



Encyclopedia of
**Religion
in America**

Charles H. Lippy • Peter W. Williams

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
RELIGION IN AMERICA

CQ Press would like to thank the First Church Unitarian (www.fculttle.org) of Littleton, Massachusetts, for use of its Sanctuary Quilt, “Many Paths, One Congregation,” as this encyclopedia’s cover. The quilt was made by members and friends of the congregation, the turtle design was created by Bruce Curliss, and the quilt was photographed by Barbara Peacock.

First Row

- Left:* A stylized human figure in the form of a capital H represents the American Humanist Association.
- Center:* A flaming chalice within overlapping circles, which represent Unitarianism and Universalism, is the symbol of the Unitarian Universalist Association.
- Right:* An empty space acknowledges the quilt’s incompleteness and our own, and affirms humility in the face of mystery, celebrating our continuing journey toward understanding.

Second Row

- Left:* The yin and the yang show opposites intertwined and represent Taoism.
- Center:* The Hindu symbol is the word “Om” in Sanskrit, evoking the infinite Brahman and the entire Universe.
- Right:* The Buddhist symbol is the wheel of dharma. “Dharma” means law or teaching.

Third Row

- Left to right:* The familiar symbols of the three Abrahamic faiths: the Jewish Star of David, the Christian cross, and the Muslim crescent and star.

Fourth Row

- Left:* The turtle represents the Nipmuc people, who lived in Massachusetts before the Europeans.
- Center:* The Tree of Life links the three worlds: upper, middle, and lower.
- Right:* The triple moon symbolizes the Goddess, the feminine face of the divine. The three lunar phases—waxing, full, and waning—represent the three stages of women’s power: Maiden, Mother, and Crone.

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Preface

This collection of essays provides an opportunity for students at any level to acquaint themselves with all facets of religion in North America. Two major factors have conspired to necessitate a new encyclopedia on this subject since we last collaborated on a reference work more than two decades ago. The religious landscape of the United States and its North American neighbors has changed significantly: since the mid-1980s, the religious right has coalesced as a significant force in both religion and politics; the Episcopal Church has split over the implications of its having elected an openly gay man as bishop; the Roman Catholic Church is reeling from the reverberations of child abuse scandals among its clergy; and unprecedented numbers of Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims have entered the country legally, as a consequence of the 1965 Hart-Celler immigration reform act. The widespread public alarm over the menace of exotic “cults” in the 1960s and 1970s rapidly subsided as the novelty and numbers of such organizations as Krishna Consciousness and the Unification Church began to wane.

American religion has changed, and its study has been transformed in both quantity and quality. The impact of the expansion of American higher education institutions in the 1950s and 1960s and the upgrading of professional expectations for faculties of these institutions in subsequent decades resulted in a veritable explosion of scholarship in this and other fields. Beyond a simple, if exponential, increase in the number of scholarly books and journal articles that continue to be published, the viewpoints from which the phenomenon of religion in America has been examined have also undergone significant changes. Although historical and sociological investigations have continued unabated, the “ethnological turn” in methodological approach that began in the 1980s has produced any number of significant participant-observer accounts of contemporary American religious phenomena. Topics such as economics and environmentalism are now included here. Similarly, the realm of visual studies in religion has attained a remarkable sophistication in recent decades and is well represented in this work. So, too, the increased awareness of what an

examination of material culture tells us about religious life and a deepening appreciation of popular culture and mass culture have left their mark on how we explore religion in American life. Gender and sexuality studies continue to push us in new directions as well, and the number of entries reflecting those arenas of inquiry has likewise expanded. In addition, although our earlier work attempted to include the remainder of North America as well as the United States in its purview, the coverage of Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean appears here in greatly enhanced form.

The contents of these volumes are arranged in alphabetical order. We would like, however, to call the attention of our readers to the alternative, thematic table of contents included at the beginning of each volume. This feature clusters articles that are related in content into coherent units, so that readers interested, in say, a broader area than that covered by any individual article can easily access the whole gamut of essays dealing with that topic. Similarly, each article concludes with a list of cognate articles included in these pages, as well as a bibliography.

In pulling these volumes together, the editors—who mutually acknowledge the ease and pleasure of having worked with one another for many decades—are pleased to recognize the extraordinary contribution of the many others who have made this new set possible.

First, our editorial advisory board, an outstanding group of scholars whose individual and collective expertise straddles a broad range of fields, has been most helpful both in formulating the shape of the content of these volumes and in tracking down potential authors. Calls for help to our far-flung colleagues for assistance in the latter enterprise have resulted in gratifying and indispensable responses from, among others, Mary Ellen Bowden, John Corrigan, Marie Griffith, Amanda Porterfield, Jon Roberts, and Grant Wacker. The editorial staff at CQ Press, especially David Arthur and John Martino, have been uniformly pleasant, efficient, and cooperative in bringing the entire operation together. And, without the unrelenting determination of our literary agent, Victoria Pryor, this work would not have seen print at all, at least not in its present form.

In addition to those who have provided direct aid to our enterprise, we would also like to acknowledge others who have provided deeper levels of support. The two of us, and many of our colleagues, were nurtured academically by an extraordinary generation of scholars who combined erudition with magnanimity and shared their wisdom with their own students as well as with their entire professional community. These include Daniel Walker Howe, Martin E. Marty, and John F. Wilson, as well as the late Sydney E. Ahlstrom, Robert T. Handy, and William R. Hutchison. On behalf of the company of American religious historians, we salute them.

We also salute Ruth Ann and the multigenerational cohort that provided the context for our summertime stays

at Buffalo Bay in Madison, Connecticut, where we happily sorted out the complexities of this enterprise while contemplating Long Island Sound, fortified by refreshing beverages and savory meals.

Finally, we acknowledge our many canine companions, past, present, and future, who have so amply enriched our lives over the years.

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Abolitionism and Antislavery

American abolitionism was an antislavery movement that began in the early 1830s. It gradually faded after issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 and the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870. American abolitionism was characterized by violent conflict, heated debate, political action, and religious fervor.

Questions over the legitimacy of buying and selling slaves often surfaced within the early Republic. Amid the animated debates between state governments and political parties, the Slave Trade Act of 1807 was eventually ratified, banning the importation of slaves to the Americas and British colonies. By 1827 the termination of the African slave trade had led to the complete abolishment of slavery in all northern states.

Apart from political legislation, opposition to slavery before the 1830s came primarily from religious groups that considered the practice of slaveholding unethical and immoral. The Society of Friends, more commonly known as the Quakers, argued that the buying and owning of slaves was inappropriate for a true follower of Christ. In a similar fashion, the Methodists in 1789 forbade congregants from buying and owning slaves, citing that the practice was antithetical to the sovereign laws of God. A significant number of Unitarians, Mennonites, and Transcendentalists, along with some Presbyterians and Congregationalists, also condemned slavery in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and would later play a prominent role in antislavery initiatives.

Although opposition to slavery was evident in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, not until the mid-nineteenth century did antislavery sentiments begin to emerge in American public discourse. During this time the Enlightenment ideas of inalienable rights and democratic equality—remnants of Jeffersonian democracy and the

founding of the new Republic—combined with the nation's budding economy to produce a strong sense of progressivism. Young men and women began leaving the small towns of their childhood and moving to urban centers to capitalize on the tremendous job growth produced by the post-Revolutionary War industrial boom. Heeding the call of "Manifest Destiny," others began migrating westward, seeking to claim a niche on the frontier. Also during this time persecution and a protracted famine in Europe spawned a mass migration of Jewish and Catholic immigrants to America's shores. Moreover, in the late 1840s the first wave of feminism began sweeping portions of the nation. In the wake of such extraordinary cultural change, the boundaries that once differentiated genders, religions, and ethnicities were forcibly redefined, making room for more equitable convictions.

The early nineteenth century in America was also a time of profound religious transformation. In what has since become known as the Great Revival or the Second Great Awakening, post-Revolutionary War America was inundated with an overwhelming sense of religious fervor, manifested in Protestant revivalism. Evangelists such as Charles Finney (1792–1875), Lyman Beecher (1775–1863), and James McGready (1760–1817) avidly preached to large and diverse gatherings at lengthy camp meetings in upstate New York and on the American frontier. Their message emphasized conversion that hinged on an individual, dramatic, and often emotionally turbulent experience. Congregates were encouraged to display physically feelings of anguish toward previous sin, as well as feelings of jubilation for redemption and salvation. This salvific experience was open to all who were willing to participate, regardless of social class, gender, or even race.

This evangelical style of conversion tended to provoke both moral and social reforms. Many nineteenth-century revivalists assumed that if an individual could be



William Lloyd Garrison founded the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 and produced antislavery literature, including a weekly newspaper titled *The Liberator*. Garrison chided religious denominations for their lack of commitment to the antislavery agenda and their quick willingness to compromise on the issue.

dramatically transformed through a vivid conversion experience, so, too, could American society be rescued from its perpetual state of moral and spiritual decline. Social movements such as temperance and suffrage, the outgrowths of this perfectionist mentality, became popular modes for enacting social change, especially among the women who experienced a degree of authority as lay leaders during revival meetings. In the eyes of many, however, the institution of slavery was at the core of America's moral iniquity. Heeding the call, many revivalists, including Finney and Beecher, began advocating the immediate disbandment of slavery throughout the nation.

William Lloyd Garrison and the Early Years

Strongly influenced by nineteenth-century cultural change and revivalist perfectionism, American abolitionism began to

materialize in the mid-nineteenth century as a visible social force. In 1833 the American Anti-Slavery Society was established in Philadelphia by journalist and social reformer William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879). Like many of his contemporaries, Garrison emphasized peaceful social activism with the ultimate goal of purging the nation of its moral failures. Although he shared with Finney, Beecher, and other revivalist leaders a sense of perfectionism, as a native New Englander he was most heavily affected by the pacifistic and social concerns of American and English Quakerism.

With the adoption of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and the various pro-slavery concessions that characterized Andrew Jackson's presidential administration, Garrison became disenchanted with the ability of the U.S. political system to eradicate slavery. Garrison also chided religious denominations for their lack of commitment to the antislavery agenda and their quick willingness to compromise on the issue. Instead of lobbying for legislation or appealing to the rhetorical power of clergy, Garrison and his followers—known commonly as Garrisonian abolitionists—protested the institution of slavery primarily through the written word.

As a young man in the early 1820s, Garrison coedited with fellow abolitionist Benjamin Lundy (1789–1839) the Quaker antislavery newsletter *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Having experienced first-hand the efficacy of the written word, Garrison's American Anti-Slavery Society also produced a weekly newspaper, *The Liberator*. Throughout the 1830s, Garrison, along with other abolitionist publishers such as Theodore Dwight Weld (1803–1895), inundated the southern states with antislavery literature. This flood of abolitionist rhetoric prompted southern clergy to respond.

Disputes and Violence

More often than not, the debates between northern abolitionists and southern clergy centered on interpretations of the biblical text. For abolitionists such as Angelina Grimké (1805–1879), the Bible had to be interpreted contextually. In her treatise *Appeal to Christian Women of the South*, Grimké pointed out that slavery in the Bible and slavery as it existed in the American South bore “no likeness.” Although the Law of Moses protected slaves from the cruelty of their masters, the southern American slave system facilitated injustice and brutality. By contrast, members of the southern clergy such as Thornton Stringfellow

(1788–1869) argued that a literal reading of various biblical passages justified the institution of slavery. In his tract “The Bible Argument, or, Slavery in the Light of Divine Revelation,” Stringfellow observed that slavery was not abolished anywhere in the Bible, and therefore it should not be abolished in nineteenth-century America. He wrote: “If pure religion, therefore, did not require its abolition under the Law of Moses, nor in the church of Christ—we may safely infer, that our political, moral, and social relations do not require it in a State.”

Many northern Democrats also disapproved of emancipation, at times even violently. On November 7, 1837, Presbyterian minister and abolitionist publisher Elijah Lovejoy (1802–1837) became the first victim of pro-slavery mob violence while defending his printing press from destruction. Like their pro-slavery rivals, abolitionists also were prone to certain acts of indiscretion. In response to the ransacking of Lawrence, Kansas, by pro-slavery ruffians, radical abolitionist John Brown (1800–1859), along with a few of his supporters, murdered several sympathizers near Pottawattamie Creek, Kansas, in 1856. Brown’s most famous, and ultimately unsuccessful, insurrection occurred in the fall of 1859 when he and twenty-two followers led a raid against the federal armory in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, in the hope of seizing its munitions and arming the local slave population.

Disputes, though relatively nonviolent, also arose among abolitionists in the late 1830s and early 1840s over the role that political and religious institutions should play in the antislavery movement. Even though Garrisonians severed all ties with politicians and denominations, other abolitionists, believing Garrison’s actions to be rash, sought to maintain an alliance. For these non-Garrisonian abolitionists, political and religious institutions provided the necessary resources for enacting genuine change.

Political and Denominational Abolitionism

Non-Garrisonian abolitionists established the Liberty Party in 1840, which advocated full emancipation and opposed extending the practice of slavery to the western territories and newly formed states. In 1848 the Liberty Party was joined by other “non-extensionist” Whigs and Democrats to create the Free Soil Party, whose platform, like that of the Liberty Party, opposed the extension of slavery to the West. However, with the ratification of pro-slavery legislation such as the Compromise of 1850, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850,

and the Kansas Nebraska Act of 1854, the Free Soil Party became obsolete and eventually was absorbed into the new Republican Party.

In addition to engaging in partisan politics, many non-Garrisonian abolitionists worked closely with various religious denominations, including Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, as well as non-Protestant religious groups such as Unitarians, Mennonites, and Shakers. Non-Garrisonians also aligned themselves with some religious institutions. Schools of higher education, such as Congregationalist-run Oberlin College—the second president was Charles Finney—became centers of abolitionist activity, admitting African American students as early as 1835. Also unlike Garrisonians, non-Garrisonian abolitionists used the influence and charisma of the clergy to further disseminate the antislavery message. Famous abolitionist ministers such as Charles Finney and Lyman Beecher preached openly against the immorality of slavery to large congregations and gatherings. Yet in spite of their strong opposition to the buying and selling of slaves, Finney and especially Beecher were hesitant to suggest that all races be treated as equal.

Non-Garrisonian abolitionists may have cooperated with a variety of religious denominations and institutions, but most remained steadfast in their anti-Catholic sentiments. And yet, even though many American Catholics in the mid-nineteenth century were pro-slavery, liberal Catholics pursued an abolitionist agenda. Catholics such as James McMaster (1820–1886), editor of the antislavery *New York Freeman’s Journal*, and Archbishop John Purcell (1800–1883) of Cincinnati were highly vocal in their criticism of slavery as a blatant violation of basic human rights. Although skeptical of President Abraham Lincoln’s proposal of immediate emancipation, the Vatican itself, during the early years of the Civil War, also characterized slavery as a tragic and regrettable institution.

The Final Years

By the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, antislavery sentiments in the United States had reached a fever pitch. The Republican abolitionist contingency in the North pressed the Lincoln administration for decisive action. In response, the executive branch issued the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, which was followed shortly by ratification of the Thirteenth (1865) and Fifteenth (1870) Amendments. With slavery officially abolished and freed male slaves given the

right to vote, the American abolitionist movement quickly faded, but not before leaving an indelible mark on nineteenth-century American culture.

See also *African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War*; Bible entries; *Benevolent Empire*; *Civil War*; *Episcopalians: Early Republic*; *Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century*; *Politics: Nineteenth Century*; *Quakers: Through the Nineteenth Century*; *Transcendentalism*; *Unitarians*.

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Aboriginal Traditions

See *Canada: Aboriginal Traditions*

Abortion

Abortion is a medical procedure used to terminate a pregnancy by removing the embryo or fetus from a woman's

uterus. Nonsurgical means for abortion include longtime herbal options and modern drugs such as RU-486. Surgical abortions became legal in America in 1973 with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*.

Prior to *Roe*, most religious groups, with the exception of Roman Catholics, did not view abortion as a significant moral issue. Rather, it was a medical issue, and physicians drove the debate. After *Roe*, religious views colored the issue, and it became a focal point of domestic politics and foreign policy, eventually affecting world population policies. Though pro-life positions are often motivated by belief in the dignity of human life, antiabortion politics have at times perpetuated racial inequities in the United States, and American antiabortion transnational activism has arguably contributed to greater social and economic burdens for women in underdeveloped areas of the world.

Abortion as a Medical Issue: Antiabortion Legislation

Prior to the enactment of antiabortion legislation in the nineteenth century, abortion was common in America. The most common indicator of pregnancy was quickening, the point at which a woman first felt fetal movements. Early antiabortion legislation, such as in Connecticut in 1821, outlawed abortion using poison after quickening and imposed life sentences on abortionists. Nevertheless, women effected their own abortions with pennyroyal or other herbs, and physicians commonly treated women for "menstrual blockage," even after quickening. Untrained abortionists such as Ann Trow Lohman, more widely known as Madame Restell, made fortunes catering to wealthy socialites. Abortions were even more dangerous than childbirth, and without antibiotics they often resulted in infection or death.

During this period there was surprisingly little religious opposition to abortion. Instead, changes in English law and medical concerns first inspired antiabortion legislation in the United States. Quickening disappeared as a dividing point after the British declared abortion via poison (Lord Ellenborough's Act, 1803) or surgical means (Lord Lansdowne's Act, 1828) illegal. New York embraced its own Lansdowne Act of 1828 and brought charges only upon the death of the woman or the successful termination of her pregnancy. It did, however, make exceptions for the mother's life when two physicians deemed the procedure necessary. By 1840 eight states had enacted antiabortion legislation, including Connecticut, where abortion before quickening became a crime in 1860.

Lobbying by physicians in response to the health risks posed by untrained providers escalated the legislative movement. Physician Horatio Storer led the effort to organize the medical profession, and in 1859 the American Medical Association (AMA) called for an end to abortions both before and after quickening. The AMA rejected the common belief that a fetus was not alive until after quickening and declared it a living being before birth. It also claimed that women seeking abortions had abandoned providential roles, a sensitive issue at a time when more and more women were entering the workforce and experiencing its effects on their role in family life.

The debate soon addressed birth control. Protestant women were more likely to use birth control than Roman Catholic women, and Protestants feared that their declining birthrates might promote “race suicide” if Catholic and other “inferior” immigrants increased in numbers. Although Protestants had little to say against abortion, Antony Comstock and other Protestant politicians became the chief opponents of legalized birth control measures. The Comstock Act of 1873 made it illegal to send any contraceptive or abortion-related item through the mail. Connecticut promptly banned the use of contraceptives, forbidding physicians to dispense them or to provide information even to married couples. Authorities eventually prosecuted both Madame Restell and birth-control advocate Margaret Sanger under the act.

The Comstock Act was very unpopular, but by the end of the 1870s over forty states had passed antiabortion statutes without reference to quickening, often allowing exceptions for a woman’s health. Nevertheless, abortions continued to be common, especially for privileged women, but physicians had gained control of the process. Often states required the opinion of two concurring physicians for abortions. The debate over contraceptives followed a similar pattern. Margaret Sanger supported physician control of contraceptives and won a victory over another birth control activist, Mary Ware Dennett, who advocated women’s control over their own bodies. For both abortion and contraception the debates focused solely on medical concerns; moral issues never became a focal point.

Physicians Drive Abortion Reform

By the 1940s physicians were making their decisions to grant therapeutic abortions via hospital boards, but medical advances had made pregnancy safer, and doctors routinely denied abortions, even in cases of maternal cancer. Boards

subjected women to humiliating interviews and examinations, and women approved for abortions were often perceived as psychologically unstable. Over 40 percent of U.S. hospitals performing abortions insisted that women consent to simultaneous sterilization.

This was particularly true for impoverished African American women, many of whom were unwed mothers. A 1970 study conducted by Princeton University researchers reported that 20 percent of African American women had been sterilized. Politicians blamed unwed African American mothers for juvenile delinquency, poverty, and inflated welfare rolls. African American women sometimes sought abortions so their children would not suffer from miserable social conditions, and by 1950 the rate of population growth for African Americans had been cut in half. According to an article in the magazine *Ebony*, eight thousand of the abortions undergone by African American women every year resulted in death.

As medical care advanced, physicians once again led the battle to reform antiabortion laws, and in 1959 the AMA stopped classifying abortion as a homicide. An epidemic of German measles from 1962 to 1965 that resulted in 15,000 babies with birth defects, as well as the well-known case of Sherry Finkbine, who took the sedative thalidomide while pregnant with her fifth child but could not get an abortion in America, inspired further reform (thalidomide causes severe birth defects).

The abortion issue was, however, not yet a moral controversy, nor were race and political persuasion decisive factors. The few pro-life movements before *Roe* were largely Roman Catholic. Pope Paul VI defended the sanctity of life and defined it as beginning at the moment of conception (*Humanae Vitae*). Consequently, abortion reform bills failed in states with larger percentages of Catholics, such as Maine and New Jersey, whereas they passed easily in states such as Georgia with small percentages of Catholics. Indeed, southern states passed most of the reform legislation. Generally, no large, well-organized antiabortion groups were active in the South during this period, and many Protestant groups openly supported abortion reform bills.

By 1972 Alaska, Florida, Hawaii, New York, and Washington had repealed antiabortion laws. Meanwhile, feminist organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) continued to agitate for reform. Other organizations such as Jane, founded in 1969 and officially known as the “Abortion Counseling Service of Women’s Liberation,”

provided underground though safe abortions for poor women. Some doctors even performed illegal abortions, such as Jane Hodgson, the only licensed physician ever convicted for performing an abortion in a hospital. Other doctors referred women to providers such as Ruth Barnett, “the abortionist,” who performed tens of thousands of abortions. Nevertheless, no further legislation was passed, because physicians drove the movement and it never touched the masses.

The Supreme Court’s Impact on Abortion Law

When the courts stepped into the picture, abortion became a polarizing moral issue. In 1965 in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Comstock laws, which criminalized the delivery or transportation of “obscene, lewd, or lascivious” material as well as methods of or information about birth control. Justice William O. Douglas’s majority opinion referenced “penumbras and emanations” from the “specific guarantees in the Bill of Rights,” including the right to privacy, which became a factor in the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.

The case of Norma McCorvey, better known as Jane Roe, was controversial from the beginning. Texas denied an abortion to McCorvey, who had pleaded economic hardship. She already had children and claimed to have been gang-raped, but news leaked out that she was a lesbian and that her pregnancy was the result of a brief liaison rather than a rape. By the time the case came before the Court, McCorvey had given birth to her child. Her attorneys, Sarah Weddington and Linda Coffee, were recent law school graduates, and Weddington did not provide a constitutional foundation for her arguments. Although the Court found in Roe’s favor, Weddington reargued her case when Justice Harry Blackmun’s majority opinion did not convince the Court.

Justice Blackmun based the majority opinion on the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and also on the penumbra of privacy from *Griswold*. However, he argued that the right to privacy was not unqualified, because the state’s legitimate interest to protect the welfare of its subjects and “the potentiality of human life” increased over the course of a pregnancy. *Roe* did not guarantee the right to abortion on demand, nor did it forbid physicians or the state from regulating the process. In the first trimester, it gave a woman the unqualified right to an abortion in consultation with a doctor. The state had the right to regulate but not prohibit abortion in the second trimester, and in the third

trimester and after fetal viability the state could proscribe abortion unless the mother’s life was in danger. *Roe* subjected the state’s right to regulate abortion to a standard of “strict scrutiny,” but this standard did not negate state requirements that licensed physicians perform abortions. In an especially controversial statement, the Court declared in *Roe* that a fetus was not legally a person before birth and before viability had no rights of its own that superseded those of the mother.

The Court further confirmed physicians’ control over abortion in *Doe v. Bolton*, issued the same day as *Roe*. It upheld a Georgia law requiring medical review of abortions by a board of physicians, but expanded grounds for therapeutic abortions to include economic hardship. In 1977 the Court upheld the conviction of an untrained abortionist (*Menillo v. Connecticut*).

The Court issued inconsistent decisions, however, on the principle of “strict scrutiny,” refusing to require spousal or parental consent for abortions involving underage, unwed girls, but upholding mandatory prior written consent in *Planned Parenthood v. Danforth* (1976). Later, in *Belotti v. Baird* (1979) and *Planned Parenthood of Kansas City v. Ashcroft* (1983) it reversed itself on parental consent laws for minors as long as judicial approval or other alternatives were available. Simultaneously, in *Akron v. Akron Center* (1983) the Court overturned Akron’s hospitalization requirement, a twenty-four-hour waiting period, and its informed consent requirement for the second and third trimesters. In *Planned Parenthood of Kansas City v. Ashcroft*, Justice Sandra Day O’Connor dissented and advocated an “undue burden” standard for determining whether state attempts to regulate abortion violated the spirit of *Roe*. The Supreme Court then gradually retreated from *Roe*, ignoring its own precedents.

After *Roe*, pro-choice groups such as Planned Parenthood and NARAL fought for abortion to be available in clinics. As a result, the number of safe abortions increased. Deaths from legal abortions were ten times lower than from illegal ones and five times lower than the death rate of women who gave birth. Inequities were apparent, however, as abortion often remained inaccessible to young and poor women who lived far away from urban centers. When Congress passed a “conscience clause bill” in 1973 allowing hospitals to refuse to perform abortions, they became even more inaccessible. Only 17 percent of public hospitals in 1975 performed abortions; 28 percent of non-Catholic private hospitals offered them. Consequently, more than 500,000 women in America had to seek abortions outside of their state of residence.

Religious Responses to Roe v. Wade

Roe sparked a great deal of outrage among Catholics. The National Right to Life Committee was formed in 1973, spending \$4 million lobbying Congress for a constitutional amendment banning abortion. The 1976 election proved pivotal to the pro-life movement, and for the first time Protestant involvement became more of a factor. Ronald Reagan, who as governor of California had refused to veto the state's abortion reform bill in 1967, became a favorite of pro-life groups. Although Gerald R. Ford eventually won the Republican nomination, Reagan's supporters pushed through a plank in the party platform supporting a constitutional amendment banning abortion. Democrats refused to support an amendment. By 1978, however, thirteen state legislatures had called for a constitutional convention.

Medicaid was funding over 33 percent of all abortions. In response, pro-life agitation led to the drafting of the 1976 Hyde Amendment, which called for a ban on the use of Medicaid funds for abortions. The amendment eventually passed the Senate, with an exception clause for the life of the mother. When the Supreme Court upheld this ban in *Harris v. McRae* (1980), the rights provided by *Roe* were now largely inaccessible to minorities.

In the 1970s pro-life advocates were a very diverse group that reflected an odd marriage of Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. They were not yet clearly divided along party lines, even in Congress and in the White House. The Republican pro-life plank was criticized for being contradictory—that is, Republicans who supported the right to life for the unborn and interpreted abortion as murder were often in favor of the death penalty. Nor did a pro-life stance on abortion translate into advocacy for a minimum quality of life for all people, because pro-life Republicans were generally opposed to welfare. By contrast, Catholic pro-life advocates tended to be liberal on government programs for the poor and to condemn the death penalty and euthanasia. Protestants tended to see abortion as a by-product of premarital sex and focused on this issue more than on the right to life of a fetus, whereas Catholics focused on right to life issues. More broadly, pro-lifers tended to be generally more conservative in their worldviews, single-issue voters, and supportive of traditional roles for women.

Unlike the view put forth by the Court in *Roe v. Wade*, pro-life advocates maintained that a fetus is a human being from the moment of conception. Pope John Paul II's theology of the body underscored this view, because he

emphasized the centrality of the Incarnation in Christian theology and the importance of human embodiment as the only medium through which God is revealed. But there was lack of agreement even here, because Catholics protected fetal life over the life of the mother, whereas the Seventh-day Adventists and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America allowed exceptions for rape, incest, or the mother's health.

The official positions of many religious groups on abortion and the status of the fetus evolved over time, especially as a result of the political activism during the 1980s. For example, the Southern Baptist Convention initially endorsed *Roe v. Wade*, but by the thirtieth anniversary of the decision it had firmly retracted its endorsement.

Pro-choice advocates tended to maintain that a fetus is not a fully individuated person; it is not a human being. Scientific studies supported these views, demonstrating that a fetus could not feel pain prior to the third trimester. However, the demarcation between antiabortion and pro-choice positions was not, and is not, always clear. Even within the pro-choice group opinions often differed and positions evolved over time.

In 1973 a group of pro-choice clergy formed the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights in response to *Roe v. Wade*. Later renamed the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Rights, this group includes, among others, Methodists and the Presbyterian Church (USA). In 1970 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States declared that abortion should not be regulated by law; in 1992 the General Assembly declared that abortion should not be used as a form of birth control; and in 2006 it affirmed that the life of a child ought to be respected both before and after birth. Simultaneously, however, the General Assembly insisted that humans could not claim to know when life begins. Although the Presbyterian Church (USA) can be classified as pro-choice, its position is complex and it cannot be said to favor abortion on demand. Similarly, although the United Methodist Church favored abortion as a choice in the 1970s and its 1996 *Book of Discipline* still included pro-abortion statements, it also included texts that affirmed the sanctity of unborn life.

Demarcation of the pro-life movement by political party lines did not occur until the 1980s, when the Christian Right allied with the Republican Party. After 1980 there was also more Protestant pro-life involvement. The Moral Majority, founded by Jerry Falwell, a Baptist minister, had a significant impact on politics in the 1980s and drew

supporters from a broad spectrum of society. Together with Pat Robertson's 700 Club, the Moral Majority added some eight million voters to the rolls. Falwell had an enormous influence on the Ronald Reagan administration, and pro-life representatives met with Reagan every year on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. Reagan failed, however, to deliver the constitutional amendment banning abortion desired by the pro-life movement.

Pro-life activism took a decidedly violent turn in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Joseph Scheidler, a former Benedictine monk, founded the Pro-Life Action League (PAL) in 1980, which harassed women as they entered clinics, followed them home after appointments, jammed clinic phone lines, and harassed workers. Bombings and arson began in 1977 and reached a high point in 1984, with the release of the emotionally stirring film *Silent Scream*, depicting an actual fetus during an abortion. Randall Terry, a protégé of Scheidler, formed Operation Rescue in 1986, and thousands of evangelical Protestants joined him in picketing abortion clinics in Atlanta in 1988 and in Wichita, Kansas, in 1991. In Wichita a federal judge issued an order to stop the picketing, which resulted in over two thousand arrests. Another controversy erupted when the administration of President George H. W. Bush filed a brief of amicus curiae in *Bray v. Alexandria Women's Health Clinic* supporting the activities of Operation Rescue and similar groups. The Bush administration argued that authorities could not use federal civil rights law to protect clients of clinics from blockades. John G. Roberts Jr., who worked in the Bush Justice Department and Office of White House Counsel, helped to develop some of these briefs, a controversial factor in his later confirmation hearings as chief justice of the United States. Despite the support of the Bush administration, two court cases, *National Abortion Federation v. Operation Rescue* and *National Organization of Women (NOW) v. Scheidler*, resulted in restrictions on clinic picketing, and Terry himself was later incarcerated. In the 1990s, during the Clinton administration, the Justice Department also prosecuted Operation Rescue under the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organizations (RICO) laws, imposing fines in the hundreds of thousands of dollars by the 1990s.

Although the activities of Operation Rescue and similar organizations dwindled as a result of legal difficulties, violent activism succeeded in reducing the number of abortions performed. By 1985 only about one-quarter of medical schools were offering training in abortion. By 1991 only 12 percent were offering training in performing first-trimester

abortions, while only 7 percent trained physicians in second-trimester procedures.

Planned Parenthood v. Casey

In 1989 pro-life forces believed they had won another victory when a Supreme Court decision in *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* upheld state regulations prohibiting abortions in public hospitals and requiring that physicians check for fetal viability before performing an abortion. The Court left untouched a portion of the Missouri statute that defined human life as beginning at conception. The fetal viability requirement potentially undercut *Roe's* provision of privacy during the first two trimesters, prompting Justice Blackmun to remark that "a chill wind blows." *Webster* was the beginning of the Court's reconsideration of various planks of *Roe*.

In 1992 the Court continued its assault in *Planned Parenthood of Southeast Pennsylvania v. Casey*. The *Casey* decision upheld a twenty-four-hour waiting period before an abortion. Previously, in *Thornburgh v. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists* (1985), the Court had ruled against such a period. The Court also refused to force a woman to obtain spousal consent, basing its argument on the principle of *stare decisis* (prior decisions), but this refusal implied that other state restrictions, once upheld, would be permanent. Although the Court had not completely overturned *Roe*, it had negated its trimester system and abandoned *Roe's* standard of "strict scrutiny" for restrictions in favor of Justice O'Connor's "undue burden" standard. State court decisions also retreated from *Roe's* statement that a fetus is not legally a person, convicting African American crack addicts on charges of endangering their unborn children and determining that frozen embryos were "persons" who should be considered "children" of a divorced couple (*Davis v. Davis* [1989]).

Ironically, *Webster* and later decisions energized the pro-choice faction and women's rights groups became a significant factor in the debate over abortion, although antiabortion groups softened their stance throughout the 1980s and 1990s to accommodate exceptions for rape and incest. They favored freedom from governmental intrusion into areas in which the family should be sovereign and parental consent laws for minors. Even NARAL softened its support for abortion to accommodate what journalist William Saletan calls the "mutant version" of abortion rights, based on data gleaned by professional pollster Harrison Hickman. NARAL orchestrated a massive campaign based on the motto "Who

Decides—You or Them?” In 1989 Douglas Wilder used this strategy and won the Virginia governor’s race, becoming the first African American governor in U.S. history. In 1992 even Democrats Bill Clinton and Al Gore ran on a plank that included parental consent laws and opposed government funding of abortion. By the early 1990s Republican Newt Gingrich could refer to America as “pro-choice, anti-abortion.”

Partial-Birth Abortion and RU-486

The introduction of partial-birth abortions, technically known as “intact dilation and extraction,” further ignited the debate. The procedure involved dilating the cervix over several days, partially delivering the fetal body, piercing the skull in order to suction out the contents of the cranium, and then delivering the rest of the fetus intact. Less than one-third of fetuses aborted in this way were dead when the procedure was performed, making it especially controversial. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists pointed out that it was never the only option available, and the AMA called for a ban based on the “inhumane” nature of the procedure. In addition to expected opposition from the Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA), which historically had advocated for a woman’s choice in the matter of abortion, issued a statement of concern about the procedure, departing from the position of its fellow members of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Rights. Some pro-choice senators, such as Daniel Moynihan of Massachusetts and Tom Daschle of South Dakota, did not support the procedure, and in 1995 a ban on partial-birth abortions passed both houses of Congress. President Clinton vetoed the bill and did so again in 1997. Many religious groups protested Clinton’s veto, including the Orthodox Church in America.

The states then took matters into their own hands, and by 1998 twenty-two states had passed bans on the procedure. However, in *Stenberg v. Carhart* (2000) the Supreme Court refused to uphold Nebraska’s ban on partial-birth or late-term abortions. Because the ban did not include an exception for “health” and removed an option for women, the Court held that it constituted an “undue burden” on women’s rights. The decision, however, contradicted public opinion, and in 2003 President George W. Bush signed the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act into law.

New nonsurgical options are equally controversial. In 1982 French physician Etienne-Emile Baulieu invented RU-486, an antiprogesterin that breaks the bond of the

fertilized egg with the uterine wall. A dose of RU-486 is followed thirty-six to forty-eight hours later by a dose of synthetic prostaglandin. A miscarriage then occurs in 96 percent of cases. Although RU-486 has a wide safety margin, physicians restrict its use to women under age thirty-five who are nonsmokers. In 1996 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the use of RU-486 in the United States at the request of President Clinton; it is marketed as Mifeprestone. As expected, pro-life forces reacted vociferously to RU-486. The Catholic Church condemned its use, and in view of the multimillion-dollar pro-life campaign against RU-486, drug companies are wary of marketing the drug. Germany, Spain, and France have banned RU-486.

Other new technologies have brought the issue out of a woman’s womb and into the test tube. Surrogate mothers have already given life to frozen embryos. Eighty-four families have adopted children born from frozen “snowflake” embryos, obtained from *in vitro* fertilization programs by Nightlife Christian Adoptions.

Abortion and U.S. Foreign Policy

The parameters of the abortion debate extend beyond the unborn. What is less recognized is that the antiabortion stance of the New Christian Right has molded U.S. foreign policy and had a dramatic impact on women in developing regions of the world. In 1973, the same year as *Roe v. Wade* and well before the Hyde Amendment passed the Senate, Congress prohibited the use of U.S. population funds to either pay for or encourage abortion. In January 1974 the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) stopped funding abortion-related services. Prior to 1974, presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon had argued that it was inappropriate for the United States to export its abortion policies to other countries. Thus USAID policy before 1974 gave priority to funding for research on early abortion technologies and considered abortion an essential component of effective family planning programs. After 1974 Congress prohibited the use of foreign aid to pay for biomedical research on abortion as a method of family planning (1981) or lobbying for abortion (1982), but left open the ways in which organizations could use funds from other sources.

In 1982, it was argued that USAID had an impact on the Alan Guttmacher Institute’s freedom of speech when it cut funding for its *International Family Planning Perspective*. Two articles in the journal discussed abortion in developing

countries, thereby allegedly violating USAID's policy on promoting abortion. One article contained only one sentence about the legalization of abortion in Tunisia in 1973. The Guttmacher Institute took the case to court. In 1986 a circuit court upheld the district court and ruled that because USAID regulations did not prohibit the publication of neutral information on abortion at the time that funding was denied, the agency could not impose funding restrictions that applied retroactively. The court did not explicitly address the freedom of speech issue raised by the case.

In 1984 the United States released the Mexico City Policy, a radical departure from previous policies, in preparation for the UN Population Conference in Mexico City that same year. In this election year, the New Right of the Republican Party figured prominently. The leader of the U.S. delegation to the conference was former senator James L. Buckley of New York, who had lobbied for the failed constitutional amendment banning abortion. The Republican leadership hoped that transnational antiabortion efforts might ensure success for their domestic planks.

The Mexico City Policy contained the controversial assertion that population growth was a neutral phenomenon not necessarily connected to underdevelopment. For the first time, the policy restricted foreign funding for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that engaged in abortion-related activities, even if with non-USAID funds. This restriction included counseling women to obtain abortions in countries where abortion was legal or performing abortions for victims of rape or incest. Effectively, this policy meant that funding NGOs in Asia, Latin America, and Africa risked violating the policy. Many of these NGOs were important providers of contraceptive services and had only limited connection with abortion-related activities. Government agencies that provided abortion services without coercion could receive funds so long as USAID funds were not used for such purposes.

These restrictions on NGOs came at a particularly inopportune time. Since 1980 twenty developing countries had softened harsh abortion laws. Whereas only three African countries had population policies before 1974, African economic ministers endorsed the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action on Population shortly before the 1984 Mexico City conference. The Kilimanjaro Programme was intended to respond to population issues in order to promote socioeconomic development. Family planning services were considered integral to the program's success. Algeria and Brazil were much less confrontational on the subject of family

planning than they had been in 1974 at the UN population conference in Bucharest, whereas China had implemented its one-child policy in 1979 and was prepared to defend population programs. Even the location of the conference was conducive to population reform, because Mexico was then the leader of the Group of 77, the caucus of developing countries in the United Nations, and since 1974 Mexico had worked to solve its population issues. The World Bank encouraged these efforts when it released data suggesting that countries would have to quadruple population assistance to meet current needs.

Although the United States articulated a policy prohibiting funds for abortion-related activities, it allowed the Vatican to demand that the conference exclude abortion as a method of family planning. Attendees ultimately agreed not to promote abortion (the word "promote" meant anything from providing services to referring a client to a provider).

One of the first casualties of the Mexico City Policy was the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which provided funds to China. U.S. support for the UNFPA had already declined from about 50 percent of its total revenue to 25 percent by 1984. Since 1980 China had been the second largest recipient of UNFPA funds. James Buckley, under secretary of state and a leading antiabortion advocate, linked the use of funds for abortion or forced family planning in China to UNFPA funding, and pro-life advocates demanded that President Reagan cut UNFPA's funding at their annual meeting on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. Although several senators challenged the Mexico City Policy and the majority of Americans did not want to see funding for population programs tied to abortion, eventually the New Right won, and the United States cut off aid in 1985, despite having previously provided China multilateral development loans without reference to human rights issues. The percentage of funds lost by China for its family planning programs was negligible, but China relied on Western technologies acquired through UNFPA for its population program.

The Mexico City Policy and the Status of Women

The United States did not include any reference to the status of women in its statement released before the 1984 Mexico City U.N. Population Conference. In an election year in which the traditional views of the New Right were pivotal, a public statement was too risky, but the United States did endorse a section of the conference document strengthening the stand on women's issues. Not coincidentally, many American women were at the conference lobbying for NGOs.

Ironically, the official conference statement on women emphasized persistent links between high rates of fertility and women's inferior social status. In fact, since the 1950s demographers had argued that rates of population growth in underdeveloped areas of the world outpaced those of industrial areas, and they insisted that economic growth was dependent on a reduction in fertility rates. Because the Mexico City Policy often affected NGOs that provided contraceptive and abortion services, its biggest impact was on developing countries with high fertility rates. The population of Kenya, for example, increased three-fold after it gained independence. The largest NGO that offered family planning services in Kenya was the Family Planning Association of Kenya, whose parent donor was the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), an agency that lost funding as a result of the Mexico City Policy. Meanwhile, the Roman Catholic Church and transnational right-to-life groups from the United States have successfully blocked attempts to reform antiabortion laws in Kenya.

The Roman Catholic Church also agitated against abortion and family planning with great success in Mexico, and again transnational groups with support in the United States aided the Church. In 1989 Catholic transnational organizations such Pro-Vida opposed a Mexican government plan to legalize abortion, with the result that the political leadership ceased to make any public statements on the issue. Members of U.S. antiabortion movements attended two international conferences organized by Pro-Vida in the 1980s. Mexican bishops regularly attend meetings of the Knights of Columbus in America, and Pro-Vida receives materials from Human Life International. Traditional views about women's roles continued to dominate the debate in Mexico, as evidenced by results from a 1991 Gallup poll which showed that 43 percent of Mexicans believed that the decision to get an abortion should be a woman's and another 48 percent believed that a woman need not consult the Church, only 38 percent believed that health care organizations should provide abortion services. Some shift in thinking occurred in 2007, when Mexico City's legislative assembly voted to legalize abortions obtained during the first twelve weeks of pregnancy; one year later the Supreme Court of Mexico upheld the law. In other parts of Mexico, abortion is legal only in cases of rape or when the mother's life is endangered.

The Cairo Conference and Beyond

By the 1990s the alliance between the United States and the Vatican had crumbled after U.S. policy took a decisive turn away from the Mexico City Policy. Within two days

of taking office Bill Clinton repealed the Mexico City Policy. In 1994 the U.S. supported a very liberal policy toward women at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. The U.S. contribution to population aid reached its peak early in Clinton's administration. The Vatican, by contrast, assumed a rigid stance at Cairo, and was alarmed by the growing influence of women's rights movements in America. It feared Clinton might promote abortion on demand, and it held up the debate over language on abortion for three days, offending many of the delegates. Clearly, 1994 signaled a new era for women, and the chair of the main committee at Cairo believed the conference had achieved unimagined success.

However, the impact of the Clinton administration was short-lived. Agitation among antiabortion activists, among other factors, resulted in the restoration in 1995 of a Republican-controlled Congress. In 1998 Congress essentially withheld payment of the back dues owed by the United States to the UN and called on Clinton to restore the Mexico City Policy. By 1999 the back dues amounted to almost \$1 billion, and Clinton feared loss of the U.S. vote in the General Assembly in 2000. In 1999 Congress passed legislation once again implementing the Mexico City Policy, also known as the Global Gag Rule, and Clinton signed it into law.

Once again, NGOs had to certify that they did not use USAID or any other funds to provide abortion services or to engage in efforts to change foreign abortion policies. USAID interpreted the last restriction to encompass communicating with political leaders on abortion, trying through the mass media to alter policies, or organizing demonstrations. Clinton had the discretion to waive the restrictions on \$15 million of the funds, and he immediately did so. Many organizations that certified compliance with the policy later also protested U.S. attempts to curb their autonomy within their native lands. Enyantu Ifenne of Nigeria described the Global Gag Rule as retrogressive, repressive, and undemocratic. Ironically, this reversal of U.S. policy came at a time when global policy was focused on the links between reproductive rights and women's economic and political status, but in 2001 President George W. Bush reaffirmed the prohibitions of the Mexico City Policy. Nonetheless, despite the events chronicled here, at the end of the twentieth century the United States remained the largest single donor to population assistance programs, amounting to fully one-third of the total contributed from all sources.

On January 21, 2009, newly inaugurated President Barack Obama rescinded the Mexico City Policy. On the thirty-sixth

anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, Obama issued a statement criticizing the policy as unnecessarily broad and affirming a woman's right to choose. USAID announced quick action to implement the change, while antiabortion groups protested the decision.

In November 2009, as the House of Representatives debated a sweeping health care bill, Democrat Bart Stupak of Michigan proposed an amendment to the bill that barred the use of any federal funds to pay for an abortion or to purchase a health care plan that covered abortion, except in cases in which the mother's life was in danger or in cases of rape or incest. The Stupak Amendment did not prohibit women who wanted abortion coverage from purchasing supplemental policies, but they could not do so with federal funds.

Conclusion

Though the policy articulated by President George W. Bush in 2001 did not forbid postabortion care, legal and cultural restrictions continue to pose challenges to programs offering such care. Worldwide, contraceptives are still not readily available to 120–165 million women, and safe abortions are out of the reach of one in four women who live in countries where they are illegal. In developing countries as many as 68 percent of patients treated for complications from abortions are under twenty years of age. Family planning issues are among the most pressing global issues.

Even though the abortion issue played a very important role in the 2004 U.S. presidential election, it did not play a similar role in the 2008 presidential election, perhaps signaling a decline in the political influence of the New Right. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the rise of the New Right's antiabortion politics in late twentieth-century America combined with Vatican activism have had an impact on America and the world in ways still being measured.

See also *Bioethics; Feminism; Gender; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Politics: Twentieth Century; Religious Right; Roman Catholicism: Early Twenty-First-Century Issues; Supreme Court.*

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Adventism and Millennialism

The adventism formulated by William Miller in the 1820s—the expectation of Jesus' imminent Second Coming or, as the adventists say, Jesus' "soon" Second Coming—developed within a tradition of Anglo-American millennial thinking that began in the seventeenth century. Millennialism looked forward to the Second Coming of Jesus, but its thinking took two major forms. Postmillennialists believed that the biblical prophecies of the millennium referred to a future time when God's spirit would reign in human hearts, after which Jesus would return to earth. Premillennialists understood the prophecies to foretell a period of increasing doom that would end with Christ's return in judgment, after which the millennium would begin. Until the mid-nineteenth century most premillennialists took a historicist position—that is, they believed that the prophecies described historical periods—but in the 1830s an alternative futurist view emerged, which asserted that the prophecies told of events that would

occur just before the end of time. The futurist interpretation, however, did not become prominent in the United States until after the Civil War.

Eighteenth-Century American Millennialism

Although millennialist thought was widespread in seventeenth-century Anglo-American religious movements, it gained greater prominence in the eighteenth century, particularly in the thought of Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), a minister and theologian in Massachusetts. As early as the 1720s Edwards had expressed his expectation that the future would bring the church both civil and religious liberty, a postmillennial outlook he developed more fully in a series of sermons preached in the 1730s and published after his death as *History of the Work of Redemption* (1774). The Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s, in which Edwards played an important role, spread similar millennial hope throughout the New England and middle colonies.

In the aftermath of a series of earthquakes in 1755, most importantly in Lisbon, Portugal, liberal preachers Charles Chauncy and Jonathan Mayhew drew on biblical prophecy to support their conviction that the world would undergo a fundamental transformation. By the 1770s, these millennial expectations had become a significant element in American political thought as the revolutionaries interpreted Great Britain as the antichrist, believed that America would bring the kingdom of God, and thought that the latter days were at hand. Although millennialist enthusiasm subsided during the Revolutionary War, the French Revolution of 1789 and subsequent reign of terror sparked a revival of interest in the biblical prophecies. Works of prophetic interpretation began attracting attention, among them a new edition of Edwards's *History* as well as Samuel Hopkins's postmillennialist *Treatise on the Millennium* (1793) and Elhanan Winchester's premillennialist *Lectures on the Prophecies that Remain to be Fulfilled* (1795). During the 1790s the two versions of millennialism became more distinct.

British Premillennialism

The French Revolution also awakened interest in the biblical prophecies among British observers. Believing that Daniel 7 and 13 were being fulfilled before their eyes, such writers as George Stanley Faber in *Dissertation on the Prophecies* (1804) and James Hatley Frere in *Combined View of the Prophecies* (1815) developed a literal, premillennialist interpretation that took a pessimistic view of the future. Another premillennialist, Lewis Way, introduced the idea

that before Christ's Second Advent, the Jews would return to Palestine.

British premillennialism was organized through the Albury Conferences of Henry Drummond (1786–1860), a former banker and member of the House of Commons. The conferences, which were held annually from 1826 to 1828, brought together leading premillennialist clergymen, mostly Anglican, and lay persons, thereby consolidating the premillennialist theology. In 1829 Drummond established six points of belief on which the conference participants largely agreed: (1) the current dispensation would end cataclysmically; (2) the Jews would return to Palestine; (3) Christendom awaited judgment; (4) the millennium would take place after this judgment; (5) Jesus would physically return before the millennium began; and (6) the 1,260-day prophecies of Daniel 7 and 13 were to be understood as historical years, extending from Justinian to the French Revolution, while Revelation 16's vials of wrath should be interpreted as referring to the present time. Christ's Second Advent, therefore, would occur very soon.

Beginning in the 1820s several societies formed to study the prophecies, and premillennialist periodicals began to appear. William Cuninghame and Edward Irving, who had translated Manuel Lacunza's *The Coming of the Messiah* in 1826, emerged as leading preachers, although the exhaustion arising from a controversy over speaking in tongues led to Irving's demise in 1834. Meanwhile, John Nelson Darby (1800–1882), founder of the Plymouth Brethren, adopted a futurist/dispensationalist interpretation of the book of Revelation, which asserted that nothing in Revelation's prophecies had yet taken place and would not occur until very near the end of the present age. The differences between these two versions of premillennialism became clearer at the Powerscourt Conferences in Ireland, held between 1831 and 1833, which were ultimately dominated by Darby's views. Despite these differences in interpretation of prophetic chronology, the premillennialists were agreed that the present age would end in destruction as Jesus physically returned to earth and the millennium began. Their outlook toward the future contrasted sharply with that of the postmillennialists.

Second Great Awakening

Despite the interest in millennialism in late eighteenth-century America, the new nation was rather secular in outlook and active involvement in religion seemed to be in decline. This situation changed dramatically during the first half of the nineteenth century with the series of revivals

known as the “Second Great Awakening.” The spiritual renaissance had both eastern and western origins. Its beginnings were marked by Kentucky’s Cane Ridge camp meeting (1801) and a major revival at Yale College (1802). From there it spread across the country, becoming most intense in upstate New York in the “Burned-Over District,” where the fires of revival spread back and forth across the region from the 1820s to the 1840s. Charles G. Finney (1792–1875), who was converted in 1821, became the most famous of the Second Great Awakening preachers and developed several evangelistic techniques, known as “New Measures,” that were to shape the tradition of American revivalism.

Although many of the Awakening preachers, such as Finney, regarded themselves as Calvinists, they moved in an Arminian direction that emphasized the role of the personal decision in conversion. Influenced by Methodism, Awakening theology also stressed that Christians should not only accept Christ’s forgiveness of sin but also strive to overcome it through an infusion of the Holy Spirit. As Thomas Hastings wrote in the popular hymn “Rock of Ages,” “Be of sin the double cure/Save from wrath and make me pure.” Most of the revival preachers also believed in postmillennialism and looked forward to the reign of God’s spirit on earth prior to Christ’s return. The combination of perfectionism and postmillennialism contributed to the establishment of many voluntary associations that sought to advance God’s kingdom by engaging in activities ranging from foreign missions to temperance to antislavery. By the time the Second Great Awakening reached its end in the 1850s, it had transformed the American religious landscape. Whereas in the eighteenth century American religion was dominated by the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, by the mid-nineteenth century these denominations had been replaced by the Methodists and Baptists.

With religious revival flourishing, millennial language achieved widespread expression, even in the old-line churches. In a hymn written in 1840, Arthur Cleveland Coxe, an Episcopalian, asked, “Hark! What Soundeth? Is Creation/Groaning for its latter day?” A few years later, Samuel H. Cox, moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly, observed that “God has got America within anchorage. . . . He intends to display His prodigies for the millennium.” More directly connected with the Second Great Awakening, Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples of Christ, entitled his journal the *Millennial Harbinger* and explored the meaning of the 1,260-day and 2,300-day prophecies of Daniel using the day-year principle of interpretation.

Although postmillennialism dominated most millennial thinking, a few Americans turned toward British premillennialism. Between 1840 and 1842 Joel Jones and Orrin Rogers reprinted various British premillennialist works in *The Literalist*, which ran to five issues. Their effort was continued by Isaac P. Labagh, the rector of Calvary Episcopal Church in New York, who published the *American Millenarian and Prophetic Review* from 1842 to 1844. In the pages of this journal, Labagh recommended British premillennialist authors and offered copies of *The Literalist*. American works that reflected British premillennialism included those by Episcopalian Edward Winthrop, *Lectures on the Second Advent* (1843), and Presbyterians William Ramsey, *Second Coming . . . Before the Millennium* (1841), and George Duffield, *Millenarianism Defended* (1843).

On the fringes of Christian orthodoxy, other movements that developed during the Second Great Awakening also held millennial expectations. The Shakers, who were established in the Revolutionary period but grew significantly during the revival, adopted as their official name the Millennial Church of the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing. In their view, the Second Coming of Christ had already occurred in the person of Ann Lee, their founder, who had inaugurated the millennium. In the early 1830s, John Humphrey Noyes, who later established the Oneida community, fully expected that the millennium was near. Later, he reinterpreted the scriptural passages, concluding that Jesus had returned in spirit in 70 CE. Meanwhile, Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or the Mormons, called his periodical the *Millennial Star* and through the early 1840s advocated premillennialism. As the Mormons were forced to move west to Utah, however, they increasingly connected the millennium with a geographical location rather than time.

William Miller

Before this transatlantic interest in the millennium had fully developed, William Miller (1782–1849), a New York farmer, had concluded that Jesus would return about the year 1843. Born in Massachusetts and reared in Low Hampton, New York, Miller was largely self-educated. He had been raised a Baptist, but became a Deist as a young adult while living in Poultney, Vermont. There, he read works by Voltaire, David Hume, and Ethan Allen. After moving back to Low Hampton, he held some minor public offices and was elected a lieutenant of the local militia raised for the War of 1812, later becoming a captain in the regular army. After

participating in the Battle of Plattsburgh on September 11, 1814, in which an outnumbered American force defeated the British, Miller began to question his Deistic beliefs, for it seemed that a divine power must have been involved in that victory. Upon returning home after the war, Miller began attending a Baptist church. He was sometimes asked to read the sermon, but he did not yet profess belief in Christianity. While presenting the sermon in 1816, however, he underwent a profound conversion experience in which he was drawn both emotionally and intellectually to Jesus as his savior.

Challenged by his Deist friends who alleged inconsistencies in the Bible, Miller began a systematic study of the scripture. In line with his faith in reason and common sense that he had held as a Deist, he established fourteen rules of interpretation, which he wrote down in a two-column chart with the rule on one side and a supporting proof-text on the other. By 1818 he had proven to his own satisfaction not only that the Bible contained “a system of revealed truths” that were both simple and clear but also that Jesus would return in about the year 1843. Focusing on Daniel 8:14, “Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” Miller combined the common interpretive principle that a prophetic day represented an actual year with his belief that the seventy-week prophecy of Daniel 9:24–27, which referred to the rebuilding of Jerusalem, was part of the 2,300 days. As for Artaxerxes’s decree in 457 BCE to rebuild Jerusalem as a fulfillment of Daniel 9, through simple arithmetic Miller determined that the 2,300 days ended in 1843. Because he understood “sanctuary” to mean the earth and “cleansing” to refer to the burning at the final judgment, Miller concluded that Jesus’ Second Advent was to take place at the end of the 2,300 days. Except for his rejection of the belief that the Jews would be restored to Palestine and his assertion that Jesus would return about 1843, Miller’s interpretation of the prophecies was similar to that of the British premillennialists.

Not wanting to present his startling conclusions prematurely to the public, Miller continued to study. Finally, in 1831 he gave his first public lecture in nearby Dresden, where he sparked a revival. Soon he began receiving invitations from elsewhere in New York and New England, and despite being over fifty years of age and by his own admission a poor speaker, he became a full-time lecturer. In 1832 Miller published a series of sixteen articles in the *Vermont Telegraph* that he combined the next year into a sixty-four-page pamphlet, “Evidences from Scripture & History of the

Second Coming of Christ about the Year CE 1843.” He later expanded this pamphlet into a similarly titled book, which was published in 1836.

Joshua V. Himes and the Emergence of a Movement

Speaking mostly in small towns, Miller to this point was not well-known. In 1839, however, he gave a lecture series at Exeter, New Hampshire, where he made the acquaintance of Joshua V. Himes (1805–1895), a Christian Connection minister from Boston. Himes invited Miller to speak at his Chardon Street Chapel, where he drew large crowds during two series of meetings in late 1839 and early 1840. Himes had been active in both the New England Anti-Slavery Society and the New England Nonresistance Society and soon was using the publicity techniques learned in those causes on behalf of Miller. In March 1840 Himes began publishing a biweekly paper, the *Signs of the Times*, promoting the imminent return of Christ according to the biblical prophecies as interpreted by Miller. By the end of the year, the *Signs* had 1,500 subscribers.

Himes quickly became Miller’s publicist and chief organizer. As interest in Miller’s views developed, Himes and several other ministers announced in the *Signs* that a general conference of those believing that Christ’s coming was near at hand would meet in Boston beginning on October 14, 1840. Because of illness, Miller was unable to attend the conference at Himes’s church. But two hundred did attend the event. Among the major speakers were Henry Dana Ward, a Congregationalist, Josiah Litch, a Methodist, and Henry Jones, a Presbyterian, which suggests the interdenominational appeal of Miller’s message. A second conference, held in Lowell, Massachusetts, in June 1841, established committees to raise money, publish papers, and organize future conferences.

Although three more conferences were held in 1841, the meeting that took place in Boston in May 1842 proved pivotal. This conference passed a resolution that for the first time clearly defined the movement’s articles of faith. The articles rejected belief in the restoration of the Jews to Palestine and postmillennialism and affirmed that Jesus would return in 1843. In response to this emphasis on a specific time, some early leaders in the movement, particularly Jones and Dana, who had never adopted the specifics of Miller’s prophetic interpretation, began playing less visible roles. The conference also appointed a committee to organize camp meetings as a means of promoting the message of Christ’s soon return. Finally, the conference voted to print three

hundred copies of a pictorial chart interpreting the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. These charts became a standard feature of adventist preaching.

From this point on, the movement gained momentum and visibility. The first Millerite camp meeting took place in Canada, at Hatley, Quebec, in June 1842. The first meeting in the United States was held later that same month in East Kingston, New Hampshire (poet and essayist John Greenleaf Whittier attended the meeting and later described it). The East Kingston meeting raised money to purchase a large tent that was used the following month at Concord. The “Great Tent” itself, reportedly the largest in America, became a means of publicity and was used seven more times that year. Even though the tent was severely damaged by winds in 1843, camp meetings, tent or no tent, became an increasingly important element of the movement, and the number of meetings grew from 31 in 1842, to 40 in 1843, to 125 in 1844.

Publications were even more important than camp meetings. Himes expanded circulation of the *Signs of the Times* by hiring agents who received a commission for each subscription sold. By early 1842 the paper was able to claim five thousand subscribers, and in April Himes moved to weekly publication. That same year he developed the strategy of establishing temporary papers to accompany specific evangelistic campaigns and provide the opportunity for regional variety and closer support for new believers. In November 1842, Himes and Nathaniel Southard, formerly an antislavery activist, started the first of these papers, the *Midnight Cry*, in New York City, where they printed ten thousand copies each, of twenty-four issues. The paper’s popularity led to its continuation as a weekly. More than forty papers were eventually published, among them the *Trumpet of Alarm* (Philadelphia), *Second Advent of Christ* (Cleveland), *Voice of Elijah* (Montreal), and *Western Midnight Cry* (Cincinnati). In addition to these regional publications, the *Advent Message to the Daughters of Zion* addressed women, and the *Advent Shield*, a quarterly, provided a scholarly exposition of Millerite interpretations.

Beginning as early as 1840, the adventists began issuing tracts and pamphlets. Among these was a series entitled “Words of Warning,” which included brief discourses on topics such as “The Last Days,” “The End of Time,” and “How Awful to Meet an Angry God.” Himes also created the “Second Advent Library,” which eventually ran to nearly fifty volumes; these varied in size from a few pages to more than two hundred pages. To support the camp meetings and other

gatherings, Himes published *Millennial Harp, or Second Advent Hymns* (in 1842), a collection of both traditional and new songs related to the Second Coming of Christ.

Although Miller provided the movement’s message and Himes its organizational and publicity direction, other individuals also emerged into prominence. Josiah Litch (1809–1886), a Methodist minister, adopted Miller’s interpretations in 1838, and in June of that year he published *The Probability of the Second Coming of Christ about the Year 1843*. By 1841 he had left his ministerial appointment to become a full-time adventist lecturer. Charles Fitch (1805–1844), a minister and antislavery activist associated with William Lloyd Garrison, adopted Miller’s ideas in 1838, but because of criticism from his Presbyterian colleagues abandoned those ideas a short time later. In 1841, however, he left the Presbyterian ministry because of the denomination’s opposition to his advocacy of Oberlin Holiness theology. Shortly thereafter, Litch encouraged him to restudy Miller’s prophetic interpretation, which he once again adopted. The following year, Fitch and Apollos Hale created the pictorial chart that played such an important role in adventist preaching. Joseph Marsh (1802–1863), a Christian Connection minister, accepted Miller’s message in 1843 and the following year began publishing the *Voice of Truth* in Rochester, New York. A few women, among them Lucy Maria Hersey, Olive Maria Rice, and Elvira Fasset, also preached for the adventists. Although the number of adventist lecturers is unknown, in the spring of 1844 the *Midnight Cry* claimed that between fifteen hundred and two thousand men and women were preaching the message. It appears that the majority of the preachers were Methodists or Baptists.

The Year 1843

As 1843 approached, under Himes’s direction the adventists intensified their efforts, moving around the country much like a military campaign. They especially concentrated on major cities such as New York City in late 1842 and Philadelphia in early 1843. Fitch visited Oberlin College in the fall of 1842 and a short time later established a headquarters in Cleveland. In the spring of 1843 the movement gained the support of biblical scholar N. N. Whiting and prominent Baptist ministers Elon Galusha, F. G. Brown, and J. B. Cook. Cook soon went to Cincinnati to direct efforts in southern Ohio. In June, Himes and George Storrs (1796–1879), a Christian Connection minister, took the Great Tent first to Rochester, New York, and later in the summer west to Buffalo and south to Cincinnati, Ohio. Storrs stayed in

Cincinnati so Cook could move northeast to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Some speakers traveled as far west as Indiana and Illinois, and Fitch held a campaign in Detroit, Michigan. Although Millerism was primarily a northern movement, some speakers went as far south as the Carolinas, and Litch held successful meetings in Baltimore, Maryland.

Although Miller had always spoken of Christ's coming in "about" the year 1843, his followers began pressing for greater specificity. At the same time, newspapers were erroneously attributing to Miller various dates for the Second Advent. To clarify his position, Miller wrote a "New Year's Address to Second Advent Believers," which was published in the *Signs of the Times* in January 1843. Using the Jewish lunar calendar rather than Gregorian calendar, he declared that Christ would come between March 21, 1843, and March 21, 1844, observing that no prophetic period extended beyond 1843. Not everyone in the movement agreed with Miller, for even though Jones, Ward, and Whiting believed that Jesus would return soon, they refused to identify a specific year. Some adventists, however, did not hesitate to name specific dates, among them February 10 (forty-five years after the French capture of Rome), February 15 (the anniversary of the establishment of the Roman Republic), and April 14 (Passover, in 1843).

As the adventist movement intensified, it faced increasing criticism. Newspapers published stories asserting that Himes and Miller were growing rich, and that they were hypocrites who did not live as if they soon expected the end of the world. Rumors passed from one publication to another of Millerites going insane or donning white ascension robes in preparation for meeting their Lord—accusations consistently rebutted by the adventist papers.

More significant, as the adventists aggressively pushed their message the denominations began to close their doors to them. Whereas previously Millerite preachers had been valued because they stimulated revival, the increased specificity by both leaders and followers on the time of Christ's coming and their expectation that everyone would agree with them frequently made adventist believers a disruptive force within the churches to which they belonged. By August 1842 Himes was reporting that churches were not allowing adventists to hold meetings within their buildings, a problem that increased over the next two years. Furthermore, denominations began revoking the licenses of any of their preachers who had accepted adventism or pressured them to leave their employment. In 1843, for example, Congregational ministers in Vermont passed a resolution that

prohibited anyone within their ranks from teaching about the coming Second Advent. That same year Marsh lost his position as editor of *The Christian Palladium*, a Christian Connection journal, and in 1844 Galusha tendered his resignation as a Baptist minister because he was unwilling to curtail his preaching of Christ's soon return. Finally, individual Millerite believers were increasingly prevented from speaking of their beliefs within their local churches, a situation that frequently led to cessation of their attendance and sometimes to their expulsion. One example was the Harmon family in Portland, Maine, in 1843.

Partly as a result of their own internal dynamic and partly in response to these increasing external pressures, the adventists moved in a sect-like trajectory. Although in their early conferences they had declared that they sought to work within the churches and had no desire to initiate conflict, their very actions in organizing conferences, publishing papers, and aggressively pressing their doctrine established a degree of independence from the start. In 1842 they had organized a Second Advent Association in New York, which collected funds and organized Sunday afternoon meetings; similar associations were formed elsewhere. Another sign of separation was the building of Millerite tabernacles, the first of which was erected in Boston in 1843. It offered a place for large numbers of adventists to meet on a regular basis.

By mid-1843 the tension between the adventists and organized Christianity apparently reached a breaking point. In July Fitch preached a sermon entitled "Come Out of Here, My People," based on Revelation 14:8 and 18:1–5. Whereas at this time Protestants generally and most Millerites applied the term *Babylon* to the Roman Catholic Church, Fitch now argued that Babylon included anyone who opposed adventist teaching. Therefore, he urged those who looked forward to Christ's return to separate themselves from the existing churches.

Fitch's sermon appeared in his own publication, *Second Advent of Christ*, in July, and in September it was reprinted in the *Midnight Cry*, although accompanied by a statement from Himes indicating his disagreement. It also appeared as a pamphlet that achieved wide distribution. Even though Miller, Himes, and Litch did not immediately accept Fitch's position, emerging figures such as Storrs and Marsh picked up the theme, and by early 1844 it pervaded the movement. As thousands of Millerites left their churches, they were taking on the very sect-like characteristics they had earlier disavowed.

The reason Millerism appealed to so many people during this period has never been fully understood. There does not

seem to have been many social and economic differences between those who were attracted to the movement and those who rejected it. The fact that Millerism arose during and contributed to a major religious revival was probably the key element in its popularity. Also, it shared the biblicism common to American culture at the time, combining it with a commonsense rationalism that made its references to historical events and chronological calculations seem reasonable. Furthermore, during a time when a variety of reform movements had emerged, it offered the ultimate reform: the immediate cleansing of the earth from sin and the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

Disappointment and the Seventh-Month Movement

Looking toward the end of all things in just a few months, Himes, Miller, and Litch organized major campaigns in northeastern cities for early 1844. Between January and March, Miller preached in Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, among other places, before returning home on March 14 to await his Lord. After March 21 passed uneventfully, however, he admitted his error and expressed his continuing conviction in Christ's soon return, a belief reiterated by Himes and others. Although the leaders were clearly disoriented for several weeks, in April the *Advent Herald* connected Habakkuk 2:2–3, which spoke of an "appointed time . . . though it tarry," with the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 5, which referred to the bridegroom tarrying. Thus, the article concluded, earth was in a "tarrying time" of unspecified length prior to Christ's return. With this explanation of their experience at hand, Himes and his colleagues gained renewed focus, and by early summer they were once again organizing camp meetings and distributing their papers.

By August the movement's activity had picked up, although without a designated time for the Second Coming it lacked its earlier intensity. But this situation changed drastically in August at the Exeter, New Hampshire, camp meeting. There, Samuel S. Snow (1806–1870), a religious skeptic before converting to Adventism, asserted that the Old Testament festivals were symbols of Christ's ministry and that the Day of Atonement, the "tenth day of the seventh month," was the only festival that had not yet been fulfilled. He argued that this festival, understood in relation to Daniel 8:14, indicated the specific day of Christ's Second Advent, which, as determined by study of the Jewish calendar, fell on October 22, 1844.

Reportedly, Snow's ideas swept through the camp meeting like wildfire. A few days later, Snow began publishing his own paper, the *True Midnight Cry*, and by September Storrs was espousing the new view. Although the "seventh month" interpretation spread quickly among the adventist believers, leaders were slow to accept it. In late September, however, Marsh and Southard gave the support of their papers to the October 22 date, followed by both Himes and Miller on October 6 and Litch on October 12. Meanwhile, Fitch, who had become seriously ill after baptizing believers in frigid Lake Erie, accepted the seventh-month teaching a few days before he died on October 14. By mid-October, it appears, virtually all of the major Millerite leaders were looking forward to Christ's coming on October 22.

As the day of expectation approached, excitement built up among the adventist believers. Miller and the *Signs of the Times* counseled their followers to continue to fulfill their family and economic responsibilities, whereas others took more radical positions that more fully carried out the implications of their millennial expectations. Marsh advised believers to give away all property not used for present needs, while Storrs urged that they rid themselves of every material possession and leave their crops standing in the fields. Anecdotal evidence suggests a wide variety of responses to this conflicting advice, ranging from continuation of one's business to the closing of shops, the giving away of property, and decisions not to harvest. Adventists continued to hold meetings, both to offer the world a final warning and to provide spiritual and social support to one another as the division between themselves and unbelievers became starkly apparent. Mob violence against the adventists, which forced the closure of meetings in cities such as New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, must have reinforced the Millerite sense of alienation. As October 22 dawned, the adventist believers, who Miller later estimated to number about fifty thousand, gathered in homes and meeting houses to await Christ's coming. Himes, rather than staying in Boston where his tabernacle was filled with believers, traveled to Low Hampton to be with Miller.

But October 22 passed uneventfully, in time becoming known to adventists as the "Great Disappointment." In contrast to the spring disappointment, believers reported deep feelings of despair over their loss of hope and anxiety about their future as they faced the ridicule of an unbelieving public. Almost immediately Himes set to work to address the situation, putting forth a plan to aid destitute adventists who no longer had property and restarting the publication of the

Midnight Cry and *Advent Herald*. Some of the adventist preachers resumed their travels, meeting with groups of believers to provide consolation and encouragement.

Beyond their immediate physical and emotional needs, the adventists also had to address the problem of what had gone wrong. There was, however, considerable confusion and difference of opinion. On October 24 Southard declared that the leadership must simply admit that it had been wrong, but on October 30 the *Advent Herald* argued that the October 22 date was correct and that Jesus would return within a few days. By mid-November, however, both the *Herald* and the *Midnight Cry*, along with Himes, had admitted their error, but they continued to assert that God had been in their movement. It took Litch until May 1845 to fully reject the seventh-month interpretation, while Miller moved slowly from admitting that his calculations may have been off by a few years to recognizing by September 1845 that October 22 had no prophetic significance at all.

But the seventh-month movement had not originated with these leaders, and, not surprisingly, other adventists were not so willing to give up their belief. They proposed a variety of solutions to their dilemma. In January 1845 Joseph Turner and Apollos Hale put forth the “shut door” theory, stating that the opportunity for unbelievers to accept Jesus had ended on October 22 when Christ had returned spiritually as bridegroom. Hiram Edson and O. R. L. Crosier argued that Jesus had entered the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary on that date to begin the work of judgment that must precede his Second Advent. Others set new dates, a practice that continued to affect adventism for the next two decades. In addition to reinterpreting their beliefs about the Second Coming, in the months after the Disappointment some adventists began pursuing a variety of other doctrinal innovations, including the seventh-day Sabbath and conditional immortality (also known as “soul sleep”) that previously had played a minor role in the movement. Many believers simply left adventism to rejoin their previous churches, while others lost their Christian faith. A few, such as Enoch Jacobs, found a temporary spiritual home with the Shakers.

With their movement fragmenting, the adventist leaders called for a meeting in Albany on April 29, 1845. The Mutual Conference of Adventists, which drew representation from what might be called mainstream adventism, reaffirmed its belief in the coming of Jesus without making any reference to time, developed a plan for further evangelism, and condemned what it regarded as extreme views—among

them the seventh-day Sabbath, foot washing, and the “Holy Kiss.” From this point on, the adventist movement was divided between a mainstream that differed from its Protestant environment only in its emphasis on the premillennial Second Advent and a radical fringe that continued to experiment with new doctrines and practices.

Adventist Churches

The failure of the Millerite predictions in 1844 appeared to bring premillennialist interpretation of the Bible into dispute. Nonetheless, the movement spawned several denominations, most of which developed around influential publications. Shaped by Himes’s *Advent Herald*, the mainstream adventism of the Albany conference evolved into a movement that established a formal church organization in 1858, the American Evangelical Advent Conference. By the 1920s, however, the Evangelical Adventists, as they were known, had lost their distinctiveness and were absorbed into fundamentalist Christianity.

From the more radical wing of adventism arose the Advent Christian Church, formed largely around Miles Grant’s *World’s Crisis*, which combined Miller’s historicist prophetic interpretation with a belief in conditional immortality. Like other Millerite groups, this denomination was slow to organize, establishing publishing and missionary societies in the 1860s and a general conference in 1893.

Drawing on Marsh’s *Advent Harbinger and Bible Advocate*, the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith adopted the belief that some who had not accepted Christ would be spared destruction at his coming and have a second chance at salvation during an “age to come.” Although this movement formed some regional conferences in the 1850s, it did not adopt a name until 1888 or fully establish a general conference until 1921.

One of the smallest of the radical adventist groups ultimately became the largest denomination to arise out of the movement. It adopted the seventh-day Sabbath, the interpretation that Jesus had entered the heavenly sanctuary on October 22, 1844, conditional immortality, and the divine origins of the visions of Ellen G. (née Harmon) White, a young adventist in Maine. The Sabbatarian adventists began publishing the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* in 1850 and formed the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in 1863. This new denomination combined historicist premillennialism with publishing, health, and educational institutions that established its presence in American society and provided the basis for a worldwide missionary

outreach. By the early twenty-first century, it had about a million members in the United States and from twelve to fifteen million abroad.

The Rise of Dispensationalism

Apart from these adventist groups, premillennialism went into eclipse for the next quarter-century. Meanwhile, the “futurist” version that had developed earlier in Great Britain gained some credence because it rejected historicism and held that the last days prophecies would be fulfilled during a short period prior to Christ’s Second Coming. John Nelson Darby’s version of futurism was called “dispensationalism,” because it divided history into eras or “dispensations”; during each dispensation God dealt with sin in a different way. Darby asserted that God had one plan for Israel and another for the Christian church. He therefore anticipated two events. First, God would secretly take his saints to heaven (the “rapture”), after which a great tribulation would occur on earth and the prophecies for Israel would be fulfilled. Then, the Second Coming would take place as Jesus and the saints returned to earth to destroy the armies gathering for the battle of Armageddon, to throw Satan into the bottomless pit, and to establish Christ’s rule for a thousand years. At the close of this millennium, Satan would rebel once more and be defeated, the dead would be resurrected, and the Last Judgment would take place, after which God would create a new heaven and a new earth.

Darby visited North America seven times between 1859 and 1874, spreading this dispensationalist theology and influencing Dwight L. Moody, among others. The Niagara Bible Conferences (1875–1897) soon adopted premillennialism, whereas the dispensationalist version dominated the American Bible and Prophetic Conferences (1878–1918). Dispensationalism gradually won a large following. Charles I. Scofield’s *Reference Bible* (1909), influential pastors such as James H. Brookes and A. J. Gordon, and training schools such as the Moody Bible Institute convinced many within the conservative Christian community that it was the correct interpretation of the scripture. Indeed, world events such as the emergence of Zionism and World War I seemed to confirm the dispensationalist position. By the 1920s it had become the dominant form of premillennialism and was strongly associated with fundamentalism. Lewis Sperry Chaffer, John F. Walvoord, and Charles C. Ryrie became major dispensationalist theologians, but the belief system gained popular attention with Hal Lindsey’s *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1970) and Jerry Jenkins and Tim LaHaye’s sixteen *Left*

Behind novels (1995–2007), which sold millions of copies. Dispensationalist premillennialism remained a major force within American Protestantism.

See also *Adventist and Millennialist Denominational Families; Apocalypticism; Bible entries; Evangelicals entries; Fundamentalism; Great Awakening(s); Independent Bible and Community Churches; Jehovah’s Witnesses; Latter-day Saints; Seventh-day Adventists; Shakers.*

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Adventist and Millennialist Denominational Families

The central doctrinal affirmation of adventist and millennial groups is the Second Advent of Christ. Although they may differ from each other, these groups share that doctrine.

The adventist groups examined here took root in the advent movement of the 1840s that received its inspiration from William Miller (1782–1849), a Baptist layperson. The 2007 *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* lists four “Adventist Bodies”: the Advent Christian Church, the Church of God General Conference (Oregon, Illinois, and Morrow, Georgia), the Primitive Advent Christian Church, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. That list should have included the Church of God (Seventh Day). Two other denominations once were in this family but no longer exist: the American Evangelical Adventist Conference and the Life and Advent Union.

Millerite Adventism

In 1818 William Miller came to the conclusion from a study of Daniel’s time prophecies that Christ would return “about the year 1843.” Because Christ’s teaching implied that no person will know the exact time, Miller had no desire to set a specific date.

Indeed, fearing he might be wrong, he continued to study the prophecies for the next fifteen years without saying much in public. But by the late 1830s he had attracted some very skilled pastors into what was becoming a movement. Especially important was Joshua V. Himes (1805–1895), an influential Christian Connection leader and a confidant of abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison. Himes, who was one of the public relations experts of his day, put Millerism on the American religious map. The movement grew rapidly throughout the northern states in the early 1840s. It recruited from among the social reformers of the day several active clergy who perceived the Second Advent

as the ultimate reform that would transform the very climate that bred social injustice.

Miller’s theology focused on two points: salvation in Christ and the premillennial Second Advent. The leaders in the movement that formed around his leadership sought to avoid other theological issues that would prove to be divisive to its growth across denominational lines. All their energy was put into the urgency of preparing for the return of Christ. It was never their intention to form a denomination. Miller himself was convinced that all Christians would be more than eager to rally around the return of their Lord.

Millennial interest permeated the American Christianity of the time, and so it was an invasive challenge to preach premillennialism (the belief that Christ would return at the beginning of the millennium) in a context in which the vast majority of the population was postmillennialist (that is, they believed that Christ would return at the end of the millennium, during which social conditions would continue to improve until the kingdom of God was established on earth). By mid-1843 the confrontation of millennial ideologies had set the stage for the expulsion of those Millerite preachers and members from several denominations who would not keep quiet about the topic closest to their hearts. In that context, Charles Fitch (1805–1844), a Congregational pastor who had been closely aligned with Charles G. Finney (1792–1875), an 1821 convert who became the most famous of the Second Great Awakening preachers, sounded the call to “come out of Babylon.” Thus the stage was set for the rise of a distinctive adventist body.

The Second Advent, of course, did not take place in 1843. The Millerite adventists, following the lead of Samuel S. Snow (1806–1870), a Methodist pastor, eventually came to believe through a series of calculations based on the book of Daniel that Christ would return on October 22, 1844. His nonappearance became known as the “Great Disappointment” and led to the dissolution of adventism as a unified movement.

Postdisappointment Transitions

It is impossible to give a completely accurate picture of the disappointed Millerites, but it is probable that the majority abandoned their advent faith and either went back to their previous churches or drifted into secular unbelief.

The remaining believers divided themselves into two main orientations toward the fulfillment of the prophecy in October 1844. One group, following Himes, claimed that nothing had happened and that adventists needed to

continue to warn the world of the pending advent. The other group held that the prophecy had definitely been fulfilled in October, but they split over exactly what had happened. The larger segment held that Christ had indeed returned, but spiritually in their hearts rather than physically in the clouds of heaven. The smaller segment held that the fulfillment signaled the movement of Christ into his final work in the heavenly sanctuary depicted in the book of Hebrews.

By early 1845 those adventists who believed that Christ had come spiritually into their hearts and that, as a result, they were now in the millennial period, proved to be the most active. Unfortunately, the “Spiritualizers,” as they were called, stimulated fanatical excesses. Their spiritualizing approach destroyed the calm hermeneutical controls of the earlier Millerite movement, and so things rapidly spun out of control in a segment of adventism that would self-destruct by the end of the 1840s.

Meanwhile, Himes and Miller, fearing the destruction of a religious understanding in which they firmly believed, called for an adventist convention in Albany, New York, in April 1845 to counteract the excesses of the Spiritualizers and to establish post-1844 adventism on a firm basis.

The Albany meeting stabilized the vast majority of believers in the advent by establishing a congregational system of church governance that would be held together by periodicals and periodic meetings of the movement’s pastors and leading laity, by certifying “trustworthy” pastors, and by setting forth a rudimentary doctrinal platform largely emphasizing items related to the advent and salvation. The convention specifically rejected the “anti-Scriptural” post-millennial doctrine that the world would be converted to Christ and the teaching that held that the Jews would be restored as a nation. They also resolved to have no fellowship with adventism’s fanatical wing and those who had adopted new tests of fellowship beyond the acceptance of Christ and a belief that he would soon reappear.

Unfortunately, the very actions of the Albany conference split the moderates, because many of them, with their fresh memories of their recent bad experiences with the denominations that had expelled them, had come to believe that to authorize any organization was to return to an oppressive Babylon. Some were against organization even at the congregational level. That anti-organizational mentality influenced all the developing adventist groups to some extent, and made it almost impossible for them to organize as religious bodies until the late 1850s and early 1860s.

But formal church organization would eventually come in some fashion to the remaining advent believers. The nineteenth century would see four denominations grow out of the Albany orientation, and two out of those believers who at first came to focus on the heavenly ministry of Christ since 1844 eventually observed the seventh-day Sabbath. The Spiritualizer segment produced no religious movements that existed beyond 1850.

American Evangelical Adventist Conference

The Albany orientation was the major visible adventist presence during the late 1840s and most of the 1850s. But definite moves toward concrete denominational formation were hindered by the ongoing antipathy toward organization by the vast majority of adventists. Thus the Albany adventists continued to be held together by a shared interest in the Second Advent promoted by their major periodical, the *Advent Herald*.

But theological harmony was not achieved easily. The major dividing force in the 1850s was the teaching of conditionalism—the belief that people are not born immortal, but receive immortality as a gift at the Second Advent through their faith in Christ—and annihilationism—the belief that because the wicked are not innately immortal, they cannot burn perpetually but will be eternally destroyed.

Those teachings had entered Millerite adventism in the early 1840s through George Storrs, who had been a Methodist minister. Himes and Miller had been able to stem the force of those teachings before 1844, but afterward they would gain increasing influence.

By 1858 those who accepted and those who rejected conditionalism and annihilationism among the Albany party had come to an impasse. Thus in May 1858 the rejecters, who controlled the *Advent Herald*, formed the American Evangelical Adventist Conference to disseminate “original” adventism as defined in 1845 at Albany. In November 1858 the Evangelical Adventists approved a constitution and elected a slate of officers. Therefore the most powerful of the Albany groups had formed the first adventist denomination.

But it would not be a lasting one. With only the premillennial advent to separate it from the general Christian populace, Evangelical Adventism lost its reason for a separate existence when a large share of conservative Protestants also adopted forms of premillennialism in the decades after the Civil War. By 1890 its membership had shrunk to 1,147, and it disappeared in the early twentieth century.

Advent Christian Association

Meanwhile, back in 1858 the conditionalist segment of Albany adventism was horrified by the move of the Evangelical Adventists to organize. This group, which had been shut out of the pages of the *Advent Herald*, solidified around the *World's Crisis*, a periodical that set forth its views of both the advent and conditionalism.

Gradually and reluctantly the *Crisis* adventists drifted toward formalizing a church organization. In July 1860 they formed the Christian Association to support the formation of a publication society, to organize local congregations, and to aid in certifying and supporting an efficient gospel ministry. In October the Christian Association was renamed the Advent Christian Association. Thus was born a second adventist denomination, although because of the strong antidenominational feelings of many of its members it was called an association rather than a church.

Even though the Advent Christians had organized, their administrative structure was extremely weak. Clyde E. Hewitt, the most recent historian of the movement, claims that it never overcame that weakness, which has contributed to the denomination's lack of growth.

Throughout the mid- to late nineteenth century the Advent Christians continued to gain influence over the ever-shrinking Evangelical Adventists. According to the 1890 census, there were 25,816 Advent Christians at the time. Their rallying point had become their firm belief in conditionalism and annihilationism, which had overtaken even their ongoing belief in the Second Advent as the doctrinal center of the movement.

The Advent Christians sponsored a very modest mission outreach program, but by 2004 the denomination had a mere 24,182 members in the United States, worshipping in 304 congregations. Hewitt attributes their lack of growth to a lack of evangelism, insufficient organization, and "smallness in vision."

Over the years the Advent Christians sponsored some educational work, of which Aurora College in Illinois was the center. But they gave up control of that institution in the late twentieth century, even though Aurora's library still contains one of the finest collections of Millerite documents in existence.

Today, the denomination's general conference is located in Charlotte, North Carolina. Doctrinally, it upholds the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice and believes that salvation is free to all on the condition of repentance, faith,

and faithfulness to God. It holds that the only ordinances of the church are the Lord's Supper and baptism, which is always by immersion. The Advent Christians maintain doctrinal distinction in the areas of conditional immortality, the sleep of the dead until the return of Christ, and establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth made new.

Life and Advent Union

The Life and Advent Union grew out of an internal squabble among the Advent Christians soon after their founding. A significant minority of Advent Christians had begun to teach that God would not raise the wicked dead from their unconscious sleep only to resentence them to eternal death. In 1863 the majority, holding that the Bible taught the resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked, would not allow the group espousing the nonresurrection of the wicked to publish their views in the *World's Crisis*. In response, the smaller group established the Life and Advent Union on August 3, 1863, as well as the *Herald of Life and the Coming Kingdom* to publish their views.

The "Life" adventists aggressively evangelized in the 1870s and 1880s and had a membership of 1,018 in 1890, but by 1926 that figure had fallen to 535. In 1957 only three congregations remained, and in 1964 the denomination merged back into the Advent Christian group.

Primitive Advent Christian Church

The Primitive Advent Christian Church grew out of a twentieth-century rupture with its parent body over foot washing and the rebaptism of backsliders who return to fellowship. The original Advent Christians reject both teachings.

Located entirely in West Virginia, as of 2005 the Primitive Advent Christians reported 76 churches with 3,965 communicants. Their doctrinal platform reflects that of the parent church in terms of salvational issues and the role of the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice. But they have expanded the number of ordinances to three, adding the saints' washing of one another's feet to baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. They also differ from the Advent Christians in that they hold firmly to noncombatant principles, whereas the Advent Christians, while holding that war is contrary to the teachings of Christ, leave the arms-bearing issue up to the discretion of the individual conscience.

Church of God General Conference

The small family of denominations that grew out of the Evangelical and Advent Christian movements was directly

related to the Albany meetings. The Church of God General Conference, although in general theological harmony with the Albany adherents, disagreed with them over the steps they had taken to organize. Thus, although the Church of God cohort originated in the same adventist population pool, it was in essence a reaction, under the leadership of Joseph Marsh and his *Voice of Truth*, to Albany rather than an outgrowth of it.

Early on, this sector of adventism taught that the Jews would return to Israel and that individuals would have a second chance to be saved during the millennium or the “Age to Come.” Such positions were closer to those of the British premillennial literatists than they were to Millerite adventism, which had rejected the positions in 1840 at its first “general conference” meeting.

During the 1850s there was a great deal of interaction between the Age to Come believers and those evolving into the Advent Christians. But after the latter organized, the two groups drifted apart.

From its position at the extreme edge of the antiorganizational wing of adventism, the Age to Comers found it next to impossible to organize as a denomination. By the 1880s several streams had fed into the movement, and they organized in 1888 as the Church of God in Jesus Christ. But because of strong convictions about congregational rights, the 1888 organization soon ceased to function. In 1921 the present general conference was organized as the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith, with its headquarters in Oregon, Illinois. In 1991 it moved its headquarters and training school to Morrow, Georgia, where the school became the Atlanta Bible College. In 1890 the Church of God had a membership of 2,872, and as of 2004 it reported eighty-nine congregations and 3,860 members.

Central to its doctrinal affirmations is the teaching that the kingdom of God will begin in Jerusalem at the return of Christ and be extended to all nations. Thus the promises of God to Abraham will be literally fulfilled. The church also affirms the creatorship of God, with Jesus not existing prior to his birth in Bethlehem. Baptism of believers is by immersion.

Seventh-day Adventist Church

Unlike the five religious movements just described, Seventh-day Adventism did not originate among those adventists who held that no prophecy had been fulfilled in October 1844. To the contrary, Seventh-day Adventists believed that prophecy had been fulfilled; that fulfillment, however, was

not the Second Advent but the inauguration of Christ’s final work in heaven before returning to earth.

The primary founders of the movement were Joseph Bates (1792–1872), James White (1821–1881), and Ellen G. White (1827–1915). By 1848 the Sabbatarian adventists were advocating not only the nearness of the Second Advent, but also the seventh-day Sabbath, the role of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and conditionalism and annihilationism. Beyond that, they held that Ellen White had a genuine prophetic gift.

The Sabbatarians aggressively evangelized from 1848 onward, using literature and traveling evangelists to great advantage. They eventually came to believe on the basis of Revelation 14:6–12 that they had a message the whole world needed to hear before the return of Christ pictured in Revelation 14:14–20. By 1890 they had become the largest adventist church, with membership in North America of 28,991. The twentieth century saw rapid and continual growth, with the denomination having at the beginning of 2007 over one million members in North America and over fifteen million worldwide.

Part of its success can be attributed to a worldwide organization designed to facilitate mission. That organization, however, got off to a rather slow start. After all, the members of this denomination were members of the group that by adventist tradition opposed any organization. But by 1861 they had formed their first state conference, and 1863 witnessed the formation of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists to coordinate the efforts of the state conferences. Unlike the congregational structures in the other adventist denominations, not only did the Seventh-day Adventists develop a layered structure, but each level in the Seventh-day Adventist structure had very definite administrative authority.

Church of God (Seventh Day)

Owing to their Millerite heritage, not all of the Sabbatarian adventists appreciated the movement’s drift toward organized status under the guidance of James White. Not only did the Sabbatarian dissidents balk at White’s growing authority, but they also rejected and resented the visions and writings of his wife, Ellen.

Beginning in the 1860s, Sabbatarian groups in Michigan and Iowa united in their opposition to Seventh-day Adventism. In 1863 they united to publish the *Hope of Israel*, which eventually became the *Bible Advocate*, the movement’s current publication. The General Conference

of the Church of God was formed in 1864, and “(Seventh Day)” was added to its name in 1923. Its denominational headquarters was in Stanberry, Missouri, from 1888 to 1950, when it moved to Denver.

The church’s doctrinal distinctives include an understanding of the perpetuity of the Ten Commandments (including the seventh-day Sabbath), conditionalism and annihilationism, and an earthly millennium following the Second Advent, at the end of which the wicked will be resurrected. Salvation is a gift, but one that results in a changed life. The two ordinances of the denomination are baptism by immersion and an annual communion service accompanied by foot washing.

The Church of God (Seventh Day) has never been a large denomination. It had 647 members in 1890 and reported 9,000 members in the United States in 2001. Schism has plagued its history. Thus in 1933 a section of its membership split off to form the Church of God (Seventh Day), headquartered in Salem, West Virginia. A similar body is the General Council of the Churches of God, Seventh Day, located in Meridian, Idaho. Because of possible confusion over the name, the original Sabbatarian Church of God is sometimes identified as the Church of God (Seventh Day), Denver, Colorado.

Christadelphians

The Christadelphians arose in 1848 under the leadership of John Thomas (1805–1871). Although they were a restorationist body that looked forward to the return of Christ in power to set up a visible worldwide theocracy, they appear to have had no direct connection with the Millerite denominations discussed earlier. They did, however, share several doctrinal positions espoused by some of the Millerite denominations, including conditional immortality, annihilationism, and immersion as the only form of baptism.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Apocalypticism; Evangelicals* entries; *Fundamentalism; Independent Bible and Community Churches; Jehovah’s Witnesses; Seventh-day Adventists.*

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African American Baptists

See *Baptists: African American*.

African American Methodists

See *Methodists: African American*.

African American Music

See *Music: African American; Music: African American Gospel; Music: African American Spirituals*.

African American Pentecostals

See *Pentecostals: African American*.

African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War

It is tempting to take advantage of simple chronology and concrete origin and begin a study of African American religion during the colonial era at the moment and place that people of African descent initially set foot in the “New

World.” Thus the investigation might start in 1619, when Africans arrived as indentured servants in Jamestown on the banks of the James River sixty miles from the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Founded a decade earlier by Virginia Company explorers operating under the charter of the British Crown, Jamestown marked the establishment of the first permanent English colony, Virginia. Another, more sophisticated option for selecting a starting point emerges if the term *New World* is defined more broadly to include the earliest years of European imperial contact with the Western Hemisphere. In this framework, one might assume the year of beginning to be 1502, when the first ship of African slaves landed on the Spanish-controlled island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean.

Origins

But both approaches pose a similar analytical risk, one that has limited the explanatory scope of the literature on African American religion for generations: the neglect of the world left behind by the native-born Africans forcibly transported across the Atlantic. Too often the dating and examination of the sacred history of black Americans commences with the physical introduction of their ancestors to the New World—however interpreted—and its trajectory is drawn without a full consideration of the influence of traditional African beliefs. Older investigations routinely cast aside the matter of the African character of African American religion or focused on the question of to what extent, if any, “Africanisms” survived the Middle Passage. Frequently missing was a thoughtful analysis of the shifting and malleable interaction of the past and the present, of the symbiosis between religious cultures formed in Africa and ones developing in newer environments.

More recently, scholars have rightly stressed that the roots of African American religion stretch back to the native cultures of Africa itself. Well before Portuguese soldiers of the military Order of Christ first descended on West African villages in the fifteenth century, Africans were a religious people. The estimated ten to twelve million Africans shipped as human cargo to the Western Hemisphere over the next 350 years arrived at their destinations not lacking a rich sense of the sacred. Over the course of centuries in Africa, they had created worlds of gods and spirits that lent meaning to their lives, even if their spiritual precepts and practices were dismissed as primitive and offensive by Christian missionaries and slavers. Although some Africans were Muslim or Christian, the great majority practiced traditional beliefs.

The Memoir of Olaudah Equiano

Olaudah Equiano made the case for the rich religious background of native-born Africans in his memoir, published first in England in 1789 and in America two years later. Born in 1745 to a large, prosperous, Ibo-speaking family in what is now eastern Nigeria, Equiano was stolen from his home at age eleven, sold to white slave traders, and eventually purchased by the captain of an English merchant ship in Virginia. He worked as a slave in the Caribbean, England, and Philadelphia until he purchased his own freedom in 1766.

Although he converted to Protestant Christianity as an adult, Equiano keenly recalled the complex spiritual culture of his early African boyhood. Many “believe in the transmigration of souls to a certain degree. Those spirits, which are not transmigrated, such as their dear friends or relations, they believe they always attend them, and guard them from the bad spirits of their foes.” He noted rituals designed to appease these spirits and ceremonies that marked the New Year or burial of leading citizens, in which “most of their implements and things of value were interred along with them.” He wrote, too, of his community’s “priests and magicians” who served as doctors and “were very successful in healing wounds and expelling poisons.”

Equiano’s account identifies some of the core dimensions of conventional African religion that Africans transported to the New World and relied on to explain and confront their new lives. In particular, he evoked the common African conviction that honoring the spirits and ancestors through prayer and sacrifice promised a good life, whereas ignoring or angering them brought evil and ill fortune into the world. Spirits, though invisible, could take human or animal form, come alive through a ceremonial mask or specially concocted medicine, and communicate with worshippers through dancing, drumming, chanting, and spiritual trances. Equiano also indicated how Africans celebrated turning points in life and practiced rituals that helped them manage unpleasant or traumatic turns in life such accidents, disease, sickness, and death.

Under Slavery: Hybrid Faiths and the Great Awakening

Africans and their descendants blended their traditional sacred lives with the pressures and constraints of slavery. In Catholic communities throughout North America, for example, they viewed the saints as similar to African spirits in terms of their special powers and spheres of interest. They

took advantage of the overlaps between Catholicism and the religions of Africa to give birth to hybrid faiths. In Brazil, Africans and their descendants created Candomblé; in Cuba, Santería; and in Haiti, vodou or voodoo. Central to them was African-styled worship services featuring energetic dances, communal song, powerful traditional rhythms banged out on drums, and spiritual visions.

In British North America slaves only slowly converted to Protestant Christianity. Much of this was of the white missionaries' own doing. Before the early eighteenth century British clerics often refused to school slaves in the history of their faith or even to baptize them for fear that such a formal statement of Christian identification might lead to their emancipation under British law or upset hierarchies of social order. Instead, they preached that slaves should obey their masters. To be sure, white Protestants organized missionary societies, such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which underwrote the efforts of English clergy to labor in the colonies. But various factors greatly limited the society's success, most especially the fear among whites that Christian slaves were fundamentally disobedient slaves. As a result, missionaries struggled to gain permission from masters to visit their bond servants. Even when they did, slaves infrequently took to their preaching. Sometimes the issue was language: native-born African slaves struggled to understand missionaries. But even English-speaking slaves often made poor candidates for conversion because many simply rejected Christianity as the faith of their oppressors.

The interest of slaves in Christianity changed dramatically beginning in the 1730s, when a series of religious revivals rolled across the colonies in what was dubbed the Great Awakening. In lengthy public meetings aimed at saving as many souls as possible, preachers whipped up popular enthusiasm through fiery sermons. They made a special point of inviting blacks and including them as speakers, prayer leaders, and singers. Some slaves gained permission to attend from sympathetic masters, while others stole away to the gatherings. They then converted to Christianity in unprecedented numbers largely because of the revivalists' egalitarian ethos and particularly their concentration on the experience of individual conversion as the central requirement for Christian membership.

Revivalist ministers such as William Tennent and George Whitefield called men and women, rich and poor, free and slave, to experience God's saving grace. Gone was any prerequisite literacy, mastery of scripture, or social rank. They

preached excitedly, voices soaring and bodies jumping. Biracial audiences responded with equal fervor; caught up in the excitement of the moment, many entered spiritual trances while others wept openly, shouted, waved their arms in the air, danced, fell to the ground, or simply collapsed. Clergy and laypeople alike understood that these behaviors were vital components of worship and individual spiritual growth. People simply communicated the intensity of their emotions, the powerful experiences of conversion, and the presence of the Holy Spirit through physical means. In these meetings, slaves finally experienced a type of Protestant Christian worship that resembled their own African traditions, which, in turn, led them to better understand Christianity and convert.

The pattern of slaves converting to Christianity continued throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The success of the American Revolution further threw into doubt the moral claims of slavery and accentuated the democratic impulse unleashed by the revivals. Antislavery petitions grew among some denominational groups. In the late 1700s, Baptist and Methodist ministers pushed the boundaries separating blacks from fully fledged leadership in their churches by licensing African Americans, free and slave, to preach to fellow blacks. Some become part of white churches, while others formed the first generation of all-black houses of worship and took critical steps toward making Christianity fit with the experiences and stresses of black life in America.

Institutions

Although most African Americans living during times of slavery practiced their religion away from any black-led church, this was not always the case.

Southern Independent Black Churches

In the South and particularly in the North, blacks founded and controlled their own houses of worship. One of the first efforts to organize a black church in the South was spearheaded in the late eighteenth century by David George in Silver Bluff, South Carolina. George, born in the mid-eighteenth century to African parents in Essex County, Virginia, spent much of his young life as a runaway seeking shelter among the Creek and Natchez Indians. He eventually joined a plantation owned by an Indian agent for South Carolina, George Galphin, who lived in Silver Bluff, and there David George apparently helped build the Negro Baptist Church.

During the Revolutionary War, Pastor George and fifty members of his congregation relocated to Savannah, Georgia. His church grew and became part of a fledgling African American Baptist community led by a slave, Andrew Bryan. For years Bryan had defied local authorities and gathered blacks to worship, sometimes paying a price measured in lashes. Eventually officials determined that Bryan posed no direct threat to the social order and permitted him to host open meetings, but never at night. By 1790 Bryan was presiding over a sizable Baptist congregation that boasted a membership of 225 communicants and hundreds more not yet fully accepted. It became the African Baptist Church of Savannah and quickly spawned offshoots: in 1803 the Second African Baptist Church was created, and several years later the Third African Baptist Church took shape. Bryan tapped a former slave and a close friend, Henry Francis, from Silver Bluff, to lead the Third Baptist church. Literate and possessing eighteen years of experience as a minister, the fifty-two-year-old Francis was well suited to the task.

The success of the African Baptist Church of Savannah, however, was unusual in the South before the Civil War. Slaves and freed people seeking to worship independently confronted whites eager to control their movements and behavior, especially during times when fears of slave revolts ran high. Still, a small number of southern blacks formed houses of worship and thus created an important counterpoint to the more prevalent pattern of southern blacks attending white-run churches, sitting in segregated quarters, and hearing about their supposed social and intellectual inferiority.

Northern Independent Black Churches

The story of independent black churches was very different in the North, where multiple denominations emerged, drawing thousands of African American congregants by the eve of the Civil War. There, the leveling impulse unleashed by the Revolutionary War, the slow eradication of slavery, and the legal separation of church combined to generate greater freedom of assembly. Less constrained by laws and customs designed to tightly manage their whereabouts and activities, northern blacks enjoyed wider public opportunities to articulate the meaning of their spiritual lives. Beginning in the late 1800s those who were part of the traditional white-run denominations increasingly sought improved status as members, access to sacramental privileges, and prospects for liturgical leadership. When their requests were ignored, many formed their own churches.

Such was famously the case in the founding in 1794 of Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia by Richard Allen. Born the slave of a Quaker in the City of Brotherly Love in 1760, Allen eventually became the property of a Methodist living outside of Dover, Delaware. At seventeen he converted to Methodism. Soon thereafter he bought his freedom, became a Methodist exhorter, and returned to Philadelphia in 1786. Joining the white-led St. George's Methodist Church, Allen and other blacks worshipped for years through the scrim of racial segregation. Although permitted to form their own private prayer groups, they were forced to sit in black-only pews and lacked their own church. But during one Sunday service at St. George's, the matter of black religion and the color line came to a head. As Allen recounted in his autobiography, he and fellow black members entered the church, placed themselves in a white-only section, and joined in the prayer being led by the presiding Elder. "We had not been long upon our knees before I heard considerable scuffling and low talking. I raised my head up and saw one of the trustees, H—M—, having hold of the Rev. Absalom Jones, pulling him up off his knees, and saying 'You must get up—you must not kneel here.' Mr. Jones replied, 'Wait until prayer is over.' Mr. H—M—said 'No, you must get up now, or I will call for aid and force you away.'" In quick succession, Jones refused to move, the trustee called for aid, and he and two other white men ejected Jones. In response, Allen and every other black member immediately "went out of the church, and they were no more plagued with us in the church. . . . But my dear Lord was with us, and we were filled with fresh vigor to get a house erected to worship God in." Allen then spearheaded a successful effort to build Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church.

In the subsequent fight for ecclesiastical and legal control of Bethel, one made curious by the fact that blacks owned the very property on which their church sat, Allen squared off against white Methodist clerics and pursued the matter to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which ultimately ruled in his favor. The predatory efforts by the white Methodists prompted Allen to gather black Methodists from the region in 1816 to discuss the issue of their religious autonomy. The result was the creation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the election of Allen as its first bishop. Other black Methodist groups quickly followed suit. In 1815 Peter Spencer founded the Union Church of Africans in Wilmington, Delaware; six years later, under the guidance of Peter Williams, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion

Church—which added “Zion” to its title as a way to distinguish itself from Allen’s denomination—took root in New York City and elected James Varick as its bishop. Though eager to differentiate his church from other black Methodist churches, Varick echoed Allen when recounting its early history. He described the relationship between white and black Methodists as controversial at times, indicating that “as the whites increased very fast the Africans were pressed back; therefore it was thought essentially necessary for them to have meeting-houses of their own . . . in order to invite their coloured brethren yet out of the ark of safety to come in.”

Black Christians founded other types of African American churches as well. For example, in 1794, the same year he was roused from St. George’s, Absalom Jones became founding pastor of St. Thomas African Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. Nearby was the first African Presbyterian Church, organized in 1807 by John Gloucester. Thomas Paul established independent black Baptist churches: the African Baptist Church in Boston in 1804 and Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City four years later. Taken collectively, the new black churches formed the nexus of northern black religious life through which African American ideas about religion and society developed.

Antislavery Words and Deeds

Uniting the different northern black churches was their shared revulsion of slavery and segregation. Northern white denominations typically offered only muted criticism of the peculiar institution, but African American leaders loudly proclaimed it as the main bane of the nation’s history. On July 4, 1827, as part of an Emancipation Day celebration honoring the twentieth-eighth anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the state of New York, Rev. Nathaniel Paul, pastor of Hamilton Street Baptist Church in Albany, devoted the occasion to detailing the evils of slavery. “Slavery . . . is but a hateful monster, the very demon of avarice and oppression, from its first introduction to the present time; it has been among all nations the scourge of heaven and the curse of earth.”

Most blacks shared the notion that slavery was a blight on American civilization, but a few spokesmen took it one step further and suggested that, at some near point in the future, those who sanctioned bondage would pay dearly for their deeds. One such person was David Walker. Walker, born of a slave father and free mother in Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1785, settled in Boston at the turn of the century and

became active in abolitionism and church life. He published a fiery pamphlet, *Appeal*, in 1829, which heavily criticized slavery and included a dramatic twist that excited southern state legislators to ban black residents from ever reading it. In a view that eerily forecast the outbreak of the Civil War, Walker argued that America’s sordid history as a slave nation not only angered God but also promised its eventual ruin. “Perhaps they will laugh at, or make light of this; but I tell you Americans! That unless you speedily alter your course, *you and your Country are gone!!!!!!* For God Almighty will tear up the very face of the earth!!!!” He then concluded, “I call God—I call angels—I call men, to witness, that your DESTRUCTION *is at hand*, and will be speedily consummated unless you repent.”

In addition to preaching an antislavery message, black church and public leaders took more concrete steps toward accomplishing their goal. Many made their houses of worship into stops on the Underground Railroad. They hosted political conventions to organize support for abolition. They formed self-help societies in the strong conviction that raising the general levels of moral character and living conditions was a vital means of strengthening their communities and combating negative stereotypes. One example of a self-help organization was the Free African Society of Philadelphia, organized by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones shortly after they parted ways with St. George’s Methodist Church. They built this club to encourage blacks to live orderly lives, avoid alcohol, support the sick, and contribute monthly dues for the purpose of providing financial support to widows and orphans.

Central to the self-help efforts was the rise of black fraternal orders. Closely partnered with churches and often sharing members with them, fraternal orders reinforced the disciplinary codes taught by preachers and offered a world of rituals that celebrated black achievement. In 1785 Prince Hall, an African American from Boston, took matters into his own hands soon after his bid to join a white Masonic lodge was rejected because of his skin color. He founded the all-black Prince Hall Masons, which offered members a series of rituals loosely based on white Masonry and a vow to help them financially during times of need. The group taught members about a glorious African past in which black men were political leaders, hosted marching drills and parades, required that blacks follow a strict moral code of conduct that avoided drinking spirits, and adhere to the precepts of the Bible. It spread rapidly across the North and triggered the growth of other black fraternal orders.

Although their many labors minimized the brutality of slavery, northern blacks still confronted vexing questions about the religious meaning of slavery for African Americans. What was God's purpose in allowing blacks to be enslaved for centuries? Clergymen were quick to argue that God did not will such a course of history, but instead permitted it to happen for reasons of his own design. The most common explanation offered was that slavery brought native-born Africans and their progeny into direct contact with the message of the gospel and thus made possible their conversion to Christianity. In turn, black Methodists and Baptists could bring their newly discovered faith back to Africa as missionaries and spread the "Good News." As early as 1792 Rev. David George of Savannah, Georgia, established a Baptist church in Sierra Leone on the west coast of Africa. By the time Alexander Crummell, a black Episcopal priest, arrived in Liberia in 1853 to begin a twenty-year endeavor to "redeem" Africa, more than eight thousand black Americans were already living in the city. Crummell framed his efforts as a way of seeing good come from the horrors of slavery. As he wrote, the "EVANGELIZATION OF AFRICA" was "the end, and aim, and object of that divine will and providence which the Almighty has been working out by the means of institutions and governments, by afflictions and sufferings, and even oppressions, during the course of centuries."

Northern blacks also used the history of slavery to fashion a radically different understanding of the relationship between divine providence and America. For many white Americans, their nation was a "promised land" of economic and social opportunity, where the yoke of past oppression was thrown off and freedom enjoyed by all. God amply blessed America and intended it to act as a beacon of liberty and democracy for the world. The meaning of America was more ambiguous for blacks. For them, the country was no promised land of freedom but more akin to Egypt of the Old Testament, where the ancient Israelites, God's favored race, endured generations of bondage before being emancipated. Black leaders also pointed out the serious shortcomings of white Americans who professed to be Christian yet practiced slavery. Frederick Douglass put the matter vividly in his 1834 autobiography: "I . . . hate the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land. Indeed, I can see no reason, but the most deceitful one, for calling the religion of this land Christianity. I look upon it as the climax of all misnomers, the boldest of all frauds, and the grossest of all libels."

Struggles of Radical African American Women

At the same time that black churches were publicly campaigning for African American freedom, they were also stymieing attempts by women to serve as religious leaders. Like white clerics, black preachers widely banned female congregants from ordination and from obtaining a license to preach and often required them to seek special permission to serve as class and prayer leaders. No black denomination formally recognized a woman as a cleric until the African Methodist Episcopal Church ordained Julia Foote in 1895. Still, black women sought to preach during the colonial and antebellum eras. Among the first was Jarena Lee, born free in 1783 in Cape May, New Jersey. As a twenty-one-year-old woman then living in Philadelphia, she preached in public with such verve and passion that she earned an invitation from Rev. Richard Allen to speak at his church. Yet few other ministers welcomed her, which Lee struggled to understand theologically. As she argued in 1833, "If the man may preach, because the Savior died for him, why not the women, seeing he died for her also? Is he not a whole Savior, instead of a half one, as those who hold it wrong for a woman to preach, would seem to make it appear? Did not Mary *first* preach the risen Savior? Then did not Mary, a woman, preach the gospel?"

A more radical contemporary of Lee's was Rebecca Cox Jackson. Growing up as a free woman in Philadelphia during the early 1800s, she lived much of her life with her brother, Joseph Cox, an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) minister. Following instructions given to her by a heavenly spirit in 1830, Jackson began to host prayer meetings that quickly surged in popularity. She stirred controversy by tossing aside convention and inviting men and women to worship side by side. She earned a temporary reprieve, however, after a visit by Morris Brown, who succeeded Richard Allen as bishop of the AME Church. Brown came to one of Jackson's meetings with the idea of silencing her, but left thoroughly impressed by her preaching and ordered that she be left alone. In 1833 Jackson embarked on a preaching tour outside of Philadelphia but met with new and greater resistance. Her insistence on her right to preach, open refusal to join a church, and radical views on sexuality that included celibacy within marriage angered area clerics and, Jackson claimed, motivated some to assault her. Eventually she broke ranks with the free black church movement and joined a Shaker group in Watervliet, New York. In 1851 she returned to Philadelphia and founded a Shaker community composed mainly of black women.

Lee and Jackson rejected the limitations placed on their preaching because of their sex. Like others black women, they found confirmation for their efforts not in any church rule or clerical pronouncement but through their personal interpretation of the Bible and, more important, an unflagging conviction that God had called them to preach. Though denied official recognition as preachers, they still touched the lives of many and represented a vital dimension of the religious lives of northern blacks.

While rarely acting as preachers to a slave community, black women served as spiritual leaders in other ways. As mothers and grandmothers, they introduced children to the precepts of their faith and passed on traditions through story and song. Many earned the respect of their peers by exercising skills as midwives, folk healers, and comforters of the sick and dying. A few gained popularity as wise and trusted counselors able to interpret strange dreams and forecast the future. Although without large followings or the same degree of influence as male preachers, black women in the South, as in the North, influenced the evolution of African American sacred life.

Beyond the Master's Eye

Although African Americans built their own churches, denominations, self-help societies, and fraternal orders during slavery, most did not participate in these institutions. This was especially true in the South, where the overwhelming majority of slaves and freed people lived and had little direct access to black churches or even white ones. They often lived too far from any kind of house of worship to participate in its life on a regular basis and were lucky to receive visits from itinerant preachers or even hear their masters read from scripture.

This is not to say, however, that southern blacks failed to create and sustain a religious identity. The truth was just the opposite. They developed a dense sacred life outside of the walls of any church and far beyond the master's eye, one that integrated themes and practices of Christianity with the realities of their existence as bond servants and their African traditions. Eager to push beyond the banal platitudes issued by white clerics about willfully and cheerfully accepting their lowly status, slaves gathered and nurtured an alternative spiritual community. At night, in fields, brush harbors, thickets, and secret meeting places, they probed their place in God's unfolding plan for humanity and created their own sermons, visions, dreams, and performance styles.

In contrast to the servile messages promoted by white clergymen, blacks stressed their special value in the eyes of God, especially through their distinctive interpretation of the book of Exodus. They saw in the story of Exodus a map for their history: like the Hebrews, they were God's chosen children, suffering in bondage but destined to be freed and taken to the Promised Land. Their conviction came to life during their secret rendezvous and praise services, when they commemorated through dance and song the act of slipping Pharaoh's grasp and crossing the Red Sea to freedom. Transforming biblical history into a lived reality, if only for a few moments, slaves refreshed their identification as a just people blessed by God, who would eventually emancipate them. This identification, in turn, helped them to deflect white claims that God preordained blacks for lives of forced labor.

Power of Preaching and Song

The leader of the slave religious community was the slave preacher. Though sometimes illiterate, the preacher earned his status by employing a dramatic style of communicating that consisted of biblical verses, gestures, and stories committed to memory and expressed through repetition and parallelism. Often called the chanted sermon, it followed a common pattern, beginning with spoken prose but swiftly moving to a rhythmic cadence punctuated by cries of encouragement from the audience. It typically climaxed in a near tonal chant, when the preacher brought his listeners to their feet, singing and swaying with him.

A central part of slave religious life was song. Frequently limited by law and custom from learning how to read and write, slaves turned to song as a powerful way of expressing themselves. Integrating African-influenced cadences with Protestant hymns and Bible verses, they fashioned their spirituals, a particular type of sacred music sung alone or in groups, in the fields or their homes. In the spirituals, they blended hopes for freedom with the pain and suffering of everyday life. For example:

Oh, that I had a bosom friend,
To tell my secrets to,
One always to depend upon
In everything I do!

How I do wander, up and down!
I seem a stranger, quite undone;
None to lend an ear to my complaint,
No one to cheer me, though I faint.

At other times the spirituals concentrated explicitly on the promise of freedom and rang with biblical references about emancipation, in this case reaching the Jordan River that separated the Israelites from the Promised Land.

Jordan River, I'm bound to go,
Bound to go, bound to go,—Jordan River,
I'm bound to go,
And bid 'em fare ye well.

Alternatives to Protestant Christianity

Although most slaves practiced a form of Christianity, some were Muslim. Indeed, Islam was the religion of choice for a small minority of slaves, perhaps as high as 10 percent. Omar ibn Said, who authored the only surviving North American slave narrative in Arabic, was a member of a wealthy family from Futa Turo in West Africa. He was born about 1773. Captured by international slave traders, he arrived in South Carolina in chains in 1807 and remained there in bondage until his death in 1864. He recalled his early Islamic upbringing as a follower of “Mohammed, the Apostle of God,” and his routines of praying throughout the day, tithing, making pilgrimages to Mecca, and joining yearly “holy wars against the infidels.” As he explains in his autobiography, Said, like other Muslim slaves, confronted masters impatient with his faith.

Some slaves were also Roman Catholic, especially in national centers of Catholicism such as Maryland and Louisiana. In 1783 the bishop of Maryland estimated that about one-fifth, or three thousand, of all slaves in the state were Catholic. Two orders of black nuns formed in the first half of the nineteenth century. Mother Mary Lange, a free black woman originally from Haiti, began the Oblate Sisters of Providence in 1829 in Baltimore. And a free woman of African descent, Henriette Delille, began the Sisters of the Holy Family in New Orleans in 1842. These orders cared for the black population. No black priests were ordained in America until after the Civil War.

More popular among slaves as an alternative to Protestant Christianity was conjure, a mix of magic, medicine, spiritual beliefs, folklore, and African traditions that stressed the conjurer's healing abilities. It promised ways to bring good or harm to people, to tell the future, and to cure the sick. Through spells, chants, songs, and potions composed of roots and herbs, conjurers offered a different pathway to understanding and confronting the challenges of daily life. They typically enjoyed high status among blacks and many whites,

especially if they were effective in their work. Though slaves might doubt conjure as a dependable defense against slavery's evils, many still resorted to it during moments of crisis. Henry Bibb, born in bondage in 1815 in Shelby County, Kentucky, but who eventually escaped to freedom in Canada, recalled that many slaves “believe in what they call ‘conjuraton,’ tricking, and witchcraft; and some of them pretend to understand the art, and say that by it they can prevent their masters from exercising their will over the slaves.” Bibb himself was skeptical of conjure, though he benefited from it on occasion. Facing a near-certain flogging by his master for breaking a rule, he desperately sought out a conjurer for help. “After I paid him, he mixed up some alum, salt, and other stuff into a powder, and said I must sprinkle it about my master, if he should offer to strike me; this would prevent him. He also gave me some kind of bitter root to chew, and spit towards him, which would certainly prevent my being flogged.” Bibb did as he was told and escaped punishment.

Beyond Slavery

Black Americans greeted the outbreak of the Civil War with a mix of hope and skepticism. Many prayed that the conflict would finally end the peculiar institution of slavery and interpreted it as God's punishment meted out upon the entire nation for its slave history. Not long after northern troops fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina, northern blacks rushed to join the Union Army, while southern blacks fled for Yankee encampments to escape slavery. Independent black churches organized relief efforts for black soldiers and the runaways, providing food, shelter, and basic literary training. Others, however, were only guardedly optimistic about the lasting meaning of the Civil War. Even if the war broke the chains of bondage, they worried that racism's poison, so long pumping through the heart of the nation, would limit any permanent change to the citizenship rights of African Americans. These anxieties proved to be well founded. For although the war broke slavery's back, it failed to uproot national ideas about racial hierarchy or check the customs and laws of segregation that came into being during the 1880s and 1890s and defined race relations for generations. To be sure, the war's conclusion made possible an explosive growth of black churches and denominations, fraternal orders, religious schools, and seminaries. But it also bore witness to a sadder truth—that even though African Americans were no longer slaves, they were still not free. Their historical identification with the ancient Hebrews

in the book of Exodus as they journeyed from slavery to freedom would persist, only now focused on the process of seeking the promised land of liberty.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion entries; African Traditional Religions; Great Awakening(s); Invisible Institution; Literature: African American; Missions: Foreign; Music: African American; Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics.*

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African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights

Black churches became the most dominant and stable institutional area to emerge from slavery largely because of the great ambivalence of most white Christians and slave masters toward freedom of religion and the conversion of enslaved Africans.

Although white missionaries and slave owners made many attempts to control slaves' religious lives and to produce obedient and docile servants, the Africans often held their own religious services with their own leaders in the backwoods and bayous of plantations and used a syncretism of Christianity and African traditions as a form of resistance. Sociologist E. Franklin Frazier has called this phenomenon "invisible religion." Gradually, slaves' invisible religion, or what others have called the "invisible institution," was transformed into visible independent black churches and denominations as more Africans gained their freedom starting in the mid-eighteenth century.

As a result of their dominance and independence in black communities, black churches often functioned as more than worship centers because they also participated in all aspects of people's lives, including communal and personal morality, politics, economics, education, music, and artistic activities. Sociologist C. Eric Lincoln found that the onerous pilgrimage of the black man and woman in early America was eased somewhat by their religion. According to Lincoln, "It was the peculiar sustaining force which gave him the strength to endure when endurance gave no promise, and the courage to be creative in the face of his own dehumanization."

African American Churches from the Civil War to the End of the Nineteenth Century

The clergy who led the established northern black denominations—the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME Church) and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion



The Rev. Hiram Revels, an AME clergyman from Mississippi, became the first African American citizen and senator elected to Congress in 1870.

Church—took advantage of the chaos caused by the Civil War to recruit new members among the enslaved Africans in southern states. Even before the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, both denominations sent numerous missionaries into the South, following the advance of the Union armies. Thousands of new members were recruited from the “invisible institution,” and there were massive defections from the black constituency of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. They flocked to the black denominations where they found an unaccustomed dignity and a sense of self-worth. Enslaved Africans who attended white church services with their masters were often relegated to an upstairs balcony or seated at the rear of the church. Sometimes they even had to sit outside by the window to hear the sermon, prayers, and hymns.

The inclusion of newly emancipated black southerners led to enormous growth in the black denominations. The membership of the AME Church grew from a modest 20,000 members before the Civil War to more than 400,000 by 1884. Although the denomination was established in Philadelphia, South Carolina became its strongest demographic region. A similar phenomenon occurred with the

New York–based AME Zion Church, which had 4,600 members in 1860. Its membership grew to 300,000 by 1884. The state of North Carolina emerged as the Zion Church’s largest area in terms of members and numbers of churches.

The third black Methodist denomination, the Colored (later Christian) Methodist Episcopal Church (CME Church), was established on December 15, 1870, in Jackson, Tennessee. It grew more slowly than the African churches; it had 103,000 members, 75 percent of whom were located in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The CME Church has remained the smallest of the three black Methodist denominations.

Independent black Baptist churches were the earliest black institutions, created between 1750 and 1775. However, the black Baptist denominations were not organized until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At a meeting in Atlanta on September 28, 1895, the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. was established, and Rev. E. C. Morris was elected as the first president of the new convention. Black Baptist churches constituted the largest sector of the black church population, with twenty thousand churches and three million members in the late nineteenth century.

Re-enslavement and Lynching

The period after the Civil War was characterized by several events: the rising violence of the Ku Klux Klan and the development of a more rigid system of segregation in the South; the establishment of black educational institutions by black churches and the American Missionary Association; the collapse of the Freedman’s Savings Bank and the need for black banks and life insurance companies; and the emergence of the Holiness-Pentecostal movement.

In 1865 two groups were formed to oppose the Reconstruction efforts of the Union and to intimidate the recently freed African Americans through acts of violence and vigilante terrorism: the Ku Klux Klan, a white supremacist organization founded by Confederate veterans, and the southern Convict Lease System. The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution (1865), which freed the slaves, contained a proviso that made prison labor the only form of legal slavery or involuntary servitude permissible in the United States. The southern Convict Lease System, which was based on this amendment, was used to re-enslave thousands of African Americans who were imprisoned for often petty charges such as vagrancy. Ninety percent of the convicts were African Americans, who were leased out by local sheriffs at cheap rates to plantation owners and farmers.

Because the former slave owners were no longer responsible for the health and well-being of their laborers, untold thousands died under the Convict Lease System.

The deadlocked presidential election of 1876 led to a compromise by the eventual winner, Rutherford B. Hayes, who promised to withdraw the Union Army from the southern states if southern politicians gave him their electoral votes. The subsequent withdrawal of the Union Army from the South in 1877 unleashed a wave of violence and lynching that continued into the first decades of the twentieth century. Laws passed by southern states eventually eliminated the rights of African Americans to vote, and the 1896 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* legitimated racial segregation laws in public accommodations throughout the South.

Black churches and their clergy attempted to oppose this climate of violence and intimidation. Some black clergy preached against the violence and acts of discrimination that their members were suffering, while others were intimidated by the attacks on black churches, which included gunfire, burnings, and bombings. Ida B. Wells, a former newspaper editor, led an antilynching crusade after witnessing the hanging of three successful black grocery store owners in Memphis in 1892. Most of Wells's public speeches against lynching were given in AME churches.

Civil Rights Act of 1867

The Civil Rights Act of 1867 passed during the Reconstruction era conferred on former slaves in the South and other black people in the North the right to vote. These black voters succeeded in electing twenty black representatives and two black senators. In 1870 Rev. Hiram Revels, an AME clergyman from Mississippi, became the first black citizen and the first black senator elected to Congress. Another AME clergyman, Rev. Richard H. Cain of Georgia, was elected to the House of Representatives in 1873. Both Revels and Cain established the tradition of the clergy-politician in black communities, a pattern that would be revived in the mid-twentieth century. President Hayes's southern compromise and the withdrawal of Union troops in 1877 led gradually to the elimination of black voting rights in southern states before the end of the nineteenth century. Thus blacks were limited to voting in their churches—for their pastors, bishops, and convention presidents, and for their deacons, stewards, and members of their boards of trustees, including the leaders of women's conventions, missionary societies, and ushers and nurses. Because for almost a century

black people could vote only in their churches, black church politics at the local, state, and national levels steadily became a highly competitive and contested terrain.

Sunday Schools, Music, Black Colleges, and Banks

The Sunday schools of black churches often fulfilled the rudimentary task of teaching adults and children reading and writing skills. In many southern states it was illegal to teach an enslaved person how to read and write. When freedom came, the pent-up demand for education was overwhelming. Every school that opened in Savannah, Georgia, after the Civil War was deluged by blacks of all ages who wanted to learn how to read and write in spite of the fact that an education would not lead to a job in the devastated southern economy. A primary motivation for most black people to become literate was so they could read God's Word for themselves. Their belief in a transcendent God had enabled them to survive the brutalities, deaths, and horrors of the slave system.

Music in black churches during the postbellum period consisted of a mixture of Negro spirituals, Isaac Watts's hymns, and locally developed songs. Bishop Richard Allen, the founding pastor of the Mother Bethel AME Church in Philadelphia, developed the first collection of Negro spirituals—songs created by enslaved Africans about their lives, faith, and hopes. Because many black Christians were illiterate at the time, the hymn lining tradition became prevalent—a leader would call out the line to be sung, and it would be repeated by the congregation. Much of the music at this time was a cappella, accompanied by hand clapping and foot stomping. To move to a more formal worship style that emphasized "order and decorum," Bishop Daniel Payne introduced the use of an organ at the Bethel AME Church in Baltimore in 1847.

Black churches independently, and sometimes in cooperation with the northern American Missionary Association, helped to turn the schools established in church basements into the first black colleges and universities. Bishop Payne of the Bethel AME Church, who had a reputation for promoting education, paved the way by founding in 1856 the first African American institution of higher learning, Wilberforce University in Ohio. Six other AME-sponsored colleges followed. Morehouse College grew out of a school of the Springfield Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia, and it later moved to Atlanta. Spelman College was founded in the basement of Atlanta's Friendship Baptist Church. The Tuskegee Institute received its start in the basement of an AME Zion Church in Tuskegee, Alabama. Often called the

“black Harvard,” Fisk University was established by the American Missionary Association in 1866. It became famous for the Jubilee Singers and for the undergraduate training of well-known scholars such as W. E. B. Du Bois and John Hope Franklin. Howard University, the “black Yale,” was established by private benefactors in 1867 and has received funds from the federal government as most colleges do.

The Freedman’s Savings and Trust Bank, established by Congress in 1865 to provide banking services for the newly freed people, collapsed in 1874 because of the financial recession of 1873 and the bank’s mismanagement by white overseers. This bank held the cash bounties that thousands of black soldiers received for joining the Union Army during the Civil War and the funds of many black churches, fraternal lodges, and mutual aid and beneficial societies. The collapse left black people without any banking services because white banks refused to serve them. As Du Bois noted in 1907, the study of “economic cooperation among Negroes must begin with the Church group.” In 1888 the fraternal lodges and black churches helped to capitalize black banks such as the True Reformers’ Bank in Richmond, Virginia, and the Capital Savings Bank in Washington, D.C. In the late nineteenth century the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church of Birmingham established the Penny Savers Bank for its members. The bank’s first president was the church’s pastor. About a dozen black banks were created in the years that followed, but most of them collapsed during the Great Depression. Black churches and lodges also helped to capitalize the first black-owned life insurance companies, North Carolina Mutual in 1898, the Afro-American Industrial Insurance Society of Jacksonville in 1901, and Atlanta Life Insurance in 1905. The Afro-American Industrial Insurance Society began as a mutual benefit society in Rev. J. Milton Waldron’s Baptist church in Jacksonville.

Holiness Movement and Pentecostalism

During the post-Civil War period, the Holiness movement developed from its roots in the Second Great Awakening and became highly influential among black churches. The concept of an experience of sanctification by the Holy Spirit, of living a holier life, originated in John Wesley’s belief that spiritual perfection in this life was possible. The first national camp meeting of the movement was held in Vineland, New Jersey, in 1867, and the movement began to spread to the camp meetings of other black and white Christians, who in the beginning were largely Methodists but later hailed from other denominations. Black Holiness churches developed in

small rural towns in the South and spread widely in urban storefront churches in northern cities during the great migrations. Holiness members believed in a second blessing of the Holy Spirit or a religious experience of sanctification beyond the first blessing of personal salvation or “being saved.” Women in black Holiness churches wore long white dresses, head coverings, and gloves as symbols of sanctification. In the 1890s and early twentieth century the Holiness movement began to be blended with Pentecostalism. Pentecostals believed in a third blessing of the Holy Spirit as manifested in gifts of the Spirit such as “speaking in tongues,” interpretation of tongues, and healing.

The blending of the Holiness-Pentecostal movement is illustrated by the life of Bishop Charles H. Mason, the founder of the Church of God in Christ, the largest black Pentecostal denomination. This Baptist minister in Arkansas experienced sanctification at a revival in Mississippi. He was eventually ousted from the Baptist association, but as a Holiness preacher he attracted many followers. His first church, which he called the Church of God in Christ, was established in a former cotton gin house in Lexington, Mississippi. In 1907 he attended the Azusa Street revival, an international phenomenon that spanned 1906–1909 in Los Angeles, and was led by a black Holiness preacher, Elder William Joseph Seymour. Like the thousands of black and white attendees, Mason experienced the blessing of the Holy Spirit and began speaking in tongues. He returned to Memphis and organized other clergy into a Pentecostal denomination.

As the first Pentecostal bishop, Mason ordained both black and white clergy. However, the biracial character of Pentecostalism in the United States was short-lived, because the white clergy eventually split off and in 1914 established their own Pentecostal denomination, the Assemblies of God. The northern urban migrations proved to be beneficial to the rapid growth of the Church of God in Christ, as it developed from a handful of rural southern clergy and churches to the second largest black denominational group after the Baptists.

African American Churches, the Great Migrations, and the Great Depression

In 1890 about 90 percent of the black population of the United States resided in the South, and about 80 percent of African Americans lived in the southern rural counties from Virginia to Mississippi called the “Black Belt,” because of the demographic predominance of black people living in the rural areas of these states. By the end of the civil rights era in 1968, only 51 percent of the total U.S. black population

remained in the South. Many African Americans had joined others in the largest internal migrations the country has ever seen. From 1870 to 1970 about seven million people left the rural South for northern and western urban areas. Many of those who remained in the South also began moving to its urban areas. Thus a largely rural population became in the late twentieth century one of the most highly urbanized. The vast migrations were clustered around the periods of the two World Wars and the Korean War, transforming the demographic landscape as millions of African Americans relocated in search of jobs and a better life.

Employment was the primary reason for migration, but other factors also spurred black people to move: the mechanization of agriculture in the South, the lynching and violence of a rigid system of Jim Crow segregation, the long-term decline of sharecropping and individual black-owned farms, and the need for cheap labor in northern factories and industries. Near-starvation forced some church congregations and whole sections of black towns to leave. People wanted to get out of “this land of sufring” and seek the promised land elsewhere.

Urbanization and the Black Pastorate

Since their beginnings in the mid-eighteenth century, the majority of black churches in the South have been rural institutions. The major effect of the migrations was to produce a largely “absentee pastorate” among these churches. One pastor typically cared for three or four rural churches, preaching at each one once a month. The automobile and the growth of highways made this monthly circuit possible. The absentee pastorate meant that the pastor no longer resided in the rural area where the churches were located but usually in a nearby city. It also meant that rural church members had to be self-sufficient, carrying on activities such as weekly prayer meetings and Bible study without the guidance of their pastors. Meeting once a month also produced the phenomenon among some black church members in urban areas of preferring to attend church on the “first Sunday,” “second Sunday,” or “third Sunday,” and still considering themselves to be faithful Christians.

Although the migrations depleted rural congregations in the South, it was extremely difficult to close a rural church. Part of the reason for the high levels of loyalty was found in the cemeteries of these churches. Enduring segregation from birth to death, generations of black families traced their roots to these rural church cemeteries, and some family clans made annual pilgrimages to these churches.

To encourage the migration of black laborers, northern companies advertised in black newspapers, and railroad companies gave steep discounts on train tickets to black clergy and their families if they moved north with members of their congregations. The net result was the tremendous growth of urban black churches in the twentieth century. The established black churches in cities such as Chicago or New York City were overwhelmed by the needs of black migrants not only for worship services but also for social services, such as help in finding housing and jobs, and, for the poorer migrants, clothing and food. As the membership of these established urban congregations swelled, some of the migrants who felt uncomfortable in the environs of black middle-class churches began to start their own churches, often in storefronts in the poorest sections of the city. If a preacher was not available to lead them, they called those from their rural churches.

Urban areas also provided a level of anonymity and freedom for religious experimentation that was unavailable in rural areas, where people’s behavior and moral reputation were closely scrutinized by church deacons and clergy. Breaking the moral code often led to social isolation and excommunication from the church community. The migrants reveled in their newfound freedom in cities, and some of them began their individual quests for meaning in adopting new identities and joining new movements, such as Marcus Garvey’s United Negro Improvement Association, black nationalism, Noble Drew Ali’s Moorish Science Temple, and Master Fard and Elijah Muhammad’s Nation of Islam. Other popular charismatic religious leaders of large national urban religious movements were Father Divine, Daddy Grace, and Rabbi Cherry.

One of the fruits of urbanism was the elevation of black women to the ranks of the clergy. Although there has been a long tradition of black preaching women, some of whom wanted to be ordained, such as Jarena Lee, from the days of slavery onward African American women often met strong resistance from black male clergy. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church became the first denomination, black or white, to raise women to the clerical ranks. At the urging of a group of feminist Zion bishops, Bishop James Walker Hood ordained Julia A. Foote, a conference missionary, as a deacon on May 19, 1894, at the Catherine Street AME Zion Church in Poughkeepsie, New York. Bishop Alexander Walters ordained Mary J. Small, the wife of Bishop John B. Small, as a deacon in Philadelphia in 1895. In 1898 Bishop Calvin Pettey ordained Mary Small as an elder in the Philadelphia-Baltimore

conference. Julia Foote was also ordained as an elder by Bishop Alexander Walters in 1900. Both Small and Foote were the first women to achieve the rights of full ordination to the ministry by any Methodist denomination.

The AME Zion Church's ordination of women preceded similar action by other black or white Methodist denominations by half a century. And yet women in the black Baptist denominations have struggled to be ordained as clergy. The Church of God in Christ, the largest black Pentecostal body, still prohibits the ordination of women.

Because urban politics and economics were often more complex than the politics and economics normally faced by rural pastors, the migrant clergy had to adjust their leadership styles and become less autocratic in their relationships with their congregations and local communities. Some of the leading black clergy in urban areas realized the need to create secular, broad-based civil rights organizations. Clergymen such as Rev. Reverdy Ransom and Rev. J. Milton Waldron were influential members of W. E. B. Du Bois's Niagara Movement, which preceded the founding of the interracial National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 as the guardian and advocate for black rights in the political arena. In 1911 the National Urban League was created through the influence of black educator and leader Booker T. Washington to help black people improve their employment and economic opportunities. Both organizations found their primary black support in black churches, and many local chapters were led by black clergy.

In 1915 the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., experienced a schism over ownership of its publishing house in Nashville. The dispute erupted between the "Boyd faction," led by Rev. R. H. Boyd, secretary of the Publishing Board, and the "Morris faction," led by Rev. E. C. Morris, president of the convention. Clergy in the Boyd faction withdrew and set up their own Baptist denomination, taking the name National Baptist Convention of America. Because a long time passed before it was legally incorporated, this group was often referred to as the "unincorporated" convention, and the original body was called the "incorporated" convention. The original denomination began to emphasize this aspect in its name, the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

From War to Depression and Back Again

Black veterans returning from World War I experienced high levels of racial discrimination in their search for employment in both the North and the South. In the summer of 1919 a

series of bloody racial riots broke out in twenty-five cities, largely instigated by whites who were reacting to the large numbers of African Americans migrating to these areas and competing for jobs. Black people were attacked in the streets, and some were lynched, and black neighborhoods were burned. More riots occurred during the "Bloody Summer of 1919" than during any other period until the racial conflagrations of the late 1960s. The Ku Klux Klan, which had its headquarters in Indianapolis, expanded its membership nationwide to two million in the 1920s. Thousands of Klan members also held a march on Washington.

In the 1920s the migrations of blacks to urban areas prompted a creative outburst of exceptional talent by African American artists, writers, poets, intellectuals, and musicians. The Harlem Renaissance, as it was called, spread from Harlem in New York City to other urban centers. Although it has not been fully studied the impact of the Renaissance on black churches and clergy, the one tangible area of change was in the music of black churches. Thomas "Georgia Tom" Dorsey, a blues nightclub musician who learned his music in church, returned to the church to combine blues music with Charles Tindley's hymns to produce what he called "Gospel songs." Because of its association with nightclubs and houses of prostitution, blues was often called the "Devil's music" by black church members. However, the simple but livelier gospel music with its compelling imagery gradually spread to black churches, especially influencing their choirs from the 1930s to mid-1960s. After Dorsey's wife and child died tragically, he wrote "Precious Lord, Take My Hand," which Elvis Presley made famous.

The Great Depression was devastating to black communities and churches, as unemployment and poverty levels rose throughout the 1930s. However, the churches and clergy continued to participate in local urban politics during the interwar years, primarily as mobilizers of the black vote in cities such as Chicago, where African Americans played a significant role in Big Bill Thompson's Republican political machine. The majority of black voters were staunch members of the Republican Party, the party of Lincoln the Emancipator, from the Civil War until the middle of the Great Depression, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt's liberal social welfare policies convinced many of them to join the Democratic Party. In Chicago, black clergy such as Archibald Carey and some secular black leaders became part of the "client-patron" politics, in which African Americans became clients of white political patrons such as Thompson and later Mayor Richard J. Daley. The ongoing arrival of large numbers of

rural migrants and the devastating economic conditions pushed many black churches into a conservative political stance. Gayraud Wilmore has described the interwar period as the “deradicalization of the Black Church.” Sociological studies by Benjamin Mays and Joseph Nicholson, St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, and Gunnar Myrdal detected a robust conservative stance among some black clergy and churches, a withdrawal from the political and social involvement in their communities, and a strong tendency toward assimilation into the mainstream white culture.

Some black churches, however, were moving in the opposite direction—toward greater political activism. Rev. Martin Luther King Sr., pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, led members of his congregation to city hall to attempt to register to vote in 1935, when black disenfranchisement was the order of the day in southern states. Many large black churches in major cities such as New York, Baltimore, and Chicago allowed A. Phillip Randolph to hold organizing and recruitment meetings for his fledgling black labor union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Staunch laywomen such as Mary McLeod Bethune and Nannie Helen Burroughs were active on the national political scene, as well as in the women’s conventions of their denominations. Bethune reached national prominence as a member of the Roosevelt administration in part because of her close friendship with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

In the late 1930s Rev. Adam Clayton Powell Jr., pastor of the eight-thousand-member Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, called for protests in the streets on economic issues. He also organized the Greater New York Coordinating Committee to focus attention on job discrimination. Later, he broadened the committee to include other religious and secular groups, and eventually it became the political instrument that broke the power of New York’s Tammany Hall political organization in Harlem. In 1944 Powell was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, the first black politician from the east to serve in Congress. He revived the tradition of the black preacher/politician. Flamboyant, outspoken, and controversial, Powell became chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor and made major legislative contributions that led to the rise of the civil rights movement.

In 1934 AME bishop Reverdy Ransom established the Fraternal Council of Churches, composed of largely progressive black Methodist and Baptist churches. From the mid-1930s to the 1950s, the council lobbied in Washington on civil rights issues such as antilynching legislation and

desegregation of the armed forces. President Harry S. Truman signed the antilynching legislation in 1946 and desegregated the armed forces in 1947. Father Divine’s Peace Mission was also a major force in the antilynching campaign, begun by Ida Wells in the late nineteenth century.

After years of negotiation, a plan was finally adopted in 1939 to unify the major white Methodist bodies—the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church—that had split over the issue of slavery in 1844. However, the price of union was the creation of a separate black jurisdiction within the newly unified church. The new Methodist Church was organized into five geographical regions or jurisdictions. A sixth entity, called the Central Jurisdiction, consisted of all the black conferences and missions in the United States, which encompassed 315,000 black Methodists. Although the Central Jurisdiction participated equally with the others at the national level of the church, at all other levels blacks were officially segregated. They could elect their own black bishops, but those bishops could function only as bishops of black Methodists; they had no authority over white Methodists. The result was to institutionalize a black Methodist church, which literally was a church within a church. It was not until the pressures and agitation of the civil rights movement and the merger with the Evangelical United Brethren Church that the Central Jurisdiction was abolished in 1966. The new entity was called the United Methodist Church.

World War II and the Postwar Period

As economic historians have pointed out, the Great Depression ended only after the economic stimulus provided by the country’s involvement in World War II took effect. Fought on two fronts, Europe and the Pacific, World War II surpassed World War I in providing job opportunities for black men and women in northern factories and industries. These jobs, combined with the opening of labor union membership to blacks, served as the economic foundation for a growing black middle class. As in past wars, black soldiers, sailors, and pilots served in segregated military units commanded by white officers. However, these travels abroad and the experiences gained in other countries broadened the horizons of the African American soldiers. Although they encountered some racial discrimination from fellow white soldiers, their experiences in combat also taught them that friendships could be forged across racial barriers. They also saw that other countries had no rigid segregation laws.

However, upon returning to the United States many of these black veterans encountered the same hostility and racial discrimination in employment that black veterans had experienced after the end of World War I. Thus, although they had served in segregated units, the black war veterans were able to form a broad support group that had the leadership experience needed for the agitation and changes that the civil rights movement would bring.

Foundations of the Civil Rights Movement

Several other events or actions also laid the foundations for the emergence of the civil rights movement. The first was President Truman's order to desegregate the military. It ensured that blacks who fought in the Korean War and future wars would serve in integrated units. It also opened upward mobility for African Americans to become officers, even generals.

The second was the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which declared segregated education in public schools illegal. In this case, Rev. Oliver Leon Brown of St. Mark's AME Church in Topeka, Kansas, with the support of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, sued the Board of Education on behalf of his nine-year-old daughter, Linda Brown, and all other black children similarly injured by segregation in the public schools. NAACP attorney Thurgood Marshall, supported by the psychological studies of the effects of segregation on young black children conducted by Kenneth and Mamie Clark, argued the case and won. The Supreme Court's *Brown* decision provided the legal legitimacy for the attempts of the civil rights movement to desegregate public transportation and public accommodations throughout America.

The third was the lynching of Emmett Till, a fourteen-year-old teenager from Chicago who was visiting his uncle in the rural delta town of Money, Mississippi, in August 1955. After buying candy and soda at a grocery store, Till allegedly flirted with the white woman clerk. Unknowingly, he had broken one of the oldest southern taboos against interracial relationships, which placed the purity of white women on a pedestal. Several days later, Till was taken from his uncle's home at night by the clerk's husband, Roy Bryant, and half-brother, J. W. Milam. Till was then brutally beaten to death, and his body was thrown into the Tallahatchie River. In the ensuing trial the alleged perpetrators, Bryant and Milam, were found innocent. Till's mother, Mamie Till Bradley, held a funeral for her son in her church in Chicago. The open casket revealed her son's smashed head

and disfigured face. Photos in *Jet* magazine and black newspapers aroused the conscience and emotions of the national black community.

During the decades of the 1940s and 1950s, sociological studies found that the earlier trend of upwardly mobile African Americans joining white church denominations was continuing. According to the eminent black sociologist of Howard University E. Franklin Frazier, the "Negro Church" was a stumbling block in the attempts of black people to assimilate into mainstream American society.

African American Churches and the Rise of the Civil Rights Movement

In 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, E. D. Nixon, president of the local chapter of the NAACP and a member of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, was preparing to challenge segregation on the city's public buses. Nixon and several members of the NAACP, such as chapter secretary and seamstress Rosa Parks, had been trained in the tactics of nonviolent protest at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. On Thursday, December 1, 1955, Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a crowded bus. That evening Jo Ann Robinson of the Women's Political Council printed and circulated a flyer calling for the black community to stay off the buses when Parks's case came up for trial on the following Monday. At a meeting of local leaders, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the newly arrived pastor of the Dexter Street Baptist Church, was elected as the leader of the bus boycott by the recently formed Montgomery Improvement Association. Nixon had chosen the twenty-six-year-old King to be leader of the recently formed association because he was new, young, and "untouched" by the intimidation of white political leaders. The mass meeting held on Saturday, December 3, at a black church was overflowing with enthusiastic supporters. Plans were made for carpooling, walking, and riding bicycles, and black cab drivers were to charge the same fare as the city buses.

The one-day Montgomery boycott was so successful that plans were made to continue it until the white leaders agreed to black demands to desegregate the buses. Accompanied by numerous mass meetings at black churches, sometimes held almost nightly, the boycotters carried on the struggle in the face of threats by white employers, beatings, and intimidation by imprisonment. King was arrested and spent two weeks in jail. Bayard Rustin from the War Resisters League advised King and the Montgomery movement

on the philosophy and strategy of Gandhian nonviolence. The boycott was supported by legal rulings from a federal district judge and the U.S. Supreme Court that Alabama's racial segregation laws for buses were unconstitutional. After 381 days, the boycott officially ended on December 20, 1956, when the city of Montgomery ruled that black passengers on buses could sit wherever they wanted.

The success of the Montgomery bus boycott inspired many other African Americans to begin protesting and attacking de jure and de facto segregation throughout the country. Although boycotts of public transportation had been led by black clergy in the 1920s and 1930s, the Montgomery event succeeded where the others had failed.

Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

Buoyed by the success of Montgomery, King and other black Baptist leaders formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957, in order to continue to protest the segregation of public facilities in southern states. In 1959 Rev. James Lawson, another disciple of Gandhian nonviolence and organizer for the Fellowship of Reconciliation, moved to Nashville and began teaching students at Fisk and Vanderbilt Universities about the tactics of nonviolent protest. His efforts led to sit-ins at lunch counters and protests at segregated downtown stores in February 1960. The Nashville movement was led primarily by students, such as future ministers Bernard Lafayette and John Lewis, and the president of the Fisk student body, Diane Nash.

About the same time, four African American students from North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro held a sit-in at a Woolworth's lunch counter. Throughout the South other college and university students became involved in local civil rights protests. In April 1960, Ella Baker, national secretary of the SCLC, led a broad coalition of the students in a conference at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. She advised them to form their own independent student group instead of becoming a youth branch of the SCLC, as Reverend King wanted. They followed her advice and formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which focused on civil rights protests, voter registration and education, and community organizing at the grassroots level. Baptist seminarian John Lewis became the first chair of SNCC, and its organizers spread throughout the rural South. SNCC had major roles in the sit-ins, freedom rides, March on Washington, Mississippi Freedom Summer, Mississippi Freedom

Democratic Party, and movements in Albany, Georgia, and Birmingham, Alabama.

According to sociologist Aldon Morris, throughout the protests and demonstrations of the civil rights movement, black churches provided the mobilizing foreground. They also provided many of the leaders and bodies that became the frontline troops for the movement. In rural and urban areas many mass meetings were held in black churches, because they were the only facilities large enough to accommodate the crowds of several hundred to more than a thousand protestors in a segregated South. Not all black clergy and church members participated in the civil rights movement because of the violence and intimidation they would face, but enough of them did so to the credit of this institution. In addition to meeting places, leaders, and followers, the rituals and songs of the churches provided a sustaining and inspirational force for the civil rights movement. Indeed, a genre of music called "Civil Rights Hymnody" emerged. SNCC Freedom Singers from Albany, Georgia, toured the country, holding fund-raising concerts and singing freedom songs. Evidence of the significance of black churches in the freedom movement was the many black churches that were shot at, bombed, or burned—some three hundred churches in Mississippi alone from 1960 to 1965. Probably the worst bombing was of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, where four young girls attending Sunday school were killed.

Although Rev. Martin Luther King and other major figures of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference were Baptists, the president of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., Rev. Joseph H. Jackson, refused to support the civil rights movement. The authoritarian Jackson, who wanted to be president for life, was challenged by the King faction, which was led by the outstanding orator Rev. Dr. Gardner C. Taylor, who ran for the presidency at the Philadelphia convention in 1960. However, Jackson won, and his faction refused to let the "Taylor team" into the convention held in Kansas City the following year. After they were finally admitted, the Taylor delegates approached the elevated stage to speak, but fistcuffs erupted on the floor of the convention. In November 1961 the King faction formed the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., at the Zion Baptist Church in Cincinnati.

The civil rights movement's largest gathering was the highly successful March on Washington held in August 1963. More than 250,000 people attended, the largest assembly in Washington, D.C., up to that point. Martin Luther King's "I

have a dream” speech became a riveting classic. Less than a month later, the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was bombed. That bombing and the death of three civil rights workers—Michael Schwerner, James Chaney, and Andrew Goodman—in Mississippi, in 1964, brought pressure on Congress to pass and President Lyndon B. Johnson to sign the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Likewise, the brutal beatings and tear gassing of civil rights marchers on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, and King’s speech on the steps of the state capitol in Montgomery led to passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Both acts formed the basis for public policies that removed many of the barriers to racial equality in politics, employment, housing, education, and public accommodations. They provided the legal basis for the rise of a viable black middle class. Women of all colors used the Civil Rights Act to open the doors of opportunity for themselves. And other racial minorities such as Native Americans, Latinos, and Asians sought legal protection under this act.

In an attempt to move the civil rights movement toward attacking de facto racial segregation in housing in the north, King spent some months in the Chicago area in 1966. However, his protests and demonstrations failed because they encountered fierce resistance.

Black Power and Black Liberation Theology

The assassination of Rev. Martin Luther King on April 4, 1968, at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, is sometimes regarded as the formal end of the civil rights period. The death of this nonviolent warrior led to some 450 urban rebellions across the country as black people expressed their rage, anger, and sorrow in the streets in the weeks and months after the assassination. America was literally burning. Militant black students on college campuses began occupying buildings and demanding more black faculty and black studies programs and departments. The Black Power and Black Consciousness movements swept the country as similar movements took root in South Africa and elsewhere. Black people began demanding a place at the table in all areas of life. In black and white church denominations, the clergy formed separate black caucuses. In 1969 James Cone of the Union Theological Seminary produced a genre of theological reflection called black liberation theology. His black women doctoral candidates, Katie Cannon and Jacqueline Grant, developed a womanist theology, a black feminist version of the liberation theology of the late 1960s and 1970s. Both theologies have been highly influential in the education of black clergy.

The Black Consciousness era produced a new and greater appreciation of the historical role of black churches in the struggle for equality and justice in all areas of life for black people. It also stemmed the earlier tide of blacks joining white denominations. Members of the new black middle class became staunch supporters of black churches.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion entries; African Traditional Religions; Baptists: African American; Great Awakening(s); Invisible Institution; Literature: African American; Methodists: African American; Music: African American; Religious Thought: Womanist; Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics; South as Region.*

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African American Religion: Post–Civil Rights Era

African American religion is perhaps best understood to be an arrangement of competing and overlapping faith claims present in African American communities from the period of enslavement to the present. All these claims were forged in an effort to help African Americans form life meaning and a strong sense of place in the world in spite of the oppressive forces imposed by slavery and the discrimination that followed. Over the centuries, race and racism would serve as the issue most consistently addressed within the context of African American religion. While response to issues of race and racism would continue to mark African American religion during the post–civil rights era, it was matched by concern about a variety of other issues, along with the accompanying transformations of the nature of African American religion itself.

Religion and the Web of Oppression

Before the onset of the civil rights movement, scholars discussed African American religious activism almost exclusively in terms of the struggle against oppression in the form of racism, and in that context they highlighted black churches as the most visible and systemically organized brand of African American religion. But within the context of the civil rights movement and during the post–civil rights discourse, a preoccupation with race and racism was challenged, for example, by African American women, who sought to bring the critique of sexism found within feminist thought into the struggle for liberation within African American communities. This greater attention to the problem of sexism within African American religious communities pointed out the large numbers of women involved in African American religious communities and the awkward nature of such large laity numbers in view of the very small number of women who exercised substantive leadership, including pastors. Indeed, although women represented some 70 percent of the membership, they represented roughly 5 percent of the leadership within the seven largest African American denominations.

This challenge to patriarchy within Christian organizations has met with some success. For example, in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, several women now exercise authority as bishops. The first was Rev. Vashti Murphy McKenzie, who in 2000 became the first woman

to serve as a bishop. In this position, she and the others who followed have a share of the most powerful position within the organization, helping to establish and monitor the workings of the church on the local, regional, national, and international levels. Pentecostal denominations and Baptist conventions have not made as much progress on this front, although some women are serving as church pastors. In many of these cases, they gained the leadership of particular churches after the death of their husbands. Within some Baptist circles there has been some forward movement, such as the late twentieth century pastor Suzan Johnson Cook, who in 1983 became the first woman to serve as senior pastor of a church within the American Baptist Churches of the USA. In addition, she was the first woman to head the Hampton University Ministers' Conference, which is one of the most significant gatherings of African American preachers in the country. African American women in majority-white denominations also made progress on this issue. For example, in 1989 Barbara Harris became the first African American woman to serve as a bishop in the Anglican Church; she became assistant bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts. As early as 1956 the General Conference of the Methodist Church granted women full ministerial rights, and currently more than ten thousand women serve in all leadership capacities of the church. However, it was not until 1984 that Leontine T. C. Kelly became the first African American woman to serve as a bishop within this denomination, three years after the first woman was elevated to this office. In addition, in 1974 Katie G. Cannon became the first African American woman ordained within the United Presbyterian Church (USA).

Even though outside the context of Christian institutions some instances of sexism have arisen, generally there is still greater openness to leadership regardless of gender within African-based traditions. For example, within Santería women have been initiated into the priesthood associated with particular deities, and in that capacity they head a community or house of practitioners. In fact, in 1961 the first African American woman was initiated as a priestess—two years after the first African American male.

Disillusionment and the Changing Function of Black Churches

The assassinations of activists Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X marked a decline in the optimism and reach of the civil rights movement. Claims that greater commitment to an active faith would result in the transformation of life

circumstances in the United States seemed to falter. The optimism generated by religious commitment seemed out of step with the continuing struggle, and theology was challenged by the secular ideology of more radical and more nationalistic organizations. Black churches were the primary target of this pessimism in large part because they had greater numbers of adherents and they had received most of the popular and scholarly attention up to this point. Although the majority of African Americans when polled confessed belief in God and commitment to religion, black churches lost much of their luster, and some African Americans during the 1970s and 1980s shifted their personal allegiance away from these churches.

Declining membership within some of the major African American denominations—although there were increases within some others—spoke to the disillusionment some experienced. Further complicating this situation was the growing number of African American youth with little or no knowledge of black church tradition. Born after the glory days of the civil rights movement and the death of its most celebrated leadership, these young people had no ties to black churches and what they represented. Talk of “tradition” failed to motivate this population as it might have inspired their parents and grandparents. Drawing from different cultural resources and frustrated by the ongoing oppression the civil rights movement fought against, some of these young people critiqued black church tradition and called into question its theological assumptions, as opposed to what they saw as the realities of life. Their absence within black churches has spurred many African American ministers to develop creative ways of reaching out to this population. Many of these strategies have involved rethinking church liturgy and ritual structures in ways that incorporate the cultural realities and views of young people. From the perspective of some church leaders, recruiting this population is required if churches are to thrive and maintain connection to African American communities.

Within two decades of the civil rights struggle, some members of the African American middle class were disillusioned with life in the suburbs, the struggle for material success, and the setbacks in trying to break through the “glass ceiling”—that is, discrimination within the United States continued to shape and frame life options. Because of this situation, the story does not end with the decline of the black church’s reputation and population. In fact, the 1990s marked a return to black churches by members of the African American middle class and others whose disillusionment with the

socioeconomic and political shape of life overshadowed their difficulties with those churches. In the last decade of the twentieth century religious commitment seemed an answer to life struggles. After all, religion provided order, life structure, and the framework for hope. In search of stability, clear identity, understanding, and a basis for hope, some returned to black churches for grounding faith and community as well as the centering effects of religion. According to sociologist C. Eric Lincoln, during this period roughly 78 percent of African Americans claimed church membership. Although this percentage is difficult to verify, black churches by the end of the 1990s reported increasingly impressive numbers—over twenty million members spread across more than fifty thousand local congregations

The return to black churches forced changes in the nature and arrangements of church leadership. It had long been assumed for good reason that the church minister was the most educated and politically connected person within the church culture. However, with the influx of members of the African American middle class laity had as much if not more educational training, experience, and political know-how than their ministers. Church leadership for so long premised on the status of the pastor had to shift to recognize and include the talents and capabilities of professional church members. In response, some churches developed a community responsibility model in which the abilities of those within the church, not the assumed expertise of the pastor, determined patterns of authority. This model amounted to synergy between pastoral leadership and lay leadership. New models of leadership also included a determination to creatively incorporate the interests and concerns of young African Americans.

The new “look” of black churches as a result of this influx of middle-class African Americans was at times matched by a renewed call for community activism to respond to the conservative political policies that restricted assistance to the most economically challenged citizens. Churches were taking some ownership of the problems plaguing the communities in which they were located—that is, those churches that did not move to suburban communities during the period of decline in the inner cities. Outreach strategies including living out religious commitment in ways that maximized the talents of church members and allowed for partnerships with secular community organizations that otherwise might not cooperate with churches. Churches with political connections were able to receive local governmental assistance with the development

of low-cost housing. This development seemed to cut across regions. For example, First AME Church in Los Angeles, Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston, and Concord Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York, all partnered with secular community organizations and local government in order to advance development projects.

Financing these and other outreach programs (often in the form of community development corporations) has grown to involve more than the resources available through member contributions—tithing and targeted giving opportunities. More and more churches are looking to the federal government for the financial resources needed to start and maintain community initiatives. Perhaps the most widely known and most controversial form of government assistance has been the faith-based initiative program associated with the presidency of George W. Bush. Bush argued that religious communities can serve as effective ways to get resources into communities without the degree of red tape government agencies would require.

Based on “Charitable Choice” from 1996, the Office of Faith-Based Initiatives at the White House was meant to encourage and enable faith communities of all kinds to play a role in the socioeconomic transformation of communities. Successful applicants received federal funding for outreach programs that addressed community needs without requiring those receiving assistance to embrace the theological teachings of that particular religious community.

In 2009 newly elected president Barack Obama announced that his administration would continue this initiative, renamed the Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships program. Over the years the work of this office has met with mixed reviews. Some question whether it is constitutionally viable for the government to partner with religious organizations and in essence privilege them with respect to government funds. Others argue that this initiative might in fact be a political ploy to secure the all-important African American vote by appealing to the dominant religious organization and its leadership. And these funds, while useful on a certain level, might foster an unhealthy relationship between politics and the ministry of churches that compromises the latter for the sake of the former. Others have raised questions about whether most churches are administratively prepared and equipped to manage government funds. In addition, they point to the small number of churches (typically with large memberships) receiving these funds. Some suggest that

churches do not necessarily separate their theological commitments from access to their social service programs. Finally, critics note the failure of this office to provide funds to non-Christian organizations.

Those in favor of this program and who make use of such funding argue that it is a vital way to ensure that organizations committed to the welfare of African American communities are given the materials required to meet the needs of those communities. After all, black churches have remained the central organization within black communities; they have easy access to large groups of African Americans and the ability to quickly disseminate information and resources. By way of illustration, supporters of faith-based initiatives point to the civil rights movement and the key role in it played by churches. More recently, it has been suggested that the centrality of black churches is evident in the ability of these churches to effectively address issues of voter registration and provide relief during natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina (2005) and Ike (2008).

Challenge to the Status Quo in Majority-White Denominations

African Americans have never limited their involvement in the Christian community to predominately African American denominations such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Church of God in Christ, or National Baptist Convention, USA. For centuries majority-white denominations have also been home to African American Christians. And although the presence of African Americans has raised the challenge of social discrimination and the proper Christian response, the presence of discrimination within these churches was put into graphic relief during the civil rights movement. For example, the “Black Manifesto” read in 1969 by James Forman at Riverside Church in New York City called upon majority-white denominations to recognize the racism embedded within their leadership structures and that undergirded their financial resources. It demanded that these churches surrender some of their money to the cause of African American liberation. This event caught the attention of many majority-white churches and forced them to wrestle with their internal race-based flaws. However, it was not simply external pressure that required this reevaluation; African American members during this period also critiqued their church homes and called for substantial change.

Organizations such as the National Black Presbyterian Caucus were organized as a way to centralize African

American concerns and unify their voices. African Americans argued that such issue-oriented committees and caucuses provided an opportunity to think through ways to create greater diversity in leadership. In some instances this push resulted in ordinations and other shifts in church authority. In general, however, substantial roles for blacks in white-majority church governance are still slow in coming and continue to be a source of tension in the twenty-first century.

The push by African Americans for a greater presence in predominately white churches was not limited to administrative and pastoral roles—the form and content of worship were a concern as well. For example, many churches altered artwork, songs, and other elements of worship in order to represent the cultural heritage of their diverse membership. For example, late in the twentieth century Saint Alphonsus Liguori Catholic Church in St. Louis, Missouri, changed its worship as its membership changed. The church, under the leadership of Rev. Maurice J. Nutt, gained an Afrocentric approach to worship and aesthetics, which included the use of gospel music and artwork that reflected African-styled carvings.

Megachurches and Prosperity Gospel

As noted, the 1990s marked an increase in the stature of black churches that fostered a general trend toward growth in membership and programming. Many of these churches—both denominational and nondenominational, suburban and urban—constitute the corpus of what is now commonly known as megachurches. These churches are often defined as those who attract several thousand congregants each Sunday. And according to available accounts, as of the early 1990s fewer than fifty churches in the United States had memberships exceeding five thousand. Most churches were rather modest in size. More recent estimates suggest that more than thirty African American churches have memberships over the five thousand mark. These churches, pastored by ministers such as T. D. Jakes and, Creflo Dollar have in recent years not only established themselves as a religious force but also gained political influence through personal connections to major political leaders.

Marked by the emergence of ministries such as Fred Price's Crenshaw Christian Center (Los Angeles,) in the late 1960s, these churches use technology to minister to a follower base that includes not only those who physically attend the church but also the millions who consider themselves members via television programming, Web sites, CDs,

and DVDs. These churches tend to lack the traditional iconography and structure suggestive of a traditional church building, opting instead for the look of stadiums or auditoriums. Worship within these churches involves a mix of preaching, singing, and other activities meant to please the senses with less emphasis on the harder theological questions. Some scholars refer to this approach as “religio-tainment.”

Many of these churches and their leaders are known not only for their size but also for the theology they preach. Often referred to as the “Prosperity Gospel,” this message seeks to balance material success and spiritual growth. It tends to downplay the importance of social critique and rarely challenges the political establishment. It suggests that God wants humans to be successful; in fact, material success can be a sign of a proper relationship with God. Understanding and living the Bible—particularly the New Testament—result in blessings, and traditional theological vocabulary and grammar are at times replaced with the language of corporate America.

Critics charge that the Prosperity Gospel simply offers a religious justification for a form of crude materialism. Rather than offering African Americans substantial ways to approach and address the issues in their personal lives, it poses the answer in terms of greater participation in a problematic economic system. Championed in this context is radical individualism, a religious justification for the “American Dream.” The critique continues by suggesting that Prosperity Gospel preachers offer their followers nothing of lasting worth—no response to controversial issues. Thus this brand of message paints the minister as a motivational speaker rather than a prophetic representative of the social gospel—the commodification of spirituality. In response, many of these churches argue they do not offer material goods as the end point or as the purpose of religious commitment. Instead, they see their function as encouraging and guiding a proper relationship with God; economic benefit is simply a consequence of the primary objective—a personal relationship with God and with humanity.

The success of these churches raises questions and challenges for churches that do not have large memberships or do not preach the Prosperity Gospel. They may critique the megachurch and its brand of theology, but traditional churches are also pushed to respond in ways that allow them to maintain their viability. In the twenty-first century, a response to the megachurch phenomenon (complete with its theology) is unavoidable.

The Appeal of Non-Christian Religious Traditions

The religious landscape of African American communities from the earliest presence of people of African descent in the Americas to the present has been marked by religious pluralism beyond various Christian denominations. Although always present, it was not until the second half of the twentieth century that these traditions and their adherents challenged the authority of black churches and entered the popular imagination of the United States.

Islam

Drawing on the disillusionment of black nationalists, former Christians, and others, Islam provided a new context for life by connecting African Americans to a world community. It gave balance and purpose to the “me generation” and urged connection to others within a context marked by global conflict and a general ethos defining a sociopolitical and cultural nadir.

For some African Americans, the Nation of Islam provided a more compelling explanation of and response to oppression in the United States than did the black church and other religious orientations. However, the nature of the Nation of Islam changed during the post–civil rights era, first through the death of its leader, Elijah Muhammad, in 1975. This development was followed by a surprise move as Wallace Muhammad (Warith Deen Muhammad as of 1980), Elijah Muhammad’s sometimes rebellious son, became the new leader of the movement. Warith worked to bring the Nation of Islam in line with the world community of Islam by changing its teachings and the aesthetics of its practices and by dismantling other elements inconsistent with Sunni Islam. Three years after Warith Deen Muhammad became leader, Minister Louis Farrakhan broke away and reconstituted the Nation of Islam under the original teachings of Elijah Muhammad.

Even though it is difficult to gauge with any accuracy the membership of the Nation of Islam, it is clear that some African Americans have continued to find it a more compelling response to spiritual desire. Maintaining the essence of the original teachings, Farrakhan with time suggested that the more controversial teachings, such as the demonic nature of white Americans were to be understood in symbolic terms. For example, white Americans were not demons; rather, white supremacy was demonic behavior. Farrakhan also opened the Nation of Islam to other people of color willing to abide by its teachings. This

new policy was in fact consistent with Elijah Muhammad’s understanding of Latinos, Native Americans and, other “people of color” as part of the “Original People”—that is, those people created by God to rule the earth. Because of Farrakhan’s health challenges, the nature of leadership within the Nation of Islam is under review, and more authority is being given to a governing group as opposed to a strict reliance on a single charismatic figure. Under Farrakhan’s leadership, members of the Nation have also been encouraged to become politically involved, which marks a shift from the early separatist stance of Elijah Muhammad.

Farrakhan’s relationship with the U.S. government has been tense at times, but he has exhibited an ability to capture the imagination and commitment of large numbers of African Americans. The “Million Man March” he organized in 1995 in Washington, D.C., was a symbolic gathering of African American men meant to suggest their renewed embrace of their responsibilities to themselves, their families, and their communities. In the post–civil rights era, the Nation of Islam continues to secure the allegiance of many African Americans because it provides life structure, a strong religious and racial identity extending beyond the borders of the United States, and straightforward explanations of historical developments. The Nation of Islam also provides its members with a sense of hopefulness and certainty in a world marked by turmoil.

The same can be said about the appeal of Warith Deen Muhammad’s push for an African American Islam consistent with the beliefs and practices of the world community of Islam. Shortly after taking control of the organization once led by his father, Warith Deen Muhammad renamed the organization the World Community of Al-Islam in the West. In 1980 the name was changed again to the American Muslim Mission, and yet again in the 1990s to the Muslim American Community. Each name change was meant to represent the growth of an African American Muslim community consistent in all respects with Sunni Islam as practiced elsewhere in the world. Furthermore, these changes represented an effort to connect with the roots of Sunni Islam within African American communities, first represented, by the Islamic Mission of America Inc., founded by Shakyhk Dauod Ahmed Faisal in 1924, and the First Mosque of Pittsburgh.

The successful transition from the teachings of Warith Deen Muhammad’s father to Sunni Islam is expressed not only in the development of a strong community represented

by over two million African American Muslims, with schools and mosques across the country, but also in Muhammad's stature. For example, he is a member of the World Mission Council of Imam Administrators, and he is of undeniable importance to any Muslim in the United States wishing to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca (one of the five pillars of the faith) because he provides the necessary certification. Muhammad's organization now represents the dominant expression of Sunni Islam within African American communities. These African American Sunni Muslims are connected to the world community of Islam and practice the faith in a way that would be recognizable to Muslims across the globe. Although many mosques tend to be tied to particular racial or ethnic groups, many of whom have immigrated to the United States, African American Sunni Muslims are found in a variety of cities and within mosques that are racially and ethnically diverse.

African-Based Traditions

The years following the heyday of the civil rights struggle were marked by a reevaluation of African American identity. The continuing sting of discrimination in all areas of life stoked the suspicions of some African Americans that they would never be fully integrated into U.S. society. Their sense of self and community therefore had to extend beyond the cultural and social arrangements that defined the majority community. For those with this perspective, a cultural and spiritual connection to Africa was often vital, and African-based religiosity provided an answer.

The influx of immigrants from the Caribbean provided the injection of ritual expertise and cosmological knowledge needed to supplement a rather thin adherence to the African ways. African American involvement in traditions such as Santería thus increased during the post–civil rights era, its rituals protected by the Constitution, with African Americans developing “houses” of their own. In addition, the Oyotunji African Village, founded shortly after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., continues in Sheldon, South Carolina, as a religiocultural connection to African practices. This village, founded by the first African American initiated into Santería, in 1959, commits itself to the preservation of Yoruba tradition in the United States. Although the number of adherents actually living in the village has fallen over the last several decades, it remains a point of orientation and allegiance for many living elsewhere in the United States who seek the counsel of the village elders on issues of personal struggle and initiation into the priesthood.

Elsewhere, movement between Haiti and the United States during the twentieth century served to keep voodoo present and vital. And it would remain a religious option for African Americans committed to a faith tradition consistent with their perception of African heritage. Although voodoo lacks a standard doctrine, the late twentieth-century immigration of Haitians served to advance the tradition by an influx of ritual expertise. However, in some instances the substance of the tradition has been lost and what remains involves peddling to (for financial gain) the stereotypical assumptions of tourists, who buy voodoo dolls and other trinkets. For those who maintain allegiance to voodoo as a complex and rich tradition, general suspicion about it and other African-based traditions continue to call for secrecy. Scholars and popular outlets have helped to advance the interest in voodoo beyond the stereotypical depictions found in popular films. Examples are ethnographic discussions of particular voodoo leaders, such as Alourdes Margaux (Mama Lola) in New York City and Ava Kay Jones in New Orleans, and their work.

Buddhism

Americans' embrace of the new age movement during the late twentieth century included African Americans as well. A feeling that life in the United States was empty inspired a turn toward the East for guidance and new ways of living. One manifestation of this search for life balance was the interest in Buddhism. Although present to some degree in the United States in the 1800s through missionary efforts and the writings of D. T. Suzuki, it was not until the 1960s with the proselytizing efforts of Soka Gakkai International-USA that African Americans began to embrace Buddhism in noteworthy numbers. Eventually African Americans would constitute more than 20 percent (twenty thousand) of Soka Gakkai's total membership and would hold positions of authority within the organization such as serving as district leaders and as vice general director.

Part of the appeal of Buddhism for African Americans stemmed from its commitment to equality and mutuality. In this way, African Americans felt free to embrace their heritage as people of African descent, denounce discrimination, and do so within the context of religious commitment. Furthermore, Buddhism has provided some African Americans with a sense of balance and serenity within a country marked by discord. There is within Soka Gakkai, according to some, opportunity for self-improvement and freedom to rethink the context and terms of life.

Humanism

Since the period of slavery, some African Americans have rejected theistic orientations and have instead embraced various forms of humanism. Denouncing supernaturalism, these African Americans have preferred religious naturalism in which ethics trumps notions of the divine, and humans are understood to be accountable for the problems plaguing them as well as responsible for solving these problems. During the twentieth century African American humanism often revolved around an embrace of the Communist Party because of the perceived inability of Christian churches to address adequately the issues facing African Americans. During the civil rights movement some African Americans maintained this humanistic orientation through a rejection of the theological assumptions of leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. Instead, they worked with organizations such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), as well as the Black Panther Party, both of which were disillusioned with the Christian ethos of the dominant civil rights struggle. Shifting to a human-centered framework was thought to be a more effective way of addressing the ills facing African Americans, in that it removed the possibility of divine sanction for oppression and allowed for a strong sense of human worth and hope generated by a sense of control over one's destiny. Today, many African Americans who continue to maintain this perspective and want to do so within the context of community join organizations such as the Unitarian Universalist Association, a no-creed religious denomination.

Black and Womanist Theologies

In the 1960s a group of progressive religious leaders and academics attempted to express a radical form of the social gospel meant to directly respond to racism and discrimination. In essence they sought to wed theologically black power and the Christian faith. This group, known as the National Council of Negro Churchmen (later the National Council of Black Churchmen), published statements on the religious import of black power and the obligation of Christians to seek freedom for the oppressed. Some of the early work in this area was carried out by Rev. Albert Cleage (*The Black Messiah*, 1968) who argued that God was black and Jesus was a black revolutionary whose activities pointed toward the liberation of oppressed African Americans. Yet it was with the publication of *Black Power and Black Theology* (1969) by James H. Cone that academic black theology

assumed its current structure and expression. Cone argued for an intimate connection between God and the struggle for liberation. In fact, he argued, God, in keeping with the biblical story of the Jews, sided with the oppressed and worked for their liberation. The mode of this struggle and partnership did not exclude, from Cone's perspective, the use of violence. In framing this agenda, black theology argued the meaning of oppression in the United States in terms of the plight of African Americans. The next year Cone published *A Black Theology of Liberation* (1970), in which he extended his earlier reflections. For example, Cone argued that God's connection to the oppressed in the United States (that is, African Americans) is so strong that God must be understood as black, or as ontologically black. With its commitment to the best of the Christian faith and the ability of that faith to promote healthy life options, black theology became a Christian theology.

Roughly three generations of black theologians are committed to the agenda initiated some forty years ago by Cone and others such as J. Deotis Roberts. They have expanded its attention to African American cultural materials and altered it in other ways while maintaining an allegiance to its fundamental structure and purpose. Some African American academics have challenged black theology to include more sophisticated social theory and analysis and to provide more rigorous attention to its reading of scripture and history. Others have pushed for better recognition of religious pluralism in the theology (including its nontheistic orientation). Furthermore, a small group, inspired by William R. Jones's 1973 book *Is God a White Racist? A Preamble to Black Theology*, has called into question the manner in which black theological discussions tend to understand human suffering as having some type of benefit in the struggle for liberation.

Amid the disagreements on the scope, framing, and articulation of black theology was an underlying problem that was not addressed in a systematic manner until the late 1970s. African American women academics pointed out the unchallenged sexism framing black theology and the teachings and practices of Christian churches. In the mid-1980s, a small group of African American women in ethics and theology added to a centuries-old critique of black churches a constructive element, womanist thought. This new theological paradigm critiqued the racism of many feminist thinkers and the sexism of many African American thinkers. The notion of "womanish" offered by novelist Alice Walker in her book *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* (1982)

provided both a new methodology for the study of African American religion as well as new source material for understanding the development of that religion. Katie G. Cannon and Delores Williams, who are credited with naming this new mode of religious analysis, argued that a proper theological and ethical thinking capable of transforming life for the most oppressed must recognize the ways in which African American women were suffering because of oppression's triadic structure—racism, sexism, and classism.

The only way, these scholars argued, to develop sensitivity to and a critique of racism, sexism, and classism as they function in African American communities was to pay attention to the voices of African American women who were suffering from this web of oppression. Thus the literature and other materials that chronicled the concerns and experiences of women began to draw attention. And the perspective of women emerging from these materials was used to rethink the Christian faith. For example, Delores Williams in *Sisters in the Wilderness* (1993) used the challenges faced by African American women during slavery and freedom to interrogate traditional thinking on theories of the Atonement. Rather than embracing suffering as the central mark of the Atonement, Williams argued that not the death but the ministry of Christ was the most important: people should behave in the world in ways consistent with the teachings and practices of Christ. Williams was not the first to challenge traditional thinking about the Christ Event. In 1979 Jacqueline Grant (*Black Woman's Jesus, White Woman's Christ*) pushed both black theologians and feminist scholars by suggesting that African American women and white women have very different perceptions of Christology based on the modalities of oppression experienced by African American women. In terms of ethics, Katie Cannon in *Womanist Ethics* (1988) used the work of African American writer Zora Neale Hurston to think through the ethical lessons one can learn from the manner in which African American women have responded to oppression.

In addition to identifying the triadic structure of oppression as a way to reformulate African American religious thought and practice, womanist thinkers have also pushed African American Christians to address homophobia within African American churches, as well as the more general lack of attention to issues of sexuality. From the perspective of womanist scholars, African American Christians have had a troubled relationship with the human body. According to womanist theologian Kelly Brown Douglas (*Sexuality and the Black Church*, 1999, and *What's Love Got to Do With It?*

2005), this troubled relationship with the body stems from Christianity's platonic privileging of the spirit over the flesh. To overcome this dualism, Douglas argued for a theologically informed regard for the body, stemming from an appreciation of the Christ Event as the perfect union of God and humanity in relation to the body—that is, the body is not seen as a barrier to proper relationship with God, but rather as the vehicle through which God is made manifest in the world. This new attitude toward the body, then, allowed African American Christians to understand a full range of relationships—including sexual relationships—as of profound value.

As for homophobia, womanist scholars challenge the assumed biblical basis for this form of discrimination. For African American Christians to discriminate against homosexuals runs contrary to the deep love and respect for all highlighted in the ministry of Christ. The underlying assumption present in womanist scholarship is recognition of the manner in which people are both oppressed and oppressing, participating in a complex system of interactions that privilege some and harm others. And liberation must involve recognition of the web-like nature of oppression and the effort to work in solidarity with all living creatures.

Finally, it is only within womanist scholarship over the last several years that destruction of the environment has been understood to be a religious issue that should be addressed by African American Christians. Drawing again on the pattern of commitments and relationships present in the Bible, scholars such as Emilie Townes (*Breaking the Fine Rain of Death*) argue that liberation must also involve a proper relationship with the earth.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Faith-based Community Organizations*; *Faith-based Initiatives*; *Gender*; *Islam in North America*; *Literature: African American*; *Megachurches*; *Music: African American Gospel*; *Nation(s) of Islam*; *New Religious Movements: Black Nationalist Movements*; *Race and Racism*; *Religious Thought: Womanist*; *Santería*; *Voodoo*; *Women*.

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African American Religious Thought

See *Religious Thought: African American*

African American Roman Catholics

See *Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics*

African Traditional Religions

Written accounts of African traditional religions first appeared in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and resulted from Westerners' contact with Africans during colonization and the slave trade. Prior to this time, there were some accounts written by missionaries or traders, but their contact was often extremely limited, and their ability to converse in local languages calls into question their ability to understand local customs. In addition to these written sources, scholars have utilized oral sources, although their reliability is also questionable, since most were recorded generations after colonization and it is impossible to know how contact may have influenced them. Archeological findings, such as rock paintings, have also been utilized by researchers, although they require a great deal of interpretation, which is difficult considering the lack of supporting historical sources. Although there has been an increased interest in studying African traditional religions, much of the older scholarship is based in a Eurocentric, racist understanding of African culture, and this has inevitably affected modern scholarship.

Though at present westerners know little about African traditional religions prior to Western contact, it is clear that the practices of African traditional religions have been in decline. Prior to 1900, the practice of indigenous religions was almost universal in sub-Saharan, non-Muslim Africa. By

the turn of the twenty-first century, however, the percentage of Africans practicing traditional religions decreased dramatically. The majority of Africans were either Christian or Muslim, with only about 25 percent considering themselves members of traditional religions.

The Supernatural in Africa

African traditional religions generally focus on this world, and as a result, practitioners' interactions with the supernatural realm tend to be instrumentalist. This means that they appeal to divinities, spirits, and ancestors in hope of gaining their help in this world, rather than simply worshipping them to show their devotion or to gain personal salvation. Religion is more about maintaining order and creating systems of support in which community identity is key, and issues of personal devotion and salvation are not primary. Furthermore, religion is not considered a distinct sphere within traditional African culture. Rather, it is intertwined with other aspects of life much more so than in the West. Prior to Western contact, there was not a sense that religion was distinct, and this makes it difficult to distinguish what is and is not "religious" within African culture. Because practitioners do not make such distinctions, one must recognize that outsiders impose such categorizations upon traditional African ways of life.

Although it is difficult to generalize about African traditional religions, most include a concept of a supreme being, or god, who is eternal and omniscient. They also involve myths about the divine origins of life, suffering, disease, and death as well as a belief in lesser deities and spirits that are active in the world in both positive and negative ways. A belief in the evil power of witches is also common, especially in societies where status is earned rather than ascribed.

The supreme being, or high god, is often associated with the sun or sky, though the nature of these beings differs between religions and cultures. Some of these deities are male, others female, and still others are androgynous and are understood as neither male nor female. In addition to different personifications of these supreme beings, the roles that they play in this world also differ among traditions. For example, creation myths in different cultures describe the supreme being's involvement in the creation of the world in various ways. The Yoruba tradition of Nigeria and Benin, for example, maintains that their supreme being, known as Olodumare, delegated the creation of the world to lesser beings, known as *orisha*. Similarly, the Dogon of Mali believe that their high god, Amma, began the creation of the world

but had lesser spirits, known as *Nummo*, complete the process. In contrast, the Nuer and Dinka of southern Sudan, the BaMbuti of the Congo, and the Kboisan of South African believe that their supreme being was the sole creator of the universe.

In addition to different myths about the creation of the world, African traditional religions also have different conceptions of how their supreme being interacts with this world. Yoruba tradition understands the high god as a distant ruler, in a category distinct from other, lesser deities. Like Yoruba kings, who rule from afar and have very little interaction with their people, one does not appeal to this high power for assistance but instead petitions lesser deities and spirits for their help. As a result, many regions do not have shrines to their supreme being or artwork depicting the high god, but only lesser beings. The highest god also tends not to be involved in rituals of spirit possession. This has often been understood by outsiders to be evidence that the highest being is not central to African traditional religions, but in fact, the lack of shrines or presence during ritual is because the supreme being is considered too distant and powerful to be bothered with everyday concerns. This is not universal, however, and among the Igbo, for example, the high god, Chukwu, has shrines in his honor and has been known to speak to his people through an oracle. Rather than being a distant figure, Chukwu communicates with the Igbo people and directly affects their lives.

Although the supreme being is generally not the focus of ritual appeals, many traditions maintain that he is active in the most critical issues of this world. In many cultures he is central to birth and death. For example, the Dogon tradition maintains that pregnancy is the result of the supreme being's allowing a birth force to enter a woman's womb. Similarly, Yoruba custom says that Olodumare allows the spirits of ancestors to enter a woman's body in order to be reborn. The highest god is also commonly thought to judge people after death and assign them to an afterlife or reincarnation depending on the lives they led. It should be noted that reincarnation is not seen as negative in most African cultures, as it is in Asian religions. Instead, it is an expected outcome of living a good life. Other traditions also believe that the supreme being is in control of the rain. This is especially true in regions where rain is scarce and droughts are a serious threat to communities' survival.

As mentioned above, in addition to the supreme beings that are found in nearly all African traditional religions, most traditions also believe in the power of lesser deities and

spirits. Like those of the high gods, the natures and powers of these lesser beings also differ among traditions. For example, the Nuer of Sudan believe that lesser deities are emanations of the supreme being, so a strict distinction between the higher and lower beings is not made. They are seen as part of one whole. Among the Yoruba, however, there are thought to be hundreds of distinct lesser deities, known as orisha. Each orisha is independent from the high god, Olodumare, and has his or her own history, myths, personality, and rituals associated with him or her. Specific deities are also commonly associated with certain professions. For example, in Yoruba culture, blacksmiths and hunters are associated with Ogun, the god of iron and war. The belief that lesser deities are autonomous is common among other West African groups as well, especially among groups with strict sociopolitical hierarchies, such as the Yoruba or the Akan of Ghana. Most African traditional religions also involve a belief in a god or goddess of water. They are particularly important in the Igbo culture and tend to be the dominant local divinity in this region. To the Igbo, the goddesses of water are stern rulers who are quick to punish but are also devoted to the protection of their people. In contrast, the Ijo people found in the Niger Delta have a different understanding of water deities. They believe in a society of male and female spirits that live beneath the waterways and communally control only the water.

In addition to lesser deities, ancestors are also important among many practitioners of African traditional religions. Bantu-speaking peoples of Equatorial, East, and South Africa, for example, focus a great deal on their ancestors. These are people who died a good death, lived to an appropriate age, and had proper burial rites performed on their behalf. After passing into the afterlife, they continue to influence this world and the lives of their descendants by punishing, rewarding, and protecting them. Ancestor cults tend to look back four to five generations. These people's names, stories, and histories are still remembered, and they are thought to be closer to those still living than people who passed away longer ago. Similarly, the elderly are often revered in these societies because they are closer to the afterlife and therefore to the ancestors. Although most ancestors can only affect the lives of their progeny, after death sacred rulers can influence the lives of all the people living in their territories, just as they could while living. Shrines and rituals devoted to ancestors and deceased rulers are common in many African traditions, even among those who have converted to Islam and Christianity. Yoruba and Igbo traditions

have also focused on ancestors, in addition to the lesser deities mentioned above. They believe that ancestors are active in the world and that they become physically present during ritual masking dances.

Among the people of Central and West Africa, fetish cults are often even more important than ancestors. Although these cults were more important and prominent prior to the twentieth century, they are still a part of some religious practice. The Kongo people from the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Angola are examples of groups that participate in fetish cults. In these traditions, spirits are associated with sacred objects, known as *minkisi*. Minkisi are often bundles or sculptures that are extremely powerful because of their connection to spirits and the supernatural realm.

Although there is no strict dualism between good and evil in most African traditional religions, and gods, spirits, and deities both help and harm people, evil forces are often associated with witches. In most cultures, witches' supernatural powers can only be used for evil, although Yoruba culture teaches that they can also bring about positive ends, if they are placated. Witches are generally thought to be older women who survive by stealing the life force of living things, although the Chewa believe they can be male or female. Witchcraft can either be inherited, learned, or can result from a woman's consuming human flesh, which requires her to repay a supernatural debt. The relationship of witches to the natural world is inverted, and they are seen as more closely connected to the animal world and are often assumed to be shape-shifters. Unlike people, who eat animals and make companions of humans, witches feed on humans and develop close relationships with animals. In many cultures the presence of witches and their power is taken for granted, and witchcraft is often used as an explanation for sickness or unfortunate accidents. Although not all misfortune is attributed to witchcraft, as gods and ancestors are also capable of causing people harm, witches are often blamed when something bad and unexpected happens. Rituals are often utilized to counteract the power of witches.

A final group of supernatural beings found in many African traditional religions are *tricksters*, and these beings are especially common in West African traditions. They love to create confusion and chaos in supernatural and natural realms. They often tempt humans to act impulsively, hoping to create unexpected chaos. Tricksters are also commonly portrayed as messengers who intentionally manipulate their messages to cause confusion. For example, among

the Yoruba, Eshu is a trickster who is responsible for calling together other orisha for rituals. He intentionally leaves out or changes part of his messages, however, which causes confusion among the other orisha and makes rituals fail. Although many westerners have understood tricksters to be evil beings and have tended to associate them with Satan, this dualistic view of good and evil is not found in most African traditional religions, and tricksters and other deities are not seen as strictly good or evil but as part of a more complicated system of interaction between the supernatural and natural realms.

Rituals in Africa

Ritual practices are also an integral part of African traditional religions, although many rituals have died out or changed dramatically in the recent past. There are multiple reasons for these changes. With the appearance of colonial powers, many cultures changed dramatically, and traditions such as religious rituals were no longer seen as necessary. Also, many colonizers and missionaries restricted or outlawed indigenous religious rituals, making it difficult for the traditions to continue on.

Rituals are commonly performed among adherents to African traditional religions to encourage fertility, bring about rain, heal the sick, and protect the community, and they often take the form of prayer, animal sacrifice, or offerings of food or beverages. These behaviors are set apart as distinct from everyday activities, which is what makes them powerful. Because rituals must be distinct from daily life, specific instruments are used. Special bottles and bowls hold sacrificial food and libations, special tools are used for killing and the preparation of sacrificial meals, and certain dress is often required for rituals to take place.

Sacrifice and bloodless offerings are common in African traditional religions. They are generally understood as a form of communication between supernatural beings and humans. By offering sustenance, believers nourish the deity or ancestor, and in return they are assisted in the natural world. These forms of sacrifice tend to also nourish the believers, who often consume the sacrificial food and drink as part of the ritual. The more important the object being offered is to the community, the more significant the sacrifice. For example, the Nuer, Dinka, and Masai people traditionally raised cattle, which were essential to their survival. This made the offering of a bull or a cow a supreme sacrifice.

Prior to contact with Europeans, human sacrifices were also a part of some African traditional religions' ritual

practices. For example, in the late nineteenth century, the Igbo of Niger still sacrificed slaves when a titled man was initiated into his position and when he died. In other instances, humans were sacrificed to atone for the community's sins or to appease natural forces, such as the ocean. Most human sacrifices ceased after colonization, however. Though blood sacrifices of animals or humans have been common in African traditional religions, not all cultures perform animal sacrifices, and some specific deities do not require blood offerings.

In addition to offering sacrifices, it is also common for adherents to African traditional religions to take part in rituals when they transition between life stages. For example, when a member is born or dies, is named, goes through puberty, gets married, or is installed into office, it is common for a ritual to be performed. There are often three stages to these rituals. During the first stage, the initiate is removed from his or her familiar life. He may be removed from his home or separated from his family or community. During the next phase, he enters a liminal stage, where he is between life stages and is no longer a part of the previous stage but has not yet entered the next. At this time, members are often subjected to physical suffering as well as made to feel helpless, while they are also taught their new responsibilities. The final step is for the initiate to be reintegrated into his community with new responsibilities based on his new status.

Masking cults and spirit possession are also common to many African traditional religions, and some cultural regions recognize thousands of named masks. These tend to be male-dominated secret societies, and members perform rituals in order to receive the presence of deities, spirits, or ancestors. Spirits may be part of the natural world—an animal or a more general natural force—or spirits of deceased relatives. Unlike other forms of spirit possession, which tend to focus on healing, masking cults are more concerned with social order and control and are thought to counteract the power of witches. Although elaborate costumes are required for these rituals, the supernatural being is not within the material of the costume; rather, the ritual dress allows these beings access to the practitioners.

Divination is also a common ritual practice among many members of African traditional religions. Divining is the art of foretelling the future or gaining insight into a situation by accessing supernatural knowledge through the performance of rituals or the interpretation of omens. Trained men generally perform divination to find meaning in

people's daily lives and to find cures for afflictions. Though divination is widespread in African traditions, the practices and purposes of divining vary dramatically. The Dogon of South Mali, for example, lure desert foxes with nuts and then look at their footprints and interpret their meaning. Among these people it is believed that foxes could once speak, but now they can only communicate through diviners. Another widespread tradition is Ifa, which is the dominant divining tradition of the Yoruba region. This tradition centers on the collection and recitation of oral poetry. Diviners memorize hundreds of poems, which are then randomly selected when a believer comes for assistance. After the poem is determined, the diviner recites it, and it directs the seeker. Afa is another common divination practice among the Igbo, although there are regional differences even among the Igbo, and northern and southern versions of Afa differ. In the north, diviners cast seed pods and read their positions as a secret language, which provides guidance. In the south, however, twenty symbolic objects are cast, and the positions in which they fall are interpreted. Other groups read the behavior of animals or interpret their deaths or look to their entrails for direction. As with most traditional rituals, divination is becoming less and less common, but politicians and leaders are still known to rely on traditional divining for guidance, even today.

Christian missionary efforts in Africa, as well as the colonization of the continent by Christian nations, have led to a dramatic decrease in the number of adherents to traditional religions. Although not as common as they used to be, these traditions are still practiced by a large portion of the African population. In addition to the influence that African traditional religions have had on African cultures, their influence has also spread through the African diaspora. As African slaves were taken from their homelands and sold around the world, their religions spread. This was particularly true in North and South America and the Caribbean, as this is where the majority of slaves ended their journey.

African Traditional Religions in the "New World"

Any time religions and cultures are transplanted from one area to another, they are bound to change, and this was particularly true of African traditional religion in the so-called New World. African traditional religions came to the Americas during the slave trade, when Africans transplanted their indigenous religious beliefs and practices after being taken from their homelands. There has been a long-standing debate among scholars about the extent to which African

slaves were able to maintain and preserve aspects of their religion and culture while enslaved and, consequently, the extent to which African culture has influenced African American religious life in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Melville Herskovits and E. Franklin Frazier are two of the most well-known scholars who engaged in this debate, with Frazier arguing that the institution of slavery stripped Africans entirely of their native religions and cultures. According to Frazier, this meant that twentieth-century African American culture had no meaningful connection to traditions of Africa. Herskovits, on the other hand, maintained that enslaved Africans were able to preserve many aspects of their cultures, including aspects of their religions, and as a result, the influence of African traditions could still be seen in twentieth-century American black culture.

Late-twentieth and early-twenty-first century scholars have stressed a middle ground between Herskovits and Frazier. Although slave masters worked diligently to erase African culture from the lives of their slaves, Africans and their descendents fought just as hard to maintain aspects of their past. Recent research indicates that although African slaves were forced to give up a great deal of their religious lives, they were nonetheless able to preserve much of their culture during slavery. African folklore, music, language, and ritual actions all remained a part of many slaves' religious lives, even though they changed in order to accommodate a new setting and the institution of slavery. Beliefs in the power of spirits to control and animate the natural world remained important to transplanted Africans, as did the role of spirit possession in religious ritual. Fetishes, which tended to be in the form of amulets or charms, also remained important for protecting against illness, misfortune, and witchcraft in the New World, and slaves continued to utilize divination techniques to predict the fate of people or to know the will of ancestors and gods. Finally, religious dancing, drumming, and singing, all of which were integral to the religious lives of many West Africans, remained important within slave communities. As mentioned above, although these African traditions were transplanted into a slave context, there were necessarily changes that occurred. Many slave owners banned the use of drums, so slaves began replacing drumming with rhythmic clapping, foot tapping, preaching, and call-and-response singing. These new practices were related to spirit possession among African Americans and accomplished what drumming had in Africa by calling spirits to possess their believers. While drumming was no longer an option, African slaves invented new systems for accomplishing what drumming had contributed.

Although Christianity and Islam were present on the African continent before the slave trade began, most slaves were believers in African traditional religions. Africans brought to the Americas tended to be from West Africa and the Congo-Angola region, where traditional religions were still the dominant religious force. This having been said, slaves came from a variety of tribes, nations, and language groups, and traders often went out of their way to separate Africans based on their backgrounds, so as to weaken the ties to their past. This made it nearly impossible for African slaves to maintain their religions and cultures intact, requiring them to build communities that incorporated their diverse backgrounds. Slave communities often combined the beliefs and practices of their various traditional beliefs, while also incorporating aspects of Christianity and Native American religions. This, combined with their new environment and their experience as slaves, resulted in many new, syncretic religious traditions among slaves in the Americas.

Afro-Caribbean Religions

In areas of the Caribbean where Catholicism dominated, such as Haiti and Cuba, African slaves developed religious traditions that were syncretic alternatives to Catholicism and Christianity. They formed distinct rituals, which occasionally corresponded with Catholic traditions but were in many ways distinct. In regions where Protestantism was prominent, such as Jamaica and Trinidad, Africans often created alternate forms of Christianity by interpreting Christianity and the Bible in Afrocentric ways.

Caribbean traditions such as vaudou (also spelled vodou or voodoo), shango, and Santería conflated African gods and Catholic saints. This worked well for a number of reasons. First, Catholic emphasis on the cult of saints allowed African slaves to disguise the worship of their gods in the guise of Catholicism. Similarly, the intercession of saints on behalf of Catholic believers was reminiscent of the African system of lesser deities acting as intermediaries between the supreme god and human beings. Finally, it was common among African religious believers to accept the gods of other African groups. As cultures intermingled in Africa because of marriage or warfare, Africans were typically willing to shift devotion from one god to another, making syncretism more palatable to African slaves than Europeans.

One of the most well-known instances of African traditional religions influencing religious culture in the Caribbean is found in Haiti. Haitian vaudou is most commonly associated with Dahomey culture, although it was

influenced by cultures from Senegal to Congo and all over West Africa. Practitioners of Haitian vaudou believe in a supreme being, known as Gran-Met. Although Gran-Met is the highest god, like many African traditions, vaudou has a pantheon of lesser deities, known as *loa*. Similarly, these lesser gods tend to be the focus of vaudou rituals because they are the ones involved in human affairs, while Gran-Met is distant and removed from daily life. Another similarity between Haitian vaudou and traditional religions as found in Africa is the emphasis placed on possession. Practitioners of vaudou perform rituals that allow lesser deities to possess their bodies, providing direct contact with the supernatural realm, and the behaviors of the possessed believer allow others to identify which *loa* is present. This is similar to possession in much of Africa.

Many of the major Yoruba and Dahomean gods are also worshipped by name among the Shango cult of Trinidad, though they are in many ways actually more local than African. Eshu, Ogun, Yemanjá, and Shango are worshipped by name, but the myths associated with these gods have been replaced. Rather than having African myths associated with them, they now have Catholic hagiographies.

Combinations of African traditional religions and Catholicism also characterize Cuban Santería. Again, Yoruba influences are significant, but the tradition is clearly infused with Catholic traditions and beliefs as well. Practitioners of Santería refer to themselves as Lucumi, taken from the Yoruba greeting *Oluki mi*, which means “my friend.” Many Yoruba gods also became identified with the saints and were worshipped as such. Also, spirit possession, animal sacrifice, Ifa divination, drumming, and singing are all very reminiscent of Yoruba traditions, with Ifa divination being almost identical in Cuba and Africa.

Possession is also important to many Jamaican religious groups. Revival and Pocomania are two religious communities that have melded Protestant theology with African styles of possession. Like so many African and syncretic traditions, these groups emphasize the importance of spirit possession. Unlike traditional African possession, however, these believers are thought to be possessed by Christian figures, rather than African gods or ancestors. They connect with Old Testament prophets, the twelve apostles, archangels, and the Holy Spirit.

The Convince cult and Cumina are other Jamaican traditions that incorporate West African theology, although they too no longer refer to African gods or spirits by name. Members of the Convince cult are called *Bongo men* and

trace their roots to a group of runaway slaves. These slaves escaped to the mountains and fought against the British until they were eventually granted their independence in 1739 by a treaty. Unlike traditional religions, which tend to focus on recently deceased ancestors, Bongo men venerate older ancestors, who died in Africa, and Jamaican slaves. They also offer animal sacrifices, like practitioners of African traditional religions. In language similar to African tradition, spirits are said to “mount” believers and ride them like horses. Cumina believers worship Shango, the Yoruba god of thunders, although he is the only African god that remains a part of the tradition. Although Shango is the only African god, practitioners also venerate spirits of the sky and earth and the ancestors, with gods of the sky being the highest and ancestors the least powerful. This is similar to many African traditional practitioners, who assume that there are spirits associated with each of these realms, although they are often given names and distinguished one from another, rather than worshipped as a whole. Also similar to African traditional religions, the spirits connected with these realms have certain food preferences, drum rhythms, and dance styles that are associated with them and determine the ritual behavior of followers.

Afro-Brazilian Religions

The Candomblé tradition is found primarily in Brazil and was heavily influenced by Yoruba culture and also emphasizes the importance of sacrifice, drumming, singing, and possession. Similar to the Yoruba tradition, Candomblé has multiple deities with unique personalities and histories, although unlike Yoruba traditions, there is more of a focus on the relationship between practitioners and their personal deity, known as their *Orixá*. Priests and priestesses, known as *paes* or *maes de santo*, have a special devotion to their deity and are in charge of maintaining their temple, organizing worship, and training other devotees. By providing their personal *Orixá* with the appropriate sacrifices and by observing their deity’s commands, believers are able to receive magical powers, known as *axé*. Candomblé also places a special emphasis on the importance of trances, which allow practitioners to directly connect with their *Orixá* and act as mediums between the supernatural and natural realms.

Umbanda is another syncretic religion found in Brazil, and it was heavily influenced by the religion and culture of the West African Bantu people and spiritualism. It developed later than many other syncretic traditions, beginning at the end of the nineteenth century. Umbanda cults were found

primarily within urban areas, although Umbanda never gained much of a following in the northeast, and it was especially popular in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Umbanda groups are self-governing, with each high priest, or *Pai de santo*, being relatively autonomous. This has led to little consistency among groups and has resulted in different doctrines and rituals in different regions.

North America

African traditional religions surely influenced African North American as well as South American cultures, especially during slavery, although the theology and practices associated with African traditional religions did not survive in North America to the same degree as they did in the Caribbean and Latin America. There are a number of reasons why this was the case. First, some scholars have argued that Catholicism, with its focus on ritual action and the saints, was more conducive to the survival of traditional religions. African slaves were able to incorporate aspects of their traditional behavior into Catholic ritual and were able to replace their worship of traditional gods with devotion to Catholic saints. This was less the case within Protestant settings, as Protestants tended to downplay the importance of ritual and focused rather on inward contemplation and individual experience. Consequently, slaves were able to transfer and therefore maintain their devotion to traditional gods and rituals less easily when placed within a Protestant setting. Because Catholicism was much more influential in the Caribbean and Latin America than in North America, African traditional religions were able to survive more clearly there. Second, there were fewer slaves imported to North America than other regions of the New World. By the time of North American emancipation in 1863, there were more than four million slaves in the United States. This is ten times the number of slaves that were brought into the country. In the Caribbean and South America, however, the number of emancipated slaves was consistently less than the number of slaves imported. This is to say, by emancipation, most slaves in the United States were native-born and were born into slavery. Their connections to the African continent were often generations removed, which weakened their ties to traditional religion and culture. In other regions, however, where slaves were consistently imported and recent arrivals made up the majority of the enslaved population, there was a more direct connection to Africa, and traditional rituals and beliefs were constantly being reintroduced and reinforced.

Although it was difficult for slaves in the United States to maintain much of their traditional cultures, there are clear ways in which African traditional religions influenced American religious practices. The ring shout is one of the most obvious instances of African influence in North America. During this ritual, slaves danced in a circle as part of their religious worship. Although the name implies ritual shouting of some kind, this was not essential to the practice. During the ring shout, rhythmic clapping, singing, and dancing continued to call for spirit possession, but these were no longer the spirits of ancestors or African gods but of the Christian Holy Spirit. Though the theology behind possession changed, the behaviors were similar and were recognizably African. Slaves' ecstatic behavior, although inspired by a different religious view, nonetheless included behaviors that pointed to the influence of their African heritage on New World religion. Ecstatic religious practices borrowed from African traditional religions not only influenced African American religions but also affected the religious lives of whites. This was particularly evidenced in the camp revival meetings of the Second Great Awakening. Again, rather than being possessed by gods or ancestors, white Protestants were overwhelmed by the power of the Holy Spirit and participated in clapping, dancing, and singing in order to bring about these ecstatic states.

In addition to these general trends in slave religions in North America, there are also instances of specific communities on which African traditional religions had a particularly notable influence. One example is a community that flourished until the nineteenth century in New Orleans, Louisiana. This group practiced voodoo, which was related to Haitian vaudou but should not be confused with it. The beginnings of the voodoo tradition in New Orleans were associated with slaves from the French West Indies, but voodoo grew as a result of an influx of slaves and freed blacks who left Saint-Domingue during the Haitian Revolution. Believers in voodoo centered their worship around a snake god, although there are aspects of other traditional gods and goddesses also present in the tradition. Like so many other traditions with African influences, voodoo practitioners integrated drumming, dancing, singing, spirit possession, and animal sacrifices into their religious lives. They similarly used charms, amulets, and potions to predict the future as well as affect the present. Voodoo practitioners in New Orleans became quite successful and gained influence and prestige among both white and black Louisianans. Although this community was fairly confined to the New Orleans

area, voodoo came to be associated more generally with conjuring in the United States, regardless of its connection or relationship to Haitian vaudou or African traditional religions. Though much of the theological backing is removed from modern forms of voodoo, many of the folk practices remain to this day.

Although the influence of African traditional religions has continued into the present, there are not many practitioners of African traditional religions in America today. Though the number of African immigrants into North America has been increasing in the past few decades, most of these immigrants are Christians and Muslims. Even so, the increase in the African-born American population that resulted from the 1990 Immigration Act has meant that practitioners of African traditional religions are more common in the United States than they have been since slavery. There are a few men and women who associate with African traditions and have followings in the United States, but their followings tend to be small. They generally come from the priestly class of West African diviners, known as *babalawos*, and divination is often their only African-influenced practice. There has also been an increase in the popularity of African traditional religions among African Americans in recent years. Most of these practitioners are American-born, however, and are self-consciously seeking to reconnect with their African heritage through religious devotion and ritual.

The Christianization of Africa since colonial times has led many scholars to overlook African traditional religions on the African continent as well as in the so-called New World. The efforts of missionaries and colonizers to silence traditional beliefs and end indigenous practices were often quite successful, which has caused problems for researchers who seek to understand Africa's indigenous cultures and religions. This problem was further exacerbated by the fact that many Christian and Muslim Africans understand traditional beliefs to be nothing but superstition, which has also led African scholars to de-emphasize the importance and influence of African indigenous religions.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Santería*; *Voodoo*.

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Amana Communities

The seven villages of the Amana Colonies, Iowa, were founded in 1855 by a German religious group known as the Community of True Inspiration. Formed under the leadership of Eberhard Ludwig Gruber (1655–1728) and Johann Friedrich Rock (1678–1749) in 1714 in the Wetterau region of Germany, the Community of True Inspiration had its roots in the German Pietism movement of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Like other Pietist groups, the Inspirationists emphasized a pious, personal religious experience outside of the established church, advocating humility, quiet reflection, prayer, and Bible study. Their belief that God still communicated directly to people just as to the prophets of the Old Testament set the Community of True Inspiration apart from other Pietist groups. In the history of the community, several women and men have been recognized as instruments of the Lord, or *Werkzeuge*, who delivered divine pronouncements. Scribes wrote down these pronouncements, or testimonies, as they were spoken. Many were printed and disseminated.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, the group flourished, and Inspirationist communities could be found



The Amana Colonies in Iowa, founded in 1855, developed a communal economy based on manufacturing and agriculture.

in dozens of towns in southwestern Germany, Switzerland, and Alsace. After the death of Rock in 1749, the movement experienced a general decline.

Emigration to Ebenezer, New York

In the 1820s, under the leadership of a new Werkzeug, Christian Metz (1793–1867), the Community of True Inspiration was revitalized. Its growth and enthusiasm, however, caused it to come under closer scrutiny by religious and secular authorities. In the 1830s, Inspirationist families and congregations throughout southern Germany, Switzerland, and Alsace left their homes to avoid persecution for their beliefs. Many came to live on large estates leased by the community in Hesse, one of the more tolerant German provinces. Hesse, however, offered only a temporary respite for the Community of True Inspiration. Religious and civil authorities grew less tolerant of religious separatists. Depressed economic conditions also weighed heavily on the community. Finally, an inspired pronouncement through Christian Metz determined that the community should move to America.

The Inspirationists decided to settle in America in a community of their own, separate from the rest of the world. In 1842 they pooled their money to buy land and pay passage for those members who could not afford it themselves.

They called their new home near Buffalo, New York, “Ebenezer.” By 1845, more than seven hundred members of the Community of True Inspiration had immigrated to Ebenezer, where they had purchased more than five thousand acres and built six villages, constructed textile factories and craft shops, and cleared land for their agricultural endeavors. Here they created a communal economic and social system that remained essentially unchanged for eighty-nine years. All land and buildings were owned by the community; families were provided with living quarters and household necessities; communal kitchen houses prepared meals for all members; and each adult worked without wages at assigned tasks in the kitchens, fields, factories, or shops.

Move to Amana, Iowa

Despite their prosperity in Ebenezer, the Inspirationists faced problems that caused them to move again. By 1854, the population had grown to more than a thousand members, but land prices had increased dramatically, and the Inspirationists could not afford to purchase additional land. Also, Metz and the community elders were concerned about the growth of the city of Buffalo, which they felt threatened the community’s separation from the sinful world. The community looked to the Midwest to find a

more suitable place to settle. Along the Iowa River about twenty miles west of the Iowa state capitol, Iowa City, they found an ideal place that had all the requisite resources: fertile land available at a reasonable price; water that could be used to power their mills; and abundant timber, stone, and clay for construction. Of equal importance in their decision to move to Iowa was the fact that the exploring party reported that they “felt at home” there.

The Inspirationists started buying land and began construction of the first village in 1855. They called their new home “Amana,” a biblical name that signifies “remain true.” They incorporated as a religious organization, the Amana Society, retaining communal property ownership. Their new constitution declared that their purpose was to serve God and seek salvation and that “the foundation of our civil organization is and shall remain forever God, the Lord, and the faith which He worked in us according to his grace and mercy.”

Over a period of eight years, the community sold the Ebenezer villages and the members relocated to the new Iowa site, which came to include more than twenty-six thousand acres of farm and timber land and seven villages: Amana, Middle, East, High, West, South, and Homestead. Each village had its own church, trade shops, and farm. The economy of Amana, like Ebenezer, was based on manufacturing and agriculture. The farms and flour mills sold goods to the outside market. Two woolen mills and a calico factory sold textiles nationwide. Membership reached eighteen hundred people in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Life in Nineteenth-Century Amana

Although the demands of providing for the economic vitality and material needs of the community played a large part in the lives of its residents, for the most part daily life in communal Amana was based on religion. To assist them in leading pious and humble lives, the Inspirationists attended eleven regular church services a week: every evening; Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday mornings; and Sunday afternoon. The community also observed Easter, Christmas, and other Christian holidays. In addition, the Inspirationists in communal Amana held several special services during the year. Of these, the *Bundesschliessung*, an annual renewal of the covenant between each member and the community, and *Liebesmahl* (Holy Communion) were the most important. *Bundesschliessung* occurred on Thanksgiving and began as a response to Lincoln’s Civil War declaration to hold a day of fast and repentance. *Liebesmahl* was held only at times

determined through inspiration until the death of Christian Metz in 1867 and thereafter usually every other year. An *Unterredung* or yearly spiritual examination was held over several months, with the elders visiting each village in turn. Each member of the community came before the elders and was questioned regarding his or her spiritual condition and admonished to lead a more pious life.

The church elders, always men, constituted the leadership in the community. During the time of the *Werkzeuge*, elders were chosen through divine testimony. After the death in 1883 of the last *Werkzeug*, Barbara Heinemann Landmann (1795–1883), elders were chosen by the Great Council. The control and management of all the affairs of the Amana Society, both religious and secular, was vested in a thirteen-member Great Council that was elected annually from among the elders. The council made decisions regarding not only religious matters of the community but also business operations, admission of new members, and members’ spending allowances and job assignments. For more than a generation after Landmann’s death, the elders were able to show sufficient flexibility and compromise in their leadership to allow the Inspirationists to become one of America’s longest-lived communal organizations.

The “Great Change”

Nevertheless, by the early twentieth century, the communal system in Amana had generated stresses that the leadership could not resolve. Many community members found the rules associated with communal living to be petty and overly restrictive. Families wanted to eat together at home rather than in the communal kitchen dining rooms. Some members were frustrated by their inability to enjoy more material goods. Some did not do their share of the work. Increasingly the elders were unable to enforce the rules. In short, for many members, communalism was no longer a tenet of faith.

In 1932 the elders presented the membership of the community with a choice to return to a more austere and disciplined life or to abandon the communal system. Significantly, dissolution of the church was not considered. The members elected to retain the traditional church as it was and to create a joint-stock company for the business enterprises to be operated for profit by a board of directors. Each member of the communal society received stock in this new corporation. The separation of the church from the economic and social functions of the community—the abandonment of communalism—is referred to by Amana residents as “the Great Change.”

Contemporary Beliefs and Practices

In twenty-first-century America, the Amana Church still is defined by its Inspirationist beliefs and traditions, acknowledging a Profession of Faith formulated by the Inspirationist leadership in 1839. The tenets include these three central beliefs:

- **Baptism.** “We hold that baptism of the Holy Spirit is the essence of this sacrament. By not giving undue importance to water baptism, the spiritual baptism can take place uninterruptedly. It is only by baptism of the Holy Spirit that we can obtain forgiveness and salvation.”
- **Communion.** “We believe in the Communion or the Lord’s Feast of Love and observe it exactly as instituted and ordained by the Lord. It is an extremely important and holy act.”
- **Inspiration.** This term is understood to be a presentation and influence or vitalization of the Holy Spirit as one of the gifts that God promised the people and that was already given them in the Old Covenant and through all time up to the present. It serves next after the Holy Scriptures as a guide and course toward salvation.

The Amana church buildings are little changed since they were built in the mid-nineteenth century. The building exteriors are unpretentious: no steeple or colored-glass windows declare that the edifice is a house of God. Inside, the unfinished wood floors, plain pine benches, and unadorned walls echo the tradition of humility and piety. Men enter and sit on one side of a central aisle; women, many dressed in traditional black shawl, apron, and cap, sit on the other. The elders, all lay members of the church, sit in front facing the congregation. Worshippers come early for quiet contemplation.

English-language services were introduced in 1960, but in both German and English services the order of worship remains very traditional: a reading of a testimony from one of the inspired Werkzeuge; a prayer while kneeling; a reading from scripture; and hymns sung a cappella from the church’s own hymnal, the *Psalter-Spiel*, that would be recognized by a congregation of a century earlier. The presiding elder comments on the readings and exhorts all to have faith in Christ, believe in the word of God, strive for peace and humility, and “remain true.” Just as the church buildings and order of worship have changed little, the cemeteries in the seven Amana villages continue to express the Inspirationist ethos of equality, humility, and simplicity. As they have been for more than 150 years, members are buried in order of death with plain, uniform headstones.

The Amana Church Society has experienced some change. Perhaps most notably, the role of women in the church was expanded to include serving as elders; currently, of the ten church elders, four are women. A Church Guild was organized to provide an opportunity for social involvement for members. Although the Unterredung was discontinued after 1932, the Amana Church continued to emphasize a personal examination of one’s spiritual condition. There has also been a reemphasis on the Covenant service for members to affirm their devotion to God and the community. Communion is now an annual service. As fewer members remained fluent in German, a translation committee has worked to translate the fundamental documents of the tradition into English.

Life in the Amana villages still is shaped in part by the community’s religious, communal, and German heritage. In 1965, the twenty-six thousand acres and seven villages of the Amana Colonies were designated a National Historic Landmark, and the villages have become a major tourist destination in the state of Iowa. Several local organizations, including the Amana Heritage Society, actively work to preserve the buildings, landscape, and cultural heritage of the community. The Amana Society, Inc. still owns the agricultural land of the former communal society and plays a major role in the economic and social life of the community. Amana Appliances, founded by Amana people soon after the end of the communal system, is a major employer and markets home appliances around the world. The Amana Church Society, as the Community of True Inspiration now calls itself, with a membership of four hundred adults, continues as the religious foundation of the Amanas.

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family; Anabaptists; Great Plains Region; Moravians; Oneida Community; Pietism; Shakers; Utopian and Communitarian Experiments.*

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America, Religious Interpretations of

The United States of America is a continental nation-state, but this has not always been the case. Beginning with a revolution waged against its mother country, England, in the late eighteenth century, the nation, set between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, evolved over the next two centuries. Bordered on the north by Canada and on the south by Mexico, two noncontiguous territories, Alaska and Hawaii, eventually completed it as a nation containing fifty states. This nation-state, with the exception of Hawaii, is contained within North America, which is a part of the Western Hemisphere, the landmass west of Europe across the Atlantic, which also contains the territories and states of Central and South America. These simple facts form the bases for considering a meaning of religion within the temporal-geographical area referred to as *America*. While this essay is centered upon the political entity of the United States of America, contextual considerations warrant attention to the broader meanings evoked by the appearance of America and the Americas on the world scene. There are certain modes of “the given” and the “a priori” nature occasioned by the name and meaning of this space. These modes serve as background and evoke the deeper structures of the cultures of this space where human actions have taken place.

Introduction: Orientation and Beginnings

Fernand Braudel, in *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1972), introduced the notion of three temporal rhythms as history. There is an environmental geography of time that is slow-moving and repetitious replete with seasonal cycles, mountains, terrain, waters, rivers, and so forth. This is history as the *longue duree*. There is then history as the time of groups and groupings—a social history of collective life that moves in a rhythm faster than the *longue duree* but is still at a slow tempo; this is history as *conjuncture*. And finally, there is the fast-moving history of events. This is “a history of brief nervous fluctuations, by

definition ultra sensitive; the least tremor set all antennae quivering.” Braudel calls this layer of history *evenementielle* (vol. I, pp. 20–21). These layers of time are easy to locate in the Mediterranean, for it has been the locale of many and diverse human passages for more than three millennia. As Charles H. Long wrote in “Passage and Prayer: The Origin of Religion in the Atlantic World” (1999: 15), “it is also a womb for the gestation and birth of gods—from the Ancient Egyptians through the Jews and Christians to the Mithra, Zoroaster, and Islam.” By way of contrast,

The Atlantic world introduces us to the globalization of humanity. . . . The Atlantic is, however, not a revealer of deities, seers, and prophets; it is not under the sign of revelation but of freedom, civilizations, and rational orders. It manifests no regard for the layered thickness of time. It is a world justified by the epistemologies of Descartes and Kant, the English empiricists, and the ethical economies of Adam Smith and Karl Marx. (P. 15)

In spite of these major dissimilarities, certain hints may be derived from Braudel that help to decipher a distinctive meaning of a religious orientation arising from the Atlantic world in North America. Though America does not appear in Mediterranean guise, its spatial geography fails to express a homogeneous meaning in relationship to the spatial and temporal orders of the peoples, cultures, or land. D. W. Meinig’s four-volume *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History* (1986–2004) takes up Braudellian hints in the understanding of American religious orientation. These volumes offer the most comprehensive historical cultural geography of the United States.

The religious issue here is not so much one of transcendence but rather an awareness of those unchanging or ever so slowly changing realities of the created order out of which human societies emerge and upon which they are dependent. These given orders of creation not only undergird and sustain but are equally reflected and refracted in the symbolic and imaginative structures of human communities.

In this essay, religion is defined as orientation. *Orientation* refers to the manner in which a culture, society, or person becomes aware of its place in the temporal spatial order of things. Implied in the term is a recognition of the powers that accrue to the specificities of the modes of being that are coincidental to this situation. Orientation expresses creativity and critique in the face of the given orders of creation. This is not a simple task; it is by its very nature a dialectical

process, for it is precisely in the act of creating one's world that the world is understood as having been already given. More specifically, orientation as religion is most appropriate to the situation of the Americas. To use the language of Gerardus van der Leeuw in his *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* (1938),

Religion . . . in other terms, is concerned with a "Somewhat." But this assertion often means no more than this "Somewhat" is merely a vague "something"; and in order that man may be able to make more significant statements about this "Somewhat," it must force itself upon him, must oppose itself to him as being "Something Other." (P. 24)

What better way to speak of the voyages of Columbus and most of the later "explorers" and "discoverers"? Though Columbus made land in a territory after months of travel on the western ocean and presumed he knew where he was, he had indeed confronted a type of "vague Somewhat." It was given to Amerigo Vespucci to make known that he had blundered into a landmass that was totally unknown to any of the heirs of European traditions. Europeans did not know the land and were thus alien to this land. European knowledge of the "lands across the Atlantic," the Americas, combined the precision of a kind of empirical and scientific discourse of navigation and cartography with a vague speculative sense of the unknown and the mysterious. They were both fascinated and frightened by the land. In "The Earliest Accounts of the New World," Antonelli Gerbi (1976: 37) remarks, "It must be remembered, however, that America (apart from the fact that it was long believed to be a peninsula of Asia), exercised its perplexing impact well before 12 October 1492."

Edmundo O'Gorman adds to this ambiguity about America in *The Invention of America* (1961) by questioning the logical and philosophical legitimacy of the "language of discovery" that becomes synonymous with the European meanings of America. Stated succinctly, O'Gorman makes the point that because Europeans did not know of the existence of America, it would be impossible to discover it since one cannot discover something that did not exist. Instead of "discovering America," O'Gorman tells us that America was, rather, "invented" by the Europeans and that the ambiguity of this meaning has permeated all European discussions about the "lands across the Atlantic." Henri Baudet extends this discussion in *Paradise on Earth: Some Thoughts on European Images of Non-European Man* (1988). On the one hand,

Europeans have a knowledge of non-European peoples gained from concrete and direct relationships with them. On the other hand, Baudet describes a European "knowledge" of non-Europeans that is a product of their imagination of the otherness of non-Europeans. He goes on to explain that the knowledge gained from concrete empirical relationships hardly ever changes the myth-like imagination that constitutes the other pole of their knowledge and subsequent relationships. Such notions were not simply ideational and ideological; they find expression in practice and in the establishment of institutions, thus becoming basic ingredients in the cultures of contact in North America.

With the coming of the Europeans, a massive reorientation on the part of all the participants took place among the three major cultures—the indigenous aborigines, the Europeans, and later the Africans who were brought into these lands as enslaved persons from various cultures. The meaning and orientation of religion now takes place within a "contact zone." As opposed to those narratives that tacitly imply that the Europeans "knew who they were," whereas the original inhabitants of the indigenous cultures were ignorant or debased, orientation within a contact zone provides the basis for creativity and critique on the part of all parties within it. Marcel Mauss's notion of total prestations, outlined in his essay *The Gift, the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (1990), provides a structure for the range of relationships and exchanges that take place within the contact zones of the Americas. Mauss's understanding of the reciprocity of exchanges as a specification of the ongoing relationships between groups that were originally geographically and historically separated allows for a methodological orientation that is adequate to the historical cultural situation of America—a meaning of religion that takes into account the deeper order and structures of temporality as well as the materiality of the things exchanged and the attendant symbolic modalities of these exchanges. This meaning of religion is capable of dealing with the unique orientation of the religion of the "three races," especially as each is related to the geographical space that they occupy together; but simultaneously, and equally important, it provides a way of understanding a meaning of religion that emerges from the relationship and exchanges among and between these three cultures that inhabit the territory of the United States. While several groups of people from various cultural backgrounds now occupy the space of the United States, the "three races" express the original constitutive founding groups of an American culture. From this

perspective, America from its beginnings has been an Aboriginal-Euro-African culture.

In addition, precisely because the nation is a political entity, some understanding of those peoples and cultures that lie within its boundaries but were not always considered citizens of the political community must be achieved. And finally, the issue of the very nature of the founding of the political nation-state of the United States within this geographical space must be considered. Given the variety of aboriginal cultures, the several and different origins of the European immigrants who came to inhabit the land, and the Africans who were brought as enslaved persons from Africa, one finds little unity among and between the three groups except that imposed by political or other forms of domination, including violence. To be sure, Europeans had in most cases come from cultures that practiced some form of Christianity, and even if they denied a religious sentiment, it was a denial based upon a Christian understanding of the nature and meaning of religion. From this perspective there has never been an American religion, per se—that is, a single explicit tradition with common rituals, deities, a cosmology, and so forth.

While there has been no “American religion” in the strict sense, but only several religious traditions that are expressed in the country, there have been modes and meanings that identify essential elements of another religious orientation. From time to time, these modes come to the surface and are expressed in religious language, symbols, and styles.

Chapter 10 of part II of Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* is entitled, “Some Considerations Concerning the Present State and Probable Future of the Three Races That Inhabit the Territory of the United States.” De Tocqueville’s work, written in the middle of the nineteenth century, acknowledges the structural presence of the “three races”: the aboriginal cultures, the European immigrants (primarily English), and the enslaved Africans.

If de Tocqueville is taken seriously, one must acknowledge that American history and culture have been since the first European settlements a vast “contact zone.” The term *contact zone* has received academic parlance through the work of Mary Louise Pratt, who, in *Imperial Eyes* (1992), describes a contact zone as a “space of colonial encounters, the space which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish on-going relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict” (p. 6).

The Three Races That Occupy the Land

The land as geographical space has been the constant ingredient shared by all the collectivities. Each group possessed a different perception of and use for the land. For the aboriginal populations, the land expressed not only their livelihood but also their identity. As a place for human habitation it had been given to them by a creator or other divine beings. The original inhabitants of the lands, known by another misconceived misnomer as “Indians,” had already been in this land for more than a thousand years when the first Europeans arrived. The land was held in common by the entire group in the culture of the specific aboriginal society. The land was not possessed as real estate and thus could not be bought or sold. The aboriginal cultures possessed both tacit and empirical knowledge of the land. Such knowledge was not only expressed in rituals and beliefs but was a pervasive aspect of their everyday existence. For the aboriginal populations the land performed a mutual orientation—it oriented them to their world, and they in turn served the land through the preservation of its orientation in space.

Beginning as a series of English colonial settlements dating from the early seventeenth century, the colonies became independent through a revolution in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and the United States has since become a nation of immigrants, primarily from Europe. In the Middle Colonies, primarily Virginia and the Carolinas, through the activities of Richard Hakluyt, whose writings about North America can be described as combining travel literature with real estate promotion urging investment in charter companies promoting ventures in Virginia and the Carolinas, the land is portrayed as paradisaical. As Bernard Sheehan put it in *Savagism & Civility* (1980) in regard to Hakluyt’s rhetoric, “the effulgence of the rhetoric and the prediction that wealth would be obtained, ‘with or without art or man’s help’ contained profound paradisaical implications.” Sheehan continues with a comment about Hakluyt’s collaborator, Samuel Purchas: “He had traveled on three continents but held Virginia ‘by the naturall endowments, the fittest place for an earthly paradise’” (p. 12).

In *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Roderick Nash relates how William Bradford stepped off the *Mayflower* into what he called a “hideous and dangerous wilderness” (p. 23). From the time of Bradford to the present, the wilderness theme has been a feature of American culture, of its practices and rhetoric. The wilderness is an example of the New World as both threatening and sinister on the one hand

and fascinating on the other. One of the most influential books on American culture and religion was Perry Miller's *Errand into the Wilderness*. Miller's book initiated a renaissance in the study of the religious meaning of American culture. Since the aboriginal populations were not a part of the city traditions of the European immigrants, they were identified with the wilderness, threatening realities to be avoided or overcome. The European metaphorical expressions ranged from wilderness to virgin to paradise. In spite of the force of these metaphors, it is clear that the English settlers in New England and the Middle Colonies were able to work out a way of understanding and cooperating. Indeed, the colonists were dependent upon the native populations for long periods of time.

Francis Jennings had already made use of the term *invasion* to describe the landing and settlements of the English in his 1975 work *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*. Jennings's study is important because of its focus on the meaning and nature of the aboriginal populations at the time of the English arrival, and it discusses in detail the inner structure of their relationships over a period of time. It also erases the mild or neutral language of "pilgrimage" and the search for religious freedom that had defined the American rhetoric of the Massachusetts settlements. Jennings continued to debunk the other American shibboleths the land as "virgin" or "wilderness." As Jennings put it, from a metaphorical point of view, the Europeans occupied a "widowed land":

European explorers and invaders discovered an inhabited land. Had it been pristine wilderness, it would possibly be so still today, for neither the technology nor social organization of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had the capacity to maintain, of its own resources, outpost colonies thousands of miles from home. . . . They did not settle a virgin land. They invaded and displaced a resident population. (p. 15)

The scholarship on the colonial period over the past few decades has gone far to emphasize two major factors that had not been put to the fore in previous works—the structure and periods of relationships of accommodation and the violence waged by the English populations against the original inhabitants of the land. The fact that accommodations were possible did not erase the European imaginings of these inhabitants of the land as savages. Given the several concrete relationships that the English experienced

with the aboriginal populations, Bernard Sheehan mused over

the profound inability of the reigning . . . European ideas to offer even a glimmer of truth about the meeting of white and Indian in America. Englishmen certainly behaved toward Indians in certain ways because they believed them to be savages, but more important was the irony that they continued to believe them savage even when circumstances inspired an utterly different relationship. Because the English were trapped by the disjunction between savagism and civility, they could never grasp the reality of their dealings with the native inhabitants of America. (pp. x–xi)

In his novel *The Confidence Man*, Herman Melville coined the phrase, "the metaphysics of Indian-hating." It is clear that many observers equate the violence against those of non-European racial groups to the experience of the English of the colonial period. One example is Richard Drinnon's *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire Building* (1980). Ralph Slotkin in a series of studies has taken up the theme of violence from the colonial period through the twentieth century as one of the basic ingredients in the formation of Anglo-American culture. Violence is not discussed as simply physical acts of harm but the rhetoric and language of many American institutions and practices.

In 1619 a Dutch ship arrived in Jamestown, Virginia, with twenty African persons aboard, including men, women, and children. They were sold as indentured servants, but this initial form of limited servitude of Africans opened the door to the full-fledged enslavement of millions of Africans imported into the colonies from Africa. The Africans in America constitute an "involuntary presence" in the land. Of the "three races of people," they are the one group of people who did not wish to be here and who were brought to the country bound and in chains. From the small band of indentured servants, the African slave population grew to approximately three million by 1850, most enslaved on plantations in the Chesapeake region, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Some form of slavery existed in every part of the country, however, with the largest slave port north of Charleston, South Carolina, located in Providence, Rhode Island. No person of African descent was, or could become, a citizen of the United States until after the American Civil War. Europeans coveted the land inhabited by the indigenous peoples and their ability to

trap furs and utilize other resources of the land for the international market. It was the bodies of Africans that were desired and coveted by Europeans. The Africans, themselves, became commodities in an international market participated in by all the European maritime nations. The enslaved African was the major source of agrarian labor throughout the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth centuries.

The enslaved Africans worked land that was neither their own nor the lands of those who had enslaved them. Their relationship to the land was highly ambiguous, being at once the reality that opposed them in the act of labor and at the same time allowing for a direct relationship with a form of the irreducible reality of this labor that defied the intervention of their owners. Through solitary and communal labor they were inspired with a notion of freedom that was not conveyed through the language and practice of their owners and other slaveholders.

In addition and as corollary to the economic value of the institution of slavery were the symbolic and political effects of its existence in the colonies and later the United States. With the legitimation of slavery by the Constitution of the United States at the founding of the American republic, the values consistent with those of the slave system were destined to permeate the nation. Ira Berlin remarked in his book *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (1998) that there are “societies with slaves” and “slave societies.” What distinguishes them is that “in societies with slaves,” the enslaved are marginal to the central productive processes. In “societies with slaves,” no one presumed the master-slave relationship to be the social exemplar. In “slave societies,” slavery stood at the center of economic production, and the master-slave relationship provided the model for all social relations: husband and wife, parent and child, employer and employee, teacher and student. From the most intimate to the most public relationship, the archetype of slavery reigned; no relationship lay outside this group.

While the three constitutive races of American culture have been in constant relationship since coming to share the same geographical and human spaces, their relationships have seldom been peaceful. This is characteristic of the tensions involved in contact zones. The American historian Stephen Saunders Webb points to the year 1676 as crucial with respect to the possibility of the three races forming an expression of the American reality, embodying the cultural symbols and languages that gave authentic expression to their cultural beginnings. In his book *1676: The End of*

American Independence (1985), Webb interprets Bacon’s revolt in Virginia as a turning point in the colonial determination of cultural and economic destiny. This revolt involved Bacon and his followers against the English Crown’s representatives and the Iroquois League against the Susquehanna, who supported the Crown. Africans formed a significant cohort in Bacon’s ranks. The other event of this time was King Philip’s War in Massachusetts. The colonists were too weak after these conflicts to cohere as a possible united force to work out their own destinies and, according to Webb, fell into a purely Anglophone mode of understanding themselves as colonials. Though they would wage a revolution against the Crown a century later, this revolution was not fought in the terms of the new and creative forms of the three races sharing the land but in terms consistent with those of a purely Anglophone polity.

Civil Religion: Founding and Orientation

Sidney E. Mead published his essay “The American People: Their Space, Time, and Religion” in 1954 in the *Journal of Religion*, it was later included in a group of his essays published as *The Lively Experiment, The Shaping of Christianity in America* (1963). A long history of books and articles have been devoted to American identity or character, from Hector St. John Crèvecoeur’s *Letters from an American Farmer* (1904), through Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*, to Robert Bellah’s and Sidney Mead’s own studies of the 1960s and 1970s. Mead’s essay is one of the few that employs a geographical historical perspective; there are echoes of Frederick Jackson Turner’s “frontier thesis” running through the essay. Turner’s thesis, initially delivered as a lecture at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago (the Chicago World’s Fair) in 1893, was expanded into a book, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (1920). Turner’s thesis presents the Americans as a people who moved across the land from one frontier to the next—from the Atlantic to the Pacific, occupying the continent. At each frontier the American pioneer, as bearer of civilization, touches primitive forces of wilderness and its inhabitants. In an agonistic conflict these primal energies provide the power to overcome the frontier and move on to the next.

Mead’s essay, while paralleling Turner, adds the pathos of religious sentiment to this pilgrimage across the land. Mead mentions the Indian indigenous population only in passing and the Africans not at all. In the last analysis, the American is a person of European descent moving across and taking

possession of a vast territory. The land and other inhabitants of the territory are not presented within any real space and time; they are real to the extent that they become aspects and dimensions of the inner consciousness of the Europeans.

In 1975 Mead published another group of essays entitled *A Nation with the Soul of a Church*. In these lectures Mead was able to comment on the programmatic essay of Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," published in the journal *Daedalus* in 1967. Bellah's essay begins as a commentary on the election of the first Roman Catholic president, John F. Kennedy. From this point of view it might be seen as a fulfillment of Will Herberg's formula for American religious identity set forth in his *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (1955). Herberg was attempting to give substance to the notion that American civil or secular religion was an ill-defined, "American way of life." President Eisenhower had memorialized this notion in the statement, "Our government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is."

The context for most discussions of civil religion in America is strictly circumscribed as a negotiation about the proper accommodation of persons of European descent within the American republic. No mention is made of the Supreme Court decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in public education, nor is any reference given to the monumental study of race relations in America edited by Gunnar Myrdal and published as *An American Dilemma* in 1944. As a matter of fact, very little attention is given to the other "two races" that have inhabited the land since the beginnings. None of these studies deal with the debates of the abolitionists, nor do we hear anything of a specific nature regarding the "Trail of Tears" or the negotiation or adjudication of aboriginal native lands. Given the critical tone of these works, they are nevertheless suffused with a sense of optimism. In the words of Mead, what Americans had accomplished was done in a *very short time*. Maybe in time, Americans might achieve a tragic sense of life and express the maturity of the founding documents of the republic. If one takes seriously the existence of the three races, the tragedy might be situated at the founding, and if not there then at the end of the Civil War.

All discussions of civil religion deal extensively with the founding documents and the founders, their beliefs, and their faiths. Very few raise the religious meaning of founding itself. Catherine Albanese's *Sons of the Fathers: Civil Religion in the Revolution* (1976) details the importance of the Roman model and the rituals and pageants that accompanied the

inauguration of George Washington as the first president. The nature and meaning of foundings and beginnings as basic modes of orientation for cultural life are discussed in the many writings of Mircea Eliade, especially in his *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (1958), and in Joseph Rykwert's *The Idea of a Town: The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World* (1976). To date, only in the work of Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (1963), is there a thorough philosophical discussion of founding in general and the descriptive critical discussion of the specific founding of the United States.

Arendt shows that the American and French revolutions differed from other radical and violent upheavals. While other upheavals had changed the ruling class, they had not changed the "nature of things"; the general hierarchy remained: some would always be rich, others poor; some always rulers, the others ruled. While the "actors" changed, the drama remained the same. The American Revolution intended to create a new drama; it was a revolution in the name of freedom. And this freedom was based on the idea that all persons could take part in their governance. Arendt notes that the possibility for a new drama of freedom was undergirded by the great economic wealth of the colonies. She points out that Europeans marveled at the wealth of the colonies, and Benjamin Franklin and other American colonists were amazed by the poverty that was pervasive in European societies. The wealth of the colonists was dependent upon the acquisition and exploitation of indigenous lands, the involvement of aboriginal populations in the international fur trade, and the labor of the enslaved Africans. In *Slave Counterpoint* (1998), Philip D. Morgan noted,

From 1700 to 1780, about twice as many Africans as Europeans crossed the Atlantic to the Chesapeake and Lowcountry. Much of the wealth of early America derived from slave-produced commodities. Between 1768 and 1772, the Chesapeake and Lowcountry generated about two-thirds of the average annual value of the mainland's commodity exports. Slavery defined the structure of these British American regions, underpinning not just their economies but their social, political, and ideological systems. (p. xv)

Arendt discussed the philosophical meaning of the American founding. The men of the American Revolution knew that they were founders, and they perceived that their founding must have a model. They knew of two models of founding: that of the Hebrews' escape from the Egyptians

and the story of Aeneas from Virgil's Eclogues. They chose the Roman model, for it hinted at the establishment of political instruments for governance. They chose as their motto for founding part of a line from the beginning of the Fourth Eclogue, *magnus ab integro saeculum nascitur ordo*. This can be translated, "The great order of the ages is born afresh." The American version reads as follows: *novus ordo saeculum*, which in translation is "a new order begins." The American motto implies that they created *ex nihilo*, that there is no past and that nothing occurred in the land before their Constitution. The Roman formula knew that every new creation must recognize a past, and thus their creation is a renewal and continuation of other past creations.

A revolution breaks into and disrupts the old order so that a new order might begin. There is a moment in revolutionary temporality when the old order is *no longer* but the new order is *not yet*; this is a moment that allows for new forms of thought, new interpretations of the past, and heretofore unknown meanings and imaginations to enter into the new formulations of the new order. It is at this point that a meaning of the eternal as the absolute of all time presides over and permeates the meaning of this in-between time of the revolution. At this point of hiatus, the novel meanings, imaginations, and actions of "the three races that inhabit the territory" and their understanding of what freedom could be in this land should have been injected. Instead the American notion of "pursuit of happiness" fell back into the various older forms of mercantilism, and with the continuation and legitimating of the institution of slavery, the idolatry of race gained a hold on the American nation and the American republic continued its invasion of aboriginal lands. The eternal as a normal part of the ordinariness of common life became an abstract political symbol upholding in most cases the tyranny of the majority.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion* entries; *American Revolution; Atlantic World; Civil Religion in the United States; Civil War; Frontier and Borderlands; Geographical Approaches; History of Religions, Approaches; Immigration* entries; *Native American Religions: Post-Contact; Pledge of Allegiance; Pluralism; Race and Racism; World War I; World War II*.

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American Revolution

The American Revolution (1775–1783) was a war that disrupted religious practice in North America, and it was a transformative era (from roughly 1760 to the early nineteenth century) that reshaped the social and cultural practices of religious organizations and practitioners. The American Revolution transformed religious structures, practices, and beliefs throughout North America. The religious changes were fitful and incomplete, much like the broader influences of the Revolution itself. Sharing in the social and physical upheaval that went along with the challenges to traditional authority and practices, religions and the religious joined in the tearing down of an old social and political order and the exploration of novel ideas and structural arrangements; and, through all the changes and the experimentation, they regularly employed governance and ideas that had unintended consequences and did not entirely eschew the past.

Neutral Individuals and Groups

For individuals and for religious institutions, the Revolution was disruptive. The strains, struggles, and threats were not only things to endure, they were also dangerous and destructive to congregations. The physical violence destroyed churches, disrupted services, and scattered participants. Church members and organizations who chose sides faced reprisals from their foes. Neutrals garnered double the scorn and worse. Methodist Francis Asbury (1745–1816) became such a target. He asserted that his Methodism and its intensely spiritual focus transcended the worldly distraction and corruption that disputes over money and power caused. Partisans on both sides disagreed, forcing Asbury into hiding, his purity and balancing act made ever more precarious

when his supervisor, the English leader of Methodism, John Wesley (1703–1791), published a shrill condemnation scorning American complaints about taxes. Moravians in North America chose neutrality, as the Asbury had done, and they added to the principled reasons some pragmatic justification for their stance. Moravians in North Carolina had little complaint against a colonial government that had helped them carve out an exceptional presence in the backcountry—their tract of land called Wachovia—but they were partially surrounded by partisans who urged them toward the cause of independence. As armies and militias ranged about, the Moravians held their principled and practical neutrality by supplying goods to all visitors, while trying to shield their young men from on-the-spot recruitments. Members of the Society of Friends, too, generally maintained their pacifism against the pressures of their neighbors on both sides of the conflict, but individuals such as General Nathaniel Greene (1742–1786) and a faction labeling itself the “Free Quakers” chose to break from their brethren and join the battle against the British.

Deism and Rationalism

The physical disruptions were matched by less tangible dangers. Threatening voices, such as that of Thomas Paine (1737–1809), whispered and then began to shout that religion was as corrupt and antiquated as the monarchical order that Americans were beginning to leave behind. Paine was simply the most vocal among many who perceived in traditional religion too many irrationalities—ancient stories filled with misrepresentations and lies about miracles and divinities designed to deceive gullible people. Paine and a cohort of freethinkers asserted that religious irrationalities were wedded to political ones, priesthoods paralleled presumed aristocratic bloodlines, and all religious belief represented a soon-to-be bygone era of superstition. A new enlightened “age of reason” would prevail over the centuries of myth and manipulation that had propped up both church and kingdom. Faced with such criticisms and associations, Christian apologists wrote and spoke to distinguish their traditions from those targeted by the political revolutionaries, and through their writings and sermons, they strove to carve out a compatible place for Christianity in the emerging order.

Many other revolutionaries embraced some form of deism, a more modest but sufficiently threatening challenge to Christianity. Leaders such as George Washington (1732–1799) spoke of a divine being and creator who impersonally managed the universe after having created it; Jesus was

simply a very wise teacher—not divine—in this formulation. Washington spoke in vague terms of a creator and did not mention the name of Jesus, and Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) was so agitated by the ideas of miracles and divinity on earth that he clipped all such references out of his Bible to create a palatable testament. Jefferson valued the teachings of Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), who in his Unitarianism denied the doctrine of the trinity, the divinity of Jesus, the efficacy of sacraments, and a host of other corruptions of Christianity that generations of misguided believers had imposed on the ethical teachings of the human Jesus. These thinkers were ready to redefine religion in a way that fit the new, rational world America was creating, a faith that would be distinctly different from traditional Christianity and its continued adherence to the trinity and miracles. The Revolution, with its appeal to natural law and reason, seemed to favor religious experiments and usher in a new era that would favor a realistic form of devotion to better principles. The nation and its citizens would exemplify the highest ethics associated with verifiable and reasonable truth.

Freethinking and ‘Dissenting’ Alliance for Disestablishment

Christians often labeled freethinkers and deists their enemies, and the latter regularly criticized the naiveté of the churchgoers; but in the revolutionary age, the groups found a shared complaint. For a moment, they found a common enemy in the established church—the Church of England that was by law the single official religion that encompassed all subjects of the kingdom—and a common cause in the movement for religious choice and disestablishment. Freethinkers relished the prospect of being at liberty to pursue their heterodoxies safe from stigma and attacks originating with the traditional and unreasonable. For their part, many Christian groups, including Baptists, Presbyterians, and Friends, chafed against the classification as “dissenters” to the established Church of England, a status that effectively prevented them from functioning without oversight and limits. Dissenters paid taxes in mandatory support of the “One” church while making offerings in voluntary support of the several they claimed as their own. Ministers were restricted from violating parish boundaries in some regions, had to register, and could not perform marriage ceremonies. Dissenters, those groups that had fought the two-hundred-year-long quest to garner the role as substitute for the medieval Roman Catholic Church, continued to assert complaints and to criticize, even as they

conceded that their very presence at least could be tolerated by the Church of England. Dissenters defensively feared encroachments on their hard-won opportunities, however, sometimes trying to carve out for themselves geographic niches, territories where they could implement their religious designs, as the Puritans strove to do in Massachusetts Bay. There, distant from the established church, they tasted an exclusive freedom they would try to retain through the Revolution.

On the eve of the war, disputes over the presence of an Anglican bishop in North America rankled dissenting church members, who feared a possible bolstering of the establishment. In southern colonies, members of the Church of England themselves resisted such plans, fearing that such an authority in America could diminish the strong control local vestries often exercised over parish matters, including the direct criticism of parishioners’ behaviors, and especially control over the levels of clerical salaries, paid out of required fees. In New England, the Quebec Act (1774), which permitted Roman Catholics to worship in the territories transferred from France to England after 1763, irritated and threatened Protestant colonists. Seeing parallels between the current dispute with England and the long-standing religious complaints against establishment, ministers such as the Presbyterians James Caldwell (1734–1781) and John Witherspoon (1723–1794) became aggressive and outspoken in their support of the revolutionary cause. Some clergy, such as the liberal Congregationalist Jonathan Mayhew (1720–1766), added loud voices of criticism over the Stamp Act as the revolutionary crisis developed; others served as chaplains and even volunteered for direct military service, such as the Lutheran minister Peter Muhlenberg (1746–1807), who served in the Virginia militia.

Preaching and Rallying for or against the Revolution

Preachers advocated their causes in print and pulpit, spreading their ideas of patriotism, loyalty, or neutrality. Mayhew preached and published *A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to High Powers* in 1750—the anniversary of the killing of Charles I (1600–1649; ruled 1625–1649). Mayhew urged Christians as a matter of duty to challenge tyrants, and his views set a pattern for sermons favoring the patriot cause during the Revolution. Ministers regularly harmonized Christian beliefs with notions of rights and resistance developed during the English Civil War (1640s and early 1650s), when

Parliament challenged, deposed, and killed the king; the Restoration of the monarchy (1660), when England called Charles II (1630–1685; ruled 1660–1685) back to the throne, investing him with largely symbolic powers; and the Glorious Revolution (1688), when Parliament invited William and Mary (ruled 1689–1702) to take the throne. Religious leaders equated and mixed these political events that strengthened England's parliament and reduced the powers of the monarchy with the religious legacy of Protestant protests against Catholic monopoly. In the sermons' formulation, believers and subjects had the right to challenge tyrannical leaders who might oppress or misguide their people. The Americans' complaints represented another step in the path toward liberty of person and conscience. That step, however, would be an enormous stride, for the results of the American efforts could be transformative: the Revolution could be the beginning of a new era—a golden age, equated in religious terms with the millennium, that thousand-year period anticipating the return of Jesus.

People living in the revolutionary era employed new forms of communication and social interaction in their religious and political efforts. Patriot leaders such as Patrick Henry (1736–1799) adapted tactics of traveling preachers such as the famous George Whitefield (1714–1770), who spoke extemporaneously and dramatized his messages with emotionally charged inflections and sharpened vocabulary as he toured England, Ireland, Scotland, and the American colonies in the mid-1700s. Henry and other organizers became evangelists for their political cause, much the way dissenting preachers had employed those tools to challenge the established authority of an established church and the decorum that came with presumed status. Similarities compounded as many political rallies and speeches spilled out of buildings into streets and open fields, the very places New Light ministers had claimed when expelled from established churches and parishes. Evangelistic and patriot efforts—encouraging of the spontaneous expressions of the seemingly unqualified and performed in prominent places—implicitly threatened the staid and structured systems of monarchy and establishment.

Impact on Women

Revolutionary disruptions spread throughout the societies being recreated in the thirteen colonies. During the upheaval and experimentation, when militias and churches struggled to fill ranks, pews, and pulpits, some religious groups accepted the leadership of women. Often, the roles were

auxiliary, reinforcing the long-standing reliance on women to support functions by cooking, nursing, tending, and simply populating meetings. But on occasion during the revolutionary moment, women soldiered, exhorted, and preached. Their experiences became standards for their hearers, leading to new public appreciation for their religiosity and new causes they advocated. Ann Lee (1736–1784), who endured the devastating loss of eight children—four stillborn and four dying before age seven—advocated sexual abstinence. She also promoted women's equality with men, affirmed by her discovery of the perfect attributes of God in her female self. The “Shakers” who followed Lee's teachings would attract women and men committed to celibacy and some measure of equality between men and women.

Impact on Native Americans

The Revolution transformed relations between settlers and Native Americans. The interactions between the two were complex from the start, but lurking behind the many conflicts had been a tacit hope that cooperation could prevail. Trade offered the greatest potential, but Christians hoped that Native Americans might convert to their beliefs, and Native Americans found ways to fit the arrival of strange people into their beliefs and prophecies. Hope quickly soured, with Native Americans turning away from Europeans whose notions of cooperation had taken the form of missions and schools designed more to enforce cultural conformity than anything else. By the time of the Revolution, hopes for cooperation were replaced by expectations that Native Americans and settlers would live in irreconcilable worlds and would hold incompatible beliefs. American militia attacked Native Americans vigorously, accelerating the pace at which Native Americans were being eliminated from lands between the Appalachians and the Mississippi River—a less organized anticipation of President Andrew Jackson's (1767–1845) official policy of Native American removal just a few decades later.

These changes affected the religious landscape, removing many Native Americans from sacred sites and killing many people who held the oral traditions handed down through generations. Some of the remaining missionaries began to rework their previous roles, functioning as defenders of Native Americans out of moderate (and often condescending) sympathy for people they had come to respect. By the time President Jackson committed the resources of the federal government to Native American removal, a handful of missionaries were the most vocal critics of the new assault. In the meantime, Native Americans were open to the ideas

of prophets such as the Delaware Neolin (c.1725–c.1775), who called for the rejection of European influences in all aspects of Native American life, and a return to a purer set of practices and beliefs untainted by the newcomers. The aggression so violently applied to Native Americans was part of an unleashing of energies, expectations, and designs for an emerging country. As Americans emerged from the years of struggle against the British, they began to celebrate their opportunities. Taking land from Native Americans and dismissing them at a more rapid pace was one success, they thought. The elimination of religious establishment was another.

Filling the Void of Disestablishing the Church of England

As independence became a reality, real detachment from the Anglican Church and the long fought battle for recognition also dawned on Americans. Their first response was mixed, for although many Americans wanted the destruction of the establishment, they disagreed about what should fill the void. State by state they debated their particular opportunities, with some stronger denominations plotting to take their rightful place as substitutes—either alone or in conjunction with other groups. Several states, including Massachusetts and Connecticut, continued to require citizens to pay taxes for the support of a church, but they allowed for the choice of religion. Virginians considered multiple establishments briefly before rejecting both establishment and general assessment. Instead, through the operations of Jefferson and James Madison (1751–1836), and the support of numerous dissenting groups, Virginia introduced the broad concept of free religious choice based on conscience by passing Jefferson's Act for Establishing Religious Freedom (drafted 1779; passed 1786). This more liberal concept of religious freedom grew in influence and respect, and its core assumption helped shape the results for the new U.S. Constitution, which did not mention God, religion, support, or tests; instead, the new document included the First Amendment that barred establishment and guaranteed free exercise of religion.

Immigration and Migration Westward

Religiously free Americans poured out into the new country, freely exercising their right to pursue what their consciences told them, happily free to try telling others what their consciences should tell them, and finding new places to spread their many visions of God, the devil, and the other characters in their spiritual dramas. The Revolution and its new notion

of citizenship confirmed what the religious dynamism of the eighteenth century had offered—that people were free to think and choose for themselves. The United States became a hotbed of religious innovation in the nineteenth century, with flourishing churches, spiritually aware citizens, and a host of new religious beliefs and organizations, including the Latter-day Saints, who celebrated the vision of Joseph Smith (1805–1844) of an American scripture and holy people. Although Smith and the Mormons tapped into religious strains that had roots in medieval times, the newly created United States figured prominently in their religious hopes and in the designs of many others. Some thought that the creation of the new nation held profound symbolic significance, perhaps ushering in a millennial era, a thousand years of improvement that would advance the world toward the culminating return of Jesus. Others assumed that the nation itself represented a truth that, mixed with proper religion, would create a civic religion focusing faith on the promise of the benefits that the nation would bring.

Missionaries hailed the opportunity to pursue settlers beyond the Appalachian Mountains into the Ohio River Valley and further. Not only did they feel the lure of potential new converts, missionaries also sensed their alienation from the populated areas of the east coast. Both the Revolution and the religious revivals of the eighteenth century had taught them their responsibility to throw off corruption from the past, evils that had infiltrated America and remained, despite the efforts during the 1700s. The West became a place to find the promise of America and Christianity, an area where hard-working preachers met challenging but open people. There could be nurtured a religion of common sense, free from the elitism of cities and too much education. There, too, could flourish a religion that could skip over human inventions and returned to the purity of its origins; in the Christian tradition, that meant the model of the early church described in the New Testament. Western preachers such as Alexander Campbell (1788–1866), Lorenzo Dow (1777–1834), and Peter Cartwright (1785–1872) lauded the virtues of the expansive lands, and they attempted to recreate a purer religiosity that linked Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee directly back to the natural ancestors in Ephesus and Philippi.

Renewal of Religious Competition and Sectarianism

The many efforts to make America and its religions anew did not always produce the intended results. The experiments to

create a pure, universal Christianity in the new American lands steadily added new churches to the existing multiplicity already littering the religious landscape. The religious freedom created by the Revolution brought into the open the many competing sects that had proliferated since the Reformation and accelerated the pace of their multiplication. On occasion formerly competitive groups combined efforts to address the growing need for ministers and churches; the cooperative union between many Presbyterians and Congregationalists from New England exemplified this spirit, but it did garner some criticism and opposition. The many religious groups could not divorce themselves from their past assumptions. Lurking in their designs for conversion, cooperation, and growth was the ultimate goal that one truth would overwhelm the competing messages of the competition. Charismatic and sometimes authoritative leaders regularly led upstart and splinter groups and became the focus of their growth and legacy. Religious proliferation and freedom were built on the strengthening of religious organizations and their influential leaders. Baptists, for example, who had defined themselves in part by their practice of congregational independence and autonomy, began to create local associations, and regional and national organizations through the revolutionary era into the nineteenth century.

Increasingly concerned with their influence in society, the various sects strove, like the competing political leaders, to build their parties and legitimate themselves, and they struggled against each other with conflicting views of the proper paths to take. Steadily churches began to restrict the leadership roles of women, excluding them from ministry and even delimiting their roles as exhorters. As an alternative, one that fit neatly with selected principles from the Revolution and the assumptions long ingrained, notions of republican motherhood became the celebrated paradigm. Women would be important, even vital to the success of the nation, but they could best contribute by maintaining homes that nurtured children who might grow up to be capable and respected citizens, and supporting husbands who could contribute to the public life of the country. The Revolution's disruption of some traditions had introduced alternatives that would not be forgotten; steadily into the nineteenth century, women would claim moral authority as protectors of household and families and through such assertions steadily increase the boundaries of their domestic responsibilities. Through voluntary religious organizations—so vital in a religiously free nation—women helped lead several reformist causes in the nineteenth century,

addressing issues such as temperance, mental health, and abolition.

Impact of the Revolution on the Institution of Slavery

“Freedom” and “liberty” had been the mottos of the revolutionary cause, and “slavery” the term used to describe British mistreatment of colonists. For a moment, some Americans applied these ideas broadly by releasing enslaved African Americans, outlawing slavery in newly forming states, and accepting African Americans into religious fellowships. Religious groups had been at the vanguard of such efforts. Participants in the meetings of the Society of Friends regularly spoke out against slavery, and they were sometimes joined by a smattering of Baptists and Methodists, who occasionally expressed their shock at the mistreatment of the enslaved in the American South. Most would compromise quickly, however, backing away from broad critiques of the morality of slavery, and instead calling for limited reform that could improve the relative treatment of the enslaved within the practices of slavery. The altered approach opened a few more doors, although slaveholders were more amenable to hearing calls for their slaves' obedience than criticisms of their own vices. African Americans who converted to Christianity were selective, weeding out calls for their submissiveness and instead celebrating the stories of Exodus and release from captivity. Some were able, despite separation from land, relatives, and others who shared their traditions, to continue practicing strands of African religions, including some elements of music and burial practices. A few continued to practice the Islamic faith that had been theirs in Africa. White Christians rarely accommodated African American sensibilities, and steadily, black participants were relegated to balconies in mixed services, and whites tried to supervise the independent meetings that African American worshippers tried to carve out for themselves. Many of these gatherings took place at night, secreted away in woods. Some few, however, developed in the open atmosphere that larger port cities supplied. Richard Allen (1760–1831) was quite successful in Philadelphia, developing a fellowship and eventually the African Methodist Episcopal Church—a reflection of both opportunity and nonacceptance by white Americans after the Revolution.

Religious Freedom

Religious freedom answered the mutual needs of the two most aggressive religious participants in the revolutionary era. Dissenting Christians and freethinkers awarded

themselves the opportunity to pursue their religious interests. These two groups could agree that the new country held promise in its religious experimentation, and that promise took on its own life. Americans celebrated the success of their Revolution, their leaders, and their freedoms in ways that echoed the trappings of religiosity. This “civic” religion, exercised in the veneration of Washington, in anthems and poems, and on a series of holidays (including, over time, the 4th of July), celebrated the success of the Revolution and the values, variously interpreted, of the Founders. Through the nineteenth century and especially in the twentieth century, Americans of various religions have shared an appreciation of the generic values associated with revolutionary freedoms. They have also attached portions of their religious faiths to the success of the American experiment to justify their beliefs and add a triumphal sensibility to their faith. Their collective efforts have led to strains of religion, usually versions of Christianity, that link the United States to dreams of divine plans or a chosen nation. Reflexively these faithful distort the role of Christianity in history, superimposing a flattened, ahistorical concept of Christianity on the revolutionary era and especially its leaders. The effect has been counter to the trajectory during the revolutionary age. Instead of furthering religious freedom, the insistence on a “Christian nation” has ascribed to the Founders some particular contemporary beliefs.

Many Americans in the revolutionary era hesitated to extend religious freedoms. It was sufficient to have thrown off the formal demands and structure of one group—the Church of England—and to have replaced it with the informal influences of a host of local fellowships. Technically, there would be no restrictions, but in practice, many people were reluctant to admit Jews, Muslims, and even Roman Catholics into full participation in the Republic, especially as participants in political leadership. Many Jews who had carved out local acceptance and quiet tolerance under the earlier system now struggled in the seemingly freer world after the Revolution, when a spotlight of attention illuminated their presence in the competitive religious world. The mutuality of dissent gave way; informally, most Americans assumed—or required—a tacit acknowledgment of Protestant Christianity as the nation’s religion. Particular Protestant groups vied for priority of place, and they closed ranks only to stave off newcomers, such as the homegrown Latter-day Saints or the immigrant Roman Catholics in the nineteenth century. The broad language used to guarantee Protestant pluralism, however, held the potential for broader inclusion in the future—slowly

opening American religious freedom to other groups in the nineteenth century and eventually to individuals and individual consciences in the twentieth. Revolutionary freedom of religion continues to struggle against notions of establishment, but the Revolution itself ended the institutional presence of religious establishments, shifting only a portion of the remnant to the new political entity itself.

See also *African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War*; *Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America*; *Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic*; *Civil War*; *Deism*; *Methodists: Through the Nineteenth Century*; *Moravians*; *Pacifism and Conscientious Objection*; *Roman Catholicism: Catholics in the Atlantic Colonies*.

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Anabaptist Denominational Family

Anabaptism first appeared as an inchoate movement during the Protestant Reformation, but although a unified organization or a formal set of shared beliefs never materialized, believer's baptism nevertheless became nearly universal among Anabaptists. *Anabaptism* means "to baptize again"; the first generation as children had experienced baptism by the established churches, and baptism as adults was their second.

Anabaptist groups that survived the Reformation era developed a system in which the faith community imitated the New Testament church by separating itself from the sinful world and becoming an alternative community with its own relationships and rules. Consequently, obedience to the scriptures, or discipleship, became critical to membership in God's kingdom, but unity within the faith community about the characteristics of discipleship was also vital. The fellowship's collective discernment of the Bible, considered superior to individual insight, delineated the specifics of the restored New Testament Church. Anabaptists, then, were nonconformists (to the larger society), who ideally conformed to God's will as determined by the faith community.

Past scholars anointed Conrad Grebel (1498?–1526) in 1525 as the first Anabaptist, but current thinking stresses several spontaneous sources of origins, that is, polygenesis. Grebel's failure to persuade Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich, Switzerland, to endorse believers' baptism marked the birth of Anabaptism there. But in other parts of central Europe other Anabaptist groups also appeared. In south Germany Anabaptism was a legacy of the Peasants War (1525), a broad uprising of commoners linked to the Protestant Reformation. After authorities crushed the rebellion, some reformers adopted community of goods, as practiced by the New Testament church, and this laid the groundwork for nascent Anabaptism in that region. In the north German city of Münster, millennial reformers calling themselves Anabaptists gained political control through legal, due process and adopted community of goods and polygamy. After a bitter siege authorities regained power and killed most of the inhabitants, but the radical Münsterites had stamped Anabaptism with fanaticism, an image that lasted for centuries, and widespread persecution resulted. Anabaptist martyrs were burned at the stake, drowned, tortured, imprisoned, or exiled. A Dutch priest, Menno Simons (1496–1561), brought order to this scattered, persecuted movement. Menno, as his

subsequent followers refer to him, emphasized inner change and nonresistance (refusal to serve in the military and non-retaliation in personal life), far different from the revolutionary and violent call for social reform at Münster. Under his influence the movement acquired its emphasis on separation and unity, and he also stressed church discipline through the ban, sometimes called "shunning," which mandates avoidance of excommunicated members in many social settings. Traveling from group to group, mostly in north Germany, Menno created enough organization that some Anabaptists adopted his name, calling themselves "Mennonites." The Anabaptist family tree, however, has several trunks—North German/Dutch Mennonites, South German/Swiss Mennonites, Hutterites, Amish, Brethren, and Brethren in Christ (in approximate chronological order).

In the late seventeenth century Anabaptists began migrating to North America, a movement that continued into the twentieth century. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century North American Anabaptists usually shared several beliefs and practices besides believers' baptism. Generally, they practiced nonresistance; humility; non-swearing of oaths; and plainness, especially in dress but also in material goods. Congregations chose ministers who had no formal training and served without pay. Women voted and perhaps spoke in congregational councils but did not hold leadership positions other than deaconess. North American Anabaptists worshipped either in homes or in very simple, unadorned meetinghouses. They did not serve in public office and did not own slaves. They expelled members particularly resistant to the fellowship's guidance about avoiding the sinful world. Amish and Brethren men wore untrimmed beards.

But despite these common threads, Anabaptists have suffered persistent disagreements over the application of discipleship, especially in separating from the larger culture. Furthermore, like many minority immigrant religious groups in North America, Anabaptists confronted Americanization, which threatened to assimilate their vision of the restored, unified, countercultural church, and much of American Anabaptist history reflects this tension, especially beginning with late-nineteenth-century industrialization when conservatives, called "Old Orders," resisted change and "fast" progressives more willingly accepted it. Consequently, today Anabaptism is a multihued continuum that ranges from horse-and-buggy Old Orders to progressives who have abandoned much of the tradition and resemble mainstream Protestants more than their conservative Anabaptist cousins.

Mennonites

The first permanent Anabaptist settlement in North America began in 1683 when Dutch and North German Mennonites settled in Pennsylvania, but the lower Rhine never generated a steady flow of immigrants. In the early eighteenth century, however, Palatine and Swiss/South German Mennonites arrived, the first of many from that source. Economic opportunity strongly motivated their transatlantic odyssey despite the heritage of Anabaptist persecution, and the patterns of arrival and settlement of South German Mennonites resembles that of other eighteenth-century German immigrants. They located initially in Germantown, outside of Philadelphia, and then in the rich farmland of southeast Pennsylvania, expanding into western Maryland and Virginia's Shenandoah Valley prior to the American Revolution. After the Revolution they followed frontier migration west into Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and others went north into Ontario; later generations put down roots in Kansas and Nebraska. Eventually Mennonites descended from eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century immigrants followed larger population movement patterns to the West Coast, particularly Oregon.

The descendents of Swiss/South German Mennonites defined Mennonite life until after the Civil War. They baptized by pouring, and worship was in German although English made gradual inroads. Mennonites gathered in homes or in plain meetinghouses for sermons, prayer, and hymns. Men and women sat separately, and the preachers faced them from behind a simple table. Ministers were chosen from among the fellowship, and they served without pay, received no special training, and remained in their secular occupation, usually farming. Candidates for the ministry received nomination from the membership, but casting lots determined the final selection. Each nominee received a book, usually a Bible or hymnal, one of which had a slip of paper inside. The books were shuffled, and the candidate who received the book with the paper was God's choice. Usually several ministers served several congregations, which limited the accumulation of power by individual preachers. Mennonites preserved unity by expelling, but they preferred to maintain conformity through gentle persuasion and role models, especially ministers. A member who violated custom might receive a quiet visit from a preacher. Although they believed in salvation by faith, early American Mennonites emphasized that faith without works is dead and stressed discipleship—that is, that believers should obey the Bible's directives for daily life.

Additionally, Continental Pietism (the doctrine that believers can receive forgiveness for their sins, and experience an intimate relationship with Christ and salvation by voluntarily accepting Christ's lordship—called "Continental" for the European continent) heavily influenced early American Mennonites. Menno had not taught heartfelt faith, and, in fact, he predated Pietism by more than a century. Mennonites typically favored orderly worship, such as camp meetings, and revivalism's penchant for personal testimony and counting converts struck many as excessive individualism and a prideful emphasis on numbers rather than biblical humility. But the Dutch priest had stressed a changed life, including spiritual rebirth, repentance, and conversion, and born-again religion merged comfortably with Anabaptism. By the mid-eighteenth century many North American Mennonites embraced moderate Pietism, and late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century revivalism attracted Mennonite participants, although the most enthusiastic revivalists tended towards the fringes rather than the core of Mennonite society. Eastern North American descendants of Swiss/South Germans, then, crafted a form of Anabaptism based on discipleship, a unified faith community, and the new birth.

In the 1870s a new stream of Anabaptism imported by Russian Mennonites arrived on the Great Plains, with different ideas about how to maintain fellowship and avoid the world. The newcomers were the progeny of Dutch/North German Mennonites who had migrated into east Europe and Russia. In Russia Mennonites retained German folkways, and they lived in ethnic islands separate from the larger society. Consequently, they saw their distinctiveness in language, customs, and hymns rather than plainness, especially in dress. Some were Mennonite Brethren. They practiced footwashing, a ritual performed by various but not all eastern Mennonites, and their mode of baptism by immersion, one time backward, was a clear marker between themselves and other Mennonites. They clung to German-language worship, but they did not choose leaders by lot. Finally, Mennonite Brethren fused evangelicalism with Anabaptism, and although generations of eastern Mennonites had been Pietists, Mennonite Brethren made experiential conversion and mission central to their message. As a result, humility, nonconformity, nonresistance, and plain dress, though present, became less essential than in the east.

In the late nineteenth century the pace of change for Mennonites accelerated. Mission, for example, received attention from progressive Mennonites. In 1880 Samuel and

Susannah Haury established the first North American Mennonite mission when they moved to Indian Territory (Oklahoma) and lived among the Arapahoes. In 1889 the first overseas missionaries went to India. Also, revivalism became popular. Led by John S. Coffman (1848–1899), Mennonite revivalists bent the methods of mainstream tent preachers to Mennonite customs. Coffman, for example, preached the classic evangelical message of salvation, but he spoke in a conversational style between the singsong of traditional Mennonite preachers and the extroverted pulpit pounding of tent revivalists. Protracted meetings were an especially controversial symbol, and when local sentiment opposed them, Coffman announced services one by one. The methods of Coffman and other Mennonite revivalists won much favor, and by the early twentieth century altar calls reaped a bountiful harvest of young Mennonite converts.

Growing acceptance of higher education represented a further transformation of Mennonites. Between 1893 and 1917 Mennonites opened seven colleges: Bethel (Kansas, 1893), Goshen (Indiana, 1903), Bluffton (Ohio, 1914), Freeman (South Dakota, 1903; closed 1987), Tabor (Kansas, 1908), Hesston (Kansas, 1909), and Eastern Mennonite (Virginia, 1917). Typically these campuses became centers of Mennonite scholarship, but higher education also often pushed the envelope against traditionalism. Conservatives deeply distrusted the liberal influence of Mennonite higher education, and the most conservative Mennonites considered higher education as anathema.

Ironically, revivalism, another change and clearly an outside influence, sparked renewed interest in traditional Mennonitism, especially dress. Garb was always important for Mennonites because it encouraged nonconformity in daily life, but although early American Mennonites had dressed plainly, they had not adopted uniform dress. But the intensity brought by revivalism inspired greater interest in modesty and consistency in dress, and the resulting trend was towards formal, written codes. Many men, including John Coffman, wore plain coats without a collar and lapel and cast aside neckwear. Women adopted a shapeless dress with an especially modest cape covering the upper torso. The New Testament instruction for women to cover their heads received special attention, and female Mennonites set aside fashionable bonnets and hats for prayer caps, a simple head covering worn at all times. When outdoors, they added a plain, black bonnet that fit over the prayer cap. Because Mennonites remained decentralized, specifics on dress fell to districts and congregations, with considerable variation.

Some districts, for example, permitted bowties, and a few still allowed neckties. Similarly, headwear for women varied in shape, material, and color of the strings, which could be tied or loose. To an extent the new standards of plainness replaced the German language as a sharp line of distinction between Mennonites and the American mainstream, but plain dress also divided conservative from progressive Mennonites, who kept the dress codes at arm's length.

By the 1890s four groupings dominated American Mennonitism: Old or Mennonite Church Mennonites, General Conference Mennonites, Old Orders, and Mennonite Brethren (described above). Old Mennonites, later called Mennonite Church Mennonites, descended from the Swiss/South German trunk, and "Old" distinguished them from fellowships that had splintered away throughout the nineteenth century (for instance, Reformed Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren in Christ, and East Pennsylvania Mennonite Conference). Strong bishops with authority over several congregations gave Old Mennonites top-down leadership, a departure from past practice. Old Mennonites, still swimming hard against the mainstream, dressed plainly and only slowly accepted publications, education, missions, and associations with other Protestants. Old Mennonites considered themselves the Mennonite mainstream between the progressives and Old Orders.

General Conference Mennonites were a progressive association that included both Dutch/Russian descendants on the Plains and Swiss/South German descendants east of the Mississippi. More willing, or "faster," than most Mennonites to discard nonconformity, they hoped to persuade conservative Mennonites to abandon alleged cultural backwardness and adopt education and mission. In the nineteenth century they stopped dressing plainly, a concession to individualism, and in the 1920s they adopted English worship. They also hoped to unite all Mennonites under one large pan-Mennonite organization, and their adherence to congregational authority gave them flexibility that facilitated their vision. Most other Mennonite conferences, however, eventually adopted education and mission on their own terms rather than merge with the General Conference. Nevertheless, in 1920, various Mennonite groups, including the General Conference Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren, and Mennonite Church Mennonites, organized the Mennonite Central Committee, an umbrella organization that assisted resettlement of Russian Mennonites fleeing the Soviet Union and, when that task ended, devoted itself to international relief, development, and peace work.

On the Mennonite right wing was a third group, the Old Orders. As progressive Mennonites increasingly assimilated into the American Protestant mainstream, Old Order objections arose. Revivalism, with its testimonies, unrestrained emotion, and convert-counting still looked to most conservatives as awash with individualism and juxtaposed to humility. Sunday schools, another mainstream practice increasingly popular with progressives, were too ecumenical for Old Orders, who suspected that non-Mennonite influences jeopardized nonresistance and nonconformity. Higher education, foreign missions, and English-language worship were other dangerous intrusions of the world. On another level, Old Orders resisted the modern rationalism adopted by many other Mennonites with the coming of the industrial age. Progressives, for example, held spirited debates and maintained detailed minutes, but Old Orders cherished unity through consensus and kept barebones records. Old Orders never created institutions that connected their scattered communities, another rejection of modern rationalism, but they communicated closely and visited one another, an informal system more compatible with a premodern outlook. But beyond all the specifics, Old Orders felt that change should come slowly, and now it was coming quickly.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, technology and fundamentalism raised more questions about how the faith community should relate to the world and provided new ways to tear at the Mennonite fabric. For conservatives the new technology endangered the faith community by closing the distance between it and the larger society. Accordingly, Old Orders were standoffish towards electricity and telephones, but they disagreed over the automobile. The most conservative remained “team” or “horse-and-buggy” Mennonites, but other Old Orders accepted the horseless carriage.

Fundamentalism was also disruptive. The old-time religion of mainstream Protestants with its lists of fundamentals easily merged with conservative Mennonitism and its tendency towards detailed discipleship in daily life. Fundamentalism, then, influenced all branches of Mennonites, although the Old Orders, who remained more aloof from larger Protestantism, felt its impact less directly. Dispensationalism and premillennialism became especially popular, and the Scofield Bible and the *Sunday School Times* enjoyed wide Mennonite readerships. As in broader Protestantism, denominational colleges and seminaries became battlegrounds. Between 1913 and 1951 fundamentalism influenced the resignation of seven Mennonite college presidents,

and Goshen College (Indiana) closed for the 1923–1924 academic year because its board suspected that modernism had infected the campus. In truth, few Mennonites were modernists, but fundamentalists nonetheless flung the charge of liberal or modernist at those unenthusiastic about premillennialism and at progressives refusing to wear the plain coat. Like revivalism, fundamentalism reinforced traditional Mennonite norms, but technology and fundamentalism both provided new opportunities for assimilation into the Protestant mainstream and stoked new tensions within the faith community.

By the late twentieth century, nonconformity and unity remained important Mennonite themes. At this point only Old Orders defined nonconformity in terms of dress, and many Mennonites expressed their relationship to the world through peace work, social activism, and a simple lifestyle. During the peak of the Vietnam War, Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder published *The Politics of Jesus* to reassure a young generation of Anabaptist activists that they could simultaneously belong to the set-apart Kingdom of God and the wider peace and civil rights movements. Yoder’s book achieved wide circulation beyond Anabaptist circles. And Mennonites took a step towards unity when in 1989 the General Conference and the Old Mennonite Church combined into the Mennonite Church USA, the largest current Mennonite organization with approximately one hundred thousand members.

Currently, assimilated Mennonites, especially the Mennonite Church USA, suffer a membership decline similar to the mainline denominations. Racial/ethnic Mennonites (Asian, Hispanic/Latino, African American, Native American), however, are a growth edge for the denomination and may represent as much as 15 percent of its membership, much higher than for other U.S. denominations that are historically European. Old Orders are less than 10 percent of U.S. Mennonites, but their strong, clear boundaries against the larger society result in higher retention rates than for progressives. The Old Order disdain for organization and fondness for specific lines against the world in daily life encourage variety. Stauffer Mennonites, for example, dress very plainly and use horses and buggies. Wenger Mennonites are also horse-and-buggy Mennonites but are somewhat less plain than the Stauffers; they use tractors, albeit with steel wheels rather than rubber tires. Horning Mennonites, slightly more progressive but still Old Order, occupy yet another position in the range of plainness; they own automobiles but require them to be black and ministers to strip them of chrome. For non-Old

Order Mennonites the current debate over how to reconstruct the New Testament Church focuses on divorce, military service, the ordination of women, and homosexuality. Meanwhile, the Mennonite Central Committee continues as a large and effective service organization. Unity over how to separate from the world still eludes North America's spiritual descendents of Menno Simons.

Hutterites

Hutterites, another Anabaptist stem with roots in the Reformation era, trace their origins to 1528 when a small group in Moravia, led by Jakob Hutter (d. 1536), began to hold property in common, making them the most direct Anabaptist link to the Peasants War. They survived European persecution and poverty, and in the 1870s approximately twelve hundred migrated to the Dakota Territory. The majority of the immigrants, called *Prarieleut* (Prairie People) abandoned communal living and drifted into Mennonite congregations. The minority retained goods in common and established three branches: *Schmiedleut*, *Dariusleut*, and *Lehrerleut*, each named for its founder. Although the three groups share many beliefs, they function independently and rarely intermarry. Like many Anabaptists, Hutterites stress that true faithfulness comes by surrendering the self to God and to a faith community set apart from the larger world, but for Hutterites this means that individuals have no private property except for a few personal items, such as clothing and books. They work without pay for the community, or "colony," which functions as a legal corporation. The colony aims for self-sufficiency but buys and sells with the outside world, usually in large quantities. Continued use of German also distinguishes Hutterites from the larger society.

Hutterite socialization depends upon education. At age three children enter a nursery and come under the supervision of the colony. At six they eat in the children's dining hall rather than with their parents, and six-year-olds also enter school, where they learn both English and German. The English and German schools meet within the colony rather than off-premises. A non-Hutterite hired by the local school district teaches the English school, but a member of the colony leads the German school. The German teacher is an unquestioned moral authority who emphasizes Hutterite heritage, habits, and beliefs.

Worship further reinforces norms. Services consist of singing, preaching, and prayer in a simply furnished room. Worshipers file in and sit according to rank based on age and gender. The oldest sit in the back, enter last, and leave

first, and men precede women. Seating also is segregated by gender, and the oldest woman follows behind the youngest boy.

During World War I Hutterites, like all German-speaking, nonviolent, U.S. Anabaptists, suffered persecution at the hands of authorities. Some were imprisoned and mistreated, and two young Hutterites died while in detention at Fort Leavenworth. Consequently, many Hutterites moved to Canada, but as militant patriotism subsided in the 1930s a few returned. In 2000, Hutterites had 425 colonies with approximately ninety members each. Approximately 75 percent are in Canada, especially Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, and the remainder are in the United States, mostly in South Dakota and Montana. Hutterites are the oldest communal society in North America.

Amish

The Amish version of Anabaptism emerged from a dispute among South German/Swiss Mennonites in Europe. In 1693 the dispute grew into a schism, and the dissenters, led by Jakob Amman (1656?–before 1730?), became known as "Amish." They came to North America in two waves in the mid-1700s and early 1800s. The first immigrants settled in southeastern Pennsylvania, then followed the Pennsylvania German diaspora into the Midwest (but not the Virginia backcountry). The nineteenth-century group moved immediately to the Midwest.

In the late nineteenth century the Amish turned to Old Orderism. Progressive Amish, known as Amish Mennonites, assimilated into Mennonite fellowships, but the Old Order Amish resolutely spurned many aspects of modernization, especially telephones, electricity, and automobiles. Amish memory is uncertain about the reason for banning telephone ownership except that the new communications technology led to gossip and was generally worldly. In 1919 high-voltage electricity became off-limits when the Amish agreed to permit energy from 12-volt batteries rather than public utilities. Although unknown at the time, the ban on alternating current from power lines became a high wall against the larger society because most appliances required 110 volts. Automobiles similarly became forbidden for their potential to bring the outside world to Amish doorsteps. Horse-and-buggy transportation and field work forced a slower pace of life and naturally limited contact with the larger society. These and other restrictions on technology erected particularly effective boundaries that isolated the Amish from the larger world.

Old Order Amish, however, do not flatly ban all forms of technology and modernity but rather adopt them at their own pace and control their growth within the community. (The same is true for Old Order Mennonites.) The rule against telephones, for example, forbids ownership but not usage, and telephones lurk around the fringes of Amish society. Phone shanties, which first appeared during the 1930s, are small hut-like buildings at the end of farm lanes that contain phones shared by several families, mostly for outgoing calls for appointments and farm business. Many Amish borrow phones or use those belonging to neighbors, and sometimes phones are in barns and shops. At this writing, easily concealable cell phones are under discussion in many Amish communities. Likewise, the Amish limit electricity rather than avoid it completely. When in the sixties horse-drawn farm implements declined in availability, they began to use portable gas-powered welding equipment to adapt tractor-drawn equipment for their teams. Soon, however, some plugged their generators into other electrical devices, such as freezers or even lightbulbs in barns. Faced with this new threat, the Amish permitted generators only for welding equipment, which allowed them to continue to farm without tractors, a vital part of their life. Just a few years later milk dealers required storage in cooled, stainless steel tanks, which the Amish powered with diesel engines and stirred with generators connected to twelve-volt batteries. But the basic ban against electricity drawn from power lines remains. Most Amish kitchens and bathrooms use bottled gas to heat water and operate stoves and refrigerators, and gas-pressured lanterns illuminate homes, barns, and shops. Amish farmsteads remain readily recognizable by the absence of wires running from the road.

In addition to limits on technology, the Amish observe nonconformity in many other aspects of daily life. Amish garb is more than plain and distinctive; most Amish groups limit buttons and prohibit belts. Dresses are gray, green, purple, blue, or wine; and the men wear black with green, purple, blue, or wine dress shirts. Women wear a prayer cap at all times, and vests, black felt hats, and untrimmed beards are mandatory for men. Most Amish speak a Pennsylvania German dialect. Religious services, held in homes, are a mix of dialect and formal German and consist of congregational singing, prayer, and two extemporaneous sermons. Absent are organs, offerings, flowers, crosses, choirs, litanies, and robes. Hymns come from the *Ausbund*, a sixteenth-century book in German without musical notation. The slow tempo can stretch a hymn to more than twenty minutes.

Additionally, the Amish do not participate in the Social Security program. In 1965 they secured exemption from self-employed social security taxes—they hold that the body of believers should care for the elderly—and in 1988 the exemption extended to Amish employed in Amish businesses. As a consequence, they do not qualify for Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid. Currently, most Amish operate their own eighth-grade education system in one-room facilities. The Amish participated in public education when it consisted primarily of one-room schools, but consolidation and pressure to attend high school created tension with authorities. In 1972 a landmark Supreme Court decision (*Wisconsin v. Yoder*) provided exemption from compulsory education laws. In brief, despite considerable variation on details of nonconformity, such as gas refrigerators or mechanical hay balers pulled by horses, and despite hundreds of congregations spread across twenty-five states and the absence of anything close to a central organization, remarkable uniformity characterizes the Amish method of separating from the world.

In 2000 the Old Order Amish included more than 180,000 adults and children, mostly in Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. With high birth rates and strong retention, their population doubles every twenty years. On the other hand, the high cost of land pressures Amish off the farm and into small businesses and wage employment, which brings them into greater contact with the larger society and provides new strain on their system of nonconformity.

Since 1927 a smaller and loosely organized group popularly known as the Beachy Amish (named for an early leader, Moses Beachy) has also existed in North America. The Beachy Amish dress quite plainly and reject certain aspects of modern technology, particularly entertainment technology such as television and movies. However, they drive cars, use English, and engage in vigorous evangelism.

Brethren

The Brethren trunk of Anabaptism grew out of the moment in 1708 when Alexander Mack (1679–1735) and seven others baptized themselves in a central German stream. Brethren have long pondered whether Anabaptism or Radical Pietism came first to their tradition, but the latest scholarship argues that Mack's movement materialized from a swirl of ideas that included both. From Radical Pietism Mack embraced a personal relationship with Christ and the fear that religious institutions, especially the established churches, could impede this. But he also concluded that the

New Testament emphasized the body of believers. Mack thought that Mennonites came closest to the New Testament model of the church, but he criticized them as lifeless, no doubt inaccurately, as many Mennonites had discovered Pietism. Mack and his followers, then, created their own fellowship. In 1719 the first Brethren arrived in Pennsylvania, and within a generation the entire fellowship had been transplanted to North America. They followed the larger settlement patterns into the southern backcountry, the Midwest, the Plains, and eventually the West Coast.

Like the other Anabaptist groups, the Brethren developed several distinctive ways of restoring the New Testament Church. Worship, for example, resembled the practice of other Anabaptist groups, and it included a sermon, exhortations or short comments on the sermon, prayer, and a few hymns. Brethren baptism was especially unusual: full immersion three times, once for each member of the trinity. This mode gave them a nickname, “Dunkers,” widely used by others prior to the Civil War (other variations include “Dunkards” and “Tunkers”), although Mack’s followers preferred simply “the Brethren.” (The official name through the nineteenth century was German Baptist Brethren.) Another distinctive Brethren practice was their interpretation of Love Feast, which included footwashing, a holy meal, and communion. Unlike the other early Anabaptist groups, the Brethren developed a strong denominational structure with an annual meeting that provided common policy as the fellowship grew geographically and numerically. These yearly gatherings began in the late eighteenth century and in the next century responded to the market revolution with large and small lines against the world, including sanctions on wallpaper, fancy furniture, sleigh bells, and hoop skirts, as well as and other fashionable clothing.

The first Brethren schism came in 1728 when Conrad Beissel broke with the fellowship, and four years later he and his followers created the Ephrata Society on the Pennsylvania frontier. The core of Beissel’s followers were communal with a Spartan, monastic, celibate lifestyle. Married “householders” resided in the surrounding neighborhood, and the fellowship met for worship on the Sabbath, that is, Saturday. Ephrata developed a flourishing printing operation, which issued a fifteen-hundred-page chronicle of martyrdom for Mennonites. After Beissel’s death in 1768, the Society’s membership aged and struggled to recruit new members. Ephrata also suffered heavily from its use as a military hospital during the American Revolution. The last celibate died in 1813, but married members maintained the Society until

1941, and a spin-off congregation in central Pennsylvania still survives.

After the Civil War more serious division came to the Brethren as progressives advocated admitting the Protestant mainstream, especially revivalism, into the fellowship. For progressives soul-winning now trumped separation from the world, and a message of salvation replaced nonconformity. Plain dress, denominational publications, missions, higher education, and Sunday schools were other points of controversy. In the late nineteenth century the Brethren opened more than twenty academies and colleges. Most failed, but the survivors are Ashland (Ohio, 1897), Bridgewater (Virginia, 1880), McPherson (Kansas, 1888), La Verne (California, 1981), Manchester (Indiana, 1895), and Elizabethtown (Pennsylvania, 1899). In 1880 Old Orders angry that the German Baptist Brethren had accepted too many modern innovations started the process of withdrawal, which led to the formation of the Old German Baptist Brethren. In 1882 the denomination disfellowshipped (that is, excommunicated) progressive leader Henry R. Holsinger (1833–1905), who was impatient with the pace of change, and the next year his followers founded the Brethren Church. What remained, the middle and the largest of the Brethren branches, still had progressives and conservatives and in 1908 changed its name to Church of the Brethren.

In the 1920s Alexander Mack’s movement further divided. In the previous decade the Church of the Brethren had abandoned plain dress as a test of membership, and in the 1920s an Old Order faction formed the Dunkard Brethren Church. Aside from dress, they also complained about bobbed hair on women, church picnics, Sunday schools, pianos and organs in worship, membership in secret societies (labor unions), and paid pastors, all departures from the tradition.

The Brethren Church also suffered division during the twenties when fundamentalists detected liberalism and argued with nonfundamentalists over the need for discipleship, which fundamentalists associated with legalism. Led by Alva J. McClain (1888–1968), in 1930 Brethren Church fundamentalists organized a seminary for their denomination, but conflict ensued. In 1937 two fundamentalist professors, McClain and Herman A. Hoyt, were dismissed from the seminary, and they launched a rival institution. In 1939 schism resulted, and the fundamentalists formed their own denomination, the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches. Once independent, the Grace Brethren continued towards fundamentalism, emphasizing dispensationalism and replacing traditional Brethren

nonconformity with a fundamentalist-like relationship with the larger society.

In the post–World War II era the three largest Brethren groups made different choices about their relationship with the Protestant mainstream. The Church of the Brethren abandoned many traditional Anabaptist practices, such as plain dress and unpaid ministers, and became heavily ecumenical and service-oriented. During World War II it joined with the Mennonite Central Committee and the Society of Friends to negotiate with the federal government for alternative service for conscientious objectors, which resulted in Civilian Public Service. In 1942 the Church of the Brethren founded Heifer Project, a plan to improve the breeding of farm animals overseas by donating genetically superior stock. The idea came from Dan West, appalled by the starvation he witnessed in the Spanish Civil War. In 1953 Heifer Project became an independent organization. The Brethren Church, often called “Ashland Brethren” for its headquarters in Ashland, Ohio, remained heavily evangelical, now placing these former progressives to the right of the Church of the Brethren. Both the Church of the Brethren and the Brethren Church suffered serious membership losses after the mid-twentieth century. Meanwhile, the Grace Brethren abandoned nonresistance and added typical fundamentalist causes, including support for capital punishment and opposition to feminism and abortion. In 1948 it founded Grace College (Ohio) to implement an evangelical version of higher education.

In 1992 the Grace Brethren fractured over several traditional Brethren rituals. In a running argument during the last half of the twentieth century, strong evangelicals favored allowing adults from denominations without adult baptism to transfer membership without undergoing the ceremony. Also debated was whether communion could be practiced separately from Love Feast. Conservatives favored the “closed” position that required adult baptism and restricted communion to the threefold service, that is, feetwashing, the holy meal, and communion. Dissenters also complained of growing denominationalism and loss of congregational independence. In 1992 traditionalists departed, forming the Conservative Grace Brethren Churches International Fellowship.

Today, with progressives, Old Orders, and evangelicals, the Brethren family of denominations resembles the Mennonite spectrum. The spiritual descendents of Alexander Mack are just as divided as those tracing their lineage to Menno Simons.

Brethren in Christ

The most recent species of Anabaptism is the Brethren in Christ, who are distinctive for their combination of an Anabaptist understanding of nonconformity and unity with an emotional variety of Pietism similar to Wesleyanism. Originally called “River Brethren,” for their location near the Susquehanna River in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, they were the product of an awakening among Pennsylvania Germans in the late eighteenth century, the same revival that created the United Brethren and the Evangelical Association, both ethnic German. This made River Brethren more revivalistic than most North American Anabaptists at that time. Unlike the United Brethren and Evangelical Association, however, the River Brethren combined their new birth enthusiasm with an Anabaptist understanding of the church that included discipleship, nonresistance, avoidance of politics, non-swearing of oaths, plain dress, and use of the ban in congregational discipline. From the Dunkers, specifically, they adopted trine immersion baptism, beards on men, and Love Feast, including feetwashing. River Brethren also worshipped in homes rather than in meetinghouses. In 1864 they took the name Brethren in Christ.

In the late nineteenth century some Brethren in Christ, like progressive Brethren and Mennonites, adopted innovations from larger Protestantism, including revivalism, missions, Sunday schools, and higher education. In 1909 Messiah College (Pennsylvania) opened its doors. Those objecting to this trend became Wengerites, Old Order River Brethren (Yorkers), and the United Zion Children. Also during this period Wesleyan holiness grew in popularity among the Brethren in Christ. By the first half of the twentieth century the Brethren in Christ were firmly in the evangelical mainstream with a large mission program, revivals, and popular holiness camp meetings. Nevertheless, in 1939 they adopted the plain coat for men and the cape dress for women, similar to other Old Order Anabaptists. During the two world wars the Brethren in Christ reaffirmed non-violence, and in 1940 they joined the Mennonite Central Committee. In the 1950s they became more evangelical and less Anabaptist, repealing dress rules, permitting musical instruments in worship services, and affiliating with the National Association of Evangelicals and the Christian Holiness Association. At this writing the Brethren in Christ are a tripartite combination of Anabaptism, evangelicalism, and fundamentalism experiencing small growth in membership.

Anabaptists today are probably best known for their Old Orders, especially the Amish, and for their contributions to

the historic peace church movement. The Anabaptist route to outsidership, particularly through equine transportation, plain dress, and nonresistance, makes them conspicuous; and their countercultural behavior, usually but not universally accepted, testifies to tolerance amidst diversity in American religion and to the guarantee of religious freedom in the U.S. Constitution. But Anabaptists have also felt the power of Americanization, and while some contemporary progressive Anabaptists may consider service as an acceptable replacement for lost traditions, reconstructing the New Testament Church through separation and unity is a declining concept among them.

See also *Anabaptists; Fundamentalism; Moravians; Pietism; Revivalism: Nineteenth Century; Social Ethics.*

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Anabaptists

The term *Anabaptists*, meaning “rebaptizers,” refers to persons and groups that, in the context of the Protestant Reformation, advocated radical ecclesiastical reform measures, including adult baptism. Initially a derogatory label fashioned by the radicals’ opponents, the term *Anabaptists* was eventually embraced by groups that found adult baptism (or “believers baptism”) theologically superior to infant baptism. Although significant diversity existed within early Anabaptism, historians have nonetheless documented widely shared, if not consensual, emphases beyond believers baptism, including commitments to disciplined Christian living, nonresistance (pacifism), and other forms of social nonconformity. These emphases continue today in a host of North American religious groups, including Amish, Brethren, Mennonite, and Hutterite groups, that trace their roots to the sixteenth-century Anabaptist movement.

Anabaptist Origins

As with many religious traditions, the question of origins is contested with respect to the Anabaptist tradition. One prominent school of thought has focused on the followers of Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531), the Protestant reformer who assumed a preaching post in Zurich, Switzerland, in 1519. Zwingli’s reform agenda, driven by the principle of *sola scriptura*, eventually included a proposal to abolish the Catholic mass. In 1523, the Zurich city council considered this idea and demurred, not because it disagreed with Zwingli’s reasoning but because it feared the idea was too radical for immediate implementation. Zwingli affirmed the council’s right to decide the pace of reform, a decision that alienated some of his young disciples, including Conrad Grebel (c. 1498–1526) and Felix Mantz (or Manz, c. 1498–1527). According to his disenchanting followers, the Bible’s teachings, not the council’s political calculus, should take priority in matters of ecclesiastical reform.

Charging Zwingli with “false forbearance,” these radicals soon began to advocate more drastic reforms, including the rejection of infant baptism. Earlier, Zwingli had demonstrated some openness to this idea, but he had since backed off. On January 21, 1525, the radicals decided they would wait no longer for Zwingli or the city council to endorse their ideas. They took it upon themselves to baptize one another, a practice they considered their first true baptism (although to others it appeared to be a second baptism, that is, a rebaptism). For some mid-twentieth-century Anabaptist

historians, and certainly in the historical imagination of contemporary Anabaptist churches, this act of baptismal defiance constituted *the* formal beginning of the Anabaptist movement.

Other historians, however, have contested this simple, normative account of Anabaptist origins. To these later-twentieth-century historians, many of whom were unconcerned about identifying a useable Anabaptist past, the “monogenesis” account of Anabaptist origins ignored the complex realities of the radical Reformation. They advocated instead a “polygenesis” account that highlighted numerous people who pushed beyond the strictures of state-sponsored churches and advocated adult baptism as one facet of their reform. According to polygenesis historians, the Anabaptist movement is best conceived as originating in several geographically disparate places. One particularly influential argument noted that in addition to the Mantz–Grebel circle of Anabaptists in Zurich, two other influential circles emerged quite independently at about the same time: one in south Germany, led by the mystics Hans Hut (d. 1527) and Hans Denck (c. 1500–1527), and one in the Low Countries (north Germany and Holland), led by the apocalyptically inclined Melchior Hoffman (c. 1495–1544?). Over time these different Anabaptisms grew, merged, migrated, and declined, producing an ever-changing *mélange* of European Anabaptist expressions. The polygenesis historians, who gave priority to social history over ecclesiastical and intellectual history, underscored not only the diversity of Anabaptist expressions but also the importance of their social contexts in shaping diverse reform agendas. In some cases, they noted, early Anabaptists rejected what is today often seen as a normative, consensual Anabaptist value: pacifism.

In many respects, polygenesis became in the 1970s and 1980s the reigning paradigm for delineating Anabaptist origins. More recently, however, some scholars have sought to temper the diversity suggested by the polygenesis account. More specifically, these scholars have suggested that an over-emphasis on historical *origins* has come at the expense of recognizing the ways the different geographical centers influenced one another and moved toward various points of consensus. “What we see in early Anabaptism,” writes historian Arnold Snyder in “Beyond Polygenesis,” “is a movement with significant internal theological agreement and coherence that, in early stages of development, could and did overlook many implications which later would become divisive issues” (p. 3). So, for instance, in addition to affirming the broad outlines of historic Christian doctrine, as well as embracing particular

emphases of the Protestant reformers (for example, *sola scriptura* and salvation by faith through grace), Anabaptist groups shared many other ideas in common with each other beyond their commitment to believers baptism (for example, the anthropological doctrine of free will, a soteriology that stressed the centrality of discipleship, a view of the visible church that placed Christians in tension with the larger world, and an openness to the revelatory power of the Holy Spirit). In this regard, Snyder and other scholars contend that one can rightly talk about an Anabaptist movement with an Anabaptist theology (singular), albeit with varying places of origin and different practical emphases.

Early Emphases and Expressions

One of the earliest events aimed at defining Anabaptism occurred in 1527, when Swiss Anabaptist leaders gathered near the town of Schleithem. Overseen by Michael Sattler (d. 1527), the gathering produced a seven-article manifesto known as the Schleithem Confession that delineates the key elements of Swiss Anabaptism: adult baptism; stringent church discipline (“the ban”); the breaking of bread as a communal act; separation from worldly evils; the importance of a faithful, congregationally chosen ministry; the rejection of the sword; and the refusal to swear oaths. One mid-twentieth-century Mennonite scholar notes that, taken together, these seven articles point to the essential concerns of early Anabaptism: “the nature of Christian obedience, the idea of the gathered people of God, and the way of Christian love.” With these words in his Introduction to *The Schleithem Confession*, John Howard Yoder corroborated the work of his mentor, Harold Bender, who had posited an “Anabaptist vision” of three distinct emphases: *discipleship*, in which one’s life is patterned after the life of Jesus Christ; *a voluntary church* consisting of a converted membership; and *an ethic of love and nonresistance*.

The Anabaptists’ separatist ecclesiology had clear political implications. First and foremost, their views spawned persecution at the hands of the state. Civil authorities considered the Anabaptists both heretical and seditious; indeed, in an age when tax roles and military conscription were based on infant baptismal records, Anabaptist theology spawned fears of anarchy—and quick and brutal repression. This state-sponsored persecution, which began almost immediately, redoubled the early Anabaptists’ sense of pessimism toward the social order that, according to the Schleithem Confession, was beholden to “the evil one.” A logical corollary to this pessimistic view of the world, at least in the case of Swiss

Anabaptism, was pacifism. According to the Schleithem confession, the sword was “an ordering of God outside the perfection of Christ”; as an instrument of the world it was not to be wielded by Christians. Although some historians have suggested that pacifism was merely a way for Anabaptists to make a virtue of their victimization, the Schleithem Confession reveals a deeply principled commitment to pacifism based on a dualistic understanding of the church and world.

Not all the early Anabaptists were pacifists, however. The most dramatic instance of Anabaptists taking up the sword occurred in the northern German city of Münster in 1534. Captivated by the apocalyptic visions of German Anabaptist Melchior Hoffman, a Dutch Anabaptist named Jan Matthijs (or Mathtys, d. 1534) sought to hasten that end in Münster. Hoffman had preached that God would pave the way for Christ’s return by destroying the ungodly; Matthijs modified that message to say that individual Christians could help prepare for Christ’s return by annihilating the wicked. When Matthijs declared Münster the New Jerusalem—and forced unconverted citizens to leave the city in anticipation of Christ’s return—the Catholic bishop of Münster rallied an army to retake the city. In the end, Matthijs and many other Anabaptists died in a lengthy siege. For centuries thereafter the term *Anabaptists* was used to denote dangerously misguided revolutionaries.

Although Münster loomed large in the minds of the Anabaptists’ detractors, still other forms of Anabaptism took hold in the 1520s and 1530s that diverged sharply from the violent Anabaptism that characterized Münster. Perhaps most significant in this regard was a smattering of individuals and groups that historians often lump together under the label “South German Anabaptism.” Some South German Anabaptists (Hans Hut, for instance) manifested an apocalyptic interest akin to the Münsterites (but without the violence), an interest that helps to explain Hut’s disinterest in founding churches that would outlive him. Like Hut, other South German Anabaptists showed more interest in the regeneration of individuals and, in some cases, mystical encounters with Christ, than in starting and maintaining church communities.

In Moravia, however, a group of Anabaptist refugees seeking safe haven from persecution created an alternative community that, rather surprisingly, has survived to the present: the Hutterites. First gathering in Nickolsburg in 1527, and shortly thereafter migrating to Austerlitz, these Moravian Anabaptists began practicing a communal sharing of goods as outlined in the New Testament book of Acts. In

1529, an Anabaptist pastor named Jacob Hutter (d. 1536) began visiting the Austerlitz refugees to provide counsel and receive encouragement. In time, Hutter became the group’s leader, and the group eventually took the name *Hutterites*. Although Hutter was captured and put to death in 1536, the Hutterites survived. They continue today as a distinct North American Anabaptist group, located primarily in Canada.

Persecution and Survival

The martyrdom of Jacob Hutter was hardly unique. Over the course of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, at least twenty-five hundred Anabaptist men and women lost their lives on account of their faith. Thousands of others were arrested or otherwise harassed. In response, many early Anabaptists worshipped in secret, and still others migrated in search of more hospitable environments. Persecution not only reaffirmed the Anabaptists’ dualistic, good-versus-evil view of the world, but it also shaped their identity as faithful disciples sharing in Christ’s suffering. Nowhere was this claim more apparent than in *Martyrs Mirrors*, a compilation of Anabaptist martyr accounts assembled by Dutchman Thieleman J. van Braght (1625–1664) and published in 1660. Even today this large tome can be found in many Anabaptist church libraries and in some members’ homes. The 1685 edition included copper etchings that illustrated the martyrs’ experiences, sometimes quite graphically. One etching in particular, depicting the Anabaptist Dirk Willems rescuing his would-be captor from an icy pond, has achieved nearly iconic status in some twenty-first-century Anabaptist communities.

Despite many sources of persecution, and despite the public relations disaster at Münster, the Anabaptist movement survived. In part, this survival can be attributed to effective leaders who, in the aftermath of Münster, helped to define Anabaptism in more moderate terms. No leader was more important in this regard than the Dutch Anabaptist Menno Simons (1496–1561). By 1544, just eight years after Menno’s conversion from Catholicism, the term *Mennist* appeared in a letter to refer to the Dutch Anabaptists. Today, the most common label for North American Anabaptists is *Mennonite*.

Another factor that contributed to the survival of Anabaptism was the Anabaptists’ ability to find out-of-the-way places where they could live in peace. In the sixteenth century, some Swiss Anabaptists migrated to Moravia for this reason; a century later, others made their way to the Alsace region in present-day France. Dutch Mennonites, on

the other hand, made their way to the Vistula Delta along the Baltic Sea, and from there, in the eighteenth century, moved on to Russia. In many of these places, Anabaptist refugees found welcome due to their expert farming practices; they were allowed to worship freely as long as they contributed to the region's economic well-being and resisted the temptation to proselytize. For this reason, some Anabaptist groups, particularly those of Swiss origin, developed a reputation for quietism. Russian Mennonite groups, on the other hand, assumed a more politically engaged posture, in part because they were given administrative oversight of the large colonies they created.

The Amish-Mennonite Division of 1693

As noted, one place where early Anabaptists found sanctuary from persecution was the Alsace region of present-day France. Migrating there from Switzerland in the mid- and late seventeenth century, these Swiss-Alsatian Anabaptists nonetheless maintained fellowship with other Swiss Anabaptist churches, at least for a time. Under the leadership of Jacob Amman (1656?–before 1730?), however, some chose to break from the more established Swiss Anabaptist churches in 1693, citing Swiss church leaders' lack of faithfulness to the original Anabaptist vision. In particular, Amman and his faction complained that Swiss Anabaptists had become lax on a variety of lifestyle and ecclesiastical issues, most significantly their commitment to church discipline. Invoking earlier Anabaptist precedents for shunning wayward church members, the Ammanists demanded a reinvention of this potent form of church discipline.

When Swiss Anabaptist leaders rejected the Ammanists' demand, the Amish church was born. Henceforth the Swiss Anabaptism movement would be characterized by two dominant streams: the more strictly disciplined Amish stream and a more world-embracing stream that assumed the Mennonite moniker. In twentieth-century America, the Amish would become renowned for their steadfast commitment to an agrarian lifestyle and their selective use of modern technology, a visually potent combination that has spawned a thriving Amish-themed tourist industry in some Amish regions. By contemporary standards, however, the sociological differences between the seventeenth-century Amish and their European neighbors was slight; indeed, most of the distinctions that are so apparent today did not emerge until the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, long after the Amish had migrated to North America. Nonetheless, the die had been cast in 1693 for ecclesiastical

categories—Amish and Mennonite—that survived the Anabaptists' migration to North America, categories that continue to be used today.

Migration to North America

The dispersion of Anabaptists across Europe, and the conditions they experienced in their adopted homes, shaped their decisions about migrating to North America. In the case of Swiss-German Anabaptists, this decision first came in the late 1600s. The first Mennonites arrived in Philadelphia in 1683, settling in what is now Germantown. About fifty years later, in 1737, Amish immigrants arrived aboard the ship *Charming Nancy*, which also docked in Philadelphia. Indeed, Philadelphia became the favored port of entry in the ensuing decades for most Amish and Mennonites. Correspondingly, Mennonites and Amish first settled in Pennsylvania before continuing their migrations westward (to Ohio and Indiana), northward (to New York and Ontario), and southward (to Maryland and Virginia). In the eighteenth century, Amish and Mennonite immigrants, almost all of them farmers, established a Pennsylvania German ethnic identity, one element of which was a dialect known as Pennsylvania Dutch, from Deutsch, meaning German. Some observers found these Pennsylvania Dutch citizens to be “dull and ignorant boors,” but other observers highlighted more positive traits: agricultural proficiency, a willingness to work hard, honesty, and piety.

In addition to the Amish and Mennonites, another German Anabaptist group—the Brethren—began emigrating to North America in the early 1700s. The Brethren had not been in Europe long. In fact, the roots of the Brethren movement stretched back only a few years prior to their North American migration, to the development of radical Pietism in late-seventeenth-century Germany. Disenchanted with the spiritual state of Germany's Lutheran and Reformed churches, some Pietists adopted the beliefs and practices they saw in early Anabaptism, including adult baptism, pacifism, and strict modes of church discipline. In 1708, eight adults were baptized in the Eder River near Schwarzenau, Germany. Eleven years later, in 1719, the first Brethren migrated to North America. In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America, these Brethren were called German Baptist Brethren or “Dunkers,” the latter term owing to their practice of baptism by immersion.

The Anabaptist groups that had journeyed eastward in Europe—the Hutterites in Moravia and the Dutch Mennonites in Russia—migrated to the New World much later than the Swiss-German Anabaptists, first arriving in North

America in the 1870s. Rather than settling in Pennsylvania, the Hutterites and Russian Mennonites settled further west; the Hutterites initially made their homes in the Dakota Territory, whereas the Russian Mennonites put down roots in a variety of upper midwestern states (Kansas and Nebraska, for example) and Manitoba, Canada. As was their earliest pattern in Europe, some Hutterites created colonies that practiced the communal sharing of goods. In fact, the Hutterites remain the only North American Anabaptist group that lives in cloistered, communally owned colonies separate from the larger society. The Russian Mennonites, like their Swiss-German counterparts, settled largely as independent farmers, having brought with them a variety of red winter wheat that flourished in the prairie states' climate.

The North American Anabaptist Mosaic

In many respects the Old World experiences and the subsequent migration patterns of Europe's Anabaptists created the contours for Anabaptism in North America. Scholars of North American Anabaptism have frequently noted the ethnic divide between Swiss-German Anabaptists, who first migrated to America in 1683, and Dutch-Russian Anabaptists, who immigrated to America almost two hundred years later. This ethnic divide does not tell the full story, however, for within these two ethnic camps one can find significant ecclesiastical diversity. For instance, the Swiss-German ethnic family includes a variety of Mennonite, Amish, and Brethren groups; likewise, the Dutch-Russian family boasts a variety of Mennonite-related groups. Moreover, one Mennonite denomination, the now-defunct General Conference Mennonite Church, was founded by Swiss-German Mennonites but was quickly populated by immigrating Dutch-Russian Mennonites.

Perhaps the most common way to think about the diversity of Anabaptist expression in North America is by denominational family, or what Donald B. Kraybill and C. Nelson Hostetter call Anabaptist "tribes." In this organizational scheme, four tribes—Amish, Brethren, Hutterite, and Mennonite—comprise the hundreds of churches and denominations that exist in actual practice. Of course, even then it is not always clear into which family a particular church or denomination falls. For instance, the Brethren in Christ Church was likely founded by Mennonites, but the fledgling church also appears to have been influenced by German Baptist Brethren.

A different way to categorize the variety of Anabaptist churches in North America places greater emphasis on

sociological features than organic historical connections. In addition to their tribal paradigm, Kraybill and Hostetter divide Anabaptist groups into three categories based on their degree of assimilation to the larger culture. The *traditional* groups, often known as Old Orders, use horse-drawn transportation, dress plainly, speak a distinct dialect, and use technology very selectively. At the other end of the spectrum, the *transformational* groups value higher education, hold professional jobs, use a wide range of technology, and participate in most mainstream cultural and recreational activities. In between these two extremes lie the *transitional* groups that continue to wear plain clothing and often reject some technologies (such as television) but nonetheless engage the larger world more assertively than the traditional groups (by engaging in evangelistic practices, for example).

Some observers mistakenly believe that the Amish and Hutterites make up the traditional category and that Mennonites and Brethren make up the other two categories. Generally speaking, that is the case, but a closer look reveals a more complicated reality. For instance, the Beachy Amish are a good example of a transitional Anabaptist group; moreover, Old Order Mennonite and Old Order Brethren groups are rightly located on the traditional end of the spectrum. Indeed, Mennonite and Brethren groups can be found in all three sociological categories, and Amish and Hutterite groups can be found in two. And while it is more likely for an Anabaptist person or group to migrate from the unassimilated end of the spectrum toward the more assimilated end than vice versa, some people, and even some groups, have sought not simply to slow but to reverse the trend toward assimilation to the larger culture.

The Demographics and Significance of North American Anabaptism

From a numerical standpoint, North American Anabaptists constitute a small percentage of North American Christianity. Although precise numbers are hard to find, one recent count of Anabaptist church membership estimated 540,000 members (if children and other nonmember participants are included, the North American Anabaptist population rises to about 860,000). Of those 540,000 members, 43 percent belong to the Mennonite tribe, 39 percent to the Brethren tribe, 16 percent to the Amish tribe, and less than 2 percent to the Hutterite tribe. Using the other categorization scheme outlined above, 67 percent of the 540,000 North American members belong to transformational churches, 13 percent to transitional churches, and 20 percent to traditional churches.

Given the greater likelihood of Anabaptist individuals and groups to move toward increased assimilation, one might conclude that the proportion of Anabaptists in the more assimilated (transformational) churches will increase over time. But that assumption fails to account for two things that traditional Anabaptist churches do better than transformational churches. First, they procreate at a higher rate; for instance, the typical Old Order Amish woman in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, gives birth to seven children over her lifetime, four more than the average non-Amish woman in Lancaster County. Not only do Old Order families produce more children, their children are more likely to join their birth churches. In fact, many Old Order Amish communities retain 85 to 95 percent of their children.

These two factors—high birth rates and successful retention—have led to growth rates in traditional and transitional Anabaptist churches that, from 1950 to the present, have far exceeded those of most transformational Anabaptist churches. One relatively recent study charting membership changes showed that Old Order Amish churches had doubled their membership over a fifteen-year period, the Beachy Amish church had grown by 76 percent, and Old Order Mennonite churches had grown by 51 percent. Contrast this to 9 percent growth over fifteen years for the Mennonite Church and –3 percent growth for the General Conference Mennonite Church, the two largest transformational Mennonite denominations (these denominations have since reorganized to form the Mennonite Church USA and the Mennonite Church Canada). Another recent study indicated that only 30 percent of Mennonite Church USA members are under the age of forty-five, a striking contrast to the Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, in which 82 percent of the population is under the age of forty-five.

Of course, one area in which the more assimilated North American Anabaptist churches have grown and the less assimilated Anabaptist churches have not is in the realm of ethnic diversity. The traditional and transitional churches continue to be overwhelmingly Euro-American and largely Swiss-German. On the other hand, almost 25 percent of the new members who joined the Mennonite Church USA from 2001–2006 were African American, Latino, Native American, or Asian.

Whether traditional or transformational in orientation to the larger culture, Anabaptists have arguably demonstrated a significance in North America that outpaces their relatively modest numbers. On the traditional end of the spectrum, groups like the Old Order Amish have generated significant

public interest for their disarmingly alternative lifestyle. Although few outsiders opt to undertake an Old Order lifestyle, the way of life the Old Order Amish represent has catalyzed significant soul-searching among those who observe it. Indeed, the Old Order Amish function as something of a religious Rorschach test for many Americans, who find various (and sometimes contradictory) meanings embedded in the Old Order lifestyle.

As for the transformational Anabaptists, their significance owes less to their visual distinctiveness than to their theological vision. In an age when many North American Christians cobble together their religious commitments, Anabaptist emphases on nonresistance, radical discipleship, simple living, and community have found a broad resonance. Moreover, socially engaged Anabaptists, drawing on long-standing Anabaptist values, have made important contributions to the emerging fields of conflict transformation and restorative justice. In some cases, transformational Anabaptists have even undertaken political advocacy, particularly with respect to war, poverty, and hunger. In these and other ways, transformational Anabaptists are challenging the dualistic assumptions that track a long history in Anabaptist life. To be sure, many North American Anabaptists continue to live as “the quiet in the land.” At the same time, Anabaptists on the transformational end of the spectrum have effectively complicated the notion that quietism is an essential Anabaptist trait.

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family*; *Moravians*; *Pietism*; *Social Ethics*.

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Angels

An unorganized religion of angels, shaped by commercial and cultural forces, emerged in the United States during the twentieth century and continues into the twenty-first. Anchoring this religion is a network of about six thousand Hallmark stores and innumerable independent shops that sell angel statues, pins, ornaments, and cards in dozens of forms. Above these material angels soar angels of popular culture, literature, and art, appearing in the scores of television shows, movies, songs, books, and paintings featuring angels that have proliferated since the 1930s.

Meanwhile, the organized religions of America also emphasize angels in their own ways. Millions of evangelicals take part in spiritual warfare, in which human prayer aids Michael and his angels against Satan and his demons. New Age believers read books and attend workshops on talking with angels and take advice from those who channel angels. Mormons credit the beginning of their movement to the angel Moroni, who brought revelation to Prophet Joseph Smith and whose statue stands atop each of their temples.

All of these versions of angels share in an American tendency to see angels less as servants of God than as natural, even bodily creatures who serve humanity. Because God tends to disappear in all of these angel stories and symbols, theories, and practices, American angels exemplify the trend toward a type of faith called *transtheism*. Transtheistic faith provisionally accepts many sources of spiritual power, with a sense that some unity (which may be impersonal, as in Love or Awareness or the Force) underlies everything. The hunger for objects of transtheistic faith is so acute in the United States that Americans are constantly inventing new objects, such as the Care Bears of children’s cartoons (who descend in the manner of angels from their heavenly Care-A-Lot to solve the world’s problems) and superheroes such as

Superman, whose powers have grown until they equal those of an angel.

A transtheistic faith in angels suits American tendencies toward pluralism and optimism. In American visions of the future, from *Star Trek* to the *Left Behind* novels, many different kinds of humans are usually pictured living on a par with angels. Statements of human equality with angels occurred in the writings and sermons of English Puritans and Spanish Conquistadors, long before there was a United States.

From Colonial Men to Victorian Women

According to Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra in *Puritan Conquistadors* (2006), the Spanish invasions of the Americas produced accounts of war with Satan that were translated into English, and this “satanic epic” influenced English literature. The prominent roles John Milton gave to Satan, to Raphael, to Michael, and to many other angels in *Paradise Lost* reflected widespread interest among philosophers and theologians. One Milton scholar counted several dozen “substantial works” in English dealing with angels between 1640 and 1665.

In the English colonies in America, interactions between humans and angels tended to be as intimate as the scene from *Paradise Lost* in which Raphael blushed while describing angelic sex. Increase Mather’s (1639–1723) *Angelographia* (1696) reported a man cured of disease by an angel who gave him a potion of “Blood wort and Red sage, steeped in small beer.” Eleven years earlier, in 1685, Mather’s son, Cotton Mather (1663–1728), had recorded in his diary a visit to his study by an angel. Both Mathers reported that angels and demons attended church services, helping the prayers of human saints and distracting the damned.

Though the eighteenth century brought a turn toward rationalism and the dominance of secular leaders over the clergy, angels remained prominent in service to humanity. Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), the revivalist and theologian, wrote that the angels are “made inferior to the saints in honour” because they were created for us. Edwards also agreed with Milton in seeing the creation of humanity and the plan of the Incarnation as the reason for Satan’s rebellion and added that good angels were not confirmed in their salvation until Jesus ascended to Heaven in a glorified human body.

The primary contribution of the eighteenth century to American angelology came from the Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), who conversed with angels in visions and recorded his findings in *Heaven and Hell* (1758). For Swedenborg, angels and demons were former humans,

and their opposed influences on humanity opened the way for human freedom. He described heaven as a place with houses and people marrying each other and working, while hell was filled with mobs, slums, and brothels. Though denounced by many, Swedenborg was also widely read. His doctrines were spread across America by missionaries, including John Chapman (1774–1845), also known as “Johnny Appleseed,” who distributed Swedenborgian tracts as he planted apple trees. Those who accepted Swedenborg’s visions as revelation were limited to the tiny Church of the New Jerusalem, but his picture of heaven as a replica of earth prefigured that of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps in the best-selling *The Gates Ajar* (1868). The Swedenborgian idea that angels are former humans appeared both in Mormon doctrine and in the popular culture through films like *It’s a Wonderful Life* (1946) and *Angels in the Outfield* (1951, 1994).

In the era from the 1800s through the 1920s, America witnessed a triumph of angels in visual art. Angels had been an exception to the rule against making graven images since biblical times, and even the Puritans put heads with wings on their tombstones. After George Washington’s death in 1799, lithographs showing Washington borne into heaven by angels were reproduced for display in thousands of homes. American sculptures of angels began with marble cherubs and male youths by Horatio Greenough in the 1830s and proceeded through the massive, bronze, female *Angel of the Waters* in Central Park, New York, by Emma Stebbins (1873). Around the turn of the century, winged figures by Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Daniel Chester French created public sacred places in American cities. In the park-like cemeteries that replaced churchyards, starting with Mount Auburn in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1831, angels became part of the standard decoration for tombs. The trend toward monumental angels reached one of its greatest expressions in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington, D.C., in 1865, where Constantino Brumidi painted Washington surrounded by angels as he looked down from the dome. By 1905, the Presbyterians of Pittsburgh were worshipping in a downtown church that featured eleven Tiffany windows of angels.

Angels dominated the Women’s Building of the 1893 Columbian Exhibition in Chicago, where a student from the San Francisco School of Design named Alice Rideout made twelve-foot bronze female angels of Enlightenment and Innocence to set upon the roof. Inside that building, Dora Wheeler Keith painted an angel called Imagination raising her gorgeous, multicolored wings. Until the

Renaissance, when a few female angels appeared, angels in painting and sculpture had always been male, but by the late nineteenth century they had become predominantly female.

This change in the sex of angels reflected a rise of the feminine throughout the Christian world. Male artists shared and eventually took over the trend toward female angels. The thirteen angels painted by Brumidi in the Capitol dome are female. Abbott Thayer (1849–1921), a reclusive Yankee, painted his daughter Mary as an angel for the first time in 1889, probably in response to the death of his wife. The portrait, called *Angel*, has appeared on many cards and book covers, and Thayer painted Mary with wings at least twelve more times. Looking at *Angel*, one can see the same aesthetic that appears in the lingerie fashion shows that the Victoria’s Secret company has broadcast since 1999, in which supermodels called Victoria’s Secret Angels combine sensuality with magic, spirituality, and innocence as they walk the runway with huge wings. Daniel Chester French, the sculptor of the Lincoln Memorial, the *Minuteman* of Concord, and the John Harvard statue in Harvard Yard, made many large female angels. Ironically, the female artists who helped to make angels female, such as Emma Stebbins and Alice Rideout, were largely forgotten during the twentieth century.

Several major American writers of Victorian times wrote about angels, especially when they dealt with the problem of evil. Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “Uriel,” a poem of 1846, made the traditional angel of the sun his spokesman for an assertion that evil cannot be separated from good. For Edgar Allan Poe, the envy of angels explained the death of his child bride in “Annabel Lee” (1849). Herman Melville ended the sinking of the *Pequod* in *Moby Dick* (1851) with the image of a “bird of heaven” tangled with the ship and sinking “with archangelic shrieks,” an evocation of Michael in his contest with Satan. In that same year, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow brought the seven angels of the planets—two of whom later observed Satan—to the birth of Jesus in a narrative poem, “The Golden Legend.” Walt Whitman wrote defiant lines for Satan in “Chanting the Square Deific” (1865).

Just before his death, Mark Twain (1835–1910) wrote *Extract from Captain Stormfield’s Visit to Heaven*, a satire of the heavenly vision genre that descended from Swedenborg through Victorian spiritualists. Twain’s protagonist found that wings were more of a hindrance than a help, so that angels used them only on ceremonial occasions. He also discovered that angels he might glimpse at a ceremony had little interest in talking with humans who had just died. In

a posthumously published work, *The Mysterious Stranger*, which Twain wrote in three different versions that were combined by an editor, a son of Satan tried to make up for the damage his father had done but ended by destroying human faith. Psychologist and philosopher William James wrote of the Earth as “our guardian angel,” one among many spiritual forces, in *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909). As the age of high literature ended, the poet known as H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) wrote *A Tribute to the Angels* (1944), in which angels became explicitly transtheistic, because each angel was identified with at least one ancient god. H.D. equated Michael with Thoth, an Egyptian judge of the dead; Uriel with Zeus; and Annael (the angel of Venus) with Aphrodite and Astarte.

Breakthrough of an Angel Religion into Mass Culture

Through three iconic works, angels descended from their dignified places on memorials and in literature to enter American mass culture. *The Littlest Angel*, written in 1939 for a radio broadcast, turned into a children’s book with a Christmas market, as well as two cartoon versions and a television musical. Walt Disney’s *Fantasia* (1940) presented a transtheistic universe in which Satan was the most vibrant presence. Frank Capra’s *It’s a Wonderful Life* (1946) set the pattern for angel therapists.

The Littlest Angel was written by Charles Tazewell, a descendent of Puritans who moved to Hollywood. In this story, a boy dies at four and a half and has a hard time adjusting to heaven. He causes the gatekeeper to blot his page; comes late to choir; sings off-key; and is generally disruptive until he is asked what could make him happy, and requests that a box containing his old dog’s collar, a dead butterfly, a robin’s egg, and two white stones be fetched from under his bed. Having this box makes him content, until he hears the news that Jesus is to be born on earth as God’s son, and the angels begin to create gifts for the child. The littlest angel finds that he has no skill to make a gift. At the last moment, he is inspired to give Jesus his box, which he sets before God’s throne. After God looks over the gifts the angels have made, God picks out the box and asks who has given this. Terrified, the littlest angel steps before God, certain that his shabby box has been found unworthy. God says that this box pleases him more than all the other gifts, since his son will be born as a human and learn to love such things. God then sends the box into the heavens and transforms it into the Star of Bethlehem.

Illogical as the story may appear, *The Littlest Angel* confirmed and extended the roles played by angels in America since colonial times. Angels lived to exalt the material world and to serve humanity. Making gifts for the human Jesus was the most important activity of their lives.

Through Walt Disney’s *Fantasia*, Satan became a cartoon star. In the final sequence of the film, Modest Moussorgorsky’s *Night on Bald Mountain* begins with the mountain of the title turning into an enormous creature with leathery, bat-like wings and yellow glowing eyes, black skin, and a muscular chest and abdomen. This figure raises souls out of a village graveyard, makes them dance, crushes them into flames, and watches as they writhe and combine with each other in more frenzied dancing. Just when it seems that the world will be swallowed into the maw of hell, dawn breaks, and each tolling of a church bell causes the Satanic figure to flinch and recoil from the light, until he wraps his wings around himself and turns again into the mountain. Without a break, the last notes of Moussorgorsky’s piece blend into the opening of Franz Schubert’s hymn, *Ave Maria*. The dawn mist is punctuated by a line of candles carried by white-robed figures who may be angels like the worshipful bands disrupted by the littlest angel. The procession enters a gate to a garden (that might also be a cemetery) and disappears in a golden sunrise.

According to the official Disney history of *Fantasia*, Walt Disney intended to juxtapose good and evil and to create a movie that worked on the level of fairy tales and myths. Before Satan, the damned souls, and the angels appeared, the movie had featured a sorcerer and his apprentice; magical brooms with arms and legs; Greek and Roman gods from Bacchus to Zeus, Vulcan, and Apollo; male and female centaurs; and many winged cherubs or Cupids. *Fantasia* contributed more than any film before *Star Wars* to the transtheism that underlies the religion of angels.

It’s a Wonderful Life established the model of angels as therapists. In the story written by the filmmaker Frank Capra, a small-town banker named George Bailey, faced with a scandal and prosecution because of a shortage of funds, is about to kill himself when an old man falls from the bridge from which Bailey intended to jump. After rescuing the man, Bailey discovers that the man is an angel, sent to show Bailey what the world would have been like if he had never lived. When Bailey finds his town turned into a den of vice, abandoned homes, and slums, he resolves to go back and face whatever will happen. Bailey’s neighbors rally to his side, contributing to make up for the shortage at the bank.

The angel, Clarence, who had been trying for two hundred years to earn his wings, finally succeeds.

Though *It's a Wonderful Life* was the greatest example, this pattern of angels helping people to understand themselves appeared in many films, including *Here Comes Mr. Jordan* (1941) and the remake, *Heaven Can Wait* (1978), *The Bishop's Wife* (1947) and its remake, *The Preacher's Wife* (1997), *Angels in the Outfield* (1951, 1994), and *Michael* (1996). The British reaction to *It's a Wonderful Life* showed how American it was to depict an angel in this way. One British critic called it "an embarrassment to both flesh and spirit," while another said it was "a very good film—for Americans" (Jeanine Basinger, *The It's a Wonderful Life Book*, p. 66). Beyond bad reviews, the movie had great difficulty being shown in Britain because of censorship. Censors apparently concerned with theology demanded that Capra remove all references to Jesus and Mary, all discussion of first- and second-class angels, and even the word *wings*. To illustrate the difference that had grown up between American and English sensibilities on angels, one might consider the "space trilogy" (*Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra*, and *That Hideous Strength*) written by C. S. Lewis between 1938 and 1945, which featured angels. Whenever an angel spoke with a human in the Lewis books, the human perceived the world reeling at an angle while the angel stood straight.

Therapy, Sex, and War in the Angel Craze of the Twentieth Century

The most therapeutic angels in American culture appeared in two television shows, Michael Landon's *Highway to Heaven*, which had a successful run from 1984 to 1989, and *Touched by an Angel*, the creation of Martha Williamson, which posted consistently high ratings between 1994 and 2003. Landon's character was a former human, a lawyer who had died young and been sent back to Earth to earn his status as an angel. Traveling with a human, a former policeman who knew his identity, "Jonathan Smith" took jobs in nursing homes, brought homeless people to protest to city government, and generally worked as a community organizer. In *Touched by an Angel*, the theologically aware, born-again Methodist producer Martha Williamson did not depict her female angels, a "case worker" and her apprentice, as former humans. These angels worked more often with personal and family problems than with social issues, although the series did touch on slavery in Sudan and terrorism. While Landon's climaxes sometimes showed villains punished for their sins, Williamson's plots usually drove toward

the moment when everyone saw that God loved them more than they could possibly know and that they should let go of whatever fear or hatred was distorting their lives. Though both shows could be offered as proof of the statement by Marx that religion is "the opium of the people," they interjected a message that God sides with those who are poor and suffering into a medium that normally celebrates violence, sexual imagery, and materialism.

While therapeutic fictions skirted the subject of angels and sex (suggested at times in *The Bishop's Wife* and *Touched by an Angel*), this ancient taboo (dating from Genesis 6) was broken in the last half of the twentieth century. A precursor appeared in 1923, when Daniel Chester French made a male angel as part of an alarmingly sexual couple in a work called *The Sons of God Saw the Daughters of Men That They Were Fair*. A few English writers and artists, particularly Edward Bourne-Jones, had sexualized angels in the nineteenth century, but in the United States angelic sex emerged as a theme of popular culture.

The theme first proliferated in popular music. Romantic songs like "Earth Angel" (black version 1954, white cover 1955), "My Special Angel" (1957, remade often), and "Teen Angel" (1960) accustomed audiences to language that made human lovers into angels. The trend continued with Bobby Vee's "Devil or Angel?" (1960), Curtis Lee's driving "Pretty Little Angel Eyes" (1961), and Shelley Fabares's longing ballad "Johnny Angel" (1962). Neil Sedaka brought angels to doo-wop with "Right Next Door to an Angel" (1962) before the innocent phase of the sixties ended. After a few years in which the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and Bob Dylan made songs too real to be populated by angels, the metaphor returned with "Angel of the Morning" (1968), a ballad about losing virginity, and Karen Carpenter's "Close to You" (1970), which cast angels as the creators of a human lover. Then came the very first popular song celebrating a sexual relationship between a human and a real angel: "Angel" by Jimi Hendrix, released in 1971.

Two movies that included sex with demons rocked the nation. In *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), Mia Farrow played a heroine impregnated by Satan at a Black Mass. This fiction overlapped with the actual practice of Satanism, because the role of the Devil went to Anton LaVey, a Satanist leader, and the director Roman Polanski lost his wife Sharon Tate to the Satanist Manson "family" cult shortly after the film was completed. Five years later, just before the end of 1973, *The Exorcist* broke all box office records for horror films with its tale of a young girl's possession, with grossly sexual

overtones. Eleven years later, sex between Satan and women moved into the realm of cultural satire with John Updike's novel *The Witches of Eastwick*, which became a 1987 movie. A human male and an angel female became a couple in a minor comedy, *Date with an Angel*, also in 1987. In Germany, 1987 brought *Wings of Desire*, a film by Wim Wenders that was remade in America as *City of Angels* (1998). In the soundtrack for *City of Angels*, musicians including the Goo Goo Dolls, Sarah McLachlan, and U2 performed songs about humans and angels that became popular hits.

Angels and sex dominated Broadway in 1993 and 1994, when Tony Kushner's two-part *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes* won the Tony award for Best Play. Here the Continental Principality of America, a creature with eight vaginas and a "bouquet of phalli," brought both a gay prophet and a Mormon mother to orgasm as moments in a healing ritual for the plague of AIDS. The play marked the arrival of gay men at the center of American culture, a center marked by the statue of the Angel of the Waters in New York's Central Park.

Tens of millions among Christian believers did not acknowledge that center, however. Even as *Angels in America* played Broadway and the spirits of *Touched by an Angel* began their multicultural healing ministry, many evangelicals, especially in the Pentecostal churches identified with the Third Wave or the Vineyard movement, saw angels as soldiers in a spiritual war. According to Third Wave theorists such as George C. Otis and C. Peter Wagner, fallen angels occupied many places on the Earth, especially in a rectangular "window" between 10 and 40 degrees above the equator that extended from West Africa through the Middle East and Central Asia to Japan, impeding the Christian gospel and keeping billions of souls in darkness. Angels called the "Prince of Persia" and the "Prince of Greece" in the book of Daniel still prowled the world today, possessing the leaders of Iran and inspiring hatred in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. Because Daniel described Gabriel and Michael fighting these fallen angels, one could imagine good angels continuing their battles. Christians who adopted this worldview practiced "spiritual warfare," a kind of prayer aimed at helping the fight. In 2002, as American troops invaded Afghanistan, which is located in the "10/40 Window"—the predominantly non-Christian countries in the Eastern Hemisphere—Lieutenant General William Boykin, a founder of the Army's Delta Force, was wearing his Army uniform while showing pictures of fallen angels and giving talks on spiritual warfare at American churches.

Meanwhile, bookstores everywhere stocked spiritual warfare fiction. Frank Peretti's novel *This Present Darkness* (1986), pitting American humans and multicultural good angels against demons led by Rafar, the Prince of Babylon, sold 2.8 million copies in its first decade. Twelve novels under the title *Left Behind*, by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, sold 60 million copies between 1995 and 2004. They did not focus on angels as much as Peretti, but they did conclude with the battle between Michael and Satan.

By the twenty-first century, angels in the United States reached a status worthy of religious symbols about which Jews, Christians, and Muslims could agree. *Crash*, the movie that won the Academy Award for Best Picture of 2004, featured a spirit that a Latino called a fairy and a Persian called a *favrashi*, or guardian angel. Advertising for the movie *Superman Returns* (2006) showed Superman in an angelic light. In virtual settings such as Second Life and World of Warcraft, Americans made winged, flying avatars for themselves. Angel channelers and therapists continued to run workshops. Books on animal angels were sold at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Hallmark stores offered Willow Tree angels, Precious Moments angels, and dozens of others. American angel theorists, from William James to Mortimer Adler in *The Angels and Us* (1982), had seen their countrymen aspiring to angelhood, and they were right.

See also *Film*; *Literature* entries; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Sexuality and Sexual Identity*; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Anglican Tradition and Heritage

Anglicanism is the religious tradition that emerged out of the Reformation of the sixteenth century in England. It has often been something of a puzzle to outsiders (and not a few insiders). It has claimed itself to be both a Reformation and a pre-Reformation church and to embrace both Protestantism and Catholicism. Indeed, even its name is

problematic. Although the term *Anglican* is universally used to refer to the movement, the name itself did not appear until the 1830s, over three hundred years after the beginnings of the English Reformation, and it reflected a distinctive development. Anglican history has been shaped by these paradoxes.

Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Henry VIII to the Book of Common Prayer

The religious policies of Henry VIII (1491–1547) set the pattern. Although personally conservative on religious matters—he received the title “Defender of the Faith” from the pope for his treatise defending the seven sacraments—Henry’s religious policies were shaped by dynastic concerns. Fearing that his Tudor dynasty could be maintained only through a male heir, by the late 1520s he recognized that such was no longer possible through his wife, Catherine of Aragon. The reason for this crisis, he came to believe, was that his marriage stood condemned since it had violated the scriptural injunction against a man wedding his brother’s wife (Lev. 18:16). Catherine had earlier been betrothed to Henry’s older brother, Arthur, and subsequently was permitted to marry Henry only through a papal dispensation. Henry sought a further papal dispensation to annul his marriage and wed Anne Boleyn. When such a dispensation was not forthcoming, Henry, through Parliament, separated the English church from Rome and declared that he was the “Supreme Head of the Church of England.” Neither liturgy nor doctrine was changed, and the hierarchy of bishops and archbishops was untouched, but through a series of parliamentary acts, the English church began to go its own way. The medieval monastic houses were suppressed, with their wealth going to the Crown and Henry’s supporters.

Although in no way a Protestant movement like those of the Continent, Henry’s actions did provide an opportunity for those who were sympathetic with continental reform movements. Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556), archbishop of Canterbury, and others were surreptitious forces for a more Protestantized Church of England. Henry’s policy was to have as advisers both conservatives and Protestants, carefully balanced, each having voice, largely for international political reasons.

Religious policy was to be reconceived after Henry’s death in 1547. His first successor was his son, Edward VI. Hailed as the “new Josiah” (in reference to the Old Testament king who cleansed the Temple), Edward did attempt to push the English church in a Protestant direction. This

was most dramatically seen in the reform of the liturgy, which was largely the work of Cranmer. During Edward’s reign two Prayer Books were issued. The 1549 edition, while in English and having a Protestant subtext, was traditional in its form and usage. The 1552 edition, however, was more strongly Protestant. Traditional practices and beliefs were rejected, including the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Edward’s religious policy also called for the elimination of much of the medieval fabric of the church. The marriage of clergy was permitted, and a set of Articles of Religion were drawn up, reflecting a decidedly Protestant point of view.

Edward’s death in 1553 led to the accession of his half-sister, Mary Tudor. Daughter of Catherine of Aragon, Mary was dedicated to restoring the old religion. The Latin liturgy was revived, the religious orders (suppressed by her father) were reestablished, and papal authority restored. The success of Mary’s campaign has been a source of debate, but two of the side effects of her actions would have a lasting impact. For many, her use of force to establish religious uniformity would link the old religion to a spirit of persecution and, in contrast, associate Protestantism with liberty. Likewise her marriage to Phillip II of Spain would tar the old religion with the mark of foreignness, while linking the new with English nationalism. The accession of Mary led a number of English men and women (the “Marian exiles”) to take residence on the Continent in Rhineland cities such as Frankfurt and Geneva. There they encountered a much more rigorous form of Reformed Protestantism, which they would bring back to England with their return.

Mary’s death in 1558 brought her half-sister, Elizabeth, to the throne. Elizabeth’s religious policy was firmly Protestant—as the daughter of Henry and Anne Boleyn she was viewed by the papacy as illegitimate—but sought to create a national church broad enough to include sympathizers of both the old religion and the new. She combined firmly Protestant theological statements such as the Articles of Religion (revised in 1566 and published in 1572), with a liturgy that retreated from the radical Protestantism of the book of 1552. The Eucharistic office was recast to allow for, but not necessitate, a belief in the real presence. Traditional practices and vestments were emphasized to enforce continuity with the past. Lastly Elizabeth was insistent that unity was to come from common prayer and not from complete unity in doctrinal matters. Her church was to be marked by orthopraxis, not rigid orthodoxy. As she famously claimed, “I do not wish to make windows in the souls of my subjects.”

This policy has been called the “Elizabethan compromise,” and for the rest of the century it put the Church of England in a unique position. On the one hand the church was part of the great world of international Protestantism, participating in its struggles with Rome. Yet on the other hand the church seemed only partially reformed, clinging to many older practices. In the short run the compromise was accepted as a political necessity, but by the late 1560s some voices demanded further reformation. They called for a pruning of nonscriptural practices from the Prayer Book (for example, the ring at weddings), stripping away trappings that emphasized continuity with the past (for example, clerical vestments), and revising church discipline to resemble that found in the Reformed churches on the continent. The movement became known as Puritanism. By the 1580s these critics also advocated a rejection of the episcopate, the ruling body of bishops, in favor of the biblical polity of Presbyterianism. Among the churches breaking from Rome, England was unique in preserving an unbroken chain of bishops. (England’s reformation was not limited to England itself. In Wales and Ireland the official church was also reshaped along English lines, though it never was as popular in either land, and in the latter was at best a religion of a small Anglo-Irish minority.)

In response to critics an apologetic emerged that argued for the superiority of the Elizabethan compromise. Richard Hooker, in his *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1593), challenged the narrow scripturalism of Puritan critics and called for a wide engagement with human culture. “The general and perpetual view of man,” he wrote, “is as the sentence of God himself.” In addition Hooker offered a defense of the piety of the Prayer Book, which emphasized the value of set prayers and aspects of worship besides merely the preaching of sermons. Others took up this defense. Lancelot Andrewes called not for the further purging of traditional practices but the restoration of them. Richard Bancroft argued that it was episcopacy and not presbyterianism that was to be found in scripture, and a true church must have a succession of bishops back to the apostles (apostolic succession). Finally William Laud, supported by King Charles I, attempted to impose these new ideas upon the larger church, along with an Arminian theology that rejected the reigning Calvinism. As a result of Laud’s policy, tens of thousands of Puritans fled to the New World.

By 1637 Laud attempted to introduce his vision to Scotland. Through the influence of Charles’s father, James I, episcopacy had been introduced into the Church of

Scotland, and since then episcopacy and presbyterianism had existed in uneasy tension in the Scottish church. Laud’s decision in 1637 to introduce the Prayer Book into Scotland (and indeed one modeled in key ways after the more traditional 1549 edition) resulted in disruption and war between Scotland and England. This led to the rejection of Laudian policy, and eventually to the English Civil Wars, pitting king and those loyal to the church of the Elizabethan compromise against Parliament and its Puritan supporters.

The defeat of the king led to the rule of the Commonwealth, and the formal rejection of Anglicanism along with its bishops and Book of Common Prayer. Anglicanism continued nonetheless, practiced surreptitiously in England and among the exiles abroad. With the end of the Commonwealth and the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 with Charles II, Anglicanism once again became the established religion of the realm. Those who would not conform to it (Nonconformists) were ejected from their churches and denied full participation in the society. In 1662 a revision of the Book of Common Prayer was issued that not only rejected the earlier Puritan objections but strengthened sacramental practices.

Restoration Anglicanism became marked by a number of factors. The movement away from Calvinism continued, and the emphasis upon the way of salvation through the living of the Christian life was stressed. The idea that Anglicanism was a *via media*, or a middle path, between the excesses of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism was exalted, and along with it was the central importance of the episcopal succession. Finally the importance of Anglicanism as the national established religion was highlighted. To receive Communion one passed under the old medieval rood screen, but now it was topped not with a crucifix but with the symbol of the Crown. The Articles of Religion were seen as the safeguard against the entry of Nonconformists or Roman Catholics into the halls of power. The elaborate marriage of Crown and altar has been called by some scholars the “confessional state.”

By the 1680s the English church began to be divided between those who took an elevated view of bishops and king (High Church), and those who took a more moderate view (Low Church). Politics again played a great role as High Church and Low Church divided as to whether one could accept James II, the Roman Catholic brother of Charles II. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 replaced James with the Protestant monarchs William and Mary. The unwillingness of many High Church clergy to affirm loyalty

to William and Mary meant that these clergy were exiled, and they became known as the “nonjurors.” This led to the withdrawal of support of episcopacy in Scotland, and finally, in 1715 (because of their continuing support for the exiled Stuarts), the church became subject to the Penal Laws, which imposed severe limitations on nonjuring clergy.

Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Exporting Anglicanism to the Colonies

This convoluted history would be transported across the Atlantic as the English began to found their empire. Although Anglican chaplains undoubtedly performed on earlier exploratory expeditions, continuous services began with the founding of the English colonies. An American branch of the English church was established in Virginia in 1607, in Maryland in 1702, in South Carolina in 1704, and eventually also in North Carolina and Georgia. In some ways the colonial establishments mirrored English practices. The various colonies were divided into parishes, and ministers were paid, churches built, and glebes (farms to support the church) established, all through public funds. But the absence of an episcopate created a power vacuum, and lay governing boards, or vestries, exercised far greater control than they had in England.

By the end of the seventeenth century Anglican life in the American colonies began to become more organized. In 1689 Henry Compton, bishop of London, appointed James Blair as his personal representative, or commissary, to the church in Virginia. The commissary was to provide episcopal oversight for the clergy, yet he possessed neither episcopal sacramental powers nor any authority over laity. Eventually commissaries were active in nine of the thirteen colonies. At the same time royal governors in places such as Massachusetts and New York began to act as patrons to the church, giving it support. Finally, one of the early commissaries, Thomas Bray, on his return to England, founded two organizations that did much to quicken the life of colonial Anglicanism. In 1698 he organized the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which was dedicated to founding libraries in the colonies. In 1701 he founded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The SPG, as it came to be known, was the first Anglican missionary society, and it provided educated clergy for the English colonies, as well as missionaries to Native Americans. As a result of the SPG, Anglicanism took on a new vigor, particularly in areas such as the middle colonies and New England, where it previously had had little impact.

Still another source of vitality was converts. SPG missionaries such as George Keith actively promoted Anglicanism to the non-Anglican public. The most dramatic event, however, was in 1722, when Timothy Cutler, rector of Yale College; Daniel Brown, a tutor; and several other Congregational ministers, including Samuel Johnson, shocked the Congregationalist establishment by announcing their plans to seek episcopal ordination. Known as the Yale apostates, these men traveled to England, received ordination, and returned. Cutler and Johnson were particularly active as SPG missionaries, the former in Massachusetts and the latter in Connecticut. Johnson would also be appointed the first president of King’s College (now Columbia University), in 1754.

Anglicanism also entered into Canada through English colonization. Explorers brought their religion from the Old World, and indeed the first service from the Book of Common Prayer on American soil was a celebration of Holy Communion at Frobisher Bay in 1578. The first Anglican church in what is now Canada was a garrison chapel at St. John’s Fort, Newfoundland, sometime before 1698. The capture of Nova Scotia in 1710 led to the establishment of another Anglican center at Annapolis Royale.

The events of the middle decades of the eighteenth century would leave a marked influence on both American and Canadian Anglicanism. The religious excitement of the 1740s and 1750s, known as the Great Awakening, introduced a conversion-oriented piety to the North American scene and a distinctive religious understanding known as evangelicalism, which challenged earlier religious patterns. In the northern colonies the disruptions led many to seek Anglican churches as havens of peace in a sea of controversy. If in the northern and middle colonies the Awakening proved a boon to Anglicans, in the southern colonies it was the reverse. The conversion-oriented piety and strict biblical morality challenged the Anglican establishments and proved attractive to many. Furthermore, Baptists (leading proponents of the Awakening in the South) were critical of the very idea of an established church and labored to undermine it. Although some Anglicans, such as Devereux Jarratt, attempted to harness the new evangelical spirit for Anglicanism, and Methodist societies (at the time still formally connected to the church) tried to hold the two together, the new evangelicalism proved a challenge to the southern Anglican order.

Political developments as well would have their impact. The decades-long struggle for empire between Britain and France reached its final chapter in the conflict known in

Europe as the Seven Years' War, and in America as the French and Indian War. The result was a triumph for the British and the incorporation of French Canada into the British Empire. In 1755 British administrators ordered the evacuation of the Acadians from Nova Scotia, and in 1758 the Church of England was made the established religion. With complete victory in 1763 the formal British goal was "Anglicization," or bringing Canadian practices in line with those of Britain, and this in turn involved a privileged status for the Anglican Church. In practice, however, British governors attempted to placate the French population and its church. A formal British policy was finally established in the Quebec Act (1774). The act granted Catholics free exercise of religion, recognized the church's hierarchy, and its right to receive customary dues. It also affirmed the property rights of Catholic institutions.

Eighteenth Century: Anglicization and the American Revolution

In what is now the United States, the end of the war left the British government with a disjointed empire that had evolved with little thought, as well as massive debt. A similar policy of Anglicization was instituted. For religious Anglicans such a policy needed to include the strengthening of the English church through the establishment of an American episcopate. Although the idea of a colonial episcopate had been floated earlier at a number of times, in the 1750s and 1760s it became a leading cause for many colonial Anglicans. Throughout the northern and middle colonies a vigorous campaign for an American episcopate was launched. Leaders such as Thomas Bradbury Chandler argued against the unfairness of forcing colonials to make the dangerous Atlantic sea crossing to attain ordination.

For the descendants of the Puritans, who had been forced out of England more than a century earlier, such a campaign for episcopacy was not an issue of justice but a threat to religious liberty. Despite Chandler's insistence that all that was desired was a primitive episcopacy (that is, with none of the political powers of established English bishops), the children of the Puritans feared the episcopal persecution, from which their forefathers and mothers had fled. Opposition to bishops, along with opposition to taxes that Parliament had enacted to pay its debt, created a sense of mistrust between many non-Anglican colonists and the mother country. The passage of the Quebec Act, which granted to Roman Catholics not merely political rights but also extended the border of Canada down to the Ohio River, was a further indication

that Parliament was intent upon undermining Protestant religious liberty. Thus, as relations between Britain and the American colonies began to deteriorate, northern and middle colony Anglicans found themselves defending the Crown while their non-Anglican neighbors opposed it.

The situation was different in the southern colonies. There, enthusiasm for bishops was far less intense and almost exclusively limited to small pockets of clergy. Indeed the Virginia House of Burgesses publicly rebuked the campaign for episcopacy and its few clerical supporters. There were also signs that the Anglican churches of the southern colonies were losing support. The growing popularity of evangelicalism, on one side, and of deism, or a confidence in a religion based on reason rather than revelation, on the other, sapped lay support. In places like Virginia the reputation of the established clergy suffered from a perception of avarice. In the late 1750s some Virginia clergy had sued in order to protect their salaries, and the failure of the "Parson's Cause" weakened their reputation.

All of these tensions came to a boil with the Revolution, with northern clergy, many of whom had been shaped in the High Church theology of the SPG, lined up behind Britain. For them the Revolution was but a new phase of the seventeenth-century English Civil War, in which Puritans attacked both church and Crown, and threatened to overthrow the very order of society. A High Church cleric, Samuel Seabury, became one of the most powerful pamphleteers for the pro-British side. For others it was a matter of oaths. At ordination clergy had sworn to obey the Crown, and to faithfully use the Book of Common Prayer with its many prayers for the king. To fail to do so was to violate a sacred oath. Clergy in New England closed their churches rather than either deny their oaths or face angry patriotic crowds. Still others fled to British-occupied areas, and, in 1776, when the British reoccupied the city, New York became the center of Anglicanism in the northern colonies.

A handful of northern clergy did side with the revolutionists, and none was as important as William White. Minister of the United Parishes of Christ Church and St. Peter's Church in Philadelphia, White served as chaplain to the Continental Congress from 1777 to 1789, and he continued to be chaplain to the national Congress until it moved from Philadelphia in 1800. In contrast to the High Church northern clergy, for whom Anglicanism was an inseparable part of the British union of church and state, White believed that Anglicanism could be adapted to republican institutions.

Nowhere was Anglicanism more affected by the Revolution than in the southern colonies. The old Anglican establishments were all eliminated through an alliance of evangelicals and deists. The effects were particularly dramatic in Virginia. There, the privileged status of the colonial church was removed by degree between 1776 and 1785. With the withdrawal of public support many clergy left and the church largely collapsed, shrinking from over ninety clergy to thirteen. If this were not enough, by the 1790s the state claimed that the properties of the once-established church now belonged to the Commonwealth and not the reconstituted church.

Eighteenth Century: After the Revolution

The two years after the British were defeated at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781 were an uneasy time. The British controlled a few port cities such as New York; the revolutionaries possessed the rest of the colonies; and neither side could budge the other. In this stalemate two schemes for moving forward emerged among colonial Anglicans. William White's *The Case of the Episcopal Churches Considered* (1782) called for the organization of an American Episcopal Church, even if temporarily without bishops, along republican political principles. In contrast, Connecticut Anglicans believed that episcopacy was essential for any true church. Accordingly, in 1783 Connecticut Anglican clergy selected Samuel Seabury to travel to England to receive episcopal consecration. He encountered opposition there, both because of concerns about Seabury's Connecticut support and an unwillingness to ordain anyone without the oath of allegiance to the British Crown. Although having been both a defender of the British and a chaplain to a Loyalist regiment, Seabury recognized that any such oath would make an American ministry impossible. After eighteen months of frustration, he turned to the nonjuring Scottish Episcopal Church, which had been legally proscribed since the early part of the century. On November 14, 1784, Seabury was consecrated by Scottish bishops. He also signed a concordat accepting the Scottish communion office (which was more in keeping with the service of 1549), and other points. The concordat between Seabury and the Scottish bishops was momentous in the self-understanding of Anglicanism. It was the first time an "Anglican" agreement was reached without the involvement of the Church of England.

Seabury returned to Connecticut in 1785, wearing perhaps the only mitre (the ceremonial head gear of a bishop) in the Anglican world, and attempted to impose his High

Church vision of Anglicanism upon the American scene. While he was doing so in New England, southern and middle state churches in 1785 organized a Protestant Episcopal Church along the principles of William White's *Case of the Episcopal Churches Considered*. Laity were included in governance, republican principles were assumed, and the power of bishops (still absent) was circumscribed. The Book of Common Prayer was also adapted for American use. Although the preface to the proposed book of 1786 stated, "this church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline or worship," it did take a free hand at modifying the liturgy. Two of the historic creeds were removed, key changes were made in the services of baptism and matrimony, and traditional priestly authority was modified. Many of the more radical changes did not sit well with the bishops of the Church of England and were subsequently modified. White (who had been elected bishop of Pennsylvania) and Samuel Provoost (of New York) traveled to England in 1787 and received episcopal consecration (now permissible, since Parliament had passed the Consecration of Bishops Abroad Act in 1786). Finally in 1789 Seabury came to the General Convention, and there compromises were made to unite the two wings of the American church. A separate House of Bishops (ensuring episcopal authority) was created to meet alongside a House of Deputies (containing clerical and lay members). Also, the communion office Seabury had received in Scotland was accepted. In the organization of the Protestant Episcopal Church something new entered Anglicanism—a church liturgically and theologically in continuity with the English church, but politically independent. It would be an anomaly almost unique until the twentieth century.

The disruption of the American Revolution led many Loyalists, including many Anglicans, to seek refuge in Canada. Convinced that the problems of the Thirteen Colonies had stemmed from an inadequate linking of church and empire, the British Crown took steps to put the Church of England on a firm legal footing in English-speaking Canada. Charles Inglis, one of the exiled Loyalists, was appointed bishop of Nova Scotia in 1787, and in 1791 the British Parliament secured the Church of England in British Canada. The Constitutional Act of 1791, while not establishing the Church of England, did endow it. Some individuals, such as the bishop of Nova Scotia, were paid directly by Parliament, but in addition 675,000 acres of property were set aside as a "Clergy Reserve" to support "Protestant"—that is Anglican—clergy.

Nineteenth Century: Evangelicalism, Wesleyanism, and the Oxford Movement

Anglicanism was greatly transformed in the course of the nineteenth century. Political, imperial, theological, and social factors all contributed to reshaping the tradition. The old idea of the established church being one of the foundations of the confessional state began to weaken in the early decades of the nineteenth century. As Britain became more religiously and socially complex, the idea of the realm being held together by an established church began to be questioned. Beginning in the 1820s a series of parliamentary acts were passed granting more privileges to Roman Catholics and Protestant Nonconformists. The Test Acts were repealed, Parliament began to include non-Anglicans, and eventually the universities of Oxford and Cambridge became open to non-Anglicans. The Reform Act of 1832, which increased suffrage, created a Parliament less sympathetic to the church than ever before, and some saw the ending of the establishment. The established position of the Church of England remained (though not that of the Church of Ireland and Wales), but Anglicanism was far less central to the social and political order in 1850 than it had been earlier. The confessional state had given way to a world where religion was becoming an individual concern.

The passing of the confessional state inevitably led to a discussion of what was the nature of Anglicanism. Two theological movements within Anglicanism attempted to provide an answer. The first was evangelicalism. The interest in a conversion-oriented piety, coupled with strict personal morality first emerged in the Church of England through John Wesley. Challenged by his experience of German Pietism (in Georgia, in the American colonies, where he briefly and unsuccessfully ministered), Wesley became a fervent advocate of the religion of the heart. His Methodist movement achieved great popularity but gained little support from the powers of the Church of England. Although his societies were supposed to be fellowships within the church, official opposition was so great that by the time of Wesley's death in 1791 they had become independent churches (the split occurred earlier in America, in 1784). Others, however, attempted to encourage the evangelical spirit within the confines of the church. Anglican evangelicals such as Charles Simeon, William Wilberforce, and Hannah More argued that heart religion and biblical morality were at the core of the religion of the English Reformation. They insisted upon a seriousness of religious and moral purpose not usually characteristic of eighteenth-century Anglicanism.

Anglican evangelicals, although a minority in the church, quickly made their influence felt both in the church and the nation. They advocated reforms in manners and morals among both the high and the low of society. They actively worked to distribute Bibles to the multitudes and in doing so cooperated with non-Anglican evangelicals. They were on the forefront of missions, and the Church Missionary Society, founded in 1798, became the chief vehicle for spreading Anglican evangelicalism around the world. Finally, through the work of people like Wilberforce, they led the campaign to abolish slavery in the British Empire.

Another solution to the changing place of the Church of England was to reassert its Catholic nature. Since the end of the seventeenth century there had been a "High Church" party that had emphasized the importance of both bishops and kings. But by the early 1830s some in the High Church party took a radical turn. In the face of Parliament's attempt to reform the church (and in the case of Ireland to eliminate bishoprics), John Henry Newman, John Keble, Edward Bouverie Pusey, and others claimed that Parliament had no right to reform the church because the church was not theirs to reform. The Church of England was in fact a branch of the traditional Catholic Church and was loyal to it alone. This movement, known as the Oxford Movement, or Tractarian movement, not only opposed state dominion of the church but called for the restoration of many Catholic beliefs and practices that had slipped out of Anglicanism over the course of time. Apostolic succession, a concern for sacramentalism, and an emphasis on holiness became the hallmarks of the movement. In stressing the Catholic nature of Anglicanism, leaders of the movement ran into problems with the Protestant heritage of the English Reformation. Newman, in his *Tract XC* (1841), argued that the Articles of Religion were not Protestant as they seemed, but when read "properly" allowed for prayers for the dead, the complete sacramental system, and other Roman Catholic practices. Although Newman's tract caused an uproar (as a result of which he eventually converted to Roman Catholicism), later Anglo-Catholics—as those in the movement came to be known—continued the reincorporation of Catholic practices, such as advanced ceremonialism, and the revival of the religious orders that had been suppressed by Henry VIII.

The battle over "churchmanship" would affect the larger Anglican world. American Episcopalians recognized even earlier than their English coreligionists that such a reconceptualization was necessary if Anglicanism were to flourish in the Republic. Evangelical leaders, like Charles P.

McIlvaine, emphasized the evangelical nature of the church, while High Church leaders, such as John Henry Hobart, stressed that the church was in continuity with the primitive church of the earliest centuries.

Newman's *Tract XC*, although controversial, raised a serious question for Anglicans: What was the authority of the Articles of Religion? The Articles—a product of the Reformation era and deeply influenced by the continental Reformation—already by the seventeenth century did not reflect actual Anglican belief and practice. Their teaching on predestination was increasingly an embarrassment for most Anglicans. But the Articles were nonetheless seen as a bulwark, defending the established church, and effectively keeping out those of heterodox belief. During the eighteenth century attempts to liberalize them had been beaten back, but by the middle of the nineteenth century their role in defining Anglicanism theologically was being challenged. This was particularly the case with those who argued that Anglicanism needed to be flexible enough to respond to the changing intellectual and social world. These advocates called not for a church rigidly defined by evangelical piety, nor by a Catholic ministry, but one broad enough to include diverse opinions. In contrast to the High Church (or Catholic) vision, and the Low Church (or evangelical) vision, theirs was a vision of a broad church.

Moral uplift, intellectual openness, and a de-emphasis on doctrine characterized the Broad Church party. Its openness to new intellectual trends was reflected in the 1860 publication of *Essays and Reviews*, which introduced the English public to the new German biblical criticism that questioned not only the veracity of the literal text but also such traditional religious categories as the miraculous. Likewise, in persons such as Frederick Denison Maurice, one saw an interest in Christianity addressing the social questions of the day. The Industrial Revolution had created great disparities in wealth among the rich and the poor, creating a class antagonism that threatened the social peace. Maurice called for the church to respond with a "Christian Socialism." As Maurice famously explained, Christian socialism stood against "Unsocial Christians and Unchristian Socialists." Maurice's influence would transcend the confines of the Broad Church party and would lead many Anglicans to emphasize the role of the church in achieving a just society.

Nineteenth Century: Worldwide Expansion

If all of these changes were not enough, the nineteenth century saw the expansion of Anglicanism into a worldwide

religion. Scholars speak of the British imperial expansion of the nineteenth century as the Second British Empire, and as the empire expanded so did Anglicanism. In places like South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, it followed the pattern already established in North America, taking root principally within the European population. Although never a majority in these colonies, its attachment to the imperial government gave it a privileged status. But Anglicanism also expanded through its growth among indigenous populations. This kind of expansion involved controversy. The British East India Company, which governed India until the 1850s, forbade any missionary activities with the native populations, fearing such actions would create social strife and conflict that would be financially hurtful. It was not until 1813—through pressure from evangelicals led by William Wilberforce—that Parliament changed the company's charter to secure a place for missionaries.

The first five decades of the nineteenth century saw Anglicanism becoming organized in India (including in Sri Lanka and the East Indies), Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. One factor that would be important in the later Anglican Communion was that the vast majority of those who took up the missionary cause in these decades were evangelicals. The Church Missionary Society was perhaps the most important vehicle for evangelical missions. Evangelicals were not, however, alone. A significant minority of the missions were inspired by the High Church vision of the Oxford Movement. George Selwyn, the first missionary bishop to New Zealand, for example, brought Tractarian theology to that area. In 1857 the (Anglican) University Mission to Central Africa was founded, and it became the favored missionary society among Catholic-leaning Anglicans. The High Church/Low Church divide was transferred to the colonial churches.

It was during this period that the term *Anglicanism* (and still later *Anglican Communion*) came into use. The former term, which apparently first appeared in 1838, reflected a belief that the movement growing out of the Reformation in England had evolved into something more complex than simply the Church of England. It was both less, since by 1850 barely half of English Christians continued to identify with it, and more, since it could now be found in many places in addition to the British Isles. Indeed, for a person such as John Henry Newman (who was an early advocate of the term), it was more accurately found outside England, since the continued trappings of establishment veiled its true nature. The term *Anglican Communion* was first used by an

American missionary bishop, Horatio Southgate, in 1847 to describe the worldwide spread of Anglicanism.

The complexities of this emerging communion required adaptation. It was not until 1840, through the Scottish Episcopal and Other Clergy Act, that American and Scottish clergy could legally minister in England. But the great innovation was the establishment of a meeting of the worldwide Anglican bishops. Although such a meeting had been suggested as early as 1851, by the American bishop John Henry Hopkins, its origins can be traced to the request of a synod of Canadian Anglicans to the archbishop of Canterbury, C. T. Longley. Canadian bishops were upset at the trends of modern biblical criticism, not only by the 1860 publication of *Essays and Reviews*, but also more pointedly by the publication of a work by J. W. Colenso, bishop of Natal in South Africa, questioning the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Canadians and Americans both hoped for a great legislative gathering that would authorize and define doctrine, but instead, the archbishop of Canterbury invited the bishops around the world, “not only the Home and Colonial Bishops, but all who are avowedly in communion with our Church,” for united worship and common council. It was not to be a legislative session. “Such a meeting would not be competent to make declarations or lay down definitions on points of doctrine.” Seventy-six bishops accepted the invitation, and in 1867 the first Lambeth Conference was held, named for the London palace of the archbishop, where the meeting took place.

By the 1880s the Lambeth Conference, and Anglicanism generally, had become involved in a new concern—church unity. An American Episcopal priest, William Reed Huntington, had published in 1870 *The Church-Idea*, calling for the uniting of American Protestantism on the basis of scripture, the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist, the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds, and the historic episcopate. Huntington, however, had another goal in addition to church unity. These four principles, he claimed, lay at the core of Anglicanism; they were its uniting essence. Older theological statements, such as the Articles of Religion and even the Cranmerian Prayer Book, itself were of lesser importance. Huntington’s four principles were taken up by the General Convention of the American Episcopal Church in its Chicago meeting of 1886. Two years later, in 1888, they were approved by the Lambeth Conference. The Chicago–Lambeth Quadrilateral, as the document came to be called, remains the official ecumenical document of the Anglican Communion, and also the boldest attempt by

Anglicanism to define itself in light of its changed environment. The Lambeth Conference would continue to express interest in church unity, most particularly in its 1920 statement, an “Appeal to All Christian People.”

Twentieth Century: Ecumenical Movement and Demographic Shifts

A concern for church unity led some to go further. In the early years of the twentieth century Protestant Christians in India desired to establish a united church that would still reflect the different traditions. By the 1920s Anglicans, inspired both by the Lambeth Quadrilateral and the “Appeal to All Christian People,” were participants in this plan. Although the organization of the Church of South India, in 1947, called for the introduction of an episcopate in historic succession, the decision to recognize the validity of all the ministries (and not just those who had been episcopally ordained) was a point of controversy within the Anglican Communion, and the Church of South India was admitted into full membership in the Communion only when all of its clergy had episcopal ordination.

Still another concern that began to surface was liturgical reform. With the exception of the United States and Scotland, most of the Anglican world was tied to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, a liturgy that was neither flexible nor modern. Many could point to its problems. Anglo–Catholics found the Eucharistic service incomplete and interpolated prayers into it. Broad church clergy chafed at the picture of God found in some of the Psalms and other theological elements out of keeping with modern sensitivities. Evangelicals found the lack of venue for extemporaneous prayer frustrating. Yet to change the Prayer Book was a momentous thing. Since Anglicanism did not possess a historic confession, such as those of other churches of the sixteenth-century Reformation, the Prayer Book united them not only liturgically but theologically as well. *Lex orandi, lex credendi* (the law of prayer shapes the law of belief) was a deeply held principle. The liturgical revisions that began in the late nineteenth century and continued into the early twentieth century (America, 1892, 1928; Ireland 1878, 1928; Scotland, 1912, 1929; Canada, 1922; and so on) were conservative in nature, and attempted to preserve the Cranmerian language and structure. But, still, Prayer Book revision was controversial. After years of preparation, the revision of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer by the Church of England was rejected by Parliament, in part because of Protestant (and to a lesser extent Anglo–Catholic) objections.

Until the middle of the twentieth century the Anglican Communion, though evolving, was stable. Since most of its communicant churches were still part of the British Empire, its shape was still largely assured. Although having little actual authority, the archbishop of Canterbury was assumed to have primacy. Englishness, the Cranmerian Prayer Book, and an ethos of reasonable moderation seemed to characterize the church. A distinctive Anglican theology had emerged by the end of the nineteenth century that stood in marked contrast to a Protestantism being racked by conservative–modernist divisions and a Roman Catholicism emphasizing papal infallibility and rejecting modernism. Anglicans stressed the importance of the Incarnation, a sacramental vision of the universe, and an attempt to balance reason and faith. Theologians such as Charles Gore and William Temple demonstrated how an Anglican sense of balance and modesty, anchored in prayer, could hold the faith in changing times.

By 1945 forces were afoot that were to lead to changes in world of Anglicanism. The interest in international organizations of cooperation, such as the United Nations, in the wake of the Second World War had ecclesiastical ramifications. Many recognized that the Anglican Communion needed to be better organized if it were to be an effective force on the world scene. In 1958 Lambeth called for an executive officer to coordinate the various international efforts. In 1968 the Anglican Consultative Council was organized with representatives from every province to share information and resources. Finally, in 1978, a “Primates Meeting” was established so that the chief bishops of each province could gather for prayer and discussion. These last two organizations, along with the archbishop of Canterbury and the Lambeth Conference, would become known as the instruments of unity and would give to international Anglicanism far more structure than it had earlier. The new structure gave increased visibility to the international Anglican Communion, which by the latter part of the twentieth century was seen as the third-largest worldwide Christian body.

At the same time there were political shifts as well. The decline of British preeminence in the years after the Second World War and the ending of the British Empire were to have their impact upon Anglicanism. Anglicanism had always been held together by the solid center of the Church of England, the oldest, largest, and wealthiest of the churches of the Anglican Communion. Although in age and tradition it continued to be preeminent, the wealth and activism of the Anglican churches in North America began to shift the balance of power. It is significant that the first executive

officer chosen for the Communion, Stephen Bayne, was an American. In 1955 Canadian Anglicans formally changed the name of their church from the Church of England in Canada to the Anglican Church of Canada. At a number of key points American bishops stated they would not be subservient to the Church of England. While this was happening, the colonial churches, particularly in Africa, having become independent of England, began to grow at very rapid rates. Over the course of the twentieth century Anglicans in Uganda increased 140-fold, while Anglicans in Nigeria increased almost 700-fold. The demographic center of the Anglican world was moving south. This was occurring at a time when Anglicanism in Britain and North America was declining in membership.

These institutional and demographic changes have occurred at the same time that there has been a theological shift within Anglicanism. For centuries a key point of division was churchmanship—or whether Anglicanism was a Catholic church or a Protestant church. In the early decades of the twentieth century the vigor of the Anglo-Catholic party waxed strong, but by midcentury it had peaked; and particularly in the wake of the changes in Roman Catholicism instituted by the Second Vatican Council, Anglo-Catholics have been somewhat adrift, and questions of churchmanship have waned. But in their place have emerged issues arising from new attitudes concerning race, gender, and sexuality that came out of the 1960s.

Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries: Divisive Controversy over Gender Issues

Anglicanism had always had a male-only ordained ministry, and when Protestant churches first began to recognize women clergy, Anglicans refused. But by the 1960s the question of women’s ministry reemerged. The Lambeth Conference of 1968 stated that there were “no conclusive theological reasons for withholding priesthood from women,” a statement Catholic Anglicans would have challenged. Difficult debates occurred over the next three decades, but between 1970 and 1990 Anglicans in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Brazil, Kenya, and Uganda all accepted the ordination of women to the priesthood. And in 1993 the Church of England did likewise. The opening of the office of the episcopate occurred more slowly. Barbara Harris became the first woman bishop in the Anglican Communion in 1989, when she was consecrated a bishop of the diocese of Massachusetts. By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, women bishops

could be found in the churches in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Cuba. In 2008 the Church of England itself took decisive steps toward allowing women into the episcopate. Such decisions, however, alienated many traditionalists and pointed to a new liberal–conservative split that was replacing the older issues of churchmanship.

Despite the divisions the Anglican Communion weathered the question of the ordination of women. The Lambeth Conference of 1988 resolved that “each province respects the decision and attitudes of other provinces in the ordination or consecration of women to the episcopate,” though adding that respect did not necessitate agreement. The issue of sexuality proved more difficult. From the late 1970s many Anglicans in Europe and North America began to participate in a large-scale reassessment of the traditional taboos against homosexual activities. This decision not only further exacerbated the frustrations of the conservative members in many churches, but it also provoked anger in many parts of the growing Anglican community in the Southern Hemisphere. Many of these churches had been shaped by the conservative evangelical teachings of the Church Missionary Society. Others, such as the church in Kuala Lumpur, were influenced by the charismatic renewal. Many Anglicans from the global south were critical of the apparent ease with which northern Anglicans could dispose of traditional biblical mores. In addition, many African Anglicans shared an African distaste for homosexuality. These factors erupted in the 1998 meeting of the Lambeth Conference. The conference went on record to proclaim that “homosexual practice is incompatible with Scripture.” For one of the first times in its history, the Lambeth Conference spoke out against the autonomy of provinces. When, in 2003, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirmed the election of V. Gene Robinson (divorced, gay, and noncelibate) as bishop of New Hampshire, and when, in 2002, the Canadian Anglican diocese of New Westminster voted to permit the blessing of same-sex unions, the stage was set for a crisis within Anglicanism. What was to give way: the long cherished idea of autonomous national churches or the idea of an international Anglican Communion?

The growing concept of an international Anglican community would contribute one more aspect to the crisis. Dissident conservative congregations in the United States and Canada have attempted to disassociate from their national churches and in turn to affiliate with more conservative churches in Asia, Africa, and South America. The Anglican Church of Nigeria established a Convocation of Anglicans,

an ecclesial body offering a home for conservative North American Anglicans. In 2007 the American diocese of San Joaquin (California) attempted to leave the Episcopal Church and join the province of the Southern Cone (which was made up of Anglican churches from a number of South American nations). Such actions challenged the long-honored Anglican view that there should be one church within one nation.

To address these issues the archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, established a commission, which in 2004 issued its report. The Windsor Report criticized both the churches in North America for their unilateral actions and the churches of the Southern Hemisphere for their violation of diocesan boundaries. In 2008 work began on a proposed covenant that would limit the autonomy of the individual provinces and give more coherence to the Communion. The fate of such a covenant remains unclear.

The crisis in the eighty-million-member Anglican Communion in the twenty-first century, allegedly about sexuality, is actually about the nature of Anglicanism, as the Windsor Report concluded. Can its noncreedal fellowship of churches, sharing a common liturgical structure and an English heritage, survive in a world far different from that which gave it birth?

See also *Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Canada: Anglicans; Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence; Episcopalians* entries; *Gender; Latino American Religion: Mainline Protestants; Literature: Colonial; Mainline Protestants; Methodists: Tradition and Heritage; Worship: Anglican.*

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Anglican Worship

See *Worship: Anglican*

Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America

When English settlers began traveling to North America in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries to establish colonies, they carried with them their religion—a Protestantism born of the English Reformation. Many, but by no means all, of these men and women followed the religion of England’s established church, the Church of England. A hybrid creation blending reformed Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, the Anglican Church combined reformed theology with an episcopal form of church government, that is, a church governed by bishops. Some of England’s North American colonies were founded by its adherents; others were founded by members of dissenting persuasions. As a result, the status of the Church of England varied from colony to colony. The Church of England in colonial North America, in fact, is best understood not as a

single institution but rather as a series of institutions, each born out of the adaptation of England’s established church to a variety of circumstances peculiar to the mother country’s numerous Atlantic seaboard colonies.

The Church of England became the established church in several colonies, particularly those in the South. It was established by law in Virginia (by 1619), Maryland (1702), South Carolina (1706), North Carolina (1715), Georgia (1758), and in the four lower counties of New York (1693). In the other colonies it remained a dissenting faith.

Early Seventeenth Century

The Church of England was first established in North America in Virginia, where it had been the religion of most of the settlers for over a decade before establishment. Imbued with both militant Protestantism and a firm belief that English colonization of North America had been fore-ordained by God, English settlers sent by the Virginia Company of London established a colony at Jamestown in April 1607. The company’s charter, like the charters issued to previous colonization ventures, directed the settlers to follow the practices of the Church of England “in all fundamental pointes.” Company leaders took this charge seriously, and until its dissolution in 1624 the Virginia Company emphasized the place of religion in the colony’s life. Ministers who wanted to serve in the colony had to pass a rigorous selection process, the highlight of which was a trial sermon preached before members of the company; only the most qualified ministers were accepted. Despite the rigors of this screening process, the Virginia Company nonetheless maintained a sizable number of clergy in Virginia (it sent at least twenty-two ministers between 1607 and 1624) who served the settlers’ pastoral needs.

This promising start collapsed when Virginia became a royal colony, and by the end of the 1620s North America had become a missionary field for the Church of England. For much of the seventeenth century the English Church took little interest in the spiritual lives of English men and women in the colonies, and the church suffered. Too few ministers served a growing population. Colonial men who wished to become priests had to journey to England to be ordained and then back to North America. During the eighteenth century, one of every five or six postulants who made the trip died before returning to the colonies.

In the South, parishes were far larger than those in England, and ministers found it difficult to serve their widely dispersed congregations. In the middle colonies and New

England, members of the Church of England were largely dependent on the High Church–leaning Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), founded in 1701 by Maryland’s commissary, Thomas Bray (1656–1730), to supply them with clergy. And while settlers may have successfully planted the Church of England’s form of worship in the New World, its administrative structure was another matter. Absent guidance and support from the church’s hierarchy, colonists created a hodgepodge of different forms of ecclesiastical organization for the Church of England in North America. The one common denominator was the rise of lay power over both the church and the clergy.

Mid- to Late Seventeenth Century

By the early 1660s Virginia’s General Assembly had passed laws establishing parish vestry, setting their size (twelve men), and outlining their duties. The vestries, the group of men who made decisions for the parish, and wardens, the two officers who generally carried out the vestry’s duties, engaged in a number of secular and religious tasks: They chose the minister; they collected tithes to pay the minister, care for the poor, educate orphaned children, and construct or maintain church buildings; they presented moral offenders to the county courts; they maintained roads and ferries; they oversaw the processioning of lands [or “going round . . . the bounds of every person’s land” in the parish at periodic intervals, usually every three or four years, and renewing the marks that separated one person’s property from that of another]. Parish freeholders elected each parish’s original vestry, but the vestries soon became largely closed corporations, and when vacancies arose, the vestrymen themselves rather than the parish chose a replacement. In Maryland a different system emerged. The vestries did not become closed institutions as in Virginia, but vestrymen also held far fewer powers. There the governor appointed and removed clergy, the local sheriff collected a tobacco tax that paid clergy salaries, vestries reported moral offenders, and the county courts provided for poor people. Anglican ministers in South Carolina were paid from the colony’s general treasury.

In New England and the middle colonies, where the church was established only in the four lower counties of New York, the Church of England was a dissenting religion and was supported by voluntary contributions in the form of pew rents, lotteries, or subscriptions, and in some cases by funds donated by the SPG. Vestries in these areas had tremendous power over the clergy since the Church of England was not a governmental institution.

Conditions improved somewhat for the colonial Church of England in the 1670s, when Henry Compton became the bishop of London. Although the bishop of London nominally had charge of the church in the colonies, most previous incumbents of the see had done little to advance the mission of the church abroad. Compton, however, took the North American portion of his jurisdiction seriously, even calling himself the colonies’ “diocesan” at one point, and introduced measures that helped increase both the quantity and the quality of men serving colonial cures. He issued instructions to colonial governors asking that they allow no minister to serve a parish without presenting a letter testifying to the parson’s fitness signed either by Compton or by another English bishop.

Compton also introduced the commissary system to the church in North America. An office peculiarly suited to the administrative necessities of the medieval church, the position was fading from use in seventeenth-century England. Bishop Compton, however, recognized the utility of having commissaries (or representatives) in the colonies who could oversee the clergy and act as advocates for the church. A deputy of the bishop who acted on his behalf, a commissary could “summon the clergy, conduct visitations, administer oaths customary in ecclesiastical courts, and administer discipline to wayward clergy either by admonition, suspension or excommunication.” Men appointed to the position—like James Blair of Virginia, Thomas Bray of Maryland, and Alexander Garden of South Carolina—helped to expand and strengthen the church, attract worthy ministers to the colonies, and raise clergy salaries to adequate levels. Yet since they were not bishops, they could not do the one thing that would have helped the colonial Church of England most: they could not ordain men to the priesthood. Frustrated by this enduring problem, Thomas Sherlock (bishop of London, 1748–1761) stopped appointing commissaries for colonies other than Virginia in an attempt to force Parliament to appoint a bishop for North America.

Colonial Anglican Worship

The men and women who worshipped in the Church of England in colonial America came from all segments of society, from slaves (who often worshipped in segregated galleries or at a separate service) and indentured servants to members of elite families. They worshipped in church buildings often constructed near rivers or crossroads in an effort to facilitate attendance. In particularly large parishes, especially in the southern colonies, vestries may have had

smaller chapels of ease built at convenient spots so that parishioners would not have to travel so far to attend church. In these circumstances ministers served the mother church and chapels in rotation on successive Sundays or occasionally during the week. The Reverend James Maury of Virginia referred dismissively to all the traveling his vocation required as “a post-boy’s life.”

The church building itself would likely have been a rectangular or cruciform edifice constructed in the Georgian style. Steeples were rare. In the rural South church buildings often resembled tobacco warehouses. In the interior of the building (particularly after the wave of religious revivals known as the First Great Awakening in the 1730s and 1740s), a two- or three-decker pulpit would have been the dominant feature and center of attention in most Anglican churches. The parish clerk used the lowest level as a reading desk from which he led the congregational responses. The minister read the lessons for the day and led the service from the second level; he preached from the third or highest level. In the sanctuary, behind and to the sides of the holy table (adorned with neither flowers nor candles), panels on the wall contained the texts of the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, and in some cases the Royal Arms. Parishioners sat in box-style pews, those closest to the front indicating the wealth and status of the owner.

A typical Sunday worship service in colonial America followed the Book of Common Prayer and included Morning Prayer, the Great Litany, Ante-Communion (or the Communion service through the prayer for the church militant), and a sermon. Anglican ministers generally celebrated Communion about four times each year (often on or near the three principal festivals of the church: Christmas, Easter, and Ascension), although some clergy claimed to have celebrated the sacrament six or eight times a year. Divine service lasted about ninety minutes, although some historians have suggested they lasted twice as long. The sermon, usually read from a prepared text, was often modeled on the discourses of John Tillotson, archbishop of Canterbury, 1691–1694, whose pulpit oratory shaped the Anglican sermon for decades. Colonial parsons borrowed liberally from Tillotson’s published works (as well as from those of other English divines), sometimes transcribing lengthy passages from the archbishop’s discourses to intersperse with their own original work. And like their model, Anglican sermons often explicated a single verse of scripture, most frequently on the one taken from the New Testament. Colonial laypeople enjoyed a good sermon and often stayed

at home on Sunday if the minister, who alone could preach an original discourse, was officiating at one of the parish’s other churches or chapels of ease. Nor were parishioners reluctant to comment on the quality of sermons they heard. William Byrd II of Virginia once confided to his diary that the minister had “preached the congregation into a lethargy.” Ministers sometimes commented on what they considered the inattention of their congregations as well. One Anglican minister condemned his parishioners’ frequent talking, claiming that they seemed to have news “of such importance & necessity to be communicated immediately that even the duties of hearkening to God’s word in the lessons & singing his praises in the Psalms must give way.”

Until the advent of the Great Awakening, singing in the Church of England was largely limited to metrical Psalms, usually by 1700 to a setting in Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady’s popular “New Version” of the Psalms. In some parishes, conflict erupted when congregations and their ministers disagreed about which version to use.

In public as well as in private, the Book of Common Prayer was the single greatest influence shaping the devotional lives of colonial Anglicans; only the Bible surpassed it as the book most commonly appearing in the colonists’ libraries. Its liturgy repeated weekly at public worship and read each day privately by many individuals provided a constant source of structure for the spiritual life. Congregations and individual worshippers in private repeated the Apostles’ Creed and the Lord’s Prayer at each office, and in the lessons appointed for each day the Bible was read through in the course of each year. Anglican liturgy, in fact, echoed the Bible, with many of its prayers crafted from the words of Holy Scripture. Day after day, week after week, the Book of Common Prayer gave voice to the same themes in the same words that called the faithful to repentance at every office and offered them the means of grace. By repeating the same words at each office and by using the same words week after week, the set liturgies in the Book of Common Prayer were intended to work a gradual transformation in the lives of the faithful. Unlike the evangelicals of the Great Awakening, Anglicans placed little emphasis on conversion and their style of worship reflected this difference. Both as a devotional work and as a service book, the Book of Common Prayer aimed less at conversion than at assisting individuals already presumed to be Christians to maintain and deepen their faith. It served as the liturgy for a people thought to be Christian by virtue of their membership in the English Commonwealth.

Eighteenth Century

The Great Awakening

Not everyone found this quiet and reflective liturgy a suitable means of expressing the Christian faith. Adherents of a trans-Atlantic revival movement known as the Great Awakening opposed the Church of England as well as other established churches as too formal and spiritually dead for the vital task of spreading the gospel. Rather than an enlightened religion that emphasized intellectual assent to the idea of justification by faith, the Awakening was more subjective, appealed to the emotions, and asked that believers feel within themselves the immediacy of justification by faith alone. This evangelical movement was dominated by an itinerant Church of England minister, the Reverend George Whitefield, from 1739–1740, when he made his first trip to North America, until his death in 1770. Whitefield was a tremendous orator and organizer who relied upon a dramatic style of preaching to communicate his Calvinist message. Rather than following the set liturgies in the Book of Common Prayer, he prayed extemporaneously. In addition, he emphasized the importance of the conversion experience (or “new birth”) to salvation and denounced both the Church of England’s episcopal form of church government and the widely popular writings of John Tillotson. With the notable exception of Virginia’s commissary James Blair (c. 1655–1743), few Anglican ministers allowed Whitefield to preach from their pulpits. South Carolina’s commissary, Alexander Garden (1685–1756), brought Whitefield up on charges of heresy.

The Great Awakening had a profound effect on the colonial Church of England. In the South, great numbers of people joined dissenting churches led by itinerant preachers, denounced by Anglican clergy as “strolling pretended ministers.” In New England, on the other hand, some residents had grown weary of Calvinism and distrusted the Awakeners’ “enthusiastical” preaching. As a result the church in New England gained members. The Reverend Timothy Cutler of Massachusetts explained: “Enthusiasm has had a long Run . . . so that many are tired of it, and if the Door were open would take Refuge in our Church from Error and Disorder.” By the early 1760s another change had taken place: Some younger Anglican clergy began to accept Whitefield’s preaching style, which emphasized the affections rather than logical assent to theological principles, all the while rejecting his theology. A small but influential evangelical movement that included Devereux Jarratt

(1733–1801) and Charles Clay (1745–1820) of Virginia, Samuel Peters (1735–1826) of Connecticut, Samuel Magaw (1735–1812) of Delaware, and William McClenahan (d. 1766 or 1767) of Pennsylvania thus emerged within the colonial church. Many of these men were sympathetic to the Methodist (or Wesleyan phase) of the Awakening that emerged after Whitefield’s death. Like Jarratt, they were just as likely to feel betrayed when Methodists in the United States split from the Church of England in 1784.

The Great Awakening had an impact on Anglican worship in other ways as well. To emphasize the importance of the sermon, pulpits became even more important than before as church leaders had large pulpits constructed in the center-front of the church rather than to the side; sometimes the pulpit obscured the holy table from view. Hymns, although in limited numbers and hindered by the occasional arrest of ministers who allowed them, also came to the Church of England as a result of the Great Awakening.

Anglicans also established colleges to help combat the Calvinism and enthusiasm of the Great Awakening. The College of William and Mary had been founded in Virginia in 1693, in part to train colonial men to serve as Church of England ministers, but Anglican education in the middle and New England colonies lagged behind. In 1753, however, a group comprising mainly members of the Church of England founded King’s College (later Columbia) in New York City on land donated by Trinity Church, Wall Street. Another majority Anglican group started the College of Philadelphia. So many students from Yale converted to Anglicanism in the 1750s that the school’s president forbade students from attending the nearby Church of England parish.

Relationships to Slaves and Native Americans

Both prior to and after the Great Awakening, individuals, rather than the institutional church, shaped Anglican efforts to Christianize African and African American slaves. Slaveholders in the seventeenth century opposed the clergy’s efforts to proselytize to their chattel, convinced that slaves who received the sacrament of baptism would be freed. Indeed, a series of court cases in Virginia in the 1700s granted freedom to slaves who could prove they were Christians, thereby affirming the commonly accepted notion that Christians should not own other Christians as slaves. Ministers concerned about slaves’ spiritual salvation, ironically, worked to remove this impediment to conversion, thus helping to create a pro-slavery Christianity. (Very few Anglican clergy, in fact, opposed the institution of slavery

itself.) The legislatures of both Maryland and Virginia passed statutes declaring that baptism did not change a slave's civil status, and Edmund Gibson, the bishop of London, issued a pastoral letter in the 1720s further stating the sacrament's irrelevance to whether a black person was bond or free.

Nonetheless, the belief that conversion equated with freedom would not die. As late as the 1730s some colonial church leaders echoed these fears of earlier slaveholding generations, claiming that slave converts were largely insincere and that the hope of freedom was all that motivated their embrace of Christianity. Continued resistance by slave owners to Christianizing their bondmen and women meant the Church of England had a very mixed record when it came to spreading the gospel in the slave quarters. Ministers who insisted on this work were sometimes denounced as "Negro Parsons." Slaveholders argued that baptism only made slaves feel proud and that Christian slaves were less likely to work hard than others. Ministers countered this argument by claiming that Christianized slaves became better slaves, more likely to obey their earthly masters. To appease planter fears, the Reverend Francis Le Jau (1665–1717) of Goose Creek Parish in South Carolina introduced a ritual to baptisms in which slaves announced before their masters that they did not seek the sacrament in order to claim their freedom.

Anglican clergy who tried to spread the message of the gospel to Virginia's slave population received support from the Associates of Dr. Bray, a group formed in 1723–1724 to help educate and Christianize blacks in the colonies. They sent books to colonial ministers for this purpose and established schools for blacks in Philadelphia (1758); New York (1760); Williamsburg (1760); Newport, Rhode Island (1762); and Fredericksburg, Virginia (1765). The onset of the American Revolution, however, led to the collapse of this initiative.

Attempts to evangelize slaves were as individual as the relationships among particular slaves, particular masters, and particular ministers. Some masters took the duty more seriously than others, just as some slaves no doubt desired to become Christians more than others, and just as some ministers pressed the work more vigorously than others.

Anglican efforts to Christianize Native Americans ended with even more disappointing results, hampered in part by an English belief that natives should be "civilized" before they could become Christians. Despite the occasional spectacular conversion, like that of Pocahontas, daughter of the head of the Powhatan Confederacy, near the English settlement in Virginia, this harvest of souls was meager. The College of

William and Mary accepted a bequest from the will of renowned chemist Robert Boyle (1627–1691) that was intended to support Indian education, but the college's Indian school taught few native people. Perhaps the high point of missionary work among North America's indigenous people came with the career of the Reverend Henry Barclay, a missionary in the 1730s who worked among the Mohawk in New York. He learned the Mohawks' language and translated the Book of Common Prayer; he also established a series of chapels for the Indians in central New York. Barclay, however, soon became rector of Trinity Church, Wall Street, and his missionary work did not survive this change in vocations.

Episcopacy Controversy

In the decade preceding the American Revolution no issue caused the Church of England more difficulty or revealed more clearly the varying emphases of the church in different regions of British North America than did the so-called episcopacy controversy of 1766–1767. Attempts to establish a bishop in colonial North America were not new. Archbishop William Laud had tried to settle a bishop in New England in 1638 (albeit to keep an eye on Puritans more than to help Anglicans), and the process of sending a bishop to the colonies had advanced so far in the 1670s that a charter creating a bishopric in Virginia was written. There was even some talk in the 1710s of making Commissary James Blair a suffragan bishop (a bishop without political powers).

By the 1760s frustrated clergy in the northern colonies, where the Church of England held a High Church outlook, began holding conventions to petition for the introduction of a bishop to North America. (High Church in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did not refer to a particular style of worship but to an emphasis on episcopacy and the necessity of the apostolic succession to a true church.) Why, they asked, could Moravians in Pennsylvania and Roman Catholics in British Quebec have bishops when members of the mother country's established church could not complete its own traditional ecclesiastical hierarchy? Members of other denominations viewed these efforts to introduce a bishop to North America in the context of the hated Stamp Act of 1765: An Anglican bishop would not only be an innovation in North America but also might introduce a form of tyranny that could threaten the civil liberties of religious dissenters. Bishops had exercised both ecclesiastical and civil powers in Great Britain for so long that opponents could simply not conceive of a bishop who exercised his authority only over members of the Church of England.

Southerners held different opinions about episcopacy as well as churchmanship. Lay vestries in the South had traditionally exercised great power over the church, and laypeople there were reluctant to concede authority to a resident bishop. Absent a bishop, the laity could continue to dominate the church; a bishop would only threaten the laity's entrenched authority. Episcopacy remained important to their understanding of Anglican identity; they just did not want a bishop in the colonies. The inconvenience of sending postulants across the Atlantic Ocean for ordination was far less important to them than was protecting the laity's control of the church.

Southern clergy also questioned the wisdom of sending a bishop to America and criticized northern clergy who asked for a bishop when northern laity offered only lukewarm support for the plan. Northern clergy in turn tarred southern ministers as unworthy men afraid that inspection by a bishop would reveal their numerous shortcomings. Ironically, support for a resident bishop was lowest in those southern colonies where the Church of England had long been the established church. Even there opponents of episcopacy sometimes viewed bishops through the lens of the Stamp Act. A South Carolina minister, for example, warned in 1765 that "it would be as unsafe for an American Bishop (if such should be appointed) to come hither, as it is at present for a distributor of the Stamps." In the end, the petitions of northern clergy and the concerns of southern laypeople meant little to the debate. After the crisis brought on by the Stamp Act, imperial authorities back in Great Britain came to believe that introducing a bishop to the North American colonies ran too great a risk of angering the colonial public and thus creating yet another crisis.

Revolutionary War

The Church of England grew tremendously during the eighteenth century. In 1700 there were 111 Anglican parishes in colonial North America; in 1780 that number had risen to 440 parishes. The number of ministers available to serve these parishes was increasing as well. Between 1745 and the onset of the American Revolution in 1776, the bishop of London licensed just over four hundred ministers to serve colonial parishes. Colonial vocations were on the rise also. By the 1740s nearly 25 percent of Anglican clergy in the colonies had been born in North America. Despite this impressive growth, however, the Church of England was actually losing ground. In the decades after 1700, Congregationalists had increased their numbers more than five times. The increase for Baptists and Presbyterians was

even greater, fourteen and seventeen times, respectively. And by percentage far fewer people worshipped in the Church of England than at the turn of the century. In 1700 approximately one-quarter of all Americans considered themselves members of Great Britain's established church; by 1775 the figure had fallen to one-ninth of the population.

Despite the ambiguous conclusions suggested by these figures, the colonial Church of England was arguably at its strongest point in the mid-1770s. The Revolutionary War, however, confronted the church with unprecedented challenges and made even more apparent the sectional divisions revealed a decade earlier during the episcopacy controversy. Clergy, for instance, found themselves in an awkward position. At their ordinations they had sworn allegiance to the king. In addition, the Act of Uniformity of 1662 required them to use the Book of Common Prayer at worship service—including its prayers for Parliament, the royal family, and the king. This obligation presented scrupulous clergy with a grave dilemma: Their ordination vows required them to pray for the king, but after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence to pray for the king as their vows demanded was to commit treason. Many southern ministers addressed this dilemma shrewdly. When southern legislatures ordered clergy not to pray for the king, many ministers resolved the question by arguing that the king deserved their prayers and allegiance only when he ruled justly.

With no bishop in North America, the Church of England in the new United States, especially in the southern states, also faced the problem of finding additional clergy to replace those who died, quit, or fled during the war. Once war formally broke out, English bishops refused to ordain men they considered rebels, thus making it even more difficult for colonial parishes to secure ministers.

Although the majority of Anglican laypeople supported the patriot cause, clergy sympathies were another matter and broke sharply along sectional lines. In New England and New York (where the vast majority of Anglican clergy were SPG missionaries) and the middle colonies, most ministers were Loyalists. One account, in fact, suggests that in the northern colonies nearly 80 percent of all clergy considered themselves Loyalists. Many received support not from their congregations but from Great Britain's Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), and those guidelines stated that ministers could be dismissed for disloyalty, thus linking clergy salaries to the British cause. Given this dilemma many northern clergy suspended services or allowed lay readers (who had not taken vows of allegiance to the king) to lead services.

According to some estimates by the end of 1776 only a handful of Anglican churches remained open in Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey. The Reverend Charles Inglis of Trinity Church in New York City wrote proudly in 1776 of the SPG missionaries in New England and the middle colonies, claiming that they “have proved themselves faithful, loyal subjects in these trying times.” Churches in New England and the middle colonies did not begin to open again until 1779, after the SPG had given its missionaries tacit permission to drop prayers for the king, asking only that they not pray for the American Congress.

Southern clergy offered a more ambiguous response to the Revolution than did the Anglican clergy in New England. In Virginia and South Carolina most supported the patriot cause, while majorities in Maryland and North Carolina were Loyalists. No matter where they lived, many Loyalist ministers were persecuted by state and local committees of safety. The Reverend Jonathan Boucher of Maryland, a Loyalist, felt concerned enough to take two pistols with him when he conducted services. In Massachusetts the legislature threatened Loyalist parsons by passing legislation that made it a crime punishable by a fifty-pound fine (the approximate value of a New England minister’s yearly stipend) to preach anything that might weaken support for the war. Throughout the United States approximately thirty-five ministers who supported the British cause were forced from their cures during the American Revolution. Others had their churches or rectories burned. Some, like Charles Inglis of Trinity Church, who later became the first bishop of Nova Scotia, fled the country for Canada or Great Britain. A number of ministers, patriots as well as Loyalists, served as chaplains to American and British soldiers.

One of the greatest challenges to the Church of England during the Revolutionary War came from disestablishment in those states where the church had been established before the war, primarily in the South and in New York. In some places the process was swift; in New York the legislature simply repealed the legislation that had granted the Church of England partial establishment. In other states, such as Virginia, the process was a protracted one that took the better part of thirty years to complete, ending there in the early 1800s with the partial confiscation of church property. Anglican ministers suffered financially from disestablishment: In each state where the church had been established, the legislatures voted between 1776 and 1778 to end tax support for clergy salaries. In short, disestablishment meant that in New York City and in the southern states the new

Episcopal Church would have to find a way to function as a voluntary association lacking state support. Full recovery took decades in states like Virginia and North Carolina.

Anglicanism after the Revolution

The American Revolution also broke any remaining ties between the Church of England and the Episcopal Church and forced church leaders to create a new institutional structure to govern the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. (The term *Protestant Episcopal Church* had first been used in Maryland in the early 1780s.) Regional factions reflecting the church’s varying theological and institutional development during the colonial period quickly emerged. A High Church party that emphasized clergy leadership and the absolute necessity of episcopacy to a “true” church led by the Reverend Samuel Seabury (1729–1796) developed in New England, while a group with a more pragmatic focus led by the Reverend William White (1748–1836) of Pennsylvania emerged in the middle states. The middle state faction (which was also supported by what remained of the church in the South) granted the laity a greater role in church governance and conceded that although episcopacy was desirable, the Episcopal Church might have to be led by “presiding clergy” elected by state conventions or “general vestries” who would carry out some episcopal duties until they could find English or Scottish bishops willing to consecrate a bishop for the United States. White suggested a three-level system of church governance in which laity and clergy shared decision-making powers at the local, regional, and national levels. The New Englanders and Seabury, who was consecrated bishop by Scottish nonjurors in 1784, objected to this form of organization, complaining that it differed little from Congregationalism, and refused to attend the General Conventions held in 1785 and 1786.

While Seabury set about organizing the church in New England, delegations from the Episcopal Church in the middle states, Virginia, and South Carolina met in Philadelphia in 1785. Led by White, the delegates drafted a constitution and an American version of the Book of Common Prayer; they sent letters to the archbishop of Canterbury and the archbishop of York asking the two prelates to consider consecrating American bishops so that the Episcopal Church could maintain the apostolic succession. In 1786 Parliament agreed to allow English bishops to consecrate men who were not British, and in response the General Convention gave White and Samuel Provoost (1742–1815) of New York

permission to seek consecration as bishops. Yet even after White and Provoost returned from Great Britain, having been elevated to the episcopate in February 1787, creating a single Episcopal Church in the United States from the competing regional institutions remained a vexing challenge. The various regional churches disagreed not only on what constituted proper church polity but also about the language of the creeds and which creeds should be included in the Book of Common Prayer. The General Convention, in fact, had refused to accept the validity of Seabury's consecration to the episcopate; in at least one case, an Episcopal minister in Pennsylvania refused to open his pulpit to a minister ordained by Seabury.

At the General Convention of 1789 (the first session of which the New Englanders refused to attend), the Episcopal Church in the United States successfully crafted a degree of institutional unity. Delegates from the southern and middle states agreed to accept Seabury's consecration as valid. They also introduced a House of Bishops that would sit independently from the House of Deputies and would hold some degree of veto power over that body of clerical and lay delegates. Pleased with these and other concessions, the New Englanders attended most of the convention's second session at which the church factions came to agreement on what would become the 1789 Book of Common Prayer, the first American prayer book. The new prayer book shortened some services, agreed to retain the Nicene Creed (although some clergy complained that it included a "mystery beyond human comprehension" and the use of "regeneration" in the baptismal liturgy), retained language about Christ's descent into hell in the Apostles' Creed, and deleted the Athanasian Creed and its condemnatory language.

Although the 1789 General Convention created institutional unity for the church that allowed factions to continue their battle over the meaning of the English Reformation as members of the same church, the Episcopal Church in the United States did not achieve complete independence from the Church of England until 1792. Bishops White and Provoost had made concessions to English church leaders about the validity of Seabury's consecration and agreed not to consecrate another American bishop until a third American bishop had been consecrated in England, an event that took place in 1790, when English bishops consecrated James Madison (1749–1812) as bishop of Virginia. (Bishop Madison was a cousin of the president of the same name.) Two years later the four American bishops consecrated the first bishop of Maryland, Thomas Claggett (1743–1816), thus

giving the American church full independence. It was at that time a church of about ten thousand Americans, and it faced an uncertain future.

See also *American Revolution; Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Architecture: Early America; Canada: Anglicans; Episcopalians* entries; *Establishment, Religious; Great Awakening(s); Worship: Anglican.*

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Anti-Catholicism

In a speech delivered to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association on September 12, 1960, John F. Kennedy insisted, “Contrary to common newspaper usage, I am not the Catholic candidate for President. I am the Democratic Party’s candidate for President who happens also to be a Catholic. I do not speak for my church on public matters—and the church does not speak for me.” Kennedy’s advisers hoped this speech would assuage fears among Protestant voters that were he to become president, he would be obligated to enforce Vatican edicts rather than U.S. laws. Questions about the Catholic Kennedy’s loyalty to the nation loomed throughout his presidential campaign. From the moment he won the Democratic Party’s nomination until he narrowly defeated Richard Nixon in November, Kennedy struggled to prove that he was a patriotic citizen committed to the separation of church and state. Both during and after the election, Nixon would insist that it was Kennedy himself who made Catholicism and religious tolerance a campaign issue. While it is true that Kennedy supporters, especially former president Harry Truman, often accused his opponents of being anti-Catholic, it is also true that Kennedy faced serious opposition from Protestants who argued that no Catholic could be trusted to hold the nation’s highest executive office. In September of 1960, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), with the support of prominent minister Norman Vincent Peale, sponsored a conference aimed at generating antipathy toward the Catholic candidate. The conference’s organizers compared Kennedy to Nikita Khrushchev in a front-page *New York Times* article, in which they also declared that the “actions and policies of the Catholic Church have given Protestants legitimate grounds for concern about having a Catholic in the White House.” Even the Reverend Billy Graham, a public proponent of religious tolerance who avoided the NAE’s convention and advised Nixon to keep the religion question at bay, expressed concern that a Catholic president could become a papal puppet. Kennedy’s speech to the Houston ministers was thus designed to present him as a privately religious man who could maintain secular public commitments—something many Protestant Americans believed no Catholic capable of doing.

Kennedy’s election to the presidency in some ways marked a turning point in U.S. political and public culture. After all, not only was Kennedy the first Catholic to win a presidential election, he was also only the second Catholic to capture a major party’s nomination. But anti-Catholicism in the United

States certainly did not originate with the Kennedy campaign, nor did it fully abate once that election cycle was complete. Indeed, anti-Catholicism took root in North America long before the formation of the United States, and it has long played an integral role in the shaping of U.S. culture.

British Roots

Anti-Catholicism was, in many respects, a European and particularly British import to the Americas. In the wake of the Reformation, many colonists brought with them a deep distrust of Rome and its religion. Englishmen arriving in seventeenth-century North America were particularly invested in anti-Catholicism, in part because British Catholics and Protestants had been fighting each other since Henry VIII broke with the Church in 1533. To many English Protestants, national history since Henry’s formation of the Church of England was marked by Catholic designs on English liberty. The five-year reign of Henry’s Catholic daughter Mary I—or “Bloody Mary,” as the Protestants called her—had brought with it not only the restoration of English ties to Rome but also the persecution and execution of many English Protestants. Fear of Catholicism’s influence persisted even when Mary’s Protestant sister Elizabeth I succeeded her in 1558. In 1559, English lawmakers passed the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, which banished priests, excluded Catholics from public employment, and made attendance at Church of England services compulsory. Protestant suspicions about Catholicism seemed only to be confirmed by rumors that Mary Stuart, the Queen of Scots and Elizabeth’s Catholic cousin, held designs on the English throne. When Elizabeth had Mary beheaded in 1587, Catholic Spain retaliated with its Armada. The surprise victory of England’s navy over the Armada in 1588 stood in the minds of many Englishmen as proof of Protestantism’s assured ascendancy. Even so, English Protestants continued to fear Catholic designs on their nation. And when Catholic revolutionaries led by Guy Fawkes were arrested in 1605 for attempting to blow up Parliament, those fears seemed less irrational paranoia than justifiable suspicion. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Anglo-Protestants came to view Catholicism as a threat not only to their new system of belief but also to the sovereignty of the English nation-state.

Colonial Anti-Catholicism

It was out of this cultural climate that the English colonists to the Americas emerged. Although those colonists often

violently disagreed with each other on theological matters, Low and High Church Protestants alike feared that Catholic France or Spain would build an empire in the Western Hemisphere. Distrust of Catholics not only unified members of divergent Protestant denominations within the Americas, but it also created a link between the colonies and their home government, as the American territories largely reproduced English laws prohibiting Catholic practice. By 1700, Rhode Island was the only colony to officially afford Catholic residents full equal rights. Massachusetts passed perhaps the most aggressive anti-Catholic legislation, decreeing in 1647 that all Jesuits would be banished or, if they refused to leave, executed. Virginia officially disenfranchised its Catholics in 1642; New Hampshire enfranchised only Anglo-Protestant men; in both North and South Carolina “papists” were refused the right of “liberty of conscience”; and in even tolerant Pennsylvania Catholics were excluded from public office. Although Maryland had been founded by the Roman Catholic Lord Baltimore, it repealed its own Toleration Act in 1654 and passed a law denying Catholics legal protection in the colony. In the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, England’s new Protestant monarchs William and Mary revoked Maryland’s charter altogether and established Anglicanism as the colony’s official religion. Thus the thirteen colonies that would become the United States, in many respects replicated the situation in England: colonial governments and Protestant citizens viewed Catholics as a threat not only to the religious but also the political order.

Anti-Catholicism as a Source for Revolution

Although anti-Catholicism linked England to her colonies for more than a century, in the late eighteenth century it ultimately became a source of tension between them. In June of 1774, King George III signed the Quebec Act, which legalized the practice of Roman Catholicism in the formerly French colony. The act essentially fulfilled conditions already laid out in the 1763 Treaty of Paris, which George had signed when Louis XV surrendered all Canadian territories to England at the close of the Seven Years War. But though it merely codified a decade-old promise between monarchs, the Quebec Act triggered a flurry of anti-Catholic activity. On the eve of the bill’s signing, an anonymous vandal blackened the bust of George III that stood in Montreal’s Place d’Arms and around its neck hung a rosary made of potatoes and bearing the inscription, “*Voilà le Pape du Canada, ou le sot Anglois*” (Behold the Pope of Canada, or the English fool). In more official channels, the

Continental Congress denounced the Quebec Act not only as “dangerous in an extreme degree to the Protestant religion,” but also as threatening “the civil rights and liberties of all America.” To many colonists, the King’s apparent collusion with the French Catholics was just one more illustration of his disdain for the thirteen colonies. And when Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence in 1776, he included among the colonists’ list of grievances an item accusing the crown of “abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies.” The incorporation of Catholic Quebec into the English empire thus became one more reason for Protestant colonists to revolt.

Rise of “Nativism”

In the aftermath of the Revolution, the ratification of the Constitution and Bill of Rights largely eliminated official federal persecution of and discrimination against Catholic U.S. citizens. And despite the fact that some states maintained official church establishment into the nineteenth century (Massachusetts was the last to disestablish in 1833), Catholics were increasingly granted—in theory if not always in practice—equal rights of citizenship in individual states. Suspicion of the Catholic presence in the new nation, however, did not suddenly dissipate. Although numerous Catholics joined the U.S. Army to fight against Britain in the War of 1812, Protestants retained their concern that Catholics threatened both religious liberty and national sovereignty because they would always remain primarily loyal to the Church. Thus when immigrants from “Catholic” nations such as Ireland and Germany began arriving in the United States in the 1820s and 1830s, the rhetoric of nativism became linked to a narrative of Catholic encroachment on the “American way of life,” and the nation’s long-standing but simmering anti-Catholicism resurfaced in public culture. In 1834, nativist activist Samuel F. B. Morse (coinventor of the telegraph and Morse code) published a series of letters accusing Europe’s monarchs of colluding with the Catholic Church in an effort to stymie the spread of democracy in the Americas. That same year, following a series of lectures in which Lyman Beecher—famed Presbyterian clergyman and father of Harriet Beecher Stowe—claimed that the western frontier was being overrun with despotic Catholics, mob violence broke out in Charleston, Massachusetts, and resulted in the

burning of an Ursuline convent. Despite the violence that his anti-Catholic invective inspired, Beecher published *A Plea for the West*, a digest of his lectures, the following year. Tales of the abuse of young girls in Catholic convents also became popular in the 1830s. In 1834, Rebecca Reed published *Six Months in a Convent*, a supposed exposé of the terrible treatment she, a Protestant, had been subjected to while a novice. Two years later, Maria Monk published *Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal*, in which she claimed to have been sexually abused by priests. Although Monk's story was ultimately discredited, her book sold more copies than any other in America (besides the Bible) until the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1853.

Mexican War and Italian Rebellion

Anti-Catholicism was never merely a domestic question in the United States, and in the 1840s two major events generated concern among Anglo-Protestant Americans. The first was the Mexican War (1846–1848). A complicated conflict that generated much controversy in the United States because it seemed to many an illegal war designed to increase the country's slaveholding territories, the Mexican War also reminded the American public that the nation with which it shared its southern border was populated mainly by Catholics. While some Protestants viewed the war as an opportunity to spread Protestantism into the southern parts of the hemisphere—the writer George Lippard even referred to it as “the new crusade”—others bristled at the thought of incorporating the Catholics living in northern Mexico into the United States. At the same time that the nation's southern boundary was being violently reordered, many Americans were also looking to Europe, where the protracted battle for Italian unification, or *Risorgimento*, was under way. At the heart of the *Risorgimento* conflict was the question of whether the pope should remain the head of the Italian states or relinquish state power to a secular authority. In a series of dispatches written from Rome for Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*, the prominent transcendentalist thinker and women's rights advocate Margaret Fuller compared Italy's revolution against papal power to the emancipation of slaves. “I listen to the same arguments against the emancipation of Italy, that are used against the emancipation of our blacks,” she wrote in 1848, “the same arguments in favor of the spoliation of Poland as for the conquest of Mexico. I find the cause of tyranny and wrong everywhere the same.” Although Protestants in the United States generally supported the Italian revolutionaries, many U.S. Catholics believed that the

pope should retain civil authority. Pope Pius IX's efforts to quash the European revolutions of 1848, and the perceived support for Roman rule among American Catholics further convinced Anglo-Protestants that Catholics could never fully assimilate into secular democracy.

Know-Nothing Party

Concern over Catholicism eventually translated into political organization. In 1843, anti-Catholic nativists formed the American Republican Party, the platform of which included a call for a twenty-one-year naturalization period for all immigrants, a banning of foreign-born citizens from public office, and mandatory reading of the King James Bible in public schools. As the Whig Party split itself apart because of slavery, and as Democrats and Republicans battled over it, the American Republican Party began to emerge as a viable third party in 1854. The party renamed itself the American Party, but critics and opponents referred to it as the Know-Nothing Party. The precise origin of the title “Know Nothing” is itself unknown, but it seems to have derived from the members' commitment to anonymity. The party drew most of its membership from two nativist organizations: Charles B. Allen's secret society the Order of the Star Spangled Banner (OSSB) and the older but less secretive Order of United Americans, which merged with the OSSB in 1852. In 1854, the Know-Nothings engineered surprise electoral victories in numerous state and local elections. The care with which the party guarded the identity of its members has made it difficult to determine precisely how many candidates it actually placed in office, but two of its biggest victories were in Maine, where the declared Know-Nothing candidate Anson Morrill won the gubernatorial seat, and Philadelphia, where the winner of the mayoral race, Robert T. Conrad, turned out to be a Know-Nothing in Whig's clothing. But the Know-Nothings' greatest achievement that year may have been architectural rather than electoral. On March 6, vandals who were likely party members stole the block of marble that Pope Pius IX had donated for the Washington Monument's interior wall. The stone, which had once been part of the Temple of Concord in Rome, was never recovered—perhaps because it ended up at the bottom of the Potomac River. Although the stone itself had enraged Protestants who believed that the secular monument should not contain stone imported from a Catholic space, its disappearance angered both Catholics and Protestants, and private donations for the monument's construction evaporated when the stone could not be recovered. Construction on the

monument all but ceased until the Know-Nothing Party disappeared from the U.S. political stage four years later.

Millard Fillmore: Know-Nothing Candidate for President

In 1856 the Know-Nothing Party made its only bid for the presidency, nominating former president Millard Fillmore to head the ticket with Andrew Jackson Donelson, nephew of Andrew Jackson, as his running mate. Fillmore was, in some respects, an odd choice for the party. For one thing, he had never actually won a presidential election: having finished out Zachary Taylor's term following his sudden death in 1850, Fillmore failed to win the Whig nomination when he came up for reelection. Even more problematic, he was not particularly sympathetic to nativist and anti-Catholic causes. The Unitarian Fillmore had enrolled his daughter in Catholic school, and in the past he had donated funds for the building of Catholic churches. The Know-Nothings chose Fillmore, however, because of his commitment to the preservation of the union and his noncommittal stance on slavery. As the Republican Party built its abolitionist platform, and as the Democrats prepared to run pro-slavery candidates, many Know-Nothings believed that Fillmore's aversion to sectionalism would resonate with voters on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line. That year, Fillmore and Donelson ran with posters boasting the somewhat redundant slogan, "I know nothing but my country, my whole country, and nothing but my country." His campaign also attempted to damage the reputation of Republican candidate John C. Frémont by spreading rumors that he was a Catholic. Although Fillmore won 21.6 percent of the popular vote—the largest share any third-party candidate has ever received—he and Frémont both lost to Democrat James Buchanan. Following the 1856 election, the Know-Nothing Party faded from the political landscape and was essentially defunct by 1859. Most of Fillmore's supporters migrated to the Republican Party.

Civil War

Anti-Catholicism at the national level declined substantially in the years leading up to and during the Civil War. This was partly because many northerners who had been suspicious of foreign and Catholic influence in the United States now came to see slavery as the real threat to U.S. republican principles. Also, because both the northern and southern armies required large numbers of soldiers, they simply could not afford to discriminate against Catholics. This is not to say

that religious tension entirely subsided in this period. In July of 1863, for example, a three-day riot broke out in New York City in part as a response to Congress's institution of a Union Army draft. The rioters were mainly poor and Irish men who had recently arrived in the United States. They attacked not only those running the draft itself but also wealthy New Yorkers—who could buy out of the draft—and African Americans—whom they incorrectly blamed for the war itself. To many Protestant northerners, the draft riots stood as an emblem not only of the Catholic foreigner's violent tendencies but also of his inability to integrate into the nation. Still, in general, anti-Catholic sentiment waned in this period, as attention focused increasingly on the possibility of national division.

Republican Anti-Catholicism and the A.P.A.

In the aftermath of the war and Reconstruction, anti-Catholicism did revive in the United States, though it was not as vehement as it had been in previous decades. At the end of the 1860s, Catholic organizations suggested that the reading of the King James Bible in public schools promoted Protestantism, and they demanded that Catholic parochial schools receive a share of state funds. At the same time, Catholic charitable organizations made the case that they should be eligible for as much state aid as their Protestant counterparts. Such demands revived fears of Roman designs on the state and its resources. The Republican Party, which had absorbed many of the former Know-Nothings, took up the anti-Catholic banner and attempted to convince constituents that only it stood between the nation and Rome. Republicans as prominent as Ulysses S. Grant and Rutherford B. Hayes accused their Democratic opponents of pandering to Catholic interests and placing public education at risk. Through the 1890s anti-Catholicism remained at the center of nativist complaints, and anti-Catholic committees, fraternal organizations, and secret societies continued to flourish. Perhaps the most powerful of these groups was the American Protective Association (A.P.A.), founded by Henry F. Bowers in 1891. Drawing strength from the class conflict arising from the depression of 1893, the A.P.A. instructed its members never to vote for Catholic candidates for public office and to boycott Catholic businesses and labor. It is important to note, though, that during this period anti-Catholicism both fed into and stemmed from a larger climate of nativism. If in earlier decades the figures of priest and pope represented the great threat to "American" life and politics, at the end of the nineteenth century it was the immigrant—understood in

terms broader than simply Catholicism—who posed a threat to national stability. At the same time, the question of race began in many ways to supplant the question of religion in conversations about what it meant to be “American,” and whiteness became an even more salient social category than Protestantism.

Early Twentieth Century: Al Smith for President

In the early decades of the twentieth century, Catholics still often appeared to their Protestant neighbors as papal subjects ill-suited for U.S. democracy. The second, 1915 incarnation of the Ku Klux Klan—the first manifestation of which had declined in the 1870s—included Catholicism along with immigration, Judaism, and racial difference in its list of perceived threats to Americanism. Catholicism, Klansmen argued, was antithetical to American democracy, because the Catholic Church not only promoted hierarchy in its theology but also materially supported a number of monarchies in Europe. Still, in the 1920s many Protestant Americans found themselves on the same side of a political divide as their Catholic neighbors, because members of both religious groups opposed the rise of communism. It was partly this emerging sense of Catholicism as anti-communist that made it possible for Alfred E. Smith, governor of New York, to become the first Catholic to win a major party’s presidential nomination, when he ran as a Democrat against Republican Herbert Hoover in 1928. Smith’s candidacy inspired immediate religious controversy. Early in the campaign, Charles G. Marshall, a Protestant lawyer from New York, wrote an open letter to Smith that appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. The letter asked Smith to respond to charges that a Catholic president would be unable to both maintain his allegiance to the Church and uphold the Constitution’s separation of church and state. In his own letter to the *Atlantic*, Smith refuted Marshall’s claim, asserting that he believed in the liberty of conscience and the principles of religious liberty that the Constitution promoted. In the end, however, Smith’s Catholicism—along with his opposition to Prohibition—stymied his campaign, and he lost to Hoover by the largest electoral margin in U.S. history. Three decades would pass before another Catholic, Kennedy, would represent a major party on the presidential ballot.

Anti-Catholicism after the Second Vatican Council

Anti-Catholicism did not disappear from the American landscape in the aftermath of Kennedy’s presidency and assassination, but it did cease to be a prime motivator of

social and political organization. Pope John XXIII’s 1962 opening of the Second Vatican Council, in which the Church adopted numerous reforms including a greater recognition of liberty of conscience and religious diversity, indicated to many Americans that Catholicism was not at odds with liberal politics. Still, in the later twentieth century, the battles that candidates for office such as Geraldine Ferraro and John Kerry have fought with the Church over issues including abortion and gay rights have given some Protestant voters pause over the Vatican’s influence on Catholic politicians. When he ran for president as a Democrat in 2004, Kerry responded to questions about his faith by asserting that, like Kennedy, he would be “a president who happens to be Catholic, not a Catholic president”; but unlike Smith and Kennedy, Kerry never was asked to give a serious accounting of how his Catholicism might affect his presidency. In the end, however, the decline of organized anti-Catholicism within the American landscape in the latter part of the twentieth century may have more to do with the emergence of anti-Islamism in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In recent years, Islam seems to have replaced Catholicism as the dangerous religious Other in U.S. culture, and Catholicism has become increasingly aligned with Protestantism as yet another sect of Christianity.

See also *Anti-Semitism; Ethnicity; Immigration* entries; *Politics: Nineteenth Century; Religious Prejudice; Roman Catholicism* entries.

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Antinomian Controversy

“Antinomian Controversy” conventionally designates an incident in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636 to 1638 about assurance of personal justification before God as a qualification for church membership. The English Puritans who settled Massachusetts in the 1630s sought to create congregations of truly godly Christians, “sifted” out from worldly people, who could commune together with Christ in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper purely. The controversy concerned the basis for sifting. “Antinomian” (“against the law”), in Christianity, refers to the perfectionist view that the moral law revealed in the Bible is irrelevant to true Christians. Few people in early Massachusetts acted on this view, though the teaching of one party suggested it. The controversy embroiled the government of the Bay, and the laity and clergy of its churches, and threatened the colony.

Persons

The controversy centered on the Boston church and four people associated with it: John Cotton, Anne Hutchinson, Henry Vane, and John Wheelwright. Cotton (1584–1652), a prominent Puritan minister in Boston, Lincolnshire, came to Massachusetts in June 1633 and was appointed teacher of the Boston church, alongside John Wilson (c. 1591–1667), the pastor. His preaching produced a surge of new members. His views about assurance and the nature of personal conversion, and Hutchinson’s version of them, became a focus of the controversy. Hutchinson (c. 1591–1643) came from Lincolnshire in May 1634 and, with her merchant husband, joined the Boston church. She believed that the Holy Spirit had taught her to distinguish true ministers of the gospel from false, so she could only hear Cotton and her brother-in-law, Wheelwright. Of godly character and a persuasive interpreter of scripture, she became sought-after in Boston for counsel about people’s spiritual condition. With Cotton’s approval and Vane’s encouragement, she held meetings of lay people (“conventicles,” an established Puritan practice) in her home to interpret Cotton’s sermons. She considered herself a godly prophetess.

Vane (1613–1662), son of a prominent member of Charles I’s Privy Council, arrived in October 1635, joined the Boston church, and lived with Cotton. He was made governor in March 1636 because of his English connections. He shared with Hutchinson unusual views about the “legal” character of the “letter” (verbal meaning) of scripture, of moral and pious actions considered in themselves, and the

nature of Christ’s union with believers. Wheelwright (c. 1592–1679), also from Lincolnshire, arrived in May 1636. He was a proponent of “free grace” and the Spirit’s special witness to personal godliness. Some in the Boston congregation wished to appoint him coteacher with Cotton. John Winthrop (1588–1649), recently governor, leading citizen, and Wilson’s friend, blocked it because Wheelwright’s doctrine seemed odd.

In the spring of 1636, Thomas Shepard (1604–1649), pastor at Newtown (Cambridge) called Cotton’s attention to questionable opinions circulating in Boston. Shepard and other ministers conferred with Cotton, Wheelwright, and Hutchinson in October and December and found Hutchinson and Wheelwright provocative. Contention became public and parties formed. Cotton, Hutchinson, Wheelwright, Vane, and their adherents in Boston distinguished themselves from Shepard, Wilson, the other ministers, Winthrop, and most of the magistrates in the General Court. The issues were whether sanctification could be evidence to a person of justification, whether created graces were active in believers, whether the Holy Spirit witnessed by means of scripture or independently, and whether the ministers were preaching a covenant of works or of grace.

Ideas

Massachusetts Puritans made personal conversion the defining event in Christian life, generally understanding it in terms formulated by the English Puritan theologian William Ames (1576–1633). God made a “covenant of works” with Adam, whereby, if he obeyed the moral law, he would attain eternal blessedness. Adam failed to obey, fell into sinfulness, and, with his descendants, became liable to God’s punishment. Before time, God elected some persons for blessedness. For their sake, he made a “covenant of grace” with Adam, whereby those who receive Christ in faith as savior attain blessedness. Faith in Christ is a divine gift, freely bestowed. In conversion (“effectual calling”), the covenant of grace becomes effective for individuals. The Holy Spirit infuses new spiritual power into the soul, freeing it from bondage to sin, enabling it to know God truly and love him as the highest good. The soul is turned from attachment to self and world toward God and holy things and is enlivened to seek these. This transformation is manifest in the act of faith, wherein the individual, abandoning attempts to earn God’s reward by personal obedience, receives and wholly relies on Christ as savior. It is also manifest in personal “sanctification,” that is, in God-directed actions in daily life, including

Christian “duties.” Under the covenant of grace, God “justifies” those who take Christ in faith (accounts them forgiven and free of punishment for sin). Gracious conversion is real, but not dramatically unmistakable or complete. The converted struggle with sin’s remnants; strength and vividness of faith vary. If genuine, faith endures, and the converted grow in grace until perfected in Heaven.

Assurance that conversion is real became an issue in Massachusetts in the 1630s; and “hypocrisy”—pretending, or naively assuming, that one is actually gracious, a member of Christ, and a candidate for church membership—was a concern on both sides. Misplaced confidence could be eternally fatal for individuals; undiscovered, it threatened the purity of “sifted” congregations. Around 1636, Massachusetts churches began requiring candidates for membership to give a plausible account of the “work of grace” in themselves, and ministers preached about the marks of graciousness and the mistakes of hypocrites.

Shepard and his associates in the controversy maintained that hypocrisy could be discerned, and graciousness confirmed, by examining one’s actions in relation to motives, with guidance from the clergy. Election and justification are in God’s mind, not directly knowable; but holiness is in a person as infused grace, which expresses itself. Confidence and zeal for duties change, but gracious disposition persists. The mind, by reflection, can know whether, in efforts at godliness, it truly rests on Christ for salvation and seeks to do his will out of love for God—or not. In scripture, in so-called conditional promises, God indicates that acts of faith and love characterize the blessed. Taking act, motive, and promise together, one has evidence that one’s calling is “effectual” and that God accounts one justified.

Cotton drew a sharp distinction between actions of the gracious soul, as a mere creature, and the animating and revealing activity of Christ and the Holy Spirit. In conversion, the soul is passive. Grace empties the soul of self-righteousness; faith is a capacity of receiving Christ as savior. After receipt, the Spirit “witnesses” to the soul, in an “absolute promise,” that it is beloved by God and justified, whereupon the person believes that this is so. This happens when a scripture verse, in which God offers grace without conditions, forcefully occurs to one’s mind as directed to oneself. Sanctification cannot be evidence of justification, or a basis for assurance, unless one first “sees” one’s justification by the Spirit’s witness and knows thereby that one’s sanctification is genuine. In conversion, Cotton insisted, works and grace are mutually exclusive. Sanctification involves acts of obedience.

Though gracious, these acts of a fallible creature; inferences from them are acts of created reason. As “creatures,” both are insufficient apart from the Spirit’s confirming testimony, above and independent of human acts and reasoning. People who, without this “seal of the Spirit,” derive assurance of justification from their sanctification wrongly “go aside to” a covenant of works; their assurance is false. Those who assume that God justifies them because of their sanctification “go on in” the covenant of works. The former may be converted, but do not know; the latter are not.

Contention

At a special court in December 1636, Governor Vane tried to resign, lest the colony’s dissension incur divine judgment. The court refused and summoned the ministers for advice. Vane objected to an independent meeting of ministers to investigate Cotton’s teachings. One told Vane bluntly that he was the cause of the trouble. Wilson blamed it on the new opinions in Boston, for which the Boston church formally admonished him. The court appointed January 19, 1637, as a day of fasting and humiliation.

On that day, Wheelwright preached at Boston. The only reason to fast, he declared, is Christ’s absence from the churches, which occurs because his true children fail to fight his enemies. There are two kinds of professing Christians: those who belong to Christ, are under a covenant of grace, and take their assurance of justification from Christ’s direct revelation of himself; and those who belong to Antichrist, are under a covenant of works, and derive assurance from works of sanctification. The former must battle the latter with the fire of the gospel. Christ’s enemies are the greatest enemies of the state, so the resulting upheaval in church and commonwealth is warranted. He cautioned those under a covenant of grace to preserve unity in love, deal correctly with opponents in ordinary business, and not give occasion for charges of antinomianism and libertinism. The caution reflected divergence in the Boston group between Cotton’s version of “free grace” and Spirit’s “witness” and more radical versions. Despite the caution, the godly at Boston, including Vane, demonstrated their opposition to “legalists”—boycotting ordinations, abstaining from militia duty, and questioning ministers’ legitimacy after sermons. In public affairs, people distinguished each other as under covenants of works or grace and behaved accordingly. The Boston church refused admission to any who would not renounce their sanctification and wait for the Spirit’s revelation and disparaged admitted members who would not do so.

Wheelwright raised the temperature. The court in March, for the safety of the state, summoned him, pressed him on his teaching about evidencing justification (Cotton defended him), and judged him guilty of sedition and contempt, for stoking contention on an occasion intended for reconciliation and for maligning the ministers. The proceeding was contentious, and the court moved the May meeting, for election of a new government, to Newtown, away from Boston. The controversy was now fully politicized. At the election meeting, Governor Vane refused to proceed without hearing a Boston petition against Wheelwright's conviction. A wrangle ensued; Winthrop led the freemen to one side and held the election. He was made governor, and the Boston faction was omitted. On a rumor that English sectaries were about to arrive, the court limited new arrivals to a three-week stay without its approval. Winthrop and Vane conducted pamphlet warfare over the court's actions and threats to appeal to the king. Cotton contemplated leaving the colony with part of his congregation. Instead, Vane, in August, returned to England, to the Boston faction's disappointment and their opponents' relief. The court, led by Winthrop, set about restoring order.

In August, the ministers met in synod for three weeks at Newtown to discuss and confute the "erroneous opinions" underlying the contention. One set of these opinions, concerning the soul's passivity in conversion and the relation of faith, justification, sanctification, and the Spirit's witness, derived from Cotton's and Wheelwright's preaching, extended by Hutchinson and her associates. Another set, reflecting Hutchinson's more radical teaching, made faith and sanctification the activity of Christ and the Spirit in the soul and assimilated sanctification, holy duties, and scripture commands to the covenant of works. Outward accommodation was achieved with Cotton.

At the November court, Wheelwright declined responsibility for public consequences of his sermon (Christ was the cause of them, he said) and refused to stop preaching. He was banished from the colony with two of his principal supporters. Hutchinson was summoned to answer the charge that she said the ministers preached a covenant of works and were not able ministers of the gospel. She dismissed the ministers' method of evidencing justification as a way to hell and explained how Christ, in scripture verses, by an "immediate" voice, had taught her how to distinguish his voice in sermons from Antichrist's. In the same way, he showed her that she must go to New England, be afflicted there, and be delivered providentially, to the ruin of the court. The court found her

the source of the troubles, convicted her of slander, and banished her. Fearing violence, it removed the colony's munitions from Boston and disarmed Wheelwright's supporters.

The controversy now wound down. The ministers visited Hutchinson, held in a private house, in hope of recovering her. She became more explicit. The consensus that had sustained the Boston congregation's sense of superior godliness collapsed. In March, the church summoned Hutchinson to revoke her errors, including that the soul is mortal; there is no resurrection of the body; resurrection is union with Christ in conversion; and there are no graces of faith or sanctification inherent in the converted, but only in Christ who acts them. The libertine and fundamentally un-Christian implications of these ideas were pointed out to her. Cotton (who supported her in court and church) formally admonished her for recalcitrance. Then she claimed, contrary to public knowledge, that she had not held these views before her house arrest. The church excommunicated her for lying. Shortly, she joined some of her associates in Rhode Island.

Contexts

Since the late nineteenth century, the Antinomian Controversy has been a periodic topic for scholars, who tend to find in it issues current in their own times. Regarding the event in its contemporary context, the following may be noted.

Puritans held the conventional hierarchical assumptions of their time about social status and gender roles. Those assumptions allowed scope for lay activist public godliness by men and women. Hutchinson's conventicles were mostly uncontroversial until attendees challenged the spiritual character of church members and ministers. Hutchinson had active support from women. Serious sanctions—disfranchisement, disarmament, banishment, excommunication—fell principally on men. Wheelwright's and Hutchinson's main support lay among fairly prosperous, respectable people in and around Boston—freemen, officeholders, merchants. Most of them had arrived before 1634, many from Lincolnshire. "Antinomian" agitation was localized in Boston and neighboring Roxbury. Elsewhere in the Bay, clergy and laity united fairly quickly to oppose it. On both sides, laity, in churches and the General Court, was prominent in challenge and defense.

The Massachusetts group comprised the first Puritans to enjoy political power and the opportunity of actualizing the godly church in a Puritan society. How godly might it be? They arrived intending to enjoy "Christ's ordinances" free of human corruption and regarded the gathered congregation as the form of the true church. In the mid-1630s, they

took the further step toward a “sifted” congregation of the inwardly godly. The Boston church, stimulated by Cotton’s teaching about grace versus works and the Spirit’s special witness, drew the circle of godliness very tightly, to the point of challenging the legitimacy of other congregations. Cotton was not a separatist, but after they lost the political contest, Hutchinson’s prominent supporters fairly readily removed to Rhode Island to enjoy godly purity. One result of the controversy was the organization, and containment, of the sectarian urge for purity in a combination of government supervision of churches, mutual consultations of ministers, and lay control of church membership based on personal profession of inward godliness. With variations, this combination became “the New England way” of congregational church polity into the next century.

English Puritans, in the 1620s, had an “antinomian controversy” of their own. Preachers in London and elsewhere propagated a gospel of “free justification” without works, personal “union with Christ,” and relief from pious moral scrupulosity. Puritan polemicists called them “antinomians” and “familists” (alluding to the Family of Love, a sixteenth-century Dutch sect). These terms together covered a loose set of propositions distinguishing sharply between covenants of works and grace, subordinating human activity to divine, and rejecting “legal” obedience. Vane’s and Hutchinson’s more striking notions, and Wheelwright’s more excited ones, belonged to this set. Cotton’s teaching tended toward it and stimulated local variants. Winthrop, Shepard, and Cotton knew people on the radical side in England. When Shepard sounded Cotton, in 1636, about strange notions at Boston, he did so with such a sense of recognition and of puzzlement that Cotton seemed not to notice them. The Massachusetts incident echoed this preexistent intra- and semi-Puritan religious radicalism.

Around 1600, Puritan pastors worked out a program of introspective disciplinary piety, propagated in handbooks and organized in rituals of self-examination. Their aim was God-directed living, as application of biblical precepts to Christian life, by means of deliberate resistance to worldliness and sensuality and carefulness about thoughts and acts. This intensive piety defined conduct for the Puritan subculture and defined the content of inward godliness. In relation to the doctrine of divine election, it was a source of both assurance and anxiety. In England in the 1620s, it stimulated an “antinomian” reaction, in the name of “free justification” by Christ’s righteousness, independent of “legal” efforts at personal obedience. The Massachusetts incident was part of

this reaction. Tell us not of graces, duties, and meditation (said some in Cotton’s congregation), but tell us of Christ! That the incident centered in and around Boston, and was transient, suggests that the pious program worked relatively well for others in the colony.

Massachusetts Puritans believed that God truly regenerates individuals, in conversion, and works in harmony with their created natures. Infused grace restores the “image of God” in which Adam was created, as deliberate agent, enlightening understanding and liberating will, to take Christ and obey his commands. Original nature is not replaced but reborn in its essential character. Conversion is God’s work, but the content of it is in the person, as a new disposition, a real moral renewal. “Antinomians” talked of direct acts of the Trinity, independent of regenerate mind and of radical newness different from created nature. The “new creature” is not Adam’s image renovated (which the unconverted may have and perish) but Christ personally indwelling. Cotton and Wheelwright held that graces of faith and holiness inhere in the regenerate; but only the Spirit’s testimony, revealing free pardon immediately, “above” any creature, can certify both. No, said Shepard: Christ’s greatest work is to change the hearts of the converted, not just their acts, and created minds can know it. “Antinomians” seemed to deny that God regenerates *persons* and therein to invoke a different model of God’s relation to created souls than the conventional Puritan one. That the conventional model was a social idealization, imposed on ordinary mental and social life, ensured that it was experienced ambiguously. “Antinomian” responses to the ambiguity pressed the edge of a widely held Puritan and reformed Protestant worldview.

See also *Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage; Congregationalists; Establishment, Religious; Presbyterians* entries; *Puritans; Reformed Denominational Family; Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*.

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Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism refers to an act, feeling, or idea that displays aversion or animosity towards Jews solely on the basis of religion or ethnicity. Anti-Semitism is rooted in, and gives rise to, religious intolerance or racial persecution, legal discrimination or casual disdain, political division or theological dispute. Its proponents ascribe negative motives to Jews, fear incursion of Jews into the Christian domain, blame Jews for suffering that is not fully comprehended, and attribute a menacing quality to the survival of Jews. Prejudicial attitudes toward Jewish individuals have sometimes included stereotypes that Jews are greedy, clannish, and demonic. Less poisonous than its counterparts elsewhere, American anti-Semitism has nonetheless found favor over the years with political groups ranging from right- to left-wing, with ethnic groups from Anglo-Saxon Protestant to African American, with organizations ranging from country clubs to labor unions, and with religious organizations from Southern Baptists to the Nation of Islam.

Economic competition and resentment have stirred antagonism toward Jews and included charges that Jews are communist or capitalist exploiters. However, several factors have diminished the potency of American anti-Semitism. Jews acquired equal rights under the law—albeit unevenly—alongside white (Caucasian) ethnicities. The constitutional clause prohibiting the establishment of religion by the federal government fostered a pluralism of religious association. Social patterns in the United States are crosscut with so many ethnic, national, and religious differences that Jews do not stand out particularly; and the congregational decentralization of Judaism fits as comfortably into a predominantly Protestant landscape as either Catholicism or Mormonism.

Anti-Semitism has two sides, approaching Jews in two related but distinct ways: it places Jews within a shared social framework but outside the powerful classes, an ethnocentric view; and it places Jews outside society as an external threat,

a xenophobic view. While the ethnocentric view has taken precedence over the course of U.S. history, during periods of social disruption, such as wartime, the xenophobic view has sometimes come to dominate.

Historical Dimensions

In the late nineteenth century, the German term *Antisemitismus* was coined to give a more “objective” ring to hatred of Jews than the Greek *judaeophobia*. Whether feeling or principle, and having an ancient tradition with a record of evidence in Egypt and Rome, anti-Semitism was shaped by Christian belief over many centuries before Jews landed on North American soil. While some Christian tradition identifies the Romans under Pontius Pilate as responsible for Christ’s Crucifixion, other traditions believed Jews were guilty, which meant that Jews could justifiably suffer punishments in the form of special taxes, restrictions, execution, or expulsion. In medieval Europe, Jews were accused of ritual murder (the blood libel), host piercing, and well poisoning. The sixteenth century marked a dividing point: the Spanish doctrine of blood purity subordinated Jews to Christian rule, whereas freedom to reside and worship was offered in the Netherlands and England. The historical consensus is that the modern period in Europe was characterized by the expectation that in exchange for rights under the law, Jews would reject at least some aspects of their Jewishness; the dynamic of Jewish emancipation did not proceed without anti-Semitism.

From Settlements to States

Signals were mixed from the start about how to identify Jews amidst the early European settlers of the New World. On the one hand, Jews were never targets of genocidal policies or slavery. On the other hand, Jews did not adopt Christianity as had many Native Americans and African Americans. Upon the 1654 arrival of twenty-three Portuguese Jews to New Netherland, a Dutch West India Company enterprise, Governor Peter Stuyvesant requested expelling “the deceitful race—such hateful enemies and blasphemers in the name of Christ,” because they would open doors to Lutherans and Papists; but company directors under pressure from Amsterdam Jews lifted restrictions on Jewish settlement and trade. Divines condemned Jews for deviousness and Catholics condemned Jews for their devilishness. In the only recorded legal case involving religious discrimination, the state of Maryland charged but did not convict a Jew for the crime of blasphemy in 1658. However,

British and Dutch territories relieved Jews of the many restrictions that were placed on them in Europe. In a sign of appreciation that paradoxically rendered the Jews archaic, and silent, Puritan leaders of New England romanticized the ancient Israelites. The Jews were seen as outsiders from American society who posed a modest threat to Christian purity, but even so, they were beneficial interlopers whose trading networks extended widely.

When England granted conditional citizenship to colonial Jews in 1740, the colonies differed in their treatment of these citizens; political enfranchisement of the Jews was slow, if steady. Soon after the ratification of the Constitution, Delaware, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina allowed Jews to vote. Yet many of the states had religious tests for holding public office. Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and South Carolina maintained state-established churches. Not until New Hampshire lifted restrictions in 1877 could Jews vote in every state of the union. Allowance for Jews to serve in public office followed a slow path, including a protracted contest over the "Jew Bill" Maryland passed in 1826, finally allowing Jews to hold office in that state.

By 1790, fewer than two thousand Jews (of roughly four million worldwide) resided in the United States, mostly in Charleston, New York, Philadelphia, and Newport. Perhaps because of the small size and productivity of the Jewish population, ideas broadcast through newspapers about Jewish institutions were not particularly unwelcoming. Nevertheless, discrimination against Jews did surface in commercial suits. Also, ministers and politicians occasionally displayed their distrust of Jews, mainly on the basis of their outsider status.

The Early Republic

The early Republic witnessed a shift in which Jews came to be viewed less as outsiders than as a distinctive group within American society; however, they were perceived as a threat to social and religious cohesion. George Washington honored synagogues with visits; Presidents John and John Quincy Adams expressed mixed feelings about Jews; Thomas Jefferson maligned the Jews. Whereas laws eradicated oaths testing the faith of political officeholders, Jews were commonly associated with internal and external plots (for example, Jacobin, Jeffersonian, Federalist) to undermine the states. Although every state eventually disestablished its church, revivalists of the Second Great Awakening actively sought Jews to convert. Journalism traded in stock figures of the Jewish usurer and peddler, and yet President Fillmore defended equal treatment of Jews under the law. In short, as Frederic Cople Jaher puts

it in *A Scapegoat in the New Wilderness*, Jews, though "insulted," were scarcely "assaulted" (p. 169). Shakespeare's Shylock was performed sympathetically onstage.

The Nineteenth Century

From 1830 to 1860, mass migration increased the number of Jews, especially from Germany (often industrious and skilled), and fostered a new wave of anti-Jewish prejudice. Jews played prominent roles on both sides of the Civil War: for example, the politician Judah P. Benjamin served as Confederate Secretary of War and then State, and the banker Joseph Seligman prominently helped finance the Union effort. Each side disdained Jews for some reason and charged them with having the stereotypical traits of the *parvenu*, moneylender, or pawnbroker. In one of the few anti-Semitic acts of the Union, Ulysses S. Grant's Order #11 expelled the Jews from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi, ostensibly on the grounds of illegal trading; however, Lincoln, on the argument that the Constitution prohibited singling out a group for collective guilt without a trial, commanded the order rescinded. Nevertheless, commercial discrimination was widespread, bursting into occasional violence. The worsening economy and a religious revival provided a context for accusations of ritual murder and deicide to take hold. Slanders were printed in newspapers, which conjured the phrase "to out-Jew the Jew" and the verb "to jew." While anti-Semitic allusions appeared in popular writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Mark Twain, it was perhaps Hermann Melville who gave voice to an ironic strain of anti-Semitism that praised the diversity of America's *non-Jewish* population ("Englishman, Frenchman, German, Dane, or Scot") precisely because "[w]e are not a narrow tribe of men, with a bigoted Hebrew nationality." Just as laws of political equality began to achieve some parity, in short, resistance rose against Jewish social assimilation. In the crucible of this discord, says Jaher, "was forged modern American anti-Semitism" (p. 170), insofar as dependence on the talent and wealth of many individuals and institutions was detested on the grounds that Jews were neither Christian nor Anglo-Saxon, one or the other of which trait virtually every other resident (including most African Americans and many Native Americans, but excepting most Asian residents) obtained.

During the Gilded Age and Progressive Era generally, discrimination against Jewish American citizens became less defensible on constitutional grounds of liberty; but a certain social disdain for Jews, and anxieties about their rising numbers due to immigration patterns, grew vocal and visible.

When Grant was president, he offered the post of Treasury secretary to Joseph Seligman, who declined the offer but whose prominence turned the denial of his admittance into the Grand Union Hotel in Sarasota Springs, New York, into a cause célèbre of 1877. Oliver Wendell Holmes recorded overcoming his personal aversion toward Jews. Yet following the influx of new arrivals from Russia after 1880, Congress passed the 1891 Immigration Act limiting entry. In 1884 the poet, critic, and diplomat James Russell Lowell associated “Jewish blood” with the “ignobler scepter of finance.” The man of letters Henry Adams wrote of the Jews who were held responsible for an economic crisis in 1892, “I live only and solely with the hope of seeing their demise.” A currency crisis surrounding the 1896 presidential election stirred an agrarian campaign against Jewish bankers who were seen to sell out national interest for the gain of their “race.” Massachusetts Senator Henry Cabot Lodge proposed a literacy restriction on immigration to include only those who spoke either English or the language of a native country, which by excluding Yiddish was a thinly veiled effort to curb Jewish immigration.

The firestorm over Jewish immigration was reignited by a 1911 report by Congress, which firmly rejected preferential treatment of older ethnic groups over newer arrivals in 1917. In this less religious atmosphere, anti-Semitism targeted Jewish race more than religion. However, Congress and many Jews rebuffed other Jews’ efforts to define “Hebrew” as a race in the National Census. With millions of new arrivals from 1881 to 1930, the Jewish portion of the U.S. population swelled from less than 1 percent to more than 3 percent. With an increasingly prominent role in major cities, especially, Jews were called depraved and avaricious in muckraking journals, which fantasized about Jewish economic domination, although most Jews lived at the edge of poverty. Meanwhile Boston Brahmins claiming hereditary descent from the city’s Protestant founders resisted the 1916 appointment by Woodrow Wilson of the public advocate Louis Brandeis as the first Jewish Supreme Court Justice. While influential books were published detailing how Jews were invaders who could never assimilate, rare physical assaults of Jews occurred spontaneously.

The Leo Frank Case

The most vicious anti-Semitic incident in American history began with the 1913 conviction in Atlanta of New York transplant Leo Frank for the murder of Mary Phagan, a young Christian girl in the employ of Frank’s factory.

A populist newspaperman and would-be politician Tom Watson, to whom Georgia subsequently gave a U.S. Senate seat in 1920, constantly hounded the “filthy perverted Jew from New York” whose only defenders conspired for a “Parasite Race.” Using potently sacrificial language, Phagan’s pastor called for “a victim worthy to pay for the crime.” After an eyewitness’s deathbed confession exonerated Frank and his sentence was commuted by Georgia’s governor, a group of prominent citizens of Phagan’s hometown, including a minister and a sheriff, murdered Frank near Marietta, Georgia, in the sole lynching of a Jew on American soil. It resulted in the creation of the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai Brith.

Shifting Color Lines

Following World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution, anti-Semites charged Jews with allegiance to socialism and communism, as well as with control of international finance. Jews, though comprising less than 3 percent of the total U.S. population but 5 percent of the soldiers, were again labeled “war profiteers.” The industrialist Henry Ford accused “German-Jewish bankers” of waging “subversive warfare upon Christian society”; his paper *The Dearborn Independent* headlined “The International Jew” in 1920, summarizing the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Harvard University proposed, after its Jewish proportion of students rose from 6 percent in 1908 to 22 percent in 1922, to restrict admissions. Its president, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, argued the move would help the fewer Jews admitted in the long run because, unlike the perceived degradation of Columbia University into a school for Jews, Harvard would retain the exclusivity of a patrician establishment. However, the faculty rebuffed him. Nevertheless, versions of the *numerus clausus* (the medieval prohibition against Jews’ partaking of higher education) were imposed at other private colleges and professional schools; for instance, Cornell Medical School’s Jewish population went from 40 percent before 1922 to less than 4 percent after 1940. Likewise, job discrimination was rampant. Capping waves of new arrivals from Russia, Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1924 (the Johnson-Reed Act) and restricted entry into the United States by a system of quotas. In the first half of the decade Jews amounted to roughly 10 percent of immigrants; the proportion shrunk to 3 percent in the second half. Private restrictions on Jewish life were endemic: neighborhood covenants prohibited selling Jews a home, and some clubs and private vacation areas barred Jews; in

response, Jews established parallel institutions, following the example of Seligman, who ultimately purchased the hotel that had denied him admittance.

To combat this increase in anti-Semitism, which seemed to occur within the bounds of legal consensus during the era before civil rights (when racism against blacks was still legal), different, sometimes competing, but constructive organizations were established, including the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, and the American Jewish Congress. Louis Marshall, head of the American Jewish Committee, notably brokered a deal with Ford to recant his endorsement of “the International Jew” (although in 1940 Ford came to blame Jews for causing the war).

At the same time, a revived Ku Klux Klan ignored Jews from Western Europe, and even sought their support. Following the wave of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, a class line of sorts divided those Yiddish-speaking Jews from the German and Sephardic Jews who had settled decades earlier. The ethnic slur “kike” circulated amongst Jews to designate Eastern European Jews before non-Jews adopted it to designate any Jew. With debates over whether *Jewish* meant religious, racial, or ethnic raging in 1925, the Yiddish poet I. J. Schwarz dubbed Jews a “white race of another kind.”

Great Depression to World War II

Violent anti-Semitic incidents may have decreased in number as the Great Depression took its toll, but fantastic ideas about a Jewish scourge seemed to grow with the prominence of Jews in business and government. Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s employment of many Jews, mostly from New York and Boston, including the 1934–1945 secretary of Treasury, Henry Morgenthau Jr., and Abe Fortas, legal counsel of the Public Works Administration (later tapped by his friend Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965 for the Supreme Court), prompted critics to caricature the administration’s “Jew Deal.” In 1936, after reporting that more than 50 percent of the nation approved Germany’s treatment of the Jews or expressed indifference to their plight, *Fortune* magazine dismissed the “suggestion that Jews monopolize U.S. business” but declared “the apprehensiveness of American Jews” a major influence on society. Allegations of Jewish control over the Hollywood Empire notably accompanied praise of Jewish progress through the same. The journalist and popular commentator, the “Sage of Baltimore,” H. L. Mencken, displayed ambivalence, repeating slurs against Jews while defending their rights against the Nazi menace.

As World War II approached, anti-Semites critical of Jewish presence in the United States had tremendous effects on European Jewry. In print and on radio, with millions tuning in weekly, the Catholic priest, Father Charles Coughlin, spread the German National-Socialist message, cresting days after *Kristallnacht* (the “Night of Crystal”) in 1938, but his affiliation with the Christian Front led to conspiracy charges by the FBI in 1940 and silencing by his Detroit bishop after the tragedy at Pearl Harbor. The Disciples of Christ minister Gerald L. K. Smith followed suit. Urban working-class Irish and Jews occasionally brawled. Nearly 80 percent of Americans polled in 1938 did not want quotas lifted for war refugees. In an effort to show that no Western country would willingly accept Jews who were obviously seeking political asylum, the Nazis had devised a propaganda campaign by setting more than nine hundred Jews to sail in May 1939 with tourist visas aboard the German cruise ship the *St. Louis*. Upon arrival in Cuba, its passengers were refused entry; on June 4, under pressure from Cordell Hull and southern Democrats, President Roosevelt denied the ship’s passengers permission to disembark in Florida. Against the advice of Jewish administration officials fearful of raising the Jewish profile, Roosevelt replaced the late Benjamin Cardozo with Felix Frankfurter to serve on the Supreme Court bench alongside Justice Louis Brandeis. Majorities of the population seemed to feel that Jews held “too much power,” were “different and should be restricted,” and were a “menace.”

When, in September 1941, flying hero Charles A. Lindbergh spoke about the “danger” of Jewish “influence” before the America First Committee, founded in 1940 to keep the United States from entering World War II, he was denounced in every public quarter. Nevertheless, official or semiofficial anti-Semitism persisted more subtly. Not until March 1944 did President Roosevelt publicly discuss the Nazi genocide. Henry Morgenthau’s Treasury Department titled its audit of the State Department’s suppressing evidence of genocide, “Report to the Secretary on the Acquiescence of This Government in the Murder of the Jews.” In these years the United States did not even fill quotas, admitting many fewer refugee children than did Great Britain, several Western European nations, and Shanghai, China. A June 1945 poll indicated that Jews were considered a more dangerous threat than German or Japanese descendents. The information about the Nazi genocide released by the U.S. press was paltry and minimized. Although not disenfranchised (like African Americans), ghettoized (Mexicans), or interned

(Japanese), Jews were subject to harsh recriminations due as much to their recent advancement as their persistent segregation. Marking the anti-Semitism of this period were the thousands of name changes officially registered by Jews; even greater numbers probably converted to Christianity.

Post-World War II

Alongside other Americans of various ethnic groups, Jews individually and collectively advanced rapidly in the decades after 1945; many of the social and economic programs geared towards the white males who had served in the military (for instance, the G.I. Bill and home-loan programs) redounded directly to the benefit of Jewish men, but not to African Americans or women. Alongside a kind of mainstreaming effect, the institutional-political energy the Jewish community marshaled to protect itself against another Holocaust increasingly rallied around generic efforts to oppose hatred and intolerance. Overt expressions of anti-Semitism declined in the United States as never before. Soldiers returning from war and the military itself opted to lift boundaries, although prejudices remained entrenched in some quarters. Thanks to legal measures instituted by states, residential and job discrimination broadly decreased, except in the cases of social restrictions (for instance, country clubs and corporate boards in heavy industries and utilities). How Jewish and non-Jewish coworkers parted ways outside work was depicted in *Gentlemen's Agreement*, awarded an Academy Award for Best Motion Picture in 1947. Anti-Semitic groups diminished in number, though sporadic vandalism desecrated synagogues, correlating with the growth of suburban Jewish populations. The Catholic Church began, under Pope John XXIII, to thaw relations with Jews, and Jewish communities began to meet formally with evangelical Protestants in the mid-1960s.

Quiescence

While overt and orchestrated anti-Semitism fell out of public favor after World War II, a quiet bigotry pervaded the upper and lower classes, whether because upwardly mobile Jews were encroaching on scarce territory or stepping over those less fortunate. Surveys taken in 1964 and 1981 indicated a downward trend of attributions to Jews of characteristics such as loyalty to their own, excessive control over financial sectors, and other familiar charges. According to *Time* magazine in 1965, "anti-Semitism is at an all-time low and publicly out of fashion."

There were still contrary indications of anti-Semitism. School board member Newt Miller of Wayne, New Jersey,

opposed electing two more Jews in addition to another on the board because, he claimed, "we lose what is left of Christ in our Christmas celebrations." While political leaders and the press denounced that precedent, the Jewish candidates lost by a landslide, one resident commenting, "It was a terrible shame that the Jews caused all this trouble." Anti-Semitism beneath the surface only awaited the opportunity to arise. The South witnessed some violent expressions of anti-Semitism, including a spate of temple bombings; in response, U.S. Jews divided between the northern elements directly confronting prejudice and southern elements preferring not to highlight their distinctiveness. In 1964 two white civil rights workers in Mississippi murdered alongside an African American were, not coincidentally, Jewish.

African Americans and Anti-Semitism

The Christian heritage of anti-Semitism has sometimes infected African American culture. Also, as the diplomat and Nobel Peace Prize winner Ralph Bunche observed, "it is safe to scorn the Jew" because this was a white group ostracized by other whites. Many African Americans denounced their prior anti-Semitic sentiments, such as W. E. B. Du Bois in a 1936 essay. Adam Clayton Powell Jr., who represented Manhattan in the House of Representatives (1945–1971), called anti-Semitism "a deadly virus of the American bloodstream," countering more popular African American voices such as the Chicago newspaper that declared, "What America needs is a Hitler." Anti-Jewish riots took place during summer 1943 in Detroit and Brooklyn. Jewish institutions, opting to fight bigotry in general rather than isolate Jews for defense, were prominent supporters of the civil rights movement and were praised by leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. However, small, loose organizations (for example, neighborhood papers) denounced Jewish exploitation of the inner-city poor, including blacks; a peak of animosity was reached in 1968–1969 with riotous protests in a few cities. James Baldwin's 1967 *New York Times Magazine* article put his anti-Semitism ironically: "The Negro is really condemning the Jew for having become an American white man" hindering African Americans.

Occasional incidents at the end of the century revealed a specific brand of ethnocentric animosity. Jesse Jackson caused a flap in his 1984 Democratic primary campaign when he admitted having called New York City "Hymietown." A spokesperson for Louis Farrakhan applied the long-standing charge of "bloodsuckers" against Jewish bankers to shop owners and landlords. Black scholars repudiated Leonard

Jeffries's canard that Jews had directed the slave trade. Many factors contributed to anti-Semitism among African Americans, including Christian influences, making Jews a scapegoat for mistreatment of African descendants in America, suspicion of negotiating with Jews, and perhaps taking revenge on a white outsider (a Jew) by aligning with a more socially dominant white person (an anti-Semite). These factors probably incited three days of African Americans' looting and damaging Jewish property and marching with anti-Semitic signs and chanting "Whose streets? Our streets" in Crown Heights, Brooklyn (New York), following the death of a Guyanese child accidentally struck by a Jewish driver on August 19, 1991. During the event Yankel Rosenbaum, an orthodox Jewish student visiting from Australia, was killed by a group of African Americans, including Lemrick Nelson Jr., who, acquitted for murder and then convicted of violating his victim's civil rights, admitted to stabbing the victim.

End of the Millennium

Anti-Semitism from the 1970s through the 1990s took on a less virulent tone but simmered in small events. On the one hand, Jewish organizations were reaching consensus that under no historical circumstances had modern Jews suffered less violent forms of anti-Semitism. Various, and variously reliable, polls generally confirmed a measurable decline in anti-Semitic feelings or judgments. On the other hand, minor incidents occurred, ranging from occasional synagogue and gravestone desecrations; to a few instances of political indiscretion; to a heavily publicized and protested request by neo-Nazis to march in Skokie, a Chicago suburb, in 1977–1978; to campus bigotry of every stripe. Statistically, Jewish presence grew in business, university, and public life. Christians have criticized their own past anti-Semitism. The popular evangelical reverend Billy Graham expressly recanted the derogatory remarks he made in the Oval Office while counseling Richard Nixon. Indicating decreased intensity or reach of anti-Semitism is the exponential rise of intermarriages. About 10 percent of U.S. Jews married non-Jews in 1965, but by 1990 this figure was closer to 50 percent.

Criticism of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East provoked a January 1993 *New York Magazine* cover to warn of "The New Anti-Semitism." Some evangelical Christian and Jewish groups united to support Zionism and set a new stage. On the other hand, we cannot simply equate anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism: criticizing specific

policies in the state of Israel is different from ascribing U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East to the so-called Israel lobby.

Critical Assessment

Perhaps anti-Semitism is best specified in terms of aversion, antipathy, and indifference to Jews. Also a blurry distinction remains between anti-Semitism and philosemitism, or a special fondness for Jews. The stated belief that Jews hold too much power in the United States, for instance, may represent an attitude of resentment or envy, blame or praise. A lingering question is how much distance separates an insult or personal affront, such as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints purporting to convert deceased Jews, from killing Jews or otherwise threatening their worldly lives. Perhaps it is because Jews are a small minority of the U.S. population whose cultural and political prominence and visibility overshadows even larger minority populations that anti-Semitism has manifested so weakly and yet been subject to a vociferous reaction; a prominent African American organization in the United States *promotes advancement* and a prominent Jewish organization *opposes defamation*.

Current Status

In the early twenty-first century, U.S. anti-Semitism and philosemitism center on a few issues: religion, Israel, the media, and the economy. Surveys conducted in 2002, as reported by Robert Michael in *A Concise History of American Antisemitism*, indicate that millions of Americans believe Jews killed Christ as well as control the media and Wall Street (p. 210). American Defamation League surveys in 2002 and 2005 show that around 30 percent believe the Jews killed Christ, 30 percent believe Jews are more loyal to Israel than the United States, and 15 percent believe that Jews have too much power in the United States. The *American Jewish Yearbook* of 2006 reported 6.5 million Jews in the United States, while the Jewish percentage of the total population dropped from around 3.5 percent (from 1937 through the 1960s) to 2 percent. November 2006 saw the election of forty-three Jewish members of Congress (or 12 percent), a record. Numerous factors contributed to the sharp decline of discrimination and, though harder to quantify, perhaps prejudices against Jews as well: advocacy and education; public trials of Holocaust perpetrators; occupational and geographical mobility leading to increased social interaction and intermarriage; law enforcement; and

the civil rights movement. Nevertheless, the idea held onto by some that Jews are not fully American persists: having called U.S. Senator Charles Schumer (New York) “that Jew” in May 2009, Arkansas State Senator Kim Hendren apologized, explaining how he had meant it to indicate someone who does not “believe in traditional values.”

Just as the line between what Jews find anti-Semitic and what non-Jews find anti-Semitic is unclear, so too is the line between what one Jew finds anti-Semitic and another Jew does not. Mel Gibson’s 2004 film *The Passion of the Christ* was praised by Christian ministers and church leaders despite being denounced by many Jews as disingenuously anti-Semitic; however, a tape of Gibson spewing anti-Semitic slurs upon his 2006 arrest for drunk driving in Malibu, California, was released to a chorus of scorn. Meanwhile, in September 2002, the president of Harvard University, Lawrence Summers, crystallized a contentious debate within the American Jewish community by warning that critics of Israel risk expressing views that are “anti-Semitic in their effect if not in their intent.” The question of what counts as anti-Semitism in the United States remains complicated by historical, cultural, political, and religious factors.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Ethnicity; Film; Holocaust; Judaism* entries; *Race and Racism; Religious Prejudice; Zionism*.

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Apocalypticism

In 1987, the American alternative rock band R.E.M. produced an apocalyptic-themed song entitled “It’s the End of the World as We Know It (I feel fine).” Fourteen years later, the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, instilled the song with new meaning. R.E.M.’s song described a series of catastrophic events associated with the end of the world: “earthquake, . . . birds and snakes, . . . aeroplane, . . . hurricane, . . . fire, . . . that low plane, . . . rapture, . . . foreign tower, . . . book burning, . . . bloodletting, . . . continental drift divide.” The song also revealed conditions that hid the impending destruction, things like “games, . . . government, . . . reporters baffled, . . . save yourself, . . . serve yourself, . . . six o’clock-TV hour, . . . a tournament of lies, . . . birthday party, cheesecake, jelly bean, boom!” (lyrics by Berry et al.). The song warns against feeling fine since no one is safe and anyone who thinks she or he is safe is being deceived.

On one level the song provided an ironic commentary on the idea of an apocalyptic end to the world. However, since September 11, 2001, the song can be interpreted as creating a strong apocalyptic message to heed the warning and wake up before it is too late. Following 9/11, it was too late and nobody, at least nobody living in twenty-first-century America, felt fine. The term *apocalyptic* in American culture has come to mean some kind of earth-shattering, cataclysmic event, although in the original Greek the term simply referred to a revelation or an uncovering of something hidden.

John J. Collins is one of the most distinguished scholars among those who have attempted to define apocalyptic literature. In *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, he claims that apocalypses have two distinguishing characteristics. First is an angelic guide who uncovers the symbolically hidden divine message. Second is a message of glorious salvation for God’s people and retribution for God’s enemies. This divine punishment will continue beyond death, and it is often joyfully anticipated by God’s people (pp. 5–6). This genre of literature also raises questions about terms like the millennium and the timing of Christ’s Second Coming. A millennium is simply a thousand years, and the millennium referred to in the apocalyptic Book of Revelation is the thousand years of peace and holiness when Jesus’s followers rule the earth. In particular, Protestants in America have had a lively debate about the time of Christ’s Second Coming. Those theological positions that claim Christ will return before the start of the millennium are referred to as

premillennialists, and those who believe Christ will return after the millennium are *postmillennialists*.

Seventeenth-Century Puritan Apocalypticism

Traveling back to the beginning of the seventeenth century, Puritans in England began to feel less fine as the sting of political uncertainty and persecution brought the world as they knew it to a close. First they fled to Holland and then to Plymouth in order to build a new colony in what was to them a new world. These English travelers set sail in a time of political and religious volatility. Their worldview had been influenced by two pieces of apocalyptic literature written during times of crisis. They were canonical books produced by Jewish writers during times of oppression. First was the Book of Daniel, a text produced by Jews facing persecution under the Seleucid King Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BCE). Second was the Book of Revelation written by Jewish followers of Jesus facing persecution from the Roman Emperor Domitian (81–96 CE). Those two apocalyptic texts and the theological commentaries written about them influenced the English Puritans.

The settlers of North America in general and of New England in particular were significantly influenced by the apocalyptic narratives of Daniel and Revelation. Their numerous journals, letters, and sermons displayed evidence of a worldview that was shaped by many apocalyptic assumptions. Their apocalyptic outlook could be discerned by the ease with which they equated the French and their Indian allies with God's enemies, and their long-held belief that the Catholic Pope was the antichrist.

The Puritans' sense of "mission," which has so often been written about since Perry Miller's groundbreaking 1952 essay "Errand into the Wilderness," was not in itself a demonstration of the influence of apocalypticism on their worldview. Yet much of their "mission" does appear to have been driven and justified by an apocalyptic perspective. Furthermore, it was not that their original "errand" was a divinely sanctioned part of God's millennial plan for the world that made their "mission" apocalyptic since, as J. J. Collins points out, there were many Hebrew prophets of old who believed they were living in the last days prior to God's judgment. Rather, the apocalyptic influence became clear through the Puritans' interpretation of history as a supernatural revealing of biblical signs proving the French and their native allies were indeed God's enemies and as such deserved total destruction.

John Winthrop's sermon on the *Arbella*, in which he evokes the image of the new settlers creating a holy

commonwealth which would be a model or a "City upon a Hill" for all of Old England to copy, lacked a clear apocalyptic motif. In his sermon, apocalyptic themes and images were also lacking. Even if Winthrop did believe this "City" would help to usher in the end of time and Christ's millennial reign, an apocalyptic tune was absent. Stephen Stein in his article "American Millennial Visions" makes the distinction between the apocalyptic, world-transforming motives of the "crusading" Christopher Columbus as compared to the "metaphorical" apocalypticism in the background of the Puritans who were seeking a better life (p. 193). But once Winthrop's millennial vision became situated within a framework of isolation and unpredictable external attacks, the early Puritans' sentiments quickly turned apocalyptic and the settlers' adversaries become equated with God's enemies who must be destroyed.

Neither the small group of Separatist Puritans who settled at Plymouth nor the larger group of Puritans hoping to reform the Church of England who settled at Massachusetts Bay formulated their apocalyptic ideas on their oceanic voyage or during their confrontations with the natives. Rather, their apocalyptic imagination, as John Collins has so aptly named this worldview, was shaped in England. As Reiner Smolinski points out in "Apocalypticism in Colonial North America," English Reformation theologians since the early part of the sixteenth century had been examining Revelation and Daniel in order to decipher those books' mysterious end-of-the-world scenarios (pp. 36–42). The writings of English theologians such as John Bale (1495–1563), John Foxe (1516–1587), and Thomas Brightman (1562–1607) all contributed to Congregationalists in England perceiving themselves as God's chosen millennial people who were still trying to figure out when and if the millennium had started.

Bale dated the millennium in the distant past, beginning with Christ's Resurrection, and interpreted Christ's rule as a spiritual reign in the hearts of his followers. Foxe followed Bale's scheme; however, Brightman's commentary on Revelation published in 1609 dated the millennial reign as a present reality that began in the middle 1300s with the dissent of John Wyclif (1330–1384), who was England's "morning star" of the Reformation. However, the traditional preterist approach of interpreting apocalyptic literatures' end-of-the-world scenarios as allegorical events that were fulfilled in the past or were being fulfilled in the present would soon be challenged. The voice of dissent came from the German theologian Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588–1638). In 1627, he published a tract on Revelation in

which he proposed that the start of the millennial reign of Christ would come in the future. Smolinski finds the roots of Cotton Mather's (1663–1728) later and more literal pre-millennial eschatology in Alsted, while the majority of eighteenth-century American theologians such as Daniel Whitby (1638–1726), Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), and Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803) remained in the traditionalist camp, interpreting Christ's millennial reign allegorically (pp. 39–40). Their allegorical thinking held the millennium was symbolic of a spiritual truth that may have been a past or present reality rather than a literal future event.

An English theologian who impacted the Puritan travelers' apocalyptic outlook was Joseph Mede (1586–1638), who published a commentary on Revelation. In his commentary, he placed Christ's millennial reign in the future. In addition, he determined that the time of Christ's millennial reign could be calculated based on the 1,260-year reign of the antichrist, the beginning of which he placed on one of two possible dates in the fifth century. These two potential dates situated the demise of the antichrist and the start of Christ's millennial rule in either 1716 or 1736.

One reason for Mede's influence on the English settlers in New England stemmed from his association with John Cotton (1584–1652). In 1633, Cotton traveled to New England where he became pastor of the First Church in Boston. In 1639 Cotton's interpretation of Revelation followed many of the same conclusions as Mede. However, according to Cotton's historical calculations, 1655 was the year that marked the fall of the antichrist and the beginning of Christ's millennial rule. As Smolinski notes, Cotton's interpretation of Revelation also served an important pastoral role as he bound the covenant, individual salvation, and church membership with the visible church's role in the downfall of the antichrist (pp. 41–43).

The Protestant and Catholic wars during the sixteenth and seventeenth century helped to shape the Puritan outlook, which only intensified the "end of the world" scenarios. These future apocalyptic scenarios were produced by calculating past events as a timeline from biblical texts (usually Daniel and Revelation), which were interpreted as revealing a definitive starting time for Christ's millennial reign. The English Protestant millennial expectations set the stage for the apocalyptic worldview that would justify the violence done to the French and their native allies, as well as provide a rationale validating both the War for Independence with England and the Civil War that violently tore the nation apart.

The Puritans living in seventeenth-century New England, as Amanda Porterfield has pointed out in *The Protestant Experience in America*, were a fairly insulated and isolated group (p. 30). While their leaders still had some communication with England and Europe, the Atlantic made communication difficult and slow. Therefore, the Puritans' self-identity was influenced by how they differentiated themselves from outsiders: the Roman Catholics and the native peoples. Since Catholics were the religious "other" and native peoples were the cultural "other," both groups were easy to conceptualize as the enemy within a worldview that was shaped by both a Calvinistic dualism, separating people into God's chosen versus God's rejected, along with an apocalyptic dualism where the godly were relentlessly struggling against the forces of evil.

By 1637 the increase in Puritan migration to the Massachusetts Bay colony created a tenuous situation with the surrounding native peoples whose lands were disappearing. In May, the settlers' fear of native attacks led to military action. They sent a militia along with a Connecticut militia to attack a Pequot fortified village near Mystic. The militias set fire to the village and it was consumed in minutes, killing men, women, and children. The inferno was described in apocalyptic terms by the militias' leaders. Porterfield quotes the Connecticut leader, "Such dreadful Terror did the ALMIGHTY let fall upon their Spirits, that they would fly from us and run into the very Flames [that consumed them all]" (p. 31).

The village's destruction was interpreted by the leaders as God's restoration of a time of peace and freedom granted to God's people, who had been held captive by the threat of future Indian attacks. Accordingly, as quoted in Porterfield, "the LORD turned the Captivity of his People, and turned the Wheel upon their Enemies; we were like Men in a Dream; then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongues with Singing; thus we may say the LORD has done great things for us among the Heathen" (p. 31). Porterfield connects these statements to the biblical prophets as a common theme of the English settlers, who justified war based on a biblical precedent where the settlers were the New Israel taking the new Promised Land by driving out the Canaanites. Yet within these statements there is also a clear indication of apocalyptic influence, justifying the settlers' perception of the natives as evil enemies of God's people who need to be destroyed. In addition, their conclusion that the fiery death of women and children would be their salvation plus their joy at the complete annihilation of their foe conveys a significant degree of apocalyptic influence on their actions.

Eighteenth-Century Apocalypticism

Like the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century millennial debates that influenced the English settlers' apocalyptic rhetoric justifying violence against their enemies, so too would the eighteenth-century theological debates concerning Revelation's millennial vision shape the apocalyptic rhetoric during the colonial push for independence. The colonist apocalyptic outlook easily found a new enemy once the French and their native allies had been defeated. The millennial views of two prominent eighteenth-century theologians will provide a useful background to the colonial apocalyptic rhetoric justifying violence against their present enemy.

Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards were two of the most influential early-eighteenth-century Puritan pastors, and their ideas concerning the millennium demonstrate the influence of apocalypticism within the New England colonies. In 1703 Cotton Mather expressed his views on the millennium in the published tract *Problema Theologicum*. According to this tract, Cotton Mather clearly agreed with the preterist position of his father, Increase Mather. However, by 1720 Cotton Mather's views had shifted and his interpretation of Revelation took a sharp antiallegorical stance. In that year he published a new literalist interpretation of Revelation in an article entitled "Triparadisus." In this work, he predicted Christ's literal appearing at both the beginning and end of the millennium. Thus, his text indicated that both resurrections depicted in Revelation should be interpreted as literal historical and future events. The first resurrection, according to Cotton Mather, was symbolic neither of the spiritual conversion of individual Christians nor of the Reformation of the Church. His revised opinion did not diminish the importance of individual salvation and church reformation; rather his changing perspective actually strengthened his resolve that the church militant here on earth be faithful in order not to be cut off from the future, literal millennial reign of Christ.

Jonathan Edwards's Reformed orthodoxy would not be swayed by the new literalist interpretation of apocalyptic texts in general or the Book of Revelation in particular. In Edwards's faithfulness to the allegorical tradition of interpreting apocalyptic literature, he anticipated a new awakening of God's spirit within his own Northampton congregation during the "last days." The church in Northampton had experienced at least seven revivalistic periods under Solomon Stoddard prior to Edwards's taking over as pastor. Edwards as a young pastor of twenty-six thrived in his

authoritative position, and as he developed as a pastor he began to trumpet the call for bigger and better awakenings of God's spirit. While the reasons for his revivalistic determination were many, perhaps the most obvious was his ambitious drive to do great deeds for the worldwide kingdom of God. Too often, however, commentators on Edwards's thought point to his millennial outlook and his passing remark concerning the possibility of America being the place where Christ would inaugurate his millennial reign.

Jonathan was the only male heir to Timothy Edwards, and he was raised knowing the family's name was his legacy. Perhaps this is what influenced his expectation that the current revivals in America could spark the millennial reign of Christ. However, the vast majority of his millennial views remained traditional, allegorical, and, as classified today, post-millennial. His postmillennialism, however, was not the tame, waiting for the world to improve so Christ could return variety. Within Edwards's writings, the historical demise of the antichrist, as Smolinski keenly observes, included enough global warfare, horror, and gore to compete with all the visions of Christ's supernatural destruction of the antichrist postulated by Cotton Mather and other premillennialists of that time (p. 59).

In 1739, Edwards preached a series of sermons entitled "A History of the Work of Redemption" in which he highlighted Christ's love as being the central focus of God's dealings with creation throughout history. Edwards was convinced that the 1734–1735 revival in his church at Northampton was an historical manifestation of Christ's redeeming love that would ultimately triumph. However, in keeping with his traditional Reformed doctrine, he also believed Christ's ultimate redemption would occur gradually throughout history in successive cycles of good and evil that would eventually establish the Kingdom of God at the end of time. Therefore, according to Edwards's sermons, the apocalyptic texts of Daniel and Revelation were useful guides to indicate the timing of Christ's victory over Satan.

In Edwards's "Notes on the Apocalypse," a kind of informal commentary on Revelation written over thirty-five years (1723–1758), he directed his rhetoric of violence towards the Roman Catholic Church, the primary enemy of Protestants throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In these "Notes" he speculates that the antichrist's reign began in 606 and would be ended around the year 1866. Even at the present time, however, there were growing signs of the antichrist's weakening power. Thus, any event

that weakened the Pope or diminished the Catholic Church's wealth was viewed by Edwards as a fulfillment of Revelation's prediction that the antichrist would be defeated with the drying up of the Euphrates. The Reformation in 1517 along with all the seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century wars that drained away wealth from Spain and France all contributed to the weakening of the Catholic antichrist. Yet Edwards believed that the antichrist would make a final stand in which terrible devastation would ensue, so that only the faithful would survive.

In 1757, James Cogswell wrote a tract to spur on the colonists in their fight against the French—it was the same apocalyptic rhetoric justifying war that would be used in less than ten years to spur the colonists to unite against the evil English empire. He wrote to his fellow countrymen, “Endeavor to stand as Guardians of the Religion and Liberties of *America*; to oppose Antichrist . . . [as] the art of War becomes a Part of our Religion” (quoted in Smolinski, p. 67). Following the defeat of the French in 1763, England sought ways to increase tax revenue to pay for the extended war with the French, passing the Sugar Act in 1764 and the Stamp Act in 1765. By the time Parliament had passed the Quebec Act (1774) granting freedom of religion to the Catholics in the conquered French territory, the colonists had ample time to figure out their new enemy. The old apocalyptic rhetoric that fit so well on the French, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Pope was quickly reassembled to fit Great Britain, the Anglican Church, and especially King George.

The tribulation that the colonists faced now was interpreted as coming directly from the oppressive tax and pro-Catholic policies of England. The new colonial symbol of the antichrist was King George III, who, if not the antichrist himself, was at least viewed as in collusion with the Catholic antichrist to do the work of Satan by oppressing the chosen people of God. Thus, the strong desire for political independence from the beast of British power, and religious freedom from the antichrist who headed the Roman Catholic Church, brought forth an intense apocalyptic rhetoric that fueled the violent fight for independence. Once the Revolutionary War era was over the American fascination with apocalyptic images and debates about the beginning of the millennium would continue, and by the mid-nineteenth century the apocalypticism of war would once again pit enemy against enemy in the lead-up to the American Civil War. In this conflict, however, the Roman Catholic Church was not the symbolic antichrist doing the work of Satan;

rather, it was Northern and Southern Protestant cultures demonizing each other.

Early Nineteenth-Century and Antebellum Apocalypticism

In the early nineteenth century Jonathan Edwards's theological ideas became known as postmillennialism and were widely accepted by Protestant denominations. The idea of postmillennialism, at this time, took on some of the more progressive characteristics of the Protestants who held this theological belief. Therefore, it became associated with an optimistic worldview that anticipated and strived for improving society as a way to initiate the Kingdom of God. This eschatological system was influenced by scientific and technological advances, along with a growing faith that education could solve society's problems. Postmillennialism became an undergirding support for the revivalistic spirit in America in the early nineteenth century. This revivalistic movement became known as the Second Great Awakening (1790s–1850s), as it produced enthusiastic conversions that drew comparisons to the 1740s Great Awakening. In addition to emphasizing personal salvation, this revivalistic movement focused on evangelical outreach programs, societies for social improvement, and world missions. While the revivalistic spirit and personal conversions waned after the 1850s with the country's preparation for war, the Second Great Awakening in many important ways prepared the way for a movement that arose in the early twentieth century, a theological movement known as the “Social Gospel.” The Social Gospel was encapsulated in the preaching, social outreach ministries, and theological writings of Walter Rauschenbusch. Thus, throughout the nineteenth century, even during the horror of the Civil War, most mainline Protestants believed the apocalyptic images in scripture to be symbolic and allegorical, representing historical cycles of violence that were necessary to rid the world of evil before Christ would return. During this time, America produced and became home to numerous new religious movements, many of which held worldviews based on interpretations of apocalyptic texts.

As a representative of mainline Protestantism at this time, Lyman Beecher (1775–1863) wrote *A Plea for the West*, in which he attempted to prove America's central place within God's millennial plans by citing Jonathan Edwards. Quoting Edwards was a favorite activity of nineteenth-century revivalists, as they attempted to justify their revivalistic efforts to inaugurate the Kingdom of God by pointing back to earlier revivals in the eighteenth century. While the dominant

Protestant force in America perceived a threat in the large number of immigrating Catholics, there were several religious groups in America that either sought cultural isolation or faced real ridicule and often relentless oppression that actually intensified their apocalyptic outlook. The two religious groups used as examples here were chosen from a multitude of religious and political movements influenced by apocalypticism. While this type of apocalyptic worldview was not limited to Protestant religious groups, in America during the nineteenth century, Protestant groups were still numerically dominant, and within this religious majority many became fascinated with prophecy and a literal interpretation of Revelation.

During the antebellum years in America, Cotton Mather's literal and premillennial doctrine did not disappear. And as the Civil War loomed closer, more and more religious groups embraced the supernatural apocalyptic visions of Christ's imminent return prior to the millennium. The Millerite Adventist religious movement was one such group. It was a religious movement that started from the teachings of William Miller (1782–1849), a self-taught biblical student fascinated with prophecy, who in the early 1830s began preaching in upstate New York. He was a self-proclaimed Baptist preacher who began to teach that Christ's Second Coming would take place sometime around 1843–1844. His prediction was based on his interpretation of biblical apocalyptic texts, especially Daniel, and his calculation of the start of the millennial reign of Christ was determined by using the date of the rebuilding of the Hebrew temple. His premillennial preaching spurred conferences, camp meetings, and a newspaper entitled *The Midnight Cry*. By the start of the 1840s, his followers pushed for a more exact date and he essentially complied. He identified Christ's return as coming between March 21, 1843, and March 21, 1844. When the predicted dates passed, social persecution and ridicule were intense; however, a revised calculation of October 22, 1844, was suggested by some Adventist leaders. William Miller eventually concurred, although by this time, he was becoming doubtful that the imminent return of Christ could be calculated. When Christ did not return on October 22, most Adventists were devastated, and the failure was dubbed the "Great Disappointment." Out of the Adventist ashes, however, Ellen White resurrected a movement with millennial hopes that has refused to predict future events while interpreting apocalyptic literature. Yet these Adventist members still look in earnest for signs of Christ's Second Coming in power and glory.

Another religious movement that enjoyed its climax of popularity in antebellum America was a group that came

from England in the 1790s. The movement's name reveals much of its millennial hopes: The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, or The Millennial Church. However, most people recognize them by their more common name: the Shakers. The movement originated in England in 1747 and was founded by James and Jane Ward. They were superseded by Ann Lee, who was regarded as "Mother Ann" and accepted as the fulfillment of the Second Coming of Christ. She was revered as the "female Christ principle" in the same way that Jesus was revered as the "male Christ principle." In 1774 she brought to America her group of dedicated followers, who soon founded other Shaker communities. The Shakers' more common name was a result of the "shaking" and "quaking" that ensued while members were being filled and possessed with God's spirit during "the last days." In addition to a belief in spirit possession and in Mother Ann's millennial fulfillment of Christ's Second Coming, the movement also practiced a strict communal disciplinary regimen to ensure holiness. Most important to this communal holiness was the aspect of complete celibacy and total marriage to the Christ principle. Within the apocalyptic spiritual milieu that was America during the antebellum years, the Shakers' message found some fertile ground, and by 1840 the movement peaked with just over six thousand members. By the late twentieth century, however, the movement had all but disappeared.

Apocalypticism from the Civil War to the Early Twentieth Century

War and apocalyptic influence and imagery are closely connected, and the Civil War era in America was no exception. Abolitionists found motivation in apocalyptic imagery that they interpreted as supporting abolition as the fastest way to establish Christ's millennial reign. Apocalyptic hopes and nightmares filled the imagination of most Americans living through the Civil War years. Terrie Dopp Aamodt traces the apocalyptic images of this era in both its religious and secular forms in her text entitled *Righteous Armies, Holy Cause: Apocalyptic Imagery and the Civil War*.

Following the Civil War, many new religious groups that were influenced by apocalypticism came to the forefront within the United States. During this time, premillennialism enjoyed a new and continuing popularity, while many post-millennialist Protestants who hoped that the church would partner with science and technology to progressively improve society began leaving the church, taking their liberalism in a more secular direction. As more mainline Protestants began

to disregard biblical apocalyptic texts, the door was opened for premillennialists, dispensationalists, and fundamentalists to articulate and propagate their interpretations of apocalyptic passages in scripture. Dispensationalism is the interpretation of history as a series of divinely sanctioned periods of time. Christian theological proponents of this interpretation usually view apocalyptic scripture as literal and hold to a premillennialist view of Christ's return. Fundamentalism, as used here, refers to a Protestant movement that reacted against modernism by asserting the Bible is both infallible as a guide to faith and literally true as a historical record.

Paul Boyer, in *When Time Shall Be No More*, traces the rise of fundamentalist dispensationalism in the work of John Nelson Darby (1800–1882) and Cyrus Scofield (1843–1921). John Darby was a founder of the more radical wing of the English Plymouth Brethren, and by the year 1837 he started taking extensive preaching tours. In 1859 he traveled to America, where he became perhaps the most prominent promoter of a premillennialism based on fundamentalist dispensationalism (p. 87). Darby's system used charts and timelines to demonstrate the ever-closer hour of Christ's return and the church's Rapture.

He also learned a lesson from William Miller, as he avoided predictions of an exact time in the future for Christ's return. Darby's system of dispensationalism divided history into time periods, in which God dealt with humanity (or the chosen people) through a series of covenants in which salvation could be achieved through various means. According to this literalist approach to scripture, the present covenant is the "church age," which will end with the Rapture of the church. This will throw the rest of the world into a seven-year period of terrible tribulation. At the end of the tribulation, Christ will return with his saints to overthrow the antichrist and bind Satan for a thousand years, inaugurating his millennial reign. Darby's system was supported through the *Scofield Reference Bible*, published in 1909. Scofield applied a dispensationalist interpretation upon the entire Bible, making it appear to readers that dispensationalist's categories were an actual part of the scriptural text. This bible is still popular today within conservative evangelical circles and has sold more than twelve million copies.

The early twentieth century in America was a time of increasing racial violence and division; however, one apocalyptic religious movement used the biblical imagery of the "last days" as a time when "God's spirit would be poured out upon all flesh" to overcome racists' bigotry, at least for a few years. While the theological doctrines that gave rise to

the Pentecostal Movement were diverse and historians of religion and America debate their origins, most scholars point to the 1906 Azusa Street revival as the birth of the modern Pentecostal movement.

William J. Seymour, a black holiness preacher, led the revival that broke down racial and gender distinctions as people flocked to Los Angeles, California, to witness the emotional revival. The revival also drew from the many Baptist, Methodist, and Holiness churches in the area as fellow believers came to hear the emotionally charged message of God's baptism with power. The primary distinction within this Pentecostal revival was the literal biblical theme that speaking with other tongues was the physical evidence of God's spirit being poured out, just like it was back in the first century, when the disciples were baptized in God's spirit and empowered for missionary service. Thus, this twentieth-century revival combined a simplistic, literalistic reading of prophetic and apocalyptic texts with a very modern evidentiary proof that this spiritual revival was real. For the first three years of the revival, the missionary power of spirit baptism could not be denied as Pentecostal missionaries from Los Angeles traveled throughout America and the world. The Pentecostal revival incorporated women, African Americans, and Hispanics in leadership roles, as all who were spiritually baptized could pray, preach, and teach during any worship service.

After a few years the revival lost its ability to quell racial bias and bigotry to such a degree that the movement split down racial lines. The racial division convinced William Seymour that speaking with other tongues was not evidence of baptism in God's spirit; rather, for him, the true evidence of spiritual baptism was the ability to love brothers and sisters of other races. Just as the power of God's spirit convinced Peter to love and preach to the gentiles, so the proof of God's spirit being poured out in the "last days" before the Rapture should be a spiritual love between all of God's children, regardless of race.

Mid- to Late-Twentieth-Century Apocalypticism

By the mid-twentieth century, America was a triumphant world force, having just defeated Imperial Japan and the Nazi military machine that had threatened all of Europe. However, Seymour's vision for American racial reconciliation was becoming less of a reality, as southern evangelicals armed with premillennial dispensationalism began to ignore racial inequality in America, while pushing for a new aggressive message of American nationalism. Billy Graham's preaching tours expanded into great crusades, the likes of which had not been

seen since the days of George Whitefield's revivalistic tours during what is now referred to as the Great Awakening. Graham's premillennial message of the need for salvation before the coming tribulation was grounded in Darby's system and set the stage for a literary explosion that took America by storm in the 1970s and turned Hal Lindsey into a literary star in fundamentalist and conservative circles. Hal Lindsey cowrote *The Late Great Planet Earth* in 1970 with Carol C. Carlson. The book combined the narrative styles of catastrophic science fiction with a premillennial approach to apocalyptic narratives, which were interpreted as providing a literal timeline of horror that would follow the Rapture of the church. The book claimed to point out the fulfillment of apocalyptic biblical passages in Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation, and it captured the imagination of the growing number of Christians who were expecting the Rapture. As a book with fantastic descriptions of the horrors that awaited the earth, it caught the attention of a secular press and became the "non-fiction" best seller of the 1970s, selling more than nine million copies by 1978. Future editions of the book had to be revised and updated to take into account changing geopolitical conditions that made earlier editions inaccurate.

The literary model of *The Late Great Planet Earth* was continued when a politically active conservative evangelical minister in the 1990s wrote a series of novels based on the apocalyptic horrors that non-Christians would face following the Rapture. In 1995, Tim LaHaye cowrote *Left Behind* with Jerry B. Jenkins, and the book's popularity spurred a *Left Behind* series containing twelve volumes. Seven of these volumes became best sellers, and series total sales have topped sixty-five million copies.

The success of both the *Left Behind* series and the earlier *Late Great Planet Earth* points to the fascination Americans have always had with apocalyptic scenarios of future destruction of one's enemies. This has been true from the English settlers' first violent encounter with natives, who had aligned themselves with the Roman Catholic antichrist by their association with the French, up through the current generation of conservative evangelical Christians anticipating a rapturous escape from the coming horrors that non-Christians will suffer.

Connection between Apocalypticism and War

This American fascination with apocalypticism relates to an American fascination with war. Some used these terms about the United States war effort to liberate Iraq (first from Saddam Hussein and then from the terrorists); but each

American generation has had a violent fight in which it has been able to identify some evil enemy who could be connected to the enemies of God. There are the terrorists now as there were the communists in the Vietnam era, the communists in the cold war period, the Nazis in WWII, the Kaiser in WWI, the Protestant demonizing of each other during the Civil War, King George and taxes in the Revolutionary era, and the Roman Catholic Church with native tribal collaborators. War has a way of bringing out the best in a nation's "apocalyptic imagination," and the American people's fascination with apocalyptic themes has a way of being expressed in their music.

In 1861, at the start of the Civil War, Julia Ward Howe heard Union soldiers marching to the song "John's Brown's Body," a popular tune in the North written for a Northern martyr. John Brown was executed shortly after his raid on the military arsenal at Harpers Ferry during a slave insurrection he organized. Howe became inspired by the soldiers and wrote the words to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The first and third verses demonstrate the power of the apocalyptic influence upon Northern culture. She began by writing about the Lord's coming with vengeance: "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored; He has loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword; His truth is marching on." By the third verse the judgment of God has arrived and the feet of Northerners rejoice: "He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat; He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment seat; Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet; Our God is marching on." Julia Howe's apocalyptic images are completely grounded in the scriptural idea of a wrathful God's judgment upon the enemy. This theme fills her lyrics with expectations that God will fight for the Northern cause and ensure its victory. Just as the Lord's coming would ensure Northerners' military victory, it would also ensure the end of the world as they knew it while still allowing them to feel fine. One hundred twenty-seven years later in America, R.E.M. was once again writing lyrics, albeit more secular in nature, with the end of the world in sight while still trying to feel fine.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Adventist and Millennialist Denominational Families; Bible entries; Civil War; Evangelicals entries; Fundamentalism; Great Awakening(s); Jehovah's Witnesses; Pentecostals; Puritans; Seventh-day Adventists; Shakers; Social Gospel.*

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Appalachian Mountain Religion

Appalachian mountain religion has been observed only in recent decades as a regional American religion in its own right. Virtually all Protestant denominations and many sects, as well as Catholicism and non-Christian religions, are represented in the region, although that which characterizes mountain religion is native and distinct by its emphasis on autonomy, spiritual worship, and the importance of personal religious experience. Religion is a deep and abiding concern for Appalachians, even for many who may not

confess to being religious. Influenced by the landscape and culture, Appalachian mountain religion represents a rich diversity of traditions that are not fatalistic—as some have claimed—but purposeful and meaningful in the daily life of those who call the region home.

The Region and Culture

Since the Appalachian landscape has influenced its cultural development, the religion cannot be understood apart from the region itself. The mountains and their valleys stretch along the eastern United States, traversing thirteen states, including northeastern Mississippi; the northern reaches of Alabama and Georgia; the western regions of South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia; the eastern parts of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio; all of West Virginia; western Maryland; northern and western Pennsylvania; and southern New York. This area accounts for some 205,000 of the 3,537,438 square miles of U.S. land and about 23.6 million of the 300 million people living in the United States as of 2009. The core region looks to the north and west from the Allegheny/Cumberland Mountains and reaches toward the east from the Blue Ridge Mountains; these majestic terrains and the fertile Great Valley, nestled between them, occupy the six states of Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia. It is the upper regions of this area, known as the southern "highlands," that most often are associated with native mountain religion, although mainline denominations in the area also have been influenced to some degree by the mountain culture.

During its settlement, this rugged wilderness met European immigrants—mostly English, Scots-Irish, and Germans—with a challenging life involving danger, harsh conditions, and isolation. It was survival in this environment that influenced the development of an Appalachian culture, with values reminiscent of an earlier America that persist to the present day. Such values include independence and self-reliance, two of the most basic and proudest Appalachian traits that have been passed down through generations, from pioneers who learned to survive wilderness life by doing for themselves. A common tendency toward neighborliness and hospitality can be traced to the frontier need for cooperation with others, in such things as house and barn "raisings" and the harvesting of crops. The emphasis on family is another important value rooted in the need to "stick together"—particularly in the face of hardship or misfortune—and to provide for relatives,

sometimes by “taking them in” until a crisis has passed. Also linked to wilderness survival, personalism involves the ability to relate easily to those of familiar acquaintance and also the penchant to maintain distance from others who are less known; it further involves the tendency to be agreeable with another—even though one actually disagrees—for the sake of avoiding offence. The culture also has fostered a general sense of modesty—one that cautions to not “get above your raising”—that affords a fair self-estimate of one’s own abilities. A sense of place has developed over generations and describes a rootedness in the mountains and belongingness that often lure out-migrants back for periodic “homecomings.” Other values include a sense of beauty that appreciates nature as well as fine craftsmanship, and a sense of humor that “pokes fun” at self and at others to sometimes break the somberness of life. Perhaps the most important value passed down in Appalachian culture is that of religion, which has helped generations to transcend the stark challenges of their environment and to make sense of their lives. Influenced by the landscape, mountain religion continues to be of great importance in Appalachia and reflects many of the above qualities.

Mountain Religion Spirituality

Mainly Protestant, mountain religion itself is diverse and complex; however, some commonalities of highlander spirituality may provide an understanding of the world it affords. In general, Calvinism has contributed to the belief that all of humanity is limited by sin and depravity, thus projecting a duality of the world in terms of the natural and the spiritual, which are always in conflict. Although larger society generally sees itself on a road toward progress, mountain people may interpret daily events from a spiritual context, sometimes as a regression that is moving the world toward the end times. This situation leaves one helpless and in need of God’s indwelling power, not only for salvation but also for combating the evil that is resident in the world. If not persuaded by an election to salvation, one must trust in grace and pursue holiness to be ready in the last days; regardless, the imminence of the end-times allows little concern for improving social conditions in the ephemeral world and gives focus to more important matters of spirituality. As much as anyone, highland Christians are well aware of the hardships of life and the reality of death. However, they find in religion the power of transcendence such that “death is swallowed up in victory”—whether at the Resurrection or the Second Coming. Heaven will be a place of happiness

and freedom from the sorrows, disappointments, and pain of earthly life.

Among many highlanders, God is the creator of the universe and reigns in sovereign power and majesty; however, his only abode is the human heart. Whether faith involves the Arminian idea of seeking salvation, or the Calvinist belief of being awakened to salvation, many believe God dwells in the hearts of all who are aware that they need him, and they know experientially when he takes residence, from the sense of peace, joy, and spiritual power that provides affirmation. For most, God is triune and expressed in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, although some hold fast to the Oneness concept in which Jesus is the name for all members of the so-called Trinity. Although seldom mentioned among mainline churches, Satan is a reality in the lives of some highlanders. A fallen angel, he desires to thwart God’s plan and purpose in the world. As the Evil One, he ever lurks behind the scenes to tempt the righteous with worldliness, the lust of the flesh, and sin; furthermore, everyday misfortune and calamity are products of his handiwork. Straying from close communion with God makes one vulnerable to Satan’s devices—thus behooving the righteous to stay on guard.

Of utmost concern to many highland believers is salvation, although how it is obtained depends upon the specific tradition to which one belongs. For many, salvation begins with God working in the heart to bring forth conviction or remorse for sins, leading to godly sorrow and repentance. Subsequently, the grace of God acts upon the heart to regenerate new life through spiritual rebirth—as God’s spirit takes residence. For Calvinists and Arminians, God’s grace plays a central role in the experience, both in awakening the heart to the call of repentance and in providing meaning in the midst of life’s hardships and suffering. Some traditions of mountain religion require immersion baptism after conversion in obedience to the Bible; converts may be immersed once or even “dipped” three times—depending on tradition—as a symbol of the spiritual resurrection that has taken place. The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is practiced with variable frequency according to tradition, followed by some with footwashing; the former represents the vertical relationship between the believer and God, whereas the latter illustrates humility and servanthood in the horizontal relationship between believers.

There are other aspects of salvation. Although many highland Christians speak of the Holy Spirit as a presence in conversion and in daily life, holiness Pentecostals describe an experience beyond conversion as the baptism of the Holy Ghost, evidenced by speaking in tongues; this

indwelling of the Holy Ghost is believed to provide supernatural power for overcoming Satan and living a successful Christian life. What salvation means may differ among mountain religions: Calvinists believe in the guarantee of eternal security, which means that one cannot fall from grace or lose salvation; Arminians believe that one can fall from grace after salvation through backsliding and be eternally lost, unless one repents to receive salvation once again. According to the latter, the best safeguard against backsliding is to experience a second work of grace called sanctification, through which the sin nature is eradicated by the blood of Christ, leaving unhindered the regenerated heart to live holy and free from sin. To the Calvinist, however, sanctification means being set apart from the world by one's "position" of righteousness in the family of God, which is made possible through new birth; one's "condition" of living imperfectly in the sinful world is nullified by virtue of that position, which is based on the imputed righteousness of Christ. Many of the mountain religious believe that salvation saves one from hell, a place of unspeakable punishment and pain, and allows for entrance into heaven, a place of beauty, peace, and relief from troubles of earthly life. Heaven is sometimes described as including mansions not made with hands, streets paved with gold, a crystal river, angelic harps and choirs, reunion with loved ones, and constant companionship with Jesus and the patriarchs of old. Not all mountain Christians, however, believe in eternal hell as a punishment for sin. The "No-Hellers," a small group among Primitive Baptists, believe that because of Christ's atonement all of humanity is predestined for heaven—regardless of how that earthly life is lived; accordingly, hell is experienced only in this life, in terms of the hardships and unhappiness brought on by sinful living. The ultimate concern of salvation for highlanders is transcendence of death and eternity with God.

Other aspects of mountain spirituality are found in worship practices. Of primary importance for many is prayer as direct communication with God not only as the sovereign, but also as a father; it serves as a medium for praise, thanksgiving, and petition in time of need. A special time for personal testimonies is common in many services and provides an opportunity for any to offer thanksgiving for salvation, prayers answered, and blessings received; depending on the tradition, it also allows for women to participate in services, even though they may not be allowed to preach. The tenor of testimonies sometimes may rise to passionate exhortations that move and strengthen the faith of hearers. As in most religious traditions, music plays a significant role in

mountain religion. Set to melodies that evoke deep emotion, the lyrics, in both hymns and gospel songs, can communicate such themes as redemption in the blood of Jesus, the trials of pilgrim-believers, the faithfulness and peace of God, and the hope and beauty of heaven. For some, the message in a song can be more moving than that conveyed through a sermon. There is little concern for elegance in voice, for the song is offered not for show but as worship unto God; singing is something that all believers can do as an act of praise.

The above characteristics can be considered only as general aspects of mountain religion and spirituality. They may vary among specific faith traditions, sometimes being more or less pronounced. Although they may offer some insight into highland spirituality, there always is hazard in providing such basic descriptions as these—as should be noted.

Roots of Mountain Religion

Appalachian religion and spirituality evolved largely from three religious traditions brought from Europe to the mountains by early settlers and ministers: the Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists. The Scots-Irish of Northern Ireland began a major migration to America in the early 1700s and populated regions in southeastern Pennsylvania, western Virginia, and the Piedmont of the Carolinas. The vast majority of these were Ulster Presbyterians who embraced Calvinism and the practice of a rich tradition of annual sacramental meetings known to promote spirituality and piety. A reaction against the Catholic Eucharist, these meetings emerged in post-Reformation Scotland and emphasized the mystery of Christ's presence around a Communion table where believers partook of the Lord's Supper; the touching and tasting of the bread and wine often led to ecstatic experiences that many counted as their day of conversion. These sacramental meetings—which included days of exhortation, thanksgiving, and celebration—became immensely popular as a time for evangelism and spiritual renewal; they eventually were exported to colonial America, where they afforded traditional and new religious meaning in the face of opportunity and challenge. As the first Great Awakening (circa 1726–1745) swept the eastern seaboard, these meetings drew hundreds to thousands among not only Scots-Irish Presbyterians but also Anglicans, English dissenters, and even slaves. By the late 1700s, the Scots-Irish had pressed westward into the mountains in search of land and opportunity, taking with them their religion and sacramental practices. Their pietism, revivalism, and religious fervor would come to serve mountain religion in a profound and meaningful way.

During the Great Awakening, New England Baptists—mostly Calvinists—were awakened from slumber as entire congregations of Separatists, who rejected the union of church and state, joined their ranks. The Baptists themselves had taken exception to this alliance a century earlier under the leadership of Roger Williams, who feared the corruption of the church by the state; furthermore, they distrusted central forms of government, favoring local autonomy. These Separate Baptists came late to the revival but appreciated the fervor and spontaneity of meetings, in contrast to Regular Baptists, who favored more orderly and formal worship. Particularly in Tidewater, Virginia, the Separate Baptists found themselves in growing dispute with the American-established Church of England and its aristocracy, not only for religious but also social and political reasons. The foundation of their protest was based on the democratic notion that individuals, regardless of status, wealth, or education, should have the right to think for themselves in matters of religion and practice. Their tendency to be vocal led to persecution and sometimes imprisonment—which only added to their mission and numbers. By the nineteenth century, this maltreatment led as many as one-fourth of Virginia Baptists on an exodus into the mountains of eastern Kentucky where they could breathe more freely. Their religious values on individual conscientiousness and local autonomy followed them into the mountains, where they would help shape what mountain religion would become.

Led by Anglican John Wesley, Methodism began as a rejection of Calvinism for the Arminian belief that Christ died not only for the elect but for all of humanity. Unlike predestination, salvation in Arminianism could be known for certain because of a “heartfelt” crisis conversion. Furthermore, salvation could be followed by another crisis experience known as sanctification, through which one might be “cured” of the sin nature, overcome temptation, and live a life of perfection. A major key to the success of Methodism was Wesley’s “method” of organizing small groups that met in homes for Bible study, prayer, and worship. After migration from England, Methodists formed such groups in the middle colonies of Maryland, New York, and Pennsylvania in the 1760s but realized little growth until after the war. Wesley sent ministers for assistance, of whom the most effective was Francis Asbury who, from 1800 to 1813, rode a circuit on horseback from Maine to Georgia and back to New York on a yearly basis. His visits to the highlands were especially important, since ministers of any denomination in those regions were in short supply. It was

Asbury and his circuit riders who spread Methodism and its emphasis on holiness in the highlands and who modeled an itinerant type of ministry that continues in mountain religion today.

A convergence of the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist traditions came about on the Appalachian frontier at the onset of the Second Great Awakening (circa 1790–1840). With rich valley land taken by planters, “plain-folk” settlers pushed into the highlands where they cleared small plots of less fertile farmland. Life in such a dangerous and rugged environment cultivated need for a sense of control over one’s life—and the type of religion experienced at the 1801 Cane Ridge revival, in Kentucky, afforded such control through a transformed worldview that managed relationships and a disciplined approach to life. The event itself was begun by Presbyterian ministers as an August sacramental meeting and was later joined by both Methodist and Baptist preachers. About a thousand came forward to sit at communion tables, while tens of thousands came to participate in other revival activities or simply to observe, scoff, socialize, or carouse. Peter W. Williams noted in *America’s Religions* that skeptics of the event speculated that “more souls were conceived than saved during the proceedings” (p. 188). History reports some of the most ecstatic displays of emotion on record in American religious history. Participants danced, jerked, swooned, barked, expelled “holy” laughter, and fell into trances—all of which were perceived as manifestations of God’s power. From meetings such as this, Baptists and Methodists gained in number as the camp-meeting format was more conducive to their experiential type of worship. Since Presbyterians had fewer ministers serving the highlands, their denomination began to decline as members left to join ranks with the better-supplied Baptists and Methodists: Baptist preachers were self-supporting farmers of the area, and Methodist preachers were appointed and supported by their denomination.

From camp-meeting experiences, pioneers not only perceived heartfelt encounters directly with God, they also benefited from a transformed worldview. The subsequent taboo of vices, such as drinking and gambling, demonstrated in everyday life their rejection of the world and the force of their beliefs in an intellectual, disciplined, and concrete way. Contentment of salvation in the present world, and hope in the next, mitigated the frustration from economic ambitions linked with unlikely success in a planter society. Furthermore, the fellowship of believers fostered a vital sense of cooperation that tempered the proud and sometimes costly individualism of frontier life. In general, camp-meeting

religion provided a transformed view of self and the world through participation in a divine order.

The Emergence of Mountain Religion

Certain factors pertaining to denominationalism and economic development are important in understanding the social psychology of how mountain religion evolved and came to be defined; they also are important for observing how mountain religion came to understand itself as a coffer of spiritual meaning. After Cane Ridge, the frequency and intensity of frontier camp-meeting revivals waned, and camp meetings lapsed from national attention by the 1840s. Led mostly by frontier plain-folk preachers, they were never fully embraced by the leadership of denominations represented among them. Both Baptists and Methodists were becoming more successful as denominations and leaning toward an educated clergy, as evidenced by the founding of several Bible colleges in Appalachia during the 1800s. Furthermore, they were becoming more successful as landowners and coming to appreciate the values of an affluent and elite Southern culture, including the institution of slavery. Losing appeal among mainstream denominations, camp meetings remained an important influence, however, in the spiritual life of Appalachia.

Deborah McCauley has marked the growth of the Baptist and Methodist denominations, from 1800 to 1840, as the beginning of mountain religion in a regional sense, for it was during this time that concerns shifted toward national prominence and political influence. Leaving concern for “vital” religion, they focused instead on developing highly complex and centralized organizations that were committed to education, missions, and social issues—which birthed an era of American benevolence and concern for Christianizing America. Development of this ambitious agenda required a transfer of finance and responsibility from local congregations into the hands of a few who would act by proxy for their denominational membership. Many autonomous and self-reliant churches of Appalachia took great exception to this move.

Particularly among Baptists, the notion of a mission board at a national office offended good theology and gave rise to an Appalachian antimission sentiment. From a Calvinist perspective, the mission effort was misguided and without biblical basis, particularly since people had within them either the seed of regeneration—as the elect—or the seed of damnation. Thus, any global attempt to Christianize an entire nation was a lost cause and misuse of money. Other issues

were more broadly defined. For example, such a mission effort would devalue the work already being done by frontier churches; a centralized office would undermine local autonomy and pave the way for an aristocracy; the practice would subject financially dependent missionaries to political influence from their national office; and the required training would promote ministry as a chosen profession rather than an ordained calling by God. All this, and the constant plea for finances, made the centralized form of denominational leadership offensive to many highlanders and drove a wedge between congregations and their denomination.

The 1800s also found Presbyterian and Methodist denominations losing influence in the highlands. Presbyterians, who required a college-educated clergy, lost ground after the frontier revival for lack of qualified ministers to fill their pulpits; few educated men would make the sacrifice of relocating to the difficult wilderness environment. Furthermore, before the mid-1800s, the denomination had taken a more rational and less intense approach to worship, which resulted in a push from leadership to replace the annual, regional, outside sacramental meetings—sometimes creating a carnival-like atmosphere—with a more frequent, orderly practice of sacrament inside the local church. The nonrational, emotional type of religion still practiced by highlanders came to be viewed as disorderly and improper.

It was much the same for Methodists. Throughout the mid-1800s, and by the 1890s, both factions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which split in the 1840s over slavery, distanced themselves from the “frenzied” worship so common in the early years of Methodist revivalism. Furthermore, they had compromised their stance on sanctification as a second immediate work of grace with subsequent “sinless perfection” for one that was gradual and progressive. The Holiness doctrine and its associated heartfelt worship, however, had rung a bell in the wilderness frontier and found practical use in guiding life in a region where vices such as drinking, gambling, and fighting were common. The allegiance of frontier churches to this type of faith made them different from an aspiring denomination that preferred an approach to religion more appealing to mainstream America.

The relationship between mountain religion and major denominations also was affected by socioeconomic factors. Toward the end of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, America was fast becoming an industrial world leader, which brought pressure to rural Appalachia in the harvesting of its natural resources of iron, coal, and timber. The social and economic changes that followed were

profound for a region that largely had been isolated from much of America since 1850, when settlers began using alternate routes around the mountains. Industrialization not only changed the landscape of the region, it also transformed the face of a culture that at one time had been proudly independent and self-reliant, leaving many in poverty with little more than their religion to assist them in their social and economic adjustment.

It was during this time, from 1880 to 1930, that mountain religion gained further definition, as major denominations and various home missions boards took notice of Appalachia as a field in great need of American benevolence and evangelism. Despite the Christian and deep spiritual nature of Appalachia, the denominations often viewed the region as largely “unchurched” or, at best, considered mountain religion as an “otherness”—an aberration of true Christianity in need of correction. Therefore, various denominational churches were organized to evangelize the region and address the problem. In many respects, denominational as well as independent home missions boards were helpful in establishing agencies, clinics, and schools, which provided not only basic education for mountain children but also domestic and vocational training; some also were successful in establishing colleges and universities in central Appalachia for training in ministry and professional careers. On the religious front, however, denominations met with limited success, for though mountain people did change over time in response to the social efforts, the essence of mountain religion remained important for highlanders. They tended to abstain from denominational religion, which appeared too formal and tepid for their needs, in preference to their own, which afforded a more meaningful way of experiencing God. Ironically, the denominational interventions in Appalachia helped to distinguish more clearly what came to be seen as a regional Christian religion in its own right.

Appalachian Religious Groups

Non-Christian religions, Catholicism, and virtually all Protestant denominations and sects are represented in Appalachia, although that which is characterized as mountain religion is predominantly Protestant. Bill J. Leonard has proposed a useful typology of four Christian groups that cover the landscape of Appalachia: (1) mainline churches, (2) evangelical churches, (3) Pentecostal churches, and (4) mountain churches. This categorization can serve to highlight religion in Appalachia today and distinguish basic groups that are unique to mountain religion.

Mainline churches include the Roman Catholic Church and major Protestant denominations found in the region. The Presbyterian, American Baptist (USA), and United Methodist Churches, as well as the Lutheran and Episcopal Churches, all have congregations in Appalachia, as does the United Church of Christ. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) also is represented and has roots in the Stone-Campbell traditions, which were birthed and joined following the 1801 Cane Ridge revival; these traditions were restorative in nature but eventually separated into three groups: the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ), the Churches of Christ, and the “independent” Christian churches, which are undenominational. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church also emerged from the Cane Ridge revival and separated from the Presbyterian denomination in 1810 over the requirement that ministers be college-educated; by relaxing that condition on the frontier, Cumberland Presbyterians experienced marked growth in the years that followed. Today, however, commonly found among all mainline churches are an educated clergy, a formal worship liturgy, and an emphasis on social action regarding cultural and political issues.

Evangelical churches of Appalachia are less formal and are centered on the need for spreading the gospel to the unconverted. Among these are different Baptist and Nazarene congregations, Churches of Christ, and a host of independent churches that are nondenominational and non-Pentecostal; even among churches that are denominationally affiliated, there is great emphasis on local autonomy and other values embraced by mountain religion. Fundamentalist groups are represented here, as well as an emphasis by all on the Bible as the word of God. Ministers of these churches may or may not have college or seminary training and are less likely to be paid full-time, if at all. Their worship includes gospel or contemporary worship music, Bible sermons, and prayer time at the end of service. Depending upon the church tradition, conversion experiences may be either sudden or gradual, although emphasis is given to personal salvation in Jesus Christ. In general, concern for addressing social problems is supplanted by stress on moral issues in relation to social and private life.

Pentecostal churches are represented by denominations such as the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), Church of God of Prophecy, International Pentecostal Holiness Church, Church of God Mountain Assembly, and Assemblies of God, as well as numerous independent Pentecostal groups with no denominational affiliation. Like the Church

of God Mountain Assembly, the Church of God is a denomination indigenous to Appalachia that emerged from the Holiness revival that swept the region in the late nineteenth century; it split in 1923 over leadership issues to become the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) and what would become the Church of God of Prophecy. Common to all mountain Pentecostal groups is an emphasis on spirit-filled worship, spontaneous preaching, Spirit baptism with tongues-speaking, and the exercise of various charismatic demonstrations such as healing and prophesying. The clergy may or may not be educated or compensated for services they provide. Any emphasis on ministry for improving society is minimized by concern for living in a holy manner in the present world as a prerequisite for heaven in the next.

The last group, mountain churches, is indigenous particularly to central Appalachia; these churches have no denominational ties, hold fiercely to local autonomy, and practice particular rituals associated with Appalachia. Among them are a variety of Baptist churches, a variety of independent Holiness traditions, and Holiness-Pentecostal serpent-handling sects. All embrace the Bible—mostly the King James Version—as the inerrant word of God and stake its claim as the final authority on all matters pertaining to religion and life.

Because of its predominance, the Baptist church historically has been viewed as the prototypical native mountain church, which is characterized by immersion baptism after conversion. Among the multitudes of different Baptist churches in Appalachia, Howard Dorgan identified six groups that are concentrated particularly in the highlands and are representative of mountain religion: Primitives, Old Regulars, Regulars, Union, Free Will, and Missionary Baptists. Among these groups, there is a range in beliefs and practices. Some (Primitives and Old Regulars) are more strongly Calvinist, rejecting Sunday school and revival campaigns, whereas others (Missionary and Free Will) are more clearly Arminian and thus mission- and evangelism-oriented. The tenor of worship ranges from the formality and reserve of Primitives to the weeping and shouting of Old Regulars. With the exception of the Free Will Baptists, all these groups—as descendents from pioneer Separates and Regulars—are indigenous to the mountains and properly known as “Old-Time Baptists.”

Although differing in some beliefs and customs, the Old-Time label fits these groups because all preserve at least some of the following features of mountain religion: (1) a capella lined-singing, extemporaneous preaching, shouting, and emotional worship; (2) living water (creek) baptism by

immersion and footwashing; (3) practice of old-time biblical mandates regarding gender and dress; (4) prohibitions against divorce and “double-marriage”; and (5) practice of a particular worship protocol common to them all. Most Missionary and United Baptists no longer adhere to some of these practices, although a few still practice them all.

Mountain churches also are represented by many small, independent Holiness churches scattered across the highlands. All have roots in Methodism that spread throughout the mountains in the wake of the Great Revival. As such, they continue to practice the same experiential worship (sometimes with tongues-speaking) and emphasize piety as a way of life; however, what constitutes the specifics of holiness may differ among groups. Also indigenous to the mountains—and most often misunderstood and unappreciated—are the Holiness-Pentecostal sects that practice serpent handling in obedience to a perceived commandment of Jesus in Mark 16:17–18. Little in their beliefs and worship practices varies from other Holiness-Pentecostal churches, except for the occasional handling of venomous serpents. Some handlers are of Oneness persuasion, which rejects the doctrine of the Trinity for belief in Jesus as the name of the one God, although the majority are Trinitarians.

In general, mountain church preachers may have limited theological or formal education and emphasize that preaching is not a chosen vocation but a calling from God. Their preaching is typically impassioned, sometimes extemporaneous, and “Spirit-led,” offered in a chanted, cadenced, musical pitch. Sometimes unpaid, they offer their ministry to the church and community as a sacrifice of love for God. As Leonard observed in *Christianity in Appalachia*, “They are linked to the mountain culture in powerful ways, through grassroots constituency and kinship, as well as a pervasive piety and spirituality” (p. xxii). As for mountain churches in general, belief in salvation by grace and the practice of heart-felt worship are appreciated not only among Old-Time Baptists but by all who embrace mountain religion itself.

Mountain religion and spirituality have persisted over generations largely because of oral tradition. Within the context of a worship service, oral tradition facilitates the transmission of beliefs, behaviors, practices, and rituals through verbal communication and their performance according to rules of the tradition. Such rules are used implicitly by the audience to approve (or disapprove) of a specific performance, as given by one who prays, testifies, sings, preaches, and so forth; audience approval takes form in behavioral responses to the performance, such as singing

with the singer, shouting, dancing, or interacting with the preacher, as the case may be. Accordingly, audience participation in mountain religion is an important factor not only in its spirituality but also in the very survival of its traditions.

As a regional phenomenon, Appalachian mountain religion must be understood within its cultural and geographical context. For a people whose history has involved numerous challenges, religion has played no small role in providing spiritual meaning at moments of grave circumstance in life and the hope of heaven when life is done. This type of religion often is misconstrued as fatalistic or compensatory, when in reality it is best understood as a culture attempting to understand its world and make sense of its experiences. As found in mountain religion, the perception of the world as a realm of supernatural power provides a way in which to understand how the forces of good and evil are part of everyday life—be it Baptist Calvinists who are called to election and enabled by divine power to live godly in an evil world or Holiness–Pentecostals who are infused through Spirit baptism with power to overcome evil surrounding them. It is in the hope of heaven that believers gain a different perspective on the tribulations of everyday life, for as they perceive the manifestation of God’s presence and power in the midst of calamity, they see spiritual evidence of a world yet to come—one in which troubles, trials, and even death have no part. Their abstentions from worldliness and the practice of sin enable them to avoid struggles between good and evil, which bear witness that they are not of this world, but already part of the one to come. Mountain religion of Appalachia, then, is underserving of the fatalist and compensatory labels that many have used to describe it. It seems best understood as a religion based on belief in spiritual power that transforms and makes life meaningful in a unique region of America.

See also *Baptists: Sectarian; Camp Meetings; Holiness Movement; Missions: Domestic; Music: Appalachian Religious; Revivalism: Nineteenth Century; Serpent Handlers; South as Region.*

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Appalachian Religious Music

See *Music: Appalachian Religious*

Architecture

Religious architecture refers to physical structures conceived, designed, and erected for religious uses, especially worship. It is part of the broader built environment of religion and is closely related to religious landscape, which it helps shape. It is also part of the material culture of religion, which includes the entire range of physical objects employed for religious purposes. In North America, which

is characterized by extensive religious pluralism and populated with religious cultures that often have been imported from Europe, Asia, or elsewhere, religious architecture is manifold, complex, and highly revealing of the broader contours of the American religious and social experience.

Religious Architecture and Sacred Space

The terms “religious architecture” and “sacred space” are clearly related to one another but are by no means identical. The primary function of religious architecture is to house and otherwise accommodate the performance of ritual, which is an essential characteristic of religion. Ritual, however, may be performed without any human-built structures, as in the Sun Dance of the Plains Indians and many other rites of native peoples. Many contemporary followers of “New Age” religion, some of whom find inspiration in what they interpret as the spirituality of native peoples, regard the realm of nature as the most appropriate setting for their own private meditations or collective ceremonies. On the other hand, the New England Puritans of the seventeenth century deliberately instituted a new form of religious building, namely, the meetinghouse. Both the name and the structure itself were intended to provide a suitable physical backdrop for the proclamation of the Word of God, the central ritual in their worship. These Puritans, however, were adamant that the meetinghouse was not in itself sacred—that is, possessed of divine power—since such a belief would have compromised their Calvinistic premise that only God (and, by extension, the Word of God) was in any sense sacred. The invention of the meetinghouse and the theology behind it were the continuation of an argument that had originated in the European Reformation and would be continued vigorously in the New World context.

Church versus Meetinghouse

The conflict, implicit or otherwise, that characterized much of the religious argument that informed colonial American religious life can be summarized as church versus meetinghouse. “Church” is a term that originally referred to a congregation of worshippers but later came to refer to the structure in which they assembled for worship as well. Early Christian churches were often erected on sites associated with the martyrdom of saints and thereby took on an aura of sacred power. By the time of the Reformation, the term “church” had acquired a multiplicity of meanings: a building for worship; a congregation of worshippers; the institution, national or international, to which individual churches (or

parishes) belonged and by which they were controlled; or, most cosmically, the entire assemblage of believers, past, present, and future, who constituted the “church invisible.” Both the Roman Catholic Church and the various national churches that arose in the wake of Luther’s reforms claimed the title of “church,” with the implications of power over earthly conduct that the term had acquired, and which was embodied in the multiplicity of individual church buildings that shaped the religious landscape of Europe. These individual churches, for Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics and in varying degrees for the new Protestant groups, were places where sacramental worship could be conducted efficaciously because the buildings themselves had been consecrated as sites of sacred power.

The various groups that colonized the Atlantic seaboard during the colonial era reflected the entire range of European opinion on these issues, with some twists of their own. The dominant institutional presence in the English-speaking colonies was the Church of England, whose parish churches were designed for the peculiar mixture of Catholic and Protestant worship that had come to characterize the emergent Anglican tradition, and which also stood as reminders of royal authority in a colonial arc that swept from the maritime provinces of Canada through the British West Indies. Structures such as King’s Chapel in Boston, Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, and St. Michael’s in Charleston were often the largest, most conspicuous, and most centrally located structures in colonial cities and were outward and visible signs of Establishment—that is, the Church of England as the official ecclesiastical arm of the British Empire.

Although other state churches of Europe, such as the Roman Catholic and the Swedish Lutheran, had outposts in the Atlantic colonies, they had no legal status and, in the case of Maryland Catholics, had to worship inconspicuously in private homes after that colony’s original Catholic founders had to yield power to Anglicans (that is, members of the Church of England). The real contest took place in colonies where groups of English dissenters—Puritan Congregationalists in most of New England, the Society of Friends (Quakers) in Pennsylvania, and a loose alliance of Baptists and Quakers in Rhode Island—all challenged the Church of England not only politically and theologically but visually and materially in their propensity for erecting meetinghouses rather than churches. Despite the considerable differences among themselves—especially between Quakers and Puritans—their common rejection of the notion that sacred



Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, Virginia, reflected the peculiar mixture of Catholic and Protestant worship that had come to characterize the emergent Anglican tradition. Such edifices also stood as reminders of British royal authority in the colonies.

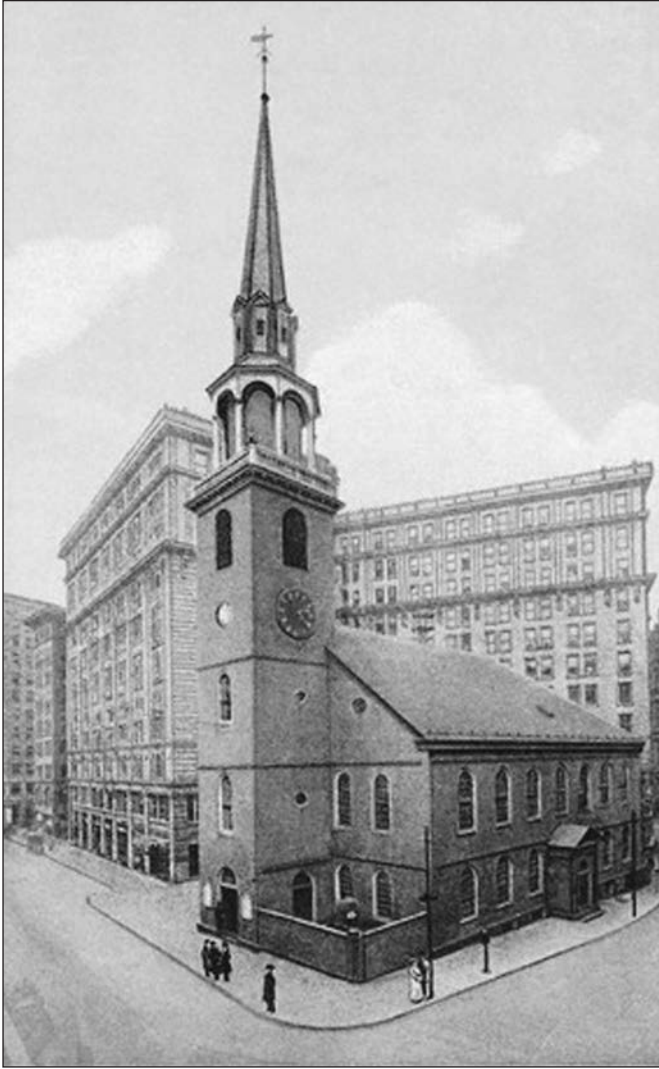
power could be embedded in worldly structures was a radical challenge to the orthodoxy represented by the “church” form of religious building. For Puritans and their Baptist offshoots, the meetinghouse framed the preaching of the divine Word; for Quakers, it was a convenient but simple structure in which the testimonies of the Inner Light could be heard and witnessed. For none was it a place designed primarily for sacramental worship.

Pluralism, Fashion, and Ideology

The earliest Puritan meetinghouses embodied the same aesthetic exemplified in Puritan sermons: the “plain style.” These meetinghouses, best represented today in Old Ship (1681) in Hingham, Massachusetts, were deliberately designed on the model of private homes, village guild halls, or other “secular” structures rather than traditional churches. Instead of an altar, the pulpit was the visual focus of the interior, and communion was served occasionally from a hinged board or movable table. These meetinghouses could also be used for legitimate secular purposes such as town meetings, school classes, or defense against native attacks, without compromising their religious character—which was never defined as in any way embodying the “sacred.”

Other than occasional nonfigurative wood carving, these structures were unornamented and intentionally lacked any visual or material representations of the divinity.

With the passage of generations and the loss of Puritan dominance, however, the meetinghouse began to morph into something new—or, rather, something older. Although it retained some of the basic structural features of older structures of the sort, such as a central pulpit and the main entrance on one of the long rather than short sides, Boston’s Old South Meetinghouse of 1729 boasted a very unpuritanical steeple and other neoclassical stylistic features popularized by Sir Christopher Wren and his successor, Sir James Gibbs, in the rebuilding of London’s “churchscape” following the Great Fire of 1666. The meetinghouse, in short, now resembled nothing so much as an Anglican church. Although Quakers continued to resist this appeal of fashion, at least in the Philadelphia area, Baptists and others followed the Puritan/Congregational lead in abandoning the plain style of the founders in favor of what the Quakers deemed the “fancy” mode of the pacesetters of ecclesiastical as well as architectural fashion. By the nineteenth century, the term “meetinghouse” itself had largely yielded to the more generic “church.”



With the loss of Puritan dominance, buildings such as Boston's Old South Meetinghouse of 1729 began to resemble traditional Anglican churches.

By the 1820s, the Wren-Gibbs neoclassical mode had largely given way to a newer form of classicism, namely, the Greek revival. Although ancient in inspiration, this mode evoked for Americans highly resonant associations with ancient Athenian democracy, and before long not only government buildings and private homes but religious buildings of all sorts—from Roman Catholic to Reform Jewish to Episcopal to Swedenborgian—now took on the aspect of “pagan” temples, as each denomination vied to assert its loyalty to American republican values. (The custom of displaying American flags in churches that began during World War I and diminished after the Vietnam conflict is a latter-day corollary.) The proliferation of both governmental buildings and memorials to wars and heroes in classical form

along the mall in the nation's capital is also a good example of the deliberate invocation of sacred allusions in structures not designed for explicit religious worship but that collectively do in fact invoke the patriotic cultus sometimes deemed the American “civil religion.”

Medieval Revivals

A major influence on Victorian American church design was the Cambridge Movement, a corollary of the better-known Oxford Movement that promoted a revival of emphasis on sacramental worship and the historic church among Anglicans on both sides of the Atlantic. The Cambridge Camden Society—also known as the Ecclesiologists—insisted that medieval Gothic was the only appropriate style for Christian sacramental worship and began to provide designs for model churches based on medieval prototypes. In the United States, such churches began to appear among Episcopalians by the mid-1840s, most notably Richard Upjohn's Trinity Church at Wall Street and Broadway in Manhattan. Upjohn, an English expatriate, also invented a new and distinctively American form, namely, “carpenter Gothic,” an adaptation of some of the most distinctive features of that style reduced to their essentials and easily built in “board and batten” form from wooden planks and simple tools. As Americans of all denominations began to settle the prairies, Great Plains, and mountain west, they brought this style with them, and it proliferated until it took on iconic dimensions for artists and photographers.

Although Episcopalians, particularly those of “High Church” or “Ritualist” inclinations, readily took to the Gothic revival, it was resisted by some of their “Low Church” coreligionists, as well as many evangelical Protestants with whom the latter identified. These latter, however, found an appropriate medieval style in the Romanesque revival, exemplified in H. H. Richardson's Trinity (Episcopal) Church in Boston's new Copley Square (1877.) The Romanesque, associated by some with the early Christian centuries rather than the later Middle Ages dominated by Roman Catholicism, was adapted by Richardson and his eclectic imitators into Victorian preaching halls for “princes of the pulpit,” such as Trinity's Phillips Brooks. Both Gothic and Romanesque revival churches, often massive in scale, became fundamental markers of the Victorian American urban landscape.

Identity and Adaptation

Although American Protestant churches of a range of denominations proliferated during the great age of urbanization



Richard Upjohn's Trinity Church at Wall Street and Broadway in Manhattan (New York City) reflected the insistence of the Cambridge Camden Society (the Ecclesiologists) that medieval Gothic was the only appropriate style for Christian sacramental worship.

that spanned the decades between the Civil War and the Great Depression, Americans of other backgrounds found themselves in need of adapting to the new situations in which they found themselves through immigration from Europe or in-migration from rural and small-town America. Prominent among the latter were African Americans, who fled north and west in vast numbers in the wake of segregation and peonage. Black slaves had worshipped as they could, in secluded outdoor “hush harbors” or in segregated galleries in white churches. Free blacks often erected modest rural churches in the Greek revival mode, creating a style as iconic as the carpenter Gothic of their western white counterparts. Those newly arrived in Chicago and other northern

cities did what they could, worshipping in storefronts or, if they ascended into the middle classes, either taking over former white churches or building their own, often in the Romanesque revival style. The distinctiveness of their worship was found not in their architecture, an arena in which they lacked economic resources to compete, but rather in their expressive manner of preaching and music.

Those coming from Europe as part of the “New Immigration”—primarily from eastern, central, and southern parts of the continent—were more likely than not to carry with them the Eastern Orthodox, Jewish, or Roman Catholic traditions, and found themselves in the industrial centers of the Northeast and Great Lakes trying to create, or recreate, a suitable environment for worship with limited resources. Eastern Orthodox were perhaps the most traditional, using local materials to build sacrament-centered churches marked by the round domes characteristic of the Greeks and the onion domes of the Russians and other Slavs. Jews, on the other hand, had few distinctive traditions, having adapted those of their host cultures over millennia of diaspora. Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island (1763), the oldest surviving Jewish house of worship in the nation, is

distinctive in its lack of distinctiveness, since it was designed to resemble the houses of the wealthy merchants among which it was situated. By the Victorian era, a new, eclectic urban style had emerged, fusing elements of the medieval revivals found in Christian churches with stylistic aspects of Moorish (Mediterranean Islamic) architecture, as a historical reference to the long association of Jews and Muslims in Iberia prior to the Reconquest of 1492. Exemplified in Cincinnati's Plum Street Temple (1865) and New York's Central Synagogue (1872), as well as in more modest versions in many small towns across the nation, this “Jewish Victorian” style represented active participation in the American civic scene while asserting a note of individuality.

During the early twentieth century a distinctively Jewish American genre emerged: the synagogue-center, which incorporated recreational and educational facilities with worship space to accommodate the needs of a community desirous of maintaining a religious and ethnic identity while conforming to the broader norms of American society.

Roman Catholics, more ethnically diverse and numerous, brought with them an elaborate liturgy and a variety of architectural traditions, many of which were adapted for American use. Patrick Keeley, a prolific Irish-American architect, favored the French Gothic style that appealed to his fellow Irish Catholics, and hundreds of his churches helped form the massive institutional infrastructure that became characteristic of American Catholicism. American Catholics also utilized a variety of styles with historical associations, such as German and Italian Romanesque and Spanish mission, the latter of which emerged during the colonization of northern California during the late eighteenth century by Franciscan missionaries. Although the Catholic immigrant community lacked the resources of many American Protestant denominations, the accumulated small contributions of unnumbered working-class families made possible the erection of such architectural monuments as St. Patrick's Cathedral on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue in 1879. Catholic parishes—the geographical units into which dioceses are subdivided—throughout the nation consisted not only of houses of worship in various revival styles but also of parochial schools, rectories, and convents, while dioceses sponsored high schools and colleges, hospitals, orphanages, cemeteries, shelters for young single people, and other structures designed to mediate life transitions under church supervision.

Protestants also acknowledged the new demands of the pluralistic city with their own adaptations. In addition to a multitude of neighborhood churches built by all denominations, some new forms emerged as distinctive to the American urban context. Episcopalians vied with Roman Catholics in erecting cathedrals and churches, usually large ones, that were designated as the ecclesiastical “seats” of bishops in their dioceses. Cathedrals were intended to be impressive material symbols of the presence of the church in the city, just as they had been in medieval Europe, and often housed lavish collections of art. Some of the latter, which could also be found in wealthier urban churches, consisted of paintings and sculpture collected and donated for the purpose, while other art objects, such as stained glass windows and reredoses (altarpieces), were built into the

fabric of the cathedral itself. Cathedrals could also be expressions of aspirations towards religious dominance, as in the (Episcopal) National Cathedral that overlooks the nation's capital.

Cathedrals had social as well as liturgical and political functions and were parts of administrative complexes from which the activities of a diocese, including outreach to the poor, could be coordinated. Evangelical denominations such as the Salvation Army or entrepreneurial preachers also established urban missions, usually nondescript buildings where the poor would be welcomed for shelter, meals, and exposure to a religious message. “Mainline” churches also founded missions where the immigrant poor could worship and receive aid without intruding on the decorous English-language worship of the middle classes. An important innovation of the era was the “institutional church,” which often occupied an entire city block and consisted of worship space—often a large Gothic revival church—together with a physical plant housing educational and recreational facilities, including parlors, Sunday school rooms, bowling alleys, basketball courts, and libraries and reading rooms. Such amenities were often aimed not so much at the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, or Congregationalists who were already members but rather at young people recently arrived in the city from farms and small towns who might drift off into the pathways of urban vice if left without wholesome alternatives. (The YMCA and YWCA movements were similar evangelical responses.) Roman Catholic parishes at times offered similar facilities and programs, as did the Jewish synagogue-center.

Postwar Patterns

Religious building came nearly to a stop during the years of the Depression and world wars, but it revived in the late 1940s as the rush to the suburbs again transformed the geographical and demographic shape of American life. New churches and synagogues proliferated, sometimes in stylized versions of established modes—the colonial revival had patriotic resonances during the cold war era—and others that incorporated the design elements generated by the modernist movement in Europe and by the liturgical revival that originated in Benedictine monasticism and received a major impetus from the reforms of Vatican II. Instead of hierarchically arranged worship spaces, with a processional aisle leading up to the high altar, churches now were frequently designed in semicircular configurations with an altar-table centrally located amidst the congregation, whom

the priest now faced. American Lutherans, whose order of worship closely resembled that of Roman Catholics and Anglicans, quickly joined their liturgical bedfellows in creatively adopting these architectural forms.

The evangelical revival that began in the 1970s also ushered in a new era of religious design and building, now situated primarily in the far suburbs and exurbs that grew up around the rapidly expanding conurbations of the Sunbelt. Although such churches began with domestic-like structures that resembled ranch houses, the distinctive new building form was the “megachurch.” Megachurches are usually defined as churches with membership of more than two thousand, sometimes exceeding the fifteen thousand mark. Usually but not always evangelical in tone, such churches are in some ways the heirs of the institutional church movement of the era of urbanization. Vast in scale, eclectic in style, and designed to provide both auditorium-style space for preaching and high-tech facilities for any number of other group activities, megachurches target uprooted and unchurched suburbanites as their potential clientele.

Whereas the megachurch was the continuation of a long tradition of Anglo-American preaching-centered evangelicism, another new feature of the late-twentieth-century American “churchscape” was the proliferation of houses of worship of religions beyond the Jewish-Christian spectrum. The result in large part of the Hart-Cellar Immigration Act of 1965, which facilitated the settlement especially of professionals from Asia and the Middle East, these newcomers brought with them the Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim traditions. Their often high income levels enabled them to construct appropriate places for worship, often in affluent suburban locales with easy access to interstate highways. Such structures were frequently not simply replicas of prototypes in the home nations of these immigrants but rather adaptations to American circumstances similar to those created by earlier waves of European immigrants when confronted with the new social realities of the American city. Where mosques are a common feature of the urban landscape of Arab countries, for example, American Muslims have been concerned not simply with securing places of worship but also with preserving and transmitting their religious cultures to American-born generations, issues with no relevance in countries where Muslims predominate. The result was the Islamic center, much like the older Jewish synagogue-center, which combined educational and recreational with worship facilities and brokered the cultural differences of the many national groups represented in

nascent American Muslim communities. Hindu temples in America similarly reflected new social realities such as changing gender roles, ethnic differences, and the universal immigrant problem of cultural transmission.

Religious Architecture and the American Landscape

The story of American religious architecture is in many ways the story of American religion and, more broadly, of America itself. The clues offered by such architecture can be a valuable addition to other sorts of evidence for interpreting those stories. The following are some general themes illustrated in the preceding narrative.

Ritual. Although ritual is a universal constituent of religion, the ways in which it is enacted are as diverse as religion itself. Religious architecture is, first and foremost, a material backdrop for worship, and the study of worship is inseparable from that of its backdrop. Ritual, though often tradition-bound, is seldom static, and changes in belief and worship frequently exist in dialectical tension.

Expanded Religious Functions. In a new society in which many social functions provided by traditional communities no longer existed, religious organizations by some mixture of choice and necessity began to take them up. The result was the erection under religious auspices of programs and physical facilities for recreation, education, and the care of the ill and the indigent.

Pluralism. The enormous variety of religious building, past and present, in the United States is reflective of the diversity of religious adherence that has been fundamental and distinctive in America’s religious composition.

Political Presence. Religious buildings are visible markers of a religious body’s presence in a community and may be assertions of civic participation or political influence.

Immigration and Ethnicity. The major source of U.S. diversity has historically been immigration, from virtually every part of the world, an immigration predating the arrival of Europeans as indigenous peoples arrived from Siberia (and perhaps other locales) and spread throughout the American continents. One of the primary components of the cultural baggage of immigrants is their religion, and with it the remembered physical settings for the performance of that religion.

Adaptation. Although immigrants often seek to replicate the built environment, religious and otherwise, of their homelands, they almost inevitably find themselves having to adapt and innovate as well, incorporating new raw materials and building techniques as well as devising new sorts of

structures to meet needs that had never existed in the lands whence they came.

Demographic Change. In addition to immigration, the patterns of American life have been historically affected deeply by in-migration, the movement of populations within the boundaries of the nation. As the focus of American settlement shifted from farm to city to suburb to exurb, religious building, as well as other types, have adapted in scale, siting, and structure to the needs presented by continually shifting patterns of settlement. Where the Anglican churches of colonial Virginia, for example, were sited for access from scattered plantations by horse or boat, the megachurches of the early twenty-first century must have easy interstate access and vast parking facilities.

Economic and Social Status. Building costs money. The scale, siting, and style of religious buildings are primary evidence of the social status of a congregation, as reflected in the financial resources it can muster for its building.

Fashion. In addition to money, fashion is another marker of social status, and religion and its built environment are by no means exempt from its call. Fashion in religious building may result, as it did in medieval Europe, from the primacy of religious institutions and leaders as shapers of fashion (hence Gothic); from the dominant role of governmental institutions, as in the Roman Empire (Romanesque); from a privileged aristocracy, as in Georgian England (neoclassicism); or, as in the United States, the prestige of commercial culture, which has been cited as an explanation for the putative resemblance of megachurches to shopping malls or corporate headquarters.

The built environment of American religion is, in short, not only diverse but as complicated in its forms, functions, and sources as the religious traditions that have produced it within the context of a broader society, the character of which it reflects and by which it has been shaped.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Immigration* entries; *Liturgical Arts*; *Megachurches*; *Music* entries; *Worship* entries.

Peter W. Williams

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Architecture: Asian Religions

Architecture of Asian religious traditions in the United States includes temples, churches, and *Gurdwaras* used by Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, and Shinto congregations. The internal diversity within the immigrant groups, the existence of religious subcultures, and practice of congregational and noncongregational services influence the kinds of structures built to house these traditions.

Buddhist Architecture

Buddhist traditions in America include Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana schools of Buddhism. Paul Numrich argues that there are two parallel congregations in American Buddhist temples: the immigrant/Asian American congregation and the non-Asian, native-born (often white) American congregation.

The Japanese brought Mahayana practices to the United States between 1868 and 1912. Buddhist temples in America did not carry the architectural characters of temples and monasteries (*vihara*) in Japan (such as landscaped courtyards, pagoda roofs, and grottos). Instead, the immigrants modified existing buildings by adding decorative motifs such as the dharma wheel and lotus symbols on the walls. They re-created temple altars (*butsudan*) to hold statues of the Buddha and *bodhisattavas* (divine beings and incarnations of Buddha).

Sociologist Tetsuden Kashima argues that Buddhist temples in Japan were primarily places of worship and spiritual development, while in America they became religious and social spaces that sustained ethnic communities. Many of the immigrants practiced Jodo Shinshu, a denomination of Amida Buddhism. The main temple of this sect is Hongwanji-Ha in Kyoto. The 1898 Bukkyo Seinen Kai Buddhist organization (also known as Young Men's Buddhist

Association) met in the home of one Dr. Katsugoro Haidu in San Francisco. Within a few months, the congregation met in the Pythian Castle Auditorium (909 Market Street) and within a year moved to a building in Mason Street. After moving about in multiple locations, in 1905, the Buddhist Church of San Francisco was reestablished at 1880 Pine Street. After major rebuilding in 1935, the new three-storied structure looked like a Western church with arches and pediments. However, external architectural motifs such as the lotus on the doorway and a domed roof with a pagoda finial mark this as a Buddhist building. Internally, it had a *hondo* (worship sanctuary), a *stupa* (Buddhist reliquary), food and incense offerings area, a gymnasium, and office spaces.

After the Japanese internment during World War II, freed prisoners spread out across the United States carrying their religious beliefs. The Midwest Buddhist Temple and Buddhist Temple of Chicago opened in 1944. Buddhist churches and meeting places across the country doubled up as community centers. For instance, in 1945, returning internees found sanctuary in temporary prefab houses built on the grounds of the Arizona Buddhist Church.

Zen is a practice within Mahayana traditions. The Buddhist Society of America opened in New York City in 1931 to popularize Zen meditation. Zen teacher Nyogen Senzaki opened Zen centers in San Francisco and Los Angeles during this decade. By the late 1950s Zen was popular among the

predominantly Anglo-American congregations of the Beat Generation, and by the mid-1960s centers opened in New York, Rochester, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Hawaii to cater to a mixed native-born, Anglo, and Asian congregation.

The Buddhism practiced by the Chinese incorporates deities originating from Taoism and Confucianism. The main architectural elements in a Taoist/Buddhist temple, popularly called Joss Houses, are (1) a sloping roofed structure with a front porch; (2) altars, food offering tables, bells, and gongs; and (3) wall inscriptions and tapestries. In the United States, a Joss House has come to stand for a Chinese shrine. The origins of this term can be traced back to joss sticks, or incense sticks that are burnt in this space. Temple layout, based on Chinese rules of geomancy, includes a single room with an altar and screens to channel good spirits. Often rooms are added on either side or at the back of the main room to house a storeroom, a kitchen, or a priest's living quarters.

The Kong Chow Temple of San Francisco (1853, rebuilt after 1909), Oroville's Moon Temple (wooden structure in 1850s, rebuilt in 1863), the Mo Dai Miu temple in Mendocino, and the Bok Kai Miu Temple in Marysville (1854) are early examples of Taoist temples. According to the Pluralism Project, by the end of the nineteenth century, there were four hundred Chinese temples on the West Coast and in the Rocky Mountain frontier states.



Storefront Taoist/Buddhist temple in New York City dedicated to Guan Gong.

The Weaverville Joss House Temple, built in 1874 (first built in 1852 and rebuilt three times), is a typical Taoist temple located in a wooded site. The building is a wooden structure with a porch and two parallel gables. In China, temples are built of stone and tile. In the New World, immigrants used wood, but they painted the wooden façade to resemble sky-blue tiles with pearl white mortar. The porch has a cedar gate with golden Chinese inscriptions hung over it. Symbols of a lotus flower, dragon fish, and dragons embellish the rooftop. Ornate cornices transform this ordinary building into a temple. A bright red screen near the entrance door guards against evil spirits. The inside room is dimly lit and fragrant due to burning incense. The floor is made of cedar and the altar has a railing. Silk

tapestry banners, embroidered and stitched scrolls, and King's umbrellas embellish the walls. In addition to deities, brass inscribed tablets and ceremonial objects such as oracle books, incense burners, and divination sticks are placed on the altar. An offering stand holds fruits, candy, or incense.

A study of the Guan Gong temple (294 Broome Street, New York) conducted by this author and his students, shows that recent Taoist/Buddhist storefront temples resemble the interior layouts of their twentieth-century predecessors. This temple is one of many set up by the recent Fuzhounese immigrants in New York. Like the older Joss Houses, these storefront temples include a central hall with multiple altars, a platform for offerings, wall tapestries and scrolls, and incense and offerings. In addition, back rooms serve as kitchens, storerooms, and living spaces.

Theravada Buddhist places of worship appeared in the American continent after 1965 with the coming of new immigrants and refugees from Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. New Theravada temples built since the 1990s follow the architectural details of temples in Asia. Examples include the Buddhist Vihara (1966) and the Dharma Vijaya Buddhist Vihara (1980) for Sri Lankan immigrants in Washington, D.C.; Wat Thai Temple in Los Angeles for Thai worshippers (1972); and Wat Lao Phouthavong Temple in Catlett, Virginia, for Laotians (1979). The temples double as social spaces catering to immigrants. Theravada worship involves ritual chanting on a raised platform and sacred enclosure (*mandapaya*) next to the altar. The main prayer hall is called a *sala*. Many new temples have accommodations for the monks in the temple precincts. In Wat Promkunaram, a Thai temple in Waddell, Arizona, living quarters for the monks, a library, and offices are tucked behind the prayer hall. A larger community hall with a kitchen and dining space is built separately in the site to accommodate social events and ceremonies. In addition, temples are festooned with brightly colored flags.

Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhist centers include the Land of Compassion Buddha in West Covina, California, ongoing building projects of the United Trungram Buddhist Fellowship (Sankhu Monastery, Mahamudra Hermitage, Trungram International Academy), and the Drepung Loseling Monastery in Atlanta, Georgia.

In general, buildings used by Asian Buddhist congregations can be categorized into two types: (1) preexisting structures reused as religious spaces, often indistinguishable from surrounding secular buildings; and (2) new custom-built structures set apart from the surrounding landscape by their



The Fresno Betsuin Buddhist temple, located at 1340 Kern Street, belongs to the Jodo Shinshu (Pure Land) denomination of Buddhism.

scale, architectural form, and building materials. The first kind, popular in the early years of the twentieth century, comprised buildings that reused local materials and structures but added symbolic elements and inscriptions to the façade and painted the buildings in ways that made them resemble structures back home. Recurring elements such as lotus flowers, dharma wheels, and post and lintel gates were often added so that the buildings were identifiable from outside. Immigrants often transformed these buildings by creating an appropriate ambience through ephemeral and sensory modifications to the environment. As a result, most changes occur in the interior of the buildings, including smells, sounds, and haptic choreographing of access into the shrine. Newer buildings, especially those built since the 1980s by recent immigrants, are more ostentatious, their external façades resembling temples in Asia. High plinths and pagoda roofs (Hsi Lai Temple, Hacienda Heights, California), elaborate sculptural gates and landscaping (Wat Promkunaram, Waddell, Arizona), replicas of temples in Asia (Wat Florida Dhammaram, Kissimmee) and signage in Asian languages make these temples stand out in the American landscape.

Shinto Architecture

The architectural layout of Shinto shrines includes a main hall for worshipping (*haiden*) and a smaller hall for the deity (*honden*). In more elaborate temples, one may find a room between the *haiden* and the *honden*. Called *heiden*, these rooms offer spaces accessible to the priests only. The sacred precinct of the temple is delineated by a ceremonial gate called the *torii*. These gates, generally made of wood, have straight or curved lintels. The path and landscape leading to the shrine via the *torii* is decorated with stone lanterns and lion statues (*komainu*). The eaves of shrine roofs sometimes have carvings of mythical beasts. The temple walls have strips of white paper (*gohei*) and sacred plaited ropes (*shimenawa*). Since ablutions are necessary during prayer, shrines also have a tub for washing the face and hands. The Tsubaki Grand Shrine erected in Stockton, California, in 1987 is the first documented Shinto shrine within the U.S. mainland. Earlier temples exist in Hawaii (such as the Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha started in 1920).

Hindu Religious Architecture

Hinduism is a complex tradition with many subgroups with diverse local languages, practices, and deities. Hindu religious spaces are of two types: shrines and consecrated temples. Because Hindu worship need not be congregational, Hindu shrines appear in homes, businesses, and places of work. These shrines, housed in elaborate cabinets, are sometimes located in rooms set aside for worship or placed on shelves and china cabinets.

Hindu temple building in the United States has increased since the 1970s. Two kinds of temples appear in the American landscape: spaces where practice is primarily congregational and temples where ritual practice is common. According to John Y. Fenton, consecrating a temple is a symbolic act during which the site of the temple becomes part of a larger sacred landscape. Diana Eck refers to the notion of pilgrimage in order to understand the social reproduction of Hindu sacred geography in the United States. Some temple compounds literally re-create temples and landscapes from India (for example, Shiva Vishnu Temple in Lanham, Maryland, the Divya Dham Temple in Queens, New York, and the Shri Venkateshwara temples in multiple American cities).

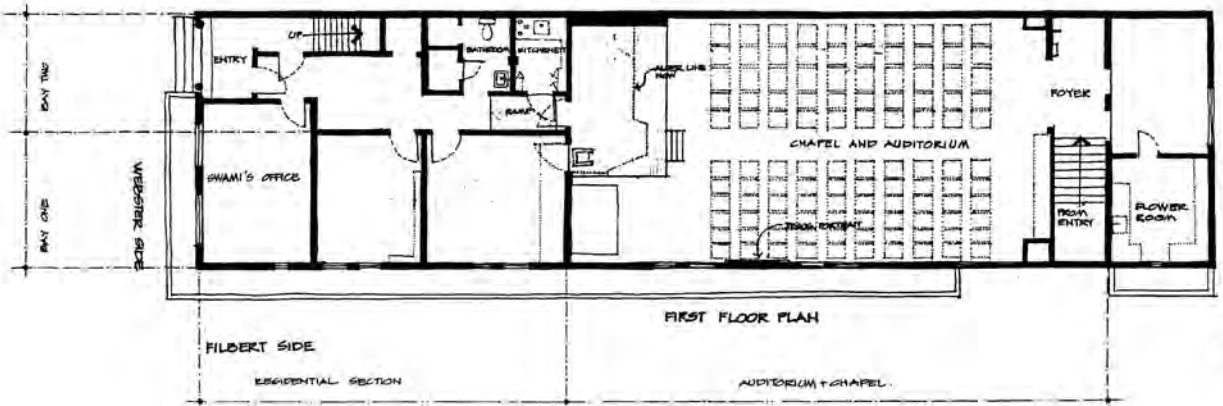
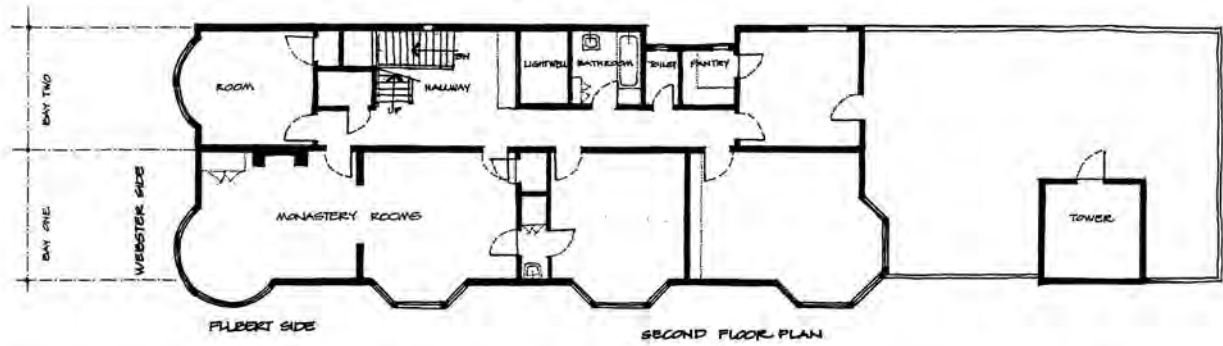
The term “Missionary Hinduism” describes an intellectual Hinduism that has appealed to American converts since the nineteenth century. The interior architecture of Missionary Hinduism buildings primarily caters to congregational

practices. Examples include temples for Vedanta Societies (started in 1900), Self-Realization Fellowship (started in 1920), and International Society for Krishna Consciousness (established in 1966). The opulent International Society for Krishna Consciousness temple designed in New Vrindaban, West Virginia, contains multiple temples built in eclectic Rajput architectural styles resembling palaces and temples in the Indian state of Rajasthan.

A prominent example of a building for congregational worship is the Vedanta Temple of San Francisco, known as the first Hindu temple of the West (built in 1906, added to and completed in 1908). The San Francisco temple served a largely Anglo congregation during a time of popular anti-Asian sentiments and negative perceptions of Hindu and Oriental religions. The architectural style of this building is eclectic, with elements borrowed from Islamic mausoleum domes, Hindu temple towers from Bengal and North India, Moorish arches, onion domes, battlemented parapets of European castles, and bay windows akin to those found in neighboring Victorian homes in the upscale Filmore neighborhood where the temple is located. Foliated arches over the windows, lotus-petal canopy protruding over a marble-mosaic doorway, and a Taj Mahal dome are architectural elements that refer to its exotic eastern origins. The building layout is not so “exotic”: it has a congregational prayer hall, a rectory, and a series of terrace-top chapels. Men and women sat in separate chairs across the central aisle during “vesper” services on the weekends and evenings. The monk stood on the elevated wooden dais on the altar platform to give a sermon to his seated congregation. Hindu practices were mixed with Christian ones, creating a hybrid behavior in this space. The building was designed by Joseph Leonard, an architect and developer from the Bay Area.

Another good example is the Vedanta Temple of Berkeley, California, built in 1939. Designed by Henry Higby Guttersen (1884–1954), a prominent Bay Area architect who worked with John Galen Howard (1864–1931) and Bernard Maybeck (1862–1957), the temple is designed to look like a church.

Raymond Williams argues that immigrant Hindu temples in America put aside internal differences, creating a pan-Hindu ecumenical order. In these temples we find an attempt to accommodate diverse deities, practices, and architectural styles in ways that are not found in India. Noncumenical temples catering to specialized traditions exist. Examples are the Swaminarayan temples and the Pushtimarga temples (Vraj, Pennsylvania; Sayreville, New Jersey) built by Gujarati



The Vedanta Temple in San Francisco. Plan and Elevation. The temple was built in 1906 and completed in 1908. Vedanta practice emerged from Hinduism.



The Hindu Temple Society of North America, Ganesh Temple, Flushing, New York.

immigrants, Venkateswara temples (Pittsburgh, Chicago, and other locations) built by Tamils and Telegu-speaking groups, and Kali Temple (New York) or Ananda Mandir (Somerset, New Jersey) by Bengali-speaking immigrants. Indo-Caribbean Hindus (American Sevashram Sangha, Jamaica, New York; Sri Ram Mandir, Cyprus Hill, Brooklyn, New York) have also built temples in recent times.

The basic layout of a Hindu temple includes one or more sanctum areas. Variations of these spaces (called *garbha griha* in Sanskrit or *grabhagraham* in Tamil) include a separate room or an area delineated within a larger space by a canopied platform (*mandapam* or *mandap*) or a simple raised dais. The sanctum area is not accessible to lay worshippers and is only entered by officiating priests. Worshippers circumambulate the sanctum.

Scholars categorize Hindu temples under North Indian and South Indian styles. The North Indian style, also known as the *Nagara* style, is loosely characterized by the presence of a beehive-shaped tower (*shikhara*) made in multiple overlapping layers and tipped by a round, flattened element called the *amalaka*. Examples of North Indian temple architecture can be seen in temples such as the Hindu-Jain Temple in Monroeville, Pennsylvania; the Hindu Temple of metropolitan Washington; Sunnyvale Hindu Temple and

Fremont Hindu Temple in California; and in the faux relief on the façade of the Vaikunth Hindu-Jain Temple of South Jersey in New Jersey.

In contrast, the South Indian style is identifiable by a pyramid-shaped tower gate (*gopuram*), with smaller stepped stories containing pavilions and carved statuettes. Examples of temples built in the South Indian style include Shri Venkateswara Temple, Pittsburgh; Ganesh Temple, Flushing, New York; Meenakshi Temple, Houston; Shri Venkateswara Temple, Los Angeles; Shri Vishwanatha Temple, Flint, Michigan; Rama Temple, Lemont, Illinois; Shri Venkateswara Temple, Aurora, Illinois; and Shiva-Vishnu Temple, San Francisco.

The Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago is an example of the two variations built side by side. The Rama Temple with its towering South Indian-style *gopuram* is flanked by the shorter North Indian-style *shikhara* of the Ganesh-Shiva-Durga Temple. However, these “styles” are monikers that stand for complex politics of temple building and the differences between immigrant subgroups. Major regional and historical variations within these styles can be easily missed by following the simplistic binary nomenclature. Students of Indian temples should therefore carefully examine the details of the temple before using existing categories to describe temple architecture.

Jain Architecture

Jainism is a distinct religion popular in India. Jain temples in the United States share premises with Hindu temples (for example, Hindu-Jain Temple, Monroeville, Pennsylvania; Samarpan Hindu Temple, Philadelphia). Some are located in the same grounds as Hindu temples (for example, Jain Religion Center of Wisconsin, Pewaukee). Since the late 1990s, new temples dedicated to Jain worship have appeared (for example, Jain Center of Northern California, Milpitas; Jain Center of Southern California at Buena Park). Nevertheless, a majority of contemporary Jain centers are located in existing buildings and rented halls. Architecturally, the new Jain temples

resemble North and West Indian temples. The sanctum houses deities of Mahavira, the founder of the religion, and twenty-four *tirthankaras* (enlightened liberated souls).

Sikh Architecture

The Sikh place of worship is called a *Gurdwara* (literally a doorway to the guru). A typical layout of a Sikh *Gurdwara* consists of a rectangular room to house the sacred scriptures called the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The sacred scripture is placed on a raised platform with a covering canopy. The room can be entered from all four sides. Men and women traditionally sit in separate aisles. The central hall is designed for circumambulation of the sacred scriptures. Sometimes a ribbed dome with ornamental toppings crowns this room, and arched copings and architectural kiosks are attached to this structure. A saffron or blue flag called *Nishan Sahib* is flown atop the *Gurdwara* to mark the sacred domain. A *Gurdwara* also includes a public meeting place, an educational institution, a service space for the community, and a communal kitchen (*langar*).

The first *Gurdwara* in the United States was established in Stockton, California. The *Gurdwara* began in a small frame house in 1912. The November 22, 1915, issue of the *Stockton Record* newspaper reported the opening of the Stockton *Gurdwara* on 1936 South Grant Street. The article described the worship ceremonies in this two-storied building. The sanctum was on the second floor while the first floor acted as a public meeting room. In 1929, the old structure was moved, and a new imposing brick building with a large arched entrance portal was built in the same location. In addition to being religious spaces, twentieth-century *Gurdwaras* along the Pacific Rim became sites of nationalist activism against British rule in India and meeting places for Indian immigrants from all religious persuasions.

A new wave of Sikh immigrants came to the United States after 1965 and again in the mid-1980s. Many of them came to the borough of Queens, New York. After using the basement of St. Michael's school in Flushing as a Sunday meeting and worship space, the first *Gurdwara* on the East Coast was built in Richmond Hill in 1972. This *Gurdwara* catered to a large community: the community kitchen fed more than five thousand men and women during festivals. The 1970s saw a spurt in the number of *Gurdwaras* across the country. While many of them are housed in temporary spaces, churches, basements, preexisting buildings, and warehouses (Millis, Massachusetts; Denver; Bridgewater, New Jersey; Hayward, California), there are new ostentatiously built structures such

as the ones in California, including El Sobrante (1970s), Yuba City (1969), Fremont (1978), and Sacramento (1983); and in Durham, North Carolina (1985). These new buildings are often bigger to accommodate larger and richer congregations. They are built in the Indo-Persian style of architecture, resembling the main Sikh shrine of Harimandar Sahib in Amritsar. Fluted and solid domes, multifoil arches, decorated panels and pilasters, and variations of trefoil arches are architectural elements used in these buildings. However, building such large and architecturally significant structures is also fraught with political resistance from local communities, as seen in the controversy surrounding the design and building of a \$10 million Sikh *Gurdwara* on a forty-acre property in the Evergreen Hills neighborhood of San Jose, California, in 1997. The Pluralism Project at Harvard University lists 251 religious centers related to Sikhism in its 2008 database.

Conclusion

A point to keep in mind while studying Asian religious architecture in the United States is that cultural forms are translated and interpreted differently in new contexts. Theories of cultural diffusion focus on the retention and reuse of material and visual forms, symbolic details, interior layout, and architectural styles in buildings. Indeed, due to their visual alterity, stylistic and formal features such as the dharma wheel, temple towers, gates, and signage take precedence over less apparent spatial characteristics such as the processional layout, forms of access and territories, sensory ambience, and conflicting user interpretations of these spaces. These visual forms are therefore the first identifiable features that distinguish religious buildings. However, for Asian religious architecture, theories of hybridity, performance, and translation offer a better framework of analysis. An interpretive framework that relates the building to its social, economic, and political context allows us to see how these architectural forms are tempered and construed as a response to local government, communities, media, and other forms of authorship.

Buildings housing Asian religions in the United States fall under a continuum of architectural marking strategies used by their builders to relate to the larger cultural landscape—from camouflaging, or erasing all signs of difference from the exterior form, on the one hand, to accentuating visible difference through exotic architectural forms, on the other. Buildings are marked by using a bank of symbolic forms and details that reproduce social and spatial boundaries and distinguish these buildings from the surrounding landscape. Semifixed and impermanent features such as flags, posters,

and signage are easy to tack on and can be a quick and easy way to demarcate religious territories. Fixed features such as towers, lintel detailing, and structural features are more expensive and difficult to build and hence require a larger and politically sustainable congregation, as well as amenable social, political, and economic circumstances. Hence we find that at different historical periods these strategies varied with demographics and the acceptability of these religions within American society.

Boundary maintenance and marking processes occur in the interior of buildings, too. Manipulation of visual and physical access, interior layout and use, creation of processional movement spaces, controlling smells and sounds, and home behavior are tactics that are ephemeral, performative, and dependant on the user. Different users experience and interpret these tactics differently, making it necessary to situate these spaces within social and spatial contexts.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Bahá'í*; *Buddhism in North America*; *Buddhist Tradition and Heritage*; *Canada: Pluralism*; *Hindu Tradition and Heritage*; *Hinduism in North America*; *Jainism*; *Sikhs*; *Zen Buddhism*.

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Architecture: Early America

As many historians have noted, religion in colonial America was pluralistic from the beginning. The varied religious denominations transplanted by colonists were a reflection of their ethnic and geographical origins, which in turn influenced their respective modes of worship and the buildings they constructed. However, out of necessity, in the early years of settlement all colonists worshipped in temporary structures or in buildings constructed for other purposes. Later, as communities grew and colonists became more settled, worshippers began to erect more permanent and impressive buildings of enduring indigenous materials. In some cases, forms such as the Congregational meetinghouse type were adopted by other Protestant denominations in the colonies. Increasingly throughout the eighteenth century, architectural style and taste from England began to influence the design of colonial religious buildings, providing a greater aesthetic unity across denominations.

Anglican Churches in Virginia

The earliest English settlement on the eastern seaboard was in the Virginia colony. In 1607, colonists established the first permanent English settlement, which they named Jamestown. These Virginia colonists, distinguished from colonists in New England who sought religious freedom, were instead motivated by economic independence. Despite the reason for their emigration, the Jamestown colonists were not without faith and appear to have held worship services immediately upon arrival in their new home. Their leader Captain John Smith wrote of their early experience,

I well remember wee did hang an awning (which is an old saile) to three or foure trees to shadow us from the Sunne, our walles were rales of wood, our seats unhewed trees till we cut planks, our pulpit a bar of wood nailed to two neighbouring trees. In foule weather we shifted into an old rotten tent; for we had few better. . . .

It was in such a primitive worship space that these colonists recited from the *Book of Common Prayer* two times a day and held Sunday service. Later, a more permanent wood structure was built. This edifice was probably of earthfast construction, where wooden posts providing the structural support for the building were set directly into the ground. After this church burned in 1608, colonists replaced it with another structure approximately thirty feet by twenty-four

feet, also of wood. A third church built in 1617 likewise was of wood, but it was set upon a stone and brick foundation, an enhancement that extended its life. However, it was not until 1639 that colonists began construction of a truly permanent church of brick—a project that took them until 1647 to complete.

The importance placed on building worship space at Jamestown was not completely driven by the colonists' own piety. The charter authorizing the Virginia settlement declared the Anglican or Church of England the official church, which in turn was supported by public monies. Gradually, legislation further defined the role of the Anglican Church, directed its physical development, and regulated colonists' participation. Within two years, the Virginia Company Council dictated that three settlements would be established and each would have a church. By 1624, acknowledging both the rural quality of the colony and its system of plantations, the General Assembly ordered that every plantation should have a room or a building in which to worship. As a practical matter, the organization of the Anglican Church in Virginia was based on parishes, which ranged in size from a single plantation to a county or larger. In the 1630s, a law was passed mandating Communion three times a year and authorizing the imposition of a fine for an unexcused absence from worship service.

According to architectural historian Dell Upton, most of Virginia's churches of the colonial period were wood and, accordingly, do not survive. One of the earliest examples for which there is documentation is the nonextant Poplar Spring Church of 1677 in Gloucester County. Probably of earthfast construction, its interior belied its crude construction and exterior. With paneled pews, a chancel screen, and a pulpit that rose three levels, it also reportedly had painted cherubim. Typical of these early wood churches, its construction necessitated its replacement by 1723. Throughout the eighteenth century, a majority of churches continued to be built of wood. Two notable wooden churches that survive are Slash Church (1730) in Hanover County and Tillotson Parish Church (c. 1760) in Buckingham County. These rectangular buildings have entrances directly into the long sanctuary. A gallery at the west end provided additional seating.

A seventeenth-century brick church known as St. Luke's, in Isle of Wight County, Virginia (c. 1680), survives as Virginia's oldest church and is today considered by many to be the quintessential church of colonial Virginia. Stylistically, the exterior is an amalgam of several European

influences. The tall entrance tower, buttresses, and pointed arched windows with tracery reference the Gothic style—a late survivor of this medieval style. The crow-stepped gable at the east end shows a Flemish influence. Details such as the quoin and applied pediment over the entrance exhibit an awareness of classical architecture on the part of the building's unknown designer. Inside is the long nave with center aisle but without a separate chancel. This interior arrangement was derived from the rectangular room or auditory churches of rural England that began to emerge in the early seventeenth century. A related church is St. Peter's Parish Church in New Kent County, Virginia, of 1701–1703. Obvious similarities between these two churches include the use of brick, the Flemish curvilinear parapet gables at the east and west ends, and the rectangular nave. The tall tower of St. Peter's was added forty years after the initial construction as an embellishment, as the congregation grew more settled and affluent.

Other colonial churches in Virginia include Bruton Parish Church erected on Duke of Gloucester Street in the colonial capital of Williamsburg. This church, the third iteration on this site, was built between 1710 and 1715 and was designed by colonial Governor Alexander Spotswood. Although its cruciform shape is a medieval form, its proportions and detailing are classical. Indeed, Bruton Parish is the first colonial church influenced by Christopher Wren, the architect hired to design fifty-one churches in London following the disastrous fire of 1666. Similarly, Christ Church in Lancaster County of 1732 is cruciform in plan but with classical references, including round-headed windows with keystones and an arched pediment and classical pilasters at the entrance. A three-tiered pulpit, classical altar, and paneled box pews finished the interior. This building was financed by wealthy plantation owner Robert “King” Carter, who wrote, “The more [God] lends us, the larger accounts he expects from us.” Christ Church served as the model for a number of other Virginia parish churches well into the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

In the mid-eighteenth century, classicism continued to dominate the design of Anglican churches in Virginia. Aquia Church of 1751–1755 in Stafford County is a Greek cross-plan church with a tower and cupola over its west arm. The church is built of brick laid in Flemish bond (an expensive embellishment) and with quoins and keystones of local Aquia sandstone. The three entrances have door architraves taken from Batty Langley's *Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs* (1750), a remarkably swift transmission of an



St. James Church at Goose Creek near Charleston (built 1713–1719) is a rural parish church set in one of nine parishes established by South Carolina's General Assembly in 1706.

architectural idea given that Aquia Church was completed just five years after publication. A focal point of the interior is an elaborate altarpiece with Ionic pilasters and pediment. Mounted on the altar are four tablets on which are inscribed the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, and Apostles' Creed.

Anglican Churches in South Carolina

Outside of the Virginia colony is St. James Church at Goose Creek, near Charleston. It was built from 1713 to 1719, and its construction was partially funded by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. This one-story brick building, covered with stucco in the nineteenth century, is a rural parish church set in one of nine parishes established by South Carolina's General Assembly in 1706. The main entrance is framed with Doric pilasters, and the pediment above holds a stucco relief of a pelican piercing her breast with her beak to feed her young—a Christian symbol adopted by the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. In the interior, a center aisle and two flanking aisles separate the box pews. A gallery across the rear of the sanctuary and supported with Ionic columns provides additional seating. At the east end, a curving staircase leads to the elevated pulpit, which is situated in front of

a Baroque painted reredos with the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. The royal coat of arms of George I featuring a lion and unicorn hanging over the pulpit was a physical reminder to worshippers of the dependence of the colony and the church on England and the Church of England.

St. Michael's Church in Charleston, South Carolina, marks an important departure in the design of Anglican churches in the South. This monumental building erected by Irish-born architect Samuel Cardy in 1761 was based on James Gibbs's innovative design for St. Martin-in-the-Fields (1722–1726) in London. Built of brick but covered with stucco, perhaps the most impressive feature is this building's two-story Doric portico topped with a five-story steeple. The interior and the sacraments practiced within similarly displayed new ideas that represented important shifts in Anglican theology. Historian Louis P. Nelson has noted that the

use of a tray ceiling in the sanctuary instead of the more commonly used celestial-inspired barrel vault signaled an acceptance of empiricism and a rejection of the supernatural. Cherubs and other supernatural forms were supplanted by a "theology of aesthetics"—a set of values that privileged reason and beauty over mystery. With the design of this church, the vestry made conscious choices to adopt the latest architectural styles from abroad and to change the way in which Anglican beliefs were expressed in iconography and liturgy.

Congregationalist Meetinghouses in New England

To the north, the Puritans or English Separatists first arrived in the New World in 1620, but it was ten years later when the great Puritan migration took place with the establishment of the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1630. These colonists were in search of religious freedom for themselves, and as William Bradford, governor of Plymouth, declared, they were committed to the task of "propagating and advancing the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world." The Puritans' earliest worship services took place in temporary structures hastily erected, in colonists' homes, or in the parsonage. It was the meeting-house form, however, that came to epitomize early Protestant



St. Michael's Church in Charleston, South Carolina, reflects a significant departure in the design of Anglican churches in the South, including the adoption of the latest architectural styles from abroad. The design represented a change in the way in which Anglican beliefs were expressed in iconography and liturgy.

worship space in New England in the colonial period. These Congregational meetinghouses were usually constructed and supported with public money and owned by the town. In addition to serving as the community's worship space, they were also the places where civic meetings of all types took place in the early years of the colonies. Literally and figuratively, the meetinghouse was centrally located usually in the town green and symbolically represented both the civic and religious life of the community.

The first meetinghouses to be constructed, such as those in Sudbury and Dedham, Massachusetts, date from the early seventeenth century. Small in scale, these rectangular wooden buildings resembled domestic buildings and were undistinguished from the homes of the more well-to-do colonists. These meetinghouses were of heavy timber frame construction infilled with wattle and daub, which in turn was

protected from the elements by clapboard on the exterior. Typically, these buildings were one-and-a-half stories, with the entrance on one of the long sides, small casement windows with diamond-shaped panes of glass, and thatched roofs. These plain buildings served the strict functional purpose of providing a gathering space and deliberately avoided overt religious symbolism such as an altar. Puritan worshippers instead focused their attention on proclamation and preaching. Accordingly, the arrangement of benches on which the worshippers sat and the prominence of the pulpit facilitated that emphasis. Communion, using plain vessels and plates, was offered occasionally throughout the year in the meetinghouse, but baptisms typically took place in private homes.

The next generation of meetinghouses in New England was distinguished by an increase in scale. Old Ship Meeting House in Hingham, Massachusetts, is the earliest surviving example of this type. Originally built in 1681, it was forty-five feet by fifty-five feet in plan but was altered in the eighteenth century: its floor plan was expanded to seventy-three feet by fifty-five feet and a cupola was added. The building is heavy timber frame covered with clapboard on the exterior but with its structural system, including the cruck frame (naturally curving timbers supporting the roof), exposed on the interior. With more windows and larger ones at that, the interior of Old Ship was better illuminated than its more humble antecedents. However, continuing the tradition of the New England meetinghouse, the pulpit was located opposite the main entrance. Pews on the main floor and on three sides in the balcony provided sightlines to the pulpit and auditory advantage.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the internal arrangement of meetinghouses continued to maintain their focus on the spoken Word but also began to exhibit a knowledge of up-to-date architectural trends in England, transmitted to colonial America largely through the increased availability of books and prints. Georgian architecture, named after England's ruling monarchs beginning with George I in 1714, appeared in the colonies by the third decade of the eighteenth century. Georgian order expressed through strict symmetry, classical proportions, and classical ornament showed increasing architectural sophistication in the colonies. An example is the Congregational Old South Meetinghouse in Boston of 1729. Designed by Robert Twelves, this building is rectangular in plan with a tall tower topped by a cupola and spire (added in the 1770s), with its entrance on one of the long sides—a holdover from earlier meetinghouses. The largest building in Boston at the time, this

impressive brick structure has tall round-headed arched windows, a molded cornice, and moderately classical details on its interior. In keeping with the dual function of the New England meetinghouse, this building was the home of a radical congregation and was the site of politically charged meetings leading up to the American Revolution.

Anglican Churches in New England

Anglican churches in New England, even more so than Congregational examples, reflected architectural trends from abroad and, in particular, showed an awareness of the church designs of Christopher Wren. Boston's Old North Church (also known as Christ Church) of 1723 was built as an Anglican church and is the earliest example in New England to show the influence of Wren. Boston print dealer William Price designed the church and probably was inspired by engravings of Wren's churches in London, which he handled in his gallery. Old North Church is composed of a brick

rectangular block for the sanctuary, with a brick entrance tower modeled after Wren's St. Garlickhythe (c. 1680) in London. The wood steeple rises 175 feet in the air (where, in April 1775, illuminated lanterns signaled to Paul Revere the approach of British troops). The interior is filled with box pews, and a balcony on the second level has additional seating. A vaulted plaster ceiling and sounding board above the pulpit helped amplify the service for the congregation. Two years later, craftsman Richard Munday designed Trinity Church in Newport (1725–1726), based on Old North Church but rendered in wood rather than brick. Originally, the Newport church was nearly square in proportions, but it was lengthened in 1762. The steeple with clock also resembles that of Old North and was completed in 1741. On the interior, the wineglass pulpit projects into the sanctuary, making the preacher visible. A sounding board suspended over the pulpit reflected his voice towards the congregation, making him easily understood.



King's Chapel (built 1749–1750) in Boston is distinguished as the first American church constructed of stone. Rectangular in plan with a hipped roof, its interior has elegant classical details including Corinthian columns supporting the gallery.

King's Chapel (1749–1750), built in Boston of Quincy granite by Newport architect Peter Harrison, is distinguished as the first American church built of stone. For the design of this church, Harrison likely was inspired by church designs by Christopher Wren published in James Gibbs's *Book of Architecture* of 1728. King's Chapel is rectangular in plan with a hipped roof. Its first-floor segmental arched windows surmounted by round-topped windows on the second floor are inspired by Marybone Chapel by Gibbs. The interior has elegant classical details including Corinthian columns supporting the gallery and a Palladian window in the apse.

It was the influence of James Gibbs's church designs that began to supplant Wren in the colonies. According to architectural historian William Pierson, Gibbs's St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church (1722–1726) in London was the most influential and most commonly imitated church, particularly after the mid-eighteenth century. The first church in the colonies to show the influence of Gibbs was Philadelphia's notable

Anglican Christ Church. Gentleman architect John Kearsley designed Christ Church in 1727, and its construction was completed in 1744. A large brick church with Palladian windows, the building also has a simplified interior based on that of St. Martin. In New York, Thomas McBean, a student of Gibbs in London, constructed St. Paul's (1764–1766) in New York, which is also a close copy of St. Martin.

Churches of Other Denominations

Dutch Reformed

In addition to the Congregationalists and Anglicans, other denominations settled in the colonies and established their own traditions. The Dutch Reformed Church, a Calvinistic denomination that was a result of a split from Catholicism, took hold in New Amsterdam. Like the Puritans, the Dutch Reformed congregants eschewed what they termed the excesses of Catholicism and a hierarchical church organization. As a result, their Dutch Reformed church buildings were simple and placed a special emphasis on the pulpit. An unusual octagonal form inspired by similar worship space in the Netherlands was adopted for a number of churches and gave no one person, minister or laity, special status. One such example is a nonextant, but documented, stone octagonal church with a steep roof constructed in Bergen, New Jersey, around 1680. Other Dutch Reformed churches were more similar to those of other Protestant denominations in the colonies, rectangular in plan but with Dutch gambrel roofs and simple ornamentation. In 1679, the Dutch constructed a stone church approximately sixty by forty-five feet in plan near the tip of Manhattan. This building had a tall tower topped with a bell and a gambrel roof. In Albany, the Protestant Dutch Church was erected of stone in 1715. This building had a steeply sloped hipped roof topped with a cupola and bell. Access into the building was through an attached vestibule, called a *doop huys*.

Society of Friends

The Society of Friends or Quakers settled throughout the colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, but the largest concentration was in Pennsylvania. Of Welsh, Irish, English, and German extraction, their earliest services were held in private homes, but by the end of the seventeenth century they began building meetinghouses, first in wood and later in brick. Similar to Puritan meetinghouses, these buildings were plain on the exterior and interior with no obvious religious references;

however, Quaker meetinghouses had separate doors for men and women who sat segregated on plain benches. By the mid-eighteenth century, approximately 250 Quaker meetinghouses had been constructed in the colonies. The Great Meeting House in Philadelphia was a building fifty feet square topped with a cupola that illuminated the interior. This meetinghouse was replaced in the mid-eighteenth century by a two-and-a-half-story brick building that was simple in detail like its predecessor.

Lutherans

Swedish Lutherans first settled in the Delaware River Valley in the seventeenth century. They constructed their earliest church buildings of horizontal logs, a building tradition the Swedes brought with them. One of their earliest churches was in fact a converted log blockhouse constructed circa 1666 in modern-day Philadelphia. For its first decade, the structure served as both fortress and church. In 1677, the blockhouse was completely taken over for sacred purposes, and to mark that conversion, parishioners added a roof and small spire. This building served as a church until circa 1700, when the Lutherans replaced it with a brick building named Old Swedes' Church, a cruciform-plan church adorned with an altar painting by noted portrait artist Gustaf Hesselius. In Delaware, Lutherans first worshipped in Fort Christiana, but in 1699, colonists decided to erect a separate building on a hill opposite the fort. This church, Holy Trinity Church (Old Swedes' Church), in Wilmington, Delaware, is the oldest Lutheran church in America. Built by stonemason John Yard and his three sons of dark granite cut into irregularly shaped blocks of native stone, its original entrances were located in the middle of the two long sides of the building. Round arched windows illuminated a plain interior with low arched ceiling. Lutherans elsewhere appropriated and modified the meetinghouse form of the Congregationalists. For example, just prior to the American Revolution, Lutherans in Waldoboro, Maine, constructed a New England meetinghouse but located the building's main entrance on the gable end.

Presbyterians

Missionary Francis Makemie, who arrived in Maryland in the 1680s, brought Presbyterianism to the American colonies. However, it was in the eighteenth century, when immigrants from Scotland and Northern Ireland came in larger numbers, that Presbyterians began to shape the built environment. First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia

was erected in 1704. In the 1740s, swept up in the religious fervor of the Great Awakening, an alternate Presbyterian congregation split off from this conservative church and built for themselves a more elaborate brick church. Leading Philadelphia architect and builder Robert Smith constructed the Georgian-style Second Presbyterian with a pedimented façade, arched windows, Palladian window on the façade's second story, and urns mounted on the gabled roof. In 1761, the congregation added a tall steeple that brought them ridicule for its perceived excess.

Baptists

The Baptists established themselves in the colony of Rhode Island led by Roger Williams, who founded the first Baptist church in Providence. For the first sixty years of settlement, these worshippers met in private homes. Their first purpose-built church was constructed circa 1700. Later in the eighteenth century, the congregation constructed the First Baptist Meetinghouse in Providence, in 1774–1775. This frame building nearly eighty feet square with entrance doors on all four sides was designed by Brown University professor, mathematician, and astronomer Joseph Brown. The two-story building has numerous classical details including quoining, a Palladian window, a bold pediment with brackets, and round-headed windows with keystones that Brown appears to have taken out of James Gibbs's *Book of Architecture* (1728). The tower of First Baptist is a nearly literal copy of a rejected design by Gibbs for St. Martin-in-the-Field that Gibbs illustrated in his book. The nave has a barrel-arched sanctuary with two side aisles. Brown carried the classicism of the exterior through to the interior with the addition of fluted Doric columns.

Methodists

As with the Baptists, Methodism in colonial America was slow to take hold, but New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland were among the colonies with Methodist settlements in the eighteenth century. Most early Methodist services took place outdoors or were held in whatever building was available. St. George's Methodist congregation in Philadelphia appropriated a German Reformed Church, where they began holding services in 1769. In New York, a fledgling Methodist congregation worshipped in private homes and in a sail loft until they built Wesleyan Chapel in 1768 on John Street. This plain two-and-a-half-story meetinghouse, probably of stone, was indistinguishable from its New England counterpart except that the main entrance

was located in the gable end rather than on the long side of the building. Just prior to Independence, approximately half of the Methodists in America resided in Maryland. In Baltimore, Methodists erected a stone meetinghouse called the Lovely Lane Meetinghouse (nonextant) in 1774, where ten years later the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. Today that congregation claims to be the “Mother Church of American Methodism.”

Conclusion

Colonists who emigrated to America beginning in the seventeenth century sought both economic independence and religious freedom. Upon arrival, they struggled to build shelter and establish a livelihood while at the same time practicing the religious faith they brought from their homeland. What distinguished these colonists were their individual worship practices and how these religious differences were manifested in the designs of their churches and meetinghouses. Congregationalists in New England emphasized hearing the Word, which led to the development of meetinghouses and interior spaces where the congregation could see and hear the preacher. Anglicans in the southern colonies were politically, culturally, and economically connected to England and made this association with their mother country visible in their churches. Quakers emphasized the equality of men and women and constructed buildings of simplicity and plainness. Yet despite these differences, there were also important similarities, particularly in the widespread adoption of the meetinghouse form in the northern and mid-Atlantic colonies by denominations other than the Congregationalists. It was in the eighteenth century, however, when the architectural taste of these Protestant denominations north and south grew closer together. With some exceptions, Protestant colonists began to adopt a more sophisticated classical architectural expression for their worship buildings. Ironically, the most important architectural influence came from England through the designs of architects Christopher Wren and James Gibbs. Transmitted to the colonies through the greater availability of books, these English ideas profoundly shaped the physical development of a colony on the verge of political independence.

See also *Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America*; *Architecture* entries; *Congregationalists*; *Dutch Reformed*; *Lutheran Churches*; *Methodists: Through the Nineteenth Century*; *Presbyterians: Colonial*; *Puritans*; *Quakers: Through the Nineteenth Century*; *Worship: Anglican*; *Worship: Protestant*.

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Architecture: The European Protestant Background

To understand the development of Protestant religious architecture in the United States requires an understanding of the development of the built environment of Protestantism in Europe, from which so much American ecclesiastical design is derived. Just as the Protestant Reformation and the traditions that emerged from it were multiple, rather than unified, so has been the architecture that has come to constitute the built environment of Protestantism. Since this latter term has been taken to include everything from Quakers to Old Order Amish to Anglo-Catholics, caution is required in suggesting that there is any particular sort of architecture that is distinctively, uniquely, or essentially “Protestant.” To be sure, there are some unifying themes. Just as biblical restorationism—the goal of restoring contemporary religious life to that of apostolic times—informed the visions of virtually all of the early reformers, so has the idea of returning to the norms and practices of the early church been a common theme in liturgical reform and its architectural expression. On the whole, though, it is more useful to think about religious architecture in terms of a range of typologies, each of which reflects certain assumptions about theology, worship, and polity—remembering, all the while, that in the messiness of actual experience, it is vain to look always for precise correspondences between any one ideal type and the experience and practice of a particular community.

Typologies

The architectural baseline for understanding Protestant architectural theory and practice was the Gothic of the later Middle Ages, which had evolved ultimately from the Roman basilica as a public, rectangular, processional space in which the focus of attention was on the ultimate authority—in this case, God, and the hierarchy and clergy instituted to carry out his worship. Such architecture was at once *hierarchical*, in that it emphasized distinctions of sacrality and authority in its internal arrangements, and *sacramental*, in that its primary purpose was the provision of a suitable place for the celebration of the Eucharist, as well as the other sacraments, in which humanity came into direct contact with the divine through the mediation of the Church. Most of the material fabric of religious life in which the Reformation arose was either in this mode or that of the earlier Romanesque, a style fundamentally similar in plan if not in structural and decorative detail. Emergent Protestant communities therefore had either to adapt such churches for their own uses or, when enabled or compelled by circumstance, to create new forms.

The creation of such new forms or the radical modification of the old often brought with it a new nomenclature: instead of “church,” which implied for some the earthly presence of the sacred in material form, “temple,” “tabernacle,” or “meetinghouse” became distinctly Protestant alternatives. A new emphasis on preaching—foreshadowed by later medieval religious orders such as the Franciscans and Dominicans, who themselves had built new structures, such as the “hall church,” for this function—was common among those who were called Protestants. Those such as Calvin and his followers, however, who particularly focused on the proclaimed Word, were most inclined to shape their houses of worship around this practice. The *preaching hall*, in which elaborate sacramental apparatus and depictions of sacred personae were minimized or eliminated and the authoritative role of the minister as preacher took material shape in a central, dominant pulpit, emerged as a major alternative to the *sacramental/hierarchical church*.

Among the more radical communities engendered by the Reformation, though, still another model emerged to reflect a different and still less hierarchical self-understanding. The Radical Reformation (Anabaptists) and later groups such as the Friends (Quakers) rejected the authority of clergy as well as bishops and saw the primary, local community as the locus of religious experience and authority. Such buildings were generally austere, and their interior arrangements minimized clergy-lay distinctions. The testimony and sometimes

the immediate experience of the assembled community could now play out in this even more egalitarian structure, which we might call the “assembly house,” the external shape of which was frequently domestic in scale and style.

A final model suggests itself in the ecumenical liturgical convergence that has characterized twentieth-century experience, in which the polarity of Catholic/Protestant began to erode, even as differences among those who had traditionally called themselves “Protestant” began to increase. Here clergy and laity interact in a differentiated but no longer sharply divided manner, echoing themes of earliest Christianity, the early Reformation, and the Roman Catholic ecumenical council Vatican II. We might call this model that of the *renewal church*, in which sacrament, Word, and community all receive significant emphasis. The external style here might vary, but it is frequently modernist in conception and circular or polygonal in shape, minimizing hierarchical distinctions.

These models, which arise out of particular theological moments, do not describe experienced reality exhaustively. Early Lutherans, for example, can probably be placed somewhere between the sacramental/hierarchical and preaching hall models; Pentecostals fall between the latter and the community house in their actual practice; while Anglo-Catholics, as their name suggests, have embraced the sacramental/hierarchical church perhaps even more avidly than many of their Roman Catholic contemporaries, who have embraced the renewal church. What we call “Protestantism” has always been and still continues to be polymorphic and protean.

Lutherans

The attitude of Martin Luther and his early followers towards religious building was consistent with the broader religious culture that Luther’s movement generated. Compared with Reformed and Anabaptist theologians, Luther followed a comparatively moderate, pragmatic, even mediating course between Catholic practice and more extreme Protestant biblical restorationism. Luther’s concern was not with the wholesale revocation of the medieval past but rather with the adaptation of existing space to the needs of proper liturgical performance. As a result, little new religious building took place during the early decades of reformation in the German-speaking states. Extant churches were not destroyed but retrofitted with galleries and elevated pulpits better suited to an emphasis on the proclaimed Word; similarly, side altars dedicated to the Virgin Mary and

other saints were often eliminated. Preaching, and sometimes the entire service, was frequently conducted in the nave alone. During the mid-sixteenth century, new building was confined to a handful of princely chapels, such as the small hall church erected for the Elector Johann Friedrich at Torgau in 1543–1544.

By the later sixteenth century, new building, mainly in the late Gothic style, began to take place. By the following century, new models began to develop such as the hall (preaching-oriented) church, L-plan churches, or multigalleried chapels. Jakob Wurstmann’s 1618 Zum Heiligen Geist (Holy Ghost) church at Nidda in Hesse, essentially a rectangular meetinghouse with a square or pentagonal apse, was an early and influential example of a plan that persisted both in Europe and North America into the subsequent century. The baroque style, so successfully employed by the Jesuit order that arose in the service of the Catholic Reformation, or Counter-Reformation, was also adopted by German and Scandinavian Lutherans for their own purposes. The centralizing and dramatizing devices of the baroque, such as highly focused lighting, found a Lutheran focus in the *Prinzipalstück*, a new concept in liturgical furnishings in which altar, pulpit, and often the baptismal font were combined. A prime example of Lutheran baroque was Georg Bähr’s Frauenkirche (Church of the Virgin Mary), built in 1725–1743, in Dresden, destroyed by Allied bombing during World War II, and restored and reopened in 2005. Capped by an oval dome and resembling a grand opera house, it was circular in form and included five tiers of galleries. By the eighteenth century a number of forms had come into use, including other circular plans as well as rectangles, polygons, and L shapes. Similar developments were also characteristic in the Scandinavian lands during the early centuries; by the later nineteenth century, however, a widespread romantic nationalism aimed at recapturing the historic genius of particular peoples affected all aspects of Scandinavian design and resulted in Lutheran churches based on motifs derived from traditional folk building styles.

Continental Reformed

John Calvin and Huldreich Zwingli, usually regarded as the founders of the Reformed tradition, were more radical than Luther in their iconoclastic rejection of the arts and distrust of the notion that sacred space could be embodied in earthly vehicles. Nevertheless, little in the way of an architectural program emerged in the first generation of Swiss reform; rather, Calvin’s stripping of Geneva’s cathedral

church of St. Pierre of its Catholic religious art and liturgical furnishings in favor of a dominant pulpit was a typical combination of ideology and pragmatism designed to highlight the centrality of the preached Word.

In France, Huguenots engaged in limited but significant building from the mid-1500s until their expulsion with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Many of the leading architects of the period were Calvinists in the employ of Catholic rulers; as Catharine Randall provocatively argues, they made their faith known obliquely through a strategy of subverting and distorting the absolutist political and religious purposes their patrons envisioned by employing such devices as grotesque or excessive ornamentation. Prior to the Edict of Nantes, they had been obliged to worship in adapted Catholic churches or secular structures such as barns. The earliest known example of a public structure for Calvinist worship was the Temple de Paradis attributed to Jean Perrissin, built at Nantes in 1564. Other major examples were Philibert de l'Orme's octagonal temple at La Rochelle in 1577 and Salomon de Brosse's temple at Charenton in 1606. These Huguenot "temples"—a term presumably chosen to avoid the sacral connotations of "church/église"—were severely plain in design and large in scale, accommodating up to six thousand worshippers after the Edict of Nantes imposed a limit on the number of such structures. Designed to facilitate the hearing of the preached Word, they featured central pulpits and multiple galleries to concentrate seating close to the pulpit. In many cases the temples were situated within a walled enclosure that also included a concierge's house, parish house, cemetery, dining hall, and other amenities. All were destroyed with the revocation of the Edict, after which exiled Huguenots generally blended into other congregations in the Netherlands, Britain, and the North American colonies. A handful of structures were designed specifically for Huguenot congregations in diaspora, such as the centrally planned building at Church



Georg Bähr's *Frauenkirche* (Church of the Virgin Mary), built from 1725 to 1743, in Dresden, is a prime example of Lutheran Baroque architecture.

Street, Spitalfields, in London (1743), and the Gothic revival Huguenot church in Charleston, South Carolina, built in 1845 for a congregation established in 1681.

The pattern of retrofitting medieval churches according to Reformed usage characterized the early years of Calvinist development in the Netherlands, which was preoccupied with its struggle for independence from Spain until well into the seventeenth century. The emergent Reformed pattern of a preaching house featuring an octagonal shape, galleries, round-headed windows, and prominent pulpit on a side wall characterized the earliest Dutch Reformed house of worship, that built at Willemstad by Prince Maurice in 1596. The *Zuiderkerk* in Amsterdam, designed by Hendrik

de Keyser—the architect of the only three churches erected in that city during its “boom” years—and built in 1603–1611, was more conservative in pattern, modifying Gothic form with classical detail for Protestant liturgical usage. A Greek cross form was the basis for churches built in the early seventeenth century in Blokzijl, Amsterdam, and Maasluis, which exemplified Dutch classicism in style and lacked chancels with altars.

Anabaptist

The Anabaptist—Amish, Hutterite, Mennonite—tradition of religious building was shaped both by the constraints of official persecution and by the theological imperative of rejecting the notion of sacred space in favor of a gathering of the faithful, whose very act of coming together evoked the sacred. Two roughly synonymous terms were utilized by early Anabaptists to describe this space: *Bethaus* (“house of prayer”) in Eastern Europe and *Versammlungshaus* (“meeting house”) in German-speaking lands. The internal configurations of these structures resembled those of Anglo-American Quakers in their patterns of face-to-face seating, with the collective leadership on a bench or behind a table along one of the building’s long walls, with a modest pulpit; seating divided along gender lines; minimal interior ornamentation except for scripture verses and floral motifs; and a functional exterior. When necessary, barns or other secular structures were utilized for worship; and some groups, such as the communal-dwelling Hutterites, and Old Order and other extremely conservative Amish, continued to reject any specialized structure for worship, regarding the entire complex of landscape in which a godly life is enacted as sacred. With minor variations, this pattern diffused with the diaspora of Anabaptists across Central and Eastern Europe and through parts of North and South America. Changes began to take place on a significant scale first in the nineteenth century, when toleration and prosperity led to the erosion of the notion of worship as subsisting in the gathered congregation in favor of the erection of buildings that for the first time took on the name of *Kirche* (“church”). This onset of “worldliness” accelerated the process of schism that had long been latent in the movement. Whatever the degree of acculturation, however, Anabaptists have always expressed an affinity for the notion of the house of worship as first and foremost an *assembly house*.

Anglican

After Henry VIII’s break with papal authority, little changed in England for the remainder of his lengthy reign with



James Gibbs’s St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church (built 1722 to 1726) in London was the most influential and most frequently imitated church, particularly after the mid-eighteenth century.

regard to worship or its physical setting, other than the purging of many churches of “popish” art and furnishings. Although various experiments with the interior setting of worship took place with the introduction of the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1559, and the emergent Puritan party began to demand more drastic change, the first major paradigm shift to take place in the fabric of worship for the Church of England was occasioned by natural rather than human causes. The Great Fire of London of 1666 destroyed a considerable number of that city’s multitudinous houses of worship, and it fell to Sir Christopher Wren to replace them. The fifty-one churches designed by Wren, together with the elaborations on his architectural themes by successors such as James Gibbs and Nicholas Hawksmoor, constituted a new chapter in Protestant architecture in which neoclassicism

became explicitly linked with the notion of the church as a preaching house, an essentially rectangular structure with clear glass windows and no chancels. While no Anglican church could be conceived without provision for the administration of the sacraments as well, Wren was explicit in designating churches of his design as *auditories*—buildings in which all could clearly hear the preached Word—in contrast with the “larger Churches . . . [of] the Romanists . . . [where] it is enough if they hear the murmur of the Mass.” Although a number of Wren’s city churches were destroyed during World War II bombing or through other causes, those that remain continue to constitute a distinctive feature of London’s cityscape, and they provided the prototypes for provincial adaptations in North America and elsewhere in subsequent generations. What has subsequently become known as the “Wren Baroque” or “Wren-Gibbs” style, modified in the direction of a purer classicism, remained normative in England until the advent of the Gothic revival in the 1840s.

British Nonconformist and Wesleyan

The English Calvinists—Puritans—who took exception to the usages of the Church of England under Elizabeth I and the early Stuarts were forced, as many Continental dissidents had been earlier, to worship covertly and haphazardly, in the private chapels of the elite or in private homes, barns, guild halls, or other secular structures. The Interregnum period of the 1640s and 1650s saw considerable destruction wrought on medieval Anglican property by the troops of Oliver Cromwell, who saw only idolatry in the sacred figures displayed in statuary and stained glass, but little if any new building. It was during this period that the Westminster Confession (1646), a major articulation of Reformed principles in English, gave classic expression to the Reformed attitude towards the issue of sacred space: “[n]either prayer nor any part of religious worship is now under the gospel, either tied unto or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed.” The Toleration Act of 1689 made possible for the first time the widespread buildings of Dissenting houses of worship. After this date, Baptists, Independents, Presbyterians, Quakers, and, several decades later, Methodists, began to cover the landscape with thousands of preaching houses featuring central pulpits, galleries, and box pews or benches designed to maximize exposure to the preached Word.

Although rectangular forms were most common, the octagon, of which John Wesley himself had spoken favorably,

also found numerous manifestations. Many early Dissenting buildings were modifications of extant churches or modest in scale and design. By the eighteenth century, when Wesley and his movement as well as other Dissenting groups began to gain momentum and respectability, more monumental structures, such as the Presbyterians’ Octagon Chapel at Norwich (1754–1756) and Wesley’s Chapel at City Road, London (1777–1778), were somewhat more sophisticated—usually neoclassical—in design; the latter, for example, was a brick building with two stories, or round-headed, a five-bay façade, and a three-bay pediment. As Methodism broke from the Church of England and established its own sacramental practices, its chapels began to feature communion tables as well as pulpits. The rapid urbanization and new iron construction technology of the nineteenth century resulted in the erection of huge tabernacles for preachers such as the eminent Baptist Charles Haddon Spurgeon; the latter’s Metropolitan Tabernacle in London (1859–1861) possessed two tiers of galleries and could seat five thousand. Although the rage for such buildings rapidly spread across urban Britain, many have subsequently been demolished.

Medieval Revivals

By the 1840s, a convergence of demographic change, taste, and theological principle brought about a major paradigm shift in religious design, especially in the Anglo-American realm, though not without parallels elsewhere. The rapid growth of urban population, first in Britain and then in North America, necessitated a vast new program of church building. The English Parliament’s establishment of a Church Building Commission in 1818 was to be the last major program of governmentally funded religious building in that country; the thirty-five or so neoclassical Commissioners’ Churches that resulted were displaced by the privately financed Metropolis Churches Extension Fund of 1836, which launched a massive building campaign throughout England during the next several decades (3,765 Church of England churches were built or restored during the years 1835–1875). The architectural theology of this explosive new campaign was provided by the Cambridge Movement, the name given to the work of the Cambridge Camden Society (founded in 1839), also known as the Ecclesiologists, which served as a counterpart to the Oxford Movement that was simultaneously reviving an emphasis on church and sacraments in historical tradition. Promoting their views through *The Ecclesiologist* (begun 1841), the Cambridge Movement insisted that the only proper style for sacramental Christian

worship was the “English decorated” form of Gothic that had flourished in the early fourteenth century, in which every detail was laden with profound Christian symbolic import. In addition to the building of countless new churches, the Movement also inspired and attempted to control the restoration of many medieval churches, by advocating that they be brought into the conformity with the style of the period they regarded as normative. Although Anglo-Catholic ritualism was the major force shaping Victorian church design, Roman Catholic convert Augustus Welby Pugin’s architectural designs and critique of contemporary society and critic John Ruskin’s promotion of Venetian Gothic as an eminently “moral” style, reflecting the wholesomely organic character of the society that had produced it and compatible with Protestant values, contributed to the popularity of the mode in the United States as well as in Britain.

Twentieth-Century Liturgical and Architectural Reform

By early in the twentieth century, the enthusiasm for medieval revival styles that had consumed groups as disparate as British Anglo-Catholics, American Unitarians, and German Lutherans began to yield to a combination of economic, theological, and architectural forces that rendered them virtually obsolete by the onset of World War II. The Great Depression of the 1930s brought the construction of new churches to a virtual halt, and the war itself decimated a considerable amount of the ecclesiastical fabric of Britain and the Continent. Even before this enforced hiatus in church design, though, other new forces conspired to bring about a new era. From various national directions, but epitomized in Germany’s *Bauhaus*, the movement of modernism in architecture declared war on the principles of romantic revivalism that the medieval styles had represented. Frank Lloyd Wright in the United States, Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe in Germany (and later the United States as well), and Le Corbusier in France were among the leading names in this loosely knit movement, although these particular figures only occasionally turned their hands to religious design. Modernism embraced new techniques of construction, such as the use of structural steel, and an aesthetic that condemned any decoration not intrinsic to a building’s structure. It rejected the revival of historical styles outright in favor of a new, international mode based on the beauty of unadorned materials and their textures, simple geometrical forms, and the play of light and shade.

A similar recall to fundamentals informed the liturgical movement within Christianity, which found early exposition

among French and American Benedictines and eventually received normative status within Roman Catholic circles as a result of Vatican II. Informed by a desire to return to the forms of worship that had characterized the earliest Christian community (and, by implication, rejecting medieval practice as normative), this movement soon permeated the architectural thought of many Protestants, particularly those in traditions such as the Anglican and Lutheran that emphasized more formal and elaborate liturgical practice. (The impact of the ecumenical movement and the convergence of liturgical practice encouraged this coming together of architectural mode as well.) The desire for simplicity and authenticity that had informed architectural modernism was central to the liturgical movement and what we earlier called its resultant “renewal church” as well. The early emergence of European Catholic church architects such as Domenikus Böhm and Rudolf Schwarz established a vocabulary of ecclesiastical design that was rapidly appropriated by both Protestant and Catholic, as the massive program of rebuilding that followed World War II provided the opportunity, yet again, for reconstructing the Continent’s ecclesiastical fabric literally from the ground up. It was here that the “renewal church” paradigm of sacramental but nonhierarchical worship space began to be realized on a grand and ecumenical scale.

To speak of Protestant architecture, then, is as problematic as speaking of Protestantism. Although the general tendency among the new movements of the Reformation era was to simplify worship along the perceived lines of biblical practice and to adapt or invent religious architecture towards this end, disagreement in both theory and practice was the rule, as competing and contrasting traditions within the realm of Protestantism took shape. Although biblical worship as a guiding principle never disappeared, periodic rediscoveries of the sacramental ideal gave rise to architectural revivalism along medieval lines. During the twentieth century, the whole notion of a Protestant worship and architecture that was essentially distinct from that of Roman Catholicism began to erode rapidly, as Christian ecumenism and architectural modernism converged to shape a renewed Christian paradigm that transcended and rendered obsolete traditional Catholic/Protestant distinctions and rivalries. And, as in Europe, these processes would express themselves in the United States as well.

See also *Anabaptists; Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Architecture entries; Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage; Lutheran Tradition and Heritage; Methodists: Tradition and Heritage; Worship: Protestant.*

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Architecture: Jewish

For nearly three centuries, synagogue architecture in the United States has both reflected its environment and evolved an aesthetic of its own. As the public face of American Judaism, the synagogue edifice is shaped by the key tension of *assimilation/survival*, the powerful impulse for modern Jews to integrate socially and assimilate culturally versus the persistent desire to set themselves apart from Christianity and thus preserve Judaism as an independent faith community. On the interior, the synagogue sanctuary plays out the tension between *tradition/modernity*, the ongoing conflict between historical norms of the Jewish tradition and contemporary norms of modern civilization. In sum, the architecture of the synagogue may offer some resolution to these tensions, often by splitting such social and symbolic functions between the building’s exterior and interior. All such design solutions are subject to religious custom regarding the synagogue layout, while allowing for flexibility given the lack of historical style for the synagogue, as well as the relative dearth of *halachic* (Jewish legal) guidelines for its architecture. Important precedents in Western Europe offer useful illustration of these principles. Amsterdam’s Sephardic “Esnoga” synagogue of 1675 is a hip-roofed, monumental structure meant to echo the ancient Temple of Jerusalem; and London’s Bevis Marks synagogue of 1701 is similarly a

boxy brick building contrasting with neighboring churches yet comfortable in its urban milieu. Both buildings managed to simultaneously represent Jews as being a part of their social context while remaining religiously apart. On the interior, both influential synagogues had the traditional arrangement with its three primary elements: (1) the *Aron ha-Kodesh*—the holy Ark on the east wall, orienting prayer toward Jerusalem; (2) the *bimah*—the Torah reading platform located prominently in the center of the sanctuary; and (3) the *ezrat nashim*—the raised gallery for the separate seating of women. In a sign of modernization, however, the galleries were now enclosed by open balustrades, allowing the women to better see and be seen. Beginning in the eighteenth century, Jewish women at prayer would become ever more included in the service. Similarly, other elements of the synagogue would evolve in response to changing social mores, and hence synagogue design will be seen to be reflective of Jews’ relation to society at large.

The “Synagogue-Community”

The earliest Jewish settlers in North America were Sephardic refugees from Brazil who landed in New Amsterdam in 1654. They formed a congregation sometime after their arrival and managed to build their own synagogue structure by 1730. The Mill Street Synagogue of Shearith Israel (Hebrew, “remnant of Israel”) was a modest stone building in vernacular style that would serve New York Jews for a century as the sole center of Jewish life, a “synagogue-community.” Though the building has not survived, its traditional interior layout has been preserved in a small sanctuary within the current structure, the congregation’s fourth. The second synagogue in colonial America would arise in Newport, Rhode Island—the Touro Synagogue of 1763, today the country’s oldest standing synagogue. The upwardly mobile Jews of Newport’s Jeshuat Israel hired a prominent architect, Peter Harrison, to design a fashionable Georgian structure; like its most obvious model, Bevis Marks in London, it was a two-storied meeting hall with the traditional interior arrangement. The exterior only betrayed itself as a synagogue in subtle ways, as by its orientation: set at an awkward angle to the street, the building faces in the traditional eastward direction. Likewise, the 1794 steepled synagogue of Charleston, South Carolina’s Beth Elohim, looked very much like a church on the exterior but once again maintained the traditional Jewish arrangement within. Early American Jews had two priorities, both met by their synagogue structures: to establish themselves as good neighbors



The Touro Synagogue of 1763 is the country's oldest standing synagogue. The upwardly mobile Jews of Newport, Rhode Island's Jeshuat Israel hired architect Peter Harrison to design a fashionable Georgian structure.

in the eyes of their fellow Americans and to preserve Judaism as best they could at the same time. Both goals remain in place in the twenty-first century.

The "Rite Congregation"

A new wave of Jewish immigration from Central Europe ensued in the early nineteenth century, and the monolithic synagogue community soon broke up into a pluralistic "community of synagogues"—multiple congregations distinguished by their *minhag*, or "rite," and variant liturgical traditions based on place of origin. The new diversity in American Judaism would be reflected by a new eclecticism in synagogue architecture. Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel, for example, hired architect Thomas Strickland to design their new synagogue of 1825, and he gave them an Egyptian Revival façade together with a sky-lit oval interior; like its contemporary in Vienna, the Seitenstettengasse "Tempel" of 1826, the design was both modern in conception while retaining its distinctiveness as a synagogue. The choice of Egyptian Revival, an early use of the style, may have been intended to signal both the ancient roots of Judaism as well as the non-Christian identity of the congregation. Another Egyptian Revival synagogue was built in Philadelphia in 1849 for Beth Israel, but far more often in the antebellum period, Greek Revival would be the preferred style for new synagogues—again signifying the classicism of Jewish

tradition, but now adding the association of American democracy. In 1834, Shearith Israel constructed its second synagogue building—in the neoclassical mode. Other Greek Revival synagogues, all with classical temple fronts and traditional Jewish interiors, included Cincinnati's Bene Israel of 1836, Charleston's Beth Elohim of 1841 (built to replace the earlier structure destroyed by fire in 1838), and the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation of 1845—the latter two are today the second and third oldest standing synagogues in the United States. The trend toward historical eclecticism would continue with synagogues in the Gothic style—for example, Cincinnati's B'nai Yeshurun of 1848; New York's Anshe Chesed of 1850 and B'nai Jeshurun of 1851; and San Francisco's Emanu-El and Sherith

Israel, both of 1854. Somewhat more commonly, American synagogues of the mid-nineteenth century were built in Romanesque Revival, a style attaining popularity in Central Europe at the same time. The round-arched style was often adopted, therefore, by American Jewish congregations of German background—for example, New York's Shaaray Tefila of 1847, designed by the country's first Jewish architect, Leopold Eidlitz; Baltimore's Har Sinai of 1849; and New York's Rodeph Shalom of 1853. In 1860, the original Sephardic congregations of New York and Philadelphia dedicated new synagogue buildings. Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel was built in the new Romanesque style, whereas New York's Shearith Israel erected its third building in a neoclassical Baroque style. Rather than following the prevailing trends, the architect, Robert Mook, had looked carefully at the previous building of 1834 before presenting his plans.

The antebellum period also saw the modernization of the synagogue interior, by a process Leon Jick called "the Americanization of the Synagogue." The first major change was the inclusion of an organ in Charleston's new synagogue of 1841. As was the case in Europe, the addition of organ and/or choral music to the synagogue service—innovations derived from Christian practice—often signified religious liberalization and the advent of "Reform" Judaism. Not yet Reform but progressive nonetheless, Baltimore's 1845 synagogue offered two new features: expanded seating through the

elimination of the central *bimah* in favor of a simpler reading desk next to the Ark and the novelty of stained-glass windows, one in the form of a Star of David—the six-pointed star would become the principal symbol of the synagogue until the mid-twentieth century (when the newly founded state of Israel adapted the symbol). All synagogues, both traditional and Reform, would soon adopt another church practice, as American rabbis began offering regular sermons around midcentury—and thus the addition of a preacher’s pulpit became common in the 1850s. The change was momentous, as the elimination of the central *bimah* in favor of a frontal pulpit and reader’s desk meant a transformation in the Jewish experience of worship. Intended to promote decorum, the rearrangement of the synagogue sanctuary would turn the liturgical leader around to face the congregants and render them a passive audience. Yet the most controversial change would be the installation of family pews in lieu of the separate women’s gallery. Its first appearance was in the Albany congregation of Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise in 1851. It was, at first, a matter of expediency—Wise’s congregation, Anshe Emeth, had purchased a former Baptist church and rather than alter the floorplan chose to preserve its family seating and allow the innovation in synagogue practice. What began as a practical decision to adopt the American mode of worshipping as a family would later be ideologically justified by arguing for the more equal status of women in the synagogue. The separation of women in prayer had long occasioned negative comment on the part of both acculturated Jews and non-Jewish visitors. Now the criticism would be answered by the leap to mixed seating; and it, in turn, became the principal sign of a Reform congregation.

The “Reform Temple”

Following the Civil War, as American Jews attained greater affluence and social status, Reform synagogues came to predominate in American Judaism—and were now most often called “temples” to differentiate them from the traditional synagogue. Their architecture set them apart as well, as the new temples were built in monumental form in the



Philadelphia’s Rodeph Shalom of 1870, designed by American architect Frank Furness in an eclectic Picturesque style, is an example of the “Reform Temple” which came to predominate American Judaism after the Civil War.

most opulent fashion. Intriguingly, the earlier division between Americanized exterior and Judaized interior was now reversed, as the new reforms were institutionalized inside the sanctuary and architects designed exotic-looking edifices, most commonly in Islamic Revival style. The first of these were built in 1866 in Cincinnati and San Francisco for congregations B’nai Yeshurun (better known as the Plum Street Temple or the Isaac Mayer Wise Temple) and Emanu-El, respectively. Both were twin-towered cathedrals, highly conspicuous on the cityscape, and both were designed in Islamic or “Moorish” style to accentuate the non-Christian, unabashedly Jewish identity of their Reform congregations. New York’s Temple Emanu-El followed suit in 1868 with a Moorish cathedral on Fifth Avenue—billed as the world’s largest synagogue—codesigned by Leopold Eidlitz and fellow Jewish architect Henry Fernbach. Fernbach would later design other prominent New York synagogues, including Shaaray Tefila in 1869 and Ahavath Chesed in 1872. The latter, now known as the Central Synagogue, recently underwent extensive restoration reviving its original nineteenth-century magnificence. Other such opulent and exotic synagogues of the time include Philadelphia’s Rodeph Shalom of 1870, designed by American architect Frank Furness in an eclectic Picturesque style; Portland’s San Francisco-inspired Beth Israel of 1888; New York’s Beth El of 1891, by Arnold Brunner—the first

American-born Jewish architect—in a striking Byzantine style; and Chicago's Anshe Maarivin, in 1891, by the firm of (Dankmar) Adler and (Louis) Sullivan in the American style of the "Chicago School." Following the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893, and perhaps in response to the arrival of East European Jews, a new neoclassical trend took hold—for example, Brunner's Renaissance palazzo design (albeit with Moorish arcades) for New York's West End Synagogue (Shaaray Tefila) in 1894 and, three years later, a new Shearith Israel by the same architect in Roman Corinthian style. Though the latter had retained its identity as a Sephardic Orthodox synagogue, the trend toward Reform was otherwise so pervasive that even when congregations could not build anew, they often renovated their interiors to conform to the new religious style—for example, Charleston's historic Beth Elohim, which eliminated its central *bimah*, added a preacher's pulpit, and installed family pews in 1879.

The Orthodox Shul

Between 1880 and 1915, more than two million Jews from Russia, Poland, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe immigrated to the United States. The immigrant synagogue of this era would be Orthodox in orientation and called simply, in Yiddish, *shul*. Its characteristic building would fall into one of three architectural categories: (1) the adaptation of an existing structure, (2) modest synagogues built on the narrow footprint of the urban tenement, and (3) grand synagogues built to rival the Reform temples of uptown Jewry. In the first case, the largely impoverished immigrants often made do with any prayer space they could afford. Thus, the earliest *shuls* were makeshift operations holding services in rented storefronts and converted apartments. Moving into older city neighborhoods, immigrant Jews also acquired the habit of purchasing and converting former church buildings for use as synagogues. American synagogues had taken over church buildings before, but the phenomenon had special resonance for a group that had originated in lands where the spheres of church and synagogue were strictly separated. The fact that in America, a church could actually become a synagogue (and later, the opposite case would be just as common) offered a powerful demonstration of social and religious equality in the new land. Sometimes the "church" acquired was a former Reform temple. As the earlier Jewish immigrants from Central Europe moved uptown they left their synagogue buildings behind, and those passed down to the new

immigrant community included New York's Anshe Chesed and Rodeph Shalom, which were taken over by Anshe Slonim and Chatam Sopher, respectively. In Baltimore, no fewer than four nineteenth-century synagogues were recycled by the East European immigrant community. Whether converting a church or a temple, the immigrant congregation typically would modify the building to transform it into an Orthodox synagogue. This might entail adding exotic ornament on the exterior and Hebraic mural art on the interior to "Judaize" the building—especially common for a former church, as at Beth Hamedrash Hagodol in New York—and furthermore adding a central *bimah*, removing or concealing the organ, and if necessary building a new women's gallery.

Once on their feet economically, immigrant congregations were able to build their own synagogues, whose architecture would reflect many aspects of immigrant Jewish life. For example, the "tenement *shul*"—the smaller-scale synagogue built in the tight space between neighboring tenement buildings—clearly indicated how immigrant Judaism was adapted to and subsumed within the socioeconomic realities of the immigrant ghetto. Such *shuls* proliferated in the immigrant communities and were most often constructed by a *landsmanshaft*, a mutual aid society of immigrants from the same hometown; the *landsmanshaft shul* thus served social as well as religious functions. It was, in effect, a home away from home, and like a multistoried house, the interior was divided between a well-appointed sanctuary on the upper floors and a daily prayer/study hall and communal meeting place below. Their exterior façades were of the same dimensions as the tenements on either side but were given far more decorative treatment. Whether in neoclassical or Moorish Revival mode, their message was the same—that despite their humble circumstances, immigrant Jews aspired to the same level of social acceptance and religious propriety as their uptown brethren. The larger, "great synagogues" of the immigrant community made this point all the more emphatically. The first such grand structure was built in New York in 1886 by Congregation Khal Adas Jeshurun, creating a landmark synagogue better known as the Eldridge Street Shul. Though inconspicuously located on a side street, Eldridge Street's ornate façade boldly announced the arrival of downtown Jewry. Clearly derived from the Moorish temples of uptown Jews, the design of the new *shul* expressed both the immigrants' ties to other Jews and their shared portion of the American dream. Similarly, the Renaissance Revival design of the 1903 Kalvarier Shul,

located a few blocks from Eldridge Street, was a direct imitation of the 1902 uptown *shul* of Kehilath Jeshurun, itself inspired by the West End Synagogue of 1894. In Boston, no fewer than four immigrant synagogues borrowed their *Rundbogenstil* design from the leading Reform synagogue of the city, Temple Israel. All these new constructions included intricately carved arks and *bimahs* on the interior, as well as painted murals and other lavish decoration. In all, the grandness of the grand synagogues, both inside and out, was the concrete realization of the East European Jewish immigrants' dream of finding a home in America, both for themselves and for their faith.

The "Synagogue-Center"

As the children of the immigrants joined the middle class, they moved to better neighborhoods and built new synagogues to suit. Following WWI, and for the better part of the twentieth century, the characteristic American synagogue would be the large, multipurpose complex called a "synagogue-center." The synagogue-center concept was to some degree inspired by the precedent of the institutional church, but it had its more direct origins in the earlier functional expansions of both the Reform temple and Orthodox *shul*. The rabbi most closely identified with the new institutional form was Mordecai M. Kaplan, who founded the Jewish Center on Manhattan's Upper West Side in 1918. The building was designed by architect Louis Allen Abramson, who was also involved in the construction of the Young Women's Hebrew Association of the same year. Like the YWHA, the new synagogue would include a swimming pool, gymnasium, auditorium, library, and rooms for the manifold functions of such an all-purpose Jewish institution. Two years later, Abramson also designed the Brooklyn Jewish Center, which, like its predecessor, was situated on a broad avenue and resembled a grand apartment house far more than a traditional house of worship. Such multiuse synagogues were soon built throughout the New York City boroughs and in other cities as well. Most would be affiliated with the

burgeoning Conservative movement, but some were Orthodox and Reform as well—for example, Baltimore's Beth Tfiloh synagogue and center of 1925–1927 and Brooklyn's Union Temple, designed by the firm of Arnold Brunner in 1926–1929. Though not all included the amenities described above, the general idea of a combined synagogue and community center, fondly called a "*shul* with a pool," had won the day. As the trend spread across the country, the architectural style most often chosen for the monumental new structures was Byzantine Revival, characterized by a centralized sanctuary topped by a massive dome. In 1925, eminent urban historian Lewis Mumford advocated the application of the Byzantine style to the "Modern Synagog" so as to "recognize the reintegration of the Jewish culture and Jewish civilization." The central dome had been used in synagogues before but would now be intended to symbolically unify the spiritual, cultural, communal, and social functions of Jewish life. Such monumental domed synagogue-centers were built throughout the 1920s in every major Jewish community, such as Boston (Ohabei Shalom), Chicago (Isaiah Temple), Cleveland (The Temple), Newark (B'nai Jeshurun), San Francisco (Temple Emanu-El), and many others. The monumental synagogue-center also institutionalized the use of representative art on the interior, a



Affluent post-World War II suburban Jewish congregations sometimes hired famous architects to create striking, sculptural designs, such as Frank Lloyd Wright's 1957 Beth Shalom Synagogue, located in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania.

trend begun by the first Reconstructionist synagogue (Mordecai Kaplan's second congregation), the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, founded in 1922. It featured a wall mural designed by artist Temima Gezari, depicting scenes from Jewish history; and a similar artistic scheme was used in a mural encircling the sanctuary of Los Angeles's Wilshire Boulevard Temple of 1929.

Following WWII, the synagogue-center idea was transferred to suburbia. But rather than evoking the former urban monumentality and picturesque decor, the new structures reflected the sprawling informality of suburban life and the stark aesthetic of modernism. Perhaps the most conspicuous new feature was the spacious parking lot surrounding the complex of low buildings. Of the buildings, the synagogue sanctuary often received artistic treatment in a modern mode, and a more prosaic wing housed the religious school. Modernist architects adorned the new Jewish centers with symbols celebrating the arrival of Judaism in American suburbia, often an abstracted version of the *menorah* (candelabrum) of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem (replacing the Jewish star in popularity). The sanctuary interior betrayed a lack of such reverence, however, as a "flexible plan" was adopted wherein the sanctuary could be expanded into a larger space, usually the adjoining social hall, to provide for the overflow crowds on the high holidays. During the rest of the year, the sanctuary was more than adequate to house the dwindling numbers of worshippers. But another constituency did come more regularly—youth. Though the concept of an all-purpose synagogue was still in effect, the suburban synagogue had become a child-centered institution, and hence the school facility often became the hub of greatest activity. Nevertheless, suburban Jewish congregations sought attention for their new edifices, and the more affluent hired well-known architects to create striking sculptural designs. Prominent examples of the postwar suburban synagogue include St. Louis' parabola-roofed B'nai Amoona of 1949 and Cleveland's domed Park Synagogue of 1953, both designed by noted German Jewish architect Eric Mendelsohn; Providence's 1954 Temple Beth El and Miami Beach's 1956 Temple Beth Shalom, both by American Jewish architect Percival Goodman, responsible for more than fifty modern synagogues; Port Chester's (suburban New York) 1956 Kneses Tifereth Israel, by Philip Johnson; Elkins Park's (suburban Philadelphia) 1957 Beth Shalom Synagogue, by Frank Lloyd Wright; Baltimore's 1960 Temple Oheb Shalom, by Walter Gropius; Glencoe's (suburban Chicago) 1964 North Shore Congregation Israel, by Minoru

Yamasaki; and Buffalo's 1967 Temple Beth Zion, by Harrison & Abramovitz.

The Synagogue "Havurah"

In the late twentieth century, following the social upheavals of the 1960s, the synagogue turned inward. Many young Jews abandoned the synagogue altogether during those years, but a select few reacted to the large, impersonal synagogues of their childhoods by creating a new style of Jewish religious community, the *havurah*. *Havurah* Jews aspired to greater intimacy, communality, and spirituality and eschewed professional leadership and the usual bureaucratic trappings of a synagogue—their motto was "do-it-yourself Judaism." They had no rabbi, and neither did they require a synagogue building. Instead, apartments and houses were converted to use as *havurot* (pl.), and, as at Havurat Shalom in Somerville, Massachusetts (founded 1968), the living room was used as the prayer hall, with pillows spread around the floor for seating. In the years since, the *havurah* movement has had a profound effect on the mainstream synagogue and its architecture. Synagogues have begun to downplay their role as public monuments to Judaism in favor of more user-friendly private spaces conducive to Jewish learning and living. In fact, many contemporary synagogues have added such subsidiary spaces to their existing complexes. For example, in 1979, North Shore Congregation Israel added a chapel to its landmark Yamasaki structure; and in 1988, Temple Oheb Shalom of Baltimore commissioned the firm of Levin/Brown to add a separate chapel to the earlier Gropius design—such chapels, often called in Hebrew *bet midrash*, are now *de rigueur* in contemporary synagogue design. In a variation on the theme, Scarsdale's Westchester Reform Temple added a congregational "living room" for small informal events and study sessions. The interiors of all these spaces, as well as of the contemporary sanctuary, are characterized by warm-toned wood surfaces and have large windows and skylights allowing natural light to pour in. Some have eliminated fixed seating in the sanctuary in favor of *havurah*-style informality and nonhierarchical community. Yet others have begun to reintroduce the central *bimah*, both to reclaim a sense of Jewish authenticity and to reemphasize the participatory nature of Jewish worship. The general effect replicates the homey ambience of the *havurah*—warm, hospitable, inviting, and spiritually uplifting. Many suburban and rural synagogues have even adopted the look of domestic architecture, taking literally the Hebrew term for synagogue, *bet k'nesset*, "house of assembly." At the same time,

many post-1960s Jews have returned to the city center, and so we have seen the return of the urban synagogue, though now with the modernism of suburbia and the intimacy of the *havurah* combined. Wherever synagogues are built and in whichever style, they continue to display the twin imperatives of American Jewish life: to be a part of America and to remain apart as Jews at one and the same time.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Judaism: Conservative*; *Judaism: Orthodox*; *Judaism: Reconstructionist*; *Judaism: Reform*; *Music: Jewish*; *Women: Jewish*; *Worship: Jewish*.

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Architecture: Muslim

The presence of Muslims in antebellum America is central to the understanding of the development of the first American Muslim communities. Some sources estimate that the transatlantic slave trade brought up to 12 million West Africans to North and South America between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, with an estimated 645,000 to the United States. By 1860, according to the census, the slave population in the United States had grown to 4 million.

That Islam did not survive in the antebellum era as an organized practice among Muslim captives does not mean that it did not flourish in some rebellious form during slavery. Indeed, the African Muslim community succeeded in following the precepts of their faith. Several of these captives stood out as men of education and knowledge, for example, Omar ibn Said (1770–1864)—after whom a mosque at Fayetteville, North Carolina, is named.

Thus far, researchers have been unable to identify the earliest established mosque in the United States with any degree of certainty. In the early 1920s a Muslim community was established in Ross, North Dakota, and a mosque was built there around 1928. Another community was established during the 1930s in Rapid City, South Dakota. In 1934, Lebanese immigrants built a mosque in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; this building is popularly referred to as the oldest mosque in America. In 1930, African American Muslims established the First Muslim Mosque in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A Cleveland, Ohio, mosque founded in 1932 by al-Hajj Wali Akram is now the oldest continuously running indigenous Muslim institution in America. During the Great Depression (1929–1945), Professor Muhammad Ezaldeen established the Ad-Deen Allah Universal Arabic Association in Jabal Arabiyya, a Muslim village at Buffalo, New York. Professor Ezaldeen was an African American who had studied in Cairo from 1931 to 1935 and was knowledgeable in both Arabic and Islamic studies. In the 1930s Malcolm Bell Jr. (1913–2001) photographed and interviewed many coastal Georgia blacks as part of a Works Progress Administration program; this project was published in 1940 and entitled *Drums and Shadows: Survival Studies among the Coastal Georgia Negroes*. Bell interviewed a number of coastal Georgia blacks who were descendants of Muslim slaves; they described the daily ritual prayer that was still being performed at the time of the interview. One interview mentions a building that a slave master had ordered to be torn down; from the description it appears to have been a place for Muslim worship (*musalla*) rather than a domicile. The *musalla* is the most common type of building used for communal worship because adapting an existing structure is far less costly than constructing a new building. However, two approaches have their parallels in the aesthetics of the urban mosque. One views fragments of aesthetics as precedent handed down through history, independent of meaning or time. Another quotes the formal elements, devoid of any meaning. What differentiates these approaches is a fundamentally spatial form with many types of corresponding modes of creative expression. But the picture is more complex: besides communal worship, there exists a ghostly residue of emotional and cultural feeling attached to the image of the edifice that causes a most intractable aesthetic problem for an untrained architect, who may not be familiar with the planning of this type of structure. In Europe and America there are four or more stages in the development of the urban mosque and Islamic center: (1) an early period dating to the turn of the

twentieth century, including such examples as the Mosque de Paris built in 1926; (2) a second period epitomized by the Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., built in 1957; (3) a third period witnessing the proliferation of mosques in the West, such as the London Central Mosque completed in 1977, up to the 1990s and the Islamic Cultural Center of New York; and (4) the period from 2000 to the present day, including the Islamic Cultural Center of Boston and al-Farooq Masjid Atlanta, both completed in 2008. The idea of using the term “Islamic center” gained legitimacy in the early 1960s when a host of ancillary functions were added to the typical edifice (mosque) simply built or modified for communal worship; these ancillary functions now include education, socializing, recreation, and civic activities for the entire urban or suburban community. The terms “Islamic center” and “mosque” are often used interchangeably.

The Formation of the Urban Mosque (Masjid)

The pious saying (*hadith*) “the whole world is a mosque . . .” sanctions the injunction of public worship anywhere in the world. Today there are between fifteen hundred and three thousand mosques in the United States; the vast majority of these buildings exist in urban communities. *The Mosque in America: A National Portrait*, by Ihsan Bagby, Paul M. Perl, and Bryan T. Froehle (2001), estimated the total number of Muslims living in the United States as between six and seven million. African Americans were reported to make up 42 percent of the total, 24.4 percent were Indo-Pakistani, 12.4 percent were Arabs, 5.2 percent were Africans, 3.6 percent were Iranian, 2.4 percent were Turks, 2 percent were from Southeast Asia, 1.6 percent were white Americans, 3.2 percent were Albanians, and all other groups constituted 5.6 percent. The same study estimated that the majority of existing mosques (87 percent) had been founded since 1970. Likewise, approximately 64 percent of all mosques are located in urban areas, while 36 percent are established in rural or suburban locations.

Urban mosques can be found in Brooklyn, New York; Newark, New Jersey; Philadelphia; Boston; Los Angeles; Houston; Chicago; Detroit; and elsewhere. A kaleidoscope of ethnic Muslim groups have settled in the aforementioned urban locales over the past fifty years; however, the latest wave of immigration is distinct in two ways. First, new Muslim immigrants tend to reside where there are established Muslim communities; second, recent arrivals are more likely to live in ethnic suburban enclaves, with other ethnic Muslims from the same country. Until the early 1970s, the most

prominent ethnic group of Muslim immigrants in Brooklyn, New York, and Detroit, Michigan, had come from Yemen in the 1950s and 1960s. Since the 1970s this group has increased to include immigrants from Lebanon and the rest of the Middle East. After 1980 many Iranian immigrants also settled in Los Angeles, California.

In inner-city neighborhoods all across America, the urban mosque represents an edifice dedicated to communal worship, education, and social activities. Three prominent examples include the Islamic Center of Washington, D.C. (1957); the Islamic Cultural Center of New York (1991); and the Islamic Cultural Center of Boston, Roxbury (2007).

Social and religious practice undoubtedly influences the desire for communal worship and is rooted in a long tradition of public gathering, especially on Fridays and for important religious events. Urban and rural mosques usually differ only in size and ancillary function; however, these differences can be the result of construction costs or the availability of land. While no prescriptive form for the urban mosque occurs in the Qur’an, the need for communal worship among immigrants and indigenous Muslims has led to the development of a particular American plan for these buildings.

Differing in more than just outward appearance, the North American mosque gives priority to a balanced mix of functions and innovative aesthetic features. Because many cultural and religious traditions persist, immigrant mosques in North America have a two-tiered identity, which may differ according to the cultural interaction of the émigré. First, “diaspora aesthetics,” cultural sentiments informed by nostalgia, a host of customs, traditions, and present-day beliefs, associate the mosque with memory and as such a style adapted from far-away foreign places. Stylistically the design of a mosque falls within three common genres: first, a strict adherence to an aesthetic tradition influenced by sign, symbol, and building convention; second, an attempt at design interpretation employing experimental and popular ideas and resulting in a hybrid image; and finally, a faithful attempt to understand modernity, tradition, and urbanism.

In North America the urban mosque operates under unique existing site constraints. Among these constraints is the *qiblah*, the need for Muslim worshippers to face Makkah (Mecca). The edifice must, therefore, conform to this canonical requirement. Architects and designers have sought to preserve meaning, religious practice, and social interaction in new ways. But the difficulty lies in deciding what to select from a particular vocabulary of an émigré’s place or history, and this kind of aesthetic profile in short accounts for the

vast majority of stylistic variations that exist today. Appropriation of space must also consider religious values to adequately explain design strategy. Conversely, it could be argued that while architecture differs from the literal exegesis (commentary) of the Qur'an, architecture is nonetheless a by-product of religious belief and practice.

Aesthetics and Religious Values

A mosque is primarily a place of spiritual repose, a spiritual sanctuary. Mosques are not built according to divine patterns; the two main religious texts for Muslims, the Qur'an and the *hadith* (writings that recount the statements or actions of Muhammad), provide no clear rules as to what a mosque should look like. However, the Qur'an does stress the value of the edifice as a place for the remembrance of God, and the *hadith* prescribe lists of profane actions that are not allowed to take place in a mosque. The essence of sacred art remains always reflective, contemplative, and theocentric; the acceptance of revealed truths requires a keen intellect (*al-aql*), purity of heart (*qalb*), and piety of soul (*ruh*).

All mosques can be traced to a valued origin with an affinity to the first *masjid*—the Prophet's mosque built at Madinah (Medina), Arabia, in the seventh century CE. The first edifice was originally a simple demarcated orthogonal walled space, with an open courtyard and two or three doors and a shaded rectangular portico (*musalla*) to one end facing Makkah. The portico was supported by columns, which were spaced at regular intervals to support the roof structure. This simple structure became the paradigm for all buildings built following the expansion of Islam in the first century after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. The American mosque demonstrates a regional development and refinement and a modern expression; likewise, in North America, regional building traditions may have a direct influence on the aesthetics of the edifice.

The development of the first prototype and its later variations were generally sustained via a commonly understood cosmological order. That order can be defined by five themes: *belief*, *order*, *space*, *materials*, and *symbols*. These themes find their primordial origin in rational sciences (geometry, for example), which were engaged as means of expressing the idiosyncratic aesthetic themes. In the development of the American *masjid* (urban mosque), the use of rational science as an aesthetic device, like the absence of iconography in any place of Muslim worship, is a universal tenet. This tenet is as fundamental a principle of Muslim belief as *tauheed* or monotheism. *Tauheed* in Muslim

aesthetics is related to the power of *shari'ah* (sacred law). Muslim religious aesthetics is therefore a theocentered epistemology. It has no associated symbolic form, only the primary act of individual submission and, as such, a reluctance to directly invest an edifice with any symbolic connotation. The ultimate principle of monotheism is the rejection of idolatry. The individual act of submission is paired with the physical experience; thus, the cognitive rule of facing toward the *kabah*, a stone building at the center of the Great Mosque in Makkah, can be explained as the axis of prayer (*qiblah*), which is the universal axis for Muslims anywhere on the planet. An important injunction in the Qur'an (3:36) states that the believer should face Makkah while performing the ritual prayer. This means that mosques must have a wall 90 degrees to the direction of Makkah; this is commonly called the *qiblah* wall, which is laid out transversely to the correct prayer direction. Muslims refer to this as the wall facing Makkah or the axis of prayer. Owing to the importance of calculating the direction of the *qiblah* when the site of a mosque is established, various methods were firmly incorporated to determine its accuracy, as well as that of the placement of the *mihrab*, a niche in the wall facing Makkah.

Congregational prayer is governed by this rule, which also affects the orientation of the prayer space toward the *kabah* in Makkah. This idea, the orientation of the prayer space toward the *kabah*, reveals an architectural condition that imparts a control over the space and building in terms of the physical and the conceptual. The axis of prayer (*qiblah*), or direction to Makkah, recognizes that the term mosque (*masjid*) is related to both a place of prostration and the act of prostration (*sa-ja-da*, to prostrate); the *qiblah* is therefore vital with regards to the performance of individual and communal prayer.

The American Mosque since 1950

Because Islam is often imbedded in a transnational identity, the collective activity of worship treats the mosque as a reflection of the diaspora community; yet the belief system cannot be ignored, and as such the types of aesthetics that we find in American mosques span a range of cultural nuances, modern schemes, and traditional or hybrid styles, which have power over the image of the edifice. It is important to realize that both architect and client face two related design choices. First, the approach must attempt to interpret and bring critical analysis to bear on space, form, symbol and order. Second, differing in more than just outward appearance, the hybrid model gives priority to an unbalanced mix of functions and aesthetic features. The North American mosque

displays a wide variety of styles based on this broad interpretation of aesthetic vocabulary and the need to meet liturgical requirements. However, the plan of a mosque's fellowship hall for men and women is a fundamental criterion: it is primarily governed by the liturgical axis towards Makkah.

In Muslim aesthetics the *shari'ah* has dominated the written and spoken word, often altering the relationship of faith to aesthetics. Historically three kinds of visual patterns can be found among a myriad of examples in North America: (1) designs derived from plant life, often called *arabesque* in the West; (2) Arabic calligraphy, which is the most revered art form in Islam because it is believed to convey the word of God; and (3) tessellation, or the repetitive "ordering" of a geometric pattern.

In general, these three are not common to all North American mosques, although isolated examples of their occurrence do exist. There are no formal design standards for an American mosque; it was only recently that *masjid* standards were included in the religious building section of the *Architectural Graphic Standards*, which is consulted by professional architects and architectural students. A second text, *Design Criteria for Mosques and Islamic Centers: Art, Architecture and Worship*, was published in 2007.

American architects have to deal with a set of unique design problems when planning a *masjid* because adequate

design standards have not been formally established. In their absence, American architects who have been commissioned to design mosques have exercised absolute freedom in interpreting planning prerequisites to meet American code requirements.

The forces that shape the American mosque are therefore complex and at the same time unique in sociohistorical terms. Three examples present an interesting overview of the architectural complexity of American mosques. The Islamic Center of Washington, D.C. (1957) includes various motifs from the Muslim world, primarily Egypt. The Dar al Islam (abode of tranquility) at Abiquiu, New Mexico (1980), is built primarily of adobe construction; it also employs several traditional methods and crafts from ancient Nubia, in what is now Egypt. Another approach is a modern interpretation of belief, order, space, materials, and symbols; this can be seen in the Manhattan *masjid* and Islamic center in New York designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (1990).

The Islamic Center of Washington, D.C.

The cornerstone of the Islamic Center Washington, D.C. was laid in 1949, and President Eisenhower formally inaugurated it in 1957. It was built primarily for the diplomatic community. The first major Islamic religious edifice to be built in a major American city, the Washington building, like the

Regent's Park Mosque in London and the Grand Mosque of Paris, employs a unique aesthetic vocabulary. The architect Abdur Rahman Rossi reproduced several Egyptian mosque motifs, which can best be understood by studying the inscriptions, which depict both meaning and style. While each inscription is primarily intended to further the knowledge of the community, deciphering the text of the inscription is an overwhelming task for anyone who is not adept in reading Arabic. Several verses of the Qur'an have been arranged in a symmetrical configuration and in various patterns on the interior walls and ceilings of the primary prayer hall. The divine names of Allah (*Al-Asma Allah Al-Husna*) and several familiar and often-quoted



Built primarily for the diplomatic community, the Islamic Center of Washington, D.C. (1957) was the first large Islamic religious edifice to be built in a major U.S. city. The architect, Abdur Rahman Rossi, reproduced several Egyptian mosque motifs whose inscriptions are intended to further the knowledge of the community.

verses from the Qur'an, such as *Al-Alaq* 96:1–5, are inscribed in large framed borders of Arabic (*thuluth*) script, with smaller framed panels of ornamental Kufic script.

Two inscription bands run horizontally across the face of the prayer niche (*mihrab*). The upper band reads, “Verily we have seen the turning of your face to the heaven . . .,” and the lower band says, “. . . surely we shall turn you to a *qiblah* that shall please you” (*Al-Baqara* 2:144). The *mihrab*'s decorative treatment follows the Iznik and Bursa tradition of using glazed tiles—blue, red, and green—which are commonly found in Ottoman Turkish buildings.

The plan of the building contains three halls (*iwan*) framed by an exterior double arcade (*riwaq*), which serves as an *extra muros* space or *ziyada*. The orthogonal arcade remains perpendicular to the street, but the *masjid* is set out at a tangent to conform to the *qiblah* axis, which has been calculated on the basis of the great circle: the shortest distance when facing Makkah. In the building there is a small court (*sahn*) open to the sky, but the whole central space of the *masjid* is covered with a modest clerestory dome. An arcade (*riwaq*) consisting of five contiguous arches serves as an entry portal and a key part of the façade.

The entry portal runs parallel to the street, and for added emphasis it has an inscription band of Kufic script at the upper part of the façade, which reads, “In houses of worship which Allah has permitted to be raised so that His name be remembered, in them, there [are such as] extol His limitless glory at morning and evening” (*Al-Nur* 24:36). The *masjid*'s composition epitomizes an array of Muslim aesthetic themes; the overall *image* the inscriptions evoke is significant in regard to the use of epigraphy (calligraphy—pious verses from the Qur'an) from two aspects: first as a devotional theme and second as an emotional device with symbolic meaning that satisfies a quiet devotional disposition. With regards to art and worship, epigraphy has both essence and appearance: it is self-evident, it has meaning when it is read, and even when it is rendered in a highly stylized manner it evokes delight. Calligraphy is a composition that transmits a message. For example, when seen as art, it exhibits beauty and meaning; its communicative power exists because

of its syntactical structure. In terms of syntax, the development of epigraphy was more systematized and controlled than building structures, simply because it is essential that the meaning of a text be understood.

Dar al-Islam, Abiquiu, New Mexico

In 1980, Hassan Fathy (d. 1989) was commissioned to design the master plan for a Muslim village in Abiquiu, New Mexico. The mesa site is framed by surrounding arid hills and several snow-capped mountains that are visible in the distance. At the top, one can expect to experience the reflective aura of the mosque and the *madrassa* (school). The Abiquiu site shares an empathic relationship with Fathy's theory of creativity, and a balanced spiritual awareness of a sense of unity between building, landscape, and user imposes an intangible order on the building and the site.

The idea of the Dar al-Islam (Abode of Islam) village was the dream of an American-born Muslim and an American-educated Saudi industrialist who met at Mecca in the late 1970s. The original idea was to establish a Muslim village, the largest and most comprehensive of its kind in America. Today, the Dar al-Islam organization emphasizes education first, and the site provides a quiet retreat as sacred site.

Abiquiu, the Chama Valley, and their immediate surroundings were populated before the arrival of the Spanish by several Native American peoples. Spanish settlers arrived



In 1980 Hassan Fathy (d. 1989) was commissioned to design the master plan for a Muslim village in Abiquiu, New Mexico. The site reflects a sense of unity among building, landscape, and user.



The Islamic Cultural Center of Manhattan (1990) explores the use of modern technology, and geometric themes are employed as a unifying element throughout the interior and exterior.

in 1598. The harsh environmental conditions at Abiquiu provided an ideal setting for using adobe construction. In making use of adobe, Hassan Fathy remained faithful to a long-established building tradition endorsing the notion that “small is beautiful.” As Fathy put it, “Tradition is a key element of culture . . . when the craftsman was responsible for much of the work of building, traditional art came out of the subconscious of the community . . . it is held together by an accumulated culture, rather than by one individual’s idea of harmony.” The traditional Nubian building technique worked well for the choice of site and the project itself. Not only can the site be considered in terms of its psychological impulse, but it is, in a manner of speaking, a spiritual place: a container that naturally embodies physical space.

The Islamic Cultural Center of New York

The Islamic Cultural Center of New York (1990, by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill) explores the use of modern technology as a compositional device. The *masjid* confronts both tradition and modernity, seeking to reinterpret various aesthetic themes associated with extant models found in the Muslim world. First, the surface motifs reflect geometric themes, which are employed as a unifying element throughout the *masjid*’s interior and exterior. These motifs can be seen primarily on the carpet where worshippers assemble for prayer in horizontal and parallel rows facing the *qiblah*.

They also appear in the surface treatment of the *minbar*, the exterior façade, and several other interior elements as well. Geometry is a fundamental theme in Muslim cosmology, but in this instance it comes closer to a modernist, secular interpretation than a traditional, cosmological one.

The inscriptions, which are included in the decorative features of the *masjid*’s interior, are rendered in a geometric Kufic style. They are set in straight, horizontal, and vertical arrangements to accommodate a modernist concept of order. For instance, around the *mihrab* the geometric Kufic script reads, “Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth.”

Admittedly, the use of traditional inscriptions as a decorative element is in some respects incongruent with

the idea of a secular, modernist interpretation of surface treatment. Using geometry as a spatial theme, with the aid of a corresponding angular Kufic inscription, provides visual affinity; a less complementary script would have put the theme of composition and “order” at risk. The aesthetic treatment of the interior of the dome over the central prayer hall further illustrates this point. The dome’s structural ribs have been left bare and rudimentary, which provides a bold geometric texture to the dome’s inner face when seen from below. The inner drum of the dome is covered with a band of angular Kufic inscription, but the pattern of concentric ribs clearly dominates the composition, especially since the text of the band is largely unreadable from the main prayer hall below. Both compositional elements—epigraphy and geometry—were clearly intended by the architect to be operative aesthetic devices.

Summary

The design conceptualization of a mosque and its aesthetics supports two primary themes. First, it preserves the identity of the various forms that constitute the elements of a religious edifice for men and women and the relationship between spiritual repose and aesthetics. Second, religious practice and the *shari’ah* have traditionally been the major factors organizing the human space of the mosque. Furthermore, there is a common consensus that Muslim

religious aesthetics is a theocentric dogma. In a conceptual framework, one must also consider the unique aesthetic language that explains the elements employed in spatial treatment within a mosque. From a historical point of view, there are exhaustive categories of types and subtypes of mosque, yet in its simplest function the mosque is a space for contemplation, repose, and communal worship. In the West this formula holds true, with the added proviso that the North American urban context has no parallel to the Muslim world. In the Muslim world, Islamic law (*shari'ah*) has substantive meaning for the study of urbanism in the *madinah* or the pre-modern Islamic city. The *shari'ah* is a commonly accepted means of adjudication in habitat disputes; it is therefore a reasonable criterion for the "ordering" of habitat, which forms the corpus of building ordinances.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Islam in North America*; *Islam Tradition and Heritage*; *Nation(s) of Islam*; *Qur'an*; *Women: Muslim*; *Worship: Muslim*.

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Architecture: New Religious Movements

The United States has provided a fertile environment for a broad range of spiritual organizations and religiously based utopian settlements. Some of these groups, such as the

Shakers, Quakers, and Swedenborgians, were founded in Europe, and the Vedantists in India, but all found a following and made important contributions to the religious built environment of America. Other groups, such as the Christian Scientists, Theosophists, and the Latter-day Saints, the largest of America's new religions, were indigenous groups from the nineteenth century that grew rapidly in the United States and spread their influence across the globe.

Early Communal Impulses

One of the earliest successful utopian groups was the celibate United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, or Shakers, who founded their first community at Hancock, Massachusetts, in 1790. By the 1820s, the Shakers developed a systematic planning of villages, usually surrounding a centralized meetinghouse. At one time they had twenty-two communities in New York, New England, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana with six thousand members scattered across the eastern United States. In these villages the Shakers developed a distinct style of architecture that emphasized simplicity and functionality. Shaker religious architecture emphasized the separation of the sexes and therefore was built to allow minimal contact between men and women. Meetinghouses had three entrances, one for each sex and one for the ministry, with interiors that consisted primarily of unadorned and unimpeded spaces for the ecstatic dancing that was part of the religious rituals of the group. Today there are fifteen Shaker villages and museums that celebrate their innovative architecture, design, agriculture, and industry. The National Park Service provides the Shaker Historic Trail, a travel itinerary of the National Register of Historic Places.

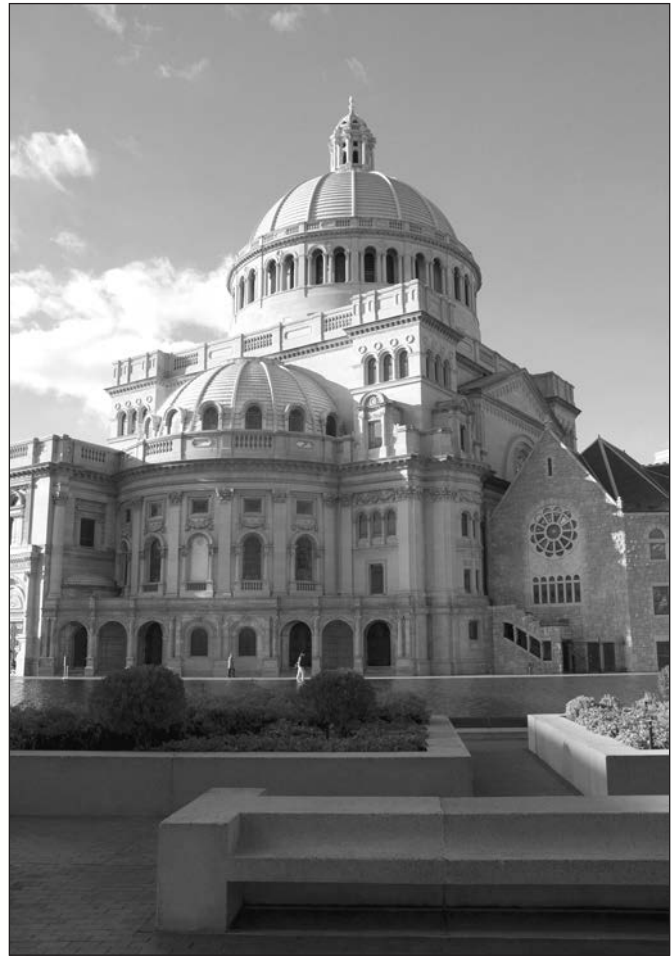
The Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers, a Puritan group that emerged in seventeenth-century Britain, developed a set of quite diverse worship styles over the past four hundred years in America, which is reflected in their historical and current architecture. The Friends General Conference supports unprogrammed worship, consisting of the congregants waiting in silence, much like original Quaker colonists, while the Friends United Meeting has semiprogrammed worship with clergy. The Evangelical Friends Church International services and architecture more closely resemble other forms of Protestantism. The earliest forms of the meetinghouse, emerging in a building boom in the late eighteenth century, were generally vernacular, south-facing, one- or two-story wood, brick, or stone buildings without stained glass or steeples. Exemplary was the popular early Quaker plan, such as the one in Buckingham, Pennsylvania

(1768), that consisted of domestically scaled, plain, symmetrical, rectangular buildings. The buildings were generally end-gabled, with six-bay façades, consisting of separate entrances for men and women between two windows on either side of each door. Interiors were simple, unornamented, and austere and contained long benches for seating arranged in varying ways on either side of the worship space, one side reserved for women and one side for men. Worship consisted of waiting to be moved by the voice of God within: there was little ritual and no need for a pulpit or other hierarchical or liturgical arrangements. Either a permanent or movable partition was placed between men and women for conducting separate business meetings and sometimes even for worship. As other forms of worship emerged, different bays, openings, and orientations were needed for new functions, such as preaching from a fixed pulpit. A particularly beautiful example of a modern meetinghouse based on the earlier Quaker plan is architect Leslie Elkin's gray-clapboard Live Oak Friends Meeting House (2001) in Houston, Texas, with its multiple bay doors and seating arranged in a hollow square for unprogrammed worship. It features one of artist James Turrell's "Skyspaces" in the vaulted ceiling, which encourages contemplation of the framed sky and passing clouds as a metaphor for seeking the "inner light."

Metaphysical Groups

The first Swedenborgian church was formed in Baltimore in 1792, with a General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States established in 1817. An institutional break occurred in 1890, resulting in the creation of a more conservative General Church of the New Jerusalem, now known commonly as the General or New Church, headquartered in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. This body emerged from the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in North America, now known as the Swedenborgian Church, headquartered in Newtonville, Massachusetts.

The early Swedenborgian church built several significant buildings in the Gothic style. An early example is the Gothic-revival Cambridge Swedenborg Chapel built in 1901, designed by H. Langford Warren, an important Arts and Crafts architect and founder of the architectural curriculum at Harvard University. The Swedenborgian Church of San Francisco opened its doors for worship in 1895 and was designed by a distinguished group of architects, including the celebrated Bernard Maybeck. Its founding



The Mother Church of Christian Science was a small Romanesque revival edifice when first built (1894). A monumental extension (1906) was designed in the Renaissance classical style, inspired by the 1893 Exposition in Chicago, the center of the Christian Science movement.

pastor, Rev. Joseph Worcester, encouraged rustic Arts and Crafts principles in the church design, integrating natural materials that were simply and honestly expressed in the structure. A more recent innovative example is Frank Lloyd Wright's organic 1951 Wayfarer's Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes, California, a redwood and glass structure integrated with trees and panoramic views, reflecting the correspondences between the inner and outer world so important to the seer and prophet of the group, Emanuel Swedenborg. The use of natural materials and open glass expanses is also apparent in several new designs, such as the Church of the Open Word Garden Chapel, built in 1957 in St. Louis.

The New Church's headquarters at Bryn Athyn, outside Philadelphia, is a stunning Gothic-inspired cathedral.

Erected in 1913 and dedicated in 1919, a Romanesque council hall was completed by 1926 and a choir hall added in 1928. Initially designed by famous Gothicist Ralph Adams Cram, the church building was supervised by church member Raymond Pitcairn, who wanted to create a unique organic structure built through communal effort. The building was continually altered by the draftsmen and builders during the course of construction. Pitcairn encouraged the use of local materials and had his artisans create working models derived from his collection of medieval and antique examples.

The Mother Church of Christian Science was built in Boston in 1894, a small Romanesque revival edifice, later abutted by a monumental extension in 1906 designed in the Renaissance classical style. Aside from Bernard Maybeck's Arts and Crafts masterpiece, First Church of Christ, Scientist, Berkeley, California (1911), Christian Scientists generally chose a monumental classical style with Greek pediments and Roman domes for their unornamented urban edifices. This was the result of the growth of the movement in Chicago around the time of the 1893 Exposition, when Chicago stood at the geographical and demographic center of the Christian Science movement. Between 1896 and 1910 eight edifices were built in Chicago, each seating between one thousand and fifteen hundred people. These were all classical edifices, built of stone, and inspired by the example of the "White City" of the World's Columbian Exposition. The Exposition both launched Christian Science into the limelight of public respectability and provided a model for the architectural style of its new edifices. Subsequently, well over a thousand edifices were designed in the classical style, often with elaborate art glass domes featuring unimpeded open worship spaces where congregations were led by two lay readers, usually a man and a woman. Through architects such as Chicago-based Solon Beman and Leon Stanhope, the classical style was defended in the press and debated with architects such as Elmer Grey, who argued for a more broadly historical and site-specific approach. The cult of the colonial dominated new suburban branch church designs after 1950, with some significant modern designs, such as architect Paul Rudolph's now-raised brutalist Christian Science Organization Building at the University of Illinois (1962); Harry Weese's Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist, Chicago (1968); Araldo Cossutta's reinforced concrete Christian Science Center in Boston (1968–1974); and Cossutta's brutalist Third Church of Christ, Scientist, Washington, D.C. (1971).

Mormon Restorationism

Nineteenth Century

This covenant-based group of denominations, the largest of which is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was first founded by Joseph Smith in 1830 in upstate New York. Envisioning a "city of Zion" in the west near Independence, Missouri, many of his followers attempted settlement in the area, organizing their first community in Kirtland, Ohio, between 1831 and 1838, when they were forcibly removed and settled on the banks of the Mississippi river at Nauvoo, Missouri. Continued altercations with non-Mormons resulted in the murder of Joseph Smith, and a succession crisis ensued. Brigham Young led the adherents from Nauvoo in 1846 to the Great Basin in Utah and legally founded the church in 1850 in the new territory of Utah. Urban planning resulted in distinctive geometric city and town patterns.

The first Mormon architecture, the Kirtland, Ohio Temple (1833–1836), was designed by Joseph Smith. It was a simple rectangle with pointed roof and tower at its east end, like a typical New England meetinghouse. The neoclassical Nauvoo Temple (1841–1845) was like the Ohio Temple. Though it burned down in the hostile environment of 1848, a faithful reproduction was erected in 2002. Both of these two-story structures were primarily assembly rooms, reflecting a time before temples were deemed the place of the holiest of holies and before temple ordinances had been fully developed. The lower hall was used for public worship, while the upper hall was used for instruction in the Aaronic and Melchisidek priesthoods. Unique were the series of pulpits on each end of the hall, tailored to the needs of whichever priesthood was in session.

The more intimidating castellation of Mormon temples indicated a shift of emphasis, borrowed from Masonic rites, of secret rituals and initiations that were not open to the public. By the rise of the intentional settlements in Utah, temple rituals were well established. In these temples, worthy members obtained instruction; carried out initiation rituals; and received their endowment to participate in sacred ordinances, including baptisms by proxy of family members and others who were dead before the restoration of the gospel, as well as sealing ceremonies of eternal marriage for couples and families that ensured their connection into eternity. Subsequent temples contained progressive ordinance rooms, often with murals, and some were situated for live-action endowment ceremonies and later film



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, is based on a sketch by Brigham Young that informed Truman Angell's design. The style of the building is a mix of Romanesque and Gothic.

viewing. The first functioning temple in Utah was the Gothic-style temple at St. George (1871–1877), similar to the Nauvoo Temple. Soon after, temples were built in Logan (1877–1884) and Manti (1877–1888), the latter designed by William Folsom in a French Renaissance style.

Brigham Young chose Temple Square immediately after arriving in the Great Basin in 1847. At ten acres it paralleled the ten-acre block system provided for Salt Lake City. His 1853 sketch informed Truman Angell's design for the temple that was finally completed in 1893 of local granite. The style of the building is a mix between Romanesque and Gothic, with tower groupings in threes and of different sizes indicating the organization and powers invested in the two priesthoods. This six-tower model inspired a number of more contemporary temples, such as

the Washington, D.C., temple (1968–1974); the Boise, Idaho Temple (1982–1984); and several others that used a simplified modern architectural style with a gabled roof, similar to many meetinghouses and stake centers built during this era.

Twentieth Century

The Laie Hawaii Temple (1915–1919) and the Mesa Arizona Temple (1921–1922) were both modified classical designs reminiscent of pre-Columbian temples. The early Cardston, Alberta Temple (1913–1923), with its Aztec influences, designed by important church architects Hyrum C. Pope and Harold W. Burton, showed the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright's influence also marked meetinghouses and tabernacles during this period, designed by them and by Wright renderer Taylor Woolley; together they produced a Wright-inspired "Mormon style." The pyramidal single-spined Art Deco Idaho Falls Temple (1939–1945) subsequently inspired a number of single-spire examples, including the church's then-largest Los Angeles Temple (1951–1956).

The responsibility for the architecture of the church has generally been centralized. Truman Angell was the first official architect for the church after it arrived in Utah, and he designed the homes of his brother-in-law and leader of the church, Brigham Young, as well as the St. George Temple and the Salt Lake City Temple. Brigham Young's son, Joseph Don Carlos Young, studied architecture at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York and was then appointed church architect.

Standardization of the meetinghouse/stake center ensued under Young to create a utilitarian and recognizable Mormon form. At first, only simple, functional buildings were built for worship. By the early twentieth century, these structures were supplemented by buildings for auxiliary meetings and recreation, often built in the colonial style, designed by the church architectural department. These were usually connected by a foyer through the 1940s and then became integrated into a single structure in the 1950s.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the church was responsible for more than one thousand buildings. Today the Mormons have 128 operating sacred temples, dedicated as houses of the Lord Jesus Christ, open only to members in good standing, with 17 in various phases of realization. Of these, 127 were built after 1980.

More recently a centralized church building committee has functioned to create uniform and affordable accommodations for the movement. These more standardized plans

began with Emil Fetzer's modern Ogden Temple (1969–1972) and Provo Temple (1969–1971) and continued with a series of temples designed with long, low roofs and single dramatic towers. A particularly exceptional design, conceived outside the church's official architectural office, was the double-towered San Diego Temple (1988–1993), designed by William S. Lewis Jr. and Dennis and Shelly Hyndman.

Meetinghouses, like larger stake centers, usually consist of a chapel accommodating between two hundred and four hundred worshippers, mirrored by a multipurpose “cultural hall” auditorium/gym, surrounded on three sides by a large kitchen, baptismal font room, classrooms, and other office spaces. Other large stake center projects are increasingly moving to urban cores with new modified colonial structures, similar to those built in the 1920s, such as the Cambridge, Massachusetts Stake Center (2009).

Mormon meetinghouses or stake centers are organized geographically and are used by several congregations called branches or wards that make up the stake (diocese), depending on membership density. Tabernacles are built for stake conferences. The most famous is the Mormon Tabernacle at Temple Square, Salt Lake City, erected between 1864 and 1867 to seat eight thousand. The elliptical building with elongated dome was an engineering and acoustic marvel, designed by civil engineer Henry Grow and Angell using Ithiel Town's lattice truss system.

The second largest Mormon group, with 250,000 members, is the Community of Christ, until 2001 known as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, founded in 1860 during the crisis of succession after Joseph Smith's death. The church recently built a stunning nautilus-shaped world headquarters in Independence, Missouri, erected between 1990 and 1994, designed by Gyo Obata.

East Meets West

With immigration from Asia in the last half of the nineteenth century, many missions were established that ministered to new workers in the American West. Aside from groups that ministered directly to their constituencies from China and Japan, such as the Jodo Shinshu sect of Buddhism known as the Buddhist Churches of America, several Eastern groups made inroads into mainstream society through their active teaching to Anglo audiences.

Swami Vivekananda, for example, represented Hinduism at the World's Parliaments of Religions, an auxiliary Congress of the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. He opened several centers and was instrumental in

solidifying Hindu teachings in the United States, through support of the Sri Ramakrishna sect in India (now the largest Hindu body in India). The first Vedanta Hindu Temple in America was built in San Francisco by Swami Trigunatita in 1906, with windows and moldings in the Moorish style. At first simply a Victorian house, the elaborate upper-third-story veranda was added in 1908. Four metal towers crown the structure, copied from the styles of several Indian temples, including one sacred to Shiva in Bengal. This combination of architectural features was designed to symbolize the harmony of East and West. A later temple, designed by Henry Gutterson and built in 1959, serves as the headquarters of the society in San Francisco, and Gutterson built another fine example of Spanish Romanesque architecture in his Berkeley Vedanta temple, constructed in 1939.

The Vedanta Society in Southern California built a small Taj Mahal-inspired temple in the Hollywood Hills in 1938. By 1942, a beautiful country estate in the Santa Barbara hills was given to the Vedanta Society and in 1946 became a convent. In 1956 the devotees hired Lutah Maria Riggs. Riggs was inspired by traditional Indian temples and built a superb wooden structure that won an award that year for the best new civic building in Santa Barbara.

The Theosophical Society, founded by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott in New York in 1875, soon relocated to Adyar (now Chennai), India, in 1879. Theosophical writings brought ancient esoteric wisdom, based in both Eastern and Western theologies and philosophies, to the West. The American Section of the Society was led by William Quan Judge. After Judge's death in 1896, the American Section had leadership challenges, and several new groups emerged.

One institution still loyal to Adyar was the Krotona Institute of Theosophy, founded as a utopian outpost and built in the Hollywood Hills in 1912. A grand organizational headquarters was planned, but only a court and temple, research building, and several houses with Eastern and esoteric ornaments were constructed. The group sold the property in 1924 and moved to Ojai Valley, California, where a school of theosophy still functions. This school and grounds were designed by esoteric architect Robert Stacy-Judd in the Pueblo/Spanish tradition in the late 1920s. The American Section continues to be the largest group, with its headquarters in Wheaton, Illinois, designed by the important Chicago architectural firm Pond and Pond, Martin and Lloyd, erected in 1927. An Egyptian pylon portal gate designed by theosophical architect Claude Bragdon marks its entrance.

One group that claimed leadership after Judge's death was led by Katherine Tingley. She founded the Raja Yoga Academy at Point Loma, California, and became the controversial leader of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society, founded to promote world brotherhood and the use of the arts in religion and education. "Lomaland" was founded in 1897 and buildings began to be erected in 1898, many after Tingley's own designs. By 1900 an aquamarine-domed hotel sanatorium was converted for the group's use, and a purple-domed circular Aryan Memorial Temple was completed. A school that numbered almost three hundred by 1910 was established. Students and teachers lived together in round cottages with skylights. Children were schooled, worked in the elaborate gardens, practiced music, and worked on Point Loma's often grandiose dramatic presentations, held in the first Greek amphitheater built in the United States, erected in 1901. Since 1972 the site has been home to Point Loma Nazarene University, and only several original buildings remain, including an octagonal house, festooned with esoteric and symbolist architectural ornaments designed and executed by Tingley's British follower Reginald Machell.

The Temple of the People, founded by Dr. William H. Dower and Francia La Due in Syracuse, New York in 1898, moved to the central coast of California in 1903. Seeing themselves as Judge's true successors, the temple founders joined other theosophical groups who moved to California but were unique in their commitment to communitarian economic ideals and in their desire to build a city as a physical manifestation of the New Jerusalem. The group built a thirty-seven pillared, three-sided temple, designed by Los Angeles architect Theodore Eisen and Dower. A memorial to Francia La Due, the Blue Star Memorial Temple (1924), was built on lines of mathematical and geometrical symbolism.

Originally theosophical, the Rosicrucian Fellowship in Oceanside, California, was founded by Max Heindel and emphasized spiritual healing and astrology. Their concrete Ecclesia Temple was built between 1914 and 1920. Highly symbolic, the temple is twelve-sided, to conform to the twelve signs of the zodiac, which the Rosicrucians believe directly influences the restoration and maintenance of health. Inside is an array of symbolic stained glass and mural art. The door contains carved panels representing Leo and Aquarius. Those admitted sit in places ordained by their zodiacal sign.

Conclusion

Alternative religious architecture in the United States demonstrates the tendency of new groups to choose forms of

architecture that not only serve the functional aspects of their rituals but solidify and publicize their theological teachings in built forms often quite distinct from traditional and historical Judeo-Christian architectural styles. From the simple Quaker meetinghouse to the monumental Bahá'í or Mormon Temple, these buildings make important contributions to the built environment of a religiously pluralistic America.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Christian Science*; *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion*; *Hinduism in North America*; *Latter-day Saints*; *Quakers* entries; *Shakers*.

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Architecture: Protestant, from the Nineteenth Century to the Present

Protestants have designed their religious buildings to provide environments for worship, education, service, and fellowship and to express their message and social position. Interior arrangements have responded to changing theologies of worship, standards of comfort, and communication technologies. Congregations have employed classical, medieval, and modern styles to embrace changing aesthetic standards, create an atmosphere conducive to worship, and

project a prominent and relevant image of churches' roles in society. The surrounding environment has also shaped buildings as Protestants have responded to the particular demands of urban, rural, and suburban neighborhoods and reflected regional architectural practices.

Vernacular and Professional Architecture

Many church buildings are vernacular in character. They reflect local customs of construction and lay understandings of appropriate styles. Similar vernacular traditions have shaped the adaptive reuse of storefronts and other structures. Other congregations, especially in cities and wealthy suburbs, have employed expensive, high-style architects to design buildings that display their refined taste and assert their prominence.

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, denominations and architects sought to provide professional guidance on a mass scale. Denominations published plan books and mail order plans to facilitate uniformity and quality control in buildings erected with denominations' church extension funds. Some architectural firms began to specialize in churches, erecting similar churches throughout whole regions. Between 1915 and 1924, major denominations established architectural bureaus that provided centralized guidance. They also assisted congregations in hiring architects to design buildings for specific sites. While the Great Depression caused the elimination or consolidation of these bureaus, a boom in church construction following World War II combined with increasing architectural professionalization to support an enduring industry of advice and expertise.

Denominational Characteristics

The succession of styles and interior arrangements discussed below has had a broad impact across denominations. However, a few denominational characteristics should be noted. The strong influence of Reformed theology caused many denominations to favor a plain worship space devoid of pictorial decoration. Anglicans took the lead in incorporating decoration, but by the late nineteenth century, changing aesthetic standards made visual images, particularly stained glass windows, more a sign of style and class than of denomination.

Anglicans, and to a lesser degree Lutherans, constitute a special case because of their enthusiasm for altar-centered chancels. These were practically universal in their churches by the end of the nineteenth century. Later this arrangement also became very popular among Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and especially Methodists. Baptists and Pentecostals

have been more consistently inclined toward pulpit-centered spaces. These and other evangelical groups have often been satisfied with simple vernacular structures. The unprogrammed worship of the Quaker tradition is distinctive for meetinghouses without pulpits where the worshippers are arranged facing one another.

Until at least the late twentieth century, Anglicans, Methodists, and Lutherans placed kneeling rails before their altars or communion tables. Other denominations served communion in the pews. These groups also preferred a free-standing communion table, a feature the more liturgical denominations have also adopted since the 1970s. Churches where the Lord's Supper was infrequent sometimes had no permanent table. Baptists and others requiring believers' baptism by immersion initially did this outdoors. By the late nineteenth century, however, they commonly provided a baptismal pool within the church.

Federal Churches

In the decades following the Revolutionary War, Congregationalist churches throughout New England replaced their colonial meetinghouses with elegant churches in what was later termed the Federal style. Inspired by the designs for churches in London, England, by Christopher Wren and James Gibbs, these churches typically combined a multilevel steeple with a rectangular building and classical details. Frequently, as at Center Church, New Haven, Connecticut (completed 1814), a large porch stood at the entrance. Unlike earlier meetinghouses, the interiors of these churches were arranged longitudinally. The pulpit was placed on the short wall opposite the steeple. Slip pews (that is, benches often seen in churches today) replaced box pews. These were typically sold or rented to worshippers to help finance the building. Seating for worship enacted the social hierarchy.

The high tub pulpit characteristic of colonial churches soon yielded to a large desk at a slightly lower level that sometimes resembled a judge's bench. The communion table sat in front of it on the floor. Pipe organs became increasingly common and were placed in a rear gallery. Church interiors were sometimes fitted with rich details such as Corinthian columns. They were also increasingly used exclusively for religious services. In sum, these buildings appeared more churchly than their predecessors. Abandoning Puritan language, worshippers began to refer to them not as meetinghouses but as churches.

Whether constructed of brick, wood, or stone, the Federal church, especially the Wren-Gibbs spire, was popular



In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Congregationalist churches throughout New England replaced their colonial meetinghouses with elegant structures that were recognizable as churches. Center Church in New Haven, Connecticut (completed 1814), typified this design and construction, later termed the Federal style.

among many denominations. It was erected in the western towns, such as the 1826 Congregationalist Church in Tallmadge, Ohio, as well as in southern cities such as Charleston and Savannah. During the twentieth century, and especially during World War II, these buildings became icons of America. They served as the models for many so-called colonial revival churches. Imitations of their spires made even the most nondescript buildings recognizable as churches.

Evangelical Revivalism and the Greek Revival

Until the mid-nineteenth century, with a few exceptions, growing evangelical denominations such as Baptists and Methodists did not employ high-style architects. They preferred vernacular structures focused on a preaching stand. Pews were not rented, and men and women often sat on opposite sides of the church. African Americans were frequently restricted to special sections.

Evangelicals' outdoor camp meetings produced another type of worship space. In the typical arrangement, a platform for the preachers faced a natural amphitheatre surrounded by tents. In later decades, this arrangement took more permanent form in some places such as Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts. A large wooden or steel structure, often called a tabernacle, provided shelter for the worshippers, and the tents were replaced by wooden cottages. Similar tabernacles would be built in later years for urban evangelists such as Charles Finney and Dwight Moody.

When evangelical groups began to erect more sophisticated churches, they often built in the style of the Greek Revival. Popular from 1820 to 1850, it employed simpler lines than the Federal style while retaining the classical aesthetic. The front of churches typically resembled a Greek temple with a porch supported by columns, topped by a triangular pediment, as at First Baptist in Charleston, South Carolina (1822). Other churches included a central tower above the porch, such as Saint Paul's Episcopal, Richmond, Virginia (1845), or used a recessed portico as at Government Street Presbyterian in Mobile, Alabama (1837). To finance these urban churches, even Baptists and Methodists began to rent pews. A national style, the Greek Revival was particularly popular in the South and among Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists. It was widely adopted into wooden vernacular buildings. Many historians have argued for a strong association between the Greek Revival and democratic ideology and an emphasis on reason. More recently, others have contended that it was more simply a fashion and popular for its affordability and its chaste lines that bespoke middle-class respectability.

Nineteenth-Century Gothic Revival

While classical styles were often seen as modern, the Gothic Revival was seen as distinctly traditional. Most closely associated with the Anglican tradition and its emphasis on historical continuity, it was also utilized by other Protestants. While Gothic came to the forefront in the 1840s, the earliest examples are from the beginning of the century. In plan,

churches such as Trinity Church, New Haven, Connecticut (1815), were very similar to Federal churches. They were rectangular with a tower centered above the entrance. In some cases there was even a central pulpit above the communion table. Yet the buildings were constructed of roughly laid stone, incorporated pointed windows and castellated roof lines, and were often finished to provide the illusion of vaulting in the interior.

In the 1840s, the influence of a more academically correct Gothic Revival movement appeared. In England, the Cambridge Camden Society formulated laws of church building by studying medieval churches. Along with other writers such as A.N.W. Pugin and John Ruskin, these “Ecclesiologists” promoted the idea that Gothic was the true Christian style. It expressed Romantic sensibility by evoking transcendent mystery, unbroken tradition, and unity with nature. Churches often exhibited picturesque qualities including construction from fieldstone in a random pattern, asymmetrical exteriors, and a rural setting.

The first American church erected according to designs furnished by the Ecclesiologists was St. James the Less (Episcopal) (1848), in what is now Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Churches such as St. James featured a chancel whose lower roof line made it visibly distinct from the nave where the congregation sat. The altar was placed against the far wall of the chancel. A pulpit for preaching and a lectern for reading scripture lessons faced the congregation from either side of the chancel steps. Between the steps and the altar, stalls for clergy and sometimes the choir were arranged facing each other. By the end of the century, this arrangement, often referred to as a “split” or “divided” chancel, would be ubiquitous in Anglican and Episcopal churches. The altar was often fitted with a cross and candlesticks, and interiors were decorated with stained glass and carvings in stone and wood.

The Gothic Revival was extended into wooden structures that emphasized verticality with tall pointed gables, elaborate spires, and vertical board-and-batten siding. This so-called carpenter Gothic was frequently used in rural settings. It was given particular distinction in a popular plan book by Richard Upjohn. He also designed many stone churches, such as Trinity Church on Wall Street in New York City (1846).

Gothic designs were not limited to Episcopal churches but were also adopted by other Protestants, particularly those populated by a similarly high social class such as Unitarians, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians. In the nineteenth century, however, these denominations almost never adopted a divided chancel. As at Upjohn’s First Parish Church in

Brunswick, Maine (1845), the focal point of the church remained the large desk or pulpit from which the preacher led the service. Lutherans made the altar the focus but used a shallow chancel to keep it close to the congregation, an expression of their belief in the priesthood of the people.

Romanesque and Other Revival Styles

Another style with medieval associations was the Romanesque Revival. It appeared first in Germany, where it was known as the *Rundbogenstil* or “round-arch style.” Kathleen Curran has argued that this style was associated with the undivided Christianity of late antiquity, as well as the Early Middle Ages, and was chosen as a sign of ecumenical Christianity. It is unclear to what extent this association was operative in the many urban American congregations that built in this style from the 1840s to the 1870s. What is known is that it was accepted as a distinctly Christian style that was not Gothic, supported fashionable decoration, and worked well in brick and stone.

In the 1870s, the Romanesque was transformed by Henry Hobson Richardson, particularly in his design for Trinity Church (Episcopal) in Boston, Massachusetts. Richardson distinguished Trinity not with a tall spire but with a massive tower over the nave. He also used wide, heavy arches and stone of contrasting colors. Richardsonian Romanesque was popular for more than thirty years. It provided monumentality and associations with nature and tradition. It was also adaptable to a variety of interior plans, particularly those that were broad rather than long.

In the nineteenth century’s eclectic architectural environment, some churches were also built in nearly every other available style. Classical associations extended into an Egyptian revival, for example First (now Downtown) Presbyterian, Nashville, Tennessee (1851). A few domed structures were Roman in their associations such as First Unitarian Church, Baltimore, Maryland (1818). Gothic Revival extended into many forms including the colorful High Victorian Gothic and combinations with Tudor and Stick styles. The Shingle Style provided wooden buildings with some of the design features of Richardsonian Romanesque. It also, along with Queen Anne, gave churches a rather domestic exterior.

Auditorium Churches

Revivalist Charles Finney had built a circular auditorium for his Broadway Tabernacle in New York City in 1836, but in the tense decades that led to the Civil War this innovative arrangement found few imitators. From the 1870s to the

1900s, however, auditorium churches were very popular among Baptists, Methodists, and other evangelical Protestants. Designed to provide a comfortable and acoustically successful space for worship, they used sloping floors and rear and side galleries to arrange worshippers in curved, cushioned pews around the speaker's platform. Here a large speaker's desk served as the pulpit. The open platform drew attention to the preacher or song leader as a personality, not simply a voice. Music also received a prominent place. Behind and above the platform was a choir loft and above it organ pipes.

Such spaces shaped worshippers in two opposing ways. The visibility of the congregation to one another increased a sense of egalitarian community and facilitated participation in worship. The circular arrangement undercut social hierarchy, and partly for this reason pew rental was gradually abolished. On the other hand, auditorium churches suggested that the congregation's primary role was to be a passive audience for the preacher's message and the beautiful music offered by organist and choir.

Erected throughout the country, auditorium churches often commanded street corners in burgeoning streetcar suburbs. Richardsonian Romanesque was particularly suited to these innovative square-planned churches, but they also appeared in a variety of Gothic, Shingle, and classical styles. Examples include Trinity Methodist Episcopal in Denver, Colorado (1887); Pilgrim Congregational, Cleveland, Ohio (1894); and Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama (1911).

The color and furnishing of these novel worship spaces helped sacralize them by linking them to the sacred sphere of the Victorian home. Church buildings increasingly incorporated domestic spaces such as parlors and kitchens. The pictorial stained glass windows, designed by Lewis C. Tiffany and other artists, that became common around the turn of the century continued the domestic association by depicting sentimental scenes, such as Jesus the Good Shepherd, the Great Consoler, or praying in Gethsemane.

Sunday School Architecture

Closely associated with auditorium churches was the Akron Plan Sunday School. Developed at First Methodist Church in Akron, Ohio, in 1869, the Akron Plan provided a large, typically semicircular "rotunda" for Sunday schools' opening and closing exercises. Surrounding this space, on two levels, were smaller rooms that were closed off by sliding or rolling partitions for individual classes. Frequently the rotunda was

connected to the main auditorium by another sliding partition, enabling the capacity of the auditorium to be nearly doubled. For this reason, "Akron Plan" was sometimes used to designate this combination arrangement or auditorium churches generally.

The Akron Plan was designed to support a curriculum where all ages studied the same Bible passage. In the early twentieth century, many churches adopted graded curriculums in which different ages studied passages appropriate to their developmental stage. Sunday schools were reorganized into age-level departments with distinct classrooms. These were often placed in a building that was visibly distinct from the church proper. Increasingly built for "seven-days-a-week" ministry, churches' expanded buildings often included gyms and film projection booths, and sometimes swimming pools and bowling alleys. These developments were strongly supported by denominations' newly formed architecture bureaus. They were also made possible by the larger lots churches occupied in new automobile suburbs.

Beaux-Arts Classicism and the Late Gothic Revival

From the 1890s to the 1920s, Beaux-Arts Classicism made a strong claim to be America's national style. Solidly supported by the architectural profession, many churches were built in this academically correct and often elaborate style, especially among southern evangelicals. Some structures had domes and retained the square plan of earlier auditorium churches. Others styled after Greek temples took a more rectangular shape, while retaining the typical platform of auditorium churches. These rectangular spaces were promoted as having better acoustics.

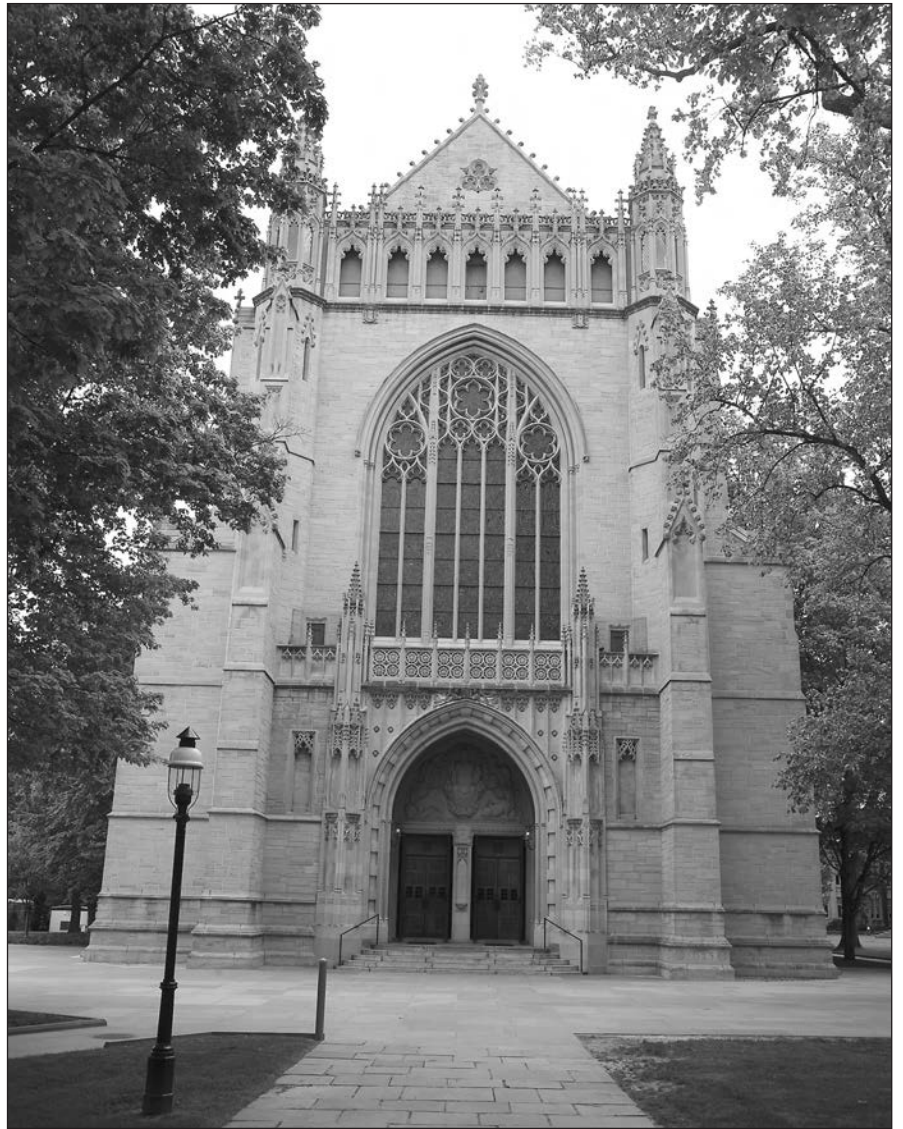
Enthusiasm for classical styles, however, was tempered by a renewed enthusiasm for Gothic. The buildings designed and promoted by Ralph Adams Cram and others were at once more academically correct than those of the High Victorian era and more modern in their clear massing and restrained decoration. Cram's very faithful Perpendicular Gothic chapel for Princeton University (1928) and the more modern Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago by Bertram Goodhue (1928) illustrate the tendencies. Cram and his colleagues insisted on approving a unified scheme of decoration for each church. In stained glass, large images copied from popular paintings yielded to intricate mosaic designs. These harmonized with the architecture but were more apt to be filled with small medallions than easily legible images.

Whereas in the nineteenth century only Anglicans and Lutherans had commonly made an altar the focal point of their churches, by the 1920s most Protestants placed divided chancels in their new Gothic Revival churches. This altar-centered arrangement was valued not primarily because of an increased focus on the Eucharist but, rather, because it provided a symbolic focus and created a distinctly religious space that encouraged the sense of transcendence and tradition that many Protestants valued in Episcopal and Catholic churches. With strong support from architecture bureaus and experts on worship, from the mid-1920s to the mid-1960s, divided chancels were introduced in churches of all styles. Many older churches with auditorium or center-pulpit arrangements were renovated to include divided chancels. Methodists embraced the divided chancel most widely, but it was adopted by Presbyterians and other Reformed denominations and even some Baptists.

Given the understanding of the worship space expressed by the divided chancel, “auditorium” now seemed too secular a term. Most Protestants, however, were not inclined to distinguish between church and parish house as Episcopalians commonly did. Thus, “sanctuary” became widely used to designate the room built for public worship.

Colonial Revivals and Modernism

In the 1920s, among congregations unwilling to embrace or finance Gothic, Beaux-Arts Classicism gave way to structures with Georgian or Federal references, usually understood as colonial revival and often associated with the vigor of patriots and pioneers. These red brick structures were more economical than stone Gothic ones and could be combined pleasingly with simple educational buildings. Such churches became ubiquitous in some eastern states after World War II, but churches evoking Bruton Parish Church, Williamsburg, Virginia, or a Federal meetinghouse



A renewed enthusiasm for the Gothic style was evident in Ralph Adams Cram's Perpendicular Gothic chapel for Princeton University (1928).

could also be found in other regions. In some cases, particularly in states once ruled by Spain, this revival took a Spanish form, whether with elaborate baroque details or the simplicity of an adobe mission.

The twentieth century also saw new churches free of stylistic precedent. First among these was Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois (1906). Built of concrete, in a square configuration, the space drew the congregation close to the pulpit. A few modern churches were built in the Art Moderne style (frequently called Art Deco), such as Boston Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma (1929). Far more churches in modern styles were built after 1950. Many employed modern materials but with



Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois (1906), among the first twentieth-century churches whose design did not reflect a stylistic precedent, was built of concrete in a square configuration.

traditional, even Gothic, arrangement and massing. These include the numerous A-frame churches built after the pioneering example of Eero Saarinen's chapel for the Concordia Seminary campus in Fort Wayne, Indiana (1953–1958). Churches in modern design were more common in the West and Midwest, where the colonial revival was weaker.

The liturgical renewal that reshaped the interiors of Catholic churches since the 1960s also affected mainline Protestants. The central idea was to emphasize the participation of the congregation in the actions of worship, particularly by arranging them around a freestanding communion table. Designers sought to avoid hierarchical separations between nave and chancel and between choir and congregation. They emphasized God's presence in the gathered assembly. Some, especially in the 1960s, sought to avoid exterior forms that were distinctively churchly. Most churches embodying this approach were modest in size. Trinity United Methodist Church, Charles City, Iowa (1972), is one example by Edward A. Sövik, an architect particularly associated with this approach.

New Auditorium Churches

The most prominent churches employing modern designs belong to the megachurches that came to prominence at the end of the twentieth century. Churches such as Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois,

take the form of a large complex of modern buildings, often devoid of religious decoration. Occupying their own suburban campuses, they aim to provide an environment for church activities that is as comfortable and fashionable as commercial establishments. Campuses often include a food court, coffee bar, small meeting rooms, a large informal lobby, and thematically designed spaces for children and youth, along with a large auditorium often equipped with theatre-style chairs.

The basic concept of what is often called the "worship center" is similar to earlier auditorium churches, except that if the house lights are dimmed, worshippers are not visible to one another. The arrangement of the stage area is

shaped by the type of music that predominates. Many focus on a large choir loft. In others that use rock-style music, worship leaders lead or perform from a stage with professional-quality lights, sound equipment, and instruments. Large screens display the words of songs and, frequently, images of the preacher. They have become as characteristic of Protestant worship space as organ pipes once were. Screens and stages are also found in smaller churches where contemporary worship music is used. This has become the typical arrangement of evangelical and Pentecostal churches.

Twenty-First Century

Many recent buildings incorporate large, flexible gathering spaces and, in most mainline churches, adaptable liturgical arrangements shaped by twentieth-century liturgical renewal. Some of the worship services in evangelical churches often labeled "emergent" have employed similar spaces. Others, in a postmodern embrace of plurality, arrange spaces that allow individuals in the same worship service to choose between different simultaneous activities, such as corporate song or individual Communion. These and other congregations often place an emphasis on adaptive reuse of existing buildings or seek to meet in secular spaces such as nightclubs or coffee houses.

Churches of recent decades have often displayed postmodern architecture's openness to the innovative adaptation



Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois, is often cited as an example of the “megachurch.” Consisting of a large complex of modern buildings situated on suburban campuses, these churches aim to provide an environment that is comfortable and fashionable—akin to that of commercial establishments.

of historic styles. Some Charismatic churches have placed particular emphasis on their buildings as signs of God’s blessings, occasionally employing historical styles as a sign of their authenticity, such as the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in suburban Atlanta, Georgia (1991). Some large modern auditorium churches affiliated with Southern Baptists and other traditional denominations are also apt to incorporate spires and stained glass. The seemingly secular designs of many evangelical church auditoriums were shaped in part by the desire of baby boomers for a church unencumbered by tradition. Recent studies indicate that younger generations prefer churches that evoke a sense of mystery and beauty. This could yield another permutation of revival styles.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Canada: Protestants and the United Church of Canada*; *Congregationalists*; *Education: Sunday Schools*; *Episcopalians: The Gilded Age and Progressive Eras*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Liturgical Arts*; *Megachurches*; *Revivalism* entries; *Visual Culture*; *Worship* entries.

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Architecture: Roman Catholic

The architecture of Roman Catholicism in North America encompasses a broad range of buildings and features that have shaped the religious and social life of Americans from European contact to the present. Beyond cathedrals and churches, Roman Catholic architecture also includes shrines, convents, monasteries, schools, colleges, charitable buildings, cemeteries, and other constructions. Two major themes have consistently animated this varied Catholic landscape: (1) the primacy of the pope and the Church's hierarchical organization, and (2) the centrality of the Eucharist as the literal reenactment of Christ's sacrifice. These have combined to produce an approach to the material world in which sacred space is clearly identified and distinguished from secular space. Nevertheless, alongside these themes and this approach, Roman Catholic architecture has expressed a great deal of diversity, maintaining a close relationship with place and time.

The European Heritage and Spanish Colonization

Roman Catholic architecture in the Western Hemisphere began with the earliest colonial settlements. Christopher Columbus apparently did not bring any priests with him as part of his first, risky voyage. However, at least a dozen Catholic clergy accompanied him on his second, larger expedition in 1493, reflecting the explorer's religious zeal and that of his Castilian sponsors. In late 1493 and early 1494, the Franciscans Juan Pérez and Bernaldo Buil and others celebrated the first mass in the Western Hemisphere and built a rough church in the new settlement of La Isabela on the island they called Hispaniola. Made of stone, earth, and other local materials, the church also housed a bell and other religious implements sent from Spain expressly for this construction, to benefit the settlers and the local Taino Indians.

At the time the little church was built, there was no single model for Roman Catholic architecture from which the

early colonizers might draw. The Catholic architectural heritage in Europe ranged from rural shrines, to imposing monasteries and universities, to ancient basilicas—rectangular halls adopted from Roman legal traditions—and to soaring new cathedrals, all more reflective of their region, patrons, and era than of any single Roman Catholic mode. The nearest thing to an ideal Catholic space appeared a generation after Columbus's voyages, with the beginnings of the reconstruction of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The resulting Renaissance wonder, based on studious humanistic planning and designs, took more than one hundred years to complete. With its enormous size, triumphant central dome, and rich decoration, it presented an inspiring though rarefied focal point for the faith.

Still, there were commonalities shared by the array of Catholic buildings. All church property was vested in the name of the Church, rather than in that of nobility, congregations, or states. And that property was intended for the benefit of the whole fabric of society, rather than select groups of believers or social classes. Furthermore, the Church was tied together, in bonds sometimes more and sometimes less steady, by the authority of the pope, the bishop of Rome, seen as Christ's representative on Earth. Beneath the pope, a carefully guarded hierarchy, made up of properly ordained cardinals, bishops, and priests, conducted sacraments in the various facilities. And reflecting the needs of the Eucharist, the primary sacrament, all churches required a properly consecrated and dressed altar, at which the host bread and wine during the mass transformed into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, in the presence of the clergy and congregants. This miracle helped dictate the Catholic definition of sacred space, in which buildings and burial grounds could be irrevocably "consecrated," dedicated to sacred purposes, and in which worshippers' senses encountered the divine.

Another common factor that shaped Catholic architecture emerged after 1517, when German monk Martin Luther famously protested against existing Church policies. The ensuing Protestant Reformation, which followed Luther's excommunication in 1521, irrevocably changed the Catholic landscape in Europe as well as the New World. In Europe, old cathedrals, churches, convents, and schools—centuries of wealth accumulated in the treasury of the Church—were desecrated, seized, and refashioned by successful new reforming groups in the northern and western portions of the continent. The primary Protestant objections involved what the reformers saw as corruption within the Church's ranks and,



Construction of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City began in the late 1500s, and continued until its substantial completion around 1813. The commanding structure illustrates the hallmarks of aggressive, Counter-Reformation Catholicism and would remain the largest church space in the Western Hemisphere for centuries.

even more importantly, the correct relationship of believers to God. Protestants emphasized direct access to God through the scriptures, and therefore they grew wary of the artistic equi-
page that accompanied priestly intervention in this divine relationship.

The official Roman Catholic response to the Protestant Reformation became known as the Counter-Reformation, or the Catholic Reformation. Its policies were formalized at the Council of Trent held in northern Italy between 1545 and 1563, which developed in step with the Spanish conquest of the mainland west of the Caribbean after 1519. During the council, the Church revised and standardized the Latin mass, strengthened the pope's leadership, confirmed the role of visual arts as essential aids to devotion, and reemphasized the sacrificial importance of the Eucharist.

With this broad backdrop, the Spanish conquered much of Central and South America. The island of Hispaniola served as the initial disembarkation point, and its capital,

Santo Domingo, boasted a noteworthy cathedral, literally the bishop's seat and diocesan center, by 1541. Santa María de La Encarnación Cathedral was built of stone with an intricate Plateresque façade, reflecting an emerging Spanish architectural style in which carved surfaces resembled the decorative work of contemporary Iberian silversmiths. The cathedral's interior was vaulted, with plain walls and few windows.

The primacy of Hispaniola was soon overshadowed by developments in Mexico City, both politically and ecclesiastically. The very first church in Mexico City was fairly rough, like the church built at La Isabela, though it was built symbolically on the foundations of the great Aztec temple. In the 1570s, however, initial designs for a massive rectangular cathedral were sent from Spain, and work continued in successive waves until its substantial completion around 1813. It was dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in 1656 and consecrated eleven years later. The Spanish colonial system depended upon heavy, forced Indian labor,

and the construction of the cathedral by Indian masons, carpenters, and artists reflected this practice. The building illustrates the hallmarks of aggressive, Counter-Reformation Catholicism, equally suited to impress doubting Indians and the European atmosphere of Protestant detractions. The building commanded the Zócalo, the city's huge plaza, and it would remain the largest church space in the Western Hemisphere for centuries.

This complex sandstone building mingled baroque and more severely classical features, two primary streams of Renaissance and post-Renaissance design. Classicism involved the precise, geometrical orders resurrected from ancient Greece and Rome, while the baroque indicated a more vibrant, sculptural approach to surfaces and spaces. The cathedral's creative mixture of the two was probably the product of several successive archbishops and architects, with most attribution given to Spanish architect and sculptor Claudio de Arciniega. Twin bell towers and a central dome were added in the eighteenth century, as was the adjoining side chapel, the Sagrario Metropolitano. The cathedral's interior featured double aisles to the chancel. Art crowded the walls and interior spaces, with dozens of paintings, altarpieces, and statues, yet the central focal point remained the high altar. The cathedral also accumulated a rich inventory of communion vessels, vestments, censers, and other furnishings.



Spaniards and Franciscans were driven from the Rio Grande area in the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, but they reestablished missions by 1700 and built the comparatively vernacular cathedral of Saint Francis in Santa Fe in 1713.

Catholic architecture in New Spain radiated outward from Mexico City. The Church was the largest landholder in the colony, and it developed an impressive system of convents, shrines, schools, hospitals, and missions throughout the varied geography of the lower portion of the North American continent. In 1573, Philip II attempted to order the landscape by decreeing a grid plan for new towns, with a central plaza featuring public buildings and the church or cathedral. Also, the Church and crown remained committed to the conversion of indigenous peoples, much of the work of which was performed by Franciscans, Augustinians, Dominicans, and members of other religious orders. At Tepeaca, Franciscans built a representative monastery in the sixteenth century with a decidedly fortified character. This set of austere buildings was surrounded by three roads, sentry boxes, battlements, and embrasures. It also promoted interplay between the shelters and the outdoor spaces, with walled atria and open-air chapels for the Indians' worship, an arrangement congenial to the racial views of the colonizers and the pre-Hispanic traditions of the colonized. Another example of a fortified, multiuse Franciscan convent can be seen in the 1678 complex at Churubusco.

As the colony spread north into the borderlands of Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and California, churches became simpler than those to the south. Missionaries adopted more indigenous and domestic building traditions, with coquina shell stone and wood in the east and mud-brick adobe and wood in the west. The missions achieved conversions, but they also inspired fierce reactions. Among the Pueblo Indians on the Rio Grande, Franciscan authorities had to contend with well-defined, pre-Conquest ritual centers called *kivas*—circular, subterranean, windowless rooms covered with earth or adobe—that still nurtured indigenous religion. Missionaries attempted to forcibly redirect Pueblo attention to their newly constructed churches, also made of adobe, and their altars inside. The tensions inherent in these two competing ritual spaces erupted during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, in which the bulk of the

Indians conducted a well-orchestrated uprising against Spanish rule, temporarily driving the colonists and their few Indian sympathizers entirely out of the province. During the revolt, the rebels tortured and killed a high proportion of the colony's missionaries and desecrated Catholic symbols—spreading excrement on statues and altars, destroying crucifixes and chalices, and shattering bells. Yet the Spanish and the Franciscans would return by 1700 to reestablish missions and then construct the comparatively vernacular cathedral of Saint Francis at Santa Fe in 1713. At the same time in the east, armed English incursions and Indian depopulation forced the Franciscans to abandon their line of sixty working missions stretching from the St. Johns River to present-day Alabama. The California mission complexes lining the West Coast reflect the latest phase of Spanish settlement, begun after 1769. By the time of their construction, monumental Catholic projects in the cities to the south had absorbed another expressive Spanish architectural style—the Churrigueresque, in which florid stucco sculpture was used to enhance surfaces, as at the Sagrario Metropolitano in Mexico City.

French Colonization

Simultaneously, a very different sort of Catholic landscape was developing in the upper reaches of the continent. In New France—on the northern Atlantic coast, along waterways of the St. Lawrence River valley, around the Great Lakes, and down the Mississippi River—French priests, nuns, and brothers attempted to minister to highly mobile colonists and convert the region's Algonquian and Iroquois Indians. As in New Spain, members of religious orders provided much of this labor, though the particular orders differed in the predominance of Jesuits and Ursulines. The city of Quebec, founded in 1608, provided the central rallying point for their efforts. From there, individual Jesuits or small groups undertook “flying missions” along with traveling Indians or fur trappers, gathering a vast amount of knowledge about the Indians' lives but leaving few permanent constructions in their wake.

Catholic institutions in the cities of New France proved much more substantial. Quebec, Trois Rivières (founded 1634), and Montreal (founded 1642) housed Catholic institutions that rivaled those of New Spain by the early eighteenth century. Naturally, French religious facilities reflected a different culture. French colonial architecture blended medieval craft traditions with academic trends, especially with the growing importance of the Italian-inspired

classicism in the seventeenth century. French constructions drew less upon Indian labor and art than the Spanish examples, and they were less forceful in terms of visual expression. Educational institutions were prominent, including the châteaux-style Jesuit College built in Quebec in 1666; the Congregation of Notre Dame's numerous schools in Montreal; and the Ursuline school for girls in Trois Rivières, which occupied a solid two-story mansion previously used as a governor's residence.

Many of these Catholic structures were multifunctional, with portions of the buildings used for care of the sick or indigent. The notable Hôtel-Dieu was founded by Jeanne Mance in a small building inside the fort at Montreal in 1644, with two sick wards and scanty service areas. In the 1690s, the building was replaced by a more substantial stone structure, constructed under the direction of Paris-born architect François de la Joue. At this point, it housed a chapel and other sanctuary spaces. Later, such convents developed a common architectural program, usually made up of an H- or E-shaped plan with a central chapel.

Due to building fires, Indian wars, and English raids, there was no designated cathedral in New France until a papal bull recognized Quebec's parish church of Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix as such in 1674. The stone church had a plan in the form of a Latin cross, with a semicircular apse facing east. In the next decade, this structure was enlarged under the direction of architect Claude Baillif, and a bell tower was added. Baillif also built the city's lavish but unfinished Episcopal Palace in 1693. Outside the major cities, parish facilities tended to cluster in their villages, with church, rectory, and cemetery occupying single enclosures. But many major French fortification sites in the interior and along the Gulf Coast had no dedicated religious structures.

At the mouth of the Mississippi River, the city of New Orleans offered a more semitropical contrast to the Canadian scene. Founded late (by colonial standards) in 1718, and planned by Louisiana's engineer-in-chief, Le Blond de La Tour, New Orleans boasted a prominent central Place d'Armes fronted by a notable church site. This site saw the construction of the substantial, classical parish church dedicated to Saint Louis in 1727, which served the city's French, Spanish, and African residents until its ultimate replacement in 1794 with the neoclassical cathedral building still standing today (though altered in the nineteenth century). In keeping with Catholic tradition and canon law, a consecrated burial site was also established in the 1720s with

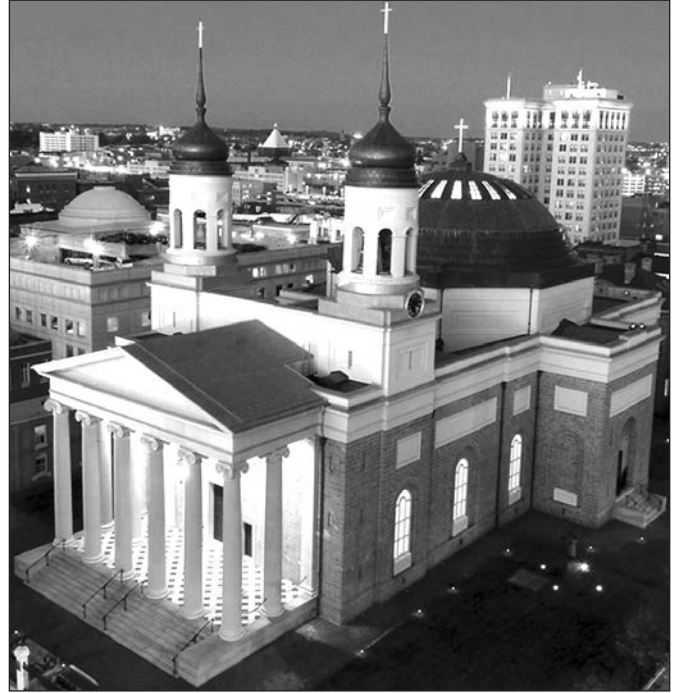
St. Peter Street Cemetery, which ultimately led to the city's unique above-ground necropolises by the early 1800s. This tradition officially excluded the burial of deceased Protestants and unbaptized residents in Catholic ground, thereby reinforcing the Church's concept of sacralization.

Catholic female orders were active in Louisiana as they were in Canada, and the Ursulines completed an impressive new convent on Chartres Street in 1753. This two-story building presented a classically balanced façade with a hipped roof and dormer windows. Offering female-directed space for the successful convent, school, and orphanage, the building's plan nevertheless reflected the hierarchical organization of nuns, novitiates, and students, all of whom depended on male priests for practice of the sacraments.

British Colonization and American Independence

After the founding of Jamestown in 1607, the British colonies occupying North America's Atlantic coast between the French and Spanish Catholic empires defined themselves as vigorously Protestant. The Reformation in Great Britain had been a fluid yet intense affair, and by 1607, animosity towards the Roman Catholic Church characterized the nation's identity. Yet upper-class Catholics, even after lamenting the outlawing of their faith and the seizure of their church property, could still find rare opportunities for religious expression. This was the case with Lord Baltimore's Maryland, and when English Catholics founded St. Mary's City in 1634, one of their first construction projects included the church building. Jesuits served as the principal religious leaders, but since many of the original colonists were Protestant, and those numbers continued to swell in the coming decades, the proprietors urged restraint in the public expression of Roman Catholic worship. Restraint proved even more necessary after the colony's Catholic leadership was displaced during England's Civil War and then after its Glorious Revolution, and Catholic worship in the colony retreated to discreet domestic settings and private chapels. The Jesuits initiated missions to the area's Indians, but these too proved ephemeral. Still, Maryland retained a unique Catholic presence that would reemerge and coalesce around Baltimore in the next century. Elsewhere in the British colonies, the pattern of discreet private worship among the few scattered Catholics in coastal cities held sway, with the exception of Quaker Philadelphia, where St. Mary's Church opened its doors in 1734.

The American Revolution changed this situation dramatically. The language of liberty, the assistance of the French, and



John Carroll, the first Catholic bishop in the United States, oversaw construction of British America's first cathedral in Baltimore, Maryland, between 1805 and 1821.

the patriotic ardor of Maryland Catholics culminated in new public freedoms and the consecration of John Carroll as the first Catholic bishop in the United States in 1790, seated in the Diocese of Baltimore. Bishop Carroll oversaw the gradual construction of new churches and schools northward, southward, and westward in the vast reaches of his diocese. His cathedral, constructed between 1805 and 1821, the first in British America, provided the Church's most important architectural statement. Carroll worked closely with British-born architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe, who was schooled in classicism and had a hand in the design of the U.S. Capitol. The men selected a prominent hilltop site, and Latrobe presented Carroll with two different designs from which to choose—one Gothic and one neoclassical. He suggested that the Gothic was relevant because of its historic associations and its grandeur. Carroll made the neoclassical choice, explicitly aligning his faith with the image and ideals of the young nation. The resulting building featured a Latin cross plan with a great coffered dome and oculus over the crossing and twin bell towers at the western, Greek-detailed portico. The building was spacious inside, with white marble floors and clear glass windows. Despite its general harmony with national designs, no one would have mistaken the cathedral for a Protestant structure.

Nearby, the bishop helped found socially and architecturally important colleges and seminaries. Earlier, in 1789, Carroll and other former Jesuits created an academy at Georgetown, which developed into the nation's first Catholic university by 1815. Back in Baltimore, members of the Society of Saint-Sulpice founded St. Mary's Seminary in 1791. By the early 1800s, the seminary had expanded into a quadrangle of institutional buildings, and campus leaders engaged French architect Maximilian Godefroy to design the seminary chapel. Finished in 1808 as the city's cathedral was still taking shape, Godefroy's chapel displayed a bold, early example of the Gothic Revival, with pointed windows, flying buttresses, and a vaulted roof.

As Catholic leaders took satisfaction from new civil rights and construction projects, they also wrestled with peculiarly American struggles over ownership of church property. In a series of bitter battles that came to be known as "trusteeism," various new congregations and their lay trustees claimed the right to control their church buildings independently of the Catholic hierarchy and to appoint or dismiss their own priests (rights most Protestants practiced within their own denominations). The struggle began when a splinter group of German-born Catholics in Philadelphia founded and ran Holy Trinity Church in 1787 until reconciled to official church leadership in 1802. Similar problems surfaced among different ethnic congregations in New Orleans, Charleston, Norfolk, and Buffalo, and continued without complete resolution until the Civil War in the 1860s.

Throughout this era, French dominance in the hierarchy eventually gave way to the Irish. St. Joseph's, built in Bardstown, Kentucky, between 1816 and 1819 as the first cathedral in the United States west of the Allegheny Mountains, reflected this early French influence. When Bishop Benedict Joseph Flaget arrived in the state in 1811, he found twenty-four stations, ten log churches, and one brick church. The bishop secured some local Protestant funds for his cathedral project, and he contracted with Baltimore architect John Rogers to design the structure. The cathedral presented an elegant neoclassical façade, and its interior displayed fine paintings of the crucifixion and other scenes, as well as gold candlesticks and a carved tabernacle, all gifts from Pope Leo XII and European royalty. The structure lost its diocesan position when Flaget shifted his seat to Louisville twenty years later, but it remains a beloved landmark of its era.

Still, the material presence of Roman Catholicism in the young republic remained slight. As late as 1820, only about 124 Catholic churches could be found from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi River, and these generally clustered around Baltimore and New Orleans—Maryland and Louisiana held almost half of the nation's total number. A significant portion of the nation's 195,000 Catholics still conducted their lives beyond the shadow of a consecrated sanctuary. In contrast, American Baptists and Methodists each occupied about 2,700 meetinghouses, distributed across the country. Even the modest Quakers held 350 meetinghouses, more than doubling Catholic holdings.

Nineteenth-Century Immigration and Revival Styles

The story of national independence played out differently in the Caribbean, Mexico, and Canada. But Canada and the United States did share in two major developments in the nineteenth century: the spike in European immigration and the flowering of revival styles.

The first development changed the landscape by the sheer number of new Catholic churches and other facilities built to serve the unprecedented flood of Irish and German immigrants into the United States and Upper Canada. From 1820 to 1850, American Catholics built more than one thousand new churches throughout the United States, outpacing the rate of construction of every other denomination and establishing a Catholic footing for the very first time in hundreds of new communities. In New Jersey, Catholic churches increased from 3 in 1820 to 23 by 1850. The handful of early Catholic congregations in Ohio grew to include 130 church buildings by midcentury. And New England's 6 Catholic churches increased to at least 82, with the Boston area accounting for only about 9 of these. In Canada, Irish Catholics built churches in the English-speaking Maritime Provinces and in Ontario, breaking ground far beyond the traditional French/Catholic enclave around Quebec. A corresponding number of schools and cemeteries accompanied this growth.

Irish-born architect Patrick Keely stood at the unofficial helm of this new construction. He is estimated to have helped produce more than seven hundred religious buildings over the course of his career, ranging from Nova Scotia westward to Wisconsin and southward to the Gulf of Mexico. He designed cathedrals, such as St. Michael's in New Brunswick and Holy Cross in Boston, as well as parish churches, such as Sts. Peter and Paul in Brooklyn and

St. John the Baptist in Manayunk, Pennsylvania. He was also an accomplished woodcarver and integrated his handiwork into many of his buildings, as with the wood reredos—the customary, decorative screen behind an altar—at Sts. Peter and Paul Church.

Most of Keely's churches drew upon the Gothic or the Romanesque revival styles, both of which were becoming the preeminent choices for church construction of all denominations. The use of the Gothic involved an array of pointed arches, stained glass, window tracery, towers, vertical lines, and exterior buttresses intended to evoke late medieval designs, while the Romanesque featured the round arches and heavier masses that had preceded the Gothic era. As with other revival styles popular in the nineteenth century, the Gothic and the Romanesque revivals reflected attempts to capture the mood of historic architectural traditions without adhering to original engineering techniques or archaeological accuracy. These attempts meshed with the era's broad intellectual romanticism and theories of the picturesque. For Christian congregations, the Gothic held special appeal, with its celebrated connections to memorable cathedrals, abbeys, and parish churches and its explicit Christian symbolism. Religious congregations of all stripes turned from Enlightenment classicism to embrace the mysterious light and shadows cast by forceful medieval architecture.

Catholic architects, builders, and theorists worked to distinguish their Church's use of the Gothic from the attempts by all other denominations. In particular, A.W.N. Pugin, England's strident convert to Catholicism and a design prodigy, published his arguments widely and aggressively. Pugin held that Roman Catholicism was the only true heir to Gothic designs; that the Church had orchestrated an organic, moral society during the Middle Ages; and that medieval architecture properly reflected that morality and Christian spirit. Therefore, he recommended the Gothic for Catholic churches above all other styles. Other Anglican critics made variations on these claims for their own Church's Gothic Revival. But Roman Catholics in North America indeed did apply the Gothic differently from Protestants. Their designs made room for multiple interior chapels; they made sure that the high altar was dramatically visible; they included more representational art in sculpture, painting, and window designs; and they looked to continental models of Gothic architecture in addition to English examples.

The crowning achievement of these trends came with the construction of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York

City (1853–1879). This monumental structure was designed by Episcopalian architect James Renwick Jr. at the behest of Archbishop John Hughes. It indirectly followed in the footsteps of the Cathedral of Notre Dame (1824–1843) in Montreal. Notre Dame was enormous, with twin west towers, triple central doorways with triple statuary niches high above, and a double tier of galleries inside. Yet St. Patrick's was built in the gaze of a skeptical or hostile Protestant community in upper Manhattan. Renwick took designs and inspiration from Cologne Cathedral, and when finished, his gleaming, twin-towered, white marble structure occupied nearly an entire city block. It attracted throngs of curious, approving spectators and was proclaimed the largest ecclesiastical edifice in America. Remarkably, it had only been a generation since a Protestant mob had burned a stately convent of Ursulines on a Charlestown, Massachusetts, hilltop and nativists had demolished Catholic churches and other buildings in riots across Philadelphia and Louisville.

At the same time, the patterns of immigration were shifting again. From the 1880s through the 1920s, Roman Catholics from southern and central Europe came in even larger waves to the United States and Canada, increasing the faith's ethnic complexity. Immigrant groups settled in dense urban areas, establishing fortress-like enclaves where language-based parishes served more than religious needs. The Catholic sacred landscape became more varied, as urban grottoes, statuary, cemeteries, and streets became sites for feasts, processions, and miracle stories. The Irish hierarchy and its embrace of the Gothic and Romanesque (as well as the later Byzantine and Renaissance revivals) could not fully contain immigrant worship. However, church leaders did succeed in establishing a nationwide system of parochial schools.

The revival styles also proved important in Texas, on the West Coast, and even in Mexico towards the end of the century. In the 1880s, church leaders at San Miguel de Allende moved to update their seventeenth-century sanctuary, built with Indian labor, that sat on the city's main square. *Indígena* mason Cerefino Gutiérrez oversaw the addition of a pink Gothic façade and tower that remains a curiosity today. Our Lady of Guadalupe Cathedral in Michoacan, begun in 1898, presented a more complete, if structurally unfinished, Gothic Revival statement. New churches in Mexico continued to be built in the baroque and neoclassical styles as well. But the tensions between opulent sanctuaries and humble farms, and between liberal new governments

and conservative reactions, resulting in liberal victories and the loss of the mandatory tithe as well as some church properties, significantly slowed the Church's progress.

The Twentieth Century—Old and New

When the twentieth century opened on North America and Europe, Catholic architecture pulled in two directions. It looked to the past and the future simultaneously. These tensions drew from several sources, but one contributing factor grew out of nineteenth-century Europe, where small pockets of monastics and scholars had begun to reconsider the original sources of Christian scripture, worship, art, and life. In France, the Benedictines conducted fruitful research into early Christian liturgies and music, and by the early twentieth century, the movement had gone so far as to reconsider the very nature of the Eucharist. Official encouragement of this general movement, which would be known as the liturgical movement, came in 1903 with the election of Pope Pius X, who called a conference to explore the nature of the liturgy and encouraged more frequent Communion by the faithful. All of this historical investigation led to a greater emphasis on congregational participation in worship and laid a basis for ecumenical comparisons across denominations and even across religions. It also prompted architectural changes in Catholic sanctuaries, with critics recommending the dismantling of superstructures built high over altars and their tabernacles in an effort to simplify spaces that had grown confused with Victorian stuffing and multiple, competing devotions. A model of this liturgical work, and indeed a landmark project, resulted from the call of Baldwin Dworschak, head of St. John's Benedictine Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minnesota, in 1950, for a new building program on his campus. A Hungarian architect and former member of the Bauhaus in Germany, Marcel Breuer, was chosen, and he completed construction of the Abbey Church of Saint John the Baptist in 1961, in addition to several other campus buildings. Breuer's monumental concrete design for the church, with a 112-foot, trapezoidal bell tower standing in front of the honeycombed sanctuary wall, invited worshippers in past a flowing frontal baptistry to a central altar underneath a simple baldachin. The Benedictines expressed a kinship with the utopian goals and honest use of materials that infused such modern designs.

Both the impulse to involve congregations in worship and the impulse to engage modernist architecture found a forceful voice through the Second Vatican Ecumenical

Council, held from 1962 to 1965 and known as Vatican II. Scholars disagree about whether Vatican II prompted new devotional and artistic changes in itself or merely confirmed the trends brewing since earlier in the century, but there is no question that Catholic spaces around the world changed dramatically in the decades afterwards. Cathedrals and parish churches everywhere were remodeled; altars were pushed forward into the congregations, statuary was removed, and the laity assumed a greater role in services—leading prayers, reading from scriptures, and even distributing the holy elements during the Eucharist. And priests had the freedom, even the directive, to recite the mass in vernacular languages rather than in Latin.

In this spirit, earlier experiments with modernist designs gave way to full-blown postmodern fantasies, in an attempt to engage the spirit of the age. Central and circular plans took the place of older, longitudinal plans. Examples abound, from Precious Blood Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba (1969), to Saint Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco, California (1970), to Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral in Los Angeles, California (2002). The change was wrenching for some and inspired a conservative reaction to perceived coldness in the new designs—witness the title of Michael S. Rose's 2001 *Ugly as Sin: Why They Changed Our Churches from Sacred Places to Meeting Spaces and How We Can Change Them Back Again*. A particularly bitter battle between proponents and opponents of the innovations took place at St. Martin of Tours Church, Cheviot, Ohio, where organized lay opponents submitted a formal petition against the proposed renovation of their sanctuary to the Vatican in 1999. During these same decades, older buildings in urban areas weathered changing demographic circumstances due to suburban flight and new immigration. And church scandals, along with a decline in the relative number of clergy and the loss of groups of traditional members, have recently suggested a trend toward the closure and abandonment of some historic church locations.

Thus, the nature of the Roman Catholic architectural heritage remains in dispute. Ideals involving the earliest Christian worship are intertwined with radical new designs, which also share the public stage with historic sanctuaries. In North America, the past four centuries of Catholic settlement may mix most poignantly just north of Mexico City, at the *Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, one of the most popular pilgrimage sites in the world. Finished in 1976, the basilica showcases the original image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, said to have imprinted on the cloak

of the poor Indian Juan Diego in 1531. The new basilica stands on the Aztec sacred site of Tepeyac, where Juan Diego is said to have received his visions, and the sanctuary grounds still hold the original seventeenth-century Capilla del Cerrito, or “hill chapel,” as well as the successive basilica built in 1709.

The 1976 basilica, designed by Pedro Ramirez Vasquez, has a tent-shaped roof and circular floor plan, allowing views of the image from anywhere inside. And moving walkways transport visitors back and forth under its frame hanging above the main altar. The basilica also houses two chapels on the main floor, nine chapels on the upper floor, and crypts underground. The front walls of the basilica, facing the Plaza of the Americas, can be rolled up to involve hundreds of thousands more pilgrims outside. Masses are celebrated there almost every hour, every day; hundreds of baptisms, weddings, and confirmations take place each week; and confessions are heard regularly. Although the Virgin of Guadalupe has served as a Mexican national symbol, her devotion and arts have transcended political boundaries, with churches and shrines dedicated to her throughout the United States and Latin America, along with countless private spaces. She has been proclaimed Patron of the Americas, and indeed, the fervent activity that engulfs her seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and twentieth-century spaces at the basilica, with official and folk devotions intertwining atop the one-time Aztec hill temple, reveals to us the power and paradoxes of the continent’s built Roman Catholic heritage.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Canada: Catholics*; *Mexico: Colonial Era*; *Mexico: Twentieth Century*; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *Suburbanization*; *Worship: Roman Catholic*.

Ryan K. Smith

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Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief

Proclaiming faith in religious beliefs—particularly Christian beliefs—is common in American society. From an intellectual standpoint, however, there is nothing common about religious faith. Religious beliefs go well beyond everyday experience by affirming such things as the existence of unseen beings, the divine authority of ancient books, or the causal efficacy of prayer and ritual action. In every other area of life we are encouraged to question authority, demand observable evidence, and evaluate competing ideas by how well they square with ongoing experience. Yet in the case of religion we are asked to suspend our usual cognitive standards and instead comply with authority or tradition. It is thus understandable that there are always some persons who cannot in good intellectual conscience endorse their society's religious beliefs.

Over the course of American history there have been almost as many kinds of disbelief as there have been kinds of belief. Some forms of disbelief emphasize the value of living “without God” and are thus literally forms of a-theism. Since the word *theism* represents the beliefs and practices (*ism*) based on belief in a god (*theos*), the word *atheism* simply means a philosophy without a god. As far back as the fifth century BCE, however, atheism has commonly been understood as a more intentional position based on cognitive certainty that there is no God or supreme being. Other forms of disbelief are more accurately defined as agnostic (that is, without certain knowledge) in that they proclaim that human reason is not capable of ascertaining whether a god does or does not exist. Like atheism, agnosticism represents a philosophy without a god. Unlike atheism, agnosticism is defined more by its stance toward the nature and limits of human rationality than by certainty about the non-existence of supernatural beings.

Distinguishing between atheism and agnosticism is only the first step toward appreciating the many varieties of American disbelief. Even more important is identifying the personal and philosophical motives that lead people to think in nonreligious ways. Many of these motives are secular or this-worldly. Persons might, for example, be committed to the intellectual methods found in the natural sciences and therefore oppose the way religions proclaim truth for methodological reasons. Other persons might be suspicious of religious claims concerning “absolute truth” because they are aware of how such claims appear from the wider perspective

of historical and cultural relativism. There are even religious reasons why some Americans are counted among the unbelievers. Anyone who embraces a religion other than Christianity appears an unbeliever in some American communities. Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists are nonbelievers from the standpoint of many among America's Christian majority. Christians, however, are viewed by some as nonbelievers in India or Saudi Arabia. And, too, many Americans have developed religious philosophies that substitute monistic or pantheistic conceptions of god for belief in the personal God of the Western biblical tradition. Their religious beliefs, while often the culmination of a long spiritual journey, make them unbelievers in the eyes of those who hold more conventional views.

The sheer variety of disbelief in American history alerts us to an important point. We need to focus less on what “unbelievers” are *against* and instead concentrate on what they are *for*. Atheism, agnosticism, and other forms of disbelief are usually motivated by more than the desire to expose believers' intellectual errors. Proponents of disbelief are often champions of a worldview that they believe has more long-term value than the religious systems they reject. They, too, often seek converts. They hope to persuade others to abandon seemingly outmoded ways of thinking and to embrace a new worldview that might better affirm humanity's highest powers and potentials. The history of American disbelief is thus simultaneously the history of faith in reason to lead humanity to a better future. Although self-identified nonbelievers have been a minority in American history, they have exerted considerable influence in shaping the basic structure of American government, securing constitutional protections of religious liberty, forming social reform movements, creating research universities that pursue knowledge without fixed religious conclusions, and championing the cause of individualism rather than conformity to societal norms.

The Colonial Era

The history textbooks used in American classrooms present a highly selective version of the nation's origins. The story of the Pilgrims at Plymouth gives the impression that the colonies were made up of pious Bible-believers, while obscuring the real social and cultural history of the nation's founding. Many of the Europeans who ventured across the Atlantic did so to seek economic opportunities or to escape criminal punishment (at least sixty-five thousand criminals were forcibly ordered by English and Irish courts to be transported to the colonies). Relatively few came for religious reasons.

Indeed, only about one in five persons throughout the colonial period would have considered herself or himself very religious. Drunken revelry, barroom brawling, gambling, and extramarital sex were all more prevalent in early America than attending church. As the Frenchman Hector St. John de Crevecoeur observed in *Letters from an American Farmer*, “Religious indifference is imperceptibly disseminated from one end of the continent to another, which is at present one of the strongest characteristics of the American people” (p. 76). In a statistical sense, then, disbelief was America’s original cultural heritage. It rarely seems this way, however, because the ministers who served the 15 or 20 percent of the population that did belong to a church wrote sermons and books that disproportionately represent their views in the historical record.

The churchgoing segment of the colonial population was overwhelmingly Protestant Christian. Their theological orientation is typically designated as Puritan, indicating that religion to them was less about participating in rituals than holding Bible-based beliefs. Colonial Puritanism was, however, more than a set of theological creeds. It was also a program for organizing society. While the religious segment of early American society had come to the New World for their own religious freedom, they had no intention of granting such liberty to others. They believed that uniformity in religion was the only proper foundation for a moral society. One of the principal functions of religion in any society is to establish clear-cut tribal boundaries. Commitment to religious beliefs is, after all, a conscious act of conformity. Declaring faith in religious beliefs therefore signals who are loyal members of the tribe—and who are outsiders or rebels who refuse to submit to authority. Colonial Puritans were therefore hyperalert to those who dared transgress doctrinal boundaries. Salem Village in colonial Massachusetts, for example, labeled its dissenters “witches” and promptly executed them for undermining the theological foundations of their righteous community. Authorities of the Massachusetts Bay Colony put Anne Hutchinson on trial for pointing out that the local ministers blatantly twisted the Bible to support their efforts to control people’s lives. It was clear throughout the trial that Hutchinson was better-versed in scripture and intellectually quicker than her accusers. But the court nonetheless found her guilty of holding “strange opinions” and concluded that her failure to conform to the colony’s male authorities made her unfit for their righteous community. She was forcibly banished.

Throughout the American colonial period European intellectuals participated in a philosophical movement known as the Enlightenment. Scientific discoveries in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries led to a newfound confidence in the power of human reason. Perhaps no era in human history has witnessed greater faith in humanity’s ability to discern the lawful principles governing the universe. The Enlightenment, or Age of Reason, was an era that focused attention on human abilities, this world, and the scientific method that moves gradually from observed data to universal laws or principles. It was, in other words, an age eager to replace Bible-based religion with both humanism and rationalism.

A few Americans such as Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson would become self-appointed spokespersons for the Enlightenment outlook. But many others absorbed Enlightenment thought piecemeal and mediated through other cultural forms. One such cultural form was the rapid growth of Freemasonry in the colonies. Freemasonry originated in Europe, probably emerging from periodic gatherings of the stonemasons who built churches and cathedrals in England. What was first an association concerned with the occupational development of stonemasons eventually developed an interest in ancient wisdom, particularly as promulgated in contemporary esoteric philosophies such as Rosicrucianism. The tools of masonry (the square and compass) became symbols for building moral and spiritual character. By the early eighteenth century, the movement began to organize into “lodges” that were responsible for recruiting, initiating, and educating new members. The movement spread to France, Scotland, and eventually colonial North America, where more than forty lodges had been established by the time of the American Revolution.

Freemasons used symbol-laden ceremonies to initiate new members and to mark their progress through successive levels of character development. Freemasonry encouraged new members to reinterpret religion from the perspective of Enlightenment rationality. Masons were taught, for example, to view God in the era’s rational categories as the impersonal “grand architect” of the natural order. Masons were, furthermore, taught that it is possible to distinguish the core concepts thought to be universal elements of all world religions from the culturally embellished beliefs that separate them. In this way Masons were trained to abandon blind faith in various denominational theologies and instead to build an eclectic, consciously chosen religious outlook. At least nine, and perhaps as many as thirty, of the fifty-six

gentlemen who signed the Declaration of Independence were Freemasons. It thus appears that by the end of the colonial period, it was fashionable to be intellectually adventurous when it came to religion.

The Founders

Even in the twenty-first century, it is common for some Americans to suggest that the “founding fathers” established the United States on Bible-based religious beliefs. Myths persist, it seems, despite all evidence to the contrary. Ethan Allen, Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson were as pivotal in shaping the early republic as any four persons could have been. All were deists, meaning that their religious views conformed as closely as possible to what can be affirmed on the basis of reason alone. Deists, therefore, believe in God, but only insofar as reason can infer the existence of a first cause behind the elaborate workings of nature. Deists typically referred to God as the impersonal “architect” of the universe, while insisting that this architect no longer intervenes in the lawful operations of nature. The rational underpinnings of the deist outlook made it impossible for them to believe in the divinity of Jesus, the special authority of the Bible, or the whole notion of supernatural miracles.

Deism, not Christianity, was thus the religious outlook of such founding fathers as Allen, Paine, Franklin, and Jefferson. James Madison, the principal architect of the Constitution, was also a staunch advocate of Enlightenment ideas about religion, if perhaps a bit more discreet than a Paine or Jefferson. Similarly, John Adams and George Washington were at best mild adherents of conventional Christian beliefs and interjected a great deal of Enlightenment humanism into their general philosophical outlook. The founders, it seems, were secular humanists who wished to keep biblical religion outside the public sphere.

Thomas Paine (1737–1809) was perhaps the most provocative rationalist of the Revolutionary era. His *Common Sense* (1776) was the first public call for American independence and marked him as the era’s most adventurous patriot. Yet his later work, *The Age of Reason* (1795), provoked the churchgoing population to vilify him as an infidel. Paine was, however, no infidel. He was an impassioned rationalist who developed an intellectually sophisticated belief in God as the “great mechanic” underlying nature. Paine’s deistic conceptions of God led him to conclude that many conventional Christian beliefs were irrational. He wrote, for example, that no rational person should be expected to accept the Bible on authority. Belief in miracles, he argued, violates the

lawful order we observe in nature and portrays God as some kind of “show-man,” who performs stunning acts to amuse us. He further maintained that Christianity is an inferior source of moral guidance. Morality, he argued, should be based on our rational knowledge of justice and how we might best make our fellow creatures happy. Even though Paine’s rational humanism led him to denounce many of the religious ideas that prevailed in American society, he was in reality a deeply religious thinker. His message was that we might best understand God by studying nature. He was the revolutionary voice of a religious style based on his credo that “My own mind is my own church.”

Ethan Allen (1738–1789) is usually remembered as a Revolutionary War hero. He first fought in the French and Indian War and later for a local militia, where he rose to the rank of “colonel commandant” of the Green Mountain Boys. Allen became a symbol of Revolutionary bravery when his troops captured Fort Ticonderoga in 1775. This patriotic icon, however, was also the author of several pamphlets that championed deism over and against biblical supernaturalism. Allen’s most famous tract, *Reason the Only Oracle of Man* (1784), maintained that the rational investigation of nature yields all the philosophical principles required for philosophy and ethics. He argued that the existence of God is perfectly rational insofar as the vast system of cause and effect found in nature surely points to a first cause from which the universe derives its constancy, uniformity, and regularity. Allen deduced that the laws of nature are themselves God’s revelation. For this reason humans best revere God by thinking and acting in rational harmony with natural law. Allen’s unflinching devotion to reason did, of course, render him an unbeliever from the standpoint of conventional Christianity. From Allen’s point of view, it was utterly irrational to believe in either the divinity of Jesus or that the Bible is a direct revelation from God. Reason, he showed, is the only oracle of truth and therefore the only trustworthy guide to moral living.

What Americans most admire about Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) is his witty advocacy of “common sense.” Often overlooked is the fact that it was precisely this common sense that prompted Franklin to deem Christianity both unintelligible and doubtful. In its place he substituted a largely deistic philosophy that reduced religion to a few moral principles. Franklin’s intellectual pilgrimage away from Christian belief began with his birth into a pious Puritan household. By his teenage years Franklin came to view church attendance as an unpleasant duty. Bible-based religion preyed on the emotions of guilt and fear so thoroughly

that he deemed it inherently incapable of cultivating our highest potentials. The young Franklin was an avid reader. He studied Isaac Newton's scientific treatises and John Locke's social philosophy. Such Enlightenment works confirmed his rational objections to Christianity and strengthened his resolve to replace it with a more rational and practical religious philosophy.

In later life Franklin sought to separate what he considered "the essentials of every religion" from irrational ideas found in specific religions such as Christianity. The first of these essentials was belief in the existence of the deity, assuming that this term connoted not the vain being depicted in the Bible but rather the grand architect who established the system of physical laws that govern our universe. Franklin's conception of deity led him to conclude that the most acceptable service of God is not worship but, rather, the doing of good to our fellow human beings. And to underscore this emphasis on moral duty, he added that the essentials of religion also include belief in the immortality of the soul, as well as future reward or punishment for our worldly behavior. It seems, then, that the very commitment to common sense that led Franklin to reject Christian beliefs simultaneously led him to affirm religious beliefs he deemed consistent with the virtuous living necessary to a democratic society.

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) authored the Declaration of Independence. He served with John Adams and Benjamin Franklin as America's ambassadors to European governments. He then became the nation's second vice president before being elected to two terms as the nation's third president. Throughout all of this he was an inventor, scholar, farmer, architect, and man of letters. He was, however, also reviled by his era's churchmen because of his forthright religious opinions. Newspapers, political pamphlets, and Sunday sermons alike smeared his reputation by labeling him a "French infidel and atheist." Clergy warned that, if elected president, Jefferson would overthrow all churches and have every Bible in the country destroyed. Jefferson was certainly an unbeliever if by that we mean he was not a Christian. But he was no atheist. In fact, Jefferson is clearly the most philosophically sophisticated religious thinker ever to be elected president of the United States.

Jefferson received the finest education the colonies could provide. In his youth he was trained in the classics, giving him a thorough background in rationalist and humanist moral philosophy. He later graduated from the College of William and Mary before taking up the study of law. Through all of this, Thomas Jefferson picked up the excitement being

generated by European proponents of Enlightenment thought. He developed an abiding faith that reason was the greatest gift that God had imparted into creation. Loyalty to reason, then, was humanity's most important religious obligation.

Like other deists, Jefferson rejected traditional conceptions of God as a father sitting on a heavenly throne in favor of such impersonal categories as "infinite power," "giver of life," "ulterior cause," or "intelligent and powerful agent." Unlike most deists, Jefferson devoted a great deal of his life to the study of the Bible. Few of his contemporaries could claim that they had studied it more systematically. Indeed, Jefferson was a pioneer of what in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would evolve into the scholarly exegesis of the Bible. He devised an intricate theoretical framework that allowed him to see the Bible as a humanly constructed text (as opposed to a text delivered once and for all through divine revelation). He reasoned that nothing truly grounded in divine reality could be irrational, for this would be contrary to the very order and design God imparted to the universe. Jefferson then went through the Bible identifying those passages that to a scientifically educated reader were blatant nonsense. Jefferson concluded that in addition to many lofty ethical principles, the Bible also contained ignorance, absurdity, untruth, and charlatanism.

Jefferson's exegetical method was designed to differentiate between the sound ethical principles contained in scripture and "vulgar ignorance and superstition." The application of this method became most controversial when it came to New Testament attestations concerning the divinity of Jesus. Many deists dismissed Jesus altogether, viewing him as deluded in his claim to be the divine son of God. Jefferson, however, remained a serious student of Jesus all of his adult life. He was convinced that Jesus had been a sublime moral teacher. He saw in Jesus' teaching the three main principles of a rational religion: (1) that there is one God, and that he is all-perfect; (2) that there is a future state of rewards and punishments; and (3) that we should love our neighbors as ourselves. The problem, in Jefferson's view, was that Jesus' original ethical teachings were later transmitted by unlettered and ignorant men. He singled out Paul in particular as having corrupted the teachings of Jesus. Jefferson's point was that Jesus' moral insights over time degenerated into irrational and superstitious beliefs. Jefferson's rationalism caused him to reject such traditional Christian beliefs as the virgin birth, miracle stories, the resurrection, and the atoning sacrifice. As he wrote to John Adams about the virgin birth, "The day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus, by the

Supreme Being as his father, in the womb of a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter” (letter to John Adams, April 11, 1823).

Of particular interest is the fact that Jefferson used a pair of scissors to edit his copy of the New Testament. Jefferson carefully cut out all of Jesus’ moral teachings, omitting all references to his supposed divinity, miracles, and so forth. Jefferson’s intention was to strip away the supernatural elements of the New Testament and to emphasize, instead, the simple moral teachings that he thought comprised the real basis of Jesus’ life and teachings. This text, commonly known as the “Jefferson Bible,” still resides in the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.

Jefferson’s friend and fellow Virginian James Madison was another of the era’s Enlightenment rationalists. It was Madison more than any other “founding father” who oversaw the writing of the U.S. Constitution. Madison and Jefferson collaborated in ensuring the passage of first the Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom and then the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States declaring that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” It is important to note that the desire for freedom *from* religion even more than freedom *of* religion animated Madison and Jefferson to construct the constitutional wall of separation between church and state. Disbelief, it turns out, is greatly responsible for the nation’s fundamental religious liberties. Freethinkers such as Franklin, Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison distanced themselves from the era’s conventional religious life and created a governmental structure that would both protect freedom of religious belief and prevent religious groups from imposing their beliefs on the nation’s legal process.

The Great Agnostic

The nineteenth century witnessed an explosion in church membership. Revival-based Protestantism spurred commitment to Bible-based beliefs. While most of the century’s religious enthusiasm reinforced Protestant Christianity’s central tenets, there were several countervailing movements that appealed to people who styled themselves to be progressive or independent thinkers. Transcendentalism, Swedenborgianism, mesmerism, and spiritualism all attracted sizeable numbers of middle-class followers who had grown indifferent to biblical religion. Spokespersons for all four of these esoteric or metaphysical systems disputed the literal truth of the Bible, expressed disbelief in the special divinity

of Jesus, and rejected the spiritual value of conventional Christian worship or ritual. From a Christian standpoint, they were fomenters of unbelief. They were, however, deeply interested in spiritual matters. They unquestionably believed in the existence of higher spiritual dimensions of reality. They also believed that every human being has within himself or herself the ability to connect inwardly with the spiritual powers emanating from these higher realms. What made them appear unbelievers to some, then, was their unabashed desire to proclaim a spiritually and intellectually satisfying alternative to the faith of the churches.

The late nineteenth century also witnessed the astonishing career of the nation’s most eloquent agnostic, Robert Ingersoll (1833–1899). Oddly enough, Ingersoll was the son of a Presbyterian minister who adhered to a strict Bible-based faith. It is, in fact, quite possible that it was precisely Robert Ingersoll’s prolonged exposure to theological rants concerning human depravity, the blood sacrifice of Christ, and the necessity of thoroughgoing repentance that turned him instead to rational humanism. Ingersoll was deeply committed to personal and intellectual honesty. Such honesty and openness, he thought, were the bedrocks of America’s democratic government. Deeply committed to civil liberties and progressive political causes, Ingersoll devoted his life to urging fellow citizens to follow truth wherever it leads—even if this means abandoning authoritarian religious beliefs and authoritarian social values.

Ingersoll became a successful attorney in Peoria, Illinois, and even served a term as the state’s attorney general before finding his calling as a professional agnostic. He was portly and rather unassuming in his physical appearance. But the nation may have never had a greater orator than Robert Ingersoll. Mixing warm humor with obvious passion and energy, the “great agnostic” charmed his audiences even while he hammered home a message most thought blasphemous. His fame as an eloquent provocateur spread rapidly though the country. By the 1880s and 1890s, he was receiving invitations to speak in hundred of cities a year. Ingersoll turned his lectures into books such as *The Gods* (1872), *Some Mistakes of Moses* (1879), and *Why I Am an Agnostic* (1896) that extended the reach of his attack on Christian faith. Suffused throughout his lambasting of institutional religion was his own faith in reason and human nature. He explained to his audiences that humanism, too, has a valuable creed based on cherishing human happiness in the here and now.

Ingersoll charged large sums of money for his public lectures. Audiences consequently paid dearly for the right to

have their beliefs satirized by the great agnostic. Ingersoll poked fun of typical Sunday worship services where parishioners must endure lengthy sermons and be accused of every imaginable kind of sin. He measured out equal amounts of humor and sarcasm to force audiences to reconsider how they had come to profess faith in Christianity's extraordinary beliefs. One newspaper recorded that those who had come for evening entertainment actually hissed at the great infidel preacher. A few surely did hiss. Most, however, laughed occasionally to relieve the uncomfortable feelings that inevitably arose as they found themselves examining previously unquestioned dogmas. It seems unlikely that many in his audiences were ever moved to denounce religion and become converts to secular humanism. Ministers typically used Ingersoll's visits to their communities as an occasion to intensify their preaching and to alert parishioners to the danger of entertaining doubt. Within days of his lectures, most in his audience went right back to accustomed forms of believing. But it is also possible that some had been gently coaxed into becoming more flexible in their religious thinking.

Ingersoll's career was both cause and symptom of a fairly widespread sensitivity to "freethought" in the realm of religion. Freethought represents the intellectual viewpoint that holds that our beliefs should conform to both scientific knowledge and logical principles. A few free-thinking periodicals such as *Truth Seeker*, *Free-Thought Ideal*, and *Iconoclast* emerged to advocate the maxim that it is always wrong to believe anything without sufficient evidence. Neither Ingersoll's meteoric career nor the short-lived agnostic movement of the era had a long-lasting influence on American thought. Yet all the while throughout the 1880s and 1890s, a more pervasive cultural movement was emerging that was to give disbelief an enduring place in American life and thought—modernism.

The Rise of Modernism

The late nineteenth century was a tumultuous period in American life. Social and intellectual change outpaced cultural innovation. Immigration and urbanization combined to erode Protestantism's ability to transmit its beliefs through accustomed socialization processes. From 1865 to 1900, more than thirteen million immigrants arrived on American shores. A large number of these had languages, customs, and religious affiliations that differed from their Protestant Yankee "hosts." By the first decade of the twentieth century, one out of every three church members in the country was Catholic. And while there were only 250,000 Jews in the

United States in 1880, that number increased almost tenfold in the span of just three decades. The increasingly pluralistic character of American society made it startlingly clear that religion was an "accident of birth," not a universal truth. What is more, most of the immigrants who arrived on American shores headed straight for the cities. As virtually every American city along the nation's eastern seaboard tripled in size during the 1880s and 1890s, Protestantism found it increasingly difficult to impose its patterns on American life.

Even as social changes displaced Protestantism from the nation's cultural center, a new intellectual climate rapidly altered the way that educated people thought about their lives. Science enjoyed newfound cultural prestige. The scientific method demonstrated its superiority over competing intellectual systems on an almost daily basis. The technological advances ushered in through scientific achievement gave humans control over areas of life that were formerly thought to be governed by fate or by the whims of God. Religion appeared increasingly anemic. The scientific method focuses upon the observable laws of cause and effect; it has no room for ideas that cannot lend themselves to empirical confirmation. Belief in miracles or supernatural intervention seemed the stuff of ancient folklore.

Darwin's eloquent explanation of biological evolution became the focal point of the cultural clash between science and religion. In the academic world, Darwin emerged victorious. By 1880 virtually every important scientist in the United States had been converted to the new worldview. Biological evolution does not invalidate the possibility of taking a religious perspective upon the world. But it does invalidate the Bible as a source of factual information. Although the academic world had quickly embraced evolutionary science, it was the infamous Scopes trial in 1925 that focused public attention to the shift occurring in American culture. John Scopes, a young substitute biology teacher, was charged with violating Tennessee's statute making it illegal to teach a theory that denies the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible. The "Scopes Monkey Trial" attracted worldwide attention from the press. Scopes's guilt should have taken only a minute or two to ascertain as he had clearly attempted to teach modern science to his students. Instead, the trial lasted eleven days and featured the impassioned orations of the opposing attorneys (William Jennings Bryan assisting the prosecution and the famed agnostic criminal lawyer Clarence Darrow heading up the defense). Scopes was eventually found guilty and fined \$100, but public sentiment

went resoundingly against the biblical fundamentalists, who came across to the nation as backward and intolerant.

The challenges that science presented to religious belief were matched by those emerging from the field of modern biblical scholarship. Academic scholars began using the techniques of scientific history and careful literary analysis to examine the origins and authorship of Jewish and Christian texts. Their sophisticated analyses established beyond scholarly dispute that the Bible was the work of numerous authors who collected, edited, and arranged their narratives according to their own conceptions of religious truth. Modern scholarship therefore made it impossible to view the Bible as a “delivered once and for all” revelation from God. The Bible was instead now seen to be a collection of ancient writings whose original purpose was to witness to their authors’ personal faith, not to convey factual information.

By the dawn of the twentieth century, the university had replaced the church as the source from which Americans would expect to find reliable knowledge. The disbelief generated by a skeptic such as Robert Ingersoll was limited to the power and reach of his personal orations. Agnosticism and disbelief were consequently limited in range of scope or influence. With the onset of modernism, however, American universities would provide a stable institutional base for the kind of empirical and inductive reasoning processes that undermine the credulity of religious belief. Henceforward philosophical examinations of religion would be greatly influenced by the natural and social sciences. Thus, for example, both Thomas Huxley and Herbert Spencer became effective popularizers of Darwin’s ideas. Both of these British authors extended Darwin’s core insights into full-blown philosophical positions that left no room for traditional religion. Most American readers were not capable of distinguishing between the scientific principles and the unscientific ideology mingled together in their writings. The general effect of such manifestos of modernist thought was thus to convince the general public that science leads inexorably away from religion. Even those who continued to profess conventional religious beliefs nonetheless used science-based technology on a daily basis. As a consequence, religious persons have been forced to compartmentalize their religious beliefs in ways that isolate them from the kinds of thinking that otherwise dominate modern life.

New academic disciplines such as sociology and psychology were also carriers of modernism’s secularist tendencies. Although Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud were European thinkers, their views were avidly debated by American

professors interested in aligning sociology and psychology with the newest intellectual trends. Karl Marx, an economic historian and early sociological thinker, argued that religion is the opiate of the masses. Marx’s point was that religious beliefs divert our attention from the real causes of human happiness or suffering. Instead of actually demanding changes in the social and economic forces that affect the quality of life, religion comforts people in their misery by reassuring them that they will be compensated for their suffering when they reach heaven. Marx argued that religious beliefs, like opium, provide an illusory feeling of well-being but do absolutely nothing to improve the conditions that actually cause this misery. Marx’s humanistic message was clear. If we wish to better the human condition, we must first give up the unproductive kinds of thinking fostered by religion and instead tackle our problems in a rational, technical manner.

Sigmund Freud also viewed religious belief as a misguided form of thinking. A medical doctor and the founder of modern psychotherapy, Freud’s confidence that reason and science can lead us to a better future predisposed him to conclude that religion has no constructive role in modern life. Freud began his classic critique of religion, *The Future of an Illusion*, by acknowledging that life is hard to endure. We are powerless in the face of natural disasters, accidents, disease, and death. The prototypical human response to our fundamental weakness is “to humanize nature”—to envision supernatural beings who have the power to help and protect us if they are so inclined. Once we believe the world to be governed by beings similar to ourselves, we are no longer entirely helpless. We can hope to gain at least some control by attempting to bribe, appease, or cajole these supernatural beings much the way we would human beings. Freud further observed that we tend to visualize these supernatural beings in the image of a father figure who can be implored to watch out for and protect his family. We thus find ourselves yearning for a heavenly father who will protect us if we beg and flatter (i.e., pray and worship). The idea of God, then, is not based upon any empirical evidence or rational process. Instead, the idea of God originates in the human wish for protection against the dangers of existence. Freud argued that a belief held only because we want it to be true is an illusion. Religious beliefs, like illusions, rest on nothing more than wishful thinking. Freud thus used modern psychology to portray religion as a form of psychological weakness. Religion, though an understandable coping device, stands in the way of our taking a more rational, problem-solving approach to life. Freud believed that we cannot become fully mature

persons until we abandon the illusion of religion and face life in a realistic and rational manner.

Many of the pioneering psychologists and sociologists turned their academic tools to the study of religion. James Leuba, George Coe, Edwin Starbuck, William James, and John Dewey were among those who showed how the new social sciences could explain the “real” forces shaping religion, leaving no doubt that religion was a human-made set of beliefs that lacked the kind of intellectual authority of modern science. Even when these new academic disciplines did not specifically address religion, their efforts to explain “the good person” and “the good society” without explicit reference to revealed religion were alone sufficient to carry the banner of humanistic philosophy. John Dewey, for example, never attacked religion per se, but he did inject American life with a new confidence in reason and the democratic process. His well-known *A Common Faith* (1934) ignored organized religion and instead celebrated the public virtues that emerge from social processes alone. All the while, social reformers such as Jane Addams demonstrated how charitable social activities can steadily uplift human lives with no connection to biblical religion.

Humanist and Atheistic Organizations

The ongoing tradition of disbelief mostly consists of a series of individual writers such as Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Ethan Allen, and Robert Ingersoll. We might add to this group the agnostic sentiments found in the writings of Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), Sinclair Lewis, and Baltimore journalist Henry Louis Mencken. Their solo voices have emboldened a small but continuing minority of Americans to resist social pressure and instead maintain a wholly nonreligious outlook on life. However, none of these impassioned humanists gave rise to anything resembling an organization that might disseminate disbelief on a broader scale.

As early as 1826 the Welsh industrialist Robert Owen organized a community of freethinkers in New Harmony, Indiana. Owen was convinced that the social environment plays a determining role in the development of personal character. This philosophical commitment had already prompted him to establish a model factory town in New Lanark, Scotland, that was founded on the principles of communal living and mutual support. Owen passionately believed that an ethical community could evolve new social forms that would replace traditional economic and religious practices. Those who gathered in New Harmony not only ignored biblical religion, they expressly opposed it. What

attracted them to this communal endeavor were their shared commitments to education, freethinking, and the construction of a moral community. These commitments, however, proved insufficient for sustaining an entire economic system. Other opportunities, the era’s individualistic spirit, and the lack of an effective governing structure prompted the community to dissolve a year later.

Shortly after the Civil War a group of humanistic Unitarians decided that their liberal denomination still harbored a residual trace of religiosity. Under the leadership of Octavius Brooks Frothingham, they broke away from the Unitarians and established the Free Religious Association to promote the principles of free thought and moral philosophy without any reference to Christianity. The movement struggled to gain a core constituency partly because the Unitarians already had a long tradition of attracting the nation’s freethinkers and partly because a similar organization, Ethical Culture, emerged and successfully competed for new adherents. Ethical Culture was organized by Felix Adler. A Reform Jewish rabbi, Adler was deeply steeped in the tradition of combining progressive rationality with moral concern. Ethical Culture’s main purpose was to use religious-like ceremonies and lectures to promote ethical commitment with no reference to the Bible, God, or the supernatural. Adler eventually severed his ties with Reform Judaism and instead redirected the kind of ethical impulse found in Jewish prophetic tradition to contemporary social causes such as education, medical care, and the rights of labor.

Many of the immigrants who came to the United States in the last few decades of the nineteenth century or the first few decades of the twentieth century had secularist leanings. Severed from the religious institutions of their homelands and eager for economic prosperity, they put their energies into any number of freethinking and moral causes. Finnish, Czech, German, and Jewish freethinkers put their faith in this-worldly reforms and sought to counter the moral tenor of the entrenched Protestant population. Because many freethinkers were vociferous advocates of labor unions and other “radical” social causes, the nation’s Protestant majority often viewed freethinking with great suspicion.

Several freethinking periodicals such as *Truth Seeker*, *Free Thought Ideal*, and *Iconoclast* were launched about the turn of the twentieth century. The editor of the *Iconoclast*, William Cowper Brann, published his journal from Texas, square in the middle of conservative Baptist territory. Brann gained national attention not only for his raging criticisms of biblical religion but also for his claims that morality can be

fashioned on a wholly rational basis apart from religious beliefs. Another freethought leader was Joseph Lewis. From 1915 until his death in 1968, Lewis served as president of the Freethinkers of America. Lewis had been deeply influenced by the writings of Thomas Paine and Robert Ingersoll. Through a steady stream of publications including *The Bible Unmasked* (1926) and *An Atheist Manifesto* (1951), Lewis offered the semblance of national organization for the otherwise disconnected proponents of disbelief in America.

There were numerous organizations founded throughout the twentieth century to disseminate freethinking principles, including the American Humanist Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism. The most widely known organization, however, was the American Atheists founded by Madalyn Murray O'Hair. O'Hair was something of a natural-born agitator. She first gained attention when, in 1960, she filed a lawsuit against the Baltimore City Public Schools claiming that it was unconstitutional for the public schools to force her son Bill to participate in Bible readings. Her suit was eventually consolidated with a similar dispute, *School District of Abington v. Schempp* (1963), and reached the United States Supreme Court, which voted 8–1 in O'Hair's favor, thereby making it illegal for public schools in the United States to include the Bible in their curriculum.

Although O'Hair's organization probably never had more than a thousand members, she became the public face of atheism in America during the 1960s and 1970s. She was constantly invited to appear on television shows and to debate Christian ministers in large public forums. Her advocacy of atheism was complicated by her endorsement of other provocative causes such as "sexual liberation." O'Hair was not herself an original thinker, nor did her confrontational style help her attract a more philosophically sophisticated core of supporters. She succeeded, however, in generating considerable publicity for both the separation of church and state and the civil rights of nonbelievers. The greed and deceit surrounding her murder in 1995 by an associate within the American Atheists cast further suspicion on her philosophical beliefs, as did her son's conversion to evangelical Christianity.

Theologies of Disbelief

Intellectuals in the twentieth century found it increasingly hard to articulate belief in God without appearing philosophically naïve. Modernism had gradually turned the tables; the burden of proof was now on those who proposed belief

in God rather than on those who found no warrant for such belief. Two quite different philosophical currents contributed to this philosophical assault on religious ideas. First, the epistemological methods utilized by science gave rise to a fully modern philosophical position known as logical positivism. Logical positivism focused attention on the empirical basis for claims to knowledge. Bertrand Russell, A.J. Ayer, and Anthony Flew were among the many notable philosophers who concluded that religious statements were literally nonsense—that is, religious beliefs did not signify anything in our world of sensory experience and therefore had no credible content. The era's most dominant philosophical trend thus deemed religion utterly lacking in cognitive significance.

A second important philosophical current, existentialism, also rejected the significance of religion, but for very different reasons. Based in part on the work of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and propounded by the French writers Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, existentialism voiced the era's profound suspicion of those who profess to know absolute truths. For Nietzsche, the end of theism was simultaneously the beginning of a new era of humanism. His pronouncement that "God is dead" was simultaneously a celebration of the fact that humans have the power to transform themselves into whatever they desire. Sartre and Camus voiced a more somber despair with notes of anomie and nihilism. Although there are many versions of existentialism, all deny the existence of any transcendent, universal essences (truths). All we have is what we make of our own existence. Existentialists deem religious orientations to life to be "inauthentic" insofar as they avoid taking full responsibility for determining our own lives and values. Authenticity, they contend, requires a willingness to face life with brutal honesty and without the false securities of religion.

By the 1960s these philosophical trends found their way into liberal Protestant thought. The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, for example, declared that modern people can no longer be religious. Although Bonhoeffer continued to believe in God and in the basic authority of scripture, he nonetheless ceased identifying religion with belief and instead equated it with service to our fellow humans. More daring still was the thought of Paul Tillich. Tillich asserted that educated persons could no longer intellectually affirm scripture or traditional church doctrines. Tillich even went so far as to declare that he did not believe in a supreme being, if by that we mean believing in the existence of some supernatural entity. According to Tillich,

what distinguishes thought or action as religious is not that it intends some object referred to as “God.” Instead, thought or action becomes religious to the extent we seek to connect with the “ground” or “depth” of life. Tillich’s definition of religion as “ultimate concern” implied that there is nothing intrinsically religious about what transpires in a church. Tillich’s final legacy was that he encouraged persons to distance themselves intellectually from biblical religion and instead to find ways of being “ultimately concerned” outside of institutional churches.

Another theological expression of the 1960s was “the death of God” theology. William Hamilton, Paul van Buren, Thomas Altizer, and Richard Rubenstein were among the most prominent of those theologians who agreed with Nietzsche’s dictum that “God is dead” and that it is time for humans to abandon supernaturalist modes of thought. For some, the “death of God” was primarily a sociological statement meant to draw attention to the fact that modern culture no longer thought in supernatural categories and hence traditional religion was irrelevant to contemporary moral reflection. For others, the “death of God” was an actual metaphysical pronouncement that humans are alone in this universe. The “death of God” theology thus represented a radical departure even from the positions taken by the era’s most liberal Christian thinkers such as Tillich. Whereas liberal theology accepts the basic authority of the Bible but tries to reinterpret its message in modern ways, the “death of God” theology rejects the Bible altogether as it represents a mode of thinking no longer credible to the modern educated person. And whereas liberal theology represented an attempt to rethink the nature of God in ways that spoke more directly to modern persons, the “death of God” theology expressed radical doubt about the very existence of God.

Though there was great diversity in the views of the era’s “death of God” theologians, they shared at least two important commitments. First, as a group, they held up the man Jesus as the normative model for human life. Although they rejected the traditional Christian formulas concerning the divinity of Jesus, they embraced Jesus as “the man for others.” Indeed, they maintained that the death of God must be accompanied by the birth of humanistic commitment, and for this reason Jesus represented a life devoted to our neighbors and the world. Second, their message was not one of existentialist despair or nihilism. It combined self-conscious declaration of the death of God with a positive affirmation of human life. Death of God theologies celebrated humans as free and morally responsible agents. Denying the existence of

God simultaneously affirmed the significance of this world. By acknowledging that we can no longer expect supernatural assistance, we accept responsibility for living fully and ethically in the concrete world of human relationships.

These theologies of disbelief had limited impact on Americans’ religious outlooks. The death of God movement was especially short-lived. Even though the movement made for spicy media coverage including the cover of *Time* magazine during Easter week of 1966, it was all but forgotten by the end of the decade. The liberal Protestant views popularized by Paul Tillich, John Robinson, and Harvey Cox have had a longer influence. Rather than revitalizing Christian thought, these daring views may have encouraged some to drift away from institutional religion altogether. Ironically, these liberal theological ideas siphoned away potential members of theologically moderate Protestant denominations and thereby accentuated the relative dominance of theologically conservative churches in the last decades of the twentieth century.

“Nones” in the Twenty-First Century

It is extremely difficult to estimate the number of atheists, agnostics, or other kinds of nonbelievers in the United States. People are usually guarded when responding to opinion surveys and often comply with what they perceive as polite protocol. There is also the problem of what criteria should be used to classify persons as religious or nonreligious: membership in an organization, attendance at weekly services, or a professed sense of affiliation even without attendance or membership? Taking all these methodological difficulties into account, recent social surveys indicate that the percentage of nonbelievers is growing in the twenty-first century. When asked, “What is your religion, if any?” more than 14 percent of respondents answer “none.”

Most scholars agree that the percentage of “nones” in the United States population is substantial and has been growing since the 1990s. Less certain, however, is whether this figure of 14 percent is a reasonably accurate estimate or whether the actual number is a little higher. It seems likely, for example, that 46 percent of American adults regard themselves to be members of a religious organization. This leaves 54 percent in the category of religiously unaffiliated. Some of these unaffiliated Americans have clearly defined religious beliefs. But the rest can be arranged along a scale that includes being religiously indifferent, holding nontraditional religious views, agnosticism, and atheism. A tentative estimate is that the number of “nones” in America is somewhere between 14

and 20 percent of the population depending on research methodology and definitions.

We know a little bit about who these “nones” are. Males outnumber females, perhaps accounting for 60 percent of those who have no religious affiliation. Younger Americans outnumber older Americans, with the highest percentage being in the age category of eighteen to thirty-five years. The western states of Colorado, Idaho, California, Washington, and Oregon have the highest concentration of nonbelievers. We also know that “nones” are more likely to have higher levels of education and more income. Persons of Asian ethnicity are also more likely to have no religious affiliation.

Less certain is just where these persons range along the scale from holding nontraditional religious beliefs to being wholly secular. Surely some are simply indifferent to metaphysical questions or concerns. Others are more self-consciously opposed to supernatural ideas. In the first decade of the twentieth century, several prominent scholars published books that pointed out both the intellectual flaws and disastrous cultural consequences of religious belief. Richard Dawkins’s *The God Delusion* (2006), Sam Harris’s *Letter to a Christian Nation* (2006), and Christopher Hitchens’s *God Is Not Great* (2007) were among the many books that boldly articulated reasons for rejecting religious belief. Importantly, however, American nonbelievers remain more interested in what ideals or values they seek to promote rather than what they find themselves opposing. For this reason nonbelievers use a variety of terms to describe themselves: naturalist, rationalist, humanist, freethinker, or empiricist. Many are quick to point out that they seek to move beyond the tribal mentality so often associated with religion and embrace a more universal, even cosmic view of how human life fits into the larger scheme of things.

The 14 to 20 percent of younger Americans who proclaim no religious affiliation thus join a long American tradition of disbelief. Biblical religion has held no monopoly on American moral philosophy. Colonial settlers, founding fathers, and humanist philosophers alike have espoused moral outlooks based on reason alone. The nation’s deepest political values, indeed even its explicit provisions for individual liberties and religious liberty, are largely the product of those who placed their confidence in human rationality rather than institutional religion. Atheists, agnostics, and nonbelievers of many varieties have not only sought to expose the limitations of views that fly under the banner of faith but have also championed alternative visions of how Americans might best realize their personal and national potentials.

See also *American Revolution; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Death of God Theology; Deism; Enlightenment; Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Humanistic Traditions and Movements; Puritans; Transcendentalism; Unaffiliated.*

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Atlantic World

Expansion of Europe into the Atlantic basin beginning in the fifteenth century eventually carved up the Americas into colonial zones. By 1660 parts of North America were variously claimed by the French, English, Dutch, and Spanish. While these European powers would be entirely removed in the nineteenth century, the legacy of their presence, their faiths, and their policies shaped religion in North America. The Atlantic world brought together Europeans, Africans, and Native Americas in an encounter that affected the various faiths and traditions involved. Europeans drew upon their common religious heritage to justify expansion and various colonialist practices, especially enslavement. Tensions within the European community also shaped the Atlantic world, and from the English perspective no tensions were more important than the Catholic-Protestant divide. Anti-Catholicism first fueled expansion and then influenced relations among the various colonizing states. For their part, British Protestants found it difficult to transfer their religious institutions to a New World setting while at the same time welcoming adherents to a variety of alternative Protestant traditions from Europe, who found in the British Atlantic a refuge. Diversity challenged assumptions about the necessity of religious uniformity, creating a situation conducive to the

exploration of religious liberty. After 1800, by which time the British Atlantic world had been torn in two, a common religious culture continued to connect that world.

Encounter

Europeans moving into the Atlantic necessarily encountered people with faith traditions different from their own. First encounters brought together explorers and native inhabitants. Early meetings along the coast introduced unknown disease pathogens into the North American environment, sparking epidemics that severely reduced populations and challenged religious beliefs.

Meeting the natives of the Americas, Christian Europeans categorized them as “pagans.” They understood pagans to be those people outside of the three great monotheistic traditions of the Mediterranean world—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Christians assumed such people either had no religion or adhered to a false belief system based on superstitions and that as a result they would be ripe for conversion. Although conversion of native peoples was considered an imperative, many early encounters did not involve aggressive proselytizing but rather exploratory conversations in which Europeans and Native Americans sought information about the other’s belief system. The English looked for evidence that natives had some inkling of the truth, by which they meant ideas similar to their own. European sojourners thought Native Americans who knew of a supreme deity or life after death were ripe for conversion to Christianity. Europe’s growing reading audience enjoyed perusing their reports of native belief systems and cultural practices.

The Atlantic world hosted many other encounters, beyond those between Europeans and Native Americans. New peoples and their religious traditions were added to the mix by trading voyages to coastal Africa and by the sale of captive Africans in the Americas. Europeans generally viewed these people as pagans. A majority were polytheists, adhering to traditional West African beliefs, but a few were Roman Catholics, converted by Portuguese missions in the region around the Congo River, or Muslims, converted via trading ties with North Africa. The movement of peoples that this era of expansion brought created new opportunities for interactions among those from different traditions who hailed from the same broad geographical region. English Christians met European Jews in the Americas, for instance, at a time when Jews encountered discrimination in England itself. The circulation of peoples brought increased exposure to a variety of faiths and traditions.

Religion’s Role in Colonialism

In confronting non-Christian peoples in Africa and the Americas, European Christians drew upon ideas that facilitated the settlement of new lands and the expropriation of labor. Europeans understood the biblical injunction to “fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28) as an endorsement of their own modes of agricultural use. In this view, the seasonal migration, hunting, gathering, and limited agriculture of the peoples of the eastern seaboard of North America did not constitute appropriate use, and the native failure to subdue the earth justified European land claims.

Such ideas worked in conjunction with the demographic catastrophe that witnessed the near collapse of native populations in some areas. Early English settlers cited the high incidence of epidemic disease to support their claims, noting that God had prepared the way for the arrival of Christian settlers by providentially destroying the native population. Such conceptions made it easier for Europeans to justify land seizures to critics of the violence and exploitation that accompanied colonization.

The enslavement of Africans as well as the treatment of Native Americans were justified in part using religious ideas. European slavery, to the extent that it was still practiced, usually involved persons of a different faith, such as pagans or Muslims. The word *slave* came from *Slavs*, as pagan Slavs had been enslaved in Europe in an earlier era using this justification. African and Native American pagans qualified as persons who could be enslaved. This construction, however, raised the prospect that once converted to Christianity, the individual might become free. Slave masters worried over this issue, opposing missions among their slaves in part to circumvent this possibility. Eventually colonies that relied heavily on slave labor passed laws stating that conversion had no impact on a slave’s status.

Catholic-Protestant Tensions

English expansion was launched at a time of religious polarization in Europe. By the late sixteenth century, the Protestant Reformation had divided Western Europe between Protestant and Catholic. England and Scotland both embraced Protestantism, the former erecting a Church of England with the monarch as its head and an episcopal hierarchy, and the latter creating a Presbyterian state church. Ireland remained largely Roman Catholic, although the English imposed a legally established Protestant church on the country that had a small membership and a disproportionate share of authority. With Scotland and England both

including a residual population of Catholics, not one of those kingdoms was religiously uniform at the time that English expansion began. Europe was similarly divided, with the Scandinavian countries, the United Provinces, and some German states becoming Protestant; portions of the populations of some Catholic countries, such as France, also converted to the new faith. This religious bifurcation sparked many decades of war, until finally the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) enshrined the principle that the religious identity of a state should follow that of its ruler and no outside power would attempt to change that by force.

The first English colonies were founded at the height of these religious conflicts. The English launched their colonies partly as an effort to reduce the power and wealth of Spain, which had already successfully conquered much of the Americas and Caribbean. They declared that they would convert Native Americans to Protestantism and thereby prevent the Spanish from winning more souls and from extracting wealth that could support Catholic causes. Puritans were especially suspicious of Catholicism. Their tendency to think of the Church of England as flirting with “popery” created distrust among English Protestants at various key moments.

Anti-Catholic rhetoric was a regular refrain in the English colonies. The Glorious Revolution of 1688–1689 witnessed the ouster of James II, who was unacceptable to his subjects on both sides of the Atlantic for his Catholicism. Denunciations of James cited his religion and equated it with abuse of authority. With the mainland colonies eventually hemmed in by Catholic settlement to the north (New France) and the south (Florida), border wars had a religious component. Intermittent warfare on the northern border caused clashes in which not only the French soldiers but also their Native American allies might be Catholic. When captive English settlers occasionally converted, their Protestant relations expressed dismay. A particularly infamous case involved the young daughter of a Massachusetts minister. The government of Spanish Florida offered freedom to any runaway slave who would convert to Catholicism, outraging English masters and attracting enough ex-slaves to create a town of their own. In places like New York City, too, colonists feared that Jesuit priests in disguise were fomenting slave uprisings. When the British government did not outlaw Catholicism among the French population in the newly conquered Canada, colonists, parliamentarians, and London crowds all protested. They again equated Catholicism with an attack on the liberties of

English men. Suspicion and outright hostility to Catholics was common throughout the British Atlantic.

Institutional Expansion

In colonizing the Americas, European states expected to transfer their religious institutions to their distant dominions. The Spanish, Portuguese, and French intended to transplant Roman Catholicism, bringing priests, friars, and nuns and establishing churches, convents, and schools. Swedish settlers along the Delaware River brought the Lutheran Church with them, and the Dutch West India Company that founded New Netherland and other colonies established the Dutch Reformed Church as the official religious institution. Similarly the English monarchs expected their colonies to create Church of England religious establishments, with state support for the ministry and church buildings. Colonial charters included provisions for the supply of ministers, and churches were the first public buildings erected in most colonies. Governments developed funding schemes to support the church. To provide local governance of the church, colonies such as Virginia expanded the role of the vestry into a board made up of local elites who oversaw the workings of the church, hiring ministers, collecting their salaries, and caring for church buildings.

Transferring religious institutions proved a difficult task, especially in the Protestant churches with institutional hierarchies that were less developed than those bolstering the spread of Catholicism. English colonial promoters usually had difficulty recruiting ministers willing to sojourn to colonies. Initially high death rates indiscriminately killed clergymen along with settlers. The church did not send a bishop to the colonies before 1800, which meant that the institutional hierarchy in America was only an attenuated version of that in England and Wales. In practical terms it also meant that any colonial man who sought ordination had to go to London, where the bishop would perform the service. This hurdle effectively reduced the number of colonists who became clergymen in the Church of England. Even after the College of William and Mary was founded in 1693 to train men for the ministry, few such ordinations occurred. Recruitment of ministers for the colonies improved only in the eighteenth century when new missionary societies such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) worked to locate and finance clergy for the American churches. While about 80 percent of the English population belonged to the Church of England in the mid-eighteenth century, only about 30 percent of the North

American colonial population did. Still, the Church of England had a presence in the thirteen colonies by the eve of the American Revolution, and it was established in more than half of all colonies throughout the British Atlantic world, ranging from Nova Scotia to Barbados.

Attempting to transplant the Church of England faced more than just institutional challenges, however, because the religious complexity of the three kingdoms ruled by the early Stuarts meant that many migrants from Britain and Ireland were not members of the state church. In colonial New England, the proportion of the ministers in the migrating population was high, but the clergymen who went in such large numbers were critics of the established church. They used their migration as a means to create a new church order, which would come to be known as Congregationalism. They also quickly founded Harvard College to train the next generation of ministers, thereby eliminating the need to rely on Oxford and Cambridge graduates who might support the Church of England. The first two colleges founded (Harvard, 1636, and Yale, 1701) trained ministers not for the Church of England but for the Congregational alternative.

Congregationalism, while dominant in colonial New England, was not the only option arising in the British Isles that increased colonial complexity right away. Other migrants were adherents to Presbyterianism, which was the established church in Scotland and also claimed adherents in England, Wales, and Ireland. Some Catholics from England and Ireland migrated as well, especially to the early colony of Maryland, owned by a Catholic proprietor. Over the course of the seventeenth century, too, the religious landscape in Britain and Ireland became more complex, with new religious movements, such as the Quakers, emerging and older sects, such as the Baptists, increasing their numbers. Colonies included adherents to all these faiths, which made it difficult to create an Anglican establishment. The Stuart realms were diverse, which immediately foiled the goal of religious uniformity in the colonies.

The Stuarts and their successors came to doubt their ability to achieve this institutional uniformity, although they never abandoned the idea of an established church for their colonies. As England became more diverse and as Britain and Ireland became refuges for displaced Protestants from the Continent, the government eventually came to tolerate dissenting views within certain limits.

In the Atlantic world, the situation for dissenters had always been better. With the exception of New England's execution of four Quaker missionaries between 1659 and

1661, no government had responded more harshly to dissent than England did routinely. The mechanisms for suppression were less well developed initially, and later, toleration became official policy in various locations. By the mid-eighteenth century, about half of the colonies had a Church of England establishment, but its weak institutional base limited its ability to squash dissent. In colonies without an official establishment, toleration was officially the order of the day: such was the case in most New England colonies once the Congregational establishment was pulled down by the British government (1680s), but it was also true in Pennsylvania, Georgia, and, for much of its history, North Carolina.

Authorities sometimes considered colonies as potential receptacles for dissenters, raising this to the level of policy when chartering Maryland to a Catholic proprietor or West Jersey and Pennsylvania to Quakers. As their thinking turned increasingly into these tracks, officials worked against their own assumption that an established church was necessary to support loyalty and promote social and political stability.

Protestant Refuge

The British Atlantic immediately re-created and even exacerbated the religious complexity of the Stuart kingdoms, and diversity then increased further as a result of migration from other parts of Europe. Britain and Ireland received refugee populations from the Continent when Protestants were displaced by war or changes in religious policy. Huguenots (French Protestants), left France in large numbers from 1685. In that year, the king revoked a 1598 royal edict that had permitted Protestants to remain in their predominantly Catholic country. What had been a small-scale emigration then turned into a flood, as perhaps half a million Protestants departed. They went in large numbers to Britain, Ireland, or the colonies. These refugees were Calvinists, so they shared much in common with many English and Scottish Protestants. Some, especially members of the elite, were quickly absorbed into the Church of England, but others established separate French churches in various locations.

Protestants also came from German-speaking parts of Europe where economic hardship and wars made life difficult. The German states included a wide variety of Christian churches and sects, besides the dominant Lutheran tradition. Much of that diversity was re-created in the North American Middle Colonies, especially in Pennsylvania. William Penn's colony received a large proportion of German migrants because he recruited heavily in that region. Eager

to attract settlers and able to offer religious liberty, Penn sought settlers widely, sparking a sustained migration from Central Europe and welcoming many Presbyterian Scots Irish settlers as well. Even Catholics—German, Irish, and others—were welcomed in Penn’s colony. Moravian missionaries, who launched a worldwide evangelical effort in the 1730s, would include many British colonies in their efforts, further enhancing the available religious options.

As the British Atlantic became a destination for Protestant migrants, the diversity there rose sharply. By the late colonial period, the area hosted adherents of all the variations on Christianity present in Britain and Ireland as well as every major alternative—and many minor ones—within Western Europe. Adding to that the traditional faiths of West African slaves, the spirituality of Native Americans, and the Islamic beliefs of some captive Africans, the religious landscape in the British Atlantic was as varied and as complex as any of its day.

Evangelical Religion

In theory, colonial government and the Church of England establishment supported missions, although these were late in developing and slow to reach beyond the non-European populations. Early efforts were modest, such as fund-raising for a never-founded Indian school in Virginia and a Jesuit mission in Maryland, both in the respective colonies’ first decades. Massachusetts, working with Parliament while it temporarily ruled England during the Commonwealth period (1649–1653), launched a mission that resulted in the establishment of Praying Indian Villages and the translation of the Bible into an Algonquian dialect. At its height, this effort involved a few thousand native converts, before violence and prejudice weakened it severely during King Philip’s War (1675–1676). After 1700, the Church of England engaged in missionary work, especially under the auspices of its SPG (founded in 1701). The organization had a dual mission with regard to the colonies: to bolster the Church of England among the settler population by providing ministers and to evangelize among the Native American population. Its success in both areas was uneven, although a mission to the Mohawks in northern New York was particularly robust. Other churches organized missions in the eighteenth century, with the Moravians offering one far-flung example.

Religious revival in the late 1730s and early 1740s affected churches and individual believers on both sides of the Atlantic and laid groundwork for later evangelical growth among enslaved Africans. Periodic revivals had

occurred in individual churches around the Atlantic basin before Jonathan Edwards oversaw one in his Northampton, Massachusetts, church in 1736. Many parishioners underwent emotional conversion experiences and joined the church as full members. Edwards subsequently published accounts that primed ministers elsewhere to watch for signs of revival in their own flocks. When George Whitefield, the famed “boy preacher,” began touring the American colonies to raise money for a Georgia orphanage, he spoke at mass meetings up and down the coast starting in 1739. Other itinerates soon followed. Many individuals experienced conversion, joined churches, or started informal meetings for worship. The Great Awakening, as the resulting intensive period of revivalism came to be known, had its greatest effect in New England, followed by the Middle Colonies; revivalism was also common in England, Wales, and to a lesser extent Scotland and Ireland in this era. It ultimately gave rise to new churches, including many Baptist congregations, and energized older churches, such as the Middle Colony Presbyterians. Members of both communities would later proselytize in the southern colonies, among the enslaved as well as the settler populations. Midcentury revivals created transatlantic networks of evangelicals anxious for news of God’s work in various locations. It helped to knit the Atlantic together, even as it caused divisions in some communities and churches.

Religious Liberty

That people of such diverse faith traditions could live together peaceably seemed highly unlikely to Western Europeans, but the reality of the situation within the British Atlantic world challenged that assumption. Europeans had long believed that religious uniformity was necessary to social and political harmony, and it was a view that many thought was proven by the wars and other difficulties that a religiously divided Europe had experienced since the Reformation. Diversity in the colonies in particular seemed potentially dangerous, as critics cited the weak institutional structure supporting many churches; they tended to see colonists as lacking religion altogether, if they did not have the full panoply of supports for their faith that many in Europe enjoyed. The varied religious scene and the relative weakness of transplanted churches caused alarm to conservative observers.

Even though the British Atlantic could be taken to prove the need for stronger churches and more rigorous policies to eliminate religious dissent, at the same time the Atlantic

setting furthered the opportunities for dialogue around the issues of toleration and liberty of conscience. From the very first, some colonies had permitted greater freedoms. Maryland, founded by a Catholic proprietor who wanted to protect the liberty of his coreligionists, had created no establishment and had tolerated all Christians. Religious tensions had been rife there in the seventeenth century. Rhode Island, settled largely by individuals who disagreed with the emerging church establishment in Massachusetts Bay, enacted religious liberty immediately. Later codifications of that practice clarified that the colony welcomed all Christians, although Jewish migrants from Brazil also made a home there. In Pennsylvania, the Quaker commitment to allowing each individual to follow his or her conscience led proprietor William Penn to enshrine religious liberty as government policy. Other colonies founded in the later seventeenth century, such as the Carolinas, created loose establishments that permitted a degree of freedom. For practical or principled reasons, diversity and religious freedoms moved forward together.

Ideas about supporting religious liberty circulated in the Atlantic, gaining support from the colonial context while at the same time shaping it. The earliest idea in this vein was toleration. A fairly limited idea, toleration assumed that divergence from the accepted way might in some cases be permitted. The freedom granted through toleration was grudging and often provisional. A more expansive idea was that of liberty of conscience, which suggested that each individual should make up his or her own mind on matters of faith. Often associated with radicals in the seventeenth century, the idea became more commonplace with time. Roger Williams, an early colonial leader, supported this idea, but he did so because he believed that the faithful few needed freedom to pursue the truth unmolested by others. By the late seventeenth century, some religious thinkers suggested that certain differences among Christian churches were incidental matters and should not block ecumenical cooperation. This thinking fostered acceptance of difference. As Christian leaders began to fear irreligion more than religious difference, cooperation among Christians received more support. Gradually the reality of diversity and changing views of religious difference created an atmosphere in which cooperation and accommodation became possible.

Common Religious Culture

The transatlantic community forged in the two centuries after England began colonizing the Americas was pulled

apart politically with the American Revolution. Political revolution created two separate polities, but it could not sunder the shared religious culture that had been created since 1600. Great Britain, its remaining Atlantic colonies, and the new United States continued to have many ties and developed in some similar ways after 1800. The major churches of the early United States all had British roots, whether they were the Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, or Congregational churches. The evangelical connection that linked together Christians throughout the British Atlantic operated despite the altered political context after the Revolution. Conversion of captive Africans, which had made large strides only in the years just before the Revolution, would proceed apace in both the British Caribbean and the new United States, and the circulation of Christian slaves and former slaves that the Revolution sparked would bring evangelical preaching to a number of African communities that had not previously seen many conversions. The burgeoning of missionary organizations, tract societies, and Sunday school movements in the United States had their British counterparts and were usually based on British models. Even the religious impulse to found an African colony that would serve as a new home to ex-slaves who were expected to evangelize the native population started with the British (Sierra Leone, 1787) and spread to the Americans (Liberia, 1815). When the United States gave rise to perhaps its first indigenous religious movements in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, large numbers of the first generation of converts who journeyed to Utah had been converted in Britain. The anti-Catholicism that had so shaped expansion continued, affecting the reception of the Irish immigrants who would later travel to the United States. That they would remake once-Puritan and vehemently anti-Catholic Boston as a Catholic city would be a great irony. Transatlantic connections also continued into the nineteenth century, in revivalism, missionary outreach, and other areas. The groundwork for much of the religious culture of the early United States had been laid in the British Atlantic world.

See also *Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Anti-Catholicism; Benevolent Empire; Evangelicals: Colonial America; Freedom, Religious; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; New England Region; Quakers* entries; *Roman Catholicism: Catholics in the Atlantic Colonies; South as Region.*

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B



Bahá'í

The Bahá'í faith was born in nineteenth-century Iran but has rapidly spread to many parts of the world, including America. The faith began when an Iranian reformer and prophet named Ali Muhammad (1819–1850) or “the Bab” (Arabic: doorway or gate) claimed to possess a new message from God. A crucial part of his message was that a greater messenger or manifestation of God was to arrive soon, regenerating the world and ushering in a new, millennial age. Because most Muslims believed Muhammad was the last prophet, the Bab and his followers were persecuted. Just six years after making his radical claim, the Bab himself was shot by firing squad in a public square. After his death, the Bab’s followers were in disarray, though in time one of them, Mirza Husayn Ali (1817–1892), assumed the title “Bahá’u’lláh” (Arabic: Glory of God) and claimed to be the divine messenger anticipated by the Bab. Most of the Bab’s followers embraced Bahá’u’lláh, but though he consolidated and unified the community, the persecutions did not abate. Bahá’u’lláh himself was tortured, imprisoned, and finally exiled with his family and some followers from Iran to Iraq; Turkey; and, in 1868, the penal colony at Akka, in Ottoman Palestine, where he lived under house arrest until his death in 1892. Bahá’u’lláh’s many letters, books, and other writings constitute the core of Bahá’í scripture. They also delineate the elected and appointed administrative bodies that today govern the Bahá’í world community.

The American history of this faith is linked to its Middle Eastern origins. Starting in 1892, several Middle Eastern Bahá’í teachers came to America, converting about fifteen hundred Americans of evangelical and liberal Protestant

background before 1899. Figures from the 1890s in America and Canada show that converts came from a range of Christian denominations, with large numbers of Methodists and religious liberals in particular. Many saw this faith as the fulfillment of biblical prophecies about the “end times”; some could conjure memories of great millennial disappointments at midcentury and see the Bab’s prophetic proclamation in 1844 as a sign that they had been right all along. For these believers, there was no disappointment after all. Some Americans, learning from Eastern teachers about this *great new day of God*, wished to journey themselves to the Holy Land, to Ottoman Palestine, and those with means did so starting in 1898. There they met Bahá’u’lláh’s family and especially his appointed successor, his eldest son, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (1844–1921), whom many of them saw as a divine figure, a “return” of Christ. (‘Abdu’l-Bahá rejected these notions and insisted that such titles belonged only to Bahá’u’lláh.) A number of Bahá’í pilgrims to Palestine were wealthy religious seekers, people such as Phoebe Hearst, the widowed wife of Senator George Hearst (and mother of William Randolph Hearst). Hearst brought her African American butler along on the trip, a man named Robert Turner, and he became the first African American convert.

What was the substance of the Bahá’í message? Bahá’u’lláh taught that each of the world’s religions had been part of God’s plan to educate and uplift all the peoples and cultures in the world. His revelation was the most recent divine installment, an update of earlier ethical and social teachings and a restatement of earlier religious emphases on daily worship, devotion to God, and service to all people. All religions, Bahá’u’lláh said, have two different aspects, spiritual and social. In their spiritual aspect, religions reveal God to

human beings and prescribe ways of worshipping him. In this aspect they are all similar. In their social aspect, on the other hand, religions are different because urgent communal and ethical problems are different in each age and culture. God sends different messengers to different people to offer different solutions, insights, and moral emphases. So the world's religions, though differing in many ways, are from the same transcendent source. Bahá'u'lláh insisted that the crucial problem facing the world today was living as a single global community, and his key social teachings therefore focus on such things as overcoming national, racial, and religious prejudices; appreciating cultural and religious differences; and finding new global systems of communication and governance. He prophesied the eventual development of a worldwide community of federated states. He also emphasized the equality of men and women, universal education, the importance of eliminating extremes of wealth and poverty, and the importance of seeing science and faith as complementary.

American Converts

In the early twentieth century, the ecumenical ideas contained in Bahá'í teaching appealed to a range of educated, cosmopolitan Americans. The World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 marked a moment of widening interest in foreign religions, and the vibrations emanating outward from that event stimulated new religious thoughts, wanderings, and conversions. Some spiritual wanderers journeyed into the Bahá'í fold. One place where many learned about the new "Persian Revelation" was Sarah Farmer's Green Acre community in Eliot, Maine, an eclectic retreat center founded in 1894 for Emersonians; freethinkers; theosophists; and visiting Buddhist, Bahá'í, and Hindu teachers. Its founder, Sarah Farmer, brought to Green Acre eminent American religious liberals such as Edward Everett Hale, Henry Wood, Ralph Waldo Trine, Annie Besant, Paul Carus, D. T. Suzuki, and W. E. B. Du Bois, as well as foreign teachers such as the Hindu guru Swami Vivekananda and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Farmer was less interested in dispassionate study than she was in spiritual improvement, and eventually she found that the best way to do this was by embracing the Bahá'í faith. The Green Acre retreat center continued introducing Americans to comparative religions and Bahá'í teachings in the early decades of the twentieth century, and it still functions today as a Bahá'í retreat center and school.

But if Bahá'í ecumenism and cosmopolitanism attracted liberal believers early in the century, Bahá'í emphases on

overcoming prejudice and racism drew in more Americans, of different varieties, throughout the century. In 1912, when 'Abdu'l-Bahá made a nine-month missionary trip to America, he talked about racism in America as a crucial issue and confronted the problem by hosting mixed-race meetings and seating African Americans next to himself and white Americans. This caused a stir, especially in places that had very clear race protocols, such as Washington, D.C. 'Abdu'l-Bahá frequently spoke to Americans about the dangers of racism and encouraged interracial friendships and marriages. This was at a time, of course, when Jim Crow laws separated the races and interracial marriage was illegal in more than half of the American states. 'Abdu'l-Bahá also spoke about race unity to the fourth annual meeting of the NAACP. After 'Abdu'l-Bahá's departure, the community continued to sponsor "race amity" conferences, especially in the Northeast. As the American Bahá'í community grew around the middle decades of the twentieth century, its message of race unity attracted a large number of converts, especially in the South, where there is today a strong African American community. Though the evidence is impressionistic, rates of interracial marriage among Bahá'ís today seem to be significantly above the national average.

In the early twentieth century, Bahá'í growth was slow but steady: in 1936 there were 2,584 American Bahá'ís; in 1944 there were 4,800; in 1956 there were 7,000. But in the 1960s the growth curve spiked. There were 18,000 American Bahá'ís by 1970 and 60,000 by 1974. As Robert Stockman remarked in *The Bahá'í Faith in America*, older Bahá'í families and conservative Iranian Bahá'í immigrants suddenly had to adjust to a Bahá'í community "filled with persons with long hair, dirty clothing, and youthful enthusiasm." Of course, other alternative and new religions also did well in this period, and others also experienced the inevitable strains of such dramatic growth. In the Bahá'í case, the community suddenly was filled with believers who knew little about basic Bahá'í beliefs or practices; some of them eventually withdrew from the religion. Others who stayed brought different personal styles and religious and ethnic backgrounds to the community, and individual Bahá'ís had to find ways to make good on promises to embrace difference. They were not always successful, and some disaffected Bahá'ís left the community precisely because they felt their different perspectives were not valued. The remarkable growth of the community beginning in the 1960s continued, however, sustained not just by youthful converts but also by systematic teaching

efforts that led to large numbers of African American conversions, especially in South Carolina and other parts of the rural South.

The American Bahá'í community today is diverse and growing. In 2008, the total number of American Baha'is was about 157,000. Though precise demographics are hard to come by (the community does not ask converts about ethnicity), African Americans probably account for about 10 to 15 percent. Hispanic and Native American peoples also have converted in significant numbers, and there are about 12,000 Iranians and a smaller number of Southeast Asians. Surveys of the American Bahá'í community indicate that it is slightly more educated than the American population as a whole and that Bahá'ís are of average income. There are Bahá'í centers in most major American cities and smaller Bahá'í communities in most other cities and towns. The community is widely but thinly spread, though there are larger concentrations in southern towns (such as Atlanta) and in California. The American Bahá'í national center is in Wilmette, Illinois, where, on the shores of Lake Michigan, there is also a large Bahá'í temple, the first Bahá'í temple in North America.

Community Life

What are the daily religious practices of American Bahá'ís? It should not be forgotten in any survey of this community that the Bahá'í religion, like most religions, is fundamentally about an inner, spiritual transformation pursued through practices such as prayer, meditation, fasting, and sacrificial service. First of all, it is almost impossible to overstate the importance of prayer. Bahá'u'lláh instructed believers to pray every day and wrote several special, daily prayers that emphasize God's love and mercy, human dependence, and the power that comes with submitting oneself to the divine will. Unlike the ritual prayers (*Salat*) in Islam, these daily prayers are said in solitude. Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá composed prayers with many different themes and for all occasions. Daily prayer, however, is only one of several key Bahá'í practices. There also is a month of fasting, during which believers cultivate self-restraint and thankfulness by abstaining from food and drink during daylight hours. This is considered a sacred time of reflection, prayer, and meditation. The Bahá'í fast occupies the last month of the Bahá'í calendar, which is a solar calendar that consists of nineteen months of nineteen days' duration. The final month, the month of the fast, corresponds to March 2–20; and March 21st the first day of spring, is new year's day (*Naw Ruz*).

There also are nine holy days during the year during which work is suspended, days that commemorate key events in the early history of the religion, including Bahá'u'lláh's birth and death and his April 1863 announcement of his prophetic mission. An important devotional practice worth mentioning here is service, and specifically service that is sacrificial and that benefits other people or advances a worthy humanitarian cause. Typical Bahá'í forms of service include inter-faith activities; social work; education; social or economic development projects in developing countries; and missionary activities, or "teaching" the religion to others.

What are some critical issues and tensions in this community? First is a set of tensions that arise when Bahá'ís think about how precisely to teach the religion to others and consolidate them into the Bahá'í community. Bahá'u'lláh spoke of the importance both of sharing his good news and avoiding aggressive proselytizing. How exactly to balance these prescriptions has led to an ongoing and sometimes difficult conversation about the appropriate ways to share the Bahá'í faith with others. Making this conversation more urgent have been ongoing encouragements from national and international bodies that call Bahá'ís to carry Bahá'u'lláh's message to more and more people. The result has been a kind of experimental attitude in which teaching the faith is cautious in some contexts and bold and assertive in others. A second pressing issue is creating more cohesive Bahá'í communities that allow Bahá'í families (and especially children) to develop Bahá'í identities. Bahá'ís do not drink alcohol; they do not believe in sexual relations before marriage; they have regular worship and prayer practices that set them apart; they have a series of holy days that are virtually unknown to non-Bahá'ís. How might American Bahá'ís develop strong Bahá'í identities given these facts and given that their numbers are quite small relative to the population? The small size of the Bahá'í community is a crucial issue that it will have to face. Third and finally, though the faith embraces the intellectual life and scientific inquiry in particular, Bahá'ís themselves have not yet developed a cadre of historians and religious studies scholars. The result has been that scholarly conversations about Bahá'í history and theology have proceeded slowly, an unfortunate development both for Bahá'ís and for scholars of religion and history. Were these conversations developed in new ways, they would surely help Bahá'ís understand better their history and unique religious perspectives. They also would tell historians and other academics important things about new religious movements; religious transnationalism and

cosmopolitanism; American religious seekers and converts to other religions; and religion, modernity, and reform in the Middle East and America.

See also *Islam Tradition and Heritage; New Religious Movements.*

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Baptists: African American

Many African American denominations have flourished in the United States. Although some black congregations existed as early as the latter half of the 1700s, the first permanent black Baptist denomination did not form until the late 1800s. Yet in the context of Baptist denominations, white and black, the late emergence of the first enduring black Baptist group, the National Baptist Convention, in 1895, was not as anomalous as it might appear initially. The mainly white Triennial Baptist Convention began in 1814, but it did not survive beyond 1845, the year the Southern Baptist Convention was founded. The National Baptist Convention (NBC) preceded the formation of the Northern Baptist Convention (currently the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A.) by a decade.

Black Baptists, then, were being true to Baptist tradition in their slow march to organized denominationalism. Like white Baptists, they jealously guarded the principle of congregational autonomy, arguing that the true definition of church includes the preeminence of the local congregation and its autonomy from coercive control by other bodies. They insisted that each congregation was a democratic polity, establishing its own rules and selecting its own leaders. Believers regarded the Bible as the authoritative word of God and the sole reliable guide for doctrine, church

governance, and personal behavior. Black Baptists, like their white counterparts, firmly believed that conscious, voluntary Christian conversion must precede any valid baptism, and they held an unshakeable conviction that the only biblically mandated and acceptable form of baptism is by total immersion in water.

Although black and nonblack Baptists shared the long march to denominational unity and organization, doctrines, rituals, and polity, separate, independent black denominations continue to exist. These include the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (NBCI); the National Baptist Convention of America (NBCA); the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC); and the National Missionary Baptist Convention (NMBC). In addition, there are smaller bodies, such as the Lott Carey Baptist Convention (LCC), the National Primitive Baptist Convention (NPBC), and the United American Free Will Baptist Church (UAF-WBC). Among the reasons for this division are the desire of black Baptists to escape racial discrimination in church life; the opportunity for blacks to participate more fully in leadership; the struggle against slavery, segregation, and social injustice; a belief that black organizations under black leadership could more effectively pursue missions and benevolent enterprises at home and abroad; and what today we would call “racial identity” but that in the nineteenth century was termed the search for racial “manhood.” Coupled with these reasons for black separation from whites was whites’ discomfort with the presence of blacks, especially when blacks actively sought equality and justice within the church and society.

Early Black Congregations and Regional Organizations

The move to form independent black organizations dates back to the eighteenth century and sometimes enlisted the support of white sympathizers. Black involvement in Christianity in the English North American colonies manifested itself as early as the first decades of the seventeenth century. It was with the advent of the First Great Awakening, a period of religious revival that lasted from the 1730s until about 1760, that significant numbers of Africans embraced the Christian faith and affiliated mainly with the Baptists, the evangelical forerunners of the Methodists, and the Presbyterians. In the context of this evangelical movement the earliest congregations of black Baptists arose. Among them were the Silver Bluff Baptist Church in South Carolina, near Augusta, Georgia, in the mid-1770s; the

Springfield Baptist Church in Augusta, in the 1770s or early 1780s; the First African and First Bryan Baptist Churches in Savannah, Georgia, officially organized after 1780; and the Bluestone Baptist Church in the area of Mecklenburg, Virginia, in the late 1750s.

Although church people and scholars might differ regarding the identity of the first black Baptist church, there is consensus on some points. First, the rise of these southern congregations reflects a desire for independence that manifested itself in other places and other denominations. Second, especially in the South, separate black congregations did not mean the termination of racially mixed, though white-controlled, congregations in which the black membership in some areas was more than quadruple that of white membership. Third, these earliest churches were part of an international Baptist movement. During the 1780s and 1790s, David George, a black Baptist minister active in the Silver Bluff church, and others journeyed from Savannah to Nova Scotia, eventually settling in Sierra Leone in West Africa. David Liele, also a minister from Silver Bluff, and some others ventured to the Caribbean area and there founded the first Baptist churches, white or black.

A second important stage in the denomination-forming process was the creation of regional Baptist associations. It was in the midwestern region of Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan that we find the earliest black Baptist associations, in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s, including Wood River, in Illinois; Union, in Ohio; and Amherstburg, in Ontario, Canada. In the 1850s the Western Colored Baptist Convention, which developed from the Wood River Association, seems to have been a move toward forming a national convention. In the Northeast, in 1840, there emerged among black Baptists the American Baptist Missionary Convention, which included in its memberships the renowned Abyssinian Baptist Church membership in New York City. Although this convention aspired to be a national body concerned with domestic and foreign missions, various factors, including the difficulty of any independent black group to expand into slave territory, essentially confined it, like the Western Colored Baptist Convention, to one region.

Civil War and Reconstruction

The advent of the Civil War, in 1861, and the Reconstruction era that followed occasioned heightened efforts to achieve black denominational unity. These African American exslaves, and the few and severely restricted southern free people, now had occasion to select and govern their own

religious organizations on a mass scale with historically unparalleled freedom. Northerners, white and black, had new opportunities to conduct religious and humanitarian work in the South. As a result, new congregations appeared, and black Baptists in practically every state with a sizable black population formed state conventions to pursue missions and education, with Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina leading the way in the South.

Southern blacks united forces with northern blacks, and sometimes northern whites, to establish new Baptist regional associations and merge with existing ones, as well as aspiring national conventions, producing groups such as the North-western and Southern Baptist Convention, or NSBC (1864), encompassing eight southern and midwestern states; the Consolidated American Baptist Missionary Convention (1866), which merged the American Baptist Missionary Convention with the NSBC; the Southwestern and Southern Missionary Baptist Convention (1875); the Baptist Foreign Mission Convention, or BFMC (1880), which focused on African missions; and the American National Baptist Convention, or ANBC (1886), a strong attempt by the Kentucky Baptist William J. Simmons to unite all black Baptists in the face of growing racial reaction in the South; and the Baptist National Education Convention, or BNEC (1893).

Because approximately 90 percent of blacks in the United States were concentrated in the South, most new associations and conventions had southern bases or headquarters or had large southern memberships. Yet some conventions and associations operated mainly as nonsouthern groups in terms of headquarters and governance. They include the Baptist General Association of Western States and Territories, founded in 1873, and the New England Baptist Missionary Convention, established in 1874.

All of these groups played important roles in uniting Baptists across state and regional lines, conducting missionary and educational work, pursuing overseas missions (especially in Africa), supporting local churches, and demonstrating the abilities, commitments, endurance, and progress of a people who only recently had been slaves and for whom some whites had predicted extinction. A national organization of Baptist forces proved elusive for more than twenty-five years after the end of the Civil War. Yet prior to 1895 no Baptist group of significant size, black or white, had attained the stature of a national organization reminiscent of or approaching that of the defunct Baptist Triennial Convention. The white-controlled Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), formed in 1845, was by far the most successfully

organized Baptist denomination, a model that subsequent national bodies, white and black, would emulate. Nonetheless, during this era it was essentially a southern regional organization. The northern white-controlled groups had followed the society model and focused their multiple institutions on specific fields of endeavor (foreign missions, domestic work, and religious literature and education), rather than subsuming all their efforts under the single umbrella of a convention, as did the SBC. Their work among, and in cooperation with, black and white southerners notwithstanding, these northern Baptists were also essentially regional. It would not be until the first decade of the twentieth century, about ten years after the founding of the black National Baptist Convention, that the northern Baptists would organize and consolidate their activities into a national convention model.

Therefore black Baptists, like their white counterparts, found it difficult to organize and maintain a national convention or denomination because of issues surrounding polity and congregational autonomy, as well as because of tensions between Baptists of different geographical sections. To be sure, the controversy over slavery that divided the country, the Civil War, and Reconstruction ultimately brought together black Baptists across geographical lines, while these factors divided Northern and Southern white Baptists. Indeed, many of the blacks in the North at the time of the Civil War still had relatives, friends, and other intimate connections in the South, because a significant number of Northern blacks themselves had once been Southern slaves before escaping or by some other means obtaining freedom. Although absent the same level of rancor and hostility existing between Northern and Southern whites, blacks nonetheless also experienced conflicts reflecting the sectional divide. Black Northerners and even some nonabolitionist white Northerners believed that Southern white religion had become a false, heretical brand of the faith since it had been corrupted by cooperation with, and approbation of, slavery.

Likewise, these Northerners tended to believe that enslaved blacks had been taught a defective form of Christianity by white Southern heretics, and hence the black people themselves held a corrupted form of the faith. These northerners apparently were unaware that most blacks received the faith through other blacks, not from whites. Additionally, many Southern blacks did in fact practice aspects of the faith that differed from whites and Northern blacks. In some areas in the South, the performance of a sacred dance known as the ring shout and a reliance on

visions, dreams, and strongly emotional spiritual experiences (even in comparison with other evangelicals) caused some dismay among outsiders. To a considerable extent these emphases reflected continuations and influences of traditional African religions. Other factors that contributed to sectional tensions were the impoverishment of former slaves, the gap in literacy levels between Northern missionaries and local blacks, and the financial and transportation difficulties in attending meetings in distant places for people, North and South, who for the most part were poor.

Formation of the National Baptist Convention

In 1895, in Atlanta, Georgia, these and other impediments were overcome with the formation of the first national, enduring denomination of African American Baptists. The desire for Christian unity, union of forces for religious work, greater institutional racial unity occasioned by increasing levels of “legal” acts of racial discrimination (such as segregation and voting disfranchisement), and violent acts (such as lynching) propelled black Baptists to form the National Baptist Convention. The founding meeting, in September 1895, arose from an earlier proposal, the Tripartite Union, which was revived by Albert W. Pegues of North Carolina and William J. Simmons of Kentucky. This proposal called for the union of three black denominations: the Baptist Foreign Mission Convention (1880), the American National Baptist Convention (1886), and the National Baptist Education Convention (1893). Henceforth, the work of foreign missions, domestic missions, and education would fall under the auspices of one convention, as was then the case with the practically all-white Southern Baptist Convention. Within a decade the National Baptist Convention had formed a number of important boards to deal with pressing denominational business: foreign and home missions, publications, Sunday schools, and youth work. A number of commissions were formed, including those devoted to rural life, evangelism, business, race relations, ecumenism, and engagement with the international Baptist community.

An important development was the formation, in 1900, of the Woman’s Auxiliary to the convention; it was led by dynamic personalities including Nannie Helen Burroughs (1879–1961), an educator, social activist, and denominational organizer. The members of the auxiliary were also members of the convention, but they fought successfully to retain their autonomy in governance and operations. The establishment of the auxiliary represented the desire of

women to exercise more openly leadership roles within the convention. Of course, women traditionally had engaged in home and foreign mission work, education, and prayer groups, and often, if not usually, they led the way in raising funds for various enterprises and functions of Baptist organizations of all types and at all levels—local, regional, national, and international. In addition to Burroughs, a number of other black women had a tremendous impact in Baptist and wider circles. A few, such as Virginia Broughton, who advocated a holiness theology, even preached, though it appears that unlike some of their Methodist counterparts none of these women actually sought ordination or “full” ministerial rights (this would include pastoring churches and officially performing central rituals of baptism, Communion, or weddings). Emma B. DeLaney, a graduate of Spelman College, journeyed to southern and western Africa during the first two decades of the twentieth century, as a missionary and, unusual for the time, was unaccompanied by a husband, father, or other male relative. Lucie Campbell Williams, who composed classic hymns during the first half of the 1900s, was a leader in the popularization and acceptance of the new gospel music.

Another trait of the National Baptist Convention—which became the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (NBCI), about the time of the division in the NBC ranks in 1915–1916—has been the longevity of presidential leadership, which resulted in both positive and negative developments. The first president, Elias C. Morris, served from 1895 until his death in 1922. Morris was an outspoken advocate for racial justice, denominational and racial unity, and domestic and foreign missions. He was succeeded by Lacey Kirk Williams, who served approximately eighteen years, and David V. Jemison, who served approximately thirteen years. The longest tenure as president belongs to Joseph H. Jackson, pastor of Olivet Baptist Church in Chicago, who served from 1953 to 1982. Jackson’s term witnessed internal disputes regarding convention governance and the relationship of the convention to the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, eventually resulting in a serious schism. A damaging blow came to the organization with the presidency of Henry J. Lyons in the 1990s. Along with the public disclosure of Lyons’s marital problems, there came to light financial irregularities connected with his leadership that resulted in his imprisonment in a federal facility. The episode also revealed that the reported NBCI membership number of approximately seven million was probably inaccurate and in fact was lower. The fact that neither the

governing board nor the convention repudiated Lyons did not serve the reputation of the national body well.

The missteps of Lyons notwithstanding, since the 1980s the convention has sought to involve itself more actively in issues of social justice, cooperated with other black Baptist groups, and continued ecumenical dialogue with predominantly black groups as well as predominantly white groups. The convention contributes to the support of a number of educational institutions, including the American Baptist Theological Seminary, in Nashville, and the Morehouse School of Religion, in Atlanta (which is separate from Morehouse College). It also continues mission work in the Caribbean and in western and southern Africa. Some estimate the membership of the NBC to be approximately five million members, extending to almost all areas of the United States and to the Caribbean and Africa.

Divisions within the National Baptist Groups

All of the major black Baptist denominations and some of the minor ones have their origins in divisions or secessions from the National Baptist Convention or National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (NBCI). The first significant division occurred in 1897. The Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention (LCC), later the Lott Carey Baptist Convention, with leaders such as Calvin S. Brown of North Carolina, formed because of disagreements over cooperation with white Baptists and the conduct of foreign missions. The Lott Carey Convention has received its greatest support from the states of the upper Atlantic South and mid-Atlantic region, including the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland. This new convention, in addition to sensing that some of the central leaders and states in the foreign mission enterprise had not been respected and had been marginalized in the operations of the new NBC, believed that the mother group had been too inflexible in making cooperative arrangements with white Baptist groups, especially those in the North. The NBC, for its part, accused the LCC of being so eager for interracial cooperation in ventures like foreign missions and publication that it was willing to accept a subordinate rather than an equal role in pursuit of these efforts.

The LCC soon found that it was not as easy to establish acceptable terms with the Baptists of the North in the conduct of foreign missions as they had envisioned. After the failure of a cooperative alignment with the NBC, beginning in 1905, the LCC in 1924 established a cooperative arrangement to conduct foreign missions on behalf of the National

Baptist Convention of America (which had separated from the NBC). In the long run this second arrangement also failed to meet the original expectations of either group, and each began conducting its own mission enterprises. Led by Wendell C. Somerville, the LCC experienced a revival of its mission programs in the 1940s. By the early twenty-first century, the LCC had members in sixteen states and the District of Columbia and sponsored more than one hundred missionaries in West Africa, India, and Guyana. It has promoted education and evangelism, worked to combat hunger, cared for lepers, and established hospitals. The LCC has established departments that are concerned with women and youth.

The second major division in the NBC, which occurred in 1915, produced the National Baptist Convention of America (NBCA) under the leadership of Richard Boyd. The principal issue behind the split was the control of the publishing house. Soon after the founding of the original NBC, the convention had established a publishing house so that black Baptists could produce their own literature rather than relying on the white American Baptist Publication Society. In 1899 E. C. Morris, then the NBC president, had unsuccessfully attempted to establish greater control by the convention over the venture. The publishing house, however, was incorporated under Tennessee law in the name of Richard Boyd, not the NBC. Boyd, therefore, was successful in thwarting efforts of the NBC to secure greater funding from the prosperous publishing house and refused to abide by aspects of the convention charter. When the NBC sought to press its case with greater fervor in 1915, the NBCA broke ranks. With a membership of approximately four million, the NBCA's greatest strength is in the southern states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

In 1961 the third major black Baptist division occurred when the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC) withdrew from the NBCI. The separation was occasioned by two principal issues: the length of tenure of the convention president and the most effective way in which to pursue civil rights for African Americans. Joseph H. Jackson assumed the presidency in 1953, accepting the idea of term limits on holders of the office. According to a 1952 amendment passed by the NBCI, persons who wanted a fifth term as president must let one year intervene after they had served four consecutive terms. When Jackson decided to seek a fifth consecutive term, the law was challenged in federal court and judged to have been passed improperly. Linked with the tenure issue was a disagreement between

Jackson and his critics over civil rights. Jackson argued for an approach to civil rights for African Americans that emphasized legal challenges, pursued economic development, and generally avoided civil disobedience and mass protests, the latter two being hallmark strategies of Martin Luther King Jr. After attempts to unseat Jackson failed, dissidents, including L. Venchael Booth of Ohio and Gardner Taylor of New York, met in 1961 to form the Progressive National Baptist Convention, which would be committed to term limits and to a more direct, activist approach to civil rights and economic justice. The PNBC has supported traditional civil rights organizations in the United States and opposed apartheid in South Africa. With a membership of approximately two million, it supports a number of schools, including the Morehouse School of Religion and Shaw University's Divinity School, in Raleigh, North Carolina.

In 1988 a fourth major division occurred with the secession of the National Missionary Baptist Convention from the National Baptist Convention of America. The NBCA attempted to have a Sunday school congress and publishing house on the model of other conventions. Approximately one-fourth of the membership supported the Boyd family, which still controlled the publishing house, and at that point those members withdrew and formed the new convention. By 2000 the NMBC had a membership of approximately 2.3 million.

Non-National Baptist Denominations

In addition to the National Baptist conventions, there are several smaller, lesser known black Baptist denominations. Two examples illustrate what in many ways are the opposite sides of a theological spectrum in religious life. Adhering to an Arminian theology, the first group, the United American Free Will Baptist Church (UAFWBC), organized its first general conference in 1901. The Free Will Baptist movement traces its origins to the 1700s, when it rejected what at that time was perhaps the majority view in Baptist theology: strict Calvinism, including the acceptance of predestination. After the Civil War, black Free Will Baptists began to separate from their white counterparts in the South, forming their first congregation as early as 1867, calling an annual meeting in 1887, and following that up with a general conference fourteen years later. Arminian theology rejects historic Calvinist ideas such as unconditional predestination, perseverance of the righteous ("once saved, always saved"), total human depravity that erases human free will in matters of salvation, and the extension of God's grace to the

sinner. Not only do the Free Will Baptists share the Arminian theology of Methodists but they have also appropriated the Methodist form of governance. The UAFWBC has conferences at the local, regional, and national levels, and the conference leader is known as “senior bishop.” It supports a Bible college in Kinston, North Carolina, and a newspaper, the *Free Will Baptist Advocate*. With at least 100,000 members, the UAFWBC has its greatest strength in North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas.

Second, the National Primitive Baptist Convention of the United States of America (NPBC), a Calvinist body, was founded in 1907 in Huntsville, Alabama, a part of the larger Primitive Baptist movement. As early as the late 1820s some Baptists, especially in southern and border areas, began separating from the Baptist Triennial Convention and certain national societies that promoted missions, the distribution of Bibles, and seminaries. Primitive Baptists believed that these organizations above the levels of the local church and associations were non-biblically based entities started by human beings rather than by God. They referred to themselves as “primitive” because they were attempting to reestablish the first, pure, original, and, therefore, authentic God-willed ways of conducting the church. Blacks were also members of these early Primitive churches and associations, and they faced the same racial discrimination and segregation as non-Primitive African American Baptists. As the Civil War ended, blacks in these churches organized their own independent churches and associations. Among the earliest was the Indian Creek Association, formed in 1869 in northern Alabama.

As 1900 approached there was growing interest in establishing national, institutional unity among African American Primitive Baptists. This is a significant difference between white and black Primitive groups of the time. Whites adhered to the principle that there should be no organizations above the association level. But black Primitive Baptists, evidently motivated by the same concerns as the National Baptists, believed their interests would be served by forming a convention or national group. Led by Clarence Francis Sams, James H. Carey, and George S. Crawford, most of the participants in the formation of the convention were from the South. E. J. Barry, in the 1850s, established a Primitive Baptist Publishing House in North Carolina. Primitive Baptists share many Baptist doctrines, but they are Calvinist in their views of predestination and other matters relating to salvation. They practice closed Communion; that is, they do

not share the sacred ritual with persons outside the local congregation. In addition to the two Baptist ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, Primitive Baptists also practice foot washing and retain a strong emphasis on congregational polity and independence. Some estimates of the membership range up to 250,000.

In the early twenty-first century, Baptist churches and denominations have continued to play a leading role in the lives of African Americans and the nation. Constituting a majority of black religious adherents, the Baptists, especially those of the National Baptist family, in recent decades have shown through dialogue and collaboration among themselves, other black denominations, and other religious bodies that they wish to make an even greater organized contribution to religious and civic society in the present and future.

See also *African American* entries; *Baptists* entries; *Evangelicals* entries; *South as Region*.

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Baptists: Denominations

More than fifty distinct groups in the United States claim the name Baptist in some form or another. Of the approximately 42 million Baptists worldwide, some 30 million reside in North America, congregating in over 100,000 churches. These groups span the nation, though they have particular numerical strength in the South and Southwest. Theologically they include fundamentalists and liberals, Calvinists and Arminians, and denominationalists and antidenominationalists.

Amid their differences Baptists share a variety of beliefs and practices that, while not necessarily unique to their particular form of Protestantism, become distinctively Baptist when combined in specific ways. These include a strong commitment to biblical authority as the primary guide for faith and practice, an ecclesiology centered in the concept of a believer's church comprising those who claim a personal experience of God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and immersion as the normative mode of baptism for those who have professed faith. Baptism and the Lord's Supper (sometimes called Holy Communion) are the two sacraments, or ordinances, of the church. Some Baptists add a third sacrament, the washing of feet as practiced by Jesus and his disciples prior to his crucifixion. Baptists also maintain that local congregations of believers are autonomous and that the authority of Christ mediated through the community of believers fosters congregational church polity. Other beliefs are liberty of conscience in the interpretation of scripture, the Reformation principle of the priesthood of all believers, associational fellowship between churches "of like faith and order," and a historic concern for religious liberty and the separation of church and state.

Beyond these standard beliefs Baptists disagree over many issues, including the meaning of church-state separation, evangelism and missions, predestination and free will, the role of women in the church and its ministry, denominational affiliation and associational relationships, open or closed baptism and Communion, and ecumenical relations with other denominations.

Theological Differences: General and Particular Baptists

From the early days of their movement, Baptist denominations covered a theological spectrum that reflects historic differences born of seventeenth-century Arminianism and Calvinism. These distinctive positions revolved around

questions of free will, election, predestination, and the nature of salvation. Some Baptists—General and Free Will groups—solidly support Arminian views, while others—Primitive and Old Regular Baptists—are staunchly Calvinist in their theological orientation. Still others reflect a blend of the two views, drawing on both traditions to create a more moderate theological system.

General Baptists, the first of the Baptist communions, were formed about 1609 by a group of English Separatist exiles in Amsterdam, some of whom returned to London in 1612. These Baptists, who wished to separate from the Church of England, were influenced by the work of a Dutch theologian, Jacob Arminius, and his response to Reformed theology, especially the ideas of divine sovereignty and the nature of Christ's atoning death. They believed that although human beings were tainted by original sin, they retained the free will to accept or reject God's grace. Prevenient (enabling) grace "cooperated" with God's saving grace to accomplish salvation. All persons potentially could be elected to salvation, but only those who came on the terms of election—repentance and faith—could actually claim such grace. Christ's death on the cross was a general atonement, efficacious for the sins of the entire world (hence the name General Baptists). If individuals had the free will to accept Christ, they also had the free will to reject him along the way; therefore, "falling from grace" was a distinct possibility.

By the 1630s another group of Baptists had appeared on the English scene. Many were Puritan Congregationalists (independents) who accepted the practice of infant baptism. These Particular, or Calvinist, Baptists organized around the theology of the Geneva reformer, John Calvin. They believed that all persons were depraved and thus had no inherent free will whereby they might move toward salvation. Redemption was possible only through the infusion of grace given unconditionally by God to those elected to salvation before the foundation of the world. Christ's death was limited in its application only to the elect. The elect might resist grace for a time, but ultimately it would overwhelm them, bringing the regeneration that produced the necessary repentance and faith. The elect would be kept by divine grace, persevering in Christian living until the end.

The Colonial Period: Regular and Separate Baptists

These differing Arminian and Calvinist positions have shaped the theology of various Baptist groups from the first

colonial Baptist churches founded in Rhode Island in the 1630s to the present day. These early churches included General, Particular, Seventh Day, and other groups of Baptists. By the 1700s, as the fervor of the First Great Awakening moved through the American colonies, Baptists, like other Protestant denominations, divided over support of revival theology and methodology. The name Regular Baptist was given to those who, while affirming the need for conversion, shied away from the exuberance of revivalist methods. They favored orderly worship and erudite sermons, sang the Psalms as the only divinely inspired hymnody, encouraged an educated ministry, and discouraged “enthusiastical” conversion.

Separate Baptists were Calvinists who modified their theology, preaching as if everyone could be saved while insisting that God would use such preaching to awaken the elect. Their services were characterized by powerful preaching and emotional conversions. Many feared that education, especially in ministers, would contribute to a lifeless dogmatism that stifled the Holy Spirit. The influence of Regular and Separate Baptists remains evident in various Baptist subdenominations across the United States.

General Baptists

General Baptists came to America in the 1600s and were present in many of the earliest colonial Baptist churches, including the First Baptist Church of Providence, Rhode Island, the original Baptist congregation in America. They struggled, however, because of problems in organization, clarity of theological views, and scarcity of church buildings. Many moved toward Calvinism or entered other Arminian-oriented Protestant communions. Some eventually became part of the Free Will Baptist tradition. By 1800 General Baptists were in sharp decline.

In 1823 an Indiana preacher named Benoni Stinson (1798–1869) founded a new General Baptist church in Evansville, Indiana, and began a movement to revive Arminian views. In 1824 he helped establish the Liberty Baptist Association in Indiana, a new gathering of General Baptist churches. In 1870 the General Association of General Baptists was established with the assertion that “Christ tasted death” for everyone through his general atonement for the sins of the world. General Baptists stress the need for salvation and the possibility that all persons may choose grace by faith in Christ. They practice baptism by immersion, celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and share in the washing of feet. General Baptists support Oakland City College, an

undergraduate school in Indiana. Their publishing house, Stinson Press, is housed at the national headquarters in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. They claim about 70,000 members from churches located largely in the South and Midwest, including Tennessee, Missouri, Illinois, Arkansas, Michigan, and Kentucky.

American Baptist Churches in the United States

The group known as the American Baptist Churches in the USA (ABCUSA) traces its roots to the earliest Baptist congregations in the colonies, including the First Baptist Churches of Providence and Newport, Rhode Island. These churches helped to form the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States, in 1814, for the purpose of funding missionary activity at home and abroad. Known as the Triennial Convention because it met every three years, the organization was a clearinghouse for a variety of independent societies established to fund home and foreign missions, education, publishing and other benevolent endeavors. These included the American Baptist Home Mission Society, the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, and the American Baptist Publication Society. When the Triennial Convention split in 1845 over the question of slavery, the southerners formed the Southern Baptist Convention and the northerners continued to work through diverse benevolent societies. By the 1870s women’s missionary organizations had also been established.

The need for greater denominational efficiency led, in 1907, to the formation of the Northern Baptist Convention, a denominational mechanism for raising funds, conducting business, and strengthening organizations that conducted certain types of ministry. The American Baptist Home Mission Society worked diligently during these years to respond to the social and physical needs of people, many of whom had no previous Baptist experience.

Throughout much of the twentieth century, a controversy between fundamentalists and liberals brought numerous debates and divisions into the Northern Baptist Convention. From the 1920s to the 1940s conservative leaders tried unsuccessfully to reform the denomination in more specifically fundamentalist directions. The resulting schisms led to the founding of new Baptist groups, such as the Conservative Baptist Association of America, established in 1947 by individuals and churches that came out of the Northern Baptist Convention.

In 1950 the denomination was renamed the American Baptist Convention, and efforts were begun to extend

connections between the various societies. In 1955 the women's mission societies were united administratively with the foreign and home mission agencies. By the 1960s connections had developed between societies such as the American Baptist Historical Society, the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board, and the American Board of Education and Publication. Judson Press remains the longtime publishing arm of the ABCUSA, offering resources for churches as well as texts in history, theology, and preaching. In 1972 a new organizational plan was approved, and the denomination's name was changed to the American Baptist Churches in the USA. The General Board of the denomination, with approximately two hundred members, encourages participation at every level of church and denominational life. Efforts are also made to make meetings and boards within the convention racially and ethnically diverse and inclusive. As a result of these efforts, the ABCUSA has become one of the most racially diverse denominations in the United States.

The ABCUSA is a diverse communion of Baptist congregations spanning theological positions from liberal to conservative, Calvinist to Arminian. It maintains membership in the National Council of Churches of Christ, the World Council of Churches, and the Baptist World Alliance. It has historic connections with Andover Newton, Colgate Rochester Crozier, Northern and Central Baptist Theological Seminaries, as well as the Baptist Seminary of the West. Many of its churches ordain women and call them as pastors. During the early years of the twenty-first century, the ABCUSA encountered significant controversy over homosexuality, specifically related to ordination, same-sex unions, and member churches that are "open and affirming" in their reception of gay members. The denomination numbers a little over one million members.

Seventh Day Baptists

Seventh Day Baptists began in England in the 1650s. These Baptists practiced baptism by immersion, the laying on of hands, foot washing, and congregational polity, within the context of a believers' church. They also insisted that certain laws set forth in the Hebrew scriptures were not negated by the coming of Christ, chief among them being the Ten Commandments. They refused to substitute the first day of the week as the Lord's Day and called all Christians to return to the Sabbath as God's day of rest and worship.

Seventh Day Baptists were present in the First Baptist Churches of Providence and Newport, Rhode Island, by the

late 1600s. Ultimately, these groups of "Sabbatarians" departed those churches to found their own congregations built around the basic teachings of Jesus and the Ten Commandments. New England and Pennsylvania were early centers of Seventh Day Baptist church life, and in 1801 the General Conference of Seventh Day Baptists was founded in Rhode Island. By the 1840s the denomination had formed mission societies for ministry at home and abroad. Many of the early Sabbatarians opposed slavery, secret lodges (Masons), and excessive use of alcohol. During the twentieth century they were among the earliest Baptist participants in the World and National Council of Churches, the Baptist World Alliance, and other ecumenical groups.

Appalachian Baptist Groups

The Appalachian region was an early seedbed of Baptist influence, producing some of the most distinctive members of the Baptist groups. These "mountain churches" share numerous characteristics that include fierce independence, staunch theological and ethical conservatism, a strong sense of family and community, suspicion of broad denominational alliances, and a desire to preserve the "primitive" traditions of Christian origins as evidenced in their historic Baptist practices. Many of these churches developed limited denominational identities as a result of controversies over missions and mission boards, revivals, worship, and certain theological differences. Their churches often reject any translation of the Bible apart from the King James Version, and their preachers are generally "bivocational," with little or no salary from their churches. They have often been looked down on by members of certain larger and more regionally diverse Baptist groups, some of whom gave these mountain churches the pejorative label of "hyper-Calvinist." Some Baptist denominations sent missionaries into Appalachia, often implying that no appropriate Baptist presence had been present in the region.

Primitive Baptists

Although Primitive Baptist churches exist outside Appalachia, their strongest presence is found inside the region. Many of their practices reflect the traditionalism of old-line mountain churches. Their earliest organizational alliance began in 1826, with the decision of the strict Calvinist Kehukee Association in North Carolina to oppose formation of mission societies, theological seminaries, and denominational systems that were outside local churches or regional church fellowships. These Baptists insisted that the

“primitive” (meaning the earliest and most biblically orthodox) churches knew nothing of mission societies or denominational agencies. Their leaders also declared that sending missionaries, holding revivals, and establishing Sunday schools ultimately undermined orthodox (Calvinist) theology by implying that all persons could be saved (not simply the elect) and offering a “works-righteousness” approach to salvation grounded in human behavior rather than in divine sovereignty and predestination.

Primitive Baptists cultivated a distinct worship style that often included outdoor baptisms; the Lord’s Supper and foot washing; shaped-note or plainsong hymnody unaccompanied by musical instruments; bivocational pastors given to sing-song preaching (“the holy whine”); and close associational relationships between churches, many of which were located in rural areas deep in the mountains of Appalachia.

During the nineteenth century Primitive Baptists led in the “antimission” movement that divided Baptist churches, especially in the South. Churches and associations that previously had been in fellowship with one another split over the biblical, theological, and practical implications of missionary endeavors.

Primitive Baptists maintain a loose fellowship of churches with no elaborate denominational organization. More recently, certain congregations have developed a more intentional evangelicalism in their efforts to proclaim the gospel. Some even fund various types of ministries that could be considered missionary endeavors developed for local churches. Many remain rural, “stem family churches” composed of a few core families who have intermarried over the years.

Old Regular Baptists

Old Regular Baptists began in 1825 with the founding of the New Salem Association in Kentucky. The association and succeeding churches affirmed many of the same doctrines held by the Primitive Baptists, with some significant distinctions. Old Regulars softened the doctrine of election with their suggestion of “election by grace,” the belief that salvation by grace may be sought by anyone and is both the process for and the conclusion of election. Sinners may pursue salvation that only God can bestow. Free will is thus possible even as election determines the recipients of God’s grace.

Old Regulars are antimission Baptists who reject Sunday schools, religious radio broadcasts, and revivals or other forms of evangelistic outreach. Their preaching and worship

often reflect greater emotional enthusiasm than their Primitive Baptist counterparts. They wash feet and celebrate the Lord’s Supper and baptismal immersion. Many observe the Lord’s Supper only once a year. Their ministers often appear to chant the gospel and preach in a distinctive sing-song manner. Their annual associational meetings (homecomings) include business meetings, preaching services, and memorials to members who died in the past year. Many practice particular dress codes aimed at contributing to the modesty of men and women. Their “holiness code” discourages divorce, prohibits musical instruments in church, and limits discussion of church business to men. Old Regulars claim approximately 19,000 members in 326 congregations located in states that include Arizona, Florida, and Maryland, as well as the District of Columbia.

United Baptists

United Baptists began in the late 1700s and early 1800s, especially in Kentucky, as a result of efforts on the frontier to bring together Regular and Separate Baptists. Many of the beliefs and practices of the United Baptists parallel those of the Old Regulars. They insist that salvation comes only from grace but is conditioned on fulfilling other biblical mandates related to repentance and faith. They believe that foreign missions have no place in a New Testament-based church, even as they urge their bivocational ministers to preach the gospel wherever they live and work. They refuse to support formal ministerial training and insist that women must not occupy any leadership roles in the congregation. They practice immersion following a confession of faith, share yearly communion, and wash feet as a sign of true Christian community. They report more than 75,000 members in almost 500 churches in over 100 counties, largely in Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee.

Regular Baptists

Regular Baptists trace their origins to the colonial Regular Baptists of the 1700s. They share common doctrines with other Appalachian Baptist groups with an emphasis on such Primitive Baptist dogmas as divine sovereignty, unconditional election, and Christ’s limited atonement. However, like the Old Regular Baptists, they favor the idea of election by grace and often seem more classically evangelistic, allowing churches to conduct Sunday schools and revival meetings. Some Regular Baptist churches also utilize a more contemporary style of gospel music in their services, but they generally reject the use of musical instruments in

worship. They have a very small membership, perhaps fewer than 500 people, with churches in three North Carolina associations known as Little Valley, Mountain Union, and Little River.

Union Baptists

Union Baptists grew out of a dispute over support for the North during the Civil War. By 1867 the Silas Creek fellowship in Ashe County, North Carolina, was formed by churches that had supported the Union during the war. Four associations remain active today: the Mountain Union Association, the Union Baptist Association, the Primitive (Union) Baptist Association, and the Friendship Association, all in North Carolina. Union Baptists reflect a greater appreciation for evangelism than some of their counterparts through Sunday schools and revivals, with an emphasis on election by grace. They allow members to broadcast music and preaching on local radio stations as a witness for Christ. Members are also permitted to attend services in other types of Baptist churches, a practice sometimes discouraged by other mountain congregations. Most churches reject the use of musical instruments, choirs, and other formal singing groups. Some churches continue to “line out” the hymns with the leader singing a phrase that is repeated by the worshiping congregation.

Duck River and Kindred Baptists

The Duck River and Kindred Baptists group, often called the General Association, is located primarily in counties in Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama, and has more than 10,000 members. The movement seems to have come from a group of Baptists in the Elk River Association in Tennessee, founded in the early nineteenth century. The new Duck River Association was composed of persons who reacted against the strict Calvinism of the region. Members affirmed the role of free will and human choice in the process of salvation. As “liberal” or modified Calvinists, the Duck River and Kindred Baptists used the terminology of Calvinism but restated it in terms of revivalistic conversionism and human free will. They practice three ordinances: the baptism of believers, the annual observance of the Lord’s Supper, and foot washing.

Free Will Baptists

Free Will Baptists are not exclusive to the Appalachian region and reflect a wide swath of churches and ministries across the United States. They represent the largest of the

Arminian Baptist groups. “Free-willers” trace their origins to two individuals: Paul Palmer, who started a church in North Carolina in 1727, and Benjamin Randall, who founded a Free Will Baptist Church in New Hampshire in 1780. Segments of those two groups came together in 1935 as the National Association of Free Will Baptists, but they split in 1962 with the founding of the General Conference of Original Free Will Baptists in Ayden, North Carolina. Randall, who was converted through the influence of colonial revivalist George Whitefield, led his segment of the Free Will tradition in a variety of progressive endeavors that permitted women to preach and exercise church leadership, opposed slavery, and admitted blacks to membership. Some of these New England churches merged with the Northern Baptist Convention in 1911.

From the beginning these subdenominations offered a response to the majority Calvinism while practicing open Communion and foot washing. The latter rite is understood to be of sacramental value and a continued reminder of Christian humility. Free Will Baptists maintain a membership of approximately 250,000, with almost 300 churches.

Ethnic Baptist Groups

The Baptist presence in America has included a variety of groups that were related to ethnic groups who brought their Baptist identity with them or discovered it on arrival. Among these are Romanian, Hungarian, Polish, and Scandinavian Baptists, as well as several Asian Baptist communities. The Swedish and German conferences reflect the diversity of ethnically based Baptists but are not definitive.

The Swedish Baptist presence in the United States began with the arrival of Gustavus W. Schroeder, a Swede converted on a trip to America, baptized in New York, and nurtured by German Baptists on his return to Europe. Schroeder helped convert Frederick O. Nilsson, who was baptized by German Baptists and commissioned to return to the United States as a missionary. In 1848 Nilsson formed the first Swedish Baptist church in America. Greatly influenced by German Pietism, the Swedish Baptists thrived in the United States, and a General Conference was established in Illinois in 1879. The Swedish Baptist General Conference continues with more than 100,000 members. A theological seminary was founded in Chicago in 1871, and in time it became Bethel Seminary, and, since 1914, has been located in St. Paul, Minnesota.

German Baptist churches began in the United States by 1843, with the founding of the first congregations. The first

General Conference, which was established in 1851, eventually became the North American Baptist Conference (NABC). It exists today with a membership of more than 60,000, with almost 400 member churches. The Rauschenbusch family is one of the most well-known families in early German Baptist life in America. August Rauschenbusch and his son Walter (1861–1918) were teachers and pastors in German Baptist life. Walter Rauschenbusch's days as a pastor in Hell's Kitchen, an impoverished section of New York City, convinced him of the social implications of the gospel and the need for "Christianizing the Social Order." From his position as professor of church history at the Rochester Theological Seminary, Rauschenbusch became the "father of the Social Gospel in America." The German Baptists have held triennial meetings since 1865, and the denomination holds a variety of regional conferences across the United States. In 1944 the seminary was renamed the North American Baptist Theological Seminary, and in 1949 it was moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Landmark Baptist Groups

The Old Landmarkism was a successionist movement that began in the South in the 1850s, with an effort by Baptist ministers J. R. Graves (1820–1893) and J. M. Pendleton (1811–1891) to establish the "marks" of the true New Testament church. In a treatise called *An Old Landmark Re-Set*, Pendleton, pastor of the First Baptist Church, in Bowling Green, Kentucky, gave the movement its name, which was based on Proverbs 22:28: "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Pendleton believed that a series of dissenting churches—Montanists, Donatists, Cathari, Waldensians, Anabaptists, and Baptists—moved through the centuries from the time of the New Testament and were "Baptists in everything but name." Graves, a longtime member of the First Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, delineated the "marks" of the true church. These included the primacy of the local congregation of believers; the inability of nonimmersed (pedo-Baptist) ministers to participate in Baptist worship; and the beliefs that Baptist churches are the only churches to exist from New Testament times and that they are the only true churches remaining in the world. Because Baptists alone adhered to the true New Testament form of baptism, rebaptism was required of all who had not previously received Baptist-based immersion, no matter how long they had professed the Christian faith. The Lord's Supper was entirely a local church ordinance to be received only

by members of the specific congregation in which it was celebrated.

Baptist Missionary Association

Formed in Texas in 1900, the Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) took shape in the 1840s with a group of conservatives who opposed the formation of the Baptist General Convention of Texas because it usurped authority that belonged only to local churches. Denominational formation of missionary boards and agencies contradicted the New Testament model of missionary work through local congregations. In 1879 a group of Landmark Baptists, expelled from the First Baptist Church, Dallas, for their divisive actions, formed the Live Oak Baptist Church, and in 1883 the church called Samuel A. Hayden (1839–1918), a prominent Landmark preacher, editor, and controversialist, as pastor. Hayden led the church to reunite with First Baptist, but he continued to publish attacks on convention leaders, charging them with heresy and dishonesty. Disciplined by the convention, for sowing "discord," Hayden brought suit against numerous Baptist leaders in 1898, a case that was finally concluded with an out-of-court settlement. Continued defeat in the Baptist State Convention of Texas led other Landmarkists to the founding of the Baptist Missionary Association. Although small, the BMA continues to promote fundamentalist and Landmark theology, send out missionaries funded only by local churches, and promote the "independence" of local Baptist churches free from denominational "hierarchy." It also promotes Landmark doctrines of Baptist successionism, closed Communion, and baptismal immersion, rejecting the validity of "alien immersion," administered in non-Landmark churches.

American Baptist Association

The American Baptist Association (ABA) is another fundamentalist and Landmark group. Founded in 1905 as the Baptist General Association, it was renamed in 1924. Ben Bogard (1868–1951), a proponent of J. R. Graves's Landmark views, led in founding the ABA in opposition to state Baptist conventions in Arkansas and Texas. Churches affirm their independence from denominational alliances, their call to send out their own missionaries without the help of denominational boards, and the fundamentals of orthodox faith including biblical inerrancy, Christ's virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, and bodily resurrection. Its Landmark positions led the ABA to insist that Baptists are the only true church existing in an unbroken line of churches

from the New Testament era. In spite of its suspicion of denominationalism, the ABA maintains a headquarters and publishing house in Texarkana, Arkansas. Its total membership in 2008 was approximately 800,000.

Fundamentalist Baptist Groups

Although theological and ethical conservatism is imbedded in many Baptist groups in the United States, there are numerous groups that grew out of historic debates related to fundamentalism and liberalism during the twentieth century. These Baptist communions affirm the need for orthodoxy at every level of church life. Although the dogmas of fundamentalism are many, several of these groups give particular emphasis to the classic “Five Points,” which include biblical inerrancy, the virgin birth of Christ, his substitutionary atonement, bodily resurrection, and literal Second Coming (premillennialism). Some are separatist fundamentalists who warn that any connection to liberal denominations or individuals is a compromise of the faith. Many were born of schisms that divided existing Baptist denominations. These included congregations such as Highland Park Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

General Association of Regular Baptist Churches

The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (GARBC) began as a response to what some felt was the liberal drift of the Northern Baptist Convention. In 1920 conservatives founded the Fundamental Fellowship of the Northern Baptist Convention, an organization that worked inside the convention for more than twenty-five years to create strategies for moving it in fundamentalist directions. Although many of its members wanted to remain in the Northern Baptist Convention and change the convention from within, others, insisting that it could not be changed, demanded separation from all signs of liberalism.

Separatists led by W. B. Riley (1861–1947), J. Frank Norris (1887–1952), and T. T. Shields (1873–1955) organized the Baptist Bible Union in 1922, and the group mounted strenuous attacks on the policies of the Northern Baptist Convention. The Baptist Bible Union formed Sunday school and mission programs, and acquired a Bible school in Des Moines, Iowa. The school soon went bankrupt after students rioted when trustees fired faculty and administrators. The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches officially began in 1933 as the successor to the Baptist Bible Union. Its leaders continued to promote fundamentalism as

the doctrinal center of the movement. They also developed a mission society called Baptist Mid-missions that became a clearinghouse for funds used by independent congregations to send missionaries around the world. The denomination, strongest in the South and Southwest, claims about 250,000 members. It continues to assert fundamentalist doctrines and practices.

Conservative Baptist Association of America

The Conservative Baptist Association of America (CBAA) was founded in 1947 by a group of conservative–fundamentalists in the Northern Baptist Convention. Somewhat more “moderate” in their fundamentalism, many hoped to influence the NBC toward more conservative agendas, especially in the appointment of conservative missionaries and seminary professors. When it became clear that these changes would not occur, the group formed the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society in 1943. Although members of the group requested recognition by the Northern Baptist Convention, it was not granted, and thus funds given to the new society would not count toward voting membership in the NBC. A formal division occurred in 1947, as NBC loyalists acknowledged it was time for the dissidents to go and the fundamentalists acknowledged that their views would not prevail in the parent denomination.

The new denomination founded a Home Mission Society and, in 1950, organized the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver, Colorado. In 1951 members gained another seminary in Portland, Oregon, a school originally founded in 1927. At first, many of the CBAA churches retained “dual alignment” with the NBC, but those connections declined over time. Firmly fundamentalist in theology, the leaders of the new group preferred the designation “conservative” for their theological position. Promoting the well-known Five Points of orthodox dogma, they nonetheless experienced some division over premillennialism and specific details of Christ’s return. In many churches, a thoroughgoing premillennial eschatology, or concern with the end of the world, prevailed. The CBAA continues to maintain strong connections to its seminaries and its missionary origins. It claims approximately 400,000 members in some 1,500 churches.

Baptist Bible Fellowship

The Baptist Bible Fellowship (BBF) is among the strongest of a collection of fundamentalist fellowships born of

controversies developing in the early to mid-twentieth century. These churches are unashamedly, often militantly fundamentalist in their orientation, promoting orthodox dogmas as nonnegotiable for those who would claim to be genuinely “born again” Christians. They are highly evangelistic in orientation, conducting seasonal revivals, warning unbelievers of “the wrath that is to come,” and anticipating the premillennial return of Christ at any time. Many are separatist fundamentalists, rejecting any fellowship with those whose Christianity is deemed to be tainted by the world. They preach from the King James Bible, send out their own local church-funded missionaries, and denounce worldliness and secularism as evidence of the moral collapse of human society.

The Baptist Bible Fellowship began as a result of a schism in the fundamentalist ranks when a group of leaders in the First Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, rejected the authoritarian leadership of the pastor, J. Frank Norris. Known as the “Texas Tornado,” Norris was an early leader in Baptist fundamentalism, attacking the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Southern Baptist Convention as requiring an organizational conformity that denied the authority of local congregations. Norris’s efforts to control both the First Baptist Church and the church-owned Baptist Bible Seminary brought him into conflict with many leaders of the congregation. Various attempts to fire the faculty resulted in a schism in which his closest associates, Louis Entzinger (1878–1956) and G. Beauchamp Vick (1901–1975), moved to Springfield, Missouri, where in 1950 they founded the Baptist Bible Fellowship. They also organized a new Baptist Bible College and a periodical called the *Baptist Bible Tribune*. Both the school and the journal became important vehicles for extending Baptist fundamentalism throughout the twentieth century. The *Tribune* has long published scathing commentaries on the evils of liberalism in the church and in the larger society, attacking the civil rights movement and denouncing Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968) as un-Christian, fretting about liberalism at Texas-based Baylor University and other schools of Baptist origin, and promoting crusades for school prayer and against abortion, communism, and the ecumenical movement. Largely Landmark in its understanding of the church, the BBF is not considered a denomination by its adherents but a loose gathering of pastors who serve fundamentalist Baptist churches. Many BBF-related congregations were among the first “megachurches” in the

United States, developing a variety of marketing techniques for attracting and evangelizing large numbers of people.

Newer Baptist Groups

The Alliance of Baptists was founded in 1986 by a group of Southern Baptists distressed by the continuing controversy between “moderates” and “conservatives” in the denomination. Originally called the Southern Baptist Alliance, it was established as a way of reasserting Baptist principles of local autonomy, soul competency, and religious liberty that founders felt were being negated in the Southern Baptist Convention debates. Based in Washington, D.C., the alliance holds an annual national conference and facilitates missionary and social endeavors among member churches. Member churches are more likely than most Baptists to support women in the ministry and to be “open and affirming” in matters related to gender and sexuality. The group also partners with other denominations, such as the Progressive National Baptists and the United Church of Christ, in various ministry actions.

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) is a configuration of “moderate” Baptist churches and individuals, many of whom came out of the Southern Baptist Convention after decades of denominational controversy. The group was founded in 1991 and maintains offices in Atlanta, Georgia. CBF member churches contribute funds that are used in its global missions program, fund a variety of related seminaries and divinity schools, and offer aid to Baptist-related groups such as the Baptist Joint Committee on Religious Liberty, Associated Baptist Press, and the Baptist Center for Ethics. Several state groups have developed their own networks for regional ministry and fellowship. CBF-related churches are often positive in their response to women in ministry and ecumenical engagement. In recent years the CBF has engaged in dialogue and cooperative efforts with a variety of Baptist and other Protestant communions.

Reformed Baptists are represented in various loose networks of churches, developed since the 1960s and reasserting principles of Calvinist theology in local congregations and interchurch fellowships. These congregations are often organized around certain seventeenth-century Particular Baptist doctrinal statements, such as the First and Second London Confessions of Faith. They emphasize divine sovereignty, election, predestination, and other Calvinist dogmas within the context of the believers’ church, immersion, and local church autonomy. Various associations of Reformed

churches across the United States maintain varying degrees of fellowship, some founding their own Bible schools and seminaries, often in local congregations. Some insist that Reformed theology is the only viable theological foundation for historic Baptist identity.

Multiplication by Division

The diversity of Baptists was evident from the beginning across a spectrum that included Calvinists and Arminians, proponents of open and closed Communion, and advocates of congregational autonomy. Later Baptists divided over theories of biblical inspiration, the relationship between church and state, and issues related to regionalism, gender, and race. Yet they are unified around commitment to concepts of a believers' church, believers' immersion, associational relationships, congregational polity, and the priesthood of all believers. A concern for the centrality of the local church has led many Baptists to be wary of denominational systems or "top down" authority. Yet commitments to organizational and communal relationships continue to create a need for denominations in some form or another.

See also *Appalachian Mountain Religion*; *Baptists* entries; *Baptists: Tradition and Heritage*; *Fundamentalism*; *Latino American Religion: Mainline Protestants*; *Missions: Domestic*.

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Baptists: Sectarian

Baptists are usually described as independent, congregational people. Precisely what it means to be a Baptist varies from interpreter to interpreter. However, one may find several common characteristics, including acceptance of the Bible as authoritative in matters of faith and practice; a polity that stresses the independence and autonomy of each congregation as well as congregational rule; church membership only for believers baptized by immersion, thus resulting in a "believers' church"; and a symbolic rather than sacramental understanding of the ordinances. Baptists have adopted numerous confessions of faith that articulate their theological preferences, but they share no common creed and recognize no ecclesiastical authority beyond the local church. They also support religious liberty and the separation of church and state.

Defining Baptist sectarianism is not an easy task. For some the words *Baptist* and *sectarian* may seem synonymous. After all, Baptist and sectarian doctrinal stances on regenerate church membership and baptism by immersion for believers only, coupled with their free church and anti-authoritarian tendencies, do not lend themselves to ecumenism. Even so, defining *sectarianism* is not easy. Scholars are divided over whether the word *sect* stems from the Latin *secare*, "to cut," or *sequi*, "to follow." Assuming the latter, one may infer that in the broadest sense *sect* describes those who leave an established religious body to form a new one. As such, sects are voluntary organizations that do not conform to mainline norms with respect to doctrine, practice, or both. Sect leaders usually promise their followers a clear, "true" representation of biblical doctrine, while sect members tend to be fervent, devoted, and especially zealous for the sect's truth claims that separate them from everyone else.

If defining sectarianism is difficult, identifying the sectarians in Baptist ranks is equally so. Sects often reject mainline or traditional sources of authority such as the Bible, creeds, and church council decisions, but most sectarian Baptists remain staunchly committed to biblical authority in matters of faith and practice. Historically, some may be classified as sectarian because they differ from the established church on polity, points of theology, and hermeneutics (interpretations of texts). Some are sectarian because they differ from other Baptists over procedural issues. Further, throughout their history some Baptists have displayed more sectarian tendencies than have others. Over time a number of splinter groups

emerged who espoused certain doctrines that dramatically distinguished them from the groups they had left. Thus, while retaining aspects of more “mainline” Baptists, these groups usually positioned themselves as more “pure” than their parent group. Even though sectarian Baptists foster exclusivism in the sense of their being outside the religious mainstream, they are open to receiving new recruits provided that the newcomers agree with the sect’s doctrine and polity.

Early Baptist History

Early American Baptists resembled their spiritual kin in England. Beginning in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries English churches faced religious turmoil, much of which centered on the relative purity of the Anglican Church. Puritans claimed that the Church of England retained too many vestiges of Roman Catholicism. In addition to the Puritans, a host of dissenting groups and independents openly longed for a “pure” church, free from secular and sacral corruption.

Early British Baptists were among those who wanted purity among churches. The earliest modern-era Baptists were identified according to their understanding of Christ’s atonement. General Baptists held to the idea of a “general atonement” in which Christ died for everyone without exception. One need only repent and believe for salvation. General Baptists also maintained that if faith was voluntary, individuals could renounce their faith and “fall away from grace.” By contrast, the Particular Baptists were Calvinistic. They held to a “particular atonement” in which Christ died for a specific, unalterable number of people chosen by God before creation.

As seventeenth-century England lurched toward civil war, many came to North America to escape religious persecution and seek new opportunities. Roger Williams (1603–1683) was among the earliest colonists in North America. Ordained as an Anglican priest in 1627, Williams turned to Puritanism in 1629. He came to America in 1631 and soon ran afoul of the Puritan establishment for openly advocating freedom of conscience and criticizing Massachusetts Bay Colony leaders, who in his estimation were exploiting Native Americans. He was exiled from the colony in 1635, whereupon he turned to the Narragansetts, purchased a tract of land, and established Providence Plantation in what is now Rhode Island.

Williams’s nonconforming tendencies led him to be a Baptist for a time. It is difficult to say with certainty, but it

appears that he established a Baptist church in Providence in either 1638 or 1639. Soon afterward, John Clarke (1609–1676), also a religious exile from England, established a Baptist church in Newport. Despite the fact that Williams and Clarke had Calvinistic leanings, both Providence and Newport churches were likely mixed congregations of both Calvinist members, who believed that people were predestined for salvation, and Arminian members, who insisted that individuals accept God’s offer of salvation of their own free will.

General and Particular Baptists had scarcely gained a toe-hold in North America before both faced a challenge from the Seventh Day Baptists. Like other early Baptists the Seventh Day Baptists searched for a pure church, and they turned to the Bible for direction. Unlike their fellow Baptists, however, their study of the scriptures led them to conclude that nothing about Jesus’ life or ministry cancelled the Jewish Sabbath. Thus they adopted Saturday, the “seventh day,” as the proper day for worship.

The Seventh Day Baptists appeared in America as early as 1665. Stephen Mumford, a recent immigrant to colonial North America and sympathetic to the Seventh Day doctrine, raised the issue of Sabbath observance in Newport. Soon a number of Newport’s church members had openly embraced Sabbatarianism, the belief that the Old Testament’s Sabbath was binding on New Testament Christians. The issue festered until 1671, when a group left the church to form the first Seventh Day Baptist church in the North American colonies. Although they never rose to the prominence of either the General or the Particular Baptists, the Seventh Day Baptists became a regular feature of North American religious life, leaving Baptists with three branches in its young family tree.

Associationalism and the Great Awakening

Regardless of their doctrinal convictions, Baptists were not very strong in the American colonies. Roger Williams’s *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution* (1644), and *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody* (1652), and John Clarke’s *Ill Newes from New England, or a Narrative of New England’s Persecutions* recounted numerous tales of mistreatment at the hands of colonial governments. Churches were small; converts few. Dogged by persecution and indifference, seventeenth-century Baptists struggled to survive. The eighteenth century, however, witnessed at least two noteworthy changes.

The General, Particular, and Seventh Day Baptists all practiced congregational polity, and each followed British

precedent in creating associations whereby like-minded congregations met periodically and voluntarily for fellowship and mutual assistance. In 1707 a group of seven churches near Philadelphia formed the Philadelphia Association. America's middle colonies, especially Pennsylvania and New Jersey, tended to be more religiously tolerant and diverse than the other colonies, thus offering Nonconformists a relatively safe haven. Over time the Philadelphia Association proved to be the most successful Baptist Association in early America.

Theologically Calvinistic, the Philadelphia Association grew steadily throughout the eighteenth century. The association corresponded with churches along the eastern seaboard and helped create several new associations, including the Charleston Association in South Carolina and the Warren Association in New England. In 1742 they produced their own confession of faith, the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, styled after the Second London Confession with additional provisions for hymn singing and "laying on of hands." They also promoted literacy and education, as well as limited missionary work.

As the Philadelphia Association was gaining strength, a series of revivals commonly known as the Great Awakening triggered dissent within Congregational and Presbyterian churches. These revivals featured intense emotional conversion experiences along with a host of zealous converts. Not everyone rejoiced over the awakening or its fruit. The so-called Old Lights objected to the revival and its emotionalism, while the New Lights welcomed the new burst of religious enthusiasm and piety. The rift between those supporting the Great Awakening and those opposing it led to numerous schisms. Many New Lights left their churches to form new, pro-revival congregations, and others left to join Baptist churches.

Baptists were not the Awakening's most vociferous supporters, but they gladly added many of its converts to their numbers. By the mid-eighteenth century the Particular Baptists had come to be known as Regular Baptists, thanks in part to the Philadelphia Association's shaping of normative practices for its associating churches, as well as its reluctance to embrace some of the Awakening's perceived irregularities. That is, Regular Baptists welcomed the conversion of sinners, but they disapproved of the emotionalism and spontaneity associated with revivalism. The Awakening's sharp distinction between pro- and anti-revival camps and its subsequent transdenominational realignment led to the

formation of a new group of pro-revival Baptists, the Separate Baptists.

Shubal Stearns (1706–1771) and Isaac Backus (1724–1806) numbered among the early converts to the Separate Baptists. Both Backus and Stearns played important roles in shaping religious life in America. Backus remains one of America's most prolific Baptist authors. A leading voice of the Warren Association, he along with John Leland (1754–1841), a Regular Baptist from Virginia, argued tirelessly for the separation of church and state. However, Stearns may be the most celebrated of all Separate Baptists.

Unlike Backus, Stearns apparently wrote nothing. Yet under Stearns's leadership Separate Baptist influence moved south from his native Connecticut, stopping briefly in Virginia, and eventually settling in North Carolina. There, in 1755, Stearns and his brother-in-law, Daniel Marshall, established the Sandy Creek Baptist Church in Liberty in what was then Guilford County. Stearns enjoyed a reputation for persuasive oratory, and the Sandy Creek Baptists quickly began spreading the message of Christ with revivalistic fervor. The Separate Baptists enjoyed considerable success, especially in the South. Within seventeen years of its establishment the Sandy Creek Church spawned as many as forty-two new churches. In 1760 Marshall and his wife, Martha, moved to South Carolina, where they labored for about a decade before relocating to Georgia. In both cases the Marshalls reportedly shared the Separate Baptist message with great passion.

Primary documents on the Sandy Creek Church and the Sandy Creek Association are scant at best. Theologically, the Separate Baptists were Calvinistic, but they shunned formal statements of faith. The first official, written statement of the Sandy Creek Association's beliefs came in 1816, forty-five years after Stearns's death. In reality, Separate and Regular Baptists differed more in style than in theology, with the Separates preferring emotional, freewheeling services over the more staid, formal services of the Regulars. In 1787 Virginia's Separate and Regular Baptists laid their differences aside and formed a new group called the United Baptists. Other states soon followed suit. In the early nineteenth century most United Baptists joined forces with the emerging missionary movement.

Free Will Baptists

The Separates were not the only Baptists who originated in eighteenth-century American revivalism. The Free Will

Baptists are also rooted in the Great Awakening. Free Will Baptists stem from two different sources. In the early 1700s North Carolina claimed a small group of General Baptists. As early as 1727 Paul Palmer established a church in Chowan, in eastern North Carolina. Palmer's wife, Joanna, was the stepdaughter of a noted British General Baptist, Benjamin Laker. Palmer's persistent preaching of "free salvation" earned him and his followers the nickname "freewillers," hence, Free Will Baptist, or as some preferred, "free Baptists." Palmer managed to attract a number of followers in scattered North Carolina congregations, but most of these churches became Calvinistic in the 1750s as a revival of Calvinism swept the South.

Not all Free Will churches converted to Calvinism. Those churches who remained Free Will regrouped in the early nineteenth century, and by 1830 they had experienced a comeback. They were organized into quarterly meetings, and they affirmed an adaptation of the Standard Confession of English General Baptists titled, "An Abstract of the Former Articles of Faith Confessed by the Original Baptist Church Holding the Doctrine of General Provision with a Proper Code of Discipline."

Meanwhile, in New Hampshire Benjamin Randall (1749–1808) provided the second source of Free Will Baptists. Apparently converted about 1770, Randall briefly united with a Congregational church before joining a Baptist church in 1776. He chafed under Calvinism, however, and in 1779 a local council declared they could no longer continue in fellowship with him. In response to this indignity, Randall allegedly quipped that as long as Jesus owned him it didn't matter who disowned him. Like Palmer, Randall preached "free salvation" and openly accepted the descriptor "Free Will." Randall and his associates spread their teachings throughout New England, and by 1808 Free Will Baptists in New England numbered about six thousand.

Throughout the nineteenth century both the Palmer and Randall branches of Free Will Baptist life faced the challenges associated with denominational organization, not to mention internal squabbling. By the twentieth century a number of Free Will Baptists affiliated with the newly formed Northern Baptist Convention. Others refused to unite with the NBC and chose rather to form the Cooperative General Association of Free Will Baptists, in 1916. Meanwhile, Free Will Baptists in the South regrouped to form a General Conference in 1921. These two groups

merged in 1935 and located their headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee.

The Nineteenth Century and the Modern Mission Movement

The dawning of the nineteenth century and the rise of the modern mission movement was a crucial time for Baptists in America. The guarantee of religious freedom, along with the western expansion and revivalistic fervor, promised new opportunities for Baptists. Organized missionary activity captured the Baptist imagination more than anything else during this time. If the nation saw a "Manifest Destiny" in western expansion, Baptists saw it too and added their own spiritual twist to the mix.

In the early nineteenth century many Baptists embraced organized international mission work when Luther Rice (1783–1836) and Adoniram Judson (1788–1850) joined their ranks. Rice and Judson had sailed for India as Congregational missionaries under the sponsorship of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. En route to the field, both decided to become Baptists. Judson stayed in India, while Rice returned to America to inform the board of commissioners of their defection to the Baptists and to solicit financial support from their new brethren.

On May 18, 1814, Rice met with interested parties in Philadelphia and formed the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions. Also known as the Triennial Convention because it met every three years, this body was open to a variety of missionary opportunities. The Triennial Convention encouraged the creation of education and publication societies, which most Baptists quickly embraced as reasonable missionary ventures.

With the new opportunities, however, came questions regarding missionary activity. Some wondered if churches should shoulder the responsibility for building schools and producing religious literature. Others claimed that the New Testament did not sanction organization for religious work beyond individual churches. Hence, critics claimed the newly forming mission organizations were both unnecessary and unbiblical, as were their non-biblically sanctioned administrators.

Three names are especially prominent among early missionary critics. Daniel Parker first gained notoriety among Baptists with a booklet titled "A Public Address to the

Baptist Society, and Friends of Religion in General, on the Principle and Practice of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States of America” (1820). In this booklet Parker questioned the scriptural legitimacy of missionary societies and organizations. In a similar vein, John Taylor suggested that organized missionary work might infringe on republican values. His now famous broadside, “Thoughts on Missions” (1819), was also a polemic against Rice for what Taylor perceived to be disreputable means in raising money for missions. Finally, Alexander Campbell claimed that the New Testament did not sanction missionary organizations. Campbell ultimately left the Baptist ranks to restore what he called “the ancient order” of things, particularly regarding baptism, thereby launching the Restoration Movement. It is important to note that Taylor, Parker, and Campbell did not oppose evangelizing the unconverted. All three, however, opposed the expansion of missionary organizations beyond individual churches.

Primitive Baptists

Primitive Baptists are among the most sectarian of all Baptist groups. They are a diverse lot, but their roots are in the antimission movement of the early nineteenth century. They are fiercely independent and noted for their extreme Calvinism. They also claim a unique worship style that features a cappella singing. Primitive Baptists shun Sunday schools and mission organizations, claiming they are man-made institutions and unnecessary. In addition to baptism and the Lord’s Supper, most Primitive Baptists also practice foot washing as a church ordinance.

Unlike most Baptist sects, the Primitive Baptists did not have a single recognized voice for the movement in its earliest phases. As the concept of “missions” expanded, some Baptists argued that *they* followed an ancient way and that their doctrine and practice mirrored New Testament teachings. Hence, they styled themselves Primitive Baptists and rejected organized missionary activity and everything associated with it. The movement gained momentum through the 1820s and 1830s as churches and associations wrestled with the organizational shifts Baptists were initiating to fulfill their mandate for missions. Those who disagreed with mission work and its associated agencies and boards cited “Thoughts on Missions” (1819) and “A Public Address to the Baptist Society” (1820), along with “The Black Rock Address” (1832), named for Black Rock, Maryland, where those adopting it met, and other treatises, until Joshua Lawrence (1778–1843, a Baptist preacher in

North Carolina, emerged in the 1840s as the leading voice for Primitive Baptists. Thus, in the case of the Primitive Baptists, the sect was formed before it had a recognized leader.

It was not long before the Primitive Baptists faced internal strife over points of doctrine and interpretation. Broadly considered, Primitive Baptists fall into either one of three categories. One group maintains that God has absolutely predestined all things. A second group maintains that God has predestined all things pertaining to the elect and their salvation, but not anything else. A third group, the so-called Progressive Primitives, are theologically Calvinistic, but they have adopted many trappings of more mainline Baptist churches, including Sunday schools, the use of musical instruments in worship services, and paid ministers.

Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Baptists

The Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Baptists are arguably the most sectarian of all Baptist groups. Much like the Primitive Baptists, they came into existence during the antimission controversy of the early nineteenth century. Their founder, Daniel Parker, was born in Virginia, reared in Georgia, and moved to Illinois in 1817. He received a limited education, mostly from his mother, but he managed to attract a following among Baptists on the American frontier, first by opposing mission organizations and organized missionary activity and then by introducing his now famous doctrine of the “two seeds.” In 1833 he established the Pilgrim Predestinarian Regular Baptist Church and then promptly relocated to Texas.

Parker had gained notoriety with a work titled “A Public Address to the Baptist Society” (1820) that questioned the legitimacy of newly formed missionary organizations. Six years later he published another work, “Views on the Two Seeds,” in which he articulated his understanding of the “two seeds in the spirit.” Parker argued that Genesis 3:15 describes “two seeds,” one of the woman, the other of the serpent. These seeds are spread throughout all humanity. The woman’s seed represents the elect, while the serpent’s seed represents everyone else. Some have seen Parker’s Two Seedism as an extreme form of Calvinism, but it may be more accurate to say that it represents Manichean tendencies among a small segment of Baptists, especially in stressing the difference between good and evil as found in the two seeds. What is not clear is whether Parker formulated his theology to buttress his strident antimissionism, or if his antimissionism stemmed from his two-seed theology.

Landmark Baptists

Landmark Baptists follow a strict form of local church ecclesiology. The term *Landmark* comes from two biblical injunctions, Proverbs 22:28, “Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set,” and Job 24:2, “Some remove the landmarks. . . .” They share certain features with the Primitive Baptists; among them are the rejection of any ecclesiastical authority beyond individual churches, including mission boards and other “sending agencies.” But unlike the Primitive Baptists, Landmarkers support missionary ventures and Sunday schools.

To understand Landmarkism, it is helpful to understand the impact of the Restoration Movement on Baptist life. The movement quickly gained headway among nineteenth-century Baptist churches under Campbell’s leadership. The Restorationists, sometimes pejoratively called Campbellites, emphasized a “common sense” approach to biblical interpretation. They preached baptism by immersion for believers. Moreover, they claimed to practice a form of Christianity that mirrored the purest form of New Testament faith, thereby restoring the Bible’s “ancient order.” Baptists listened closely to Campbell’s claims that contemporary Christianity had drifted from its first-century moorings. Many Baptists left their churches to follow Campbell. Others rejected Restorationist teachings, but the mission movement had raised questions of biblical propriety and the limits of ecclesiastical authority that they could not ignore.

Landmarkism became a regular feature of Baptist life in the South in the middle of the nineteenth century. Early Landmarkers claimed three leaders: A. C. Dayton (1813–1865) was a dentist by trade, but his novel *Theodosia Ernest* (1857) served as an excellent means of articulating Landmark sentiments through the eyes of a young girl on a spiritual quest to find the “true church.” James Madison Pendleton (1811–1891), one of the most respected preachers and educators in the South, served as the second member of the “Landmark Triumvirate.” Finally, James Robinson Graves (1820–1893), generally recognized as the father of “Old Landmarkism,” served as the movement’s most outspoken advocate.

A renowned controversialist, Graves served as editor of *The Baptist*, later renamed *The Tennessee Baptist*, from 1846 until his death in 1893. Graves claimed that Baptist churches were the only true churches; all others were merely “religious societies.” In 1851 Graves and other like-minded Baptists affirmed the basic tenets of Landmarkism in what

came to be known as the Cotton Grove Resolutions. The meeting posed a series of five questions: (1) Can Baptists, consistently with their principles or the scriptures, recognize those societies not organized according to the pattern of the Jerusalem church, but possessing different governments, different officers, a different class of members, and different ordinances, doctrines, and practices, as churches of Christ? (2) Ought they to be called gospel churches, or churches in a religious sense? (3) Can Baptists recognize the ministers of such irregular and unscriptural bodies as gospel ministers? (4) Is it not virtually recognizing them as official ministers to invite them into Baptist pulpits, or by any other act that would or could be construed into such a recognition? (5) Can Baptists consistently address as *brethren* those professing Christianity, who not only have not the doctrine of Christ and walk not according to his commandments, but are arrayed in direct and bitter opposition to them? Although Graves affirmed only Baptist churches as genuine Christian churches, he did not suggest that Baptists were the only redeemed individuals on Earth. Neither did all subsequent Landmarkers assign equal significance to each particular question posed by the Cotton Grove Resolutions. Thus Landmarkers tend to agree that there is no universal church, and there is no warrant for organizations beyond local churches.

Graves never left the Southern Baptist ranks, and Landmarkism did not cause a schism until the early twentieth century. In 1905 Benjamin Marcus Bogard and a number of Landmarkers formed the General Association of Baptists, renamed the American Baptist Association in 1924. In 1950 a group of individuals left the American Baptist Association and formed the North American Baptist Association, changing their name to the Baptist Missionary Association of America in 1968 to avoid confusion with the other group. Although some Landmarkers prefer to remain officially unaffiliated, they generally form voluntary associations for fellowship.

Landmarkism remains one of the most significant features of Baptist life, particularly in the South. In addition to fueling sectarian tendencies, Landmarkism provided mid-nineteenth-century Baptists with a polemical platform for countering Restorationist claims to biblical and historical authenticity. Graves and his followers claimed they were not restoring an ancient way. Rather, they maintained they were the legitimate heirs to New Testament Christianity. Additionally, Graves used his resources as a publisher to promote G. H. Orchard’s *A Concise History of the Baptists* (1838).

Relying on Orchard, Graves claimed that Baptists could trace their lineage back to the New Testament era, thus legitimizing Baptist faith and practice. Following Graves's logic, sound hermeneutics and knowledge of history were all anyone needed to make a case for Baptist legitimacy.

Other Sectarian Baptists

Certain Baptist sects are found mostly, though not exclusively, in the Appalachian region. The Primitive Baptist Universalists are among the more enigmatic of these sects. This sect originated in 1924, when the Washington District Association of Primitive Baptists divided over the issue of eternal damnation. Sometimes known as "no-hellers," Primitive Baptist Universalists share some beliefs and practices with the Primitive Baptists, including elements of worship style. They differ markedly from other Primitive Baptists in that they reject the Calvinistic doctrine of limited atonement whereby Christ died for the elect only, choosing rather to believe in universal redemption where everyone without exception is ultimately reconciled to God. Their designation "no-hellers" is misleading in that the Primitive Baptist Universalists believe individuals suffer their own hells on earth prior to death because of their separation from God.

The Old Regular Baptists are located primarily in Appalachia. They identify with an 1801 melding of the Elkhorn and South Kentucky Associations that brought the Commonwealth's Separate Baptists and Regular Baptists together as United Baptists. Eventually, this group experienced schisms, and those who remained gradually became identified as Old Regular Baptists. Theologically they tend to be Calvinistic, but they neither espouse individual election to salvation nor Arminianism, *per se*. Old Regular Baptists teach that Christ's atonement produces a call to individuals. This call leads to a personal awakening to one's own sinfulness, which in turn begins a spiritual odyssey to ultimate repentance and faith. Old Regular Baptists continue certain practices including an unpaid clergy, "lined singing," annual foot-washing ceremonies, and gender-segregated congregations. They shun Sunday schools, and they prefer to baptize individuals in running streams.

The United Baptists trace their origins to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The main distinction between the Separates and the Regular Baptists amounted to worship style, not doctrine. Ultimately, these groups began laying aside their differences and seeking union. The Kehukee Association (Regular) and the Sandy Creek Association

(Separates) in North Carolina entered into discussions as early as 1772, the year after Shubal Stearns's death. In 1787 the Kettocton Association (Regular) and the Separate Baptists of Virginia united; they were followed by the Elkhorn Association (Regular) and the South Kentucky Association (Separate), who united in 1801. Having laid aside their differences, they became known as United Baptists.

Because of their missionary enthusiasm, many United Baptists joined forces with larger missionary groups like the Southern Baptists. Those who remained United Baptists are diverse in their views. Some are theological Arminians; some are Calvinists. Some United Baptists correspond with Free Will groups. They are located primarily east of the Rocky Mountains and in the southeastern United States, but they can be found in Arkansas and as far north as Michigan.

Interpretive Constructs

If modern Baptists emerged from conflict, perhaps it is not surprising that conflict became a way of life for them. Their devotion to a "free church" combined with local church independence and the lack of any centralized authority has both helped and hindered Baptist development. On the one hand, Baptist polity is flexible, and this flexibility enabled them to adapt to changing social and cultural norms, especially in North America. On the other hand, Baptist polity has traditionally fostered political and ecclesiastical antiauthoritarianism, thereby facilitating schism and the proliferation of various sects.

Baptist ecclesiology by definition furnishes its followers with sectarian tendencies. Their insistence on a gathered church of baptized believers and their insistence on freedom of conscience marked them as radically different from the colonies' established churches. Moreover, America's earliest Baptists tended to carry over theological and polity issues from Britain, thus reinforcing arguments by late-twentieth-century social historians that American colonists tended to see themselves as British, not distinctly American. If early American Baptists tended to see themselves as British, they also tended to replicate those ecclesiastical structures with which they were most familiar, reinforcing an emerging consensus that American religious practices, at least through the eighteenth century, were neither exceptional nor uniquely American.

The early nineteenth century marked a dramatic shift for Baptists in America. Religious liberty as guaranteed by the First Amendment teamed with revivalistic fervor to create new opportunities for religious expression. Baptists used

their newfound liberty to their best advantage. Their rapid growth merged them into America's religious mainstream, and they were no longer "outsiders." Earlier generations had gauged orthodoxy by doctrinal or polity standards, and although subsequent generations did not abandon their pursuit of doctrinal purity, missions opened new doors for cooperation and controversy.

The rise of the modern mission movement marked a dramatic shift in Baptist thinking about polity, procedure, and large-scale organization. The resources necessary for intercontinental mission work demanded new organizational structures previously unknown among Baptists. Some embraced these new structures, while others did not. Once missions came to dominate Baptist thinking, defining what constituted sectarianism became largely a matter of how or if sects related to missionary activity.

Missions also shaped denominationalism for Baptists. Prior to the nineteenth century Baptists were at best on America's religious periphery. Religious liberty, as well as the organizational impetus missions provided, helped create a denominational identity for Baptists by which non-missionary Baptists would appear sectarian. Consequently, Seventh Day and Free Will Baptists, two of America's earliest sects, quickly became non-sect like as they organized missionary boards and eased into the religious mainstream. Others, however, like the Two Seeders and the Primitives, demonstrated no desire to win the world to their viewpoint or their doctrinal convictions and remained on the fringe.

Organized mission work and the specific organizational structures Americans created to evangelize the world may have widened the gap between American and British Baptists. Granted, the American and British experiences had never been identical. Still, they shared many similarities at least throughout the colonial era. They continue to share certain doctrinal similarities. However, organized missionary activity accentuated existing differences and likely created new ones.

Baptist sects were often born in controversy. Early sects were born in the struggle for religious liberty, a struggle that migrated to America from England. Later controversies led to schisms that led to new sects. Most Baptist sects formed because of disputes over fine points of doctrine. Once formed, however, many sects faced further schism, with some opting to cooperate with other Baptist networks and others choosing to remain sectarian for cultural rather than doctrinal reasons.

Contributions

Sectarian Baptists have enriched the American social, political, and religious landscape even though they may be the last ones to acknowledge it. For example, by defining themselves against prevailing norms whether doctrinal or organizational, sectarian Baptists helped affirm dissent as a Baptist hallmark. For better or worse, dissent and its consequences have played crucial roles in shaping the American Baptist experience. Baptist sects also demonstrate that there is more than one way to be Baptist.

As dissenting sectarians, Baptists helped secure religious freedom. They were not single-handedly responsible for religious liberty, but they were among its most outspoken advocates. Further, their continuing legacy of maintaining the separation of church and state remains one of their enduring contributions to American society.

By dissenting among themselves, sectarian Baptists have proved to be invaluable for Baptist self-definition. Sectarians pushed the bounds of acceptable doctrinal belief and ecclesiastical practice. In other words, Baptist sects have helped "mainline" Baptist groups define themselves in terms both positive and negative.

Yet sectarian Baptists have done more than simply perpetuate dissent. Some Baptist sects have helped preserve worship styles and musical forms from bygone eras. They serve as a reminder that some among the faithful find comfort and identity in the "old ways" rather than in the most recent theological trends. Because Baptists insist that religious worship be a voluntary act, sect members follow the old ways by choice, not from coercion.

Finally, sectarian Baptists contributed to religious journalism, especially in the nineteenth century. Sectarians used newspapers, magazines, and books toward hortatory and didactic ends. Daniel Parker, James Robinson Graves, John Taylor, and others offered both a voice of dissent for their followers and a means of spreading their particular messages. In addition, many sectarian groups tended to promote their views aggressively, and their journalistic contributions forced all Baptists to consider their arguments carefully.

At the end of the twentieth century an estimated 90 percent of the world's Baptists lived in the United States. They have overcome persecution and animosity to become mainstays on America's religious scene. Ironically, as Baptists became more denominational and made the transition from despised sect to social acceptability, they retained certain

sectarian impulses. These quarrelsome tendencies may be an important feature of their dynamism.

See also *Baptists: Tradition and Heritage*; *Baptists* entries; *Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Missions* entries; *Stone-Campbell Movement*.

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Baptists: Southern

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is the largest Protestant denomination in the United States. Founded in 1845 because of divisions among Baptists over slavery and home and foreign missions, the convention developed an extensive network of local, regional, state, and national connections, inculcating a powerful sense of identity in generations of adherents. Characterized by strong evangelistic and missionary efforts, it weathered a controversy between fundamentalists and liberals in the 1920s, but encountered serious divisions over doctrine and ethics during the later twentieth century. Throughout much of its history, denominational unity was supported by a common southern culture, a strong sense of loyalty to the convention, theological conservatism, and evangelistic zeal.

Although the SBC maintains a national presence, the primary constituency of the denomination lives in the American South and Southwest. By the early twenty-first century, the SBC had experienced numerical declines and other demographic influences that mirrored those of other traditional American denominations. Controversies over theology and ethics led to significant changes in the organization and constituency of the convention. The history of the denomination is characterized by great numerical success within the context of southern culture and a wide array of public controversies and internal debates.

Southern Baptist Beliefs

Theologically, Southern Baptists generally affirm classic doctrines associated with Christian orthodoxy and broader Baptist traditions. They affirm a belief in the authority of Old and New Testament scriptures along with the freedom of conscience that enables Christian believers, under God, to read and interpret the scriptures for themselves. Throughout the twentieth century Southern Baptists struggled with particular theories of biblical inspiration, especially those concerning the doctrine of inerrancy, a belief that the Bible is without error in every topic it discusses, as revealed in the original manuscripts of the biblical text. Debates over biblical inerrancy have caused great controversy in the ranks of the SBC. These debates were especially sharp in the 1980s and 1990s, leading to an exodus of many lifelong Southern Baptists who rejected attempts to make inerrancy the only viable method of biblical inspiration appropriate to the convention and its member churches.

Southern Baptists also insist that the true church on earth is to be composed of “believers only,” those who testify to a work of divine grace in their hearts and receive baptism by immersion as a sign of that grace. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Communion) are considered “ordinances” established by Christ for his church. Baptism is given to those who confess faith in Christ and request membership in the church. The normative mode of baptism is immersion, dipping the entire body in a pool of water inside the church or outside in a river, creek, or stream. Baptism is given to both adults and children, and some congregations permit the baptism of children during the preschool age. In certain SBC-related churches baptism is sometimes repeated for those who say they were not truly “saved” at the time of their original immersion. Indeed, the phenomenon of the rebaptism of Southern Baptist church members increased significantly throughout the late twentieth century.

Most Southern Baptists believe that the Lord’s Supper is a symbol of Christ’s death, to be taken in memory of him. Others affirm Christ’s spiritual presence in the Supper. Churches generally celebrate the Supper monthly or quarterly, using unleavened bread and the “fruit of the vine,” normally unfermented grape juice, a practice that developed with the rise of the temperance movement in the nineteenth century. A small number of Southern Baptist churches continue to use wine in the observance of the Supper.

Congregational polity is the normative form of government in Southern Baptist churches. Such congregationalism is grounded in the belief that the authority of Christ is mediated through the congregation of believers who vote on issues related to the calling and ordination of ministers and deacons, and the administration of church business financially and corporately. Southern Baptists place great emphasis on the autonomy of the local congregation as the basic source of authority for Baptist ecclesiastical life. Each congregation therefore is free under God to set its own by-laws, develop its own ministries, and promote its particular approach to Baptist theology and practice.

Local congregations may also choose to participate in regional Baptist associations, cooperating with other churches for collective ministry, fellowship, and mutual encouragement. State conventions link churches in a larger geographic region, often supporting Baptist colleges, children’s homes, campgrounds, and other benevolent and

evangelical efforts that one congregation may not be able to accomplish on its own. The Southern Baptist Convention system allows churches to join in funding theological education, missions, and a variety of other social, educational, and missionary endeavors. Member churches may send “messengers” to the annual meeting each June. Those messengers are full members of participating churches, charged to vote their consciences in matters that come before the convention.

Southern Baptists also affirm the priesthood of the laity even as they ordain persons for professional ministry, or the “ministry of the word.” The two officers of the church are pastors and deacons. Pastors “preach the word,” offer the “care of souls,” and lead the church spiritually and administratively. Deacons are lay members of the church who serve the community of faith in a variety of spiritual and practical ways. Southern Baptists ordain both pastors and deacons with a service that involves the laying on of hands, thereby setting them aside for special service to the church. More recently some Southern Baptist churches have limited the role of the congregation in the fiscal and administrative activities of the church, utilizing business managers or committees of “elders” who represent the congregation in these matters. The congregational system represents a kind of overarching democracy in which many persons may participate in the overall life of the church in very direct ways.

At its best the priesthood of the laity and the work of the (ordained) ministry complement each other in extending the church’s witness and teaching the faithful. Yet this democratic ideal often creates tensions related to the authority of pastors and congregational leaders. Indeed, clergy–laity conflicts are not uncommon in Southern Baptist life and can revolve around issues as varied as determining the nature of scripture or doctrine, where to build a new building, or what color to paint the church kitchen.

Southern Baptists have also given great attention to the divine imperative for evangelization, working to bring all persons to a “saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.” Across the years SBC churches and individuals have established ways of “witnessing” to the lost, those who have never received a “personal experience” of grace through Jesus Christ. “Soul winning” classes, revival services, and other evangelistic campaigns have long been a part of Southern Baptist efforts to evangelize the nation and the world. These endeavors have been a major source of numerical growth for the denomination and its churches.

As in other Baptist groups, a concern for religious liberty has also characterized much Southern Baptist rhetoric and shaped certain practices. Although religious liberty was a hallmark of seventeenth-century Baptist religious dissent in England and America, much of that emphasis was lost or at least minimized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries simply because Southern Baptists were the majority religious group in the South, a region dominated by Protestantism and, with a few exceptions, a region with limited religious pluralism. With the rise of the Roman Catholic influence in the South and Southwest in the post-World War II era, Southern Baptists again reasserted the separation of church and state, often out of concern that Catholics would succeed in their demands for state aid to parochial schools and other state-funded religious prerogatives. Through the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, founded in 1946, Southern Baptists joined other Baptist denominations in opposing what they termed “parochialism,” the appointment of a U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, and other perceived encroachments on religious liberty. They also divided over U.S. Supreme Court rulings regarding prayer in schools, abortion, and the use of funds for “faith-based” programs. These divisions led the convention to sever its ties with the Baptist Joint Committee and, in 1988, establish its own Washington, D.C.-based office called the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

Beginnings of the Convention

Baptists in the North and the South were drawn together in cooperative endeavor in the early 1800s through efforts to fund missionary programs at home and abroad. The most explicit project began in 1812, when Adoniram Judson, Ann Hasseltine Judson, and Luther Rice accepted Baptist views while on their way to India as missionaries of the Congregational church. Realizing that they could no longer accept funds from the Congregationalists, they sent Rice back to the United States to seek Baptist support. In response, mission-minded Baptists formed the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions, in May 1814. Known as the Triennial Convention because its national meetings were held every three years, the organization became a clearinghouse for multiple “societies” that enabled Baptist individuals, congregations, or regional associations to pool their funds to support home and foreign missions, education, publications (a “tract” society), and other activities. Each of these societies was independent of

the other, maintaining its own officers and board of directors. The “society method” allowed Baptists to carry out national and international ministries efficiently but within a context that was not hierarchical, given Baptist mistrust of ecclesiastical authorities that could undermine the sovereign autonomy of local congregations.

The Triennial Convention was the first truly national denominational experience for Baptists in America. Funds were raised and missionaries were sent to Burma, the Caribbean, and ultimately to China. The American Baptist Home Mission Society also sent out missionaries, such as John Mason Peck and his wife, Sally, who, in 1817, traveled west to the Missouri Territory to work with Native Americans and settlers. A Tract Society published materials for use in evangelization, as well as for biblical and doctrinal instruction.

With the rise of abolitionism, evident in the development of various abolitionist Baptist churches and associations, tensions arose over the issue of slavery, sanction (the idea that the New Testament in several places seems to sanction or approve of slavery), and ultimately the appointment of slaveholders as missionaries funded by the missionary societies. Many Baptist leaders in both the North and the South worked diligently to moderate the issue, keep it from dividing the Triennial Convention, and avoid denominational schism. In 1844, as abolitionists pressed their case, members of the Georgia State Baptist Convention requested that the American Baptist Home Mission Society appoint James Reeve, a southerner and known slave owner, to the society. When the society refused to respond to the request, Georgia Baptists cut off funds to the missionary society and appointed Reeve themselves, demanding that Baptists in the South convene a gathering that would found a new Baptist denomination.

The result was the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention at the First Baptist Church, Augusta, Georgia, in May 1845. The founders stated that the new convention was established to fulfill the church’s missionary imperative, now impeded by the mission society’s refusal to appoint duly called and certified southern (slaveholding) missionaries. The convention’s organizational structure grew out of a plan offered by South Carolina pastor William B. Johnson (1782–1862) that involved greater connectional or “associational” cooperation between churches and denominational agencies. Instead of maintaining the loose cooperation evident in autonomous societies, Johnson proposed a more extensive connectionalism that linked local churches,

regional associations, and state conventions with the national denomination in providing a variety of programs that could be coordinated more efficiently than those of the autonomous societies. These connectional relationships made possible more centralized administrative efforts and anticipated the growth of a powerful sense of “Baptistness” among clergy and laity alike. Indeed, after the defeat of the South in the Civil War, this denominational program combined with elements of southern culture to inculcate a profound theological and regional identity in SBC churches and members.

The Development of Convention Agencies

The newly formed denomination soon set about forming its own agencies for accomplishing various benevolent and evangelical tasks at home and abroad. A Foreign Mission Board (now the International Mission Board) was founded in 1845, with headquarters in Richmond, Virginia. Funds came gradually, but before the Civil War the first wave of Southern Baptist missionaries were sent to such places as China, Liberia, Nigeria, and Brazil. The early China missionaries were a tough group that included Matthew and Eliza Yates, J. Lewis Shuck, T. P. Crawford, and Charlotte Diggs (Lottie) Moon (1840–1912). Lottie Moon’s work was so exemplary that she became one of the Southern Baptists’ best-known missionaries, an iconic exemplar of sacrifice and commitment. Teaching and preaching widely, Moon worked in several remote provinces of China, where she exhausted herself for the work of the mission, dying off the Japanese coast on her final journey to America. In response to her sacrifice, the Woman’s Missionary Union (founded in 1888) named their annual foreign missions offering in her honor. Following the Civil War, the Foreign Mission Board expanded slowly but persistently, ultimately sending missionaries worldwide and establishing the largest missionary task force of any American Protestant denomination.

The Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board) was also established in 1845, with headquarters in Marion, Alabama, where it remained until 1892, when it was moved to Atlanta. The earliest Baptist home missionaries were charged with founding new churches, working with slaves (later with freed blacks), and Native Americans. Many SBC home missionaries ministered to soldiers during the Civil War. After the war ended in 1865, defeat left the board in such dire financial straits that it was almost abandoned by the convention. In 1882 the

appointment of Isaac T. Tichenor as corresponding secretary (director) led to a renewed effort to establish distinct Southern Baptist ministries, improve publications, and delineate regions of service from those covered by the American Baptist Home Mission Society (Northern). A conference held at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, in 1894, led to an agreement for mutual ministries to freed blacks, including educational opportunities, and terms for avoiding overlapping ministries in new home mission “fields.” Work with African Americans may not have been as extensive as early reports from the board implied, however.

By the twentieth century, the Home Mission Board worked to establish new churches, provide varied social ministries in rural and urban areas, and offer cooperative endeavors with a variety of ethnic and immigrant groups. During the latter half of the century, Home Mission Board literature and action reflected some of the most progressive attitudes toward racial equality and reconciliation of any of the SBC agencies.

The Sunday School Board of the SBC took longer to develop, since many southern churches had no Sunday school at all, and many of those that did continued to use the American Baptist Publication Society (Northern) for their instructional literature. Early attempts at founding publication societies in the South failed on at least four occasions, until 1892, when, through the work of J. M. Frost, the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board was established in Nashville to produce literature for the denomination and its churches.

With the growth of Sunday schools as a mainstay of Baptist biblical studies and weekly programs, the publication of Baptist-friendly literature became extremely important. The Sunday School Board thus accepted its role as the chief publishing arm of the denomination, developing a huge circulation for its products, and forming a large network of writers including clergy and laity and professors and students at Baptist schools. For many years the board utilized the Uniform Series of biblical studies, a lectionary of common scripture texts used Sunday to Sunday by a variety of Protestant groups. Gradually, Sunday evening study programs, such as the Baptist Young People’s Union (BYPU), provided instruction in ethics, church history, and Christian living. A publishing house, known as Broadman Press (now Broadman and Holman), produced books on theology, doctrine, biblical studies, and discipleship, much of which was written by Baptist authors.

Educational Institutions

Many of the earliest Baptist educational institutions in the South predated the founding of the SBC. These colleges were developed not by the national denomination but by specific state conventions that established varying degrees of charter relationships, appointed trustees, and provided funding for students and general operations. Such schools included Mississippi College (1826), Furman University (South Carolina, 1826), the University of Richmond (Virginia, 1832), Mercer University (Georgia, 1833), Wake Forest University (North Carolina, 1834), Howard College (now Samford University, Alabama, 1844), Baylor University (Texas, 1846), Stetson University (Florida, 1882), and numerous others. These schools struggled financially throughout much of their early history, but they provided undergraduate education for generations of young people who came from Baptist churches and often remained within the SBC system for the rest of their lives. Schools offered a basic liberal arts education, provided religion majors with preparation for the seminary and Baptist ministry, and extended Christian education by requiring Bible classes, mandating weekly chapel attendance, and offering a variety of religious activities—from religious emphasis week to campus revivals and summer mission trips. Baptist colleges and universities were major sources for inculcating Baptist identity into a new generation of young people, many of whom were the first generation of their family to enter college.

Southern Baptists began to establish their own seminaries in 1859 with the creation of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary on the campus of Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. In 1877 the school was moved to Louisville, Kentucky, a region less devastated by the Civil War. The seminary closed during the war and reopened after the conflict with one student and four faculty members. Firmly anchored in reformed theology the seminary founders required that all faculty members subscribe to the Abstract of Principles, a basic statement of Baptist doctrine. Faculty members are still required to sign the document. Five other denominationally owned seminaries were founded by the SBC during the twentieth century: Southwestern Baptist Seminary (Fort Worth, Texas), New Orleans Baptist Seminary, Midwestern Baptist Seminary (Kansas City, Missouri), Southeastern Baptist Seminary (Wake Forest, North Carolina), and Golden Gate Seminary (Mill Valley, California). They remain among the largest theological schools in the United States. Some estimates suggest that

one in five American seminarians attends a Southern Baptist seminary.

To this day many Southern Baptists demonstrate something of a love-hate relationship with their educational institutions, strongly recognizing the need to provide a liberal arts education that opens intellectual, spiritual, and financial doors to southern youth, while also fearful that such schools will “steal the faith” of the young, introducing ideas that lead them to challenge traditional religious dogmas and cultural norms. Throughout the history of the SBC controversies large and small frequently descended upon the biology and religion departments of Baptist colleges over the use of certain textbooks, the historical-critical method of biblical studies, the teaching of evolution, and the role of women and African Americans in southern society. Disputes related to fundamentalist, conservative, progressive, and liberal approaches to biblical and theological studies have long characterized Southern Baptist seminaries.

The Cooperative Program

The development of a collective giving program known as the Cooperative Program, approved in 1925, was an important illustration of the growth of the Southern Baptist Convention and its plans for the future. The program linked churches, state Baptist conventions, and the national denomination in common funding relationships. Churches sent funds to their respective state conventions that then forwarded a percentage directly to the denomination. Each state was permitted to determine the percentage of funds to be divided between the national and state conventions. Although it took many years for churches to come to full acceptance of the plan, the Cooperative Program ultimately became the lifeline of funding for collective endeavors undertaken by the denomination. Indeed, participation in the Cooperative Program became a major sign of denominational commitment for churches and individuals. Throughout the twentieth century, those who differed with denominational policies often withheld funds or simply complained about the financial uniformity demanded by denominational leaders.

In 1927 the Executive Committee of the SBC was linked to the Cooperative Program with the committee charged with managing the finances of the denomination, establishing funding agreements with the state conventions, and allocating the specific percentages received by denominational agencies. These efforts served to extend the denominational centralization of the denominational organization.

A Confession of Faith

Although many of the early Southern Baptist churches were constituted around a confession of faith that laid out specific dogmas, the denomination itself had no official doctrinal statement until 1925, when the convention set forth its own confession of faith, entitled the Baptist Faith and Message. Its approval was due, at least in part, to the impact of the fundamentalist–liberal disputes that were dividing large segments of American Protestantism in the 1920s. The Baptist Faith and Message is based on an earlier document known as the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, first compiled in the 1830s as a modified Calvinist response to Baptists’ increasing emphasis on free will, the general atonement (Christ’s death for the entire world), and the imperative for world evangelization. The document touches on basic beliefs related to scripture, the nature of God, the Trinity, election, salvation, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, the priesthood of all believers, church polity, academic freedom, clergy and laity, church and state, and “end times.” The Baptist Faith and Message was revised in 1963, in response to controversies regarding the Bible and the rights of professors in Baptist schools. It was revised again in 2000, with particular attention given to a new entry noting that women are not to receive ordination to the pastoral office in a local congregation. The new edition addresses the need for opposition to such issues as racism, adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. Reference is also made to marriage as a divinely intended union between a man and a woman.

Although Southern Baptists are not required to subscribe to the Baptist Faith and Message in order to belong to a Southern Baptist church, most denominational employees—seminary professors, missionaries, writers, and trustees—are asked to make such a commitment. In recent years the denominational leadership has expressed concern that the SBC affirm and maintain a strong confessional identity, grounded in the orthodox doctrines of the official confession of faith.

SBC Controversies

Southern Baptists are never without controversy on issues related to race, the Bible, denominational control, and innumerable doctrinal differences. Some of the most divisive debates include the following.

Landmarkism

Old Landmarkism was a movement that developed in the 1850s, in an effort to trace Baptists in an unbroken

succession back to the New Testament church and establish Baptist identity as the source of the true church. Landmarkists envisioned a “trail of blood” and martyrs who constituted the true New Testament church in every age and were Baptist in everything but name. These included Montanists, Donatists, Cathari, Waldensians, Anabaptists, and Baptists. Although this view of Baptist history was not new, it became more pronounced in Landmarkism. One of the early controversies related to the movement involved the question of whether pedo-baptist (one baptized as an infant) clergy could preach in a Baptist pulpit. It was concluded that they could not do so since they were not members of the true church and did not have a true New Testament baptism.

J. R. Graves (1820–1893) and J. M. Pendleton (1811–1891) were Baptist ministers who led the early Landmark movement, writing numerous works that delineated its doctrines. Pendleton’s treatise, *An Old Landmark Re-Set*, gave the group its name; it was based in a statement from Proverbs 22:28: “Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.” It was also an attempt to discern the marks of the true church in ways that identified Baptists as the clearest recipients of the biblical authority and churchly practice. Graves’s views were published in 1880 in a work entitled *Old Landmarkism: What Is It?* In it he proclaimed that Baptists were the only true church, and that such a church was found only in the local congregation. Non-Baptist pastors could not share Baptist pulpits since their communions were mere “societies.” Contemporary Baptist churches could be traced in an unbroken succession to Jesus and the early church; thus Baptists alone retained the authority to baptize and celebrate the Lord’s Supper. Only Baptist immersions were valid; even those who had had a non-Baptist “alien immersion” were required to have a Baptist baptism. Only members of each individual church could participate in the congregation’s celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Since the local congregation was the only source of authority for the church, many Landmark leaders were critical of what they believed to be the hierarchical practices evident in Southern Baptist denominationalism. Some rejected the use of mission boards as unscriptural and insisted that missionaries should be supported directly from local churches.

Although Landmarkists sought to impose their views on the entire convention prior to the Civil War, their efforts were largely unsuccessful. However, their views live on in those congregations that require immersion of people who

join their churches and had been baptized as infants. Thus many Southern Baptist churches require the immersion of new converts and old believers who have never received baptism by immersion. Although many Southern Baptist churches practice open Communion—inviting all baptized persons to the table—others continue to practice closed Communion, restricting participation to members of the specific congregation or those who affirm orthodox Baptist doctrines. One of the best-known controversies related to nineteenth-century Landmarkism occurred in the 1890s at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Louisville, when William H. Whitsitt, the seminary's president and professor of church history, published a book entitled *A Question in Baptist History*, suggesting that the earliest English Baptists had not practiced immersion until some thirty years after the movement began in 1609. Whitsitt's findings, now fully accepted by most Baptist historians, were a powerful threat to Landmark claims that Baptists preserved immersion in an unbroken tradition as established by Jesus in the river Jordan. Landmark denunciation of Whitsitt's views led to his resignation in 1899.

Racial Issues

Born of the national schism over slavery, the SBC became the largest Protestant denomination in the segregated South, a racial position supported by a majority of convention members throughout much of the twentieth century. Integration of SBC-related colleges, universities, and seminaries did not begin until the 1960s, in many cases brought to a head over the admission of students from Africa, who had been evangelized by Baptists on the mission field. Many local churches were torn asunder over the admission of African American members, and pastors who stood against racist cultural norms were often summarily dismissed. Although many denominational publications promoted progressive views on race, some denominational leaders held membership in the Ku Klux Klan. Not until 1995 did the SBC apologize for its failures in the slaveholding and Jim Crow-based societies of the South.

The Fundamentalism–Liberalism Divide

Debates between fundamentalists and liberals divided American Protestant denominations throughout the twentieth century, and Southern Baptists were no exception. During the 1920s and 1930s the Southern Baptist Convention weathered a challenge from fundamentalists, many of whom instituted what became known as the Independent Baptist

movement. Denominationalists, already committed to theological and social conservatism, successfully resisted efforts by fundamentalists such as J. Frank Norris (1877–1952) to impose the classic “Five Points” of fundamentalism (the inerrancy of the Bible; the virgin birth of Christ; Christ's substitutionary atonement, through which he died for the sins of individual human sinners who believed; his bodily resurrection; and his literal Second Coming) as litmus tests for all denominational employees, schools, and member churches. Norris, sometimes known as “the Texas Tornado,” was pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Worth, and a frequent critic of Baptist seminary and college professors, denominational “lackeys,” and what he saw as efforts by the convention to usurp the authority of local congregations. Norris's outlandish behavior and fundamentalist diatribes led to the expulsion of his church from the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1924. In response, he helped begin a new group of Independent Baptists, identified by their fundamentalist views, evangelistic zeal, and congregational autonomy, loosely connected to the Baptist Bible Union and the World's Christian Fundamentals Association. A schism between Norris and some of his followers led to the founding of the Baptist Bible Fellowship, one of the largest groups of Independent Fundamentalist Baptist churches in the United States.

The Southern Baptist Convention managed to avoid a major schism by reasserting its doctrinal orthodoxy, its commitment to world mission and evangelism, and the need for denominational unity to accomplish these evangelistic tasks.

Following World War II, concerns again arose among many SBC conservatives regarding the “liberal drift” of the denomination, evident in such things as the use of the historical-critical method of biblical studies in college and seminary classes, social progressivism promoted by certain denominational agencies such as the Home Mission Board and the Christian Life Commission, Broadman Press's publication of books promoting liberal theology, and the support for Supreme Court rulings on prayer in public schools by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. These concerns became full-blown controversies in the 1960s and 1970s related to the publication of various books by the denominational press. The publication of *The Message of Genesis* by Ralph H. Elliott, a professor at Midwestern Seminary, in 1961, led to a firestorm of opposition against his use of historical-critical methodology and its impact on doctrines of biblical infallibility. In response, Broadman Press refused to approve a second printing of the book. Although

seminary trustees initially supported Elliott, his decision to have the text republished by another company led to his dismissal in 1962. Similar concerns developed in 1970, when the first volume of the Broadman Bible Commentary series was rescinded because its use of historical-critical methodology was thought to undermine the historicity of the Genesis accounts.

In 1979, in an effort to stem the tide of what they felt to be a rapidly developing liberalism in the SBC, a group of conservatives began a concerted effort to promote conservative-fundamentalist ideology at every level of the denominational system. Led by longtime conservative pastors Adrian Rogers of Memphis and W. A. Criswell of Dallas, as well as Houston Appeals Court judge Paul Pressler and Criswell College president Paige Patterson, the group determined that by electing a succession of SBC presidents and using their appointive powers to change the boards of trustees at each denominational institution, they could achieve a needed "course correction" against liberalism. The litmus test for those appointees was their commitment to the doctrine of biblical inerrancy and their desire to require that view of biblical inspiration of all denominational employees. Adrian Rogers's election as SBC president in 1979 marked the official beginnings of their efforts. Moderate Baptists soon responded, asserting their conservative credentials but resisting what they perceived to be a "take-over movement" on the part of the Religious Right. These political machinations brought huge numbers of "messengers" to the annual June meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. Although many of the votes were close, the conservatives were able to win every presidential election and, over a decade (1980-1990), succeeded in appointing to each convention agency a majority of trustees who shared their views and their agenda for denominational change. By the mid-1990s conservatives were in firm control of the national denomination, extending the confessional requirements for denominational employees by revising the Baptist Faith and Message, and replacing large numbers of seminary faculty, missionaries, and other denominational employees who would not support the changes.

At the same time, new divisions erupted in state Baptist conventions, in Baptist-related colleges and universities, and among those moderate Baptists who moved slowly to found new organizations, schools, and programs. The Alliance of Baptists was founded in 1986 by a group of churches and individuals who desired to move beyond the SBC controversy in order to direct their energies in more positive

directions. They encouraged the establishment of a new theological seminary, Baptist Theological Seminary, in Richmond, Virginia, founded in 1991 as an alternative for moderate Baptist ministers. In 1991 a larger group of moderate Baptists came together in Atlanta to found the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a society of churches joining together for fellowship, encouragement, and common support for projects related to the church's mission in the world. State Baptist conventions also divided along conservative and moderate lines, with South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida drawn into the conservative camp and Virginia and Texas moving toward the moderates. Other conventions such as Alabama and Mississippi have been less divisive, while Kentucky and North Carolina continue to move between the various factions. Although some state Baptist colleges and universities remain under control of their respective state conventions, others have severed those ties in favor of self-perpetuating trustee boards and formal breaks with their parent bodies. Schools such as Meredith College (North Carolina), the University of Richmond, Wake Forest, Furman, Mercer, Stetson, Belmont, Samford, and Baylor now control their own boards of trustees. Some continue to receive funds from the state conventions, though most do not. Other schools such as Louisiana College, Shorter College (Georgia), and Union University (Tennessee) remain firmly connected to conservatives in their state conventions. Still others continue a traditional yet tenuous connection with their parent Baptist bodies. New divinity schools and seminaries with varying connections to the SBC controversy have also been established at Campbell, Gardner Webb, Mercer, Baylor, Hardin-Simmons, and Samford Universities. Baptist houses or programs have also been established inside divinity schools at Duke, Emory, Wake Forest, and Texas Christian Universities. The SBC continues to experience realignments and disconnections some thirty years after the original "course correction/takeover" movement began. Although the departure of moderates did not immediately take large numbers of churches from the SBC, it did serve to deprive the convention of some of its oldest and most active congregations. The overall effect of these departures on the convention remains to be seen.

Continuing Issues

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, as conservatives settled into leadership of the SBC, certain actions were taken to increase the doctrinal uniformity of all member

churches. As membership statistics declined, the denomination renewed its commitment to evangelism and church growth, with particular efforts to increase the presence of African Americans in the SBC. The convention also continued to oppose a variety of religio-political issues including abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, and the ordination of women for the pastorate of Baptist churches. Some fretted over the rising influence of Calvinism, the increasing debates over church-state relationships, prayer in public schools, and relationships between Christian and non-Christian communities. Discussion of these issues inside the denomination and in its pronouncements in the public square has had a significant impact on the way many Americans understand the nature of the Southern Baptist Convention and the way in which Southern Baptists' conservative theology has carried them into a variety of responses toward the culture.

Perhaps there is no clearer illustration of the nature of Southern Baptists' varied responses to political activity than in the attitude of the SBC leadership to the presidential candidacies of Baptist Democrats, from Harry Truman in 1948 to Jimmy Carter (1976 and 1980), Bill Clinton (1992 and 1996), and Al Gore (2000). All of these lifelong Baptists were essentially rejected in their bids for the White House by many in the SBC because of their liberal views on a number of social, economic, and political issues. At the same time, divisions of opinion have also arisen over the way in which SBC-related laity and clergy have related to the Republican Party. Conservatives also modified the rules for determining "messengers," representatives from member congregations to the annual convention meetings, amending the by-laws accordingly. They retained the earlier guidelines that churches in "friendly cooperation" with the convention are able to send up to ten messengers to the meeting, with one messenger for every 250 members or for every \$250 contributed to the convention during the past fiscal year. However, since 1992 the convention states that no churches can claim friendly cooperation that "affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior." Churches must certify each messenger with a letter presented at convention registration.

In 2008 the SBC reported declines in both membership and baptisms. Membership statistics were posted at 16,266,920, a 0.24 percent decline since the previous year. Baptisms dropped by 5 percent, the seventh decline in baptisms in eight years. The number of SBC-related churches was listed at 44,696.

See also *Appalachian Mountain Religion*; *Baptists* entries; *Baptists: Tradition and Heritage*; *Fundamentalism*; *Religious Right*; *South as Region*.

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Baptists: Tradition and Heritage

Baptist churches, part of the diverse Protestant tradition, originated in seventeenth-century England and are most clearly identified with the practice of the baptism of believers by immersion. Baptists are the largest Protestant group in the United States, in 2008 representing 17.1 percent of the adult population. In 2008 the Southern Baptist Convention alone represented 6.7 percent of adults, a larger percentage than that of any other Protestant tradition. In comparison, all Methodist groups represented 6.3 percent of adults, followed by all denominations classified as Lutheran (4.6 percent), Pentecostal (4.3 percent), Presbyterian (2.7 percent), and Episcopalian (1.7 percent). Moreover, most African American Protestants are Baptists, with 4.4 percent of the overall population listed as members of historically black Baptist churches. Baptists achieved such numerical success in

several phases. Beginning as a minority group in the seventeenth century, Baptists grew exponentially through revivals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and maintained their expansion through a succession of organizations and divisions.

Most Baptists believe that the Bible is the highest religious authority. Church traditions and confessions are helpful records of Christian experience and beliefs in particular times and places, but creeds are problematic because they can be improperly elevated to rival scriptural authority. Baptism is reserved for believers who have testified to an experience of conversion and have voluntarily sought membership in the church. Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion) are not "sacraments," which confer grace, but are "ordinances" or "memorials," which are outward signs of discipleship. In church governance the local church has full authority over its own worship, theology, and witness. Ministers are ordained for ministerial work, but ministry is not limited to a clerical office; all believers are called to serve the church. Furthermore, believers are their own priests in that they can approach God directly, with no human intermediary. Finally, all people can claim the religious liberty to follow the convictions of their consciences without interference from any human authority; only God judges the soul.

Origins of the Baptist Tradition

Although most historians trace Baptist beginnings to seventeenth-century England, many Baptists have disagreed on the origins of the movement. Three main theories have emerged on the question of Baptist origins, each connected to particular claims for Baptist identity and witness.

First, the *successionist* view claims that the Baptist church originated with the New Testament church and has continued in a line of succession to modern times. Advocates of this theory admit that this church, founded on the baptism of believers, has been known by various names over the centuries, including Donatist, Anabaptist, and finally Baptist, but the substance of the church has remained constant. This view was influential in a nineteenth-century movement called Landmarkism, where it was used to defend the claim that the Baptist church was the one true church in the face of much denominational competition. Most modern historians reject this perspective, but its persistence throughout Baptist history indicates the strength of Baptist convictions for biblical authority and local autonomy. That is, advocates of the successionist view claimed that Baptists were the most primitive, and the most biblical people, since the

Baptist church was linked directly to the church of the New Testament. And since the Baptists were the most biblical people, they were to protect their autonomy, refusing to taint themselves by forming unbiblical associations with other denominations and churches.

Second, the *Anabaptist influence* view is understood in different ways: Some claim that Baptists emerged directly from Anabaptist communities, while others argue that Anabaptists influenced certain Baptist characteristics, including believers' baptism by immersion and convictions concerning religious liberty. Although Anabaptists may have influenced early Baptists to some degree, most historians deny a direct line of succession from the Anabaptist movement to Baptist churches. There were major disagreements between Anabaptists and Baptists, especially regarding participation in war. (Most Anabaptists were pacifist; most Baptists were not.) Moreover, many seventeenth-century Baptists denied any connection with Anabaptists. And yet this view of Baptist origins has persisted throughout history, especially among those who find in the Baptist heritage a witness for peacemaking and the separation of church and state.

Third, the *English Separatist* view, which most historians support, claims that the Baptist movement originated in seventeenth-century English Puritanism. Puritans believed that the Church of England needed to be purified of unbiblical elements in doctrine and worship. Aside from this common goal, however, Puritanism was a diverse, even conflicted, movement. Although some believed that the Church of England could be reformed, others concluded that it was so corrupt that believers should abandon it. These radical Puritan "Separatists" split from the Church of England to start new congregations and then faced persecution for rejecting the official Anglican Church. To escape, many Separatists fled—some to Holland and others to North America (as in the case of the "Pilgrims" aboard the *Mayflower*). The Baptist movement arose among a group of Separatists in Amsterdam. Their leader, John Smyth (c. 1570–1612), renounced his baptism, which had been administered by the Church of England, in favor of a new baptism—one that would restore the biblical practice of believer's baptism. Smyth baptized himself and then his followers, thereby forming the first Baptist church in 1609. When Smyth later sought to join the Mennonites, some in his church returned to England to form a Baptist congregation led by Thomas Helwys (c. 1550–c. 1615). Back in England, Helwys and other Baptists were imprisoned for their faith, and several responded by

publishing defenses of religious liberty. Among these was Helwys's *Mystery of Iniquity* (1612).

Historians labeled the Smyth and Helwys group as General Baptists because they believed that Christ's salvation was "general" or offered to everyone; salvation was not limited to a particular group of "elect" that God had predestined for grace. The term for this view, Arminianism, was taken from the name of Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609), who defended human freedom in salvation in opposition to traditional Calvinist views of predestination. Another group of Baptists emerged in the 1630s and were called Particular Baptists because they were more traditionally Calvinist, believing that Christ's salvation was "particular"—available only for the elect. Like their General Baptists predecessors, Particular Baptists began as Puritan Separatists. Although the General Baptists emerged first, the Particular Baptists were much more influential in North America, a development that accounts for the strong Calvinist tradition among most Baptist groups in the United States.

Colonial North America

Baptists in the English colonies suffered persecution, especially in New England, where Puritans had formed alliances of church and state and dealt harshly with any unauthorized churches. In reaction, colonial Baptists followed their English Baptist predecessors in becoming advocates for religious liberty. They protested colonial taxes to support "official" churches, and they defended the authority of local churches to direct their own theology and worship without interference from the state. In the colonial period, therefore, Baptists were among the first advocates of religious liberty. Although Baptists often disagreed on the definition and extent of religious liberty, the idea remained central to the Baptist heritage, even when Baptists were no longer the persecuted minority. And that dramatic shift from a small, besieged movement to a major denominational force occurred through two major events of colonial America: a succession of revivals called the Great Awakening and the American Revolution.

Persecution in New England

The first advocate of religious liberty in colonial America was also the founder of America's first Baptist church, Roger Williams (1603–1683). Born in England, Williams and his wife, Mary Barnard Williams, joined other Puritan migrants to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Soon after arriving in Massachusetts in 1631, Williams surprised his

Puritan colleagues by declaring Separatist views, and then disputing repeatedly with Massachusetts's leaders until they finally banished him in 1635. Banishment was serious but necessary, Puritan leaders believed, because Williams was guilty of spreading dangerous ideas. Not only was he a Separatist, but he also rejected the alliance that Puritans had formed between church and state. After the Israel of the Old Testament, Williams argued, there were no Christian nations, only a Christian church, and any government that claimed to be Christian perverted true Christianity rather than supporting it. The implications were serious and even affected colonialists' rights to American lands. After all, Williams reasoned, the English king, Charles I, had no right to bequeath the land to the English because he did not own it; the Native Americans did. The king's claim to the land was based on illegitimate "rights" as a Christian ruler over heathen peoples—a distinction that held no value because Christ had no kings, only churches. Alliances of church with state, therefore, were not Christian but "Christendom," a coercive, political enterprise that Christ never endorsed. True Christianity, in contrast, required that persons freely accept (or freely reject) the gospel. After his banishment for these radical ideas, Williams headed south from Massachusetts, negotiated with Narragansett sachems (rulers) for a place to live, and in 1638 established North America's first Baptist church in the settlement he called Providence.

Williams did not remain Baptist for long. Eventually he determined that all churches were corrupt, along with their baptisms, and only a new influx of Christ's apostles could reestablish the true, primitive faith. Even so, Williams continued to quote Baptist authors in his writings, and in turn Baptists throughout history cited Williams as a pioneer of Baptist principles. As first governor of the new colony of Providence Plantations (later Rhode Island) Williams launched a society with religious liberty as a central principle. Afterward Rhode Island became a haven for dissenters, including Baptists and Quakers. More important than Williams for ongoing efforts to promote the Baptist faith was John Clarke (1609–1676), who led a Baptist church at Newport and took over from Williams the leading role in securing the final charter for Rhode Island in 1663. Like Williams, Clarke faced persecution firsthand. He and other Baptists, including Obadiah Holmes, were arrested for their illegal worship in Massachusetts. After Puritan leaders punished Holmes by flogging, Clarke narrated the episode as an account of religious persecution for English readers, *III*

Newes from New England (1652). This narrative joined Williams's *Bloudy Tenet of Persecution* (1644) and other works in defending religious liberty and exposing New England's persecutions to an English audience.

The Philadelphia Baptist Association

While early Baptists struggled in New England, they prospered in the middle colonies. The center of Baptist strength was Pennsylvania, where there was no established church to force religious taxation or to interfere with Baptist worship and organization. In Pennsylvania, therefore, Baptists were not a harassed minority; they were a respected group with the freedom to organize the influential Philadelphia Baptist Association (PBA) in 1707.

Although the PBA did not impinge upon the autonomy of local churches, it fostered cooperation and advised Baptists on doctrine, missions, and education. In pursuit of such goals, the PBA helped to establish a Baptist school that later became Brown University, and it approved a confession of faith in 1742. The Philadelphia Confession was, essentially, the Second London Confession that Particular Baptists approved in 1677, but with the addition of two articles—one to allow hymn singing and the other to condone a ceremony of laying hands on the baptized. Through this confession alone, the PBA's influence was extensive. Baptist associations from South Carolina to Rhode Island adopted the Philadelphia Confession and its Calvinist theology. In addition, the PBA published materials on polity, a hymnal, a catechism, and a two-volume history of Baptists written by Morgan Edwards (1722–1795), a tireless advocate of the PBA. Through these and other efforts, the PBA became the center of a broadly Calvinist tradition that became known as Regular Baptist.

The Great Awakening

The revivals of the mid- to late eighteenth century, often called the Great Awakening, moved many Congregationalists to join Baptist ranks. Baptist churches more than doubled during the prime revival years, from 47 to 101 churches. Most revival preachers were not Baptists—most famously, George Whitefield (1714–1770) was Anglican, and Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) was an heir to the Puritan tradition in New England. Even so, disputes over revivals divided Congregationalists and Presbyterians, and Baptists benefited from the divisions. Specifically, pro-revival Congregationalists often formed separate congregations that embraced revival piety. These Congregationalist “Separates” often moved one step further to become Baptists, convinced that

believer's baptism was both more scriptural than infant baptism and more supportive of a pure church comprising those who had experienced true conversion.

These Separate Congregationalists who became Separate Baptists dramatically increased the Baptist ranks in the colonies. Influential among Separate Baptists were Martha Stearns Marshall (1726–c.1793), her brother, Shubal Stearns (1706–1771), and her husband, Daniel Marshall (1706–1784)—New Englanders whose revival zeal inspired a missionary enterprise to the South in 1755. They eventually settled in the Piedmont area of North Carolina and established the Sandy Creek Baptist Church. With Stearns serving as first pastor of this church, the Marshalls founded another church, thereby setting the pattern through which Sandy Creek launched more than forty additional Separate Baptist congregations in the South. The leadership of Martha Marshall demonstrates the Separate Baptist openness to women in the ministry. Women's ministerial activity was but one of several points of contention between the pro-revival Separate Baptists and the Regular Baptists who rejected revivalist emotionalism in favor of a dignified worship style and a professional, educated clergy.

The American Revolution

Early in the Revolutionary period, in the last half of the eighteenth century, Baptists were on both sides of the dispute between the colonies and Britain. Some Baptists even looked to the king of England for support against colonial governments that forced Baptists to pay taxes to support the established churches. Eventually, however, most Baptists concluded that religious and political liberties were inseparable. Tyranny was the enemy, whether in the form of a British king or through forced taxation in support of an “official” church. A key figure in crafting the Baptist legacy for religious liberty in the Revolutionary era was Isaac Backus (1724–1806), a minister in the Puritan tradition who embraced Baptist views in 1756. Backus believed that religious liberty was crucial both to Baptist identity and to the political responsibility of Baptists in America. In defense of this view, he wrote a history of Baptists in New England, represented the Warren Association of Baptists in defending religious liberty before the Continental Congress, and published *An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty against the Oppression of the Present Day* (1773).

Joining Backus in representing Baptists in revolutionary times was John Leland (1754–1841), who, like Backus, was born a Congregationalist in Massachusetts before adopting

the Baptist faith. Leland's early influence was in the South, specifically in Virginia, where Leland opposed the government's alliance with the Anglican Church. When the states began the process of ratifying the new Constitution, in 1787, Backus supported it, while Leland demurred. Backus was satisfied with the Constitution because it opposed religious tests for political offices, but Leland wanted a clearer statement in support of religious liberty. Leland's opposition to the Constitution was serious because of his strong influence in Virginia. Legend has it that James Madison negotiated a deal in which Leland agreed to support ratification in exchange for Madison's promise to secure religious liberty in a future constitutional amendment. The story is plausible because Leland was influential, and Baptist votes were essential to the Constitution's success in Virginia.

The combination of political democracy and evangelical revival sparked exponential growth for Baptists from the revolutionary period through the end of the eighteenth century. In fact, the number of Baptists grew even more dramatically during the revolutionary era than they had during the revivals, from 254 churches and 13,817 members in 1770 to 978 churches and 67,320 members in 1790.

The Nineteenth Century

The nineteenth century was a time of transformation for Baptists. As the new nation expanded into the frontier, Baptists flourished. By 1850 Baptist church membership was 715,500—an increase of more than 600,000 members in sixty years. At least four factors contributed to Baptist growth. First, while other denominations required ministers to be theologically educated and officially ordained before venturing out on the frontier, most Baptists required neither. Baptist ministers were often “farmer-preachers,” or bivocational pastors who had secular employment and accepted little or no money for their ministry. For many Baptists, the farmer-preacher model was a necessary and even desirable alternative to “professional” ministers who could be accused of entering God's service for worldly gain. Second, any group of willing believers could start a Baptist church, without approval from any higher denominational authority. Third, Baptists were uniquely positioned to succeed in the political ethos of the new nation. Baptists had struggled against church-state establishments long before the First Amendment (ratified in 1791), which meant that they had already shaped their identity around the idea of liberty, just as the new nation was doing the same. Fourth, Baptists' voluntary church membership, which required individuals to

join the church rather than being born into it, fit perfectly with democratic self-reliance and individual freedom. Likewise, Baptist convictions for the independence of each church meshed perfectly with a democratic frontier where local authority was as sacred as scripture.

Cooperation for Missions

In the religious landscape of the new nation, a competitive situation developed. Churches could not rely on state support; they had to vie with other denominations for members. The number of converts became the measure of success for Protestants, and revival became the chief means of achieving it. The early-nineteenth-century revivals known as the Second Great Awakening had both commonalities and contrasts with the revivals of the previous century. The latter revivals took various new forms, including camp meetings on the frontier, most famously the revival at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in 1801, and the innovative revivalist techniques (“New Measures”) of Charles Finney (1792–1875), the era's premier evangelist. As in the first Great Awakening, the most prominent leaders of these revivals were not Baptists, but Baptists were among the revivals' chief beneficiaries.

Revivals often inspired missions, and that was especially the case with most Baptists. The support for missions was clearly revealed in the name of the first national Baptist organization, the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions (known as the “Triennial Convention”). The convention was founded in May 1814 in Philadelphia, in part due to the efforts of Luther Rice (1783–1836), whose conversion to the Baptist faith became missionary lore. Two years before helping to found the Triennial Convention, Rice was a Congregationalist missionary on his way to India with Adoniram Judson (1788–1850) and Judson's wife, Ann Hasseltine Judson (1789–1826). While aboard ship, all three missionaries decided that infant baptism was unbiblical. Soon after arriving in Calcutta, therefore, they sought baptism by immersion, administered by Baptists from Britain, and later resigned their positions with the Congregationalist missionary board. Rice then returned to America to seek support from Baptists—support that resulted in the Triennial Convention.

In addition to this new national convention, state conventions emerged, along with two national societies, the Baptist General Tract Society (1824) and the American Baptist Home Missionary Society (1832). In forming a society devoted to home missions, Baptists competed with other

denominations in the expanding frontiers of the West and Southwest. By the late eighteenth century Baptists were in Tennessee and Kentucky and had clashed with Spanish Roman Catholics in the Mississippi and Louisiana territories. When President Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act (1830) forced Native Americans westward, Baptist home missionaries moved west as well. Among the leading missionaries in this effort was John Davis, a Creek Indian who converted to the Baptist faith in the Southeast, moved west with the Creeks, helped to found the first Baptist Church in Oklahoma in 1832, and translated part of the New Testament into Creek. By midcentury the American Baptist Home Mission Society was substantially invested in the West. In 1840 American Baptist home missionaries Osgood and Elizabeth Wheeler were in San Francisco, where they founded the First Baptist Church of the city and baptized converts in the San Francisco Bay.

Education was essential to building a national denomination. Baptists organized Sunday schools to educate children, especially in frontier locations in which schools were scarce or nonexistent. While Sunday schools provided a needed resource, they also spread churches and strengthened denominational identity. Further educational interests led Baptists to form several institutions before the Civil War, including Andover-Newton Theological Seminary (in Massachusetts), and Furman (South Carolina), Baylor (Texas), Wake Forest (North Carolina), and Mercer (Georgia) Universities.

Although many Baptists believed that missionary conventions and educational institutions were necessary, others were suspicious. Early on, John Leland distrusted denominational systems and professional ministers who cared more for money, prestige, and advanced degrees than for saving souls. Leland was present at the first meeting of the Triennial Convention, but he warned against missionary societies and the power struggles and bureaucracy that accompanied them. Others who shared Leland's opposition to missionary societies included Daniel Parker (1781–1844), who was born in Virginia and became a state senator in Illinois before establishing an early Baptist church in Texas. A devoted Calvinist, Parker founded the Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists and concluded that all missions were human attempts to interfere with God's election of souls.

With few tax-supported churches in the states, and no official church for the new nation, denominations competed for members and funding. Baptists faced off against Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and

new religious movements such as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Americans had a bewildering array of religious options, which left many people asking which among the many churches was the most authentically Christian.

A major defense of the Baptist church as the only true faith came from Landmarkism, a movement that gained popularity through the influence of James Robinson Graves (1820–1893), a Tennessee preacher and journalist. Graves spread Landmarkist views as editor of *The Tennessee Baptist* (circulation 13,000 in 1859) and as an author (*Old Landmarkism: What Is It?*, published in 1880). According to the Landmarkist argument, the Baptists were not only the most faithful to biblical practices, the Baptist church was in the Bible. The church of the New Testament shared all the ancient "landmarks" of the Baptists, especially believer's baptism, and it was the one true church that survived to modern times, though often under different names. Moreover, the only authentic form of the church was the local community. Christ established a local fellowship, not a universal church (in the Catholic model) and not a national church (as in many Protestant models). Church membership, discipline, and rights to baptism and Communion were locally authorized and controlled. On this basis, Landmarkists believed in closed Communion—the Lord's Supper was open only to members in good standing in their local congregations. Communion required discipline, Landmarkists reasoned, and each church could know and discipline only its own members. This ecclesiology had obvious appeal for evangelicals who honored biblical authority while defending their independence.

Slavery and Schism

In the nineteenth century slavery divided the United States—racially, regionally, and politically, but also religiously. Such divisions resulted from fissures that were present a century earlier. Amid the celebration of liberty at the nation's founding, slavery was the glaring obstacle that separated rhetoric from reality. Some Baptists, including Leland, recognized the vast contradiction between slavery and a free nation, but most were as divided over slavery as the rest of the nation. Later, conflicts over slavery escalated into violent uprisings, often with religious motivations. Baptists played central roles in two famous slave revolts—an attempted insurrection in South Carolina initiated by Denmark Vesey (1767–1822), in 1822, and a bloody rebellion led by a Virginia slave, Nat Turner (1800–1831), in 1831. Turner's

insurgency, sparked by apocalyptic visions of godly violence against evil, was explicitly biblical in its justification. Both revolts ignited a fear of slave insurrection that lasted for years to come.

In large part because of conflicts over slavery, the three major Protestant denominations divided into northern and southern factions—Presbyterians in 1837, Methodists in 1844, and Baptists in 1845. These divisions were a portent of the looming national crisis. Not only did the churches fail to unite the nation, but religious arguments on both sides of the slavery controversy fueled the fires of war, providing theological justification for sectional division and violence.

Unlike Presbyterian and Methodist denominations, which reunited after the Civil War, the Baptist rupture created a permanent institution: the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), formed in May 1845. Although the conflict over slavery was the major reason that southerners established the SBC, a disagreement about missions was also involved. Many asked the controversial question: Were Baptists who owned slaves qualified to be missionaries? Georgia Baptists forced the issue by recommending James Reeve, a slave owner, for assignment with the American Baptist Home Mission Society. When the society rejected Reeve, southerners protested, asserting that slavery was a secular issue that should not invade missionary work. Southern representatives met in Augusta, Georgia, to develop plans for the SBC. Unlike the Triennial Convention, which operated under a “society” approach, allowing its agencies much autonomy, the SBC developed a “convention” strategy that more tightly controlled its various activities.

Organization for Mission and Publication

Despite their contrasting organizations, Baptists in both North and South shared similar objectives, namely missions and publications. In the North the Triennial Convention marked its division from southern Baptists by changing its name to the American Baptist Missionary Union (ABMU). The name both communicated the society-based approach to a single cause (foreign missions) and defied southern claims to sovereignty—the *American Baptist Missionary Union* would represent all Baptists in America. In the South the convention-based approach communicated a broader institution with boards for both home and international missions, but in reality foreign missions were the driving force, just as in the North.

International missions involved women as organizers, educators, and missionaries. Women’s leadership in missions

was not new, however. A combination of Baptist and Congregationalist women founded the Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes in 1800. In the same city in 1871 the Woman’s Baptist Foreign Mission Society was formed to send women to the mission field under the authority of the ABMU. A similar group formed that same year in Chicago—the Woman’s Baptist Missionary Society of the West—and three years later a San Francisco-based group emerged, the Woman’s Baptist Foreign Missionary Society of the Pacific Coast.

For Southern Baptists the place of women in missions achieved legendary status with Charlotte (“Lottie”) Diggs Moon (1840–1912). Born and educated in Virginia, Moon pursued a teaching career before entering missionary service. In 1873 the Foreign Mission Board sent her to China, where she served nearly forty years. Not only was she a tireless missionary in the field, Moon was an effective fundraiser. She called for a Christmas offering to fund missionaries and was especially successful in persuading Baptist women to give. Moon died on Christmas Eve of 1912, in part from malnutrition. For Southern Baptists, Moon’s death was characteristic of her sacrificial life for Christ. Five years later the offering she inspired became the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. In 2008 the SBC goal for the Lottie Moon offering was \$170 million.

In home missions, fierce rivalries developed between North and South. During the Civil War, the North’s War Department gave the Home Mission Society (HMS) permission to take over any Southern church unless its minister claimed loyalty to the Northern cause. Since very few Southern churches fit that description, the Home Mission Board (HMB) could confiscate church buildings and disperse congregations at will. Although the HMB rarely acted on this authority, the few instances in which churches were overtaken and Southern pastors were arrested aroused the resentment of Southern Baptists. In reaction to such Northern encroachment, the SBC asserted the traditional Baptist conviction for religious liberty. The state should not interfere with the church, they claimed, which was exactly what happened when a Northern government claimed the authority to subdue Southern churches. The resentment continued after the war as the Home Mission Society continued working in the South in defiance of the SBC’s Board of Domestic Missions (renamed the Home Mission Board in 1875). Northern Baptists justified their work in the South as an effort toward reunification after the war. The nation had reunited, they reasoned, as had other denominations, and Baptists should do



Charlotte "Lottie" Diggs Moon served nearly forty years as a missionary in China. Her service and fundraising inspired the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

likewise. And some reunification had taken place; several state Baptist conventions in the South aligned with the HMS. On the whole, however, Southern Baptists resisted realignment.

Despite much division, there was one area in which unity prevailed after the Civil War: publications. The American Baptist Publication Society (ABPS) greatly influenced Baptist education. Working through traveling colporteurs, this Philadelphia-based society distributed Bibles, confessions, hymnals, and especially Sunday school literature throughout the nation. The ABPS ignored the schisms over slavery and the Civil War, arguing that the North–South division centered on the missionary societies and had nothing to do with publications. Many southern Baptists agreed, continuing to use literature from the northern ABPS for decades after founding the SBC. In 1891 the SBC finally launched its own publishing enterprise, the Sunday School Board, which eventually overtook the ABPS in the South. Ironically, the Sunday School Board, which was late in coming

for the SBC, became the most influential bond of unity for the convention.

African American Baptist Autonomy

Most African Americans in the early nineteenth century encountered Christianity as slaves. The alignment between Christianity and slavery was deliberate. From the beginning of the slave trade in the Atlantic world, slavery was justified as a means of Christianizing slaves. Although many slaves rejected Christianity as a religion of bondage, others reshaped it to resonate with the experiences of slavery. When slaves accepted Christianity, they usually did so in evangelical communities, especially Baptist and Methodist churches. Unlike more liturgically formal denominations, Baptists and Methodists stressed revival experience that resonated with some African religious forms, especially experiences of ecstasy in worship and spirit possession.

The Baptist emphasis on local control allowed the possibility of independent congregations for slaves. A pioneer in this effort was George Liele (c.1750–1820), a Georgia slave who preached in the Savannah area. Liele influenced the early ministries of two slave preachers who then founded two of the earliest black Baptist congregations: David George (c.1742–1810), who helped to form the Silver Bluff church, in South Carolina, no later than 1775, and Andrew Bryan (1737–1812), who cofounded the First African Baptist Church, in Savannah, in 1788. The ministries of Liele, George, and Bryan were innovative and controversial. In most cases, however, slaves who accepted Christianity worshipped either in white-controlled congregations, which relegated slaves to separate seating and marginalized their status, or in secret worship services conducted by and for slaves.

In the North, African Americans founded churches, established associations, and pursued a variety of objectives in education and missions. Early northern churches included Boston's Joy Street Baptist Church (from 1804) and New York's Abyssinian Baptist Church, both founded in part by Thomas Paul (1773–1831), who was pastor at Joy Street for more than two decades. Racial prejudice and abolition influenced the formation of black Baptist churches and associations, including Providence Baptist Association and the Union Association, both in Ohio (1836), and the Colored Baptist Association and Friends to Humanity (1939), in Illinois, which was renamed Wood River Association in 1852. This associational zeal reached a zenith in 1840, when representatives met at Abyssinian Baptist Church to form the American Baptist Missionary Convention, which was a forerunner to the National Baptist Convention.

Theological Developments

Academic theology was a point of contention among Baptists. While some advocated theological education, others worried that doctrinal systems complicated the simple message of scripture and, in so doing, removed theology from the control of the people. John Leland was one of the strongest opponents of academic theologies. He associated doctrinal systems with a professionalized ministry that commandeered theology for the educated elite. Other Baptists disagreed, however. Brown University, which Baptists founded as the College of Rhode Island in 1764, trained theologians in the revivalist Calvinism of the Jonathan Edwards tradition, and several other Baptist colleges were formed to promote an educated ministry. These two strains of Baptist theology, populist and academic, coexisted in the nineteenth century. Some Baptists defended the necessity of theological education for ministers, while others adopted the virtues of the farmer-preacher model out of fears that doctrinal training would deflect attention from a plain reading of scripture.

Most Baptist theology in the nineteenth century represented some variety of Calvinism. But Arminianism never disappeared from Baptist life and was represented by many groups, including the Free Will Baptist Church, founded in 1780 by former Congregationalist lay preacher Benjamin Randall (1749–1808). The great majority of Baptists, however, adopted a moderate Calvinist theology that called everyone to repentance and made extensive use of revivals. Among the leading theologians in the Baptist tradition was John Leadley Dagg (1794–1884), professor and president of Mercer University, whose *Manual of Theology* of 1857 represented a strong Calvinist tradition. Dagg and other Baptist theologians claimed an explicitly biblical theology that resonated with deep currents in Baptist life. And yet Baptist theologians, like most other academic theologians in the nineteenth century, supported their claims for biblical authority with external proofs, especially drawn from the philosophical tradition of Scottish Common Sense Realism.

Immigration

The staggering growth of Baptist churches convinced many American Baptists that their denomination was uniquely suited to the United States. Baptists, they concluded, had a democratic church polity that best supported democracy and a tradition for religious liberty that best resembled the independent ethos of the nation. In his scathing attack on Methodism, for instance, J.R. Graves argued that the

Methodist system closely resembled Roman Catholicism, which he believed directly opposed American democracy. But the America that Baptists identified with changed rapidly as waves of immigration brought millions of Europeans to the country in the nineteenth century. Baptists responded in a variety of ways, including nativist reactions, especially against Catholic immigrants. Institutionally, however, Baptists seized upon the new immigrant population as an opportunity for home missions.

Included among the immigrants were Swedish and German Baptists, and their arrival prompted the American Baptist Home Mission Society and the Home Mission Board of the SBC to expand their efforts to support the new communities. There were 324 Swedish congregations by the beginning of the nineteenth century, most of which belonged to the Swedish Baptist General Conference, which formed in 1879. In 1945 the conference changed its name to the Baptist General Conference to represent the rise of non-Swedish members.

The first German Baptist church in America was founded in 1843 in Philadelphia. The church's pastor, Konrad Fleischmann (1812–1867), was instrumental in forming the General Conference of German Baptist Churches in North America, which was later renamed the North American Baptist Conference. The center of German Baptist education was the Rochester Theological Seminary, where August Rauschenbusch founded an area of German studies. It was while teaching at Rochester that August's son, Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918), profoundly influenced theological ethics and societal reform through his leadership in the Social Gospel movement. The department that August Rauschenbusch founded moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in the late 1940s, to become the freestanding North American Baptist Seminary, a name that it kept until 2007, when it took on the nondenominational name Sioux Falls Seminary.

Missions among Spanish-speaking people developed after the United States gained control over Texas territories in the Mexican-American War, with Baptist home missionaries from both major conventions increasing their work in Texas. And after the Spanish-American War, the American Baptist Home Mission Society led missionary efforts in Cuba and Puerto Rico. As a result of home missions, Mexican Baptist churches arose in San Antonio and El Paso in the 1880s and 1890s, and the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas was founded by 1910. In the early twentieth century Spanish-speaking people were a small percentage of

Baptists in the United States. That would change dramatically with the rise of Spanish-speaking immigrants in the late twentieth century.

The Twentieth Century

By the early twentieth century Baptists were one of the two largest Protestant groups in America, totaling over four million members. Their challenge, therefore, was not how to survive in the American religious landscape but how best to shape it. On this question there was great disagreement. Baptists were on both sides of nearly every major debate over theology, economics, social justice, and race. In all Baptist communities, the affinity for local church authority remained strong, though Baptists continued to seek cooperation. In 1905 Baptists from around the world sought international unity in founding the Baptist World Alliance (BWA). Despite the global witness of the BWA, complete unity among Baptists remained elusive, primarily because of the traditional Baptist conviction for local autonomy.

From “Northern” Baptists to “American” Baptists

Although northern Baptists traditionally resisted centralized authority, by the end of the nineteenth century they also recognized the difficulties of a denomination composed of autonomous agencies. Moreover, northern Baptists observed the success of the SBC, and they longed for a convention that would bring efficiency and unity to Baptist life in the North. When the Northern Baptist Convention began in 1907, it combined American Baptist organizations for missions and publications. The convention safeguarded the autonomy of the societies, each of which kept its own governing board and budget (though with the convention’s oversight). In 1950 the Northern Baptist Convention became the American Baptist Convention. Several agendas marked this transition: to recognize the convention’s reach across all regions of the nation, to expand through connections with other groups, and to reinvigorate Baptist life through ecumenical outreach and renewed efforts to honor Baptist history and identity. The convention changed its name again in 1972, becoming the American Baptist Churches in the USA. The shift from “Convention” to “Churches” in the name indicated the transition to a more flexible, less centralized structure that sought alignment with various Baptist groups. In the shifts between these three organizations, northern Baptists wrestled with the long-standing Baptist tensions of autonomy versus cooperation and society versus convention.

Poverty, Wealth, and the Gospel

The United States changed dramatically in the late nineteenth century. The rise of industry, combined with the arrival of millions of European immigrants, caused unprecedented growth in the cities. These social and economic changes pressured Baptists and other Protestants. Not only were many immigrants Jewish and Catholic, and thus a challenge for missions, but many of them were poor, and their struggles to eke out a living in the cities forced churches to face issues involving economic justice. Although industrialism brought great wealth to some, many, including children, toiled in sweatshops and endured extreme poverty.

Northern Baptists approached these new realities differently. One response came from Philadelphia minister Russell Conwell (1843–1925), whose book *Acres of Diamonds* (1915) asserted that wealth was a Christian virtue. Conwell emphasized the responsibilities as well as the rewards of wealth—the rich should use their money for God’s kingdom—and his philanthropic theology retained a self-help emphasis, which called on individuals to improve their own situations. This perspective conflicted with the Social Gospel movement, which recognized that individual effort alone could not solve social crises. Instead, entire economic systems needed transformation; systemic injustices demanded systemic corrections, and the traditional Christian gospel of individual conversion was inadequate when society itself needed renewal. The most prominent theologian of the Social Gospel was Walter Rauschenbusch, who discovered his academic vocation while pastoring in the poverty-stricken Hell’s Kitchen area of New York City. Rauschenbusch crafted a theology for societal reform in books entitled *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907), *Christianizing the Social Order* (1912), and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917). Rauschenbusch’s theology was optimistic, influential, and Baptist. In a series of articles entitled “Why I am a Baptist” (1905–1906), Rauschenbusch praised Baptists for elevating personal experience above creeds, honoring democratic polity instead of loyalty to bishops, and prioritizing Christ-centered morality over ritualistic formality in faith and worship.

Theological Controversy: Fundamentalism versus Modernism

Rauschenbusch’s vision for a Social Gospel was part of a larger movement called Protestant liberalism (or “modernism”). The modernist movement met strong resistance from

fundamentalism, a movement comprising evangelicals who believed that modernism threatened true Christianity at its biblical foundations. Although the modernist–fundamentalist crisis was broad, covering several denominations, it especially divided Baptists and Presbyterians.

Protestant modernism arose out of a concern that traditional Christianity was irrelevant in the modern world. Not only did the gospel need to meet the social needs of the city, modernists believed, it also needed to meet the intellectual needs of a scientifically literate society. Of specific concern were recent challenges to scripture, especially Charles Darwin’s theory of the evolutionary development of life, which seemed to contradict the biblical explanation of creation, and the rise of historical–critical methods of interpreting texts, through which modern interpreters questioned the historical accuracy of the Bible. Protestant modernists responded to these challenges. Evolution was compatible with Christianity, they argued, because God worked within the natural process of evolution. This view of God and history was optimistic. Sin could be overcome through human effort. Gone was a view of Christ’s atonement as a sacrifice for sin; instead, Jesus was a moral example, demonstrating human potential for good. And scriptures, along with doctrines and creeds, were vital but fallible records of human experience that needed revision as people evolved into clearer understandings of God.

Several modernist leaders were Baptists, including Shailer Mathews (1863–1941), dean of the University of Chicago Divinity School, and Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878–1969), prominent New York minister and professor at Union Theological Seminary. In 1922 Fosdick preached his famous sermon “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?”—a widely published foray into the controversy between modernists and fundamentalists. In opposition to fundamentalism, Fosdick asserted several traditional Baptist convictions that fit well with modernism, especially religious liberty, the priority of individual experience, and the rejection of authoritarian creeds.

But Baptist convictions could also support fundamentalism. It was probably a Baptist who first used the term *fundamentalist*—Curtis Lee Laws (1868–1946), editor of the popular newspaper the *Watchman-Examiner*. Several Baptists led the movement, including Amzi Clarence Dixon (1854–1925), who edited an influential series called *The Fundamentals*, and William Bell Riley (1861–1947), a Minneapolis pastor who opposed liberalism in education by founding several schools, including Northwestern Evangelical

Seminary (1935). Riley became the founding member of the World’s Christian Fundamentals Association (WCFA, 1919), which entered the fray against evolutionism on the nation’s most visible stage—the famous Scopes Trial of 1925. The WCFA chose William Jennings Bryan to prosecute the case against John Scopes, a biology teacher accused of illegally teaching evolution to high school students in Dayton, Tennessee. Although Bryan and the state won the trial, the media spectacle branded fundamentalism as a hick theology, hopelessly out of place in a progressive, modern nation.

Although fundamentalism lost its voice in much of the Northern Baptist Convention, it developed strength through other networks, especially the Independent Baptist movement, which began as a reaction to modernist strength in the Northern Baptist Convention, though the movement was never limited to the North. Early Independent Baptists included J. Frank Norris (1877–1952), an influential pastor in Fort Worth, Texas. The title of Norris’s latest biography described him as “God’s Rascal”; others called him the “Texas Tornado,” a moniker he earned from confrontational rampages against alcohol, liberalism, and Catholicism. Norris’s Fort Worth congregation grew to fifteen thousand, and for thirteen years he simultaneously pastored Temple Baptist in Detroit, Michigan, which had a membership of ten thousand. Moreover, Norris expanded his influence by editing several newspapers, including *The Baptist Standard* and *The Fundamentalist*. One of the most influential Independent Baptists of the twentieth century was Jerry Falwell (1933–2007), pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, and founder of the Moral Majority in 1979. Falwell used the mass media to wage crusades against abortion, homosexuality, and the Equal Rights Amendment.

Growth and Division in the Southern Baptist Convention

The SBC is the largest Protestant denomination in the United States, growing in membership from 3.6 million members in 1925 to 15.9 million in 2000. This growth has been achieved in spite of—or perhaps because of—much controversy, including rifts that centered on central Baptist convictions, especially the authority of scripture, religious liberty, and local autonomy in relation to centralized denominational institutions. Although each of these convictions was important to nearly every controversy, the rhetoric of the debates usually fixated on the integrity of the Bible. Similar to the debates that fragmented Northern

Baptists in the 1920s, a series of controversies over biblical inerrancy raged among Southern Baptists, beginning in the 1960s.

When Baptists debated the Bible, women's ordination was usually a divisive issue. Since the beginnings of the Baptist movement, women have had a prominent place in church life, though most often not in positions of leadership over men. Lottie Moon's tenacity as a missionary pushed the limits of Southern Baptist acceptance of women in religious leadership, though Moon never sought ordination. Women had more opportunities in the North, where some Baptist churches ordained women to preach. The first ordained woman was probably Frances Townsley (1849–1909) of Massachusetts, who was ordained in 1885. In 1921 the Northern Baptist Convention selected the first woman ever to lead a denomination, Helen B. Montgomery (1861–1934). A biblical scholar, Montgomery published the first translation of the New Testament by a woman. Montgomery was also socially progressive, an advocate of suffrage and a colleague of Frances Willard, a well-known reformer. Montgomery's legacy thrived among Northern Baptists: the ABC officially advocated women's full equality in ministry in 1965.

The response to women's ordination was much different in the South, however. A woman was not elected as a convention officer until 1963—forty-two years after Montgomery's presidency in the northern convention—and a woman has never served as president of the SBC. The first woman ordained to the ministry in the SBC was Addie Davis (1917–2005), in August 1964, and that action by Watts Street Baptist Church in Durham, North Carolina, stirred controversy. In 1973 the SBC issued a statement opposing women's liberation movements and advocating traditionally subordinate roles for women. In the early 1980s the SBC opposed the Equal Rights Amendment and stated that women had the same "worth" as men, though they had different responsibilities. These resolutions did not speak for the entire convention, however. Conferences were held to discuss women's activity in ministry in the 1970s and 1980s, and by the mid-1980s both Southern and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminaries voiced support for women in pastoral ministry. This shift in support of women's ordination in the seminaries contributed to the perception among conservatives that the SBC needed a change in direction. Just as the seminaries began to support women as ministers, the SBC affirmed an official statement against women's ordination in 1984.

These disputes were elements of a broader controversy, as conservatives in the denomination attempted to reverse what they perceived as a trend toward liberalism. By the late 1970s conservative leaders developed a strategy for overtaking the SBC. The plan was to elect a series of conservative presidents who would appoint only conservatives in leadership positions, allowing them to control all areas of the SBC. Those who devised this strategy included Paige Patterson, head of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, Texas, and Adrian Rogers (1931–2005), pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. The election of Rogers to the presidency in 1979 started the process for conservative control. Over the next eleven years, each meeting of the convention was a struggle between conservatives and self-proclaimed "moderates," with each side calling itself defenders of authentic Baptist identity. Conservatives argued that the moderates threatened the conservative doctrinal and biblical foundations that Baptists had always supported. Most critically, conservatives claimed, liberalism in seminaries undermined the authority of scripture and threatened to populate churches with ministers who doubted biblical truth. Moderates countered that the conservatives' drive for doctrinal uniformity conflicted with cherished Baptist convictions for liberty of conscience. Baptists had never agreed on doctrinal issues, moderates pointed out, and to force conformity in an authoritative convention was decidedly non-Baptist. By 1990 conservatives had gained control of the convention. In response, moderates formed two new groups, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Alliance of Baptists, and established new divinity schools at Baylor, Mercer, Gardner-Webb, and other universities, along with seminaries such as the Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia.

African American Baptist Conventions

At the end of the twentieth century the largest African American denomination in America was the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., with 3.5 million members. The NBC was formed in 1895, when representatives from three African American Baptist conventions—all formed in the 1880s—united to establish a new organization, national in scope and focused on missions and education. The first president was Elias Camp Morris (1855–1922), an Arkansas minister who was born a slave in Georgia. During Morris's presidency, the convention divided over the ownership of its publication board, which had become enormously successful under the leadership of Richard Henry Boyd

(1843–1922). When Morris pushed for the NBC's control of the board, a lawsuit ensued that favored Boyd's ownership. Boyd and his followers subsequently withdrew from the NBC in 1915, forming the National Baptist Convention of America.

The next major division of the NBC involved the civil rights movement. With the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968), the drive for civil rights was intimately connected with Baptist communities. King was a Baptist minister, as were his father and grandfather. While working on his PhD dissertation at Boston University, King accepted the call to the pastorate of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. After the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955 launched King into the national consciousness, his prophetic message for justice and nonviolent resistance received much attention—not only for its effectiveness and the heated reactions that ensued, but also for its call to religious communities to take up the struggle. Although nearly all African American Baptists agreed with King's goals, some rejected his methods. Perhaps the most prominent opponent of King's use of civil disobedience was Joseph H. Jackson (1900–1990), president of the NBC for nearly thirty years. King intended for civil disobedience to be peaceful, Christian, and effective, but Jackson called it criminal, disruptive, and unpatriotic. Jackson preferred more gradual approaches, including cooperation with the NAACP, and an emphasis on education, including religious instruction to expose racism as a spiritual disease. Many of those supportive of King opposed Jackson, not only for his distaste for civil rights but also for his domineering leadership style. Those critical of Jackson formed a new convention in 1961, the Progressive National Baptist Convention. By the mid-1990s the PNBC claimed 2.5 million members and 2,000 churches, some of which were dually aligned with the American Baptist Convention.

Twenty-first Century Trends

At the beginning of the twenty-first century at least three realities forced Baptists to reassess their identity: the success of nondenominationalism, a resurgence of Calvinist evangelicalism, and new strategies for cooperation.

Baptists in a Postdenominational Religious Culture

Membership in nondenominational churches increased dramatically at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The popularity of these churches created an increasingly postdenominational religious culture that challenged traditional

churches. In order to connect with the appeal of nondenominational communities, some churches maintained partnerships with denominations but without advertising denominational affiliations in the names of their churches. For example, the Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, formed multiple congregations and partnered with the SBC, though without identifying itself exclusively as a Baptist church. Saddleback's pastor, Rick Warren, reached a level of fame far beyond denominational boundaries, selling millions of copies of his books, including *The Purpose Driven Life* (2002), and offering the invocation at President Barack Obama's inauguration in 2009. On his Web site, Warren claimed to teach “theology without using theological terms and telling people it is theology”—an educational strategy that attempted to address human needs with nontraditional and nondenominational methods. This trend has led some churches to drop the name “Baptist” in favor of brands that communicate a positive, spiritual message, while casting aside traditional labels that some perceive as outdated and legalistic. In probably the most visible example, the Southern Baptist Convention changed the name of its Baptist bookstores to LifeWay Christian Stores, and even changed the name of the Sunday School Board to LifeWay Christian Resources. The nondenominational movement has influenced the American religious landscape with its megachurches and bestselling authors. But perhaps more prominently, the success of unaffiliated churches has influenced traditional denominations to rethink their identities.

The Perseverance of Calvinism

The debate between Calvinism and Arminianism has always engaged Baptists. Weary of theological quarrels, John Leland asserted that preachers should be Calvinist in proclaiming God's sovereignty and Arminian in asserting human freedom. Much Baptist theology has pursued this moderately Calvinist position, retaining a sense of God's authority without sacrificing human agency. But that balance has been difficult to achieve. At the start of the twenty-first century, evangelical Calvinism surged in Baptist denominations. With the downfall of the moderate movement in the SBC, the convention moved in a more Calvinist direction with leaders such as Albert Mohler, president of Southern Seminary. Perhaps the most prominent Calvinist thinker among Baptists was John Piper, bestselling author and pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The central thrust of the

renewed popularity of Calvinism among Baptists seemed to be a hunger for doctrinal depth in what some perceived to be a shallow religious culture.

The Quest for Unity

Baptist history is a narrative of conflict. Despite their passion for independence, Baptists have always sought cooperation, though most efforts toward unity have caused further divisions. In the early twenty-first century, Baptists made significant moves toward reconciliation. In January 2005 the four predominantly African American Baptist denominations cooperated in a historic meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. These denominations—the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., the National Baptist Convention of America, Inc., the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., and the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America—met not only to signify their ecclesial unity, they also issued statements calling for an end to the war in Iraq and opposing several domestic policies of President George W. Bush's administration.

Just over a year later, former president Jimmy Carter convened a group of Baptists to represent the vast diversity of Baptist life, moving across geographical, racial, theological, and cultural differences. These representatives produced a "North American Baptist Covenant," which stressed social justice on behalf of the poor and advocated "religious liberty and respect for religious diversity." A meeting of this New Baptist Covenant in early 2008 included over thirty Baptist groups. Noticeably absent was the Southern Baptist Convention, and many conservatives viewed the covenant as a politically liberal response to the politically conservative agendas of the SBC, which had long affiliated with the Republican Party and the Religious Right. In contrast, supporters of the New Baptist Covenant included not only Carter but also other prominent Democrats, including former president Bill Clinton and former vice president Al Gore. The formation of the New Baptist Covenant, and the reaction against it, demonstrated how thoroughly Baptist identity had become politicized—an ironic development for a tradition noted for advocating religious liberty and the separation of church and state.

Conclusion

Although the Baptist denomination has a global presence, 75 percent of the world's Baptists live in the United States. Several factors account for Baptist success in North America. Theologically, most Baptists have resisted creeds, allowing

for much diversity in doctrinal convictions. This flexibility has allowed Baptists to expand their reach across the theological spectrum. Baptists have been leading liberal theologians, such as Walter Rauschenbusch, and prominent fundamentalists, such as Jerry Falwell. Even with this theological diversity, most Baptists have advocated three convictions that have been enormously successful in populating the American religious landscape: the importance of revivalism, the necessity of missionary zeal (both at home and abroad), and ultimate allegiance to the Bible in theology and practice. Clearly Baptists have disagreed on these issues. They have debated revivalist theologies and strategies, argued over whether missionary societies were an asset to missions or their downfall, and divided over the inerrancy of scripture. But even divisions on these points have furthered Baptist growth, allowing for a variety of communities that claim the name Baptist. Because of their conviction for local church autonomy, theological divisions have pushed Baptists outward, allowing them to reinvent themselves in different locations to reach diverse communities. This conviction for autonomy has never eclipsed Baptists' desire for unity, but Baptist organizations have always been tenuous. In Baptist life, commitments to autonomy and independence have both stimulated Baptist growth and imperiled large-scale Baptist cooperation.

See also *Anabaptists*; *Baptists* entries; *Bible: Interpretation of*; *Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage*; *Canada: Protestants and the United Church of Canada*; *Fundamentalism*; *Latino American Religion*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Missions* entries; *Revivalism* entries.

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Benevolent Empire

The Benevolent Empire was a name given to a group of interrelated organizations born of revivalism and Protestant evangelicalism in the first part of the nineteenth century in the United States. These groups included missionary societies, Bible and tract societies, and educational and Sunday school societies that eventually became national presences. They laid the foundations for a variety of later reform organizations, some religious and some secular, including those associated with temperance, antislavery, and women's rights. Also known as the Evangelical United Front, the Benevolent Empire was an interdenominational movement that used new organizational means associated with the growth of market capitalism to create communities of like-minded Christians, harnessing their energies in nationally oriented evangelical and reform causes. In addition, Benevolent Empire organizations tried to extend the reach of evangelical Christianity to include non-Christian peoples, both foreign and domestic. In the process of using new measures—including interlocking organizational directorates, mass communications, and nationally coordinated fundraising—the Benevolent Empire helped to transform the relationship between Protestantism and American society.

The major Benevolent Empire organizations included the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (chartered in 1812), the American Bible Society (1816), the American Sunday School Union (1824), and the American Tract Society (1825), with the American Education Society (1815) and the American Home Missionary Society (1826) also a part of the united effort. A generation after they began

to flourish, these organizations spawned a second wave of reform that took on a life of its own outside the Protestant evangelical establishment. Of these, the American Temperance Society (1826) and the American Anti-Slavery Society (1833) both had significant and long-lasting effects on American civic and political life, although their rise to visibility also spelled the end of the Benevolent Empire model of cooperative evangelical effort that gave rise to them.

Benevolent Origins: Ideological and Denominational Roots

Evangelically driven reform societies were a presence in much of the English-speaking world in the nineteenth century. Those that grew and flourished in the first half of the century in the United States and that came to make up the Benevolent Empire resembled those elsewhere dedicated to spreading a particular, theologically driven vision of individual behavior and cultural values through the use of sophisticated organizational and marketing techniques. American Benevolent Empire organizations with national aspirations arose in the northeastern part of the United States between about 1790 and 1830. These organizations nearly always were patterned after, and sometimes directly linked to, similar organizations among British dissenting groups. They were part of a transatlantic impulse in which religiously motivated people organized into voluntary associations to evangelize, using both modern techniques of business management and mass media as means to their goal.

Theological and Organizational Roots

In the United States several ideological factors converged to give rise to the missionary, education, and tract organizations that arose in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth and that became the regional prototypes for Benevolent Empire associations. These included a Neo-Calvinist theology that emphasized self-abnegation and disinterested service to others; transatlantic connections with dissenter groups, who themselves were energized by opposition to the French Revolution to increase evangelical outreach; and an internal denominational split between theologically conservative Congregationalist and Presbyterian elites, on the one hand, and liberal rationalists from the same traditions, on the other.

Most Benevolent Empire organizations had common theological roots in the Hopkinsian Calvinist tradition, the “New Divinity,” that arose in Congregational New

England and Presbyterian New York and New Jersey between about 1760 and 1790. The Reverend Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803), pastor of the First Congregational Church in Newport, Rhode Island, and one of the principal proponents of this theology, claimed the spiritual mantle of the renowned Jonathan Edwards. Their theology focused on the concept of *disinterested benevolence*, or the willingness to seek the good of the whole as decreed by God’s plan and to abandon selfishness, the source of all sin. Or, as Hopkins put it,

No man can know that he loves God until he does really love him; that is, until he does seek his glory above all things, and is disposed to say, “Let God be glorified, whatever may be necessary in order to it,” without making any exception; and this is to be willing to be damned, if this be necessary for the glory of God. (*The Works of Samuel Hopkins, D.D.*, 148.)

The philosophy of turning away from self and toward work for the good of all became the underpinning of a movement that lasted several generations. Organizations formed on Hopkinsian principles had in common the belief that Christian individuals were called to work for the good of all.

At about the time the New Divinity gained adherents among the conservative elite Calvinist ministry in the Northeast. Protestant dissenters in Britain, including mainly Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists, formed organizations designed to evangelize, both within Britain and in parts of the world that were becoming parts of its empire. American Calvinists and British Nonconformists had long enjoyed a correspondence with one another. Major developments among the one group were readily known by the other. Jonathan Edwards’s 1747 plea for corporate concerts of prayer for the revival of religion around the world was a shared project for both. During the last third of the eighteenth century, as British Nonconformists began to rely on printed materials to extend the reach of evangelization efforts to the poor, to the unchurched, and to non-Christians in foreign parts, American Calvinist ministers quickly became aware of those efforts. A growing British evangelical press supported the extension of missionary and tract organizations whose goal, in an era of revolution on the Continent, was to maintain and to extend religious values that would make for a well-ordered society.

The Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor, founded in 1750, was the first of Britain's tract societies in which the distribution of printed literature became a major vehicle for evangelization. A Sunday School Society, organized in London in 1785, brought institutional advocacy to the spread of Sabbath schools. By the 1790s efforts to use mass forms of communication to spread religious values picked up speed with the founding of missionary societies that relied on print to recruit supporters and attract funding. These organizations included the London Missionary Society (founded in 1794 by British Baptists), the Religious Tract Society (founded by Hannah More in 1799), and the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804).

The earliest American evangelical organizers knew of British efforts—their goals, their methods, and their organizational practices. The books, journals, and society reports used by the British to publicize their efforts provided prototypes for would-be local organizers, who, by the late 1790s, began to form home-grown groups in the United States. Once print became a major factor in generating membership and sustaining the identification of members with new geographically dispersed organizations, it was only a matter of time before economies of scale led to the mergers of the smaller organizations into larger umbrella groups that could handle recruitment, fundraising and expenditures, and print dissemination more efficiently from centralized locations such as New York, Philadelphia, and Boston.

The Second Great Awakening and University Politics

Although the theology of evangelical benevolence and the example of British organizations provided important preconditions for the rise of evangelical organizations in the American Northeast during this period, their appearance on the scene has been most strongly associated with what has been called the Second Great Awakening. Beginning in the late 1790s and continuing through the mid-1830s, an orientation toward revival became a marker of evangelical identity among many associated with the Calvinist tradition in the United States. This revivalism, both as a shared practice and as a sign of a distinct theological orientation, sparked a widening split between orthodox and rationalist elements of the New England Congregationalist establishment. By the 1820s the movement resulted in a full-fledged schism between orthodox Congregationalists and Unitarians, with complete religious disestablishment an accomplished fact everywhere in the region by 1833.

With disestablishment, the role of religion in society was transformed. In the new religiously pluralist environment, denominations now competed with each other for adherents and resources. As evangelical activism and outreach received new emphasis, affiliated parachurch organizations sprang up to organize adherents in new ways to maintain religious identity. Distinctive theological differences and competition for confessional loyalty played a larger role in New England in the earliest stages of Benevolent Empire organization than it did in New York, Pennsylvania, or New Jersey, where disestablishment was already the rule and where there was less at stake in terms of competition for real property or civic influence. By the 1820s and 1830s, however, competition for communicants had become the common rule there, with the revivals of Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875)—a New York Presbyterian and lawyer turned preacher—playing a particularly visible role. What was to be the relationship between religious and civic values in a nation where religious establishments would no longer serve as a formal pillar of social authority and order? The sociologist Michael P. Young has argued (in *Bearing Witness against Sin*, 2006, p.49) that the Second Great Awakening was less important in effecting direct change in actual religious practice among Americans than in establishing “religious competition among evangelical Protestants [that] created a national religious audience before there was a truly national economic market or a national electorate.” Although religious awakening was the governing metaphor of the time, what may really have been at stake was an organizational revolution sparked by shifting local and translocal realignments and power shifts.

New England's Old Calvinists, who had the most to lose through erosion of their power, by the 1790s called for a new wave of revivals, which they linked explicitly with Edwards's 1747 call for prayer for the revival of true religion. Connecticut's Yale University, under the leadership of President Timothy Dwight (a grandson of Edwards), became the training grounds for those advocating revival-inspired conversion. Massachusetts's Harvard University, in contrast, served as the seminary of choice for the portion of the establishment that had adopted rationalist and gradualist approaches to both religion and life. The Yale group had strong links to Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed groups in New York and New Jersey; the Harvard-trained ministry, cosmopolitan and market-oriented, dominated mainly Boston and its environs.

Dwight, the president of Yale, was concerned not only about right theology but also about cultural changes he feared might transform a milieu dominated by the Congregational (and Federalist) elite into at best a democratic anarchy and at worst a clergy-killing mirror of the atheistic French. Jedidiah Morse, who was perhaps the most prominent of Massachusetts's conservative clergy, took the lead in denouncing liberalism as the road to atheism. He turned to the press to combat the forces of irreligion, denouncing a purported international conspiracy against religion led by a group of European atheists, the Bavarian Illuminati. Alarms about a rising tide of religious disaffection combined with calls for religious revivals, which were formally advocated by the Connecticut General Association of Ministers in 1798. In response to attacks on Calvinist Christianity, the threat of disestablishment, and a rising tide of irreligion, the orthodox clergy preached a renewed attention to conversion, as well as to the biblical Great Commission (Matthew 28: 16–20), in which Jesus exhorts his followers to spread the gospel.

By 1805 the appointment of liberal minister Henry Ware to the Hollis Professorship of Divinity at Harvard signaled to the more conservative and moderate Calvinist faction the institutional triumph of liberalism. With their control of the religious establishment slipping, “orthodox Calvinists” entered into battles with the liberals over the control of Massachusetts's Congregational churches. In the process they came increasingly to emphasize their theological distinctiveness, which consisted in their orientation to revivals and religious conversions, a theology based in benevolence, and an emphasis on evangelization. To realize their newly articulated objectives, they founded an institution dedicated to educating an evangelical ministry, Andover Seminary (1807), which over time became a headquarters for Benevolent Empire activity and a training ground for its clerical leadership. In addition, in the year of Ware's appointment as Hollis Professor, the conservatives began to use the press in systematic ways to yoke missionary organization and extension with the antiliberal cause. The *Panoplist*, a magazine of Christian biography and missionary work published by the Massachusetts Missionary Society and edited by Morse, fused benevolent causes and antiliberal theology, in the process helping to create a new evangelical audience for religious literature in the Northeast.

These factors—evangelical impulse, British models, the theology of benevolence, and the culture of revivalism—provided rationales for organizations that brought together geographically dispersed devotees into a united effort.

Although the initial efforts were locally organized and managed, they had in common governing boards that included prominent ministers and laypeople; a need for fundraising on a larger scale than before; the production of either journals or annual reports to give heightened visibility to organizations; and the necessity to engage in public relations, both as an evangelical imperative and as a practical matter of economic survival. In the early days of their existence, ministerial associations tended to be the driving force behind many of these organizations, with women often a strong behind-the-scenes force. Over time, however, the functions of these organizations necessitated separate incorporation as legal entities and the inclusion of lay directors, executive secretaries, or other officers. Organizational boards often read like a list of the most prominent evangelical civic leaders of the new market-driven Northeast, with bankers, lawyers, and merchants presiding over well-organized and integrated initiatives.

Benevolence Abroad: Foreign Missions

Evangelicals first organized in major ways around missionary endeavors. Missions had existed in New England and the Atlantic states since European settlement began. But evangelical ferment, sparked by British precedent and a desire to differentiate the religion of the converted from the religion of the complacent, led to the formation of missionary organizations such as the New York Missionary Society (1796), the Northern (New York) Missionary Society (1797), the Missionary Society of Connecticut (1798), and the Massachusetts Missionary Society (1799), among others. Oriented not only to evangelization as a general goal but to the distinctive experience of the converted and their need to promulgate their own social values, these organizations were intended to support conversion of the “heathen,” to spread revivals, and to ensure that the sons and daughters of the Yankee exodus continued to be churchied in the ways of their fathers and mothers.

Churches had a long history of sponsoring missionary efforts in New England and New York aimed at the conversion of Indians. The British- and Anglican-based Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, for example, played a major role in helping to fund the Congregational mission to the Indians it set up in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in 1734. Efforts to Christianize Indians in New York and New Jersey proceeded throughout this period as well. (By “conversion,” missionaries meant not only adoption of Christian beliefs and religious practices but also of values

associated with settled agriculture and literacy—a set of goals that would carry over into work with non-Christians in foreign lands.) By the last third of the eighteenth century, the increasing flow of out-migrants to new white settlements in remote areas led to concern among the established clergy of New England and among mid-Atlantic Presbyterians that missionary efforts ought to focus not only on conversion of the Indians but also on the religious needs of those moving to far-flung regions in search of land. By 1797 the Connecticut General Association, in consultation with the local ministerial associations of the state, determined to constitute a state missionary society, whose aims would be “to Christianize the heathen in North America and to support and promote Christian knowledge in the new settlements within the United States.”

Presbyterians and Congregationalists of Massachusetts, New York, New Hampshire, and Vermont quickly followed suit with the incorporation of similar state organizations, and Baptists in many locations formed organizations of their own as well. The larger organizations published their own missionary magazines to disseminate news of evangelical progress to large groups of people, to raise funds for continuing efforts, and to provide godly reading material, particularly for those in newly settled areas without the services of regular pastors. The *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* and the *New York Missionary Magazine* began publication in 1800, the *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine* and the *Baptist Missionary Magazine* in 1803. Women’s missionary organizations and charitable “cent societies,” whose institutional structures nearly always remained local, contributed to these efforts as well.

The Haystack Revival and the Rise of National Organizations

Just as the desire to expand missionary activity produced the first evangelically inspired local organizations, they also produced the first Benevolent Empire organization with national aspirations. Inspired by the example of the British Baptist missionary William Carey and his *Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen* (1792), five earnest young men from Williams College, who were converted in the so-called Haystack Revival in 1806, lobbied the orthodox wing of the established Massachusetts ministry until, in 1810, they gained support for their own missionary project. The first foreign missionary association in the United States, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), proposed to send evangelists to foreign

nations to convert non-Christians. Samuel Mills, the leader of the Williams group (and a future founder of the American Bible Society as well as the ABCFM), spearheaded the effort to persuade the established Congregational clergy to support the first foreign effort, a mission to south Asia along the lines of those of Carey and the Baptists.

With the ABCFM, evangelical benevolent organizations began to aspire to a larger reach and scope. The desire to extend the geographic reach of the new missionary effort led to an invitation by the Massachusetts General Association of Ministers to the General Association of Connecticut, requesting that they send representatives to a governing board. With the addition of four representatives from Connecticut to five from Massachusetts, the American Board came into existence as a foreign missionary organization that its founders hoped would mirror the aspirations and successes of its British counterpart. Its constitution specified that at least one-third of the membership of the board would consist of laypeople and at least one-third of clergy, with the remaining one-third to be drawn from either group. When formally incorporated as a legal entity in 1812, however, the American Board became separate from the organizations from which it sprang, with four designated fields of missionary endeavor: people of ancient civilizations, primitive cultures, the ancient Christian churches, and Islam. The Presbyterian General Assembly endorsed the efforts of the ABCFM, but the New York Presbyterians and Dutch Reformed organized their own foreign mission association in 1817. In 1826, however, the two groups merged into one under the ABCFM designation, with membership drawn not only from much of New England but also from much of New York, New Jersey, and eastern Pennsylvania. The American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS), born of the conversion of American Board missionaries Adoniram and Ann Hasseltine Judson to the Baptist faith while on mission in Burma in 1814, and similar in aim and organization to the Congregational and Presbyterian Societies, always remained a separate and parallel effort.

American Board Missionaries

The American Board sent its first delegation of missionaries to Marathi, British India, in 1813. In the next quarter-century its agents established foreign missions in fourteen locations in China, Asia Minor, south Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Islands. Beginning in 1817, home missions to the Cherokee, the Chickasaw, the Choctaw, and the Osage Indian peoples were established. Wherever American Board

missions were planted, they had a common agenda: cultivating native evangelists, opening schools to teach literacy skills, translating the Bible into local languages, and inculcating a set of cultural values related to family and work that would integrate the evangelized groups into the Euro-American cultural orbit. Young men who aspired to missionary work were required to be married—in part to allow for a stable family existence in a foreign environment, in part to head off any tendency unattached men might have to marry local women. For the first time, women might take on the work of missionaries as well by marrying young men bound for foreign evangelization. Women were active partners in the missionary endeavor. They were charged not only with making homes and families for male missionaries, but also with the specific work of evangelizing women and children. Often a particular concern, not only for the women missionaries but for readers following mission efforts back home, was finding ways to raise the status of women in “foreign” cultures.

Missionary exploits received significant coverage in the newly prominent religious press of the period. The American Board’s *Panoplist and Missionary Magazine*, successor to the *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine*, thrived under the editorship of Jeremiah Evarts, later the corresponding secretary of the organization. The periodical became an all-purpose missionary organ conveying information on evangelism efforts, both foreign and domestic, and represented a new mass medium that served as an alternative to the secular press for many of the pious. Read by women as well as by men, missionary periodicals fueled the formation of evangelical communities of identity and common purpose—a national “virtual community” in a country where organizations of other types with national reach were still weak or nonexistent. The print media provided stories of revivals and missionary exploits, advice, pious meditation, and scriptural commentary that gave its readers a common vocabulary and universe of discourse.

Benevolence at Home: The Benevolent Empire and Print Evangelization

In contrast to the foreign mission effort, which had its strongest American roots in New England Congregationalism, the work of Bible production, distribution, and dissemination began largely in the Middle Atlantic states, particularly among Presbyterians of New Jersey and Philadelphia. The city, a major center of commercial activity and print production in the early Republic, was a prime location for an

evangelical ministry that focused, as its primary activity, on dissemination of the Word of God “without note or commentary.” Although this region gave rise to the first local American Bible societies, these groups quickly spread to other areas dominated by educated and well-capitalized religious elites. Modeled on the British and Foreign Bible Society, founded in 1804, Bible societies formed quickly in 1808 and 1809 in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York. Twenty-eight local and regional societies existed in the Northeast by 1816, with nearly a hundred nationwide. These bodies organized to raise money to purchase Bibles and to find ways to distribute them to the needy. Since the principle of *sola scriptura*—the sufficiency of the Bible alone—lay at the heart of the Calvinist tradition, knowledge of true religion required direct access to scripture by literate individuals. In a world where literacy was tied to religious responsibility, access to the Bible meant not only the ability to know the sacred, it also implied the ability to read in general.

Nationalization of Bible Societies

As with missionary societies, Bible societies first existed as independent or loosely affiliated organizations headed by wealthy laymen, mainly merchants and local professionals, as well as by clergy. They formed nerve centers for the collection of funds and the distribution of Bibles to the poor and indigent within their respective geographic areas. However, a report in 1813 by ABCFM missionary Samuel Mills, who had toured the West with fellow missionary J. F. Schermerhorn, triggered an effort at national organization linked to the needs of that newly expanding realm of missionary activity. Mills, a Connecticut Congregationalist minister who had been a leader in the Williams College Haystack prayer group and was one of the major organizers of the American Board, went on a missionary journey to the Mississippi Valley in 1812. On his return, he spoke with urgency to the problem of supplying white settlers there, and the unchurched everywhere, with appropriate religious materials—an effort that might require up to half a million Bibles. Not coincidentally, his pleas took on added force because many of those without Bibles in the West were Roman Catholic and perceived as a threat to the good order of Protestant America—a Benevolent Empire theme that would grow in importance as time went on. “The existing societies are not able to do this work,” Mills wrote. “They want union; they want cooperation; they want resources. If a National

Institution cannot be formed, application ought to be made immediately to the British and Foreign Bible Society for aid.” (*The Centennial History of the American Bible Society*, 15.)

Mills’s cry of alarm found a response in both the Philadelphia Bible Society, which began a massive effort to coordinate the supply of the needed materials, and in Elias Boudinot, a prominent New Jersey Presbyterian layman who had served in the Continental and U.S. Congresses, as a Princeton University trustee, and as president of the New Jersey Bible Society. Boudinot, like Morse and his Connecticut theocrat colleagues, had since Thomas Paine’s *The Age of Reason* (1795) feared the inroads of deism and rationalism on American life. Boudinot promoted Mills’s plan for a national organization. After considerable effort and some opposition from the stronger local societies (including Philadelphia’s), he succeeded in forming a national organization for the distribution of Bibles that included six different denominations. The emphasis on the mutual cooperation of geographically dispersed and confessionally different groups to promote a common evangelical Christian agenda became an important hallmark of Benevolent Empire organizations. For the American Bible Society (ABS), it was also the source of the stipulation that the Bibles distributed be “without note or commentary.”

Under Boudinot’s leadership, the American Bible Society was established in New York in 1816 to coordinate the efforts of numerous local Bible societies (auxiliaries) under the umbrella of an organization capable of large-scale reach and productivity. The agreement of Congregationalist leaders Lyman Beecher and Jedidiah Morse, who served on the executive committee of the New York Bible Society, was important to bridging differences and creating the multid denominational organization. Like most other Benevolent Empire societies, it was controlled by a lay board with business expertise and, as Peter Wosh noted (in *The Bible Business in Nineteenth-Century America*, 1994, p. 39–40), it was possessed of “a broad cosmopolitan outlook and extensive participation in a transatlantic, Anglo-American world of business, benevolence, and intellectual life.” Called forth by Mills’s missionary rhetoric, the society formed at a time when new technologies made an economy of scale in printing and distribution a real possibility. Consolidation of capital and the introduction of business management techniques proved vital to the success of these new large-scale and print-based endeavors. The new stereotype technology for printing, along with the use of steam power, made possible

production in bulk. A national pooling of capital for mass production of Bibles and Testaments made not only good religious sense but good business sense as well.

The American Bible Society

At first the goal of the American Bible Society (ABS) was solely to ensure that Bibles were placed into the hands of Americans who could not afford them. The national organization relied heavily on local auxiliaries to gauge need in their local regions, to raise funds, and to distribute the Bibles and cheap Testaments that were the stock in trade of the society. In exchange for returning to the national body any surplus of funds, auxiliaries would receive Bibles at 5 percent below cost and would have voting rights at the national level. As time went on, major alterations took place in the relationship between locals and the national coordinating body. First, it rapidly became clear that auxiliaries could not predictably provide the cash to ensure continuous production. The ABS began to hire agents of its own—up to forty in the 1820s—to raise money and distribute Bibles as a supplement to the efforts of the auxiliaries. These agents were generally seminary students or trained ministers who abandoned settled pastorates for a while to undertake the distribution of the Word in printed form as their calling. In addition, the ABS grappled with the problem of funding the production and distribution of Bibles using only a charitable model. Over time the group moved to a system of production of Bibles for sale, with a system of differential pricing requiring recipients to pay what they could afford. Middle-class demand for elaborate Bibles led to an increase of production for the market. It also, however, produced protests from commercial book publishers and sellers who saw a staple of their own businesses produced at lower cost.

ABS receipts more than tripled in the 1820s, in part because of these innovations in business structure and production and in part because of a major campaign to ensure that every family in the United States had a Bible by 1831. Although the latter campaign met with considerable success, it had lost steam by 1833 and was revived on an even larger scale with a campaign to supply the entire world with Bibles within twenty years. The ABS thereby expanded its mission to include the world and began to invest in the translation of the Bible into various languages.

The American Tract Society

Like many other of the Benevolent Empire organizations, the American Tract Society resulted from a merger of New

England and New York–based societies. As early as 1802, in imitation of the new British tract societies, Jedidiah Morse had promoted an early effort in Massachusetts to promote the production and distribution of tracts, chiefly for distribution in newer settlements. By 1814 a more ambitious regional effort, the New England Tract Society, had arisen out of the same Andover Seminary nexus that gave rise to the ABCFM. The Reverend Justin Edwards, later of temperance reform fame, took the lead in encouraging the collection of funds to publish Christian exhortations. The New England organization, formed explicitly to supply local societies with materials for distribution rather than to distribute those materials itself, was patterned on the work of the Bible societies. Tracts, upwards of four pages in length, commonly contained readable and homely stories about everyday behavior. As time went on, tracts also frequently contained woodcut illustrations. They were distributed at cost to regional depositories and local auxiliaries. By 1821 the New England society boasted relationships with seventy-one depositories nationwide, and in 1823 it legally changed its name to the American Tract Society.

Like the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society (ATS) was primarily a charitable venture organized to print material to give away. In a country flooded with print of various sorts, its goal was to compete in the marketplace of ideas and to establish an evangelical Christian presence, thereby ensuring the availability of popular reading material that inculcated godly attitudes and behavior. Like the American Bible Society, the ATS also relied on local auxiliaries, technologies for the mass production of print, governing boards comprising rich and well-connected businessmen and professionals, and regional depositories. And like the ABS the ATS was deliberately and explicitly interdenominational, its work premised on the belief that “the great body of evangelical Christians were agreed in all that truth which the Bible makes essential to vital godliness and salvation, and also in that which would promote sound morality.” (*Letters to Members, Patrons, and Friends of the Branch American Tract Society in Boston, Instituted 1814; and to Those of the National Society in New York, Instituted 1825*, 8.) The multid denominational board charged with approving tracts for production guarded against publications that might promote particular theological tenets.

Although the first tract society with national aspirations grew from evangelical Congregational soil, tract societies were not exclusively—or especially—New England phenomena. Societies formed in New York (1812),

Philadelphia (1815), Baltimore (1816), and Hartford (1816), locations where a strong tradition of an educated Calvinist ministry and an accumulation of capital resources existed. Several of these produced extraordinary numbers of tracts for distribution. Although the New England–based American Tract Society signaled through its name its hopes of extending its national dominance, it was not to be. New York was clearly becoming the center of operations for most Benevolent Empire organizations. Increasingly important as national capital, commercial, and communication center, New York became the home of an expanded—and interdenominational—American Tract Society in 1825, with the Boston branch continuing to exist as an independent subsidiary of the national organization. The work of the new society received substantial underwriting from prominent merchant and reform benefactor Arthur Tappan, who, with his brother Lewis, later became central figures in the antislavery movement.

By the mid-1820s many tracts were mass-produced using stereotype technology. The efforts of the ATS to produce and distribute tracts mirrored closely those of the ABS, with an initiative to provide a “general supply” of tracts to all families in the United States through systematic monthly distribution beginning in 1829. Organizers hoped to disseminate the same tract everywhere to create a coordinated evangelical theme of the month. This effort had modest success, particularly in well-financed efforts in eastern cities. But as with the Bible initiative, tract distribution fell substantially short of aspirations, especially in the West. Where tracts circulated abundantly and freely, however, they became an especially important way for bringing home the lessons of scripture to young learners. In addition, they became a staple of Sunday schools as networks of the latter began to be established.

The ATS ran into problems of financing, with auxiliaries seldom remitting the required 25 percent of their annual receipts to the national organization. Beginning in 1827, the organization began to publish full-length books for sale to help offset the costs of production of tracts for charity distribution. Traveling agents were employed directly to address distribution problems in remote areas, but with mixed results. By 1841 the American Tract Society made a decision to professionalize, hiring salaried administrators, managers, and colporteurs. The result—an explosion in the number of books sold, tracts distributed, and territory covered—made the society a prominent force in antebellum America, not only in the spreading of

evangelical Christianity but also in establishing a common canon of popular reading.

The American Sunday School Union

The third major evangelical disseminator of print in the Benevolent Empire was the American Sunday School Union, founded in Philadelphia in 1824. Like other Benevolent Empire organizations, it was modeled on British practice dating from the 1780s. Although the first Sunday school in the United States began in Philadelphia in 1791 under the direction of the First Day Society, New York merchant Divie Bethune and his wife, Joanna (who in 1816 founded the Female Union for the Promotion of Sabbath Schools), were major forces in promoting American Sabbath schools, beginning with the school held in their home in 1803. Bethune, a Scottish immigrant, merchant, and one of the founders of Princeton Theological Seminary, was, according to observers of the time, not especially religious but exceedingly disturbed at the rising tide of profanity and vice around him. As in Britain, the very first Sunday schools were largely urban phenomena, as much concerned with teaching basic moral and cultural values of order as in raising literacy levels among children and adults. Over time, the population they served included significant numbers of African Americans, women, western residents, and children of the poor for whom no significant literacy alternatives existed.

The process and timing of Sabbath school development paralleled that of other Benevolent Empire societies: first, contemporaneous development of local and regional societies in urban commercial centers, such as Boston, Hartford, New York, New Haven, and Philadelphia; second, large-scale regional production of printed materials (books, pamphlets, and periodicals) designed for free dissemination, in this case through the libraries that became one of the chief attractions of the Sabbath schools; third, combination into an interdenominational national organization (including Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Reformed Dutch) designed to enlarge the project to a national scope and to increase its effectiveness by using economies of scale. The American Sunday School Union utilized the same relationship between auxiliaries and the national organization as that used by the ABS and the ATS. Like the ABS, it took on the role of publisher of books for the middle class, in part to help finance its charity ventures. It too embarked on an initiative to extend Sunday schools to unserved areas, chiefly in the West, and moved to partial reliance on paid itinerant missionaries

and agents to do the job. Between 1824 and 1837 the number of children who attended Sunday schools increased from about fifty thousand to about a million.

Other Organizations

The American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, and the American Sunday School Union were the major domestic evangelical arms of the Benevolent Empire. All had in common an emphasis on dissemination of a message of morality and salvation broadly acceptable to major evangelical denominations of the period through mass dissemination of the printed word. A number of other organizations also existed primarily for domestic evangelization purposes, especially among indigent and unchurched populations in the western United States. The most important of these included the American Education Society (1815), originally the American Society for Educating Pious Youth for the Gospel Ministry, established to provide funds to poor young men wishing to study for the evangelical ministry, and the American Home Missionary Society (1826), founded to evangelize sparsely settled areas, particularly in the West. As the Benevolent Empire grew in organization and power, campaigns increasingly were geared toward areas of newer settlement. The formal merger of the Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed missionary efforts with the (largely Congregationalist) ABCFM in 1826 ignited hope that a similar united effort might be mounted with regard to domestic missionary work as well. Societies from the three denominations combined to form the American Home Missionary Society, whose goal was to unite in an effort to bring evangelization and civilization to remote areas. By supporting new and feeble churches in newer and sparsely settled sections of the country, the organization would ensure the perpetuation of evangelical Christian values among those unable to support a settled pastor and the extension of those values to immigrant populations.

The specter of illiteracy and disorder as well as the perceived threat of Roman Catholicism to Protestant “civilization” evoked extraordinary efforts and new means to find ways to meet the challenge of growing populations dispersed over large geographical areas. By 1830 these organizations had raised more than \$2.8 million for their charitable work. What had begun primarily as urban efforts by these groups expanded to take on the responsibility of service to vast reaches of the Republic without the capital or resources to found similar organizations or auxiliaries on their own. Western efforts sponsored by the Benevolent

Empire reached their apex in the early 1830s. By 1835, however, the evangelist Lyman Beecher, who had moved from New England to Ohio, called for a significant shift in tactics. Itinerants and Bibles from the East were no longer enough, he proclaimed in *A Plea for the West* (1835): It was time for the West to train its own ministry and erect its own institutions. In essence, Beecher's sermon made a case for the West as something other than missionary territory. Culture and institutions, he argued, must reach a stage where they were not sustained by national evangelization efforts but produced their own. Such institutions, he maintained, would bring on the millennium, which was America's role to herald.

The Age of Reform: Perfectionism, Temperance, and Antislavery

A theology of benevolence, modeled by British organizations and picked up by educated American clergy in the Calvinist tradition, set off the waves of evangelical organization that began in the 1790s. The first phase of benevolent reform involved widespread agreement among evangelical Protestants—mainly Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Dutch Reformed, but also sometimes Methodists, Episcopalians, and Lutherans—on the importance of disseminating sacred scripture, making available moral reading, and providing instruction in evangelical values. Although governing boards of the major Benevolent Empire organizations were controlled largely by prominent laypeople, these engines of evangelization were also closely tied to the denominations that gave rise to them, and publication boards with varied denominational representation exercised control over the organizations' publications. By the late 1820s and early 1830s the organizational model was well established, and in a form that could be reproduced endlessly by new organizations: a central governing board supported by local auxiliaries that acted as the “hands and feet” of the national group; an emphasis on the use of printed media to create an identity of interest and sentiment among adherents and to raise funds for further extension of the organization; and an emphasis on interdenominational cooperation rather than competition in the support of common evangelical goals.

Rise of Perfectionism

By the 1820s, however, the well-established Benevolent Empire began to experience shifts in tone and operation. These would lead within a decade to reform activity taking

on a life of its own apart from its evangelical denominational base. First, organizations of a new type arose—groups such as the Prison Discipline Society (1825), the American Seamen's Friend Society (1826), the General Union for the Promotion of the Observance of the Sabbath (1828), the American Peace Society (1828), and Magdalen societies for the redemption of prostitutes in Philadelphia (1826) and New York (1829). Their efforts, while based on the benevolent organization model, more narrowly focused on eradicating particular sins or on outreach to particular groups. In addition, by the late 1820s and early 1830s even mainline benevolent organizations had also begun to turn to paid agents and managers to realize their aims, creating a group of ministers and employees tied to the particular cause of the organization rather than to general evangelical work. This group of agents who saw themselves tied to particular reforms first and the general cause of evangelicalism second caused a change in the rhetoric surrounding reform. Perhaps most important, “perfectionism,” a new theology emphasizing individual choice in conversion and establishing the eradication of sin as an ideal, began to displace Hopkinsian benevolence among a new generation of evangelicals oriented to possibility.

These factors created a shift in cultural climate and led to a new wave of reform. In many ways, the new type of reform efforts shared much in common organizationally and operationally with first-wave benevolent organizations. But a philosophy of social purification and focus on the eradication of sin eventually set several key new organizations at odds with both the organized churches and the Benevolent Empire apparatus on which it was modeled. Two organizations in particular took on special importance: the American Temperance Society (formed in 1826; renamed the American Temperance Union in 1835) and the American Anti-Slavery Society (1833).

Perfectionism as a theology originated with the Methodist founder John Wesley (1703–1791). Christians were called to a state of sinlessness—perhaps not as a matter of likely achievement during this life but as a matter of aspiration and as an ideal. Such a theology ran at odds with Old Calvinism, which emphasized human inability to choose the good and the right apart from the arbitrary and unmerited grace of God. Perfectionism made a rather uneasy marriage with the Calvinist tradition, chiefly in the work of Charles Grandison Finney. Between 1825 and 1837 Finney used emotional techniques, or “new measures,” to induce revivals upon which Calvinist traditionalists looked askance. In Finney's theology, not only could individuals be led to conversion by

special methods, they could will and choose their own conversions. In addition, according to Finney, true Christianity required of its adherents “perfect obedience to the law of God,” which he held to be possible in this world. The eschewal of sin in all its forms meant for many a willingness to abandon any compromise as an unacceptable alternative.

Initially, considerable friction existed between Finneyite revivalism, with its emphasis on “new measures” and emotional appeals, and orthodox Congregationalism. Congregationalists and Presbyterians had been allied in a formal way since 1801, when a Plan of Union united the two denominations in an effort to evangelize the West. But the advent of Finney’s new measures and of his perfectionist theology threatened to drive the two groups apart. Lyman Beecher, perhaps the most prominent of the New England evangelical faction at the time, met with Finney in New Lebanon, Connecticut, in 1827, where the two achieved an uneasy truce. But by the next year, even at Yale University, the citadel of New England evangelicalism, a “New School” of theologians began to emphasize freedom of the will. Nathaniel William Taylor’s watershed *Concio ad Clerum* (Advice to the Clergy), a sermon delivered in the Yale chapel in 1828, denied that human depravity consisted in an innately warped nature. Taylor instead defined depravity as a human ability and willingness to sin, something that individuals could avoid if they wished to do so. In a nation where individual capability was increasingly being celebrated and the self-made man increasingly an ideal, a theology where *should* implied *could* was popular. Where perfectionism dominated, organizations became less oriented toward general evangelization and conversion and more oriented to self-improvement and to the absolute eradication of particular sins. Such a shift did not take place in every organization. But where it did, it often ended up blasting apart the consensus on means and ends that had existed for a generation among Benevolent Empire organizations.

The American Temperance Society

Formal temperance organization, the effort to reduce or eliminate the consumption of alcoholic beverages, began in the United States with the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, organized in 1813. For once the American organized effort preceded that in Great Britain. As with other reforms, prior to regional and national organization, local societies sprang up, especially in New York and New England. Their objective usually was to advocate for liquor license restriction as a way of curtailing the use of ardent spirits. Temperance originated with Presbyterian and

Congregational clergy and remained a cause largely dominated by those denominations, despite the usual benevolent aspiration toward multid denominationalism. In 1826 the American Temperance Society was organized in Boston under the leadership of Justin Edwards—the same person who had been instrumental in organizing the American Tract Society, which by this time was distributing popular reading matter on sin and moral failing in bulk. Perhaps not coincidentally, the temperance organization took shape just as the American Tract Society headquarters moved from Boston to New York, leaving the now affiliated but still relatively autonomous New England body with a niche to fill and a challenge to its preeminence. Lyman Beecher, the powerful Congregationalist evangelist, preached a series of six sermons on intemperance in 1825, and they formed the substance of one of the first publications disseminated by the new organization in the tract tradition. Beecher denounced alcohol use as a sin to be avoided at all costs, a snare that would inevitably lead imbibers on a downward spiral and to damnation.

The founding of the American Temperance Association marked a new phase in the temperance campaign: Alcohol use was not only a social evil; it was a sin. Within five years, the group moved from advocating against the consumption of distilled spirits as a cause of alcohol abuse to a campaign that urged Christians to take the pledge—to forswear the use of *any* alcohol as a sin against God. Temperance was the first single-cause reform to attract a significant number of national adherents: It claimed about a million and a half members by 1835. Using auxiliaries, hired agents, lecturers, and publications, the organization advocated against the consumption of alcohol in any form and had striking success in decreasing domestic consumption over the quarter-century period when it relied primarily upon “moral suasion.” In addition, it began to outdistance other Evangelical United Front organizations in its membership, numbers of auxiliaries, and geographic reach.

By 1840 the Washingtonians, a largely working-class temperance organization without ties to the Benevolent Empire, provided a challenge to the reform leadership of the American Temperance Union by appealing to a new and independent constituency. The appearance of this group marked the beginning of a proliferation of organizations with similar instrumental goals but with very different ideological roots and assumptions. With the fragmentation of a unified national movement for temperance of which evangelicals could claim ownership, temperance became a goal to be achieved by multiple organizations and people, and increasingly through statutory means. As time went on, the cause was only

marginally identified with either evangelical culture or Benevolent Empire leadership. Having taken on a life of its own as an independent reform cause, it broke any potential Benevolent Empire monopoly in this realm of American life.

The American Anti-Slavery Society

The American Anti-Slavery Society followed a similar path of development and distancing from the evangelical core of the Benevolent Empire. Although it had fewer members and auxiliaries than did the American Temperance Society, with somewhere between 150,000 and 250,000 members by 1840, it may have had the greater impact on American life and politics through its relentless agitation for abolition. Born in Philadelphia in 1833 of the merger of the New England Anti-Slavery Society (founded in Boston by William Lloyd Garrison in 1831) and of the New York Anti-Slavery Society (founded by Arthur and Lewis Tappan in the same year), the organization advocated for the immediate and unconditional abolition of slavery, which it branded without qualification as sin. The American Anti-Slavery Society used the now-common organizational template of national organization: lay board of governors, local auxiliaries, mass print dissemination of message through journals and tracts, and hired agents and speakers. However, far from encouraging cooperation among evangelicals, antislavery brought a sword that not only divided denomination from denomination but that produced schism within individual denominations themselves. It provoked mob attack in the North and barring of printed materials and tracts from the mail in the South (which had never been much of a Benevolent Empire stronghold to begin with). More than any other force, the divisiveness produced by the antislavery impulse destroyed the ground on which a common evangelical project for the promotion of civic morality had grown. Without the possibility of widespread agreement on the parameters of benevolent reform, the Benevolent Empire by the 1840s fragmented and lost significant ground as a unified moral and civic force.

Although the temperance movement was perhaps the first to develop a distinct culture based on a reform cause, replete with a literature, a tradition of melodrama, and a well-developed network of associated women's organizations with it, Anti-Slavery grew into a genuine counter-cultural movement. For many, it became a self-conscious alternative to both American market-oriented culture and the evangelical culture of benevolence. "A clergy independent of the Churches, an itinerating clergy," the Reverend Leonard Bacon of New Haven warned in 1837,

—a clergy distributed into various orders, each charged with its single topic of instruction or agitation, is making its appearance among us. . . . One class of itinerants preaches temperance, according to the *latest discoveries*. Another is determined to know nothing but anti-slavery. . . . What surer method can be devised to make him [the lecturer] a flaming enthusiast? (*New York Evangelist*, April 29, 1837: 69, quoted in Michael P. Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin*, 2006, p. 7.)

Antislavery clergy and agents more than any other came to hold as their first allegiance the antislavery cause. Where churches admitted slaveholders as members or allowed congress with them in any way, it was the churches that became expendable.

Nowhere did the antislavery cause raise the specter of revolution more strongly than in its potential to catalyze women into radical action. Although women had been deeply involved in Benevolent Empire causes since the very beginning—as contributors to the larger organizations, as founders of societies for orphans and widows, as missionaries, as authors of pious texts, and as founders and operators of independent female auxiliaries—female antislavery activists were now claiming as their moral right the right to speak out in public, and in mixed assemblies of women and men, against sin. In 1837 Angelina and Sarah Grimké, sisters from a South Carolina slaveholding family and Quakers, elicited a sharp rebuke for their public antislavery activities from the evangelical establishment of Massachusetts in a *Pastoral Letter of the General Association of Massachusetts to the Congregational Churches Under Their Care*. The ministers denounced women reformers who, fired by passion against a sin with which they believed no compromise was possible, stepped out of the roles deemed appropriate for them. "We appreciate the unostentatious prayers and efforts of woman, in advancing the cause of religion at home and abroad," the ministers wrote:

—in Sabbath schools, in leading religious inquirers to their pastor for instruction, and in all such associated effort as becomes the modesty of her sex; and earnestly hope that she may abound more and more in these labours of piety and love. But when she assumes the place and tone of a man as a public reformer, our care and protection of her seem unnecessary, we put ourselves in self defence against her, she yields the power which God has given her for protection, and her character becomes unnatural.

Women had spent two generations as powerful partners in benevolent activities, but within strictly defined parameters. Work was often undertaken in a largely anonymous way, or it was confined to an all-female sphere or to work with children, or it was framed as supportive of the major organizational efforts of husbands or male clergy. The “woman question” within antislavery efforts proved so contentious that it occasioned a split in 1840 between those who continued to favor more traditional roles for women (including prominent Benevolent Empire benefactors Arthur and Lewis Tappan) and more radical reformers (including William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass). After the split, the Tappan brothers took leadership of the new American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, which began to adopt political means for achieving its goals and which did not allow women full membership. The American Anti-Slavery Society, headed by Garrison, allowed women full membership. Under Garrison’s leadership, it also advocated for nonresistance to and noncooperation with any bodies, whether ecclesiastical or civil, that condoned slavery—including the United States. But not only did the “woman question” divide antislavery forces, it also led to a new movement agitating for women’s rights and equality, a movement that conservative evangelicals saw as a major threat to the divinely decreed order of things.

The Waning of the Benevolent Empire and Its Legacy

By 1840, even within abolitionism, adherents were forced to choose between a more conservative version of reform that maintained its ties with the evangelical elite and a more radical version that promised to rearrange gender, racial, and class hierarchies in the name of the eradication of sin. But antislavery had begun to unravel the generation-long alliance between Protestant evangelicals in other ways as well. The denominations involved in United Front activity had already begun to splinter and fragment over the slavery question. In 1837 the Presbyterian denomination, one of the major pillars of Benevolent Empire efforts, split. An Old School faction (“consistent Calvinists”) abrogated the 1801 Plan of Union with the Congregationalists and expelled from fellowship a New School faction, defined largely by Taylorist theological views, Finneyite revivalism, and support for antislavery. In 1844 the Methodist Episcopal Church also split, this time explicitly over the slavery issue, as did the Triennial Convention

union of Baptists, from which the Southern Baptist Convention split in 1845.

As Old School Presbyterians withdrew from denominational union, they set up new versions of the older Benevolent Empire efforts, including their own Board of Foreign Missions. After the Presbyterian split, the American Education Society largely reverted to its Congregational roots and became an arm of that denomination, despite retaining its more inclusive name. Other major Benevolent Empire organizations—the American Board, the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, and the American Home Missionary Society (AHMS)—survived, sometimes in attenuated form but registering the strains of the national divide over the slavery issue nonetheless. The American Bible Society suffered the withdrawal of a number of abolitionists in the mid-1830s and the Baptists in 1836. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s abolitionists agitated for a commitment by the national organization to supply Bibles to African Americans. The ABS resisted, in deference to its auxiliaries, who maintained local autonomy in the work of Bible distribution. Abolitionists similarly urged the American Tract Society, which had produced materials on every other kind of sin, to distribute materials on the sin of slavery as well. The ATS resisted for two decades because its interdenominational board, which had the right of veto over materials produced, regularly vetoed antislavery materials. The American Home Missionary Society, because it continued to admit slaveholders as members, saw its abolitionist members depart in 1846 to form a new society willing to bar slaveholders and to include evangelization of African Americans among its goals. Led and financed by the Tappan brothers, the new American Missionary Society siphoned off funds that had gone to the AHMS.

Benevolent Empire organizations continued to exist well into the latter part of the century, some with new names and denominational identities and some still relatively intact today. But by 1840 no new organizations formed along the lines of the original evangelical cooperative template. By that time, new political parties, ready and willing to take on the national organizing functions that the Benevolent Empire had pioneered, translated the old evangelical cultural agenda into a political one. New streams of popular literature from commercial presses built on the audiences established by the evangelical press, and in many instances commercial sentimental novels and periodicals, supplanted the influence of the evangelical presses with a new generation of readers.

The Benevolent Empire left a significant legacy. A rich and varied historiography has attempted over the course of a number of generations to describe its meaning and significance. It points to the role of these organizations in dealing with the status anxiety of old elites threatened by the decline of their power in the early American Republic; in linking dispersed new elites into larger national organizations, capable of harnessing capital and exerting control over national attitudes through moral suasion; in promoting nationwide literacy and the birth of a new popular mass medium of communication; in catalyzing groups of women into civic activism and a quest for public power; in providing religious sanction for a wave of reform that was both reaction to and promoter of a new market-oriented culture of individual possibility; and in developing strategies, technologies, and prototypes for mass movements of reform.

The French visitor to the United States, Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote in 1840, in *Democracy in America*, "In democratic countries, the knowledge of how to form associations is the mother of all knowledge since the success of all the others depends on it" (p. 600). The Benevolent Empire was perhaps the major nursery where this knowledge was developed and perfected.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Bible: As Sacred Text, Translations, Cultural Role; Education* entries; *Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Great Awakening(s); Missions: Domestic; Missions: Foreign.*

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Bible: As Sacred Text, Translations, Cultural Role

The Bible, in both Jewish and Christian formats, is the most influential book in American history. No text has been more frequently translated, printed, studied, debated, revered, or exploited. Although originally written in Hebrew and Greek in distant ancient contexts, the Bible's stories, translated into English in classics such as the King James Version, tell of characters who became like family members to many devoutly religious Americans. In the early American Republic, after the disestablishment of the former state churches, the Bible inspired a welter of upstart groups, from Methodists to Mormons, who honed in on its passages as doctrinal touchstones.

Writers and artists, meanwhile, found in the Bible a well-spring of images and idioms, making scripture the great subtext of the American literary and artistic canon. Even

persons less familiar with the Bible's stories often treated the book itself as sacrosanct, using it in courtrooms to swear oaths, displaying it in salesrooms to prove financial probity, or invoking it in classrooms as the rock of American civilization. Yet though the Bible served as a unifying talisman, it also loomed at the center of some of the most bitter conflicts in U.S. history, from the battle over slavery during the Civil War to struggles over sexuality and gay rights. Any exploration of the Bible as America's central sacred text must therefore examine not only the English translations through which most people encountered scripture, but also the disparate arenas of cultural change and conflict driven by Holy Writ.

The Idea of Vernacular Scripture

From their beginnings the three Abrahamic faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—were religions of the book. All three traditions assumed that God spoke to humans through direct revelations, which were subsequently recorded as holy scripture (from the Latin *scriptura*, or “writing”). Yet whereas Muslims had a revelation uniquely their own (the Qur'an), Jews and Christians shared a sacred text: the book that Jews often call *Tanakh*, an acronym derived from the Hebrew names for the Bible's three parts (Torah, prophets, and writings). In Christianity, this Bible became the “Old Testament” after Christians had added their own body of sacred texts, the New Testament. Written in Greek in the Roman Empire during the first and second centuries, the New Testament often quoted the Old and reinterpreted the Bible's prophetic books as pointing forward to Jesus. Although Jews accused the early Christians of perverting Hebrew scripture's original meaning, the Christian canon of the Old and New Testaments was destined to become the most common form of the Bible in the United States.

In the Western Christian tradition (Roman Catholic and Protestant, as opposed to Eastern Orthodox), the Latin translation of the Bible known as the Vulgate was for centuries the ecclesiastical standard. Long after the death of the Roman Empire, bishops and scholars retained Latin as a means of unifying the disparate national traditions within the Catholic Church. Although Protestant apologists would later accuse Catholic prelates of deliberately hiding the Bible from the laypeople (most of whom knew no Latin anyway), the medieval church in fact taught biblical stories through other media: visual art (statues, frescoes, stained glass windows), preaching (which was often catechetical in its function), and drama (passion plays and even the Eucharist

itself). It is also untrue that the Catholic hierarchy showed no interest in the original Greek and Hebrew of scripture. After the advent of printing in the mid-fifteenth century, Cardinal Francisco Ximénez, archbishop of Toledo in Spain, sponsored the Complutensian Polyglot (1514–1517), the first multilingual printed edition of the entire Bible, which became an important tool for scholars of biblical languages. In the same era the Catholic humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam published a Greek–Latin parallel edition of the New Testament (1516; second edition, 1519), which sold some 3,300 copies.

Yet it was the early Protestants, particularly Martin Luther in Germany and William Tyndale in England, who insisted on translating the Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew into the languages of the people. Luther and Tyndale consulted Erasmus's Greek edition as a basis for their translations of the New Testament into German (1522) and English (1526, 1534), respectively. Similarly, Luther and Tyndale based their versions of the Old Testament on the Hebrew Masoretic text (produced by the medieval Jewish scholars known as the Masoretes). No less important than actual translations was the Protestant ideology that supported them. The Protestant slogan of “scripture alone” reversed the traditional Catholic priority of the institutional church over the book and made the Bible the measure of all belief and practice. Vernacular scripture, moreover, cut out churchly intermediaries, making the Bible in theory accessible to any literate person. Early Protestants frequently spoke of the “priesthood of all believers” and claimed that the Bible was self-authenticating (2 Timothy 3:16: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God”) and self-interpreting (meaning that the average reader could deduce the meaning of obscure verses by comparing them with easier passages). Such commonsense interpretation was said to require no bishop or pope for guidance. Unlike the Catholic Church's Latin Bible and liturgy, which were shrouded in sacred mystery, the vernacular Bible promoted the idea—so influential in U.S. history—that ordinary people had unmediated access to the very words of God.

The English Bible thus became for many American Protestants the icon of a word-centered piety that supposedly transcended Catholic “superstition” and built religion on solid empirical foundations. Although English Catholics produced a vernacular Bible of their own—the Douay-Rheims Version (1582–1609), translated by British exiles in France and Flanders—Latin would remain the official language of Catholic worship until the reforms of the Second

Vatican Council (1962–1965). The corporate piety of Catholics centered on the ritual of the Mass, with its mystical idea of communion with Christ's true body, while Protestant piety centered on biblical exposition through preaching. Likewise, whereas individual piety among Catholics centered on the rosary, novenas, and other devotions, the most common devotional practice among Protestant laypeople was private Bible reading.

Protestant Translations: The First Three Centuries

The most zealous Bible readers in early America were the Puritans, whose emphasis on the supposedly pure standard of scripture, uncorrupted by human invention, contributed to much higher rates of literacy in the New England colonies than in any other part of British America or most of England. The Puritans' own edition of scripture was the Geneva Bible (1560, with various revisions thereafter), which was heavily dependent on Tyndale's translation and whose copious marginalia were laced with anti-Catholicism, as at Revelation 17:4, where the note identified the Whore of Babylon as "the Antichrist, that is, the Pope." Yet with its doctrinaire annotations, the Geneva Bible seemed particularly time-bound; it was produced by Puritan exiles in Geneva, Switzerland, during the reign of England's Catholic queen Mary Tudor. It was eventually superseded, even among the Puritans, by the King James, or Authorized, Version (1611), which lacked doctrinal marginalia (though some early editions of the new translation appeared with notes from the Geneva Bible).

The diction of the King James Version soon became the native religious language of clergy and laypeople alike. Colonial intellectuals pored over every word of scripture, composing massive commentaries that rivaled the output of English exegetes such as Matthew Poole and Matthew Henry. Boston minister Cotton Mather's commentary, which he dubbed his *Biblia Americana*, extended over 4,500 manuscript pages in six folio volumes. Mather's younger contemporary Jonathan Edwards kept a 910-page notebook, interleaved with pages of a small King James Bible, in which he penned in minuscule handwriting his annotations to every scriptural page. Clergy such as Mather and Edwards were also assiduous commentators from the pulpit. The typical Sunday sermon consisted of elaborately drawn-out moral lessons extracted from a single verse or two of scripture. Laypeople took these lessons to heart, or at least internalized the Bible's language. In the midst of life's daily hardships and occasional calamities, people fell back on

biblical verses to make sense of their experiences. Such was the case with Massachusetts colonist Mary Rowlandson, whose narrative of her Indian captivity, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* (1682), overflows with biblical citations designed to show the hand of Providence amid her suffering. Laypeople also quoted freely from the Bible in the conversion relations, or accounts of their turning to Christ, that New England pastors typically required as a condition of full church membership.

The zeal of New Englanders for the Bible was equally evident in their missionary endeavors among the Native Americans. In 1663, after more than a decade of study with Native tutors, Puritan minister John Eliot translated the Bible into Massachusett, an Algonquian language of southern New England. A group of ministers, including Eliot, had earlier produced the Bay Psalm Book (1640), the first English volume published in the colonies and the first American translation of any portion of the Bible. But Eliot's Indian Bible, as it became known, was the first American edition of the entire Bible and the first translation of the scriptures in a Native American vernacular. Eliot took certain liberties to make the book more understandable to Native American readers: He changed the ten virgins in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Matthew 25:1–13) to men because of the high premium on male chastity in Massachusetts culture. Yet by the early eighteenth century, such attempts at linguistic and cultural translation would be eclipsed as Cotton Mather and others insisted that missionaries must anglicize the Indians and teach them the Bible in the English of King James.

The King James Version (KJV) reigned supreme throughout the colonial period and early American Republic, despite a few attempts to dethrone it. One notable insurgent was the politician Charles Thomson, who served as secretary of the Continental Congress from 1774 to 1789. After suffering a forced retirement at the hands of his political opponents, Thomson returned to his estate near Philadelphia and began translating the whole Bible—the New Testament from the original Greek and the Old Testament from the Septuagint (the Hellenistic Jewish translation of Hebrew scripture into Greek). Two decades later, in 1808, Thomson published his work in four octavo volumes. Although it was the first American translation of the whole Bible into English, it quickly fell into obscurity, a victim of the KJV's much greater esteem and affordability among the general public. The development of cheap printing technology in the antebellum period made the KJV readily available, as did the well-orchestrated efforts of the American Bible Society

(ABS). Founded in 1816 by the consolidation of more than a hundred local societies, the ABS distributed millions of Bibles in successive campaigns to put a copy of the KJV in every American home.

The ABS campaigns did not deter a variety of individuals in the nineteenth century from seeking to improve on the KJV. Some, such as the lexicographer Noah Webster, tried to make the Bible's English more delicate, as when he changed "not one that pisseth against a wall" (1 Kings 16:11) to "not one male." Other individuals modified the Bible for theological reasons. Alexander Campbell, the founder of the Disciples of Christ, retranslated the New Testament from the Greek, rendering the verb *baptizō* as "immerse," a change hailed by advocates of believers' (adult) baptism. (The KJV had simply transliterated the term as "baptize.") The resistance of the ABS to the publication of an "immersion" version led a group of Baptists to form the rival American Bible Union in 1850. Among the group's leaders was the biblical scholar Thomas Jefferson Conant, whose 1860 version of the Gospel of Matthew was published with a 107-page appendix defending "immerse" as the most correct translation. Although the American Bible Union published a complete revision of the New Testament in 1864, no new translation garnered widespread public notice until the discovery of additional ancient manuscripts ushered in the modern age of Bible translation in the 1880s.

Protestant Translations and Editions after 1881

The first major new Bible translation to reflect modern textual scholarship was a joint British–American project, the Revised Version (1881–1885). In the decades leading up to the new Bible's publication, biblical scholarship had developed on two fronts. Higher (or historical) criticism attempted to separate fact from fiction in the biblical narratives and questioned traditional assumptions about biblical authorship (for example, that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament). Lower (or textual) criticism attempted to reconstruct the original Hebrew and Greek texts of scripture from the immense array of surviving manuscript variants. Although higher critics often grabbed headlines, as when the Presbyterian biblical scholar Charles Augustus Briggs denied the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch in his inaugural address at New York's Union Seminary in 1891, lower criticism proved more important as a basis for new English translations.

A major turning point occurred in 1859, when the German biblical scholar Constantin von Tischendorf discovered

the fourth-century Codex Sinaiticus—the oldest complete manuscript of the New Testament ever uncovered—at the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. Together with the Codex Vaticanus (made public in the same era by the Vatican Library), the Codex Sinaiticus became the basis for the New Testament portion of the Revised Version. Published amid great excitement—the *Chicago Tribune* printed a pilfered copy of the entire New Testament in its Sunday edition of May 22, 1881—the project was a triumph for the American committee of translators, a group of Protestant scholars headed by the Union Seminary professor and Swiss immigrant Philip Schaff. But the new Bible also sparked considerable controversy because of the doubt it cast on the authenticity of certain biblical passages—for example, the Longer Ending of the Gospel of Mark (16:9–20), which was set apart with a marginal explanation noting the passage's absence from codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus.

The Revised Version was slow to win converts among average churchgoers, and a modest recension of the text, dubbed the American Standard Version (1901), was widely panned for its wooden, literal renditions. Calls for a completely new American translation resulted in the formation of a thirty-two-member committee chaired by Luther Weigle, dean of Yale Divinity School. In a major ecumenical milestone, Weigle and his colleagues invited a Jewish scholar, Harry M. Orlinsky of the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, to join the committee—the first instance of official Jewish–Christian cooperation in the history of the English Bible. The new translation was sponsored by the National Council of Churches, a federation of liberal Protestant bodies, which hoped to replace the KJV with a Bible cast in less archaic idiom that would become the new standard for Christian education and worship.

A huge publicity blitz heralded the new Bible, known as the Revised Standard Version (RSV), in September 1952. At the White House, President Harry Truman received a leather-bound copy from Weigle, and newspapers across the country ran front-page stories celebrating the event. The celebration abruptly ended, however, when conservative Protestants discovered that the RSV had changed the "virgin" in the King James reading of Isaiah 7:14 (traditionally seen by Christians as a prophecy of the virgin birth of Christ) to "young woman" (a more accurate rendering of the original Hebrew word). To many conservatives, this smelled of a liberal plot to discredit the doctrine of Jesus' miraculous birth and even to deny the whole idea of predictive

prophecy. Intense controversy ensued. Fundamentalist preachers burned the RSV before cheering congregations; pamphleteers denounced it as modernist and communist; and even the U.S. Air Force Reserve, in a spectacular breach of church–state separation, urged recruits to avoid it. Only when the firestorm died down did cooler heads realize the RSV’s significance as the first Christian translation to attempt to read the Old Testament on its own terms as a Jewish document.

In the wake of the RSV controversy, Bible translation among American Protestants became increasingly polarized between conservatives and liberals. The New International Version (NIV, 1978), born of conservative opposition to the RSV, restored the virgin of Isaiah 7:14 and became a favorite among evangelical readers. (Scholars on the NIV committee were required to sign a statement attesting to their belief that the Bible was “inerrant” in its long-lost original manuscripts.) Similarly, the English Standard Version (2001), an evangelical revision of the RSV, reverted to “virgin” even while translating other passages more literally. Meanwhile, liberal Protestants issued the New Revised Standard Version (1989), which updated the RSV to include more gender-inclusive language. Not to be outdone, conservatives unveiled Today’s New International Version (TNIV, 2002), which split the evangelical community over its own use of gender-neutral terminology. Several popular evangelical apologists, including Bill Hybels and Lee Strobel, endorsed the TNIV, while the nation’s largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, passed a resolution against it.

The proliferation of Bibles was also market driven. By the turn of the twenty-first century, niche study Bibles had become a mainstay of religious publishing. A forerunner of the genre was the *Scofield Reference Bible* (1909), which popularized a dispensational premillennialist scheme dividing history into seven dispensations that would be followed by the Rapture, the Great Tribulation, and the Second Coming. In the later twentieth century, with the rise of evangelical powerhouse publishers such as Zondervan the number of special-interest Bibles rapidly proliferated. The decade of the 1990s alone brought the publication of, among others, the *NIV Women’s Devotional Bible* (1990), the *NIV Men’s Devotional Bible* (1993), the *Recovery Devotional Bible* (1993), and the *New Believer’s Bible* (1996). Study Bibles catering to particular denominational or ethnic traditions also gained popularity. African American Protestants could explore Afrocentric interpretations in the *Original African Heritage Study Bible* (1993) or read African American

Baptist perspectives in the *African-American Devotional Bible* (1997); conservative Calvinists could peruse predestinarian glosses on Paul’s epistles in the *New Geneva Study Bible* (1995) or the *Reformation Study Bible* (2005); United Methodists could find an index of Wesleyan terminology in the *Wesley Study Bible* (2009); and mainline Lutherans could consult historical articles and timelines on Martin Luther in the *Lutheran Study Bible* (2009). Bible publishing even merged with youth culture in editions such as *Revolve* (2003), which took the form of a glossy fashion magazine for teenage girls, and the *Manga Bible* (2007), which imitated the distinctive style of Japanese comic books.

Jewish and Catholic Translations

Although the Bible marketplace for Jews and Catholics was, by the turn of the twenty-first century, beginning to resemble that for Protestants—with titles such as the *Jewish Study Bible* (2004) and the *Catholic Study Bible* (1990)—non-Protestant communities had long resisted vernacular scripture for liturgical reasons. Jews, like Muslims, traditionally regarded translations of scripture as having no authority. Biblical Hebrew was regarded as God’s sacred tongue—the “language spoken by the angels,” as one Mishnaic tractate put it. Consequently, coming-of-age rites (bar mitzvah for boys; bat mitzvah for girls) required the initiate to read aloud in Hebrew the portion of the Torah and prophets appointed for the day’s worship. Jewish Kabbalah invested the Hebrew alphabet with mystical significance, and many Protestants, from Jonathan Edwards to University of Chicago founder William Rainey Harper, were enamored of ancient Hebraic wisdom. (Yale University, from which Harper received his PhD at age nineteen, embodied this Protestant Hebraism: The university seal, designed by president Ezra Stiles, bears an open book with the Hebrew words *Urim and Thummim*, the sacred oracles associated with the breastplate of the biblical high priest.)

Jewish leaders in the United States nevertheless recognized early on the utility of English translations and worried that Jews were being misled by the King James Version. Isaac Leeser, the *hazan* (cantor) of Philadelphia’s Mikveh Israel, was particularly distressed that copies of the KJV distributed by the American Bible Society had chapter headings and other elements reinforcing a Christian interpretation of the Old Testament books. Leeser, who knew that most American Jews actually understood little Hebrew, in 1838 began his own translation of the Bible into English. Published in 1853, it included the Hebrew and a literal English translation on facing pages. The edition also eliminated the KJV’s

Christianization of key passages, substituting “young woman” for “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14 and lowercasing “son” in Psalm 2.

Dissatisfaction with the cost and wooden style of Leiser’s Bible led to periodic calls for an alternative, and in 1895 work began on the first committee-based Jewish translation. The project’s sponsor was the Jewish Publication Society (JPS), founded in 1888. The editor in chief was Max Margolis, an immigrant from eastern Europe who prepared himself for the task of translation by perusing the classic literature of Elizabethan and Restoration England. When the new Bible appeared in 1917, its preface declared Jewish independence from the Christian translation tradition: “The Jew cannot afford to have his Bible translation prepared for him by others.” Yet some critics faulted the JPS Bible for sticking too closely to the Protestants’ Revised Version. Further developments in biblical scholarship, along with the rapid professionalization of the field after World War II, led the JPS to appoint a new translation committee, headed by RSV veteran Harry Orlinsky, which began its work in 1955. In addition to its professional scholarly members, the committee also included rabbis from Judaism’s three major branches (Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform). After the initial work on the Torah and prophets, a new committee, whose members included the novelist Chaim Potok, began translating the third section of the Old Testament, the writings. All three parts appeared under the title *Tanakh* in 1985. A second edition appeared in 1999, and Oxford University Press published an annotated edition in 2004.

Although *Tanakh* (also known as the New JPS translation) became the standard English Bible among American Jews, it did not stop individual scholars from producing alternatives. Among the most significant was the 1995 edition of the Torah by Clark University professor Everett Fox, who followed the philosophy of the German scholars Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig in preserving the idiom and poetic structure of the original Hebrew as much as possible. Fox also used the Hebrew forms of biblical names (*Moshe* for Moses, *Yitzhak* for Isaac, *Rivka* for Rebecca), and retained the tetragrammaton, YHWH, where other translations typically substituted “the Lord” for God’s unutterable sacred name. The purpose behind the translation was to recover the Bible’s sacred strangeness, which Fox believed had been sacrificed in the modern rush to cast scripture in contemporary idiom.

A similar reverence for the power of ancient language characterized traditional Catholic attitudes toward the Latin

Mass and the Vulgate (the ancient Latin translation of the Bible originating with St. Jerome). In the face of the Protestants’ insistence on vernacular translation from the original Greek and Hebrew, the Council of Trent in 1546 declared the Vulgate the only authentic version for public reading and theological debate. For unofficial use, however, the Douay-Rheims version, as revised and annotated in the 1740s by London bishop Richard Challoner, became the standard Bible for American Catholics until the twentieth century. The marginal glosses occasionally lapsed into polemic, as at the account of the Last Supper in Matthew 26:26, where the note attacked many Protestants’ denial of the real presence in the Eucharist: “*This is my body*. He does not say, *This is the figure of my body*.” In 1790 the Irish Catholic printer Matthew Carey printed the first American edition of Douay-Rheims, but disappointing profits eventually led him to print the KJV for Protestant readers instead.

In the antebellum Republic, as new Catholic immigrants crowded rapidly into eastern U.S. cities, controversy exploded over which Bible—Catholic or Protestant—would be read in the public schools. In 1843 Philadelphia bishop Francis Kenrick successfully petitioned the local school board to excuse Catholic children from reading the King James Bible. The fact that the KJV was not based on the Vulgate was just one reason Catholics rejected it. American editions of the KJV invariably appeared without the Apocrypha, the fifteen additional biblical books accepted by Catholics and many Anglicans. (Most Protestants rejected the Apocrypha because it contained, among other things, the key proof text for the doctrine of purgatory.) The exemption obtained by Kenrick was a fleeting triumph, for Protestant nativists regarded it as a plot to remove the Bible entirely from the schools. Ethnic and religious tensions eventually escalated into a citywide riot in 1844 that killed at least thirteen people. Kenrick, meanwhile, had begun work on his own revision of Douay-Rheims, a project he continued after becoming archbishop of Baltimore in 1851. Although Kenrick never published a complete edition of the Bible, his version was the most important American Catholic translation before the twentieth century.

Between the two world wars, Catholic biblical scholarship rapidly professionalized, as is evident in the founding of the Catholic Biblical Association in 1936. The group’s first major project was a revision of Douay-Rheims, the New American Bible (NAB), which published with the New Testament in 1941. Sponsored by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (the apostolate responsible for the

religious education of youth), the NAB was based on the Vulgate, as church regulation required, but it took account of the Greek in the footnotes. Then, in 1943, Pope Pius XII issued a major encyclical, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, fully sanctioning the translation of vernacular Bibles from the original Greek and Hebrew. This forced an overhaul—much welcomed by scholars—of the NAB project and delayed its completion until 1970, when the full Bible appeared. Along the way, the Second Vatican Council contributed greatly to the new era of openness in Catholic scholarship. The council also allowed for ecumenical cooperation between Catholics and Protestants in the translation of scripture. The first fruits of this cooperation appeared in 1966 with the RSV Catholic Edition, which integrated a small number of Catholic textual preferences, chiefly in the New Testament. As a gesture of appreciation, Pope Paul VI awarded RSV chairman Luther Weigle (himself a Congregationalist) the papal knighthood of St. Gregory the Great.

The Bible and New Denominations

For all the varied editions of scripture on the market, no version exerted greater cultural influence than the King James Bible. Particularly in the nineteenth century, after the First Amendment created a free marketplace of religious sects, various upstart brands of Protestantism looked to the Bible as their founding charter. Some groups focused on a particular passage, even a single verse, of the KJV as the interpretive key for unlocking everything else. Other groups appealed to the Bible more generally as a document that supposedly transcended merely human doctrines and customs. Common to all these groups was the notion that the Bible, like the U.S. Constitution, broke the monarchial authority of inherited traditions. This idea of starting afresh was expressed in the new nation's Great Seal, designed by Bible translator Charles Thomson, which included the Latin motto *Novus Ordo Seclorum* (New Order of the Ages). For many Americans, this new order entailed a return to something ancient—the allegedly pure standard of scripture.

Ironically, in New England, where the back-to-the-Bible emphasis had been particularly strong, this biblical primitivism planted the seeds of Puritanism's own demise, as many onetime Puritans embraced Universalism or Unitarianism. Universalists, who were so named because of their doctrine that universal salvation was God's ultimate purpose, found inspiration in KJV verses such as Luke 3:6 ("all flesh shall see the salvation of God") and 1 Timothy 2:4 ("Who will have all men to be saved"). Unitarians, meanwhile, argued that

scripture nowhere spelled out the doctrine of the Trinity, a metaphysical invention they believed was at odds with the biblical picture of Jesus as the savior empowered by the Father (who alone was fully God) to work miracles and teach moral lessons. In discounting the Trinity, some Unitarians noted that the doctrine's chief proof-text, 1 John 5:7 ("the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one") was not found in the most ancient Greek manuscripts. Unitarian scholars regarded this textual intrusion, which had been pointed out as early as the sixteenth century by the humanistic scholar Erasmus, as a flaw in the otherwise revered KJV.

As Unitarianism thrived in the early nineteenth century in liberal bastions such as Harvard, more populist movements such as Methodism were also appealing to scripture in combating the older Calvinist message that God intended to save only an elect few. In camp meetings on the frontier, Methodist circuit riders repeated biblical refrains of "whosoever" ("whosoever believeth in him," John 3:16; "Whosoever shall confess me before men," Luke 12:8) as evidence that God gave humans the ability to choose between life and death. Other frontier groups, such as the followers of Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone, echoed the same free-will line in proclaiming their independence from all "man-made" doctrinal systems. Campbell, who began his career as a Presbyterian in Ulster, in Ireland, declared "Bibleism" his only theology. The phrase "no creed but the Bible" likewise became a rallying cry for Campbellites and Stoneites as they worked to unlearn the "speech of Ashdod" (Nehemiah 13:24)—the language of Philistines, which was Campbell's name for invented human dogmas.

"Bibleism" always involved selective appropriation of scripture, however, and some groups read the Bible more selectively than did others. Among the more unusual sects were the Millerites, led by the onetime deist William Miller, who found in scripture the key to the end of time. Miller foreshadowed Cyrus I. Scofield, editor of the famous reference Bible, in scouring the KJV for numerical clues to the date of Christ's Second Coming. After reading through the entire Bible, Miller singled out Daniel 8:14 ("Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed"). He interpreted this as 2,300 years from the "seventy weeks" (Daniel 9:24), which some biblical chronologies dated from 457 BCE. Thus, by Miller's calculation, the Second Coming (which he equated with the cleansing of the sanctuary) would happen 2,300 years from 457 BCE, or in the year 1843. Miller made his prediction in 1816,

which gave his followers twenty-seven years to build up expectations. As the date drew near, some Millerites sold their farms or gave up other worldly attachments. But when 1843 came and went, and Miller's revised date of 1844 also failed to bring Christ's return, his movement suffered what came to be known as the Great Disappointment. The Millerites' later successors, the Seventh-day Adventists, took the perils of precise date setting to heart and maintained a more general sense of the imminent end. Other apocalyptic groups, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, boldly proclaimed new dates, each time revising their predictions based on supposedly better understandings of the biblical "facts."

No less striking than apocalyptic readings of scripture were interpretations focused on the powers given to Christ's followers in the here and now. For Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, the key to scripture was Matthew 9:1–8, the story of Jesus healing a man with palsy. Eddy discovered the passage, which affirmed that God "had given such power unto men" (Matthew 9:8), from her sickbed in 1866 and subsequently experienced a remarkable recovery. A decade later, she published *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (1875), her manifesto of mental healing, in which she reinterpreted the Bible through a metaphysical lens. For Eddy, the key to scripture was in understanding that the material world is an illusion. Sickness and death do not truly exist because only mind is real, and it is immortal. In summing up her view, she quoted Romans 8:7: "The carnal mind is enmity against God." This passage revealed that the "central fact of the Bible," as she put it, "is the superiority of spiritual over physical power."

Eddy was hardly the only American to find in scripture a paradigm for healing. Some other groups, most notably Pentecostal Christians, regarded divine healing as one of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit that would be given to the faithful in the last days. For Pentecostals, the key to scripture was the New Testament account of the outpouring of the Spirit on Jesus' disciples, when they miraculously spoke in other tongues "as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). Pentecostals connected this passage with the Old Testament prophecy of the "former rain" and the "latter rain" (Joel 2:23). The former rain was the first Pentecost experience of the disciples in Jerusalem. The latter rain was the modern revival of charismatic practices—speaking in tongues, divine healing, casting out demons—in the birth of the Pentecostal movement. This modern revival neatly coincided with the turn of the twentieth century when Agnes Ozman, a follower of the former Methodist preacher

Charles Fox Parham, spoke in tongues at Parham's Bible school in Topeka, Kansas. From there, the movement spread rapidly, especially after the African American preacher William J. Seymour initiated the more famous revival at Azusa Street in Los Angeles.

The American Religious Text: The Book of Mormon

The most dramatic restoration of biblical paradigms came in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), better known as the Mormon tradition. Mormonism's logic was compellingly simple: If God imparted direct revelations in apostolic times, why could he not reveal things directly to people today? Ongoing revelation, in other words, was Mormonism's key, not only in the emergence of new scriptures (the Book of Mormon) but also for the interpretation of old ones. The revelations to Mormon founder Joseph Smith Jr. began in 1820, when Smith was only fourteen. He learned in a vision that all the existing sects were wrong and that all their creeds were an abomination in God's sight. Eventually he was directed to a hillside near his home in upstate New York, where he found a buried trove of ancient writings engraved on gold plates. These plates became in translation the Book of Mormon (1830), a text immediately assailed as a forgery by critics but hailed as a divine revelation by the Mormon faithful.

For historians of American religion, the Book of Mormon's authenticity is beside the point. What matters is its cultural significance as a uniquely American bible—a continuation of the Bible's story on American soil. The doctrine of ongoing revelation meant, moreover, that even the Book of Mormon could be supplemented by later disclosures. Such is the purpose of Mormonism's open-ended Doctrine and Covenants, a compilation of later revelations imparted to Smith and his successors as prophets of the church. Smith also received revelations correcting or clarifying certain passages in the Bible itself. The revised KJV text became known as the Joseph Smith Translation. (Modern editions of the KJV published by the LDS Church include Smith's minor textual modifications in footnotes and print the longer ones in an appendix.)

Direct revelation was just one of the biblical practices restored by Smith and his successors, beginning with Brigham Young. The Latter-day Saints regarded their westward trek to Utah as a replication of the Israelites' journey from bondage in Egypt to the freedom of the Promised Land. Like the Israelites, the Mormons built a great temple,

and they restored Israel's patriarchal offices of leadership, which they dubbed the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods. The Latter-day Saints also restored New Testament practices such as divine healing, typically through the anointing of the sick with oil and the laying on of hands by an elder. Most controversially, the early Mormons restored the biblical practice of plural marriage, which, in conjunction with their doctrine of eternal families, was seen as a way of enlarging the eventual company of heaven by sealing women to the men of the priesthood. Although the church renounced polygamy in 1890 as a condition of Utah statehood, Mormons retained their underlying zeal for the restoration of Zion—the new Jerusalem.

Indeed, the Book of Mormon tells the story of a group of Israelites who fled old Jerusalem in 600 BCE, before its destruction by the Babylonians. They traveled by ship to America, where they split into two rival tribes, the Nephites and the Lamanites, who remained in conflict for centuries. After Jesus was crucified and raised from the dead, he appeared in America and shared his teachings with the inhabitants. Eventually, in the fourth century the Lamanites defeated the Nephites, whose last survivor, Moroni, buried an account of the events on the gold plates found by Smith some 1,400 years later. The Lamanites, meanwhile, became the ancestors of the Native Americans, who, according to the Book of Mormon, would eventually turn to Christ and thereby usher in the Second Coming. Mormons consequently took a missionary interest in the conversion of Native peoples, who became pivotal players in the restoration of the biblical drama on the North American continent.

The Bible, Race, and Slavery

Mormons resembled many other Americans in reading scripture for clues about the origins and destinies of particular peoples. The original edition of the Book of Mormon prophesied that at the last day, the descendants of the dark-skinned Lamanites would become “white and delightsome” (2 Nephi 30:6). (The modern edition of the text changed the wording to “pure and delightsome.”) The Mormons’ teaching about the Lamanites’ Israelite origins, moreover, partook of a long tradition of American speculation about the ancient Hebrew tribes and their possible connections to the indigenous peoples of America. The Puritan Roger Williams, in *A Key to the Language of America* (1643), cited what he thought were resemblances between the Hebrew and Narragansett languages and religious

practices to bolster his theory that the Indians were the descendants of the ten “lost tribes” of Israel (the tribes that never returned to Jerusalem after the Assyrian-Babylonian exile). Williams’s contemporary, the Bible translator John Eliot, hazarded a similar hypothesis in a letter printed in *Jews in America* (1660) by the English Puritan divine Thomas Thorowgood. More often than not, however, Puritan writers equated Native peoples not with the Hebrews but with the Canaanites—the indigenous inhabitants of Canaan who had to be defeated before Israel could take possession of the land.

The dispossession and even extermination of Native Americans thus seemed to some English colonists to have a clear biblical warrant. Like the Canaanites, the Indians seemed given to idolatry. The cultivation of multiple spirits in Native rituals seemed, to English eyes, little different from the cults of Baal and other Canaanite gods. The English conquest of early America could therefore be read as a latter-day struggle to vanquish the idols and establish the exclusive worship of the God of Israel.

An equally fateful reading of scripture occurred with the rise of the Atlantic slave trade, as Europeans turned to the Bible to explain the origins of African peoples. By the nineteenth century, it had become commonplace among slaveholders in the American South to justify the subjugation of Africans by appeal to the so-called curse of Ham. Ham was the son of Noah who, unlike his obedient brothers Shem and Japheth, “saw the nakedness of his father” (Genesis 9:22), who was lying drunken and uncovered in his tent. Because of this transgression (the exact nature of which has always been debated), Noah cursed Ham’s progeny, namely his son Canaan: “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren” (Genesis 9:25). The story of Ham is followed in Genesis 10 by a table of nations listing the descendants of Noah’s three sons. Ham’s descendants include Cush (Ethiopia), a connection used in nineteenth-century pseudo-scientific racial theories as evidence that the “Hamitic” line consisted of dark-skinned peoples condemned to perpetual servitude. As the prominent Southern Presbyterian minister Benjamin Palmer declared in an 1861 sermon in New Orleans soon after the outbreak of the Civil War, “We find in Noah’s prophetic utterances to his three sons, the fortunes of mankind presented in perfect outline.”

Yet even as many white southerners used the Bible to justify the notion of black inferiority, African Americans found scripture equally fruitful as a document of liberation. Although the Bible presupposed slavery as an institution, it

also contained the Exodus narrative in which the Israelites, through God's providential assistance, escaped enslavement in Egypt for the freedom of the Promised Land. In retellings by African Americans as well as by white abolitionists, the biblical crossing of the Red Sea foreshadowed the bloody Civil War, which delivered the United States from the sin of slavery. Slave spirituals likewise repeated the Exodus story in song, as in the famous lines, "Go Down, Moses, / Way down in Egypt land, / Tell old Pharaoh, / Let my people go." A century later, leading figures of the civil rights movement invoked the same motif in exhorting the nation to live up to its constitutional ideal of liberty for all. In his last sermon on the eve of his assassination, Martin Luther King Jr. alluded to the dying Moses gazing out at Canaan from atop Mount Pisgah: "I've been to the mountaintop. . . . And I've seen the Promised Land. And I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the Promised Land."

African American laypeople, no less than clergy, turned to biblical narratives for solace amid their suffering and for the courage to confront injustice. Jarena Lee, a domestic servant born to free black parents in New Jersey in 1783, experienced an ecstatic conversion that she compared to the "third heaven" spoken of by the apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 12:2). Later, when she appealed to Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, for the right to be ordained as a woman preacher, she invoked the vision of the last days in Joel 2:28 ("your sons and your daughters shall prophesy"). She also pointed out that it was a woman, Mary Magdalene, who first witnessed the Resurrection and proclaimed the good news to Jesus' disciples (John 20:18). A century later, after the sharecropper and civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer was savagely beaten in a Winona, Mississippi, jail, she witnessed to the jailer's wife by quoting Acts 17:26 ("And hath made of one blood all nations of men")—a verse that subverted the separate and unequal races that segregationists had tried to prove by appeal to Noah's sons.

However discredited the notion of inferior bloodlines had become by the last half of the twentieth century, the questions of slavery and race had opened up a wider crisis of biblical interpretation that would have ongoing implications for the Bible's relevance in the culture. Protestants in particular, who before the Civil War had been united in their conviction that the Bible was uniformly unambiguous and authoritative for moral guidance, came to blows over whose cause—the North's or the South's—enjoyed a preponderance of scriptural support. No one better expressed

the tragic irony of the two sides than Abraham Lincoln in his second inaugural: "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other."

The Bible as "Great Code": Arts and Letters

The tragedies and triumphs, as well as the relentless ambiguities, of the American affair with scripture have always been especially vivid in the nation's arts and letters. The English poet William Blake once commented that the Old and New Testaments were the "great code" of art, and this would also describe the Bible's role in the American imagination. Quite apart from debates over the historical accuracy or moral applicability of particular scriptural passages, the Bible as a *literary* source typically functioned as a seamless narrative, a grand epic running from the world's creation to its end. This epic told the history of salvation, and it was populated with characters both noble and flawed. Thus the Bible became the lens through which many writers, such as the twentieth-century African American novelist James Baldwin, viewed the world. Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1952) contains numerous biblical allusions. The leading characters—Gabriel, Deborah, Elizabeth, and John—are namesakes, respectively, of the biblical archangel, the Israelite judge, the mother of John the Baptist, and John the Baptist himself. Many of the novel's scenes also recapitulate biblical stories, from John's gazing out over Manhattan from atop a hill in Central Park (an allusion to the temptation of Christ by Satan on the mountaintop in Matthew 4) to John's wrestling with the boy-preacher Elisha (an allusion to Jacob's wrestling with the angel of the Lord in Genesis 32). Midway through the novel, Deborah tells her husband, Gabriel (a lay preacher): "ain't no shelter against the Word of God, is there, Reverend? You is just got to be in it, that's all." To "be in it": This epitomizes the Bible's role as the imaginative universe inhabited by some of America's greatest writers and artists.

Some writers in American history succeeded in mass-marketing biblical themes. The first American literary blockbuster was the Puritan minister Michael Wigglesworth's long poem *The Day of Doom* (1662), which recreates in lurid detail the Last Judgment scene in Matthew 25. The scenario unfolds when a light breaks forth at midnight, causing sinners to awake in terror. Some people vainly try to escape by drowning themselves, but there is no getting away as Christ commences to separate the sheep from the goats. Such popular literature found its twentieth-century equivalent in

Left Behind, a series of sixteen novels published between 1995 and 2007 by the dispensational premillennialists Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins. The series describes the travails of persons left on earth after Christ's faithful ones vanish in the Rapture.

Between the bookends of *The Day of Doom* and *Left Behind*, which both broke publishing records for their times, an array of other popular works appeared, including novels based on the life of Jesus. A best seller of this genre was the Episcopal priest Joseph Holt Ingraham's *The Prince of the House of David* (1855), an epistolary novel written from the perspective of Adina, a fictional first-century Jewish girl who witnesses the key events of Jesus' ministry. Another successful venture was Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's *A Singular Life* (1894), which narrates the tale of Emanuel Bayard, a renegade New England minister. A thinly veiled Christ figure, Bayard—whose parents' names are Mary and Joseph—bucks the Congregational establishment and sets up his own ministry to fishermen in a seaside town. He is ultimately stoned to death by henchmen of the local saloonkeeper, who is angry about the loss of his customers. Phelps, whose father was a professor at the Congregational seminary at Andover, Massachusetts, epitomized the spirit of the Social Gospel movement, which stressed the countercultural aspect of Jesus' ministry. Jesus appeared in her fiction, as he did in Ingraham's novel and in many lesser-known works, as the great mirror reflecting the anxieties and aspirations of each new era in U.S. history.

Popular literature, of course, always coexisted with the more sophisticated works judged canonical by the academic arbiters of America's literary output. Here the Bible's influence was often more subtle but no less pervasive. Herman Melville's monumental classic *Moby-Dick* (1851) is so full of biblical names and tropes that scholars have produced concordances of all the references. From the biblical names of the characters (Ishmael, Ahab, Elijah) to Melville's complex play on themes from the book of Jonah (whose protagonist, unlike Captain Ahab, yields to God's will in the end), *Moby-Dick* can scarcely be understood apart from its scriptural underpinnings. Similarly, the Bible forms the substructure of the fiction of Nathaniel Hawthorne, who, like Melville, wrestled with scriptural preoccupations inherited from the Calvinist–Puritan tradition. The theme of sin looms throughout Hawthorne's great novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), including the tapestry depicting the adulterers David and Bathsheba that hangs in the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale's study.

The Bible continued to be the great repository of figures for twentieth-century fiction writers and essayists. The titles alone of many works are either full or partial quotations of biblical phrases: James Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941), William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936), Ernest J. Gaines's *In My Father's House* (1978), Shirley Ann Grau's *The Keepers of the House* (1964), Ernest Hemmingway's *The Garden of Eden* (published posthumously, 1986), Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* (1977), Katherine Anne Porter's *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* (1939), Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead* (2004), O. E. Rölvaa's *Giants in the Earth* (1927), and John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* (1952).

The Bible's ubiquity in American literature is rivaled only by its influence in the visual arts and music. In visual art, this influence extends as far back as colonial New England, despite the Puritans' iconoclasm. In England, Puritanism had inspired waves of iconoclastic destruction as zealous mobs, in obedience to the biblical prohibition against graven images, smashed the statues and stained glass that adorned many medieval churches. The Puritans brought this iconoclastic zeal to the New World, where a typical New England meetinghouse was furnished with not so much as a simple cross. Yet steeped as they were in the literary figures of scripture, Puritan artisans soon developed their own traditions of biblically inspired folk art, most notably the carved headstones still visible in many New England cemeteries. Juxtaposed with the familiar skulls and mottoes of mortality (*fugit hora*: the hour is fleeting) were stylized renditions of women's breasts, which were based on Christian readings of the Song of Solomon (the breast as a type of the life-giving power and maternal care of Christ the redeemer). By the nineteenth century, the iconoclastic aesthetic of the Puritan meetinghouse, which had influenced not only Puritans but also many other colonial Protestants, began to give way to the neo-medieval sensibilities of architects such as Richard Upjohn and Ralph Adams Cram, who designed Gothic revival churches replete with biblical epics set in stained glass. Early American painters such as the colonial-era master John Singleton Copley also belied New England's iconoclastic tradition. In addition to painting portraits of Boston's elite, Copley is also known for *The Ascension* (1775), a dramatic depiction of the astonished apostles watching as Christ is lifted up to heaven.

Copley's incorporation of Renaissance and Baroque elements lent his work a European flavor, but distinctively American traditions of biblical depiction emerged, as in the decidedly vernacular Millerite prophecy charts, reprinted by

the thousands in the antebellum republic. On these appeared the apparitions of the apocalypse: the “great image” with a golden head and feet of clay (Daniel 2), the five-horned sheep (Daniel 8), the seven trumpets (Revelation 8–11), and the seven-headed dragon (Revelation 12). Equally influential on the popular imagination were illustrated editions of scripture, such as Harper and Brothers’ highly successful *Illuminated Bible* (1844), which included 1,600 engravings of biblical scenes. Visual representations of biblical scenes also permeated the world of popular devotional publishing, as in John Cameron’s 1849 lithographs of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, which were widely distributed by the American Tract Society, and Warner Sallman’s 1941 painting *Head of Christ*, which was reprinted more than five hundred million times, thus becoming the most recognizable image of Jesus in the culture.

Music was another important medium through which Americans experienced the Bible. In colonial America, Puritan worship typically included the singing of metrical psalms, usually without accompaniment. Over time, other biblical texts, retold in verse by writers such as the English Nonconformist Isaac Watts, were set to hymn tunes for congregational singing. With the publication in 1844 of *The Sacred Harp* by Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha J. King, a distinctively American genre came into its own: sacred harp or “shape note” hymnody (so named for the distinctively shaped musical notations used to aid untrained singers). Sung a cappella in four-part harmony, the sacred harp combined haunting melodies with rhymed stanzas, as in the tune *Windham* (with text based on Matthew 7:13–14): “Broad is the road that leads to death / And thousands walk together there; / But wisdom shows a narrow path, / With here and there a traveler.” Although biblical texts formed the basis for a variety of more complicated works by later American composers—from Leonard Bernstein’s first symphony, *Jeremiah* (1942), to Carlisle Floyd’s opera *Susannah* (1955)—the stark hymns of the sacred harp, sung in frontier meetinghouses and revival tents, best captured the biblical worldview that animated countless ordinary people.

The Bible as Contested Book: Religious and Secular Politics

The Bible’s tremendous influence on American habits of mind is owed in no small part to the widespread belief in the book’s literal veracity. In polls between 1991 and 2007, for example, the Gallup organization found that 31 percent

of Americans, on average, believed that the Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally. Another segment of the population, hovering near 50 percent, accepted the Bible as the inspired word of God but believed that not everything in it should be taken literally. The combined percentages therefore indicated that roughly four of five Americans at the turn of the twenty-first century regarded the Bible as in some sense the word of God. Although other polls have indicated a gradual upward trend in the number of religious skeptics, the United States remains unique among Western industrialized societies in the extent of its biblicism.

The nation’s presidents are well aware of the Bible’s legitimating potential and routinely quote scripture in their oratory to lend gravity or provide comfort, especially in times of crisis. Presidential use of scripture is bipartisan. On the night after the September 11, 2001, attack, which killed nearly three thousand people, George W. Bush invoked Psalm 23 (“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil”). In repudiating some past policies and the unwillingness to address certain problems, President Barack Obama, in his inaugural address, paraphrased 1 Corinthians 13:11 (“the time has come to set aside childish things”).

Yet the bipartisan rhetorical use of scripture belies the fact that the Bible remains the most divisive book in American history. Its divisiveness stems from two factors external to scripture itself. The first, and more basic, issue is the modern manner of reading the text that has dominated since the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Modern readers tend to judge the text based on its perceived degree of correspondence to historical, factual reality. Many conservative Christians presume a complete correspondence—hence the modern doctrine of “inerrancy” (the notion that the Bible lacks any error, whether historical, scientific, or theological). Liberal Christians presume that the Bible is a mixture of authoritative material and ancient legend, a view shared by critical biblical scholars. The divisiveness arises when the two sides clash over the extent of the Bible’s normative status. In 1993, for example, a group of liberal scholars known as the Jesus Seminar made waves with *The Five Gospels*, a new edition of the four New Testament Gospels along with the noncanonical Gospel of Thomas, in which every verse is color-coded according to how reliable the committee judged it to be. Conservative scholars condemned the project and appealed to the favorite proof text of inerrantists, 2 Timothy 3:16 (“All scripture is given by inspiration of God”). Such

controversies continue to reinforce a conservative–liberal divide even as the most strident voices on the two sides inevitably drown out the less polarized perspectives of other scholars and many average people.

The second source of the Bible’s divisiveness concerns the particular passages judged authoritative by different constituencies and how those passages should be applied to ethical issues of modern times. In the nineteenth century, the burning question was slavery and whether the biblical passages that presumed the institution should be relativized. In the early twentieth century, especially in the famous Scopes “Monkey” Trial of 1925, the issue was the teaching of evolution in the public schools. Creationists feared that the Darwinists’ rejection of a literal reading of Genesis would imperil the whole providential view of history in which God planned all things, from the creation to the end of the world. By the turn of the twenty-first century, controversy centered on homosexuality, specifically the question of whether passages such as Leviticus 18:22 (“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind”) are timeless ethical verities or time-bound products of an ancient culture that lacked nuanced understandings of sexual and gender differences. For Christians, the homosexuality debate is made all the more divisive by the complicated issues of Bible translation surrounding passages such as 1 Corinthians 6:9, in which one of the disputed Greek words has been variously rendered as “effeminate,” “homosexuals,” and “sexual perverts,” among other readings. Such exegetical debates are far from idle, for they relate to hotly contested questions in the political realm. When Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage in 2004, activists on both sides of the issue redoubled their efforts to claim the Bible for their respective causes.

The Bible, in other words, seems destined to remain a politically contested book, at least in the short term. The long-term outcome of the contemporary culture wars is less clear. Will battle fatigue over sexuality ultimately help weaken the Bible’s hold over the lives of many Americans? Or will a majority continue to find ways to Americanize the ancient text and make it relevant to new contexts? History would seem to favor the latter, for as the Bible itself attests (Ecclesiastes 12:12), “of making many books there is no end.”

See also *Benevolent Empire*; *Bible, Interpretation of*; *Book of Mormon*; *Qur’an*; *Religious Thought* entries; *Torah*.

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Bible: Interpretation of

The Bible has played an important role in the religious life of North American Christians and has been interpreted in a number of different ways. The academic study of the scriptures has been a primary focus for seminaries throughout the United States and Canada. Preaching and teaching the Bible has been a central task of churches in a variety of ways, both formally and informally. Millions of Christians in their own personal and devotional interactions with the Bible have studied and interpreted scripture since the earliest days of Christianity in North America. Likewise, Jewish readers have studied the Hebrew Bible and related materials, keeping alive a centuries-old tradition of scriptural study and interpretation.

There are two dimensions to any consideration of the Bible. First, it is inevitable that a view about the nature of scripture is held or will be developed. One studies the scriptures in a variety of ways and does so out of convictions about what the Bible is. These convictions may be explicit or implicit. But interaction with the Bible leads to a view or is occasioned by a view of what kind of book the Bible is. Among other viewpoints, the Bible may be considered as a book of inerrant facts; as a medium through which one is in contact with the divine; as a record of the religious experiences of ancient peoples; or as a book of morals or source of wisdom for daily living.

A second factor is that the Bible is interpreted. Whenever the scriptures are read and comments are made, biblical interpretation is occurring. Declarations about “what the Bible says” are always interpretive acts. In both formal and informal ways, one interprets the scripture when its verses are read, pondered, or discussed. This has been the case throughout the history of the Christian church. Biblical scholars and theologians have developed highly structured methods of biblical interpretation. But the interpretative process is also a part of what ordinary Christian believers have done and do on a regular basis. Likewise, interpretation is involved for those many people who study the Bible for a number of reasons or do not operate from explicitly

religious convictions. Interpretive judgments emerge no matter from what perspective readers approach their study of the Bible.

The interpretation of the Bible in North America has been intimately tied into the culture of the United States and Canada. This is true in relation to the kinds of concerns biblical interpretation has addressed, as well as the ways in which descriptions of the nature of scripture and the means of its appropriate interpretation are articulated. Events in American culture in both social and personal arenas have elicited comments from religious people about what they interpret the Bible to teach and its relation to certain issues. A “religious interpretation” of American history, for example, is often predicated on specific interpretations of biblical passages that relate to how “God” and a “nation” should interact. Prominent political figures often cite—and thus interpret—the Bible in their rhetoric and speeches. So biblical interpretation in North America has not been an isolated event or a private endeavor. The Bible has held a prominent place in the “marketplace,” and its significance has been ongoing into contemporary times.

Views about the nature of scripture and the means to interpret it are related in many and often subtle ways. What one believes about what the Bible is will influence what methods one employs to interpret it. When one is committed to a basic interpretive approach to scripture, one’s views about what the Bible is can be reinforced or altered. This is true if one adopts the approach of literalism, in which texts are interpreted at their face value, or literally; or if one looks at the Bible as allegorism, which establishes a set of hidden meanings for which the words of the text are a code; or if one uses critical methods, in which the text is examined rationally for a number of features, such as its language, context, or impact upon its readers. There is an interplay between “theoretical constructs” and “interpretive practices” or between views of the nature of scripture and the ways one believes it should be interpreted.

The views discussed in the following section have been prominent in North America. A short description of each viewpoint’s concept of the nature of scripture is followed by comments about interpretive practices and leading practitioners.

The Nature of Scripture and Its Interpretation **Roman Catholicism**

North American Roman Catholics have adhered to the traditional position that the Bible is God’s revelation and is

to be interpreted through the work of the *magisterium*, or authority, of the Roman Catholic Church. The church is the guarantor of the correct interpretation of Scripture. This view has been expressed in the tradition of the Roman church and its official pronouncements, so the church's tradition is the means by which the true interpretation of the Bible has been expressed. Thus scripture and tradition serve as dual sources of God's revelation.

Until the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), 1962–1965, methods and results of biblical interpretation for Roman Catholic theologians had to coincide with the church's teachings. Use of emerging critical methods of studying the Bible was forbidden. (The Catholic Biblical Association of America, founded in 1936, had begun publishing the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* for the scholarly study of scripture in 1939.) With the approval of the Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*), in 1965, a number of Roman Catholic scripture scholars became prominent figures. Among them were Roland Murphy (1917–2002), Raymond E. Brown (1928–1998), and Joseph A. Fitzmyer (1920–). By the 1970s the doors had been opened for important Roman Catholic scholars to adopt most of the scholarly consensus on most issues of biblical interpretation. For example, Fitzmyer argued against the traditional viewpoint but in line with other New Testament scholars, that the apostle Paul did not write the pastoral letters (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, which traditionally had been attributed to him). Brown, who had argued that the apostle John wrote the Gospel according to John, later rejected this position. These are indications of the ways Roman Catholic scholars, while remaining loyal to church dogma and tradition, were able to employ contemporary methods of scholarship used by non-Catholic biblical scholars as well. Examples of Catholic contributions to biblical studies currently abound in the number of high-level biblical commentaries and specialized studies produced by Roman Catholic exegetes.

Liberal Theology

Liberal theology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries emerged at the time when biblical scholars were increasingly employing a number of new forms of analysis in their study of the scriptures. These included scientific, sociological, economic, and psychological approaches. Overall, what became known as historical criticism, or the historical-critical method, became prominent. This was the attempt to understand ancient texts in relation to their

historical origins, the time and place in which they were written, the sources that informed them, and the dates, events, places, persons, and things (including customs) that are mentioned or implied in the texts. Basic presuppositions of this approach include the convictions that ancient reality is accessible to investigation by the use of human reason and that the contemporary experience of humanity can indicate the objective criteria by which to determine what could or could not have happened in the past. Liberal theology embraced the historical-critical method as the means of interpreting biblical texts and for understanding the nature of the Bible.

The liberal theology of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European Protestants, including Friedrich Schleiermacher, Albrecht Ritschl, and Adolf von Harnack, was expressed in North America by a number of interpreters. Prominent figures were William Adams Brown, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Walter Rauschenbusch, and Shailer Mathews. They viewed the Bible as the record of the religious experiences of ancient peoples, written by fallible human authors, that nonetheless could inspire contemporary readers with its great beauty, power, and dignity. The Bible's authority was in its power to evoke religious experience through the ancient writings and to confront readers with the great questions of human existence. Fosdick spoke of the Bible as presenting "abiding experiences and changing categories."

Liberal theology embraced the emerging critical study of the Bible as compatible with its desire to separate the Bible's "religious" understandings from the social and cultural contexts in which these were presented in the scriptures. A full range of critical methods and schools of interpretation can be applied to biblical interpretation in order to separate the husk from the kernel—the historical, sociological, and cultural backgrounds of biblical texts from their religious meanings. Liberal theologians sought to communicate the experience of the biblical writers ("abiding experiences") in the contemporary thought forms and language of their own times ("changing categories").

The impact of critical biblical scholarship, especially as developed in Germany, on Americans has been substantial. This can be seen in the number of American scholars who studied in Germany. In most years in the 1890s, more than four hundred American students were enrolled in German theological faculties. After World War II a number of prominent Continental biblical scholars assumed teaching posts at major North American theological institutions.

Neo-Orthodox Theology

The Swiss theologian Karl Barth (1886–1968) was the leading Protestant theologian of the twentieth century. Barth had been a student of leading German liberal theologians, including Adolf von Harnack. But when he saw his former professors supporting the kaiser's war policies at the start of World War I, Barth rejected liberal theology and began his own study of scripture.

For Barth and those who followed him (often labeled "neo-orthodox"), the Bible was "witness." As such, the category of "inerrancy" and the demands for "factual accuracy" were not a set of concerns. Barth "returned" to the Bible, and, along with colleagues such as Emil Brunner, developed a "dialectical" approach to scripture. This viewpoint stressed the great contrast between God and humanity, between the transcendent and holy God and finite and sinful human beings. In Jesus Christ, who was truly divine and truly human, as the ancient church affirmed, God has been revealed fully and finally, as "the Word made flesh." In Jesus Christ, God has bridged the gap between the divine and human by the divine "Word," which for Barth took three forms: the Word revealed (Jesus Christ); the Word proclaimed (preaching); and the Word written (scripture). The Bible "becomes" God's Word when through preaching Jesus Christ is proclaimed. The scriptures are our only source of knowledge of Jesus Christ and are the divine witness to the Word made flesh. Biblical writers were "inspired" but were still fallible humans recording in words their witness to what they had seen and heard. These writers and words had the "capacity for errors"; yet they were used by God through the Holy Spirit to point to the central character of scripture, Jesus Christ, and to accomplish God's divine purposes in the world. Scripture's "authority" arose when the Holy Spirit took the words of human witnesses and through this witness brought faith and obedience to Jesus Christ. Whatever "discrepancies" or "difficulties" or perceived "errors" in the biblical text may be found do not at all diminish what God is doing in and through the Bible by providing a "witness" to the greatest news in the universe: "The Word became flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14).

Barth did not find much of the work of his contemporaries in historical-critical studies of the Bible to be useful for enabling the theological meanings of the biblical texts to emerge. He did careful exegesis, but he always regarded that work as a prelude to the task of the "theological exegesis" of scripture in which the primary focus was on hearing and understanding what the biblical texts were pointing toward

in terms of God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Some critics thought Barth's Christological focus was detrimental to exegesis because his Christocentric theology was always looking for how texts (even in the Old Testament) were pointing toward Jesus Christ. The Bible was authoritative for Barth insofar as its writers were used by God's Holy Spirit as witnesses to God's Word in Jesus Christ. The Bible was to be interpreted with this focus.

Those who adopted this neo-orthodox approach to the nature and interpretation of the Bible were not drawn in to the arguments around inerrancy that were to rage among other American Protestants. Among academic theologians and some biblical scholars, Barth's influence in the 1950s and 1960s was pervasive. It also reached wider audiences in some churches through preachers trained under neo-orthodox American seminary professors and also through church school curricula that adopted this approach to the Bible and its interpretation.

Fundamentalism

A strong reaction to the liberal and later the neo-orthodox views of the nature of scripture and its appropriate interpretation is evident in the development of American fundamentalism. This movement got its name from the writing project called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of the Truth*, a series of twelve paperback books published between 1910 and 1915, that sought to answer the charges of liberalism in terms of the nature of scripture and its appropriate interpretation. Approximately three million copies of these books were distributed free to Christian leaders throughout the world.

Fundamentalist theology was attractive to evangelical Protestant Christians who came out of the revivalist tradition of American religion and in the twentieth century sought to oppose the "modernism" of liberal theology and the cultural changes that this theology endorsed. The fundamentalist movement was composed of people from a number of related traditions and began to take on its own identity. Fundamentalist theology viewed the Bible as containing divinely inspired and "inerrant" propositions that were directly revealed by God to human writers who recorded God's "Word" in all their words without error. The entire (Protestant) canon of scripture is thus inspired ("plenary inspiration") and is inspired "verbally," in every word. Since God is "true" (Romans 3:4) and God has "inspired" the scripture (2 Timothy 3:16), the Bible must be true and without error in all that it teaches. This truth is revealed in

the propositions of the Bible that by the direct inspiration of God stand as God's Word, which is true in all senses—not only “religiously” or theologically, but also historically and scientifically.

The fundamentalist view of scripture is tied primarily to a literalist hermeneutic, or approach to interpreting biblical texts. This means that biblical passages are interpreted in their plain, literal, or “historical” sense unless there is a pronounced clarity indicating that some other method of understanding should be used. (For example, Jesus' parables of the New Testament do not have to be read as literal or historically accurate stories.) The results of this emphasis on literal Biblical interpretation are seen most clearly in the interpretation of the first eleven chapters of Genesis as literal history. The biblical accounts of creation—of the universe and of humanity—are understood to be historically accurate, literal accounts of how the universe came into existence and how humans were created by the direct action of God. The most highly publicized example of fundamentalist theology on display was the famous Scopes “Monkey” Trial in 1925, in Dayton, Tennessee, when John Scopes, a high school biology teacher, was charged with violating Tennessee law by teaching Darwinism and the theory of evolution.

Today, the viewpoint known as creationism is a restatement of the fundamentalist view of how the opening chapters of Genesis should be interpreted in a literal way. The fundamentalist approach to biblical interpretation can also be found in some “pro-life” arguments in North American religious life about abortion as well as capital punishment. Leading fundamentalist leaders have included John R. Rice, Charles C. Ryrie, Jerry Falwell, and Pat Robertson. Also prominent was C. I. Scofield, whose *Scofield Reference Bible*, first published in 1909, is still widely used. The Scofield Bible popularized the approach to biblical interpretation known as dispensationalism, in which God is seen as dealing with the people of God in different ways during different biblical “dispensations,” or periods.

An expression of Scofield's dispensationalism as applied to eschatology, or the doctrine of the “last things,” is in the popular Left Behind series of fiction books by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins. These are narratives that express a particular reading of apocalyptic biblical passages, particularly from the book of Revelation. Emphasis is on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, which, according to this way of interpreting scripture, is to occur prior to the thousand-year reign of Christ known as the millennium. This view is called

premillennialism. It features the “rapture” of believers (based on 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18), the appearance of the “Beast” whose “number” is 666, the Antichrist, and the vanquishing of Satan. The phenomenal sales of the Left Behind series, along with a resurgent fundamentalism throughout American culture, have established an appeal for the literal hermeneutic of fundamentalism in relation to speculations about the end of the world and its time frame—which adherents believe will be able to be seen as coming to pass within the events of current history. Overall, this effect of fundamentalist views of biblical interpretation continues to play a part in popular interpretation of the Bible among many people in the United States.

Protestant Scholastic Theology

The emphasis on the nature of scripture and its literal interpretation are also found in an important viewpoint that continues to find expression in American religious life and that is associated with seventeenth-century Calvinism: Protestant scholastic theology. It is the approach of prominent theologians of Princeton Seminary, in New Jersey, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in which scripture is understood as doctrine. Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, Archibald Alexander Hodge, Benjamin B. Warfield, and the New Testament scholar J. Gresham Machen continued the tradition of seventeenth-century Reformed orthodoxy and developed a view that saw the Bible as authoritative because it was verbally inspired by God.

Since divinely inspired writers cannot err (under the influence of the Holy Spirit), the Bible must convey inerrant truths in all dimensions of what it teaches, including areas of history, science, and all issues of fact. A. A. Hodge and Warfield wrote an essay on “Inspiration,” in 1881, in which they argued that this inerrancy pertains directly to the “original autographs”—the original documents of scripture. These, they claimed, were “absolutely infallible when interpreted in the sense intended.” To disprove this view, they said, it would have to be shown that two apparently “discrepant” passages of the Bible existed in the original autographs (which are no longer extant); that the interpretation of the apparent discrepancy is the interpretation intended by the passage; and that the true sense of the text in the autograph of scripture is “directly and necessarily inconsistent with some certainly known act of history, or truth of science, or some other statement of Scripture certainly ascertained and interpreted.” One comes to recognize the inerrancy of scripture by the acquiescing of the mind to the truths of scripture as

found through the powers and processes of human reason, under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Scripture presents “doctrines” to be believed—a view that fit well into the confessional Calvinism of the “Old Princeton” theologians, in which subscription to a confession of faith (the Westminster Confession of 1646) was an important act of faith.

The sophisticated doctrine of the inerrancy of scripture was developed by the Princeton school in the light of the attacks of nineteenth-century “higher critics”—those who used the historical-critical method—on the veracity and accuracy of the Bible. The Princeton view of scripture was appropriated by a number of fundamentalists, and Princeton Seminary professor Benjamin B. Warfield wrote the article on the Bible for *The Fundamentals*. The transdenominational and breadth of the fundamentalist-scholastic approach of inerrancy is crystallized in that fact, since others who wrote for the series would not agree with Warfield’s Calvinism or with his specific views on issues such as election and predestination or the millennium. The Princeton tradition maintained this view of the Bible’s verbal inspiration, and thus authority, as well as the view that the inerrancy of scripture had been the church’s historic view through the ages.

The contention that the “inerrancy view” had been the church’s historic position was challenged in the nineteenth century by the Presbyterian Charles Augustus Briggs, an Old Testament scholar at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Briggs had studied in Germany and became proficient in biblical criticism. He challenged the Hodge-Warfield formulation, this “scholastic view,” as being an expression of seventeenth-century Reformed theologians who came after the time of Calvin. Briggs claimed the inerrancy view was not the viewpoint of Calvin and the Reformation confessions of faith. Briggs pointed out that none of the official confessions of the period had stated that the words of the original autographs of scripture were without error and also that the great reformers recognized errors in scripture and did not hold to the inerrancy of the original autographs. Briggs believed minor errors in detail did not destroy the Bible’s credibility and its trustworthiness as the revelation of God. In Briggs’s view, credibility was to be distinguished from infallibility.

Briggs’s views led to his ecclesiastical trial within the Presbyterian Church in 1892. By then a majority of Presbyterian ministers and through them church members had been educated in the scholastic theology of Hodge and Warfield in the Old Princeton tradition. In 1893 Briggs was convicted of denying the Bible’s authority. He lost his

ordination in the Presbyterian Church and later became ordained in the Episcopal Church. In the same year the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church acted to make the Hodge-Warfield theory of inerrancy the correct interpretation of the Westminster Confession for American Presbyterians. This was not modified until 1927, when a special theological commission was appointed in the church to deal with the continuing polarization of views over issues of biblical criticism and evolution. The General Assembly ruled that no body, even a General Assembly itself, could prescribe binding interpretation of the Westminster standards.

The view of the nature of the Bible as presenting doctrines to be believed, as well as an authoritative source of information on all it affirms, had many implications for biblical interpretation. Under divine inspiration, in this view, the biblical writers perfectly portrayed that which they were inspired to write, based on what they saw and heard. In interpretation, the interpreter sought through rigorous study of the biblical text, using the original languages of Hebrew and Greek, to find the established usage for the words in the text, and in so doing could be brought into direct contact with the event conveyed in scripture. This process enabled interpreters to encounter the biblical event as if they had been present and had personal experience. The testimony of others, as “witnesses,” could also mediate historical events with veracity and accuracy. Thus miracles, for example, could be considered as true when they were established by the testimony of credible witnesses. The testimony of credible witnesses made an event every bit as “true” as if one had had the experience of being present at the original event. The logical meanings of statements were most important, and by induction (the influence of Francis Bacon), one could construct a “systematic” theology from the biblical texts. The influence of Scottish “common sense” realism was strong in the Princeton School. It enabled an essential confidence in the abilities of readers to interpret the biblical text in a straightforward manner and to enter into the “world of the Bible” with confident assurance that human powers of reasoning, along with the work of the Holy Spirit, would lead one to the right interpretation of biblical texts

Neo-Evangelical Theology

Reactions to the fundamentalist and scholastic views of the inerrancy of the Bible in the wake of many American denominational splits over the nature of scripture led Harold John Ockenga, pastor of Park Street Church, Boston, in 1948, to call for a “new evangelicalism.” This was to

distinguish “evangelicals” from “fundamentalists,” especially in calling for more social involvement by Christians in the nation’s problems. In 1942 Ockenga and others had formed the National Association of Evangelicals. Since that time, evangelicalism has become a visible and potent factor in American religious life. There are today various streams or strands of the American evangelical movement with differing relationships to the fundamentalist theology from which they wish to distinguish themselves.

At the same time, the Reformed theological tradition, and particularly the Presbyterian tradition, which had produced the Old Princeton stress on the inerrancy of the Bible, has also evolved. Over the past sixty years, new Presbyterian churches have been formed, and in 1983 the two main bodies of American Presbyterians—the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the United Presbyterian Church of North America—merged to become the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Evangelicalism and Presbyterianism are two groupings in American religious life that have produced some who adhere to a view of the nature of scripture that is neither fundamentalist nor scholastic but that wants to hold to the Bible as God’s authoritative Word and wants to be open to different means of biblical interpretation, using a variety of scholarly tools. This viewpoint may be labeled neo-evangelical, though the term is not used as much as it was in the past. Yet the viewpoint, which is held by many who call themselves evangelical, or who are part of mainstream Protestant churches through which they have their theological identity, has enduring importance as what might be described as a centrist position. A primary concern of evangelicals is that a person’s relationship with Jesus Christ by faith is what makes one a Christian. It is through the Bible that Christ becomes known and present. An emphasis on religious conversion has been prominent among leading evangelicals (such as Billy Graham). The Bible functions as the means by which religious conversion can be effected.

Scripture, in this view, may be regarded as “message.” A distinction is made between the words *infallibility* and *inerrancy*. In fundamentalist and scholastic theology, the Bible was considered verbally inspired by God and therefore logically had to produce an “inerrant” (original) text. In this sense, the Bible is true. In neo-evangelical theology, *infallibility* is regarded as the more appropriate term, with the emphasis being on the Bible as God’s revelation, which is true in the sense that it will not lead one astray and is completely trustworthy for the purposes for which it is written.

The primary purpose is to guide people to faith in Jesus Christ and allow them to have eternal life in his name (John 20:31). In this view the Bible is authoritative because it is centered in Jesus Christ and it conveys the truth of Jesus Christ to those who believe, by the work of the Holy Spirit. Scripture *is* the Word of God because it is God’s divine revelation, which has been conveyed through the inspired writers of the Bible. But in this view the central purpose of scripture is to convey the divine message of salvation, which comes from God, who uses limited, fallible human writers to present this message. The biblical writers were inspired by God, but this inspiration emerges in and through their personalities and does not exempt them from the limits of their own humanity and their time and place and cultures. The purpose of the scriptures is a theological one—proclaiming the message of salvation in Jesus Christ—and this does not entail the need for the Bible to be an inerrant book in the sense of providing exactly accurate information on all topics about which it speaks. Scripture is infallible in accomplishing its purpose, but infallibility does not imply a necessary inerrancy.

The neo-evangelical viewpoint has drawn on European predecessors, especially in regard to challenging the Old Princeton view of inerrancy as the historic position of Christian churches and as being the view of Calvin and the Reformation leaders. Those who critiqued the inerrancy view and who believed *infallibility* was a better term to describe the nature of scripture were Thomas Lindley and James Orr, in Scotland, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck, at the same time, in the Netherlands. In the mid-twentieth century, the Dutch theologian G. C. Berkouwer played an important role in helping to establish this view of scripture as a responsible “evangelical” viewpoint. Other important voices in the United States have been Donald Bloesch and Jack Rogers.

A neo-evangelical view of scripture that speaks of the “divine message expressed in human thought forms” is open to a variety of methods of biblical interpretation. Both “lower” criticism (study of the biblical texts) and “higher” criticism (all other forms of biblical criticism) can be used for interpreting biblical texts, as well as in other interpretive approaches. This openness is possible because of the view that the divine message is expressed through human writers who lived and wrote in ancient cultures. The more we can understand their backgrounds, languages, and all other dimensions of their cultures, the more fully we can understand what message the writers are trying to convey. The

Word of God comes through human writers whose own limitations—by the contemporary standards typically employed in the fields of history, sociology, and the sciences—are not barriers to hearing scripture’s message. This is why, in this view, a comprehensive scientific accuracy is not required of the biblical text. God’s message is given in the midst of the human domain. Any “findings” by biblical critics of seeming problems with the biblical stories or texts do not detract from the Bible’s functioning as the Word of God, which was given to proclaim the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. Since the Bible’s primary purpose is theological, the findings of history or science do not jeopardize the Bible’s authority. So while the linguistic distinction between “inerrancy” and “infallibility” may seem small, the distinction is crucial and has had tremendous implications for the religious lives of millions of American Christians.

This divide was expressed memorably in “the battle for the Bible” controversies that were prominent on the evangelical landscape from the mid-1970s onward. The continuing influence of the cultural changes of the 1960s and early 1970s surely played a role in the need felt by some to focus on the Bible’s divine and absolute authority. In a time when many felt that North American culture was “adrift,” when older cultural norms and practices were under attack and breaking down, and when “authority” was questioned through many voices, a need to reassert the unchanging authority of the Bible was appealing to many conservative Christians. Besieged by events of the day, such as the war in Vietnam, women’s liberation, and the emerging drug culture, many conservatives felt compelled to defend biblical authority in the face of “attacks.”

In 1976 the evangelical leader Harold Lindsell published *The Battle for the Bible*. In it, he expressed the belief that no one who did not adhere to his view of the inerrancy of the Bible could rightly claim the name “evangelical.” Lindsell’s book threatened to divide American evangelicals, all the more so since those who did not agree with his views of biblical interpretation on issues such as the role of women or the relation of science and scripture were said to deny the authority of the Bible. In particular, Lindsell took aim at Fuller Theological Seminary, an institution with which he had been associated.

In 1978 the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy (ICBI) was formed. Its purpose was to establish a ten-year initiative to “win back” those in churches who had drifted away from the position of inerrancy. In the literature that followed, it was the scholastic theology of the

Hodge–Warfield view of inerrancy that was considered by proponents as the only historically and theologically sound approach to biblical authority and interpretation.

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, drafted by a coalition of fundamentalist and Protestant scholastic theologians and endorsed by many others, affirmed the importance of the theory of inerrancy. The statement maintained that while God caused the biblical writers to write the words that God chose, this did not mean that he overrode their individual personalities. A shorthand expression for the view was, “What scripture says, God says.” Another article in the statement issued qualifications about what the theory of inerrancy did not mean—apparently to provide biblical scholars with measures of freedom in which to work. These qualifications included the denial that inerrancy was negated by “lack of modern technical precision,” the “reporting of falsehoods,” the “topical arrangement of material,” and the “use of free citations,” among other items.

This tension between the theory of biblical authority and the practice of biblical interpreters who dealt with the “phenomenon” of scripture continued to be a source of difficulty for American evangelicals. For some, “inerrancy” was a way of affirming the Bible’s truth and trustworthiness as God’s revelation—similar to what may be meant by “infallibility.” For others, it was an absolute necessity to affirm how the Bible was true and the nature of this truth—thus, “inerrancy.”

In 1979 Jack B. Rogers (of Fuller Seminary) and Donald K. McKim published *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach*. In this book the authors argued that the central tradition of the church through the centuries had been to see the scriptures as focused on presenting the story of salvation, culminating in Jesus Christ, and that the church’s main theologians—in particular, Calvin and Luther—did not hold to what later became the inerrancy view of the Old Princeton theology. Rogers and McKim traced the beginnings of the inerrancy theory to post-Reformation scholasticism and its development in America at Princeton Seminary, where, for its first sixty years (1812–1872), the primary theology textbook was not Calvin’s *Institutes* (1536) but the *Institutes* of a later Geneva theologian, Francis Turretin, published in 1679–1685. Turretin’s theological method was opposite to that of Calvin, and he was instrumental in developing the view that the autographs of scripture were inerrant. (Turretin’s text was replaced at Princeton in 1872 with Charles Hodge’s *Systematic Theology*.) The significance of this fact, maintained Rogers and

McKim, was that those who were taught the “Princeton theology,” including inerrancy, thought they were learning the views of the Westminster Confession and Calvinist theology when, in fact, they were learning the post-Reformation scholasticism of Turretin and his successors. These scholars and students were facing the beginnings (and later the development) of scientific criticism of the Bible and sought to ensure the Bible’s authority with a theory of scripture’s inerrancy. Correlatively, according to Rogers and McKim, some of the important features of the church’s central teaching about the authority and interpretation of the Bible (such as Chrysostom’s, Augustine’s, and Calvin’s concept of “accommodation”) had been lost.

The publication of the Rogers and McKim volume evoked a number of responses. Many evangelicals and those in mainstream churches found the work liberating in freeing them from having to adopt an inerrantist viewpoint. Those to the left of Rogers and McKim on the theological spectrum said the book was merely saying what had been known for years and that fundamentalists and inerrantists should be ignored. Some saw the book as irrelevant to the real concerns of the church. For some (a bit to the right of Rogers and McKim on the theological spectrum), the real problem with biblical authority was with liberal theology in mainstream churches, and it is these views that must be criticized.

In the 1980s the lines hardened even more among American evangelicals. The political expression of evangelicalism with Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority, founded in 1979, and the rise of the new Religious Right during Ronald Reagan’s presidency (1981–1989) gave prominence to the “evangelical presence” in American religious life and to questions about the distinctiveness of evangelicalism in relation to fundamentalism. While all fundamentalists may be evangelicals, not all evangelicals would consider themselves fundamentalists.

Harold Lindsell’s sequel, *The Bible in the Balance* (1979), focused on even more people and institutions that he saw as having abandoned historical evangelicalism. A 1982 volume by John Woodbridge, *Biblical Authority: A Critique of the Rogers/McKim Proposal*, questioned Rogers and McKim’s reading of church history and maintained that the biblical writers wrote inerrantly “not only for matters of faith and practice, but also in making incidental affirmations concerning history, geography and the natural world.” The term *inerrancy* had become a battle cry and a term that measured the fidelity of evangelicals.

The issues raised by the inerrancy debate have continued. Political and social events and ethos in American religious life have ensured that differences over biblical interpretation predicated on views of the nature of scripture have continued to have relevance. It is realistic to think that the controversies will continue, both in academic terms among scholars as well as in the day-to-day lives of American Christians as they consider their own cultural attitudes and theological commitments.

Other Contemporary Views

Other viewpoints about the nature of the Bible and its appropriate interpretation have also played a role in considering biblical interpretation in America on both the academic side and on more popular levels.

Existential theology is associated with the theology of the German thinker Paul Tillich (1886–1965). The emphasis here is on scripture as “living encounter.” The scriptures comprise religious symbols through which readers can encounter “God” as the “ground of being” and enter into the power of the original revelatory events, and encounter the supreme symbol, “Jesus the Christ.” The religious symbols of the Bible link contemporary individuals to Jesus Christ and to the power to make each a “new being.” As one reads and interprets the Bible, healing events of “salvation” are mediated as the power of being rescues those who are living an estranged existence, cut off from the “ground of being.” This is a personally transformative experience mediated through a “holy object”—the scriptures.

Process theology is associated with the American theologians John Cobb and David Ray Griffin. Scripture is perceived as “unfolding action,” as it describes the actions of God in leading the world to what it can be and in presenting possibilities for life that go beyond the ordinary, to open new perspectives as God and the world are evolving and are “in process” of “becoming.” As one reads and interprets the Bible, one finds experience confirmed or enlarged, and thus discovers a way God can be known. Scripture provides insight and inspiration, a way to new possibilities of experience for readers.

Liberation theologies are found in American religious life in terms of African American theology, feminist theology, and womanist theologies. In these, scripture is the source of the stories that provide for liberation, freedom, and emancipatory praxis. Overcoming oppressions of racism and sexism are possible through the biblical accounts that show God’s “preferential option” for the poor, and God’s desire for

persons to be free from both personal and corporate forms of sinfulness, expressed through oppression. Biblical stories such as the Exodus are paradigms of God's work to free those enslaved and to aid oppressed minorities, including women and people of color. The Bible can provide a new vision of the reality of life and society as God desires them to be and is to be interpreted in ways that bring liberation to persons enslaved in all forms of oppression. The story of the Exodus of the people of Israel from oppression in Egypt, the cry of the Hebrew prophets for social justice, and the way of Jesus as he related to women and to those rejected by society are all biblical models that provide a vision of emancipatory possibilities.

Conclusion

There are many approaches to reading the history of biblical interpretation in North America. One could focus, for example, on the biblical interpreters themselves, the exegetes, those who wrote biblical commentaries. One could also focus on the various interpretive methods that have won the allegiance of scholars and have been used in many ways to interpret biblical texts.

The story throughout is plurality. There is no single method or approach that can be used to discover the meaning or meanings of this sacred text. The variety of approaches indicates that the Bible is richly faceted and can be approached from a number of different angles. The reason so much attention and energy has been expended on interpreting the Bible is that it continues to be the basic source for knowledge in the Christian religion and for Christian theology. As biblical scholars and theologians continue their work, they will keep turning to the Bible with new and old interpretive tools and methods.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Fundamentalism* entries; *Liberation Theology*; *Neo-Orthodoxy*; *Protestant Liberalism*; *Religious Thought* entries; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *Scriptures: American Texts*.

Donald K. McKim

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Bioethics

Bioethics is the study of ethical issues that arise in the settings of healthcare and medical research. Ethical concern about medical practice is perhaps as old as medical practice itself. The Hippocratic oath, which dates back to the time of its originator, the Greek physician Hippocrates (fifth century BCE), and which doctors still sometimes recite upon graduation from medical school, reads in part: "I will use treatment to help the sick according to my ability and judgment, but never with a view to injury or wrongdoing." Yet even with medicine's long-standing tradition of ethical concern, bioethics would never have become the public morality phenomenon that it is today without the multitude of scientific and technological breakthroughs that have occurred since the 1960s. Since that time we have come to understand the structure of human genes, developed mechanical ventilators and dialysis machines, performed organ transplants, and created human embryos in a petri dish. Despite the benefits that these developments have brought to humanity, they have also created unprecedented ethical dilemmas.

Methodology in Bioethics

In addition to discussing particular issues in bioethics, such as embryonic stem cell research and euthanasia, bioethicists

have engaged in much reflection on the proper moral standards to employ to resolve these issues. When an ethicist attempts to resolve a bioethical dilemma, she must offer a principled moral justification for her solution, a justification that is presumably open to public scrutiny. But to what sort of moral standard should she appeal? Discussions of this question among bioethicists have often been fraught with as much controversy as the discussions of the bioethical issues themselves.

One methodological approach is to employ a general normative theory, such as utilitarianism (as employed in bioethics by Joseph Fletcher, R. M. Hare, and Peter Singer, among others), to justify decisions in particular cases. Utilitarianism maintains that an act is right if and only if it is the one that will result in the most good for the most people. If we wished to determine whether stem cell research, for example, were morally right, we would examine the goods and evils that might result for all those affected by the research. If conducting the research appeared on the whole to maximize the good, then it would be right to engage in it. Utilitarianism is a controversial view, however, and many ethicists reject it. Many have complained, for instance, that utilitarianism sometimes requires the basic rights of an individual to be sacrificed for the general good of society, and that this is never acceptable. There are certainly other general normative theories besides utilitarianism that have been applied by their adherents to resolve medical ethics dilemmas (for example, Kantian theories, which require that people always be treated as ends in themselves, and divine command theories, which define right in terms of what God commands). Like utilitarianism, though, these views face serious challenges from their critics. Of course, this is not to say that they are false. Rather, the controversy surrounding all of these general theories renders attempts to resolve bioethics dilemmas by facile applications of them suspect.

Others have chosen a more particularized, case-driven approach. Casuistic approaches have been defended as a method for adjudicating bioethical conflicts by ethicists such as Stephen Toulmin and Albert Jonsen. Casuistry involves using settled paradigm cases to arrive at values or principles that can be employed to decide unsettled cases. The goal is to determine which of the paradigm cases the disputed case most closely resembles and then resolve it accordingly. Yet most ethicists have found casuistry too unstructured and unprincipled to be an acceptable methodology for bioethics.

A third approach to method in bioethics purports to incorporate elements of both of the foregoing approaches. This method is known as the principles approach, or, simply, principlism. The most sustained and influential expression of principlism is that found in *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* (first published in 1979) by Tom Beauchamp and James Childress. Indeed, many would say that this book is the most important general work on bioethics ever written. At the heart of Beauchamp and Childress's method are four principles: respect for autonomy (that is, a concern to respect a person's right to determine his or her own destiny); beneficence (a duty to promote the well-being of others); non-maleficence (a duty not to harm others); and justice (a duty to distribute goods fairly). These are midlevel principles. That is, they are not as general as the basic claims of normative theories like utilitarianism, but they are not as specific as the particular judgments about paradigm cases emphasized by casuists. One of the benefits claimed by those who favor the principles approach is that it can bypass the controversies concerning which normative theory is correct. For whether one is a utilitarian, a divine command theorist, or a casuist, one will presumably find the four principles intuitively appealing. It is thus at least possible to justify resolutions of bioethical dilemmas by appeal to standards that virtually anyone would accept. Principlism, too, has had its detractors, but it continues to have broad appeal, so much so that the principles approach is today the most widely used method among both bioethicists and healthcare professionals.

In recent years, however, alternatives to the aforementioned approaches to bioethical decision making have emerged. Chief among these are virtue ethics and care ethics. Virtue ethics concerns itself less with what acts should be done and more with the character traits and motives of the people doing the acts. Acts are right when the people performing them are acting from virtuous dispositions. Care ethics, which is largely an outgrowth of feminist philosophy, also downplays the importance of assessing actions against the backdrop of moral rules and principles. Instead, it focuses upon the importance of interpersonal relationships and the virtue of sympathy in healthcare contexts. To opponents of these approaches, though, both virtue and care ethics have seemed inadequate as a means of resolving bioethical issues, for such resolutions frequently require a statement of what we should do, not how we should be. This difficulty seems especially pressing when the public policy dimensions of many bioethics issues are kept in view. Nevertheless, even some critics of virtue and care ethics have

allowed that these views can serve as useful supplements to act-oriented ethics. In particular, many feel that the ethics training of prospective healthcare providers should include more than abstract considerations of moral theories and principles; it should also stress the importance of becoming virtuous, caring professionals.

Issues in Medical Research

Cases of grossly unethical medical research have played a large role in bringing the field of bioethics to the fore of public attention. These cases have prompted many to reflect on the conditions under which it can be morally acceptable to use human (and other sentient) beings to advance medical knowledge. Among the most horrific examples of unethical research are the experiments performed by Nazi doctors, such as Joseph Mengele, on concentration camp inmates during World War II. Some inmates were forced to sit in vats of ice-cold water until they developed hypothermia, so the efficacy of various hypothermia treatments could be tested. Others were deliberately infected with malaria, so treatments for malaria could be studied. Still others were cut on their bodies and then the wounds were purposely infected with bacteria, wood shavings, and specks of glass, in order to test the efficacy of infection-treating drugs. Many of the subjects suffered and died during the course of these nightmarish experiments, and those mentioned represent only a small sample of the Nazi experiments. In 1947, at the Nuremberg Trials, fifteen of the Nazi doctors were convicted of crimes against humanity, and several were executed. But from the Nuremberg proceedings came the Nuremberg Code, the first international code of ethics for research on humans. Chief among the code's requirements was that research on a human could be done only with the subject's informed consent. Issues of informed consent have since dominated the ethics of medical research.

Doctors in the United States, some of whom were working under the direct supervision of the federal government, conducted research on subjects where consent was not sufficiently informed or was lacking altogether. During the Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union, nuclear war seemed a very real possibility. It thus seemed crucial to study the effects of radiation on humans and the measures for treating those effects. Thus various groups, including such vulnerable populations as pregnant women, prison inmates, and mentally retarded children, were exposed to radiation. In some cases, they were exposed without their consent; in others, they consented but without

being told of all the risks involved. Some involved in carrying out the research justified it by likening it to the draft. In a time of war the government could draft a young man and place his life on the line in battle, even if he did not want to be so placed and had very little understanding of why he was there. Why could not other people be "drafted" into becoming medical research subjects during the Cold War?

Many other instances of unethical research in the United States could be cited, but perhaps the most infamous case of all is the Tuskegee syphilis study, which was conducted by the U.S. Public Health Service in Tuskegee, Alabama, from 1932 to 1972. The Tuskegee experiment was designed to be a study of the natural course of syphilis if left untreated. The study's subjects were 399 African American men, all of whom had syphilis. None of the men were told that they had syphilis, nor were any of them treated (even after penicillin, the most effective treatment for syphilis, became widely available in the mid 1940s). The men instead were told that they had "bad blood" and were given only placebos for treatment. Finally, in 1972, Peter Buxtun, an official at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, after trying unsuccessfully to have the study stopped, revealed details of the study to the press.

Of the many things that occurred in the aftermath of the revelation, the passage of the National Research Act of 1974 has greatly impacted medical research ethics in the United States. This act mandates that every institution which receives federal funding for its research must establish an institutional review board to ensure that its research is conducted in an ethical manner. The act also created the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research. The commission was given the task of identifying the core principles of ethical research on humans. The commission, whose findings were published in the so-called Belmont Report, identified three core principles: respect for persons (which, among other things, requires that informed consent always be obtained from research subjects), beneficence, and justice.

Medical experimentation in the United States involving nonhuman animals also experienced a watershed event. Neurologist Thomas Gennarelli was doing research to understand brain injury in humans by inflicting serious brain injuries upon monkeys and baboons. Gennarelli videotaped his procedures, and in May of 1984 some members of the Animal Liberation Front, an animal rights group, broke into his lab and stole a number of these tapes. The tapes showed many abuses of the animals: animals that were

not properly anesthetized before being injured, animals that were injured repeatedly, and researchers who were laughing at and joking about the animals' injuries. Edited versions of the tapes were shown to members of the U.S. Congress and were aired on the television newsmagazine *20/20*. Many were outraged over what the tapes revealed, and in 1985 Congress, largely in response to the revelation, passed an amendment to the Animal Welfare Act of 1966. The new act, known as the Improved Standards for Laboratory Animals Act (analogous to the National Research Act), requires that every institution engaged in federally funded research must empanel an institutional animal care and use committee (IACUC) to ensure that the institution's animal research complies with federal regulations on the humane treatment of laboratory animals. IACUCs, like institutional review boards, are now a fixture of ethical research practice in the United States.

Some believe, however, that federal regulations and IACUCs do not go far enough to protect animals. Philosopher Peter Singer, for example, has argued, on utilitarian grounds, that since animals are sentient creatures with as much capacity to feel pain as does a mentally handicapped human baby, we should not perform any experiment on an animal that we would not be willing to perform on a mentally handicapped human baby. Other philosophers, such as Tom Regan, have argued on more deontological grounds (an approach emphasizing acts rather than consequences and regarding the goodness of an act as self-evident) that animals have rights akin to those of humans and that animal research should simply be abolished. For thinkers like Singer and Regan, therefore, mere guidelines for humane animal research, IACUCs, and so forth, fall terribly short of what morality requires of humans in regard to their treatment of animals.

The foregoing discussion represents some of the pivotal cases and events that gave rise to the field of research ethics. Researchers struggle with many other issues today. There are the frequent financial conflicts of interest that arise from the fact that private drug companies fund most new drug research and also give doctors and researchers involved in the research indirect payments and other "perks." These financial inducements can tempt researchers to cut ethical corners on informed-consent requirements and to be less than forthright about negative results in the research. Another issue is what to do with the data collected in immoral experiments. There was, for instance, much discussion in medical ethics literature in the late 1980s and early

1990s about whether it was ethically permissible to use the data from Nazi experiments in current research. Would citing it somehow legitimize the evil of the experiments? Would not citing it mean that the victims had suffered in vain? Such issues, along with many others, make the field of research ethics the important area of bioethics that it is.

Assisted Reproduction

One of the most rapidly developing areas of both medical practice and bioethical discussion is that of assisted reproduction. In assisted reproduction, technologies such as in vitro fertilization and artificial insemination are employed to help people have children who could not otherwise have them. The drive to bear children is one of the deepest and most profound of all human inclinations. Indeed, this fact is the basis of the primary argument for using these technologies. Since the drive to reproduce is so basic, some feel that there is actually a right to reproduce, a right that would include the freedom to use assisted-reproduction technologies when necessary.

A variety of means exist to aid reproduction today. In vitro fertilization (IVF) involves placing a man's sperm and a woman's egg in a petri dish to allow fertilization and the formation of an embryo to occur. Generally, several eggs (as many as twenty) from the woman will be fertilized in this way. Some of the fertilized eggs are then placed into the woman's uterus in the hope that one will implant, grow to term, and be born a healthy baby. Thus prospective parents who, for various reasons (for example, low motility in the man's sperm), are unable to conceive a child by natural means are given a chance to have children by means of IVF. IVF was first used successfully in 1978 in England to bring about the birth of Louise Brown, whom the press dubbed as the world's first "test tube baby." In many cases, not all of the created embryos end up being needed. Between four and eight of the embryos are placed at one time in the woman's uterus (which sometimes results in multiple births—twins, triplets, quadruplets—and the attendant health complications for the children). If the first attempt results in a successful pregnancy, the remaining embryos are kept frozen until such time as they may be needed. Sometimes, for various reasons, couples never use their other frozen embryos. As will be discussed below, these unused embryos are the ones that would typically be used in embryonic stem cell research.

Also prevalent is the practice of artificial insemination (AI), in which sperm from a woman's husband, partner, or

an anonymous donor is injected through a catheter-like tube directly into the woman's uterus. AI can increase the chances of conception when the man's sperm count is low or when the woman's vaginal environment is chemically hostile to sperm. Of course, AI is also used by women who have no male partner but who simply wish to have a baby. The female analogue of AI is ova donation (OD). In OD, eggs are taken from a woman (usually an anonymous donor), fertilized with the sperm of the intended father by means of IVF, and then implanted in another woman, either a gestational surrogate (discussed below) or the woman who intends to be the resulting child's mother. Unlike sperm donors, who generally receive only \$50–\$200 for their services, ova donors can receive as much as \$5,000 for their eggs, and they can donate multiple times (though current guidelines recommend no more than six times). And stories abound of even higher payments than this. OD is a moderately demanding procedure that requires the donor to undergo strong hormone injections (to stimulate ovulation) and a minor surgical procedure to extract the eggs. In AI and OD, when anonymous donors are used, though the identity of the donor is concealed, characteristics of the donor, such as hair and eye color, race, height, athletic ability, and various intellectual attributes (for example, that the donor has artistic ability, that the donor is a medical school student, and even that the donor has high SAT scores), are revealed. And people choose donors largely on the basis of these features. This fact has led some to charge that there is a subtle form of eugenics at work in these practices.

Another assisted-reproduction practice that has been the subject of considerable legal and ethical discussion is surrogacy, in which a woman gestates a baby for another woman for the nine months of pregnancy and then gives the baby to the other woman to be raised by her (and frequently her spouse or partner). There are two types of surrogacy: surrogate mothering, where the surrogate also furnishes the egg from which the baby will come, and gestational surrogacy, where the surrogate carries a baby for another couple but is not biologically related to it. In both types, IVF is used to create the embryo that the surrogate carries. In most instances a contract is drawn between the surrogate and the intended parents. Under the contract, the surrogate, who, as the one who gives birth to the child, will be, in most states, the legal mother of the child, agrees to surrender custody of the child to the intended parents. The intended parents agree to pay the surrogate for her services. Amounts vary, but they usually lie between \$10,000 and \$25,000. Not

surprisingly, these arrangements have sometimes gone awry, as surrogates have occasionally changed their minds about giving up the babies. The first such case, *In the Matter of Baby M* (1988), arose in New Jersey and brought surrogacy to national attention. The New Jersey Supreme Court, though it essentially awarded custody of the child, Baby M, to the intended parents (because the surrogate was emotionally unstable), held that surrogacy arrangements were too close to baby selling to be upheld. The Supreme Court of California, on the other hand, in *Calvert v. Johnson* (1993), upheld surrogacy contracts on the ground that the money paid to the surrogate is for her time and trouble, not the baby, and so is not against public policy.

The foregoing assisted-reproduction practices raise a host of ethical issues. First, there are concerns about potential harm to the children born of these practices. For example, some studies have suggested that children conceived through IVF are about twice as likely as naturally conceived children to be born with certain birth defects and other health complications. In addition, some have feared psychological harm to children born through AI (from a donor) or OD, as, for example, such children may have identity problems arising from never knowing one of their biological parents. Second, all of these technologies involve reproduction without sexual intercourse. This fact has been a primary reason for the Roman Catholic Church's opposition to most forms of assisted reproduction. The children of assisted reproduction do not result from the two becoming one flesh, and thus such reproduction, even when it is between a husband and wife, departs from God's design for procreation. Third, some have raised the worry that AI (where the sperm comes from a donor), OD, and surrogacy involve adultery, or some other impermissible encroachment upon the sanctity of marriage, as these technologies bring in a third party to the very private and intimate realm of marital procreation. Fourth, many have been concerned that these technologies might further contribute to the breakdown of the traditional family. AI allows single women to have children purposely without a father's involvement in raising the children. Lesbian couples can also have children by AI, and gay couples can have children by means of OD and surrogacy. In these cases, and unlike those in which an already living child is adopted, a child is intentionally conceived to be, in some sense, the fruit of the two lovers' union (in the case of homosexuals) or the fruit of the single woman's genes. The traditional norm of the family unit as consisting of a man and woman who are married to each other, and who bear children that

are the fruit of their union, has thus seemed under siege to those (for example, the Catholic Church, officially, and most evangelical Christians) who hold it as the ideal. Lastly, some have expressed concern that OD and surrogacy may perpetuate the objectification of women. These technologies could, it is argued, cause some women to be seen as mere medical supply cabinets (in the case of OD), or incubators (in the case of surrogacy), and not as persons with rights equal to those of men. These are not the only moral worries raised by assisted reproduction, but they are some of the most commonly asserted ones.

Assisted-reproduction practices have also given rise to many novel and unprecedented court cases in the United States. The surrogacy cases mentioned previously are prime examples, but there are many others. The Tennessee case of *Davis v. Davis* (1992) involved a divorcing couple's custody battle over seven embryos they had in frozen storage. The husband wanted the embryos destroyed, but the wife wanted them to be donated to a couple who could not have their own children. The Tennessee Supreme Court ruled in favor of the husband. In *Buzzanca v. Buzzanca* (California, 1998), a couple who had received an embryo created from the gametes of two unknown donors had arranged for the embryo to be carried by a surrogate. Thus no fewer than five people were involved in bringing the child into the world. During the pregnancy, however, the couple decided to divorce, and neither the husband nor the wife, nor the surrogate, had any interest in raising the child. The California appeals court held that the Buzzancas were the legally responsible parents of the child because they were the ones who had intended to bring about the birth of the child. Since, as a result of these new reproductive practices, biological parentage (that is, being a person from whose sperm or egg a child has come) is no longer always the clearly relevant one, many jurisdictions in the United States are now, like California, moving toward the concept of parentage by intent. It is fair to say, then, that new reproductive technologies are profoundly affecting many people's understanding of the nature and ethics of the family and parentage.

Embryonic Stem Cell Research

The issue of embryonic stem cell research is yet another controversial outgrowth of assisted-reproduction technology. After an ovum is fertilized, it begins dividing, and after a few divisions have occurred, a cluster of cells results. These cells are what are referred to as embryonic stem cells. They

are unspecialized cells that have the potential to develop into any type of cell in the body (brain cell, bone cell, and so on). As the embryo develops, instructions in its genetic code essentially tell the cells what form to take, and a human body, with all of its many and diverse parts, is formed. In 1998 researchers announced that they had isolated and cultured these cells from early-stage embryos, and this development opened up the possibility for therapeutic uses of the cells. If, for example, someone had suffered a spinal cord injury, then, in principle, embryonic stem cells could be introduced at the injury site, and these cells would then specialize into new spinal cord tissue and heal the injury. Similar uses of the cells to treat diabetes, Parkinson's disease, heart damage, and many other afflictions have been suggested. Although such therapeutic uses for the cells remain largely conjectural, the possibility of such applications is real. Yet a great many different embryonic cell lines would have to be created in order to provide close tissue matches to all of the different people who might be treated. Thus a very large number of embryos would be needed. This is where assisted reproduction enters the picture. At present, there are thousands of unused frozen embryos in fertility clinics across the United States. These embryos were created for couples who were trying to have a baby via IVF, but who no longer need or want the embryos. These embryos would be the primary supply for embryonic stem cell research.

The controversy over stem cell research arises because the embryos are destroyed when the stem cells are removed from the embryos. For those, such as conservative evangelicals and the Catholic Church, who take the view that human personhood begins at the moment of conception, this process would mean that the research requires the killing of many human persons. It is not permissible, they maintain, to kill an innocent person deliberately in order to save others. Those who support the research are unwilling to ascribe personhood to a small cluster of cells and so feel no moral trepidation about destroying the embryos, if so doing could help someone suffering from a serious affliction. Thus, driven as it is by clashing perspectives on the personhood status of embryos, the stem cell debate in the United States greatly resembles the abortion debate and will likely prove to be just as intractable.

At present the research is legal, though President George W. Bush signed an executive order that banned federal funding for any stem cell lines developed after August 2001. (The order allowed such funding for lines developed before that time.) Despite multiple attempts by Congress to enact

legislation overriding Bush's order, the ban remained in effect throughout Bush's presidency. In 2009 President Barack Obama issued another executive order that rescinded the Bush policy and opened new opportunities for stem cell research. Yet in response to the earlier federal ban, some states such as California with its Proposition 71 (approved in November 2004) have passed their own funding initiatives for stem cell research. In addition to private funding, then, stem cell researchers can seek state funding for their studies.

Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide

Bioethicists, as the discussion of assisted reproduction and stem cell research illustrates, have been greatly concerned with ethical questions that surround the beginning of life. But they are equally concerned with ethical issues that pertain to the end of life. Foremost among end-of-life concerns are those pertaining to euthanasia. In its origins from the Greek, the word *euthanasia* expresses the idea of a good or easy death. As understood today by ethicists and healthcare providers, euthanasia comes in two forms: active euthanasia, which involves intentionally administering some means (for instance, a lethal injection) to hasten the end of an already dying person's life, and passive euthanasia, in which life-sustaining treatments (for instance, ventilators, CPR, antibiotics) are simply withheld or withdrawn from a dying person. In the latter case, it is the underlying illness that kills the person, while in the former, though there is an underlying terminal affliction, it is whatever lethal means that are administered to the person that kills him. What ethicists refer to as physician-assisted suicide (PAS) falls under the heading of active euthanasia, as it involves physicians actively administering or at least providing the means to bring about the death of a patient. At the present, many take the position that passive euthanasia is morally permissible, while at the same time asserting that active euthanasia is wrong. This, for example, is the current position of the American Medical Association (AMA). Some believe that the moral distinction between the two forms of euthanasia is not always clear, however.

The most widely discussed cases of passive euthanasia are those concerning patients in deeply unconscious and generally irreversible comas known as persistent vegetative states (PVSs). Patients in a PVS have lost all brain functions involving consciousness; typically only their brain stem, which controls basic bodily functions, such as heartbeat and respiration, remains operative. They generally must be fed

through nasogastric feeding tubes, their bodies shrivel into rigid fetal positions, and they sometimes even need the assistance of ventilators to breathe. What is worst of all, for many, is that they can go on for many years in this state before dying, all the while with virtually no prospect for recovery.

As with many of the prominent issues in bioethics, ethical consideration of these cases has been framed against the backdrop of nationally publicized legal disputes. The first such dispute was *In The Matter of Quinlan* (New Jersey, 1976), in which the parents of Karen Ann Quinlan sought to have their daughter's ventilator removed so that she could be free to die. The New Jersey Supreme Court ruled in favor of the parents, finding that the personal liberties guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution included a right to be free from unwanted medical treatment. The next major case was *Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Department of Health*, a 1990 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. Like *Quinlan*, *Cruzan* involved parents of a PVS patient (Nancy Cruzan) who wanted life-prolonging measures for their daughter, in this case nutrition and hydration through a tube, stopped. Although the Court, because of particular issues surrounding the Missouri law in question, ruled against the parents, it did recognize a basic right to die founded upon the Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment and its protection of personal liberty from state interference.

The two chief arguments for allowing passive euthanasia arise from the principles of respect for autonomy and beneficence. The courts in the *Quinlan* and *Cruzan* cases both essentially held that being free from unwanted medical treatment is a basic aspect of personal liberty, and this is nothing less than respect for autonomy expressed in the language of constitutional jurisprudence. What could be more basic to personal autonomy than having some control over the timing and manner of one's own death? The other argument is that allowing people who are suffering with grave terminal conditions to die is an act of mercy and is thus required by the principle of beneficence. We are actually conferring good upon them by not prolonging their suffering with further life-sustaining medical care. A principal argument against passive euthanasia, advanced by both Catholic and theologically conservative Protestant ethicists (though not endorsed by all of them), is that human life, being made in the image of God, is intrinsically valuable and worth preserving, no matter what its condition. Another argument against passive euthanasia is that it is contrary to the purposes of medicine. Doctors and other healthcare providers exist to

preserve the lives of their patients, and passive euthanasia seems at odds with this directive. Lastly, many opponents of passive euthanasia fear that allowing it will lead to descent down a moral slippery slope. That is, if passive euthanasia is allowed, then once people have become accustomed to it, active euthanasia will be allowed, and soon the government will begin determining what sorts of lives are worth living and even require euthanasia for those lives that fall short of the standard, as occurred in Nazi Germany. As healthcare costs spiral out of control, actively euthanizing the very sick may come to be seen as an efficient cost-saving measure.

Active euthanasia in the form of physician-assisted suicide has also been a subject of national attention. Dr. Jack Kevorkian, who, from 1989 until his conviction for the crime of PAS in 1998, actively euthanized more than one hundred people, was a primary catalyst for this debate in the United States. Some states, such as Kevorkian's home state of Michigan, have enacted specific laws banning PAS, and most states have more general prohibitions barring anyone from assisting in the suicide of another. The U.S. Supreme Court, in the cases of *Washington v. Glucksberg* and *Vacco v. Quill* (both decided in 1997), has ruled that such laws do not violate the liberty interests protected by the Constitution. It is consistent with these cases, however, for a state to allow PAS, and that is what the states of Oregon and Washington have done with their Death with Dignity legislation (Oregon in 1994 and Washington in 2008). These laws allow physicians to write a prescription for a lethal dosage of barbiturates for patients who have six months or less to live, as certified by their physician and a consulting physician. The patients administer the drugs to themselves, but physicians provide the drugs with a full knowledge of what they will be used for.

The moral arguments for and against PAS and active euthanasia are essentially the same as those for passive euthanasia. Considerations of autonomy and beneficence are still the primary reasons for permitting PAS, and worries about devaluing human life, flouting the basic purposes of medicine, and sliding down a slippery slope are what lead many to oppose it. This fact illustrates why the position that passive euthanasia is morally acceptable while active euthanasia is not strikes some as rather tenuous. On the other hand, if we were to allow PAS in the name of autonomy and beneficence, then why should it be available only to those with six months or less to live? Why not allow it for those with a year to live, or even for those with conditions they judge to be

unbearable but that are not necessarily terminal? Is it because the government has made an implicit quality of life judgment, to the effect that people with six months or less to live no longer have a life worth saving, but those with more life left do? Do we want the government making such judgments? The unsettled nature of these questions suggests that the euthanasia debate will continue to be at the fore of public concern for a great while to come—as will a host of other fascinating questions of bioethics.

See also *Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Religious Thought* entries; *Social Ethics*.

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Black Nationalist Movements

See *New Religious Movements: Black Nationalist Movements*.

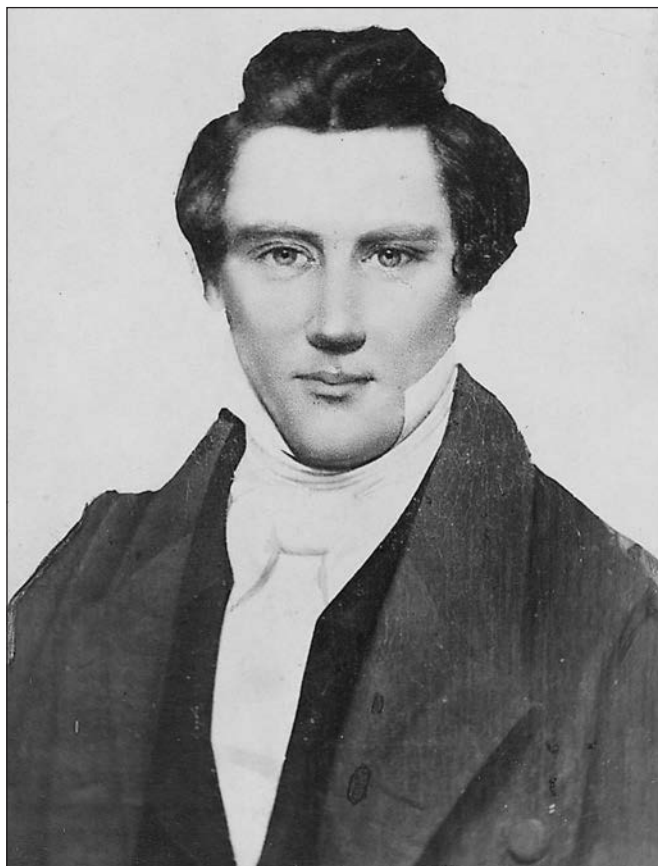
Book of Mormon

On the March 26, 1830, the *Wayne Sentinel*, the village newspaper of Palmyra, New York, printed an advertisement under the heading “The Book of Mormon.” The advertisement reproduced the title page of the book in question, which had created a considerable stir in the area months before its publication, followed by a simple announcement: “The above work, containing about 600 pages, large Duodecimo, is now for sale, whole-sale and retail, at the Palmyra Bookstore, by HOWARD & GRANDIN.” This announcement heralded the publication of what would become the most widely distributed book in American history, save only the Bible. And that publication was the immediate prelude to the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, organized on April 6. That same church has consistently relied, from the day of its founding to the present, on the Book of Mormon as the principal agent of conversion to the gospel it preached.

An Ancient American Epic

The Book of Mormon could be said to have two points of origin, each setting in motion events that would converge on the March day of publication when a new “American Bible” altered the face of American religious history. The point of first origin is described by the record itself as a year of turbulence in the ancient city of Jerusalem. A man named Lehi is called by God to preach repentance to a rebellious populace. The people reject him, God commands him to flee with his family, and Lehi and his clan escape both the anger of the crowd and the ensuing Babylonian bondage (c. 600 BCE). After some years in the wilderness, Lehi’s group migrates, by ship, to the New World, where his son Nephi assumes the leadership and begins to maintain a record of his people on metal plates. Essentially a tribal history, the record is kept by Nephi and his descendents for the next thousand years, chronicling the rise and collapse of a civilization of Nephites, who are plagued with recurrent internal strife, cycles of prosperity and spiritually debilitating pride, and warfare with a dissenting branch called Lamanites.

The record also details the religion of these people, who follow the Mosaic law, even as they anticipate the coming of



Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon religion, said he experienced a personal visitation of God the Father and Jesus Christ in 1820, at the age of fourteen. Subsequent visions revealed to him the location, near his New York home, of engraved golden plates, which he translated into the Book of Mormon.

a Messiah they refer to by name as Jesus Christ. After his death and resurrection in the Old World, the record claims, this same Christ appears to a group of righteous Nephites, preaches his gospel, and organizes a church—all along the pattern detailed in the New Testament—before departing into heaven and leaving his New World disciples to enjoy several generations of utopian peace, before the descent into their final cataclysm begins. In the early fifth century, after witnessing the utter destruction of his people, Moroni, a Nephite general and the last record keeper of the plates, seals up his record and buries it in the earth.

Joseph Smith

The modern history of the Book of Mormon could be said to begin in 1820. That was the year that a young Joseph Smith (1805–1844), one of thousands of seekers searching out true religion in the era of the Second Awakening,

claimed to have experienced a personal visitation of God the Father and Jesus Christ in response to his earnest entreaties for spiritual guidance. Although Smith depicted this visitation at the time and apparently ever after as largely a personal conversion narrative, the experience ushered him into a career of epiphanies and angelic visitations. In 1823 the same Moroni who had buried the sacred record in the fifth century appeared to Smith as a resurrected being, relating to him the history of the Nephites and the buried plates. After four years of tutelage, Smith was permitted to retrieve the plates from a repository he was directed to, in a hillside near his home in Palmyra, New York. Along with the plates, he found an instrument called “interpreters,” which consisted of two clear stones in a silver setting, that functioned for him as seer stones and that enabled him to translate the writing on the plates.

Slowed by his own intractable poverty, encumbered with supporting a new family, and distracted by the curiosity and harassment of outsiders that at times became violent, Smith made slow progress with the translation. The first portion of 116 pages was stolen in the summer of 1828, and he began the process again. The arrival of Oliver Cowdery, a young schoolteacher, who volunteered to serve as scribe, initiated a burst of productivity in the spring of 1829, and in June of that year Smith completed the work. That same month, Cowdery and ten others were shown the plates, which until then Smith alone had been permitted to see and handle. In their published testimony, the first three witnesses describe how the plates were laid before their eyes by “an angel of God [who] came down from heaven.” Although they were close enough to the relics to see “the engravings thereon,” as they twice tell us, they neither touched nor handled them for themselves. The other eight witnesses, on the other hand, were allowed to handle the plates and draw their own conclusions. The plates, they write, did indeed have “the appearance of gold,” and the engravings had “the appearance of an ancient work,” for “we did handle [them] with our hands.”

Old Wine in New Bottles?

The content of the Book of Mormon is a striking mix of the familiar and the unexpected. Beginning as it does in a scene of Jerusalem prophets, it invites immediate comparison with the Judeo-Christian scriptures. The notion of ancient Israelites in the New World is patently strange, as is the idea of people worshipping a Christ whose coming is hundreds of years in the future. At the same time, the “doctrine of Christ” taught by Book of Mormon prophets was

both familiar and appealing, especially in an age full of restorationists and primitivists (religious seekers who craved a return to the Christianity described by the New Testament). Faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost are all affirmed as core principles. One striking departure from orthodox teachings is the Book of Mormon’s repudiation of the doctrine of original sin, and the recasting of the biblical Eden story as a “fortunate fall”:

And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy. (2 Nephi 2:23–25)

Another motif in the Book of Mormon is even more fundamental to the religion the scripture launched. That is the principle of individual, dialogic revelation. Like the Old Testament deity, the God of the Book of Mormon engages in frequent interaction with prophets—directing, counseling, and commanding. The Book of Mormon God, however, extends those acts of literal communication and interaction to a new level. God directs inquiring generals where to attack and hungry patriarchs where to hunt, provides doctrinal understanding to the piously curious on issues from infant baptism to the spirit world, reassures anxious parents about their children, or directs high priests in how to resolve ecclesiastical conundrums. Time and again, “the voice of the Lord” is heard, at times repeatedly and insistently, in the face of resistance or spiritual obtuseness. No vague intimations, these, but articulate, conversational episodes fill the pages of the Book of Mormon, making God’s interaction at the level of personal concern a dominant leitmotif.

Other themes are similarly adaptations or modifications of familiar biblical ones. God’s covenant with Israel is almost as central a topic here as in the Old Testament, with the additional urgency that it would naturally have to a people

dispossessed and a hemisphere away from the promised land. And that promised land itself proves to be a highly portable concept, shifting from Jerusalem to the New World, and through successive phases of habitation and divinely directed resettlement, as war and dissension drive the people of God deeper and deeper into an alien wilderness. Scripture proves to be of such consummate value that lives are hazarded and even taken to preserve it. And reinforcing the splintering and expansion of the Christian canon that the Book of Mormon physically embodies, the record emphasizes the endless proliferation of scripture: “for behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth and they shall write it” (Nephi 29:12).

Debates and Reception

The claims made by the Book of Mormon were at the same time occasion for both eager anticipation and vehement denunciation. Even before the book was published and available, reports of a new record purporting to be scripture inflamed public opinion. For many who had been anxiously expecting marvelous works and signs in evidence of a Christian renewal presided over by God’s spirit, the Book of Mormon was the “marvelous work and a wonder,” the “ensign to the nations” foreseen by the prophet Isaiah. But for more of the public, its very existence was a blasphemous affront to a Christianity believing its canon to be closed and its Bible solely sufficient. That fact, and the sheer unlikelihood of its two stories—the one involving seafaring Israelites and the other gold plates and angels—meant that few investigations into Book of Mormon historicity rose to the level of actual analysis of the evidence. Proponents appealed to spiritual confirmation—a witness “borne of the spirit”—and opponents dismissed it on *prima facie* grounds.

The earliest support mustered for the Book of Mormon was in the form of affidavits from the eleven witnesses who testified they had seen the plates, published in every copy of the Book of Mormon from 1830 to the present. With the discovery of impressive ruins, including temple complexes and magnificent remains in Central America, popularized by John Lloyd Stephens in the 1840s, Mormons gained confidence that archaeology supported their view of the Book of Mormon as a record of now vanished civilizations. By the 1920s, however, the first real difficulties with the Book of

Mormon were coming to the fore. Principal among these were the variety of American Indian languages, which could hardly have evolved from a Hebraic precursor, especially in the short span of two millennia, and the mention in the Book of Mormon of apparent anachronisms, including the horse, steel, and silk. Environmental explanations that trace the Book of Mormon to nineteenth-century contexts have largely displaced early attempts to link its authorship to works by two nineteenth-century figures, Solomon Spaulding or Ethan Smith. This kind of criticism, first begun in 1830 and continuing to the present, draws attention to parallels between elements of the Book of Mormon and environmental influences of the period. These included doctrinal preoccupations such as infant baptism and universalism, secret oaths and “combinations” of malevolent groups (reminiscent, to some, of Masons), anti-Catholic intimations, and emotional behavior consistent with nineteenth-century revivalism. Most recently, critics have appealed to DNA evidence for lack of a connection between modern Native Americans and Israelite lines.

Each onslaught has been met by Mormon-mustered evidence and counterarguments, at times attaining a high level of sophistication. Scholars have found parallels between Book of Mormon accounts and Israelite coronation rituals, numerous examples of ancient writing on metal—even gold—plates, etymologies that tie Book of Mormon names to Egyptian and Asiatic derivatives, and chiasmic structures—a kind of reverse parallelism typical of ancient Hebrew poetry and quite prevalent in the Book of Mormon. The DNA approach has been largely discredited as misapplied science, especially in light of ungrounded assumptions about the ethnic purity of Book of Mormon peoples and descendants. Finally, dramatic evidence surfaced in Yemen, on the Arabian Peninsula, in the 1990s of stone altars inscribed with the name NHM, apparently corroborating a Book of Mormon place name situated in that same area by the narrative’s early pages. Book of Mormon apologists have also reconstructed a historically plausible exodus route for Lehi’s trail, and others appeal to the growing group of diffusionists, who argue for multiple sources of New World settlement.

With the growth of Mormonism undiminished at the beginning of the twenty-first century, and the Book of Mormon still featuring prominently as the principal tool of missionary efforts, the influence of the naysayers appears to be negligible. The work of the apologists may be said, in this regard, to have successfully countered the attacks of the critics. More likely, scientific and archaeological approaches

tend to confirm both believers and doubters, who have already drawn their conclusions on the basis of prayerful inquiry or religious presuppositions, as might be said of the Bible's believers and critics. In addition to the Book of Mormon, Smith produced two other works that consisted of revelations and purported translations of ancient texts, bringing to four the number of scriptures in the Mormon canon: the Holy Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

See also *Bible* entries; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Latter-day Saints*.

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Buddhism, Zen

See *Zen Buddhism*.

Buddhism in North America

The term *Buddhism* is used to denote a highly diverse collection of religious traditions that developed in south, central, and eastern Asia. Although Buddhist schools of thought vary widely in specialized doctrine, praxis, and organization, they share a common origin that they trace back to a single man, Siddhartha Gautama. According to traditional narratives, Gautama was born into a noble family in what is now southern Nepal but was then northern India. His exact dates are uncertain, but recent scholarship puts his birth at approximately 485 BCE and his death about 405 BCE. Dissatisfied with the royal life, Gautama went off into the wilderness to find a way to end suffering; at the age of

thirty-five, after six years of searching, he achieved a breakthrough that brought him the peace he sought. He began to teach his insights to others, and a community formed around him. In time he came to be called Buddha, meaning “the Awakened One.”

At the heart of the Buddha's teaching was a cosmology that divided the world into several different realms, into which living beings are repeatedly born; these realms range from hellish places of punishment, through the domains of animals and humans, and finally to the heavenly lands. An impersonal natural force known as karma controls where a being will be reborn: Good actions lead to relatively pleasant rebirth, bad actions lead to undesirable new births. All beings—whether humans, animals, gods, or ghosts—eventually die and are reborn, and even the most fortunate life contains elements of suffering. Therefore the goal of Buddhism is to escape from the endlessly cycling wheel of birth and death. One accomplishes this through a process of self-cultivation, resulting in insight into the true nature of reality. This leads to permanent dwelling in the peaceful state of nirvana beyond the sorrows of mortal life. Both the exact process of achieving this awakening and particular interpretations of what exactly nirvana constitutes differ among the various schools of Buddhism.

Buddhism spread throughout the Indian Subcontinent, and under the Buddhist emperor Asoka (c. 272–c. 231 BCE) it extended into southeast Asia. It reached China around the first century BCE, Korea by the fourth century BCE, Japan in the sixth century, and Tibet in the seventh century. Naturally, the doctrines, beliefs, and practices of Buddhism changed considerably over such a large period, both within India and in other parts of Asia. In many cases, Buddhism was far more than just a religion: It carried medical and scientific knowledge, alphabets and literature, music and cuisine, social theories and moral proscriptions, altering each new society it encountered. Overall, Buddhism's dissemination was peaceful, growing from the activities of pious merchants traveling along the Silk Road as well as from monks and nuns sent abroad to bring the Buddha's teachings to the world. It stimulated changes in the religions it encountered, sometimes being copied or partially assimilated with other religions, sometimes prompting backlash and anti-Buddhist revivalism.

Buddhist Groups in America

From humble beginnings the American Buddhist community has come a long way: Virtually every form of Buddhism has

some representation in the United States. There are too many different sects of Buddhism to treat here, but it is important to touch on some of the broader categories that have significant numbers of adherents in the United States.

Theravada Buddhism

Theravada (“Teaching of the Elders”) Buddhism is primarily represented in America by Thai, Sri Lankan, Burmese, Cambodian, and Laotian immigrants and their descendants. This is the oldest surviving form of Buddhism, though like all religious traditions it has undergone significant changes over the centuries. This conservative form of Buddhism has a strong focus on the original Buddha Gautama and his immediate disciples, though various other saints, deities, and spirits also receive veneration in popular practice. Monks are usually held to a strict interpretation of the monastic rules, necessitating their reliance on the laity in most cases for food, clothing, transportation, and other needs. This strict practice has complicated matters in America, where differences in climate and culture have sometimes led to creative reinterpretations of the rules. For example, monks traditionally are expected to go barefoot, but in cold American regions some have taken to wearing socks and shoes dyed the color of monastic robes. Major Theravada temples in America include the New York Buddhist Vihara, Wat Thai in Los Angeles, and the Bhavana Society in West Virginia.

The twentieth century saw the rise of a subtradition within Theravada, known as the Vipassana movement. Named after a popular form of meditation, this reformist movement has placed meditation practice at the center of Buddhist life, often removing the more ceremonial and communal aspects of Theravada. This pared-down form of Buddhism has attracted many Euro-Americans, in part because it is less ethnically based and thus more accessible to individual American converts. Also known as Insight Meditation, the Vipassana community has created an influential network of practice centers across the country. The most notable Vipassana centers in the United States are the Insight Meditation Society (based in Barre, Massachusetts) and Spirit Rock Meditation Center in northern California.

Mahayana: Pure Land, Zen, and Nichiren Buddhism

While Theravada is a relatively unified tradition, Mahayana (“Great Vehicle”) Buddhism is a riot of different sects stressing many and various scriptures and venerating a greatly expanded pantheon of cosmic Buddhas and bodhisattvas

(Buddhas in training). Perhaps the prototypical form of Mahayana Buddhism in the modern world is Pure Land Buddhism, which focuses on the salvific power of Amitabha Buddha. Devotion to Amitabha through such common practices as chanting his name results in rebirth in the Buddha’s pure land, where it is easy to become a Buddha oneself.

Pure Land ideas and motifs are widely diffused throughout Buddhism, found in some manner within virtually all Buddhist sects other than Theravada. Although arguably the most widespread form of Buddhism in Asia, this is the only major Buddhist tradition that has failed to attract significant numbers of American converts, both because it resembles Christianity in some ways (a religion that many of its converts wish to renounce) and because in America it has been associated with ethnically based temple organizations. The most important Pure Land organization in the United States is the Buddhist Churches of America. A second significant group is the Amitabha Buddhist Society, whose American headquarters is in Sunnyvale, California. This organization mainly attracts Chinese Americans.

Another type of Mahayana Buddhism is Chan, more familiar to Americans by the Japanese name “Zen.” Central to this tradition is an emphasis on specific lineages of semi-mythical awakened patriarchs who embody a penetrating insight into reality passed down from the original Buddha. Although frequently portrayed as a meditation-oriented tradition, actual Chan meditation in Asia is uncommon. Rather, Chan activities for the average layperson tend to include heavy amounts of Pure Land-type devotion and ancestor veneration. This makes it hard to categorize the average Chinese temple as simply Chan, Pure Land, Tantric, or any other specific tradition. A good example of this mixture is Fo Guang Shan, a large Taiwan-based international organization whose American headquarters are located at the Hsi Lai Temple outside Los Angeles.

Chinese Chan and its Korean (Son) and Vietnamese (Thien) versions are primarily practiced by Asian Americans in the United States. However, Zen presents an interesting exception to this trend. Never enjoying particularly large representation within the immigrant Japanese population, Zen was spread instead by the missionary efforts of Westernized Asian Zen teachers who portrayed Zen as a timeless, intuitive spiritual tradition focused on silent meditation and relatively unadorned with ritualistic trappings. This modern reformist Zen appealed to many Euro-Americans and, by the 1960s, resulted in the first significant groups of American Buddhist converts. Major centers include the San Francisco Zen Center, representing the Soto



Dancers at the San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple summer Obon festival in California. Japanese Pure Land temples such as this one provide not only a religious home, but also a place to maintain Asian cultural traditions and convey them to the next generation. Amid the participants in traditional costumes are those dressed in ordinary street clothes, and some of the popular folk dances are original creations, originating in North America.

Zen sect, and Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji in upstate New York, a member of the Rinzai Zen sect. A few convert-oriented versions of Son and Thien, often simply labeled “Zen,” have also enjoyed considerable popularity since the 1970s. The most prominent ones are the Korean-derived Kwan Um School and the Vietnamese teacher Thich Nhat Hanh’s (1926–) Community of Mindful Living.

A third form of Mahayana is Nichiren Buddhism. This is a highly fractious form of Buddhism containing a great many sects that all trace their teachings back to the Japanese monk Nichiren (1222–1282), who advocated complete reliance on the Lotus Sutra scripture and the chanting of the title of the sutra as the ultimate practice. Although a tiny portion of worldwide Buddhists, Nichiren Buddhist groups are often highly missionary in orientation and have successfully brought their understanding of the dharma to other countries in recent decades. In America the most significant of these is Soka Gakkai. Characterized by sometimes aggressive proselytization efforts and a belief that chanting can have material as well as spiritual rewards, Soka Gakkai is somewhat unusual in its declaration that Nichiren was the true Buddha for our age. This sect has grown to be one of the single largest Buddhist groups operating in the United States due to a successful recruitment of non-Japanese. Other Nichiren groups that are present but less popular are the mainstream Nichiren Shu and the liberal Rissho Koseikai.

Vajrayana, or Tantric, Buddhism

The third and final broad type of Buddhism is Vajrayana (“Diamond Vehicle”), or Tantric, Buddhism. This outgrowth of the Mahayana tradition includes an even larger pantheon of deities and awakened beings, often manifesting both peaceful and wrathful forms. Vajrayana Buddhism includes additional scriptures known as tantras, often couched in esoteric and highly symbolic language requiring special initiations to understand. The master–disciple relationship is particularly central to Tantric Buddhism, which claims to be able to help one become a Buddha within a single lifetime. Vajrayana Buddhist immigrants come mainly from Tibet, Mongolia, Nepal, and the small Caucasian state Kalmykia, none of which have very large populations in America. An even smaller number of Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans practice in tantric lineages such as Shingon or Tendai, though tantric influences are common in many Mahayana Buddhist traditions.

So-called Tibetan Buddhism in America is in fact dominated by Euro-American converts, who easily outnumber the small numbers of Asian American practitioners. Fueled in part by positive Hollywood portrayals and the international charisma of the Dalai Lama (1935–), but also by dynamic and highly trained teachers who have set up shop in the United States, Tibetan Buddhism has blossomed since the 1980s and has overtaken Zen as the most visible form of

Buddhism. This type of Vajrayana includes a belief in *tulkus*, wise teachers who deliberately reincarnate life after life in order to continue teaching unawakened beings. The Dalai Lama, currently in his fourteenth incarnation, is the most famous example of this. He belongs to the Gelug sect, represented in America by such centers as Namgyal Monastery in Ithaca, New York, and Jewel Heart in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Probably the most important Tibetan-based Buddhist organization in North America is Shambhala, based in Nova Scotia and with dozens of centers in the United States. Founded by the flamboyant Tibetan missionary Chogyam Trungpa (1939–1987), this eclectic lineage includes elements of the Kagyu and Nyingma sects.

Early History in America

Information on Buddhism began trickling into America via trade ties and European scholarship, but sustained contact with Buddhism did not develop until the mid-nineteenth century. Buddhist studies in America began in 1842, when the American Oriental Society was convened. At the first meeting, Edward Elbridge Salisbury (1814–1901) delivered a breakthrough lecture entitled “Memoir on the History of Buddhism.” This was also the year in which Americans first began to display an interest in Buddhism for its potential spiritual resources, a development signaled by the first English-language publication from a Buddhist scripture. The excerpt, entitled “The Preaching of the Buddha,” appeared in the Transcendentalist journal *The Dial*. Transcendentalism—made famous by such figures as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) and Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862)—was an outgrowth of Unitarian Christianity and the first American religious movement to take Asian traditions seriously as a possible source of spiritual insight.

The California gold rush was touched off in 1848, and soon people from all over the world were streaming into California. Within a few years tens of thousands of Chinese had arrived. In 1853 the Sze Yap Company established America’s first temple. Located in San Francisco’s Chinatown, it provided a mixture of Pure Land Buddhism and other Chinese religious elements. But the Chinese were resented for doing work that might go to Americans, and they were seen as invaders from a foreign racial stock practicing an alien religion. In 1854 the California Supreme Court ruled that Chinese people in America could not serve as witnesses in criminal cases and essentially had no rights. As the Chinese moved up and down the West Coast, carrying Buddhism with them, they encountered ever more discrimination. Finally, in 1880,

Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, banning most Chinese immigration.

A complicated mix of scholarly interest, exotic attraction, half-informed speculation, and anxiety defined American attitudes toward Buddhism. For many Christians, Buddhism was dismissed out of hand as heathenism. Yet there was also a vigorous discussion among liberals and scholars over the nature of Buddhism. Most authors approached their subject with assumptions derived from Protestantism. They believed that the Buddhism of the Buddha should be seen as the truest Buddhism, the only authentic expression of the Buddhist impulse. Later developments in Buddhism were viewed as degradations. They sought this original Buddhism almost exclusively through texts—the older the better—which could be appropriated and employed by Western scholars and critics. Buddhist practices of Pure Land worship or monastic asceticism seemed strange to them, but the Buddha himself came to be widely admired as a virtuous role model.

As the century drew toward a close, American interest in Buddhism developed even further, as a trickle of Euro-Americans began to turn from talking about Buddhism to identifying themselves as Buddhists. In 1880, during a Theravadin ceremony in Ceylon (later, Sri Lanka), Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907) and Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891), a naturalized citizen of the United States, become the first Americans to formally pledge their allegiance to Buddhism. Olcott and Blavatsky were the founders of Theosophy, an eclectic religious movement that incorporated Hinduism and Buddhism into its beliefs. Even after their vows, their understanding of Buddhism was heavily influenced by Theosophical ideas. But the same cannot be said of Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and William Sturgis Bigelow (1850–1926), who in 1885 took the Tendai precepts and began practicing Shingon meditation practices in Japan.

It was 1893 that proved to be a watershed year in the history of Buddhism in America. This was the year that the World’s Parliament of Religions was held in Chicago. The parliament brought together representatives of religions from around the world, and popular speeches were delivered by representatives from many Buddhist sects. It was one of the few instances of Buddhists being able to represent themselves, rather than being represented by others, often unsympathetic Christian Americans.

An important interpreter of Buddhism during this time was Paul Carus (1852–1919). A German immigrant, Carus identified Buddhism as one of the closest approximations to his vision of a rational, investigative approach to universal

spirituality. In 1894 he published *The Gospel of Buddha, According to Old Records*, a popular book that helped to introduce Buddhism and the life of the Buddha to a general audience.

The end of the nineteenth century seemed to herald a bright future for Buddhism in the United States. Hawaii was already home to 25,000 Japanese Buddhists when the United States annexed it in 1898. Furthermore, the Japanese had begun to immigrate to the mainland. The result was the creation of the Buddhist Mission of North America in 1899 in San Francisco. And yet Buddhism had still only barely penetrated America's diverse but often contentious religious landscape. A handful of converts and a marginalized collection of Chinese and Japanese communities did not add up to a mass movement. In fact, it would be another two generations before Buddhism began to make major inroads into the American consciousness and attract significant numbers of followers.

The Twentieth Century

During the first five decades of the twentieth century Buddhism in America was dominated by Japanese traditions. Japanese Buddhist sects founded many of their first American temples during this time, including Nichiren Shu, Shingon, Soto Zen, and Jodo Shu. The primary form of Buddhism in the United States, the Japanese-derived Jodo Shinshu Pure Land school, continued its rapid expansion during this time period. Already by 1900 English-language study groups and periodicals were appearing. Nevertheless, Jodo Shinshu remained a heavily Japanese American form of Buddhism, as temples continued to be founded wherever Japanese immigrants went throughout Hawaii and the West Coast.

But hard times loomed for the Japanese Americans. The Immigration Act of 1924 virtually eliminated Japanese immigration. With the flow of Japanese immigrants cut off, Pure Land Buddhism's growth slowed, and few other sects experienced further development. The day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, federal agents began to detain Buddhist priests and other community leaders. By 1942 more than 120,000 Japanese Americans and immigrants had been forced from their homes into internment camps because of suspicion of their loyalties. Temples were ransacked during the process, and many families lost their homes and land. In the camps, makeshift Buddhist centers formed, and the younger generation began to push for adaptations that would make Buddhism seem more "American." Among the results was the reorganization of the Buddhist Mission of North America into the

Buddhist Churches of America, the widespread use of English in services and publications, and the adoption of Christianized terms such as *minister* and *bishop*.

Although these fifty years of American Buddhism largely belong to Japanese Americans, a few notable milestones were achieved by others as well. In 1927 Walter Yeeing Evans-Wentz (1878–1965) produced one of the most famous American Buddhist texts, a translation and commentary of the *Bardo Thodol* entitled *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. A second classic of American Buddhism was published by Dwight Goddard (1861–1939) in 1932. Goddard's *Buddhist Bible* was a large collection of sutras and other traditional materials in translation, the first easily accessible volume of such texts available to the English-speaking world.

In the 1950s a new cycle of non-Asian interest in Buddhism began to appear. Most visible was the rise of the Beats, a loose collection of avant-garde literary pioneers who explored Asian traditions in an effort to find meaningful art and spirituality. Buddhism played a large part in these explorations. Probably the most famous of the explicitly Buddhist-related works produced by the Beats was Jack Kerouac's 1958 novel, *The Dharma Bums*, in which Kerouac (1922–1969) gave a semifictional account of hitchhiking literary Buddhist wanderers roaming the highways of Eisenhower's America. The Beats and later converts were influenced by D.T. Suzuki (1870–1966), who had worked with Carus in Chicago and returned to the United States in 1949 to teach on Buddhism, especially Zen. Suzuki's university lessons, which stressed the value of spontaneity, playfulness, simplicity, and mystic wisdom in Zen, caught the imagination of the developing counterculture and led to profiles of him in major magazines and television appearances. Although his interpretation of Zen was highly idiosyncratic, he was a talented teacher and his presentation of Zen as an unfettered, ineffable, experiential core of religion indelibly stamped American attitudes toward Zen.

While the 1950s began to heat up interest in Buddhism once again, the 1960s were the breakout decade for American Buddhism. In 1960 Daisaku Ikeda (1928–), the leader of the Japanese Buddhist new religious movement Soka Gakkai, visited the United States for the first time. An American Soka Gakkai organization was quickly established, and Soka Gakkai Buddhism began to spread. A number of new Zen missionaries were offering Zen practice as well. Significantly, these Zen teachers included not only Asian immigrants but also non-Asian Americans. Both types of Zen missionaries tended to focus their efforts specifically on non-Asians.

Their approach contrasted with that of a new generation of Chinese teachers and promoters, such as Hsuan Hua (1918–1995), who directed their energies toward Chinese Americans and non-Asians alike, and included not only Zen-type Chan Buddhism but Pure Land, Tantric, and scholastic Buddhism as well. In 1969 five of Hsuan Hua's students became the first fully ordained American-born monastics.

The most important event of the 1960s for American Buddhism was the passing of the Immigration Act of 1965. This legislation lifted the racist immigration laws that had helped to choke off Buddhism's growth, allowing a new tide of Asian immigrants to reach the United States. The Chinese came again, as did the Japanese (though in smaller numbers), and they were joined by Sri Lankans, Koreans, and Vietnamese. These newcomers brought new forms of Buddhism, either as beliefs to be transplanted along with their lives, or as religious commodities to market to a new mission field in America. In the wake of this revitalization of American Buddhism, the first Theravada temple in North America was founded, in 1965, in Washington D.C.

The first trickle of Tibetans into America also began during this period. A Vajrayana temple in a Tibetan lineage, the Lamaist Buddhist Monastery of America, had already been founded quietly in New Jersey in 1955. In 1965 Robert Thurman (1941–) became the first Westerner ordained as a Tibetan monk, taking the lower ordination in a ceremony presided over by the Dalai Lama in India. In 1969 Tarthang Tulku (1934–) founded the Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center in Berkeley, California, the first temple in the Nyingma tradition, the oldest of Tibet's sects. This is also the year that Shambhala Publications, the first large Buddhist press in the United States, was established.

A perception of Buddhism as ancient, wise, peaceful, and esoteric pervaded the counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s, with concepts like karma and reincarnation reigning side by side with free love and widespread drug use in the growing network of new-convert Buddhist centers. Some missionaries did little to discourage these combinations. One example of this is Chogyam Trungpa, a Tibetan guru who founded the Tail of the Tiger practice center in Vermont in 1970. Charismatic, insightful, traditionally trained, sexually promiscuous, and alcoholic, Trungpa embodied a form of "crazy wisdom" highly compelling to the baby boomer seekers investigating Buddhism and other Asian religions.

Not all Buddhist teachers, Tibetan or otherwise, were as flamboyant as Trungpa. The 1970s saw a steady increase of

Tibetan monks who attracted small bands of followers, such as Kalu Rinpoche (1905–1989) and Dudjom Rinpoche (1904–1987). Another form of Buddhism, the lay-oriented Vipassana meditation movement, also reached America during this time. It was led by American laypeople who had trained in Asian Theravadin countries, such as Jack Kornfield (1945–) and Joseph Goldstein (1944–), who founded the Insight Meditation Society in Massachusetts in 1975. And the flow of immigrants continued, bringing the first Thai (1971), Korean (1973), and Cambodian (1979) temples.

The counterculture began to wane in the 1980s, as the baby boomers aged and the country, under President Ronald Reagan, shifted in a more conservative direction. Nonetheless, Buddhism continued to expand in America during the Reagan years and President George H.W. Bush's presidency, largely along the same established trajectories: more Zen, more Tibetan, and more Vipassana Buddhism, as well as many more Asian immigrants and their ethnic forms of Buddhism.

In some ways the 1980s was the golden era of women's Buddhism in America. In 1987 the Theravada nuns' order was resurrected, revived at the Dharma Vijaya Buddhist Vihara in Los Angeles. The same year Jetsunma Ahkon Lhamo (1949–) was recognized as the first Western female reincarnate lama. Less positive in its genesis but ultimately of equal significance was the development of greater democracy and awareness of the need for inclusion of women teachers in convert Buddhist centers, sparked in part by a series of sex scandals involving prominent male Buddhist teachers.

Buddhism once more became trendy in the 1990s, with major movies (including *Little Buddha*, 1993, and *Kundun*, 1997), bestselling books such as Lama Surya Das's *Awakening the Buddha Within* (1997), and seemingly endless amounts of media buzz, especially around famous converts such as film star Richard Gere, who began to turn toward Buddhism following a trip to Nepal in 1978. The first major English-language Buddhist magazine, *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*, appeared in 1991, oriented toward elite Buddhist converts involved in Tibetan, Zen, and Vipassana Buddhism. The same year, Soka Gakkai, which by then boasted tens of thousands of members in America, was summarily excommunicated by its parent Nichiren Shoshu organization. Soka Gakkai was only temporarily slowed down by this debacle, quickly regrouping and seeming to thrive without the guidance of the traditional priesthood. The network of temples

and centers founded by Chogyam Trungpa likewise rebounded after a period of scandal and decline, reorganizing as Shambhala International, which continues to be a major force in American Buddhism.

As the millennium turned, Buddhism seemed at last to have made itself comfortable in America. By the end of President George W. Bush's second term, in 2009, American-trained teachers led most of the convert-oriented temples and meditation centers founded in the previous four decades, and groups affiliated with major lineages were operating in every part of the country. Relationships between cutting-edge brain sciences and Buddhism seemed to herald a new era in Western cognitive and therapeutic concepts, and meditation was becoming widely accepted as a technique for managing stress and pain. An impressive secondary literature on Buddhism's many American manifestations had appeared as American Buddhism became a legitimate subfield of academic research.

Early Twenty-First-Century Issues

One question that often confounds researchers is the deceptively simple issue of "who is a Buddhist?" Because Buddhism is largely noncreedal in nature and most Asian temples do not have formal members, there can be significant difficulty in determining what constitutes legitimate Buddhist identity. Is someone who reads several books on Buddhism a year and likes its philosophy a Buddhist? What about someone who meditates and occasionally attends Buddhist events, but doesn't believe in reincarnation or karma? Obviously, such behaviors make it difficult to quantify the number of Buddhists in America, an issue made even harder by the persistent tendency of surveys (which undercount non-English speakers) to overlook segments of the American Buddhist community.

A possible solution lies in the attempt to measure Buddhist *influence*, rather than simply numbers. Although scholars have speculated that the number of Buddhists in America ranges anywhere from 1.4 million to 4 million adults, a 2004 study by religion scholars Robert Wuthnow and Wendy Cadge demonstrated that one in seven Americans has had contact with Buddhism and one in eight believes Buddhism has had a measurable impact on their religious life. That's 12.5 percent, a percentage far above the actual representation of fully identified Buddhists in the population. Thus Buddhism's contribution to American religious culture may lie less in its ability to obtain converts or nurture immigrant communities and more in the way that Buddhist

ideas, practices, and motifs have successfully made their way into the culture at large.

Perhaps the most obvious issue involving the Buddhist communities in America is the racial homogeneity of so many temples and meditation groups. Although not a universal phenomenon, most Buddhist groups are overwhelmingly composed of a single ethnic group, and Buddhism overall can be loosely grouped into Asian American and (mainly Caucasian) convert types. While instances of cross-racial cooperation and appreciation do occur, more common are misconceptions and even prejudices about the ways the other racial group is believed to practice Buddhism. This racializing of American Buddhism is not necessarily a conscious phenomenon, but it arises in part because immigrant groups may have significantly different community and religious needs from those of native-born converts to Buddhism.

Meanwhile, African Americans often feel particularly marginalized in American Buddhism, lost in a sea of nonblack faces wherever they go. The only significant exception to these segregating trends is Soka Gakkai, which is probably one of the most integrated religious organizations in the country, including significant numbers of all racial groups. This multiethnic phenomenon is the result of Soka Gakkai's evangelical approach to spreading Buddhism and serves as a point of pride that manifests the sect's belief that all people possess Buddha-nature.

A second issue is gender. In North America, there has been a push by women for greater responsibility and recognition, in some cases fueled by sexual inappropriateness on the part of male teachers. Euro-American groups in particular have often made efforts to develop more female-affirmative Buddhist ideals, and a growing number of women teachers and abbesses have appeared in the past twenty years. Less recognized are the contributions made by Asian American women; their labor and donations are often the backbone of their communities, and they also frequently play important organizational and spiritual roles in their temples.

The emergence of stronger positions for women within American Buddhism is partially the result of another issue: the lack of monks. Traditionally, the monastic orders have played a key role in the maintenance of teaching, guidance, and morality in Buddhist communities. Furthermore, the monks (and, in those fewer countries that have them, nuns) acted as fields of merit, engines for generating good karma, which could be tapped into by the laity through the

traditional lay roles of providers and disciples. But celibacy and renunciation have had a difficult time in America. Asian American youth and young adults are more likely to pursue a high-paying career over the life of a religious beggar, and Euro-Americans seem disinclined to consider full-blown monasticism as an option. For Asian American communities, this has often meant the importation of foreign monks and nuns with Old World cultural and religious assumptions and weak English skills. Operating in a strange culture, these monks often stay for only a few years, meaning that there is a constant turnover of foreign leaders that retards the development of many communities and can lead to friction with the Americanized laity. Meanwhile, many Euro-American groups have elevated laypeople into the roles traditionally played by dedicated monastics, often with only a partial understanding of how Buddhist clergy are trained and expected to act in Asia.

Another issue is the unusual way in which Euro-American groups tend to conceive of proper Buddhist activities. Meditation is central to most Euro-American Buddhists, for leaders and laypeople alike. This is a startling contrast to historical Asian Buddhism, where meditation has always been a relatively uncommon practice engaged in by a small number of elites, usually monks. This strange positioning of converts, neither really monk nor layperson, is reshaping Buddhism. Many profess to find this combination liberating; it remains to be seen, however, whether laypeople entangled in families and jobs can carry on strenuous monastic-type practices over decades and pass on strong traditions to new generations.

One conflict that Buddhist temples have had to face is discrimination from non-Buddhists. The Chinese and Japanese first confronted prejudice in America in the nineteenth century, and though religious tolerance has grown considerably since those first problems, Asian American Buddhists continue to encounter difficulties in many places. Race complicates the attempt to classify vandalism of temples and harassment of monks as specifically ethnic or religious bigotry, but clearly Buddhism's non-Christian status is one significant contributing factor to marginalization. Besides having to deal with outright confrontations, Buddhists often find themselves unable to build temples because of restrictive zoning laws that in some cases are enforced by local communities specifically to keep Buddhists out.

But not all interactions with non-Buddhists are negative. In fact, many of the people attending Buddhist centers

identify themselves as Christians or Jews. In some cases, this is part of a dual religious identity, while for others Buddhism is approached as a technique or a philosophy, not as a religion per se, and thus offers no particular threat to more traditional American religion.

Developments and Trends

Where is Buddhism going in the twenty-first century? Predictions are always a tricky business, but some general trends can be pointed to. First, as important as the American context is for Buddhism in the United States, it is developments in Asia that will have the largest effect on American Buddhism. Buddhist immigration has always been tied to conditions in Asia, whether caused by political conflict, economic depression, or missionary zeal. Unforeseeable events will continually reshape the American Buddhist landscape as new wars and other factors push various Asian groups to seek a better life in the United States. Even established Buddhist groups are likely to remain at least somewhat porous to new ideas and practices developed first in Asia.

A second development counter to the first is the expansion of American Buddhist missionary programs to other countries. Despite its relatively young status among the nations of the world, the United States has long been a launching pad for foreign missionary endeavors. As Americanized forms of Buddhism continue to evolve, the unparalleled status the United States enjoys as a rich, technologically sophisticated, and militarily powerful country will likely facilitate the spread of Buddhism from America to newer pastures, such as Latin America. Thus while the United States will remain an importer of Buddhism, it will be a significant exporter of Buddhism as well.

This raises the issue of exactly what "American Buddhism," rather than "Japanese Buddhism" or "Tibetan Buddhism," might be. Many Buddhist groups themselves have wrestled with this question, some attracted to the idea of a uniquely American expression of Buddhism, others fearful that American materialism and ignorance will devolve the dharma. America is so large, so diverse, and already host to so many forms of Buddhism that the future will probably be ever-increasing pluralism, rather than a united or definitive form of American Buddhism. One source of diversity within American Buddhism is likely to be the encounter with non-Buddhist religions. Buddhism has been continually impacted by other religions it interacted with in its spread across Asia, such as Daoism and Shinto. Exchanges and conflicts with

various forms of Christianity, Judaism, and New Age paths, as well as Western secularism, scientific materialism, and psychology, will surely lead to a multiplicity of responses and new developments within Buddhism.

A final issue confronting Buddhism's future in America is the difficulty of transmitting the tradition to younger generations in a meaningful way. The Buddhist Churches of America has declined to a mere seventeen thousand families, down from a high of approximately fifty thousand in 1960. The problem has come especially from out-marriage and conversion to Christianity among the newer generations, as well as the low rate of Japanese immigration to replace aging members. Other primarily Asian American Buddhist groups face similar problems as many of their young people seek to leave Buddhism behind in their ongoing assimilation process to mainstream American culture. On the other hand, Euro-American groups are experiencing a graying effect as well because of the tendency to emphasize meditation—an activity that typically excludes unruly youngsters—and the lack of effective children's programs at convert temples. Although Buddhism will surely continue in some fashion, the specific organizations that currently dominate the scene may fail to survive these processes of attrition.

See also *Architecture: Asian Religions; Buddhist Tradition and Heritage; California and the Pacific Rim Region; Canada: Pluralism; Celebrity Culture; Devotionalism; Zen Buddhism.*

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Buddhist Tradition and Heritage

Buddhism originated in northeastern India in the sixth century BCE with the teachings of a former prince named Siddhartha Gautama. It draws upon ancient ritual language associated with the religious tradition Brahmanism, although the ideas about salvation, or soteriology, of Buddhism differ significantly from those expressed by the Brahman priests of ancient India. Expanding rapidly throughout Asia, Buddhism was a missionizing religion that developed into various forms, many of which have successfully established themselves in Europe and in North America. In fact, some demographic studies identify Buddhism as the fastest growing religion in places like Western Europe because of the large number of Westerners claiming loyalty to the religion (whether as active practitioners or as "bookstore Buddhists" whose adherence takes an intellectual form).

Life of the Buddha

The life experiences of the founder played a decisive role in the formation of the Buddhist religion. Born in the Lumbini area (in what is today southern Nepal) to a royal family known as the Shakyas, Siddhartha Gautama earned the epithet Buddha ("the Awakened One") in later life, after a breakthrough experience that occurred while he was meditating under a tree. He is also known as Shakyamuni (literally "Sage of the Shakya Clan"). The details of Siddhartha's birth are indicative of his special status and potential. His mother conceived the child while she was dreaming of a white elephant, a symbol of royalty. Legendary accounts say that she gave birth without pain, with the child emerging

bloodlessly from her side. The child was born amidst a rain of flowers and auspicious earthquakes. Immediately after taking birth, Siddhartha reportedly ascended to the top of the universe and declared that this would be his final rebirth: He would attain Buddhahood and experience no more rebirth. The baby's mother died within a week of giving birth, assuring that the vessel that bore this *bodhisattva* (a being destined to awaken to the truth of the Buddhist teachings, or *dharma*) would not be "sullied" by subsequent sexual and gestational activity.

The child's body was unusual, with a number of odd features, such as webbed hands and special marks on his feet. His father invited soothsayers to interpret the marks and was told that the boy would grow up to be a great king or a great spiritual ruler. From that time on, the bodhisattva's father deliberately sheltered his son from the sight of all suffering, in an attempt to ensure that the prediction about the child growing up to take a spiritual path would not come true. The boy's father provided the child with the choicest of luxuries, and as he came of age his father provided him with a bevy of royal brides and consorts and also surrounded him with guards. Despite all the efforts made by the bodhisattva's father to bind his son with chains of pleasure, the bodhisattva had some dramatic experiences in his late twenties that shook him, causing him to leave his family behind and embark on a search for a path leading beyond birth and death. According to legends the young man obtained permission to go on an excursion, and his father arranged to have all poor people, old people, and people suffering from disease removed from the path. The deities conspired to see that the bodhisattva nevertheless encountered an old person, a diseased person, and a dead person. Next, he encountered a renouncer who inspired him to leave home. The quest for a path beyond birth and death was not easy and did not yield fruit immediately. After six years of extreme asceticism, the bodhisattva reportedly discovered the middle way between asceticism and hedonism. He moderated his ascetic lifestyle, began to eat normally, achieved awakening, and earned the epithet "Buddha."

Teachings of the Buddha

Buddhist tradition indicates that the Buddha was hesitant to teach, believing that the insights he had achieved would be difficult for ordinary beings to comprehend. Nevertheless, a deity convinced the Buddha to teach what he had learned for the benefit of those few who were ready for such advanced ideas. At his first teaching, the Buddha is said to

have set forth four propositions known as the Four Noble Truths. First, life is dissatisfying. Second, life is dissatisfying because of craving or "thirst." Third, life doesn't have to be dissatisfying; dissatisfaction can end. And, fourth, there is a path that leads to the end of dissatisfaction.

This fundamental teaching is often compared to a medical diagnosis in which the Buddha (often referred to as the Great Physician in Buddhist literature) identifies the malady at the heart of the human condition and prescribes a cure. In the scriptural languages in which the Four Noble Truths are preserved, the term used to characterize the ills of life (Sanskrit, *duhkha*; Pali, *dukkha*) is a word that means suffering, discomfort, dissatisfaction, or unsatisfactoriness. Linguistically, this term is the opposite of a term meaning ease, satisfaction, or pleasure. Hence the term can be translated literally as "dis-ease." This is the condition that plagues all sentient beings; this is the ailment or syndrome that Buddhism cures. According to the second noble truth, the source of this state of dissatisfaction, or dis-ease, is craving or thirst. Although often translated as "desire," the term that is rendered in English as "craving" or "thirst" is more narrow in meaning than the English "desire," referring more specifically to desire that is in some sense distorted, excessive, or misdirected. Sometimes the term is translated as "egoistic grasping" because it refers to ego-driven craving. Craving or thirst appears in three forms: first, craving for sensual pleasure, or pleasure derived from taste, touch, and other sensory experiences; second, craving for renewed existence; and, finally, craving for the nonexistence of those things and beings that disturb us or craving for our own nonexistence when we are feeling unhappy.

All three forms of craving lead to rebirth—even a person who craves nonexistence and commits suicide will be born again—and rebirth is considered by Buddhists to be a source of pain. To those with little background in Buddhist teachings, rebirth or transmigration may sound quite pleasant. Since it entails the experience of life in some other form after death, rebirth thus seems to promise novelty and excitement as well as extended life. But none of the various forms of rebirth that Buddhists might envisage, including extremely pleasant forms of life as a deity, offer the possibility of endless life. Those who take birth in various hells (or who are born as insects or other sentient beings with limited faculties) because of their lack of virtue in their present lives will experience tremendous discomfort. Even those who, having performed meritorious deeds in their present lives, enjoy tremendous ease and satisfaction of physical needs by

taking rebirth as gods and goddesses, will eventually die. Rebirth is inherently dissatisfying because life must end, and at the end of each life one not only endures the breakdown of one's body and the pain of saying good-bye to life, but one must also separate from loved ones. This dissatisfying cycle of rebirth is driven by *karma*, a term that refers to the effects of our actions: Our actions bear fruit for us, with results that we will experience either later in this life or in future lives.

Craving is a source of bondage, according to the teaching of the Four Noble Truths, which keeps one bound to repeated sufferings and dissatisfactions in the cycle of birth and death. Craving or thirst is said to be like a fire: the more you feed it, the more powerful it becomes. Once one's cravings are gratified, one begins to crave more. Because one can never satisfy craving once and for all, it is a source of pain. It is especially difficult to satisfy craving when, according to Buddhist teaching, everything that exists is impermanent. Everything changes, and what satisfies one's cravings today will not be there tomorrow. We are always hankering after things that do not last; whenever we get comfortable with a situation, it changes, constant change being the only thing that stays the same in this world of transient phenomena.

So to sum up the second noble truth, craving or thirst leads to dissatisfaction or dis-ease. But the third noble truth asserts that there is an optimistic prognosis for someone who finds life unsatisfactory. This malady caused by craving is curable. If the craving ceases, dissatisfaction ends. Nirvana is the state that one experiences when the fire of craving that feeds on the fuel of ignorance is put out. The fourth noble truth summarizes the path by which one experiences *nirvana*, the state of awakening.

In terms of the medical model, the fourth noble truth lays down a treatment plan. The path has eight elements, each described as correct or proper, and hence is known as the eightfold path. The first of these eight elements is proper understanding, a frame of mind, which comes from experientially, or existentially, understanding the Four Noble Truths. The second element of the path is proper intention, which entails cultivating thoughts free from sensuality, malice, and cruelty. Proper speech, most importantly avoiding dishonesty and harmful speech such as gossip or slander, is the third element of the path. The fourth element is proper action. The key aspects of Buddhist morality that guide proper action are encoded in the five precepts that laypeople undertake to follow at all times; these require refraining

from killing, stealing, inappropriate sexual conduct, lying, and the use of intoxicants. In addition to the five precepts, monks and nuns cultivate proper action by following a code of conduct contained in the monastic rule of their order. The fifth element of the path is proper livelihood, or avoiding occupations that would violate the precepts, such as butchering animals or battlefield military duty. The sixth element of the path is proper effort: being energetic and vigilant in monitoring one's thoughts, trying to cultivate pure and compassionate thoughts. The seventh element is proper mindfulness, which refers to the practice of insight meditation. The point of this kind of meditation is to cultivate mindful awareness (sometimes called "bare awareness"). It can be done while sitting, while walking, or while engaged in any number of mundane activities. While so engaged, one focuses one's attention on the body, following the breath while in seated meditation or noting the feeling of one's feet against the ground while walking. Proper concentration is the eighth element of the path. The ideal is a state of objectless awareness often described as "going into a trance" where one has no awareness of self or other, no sense of such mundane details as the passage of time. Thus when one achieves perfect concentration, there is nothing to apprehend and no one there doing the apprehending. Practicing proper concentration is thus an excellent way to experientially realize the central Buddhist doctrine that an eternal soul or abiding self does not exist—a doctrine that distinguished the Buddha as a religious teacher from other religious teachers of his day.

The path eventually came to be condensed into three elements: morality, meditation, and wisdom. Each element is considered necessary for the next. Thus only a person practicing a morally disciplined life can succeed in meditation, and meditation is a prerequisite for the cultivation of wisdom.

Cultural Context

Buddhism arose at a time in Indian history when the idea of the autonomous individual was emerging. Challenging prevalent notions of salvation as a family affair in which family members would enjoy (or suffer) afterlife destinies achieved by the ritual activities of the head of the household, Buddhists articulated a religious ideal of individualism whereby a person stands apart from his or her family and determines an individual destiny for him or herself as an independent religious actor (by performing meritorious deeds or by failing to act meritoriously). In the criticism of

family life and the praise heaped upon the unfettered existence of the religious wanderer in early scriptural texts, one can see a valorization of the individual who stands apart from family as the sole shaper of his or her own fate. Celebrations of the holy wanderer equate the homeless life of the religious nomad with the exercise of religious autonomy. The Buddha and his followers lived a peripatetic lifestyle, traveling about nine months a year. Monks who followed the Buddha left their families and jobs behind and lived off the generosity of lay supporters, who provided food, clothing, and other necessities. Late in life, the Buddha agreed to accept women into the monastic order and established a separate order for nuns.

The young religion appealed to all classes of Indian society, but it was especially successful with merchants and other members of the commercial classes. From its beginnings in northeastern India, Buddhism began to spread throughout India. By the third century BCE, missionary efforts led to Buddhism taking hold in Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, and other countries of southeastern Asia. The religion also moved northward into the region of the Himalayas (present-day Sikkim, Bhutan, and Nepal), into Tibet, Mongolia, and other parts of central Asia, and also into China, Korea, and Japan.

Organization of the Religion

As Buddhism developed in India, it did not develop a centralized ecclesiastic authority. When the Buddha was dying, he instructed his community that he would not appoint a successor: His teachings (the dharma) would stand in the place of a single leader of the community. Thus no religious leader dictates ecclesiastical policy for Buddhists in a manner comparable to, for example, the functions of the pope for Roman Catholics. Perhaps inevitably differences of practice and interpretation arose within a few centuries of the death of the Buddha. A division occurred at the second council at which all members of the entire far-flung monastic community came together to communally recite the Buddha's teachings, as recollected by different memory specialists. The two groups that emerged from this council at a later time divided into additional factions.

As Buddhism spread throughout Asia, different denominations came to dominate in different areas. Theravada, the predominant Buddhist tradition today in Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos, once competed with other Buddhist denominations in these places. Vestiges of religious polemics between Theravada Buddhists and

those who competed with them for dominance have left a trail of problematic terminology and claims to leadership in the secondary literature on Buddhism. For instance, the term "Hinayana," meaning "the Inferior Vehicle" or "the lesser path," is a pejorative term used by other Buddhists to characterize Theravada Buddhists. Although the term is still sometimes used by scholars, it has polemical connotations that render it unsuitable in academic discourse. In addition, readers should be aware that the claim that Theravada Buddhism preserves the original teachings of the Buddha is a sectarian claim with which most current scholars of Buddhism take issue. Theravada Buddhists rely on a canon that was redacted several centuries after the death of the Buddha. While there are some very ancient materials in this corpus of the literature, the same can be said of the canons of other denominations.

Theravada Buddhists place a high premium on the virtues of monasticism, with its opportunities for education and meditation. In Theravada circles, the laity supports monastic renunciators of the cycle of production and reproduction with gifts of food, clothing, shelter, and sons to serve as novice monks. Laypeople donate their material goods and symbolically "donate" their offspring in this life to help establish good roots for future flourishing, by which they might achieve awakening themselves as renunciators in future lives. The path to nirvana begins with the recognition that the Four Noble Truths accurately describe the human condition (and indeed the condition of all sentient beings, for no Buddhist is concerned only with the well-being of humans). The person who achieves this recognition is known in the Pali liturgical language of the Theravada denomination as a "stream enterer." Such a person can expect to achieve enlightenment or awakening in no more than seven subsequent human births. At a more advanced stage, according to the Theravada typology of stages of the path, a person wins the status of a "once returner" who will be born only once more as a human before achieving awakening. The "nonreturner" will not be born as a human being but will achieve awakening in one of the many subtle spheres of existence known as the Pure Abodes. The *arhat* (Pali, *arahant*) is a person who has awakened to the truth of the dharma in the fullest sense and is liberated from the cycle of reincarnation entirely.

The form of Buddhism that is dominant today in Vietnam, China, Korea, and Japan (and is also present in Tibet and Mongolia) is called Mahayana, or "the Great Vehicle." Advocates of the Mahayana questioned the sharp division

between laity and monastics characterizing those rival sects that the Mahayanists called Hinayana (of which the only denomination surviving today is the Theravada, “Way of the Elders,” that is predominant in southeast Asia and in Sri Lanka). The Mahayana presents itself in its scriptures as an inclusive path open to all, rather than an exclusive or narrow path in which one can enter nirvana only through the gateway of the monastery. One of the other doctrinal developments that set the Mahayana apart from rival schools was a new conception of the goal of the religion. Advocates of the Mahayana presented their ideal as the aspiration to the full and complete awakening of the Buddha, a larger goal than that of passing away from the realm of birth and death in that it includes the aspiration to bring all sentient beings to awakening.

Mahayana texts problematize the goal of escaping the realm of birth and death from moral and philosophical viewpoints. In its sutras (the *sutra* form in a genre of Buddhist text that represents a particular occasion in which the Buddha taught a lesson), the Buddha is shown to interpret in significantly different ways what he is said to have taught in the sutras of other Buddhist traditions; where new viewpoints are presented, they are explained as secret teachings that the Buddha taught to bodies of advanced beings, such as bodhisattvas, in private settings. To focus on eliminating one’s own craving and hence alleviating one’s own dissatisfaction is to ignore the needs of others and thus is morally questionable. But to emphasize the idea of a self on whom one focuses one’s practice is to show flawed thinking from a philosophical point of view, for no such entity exists. Human beings (and other sentient beings as well) are compound entities consisting of physical and psychic elements. We are combinations or aggregates of component parts, and there is no empirical evidence accepted by Buddhists for a soul or self that dwells within. Hence one cannot alleviate one’s own suffering without also alleviating the suffering of others.

The Mahayana ideal of the bodhisattva is derived from earlier usages of the term, but it has the technical meaning of an aspirant to Buddhahood who remains within the realm of birth and death. The Mahayana bodhisattva is thus a type of saint; the term derives from earlier usages of the term *bodhisattva*, which refer to the former lives of the Buddha when he aspired to the future state of Buddhahood. But the term takes on new meaning in Mahayana contexts, as the primary expression of what it means to focus on the needs of all sentient beings. Part of the grandness of this

Mahayana vision of salvation is that to aspire to become a bodhisattva requires both the courage to suffer within *samsara* (the cycle of reincarnation) and the wisdom to see that nirvana is already achieved. According to the doctrine of emptiness, a philosophical orientation that is systematically expressed by Mahayana philosophers such as Nagarjuna (c. 150–250 CE) but is also articulated in other Mahayana texts, each form that one takes within the realm of birth and death is empty of enduring essence. Each of the component parts that together compose the human being (including the physical organs of the body as well as sensations, perceptions, volition, and consciousness itself) is a transient phenomenon that arises and ceases through a combination of various factors. Neither the component parts nor the human being they make up can be said to have any enduring reality.

One of the most compact of all the Mahayana sutras is the Heart Sutra. In it, the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara surveys the world from the perspective of perfect wisdom and finds no suffering, no cause of suffering, no extinction of suffering, and no path that leads to the extinction of suffering. All components of the human being, Avalokiteshvara declares, are empty. The eye, the ear, the nose, and the tongue, as well as the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes that these organs apprehend, are empty of own-being, or essence. We cannot say of these organs (or of the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes they bring us) that they come into existence and pass away, or that they may be characterized by suffering or dissatisfaction. When seen from the perspective of perfect wisdom, eyes, ears, noses, mouths, sights, sounds, smells, and tastes do not arise and do not cease.

It is natural to assume that for Mahayana Buddhists, emptiness is something like what God is for Jews, Muslims, and Christians, or that emptiness is something like what Hindu philosophers call *brahman*—that ultimate reality from which all things emerge and to which all things will return. Were this the case, exponents of the way of emptiness would have us look beyond the empirical world to find the ultimate reality that is its source. But as Avalokiteshvara goes on to observe in the course of the Heart Sutra, emptiness is not a separate existence or reality but is just “form” itself. The physical forms that we take, with their eyes and other sense organs, are empty of enduring essence, and emptiness is none other than physical form itself. It is none other than our eyes and the sights we see—not something that we will know when our sense organs have ceased to function. Apart from form, there is no emptiness and no

alleviation of suffering. Apart from samsara, there is no nirvana. Given this nondifference, the unsatisfactoriness of life is ultimately nothing to fear. By virtue of the nature of the cycle of birth and death (when properly understood with the eyes of perfect wisdom), nirvana is already attained. Hence one need not renounce domestic life and seek to eradicate craving. Craving, when properly understood, is nirvana itself.

Vajrayana Buddhism is the dominant form of the tradition in Tibet, Mongolia, and elsewhere in central Asia. With the rise of Vajrayana Buddhism (or “the Way of the Thunderbolt”) in India and south Asia from about the seventh century of the common era, Mahayana insights into the indistinguishability of samsara and nirvana were set forth in a thunderbolt-fast path, promising the experience of nirvana in this very lifetime. Also known as Tantric Buddhism (from *tantra*, the Sanskrit term for “weave” that denotes a body of esoteric scriptures), the Vajrayana shares many of the presuppositions of Hindu tantric texts, including the importance of ritual as a means of breaking down false distinctions that make salvation well-nigh impossible in this present degenerate age. The Vajrayana offers esoteric methods (taught only to initiates) for transforming the three poisons of attraction, revulsion, and ignorance into positive forces, requisites for the experience of nirvana. The poisons can thus become nectars of immortality when properly handled in ritually controlled environments. Male Vajrayana saints practiced ritualized forms of sexual union with their wives and spiritual consorts and did not follow the celibate path of monastic Buddhism. For example, Padmasambhava, who established Buddhism in eighth-century Tibet, had two principal wives. The eleventh-century translator Marpa was married and had eight other spiritual consorts.

Expansion of Buddhism in the West

During the age of exploration and colonial interventions in Asia, Western observers saw the practice of Buddhism firsthand. So diverse were the practices of Buddhists in Japan and Sri Lanka that the first Western observers did not recognize these practices as belonging to the same religion. Civil servants and other representatives of Western nations traveling and living in Asia expressed interest in the forms of Buddhism they witnessed during the early modern period. Because of such cultural exchanges, the study and dissemination of Asian religious texts has contributed to the development of European and American philosophical

discourses. Such cultural exchanges have also contributed to the development of new forms of modern Buddhism. In mid-nineteenth-century colonial Sri Lanka (Ceylon, at the time), Mohottivatte Gunananda and Anagarika Dharmapala combined forces with one of America’s first Buddhists, a man named Henry Steel Olcott, to combat the spread of Christianity and the decline of Buddhism in Ceylon. The resulting synthesis of Protestant reliance on the inward and suspicion of ritual forms with Buddhist claims about supernatural powers resulted in what many scholars have termed “Protestant Buddhism.” Stephen Prothero’s *The White Buddhist: The Asian Odyssey of Henry Steel Olcott* (1996) gives an account of the fascinating life of Olcott. Similarly, modern forms of Buddhism have developed wherever Buddhism’s wide swath of dissemination has placed Buddhists in dialogue with practitioners of other religions in a modern setting.

Buddhism began to appeal to a wide spectrum of subcultures in Europe and America during the twentieth century and continued to appear frequently in census data drawn in the twenty-first century. Census data in 2001 indicated, for example, that Buddhism was the fastest growing religion in Britain. Buddhism has been of interest to Americans for some time now. Jan Nattier, in “Buddhism Comes to Main Street” (1997), speaks of the “Buddhism boom” of Victorian America, when references to Buddhism began to appear frequently in mass media outlets. And because of high levels of education and income of many who identify as Buddhist in America, as well as many celebrity Buddhists, Buddhism even has adherents on Wall Street. One of the noteworthy things about contemporary Buddhism in the West is that its influence exceeds the numbers of practitioners; this phenomenon is due to the highly influential film directors, songwriters, musicians, artists, and the like who have adopted Buddhism. Indeed, one sees references to Buddhism throughout popular culture. The Dalai Lama (the official leader of the Tibetan government-in-exile and a religious leader in the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism) has lent his face to the marketers of Apple computers. Tibetan prayer flags are used to sell all sorts of services and products. Buddhist monks of vaguely Himalayan origin ride around in Subaru Foresters and send each other dharma lectures and jokes by computer. Late capitalism has clearly embraced the message of a man who left his kingdom and wealth behind and lived six austere years in the forest.

Issues and Concerns

Questions about practice, sexuality, and gender are among the most interesting issues that contemporary Buddhists face as they work to realize the dharma in their lives as modern persons. A number of Buddhist communities in North America and Europe have split into factions over allegations that their leaders and other high-ranked teachers committed sexual improprieties or engaged in systematic sexual abuse. The controversies raised by these “sex scandals” have led to some useful dialogue about what is permissible in student–teacher relationships, and what kinds of expectations Buddhists bring when they enter the door of an American or European dharma center with regard to the sexual conduct of their leaders. By convening interdenominational Buddhist conferences and meetings with such figures as the Dalai Lama, gay, lesbian, and transgendered Buddhist practitioners in the West have raised the issue of sexual orientation as a topic worthy of exploration at the highest levels of Buddhist ecclesiastical discussion.

Another issue that has been raised to a high level of visibility is the provision by Buddhist priests in Japan of mourning services for aborted fetuses. Reliance on abortion as a means of family planning is widespread in contemporary Japan. Mourning services for aborted or stillborn fetuses (known as *mizuko*, or “water babies”) did not exist prior to the 1960s and have been the subject of considerable controversy. Media exposés in Japan have focused on the profits Buddhist temples stand to gain by promoting these memorial services. Feminist analysts lament the social conditions that lead so many Japanese women to seek abortions, having few alternatives to abortion as a means of family planning.

As a religion originally centered on a core community of celibate monastics, Buddhists have tended to place religious value on the freedom from those domestic entanglements that follow from heterosexual activity in the absence of modern forms of birth control and abortion (at least for the select group of those who seek to put an end to dissatisfaction in this life). As we have seen, some Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhists regard sex as a potential means of progress on the Buddhist path. Some (at least in theory) regard lay practice as equal to monastic practice. Those Buddhists, like Buddhists in Japan who have abolished the requirement of clerical celibacy, have moved away from the tendency to consider those committed to the practice of celibacy as superior to those who are sexually active. Western Buddhists

have also placed less emphasis on celibacy than did their early Indian coreligionists by creating monastic or quasi-monastic roles for noncelibate practitioners.

As effective means of contraception and abortion become more widely available to contemporary Buddhists, and sex is thereby separated more and more from procreation, it is possible that some Asian Buddhists (such as Theravadins) who have traditionally maintained a clear division between monastic and lay paths will create quasi-monastic or interstitial roles that enable sexually active people to take ordination and pursue higher levels of path attainment. It is equally possible, though, that Buddhists in Asia will respond to these developments by identifying such innovations as signs of moral decay, especially given scriptural predictions about the inevitable decline of the dharma. Any shift in ecclesiastical stances toward celibacy (for example, the creation of monastic roles for noncelibate persons) might be viewed as a sign of encroachment by or thoughtless imitation of looser Western standards of sexual conduct. Concerns about Western sexual “promiscuity” might be expected most especially in postcolonial nations of Asia, where Buddhists have sought to recover and articulate what they regard as traditional practices untainted by the cultural influence of former colonial powers.

Buddhism has proved to be a highly adaptive religious tradition that has taken root in a wide variety of cultural contexts. Its insistence that the truth of the Buddhist dharma transcends concrete manifestations such as deities, spirits, and local heroes has helped to ensure that wherever Buddhists go, they can effectively join forces with many of those who would see the sacred manifest in local goddesses, gods, and demons. Such beings have their place, and the religion can flourish in almost any cultural environment. It is a religion well suited to flourish in settings such as North America and Europe, and it has made significant inroads in these places.

See also *Architecture: Asian Religions; Buddhism in North America; Celebrity Culture; Devotionalism; Hindu Tradition and Heritage; Zen Buddhism.*

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C



California and the Pacific Rim Region

People have practiced a multitude of religions in the vast geographical area of California and the American Pacific rim region for thousands of years. This layered complex history and the resulting contemporary diversity serves as a crucible for religious innovation. Cultural diversity, an environment of great natural beauty, and its situation in the borderland regions between the United States and Mexico and the United States and the Pacific have had important roles in shaping the religious characteristics of the region. The religious character and history of the Pacific rim region of America are understandably focused on California, but its delineation needs to account for the whole Pacific coast region, from the Alaska coast and the Pacific Northwest, to the coast of the Mexico-U.S. borderlands of Baja, California, and it will also encompass Hawaii.

Native Religious Traditions

Hundreds of communities existed along the Pacific coast of North America and in Hawaii before any European or Asian people were here. Most migrated into the region from other parts of North America and the Pacific. The Native American cultures were characterized by a great many small localized societies, many closely related but different languages, and a shared larger regional economy with common cultural characteristics. These communities shared an economy based in the sea, the rivers, and the coastal scrub or forests. The oldest of these religious traditions are difficult to

describe, partly because little evidence of their presence remains except for shell mounds, burial artifacts, and oral traditions, whose religious purpose and import is probable but not specifically discernable, and partly because many of their descendants do not believe it is appropriate to discuss these religious matters with outsiders or because they no longer know what the older traditions were. The Spanish were the first Europeans to arrive in the area. They were more interested in converting the Native Americans to Christianity than making note of the religion they already practiced, though Spanish accounts of their observations provide important though limited sources of information. The older traditions persisted, even when European missionaries called on colonial military power to enforce their conversion efforts.

From these traditions, explained in contemporary Native American writings, recorded by interested observers, or contained in the complaints of Christian missionaries, it is known that the native religions fostered a close connection between people and the land, looked to the leadership of wise elders or healers, or shamans, and that their ceremonies were performed for blessing, healing, or to create relationships or to ease tensions between scattered small groups. Native American religious leaders had knowledge of ceremonies and medicines used for healing and gaining spiritual power. Many native people shared cosmological and moral beliefs with each other and with European and Asian immigrants into their areas. The Pacific Island religious traditions contained elements that supported the nineteenth-century embrace of Christianity in Hawaii and Samoa and other Pacific Islands under the influence of the United States. Like

other Native American traditions, Pacific Island religions also focused on the natural world, the sea, and the sky. Chiefs and shamans represented the divine. European encounters with these native traditions initiated a competition of spiritual powers.

The European arrival precipitated a sharp decline in Native American populations and traditions. Disease, cultural and economic disruption, and persistent European efforts to eliminate them as enemies combined to create a demographic disaster. Nonetheless, these native communities and traditions still exist and in some places are recovering their numbers and reviving their languages and religions, though often in the face of continued suppression and poverty. Anthropology and new age religious movements have fostered interest in Native American traditions among non-native people. This outside interest draws a mixed reception from native people and complicates the effort to understand these religions. While outsiders often publish a great deal about Native American religions, it is important to be aware of possible misunderstandings and missing information in such accounts. Religion in native societies tends to be tribally based and its traditions embedded in an oral tradition and practice rather than in written texts, though such written texts exist.

Colonial Introduction of Christianity

The Pacific region was touched by competing European colonial empires long before any of them settled in the region. In the sixteenth century a few European ships, Spanish and English, touched the Pacific coast of the Americas and stopped in Hawaii on the way from Mexico to the Philippines. Visits from Asian groups were not out of the question. These chance encounters did not result in religious exchange at first. The introduction of Christianity into the Pacific rim region began in the late eighteenth century. The Russians began to expand their colonial empire across the Bering Strait in 1794, down the Alaska coast, reaching the Pacific Northwest and California by the mid-nineteenth century. Russian Orthodox missionaries accompanied the commercial colonial project although the Russian Orthodox missionary activity with California Native Americans was carried out by Native Alaskan Orthodox Christians more than by Russian missionaries. Today Alaska is the center of Russian Orthodox population in the region and the majority of the Orthodox adherents are Native American. In California, Russian and Greek Orthodox immigration increased in the twentieth century.

The Spanish colonies to the south in Mexico and the expansion of the French fur trade into the Pacific Northwest brought Catholic missionaries into the region by the end of the eighteenth century as well. French Jesuit missionaries from Canada served a small population of Catholics related to the fur trade in the Rocky Mountains. The majority of the Catholic Christian expansion in the Pacific Region was related to the Spanish colonies. Anxious about the Russian expansion southward, the Spanish established a series of presidios and Franciscan missions along the coast of California beginning in 1769, meeting the southernmost Russian outpost at Ft. Ross (1812) with the establishment of the Sonoma mission and presidio (1824). Two distinctive but related Catholic communities developed on the Pacific coast: Franciscan missions in California focused on the conversion of the native people to Christianity and European ways of life, and the Catholic parishes serving the Spanish and Mexican colonists living in and around the presidios and on land grants. The Franciscan missions established by Father Junipero Serra (1713–1784) sought to encourage the native people to give up their particular way of life and live communally in the mission, learning to be Christians and members of Spanish colonial society. While the invitation to join the mission at first seemed voluntary and was actually attractive to many Native Americans, the Franciscans were willing to use coercion and violence with the support of the troops at the presidio to enforce discipline on the newly converted, and the Spanish colonial authorities often used coercion to force conversions to Christianity. In native Christian communities, whether converted by force or by choice, people blended older native traditions and beliefs with newer ones from Christianity. The resulting mission culture was shaped both by Spanish and native interests. The missions, with their close living quarters, became places where disease spread rapidly and the population of mission residents declined rapidly. As in other parts of the northernmost Spanish colonies, support for both the missions and the parish churches was thin, connections to the oversight of bishops was weak, and the result was a strong tradition of lay piety and independence. In 1836, soon after Mexico gained its independence (1821), the Franciscan missions were secularized and the Franciscan missionaries were recalled to Spain. Though a few survived as parish churches, the missions were left to decay until they were rebuilt by later arrivals, especially American Catholics with a romantic interest in the Spanish colonial period.

Because the Philippines were for a short time being considered as an American colony, from after the Spanish American War in 1898 until 1904, the meeting of Spanish Catholicism, an older Muslim religious presence, and American Protestantism should be noted. Both Muslims and Catholics vied for the attention of the native Filipino people, some of whom successfully resisted conversion by either of the traditions. In the Pacific Islands, Christianity became the predominant religion, blending native traditions with the new religion in a synthesis. In most cases, particularly Hawaii and Samoa, conversion to Christianity was instigated by social elites. In Hawaii, Kaahumanu, the queen mother, encouraged Christianity in the 1830s. In Samoa, with its system of local independent extended families, the conversion of the high chiefs resulted in the conversion of the people.

U.S. Era and Religious Developments

The Overland Trail brought immigrants from the United States into the Pacific rim region beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. Most of these immigrants claimed adherence to some Christian denomination or Jewish community.

As the United States solidified its control of the Pacific coast in the wake of the Mexican War (1848) and the California gold rush (1849) until World War II (1942–1945), Protestant and Catholic Christians from the United States, Jews, and a few new religious movements, most notably the Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, began to establish institutional presence and worshipping communities in the region. In addition, European and African American Protestants and Catholics, Asian peoples of many religions, and Latin Americans, mostly Roman Catholic, joined the earlier Native American traditions and Spanish/Mexican Catholic layers.

Religious practice thinned out with the move east or west or north into the region. The establishment of religious institutions was slow and many people dropped their religious practice, at least in an organized form. Many others changed religious identities with a change of residence. Because the “world rushed in” to a relatively confined space in the California gold rush, people encountered many alternative religious traditions and were aware of choices not available to them before. In the transitions of the overland trail, the Pacific voyage, or the journey north or south, the commonly expected Protestant establishment characteristic of the rest of the United States broke down. By the time the Pacific region had achieved statehood, California, Oregon, and Washington—and later Hawaii and Alaska—shared with

the Pacific Northwest the twin characteristics of being on the one hand the most religiously diverse regions of the United States and also the least formally affiliated population. Recent publications have referred to the Pacific Northwest region as the “none zone,” but the term could apply as well to California.

From the gold rush to the world wars, California was one of the few places in the United States where the Protestants were not the dominant tradition. With a few local exceptions, the Pacific region is characterized by the lack of a dominant religious group. The characteristic Protestant establishment of the rest of the country did not materialize, even with significant immigration from heavily Protestant regions such as the Midwest and South.

Throughout the twentieth century, Catholics and Jews represented the first and second largest religious groups in California; both Catholics and Jews found better opportunities for political office than in other parts of the country. The Pacific coast cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles became the largest centers of American Jewish presence outside of New York. Jewish communities in the Pacific region were characterized by ethnic differences—German, Polish, Turkish, and Russian predominantly—each group establishing its own synagogues. In addition, Judaism was divided into Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox branches theologically. Catholicism remained a significant presence due to the Catholic immigrants from Mexico, Ireland, Italy, Germany, and the Philippines, and later from China and Vietnam.

During the twentieth century, immigrants from Asia who were already Christian also formed congregations based on their previous church ties. Until after World War II, these racially or ethnically based missions formed subgroups within the white denominations. Historically African American churches, Baptist and Methodist, also started churches in the Pacific region as blacks moved west in increasing numbers. They remained among the dominant traditions in the African American communities of the region. The Catholic Church, as the jurisdiction changed from the Mexican to the U.S. branch of the Catholic hierarchy, also fostered the development of ethnic congregations. All of the mainline Protestant and Catholic churches in this period encouraged the use of the English language, many opened schools for immigrants and for American children as well to teach English and to provide a general education from their particular religious points of view. As in other areas of the United States, in the Pacific region the prevailing ethos of the public schools was nonsectarian by policy but Protestant in

unspoken ways, and Catholics tended to start their own parish school systems. Perhaps the most influential legacy of these Protestant churches is the many colleges and universities they started. The University of California had some of its roots in a Protestant college established in the 1860s.

Religious Diversity in the Region

As a total group, Protestants outnumber other religious traditions in the region; however, no single Protestant denomination attracted enough members to become a dominant group. All of the mainline Protestant traditions (Baptist, Congregational, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Reformed) established a presence in both rural and urban areas of the West in the post-Civil War era, competing with one another for the sparse rural population and increasingly disinterested urban population. Their home missionary societies cultivated new congregations and slowly organized the denominational structures over the course of this period. Smaller but well-established Protestant, Quaker, and Mennonite churches, as well as newer Protestant-related churches such as the Unitarian Universalists, the Seventh-day Adventists, and the Church of Christ, Scientist did well in California.

Protestantism cultivated these congregations along racial and ethnic lines. The first such efforts in the region were the mission of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions to Hawaii and the mission of the London Missionary Society in Samoa. In California, the home missionary societies of the white denominations focused most of their work on the English-speaking, mostly European-descended immigrants from other parts of the United States. In addition they formed congregations of European immigrants based on language and ethnicity. Various "foreign" missionary societies developed congregations among the former Mexican population, attempting to convert them from Catholicism. They also began mission work among the Chinese, Japanese, and later Filipino and Korean immigrants in the Pacific region, especially in Hawaii. Many of these ethnic and racial divisions in the Protestant churches were also characterized by denominational divisions because the larger Protestant churches cooperated with each other and divided up the mission work into territories to minimize their competition with each other.

In the special case of the Japanese Americans during World War II, religious communities were strained by the internment resulting from Executive Order 9066, February 14, 1942. Japanese Americans, regardless of religion, were

forcibly removed from the Pacific coast areas of North America after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. From 1942 until 1946, they lived for the most part in scattered internment camps in remote desert areas of the western states such as Mazanar, California; Topaz, Utah; Poston, Arizona; and Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Religious leaders were especially suspected of being possible collaborators with the Japanese government in their war against the United States and were removed from their communities. Without leaders, many Japanese religious groups had a hard time surviving. After the war, Japanese Americans' survival was further jeopardized by the appropriation of their property by others while they were gone. The Buddhist Churches of America, many Christian congregations and some smaller sects such as Tenrikyo, survived the internment and formed the nucleus of postwar growth for these groups. In Hawaii, the state governor successfully resisted the internment of the Japanese Americans in his state, allowing the religious institutions to remain in place.

Mormonism also grew significantly in the region during the mid-nineteenth century. San Francisco was an entry point for Mormons migrating to Utah. With the establishment of outposts in San Bernardino and other places in California, they hoped to improve their access to transportation and supplies for the Utah Mormon communities. In the early years the Reorganized Church, a minority tradition within Mormonism, represented the largest group of Mormons in the Pacific region, but their numbers have been eclipsed by the more mainstream Mormons based in Utah. Mormons, early in their history, engaged in missions to the Pacific Islands. Mormonism grew in Samoa as well as Hawaii, rivaling the success of the Protestants. A century later, half a million Mormons lived in the Pacific rim region representing 20 percent of the U.S. Mormon population.

Because California receives the majority of the immigrants to the United States from Asia and the Pacific Islands, Asian religions are well represented even during the eras when Asian immigration was suppressed. Before World War II, Buddhism was represented in two forms: Mahayana (from China, Japan, and Korea) and Theravada (from Southeast Asia). The Japanese-based Buddhist Churches of America borrowed institutional forms from American Protestantism. Zen Buddhism, introduced to the United States during the World Parliament of Religions in 1893, attracted American adherents in California. Confucianism, as well as Daoism, traveled with Chinese immigrants throughout the region

beginning with the gold rush. Hindu and Sikh communities were present in California by the early twentieth century; the oldest Sikh *gurdwara* in the United States was established in Stockton, California, in the early twentieth century. Some forms of Hindu belief and practice also attracted American adherents outside of the immigrant communities, particularly after the World's Parliament of Religions in 1893. Muslim immigrants from the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia were present in the Pacific region. Islam also appealed to many African Americans in California urban areas who joined the African American Nation of Islam or attended more mainstream mosques.

New Religious Movements

Perhaps because of the sheer number of diverse religious groups gathered together during this period, the Pacific region, particularly California, became a crucible of religious creativity. The fastest growing form of Christianity in the world by the end of the twentieth century, Pentecostalism, while not founded in California, got its most spectacular start at the Azusa Street Revival of 1906 in Los Angeles. By the end of the twentieth century, Pentecostal adherents outnumbered mainline Protestant adherents in the region. The third largest of these Pentecostal denominations, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, originated with Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) in Los Angeles in 1927 and initiated another creative approach by California religionists in the adoption of electronic mass media to proclaim its message and further its cause. Radio in the 1920s and 1930s and television in the 1950s and 1960s became favorite tools of Pentecostal preachers and evangelists as a result of McPherson's innovation. Pentecostalism has developed particularly strongly among marginalized and minority populations, shows great ethnic and racial diversity, and is often found in smaller, store-front churches in urban areas, or in rural areas serving migrant populations and working-class people. One of the largest African American Pentecostal denominations, the Church of God in Christ, traces its founding to Los Angeles's Azusa Street revival.

California served as the birthplace of hybrid religious movements. Nature played a role in the development of a regional sense of spirituality. John Muir (1838–1914) argued that nature was a place of spiritual renewal, that the presence of wilderness was necessary for a health society. The development of national parks fostered this sense of spiritual connection with nature, as well as ethical trends toward the

preservation of the environment. A relationship developed between this sense of nature spirituality and Native American traditions, particularly notable among artists and writers, and deeply connected to the nineteenth-century Romantic Movement in the broader culture. The diversity of American religious cultures drew from many a desire to find a unified way that all people could follow. Many branches of Christianity—including Mormonism—and Islam took an exclusive view as did some Buddhist traditions. Others sought to create new religions that would provide such unity. The Bahá'í faith, representing a nineteenth-century Persian effort to unite Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, and Islam, attracted interest in the Pacific Region after the World Parliament of Religion. A branch of the Theosophical Society, founded in New York, but settled in California at Pt. Loma, San Diego, blended Asian mysticism with interest in healing and in the universal unity of humanity. Established religions with a more liberal or open attitude allowed their adherents to import practices from other traditions or to practice more than one tradition. Thus many Jews were drawn to Buddhist traditions such as Zen. Unitarian Universalists also sought to express unity by allowing many religious practices to coexist in one church.

Finally, the most steadily growing religious group in the region was that of the unaffiliated. It is characteristic of the region that people tend to be less religious, fewer participate in organized religious activities, and fewer consider themselves to be adherents of any particular religion. An exception to this trend are recent immigrants because religion serves as a bridge linking their past identity to their future identity and as a social support system, but the second generation often declines to participate in the churches.

After World War II, the region entered into what one historian characterized as an era of fluid identities. From the bedrock layers of Native American traditions to the new immigrant traditions, the complex layers of religious history and tradition bleed through into one another and people frequently change religious affiliations and combine older commitments with new practices in different communities. The changes in the immigration laws in the 1960s allowed increasing numbers of immigrants from Asia and the Pacific Islands, multiplying the presence of Asian religious traditions, increasing the numbers within each one already present, and contributing to a large array of choices for people increasingly inclined to seek out a religious tradition to meet their needs and interests.

The Post–World War II Era

The period after World War II saw enormous changes in American culture: the civil rights movements, being especially strong in the African American, Chicano, and Native American communities; women's liberation; movements to increase acceptance and equality for gay, lesbian, or transgendered people; and movements galvanized by these changes, such as the antiabortion effort, opposition to the war in Vietnam, movements opposed to the inclusion and increasing openness to leadership from women or gay, lesbian, or transgendered people in religious organizations and society, and eventually the environmental movement. In the 1960s and 1970s, many religious traditions became politically active. African American churches and new movements in the black community such as the Nation of Islam supported the civil rights movement, though they did not always agree on the means. Many white churches joined the effort toward civil rights, or opened their doors to women's leadership for the first time, or became activists in opposition to the Vietnam War. Churches divided sharply over abortion, what should or should not be taught in public schools, the Vietnam War, and the role of women or those of minority sexual orientations in society. Debate about these issues characterized the post–World War II era and greatly weakened the mainline Protestant churches in particular. Popular religiosity and spirituality shaped more by video media and music than by religious institutions grew at a rapid pace. Religious motifs in rock music, popular films, and literature joined traditional scriptures, practices, and holy sites and objects in informing people's religious beliefs and practice. Rapid decline in participation in institutional religion began with the "baby boom" generation (those born 1946–1964) and intensified with their children, though the diffuse but popular hippie movement and later nondenominational megachurches enjoyed local growth and influence. Though not unique to California and the Pacific region, many of these churches were started in California. Examples include the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California, which started in a drive-in movie theater; Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco, which grew by inviting a racially inclusive group of people to worship and serve the marginalized people of the city in what had once been a declining middle-class church; and Saddleback Community Church in Orange County, California, which began by building a basketball court. The megachurches claimed up to 20 percent of

religious adherents by the end of the twentieth century. They tend to fall into the conservative evangelical theological spectrum, though Glide Memorial is liberal, and to be pioneers in using electronic media for religious purposes.

Recent passage of the Native American Freedom of Religion Act (1978) granted Native American tribes a measure of freedom to practice their religions after centuries of repression. Many small groups in California and the Pacific rim region failed to receive recognition and can still be harassed for ceremonies in which otherwise illegal substances played a sacramental part or using sacred places that have been appropriated by the dominant society.

Native American traditions along with Asian religious traditions have become popular in the mainstream culture. The commoditization of religious symbols and literature resulted in the proliferation of bookstores and other shops dedicated to resources for spiritual practice on a do-it-yourself model. Practices that in their traditions would be communal and done with oversight from designated religious leaders are offered by individuals for purchase. The state of California recognized a mail-order form of ordination as authorization to perform marriages.

General Trends of Religion in the Pacific Rim Region

Despite the proliferation of new religious movements and the relative decline of mainline religious traditions, the persistence of Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and Mormon congregations indicates an ongoing interest in these traditions. In the same way traditional Native American and Asian religious traditions persist even in the face of suppression or decline. Most of the religious traditions of the region are imported from elsewhere. This immigrant quality of all but the Native American traditions shapes the ethos of these religions. They exhibit a paradoxical independence and dependence in relation to their centers. For the most part, these religious traditions are centered a long way away from the Pacific region. This distance weakens the supervision of the center for its marginalized constituency. The religious history of California is filled with stories of maverick religious leaders taking their people outside the boundaries of their traditions general practice, sometimes dangerously. An example was Jim Jones, a pastor ordained in a mainline Protestant denomination, who founded the Peoples Temple in California that came to an end in Jonestown, British Guiana, in 1978 as he led the community in a mass suicide. On the other hand, in the Pacific region, most religious

communities depend on the main body of their tradition for support in their early years. Since religious institutions in the region tend to be weak, this state of dependency can last a long time. These communities may never be granted enough resources to become strong institutions. While denominational identity can be strong, denominational loyalty suffered from this lack of support and from the distance most religious organizations were from the center of their tradition.

The Pacific rim region, in which most religious traditions were marginal to their cultural centers, fostered individual religious independence as well and a self-help religious style. Individuals found ways to practice their religions, or chose new ways of practicing religion that did not depend on support from the institutional authorities. The Pacific rim region is characterized by a high degree of individual or community experimentation with religion and religious practices.

The diversity of religion in California and Hawaii is such that there has never been a dominant tradition, unless the growing number of religiously unaffiliated people constitutes one. Where at least half of the population has no particular religious commitment, it is possible to curb public efforts by religiously motivated people to shape society. Diversity has its challenges also. Many of these traditions are historically hostile to one another, yet in the Pacific rim region are living closely together. Interreligious tension is present in the public arena in debates over public policy regarding marriage, education, and health care.

Religious Trends in California

The continued development of new religious movements is also characteristic of the region, especially of California. The freedom from establishment allows for change and experimentation without risking the disapproval of religious authority. Three compelling interests combine to encourage this experimentation, interest in healing, desire for a sense of identity, and freedom from established norms, particularly the freedom to be curious about unusual or supernatural phenomena. Spiritualism, mesmerism, Pentecostalism, Christian and Religious Science, Swedenborgian mysticism, Seventh-day Adventists, and recently New Age spiritualities promote mental and physical healing as an outcome of religious practices. Traditions of Yoga, Zen meditation, and Hare Krishna chanting used physical practices to create health and healing as well as spiritual enlightenment. The California dream of paradise, made possible by mild weather and spectacular natural scenery, as well as by the extraordinary human

effort of moving the necessary extra water from the rivers and lakes to the cities, creating inexpensive electricity along the way, provoked certain religious impulses. The self-help character of New Age traditions built upon the California idea that human beings could almost create a paradise. Neo-Pagan traditions have found a home in California, seeking to recover European nature-based religious practices and borrowing from other earth-centered religions of the world. The rise of the environmental movements in the twentieth century have been secular expressions of the same desire to be at home in nature.

Religion still plays an important role in creating a sense of identity for immigrants from east and west, north and south. In a culture in the United States that inevitably assigns people identities based on skin color, gender, culture, and language, religion has provided a place for immigrant people to find a sense of their own identity apart from those assigned to them. Religious community and practice allows the development of hybrid and fluid personal identity. Immigrants are often more religious than the general culture. Religious institutions provide social services, community based on language and a sense of connection to one's country of origin. Not only immigrants but many people who feel lost in the urban sprawl of the Pacific region cities are attracted to religions such as Pentecostalism, Evangelical Protestantism, or Mormonism because they are characterized by the giving of an individual name, a personal connection to both the divine and to the community. The megachurches of the new evangelical movement provide another avenue of self-help style religious life and belief. These churches offer to the individuals who agree to join a sense of personal purpose connected with divine purpose, and a sense that by deciding to join, one can fulfill this purpose.

Religious Trends in the Pacific Islands

In the Pacific rim region, especially in Hawaii but also to some degree in the southern Pacific Islands, each island is a microcosm of the whole Pacific region. Because the islands are open on all sides to newcomers, encounters between people of different cultures are a regular part of island life. Mormons and Buddhists began their Pacific Island missions very early. Jodo Shinshu was established in Hawaii in the nineteenth century. The first Mormon temple outside of Utah was built in Hawaii in 1919. By the end of the twentieth century, the Latter-day Saints had changed their theological interpretation of the gathering of the Saints in Zion,

largely because of their Pacific experience. Instead of one temple there are now hundreds. Protestant and Catholic Christianity also developed trans-Pacific communities during the twentieth century. In California and Hawaii the Roman Catholic Mass is celebrated in many Asian languages. Protestant denominations from Asia now have congregations in North America. The multireligious world is represented and concentrated in California and Hawaii.

Borderland Religions

California not only shares a borderland quality with the Pacific region as a whole, it is part of a significant international borderland between the United States and Mexico. Because it was, until the mid-nineteenth century, part of the Spanish colonial empire and the Republic of Mexico, the region continues to share economic and cultural ties with Mexico and Latin America. Los Angeles is said to be the largest Mexican city outside of Mexico. Roman Catholicism, particularly incorporating the bicultural icon of the Virgin de Guadalupe, provides continuity of religious identity as people move back and forth across the border. This Catholicism is also shaped by Native American religions rooted in the desert environment. The New Age religious movements of the late twentieth century have been intrigued by this hybrid desert spirituality. Carlos Castaneda's *Teachings of Don Juan* (1968) inspired interest in shamanism and for some served as a guide to drug-induced religious experience. The borderlands magical realism genre of literature also conveys interest in spiritual powers associated with the land. For more than a century Anglo Protestants also sent missionaries into the borderlands area and converted a small percentage of the Latino population to mainline forms of Protestantism. In the twentieth century, Pentecostalism became the fastest growing religious tradition in the region.

Role of Religious Influence on Society and Public Life

Unlike other regions of the United States, this region never had a history of Protestant establishment or even quasi-establishment. It is the home of strong centers of minority traditions such as Judaism, Buddhism, and other world religions. In addition, Native American traditions persist and have reemerged in the twenty-first century after years of suppression, though native people still face enormous difficulties in regaining their right to practice their religion. Religion has been a factor in shaping public education. In the nineteenth century, public schools often taught a Protestant

Christian ethos without specific reference to any particular church. However this "nonsectarian" ethos did not include Roman Catholics or Jews and actively worked against Native American and Asian religious traditions. Roman Catholics responded by developing their parish school systems. Controversies persist today when religious groups complain about the presence or absence of particular religious practices, such as prayer or particular content such as the Bible or recognition of religious holidays, in public schools or public life in general. Conservative forms of Christianity are often associated with conservative political parties and policies. Conflict about personal moral choices such as marriage or abortion, often based in particular religious beliefs, permeate the political life of the region. The increasingly important environmental issues facing California and the Pacific rim region also create opportunities for religiously committed people to express their views about public policy. New religious movements such as the neo-pagan traditions join the Native American traditions, those sharing the nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century sense of wilderness as a sacred reality necessary to the health of society, and the concerns of many religious about fairness and sustainability in supporting public policies that foster environmental health.

Demographic trends in the region indicate that the diversity of religion will persist. It will continue to be a crucible for creating new religious movements; however, the persistent trend of decline in interest in organized forms of religious life will probably continue.

See also *Buddhism in North America; Eastern Orthodox Tradition and Heritage; Frontier and Borderlands; Geographical Approaches; Great Lakes Region; Great Plains Region; Latino American Religion: Catholics, Colonial Origins; Latter-day Saints; Missions: Domestic; Mountain West and Prairie Region; Native American Religions* entries; *Neo-Paganism; New England Region; New Religious Movements* entries; *Pacific Northwest Region; Pentecostals; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; South as Region; Southwest as Region; Zen Buddhism.*

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Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage

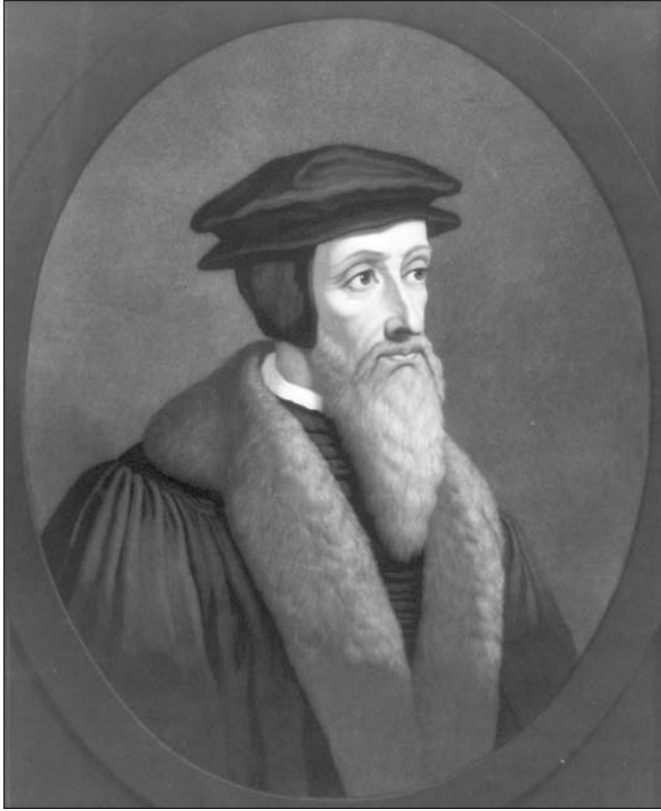
The Reformed Tradition, of which Calvinism has been a shaping and distinguishing theology, originated in the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation in Europe. Calvinist theology is characterized by a focus on the absolute sovereignty of God. This focus informs the other aspects for which Calvinism is best known, particularly the doctrines of human depravity, predestination, and a limited atonement. What belief in these doctrines has meant, for individual believers and societies influenced by the Reformed Tradition over time, is a rich subject of inquiry. Some have argued that election was a source of comfort for those who felt their human weaknesses deeply, while others have suggested that election created undue anxiety about salvation and damnation that led to a softening of Calvinist theology by the mid-nineteenth century. Still others have suggested that a this-worldly asceticism developed from Calvinism, in which believers focused on work and on reform of the world as a sign of favor for the next, and as a means

of fulfilling God's plan for history. The denominational, theological, and cultural heritage of the Reformed Tradition has been varied and far from static, suggesting the tradition's adaptability to different geographical and historical circumstances, as well as its continued vitality.

Background of the Reformed Tradition in the Reformation Era

The Reformed Tradition refers to that branch of the Protestant Reformation that grew out of the reforms of Ulrich (Huldreich) Zwingli in Zurich (1484–1531) and John Calvin (Jean Cauvin) in Geneva (1509–1564). Although some scholars have argued that “Calvinist” is too narrow a term for the tradition, others have used the terms “Reformed” and “Calvinist” interchangeably. The “Reformed Tradition” is a more inclusive term than “Calvinism,” since Calvinism often refers to a particular set of beliefs to which Reformed theologians and churches have not always adhered over time. This article will use the term “Reformed Tradition” to refer to those groups and denominations whose lineage is rooted in the reforms of Zwingli and Calvin during the Reformation, and “Calvinism” to refer to the theology specifically identified with Calvin and referred to as such by its practitioners.

Zwingli initiated his reforms in Zurich, Switzerland, in the early 1520s. Abuses of the indulgence system were common in Switzerland as in Martin Luther's (1483–1546) Germany. Although traditionally sold as pardons for the remission of temporal punishments due to sins, some in the medieval Roman Catholic Church had also begun selling indulgences for the remittance of punishments in purgatory, for the living and for their deceased relatives. Mercenary activity was also rampant, as Swiss troops fought for European monarchs and the pope in exchange for pensions and gifts that often enriched captains while killing scores of ordinary soldiers. Zwingli began his attacks on the existing leadership with criticisms of this mercenary activity. His decisive break with Rome came in the early 1520s. Though he always took care to differentiate himself from Luther and to suggest that he had developed his ideas separately, Zwingli was nevertheless aware of Luther's writings, admired his courage, and condemned what he saw as the church's persecution of the man, leading ultimately to his own decisive break with Rome. Zwingli attacked, as did Luther, the idea that works and money could buy salvation, and emphasized justification by faith alone. However, he went beyond Luther's magisterial reformation by arguing that the religious celebration of the mass was a mere remembrance of



The Reformed Tradition refers to that branch of the Protestant Reformation that grew out of reforms initiated by Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin, pictured. Calvin was influenced by humanism and the Renaissance-era turn toward the classics as an ideal to be recaptured. His arrival in 1536 helped transform Geneva, Switzerland, into a vibrant center of the Reformed Tradition.

Christ's sacrifice, in which Christ was present spiritually but not physically, and by replacing the liturgy with a preaching service focused on the word of God. Zwingli also focused his energies on the moral reform of society, instituting a civic morals court in Zurich. In addition, he attacked the trappings of what he believed were false worship practices much more vehemently than did Luther, imparting an iconoclastic spirit to his reforms in Zurich.

Zwingli fell on the battlefield in 1531. Because of his untimely death, he did not exert as profound an influence on the Reformed Tradition as Calvin. He lived to see the Reformation in much of Switzerland, but it was Calvin who contributed a theological basis to the tradition, and important ideas about church polity, that gave the movement the vitality and adaptability to spread throughout Europe and across the Atlantic.

Calvin received his education in the cities of Paris and Orléans in France, where he studied the law. Though

biographical evidence about how Calvin's experiences shaped his theology is sparse, especially compared to the evidence that exists for Luther, as a student Calvin was influenced by humanism, the Renaissance-era turn toward the classics as an ideal to be recaptured by the present age. Zwingli, too, had found humanism compelling, and both his and Calvin's emphasis on ancient biblical examples as representing the best models for life and for the church reflect their humanistic education. During this period Lutheran ideas and works circulated among Calvin and his peers, and Calvin himself left Paris at the end of 1533 because of suspicion that he was a Lutheran. In late 1534, he moved to Basel, Switzerland, where he wrote the first edition of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. In 1536 he came to Geneva, which he would transform, despite some internal conflict and a brief interlude in Strasbourg, France, into a vibrant center of the Reformed Tradition.

In Calvin's Geneva, church and state had separate, though often overlapping, jurisdictions. The church focused on spiritual affairs, while the secular government focused on external behavior. Yet the Consistory, the disciplinary arm of the church, would often turn violators of church discipline or morality over to the secular government to be punished. The Protestant belief in the priesthood of all believers under God meant that the church in Geneva was less hierarchical than the Roman Catholic Church, yet the Consistory's oversight into the lives and affairs of Genevan residents was more rigorous than they had previously experienced. Calvin's theology, in which God was so "other" from humanity as to prevent his being captured in symbol or statuary, also imparted a typically Reformed iconoclasm to Geneva, as had been the case in Zurich.

Though some Genevan residents chafed under the oversight of the Consistory and its partnership with civil magistrates in punishing people for spiritual and moral matters, Geneva became a magnet for persecuted Protestants, not only because of its reputation for success in reforming church and society, but also because of its academy. The Reformed Tradition began to spread rapidly in the second half of the sixteenth century, as Protestant exiles from other European countries came to Zurich and Geneva and then brought Reformed ideas back to their respective countries and beyond. John Knox (1514–1571) carried Reformed ideas to Scotland. Reformed Protestants in France, known as Huguenots, fought for legal toleration, which they eventually won after much persecution and years of forced exile. After similar struggles, Reformed churches eventually

dominated the northern provinces of the Netherlands, and the Reformed Tradition even spread to Hungary and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Reformed Protestants also brought their faith to the New World. French Huguenots who settled in Brazil, for instance, performed the first Reformed service in the Americas in 1557. Huguenots also participated in the settling of Port Royal (Parris Island, South Carolina) in 1562.

In England, Henry VIII (r. 1509–1547) had only partially shorn the church of its Catholic roots; Reformed ideas exercised much more influence under his son, Edward VI (r. 1547–1553). During Edward's reign, publication of books by Protestant reformers, which had previously been suppressed by long-standing medieval-era statutes, burgeoned, including those written by Calvin and his followers. Calvin's ideas also spread when Reformed exiles from other countries came to England during Edward's reign. Edward's sister and successor, Mary I (r. 1553–1558), was a Catholic, however, and Reformed Protestants fleeing persecution under her reign went to Switzerland, where they were further exposed to Reformed theology and church polity. Upon their return after the ascension of Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603), Reformed theology lived, though often uneasily, within the Church of England.

In the early seventeenth century, Puritan dissenters began to criticize the Church of England for losing its theological and ethical rigor. Calvinists were among the first settlers in Jamestown, Virginia. Separatist dissenters, known as the Pilgrims, who felt that the church could not be reformed, settled in Plymouth in 1620, while Puritan nonseparatists, who believed they could create a model society in the New World as an example for the Church of England to emulate, began immigrating to Massachusetts Bay in 1628. Eventually almost 20,000 English Puritans would make their way to Massachusetts between 1620 and 1640, establishing the first permanent Reformed settlements in the New World. Particular Baptists who immigrated to America from England also subscribed to Calvinist principles (that is, "particular" election), adopting a modified version of the Westminster Confession of Faith in a 1742 convention in Philadelphia.

Reformed Protestants also came to North America from the Netherlands, as Dutch Protestants settled New York (then New Amsterdam) as early as 1623. Scots and Scots-Irish Presbyterians immigrated to North America in large numbers in the early eighteenth century and beyond, settling in the piedmont regions of the Carolinas and Georgia, the Hudson valley, western Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

Reformed Protestants from Germany also came to America beginning in the late seventeenth century, many of them settling in Pennsylvania as well.

Characteristic Beliefs

The Reformed Tradition has its theological basis in Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (first edition 1536), and in the classic confessions of the tradition: the First Helvetic Confession (1536), the Belgic Confession (1561), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (1563), the Second Helvetic Confession (1566), the Canons of the Synod of Dort (1618–1619), and the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647).

The central identifying characteristic of the Reformed Tradition is belief in the absolute sovereignty, majesty, and "otherness" of God. From this central belief emerges the other doctrines for which Calvinism is best known (codified by the Synod of Dort, and commonly given by the acronym TULIP):

- Total depravity: humans cannot save themselves;
- Unconditional election: God alone acts in salvation, and predestines whom he will save independently of humankind's good works;
- Limited atonement: Christ's sacrifice on the cross saves only those whom God predestined for salvation (as opposed to making salvation available to all humankind);
- Irresistible grace: the elect cannot resist salvation; and
- Perseverance of the saints: the elect can never fall from grace.

Rather than representing unchanging ideas to which those in the Reformed Tradition have unquestioningly hewed through the ages, these beliefs have existed in creative tension with each other and with others and have been modified, explained, developed, and contested by theologians and laypeople in the Reformed Tradition over time.

Calvin's Theology

In fact, though Calvinism is perhaps best known for the doctrine of predestination, and though that doctrine is the one that opponents most frequently seized on in criticizing the theological tradition, Calvin himself had not intended predestination to be a central, terror-inducing, or unifying principle. Rather, he saw it as one of many mysteries with which humans have to contend, such as why some suffer or prosper in this life while others do not, and why some reject the gospel while others embrace it. Calvin believed that

election should be a source of comfort to the saints, much as Luther's emphasis on justification by grace alone was supposed to alleviate the anxieties of having to work for or purchase salvation within the Roman Catholic Church. If God alone took care of matters of salvation or damnation, human beings simply had to submit themselves to his will and work for his glory rather than subsume themselves in self-interested worry about their eternal welfare. Calvin's emphasis on the sovereignty of God was meant to take human beings' focus away from themselves and toward God, whose will for the world, regardless of the outcomes of individual sinners, was good and desirable. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints provided additional comfort to the elect: if they could never fall from grace, they could devote their energies to serving others and God without worrying about themselves.

Calvin's theological writings also covered much more than the doctrine of predestination. He devoted much thought, for instance, to the problem of how fallen humans can know anything of God. He suggested that all humans can obtain a general knowledge of God by studying the Creation, though only the scripture reveals God's plan of salvation. Calvin's belief that the Creation manifests the glory of God, and that pondering the Creation enhances worship of its creator, meant that he was far from opposed to the study of the natural sciences, though some historians have accused him of such. Others have argued that Calvin's appreciation of the natural world fostered a spirit of scientific enquiry in those countries most influenced by the Reformed Tradition.

Though Calvin believed that study of the Creation was important, he also emphasized the importance of studying the scripture as a guide to the life of the individual and the church. Though God in his absolute power was unknowable, Calvin argued that God accommodated himself to mankind through the revealed Word. This focus on the Word informed Reformed worship, as often-lengthy sermons took center stage, rather than the mass or the liturgy. Theological education was also centrally important to Calvin, and the founding of seminaries and colleges has been an important characteristic of the Reformed Tradition in general. Calvin established an academy in Geneva in 1559, which contributed to the city's international reputation. More academies were founded as the Reformed Tradition spread throughout Europe, and then in the New World.

Calvin also believed in the importance of organizing the church according to God's revealed Word. Whereas Luther felt that church organization depended on historical

context, Calvin argued that church polity should have a theological basis. Ironically, Calvin's emphasis on biblically correct church polity had to do with the historical context in which the Reformed Tradition developed. Unlike Lutheranism, which had the support of the state in much of Germany, Reformed Christians often faced hostility and outright persecution from Catholic governments, such as in France and in Marian England. A strong and independent church structure, which could cooperate with the state when possible (as in Geneva, when the Consistory and civil magistrates worked together to punish immorality and the like), or which could function on its own when not, was vital to the continuance and geographical spread of the tradition. Geneva represented the working out in practice of Calvin's ideas, summarized in his *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* of 1541. Calvin divided the church (biblically, he believed) into a fourfold ministry consisting of pastors, teachers, elders, and deacons, plus two committees: the Company of Pastors overseeing doctrinal unity, and the Consistory overseeing disciplinary matters.

Calvin's *Institutes* became one of the most influential texts of the Reformation era, yet as his biographers have pointed out, he was also much occupied with the day-to-day affairs of Geneva, and his primary interest was not in codifying a unified system centering on one doctrine, but in seeing his ideas carried out in practice. The publication history of the *Institutes*, which Calvin first published as a sort of catechism in 1536, shows how he developed his ideas over time and in a somewhat piecemeal fashion. His later editions of the *Institutes* were not just republications of the same original text, but vastly expanded, and sometimes sprawling, improvements on the original. The final 1559 edition, organized into four parts, on (1) knowledge of God as creator, (2) knowledge of Jesus Christ as redeemer, (3) modes of obtaining grace in Christ, and (4) the true versus false church and sacraments, represented a complex theological masterpiece that continues to be read and interpreted by scholars and theologians today.

Theological Debates, Post-Calvin

Calvin's followers codified his theology into the five doctrines known as the TULIP formulation, argued over the meanings of predestination, and made it a defining mark of the tradition, especially in attempting to differentiate it from other branches of the Protestant Reformation. Explaining and living with such doctrines, however, was not always an easy task for Reformed clergy and laity. Who were the elect?

How did a person know if he or she was predestined to salvation? How was mankind to know anything about a completely other and completely divine God who chose to save some and not others for reasons unknown?

Reformed critics of Calvin's theology, such as Jerome Bolsec (birthdate unknown–1584), questioned the doctrine of predestination, believing that it could lead to apathy, or worse, undue anxiety, and that it detracted from effective preaching, since it suggested that men could do nothing to alter their eternal states. These critics believed that the doctrine was overly harsh in its diminishment of human agency and its ascription of salvation or damnation to God's inscrutable will alone. Theodore Beza (Théodore de Bèze, 1519–1605), the first rector of the academy at Geneva, argued to the contrary. He was particularly adamant that the Bible taught double predestination—in other words, that God predestined men to damnation as well as to salvation. Not all Reformed leaders who accepted Calvin's arguments about predestination as a sign of God's grace agreed with Beza or with Bolsec. The Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, the most important and widely adopted Reformed confession of the late sixteenth century, smoothed over these disagreements, stating that God predestined men to salvation but ignoring whether or not he also predestined them to damnation. The Confession also stated that church polity should be based on the Bible but did not say precisely how, allowing for flexibility as the Reformed tradition spread through different historical contexts.

Controversy over predestination never fully subsided as Calvinism spread beyond the borders of Geneva and Switzerland. A particularly important late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century controversy occurred in the Netherlands, when Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609), a former student of Beza's, challenged the doctrine of double predestination, beginning in 1591. According to Arminius and his followers, God foresaw but did not predetermine who would be saved and who would be damned. Arminians argued that predestination in the form of predetermination (as opposed to foreknowledge) made God tyrannical, arbitrary, and capricious in his choice of whom to save and whom to damn. Humans, according to Arminians, had a part in bringing about their own salvation. The Synod of Dort convened to oppose the Arminian critique and to state the definitive Calvinist position in 1619, and the five doctrines known as TULIP represent its formulations.

Yet Arminianism, as the human agency position came to be known, and debates over theology in the Reformed

Tradition, continued to thrive. In England, for instance, controversies between so-called Arminians such as Archbishop William Laud (1573–1645), who placed great importance on the sacraments and ceremonies of the church, and English divines, who emphasized personal devotion and piety, shook the Church of England in the early seventeenth century, leading to the migration of the Pilgrim and Puritan dissenters to the New World. These dissenters, and the English divines who influenced them, were more concerned with the signs of salvation and attaining assurance thereof than their Reformed counterparts elsewhere. They suggested that believers could find assurance by self-examination of their own experiences and behavior, a kind of devotional and practical piety that some scholars term “experimental predestinarianism,” and that conflicted with Laud's emphasis on the sacraments. Opponents of both sacramentalism and experimental predestinarianism, however, such as Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643) in the Massachusetts Bay colony, charged that it was essentially Arminianism as well, but their positions often erred toward the other extreme of Antinomianism, the rejection of any authority and signs but the Spirit. “Moderate Calvinists” grappled with balancing the two extremes, while “high Calvinists” vigorously argued for the doctrine of double predestination.

The Westminster Confession of Faith (completed in England in 1647) ignored controversies between double predestinarians and those who argued that God only elected humankind to salvation. It rejected Arminian impositions and reaffirmed the classic Reformed doctrines of divine sovereignty, the imputation of Adam's sin onto mankind, the imputation of Christ's salvation onto the elect, and the perseverance of the saints. It represented the definitive theological position of Reformed English divines, to which Reformed Anglo-Americans also subscribed, and to which some Reformed denominations today continue to adhere. Reformed statements of faith continue to be written and revised, as in the United Church of Christ's “Statement of Faith” (1959), but the heyday of Reformed confession writing ended with the definitive statements of the seventeenth century.

Reformed Theology in North America

Reformed theology in North America exhibited much of the same dynamism, debates, and variety as it had in Europe. Though some scholars have criticized religious histories of America that begin with the New England

divines, the Puritans and their successors exercised a theological influence on future generations that was disproportionate to their relatively small numbers. Such eminent thinkers as Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) gave the Reformed Tradition in America an international reputation, and the universities, seminaries, and voluntary societies organized by Reformed ministers gave the tradition an intellectual dominance against which many other strains of religious thought in America had to contend and define themselves.

Puritanism

The Westminster Confession of Faith was completed several decades after the Puritans first began migrating to America, and while it restated accepted and generally non-controversial positions, the Puritans still grappled with how to balance paradoxes in Calvinist theology: between God's inscrutability and the ability of mankind to know him and to know of him; between absolute sovereignty and divine accommodation; between God's justness and God's mercy; and between election and free will. To address these issues, the Puritans drew on a theology of the covenant derived from close study of the Old Testament and God's dealings with the Israelites. Covenant theology had been first advanced by Reformed theologian Zacharias Ursinus (1534–1583) of Heidelberg, Germany, who distinguished between the legal covenant of works and the salvific covenant of grace. According to covenant theology, God continued to make special agreements with chosen nations. The Puritans who migrated to the New World believed that God had made a covenant with them as his new Israel, whereby he deigned to abide by certain knowable laws governing his conduct, on the condition that his people abide by the rules that he set for them in scripture. Covenant theology suggested that although only the elect were offered the covenant of grace by Christ's atonement, all within a chosen nation were obligated to abide by the covenant of works given by God to Adam. Failure to do so would imperil the nation and would almost surely serve as a sign that the noncomplying individual was not one of the elect.

This was only one sign among many. Puritan theologians devoted much thought to the order of salvation, which included preparing the heart, by humiliation and contrition, for God's saving call to the elect; responding to God's call through faith; justification, in which God imputed Christ's sacrificial righteousness onto the sinner; sanctification, in

which the elect lived a holy life according to God's revealed Word; and finally, glorification in heaven after death. Both the elect and the nonelect could live moral lives according to the covenant of works, but only the elect did so out of gratitude for their regeneration.

Covenant theology and the signs of regeneration laid out by Puritan theologians helped to alleviate some uneasiness with Calvinism's paradoxes; the Puritans' deep piety and awe of an unpredictable God eased, for some, the anxieties that remained. To the Puritans, it was natural and indeed, necessary, that God have the freedom to be unpredictable. Fallen humanity deserved to be condemned; God's choice to redeem even a few was infinitely merciful. In the words of well-known historian of Puritanism Perry Miller: "It was better in Puritan eyes that most men be passed over by this illumination and left to hopeless despair rather than that all men should be born without the hope of beholding it, or that a few should forgo the ecstasy of the vision." As the Puritan settlements grew and spread geographically, the Reformed clergy in New England debated and modified the requirements for church membership and benefits. In the Cambridge Platform of 1648, the New England congregations had affirmed that the only biblical model for the church was the individual congregation, though larger synods could be convened when necessary. As in Reformation-era Zurich and Geneva, the platform gave power to secular magistrates to punish immoral behavior, as well as blasphemy and heresy. The synod also decided that full membership of the church should be restricted to those who were able to offer testimony of saving grace, though all were required to attend church. Although this may have worked for the first generation, full church membership declined over succeeding generations, and a synod convened in 1662 decided, in what came to be known as the Half-way Covenant, that children of the baptized but unconverted ("half-way members" or noncommunicant members who had yet to give saving testimony) could also be baptized, as long as their parents acknowledged the historical faith of the church and agreed to live according to the moral code in God's revealed Word. Solomon Stoddard (1643–1729), pastor of the New England frontier town of Northampton, took the Half-way Covenant even further, by softening the requirements for Communion as well: because only God could know what counted as genuine conversion, the church could not presume to exclude people from the Lord's Supper on the basis of external signs of regeneration. Rather, since the Lord's Supper could itself

be a means of grace, it should be open to more than just professed converts. Stoddard's position stirred much controversy.

Jonathan Edwards

In fact, Stoddard's grandson, Jonathan Edwards, was ambivalent about his grandfather's support of the Half-way Covenant, and much preoccupied by the question of how to discern true conversion, so that one could have confidence in one's salvation. Edwards was at the center of the revivals that swept New England in the mid-eighteenth century, known by most historians as the Great Awakening (although the "greatness" of the revivals and the singularity of the "awakening" have both been disputed). After the deaths of two youths in the 1730s, Edwards urged his Northampton congregants to live morally and to focus on the life to come, establishing prayer meetings and using the tragedies as a means of guiding people to conversion. Edwards's preaching was effective in bringing people to a conviction of their sin and the need for regeneration, and he published an account of the revival that made him and the town of Northampton internationally famous. Yet just as news of the revival spread to England and Scotland, the revival itself ebbed with the suicides of several unstable townspeople who took Edwards's warnings about the very real power of Satan to heart.

Revivals swept America again with the arrival of George Whitefield (1714–1770) in 1740. However, Edwards's experience with the ups and downs of revivalism led him to be more skeptical about the durability of religious enthusiasm than he had been in the 1730s, and to more deeply consider the meaning and signs of true and lasting conversion. Edwards did not support religious experience at the expense of intellectual rigor. Like the seventeenth-century Puritan theologians, he sought to balance piety and intellect, because too excessive a focus on either could lead to the pernicious and recurring challenges to Reformed theology of Antinomianism and Arminianism. Instead, Edwards upheld the paradoxical Calvinist doctrines of both election and free will, modifying and expanding on the ideas of his forefathers for a generation moving toward the Enlightenment. He challenged the optimism of the Enlightenment by reaffirming the doctrine of original sin, yet argued that despite such sin, humans still had free will because nothing external or natural (such as pain or physical constraints) prohibited them from acting according to their moral inclinations. Edwards also reaffirmed the doctrine of election: since God

created and thus determined human moral inclinations, he elected whom he would to be regenerated. Those who were damned were hence paradoxically damned not by external hindrances but by their God-created free wills.

Edwards's definition of regeneration flowed from his understanding of the nature of God and Creation. Unlike some Enlightenment thinkers, who asserted that God's purpose in Creation was human happiness, Edwards argued that God creates the world moment by moment, and that his purpose is to radiate his glory outward as the sun continually radiates its light and warmth. Regeneration consists of God changing the heart of the sinner away from love of self toward love for "being in general," or what Edwards also called the "consent of being to being." Although Satan could imitate religious enthusiasm in those affected by revivals, only God could act directly on the convert's heart through spiritual and not scientifically explicable means, sometimes manifesting in converts' ecstatic sense of being enveloped by God.

Liberals, New Divinity, and Old Calvinists

Edwards died at the height of his intellectual powers because of a smallpox vaccination gone awry; his successors were left to systematize his theological innovations for future generations. They did so amidst the splintering of the Reformed clergy into rival factions as a result of the mid-eighteenth-century revivals. Those who had opposed the revivals, known as the "Old Lights," believed that the revivals' emphasis on a change of heart was too individualistic and diminished the importance of a life of obedience within the covenanted community. Those who had supported the revivals were known as the "New Lights." By the late eighteenth century, three roughly drawn groups emerged as a result of these divisions in the Anglo-American Reformed Tradition: the Arminian or liberal faction, the moderate or Old Calvinists, and the Edwardseans or New Divinity.

Men such as Jonathan Mayhew (1720–1766), Ebenezer Gay (1696–1787), and Charles Chauncy (1705–1787) led the Arminian or liberal faction. They had opposed the revivals on the grounds that the religious enthusiasm that resulted was not a sign of conversion, and they emphasized the emotions over the intellect. Highly attuned to late-eighteenth-century Enlightenment-driven criticisms of Calvinism by Deists and early Universalists, Liberals softened the Calvinist focus on God's ultimate sovereignty and mankind's inability and focused instead on the importance of virtue and morality. Chauncy even suggested that all might eventually be

saved. The Unitarians trace their origins to these early liberalizers of the Reformed Tradition in America.

The Edwardseans or New Divinity consisted of the New Light supporters and students of Jonathan Edwards, and their students in turn, who supported the mid-eighteenth-century revivals, and who played prominent roles as preachers and theologians in the revivals of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, known as the Second Great Awakening. Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803) was the man primarily responsible for systematizing Edwards's thought into what became known as the "New Divinity." Hopkins grounded Edwards's aesthetic love for "Being in general" into a more specific and prescriptive focus on what he called "disinterested benevolence." According to Hopkins, holiness consisted in the transformation of self-love, which he considered the essence of sin, into love of others. Hopkins's famous idea that believers should be willing to be damned for the glory of God, stemmed from his belief that a too-narrow focus on one's salvation or damnation is selfish, and that one's energies should instead be spent on the amelioration of moral and social ills and the betterment of society. One can see, in Hopkins's theology, Calvin's idea that predestination was a source of comfort meant to take believers' attention away from their own eternal welfare toward the welfare of others and the reformation of the world. The New Divinity men were strong proponents of revivals. They drew on Edwards's distinction between the moral and natural ability of the will, to argue that since everyone had a natural ability to convert, they could blame no one but themselves for failing to do so.

The moderate or Old Calvinists, who grew out of the Old Light opposition to the mid-eighteenth-century revivals, believed that the Edwardseans were metaphysicians whose ideas were too speculative, and they deemphasized the importance of the church and means of grace in helping sinners live moral lives leading to regeneration. Men such as Hopkins believed that the means of grace, such as sermons, prayers, and meditation, damned the unregenerate the more they used them and yet remained unregenerate. In contrast, Old Calvinists believed that the means of grace, offered continually through the church as opposed to in occasional revivals, were effective. They also believed that the unregenerate should be exhorted to behave morally as a means of urging them toward regeneration, as well as ensuring a moral society. The Old Calvinists rejected the New Divinity's belief that self-love was sin and instead believed that

appeals to self-love could encourage the unregenerate toward true piety.

Princeton, New Haven, and Oberlin Theologies

By the mid-nineteenth century, Princeton became the bastion of conservative Calvinism in America. In 1837 the Presbyterians split into Old School and New School factions, which were roughly the heirs to the Old Calvinist/Edwardsean split of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The Old School Presbyterians at Princeton saw themselves as the conservators of Calvinism, appealing to the Westminster Confession of Faith and biblical authority. Southern conservatives such as Robert Lewis Dabney (1820–1898) and James Henley Thornwell (1812–1862) also saw themselves as conservators of Calvinist tradition; their literal reading of the Bible's discussions of slavery led them to support the institution as biblically sanctioned, and social hierarchies as a natural result of the depravity of man.

In New Haven, Connecticut, by contrast, Nathaniel William Taylor (1786–1858), who identified as an Edwardsean, nevertheless emphasized the moral agency of mankind more than earlier Edwardseans ever had. Taylor argued that sin was a voluntary though permanent condition of mankind, and that it was humans' continual choice to sin, though they could choose the opposite, that endangered their eternal welfare. Taylor saw himself as balancing free will against original sin, though some Edwardseans and conservative Calvinists accused him of jettisoning that most fundamental of Reformed doctrines in his effort to make Calvinism conform to the ecumenical evangelical goal of urging sinners to voluntarily stop sinning and convert.

Though he was a Presbyterian and later a Congregationalist, Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875), perhaps the preeminent revivalist of the antebellum era, also faced accusations of jettisoning Calvinism and the doctrine of election. Finney's main interest lay in evangelizing and exhorting sinners to take responsibility for their own conversions. He minced no words in accusing conservative Calvinists of preaching a theology that was not conducive to converting sinners. He felt that the old doctrines encouraged laypeople to simply wait for God to act on their hearts, and to blame God for not doing so if they failed to convert, rather than to blame themselves. Like Taylor, Finney won criticism from those who sought to uphold a more traditional Calvinism subscribing to the Westminster Confession. Yet his theology, which he taught at Oberlin College in Ohio, proved immensely influential, particularly in spurring the

antislavery movement's shift from gradual emancipation and colonizationism to immediate abolitionism.

Protestant Liberalism and Reformed Orthodoxies

The antislavery movement was profoundly influenced by the New Divinity's concept of disinterested benevolence, and by Finney's argument that conversion should be immediate rather than gradual; however, Southern divines' uses of the Bible to justify slavery led some abolitionists to depart from their Reformed upbringings by the time of the Civil War. A few prominent ministers with roots in the Reformed Tradition also departed from their theological heritage in the mid- to late nineteenth century. Horace Bushnell (1802–1876), a graduate of Yale Divinity School and a Congregationalist minister, argued in *Christian Nurture* (1847) against the immediate conversion model of the revivalists, and instead he suggested that children should be educated into the Christian religion, a view that coincided with his understanding of Christian life and society as progressive, rather than static and predicated on before/after conversion experiences. Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887) also rejected the Calvinism of his forefathers in favor of a Gospel of Love where strict predestination disappeared and sentimentalism prevailed.

In the wake of the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, and in the aftermath of the Civil War, where theologians on both sides hurled biblical accusations at each other, and where death on such a grand scale caused some to look for more comfort than orthodox Calvinism seemed to offer, more Reformed denominations and ministers also abandoned basic tenets of Calvinist theology, such as predestination and innate depravity. Yet even as their differences from other mainline denominations blurred and church cooperation spurred the formation of interdenominational councils and unions in the twentieth century, many still identified as part of the Reformed Tradition, highlighting the tradition's adaptability and continuing vitality in the modern world. Bushnell's idea that Christian society should be progressive, and the social ethic that Calvinism spurred among some followers, can be seen in the late-nineteenth-century Social Gospel, and in mainline Protestants' attention to progress and the reform of this world. Today, the Presbyterian Church of the USA (PCUSA) is the largest mainline Reformed denomination, with over two million members, ten thousand congregations, and fourteen thousand ministers. The United Church of Christ, formed in 1957 from the union of the Congregational Christian and Evangelical and

Reformed (traditionally German) churches, also falls on the liberal side of the Reformed heritage in America.

On the other hand, the last century has also seen a resurgence of the doctrine of depravity. The two world wars led neoconservative theologians to revise the optimistic progressive visions of the mainline churches and instead promote a more cautious view of human limitations and God's absolute sovereignty. Reformed denominations today that explicitly uphold the tradition's orthodox positions include the Presbyterian Church in America and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which have roots in the mid-nineteenth-century Princeton Theology and conservative Southern Presbyterianism, and the Reformed Church of America and the Christian Reformed Church, originally formed by Dutch Calvinists. These denominations hew to the standard confessions of the Reformed Tradition.

Modern-day fundamentalists who identify as Baptists also have been influenced by the Reformed Tradition, and by the Princeton theologians' and Southern Presbyterians' emphasis on biblical inerrancy. Baptists in the colonial and revolutionary era had experienced their own Arminian-Calvinist split; the Calvinist branch of Particular Baptists (believing in particular, as opposed to general, election), was numerically dominant. Calvinist theology continues to influence conservative denominations and denominational subgroups in the highly diverse Baptist tradition today, such as the Primitive Baptists. The Southern Baptist Convention, with more than sixteen million members, does not explicitly hew to the Reformed confessions, preferring to see themselves as biblically based, rather than based in creed, but nevertheless affirms the inerrancy of scripture and the consistency of election with free agency.

A brief comparison of the Web sites of the PCUSA and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church highlights the diversity within American Reformed churches today, and the extent to which they continue to draw on traditional Calvinist beliefs. The PCUSA Web site notes that "Some of the principles articulated by John Calvin remain at the core of Presbyterian beliefs." The Web site's discussion of predestination quotes from the Second Helvetic Confession, typically seen as the most generous of the early Reformed confessions, and suggests that the doctrine of predestination should provide comfort to believers who can never fall from God's grace. The beliefs of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) on the other hand, are presented as essentially unchanged from the Synod of Dort and the Westminster Confession, including the depravity of man, the complete sovereignty of

God, and his justness in predestination. Ironically, the PCUSA's stance is perhaps more akin to Calvin's original intentions for the doctrine of predestination, while the OPC's position aligns with the ways in which Calvin's writings were interpreted by followers such as Theodore Beza and the standard confessions of the Reformed Tradition.

Ethos of the Reformed Tradition

Whether there is "a" Calvinist or Reformed ethos has been a rich subject of inquiry among scholars. Some have tried to draw connections between Calvinism and various other hallmarks of modernity, such as capitalism, democracy, and social activism. Max Weber most famously described Calvinism, and the doctrine of predestination in particular, as a driving force behind the Protestant work ethic in his 1904–1905 *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Weber argued that the anxiety people experienced as a result of not knowing whether or not they were of the elect led to a this-worldly asceticism, in which Reformed Protestants interpreted success in this world as a sign of salvation in the next. According to Weber and others who had tried to establish links between Calvinism and capitalism, Calvin's valuation of one's vocation in this world also contributed to the economic energy of countries influenced by the Reformed tradition.

Scholars have argued, too, that Calvin's decentralized, four-part church polity, with its Consistory and Company of Pastors, contributed to republican political theory, where power is spread among several branches of government, led by disinterested magistrates who are also citizens. Some scholars have suggested that Calvin's focus on God as the ultimate sovereign, to whom all humans are beholden, and his insistence on the depravity of all mankind, also contributed to democratic political thought and the concept of checks and balances. Some historians have even depicted the Reformed clergy's support of the American Revolution as evidence of the affinities between Reformed theology and republican government.

Still others have suggested that Calvinism's focus on the sovereignty of God contributed to a social activist, and sometimes millennialist, ethos in which believers have seen themselves as part of God's grand scheme of history, and dedicated their energies to the reform of the world according to his plan. The Reformed Tradition encouraged a deep piety toward the ineffability and "otherness" of God, but unlike the Pietist groups that also developed from the Reformation, it encouraged social action and reformation of the world, and not just of the individual soul. The social and

moral reform movements of the antebellum era, many of them supported by Reformed leaders and laypeople, illustrate this kind of social activist orientation. Samuel Hopkins's idea of disinterested benevolence, for instance, embodies the shift from a focus on self to a focus on God's will for the world that is so characteristic of this strain of the Reformed ethos.

On the other hand, more recent scholars such as Philip Benedict, author of a synthesis on the Reformed Tradition, have criticized the connections earlier historians made between Calvinist theology and the hallmarks of modernity. They have argued that extrapolating ethos from theological beliefs, as Weber essentially did, is methodologically faulty because not all laypeople within a tradition necessarily believe every doctrine generated by theologians, or weigh various doctrines' importance in the same way as theologians and ministers. In addition, they have compared countries influenced by the Reformed Tradition with those where Lutheranism and Catholicism prevailed, and shown that capitalism, and republican and democratic political ideas, were not exclusive to the Reformed Tradition.

These scholars have focused instead on the ways in which the Reformed Tradition was a lived religion to lay believers, and on the diversities within the tradition. Self-examination, for instance, which was an essential aspect of experimental predestinarianism, the devotional and practical piety first suggested by English divines in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, could lead to profound relief if a believer came to feel that he or she was one of God's elect, but could also lead to profound anxiety and distress if assurances were not so forthcoming. Such anxiety and distress led to the caricature of Calvinist theology by Deist, Universalist, Arminian, and other critics in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as overly harsh and terror-inducing, with a tyrannical and arbitrary God who was easy to fear but hard to worship as just and merciful. Lorenzo Dow, a popular early-nineteenth-century Methodist evangelist in America, for instance, noted that the doctrine of election "tend[ed] to presumption, or despair," and summarized Calvinism with the saying, "You can and you can't—You shall and you shan't—You will and you won't—And you'll be damned if you do—And you'll be damned if you don't." It was partly in response to such accusations that the New Divinity and New Haven divines crafted their theological innovations to the Reformed tradition.

That the Methodists and other populist denominations were much more successful than the Calvinists in gaining

adherents in nineteenth-century America has been interpreted by some scholars as a sign of Calvinism's decline after disestablishment. Ann Douglas, for instance, famously argued that Calvinist ministers and women, both essentially disestablished in the nineteenth century, joined arms to influence popular culture with a maudlin sentimentality that drained the rigor from Calvinist theology instead. Others have located the decline of Calvinism later: in his influential synthesis of American religious history, Sydney Ahlstrom, for example, situated the end of the Puritan ethos in the 1960s.

Belief in predestination, with the attendant anxieties the doctrine once produced, has indeed declined among some Reformed denominations and adherents by the twenty-first century. Yet from the disagreements between Bolsec and Beza, to the Arminian controversy of the early seventeenth century, and from the migration of Puritan dissenters to the fracturing of the New England clergy over the mid-eighteenth-century revivals, the Reformed Tradition has never been static or homogenous. Rather, it has always been characterized by rigorous theological debate, variety, and adaptability through the ages.

See also *Antinomian Controversy*; *Bible* entries; *Congregationalists*; *Dutch Reformed*; *Education: Colleges and Universities*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Lutheran Tradition and Heritage*; *Methodists: Tradition and Heritage*; *Pilgrims*; *Presbyterians* entries; *Puritans*; *Reformed Denominational Family*; *Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*.

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Camp Meetings

Camp meetings are, strictly defined, outdoor religious revival gatherings, lasting for several days, at which attendees camp on-site for the duration of the meeting. Originating in the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century, camp meetings were aimed toward bringing new converts into the churches and were noted for high levels of emotionalism and strong physical manifestations of religious experience. Although camp meetings had their greatest impact and significance prior to about 1850, they continued to occur in various parts of the United States well beyond that time, and survive, in modified form, to the present day.

Origins

The camp meeting's origins have been subject to much debate among historians. Outdoor preaching is as old as

Christianity itself, and, in American history, many of the services in the colonial Great Awakening were held out of doors as well. Such services were occasionally called “camp meetings,” though they differed in important ways from the nineteenth-century form, and the term itself did not receive widespread use.

Some historians have also identified important European antecedents to the American camp meeting. In particular, scholars have cited the background of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scottish “communions,” large outdoor gatherings, which displayed many characteristics of the camp meeting, including high levels of emotionalism, and which appear to have inspired some of the earliest camp meeting leaders in the United States.

Still, such specific practices as camping out appear to have been early nineteenth-century American innovations, and, most scholars agree, the camp meeting quickly took on a life of its own in the antebellum United States, developing forms and conventions that clearly distinguished it from colonial and European antecedents.

In general, historians date the first American camp meetings to about 1800, when they emerged as part of the second major religious revival in American history, the Great Revival or the Second Awakening. These meetings took place in Kentucky. The earliest were held in Logan County, in western Kentucky, and from there they quickly spread to other parts of the state. Most notable among these early meetings was a seven-day gathering at Cane Ridge, near Lexington, Kentucky, in August 1801. The meeting drew crowds estimated in the thousands; attendees came from great distances and, bringing their provisions with them, came prepared to spend several days on the site. Nineteenth-century observers and historians alike have often described Cane Ridge as the camp meeting’s true birthplace.

Presbyterians took a dominant role in the leadership of these early meetings and, most likely, in the makeup of the congregations, since many of Kentucky’s initial settlers—to the extent that they were church members at all—tended to be Presbyterians. Nevertheless, some of the earliest meetings also tended to be interdenominational. Thus, at Cane Ridge, for example, clergy from the Methodist and Baptist denominations joined their Presbyterian counterparts, preaching from various locations around the encampment to a religiously diverse crowd.

The early camp meetings were exciting affairs. Marked by fiery preaching—ministers from different denominations

loudly addressing different parts of the crowd simultaneously—lustily singing, and, above all, multitudes of people, in the throes of religious experience, undergoing powerful physical exercises; the scenes were viewed even by friendly observers as approaching chaos. The physical exercises were especially impressive and took several forms, including “falling” helplessly, “barking” or “laughing” uncontrollably, or, most spectacularly, “the jerks.” The jerks began with a twitch that would take over the entire body, becoming increasingly violent. According to contemporary observers, at the height of a meeting’s excitement, the entire congregation might be affected by the jerks, moving rapidly from one person to the next.

Evolution

From its Kentucky beginnings, the camp meeting spread widely and rapidly to other parts of the United States. Newly settled frontier regions provided the most fertile ground for camp meetings. Individual churches were difficult to support in thinly populated areas, and the camp meeting, where people could come to a central location for several days of worship, providing their own lodgings, had obvious utility. But camp meetings proved to be popular even in well-established areas and continued to be so throughout the antebellum period.

As the camp meeting evolved, its character changed in major ways. For one thing, despite its early interdenominational history, the practice was to be increasingly identified with the Methodist Church during the first part of the nineteenth century. Baptists and Presbyterians tended to move away from the camp meeting, for a variety of reasons. Many found the more spectacular physical exercises troubling, and the emotionalism incompatible with a true Christian faith. As they accurately pointed out, camp meeting conversions were often attributable more to the excitement of the moment than to any deep-seated religious commitment and were quickly forgotten once the excitement had passed.

Methodism had long prized emotionalism, and Methodists openly embraced that of the camp meeting. They celebrated the exercises as manifestations of the power of God moving among the people. Although by the 1810s, some of the more spectacular exercises had begun to be replaced mainly by shouting, weeping, and, occasionally, jumping, at the height of a meeting’s excitement, Methodist camp meetings continued to feature exercises through much of the first half of the nineteenth century.

There were also theological reasons for Presbyterian and Baptist opposition. From the beginning, camp meeting preaching had displayed tendencies toward Arminianism, that is, the view that God has offered salvation to everyone and that each individual has the power to accept or to reject God's call. Holding to Calvinist doctrines of predestination and election, Presbyterian and Baptist leaders became concerned about the potentially subversive impact of the camp meeting itself. Methodism was, however, strongly rooted in Arminian theology, making the camp meeting wholly compatible with the church's doctrinal thrust.

To be sure, Baptist and Presbyterian camp meetings continued to occur here and there throughout the antebellum period. Such other groups as the Adventist followers of William Miller and the Mormons, groups spawned in the religious ferment of the first half of the nineteenth century, also incorporated the camp meeting into their efforts. Nevertheless, the camp meeting was to be most closely identified with the Methodists, who fully embraced it as well.

Structure

As camp meetings evolved over the first half of the nineteenth century, they developed a body of fairly standardized procedures that was to be maintained throughout the era. These procedures were regular enough that, over the course of the period, several writers produced camp meeting "manuals" prescribing appropriate rules for organizing a meeting—rules that actually codified what had become fairly regular practice.

In general, meetings were scheduled over a long weekend. Although there was some variation, people usually began to arrive at the site on Thursday, with services scheduled to begin that evening, and continuing through Monday or, sometimes, Tuesday morning. In rural, agricultural regions, there was something of a camp meeting season in early autumn, when people had brought in their harvests and could devote several days to religious observance.

The sites themselves tended to take a standard form. The campers' tents surrounded a large central space dominated by a preaching stand and pulpit. A small area in front of the stand, the altar—sometimes called the "mourners' bench" or "anxious seat" (or, by critics, the "glory pen")—was set aside to allow new converts to come forward at appropriate times in the services. There were benches for the congregation, usually divided into sections, men on one side, women on the other—with, in parts of the South, a separate area for slaves, usually behind the stand. The settings could be quite

impressive, and camp meeting locations were often chosen for their potential effect. In wooded areas, canopies of trees overhung the site, creating what some observers described as "a cathedral" in the wilderness; at night, flickering firelight illuminated the services, giving, and intended to give, a kind of sublimity to the proceedings.

The camp meeting day was long. Morning services, usually devoted to prayer, began shortly after sunup and before breakfast. Services continued throughout the day and included sermons, prayers, exhortations, and invitations. Between scheduled services, people gathered in private tents for continuing prayer, singing, and exhortation; or, toward the end of the meeting, "love feasts," in which clergy and laypeople counseled new converts. But the camp meetings were dominated by their evening services, beginning around 7 P.M. and often lasting past midnight. This was when the most spectacular preaching occurred, as ministers graphically laid out the horrors of hell and the joys of heaven, and set forth the ability and duty of every individual to respond to God's offer of salvation. Enthusiastic singing and praying accompanied the preaching. Most important, the evening services were also when most new converts went to the altar, weeping, and then shouting as they found their new faith.

The culmination of the camp meeting came on the final morning when, prior to breaking camp, worshippers gathered for a closing service. Here, members of the congregation proclaimed themselves a community of believers, joining hands and singing as they marched around the campground.

Camp Meetings, Community, and Society

In many ways, community was the hallmark of the camp meeting. Many participants, reflecting on their experiences, recalled not only the importance of religion to their lives, but also the feeling of happiness resulting from their participation in the camp meeting's religious community. As the practice matured, especially within Methodism, it became an important institution for maintaining a larger sense of denominational ties. Becoming, in many areas, an annual affair, integrated into the institutional calendars of regional denominational bodies, it was intended specifically to provide an occasion for individual congregations and for clergy to come together in a larger fellowship.

In more sparsely settled areas, the camp meeting also had a social dimension not entirely confined to religious purposes. It enabled people to meet with friends who might otherwise live too far away for frequent visiting; many

observers noted that the campground was also a courting ground for young men and women. There was definitely a downside to this aspect of the camp meeting. Alcohol was often a problem on the campground, so much so that some states passed laws prohibiting the sale of liquor within a mile or two of religious services. Interloping drunks and “rowdies” occasionally disrupted services, challenging preachers, even threatening violence. Some ministers tried to turn this to their advantage, recounting the conversion of scoffers as a way of showing God’s power—or proving their mettle by meeting violence with violence, forcibly restoring order when they felt it had to be restored. Nevertheless, there seem to have been plenty of people attending camp meetings whose purposes were not exactly identical to those of their religious sponsors.

Nonetheless, and despite such problems, the camp meeting remained an important religious tool. The first bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, Francis Asbury (1745–1816), specifically credited the camp meeting for his denomination’s spectacular growth and success in the early nineteenth century. Many of his successors did so as well.

Camp Meeting Religion

From the beginning, the core of camp meeting religion was composed of an Arminian theology, a focus on conversion and religious experience, and an understanding of the church as a community of believers. These ideas both helped shape and were shaped by trends in the larger arena of antebellum American Protestantism. Thus, the Arminianism that dominated camp meeting religion was not only in keeping with Methodism but was also compatible with, and helped to hasten, a more general American rejection, or at least redefinition of older Calvinist ideas of election and predestination, a major development during the first half of the nineteenth century.

In giving a central place to conversion, camp meeting religion carried forward and helped maintain long-standing Protestant traditions stressing individual conversion as a basis for church membership. The “morphology of conversion,” as camp meeting participants understood it, cohered with traditional models, in which individuals moved, by stages, from a powerful, often disabling conviction of their sinfulness, through a recognition of God’s saving power, and into a new life, based on an assurance of heaven.

Still, some historians have argued that the camp meeting ritualized and dramatized this conversion morphology,

redefining it in communal terms. Thus, as potential converts began to realize their sinful state, usually under preaching, and to make their way out of the general body to the altar, they signaled their separation from the world, and from the life they had known. “Falling” or weeping in front of the stand, they gave concrete form to the helplessness conviction entailed. Finally, with the help of others, they were able to emerge, often shouting or jumping, back into the world of the congregation, giving tangible reality to their new status as members of a community of “saints.”

In camp meeting religion, this idea of the church as a community of believers had especially significant interactions with other elements in antebellum American religion. Stressing individual experience and deemphasizing institutional, mediating structures, Protestant tradition has long celebrated such a conception of the church. Camp meeting religion built on this tradition but took it in some remarkably egalitarian directions, and in a variety of ways.

One was the heavy congregational involvement in the services themselves. To be sure, ministers played a crucial role, especially through their function as preachers and teachers. Within the services, however, the role of the laity was critical. Laypeople led many activities, including the love feasts. During the day, private gatherings and other services were usually organized around the personal testimonies of laybelievers and converts, recounting their experiences and describing what religion had meant in their lives. Particularly important was the role of laypeople in the evening services, especially as converts made their way to the altar and underwent the physical torments of conviction. There, they were surrounded by members of the congregation, many of them women, who provided encouragement, praying over them, singing to them, urging them forward, even as the preachers continued to proclaim the horrors of hell and the joys of salvation.

Gender and Race

Noting the role of women in this process has important implications for understanding the character of the camp meeting as a communal exercise. The American churches of the first half of the nineteenth century were, for the most part, dominated by men, at least insofar as professional, institutional roles were concerned. Nevertheless, in the setting of the meeting, the role of women was both large and critical. They offered testimonies and counseling throughout the services, and, again, they played an essential role in bringing converts into the community. In this, the camp meeting

displayed an egalitarianism that belied the male domination of the institutional churches, emphasizing the temporality of worldly categories, at least during the bounded time and space within which the meeting took place.

This transcending of categories was especially visible in the camp meetings' closing ceremonies, in the march around the encampment. Here the lines of gender governing the layout of the campground were broken down, as everyone marched around the site, singing and proclaiming a common assurance of salvation. So, too, could lines of race and color as, often, African American as well as white believers joined in the march.

Race was a complex issue for camp meeting religion. From the beginning, African Americans—and in some places Native Americans—participated regularly in the meetings. African American preachers and exhorters served black congregants, and, early in the form's development, mixed congregations as well. This participation provided an important basis for the growth of Christianity among African Americans. Recognizing its value, leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, after its 1816 departure from white-dominated Methodism, retained the camp meeting as a key tool in their efforts to expand their denomination's reach.

In the South, the camp meeting was also a vehicle for the creation of an autonomous slave religion that came to fruition during the antebellum period. This was a faith that shared much with camp meeting religion generally: its egalitarianism, its Arminianism, and its recognition of physical exercises as manifestations of religious experience. But this faith also developed significant directions of its own. Its egalitarianism, for example, focused on freedom and liberation in a way that related directly to the conditions of enslavement people endured. It stressed an understanding of conversion that involved consolation in this world, as well as assurance of the next. No less critically, as the emphasis on physical experience and conversion dovetailed with an array of African traditions, it helped to encourage syncretistic tendencies in African American religious thought and practices. Thus, African American Christians—and not only slaves in the South—combined African with European elements to create a distinctive theology and ritual practice that powerfully shaped African American religious life.

The Spiritual Songs

African Americans played a particularly important role in the creation of one of the camp meeting's most significant innovations, the camp meeting spiritual songs. Singing was

critical to the camp meeting, and these songs developed early in the camp meeting's history. They were designed especially for congregational singing in regions where literacy rates were low and were especially useful in the poorly illuminated night services, where hymnbooks would not have been useful anyway.

In form, the songs drew on a fairly small number of well-known English hymns, to which their creators added a brief, highly repetitive refrain, usually following each verse. Sometimes composed on the ground, these refrains also traveled from hymn to hymn, making them quickly familiar to camp meeting crowds. Leaders would give out the verses; everyone in the congregation could quickly pick up the refrain and join in the singing. The tunes were often borrowed from familiar traditional folksongs, making the songs still easier to learn. Throughout the antebellum period, and beyond, these songs circulated freely in both African American and Anglo-American traditions, even though those traditions would diverge with the continuing development of distinct African American religious forms. Evidence from the meetings indicates that African Americans and Anglo-Americans alike had a role in their creation.

Because they were so easy for everyone to sing, the spirituals enhanced the communal feeling of camp meeting religion and its egalitarian tendencies. Such tendencies were also conveyed in the songs themselves, which often stressed the ties binding church members together, and the saints' sense of distinctiveness from a world of suffering and sin. The songs also reinforced the purposes of the camp meeting by holding out to believers the hope of salvation and the joys that heaven would bring, enhancing their role at the altar. Built on a limited core of ideas and images, especially in their refrains, these songs did much to define the camp meeting's theology and proved to be one of its more enduring legacies.

Interpretations

The camp meeting has been subject to a variety of scholarly interpretations. Some of the earliest commentators joined camp meetings' critics in condemning what they, too, saw as the meetings' emotionalism and lack of theological sophistication. Many focused on the spectacular physical exercises and even sought to explain those exercises by citing the power of mass hysteria in a social setting. More recent scholars have tended to reject such approaches, looking, instead, to social and cultural factors that might account for the camp meeting's rise and success.

Because of the camp meeting's Kentucky origins and its distinct success in newly settled areas, many scholars have interpreted the practice as a manifestation, or a symptom, of the American frontier environment. Some of these interpretations have leaned heavily on the influential 1896 "frontier thesis" of the historian Frederick Jackson Turner. Prominent in Turner's thesis was the view that the frontier experience strongly shaped American life and culture, encouraging, among other things, individualism, egalitarianism, and anti-intellectualism—all of which, historians have suggested, were embodied in the camp meeting.

Other approaches that emphasize the camp meeting's frontier origins have looked in a slightly different direction. Citing the fragmentation of frontier societies, these interpretations have stressed the communal tendencies of camp meeting ritual and belief and its relationship to desires for community in an otherwise fragile and disordered social environment.

Finally, however, at least a few scholars, while acknowledging the influence of a frontier environment on the camp meeting's origins and development, have suggested that such explanations do not adequately take into account the camp meeting's place in larger traditions of religious practice and, as well, the extent to which the beliefs of camp meeting religion were compatible with larger tendencies in antebellum American religion toward Arminianism and emotionalism, tendencies that went well beyond the camp meeting movement. The camp meeting's meaning and significance ultimately derive from its intimate connections to larger religious trends; and, once established, the practice developed momentum, unrelated to the demands of a frontier environment.

Survivals

The camp meeting did not disappear after its heyday in the first half of the nineteenth century. Methodists, for example, have continued to sponsor meetings to the present day, though in a very different form from those of the early nineteenth century. Even before the Civil War, camp meetings became increasingly sedate, as many members of the increasingly middle-class denomination came to be dismayed by what they, too, viewed as the emotional excesses of earlier days. In the post-Civil War era, cottages and even hotels began to replace tents for lodging participants, and the term "camp meeting" came to refer more to services offered in ongoing programs of worship and recreation on permanent, church-owned sites.

Even within Methodism, however, a few groups have maintained older camp meeting traditions. African American Methodists in some areas continue to hold camp meetings that display many of the syncretistic forms established in earlier times. The camp meeting proved significant to the growth and spread of the Holiness movement, beginning shortly after the Civil War within Methodism and, later, as it moved out on its own. In addition, since their early twentieth-century origins, Pentecostal groups have also made use of the form. Holiness and Pentecostal meetings, in keeping with the churches' experiential emphases, have retained something of the fervor of earlier versions, including physical exercises, glossolalia, and a distinctive body of religious song. These churches have also tended to develop permanent camp meeting sites, complete with cottages and hotels. Since the late nineteenth century, Holiness and Pentecostal groups have also adopted the term "camp meeting" to refer to protracted urban revivals, doing so deliberately to create a figurative, if not literal, tie to an institution that played such a major role in the development of American religion.

See also *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements; Emotion; Evangelicals* entries; *Frontier and Borderlands; Fundamentalism; Glossolalia; Great Awakening(s); Methodists* entries; *Music: African American Spirituals; Pentecostals; Pietism; Revivalism* entries; *Social Gospel*.

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Canada: Aboriginal Traditions

Aboriginal religion in Canada (often referred to as “spirituality” by Aboriginal peoples) encompasses a wide range of practices, beliefs, and values among which there are certain commonalities. There are 1.2 million indigenous people in Canada (about 4 percent of the country’s population) who are recognized in the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982 as “Aboriginal.” These include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. First Nations are communities traditionally referred to as Indians; the Métis are a distinct ethnic group who are descendants of Cree, Ojibwe, Anishinaabe, or Menominee peoples and eighteenth-century fur traders; and Inuit are indigenous peoples who inhabit the Arctic and subarctic regions of Canada. Spirituality operates within these cultures as a vital component of modern life that is quite distinct from that of non-Aboriginals.

Principles, Symbols, and Practices

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit spiritualities are repositories of distinctive practices and moral principles that help to negotiate people’s relationships with the world as it is most broadly conceived. Although there are many variations in religious life among Aboriginal peoples, there are also some distinct shared characteristics. Aboriginal spiritualities, for instance, are not generally reliant upon written texts. Rather, they are oral traditions that make use of memory, story, and public discourse to convey the deepest meanings of human existence. Most traditions maintain a belief in a creator who is responsible for the creation of humanity and the natural world. All hold a profound reverence for the earth (often conceived of as a mother), as well as a belief that all living things possess a spirit that should be respected and protected. From this perspective, people are not simply pragmatically connected with their environment, they are morally bound to it. Thus, all things are related to one another and bear responsibility for one another; and relationships among people are generally governed by the same principles.

Within this matrix of relationships respect for elders is fundamental, as elders are recognized as the preeminent bearers of tribal knowledge and are vital cultural links between the past, present, and future. Certain symbols are also widely shared among Aboriginal peoples. Eagle feathers, for instance, are generally associated with spiritual strength, and with the creator. Circles (as well as medicine wheels, talking circles, and healing circles) signify healing, wholeness, and interdependence; and medicine bundles contain

sacred objects that symbolically represent teachings and knowledge that has been received from elders or through ceremonies and fasting. Sweet grass is associated with purification and spiritual strength; tobacco connects the human and spirit worlds; sage is associated with protection from harmful spirits; and cedar is related to healing. Drums signify the center or heartbeat of creation. In some traditions, totem poles, petroglyphs, or masks have sacred significance.

Aside from symbols, there are also religious practices that are found broadly within Aboriginal cultures. Story-telling is a long-standing practice, and while it has suffered in some communities in recent years (due to language loss and the pervasive influence of entertainment technologies in the lives of young people), it continues to varying degrees in all traditions. Among the Métis, for instance, stories of a trickster figure variously named Nanabush (Ojibwe root), Wîsahkêcâhk (Cree root), and Ti-Jean (French Canadian root) are common; and in Tsimshian and Haida stories and art, a multifaceted traditional figure, Raven, continues to appear.

In many traditions, the smoking of a sacred pipe is part of individual and communal ritual and prayer, signifying people’s relationships with one another and with the creator. Thanksgiving rituals and sweat lodge ceremonies are enacted for healing or as expressions of gratitude; fasting is believed to deepen spiritual knowledge; and dancing is regarded as a form of prayer. The burning of sacred herbs (for example, sweet grass, tobacco) is also a long-standing practice, often done in the service of physical or spiritual healing. Vision quests (undertaken to achieve spiritual direction at pivotal moments in an individual’s life) are carried out to varying degrees among Aboriginal peoples; and powwows are a general practice in which people gather to express and celebrate various aspects of culture and spirituality.

Among First Nations peoples of the prairies, the sun dance has remained a vital part of communal life, in spite of government attempts to sabotage it in the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries. The sun dance is practiced by Sioux, Dene, and Assiniboine peoples. Among the Cree its counterpart is known as the thirst dance; Anishinaabe refer to it as the rain dance; and Blackfoot refer to it as the medicine dance. The celebration can involve the building of a sacred fire, prayer, dance, drumming, fasting, visions, and sweat ceremonies. On the west coast, the traditional cedar big house or longhouse (used in the past as residences for extended families) is used for various kinds of ceremonies and assemblies; and in central Canada and

among Métis, the longhouse has continued to serve as a communal and ceremonial structure. Hereditary chiefs of the Haudenosaunee (the Iroquois League of Peace and Power), for instance, meet in the longhouse.

Christianity

In addition to these practices and beliefs, the majority of Aboriginal Canadians have some affiliation with Christianity. The timeframe for the adoption of Christianity varied among communities depending on when they came into contact with missionaries, and in most cases conversion could not be isolated from economic factors. The first Aboriginal person to be baptized in Canada was the Mi'kmaq chief, Membertou. In 1610, he and twenty members of his family (none of whom could speak French) were baptized by the Catholic French missionary priest Jessé Fléché (who could speak no Mi'kmaq) in a ceremony that was clearly understood by Membertou as a trading agreement. In the early seventeenth century, the Wendat peoples, who were interested in extending their trading relationships with the French, were introduced to Catholic missionaries who had arrived as part of a package deal under orders from Samuel de Champlain 1567–1635, a French navigator who founded Quebec City. By midcentury, already half of those involved in the fur trade were either converts or catechists, since native Christians were paid the same rate for their furs as the French, an amount that was substantially more than that paid to those who remained unconverted. Likewise, the Inuit of the coast of Labrador were confronted by Moravian missionaries in the late eighteenth century and gradually converted over a span of 150 years. This community was distinct from other Inuit, who tended to convert to the Anglican or Catholic churches. Although there were symmetries between Moravian Christianity and traditional Inuit spirituality that undoubtedly made conversion possible, the Labrador coast Inuit were also induced to conversion by economic incentives. In particular, the Moravians owned seal nets that they loaned to Inuit converts to catch harp seals for a lucrative international trade, the profits of which were shared by the missionaries with the fishermen. The connection between conversion and economics continued into the twentieth century among the Innu of the interior areas of Labrador, for whom the adoption of Catholicism was associated with preferential treatment by missionaries (for example, loans for fishing equipment).

The meeting of Christianity with traditional spiritual frameworks resulted in the emergence of new religious forms, some of which have continued to the present day.

The Labrador coast Innu, for instance, have traditionally practiced a ritual called *naluajak* on the Catholic feast of Epiphany, during which masked members of the community visit homes giving presents to children and chastising adults; and a long-standing tradition of meetings involving men only has continued in the context of elected elder's councils associated with the church. Among the Mi'kmaq, the feast of St. Anne (July 26) is a focus for annual gatherings that have been incorporated into a tradition of summer meetings dating to at least as early as the sixteenth century. These meetings, which were convened primarily to conduct business involving a number of bands (for example, wars, treaties, marriages), are now a context for receiving sacraments, celebrating Mi'kmaq culture and spirituality, and conducting intertribal business.

Generally speaking, although conversion occurred broadly among Aboriginal peoples, the influence of Christianity (and especially the Roman Catholic Church) has diminished markedly in recent years due to a number of factors; chief among these is a legacy of cultural assault aimed at all indigenous peoples perpetrated by the Canadian government and a number of churches who united to create an Indian Residential School system that was in place until the 1980s.

Government Policy and Repression

The world of Aboriginal peoples was dramatically altered by colonial contact, and their religious lives cannot be separated from this context of contact, new relationships, and injustice. In Canada one of the most far-reaching and culturally damaging colonial policies was the Indian Act of 1876, which imposed regulations on Aboriginal peoples that could never have been legally applied to non-Aboriginals. The intention of the act was to “civilize” Aboriginal peoples, to assume control of their lands and their day-to-day lives, and to establish a definition of who was and who was not an “Indian.” According to the act, indigenous peoples were not permitted to employ the services of lawyers to advocate for Aboriginal or treaty rights; and they were denied the right to vote until the 1960s. The law, which remains in effect to the present day, requires that Band Councils be elected and defines the limits of band council responsibilities. The imposition of elected councils undermined traditional forms of self-government with lasting implications: because band councils are accountable to the Ministry of Indian Affairs, they have often failed to represent the interests or wishes of their fellow band members. The Iroquois Haudenosaunee (longhouse) tradition, in which chiefs were selected by clan

mothers, is a case in point. In communities where the tradition has been sustained, there is often notable conflict between those who support it and those who support elected Band Councils, since the government does not recognize the legitimacy of nonelected councils. The Indian Act also required that all children be registered at birth according to a number of categories of Indian status. According to a 1985 amendment to the law, there are seventeen options. Until the 1985 passing of Bill C-31, An Act to Amend the Indian Act, women could not retain their Indian status if they married a non-Aboriginal man, and children of their unions could not claim Indian status. As a result of Bill C-31, more than 80,000 people regained their status by 1992. At the present time, the Indian Act still reserves government control of education, taxes, land management, and band membership.

The Indian Act was only one of a number of coercive government policies that shaped the lives of native peoples beginning in the late nineteenth century. Others included the institution of Permit and Pass Systems, and the prohibition of religious ceremonies. The Permit System required that financial transactions be subject to government control, including the sale of cattle, grain, hay, firewood, lime, charcoal, and home-grown produce, and the purchase of groceries or clothing. The system was technically in place until 1995 but was virtually inoperative after the 1960s. The Pass System was instituted to oversee and limit the mobility of First Nations people, in order to undermine the possibility of organization among them and to prevent parents from having contact with their children who were attending Residential Schools. The system essentially confined individuals to their Reserves, with the possibility of traveling left to the discretion of Indian agents. "No Trespassing" signs were planted at the edges of Reserves, and those who left their Reserves without a pass were subject to criminal prosecution. Although the Pass System had no basis in the Indian Act (or any other legislation), it remained operative until the 1930s and was not officially dismantled until 1951. Other oppressive measures were given legal sanction. An 1884 amendment to the Indian Act, for example, resulted in prohibitions against a family of practices involving feasting and gift giving known generally as the potlatch, as well as a number of ceremonial dances (for example, the *Tamanawas*) practiced by First Nations in British Columbia. The traditional potlatch ceremony involved a ritual distribution of gifts as a means of extending communal relationships through the celebration of pivotal experiences such as the

birth of a child, marriage, or the confirmation of treaties, but the ceremony was regarded by religious and civil authorities as un-Christian and a wanton waste of personal resources. In 1895, ritual acts of physical stamina associated with the thirst (sun) dance were also prohibited, effectively disallowing the dances. These laws were enforced as, for example, in 1904 when a ninety-year-old man who was virtually blind was sentenced to a two-month prison term with hard labor for taking part in traditional ceremonial practices.

Within this context of cultural and religious oppression, religion remained an integral part of people's lives. New religious movements emerged, such as one that occurred in 1904, when a message of imminent salvation circulated throughout southern Saskatchewan, involving a prophecy of the end of the white world. According to the prophesy, the remaining native peoples who lived a traditional lifestyle would have the world to themselves and full access to returned herds of buffalo that had virtually disappeared. Aside from new movements, some traditional practices were also elaborated. Among the Ojibwe, contact precipitated a flourishing of the Midewiwin, healing societies whose members underwent elaborate rituals of initiation in order to prophesy, and to be empowered to communally cure the sick. The Midewiwin is firmly grounded in traditions that predated contact, but these healing societies have become an important vehicle for transmitting tribal knowledge in the postcontact period. Additionally, and in spite of prohibitions, illegal dances and the potlatch were not discontinued in the nineteenth century but were carried on covertly, resurfacing into public view again in the second half of the twentieth century. Sustained government oppression, as well as language loss in the twentieth century, have also taken a toll on traditions of story-telling; many mythic motifs have survived this onslaught, however, and, in many cases, adapted themselves to contemporary contingencies. The hero Kluskap, for instance, became a key player when he was invoked in a 1990 standoff involving the Mi'kmaq and a mining company that intended to destroy a sacred site. Another figure, Wesakechak, appeared as a Cree superhero in a 1996 comic book designed to provide guidance to Aboriginal teenagers among whom suicide rates had become disturbingly high.

Treaties and Land Claims

Among commonly shared aspects of Aboriginal spirituality in postcolonial Canada is a general recognition of the sacred nature of (1) land and treaty rights, and (2) language,

both of which have historically been assaulted by governments and economic interests. There are about 400 treaties involving Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Early treaties involved native pledges of support during times of colonial conflict (such as English–French hostility in the eighteenth century), recognition of harvesting and trade rights, promises of peace, and protections against encroachment on native land. The clearest examples of these kinds of treaties are those collectively referred to as “Peace and Friendship Treaties,” negotiated by the British with the Maliseet and Mi’kmaq between 1725 and 1779. Other treaties followed, and in these subsequent cases, the agreements dealt also with issues of land cession and Reserves. Such was the case with the Upper Canada Treaties (1764–1862), the Vancouver Island Treaties (1850–1854), and a series of eleven numbered treaties with Aboriginal peoples in various parts of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories (1871–1921).

Until the early 1980s, the Canadian courts refused to acknowledge the binding nature of these agreements, and harvesting rights, perhaps the most explicit part of the treaties, were consistently undermined by fishing and hunting regulations. Still, in spite of the fact that no Aboriginal person has enjoyed the full benefit of treaty rights, the treaties themselves have continued to be regarded as extremely significant. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit tend to place great value on the knowledge of history as a resource in dealing with issues of identity and for determining present actions. Treaties are a critical part of this knowledge, as they are regarded as structures for regulating native and nonnative relations in the postcolonial period, as well as for potentially creating unity. Many Aboriginal peoples, however, were excluded from the treaty-making process, either because of geographical location (for example, Aboriginals in the northern regions and many First Nations in British Columbia who were situated beyond the parameters of early colonial expansion) or because of lack of status.

Although the Constitution Act affirms the Aboriginal and treaty rights of all three Canadian Aboriginal Peoples, the Métis, for example, do not have a legacy of treaties to which they can turn for recognition of land rights because they were not recognized as a distinct Aboriginal people until the latter part of the twentieth century. Called “Canada’s Forgotten People,” the Métis have remained outside the pale of treaties, aside from one instance where they were included in the “Half-Breed Adhesion to Treaty No. 3,” negotiated in Ontario in 1875. Under pressure from

Aboriginal communities who were not included in treaties, the Canadian government has been compelled into land claims negotiations and settlements (also called Comprehensive Claims) that are constitutionally recognized as treaties. In the late 1970s, for instance, Labrador Inuit and Innu began pressing governments to begin treaty discussions. The Inuit were able to secure the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement in 2005. In 1993, the federal government passed the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act and the Nunavut Act, as a result of land claims negotiations with Inuit of the Northwest Territories that had begun in the mid-1970s. These acts led to the establishment of Nunavut in 1999, a territory that comprises nearly one-fifth of Canada’s land mass; and in 2008, the Canadian parliament passed a second reading of the Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement Act, whereby the government would formally recognize Tsawwassen First Nation ownership of its reservation in southern British Columbia.

Treaties and modern agreements were, and are, formal and mutually binding contracts relating to land, natural resources, political power, and economic relations. They are compromises that establish the principle that coercion and/or violence is unacceptable in settling differences, and they have legal weight. For Aboriginal peoples, they are also sacred. In 1991, the Canadian government created the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), a commission whose mandate was to assess a variety of issues relating to the status of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. In the process of its deliberations, RCAP spoke with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples from all over the country. What the commission learned with respect to treaties was that by and large they are regarded as “covenants of trust and obligation,” sacred agreements that represent spiritual principles, and that are binding for all time; as one eighteenth-century treaty ratified in New Brunswick put it, “so long as the sun rises and the river flows.” Treaties were always enacted within ritualized frameworks replete with religious symbolism (wampum, the smoking of a sacred pipe, and so on) in which government representatives participated. They were consequently placed within a context of mutual respect and responsibility that has religious ramifications. Annual reaffirmations of these sacred agreements occurred on Treaty Day, when band members met with representatives of the British Crown to renew their commitment to peaceful relations and to receive gifts and treaty payments. The practice of celebrating Treaty Days fell into disuse in some communities but has been reinstated in recent years with events

marked by ceremony, processions, church services, drumming, presentations of eagle feathers, and feasting. Contemporary negotiations over Aboriginal and treaty rights maintain this sacred component, as seen during discussions concerning amendments to the Constitution Act that took place in Charlottetown in 1992, where Aboriginal delegates were advised by elders who engaged in prayer throughout the negotiations.

Land, Spirituality, and Resistance

Treaties and Comprehensive Land Claims relate specifically to land, and issues of Aboriginal rights involving land have historically accounted for a great deal of friction between indigenous Canadians and the wider society. Exasperated by the indifference of government officials in Nova Scotia, for example, Mi'kmaq Grand Chief Louis-Benjamin Peminuit Paul wrote to Queen Victoria in 1841 appealing for assistance for his people who were suffering extreme deprivation: "The Micmacs now receive no presents, but one small Blanket for a whole family. The Governor is a good man but he cannot help us now. We look to you the Queen. The White Wampum [treaties] tell that we hope in you." By the turn of the twentieth century, Canadian authorities had lost patience with First Nations peoples who advocated for recognition of their rights. Thus, the Cree chief Payipwat was imprisoned twice for his advocacy of treaty and religious rights and was unseated as chief by the federal government in 1902 (his band remained faithful to him, in spite of this move, and did not elect another chief until he died in 1908). The relationship between Aboriginal people and the natural environment has continued to be a site of contestation to the present day, as is evident in an ongoing conflict between the Lubicon Lake Cree and the federal government concerning oil and gas development on reserve land in Alberta. The conflict began in the 1970s and has yet to be resolved. Contests over land have been amplified by government initiatives aimed at alienating indigenous peoples from their land. Policies of relocation and centralization throughout the twentieth century were a common practice that were justified in a number of ways, including the desire to assist economically disadvantaged communities and to centralize bands in the interest of efficiently delivering government programs, as well as to secure nonnative access to natural resources. In some cases (for example, the Hebron Inuit), these policies created socially stratified communities where relocated communities found

themselves alienated from resident populations. In all instances, relocation decreased the capacity of communities to support themselves economically and caused an increase in illness, government dependence, and other forms of cultural strain. The case of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq is emblematic. In the 1940s, the Mi'kmaq were resettled on two Reserves at Eskasoni and Shubenacadie with promises of employment, livestock, and better educational and health facilities. It was a disastrous experiment in social engineering. Neither community had the resources to sustain its increased population. Additionally, as RCAP noted, the promised housing did not materialize and many were forced to live in tents (although native laborers were enlisted to build houses for police officers and nonnative government personnel). In one year, an Indian agent's goats ate all the fruit tree saplings that had been planted, and groundwater was poisoned by kerosene that had been poured on seed potatoes to deter residents who were suffering from malnutrition from eating them.

Aboriginal peoples live in abject poverty and suffer from staggering rates of diabetes and other diseases. While 16 percent of Canadians live in poverty, the figure among Aboriginal peoples is 40 percent. In most cases, a long-established delicate economic balance in indigenous communities based on harvesting of various forms has been destroyed within a generation or two through lack of access to natural resources and policies like relocation.

For indigenous people, cultural knowledge is tied to the environment, creating a spiritual link between the person and landscape that has devastating effects when broken. As one Inuk man said in an RCAP interview, *nuna* (the land) is "my life, *nuna* is my body." The land provides a connection between people, their history, and their sense of the future, a connection that is often epitomized in ritual spaces, burial grounds, and other symbolic aspects of the natural world.

Such sites have consequently been the focal point of various kinds of religious resistances, ranging from peaceful demonstrations to violent confrontations. In the 1990s, when dredging threatened to destroy a 4,500-year-old system of weirs used for harvesting fish by Wendat and then later, Chippewa peoples near Orillia, Ontario, the response was the creation of the Mnjikaning Fish Fence Circle, a community-based organization that has been able to forge a working relationship with Parks Canada to ensure the protection of the site. Those involved in this diplomatic effort stressed not only the historical significance of the site,

but also its spiritual importance and its capacity to bring healing. A similar initiative has occurred in British Columbia, where it is estimated that tens of thousands of sacred sites and others containing First Nations sacred artifacts have been destroyed by urban development. In the 1990s, the First Nations became aware of the critical role these artifacts played in legally establishing Aboriginal rights to the land, and they began pressing the provincial government for control over the way in which developers were destroying these sites. The First Nations have had some success in this respect. The Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, for instance, was able to pressure the government to prosecute a developer in 2003 for violating the Heritage Conservation Act.

Other disputes have not been so peaceful. In 1990, a demonstration involving a Mi'kmaq warrior society led by Sulian Stone Eagle Herney attempted to disrupt a proposed plan to create a rock quarry on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. The company responsible for the plan, Kelly Rock, was determined to create a "Superquarry" on Kelly's Mountain, a site that is sacred to Mi'kmaq. The warriors had demonstrated against the company in 1989 with little success, and so they mounted another protest in 1990 wearing military fatigues and announcing that they were ready for combat. Kelly Rock decided to abandon the superquarry plan. The same year, a Mohawk demonstration against the development of a golf course on contested land at the Kanestake Reserve near Montreal turned violent. The land in question contained a burial ground and a sacred forest called "the Pines," which the Mohawk occupied in mid-March. Quebec's premier requested police intervention, and an initial attempt to disperse the protesters (involving tear gas and flash-bang grenades) led to an exchange of fire that resulted in the death of a policeman. Paramilitary and military forces were subsequently called into the situation as the resistance extended to the Kanawake Reserve outside of Montreal. For a number of months the situation was charged, with Mohawk warriors and nonnative Quebecers (as well as other First Nations warriors and Canadian troops) in confrontation with one another. When the crisis ended in late September, two elderly men had died in addition to the policeman, and the federal government had purchased the land in question. The warriors' return to the Reserve was accompanied by the burning of tobacco, drumming, and the prayers of elders. Fatalities are not a common result of such conflicts, but they have occurred on a number of occasions. In 1993,

for example, a group of Chippewa set up a protest in an area of Ipperwash Provincial Park, Ontario, that contained a burial ground, and in the resulting clash with authorities, a Chippewa man, Dudley George, was killed.

Language

Aside from land and treaties, one other facet of sacred value among Aboriginal peoples is language, and as with land and treaties, it has been a contested issue. There are eleven distinctive language families among First Nations peoples, as well as a number of dialects of Inuktitut (Inuit) and Michif (Métis). Within these linguistic families, there are more than fifty languages. A variety of dialects of Inuktitut are spoken throughout the Canadian Arctic. The area between Alberta and Atlantic Canada is home to a number of Algonkian languages, and Iroquoian languages are spoken in Quebec and Ontario. Siouan languages are located in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba; and those of the Athapaskan family are spoken in the prairies as well as British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. Tlingit, Haida, and Kutenai are spoken in British Columbia, as are languages of the Salishan, Wakashan, and Tsimshian families; and Michif (the language of the Métis) is spoken in various parts of the country but predominantly in the west and Northwest Territories.

Most of these languages were the objects of a devastating assault perpetrated by the Canadian government, the Roman Catholic Church, and, to varying degrees, the Anglican Church and the United Church of Canada (as well as its founding congregations, the Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches) beginning in the late nineteenth century and lasting almost a century. Nineteenth-century treaties committed the federal government to providing education for First Nations children, and the residential school system was the product of the melding of this obligation with cost-cutting measures. Since schools were already being administered by missionaries associated with Christian churches, the government decided to fulfill its treaty promises by making use of the churches' organizational structures rather than creating its own. Thus, it shouldered the cost of providing facilities, while the churches supplied teachers and general administration. The government's cost of providing education was thus dramatically reduced as it ostensibly fulfilled its treaty obligations. In effect, it was promoting the assimilation of Aboriginal children and undercutting the viability of their cultures: the goal was to "kill the Indian in the child."

During the twentieth century, 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children were placed in 132 Indian Residential Schools located in all but three provinces and territories. These children were taken from their homes (often forcibly) and placed in church-administered institutions where they were prohibited from using their own languages and denied contact with family members, while they were trained to assume employment in the lowest economic strata of the society (basic trades and domestic service). They were punished for attempting to leave the schools and for speaking Aboriginal languages; many were sexually abused by teachers and other staff; and some died as a result of poor health conditions in the schools. Although most Residential Schools were shut down in the 1970s, the last school under government control was closed in 1996. It would be another decade (June 2008) before Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper would make a statement of apology in the House of Commons on behalf of all Canadians to the 80,000 surviving students of the Indian Residential School system.

The Residential School System was designed to undermine Aboriginal culture, and more especially, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit language and spirituality. The experiences of the children who were subjected to the system dramatically altered their lives; and the trauma caused by the schools has continued to reverberate within communities, having been directly implicated in a current tide of substance abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, and suicide. Among the most dramatic results of the enterprise has been a general erosion of Aboriginal languages caused by a breakdown in systems of transmission. Essentially, the survival of any language depends on the presence of older speakers who can transmit it to younger generations. The residential school experiment was intended to undermine this relationship, and it was disturbingly successful.

Language is inseparably related to culture, since every language embodies a discreet way of understanding identity, history, and the world in which a community finds itself. One-quarter of Canada's Aboriginal peoples are able to speak their traditional language, with only about 13 percent of these using it daily. At this time, scores of Aboriginal languages are at risk of being lost, including Maliseet, Abenaki, Haida, Kutenai, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Wakashan, most Salishan, and a number of Athapaskan languages. For Aboriginal peoples, language carries spiritual weight. It is the most important aspect of culture, and most regard it as a fundamental gift to human beings from the creator who has

placed within it the cultural knowledge necessary to survive and flourish. Further, Aboriginal languages contain the wisdom and knowledge of elders stemming back thousands of years—their visions, teachings, and general understandings of the world. Reverence for elders is inextricably related to language, as are traditions of story-telling, medicine, cosmologies, rituals, and, critically, history. Among the Mi'kmaq, for instance, a spiritually laden and hereditary office of *putus* exists for the sole purpose of interpreting (now missing) wampum records of the eighteenth-century Peace and Friendship Treaties. By means of symbols embedded in language, these “texts” contained specifically Mi'kmaq records of treaty agreements, and traditionally carried authority. This was illustrated when Grand Chief Gabriel Syliboy was tried (and convicted) for possessing pelts in contravention of lands and forests regulations in 1928. The community's principle witness at the trial was the *putus*.

In the indigenous oral traditions of Canada, spoken languages are irreplaceable because they are structurally distinct from the Indo-European languages of the dominant society, and they are spoken nowhere else. Many, for example, are notably verb-oriented, with verb tenses that do not exist in French or English (Canada's official languages). Many also employ a free ordering of words such that differences in meaning are communicated through changes in intonation. These languages are not translatable. In the wake of the Residential School assault, Aboriginal peoples have recognized that language restoration is the key to intergenerational healing, and hundreds of schools on First Nations across Canada are now administered by band councils, with language instruction ranging from individual classes to full immersion, as at Ohsweken on the Grand River First nation in Ontario (Cree), and Onion Lake First Nation in Saskatchewan (Cayuga). Others have created language institutes to serve their larger communities (for example, Kanien'kehaka Onkwawén:na Raotiohkwa, a Mohawk cultural and language education center located at Kahnawake, Quebec). The religious lives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples are, as noted above, extremely rich and diverse, yet language as a sacred structure is a unifying motif that runs through these traditions. For this reason, the Residential School System was a particularly sinister enterprise among colonial and postcolonial assaults on Aboriginal peoples, cutting to the heart of their spirituality. As the Assembly of First Nations succinctly stated in its 1990 document *Principles for Revitalization of First Nations Languages*, “Language is our unique

relationship to the Creator, our attitudes, beliefs, values and fundamental notions of what is truth. Our Languages are the cornerstone of who we are as a People. Without our Languages our cultures cannot survive.”

See also *Canada* entries; *Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures*; *Mexico: Indigenous Religions*; *Missions: Native American*; *Moravians*; *Native American Religions* entries.

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Canada: Anglicans

The Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) is a self-governing province of the Anglican Communion, a worldwide family of churches that have historical roots in the Church of England. The ACC is characterized by Christian worship according to authorized liturgical texts and a governance structure of bishops and representative synods. It has been known by its present name since 1955. The ACC publishes no confessional statement; its general doctrinal orientation is indicated by its liturgical texts. The theological views of its members are very diverse, but the church is frequently described as liberal and catholic in its center of gravity. The ACC is distinguished from a few much smaller Canadian Anglican bodies, which it regards as schismatic, by being formally recognized by the Archbishop of Canterbury and by being eligible to participate in certain “instruments of unity” of the Anglican Communion. In its institutional operations, the ACC uses much of the vocabulary of the Church of England but adapts it to its different social and legal context. The ACC in 2001 counted 642,000 members.

Worship, Ministry, Doctrine

All public worship is conducted according to authorized liturgical texts by clergy (or sometimes lay ministers) licensed by the local bishop; this is a significant denominational principle. In practice, however, leaders of worship may either expand the liturgical texts with informal comments, liturgical instructions, announcements of events, prayers for local concerns, and other unscripted material, or they may abbreviate the texts in the interest of time or for other reasons. The sermon, music, and ceremony are arranged by congregational worship leaders, taking into account worship space and congregational interests and traditions. As a result, worship in the ACC is far more diverse from congregation to congregation than might be expected from the fact that common texts are used.

The two liturgical texts generally in use and nationally authorized are the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP), in a Canadian revision of 1959, and the *Book of Alternative Services* (BAS) of 1985. The BCP is a close descendant of the English BCP of 1552, written in mid-Tudor English (including “thou” forms) and reflecting a moderately Reformed Calvinist theology. The BAS is a product of the Liturgical Movement, a school of thought rooted in modern Benedictine monasticism and reflected in the liturgical theology of

the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) of the Roman Catholic Church. The BCP and BAS are thus theologically at variance. Thus, in the Eucharist, the BAS pictures the Church as joining with Christ in a sacrificial offering of bread and wine to God; the BCP avoids all suggestion of material sacrifice. The BAS gives symbolic ritual functions to such objects as oils, candles, and ashes, a practice that the BCP minimizes. The BCP, in its Eucharistic prayer and in speaking of the church as “the blessed company of all faithful people,” suggests a Protestant premise of justification by faith alone, which is absent from the BAS.

Liturgical forms for the Eucharist other than the BCP and BAS must be authorized by the local bishop. Common alternatives include three supplementary Eucharistic prayers approved by the General Synod in 1998, rites used in the Iona Community in Scotland, texts developed by and for First Nations Anglicans, and services developed by individual congregations.

By far the most common Sunday service of an ACC congregation is that of Eucharist according to the BAS. Most ACC congregations now welcome all baptized persons (and sometimes unbaptized persons), including children, to take Communion at a Sunday service. In many congregations a rite of prayer and anointing for healing is sometimes made available at the time of Communion. The sacrament of baptism is usually administered as part of a Sunday morning Eucharist; formerly baptism was frequently practiced privately. Many clergy are reluctant to baptize persons not directly connected with their congregation.

Among other worship services, morning prayer (also called matins) and evening prayer (also called evensong), which were popular forms of worship before the 1960s, are now relatively rare outside theological colleges and religious communities. The rite of confirmation, once a prominent part of a bishop’s visit to a parish, an important rite of passage for young teens, and a requirement for receiving Communion, is no longer frequent. Praise worship, with tuneful and rhythmic modern Christian songs, unscripted prayer, and physical expressions of an emotive piety, is held in some churches either by itself or within a service of Eucharist.

Almost all ACC churches constructed between 1845 and 1960 are in the architectural style known as gothic revival. Gothic churches evoke a sense of God’s transcendence and the authority of the church by using light to draw attention heavenward and by separating laity and clergy into different spaces. But a few prominent churches from this period are in Richardsonian Romanesque or central-plan style.

Surviving church buildings from before 1845 are usually neoclassical in style, though most of these have been gothicized in later renovations. Architectural styles of churches built after 1960 are diverse but are likely to give value to congregational community by stressing horizontal lines in a single room.

There are three orders of ordained ministry: bishop, priest (or presbyter), and deacon. Members of all three orders are considered clergy. A service of ordination is provided for each order sequentially (only deacons can be ordained priests, and only priests can be ordained bishops). By far most clergy are priests. Priests differ from deacons mainly in being authorized to preside at the Eucharist. All priests and deacons in good standing are under the authority of a bishop.

The ACC has no denominationally distinctive doctrinal statement. Its general theological orientation is established principally, if not exclusively, by its authorized liturgical texts. These provide for the recitation of the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds, and for the public reading of scripture, organized by lectionaries that make use of both testaments and sometimes the Apocrypha. In addition, the liturgies contain many statements and prayers implying theological positions, especially concerning the church, ministry, and sacraments. These positions are not necessarily consistent among themselves. Both BCP and BAS frequently adopt a “holy ambiguity” in phrasing so as to comprehend a diversity of belief.

There is no provision for disciplining laypeople for their theological views. In this respect the ACC probably reflects its roots in the established Church of England, which comprehended all citizens by default, and which usually preferred to unify through compromise. Clergy, by contrast, have always been expected to conform to doctrinal standards, although these are now minimal. Clergy during ordination “solemnly promise to conform to the doctrine” of the ACC, but this doctrine is not defined. (Before the 1960s, prospective clergy were required to affirm the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England, a moderately Reformed statement of 1563.)

The theological center of gravity in the ACC can be called liberal (in that it seeks to accommodate doctrine and the interpretation of scripture to scientific discovery, modern values, and common sense), and catholic (in that it values tradition, and esteems the sacraments and the liturgy as the font of the church’s power). This liberal and catholic viewpoint is signaled by the view frequently stated in the

ACC that Anglicanism rests on a three-legged stool of scripture, tradition, and reason, a formula often (though wrongly) ascribed to a sixteenth-century Anglican, Richard Hooker. A spectrum of other theological viewpoints can also be found, including the classical humanistic Reformation Protestantism of the BCP, the experiential piety of the renewal movement, an ecumenical liberal Protestantism, the more conservative strains of both Catholicism and evangelicalism that are represented by an advocacy group called Anglican Essentials Canada, and a doctrinal agnosticism. The theological diversity of the ACC creates tensions and sometimes conflicts. Since 2004, several conservative ACC congregations have broken away because of theological conflict, including St. John's Shaughnessy in Vancouver, which had reputedly been the largest ACC parish.

Governance

The ACC has four levels of governance: parochial, diocesan, provincial, and national. The diocesan level legally and historically precedes the other three. The dioceses employ most of the clergy, own most of the ACC's property, and exercise the greatest amount of authority. A diocese is a unit of geographical territory under the spiritual authority of a bishop. (Some dioceses also have one or more assistant bishops.) There are twenty-nine dioceses in the ACC, plus an administrative region in the central interior of British Columbia replacing the bankrupt diocese of Cariboo. A diocese has a governing assembly called a synod, composed of the bishop, the clergy, and representatives of the laity. The synod typically meets annually to adopt a budget, receive reports, and approve disciplinary and organizational rules called "canons." The diocesan bishop has the power of veto over the resolutions of the synod. When the episcopal office is vacant, the synod elects a new bishop.

Below the level of the diocese is the parish, which is created, defined, and organized by diocesan authority. It is composed of one or more congregations, which are local communities of Anglicans. The number of parishes in a diocese varies from about a dozen, in the case of the Yukon, to more than 200, in the case of Toronto. A parish typically comes under the pastoral supervision of a priest "incumbent," sometimes called a "rector," who represents the bishop. Parish governing structures and standards vary from diocese to diocese.

Above the level of the diocese is the ecclesiastical province, which is a grouping of dioceses governed by a provincial synod chaired by a metropolitan, with the title of

archbishop, who is elected from among the diocesan bishops. There are currently four provinces; a proposal for a fifth, nongeographical province for First Nations Anglicans is expected to be considered in 2010.

At the national level, the General Synod was created in 1893 and was incorporated in 1921. Its members are clergy and lay delegates from the dioceses, the bishops, and a few others. Under its jurisdiction come doctrine, worship, clergy education and pensions, social issues of national importance, relations with other churches, and missionary work. In practice the General Synod has few means to enforce either its rules or its financial assessments on the dioceses. Its chief officer, who is called the primate, is elected from among the diocesan bishops. A permanent staff is headquartered in Toronto.

Although the ACC is legally independent, it maintains moral, affectionate, and financial bonds with other parts of the Anglican Communion through certain so-called "instruments of unity," notably the Lambeth Conference (a decennial meeting of bishops), the Anglican Consultative Council, and the Primates' Meeting, and through mutual organizations such as Partners in Mission.

Populations

In the 2001 Canadian census, 2,035,495 persons, or 6.9 percent of the general population, identified themselves with the ACC. This was the fourth largest religious grouping after Roman Catholic (43.2 percent), "no religion" (16.2 percent), and the United Church of Canada (9.6 percent). The figure represented a decline from 1991 (2,188,110, or 7.8 percent). In the 1951 census, 14.7 percent of the general population identified themselves as Anglicans. Many will self-identify as Anglican in census questionnaires who have no institutional connection with the church.

The ACC in 2001 (the most recent year for which numbers are available) counted:

- 642,000 members (a decline from 1.36 million in 1961);
- 227,000 identifiable givers (typically singles and heads of families);
- 2,884 congregations;
- 1,792 parishes;
- 2,048 active clergy (as of July 2000).

About half the members of the church live in Ontario.

With roots in the Church of England and the Church of Ireland, the ACC has had from its beginnings a heavily

Anglo-Saxon and Celtic ethnic identity. Before 1962, when immigration restrictions were eased, Canada's population was overwhelmingly British and western European in ethnic background. Anglican Christianity was appropriately used as an example of an ethnic church in Richard Niebuhr's *Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929). Occasional efforts to increase French Canadian membership, as in the 1760s and 1840s, were not successful. During the first decades of the twentieth century, the ACC reinforced its ethnic and racial identity ideologically with a rhetoric of British superiority. Multiculturalism has increased substantially in Canada since 1962, but it is not possible to analyze how many Anglicans today have an Anglo-Saxon or Celtic background, since census data includes "Canadian" as a category of ethnic identity. On the basis of casual observation, however, it would appear that persons of British ethnic background remain dominant in the ACC. According to cross-referenced data from the 2001 census, 86 percent of Anglicans were born in Canada.

After British, the largest ethnic group in the ACC is likely indigenous. The Canadian Constitution divides this group into three categories: First Nations, formerly called Indians, representing more than fifty cultural and language groups; Métis or mixed race, and Inuit. There are about one million First Nations people in Canada, of whom an estimated 25 percent are Anglican, and 45,000 Inuit, of whom an estimated 85 percent are Anglican. Among the First Nations groups with strong Anglican connections are the Mi'kmaq, Ojibwe, Cree, Mohawk, Blackfoot, Tsimshian, Kwakiutl, Haida, and Gwich'in. (The last has been called "arguably the most Anglican people in the world.") About 225 congregations have all or nearly all indigenous membership, and there are about 130 indigenous Anglican priests. The Anglican ethnic majority has generally not been comfortable with the cultural diversity represented by indigenous Anglicans. Before 1969 the ACC administered a total of more than thirty First Nations residential schools, whose purpose was to assimilate First Nations children into British culture. Attendance at these schools, or similar schools administered by other Christian denominations, was enforced under the federal Indian Act. A significant change in attitude was marked by a report commissioned by the ACC called *Beyond Traplines* (1969), probably reflecting in part the influence of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. About the same time, Margaret Craven's *I Heard the Owl Call My Name* (1967), the fictionalized story of what a white Canadian Anglican priest learns from a

Kwakiutl congregation, reached the top of the *New York Times* best seller list, and was made into a CBS television movie. Since then indigenous people have gradually been incorporated into ACC structures of decision making, and there are some signs that their inculturated Anglicanism is becoming more widely appreciated and more influential theologically and spiritually. The first bishop of indigenous ethnic identity was elected in 1989. In 2007 Mark MacDonald took office as the first national Aboriginal indigenous bishop.

Ethnic groups other than British and indigenous are most conspicuously represented in the diocese of Toronto, which has Chinese, Filipino, Franco-African, Hispanic, Japanese, Korean, Tamil, and West Indian congregations and a Sudanese fellowship group. Many other congregations in the diocese have a multicultural character. A Hong Kong-born assistant bishop was elected for Toronto in 2006. In Vancouver, however, although the city is ethnically diverse, the ACC has moved in another direction. Since 2003 Japanese and Chinese Anglican parishes have severed their connection with the liberal and predominantly European-descent diocese.

Women were largely though not entirely excluded from church governance until the 1960s. They were conspicuously involved in lay ministries, however. Particularly notable was an independent missionary organization called the Women's Auxiliary (1885–1966), with active branches in most parishes. It sponsored female missionaries for domestic and foreign service, and undertook educational and social ministries. The first women's religious orders were founded in the 1870s; the most active today is the Sisters of St. John the Divine. The first deaconesses were "set aside" in 1895 and were used mainly for missionary, educational, and inner-city social work; their order gradually disappeared when women began to be ordained as deacons after 1969. A proposal to ordain women to the priesthood was raised, discussed, agreed, and implemented between 1968 and 1976. Despite some protest and the loss of a few congregations, the change was absorbed relatively quickly and painlessly, partly because of the diplomatic leadership of the primate, Ted Scott (1991–2004). The first woman bishop, Victoria Matthews was ordained in 1993.

History to 1867

As the British Empire took control of the regions that now belong to Canada, the Church of England accompanied it. Anglican chaplains served British military personnel, and

when colonies were established, congregations were formed with help from London. Religious affairs were controlled by the Colonial Office (working through local governors), the bishop of London, and, beginning in 1701, a Church mission organization called the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG). These authorities did not always work together harmoniously.

Before the American Revolution, the landmark Anglican events can be briefly summarized. In 1578 the first recorded Anglican Eucharist in what is now Canadian territory was celebrated by the chaplain to an adventuring expedition to Frobisher Bay. In 1583 the founder of a short-lived settlement in Newfoundland decreed a religious monopoly for the Church of England. In 1699 the earliest existing Anglican parish was founded in St. John's, Newfoundland. The minister, John Jackson, who was reputedly factious and cantankerous, received SPG sponsorship in 1702. In 1750, St. Paul's, the country's oldest Anglican church building still in use was erected in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In 1763, when England took control of Quebec at the end of the Seven Years War, the governor received royal instructions "that the Church of England may be established both in Principle and Practice." He and his successor ignored the direction: it was not wise for a tiny English occupying force to alienate a province of 70,000 French-speaking Roman Catholics. They did make a minimal provision for Anglican services for the British, and half-heartedly supported some ineffective proselytizing by three francophone Anglican clergy. In 1774, the Quebec Act made no provision for an English church establishment.

Anglican activity increased substantially with the American Revolution. Anglicans comprised a significant minority of the 40,000 persons, generally called loyalists, who left the United States to resettle in the newly reduced British North America (BNA). Their major religious work was forming congregations over a very large territory in a difficult climate, building and furnishing churches, obtaining clergy from the SPG, and developing local lay leadership. In addition, they organized schools, set up groups and guilds, sponsored social activities, developed parish libraries, and set up colleges of higher learning. Anglican leaders were typically "High Church" in the language of the day (the term is now used differently). They extolled the Church of England as the best possible church because of its true evangelical and Protestant doctrine, its episcopate in succession from Christ's apostles, and its historic written liturgy. They highly valued its "establishment," that is, its essential and privileged place

in the English constitution. They thought that a strong Church of England would keep BNA loyal to Britain. They curried government privilege, protection, and largesse, and they helped shape the religious policy of the Tory governing elite both in England and in the colonies.

An early political victory for High-Church Anglicans was securing a colonial bishop, whose main role, in addition to teaching, ordaining, disciplining, and confirming, would be administering the government's religious policies and keeping non-Anglican leaders in the shadow. The very idea of an Anglican colonial bishop had been controversial for decades. For one thing, many non-Anglicans had come to the New World precisely to escape persecuting bishops. But even the United States was now accepting bishops consecrated in England, so the risk of giving offense seemed reduced. In 1787 the king signed letters patent creating a single Anglican diocese comprehending virtually all of BNA, including Newfoundland, to be called the diocese of Nova Scotia, and appointing Charles Inglis (1734–1816), former rector of Trinity Church, New York, to be bishop. The diocese has since then been divided many times.

The English government further strengthened the Anglican cause in BNA by providing it with a huge landed endowment—glebes (land set aside as part of a rector's compensation) and, in two provinces, a huge amount (estimated at 3,000,000 acres) of what was called clergy reserve land. In addition to these financial privileges, governments granted the Church of England additional advantages in such areas as marriage legislation, college and university charters and subsidies, and appointments to powerful provincial executive councils and agencies.

Entrenched privileges for the Church of England in BNA were naturally opposed by non-Anglicans, but they were controversial among Anglicans themselves. For their part, High-Church Anglicans predictably defended them. Their greatest champion was John Strachan (1778–1867), who served Upper Canada as a parish priest for thirty-three years, and then twenty-seven years more as bishop. Three Anglican groups opposed official privilege. First were the "Low-Church" Anglicans of the whiggish type then very common south of the border. They denied that the characteristics distinguishing the Church of England from other Protestant churches, such as episcopal governance and a written liturgy, were matters of essential importance. They freely collaborated with other Protestants in politics, education, and civic and charitable activities, a behavior that High-Church Anglicans criticized as religious relativism and disloyalty. Second,

the Irish Anglican evangelicals, whose numbers were considerably augmented through immigration between 1830 and 1860, held that true Christians were to be identified by personal characteristics such as respect for scripture, conversion, and opposition to Roman Catholicism, not by the marks of the church institution to which they belonged. Their dislike for High-Church Anglicanism was heightened by a resentment of English ecclesiastical dominance that they carried over from Ireland. A third group were those influenced by the Anglo-Catholic movement that broke out at Oxford University in the 1830s, which stressed the divine authority of the church and its foundation in scripture, early Christian teaching, and tradition, and which strongly criticized the captivity of the English church to the state. Anglo-Catholics were quickly promoted to prominent leadership in the ACC and other colonial churches through the influence of a fundraising group called the Colonial Bishops Council, founded in 1841. Anglo-Catholic leaders in BNA such as John Medley (1804–1892), bishop of Fredericton, and George Hills (1816–1895), bishop of British Columbia, publicly opposed a colonial church establishment.

Against such opposition, official privilege for colonial Anglicans could not persist. As power in the provinces of BNA was transferred from Anglican-controlled elites to elected legislatures between the 1820s and the 1850s, the church's special status was gradually dismantled. A final blow was the secularization of the clergy reserve lands in 1854. The arguments among High-Church, Low-Church, evangelical, and Anglo-Catholic Anglicans continued, however, and grew increasingly broad and acrimonious through the nineteenth century. They gave a distinctive character to Anglican conversation, theology, and identity.

Anglican leaders recognized the need for independent financial and decision-making mechanisms. Taking the initiative, and theoretically running the risk of prosecution under English law, John Strachan in Toronto in 1853 created a synod of bishops, clergy, and lay delegates with the power to govern diocesan affairs. Similar bodies, called "diocesan conventions," existed in the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., but Strachan's Anglican synod was the first in the British Empire. The idea quickly spread to other dioceses, and became the standard form of Anglican self-government in Canada.

In 1863 a decision to liberate colonial Anglicanism from its dependence on the state came from an unexpected corner. The highest court in the British Empire, in a case called *Long v. Gray*, decided that England had no authority in

church matters in self-governing colonies. In 1865 it reaffirmed this decision in *Colenso v. Gray*, which protected a bishop from discipline for what was seen by many as theological unorthodoxy. England could no longer create dioceses, appoint bishops, or impose theological, liturgical, or canonical standards on any of its territories that had achieved a local legislature. The Anglican church in BNA was thus demoted to the status of one voluntary religious association among others.

Meanwhile, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), under a royal charter of 1670, held the land that is now Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta east of the continental divide, the Yukon, most of the Northwest Territories, northern Ontario, and northern Quebec. This region was known as Rupert's Land, after the first governor of the HBC. In 1820 the first Anglican missionary in this fur-trading empire, John West, began ministering to both European settlers and Cree in the area of what is now Winnipeg. His sponsor was the Church Missionary Society (CMS), which had been formed in 1799 by the group of evangelical Anglicans best known for their campaign against slavery. The CMS contrasted with the High-Church SPG, not least in its being firmly committed to promoting indigenous leadership in its missions. Thus an orphaned Cree child named Sakachuwescam, or Henry Budd, a pupil of West's, would become in 1853 the first native person in North America to be ordained to the Anglican priesthood. Also in 1853 Robert McDonald, who was part Ojibwe was ordained priest; he became perhaps the most effective of all Anglican missionaries among the First Nations. A diocese of Rupert's Land was established in 1849 with gifts from the HBC and the estate of one of its chief factors.

In British Columbia, before gold was discovered on the Fraser River in 1858, Anglican work was confined mainly to two HBC settlements and a CMS mission to the Tsimshian. In that year a diocese was endowed and a bishop was appointed. Church growth was slow during this period.

By 1867, when the dominion of Canada was born, Anglicans were an unprivileged minority, prominent in the east and extremely thin on the ground west of the Great Lakes. They had no national organization. They had almost no formal institutional connections with other Anglicans in the British Empire.

History since 1867

Shocked at the fragmentation of the British empire-wide Church of England into independent, self-governing

churches without common standards, ACC bishops asked the archbishop of Canterbury to invite all Anglican bishops worldwide to discuss the “distress.” Despite resistance from many English and American bishops who feared the control of colonials, a conference was held in 1867 at Lambeth Palace, the London residence of the archbishop of Canterbury. This proved to be the first of a series of decennial Lambeth Conferences. These are now considered a major instrument of the unity of the Anglican Communion, although their actual effectiveness has been diversely evaluated.

The ACC’s most demanding work for the next half century was in the North West. In 1868 Canada bought the land of the HBC. Learning from the bad example of the Native American battles in the United States, it signed treaties with the First Nations, promising to reserve land for their use and to educate their children. The government contracted out the latter obligation to the ACC and three other Christian denominations. The ACC also had to build churches and train clergy for a flood of European immigrants, totaling about two million over the thirty-five years following the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway across the continent in 1885. Robert Machray (1834–1901), the second Anglican bishop of Rupert’s Land, oversaw this work. Although he generally depended on help from the CMS for native ministry and the SPG and other English agencies for European ministry, Machray moved the churches increasingly toward self-support. He developed lay leadership, created parish vestries, marshaled experienced missionaries to challenging tasks, began parish schools, and organized higher education. He envisioned an indigenous First Nations church (which did not materialize) and supported native missionaries. He upgraded his diocese into an ecclesiastical province and then subdivided the original diocese by persuading the CMS and SPG to endow episcopal salaries.

British Columbia entered Canadian Confederation in 1871. In 1879 two new dioceses were formed, one for the growing European population of the lower mainland and one for native ministries in the north.

From the 1860s to the 1890s hostilities among the church parties dominated the politics of the ACC, as of other parts of the Anglican world. The focal controversy was unauthorized liturgical ceremonial, which could range from modest physical signs of reverence to lavish medievalism. While few Anglicans appreciated the extremes, probably most were inclined to accommodate them as a harmless

deviation. But evangelicals aggressively and vocally sought the suppression of unauthorized ceremonial as un-Anglican, un-Protestant, and un-scriptural. Two opposing camps emerged, called “the Church party” and “the evangelical party.” Each party developed its own newspaper, Sunday school curriculum, hymn book, theological school, and mission society. Synods became political battlegrounds. Much of the ceremonial that was controversial then is common in the ACC today.

By the 1880s most Canadian Anglicans wanted an integrated national structure, which most other mainline Protestant denominations had already achieved. The completion of the national railway in 1885 increased the feasibility of what was called “church consolidation.” In 1893 Anglican delegates met in Toronto, published a “solemn declaration” of their intent to remain connected with the Church of England, and ratified the plan for consolidation. The General Synod was created, and Machray was elected primate. Western Canadian dioceses, straining to meet the needs of a growing population, hoped for greater sympathy from the wealthier eastern dioceses; others hoped for a stronger denominational contribution to global missions, which were a consuming enthusiasm of the day. Moreover, national church agencies might effect the collaboration of the church parties. Progress was discouraging for many years, however. At first the General Synod had no budget for staff members or office space. Not until 1905 was a Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada (MSCC) functioning effectively. Later, a Sunday School Commission and a Council for Social Service were established. A Toronto office building was purchased in 1920.

The Church of England in Canada, as it was then called, might serve the young nation, but it saw itself as an expression of the mother church. Union jacks hung from church walls, Sunday worship featured prayers for the royal family and “God save the Queen” (or “King”), and synods wrote respectful addresses to the sovereign. By contrast, the larger United Church of Canada, formed in 1925, had a much keener sense of Canadian national identity and destiny. After World War II, as English Canadians generally developed their sense of independence from England, so did Canadian Anglicans, and in 1955 the name Anglican Church of Canada was adopted.

By the early 1900s, disputes about ritual were giving way to arguments about the theological implications of modern science and scholarship. Theological liberals were

reinterpreting scripture and the church's teaching to be compatible with a scientific and modern world view. At first a few liberal clergy and professors were disciplined for their views, but from World War I to the 1950s, the ACC's dominant theology was a liberal evangelicalism that avoided conflicts between science and propositional doctrine by stressing the believer's sense of a personal relationship with an immanent God. A common activist expression of theological liberalism was the Protestant "social gospel movement." Understanding the "kingdom of God" in Jesus' preaching as a call to build a just and compassionate social order, the ACC supported legislation and interventionist measures for social reform, including temperance laws, Sunday observance, the prohibition of child labor, workers' compensation, film censorship, and, in the 1940s, welfare legislation. A more individualistic expression of theological liberalism was the religion and health movement, which used scientific psychology and personal experience as resources for theological reflection. Clergy were trained for leadership in a therapeutic culture through hospital-based clinical pastoral education.

The liberal agenda gave priority to the modernization of the church not only in theology but also in communication, educational techniques, governance, and administration. In 1931, an Anglican National Commission made dozens of recommendations to make "organized religion" more respectable, responsive, and relevant to "our modern civilization." In the 1960s, the General Synod itself was modernized by management consultants, and the Sunday school curriculum was modernized according to the fashionable educational theories of John Dewey. In 1971 the *Hymn Book*, produced jointly by the ACC and the United Church of Canada, jettisoned traditional hymns such as "Amazing Grace" in favor of more modern hymns such as "God of Concrete, God of Steel."

Anglicans modernized their liturgical texts as well. In the 1960s the ACC was still using a prayer book very similar to the English prayer book of 1552. Influenced by an international and multid denominational school of thought known as the Liturgical Movement, reformers sought a style of worship consonant with the conclusions of modern liturgical scholarship, free of medieval elements, and suitable for a post-Christendom church. Many congregations experimented with trial rites, until in 1985 the General Synod approved the BAS, written in modern English and usually closely resembling the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer of The*

Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. The change was controversial since it was hard for many Anglicans to give up a familiar and dear style of worship, and since the BAS was introduced into some parishes with insufficient sensitivity and preparation. The Prayer Book Society of Canada was organized in 1986 to protect and promote the BCP.

In the 1970s and 1980s national staff members and others vigorously advocated for progressive causes, including "corporate social responsibility," the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa, environmental protection, and a fair resolution of First Nations land claims. Their activities provoked a reaction, particularly from business interests and conservative media. After 1990 staff time was generally diverted to other matters, not only because of the resistance or indifference of members but also because of the press of other business, including lawsuits, and the waning clout of the churches in Canadian public life.

In the 1990s, it became known that many children had been abused in Indian residential schools administered in earlier years by the ACC under agreements with the government of Canada. By the end of 2002, claims and lawsuits had been filed by about 1,350 Anglican residential school survivors naming the church and the government as defendants. Though concerned for persons whom it had injured, the church also worried that it could be bankrupted by financial liabilities. In 2003, the ACC reached an agreement with the federal government: Canada would pay 60 percent of the church's liability up to \$25 million, and 100 percent of amounts in excess of that. Because the ACC also accepted restrictions on claims and a complex and sometimes humiliating claims process, the Anglican Council of Indigenous People, which had not been consulted, raised energetic protests. Since then some changes have been made in the mechanisms for dispute resolution and in the agreement between the church and the government. The government has also established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to promote healing.

Discussions as to whether the ACC should bless same-gender unions and ordain gay and lesbian clergy gained traction in the 1970s, and by the 1990s it had become a principal topic at most meetings of the General Synod, the House of Bishops, and the Primate's Theological Commission, and in the denominational press. Definitive action has been stalled by disagreements about the issue itself, a reluctance to alienate more conservative churches in the Anglican Communion, and an uncertainty about whether the

blessing of same-gender unions is a matter of “doctrine,” for which the General Synod has special procedures. In the meantime, clergy in same-gender relationships and blessings of same-gender unions are informally and quietly countenanced in scattered dioceses. In 2003 the diocese of New Westminster on its own accord publicly began blessing same-gender unions, provoking the separation of some parish churches and widening fissures in the worldwide Anglican Communion. In 2005 Canada legalized same-gender marriages. The matter will return to the General Synod at its next meeting in 2010.

See also *American Revolution; Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Canada* entries; *Episcopalians* entries; *Mainline Protestants; Polity; Same-Gender Marriage; Worship: Anglican.*

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Canada: Catholics

Catholics are the largest religious group in Canada, representing 43 percent of the population, or 12,937,000 in number (Canadian Census 2001). Canada is a country of immigrants, and Canadian churches are the churches of immigrants. For more than 400 years, various Catholic groups have immigrated to Canada, beginning with the French, Scots, and Irish, and continuing with the central and eastern Europeans. In the decades immediately following World War II, the southern and eastern Europeans seemed to conclude this influx, yet after changes in the Canadian immigration laws of 1967, Catholic immigrants began arriving from the Caribbean, South America, Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Aboriginal Canadians, like the nation’s population as a whole, are estimated to be 43 percent Catholic, and from the beginning have been intimately interlinked with Catholic Christianity. Catholic history in Canada can be divided into three thematic developments: seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Gallicanism; nineteenth-century Romanism; and twentieth-century Canadianism.

Gallicanism

During the first two centuries, French colonists landed in Canada and promoted Christian evangelization of the Aboriginals. The French Gallican church generated a mystical and heroic spirituality. Gallicanism fostered the canons and customs of the French church limiting papal intervention in French affairs and resisting papal infallibility apart from the consent of the whole church. The first recorded Aboriginal conversions began at Port Royal in Acadia, Nova Scotia, in 1610. The French missionary, L’abbé Jessé Fléché (d. 1611), baptized Chief Memberton and his family and 140 Mi’kmaq and Malecite neophytes. The following year, the Jesuits Pierre Biard (1567–1622) and Énemond Massé (1575–1646) replaced the missionary Fléché, studied the Aboriginal languages, educated neophytes in their native language, and translated the catechism (a systematic presentation of Christian teaching). They began a program of methodical Christian instruction for the Aboriginals.

In Canada, French Catholics settled principally in three locations: at the fortress of Quebec, at the remote sanctuary of Saint Marie among the Hurons, and at Ville Marie (Montreal), where the St. Lawrence, the Ottawa, and the Richelieu Rivers join together. With the fur brigades, enterprising Catholic chaplains penetrated quickly to the heart of the continent at Michilimackinac, sharing the gospel with the

Aboriginals as they went, eventually paddling their canoes down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico by 1687.

At Quebec in 1608, the layperson Samuel de Champlain (d. 1635) founded Quebec by planting the French flag and evangelizing the Aboriginals nearby. He was followed by missionary volunteers—the Recollets, the Jesuits, the Ursulines, and the Hôspitaliers of St. Augustine—who built churches, hospitals, colleges, and schools that dotted the Canadian riverbanks. A multipurpose center for New France, the city of Quebec included government administration, commercial trade, military contingents, and the seat of the new diocese that stretched across North America from the Gulf of the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico.

As Quebec became the bedrock of French colonials in North America, Jean de Brébeuf (1593–1649), Antoine Daniel (1601–1648), and Ambrose Davost boarded Huron fur canoes and began the tortuous four-week journey up the St. Lawrence, the Ottawa, and the Mattawa Rivers to cross over the height of land on Lake Nipissing and to descend down the French River into the open waters that led to Huronia. When they arrived in 1634, the three Jesuits initiated a mission to 25,000 Hurons, the first Christian mission to this Aboriginal people. Five years later, Jerome Lalemant (1593–1673) and Jesuit companions began construction near Midland, Ontario, of the historic Saint Marie among the Hurons that became the centerplace for inculturation into Aboriginal life.

These famous personages in Catholic history—Jean de Brébeuf, Isaac Jogues (1607–1646), Gabriel Lalemant (1610–1649), Antoine Daniel, Charles Garnier (1606–1649), Noël Chabanel (1613–1649), Jean de Lalonde (d. 1646), and René Goupil (1608–1642)—began the long process of what is now called inculturation. They lived and ate as Hurons, and with great humility learned to speak the Aboriginal languages and respect their culture. The Hurons shared corn, tomatoes, potatoes, squash, and their fishing and hunting methods, and in turn the Euro-Canadians brought from France chickens, pigs, and cattle. Seventy Jesuits and donees lived at Saint Marie among the Hurons at its peak, and the compound became a place for Euro-Huron cultural exchange. Joseph Chihwatenha, Joseph Teondechoren, Paul Atondo, and other Hurons were baptized, evangelized their fellow Hurons, and soon founded Christian villages. Five of the Jesuits died in the service of the gospel in Huronia and three near Auriesville, New York. The eight were canonized by the Catholic Church in 1930 for their heroic sanctity in the face of violence and death.

As Quebec was a multipurpose center, and Huronia a place for European inculturation, so Ville Marie (Montreal) was a location for lay evangelization. Paul de Chomedey Maisonneuve (1612–1676) led the expedition of lay Christian missionaries up the St. Lawrence River to the Aboriginal fur markets at its juncture with the Ottawa River. Maisonneuve and his companions founded Ville Marie; Jeanne Mance (1606–1673) opened the first hospital; and Marguerite Bourgeoys (1620–1700) established the first school and the first uncloistered religious order in North America, the *Congrégation-de-Notre Dame* (CDN). Unlike Ursuline nuns who lived behind the cloister wall, the CDNs left their convent daily to do apostolic ministry throughout the countryside. The Sulpicians (a Catholic Society of Apostolic Life) in 1657 arrived in Montreal to found the principal church, *Notre-Dame-de-Montréal*, and the *Grand-Séminaire-de-Montréal*. In the midst of danger, the Christian faith was lived with a missionary intensity, and Montreal emerged as a center of lay evangelization. Francois de Laval (1623–1708), a descendant of the first Christian Franks in the fifth century, arrived in Quebec in 1659 as its missionary bishop to direct the nascent growth of the Canadian Catholic Church.

French Catholics in Canada enjoyed a century and a half of rustic solitude until the second half of the eighteenth century, when the Irish and the Scots immigrated to Newfoundland and Nova Scotia and shattered the devout Gallican tranquility. From Scotland, the impoverished Scottish families sailed to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and appeared to the French as less than proper Catholics. Their priests were not properly attired in Roman clerical dress, and they lacked suitable vestments and appropriate furnishings for religious services.

The Irish during the mid-eighteenth century in Newfoundland were separated by a large expanse of water from the French “*Canadiens*.” The Irish were a minority in Newfoundland and were forced to hide their priests because under British penal laws, if the priests were discovered, homes would be knocked down. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Irish became a majority but still faced legal discrimination until a provincial assembly was formed in 1832. In 1850, the jubilant Newfoundland Catholics constructed, on the high ground overlooking the city of St. John’s, the classical granite Cathedral of St. John the Baptist as a glistening symbol of the Celtic emergence in Atlantic Canada. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Irish commanded three dioceses, St. John’s, Halifax, and Saint

John (New Brunswick), and in turn, the Scots commanded another three dioceses, Charlottetown, Antigonish, and Kingston. Gallican spirituality henceforth was on the wane.

Romanism

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church filled episcopal sees in Canada with French, Scottish, and Irish bishops for parishioners who demanded their own bishops, and then, Propaganda Fide, the office in charge of missions for the Holy See, drew these different ethnic cultures into one church. During the second half of the nineteenth century, a second wave of immigrants arrived: the Germans, Ukrainians, Polish, and Hungarians. The Roman Church intensified the effort to unify the Canadian Catholic Church.

The period of the romanization of the Canadian church throughout the nineteenth century began with the successive appointments of the first two bishops of Montreal, Jean-Jacques Lartigue (1777–1840) and Ignace Bourget (1799–1885), both ultramontanes (those who affirmed the unilateral authority of the pope). They were the resolute and dynamic leaders of the new ultramontane Canadian spirituality, whose followers believed that a resurgence of the papal spiritual leadership was essential for the survival of Canadian Catholicism. The ultramontanes during the middle of the nineteenth century focused on loyalty to the leadership of Pope Pius IX (1792–1878), or Pio Nono, who reigned supreme for thirty-two years. At the time, Rome was besieged by the Italian republicans who were determined to unite Italy and remove the pope as temporal leader of the Papal States. As Pius IX fought a rearguard action to protect the Papal States against these popular forces, Catholics around the world loved the beleaguered Pio Nono, prayed for him, rose up to his support, and visited Rome to cheer him on. The spontaneous support for the beleaguered pope and the attractiveness of Roman spirituality and Roman devotions was the future of the Catholic Church.

Bishop Bourget hoped to make Montreal a second Rome and to have the Catholic Church direct Quebec schools and social services. He reasoned that as Catholic priests and seminarians appeared in Rome in cassocks and Roman flat hats, this was the way his Montreal clergy should appear. He built the new Saint-Jacques Cathedral (now also named “Notre-Dame, Renne de Monde”) as a smaller replica of St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. He recruited

a company of Papal Zoaves to sail to Rome to defend Pio Nono against the Italian republicans. Another Canadian leader of the ultramontane movement was Bishop Michael Fleming (1792–1850) of St. John’s, who had built the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist and invited the Irish sisters to Newfoundland to open schools, to educate young women to become the mothers of the Catholic elite, and to fashion a solid parochial culture. Ultramontane J.J. Lynch (1816–1888), the first archbishop of Toronto, formed a coalition with the Ontario premier, Oliver Mowat (1820–1903), and offered Catholic political support to the ruling party in exchange for province-funded Catholic schools.

At St. Boniface on the Red River, the French Oblates arrived in 1845 and took over the western missions under the young bishop Alexandre Taché (1853–1894). The Oblate Fathers were strong ultramontanes and fanned out along the river highways to carry the Christian gospel with untiring zeal to St. Albert, Lac St. Anne, Fort Vermilion, Rocky Mountain House, and Mission, British Columbia. In a short time more than 200 Oblates poured into the mission field to learn native languages, preach the gospel, and open churches and schools. The missionaries suffered from fatigue, rheumatism, asthma, and bladder problems. The famous Parisian editor of *L’univers*, Louis Veuillot (1813–1883), poignantly depicted the well-known, humble missionary bishop of forty-three years, Vital Grandin (1829–1902), as the “lice-covered” bishop, a not uncommon contagion for those doing mission work.

The Irish and Scottish clergy in the eastern Maritime Provinces became a phalanx of English-speaking missionaries mobilizing to evangelize western Canada. By 1900 the Celtic wave gave an Irish green tinge to the blue and white fields of the French Canadian west, and the French Oblates were being replaced by *les Irlandais*. Archbishop Adélarde Langevin (1855–1915) of St. Boniface, Manitoba, became unhappy that the Irish-driven Canadian Catholic Extension Society offered financial help to western Catholics but did not consult him or send the English-speaking seminarians to the Collège St. Boniface. When J. T. McNally (1871–1952) was appointed bishop in Calgary, Archbishop Henry O’Leary (1879–1938) replaced Emile Legal (1849–1920) in Edmonton, and Archbishop James C. McGuigan (1894–1974) replaced Olivier Mathieu (1853–1929) in Regina, the English-speaking clergy and laity replaced the French Canadians as the major players in western Canada. The

French sphere of influence became restricted to Quebec and enclaves of French-speaking peoples at St. Boniface, Gravelbourg, St. Albert, and smaller French-speaking communities in the Canadian West. The Irish and Scottish Canadians had convinced the Holy See that the future of the Canadian church in Ontario and the West lay with the English-speaking parishioners, clergy, and bishops.

Central and Eastern European Immigrants

The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad to the west in 1885 made transportation safe, and the second wave of newcomers, the Germans, Ukrainians, Polish, and Hungarians, were disbursed throughout the West. The settlers could homestead 160 acres for \$10. Having staked their claim, settlers bought wagon and team and traveled 60 to 100 miles over the roughest terrain searching through uncharted regions for their land. Arriving at the site, they set up tents to shelter and feed their families until they could erect a sod house and sod barn. In Saskatchewan, German Catholics located themselves at Balgonie, St. Joseph's Colony, and St. Peter's Colony. New life in the wilderness was a challenge for any family newly arrived from Europe.

Many German Catholics came to Canada from the United States. In 1903, eight thousand German Americans trekked from the American Midwest to found St. Peter's Colony, east of Saskatoon. A German-American land company had taken out options on fifty townships—1,800 square miles of rich soil—and then encouraged German-Americans from the United States to claim quarter-sections of 160 acres at \$10 each. Within a few years these homesteads were occupied, parish churches and private schools were built, and German Canadian villages were formed. The heart of the colony was St. Peter's Priory, which was founded by Benedictine Fathers from Cluny, Illinois, and St. John's, Minnesota. In 1921, the Holy See declared St. Peter's an abbacy and the abbot served as bishop for the thirty-six German Catholic parishes in the area. The abbey printed a German-language newspaper, *St. Peter's Bote*, with an English edition, the *Prairie Messenger*, still widely read throughout western Canada. Also in 1921, the abbey opened St. Peter's College as a Catholic high school for boys; in 1925, it became affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan and in 1972 offered university education. Métis, French Canadian, Irish, English, and German Protestant families were interspersed among the German Catholics of St. Peter's.

Ukrainian Catholics also played an important role in the Canadian church. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, 80 percent of the 100,000 Ukrainians who arrived in Canada were Catholic. The Ukrainian Catholics came from Galicia and the Carpatho-Ukraine, while Ukrainian Orthodox came from Bukovina and the eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian Catholics belonged to the Greek Catholic Church, one of the Eastern churches in union with Rome. At the Union of Brest in 1596, the Ukrainian Catholics recognized the leadership of the Holy See and retained the Byzantine liturgy and their ecclesial traditions, including married priests. Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903) in 1894 forbade married priests from immigrating to North America and deprived Ukrainian Catholics of needed married clergy. Archbishop Langevin of St. Boniface invited the Ukrainians to attend Latin churches, but they refused the invitation. The Ukrainian Catholics preserved their religious traditions in Canada, erecting wayside crosses, constructing Eastern-style churches, and organizing their devotions in accordance with the Byzantine church.

Langevin, after consulting his fellow bishops in Edmonton and Prince Albert, began to understand the need for Ukrainian clergy. The Metropolitan of Lviv, the head of the Catholic Church in the Ukraine, was asked to send celibate clergy, who began to arrive in 1902. This included five Basilian monks and four Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate who came to western Canada. The monks preached devotion to the Eucharist, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Sister Servants with financial help from the Sulpicians opened the Sacred Heart Academy for girls at Yorkton, Saskatchewan. The priests opened a bilingual school for boys. Ten Redemptorists from Belgium, five French Canadian diocesan priests, and one Oblate joined the Ukrainian priests in becoming Ukrainian clergy in western Canada. Although this was helpful, Ukrainian Catholics preferred Ukrainian married priests who became involved in the politics of parish life and organized reading clubs, drama circles, and co-operatives. For Ukrainian Catholics, Ukrainian nationalism was second only to their Catholic faith.

The First Plenary Council of Quebec in 1909 recommended the Ukrainians be given their own bishop, schools, newspaper, and more Ukrainian priests. The following year Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky (1865–1944) of Lviv came to the Eucharistic Congress in Montreal and visited Ukrainian Catholics across Canada. The Ukrainian faithful told

Sheptytsky that they needed a Ukrainian bishop, married priests, and the removal of the bilingual French-speaking priests. Sheptytsky urged them to remain loyal to the Holy See and the universal church. The Canadian Latin churches began supplying funds for their Ukrainian brothers and sisters. Bishop Langevin supported the Ukrainian Catholic newspaper, *Canadian Ruthenian/Canadian Ukrainian*, first published in 1911. The Catholic Church Extension Society contributed money for the construction of churches and bilingual schools.

In 1912, at the request of the Canadian bishops, Pope Pius X (1835–1914) appointed thirty-five-year old Nykyta Budka (1877–1959) from Lviv as the first Canadian eparch (bishop) of 128,000 Ukrainian Catholics. The following year, twenty Ukrainian priests and seminarians arrived in Canada. Budka assured Ukrainian Catholics that their language and way of life would be protected in the Catholic Church and asked parishes to register with the new Ukrainian Catholic eparchy. Initially only twenty-one of ninety-three parishes registered with the bishop. Budka stated that he was not in favor of married priests as he believed that Ukrainian immigrants could not afford married priests, and in any case, married priests from the Ukraine would not move their families to Canada. The Cathedral of St. Nicholas was constructed in Winnipeg, the Taras Shevchenko Reading Club was opened, and the Boyan Drama Circle staged Ukrainian plays.

Setting themselves apart from the Ukrainian Catholics, some of the Ukrainian intelligentsia initiated opposition, but they were badly divided among themselves. Politicians made contact with the Canadian Liberal and the Conservative parties to cultivate their favor. The nonsectarian rural nationalists sought bilingual education and political and economic independence for the Ukrainian community. The urban socialists sought bilingual schools for children and a populist party for the working people. Some of the intelligentsia in 1918 formed the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church with the assistance of the Presbyterians at Manitoba College. Bishop Budka imposed a boycott of Ukrainian Catholic parishes that had not registered with the Catholic eparchy.

By 1920 the Ukrainian religious community in Canada had split into the Ukrainian Catholics, Russian Orthodox, Ukrainian Greek Orthodox, who were independent, and the Ukrainian Protestants, who would soon disperse. Non-Catholic Ukrainians criticized the Ukrainian Catholics for excluding married priests, attending Latin services, and

having too many or not enough domes on their churches. The complaints continued that Catholic Ukrainian crosses on the dome of their churches were without the second diagonal arm, their sanctuaries were without iconostasis, they used pipe organs, made the sign of the cross only once, observed the Gregorian calendar, and attended Latin schools. These omissions were pointed out to be serious violations of the Ukrainian cultural environment.

In his last years in Canada, Budka guided forty-seven priests and maintained Eastern liturgies in 229 parishes and mission stations. The Ukrainian Catholics through the next half-century created five Byzantine eparchies: in Winnipeg, Edmonton, New Westminster, Saskatoon, and Toronto. The presence of Ukrainian Catholics along with other Europeans helped to soften the language friction between the French- and English-speakers and led the Canadian church toward multiculturalism. By the end of the twentieth century, the Ukrainian Catholic Canadian church numbered 200,000 members, scattered in 350 parishes, in five eparchies, all of which strengthened the presence of the Eastern churches in Canada.

The Polish, driven off their ancestral lands in Prussia, arrived in Canada looking for free land. As farmers they arrived in eastern Ontario and then the Canadian prairies, and as workers they settled in Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, and Winnipeg. Polish farmers arrived with almost no funds and hired themselves out to learn the dry farming techniques of the prairies and to generate capital for purchases. Meanwhile, their wives and children managed the homestead and produced a subsistence diet of vegetables, fowl, and beef. Polish clergy arrived to rally the newcomers by organizing community festivals where they could share kielbasa and conversation. In 1929 there were 33 Polish parishes and 157 missions ministering to more than 200,000 Canadian Poles. The Polish newcomers erected schools and chose English as the language of instruction (although Polish was also taught).

Count Paul Esterhazy of Hungary (1831–1912) became a Canadian immigration agent and recruited his Hungarian compatriots to come to Saskatchewan. Winnipeg eventually became the center of Hungarian Canadian culture, publishing *Kanadai Magyar Újság*. Sizeable Hungarian communities emerged in the urban centers of Toronto, Montreal, Windsor, Brantford, and Hamilton. The influx of eastern European Catholics paved the way for Canadian Catholics to become multicultural and international, and thus, more Canadian and more Catholic. The Roman ultramontane

spirituality that inspired nineteenth-century Catholics became static during the twentieth century, and Canadians, by the end of the century, were forging a new spirituality and new Canadian church.

Canadianism

During the first half of the twentieth century, the Catholic Church in Canada began to Canadianize itself, and it became apparent that it was now important to integrate into the church the third wave of southern European Catholics, the Italian and Portuguese Canadians. This process of Canadianization was initiated once again during the last half of the twentieth century, with newcomers arriving from Asia, Africa, and South America.

Southern Europe provided Canada with a large number of immigrant Catholics. Italians made up the largest group, with more than 95 percent being Catholic. In the 1890s, several hundred Italian Catholic laborers were working in Montreal, Toronto, and the Okanagan. The diocese of Toronto and the Redemptorists in 1908 renamed the Irish church Our Lady of Mount Carmel for Italian Catholics and, for the Irish, the Redemptorists then constructed another St. Patrick's Church. During the first three decades of the twentieth century, Italian immigrants arriving before World War I numbered almost 150,000. Settling mainly in urban centers, Italian workers accepted employment on the railways, maintaining urban roads and sewers, and laboring in the construction industry. Priests from several orders as well as Carmelite nuns served these immigrants—in Montreal, principally Servites, in Toronto, Franciscans. In 1934, Toronto's Italian community sponsored a Good Friday procession, which continues to this day. This modern-day procession winds its way through the Italian neighborhood south of College Street, starting and ending at the Church of St. Francis of Assisi. Elaborately costumed actors play the roles of Jesus Christ, Judas Iscariot, Mary Magdalene, Jewish Pharisees, Pontius Pilate, and Roman soldiers.

During the 1930s, education became a source of contention between the ecclesial hierarchy and Italian Catholics. The Italian government offered to provide Italian Canadians with classes in Italian language and culture, and the classes were taught in the evening at the Catholic schools and church halls. In 1939, James C. McGuigan (1894–1974), archbishop of Toronto, discovered that the Italian classes had a barely disguised Fascist agenda. Sensing future hostility, the Italian consul early in that year, much to the archbishop's relief, withdrew funding for the classes, and by the time the

Italian Fascists joined Nazi Germany against the western Allies in May 1940, the issue had disappeared. In the three decades following the war, Italy ranked second only to Great Britain as a source for Canadian immigrants, with more than 500,000 settling in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Guelph, Windsor, Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Vancouver. In Toronto, forty-five parishes offered religious services in Italian, and ten in Montreal.

The Portuguese arrived in the postwar world to participate in the Canadian economic expansion. The Canadian and Portuguese governments after World War II signed agreements allowing Portuguese railway, construction, and agricultural laborers to work in Canada. In the 1950s, nearly 20,000 Portuguese arrived, almost 90 percent of whom were Catholic. Immigrants came from the island of Sao Miguel in the Azores and settled in Toronto, and others from the continental districts of Portugal came to Montreal. In the following two decades, family sponsorship programs and chain migration boosted the Portuguese community to 140,000, and in Toronto fifteen churches offered religious services in Portuguese, and two in Montreal.

Canadian Catholic Response during the Depression

The stock market crashed in October 1929 and a world economic Depression descended upon Europe and North America. The economy in the Maritime Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island was listless; in Montreal and Toronto, the unemployed took to the streets looking for work; and on the Canadian prairies, the drought intensified the agricultural distress. The Depression intensified the Canadianization of the Catholic Church. In 1933, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) was founded in Regina, Saskatchewan, as a socialist effort to alleviate economic distress. In Montreal, Archbishop George Gauthier condemned the CCF, fearing it was communist-inspired and antireligious.

At Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Fathers Jimmy Tompkins (1870–1953) and Moses Coady (1882–1959) provided a Canadian Catholic response to the Depression by convincing St. Francis Xavier College, in 1930, to open an Extension Department to offer continuing education for working people and teach them how to establish cooperatives. Moses Coady educated farmers, fishermen, and miners to develop the habit of continual learning throughout their adult lives. Jimmy Tompkins (1870–1953) helped set up cooperatives to buy necessities at a reduced rate, and to sell their fish,

agricultural products, and manufactured items at a fair price. This Antigonish Movement generated a powerful spirit of sharing, research, cooperation, and hope among the Maritime people. The Maritime Catholics were discovering Canadian Catholic solutions for Canadian problems.

In Toronto, the editor of the *Catholic Register*, Henry Somerville (1889–1953), an English journalist with a diploma in labor studies from Oxford University, introduced Toronto Catholics in the 1920s and 1930s to the papal encyclicals, *Renum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. He taught at St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto and wrote in the Catholic newspaper that the church was concerned not only about morality but also about social justice. This concern spoke for workers, including living wages, healthy working conditions, and church support for the cause of unions. He also urged that Canadian Catholics must achieve at least a high school education to take up leadership roles in Canadian politics, unions, and society. What Somerville taught, Catherine de Hueck (1896–1985) did by opening a Friendship House in downtown Toronto to provide food for the hungry and shelter for the needy. During the Depression, de Hueck joined the picket line of workers at Laura Secord Company. This action upset Archbishop McGuigan because the company was owned by Sen. Frank O'Connor (1885–1939), a generous benefactor of the archdiocese. After the archbishop castigated her, de Hueck itemized the injustices at the Laura Secord plant and backed them up with passages from *Quadragesimo Anno* advocating a just wage for each worker and affirming the prolabor teaching of *Renum Novarum*. De Hueck and the archbishop remained friends, and Laura Secord improved their hiring practices.

To alleviate the grinding poverty during the Depression, Basilian Father Eugene Cullinane (1907–1997) was attracted to the CCF because he found it based on the British parliamentary system and on principles similar to Catholic social teachings. During graduate studies at Catholic University of America, he began a dissertation on the social philosophy of the CCF and then taught economics from 1945 to 1948 at St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon. Father Cullinane assessed the CCF to be an expression of Canadian Christian humanism, being neither violent nor against religion. In these controversial years, he was the first Catholic priest to join the CCF. Shortly after, his letter explaining why he joined the CCF, which Bishop Pocock had forbidden him to make public, was mistakenly circulated. Bishop Pocock, without further ceremony, expelled Father Cullinane from the diocese of Saskatoon.

Fathers Isidore Gorski (1930–2005) and Bob Ogle (1928–1998) followed his path and joined the CCF, which by then had broadened its political base to become the New Democratic Party (NDP). The NDP Premier of Saskatchewan Allan Blakeney (1925–) had thirteen Catholic members of the provincial legislature in his government, five of whom were in his cabinet. As historian Teresita Kambeitz has argued, the Catholic Church never stood in unrelenting opposition to the CCF. After the formation of the Canadian Catholic Conference in 1943, the Canadian bishops made it clear that the support of Catholics for the CCF was quite acceptable.

Catholic social teaching in Quebec was fully tested by the asbestos strike of 1949. During the Duplessis regime, Quebec workers were the most poorly paid in the country. The asbestos miners in spring 1949 went on strike to maintain their wages against further cuts. Johns-Manville Company in full-page newspaper ads labeled the strikers as revolutionaries and communists. Facing starvation and expulsion from their homes, the workers asked the church for help. Outside the churches at Sherbrooke and Montreal, \$167,000 was collected for the starving families. At the Montreal cathedral, Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau (1892–1959) mounted the pulpit and stated that the working class was a “victim of a conspiracy which seeks to crush it.” He declared that “the Church has the duty to intervene.”

Archbishop Roy of Quebec City offered his services as a mediator, and the asbestos companies agreed to settle. After the strike, the Jesuit and Dominican editors of their respective journals, who took the side of the workers, were sent into exile. Archbishop Charbonneau was summoned to the apostolic delegate's residence in Ottawa on New Year's Day and told to resign. The archbishop replied that he was a canon lawyer, knew his rights, and would appeal directly to the pope. The delegate countered that this message came directly from the pope: *Roma locuta est, causa finita est*. Charbonneau left Montreal before the end of the month and accepted work in British Columbia as a hospital chaplain.

One pundit alleged the New York firm of Johns-Manville Company had complained to Cardinal Spellman in New York, a very close friend of Pope Pius XII, and thus, Charbonneau was dismissed for interference against the New York firm. Another pundit claimed that the Premier of Quebec, Maurice Duplessis (1890–1959), denounced the archbishop to Rome on behalf of the mine owners. Both opinions were commonly stated without fear or research.

Rather within the month, Charbonneau blamed Quebec's rural bishops. The rural Quebec bishops, fearing the open-minded Franco-Ontarian in their midst, and themselves having strong connections in Rome, denounced Charbonneau as the thin edge of the wedge of modernity and wanted him eliminated before the turmoil of the "Quiet Revolution" ("Revolution Tranquille") swept up river to their rural dioceses.

The rural bishops of Quebec had reason to be concerned. The Quiet Revolution during the 1940s and 1950s percolated slowly through the province of Quebec and only came to a boil in 1960 with the election of the Premier Jean Lesage (1912–1980) of the Liberal Party. The center of the Quiet Revolution was the newly educated professional classes who were eager to gain control of the schools, labor unions, hospitals, and social work. In a society where education, health care, and social work had been controlled by the Catholic Church officials, the laypeople sought their place in public office. The reason the revolution turned out to be "quiet" was that the clergy willingly let go of control in exchange for an advisory role in the future reforms. With breathtaking speed, Premier Jean Lesage, René Levesque (1922–1987), and colleagues secularized the medical, social, labor, and pension systems that up until that time were run by the religious orders for the province. Seeing this happen, Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger (1904–1991) of Montreal, maneuvered for influence through chaplains and raised questions to Quebec society on behalf of minorities. These radical changes in Quebec society convinced Catholics that the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) was a necessary remedy to deal globally with the paradigm shift happening throughout Western society.

At the Second Vatican Council, the three Canadian stars were Cardinal Léger, Metropolitan Maxim Hermaniuk (1911–1996) of Winnipeg, and Archbishop Maurice Baudoux (1902–1974) of St. Boniface. Before the Council, Rome asked the bishops and universities to submit "vota" for the agenda. Cardinal Léger submitted nineteen pages in the vernacular and asked that the church adjust to the modern age and not restore dead structures. Before the first session of the council, he wrote directly to Pope John XXIII (1881–1963) to say that the agenda prepared by the Curia was not adequate and another must be prepared by council members. This was done. Metropolitan Hermaniuk sent submissions asking for equality of the Eastern and Western churches, reunion of the Christian churches, and naming the church by its proper title, "The Catholic Church."

Archbishop Baudoux set up a preparatory commission of outstanding theologians that included four future bishops, Antoine Hacault of St. Boniface, Edouard Gagnon of Saint-Paul, Remi De Roo of Victoria, and Noël Delaquis of Gravelbourg. Archbishop Baudoux was president of the Canadian bishops at the beginning of the council, as Archbishop Flahiff was their president for the last session. The Canadian bishops sat on many council commissions and returned at the end of the council with a heightened awareness of the Christian Church as the sacrament of Christ responding to the needs of the people.

The Second Vatican Council opened up many questions on church life and practice. Two problems surfaced, which the Canadian church has yet to resolve adequately, concerned the participation of women and the status of the Aboriginal Catholics. Since the intervention of Cardinal George Bernard Flahiff (1905–1989) in Rome in 1971, the Canadian church has asked that the role of women be more fully discussed and that women be appointed to administrative positions. Since that time, women have been hired in Canadian parishes and dioceses, in Catholic universities and seminaries, and in liturgies have contributed as lectors, servers, and ministers of bread and cup. In regard to the Aboriginal Catholics, Dean Achiel Peelman (1942–) of St. Paul University in Ottawa revealed his vision that Catholics will never become a Canadian Catholic church until the Aboriginal Catholics take leadership in the church and evangelize the Euro-Canadians.

Postmodern Canadianism: International Catholicism

While that vision remained a possible future of the Canadian Catholic church as of the early twentieth-first century, the day-to-day reality was affected by an arrival of a fourth wave of Catholics to Canada. Canadian laws after 1967 admitted immigrants from around the world by the merit system, opening the way for Asians, Africans, Arabs, and Hispanics. This meant that Catholics from these continents chose to migrate to Canada and carry with them their indigenous cultures. In particular, Chinese Catholics in Toronto have opened four parishes since 1970, and in Vancouver they operate three parishes, and one parish each in Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa, and Montreal. While the average parish in Toronto baptizes eighty-seven neophytes yearly, Chinese Martyrs' Parish of Toronto since the 1990s has each year consistently baptized 300 to 600 people. Lest one have any doubt about the quality of the catechesis, the pastoral council of Chinese

Martyrs' Parish extended its Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) program from nine to eighteen months.

The Filipinos have a small number of Tagalog-speaking parishes in Canada but, more importantly, have renewed many parishes by their presence in Winnipeg, Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, and Edmonton. Filipinos attend churches regularly in large numbers and contribute to the reading, serving, and Eucharistic ministry, as well as quickly becoming the backbone of parish social activities. The Vietnamese Catholics have opened eleven parishes from Vancouver to Montreal. These parishes become cultural rallying points for Vietnamese Catholics, as they take over abandoned Canadian churches and renew them or build new ones.

The Tamils have four Catholic communities in Toronto and one in Montreal. Like the Chinese, Vietnamese, Koreans, and Filipinos, the Tamils have charismatic prayer groups that rally the flagging spirits of new Canadians and help them to cope with the daily adjustment demanded. The Korean communities are seven in number and stretch from Vancouver to Montreal. The Koreans have an intensity in their religious practice that makes their faith outstanding.

Furthermore, it is the rising number of Asian, African, and Hispanic students who are making a difference in Canadian seminaries. The missionary work of Canadian men and women around the world during the last one hundred years is bringing to Canada strong believers from around the globe. Since the Second Vatican Council, the Asian bishops have been meeting at regular intervals to formulate Asian theology, which includes the principles of collegiality, subsidiarity, family values, cohesive community spirit, respect for the elderly, and concern for the needy.

Conclusion

Catholic Canadians arrived in four waves. French Gallicans for two hundred years were in undisputed control of Canadian geography and religion, until Irish and Scottish Catholic rivals settled to the east and to the west of them. In the middle of the nineteenth century, newcomers from central and eastern Europe settled in central and western Canada and helped diffuse the French-Celtic conflict, establishing the foundation of the international church Canadian Catholics profess to be. In the twentieth century, southern Europeans arrived in the well-established cities of Ontario and Quebec and created a more diverse Canadian society. The multicultural picture of Canada and the Canadian Catholic Church was completed after 1970 with the influx

of the Asians, Africans, Arabs, and Hispanics. These ethnic groups from the continents of the world are now integrated into a Catholic history that was established by Aboriginal, Gallican, Roman, and Canadian influences. Canada freely adopted multiculturalism, and the mission of the Catholic Church in Canada fully embraces this multicultural vision.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Architecture: Roman Catholic; Canada entries; Roman Catholicism: French Influence; Roman Catholicism: Tradition and Heritage; Women Religious; Worship: Roman Catholic.*

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Canada: Church and State

The changing relationship between church and state in Canada reflects the historical development of a society whose colonial roots are both French Roman Catholic and British Protestant. Although by the mid-nineteenth century the classical pattern of a single established church had been successfully contested, ties between church and state remained strong, with religion functioning as an informal or “shadow” religious establishment composed of a relatively few “main-line” Protestant denominations, with Roman Catholicism dominating in francophone Quebec. Beginning in the 1960s church and state underwent massive restructuring, resulting in a radical differentiation that brought to an end the long-standing overlap between the spiritual and the secular.

As a result, the term *church and state* is now anachronistic to describe the place of religion in contemporary secular and pluralistic Canada and can be more meaningfully reformulated as *religion and public life*. Both terms are fluid and dynamic and at various points will invite comparison with the U.S. experience.

New France, 1608–1760

As early as 1534, when French adventurer Jacques Cartier erected a cross at Gaspé, Christianity established a symbolic presence in what would become New France, but its actual roots date to 1608, when settlement began in Quebec. Following closely upon the termination of the religious wars in France, the new royal absolutism insisted on a Gallican church that was submissive to the state rather than

to Rome. Although limited toleration of Huguenots granted by the Edict of Nantes remained in effect until 1685, already in 1627 a royal charter to a commercial company stipulated that only French Roman Catholics were to be settled in the colony.

The task of the colonial church, as an arm to the state, was the religious formation and education of settlers and, more dauntingly, the Christianization of the aboriginal population. Motivated by fervid piety and eschatological zeal, male and female religious orders, some newly formed, eagerly undertook this work, and missions to native tribes became part of the network of trading alliances along the north shore of the St. Lawrence. Dependent on the military for protection, priests and missions inevitably found themselves caught up in the military and economic rivalries among European nations and their aboriginal allies. A similar interdependence could be found in the government of New France: senior clergy served as members of the governing council, while church services celebrated major state events such as the birth of a royal heir or a major victory in war.

In return for supporting the government the church received extensive benefits. All state appointments as well as some professions required proof of Roman Catholic baptism, and public morality was regulated by legislation. State financial support was significant, and by 1700 the state treasury provided 40 percent of the church's revenues, as well as offering generous subsidies to the building of ecclesiastical institutions. Church buildings dominated the colonial settlements, and the church functioned as the major patron of music, painting, and the arts.

In theory the partnership between church and state in New France was meant to work to mutual advantage, but as the state extended its power and colonial life became more stable, religious influence weakened. A shortage of priests meant less close contact with the general population, and government authorities found it impossible to enforce such moral regulations as the closing of taverns during church services and holy days. What did not change was the ecclesiastical obedience to state authority so characteristic of the Gallican church. When, after years of war, first Acadia in 1713 and then New France in 1763 fell to Britain, this obedience would be transferred to the new royal authority, a move made easier by Britain's measured pragmatic approach in the treaties and legislative acts that settled the conquest of the French colonies in North America.

*Canada as a British Colony, 1763–1867***Roman Catholics and the State in Quebec and the Maritimes**

The close association between the Roman Catholic Church and the state during the French period laid the foundations for a markedly tolerant attitude toward Roman Catholics in the newly acquired British colony. In England the classical church-state model of one religion had been adjusted by the late seventeenth century to permit some religious, but not civil, rights to minority Protestant religions, and to a lesser extent Roman Catholics. Upon their conquest of Acadia in 1713, the British had not outlawed Roman Catholicism, but in 1751 as war continued with France and concerns mounted about the population's loyalty, it was decided to deport the Acadians to the British colonies to the south.

Eight years later, with the defeat of Quebec and then Montreal, there was no thought of deportation, and despite the opposition of the archbishop of Canterbury and like-minded Protestants, there was no effort to convert the conquered Roman Catholics. What ensued was a relatively lenient practice, which, despite some restrictions on male orders, granted religious freedom to the conquered, thereby encouraging the continuation of cooperation between church and state. When compared with that of New France, ecclesiastical authority was in fact enhanced, for in the vacuum left by the departure of state officials for France, the bishop of Quebec became the population's de facto political and religious leader. Successive bishops recognized the need to maintain cordial relations with the new rulers and willingly sought the support of a government that shared their understanding of the church's conservative social role.

Pragmatic state concerns encouraged this cooperation. As Britain's colonies to the south became increasingly restive, the first two governors, James Murray and Guy Carleton, were anxious to win the hierarchy's respect and goodwill. The Quebec Act (one of the "intolerable" acts that eventually led to war in the American colonies) in 1774 granted unprecedented Roman Catholic rights of freedom of religion, including the right of clergy to collect their accustomed tithes. Although it was subsequently clarified that this did not make Roman Catholicism the established religion, such concessions did ensure the loyalty of the bishop and at least the neutrality of the majority of the *Canadiens* and lower clergy during the American and French revolutionary wars. In Nova Scotia, formerly Acadia, bans prohibiting entry into the priesthood and the ownership of property by

Roman Catholics were repealed in 1783, but there and in the subsequent separate colonies of New Brunswick (1785) and Prince Edward Island (1802) complete civil rights were not extended until 1830, immediately following the British Parliament's passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act.

Although these last two colonies had a substantial Roman Catholic population, it was only in the former New France that the church remained dominant. An influx of 5,000 Protestant loyalists following the formation of the new American republic resulted in the Constitutional Act of 1791, dividing the area into Lower and Upper Canada, each with its own colonial government and religious settlement. Since only a small number of Protestants had settled in Lower Canada, there was little immediate threat to Roman Catholics of any Church of England establishment. Of greater concern, however, was the influence of American and French revolutionary ideas on the colony's political leaders. The new constitutional arrangement had provided an elected assembly where a struggle for democratic rights now challenged the church's traditional conservative role in society, a position strengthened in 1818 by the appointment of the bishop of Quebec to the conservative Legislative Council. In 1837–1838 growing dissatisfaction and increasingly radical rhetoric resulted in several abortive rebellions, an indication that not all the faithful docilely accepted the church's insistence on loyalty to legitimate authority.

In the long term, however, the Roman Catholic Church recovered the place it had enjoyed before the advent of representative institutions in 1791. The failed rebellions and the radical reformers' loss of authority conclusively ended any fears that Lower Canadians might establish a secular state on the model of the American republic. Having won the respect of the British authorities for its conservative leadership during the rebellions, the church also received more freedom to establish new dioceses and bring priests and religious communities from France. Under its strengthened leadership, those distinctly French Canadian elements that had been part of the struggle for sovereignty—language, religion, and law—now became the foundation of a unique socially conservative Roman Catholic identity.

Facilitating this shift was a new constitutional arrangement. In 1841 in response to similar rebellions in Upper Canada but specifically to facilitate economic reform under English Canadian leadership, the Act of Union joined Lower and Upper Canada, now called Canada East and West, under one system of responsible government. To counter the potentially dangerous impact of such a union on Roman

Catholic identity, Bishop Ignace Bourget, recently appointed to the new diocese of Montreal, heartland of Protestant commercial interests in Canada East, instigated a thorough devotional revolution that affected all areas of life. Following the example of France and Italy, where the Church had been battling anticlerical and republican ideas much longer than in French Canada, Catholicism became thoroughly Roman or ultramontane. Unlike countries where Roman Catholicism was a minority faith, in Quebec its dominance allowed it to become a pervasive and public religion. There through means of distinctive architecture and art, rituals, schools, hospitals, and other social institutions, staffed by growing numbers in religious orders, the church was able to create a unique cultural space. Confederation in 1867 would help entrench this, for on the insistence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, health, education, and social services remained under provincial jurisdiction. Throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, Quebec's ultramontane public institutions would set it apart not only from Protestant Canada but also from other North American Roman Catholics.

Protestants and the State, 1750–1867

Whereas Roman Catholicism retained some signs of informal establishment in Quebec, the large numbers of Protestants who came to British North America from Britain and the new American Republic quickly began to either compete for state support or challenge the very idea of establishment. Neither position ended up with a clear victory, and not unlike Roman Catholicism in Quebec, by 1867 although church and state would be formally separate, the churches with the help of the state had achieved a strong public presence and wielded significant cultural authority.

Initially, the same conservative ideals that had inspired the colonial government's support of the Roman Catholic Church in Quebec also favored a Protestant establishment. As articulated most persistently by John Strachan, Anglican bishop of York, Upper Canada, in an age of revolutionary fervor church and state had to work together and create a social order characterized by obedience to authority and sound moral behavior. Thus at a time when in the new American republic churches were being disestablished, in the British colonies to the north a struggling Church of England tried to adapt establishment principles and practices to colonial soil. Legislation to this effect (but also granting freedom of religion to dissenters) had already been

passed in 1758 in Nova Scotia and, upon their formation as separate colonies, would follow in New Brunswick in 1787 and Prince Edward Island in 1802. For Upper Canada, which at its formation had no revenue for church support, the Constitutional Act of 1791 stipulated that one-seventh of the land be set apart for the support "of a Protestant clergy." These "clergy reserves" and a subsequent decision in 1836 to set aside further land for Anglican rectories quickly became a source of much criticism and displeasure among the other Protestant denominations, which greatly outnumbered the Anglican.

Equally contentious in all the colonies were Anglican efforts to educate an elite leadership for church and state. Well before the availability of financial resources, university charters were obtained to erect an exclusively Anglican King's College in Windsor, Nova Scotia, and another, somewhat less exclusive, in York, Upper Canada. Other Anglican entitlements such as the unique right to perform marriages and the exclusion of non-Anglicans from burial in parish cemeteries proved from the beginning to be unenforceable, when three-quarters of the population were members of a different denomination. Moreover, since the majority of Protestants belonged to evangelical denominations, there was strong resistance to any claim that an established church rather than individual conversion and faith provided the proper foundation for a moral social order. In Upper Canada there was the added aggravation of the clergy reserves, as members of the elected assembly decried the impediments these large tracts of undeveloped land posed to a commercializing market economy. By the 1830s the opinion of political reform in Britain had also turned against church establishment, and even the widening missionary movement proved a detriment when the Anglican Society for the Propagation of the Gospel moved its funding priorities from the Maritimes to new fields.

Though only Nova Scotia passed specific legislation, by 1854 church establishment had come to an end in all the colonies, with middle-class reformers now firmly in control and keen to dismantle all privileges of the former social order. In the meantime all religious groups had also acquired complete equality before the law in such areas as the right to conduct marriages, to vote, and to hold military and civil office, and the earlier automatic right of Anglican bishops to sit on the legislative councils had ended. The monopoly of the Anglican King's College in Windsor, Nova Scotia also had been successfully challenged: rival denominational colleges had been founded by Baptists, Methodists, Roman

Catholics, and Presbyterians, and in 1838, Rev. Thomas McCulloch, founder of the Presbyterian Pictou Academy, accepted the presidency of a publicly funded religiously neutral Dalhousie College in Halifax.

In Upper Canada, disestablishment had a more tortuous history, as various denominations contested Anglican privilege by claiming their own right to state financial support. By the 1830s government aid was being received not only by the Church of England but also by the Church of Scotland, the Wesleyan Methodists (for support to aboriginal missions), and the Roman Catholic Church (whose bishop premised his claim on pre-conquest status). In 1854 the growing strength of voluntarism finally terminated all denominational aid when the conservative administration of John A. Macdonald, Canada's future prime minister, voted the clergy reserves out of existence, with the proceeds to be applied to municipalities. As part of the arrangement and to the indignation of voluntarists, vested rights of the existing clergy were acknowledged in financial allotments to their respective denominations, primarily the Church of England, some to the Church of Scotland, and small amounts to the Roman Catholics and Wesleyan Methodists. Consolidated as a "commutation fund," the Anglican amount was sufficient to support its clergy into the next century.

In higher education similar vestiges of earlier denominational rivalry remained. In response to the Anglican monopoly of King's College, Wesleyan Methodists, the Church of Scotland, Roman Catholics, and the Free Church had all founded their own institutions by the 1840s. In 1849 a reform-minded legislature, sympathetic to resentment at Anglican privilege to public funds in a cash-strapped society, replaced King's College with a secular University of Toronto, but with small annual grants for the denominational colleges.

Unlike the Maritimes, which had no government-funded school system, elementary and secondary education in the Canadas would also retain evidence of an earlier period of cooperation between church and state. Through a series of compromises, what began in a sparsely settled colony as an assortment of individual schools to accommodate the religious beliefs of the local population turned into two distinct publicly funded school systems, Protestant and Roman Catholic. Influenced by reformers such as Horace Mann, Egerton Ryerson, western Canada's superintendent of education and former editor of the Methodist *Christian Guardian*, considered education a state responsibility and in the place of denominational schools advocated a single

nonsectarian Christian system. To Toronto's ultramontane bishop Armand de Charbonnel, such a system was only Protestant in disguise, and nothing less than complete Roman Catholic control of their own schools was acceptable. By 1859, with the help of like-minded representatives in the legislature and the support of the Protestant minority in Canada East, both Canadas had publicly funded schools for their respective Roman Catholic and Protestant religious minorities. At Confederation these rights would be entrenched in section 93 of the British North America Act.

This would be the only reference to religion in the new constitutional agreement, and the formal loss of church privilege by then in place was simply assumed. As had been the case with the 1791 amendment to the U.S. Constitution, religion was now a matter of free choice and expression, untrammelled by any established church. In both countries the move to voluntarism ensured a vital Christianity that contrasted favorably with the European tradition of establishment. In each, evangelical Protestants joined forces in a "united front" of interdenominational agencies devoted to such moral goals as temperance, Sabbath observance, and benevolence. Nevertheless in the second half of the nineteenth century it was Canada that struck observers as the more Christian nation. Where in the United States, debates over slavery and the subsequent Civil War fractured the evangelical front, in Canada Confederation in 1867 gave it a new impetus. However, the fact that Canada had not one but two activist forms of Christianity, evangelical Protestantism and ultramontane Roman Catholicism, also ensured that in an age of growing nationalism, religion would be a source of conflict as each group sought to shape the new country's identity.

Christian Canada, 1867–1967

Roman Catholics, who by 1871 had formed 40.4 percent of the population and feared the corrosive impact of "Americanism" in the newly formed country, emphasized those differences that distinguished them from the Protestant majority. The latter was concentrated in five main denominations: Anglican, Baptist, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Methodist (these last two consolidated by internal unions completed, respectively, in 1875 and 1883). Despite their different traditions, all shared a strong sense of evangelical mission, evocatively captured in the country's motto, taken from Psalm 72:8, "And He shall have Dominion from Sea to Sea." As the country expanded, both Catholics and Protestants looked to home missions and institutional

growth to extend their presence and in the process encountered new sources of conflict.

For the next century the entry of additional provinces, beginning with Manitoba in 1870 and finalized with Newfoundland in 1949, ensured that religious rights for minorities remained a potential battleground requiring continual political compromise. Faced with religiously mixed constituencies and usually satisfying neither side, federal politicians debated and prevaricated, reluctantly acquiescing in New Brunswick's decision in 1872 to cease providing public funds for Roman Catholic schools but subsequently extending such rights to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Newfoundland.

At a time when federal and provincial governments were relatively weak and underfunded, the opening of the west to white settlers called for increased cooperation between church and state. By its treaties, the federal government was obliged to provide schooling for Aboriginal children. Convinced that the goal of their education was to be "civilization" and "Christianization," the Department of Indian Affairs in the 1880s undertook to establish and fund a system of church-run residential schools. In contrast to their brief and limited role in the operation of Aboriginal boarding schools in the United States, Protestant and Roman Catholic denominations continued in their role on behalf of the Canadian government until the latter terminated the system in 1969.

Immigration to the west began seriously in the 1890s and in the first decade of the twentieth century brought over a million new settlers representing many different languages and faiths. That same period also saw a rise in urbanization, from 37.5 percent to 45.4 percent of the population. In each case the churches took on the giant's share of providing such basic institutions as schools, hospitals, and settlement houses for the newcomers, in part out of concern to meet their immediate needs but also to implant Christian ideals of citizenship. Anti-Catholicism and nativism combined with loyalty to the British Empire to shape a national vision of a distinctly increasingly Protestant cast. Evangelical concern for social holiness and Victorian values of sobriety and industry, with little distinction between Christ and culture, provided the impetus for large-scale campaigns of moral and social reform, from temperance to Sabbatarianism.

By the 1890s a new impetus to reform emerged in the Social Gospel, originating in American and British thought but flourishing in the less complicated Canadian setting.

Seeking to meet the challenges of large-scale immigration and growing urbanization through reform based on Christian principles of brotherhood and social justice, Social Gospelers looked beyond individual conversion to the moral reform of church and state. Methodists, who previously had favored moral suasion over reform legislation, now joined forces with Presbyterians and other evangelicals in ecumenical organizations such as the Lord's Day Alliance, which in 1906 saw the passing of a federal Lord's Day Act. Despite aggressive campaigns in every province, the achievement of prohibition legislation was more difficult, succeeding only in Prince Edward Island in 1901, until war gave sobriety a moral boost, making every province dry by 1919.

When Canada, with Britain, declared war on August 4, 1914, the churches offered enthusiastic support, often differentiating little between the spheres of Caesar and Christ in their eagerness to promote recruitment. Little tolerance was shown to religious groups of German or Russian background, and in 1917 under the Wartime Elections Act, Mennonites, Hutterites, and Doukhobors lost the franchise, not to be restored until 1920. Resentment also flared up against French Roman Catholics in Quebec, whose ties with Europe were much more distant and who strongly resisted the move to conscription in 1917. The high rate of service overseas by Roman Catholics of Irish origin, on the other hand, spoke of a shared Canadian and British identity with the Protestant majority.

For both Protestants and Roman Catholics the interwar years were a period of readjustment as capitalism evolved toward corporate concentration, forcing the federal government tentatively to take on a more regulatory role. Better equipped to assist those affected by economic downturn, it began to move into areas traditionally under the churches' purview. In the face of such changes, both mainline Protestants and Roman Catholics were able to recast their earlier visions of Christian nationhood and maintain cultural authority. In Canada Protestants were fortunate, for unlike in the United States, except for the relatively small Baptist denomination there were no fundamentalist schisms. Instead a major move to consolidation began in 1902, when, with a view to strengthening their national mission, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists entered into union discussions. Postponed until after the war, the union was finalized in 1925, and a new denomination, the United Church of Canada, came into existence by act of Parliament. Presbyterian resistance, however, left some 40 percent continuing as a separate denomination, with both sides turning

to the federal and provincial legislatures in protracted battles over property and name rights.

As the country's largest Protestant denomination, the United Church assumed leadership in adapting the earlier evangelical vision of social and moral reform to new realities. Already in 1918, building on the wartime regulation of industry, the General Conference of the Methodist Church had supported a committee report rejecting the capitalist system and calling for complete economic restructuring. In 1933 this radical approach received further impetus with the formation of a new party, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), led by J. S. Woodsworth, a former Methodist minister who since 1921 had served in Parliament as a Labor Independent. With the help of a fellow laborite, Woodsworth had been instrumental in forcing the Liberal government to pass old-age legislation in 1926, and as House Leader of the new CCF, he continued to push for reform, until the declaration of war in 1939 forced him as a pacifist to step down.

The Depression of the 1930s did not raise up radical religious voices only on the left. From 1935 to 1968 Alberta was ruled by the populist Social Credit Party, led successively by two fundamentalist preachers, William Aberhart and Ernest C. Manning, who as premiers freely transmitted their premillennialist Christianity in weekly broadcasts on the province's airwaves. In so doing they ran afoul of the Canadian Broadcasting Act of 1936, whose regulations, in a pattern similar to that in the United States, supported the interests of the mainline denominations. It was they who defined national ideals in civic life and who influenced the country's universities. Since 1907, through the ecumenical Christian Social Service Council and through progressive clergy professors, Protestant denominations played a leading role in developing university research and teaching in the new social sciences. As a result they also had a major input into social policy creation at both the federal and provincial levels and became crucial catalysts in creating a climate of opinion receptive to increased state intervention. Their social understanding of Christianity favored such ideals as universal old-age security and government-funded hospital insurance, and in 1946 the latter became reality under North America's first socialist government, the CCF in Saskatchewan, led by former Baptist minister Tommy Douglas.

In such ways the Protestant denominations were able to recast their earlier partnership with the state. They had historically taken little critical distance from the culture, and

thus their cooperation was not without ambiguity. It was only in 1939, for example, that they finally began to plead the cause of Jewish refugees seeking entry into Canada. Even then few questioned their cultural authority. A postwar religious boom resulted in new church development and healthy finances; church attendance among all Protestants continued to outstrip that in the United States; and in Ontario the public education system took new measures to reaffirm the moral teachings of Protestant Christianity. The impact of economic change on communal moral behavior also remained comparatively slow. It was not until 1950, for example, that Ontario legislation made it possible for communities to allow professional sports on Sundays, but even then it took another five years before local plebiscites accepted the change.

In Canada's other informal religious establishment, Roman Catholic Quebec, French Canadians continued to look to the church for leadership in adjusting to accelerated urbanization and corporate capitalism. As a conservative organic society dominated by church-run institutions, their way of life remained distinct from the dominant North American culture. Through the Confederation of Canadian Catholic Laborers, founded in 1921, the church played a pivotal role in the labor movement; its influence became pervasive also through cooperative movements inspired by Catholic social doctrine, especially credit unions, largely managed by priests. In the face of social change Roman Catholic identity remained strong as church-sponsored societies fostered moral behavior, from regular Sunday observance to modest dress and wholesome entertainment.

Although the numbers entering religious life continued to expand, economic and social restructuring also placed inordinate demands on church facilities. Between 1916 and 1931 people receiving care in church-run institutions more than doubled, and in 1921 the church reluctantly agreed to provincial subsidies for social service institutions in return for accountability and government inspection. Following even greater urban expansion after the Second World War, the church increased its dependence on the conservative government of Premier Maurice Duplessis, whose funding favored health, education, and welfare over transportation and natural resource development. Despite outward appearances, the 1940s and 1950s would later be seen as the twilight of Roman Catholic triumphalism, a time when the church's human resources weakened, when unions challenged the low pay of church-run institutions and clergy found themselves on both sides during strikes against several

American-owned companies allied with the Duplessis government.

The End of "Christian Canada," 1960s to the Present

In both French- and English-speaking Canada, the 1960s proved to be a watershed that saw the dismantling of religious authority in civic life, as traditional church and state ties became untangled. Most dramatic were the changes in Quebec. Faced with the advent of the Keynesian state and increased state intervention to control the social impact of monopoly capitalism, French Canadian Roman Catholics found themselves at a fork in the road. Rather than see the autonomous church-run social institutions that had largely defined their culture come under the control of the federal government and the English-speaking Protestant majority, they opted for a French Canadian provincial state. With the victory of a Liberal government in Quebec in 1960, there followed six years of "Quiet Revolution," in which the state intervened massively in economic life, nationalizing major industries such as hydroelectric power as well as assuming control over formerly church-run social welfare, health, and educational institutions. This happened with little resistance and in many cases with support from a church that, during these same years as a result of Vatican II, was undergoing its own restructuring with a view to clarifying its role within society.

Simultaneously and less self-consciously, the rest of Canada was also experiencing growing differentiation between the spiritual and temporal as a result of the state's increased regulatory role. By 1970, with the implementation of universal medicare, the churches' goal of a more just society, where all had equal access to such essentials as old-age security, medical care, and unemployment insurance, had largely been reached. As was the case in Europe and the United States, the restructuring of the state of which such legislation was a part happened within a context of broad social change. Greater leisure and consumer choices, more women in the labor force, increased reliance on technology, and extensive demographic mobility all worked together to redefine such traditional social structures as marriage, family, and community. In Canada, a milestone in this redefinition was the 1968 Divorce Act, which greatly facilitated divorce and ended a system in place since Confederation whereby divorce had been available only by private acts of Parliament on a case-by-case basis. The decriminalization of homosexuality the following year set in process even more

far-reaching changes in social attitudes, leading eventually to full civil rights for gays and lesbians and, in 2005, the passing of controversial legislation that made Canada the third country in the world, after the Netherlands and Belgium, officially to recognize same-sex marriage.

These and other social changes, such as government funding for abortions, became matters of deep division within denominations that had long shared a consensus on moral behavior. Formerly at the center of Canadian culture, they began to readjust their relationship to the state and in the 1960s and 1970s focused increasingly on the "prophetic" rather than the previous civic dimension of their role. Protests by the ecumenical Project North, for example, in 1975 successfully raised awareness of the danger to Aboriginal ways of a government-proposed pipeline in the Mackenzie Valley. Internal tensions intensified the loss of cultural leadership, especially in cases when a concern for social justice meant rejecting the denominations' traditional moral codes. Thus in 1988 the United Church of Canada at a cost to its unity moved to accept the ordination of practicing gays and lesbians and later became the only major denomination formally to support the legalization of same-sex marriage. Those denominations that had never claimed cultural leadership, and whose memberships were smaller and less diverse, largely escaped fragmentation and ambiguity. Becoming more politically active, they joined in like-minded coalitions for a more effective voice to maintain traditional Christian signposts in public life. Foremost in seeking to influence public policy were organizations such as Citizens for Public Justice, the Mennonite Central Committee, and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, which in the years since its founding in 1964 became increasingly skilled in moving its constituency from isolation into legal and political engagement.

Compared with the "culture wars" in the United States, the response to social change in Canada has been more muted. Evangelicals, who compose only a tenth of the population, compared with a quarter in the United States, realize that theirs is a society wary of public religious discourse. Unlike the United States, Canada has no civil religion that unites state and society: It has no Puritan forebears who established a "city on a hill," it had no war of independence, and its global role has been modest. Formed in the 1860s for pragmatic reasons, it has been shaped by two religiously dominant groups with conflicting understandings of what it meant to be Christian and Canadian. When in the 1950s and 1960s its culture began dramatically to change

and the old ways fell under critique, the authority these two informal religious establishments had long exercised melted away. What emerged was a thoroughly secular society. In 1961 only .05 percent of Canadians reported no religious affiliation; by 2001 this had climbed to 16.2 percent. Polls in the late 1940s registering weekly church or synagogue attendance at 67 percent by 2003 showed a drop to 19 percent, with 43 percent declaring that religion was unimportant as guidance in daily life.

Despite a reference to “the supremacy of God” in its preamble, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which was part of the state’s repatriation of its constitution in 1982, accelerated the dismantling of “Christian Canada.” In the public school system of Ontario, where a non-denominational Protestant form of religion remained officially normative, a series of challenges in the mid-1980s in the name of religious pluralism and freedom of choice resulted in the eradication of all Christian symbols from the curriculum and holiday celebrations. Provincial legislation setting aside Sunday as a common day of rest, a hallmark of the old informal establishment, was also successfully challenged as being at variance with the practices of believers of other world religions as well as those of no religion.

There remain a few vestiges of the traditional relationship between church and state, notably the British monarch as head of state, the opening of some legislative and municipal sessions with prayer, and tax exemptions for registered religious institutions. Evidence of the churches’ historical relationship with public education continues in some provinces. Publicly supported separate schools exist in Saskatchewan, Alberta, the two territories, and Ontario, where controversial legislation in 1985 extended full funding to the final three years of secondary education. Several provinces—British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba—have chosen to provide partial funding to independent, mostly religious schools. In Newfoundland, on the other hand, voters in 1997 approved the replacement of a publicly funded school system of eight denominations by a single secular system. After forty years of reform and study, Quebec in 1998 also abolished its confessional school boards in favor of integrated secular schools. A lasting, financially costly, and shameful legacy of the old partnership between church and state have been the residential schools. Disclosures in the 1990s of sexual abuse in these church-run institutions have resulted in protracted battles in the courts and large expenditures by the churches for legal costs and compensation to the victims, culminating in the Indian Residential Schools

Settlement Agreement in 2007, which finally clarified and settled the obligations of the federal government and the churches.

Accompanying the dismantling of the churches’ legacy in public life has been an intentional shift to a multicultural society. In 1832 Jews had been granted political and civic equality in Lower Canada, the first to achieve such status in the British Empire, but it was not until the 1960s that the much-vaunted “Canadian mosaic” emerged. In 1967 a new immigration act welcomed non-Western groups, and in 1971 this was followed by the federal government’s adoption of multiculturalism as a national policy. Enshrined a decade later in the Charter as foundational to Canadian social and political imagination, multiculturalism reflects the shift to a secular society, and in public policy has proved to be more receptive to promoting ethnic than religious diversity. This omission of religion from the Canadian diversity model has undermined the country’s ability to accommodate the religious practices of people of non-Christian faiths, who have arrived in large numbers since the changed immigration policy. In 2001 these constituted 6.2 percent of the population, and it is estimated that by 2017 this will have almost doubled. In a society that prides itself on ethnic tolerance, controversy continues to erupt over such religious symbols as a Sikh boy taking his *kirpan* to school or Muslim girls wearing the *hijab* at sports events.

Both the secular multiculturalism that subsumes religion under ethnicity and the public’s resistance to religious pluralism suggest that Canada’s history of religious establishment still casts a long shadow. Alternatively, at a time of global resurgence in public religion, the country’s complex past of accommodating Roman Catholics and Protestants also places it in a leading position to promote religious pluralism as a “lively experiment” in a multicultural secular society.

See also *Anglican Tradition and Heritage*; *Canada* entries; *Church and State: Early Republic*; *Education: Colleges and Universities*; *Establishment, Religious*; *Freedom, Religious*; *Roman Catholicism: Tradition and Heritage*; *Same-Gender Marriage*; *Social Gospel*.

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Canada: Pluralism

Visitors from the United States to the English-speaking segment of Canada often remark that there is little difference between the two countries and point with good reason to the many common religious and cultural institutions as proof. Furthermore, they speak of a common "freedom of religion" in Canadian society and note the similar traditions in organized religion, such as Catholicism. They also see similar problems arising from common religious histories, as recent court cases on both sides of the border testify. Those of a scholarly bent see that similar concepts have been utilized to evaluate socioreligious phenomena, as, for example, Edmund H. Oliver's use of American frontier theory in his authoritative western Canadian Christian history, *Winning of the Frontier* (1930). However, in pressing the point, these American visitors are somewhat baffled by the negative Canadian response to these sociable and linking comments; it is a theme here that part of the reason for such a response

lies in the diversity and pluralism within the Canadian religious domain.

This is not to say that Canadian social concern for religion is more "European," since Canadians join with their American confreres in churches and religious organizations in roughly the same proportion. The Canadian Institute of Public Opinion reported in 1974 that 39 percent of Canadian adults attended church weekly, a figure that compares favorably with 42 percent of American adults. The 1972 Gallup Poll, which provided the American figure, also indicated that this percentage was higher than in Switzerland, Greece, and Germany, and significantly higher than in the Scandinavian countries. Statistics indicate that in 2001, 77.1 percent of Canadians identified themselves as Christian, while 76.5 percent of Americans were similarly self-identified.

However, joining may not indicate much about affiliation, and church attendance, once used by scholars to determine Canadians' religiosity, must now be replaced by more representative instruments: The most recent study of religion arising out of the 2001 census indicates continuing decline of church attendance and rise of nonaffiliation. According to Warren Clark and Grant Schellenberg, in their 2006 survey discussed in *Canadian Social Trends*, adults with no affiliation or who do not attend religious services increased from 31 percent to 43 percent between 1985 and 2004; no affiliation increased from 12 percent to 19 percent. This compares with Barry Kosmin, Egon Mayer, and Ariela Keysar's 2001 survey in the United States, "American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS), which found that 14.1 percent specified "no religion." Furthermore, recently there has been considerable divergence of opinion toward religion by Canadian-born and immigrant communities, with the percentage of those Canadian-born respondents reporting no affiliation rising from 33 percent in 1985 to 48 percent in 2004, while immigrant religious affiliation remained constant. This suggests that with the significant increase in immigration into Canada since 1985, religious values may likewise reflect greater diversity. Jack Jedwab, from the Canadian Studies Association, predicts that Canadian religion will change dramatically over the next five years; the Muslim population alone likely will increase by 160 percent according to his calculations (www.acs-aec.ca/oldsite/Polls/30-03-2005.pdf). To this feature of Canada must now be added the extraordinary rise of private religion. Of those who reported no regular attendance at religious services, 37 percent indicated that they practiced some form of religious activity on a weekly basis.

Still, numerical values may not indicate all dimensions of religiosity in a country; this is certainly the case in Canada. Diversity and pluralism have all along played a key role in the country's makeup, but the numbers tell of a more conservative organizational norm: Although Canadian institutional religion is pluralistic, it has an establishment character. Catholics in Canada make up over 50 percent of those who self-identify as Christian, and three churches—the United, Anglican, and Presbyterian—currently represent about 62 percent of Protestants. Canadian church polity reflects the centralizing tendencies: None of the major institutions is congregational, and the United Church of Canada, while it is the country's largest Protestant denomination and itself formed by corporate union, is far more centralized than, for example, either the Methodist or the Baptist church in the United States.

One way in which pluralism has developed in Canada has been through the key role that the church has always played in the immigration process—by being there as receiver of the homesteaders and by providing whole groups for homesteading. In the former, right from the founding of Canada the church was present to shape cultural developments; in the latter, the radiation from center to periphery has continued to exercise a restraining influence on divisions, with smaller groups following the model of centralized bureaucracy so evident in the larger institutions. Thus pluralistic religion became a feature in the very founding of the nation through the religious groups that were just transported en masse to Canada and encouraged to set up shop there. Both tended to eschew schisms.

In a peculiar way, the conflicts between the French and English have assured an establishment mentality in Canada. When the company of New France was granted the charter in 1627, all colonists were required to be Roman Catholic, even though France had a sizable religious minority in the Huguenots. It was partially this traditional homogeneity in New France that allowed the Roman Catholic hierarchy to support Confederation, as one way of preventing a feared annexation by the United States; and the creation of provinces (including the two most populous, Ontario and Quebec) was a tacit recognition of the counterbalance of Catholic Quebec and Protestant Ontario. The autonomy in cultural and educational matters in Quebec granted to the Roman Catholic hierarchy in exchange for its support for Confederation has guaranteed a self-confident church, which in turn has allowed it to influence public policy and initiate debate across denominational and provincial lines.

While this balance of religious forces might have provided Canada with positive elements for discourse across diversity in the early decades, this did not occur. Rather, a pluralism of viewpoints was reinforced. In fact, from the early days a tone of rancor and competition prevailed and played a role in the mission enterprises and immigration reactions of the churches in the developing West. Protestants looked to it as an arena to extend the Reformation heritage, and Catholics saw it as the logical extension of the church in Quebec. The French hierarchy supported the French language and culture as a means of maintaining the dominance of the Catholic vision in Canada, while Protestant groups labored vigorously so their dreams would not take second place. The one positive result not immediately evident was that settlement on the prairies was intimately tied to the “national” church, in direct contrast with the situation in the United States, where individuals and sects looked to western settlement for religious and personal freedom. Because of these characteristics, it must be recognized that organized religion asserted far more than a voluntary role in the shaping of the Canadian experience.

Another way that pluralism triumphed was through a cluster of ideological concerns with religious dimensions. Some of these concerns were connected with the mission of the church to the masses of immigrants. More than one church official saw the Christianizing of the nation as a necessary ingredient in civilizing it. The church, whether Catholic or Protestant, developed energetic mission programs, at the heart of which was the conviction that moral fiber and strong character were essential in building up the kingdom of God. Such a mission was to blossom mightily during the nineteenth century, when Catholic orders and Protestant mission groups set their sights on continuing the great values of Christian tradition in the new nation of Canada. These two religious orientations differed significantly in the definition of the mission—the ultramontanists of Quebec would look to a strong hierarchy, almost medieval in ideal, from the local parish through the archbishops to the Holy Father in Rome, while the most aggressive Protestants, the Methodists and the Baptists, would brandish millennial visions and actively fight against alcohol and other social vices in their effort to bring about the morally upright Canada of their hopes. Yet both Catholics and Protestants wanted legislation to reflect their concepts, and in many cases government was shaped by their concerns. Ultimately social activism embodied in legislation was to secularize the mission legacy of the churches, giving Canadian

governments the appearance of both liberalism and community sensitivity. Especially among Protestants, the moral responsibility built into missions would translate into the material and cultural development of the nation when the original message had withered and died.

This focus on community over the individual has made the Canadian experience far less schismatic and particularist than the American experience; Canada's wild West was very dull indeed when compared with that of its southern neighbor. The Northwest Mounted Police were already there before the settlers arrived, and the sense of extending tradition in a hostile environment applied not only to religion but also to law. Since some of the greatest conflicts were between groups within a religious tradition, the law mediated for them. Because law was held to embody the moral dimensions of society, it transmuted into a kind of supra-value-system for all. Respect for law remains one of the chief traits on which Canadians pride themselves, despite the rapid rise of crime in cities.

Loyalties to community and law have had their impact in turn on the religious life. No authentically Canadian religious group has sprung up. A number of movements and revivals have influenced the whole, but no new group has appeared as a genuinely Canadian religion. Canada's best-known evangelist, Aimee Semple McPherson, did not remain in her homeland but found her greatest success in Los Angeles. Individual initiative in a number of areas always seemed to run counter to the prevailing spirit of the country, with the result that Canada is lauded for its stability and conservatism while being chastised for its reluctance to risk and its resistance to difference. Conversion to a new or radical group is not effectively salable in Canada—only sixty-one groups are noted in the 2001 census of identifiable Christians—in contrast, the United States must have several hundred.

Then, too, religion has not sparked any equivalent of "Manifest Destiny." No religious group has linked its identity with Canada as a nation, and religionists have been far less concerned with the fact of Canada's existence than with its character. Since the inculcated values were the finest from the past, Canada was no "lively experiment." The spiritual patriotism that marks the church in the United States is absent in Canada, and the messianic mythology underlying the Union is exclusive to that domain. The church in Canada has been excited by national achievements, such as construction of the national railway system, but it has scarcely presented the country with a definite

answer as to whether Canada has any destiny, let alone one clear and manifest. The result is that participation in a local religious organization does not provide the average Canadian with an entrée into national identity and seldom links him or her with fellow Canadians in a common national symbol-system. The qualifier *seldom* is deliberate. The Roman Catholic Church may for some Canadians represent that system, while for others it is the United Church. By acknowledging its pluralism legally, however, and by firmly holding to ethnic and racial differences, Canada has effectively moved religion out of national identity. This does not mean that there is no religious dimension to Canadian identity, but that it may be of a diffuse and ambiguous nature. Nevertheless, some aspects of Canadian culture have religious dimensions, and these do foster a kind of civil religion.

Canadian "Civil Religion"

The most evident example of Canadian civil religion is in the province of Quebec. Quebec society has so embodied a vision of French culture in North America, and has given it form and substance through state festivals, legendary heroes, and popular epics, that elements of a grand destiny appear. This collective direction has continued to play an effective role, even when the province became far more ethnically divided and certainly more secular than in the ultramontane days of New France. It has continued to shape public opinion in the conflict between Quebec and the federal government and the other provinces, ultimately giving birth to the Parti Québécois and the Bloc Québécois, with their separatist agendas.

If, as some have contended, Protestant civic piety is one meaning of civil religion, then the other provinces have had their own form. Even when immigration has brought non-Christian traditions, the mores and customs take on a Protestant civic coloring. Some provinces, such as Alberta, mindful of the serious problems that prejudice and lack of communication between various social groups can have, have instituted major curriculum reforms with a view to incorporating more values in the educational diet. The very will to do this indicates a transorganizational ethic and a certain concept of what Canadians "should be" that harks back to the nation-building images of the missionaries of an earlier time. It also reflects a Canadian identity transcending sectarian consciousness.

If Canadians live in isolated communities strung out along the U.S. border, and if they relate primarily through

local group consciousness, one way they are held together is by a collective response to their natural environment (the following poem fragment by F.R. Scott, "Laurentian Shield," from *Events and Signals* [1954]):

Hidden in wonder and snow, or sudden with
summer,
This land stares at the sun in a huge silence
Endlessly articulating something we cannot hear.

The image of the land is not always depicted as so alien. Jacques Cartier went to great lengths to describe it as a "new earth," deliberately drawing on Christian allusions. The prolific writings of the Jesuits present a land of natural paradisaical dimensions. Even today, with all the scientific knowledge of the northern lights, people are overwhelmed by their dramatic and brilliant display on a cold winter's night, and poets and thinkers have etched the experience in the public's imagination. Thus it is certainly impossible on the basis of artistic and literary traditions to talk of "being Canadian" without noting the connectedness of identity with the land. By extension, the "land" has also been linked to weather: Canada was the land of constant engagement with cold—it tied the country together. A byproduct of the cold is hockey; the sport often overrides the fragmentation of a huge land by uniting disparate sections around the arena. In prairie towns the arena stands out as the largest building in the community, and it dominates the skyline, far beyond any church building. Secularists insist it reflects a much more tangible Canadian religion than Christianity.

If the land is so multivalent and perhaps awe inspiring, the human response posed by experiencing it is fairly simple and straightforward: one is lost. George Grant's *Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism* is famous for the description of what happens to loyalty to Canada in the wake of a liberalism bent on fulfilling its individual entrepreneurial goals regardless of the cost. The result is a book moving for its sense of loss.

Other writers have attributed the loss not so much to the awe-inspiring nature of an unforgiving land or to the inability to relate to its first inhabitants but to slavish attention to U.S. values, culture, and influence. The ambiguity for identity is obvious. Some of Canada's best writers—Margaret Atwood, for example—use losing and victimization as unifying themes in their writing. It is too facile to regard this literature of deprivation as Canada's reaction to living next door to success. The United States throws a long shadow,

and existing at a time of doubt and alienation surely helps, but the trait goes back to the way people have looked upon their history. Some see it as a profound expression of the Canadian soul.

The Religions of the First People, Indian and Inuit

The people whose culture has been most associated with the land and who best have a reason for "being lost" are the people who were there when Europeans arrived. The diversity of religions and religious practices among Canada's Aboriginal population is legendary and quite beyond reduction to a few themes. The main conceptions are treated elsewhere in this collection, but something should be said about the Aboriginal response to the forced assimilation practices of the federal government and their impact on Canadian religion. It was Canada's major churches—Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, United—that participated in the discriminatory residential school policy of the federal government; it was they who agreed to set up schools that removed Aboriginal children from their parents, sent them away from their villages, forcefully attempted to undermine Aboriginal languages, and placed many vulnerable children in destructive situations. The result was devastating, leaving a history of alcoholism and abuse in its train. The long-festering sore between Christian traditions and Aboriginal peoples has finally been recognized officially and publicly: in 2005, the federal government set up a fund of \$1.7 billion to compensate those who endured the abuses of the policy, and on June 11, 2008, the Canadian government formally apologized to Canadian Aboriginals for the policy.

However, this was not the only religious reality that Europeans brought. They brought traditions that were embraced by Aboriginal peoples. Many Aboriginals married Christians in the early years of migration, forming another largely Catholic people known as Métis. Northwestern and Alaskan Aboriginals came in contact with Orthodox priests from the Russian Orthodox tradition and established firm Orthodox churches. Missionaries founded churches of various kinds funded by European or eastern Canadian churches. Even those who eventually rejected the establishment churches were attracted to aspects of the Christian message, especially the message clothed in evangelical and Pentecostal attire. Or they embraced minority traditions, such as the Bahai. The result is that the Aboriginal community today demonstrates the same pluralism found in the larger Canadian community.

It is important to consider the role of religious reaction among Aboriginal religions themselves. For example, messianic movements have influenced Canadian Indians since the seventeenth century. The Ghost Dance religion and the various nativistic movements are examples. More recently, the Native American Church, with its focus on peyote rituals, has had an impact, especially among the Plains people. This religion has succeeded in overthrowing many of the old ways still practiced by these tribes, notably in Saskatchewan as late as 1982.

Of a different order is the almost universal standing that elders have even when they are in a completely different cultural area. Young educated Indians are attracted to this sophisticated elder, who is able to represent to them the old ways but in a manner that stresses the broad unifying elements. Especially attractive is the herbalist and healer, who combines many of the characteristics sited by believers regardless of which religion they espouse.

Reservations, for all the segregation and loss of status that they imply to their inhabitants, have kept some areas relatively isolated from white prying, allowing some rituals to be carried on. Unfortunately, young Indians leaving the reservations have negative feelings toward them, and the elders are often included in those feelings. The result is that the young have rejected both Christianity and the old ways. Some have turned to atheism or agnosticism. With few skills in an urban society, they have become a disillusioned generation. In some areas of the prairies, the majority of the prison population is native, and alcohol and drug abuse is commonplace.

Canadian willingness to accept some form of collective representation of Aboriginal nations in Parliament might aid Indian identity in a way that would encourage a revival of traditional ways and, since Aboriginal rights are guaranteed in the new Canadian constitution, the Indians' special place in the makeup of the country is basically established. The role their religions will play is a question that has not been faced, but the Indians' fundamental religious connection with the land may have a long-term impact should Canadians define their identity in its terms.

Immigrant Religion

George Etienne Cartier, one of the fathers of Confederation, in 1865 expressed (as cited in Alistair Sweeny, 1976) the basis of religion for Canadian history as a unity of diversity:

If we unite we will form a political nationality independent of the national origin and religion of individuals. As to the objection that we cannot form a great nation because Lower Canada is chiefly French and Catholic, Upper Canada English and Protestant, and the Maritime provinces mixed it is completely futile. . . . In our confederation there will be Catholics and Protestants, English and French, Irish and Scotch, and each by its efforts and success will add to the prosperity, the might, and the glory of the new federation.

The fruit of this policy was to accept religion as a formative element in Canadian identity—the Charter of Rights and Freedoms notes that Canada exists under God—yet it ignored the potential conflicts in the prioritizing tendencies of religious commitment. For example, it said nothing about disagreements on what the foundations are of social and ethical norms.

The nature of Canadian immigration has been directly influenced by the national churches: in the early days a majority of the people came to Canada from or through their organizations. The result was that the number of immigrants with little church affiliation was small. Especially when the prairies opened up and the flood to the West began, arrangements for immigration that respected certain “values” allowed churches (for example, the Mennonites) to sanction the movements of whole communities of people onto the land. The result has been churches of national and ethnic consciousness.

The policy was carried out through the active participation of the governments of central Canada for their own reasons. It was, on the one hand, a colonization policy, designed to carry on Canadian national destiny by peopling the prairies. Part of this was motivated by a concern that if Canada did not populate the West, the United States would. Immigrants were part of national establishment policy. In addition, the prospect of a West that required the manufacturing capabilities of eastern Canada was attractive to Toronto and Montreal. But there was also Canadian ideology behind this move; a vast unpopulated land lay open to developing British conceptions of law, justice, and ultimately a distinctive sense of freedom.

Immigrant ethnic and religious diversity was the price the eastern governments were willing to pay, since it not only offset the dreams of the French Catholics but also guaranteed a grateful and submissive foreign contingent. All this took place in a remarkably short period of time, between

1870 and 1920, a factor that made continuity all the more important.

The manner in which traditional forms of religion came to dominate the West can be gauged by a look at the Orthodox Church. Orthodoxy derives from peoples of eastern Europe, Africa, the eastern Mediterranean, and Asia; the distinction from the Roman Catholic Church is usually identified with the schism of 1054, when the Eastern Church broke away from Rome. On occasion, Orthodoxy is known as the Eastern or Byzantine rite, to parallel it with the Western rite of Roman Catholicism.

The use of *rite* is significant, because for these Eastern churches it is the ritual commonality that unites, not the administrative and authoritative jurisdiction. This is demonstrated by the fact that there are believers in Canada who may owe allegiance to the ancient patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, or Jerusalem; they may also belong to one of the so-called national churches of Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Albania, Poland, or the Czech Republic; they could adhere to the autonomous churches of Sinai or Finland or Japan; or they could have recently joined a daughter church formed from one of the aforementioned national churches in Canada and the United States. There is also a small group of believers who do not adhere to this "Byzantine" Orthodoxy but rather follow the non-Chalcedonian doctrine of Christ's nature. (This doctrine places emphasis on the divine in the person of Christ, with the human element reduced to an impersonal humanity.) These Oriental Orthodox—the Armenian, Coptic, Syrian, Ethiopian, and South Indian Orthodox—churches are rejected as noncanonical by the Byzantines.

Probably the largest group practicing the Byzantine rite is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada, numbering in excess of 140,000 members. Their ancestors came to Canada at the turn of the century in the immigration flood, and most of them were from peasant stock; they have been joined recently by post-World War II immigrants who settled not on the prairies but in the eastern manufacturing centers. They came principally from Galicia in the Ukraine. The first church was established in Gardenton, Manitoba, which is still the scene of an annual pilgrimage. They are not regarded as canonically Orthodox by the other Byzantine rite churches, because Galicia was traditionally under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Church and used the Ruthenian rite. The Galicians have a married clergy, however, and the Church of Rome wished to dispense with that right. They also had used the Ukrainian language in the

liturgy. By 1918 an organization called the Ukrainian Greek Brotherhood evolved, and many of its adherents joined the Orthodox Church in Nova Scotia. The church emerged from a growing awareness of solidarity at the turn of the century, and the resulting organization, founded in 1921, follows Orthodox liturgical practice and accepts the seven ecumenical councils. It is also significant that Orthodoxy first came to North America not through immigration but through Russian Orthodox missionary activity among the Aleut in Alaska. The diocese was established in 1799 and by 1905 had an archdiocese in New York. Most of the Orthodox organizations have a North American rather than a Canadian focus.

An entirely different genre of church is associated with the Doukhobors. A pietistic group, the Doukhobors originated in Russia in the eighteenth century. They rejected both the Russian Orthodox Church and the state. It was this conflict that led them to Canada in 1899. Indeed, they were opposed to all the trappings of church, dispensing with priests, liturgies, sections of the Bible, and church edifices, and they resisted any education that would lead them away from the immediacy of the oral tradition and spiritual enlightenment. Their life in the Crimea had centered on communal living and total nonviolence; the latter concept was close to that of the Quakers. When the czar moved to conscript the young men into his army, they resisted. News of the resulting bloodshed reached sympathetic ears in Canada, where Clifford Sifton was looking for strong farmworkers, like the Mennonites who had come earlier. By June 1899 over 7,500 Doukhobors had come to Canada, the largest group migration to the prairies. They immediately moved to communal farms in Saskatchewan, where they faced strong resistance from other immigrants, who envied the huge tracts of land they had been given. Ultimately they had to abandon their communal living and principles of universal peace and brotherhood. Required to give an oath of loyalty before they could get land, some simply "affirmed" and received land; many refused on grounds of religious conviction. This group, the largest, became known as the Orthodox Doukhobors and was led by the mystical Peter V. Verigin. They purchased private land in British Columbia and became quite successful. A third group, seeking a totally untrammelled existence, began a trek across the West to British Columbia and became notorious very quickly. The negative publicity applied to all Doukhobors indiscriminately, and the members in British Columbia were twice banned from voting in federal elections.

Despite the extraordinary nature of their religious convictions and the difficulties in transplanting them to Canada, the Doukhobors have persevered and today represent a Russian group that maintains an almost mystical belief in the homeland and in the principles of communal and non-violent living.

The Mennonites are another group who arrived on the prairies, but with an entirely different story. Originally an urban people, the Mennonites had been forced to live in rural areas because of their nonviolent and independent church conceptions. They became very productive farmers, achieving their most extensive holdings in Russia, where they enjoyed near self-government. The successors of Alexander I withdrew these privileges, however, and the Mennonites moved to the Canadian prairies, where the government gave them large tracts of land together and made concessions about military service and their own schools. Early in the 1920s thousands of Mennonites immigrated, displaced by the Russian Revolution. The large size of the group meant conflict with other Canadians and splits within the group over policy. Their goal of living an isolated life evaporated under the strain of realities in the Canadian West. Their Christian separation of church from state, the kingdom of God from that of human construction, and distinctive ways of life were all blurred under the pressure of living with others from all over the world.

Major Religious Diversity

No discussion of Canada's diversity would be complete without some mention of traditions of an entirely different nature—Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. All have played a role in the development of Canada's religious environment.

Jewish immigrants came to Nova Scotia from New England in the mid-1750s, and Sephardim from England journeyed to Montreal at about the same time. By 1768 they had formed a group called Shearith Israel, similar to one in England. The census of 1901 reported only 16,400 Jews, but a dramatic change came in the next decade when the western Jewish population increased more than fourfold. This shift to the prairies came about through Jewish societies in the East, such as the Colonization Committee of the Young Men's Hebrew Benevolent Society of Montreal, which sponsored the oldest Jewish farm community, in Oxbow, Saskatchewan, in 1892. Farming communities were also established in Alberta and Manitoba. In 1905 many responded to Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier's speech on the occasion of the

condemnation of the Russian pogrom against the Jews of Kishinev, when Laurier promised a "hearty welcome" to Jews who came to Canada. Following World War I, however, Jewish immigration slowed to a trickle, and in the face of the Nazi peril in Europe, Canada virtually shut the door on the problem. Meanwhile, believers moved from farming communities to towns and cities as they sought the social and religious advantages that numbers provided. Today there are synagogues in only two centers outside major cities—Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and Lethbridge, Alberta.

Most of the first Muslims came to Canada from Lebanon, and they set to work not as farmers but as peddlers. A nucleus made Edmonton, Alberta, their departure point for selling routes to the North. These early families were finally able to construct a mosque, completed in 1938 with the help of a few Christian friends and much sacrifice. After World War II the much less restrictive immigration laws opened the way for additional Muslim immigrants, most of whom were from Pakistan and India. Today the South Asian population constitutes the largest contingent of Muslims in Canada; they are principally centered in urban areas, notably Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal. A most unusual town in Alberta, Lac La Biche, has a sizable Muslim population, all of whom are Arab, and a mosque that is one of the main sights in town. Edmonton now boasts an Arabic-English bilingual program in its public school system, with classes through high school, and recently a joint Muslim community sponsored the first Chair in Islamic Studies at the University of Alberta.

The earliest Muslim immigrants were Sunnis, and the early preponderance of Muslims in Canada belong to that tradition, but in the twentieth century, largely through the policies of dictator Idi Amin, significant numbers of Ismailis came to Canada from Uganda. They settled in all major urban areas across the country and have had a major impact on Canada's religious diversity. At the same time, when Canada liberalized its immigration policies in the late 1950s, thousands of Muslims from most major Muslim populations came to Canada, bringing that diversity along—including Shias and Ahmadiyas from regions as disparate as Syria, Pakistan, Somalia, and India. The Druze, a sect with roots in Islam, also arrived at this time, contributing to the religious diversity of the country. The arrival of all these groups has not been without controversy, especially after 9/11. Their growing presence jarred some Canadians, and some communities in Quebec passed a policy on just how immigrants were to act and dress. This sparked an inquiry from the

provincial government on integrating divergent cultures into its society, with mixed results.

In 2001 in Toronto, a group proposed to establish Sharia law for legal issues, including divorce and custody. The Canadian Council of Muslim Women launched a nationwide debate over this and argued vigorously against such a plan. The Ontario government set up a committee to study the issue but finally rejected the initiative. After 9/11, the Canadian government supported the U.S. “war on terror,” including the attack on Afghanistan, to which it contributed forces. However, after 9/11, Muslims were often profiled in airport security and had to deal with widespread antagonism. While not as severe as the curtailing of Muslim freedoms that occurred in the United States, as noted in 2007 by Aisha Pena, Canadians generally supported the curbing of Muslim militants. Wearing the *hijab* was viewed as close to subversive in some areas of the country for a time and became a matter of wider conflict when the *hijab* was banned for girls playing soccer by the national soccer body. Subsequently, public opinion forced the ruling to be rescinded. The agreement to follow the lead of the U.S. president George W. Bush against Muslim jihadists, however, backfired when the Canadian government collaborated with the CIA in September 2002 in sending an innocent citizen, Maher Arar, to Syria to be tortured. The public outcry forced the federal government to admit its collusion in this miscarriage of justice and to negotiate a sizable compensation. As part of the fallout, the Canadian public refused to support the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien won widespread praise for his refusal to participate.

Canadians remain divided on how loyal Muslim groups are to Canada, and some have wondered why few moderate voices seem to be heard. No Muslim in Canada has argued publicly, as has Ameer Ali in Australia, about Muslim militancy and the need to embrace a tolerant Islam. In a marked break with this culture of gloom, however, has come the humorous television show entitled *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. A lighthearted take on the foibles and ironies of being Muslim in a small prairie town has captured the imagination of the Canadian public and given Islam a sympathetic audience. (It has since been sold to American television.) Still, the result of most of the recent events has definitely placed Muslims on the defensive, and a sense of unease rests on the Muslim community in Canada today.

The earliest Asian religious believers came to southern Alberta and the coastal regions of British Columbia from Japan at around the turn of the twentieth century. Some

worked on the railways; some came to work in the coal mines or to begin farming. A number of the latter settled in Raymond, Alberta. They banded together in 1929 and established the Raymond Buddhist Church, the first in the province. They purchased a former Mormon church and today have one of the finest temples in North America.

When World War II began, the Japanese were rounded up and sent to internment camps in Alberta and in the interior of British Columbia. Their forced evacuation from the coast spurred the building of churches, and new congregations sprang up in Taber, Picture Butte, Coaldale, and Rosemary, with Lethbridge, the largest town, as the center of Japanese activities. After the war, the Alberta churches organized into the Alberta *Kyoku*, or ministerial jurisdiction, as part of four *Kyokus* in Canada: British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and the East. Despite a split and the formation of the Honpa Buddhist Church of Alberta, the Buddhists of the West have maintained an ongoing congregation. Regular and special services of the True Pure Land Buddhist tradition are conducted by resident ministers. Following the federal apology to the Japanese for their incarceration, relations between Buddhist communities and government institutions have been friendlier. Edmonton has had a continuing Dharmadhatu congregation, and that group has also decided to establish a permanent base in Halifax because of a stable community base; meditation rituals were successfully introduced to Canadians, and today followers of Buddhist traditions are found all across the country, with many converts among Caucasians.

The federal government’s multicultural policy has encouraged the various ethnic and religious groups to preserve their traditions, and Canada now has congregations of religions as disparate as the Rastafarians, Sikhs, and Hindus, as well as the traditional ancestor worship of the Chinese. The Sikhs suffer from a similar resistance from Canadians as Muslims: Sikhs were implicated in the bombing of a transatlantic flight that killed over three hundred, with the result that the tradition is linked in some minds to militancy and violence. However, some Sikhs continue to wear the turban and the *kirpan*, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has loosened rules so that Sikh Mounties may dress in the traditional headdress. This diversity of cultures is most noticeable in western Canada, where summer festivals of ethnic heritage are very popular. While the Canadians support the contributions these various people make to the country, some worry privately that they are challenging the essentially “Christian” character of Canada.

Material Religion

The coming of so many religious groups to Canada has spawned a dramatic change in the physical landscape of towns and cities. Architecture has shifted dramatically as these influences from abroad attempt to shape a building around the distinctive needs of an immigrant community. Consonant with this new trend, recently the federal government has matched a \$30 million initiative of the Aga Khan of the Ismaili tradition to transform the old Canadian War Museum in Ottawa into the Global Centre for Pluralism. Its concern will be research and education specific to the value of pluralist societies.

The concern with documenting this trend has encouraged scholars to move away from conventional evaluations of religion-as-doctrine to the impact of so much pluralism-in-landscape on Canadian identity. Spearheaded by Queen's University scholar William Closson James, and his groundbreaking study of religious pluralism in Kingston, a new way of looking at religion has evolved. Dubbed *material religion*, this trend changes the focus to the artifacts and constructions of religion, and tries to examine the impact of this kind of reality on the larger culture and identity. One has only to visit the many towns and cities and examine their architecture to realize how the landscape of Canada has changed—cities such as Mississauga are rich with temples, mosques, synagogues, and centers that reflect the vitality and variety of religious building. McGill University has developed the Montreal Religious Sites Project as a way to document this growing diversity.

The orientation was given a significant boost by the spectacular success of a turn-of-the-century display at the Provincial Museum of Alberta entitled *Anno Domini: Jesus through the Centuries*. Curated by University of Chicago graduate David Goa, the exhibit brought together a wide variety of material from around the Christian world: images, art, music, and architecture—2,000 years of Christian material engagement with Jesus. Thousands visited the displays that focused not so much on the doctrine of Jesus but on the variety of ways in which the figure of Christ had been portrayed, reflected upon, and embodied in architecture in the Christian West. Certainly another way material religion is expressed is in the spontaneous sanctifying of terrain: one of the most dramatic contemporary examples of how landscape becomes meaningful is ground zero in New York City, but across the Canadian landscape one sees this transformation not only in religious buildings

but also in roadside commemorative displays for accident victims.

Religious Movements

The face of religion in Canada has been decisively changed through a number of movements. A few lasting ones have modified Canadians' social outlook. In the main the impetus for these movements has come from the United States, and only two of significance, the Salvation Army and the Plymouth Brethren, have European origins. Canada has been impressed deeply by the religious ferment of its southern neighbor.

Some of this religious ferment was brought by Americans themselves. Before the War of 1812, eight out of ten residents of Ontario were Americans. Most of the Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish Lutherans who settled on the Canadian prairies came from the Dakotas. Early Congregationalists in Nova Scotia influenced the religious development of that province. The Mormons came directly to southern Alberta to establish a thriving community. Still, much of the religious ferment was a conscious adaptation of American forms to Canada.

Not all are as dramatic as the New Light movement among the Baptists of the Maritimes or the Camp Meeting movement among the Methodists. Anglicans molded their structures according to Episcopal innovations in the United States, and Canadian sectarian congregations used liturgical forms drawn from American evangelism. Strategies for winning converts, such as the huge religious forums of Billy Graham, were first tried in the United States and found an acceptance among Canada's evangelicals. Some groups, such as the Canadian Pentecostals, preferred the boisterous and dramatic evangelists of the United States, and Roman Catholic charismatics found adherents there before trying similar forms in Canada.

Despite this close connection, Canada has not always responded to these movements as has the United States. The revivalism that swept the eastern seaboard of the United States under Jonathan Edwards in the mid-eighteenth century had an impact in Canada, but not as broadly or as deeply. The United States' repeated revivalist history has not found similar expression in Canada.

The church in Canada responded, too, to its own agenda. Most notable was the Church Union movement, the most impressive achievement of which was the union of Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist churches in 1925, but which periodically took place between Baptists, Lutherans,

and others. Another impact deriving from religion has been the Social Gospel movement. The Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches were most inspired by the need to make the Gospel relevant to the everyday concerns of humans, although their motivations arose not from conditions that they saw as unique to Canada but as part of a movement that embraced the western world. The ways they responded may well not have come from the United States. In fact, the institutional structures, such as the brotherhoods, the settlements, and the labor churches, were of British derivation rather than American, but many of the themes had American counterparts. Even the antialcohol crusade, well-known in the United States, can be seen as an attempt to apply Gospel interpretations to social problems.

The center of the Canadian Social Gospel movement was not in the Maritimes or in Ontario but in Manitoba, at Wesleyan College in Winnipeg, where staff and students responded to the depression of the 1890s, which saw farmers inundated with unsold grain. Railway rates, tariffs, and a host of related issues became matters on which Christians had to take a stand. When Salem Bland arrived at Wesleyan in 1903, he found fertile ground for his social perspectives, and Methodists in particular dominated the progressive wing of the movement. The best-known Social Gospel clergyman, J. S. Woodsworth, was a Methodist, even though he later resigned from the church. The movement built rapidly. From 1890 to 1914 it dramatically increased its impact on church and labor organizations, but its very success spelled its doom: its impact fostered groups, institutions, and responses that outgrew its religious sources and spread its attitudes through church, labor, and social networks in such a way that by 1928 the movement had given over its formulation to labor and political forces. With the crash of 1929, it was no longer effective. Nevertheless, it has left an important legacy in Canadian society, and its ideas flow with regularity close to the surface of church discussion of issues.

Mention should be made of the Métis movement, led by Louis Riel. (The Métis were communities formed by the marriage of native people and early French trappers.) The Métis movement stood for independence from the federal government and the importance of local cultural difference, and its ideas were little different from those lauded by provincial premiers today. Riel was born in 1844 to a settled Métis family who represented well the combination of Indian and French blood. A devout Roman Catholic, he believed that Providence wanted the western lands to stay

under the domination of the people who lived on them, and he fought with messianic vision to resist federal encroachment on Métis land. He often did this in the name of French Canadian and Roman Catholic culture. His sense of destiny for the West ended with his execution for treason in 1885 by the federal government, but his dream of regional power and the rights of French Catholics is as alive as ever in western Canada.

“New” Religions

Of the welter of new religions that have sprung up in Canada since its inception, several seem to have been more successful than others. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) has made major headway in urban populations, especially in the West. The Bahais have built a national organization and have succeeded in attracting middle-class youth and educated Canadians alike. The Church of Scientology recruited aggressively in the 1970s and established groups across the country, as did the Reverend Moon’s Unification Church. Mantra meditation was taught earlier in Canada by transcendental meditation and still has adherents.

Various self-improvement groups operate in Canada, including Silva mind control and the New Light, which are based on certain religious views of the individual. And while Hare Krishna and Divine Light people are not as prevalent as they used to be, those groups attracted a wide range of converts at the end of the last century. Sri Chinmoy adherents are found across Canada, as are Tai Chi Chuan participants. While not new, spiritualist groups and the Unity Church appeal to some Canadians. Sometimes the charismatics are considered a new religion (for example, Toronto’s Airport Church), although their message is hardly different from that of the Pentecostals, and it is the closest to traditional Christian inspiration. Canadian animosity toward cults is largely inspired by media reports about non-Canadian groups, such as the Jonestown cult in Guyana, and about kidnapping and deprogramming of adherents. No government in Canada has enacted restraining laws, with the exception of some municipal jurisdictions for the control of street harassment. The groups have free rein in attracting secular or disillusioned persons to their organizations.

The most interesting recent new religious movement group has been that associated with Pastor John de Ruiter. Described now as a “worldwide phenomenon” by Judy Piercey, with converts to his movement in the United States,

Europe, Australia, and now India, Pastor John, as he is known, began as a shoemaker and a part-time Lutheran preacher in the small Alberta town of Stettler. He then moved to Edmonton, where he established a following that is hundreds strong. Seated on a raised dais, and responding to questions from a fixed “asking” seat among his New Age-type followers, he has moved away from Christian references and now concentrates on using silence as an operative religious medium. Believers follow him back to Edmonton from his many tours around the world. From his new building in the west end called the Edmonton College of Integrated Philosophy, he dispenses his tapes and videos to an enlarging circle of devotees—a tour to India garnered him a group from the Osho/Rajneesh ashram.

Some people regard the television evangelists as cultic, in that much of the impact of their message derives from personal appeal. David Mainse’s 100 Huntley Street, a Pentecostal TV program, is a good case in point. It has carved out a singular place in the television market and reminds us that technology is continuing to change the environment of religion. Canada has a long and vigorous evangelical tradition, however, and the strong support that evangelists receive from Canadians may only reflect that sympathy. They are a most important fact reflecting the continuous interaction between U.S. and Canadian culture and religion.

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family; Buddhism in North America; Canada* entries; *Eastern Orthodoxy; Islam in North America; Judaism* entries; *Krishna Consciousness; Native American Religions* entries; *New Religious Movements* entries; *Roman Catholicism: French Influence; Sikhs*.

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Canada: Protestants and the United Church of Canada

Canadian Protestant identity, like the identity of Canada itself, has been shaped by regionalism, cross-border politics, and the relatively peaceful transition from colonialism to sovereignty. Canadian Protestantism has been largely shaped by a spirit of ecumenism that cumulated in the formation in 1925 of the United Church of Canada (UCC)—a church that positioned itself to be Canada’s national church in a way that was distinctly Canadian.

In many respects, the Protestant experience in Canada has resembled that of Protestants in the United States. There are, however, a few notable differences, including the fact that the majority of the population has always been distributed among four or five major denominations. Mark Noll, for example, has suggested that religious allegiances in

Canada differ from those in the United States because of an absence of a significant war on Canadian territory. Noll argues that as a result Canadian religiosity is not as strong as that of its neighbors to the South (both the United States and Mexico underwent bloody civil wars that depended on religious affiliations, metaphors, and differences to foment their national consciousness). In contrast, it should be noted that Canadian historian John Webster Grant points to the War of 1812 as a significant moment in the historical articulation of Canadian national identity, one that is on par with that of the American Revolution. Likewise, the World War II battle of Vimy Ridge is often represented as a moment that had a profound effect on the construction of Canadian national identity. Other scholars have argued that the distinctiveness of Canadian religious identity stems from the historic “unofficial official” status of a few dominant denominations under the shadow of which other Protestant denominations were forced to develop. Some argue that this factor, combined with the scarcity of resources, especially in rural areas, led to a compulsory ecumenism among certain denominational families. Finally, it has been suggested that at the core of Canadian churches lie a laity who have maintained a highly suspicious and resistant attitude toward ecclesiastical control from outside Canada and who are ardently loyal to their chosen denominations.

Early History

The first sustained Protestant settlement in Canada corresponded with British control of the Maritimes and with primarily economic, rather than spiritual, interests and activities in the new colony. These early settlers included a mix of old-stock British Anglicans and Presbyterians, Lutheran and Reformed settlers from Germany and Switzerland, and some American Congregationalists. While the Church of England dominated the Nova Scotian capital, Halifax, well over half of the rural population were New England Congregationalists. Initially, there was limited missionary work undertaken and few clergy available or willing to serve the scattered Maritime congregations. The expulsion of Francophone Acadians in 1755 created space for the addition of several Free Church advocates who sought to distinguish the colonies from an established Anglican regime. Most notable was Henry Alline (1748–1784), a charismatic, uneducated, sectarian who preached a mystical “new light” revivalism, which reached its peak in around 1775 and emphasized sudden conversion, communion with God, and anti-Calvinism. Historian George Rawlyk has

suggested that Canadian evangelicalism as expressed in Alline’s “New Light” movement actually stood as even more radical, anarchistic, democratic, and populist than its American counterpart exemplified during the first Great Awakening. Rawlyk suggested that Alline’s radical anarchism stemmed from his movement’s freedom from the distinctively American characteristics of civic humanism, republicanism, the covenant ideal, and possessive individualism. After Alline’s premature death in 1784, the movement was largely absorbed, albeit without the anti-Calvinism of its founder, by Maritime Baptists and New Light Congregational churches. The legacy of Alline’s popular religious expression and revivalism in Atlantic Canada is traceable, though in a modified form, into the twentieth century.

Other early communities in the Maritimes included the American Quakers, who settled in Nova Scotia as early as 1762, and Moravian missionaries, who established missions in Labrador in 1771 working among the Inuit peoples in that region. Neither community was especially large but they did establish a presence and cleared the way for more sustained missionary efforts in the future.

The first Methodists in Atlantic Canada were organized under the leadership of Lawrence Coughlan in Newfoundland (1765) and William Black Jr. in Nova Scotia (1781), who set up the Methodist Church in opposition to the New Light movement. Black initially established his Methodist classes under the direction of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, by which he was ordained. Growing anti-American sentiment in the colonies following the American Revolution led him to redirect the affiliations of the Canadian colony to the Wesleyan Methodists of England.

Former Virginian slave David George organized the first black Baptist churches in Nova Scotia in 1783. George was part of the 1792 emigration of twelve hundred African Canadians who carried a modified version of Alline’s New Light theology to Africa. The current Baptist and Methodist churches in Sierra Leone are descended from the churches that were established there by these former residents of Nova Scotia.

In Quebec, following the British conquest of 1759, a plan to anglicize the Francophone population led to an introduction of government-supported, French-speaking Protestant clergy who were largely ignored by Francophones and Anglophones alike for religious and linguistic reasons, respectively. On the eve of the American Revolution, government policy legally recognized the Roman Catholic Church through the Quebec Act (1774), which was

implemented with the intent of keeping Quebec British. The legacy of this act resulted in a strong Roman Catholic presence and squashed any hope for anything but a Protestant minority in that province.

Following the establishment of Upper Canada (present-day Ontario) by the Constitutional Act of 1791, the Church of England maintained a semiofficial status as the only recipient of the “clergy reserves,” approximately 2,500,000 acres of land set aside for the support of Protestant clergy, despite the fact that it claimed at best only 20 percent of the population in Upper Canada. The clergy reserves system and resulting revenue acknowledged the Anglican Church as the de facto established church in Canada, but this was not without resistance. It should be noted, as historian John S. Moir states, that while many churches were resistant to the Anglican Church’s claim to official status, for the most part Protestant denominations (Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists) stressed British Christian values over and against Enlightenment free-thinking or American-style democracy.

The American Revolution dramatically changed the religious character of Canada, as British Loyalists flooded over the border, offering alternatives to the established Anglican Church in the form of ethnic and evangelical traditions. By 1812 over 80 percent of the population of Upper Canada were loyalists (or late-loyalists), having settled somewhat haphazardly: Quakers in Newmarket and Prince Edward County, Mennonites in the Waterloo and the Niagara peninsula, Scottish Presbyterians in the Glengarry region, and German American Lutherans in Dundas, Addington, and Lennox counties.

The most significant growth following the Revolution was in the Methodist Church. As noted by historian Phyllis Airhart, at the time of establishment in 1791 there were eight hundred Methodists in Canada with four circuits and only six preachers; in a little over half a century Methodism grew to become the second-largest denomination in Canada. Initially, Methodists in Lower and Upper Canada were deeply rooted in the New York network. Unlike their Maritime counterparts, who were closely tied to the English (Wesleyan) Church and were considerably more conventional in their piety and firm in their discouragement of overly emotional outbursts, the Methodists in Upper Canada espoused a revivalist theology that focused on the ecstatic conversion of the individual. The first Methodist Camp meeting in Upper Canada occurred in 1805 and was described by its organizer, itinerant preacher Nathan Bangs,

as quoted in Abel Stevens’s 1863 work *Life and Times of Nathan Bangs, D.D.* (p. 152), as if there were “a cloud of divine glory resting upon the congregation.” Central to this revivalism was an emphasis on a personal encounter between the individual (radically convicted by sin and isolated from the world) and God.

The conversion experience distinguished evangelicalism from the perceived established churches in Canada, enabling it to gain momentum following the War of 1812. In response to criticism from the Anglican bishop of Toronto, John Strachan (1778–1867), the Methodist Church was among the first of the evangelical churches to Canadianize and separate from their American and European mother churches. An autonomous Canadian Methodist church was established in 1828. Other denominations, such as the Baptists and German Lutherans, were constrained by their dependence on missionary revenue from American supporters.

Mid-Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century

Increased religious diversity led to a challenge to the Church of England’s claims to the clergy reserves. During the War of 1812, the Presbyterian Church petitioned for a share of the revenue generated by the reserves following the destruction of Niagara on the Lake by the Americans. The Presbyterian claim was based on its status as the national Church of Scotland. Despite Anglican objections, the allocation of the clergy reserves was revised to include both Anglicans and Presbyterians. These two churches understood themselves as the rightful heirs of Canadian religiosity, in contrast to populist evangelicals, who argued from a voluntarist position that the clergy reserves should be secularized. By the 1830s evangelicals had moved from the fringes of society to the center, establishing powerful and successful churches and engaging in political and public debate. As such, their concerns were modified by such individuals as Egerton Ryerson in Upper Canada and Baptist preacher Edward Manning in the Maritimes, who turned their attention to the transformation of social order primarily through the establishment of voluntary societies, newspapers, public education, and denominational colleges.

Several important denominational schools and colleges were formed during this time as a means of providing a balance between evangelicalism and the Enlightenment. According to historian Michael Gauvreau, these two phenomena were not mutually exclusive in Canadian academe. Thomas McCulloch, a Scottish-born Presbyterian minister, founded Pictou Academy in 1816 as a response to what he

saw as religious destitution in the colony. Several important Protestant universities were founded during this time, including the Presbyterian Dalhousie University in Halifax (1818) and Queen's University in Kingston (1841), as well as Methodist Mount Allison in Sackville, New Brunswick (1839), and Victoria College in Cobourg, Ontario (1841, today part of the University of Toronto). Despite their smaller demographics, the Baptists established Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia (1838), and McMaster University in Toronto (1887, moved to its present location in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1930). Many universities in Canada maintained their church affiliations well into the mid-twentieth century, at which point they were forced to at least partly secularize in order to qualify for government funding.

In 1839 the clergy reserves were extended to the four mainline denominations: Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic. The Baptists refused government funding except in Nova Scotia, where they shocked their Upper Canadian contemporaries by accepting financial support for Acadia University. The question of what constituted Protestantism and who had the right to speak for it became a topic of much debate during this time period. The issue came to the forefront in the public voice of Egerton Ryerson, who ultimately emerged as the official adversary to the Reverend John Strachan. As an advocate for Anglican privilege in regard to the clergy reserves as well as higher education, Strachan was a fervent supporter of the Anglican establishment as the means of maintaining Canada's Christian identity. In contrast, Ryerson sought to redefine Upper Canadian Protestant society as populist. As the founder and editor of the weekly Methodist newspaper *Christian Guardian*, he served as the most prominent defender of "voluntarism," or dependence by the church on voluntary giving. Ryerson also served as the first principal of Victoria College. In 1844 he was named chief superintendent of education in Ontario, where he successfully reformed the provincial education system, making it accessible to all school-aged children while still providing Protestant instruction in public institutions. His influence on Canadian Protestantism specifically and Canadian public life in general can still be felt today. Ryerson is best remembered for having standardized education in Upper Canada; this standardization relied on a central textbook press that used Canadian authors, a library in every school, the formation of an educational journal, and professional development conventions for educators.

Ryerson's energies concerning the secularization of the clergy reserves paid off in 1854, when public debate surrounding their necessity led to the introduction of a bill to secularize them. The bill's intention was to "remove all semblance of connexion between Church and State" and represents the first and only such reference to the separation of church and state in Canadian law.

John S. Moir has suggested that the effects of the secularization of the clergy reserves led to an increased interdenominational cooperation on social and political matters. The Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and evangelical Anglicans petitioned for government legislation of a Lord's Day law. Other ecumenical efforts included the formation of temperance societies, missionary organizations, Bible guilds, and YMCAs and YWCAs. Following Confederation in 1867, a national "vision" promoting a Christian Canada was taken up with increasing vigor by the evangelical movement, which imagined the new Dominion of Canada to be "His Dominion." This reference to Psalm 72:8, which serves as Canada's motto, was suggested by Samuel Tilley, one of the fathers of Confederation: "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth."

Confederation and Protestant Presence in Western Canada

The decades following Confederation saw the purchase of Rupert's Land (present-day Manitoba) from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1870 and the addition of the province of British Columbia in 1871, which, following the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1885, ushered in a new era of expansion and immigration. The Protestant churches undertook the task of evangelizing western Canada as their duty, though it eventually fell to the Presbyterians and the Methodists, with their newly established national offices, to set up missions and churches in the prairies.

The first Protestants in the pre-Confederation West were Scottish Presbyterians on the Red River near Winnipeg. This community was initially served by an Anglican minister until Presbyterian minister John Black arrived in 1851. The Presbyterian presence in the prairies expanded in the 1860s into Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Likewise the first Methodists were of British stock (Wesleyan missionaries who had been invited by the Hudson's Bay Company to work among the First Nations populations there). The Canadian Methodist Church, however, took responsibility for missions in Edmonton in as early as 1853. As such, both Presbyterians and Methodists were firmly established and ready for

evangelism in the West at the time of Confederation (along with Baptists who concentrated their energy on missionary work among non-English-speaking immigrants).

With the completion of the railroad, an increasing number of immigrant churches were built in western Canada. Russian Mennonites arrived in Manitoba in 1874 and would be followed by a second, larger group fleeing the Bolshevik Revolution of the 1920s. Also from Russia, the controversial communal sect the Doukhobors immigrated to Canada in 1899 with the assistance of Canadian Quakers and Tolstoyans. The Doukhobors entered into the public spotlight when a segment of their community defaced public property and organized nude parades in protest against government intrusion into their communal lifestyle and educational practices. The end of the nineteenth century also witnessed the first entry of Mormons into Canada, in 1887 in Cardston, Alberta, where they constructed the first Mormon temple outside the United States.

In British Columbia the Protestant churches lagged behind the activities of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, which had established a strong presence in the years following the Fraser River gold rush. The Presbyterians established a church on Vancouver Island in 1861. The Baptist Convention of British Columbia was formed in 1897.

Following Confederation, several Protestant denominations amalgamated. Four groups of Presbyterians merged into the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1875, followed by further consolidations in 1886. The many disparate Methodist groups came together in two successive waves, in 1874 and 1884, to become the largest single denomination in Canada. At about the same time, two Baptist conventions formed, first Ontario and Quebec, in 1888, and later in the Maritimes the Free Christian Baptists and the Regular Baptists amalgamated into the United Baptist Convention in 1905–1906. It was not until 1944, however, that a national organization, the Baptist Federation of Canada, was formed, representing only a fragment of Canadian Baptists.

Interdenominational ecumenism was also on the mind of Protestant leaders such as Presbyterian minister and principal of Queen's University, George Munro Grant, who in 1874 advocated for a transconfessional "organic union" among Canada's Protestant denominations. This notion of an organic union stemmed from a sense that Canada's national identity was a moral and spiritual concern; an independent Canadian church was deemed necessary in order to maintain social cohesion in the face of increased immigration. Church Union was aggressively pursued by the

Congregationalists, Methodists, and Presbyterians beginning in the 1890s. A national church was perceived as a possibility by overlooking theological differences concerning Methodist Arminianism and Presbyterian Calvinism and by limiting the emphasis of creedal statements. This proposal was met with strong opposition, especially from within the rank and file of the Presbyterian Church, who underscored the importance of the Westminster Confession and Scottish identity.

Ecumenism was also expressed in large-scale revivals. Mass evangelism gained popularity following Confederation, and the appearance of American and Canadian evangelists became more prominent after 1884. For example, the Canadian evangelist team of H. T. Crossley and John E. Hunter held revival meetings in major urban centers, converting more than 100,000 people—even Anglican prime minister John A. Macdonald was caught up in the momentum. Evangelists promoted key Protestant causes such as missionary societies, Sunday schools, and temperance, which in many ways became synonymous with Protestantism in nineteenth-century Canada. During the same time period the Woman's Christian Temperance Union established its Canadian branch under the leadership of its first president, Methodist Letitia Youmans. Initially concerned with moderation of alcohol, the temperance movement's objective became one of prohibition, which was temporarily achieved, except in Quebec, during the First World War by government legislation. The temperance movement became a key concern for promoters of the Social Gospel.

From the Social Gospel to Fundamentalism in Canada

Involvement in social reform movements was seen by many as a natural extension of evangelical commitments to the transformation of Canada into a Christian society. The Social Gospel in Canada was most prominent in the 1910s through to the 1920s. The most active participants in the Social Gospel movement were liberal Methodists and Presbyterians who replaced a theology of atonement and individual salvation with the project of constructing the Kingdom of God on Earth. As a movement, the Social Gospel found its initial home in Canada's theological colleges, especially the Presbyterian Queen's University in Kingston, Methodist Wesley College in Winnipeg, and Baptist McMaster University in Toronto. As in the United States, Christians sought a way to respond to the social problems that accompanied industrialization in urban

environments: poor working conditions, unemployment, health problems, and housing shortages.

It can be argued that in Canada, particularly in western Canada, the Social Gospel movement initially maintained a closer tie to evangelical and mainline Protestantism. Ultimately it diffused into the secular political sphere in such a way that it served as the foundation for one of Canada's major political parties, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (the socialist-democratic movement out of which Canada's current New Democratic Party evolved). Some of its less radical propositions also found their way into the Liberal Party of Canada through the political leanings of prime ministers William Lloyd Mackenzie King and Lester B. Pearson. Its most lasting effects were manifest in Tommy Douglas, the former Baptist pastor who moved from ministry into politics in the 1930s. Douglas went on to become the first socialist premier of Saskatchewan and leader of the federal New Democratic Party. Douglas is most specifically remembered as having established a universal health care plan in Saskatchewan that was later adopted across Canada.

For the Methodist Church, which continued to rely on its revivalist foundations in the form of teams of professional evangelists, the Social Gospel movement manifested itself in city missions that provided an important space for women, who were barred from ordained ministry, to participate in evangelism. The city revival was also seen both as a way to meet the challenges of the twentieth century—temperance, labor, health and educational reform—and as offering a means of attracting new members to the church.

Among the important proponents of the Social Gospel were Methodist Salem Bland and his student J. S. Woodsworth. Bland, a student of Queen's University's George Munro Grant, taught theology at Wesley College in Winnipeg from 1903 to 1917 until he was dismissed in part for his progressivism. Known as the Social Gospel's "spirit in the West," he was instrumental in moving Social Gospel concerns out of the classroom and the pulpit and into the public domain. Bland's role was crucial in the formation of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, whose first leader was former Methodist minister J. S. Woodsworth. Historian Ramsay Cook points out that Woodsworth's career mirrors the path taken by Canadian liberal Protestantism at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1902 Woodsworth experienced a profound crisis of faith in which he expressed doubt concerning central tenets of church doctrine, including the divinity of Jesus and the authority of the Bible.

Despite his agnosticism, the Manitoba Conference refused Woodsworth's resignation in 1907, stating that there was nothing in his belief system that prevented him from ministering. With this in mind Woodsworth began a process of challenging established doctrines within the Methodist Church and expanding its missionary ministry toward immigrants. By 1914, in his role as leader of the Canadian Welfare League, he questioned whether the church was the ideal venue in which to enact social reform. Eventually, Woodsworth resigned from the Methodist ministry in 1918 as a result of his refusal to support conscription. Along with other Social Gospelers and labor advocates, Woodsworth joined the short-lived Labour Church in Winnipeg, which positioned itself as part church and part educational forum based on Salem Bland's "New Christianity." The Labour Church served as a venue in which the groundwork was laid for the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919. Woodsworth served one year in jail for his involvement in the strike and went on to political involvement with the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation at the federal level.

David Marshall has argued that the Canadian Protestant churches' acceptance of the Social Gospel was a significant contributing factor to its eventual diminution by the end of World War I. Marshall contends that Protestant clergy made a concerted effort to maintain relevancy in light of social, political, and intellectual challenges of modern life, which ultimately undermined the authority of the church in light of contemporary culture. In contrast, Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau maintain that while it eventually became subservient to secular interests and leadership, the Protestant churches and the Social Gospel remained influential well into the mid-1930s. The political activities of the Social Gospelers certainly contributed to the secularization of their initially theological mandate. When considered alongside the prevalent theological challenges of Darwinism and biblical higher criticism circulating at denominational colleges at the time, the story of secularizing trends within Canadian Protestantism becomes more prominent.

The denominational colleges were set up with the intention of educating the evangelical elite and training Canadian-born clergy, so as to limit the churches' dependence on European and American theologians. It was from within the theological colleges that the challenges of modern scholarship to the traditional Christian frame of reference were considered. Many of the church colleges offered a theologically liberal curriculum that focused on an attempt to reconcile the church with the concerns of secular society.

Many historians have concluded that this process served as a major contribution to the eventual secularization of Canadian society. Mark A. Noll concludes *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, published by Eerdmans in 1992, his comparative work on Canadian and American Christianity, by suggesting that “the forces of modernity . . . have worked *through* the communal, top-down structures of traditional Canadian religion, while they have worked *alongside* the more fragmented, populist strictures of the American churches” (p. 549).

Nathanael Burwash (1839–1918), a leading Canadian Methodist, stands as the quintessential representative of liberal evangelicalism emerging from within denominational colleges. Burwash, professor of natural theology and chancellor of Victoria College, attempted to align moderate biblical criticism with a conservative understanding of evolution and the belief in the regenerative necessity of conversion. Because of his beliefs, Burwash makes for an interesting object of study, and his life is key to formulating an understanding of pre–World War I Canadian Protestantism. Burwash was also instrumental in the early negotiations on the part of the Methodists for church union.

It was under Burwash’s leadership at Victoria that the Methodist Church articulated disapproval regarding higher criticism. In 1890, Hebrew Bible professor George Coulson Workman was asked to resign from his teaching post because of his nontraditional views concerning the messianic prophecy. Following that, in 1909, English Bible professor-elect George Jackson was attacked by a number of prominent laity and ministers, including the general superintendent of the Methodist Church, Albert Carman, for applying higher criticism methods to the Book of Genesis. Burwash successfully defended Jackson at the Methodist General Conference in British Columbia in 1910. With this controversy, Burwash established Victoria College as a cornerstone institution in the teaching of higher criticism in Canada. That same year, the newly elected general superintendent of the Methodist Church, S. D. Chown, ensured that biblical criticism would be taught in all Canadian Methodist colleges. In his position as general superintendent, Chown went on to be active in the final negotiations that brought together the United Church of Canada.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, T. T. Shields, a controversial pastor at Toronto’s Jarvis Street Baptist Church, fought to keep higher criticism out of the classrooms at McMaster University, where he held a seat on the board of governors. In 1924 he attacked theology professor L. H.

Marshall for rejecting scriptural inerrancy (the idea that the Bible was literally accurate); atonement theology, which taught that Jesus’ sacrificial death was in atonement and satisfaction for the collective sins of humanity; and the innate depravity of humanity, which held that human nature was hopelessly crippled by original sin and irreparably flawed without divine intervention. Shields was censured two years later for his inflammatory accusations against Marshall at the General Council of the Baptist Convention. Jarvis Street Baptist Church was expelled from the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec and formed its own denomination (the Union of Regular Baptists) as well as its own educational institution (Toronto Baptist Seminary), both of which remain active today. At the time of its founding, seventy-seven churches joined Shields’s new denomination, an act that attests not only to his popularity and charisma but also to the prevalence of fundamentalism in central Canada in the 1920s. Controversy followed Shields, however, when in 1933 the majority of those churches left to form the Fellowship of Independent Baptist Churches. In 1949 Shields was asked to leave the Union, at which point he established the Conservative Baptist Association of Canada.

Following the spirit of ecumenism, the Canadian Council of Churches was formed in 1944 as a representative body of twelve denominations in Canada (Protestant and Eastern Orthodox). The Council was established as a means of coordinating social service and missionary efforts in Canada and abroad. There are presently twenty-two member churches, which include representation from the major Protestant denominations as well as Anglican, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic traditions. A similar movement can be found among Canadian evangelicals in the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC), which was founded in 1964 and brought together twenty-four conservative denominations including the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and smaller groups such as the Salvation Army, the Mennonite Brethren Church, the Christian Reformed Church, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance Churches. Today, the EFC consists of forty affiliates, five observers (including the Canadian Council of Churches), and individual congregations across Canada.

United Church of Canada

Formally established on June 10th, 1925, the United Church of Canada was the amalgamation of the Methodist Church, Canada (which at the time was the largest Methodist denomination in Canada), the Congregational

Union of Canada, the Council of Local Union Churches (approximately 3,000 small congregations mostly in the West that had been established in anticipation of church union), and two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Upon founding, it was instantly the largest church in Canada, with over 20 percent of the Canadian population. Later additions were the Methodist Church of Bermuda in 1930 and the Canadian Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren in 1968.

The historian Marguerite Van Die links church union with a decreased emphasis on denominational identity and orthodoxy in light of the emergence of modern evangelism. George Pidgeon, the first moderator of the United Church of Canada and the former moderator of the Presbyterian Church, negotiated two competing narratives arguing that Jesus was not merely a social reformer but also an evangelist interested in individual transformation and union with God. For the most part, the founding members of the United Church were Social Gospellers advocating not just a shift from “salvation of the self” to “salvation of society” but more importantly for a transformation of what “salvation of the self” actually entails. The United Church set itself on an early path toward egalitarianism and began ordaining women in 1936. While it is often criticized by other Protestants as being theologically weak and too quick to accommodate secular society, the United Church continues to be widely recognized as the most tolerant and justice-oriented denomination in Canada.

The optimism of church union was renewed following the Second World War; between 1945 and 1965, the United Church constructed over fifteen hundred churches, saw its enrollment increase by over 25 percent, and had thousands of laypeople join adult Christian education groups. Charles Templeton (1915–2001) was appointed to conduct a national “Crusade for Christ,” which rivaled the evangelical campaigns of Billy Graham. Templeton’s tumultuous theological journey is representative of a larger dissolution of consensus among Protestants in Canada. Templeton’s career had two distinct stages, the first as an old-fashioned revivalist and the second as an advocate for a revised Christianity that drew upon contemporary insights with which to reinterpret doctrines. In a 1958 interview with the Toronto newspaper the *Globe and Mail*, Templeton declared himself an agnostic. This statement resulted in deep backlash from the evangelical community. Templeton went on to become a journalist and ran for leadership of the Liberal Party of Ontario in 1964.

In 1963 the United Church introduced its “New Curriculum,” which attempted to provide material for all age groups that engaged with biblical higher criticism and socially relevant material. It can be said that the New Curriculum intensified the polarization between liberal and conservative Christians in Canada and seemingly ends the ecumenist era of Canadian Protestantism. While the curriculum was subsequently taken up and adapted by several liberal denominations (it is comparable to the Anglican Church of Canada’s “Parish Education” of 1966), it was widely criticized by conservative churches and ended several decades of Sunday school collaboration between the United Church and Baptists.

The United Church continued to establish itself as an inclusive and liberal-leaning church throughout the second half of the twentieth century. In 1980 Lois Wilson was elected as the first female moderator of the United Church (Wilson went on to have a distinguished career as president of both the Canadian and World Council of Churches as well as serving as a Canadian senator from 1998 to 2002). Other notable moderators have included Robert McClure in 1968 and Anne Squires in 1986 (both nonordained laypeople) and Sang Chul Lee (the first Asian moderator) in 1988.

Recent Developments

The current configuration of Protestantism in Canada is characterized by a striking decline in membership in the years following the 1960s. From 1960 to 2000 the Canadian census reveals that membership in each of Canada’s four major Protestant denominations decreased dramatically: the United Church from 20.1 percent to 9.6 percent, the Anglican Church from 13.2 percent to 6.9 percent, the Presbyterian Church from 4.5 percent to 1.4 percent, and the Lutheran Church from 4 percent to 2 percent. Interestingly, Canadian sociologist Reginald Bibby’s statistics reveal that for the most part mainline Protestants continue to identify with their childhood religious affiliations, even in instances where they are not actively engaged with church institutions. In contrast, conservative Protestants are more likely to switch affiliations several times throughout their lifetimes. Conservative Protestants in Canada, as in the United States, are more likely to attend weekly services, to profess categorical beliefs regarding the existence of God, and to pray regularly.

In the mid-1980s and into the 1990s the United Church engaged in lengthy theological debate surrounding its stance on sexuality. After much debate, in 1988 the United Church

approved the ordination of openly gay and lesbian candidates for ministry. While this decision led to the departure of some congregations, for the most part the United Church became known as a safe place for people of all sexual orientations. The United Church was actively involved in presenting evidence in favor of same-sex marriage to the Canadian federal government, which went on to legislate same-sex marriage in 2005.

At the other end of the theological spectrum, the 1990s witnessed an influx of visitors to the controversial Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship, originally a member of the Vineyard Church, to receive the “Toronto Blessing” in the form of speaking in tongues, divine healings, “holy laughter,” and the experience of being “slain in the spirit.”

Current theological concerns among Protestants, especially in the United Church, revolve around the representation of “theological truths” in the public sphere. Popular books and films such as *The Da Vinci Code* have prompted discussion about biblical accuracy and personal morality. As the most vocal institution of liberal Christianity in Canada, the United Church has become the centrifuge of debate. In 1997 Bill Phipps, United Church moderator from 1997 to 2000, entered the media spotlight when, during an interview with the *Ottawa Citizen*, he questioned the divinity of Jesus. More recently, in 2008, Gretta Vosper, United Church minister and founder of the Canadian Centre for Progressive Christianity, published *With or Without God*, in which she posits that language and references to God have outlived their usefulness in the church. Although there have been calls for her resignation, Vosper’s congregation understands itself to be a community that is intellectually rigorous, free of absolutist statements, and consistent with a worldview that conforms to accepted scientific and moral norms—a position that they insist the rest of Christianity needs to adopt in order to survive in the twenty-first century.

The core social issues facing Canadian Protestant churches today relate to an attempt to make sense of their pasts while accommodating the future. Partially as a response to decline in membership and also as a reflection of a mandate for multiculturalism in Canada, many of the mainline churches have established themselves as a resource for new immigrants to Canada. For example, in the Presbyterian Church in Canada services are conducted in at least seventeen languages with notable Korean and Ghanaian congregations. Likewise the United Church has continued to represent itself as Canada’s national church, not only by engaging in multiculturalism but also by promoting intercultural and

multifaith dialogue. In 1996 the United Church established its Ethnic Ministries Council as a means to support ethnic minority congregations and individuals within the church and to provide a venue for new immigrants, as well as for third- and fourth-generation Canadians to participate meaningfully in the denomination.

See also *Canada* entries; *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements*; *Ecumenism*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Missions* entries; *Moravians*; *Native American* entries; *Protestant Liberalism*; *Revivalism* entries; *Same-Gender Marriage*; *Sexuality and Sexual Identity*.

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Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence

The Caribbean Sea, lying between the North and South American continents, is the setting for the archipelago of islands stretching from Cuba, off the shores of Florida, to Trinidad, which can be seen from the Venezuelan mainland. The geographical location of the Caribbean islands has shaped their historical importance as a crossroads of cultures, races, and religions. Because these many islands sit within the Gulf Stream and the African Equatorial Current, they have been the stage for power and politics stretching from October 12, 1492, down to the early twenty-first century.

The many religious traditions brought to the islands have been impacted by the islands' history and culture, influencing religious beliefs and practices in ways unique to the Caribbean. The impact of these transformations on religion has long been categorized with the term *syncretism*. This term has proven to be problematic, since it includes instances of both embracement and rejection of disparate elements without the intellectual tools to decipher variations in the process. The polemic use of *syncretism* has been especially prevalent in the theological literature of religious elites, for whom one or another set of beliefs is either acceptable or unacceptable. Considered less freighted with the polemics of previous literature, the word *hybridity* has been more recently incorporated. But under any category, transformations and mixing of cultures and religions exercise an undeniable presence in the Caribbean.

Formal religion, it has been claimed, has the capacity to absorb popular expressions in order to reproduce the devotions of the masses within the boundaries of orthodox belief. Jaime Vidal (in *An Enduring Flame*, 1994) not only insists that there is an acceptable form of faith mixture within religions such as Catholicism but also coins an expression, *synthetization*, to describe this acceptable mixture, arguing that this term rather than *syncretization* registers

the acceptability of certain kinds of faith mixtures, while differentiating it from the unpalatable jumble of religious beliefs that are not yet reconciled or are incapable of reconciliation with the formal theological system.

What is being ultimately argued is that Christianity's absorption of elements of faith from other religions is indispensable to an analysis of Caribbean religious culture. Consider, for example, the influences from African belief systems that are present in a Catholic devotion like that to the Cuban Our Lady of Charity. Her statues and prayers to her are also found in Santería. Certainly, the term *hybridity* fits both cases. But how does devotion to Our Lady of Charity also result in differing theological conclusions that make such devotions both orthodox to Catholicism and unorthodox at the same time? These differing judgments about the theological dimension in religion are crucial in assessing the influences on Caribbean religious culture and the historical path trod in the process of religious transformations.

A useful analogy to sum up the "breaking point" between an assimilating synthesization and an unacceptable syncretism is the split of the different Romance languages from the common original language, Latin. Following this logic, Gustavo Benavides suggests that when the symbolic languages of religion have become so differentiated that persons accepting the same symbols no longer understand each other, then a new religion has been created (*Enigmatic Powers*, 1995). Crucial to any analysis of Caribbean religions is an empirical test of whether religion is a coherent mixture of different elements or, in fact, a noncommunicating dyad. These are the different currents that run under the cover of Caribbean religious culture and its influences.

Historical Origins

Even before the arrival of European Christianity with Columbus, the Caribbean had already experienced the encounter of different peoples and religious cultures. Two distinct linguistic groups occupied contiguous regions of the Caribbean. The most numerous were the Arahuan-speaking Taínos and Taínas, who were also the first people encountered by the Iberians on the major islands of Cuba, Española, and Puerto Rico. In the Lesser Antilles of the Eastern Caribbean, Karina-speaking groups called "Carib" had successfully integrated themselves into the social fabric. One curious aspect of this contact is the linguistic phenomenon found among the peoples of the island of Dominica. A seventeenth-century French missionary assembling a catechism in the native language found that the men used Carib words for certain tools and activities,

while the women used the Arahuan terms for the same things. Anthropologists have concluded this is linguistic evidence that Carib men settled the island by replacing Arahuan men as husbands in the island population. These intrusions had already taken place in the smaller islands of the Eastern Caribbean and were being resisted in Puerto Rico when the Spaniards arrived. Thus, the cultural differentiations of the Greater and Lesser Antilles began before the European intrusions.

These pre-Columbian differences are not matters of idle trivia. The earliest Spanish documents expanded the cultural divide between these groups to view the Arahuan Taínos and Taínas as “docile natives” and the Caribs as “hostile cannibals who deserve enslavement.” In their famous Valladolid debates of 1550–1551, Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda discussed whether or not the gravity of “sins against nature” by the American natives legitimized their enslavement. The arguments of Las Casas helped set the cornerstone of contemporary international laws that protect the religious and cultural rights of native peoples.

Speeches in Spain, however, did not erase the contradictions and conflicts among the different peoples and cultures in the colonies of the Caribbean. The distinction between preaching by word and preaching by example was made clear in Las Casas’s own commentaries on evangelization. In an encounter with a prospective native convert, Las Casas asked if he had become a Christian. The man answered that he was only a “little bit of a Christian,” explaining that he knew only a little bit about drunkenness, adultery, swearing, and lying, but by imitating the Spanish Christians, he would soon be a more complete Christian. The point is well-taken, even if Las Casas exaggerated here the contrast between the preaching of a religion and its actual practice.

African Presence in the Caribbean

Africans came to the Caribbean first as freemen working on Spanish boats and in the military and later as slaves after Queen Isabella decreed in 1503 that Taínos and Taínas could not be enslaved. The demand for a slave workforce quickly transformed the African presence in the Caribbean into one that was mostly of persons held in chattel slavery. It is also noteworthy that the first black slaves came from Spain and Portugal and not from Africa. Las Casas’s early defense of the American natives had led him to suggest that those already slaves could be substituted. Later, he more clearly repudiated the enslavement of Africans on their native soil, condemning such actions with the same

vehemence with which he had defended the American natives. He wrote of the exploitation in Africa in his *History of the Indies*, picturing oppression of peoples of color as a worldwide abuse of human rights everywhere, although these passages were omitted by nineteenth-century editors.

The distinctions between free- and slave-blacks, and between Iberian and African-origin slaves, greatly affected religious influences. For instance, the free-blacks and the Iberian slaves spoke Spanish and understood European culture, law, and religion. The slave-blacks and those taken directly from Africa had little previous exposure to Christianity until arriving in the Caribbean. This divide explains why the rituals of Africa and its linguistic heritage were preserved in the rural slave quarters and not among the domestic servants of colonial cities. The runaway slaves, called *cimarrones*, often lived in the hills and would reproduce a culture and religious expression most familiar to their memories of Africa. Eventually, arguments about fugitive African slaves as savages needing punishment would be extended by Spanish, French, and English authorities to include all black persons, slaves and freemen. Essential to this racist argument was citing rituals of African religion as enduring proof of savagery. On such a religious and cultural basis, the slaveholders conducted hunts to recapture and brutally suppress the *cimarrones*.

Also among these *cimarrones*, another kind of hybridity and racial mixture began in the sixteenth-century Caribbean. The runaway slaves often assimilated into the existing culture of the American natives. Thus, in addition to those who were a mixture of black African race and white European stock, there were peoples of mixed African and Native American ethnicities—the later the were more frequently found in the Caribbean than in Mexico or Peru. It has been suggested that the Taíno-African mixture is present in Haitian Vodun as well as in the cultural and religious practices of the so-called Black Caribs of Honduras and the Garifuna people of Belize. It is the mixed race and attendant religious and cultural heritage of the Garifuna that marks them as a Caribbean nationality. Racial mixtures do not automatically produce cultural transfers with theological results, but racial miscegenation is often the context for religious and cultural miscegenation.

Religion and Racial Politics

Cultural and religious bias is an ordinary occurrence in human history, and it affects the study of that history.

Accordingly, descriptions of the cultures and religions of the Caribbean need to be filtered through a critique that identifies underlying premises. Thus, some non-Catholic historians perceive the colonial effort of the Spanish in the Caribbean as unrelentingly exploitative. This so-called Black Legend emphasizes the negative aspects and results of Spanish colonization. Carried to the extreme, it interprets everything Spanish and Catholic as wrongful. On the other side, there is a rationalizing approach that emphasizes the positive aspects of Spanish intervention to the point of whitewashing any errors or mistakes. It is labeled as the “White Legend,” to contrast it as an opposite type of exaggeration.

Labels derived from sixteenth-century debates have persisted into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In 1987 in Hialeah, Florida, where many Cuban exiles live, the city council prohibited killing animals in Santería rituals. Defending the city ordinance, the chaplain of the police department compared the ritual to “the worship of demons” (do Campo 1995: 156). While a Supreme Court decision (*Lukumi v. Hialeah*, 1992) and subsequent federal law (Religious Freedom Restoration Act, 1993) included Santería rituals as the free exercise of religion, this case shows that the categories used by the White and Black Legends’ approaches to Caribbean religion persist in the contemporary United States.

The White Legend that supports the role of Christianity as a civilizing force is echoed in the approach of Anglicanism to slave-blacks in the English Caribbean in such places as Jamaica. Beginning in the eighteenth century, organizations such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts focused on evangelizing the slaves in the Americas. In his 1684 book *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, Thomas Burnet echoed the White Legend notion that supplanting native religion with Christianity was a benign process. The optimism for Anglicans about the potential for African slaves to become Christians stood in contrast with the Calvinist tendency to consider them unredeemable savages.

The failure of these earlier efforts helped spur the abolitionist movement of the early nineteenth century. Member of the British Parliament William Wilberforce (1759–1833) was one of many who cited the cruel mistreatment of African slaves in the Caribbean as a reason for Christians to end the slave trade. As with Las Casas two centuries earlier, Wilberforce found his most bitter opposition came from plantation owners, who considered slavery a necessary component of a profitable economy. Nonetheless, slave trade in the

Caribbean was restricted and finally abolished throughout the British Empire in a series of measures adopted by Parliament, beginning in 1807 and concluding in 1833. The religious sentiments that animated the British abolitionist movement spilled over into the U.S. abolitionist movement, which achieved success only after a bloody Civil War (1861–1865).

Without the dramatic examples drawn from the Caribbean, neither the history of the slave trade in Great Britain nor the emancipation of slaves in the United States would have been the same. Even critics who argue for economic rather than religious causes for abolition in the Caribbean recognize that religion exercised a crucial influence in the formation of Caribbean societies. In the case of abolition, as with the Spanish White Legend, the emphasis was on what Christianity did to uplift religion in the Caribbean, neglecting the power of other religious expressions among the slaves. Still, Wilberforce and his allies followed the trail blazed by Las Casas centuries before in urging reform, with a Caribbean scenario as the dramatic example presented on the world stage.

Often divorced from the processes of kings and parliaments, religion among the peoples of color in the Caribbean took on its own character. The most common form of religious hybridity arose from the need of the poor to apply medicines and cures to the sick. Before the invention of the urban pharmacy, ordinary people used plant leaves or seeds with medical properties for teas or for topical use.

Hybridity entered through two doors in the Caribbean. For one, the tropical forests and mountains did not always offer the same set of plants that were familiar to Europeans. Instead, there was an abundance of local and new sources for usage. Often these new Caribbean pharmacological resources had been used by the natives of the Caribbean long before the arrival of Spaniards or Africans. Moreover, at times the Caribbean variation of the plants more closely resembled African equivalents than European variations.

Patterns emerged for certain individuals skilled in recognizing and applying such home remedies to function in the stead of scientifically trained doctors. However, the material application of such herbal remedies was often accompanied by prayers for efficacy that could be traced to the non-Christian experience. As often as not, the practitioners invoked both Christian saints and nature spirits to provide the best path to recovery for the sick. Touching, rubbing, and anointing affected parts frequently accompanied such actions. This type of home medicine became known in the

Spanish-speaking Caribbean as *curanderismo*, and the skilled practitioners were *curanderos/as*. While in the early twenty-first century medical treatments are seldom associated with religion, history suggests that such holistic healing was applied with prayer and blessings. In this way, such home healing with religious overtones became associated with the poor, the rural, and the people of color.

With the twentieth-century efforts to build hospitals and bring scientific methods of care to the Caribbean countryside, the old arguments about savages and civilization, about the ignorant natives and the educated elites, resurfaced. On the one hand, it was argued that *curanderismo* was a vestige of ignorance and superstition. Prayers to spirits unrecognizable to Christian orthodoxy or use of plants with names unfamiliar to hospital doctors became proof that *curanderismo* should be rejected. Instead of proof of commonsense medical insight, the frequent efficacy of such home-style organic treatment was twisted to become evidence of devil worship and the like. This was exacerbated by the tendency among the *curanderos/as* to attribute illness to evil spirits who had taken up abode in the body of the sick.

Curanderismo has become part of the fabric of ordinary life in contemporary Caribbean societies. Such skills have become “spiritual capital” and have made such healing into “the business of magic” (Romberg 2003). More clinical approaches to *curanderismo* have emphasized its efficacy over its religious foundation and demonstrated the empowerment of women both as healers and as patients in what has been termed “traditional healing” in Puerto Rico and among the Latino community in the United States. Its persistence argues that *curanderismo* ought to be considered an important element of Caribbean religious culture.

Political Views of Caribbean religion

The American War of Independence and the French Revolution introduced politics into the Caribbean in ways that affected the perception of religion. While the rivalries between Catholic Spain and France on the one hand and Protestant England and Holland on the other had been present in the sporadic warfare and the piracy of the Caribbean, only in the nineteenth century did the religious cultures indigenous to the islands begin to assume political influence.

The first such manifestation was in the Haitian Revolution. The 1793 beheading of the French king in Paris and the subsequent turmoil that lasted until the final defeat of Napoleon in 1815 allowed a new nation composed mostly

of former slaves to emerge on the western part of Española. Ruled by blacks and supported by an army of former slaves, the Haitians repulsed European armies and eventually marched unimpeded into the Spanish eastern section of the island, annexing the colony of Santo Domingo in 1821. Viewing the Vatican, the central apostolic see of Roman Catholicism, with the same suspicion as existed for the European imperial powers, the new Haitian Republic witnessed the emergence of religious practices that were unregulated in the absence of clergy. Although by midcentury an accommodation was reached that allowed for restoration of institutionalized Catholicism, the hiatus had permitted a public role for rituals that exhibited elements of both Catholicism and African religions, known as Vodun, or “Voodoo.”

Haiti is not the only site for syncretism of Catholicism and African beliefs. The dichotomy between white free society and black slaves in Cuba permitted a similar syncretism that resulted in the religion of Lukumí, known outside of Cuba as Santería. Both of these forms as well as variations in the Dominican Republic (Gagá) share a common trait of hybridization, although in different measures and in various formulations.

Caribbean religions usually identified as “Afro-Caribbean” often also have been influenced by Spiritualism. Developed from European positivism, Spiritualism emerged in the nineteenth century as a philosophical system with the Enlightenment’s view that institutionalized religion was for the masses while rational science was the superior understanding of the elites. Propagated by Masonic organizations, positivism went beyond a passive deism and produced a religion to rival Christianity.

The Spiritualism that arrived in the Caribbean via Spain and France was derived from the writings of Allan Kardec, pseudonym for Hippolyte Leon Denizard Rivail (1804–1869), a French educator. Kardec insisted rational meaning was hidden within all religions. He offered the key to deciphering the progress of human history. Often cast into numerical formulae, the hidden meanings allowed Spiritualists to accept public religions such as Christianity to satisfy social expectations. Often, Spiritualists in the Caribbean were Masons or Free Thinkers who did not attack the church but tolerated it as an inconvenience whose inner esoteric symbolism was a prop for universal rationalism. While Kardec was still fashioning his synthesis of outward material religious symbols and inner spiritualist rational meaning, cases of spirit-tapping stirred public interest in

communication with the spirit world. The side result of Kardec's popularity on both sides of the Atlantic was the upper class gathering in a séance to speak with the dead.

In Puerto Rico, as in Cuba and Haiti, contact with spirits was a feature of the religion of the people of color, particularly of black slaves. In search of frequent contact with the dead, Spiritualists of an upper class were brought into symbiotic contact with Afro-Caribbean religions of blacks. Thus, there emerged cross-class religions that incorporated both the "white table," the nonsacrificial séance, with the "red table," or bloody animal sacrifice rituals.

Contact between these traditions was intensified with the migration of black persons to the cities of the Caribbean in the first third of the twentieth century and exploded with the immigration to the United States after World War II. Variations from the Caribbean islands survive among people from a particular culture who have migrated to the United States. There is, for instance, the persistence of Lukumí among Cubans in Miami of all social classes. In addition to these home-and-away linkages, the contact among the major Caribbean groups in cities such as New York has produced religious configurations found only in the United States. Moreover, the Afro-Caribbean variations in the United States attract not only new members from among African Americans with little or no Caribbean background but white people as well.

Jamaica had its own version of syncretism that combined religion with the utopian visions of Marcus Garvey (1887–1940). Garvey, who achieved his greatest successes in New York City, had lived much of his life in Jamaica before becoming an immigrant to the United States. During the Great Depression, he organized the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), a society in which blacks ran their own businesses and took pride in their African history. Although run from New York, the association popularized the notion of Pan-Africanism and the eventual prosperity of African peoples everywhere to a leading role in world affairs.

While Garvey's organization did not constitute a religion, it was a breeding ground for new religions, some of which appear unconnected to the Caribbean. It may be argued that Garvey's influence could be traced to the Black Muslims, since Elijah Muhammad had been a Garveyite before taking over the Nation of Islam. In Garvey's homeland of Jamaica, his economic and social utopian vision was hitched to a religious framework of salvation and millenarian fulfillment known as the Rastafarian faith. The first publication

promoting the religious dimensions that became the Rasta movement was Leonard P. Howell's *The Promise Key*, published shortly after the November 1930 coronation of the emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa. Ethiopia has a history dating back to biblical times and protects a Christian faith with unique beliefs and rituals partially explained by isolation from Roman Catholicism. Enlarging on the honorific titles such as "Lion of Judah" invoked in the ceremony, Howell (1898–1981) presented them as fulfillments of prophecies taken eclectically from Judaism and Christianity. His audacity rewarded him with jail time in Jamaica for sedition because he urged recognition of Selassie as a Black Messiah instead of continuing obedience to the English king.

The Rasta grew in numbers in Jamaica. Street preachers promoted a belief in a Black Messiah, using concepts taken from Christianity that were familiar to the new converts, and invoking Garvey's ideas on economic and social power for black people. By 1961, when Haile Selassie visited Jamaica, the Rasta had retreated from troublesome conflict with authorities into communes, where they promoted a return to Africa. Customs such as not cutting hair and letting it grow as dreadlocks and using marijuana, or ganja, in rituals mark members of the Rasta. The Rastafarians have also developed a musical style for songs that mirror their beliefs about the world and the role of blacks. The reggae music with words written and songs performed by Bob Marley are considered representative not only of the Rastafarians but of Jamaican culture.

In the Spanish Caribbean there is a current revival of the Taíno religion. While there was a historical break in continuity between the religion practiced by the natives of the Greater Antilles and groups of Puerto Ricans and Dominicans today, some have organized themselves as part of the Native American peoples. These new Taínos/as attend pow wows and other regional conferences for Native Americans in the contemporary United States. The Neo-Taínos/as intend to restore to contemporary practice the main elements of the religion that had been replaced by the sixteenth-century encounter with Spanish Catholicism. While there are questions as to whether or not these restorations actually reproduce the native religion of the sixteenth century, there is little doubt that such efforts have introduced Taíno/a spirituality into modern society. The revival of native religions is found not only on the Caribbean islands but also among groups of immigrants living in U.S. cities.

Not only traditional domestic customs and grassroots groups can be categorized as Caribbean religious culture. Religious institutions also generated much social influence, especially in politics. In prerevolutionary Cuba (1900–1959) as in the Dominican Republic under the Trujillo's dictatorship (1930–1961), Catholicism was used by tyrants in order to prop up their rule among the people. Their siren song was anticommunism, and at times this effort to frighten church leaders would distract religious attention from issues of social justice and government corruption. In Cuba and the Dominican Republic, however, church members from both Catholic and Protestant denominations eventually opposed the regime, participating in the dramatic overthrow of dictatorships.

In Cuba, the 1959 victory of rebel forces under the leadership of Fidel Castro over Fulgencio Batista's dictatorial regime was quickly followed by religious conflicts between the Catholic Church and the Revolution, when it was backed by the communist government of the Soviet Union. The rush of events produced the Cuban exile community of South Florida and elsewhere. Relations between the Cuban government and the Catholic Church underwent alternating periods of rapprochement and distancing for three decades, affected primarily by the Second Vatican Council, which opened up Catholicism to the theology of liberation. However, the so-called special time produced by the dissolution of the Soviet Union had the greatest impact on Cuban religion. At a party congress in 1993, the Cuban Constitution was changed from describing Cuba as "an atheistic state" to "a secular state." With the implicit censure of religious practice lifted, not only Catholicism and the historic Protestant denominations were invigorated, but also the religions of Lukumí and Spiritualism, which had often functioned secretly at the margins of state and religion. The historic visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba in 1998 signaled a new epoch in religious influence in Cuba, and the full effects are yet to be experienced, as longtime Cuban leader Fidel Castro remains powerful even after resigning his office for health reasons in 2008.

In Puerto Rico, a U.S. colonial possession since the end of the Spanish-American War of 1898, the 1960 island elections produced a conflict between church and state when the Catholic bishops promoted the formation of a religious party, the Partido de Acción Cristiana (PAC), in opposition to the birth control policies of the established political leader, Luis Muñoz Marín. Although Muñoz Marín won reelection, and the North American bishops were replaced by native Puerto Rican hierarchs, the conflict produced a

division among Catholics and fragmented ecumenical participation for decades. Moreover, the political ineptness of the North American bishops in 1960 dimmed the glaring light cast on forced sterilization by a native bishop, Antulio Parrilla Bonilla (1919–1994). In 2000, Puerto Rico had the highest rate (33 percent) of sterilization of women of child-bearing age in the world, and endemic poverty made worse by its juxtaposition with the wealth of North American corporations. The ambiguous political status of Puerto Rico—ruled by the U.S. Congress but without voting rights—has stilled the prophetic voice of religious institutions such as the Catholic Church and many Protestant churches with headquarters in the United States.

Catholicism was identified in Puerto Rico from the 1940s through the 1960s with both conservatives and radicals. The revolutionary Nationalist Party leader, Pedro Albizu Campos (1893–1965), promoted a Catholic identity for Puerto Rico. Arguing that the United States was a Protestant country with culture and values inimical to Catholic Puerto Rico, Albizu Campos compared the situation of his homeland to what Ireland had suffered under Protestant British rule for some 400 years, and he urged armed rebellion. The legacy of religious resistance to colonialism acquired an ecumenical character after the Second Vatican Council and the arrival in Puerto Rico of liberation theology from Latin America. Beginning in 1999, successful protests led by religious groups forced the closing of the U.S. Navy base and its target bombing of the inhabited island of Vieques in 2003. Thus, unique among the religions found elsewhere in the Caribbean, many believers in Puerto Rico have come together to confront the moral implications of what they view as a situation of colonialism.

Diasporic Caribbean Religion

Each of the Caribbean islands has undergone a major out-migration of its people. Too complicated to reduce to any single formula, the twentieth century produced a scattering, or diaspora, of Caribbean peoples. The ties between the sending and receiving groups also allow for continual interchange or religious culture and influence between island homeland and migrant destination.

An example of the phenomenon of import-export of both people and religion is found in Puerto Rican Pentecostalism. Shortly after the U.S. annexation of the island in 1898, growers in faraway Hawaii began to bring displaced Puerto Ricans to the Pacific islands to work the agribusiness fields. Hawaii in 1900 was also a key player in the Holiness

movement, which spilled over into the Azusa Street Revival of 1913 in California, thus contributing to the birth of Pentecostalism. Juan L. Lugo, a Puerto Rican Pentecostal convert, returned to Puerto Rico after his acceptance into the Assemblies of God in 1916. The Pentecostal faith grew rapidly in Puerto Rico, and by 1932, Pentecostals outnumbered all other Protestants in Puerto Rico. Eventually, Puerto Rican Pentecostal missionaries would found churches in much of Latin America and most especially in New York City.

Caribbean Pentecostals have not been exempt from the syncretistic elements common in other expressions of the island cultures. Juanita Garcia Peraza (d. 1970) converted to Pentecostalism in the 1940s but became convinced that she was the incarnation of the Holy Spirit. With the name La Diosa Mita, her new religion integrated a strong network of support groups and enterprises to its worship and now has spread outside of Puerto Rico. Also fitting into this category of "Pentecostal heresies" are churches such as Fuentes de Agua Viva (Fountains of Living Water). In New York City, Pentecostals broke with the orthodox preaching that "retarded" children were possessed by the devil and condemned to hell. Instead, such groups as Angels Unaware nurture people of faith and care for children with special needs.

Ana Maria Diaz-Stevens has written convincingly, in "The Saving Grace," of a "matriarchal core" at the heart of diasporic Caribbean religion. Noting that males in migration seldom reach the social status afforded them in their homeland, she states that women have assumed the key role in sustaining faith and family. The same author, in *Oxcart Catholicism on Fifth Avenue*, demonstrated that the presence of large numbers of Caribbean peoples has forced substantial changes on the religious institutions of the diaspora. The changes include the use of typical folk music and the utilization of symbols both secular and religious to identify worship as specifically Caribbean. There is a growing literature that explores the diasporic experience of other groups and other religions.

Thomas Tweed undertakes an analysis of Cuban religious identity in his study of the Shrine of Our Lady of Charity in Miami, Florida. Because it is difficult when not also unlawful for Cubans in the United States to travel to the original shrine, in the Santiago region of Cuba, the Miami complex has developed a set of supports for cultural and religious identity with uniquely diasporic Caribbean characteristics. Likewise, Dominicans in the United States have transferred to American shores the devotion to their

national patron, Our Lady of Altagracia. Haitians have incorporated the Polish Our Lady of Czechostowa, the "Black Madonna," into their expression of cultural identity. Without claiming American exceptionalism for Caribbean religion, it appears that many in diaspora have become more religious in the United States than they were in their island homelands.

Caribbean Religious Forms

Caribbean religious culture has adapted to constantly changing circumstances in multicultural and multiracial societies. Some variations appear as syncretized or hybrid "new" religions that have no match elsewhere. The Rastafarians and the religion of La Diosa Mita fall into this category. Some view Afro-Caribbean religions as imperfect restorations of pristine African religions. The Neo-Táinos made a similar claim to have restored an old religion rather than having created a new one.

Most of Caribbean believers, however, are not members of these specialized religions. Rather, they belong to more familiar Christian churches. They have been affected, however, by the crosswinds and deep currents of religious encounters in multicultural and multiracial Caribbean societies. As suggested in the opening pages, the adaptation or lack thereof to syncretistic elements is the key to understanding Caribbean religious cultures and their influences. Caribbean peoples worship through familiar forms of Christianity but also with unique expressions such as Vodun, Santería, and the Rastafarian faith. Whether on the islands or in diaspora, the lived religion of the Caribbean peoples has proven to be creative and enduring.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion* entries; *Freedom, Religious; Frontier and Borderlands; Healing; Immigration* entries; *Invisible Institution; Latino American Religion* entries; *Latino/a Religious Practice; Nation(s) of Islam; New Religious Movements: Black Nationalist Movements; Pentecostals* entries; *Santería; Spiritualism; Supreme Court; Voodoo*.

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Celebrity Culture

Celebrity culture influenced religious life long before such twentieth-century icons as Billy Graham, Elvis Presley, and the Dalai Lama. Most religions and spiritual movements

start around the lives of celebrated individuals. Two thousand years later, the Christian calendar is based on the major events in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In the Roman Catholic Church, the person performing the central act of worship is referred to as the "celebrant." Long before modern mass media placed entertainers on the national pedestal, Christians looked to the lives of the saints for their celebrity needs. Muslims may not revere the image of their founder, but they certainly seek to emulate the life story of the prophet Muhammad. In the East, the life journey of Siddhartha Gautama, a man born in the sixth century BCE in modern-day Nepal, defines the foundation of the practice of Buddhism. In more recent times, however, the line between religious celebrity and pop stardom has become increasingly blurred. One noteworthy example of this occurred at an event in the San Francisco Bay Area during the 1990s when actress Sharon Stone took the stage to introduce the fourteenth Dalai Lama, His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, as "the hardest-working man in spirituality."

History: Religious Figures as Celebrities

In the United States a long tradition of religious individualism and a consumerist approach to personal spirituality has only exaggerated the ancient tendency to personalize the mysterious power of the divine in celebrated individuals. During the colonial period the Boston Congregational Church minister Cotton Mather (1663–1728) was the first American preacher to gain international fame. He went down in history as the best-known American Puritan, in part because of his role in the Salem witchcraft prosecution of 1692, which stimulated widespread public excitement. While Mather was famous, he did little to foster the spirit of individualism and spiritual diversity that would come to characterize American religion and help create its celebrity culture. The colonial preacher best known for the cause of religious liberty was Roger Williams (1603–1683), the founder of the Rhode Island colony.

The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

The most renowned preacher of the First Great Awakening, the Calvinist clergyman George Whitefield, established the model for modern mass evangelism. Whitefield (1714–1770) drew thousands of people to hear him preach during his seven pilgrimages to the United States. His call for a "new birth" in Jesus, his ability to ignore denominational differences, and his strategy of taking his message outside church buildings and directly to the people were to become the

hallmarks of the American evangelical movement. Whitefield, an Englishman whose anti-Anglican stance made him popular in the American colonies, advertised his revivals in newspapers and advised his disciples that “the object of our measures is to gain attention.” Another celebrated preacher during this period of American religious fervor was Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), who delivered the “sermon New England would never forget,” titled “Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God,” and wrote several famous treatises such as *The Nature of True Virtue*.

The next great wave of religious celebrities would come in the first few decades of the nineteenth century, as Protestant revivalists sought to counter the ideas of the Enlightenment and resist the deism of Thomas Jefferson and other leaders of the American Revolution. The best-known preacher of this Second Great Awakening was Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875), who began his career as a lawyer but wound up testifying to a soul-shaking conversion that convinced him he had “a retainer from the Lord Jesus Christ to plead his cause.” He led revivals in the major cities of the East and in the fast-growing towns of the West. Finney developed such a personal popularity that he was forced to defend the whole idea of a religious revival led by man—rather than by God himself. “More than five thousand million have gone down to hell, while the church has been dreaming, and waiting for God to save them without the use of means,” Finney wrote.

This period of American religious history also saw the rise of religious reformers, who were reviled as much as celebrated. Chief among them was Joseph Smith, the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The story of Smith (1805–1844) is a textbook example of how starting a modern-day religion around the life of a single person can be a mixed blessing. Smith wrote, and many Mormons believe, that God was once a man and that he and his wife, the Heavenly Mother, live near the star Kolob. Smith also preached that Jesus Christ was married. In the 1890s, the church was finally forced to renounce the most well-known of Smith’s doctrines—the practice of plural marriage, or polygamy. According to historians, Smith had taken thirty-three wives by the time he was murdered by an angry mob in Carthage, Illinois, in 1844. In recent decades, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has sought to emphasize what it has in common with mainstream Christian thought, such as its belief that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin and resurrected from the dead, and that humanity can be eternally saved through Christ’s sacrificial death.

Mary Baker Eddy provides another example of how the life struggles of a spiritual celebrity can shape the doctrines of a religious movement. Eddy (1821–1910) was often ill as a young woman and found little help in the remedies of her time. She turned to Phineas P. Quimby, who used magnets and hypnotism in his healing treatments, but later developed her own ideas about faith healing, doctrines that were laid down in the Christian Science movement she founded. Another celebrated nineteenth-century woman who would influence the Spiritualist and New Age movements of the twentieth century was Elena Petrovna Gan, better known as Madame Blavatsky (1831–1891), who founded the Theosophical Society in New York City in 1875. During the final years of her life, Blavatsky told some of her students that the real purpose of the Theosophists was to pave the way for the return of the ultimate religious leader, a new world teacher. In 1909, her successors claimed to have found that teacher in India in the form of Jiddu Krishnamurti, a fourteen-year-old boy. Krishnamurti would be raised as the new “World Teacher,” only to denounce that messianic role at age thirty-four.

Christian revivalism didn’t stop at the end of the Second Great Awakening. The premier celebrity preacher of the second half of the nineteenth century was a shoe salesman from Chicago named Dwight L. Moody. In 1860, Moody (1837–1899) dedicated himself to Christian evangelism, working in army camps during the Civil War and offering words of hope to families displaced and otherwise devastated by the fighting. Moody had no theological training and only a seventh-grade education, but his simple gospel message found an eager audience in the decades following the Civil War. Newspapers devoted significant coverage to his revivals, which filled auditoriums in New York City, Chicago, and other American cities. Encouraged by wealthy contributors and powerful patrons, he founded the Moody Bible Institute and began to train a new generation of Christian revivalists who would continue the message into the twentieth century. Moody is the link between two of America’s greatest Protestant religious celebrities, George Whitefield and Billy Graham.

Another Protestant minister of this period, the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher of Brooklyn, New York, exemplified the growing national obsession with religious scandal and celebrity culture. Beecher (1813–1887) was a brother to writer Harriet Beecher Stowe and a preacher of enormous popularity in nineteenth-century America. In the 1840s thousands of people boarded ferries from Manhattan known

as “Beecher Boats” to hear his Sunday sermons. Newspaper stories of his alleged sexual affair with the wife of a close friend culminated in 1875 with an adultery trial that received unprecedented saturation coverage in American newspapers. The trial unleashed a media frenzy perhaps not surpassed until the 1995 murder trial of celebrity athlete and actor O.J. Simpson.

The Late Nineteenth and the Early Twentieth Century

Professional athletes were a major component of celebrity culture in the late nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century. The first man to make the crossover from the major leagues to the mission field was William Ashley Sunday, better known as Billy Sunday. Sunday (1862–1935) was a popular outfielder in the National League in the 1880s and one of the league leaders in stolen bases. Following his evangelical conversion in the late 1880s, Sunday stopped drinking and partying with his teammates and started speaking before congregations and young people at local chapters of the YMCA. When his audience got too large for church halls, Sunday began erecting huge canvas tents in which to hold his revival meetings. He later erected an eighteen-thousand-seat church hall, known as Billy Sunday’s Tabernacle, on the corner of Broadway and 168th Street in New York City. Sunday was the nation’s leading Christian celebrity in the first two decades of the twentieth century, but his popularity began to decline after World War I. Movie theaters and movie stars were offering new competition for the revival tent and the celebrity preacher. They were the first in a series of technological revolutions that changed the nature of celebrity culture in America.

Movies, radio, television, and, finally, the Internet each brought about profound changes in twentieth-century America. And those changes began with a woman named Aimee Semple McPherson. Decades before such televangelists as Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, and Jim and Tammy Bakker started mixing show business and conservative Christianity, this pioneering Pentecostal preacher and radio evangelist presided over the lavish opening of her 5,300-seat Angelus Temple in southern California. Just as with other celebrities then and now, her reputation was built up and torn down by a news media hungry for scandal and sensation. Born to a farmer father and mother who worked for the Salvation Army, McPherson (1890–1944) was raised in the desolate countryside of Ontario, Canada. As a young girl, she found her salvation in an Irish immigrant and fiery preacher

named Robert Semple. The couple was swept up in a revival that was just gathering steam in towns and cities across North America. The revival sparked the modern Pentecostal movement, a lively style of Christian worship that stresses faith healing, prophecy, speaking in tongues, and a literalist approach to the Bible. They married in 1908 and two years later took off on a mission to China, but within months of their arrival Robert contracted malaria and died. Looking for security, Aimee married businessman Harold McPherson. She gave birth to a son, but it was not a happy marriage.

During World War I, McPherson crisscrossed America in a “Gospel Car” painted with the slogan, “Where will you spend eternity?” By the 1920s she was a famous faith healer filling auditoriums in Denver, San Diego, and other cities. Her giant Angelus Temple soon rose at Sunset and Glendale boulevards, just down the road from Hollywood. The huge church, described by one visitor as “half like a Roman Coliseum, half like a Parisian Opera House,” became one of the city’s premier tourist attractions. It was topped with a giant radio tower that sent McPherson’s sermons and speeches across southern California. The evangelist’s most notorious exploit came in the spring of 1926 when she suddenly vanished while swimming at Venice Beach. Her disappearance and feared death by drowning set off media speculation that only continued to build after she mysteriously reappeared five weeks later in Mexico, amid rumors that she had escaped to have an amorous affair. But by the end of the twentieth century, the religious denomination McPherson founded, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, had more than 1,850 U.S. congregations and more than 238,000 members.

McPherson was at her peak in the summer of 1925, when the nation was gripped by one of the watersheds of American cultural history. In Dayton, Tennessee, celebrity attorneys Clarence Darrow (1857–1938) and William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925) faced off in the landmark “monkey trial,” in which high school teacher John Scopes was prosecuted for violating a state law that prohibited teaching the theory of evolution. Reporters from across the country descended on Dayton for an event that would define a cultural split between the secular forces of modernism and the waves of religious revivalism that periodically sweep across the United States. This same religious and political divide would persist into the next century, separating the country into a nation of “red states” and “blue states.”

Radio and television were also the media that turned two Roman Catholic priests into national celebrities in the

1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Father Charles Coughlin (1891–1979) was one of the first North American clergymen to use radio to preach a political message, including commentary that was widely viewed as anti-Semitic. Bishop Fulton Sheen (1895–1979) was a television pioneer with his *Life Is Worth Living* show in the early 1950s, which continued in various forms well into the 1960s. Coughlin and Sheen paved the way for an American-born nun Rita Antoinette Rizzo, later known as Mother Angelica (1923–), to viewers of her Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN).

“Living” Saints: Billy Graham, John Paul II, and Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Perhaps no religious celebrity in twentieth-century America has had as much fame and impact as William Franklin Graham. During that century, Billy Graham probably preached to more people than anyone in the history of the world. Graham’s television broadcasts have been viewed by hundreds of millions of people around the world, and millions more have personally witnessed his Christian crusades at massive revival meetings, from Aarhus, Denmark, to Azagorsk, Russia. Graham (1918–) was born on a dairy farm in North Carolina to Scottish Irish parents but was “born again” at a revival meeting sixteen years later. His evangelical career took off in 1944, when Graham, then a young suburban pastor and budding radio evangelist, was invited to speak at the 3,400-seat Orchestra Hall in Chicago before young servicemen from the adjacent USO.

Graham got his first big boost from newspaper czar William Randolph Hearst. Impressed by Graham’s anticommunism and strong moral values, Hearst reportedly told his editors to “puff Graham.” And they did, running glowing full-page stories about the young preacher in all twenty-two papers of the Hearst chain. During the 1950s Graham was an early supporter of the civil rights movement and Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. That cost him some southern support but improved his reputation among African Americans and the mainstream media. Graham was famous as the pastor to American presidents, and his closest and most controversial political tie was to Richard Nixon. While officially neutral, Graham was a behind-the-scenes force in Nixon’s 1960 campaign against John Kennedy, whose Catholicism worried many American evangelicals, and he also dropped clear hints in his support of Nixon’s successful 1968 presidential run. Graham stuck by Nixon during much of the Watergate scandal, only to be embarrassed later by the expletive-filled audiotapes secretly recorded in the Oval Office.

In the 1980s Graham remained untouched by the sex-and-money scandals that disgraced a series of major TV evangelists, and he was a strong voice for greater financial accountability in evangelical ministry. His unparalleled popularity landed him on the Gallup Poll’s list of “10 Most Admired Men in the World” more than forty times in the last half of the twentieth century. Graham often shared that list with another religious leader who was not born in the United States but whose American pilgrimages drew millions of Roman Catholic spectators and communicants.

Pope John Paul II (1920–2005) presided over a twenty-six-year papacy, in which he played a critical role in the downfall of communism and promoted traditional moral values as an alternative to the materialism of the West. Born as Karol Jozef Wojtyla in Wadowice, Poland, John Paul II had Eastern European roots that would define his pontificate, the second longest after Pope Pius IX, who served from 1846 to 1878. Wojtyla was elected pope in 1978, survived a would-be assassin’s bullet in the early years of his pontificate, and pushed onward to become the most-traveled pontiff ever, beginning with his first trip to Mexico in January 1979. Like former president Ronald Reagan, John Paul II was a former actor and charismatic speaker, someone who understood the power of television. His foreign tours, including five highly publicized visits to the United States, featured parades in his bulletproof “pope-mobile” and outdoor masses attended by millions of worshipers. The pope and his tour managers were masters of the photo opportunity, and images of the pope holding a koala bear in Australia, hugging a young AIDS patient in San Francisco, and kissing airport tarmacs around the world were deeply etched in the public mind.

One of the few religious celebrities who could compete with the pope for public renown and respect was another Catholic personality, Mother Teresa of Calcutta. During the last two decades of her life, the diminutive Catholic nun appeared nineteen times on the Gallup Poll of women most admired by the American public. Mother Teresa (1910–1997) was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in the summer of 1910 in Skopje, Macedonia. At age eighteen, she joined the Loreto Sisters, a Catholic religious order, and traveled to Ireland and Darjeeling, India. The journey to India began a second conversion in the young nun, who started her own religious order there, the Missionaries of Charity, and devoted herself to compassionate aid for the “poorest of the poor.” Unlike many celebrities, religious or otherwise, Mother Teresa did not seek the spotlight. The tireless nun

first gained international attention in the 1960s, when she was discovered by the British author and filmmaker Malcolm Muggeridge.

In 1979 she achieved worldwide fame when she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her decades of work with ill and dying people in India and around the world. Even after those accolades, Mother Teresa shunned publicity and downplayed her accomplishments. To avoid the media spotlight, she would often slip unnoticed into San Francisco to visit her main U.S. convent, where between eighty and one hundred sisters quietly prepared for religious life. Yet it was Mother Teresa's renown that made her Missionaries of Charity the most successful Roman Catholic religious order of the late twentieth century. At a time when many Catholic orders were in rapid decline, the Missionaries of Charity grew swiftly around the world, attracting thousands of idealistic young converts. In the process the wrinkled face and soulful eyes of Mother Teresa became synonymous with religious devotion and selfless charity.

Decades before her death, Catholics and non-Catholics alike began calling Mother Teresa "a living saint." The wheels of the official Roman Catholic process towards sainthood began to turn on September 5, 1997, the day of her death. Long before the days of television, *People* magazine, and celebrity Web sites, religious leaders were selected by a painstaking process undertaken in Rome at the offices of the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints. But in the case of Mother Teresa, the process of sainthood had already begun. Over his long papacy, Pope John Paul II canonized more than 470 saints and beatified 1,280 candidates as "blessed," more than the combined totals of all his predecessors over the past four hundred years. Saints had almost gone out of style in the 1960s. Pope John XXIII, the pontiff who inaugurated the great liberal reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), canonized only 10 of them and beatified 4 candidates during his five years in office. Many church leaders at the time saw Catholic saints—and the miracles performed in their name—as outdated or superstitious remnants from another era. John Paul II and Mother Teresa pushed sainthood back to the center of church life, but not all Catholics saw this as a sign of healthy faith. They complained that the number of canonizations by Rome lacked proper skepticism and represented a resurgent form of personal piety in the Catholic Church. Perhaps the same can be said for the larger rise of celebrity culture in American religion. There is a downside to focusing on individual personalities and choosing religious leaders because

they are photogenic or "great communicators." Both the mystical piety of the Polish pope and the good deeds of the late Calcutta nun were a move towards seeing the church as an agent of social transformation. Celebrity religion can rise at the expense of more complex questions of systematic poverty and social injustice.

Televangelism and Celebrity: Oral Roberts and the Bakkers

Most of Pope John Paul II's televised images were in the form of news coverage provided at no charge by the mainstream media. Television, in the form of paid programming and dedicated cable networks, was the key force in the rise of the major Protestant media celebrities in the last half of the twentieth century. One pioneer in that field was Oral Roberts (1918–2009), an Oklahoma faith healer who built his *Expect a Miracle* show into the top-rated religious television program of the 1970s. But another religious broadcaster would soon eclipse Roberts. Robert Schuller (1927–) came to southern California with his wife in 1955, right out of his seminary education in Chicago, and began preaching sermons atop the snack bar at the Orange drive-in theater in Garden Grove, as members of the congregation remained in their cars. Schuller was an ordained minister in the Dutch Reform Church, but his message was a hopeful "You can do it" proclamation, heavily influenced by the Positive Thinking ideas of Norman Vincent Peale.

It was a message that thousands of other displaced mid-westerners who had broken ties with churches back home were ready to hear. Two decades later, Schuller began building the Crystal Cathedral, a star-shaped, reflective glass church, television studio, and performance hall designed by architect Philip Johnson. Celebrity religion is all about glitz, and the Crystal Cathedral was certainly glitzy. But television, with its enormous power to provide an audience and financial base, creates a kind of church without walls. Schuller's cathedral is not unlike the modern stadium in a sports world dominated by television. Schuller's church provided the set for his *Hour of Power* television show, which began in 1970 and grew to become the most watched one-hour church service in the United States, with some twenty million viewers.

Schuller's show was seen in many parts of the country on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), which was founded in 1973 by two couples, Paul and Jan Crouch and Jim and Tammy Bakker, and grew to be the largest Christian television network in the world. Crouch and his wife,

famous for her towering bouffant hairdo, presided over an eclectic three-ring circus of Christian pop music, soap operas, aerobics classes, and other programming that unapologetically mixed celebrity glitz and gospel message. More traditional evangelicals have condemned the network for its promotion of the “prosperity gospel,” the idea that living a Christian life (and contributing financially) will inspire material success. Two of the network’s biggest stars, Jim and Tammy Bakker, split off to form their own operation, the Praise the Lord (PTN) network, which would collapse in 1987 in a scandal over embezzlement and sexual harassment. Their downfall—part of a series of televangelism scandals in the 1980s that also brought down the fiery TV preacher Jimmy Swaggart—revealed the shadowy side of celebrity Christianity and the fact that fame and fortune can be a double-edged sword. It also generated a firestorm of media attention in the 1980s, a journalistic free-for-all reminiscent of the newspaper coverage of the Scopes monkey trial back in the steamy summer of 1925.

Jim and Tammy were unapologetic in preaching a prosperity gospel, and they had their own rags-to-riches lives to offer up as testimony. They liked to say, “God wants his people to go first-class,” which is exactly what they did with their purchase of luxury cars and lavish homes. On a 2,300-acre pasture in the heart of the Bible Belt, in Fort Mill, South Carolina, the Bakkers built Heritage Village USA, a condo development and Christian theme park. It was also the site for the state-of-the-art television studio from which they broadcast their evangelical variety show, *The PTL Club*, which was seen by millions of viewers. Many of those viewers were “prayer partners” who sent in contributions, and during a two-year period in the 1980s, some \$200 million poured in.

It all collapsed after Jim Bakker’s March 1987 confession to a 1980 sexual encounter with church secretary Jessica Hahn, who went on to appear topless in the November 1987 edition of *Playboy* magazine. The Bakkers’ fall from grace was the perfect storm of consumerism, politics, Christianity, and celebrity culture. Before their downfall, President Ronald Reagan, himself a former show business celebrity, invited the couple to his first inaugural and praised their television network for “carrying out a master plan for people that love.”

Jim and Tammy Bakker also partnered with another powerful televangelist, Pat Robertson (1930–), and with his Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN). In fact, the couple began their Christian show business career in 1966 by

staging a children’s puppet show on Robertson’s fledgling network. Robertson’s Christian talk show, *The 700 Club*, was to Christian celebrities what the *Tonight Show* was to secular stars. Robertson was long active in Republican Party politics and made an unsuccessful run for that party’s presidential nomination in 1988. But it was another televangelist who first mobilized evangelical voters into a force powerful enough to sway presidential elections, the Reverend Jerry Falwell (1933–2007) and his Moral Majority. Founded in 1979 and credited with helping to bring Ronald Reagan into the White House, the Moral Majority mobilized a new political base with cable television, sophisticated direct-mail techniques, and emotional attacks on his *Old Time Gospel Hour* television show against legalized abortion, gay rights, and other causes. Robertson and Falwell illustrate another side of celebrity Christianity: their fame focused national media attention on them, which inspired the mainstream media to promulgate a series of controversial statements that eventually soured their reputations with many voters.

In the 1990s, Robertson and Falwell were overshadowed by James Dobson, another Christian celebrity and political power broker. Dobson (1936–), a conservative Christian psychologist and radio talk show host, had already been spreading his views on abortion, marriage, and child rearing for more than two decades. His views were broadcast from 2,500 radio stations across North America and 3,000 other outlets around the world. Most of those who contacted his Colorado City–based ministry were not seeking advice on how to vote in the presidential primary. The majority who called in to his *Focus on the Family* show were filing prayer requests or ordering merchandise from Dobson’s extensive catalog of books, magazines, videotapes, and audiocassettes on how to save marriages, stay off drugs, avoid fornication, and find Jesus. By the middle of the 1990s his sophisticated telephone marketing system handled nearly four thousand calls and eleven thousand letters a day.

Complementing the radio ministry of Dobson has been the rise of “Christian radio” and its own brand of celebrities: *Christian* music artists. Christian rock dates back to the 1960s, but it became more popular in the 1990s. That was the decade when Billy Graham—who once condemned rock and roll as Satan’s music—started asking Christian rock bands to warm up the crowds at his youth crusades. Graham drew tens of thousands of Christian rock fans to his crusades by booking Jars of Clay and DC-Talk, two of the most popular Christian rock bands at that time. These and other evangelical rock bands helped propel “Contemporary

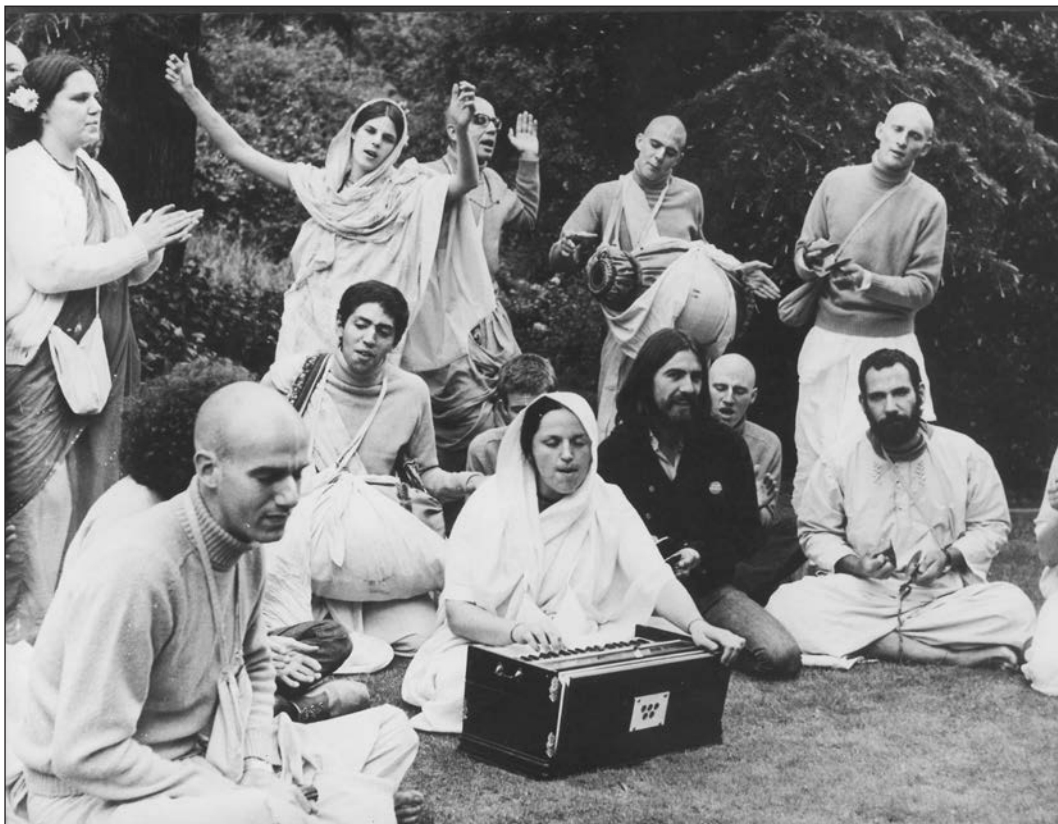
Christian” music to sell more than forty-four million albums in 2000, making it the sixth-best-selling genre in the United States, ahead of jazz, classical, and new age combined.

Celebrities as Religious Promoters: The Beatles, Richard Gere, and Scientologists

Christians were not the only religionists to tap into the power of celebrity culture in the 1960s. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1917–2008) began teaching transcendental meditation in India in 1955 and brought the technique to the United States in 1959. But his big break came in 1967, when the Beatles rock band—at the height of their popularity—attended one of his lectures in Wales in 1967 and visited his ashram in India in 1968, along with Donovan, another rock star. The Beatles soon lost interest. There was a falling out between the Maharishi and the rock band amid rumors that the bearded guru had made inappropriate advances on actress Mia Farrow. John Lennon even wrote a song about the affair, “Sexy Sadie,” in which he promised that the Maharishi would “get yours yet.” But the image of the meditation teacher dressed in white and surrounded by four smiling young Beatles stuck in the public mind and helped

inspire hundreds of thousands of young American spiritual seekers to explore the mysteries of Eastern religion.

Another Beatle, George Harrison, was the real “spiritual” Beatle. Not coincidentally, he was also the first member of the band to take the psychedelic drug LSD in 1964, when he was just twenty-one years old. He later credited that experience with giving him a powerful glimpse into another realm of consciousness, an awareness he would cultivate for the rest of his life through chanting and meditation. Harrison went on to study with another Indian guru, the late Swami Srila Prabhupada, the founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, better known as the Hare Krishna movement. Both the Maharishi and Prabhupada popularized specific types of Hindu religious practice. Maharishi stressed a simple form of silent meditation, while Krishna devotees were known for their shaved heads and chanting. Harrison remained devoted to Krishna, one of the central gods in the Hindu pantheon. Krishna is seen as the incarnation of divine love and beauty, and he is known for his quality of playfulness. “My life belongs to the Lord Krishna,” Harrison said in 1974. His 1970 No. 1 hit, “My Sweet Lord,” started out chanting the more familiar prayer of “Hallelujah,” then subtly switched to “Hare Krishna.”



English rock-guitarist, singer-songwriter, and member of the group the Beatles, George Harrison, wearing dark clothing, center, appears with a group of Hare Krishnas on August 29, 1969. References to eastern religion in the Beatles’ music played a large role in introducing these religions to Westerners on a wide scale.

The Beatles' endorsement of Maharishi was short-lived, but it had a huge effect on the West's new openness to the religious practices of India and the Far East. Of course, many other factors contributed to this East-meets-West religious syncretism, most notably a loosening of immigration restrictions that allowed a steady stream of Indian gurus, Tibetan monks, and Japanese Zen masters to come to the United States. But the massive popularity of the Beatles among the baby boom generation greatly amplified the impact of the Beatles' journey. The rock band's spiritual search was also reflected in the writings and drug-induced revelations of John Lennon. His reading of a seminal book of the sixties drug culture, *The Psychedelic Experience*, first inspired the band's mystical shift with the song "Tomorrow Never Knows." Like the book, coauthored in 1964 by Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert, and Ralph Metzner, the song was inspired by the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, a classic Buddhist text. The song appeared on the 1966 album *Revolver*, prefiguring the release of the band's landmark tribute to the psychedelic sixties, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, which included the group's tribute to LSD, the song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." Leary, known as the "high priest of LSD," and Alpert, who took his own journey to India and returned as Baba Ram Dass, achieved celebrity status themselves in the 1960s and 1970s. Alpert's religious conversion to a devotional Hindu practice, chronicled in his seminal book *Be Here Now*, furthered the pop culture shift to the exotic mysticism of the East.

Later, in the 1980s and 1990s, celebrities played a large role in helping popularize another ancient Indian religion, Buddhism. The best-known "celebrity Buddhist" to emerge during this period was actor Richard Gere, who was best remembered for his role opposite Julia Roberts in *Pretty Woman*, and his 1999 selection by that bible of celebrity gossip, *People* magazine, as the sexiest man alive. Gere may have been a "celebrity Buddhist," but he is also a serious, longtime practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism. Gere first became interested in Buddhism during an existential crisis in his twenties. He studied under Zen teacher Sasaki Roshi before becoming a student in the 1980s of Tenzin Gyatso (1935–), the 14th Dalai Lama. Since then Gere has devoted much of his energies to the campaign to preserve the Buddhist culture of Tibet and oppose Chinese efforts to weaken the faith of that ancient seat of Buddhist learning. At the same time, the Dalai Lama hardly needed Hollywood stars to promote the Tibetan cause, especially since winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. For the next twenty years, the

Dalai Lama's infectious giggles, self-deprecating humor, and spiritual addresses turned him into one of the world's premier religious celebrities, right beside Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Pope John Paul II. Tickets for the Dalai Lama's appearances were sold on the same Web sites used to promote rock concerts and sporting events.

Better-known new religious movements also have benefited from celebrity endorsement, most notably the Church of Scientology International. Founded in the 1950s by L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986), a prolific science fiction writer and freelance philosopher, Scientology describes itself as "the only major new religion established in the 20th century" as a bridge to increased awareness and spiritual freedom. Scientology is based on the precepts of Hubbard's 1950 book, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. Practitioners at Scientology centers around the world hook themselves up to a simple electric device, an "e-meter," for "auditing" sessions that purport to measure thoughts and emotional reactions, known in Scientology parlance as "engrams." Their goal is to attain a psychological and spiritual state called "clear," where they are said to overcome compulsions, repressions, and other self-generated diseases and psychoses. "Clears" are then sold advanced training sessions to become "operating thetans," spiritual beings said to possess such supernatural powers as the ability to leave their bodies. Scientologists purchasing 12.5 hours of advanced auditing, for example, were asked (in February 2001) to make a "donation" of between \$12,100 and \$15,125. Graduates purportedly achieve "a new viewpoint of sanity and rationality." From the beginning Hubbard encouraged his followers to actively recruit show business celebrities. In a directive issued in early 1955, Hubbard started "Project Celebrity" with a long list of movie stars to be courted, including Groucho Marx, Liberace, and Orson Wells. The church had little initial success in celebrity recruitment but decades later brought into its ranks two of Hollywood's most bankable actors, John Travolta and Tom Cruise. In 2004, Scientology leader David Miscavige expressed his appreciation of Cruise's work to promote the movement by awarding the actor the organization's 20th Anniversary Freedom Medal of Valor.

In the early 1970s the church purchased one of Hollywood's most distinctive buildings, a turreted castle on three acres of formal gardens originally built as the Château Élysée, a long-term residential hotel for movie stars. The church turned the building into its Celebrity Centre. It includes an exclusive hotel and restaurant described as "a safe

environment for Celebrities and Scientologists.” Travolta has personally endorsed the food and service and has appeared on the cover of a Scientology magazine titled *Celebrity*. In 2000, Travolta released the film *Battlefield Earth*, which was a screen homage, with a \$90 million budget, to one of L. Ron Hubbard’s science fiction stories. To promote the film, Travolta appeared in bookstores signing copies of Hubbard’s book, but the film failed at the box office.

Celebrities as Religious Figures

While some religious figures became celebrities and others endorsed a religion or spiritual movement, devotion to some celebrities, such as Elvis Presley, took on quasi-religious dimensions. Even in life, Presley (1935–1977) was known as “the King,” and he continued to defy death through countless “Elvis sightings” and celebrity impersonations. Numerous shrines have arisen, including the 24 Hour Church of Elvis, which began as an art project in Portland, Oregon, less than a decade after Presley’s death. Churches and new religious movements have arisen around the lives of other famous musicians, as well; included among them are the Saint John Coltrane Church in San Francisco and the short-lived Church of Unlimited Devotion, a hippie cult that saw Grateful Dead guitarist Jerry Garcia as an avatar of God.

Future Prospects

In the twenty-first century American religion and celebrity culture continues an exchange that began in the eighteenth century with George Whitefield taking out newspaper advertisements for his Christian revivals and continued into the new millennium with such Hollywood stars as Sharon Stone and Richard Gere promoting the Dalai Lama. Celebrity culture has no single effect on American religion. In some cases celebrity endorsements allow the promotion of minority faiths and exotic spiritualities—for example, the Beatles’ pilgrimage to India or the decision by pop icon Madonna to embrace Jewish mysticism. In others the rise of religious celebrities such as Mother Teresa can inspire a return to more traditional forms of Christian piety. Celebrity fame is, by its very nature, ephemeral, while religious belief appears to be long-lasting. Cable television can raise up religious celebrities—for instance, Jim and Tammy Bakker—and then destroy them with saturation coverage of the latest sex-and-money scandal. Over the past three centuries, technological innovations in mass communication (newspapers, radio, film, and television) have offered new ways to bring celebrity culture into religious life. That trend will no doubt

continue as computers and the Internet reshape the way Americans view themselves, society, and perhaps even their religious beliefs, practices, and communities.

See also *Buddhism in North America; Canada: Protestants and the United Church of Canada; Devotionalism; Electronic Church; Film; Great Awakening(s); Internet; Krishna Consciousness; Music: Christian; Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Radio; Revivalism* entries; *Scientology; Television*.

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Chabad-Lubavitch

The movement known today as “Chabad,” “Chabad-Lubavitch,” or “Lubavitch” grew out of the pietistic Hasidic revolution that swept through East European Jewry in the eighteenth century. The charismatic healer, preacher, and popular religious mystic Israel ben Eliezer Ba’al Shem Tov

("Master of the Good Name"), known by his acronym "the Besht" (c. 1700–1760) served as the central figure of this movement, which arose in response to such complex forces as the partition of Poland, anti-Semitic massacres, the stirrings of pseudo-messiahs such as Shabbetai Zevi and Jacob Frank, economic ruin, spiritual despair, and pietistic religious trends throughout the region. Hasidim defied traditional Jewish communal authorities and formed spiritual circles distinguished by their patterns of life and dress, their ecstatic religious practices, the mystical teachings that they communicated, their outreach to the poor and the illiterate, and their self-segregation. At a time when authority and prestige in Jewish life depended heavily upon Talmudic knowledge, early Hasidic masters insisted that God could also be approached through acts of love and devotional prayer.

Hasidism after "the Besht"

The leading figure in the Hasidic movement following the death of the Besht was his disciple, the charismatic preacher (*maggid*) Dov Baer of Mezhirech (d. 1772). He helped to popularize Hasidism by sending forth emissaries to recruit followers from the Jewish masses throughout Poland, while his personal conduct set the pattern for the institution of the *Zaddik*, the benevolent "spiritual father"-type leader of a Hasidic sect. He also gathered around him a group of significant disciples who studied his teachings and mystical practices. These disciples, following his death, decentralized and diversified Hasidism. They spread through Poland, the Ukraine, and into Russia, establishing Hasidic courts of their own.

Shneur Zalman (1745–1812/1813), one of Dov Baer's disciples, settled in Belarus, establishing a Hasidic court in the town of Lyady. With his broad learning, he developed a new school of Hasidism that placed greater emphasis on scholarship, study, and contemplation. He wrote a path-breaking volume of spiritual guidance, known as the *Tanya*, and sought to impart formerly restricted and esoteric Hasidic teachings throughout all levels of society. Shneur Zalman developed a three-part system of intellectual contemplation, connected to three rungs of the esoteric ten "spheres" (*sfirot*) described by Jewish mystics: "wisdom," "understanding," and (through a union of these two) "knowledge." The Hebrew acronym of these three words is *Chabad*, the name by which the movement came to be known.

Following the death of Shneur Zalman, his son, Dov Ber, settled in the town of Lubavitch, where he became the

movement's dynastic leader. As was Hasidic custom, followers of Dov Ber and his descendants became known by the town's name, the home of its central Hasidic court. Chabad also developed centers elsewhere in Russia, generally led by other members of the dynasty.

Emigration to America and Rabbi Joseph Schneersohn

Chabad Hasidim, like many other fervently Orthodox Jews, feared emigration to America. They considered it a "non-kosher land" where Judaism could not properly be observed. Nevertheless, in the face of persecution, some followers emigrated to America in any case. One of the first to arrive was Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Widerwitz (1835–1911), an ordained follower of the Rebbe ("grand rabbi") of Lubavitch, who was expelled from Moscow in 1891 and became a rabbi in the United States. Subsequently, as conditions for Jews in Russia worsened, others emigrated, some of whom continued to maintain contact with their Rebbe from afar. Synagogues named "Anshe Lubavitch" or named in memory of one of the Chabad Rebbes began to appear on the American scene.

Following World War I and the Bolshevik revolution, the Chabad movement in Russia, along with many other religious groups, was actively persecuted, and more followers emigrated, including Rabbi Israel Jacobson, who arrived in America on December 22, 1925. The fact that many Chabad followers were rabbis made it possible for them to enter the United States outside quota restrictions. Jacobson subsequently helped to bring other Chabad followers to the United States and played a major role in building the movement in North America and raising funds to send back to Chabad headquarters in Europe.

The Sixth Lubavitcher ("of Lubavitch") Rebbe, Rabbi Joseph I. Schneersohn (1880–1950), who became Rebbe upon his father's death in 1920, took a special interest in his growing band of American followers. He corresponded with them, and in 1923 he established an organization of Chabad Hasidim in the United States and Canada (Agudas Chasidim Anshei Chabad) to raise funds, promote Jewish learning, and spread the teachings of the Chabad movement. Following his imprisonment by the Communists, who allegedly sentenced him to death for promoting Judaism underground, and his subsequent expulsion from the Soviet Union in 1927, Rabbi Schneersohn personally visited the United States from September 17, 1929, to July 17, 1930. He toured Jewish communities, raised funds, lectured about Hasidism,

spoke out concerning the importance of Jewish education and the laws of family purity, and met with Justice Louis Brandeis and President Herbert Hoover. Unlike many other European rabbis, he expressed optimism concerning American Jewry and its future, believing that young American-born Jews would experience a religious revival. He even considered settling in America. Later, he continued from afar to encourage his American followers, dispatching personal emissaries to promote Chabad and raise funds for the movement.

Rabbi Schneersohn, confined to a wheelchair, was at the Yeshiva (Talmudical academy) that he had established in Otwock, Poland, when the Nazis invaded in 1939, and he soon made his way to Warsaw. There he was caught up in the German bombing and in the suffering experienced by the city's Jews once the Nazis came to power. Thanks to the efforts of his American followers, leading American political figures, and sympathetic Nazi officials (one of whom had a Jewish father), he and his household were saved. They arrived in the United States on March 19, 1940. His daughter, Chaya Mushka, and her husband, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902–1994), followed a year later from France, which had likewise fallen under Nazi control.

As leader of the Chabad movement, Rabbi Joseph Schneersohn settled in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, reestablishing his movement's world headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway. In the midst of war, and working from the premise that the United States was “no different” from European communities in its potential for Jewish life, he established a *yeshiva*, a network of Jewish all-day and supplementary schools, Jewish summer camps, a publishing house, and other institutions aimed at transforming America into the “new center for Torah and Judaism,” replacing Europe. Where other Hasidic leaders who settled in America during and after the war followed an enclave strategy, seeking to secure their followers against dangerous outside influences, Rabbi Joseph Schneersohn advocated an outreach strategy aimed at spreading his movement's mission to all Jews, affiliated and unaffiliated alike, in an effort to strengthen their religious consciousness and commitments in the face of the European catastrophe.

Movement's Growth under Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson

Rabbi Joseph Schneersohn's death in 1950 set off something of a leadership crisis in the Chabad community. The Rebbe

left two learned, eloquent, dynamic, and competing sons-in-law—Rabbi Shmaryahou Gourary and Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson—but no clear heir. Rabbi Gourary was older and had accompanied his father-in-law for some forty years. Rabbi Schneerson had attended university in Berlin and Paris, was more modern in outlook and dress, had assisted his father-in-law in Europe, and had, in the United States, achieved great success as head of the movement's publishing arm (Kehot Publication Society) and educational and social services arms (Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel). Rabbi Schneerson's lectures and scholarly writings won him renown among Chabad Hasidim in the United States. Thanks in part to their lobbying, he eventually emerged as victor and was formally installed as the seventh (and, as it turned out, the last) Lubavitcher Rebbe in 1951. Some members of the Gourary branch of the family, especially Barry S. Gourary, the son of Rabbi Shmaryahou, never fully acquiesced. In the 1980s, Barry Gourary fought and lost a widely publicized legal battle against his uncle over ownership of the Chabad library.

Under Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Chabad movement grew in numbers, wealth, and influence, and became a significant force in American Jewish religious life. Chabad emissaries—“the Rebbe's army”—spread through every Jewish community in the United States and also across the world. Chabad became the best-known Hasidic movement in America and among the fastest-growing postwar religious movements of any kind in the United States. While the movement maintains no membership figures, it bills itself as the largest Jewish organization in the world, with institutions in more than seventy countries and forty-eight states. It boasts several hundred thousand active devotees in New York (mostly Brooklyn) and other major Jewish communities, and a much larger number of friends who participate in some of its educational and religious programs and contribute to its work.

Modernizing Hasidism

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson made clear, soon after he assumed his position, that he appreciated modernity. Having himself studied mathematics and engineering, he encouraged his followers to utilize new technologies to strengthen their movement and Jewish life in general. Television, satellite communications, and the latest computer gadgetry all, in time, became part of the Chabad arsenal. Today Chabad.org and Lubavitch.com declare that their mission is to “utilize internet technology to unite Jews

worldwide, empower them with the knowledge of their 3300 year old tradition, and foster within them a deeper connection to Judaism's rituals and faith." But modernity still has its limits. The Rebbe insisted that the biblical view of creation was correct and opposed both the theory of evolution and scientific claims concerning the antiquity of the world.

Significantly, the Rebbe abandoned the distinctive fur hat and long Hasidic caftan that had been his father-in-law's uniform. He dressed in the somewhat more modern fashion to which he had grown accustomed in Europe, with a black Borsalino felt fedora. This became the uniform for Chabad Hasidic men, distinguishing them both from other Hasidim and from their American neighbors. Chabad women, though always modestly dressed, likewise made more concessions to modern fashion than most of their Hasidic counterparts, without compromising their understanding of what Jewish law demanded.

Rabbi Schneerson possessed deep Jewish learning, and was viewed as brilliant, charismatic, energetic, and a skillful administrator by many of his followers. His literary output fills dozens of volumes, comprising his regular weekly discourses on a range of subjects, occasional lectures, thousands of published letters, scholarly notes, and more. Followers considered his every word and action to be holy and maintained careful records of his activities and conversations.

Rabbi Schneerson devoted the bulk of his energies to strengthening the Chabad movement and Jewish life in general. He initiated a wide range of formal and informal educational and religious endeavors, including well-publicized and sometimes controversial campaigns, to promote the observance of individual commandments, such as the lighting of Sabbath candles by women, the donning of phylacteries (*tefillin*, small boxes containing verses from scripture) by men, and the public celebration of Chanukah by Jews. Chabad frequently borrowed military metaphors to promote these activities, perhaps appropriately given the movement's strict hierarchic organization. Emissaries drove around in "mitzvah tanks," reaching out to the unaffiliated, and children were registered at a young age as "soldiers" in Tzivos Hashem, the Rebbe's "army of the Lord."

Rabbi Schneerson and the Public Square

While many American Jews believed that the public square should be devoid of religious symbols based on the principle of church-state separation, the Rebbe insisted that public displays of religion were both constitutional and compatible

with U.S. tradition. He justified his efforts to promote non-sectarian prayer in the public schools on the basis that Congress opens with a prayer. He promoted Chanukah in the public square according to the same legal basis that justified Christmas trees. Of course, his larger goal was to gain access to secular Jews whose faith he hoped to strengthen. "Where Chanukah lamps were kindled publicly," he exulted in a letter, "the results have been most gratifying in terms of spreading the light of Torah and Mitzvoth [commandments], and reaching out to Jews who could not otherwise have been reached." The United States Supreme Court in *Allegheny County, City of Pittsburgh and Chabad v. ACLU* (1989) strengthened Chabad's hand, ruling that the public display of a menorah did not violate the First Amendment to the Constitution. Thereafter such displays became widespread across the country. By contrast, efforts on the part of Chabad to promote nondenominational prayers and "moments of silence" in the public schools, and to win state aid for parochial schools, failed to win court approval.

Late in his life, Rabbi Schneerson reached out beyond the Jewish community to "influence the nations of the world." While eschewing conversionism, he argued that non-Jews needed to observe a basic moral code set forth in seven laws that, according to Jewish tradition, God commanded Noah to observe following the flood. Chabad's hope for imminent messianic redemption of the world may have sparked this unusual universalistic campaign. An unknown number of non-Jews committed themselves to observing the Noahide laws, some calling themselves "children of Noah."

Rabbi Schneerson became a strong supporter of the state of Israel. His father-in-law, like many fervently Orthodox rabbis of the time, had once opposed Zionism, fearing that secular nationalism would replace religion as the central core of Jewish identity. About a year after the establishment of the state of Israel, however, Kfar Chabad ("Chabad Village") was established in Central Israel as the movement's Israeli headquarters. Over time, Chabad became a force in the country, particularly since the Rebbe's message of tolerance and love for every Jew contrasted with the more insular views of other fervently Orthodox groups. Rabbi Schneerson won thousands of followers in the Jewish state, and without ever traveling there, he exerted substantial influence—so much so that many Israeli leaders visited him in Brooklyn. Throughout the years, he advocated an amendment to Israel's Law of Return so that only Jews by birth and those converted according to strict Jewish law (and not

by non-Orthodox rabbis) might claim citizenship. Following the Six Day War, he opposed the Camp David accords and the return of any territory to Israel's Arab neighbors. He encouraged Israel's leaders to imbue the country with Jewish values and to ensure the security of the land. He also encouraged his Israeli followers to serve in the military, which most fervently Orthodox Jews did not. While he often disagreed with the direction of Israel's secular leaders, particularly its Labor governments, he remained a revered figure among his followers and was admired by many Jews from Arab lands who came to appreciate his spirituality, warmth, and leadership.

Messianism and the Death of Rabbi Schneerson

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson was a fervent messianist. Not only did he consider the messiah's coming to be imminent, he also believed that Jews, through their own active efforts, could induce the messianic coming. Many Lubavitch faithful had understood the catastrophe of World War II to be the "last labors prior to the arrival of our Messiah" and took solace from the movement's counsel to "be ready for redemption soon!" When that prophecy failed, they experienced grave disappointment. The Rebbe, through his lectures and outreach efforts to Jews around the world, his widely publicized pronouncements, and his interpretation of modern Israel's role in the divine plan, rekindled messianic hopes, spurring his followers to years of selfless commitment as foot soldiers in campaigns to "force" redemption, to bring "*Moshiach* [messiah] now." Many of these efforts focused on the observance by Jews of a single commandment and returning "lost" Jews to the fold. Personal emissaries (*shluchim*) dispatched by the Rebbe to set up institutions around the world wherever Jews lived or visited, served, in effect, as lifelong missionaries for his cause. In accordance with Hasidic teachings concerning self-abnegation, they established Chabad centers in communities large and small and modeled a fervently Orthodox lifestyle, often at personal sacrifice, so as to strengthen Jewish religious consciousness and hasten the messiah's coming.

Substantial numbers of Lubavitch followers concluded, as time passed, that the Rebbe himself was the not-yet-revealed messiah, a belief fostered by his childlessness, the rapid worldwide growth of the movement he headed, and, according to some, hints concealed in his public utterances. Rather than dampening these speculations, the Rebbe's death, in 1994, only heightened them, some believers insisting that "our Master, Teacher and Rebbe, King Messiah"

remained alive and would in time be revealed. Some Orthodox critics condemned these beliefs as alien to Judaism, and in time the mainstream leadership of the movement distanced itself from those who refused to declare the Rebbe dead. The messianist minority was also expelled from the movement's Brooklyn headquarters.

With the death of the Rebbe, his gravesite in Queen's, known as his *Ohel* (a "tent" built over the resting place of a righteous sage), became a site of pilgrimage. Daily, and especially on commemorative days, people come to recite psalms, light candles, and seek the deceased Rebbe's heavenly intercession. A visitor center, meditation area, and study hall have been erected close to the gravesite, and those in need are encouraged to write the Rebbe a letter. The Web site of the Ohel promises that faxes, e-mails, and ordinary letters "are brought to the Ohel shortly after their receipt."

Chabad after the Rebbe

Some predicted, following the Rebbe's death, that the Chabad movement would split asunder or decline. Few Hasidic groups have historically been able to thrive without a living Rebbe to guide and direct them. Chabad, however, has continued to grow, led by its army of more than four thousand full-time emissary families who oversee Chabad houses in far-flung communities around the world and on more than one hundred college campuses. These emissaries—"dedicated to the welfare of the Jewish people worldwide"—guide, teach, provide hospitality, lead religious services, engage in charitable work, serve addicts, minister to those in jail, and reach out to Jews of every sort.

In recent years, Chabad has created a synagogue movement in the United States that claims the involvement of hundreds of thousands of Jews, most of them not themselves fully observant. In the former Soviet Union, where Chabad's roots lie, it plays a major role in Jewish life on both the local and national levels. In Australia, South Africa, the Far East, and some European countries, its rabbis now lead a significant number of the community's major synagogues. Chabad has also established a popular program of adult Jewish education, known as the Jewish Learning Institute, and claims to be "the largest provider of adult Jewish education in the world."

The economics of Chabad, like those of many centrally driven, highly organized, and fiercely independent proselytizing movements, are somewhat mysterious. Much of the funding is thought to come from Jews outside the

movement who have come to respect Chabad's work and achievements. Chabad emissaries are responsible for maintaining their own operations and are encouraged to be entrepreneurial. While campus centers receive some start-up funding, every Chabad House is, in time, expected to fend for itself. What keeps the emissaries going is a strong sense of *esprit de corps* fostered by the movement, coupled with the deep-seated belief that they are carrying forward the Rebbe's work, serving and strengthening the Jewish people, and hastening the coming of the messiah.

See also *Anti-Semitism; Architecture: Jewish; Canada: Pluralism; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism* entries; *Music: Jewish; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Charismatics/Charismatic Movements

The word *charismatic* characterizes any Christian in any church tradition who exercises one of the postconversion gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts, listed in Romans 12:6–8 and 1 Corinthians 12–14, include, but are not limited to, the ecstatic religious experience of speaking in tongues, the

interpretation of tongues, prophecy, healing, and miracles. The term is derived from the Greek word *charisma*, meaning an unmerited gift of grace. The Holy Spirit manifests himself through these gifts for the common good of the body of Christ. Charismatics differ greatly in church background and doctrine but are united in a common experience—the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The Charismatic movement is a global spiritual renewal over the past one hundred years that has been described by some as the “New Pentecost.” Pentecostals believe that the postconversion experience of baptism of the Holy Spirit is available for all believers and is evidenced by *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues). The “New Pentecost” has spread the Pentecostal beliefs and practices to mainline Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and nondenominational traditions.

Three Waves

Charismatic Christianity has no one founder, no one system of theology, no particular type of church government, and no defining liturgy. While scholars differ on which groups should be included in this category, they generally agree that the revival/renewal movement began at the turn of the twentieth century and consists of three phases or waves of the Spirit.

The First Wave: Classical Pentecostalism (1900–Present)

Numerous revivals marked the turn of the twentieth century around the world: the Welsh Revival of 1904, a revival in India in 1905, and several revivals in the United States between 1901 and 1906. Most scholars identify the 1906 Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California, as the launching pad for the First Wave of the Spirit in the modern era and the catalyst for the extraordinary missionary activity that followed. Few events have influenced modern church history as much as the three and one half years of this revival. It became a magnet that drew people from many racial, ethnic, and denominational backgrounds to Los Angeles to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as evidenced by speaking in tongues. When the participants returned to their home churches to share their experiences, they faced rejection by their denominations. Forced out on their own, the Classic Pentecostals eventually formed the first Pentecostal denominations such the Church of God in Christ, Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), the Assemblies of God, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and others. Theologically, most Classic Pentecostals

believe that speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence of Spirit baptism. Historically, they have been very missionary-minded people because they connect their experience with empowerment for evangelism and missionary effort.

The Second Wave: Charismatic Movement (1960–Present)

The Second Wave, also known as Neo-Pentecostalism, emerged in a dramatic and unexpected fashion in the 1960s when the Pentecostal beliefs and emphasis on the spiritual gifts spread to non-Pentecostal churches. Rather than leaving their own church traditions as the First Wavers did, most Second Wavers chose to stay and bring about a spiritual or charismatic renewal in those churches. The movement spread rapidly. In only ten years, it had penetrated all major Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox traditions and spawned numerous independent Neo-Pentecostal ministries. Theologically, the Charismatics accept the idea that the spiritual gifts are still valid today. They tend to believe that speaking in tongues usually accompanies Spirit baptism, but they do not give preeminence to this belief in the same way that Classic Pentecostals do.

The Third Wave: Neo-Charismatic (1981–Present)

The roots of the Neo-Charismatic movement extend back into the 1960s when numerous independent Charismatic churches were formed. The Signs and Wonders Movement, part of the larger Neo-Charismatic movement, developed in the early 1980s from the teachings of John Wimber, the founder of the Vineyard Church and professor at Fuller Theological Seminary in Southern California. C. Peter Wagner, one of Wimber's colleagues at Fuller, coined the phrase "the Third Wave of the Holy Spirit" in 1983. According to Wagner, the Charismatic movement has been replaced by a new stream that seeks the restoration of New Testament Christianity (Acts 3:21). People in this new stream do not like to be labeled as either Pentecostal or Charismatic but prefer terms such as New Apostolic and Restorationist. Theologically, Third Wavers identify Spirit baptism with conversion, emphasizing the continuing nature of the experience rather than one specific event. They stress the gift of prophecy, the miraculous working of the Spirit, power encounters, and the importance of modern day apostles and prophets. Speaking in tongues may be found among Neo-Charismatics, but not in the same way as it was in the first two waves.

A Global Movement

Each movement began in unique ways, but all share common elements that bind them together. Because of the interconnectiveness of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, it is becoming harder and harder to speak of them separately. The terms are often used interchangeably. Some scholars declare that the Charismatic movement is simply Pentecostalism within historic mainline churches and describe Charismatics as Pentecostals dressed in traditional church garb. The Third Wavers, on the other hand, may demonstrate Pentecostal or charismatic characteristics, but they reject Pentecostal terminology.

Because the Charismatic Renewal is so various and widespread, discussing it can be confusing. As the movement spread globally, it filtered through many church traditions and indigenous groups. In some cases, it changed so significantly that the original stream is hard to find. The Pentecostal/Charismatic movement with its multifaceted character constitutes the fastest-growing group of churches within Christianity. It has been estimated that more than six hundred million Pentecostal/Charismatic adherents exist worldwide today. Recognizing that statistics vary according to methods used to collect them, if these figures are in any way correct, they indicate that the Pentecostal, Charismatic, and associated movements have grown to represent one-fourth of all Christians in just over one hundred years.

Roots of the Charismatic Movement (1950–1960)

The beginning of the Charismatic movement is traced to the spiritual experience of Dennis Bennett (1917–1991), an Episcopal priest from Van Nuys, California, in 1960. However, the roots of the movement go back to the late 1940s and early 1950s, when speaking in tongues and exercising spiritual gifts began appearing periodically in non-Pentecostal churches. From the beginning of the Classical Pentecostal movement, individuals from historic churches sporadically received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. After their experience, they usually resigned or were coerced into leaving their churches. When Harald Bredesen (1918–2006), a Lutheran minister, received the baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1946, leaders in his church requested that he stay. His ministry was a precursor to the Charismatic movement and ignited a revival in 1960 at Yale University, where Episcopal, Lutheran, and Presbyterian students spoke in tongues. Under Bredesen's mentorship, several Charismatic leaders, including Pat Robertson, a Southern Baptist and host of the

Christian television show *The 700 Club*; John Sherrill, founder of the Chosen Books publishing company; and Pat Boone, conservative gospel singer and actor, experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Bredesen was not alone in this experience. In 1951, Richard Winkler, the rector of the Trinity Episcopal Church in Wheaton, Illinois, became the first Spirit-baptized Episcopal pastor in America. Agnes Sanford, the founder of the Inter Healing Movement; James Brown, a Presbyterian minister; and Tommy Tyson, a Methodist minister, were also part of the early beginnings of the movement. In 1959, *Christian Life* magazine featured several articles about the outpourings of the Spirit in mainline congregations. Although there was noticeable Pentecostal activity in non-Pentecostal arenas, it was sporadic and lacked a sense of cohesion.

The Immediate Forerunners

The ministries of Kathryn Kuhlman (1907–1976), Oral Roberts (1918–2009), and several other healing evangelists in the late 1940s and 1950s provided a platform for the coming Charismatic movement. In the large healing crusades and charismatic conferences, men and women from many religious, theological, and cultural backgrounds mixed together without difficulty. While most of these evangelists had Classical Pentecostal backgrounds, their ministries were independent of denominational control. Large numbers of mainline Protestants and Catholics were introduced to the Pentecostal experience in their meetings and joined a growing group of believers who fell outside the Classic Pentecostal boundaries.

Oral Roberts, a minister in the Pentecostal Holiness Church (International Pentecostal Holiness Church after 1975), began his healing ministry in 1947 with a citywide meeting in Enid, Oklahoma. From that small beginning, he went on to conduct more than three hundred healing crusades on six continents, ending each meeting by individually praying for the sick. By the mid-1950s, Roberts started filming his healing crusades for his national television program. Americans began to see Pentecostalism in a new light as they heard Roberts's positive messages and witnessed dramatic healings.

To appeal to a broader constituency of Charismatics and Christians, he opened Oral Roberts University, an accredited liberal arts college in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1965. Dedicated by Billy Graham two years later, Oral Roberts University was considered the foremost Charismatic university in the United States. To align himself more closely with

mainline Charismatics, he changed his religious affiliation to the United Methodist Church in 1968 and began televising prime-time religious variety shows featuring popular celebrities. In 1970, the religion editor of the *New York Times* claimed that Roberts commanded more personal loyalty than any other minister in America. In 1980, Roberts established the City of Faith Medical and Research Center, a huge health facility dedicated to merging prayer and medicine in the healing process. This institution struggled financially for eight years before it closed.

Theologically, Roberts is a classical Pentecostal, but his moderation made him a favorite with many people. Roberts's ability to discern change and adapt to new contexts has extended his influence into the twenty-first century. His trademark message, expect a miracle (from God), has brought hope to millions of people.

Kathryn Kuhlman was probably the most famous woman preacher between 1950 and 1979. She began traveling as an evangelist when she was only sixteen years old. In 1947, her healing ministry started after a woman announced that she had been healed during Kuhlman's sermon on the Holy Spirit. As her healing ministry developed, Kuhlman intentionally avoided some of the techniques used by other healing evangelists. She seldom prayed for people individually; however, she often used the Charismatic gift of the word of knowledge to point out people's medical conditions. She refused to be called a "faith healer" but tried to create an atmosphere of faith and worship where the sick could be healed through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Like Roberts, Kuhlman used the media well and gained nationwide publicity through more than four thousand radio broadcasts, five hundred telecasts, and a variety of printed materials. Dramatic and deliberate, she was a popular guest on talk shows such as the *Tonight Show* and was often featured in major Christian and secular magazines.

The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International helped link the evangelists' message to the mainline churches. In 1951, Demos Shakarian (1913–1993), a Pentecostal layperson, started the first chapter of the nondenominational association of charismatic businessmen in the Los Angeles area, with Oral Roberts as the featured speaker. Using the format of prayer breakfasts and conventions, Shakarian created an atmosphere where Spirit-filled businessmen could evangelize non-Pentecostal professionals. In neutral venues such as hotel ballrooms or convention centers, businessmen from all denominations explored their common faith and enjoyed regular Charismatic fellowship.

In 1967, four women whose husbands were active in the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International organized the Full Gospel Women's Fellowship in Seattle, Washington. The first speaker was Rita Bennett, wife of Dennis Bennett. The organization sponsored local Bible studies and prayer meetings as well as regional, national, and international conferences. Using a name taken from Romans 12:11 in the Amplified Bible, the group reincorporated as Women's Aglow Fellowship International in 1972 (later Aglow International). Organized around the themes of Charismatic spirituality and evangelism, Aglow provided Charismatic women with a place of fellowship and a showcase for their leadership skills.

David du Plessis (1905–1987), a South African Classical Pentecostal minister, was one of the first individuals to grasp what the Spirit could do across ecumenical lines. Dubbed "Mr. Pentecost," he worked to promote unity among Spirit-baptized believers, regardless of their church affiliation. Even when his Pentecostal colleagues frowned on what he was doing, du Plessis served as an unofficial ambassador of Pentecostalism to mainline denominations and the Roman Catholic Church. In 1951, he made a spontaneous visit to the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in New York City. Although he arrived uninvited and unannounced, his efforts to share his Pentecostal faith were warmly received and opened many doors for him to speak and lecture about his Pentecostal experiences.

In his work to promote unity, du Plessis initiated dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church and served as the invited Pentecostal representative at the Second Vatican Council in 1964. Between 1972 and 1982, he cochaired the Roman Catholic and Pentecostal Dialogues with Kilian McDonnell (1921–), an outstanding Charismatic Catholic scholar from St. John's University in Minnesota.

Many people regarded du Plessis as the unofficial father of the Charismatic movement. No other individual did so much to link the movements and bridge the differences as "Mr. Pentecost." Because of his efforts, *Time* magazine listed him as one of the eleven leading shapers and shakers of Christianity in 1974. In recognition of his outstanding service to Christianity, Pope John Paul II awarded him the Good Merit medal in 1983. Du Plessis was the first non-Catholic to receive this honor.

Birth of the Charismatic Movement (1960)

At 9:00 a.m. on a November day in 1959, Dennis Bennett, an American Episcopal vicar, knelt with some friends and

began to pray in an unknown, unlearned language. He had no idea at the time the far-reaching effect this personal experience would have on his life or on church history.

The origin of the Charismatic movement is commonly associated with Bennett's public announcement of his Spirit baptism to the St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California, on April 3, 1960. Although he received some support, he faced a riot of rejection from a large percentage of his parishioners. They adamantly denounced his Pentecostal activity and called for his resignation from the church. He agreed to resign from St. Mark's but refused to give up the priesthood. Shortly afterward, *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines picked up the story, and Bennett became famous overnight.

After Van Nuys, Bennett accepted a pastoral assignment to the struggling St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Seattle, Washington. With the blessing of his new bishop, he openly shared his experience and an astounding thing happened. The church, which had been closed twice, flourished and grew in attendance under Bennett's leadership. The once nearly bankrupt parish quickly became an important Charismatic center. While the Sunday services remained traditionally Episcopal in worship, the Charismatic prayer meetings were packed with enthusiastic people from all denominations.

The Second Wave spread rapidly throughout the historic churches. By 1963, *Christianity Today* magazine estimated that two thousand Episcopalians in Southern California were speaking in tongues. Charismatic prayer groups popped up all over the United States in Methodist, Baptist, Mennonite, Presbyterian, and other historic churches. In these informal gatherings, participants had the freedom to sing, praise, pray, speak in tongues, and minister to one another with the various gifts of the Holy Spirit. Believing that this move of the Spirit was God's way of renewing existing denominations, the Neo-Pentecostal leaders and David du Plessis encouraged Charismatics to stay in their churches and work for renewal. For this reason, by the 1970s, most mainline churches dropped the term "Neo-Pentecostal" in preference to the more neutral "Charismatic renewal."

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal

The "Duquesne Weekend" marked the birth of the Charismatic movement in the Roman Catholic Church, but a number of events prepared the way for the leap from Protestant circles into the Catholic world. First, Vatican II, an

important Roman Catholic Church Council, adopted an open and receptive position on the work of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts in the church. The same council opened the way for interaction between Catholics and Christians of other churches. This was important because non-Catholic Christians would be instrumental in leading many Roman Catholics into the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

A second milestone came at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A group of teachers experienced an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues after reading the first chapters of the Book of Acts and two other books, *They Speak with Other Tongues* by John Sherrill and *The Cross and the Switchblade* by David Wilkerson. Soon afterward on February 17, 1967, they sponsored a retreat that has come to be known as the “Duquesne Weekend.” During the retreat, a move of the Spirit fell on twenty-five students as they were going to the chapel for prayer. Some of the students praised God in new unlearned languages while others wept for joy. Their Holy Spirit-inspired worship lasted all night. This event not only affected the Roman Catholic Church, but it made the Charismatic movement a pan-Christian experience.

The renewal spread rapidly. Two graduates from Notre Dame University went to investigate the happenings at Duquesne and shared the same Spirit baptism. From there, the Charismatic experience extended to the students and faculties of Michigan State, Iowa State, and several other universities. From the university campuses, the renewal reached into the wider Catholic Church.

Large conferences and renewal gatherings provided unity and integrated the renewal movement into the life of the church. The celebration of a Charismatic Eucharist that blended traditional structure and the spontaneity of the Spirit was a popular feature at Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conferences. The ministry of inner healing gained popularity and produced several new ministries devoted to healing with a number of priests, nuns, and laypeople in charge.

The positive attitude by Catholic leaders toward the renewal promoted growth in the movement. Cardinal Leon-Josef Suenens (1904–1996) of Belgium, a leading voice of the reform movement in Vatican II, described the experience in his book *A New Pentecost* as a “high voltage current of grace which is coursing through the Church” (p. 111). He expressed his belief that the future of the Catholic Church depended on charismatic renewal within its ranks. Another Catholic scholar and prolific writer, Kilian McDonnell

(1921–) of the Order of St. Benedict, felt that the Spirit’s charismatic anointing was the key to Christian unity and living a fuller Christian life.

While the Catholic Charismatic Renewal was not without opposition, most Catholic bishops affirmed the movement because of Vatican II. By 1970, a Catholic Charismatic Conference at Notre Dame attracted thirty thousand Catholics who prayed in tongues, prophesied, and rejoiced in what God was doing among them. At a 1975 international conference in Rome, ten thousand pilgrims from more than fifty countries heard Pope Paul VI voice his gratitude for the move of the Holy Spirit in the Catholic Church. By the turn of the twenty-first century, statistics showed more than seventy million Charismatic Catholics in more than 120 nations of the world. To many of those involved, this move of the Holy Spirit was regarded as the answer to Pope John XXIII’s prayer at Vatican II for a “New Pentecost.”

The First General Conference on Charismatic Renewal

The first General Conference on Charismatic Renewal convened in Kansas City, Missouri, in the summer of 1977. It was the most inclusive gathering of Spirit-baptized believers to date and the first time that all segments of the modern renewal movement met together. Representatives from the Classic Pentecostal wing, the Protestant Charismatic wing, and the Catholic Charismatic wing attended the historic meeting in a demonstration of grassroots unity never before seen in the United States.

Kevin Ranaghan (a Catholic Charismatic), Larry Christenson (a Protestant Charismatic), and Vinson Synan (a Classic Pentecostal) served as the executive committee for the conference. The morning sessions were divided up according to denominational affiliations, but the afternoon workshops were opened to participants from all church persuasions. At night, the entire body worshipped together in the huge Arrowhead Stadium. The meetings were highlighted by periods of praise and solemn moments of prayer. With fifty thousand participants, the night sessions sometimes resembled an old-fashioned revivalist camp meeting as thousands of Spirit-filled Christians rallied around the theme, “Jesus Is Lord.”

The Kansas City conference demonstrated several trends. First, Dr. Pauline E. Parham, daughter-in-law of Charles and Sarah Parham, spoke at one of the main sessions. This hinted at a change in attitudes toward women in the ministry. This

change would evidence itself in other charismatic conferences where women like Joyce Meyer, a Word of Faith teacher and author; Marilyn Hickey, inspirational speaker and Bible teacher; and Ruth Carter Stapleton, sister of President Jimmy Carter, were frequent speakers.

The fact that Thomas Zimmerman, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God in America; Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, Roman Catholic primate of Belgium; Bishop J. O. Patterson, presiding bishop of the predominantly African American Church of God in Christ; and Anglican archbishop Bill Burrett of South Africa all graced the platform at the same time showed that shared relationships in Jesus Christ created both ecumenical and racial unity. A poignant moment in the conference came when Larry Christenson gave a remarkable prophecy. He declared that the racial struggle in South Africa would end without bloodshed as a white man and black man reached out to each other in Jesus Christ. These words came years before Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk amazed the world with the 1994 bloodless transfer of power in South Africa.

The success of the historic Kansas City conference generated other conferences in the years following. The 1987 Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelization in New Orleans called the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement to a “decade of world evangelization,” with the shared goal of winning half of the earth’s population to Christ by the year 2000. Other conferences that also fostered evangelism and personal witnessing were held in Indianapolis (1990), Orlando (1995), and St. Louis (2000).

Media and Literature

Charismatics learned to use the media to their best advantage, and it played an important part in spreading the renewal message. In 1959, Pat Robertson (1930–) founded the first Christian television station, the Christian Broadcasting Network. He contributed much to the development of religious broadcasting. He was the first to use the telethon to raise support for his station and the first to broadcast a Christian talk show on CBN. Both formats remained popular in the early twenty-first century.

In 1973, Paul Crouch (1934–) formed the Trinity Broadcasting network with Jim Bakker (1940–). A few months later, Bakker moved to North Carolina to start his own PTL (Praise the Lord) network. By the late 1970s, numerous Christian centers and evangelistic ministries televised their services and beamed conferences via satellite to cooperating churches across the USA. The increased demand for

teaching materials led to an “audio cassette tape explosion.” Audio and video tape libraries distributed millions of Charismatic teaching tapes around the world.

The rapid growth of the Charismatic movement generated the need for popular and scholarly charismatic literature. Dennis Bennett shared his charismatic journey in the book *Nine O’Clock in the Morning*. John Sherrill (1923–) authored and coauthored several Charismatic best sellers. He related his own personal experience in *They Speak with Other Tongues*. He and his wife, Rita, worked with David Wilkerson to write *The Cross and the Switchblade*, the book that influenced the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. The demand for popular Christian fiction in the 1980s was met by works like *This Present Darkness* by Frank Peretti and *The Left Behind* series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins.

Problems Develop

The Charismatic experience conditioned believers to expect God to move in unusual ways that were sometimes outside the traditional milieu. The very thing that made the Charismatic movement strong also caused controversies when carried to extremes. New ideas based only on experience caused faulty interpretations of the Bible and led to dangerous excesses. Debates swirled around methods used by well-meaning Charismatic leaders who prayed for the sick or practiced exorcisms.

Although many Charismatics stayed in their original denominations, others eventually left their churches for various reasons and formed new independent Charismatic churches and fellowships. This growing number of independents did not associate with any one particular church or organization and functioned without a safety net of denominational supervision. They met in ad hoc prayer groups, randomly attended teaching conferences, and wandered from group to group in search of the newest teaching. Many leaders in the movement voiced concern over the increasing numbers of “floating” Charismatics.

Don Basham, Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, Charles Simpson, and Ern Baxter, all associated with the Florida-based Christian Growth Ministries, presented what they believed to be the answer to this problem. They began teaching that every Christian, including the leaders, needed to have a “covering” and be under the spiritual guidance of a personal pastor or shepherd. When large numbers of people accepted this teaching and submitted to the authority of the five men, the “Shepherding movement” was born in 1974. It was promoted and popularized in the pages of

Don Basham's *New Wine* magazine and thousands of newsletters, books, and teaching tapes.

Controversy started almost immediately. Charismatic leaders such as Pat Robertson, Demos Shakarian, David du Plessis, and Dennis Bennett all publicly opposed the new movement. Finally, the Shepherding leaders dissolved their association in 1989, thus ending the debate. The hard feelings generated during the ten years of the debate dampened some ecumenical relationships. In 1989, Bob Mumford issued a public apology for his part in the controversial movement, but the damage was done. Some Charismatic leaders never again attended the annual leadership conferences.

In the late 1970s, another controversy arose within the Pentecostal/Charismatic ranks—the “health and wealth” or “prosperity” gospel based on evangelist E. W. Kenyon's writings. Faith teachers Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, and others proclaimed that it was God's will for every believer to be financially blessed. All a Christian needed to do was “speak” or “claim” the blessing and God would answer. Opponents felt these teachings overemphasized human faith and caused a lot of condemnation if a person did not receive what he or she had claimed—the tendency being to blame them for their lack of faith. In spite of the debate, the prosperity gospel became very popular. Kenneth Hagin's unaccredited Rhema (spoken word) Bible Training Center in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, turned out hundreds of graduates who spread the Word of Faith teachings around the world and carried the teaching into the twenty-first century.

By the late 1980s, the Charismatic movement had changed into many different groups and lost much of its cohesion. The very public sex and money scandals associated with televangelists Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart damaged the reputation of Pentecostals and Charismatics. Controversy and media attention swirled around Oral Roberts's dramatic ultimatum to his television audience in 1987 that God would “call him home” if he failed to raise \$8 million to support his struggling City of Faith hospital and medical school. Even though Roberts eventually raised more than \$9 million, both his fund-raising techniques and the idea that God would kill him created a huge uproar.

Charismatic Communities

Entire congregations or parishes often became Charismatic; however, in other cases Charismatics sometimes functioned as a subset within a parish. They met in weekly prayer meetings featuring Bible studies, testimonies, and fellowship. Central to these meetings were charismatic expressions of

prayer and ministry to each other with the spiritual gifts. In these small groups, Charismatic believers encouraged and strengthened each other in their faith and experience. While church leaders attended these meetings, the laity often took the leadership roles.

The renewal movement also spawned covenant communities, teaching seminars, and discipleship studies that provided special Charismatic ministry to the wider church. A Charismatic Benedictine monastery founded in 1969 in Pecos, New Mexico, and the Word of God Community near the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor are examples of these communities that sprang up across the United States and around the world. Members of these communities separated themselves from the world and lived a life of devotion. Some communities were both evangelistically inclined to attract new membership and socially orientated for the poor and underprivileged. Spirit-filled leaders guided and directed the members in prayer, teaching, and worship. The Word of God community, ecumenical in nature but with a large percentage of Catholic members and under Catholic leadership, was divided into “households” dedicated to university students, married couples, single men, and single women.

Loose-knit fellowships, associations, and networks linked the organizations. The Word of God community sponsored an ecumenical association called the “Sword of the Spirit.” The People of Praise Community created the Catholic Renewal Services to coordinate and administer large Charismatic conferences. These Charismatic communities contributed in a positive way to the greater renewal movement. First, they provided discipleship and training for volunteers who manned the large Charismatic conferences. Second, they fostered scholarships and provided an encouraging atmosphere for writing. The Mother of God Community in Gaithersburg, Maryland, was the home base for Peter Hocken and Francis Martin, two leading Catholic scholars.

The communitarian movement was not without controversy. The unity among the groups was shaken by the end of the 1980s when disagreements developed between Word of God and People of Praise communities. The Catholic Church itself found it necessary to examine the activities of some communities because they were too exclusive and interfered with members' private lives.

Neo-Charismatics or the Third Wave

The Neo-Charismatic movement, or Third Wave, is larger numerically than the first two renewal waves combined. By 2000, an estimated three hundred million members had

swelled the ranks of nondenominational or independent charismatic groups not aligned with either the Classic Pentecostal or Charismatic Renewal churches. C. Peter Wagner claimed that the Third Wave was taking place in the straight-line evangelical churches previously untouched by the first two waves.

The Third Wave has been typified by the ministries of John Wimber and C. Peter Wagner. Wimber's teaching led to the Signs and Wonders movement. His teaching declared signs and wonders were normal in the church and were necessary in evangelism and church growth. Wagner is more famous for his New Apostolic Reformation, which stresses the restoration of New Testament offices of apostles and prophets.

There is no one defining form of church government or style for this group. They accept the postconversion gifts of the Holy Spirit including speaking in tongues, prophecy, and healing, but they do not specify any one experience as a requirement for the reception of spiritual gifts. As in other Charismatic churches, worship styles vary, but holy laughter, dancing before the Lord, and Spirit-inspired singing are often found in the services. It can be said that Neo-Charismatics have Pentecostal-like experiences but no Classical Pentecostal or Charismatic affiliations. While they may share slight historical connections to the previous waves, sometimes there are none at all. Neo-Charismatics include organized denominations and fellowships such as the Association of Vineyard Churches, Every Nation, Sovereign Grace Ministries, and others.

Conclusion

The Charismatic renewal caught the whole church by surprise. At first, Classic Pentecostal denominations were suspect of a revival outside their boundaries; but as time went on, the majority of Pentecostals withdrew their criticisms and embraced the growing renewal movement. By 2000, the Charismatic renewal had encompassed more than 250 distinct ecclesiastical confessions, traditions, and groups of Christianity. The contributions to Christianity of a renewal movement of this size and magnitude are worthy of note.

Ecumenical Awareness. The Charismatic renewal produced ecumenical awareness and fellowship across denominational and traditional church lines. Two important events illustrate this impulse: the Kansas City Conference of 1977 and the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogues.

Vitality in Worship. Because of the infusion of charismatic innovations, the church worship has been

reinvented. New forms of doctrine, worship, organization, and outreach are reflected in praise and worship music, prayer marches, and innovative uses of mass media and technology.

New Awareness of Spiritual Gifts. Those involved in the Charismatic renewal discovered that the spiritual gifts that were available to build and strengthen the early Christian church are still available for the same purpose in churches today.

Scholarship and Education. Leaders of the Charismatic renewal such as Larry Christenson and J. Rodman Williams wrote books and educational materials that were influential in the development of Charismatic theology. Kilian McDonnell, the primary historian and adviser to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, also produced several major works.

Slower Liberalization of the Church. The movement significantly reshaped the landscape of the church at large and slowed the liberalization of historic mainline denominations. The emphasis on Jesus as Lord and the work of the Holy Spirit drew churches back to the essentials of Christianity.

Unity. Roman Catholics and Protestants found each other in Jesus. Unity based on the shared experience motivated the establishment of closer relationships.

Concern for Fellow Human Beings. The charismatic movement muted the divisiveness between churches and church traditions. The work toward reconciliation was fueled by Christian love and desire for unity.

Evangelization. The belief that the Holy Spirit was given to empower evangelism inspired the large joint evangelistic efforts during the decade of the 1990s. The goal was to bring millions of people to the Lord before the end of the twentieth century.

New Vitality. New energy poured into the churches because of the Charismatic renewal. Charismatic worship services brought life into tired churches and produced significant growth.

Role of Women. The Charismatic renewal brought greater freedom for women leaders in the churches and strong ministries with women leaders.

Prayer. The renewal waves produced a new interest in prayer and the power of prayer for healing and deliverance.

Fellowship. Christian fellowship across church lines has been an important result of the Charismatic renewal. Small groups meeting together for prayer encouraged relationship building and spiritual growth.

Laity. The work of the Holy Spirit among all members of the body of Christ was a great equalizer. Spirit-filled laypersons found places of ministry in prayer meetings, small groups, and Charismatic communities.

This movement presents problems for those who wish to study it. First, it is hard to separate the parts from the whole because Charismatics did not form new denominations as did the Classical Pentecostals. Because the movement mixed with other traditions, it is difficult to separate the renewal stream from the larger matrix. Second, the movement, so full of diversity, is still in the process of development. Some churches that started out as Classical Pentecostal or main-line Protestant have blended Charismatic thought and practices with their traditional background to produce something different. In spite of who they are and where they originated, it can be said that this collection of Classic Pentecostals, Charismatics, and Third Wavers makes up a widespread spiritual movement. Together, they have come to constitute a major force in Christendom throughout the world.

See also *Ecumenism; Glossolalia; Holiness Denominational Family; Holiness Movement; House Church Movement; Jehovah's Witnesses; Pentecostal Denominational Family; Pentecostals; Pentecostals: African American; Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century; Serpent Handlers; Television.*

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Children and Adolescents

In his 1990 book *The Spiritual Lives of Children*, psychologist Robert Coles writes that children and adolescents use religion to find meaning in their lives, and in doing so they usually achieve greater maturity and growth. He found this was true for many religions: Christian children who deeply feared hell also found personal strength through the ministry of Jesus; Jewish children understood themselves to be Chosen, but also developed compassion for the suffering of others through their understanding of the persecution of Jews; and Muslim children grew in personal autonomy through surrender to Allah. In understanding religion in America, then, one must understand both how religions view children and how children experience religion. Many religious traditions form the religious landscape of the United States, ranging from the Protestantism that has long shaped the public discourse and much of the country's communal imagination to traditions that grew immensely after immigration laws

changed to allow greater diversity. Questions arise as to the nature of the experience of children and adolescents in some of those diverse traditions—Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam—before touching on an important moral and spiritual influence on many American children: children’s literature.

Protestant Traditions in Early America

In the early years of America, Protestant assumptions about children were hugely important to the experience of children in the United States. Not only were most children, statistically speaking, raised in Protestant homes of one stripe or another, but also Protestant understandings of children and childhood shaped much about American public education and underlie many of the assumptions of “secular” American society. For instance, the “spare the rod and spoil the child” style of parenting owes its origins to early American understandings of salvation and the best ways to ensure salvation for one’s children. Such a strict approach suggests harsh parenting, but seventeenth-century Puritan parents loved their children dearly, as numerous journal entries of parents espousing deep love for their children attest. Thomas Shepard, minister of the First Parish in Newtown (which would become Cambridge), Massachusetts, even feared that his oldest son’s life-threatening illness was caused by God because Shepard loved his child too dearly.

Although Puritan parents loved their children, they were simultaneously deeply dubious about their spiritual state. Calvinist theology argued that children were born either among the elect (saved) or not, that no actions on the part of parent or child could affect the child’s eternal state. The best that loving parents could hope for were signs indicating that their child was among the saved, and given the lack of self-control that is an inherent part of infancy, those signs were few and far between. Additionally, Puritans believed that children were born tainted with sin, as Anne Bradstreet’s description of her own childhood in *The Poems of Mrs. Anne Bradstreet* demonstrates: “Stained from birth with Adam’s sinful fact,/ Thence I began to sin as soon as act.” Early American Protestants believed that their beloved children were in fact “fallen,” deeply tainted by original sin and ruled, not by knowledge of God, but by their baser instincts.

This concern for the spiritual state and fate of Puritan children can be seen in the intense importance that Puritan parents placed on the rite of baptism for their children. For instance, before 1662, only babies whose parents had made

a confession of faith and become Communion-receiving members of congregations were eligible to receive baptism. Theoretically, having been baptized in no way affected whether one was saved, but many parents thought baptism encouraged the spiritual potential of their children. In particular, parents who had been baptized themselves but had never experienced saving conversion wished to see their own children receive the sacrament of baptism. In 1662, ministerial delegates from Massachusetts churches decided that while only the converted could take the Lord’s Supper, or Communion, anyone who had been baptized might have his or her own child baptized into the church community. This decision, called the Half-Way Covenant, reflected a dramatic shift in the understanding of the role of congregations in the spiritual lives of children. If previously the church had been understood as existing for the already saved, Puritans were moving in the direction of understanding churches as being able to encourage conversion among children by giving them some external markers of grace. In short, parents and communities might be able to help children on the road to grace.

Evangelical Child Rearing

Within a few generations, Puritan ambivalence about the nature of childhood had largely given way to an evangelical anxiety about childhood. In the increased evangelical fervor of the early eighteenth century, an understanding of childhood took hold that framed it as a time of innate depravity. Parents, then, were responsible for shepherding their children from a position of unrepentant and unknowing evil into Christ. One of the most important ways in which parents, particularly mothers, could do so was through their example of personal piety. If parents allowed themselves to be ruled by their tender feelings for their children, they ran the risk of damaging their children’s spiritual growth. A particular fear of evangelical leaders emerged in the paradox that, while parents would not want to frighten their “innocent” children with tales of hellfire and damnation, by failing to warn them about this potential, parents would damn children to just such a fate. Jonathan Edwards, one of the most prominent figures in New England Evangelicalism, responded to criticisms that one should not frighten children with eternal damnation:

As innocent as children seem to be to us, yet if they are out of Christ, they are not so in God’s sight, but are young vipers, and are infinitely more hateful

than vipers, and are in a most miserable condition, as well as grown persons; and they are naturally very selfish and stupid . . . and need much to awaken them. Why should we conceal the truth from them? (In C. C. Goen, *The Great Awakening*)

This trajectory demonstrates an important movement in how American Protestants understood salvation and the spiritual state. If Calvinist Puritans hoped that their children would be saved, but believed both that they could not affect their salvation and that the statistical odds were against salvation, they nonetheless moved quickly into looking for ways to assure themselves that their children would be among the saved. One can see such a trend in the Half-Way Covenant, which suggested strongly that it would benefit children to be within the church community. By the mid-eighteenth century, however, the operating assumption was that children, though they were born inherently depraved, could be and must be brought to Christ by making them very aware that if they did not become godly, they would burn. The message of damnation was harsh, but it was also hopeful, in that it offered parents a way to care spiritually for their children.

How, though, did it feel to be a child in the evangelical world that formed the dominant Protestant culture of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries? Certainly, there were children who found the evangelical narrative compelling. Some of the most articulate memories of life under evangelical parenting, however, came from the children of Lyman Beecher, a leading figure in the Second Great Awakening of the early nineteenth century. While his son, Henry Ward Beecher, a famous minister of the second half of the nineteenth century, remembered his profound love for his father and his father's gentle care for him in sickness, he also observed, as quoted by Debby Applegate in *The Most Famous Man in America*, "I don't remember a year of my life, after I was seven or eight Years old, that I did not go about with a feeling of sadness; a feeling that I was in danger of exile from Heaven—all because I was a sinner and I did not want to be." The reaction of people like Henry Ward Beecher to their evangelical upbringing brought about dramatic changes in the American religious landscape. Instead of evangelical fire, Henry Ward Beecher preached a "Gospel of Love" in which "God had a father's heart. . . . Christ loved me in my sin . . . while I was a sinner He did not frown upon me or case me off, but cared for me with unutterable tenderness, and would help me out of sin." Beecher's kinder, gentler Christianity had direct implications for child rearing.

In the words of his older sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Tell a boy that God loves him, and religion has a chance to take hold. Tell a boy that he is under God's wrath and curse . . . because somebody ate an apple five thousand years ago, and his religious associations are not so agreeable—especially if he has the answers whipped into him."

Horace Bushnell and the Gospel of Love

While the evangelical model of parenting certainly continued in some streams of American Protestantism, this new form of Christianity suggested a more nurturing approach to religious training. A leader in this new approach, Horace Bushnell was a Connecticut minister and author who was one of the leaders of a cultural shift away from revival culture. His *Views of Christian Nurture and of Subjects Adjacent Thereof*, first published in 1847, specifically described children as spiritual beings counter to the evangelical model. The industrial revolution contributed to a shift in how Americans understood the family. As important as evangelical mothers were in the spiritual development of their children, their families were patriarchal in structure, with the home and children under the father's control. During the nineteenth century, the domestic sphere began to be cast both as female and as sacred space, while the public world became both male and worldly. For men, the home became a retreat from the cares of the world, but it was the mother who became primarily responsible for child rearing. Simultaneously, a Rousseauian understanding of childhood as a time of innocence began to take hold. This landscape provided fertile ground for Bushnell's ideas to become popular. For Bushnell, as for evangelicals, parents were responsible for their children's spiritual development, but rather than using fear of damnation, he espoused that they model a healthy relationship with God. Parents were to shape their child, understanding that every word uttered and every action performed had the potential to shape their offspring toward or away from Christ. That said, Bushnell also understood children as having an inherent Christian nature from birth—that the child's nature would develop as the child did, slowly, and with proper care, into adult faith. As a result of Bushnell's influence, the Christian home became the primary staging ground of childhood Protestant experience. Bushnell encouraged parents to create religious experiences out of most facets of childhood, including play, birthday celebrations, holidays, and careful attention to religious devotions including Bible study, catechism, and a family altar. These home practices were reinforced with church

attendance and community. Children attended worship and Sunday school, were aware of missionaries, and aided, as age appropriate, in the broader missions of the church.

Bushnell's views had a variety of critics and certainly represented a middle-class view of the family. That said, Bushnell's views were broadly culturally pervasive. For instance, Unitarian author Louisa May Alcott valorized the home and parental nurture in her wildly popular series for "young readers," *Little Women*, *Good Wives*, and *Little Men*. The March family, characterized by deeply loving and highly moral parents, is established from the opening scene as having raised Christian children when the daughters, despite some personal reluctance, sacrifice Christmas presents to the (Civil) war effort; sacrifice personal treats and vanities further to get gifts for their mother, Marmee; and, under her influence, give their Christmas breakfast to the poor. The model of Christian nurture ran counter to the Calvinist understanding of election. While not every person was automatically among the saved, salvation was possible for each person, especially if they were properly nurtured in loving homes and churches. That salvation, however, was not expected to be a life-altering conversion as in the Calvinist model. Instead, it was understood as a slow development of an innocent, childlike faith into a deep and mature one. Many of the liberal Protestants raised in the late nineteenth century felt little of the anxiety or alienation experienced by evangelicals, rather understanding themselves to be secure in both their Christianity and their family settings.

Protestant Children in the Twentieth Century

If Bushnell's views of childhood characterized the late nineteenth century, the early twentieth century was characterized by a fear that the family and the church were under siege from modern life. Neither, it was argued by ministers and Sunday school societies, could compete against the movies, the radio, jazz, and the marketplace. Christmas, it was feared, was moving from Christ to consumption. Additionally, parents were becoming more secular, so that family devotions and Bible study were on the decline. While many American Protestants became more secular or moved into the realm of "do-it-yourself" spirituality, which left children without formal, communal, religious training, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, evangelicals created a separate youth culture that ran parallel to secular American society. Evangelical youth culture includes literature, Christian heavy metal, and the positing of Christian culture as a

form of youth counterculture that proved deeply spiritually satisfying for many who participated.

Catholicism and the Spiritual Formation of Children

If Protestants debated the inherent nature of children, the Catholic position was more clear. Children were understood to be gifts from God. Though they inherited original sin, they were also of God. Parents, then, were responsible for raising their children in the church, so as to properly spiritually form them. While parents shaped children, children were also understood to have spiritual wisdom to impart to their parents and families, both through the innocence of their questions and through their childlike wonder at the world.

American Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century

Like their Protestant contemporaries, nineteenth-century Catholic mothers were invested in and responsible for the spiritual health of their children. Mothers were charged with leading the children in family recitations of the rosary, though other forms of home devotions were also encouraged. In addition to home devotions, by the mid-nineteenth century, American Catholics had an additional concern in terms of transmitting their faith to their children. Over the course of the first half of the nineteenth century, support grew for the idea of tax-supported public schools, such that by 1860, every state had some form of a public school system. While these schools guaranteed a basic education, they were also deeply dedicated to shaping moral citizens. Horace Mann, a Boston-based educational reformer, argued that publicly funded schools could offer an education that was nonsectarian, while nevertheless retaining key pieces of Christian moral teachings. The argument was that general precepts of Christianity, such as biblical readings and recitations of the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, were acceptable and left students to be guided in specifically theological concerns by their parents and ministers. From the Catholic standpoint, however, these practices were unacceptable because the Protestant King James Bible was the biblical text used, and Protestant versions of the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer were the ones recited. To Catholics, even the not explicitly religious material, such as the readers and primers selected, demonstrated a distinct Protestant bias. As a result, Catholics tended not to support the creation of public schools. Starting in the 1840s, bishops began encouraging parents to send children to Catholic

schools. Additionally, all states with large Catholic populations had political battles over whether Catholic schools should receive public funds and whether the above-mentioned Protestant elements should be removed from the curriculums.

The conflict over public schools is perhaps best exemplified by a conflict in Boston, in which Catholic public school children publicly demonstrated their loyalty to the church. In March 1859, a ten-year-old Catholic student named Thomas Whall was asked by his teacher, Sophia Shepard, to recite the Ten Commandments. Whall refused, having been instructed by his father not to recite the Protestant version of the commandments. While Massachusetts law required the day to begin with the Protestant form of the commandments, most teachers had the class recite en masse, and Catholic students could simply say the Catholic version, with no one the wiser. Miss Shepard deviated in insisting on individual recitation, and the school board upheld her position. The following weekend, the Whalls' priest urged the Sunday school to avoid Protestant prayers. Additionally, the congregation passed a resolution recommending that the children should use Catholic versions whenever called upon to recite prayers. On Monday, Whall was once again required to recite the King James version of the Ten Commandments. He refused and was beaten until his hands were bloody. After the beating, the principal announced that all students who refused to recite the Ten Commandments would be sent home from school. Hundreds of Catholic students were discharged, and the following week, when they brought Catholic copies of the commandments, they were sent home yet again. The Whall family sued the assistant principal who had administered the beating, but the court ruled in favor of Assistant Principal Cooke.

This incident says quite a bit about Catholic-Protestant relations, but it also demonstrates the devotion of a ten-year-old boy to a sense of Catholic identity. While Catholics had been creating separate educational systems for more than a century, incidents like the Eliot School rebellion encouraged the creation of a separate American Catholic school system. While the purpose of such a system was, in part, to protect schoolchildren from Protestant influence, Catholic schools had internal religious goals as well. In the late nineteenth century, Catholic schools were huge forces in shaping Catholic culture, which was, at that time, deeply devotional. In addition to teaching the secular subjects, Catholic schools offered religious instruction that went well beyond the catechism. Historians have noted that schools were decorated

in styles similar to churches, with statues and paintings of saints. Religious devotional objects were used as rewards for academic achievement, and devotions to the saints and to the Virgin Mary became school holidays. As a result, school became sanctified space, designed to encourage the devotional lives of Catholic students and nurture in them a sense of divine figures within their daily lives.

Catholicism in the Twentieth Century

In the twentieth century, Catholic children continued to be taught that they, like Thomas Whall, might need to defend the faith. In the words of a midcentury teaching sister from Wisconsin, Catholic children were "the smallest of God's soldiers," who were directed by their teachers in "the part they were to play in winning the world for Christ. It will mean a tremendous battle."

The sacrality of the Catholic world did not, in the twentieth century, prevent it from also being fun. Scholar Julie Byrne describes women's basketball as a vital aspect of the Philadelphia Catholic high school and college experience. Catholic girls played basketball, and played it well, beginning in the 1930s and culminating in national women's college basketball championships in the 1970s. Basketball is significant because it models a way in which Catholic girls were encouraged to move out of traditional female roles, to be active athletes in whom their communities took pride. Given popular conceptions of the Catholic Church as repressive to women, this is hardly insignificant. The basketball court was also a place of spirituality, in that before the game, the team and coaches on the court and the parents, classmates, priests, and nuns in the stands would all pray, in the words of the Immaculata College Mighty Macs, "Oh God of Players, hear our prayers to play this game and play it fair." Perhaps most importantly, according to Byrne, the fun that Catholic girls took in basketball complicates the "culture of suffering" that characterizes Catholic women's history by demonstrating a place in which Catholic adolescent girls experienced pleasure in a church-sanctioned setting.

African American Children and Community Life

The pictures of Christianity traced out above, both Catholic and Protestant, were principally those of white Christianity. While African Americans were certainly affected by the theological trends discussed above, life in the black churches had distinct characteristics, particularly for children. For instance, according to sociologist Cheryl Townsend Gilkes,

until the late twentieth century, African American congregations were less likely to have programming explicitly for children and teens. Rather, children participated in adult activities as apprentices to adult positions. As a result, children were able to serve as junior leaders to adult congregations, and their voices were heard in church space. Since one of the primary social goals of black congregations was to provide children with a safe space from the harsh racism of the outside world, communities took special care to nurture and support the talents of youngsters. Children were raised to know that they were the valued future of the church. In fact, the nurturing influence of the church helped to mentor children into leadership roles in the secular world as well. Oprah Winfrey, Aretha Franklin, and Henry Lewis Gates Jr. all had their earliest public roles in their childhood churches. The positive role that the black churches have played in the lives of their children has not been static. There have been times when it has been more or less political and times when churches have failed to reach out to, or meet the needs of, the young people in the community. For many, however, African American churches have offered a deeply affirming recognition of talent.

The Role of Children in Judaism

Jews have lived in what is now the United States since colonial times; however, for much of that time communities were small, and many families lived as the only Jews in town. Waves of immigration at the beginning and the end of the nineteenth century and in the early decades of the twentieth century have created a sizable American Jewish community, though Jews remain a small percentage of the country's overall population. One of the major concerns of Judaism is *ledor vador*, the transmission of Judaism from generation to generation. Given the importance placed on passing on Judaism, children have been a major focus in American Judaism.

Life-cycle rites are an important aspect of Jewish childhood, particularly the *bris* (Yiddish) or *brit malah* (Hebrew), the ritual circumcision of a Jewish male on his eighth day of life. Through his *bris*, a boy was made part of the covenant between God and the Jewish people. At the age of thirteen, a Jewish boy became a *bar mitzvah* or a son of the commandments. A bar mitzvah took place after years of Jewish education and was marked by the teenager being called to read in Hebrew from the Torah, after which he offered thoughts on what he had read. Families often marked this occasion with some form of celebration, ranging from

offering refreshments to the congregation immediately following the service to a lavish party for the child's friends and the parents' social circles. The bar mitzvah marked the assumption of Jewish adulthood, with all the attendant ritual responsibilities. While thirteen-year-olds were still not considered to be adults in most ways, from that point on, the boy could be counted in a *minyan* (the ten Jews necessary for the recitation of certain prayers), fasted for Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), and abstained from certain foods during Passover. The extent to which any given boy observed these restrictions depended on the traditions of his individual Jewish movement and the conventions of his family, and many children observed these rituals before turning thirteen.

Study was a central piece of the Jewish childhood. While the Jewish movements had varied educational goals, traditionally, a boy would be able to read Hebrew, know the contents of the Hebrew Bible and its accompanying Jewish commentary, and be ritually literate. American Jews created a small separate educational system of day schools in areas where their numbers permitted, but communally supported Hebrew schools that provided supplemental religious education were far more common.

Until the twentieth century, the American Jewish community, like those elsewhere, was primarily concerned with the education and ritual lives of boys. Though the Reform movement instituted confirmation ceremonies for both boys and girls in the nineteenth century, generally girls were not formally educated in the Torah or in Hebrew. Instead, they learned how to maintain Jewish homes and became ritually significant mostly in their role as wives and mothers. That tendency began to change in the early years of the twentieth century. Jewish girls gained increasing access to forms of education previously reserved for boys, and in 1922, Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan performed the first *bat mitzvah*, or daughter of the commandment, ceremony for his daughter. While bat mitzvah celebrations were slow to catch on, by the 1970s, most girls in the Reform and Conservative movements received bat mitzvah celebrations and the Jewish education leading up to them. In these ceremonies, girls took a ritual role very similar, if not identical, to those taken by their brothers. Historian Jonathan Sarna suggests that such access to Jewish learning and synagogue ritual gave these girls both a deep connection to Judaism and empowered them, such that many grew up to expand the ritual and leadership roles available to Jewish women. By the late twentieth century, many Orthodox congregations were also

offering bat mitzvah celebrations, adapting the ceremony for the restrictions placed on women's ritual leadership.

Hinduism, Immigration, and Growing Up American

In India, Hinduism is primarily practiced in the home. There is no equivalent to Sunday school; rather, children learn what it is to be Hindu by immersion in a society largely ordered by a Hindu worldview. While changes in Indian society around the turn of the twenty-first century have affected the transmission of Hinduism within India, for Hindus who moved to the United States in the post-1965 waves of immigration, it became a central concern. Scholar Raymond Brady Williams describes the process as one of creating a sacred world that children could enter with their families and communities, apart from the daily world of secular American society. In an attempt to create such a sacred world, American Hindus have brought together many different strands of Hinduism from across the Indian subcontinent, each of which may have different languages, festivals, and traditions. In community settings often borrowed from Christianity and Judaism (Sunday school, summer camp, and community centers similar to the YMCA [originally, the Young Men's Christian Association] and JCC [Jewish Community Center]). Hindu parents inculcated children with Hindu values that they saw as transcending the various differences between forms of Hindu practice. The result was a new American Hinduism, different from what parental generations knew in India but nonetheless the Hinduism most familiar to their children.

In Hindu educational settings and at home, American Hindus taught their children about karma, or the moral consequences of one's actions; dharma, or one's duties and responsibilities according to one's familial status; and values such as moderate appetites, compassion, mediation, and charity. Children were also likely to learn Hindu epics, tales that they might read and discuss in classes, act out in plays, hear as bedtime stories, see in comic book form, or watch as TV miniseries. Classes and summer camps enforced values that were taught at home but that parents worried might not be reinforced by life in the United States.

For the earliest generations of Hindu children growing up in America, educational material was often created for an Indian market and rarely in English. The Hindu worldview, which is tightly interconnected with Indian social systems, often made more sense in an Indian context and was at odds with some American ideology. (The Hindu emphasis on the

extended family, for example, contradicts the American value of individualism.) Some American Hindu children found these contradictions inherently confusing, as they experienced both value sets as making inherent cultural sense. In this way, American Hindu children often end up bicultural. Simultaneously, Hindu parents and educators worked to create educational material that was in English and more socially accessible to American-raised children. In the early twenty-first century, however, the question of how to be Hindu in America remained one that each Hindu child found himself or herself working out in relation to families and communities.

Negotiating America as a Muslim Child

While Muslims have lived in the Americas since the slave trade, the Muslim American community has grown numerically and in visibility since 1965. There are many forms of and approaches to Islam, inflected by factors ranging from country of origin to individual piety. While many American Muslims in the United States became assimilated, the children in more traditional Muslim families often faced similar challenges, regardless of country of origin, principally related to the negotiation of American popular culture and public space.

Observant Muslim families in the United States took care to preserve Islamic customs in their homes, observing life-cycle rituals and dietary rules. They founded schools to ensure that children learned Arabic and studied the Qur'an, included events for children in celebrations for Ramadan and other holidays, and followed Qur'anic instructions to love their children and teach them self-respect. In an American context, however, Muslim parents also had to decide exactly how to allow their children to interact with American popular culture. Individual parents made decisions for their own families, but just as conservative Christians created an alternate popular culture for their youth, Muslims produced Muslim video games, Internet sites, and even a Muslim doll to compete with Barbie. Children in some families were encouraged to participate in prayer five times daily, but that practice as well as holiday observance and dietary rules proved problematic in the public schools. Children missed school for religious holidays; prayer times sometimes overlapped with class time; and in order to avoid unacceptable meat (that which is not halal meat), children avoided school meals, which limited their access to public aid and made them notably different from their classmates. Similarly, clothing caused problems, as physical education uniforms often did not meet Muslim standards for modesty, particularly for women.

Negotiation of these problems continued into the twenty-first century, as Muslim communities and public schools sought solutions. Aside from policy problems, however, observant Muslim students can feel like outsiders: for instance, observant girls often chose not to wear *hijab* because, even when they were not openly mocked for the practice, looking so different put them on the outside of the social circle, making it difficult to maintain a spiritual practice and be socially accepted. Similarly, Muslim children reported feeling depressed and socially excluded during the anti-Islamic outbursts that followed September 11, 2001.

Religion, Moral Formation, and Children's Literature

While there are children growing up in many different American religious cultures, there are commonalities of experience among them. A central feature of childhood in twentieth-century America came in the form of literature written specifically for children. Sometimes the literature was explicitly religious, but often the most popular texts used religious themes that were embedded in stories that were not overtly religious. For instance, in 1950, the British Anglican author C. S. Lewis wrote *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, the first of *The Chronicles of Narnia* series. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is a fantasy novel in which four children enter an enchanted land through the back of an old wardrobe, but it is also a Christological tale in which a magical land is saved by a Christ figure, who is both sacrificed and resurrected. According to *Time* magazine, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* was one of the best English-language children's novels of the twentieth century, and while it is hard to state precisely how it has shaped children's spiritual or moral thinking, it is also part of a genre of widely read books. Madeline L'Engle, an American and liberal Episcopalian author, won the Newberry Medal award in 1963 for her science fiction novel *A Wrinkle in Time*. While L'Engle's Christianity, as portrayed in the novel, is somewhat unconventional, the book tells the story of a battle against darkness, using biblical references, references to God and Jesus, and supernatural figures who are occasionally read as angels. Indeed, the strong Christian home and family of Bushnell's Christian nurture provides an ideal throughout all of L'Engle's work, particularly in her less supernatural and theological work.

Not all literature that presents children with tales featuring morality and the fight of good against evil is inherently

Christian. That does not mean, however, that such stories are not important in the shaping of American children. Susan Cooper's *The Dark Is Rising* series, written in the 1960s and 1970s, uses the myths of ancient England as the moral framework. Philip Pullman, the British atheist who authored *The Golden Compass*, was inspired by John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. His novels, which were written beginning in the 1990s for an adolescent market, deal with both the fall of man and with a corrupt church. The resulting books are concerned with both what Pullman refers to as the school of morals and with the dangers of conventional religion. Most famously, and deeply embedded in controversy both in their depiction of witchcraft and about the role of marketing in children's literature, are the Harry Potter books, a series of seven fantasy novels published between 1997 and 2007. While J. K. Rowling makes no explicit religious claims in the books, a pervasive theme throughout the series is the contrast between doing what is right and what is easy, acceptable, or politically expedient. In her 2008 commencement address at Harvard University, she spoke about the role of imagination in moral formation. All of these books have been popular examples of serial fiction, all in a similar literary genre, and they help to shape the moral and/or spiritual experience of children and adolescents. (Indeed, all of the authors deal with themes of adolescent sexuality at some point in their texts.) They are important cultural productions in the spiritual lives of children.

See also *Education* entries; *Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Literature: Contemporary; Music: Contemporary Christian; Spirituality* entries.

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Christian Science

Christian Science is an indigenous American religious movement founded by Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), author of its textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (1875), and founder, first pastor, and continuing leader of the Church of Christ, Scientist (1879). In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a battle for the hearts and

minds of American Protestants between explanations found in secular science and religion motivated new approaches to spiritual explanation, resulting in movements such as Christian Science. Christian Science emerged at a time also marked by a growing interest in spiritual and mental healing, at a juncture between stern Protestantism and religious liberalism. Christian Scientists view Jesus' teachings and his method of healing as scientific demonstrations of divine law, not as supernatural interventions. This law is spiritual, not material, and Christian Scientists believe that it sets aside the claims of material law, obliterating and destroying in human experience all that is unlike God.

Mary Baker Eddy: Formative Years

Born in 1821 in Bow, New Hampshire, Mary Morse Baker was the youngest of the six children of Mark Baker and Abigail Ambrose. Brought up in a strict religious household,



Mary Baker Eddy founded the indigenous American religious movement Christian Science and is the author of its textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.

she joined the Congregational Trinitarian Church in 1838, though she rejected the Calvinist dogma of eternal damnation. Eddy later wrote that from her childhood she was impelled by a desire for a knowledge of God as the great relief from human woe, higher and better than matter. Her father was a strict Calvinist who emphasized judgment day and punishment, and her mother was a sympathetic heart who advised her to lean on God's love and seek his guidance through prayer. Her subsequent formulation of Christian Science would reiterate these gendered ideas in her conception of the Father-Mother God. Frail in her early life, she also suffered the loss of her mother and favorite brother in her early adulthood. Married in 1843 to George Glover, she returned home after he died within six months. Widowed with a child at the age of twenty-two, she spent the next two decades battling invalidism. In 1851 her ill health and family troubles caused her only son to move in with another family, who later moved away with him in 1856. She married again in 1853 to itinerant dentist Daniel Patterson but could not travel with him, and she was bedridden for most of the next eight years. In her search for relief, she adopted Graham's pure food cure; visited Dr. Vail's Hydropathic Institute in 1861; studied traditional medicine, homeopathy (using dilutions to heal with substances that would cause symptoms in a healthy person), and mesmerism (healing through the manipulation of magnetic vital forces); and visited Dr. Phineas P. Quimby several times between 1862 and 1865. It was Quimby who had an important effect on her health and well-being. During this time her literary aspirations began to emerge and mature as she contributed poems and incidental narratives to local newspapers and periodicals.

Phineas Quimby, a clockmaker and early student of mesmerism, believed that disease had a mental cause. To him, the impressionable "spiritual matter" of the human mind was the origin of both disease and its cure. He experimented with several methods, including animal magnetism, clairvoyance, and hypnotism, until he developed a suggestive talking cure where he simply sat by his patients, told them what he thought was their disease, and his explanations were the cure. Quimby believed that disease was a deception held in the mind and that the mind could chemically change the body. Through his method of correcting the patient's "errors," he supposed he could change the fluids of the system and establish health. He believed his experiments would be scientifically verified. Eddy was helped by him and continued to explore mental causation, lectured about Quimby's methods, opposing them to deism and spiritualism,

and attempted to recast his techniques into a Christian framework.

Several months after Quimby's death, Mrs. Patterson had a severe fall on the ice in February 1866 on her way to a temperance meeting. It was this event that she later claimed led to her discovery of the decisive curative power of a spiritual understanding of the scriptures. After reading an account of Jesus' healing, she experienced a powerful moment of recognition that life and reality were spiritual and glimpsed the sole reality of the spiritual nature of God: life. She believed this understanding of God's presence healed her. Soon after the experience Patterson deserted her (she was officially divorced in 1873). Socially dislocated, Mrs. Patterson relied on the kindness of friends and family and moved often into boarding houses across New England, all the while studying the scriptures in order to understand and clarify her new conviction that she had discovered the scientific laws of God, revealing Jesus' miracles as demonstrations of the healing power of divine mind.

Her understanding evolved slowly over the next few years. In 1867, students and patients began calling on her to teach them her method and heal them. By 1869 she completed writing her first manuscripts and began teaching organized classes based on them in Lynn, Massachusetts. In 1875 she published a more complete statement of her methodology in her book *Science and Health*.

Healing Theology

Eddy taught that creation was a dynamic unfolding of God's individual spiritual ideas; revelation was how this process appeared to humanity. Eddy considered the explanation of creation in Genesis chapter 1 to be the spiritual account of God's creation, while the second chapter contained the mortal or material view of creation. The platform of Christian Science rests on discovery of the facts of being as the revelation of absolute truth, making Christian Science closer to evangelical thinking than other mind cure or New Thought theologies. As humans discover their essential spiritual nature of being as the "image and likeness of God," the divine order or kingdom of heaven is revealed with the force of divine law, destroying sin and healing the sick.

Eddy defined God with seven synonyms in *Science and Health*: "infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love." Since God is infinite spirit, the only intelligence of the universe, including man, God's true creation cannot be seen by the material senses. In fact, matter itself is ultimately unreal. God is one mind, the only self-existence, and

spiritual man is his eternal image or expression. Much like the sunray partakes of the essence of the sun and yet is not the sun, God and man are inexplicably bound together as mind and idea. God, the divine ego, expresses himself in man. As the human yields to this divine mandate, it is saved from the bondage of mortality.

Eddy rejected pantheism—spirit does not enter matter, it supplants its claim to reality: the visible universe and material man are counterfeits of spiritual reality. The material senses, as faculties of “mortal mind,” lie to humanity and claim to have power as sin, disease, and death. These are rooted in false beliefs about the nature of creation and exist only in relationship to the lack of human understanding of God’s active spiritual law. Christian Science teaches that an understanding of humanity’s spiritual relationship to God dispels the claims of the senses and destroys any false claims of “error”—of evil, sin, and sickness. Eddy believed that this was Jesus’ method: the savior saw man as God’s image and likeness, and this correct view healed the sick and sinning.

Jesus was human, born of a virgin, and “appointed” to appear to humanity in a form they could both understand and perceive. Thus, he was the exemplar, the embodiment of the Christ, God’s divine manifestation that actively dispels the illusions of the senses. Moreover, Christian Scientists acknowledge Jesus’ atonement, demonstrated in healing the sick and sinning, and overcoming death in resurrection. To be born again means to realize one’s true spiritual identity, distinct in the mind that is God, and to constantly bring human thought into an awareness of this spiritual reality.

While the healing of sin remained the goal of Christian Science, healing of the body and the empirical evidence that ensued were powerful advertising. Christian Science practitioners, who practice the Christian Science method full-time, could be called upon to help patients in the healing process through scientific prayer, and paid for their help, making the public practice of Christian Science attractive to students, many of them women. By 1958 there were nearly eleven thousand officially recognized by the church, 90 percent of whom were women. Christian Science teachers, authorized by a board of education that inherited its responsibilities from the earlier Massachusetts Metaphysical College, teach yearly classes of not more than thirty pupils, thus creating and maintaining a cohesive community of student associations that convene annually.

Christian Science conquers “error” by denying its claims to truth. Healing is accomplished through an understanding that disease and any claims of evil are only beliefs or illusions

of mortal mind, a limited material view, and practitioners turn from the evidence of the senses in order to accept the consciousness of divine truth and love, so disease will “vanish into its native nothingness.” They might argue mentally until they are receptive to accepting the ever-present perfection of the divine mind and its expression: man, in Christian Science, is complete, intact, and flawless in every detail because he is perfectly created, intelligently governed, and tenderly cared for by infinite love. God is omnipotent; therefore there can be no cause and effect other than perfect God and perfect man. Nothing can exist and there is no substance that is contrary to God’s nature as divine principle, life, truth, and love. Christian Scientists believe that this type of mental argumentation leads to an understanding of the action of God’s law that restores spiritual sense to human consciousness.

The Church of Christ, Scientist

Though early attempts at proselytizing were problematic and even litigious, Eddy organized the Christian Scientist Association (CSA) of her students in 1876 and continued teaching. In 1877 she married her student and public practitioner of her method, Asa Eddy: he was an important soul mate but died five years later. In 1878 and 1879 Eddy preached in the vestry of the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Boston, but by April 1879 members of her association voted to organize their own church. Its function was to commemorate the word and works of Jesus, including reinstating primitive Christianity with its lost element of healing.

By 1881, the focus of the new movement shifted to Boston, then center of intellectual and religious life in the United States, where Eddy, at the age of sixty, became the church’s first official pastor. A year earlier, she had founded and chartered the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, where she and her students held classes into 1889, graduating nearly six hundred students. In Boston Eddy attracted attention among middle-class women, religious seekers from Protestant denominations, and businesspeople. Christian Science has always attracted a large female following—more than 75 percent of the overall membership. Founded by a woman, it offered women relief from suffering and a public profession as healers, readers, and teachers that reinforced the traditional role of women as caregivers, often with significant remuneration. The theology of the Father/Mother God was also undoubtedly attractive to women, and early Christian Science periodicals often focused on women’s issues. Eddy chose many of the more dynamic pupils of her

college, many of them women, to disseminate her teachings across the United States. In 1884 she taught a class in Chicago, where other mind cure organizations were proliferating, that helped demonstrate the Christian basis of her teachings. Often in her preaching Eddy emphasized the differences between Christian Science and other spiritual healing methods, since many of her students had defected to form their own New Thought groups (which taught the prosperity gospel and positive thinking “mind cure”), even if there were commonalities between their teachings. Emma Curtis Hopkins, who served as editor of the *Christian Science Journal* in 1884–1885, broke away to found the Christian Science Theological Institute in Chicago in the late 1880s and taught many of the subsequent founders of New Thought groups.

The Christian Science church, with its new institutes, academies, and branches spreading across the West, began attracting critical attention in the local and national newspapers and popular periodicals. Its own publishing society was operating by 1883 and issued the bimonthly *Journal of Christian Science*. Soon it was a monthly periodical called the *Christian Science Journal*, with a circulation of ten thousand. By 1886 the National Christian Scientist Association of students was formed. It met yearly through 1890 and established the first reading room in Boston in 1888. By 1890 Eddy dissolved much of the organization, and she removed herself to Concord, New Hampshire, in 1892.

Eddy was a careful organizer. In 1892 the Church of Christ (Scientist) was reorganized with a corporate structure based on a Deed of Trust for the purpose of building a church edifice. The Mother Church polity, once democratically based, was founded on new business models, governed by Eddy, a self-perpetuating board of directors, all male at the time, and twelve first members (whose power was given to the directors exclusively in 1901). New branch churches continued enjoying democratic self-rule. But for the Mother Church, a democratic organizational model would be particularly unwieldy for a growing far-flung international organization. Christian Science was enjoying the limelight at the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago, with students of Eddy invited to address a plenary session and hold their own congress. Eddy was in Concord working on her collaborative art project, the painting/poem book *Christ and Christmas*, with illustrative figurative paintings by James Gilman punctuating Eddy’s poem, published that year. She was also busy overseeing the planning of the first edifice of the Mother Church in Boston. Completed in late 1894,

the Romanesque revival edifice sparked a building boom across the United States that lasted into the 1920s. The original edifice was soon outgrown, and the members of the Mother Church built a grand extension: a domed classical revival auditorium church rising 224 feet above the street, seating more than four thousand, completed in 1906. Branch churches in their urban settings were often quite distinctive, inspired by the classical revival architecture of Chicago’s World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893, with imposing Greek classical porches and Roman domes of art glass that gathered the faithful in acoustically superior auditoriums.

The church continued to focus on creating a distinctive identity that became increasingly standardized in the 1890s, particularly with the publication of *The Manual of the Mother Church* in 1895. The *Manual*, which Eddy claimed was divinely inspired, established the rules and standards of the organization and was continually revised by her until her death in 1910. While some of its bylaws were clearly conceived to curb possible rival students, such as Augusta Stetson in New York, the *Manual* nonetheless became an important document in transitioning the church from Eddy’s charismatic leadership into an impersonal, legal, institutional form.

In 1895 Eddy ordained the Bible and *Science and Health* the impersonal pastor of the Mother Church and later its branches. This impersonal pastor would safeguard against the heresy that could creep into personal preaching. Thereafter, lay readers, a man and woman, would carry out the worship services in the Mother Church with hymns, scripture reading, suitable music, and a lesson-sermon: selections from the Bible and *Science and Health*. The services ended with a repetition of the scientific statement of being from *Science and Health*, which is still repeated today every Sunday in Christian Science churches:

There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter. All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation, for God is All-in-all. Spirit is immortal Truth; matter is mortal error. Spirit is the real and eternal; matter is the unreal and temporal. Spirit is God, and man is His image and likeness. Therefore man is not material; he is spiritual. (P. 468)

Lessons from the Bible and *Science and Health* were established informally by 1888, followed in 1890 with the *Christian Science Quarterly Bible Lessons*, the first subjects adapted from the International Sunday-school Bible lessons, until

new topics were introduced in 1898. Also in 1895 a Board of Missionaries was established, replaced by the Board of Lectureship in 1898. The latter provided itinerant lecturers to serve the Christian Science field.

Taking over from the Massachusetts Metaphysical College was a Board of Education, established in 1898 to teach primary (foundational) and normal (teaching) classes. A Committee on Publication responsible for discussing and defending Christian Science in the press was also instituted. Other periodicals also began coming off the presses: the *Christian Science Weekly*, renamed the *Christian Science Sentinel*, in 1898; *Der Herold der Christian Science*, in 1903; and the *Christian Science Monitor*, in 1908. In 1904 Eddy provided for Christian Science organizations on college campuses. The first was at Harvard University.

The standardization of services, publications aimed at the educated middle class, the equal representation of men and women in the pulpits, as well as the new distinctive edifices being built by Christian Science congregations in cities and towns demonstrated to many that Christian Science was well organized and here to stay. Certainly the growing reputation of the *Christian Science Monitor* as a reform-minded international daily paper revealed that the church had a larger mission. Eddy had earlier authorized the opening of Christian Science Dispensaries in 1889, to help anyone without charge. There were thirty such dispensaries when they were closed in 1894. By 1900 Eddy instructed all branch churches to provide public reading rooms, popular with other publishers at the time, so that authorized literature published by the church could be made available in quiet meditative spaces in the bustling business districts of American towns and cities.

Broader Contexts of Appeal

Christian Science emerged in Gilded Age America at a time of a critical redefinition of religion, as well as a time of growing interest in science. Evangelical Protestantism was increasingly divided over doctrinal distinctions and social functions, unprepared for the rise of industrialism and threats to its cultural hegemony. Catholicism was growing, as was Judaism, and populations were migrating to cities. Christian Science offered an antidote to this fragmentation, decisively positioning itself as the new/old gospel of primitive Christianity and emphasizing Jesus' healing mission as practical in a time when conventional medical therapeutics were often ineffective or even harmful. It was also attractive to women, who were given equality within a church that

valued their self-sufficiency. The vast majority of public practitioners were women, who took their traditional healing role from the home into the public sphere.

Other currents paved the way for Christian Science's rapid growth. Transcendentalism injected an intuitive spirit and a recognition of the spark of the divine in humanity into the purely rational scientism that permeated the Enlightenment. Spiritualism indicated a broader social interest in the materialization of psychic phenomena and the next life. In the larger context of an interest in evolution and vitalism, as opposed to deistic and mechanistic explanations, Christian Science, made up chiefly of members from evangelical churches, espoused a method for humanity to progress and grow spiritward, beyond materialism. And Christian Science's idealism was nonetheless pragmatic: it claimed that to empirically witness a healing of sickness or sin indicated this spiritual growth. Periodicals were filled with testimonials—more than fifty thousand published since the beginning of the movement—and every week Christian Science congregations gathered at their testimony meetings that encouraged them to publicly testify to Christian Science's efficacy. One critique from 1912 suggested that Christian Science's gospel of healing, its religious message, its monistic idealism, its anti-materialistic spirit, its notable originator, as well as the responsive practical mind of the American people, were the reasons for its success.

Christian Science was widely criticized from the pulpit and from the medical establishment. Critics claimed that the new religious and healing movement was a fad, a mask for commerce, a haven for the affluent, an irrational female system, a modern doctrine of subjective idealism (only mind exists), a Gnosticism (spiritual knowledge that frees our divine souls from material bondage), a neo-Hegelianism (God is all substance), and a gloss of Swedenborg (emphasizing spiritual reality and the spiritual interpretation of scripture), among other criticisms. Many criticized the movement for its lack of social activism, which it began to significantly address during wartime.

Christian Science and the implication of its practice to medicine became increasingly an issue. Court cases establishing the difference between prayer and medical treatment were many. While some physicians recognized that Christian Science contributed to healing the nervousness of American women, they balked at its claims to heal organic disease. By 1911, under pressure from an increasingly powerful American Medical Association, Congress was on the verge of prohibiting the practice of Christian Science throughout the

United States, and many feared that Eddy's attitudes about hygiene and contagion were a threat to public sanitation and health. But Christian Scientists began winning court cases, particularly as they not only argued for the efficacy of their method of spiritual healing but defended their constitutional right to religious freedom.

What many clergymen feared was early Christian Science's rapid growth and the conversion of many of their own congregations' prominent members to the new church. The movement continued to develop into a mainstream denomination, through committed memberships whose influence was greater than their numbers might indicate. Due to her students' gratification over sizeable early growth, Eddy forbade the reporting of membership figures, so estimates varied widely. From a Mother Church with 26 members in 1879, by 1906 there were more than 85,000 members. In the late 1920s and into the 1930s, a church or society was being formed every week. The 1926 United States Census counted 1,913 groups, with a membership of more than 200,000, of whom 94 percent were urban and 75.5 percent were women. In 1936 there were more than 2,600 branch churches and societies worldwide, nearly 50 college organizations (which expanded to 200 by 1958), almost 11,000 practitioners, and more than 500 nurses. The 1936 United States census reported nearly 270,000 members in more than 2,100 churches in the United States, and the membership continued to grow. By 1958 there were more than 2,300 congregations in the United States and 700 in other countries, probably peaking with nearly 475,000 members. Since that time there has been a fairly precipitous decline. In 2008, the membership was possibly 200,000 worldwide, with 1,250 congregations in the United States and 500 in other countries, with some new growth in Africa and South America.

A Religion of the Word

Spiritual healing and new practices of worship created a distinctive religious community and a distinctive Christian Science subjectivity. This was partly a matter of the economic and cultural profile of church members, who were typically literate and middle-class women and men, at least in the great American cities. Indeed, it was largely through extensive publishing activity that the teachings of Christian Science reached the existing membership and new converts. Literature distribution was one of the most popular committees in many branch churches, providing young people social outlets that were church related. All members kept

abreast of the publications and bought numerous editions of *Science and Health*, which had more than 225 editions, as Eddy was ever refining and clarifying her writing. This emphasis on the divine and revelatory Word, whether on the printed page or read in the church, was not merely a matter of communication; it was an exercise of a power tantamount to spiritual healing. Even Mark Twain, Christian Science's most acerbic critic in the early twentieth century wrote in *Christian Science* that it was "the first time since the dawn-days of Creation that a Voice has gone crashing through space with such placid and complacent confidence and command" (p. 3).

Christian Science was most radically a religion of the Word, of reading and speaking, with crucial implications for the acoustics of their churches. These edifices were stages upon which the faithful reiterated the Word of God, revealed to reconnect the congregations with the sources of primitive Christianity, with signs following. While early edifices often featured symbolic elements such as the cross and crown motif that embellished the covers of *Science and Health* as well as stained glass windows, most congregations began to eschew overt Christian symbolism by the early 1920s. With the Bible and *Science and Health* the only preachers, quotations from the Bible and Eddy (she limited churches to one out of three specific quotations) became the primary decoration on the walls of branch churches. Eddy's ideas were visionary and dramatic. The reading of the Word became the liturgy, and church services in increasingly impressive edifices allowed the congregations to contemplate the grander verities of spirit, through Christian Science, clearly inscribed in the logic of their church buildings, often under soaring domes of art glass.

Eddy was often criticized for what some critics thought were her prosaic, illogical, and sometimes contradictory statements in *Science and Health*. But her style, expressed through literary, philosophical, and religious tropes and metaphors, was to her an ethical gesture at the service of spiritual truths that she felt could not be adequately expressed in material language. She often addressed the beliefs of mortal mind based in material existence; she addressed the human mind as the relative battleground of suffering and overcoming, where the action of the divine mind through Christ appeared. She also contemplated an absolute realm of spirit, where the divine mind, the true and only reality, knows nothing of sin, disease, and death, thus destroying the beliefs of mortal mind in the human realm. The mortal, the human, and the divine seem to exist, but

only the divine truly exists. These ideas led to apparent inconsistencies in her writings, because while mortal mind claims reality, through “animal magnetism,” sensuality, sin, and so forth, the human mind is redeemable, and the divine mind has no need of redemption.

These ideas and strongly worded statements became the fundamental basis for disciplined spiritual healing. The Word revealed spiritual ideas and supplanted a material sense of language with the enunciation or utterance of spiritual truth, transforming material appearances through the healing of sin and sickness. Christian Scientists studied the Bible and Eddy’s writings daily and in their church services in a sacramental way, for they led the student to understand eternal spiritual truths demonstrated in physical healing and well-being. In Christian Science, the language of the Bible and Eddy’s writings were utilized as an autonomous and divine discourse, which aided the student in the realization of the perfect spiritual subject that reflected the perfection of the divine principle, God, even though human language was at best feeble in its ability to describe the infinite beauty and intelligence of the spiritual. The language of Christian Science was found in the “new tongue,” which Eddy defined in her 1886 sermon “Christian Healing” as the spiritual language of soul instead of the senses, translating matter into its original language of mind, thus giving a spiritual instead of a material signification.

Eddy’s rhetorical strategies in her writings were highly metaphorical and, like Swedenborg, created corresponding spiritual meanings that became the language of Christian Science. Terminology was reinforced through relationships with other members, teachers, and practitioners and through the continuous reiterations from the official texts. Within this discourse, individual freedom and reason were emphasized within fairly strict moral codes, including chastity and temperance, though the renouncing of pleasure through the senses was to ensure pleasure in a different spiritual form. The disciplined argumentative method of Christian Science attempted to prove the scientific lawfulness of Christian spirituality as opposed to its supernaturalness, and claimed the beneficial redemptive healing effect of this spirituality. Living the active spiritual discipline of Christian Science created a process of regeneration through which the reality of God’s spiritual creation appeared.

The Church Matures

Into the twentieth century, the Christian Science church grew steadily in members, influence, and respectability,

even though challenges to its healing method continued. As media attention lessened after Eddy’s death, the church began to foster an image of quiet, disciplined spirituality, an emphasis on traditional family values, respect of authority and legal systems, and multigenerational reliance on spiritual healing in families that felt sustained by their religion even in a generally unsupportive social milieu. A new publishing society was built in 1934; subscriptions to and advertising revenues from the *Monitor* increased; and by the early 1960s a vision for a new sixteen-acre complex as headquarters began to take shape, centered on the Mother Church and its extension with a grand new entrance portal and flanked by the publishing house. Completed in 1973, the plan included an office building, a Sunday school building, a twenty-eight-story administration building, and a 670-by-100-foot reflecting pool covering a parking garage.

Also important was the creation of other institutions to care for members’ needs. In 1916 the directors established the Christian Science Benevolent Association, one of Eddy’s last requests, to maintain places to care for ailing and aged Christian Scientists and create a nurses training program to help minister to Christian Scientists in need. A sanatorium in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, was opened in 1919; Pleasant View Home in Concord, New Hampshire, was established in 1927; and the Christian Science Benevolence Association on the Pacific Coast, in San Francisco, was opened in 1930. Several such institutions were also established in the United Kingdom.

Not quite a decade after Eddy’s death, leadership challenges to the *Manual* model erupted in the “Great Litigation” or suit in equity. The lawsuits divided the church between the trustees of the Christian Science Publishing Society and the Christian Science Board of Directors between 1919 and 1921, but Eddy’s form of church government prevailed. Schisms did occur, such as Augusta Stetson’s short-lived “Church Triumphant” and British teacher Annie C. Bill’s “Church of the Universal Design,” the latter of which advocated a policy of cooperation with medical doctors, and had nearly eighty congregations by the 1930s, though none exist today.

Wartime challenged the church to become increasingly pragmatic. The church established a Relief Fund in Europe between 1914 and 1919, with committees throughout Britain and in France, Switzerland, Holland, and Italy that distributed food, clothing, and more than \$2 million to those Christian Scientists and other citizens negatively affected by

the war. When the United States entered the war, ten commissioned chaplains served the active armed forces, and Christian Science camp welfare centers were located in Army camps in thirty states.

Christian Scientists officially denounced fascism and defended the democratic system at their annual meeting in 1941, and soon after the gestapo in Germany closed all of the ninety Christian Science churches and reading rooms, arrested members for questioning, and banned public and private meetings. Profession of Christian Science was forbidden. Church services continued in private, and some could hear radio broadcasts of the Mother Church services: radio had been introduced in the early 1920s, with expanded testimonial programming on radio and then television beginning in 1953.

The Mother Church became a registered relief agency during World War II and worked through appointed and local wartime committees between 1939 and 1946. By the end of the war in 1945, more than 378 ministers and chaplains and other workers had served Christian Scientists in the armed forces in the United States and Britain. The camp welfare committees maintained 222 service rest centers on bases in the allied nations, as well as one in Hamburg, Germany, and several in France, Italy, and Belgium that helped reestablish Christian Science activities after the war.

Christian Science since the Later Twentieth Century

With the rise of improved medical care, and the growth of secularism and religious skepticism, by the 1979 centennial of the founding of the church the relevance of Christian Science's late-nineteenth-century religious language and formulations, approach to scientific terminology, and emphasis on spiritual healing began to be challenged as church membership declined. The 1980s witnessed a new media public relations push by the Boston leadership, who began amassing a media empire that some members felt was at odds with the church's religious mission. Between 1988 and 1993, unable to popularize the daily *Monitor*, they spent hundreds of millions of dollars to diversify into radio, television, cable, and Internet publishing. The church bought an international short-wave radio network, produced excellently reviewed radio and cable television news programs, owned a local Boston television channel, and started *World Monitor*, a glossy monthly news magazine that struggled to find an audience. The church lost more than \$325 million on these ventures.

Debates and scandal erupted when the Board of Directors, attracted by a possible \$97 million bequest that would expire in 1993 if they did not act, published the book of popular but esoteric teacher and lecturer Bliss Knapp in 1991. Entitled *The Destiny of the Mother Church* (written and privately printed in the 1940s but rejected by church leaders at that time), it proposed that Eddy had been prophesied in the Bible, an idea anathema to most Christian Scientists, who had been warned constantly during their lifetime against any deification of their person. However, these ideas appeared to be supported by a 1943 official pamphlet, and several influential Christian Science teachers had started their own independent groups based on these ideas. Though around five hundred reading rooms refused to carry the book, and members debated and publicly criticized the leadership, the church received \$50 million, which offset losses from the media projects.

Other controversies challenged the church. Both federal and state governments and insurance companies have long recognized Christian Science healing. The late 1980s and 1990s saw increased consideration of the issue of the care of children, due to the public outcry over illnesses and deaths of several children receiving Christian Science treatment, brought to the media's attention by one-time church members. With court cases mounting, press attention, and grassroots organizing, early laws protecting spiritual healing began to be questioned and overturned. Controversies concerning religious exemption laws, child neglect and endangerment laws, due process, manslaughter statutes, Medicare, and public policy are again affecting the practice of Christian Science healing.

The move into television prompted the church to use non-Christian Science workers, which also revealed certain underlying social prejudices and caused a debate about the presence of gays and lesbians in the church, who had always been part of the movement but had gone unrecognized and were sometimes openly castigated.

Members of the denomination maintain many institutions in common with other Protestant church bodies, and while not supported directly by the Mother Church, these continue the maintenance of a healing community. Today, Christian Scientists support more than forty-five retirement/nursing facilities worldwide. Members formed historical foundations such as Longyear (1938) and Daystar (1990); Christian Science schools and colleges such as Daycroft (1928–1991) and Principia (1898); and youth organizations such as *Monitor* Youth Forums (1946),

Adventure Unlimited (1962–present), and six summer camps (founded between 1915 and 1955). Emergence International (1985) was created to minister to gay and lesbian Christian Scientists, and several financial support networks and foundations are also available for members.

Some critics propose that the Christian Science approach is anachronistic, particularly in light of the increased success of medicine and the rise of popular secular holistic approaches to healing. Recently, even some church members have suggested that other emphases in Eddy's theological thought should be given a more thorough vetting by the church. Others believe that the church, in attempting to create new audiences for *Science and Health*, was modifying its radicalism and becoming more worldly and new age as the movement entered into the twenty-first century and began to participate in secular mind/body conferences. A renewed emphasis on Eddy's *Science and Health*, translated into seventeen languages, caused the textbook to continue to sell well: more than five hundred thousand copies were sold between 1993 and 1998. Its famous cross and crown emblem is now being offered as an official insignia to identify churches, societies, and reading rooms.

Mary Baker Eddy is one of the most controversial of American religious leaders. Biographers since her time have created idealized and hagiographic accounts of her life, negative psycho-biography, broader contextual narratives, feminist and psychoanalytic readings, and have even used biblical prophecy as a method to explain her relevance, often based on spurious secondary and tertiary sources. Reversing decades of secrecy and guardedness towards independent scholars, in 2000 the church announced the redesign of the publishing society building into the Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, intended to emphasize Eddy's feminist credentials and innovative ideas concerning spirituality and health. The church released all of Eddy's papers to public study. The \$50 million research library contains more than 525,000 documents, photographs, and objects concerning Eddy's work and legacy, with state-of-the-art exhibition spaces.

The church today is trying to redefine its distinctive mission of positioning spiritual healing as an effective alternative to medical care, though there is some relaxation of earlier church social mores, including allowing members to use medical treatment. The fact that the church's policies and methods were fixed at the time of Eddy's death has remained somewhat problematic for innovation. Both public lectures and reading rooms were tremendously popular

modes of communication for a variety of groups and publishers at the turn of the last century, but today they are not particularly popular modes of publicity.

In an attempt to focus on its healing ministry, the church has recently put several of its Boston complex's buildings up for lease and has sold two of Eddy's former homes to the independent Longyear Foundation, which supports a museum about Eddy and early workers in the movement and already maintains six of her former homes throughout New England.

Today, with the rise of the Internet, the church has several Web sites, some marketed for youth searching for spiritual answers in today's world (spirituality.com). But many independent groups on the Web now promote Eddy and the study of Christian Science outside officialdom, including the Bookmark, the Aequus Institute, Healing Unlimited, the Mary Baker Eddy Institute, and the Christian Science End-time Center. All of these groups support historical Christian Science study materials as well as publication and distribution activities of teachers and writers outside and sometimes at odds with current church "authorized" literature.

See also *Architecture: New Religious Movements; Esoteric Movements; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Healing; Idealist Philosophy; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements entries; Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Positive Thinking; Science; Scientology; Spiritualism; Transcendentalism; Wicca and Witchcraft.*

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Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic

Church-state issues have been the subject of heated debates throughout much of U.S. history, often focusing on whether the Constitution requires governmental secularism or whether the federal and state governments can support some religious activities or institutions in a land in which an overwhelming majority of citizens say that they believe in God. These debates often center on the manner in which the framers of the U.S. Constitution and the constitutions of the individual states addressed church-state issues during the American Revolution and in the early republic.

Church-State History and the Supreme Court

In a famous Supreme Court case in the 1940s, Justice Hugo Black recounted a common version of the history of church and state in America. It begins with people fleeing to America to escape religious persecution in Europe. On arrival, they found that traditional European church-state

patterns were difficult to cast off, and the colonists often failed to leave religious intolerance completely behind, at least in the early years. They even set up a number of state-supported “established” churches. Eventually, the colonials’ “freedom-loving nature” led towards recognizing the importance of the liberty of conscience, which paved the way for intolerance to be replaced by religious freedom.

During the Revolutionary Era, thanks to the efforts of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison (who later became the nation’s third and fourth presidents), Virginia set an example for the rest of the colonies, and for the new nation, by casting off its legally established Anglican Church. Moreover, Virginia refused to pass even a broader-based, more ecumenical tax to support religion and instead adopted a now-famous Statute for Religious Freedom drafted by Jefferson. A few years later, Madison, the “father of the Constitution” and the principal architect of the federal Bill of Rights, infused this same spirit into the First Amendment’s “establishment clause,” which says that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion,” thus creating, in Jefferson’s famous phrase, “a wall of separation between church and state.”

In this case, *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947), the Court declared that the constitutional “wall of separation between church and state” meant that the federal and state governments could not provide aid to any one religion, nor could they favor religion over nonreligion. This “no aid” standard has come to be called the “strict separationist” approach to the establishment clause, and it has led the Supreme Court to ban many forms of state support for religious schools and to eliminate official prayers and Bible reading in the public schools on the grounds that these activities constitute a forbidden “establishment of religion.”

Because this interpretation of the Constitution has generated a great deal of controversy, and because it appears to have been derived by the Supreme Court justices from their understanding of the intentions of the framers of the establishment clause, the *Everson* case triggered an explosion of church-state historical studies. Opposition to the *Everson* Court’s “no aid” interpretation has come from those who believe that a better understanding of the framers’ intentions leads to the conclusion that federal and state governments can aid religion as long as that aid does not prefer any one religion over the others. This school of thought has generally been labeled “nonpreferentialism” or “accommodationism” (in the sense that it seeks to allow the government to accommodate the American people’s religiosity).

Meanwhile, a third school of thought has argued that both strict separationists and nonpreferentialists have missed the point. For this group, a significant element of the establishment clause's original meaning was to keep the federal government from interfering with the state-supported churches that existed in New England at the time of the Bill of Rights. Looking specifically at the text of the clause, which reads, "Congress shall make no law *respecting* [that is, on the subject of] an establishment of religion," these scholars assert that any law on the general subject of religious establishments—irrespective of whether that law is proestablishment or antiestablishment—would be forbidden. That is, Congress was rendered impotent to interfere with "establishments of religion" in places such as Massachusetts, where many towns collected taxes for the benefit of local (usually Congregational) churches. Accordingly, the clause should be read to insulate the way the states choose to organize their church-state affairs from anything Congress might do.

This "hands-off" approach to the establishment clause has been called "enhanced-federalism" because it bolsters the broader concept of federalism that many scholars have associated with the entire design of the Constitution itself. "Federalism" is a complicated subject, but it generally revolves around the notion that the federal government, having been created by the state governments, possesses only the specific powers that have been expressly delegated to it by the states, thus leaving the states with all governmental power to make laws except to the extent that the Constitution specifically provides otherwise. In this case, the power to decide whether to have an establishment of religion was not delegated to the federal government in the Constitution, and therefore the basic principle of federalism should mean that Congress has no power either to establish a religion or to interfere with religious establishments in the states. The enhanced-federalism approach takes this argument one step further by saying that the addition of the First Amendment's establishment clause was specifically designed to add another layer of protection for church-state practices in the states, in the event that the Congress might become disposed towards interfering with them.

All three of these interpretations—strict separationism, nonpreferentialism, and enhanced federalism—are built on historical foundations. Their proponents believe that a fair reading of the history surrounding the adoption of the First Amendment leads inescapably to their conclusions.

While the arguments among these schools of thought sometimes seem to split historical hairs, the language of scholarly debate has been unrestrained. "False," "frivolous," and "fiction" are just a few of the epithets hurled by prominent scholars at their distinguished adversaries. In light of the fact that these competing theories of the First Amendment have real economic and political consequences (many millions of dollars of funding for religious schools or other "faith-based" institutions, for example), it is important to recognize that many of the books and articles in this field have been written with the goal of presenting historical events in a light that is most favorable to a particular interpretation of the Constitution. While this kind of goal-oriented history writing is not unique to church-state studies, it is especially pronounced in this field, and so all sources (including this article) should be read with particular care.

In thinking about how the Supreme Court and various other commentators have discussed the original meaning of the Constitution's church-state provisions, it may be valuable to note that only some people agree with Justice Black that history is an important element of constitutional interpretation; many others believe that history is either irrelevant or is merely one of many tools to be applied to the understanding of a constantly evolving Constitution. Even those who think that the original meaning of a constitutional provision *is* important do not necessarily agree on how to employ those historical insights.

And so, while many people who debate church-state issues are "originalists" in that they believe that the Constitution should be interpreted in accordance with its original meaning, they differ in where they look for evidence of that meaning. Some scholars have concentrated on the specific intentions of important framers (as can be seen in the *Everson* case's focus on James Madison and Thomas Jefferson); others are more interested in the meaning of words such as *establishment* in legal or theological writings at the time; and yet another group looks for what the constitutional text would have meant to a fully informed member of the general public (and since it is often impossible to get conclusive evidence of what ordinary citizens thought, modern scholars try to create a hypothetical vision of what those people were likely to have been thinking). In evaluating the various arguments about constitutional meaning, readers should think not only about the historical evidence itself but also how that evidence should be applied to the task of constitutional interpretation.

Ever since the *Everson* case, Americans have become accustomed to having the Supreme Court decide church-state issues involving state and local governments as well as those arising at the national level. Even though the establishment clause only refers to laws made by “Congress,” and despite a decision by the Supreme Court early in the nineteenth century that the First Amendment did not apply to state or municipal laws, since the *Everson* era, the Supreme Court has consistently held that states, cities, and towns are now bound by the clause as well. Many of the Court’s most prominent church-state decisions over the past century have involved state laws, or even the administrative actions of local school boards, rather than acts of Congress.

The legal theory adopted by the Supreme Court to apply the establishment clause (and other elements of the Bill of Rights) to the states is usually called the “incorporation doctrine.” It is based on the Court’s argument that when the post-Civil War Congress passed the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, that amendment’s “due process” clause (which reads, “nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law . . .”) included the concept that many of the fundamental rights described in the Bill of Rights (that is, the first ten amendments to the Constitution) would henceforth apply to the state governments. Since most church-state issues in the past two hundred years have involved state and local governments rather than Congress, the incorporation doctrine has been extremely influential in shaping modern American views on how the phrase “the separation of church and state” relates to the Constitution. The incorporation doctrine is very well established in American constitutional jurisprudence at this time, although it has been challenged on historical grounds, especially by those who subscribe to the enhanced-federalism approach to the establishment clause. Their argument is that the original goal of the clause was to insulate the states from federal interference with their church-state decisions and, therefore, that the incorporation doctrine effectively reverses that outcome by subjecting state decision making to Supreme Court review.

Finally, it is important to note that the histories of church-state issues in America almost invariably focus on the generally Northern European Protestant immigrants who constituted almost all of the voting population in colonial America. As a result, these histories completely overlook the Native Americans, large numbers of slaves brought forcibly to North America, indentured servants, and any others who did not voluntarily choose to seek their

spiritual or financial fortunes in the New World. In fact, colonial and early national laws and constitutions upholding the principle of religious liberty were sometimes drafted by the same people who wrote the “slave codes” that placed severe restrictions on slaves’ religious freedom. There are also few, if any, women’s voices heard in the early American church-state debates, since those debates generally involved the men who were the leaders of the churches and the states—that is, those who served as members of the clergy and as legislators.

Church-State Colonial Background

People left Europe for America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for many reasons, from the desire to “get rich quick” to the hope of establishing God’s kingdom on earth. The vast majority of these immigrants shared a common cultural background; perhaps 90 percent or more of the colonists at the time of the Revolution were English-speaking Protestants, at least by cultural background. How many of those colonists were actually active churchgoers when the Constitution was adopted has been the subject of lively scholarly debate, with some pointing to a fairly low percentage of colonists’ holding formal church memberships and others finding that many people affiliated themselves with churches even if they were not technically members.

The long and complicated relationship of church and state in the various colonies from the time they were founded until the Revolutionary Era is an interesting subject, but one that is well beyond the purview of this article. For present purposes, what may be most valuable to point out is that at the outset of the Revolution, several of the colonies had laws or provisions in their charters or constitutions (that is, their basic governing documents) to raise taxes for specific Protestant denominations; and most, if not all, restricted voting or public office-holding to Christians, limited secular activities on the Sabbath, punished blasphemy, and generally promoted specific forms of Christian beliefs or precepts over others.

Members of churches not receiving tax funding (often called “dissenters”) were sometimes but not always permitted to obtain exemptions from paying the official church taxes. The most vocal dissenters were usually the Baptists, but they were joined by some Presbyterians (especially in the South), Quakers, and others. The churches most commonly supported by taxes were the Congregational churches in New England and the Anglican Church in the South, but at various times even the Baptists and Presbyterians were the

beneficiaries of religious taxation in parts of New England, where each town voted on which local Protestant church would receive tax support.

During the Revolutionary Era, as the colonies moved towards becoming independent states, they drafted new constitutions, and thus they had the opportunity to consider whether to change their relationship with religion. How these issues were sorted out, especially in large colonies such as Virginia and Massachusetts, has provided considerable raw material for constitutional argumentation, and it is worth a more detailed look.

In Virginia, Anglicanism (that is, the official Church of England) was the “Church by law established,” from the colonial period until the Revolutionary Era, as it was in England. Its property was provided by the government, and its priests were essentially civil servants. Originally, all taxpayers were required to pay for the support of the church, but first dissenters were exempted, and then the church taxes were completely abolished in 1779. A remaining question was whether Virginia would adopt a church-funding plan under which there would be a “general assessment” levied on all taxpayers, who could then specify which churches would receive their portions of those religious taxes. Such a plan was discussed off and on for a number of years and was then seriously debated in 1784–1785.

Prominent Virginians were on both sides of the issue, with George Washington and Patrick Henry favoring the church-funding plan and Jefferson and Madison leading the charge against it. One of more than a hundred petitions circulating during this vocal campaign contained an especially powerfully worded and uncompromising argument against any religious taxation; it was written by James Madison but circulated anonymously. Although similar petitions received more signatures, Madison’s document, titled, “A Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments,” became very popular with the Baptists, first in Virginia and later in New England, and it has become very influential in modern Supreme Court decisions as well. Calling the general assessment proposal an establishment of religion, Madison wrote at length about the unhappy consequences of having established churches in Europe and America. Ultimately, intense lobbying by the Baptists and Presbyterians, combined with Madison’s clever maneuver to elect the formidable Patrick Henry as governor, thus removing his influence from the legislature, meant that the general assessment bill never became law. The legislature then approved the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom that

had been drafted by Thomas Jefferson, another document to which the Supreme Court has turned for constitutional guidance.

Around the same time, the other southern states—Maryland, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina—generally followed suit, diminishing or eliminating taxes supporting the Church of England. There are a variety of reasons why the Revolutionary state governments would stop supporting the Church of England, not the least of which was that they were at war with England. Additionally, Baptists, Presbyterians, and other dissenters had been protesting the special legal favors that had been granted to the Anglican Church, and there were undoubtedly others, including Jefferson and Madison, who opposed religious taxation as a violation of the basic principle of liberty of conscience. Once formal church taxes were eliminated, the idea of a general assessment was raised in Georgia and Maryland, as it had been in Virginia. While Virginia spurned the concept, the new constitutions in Maryland and Georgia provided for the possibility of general assessments for the support of the churches, although these provisions were never actually implemented.

The political situation was quite different in New England, where the tax-supported Congregational churches were usually stalwart supporters of the patriot cause. When Massachusetts adopted a new constitution in 1780, that document required each town to provide for the support of a Protestant church. Baptists and other dissenters fought against this provision, but proponents of what New Englanders called the Standing Order (which is a complicated term, but generally it refers to the tax-supported churches) ultimately prevailed. This kind of system of local taxation for a Protestant church designated by a majority of the town’s voters continued in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut until the first part of the nineteenth century. Dissenting Protestants could usually obtain an exemption from the religious taxes, but the tiny Roman Catholic population was usually not given the same benefit.

In sum, then, as the colonies became states during the Revolutionary Era, church-state patterns were altered fairly dramatically in the South, where the politically unpopular Church of England had previously been favored; they were unchanged in Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island, where no churches were being publicly supported at the dawn of the Revolutionary Era; and they remained largely unchanged in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, and New Hampshire, where each town would

continue to tax its citizens for the benefit of a Protestant church. In places where the issue was especially controversial, leading citizens stood on both sides of the debate.

It is therefore impossible to say that Revolutionary Americans, as a whole, held any particular view on the question of whether governments should tax citizens to support churches. Many people believed that good government required a religious citizenry because religion—especially the Protestant religion—was essential to morality, and most of the New England states chose to provide tax support for churches as a way of promoting that religiously inspired morality. These taxes were, therefore, understood by their supporters as being no different from taxes for maintaining the roads or the judicial system—all were public services for the benefit of all citizens. At the same time, many other Revolutionary Americans believed that such taxes violated the principle of “liberty of conscience,” that they unfairly benefited the demographically dominant churches to the detriment of others, or that they were an improper use of governmental power. Others simply looked for any opportunity to pay smaller amounts of taxes.

Even while the issue of religious taxation was being vigorously debated in various locales, other links between government and religion—such as punishments for Sabbath breaking and blasphemy; restrictions on governmental offices to members of certain religious groups, and legislative and military chaplains; and official days of prayer—continued to be widespread throughout the states and were rarely controversial. To be sure, it is possible to find a few prominent dissenters, such as Roger Williams (the New Englander whose century-old writings on religious liberty were rediscovered during this era) and Baptist leader John Leland, arguing against such practices, but their positions were well outside the mainstream and were often not shared even by other dissenters. That religion (usually Protestantism) was an essential component of society was a widely held view; even Jefferson and Madison helped draft laws in Virginia that would punish Sabbath breakers, and leading Baptists, Presbyterians, and other dissenters strongly favored religious tests for public office. There is, therefore, a complicated backdrop for the church-state issues that would surface at the new nation’s constitutional ratifying conventions, in the First Congress, and thereafter.

The Constitution

Today’s church-state debates generally revolve around the establishment clause, but that provision did not appear in the

original Constitution. There was, however, a controversial church-state provision approved at the Constitutional Convention: Article VI’s prohibition of any religious test for public office (that is, elected and appointed governmental positions, such as legislators or judges). At that time, at least eleven of the thirteen states restricted public office to Protestants or Christians. Some of the antifederalists—that is, those who opposed the adoption of the Constitution or who wanted the Constitution amended in a variety of ways—focused on this lack of a religious test as one of the weaknesses of the original Constitution. They feared the possibility of the government being run by unscrupulous and ungodly men. Since many Americans believed that Protestantism, or at least Christianity, was the essential foundation of morality, they worried that extending public office to nonbelievers was a threat to public safety.

Ultimately, the antifederalists were unsuccessful in removing the “no religious test” clause from the Constitution, but some of them had other church-state concerns in mind. These antifederalists, many of whom belonged to the dissenting churches (and some were even ordained clergy in those churches) saw nothing in the Constitution that would guarantee that they would be free of the kinds of legal disabilities that they had suffered in the colonies. Not only had colonial dissenters been forced on many occasions to pay taxes to support other churches but, in addition, some dissenting ministers were not entitled to perform marriage ceremonies and had even been jailed for preaching without governmentally issued licenses. Rumors also circulated that the Presbyterian Church, which was the legally established Church of Scotland, might seek to become the new nation’s official church, or that the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists, who had been holding joint annual meetings, might combine in an effort to create a Calvinist establishment. (These were two of the largest denominations in America at that time, and both churches traced their theological roots to Reformation Era theologian John Calvin.)

Madison and other federalists (that is, those who defended the Constitution and urged its adoption, not necessarily the same “Federalists” who favored John Adams over Thomas Jefferson’s “Republicans” ten years later in the presidential election of 1800) generally made two counterarguments: first, that the Constitution did not contain any grant of power by the states to the federal government that would permit it to establish a religion; and second, that there were so many Protestant denominations throughout the states that it would be practically impossible for any one church to

obtain enough political power to emerge as the nation's official church.

The federalists' arguments were successful in some states but not in others. By the end of the ratifying conventions, four states had formally proposed amendments relating to the establishment of religion. Three of them—from Virginia, North Carolina, and New York—were almost identical and were modeled on a Virginia proposal that had been adopted at Patrick Henry's urging despite the efforts of Madison and his fellow federalists. The Virginia version read, "No particular religious sect or society ought to be favoured or established by law in preference of others." A few months later, the New Hampshire convention, for which there is no official record of the debate, came up with a very different wording: "Congress shall make no laws touching religion." These proposals joined more than two hundred other amendments suggested by the state conventions. The subject of amendments was expected to be considered by the U.S. Congress soon thereafter at its inaugural session.

Newly elected Congressman James Madison took responsibility for collecting the various proposals and putting together a draft Bill of Rights for Congress to review in 1789. Since Madison had originally opposed amending the Constitution, he did so with some reluctance; and the rest of Congress, which was heavily populated with federalists, was even less enthusiastic about postponing the business of setting up a working federal government to deal with amending the Constitution. The records from the First Congress are sparse and often unreliable, so our knowledge of what transpired is limited, but those records, together with letters written by the members, provide some insight into the amendment process.

For the most part, congressmen from both North and South described Madison's list of amendments with comments such as "froth," "anodyne to the discontented," and "milk and water"—today we might say "Mom and apple pie": noncontroversial principles (free speech, free press, jury trials, due process, and the like) that might calm the antifederalists without actually changing anything. Moreover, the language of the amendments was so broad that the provisions did not even require that there be any agreement among the members of Congress on what it meant, for example, to have a free press or to provide due process of law.

Madison's initial proposal for amendments on the subject of religion included the following: "The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship,

nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or on any pretext, infringed." (All quotations in this section are from *The Complete Bill of Rights*, edited by Neil H. Cogan.) Somewhat surprisingly, this language did not resemble any of the four proposals for an establishment clause; the non-establishment language most closely tracked a provision that had been introduced but not approved at the Maryland ratifying convention. All of the amendment proposals were referred to a select committee, which modified Madison's nonestablishment language by dropping the word *national*, which was a term the antifederalists disliked.

Two months after Madison's initial proposals, the Congress finally got around to debating the following language: "no religion shall be established by law, nor shall the equal rights of conscience be infringed." The discussion was desultory at best. In response to the classic federalist argument from Connecticut's Roger Sherman that the Congress had no "authority whatever delegated to them by the constitution to make religious establishments" and that, therefore, the amendment was unnecessary, Madison gave a half-hearted defense of the language: "Whether the words are necessary or not, he did not mean to say, but they had been required by some of the State Conventions, who seemed to entertain an opinion that under the [necessary and proper clause of the Constitution, Congress might be able] to make laws of such a nature as might infringe the rights of conscience, and establish a national religion. . . ."

There followed a very brief debate in which only one other member of Congress appeared to push for the adoption of the clauses; this was Representative Daniel Carroll of Maryland, who said, "As the rights of conscience are, in their nature, of peculiar delicacy, and will little bear the gentlest touch of governmental hand; and as many sects have concurred in opinion that they are not well secured under the present constitution, he said he was much in favor of adopting the words. . . ."

Meanwhile, two congressmen expressed concerns about the nonestablishment clause: Sylvester of New York "feared it might be thought to have a tendency to abolish religion altogether," and Huntington of Connecticut worried that it might be misconstrued. He agreed with Madison, who had said that "the meaning of the words [was] that Congress should not establish a religion, and enforce the legal observation of it by law, and not compel men to worship God in any manner contrary to their conscience." But he was afraid that it "might be taken in such latitude as to be extremely

hurtful to the cause of religion,” especially in that the federal courts might not be willing to enforce Connecticut’s approach to funding churches. In response, Madison urged a return to his original proposal, which would make clear that church-state arrangements in the states would not be affected: “if the word national was inserted before religion, it would satisfy the minds of honorable gentlemen. He believed that the people feared one sect might obtain a pre-eminence, or two combine together, and establish a religion to which they would compel others to conform. He thought if the word national was introduced, it would point the amendment directly to the object it was intended to prevent.”

New Hampshire’s Livermore then said that his understanding of the amendment was the same as Madison’s but, to avoid confusion, it might better be worded, “Congress shall make no laws touching religion, or infringing the rights of conscience,” which was virtually identical to his state’s proposed amendment. Without further discussion, the members of the House, officially acting as a “committee of the whole” (which meant that the House would later need to vote again when not meeting as a committee), passed Livermore’s amendment by a vote of 31–20.

When the House returned to this topic, Representative Ames of Massachusetts proposed an entirely different wording: “Congress shall make no law establishing religion, or to prevent the free exercise thereof, or to infringe the rights of conscience.” This version was adopted by the House of Representatives on August 20, 1789. There was no further recorded debate.

The records of the Senate are even less illuminating than those of the House’s brief discussions. It appears that the first version adopted by the Senate was “Congress shall make no law establishing one religious sect or society in preference of others,” which resembled the proposals from Virginia, North Carolina, and New York. After further unrecorded discussions, the Senate then settled on alternative language, “Congress shall make no law establishing articles of faith or a mode of worship, or prohibiting the free exercise of religion. . . .”

At this point, both House and Senate versions began with the phrase, “Congress shall make no law establishing,” and they both ended with a ban on laws “prohibiting the free exercise” of religion. (The “rights of conscience” clause was dropped along the way, perhaps because a similar point was addressed by the “free exercise” clause.) A House-Senate joint conference committee would need to resolve the

differences between the prohibition of laws establishing “religion” in the House’s language and “articles of faith or a mode of worship” in the Senate’s version.

The conference committee, which had to deal with all amendment issues, not just ones relating to religion, included Ellsworth and Sherman of Connecticut, both devoted supporters of that state’s Standing Order, as well as Virginia’s Madison, who had fought against any tax support for churches in Virginia, and Charles Carroll of Maryland, a Roman Catholic who had grown up under an Anglican establishment that had leveled burdensome taxes on Catholics; so it is difficult to say that the committee members necessarily leaned one way or another on the subject of government support for religion. There is no record of the conference committee’s discussions, although it appears that the House agreed to virtually all of the Senate’s preferences as long as the Senate would consent to certain House proposals, one of which was a new version of the establishment clause: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.” This language then became a part of the “Third Amendment” sent to the states for ratification. It became the First Amendment not because it was first in importance or priority to the framers but because the states failed to ratify the first two proposed amendments.

Before leaving the House and Senate debates on religion, it may be valuable to consider the amendment that Madison called “the most valuable on the whole list.” This proposal read, “No state shall infringe the equal rights of conscience, or the freedom of speech or of the press, nor of the right of trial by jury in criminal cases.” Unlike the establishment clause, which expressly limited “Congress,” Madison’s view was that “if there was any reason to restrain the Government of the United States from infringing upon these essential rights, it was equally necessary that they should be secured against the State Governments.” One congressman thought it was better to “leave the State Governments to themselves,” but, after a minor amendment, the language was adopted by the House. The Senate rejected this proposal without any discussion. It is interesting to speculate about what it would have meant to require the states to respect the rights of conscience or why Madison’s proposal omitted a nonestablishment clause in this provision. Unfortunately, there is essentially no record to help address these questions.

This ends the First Congress’s brief debate about the establishment clause, which has been identified by many commentators as the foundation of America’s national

devotion to the principle of the separation of church and state. And since there are very few recorded comments from the discussions about ratification in the state legislatures, these debates represent virtually the entire legislative record for the establishment clause.

What Did It Mean?

Scholars have vigorously debated what “an establishment of religion” meant to the framers of the Bill of Rights. One of the reasons for the scholarly debate is that the term “establishment of religion” was used in a variety of ways around the time the Bill of Rights was adopted. The documentary record (newspapers, laws, letters, and similar types of writings) shows that some people believed that an establishment of religion only existed when laws specified an officially recognized creed and liturgy. These people denied that the New England Standing Orders constituted “establishments.” Others were quite sure that New England’s religious taxes did, in fact, create an established religion. Similarly, in the South, some agreed with Madison that general assessments were religious establishments, while others believed that disestablishment had occurred when taxes specifically for the Anglican Church were eliminated.

Justice Black and many strict separationists have generally based their arguments on the positions taken by Madison and Jefferson in Virginia, especially since Madison had said in his “Memorial and Remonstrance” petition that the proposed general assessment would constitute an establishment. To argue that the views of Madison and Jefferson provide an authoritative understanding of the establishment clause, they may point to Madison’s role in proposing the Bill of Rights in the First Congress or perhaps to Virginia’s church-state actions during the Revolutionary Era as being representative of American thinking at the time. Doing so allows them to see Madison’s “Memorial and Remonstrance” as something of an expanded gloss on the establishment clause, including the view that even an ecumenical, nondiscriminatory tax in favor of religion, like the proposed Virginia general assessment, would violate the Constitution. Advocates of strict separation will sometimes also point to Madison and especially to Jefferson to emphasize the role of the establishment clause in creating a secular government inspired by Enlightenment philosophy, a concept that they believe is properly captured in Jefferson’s “wall of separation” phrase, which appeared in a letter Jefferson wrote during his presidency to a Baptist group in Connecticut.

Some strict separationists have also examined the use of the word *establishment* and have concluded that Americans at the time of the Bill of Rights conceived of the New England Standing Orders as constituting an establishment of multiple Protestant churches; therefore, they argue, the framers were familiar with the concept of nonpreferential aid to religion and must have wanted to prevent anything of that sort when they adopted the establishment clause. The fact that the Senate explicitly rejected language that sounded nonpreferential (following the proposals from Virginia, North Carolina, and New York, it only banned laws favoring “one religious sect . . . in preference of others”) is cited as further support for the strict separationist view.

Those favoring the enhanced-federalism interpretation concur that the town-based religious taxes in New England were establishments of religion because, in their view, one of the central purposes of the establishment clause was to protect those establishments from federal interference. Meanwhile some nonpreferentialists and others have looked at early-nineteenth-century dictionaries and other sources (usually ministers of the Standing Order and other proponents of tax support for religion) and have found that the term *establishment* was most commonly used to describe a single church favored above all others, as in the case of the Church of England. Based on this evidence, they conclude that no “establishment” of religion existed in America at the time of the Constitution. Other nonpreferentialists take a different approach: they admit that the New England states “established” the demographically dominant Congregationalism but that there was no such thing as nonpreferential aid to churches at that time (and, therefore, the establishment clause could not have been meant to ban nonpreferential support for religion). Finally, some nonpreferentialists have latched onto the word *an*, arguing that the First Amendment could have forbidden a broad concept—“the” establishment of religion—but chose instead only to ban “an” establishment, that is, a single established church.

In summary, people at the time of the framing of the Constitution appeared to use the phrase “establishment of religion” in a variety of sometimes inconsistent ways. There seems to be no conclusive way to determine what definition the First Congress had in mind when it adopted the First Amendment, nor is it crystal clear how the American public might have understood the language when it was ratified by the states. This situation has allowed the advocates for various interpretations to pick and choose among

various pieces of the documentary record to support their preferred approaches to understanding the establishment clause.

Church-State Issues following Adoption of the First Amendment

The States

While the religion clauses of the Bill of Rights were largely noncontroversial, church-state issues arising in the various states would hardly be called “milk and water.” In the South, where the states had severed financial ties with the Church of England, there were lively disputes over the ownership of state lands previously owned by (or held for the benefit of) the Anglican Church and over the extent to which churches would be entitled to become “incorporated” entities. By becoming incorporated, the churches would receive a charter from the government that would grant them the ability to sue recalcitrant members to collect pledged contributions and to own property separately from the members or a member-elected board of trustees. Incorporation would therefore create an additional amount of institutional stability, as well as provide ministers with some degree of insulation from the members’ whims. These ongoing church-state disputes in the South sometimes involved the former dissenters’ trying to make sure that the Anglican Church would not work its way back into a favored position. But in other cases, even the dissenters were divided. As their numbers grew and as their members became more influential in their communities, some Baptists and Presbyterians sought to establish colleges, to promote an educated ministry, and to obtain the legal benefits of incorporation. Meanwhile, some of their fellow Baptists and Presbyterians campaigned against both an educated clergy and any governmental involvement in churches at all. Over the course of the nineteenth century, church incorporation became an increasingly well-accepted practice, but it was a heated issue in numerous locales, and it remained a controversial topic in Virginia as late as the 1850s.

In New England, the disputes were especially animated over the continuation of the tax-supported Standing Orders in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont. The key elements of the debates between the supporters of the Standing Order and the Baptists and other dissenters who believed that churches should only be supported by voluntary contributions were summarized in an opinion by church-state traditionalist Theophilus Parsons in an 1810 Massachusetts case, *Barnes v. Falmouth*.

The dissenting position had been clearly and frequently articulated by Baptist spokesman Isaac Backus, and Judge Parsons made a point of responding to each of the three major objections to the Massachusetts Standing Order: “that when a man disapproves of any religion . . . to compel him by law to contribute [to it] is an infraction of his liberty of conscience, that to compel a man to pay for public religious instruction [from which he derives no benefit] is unreasonable and intolerant; and that it is antichristian for any state to avail itself of the precepts and maxims of Christianity . . . because the founder of it has declared that his kingdom is not of this world.”

Parsons commented on each argument in turn. The first, he said, “mistake[s] a man’s conscience for his money. . . . The great error lies in not distinguishing between liberty of conscience in religious opinion and worship, and the right of appropriating money by the state.” As to the second objection, he argued that “every man derives the most important benefits” from a religious instruction that is designed to “teach and to enforce . . . a system of correct morals among the people.” Finally, since “the Founder . . . did not intend to erect a temporal dominion,” Judge Parsons asserted that “it is one great excellence of this religion, that, not pretending to worldly pomp and power, it is calculated . . . to meliorate the conduct and condition of man, under any form of civil government.” Parsons’s efforts to defend the Massachusetts Standing Order proved to be persuasive; the state’s system of religious taxation was perhaps the most solidly entrenched in New England, and it would survive for a generation after Judge Parsons’s opinion.

To different degrees in each of the New England states, many factors—from immigration and rapidly changing religious demographics that favored the dissenters to theological disputes within Congregationalism and the beginnings of what would become party politics—made the Standing Order much less politically stable in the nineteenth century than it had been in the Revolutionary Era. Not only were the dissenting denominations growing faster than the Congregational churches, which were usually the tax-supported churches, but the Congregationalists themselves were increasingly divided by politics and, as the nineteenth century advanced, riven by a battle between the more traditional Trinitarians and the increasingly powerful but less orthodox Unitarians. Vermont became the first to abandon compulsory religious taxation (in 1807), followed by Connecticut and New Hampshire about a decade later, with Massachusetts waiting until 1833.

The debates in Vermont and New Hampshire were less heated than in Connecticut and Massachusetts, where the Standing Order was more firmly ensconced. To some extent in Connecticut, and even more so two decades later in Massachusetts, the Trinitarian Congregationalists, who had previously dominated the Standing Order and who had been the most zealous in defending the tax benefits they were receiving, found that they were increasingly losing ground—and the control of their churches—to the Unitarians. As a result, they naturally became less enthusiastic about tax monies going to their former churches. Ultimately, religious taxation ended in New England in 1833, and as was the case every time the religious taxation issue was raised throughout the new nation, prominent and distinguished politicians and clergymen spoke up for each side. As was the case in Virginia during the Revolutionary Era, the rising political power of the Baptists and other dissenting denominations was a significant factor in the movement to abolish religious taxes (and once again the dissenters frequently cited Madison's "Memorial and Remonstrance" as a bold statement in their favor).

The end of compulsory church taxation did not sever all ties between religion and government in any of these states. Many retained religious tests for public office (New Hampshire's provision limiting office holding to Protestants continued until late in the nineteenth century despite numerous challenges in the legislature); laws against blasphemy stayed on the books (although prosecutions died out); legislatures typically had official chaplains; and governors continued to declare days of prayer, fasting, or thanksgiving. The abolition of religious taxes did not necessarily lead to the creation of secular states but was a reflection of increasingly complex political and theological dynamics (almost entirely within Protestantism), such that a majority of voters would no longer support the traditional religious taxation system. Those who may have favored a genuinely secular state (a fairly small number in New England in the first part of the nineteenth century) undoubtedly supported this outcome, but the vastly larger number of Baptists and other dissenters generally saw the end of such taxes instead as a positive step towards creating a Christian commonwealth on what they believed were genuinely biblical principles.

The Federal Government

In the new nation's first few decades, the federal government periodically addressed church-state issues, and many modern scholars have looked at these events for help in

determining what the establishment clause might have meant at that time.

The very first act of the Congress following its approval of the Bill of Rights was to recommend that President Washington declare a day of thanksgiving to thank God for the blessings of the Bill of Rights. Only one congressman is recorded as opposing the concept on establishment clause grounds, and the resolution was adopted. Ever since, almost every president has declared such days (with Jefferson and Jackson being the notable exceptions).

For a significant part of the early national period, church services were routinely held on Sundays in the halls of Congress and other governmental buildings. The First Congress also appointed official chaplains (a Presbyterian minister in the House and an Episcopal priest in the Senate), another practice that has endured throughout essentially all of American history. Nonpreferentialists point to James Madison's service on the House Chaplaincy Committee as evidence that he approved of some links between church and state, while strict separationists cite one of his unpublished writings that appears to have been written much later in his life (called by scholars the "Detached Memoranda"), in which he argued against both chaplains and national days of prayer.

One event that generated little, if any, notice in the early national period has become extremely influential ever since the *Everson* case: Jefferson's "wall of separation" letter to the Baptist association of Danbury, Connecticut, in 1802. The Baptists were fighting against that state's Standing Order, and they wrote to President Jefferson seeking his support. Upon receiving this letter, he told his advisers that his reply would give him the chance he had been seeking to say why he did not declare days of prayer, fasting, or thanksgiving, as Washington and Adams had done. But his advisers talked Jefferson out of doing so because such practices were so popular in New England, even among many of Jefferson's supporters. So he took that argument out of his draft letter, leaving in the more general statement, "I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people" in adopting the religion clauses of the First Amendment, "thus building a wall of separation between Church and State" (quoted in *Church and State in American History*, edited by John F. Wilson and Donald L. Drakeman). This statement has become the rallying cry of the strict separationists, and it has been cited in more than two dozen Supreme Court cases. At the time, however, the Danbury Baptists appear to have disregarded Jefferson's letter, perhaps because the concept of

the “separation of church and state” was perceived as a quite radical position at the dawn of the nineteenth century. It appears that Jefferson’s letter only came to light decades later when it was included in a published compilation of his papers.

The church incorporation issue arose in the federal government as it did in a variety of states. Churches set up in the federal District of Columbia turned to Congress to approve their charters as incorporated entities. Although Jefferson, as president, signed a law incorporating a Presbyterian church in Georgetown in 1806, five years later Madison vetoed a similar law passed by the Congress on behalf of an Episcopal church on the grounds that it did not respect the appropriate distinction between government and religion. The Episcopal Church had to wait until 1893 for Congress to act again on its incorporation request; in between, however, numerous religious organizations were incorporated in the District of Columbia.

Two more areas of church–state interaction at the federal level bear mentioning, even though they have been cited by modern scholars less frequently than the ones mentioned above: federal funding for Christian missions and the church–state controversy over Sunday mail delivery.

President Washington’s administration continued a practice adopted by the Continental Congress and the colonial governments of providing funds to Christian missionaries for their work with Native Americans. Presidents and Congresses throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries appropriated considerable sums that were awarded to a range of religious groups to educate and Christianize Native Americans. These funds paid for the building of religious schools, the salaries of the missionaries, and many other related expenses. Not until late in the nineteenth century were the potential constitutional issues surrounding this practice (such as whether it might constitute an improper “establishment of religion”) raised to a significant level, and the practice did not end until the beginning of the twentieth century.

Despite the lack of church–state debate over the direct funding of religious missions, there was a very well-publicized ongoing battle over the issue of whether a proposal to stop mail delivery on Sunday would violate the Constitution. When Congress passed a law in 1810 requiring mail delivery seven days a week, a coalition of Protestant groups protested this failure to observe the Sabbath and lobbied Congress to reverse its decision. The controversy became especially heated in 1829 and 1830, when many thousands

of Americans signed petitions asking Congress to eliminate the Sunday mails. These petitions were part of an organized effort coordinated by some of the nation’s leading Protestant churches. Their principal argument was that America, as a Christian nation, was obliged to obey the Ten Commandments’ injunction to respect the Sabbath.

The Senate and House committees responsible for the mails were chaired in successive years by the same man, Richard Johnson of Kentucky, who used the opportunity to release very strongly worded reports in support of the Sunday mails and expressing deep concerns about the pernicious influence of religion (and especially clergymen) on the actions of government. These reports became very popular in Jacksonian America (and helped propel Johnson into the vice presidency), but over time, those who sought the elimination of the Sunday mails ultimately prevailed.

In summary, influential interpretations of the establishment clause in the early republic ranged widely from the sharply anticlerical Sunday mails congressional reports to frequent assertions, as in the federal Northwest Ordinance, that “religion, education and morality” are essential components of good government. Even within one presidential administration, two fundamentally different views are evident. For example, Madison put forth a very strict interpretation of the establishment clause when he vetoed the incorporation of a church; meanwhile, one of Madison’s appointees to the Supreme Court, Harvard law professor Joseph Story, issued the highly influential *Commentaries on the Constitution* in 1833, proclaiming that “the general, if not universal sentiment in America” at the time of the Constitution was “that Christianity ought to receive encouragement from the State so far as was not incompatible with the private rights of conscience and the freedom of religious worship” (quoted in Wilson and Drakeman, *Church and State in American History*). These differing views have endured ever since, with the strict separationists following in Madison’s footsteps and the nonpreferentialists opting instead for Story’s outlook.

Conclusion

Some scholars have located the foundation for modern America’s approach to church–state issues in the founding era and the early national period described in this article. To be sure, the establishment clause prohibited Congress from making laws “respecting an establishment of religion,” yet the meaning of those words has been the subject of vigorous debate. And some scholars have countered that the

now-familiar concept of the separation of church and state actually developed significantly later as waves of Roman Catholic immigrants in the nineteenth century brought an entirely new dynamic to the largely intra-Protestantism church-state debates of the founding era. Those heated and sometimes violent nineteenth-century disputes between Protestants and Catholics centered on the Protestant prayers and Bible reading mandated by many public schools and the related issue of whether there should be state funding for a parallel system of parochial schools established by Catholics. These debates continued through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and while the *Everson* case is best known for the Supreme Court's commitment to a strict separationist originalism as the best way to understand the establishment clause, the main issue in that case was whether a state could reimburse parents for bus transportation to the Roman Catholic parochial schools. The *Everson* Court narrowly upheld the reimbursement plan—largely on the grounds that it could be seen as being similar to providing fire and police protection for church buildings—but the opinion's strict separationist legacy has led the Court to strike down public school prayers, many forms of aid to religious schools, and a variety of other state and federal programs supporting religion. This interpretation of the establishment clause, based as it was on the history of the Constitution's framing, has made the study of the relationship of religion and government in the Revolutionary and early national eras highly controversial, frequently politicized, and, as a result, extremely interesting and worthy of further study.

See also *American Revolution; Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Canada: Church and State; Constitution; Deism; Enlightenment; Evangelicals: Colonial America; Establishment, Religious; Freedom, Religious; Politics: Colonial Era; Supreme Court.*

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Churches of Christ

Churches of Christ represent a distinct American heritage that originated, along with the Disciples of Christ, in the Stone-Campbell Movement (also known as the “Restoration Movement”) in the early nineteenth century. They exist in many parts of the country, but their numbers are

strongest in “Bible Belt” states such as Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas; like many other Christian fellowships, the majority of their members can now be found in Africa, India, and Latin America. This tradition should not be confused with the United Church of Christ or with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Historical Development

As suggested by its name, the Stone-Campbell Movement was marked by dual leadership. The first leader was Barton W. Stone (1772–1844), who played a pivotal role in the Cane Ridge Revival (near Lexington, Kentucky) in 1801. Stone began his ministerial career as a Presbyterian; disenchanted, however, with creedal and synodical obligations, he withdrew in 1804. His anticonfessional, anticlerical followers embraced the generic label of “Christians,” and they sought to be governed by scripture and united by holiness. While Stone’s movement was still quite new, a similar venture appeared in southwestern Pennsylvania, led by Thomas Campbell (1763–1854) and his son, Alexander (1788–1866). They both departed the Presbyterian fold in 1809, and Alexander ultimately played the leading role in his own anticonfessional, anticlerical enterprise. He took a rationalistic approach, treating the Bible (especially the New Testament) as a formula for Christian identity and unity. In an effort to identify with the earliest Christians, his partisans were frequently known as “Disciples.”

Alexander Campbell was no revivalist, and Barton Stone was not inclined toward rational formulas. However, despite their differences on these (and other) issues, they joined forces in the winter of 1831–1832, and on the strength of this tenuous unity, their influence spread throughout the Midwest and into the South. Their followers, frequently meeting as “Christians,” “Disciples,” or “Churches of Christ,” labored to strip away the dross of tradition and to “restore” the unity and simplicity of first-century Christianity. Opposed to clerical oversight and creedal definition, this remarkable movement became a diverse and decentralized body during the 1840s and 1850s.

Churches of Christ were ultimately recognized as a separate body in the 1906 Census, but their isolation from the Disciples was realized, de facto, during the final decades of the 1800s. These parties shared common convictions about congregational autonomy, the weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper, and the salvific role of adult baptism; nonetheless, they became estranged on predominantly sectional lines, and their earliest tensions were manifested during the

Civil War and Reconstruction eras. Poorer, rural, southern churches were typically opposed to the liturgical use of musical instruments, and this proved to be a leading source of contention. Moreover, in contrast to their wealthier, relatively urban, northern counterparts, the southern churches refused to support the formation of a centrally governed missionary society.

It was not a consistent rule, but the nomenclature of the “Church of Christ” was increasingly applied to the southern churches, and the northern churches were widely known as “Disciples.” When the Census was published in 1906, the Churches of Christ had 159,658 members, a figure that was only one-sixth of the Disciples’ total. The increasingly liberal Disciples, however, soon suffered another division. Over the course of the next thirty years, a confederation of conservative “Christian Churches” withdrew from their midst and formed a separate fellowship. Aside from their use of musical instruments, these churches strongly resembled the Churches of Christ, and many adopted the “Church of Christ” name; nonetheless, they remained estranged from their noninstrumental counterparts.

Lacking any official corporate structure, the Churches of Christ were loosely organized around the editors of periodical publications. Among them were two primary papers: one was the Texas-based *Firm Foundation*, established by Austin McGary (1846–1928) in 1884; another, from Nashville, was the postwar *Gospel Advocate*, established in 1866 and edited by David Lipscomb (1831–1917). Meanwhile, the Disciples were largely defined by the *Christian Standard*, which was edited by Isaac Errett (1820–1888) from 1866 till 1888. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Churches of Christ were also identified by a growing collection of colleges, and some have survived to the present day. The Nashville Bible School (now known as Lipscomb University) began in 1891, and Abilene (Texas) Christian College was founded in 1906. Two others, Harding College (in Searcy, Arkansas) and Freed-Hardeman College (in Henderson, Tennessee), were founded in 1919.

Until his death, Lipscomb proved to be the most significant representative of the southern movement, and the official dissolution of 1906 was published on the strength of his reluctant testimony. In the region around Nashville (where Lipscomb’s influence was strongest), the Churches of Christ tended to be an economically marginalized, countercultural sect, eschewing earthly political systems and eagerly anticipating the premillennial return of Christ. By the end of two world wars, however, the pressures of

patriotism had become too great, and the movement was driven toward the mainstream of American Protestant culture. They retained their distinctive opposition to instruments, and they held aloof from the broader Protestant spectrum; nonetheless, in sociological terms, the Churches of Christ had become, by the 1950s, a conservative denomination. Like their fundamentalist and evangelical neighbors, they were deeply concerned about a host of predictable issues, such as Darwinian evolution, the “social gospel,” and the menace of communism.

The 1950s and 1960s were particularly heady days for the Churches of Christ. They enjoyed an explosion in numbers, and by 1970 they crested near the two million mark. To answer the call for additional ministers, new preaching schools were established: one of these, the Sunset School of Preaching, began in Lubbock, Texas, in 1961; another, the White’s Ferry Road School of Preaching, was founded in West Monroe, Louisiana, in 1964. Graduate programs were added to the religious curriculum at George Pepperdine College (1944, in Los Angeles), Abilene (1953), and Harding (1954, in Memphis). Through the generous donations of numerous churches, the Herald of Truth radio ministries were launched in 1952, and television programs were added the following year. Moreover, missionaries flowed from these new institutions, and a newspaper called *The Christian Chronicle* (founded in 1943) kept the churches informed about the projects that were being completed.

The prosperity of the twentieth century, however, did not guarantee unity among the Churches of Christ. For instance, there was a small coterie who challenged the biblical authorization for Sunday schools: these “nonclass” churches, mostly in Texas, withdrew to form their own fellowship during the 1920s, and they have maintained a separate fellowship ever since. Greater impact, however, was delivered by the “noninstitutional” protest, which reacted against the growing influence of the colleges and the Herald of Truth. Recalling the nineteenth-century arguments against missionary societies, this movement rejected parachurch institutions where religious influence could be centralized. In this dispute, the noninstitutional perspective was forcefully argued by Foy E. Wallace Jr. (1896–1979), who edited various periodicals such as the *Bible Banner* (1938–1949). For their part, the mainstream churches defended their colleges and radio programs; nonetheless, noninstitutional churches still constitute nearly 10 percent of the membership in Churches of Christ.

As the Churches of Christ moved into the second half of the twentieth century, their growth began to stagnate. Many churches sought to distance themselves from a notoriously disputatious heritage, and they began to adopt new points of emphasis. For example, *Mission* magazine appeared from 1967 to 1987, dealing frankly with cultural topics such as racial prejudice, warfare, and feminism. During the 1980s, another movement radiated from the Boston Church of Christ, placing radical emphasis on evangelism and discipleship. Mainstream congregations rejected this impulse, and despite its numerical success it was judged to be manipulative and “cultish.” Eventually organized as the International Churches of Christ, this movement became a separate fellowship in 1993.

Predictably, strong, reactionary forces have tried to preserve the “sound doctrines” of the previous generation. In their quest to distinguish themselves from mainstream American Christianity, these churches have been represented by journals such as *The Spiritual Sword*, which began in 1969, and by their own lectureship programs. They rigorously maintain an exclusivist, noninstrumental platform, and they continue to wield considerable influence.

To a significant degree, however, the Churches of Christ have moved away from their prior exclusivism, and many have sought to reverse their historical division with the instrumental Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. This particular quest for unity was stimulated, in large part, by a series of annual “Restoration Forums” that began in Joplin, Missouri, in 1984. Other churches, meanwhile, have reached beyond the borders of the original Stone–Campbell Movement and have embraced a broad range of evangelical associations. Some congregations, inspired by nondenominational “community church” models, have labored to erase entirely the distinctive marks of their tradition. As they entered the twenty-first century, the Churches of Christ had become a rich but fractured heritage, their identity hanging heavily on their colleges and on the continued reportage of *The Christian Chronicle*.

Distinctive Beliefs and Practices

Despite their debt to Barton Stone, the Churches of Christ have been primarily marked by the early legacy of Alexander Campbell. In his later years, Campbell softened his tone and became relatively ecumenical; Churches of Christ, however, have favored his original mission to overturn denominational creeds and to restore the putative purity of primitive Christianity. In many Churches of Christ, the earliest

centuries of Catholic development have been rejected as a time of “apostasy,” and the reformations of Martin Luther and John Calvin have been faintly praised as a partial move in a first-century direction. Hence, in this view, the restorative work of Campbell and Stone must be viewed as a decisive moment on the timeline of church history. Mainstream Churches of Christ have historically (but not unanimously) viewed themselves as the complete restoration of the first-century church; according to the cornerstones on many of their buildings, they were “established in A.D. 33.” In keeping with these convictions, they have typically refused to classify themselves as a “denomination,” believing that they have transcended that sort of category.

In 1816, Campbell delivered a “Sermon on the Law,” where he contrasted the Mosaic and Christian “dispensations.” He affirmed the abiding value of the Old Testament, but he rejected its normative authority for the restoration he envisioned. It was, he argued, the manifestation of an earlier dispensation, and its jurisdiction had been “fulfilled.” This disposition toward the Old Testament, historically, has become a trademark for the Churches of Christ and has mitigated most of the narratives and teachings that transpired before the death of Jesus. Significantly, this attitude has led to a disproportionate focus on the book of Acts and the Pauline epistles, with very little emphasis on the gospels.

Churches of Christ have traditionally used this canon-within-a-canon to identify a coherent biblical “pattern.” This pattern can be discerned, first of all, with a tripartite hermeneutic of “direct commands,” “approved precedents,” and “necessary inferences.” In many Churches of Christ, this approach has become the target of ridicule; nonetheless, it has been a distinctive interpretive tool through the years, and it still has vigorous defenders. The “direct commands” are drawn from biblical passages where imperative language is used: Acts 2:38, for instance, is frequently cited as an obligatory commandment from Peter, who said “repent and be baptized, every one of you.” Meanwhile, the “approved precedents” are based on reconstructions of first-century practice: Acts 20:7, therefore, sets a normative example for every believer when Paul breaks bread “on the first day of the week.” Other precedents, such as head coverings for women (1 Corinthians 11:3–16), can be explained by cultural considerations and are usually overruled. Third, the “necessary inferences” can be devised with simple syllogisms: Acts 2:38, for example, links baptism with repentance, which logically implies mature reflection and logically disqualifies infant baptism.

This hermeneutical strategy undergirds a nexus of distinctive practices in the Churches of Christ, beginning with baptism. In keeping with a literal translation of the Greek word *baptizo* (and the presumed example of the first-century church), it has been important for Churches of Christ to define baptism as a full bodily immersion. More distinctively, however, the purpose of baptism has been carefully defined in sacramental terms, as the means for receiving grace and forgiveness. It is not understood to be a meritorious act; on the contrary, it represents an essential, visible, and salvific moment. Once again, Acts 2:38 has been determinative here, along with Acts 22:16, 1 Peter 3:21, and numerous other passages. Campbell publicly articulated this understanding in 1823, and it became an immediate, decisive, and ongoing point of departure for his movement. Though it is scarcely unique to “Campbellites,” this definition of baptism has been central to the historical rivalry between Baptists and Churches of Christ and accounts for its distinctive priority among Campbell’s heirs.

From the very beginning, the Churches of Christ have also been marked by fierce assertions of congregational autonomy. Insisting that first-century churches were individually governed by a plurality of elders (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9), Campbell and Stone rejected the concept of monarchical bishops and authoritative councils. In this respect, their position was consistent with their Puritan forebears, but, with appeals to first-century practice, their own opinions pressed even further: most famously, Stone rejected the validity of the Springfield Presbytery in 1804, arguing that it should “die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large.” For his part, Campbell was affiliated with Baptist “associations” during the 1820s, but he also judged them, eventually, to be coercive and unscriptural. As noted above, this persuasion has led the Churches of Christ to be suspicious of any manifestation of centralized authority, including missionary societies, colleges, and radio programs. On the other hand, it has also allowed for remarkable freedom of expression and is largely responsible for the bewildering diversity that presently characterizes the movement.

Most visibly (and perhaps most famously), the Churches of Christ are known for their refusal to use musical instruments during worship assemblies. This issue did not originate with Campbell or Stone and has been explained, above, as a sectional affair. Among Churches of Christ, however, it has been consistently treated as a litmus test for obedience; for many, instruments are unauthorized by the New Testament because they cannot be justified by a direct command,

an approved precedent, or a necessary inference. Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 are decisive, here, because they command “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” without any mention of instruments. As will be noted below, this issue continues to provoke considerable discussion, and many churches have abandoned the traditional position. Nonetheless, it is rare, even in those “progressive” churches, to find instruments used on a regular basis.

Internal Issues

To some degree, the traditional threefold hermeneutic can be traced to Thomas Campbell’s *Declaration and Address* (1809), where he spoke of “express terms,” “approved precedent,” and “inferences.” This approach to the Bible revealed rationalistic assumptions that he and his son, Alexander, had inherited from the Enlightenment. Similarly, in their quest for a coherent, authoritative, first-century pattern, the Churches of Christ have imbibed a modern, rationalistic mindset. They have been optimistic about the clear-cut authority of scriptural data, and they have considered themselves to be exempt from the foibles of human interpretation. Moving far beyond the Campbells, this certitude has led the Churches of Christ to refuse “fellowship” with churches who do not accept the ostensibly “clear” teachings of scripture. They have been reluctant, consequently, to worship or fraternize with Christians from other denominational affiliations.

With the advent of a “postmodern” era, however, these hermeneutical assumptions are being called into question, along with their exclusivist consequences. Some have concluded that the traditional, pattern-seeking strategy has inadvertently neglected crucial biblical themes, leaving Churches of Christ in a theologically shallow position. This concern was expressed as early as 1965 by Thomas H. Olbricht (1929–), who dared to suggest that Campbell had led the movement in a mistaken hermeneutical direction. Moreover, subsequent critics have observed that the genre of biblical literature does not lend itself to systematic, “patternistic” manipulation; Pauline letters, for instance, must be treated according to their epistolary genre with special attention to their occasional character. These suggestions have received a predictably mixed reaction, as traditionalists rightly recognize the threat that a “new hermeneutic” would pose to numerous cherished doctrines. The most celebrated response, *Behold the Pattern*, was published by Goebel Music (1934–) in 1991 and

stoutly defended the traditional hermeneutic. In Music’s presentation, he upheld the categories of command, precedent, and inference, and he denounced the critics of the pattern-seeking approach.

Normally, the Churches of Christ have reserved public leadership roles for their male members only. This practice has been predictably called into question, as the broader culture presses in egalitarian directions; nonetheless, there are very few exceptions to this rule, and the traditional hermeneutic, despite its detractors, has proven to be a sturdy constraint. With its customary emphasis on Pauline epistles, it highlights biblical passages such as 1 Corinthians 14:34 and 1 Timothy 2:11–15, where feminine roles would seem to be clearly and sharply curtailed. Egalitarian advocates, with a different hermeneutical approach, have argued that gender equality is an essential feature of the Kingdom of God, and they have cited passages such as Galatians 3:28, where Paul asserts that there is “no male or female” in the fellowship of Christ. Many congregations are revising their views on this subject, but the hermeneutical stakes are significant and the issue has been remarkably contentious.

The Churches of Christ have also been challenged by questions of ecumenicity; as mentioned above, the movement holds diverse opinions about its associations with other fellowships. For those who believe that the Churches of Christ have restored a biblical, first-century pattern, it has been difficult to avoid an exclusivist stance, and this attitude was typical for most of the twentieth century. Once again, however, a traditional position has been modified by hermeneutical considerations, and the Churches of Christ have become increasingly tolerant toward other Christian traditions. This non-denominational impulse was significantly endorsed by Rubel Shelly (1945–), whose book, *I Just Want to Be a Christian*, was published in 1984. More recently, the devotional writings of Max Lucado (1955–) have been featured on the *New York Times* best seller list, and he has provided a public, visible example of nondenominational fraternization. Shelly and Lucado have been strongly rebuked by traditional elements in the Churches of Christ, but those reactionary voices are reaching a shrinking audience.

Though the Churches of Christ are diverse, that diversity has significant limits. These churches remain stridently conservative, and they continue, with near unanimity, to make common assumptions about biblical inerrancy, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, and homosexuality. On these

and other issues, there has been no substantial activism toward a liberal point of view.

Interpretive Theories

One of the earliest chroniclers of the Churches of Christ has been Earl I. West, who began, in 1949, to publish a four-volume series entitled *The Search for the Ancient Order*, which describes the history of the Stone–Campbell Movement from its beginnings until 1950. West interprets the movement as the successful restoration of the first-century church, and he regards the Churches of Christ to be the purest remnant of that original quest. For West, therefore, it is a story about truth and error, and his interpretation is clearly premised on traditional hermeneutical assumptions.

Douglas Foster takes an entirely different approach in his 1994 publication, *Will the Cycle Be Unbroken?* He measures the Churches of Christ against the theories of various sociologists, including the “sect-to-church” typology of Ernst Troeltsch. In Foster’s assessment, the Churches of Christ have reached a predictable and respectable stage in the life cycle of a religious movement, and he warns about the likelihood of future fragmentation. Foster insists, however, that the prospect is still theoretical and can yet be resisted; indeed, for him, the central genius of the Stone–Campbell Movement was not its quest for restoration, but its quest for unity. By recovering that priority, Foster says, the Churches of Christ can defy the sociological odds and still retain their identity.

By contrast, David Edwin Harrell Jr. interprets the story of the Churches of Christ as a series of divisions. In his 1973 publication, *The Social Sources of Division in the Disciples of Christ, 1865–1900*, he explains the schism of 1906 in terms of sectional loyalties. He observes that the Churches of Christ took root in poor, rural, southern locations and had little success in the eastern parts of the country. In addition, he has written *The Churches of Christ in the 20th Century* (2000), where he describes the tensions provoked by deeply embedded loyalties and rancorous power struggles. Unlike Foster, Harrell concludes that the mainstream is already splintered in reality, if not in writing, between two evenly matched camps of “progressives” and “conservatives.” He does speculate about the eventual “winners” and “losers,” but he does not envision a peaceful solution.

The most comprehensive interpretation of the Churches of Christ has come from Richard Hughes, who acknowledges the movement’s divisions but proposes a different set

of concerns. In his 1996 book, *Reviving the Ancient Faith*, Hughes contrasts the legalistic rationalism of Alexander Campbell with the countercultural, premillennial pietism of Barton Stone. He believes that Campbell overshadowed Stone from the start, and he traces the “unequal fusion” of their influence throughout the 1800s. As mentioned above, the Churches of Christ were driven toward the patriotic mainstream of American Protestantism during the two world wars; in the judgment of Hughes, this constituted a tragic renunciation of the “Stoneite side” of their heritage and was a cultural compromise that neutered their Christian testimony. Hughes revisits this theme in a 2002 publication, *Reclaiming a Heritage*, where he laments the movement’s evangelical assimilation and urges the Churches of Christ to reconsider the choice they have made.

Critical Assessment

The Churches of Christ have inherited a vibrant heritage and a unique historical narrative, but their distinctive doctrinal identity seems to hang on a time-bound hermeneutical scaffold. As the modernist era fades into memory, it will be increasingly difficult for these churches to appeal to the clear-cut authority of biblical patterns. Traditionalists will surely continue to protect the old paths, and they will not be dissuaded by the disapproval of the majority. Their mission, however, will be increasingly difficult, and their ranks seem destined to dwindle.

Progressives will continue to press for hermeneutical changes, but it will be difficult to do this without a change of affiliation. For instance, many congregations have already erased the “Church of Christ” label from their stationery, and some are frankly indifferent about the historic ties they might sever. If they care about the past, they might salvage an ecumenical vision from the earliest days of the movement (as Foster has hoped), or they might recover the countercultural remnants of Barton Stone’s legacy (as Hughes has advised). These kinds of options, however, will require a serious commitment to the heritage, and this does not seem likely to happen. The path of least resistance will surely lead the progressive churches into generic evangelicalism.

The most interesting variable, here, could come from other parts of the world. As noted above, the Churches of Christ have a global presence, and most of their churches are now located in Africa, India, and Latin America. In these contexts, many people are deeply impressed with a modern

approach to the Bible, and they are happy to search for patterns. Only time can tell what role they will play, as they continue to grow. The picture looks complicated, and it is impossible to make confident assertions about the future of the Churches of Christ.

See also *Bible: Interpretation of; Denominationalism; Disciples of Christ; Missions: Foreign; Stone-Campbell Movement; Women: Ordination of.*

Keith Huey

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City Missions

A city missions movement developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that was an essentially Christian response to the widespread social problems that grew out of the industrial revolution.

Nineteenth-Century Roots

The industrial revolution of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought economic opportunity and prosperity to unprecedented numbers of immigrants and Americans, but it was accompanied by widespread social problems such as unemployment, homelessness, crime, substance abuse, and destruction of families. In an era when governments offered little relief, voluntary associations and religious institutions responded to the cries of the urban poor. City missions, or rescue missions as they were often labeled, became the spearhead of a reform movement that

offered immediate relief and short-term solutions to complex urban industrial problems.

There was no single city mission that appeared first, proved effective, and then became the prototype mission to be duplicated throughout urban America. On the contrary, small storefront missions appeared almost simultaneously in every industrial city across the nation as soon as space could be secured in areas frequented by the people who lived and struggled to survive on the lowest rungs of the social ladder.

Those outposts designed to attract the least fortunate of the poor offered words of comfort, meals, cups of hot coffee or tea, and a warm and dry place to rest away from inclement weather and people who preyed on the weak. Typically these missions cared for the immediate needs of hurting people. Some missions offered shelter overnight. But for the most part these were short-term care facilities that offered little in the way of long-term solutions to systemic social problems. In brief, these rescue missions were inaugurated and sustained by Christians who ministered in marked contrast to Christians in the Social Gospel movement, who were more keen on changing the social, political, and economic systems that they believed caused the problems.

Evangelical Beginnings

The inspiration behind the earliest city missions was decidedly evangelical. Indeed, the twin purposes that motivated evangelical Protestants—evangelistic outreach to the unchurched and charity to the poor—worked like two blades of a pair of scissors. The name “mission,” which was proudly painted on the front of most of these facilities, had its roots in a biblical mandate to send out evangelists to convert non-Christians, and the impetus to care for the physical needs of shelter, food, and clothing for the poor came from the same Christian Bible.

Consequently, when a city mission opened its doors, it was commonly outfitted with a piano, pulpit, and benches or chairs to seat a few dozen people. There was usually a table to set out food, and where the buildings were large enough there were cots in a separate room so people could sleep overnight in a safe environment.

Typical City Missions

One of the earliest city missions that became well known because of its New York City location and its longevity (it is still operating) was founded in Manhattan's Bowery

District. Opened in 1872 and originally called the Helping Hand Mission, it was eventually named the McAuley Water Street Mission after its founder, Jerry McAuley. Born in Ireland in 1839, deserted by his parents, and taken to the United States by an older sister, McAuley lived hand-to-mouth on New York's East Side. This abjectly poor immigrant lad turned to petty crime as a means of survival, and he ended up in New York's Sing Sing Prison at age seventeen. While behind bars he converted to Christianity through the preaching and follow-up ministry of a woman prison evangelist. Upon release in 1864, McAuley began evangelistic preaching while he attempted to meet the survival needs of the Lower East Side's poorest people. By 1870 he raised enough money to open a rescue mission with a permanent facility.

In Chicago after the Civil War, a shoe salesman named Dwight L. Moody conducted similar rescue and relief activities among destitute people in the Windy City's rapidly growing slums. In 1876, two women of Free Methodist persuasion, Rachael Bradley and Mary Everhart, began the dual work of evangelism and social welfare in a low-income section of Chicago. Their mission, called The Olive Branch, was rivaled only by the Pacific Garden Mission as the largest and most famous of missions in the upper Midwest. Pacific Garden Mission, founded in 1877, became one of the most famous missions in the United States. Among the men who converted to Christianity at the missions and then went on to distinguish themselves as leading evangelical preachers were Billy Sunday, the major league baseball player, as well as Mel Trotter, Edward Cord, Bill Hadley, and Walter McDonald.

Meeting Wider Needs

During the 1880s and 1890s these rescue missions spread throughout the United States. By World War I, it is doubtful if there was a city with a population of eighty thousand or more that did not have at least one mission operated and supported by Christians in the local community. As the mission movement spread geographically, it also gradually embraced a wider vision. At first designed to rescue souls through conversion to Jesus Christ and to offer immediate but temporary relief from hunger and homelessness, the missions acquired larger facilities. Toilets, showers, and lockers for clothes were added, and people were allowed to live in the mission for up to a month if they attended the nightly religious services, promised to refrain from consumption

of alcohol and tobacco, and were willing to help with chores. The Salvation Army pioneered this type of wider ministry when it made its appearance in the United States in 1880 from England, where it was founded by William and Catherine Booth.

The Salvation Army was a purposively evangelistic and social welfare organization, but it was a Christian organization with a difference. Besides rescuing the spiritually and physically perishing, as the Salvationists labeled destitute people who were not Christians, these urban missionaries invested in longer-term follow-up. People were given food, clothing, and shelter as well as evangelistic preaching, but they were also given wide varieties of rehabilitation opportunities to learn how to earn a living and become self-supporting.

The Roman Catholic Church had always been sensitive to the needs of the poor, and as increasing numbers of Catholic immigrants arrived in America in the late nineteenth century, the Catholic Church rushed to care for their own for two reasons. First, it was a calling of the church to care for the poor. And second, the Catholic Church did not want its own people proselytized to by evangelical Protestants. Consequently, the Catholic Church had missions in every city where Catholic immigrants settled, but these facilities functioned in conjunction with local Catholic churches and always had worship facilities, nuns and priests to serve the people, and quite soon orphanages and schools for the children. In short, although the Catholics reached out to their own poor, their work was more holistic from the outset, and it never looked or functioned like the evangelical city missions. One of the striking examples of this Catholic work was that of Mother Cabrini and her Missionary Sisters, who worked to meet the socio-religious needs of Italian immigrants in the United States beginning in the late nineteenth century.

Late-Twentieth-Century Changes

The rural depression of the 1920s and the nationwide Great Depression of the 1930s stretched city missions throughout America beyond their limits. Indeed, by the late 1930s, most of these religious organizations suffered from dwindling donations at the time needs were greatest. The New Deal's infant welfare programs helped ease urban poverty. But World War II stimulated the economy and pulled many young men and women into factories and the armed services, thereby easing the strain on the nation's city missions.

As a result, some of the smaller and younger missions permanently closed their doors during the 1940s.

After the war, some of the older city missions continued to serve the homeless and destitute. By the late twentieth century, the city mission movement that had begun as a Protestant evangelical ministry was being complemented by Roman Catholic charities; and by the end of the century, local, state, and federal governments increasingly assumed the task of rescue and rehabilitation at taxpayers' expense and without the Christian religious dimension. To be sure, Christians' efforts to aid the poor did not end in the late 1900s. By the middle of the twentieth century the "main-line" denominations had founded churches in the inner cities with the purpose of offering pastoral care and places of worship for the poor and the newly arrived immigrants. Nevertheless, the rise of the welfare state gradually rivaled but never replaced the charitable efforts of Christians in the inner cities of America.

See also *Evangelicals* entries; *Faith-Based Community Organizations*; *Faith-Based Initiatives*; *Missions: Domestic*; *Missions: Foreign*; *Missions: Native American*; *Philanthropy*; *Roman Catholicism: The Age of the Catholic Ghetto*; *Social Gospel*.

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Civil Religion in the United States

The term *civil religion* comes from the writings of the eighteenth-century French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau, although the ideas it denotes are much older and more universal. In writing about the essential ingredients for a successful nation-state, Rousseau suggested that among them would be a shared moral system grounded in some overarching belief in a god whose providence was revealed in the common life of the people. Rousseau recognized that particulars of belief could vary considerably but felt that social cohesion required some sort of religious base to sustain it and to keep a nation viable.

An American Civil Religion?

In the ancient world, glimmers of what Rousseau had in mind come in the biblical Israel where the people believed that God had entered into a special covenant relationship with them at Sinai, a relationship in which they alone were chosen to receive the way to holiness through the keeping of the commandments. Civil religion is also apparent in the Roman Empire, when the Senate designated emperors as gods. Doing so endowed their rule with a transcendent, extraordinary power. Similar forces were at work in traditional Japan, for example, where the ruling family was also granted status as divine as a way to lift political control to a higher plane. Virtually no nation or people has existed who did not in some way regard themselves as a folk set apart from others, as a people whose collective well-being carried a dimension of divine destiny—although at times perhaps the people could fail to live up to the status God had granted them.

Historians and others had long recognized the close ties between religion and national identity in the United States, but the idea that there was a distinctive American civil religion received classic statement in an essay entitled "Civil Religion in America," published by sociologist Robert Bellah in 1967. Bellah insisted that there was a clearly defined civil religion that existed alongside more traditional religion, complete with its own belief system, rituals, and other apparatus. Drawing on frequent references to God or Providence in presidential inaugural addresses and looking to documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as sacred texts, Bellah argued that this civil religion looked to divine intervention in key events of

American history, especially wars. Indeed, many of the ritual celebrations he identified had ties to wars, such as Fourth of July events that recalled Americans to their founding ideals fixed in the War for Independence, or Memorial Day happenings that recalled first those who had lost their lives in the War between the States and later all who sacrificed their lives in the service of the nation. As well, Bellah looked to battlefields as pilgrimage sites where the faithful were revitalized in their commitment to the core ideals of the nation. There was even a hymnody associated with this civil religion, including not simply the national anthem but songs ranging from “America the Beautiful” to “God Bless America.” Many of those songs also had originally emerged in times of conflict when national identity was at stake.

Bellah’s claims seemed to many the key to understanding how religion and nationalism or at least religion and American identity were linked to one another. But others questioned whether there was actually a discrete civil religion on a par with other religions, or whether what Bellah observed was more varied dimensions of transcendent or religious meaning layered on to political events. In time, those who probed most deeply would come to question whether even those ties adequately explained the nebulous ways religious meaning became attached to political phenomena, and whether at base they worked to link all Americans to a single sense of national purpose and identity. Before exploring the many challenges to the civil religion hypothesis, however, it is helpful to understand exactly what it seeks to delineate—namely, the many ways in which events in the common life of the American people take on a religious or transcendent quality as interpreters attempt to explain their full meaning and significance—and what forces sustain that understanding from one generation to the next.

Roots of an American Civil Religion

At the time European nations entered an age of conquest and established colonial empires across the globe, ideas of destiny and providence flourished. The Spanish *conquistadores* believed they were executing the will of God in subjugating the indigenous peoples of the New World and forcing them to submit to the Spanish expression of Roman Catholicism. But in the territory within North America that became the United States, English influence was ultimately dominant, and in that age of discovery and colonization England saw itself as a beacon of righteousness, chosen of God and protected by God.

Those ideas penetrated the subconscious of the Puritan settlers who peopled New England in the seventeenth century. In a now well-known sermon preached to the dissenters from the Church of England who were about to establish a foothold in Massachusetts Bay, the early colonial governor and leader John Winthrop spoke of the enterprise as equivalent to building a city on a hill, a biblical image denoting a model civilization that would be a beacon to the world. Others described the Puritan venture as an errand into the wilderness and likened their attempt to create a holy commonwealth to that of ancient Israel. Leaving England in an exodus as the Hebrews had left Egypt, they were journeying through a colonial wilderness as they sought to craft the ideal society in their own promised land. The colonists, like the Hebrews of old, had joined in a covenant with the Almighty and with each other. In this rich mixture of religious language and images with political tasks, elements of a civil religion begin to take shape.

But colonial Puritans moved beyond what Rousseau meant by civil religion’s providing a base for social cohesion and common identity. To be sure, cohesion was central, for they were reluctant to allow those whose vision differed to settle in Massachusetts Bay, lest they contaminate the purity of the ideal society. Yet they also tended to see the hand of Providence in historical and natural events, some as signs of blessing and some as signs of chastisement. For example, earthquakes signaled divine displeasure and resulted in calls to repentance; rulers were to exhibit characteristics based on scriptural models; conflicts with the French and Native American peoples appeared as omens of the ultimate confrontation between the forces of good and evil. The English colonial enterprise was, in the familiar phrase, “God’s new Israel,” and no event was too insignificant to be a medium through which Providence was nudging the people to be faithful to their covenant.

Although popular perception associates the Puritans primarily with New England, much of this thinking permeated the collective subconscious in all areas of English control, particularly because it had roots in an earlier sense of English particularism. Hence, as events moved the colonists towards independence, they carried an overlay of interpretation that fused the political and the religious. From the Stamp Act crisis of 1765 to the Boston Tea Party of 1773, many in the English colonies saw the hand of God at work, steering a righteous people toward independence from a king and parliament given over to iniquity.

The era of the American Revolution or War for Independence became a foundational epoch in crafting a distinctive American civil religion—at least in the eyes of white male colonists who wielded power. The Declaration of Independence and then the Constitution took on the status of a civil scripture, sacred texts that articulated core beliefs in liberty, justice, and equality that would guide all the people, regardless of their European ancestry. It was Providence that crafted this *novus ordo saeculorum* (new order of the ages), making *e pluribus unum* (one out of many)—Latin phrases that still appear on U.S. currency. Few at the time took account of the many who were not part of the one, from white women denied equal rights, to Africans yet held in bondage as property, to indigenous peoples not recognized as citizens. Nonetheless, there was a widespread sense at least among the political and economic elite that the Republic, this experiment in democracy that left behind monarchy and aristocracy, had launched a political order that reflected divine will, with its structures ordered by God to guide the people towards fulfilling their destiny not just in world history but in sacred history. American independence, through the lens of Revolutionary-era civil religion, moved all humanity forward to that day when there would be a new heaven and a new earth.

Hence a lively millennial sensibility and pervasive apocalyptic spirit infused the style of civil religion that took root in the United States. Yale's Ezra Stiles trumpeted how God would bestow great honor and glory on the nation if it remained faithful to the divine will. If not, it would—like the nations of Europe—experience decay. Early on, civic rituals emerged to reinforce this conviction of American uniqueness and righteousness. From liberty poles during the Revolution to celebrations on the Fourth of July, ritual symbols and acts recalled the people to their sacred beginnings. In those celebrations, their commitment to the covenant of liberty became revitalized and the people became empowered anew to live as those chosen by God to be a light to all nations.

Many of these images carried biblical overtones, but none required a theological construction associated with a particular denominational expression of biblical religion, although most Euro-Americans of that age were inclined towards some brand of Protestant Christianity. Even the First Amendment to the Constitution that forbade a national religious establishment and in theory guaranteed to all the free exercise of religion indirectly buttressed the idea that this civil religion was anchored in religious perceptions

common to all and shared by all. It mattered not whether one's personal belief bore the marks of a particular denomination—Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Roman Catholic, Methodist, whatever. Specific doctrinal difference need not divide a people nor keep them from fulfilling their destiny, so long as all affirmed belief in an overarching Providence that informed all doctrines and creeds, even as it determined American destiny. Creed was a matter of opinion that amplified on common belief, and opinion could have many expressions.

Also sustaining this melding of the religious and political in the emerging identity of the nation and its people was the assumption widely held in the later eighteenth century that all the particular expressions of religion, despite their differences, inculcated in followers a basic morality that was essential to the common good. George Washington, who was well on his way to quasi-supernatural status in the popular mind even in his own lifetime, captured this well in his famous “farewell address.” There he asserted that morality could not exist without religion, nor could government endure without morality. This “religion-in-general” was thus indispensable to the well-being of the new nation. Religions could abound; what mattered was how they worked in tandem to create a moral citizenry who trusted in Providence to guide their collective destiny.

That the new nation was headed in the direction Providence intended and desired received fresh witness when revolutionary impulses spread in Europe. For many, the events leading up to the French Revolution, which erupted in full force less than three months after George Washington took the oath of office as the first American president, heralded another chapter in the unfolding drama of God's plan for humanity. Guided by the American spirit, other peoples would follow, and democratic principles of liberty, justice, and equality would gradually begin to prevail throughout the world. Here, too, are glimpses of that larger millennial hope underpinning these dimensions of a civil religion, for history seemed as if it were everywhere beginning to move towards its final culmination, with the United States standing as the beacon lighting the way. For many, though, as the French experience bordered on anarchy and some of its revolutionary leaders embarked on an assault on all religion, and thus by implication on the foundations of the morality essential to the commonweal, excess seemed likely to trump the righteousness America exemplified and threatened to demolish its place as exemplar to the world. In terms of civil religion, the controversy in the United States over whether

to ally with revolutionary France or with a once-misguided Britain brought a significant challenge. After renewed conflict with Britain led to another military outbreak in the War of 1812, the nation began to turn inward. Perhaps the hand of Providence could be discerned moving more in the internal life of the nation than in its efforts to be a model for all peoples.

The Spirit of Civil Religion in Antebellum America

Other dynamics quickly propelled a more intense intertwining of broadly based religious notions with American nationalism that some later analysts would see as evidence of a stratum of civil religion. With the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, the United States embarked on a policy of expansion that most of the founding generation had not envisioned. After the War of 1812 had reaffirmed the righteousness of the American democratic venture, with Providence guiding the fledgling nation to victory, those with an eye to expansion soon looked to Florida and then to territory farther west as regions where American democracy could establish itself. By the 1840s, Jacksonian Democrats especially talked about Manifest Destiny, the idea that God had ordained the United States would one day span the North American continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It was the nation's destiny ordained by God, and nothing human could ultimately stand in its path. Indeed, the idea of national destiny echoed the Calvinist theology that undergirded the Puritans, who had embarked upon an earlier errand to subdue a different wilderness.

Manifest Destiny stirred interest, for example, in annexing Texas (then the Lone Star Republic) in 1845, although Mexico still had a historical claim to the territory. It fueled interest in the Oregon Territory, which at the time included much of what is now the Canadian province of British Columbia. An agreement with Britain added some of that land to the nation in 1846. Already California had declared its independence from Mexico, and expansionists enamored of Manifest Destiny simply presumed that this land would join the American empire. Perhaps the most strident calls to heed the desire of Providence that the nation take in more land came as the United States embarked on war with Mexico in 1848. Indeed, there was little military justification for the conflict. The Mexican Cession of 1850, however, served as confirmation for expansionists that God had destined the nation to grow and take control of more land. Providence had blessed the nation through expansion and

reinforced the conviction that a democracy rooted in ideals of liberty, justice, and equality carried divine endorsement.

Of course, it helped that Manifest Destiny and its ties to democratic ideology flourished as antimonarchical sentiment once again swept through Europe in the wake of Napoleon's defeat and then the democratic "revolutions" of the 1850s. A closer look at the American nation, though, would suggest that Manifest Destiny, as other facets of an American civil religion taking shape in the eras of Revolution and the Early Republic, resonated more with the lived experience of a developing white male economic elite whose personal religious perspectives were shaped primarily by a broadly evangelical Protestantism. By the 1830s, sectional division over both slavery and the evolution of an industrial economy suggested a lack of consensus about the foundational values behind American republican democracy and its destiny. Could a nation that allowed some to hold other humans as property, as slaves, exemplify liberty and equality? Was its destiny less to expand from coast to coast than to founder in the quagmire of hypocrisy? Other religious and ethnic conflict, symbolized in the often violent anti-Catholicism that accompanied a surge in Irish immigration between 1830 and 1860, highlighted additional problems in trying to see the hand of Providence at work in national growth. Was liberty reserved for white Protestant males? It seemed increasingly so, especially to those of the ilk of William Lloyd Garrison, a strong antislavery advocate, and rank-and-file Irish pouring into Boston and other northern port cities seeking employment and hoping to make a new life in a land where justice presumably prevailed.

Civil War and the Revitalization of a Civil Religion

For those who probe the idea of an American civil religion, the War between the States from 1861 to 1865 looms large. Even at the time, those who sought to find larger meaning in this national inferno sought to understand it in religious terms that would not undercut the American enterprise altogether. President Abraham Lincoln, whose words have received careful study by a host of scholars, recognized the futility of identifying either the Union or the Confederate cause as the only one endorsed by God. In his mind, neither was faultless; both were misguided in trying to claim God for their side. But Lincoln and others also saw in the sectional conflict opportunities to revitalize a national commitment to the founding ideals of liberty, justice, and equality,

extending them in theory at least to include those once held as slaves, if the American people were willing to commit themselves anew to those principles. New England pastor and theologian Horace Bushnell, speaking at Yale's commencement ceremonies in 1865, used some traditional Christian language in trying to capture this sentiment. Talking about the obligations both North and South had to the hundreds of thousands who had given their lives in the war as well as about the heritage of democratic ideals, Bushnell saw the Civil War as a kind of baptism, albeit a baptism in blood, that reconsecrated the nation and its people to the core beliefs shared by all. War had renewed the national covenant.

The end of military conflict did not necessarily mean the end of sectional division. In one sense, as historian Charles Reagan Wilson has argued, the Southern states developed a regional civil religion that sought to mythologize the antebellum past, elevate Confederate heroes to the level of demigods, and perpetuate white racial superiority in regional culture as racism and discrimination replaced slavery. The Southern agrarian past evoked something of an Eden for those who glorified the "lost cause" of the Confederacy. As aspects of a regional civil religion emerged, antebellum white culture became idealized, with its evangelical Protestantism seen as a pure expression of truth for both individuals and society.

In the industrializing North, racial discrimination also remained the order of the day. But other issues linked to religion and ethnicity prompted many northerners to question whether there was adequate affirmation of values and beliefs associated with a civil religion. More so than for folk in other regions, massive immigration from central, southern, and eastern Europe that swelled the ranks of the Catholic, Jewish, and Eastern Orthodox population seemed to many northerners a threat to the core values of the nation. Because the rapid industrialization that was transforming the nation's economy centered more in the North and its cities, immigrants flocked to urban areas in the hopes of finding jobs and a secure future.

Josiah Strong, one-time executive secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, captured some of the apprehension of northern Protestants about immigration, urbanization, and industrialization in his *Our Country* that first appeared in 1885. Strong argued that God chose Anglo-Saxon Protestants to fashion American democracy and culture in such a way that the nation itself had special status in the divine plan for all history. The moral values instilled by Anglo-Saxon

Protestants had become endangered with the influx of millions of non-Anglo-Saxon Protestant immigrants. To protect the purity of the nation—to buttress elements of a civil religion—it was necessary to convert new immigrants to evangelical Protestantism in order to Americanize them. Strong did not single out a particular Protestant denomination as best suited for this task; in retrospect, the denomination did not matter. What Strong was promoting was in essence the kind of tie between a broadly held but loosely defined set of religious beliefs and an understanding of the nation as a people set apart by God. In other words, Strong saw as vital to social cohesion a kind of civil religion, albeit in this case one with links to a specific religious heritage, namely, Protestant Christianity. As was the case with New England Puritans in the seventeenth century, for Strong in the later nineteenth century, diversity threatened to contaminate the whole culture because it would render any civil religious sensibility dysfunctional.

By the time Strong wrote, public schools had taken hold in American culture. With roots in Massachusetts in the 1830s, public schools became vehicles for the transmission not only of basic learning thought essential to all Americans, but also of the moral values and political ideals associated with American democracy. The now-renowned McGuffey readers, used for generations to instruct public school children, freely mixed theological notions associated with the broad evangelical Protestantism Strong advocated with patriotic and moral virtues associated with American republican democracy. These two features were so intertwined in the primers that Roman Catholic leaders called for a parish or parochial school system where Catholic children, especially immigrant children, might receive basic education and even learn the moral values and responsibilities of citizenship, but without an overtly Protestant stamp. Parochial schools would demonstrate that Catholics could be good citizens without having to abandon their distinctive religious faith and practice.

Confidence that American political institutions and all the apparatus that accompanied them reflected God's design and will for humanity gained fresh reinforcement at the close of the nineteenth century when the United States engaged in the Spanish-American War. William McKinley, president at the time, made the war a religious crusade as well as a military venture when he recalled that it was while he was praying that God revealed to him the necessity of America's entering the war to bring salvation and civilization to heathen peoples. It mattered not that Cubans and

Filipinos, both of whom were for a time incorporated into the expanding American empire, already were overwhelmingly Roman Catholic Christians. McKinley's Anglo-Saxon Protestant vision of the nation and his effort to impose transcendent meaning on the trumped-up conflict with Spain also lay behind a widely publicized speech given by Albert Beveridge, a Republican senator from Indiana at the turn of the century. Beveridge insisted that divine blessing followed the imposition of American control on other peoples, since a morality sanctioned by God had given birth to American institutions. This later quest for empire was Manifest Destiny with all its ties to aspects of civil religion revamped and repackaged for a new day.

Global Conflicts Spur Concerns for Cohesion

The new age of American empire crumbled when World War I erupted. But for the United States, the war became another sign that God had chosen American democracy to influence if not dominate the world. Once again connections between religion and national identity suggest the undercurrents of dimensions of a civil religion. American president Woodrow Wilson, who turned the war from a struggle between fading imperial states in Europe into a quest to impress an American-style democracy on yet more peoples, drew readily on religious language in political speeches that were more sermons than public addresses. The son of a Presbyterian seminary professor, Wilson saw the war through a lens that fused his own Calvinist heritage with a conviction that God ordained and guided American democracy to bring true moral values to all humanity. Once again military engagement was vital to linking religion with national identity. Wilson's style and his sermonic tone help support the claim of Bellah and others that a religious substratum in American life constitutes a civil religion.

So, too, the Second World War took on religious dimensions as Hitler and the Nazi-Fascist Axis became identified with virulent evil and the United States and its allies with righteous goodness. Once again apocalyptic currents informed the ties between a civil religion and national identity, for the defeat of Hitler signaled the triumph of liberty, equality, and justice and thus pointed to a new future for all humanity. Yet this time, the religious euphoria quickly became muted. No sooner had the war come to a close than conflict broke out in Korea; more to the point was the emerging Cold War that pitted God-fearing, capitalist, democratic America against the godless communism epitomized by the Soviet Union and its puppet states.

The Cold War provided much fodder for those who insist there is a distinctive American civil religion. In 1954, for example, Congress added the phrase "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. No doctrinal definitions were provided; getting specific would reveal diversity and dissension. But the symbolic import was obvious: the United States was a nation with God on its side while the Soviet empire lacked divine blessing. So, too, when Congress ordered the phrase "in God we trust" to appear on all coins and currency, not just some of it, another symbol of American righteousness appeared. This mid-1950s move cemented the notion of the United States as a moral and upright nation. The most prominent Christian evangelist of the era, Billy Graham, added to the aura of civil religiosity, proclaiming a nondenominational gospel in arenas and stadiums across the nation and even abroad, insisting that simple faith in God, faith that was never carefully explained or articulated, provided a panacea for all social and personal problems and assured those who believed that they carried God's blessing in this life and beyond. The threat of nuclear annihilation at the hands of an expanding Soviet empire required social cohesion in the United States. Centuries earlier, Rousseau had advanced his notion of civil religion as a key ingredient in sustaining that cohesion. The United States did the same in the 1950s by attempting to use religious language in the public square and to cast the American people as righteous and moral, while acknowledging that individuals could hold a range of personal beliefs.

That connection became a central thesis in several sociological studies that appeared in the 1950s. Will Herberg's study entitled *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (1955) demonstrated that for most Americans, it made no difference whether one was identified with any of the scores of Protestant groups, Roman Catholicism, or one of the branches of Judaism. People regarded all as equally functional and legitimate ways to inculcate the moral values that undergirded good citizens. Differences in fine-tuning beliefs from a theological perspective remained; such was the character of American religious life. But there was a core consensus that crossed all such boundaries. Herberg did not speak about civil religion as such, although he did insist that there was a religion of the American way of life, one based on capitalist free enterprise economics and its concomitant conspicuous consumption. Herberg regretted the prevalence of this culture religion, thinking that it lacked the prophetic dimension and sense of commitment he thought central to the biblical faiths.

Also in the 1950s, W. Lloyd Warner appraised Memorial Day celebrations held across the nation that were replete with parades and patriotic oratory, noting that they represented an “American sacred ceremony” whose function was to integrate the people into a cohesive whole. In his understanding, Abraham Lincoln, whose Gettysburg Address was frequently quoted at Memorial Day assemblies, became a collective representation of the idealized American. Moving from poverty to the presidency, Lincoln illustrated the popular American dream of what anyone could accomplish if committed to the core values of liberty, justice, and equality.

Forces Undermining an American Civil Religion

Minority voices soon challenged the perception of the United States as a righteous nation knit together and guided by Providence. In the 1950s, the civil rights movement erupted with particular force, reminding Americans of the depth of inequality and injustice that prevailed in a nation where racism was rampant and discrimination legally sanctioned. Civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King also drew heavily on religious rhetoric to make their case for an end to segregation and racism. In doing so, they demonstrated that whatever dimensions of a civil religion might exist, they did not speak to the lived experience of African Americans. By the 1960s other dissenting voices reminded the nation that women also experienced exclusion, as did gay and lesbian Americans. As concern over U.S. military engagement in Vietnam mounted, those opposed to government policy came to think that political leaders themselves had forgotten the meaning of justice and freedom. To many, the core values of the nation seemed linked only to the lived experience of white males who were part of the nation’s political and economic elite. For millions, the extent of dissent appeared to undercut any sense of cohesion and unity.

This social disarray prompted Robert Bellah to create his mythic understanding of the American past in his seminal essay insisting that there was indeed an American civil religion. But Bellah also recognized that the social unrest of the 1960s and 1970s challenged the social cohesion promoted by this civil religion and threatened to render the civil religion dysfunctional. Hence he wrote a more penetrating study, suggesting that the social movements of that age had led to a “broken covenant” in the nation. At the time, even Bellah did not take note of other cultural transformations under way that would make it increasingly difficult to claim

that there was a single civil religion at the heart of the national experience.

Those shifts resulted in part from changes in U.S. immigration law in 1965 that allowed millions from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America to enter the country. Like those of earlier generations, these immigrants brought with them their native religious expressions. But many of these religions were new to the United States, at least in terms of visibility and increasing numbers of adherents, and they were far removed from the biblical traditions that had once dominated and had informed not only Bellah’s understanding of civil religion but also much of the casual connections that gave national experience a religious aura grounded in a broad evangelical Protestant perspective. The numbers of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs, for example, began to skyrocket. For them a providential God loosely tied to the biblical tradition, particularly to ancient Israel’s understanding of itself as a chosen people, and who worked in the events of history, was altogether alien. Now there were millions more who were part of the American people but for whom the traditional religious construction of the American past or of the American political order had no meaning whatsoever.

Some, such as evangelical leader Jerry Falwell, looked askance at how immigration and other social changes were transforming the texture of American society. Reviving the genre of the jeremiad, a sermon type developed by the Puritans to bemoan presumed declension in the moral fabric of society, Falwell and others identified with the religious right sought to reclaim an understanding of the nation even narrower than Bellah’s. Only by curtailing developments such as expanding rights for women and for homosexuals, by evangelizing among newer immigrants, and by restoring overt religious practices in the public schools eliminated by Supreme Court decisions in the 1960s could America once again become a moral nation blessed by God. The religious right associated with groups such as the Moral Majority attempted to infuse civil religious discourse with a decidedly conservative Protestant Christian nuance.

Religious language and symbolism also continued to infuse political rhetoric. In the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan, prior to the collapse of the Soviet bloc, repeatedly referred to the communist nations as an “evil empire” in a way that brought Cold War apocalyptic images to mind. Two decades later, President George W. Bush also drew heavily on apocalyptic imagery in describing Iraq before the American invasion and in reflecting on the terrorist attacks

on the World Trade Center in September 2001. Yet efforts to use such language and attempts to revitalize whatever components of a civil religion remained operative in American common life faced increasing challenges by the early twenty-first century, given the expanding religious pluralism and the growing political diversity that had become characteristics of the nation.

Contemporary Challenges to an American Civil Religion

Of course, some critics had long before raised questions not only about whether an American civil religion existed as the kind of religion that Bellah had posited, but also about whether it was a meaningful construct for looking at links between religion and politics. John Wilson, for example, drew on a wealth of historical and sociological materials and interpretations to suggest decades ago that certain features of American common life had religious dimensions and could from time to time function in religious ways. So presidential addresses could have something of a sermonic dimension, and invocation of God in pledges and on coins could represent an effort to endow the American experience with transcendent meaning. However, Wilson insisted that careful scrutiny did not reveal a full-fledged religion at all, but simply what people in many places across time had done in trying to claim divine sanction for policies and programs.

The many prongs of the civil rights movement suggested as well that the civil religion hypothesis had limitations. If it did not speak to the lived history and experience of Native Americans, African Americans, or even women, for whom did it speak? More and more, it seemed as if efforts to invoke a civil religion echoed the experience only of white men of economic and political privilege. The deep angst about the course of American society unleashed by protests against military engagement in Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 1970s was echoed in concerns about war in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as about how best to combat international terrorism. Then, too, the biblical traditions had always anchored the religious ideas encapsulated in the idea of an American civil religion. With religious groups that denied divine action in history or at least construed history very differently than did the biblical traditions, it was harder to assume that a civil religion resonated in any way with the lived religion of increasingly large numbers of Americans. Certainly Americans identified with one of the many strands of Buddhism, for example, would look at history very differently and tend not to see it as the stage on which

Providence was working out a great cosmic scheme for humanity.

Yet the idea of civil religion remains important, even if it is tentative at best. It suggests that Americans, as every people, seek to give larger meaning to their corporate national experience. It signals that Americans struggle to unite diverse peoples within a framework of common values such as liberty, justice, and equality, even while nurturing an extraordinarily wide range of particular religious beliefs and practices. Finally, the notion of civil religion serves to remind Americans that much yet remains to be done if all the diverse peoples who call the United States their homeland are to be united in a cohesive whole.

See also *African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; American Revolution; Anti-Catholicism; Civil War; Demographics; Freedom, Religious; Historical Approaches; Immigration entries; Philanthropy; Pledge of Allegiance; Politics entries; Puritans; Religious Right; Sociological Approaches; Sport(s); World War I; World War II.*

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Civil War

The Civil War (1861–1865) pitted the Northern United States against the Southern Confederate States of America. The bloodiest war in U.S. history, the military conflict cost approximately 620,000 soldiers and 50,000 civilians their lives. The war's political outcomes included the preservation

of the national union and the emancipation of about four million African American slaves, but the Civil War also represented a signal moment in American religious life. Nineteenth-century American public life was infused with a high degree of religious rhetoric, particularly that of evangelical Protestantism. Religion played a prominent role in the rending of the national union, and both the Union and the Confederacy went to war with the sanction of leading ministers in each section, assured that the Christian God had ordained their cause.

Theological Crisis over Slavery

A devout nation went to war in 1861. A year prior, somewhere between one-third and two-fifths of the American population claimed church membership, with at least double that number regularly participating in church-related activities. While American religion contained a noticeable degree of diversity, the social and political discourse of evangelical Protestantism dominated the landscape. The nation's three most populous denominations, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, all evangelical in style, accounted for approximately 67 percent of all existing churches, about 63 percent of church seating capacity (which could accommodate roughly 38 percent of the American population at any one time), and nearly 45 percent of the value of all church property. By no means did these three denominations represent all—or the only—evangelicals in antebellum America. Congregationalists, Restorationists, and some Lutherans and Episcopalians exhibited evangelical traits. More than ten million Americans—roughly 40 percent of the 1850 population—identified in some way with evangelicalism.

While antebellum evangelicals enjoyed unprecedented cultural power and authority, their seemingly broad consensus masked deep divisions. No issue was more divisive than slavery. At the core of evangelical belief rested a commitment to the primacy of the Bible as the divinely inspired, authoritative guide for the shaping of Christian life and practice. Moreover, evangelicals shared a common method of biblical interpretation. Emphasizing a literalist hermeneutic—inherited from the Reformed theological tradition, influenced by the common sense moral reasoning of the Scottish Enlightenment, and steeped in the American principle of democratic individualism—American evangelicals believed the Bible to be an eminently readable book that contained easily understandable, God-given teachings that applied to all people at all times. When forced to deal with

the morality of American slavery, that literalist method of biblical interpretation led to a theological crisis.

Key passages in both the Old and New Testaments suggested the Holy Writ sanctioned slavery. Southern proslavery divines made much of the biblical warrant for slavery, but many ostensibly antislavery ministers in the North also conceded the biblical imprimatur for slavery. Still, such concessions did not mean that antislavery clergy accepted the pro-slavery biblical argument. While some antislavery activists argued from a radical perspective that a higher human law demanded the Bible be rejected for its endorsement of slavery, more moderate antislavery religious voices held to biblical authority yet attempted to show how the slavery in scripture differed greatly from American slavery. Not only did the American system refuse to recognize such biblical concepts as the Jubilee Year—in Mosaic law, all slaves were set free every seven years—or allow for marriage between slaves but, most significantly, biblical slavery also was not based on racial difference. American slavery clearly was, though few white evangelicals questioned the racist foundations of their society. Thus, antebellum American evangelicals grew deeply divided over the slavery question. Two factions emerged, more or less divided sectionally, both claiming to read the Bible the same way and denouncing the other as sinful.

Antebellum Church Schisms

The crisis over slavery fractured the nation's three most populous denominations. That religious fracture anticipated and fomented the national fracture that would come in the Civil War. The Presbyterians were the first to divide. In 1837 an "Old School" majority of the Presbyterian General Assembly voted to remove four "New School" synods located in New York and Ohio. The New School was accused of deviating from the denomination's stricter Calvinist roots, embracing more liberal revivalist doctrines, and advocating forms of interdenominational cooperation that modified traditional church polity. While the slavery question was not the primary issue at stake, it was a very closely related secondary matter. Much of the abolitionist agitation in Presbyterian circles came from New School ranks. There was little doubt that the South's presbyteries, overwhelmingly populated with conservatives, supported the Old School on theological grounds. However, following the Old School also gave southerners a chance to rid the denomination of abolitionist influence. The following year,

in 1838, a newly formed New School General Assembly claimed roughly 100,000 members, 85 presbyteries, and 1,200 churches, significantly less than the Old School's approximately 127,000 members, 96 presbyteries, and 1,763 churches.

The Presbyterian schism of 1837–1838 could not have happened without southern support for the Old School, but the divisions were not clearly sectional. A few southern presbyteries initially joined the New School, but in the next decade, agitation over slavery proved too much stress for the denomination. In 1857 the New School condemned slaveholding as sinful, prompting twenty-one southern and border state presbyteries—containing approximately fifteen thousand members—to leave the denomination, making the New School a wholly northern denomination. At the same time, an uneasy peace prevailed in the Old School until the start of the Civil War. Then, in 1861, when the General Assembly passed a staunchly Unionist and antislavery platform, southern Presbyterians—most of whom had not attended the General Assembly—responded by creating the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America.

Among Methodists and Baptists, the divisions were more clearly sectional and more obviously about slavery. For Methodists, the issue had loomed large for several years, but it proved ultimately divisive in an 1844 debate about qualifications for bishops. James O. Andrew, bishop of Georgia, had acquired slaves through marriage and inheritance. The national General Conference instructed Andrew to free his slaves, arguing that bishops should not be slaveholders. After much southern protest and debate, the denomination agreed to divide along sectional lines. In 1845, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was created.

Baptist schism over slavery occurred almost concurrently. Abolitionism rose throughout the 1830s among northern Baptists, culminating with the 1840 American Baptist Anti-Slavery Convention in New York City. That meeting produced a treatise that denounced slavery as sin and called on southern slave-holding Baptists to repent and free their slaves or risk being cut off from fellowship. For the next few years, the issue came up repeatedly in Baptist meetings. It finally came to a head in the fall of 1844 when a group of Alabama Baptists pressed the General Convention for a ruling on whether slaveholders could serve as missionaries. The denomination's "acting board," located in Boston, answered that they could not appoint such a missionary. Baptists from

around the South responded in May 1845 by creating the Southern Baptist Convention.

Religion, Politics, and Society

Northern and Southern Protestants did not divide solely on how they read slavery in the Bible. They also divided on how they saw God's relationship to American society and the closely linked matter of the relationship between religion and politics. In the 1820s and 1830s the North experienced a wave of revivals. Led by famous evangelists such as Charles Finney (1792–1875), northern evangelicals came to believe that the society around them needed to be perfected through social reform, which would serve to bring about the kingdom of God on earth. At the same time, the North was steeped in the centuries-old Puritan notion of the United States as a covenanted nation like biblical Israel, a people chosen by God for a special purpose in the world. By the late antebellum years, northern Protestants came to believe key social reforms—such as the eradication of slavery—could be best achieved through political activism, particularly through the work of the antislavery Republican Party. As such, the political work of eradicating slavery gained a righteous stamp of approval. From a late antebellum northern religious viewpoint, the pro-slavery South, which stood in the way of the advancing kingdom of God, represented an enemy to be defeated. As armies prepared for war, Protestant ministers throughout the North overwhelmingly supported the Union effort and saw the war as a necessary "American Apocalypse" that would ultimately launch the Christian millennium.

Southern Protestants also came to believe that the Christian God sanctioned their section and, eventually, the Confederate nation. Unlike their counterparts in the North, however, such a view was a departure from historic patterns. For at least a century, dating to the colonial era, Southern evangelicals remained detached from direct political engagement, believing the church a purely spiritual institution that should not meddle with the purely secular affairs of state. This pervasive Southern Protestant doctrine, which achieved its fullest articulation among Southern Presbyterians as the "spirituality of the church," argued that the church's proper role was to aid in the saving of souls and the cultivating of individual piety, not to work for the perfection of society at large.

However, with the rise of more aggressive antislavery activism in the 1830s and the attacks on Southern society

that followed, Southern Protestants became increasingly political. Slavery, the bedrock of antebellum white Southern society, was ordained of God. It was not the South that had erred, but the North, which Southerners believed ignored the plain teaching of the Bible about slavery.

The election of Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) to the U.S. presidency in November 1860 proved decisive in securing Southern religious support for the Confederacy. Southerners convinced of the righteousness of slavery came to believe that an abolitionist conspiracy had taken over the American government. When the Confederacy ratified its constitution in March 1861, in sharp contrast to the U.S. Constitution, the Southern document signaled to all readers that the new nation was “invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God.” Like the North, the people of the South developed the belief that they were a chosen people who participated in a covenant relationship with God. From a Southern religious perspective, the Confederate cause—and war in its name—was a Christian one.

If the Confederate sense of Christian nationhood led Southerners to war convinced of their collective righteousness, God’s plan for the South also meant that the nation had to live up to Christian standards. On the eve of the sectional crisis, and then throughout the war, Confederates participated in regular “fast days,” ritual observances where ministers—like Old Testament prophets—called upon the nation to repent for its national sins and follow the Christian God. Fast days were also called regularly in the North during the conflict. In that section, they had been something of a regular occurrence dating to Puritan New England. For the South, however, like political preaching more generally, the tradition was much newer. Confederate President Jefferson Davis (1808–1889) called for no less than nine official fast days, and many others were called at the state and local levels. Since slavery was the core institution in the Christian South, fast day sermons often called on white Christian masters to realize the divine trust they had been given. They needed to bring the institution into conformity with biblical standards, making it more charitable, more benevolent, and more humane, or risk divine judgment at the hands of their oppressors—the heretical, abolitionist Union. War was God’s way of testing his people.

Chaplains

Many people in the North and South believed a chaplain system was necessary for good Christian armies and the sustaining of morale in the ranks. Prior to the war, the

chaplaincy was relatively small and weak in the American military. In the Civil War, the system expanded greatly, and it has remained a fixture in the U.S. military ever since.

Union and Confederate chaplains both fulfilled one primary duty: they held regular religious services for soldiers. To be sure, chaplains also assisted in hospitals, wrote letters for soldiers, taught classes, delivered mail, carried supplies, and more, but in the main they existed to provide spiritual care. Throughout the war, on both sides, chaplains were in short supply and often complained of unreasonable treatment. In the Union, they earned \$145 per month—equivalent to a cavalry captain—but they received private’s rations and no forage for their horses. They were not officially accorded officer status until 1864. In mid-1862, Union chaplains began to receive officer’s rations and forage but had their salary cut to \$100 a month. In the Confederacy, chaplains were paid \$80 a month, and they were not allotted uniforms, supplies, a horse, forage, or rations (though they were eventually allowed private’s rations).

Hundreds of clergy, both South and North, found their skills best put to use as regular soldiers or officers rather than chaplains. Such was the case for, among others, Leonidas Polk (1806–1864), the Episcopal bishop of Louisiana who became a Confederate lieutenant general; Robert Lewis Dabney (1820–1898), a noted Presbyterian divine who served as chaplain for Confederate general Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson (1824–1863)—also a devout Presbyterian—before becoming a staff officer; and John Eaton Jr. (1829–1906), an ordained Presbyterian minister who began the war as a Union chaplain, became a colonel over an African American regiment in 1863, and was then appointed by General Ulysses S. Grant (1822–1885) as superintendent of Negro affairs in Tennessee, foreshadowing the duties undertaken later by the Freedmen’s Bureau.

Over the course of the war, approximately 2,300 chaplains served in Union ranks, though no more than 600 ever served at once. Chaplains had long served in the U.S. military, but prior to the war, with a much smaller military, the peacetime number had been capped at 30 men. President Abraham Lincoln believed strongly in the importance and utility of the chaplaincy, seeing religion as cohesive and a morale-building agent. On May 4, 1861, the Union War Department issued orders that provided for the large-scale expansion of the chaplaincy so that each regiment might have spiritual guidance—though that goal was never fully realized.

Initially, federal orders only allowed for ordained Christian ministers to serve as chaplains, the expectation being

that chaplains would primarily come from Protestant denominations. Within a year, however, concerns arose about chaplains' lacking proper qualifications for service. In July 1862, Congress responded to the issue by revising the terms of the office to provide for more rigorous standards. These revisions also opened the chaplaincy to clergy from any religious background. Theoretically, it became possible for non-Christian chaplains to serve, but in fact only one Jewish rabbi filled the post (along with one nonordained Jew who had served illegally in 1861). Indeed, representation from non-Protestant traditions proved minimal. Approximately 200,000 soldiers, about 10 percent of the Union army, were Catholic, but only 3 percent of all chaplains were Catholic priests. Overwhelmingly, Methodists provided the largest number of Union chaplains (38 percent), followed by Presbyterians (17 percent), Baptists (12 percent), Episcopalians (10 percent), Congregationalists (9 percent), Unitarian/Universalists (4 percent), and Lutherans (2 percent). African Americans were not permitted to serve as chaplains until 1863. After that date, 14 served, the most prominent of whom was Henry McNeal Turner (1834–1915), a future bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Confederacy (or Confederate States of America, the C.S.A.) did not develop nearly as organized or expansive a chaplaincy as the Union. Over the course of the war, 938 chaplains—14 percent of all Southern clergy—served the Southern cause. Almost half were Methodists (47 percent), but Presbyterians (18 percent), Baptists (16 percent), Episcopalians (10 percent), and Catholics (3 percent) were also represented. In May 1861, the Confederate Congress authorized the creation of a chaplaincy but allowed chaplains few benefits and offered little guidance about formal duties. Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Secretary of War James Seddon (1815–1880), who saw chaplains as inconsequential to military efforts, offered little support for the office. The Confederacy had been created in rebellion against the centralized power of the U.S. government; the C.S.A. simply did not have an efficient bureaucracy for the organizing of chaplains, which Southern leaders saw as tangential to their primary military aims. Moreover, due to a long-standing Southern Protestant commitment to the separation of church and state, many Southerners opposed the creation of military offices for clergy. Because of the widely held “spirituality of the church” view, many Southerners maintained that religious bodies, not the secular government, should provide for soldiers' spiritual care. As a result, the

Confederacy's chaplains, while often visible and prominent members of the military, suffered from an ambiguous status.

Charitable Organizations

In addition to the formal military structure of the chaplaincy, numerous charitable civilian organizations emerged to support the war effort. In most cases, these supporting organizations drew from deep religious roots. An 1864 study estimated that in the Union alone, to that date, approximately \$212 million had been raised to support Civil War philanthropy. While charitable societies existed in virtually every town, one of the most visible organizations was the United States Christian Commission. Founded in November 1861 by members of the New York Young Men's Christian Association and led by Philadelphia Presbyterian layman George H. Stuart (1816–1890), the Christian Commission organized roughly five thousand volunteers from a wide variety of evangelical denominations. The Christian Commission offered general support to the armies by visiting sick and wounded soldiers, assisting surgeons, writing letters for soldiers, presiding at revival meetings, sponsoring chaplains, and running soup kitchens to supplement soldiers' diets. It is estimated that the Christian Commission received and distributed more than \$6 million along with roughly 1.5 million Bibles, 1 million hymnals, and 39 million tracts among Union ranks.

The United States Sanitary Commission was similarly visible in the Union war effort. Founded in July 1861 following a meeting of the New York City-based Women's Central Association of Relief and led by Unitarian Henry W. Bellows (1814–1882), the Sanitary Commission drew from a liberal Protestant emphasis on humanitarianism. It worked to regulate medical standards, distributed needed supplies to military surgeons, and provided donated food and clothing for soldiers. Over the course of the war, the Sanitary Commission raised an estimated \$25 million and helped to drastically lower the rate of disease in Union ranks.

Relief for freedpeople also constituted one of the primary outlets for civilian charity. Devoted primarily to providing educational opportunities for former slaves, by the end of the war, nearly one thousand teachers from variety of organizations were serving freedpeople. The most prominent freedpeople's relief organization was the evangelically minded American Missionary Association (AMA). Founded in 1846 and devoted to abolition of slavery, by 1865 the AMA had 320 workers operating schools for former slaves in every Southern state and almost every major Southern

city. Within the next decade their ranks would swell to the thousands, and they assisted in the opening of several hundred schools along with a number of Southern colleges—such as Fisk, Atlanta, Dillard, and Howard—for freedpeople.

In the Confederacy, civilian aid tended to be offered at a more local level, but soldiers and ladies aid societies existed in nearly every Southern town. Leading the way among broader religious relief efforts was the Evangelical Tract Society of the Confederacy, which became a primary dispenser of print among Southern soldiers. Organized in July 1861 in Petersburg, Virginia, it produced an estimated one hundred tracts and fifty million pages of print over the course of the Civil War. One of its primary outlets was the *Army and Navy Messenger*, a newspaper that circulated to soldiers. Several other significant newspapers were sponsored by denominations, including the Baptist *Soldier's Friend* (Atlanta), the Presbyterian *Soldier's Visitor* (Richmond), and the Methodist *Soldier's Paper* (Richmond). These organs collectively encouraged soldiers fighting for what they saw as a Christian cause.

Revivals

The course and progress of the war surprised both the Union and Confederacy. Neither side expected the war to take more than a few months, nor did they expect much bloodshed. By the end of 1862, it was clear that those expectations were misguided. On April 6 and 7 of that year, the Battle of Shiloh, in western Tennessee, claimed more than twenty-three thousand casualties. To date, it was the bloodiest battle in American history. Just a few months later, on September 17, Union and Confederate armies matched Shiloh's casualties in a single day. In what remains the bloodiest day in American military history, Confederate general Robert E. Lee's (1807–1870) Army of Northern Virginia battled Union general George B. McClellan's (1826–1885) Army of the Potomac at Antietam Creek near Sharpsburg, Maryland, resulting in roughly twenty-three thousand casualties.

Such catastrophic losses—and the knowledge that the war would not be ending in the near future—led many soldiers to look for religious meaning in the conflict. Drawing on a long nineteenth-century tradition of revivalism, including the recent “businessman's revival” of 1857–1858—which primarily spread through the urban centers of the North—Union soldiers stationed in Washington, Chicago, and St. Louis experienced waves of heightened

religiosity in 1862. It was not until the next year, 1863, that revivals had their most lasting impact among Union ranks. After significant victories in the siege of Vicksburg (May 18–July 4; nineteen thousand casualties) and the battle at Gettysburg (July 1–3; fifty-one thousand casualties), the Union army was dealt a serious defeat in September at Chickamauga Creek, near Chattanooga, Tennessee. The three-day battle was costly, with thirty-four thousand casualties, and the Union army was forced to retreat to Chattanooga while Confederates held highlands around the city and settled into a siege. As soldiers waited for General Ulysses S. Grant to come and take over command of the army, Union ranks became infused with heightened Christian fervor as soldiers implored God for their deliverance. Then, in late November, when Grant's army won the battle of Chattanooga by unexpectedly running Confederate forces off of their high position—a development that many contemporary observers saw as a miraculous show of divine favor for the Union—soldiers in the ranks became more sure of God's will for the Union. In the winter of 1863–1864, Grant's army camped nearby at Ringgold, Georgia. There, the revival continued among the soldiers, with hundreds baptized in the Chickamauga. The revivals of 1863–1864 strengthened Union resolve, improved morale, and prepared soldiers for the immense amount of bloodshed to come in the next year. For Union troops, revivals seemed linked to military fortunes as well as the promise of nearly certain death. As the army drew closer to victory but the battles grew more fierce—as in the case of 1864's Overland Campaign, which claimed one hundred thousand casualties—revivalism grew more prevalent among soldiers.

Among Confederate ranks, revivals followed a trajectory similar to those in the Union. Periodic revivals spread throughout the Confederate army in 1862 and 1863. Then, following Gettysburg and Vicksburg, revivalism seemed to become a constant fixture for the next several months. The Confederate religious press regularly made mention of revivals in the camp throughout the latter half of 1863 and into 1864. In that time in the Army of Northern Virginia, about seven thousand soldiers (roughly 10 percent of Lee's force) converted to Christianity, and thirty-two of thirty-eight brigades felt some effect of what participants called the “Great Revival.” In the Army of Tennessee, a reported eleven of twenty-eight brigades were touched by revival during the Chickamauga-Chattanooga campaign. Then, as they wintered in Dalton, Georgia—near the Union troops who were experiencing their own revival in Ringgold—the

revival continued into the spring of 1864. As was the case for Union soldiers, revival sustained Confederates and encouraged them to continue the fight, though for different reasons. Where Northern soldiers experienced victories, Confederates sensed imminent defeat. Yet convinced they served a just God who ordered the universe, Confederate soldiers still believed they had done right in the eyes of the Lord. If God's will required that the Confederacy be defeated, they could face death assured of the righteousness of their cause. In this way, both in North and South, the revivals that began in 1862 and reached their full flourishing in the winter of 1863–1864 contributed considerably to the prolonging of the war.

An estimated one hundred thousand Confederate soldiers converted to Christianity during the war. At least that number, but perhaps as many as two hundred thousand, converted in Union ranks. The experience of revival was relatively similar for soldiers on both sides. Following patterns established decades earlier in American religious history, revivals were a democratic affair. While chaplains and representatives of voluntary organizations aided revivals whenever and wherever possible, neither was ubiquitous enough in camps to provide consistent religious leadership. As such, it was the common soldiers themselves who drove revivals, with much emphasis placed on individual experience and little authority ceded to educated clergy.

Revivals in the camp were also a conspicuously masculine affair, differing greatly from the prior history of American evangelical experience. Throughout the nineteenth century and into the late antebellum period, the common assumption was that church and expressions of piety were particularly feminine in nature. Men were certainly active religious actors, but such expressions of devotion tended to be seen as reserved for women. Revivals in the camp fundamentally changed such views. As large groups of Civil War soldiers responded to gospel messages, their experiences recast evangelicalism and revivalism as masculine in nature. While there were certainly many, many soldiers who remained untouched by revivalist fervor, those who experienced revival often looked at their fellow men as Christian brothers, fit to serve one another in battle.

Women and the Home Front

As religious gender norms changed for men serving in Civil War armies, so they also changed for women on the home front. Military ranks were closed to women in the Union and Confederacy, but religious activism offered

opportunities for service and access to the world of politics. Not only were they the primary movers behind civilian relief efforts but, with an overwhelming number of men away from home, women also became heads of households. Moreover, as numerous churches had to close their doors due to lack of a minister or enough congregants or local military action, women stepped into new leadership roles in their religious communities.

These realities were particularly acute in the Confederacy. The Civil War brought massive destruction to the South, where all the battles other than Gettysburg took place. The toll on Southern religious life was particularly noticeable. Many overarching religious bodies, such as presbyteries, synods, conferences, and conventions had to suspend regularly scheduled meetings due to local military conflict. In other cases, when organizations opted to convene, representation was so thin that quorums could not be gathered. At the local level, many churches had to shut their doors to regular worshippers. In this religious environment, women on the home front worked to provide consistent religious support for those around them, holding prayer and reading groups at private homes. In the process, the site of religious community shifted from the public church to the domestic home.

That change in practice spoke to a larger change that occurred ideologically among religious Confederate women. At the outset of the war they believed that God was on their side and behind their cause. As the war progressed and the tide turned against the Confederacy, its devout women believed their new nation's suffering—like the biblical case of Job—was sent by God as a test designed to strengthen their faith. As the numbers of Confederate dead grew, devout Southern women found themselves suffering on an individual, psychological level. Over time, the loss of loved ones reminded religious women of their own mortality and enabled them to face death without fear. At the same time, however, it also led them to question the religious wisdom they had been taught about the nature of properly Christian social order. It was widely believed in the antebellum white South that God had ordained a system of paternalism and patriarchy that ensured proper relationships in human society. From God almighty, power was extended to white men, who were to exercise benevolent authority over women, children, and black slave dependents. The Civil War, however, caused Southern women to question that entire arrangement. Following God's will and embracing the Confederacy had only brought pain and loss to women at home.

Southern women did not abandon their faith en masse at the end of the war, but their understanding of gender roles, shaped by their experience over the previous four years, had changed to allow for a greater degree of religious autonomy.

African Americans and Emancipation

Slavery's end came with the Emancipation Proclamation (1863)—which declared slaves in conquered territories free—and the postwar Thirteenth Amendment (1865), which banned involuntary servitude in the United States (the border slave states of Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware, which had never joined the Confederacy, were not bound by the Emancipation Proclamation). These legal changes, which freed approximately four million slaves, launched a revolution in American religious life.

Like whites in the North and South who read Providence into their war effort, African Americans also saw the hand of God at work. However, blacks interpreted the war differently. Like the biblical Hebrews who had been liberated from Egyptian slavery in the Exodus narrative, American blacks had been liberated from the oppression of white masters. When former slaves were given the chance to seize their own religious destiny, apart from white influence, they took it. Autonomous black churches had existed in the North since the late eighteenth century, but in the South most slaves worshipped with whites in biracial churches and were relegated to second-class seating. While those antebellum biracial churches had often provided Southern blacks the only public space where they could speak with authority among whites, their postemancipation actions demonstrated clearly that they no longer wished to practice a religion dictated by their former masters. Almost immediately after the war, a significant percentage of former slaves moved to black denominations, either newly created or linked to those already existing in the North. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for example, counted 207,766 African American members in 1860. In 1866, that number dropped to 78,742 members.

The War's Religious Legacy

On April 9, 1865, Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia, confirming Confederate defeat and bringing an end to the war. Though the military conflict ended, the religious divisions between North and South persisted well beyond the war. In President Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, delivered on

March 4, just a month prior to Confederate surrender, he perceptively surmised the religious stakes of the conflict, famously stating, "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other." Lincoln was never baptized, nor did he ever join a church. Yet in his Second Inaugural, Lincoln suggested that neither Union nor Confederate Christians had clearly understood the work of Providence in the Civil War. In so doing, the president sought to repair the deep religious divide that had broken the nation years before.

Most religious Americans, however, stuck to the beliefs they maintained throughout the conflict. Union victory convinced Northerners that they had been right and uniquely blessed by God. The defeated South needed to repent for the division it had brought to the nation and its religious life. The Northern branches of denominations that split before the war refused to consider religious reunion afterward, without Southern confessions for the sins of slave-holding and disunion. That was not something white Southerners were prepared to do in the immediate aftermath of the war. (Methodists did not reunite until 1939, Presbyterians waited until 1983, and Baptists never repaired their schism.) Like Northerners, white Southerners retained their belief in the righteousness of their section and the divine sanction for slave-holding. Although slavery no longer existed legally, the inherent racism of the pro-slavery argument remained quite visible in the creation of a segregationist social order that relegated former slaves to secondary status. Former Confederates did their best to return the South to the antebellum status quo. As such, the theological crisis that had paved the way for the Civil War was never truly resolved.

At the same time, the inability to resolve that theological crisis led to a diminished role for clergy—and organized evangelical religion more broadly—in American society. The language of religion did not disappear from American public life as a result of the Civil War. Rather, it contributed to forging a civic faith, or "civil religion," devoted first to the causes of the nation. In the name of patriotism, American civil religion invented its own sacred days—such as Thanksgiving, celebrated annually in the North from 1863, when Abraham Lincoln called for a national day of Thanksgiving, and finally declared a federal holiday in 1939 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945). Civil religion also sacralized key texts in the national mythology, such as Lincoln's Gettysburg Address (1863) and Second Inaugural (1865). Moreover, civil religion also enshrined memories of

its national saints in monuments, as was the case of the Lincoln Memorial, erected in 1922 to mark the legacy of a president martyred in the name of preserving the nation and ending slavery.

The South developed its own form of a civil religion in the “religion of the Lost Cause,” which developed from 1865 into the early twentieth century. It had its own rituals, which reminded white Southerners of the righteousness of slavery and the supremacy of their race. In contrast to holidays that celebrated the Union—Thanksgiving and Independence Day, for example, were not regularly observed in the South until long after the Civil War—there were days set aside annually to remember Southern sacrifice, such as Confederate Memorial Day, begun in 1866 and held every June 3. Monuments to Confederate dead sprang up throughout the South, and famous Confederate leaders were enshrined in stained glass windows in Southern churches. Regiments of soldiers gathered annually for sermons on the sectional crisis, and when a Confederate veteran died, strict guidelines regulated the funeral service. Groups like the United Daughters of the Confederacy (founded 1894) and the Sons of Confederate Veterans (founded 1896) organized to preserve Confederate memory. The Ku Klux Klan, perhaps the most notorious racist terrorist organization in American history, was created in 1866 by former Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest (1821–1877) and claimed to be preserving a Southern Christian legacy. While none of these forms of memorialization came from a deeply theological foundation, they all drew from religious roots and spoke to the ways religious ideas about the Civil War persisted long after the fighting ceased.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion* entries; *American Revolution; Civil Religion in the United States; Cult of Domesticity; Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Holidays; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Philanthropy; Politics: Nineteenth Century; Revivalism: Nineteenth Century; World War I; World War II; Women* entries.

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Common Sense Realism

Common sense realism is a philosophical position that affirms the reality of the objects of our senses and the legitimacy of our knowledge of them. To nonphilosophers this might hardly seem to need affirmation, but in the history of philosophy it has been a controversial assertion, and indeed sometimes even treated with scorn. Nevertheless, common sense realism has been, and still remains, important in the history of American Christian intellectual life.

Origins: Thomas Reid and the Scottish Enlightenment

Common sense realism arose in reaction against the philosophy known as British empiricism, developed in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by John Locke (1632–1704), George Berkeley (1685–1753), and David Hume (1711–1776). Locke taught that our minds only know “ideas,” that is, sensory perceptions, not the external world that provokes them. Berkeley drew the conclusion that nothing really exists except that which perceives or is perceived. What keeps objects in existence when no one is looking? Berkeley, a bishop, had an answer: God perceived them. But Hume took Berkeley’s metaphysical idealism to drastically skeptical conclusions. If all we know is a stream of

sense impressions, then the outside world is only a fiction. True, in everyday life we cannot help believing that there is an outside world, Hume admitted, but this belief is merely a psychological necessity, not *philosophically* justified. There were no arguments that justified faith in God, Hume claimed; indeed, even belief in causality was merely a custom, and not rigorously justifiable. A person could not be sure that memories represented events that had actually happened, and so did not truly know (in a rigorous sense) that she or he was the same person from one moment to the next. To these disturbing assertions, the metaphysical realism of common sense proposed a rebuttal.

Common sense realism first appeared in Scotland. Hume was a Scot, and his fellow countrymen felt most strongly the urge to find an answer to his skepticism. The original definitive formulation of common sense realism came from Thomas Reid (1710–1796), professor first at the University of Aberdeen and after 1764 at the University of Glasgow. In that year Reid published *An Inquiry into the Human Mind, on the Principles of Common Sense*. In 1785 he completed his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*.

Reid went back to the first epistemological principle of the British empiricists and challenged it. The objects of knowledge, he insisted, were not ideas in the mind, but sensible things in themselves. He found Locke's notion of representational ideas not only superfluous but a barrier to understanding. The human mind included certain built-in constituents of consciousness that Reid called "common sense." These were fundamental principles of knowledge. They included the axioms of mathematics and logic, belief in causality, trust in our own senses and memory, and belief that other people too exist and that their testimony is entitled to some credence. In sum, they provided the rebuttal to Humean skepticism. A Presbyterian clergyman, Reid accepted the principle that God is no deceiver, so the faculties he has given us are entitled to reliance. The proper task of philosophy, according to Reid, was to accept and deal with the data of experience—not to challenge their validity. Reid and his disciples saw themselves as Baconians, respecting evidence. The validity of inductive reasoning constituted part of their definition of common sense.

Reid termed his basic principles "common" not because they were merely ordinary but because everyone shared them. The word *common* was a powerful one, used for the common law, the common land of a village, the common weal, and the *Book of Common Prayer*. A commoner was a citizen, with a voice in the common affairs, represented in

the House of Commons. Reid declared his principles to be "sense" because he considered them rational, as one might speak of "a man of sense." Jane Austen used the word this way when she distinguished between "sense" and "sensibility." Thomas Paine called his great polemic against the British monarchy on behalf of American independence *Common Sense*.

Reid's philosophy of common sense realism figured prominently in the flowering of the Scottish Enlightenment. Reid belonged to the "Moderate" wing of the established Church of Scotland (the Presbyterian Church), a party eager to synthesize Christianity with the Enlightenment. Opposing the Moderates were the Popular, or Evangelical, party, who insisted on a stricter adherence to Calvinism and a more austere lifestyle. These ecclesiastical parties would remain significant in the history of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, recipient of many Scottish influences. Common sense realism demonstrated its strength by appealing to thinkers in both camps.

The impressive roster of famous intellectuals in the Scottish Enlightenment includes Adam Smith, Francis Hutcheson, Hugh Blair, Lord Kames, William Robertson, Adam Ferguson, and the philosopher who transmitted Reid's work to nineteenth-century Britain and America, Dugald Stewart (1753–1828). Out of the work of these thinkers developed much of the social science, history, and cultural studies of later generations. The Scottish Enlightenment had a large and multifaceted influence on the American Enlightenment, partly as a result of the institutional example of the Scottish universities on American higher education. The philosophy of common sense realism permeated these intellectual developments.

Reasons for Widespread Influence

To appreciate why Reid's ideas exerted such widespread influence, we need to understand the scope of moral philosophy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Reid succeeded to the chair of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow upon the departure of Adam Smith. The discipline of moral philosophy as then defined included, along with what we call ethical theory, epistemology and metaphysics on the one hand and, on the other, all of what we consider the social sciences: psychology, sociology, anthropology, and political science. The problem of how we know what is right was thus considered in the context of how we have other kinds of knowledge. The social sciences gained inclusion as illustrations of applied morality. To us it seems an

anomaly that Adam Smith wrote both *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations*. To his contemporaries, he simply addressed two facets of his assigned subject.

Because moral philosophy addressed not only ethics but also epistemology and the empirical sciences of human behavior, the word *moral* could be applied not only to ethical matters but also to inductive knowledge, as opposed to deductive conclusions. “Moral evidence” meant empirical evidence. From this usage, now obsolete, we retain the expression “moral certainty.”

Reid addressed the epistemology of morality in his *Essays on the Active Powers of Man* (1788). Reid believed in a rational moral sense, analogous to the common sense that structured our knowledge of sensory objects. The moral sense intuited principles of morality, such as that promises should be kept, in the same way that common sense intuited that the whole is equal to the sum of its parts and validated the existence of the outside world. Moral principles are objective and rational, declared Reid. Not all his contemporaries agreed with him; in Scotland itself, both Francis Hutcheson and Adam Smith described the moral sense as a feeling, a “sentiment,” rather than an intellectual function, although they did not deny the objective reality of moral principles. In the technical language of philosophy, Reid’s ethical theory represented a form of deontological intuitionism, one that he presented as compatible with common sense realism in epistemology.

Closely associated with moral philosophy was another academic discipline of former times, natural theology. Natural theology studied the phenomena of natural science in order to demonstrate from them the existence and attributes of the divine creator. The intelligent and benevolent design of the universe seemed obvious to practically everybody then. Even the harshest critics of organized religion, the deists, believed in intelligent design. Indeed, the deists critiqued biblical revelation as unnecessary, given the infinitely more impressive revelation God had provided in the testimony of his creation itself. Pre-Darwinian natural science did not refute natural theology, and although Hume’s *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (published posthumously in 1779) presented telling criticisms of natural theology, they did not have much impact on received opinion. Treatises on moral philosophy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries often included a section on natural theology. Together, moral philosophy and natural theology served a desire for a science of human nature grounded in a God-given natural morality. The aspiration to value-free social science that

appeared in a later generation had zero appeal for thinkers of the Anglophone Enlightenment.

Scottish common sense realism exerted international influence for several generations—for example, on the French philosophers Victor Cousin and Theodore Jouffroy. But the distinctive synthesis of common sense moral philosophy with natural theology found a particularly receptive audience in the English-speaking countries. It represented a happy synthesis of Protestantism with the Enlightenment, and by no means excluded deists. The American founders shared in the assumptions and vocabulary of this consensus. Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams, discussing the wording of the American Declaration of Independence, chose to characterize their assertion that all men are created equal as “self-evident”—a favorite term of common sense realism and intuitionist moral philosophy. Later, when Jefferson went to Paris as ambassador to France, he made friends with Reid’s leading disciple, Dugald Stewart, and later hoped (vainly) to recruit him for the University of Virginia.

Common Sense Realism Comes to America

A figure of central importance in the transmission to America of common sense realism and the Scottish Enlightenment in general was John Witherspoon (1723–1794), an evangelical clergyman in the Church of Scotland who in 1768 accepted the presidency of the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University. Besides providing administrative leadership to the college, Witherspoon also taught moral philosophy. His lectures, delivered over a period of many years and eventually published, influenced hundreds of American statesmen, educators, and clergy trained at Princeton between 1768 and 1794. The lectures included a section on “civil polity,” or political philosophy, defending natural rights, including the right of resistance to tyranny, and the principle of checks and balances. Witherspoon exerted practical as well as theoretical influence in American politics, for he played a prominent role in the Sons of Liberty during the Revolution, signed the Declaration of Independence (the only clergyman to do so), served in the Continental Congress, and supported the Constitution at the New Jersey state ratification convention.

Witherspoon’s *Lectures on Moral Philosophy* (published posthumously in 1801) rejected the metaphysical idealism of Berkeley and Hume in favor of common sense realism. His account of human nature followed Francis Hutcheson’s in most respects but tipped it toward ethical intuitionism.

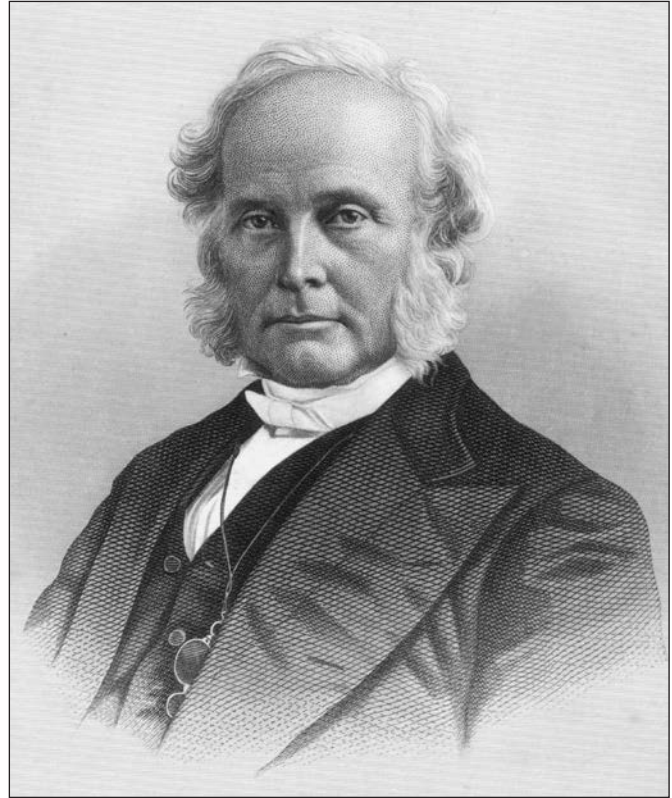
Under his leadership, Princeton moved away from the metaphysical idealism and ethical sentimentalism of its famous earlier president, Jonathan Edwards, and embraced the Scottish philosophical tradition of Thomas Reid.

Witherspoon's Princeton modeled higher education for other American colleges for decades to come. Moral philosophy, defined as Reid and Witherspoon did to include common sense realism in both epistemology and ethics, along with natural theology, constituted the capstone of the nineteenth-century American college curriculum. Because of its effort to synthesize a wide range of human knowledge into an intelligible, natural, moral, and Christian system, the moral philosophy of that time has been called a "Protestant scholasticism." Typically, moral philosophy constituted a required course for seniors, taught by the college president. As it had appealed to both moderates and evangelicals in Scotland, common sense realism bridged denominational and theological differences in the United States. Its prominent advocates included Francis Bowen and James Walker at Unitarian Harvard, Francis Wayland at Baptist Brown, Noah Porter at Congregationalist Yale, Mark Hopkins at Congregationalist Williams, and Archibald Alexander at Presbyterian Princeton Theological Seminary (a new institution, separate from Princeton University). Unless he attended a Catholic institution, practically everyone who went to college in the United States between, say, 1820 and 1870 learned the comprehensive moral philosophy of Scottish common sense.

Decline of Common Sense Realism

Scottish common sense realism in the United States reached a kind of culmination with James McCosh (1811–1894) of Princeton University. McCosh was a Scottish Presbyterian clergyman, who, like Witherspoon, was invited to take up the presidency of Princeton in 1868, exactly one hundred years after Witherspoon's arrival. McCosh defended what had become the conventional American academic philosophy in *Our Moral Nature* (1893) and *Philosophy of Reality* (1894). McCosh's neighbor at Princeton Theological Seminary, Charles Hodge, invoked common sense realism in his *What is Darwinism?* (1874), an attempt to refute Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. By this time, however, Scottish common sense realism had already fallen under serious criticism and had come to seem old-fashioned.

The dominance enjoyed by Scottish common sense realism declined in both Britain and the United States during the later decades of the nineteenth century. The



James McCosh, a Scottish Presbyterian clergyman, became president of Princeton University in 1868. He defended common sense realism when it came under assault during the late 1800s.

first important attack on it came not from a philosopher but from an historian. Henry Thomas Buckle (1821–1862), in *On Scotland and the Scotch Intellect* (1861), treated Scottish common sense philosophy as socially conservative and an instrument of clerical supremacy. Buckle's argument was based on the premise that deductive reasoning was elitist, while inductive reasoning was democratic. He then identified the Scottish philosophers with deduction, even though the thinkers considered themselves—often rightly—champions of Baconian induction. Buckle's caricature of common sense realism enjoyed a long life in intellectual historiography. Of more immediate effect was the assault that came from within the discipline of philosophy.

The great German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) had despised common sense realism, which he dismissed as an appeal to the judgment of the crowd. (Just the opposite of Buckle's criticism, it appears.) Nevertheless William Hamilton (1805–1865), appointed professor of moral philosophy at Edinburgh in 1836,

undertook to reconcile Kant with Reid and subsume Kant's views within the framework of Scottish common sense. Hamilton's work provoked one of the most effective rebuttals in the history of philosophy: John Stuart Mill's *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (1865). Like Buckle, Mill (1806–1873) considered common sense realism a philosophy of political conservatism; he made its destruction in favor of the phenomenalism of the British empiricists (that is, their belief that we know our perceptions rather than things in themselves) a necessary part of his own liberal political agenda. Not a first-rate thinker, Hamilton proved a sitting duck for Mill. The Edinburgh professor had died, but James McCosh and others went to his defense. Still, the intellectual world of the time soon decided that Mill had demolished not only Hamilton but common sense realism in general. The pedagogical use of Scottish moral philosophy declined to the vanishing point throughout Anglophone higher education. Today, Mill has survived as a great thinker while Hamilton is forgotten. Mill's *Examination of Hamilton* is ignored, too, and not considered one of his major philosophical writings.

Meanwhile in the United States, the isolated genius Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) was pioneering the philosophy of pragmatism along with other original intellectual endeavors. Peirce remained a metaphysical realist of sorts and developed his own argument for the existence of God. But his successors in the pragmatist tradition, William James (1842–1910) and John Dewey (1859–1952), departed further from the concerns of nineteenth-century academic philosophy. They saw the world as fluid and made by human beings, not as fixed and made by God. Like Mill they wanted a metaphysical foundation for democratic participation and did not see it in common sense realism. The rise of separate social sciences, which the pragmatists found hopeful, rendered the old-fashioned comprehensive academic course in moral philosophy obsolete. The version of common sense realism prevailing in American higher education had been Christian, and it is no accident that the secularizing universities of the early twentieth century hastened to leave it behind.

Twentieth Century: A Philosophical Revival

For most of the twentieth century, common sense realism remained in bad odor in the United States: out of fashion with philosophers, treated with condescension by historians, who followed in Buckle's footsteps. Joseph Blau

(1909–1986), in *Men and Movements in American Philosophy* (1952), expressed the prevailing view of the Scottish-American philosophy of common sense as naive, dogmatic, socially conservative, and the servant of an outmoded religion. Some of the advocates of common sense realism were indeed popularizers and polemicists (the Scotsmen James Beattie and James Oswald, for example) who deserved this treatment, but others were serious philosophers and educators who did not.

Significantly, philosophers and not historians led the revival of respect for Scottish common sense realism. Writing in *A History of American Philosophy* (1977), Elizabeth Flower (1915–1995) emphasized that the Scottish philosophy should be considered part of the Enlightenment, not a reaction against it, and even provided a sympathetic account of James McCosh's restatement of realist metaphysics. Not long afterwards, George Marsden (1939–) started to bring the intellectual historians around, describing the common sense realism of nineteenth-century American education as antielitist, democratic, and supportive toward natural science.

Crucial to the recovery of respect for the common sense realism of past times has been the fact of its being taken seriously in the present. Although common sense realism is now a minority metaphysical viewpoint, some noteworthy twentieth-century philosophers have embraced versions of it. The most famous of these was the Englishman George Edward Moore (1873–1958), usually called G. E. Moore. Moore defended metaphysical realism and, even more impressively, ethical intuitionism. He expounded the latter with extraordinary sophistication and persuasiveness, even in the face of the skepticism of the logical positivists (some of whom were his colleagues at Cambridge University). Moore did not believe in God, the major difference (apart from his greater analytic skill) between him and the earlier philosophers of common sense.

In the United States, common sense realism is still sometimes identified with evangelical Protestantism, including varieties of fundamentalism, but this is by no means invariably the case. Roderick Chisholm (1916–1999) and Amie Thomasson (1973–) have defended forms of common sense realism in recent years without reference to religion. Philosophers who formulate their own versions of common sense realism and synthesize them with Christianity include Alvin Plantinga (1932–) and Nicholas Rescher (1928–). It is a significant commentary on how the cultural climate has changed over the past century that the Protestant Plantinga

teaches in a Roman Catholic university and Rescher is a Catholic himself.

See also *Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Deism; Education: Colleges and Universities; Enlightenment; Ethics; Idealist Philosophy; Philosophical Theology; Philosophy; Pragmatism; Religious Thought* entries.

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Congregationalists

A distinct stream within the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English Reformation, Congregationalism is an old and influential American religious tradition. More specifically, Congregationalism was part of the Reformed wing of the Protestant Reformation, sharing broadly Calvinist beliefs but also emphasizing the freedom of the local church, formed by the signing of a members' covenant and unhindered by any higher forms of ecclesiastical authority.

At the same time, however, American Congregationalism has always insisted on the necessity of church connection. Since the earliest days of New England settlement, local

churches created various forms of mutual oversight, beginning with the Cambridge Platform of 1648 and continuing on through the evolution of a national denominational structure in the late nineteenth century.

But every move toward centralized structure has generated debate and controversy about Congregational identity, especially with the merger that created the United Church of Christ in 1957. Indeed, for a religious tradition with relatively few doctrinal requirements, the nature of "authentic Congregationalism" has remained a constant and often deeply vexing question.

The English Independents

Congregationalism originated in the dynastic woes of King Henry VIII (1491–1547), who wished an annulment of his first marriage in order to marry the young Anne Boleyn and produce a male heir. He had his way through the Act of Supremacy in 1534, which made him the "supreme head" of the Church of England. But though the act denied the authority of the Roman Catholic pope, it kept old beliefs and institutions intact; the Anglican Church, or Church of England, continued the hierarchical structure and ritual forms it had inherited from sixteenth-century Catholicism.

But Protestant dissenters saw in Henry's marital solution an opportunity to bring about more fundamental change. Those who wished to purify the English church of its Catholic elements—people often referred to in a generally pejorative sense as "Puritans"—began to envision a genuine fellowship of "visible saints," those who had undergone a spiritual change of heart. Under Henry VIII's daughter Elizabeth I (1533–1603), who attempted to chart a middle way between Protestant and Catholic parties within the Church of England, energy for reform swirled out of traditional government structures and into the streets and local churches. Dissenters began to join together in clandestine meetings or "conventicles," providing each other with biblical teaching and spiritual support and increasingly sharp critiques of the established religious order.

What emerged was not a linear debate between Anglicans and Protestants but a many-faceted discussion about the nature of a true church and the role of biblical authority. Most English Protestants accepted the foundational categories of Reformed theology, emphasizing the sovereignty of God, the dependent state of human beings, and the final authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and practice. But they differed on the means of application, especially in regard to worship and ecclesiology. Some, often known as Independents, took a minimalist approach to biblical

authority, insisting that only those practices specifically prescribed in scripture were permissible. Echoing in many ways an Anabaptist point of view, they refused to countenance any church order beyond that provided by the New Testament and pressed for simple lay-oriented structures with a minimum of hierarchy. A much larger group of more moderate Presbyterians argued that in matters pertaining to “adiaphora,” or “things indifferent,” broader Christian principles prevailed. Looking to Calvin’s Geneva and the state churches of Scotland as a model, they advocated a limited form of ecclesiastical oversight exercised through a graded system of presbyteries and synods.

By the late 1500s, increasing impatience with Elizabeth’s noncommittal policies began to fuel an urge toward entire separation from the Church of England. One of the earliest such was Robert Browne, whose *Treatise of Reformation without tarrying for anie* (1582) argued that godly piety was simply not possible under the Anglican Church and its lax exercise of spiritual discipline. Rejecting any forms of state control, Browne urged his followers not to “tarry for the magistrate” but to create their own churches by signing onto covenants together. Though the intemperate and apparently unstable Browne later recanted his position, his was an important early articulation of basic principles that later would become central to Congregational self-understanding.

During the later years of Elizabeth’s reign, pessimism spread. Leading Independents Henry Barrow and John Greenwood were executed in 1593; many others faced prison or banishment. Moreover, when James I took the throne in 1603, he inspired little confidence for positive change; thus, in 1608 a group of self-described Separatists, led by John Robinson and John Smyth, left England for the relative freedom of Holland. Smyth subsequently became a Baptist, but Robinson’s group of Pilgrims soldiered on. After a short stay in Leyden, they departed for New England, landing in Plymouth in the winter of 1620.

Non-Separatist Puritans, whose chief spokesmen were William Ames and Henry Jacob, held out for the importance of church connection. They sought to reform the Anglican Church from within, planting seeds of change through small congregational bodies within the existing structure. In their view, as long as the biblical word was preached and the sacraments regularly administered, the Church of England was still a legitimate home for Christian believers. In fact, non-Separatists argued that even the old parish system, which automatically assigned church membership to all those born in a certain geographic area, allowed its members to exercise free consent, and in some

form a covenantal arrangement, by the willing acceptance of their own clergy.

But prospects for reform grew dim under Archbishop William Laud (1573–1645). During the 1630s and 1640s, Laud’s High-Church policies and the monarchist agenda of King Charles I sparked a “great migration” of dissenting Protestants to New England. With upwards of twenty thousand new arrivals into Massachusetts Bay, churches grew rapidly—some twenty-nine in Massachusetts alone by 1640. Despite their large-scale departure, the settlers of Massachusetts Bay insisted that they had not abandoned their goal of reforming the English church. Especially as succeeding generations of Puritans settled into their new home across the Atlantic Ocean, they began to envision New England as a “city on a hill,” an explicitly godly community, and a righteous example for all the world to follow.

From Independent to Congregational

New England’s Puritans were not the dour, witch-hunting killjoys of American myth and legend. They were in many ways typical Elizabethan English men and women who enjoyed good ale and good company and who also held their religious beliefs with deep personal conviction. Early on they flourished in New England, buoyed by the conviction that they were God’s chosen people, with a central role in the unfolding of divine history. This confidence did not always make them easy to accommodate: when smallpox epidemics decimated the local Native American population, Puritan settlers accepted the tragedy as an affirmation of God’s providential care.

Very quickly the issues that once divided Independents from Separatists began to blur on New England soil. Without the Church of England as an ecclesiastical foil, questions about what constituted a “true church” needed to be addressed promptly and clearly. The very earliest Puritan settlements in Salem and Charlestown drew on Robert Browne’s notion of covenant as the means by which a legitimate church might be gathered, and this soon became a fundamental characteristic of the so-called Congregational Way. As Cotton Mather (1663–1728) described the practice in the late eighteenth century, a group of believers (with the minimum set at seven to follow the procedure laid down in Matthew 18:15–20) met together for a day of prayer and fasting before setting down their intention in a written agreement. These church covenants were sometimes lengthy, sometimes very short, but normally followed a dual pattern, laying out the new congregation’s obligations to God and to each other. Then each member signed his

or her name at the bottom of the document. Only at this point would the new congregation call a pastor, typically one already marked out as a spiritual leader but named to his new post as one church member among the rest. An ecclesiastical council of representatives from other nearby churches assisted in the ordination and installation of the new pastor, affirming—but not formally approving—the local congregation's choice.

Before long, however, the logic of the pure gathered church required new layers of ecclesiastical oversight. Often referred to as the constitution of American Congregationalism, the 1648 Cambridge Platform directly addressed worries, especially back in England, that New England churches were theologically rudderless. The Cambridge divines affirmed the Westminster Confession of 1643 as the standard of belief and outlined a “mixed polity” that affirmed the autonomy of local churches but within a larger structure of mutual oversight and care. Walking a fine line between Presbyterianism and out-and-out independency, the Platform allowed for the legitimacy of synods and local forms of cooperative supervision, while affirming the spiritual integrity of local congregations.

Churches in Connecticut tended to be less leery of cooperative forms than their coreligionists in Massachusetts. The first settlers in Connecticut, led by Cambridge pastor Thomas Hooker, left the original Puritan colony because they objected to what they saw as authoritarian trends. But the New Haven Colony, established in 1639, rested on a close alliance between church and state. In many ways, in fact, Connecticut leaned toward a more presbyterian polity: the Saybrook Platform of 1708 set up governing bodies with broad powers of ecclesiastical oversight. Under this system, associations composed of pastors and elders and “consociations” of representatives from local churches had the authority to decide disputes between churches and to approve and license new ministers. In Massachusetts, however, the basic form of association was between individual ministers themselves, a practice going back to the formation of the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers in 1692.

During the nineteenth century, many defenders of Congregational polity began to argue that the denomination's decentralized institutional structure was inherently democratic—and therefore a historical precursor of the United States Constitution. But in fact, the tie between Congregational ecclesiology and American political democracy is far from direct. Though, for example, all church members were

automatically voting members of their congregations and in the larger commonwealth, this privilege did not extend to women or to religious dissenters, who were still required to pay taxes for church support. Ecclesiological outliers, like Baptists and Quakers, or dissonant theological voices like Ann Hutchinson and Roger Williams, faced severe consequences, including banishment and persecution.

Still, contrary to the popular notion that Puritan settlements were theocratic—that is, ruled by the clergy—the government of the Massachusetts Bay colony included separate realms of activity for church and state. That partnership rested on an assumption that godly magistrates and the churches' spiritual leadership would always work cooperatively, maintaining covenant obligations that mirrored those governing local churches.

In the long run, of course, the arrangement was untenable, especially as the ranks of dissenters began to grow; but in the mid-seventeenth century, the obligations of church membership fell equally on all of the colony's inhabitants, whether or not they personally held to Puritan doctrines. Religious dissent was, in effect, illegal.

New England pastors also exercised considerable spiritual and intellectual authority, though within certain limits. In an age still bound by aristocratic assumptions, the minister's status in his community was taken for granted, simply by virtue of his superior training and erudition. Even so, however, evidence from church records shows that laypeople took their own covenant responsibilities very seriously. Though outright opposition to clerical authority was rare, many a disgruntled parishioner found ways to remind a pastor that he ruled only by his congregation's consent.

Spiritual unity was the highest goal, and in the end more important than the right of individual belief that Independents had guarded so carefully in England. Though the English Civil War ultimately brought about the Act of Toleration in 1689, allowing dissenting bodies to exist within a structure dominated by the state Church of England, New England churches resisted its imposition. Put simply, their primary purpose was not to provide a haven of religious liberty for all but to establish and maintain close-knit covenanted communities of visible saints.

Congregationalists in the Age of Revivals

In its ideal form, Congregational church government required high levels of individual piety and zeal. From early on, new members were required to “give a relation,” or publicly testify to a genuine conversion experience, in order

to join. Not just the minister and deacons but the entire congregation vetted the spiritual authenticity of each new applicant. Though the practice proved difficult to maintain in its pure form—relatively quickly exceptions were made for women deemed too modest to endure this kind of scrutiny—every effort was made to ensure that the unconverted would not compromise the congregation's spiritual purity.

But zeal did not translate easily across generations. Already in 1662 leaders of Massachusetts Bay had had to make allowances for the children of parents who had not passed the hurdle of church membership. The Half-Way Covenant created in effect a new type of church member, one who had not experienced conversion and who could not participate in the sacrament of Communion but, having publicly owned the church's covenant, could present children for baptism.

This pragmatic solution raised difficult questions of ecclesiology that would roil Congregational churches for the next century or more. Though nearly every New England church eventually accepted the Half-Way standard for membership, disputes divided leading churches and pitted eminent divines against each other in prolonged public debates. One of the most famous voices was that of Northampton pastor Solomon Stoddard (1643–1729), who defended the Half-Way Covenant as a converting ordinance, a way of keeping young families within the spiritual purview of their local church. He was vigorously opposed by Richard and Increase Mather, pastors of Boston's Second Congregational Church, who decried the decline in piety that made the new measure necessary.

The transatlantic religious revival known as the First Great Awakening tilted the scale in the other direction, back toward an insistence on heart piety as a requirement for church membership. During the 1730s and 1740s, under the fiery preaching of itinerating evangelists such as George Whitefield, Gilbert Tennent, and James Davenport, thousands of laypeople experienced dramatic adult conversions and became increasingly critical of the spiritual laxity they saw around them. All across New England Congregational dominance began to splinter, with self-described New Lights insisting on the necessity of a primal experience of grace and the Old Lights wary of the excessive emotionalism that often accompanied such religious "enthusiasm." At one end of the spectrum, Baptists and Separate Congregationalists lobbed insistent criticisms against the spiritually lukewarm clergy and unrevived church members in the established churches; in their view, the common

denominator of any religious fellowship was a personal encounter with Christ. At the other end of the spectrum, churchmen such as Charles Chauncy (1705–1787), who pastored Boston's First Church, argued that spiritual pyrotechnics of the revival were a counterfeit, distracting honest believers from embracing the means of grace already available through the ordinances of a duly gathered local congregation.

The enlarging debate generated a variety of intellectually sophisticated responses, none more influential than those of Northampton pastor Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). An unapologetic defender of "religious affections" and a thorough scholar with a firm grasp of the Enlightenment critique of revealed religion, Edwards was an unparalleled philosopher and theologian. In his many published treatises and devotional works, Edwards constructed a subtle combination of classic Calvinism with a more modern affirmation of the authenticity of human moral choices.

Though the grandson and for much of his career a disciple of Solomon Stoddard, Edwards decisively parted ways with Stoddard's ecclesiology in the course of the revivals. In Edwards's view, parents who joined the church to have their children baptized were the worst possible influence on the tender faith of young children. He announced to his congregation that he would no longer acknowledge Half-Way members or baptize their offspring; nothing but a genuine change of heart would suffice. In many ways, Edwards's appeal won the day. The Half-Way model fell into disuse by the early nineteenth century, especially with a subsequent groundswell of religious fervor. But questions about what constituted membership in a Congregational church and about the nature of Congregational identity were far from over.

Nineteenth-Century Setbacks and Successes

The Revolutionary War was an important benchmark in Congregational history. Hundreds of New England clergy sided with the cause of independence, helping to organize militias, providing service as chaplains, and organizing boycotts of British goods. Some clergy, such as John Adams of Durham, New Hampshire, even led raids against British forts; Adams reportedly stored the gunpowder he acquired under his pulpit. But most of all, through fiery sermons and literary skill, the "black regiment" of New England's gowned clergy helped the Revolution to succeed.

In practical terms, however, American independence presented Congregationalists with some serious challenges. By the late 1700s, the New England clergy, sometimes referred

to as the Standing Order, were hardly enthusiastic at the prospect of a full Jeffersonian-style democracy, nor were they prepared for the effect of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, cutting off all religious groups from any forms of government support. When Massachusetts became the last state to encode this principle into its own state constitution in 1833, the heart of the old Congregational order finally faced the unsettling prospect of relying on the voluntary donations of their members for survival.

The Dedham Decision of 1820 was another important defining point in Congregational history. The court case originated in a dispute in Dedham, Massachusetts, between the local parish and the gathered congregation, each claiming the right to name the next minister. By that time many Congregational churches were supported both by a society, defined geographically, and the church, which encompassed the worshipping body of visible saints. In the Dedham case, the church called a conservative pastor who the parish did not support, raising an immediate question about which group would have priority. The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court sided with the society, reasoning that the group paying the bills had the prior claim. The worshipping members of the Dedham church, and many others across eastern Massachusetts, were forced to leave their historic properties and build anew.

The Dedham Decision widened a growing divide between Trinitarian and Unitarian groups. By then, deep differences over the role of rationality in religious belief, forged within the fires of the First Great Awakening, had created two separate and increasingly disaffected parties. William Ellery Channing (1780–1842), pastor of Boston's Federal Street Church, laid out the basic differences in a sermon on "Unitarian Christianity" for the ordination of Jared Sparks in 1819. In short order, all of Boston's original Congregational churches—except for Boston's Third or Old South Church—identified with the Unitarian party.

Hampered by disestablishment and division, Congregationalists found it difficult to expand beyond their traditional New England base, though the problem was hardly new in the nineteenth century. When a Puritan congregation from Massachusetts attempted to form a church in Nansmond County, Virginia, in 1649, the colonial authorities forced them to leave—this despite the intercession of Massachusetts governor John Winthrop. Another group from Dorchester, Massachusetts, formed a church in Charles-town, South Carolina, sometime around 1680; in 1752 an

offshoot of this congregation settled in Midway, Georgia. But despite these scattered efforts, by the end of the colonial period, Congregationalism was thoroughly entrenched in New England. Indeed, by the 1830s, nine-tenths of all Congregational churches were located in that region; half a century later, the figure was still around two-thirds, with the vast majority of other Congregationalists in states due west—the so-called "Yankee Exodus" states of New York, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

Much of that expansion was the ambiguous by-product of an agreement that Congregationalists contracted with Presbyterians in 1801. Under the Plan of Union both groups agreed to pool their resources to allow for more efficient church planting on the frontier. Individual congregations could call a minister from either body and could participate in local presbyteries or ministers' associations regardless of their stated polity. By 1835, some 149 of these "presbygational" churches had been established just in the Western Reserve territory of Ohio; scores of others dotted the Great Lakes and upper Midwest, from New York to Iowa. The Plan of Union also included efforts to evangelize Native Americans and to establish institutions of higher learning. There the partnership was very successful, with an array of colleges stretching from Illinois, Knox, Beloit, Grinnell, and Rockford Colleges in the Midwest to a school that eventually became the University of California in 1868.

But both Presbyterians and Congregationalists found it difficult to compete with Methodists and Baptists. Only lightly invested in money and property, these "upstart" denominations expanded rapidly into the western frontier, soon overtaking Congregationalists in numbers, if not in cultural prestige. Thus, between 1776 and 1850, Methodism emerged as the leading denomination in the United States. Though some 20 percent of all religious adherents in 1776, Congregationalists numbered barely 4 percent by 1850.

Even so, the early nineteenth century was an important time of institution building. In 1810 Congregationalists sponsored the first national foreign missionary society, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). Intended as a cooperative venture with Presbyterians, and the Dutch and German Reformed, by 1870 the American Board eventually became a solely Congregational entity, notable for a broad program of educational and humanitarian outreach from the Middle East to Hawaii to Japan. In its early days, the American Board also conducted a far-reaching home missionary program; in 1830 ABCFM missionaries took a public stand opposing the American

government's Indian Removal Act, specifically the forcible resettling of Cherokees from their homes in Tennessee and Alabama into the Oklahoma Territory.

In 1826 Congregationalists were lead sponsors of the American Home Missionary Society (AHMS), an organization dedicated to establishing churches in the western frontier. Originally involving Presbyterians and Dutch Reformed supporters, the AHMS also eventually lost its interdenominational character, changing its name to the Congregational Home Missionary Society in 1893. Congregationalists also helped found other organizations that in turn became non-denominational, including the American Tract Society (1825) and the American Education Society (1826).

The American Missionary Association (AMA), formed in 1846, joined the denomination's antislavery zeal with its commitments to education and evangelism. The AMA was an antislavery alternative to the ABCFM, originating in efforts of abolitionists to win the freedom of mutinying slaves on the ship *Amistad* in 1839. In the post-Civil War years, hundreds of AMA missionaries, including scores of young women and ex-slaves, established an educational network of primary and secondary schools across the South. Many of the colleges the AMA helped form became prestigious African American institutions, including Howard, Fisk, Atlanta, and Talladega.

Congregationalists were also pioneers in seminary education. Andover Theological Seminary, founded in 1807, was the first freestanding American theological seminary and in fact the first American graduate school of any kind. Its three-year curriculum also became a standard for ministerial education across all Protestant denominations. Other Congregational seminaries soon followed after Andover, including Bangor (1816), Yale (1822), and Hartford Seminary (1833), carrying forward an intellectual tradition of educated clergy established by the original Puritan settlers, who founded Harvard College in 1636.

Congregationalists also made important contributions to American theological thought. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the New England theology, articulated and taught by the heirs of Jonathan Edwards, defined mainstream Protestant theological discourse. The so-called New Divinity Party—men like Nathaniel Emmons, Samuel Hopkins, and Joseph Bellamy—led a complex debate about Calvinist doctrines of sin and predestination and about the social responsibilities of Christians. In the mid-nineteenth century New Haven pastor Horace Bushnell (1802–1876) laid the groundwork for the development of liberal thought.

In contrast to the more rationalist presuppositions of the New England theology, Bushnell emphasized the poetic, metaphoric nature of religious truth and the immanence of God in human experience. Bushnell's insistence that God lived within the most minute human interactions, described in his ground-breaking book on *Christian Nurture* (1847), laid the groundwork for liberal theories about child rearing and created an important rationale for the expansion of Sunday schools and other forms of religious education.

Other Congregational theologians, led by the faculty at Andover Seminary, developed Bushnell's ideas even further. In the late nineteenth century, the so-called new theology rejected the formal categories of Calvinist thought, emphasizing instead a more optimistic, ethical creed centering on Christ's role as a moral exemplar and affirming human efforts to bring about a just and peaceful social order. By the early twentieth century, these views were no longer those of the radical few, as liberal theology dominated the curriculum of most Congregational seminaries and spread rapidly into church pulpits across the country.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Congregationalists also became identified with a variety of progressive causes. In some cases, the denomination's loose polity allowed for innovative changes at the local level, including the ordination of the first woman to the Protestant ministry, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, in 1853. During the late nineteenth century, many Congregationalists, most notably pastor and writer Washington Gladden, were leading figures in the social gospel movement. This loose coalition of pastors, parish workers, and scholars worked to establish the "kingdom of God on earth" by campaigning for the rights of labor unions and aid to the urban poor.

Ecumenism

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Congregationalists moved toward a more centralized structure. The process officially began at the Albany Convention of 1852, the first national gathering since the Cambridge Synod of 1646. The occasion for this meeting was simmering discontent with the Plan of Union, by then widely perceived as a win for Presbyterians, who had reaped the majority of newly planted churches. ("They have milked our Congregational cows," one critic exclaimed, "and made nothing but Presbyterian butter and cheese.") But in fact, the Plan of Union exposed the weakness of Congregationalism's decentralized polity, especially when isolated and struggling mission churches demanded support. Indeed, one major

outcome of the Albany Convention was the formation of the Congregational Church Building Society, an organization that provided funding for new churches in the West.

The Plan of Union also opened Congregationalists to criticism for their relatively open doctrinal stance. Indeed, the more conservative Old School faction of Presbyterians had repudiated the arrangement back in 1834, objecting to a lack of theological rigor among their New England partners. Not surprisingly, when Congregationalists convened again after the Civil War, talk turned to the necessity of some common creedal understanding.

The Boston Council of 1865 extended and further defined the work at Albany, involving some five hundred delegates from the various state organizations. One of the main results was the adoption of the Burial Hill Declaration of Faith at an historic site in Plymouth, the first such common statement since the Cambridge Synod. The Boston Council also adopted a “Statement of Congregational Principles,” codifying important points of polity for the first time.

Formal denominational organization came in 1871, with the creation of a permanent body, the National Council of Congregational Churches, in Oberlin, Ohio. The Council, which was composed of equal numbers of lay and clergy representatives chosen by their state organizations, had no formal legislative power over local churches. Its stated purpose was to oversee the work of Congregational missionary organizations, encouraging local churches to support the ABCFM and the AMA and dividing up their overlapping mission fields for maximum efficiency. To offset any lingering perception of sectarianism, the Oberlin meeting also produced a ringing “Declaration on the Unity of the Church,” affirming the unity and integrity of “all those who love and serve our common Lord.”

Other denominational statements followed. A Commission Creed, adopted in 1883, replaced the Burial Hill Declaration with a more nuanced liberal version. The Kansas City Declaration of Faith, adopted in 1913, put the denomination on record as a socially progressive body, working on behalf of justice, peace, and human “brotherhood.”

The push toward greater centralization tracked with a rising denominational consciousness during the early twentieth century. The National Council of 1907, for example, recommended a common legal structure for all of the various local organizations that had evolved to carry on the work of the churches since the seventeenth century, replacing all of the missionary societies, vicinage councils, associations, and consociations with a uniform arrangement of state conferences. A Commission of Nineteen, appointed

in 1910, tackled the financial and administrative complexities resulting from the decentralized structure of the denomination’s various missionary and educational organizations—in all some ten agencies, including three women’s boards and three different home missionary boards. Adoption of their recommendations in 1913 led to a closer relationship between these boards and the local churches represented in the National Council and, by 1929, to mergers that ended the independent existence of the various women’s boards.

Congregationalists also courted mergers with other denominations. In 1886, a Permanent Commission on Church Unity voted to unite with the Free Baptist churches, a move that was ultimately unsuccessful. But a few years later, in 1892, the Congregational Methodist Churches, a largely southern body affiliated with the Congregational Churches of Georgia, came under the wing of the National Council. Ensuing years saw a variety of ecumenical proposals—from Episcopalians, Disciples of Christ, Methodist Protestants, United Brethren, and Universalists—but little institutional change. Still, in 1925, the National Council accepted into fellowship the Conference of the Evangelical Protestant Churches of North America, a group of twenty-seven liberal German churches centered around Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Cincinnati, Ohio.

The most important merger occurred in 1931 with the General Convention of the Christian Churches. The Christians, who numbered only around one hundred thousand (compared to slightly less than one million Congregationalists), were a loosely organized group, composed of several different geographic strands. One originated in New England in the early 1800s, under the leadership of Elias Smith and Abner Jones, both fiercely dedicated to liberty of conscience and an absolute minimum of church hierarchy. About that same time in Virginia, James O’Kelly gathered a group in opposition to the hierarchical structure of the Methodist Episcopal Church; Barton W. Stone led a similar protest against the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky. By the late nineteenth century, all three groups had found a common cause and adopted the simple name of “Christians,” reflecting their opposition to all forms of sectarian labeling. One large segment of African American churches in the upper South formed an affiliated Afro-Christian Convention in 1892.

Though Christians were on the whole more rural and less affluent than Congregationalists, both groups shared a commitment to organizational simplicity and freedom of thought; the new denomination they formed had a relatively minimal structure. The General Council of

Congregational Christian Churches consolidated all of the missionary boards into two, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the Home Mission Board, and created a Council for Social Action in 1934. Some social conventions, especially around race, remained untouched, however. The Afro-Christian Convention and African American Congregationalists in the South remained segregated, merging to form a single entity, the Convention of the South, in 1950.

The Council for Social Action soon became the focus of controversy. Its primary tasks were to gather and disseminate information about social problems, including labor relations, rural life, international relations, and race. But critics saw an anticapitalist bias in the Council's published materials, a suspicion amplified by an "anti-profit-motive" resolution passed by the General Council in 1934. Spiritual Mobilization, a group founded by Los Angeles pastor James Fifield in 1935, campaigned tirelessly against the denomination's perceived left-leaning agenda throughout the 1940s and 1950s, gathering strength with the rise of anticommunist fervor during the postwar decades.

UCC, NACC, CCCC

After World War II, the Congregational Christian Churches emerged as a leading voice for ecumenical cooperation. Already in 1891, with the formation of the International Congregational Council (ICC), American Congregationalists had become part of a wide network of sister churches from around the world. The ICC met roughly every decade during the early twentieth century; Americans such as Douglas Horton gave key leadership, but the gatherings themselves incorporated an array of denominational bodies from Great Britain, Canada, India, and the Philippines.

In 1937 leaders of the Congregational Christian churches—Truman Douglass, George M. Gibson, and Douglas Horton—began to discuss the possibility of union with leaders from the Evangelical and Reformed Church, a denomination formed by an earlier merger in 1934 of two German immigrant bodies. After years of negotiation, a Joint Committee on Union issued a Basis of Union in 1947. That July the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church approved the document, and prospects for merger looked relatively bright.

But on the Congregational Christian side, the Basis of Union proved deeply controversial and led to a series of departures. In 1948, evangelical churches opposed to the denomination's liberal theological stance formed the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference (CCCC).

The CCCC maintained a strong emphasis on liberty of conscience but within a conservative evangelical doctrinal framework. Some fifty years after its founding, the denomination numbered 242 churches and more than forty thousand members.

The National Association of Congregational Churches (NACC) provided a home for congregations and individuals who opposed the 1957 merger for polity reasons. Critics argued that a union with the Evangelical and Reformed Church would impose a Presbyterian structure that was fundamentally at odds with historical Congregationalism. They also argued that the General Council had no legal right to unite with another denomination, as this was the sole prerogative of local churches. The NACC, formed in Evanston, Illinois, in 1955, thus emphasized the authority of the gathered congregation and the right of churches to modify any act by a national body. Fifty years after its founding, the denomination reported more than four hundred churches and sixty-five thousand members.

The final merger leading to the creation of the United Church of Christ (UCC) came after a decade of tumult. In 1949 the General Council put the question of union with the Evangelical and Reformed to local churches, hoping for a 75 percent vote in favor; when the resulting return fell just short (72.8 percent), the Council declared it an acceptable mandate and voted to move ahead. Soon after, the Cadman Memorial Church in Brooklyn, New York, filed suit against Helen Kenyon, the moderator of the General Council, charging the denomination's leaders with a misuse of power. A complex progression of court rulings, appeals, and reversals delayed any other progress toward merger for several years, until the New York Court of Appeals dismissed the Cadman case in 1953. Shortly afterward, in 1956, the General Council of Congregational Churches voted (1,310 to 179) to go ahead with merger plans. After a parallel vote from the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, a Uniting General Synod met in Cleveland, Ohio, on June 25, 1957, to form the UCC.

Like many mainline Protestant denominations, the UCC endured substantial membership loss, especially from the 1980s onward. Some of the decline was due to demographic factors—a declining birthrate for one—and some of it was related to a general mainline "malaise" in the face of the resurgent evangelical movement of the mid- to late twentieth century. In 2008 the UCC numbered just over 5,600 churches and 1.2 million members, a precipitous drop from the denomination's high point of 2.2 million members during the early 1960s.

Conclusion

Congregationalism is an important American tradition, though in some ways a vanishing one. Because of the tradition's historic aversion to creedal or doctrinal requirements, and because of its decentralized structure, Congregationalism was a relatively poor competitor in the American religious marketplace. Over the course of its long existence, the denomination has divided and merged several times, sometimes by choice and sometimes under duress. Consequently, in terms of sheer numbers, Congregationalism no longer enjoys the cultural and intellectual preeminence it once took for granted.

But in many other ways, Congregationalism is so deeply rooted in American religious life that its influence is almost impossible to measure. Its democratic and locally oriented polity is now broadly characteristic of many other denominations, from Baptists to Mennonites; even more hierarchically oriented denominations such as Catholics and Episcopalians have adopted more representative structures than their European counterparts. Congregationalism's historical insistence on toleration for other beliefs—a somewhat ironic legacy of its Puritan founders and their insistence on the freedom of the individual conscience—has also shaped modern acceptance of religious pluralism. The denomination's formidable intellectual contribution has long played a central role in the American historical narrative. Though the Puritans and their descendents are now no longer the first or only story historians tell about the nation's religious past, they are still an important and an intriguing one.

See also *American Revolution; Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Architecture: Early America; Congregations; Denominationalism; Ecumenism; Great Awakening(s); Mainline Protestants; Missions: Domestic; New England Region; Pilgrims; Polity; Presbyterians entries; Puritans; Reformed Tradition and Heritage; Unitarians.*

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Congregations

In the last two decades of the twentieth century, *congregation* became the generic term for local religious institutions in the United States, a term intentionally inclusive of entities known to their own constituents by a great variety of names: church, parish, worship center, ward, synagogue, temple, mosque, Islamic center, *mandir*, *wat*, meditation center, and *gurdwara*, among other designations. Intending to

build on the ordinary sense of the term, scholars define the American congregation as an institution with regular and frequent face-to-face gatherings that are understood by their participants to be religious in nature but are predominantly composed of religious laity (nonprofessionals). The predominance of nonprofessionals, or what this article will call “religious amateurs,” is crucial. Congregations may be, but are not necessarily, led by religious professionals, who are disproportionately male. But the majority of those who attend congregations, and do their volunteer work, are women. In this sense, the work of congregations is disproportionately women’s work.

Congregations often own the building in which they meet, but many do not, instead renting their meeting spaces from other congregations or from such secular institutions as schools. Thus, there are more “congregations” in America than there are freestanding church buildings. Congregations so defined are widespread and prevalent across the United States, numbering approximately 330,000 in the year 2000.

The Study of Congregations

Systematic social scientific knowledge of congregations as units of analysis began with the work of H. Paul Douglass in the 1920s, with ironic results. Douglass’s studies led to efforts to curtail what was perceived as excessive proliferation of and differentiation among competing congregations, for which interdenominational cooperation was proposed. By the middle third of the twentieth century, congregations were generally regarded as unworthy of the attention of scholars or religious activists. Congregations were seen as especially conducive to bad faith, while seminaries and denominational and interchurch agencies were seen as conducive to religious integrity. Liberal clergy in the 1960s learned that their efforts to promote religiously inspired social change were more likely to be successful the further away they stayed from congregational entanglement.

The focus of scholars’ and activists’ attention changed in the 1970s as the fortunes of ecumenically inclined denominations and interchurch agencies declined from their 1960s peaks. Some scholars thought “new religious movements” were an exciting research frontier in the face of denominational decline, and conservative religious activists found meaningful engagement in such parachurch agencies as InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. But other scholars and church activists insisted that whatever future religion had in the United States, and whatever potential it promised for the betterment of the society, must ultimately rise

on the convictions nurtured and resources generated in congregations. From their point of view, the congregational bedrock of American religion had been rediscovered. Well-endowed foundations, notably the Lilly Endowment, encouraged their aspirations. Meanwhile, by the late 1970s, a small literature on congregations began to emerge, stimulated more by disciplinary agendas within sociology and anthropology (for example, participant observation, symbolic interaction, racial and ethnic studies) and religious studies (especially of non-Christian communities) than by religious agendas. A field of “congregational studies” coalesced by the mid-1980s.

The new field was made up of scholars and religious leaders of different backgrounds looking from different points of view. Historians produced new studies and collected extant ones of local religious communities from colonial times to the present. Some of these were the work of academic researchers, while others were labors of love on the part of dedicated amateurs. Researcher-activists based in divinity schools promoted and encouraged efforts on the part of congregations to understand their own cultures, social processes, and environmental challenges, the better to pursue their mission objectives. Large, well-funded, academically based projects employing the talents of multiple researchers took on the tasks of understanding how Vatican II changed American parishes; how congregations dealt with economic, social, and cultural changes in their communities; why and how most congregations were racially homogeneous (and a very few are heterogeneous); and in what kinds of congregations post-1965 immigrants were involved.

The resulting literature in congregational studies consisted disproportionately of single-case studies. Some projects compared multiple congregations within a single locale or sharing a particular situation (for example, economic downturn in the community). But it was difficult to generalize from these studies because what statisticians call the “sampling frame” from which they were drawn remained unknown. Eventually, Mark Chaves devised a “hypernetwork sampling” technique that in 1998 produced, for the first time, a representative sample of all American congregations in the “National Congregations Study” (NCS). By 2008, the NCS had undergone a second iteration. In the hypernetwork technique, randomly drawn respondents to the General Social Survey were asked if they attended religious services, and those who answered in the affirmative were then asked to name the institution in question. The result was a random sample of congregations, with the

chances of a given congregation's inclusion being proportional to its number of constituents. NCS researchers then contacted a key informant in each congregation with a lengthy battery of questions. The 1998 NCS has data on 1,234 congregations, and the 2008 survey has data on 1,506. These data can be used to weight the results of nonrandom but nonetheless large and representative samples of American congregations—for example, the survey conducted by the project on “Organizing Religious Work,” directed by Nancy Ammerman in 1997–1999.

Such survey data inform this article. Yet because small groups (either of individuals or institutions) are statistically unlikely to be chosen in random sample surveys such as the General Social Survey, the NCS can tell us little about, for example, congregations of Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus, to name three important and growing religious communities, each of which accounted for little more than 1 percent of the American population in 2000. So the field of congregational studies will continue to rely on case studies and denominational rosters for much basic information.

Distributions

About 96 percent of America's 330,000 congregations in 2000 were Christian institutions, and, of them, about 94 percent were Protestant, the remaining Christian congregations being primarily Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox. The predominance of Protestant congregations is important, for, as we shall see, they have historically set the tone for other religious communities in the United States. Nonetheless, the number of non-Christian congregations has grown swiftly and significantly since the 1960s to about 12,000 in 2005. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the largest group of non-Christian congregations comprised Jewish synagogues, temples, and *shuls*, numbering some 3,500. Mosques and Islamic centers numbered between 1,200 and 2,000, Unitarian churches and Buddhist centers each numbered slightly more than 1,000, and there were smaller but rapidly growing numbers of Hindu *mandirs* and Sikh *gurdwaras*.

Congregations vary enormously in the number of participants who compose them, and some of this variation is best explained by norms specific to one or another religious tradition. In general, Catholic parishes serve a thousand or more families, while the majority of Protestant congregations have fewer than a hundred regular attendees. Some Hindu temples serve dispersed populations that span several states, whereas Buddhist centers tend to have smaller constituencies. Synagogues tend to have more member families

than Protestant churches, although with a lower rate of regular attendance. Thus, the congregation gathered for a *shabbat* service in a large synagogue may number no more persons than are found every week in a small to midsize Protestant church. Methodist and Baptist congregations, disproportionately located in rural and small-town locations, tend to be very small, although there are many exceptions to such a generalization.

Most churches are small, but most worshippers attend large churches. In 1998, half of all American congregations had seventy-five or fewer regular attendees, but the average religiously active person attended a church with four hundred or more other worshippers. Thus, there are important differences between characteristics of “the average church” (which is very small) and the church of the “average churchgoer” (which is far larger). (“Average” here refers to the median, not to the arithmetic mean.) Both perspectives matter. Insofar as we are interested in what most churchgoers experience, we must pay attention to larger congregations. Insofar as churches themselves count, as units of representation in denominations or as icons of “religion” in America, we cannot neglect smaller ones.

Starting in the 1970s, such “skewness” became more pronounced. “Megachurches” (defined as congregations with weekly attendance of two thousand or more) attracted a larger proportion of the Protestant churchgoing population, at the expense of smaller congregations. What seemed to be happening was that it became increasingly hard to do what congregations are expected to do on the restricted resources that small congregations can command. In a highly mobile society where even faithful churchgoers find themselves looking for a church in a new hometown, people will be drawn to churches that can provide high-quality Sunday schools, youth programs, and worship music. Small churches will lose members who move away and will find it harder to replace them with people new to the community. But being conservative institutions that enshrine memories of ancestors, small churches do not easily die. They plod along with ever fewer members and programs. The end result is an increasingly skewed distribution with a few large churches attracting a rising percentage of the churchgoing population and a large and only slowly diminishing number of small churches serving a declining percentage.

Structural Types: Congregation, Parish, and Temple

The size distribution of American congregations not only tracks the increasing differentiation between megachurches

and the ordinary run of Protestant congregations. It also coincides with religiously defined differences in local religious institutions that may be obscured by the use of the generic term *congregation*. Strictly speaking, from an ecclesiastical point of view, a congregation is an assembly or gathering of voluntarily participating believers. In the congregational traditions, especially among Baptists and Jews, the congregation is, as the etymology of the word suggests, defined socially, by those who assemble to comprise it. (In the Roman Catholic tradition, a “congregation” is a religious order whose members take “simple” rather than “solemn” vows. Not only is that a different usage than the generic term that is the topic of this article, it is an opposed term, insofar as a Catholic “congregation” consists entirely of religious specialists whereas the congregation as we are discussing it consists primarily of religious amateurs.) The Baptist or Jewish congregation is autonomous, governed by its laity through a board of elders, deacons, or trustees. It hires (and fires) religious professionals. “Congregation” is a bottom-up concept for the local branch of the people of God.

Because the congregation is a voluntary association, most of its work is carried out by religious amateurs in groups dedicated to activities (rehearsing choral anthems, teaching Sunday school, counting the offering, assembling the monthly newsletter, maintaining the building, and cooking soup and sewing clothes for the needy) that draw on their talents and provide them with a meaningful connection to their faith. Congregations tend to be busy places where the religious content of many activities may not be immediately obvious to the outside observer.

Because they are defined socially, as voluntary gatherings, rather than administratively, by ecclesiastical mandate, and depend on the unpaid labor of their members, congregations are especially subject to what sociologists call the principle of “homophily,” the pattern by which like chooses like. Because friendship choices in American society are heavily determined by race, congregations tend to be racially and ethnically homogeneous or, to use a less benign word, segregated. According to sociologist Michael Emerson, only 5 percent of American Protestant congregations in 1998 could fairly claim to be multiracial.

The local unit of the Roman Catholic Church that is parallel to “congregation” in the sense of this article is the “parish.” In the Catholic tradition, parishes are defined spatially, in terms of the place, especially the neighborhood, in which they are located, rather than socially, in terms of the people who compose them. When the neighborhood is

segregated, so is the parish. Yet because of their somewhat less voluntary constitution, Catholic parishes are more likely to be multiracial than Protestant congregations. In the past, the rectory was home to a corps of priests who served the parish. Today, the priest-parishioner ratio has greatly declined with the reduction in priestly vocations and the growth of the Catholic population (especially due to immigration). Many parishes now have only one resident priest; some have none. The constituent population of Catholic parishes is much higher than that of most Protestant congregations, and the disparity is growing.

An important exception to the spatial definition of the Catholic parish occurred as a result of the great migration of a century ago (roughly 1880–1920), when American bishops authorized “national parishes,” defined by the immigrant group whom they served (and who often funded their construction). Thus, many American cities have a heritage of “German,” “Italian,” and “Polish” Catholic parishes that at one time enjoyed ecclesiastical sanction. But pressures toward Americanization, especially during and after World War I, brought about a renewed stress on the territorial definition of the parish. During the 1920s, the church became less willing to designate national parishes for Catholic immigrants. The typical pattern at the end of the twentieth century was for a territorially defined parish to offer masses in more than one language, Spanish being the most widespread.

The Protestant congregation and the Catholic parish are venues for ritual observances (a “service of worship” or a “mass”) on the part of an assembly of the religiously defined community in a space large enough to accommodate their numbers. A third type of local religious institution may be called the “temple,” using this term more in the manner of Mormons and Hindus than Reform Jews (for whom “temple” is a synonym for “synagogue”). Many rituals in Hindu and Buddhist temples consist of esoteric interactions between individuals or families and religious specialists; some important rituals are conducted by priests in the absence of any lay devotees. Some of the most sacred of Mormon rituals are conducted in the temple with only a small number of people present. Because of the relatively small numbers of Hindus in the United States and their dispersed pattern of residence, some of the largest and most prominent Hindu temples in the United States are devoted to the service of multiple deities. Thus, *pujas* in service to several gods, each involving a handful of participants, occur simultaneously on the temple grounds. If the main worship event in a Protestant church can give it the air of a movie

theater, the profusion of parallel worship activities in a Hindu temple can make it feel a bit like a trade fair.

De Facto Congregationalism

Notwithstanding these hallowed differences across religious traditions, Stephen Warner proposed in 1994 that a process of “de facto congregationalism” was at work in American religion at large. American Protestants’ beliefs (for example, about the Bible) and practices (for example, hymn singing) were decreasingly aligned with their denominational affiliation and increasingly with the congregation they attended. For their part, many Protestant congregations made decreasing public reference to their denominational affiliation, identification of which began to appear in ever smaller type on their signboards. Individual Catholics felt increasingly free to attend a parish other than the one territorially defined for them. Canon law was relaxed to make territoriality only a “determining” principle instead of being “constitutive” of the parish. “Magnet” or “niche” parishes were developed by entrepreneurial priests to serve diverse Catholic constituencies: Irish, African American, gay and lesbian, progressive and conservative, those who fought to extend Vatican II reforms and those who harked back to the Tridentine (or Latin) Mass. Naming one’s parish was no longer a shortcut way of referring to where one lived; it became a signal of one’s values.

Warner’s de facto congregationalism extended to new, often non-Christian, communities in the United States as well. Members of immigrant groups who initially came together to create suitable worship spaces in their new homeland often found that the space served them as well as a place to speak their home country language and eat their home country food in the company of their fellows. As often the immigrant group’s most prominent public space in their new American home, the religious institution recommended itself for the observance of ceremonies that are not, in their religion, strictly speaking religious, for example, weddings in some Buddhist traditions. As their children grew up speaking English and adopting ways of American youth, the parents’ religious space provided a critical mass of people of somewhat similar backgrounds or ethnicities to undergird the norms they wanted their children to respect. Finding themselves unable to explain what to their children seemed exotic religious beliefs and practices, immigrant parents recognized that new programs of religious education were called for. Pursuing these ends, they found that they needed to raise money, and for that purpose they learned

how to take advantage of tax deductions for religious contributions. Some found it necessary to honor donors and to specify the names of those who would be eligible for the services their emerging institutions intended to provide. The congregational pattern of the Protestant majority (and of Jews, the largest and most well-established non-Christian minority) recommended itself to them.

De facto congregationalism is an instance of a process sociologists call “institutional isomorphism.” (The paradigmatic case is the widespread adoption of the organizational form known as “bureaucracy.”) Pressures toward isomorphism can come from law (for instance, qualifying for Internal Revenue Service recognition as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization) and from expectations on the part of interested parties. An imam of an Islamic center may learn from members of the interfaith clergy association ways to address the Muslim community’s needs. A doctor who invites a coworker’s family to her son’s wedding may be asked if the wedding is going to take place in her Buddhist temple. But not all processes toward congregationalism come from American pressure or models. Innovations in religious organization take place all over the modern world, wherever religion is decreasingly taken for granted. Several Hindu movements (for example, Chinmaya Mission, Swadhyay Parivar, and the Swaminarayan sect) organized themselves in India in ways that, intentionally or not, turned out to be well suited to American conditions, especially because of their focus on explicit instruction in rites that Hindu temples ordinarily take as culturally given.

The adoption of congregational organization in the United States can appear as an unwelcome devolution, compromising religious ideals. The practice of maintaining local membership rolls offends many Muslims’ concept of the *ummah*, the worldwide community of faith. The local Islamic center is supposed to be open to all Muslims, not just dues-paying “members.” The power of lay trustees over temple expenditures and personnel decisions comports badly with the deference owed to the *bhikku-sangha*, the community of monks, in the Theravada Buddhist tradition. The expectation that the family is supposed to show up at the mission every Sunday is not what many immigrant Hindus learned from their religiously observant parents. Congregationalism is the wrong way to organize religious life not only for some new immigrant communities but also for some old-stock American denominations. United Methodists pride themselves on their system of assigning clergy to congregations for brief terms and

under conditions that guarantee that poorer congregations are not left to rely on their own limited resources; congregational autonomy would undermine these commitments. In the face of the controversy over the ordination of non-celibate homosexual clergy, the Episcopal Church contested the claims of dissident congregations that they own the property they occupy. Although it is not simply a matter of Americanization, the concept of *de facto* congregationalism engendered controversy.

Functions: What Congregations Do

It should be obvious that the chief function of congregations is religious worship (although Buddhists may not use that term for their devotional ceremonies). Not only Chaves's and Ammerman's data showed as much, but also the case study literature that preceded these large-scale surveys. Yet it is also a well-established generalization about American congregations of whatever religious affiliation that they tend to be multifunctional. Their activities typically include not only worship but also religious education for children and adults, mutual care, social activities (or "fellowship"), cultural preservation or articulation, outreach and community service, and encouragement of members' civic and political participation. The activities in the middle of this list, especially mutual care and fellowship, have been underresearched. We know that those toward the top (worship and education) are nearly universal among American congregations, whereas those toward the bottom (community service and civic participation) are especially associated with the historical mainline Protestant tradition. Yet the prestige of that tradition and the early precedent it established for "religion" in America gives those activities normative weight as part of what Ammerman called the "template" for American congregations. Chaves gave special attention to the aesthetic component of worship as third in prominence (after worship and education) of congregational functions. Ammerman categorized congregational functions somewhat differently, but she agreed that congregations are places where the culture of the group (including its music, cuisine, and storytelling) is reproduced.

What occasioned more controversy is how political, civic, and service activities figured in the picture. In the post-1960s "restructuring" of American religion depicted by Robert Wuthnow, the "declining significance of denominationalism" was accompanied by the "growth of special purpose groups," and one implication was that Americans'

religious interests were increasingly expressed in terms of specific, especially political, agendas. The rise of the religious right in the 1980s suggested to many onlookers that these purposes were increasingly partisan. Chaves's 1998 data confirmed the findings of numerous case studies that congregations do not devote much of their effort to political and civic activism. Among Protestants, individuals who attend mainline churches were somewhat more likely to be encouraged to get involved in civic affairs, whereas those attending conservative churches were more likely to receive voter guides. Jews and black Protestants were more likely to hear speeches by political candidates in their congregations and to be encouraged to register to vote. Catholics were more likely to be recruited for a demonstration or protest march. But in all cases, such activities were the exception rather than the rule.

Another controversy arose from the "charitable choice" and "faith-based initiatives" policies of, respectively, the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations. Some advocates of these policies suggested that the governmentally provided "safety net" for economically distressed families could be supplanted by congregations' social service provisions—for example, soup kitchens, clothing banks, and warming shelters. The data are clear and consistent. Monetary and human resources devoted to social service activity are a small fraction of those expended by congregations. A small minority of the members of the typical congregation are involved in such efforts, and they are more likely to be found among mainline Protestant than conservative Protestant congregations and in larger ones rather than smaller ones. The programs that do exist are important for many congregations' sense of their mission, but they are most typically and effectively carried out in collaboration with organizational partners—religious, secular, and governmental.

Is the religiously provided social service glass half empty or half full? Chaves stressed that those who expect congregations to take up the slack of a shrunken welfare state suffer from a fundamental misunderstanding of the magnitude of the task. But Ammerman stressed how much social service work is in fact done through congregations, especially channeling volunteer efforts through organizational partners. Given the agreed-on finding that congregations spend their time on a welter of diverse activities—parenting classes, youth groups, Bible studies, new members classes, support groups, 12-step groups, prayer groups, missionary societies, building maintenance crews, choir rehearsals, hospital visits,

meal preparation, and a host of others, in addition to their primary activity of planning and conducting worship events—it was remarkable that three-fourths of religiously active Americans in 1998 attended congregations that featured some social service programs.

See also *Civil Religion in the United States; Demographics; Denominationalism; Ecumenism; Emerging Church Movement; Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Historical Approaches; House Church Movement; Independent Bible and Community Churches; Megachurches; Ministry, Professional; Philanthropy; Polity; Seeker Churches; Sociological Approaches; Unaffiliated; Worship* entries.

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Constitution

The United States was the first modern nation to adopt a written constitution limiting governmental power and the first to enshrine religious liberty among its constitutional values. The U.S. Constitution contains no reference to a deity or any invocation of any divine power; the only reference to religion in the original Constitution is the provision that there be no religious test for holding public office. When the Bill of Rights was added, its first words expanded religious protection and symbolized the new nation’s commitment to religious liberty: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Of course, as James Madison recognized, words on parchment do not themselves make a constitution. Yet over the years the United States has managed, imperfectly but with reasonable success, to maintain both an extraordinary level of religious intensity and diversity by making the guarantees part of the way American society is constituted.

Adoption of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

By the time of Independence, the American states had become quite religiously heterogeneous. Many of the new states retained some kinds of religious establishments, although by the late eighteenth century they tended to be far more relaxed than many of their more comprehensive European counterparts. The Church of England had been established in the five southern colonies, as was the Congregational Church in three New England ones. In the Middle Atlantic states there was no establishment, but there were religious qualifications for office. Pennsylvania, with no establishment, did not grant religious freedom to “papists.” Most states still required licensing of ministers and punished blasphemy, sacrilege, or criticizing the doctrine of the Trinity. Many required attending church and keeping the Sabbath. But by 1776, the trend was toward multiple Protestant establishments that provided public support for several churches, and establishment had come to mean support of religion generally through taxation, rather than support for a particular religion or penalties on nonbelievers or members of other faiths. But support was growing in many states, most notably Virginia, for the abolition of religious assessments. James Madison’s famous *Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments* both articulated and reflected this sentiment.

Under the Articles of Confederation, Congress ratified several treaties making reference to religious liberties. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 guaranteed that “No person, demeaning himself in a peaceable and orderly manner, shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or religious sentiments.” The same ordinance funded religiously based education in the Northwest Territories. The Continental Congress made references to God and Christian practices.

The U.S. Constitution was adopted by the Convention on September 12, 1787, and ratified by the states on June 21, 1789. However, antifederalists had conditioned their support upon a promise that the first Congress would adopt a Bill of Rights, including a religious liberty guarantee. Among the advocates of such a guarantee, the growing Baptist minority played a particularly important role. Baptists, who had suffered both discrimination and oppression during the colonial era, took the leadership in advocating for a formal guarantee of religious freedom. Virginia’s Bill for Religious Liberty, first proposed by Thomas Jefferson in 1779 and finally adopted in 1786, became a model for the national conversation over a religious liberty guarantee in the new federal Constitution. Virginia’s bill provided

That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in nowise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

The creation of the Bill of Rights is embedded in conflict between federalists, who advocated a strong central government, and the antifederalists, who favored greater state autonomy. The debate over a Bill of Rights was dominated by concerns over its implications for the power of the new government. Many federalists considered a Bill of Rights not only superfluous but also seriously misleading because it might imply that the newly created national government had excessive power that needed to be restrained. In their view, the Constitution had already created a government of delegated powers, which lacked authority to take any actions that were not specifically authorized. Nevertheless, the commitment had been made

to win antifederalist support, and the new Congress set out to draft a Bill of Rights.

Originally twelve rights were proposed, including the religious freedom draft offered by James Madison on June 8, 1789: “the civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or on any pretext infringed.” Ultimately two of the proposed amendments were rejected, and after several revisions, the religious rights guarantee was moved to the First Amendment and rephrased to read, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Members of Congress generally supported an amendment prohibiting a national religious establishment and guaranteeing religious liberty, but they devoted very little time or energy to analyzing its implications. The Bill of Rights was adopted on September 25, 1789, and ratified on December 15, 1791.

No Religious Tests

The problem of governing a religiously diverse nation had clearly been on the minds of the framers of the original Constitution. Article VI, section 3, provided that

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

The provision for either an oath or affirmation reflects the recognition that some citizens have religious scruples against taking oaths, and others would object to invoking the name of a deity they did not recognize. Even more significantly, the prohibition against a religious test for public office was a departure from the common practice of requiring officeholders to swear to holding particular beliefs (usually the existence of God and/or faith in Jesus Christ, the Trinity, or divine reward and punishment). At the time this provision was adopted, eleven of the thirteen new States had religious requirements for public office.

There has been no significant litigation under this provision of the U.S. Constitution. However, religious tests and oaths continued to be common requirements for public

office in several states until ruled unconstitutional as a violation of the First Amendment's establishment clause in 1961. In *Torcaso v. Watkins* (367 U.S. 488), the Supreme Court struck down a Maryland law requiring a public officeholder to swear to a belief in the existence of God, because it privileged one kind of religious expression.

The First Amendment Religion Clauses

The opening sentence of the Bill of Rights provided that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." These words are typically divided into the establishment clause and the free exercise clause. (Grammarians note that they are not clauses at all.) The establishment clause offers protection against government-imposed religious obligations, and the free exercise clause offers protection against government-imposed burdens to religious practice. Constitutional scholars debate whether the two clauses should be considered as a single guarantee or treated separately and, if so, whether they might logically conflict with each other.

For almost a century, there was no significant litigation under these clauses. The one important nineteenth-century case to reach the Supreme Court was the case of *Reynolds v. United States*, 98 U.S. 145 (1887), in which the justices upheld a Utah law against polygamy and articulated a very constricted understanding of religious free exercise. Beginning in the 1930s, the religion clauses have been a major source of constitutional jurisprudence. Religious advocacy groups, beginning with the Jehovah's Witnesses Watchtower Bible and Tract Society and the American Jewish Congress, played a large role both in supporting litigation and in shaping constitutional doctrine, usually in support of separationist principles. Since the 1980s, conservative advocacy groups such as the Rutherford Institute and the American Center for Law and Justice have advocated successfully for a constitutional understanding that permits government to accommodate religious interests.

Contemporary Constitutional Disputes

Like all constitutional disputes, the religion clause conflicts reflect different interpretations of the Constitution's language. The following sections survey contemporary religion clause jurisprudence as it relates to the guarantee's specific words and phrases.

Congress

The First Amendment begins with the phrase, "Congress shall make no law. . ." As the word *Congress* indicates, these

guarantees originally bound only the lawmaking power of the federal government, leaving the states free to regulate religion as they saw fit. Some scholars have argued that the religion clauses had less to do with protecting religious freedom than with guaranteeing the autonomy of individual states to create whatever establishments they wished or regulate religious practice as they chose. However, the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment after the Civil War extended the protections of life, liberty, and property against state infringement as well as national. And by the middle of the twentieth century, most of the guarantees of the Bill of Rights were "incorporated" into the Fourteenth Amendment. The Supreme Court incorporated the free exercise clause in the case of *Catewell v. Connecticut*, 310 U.S. 396 (1940), striking down a state law requiring a license for religious solicitation and the subsequent conviction of Jehovah's Witnesses proselytizers for breach of the peace. In the case of *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947), a five to four majority of the Supreme Court incorporated the establishment clause while upholding New Jersey's policy of offering public transportation of schoolchildren to parochial as well as public schools. Since that time, it has been settled constitutional understanding that the religion clauses of the First Amendment apply equally to the states and to the federal government—or so it had seemed until 2002, when Justice Clarence Thomas suggested reversing that understanding. In a concurring opinion in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 538 U.S. 639 (2002), upholding an Ohio school voucher plan that provided students public funds for attending private (including religious) schools, Justice Thomas seemed to be making a variation of that argument, suggesting that while states could establish religions, they could not interfere with religious liberty. And when the Court voted five to four to uphold a display of the Ten Commandments among many monuments on display on the grounds of the Texas State capitol in *Van Orden v. Perry*, 545 U.S. 677 (2005), Justice Thomas wrote a concurring opinion reemphasizing his belief that the establishment clause should apply only to the national government. This suggestion would reverse more than seventy-five years of settled constitutional understanding and dramatically change the conditions of religious liberty within the United States.

"Respecting an Establishment"

Beyond the question of states rights, there remain major disagreements over the interpretation of the words "respecting an establishment of religion." Since colonial practice left

no single understanding of a religious establishment, we are left with no definitive understanding of what kinds of public policies constitute an illegal establishment, much less about the broader sweep of the language “respecting an establishment.” Traditionally, approaches to the establishment clause fall into two categories: accommodation of religion and separation of church and state. Those favoring separation of church and state take their imagery from Thomas Jefferson’s famous call for a “wall of separation” between church and state and envision religious and governmental functions as operating in separate spheres. Those favoring accommodation argue for a benevolent governmental stance toward religion, as symbolized by Justice William O. Douglas’s words, “we are a religious people whose institutions presume a Supreme Being” (*Zorach v. Clauson*, 343 U.S. 306 [1952]). In this view, both state and federal governments may voluntarily act to enhance opportunities for religious expression and may publicly recognize the religious culture of the American people, as long as they do not favor one religion over another.

In the process of deciding concrete establishment clause disputes, various justices have attempted to articulate what is at the heart of an illegal establishment. The following paragraphs describe some of these attempts, none of which are mutually exclusive.

Expenditure of public funds for religious purposes is the starting place, if only because Madison was so adamant about it in his *Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments*. Yet religious institutions have received public funds from the beginning of American history down to the present time, so this point has never been taken literally. As early as *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947), the Supreme Court majority expressed concern about the expenditure of tax funds for transporting students to private religious schools but nevertheless upheld a New Jersey law providing bus fare for both public and parochial schoolchildren. The often contradictory series of Supreme Court cases about parochial school funding is inconclusive: *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639 (2002), most recently, upheld state allocation of vouchers for children attending private religious schools. Since some expenditures of money are permissible and others are not, money alone does not seem to be the definitive factor indicating a religious establishment.

The longest-running “test” for establishment is the *Lemon* test, used, ignored, and criticized since it was announced in the case of *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602 (1977). According to this “test,” a challenged activity is

acceptable under the establishment clause as long as it has a secular purpose and an effect that neither advances nor burdens religion and does not excessively entangle government and religion. The *Lemon* test reflects the separationist view that the establishment clause requires religious neutrality (secular purpose and religiously neutral effects), while accommodationists argue that the test is too stringent and that state and federal governments should be able to advance religion in nondiscriminatory ways. The *Lemon* test is the most comprehensive approach to establishment clause jurisprudence, but it seemed to have fallen out of use until it reappeared in the 2005 Ten Commandments cases. In *McCreary County v. American Civil Liberties Association*, 545 U.S. 844 (2005), the majority explicitly referred to the *Lemon* test in striking down Kentucky’s Ten Commandments display because it had an obviously religious purpose. In contrast, in the Texas Ten Commandments case *Van Orden v. Perry*, 545 U.S. 677 (2005), decided at the same time, the absence of an obviously religious purpose was one of the reasons the justices upheld the constitutionality of the monument.

As an alternative to the *Lemon* test, some judges suggest that religious coercion is the real danger to which the establishment clause is aimed; its goal is to protect freedom of conscience or freedom of religious choice. For example, in *McCullum v. Board of Education*, 333 U.S. 203 (1948), the justices struck down state programs offering religious education during the public school day because the programs relied on the coercive power of state compulsory education laws to foster religious education. In 1992, Justice Anthony Kennedy relied on this approach in his majority opinion in *Lee v. Weisman*, 505 U.S. 577 (1992). Kennedy argued that graduation invocations coerced students to participate in a religious event—and the coercion is all the more serious for young people, who are especially susceptible to group pressure and the pressure of school authorities.

Another explanation of the establishment clause is that it is an attempt to prevent religious conflict by avoiding institutional entanglement between church and state. Advocates of this view recall the dangers to civil peace when religious conflicts spill over into political ones, as they have often done throughout history. Particularly when tax money is involved, there is a danger of politicizing sectarian conflicts. Moreover, the institutional entanglement between church and state can easily compromise the integrity and autonomy of religious institutions. The concern is a practical one, as Justice Souter argued in his 2002 *Zelman* dissent. In his view, accepting government money puts a church in a

double bind: government requires some accountability to be sure the church is not using the money for illegal purposes. But that accountability involves the government in regulating and overseeing the activities of religious institutions. Thus, he explained, to accept vouchers, religious schools had to agree not to prefer their own church members, not to teach certain doctrines, and not to discriminate. All of those requirements potentially interfere with religious autonomy, so the entanglement endangers religious freedom.

One of the most thoughtful approaches to establishment is Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's "endorsement test," which she first introduced in her concurring opinion in *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668 (1984). Her opinion contends that the heart of an establishment clause violation is government endorsement of religion in a way that would make others feel excluded or give the impression that they were less than equal citizens. This test might inquire whether a Jew or a Muslim could feel less than equal seeing a Christmas nativity scene on public property, or whether a nonreligious person might feel excluded by the inclusion of invocations at public school graduation ceremonies, or whether a Hindu seeing an official posting of the Ten Commandments might experience a sense of "otherness" and exclusion.

Both separationists and accommodationists insist that the establishment clause requires religious neutrality, but they differ immensely on what that neutrality entails. Separationists insist that the establishment clause requires that government be not only absolutely neutral among religions but also between religion and nonreligion—hence, "religion blind." Seen in this light, one of the reasons the majority upheld private school vouchers in the *Zelman* case is because the voucher program provided money for public, community, and private religious and nonreligious schools on an absolutely neutral basis. Similarly, the majority opinion in *Rosenberger v. Rector of the University of Virginia*, 515 U.S. 819 (1995) emphasizes that the university's student activity money had to be distributed with absolute neutrality to student publications, irrespective of their religious content. Accommodationists understand neutrality only as demanding neutrality among various religious sects, while government is permitted to recognize, accommodate, and benefit religions in general, as long as it does so in a nonsectarian way. Thus, the heart of the clause is no religious discrimination. Laws granting military exemptions for religious conscientious objectors rest on this view, as does the funding of

military chaplains, as do laws protecting workers from religious discrimination.

Finally, Justice Antonin Scalia has advocated a historical approach to establishment clause jurisprudence, arguing that courts should be guided by the general understandings prevailing at the time the Bill of Rights was adopted. Moreover, contemporary understanding should give great weight to American traditions, including the enormous role that religion plays in the lives of the American people. Scalia makes this point in both *Lee v. Weisman* and *McCreary*, and Justice Rehnquist argued forcefully for a historical approach in his dissent in *Wallace v. Jaffre*, 472 U.S. 38 (1985) and again in *Van Orden v. Perry*, 545 U.S. 677 (2005). Dissenting in that case, Justice John Paul Stevens offers a powerful refutation of this view, noting how the framers' experiences of religious diversity were so much more restrictive than contemporary experience and how deeply their approaches would offend contemporary sensibilities.

While the establishment clause has been the source of a far greater number of constitutional conflicts than the free exercise clause, many observers claim that it is really the "dependent clause," intended to enhance the general theme of religious freedom as articulated in the free exercise clause.

"Of Religion"

Because the First Amendment singles out religion for special protection, the word *religion* serves as the threshold or gatekeeper to both constitutional guarantees, but the constitutional language gives no clue about what constitutes a religion. Most of the time, this threshold is passed without controversy, but occasionally courts are asked to decide whether the claim is a genuinely *religious* one. That question puts judges in the awkward role of deciding what counts as a religion for First Amendment purposes and what criteria to use for making the judgment.

Defining religion for purposes of the First Amendment constitutes a paradox, because no definitions are neutral. Every effort to define a religion privileges some particular kind of belief or practice and discounts others. History is singularly unhelpful. The authors of the Bill of Rights probably had a very limited understanding of what was a legitimate religion—often excluding the beliefs and practices of Native Americans—and they had little experience thinking (in Madison's phrase) of "Jews, Turks, and infidels. . . ."

The earliest judicial attempts to define religion emphasized belief—particularly belief in a supreme being. But by the mid-twentieth century, this definition already seemed

woefully outmoded. In *Torao v. Watkins*, 367 U.S. 488 (1961), the Supreme Court rejected such a definition and focused instead on the function of a religion and, especially, on the claims of conscience to which religions give rise. James Madison's earliest drafts of the First Amendment religion clauses had proposed the phrase "freedom of conscience." Furthermore, Madison's *Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments* defined religion as "the duty we owe to our Creator." The Court relied on this kind of reasoning in refusing to limit conscientious objector status to those whose objections to war were based on a belief in a supreme being during the Vietnam War era. In *United States v. Seeger*, 380 U.S. 163 (1964) and *Welch v. United States*, 398 U.S. 333 (1970), the Court relied on broader understanding that nontheistic beliefs function as religions and give rise to commands of conscience.

Important as this insight is, it does not encompass the full range of religious experience. Moreover, it provides little observable evidence of the kind the legal system prefers. Not surprisingly, then, judges have attempted to identify religion by observable behaviors, including the collective practices of religious communities—worship services and other rituals, institutionalized ways of propagating the faith to future generations, clergy or some other form of teaching or leadership, festivals and holidays or life-cycle events, for example. By the early twenty-first century, the trend seems to be to seek a family of characteristics, rather than a single essential element in identifying a religion. These may include some or all of the following: ultimate ideas; metaphysical beliefs; moral or ethical systems; comprehensiveness of beliefs; and accoutrements of religion, including such things as founders or teachers, writings, gathering places, ceremonies and rituals, organizational structure, festivals, and efforts at propagation. Of course, not every religion or individual religious person partakes of every one of these characteristics. Some conventionally religious persons are almost totally ignorant of the doctrine of their faith or unburdened by its moral commandments; others may partake in the spiritual life of their faith and ignore its communal manifestations. Still, taken in various combinations, these indicators help identify a wide range of religious phenomena.

“Exercise of Religion”

The very first free exercise case to reach the Supreme Court was *Reynolds v. United States*, 98 U.S. 145 (1878), upholding a federal law against religiously inspired polygamy. Chief

Justice Waite, writing for the Court, made a distinction between beliefs and actions, the former beyond government purview, the latter subject to regulation. Yet constitutional observers remind us that the First Amendment does not protect “religion” in the abstract, or even abstract beliefs, but the *exercise* of religion. However, identifying a religious exercise proves to be even more difficult than attempting to define religion. The scope of religiously motivated behaviors is virtually incalculable. Religious codes dictate a variety of means by which people worship: kneeling, standing, eating, fasting, ingesting alcoholic beverages or hallucinogenic drugs, making symbolic sacrifices or sacrificing live animals, covering or uncovering their heads or feet in houses of worship, singing, meditating, chanting, preaching, and speaking in tongues, to name only a few. Religions frequently mandate certain kinds of personal care, including bathing, hygiene, dressing, health care, diet, and hairstyle. Religious mandates cover comportment in the world at large in such areas as social responsibility, education, child rearing, relations between the sexes, medical practices, appropriate employment, financial decisions, and countless other aspects of life. Religious practices include ceremonial activities performed in religious institutions and secular practices motivated by religious faith—both obligatory and optional practices, practices sanctioned by recognized churches and those based upon individual conscience, as well as the folk practices of religious communities. And to add further complications, free exercise protection also covers the actions of religious institutions—including financial management, employment practices, social services, zoning, and architecture.

“Prohibiting”

The First Amendment provides that “Congress shall make no law . . . prohibiting the free exercise [of religion].” To “prohibit” a religious exercise—making it a crime or subject to a civil penalty—is indeed a very serious infringement on religious liberty, but it is only one of the ways in which liberty may be trammled. At least since *Sherbert v. Verner*, 374 U.S. 398 (1963), the Court has understood that clause to prevent unjustified burdens to religion. In effect, the word *prohibiting* has come to mean “burdening,” and thus the showing of a burden to religion is the threshold to free exercise protection. But what constitutes a burden, and how serious must it be to present a constitutionally cognizable problem? How can courts distinguish a major impediment to religion from a minor annoyance?

Harms to religious freedom are experienced in a variety of ways. Some laws literally prohibit a religious exercise. For example, in the case of *Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye v. Hialeah*, 308 U.S. 520 (1993), the Supreme Court struck down a local ordinance that prohibited religious animal sacrifice while permitting most other nonreligious reasons for killing animals. Some condition government benefits on behavior inconsistent with religion, such as South Carolina's refusal to grant unemployment benefits to a Seventh-day Adventist who would not work on her Sabbath (*Sherbert v. Verner*, 374 U.S. 398 [1963]). Others make a religious practice impossible, such as the National Forest Service decision to build a logging road through land held sacred by local Native Americans (upheld in *Lyng v. Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association*, 5485 U.S. 439 [1988]). Some penalties or burdens on religious exercise or intentionally targeted at religious practices, but most are unintended burdens created when otherwise valid secular laws have the effect of burdening a religious practice. The difference may have great constitutional significance.

“No Law”

The wording of the First Amendment is stark: “Congress shall make *no* law. . . .” Not even constitutional literalists have taken “no law” to mean “no law.” This statement has never been taken literally; both state and federal government do prohibit various religious exercises deemed a threat to life or safety. To use a common example, nobody doubts that the state could prohibit human sacrifice, no matter how religiously sincere its motivation or how important it might be to its adherents. The real question is, under what conditions may government prohibit or otherwise burden a religious exercise? How are legislatures and courts to balance the protection of religious liberties against other important public interests?

Ordinarily, when a law is challenged, the state must only show that the law is reasonably related to legitimate interests, not necessarily that it is the best way to achieve them. In this kind of balancing, dominant interests generally prevail over minority interests. Furthermore, the person challenging the constitutionality of a law bears the burden of proof. Failing to overcome this burden leaves the law intact.

To put extra weight on the side of religious freedom, the courts developed the compelling state interest test. When a religious right is burdened, the burden of proof reverts to

the state to show that the public interest in burdening the religion is not only important, but *genuinely compelling*, and that no less burdensome strategies are available for achieving that interest. This method reflects the view that the whole point of having a Bill of Rights is to remove certain liberties from the ordinary balancing of the political process. Furthermore, in these cases the ordinary burden of proof is reversed, so that laws burdening religious freedom are to be unconstitutional, and its defenders bear the burden of establishing its constitutionality. Such laws are subjected to “strict scrutiny,” requiring their defenders to show (1) that the challenged law served not just an important public purpose, but a genuinely compelling one; (2) that the law was well tailored to achieve that purpose; and (3) that the purpose could not be achieved by some less burdensome legislative method.

Beginning in the 1963 case of *Sherbert v. Verner*, the Supreme Court ruled that only a compelling state interest was sufficient to justify burdening religious freedom, thus requiring the state to provide unemployment benefits for a Seventh-day Adventist who lost her job because she was not available to work on her Sabbath. In *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, 406 U.S. 205 (1972), upholding the free exercise right of Amish families to be exempt from state compulsory education laws, Chief Justice Warren Burger phrased the point by saying, “only those interests of the highest order and those not otherwise served can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.”

That approach remained constitutional doctrine until the ruling in *Employment Division, Department of Human Resources of Oregon v. Smith*, 494 U.S. 872 (1990), in which the Court majority ruled that the free exercise clause did not require exemptions from state drug laws for sacramental use of peyote in religious services. In this case, the majority held that the compelling state interest test was no longer necessary to justify unintentional burdens to religion stemming from valid secular neutral laws. Justice Scalia's majority opinion ruled that the free exercise clause is directly breached only by laws that specifically target religious practice for unfavorable treatment, not by generally applicable, religiously neutral laws. Consequently, laws inadvertently burdening religious exercise need not be justified by a compelling state interest.

The argument over balancing religious rights against other important interests is bound up with the distinction between intentional (or targeted) burdens on religion and

those that are the incidental results of other laws. Even apparently neutral laws can inadvertently burden someone's religious interests. For example, compulsory education laws were not adopted to impose burdens on the Amish (*Yoder*); narcotics laws were not intended to forbid the rituals of the Native American Church (*Smith*) or of Brazilian immigrant religious communities (*O Centro Spiritu Beneficente Uniao Do Vegetal v. Ashcroft*, 546 U.S. 418 (2006)). Military uniform regulations were not intended to burden Jewish men who are required to keep their heads covered (*Goldman v. Weinberger*, 475 U.S. 503 [1986]); nor were drivers' license photograph requirements imposed to burden Muslim women religiously required to cover their faces in public. Yet all of these laws imposed incidental burdens on religious practices.

Persons who claim to be burdened by secular laws usually do not ask that the law be withdrawn or overturned; they most often request exemptions. Religious exemptions to ordinary laws and policies are so common we often do not notice them at all. Legislation is full of religious exemptions, including laws that exempt churches from some provisions of the Civil Rights Act and from zoning ordinances, that exempt persons with religious objections from vaccination requirements, and even those that exempt Communion rituals from laws regarding serving alcohol to minors. These policies are sometimes criticized as violating the establishment clause by giving preferences to religion (*Estate of Thornton v. Caldor*, 472 U.S. 703 [1985]). Free exercise disputes center not on whether legislators and administrators *may* grant exemptions but on whether the constitution *requires* exemptions from otherwise valid, secular neutral laws in order to accommodate religious needs.

The question is thus whether the First Amendment requires that persons acting on sincere religious motives be granted exemptions from such laws. What kinds of justifications are sufficient to override religious burdens and refuse exemptions? The controversial *Smith* decision reversed the long-standing understanding that such exemptions were required unless there were a compelling state interest to the contrary. While Justice Antonin Scalia's majority opinion denied any free exercise *right* to religious exemptions, he insisted that legislatures are free to grant them as part of the normal political process. He recognized that this approach moves religious protection from the courts back to the political process. "Values that are protected against

government interferences through enshrinement in the Bill of Rights are not thereby banished from the political process." He readily admits that

leaving accommodation to the political process will place at a relative disadvantage those religious practices that are not widely engaged in; but that unavoidable consequences of democratic government must be preferred to a system in which each conscience is a law unto itself. . . . (*Unemployment Division, Department of Human Resources of Oregon v Smith*, 494 U.S. 872 [1990])

Hence, much of his argument turns on his preference for political solutions within the democratic process, rather than on judicial solutions. Critics of the *Smith* decision are appalled that this ruling removes this kind of religious protection from the status of a constitutional right and makes it simply a matter for negotiation within the political process.

Legislative Efforts to Restore Compelling State Interest

Almost immediately after the announcement of the *Smith* decision, a broad coalition of religious advocates, concerned about its potentially devastating implications for the rights of religious minorities, petitioned Congress to reverse the effects of the decision legislatively. In November 1993 Congress adopted and the president signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), which legislatively restored the compelling state interest standard in cases where state or federally supported programs were involved. The key section of the bill states that government may restrict a person's free exercise of religion only if government can show that such a restriction "(1) is essential to further a compelling governmental interest; and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest" standard.

Congress relied on its authority under its Fourteenth Amendment power to "enforce by appropriate legislation" constitutional guarantees. The law was challenged in the case of *City of Boerne v. Flores*, 521 U.S. 507 (1997), a conflict between a church renovation plan and city's decision to preserve it unchanged as a historical landmark. Flores, the Catholic bishop overseeing the church, argued that the act required deference to the church's religious exercise unless the city could show a compelling state interest to the contrary. However, when the case reached the Supreme Court,

a majority struck down the act as violating the separation of powers by infringing on the judicial power. The majority ruled that while the Fourteenth Amendment grants Congress the power to enforce a constitutional right, the RFRA went beyond enforcement and, in fact, altered the meaning of the right, thus usurping both judicial power and the prerogatives of states. As Justice Kennedy wrote, “Legislation which alters the Free Exercise Clause’s meaning cannot be said to be enforcing the clause. Congress does not enforce a constitutional right by changing what the right is.”

After the demise of the RFRA, many states adopted their own versions of the statute, enhancing religious rights protection under state laws or constitutions. In 2000 Congress adopted the much more limited Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA), which forbids the federal government from implementing land use regulations that impose a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person or on the religious exercise of a person confined to an institution, “unless that action is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest.” Rather than resting on Fourteenth Amendment grounds as the RFRA had, this law was based on the commerce and spending clauses, since it extends to all programs that receive federal money. In *Cutter v. Wilkinson*, 544 U.S. 709 (2005), the Supreme Court upheld this law against an establishment clause challenge.

Proposed Constitutional Amendments Regarding Religion

From time to time various religious advocates have proposed constitutional amendments regarding religion, but none has come even near passage. The closest were reactions to the Supreme Court’s decisions in 1961 and 1963 that prohibited religious exercises in the public schools. In *Engle v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421 (1962), the Court struck down New York’s Board of Regent’s prayer, composed by state officials and promulgated for recital in the public schools. Two years later the Court struck down the common practice of public school Bible readings. (*Abington School District v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203 [1963]).

Almost immediately after those rulings, and continuing into the twenty-first century, there have been persistent efforts to reverse the impact of these decisions by constitutional amendments. Nearly every congressional session has seen the introduction of constitutional amendments to authorize prayers in public schools, religious symbols on

government property, and tax dollars for private religious schools. A typical version is the amendment President Reagan sent to Congress in 1982, which read, “Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to prohibit individual or group prayer in public schools or other public institutions. No person shall be required by the United States or by any State to participate in prayer.” Similar proposals have occasionally received favorable hearings in congressional committees, but none has made it through the first stage of the amendment process.

Proposed constitutional amendments banning abortions and limiting marriage to one man and one woman reflect religious sentiments but are not overtly religious. Thus far none has succeeded. More extreme amendments have also been proposed—including one declaring the United States to be a Christian nation and one in 2008 declaring Islam not to be a religion. Such proposals are usually understood to be political statements and have not been taken seriously as genuine candidates for consideration.

See also *Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Education: Court Cases; Establishment, Religious; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Pluralism; Politics: Colonial Era; Politics: Nineteenth Century; Politics: Twentieth Century; Supreme Court.*

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Cult of Domesticity

In the early-nineteenth-century United States, a set of ideals regarding womanhood and the home emerged that was commonly called the cult of domesticity. Americans who subscribed to this widespread ideology, found in sermons, novels, and magazines, believed the ideal woman possessed the qualities of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. This “true woman,” as she was called, was suited to life in the home, a private domain removed from the public world of politics and economics. The true woman was an embodiment of virtue, whose moral goodness originated in her innately pious nature. Such perceptions of women’s spirituality led to an increasing association between women and Christianity in the nineteenth century that ultimately granted women a degree of religious authority in American culture. From the 1830s through 1880s, the cult of domesticity profoundly constrained women’s lives, governing how women evaluated themselves and were evaluated by others. At the same time, the cult of domesticity credited American women with a moral influence that enabled them to shape and at times challenge U.S. culture.

Separate Spheres

The cult of domesticity emerged in the context of changing political and economic structures. The nineteenth century saw the United States transform from a fledgling agricultural democracy into an industrialized global power. The new republic contended with ever-expanding national borders, large-scale immigration, and growing tensions between federal power and state sovereignty. In the same period, a process of industrialization was taking hold in the urban Northeast, beginning along the Erie Canal in upstate New York. In the midst of political uncertainty and economic upheaval, a new middle class arose. The members of this class—doctors, lawyers, managers, teachers, office workers, and their families—performed newly important functions in the changing society. The urban factory began to replace the rural subsistence farm as the center of economic production in the United States, dramatically altering women’s relationship to the economy. In the agricultural economy, women were vital producers who grew food, spun and sewed clothes, and made other goods that their families required for survival. In the emerging industrial economy, women of the upper and middle classes, who no longer needed to produce their own food or clothes, became consumers, purchasing necessities and accumulating material commodities

such as furniture, books, decorations, and clothes that showcased their taste and class status.

As these transformations took place, Americans began to conceive of men’s and women’s familial and national roles in new ways. Many Americans came to believe that society was divided into two separate spheres: the public sphere, associated with the political and professional worlds, and the private sphere, equated with the home and family. Men toiled at financial and political endeavors in the rough and ruthless public sphere. Women assumed responsibility for the family’s moral education, health, comfort, and happiness in the safe and serene private sphere. Ministers, doctors, and others claimed that women had physically and morally delicate natures that would be corrupted or damaged by voting, working, or otherwise participating in the fields of government and finance. Many Americans rationalized that women’s exclusion from the public sphere not only protected the “weaker” sex but also preserved the home as a moral refuge from the arduous and depraved world. In effect, the ideology of separate spheres allowed Americans to maintain certain cultural values, particularly the Christian values of modesty, obedience, and meekness, which conflicted with the self-interest necessary for attaining success in a developing capitalist society. In the private sphere, women ostensibly upheld the traditional religious ideals of American society, while men pursued wealth and political power in the public sphere.

True Womanhood

The ideal of the true woman emerged with this transformation in women’s roles. In the cult of true womanhood, femininity came to be equated with familial and religious devotion. Women’s identities as daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, and Christians formed the basis of their cultural value. True womanhood demanded that the completed woman be pious, pure, submissive, and domestic. Magazines, advice manuals, novels, and religious literature helped create and popularize the cult of domesticity and instructed women in the best ways to embody the essential qualities of true womanhood.

Religion, specifically Protestant Christianity, formed the basis of the true woman’s virtue. It was the source of her femininity as well as her power in society. In magazines such as *Godey’s Lady’s Book*, edited by Sarah Josepha Hale (1788–1879), perhaps the century’s most influential domestic arbiter, women read that religious reverence enhanced a woman’s personal attractiveness. Women were informed that

they would find fulfillment only when their lives were absorbed in Christianity. That process of fulfillment would begin sometime in adolescence, when girls were expected to undergo a personal Christian conversion. A lack of religious interest or conviction in women was considered an anomaly and an affront to femininity. Irreligion made a woman revolting, because her faith was the foundation of her chastity, obedience, and domesticity.

Purity was equally essential for the true woman. Women were expected to remain chaste until marriage, when they would bestow on their husbands the gift of their virginity. Without purity, a woman was deemed a “fallen woman” or “fallen angel.” Unworthy of respect, the fallen woman was no longer considered a woman at all. In popular books and magazines, women’s sexual activity brought about insanity, illness, and death. Death, in fact, was often considered preferable to seduction. The threat of impurity was serious enough that advice manuals suggested that young women should avoid sitting beside or reading from the same book as men.

The ideal of women’s submission, a distinctly feminine virtue, was frequently justified through Christian teachings, both Protestant and Catholic. Piety and purity were desired characteristics in men, but society expected and forgave their failings in these categories. Obedience, however, was demanded only of women. As men made decisions and took action, women were expected to passively conform. Many Americans claimed that this sexual hierarchy was established in the Bible. Others, such as George Burnap in *The Sphere and Duties of Woman* (1854), asserted that women needed and wanted protectors. Submission asked that the true woman serve her husband’s, father’s, and brother’s desires in a state of continual dependence.

Finally, the true woman exemplified domesticity. The home was the true woman’s domain; it belonged to her and she belonged in it. The cult of domesticity insisted that women make the home a warm, tasteful refuge from business and politics, a place to nurture children and ease a husband’s burdens. From housekeeping manuals such as *The American Woman’s Home* (1869), written by the popular authors and sisters Catharine Beecher (1800–1878) and Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–1896), women received advice on everything from caring for the sick to polishing furniture. Home decoration, food preparation, cleaning, and children’s education became moral duties that reflected a woman’s virtue and her family’s Christian devotion.

Image and Reality

The image of the true woman was demanding and demeaning—it required women to live up to an exacting model of womanhood in which they remained explicitly subordinate to men. Moreover, the ideal was unrealistic. As much praise as they might receive for their feminine virtue, women were often plagued by feelings that they had failed to fulfill society’s expectations. Even Beecher, a popular writer and the daughter of the celebrated and influential minister Lyman Beecher (1775–1863), could not fully adhere to the ideals of domesticity. Catharine submitted neither to conversion nor to marriage as her father and society expected.

Furthermore, the prevailing image of the true woman was white, middle-class, and Protestant, reflecting the context of the industrializing U.S. Northeast in which the ideology of domesticity emerged. Women who differed from the true woman by religion, race, class, or region acutely felt their exclusion from this pervasive feminine norm. Catholic and Jewish women, for instance, were largely barred from acceptance as true women by widespread anti-Catholicism and anti-Semitism. Within the largely immigrant Catholic and Jewish communities, true womanhood represented not only an impossible ideal, given the need for many women to support their families by working outside the home, but also a departure from traditional religious values and practices. In Catholicism, the church, not the home, was the center of moral and religious education, and celibacy, rather than marriage, was celebrated as the paradigm of purity. Assimilation to Protestant ideals signified a rejection of the church’s authority and teachings, and as such Catholic Americans cultivated their own distinctly Catholic model of domesticity. In Orthodox Judaism, men were responsible for the spiritual needs of the family, while women, prohibited from studying the Talmud and excluded from full membership in the congregation, supported the family physically and economically. In contrast to American Catholicism, the American Jewish Reform movement largely adopted the tenets of true womanhood, revising women’s roles at home and in the temple.

Similarly, and perhaps more starkly, racial difference obstructed admission to true womanhood. Free and enslaved African American women were frequently sexualized in U.S. culture, perceived alternately as seductresses and victims of male lust. This supposed impurity barred black women

from the category of true womanhood. In her narrative *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), escaped slave Harriet Jacobs shows how the standards of true womanhood are impossible to maintain within the system of slavery. Assailed by her owner's sexual advances, Jacobs's only method of preserving her purity is to choose another white man as her lover and hopeful protector.

Catholic, Jewish, and African American women were not alone in their anxieties. Women who lived in the U.S. South and West, women who sewed or laundered clothes for wages, women who toiled on farms, immigrant women, and Asian American and Latina women all felt their unquestionable deviation from the feminine standard. Still, the true woman remained a pervasive ideal and a symbol of national belonging with which U.S. women struggled throughout the century.

The Feminization of American Religion

Womanhood became nearly synonymous with Christian virtue in the nineteenth century. The true woman's piety was the source of her purity and her selfless obedience. Even the virtue of domesticity, women were reminded, was religious in origin; St. Paul himself had allocated the home and its cultivation to women. As femininity was increasingly viewed as an effect of women's natural religiosity, religion came to be seen as the province of women. Churches and religious organizations began to be viewed not only as appropriate outlets for female activity but also, along with the family, as part of the feminine sphere. The association of women with the church reflected a revolution occurring within Protestant Christianity, sometimes called the feminization of American religion. Scholars have used the term "feminization" to describe both a sentimentalizing trend in Christian theology and the transformation of women's roles within religious organizations that occurred during the nineteenth century. It should be noted that this feminization was largely rejected by Catholics through the 1860s, who endorsed the patriarchal parish and household over and against what they viewed as a nationalized culture of domesticity. In Protestant communities, however, women's power and presence increased during the nineteenth century, instilling in women a new consciousness about their moral responsibility. As religion became feminized, Protestant women were ascribed and assumed the role of spiritual guardians, taking upon themselves the task of developing and defending the Christian home and the Christian nation.

Theological Transformations

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, the United States experienced the Second Great Awakening, a period of religious fervor and activity distinguished by the popularity of evangelical revivals and the proliferation of new Christian sects and denominations, including Mormonism and Shakerism. In the wake of this spiritual enthusiasm, the major Protestant Christian denominations began to adopt increasingly emotional models of religious practice. In 1800, Protestants were likely to explain their faith in terms of dogma, a system of beliefs the members of a particular church were required to accept. By the 1870s, Protestants were likely to describe their faith through the family values and civic responsibilities they advocated and practiced. This new emphasis on social values indicated a transformation from the repressive and patriarchal Calvinistic models that had dominated the American religious scene to a more sentimental and accommodating Protestantism. This change was reflected in Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Episcopal, and Unitarian churches with new policies and programs, such as infant baptism and children's Sunday school instruction. Interpretations of the figure of Jesus Christ similarly began to shift. In sermons and religious literature, ministers conceived of a new Christ defined by love, selfless sacrifice, and forgiveness. This modest and meek Christ was viewed as an affectionate companion, as the popular nineteenth-century hymn "Nearer My God, to Thee" illustrates. Nineteenth-century Americans likewise celebrated God's compassion. A mother's mercy as well as a father's authority comprised God's essence, according to Theodore Parker (1810–1860), a prominent reformer and Unitarian minister. As the church and its theology began to exemplify domestic virtues, Americans became increasingly conscious of a vital, distinctly feminine, religious responsibility.

Women and the Church

Although the ministers and theologians who constituted the church hierarchy remained overwhelmingly male, women's prominence within religious communities expanded throughout the nineteenth century. Church congregations frequently included more women than men, and their female members exerted powerful influence over the direction of the church. Realizing women were the chief consumers of religion in society, Protestant ministers routinely

addressed women's particular concerns, praising women's innocence, maternal inclinations, and quiet endurance of the various burdens that accompanied marriage and child rearing. Within the church community, women's presence was felt everywhere. Women taught and frequently supervised Sunday school and wrote popular hymns; and in the West, where congregations had fewer members, women occasionally participated in church services.

Beyond their individual churches, women became important members of religious organizations and reform movements. In temperance, antislavery, and religious tract societies, women raised funds, licked envelopes, and solicited support from their husbands and other family members. Women also channeled their sense of piety into missionary work, laboring most often within the United States to provide Christian instruction to indigenous communities. Some particularly daring women (who were able to find husbands who shared their religious enthusiasm and ambition) became missionaries in foreign lands such as China and the Holy Land. Cultural assumptions about female piety and virtue enabled women to assume an energetic role within the church and its endeavors. As she gained a sense of religious responsibility, the nineteenth-century woman began to see herself as a "new Eve," charged with improving and perhaps even perfecting American society.

The Christian Home

This new Eve sought to reform America starting at home. Her home was a space for reflecting Christian values and influencing others' moral actions. In *The American Woman's Home*, Beecher and Stowe included drawings for a home church, a house that may be converted at a moment's notice into a small chapel complete with steeple. Stowe and Beecher's image illustrates how many nineteenth-century Americans viewed the home and the true woman as extensions of the church's moral authority. In the Christian home, bed-making, cooking, and needlework were viewed as morally uplifting activities. Such tasks absorbed women in productive pursuits that left little time for sinful activities, and they created a pleasant environment that induced brothers, husbands, and sons to stay home and forgo the dangerous temptations (alcohol, gambling, sex) of the outside world. With her family comfortable and content at home, the true woman could bring her family closer to God. The tasks women performed at home—child care, nursing, gardening, mending clothes, financial management—aimed to make

the Christian family the foundation of society. Ideally, as women wielded their influence in the home, their families would embrace Christian values. Collectively, these families would constitute a Christian neighborhood and eventually a Christian nation. The new Eve could improve her society simply by setting the proper example for her family.

Sentiment and Social Reform

Women expanded their moral influence beyond the home through popular literature and social reform efforts. Although many ministers, teachers, and mothers expressed concerns about the dangers of women writing and reading, women's literary endeavors were accepted for the most part as an appropriate extension of women's moral facility. Women became enthusiastic writers and readers of domestic or sentimental fiction, which sought to instruct women and children in Christian virtue, general usefulness, and social responsibility. Sentimental novels, such as Susan Warner's (1819–1885) best seller *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), scripted the community and the nation as one large home in which sympathy and Christian duty formed the basis for social action. Conceived as an extended Sunday sermon or biblical parable, *The Wide, Wide World* asked readers to extend compassion toward the friendless child heroine Ellen Montgomery and to interpret her eventual happy marriage as a reward for her faith and humility. Although men were not considered a suitable audience for women writers, they evidently consumed women's fiction and helped solidify its incredible popularity. In fact, nineteenth-century women writers were more widely read than theologians, causing some scholars to suggest that domestic fiction had replaced theology as Americans' primary spiritual guide.

In conjunction with their literary endeavors, U.S. women increasingly channeled their piety and moral influence into social reform. This intrusion into the public sphere was justified, women argued, because society had violated Christian commandments and teachings through adultery, slavery, and excessive alcohol consumption. Feminine intervention was necessary to defend the family against the immoralities of male-dominated society. Seeking to eradicate prostitution and limit opportunities for adultery, the New York Female Moral Reform Society was founded in 1834. In addition to preaching to prostitutes and praying in brothels, the society published a popular national weekly, *The Advocate of Moral Reform*, which was staffed with women writers and editors.

Women also joined the antislavery movement, participating in the work of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Among the more famous female abolitionists were Lydia Maria Child (1802–1880), a notable author of fiction, housekeeping advice, and children’s literature, and Sarah Grimké (1792–1893) and Angelina Grimké Weld (1805–1879), sisters and public lecturers on the antislavery circuit. The temperance movement, which sought to curb or prohibit the consumption of alcohol in the United States, likewise attracted large numbers of women. Temperance appealed to women as a family issue, because drinking reputedly took money and men away from the home. By participating in these reform societies, women expanded their collective power while remaining within the bounds of conventional femininity.

The Little Lady and the Big War

Women’s writing and religious reform efforts often complemented each other and at times even merged. Stowe’s novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), the most popular book of the nineteenth century and the most famous example of literary activism in U.S. history, has often been credited with hastening the U.S. Civil War. Upon meeting Stowe, President Abraham Lincoln famously called her the “little lady who made this big war.” Stowe herself claimed the novel was written by God, excusing her interference in the intense public debate over slavery as an act of Christian piety. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, in fact, employs the values of domesticity and true womanhood to persuade its readers to join the antislavery cause. Written explicitly in response to the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which required northerners to return escaped slaves to the South, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* depicts slavery above all as a destroyer of families and an affront to domestic life. As such, Stowe implies, slavery demands women’s attention and intervention. The novel calls upon true women to recognize slavery’s incompatibility with Christianity and exert their moral influence over husbands, fathers, and sons.

Moral Crusaders

As women endeavored to improve society through literature and social reforms, they changed the meaning of domesticity. Submissiveness, one of the central tenets of true womanhood from the 1830s to the 1860s, gradually diminished in importance as women embraced “moral authority” as a feminine prerogative. As a consequence, women’s attempts

to transform the nation through moral suasion gave way to increasing social and political activism, particularly following the U.S. Civil War.

Most notably, women converted their sense of moral righteousness into public action through the temperance crusades of the 1870s. Women temperance crusaders organized marches on the street and prayer meetings inside bars to protest the consumption of alcohol. In 1874, the crusaders formed the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which eventually boasted more than 176,000 members, making it the largest association of women in the nation. The WCTU expanded its reform efforts under the direction of President Frances Willard (1839–1898) to include child care for working women and immigrant aid. Willard developed a protofeminist platform for the WCTU, even campaigning for limited woman’s suffrage. Under the banner of “Home Protection,” Willard argued that women needed the vote to make alcohol consumption illegal.

Despite its basis in women’s presumed moral superiority, women’s activism existed in tension with the ideals of domesticity. In uniting the temperance cause with the woman’s suffrage movement, Willard illuminated the inherent limitations of domesticity. Proponents of domesticity declared that women were supposed to influence men quietly in the home, not on the podium. Women’s rights activists might argue that suffrage would enable women to protect the family, but the political equality woman’s suffrage would establish between men and women conflicted with conventional morality. As early as 1837, Beecher had expressed her disapproval of the Grimké sisters’ lecturing before “promiscuous”—mixed male and female—audiences. The Grimkés, however, felt that women had an obligation to speak out not only against slavery’s wrongs but also against the subordination of women. The fundamental tension between these points of view persisted throughout the nineteenth century, causing many women’s rights activists to abandon the tenets of domesticity. This impasse would prove to be the cult of domesticity’s undoing. By the 1880s, the ideal of the true woman was becoming outmoded, the symbol of an old-fashioned moral framework that could no longer forward women’s interests.

Domesticity’s Interpreters

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the cult of domesticity has served as a subject of heated debate. Critics have struggled to understand how deeply the ideology of

domesticity affected the lives of Americans and whether such ideas of womanhood ultimately served conservative or radical ends. Many of domesticity's original interpreters, including Barbara Welter, conceived of domesticity as a lived reality for nineteenth-century women, whose experiences deserved to be studied alongside political and economic histories. Subsequent critics, among them Nancy Cott, Ann Douglas, and Jane Tompkins, argued that domesticity and "separate spheres" were not realities but, rather, ideologies that deeply affected American political and religious culture. In Cott's view, domesticity and its consequent sex segregation created a sisterhood, at least among white, middle-class, northeastern women. Douglas, by contrast, perceived the cult of domesticity as a symptom of general cultural degeneration, in which feminized religion and sentimental fiction affirmed an unjust economic system and encouraged women to embrace confining roles. Countering Douglas's analysis, Tompkins suggested that domesticity, in its very conventionality, provided women with the means to mold, challenge, and transform mainstream cultural values. More recently, Amy Kaplan has proposed that the cult of domesticity was intertwined with the histories of national expansion, or Manifest Destiny, making domesticity a vital part of U.S. political history and foreign policy. Gradually, the cult of domesticity has come to be seen as an important element of nineteenth-century culture in the United States, neither separate from political, economic, and religious histories nor the cause of cultural deterioration. The cult of domesticity

was a complicated and integral component of nineteenth-century U.S. culture, a powerful and popular ideology that had the potential to serve both conservative and radical ends.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Benevolent Empire; Children and Adolescents; Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Feminism; Gender; Marriage and Family; Literature: Early Republic and "the American Renaissance"; Masculinity; Religious Thought: Feminist; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Women* entries.

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Death and Burial Practices

Death and burial practices in America have been as varied as the people who have populated the land. From the beginning of European settlement, attitudes toward death, beliefs about the afterlife, and practices surrounding death and burial were important markers of identity separating native from colonist, Protestant from Catholic, Calvinist from Anglican, and African from European.

Among European Americans, there has never been a single “American way of death.” Although American death practices and beliefs are far from homogeneous, it is possible to identify widespread patterns that reflect broadly shared religious and cultural values. As these values have changed, so have the practices and beliefs related to death and burial. In the early years of European settlement, the growing wealth in the colonies led to greater materialism and optimism, which were reflected in opulent funerals and an anticipation of salvation. In the nineteenth century the idealization of the domestic sphere found expression in images of death as a natural homecoming. The acceptance of embalming during the Civil War ushered in the professional role of undertaker and the removal of the body from family control. By the mid-twentieth century, death itself had been largely removed from the home and took place in the company of medical specialists and life-prolonging technologies. Critics of these “death-denying” practices gained enough popular support in the 1960s to demand substantial reform in the care of the dying and the disposal of the dead. As a result, Americans today can choose not only between burial and cremation, but also

from an array of traditional and novel religious and secular rituals and symbols to create a personally meaningful farewell.

Death in Early America

European settlers in the New World brought with them Catholic and Protestant religious traditions, which they aggressively introduced to the Native Americans. For the many Spanish and French Catholic colonists, a good death depended on the availability of a priest to administer the sacrament of last rites to the dying and perform the funeral mass. The last rites offered sinners a final chance to repent and receive forgiveness before their postmortem journey. Though necessary for the forgiveness of sins, the sacrament did not guarantee a direct entry into heaven. Apart from the saintly, most were destined to spend time in the state of purgatory expiating their sins, and the prayers of the faithful at funeral mass were believed to shorten this duration. Whereas these Catholic practices were eventually accepted by many Native Americans as they suffered devastating death tolls from epidemics under Spanish and French rule, Protestant missionaries had much less success. Protestant colonists rejected the existence of purgatory and the ability of the living to affect the destiny of the dead through prayers and other meritorious acts. Consequently, those of the Anglican and Reformed traditions simplified the sacramental and liturgical systems of the Roman Catholic Church to varying degrees. The most radical reforms were made by the Puritans in New England, who expressly forbade the superstitious ceremonialism.

Puritans' Approaches to Death

Seventeenth-century Puritans approached death with anxious fear of damnation, because the doctrines of depravity and predestination made any certainty of salvation impossible. John Calvin's insistence on the utter depravity of man derived from the assertion that because all had inherited Adam's guilt, none could merit salvation. Damnation was simply the logical outcome of divine justice. Through God's pure gift of grace some had been selected for salvation, but this knowledge was utterly beyond human capacity. Puritan ministers used death as a didactic tool, describing it in ghastly images of decomposition and hellfire to motivate their congregants toward conversion. Educated in the terrors of hell and unable to discern their predetermined fate, they were understandably terrified of the destiny awaiting them. In the context of belief in depravity, predestination, and the inscrutability of God, the sinner best approached death through stringent introspection and repentance. Appalled by their wretchedness, sinners had no choice but to rely entirely on God's mercy. As depicted in deathbed narratives, despair was the appropriate attitude of the dying. Ironically, doubt of salvation was the best assurance of salvation, because any suggestion that one deserved otherwise was a sure sign of self-delusion.

The first Puritans encountered death frequently and dealt with it efficiently. Families washed and dressed their own dead and laid them out at home or at the church for a few days prior to burial. The dead were buried at a central graveyard with no prayers or ceremony. Excessive displays of emotion, such as wearing black, were forbidden, and there is little evidence of grave markers. Mourners gathered at the family home afterward for a meal.

The stark simplicity of the Puritan funeral did not last long, however. By the 1650s signs of elaboration were apparent, and growing class distinctions were expressed through expensive funeral garments. Those who could afford to do so would send mourning gloves as an invitation to the funeral and give attendees mourning rings. Coffins were upgraded from simple to expensive woods and lined with cloth. The burial was accompanied by a funeral sermon often including a eulogy, and graves were marked with tombstones displaying winged skulls, bones, and hourglasses. The growing expense and formality of the Puritan funeral drew criticism, but it did not abate. The doctrines of depravity and predestination had not disappeared as the famous 1741 sermon by Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," makes clear. But because the

enthusiastic revivals of the eighteenth century (the Great Awakening) offered all sinners an opportunity to accept Jesus, salvation likewise could be attained through human agency.

Domestication of Death

In the nineteenth century fear of divine justice and damnation was eclipsed by peaceful images of death and a loving, merciful God. Letters, diaries, and sermons of this period indicate that death was a constant preoccupation, valued as a forewarning to the wayward sinner. Even though the unconverted were still destined for damnation, the faithful expressed confidence that a heavenly home awaited them. Heaven, pictured as an idealized earthly home where family and friends are reunited, seemed familiar and close by. Enslaved Africans had long thought of death as a return to their homeland in Africa, and their descendants who converted to Christianity routinely spoke of death as a homecoming and reunion in heaven. For example, the well-known slave spiritual "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" declares,

Swing low, sweet chariot, Coming for to carry me home.
I looked over Jordan and what did I see, Coming for to carry me home?
A band of angels coming after me, Coming for to carry me home.
If you get there before I do, Coming for to carry me home.
Tell all my friends I'm coming too, Coming for to carry me home.

African Americans' belief that heaven was familiar can also be seen in the everyday objects they buried with their loved ones, who would need them on the other side.

In the nineteenth century European Americans also pictured death as a homecoming. The similarity and closeness between the spirit and earthly worlds became the basis for the spiritualist movement of the nineteenth century. Mediums traveled the country offering Americans a channel of communication with their beloved dead. Influenced by Romanticism, nineteenth-century Americans embraced death as a natural process that delivered the dying from earthly suffering rather than a punishment to be dreaded. Family and friends gathered around the bedside to witness the release of the soul as an edifying experience. Care of the dead continued to be the purview of the family: the family washed, dressed, wrapped, and laid out the body, keeping close vigil until the church service and burial. Keeping vigil showed great respect for the dead, but it also served the practical function of ensuring that no one was buried prematurely, a common fear at this time. The emphasis on familial bonds was expressed in elaborate displays

of sentimentality at the funeral and an extended public mourning period. As in the previous century, class distinctions were apparent in the degree of ornamentation surrounding the funeral, especially in the expense of the coffin and tombstone.

The disappearance of fearful images of decay and damnation can be clearly seen in the cemeteries of the nineteenth century. The tombstone engravings of New England had changed almost universally from skulls and hourglasses to cherubs and willow branches by the 1760s. The end of the eighteenth century also witnessed the first urban cemetery. Known first as “The New Burying Ground” and later as Grove Street Cemetery, it was built in 1796 in New Haven, Connecticut, but urban crowding and fear of disease pushed the dead farther from the living. A rural cemetery movement sought to integrate death with a cultivated natural setting that was both sanitary and peaceful. Mt. Auburn Cemetery, opened in 1831 outside of Boston, was a popular destination for locals and tourists. Designed as a beautiful garden where the living could commune with the dead in a natural setting, the rural cemetery expressed romanticized views of both nature and family. Families could purchase family plots to ensure they would remain together eternally. Following the model of Mt. Auburn, several dozen rural cemeteries, such as Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia and Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati, were created across the country. By the latter decades of the nineteenth century, however, the rural cemetery was supplanted by the open expanse of the lawn-park cemetery with flush grave markers, which continues to dominate today. Unlike the often neglected graveyards of the early colonists, modern cemeteries required constant maintenance well beyond the care of family members. From the cemetery movement emerged the role of cemetery superintendent, one of many death professions to develop in the late nineteenth century.

The Modern Funeral

The Civil War was a turning point for burial practices in the United States. With so many soldiers dying far from home, Americans began to accept embalming in order to bring their dead home for burial. Embalming allowed families to view their dead one last time and be assured that they were buried in a fitting manner. Far from a modern practice, embalming had long been rejected by Christians on the grounds that it desecrated the body. When weighed against the practical problems created by the war, the religious opposition faded. The 1865 public

procession and viewing of President Abraham Lincoln’s embalmed body helped to popularize the practice. The scientific and technological allure of embalming also appealed to the modernizing impulse of the time. Although embalmers originally did their work at the family home, they soon insisted that the dead be brought to specialized facilities with the necessary equipment. Funeral parlors were designed to resemble the family home and minimize the disruption created by the physical removal of the dead from the control of the family. Undertakers organized themselves as legitimate professionals—funeral directors—in the 1880s and claimed authority over the care and handling of the dead. Many Americans resisted the transformation of funeral rituals, but wealthy Americans living in urban areas were the first to accept their expertise and pay for a refined funeral, as they sought to distinguish themselves from the commoner. It would be several decades before the majority of Americans would accept the modern funeral form.

By the early twentieth century, reliance on funeral professionals and acceptance of embalming had become the norm among urban Americans. Increasing urbanization and mobility, which disrupted local communities and their traditions, was one of many major social changes aiding this development. As families became more dispersed, embalming was essential for delaying the funeral long enough for everyone to gather. Because of rising life expectancy, Americans had less experience with death, and they turned to professionals for guidance. A similar shift was occurring in the care of the dying. Whereas doctors previously had made house calls, the modern hospital provided more efficacious treatment of disease. The dying were now in the hands of professionals with specialized knowledge and technology for staving off death. With their traditional caregiver role supplanted by doctors and nurses, Americans became unfamiliar with death and increasingly reliant on funeral directors to guide them.

Once the funeral industry began to disseminate ideas about proper preparation, display, and disposal of the body, as well as patterns of mourning, many Americans came to believe that they needed the expertise of a professional funeral director to guide them. The funeral director assured clients of a dignified farewell. In the United States, funeral directors successfully established not only the practice of embalming, but also the use of cosmetics and facial reconstruction to create a serene image of the restful dead. The elaborate preparation of the body and its placement in a costly, sturdy, but beautifully crafted casket were undertaken

for the benefit of the mourners, who took comfort in having a final picture of their loved one in repose. Cemeteries further added the practice of covering the casket with a grave liner or vault to ensure even greater protection of the peaceful dead. Together, the removal of the body from the home and the family's control, the practice of embalming and the use of makeup, and the body-preserving caskets served to mask the reality of death or at least push it to a more manageable distance. The funeral director arranged all the details of the funeral for the family, who could grieve free of disturbing images of decay. Public mourning practices greatly declined in the early decades of the twentieth century when extended or excessive grieving became viewed as a sign of psychological distress.

These modern practices of embalming and display combined with Christian beliefs in the afterlife with little difficulty. Efforts to sanitize death had no effect on the postmortem journey of the soul or the future resurrection of the body. The emergence of the American funeral industry did affect the clergy, however. The explicitly religious aspects of the funeral were retained: a church service with a theologically focused sermon and eulogy, followed by the burial in a local cemetery accompanied by prayers. But these rituals were increasingly overshadowed by the larger drama orchestrated by the funeral director. This loss of authority became even more obvious when Americans began holding the funeral service at the funeral home chapel to save themselves the expense and trouble of transporting the body elsewhere.

Although the funeral industry was able to wield considerable power in defining the ideal form of the modern funeral, its influence was by no means absolute. In rural parts of the country, families continued to care for the dead in the context of the local community and traditional Christianity. Even in urban areas, some religious and ethnic groups maintained control of their dead much longer than Anglo Protestants. For example, Orthodox and Conservative Jews refused to accept embalming and relied on their own burial societies, known as the *Chevra Kadisha*, to care for the dead. The *Chevra Kadisha* ritualistically washes and dresses the body and maintains a vigil until the burial, which takes place within three days. Jews have also resisted the elaborate casket in favor of a simple pine coffin. More recently, American Muslim communities have organized networks to care for their own dead in a similar manner. Today, many funeral homes will accommodate these traditional practices by inviting these groups to care for their dead within the rented

space of the funeral home, thus giving limited control back to the family.

Critique and Reform

Even though the funeral industry's practices had been criticized since its inception, by the 1950s piercing critiques were drawing much public attention. In her 1963 bestseller *The American Way of Death*, Jessica Mitford criticized the opulent materialism of the modern funeral, which sought to mask death through makeup and euphemisms. She condemned the industry's exploitation of grieving families and argued for a more authentic funeral experience. Mitford singled out embalming as an especially bizarre American anomaly. In response to public outrage, legislation was enacted in the 1980s to better regulate the funeral industry. Death professionals were required to provide detailed information about prices and forced to inform families that embalming was not legally necessary. These changes were insufficient for some consumers, who sought to bypass the industry entirely by creating local cremation and burial societies that offered inexpensive, no-frills options for disposal of the dead.

Concurrent with consumer demand for greater transparency in the funeral industry, the number of Americans requesting cremation rose dramatically. The practice was first introduced to the American public in 1876 as a more scientific and modern means of disposal, but it was widely rejected until the 1960s, when disgust with the funeral industry and the weakening of religious ties allowed cremation to become a viable alternative. Cremation took hold first on the West Coast, where religious affiliation is lowest, and has only slowly caught on in the southern Bible Belt. In 1950 the cremation rate was just 4 percent, but the number had risen to over 32 percent by 2005 and is projected to surpass 57 percent by 2025. The current cremation rate in the United States is substantially lower than in other Western countries: 72 percent in the United Kingdom and 56 percent in Canada. By comparison, Americans remain strongly tied to the practice of embalming, display, and burial, but the recent surge in the cremation rate indicates that American funeral practices are undergoing major changes.

The popularity of cremation has created significant challenges for both religious communities and the funeral industry. As noted earlier, the Abrahamic traditions have long required burial of the dead on theological grounds. Orthodox Jews, Muslims, and Orthodox Christians continue to reject cremation, as does the Church of Jesus Christ

of Latter-day Saints. Protestant Christians, especially African Americans, strongly prefer burial to cremation as do a slight majority of Catholics, but enough religiously affiliated Americans prefer cremation to push their religious communities to end restrictions on the practice. The Roman Catholic Church relaxed its absolute ban on cremation in 1963, but insisted that the body be present for the funeral mass. Because the presence of the body for the service required embalming and purchase or rental of a casket, cost-conscious Catholics often ignored the rule and proceeded directly with cremation. Rather than deny the funeral mass in these cases, in 1997 the church allowed cremated remains to be present at the funeral mass, but it has continued to insist that burial is the expected form of Christian disposal. Increasingly, Protestant and Catholic churches are adapting to the cremation trend by constructing scattering gardens and columbaria on their grounds, not unlike the ancient Christian practice of burying the faithful inside or close to the sanctuary.

From a financial perspective, immediate or direct cremation cuts sharply into industry profits. It requires no embalming, no facial reconstruction, no refrigeration, no casket (other than a cardboard box), no formal attire, no burial plot, and no memorial tombstone. To counter their losses, funeral professionals have creatively marketed new products and services to cremation customers as memorializing activities needed for grief facilitation. These activities include holding a viewing prior to cremation, which necessitates embalming and a casket; holding a memorial service, preferably at the nondenominational chapel of the funeral parlor; and purchasing a beautiful urn. In addition to holding a memorial service, families are encouraged to do some kind of memorializing activity around the disposition or scattering of the cremated remains. Here the options are large and expanding rapidly: burial in a cemetery plot is quite common, but many families will want to scatter the cremated remains at a site that was personally meaningful to the deceased. Whatever they choose, funeral directors encourage families to purchase some kind of stationary memorial marker where they can return as needed to spend time with the dead. Now that the industry has had to branch out beyond embalming and casket sales to survive, technologically savvy funeral directors are even offering video memorials and webcasting of services in real time. Just as embalming opened the door to the professionalized care of the dead, the practice of cremation is creating an opening for the development of new death rituals. The dizzying array

of choices now available appeals to the consumer seeking an alternative to the traditional funerary rites.

Personalizing Funerals

Today, American funeral practices are quickly diversifying as growing numbers of Americans seek a meaningful farewell to loved ones. The formal, professionally orchestrated, theologically focused funeral of the 1950s no longer achieves this goal for many Americans. Far from following a prescribed religious or professional script, contemporary death rituals are created out of the interactions among family, funeral professionals, and clergy. The demand for new death rituals is part of a much larger shift in American religiosity, which began in the counterculture of the 1960s. Spiritual seeking and denominational switching have loosened the commitment to the traditional religious forms in favor of a more flexible eclectic religiosity. Regardless of religious affiliation, the most recent trend in funeral practices has been toward greater personalization. Contemporary death rituals are designed to express the personality, values, and lifestyle of the deceased and to celebrate his or her life.

Thanks to the creativity and innovation of families and funeral entrepreneurs, the options for personalizing death rituals are expanding rapidly. For example, there are “theme” funerals complete with theatrical backdrops and props and “artistic” funerals in which everyone takes a turn at decorating the casket or urn. More common, families decorate the ritual space with photographs or create a slideshow that is featured during the service. The choice of readings and music is an obvious place to reflect the personality of the deceased. Although traditional scripture passages such as Psalm 23, “The Lord is my shepherd,” are very common, scripture is often juxtaposed with a contemporary song. A more subtle change in the funeral or memorial service is the central place now given to eulogizing. With the exception of the early Puritans, eulogies have long been part of the American funeral, but until now their significance has been secondary to the religious message delivered by the clergy. For the religiously unaffiliated, the entire service may consist of eulogies prepared by invited loved ones or a “shared eulogy” in which anyone is invited to speak at the service. Expression of feelings is further encouraged through a cyber memorial placed on the Internet where photos, videos, and shared reflections can be posted well after the actual funeral. Finally, the burial or scattering of the cremated remains is an obvious arena for a personalized farewell. Possibilities range from incorporating ashes into jewelry, artwork, and

fireworks to scattering cremated remains over a favorite beach or golf course.

Personal values, such as environmental concerns, are also expressed in the new death practices. Cremation has long been advocated as eco-friendlier than burial because it avoids the use of embalming fluids, the waste of precious materials in caskets and grave liners, and the use of land. For the environmentally conscious, cremated remains may be mixed with concrete and added to an artificial reef. However, concerns about pollution and energy conservation have caused some Americans to reject cremation in favor of “green burials,” or “woodland burials,” which are already common in Great Britain. In 2008 some thirteen green burial sites were operating in the United States, although the exact criteria for this designation have not yet been determined. At a minimum, these sites promote plant and animal life and prohibit embalming toxins, metals, concrete, and precious woods. Some do not even allow grave markers, but they do map the burial sites using global positioning devices. Loved ones are intimately involved in the green burial process by carrying the body to the actual burial. They are free to ritualize the burial in any manner they choose, including a traditional religious service held at the gravesite. Green burials bring together two contemporary American values: environmental conservation and nature-based spirituality.

As traditional religious forms are being renegotiated, there are seemingly endless possibilities for how Americans dispose of and memorialize their dead. Some new practices, such as space burial, cryogenics, or do-it-yourself burials, are too expensive or burdensome to gain many adherents. Others, such as the spontaneous shrines created in the wake of tragic deaths, have been quickly embraced by Americans and will become even more common. What most distinguishes American funeral practices in the twenty-first century is their celebration of the life of the deceased as the central narrative that brings meaning to death and life.

See also *Food and Diet*; *Latino/a Religious Practice*; *Lived Religion*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries.

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Death of God Theology

Death of God theology as a cultural and philosophical movement reached its pinnacle in the United States in the 1960s, but it has its roots in European intellectual history after the Enlightenment.

The theology emerged from the conviction that God had become culturally irrelevant in modern discourse and paradigms of selfhood. This movement stems from an increasingly secular worldview in discussions of morality, self-identity, and cultural issues. In spite of this theology’s provocative name, the notion of the death of God is not necessarily related to an atheist perspective, although it can be. More specifically, Death of God theology maintains that the view of God as a superior metaphysical being is no longer widely accepted, because the vision of God as a transcendent or providential being controlling the events of the world has essentially died. In a general sense, this view involves a move from transcendence to immanence: instead of religious paradigms, people now turn to scientific, pragmatic, or social explanations of the world. In the contemporary era the idea of God has meaning only in relation to what is known through human existence.

Death of God theology overlaps with some separate but closely related intellectual movements. The rejection of otherworldly sources of meaning places a strong emphasis on human experience and culture as the true sources of reality and is therefore very much compatible with existentialism. Furthermore, Death of God theology correlates with the

death of a certain type of Western metaphysical thinking. Rather than suggesting that philosophy can determine a category of absolutes, philosophical thinking is instead engaged in inquiry that relates to individual perspective and experience. The rejection of a traditional understanding of God—and thus a supreme grounding principle—suggests that things have value only to the extent to which they relate to other things in existence, an idea known as perspectivism. These ideas were considered in the views of existentialist thinkers such as Martin Heidegger and Paul Tillich in their expositions of how issues of ultimate Being must be considered in the context of the individual subject's being and experiences contained therein.

Nietzsche and the Death of God

At the forefront of the Death of God theological movement was the nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900). Nietzsche continued certain themes in his writings that also are prevalent in German Romanticism—human creativity, self-expression, and nature. In *The Gay Science* (1882) and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883–1885), Nietzsche describes characters who proclaim that “God is dead.” In both of these works, the characters in question are social outcasts who realize that the general community is not ready to recognize that God is dead. As sobering as this declaration may be initially, Nietzsche argues that human beings should ultimately view it as a moment of possibility. He views the Christian moral system as an outdated source of “slave-morality” that breeds resentment, pessimism, and self-doubt. Even though God has no real influence in modern-day culture, Nietzsche argues, people still cling to an antiquated view of the world that teaches them to doubt themselves and turn to an otherworldly God for solace—even though for all intents and purposes this God is dead. This realization is an important step in beginning the process of self-overcoming and the establishment of the *Übermensch* (the overman/superman), who for Nietzsche was the most enlightened and empowered version of the human being.

Nietzsche's influence on continental Europe and eventually the English-speaking world was significant. For one thing, many of the thinkers who followed Nietzsche interpreted his perspectivism and rejection of otherworldly sources of meaning as a basis for social critique and change. Without the perceived existence of a God who commands moral directives and metaphysical truth, the socially and

politically constructed value of the world is given much more emphasis.

Death of God Theology in the Twentieth Century

The Death of God movement took shape in the United States in the context of the social and political climate of the 1960s. It was represented by various voices.

Gabriel Vahanian

Operating from a Christian theological perspective, Gabriel Vahanian (1927–) in his *The Death of God* (1961) suggested that Americans were entering a “post-Christian” era. In his view, the death of God was only figurative, a cultural phenomenon marked by recent trends in secularism and pluralism that arose in the context of the twentieth century. For example, theologian Walter Rauschenbusch's idea of the “social gospel” at the beginning of the century provided an eschatological vision that pertained more to earthly matters of social justice, not otherworldly salvation. For authors like Rauschenbusch, Vahanian argued, the idea of God as a supreme or transcendent being was no longer essential. This idea led to an indeterminate era of “religiosity” in which doctrinal or theocentric religions were superseded by superficial forms. Some of Vahanian's examples included “do-it-yourself” religions that were most concerned about psychological and emotional well-being, or a watered-down view of God as the “Cosmic Pal,” a being who was little more than a calming influence amid the tumult of daily life. Vahanian suggested that in the contemporary age human beings would describe God in a manner that was most beneficial to their needs, and that ultimately these conceptualizations of religion would reflect anthropological need rather than religious awareness. He asserted that these movements shifted religion's influence away from the “transcendentalist” ideals of traditional Christianity and the Bible and toward “immanentist” ones, as defined by earthly goods and cultural institutions. Trends in Christian existentialism and humanism have only furthered the immanentist mindset, because their descriptions of the religious event downplay crucial theological moments, such as Jesus' death on the cross, in favor of anthropological observations.

Vahanian viewed this modern take on religion as superficial, if not idolatrous, and in need of an overhaul. In spite of his objections to the current culture, he observed that, ironically, the tradition of Christianity itself caused its

inception to a certain extent. In serving as the foundation of a civilization that eventually developed to the current secular state, it ultimately demonstrated its own majesty through the folly of the human condition. Echoing the nineteenth-century Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, Vahanian suggested that the death of God demonstrated the true futility of the human condition, and ultimately human beings were even more dependent on God as the supreme living being than ever before.

Thomas J. J. Altizer

At the other end of the spectrum of Death of God theology was Thomas J. J. Altizer (1927–). Along with theologian William Hamilton, Altizer represented the more radical voice of the movement in the 1960s. Read widely in academic and popular culture circles alike, he was featured in two *Time* magazine articles in 1965 and 1966. The later article, “Is God Dead?” was published during the Easter season and fomented a national backlash. Many of Altizer’s public appearances throughout the country were met with protests, including an appearance on the *Merv Griffin Show* that abruptly ended when the studio audience began calling for Altizer’s death. Unlike Vahanian, Altizer viewed the death of God as a literal event. In spite of its seemingly sacrilegious nature, Altizer’s *Gospel of Christian Atheism* (1966) suggested that the death of God was actually a “Christian confession of faith” made possible by the very death of Jesus on the cross.

Following Nietzsche, Altizer viewed the death of God as the absolute moment of possibility for human beings. Altizer explained the death of God as a specific historical event that occurred when Jesus was crucified. He suggested that the radical Christian understands that God died along with Christ, and this death was in fact a final event. The true implications of this historical event have been overshadowed in traditional Christianity through the portrayal of the living transcendent God and the subsequent moral implications. To its detriment, the Christian tradition had understood itself as a tradition of sin and redemption, interlaced with supernatural elements. As an alternative Altizer offered a Hegelian interpretation of history, suggesting that the radical Christian vision involved a dialectical mode of understanding in which the profane event of God’s death was actually a mode of entrance to divinity. The world would be redeemed not as a supernatural act of God’s grace, but as part of the dialectical process of history itself. The Incarnation and Crucifixion were dual but necessary

moments in the singular process of God’s “self-annihilation” that negated the existence of God as only transcendent or wholly other. Only after God died on the cross, as a true human being, could absolute Spirit reach the world in a specific and determinate way.

When traditional Christianity viewed the sacrifice of God as a moral event that took place because of the shortcomings of humanity, it failed to appreciate that God’s own death was a deliberate act of self-annihilation and was the only event that makes true reconciliation possible. In Altizer’s view God’s death on the cross was part of a divine process, a gradual metamorphosis of Spirit into flesh. The death of God was also the moment of epiphany in which the world knew Christ and was thereby the possibility of transformation. Only an event as radical as God’s death could allow for true atonement: if God were a mere author of history, controlling its every event, the possibility for true reconciliation would not be possible. Insofar as God himself died and was also annihilated by this alien Spirit, then all forms of alien otherness would also be subject to this dialectical reversal. In this line of thought Altizer maintained that Satan himself was the “eschatological epiphany of Christ” and ultimately would be himself annihilated, and this would be made possible only by the death or annihilation of God.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth

Like Nietzsche, Altizer and Hamilton saw the death of God as a ground for possibility, also describing the concept as a type of “radical theology” made necessary because of a perceived nihilism or complacency within contemporary culture. This emptiness was most dangerous because it created a false sense of security, even in times of great urgency. They cited the example of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945), who wrote in his 1944 letters from prison that people must learn to live as if God were not there. The presence of Nazi Germany showed that “God is weak and powerless in the world,” and only once people make that realization and act on the basis of it could God continue to help them. Bonhoeffer described this realization of the death of God as a kind of “coming of age” process.

The Protestant theologian Karl Barth (1886–1968) represents an interesting foil to the Death of God theologians of the 1960s. On the one hand, as members of the Confessing Church in Germany, both Bonhoeffer and Barth criticized “liberal theology” because it placed too much emphasis on personal experience in the interpretation of religion. The

contemporary events of Nazi Germany should cause one to be highly critical of the human being's ability to do good. Barth emphasized the "humanity of God" as a central tenet of the Christian tradition, but believed that nineteenth-century thinkers such as Friedrich Schleiermacher and Ludwig von Feuerbach overemphasized the anthropocentric nature of this concept to the detriment of the tradition. Barth viewed the humanity of Jesus Christ as paramount, but it was solely because of his existence as the Redeemer of humankind. For Barth, subjectivism and cultural relativism as presences in religious thought needed to be corrected by a more precise interpretation of Reform theology. Although Bonhoeffer also believed in the value of Reform theology as the basis of the criticism of contemporary complacency, it was precisely the "coming of age" realization of the powerlessness—or "death"—of God in human culture that was central in his willingness to participate in the plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler.

Continuing Relevance of Death of God Theology

The problem of evil in the world introduces another important voice in Death of God theology, that of Rabbi Richard Rubenstein (1924–), who believed the death of God occurred within a specific historical event, the Holocaust. Rubenstein's *After Auschwitz* (1966; 2nd ed., 1992) was a revolutionary work that considered the problems of a post-Holocaust Jewish theology. Up to that point, Jewish thought was primarily conceived as following a covenantal model of election: God promises to act in history on behalf of the people of Israel as long as they keep the Commandments. Following from Deuteronomy 28, the people shall be "blessed" or "cursed" based on how well they maintain God's laws. God is viewed as a transcendent God who is an invisible author of history and the events that take place are an act of God's will. This logic poses a significant problem in the wake of the Holocaust, because it suggests that God willed the Holocaust to happen and that somehow Jews themselves are to blame for it.

Rubenstein argues that this notion of Jewish election or "chosenness" is no longer tenable after the Holocaust, and that the idea of God as a transcendent God who works through history is now dead. As a result, Jewish identity and the meaning of the covenant made at Mount Sinai must be radically reconceived. God should now be perceived as a God of nature who participates in its ebb and flow but does not control it. Although God's divinity exists everywhere, like the changing of the seasons, it is still subject to a basic

state of flux. This explains how God exists immanently, not transcendentally, and its paradigmatic example is found in Zionism, which Rubenstein explains as the Jewish people's yearning to return to their ancient homeland and union with the earth. Rubenstein is also heavily influenced by German philosopher Georg Hegel, but he ultimately suggests that Hegel's quest for continuity is inadequate. Drawing from the Kabbalah and other mystical traditions, Rubenstein suggests that God should be conceived as a Holy Nothingness without limit or end (En-Sof). God is not a tangible being or thing controlling the events of world; instead God is a "no-thing" that exists as the primordial ground of nature.

Death of God theology continues into the twenty-first century, although not with the same fervor of the 1960s. In addition to its contemporary applications by the thinkers noted here, it has been a significant influence within the circles of postmodernism, secular humanism, and existentialism. Over time, the idea of God as being real but dead—as illustrated by notions of "Christian atheism" or "Death of God theology"—was simply replaced by a more explicitly secular vernacular. In the latter part of the twentieth century, religious thought and religious ethics took more of a pragmatic turn. Because of both the moral and epistemological difficulties of proving the metaphysics of God's existence or death, such propositions are viewed as less important than the social and political impacts of such beliefs.

See also *Holocaust*; *Neo-Orthodoxy*; *Philosophical Theology*; *Philosophy*; *Postmodernism*; *Religious Thought* entries.

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Deism

Deism, sometimes referred to as “rational religion” or the “religion of nature,” is the belief in a God disclosed in nature and by reason rather than in sacred scripture and by supernatural revelation. Deists typically reject scriptural inerrancy, miracles, providence, and ecclesial institutions, but accept the existence of a First Cause, the importance of virtuous behavior, and, less unanimously, an afterlife.

Originating in England, deism emerged from the context of the late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Deistic texts were appearing in the American colonies by the mid-eighteenth century, scandalizing orthodox Christians but attracting a lively following among young people and intellectuals. Although enthusiasm for deism waned in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, it gained surprising momentum, thanks especially to the tireless agitation of America’s most influential deist, Elihu Palmer (1764–1806), in the opening years of the Republic. Deism in the late colonial and early Republic periods became a rallying cry for freethinkers, religious-minded people disgruntled with Christianity, and radical republicans. In addition to Palmer, the leading American deists or deist sympathizers were Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Ethan Allen, Thomas Paine, and Philip Freneau. The young nation’s first five presidents seem more deistic than orthodox in their religious sensibilities.

Basic Principles

There was no universal agreement among the individual proponents of deism, any more than there is universal agreement among adherents of the major faith traditions. Moreover, the borders between eighteenth-century deism and liberal Christianity, on the one hand, and outright free thought, on the other, were sometimes difficult to establish. Some liberal Christians endorsed positions that sounded more deist than Christian, and charges of “infidelity” and “atheism” were frequently hurled at deists by their detractors. But there was a handful of core beliefs that nearly all deists of the period embraced. These principles can be grouped into two categories: critical and constructive.

Critical Deism

British and American deists consistently condemned revealed religion in general and Christianity in particular on two counts. (Early on, it was fashionable for deist authors to level their supernaturalist criticisms at Islam as a safe but transparent stand-in for Christianity.) First, deists argued that doctrines such as miracles, the divinity of Jesus, the Resurrection, and the Trinity were irrational. They ran counter to human experience—how can an enfleshed human being walk on water without sinking? How can a man dead three days be revived? And they violated the canons of reason—how can an entity be fully human and fully divine at one and the same time? Moreover, they argued, sacred scripture was full of unbelievable tales, self-contradictions, and sheer nonsense. As Elihu Palmer sarcastically asked in his deist masterpiece *Principles of Nature* (1801), if God condemned the serpent to crawl on his belly as punishment for tempting Eve, what was the serpent’s mode of locomotion prior to the divine curse? In short, the deists argued that no rational person could be expected to take the claims of revealed religion seriously. Indeed, any proposition based on a supposed revelation rather than experience or reason was immediately suspect.

But the irrationality of Christian doctrine was not the only point of deistic attack. Many but not all deists also criticized what they saw as the immorality of Christianity. All of them insisted that the church was an oppressive social institution that retained its power by intimidating, encouraging superstition, and collaborating with the state. Likewise, all of them rejected the doctrine of original sin as offensive to both reason and moral sensibilities. And nearly all of them also condemned the Old Testament as a morally dubious document that legitimizes wholesale slaughter and slavery and depicts God as fickle and vengeful. But some of them went even further by condemning the moral precepts taught by Jesus through word and example in the New Testament. Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson thought that the ethical precepts taught by Jesus were sublime. But Elihu Palmer believed that the scripture portrayed Jesus as petty (blighting the fig tree), unconcerned with private property (destroying a herd of swine into which demons were driven), and advocating unworthy behavior such as meekness or humility in the face of evil. Although Palmer’s fierce denunciation of Jesus as moral teacher was extreme, most other deists agreed with his claim that the New Testament neither offered a systematic ethic nor taught anything particularly new. As they saw it, the maxims attributed to Jesus

by the New Testament authors had been expressed earlier and more cogently by Greek and Roman philosophers.

Constructive Deism

Deists were first and foremost influenced by three fundamental Enlightenment principles: John Locke's empiricism, which held that all knowledge originates with experience; Isaac Newton's mechanism, which held that the universe is analogous to a cosmic machine and operates according to fixed natural law; and Francis Bacon's insistence that the true purpose of knowledge is to promote individual happiness, social progress, and development of the useful arts and industry. But the deists pushed these principles even further than their originators. Locke and Bacon, for example, were at least nominal Christians. Newton left open the possibility that God periodically intervened in miraculous ways in the operations of the cosmic machine, and he pored over sacred scripture scrutinizing prophetic texts.

Reason, experience, orderliness, a high regard for the concrete and practical over the abstract and speculative, and the reduction of religion to virtue were the primary ingredients of the deistic worldview. Experience disclosed patterns in nature that served as the basis for the natural sciences. The ability of the human mind to discern natural order attested to the fact that humans were rational creatures. Thus the orderliness of the human mind was a reflection of the larger orderliness throughout the universe. Just as the physical realm obeyed predictable laws of nature (as Newton demonstrated), so too did the psychological realm (as Locke demonstrated).

Deists were in unanimous agreement that the orderliness of both nature and mind pointed to the existence of an equally orderly and rational divine Architect. Few of them felt it necessary to offer rigorous arguments for their belief in God. At best they occasionally appealed to conventional arguments from design or causation. They concluded for the most part that the existence of a God as First Cause was evident from a consideration of nature and mind as opposed to sacred scripture or religious traditions. The Book of Nature was where God and God's ways were to be found. Moreover, they considered the study of nature to be one of the highest expressions of religious veneration.

Like many Enlightenment figures, the deists had little use for metaphysical speculation. Reason for them, as for Bacon, was primarily instrumental, a tool by which to expand human ability to manipulate matter and promote good works. An understanding of natural law was a necessary

condition for harnessing nature in the service of humankind. It was also essential to the liberation of humans from the religious superstition and political oppression that stood in the way of progress and felicity. So they were content to posit the existence of God as First Cause without speculating more closely about God's nature or whether there was an ultimate purpose or plan to God's creation of the world. This apparent indifference to God as anything but a convenient *deus ex machina* was just one of the signature characteristics that prompted the charges of atheism and infidelity so often leveled against the deists. (The primary cause of such charges, of course, was deism's repudiation of Christianity.) Although the accusation of atheism was unwarranted, it is true that the deist God was so minimalistic that the eloquent hymns to the Supreme Architect occasionally written by deists have a rather hollow ring to them.

Virtue was just as important to deists as reason and nature. All deists agreed that the best way to show reverence for the God of nature was by virtuous living, although they insisted that any assumption of a divine command foundation for virtue was incorrect. Practicing virtue may have been the most appropriate way to worship God, but virtue had no necessary connection to God except insofar as it reflected the rational order of nature.

For the most part what the deists meant by virtue was prudence and moderation—two practices they felt best accorded with reason. Benjamin Franklin, for example, famously worked out a moral calculus by which to habituate himself (and others who cared to try it) to moderate and prudent behavior. Ethan Allen and Thomas Paine, who in their private lives were anything but exemplars of either prudence or moderation, adamantly advocated both in their writings. Elihu Palmer, the closest thing to a systematic ethicist among the deists, defended the moral principle of "reciprocal justice," a prudential promise of mutual respect, as the foundation of morality.

After the 1789 French Revolution deists in both Great Britain and the United States, inspired by the ideals of radical republicanism, tended to espouse freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, elimination of slavery, emancipation of women, and universal suffrage. Their admiration for radical political principles earned them at least as much public censure as did their religious heterodoxy. In the United States opposition to what was seen as the social threat of deism was so great that Thomas Jefferson found it politically expedient to publicly distance himself from it. Thomas Paine, one of the French Revolution's most ardent

supporters and one of deism's most fiery champions, came to symbolize in the popular imagination the intertwining of political radicalism and religious free thought. Two generations after Paine's death, Theodore Roosevelt still referred to him as a "filthy little atheist."

British Origins

Edward Herbert, Lord Cherbury (1583–1648), is generally credited with the birth of deism. Herbert, a British diplomat, was horrified by the ferocious sectarian fighting in the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). In his *De religione gentilium* (Of Pagan Religion), published posthumously, he seeks to distill sectarian differences into a system of belief about which Protestant and Roman Catholic adversaries in the war, despite their sectarian differences, could agree. He argues that the most widespread and therefore agreeable religious beliefs are the following: (1) God exists; (2) God deserves worship; (3) virtue is the chief part of religion; (4) it is appropriate for humans to repent of their sins; and (5) virtue and vice will be rewarded and punished in an afterlife. These five principles, while failing to satisfy the sectarians to whom they were directed, became the foundations of deism.

Herbert's *De religione gentilium* was influential primarily because it inspired more polemical and widely read successors. In 1696 John Toland (1670–1722) published *Christianity Not Mysteriorious* in which he explicitly denies Christian articles of faith such as miracles and revelation. For Toland, all human knowledge, including religious beliefs, has to be based on experience and display logical coherency. The creator of the universe is as orderly and rational as the creation itself, and religious inquirers have no need for appeals to the supernatural to understand either the world or God.

Anthony Collins (1676–1729) raised the polemical defense of deism to a new level when he attacked ecclesiastical authority in his 1724 *Discourse on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*. Collins argues that sacred scripture is incomprehensible and irrational, and that it retains its privileged position only through the conniving of superstitious priestcraft. In *Discourses on the Miracles of Our Lord* (1729), Thomas Woolston (1668–1733) argues that the New Testament's account of Jesus' miracles is "broken, elliptical and absurd."

On both the British and American sides of the Atlantic, the most influential British deist was Matthew Tindal (1657–1733), whose *Christianity as Old as the Creation* (1730) soon became recognized as the "Deist Bible." Tindal repeats the denunciations of revealed religion indulged in by his predecessors. He denies the divinity of Jesus, questions the

ethical value of the Bible (he argues, for example, that sacred scripture paints a morally unworthy portrait of the Deity), and thunders against the influence of the church. He also provides a methodological rule of thumb that was embraced by subsequent deists: the only way in which supposedly "revealed" truths can be taken seriously is if they do not violate experience or reason. There is no other standard of truth other than empirical knowledge and the canons of logic. If any religionist claims as true a proposition that is "above" reason, much less "contrary" to reason, his claim is to be rejected immediately as confusion, superstition, or deliberate deception. This rule of thumb is most famously defended in David Hume's chapter "Of Miracles" in his 1748 *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.

British deism, while generating a relatively steady stream of polemical texts and broadsides from the late seventeenth century through the end of the eighteenth century, never fueled as acrimonious a public debate as its American counterpart. This relative calm stemmed in part from the prevalence of "liberal Christianity" in Great Britain during the period, defended by thinkers such as John Locke, Samuel Clarke, John Tillotson, and William Wollaston, who saw no necessary tension between reason and revelation, as well as the influence of Enlightenment empiricism on British churchmen and intellectuals. But what struck most British Christians as a minor annoyance (or, for some, an entertainment) tended to outrage the faithful, especially those in the Calvinist tradition, in America.

Deism in America

The writings of British deists trickled into the American colonies slowly. But by mid-eighteenth century their influence was being felt at Yale, Harvard, Princeton, and William and Mary. New England Congregationalist minister and future president of Yale Ezra Stiles wrote in 1759 that "Deism has got such Head in this Age of Licentious Liberty" that there was no choice for Christians but to "conquer and demolish it." Stiles, like most other American clergy, undoubtedly exaggerated the hold that deism had on the colonies. But it is true that by the end of the century worried college administrators throughout the young Republic considered their campuses to be hotbeds of impiety. Nor was deism an exclusively academic fad. Thanks to the polemical works of several apologists, deism was embraced by a sizable minority from Georgia to Massachusetts. Philadelphia and New York City appear to have been the two areas where deists were most active. Moreover, frequent denunciations in newspapers, pamphlets, and sermons, as

well as well-attended debates between deists and orthodox spokespersons, kept the religion of nature in the public eye. Most people in the colonies and early Republic were not deists. But most had heard of deism, and some, such as Benjamin Franklin, were undoubtedly converted to it after reading antideistic polemics.

Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) and Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) each endorsed private religious views that bore some resemblance to deism. Franklin confesses in his posthumous *Autobiography* that he abandoned his parents' Calvinism for deism while still a youth. Although occasionally attending Presbyterian or Anglican services as an adult, his religious convictions appear to have been more deistic than Christian. In his early "A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity" (1725), he defends a mechanistic universe worldview that implicitly denounces Christian doctrines of free will and divine providence. Three years later, his "Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion" outlines a straightforwardly deist catechism that Franklin seems to have more or less adhered to for the rest of his life. But though he was widely rumored to be an "infidel," Franklin issued few public statements of personal belief during his lifetime and played no major role in the popularization of natural religion in America.

Thomas Jefferson was another deist sympathizer who was reticent about public expressions of his religious belief. Unlike Franklin, however, Jefferson was excoriated both during his lifetime and afterward as an infidel. As late as 1830 the Philadelphia Public Library refused to catalog his collected works on the grounds that he had died a free-thinker. Much of the rancor against Jefferson was politically motivated, associated as he was in the Federalist press after 1789 with French-style radical republicanism. But posthumously published correspondence by Jefferson, as well as his private redaction of the New Testament that expunged all supernatural references and retained Jesus' moral teachings, show that he endorsed natural religion.

Revolutionary Deists: Ethan Allen, Thomas Paine, Elihu Palmer, and Philip Freneau

America's first open defense of deism was written by the Revolutionary War hero Ethan Allen (1737–1789). His *Reason, the Only Oracle of Man* appeared in 1784. Although written in a tediously cumbersome style, the book was widely read and quickly earned Allen the anger and contempt of orthodox Christians. (Yale College president Timothy Dwight thundered that Allen was enlisted "in

Satan's cause.") Little is original in the book's criticism of Christianity and defense of deism. But especially noteworthy is the number of pages Allen devotes to denying the divinity of Jesus and arguing for the moral unworthiness of the God of the Old Testament. It is contrary to reason, he argues, to presume that "God should become a man and that man should become a God." Moreover, God should be held to the same moral standards as humans, "for the rules of justice are essentially the same whether applied to the one or to the other, having their uniformity in the eternal truth and reason of things."

The Age of Reason (1795) by Thomas Paine (1737–1809) is the best-known defense of deism penned by an American. As derivative as Allen's book but less difficult to read, *The Age of Reason* is important more for its public notoriety than its arguments. Predictably, Paine defends the "true theology" of natural philosophy: the "word of God is the creation we behold." He offers an argument for the existence of a divine First Cause, argues that miracles are "tricks to amuse and make the people stare and wonder," and condemns the church for its immorality. This condemnation does not extend, however, to Jesus, whom Paine believes to have advocated a morality of a "most benevolent kind." It is St. Paul, "that manufacturer of quibbles," who perverted Jesus' originally sublime message. Paine's book was greeted with outrage by the faithful, even though, ironically, Paine intended it as much as a response to the dogmatic atheism of the French revolutionaries as to orthodox Christianity. It is one of the few eighteenth-century defenses of rational religion still in print.

Undoubtedly the most original American deist was Elihu Palmer. A Presbyterian minister who renounced the pulpit for the law, Palmer devoted the last thirteen years of his life to spreading deism up and down the eastern seaboard. He lectured tirelessly; founded deistical societies in New York, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania; edited two widely read deistical newspapers; advocated founding "Temples of Reason," alternatives to Christian churches that would provide for the spiritual needs of deists; and agitated for republican political principles aimed against the "double despotism" of church and state. In 1801 he published *Principles of Nature*, a distillation and refinement of his thought. The book went through three editions before Palmer's death in 1806 and became known as the "American Bible of Deism." It is the most sophisticated defense of natural religion written on the American side of the Atlantic.

Much of Palmer's *Principles* is a recital of familiar themes: a denunciation of revealed religion and a defense of the God

of nature. What makes the book distinctive is Palmer's defense of an ethic based exclusively on naturalistic grounds. Earlier (and later) deists all insisted on the importance of virtue and the irrelevance for morality of a supernaturalistic God. But none of them offered a sustained argument on how to ground an ethic that claimed independence from religion. Palmer filled that gap by arguing that a naturalistic ethic rested on the twin principles of "reciprocal justice" and "universal benevolence." According to Palmer, humans are sentient creatures who naturally pursue pleasure and avoid pain. Pleasure promotes and pain destroys well-being. Reason dictates that the sensible person will act to maximize the chance for pleasure and minimize the possibility of pain, recognize that his actions toward others are reciprocated in kind, and conclude that his own best chance for well-being therefore lies in encouraging others to treat him well by treating them well. Elements of Christianity's "golden rule" are evident in all this. But the crucial point is that Palmer intended to defend morality on the basis of human nature and self-interest rather than scriptural injunction or religious tradition.

The final American deist worthy of mention is Philip Freneau (1752–1832), sometimes called the "poet of the American Revolution." Freneau, an anti-Federalist politician, journalist, and occasional civil servant, was an acquaintance of Palmer and corresponded with Paine. His defense of deism was expressed in verse and pithy parables that appeared first in newspapers and magazines and then in book-length collections. In "On Superstition," for example, he advises readers to "turn from her [superstition's] detested ways," and encourages cultivation of "the reasoning power, celestial guest/The stamp upon the soul impress'd." Like his fellow deists, he also insists that virtue is the highest form of veneration and that its practice maximizes happiness. Finally, Freneau predicts the coming of a "new age" in which reason will demolish political despotism and "dread superstition," the "worst plague of human race." Then he concludes that "the sun of happiness, and peace" will "shine on earth and never cease."

Decline of Deism

By the time Freneau died in 1832 deism in the United States had pretty much run its course. To a certain extent it died out as a clearly defined movement because it had succeeded in getting at least some of its message absorbed by the wider culture. Unitarianism, milder in rhetoric and more agreeable to popular sensibilities, gradually adopted

much of the antisupernaturalism endorsed by deism. Christian apologists, learning from deists the importance of reconciling notions of the divinity with the physical world, began to pay more attention to natural theology. And deism's criticisms of oppressive religious institutions and social practices began to seem a bit less radical when progressive movements such as abolitionism were endorsed by at least some Christian leaders.

But deism's decline in the second quarter of the nineteenth century was also attributable to the fact that the Enlightenment ethos from which it sprang gave ground in the United States to a new wave of Christian revivalism—the so-called Second Great Awakening—which tended toward anti-intellectualism and emphasized personal and emotionally turbulent piety. In addition, American transcendentalism, though not Christian, likewise called into question the Enlightenment conviction that reason was the best tool for understanding reality. The generation of infidels that immediately succeeded the deists—for example, Abner Kneeland, Robert Owen, and Frances Wright—were more influenced by the utopianism of Henri Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier than by Enlightenment ideals.

Finally, the rational religion advocated by deists was simply too impersonal to satisfy the popular religious imagination. Critical deism's savaging of supernaturalism in general and Christianity in particular appealed primarily to a generation of rebellious youth, many of whom returned to conventional religion with the passing of years, and to a small number of lifelong skeptics such as Thomas Paine. Constructive deism's God as a distant First Cause and virtue as the highest form of worship appealed only to a relatively small group of intellectuals. Such principles were too abstract for the general populace to find fulfilling. Deism always remained more a philosophical school than a religion, despite the efforts of deist popularizers such as Elihu Palmer.

See also *American Revolution; Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Enlightenment; Evangelicals: Colonial America; Politics: Colonial Era; Transcendentalism.*

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Demographics

Demography is the statistical study and description of human populations. In its formal or narrow sense, it generates statistics that illustrate the conditions and processes of life in communities: births, deaths, migrations, education, income, race, family structure, spatial distribution, change, and the like. Like mathematics, however, demography is not ultimately about *numbers*; it is about *relations*. Thus economists, anthropologists, historians, and others borrow its tools. Religious demography analyzes the relationship between religion and the biological, economic, social, and cultural processes influencing a population across space and time.

Religion in America has long presented observers from abroad with a canvas of such kaleidoscopic dazzle as to provoke frustration and wonder in anyone who makes an effort to comprehend the whole. Little wonder that they wonder, for the United States is perhaps the most religiously complex nation in history. Most of the religions of the world are present, interacting internally with their own constituents and externally with one another, at least indirectly. These religions navigate the currents of a wider and partly secular culture. They deal with the inheritance of often obscure historical developments. And they respond to a dynamic, evolving present. Prudent analysts even within the United States cannot hope to comprehend all of this. But demography can help.

Challenges in Assembling and Interpreting Data

The work of demography is not without problems. All statistics harbor their own ambiguities, non sequiturs, and capacity to mislead. To convey even highly selective aspects

of America's religious history through statistics means at times indulging in risky calculations and generalizations.

For example, membership statistics for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are elusive, erratic, and difficult to compare. In most instances, therefore, one must gain a sense of a religion's size and proportion in this era by counting churches. What is referred to as a "church," however, may be an impressive building and its constituents, or instead a modest chapel-of-ease, an even more humble preaching station, or merely a loose collection of the like-minded. The term *church* thus varies in meaning in different periods and among different denominations.

Religious statistics after 1800 begin to inspire more confidence, but difficulties persist. *Membership* rather than *church* may seem at first glance a more accurate gauge for determining denominational strength. But *member*, like *church*, contains a span of meanings.

Religious bodies differ in their inclusiveness when they construe membership. Some churches tally everyone. Others count only those who remain in good standing, or who donate, or who are heads of families, or who are free persons, or who have been "born again." Some groups offer only estimates of their membership; others have no interest or few resources to keep records. Some bodies oppose the idea of enumeration on philosophical grounds. Maddeningly for the historical demographer, various churches periodically recalibrate their methods of tabulation.

One must, then, keep in mind qualitative variances in historical religious statistics, whether thinking of members or of churches (or synagogues, temples, centers, and mosques). The count of one hundred Pentecostal churches is not equivalent to that of one hundred Roman Catholic churches, but rather less, for a single Catholic church typically serves many more communicants than a Pentecostal one. Conversely, one hundred Baptist members will not be the equivalent of one hundred Roman Catholics, but a good deal more, because a Baptist group may count only adult baptized believers, whereas Catholics, who baptize their infants, claim the entire baptized family. By comparing denominations by both number of churches and size of membership and by complementing the demography with an informed historical awareness of the groups under discussion, one can achieve informed and balanced impressions.

A contrasting method of estimating religious affiliation offers an additional perspective. Here the measure is not how religious organizations enumerate their churches or

membership, but how people identify themselves religiously in response to surveys. This approach has the virtue of offering a direct glimpse into how contemporary Americans think of their religious attachments, beliefs, and practices. But like any method it has its limitations.

In light of the problems and necessity of religious demography what resources are available for guidance? And what demographic portrait of the nation emerges?

Sources

Selections from among the more important resources for helping to craft an understanding of the country's always-in-motion religious demography are listed in the bibliography. Three among them are examples of a strong starting point, especially if used jointly, because they employ demography in treating different but essential and complementary dimensions of religious life in America. The first work adopts the tools of geography, cartography, and narrative history; the second analyzes religion and contemporary public life; and the third reports private contemporary religious self-understanding.

Oxford University Press's *New Historical Atlas of Religion in America*, coauthored by Edwin Scott Gaustad and Philip L. Barlow, includes hundreds of color maps and graphs on dozens of religious groups. It is the most extensive effort to date to interpret the nation's institutional religious past to the end of the twentieth century through the combined means of statistical data, narrative history, and an array of maps. These maps place various "filters" over assembled data in order to depict a range of insights. Constructed maps, like assembled statistics and written history, are acts (or failures) of the imagination, using and arranging the building blocks of symbolized "facts." Maps thus bear their own dangers and distortions, all the while offering irreplaceable possibilities for visualizing enormous quantities of information and otherwise obscure spatial relationships. Maps are "white lies that tell the truth of the landscape."

The second recommended beginning point is AltaMira Press's "Religion by Region" series, under the general editorship of Mark Silk. The series is not a work of history, but a historically conscious exploration of religion and public life in the contemporary United States. More than fifty authors working with eight editors contributed to the series, which devotes an independently edited book to each of eight regions, supplemented by a summary volume reintegrating the sectional dynamics into a national story. Each volume begins with a chapter on its region's secular and

religious demography, and then integrates this demography with qualitative analysis of religion's encounters with politics, education, and other elements of the public sphere. The series demonstrates real regional differences and local religious-cultural accents that persist despite the homogenizing effects of modern mobility and mass communication.

The U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, conducted in 2007 under the auspices of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, is a third resource for those beginning an exploration of America's religions. It is through this lens that this essay looks at the contemporary self-understanding of adult Americans in their relation to region. The study is based on interviews with a sample of more than 35,000 adults, eighteen years and older. The Pew Forum intends this survey to serve as a baseline for additional periodic surveys on a similarly large scale. Responses from participants provide researchers with estimates of the size of religious groups in the country, as well as a picture of additional demographic traits and basic social, political, and religious beliefs, attitudes, and practices. The Pew survey differs from previous polls by managing to ask a large sampling of people a large number of questions on religion, as opposed to asking a large sampling of people a small number of questions, or a small sampling of people a large number of questions. The survey's results provide an opportunity to examine the relationship among religious affiliation, religious and secular beliefs and practices, and factors such as age, ethnicity, place of birth, family size, regional distribution, and income and educational levels.

History

Analysts of the "present," including the religious and demographic present, must be historically informed: the present was formed by the past and is itself always becoming the past. Alertly or unaware, persons and institutions in the present are ever encountering and in dialogue with the consequences of the past. Each day and moment one engages not merely what "is," but what "has become" and what "is becoming."

This is not the space for a developed and balanced demographic-religious account of the nation's past—an exceedingly large task. What follows, instead, is an abbreviated sketch of several demographically inflected dynamics, focusing on immigration, nationality, ethnicity, and denomination or other institutional grouping. This approach intentionally ignores important elements such as gender, age, family structure, and wealth, leaving these to be exemplified

in the subsequent treatment of early twentieth-century America. This narrowed demographic sample of the earlier period will, however, illustrate the churning denominational and ethnic change that has always characterized American religious history.

Colonial Demography

As citizens and observers of the new United States worked to grasp the meaning and fallout of the successful revolt from the British monarchy, the young Republic both enabled and witnessed an era of bewildering social ferment. Federal and state disestablishment of religion, religious experimentation, missionary outreach at home and abroad, denominational cooperation and competition in the face of stupendous territorial expansion, and much else preoccupied the nervous and exuberant citizens. Grasping certain religious implications of democracy, ordinary people by the thousands embraced the camp meeting methods, the simplified theologies, and the proximity of unschooled “farmer-preachers” and circuit riders. These developments transformed the religious landscape in a single generation: upstart Baptists and Methodists, despite the efforts of urbane and rooted Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, became by 1830 the largest denominations in three-quarters of the counties in the country, which had thrust westward to Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana. Immigration had even more impact than conversion in the long term, coming in great waves throughout the nineteenth century.

Indeed, immigration defined the continent from its first peopling, when Siberian tribes made their way across a land bridge into North America and south across the Plains and to wider dispersion, before ceding the continent in the modern era to the onslaught of European germs, guns, and numbers. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these Europeans laid down an immigrant foundation along the eastern shores of North America, dominated by a comparatively rich mixture of Protestants from northern Europe. These Protestants attempted at times a valiant missionary outreach, but as a whole additional immigration controlled their increase.

Despite decades of scholars’ efforts to dismantle the dominance of New England in the telling of America’s early religious past, the migration of the Puritans into Plymouth and Massachusetts Bays in the early seventeenth century left an imprint slow to fade in the American psyche. The compact geography of Massachusetts and Connecticut, coupled with the size of the immigration and cultural homogeneity

of the immigrants, etched an enduring way of thinking, acting, and worshipping on the colonies, affecting family, school, church, and government. Historian Sydney Ahlstrom has estimated that Puritanism formed the moral and religious background for perhaps 75 percent of the population declaring independence from England in 1776. The colonists’ later migrations into the Midwest and their literary legacy disproportionately colored the country’s collective memory.

Even in New England, however, outcroppings of Separate Congregationalists began to grow strong, eventually developing into Separate Baptist churches. After 1710 Baptists were the largest group within the religious grab bag of Rhode Island.

The colonial reality outside New England was religiously diverse indeed. Beyond even the legal support they enjoyed, Anglicans predominated numerically along most of the coast south from Maryland and Virginia through South Carolina, though giving ground to religious invaders in the Piedmont and mountain areas as the century wore on. Roman Catholics had arrived shortly after the Puritans, founding and sustaining a presence in Maryland, which, though never exclusively Catholic, remained the central place of residence for Catholics through the end of the colonial period. Already by 1690, however, their original strength had contracted so much that they remained predominant only in the colony’s southernmost counties. Outside the British colonies on the Atlantic seaboard, nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries, carrying their Bibles to the Southwest, would discover that Spanish Catholics had preceded them by more than two hundred years, beginning with the founding of Santa Fe in 1610. Authorities recalled French Jesuits from their long-standing mission stations in 1764 in the face of war and eventual defeat at the hands of Great Britain. The vast Louisiana Territory was sold to the young United States in 1803, but French language, culture, and place names continued to suffuse the Mississippi River Valley from its upper reaches in Minnesota southward to St. Louis and New Orleans.

Demography of the New Republic

By 1790 Quakers still predominated in counties in West Jersey, in adjacent southeastern Pennsylvania, and in North and South Carolina. Lutherans, German Reformed, and Presbyterians eclipsed them after the mid-eighteenth century by occupying the hinterlands. Great diversity thrived among the Germans of Pennsylvania, where most Lutherans

shared church buildings with the German Reformed, and where Amish, Mennonites, and various German sects thrived. The Dutch Reformed, settlers of New Netherlands before the English wrested control from them in the 1660s, retained at the end of the eighteenth century strength in the New York counties west of Massachusetts and Vermont. Methodists were beginning to bare their comparative numerical strength on the Delmarva Peninsula in the southern portions of Delaware and Maryland.

The colonies' major involuntary immigration, from Africa, deserves its own extended treatment (as does the major involuntary internal migration of Native Americans). During the two centuries preceding 1808, when the slave trade was outlawed, nearly half a million blacks were brought to what was to become the United States. The African population in the eighteenth century was concentrated in Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia. Slaves shaped their traditional religious practices—quickly forced underground—to respond to the new environment. Eventually these traditions gave way to a hybrid orientation formed of both African (in some cases Islamic) and Christian elements. Some traditions, such as Santería imported via Cuba and the voodoo traditions imported via Haiti, especially to New Orleans, have had a long life. As the nineteenth century approached, the population of the young nation had grown to approximately five million. One in five was black—90 percent of them still slaves.

Despite some indifference or hostility to the religion of their masters, the era between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars would bring a mass conversion to Christianity, which in turn was affected by new styles and forms emerging from an African heritage. Some free and slave groups began a transition from worshipping on the plantation or in white churches to starting their own congregations and forming their own denominations.

The early nineteenth century brought immigrants from new places of origin, permanently changing the religious mix. Irish Roman Catholics came in streams from the 1820s onward. Stimulated after 1845 by famine and disease in Ireland, they came in torrents. In the ten years following 1845 nearly two million people—a fourth of Ireland's population—arrived in the United States, by which time they accounted for 43 percent of all foreign-born citizens. To the alarm of the Protestant immigrants and children of immigrants who preceded them, this very suddenly made Catholicism the country's largest denomination, which it would remain. This is no small statement in view of the explosion

of Methodist and Baptist converts during the preceding decades. In the northeastern United States the Irish newcomers overwhelmed even the Congregationalist heirs of the once-dominant Puritans. Contests over politics and the nature of education were tense if unsurprising; violence sometimes flared.

The Later Nineteenth Century

As potent as the Irish wave was, others came, too—in such numbers that by century's end the Irish portion of the nation's foreign-born had plummeted from 43 percent to 16 percent. Hailing this time from eastern Europe, many of these Austrians, Hungarians, Italians, Russians, and Poles were Catholics as well. They were also poor, taxing the capacities of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and bringing rivalries both among ethnic Catholic groups and between Catholics and Protestants. Ponder the implications: the Catholic population exploded from about fifty thousand at the beginning of the century, half of them in Maryland, to twelve million people, dispersed across the nation, by the century's end.

The human floodtide from eastern and southern Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century brought more than Catholics. Jews, fewer than four thousand around 1800, had by 1900 become more than a million. Not all the arrivals were religious, to be sure, just as with other groups. But enough were religious to establish more than a thousand synagogues, principally in New York and other eastern seaports. Even before the Civil War, however, German Jews had pushed westward, founding under the vision and perseverance of Isaac Mayer Wise an influential center of learning in Cincinnati and a new religious expression. Reform Judaism, as it was known, strove for a religious vitality relevant to the modern world and the American setting.

Yet another gush of nineteenth-century newcomers—this time Lutherans—came from Scandinavia. Perhaps a quarter-million strong in 1800, Lutherans had long prospered along the Hudson River Valley and in eastern Pennsylvania, especially from the time of their great national organizer, Henry Melchior Mühlberg, in the 1740s. By 1900 their numbers had swelled to two million, and the majority of the new arrivals were settling not in Pennsylvania or in urban centers like the Catholics and Jews, but in the upper Midwest—in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the Dakotas. There they established a cultural fiefdom sufficiently enduring that, a century later, humorist Garrison Keillor could draw smiles rather than outrage by quipping, when asked whether someone in his home state of

Minnesota was a Lutheran: “Of course she’s a Lutheran. Everyone here is. Even the Catholics.”

By the end of the nineteenth century the largest non-Catholic body remained the Methodists, 5.5 million strong, who around 1812 had surpassed the Baptists, but who before the Great Depression would surrender to them their lead by ever greater margins. In 1900 Baptists could claim 4.5 million adherents, Lutherans and Presbyterians 1.7 million each, Christians/Disciples 800,000, Episcopalians 700,000, and Congregationalists 600,000. Along with the Catholics, these denominations, for all the breathless commotion and change, were by 1900 the largest and arguably the most influential religious organizations in the United States. If these figures suggest anything, however, it is a dynamic religious picture. The fleet pace of change would not lessen in the coming century.

The Twentieth Century

Immigration into the United States continued apace during the first decade and a half of the twentieth century. Arriving Greeks and Russians, for example, elevated the numbers of the Eastern Orthodox above the few who had settled in Alaska when it was still Russian territory, later trickling south as far as San Francisco. World War I, however, crimped Europeans’ ability to leave the continent even as it heightened Americans’ concerns about the prospect of them doing so. By 1924 these concerns had enabled passage of the National Origins Act, a quota system favoring immigrants from northern and western Europe. This legislation constricted not only immigrants from elsewhere, but immigration as such, because northern and western European countries at the time harbored fewer “huddled masses yearning to be free.” Although the rate of immigration began to rise again in the 1930s, not until the end of the century would the flow reach the torrent it had at the century’s beginning.

For the next forty years the National Origins Act checked the arrival of Catholics and Jews from eastern and southern Europe, and Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists from India and Asia. Immigrants from Mexico and South and Central America, however, continued to stream in, rendering American Catholicism ever more Hispanic.

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed steady progress for most of the established faiths. Membership in churches increased impressively from 40 percent of the population in 1900 to 60 percent by midcentury. Catholics had more than doubled their population, to 30 million, by

that time. Baptists had quadrupled theirs, to 16 million. Methodists had grown from 5 million to 9 million; Lutherans from less than 2 million to more than 4 million; Presbyterians from 1.5 million to almost 3 million. Mainline religion seemed on a decades-long incline.

The 1960s and 1970s presented a very different picture, brought on by several conditions. Among the most important was an emergent cultural malaise. So long had the historic Protestant mainline seemed to dominate the culture and to champion cooperation with it that it seemed almost to become the culture. The newer generation, fully at home in American society, had an increasingly difficult time discerning what it had to gain by church membership. With seeming suddenness it was the conservative churches—demanding in discipline and sacrifice and unambiguous in theology, identity, and moral claims—that were growing in numbers and in public awareness. Scholars debated the causes, but the trend of mainline decline held through the end of the century. Congregationalist and Presbyterian growth peaked around 1960, Lutheran and Episcopalian growth around 1970, and Methodist growth around 1980.

While these liberal-leaning denominations were bleeding members, groups such as the Southern Baptists, Mormons, and Pentecostals were experiencing a surge. By the end of the century, the Southern Baptist Convention alone was claiming nearly 20 million adherents; the Latter-day Saints, 4.2 million; and the Pentecostal Assemblies of God, 2.6 million. The charismatic yearning for and experience of spiritual gifts, such as healing and speaking in tongues, spread widely beyond formally Pentecostal denominations, gaining influence even within Catholicism and the mainline churches.

Evangelical, fundamentalist, and Pentecostal bodies, especially, later discovered religious outlets of contested magnitude and effectiveness in the “Electronic Church.” This movement was a product of the television age, succeeding the religious radio broadcasting of the previous half-century and entwined with a still-active revivalism. Another distinctively (not uniquely) Evangelical and Pentecostal phenomenon emerged in and after the 1950s: “megachurches,” each of which boasted two thousand or more reliable weekly attendees. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, more than thirteen hundred such churches were thriving, fifty of them with congregants ranging from ten thousand to almost fifty thousand. More than half of such churches were nondenominational; perhaps 20 percent had attachments to the Southern Baptists, and another 10 percent each

associated with the Assemblies of God and with historically African American denominations. During the latter decades of the twentieth century the movement spread abroad; half of the ten largest Protestant megachurches were by 2008 in South Korea.

Another new aspect of the 1960s and 1970s was the reaction against the establishment culture and, amid social tumult, the rise of new and zealous sects and movements, often experimental in nature. Prominent among them were hard-to-measure New Age inclinations and a strong interest in selective parts of Native American spirituality.

Intersecting with these developments was a new tide and new pattern of immigration, enabled by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. By equalizing immigration policies skewed since 1924, the act enabled a flood of new immigration from non-European nations that changed the ethnic and religious demography—and the consciousness and self-identity—of the country. Immigration doubled between 1965 and 1970 and doubled again between 1970 and 1990. The United States was now host to a significant number of Muslims. Citizens encountered chanting, shaven, and brightly clad devotees of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness at every airport. Asian-born Buddhists, once thought confined to Hawaii, California, and graduate centers where the world's religions were quietly explored, were now discovered in cities throughout the land. One's new doctor in many urban centers seemed as likely as not to be from India, and thus perhaps of Hindu background. This influx of immigrants tightened selectively after the terrorist attacks on the country on September 11, 2001, a national trauma that sparked debate about immigration, legal and otherwise, and about the security of the nation's borders. Nevertheless, a year after the attacks the United States was still accepting immigrants at the fastest rate since the 1850s. One in nine U.S. residents was foreign-born. Of these, 52 percent were from Latin America, 26 percent from Asia, and only 16 percent and 3 percent, respectively, from Europe and Africa.

A Contemporary Portrait

The contours and dynamics of immigration and of ethnic and denominational movements provide an essential perspective on the development of American religion. A better grasp of the realities of people's lives and religion, however, requires many demographic lenses. One such lens is the U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, noted earlier, in which a large sampling of American adults responded in 2007 to extensive queries on their religious self-identity and their attitudes

U.S. Religions by Major Groups

Religious Group	Percentage of Total Population
Christian	78.4
Protestant	51.3
<i>Evangelical</i>	26.3
Baptists (evangelical)	10.8
Pentacostal	3.4
Nondenominational (evangelical)	3.4
<i>Mainline</i>	18.1
Methodist	5.4
Lutheran	2.8
Baptist (mainline)	1.9
Presbyterian (mainline)	1.9
Anglican/Episcopal (mainline)	1.4
<i>Historically Black Churches</i>	6.9
Catholic	23.9
Mormon	1.7
Jehovah's Wtnesses	0.7
Orthodox	0.6
Jewish	1.7
Reform	0.7
Conservative	0.5
Orthodox	less than .3
Other Jewish groups	less than .3
Jewish, not further specified	less than .3
Buddhist	0.7
Theravada	less than .3
Mahayana (Zen)	less than .3
Vajrayana (Tibetan)	less than .3
Other Buddhist groups	less than .3
Muslim	0.6
Sunni	0.3
Shia	less than .3
Other Muslim groups	less than .3
Hindu	0.4
Other world religions	less than .3
Unitarian and other liberal faiths	0.7
Native American	less than .3
Unaffiliated	16.1
Atheist	1.6
Agnostic	2.4
"Nothing in particular"	12.1
<i>Secular</i>	6.3
<i>Religious</i>	5.8
Don't know/refused to answer	0.8

Source: U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, 2007

toward religion. The ensuing report summarized key findings. Among them:

- America's religious complexion is diverse—not startling news. Its breakdown in major groupings is displayed in the table above.

- Religious attachment in the United States is increasingly fluid. By 2007 more than a quarter (28 percent) of adult Americans had abandoned the religion of their youth, exchanging it for another or simply discarding organized religion altogether. If switches from one denomination to

another within Protestant ranks are included, the percentage skyrockets: almost half (44 percent) of adults had either changed, dropped, or newly claimed affiliation to a particular religious group. Jehovah's Witnesses had the lowest retention rate: only 37 percent of those who were raised as such still identified themselves as Witnesses.

- African Americans were the most likely of the major racial and ethnic groups to report a formal religious affiliation.

- In view of their declining proportion, Protestants seemed destined to become the nation's largest religious minority rather than its longtime religious majority (51 percent and falling as of 2007).

- One-third of respondents who indicated they were raised as Catholics no longer claimed the label, meaning that one in ten adult Americans were former Catholics. However, 2.6 percent of the adult population had converted to Catholicism, and the losses were further offset by immigrants, a disproportionate number of whom were Catholic. The composition of American Catholicism thus was rapidly transforming, becoming more Hispanic.

- The demographics of age distribution may offer a glimpse into the future. Among Americans ages eighteen to twenty-nine, for example, one in four said they were not affiliated, whereas only 8 percent of those over age seventy were unattached. This trend portends a deep societal change if it continues among the young and as those currently in this age bracket proceed through their thirties, forties, and fifties. Similarly, 62 percent of those over age seventy were Protestant, but only 43 percent among those ages eighteen to twenty-nine. Finally, half of Jews and "mainline" Protestants were age fifty and above, as compared with 40 percent in the population as a whole.

Scrutiny of the survey suggests the importance of gender. Although the general population was only 48 percent male, 70 percent of atheists and 64 percent of agnostics were male. Only 13 percent of women claimed no affiliation with a particular religion, whereas this was true of nearly one in five men. Hindus (61 percent) and Jews and Unitarians (54 percent) were disproportionately male. By contrast, 60 percent of historically black Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses, 59 percent of Adventists, and 58 percent of Greek Orthodox were female.

Family is also important to the character of affiliation. Hindus (79 percent) and Mormons (71 percent) were by far the most married. Next closest were the Greek Orthodox

and Reform Jews (61 percent each). Members of the historically black Protestant churches (33 percent) were the least married, followed by New Age adherents (38 percent), atheists (39 percent), and agnostics (41 percent). Nearly four in ten married people had spouses who belonged to a different denomination or religion. Hindus and Mormons, again, were the most likely to be married to someone of their faith (90 percent and 83 percent, respectively). Hindus were the least divorced or separated (5 percent); New Age and uncategorized Christians were the most (19 percent).

Mormons were dramatically more likely than any other group to have large families; 10 percent of Mormon adults in 2007 reported having four or more children living at home. The next highest was Muslims (6 percent), with Catholics, black Protestants, and the religiously unaffiliated following (4 percent). Conservative Jews led in having no children at home (82 percent), followed by atheists, agnostics, and Greek Orthodox (all at 75 percent).

The relation of religion to education and wealth warrants careful thought. Seventy-four percent of Hindus graduated from college, compared with 59 percent of Jews (66 percent of Reform Jews), 48 percent of Buddhists, 42 percent of atheists, 34 percent of mainline Protestants (53 percent of Episcopalians), 28 percent of Mormons, 26 percent of Catholics, 24 percent of Muslims, and 20 percent of evangelicals (31 percent of evangelical Presbyterians). An astounding proportion of Hindus, nearly half, attained some postgraduate education, many in the field of medicine. Jews, both Reform and Conservative, followed (35 percent), and then Unitarians and other liberal faiths (29 percent) and Episcopalians (25 percent).

At 55 percent, Reform Jews had by far the greatest percentage of practitioners earning more than \$100,000 a year. They were followed by Conservative Jews and Hindus (both at 43 percent). These religious categories markedly exceeded the remaining ones. Among Christians, 35 percent of Episcopalians and 30 percent of the Greek Orthodox earned \$100,000 a year or more. Holiness and Pentecostals, at 7 percent, had the fewest in this category.

Race matters. Muslims were the most racially diverse faith in the nation: 37 percent reported themselves to be white, followed by black (24 percent), Asian (20 percent), "other/mixed" (15 percent), and Hispanic (4 percent). Among Protestants, Adventists exceeded even Pentecostals as the most racially diverse group: 45 percent white, 26 percent Latino, 21 percent black, 4 percent Asian, and 4 percent other/mixed. More than half of all American Buddhists (53 percent) were white; almost a third

(32 percent) were Asian. Lutherans were the denomination with the highest percentage of white members (96 percent); Unitarians were next (88 percent). Those in the historically black traditions (principally several Baptist and Methodist denominations) had, of course, the greatest percentage of black members (97 percent and 96 percent, respectively). Twenty-nine percent of Catholics were Hispanic, as were 24 percent of Jehovah Witnesses. Indeed, the proportion of blacks and Hispanics who were Jehovah's Witnesses were twice their proportion in the general population.

Americans may separate church and state, but not religion and society. The historically black churches were more decidedly Democratic in their politics than any other grouping, with 78 percent either firmly or "leaning" Democratic. They were followed by the Buddhists (67 percent), Jews (65 percent), and Muslims and Hindus (63 percent each). Sixty-five percent of Mormons were firmly in or inclining toward the Republican Party, as were 50 percent of evangelicals. Mainline Protestants were nearly evenly split: 31 percent Republican, 10 percent leaning Republican, 29 percent Democratic, and 14 percent leaning Democratic. Jews, who made up only 1.7 percent of the general populace, were more than any other group disproportionately represented in Congress: 7.4 percent of the House and 13.1 percent of the Senate.

Engaging Demographic Data Critically

The full survey, along with those of comparable breadth (such as the periodic American Religious Identification Surveys) or others of more specialized focus, should be used critically and imaginatively. Doing so will induce further inquiry into the lives and cultures that lie behind the data, using tools such as history, theology, anthropology, biography, and religious studies. Readers should think about what such surveys mask as well as what they reveal. Beyond providing answers, they should generate new questions. Examples follow.

Limitations to Survey Data

The social scientists who engineered the 2007 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey are sophisticated in recognizing some of its limitations. They note that it is a study of adults, who represent only three-fourths of the American public, and that many respondents bring a lack of clarity in terms of what religious group they belong, thereby somewhat blurring the picture. They further note that some 8 percent of adults in the country are not proficient in English, which

means that even though addressed by the survey in certain ways, the survey may modestly undercount, for example and especially, the proportion of Catholics among Hispanics.

Some limitations are intrinsic to surveys of religion based on self-reporting by individuals. For example, the approach is restricted to the modern era, making historical comparisons problematic. A second difficulty is that how people portray themselves when asked, while important, may not represent their behavior. The number who report going to church, temple, or mosque on a weekly or monthly basis is consistent over time. That number, however, is also notoriously inflated when researchers compare it with the number of people who actually attend the services. Similarly, a person, when asked, may respond that she is a Muslim or Methodist, and even that her religion is very important to her, and yet she may live showing little evidence of those claims. According to Muslim and Jewish demographers, most national telephone surveys undercount their respective adherents. Thus valuable telephone surveys do not resolve all issues. Reports from the religious institutions themselves about the strength and size of their memberships remain a significant source of information.

Another characteristic of the Religious Landscape Survey is that questions of belief are deliberately broad or simple: "Do you believe in God or a universal spirit? How certain are you of this belief?" "Which statement comes closer to your own views?: 'My religion is the one, true faith leading to eternal life' OR 'Many religions can lead to eternal life?'" The use of simplicity was surely wise in engaging 35,000 people at length by telephone, and the results are useful for their gross characterizations of tendencies among various demographic groups, such as Quakers or Buddhists or people in their twenties or fifties. Responses to such questions, however, can scarcely convey any conceptual or theological depth or sophistication on the part of the faithful.

Moreover, the simplicity of the questions on belief may lure analysts into thinking they understand something they do not. Instead, the questions should provoke further thought. One of the more interesting questions asked was whether one subscribed to the statement "My religion is the one, true faith leading to eternal life." Jehovah's Witnesses had far and away the greatest portion of adherents (80 percent) who concurred. Mormons, at 57 percent, were second, and evangelicals, at 36 percent, were third. The significance of this question is implied when the answers are juxtaposed with those from the religions that tend not to think in such

terms. Eighty-nine percent of Hindus, 86 percent of Buddhists, 83 percent of mainline Protestants, and 79 percent of Catholics affirmed a counterproposal: “Many religions can lead to eternal life.” But are respondents hearing the question in the same sense? If not, do their responses carry similar meaning? Mormons, for example, distinguish among concepts such as immortality, salvation, and exaltation or eternal life.

The same item on the survey raises other issues: what, for example, is the meaning of “religion” in the statement “many religions can lead to eternal life”? When 70 percent of Americans affirmed the statement, did they have in mind that other *denominations* within, say, Christianity have access to eternal life, or also that other *religions*, such as Hinduism or Islam, did as well? The question occurred to the survey’s administrators. A follow-up study conducted in 2008 pursued the issue, learning that 80 percent of those Christians who believed many religions could lead to eternal life named at least one non-Christian religion that was able to do so.

A closer look at these intriguing findings suggests how demographic truths may induce yet further inquiry. For example, the survey reports that more than half (57 percent) of those in evangelical churches believed that other religions can lead to eternal life. Although this proportion is lower than those for many groups, it is an impressive figure. Nearly two-thirds of this group of evangelicals who so believed also believed that Judaism could bring eternal life, and one-third of them held that Islam or Hinduism could do so as well, with fewer still (26 percent) indicating that atheists could achieve the goal. These findings are intriguing for their own sake, but they raise a separate and basic question: what is an evangelical?

This question has been asked and addressed many times. A common understanding is that evangelicals are people who exhibit at least several of a cluster of traits. The most important of these traits are a high regard for the inspiration and authority of the Bible, a belief in the necessity of accepting Jesus as one’s personal savior and of being “born again,” and a commitment to evangelizing, to sharing the “good news” of the Gospel. But if a quarter of those in evangelical churches believe that even atheists may be saved and two-thirds of them believe that Jews can, then what, again, is an evangelical? Why proselytize to those who can otherwise be saved? Is, or is not, a born-again experience necessary for salvation? A related question is what does it mean to categorize entire denominations as “mainline

Protestant” or “evangelical” (as the survey does for purposes of national analysis) when views toward salvation are so inclusive (as documented by the survey) among significant segments of “evangelicals”? Conversely, labeling United Methodists as “mainline Protestant” is an understandable but problematic choice, when Methodists in the South think and behave much more like evangelicals than Methodists in Michigan or Colorado.

Religious Affiliation and Unaffiliation

The survey’s respondents who indicated no religious affiliation (the “Nones,” as the American Religious Identification Survey labeled them) are particularly intriguing and ripe for further analysis because of both their size and their momentum. They seem to be a social weathervane. The Nones are the fastest-growing of any category of respondents in the survey. At 16.1 percent of the total population, their proportion is more than double the number who said they were not affiliated with any particular religion as children. So widespread and long-rooted have they been in the Pacific Northwest that observers have designated the region the “None Zone.” They are emerging even more rapidly in the Northeast.

Indeed, the group is growing everywhere. Despite this growth, half of those who were unaffiliated as children reported being attached to a specific religion today. Taking into account the numbers thereby injected into the ranks of the religiously affiliated, while also accounting for the dramatic growth among the unaffiliated, one can conclude that a great many people who were attached as children are surrendering their affiliation. Awareness of their increase has been widening among scholars, and, increasingly, the public, since the beginning of the twenty-first century. This publicity of itself may have contributed to a higher rate of reporting in more recent surveys, making Nones feel more confident and free to announce themselves.

The unaffiliated are as diverse as any of the religious groupings such as Jews or evangelicals. Only a quarter of the Nones construe themselves as atheists or agnostics. Two-thirds of them (12.1 percent of the adult population) describe their religion as “nothing in particular,” though half of these suggest that religion is somewhat or very important to them. “Spiritual but not religious” is often their mantra, especially among people in their teens, twenties, and thirties.

The lack of institutional commitment of those in this group who are not atheists may be explained variously. The

explanations are based in part on survey responses, in part on other research, and in part on speculation in need of testing. Some Nones are in transition, moving by stages into or away from a denomination. Some are active seekers. Some are faintly attached to a vestige of their parents' or grandparents' loyalties. Some claim the benefits of religious feeling shorn of the burden of organized religious action or what they experience as the confinement of specific creeds. Many have constructed an eclectic, do-it-yourself religion; recall the radically individualistic "Sheilism" made famous by sociologist Robert N. Bellah and his colleagues in *Habits of the Heart* (1985). Perhaps some of this impulse is a by-product of contemporary global connectedness, the presence in the United States of a radical diversity and pluralism (the celebration of diversity), and a waning cultural regard for institutions generally.

What of the Future?

The startling willingness of adult Americans to exchange religious allegiances or to surrender them altogether has prompted questions among the religious, the irreligious, and observers of all stripes. Is religion growing less relevant to the lives of Americans? Is the religious commitment that remains increasingly shallow, a sort of hobby or fashion statement rather than a fundamental commitment? Is the country inclining toward the way of Europe, where Christianity has grown pale and its great cathedrals have become museums? Is secularism the future? Is "denomination" still a meaningful category?

The importance of denominations and particular religions may indeed dwindle further, and yet they continue to claim the loyalty of scores of millions of citizens. Many Catholics and Baptists, Eastern Orthodox and Jehovah's Witness, Jews, Muslims, Mormons, Episcopalians, Lutherans, and others intend to continue to enact their belief and practice through their denominational traditions. It is not implausible that this allegiance will erode in the acids of modernity and American pluralism, but neither is it implausible that a reaction will set in to the radical individualism of the culture. The country has a long history of groups that refused to call themselves a church but that have assumed over time explicit or implicit denominational traits. The rapidly growing Pentecostal movement is a case in point, as are the fiercely independent Churches of Christ.

One thing does seem certain: American religion in the future will more than ever enact its dynamics in

international contexts. This is so because critical masses of imported religions already thrive within the country's borders. It is so because Christianity's demographic center of gravity and zeal has shifted from Europe, and is shifting from the United States, toward the southern hemisphere. It is so because internal division sometimes forges new international ties, as the Episcopalian experience demonstrates. Although theological conservatives are a minority in the Episcopal Church, they constitute a large majority among Anglicans worldwide. Seven hundred conservative parishes in the United States and Canada defected in 2008 over issues surrounding homosexuality. They formed a new church affiliated with overseas Anglicans.

The importance of international contexts for the future is further revealed by attention to Europe, which has so many ties to the United States. In Europe, Islam is, through immigration and high birthrates, beginning to fill the religious hole once filled by Christianity. In addition, international politics and economics dictate that the United States will need to grow accustomed to a more equitable role in world affairs than it has known since the beginning of the twentieth century. And yet despite all this, the United States is, as of the early twenty-first century, virtually unique among wealthy, technologically developed nations: it remains a religiously still-vibrant civilization. It is both three-quarters Christian *and* the most religiously diverse of all countries.

As for other demographic trends, they bear watching. The next pandemic, the next economic collapse or expansion, a war brought closer to home, another technological revolution—who knows when these or other imponderables will unleash a flow of emigration or launch or cut off a tide of immigration (and to and from what parts of the world?). Who knows how such events might alter the American birthrate, or its psyche, or its interest in the sacred?

The future has a way of mocking predictions. If there is a heaven for deists, Thomas Jefferson has had cause to recalibrate one of his. After all, he once predicted that, within a generation, most young Americans of his day would have become Unitarians.

See also *Economics; Emotion; Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches; Feminist Studies; Geographical Approaches; Historical Approaches; History of Religion Approaches; Lived Religion; Marriage and Family; Material Culture Approaches; Politics entries; Religious Studies; Sociological Approaches; Unaffiliated.*

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Denominationalism

In a 1972 mapping of religion, sociologist Andrew M. Greeley discerned denominationalism to be such a central, stable facet of American life that he titled his volume *The Denominational Society*. The United States, he believed, was one of

four denominationally defined societies (along with Canada, Holland, and Switzerland). Although subsequent developments and more recent scholarship contest this characterization as overstated, his use of the rubrics *denominational* and *denominationalism* points both to the historic importance of this dimension of American religion and to the multivalent character of the terms themselves.

Employed in academic and popular discourse alike, the terms can be shorthand for religious identity or affiliation (as, for example, of military chaplains). The rubrics describe the diversity in American organizational religious life—the named or “denominated” faith communities. They point to the major Protestant divisions and traditions: mainline, evangelical, and historically black denominations. The terms also sometimes refer to religions that coalesce around or organize themselves through regional or national assemblies, leadership, or bureaucracy—that is, for Protestant-normed patterns of religious organization, uniting congregations within regional judicatories into national or global polities. The collective term *denominationalism* can stand for the salience or societal clout of the collectivity of mainline Protestant bodies. Sociologists employ the single term *denomination* typologically, and so compare it with other “ideal types”—cults, sects, and churches.

In several ways, then, the term *denominationalism* identifies a distinctive way of being religious. It indicates, for example, that a faith, ethic, tradition, single-purpose cause, or parachurch entity has developed into a multipurpose, multi-functional entity with some measure of centralization and corporate structure. It also has an identifiable membership and affiliated congregations, leadership, and regional and national judicatories. Similarly, denominationalism can function as a theory or theology of the church that discerns individual denominations as branches of the one vine (Christ). Alternatively, as an Internet search will reveal, denominationalism renders theological judgment, a denunciatory rubric for religious division, elitism, diversity, sectarianism, and schism. Denominationalism, denominational, and denomination can mean many things.

An Invention of Modernity

The denomination is an invention of modernity. It emerged in Western societies as they searched for stratagems and policies other than coercion and repression for coping with the religious diversity and discord that emerged from the sixteenth-century reformations and seventeenth-century religious wars. English contributions—explorations of

tolerance or comprehension after the Restoration and particularly after the Glorious Revolution, the Acts of Toleration, the writings of John Locke and colleagues, and the path-breaking efforts of newly tolerated English Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers—played a vital role in the North American denomination. “Denomination” named voluntary religious organizations (initially Christian) operating under conditions of religious pluralism, codes of civility, and some measure of toleration. The collective term *denominationalism* references the existence and coexistence of tolerated voluntary religious bodies, their uneasy competition with one another establishing a larger pattern, the production thereby of an organizational field, and the emergence of a set of beliefs or practices that govern participation in the denominational order.

In their American context, both the denominational organizational field and individual denominations have evolved significantly over time, acting and reacting to other creatures of modernity, especially political parties, the press, and free enterprise, along with volunteer organizations and all levels of civil government. The relation and similarity of denomination to political parties and free enterprise have been especially marked and important. Sometimes the recipient of practice and precept from business and politics, denominationalism also has contributed to these sectors. The malleability, porosity, and dynamic character of denominationalism stem in no small way from denominations’ highly successful missional efforts in American society, from pressures to stay current with communication idioms and systems, from the freedom they have enjoyed to experiment, and from their capture of intellectual, cultural, and political elites.

Denominations’ culturally adaptive and sensitive character—embracing slavery in the South but abolition in the North—has earned both plaudits and denunciation. Here it is important to underscore the culturally adaptive and elastic character of the larger organizational ecology and its similarity to other sectors of modernity. Just as individual newspapers and magazines make up the free press, individual businesses make up capitalist free enterprise, and individual parties make up representative democracy, individual denominations make up the organizational ecology of denominationalism. These four creatures of modernity have tended to evolve together and to influence one another. That the denomination looks bureaucratic and has resembled the corporation for the last century is not surprising. It resembles the current business form of the day,

and also the current form of the political party and of the press. And no less than these other systems, denominationalism functions with sets of practices, understandings, and norms. Just as free enterprise evidenced its operative policy in corporate practice and democratic politics in partisan behavior, so denominationalism defined itself through the activities of the several denominations, in how they interacted, in the boundaries they set, and in their efforts to shape American society.

Denominational Styles and Stages of Denominationalism

Five denominational styles emerged from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century. The first style, ethnic voluntarism, or provincial voluntarism, took root in the revivalism or awakening of the eighteenth century, shaping the religious pluralism of the middle colonies. The second style arose from the religious free-for-all of the early national period. Popular evangelistic movements were patterned after the purposive missionary association, seeking converts across the whole society. The third style, a churchly or confessional style, appeared in the Civil War era, invigorated by both immigrant religiosity and nativism. It assumed both high church and primitivist expressions and sought deeper foundations for belief and polity (in Romanticism and other popular theory). The fourth style emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Protestantism reinvented itself for world evangelism by adopting corporate and managerial processes and forms. A fifth style, still defining itself, emerged in the late twentieth century, as conservative-evangelical movements and historically black denominations enlarged the mainstream and newer and non-Christian movements began negotiating their place in American society as well.

This typology serves a variety of purposes. First, it indicates that denominationalism and the denomination reinvent themselves over time. This dynamism should caution against equating denominationalism with its mainstream, bureaucratized image. Second, each stage models a normative style, thereby drawing boundaries, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly, determining which movements belonged and which did not. Over time, the denominational system enlarged itself, again prompting the question of whether that is happening now. Third, at least in several stages the transformative impulses operated from the margins, importing a new dynamic into the religious picture and effectively enlarging the system by carving out new

space for denominational formation and identity. Fourth, implicit in such renewal, the typology draws attention to renewal impulses that underlay and guided each new stage. Fifth, the schema suggests that also shaping denominations were interactions with business, politics, communication systems, and culture generally, and that denominational patterns of leadership, organization, decision making, and “business” looked very much like their counterparts in the American social, economic, and political orders. A sixth possible value, but one that cannot be probed here, is that to some extent movements new to the American scene may recapitulate some if not all of the stages. That said, the schema does not accurately describe individual denominations for any period. Instead, it “idealizes”; it identifies a predominant denominational style, and it accents the denominational profiles, purposes, and dynamic principles most powerfully operative for a specific era. Specific denominations adjusted these goals and principles in view of their own context, relative maturity, and confessional self-understanding.

Ethnic Voluntarism

The ethnic ferment of the middle colonies, under conditions of toleration, set the stage for the first stage or style of denominationalism in what has been called the First Great Awakening. Various factors preconditioned colonial society’s capacity to yield this new form of the church. The first factor was religious pluralism. Living side by side in the middle colonies were the Dutch Reformed, Quaker, Scottish, Scotch-Irish and Irish Presbyterian, English Baptist, Anglican, transplanted New England Congregationalist, and various German-speaking persuasions (Dunker, Lutheran, Reformed, Moravian, Schwenckfelder, Mennonite). African Americans, then seldom Christianized, and Jews also had their places. The second factor, as already noted, was policies or practices of toleration or of land grants to groups seeking asylum that implicitly permitted religious practice. William Penn’s policies were of immense importance, as were English precepts.

The impetus for and form of *ethnic* voluntarism lay in immigration and whatever measure of religious heritage the immigrants brought with them. The dynamism for ethnic *voluntarism* lay in the waves of revival that *imported* pietism unleashed and in the religious reactions to pietism. Congregations and associations, quasi-independent because of the sheer distance to “proper” authority, accomplished through their problem-solving two related but distinguishable social

transactions: establishing new ethnic communities and legitimating them religiously as German-American Moravians, Scottish-American Presbyterians, and Dutch Reformed.

Most imported religion has come to American shores with little in the way of trained and credentialed leadership or the capacity to create such (the Puritans being the notable exception). Middle colony immigrants, modeling a pattern, found themselves largely fending for themselves religiously. They drew on their (often lay) memories of church practice and structure. They pressed someone into leadership, gathered in one another’s homes, wrote religious authorities in the homeland pleading for proper preachers, and put in place processes by which to recognize authority. When preachers came or a community selected one of their own to serve, they founded congregations. The newly installed preachers, perhaps with laity, reached out to the leadership from congregations of the same apparent “persuasion” to initiate presbyteries, consistories, or their tradition’s counterpart. And around these modest structures converged the immigrant community, ordering itself religiously while adhering to colonial authority and further pleading to some home country judicatory for additional ministers, print resources, and adjudication of disputes that threatened the community.

The formation of religious communities began in the early stages of immigration and settlement, but took off with the itinerant, revivalistic, conversionist, pietist practices that surfaced in Dutch settlements under Theodore J. Frelinghuysen in the 1720s. It then continued among Presbyterians under William and Gilbert Tennent in the 1730s and appeared in quite diverse confessional forms thereafter, spreading across the colonies tracking the several decades of iterations by George Whitefield. Pietism’s tactics proved highly effective in stimulating both new religious identity and community as well as angry reactive responses, themselves community-strengthening, from existing and more confessionally oriented leaders. Formative but controversial were pietism’s emotional invitational preaching; expectations of conversion and a morally regenerate life thereafter; allowance for lay testimony; encouragement of prayer, Bible reading, and disciplining small groups (conventicles); itinerant preaching (beyond the community to which the minister might be called); focus in sermon and witness on sin and salvation; blunt criticisms of worldliness in other laity and of unfruitful and unconverted ministers; and willingness to experiment with new ways of training and credentialing leadership.

This repertoire, known thereafter as revivalism, proved to be of enduring value in forming a (religious) community, in part because it authorized local or indigenous processes and leadership generation, in effect allowing a community to declare its religious independence from its European home base or its alignment with more evangelical resource centers (Halle, in the case of pietism). Meanwhile, an elective, voluntary, ethnic denominational identity emerged, because most of this pietist community formation occurred within lines of kinship, language, national origin, religious tradition, and race. These communities, however, understood their new identity not in sociological terms but in pneumatological and eschatological terms.

Others, particularly in congregations based on the then-normative Protestant-confessional model, took great exception to what they saw as pietism's censorious criticism, emotionalism (enthusiasm), lax theology, irregular lay activity, and untrained/unauthorized ministries. These confessional communities filed disciplinary charges at their headquarters in Edinburgh and Amsterdam and read the enthusiast pietists out of their synods or assemblies. Religious energy and division yielded ethnic identity and cohesion. Thus among Presbyterians both the Awakening New Side and the more confessional Old Side offered versions of Celtic-American ethnicity, each organizing along received polity lines.

Denominations at this stage consisted of a few congregations loosely tied together by small, periodic leadership gatherings. These pastor-led associations concerned themselves with care of congregations, problem solving, leadership supply and credentials, hymnals and service books, catechism, and the like. Denominations did not elaborate a public theology. Nor did they see themselves caring for the whole of colonial society or seek to transform the social order. They remained largely dependent on European resources (either pietist or confessional) for preachers and materials. Insofar as perceptions of belonging within a denominational field (denominationalism) existed, they did so quite vaguely in a sense of alignment with or against the Awakening or within a confessional or pietist realm.

Purposive Missionary Associations

A second denominationalism derived its primary impulse from pietistic revivalism as well, in what has been termed the Second Great Awakening. But it was conceived in relation to the new nation, and it invented mechanisms to missionize the entire society. This civic theology harnessed

revivalistic energies to build a Christian America. The then-mainline denominations (Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians), each regionally dominant, supplied the vision of a Christian America and the main institutions needed for enculturation (voluntary societies, colleges). More marginal and newer bodies (Baptists, Methodists, Christians) supplied the expansive, energetic evangelism that transgressed lines of language, ethnicity, *and* race and aspired to Christianize (convert) the whole society. The camp meeting epitomized its missionary dynamic.

Presbyterians and Congregationalists provided the leadership and the intellectual framework that guided denominations. The new nation needed, they thought, a common moral framework for the good order that a republic required. To elaborate such, they drew heavily on Reformed theological traditions, Puritan covenantal notions, Scottish moral philosophy, and the rubrics of republicanism. When integrated, this new paradigm assigned to the several denominations, and themselves especially, the responsibility for creating and overseeing a Christian America.

Notwithstanding Congregational and Presbyterian presumptions—and they graciously included Episcopalians as well—other movements supplied both the human resources and the effective model for implementing such high policy and grand aims. The popular, even though despised, evangelistic movements—Baptists, Methodists, and Christians (Restorationists)—suffused denominationalism with their missionary energy.

The popular denominations adapted pietism's revivalistic repertoire to open, inclusive missionary purpose. In doing so, they raced settlers into western lands. Missionary impulse shaped these denominations. To be sure, the new denominationalism and even its signature camp meeting could only breach but not eradicate or transcend the social barriers (class, ethnicity, region, language, race, and slavery). Meanwhile, language- and race-specific denominations emerged—African Methodist and Baptist, as well as German- and Scandinavian-speaking. They, too, took on the new aggressive, competitive style. And increasingly so did the Presbyterians and Congregationalists.

The Reformed denominations' more highly developed institutions, as well as their theological notion of covenant, combined with the revivalistic energies of popular movements such as Methodism to provide a highly effective ecumenical drive toward building a Christian America that transcended denominational allegiances. The missionary self-understanding demanded new mobile entrepreneurial

leadership skills, a new vernacular, new communication media, and a new, more elastic organization. Mission and covenant were combined in an incredible institution-building effort, much of which went into transforming the denominations from modest associational structures into engines for national ministerial deployment and governance. They became powerful democratizing and creative forces. The three mainline denominations invested significantly in establishing voluntary societies that focused nationally on urgent causes (distributing Bibles, forming Sunday schools, furthering various reforms). Other denominations also mounted their own voluntary society endeavors. Denominational publishing houses provided congregations and Sunday schools with lessons, newspapers, and magazines. Colleges, sometimes founded more on promise than on prospect, trained denominational ministers and lay elites. And from the local level women and men joined the denominational and interdenominational reform and mission societies to deal with the urban poor, seamen, prostitutes, slaves, and slavery. In doing so, denominations would Christianize the continent. A purposive missionary association generated structure and procedure faster than formal theologies and ecclesiastical politics could adjust. The adjustment would yield other styles of denominationalism.

Confessional Denominationalism

The third style of denominationalism, confessional, culminated in transatlantic fellowships: the Lambeth Conference (1867), World Presbyterian Alliance (1877), Methodist Ecumenical Conference (1881), International Congregational Council (1891), and Baptist World Alliance (1905). Various impulses, some international and some American, stimulated more pronounced awareness of doctrinal, liturgical, or polity identity and generated a style of denominationalism that competed with purposive denominationalism. In the first impulse, the dynamism, cultural power, and seductive appeal of American revivalistic evangelicalism induced emulation and adaptation within some communities that traditionally defined their identities in other ways—notably the Reformed, Lutheran, and Anglican churches (as well as Catholicism and Judaism). Within some of these confessional Protestant churches, the leaders who emerged drew on their respective traditions to critique camp meeting style revivalism, the “new measures” advanced by Charles Grandison Finney, expansive voluntarism generally, and associated denominational practices. Especially articulate and important were the Mercersburg theologians,

Philip Schaff and John W. Nevin. In various works they parodied revivalism as a “methodistical” scheme. They deemed signature elements of purposive missionary denominationalism alien to their German Reformed tradition and its converting ordinances—catechism and the sacraments. Similarly, Charles Philip Krauth spoke for confessional Lutheranism and John Henry Hobart and Calvin Colton for proper Anglicanism, in each instance moving their denominations or a newly formed one (Missouri Synod) onto proper confessional foundations. These spokespersons appealed to their respective doctrinal heritages, but drew variously on currents of romanticism, which valued tradition, confessions, sacraments, mystery, catechism, and other hallmarks of ecclesial identity.

A second impulse of confessionalism derived from the differences over slavery within evangelical denominations. Presbyterians divided in 1837, and Methodists and Baptists in the early 1840s. In each instance various factors drove the schisms, but slavery or antislavery was at least in the background for Presbyterians, or in the foreground for Methodists and Baptists. Once divided, the rival churches rationalized their causes and explained their purposes theologically, confessionally, and biblically. In fights over turf—Methodists and Presbyterians reunited only in the mid-twentieth century and Baptists never have—each defended its polity by proclaiming first principles, appealing to the teachings of its founder, and reverting to tradition.

A third and related impulse toward a churchly or confessional orientation was centered on the voluntary associations that were a hallmark of purposive missionary organizations and, in part, their dedication to the antislavery cause. Among Presbyterians, old-school theologians such as Charles Hodge saw such institutions as ecclesially anomalous. Organized interdenominationally, overseen by interlocking boards of donors, and accountable only to themselves, they were involved in a range of churchly matters (Bibles, Sunday schools, tracts, missions) and within churchly contexts that should have been the denomination’s domain. On what basis and by what authority did they do the church’s business? Motivating the old school and driving the 1837 division were associated concerns—a missional concordat struck with the Congregationalists earlier in the century, Finney’s “new measures,” discipline cases, and antislavery. After the division the old school restructured itself denominationally, in order to bring under ecclesial authority the functions and tasks launched by the interdenominational voluntary societies. Mission, Sunday school, tract, temperance, and various other

societies became *intradenominational* operations. Other movements echoed the Presbyterian brief against voluntary or missionary societies and sought to bring such ventures under church control, a pattern to be widely emulated. Similarly, antimission Baptists and Restorationists denounced voluntary societies as unbiblical, articulating a kind of nonconfessional confessionalism. Of long-term significance were the kindred efforts and primitivist ideas of Landmark Baptists, who leapt back to the New Testament and repudiated intervening centuries of Christian tradition to warrant ecclesiologies of localism and close communion.

Corporate Organization

The fourth style of denominationalism drew on both prior styles to achieve accountability over, while affirming and increasing, the effectiveness of the powerful voluntary, purposeful missionary societies created by evangelical Protestantism. During the Civil War, mobilization of the religious community by women and men to supply, support, nurse, and minister had demonstrated the extraordinary delivery capacities of a focused, popularly based, vertically integrated, nationally managed organization. Like northern businesses, denominations had experienced firsthand in the war effort the payoff of top-down control and corporate organization. In part emulating the business community, in part capitalizing on its own experience, mainstream Protestantism undertook significant structural reforms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Denominations sought to bring under judicatory control the complex of voluntary societies—men's and women's—by which they had done their business. In doing so, denominations established a *corporate board and agency system*—in effect, they carried out a “managerial revolution.”

This revolution was aimed at checking the parallel, self-guided, trustee-accountable societies that ran denominational programs. More positively, the revolution sought to increase the effectiveness of the array of enterprises being undertaken on the denomination's behalf and in doing so to coordinate their efforts under denominational authority. The problem? With their self-perpetuating boards, own staffs, distinct collections or appeals for funds across the denomination, and prerogatives over programs, denominational societies functioned beyond denominational control.

By legislative action or by more gradual initiatives, denominations reorganized themselves internally, provided denominational oversight for the former voluntary societies, and created a corporate board structure. Elaborate

procedures coordinated finance, communications, and publication programs. The churches experimented with new modes of collaboration between agencies and local churches, especially in areas of program and finance. Every level of the church, from congregational to state to regional to national, structured itself with the same bodies, with the same names, with the same duties. The changes created national power centers, essentially bureaucratic in nature. Gradually the churches began staffing agencies with professionals, requiring higher degrees of specialization and expertise, and exploring new schemes of systematic finance.

Thus the mainstream denominations came into being, and as a collective system they effectively dominated American society and culture until the mid-twentieth century. Their various authority systems, bureaucratic program structure, and professionalized leadership aligned them with American society generally, and especially with business and government. By midcentury, their professional elites were collaborating with African Americans in leading society and the denominations themselves toward overcoming segregation and racism. And they began to accommodate women and minorities in the ministry. Thus mainstream Protestantism seemed to be poised for continued societal leadership. Instead, as noted, it found itself upstaged by conservative and evangelical movements. Badly divided itself and facing a much more pluralistic society, it effectively disestablished itself.

Post-Christian Denominationalism?

The fifth style of denominationalism might be variously dated. It may have emerged with the 1965 Immigration Act, which opened the door to Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants, or with Vatican II and the 1960 election of John F. Kennedy to the presidency, or with the civil rights movement and Rev. Martin Luther King's “I have a dream” speech in 1963, or with the urban and Vietnam War crises in the late sixties, or with the election of Ronald Reagan to the White House in 1980 and the ascendancy of conservative evangelicalism.

Characterizing this new style is difficult because, standing within it, scholars do not yet see its contours or its understandings and practices. This style formed within mainstream Protestantism; however, interactions among denominations of all kinds have resulted in a cross-fertilization in societal roles, operational styles, program features, communication systems, outreach mechanisms, and organizational purposes. Unclear at this juncture is whether these interactions are

producing a new form of denominationalism or its demise. Even less clear is whether the increased pluralism in American society and the importance of non-Protestant and non-Christian religions augur an even more dramatic reconstitution of denominationalism.

Not yet apparent, then, is the operative theory for the fifth style and whether it is Protestant, Judeo-Christian, or pluralistic. More evident are efforts across religious traditions to experiment with contemporary cultural forms, delivery systems, and communication networks. However, experiments with technique and technology stress existing associations and traditional expectations of leadership. Culture wars, immigration, war and terrorism, and the global economy further pressure denominational systems. In places, religious life charts a nondenominational course; elsewhere a hyperdenominationalism results. Will institutional ferment produce a religiously plural American denominationalism, a denominationalism stratified globally, or a Protestant denominationalism adjusted to minority status in North American society?

The Modern Denomination

The modern denomination, at least as typified by mainstream Protestantism, exhibits internal features that lend themselves to sometimes differing overall impressions. In fact, denominations function with complex or multiple authority systems, each part of which proves capable of pulling in its own distinct direction, pressing for interests intrinsic to its domain. A religious authority system—theologically warranted, biblically based, confessionally labeled, or constitutionally protected—shapes a denomination. Denominations sometime proclaim this system in their names—the African Methodist *Episcopal* Church, the Associate Reformed *Presbyterian* Church, the Evangelical *Congregational* Christian Conference. The names locate a significant, perhaps primary, source of authority—in the congregation, in presbyteries, in bishops (the episcopacy). And the religious authority systems have yielded distinctive political structures or polities—episcopal, presbyterial, congregational. Actually, denominations within each of these distinctive polity types usually borrow aspects of the other two.

Sometimes the leading or teaching function is effectively undertaken by a second system—an administrative, agency, or board apparatus. Often mimicked at every level in the denomination with offices, commissions, or committees, this system implements much of the program, publishing, mission, social action, employee care (pensions, insurance), and

financing (stewardship and expenditure) for the denomination. Theoretically accountable to the religious authority system, boards and agencies often function like corporations. Their general secretaries operate as CEOs, their staffs effectively chart denominational policy, and their initiatives are redirected by bishops, conferences, or conventions only with great effort.

Such campaigns disclose yet a third internal system, congregations and regional or middle judicatories. The latter, variously termed association, presbytery, conference, diocese, region, or synod, functions administratively between congregations and the national or international structures and authority. At this level, church officials decide to ordain, hire, and dismiss clergy; conduct problem solving; mount educational, training, and outreach programs; and negotiate denominational style, ethos, and identity. Bishops, presidents, clerks, district superintendents, and their staffs interact with pastors and congregations in quite complex ways, behaving in effect like congregations' regional service centers. This level deals with charges of clerical misconduct either through denominational judicial procedures or through civil or criminal proceedings, or through both. Findings can sometimes be appealed to other levels, but much denominational judicial, disciplinary, and personnel activity focuses on the regional judicatory.

Congregations and regional judicatories generate a fourth internal system, a national, continental, or even global assembly. These assemblies, which are usually unicameral, function as congresses. Some permit messengers from every congregation, while others are confined to representative delegates. The assemblies initiate constitutional change, vote on offices, authorize new hymnals or doctrinal statements, set missional policy, speak on public issues, and the like. Even in nonconnectional or congregational denominations, the national assembly becomes the most visible public, media-covered event. This system provides for some lay and congregational roles in denominational decision making, property holding, and financial administration.

Closely related and perhaps emerging as yet another internal system are caucuses, struggle groups, and organized campaigns—the ecclesial counterparts to political action groups, think tanks, and legislative caucuses.

Caucuses, regional judicatories, and national assemblies draw leadership from yet another denominational system, the church's professionals and, in particular, the clergy. Ministers, priests, and rabbis have no state authorizing or

professionally controlled associations through which clergy can be credentialed or advance their professional interests. However, at least in some instances the regional or national assembly has functioned as a denomination-specific professional society, despite the presence of laity. Laity serve in these bodies in a representative capacity, sometimes for a single session, while the clergy enjoy an ongoing membership. Regional judicatories function like professional organizations or the state bar.

Other professionals and specialists within denominations—religious educators, missionaries, deacons and deaconesses, musicians, urban ministers, college and military chaplains, evangelists, information officers, fiscal officers, large-church pastors, agency administrators, and even judicatory staff—have to create their own professional organizations. Typically, they have done so in more loosely structured and less regularly attended annual gatherings, and they may seek their professional recognition through some other denominational connection, perhaps in relation to a national board or agency. Denominations are, then, complex systems.

Perspectives

In recent years sociology, particularly the sociology of religion, has probed denominations extensively. The ideal typology locates a denomination on a spectrum—church, denomination, sect (perhaps in several categories), cult (sometimes), and mysticism (in some versions). Sociology also examines denominations in studies of societal composition and evolution, secularization, pluralism, and religious preference (rational choice).

However, history, not sociology, offers the oldest perspective on denominations. Chronicling and publishing its own story is one signal that a religious movement understands itself as a denomination. And early efforts to depict American religion did so by narrating the histories of the several denominations, an encyclopedic practice that continues. The most important of such efforts, guided by German-born theologian and historian Philip Schaff, founder of the American Society of Church History (1888), undertook to survey American religion by studying individual denominations (or denominational families) for inclusion in the thirteen-volume American Church History Series (1893–1897). Histories of individual denominations, for much of the twentieth century left almost exclusively to insiders and amateurs, have resurfaced as sophisticated period or region-specific case studies.

Among newer perspectives, the field of organizational studies and some examinations of voluntarism, voluntary associations, not-for-profits, and nongovernmental organizations include denominations in their purview. Bringing these several perspectives together and adding anthropology is the emerging field of congregational studies. Once more neglected than the denomination, the congregation is now studied as the shaper, instrument, and expression of American religiosity. Congregational studies often offer fresh views from the bottom-up of the denomination and its leadership. When they look across the panorama of American religion, congregational studies can measure the overall health of the denominational system and assess the degree to which newer and non-Christian religious impulses take on congregational form (de facto congregationalism), a probable indicator of their assuming denominational shape as well.

Christian theology and ethics, whose intellectual domains include ecclesiology and institutional social policy, have rather neglected the denomination and denominationalism. The notable exception is James M. Gustafson's *Treasure in Earthen Vessels: The Church as a Human Community*. And when theology has taken up the topic, it has tended to render judgment and offer criticism. In the early and mid-twentieth century, such assessments derived from ecumenical and neo-orthodox perspectives. Denominationalism was an emblem of Christian division and disunity and the ethical failure of the church to be the church made one in Christ. And as porous, culturally sensitive institutions that accommodated, and occasionally championed, some of the worst of human practices (slavery, war, segregation, class prejudice, exploitation of workers, sexism, and homophobia), denominations compromised the gospel with the world, a theological scandal.

The person who most forcefully synthesized these ecumenical and neo-orthodox judgments, H. Richard Niebuhr, was among the first to analyze the collective phenomenon of American denominationalism. He found that each denomination established and shaped itself around social impulses of class, caste, nationality, region, ethnicity, and language. These socially partial origins and denominations' difficulty in surmounting them earned Niebuhr's scathing reproach in *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1957), and his work and views still typify perceptions of denominationalism. He pointed out that the "evil of denominationalism" lay in the conditions that made the emergence of sects necessary. Churches had

failed to transcend the social conditions that made them into “caste-organizations,” to “sublimate their loyalties” to standards and institutions that had little relevance, if any, to the Christian ideal, and to fight the temptation to give first priority to their own self-preservation and expansion.

Niebuhr’s usage of church, denomination, and sect made popular the typological categories advanced by social scientists such as Ernst Troeltsch. Niebuhr proposed the categories of denomination and denominationalism as most apt for understanding American society. He wrote at the highpoint of mainline Protestant ascendancy in national affairs, perhaps in world affairs. Consequently, Niebuhr emphasized denominational conformity to society and culture and compromise of an egalitarian, inclusive, world-denying Christian ethic. He later revisited the denomination’s relation to society in various works. In *Christ and Culture* (1951) he set forth a fivefold typology aimed at characterizing the longer saga of Christianity’s relation to the state, the social order, and culture.

Status

The complexity of denominationalism makes its status in American society in part a definitional issue. However, a variety of developments suggest, if not its decline, then certainly the destabilization of the central societal role to which Andrew Greeley pointed; this can be discerned from the U.S. Religious Landscape Survey by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life and from several works by commentators on the American religious institution scene, such as Robert Wuthnow and Nancy Ammerman. The following are some considerations that call the centrality of denominationalism in the American religious spectrum into question.

- The growing North American religious pluralism may require other categories than “denominationalism” to recognize the importance and the unique patterns of the local and translocal institutionalization of non-Protestant Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, Native American, and New Age faiths, and various types of the unaffiliated.

- Protestantism breaks into three traditions—mainline, evangelical, and historically black—each denominationally divided, but together slipping to only 51 percent of total reported membership, a trajectory possibly indicating Protestant minority status in the future.

- Membership in mainline Protestant denominations has eroded (and aged) over the last half-century, and the

importance, prestige, and power of mainline denominational leadership is now contested, and often bested—for example, in the access of religious leaders to the White House.

- Conservative, evangelical, and fundamentalist bodies and their leadership have experienced corresponding growth, vigor, visibility, and political prowess, with their collective membership exceeding that of the mainline churches and constituting over a quarter of the overall American population.

- Membership growth in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia, and stagnation or decline in North America threaten long-standing patterns of assembly, governance, ethos, worship, and morality (on homosexuality especially).

- Denominational ethos, values, commitment, and cohesion now contend with denomination switching—a quarter of adults are no longer a part of the religion in which they were raised, and that figure climbs to 44 percent if switching among Protestant bodies is tracked.

- Evidence of the weakening of denominational identity and allegiance are the marriages across religious, confessional, and denominational lines (37 percent); persons retaining a sense of being Methodist or Presbyterian but no actual membership; disaffiliation in younger age cohorts; and adherents experimenting with various spiritualities and meditative practices.

- Protestant denominations contend with similar patterns of congregational independence or diffidence, reflected in the selection of nonstandard educational materials or hymnals, the diversion of collections to local or nondenominational projects, the resistance to denominational programs, and the removal of denominational signage.

- Competing for congregational business and competing with denominational agencies are an array of independent and parachurch publishing houses, curriculum suppliers, music licensors, bookstore chains, program franchisers, consultants, and training outfits.

- Megachurches, some independent or nondenominational and some remaining denominationally affiliated (often loosely), now boast resources comparable to small denominations, with sophisticated broadcast, Internet, and digital presences and the capacity to meet needs once supplied by denominations.

- Coalitions of megacongregations or their church plantings coalesce into denomination-like entities or

function more loosely as quasi-denominations, offering training events and inspirational gatherings for prospective clergy.

- Single-purpose lobbying, humanitarian, and mission organizations are claiming the resources once channeled through congregational structures and through denominations and denominational programs. Examples are Focus on the Family, World Vision, Promise Keepers, Institute on Religion and Democracy, and Habitat for Humanity.

- Similar single-purpose struggle, ideological, or caucus groups within denominations, especially within mainline ones, turn assemblies and conferences into contentious culture war gatherings. They tend to align into broad progressive or conservative camps and establish connections to similar camps in other denominations or through religious political action or coalition-forming entities, such as the Institute of Religion and Democracy.

- Older interdenominational organizations—such as the National and the World Council of Churches—that once harmonized the leadership of the mainline, function within the ambit of culture wars, tending to retain the allegiance of the more progressive and to function as a foil for the more conservative denominational leaders.

- Marginal membership attachment, congregational independence, culture war sentiments, and societal prejudices engender indifference, suspicion, and sometimes hostility toward the centers and symbols of denominational identity, at times resulting in tax resistance or other forms of revolt.

- Media ministries, the newer virtual alliances, and political action efforts that trade on religious sensibilities enlarge the marketplace within which religious expression and affiliation occur and induce consumption or invite appropriation of multiple beliefs, value systems, and ethical practices.

- Such public or digital visualizations of North America and of the world heighten awareness of American religious diversity, test tolerance levels, stimulate post-September 11 fears, and erode faith in or adherence to putative societal norms within which Protestant denominationalism has functioned.

- Because denominational loyalty is tested on so many fronts, denominational leaders, ordination committees, and seminaries find themselves forced to accent confessional particularities, resulting in the strange phenomenon of hyperdenominationalism contending with postdenominationalism.

An End to Denominationalism?

Corrosive forces are eroding the dominance, indeed the salience, of Protestant denominations, particularly those that might be termed mainline or traditional. Should one then conclude that America is no longer a denominational society? Or even that the end of denominationalism looms, as a chorus of doomsayers prophesizes? Such judgments may seem appropriate to Protestant leaders anguishing over numerical declines or to those outside mainstream denominations who have found megachurches, parachurch organizations, media ministries, or virtual spirituality to be the most effective religious modality for the twenty-first century.

The historian, however, can ask whether the crisis interpretive mood obscures the longer saga of denomination and denominationalism and overlooks the earlier declarations of its doom. Denominationalism has itself differed over time, as noted. Adequate definitions of denomination and denominationalism can no longer be equated with mainline Protestantism or with bureaucratic-corporate forms. Such definitions need to recognize the changing modalities of denominational structure and governance over the course of the American denominational experience and leave open the possibility that some of the newer and non-Christian movements will participate in the reshaping of denominationalism.

Indeed, the catalogue of social strains prompts the question of whether denominationalism is, in fact, undergoing reconstitution, whether the denominational system is broadening beyond evangelical and historically black churches and Judaism, and whether immigrant, non-Christian, and newer religious impulses are organizing themselves in what might be termed a denominational pattern (the once Protestant-normed pattern of American religious organization functioning as a denominational organizational field). Will newer movements embrace a denominational identity or label (what sociologists term “institutional isomorphism”) to claim space in the religious marketplace? Will they coalesce as voluntary communities in patterns of de facto congregationalism? Will they seek nonprofit status, advertise in newspapers or in the *Yellow Pages*, and establish trustees and lay leadership cadres, committees, or boards? Will one or more of the leaders function in such congregational communities in minister-like capacities? Will the congregations gradually emulate their neighboring churches with Sunday

schools and an array of other community-building or outreach functions? To support such multipurpose activities will leaders and congregations collaborate with counterparts to build some translocal form of denominational organization? And will such denominationalizing impulses be welcomed, recognized, or even accommodated to by existing denominations and by American society? Will the many studies, institutes, conferences, and institutes now exploring religious diversity function as signals and means of accommodation, as did Vatican II, JFK's presidency, the "discovery" of a Judeo-Christian tradition, and Will Herberg's landmark declaration in his classic book *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* of a wider denominationalism? The questions are many; the answers are few.

See also *Civil Religion in the United States; Congregations; Demographics; Ecumenism; Emerging Church Movement; Historical Approaches; House Church Movement; Independent Bible and Community Churches; Megachurches; Ministry, Professional; Philanthropy; Polity; Seeker Churches; Sociological Approaches; Unaffiliated.*

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Devotionalism

Devotionalism refers to the many ways in which religious worshippers relate to sacred figures, such as deities, persons, spirits, or objects. Sometimes known as popular piety, devotions are found in many religions and are practiced by a wide variety of believers.

Individuals and communities employ various media when practicing devotion to a sacred figure such as God, saints, goddesses, or gurus. Among these media are candles, incense, oils, flowers, songs, prayers, beads, and icons. Some devotions can be considered private because they are practiced in a domestic setting. In examples of public devotions, Roman Catholics attend Benediction (a ceremony during which the consecrated host used in Communion is displayed and adored), Jews gather as family and friends for Sabbath, and Buddhists go to public temples to pay personal homage to the Buddha. In the United States, devotionalism has long been practiced by a wide range of individuals and communities, from Native Americans to Catholics. Protestants, because of their resistance to material images (with the exception of the cross) have been less inclined to devotionalism, but they are not without the practice, particularly Hispanic Protestants. Adherents of other religions more recently present in North America (for example, Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs) have their own forms of devotionalism that are practiced in places of public worship as well as in private settings.

Devotionalism balances the theological and intellectual aspects of religion with concrete images, prayers, and practices that support the faith of believers. Employing material aids such as statues, altars, oils, and flowers, worshippers bring to mind the divine. Many popular devotions originate with and are practiced by ordinary believers. Sometimes institutional representatives or clergy view such devotions as secondary forms of worship. In 2001 Pope John Paul II (1978–2005) defined popular piety as an expression of faith that avails itself of certain cultural elements proper to a

specific environment—elements that are capable of interpreting and questioning the sensibilities of those who live in that same environment.

Devotionalism and popular religion often go hand-in-hand, although they may be separated by their originating sources. Devotions are frequently led by, or approved by, religious officials such as priests, ministers, rabbis, or bishops. Popular religion usually comprises practices created by ordinary believers and is not led by religious authorities. Often these practices are created on the margins of organized religion, and yet once established they are regularly tolerated or embraced by institutions. These practices may be described as extraliturgical for those traditions that have institutionalized and structured liturgy or worship. Over time, some practices of popular piety make their way into official liturgical ritual.

Pilgrimages are another form of devotionalism found in many religions practiced in the United States. American devotees may make a sacred journey to a place reputed to be holy because the transcendent or divine is believed to have touched that place in a special way. Thus, for example, Muslims visit Mecca in a pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia known as the *hajj*, Jews visit the remains of the second temple in Jerusalem at the Western Wall, and Catholics visit the healing waters of Lourdes in France.

Some of the risks of popular piety, according to religious officials, are demeaning sacred objects, misunderstanding the meaning of images or practices, attributing magical powers to objects or rituals, elevating these objects and rituals above sanctioned practices, substituting these objects and rituals for approved practices, or investing them with authority that supersedes the authority of approved texts or rituals.

Christian Devotionalism

The Protestant Reformation discouraged the use of icons, statues, and religious images. At the same time, it encouraged Bible reading and personal prayer. Many Protestants read, pray, and study the Bible. For many, private devotionalism extends to reading religiously inspired books and, in the contemporary era, listening to Christian radio and watching Christian television shows.

The religious revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries included devotionalism as well as preaching and prayer. For example, the American preacher Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) and the British evangelist George Whitfield (1714–1770) led a revival called the Great Awakening, during which crowds gathered not only to pray but

also to dance, scream, and contort their bodies, all as signs of their devotion to the Lord. In the Second Great Awakening, preachers such as Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875) and James McGready (1758–1817), often in outdoor campground revivals, stirred people's emotions with their fiery preaching. These same practices are followed today in many evangelical churches.

In the 1800s public schools in America initiated readings from the King James Version of the Bible. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, *The Christian Century*, a popular American publication representing mainline Protestantism, published a devotional guide entitled *The Daily Altar* that encouraged Americans to take just a few minutes daily to pray and reflect on spiritual matters. The guide included Bible readings, poetry, and inspirational texts. The use of these publications differentiated liberal Protestants from fundamentalists, who preferred only the Bible for their meditation and prayer. Henry Emerson Fosdick (1878–1969), a liberal Protestant author of four tracts on devotion, found that there were as many different ways of praying as there were individuals. Liberal Protestants accommodated contemporary culture in their devotional life, whereas fundamentalists resisted it in their spirituality while still embracing its advantages in their everyday lives. In either case, private devotions were required to keep the spirit of God alive and active in one's life. Spiritual writer Rueben Torrey (1856–1928) once observed that “no two things are more essential to a spirit-filled life than Bible reading and secret prayer.” In 1962 the Supreme Court ruled that the subjection of students to official prayer is not allowed in public school classrooms. Prayer at civic public assemblies has been challenged but still finds its way into presidential inaugurations.

As for the visual arts, in his popular paintings inspired by Bible stories Warner Sallman (1892–1968) portrayed Jesus in everyday life. These pious paintings captured the imagination of millions of Christians, who displayed prints of them in their homes. Sallman's painting “Head of Christ” (1940) has been reproduced over one billion times and would be recognized by most Americans, Christian or not. Although critics dismiss art of this genre as commercial and sentimental, such art inspired devotionalism among Protestants, who traditionally had eschewed religious images, as well as among Catholics, who enjoyed a long tradition of religious art. Led by David Morgan, contemporary scholars are reexamining this art to assess its social and religious influence.

Catholics have regularly practiced a variety of devotions. Many of these center on Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is

the focus of intense devotion. Catholics revere Mary and often ask her intercession with her son Jesus. Statues of Mary abound in churches and are often found in the homes of Catholics. The church devotes the month of May to Mary, and in many Catholic schools and parishes, in a May ceremony her statue is crowned with flowers by a schoolchild. Theologically, Mary is not divine but human, like all other humans. Nevertheless, some Catholics accord her privilege and homage that rivals that given to Jesus. The church has bestowed on her more titles than on Jesus. Commemorated on December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception is based on the belief that Mary was from her conception without the stain of original sin, the only human besides Jesus to be so conceived. In 1854 Pope Pius IX declared the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and in 1951 Pope Pius XII solemnly declared Mary's "Assumption"—that is, that Mary was assumed bodily into heaven at her death. This belief has fostered the notion that Mary was more than human or, at the least, a specially favored one.

One of the most popular and enduring prayers recited by Catholics is the rosary, sometimes called "Our Lady's Prayer." The rosary is prayed while holding a string of fifty-five beads connected in a circle. Five additional beads lead from the circle to a crucifix. Catholics touch each bead as they pray the "decades" (ten beads). The main prayer recited, "Hail Mary," is a tribute and petition to Mary:

Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Every Catholic recognizes this prayer, and most have it committed to memory. It was a mainstay of the pre-Vatican II church (before 1962). Even though rosaries continue to sell well in religious goods stores, today many younger Catholics do not own rosary beads, could not name the various mysteries that accompany the rosary, and may only encounter "Hail Mary" during the wake of a deceased Catholic, when the priest, deacon, or perhaps a layperson leads the mourners in this prayer.

"Novenas," devotional prayers recited over a nine-day period that are devoted exclusively to Mary, have also been

a form of popular piety among Catholics. These prayers might be conducted by a group or said privately by an individual. Novenas said over the course of the first Friday in the month of nine months in a row were very popular in the pre-Vatican II church and continue to be a prayer form today for some Catholics.

Devotion to Jesus takes many forms among Catholics, from prayer cards with artistic depictions of Jesus to statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is graphically depicted in the plaster form. The devotion to the Sacred Heart began in France in the late seventeenth century in response to the visions reported by Margaret Mary Alacoque, a Visitandine nun. Pope Pius IX (1846–1878) popularized the devotions throughout the church, beatified (the step before canonization as a saint) the French nun, and created the Feast of the Sacred Heart, which is celebrated throughout the church. American Catholics took up the practice of reverence to the Sacred Heart, creating Societies of the Sacred Heart, which promoted devotions and encouraged Catholics to have statues of the Sacred Heart in their homes.

Eucharistic adoration is another form of Catholic devotion to Jesus. American Catholics appropriated European practices for the "Blessed Sacrament"—that is, the "host" (the small wafer Catholics receive at Communion). The host is displayed in an elaborate holder or chalice, called a "monstrance." It is worshipped in a ritual known as the Benediction during visits to the Blessed Sacrament, which is kept in a receptacle called a "tabernacle" outside of liturgical celebrations. In perpetual adoration the host is displayed in the church for Catholics to worship at all hours of the day. These are just some of the devotional practices surrounding what Catholics believe to be the body of Christ.

The veneration of saints is another form of Catholic devotionalism. Catholics revere saints as model Christians. Many religious orders (groups of nuns, brothers, or priests) were founded to imitate a particular saint (for example, the Franciscans follow the twelfth-century Saint Francis of Assisi and the Jesuits follow the sixteenth-century Saint Ignatius of Loyola). Catholics believe that the saints not only provide a model for spiritual life but also can intercede for them with God. Specific saints have been identified as particularly helpful in specific domains. Thus Saint Lucy, a martyr whose eyes were gouged out, helps believers' eyesight; Saint Anthony, a medieval Franciscan monk, helps to find lost items; and Saint Jude the Apostle, often depicted with a flame around his head, is the patron of hopeless causes to whom many critically ill people turn for help.

Catholic devotionalism was addressed by the bishops and the pope at the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). In *Sacrosanctum Concilium* the Council stated, “Such devotions should be so drawn up that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, and are in some ways derived from it, lead the people to it, since in fact the liturgy by its very nature is far superior to any of them.”

Some observers interpreted the council documents as a signal that Catholics should limit their expressions of devotion to Mary. Concerned that Marian piety might suffer a serious decline, Pope Paul VI issued *Marialis Cultus* (Devotion to Mary) in 1974 in an attempt to renew devotion to the mother of Jesus. To further encourage continued esteem for Mary among Catholics, in 1987 Pope John Paul II issued *Redemptoris Mater* (Mother of the Redeemer), in which he declared 1988 a “Marian Year.” This year of remembrance of Mary was not designed to undermine the council’s guidance in understanding Mary. Instead, it was “meant to promote a new and more careful reading of what the Council said about the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the mystery of Christ and of the Church. . . . Here we speak not only of the doctrine of faith but also of the life of faith, and thus of authentic ‘Marian spirituality,’ seen in the light of Tradition, and especially the spirituality to which the Council exhorts us.”

Mary continues to play a significant role in Catholic piety, as testified by the millions who practice personal devotion to her. The church dedicates several feast days in

the liturgical calendar to Mary. That devotion even carries over into the public world of the Internet. The Web site “Catholic Online” (www.catholic.org) carries a dedication to Our Lady of Guadalupe, and numerous other Web sites are also dedicated to those who are devoted to Mary. The Virgin Mary thus remains a key figure in Catholic art, theology, devotion, and piety. Interpretations of her today are not as uniform as they were in the 1950s, but her importance to Catholic culture cannot be underestimated.

Although Protestants and Catholics have been the most prominent religious communities in the history of the United States, recently they have been joined by members of other religions, most of them immigrants. The Pluralism Project, headed by Diana Eck of Harvard University, has identified the locations of these groups and mapped a multireligious America. The following sections describe some of these religious communities and some aspects of their devotionalism.

Hindu Devotionalism

Much of the Hindu community practices a ritual devotion known as *bhakti*, a word derived from ancient Sanskrit that means devotion focused on a deity. The two major gods, Shiva and Vishnu, are the primary subjects of intense devotion, but other gods and goddesses (Ganesh and Devi are two prominent examples) receive significant devotional attention as well. *Puja*, a devotional ceremony for a god or goddess, can be conducted in the temple or at home, either with a group



Hinduism is filled with devotions to gods and goddesses. Here, a young Hindu prays in front of a Lingam, symbol of the god Shiva. These symbols, often made of stone, are found throughout India, usually in temples, and are the objects of devotion. Hindus anoint them with oil, place garlands of flowers on them, and pray before them. Shiva is the creator god whose symbol resembles male and female organs of creation. In Hinduism, the two major gods, Shiva and Vishnu, are the primary subjects of intense devotion, but other gods and goddesses receive significant devotional attention as well.

or alone, led by a priest or a layperson. *Puja* often includes flowers to adorn a god or goddess image, oil to anoint the image, and food as an offering. For the convenience of worshippers, Hindu temples in the United States sometimes combine the most popular gods, Shiva and Vishnu, which are normally worshipped in separate temples in India.

American Hindus continue to practice traditions that originated in India but adjust them to suit the U.S. context. The community's Hawaii-based publication, *Hinduism Today*, reaches out to Hindus outside of India, many of whom are second- or third-generation Hindus living in cultures dominated by other religions.

Hindus revere their gurus (wise teachers) and practice devotion to them by bringing gifts of flowers, money, and other goods. One popular guru is Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1926–) who lives in India but has many American Hindu and non-Hindu devotees. His followers believe that he is an *avatar*, an incarnation of the divine being. Seeing him in person is considered *darshan*, the equivalent of seeing a god. Numerous Web sites are devoted to Sai Baba, and devotees from around the world travel to his home in Puttatharthi, Andhra Pradesh, India. Many attribute miraculous healings and other extraordinary happenings to his power. Skeptics abound as well. The Sai Organization sponsors civic activities designed to improve conditions for individuals and communities. For example, in 2008 it sponsored a free medical camp to provide medical screenings. The event was acknowledged by a proclamation from the mayor of Saint Louis declaring June 7, 2008, “St. Louis Medical Camp Day.”

Krishna, an incarnation of God, is a major figure from the Indian literature, especially the *Mahabharata*. Devotees to Krishna say prayers to the god, decorate his statue, and invoke his blessing. A worldwide movement called Hare Krishna attracted American followers and has proved controversial in its methods of obtaining and retaining members.

Buddhist Devotionalism

Even though the Buddha discouraged devotion to him, some forms of Buddhism exhibit elements of devotionalism. The Buddha taught that the *dharma* (the way to enlightenment) is far more important than any form of devotion. Nevertheless, Buddhists practice a deep devotion to the Buddha as well as to his teachings. The Buddha himself said that “respect and homage paid to those who are worthy of it, is a great blessing.” Buddhist temples house statues of the

Buddha. Thus devotional expressions of reverence and gratitude play a role in Buddhist spirituality. In some parts of the world, *stupas*, containing relics of the Buddha, are revered pilgrimage sites.

In many Buddhist communities another aspect of devotionalism is ancestors, whose pictures and memories are cherished through offerings such as flowers and food.

In Buddhist centers and temples in the United States, as elsewhere in the world, there are often prayer wheels containing sacred scriptures. Devotees can spin the wheels to gain merit. Some centers and temples also have prominent bells that are used in ceremonies. Especially over the last fifty years or so, Buddhists have constructed gathering places in many states to serve a diverse immigrant and indigenous population of followers. These vary from Zen centers and simple converted residences to elaborate temples, some of which are associated with monasteries. Some structures have exquisitely designed gardens that house statues of the Buddha. Rituals vary from quiet meditation to chanting, mirroring the types of Buddhism practiced in countries such as Sri Lanka, Vietnam, South Korea, China, and Japan.

Many Americans, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist, practice *Vipassana* meditation, which originated in South Asian *Theravadan* Buddhism. This exercise is intended to calm the spirit and focus the mind. Directed toward the connection between mind and body, the meditation offers techniques to help one see reality or one's permanent nature. It is intended to purify the mind, allowing one to live in peace.

The Nichiren Buddhist Church of America, which has its origins in a form of Japanese Buddhism, practices a chant called *daimoku* that emphasizes the importance of the Buddhist text, the *Lotus Sutra*. Buddhists conduct these chants in groups or individually at home in front of a scroll (a *gohonzon*) representing the *Lotus Sutra*. Many also use strings of beads similar to a rosary to aid their concentration. These rituals are conducted by laity without the leadership of a monk or priest. They also have devotional regard for *lamas* (Tibetan or Mongolian Buddhist monks), some of whom they consider incarnations of *bodhisattvas* (enlightened beings).

Jain Devotionalism

The Jain community in North America is small but fervent, with temples dotting the American landscape. When Jains pray, they use a set of 108 beads, each of which represents a quality of the supreme beings. Jains visit temples but also

offer rituals and prayers in their homes. They bow and recite *mantras* (prayers) several times a day, the most common of which is the *Nasvkar Mantra*, which reminds Jains that one is not to cling to worldly life. Among the rituals practiced by Jains is the *pratikraman*, in which the devotee acknowledges and repents of his or her mistakes and asks forgiveness. They also read their scriptures and meditate regularly. Jains revere monks and nuns, bowing down before them in an act called *vandana*. This act humbles the person and inspires him or her to emulate nuns and monks. If no monk or nun is available, they bow in the direction of the northeast to *arihantas* (those whose souls are about to be liberated and who live far away). Jains also assume a steady posture to control the body during meditation and to indicate the superiority of the soul over the body.

African Diaspora Devotionalism

African rituals and devotions are practiced in America by descendants of Africans. The practice of Santería, brought to the United States via Cuba, which, in turn, received it from West Africa, includes forms of devotionalism. Santería, a form of African religion that incorporates aspects of Catholicism, is practiced in Cuba and parts of the United States in Caribbean-American communities. Practitioners interact with *orishas* (the elemental powers of life) in rituals and devotions. Yoruba rituals are often carried out in the homes of senior priests or priestesses. In Hispanic neighborhoods in New York or Miami, small stores sell candles, beads, oils, and statues of saints that are used in the devotion practiced in Santería.

Devotionalism also plays a role in African American churches in the United States. Wednesday night prayer meetings are common, as well as the use of devotional literature meant to inform and inspire. African slaves were introduced to Christianity as far back as the American revivals. Many became Christians, affiliating in particular with the Methodists and Baptists. They also conducted their own spirited devotions in secret in slave dwellings.

Mormon Devotionalism

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has rituals that are closed to nonmembers. Many of the church's temples are striking examples of architecture that stand out for their beauty and size. These temples have multiple rooms, bereft of liturgical symbols, and most are reserved exclusively for Mormons and devoted to various forms of worship. The first of these temples was built in 1836 in Kirtland, Ohio, and the best known is located in Salt Lake

City, Utah, where the Mormon Tabernacle Choir regularly performs. In addition to the formal ceremonies in the temple, Mormons hold a "Family Home Evening" each Monday, during which they recite devotionals found in church manuals, learn elements of the faith, and participate in family activities.

Jewish Devotionalism

Jewish worship usually takes place communally in a temple or synagogue; however, Jews do practice particular devotions individually or in groups. Before prayer, Jews customarily center their thoughts. The practice is called *kavvanah*, a term that generally translates as the intention to direct one's prayers to God, close or cover one's eyes, and concentrate on the prayer and its meaning in order to avoid making the prayer simply routine. Jewish prayer books are called *siddurim*. Traditionally, ten adults (a *minyan*) are required if prayers are recited out loud. Orthodox Jews permit only men in this count, whereas Conservative and Reform Judaism permit both men and women to participate. Prayers may also be read silently by an individual. The prayers should be read or recited in Hebrew, the "sacred tongue." Thus most American Jews seek to learn at least enough Hebrew to recite the prayers. A young Jew coming of age demonstrates his or her proficiency in the language at his *bar mitzvah* (for boys) or *bat mitzvah* (for girls). Orthodox and Hassidic Jews permit only the boy's ceremony.

Many Jews in America mark their homes by attaching a *mezuzah* to their doorpost. Derived from the Hebrew word for doorpost, a *mezuzah* contains a small scroll with biblical passages, *shema*, taken from the books of Deuteronomy and Exodus. Occupants and guests touch the *mezuzah* as they enter or exit the home, reminding them of their dependence upon God.

Shabbat (or Sabbath, from the Hebrew word for rest) is observed from sunset on Friday night through Saturday at sunset. Those observing *Shabbat* light the Sabbath candles, bless members of the family, recite the *kiddush*, a blessing recited over the wine and special bread (hallah), and refrain from certain kinds of work in order to devote time to prayer and contemplation. Families often celebrate this religious observance with guests. Orthodox and Conservative Jews often adhere more strictly to these practices than Reform Jews, who may or may not perform the rituals of *Shabbat* and may or may not refrain from work.

Zekhut Abot is a devotion to ancestors whom Jews believe will pray on their behalf. This devotion can be practiced at any time, but it is especially popular during the high holy

days of Rosh Hashanah (New Year's Day) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement).

Jews recognize 613 religious commandments, *mitsvot*, inscribed in the Torah. They include everything from hanging the *mezuzah* to circumcision practices to keeping kosher. Although many American Jews may not abide by the majority of these *mitsvot*, these laws are the basis of traditional Judaism and the foundation of many present-day devotional practices that are still observed.

Part of Jewish law revolves around the proper preparation of food. Some observant Jews follow these laws, keeping kosher homes in which meat and dairy dishes cannot be mixed for consumption and must be served on separate dishware. The preparation of kosher foods is approved by rabbis before the foods are sold. Kosher foods are often packaged in America with a notation authenticating that they have been prepared according to these rules.

Muslim Devotionalism

Islam forbids images of God because the religion holds that God (Allah) is completely transcendent and thus is not part of creation; creation is completely separate from God and is designed to give praise to God. For Muslims, devotion means living in God's presence and striving for a blameless life. Islam does not include icons, because Muslims are careful not to present images of God or to equate any material thing with God. The only images permitted are quotations from the Qu'ran and nonrepresentational art that is usually in a geometric form that depicts infinite patterns, indicating the expansiveness of God. However, some Muslims, particularly in the Sufi tradition, practice elaborate dance rituals accompanied by music.

One of the "five pillars of Islam" (the requirements of the religion) is that adherents pray five times a day. *Islam* means "submit," and Muslims are asked to submit to God. Before prayer, Muslims participate in a purification ritual, using water to cleanse the body externally, which also symbolizes internal purification. Bowing in the direction of Mecca, worshippers perform a specified number of movements while reciting verses of the Qu'ran. Often they perform this ritual on a prayer rug. These prayers can be performed at a mosque but usually are conducted in private settings.

In North America the number of Muslims has grown in recent decades. In recent years American presidents have noted Eid, the Muslim celebrations marking the breaking of the fast at the end of Ramadan (*Eid al-Fitr*) and commemorating Abraham's complete faithfulness when God asked him to sacrifice his son Isaac (*Eid al-Adha*). In 2001

the U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp commemorating the feasts. Some observant Muslims follow dietary laws (halal), similar in nature to Jewish dietary laws, including avoidance of pork and shellfish, and requiring certain procedures for the slaughtering of animals. Halal foods have a notation indicating that the food has been properly prepared, as determined by a religious authority.

Native American Devotionalism

Native Americans practiced their religions long before America was settled by Europeans, and they continue to maintain these practices today. Because this community is so diverse, any attempt to describe all of their devotional practices is not practical, but some commonalities are found among the many tribes that make up this population. Unlike many religious communities—in particular, Christian ones—Native Americans do not make a clear demarcation between the natural and the supernatural. Thus the material and the spiritual coexist so that sacrality is identified within the natural environment. Many tribes have also selectively adapted Christian practices to accommodate their own worldview. This religious syncretism includes practices derived from at least two (and sometimes more) traditions.

Native Americans often find their deities in nature, so they have a particular reverence for elements of nature such as streams, mountains, and valleys. In the past and sometimes today, this reverence may be displayed by paying special homage to nature. For example, in the ritual surrounding death the Catawba Nation would blow ashes on the dead to appease the spirit. The Muskogee Indians maintained a sacred fire that connected them to the Maker of Breath and their ancestors and therefore had to be kept unpolluted. The Natchez observed a cult of the sun as a deity who had a son who came to earth and brought them special customs and eventually resided in a stone that was preserved in a temple and revered. Other tribes used (and continue to use) special structures called "sweat lodges" in their rituals. Even though many Native Americans have embraced mainstream forms of Christianity, they continue to practice their own ancient devotions as well. Many tribes also perform holy dances that put them in touch with and pay homage to the spirits.

Conclusion

The diverse American religious landscape has given rise to multiple forms of devotionalism. With the exception of Native American traditions and, to a degree, Mormonism, all of these expressions of religiosity have been developed elsewhere and then adopted and adapted for the American

context. Generally, devotions that are particular to a world religion and developed over time in both the place of origin of the religion and in locales around the world where the religion is widely practiced make their way to the United States via immigrants. These religious adherents adopt and alter devotions as is appropriate to the American context, usually without losing the qualities and particularities that define them. Thus a Jew from Israel would recognize devotions practiced by American Jews, and Catholics from other countries would recognize the devotions of American Catholics. The same applies to Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, Muslims, and others. These practices are not unique to American communities but are specific expressions of often universal practices. These are, after all, transnational communities.

Nor are devotional practices usually unalloyed. Many religious traditions combine a variety of beliefs that may include some semblance of magic, fate, and the occult. Sometimes even a trained observer cannot separate the superstition from the genuine devotion. But believers hold that their devotionism bears fruit in this life and likely in the next. Thus those who practice devotion in its many forms believe that saints grant favors, gurus help on the path to enlightenment and liberation from the bonds of earthly life, and prayers uttered in secret are heard by God. One does not need to be an official of the religion to participate in and benefit from devotion. It complements the texts, rituals, and teachings of the religion and connects believers to the sacred in a myriad of ways that suit a variety of spiritual interests. In no country on earth is this religious expression more varied than in the United States, home of the most diverse religious population the world has ever witnessed.

The link between devotionism and “lived religion” is a close one. Studying the doctrines of religion differs from observing the practices, including devotions, in which ordinary believers engage (“lived religion”) whether sanctioned or unsanctioned by religious officials. Devotionism is sometimes embraced by institutional religion and sometimes resisted. When embraced, it can become integral to the religion. In any case, it represents a vibrant, living, and changing dimension of religious expression. Some forms of devotion have significant roots in the tradition and long histories, but some forms come and go, following cultural patterns and serving a spiritual need for a limited time and often for a particular audience.

See also *Celebrity Culture*; *Latino/a Religious Practice*; *Lived Religion*; *Spirituality*; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends*; *Worship* entries.

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Disciples of Christ

Disciples of Christ is a Protestant denomination in the Reformed tradition. It has its roots within the Stone-Campbell movement on the American frontier in the early nineteenth century. Officially known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the denomination is composed of about 3,850 congregations and 700,000 members in the United States and Canada. Disciples congregations are also found in Australia and New Zealand, but in Britain Disciples congregations have joined the United Church.

The denomination describes itself as “a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.” As such a movement, it provides the means for its individual congregations to cooperate in a variety of educational, mission, service, and advocacy programs. Representatives of congregations gather for deliberation and worship in a biennial general assembly. The denomination is a member of the National Council of Churches USA and the World Council of Churches. It also participates in Churches Uniting in Christ and maintains fraternal relationships with many church bodies.

Origins

The Disciples’ early leadership was motivated by the profound conviction that the multiplicity of denominations was contrary to biblical teaching and an impediment to Christian evangelism. This conviction drove a commitment to the restoration of the unity of the church, which Disciples believed could be achieved on the basis of a simple affirmation that Jesus is the Christ and a return to the practices of earliest Christianity. Early Disciples shared the widespread belief among Anglo-American Protestants that divisions among denominations were caused by distinctive beliefs and practices that were largely irrelevant to the Christian message. Christian evangelism required an appeal to the Bible alone, leaving to individual interpretation issues that were not clearly mandated or prohibited in scripture.

These views were shared by several restorationist movements of the period. Disciples were most closely associated with two of these movements: that of Thomas Campbell (1763–1854) and his son, Alexander (1788–1866), in Pennsylvania and Virginia, and that of Barton Stone (1772–1844) in Kentucky. After 1832 the leaders of these groups agreed to unite their efforts. Initially linked by the writing and preaching of a few influential leaders, most notably Alexander Campbell, the Disciples of Christ congregations were in fact independent; they recognized no authority beyond the local congregation. Campbell’s journal, *The Millennial Harbinger*, reflected his postmillennial views, which were shared by many Americans of this period.

This movement for unity grew rapidly in the nineteenth century, with individual congregations adopting a variety of names: Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, and Churches of Christ. However, the nascent denomination eventually faced division within its own ranks, caused not only by social and cultural factors as American society changed, but also by inherent tensions between its appeal for church unity and its effort to mandate or prohibit specific church organization

and practices based on biblical interpretation. The Churches of Christ, which rejected instrumental music on biblical grounds, were separately enumerated from 1906. Another group of Christian Churches became disillusioned with the growing theological liberalism and denominational development among Disciples and so separated in 1971.

Distinctive Beliefs and Practices

Because most early leaders among the Disciples had Presbyterian backgrounds, many of their theological positions are rooted in that tradition. Their worship pattern also follows that tradition and includes scripture readings, hymns, prayers, a sermon, and communion. But to this tradition Disciples have brought their own distinctive understandings, reflecting both their reading of the Bible and the social conditions of their time and place. Many of those views continue to shape Disciple thought and practice today. Insisting on the sole authority of the scripture in matters of faith and practice, for example, Disciples reject all creeds, including the Apostles’ and Nicene creeds, as determinative in church life and as tests of fellowship. Instead, they insist on the primitive affirmation that “Jesus is the Christ” as the only doctrinal requirement for church membership. Similarly, although early Disciples shared with Presbyterians and other Protestants of the time an understanding of faith as belief in the testimony of scripture that should lead the believer to repentance and baptism, they derive from this idea the conviction that Christian commitment is the product of reason rather than emotion and tend to be suspicious of sudden, supernatural conversion experiences.

Disciples have developed distinctive views of baptism, communion, and clerical status based on their understanding of the earliest Christian practices, as reflected in Acts of the Apostles. Alexander Campbell became convinced that a believer’s baptism by immersion was scripturally mandated. He allowed himself to be immersed, and thereafter he and other Disciples insisted that immersion was the only proper mode of entry into the church. That position prevailed well into the twentieth century, although early in that century several congregations began to adopt a position of “open membership”—that is, persons who had been baptized as infants were admitted into full Communion without immersion. Controversial at the time, that position is today the practice of the vast majority of Disciples of Christ congregations, and Disciples recognize the validity of baptism regardless of when or how it is administered.

For Disciples, celebration of the Lord's Supper was a central element in the life of the earliest church. Thus they insist that the service of Communion be celebrated no less often than weekly. Their theological understanding of the service differs little from that of other Reformed tradition Protestants, but it occupies a more central place in their common life. The Disciples' separation from Presbyterians was caused in part by the Disciples' conviction that the invitation to the table should be extended to all Christians—a view not generally held at the time. From the outset, Disciples therefore have insisted that the invitation to communion is an invitation from the Lord and that all Christians are welcome regardless of denominational affiliation.

The democratization of American society in the early nineteenth century reinforced for Disciples the Protestant principle of the priesthood of believers. In addition to ordained pastoral leadership, their congregations are served by lay persons commonly designated as elders and deacons. Earlier it was common to ordain elders as well as pastors, but this practice is not in place today. Deacons have always been regarded as lay persons. Although early Disciples restricted clerical offices to men, today women serve in all positions of church leadership, both lay and clerical. Disciples reject hierarchical conceptions of clergy, but early Disciples sometimes used the term *bishop* to designate the pastoral leader of a congregation. Such usage is now rare.

Denominational Development

The Disciples of Christ evolved from those groups within the broader Stone–Campbell tradition who were more sympathetic to the tradition's appeal for ecumenism and more open to social and cultural changes that marked America's transition from a rural and agricultural society to an urban and industrial one. As the movement grew, the need for organizational structure beyond the congregational level became apparent to many, including Alexander Campbell himself, and a general convention of Disciples was convened in 1849 with delegates from congregations in eleven states. This gathering granted voting rights in this and subsequent conventions to all who chose to participate. It approved the work of the American Christian Bible Society and created the American Christian Missionary Society to encourage evangelism. Similar organizations followed at the state level, and a Christian Woman's Board of Missions and a Foreign Christian Missionary Society were founded after the Civil War. The convention and the

societies, although dependent on individual support, became the foundation of a developing denominational structure.

The Disciples' claim that all questions on the life of the church could be resolved by an appeal to the teachings of scripture was soon shown to be problematic; too often they found the scripture to be silent or ambiguous on issues on which there was disagreement. Even though their very modest and weak cooperative structure enabled Disciples to avoid formal division over slavery during the Civil War era, the profound tensions engendered by that crisis were evident in controversies during the postwar era that led to division by the end of the century. One source of conflict was the work of the societies created for activities beyond the congregational level. Although those who took the name Churches of Christ insisted that the societies lacked biblical warrant and therefore were unacceptable, Disciples regarded them as an appropriate means of cooperation in Christian work beyond the scope of a single congregation. They argued that the societies were organized as private corporations, made no claims to be churches, and therefore posed no problems for a biblical ecclesiology, which, for them, focused on the congregational community. Another major conflict arose when prosperity permitted larger churches to introduce organs. Conservatives within the movement rejected them as unscriptural, whereas Disciples of Christ welcomed this enhancement of worship as useful and not prohibited in scripture. In these and several less significant controversies, Disciples have come to accept new ways of conducting church life, which they regard as sensible when they are not clearly contrary to scripture. Their position represents an appeal both to scripture and to reason and experience, reflecting the pragmatic temperament of the society in which their position was shaped.

Disciples, like most American Protestants, were caught up in the modernist–fundamentalist controversy of the 1920s and 1930s. For Disciples, the controversy arose from disagreements over the conduct of foreign missions, as well as over the presentation of the denominational position at home. However, because Disciples had no creed by which to test the orthodoxy of individuals, this struggle centered largely on biblical interpretation and attitudes toward newer forms of biblical criticism.

Beginning in the latter years of the nineteenth century, traditional assumptions about interpretation of scripture were assaulted by a group of scholars whose approach was later called “higher criticism.” That approach opened the

books of scripture to examination of their historical background and reliability, authorship, date, and literary characteristics, among other things. In doing so, it threatened the rather legalistic use of scripture by earlier Disciples, as well as their conviction that all matters in dispute among Christians might be resolved by a simple appeal to a consistently clear and unambiguous text. Consequently, the Disciples' initial reaction was quite negative. J. W. McGarvey (1829–1911) became professor of sacred scripture at the College of the Bible in 1865, and from that influential post he defended a view of scripture as presenting a fixed pattern of truth that Christians were simply to accept and implement. By means of his academic post and as a columnist for the *Christian Standard*, McGarvey had a profound impact on Disciples during the latter years of the century. For many, his *Standard* filled the place occupied earlier by Alexander Campbell's *Millennial Harbinger*. However, as Disciples students moved from denominational schools into major universities, they began to be shaped by the newer biblical studies. Just as McGarvey was an example of the older biblical scholarship, Herbert Lockwood Willett (1864–1944) was representative of the new. Like McGarvey, Willett studied at Bethany College as an undergraduate. However, Willett went on to pursue his studies at Yale University, where he embraced the newer biblical scholarship. From there, he followed William Rainey Harper, one of the most distinguished biblical scholars of the time, to the University of Chicago. There, Willett completed a doctoral degree in biblical studies and became the first dean of the Disciples Divinity House. He and his successors in that post provided a critical center for the education of Disciples leaders in the newer approach to Bible study over the next half-century. They created the Campbell Institute, a national organization of Disciples sympathetic to the newer scholarship, and popularized these views in *The Scroll*.

In the early years of the twentieth century, the two methods of biblical study reflecting conservative and liberal theological temperaments struggled for dominance among Disciples, but increasingly the newer views were favored by Disciples. The newer biblical studies liberated them from much of their earlier biblical legalism and rendered possible an effective dialogue between Bible and culture, as well as effective cooperation with other denominational groups in ecumenical affairs. By mid-century the newer approach was clearly dominant in the churches and seminaries of the denomination. Disciples moved decisively toward

what was becoming the liberal mainstream of American Protestantism.

In 1957 the denomination appointed a Panel of Scholars. Composed of some of the denomination's ablest scholars and reflecting the theological ferment and transformation of the time, this group met for three years to restudy the doctrines and practices of Disciples and to analyze practical issues and problems confronting the church from a theological perspective. The panel completed its work and published its findings and recommendations in 1963. The panel's work was valued, and its published reports were widely studied throughout the denomination. The concerns that underlay appointment of the panel also led to the creation of a continuing theological study group, the Association of Disciples for Theological Discussion (ADTD). The ADTD, an association of Disciples scholars from private and state universities as well as denominational colleges and seminaries, began to meet annually in 1957. It identifies and analyzes common problems and encourages theological dialogue both among its members and within the denomination as a whole.

In parallel with their twentieth-century theological transformation and related to it, Disciples undertook a succession of institutional adjustments designed to provide a more effective and coherent denominational organization and ministry. The earlier general convention had simply provided a venue in which their various societies conducted annual meetings. Seeking greater coherence for denominational programs, Disciples replaced the general convention in 1917 with an International Convention to which the societies submitted reports and from which they received recommendations. A cooperative program of fund-raising was then created to support all denominational programs. In 1950 Disciples further strengthened their management of cooperative programs by forming a Council of Agencies, in which all of the organizations reporting to the International Convention worked to achieve agreement on programs and funding. The council proposed further structural reorganization, and in 1960 the International Convention appointed a Commission on Restructure. In 1967 the commission presented a Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), which was ratified the following year. This document provided for the creation of a General Assembly to replace the convention and for regional assemblies, and it designated the old agencies as general units of the church. The chief executive officer of the church is called the

general minister and president. Although congregations retain independence, corporate unity is reinforced through decisions made by elected representatives from congregations and regions.

Attitude Toward Learning

Insisting that the Bible alone was sufficient for understanding faith and church and that theology represented an imposition of human opinion upon the simple message of the Bible, Disciples initially emphasized study of the Bible within the context of a liberal arts education. Theological seminaries were founded rather late in the development of the denomination. The Disciples' first college-level institution was Bacon College in Kentucky. Named for Francis Bacon, this college of arts and sciences also included courses in biblical studies, as did Campbell's Bethany College in western Virginia, the Disciples' second college. Bacon College later merged into what is today Transylvania University, and these two schools established a pattern that generally has been followed by other colleges of this denomination—combining the study of arts and sciences with the study of scripture.

In post-Civil War America, as state universities experienced more rapid growth than church-related colleges, Disciples sought to expand the inclusion of biblical studies in liberal arts curricula by establishing denomination-funded "Bible chairs" in state universities. These chairs, funded by the denomination, entered into agreements with the universities, enabling them to offer courses in Bible and related religious studies that were considered part of the institution's curriculum. The first such chair was established at the University of Michigan, and subsequently in Missouri, Kansas, Texas, Virginia, Georgia, and elsewhere. Some of these programs continue, although many have been replaced by religious studies programs of the universities themselves.

Theological education among Disciples evolved from the biblical studies departments in their liberal arts colleges, as it became apparent that the preparation of parish clergy in an urbanizing and modernizing America required a more demanding curriculum. Transylvania's Department of Bible became the College of the Bible in 1865, and today is known as Lexington Theological Seminary. Similar developments occurred in other Disciple colleges and universities, and more recently the seminaries have become independently governed institutions. Today Disciples maintain four seminaries: Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas; Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana;

Lexington Theological Seminary in Lexington, Kentucky; and Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma. All of these seminaries draw faculty from many denominations and serve students from many other denominations, as well as those from the Disciples.

The Bible chair pattern of establishing close relationships with non-Disciple educational institutions has been replicated at the graduate level. In 1894 Disciples established a Divinity House in association with the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and similar institutions have been established in association with Yale Divinity School, Vanderbilt Divinity School, and Claremont Theological Cluster and Graduate Theological Union in California. As a result of these relationships, a large portion of the faculty of Disciples seminaries and college-level religious studies programs is drawn from these schools, especially Chicago and Yale, and significant numbers of parish clergy are similarly educated in these and other ecumenical institutions. This distinctive pattern of ministerial education undoubtedly reinforces the ecumenical commitment of contemporary Disciples.

Ecumenical Relationships

Advocacy of Christian unity has been central to the proclamation of Disciples since their beginning. The denomination has been shaped by Thomas Campbell's assertion in 1809 "that the Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one; consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the Scriptures, and that manifest the same by their tempers and conduct." The centrality of the Disciples' advocacy of Christian unity thrust the denomination into the forefront of the ecumenical movement, beginning in mission fields where Disciples were early advocates of comity agreements and interdenominational schools and programs. In 1910 Disciples created an ecumenical office, now the Council on Christian Unity, and they also enthusiastically endorsed the church federation movement. Indeed, they were founding members of the Federal Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches USA, and the World Council of Churches. More recently Disciples participated in the Consultation on Church Union, and since its formation in 2002 they have participated in Churches Uniting in Christ. They maintain close relationships with many denominations and share with the United Church of Christ a common program of mission. Disciples also cultivate relationships with other groups tracing their history to the Stone-Campbell movement. For

example, the denomination participates in the World Convention of Churches of Christ, which was formed in 1930 and conducts mass meetings every four years. And it supports the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, the major repository for materials related to the Stone-Campbell movement.

Roles of Women and Minorities

The early role of women in the Disciples reflected the common patriarchal patterns of the early nineteenth century. However, women were occasionally ordained in the latter years of that century. Meanwhile, women founded the first Disciple missionary society and have been active in all areas of church life over the history of the denomination. Today, Disciple seminaries reflect the gender balance of American society, and women exercise pastoral and congregational leadership throughout the denomination where they serve as pastors, elders, and deacons. Disciples selected Sharon E. Watkins as their first female general minister and president in 2005.

Similarly, the role of minorities in the church initially followed and more recently anticipated the trajectory of American society generally. African Americans were attracted to the new denomination and to pastoral responsibilities early in its history. However, during the Jim Crow era a separate National Convention was created by this increasingly segregated community. Agreement was reached in 1960 to merge the National and International Conventions, and the merger was formalized in 1969. Disciples congregations are now including more and more members with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, but support groups within the denomination continue to address the special interests of those congregations identifying themselves as African American, Asian American, or Hispanic. Yet all participate in the General Assembly and the work of the denomination at local and regional levels. Those congregations serving immigrant communities are among the most rapidly growing within the denomination.

Impact on American Religious Life

The Disciples of Christ both reflected and contributed to shaping the democratic ethos of the early nineteenth century. Their insistence upon the right and duty of the individual Christian to study, to think, and to respond with integrity to the Gospel located them among a variety of religious, political, and economic forces contributing to the democratization of American society. Although the

denomination developed in an age of revivalism and participated in that movement, their conviction that faith is born of reason rather than of intense experience and their concern with Christian nurture offers Americans an alternative understanding of the process whereby one enters into Christian life.

The Disciples' insistence on the centrality of Communion in worship, a view they adopted through the classic Protestant appeal to scripture, links them to the Anglican and Catholic traditions, even as other aspects of their worship life link them to the Reformed tradition. And yet Disciples combine their understanding of worship as involving the eucharistic celebration with the affirmation that every Christian of every tradition should be welcomed to the table in the name of the Lord. They bring these somewhat disparate views to ecumenical discussions whether with other Protestant churches or with the Catholic Church.

The Disciples' conviction that divisions within the church are unscriptural has encouraged them to assume a leadership role in the ecumenical movement where their participation and enthusiastic support have been consistent. And yet Disciples, like many other Americans, have generally shown more interest in cooperative action than in reaching unity grounded in common theological commitments, and their suspicion of unity based on creedal formulations has presented problems for them when engaging in ecumenical dialogue. They have supported church federations and councils at every level, their mission churches have generally entered into united churches whenever possible, and they comfortably cooperate with other Protestant denominations in union congregations in North America. They conduct their mission program cooperatively with the United Church of Christ and have held national meetings together with that body. Only since mid-twentieth century, however, have Disciples been prepared and willing to engage in the serious theological discussions required for effective participation in Christian ecumenism today.

See also *Churches of Christ; Stone-Campbell Movement.*

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Dispensationalism

Originating in nineteenth-century England, dispensationalism is a system of Bible prophecy interpretation adopted by many evangelical and fundamentalist American Protestants. Popularized by televangelists, megachurch pastors, and the mass media beginning in the 1970s, dispensationalism gained a wide following. As millions of Americans embraced this scheme of prophetic interpretation, it, in turn, influenced their view of world affairs and public policy issues.

Dispensationalism is one variant of a broader scheme of prophetic interpretation known as premillennialism. According to this view, Christ's thousand-year millennial reign (Revelations 20:1–6) will come about entirely by supernatural means, and only after humanity has sunk to unprecedented levels of wickedness, culminating in a final apocalyptic battle in which the forces of evil are forever vanquished.

Historical Background

Throughout history, Christians have struggled to interpret the Bible's prophetic and eschatological passages. St. Augustine, formulating what would become the orthodox Catholic

view, saw the prophecies as a revelation of all sacred and secular history, culminating in the triumph of righteousness. With the Reformation, Protestant leaders generally adopted this view as well. In all eras, however, some interpreters held that the prophecies referred to events still in the future. The early Christians anticipated Christ's return in their own lifetime. Sixteenth-century Anabaptists preached that the millennium was at hand. Late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century religious radicals in England believed that the millennium would come as papal pomp and ritual—and their remnants in the Church of England—were overthrown and a purified believers' church established. Cotton Mather and other New England Puritans shared such millennialist expectations.

This futurist reading of the prophetic scriptures survived on the fringes of British religious life into the nineteenth century. The Scotsman Edward Irving, a popular London preacher in the 1820s and 1830s, formulated elements of what came to be called dispensationalism in the early 1830s in *The Morning Watch*, a prophecy magazine. John Nelson Darby (1800–1882), a leader of a British dissenting sect known as the Plymouth Brethren, made significant contributions as well. Organizing the Bible's prophetic and apocalyptic texts in sequential form, Darby and other early shapers of dispensationalism believed they had found the key to God's plan for the Jews and for Gentile Christians, and to events that would unfold in the end times. According to this scheme, God has dealt with his chosen people, the Jews, and with the rest of humanity in a series of seven epochs, or dispensations, each with its distinctive plan of salvation, beginning with the Age of Innocence in the Garden of Eden and continuing through the present dispensation, the Church Age.

Introducing dispensationalism's most distinctive feature, the founders of this interpretive system taught that the Church Age would end with the Rapture, when all true believers would disappear to join Christ in the air. (The word *rapture* is etymologically related to *raptor*, the bird of prey that swoops down to snatch mice and other small creatures.) The texts undergirding this doctrine include I Thessalonians 4:16–17: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

The Second Coming of Christ is a core Christian dogma, reflected in the Nicene Creed (CE 325), which is translated in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer as:

“And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead.” However, the Rapture as an eschatological event prior to the Second Coming represents one of dispensationalism’s distinctive contributions to prophetic interpretation.

Heeding Jesus’ warnings in Matthew 24:36 against date setting (“of that day and hour knoweth no man”), dispensationalists avoided a pitfall that has discredited many prophecy interpreters. In the 1830s, for example, William Miller of New York, after studying time sequences mentioned in the book of Daniel and translating the “days” into years, began to preach that Christ would return “around 1843 or 1844.” An even more precise date soon emerged: October 22, 1843 (later revised to 1844). Miller won many followers, but when the predicted dates passed uneventfully, the movement collapsed. (From its ashes, however, arose the Seventh-day Adventist Church, whose followers still study the prophecies, though carefully avoiding date setting.)

Although dispensationalists generally eschew date setting, they also teach that Jesus’ Mount of Olives discourse recorded in Matthew 24, along with other biblical passages, reveal telltale signs by which believers can know that the end is near. These signs include wars, wickedness, natural disasters, and the return of the Jews to Palestine, the land promised by God to Abraham (Genesis 15:18), and the rebuilding there of the Jewish Temple destroyed by the Romans in CE 70. For Pentecostals, renewal of the spiritual gifts granted to believers at Pentecost, including divine healing and speaking in tongues (glossolalia), is further evidence of the approaching end.

This avoidance of date setting, combined with the insistence that the Rapture is imminent, helps explain dispensationalism’s enduring appeal and its powerful spur to the evangelistic effort. Believers exist in a state of intense anticipation, carrying on their daily lives and yet convinced that the Rapture may occur at any moment. Anxiously looking to their own readiness, they urgently implore others to accept Christ before it is too late and scan the headlines for signs that the long-awaited event is, indeed, drawing ever closer.

After the Rapture, according to the dispensationalist system, will come the Great Tribulation foretold by Jesus (Matthew 24:21–22), when a demonic figure, the Antichrist, will arise. First presenting himself as a peacemaker, the Antichrist (called the “Beast” in Revelation) will soon reveal his true intentions and establish a global dictatorship in which all who resist his power, represented by the number 666 (Revelation 13:18), will be persecuted and slaughtered.

The Antichrist’s reign, though brutal, will be brief. After seven years, as the Antichrist’s armies gather at Har-Megiddo (Armageddon), an ancient battle site in Israel, Christ and the raptured saints will return to earth in full battle mode. Once he defeats the Antichrist and slaughters his armies (Revelation 19:11–21), Christ will inaugurate his millennial reign of justice and peace in the rebuilt Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. After a short-lived final rebellion, the Antichrist will be defeated forever. After a solemn Last Judgment, when all who have ever lived confront their eternal destiny, the great human drama that began in the Garden of Eden will come to a close. The damned will suffer endless torment in hell; the redeemed will rejoice forever in God’s presence in heaven.

Dispensationalism Comes to America

Dispensationalism won adherents among evangelical Protestants in late nineteenth-century Britain and North America, where Darby made several evangelistic tours. Early U.S. dispensationalists included the evangelist Dwight L. Moody; the Chicago businessman William E. Blackstone, whose *Jesus Is Coming* (1898) sold more than a million copies; and James Brookes, a Presbyterian minister in St. Louis. Through Brookes’s prison ministry, Cyrus Scofield (1843–1921) became not only an evangelical Christian but also a committed dispensationalist. After fleeing an embezzlement accusation and abandoning a wife and children in Kansas, Scofield was in a St. Louis prison on forgery charges at the time of his conversion. After prison, he settled in Dallas as a Congregationalist pastor. There, Scofield edited a prophecy magazine, preached at prophecy conferences, and conducted a Bible correspondence course. In 1909 Oxford University Press published his annotated version of the King James Bible, with a running commentary reflecting the dispensationalist interpretation. Eventually selling millions of copies, the “Scofield Bible” played a seminal role in spreading dispensationalism.

Dispensationalism, with its confident assumption of the Bible’s divine inspiration and inerrancy, appealed to evangelicals dismayed by theological modernism and critical biblical scholarship. The fundamentalist movement, coalescing around a series of treatises published as *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of Truth* (1910–1915), proved particularly receptive to dispensationalism.

Other Systems of Prophetic Interpretation

Although highly influential, dispensationalism and premillennialism more generally are not the only ways in which

Christians past and present have interpreted biblical prophecy. Indeed, these often cryptic texts have stirred much controversy over the centuries. The Catholic, Reformed, and Lutheran traditions are generally amillennial, viewing the prophecies as unfolding over a long span of time or as allegories of the perennial conflict between good and evil. Although they anticipate Christ's return, amillennialists reject the idea of a literal thousand-year earthly reign as well as other details of dispensationalism's end-time scenario. Righteousness will finally triumph, they affirm, but the details remain unknowable.

Another interpretive mode, postmillennialism, views the prophesied era of justice and peace as gradually attainable in the present age through Christian effort, rather than emerging only after a final apocalyptic confrontation between righteousness and evil. The eighteenth-century New England theologian Jonathan Edwards espoused postmillennialism, believing that the triumph of righteousness could be achieved through prayer, evangelism, and other pious endeavors. Much nineteenth-century reform activity, including the temperance and antislavery movements, was inspired by this vision of a purified society achieved by means of earnest Christian striving.

Postmillennialism appealed to liberal Protestants and reformers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Leaders of the Social Gospel movement such as W. D. P. Bliss, Washington Gladden, and Walter Rauschenbusch argued that Christ's kingdom could be advanced by remedying the social evils and injustices so rampant in urban-industrial America. The mainstream Protestant denominations and their ecumenical organization, the Federal (later National) Council of Churches, embraced postmillennialism as a theological rationale for their social activism.

Meanwhile, other groups—notably the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), Seventh-day Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses—taught particular versions of end-time belief. Many Pentecostals, while emphasizing glossolalia and other “gifts of the spirit” as evidence of Christ's near return, also believe in ongoing prophetic revelations, whereas most dispensationalists hold that information about the end-times is confined to the Bible.

Dispensationalism from World War I through the Cold War

From the 1920s through the 1960s dispensationalism retained a loyal following among fundamentalists and evangelicals. Bible schools and seminaries such as the Philadelphia

School of the Bible (founded by Cyrus Scofield and William L. Pettingill in 1911), Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Dallas Theological Seminary, and Chicago's Moody Bible Institute became dispensationalist bastions. Among the prominent ministers, evangelists, and writers who espoused dispensationalism were Isaac Haldeman, pastor of Manhattan's First Baptist Church; Arno Gaebelein, editor of the prophecy magazine *Our Hope*; the British revivalist G. Campbell Morgan, who frequently toured America; Harry A. Ironside, pastor of Chicago's Moody Memorial Church; Reuben A. Torrey of Los Angeles's Church of the Open Door; James M. Gray, the longtime president of the Moody Bible Institute; and Philadelphia's Donald Grey Barnhouse, whose *Bible Study Hour* radio program and *Eternity* magazine exerted broad influence.

Historical developments seemed to confirm the dispensationalist scenario. Progressive-era optimism and President Woodrow Wilson's vision of a peaceful, democratic world faded in the disillusioned 1920s. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia stirred interest in prophecies of a mysterious northern kingdom, Gog, that would be destroyed by God after it invaded the land of Israel (Ezekiel 38). Some prophecy writers had long identified Russia as Gog, and with the atheistic communists in power such speculation intensified. Britain's 1917 Balfour Declaration supporting the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine also captured the attention of dispensationalists; they had long viewed the Jews' return to Palestine as a crucial end-time sign. As early as 1891, businessman William Blackstone had persuaded prominent U.S. political and corporate leaders to sign a manifesto calling for a Jewish homeland in Palestine “to further the purposes of God concerning His ancient people.” The Balfour Declaration seemed to be a momentous step toward this long-anticipated prophetic fulfillment.

World War II, with its global scale and massive casualties, appeared to fulfill Jesus' prophecy of “wars and rumours of wars” (Matthew 24:6) in the last days. And Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini for a time seemed possible candidates for the Antichrist. After 1945 Wilbur M. Smith of the Moody Bible Institute and other dispensationalists looked upon the atomic bomb as the instrument that would lead to the earth's fiery destruction, as foretold in II Peter 3:10. The postwar founding of the United Nations and moves toward European unification were interpreted as preludes to the Antichrist's global dictatorship. Meanwhile, the Cold War struggle with the Soviet Union heightened the attention given to Russia's end-time role. As telecommunications

satellites soared into orbit, dispensationalists identified the technology by which the Antichrist would attract a worldwide following. Wherever dispensationalists looked, it seemed, end-time signs were proliferating.

Dispensationalism in the Contemporary United States

Despite its wide acceptance by conservative Protestants, dispensationalism remained marginal throughout the 1960s, with only limited penetration of the larger culture. This situation changed dramatically after 1970, as world events combined with political and cultural developments at home to expand the influence of dispensationalism. In a backlash against the antiwar activism, campus turmoil, and counter-culture provocations of the 1960s, conservative churches burgeoned in the 1970s and beyond. While liberal, mainstream denominations lost members, evangelical churches grew dramatically. The nation's largest Protestant denomination, the evangelical Southern Baptist Convention, grew by 23 percent between 1970 and 1985. Membership in the Assemblies of God church, a product of the Pentecostal revival of the early twentieth century, increased by 300 percent over the same period. The nondenominational Calvary Chapel movement, launched by Chuck Smith in Costa Mesa, California, in 1965, spread like wildfire; eight hundred Calvary Chapels could be found worldwide by 2000. Nondenominational suburban megachurches (churches with two thousand or more members), most of them fervently evangelical, proliferated as well.

As conservative Protestantism grew, premillennial dispensationalism, with its emphasis on human sinfulness, the futility of reform effort, and God's absolute sovereignty over the course of history, also gained ground. Chuck Smith, for example, promoted dispensationalism not only through the hundreds of Calvary Chapels worldwide but also through paperbacks, films, audio- and videotapes, and eventually the Internet.

Changes in mass communications further facilitated the diffusion of dispensationalism. Religious programming on television, once confined to local preachers and soporific Sunday public service programs on network television, now exploded as evangelical, fundamentalist, and Pentecostal preachers, supported by viewer contributions, seized the initiative. Exploiting cable and communications satellites, Jerry Falwell's *Old Time Gospel Hour*, Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network (1961), and Paul Crouch's Trinity Broadcasting Network (1973) provided potent new

venues for promulgating evangelical Christianity and dispensationalism specifically.

The paperback revolution, the emergence of book marketing outlets (such as Borders, Barnes and Noble, Wal-Mart, and Amazon.com), and the explosive growth of Christian (mostly evangelical) bookstores were all factors in the mass marketing of dispensationalism. Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* signaled what lay ahead. Lindsey, a Mississippi River tugboat operator who found God, studied dispensationalism at Dallas Theological Seminary, and joined Campus Crusade for Christ (an evangelical ministry founded by Bill Bright in 1951), sensed his opportunity when his sermons on Bible prophecy at the University of California, Los Angeles, drew standing-room-only crowds. *The Late Great Planet Earth*, a slangy version of dispensationalism full of allusions to current events, was issued as an inexpensive paperback by Zondervan, a religious publisher in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It went on to become the nonfiction bestseller of the 1970s.

As dispensationalism entered the cultural mainstream, other popularizers produced their own paperbacks, and many became bestsellers. John Walvoord of Dallas Theological Seminary published *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East Crisis* in 1974. In the years that followed, the veteran televangelist Jack Van Impe produced a stream of prophecy paperbacks, including *Signs of the Times* (1979) and *11:59 and Counting* (1984). Arthur Bloomfield's *How to Recognize the Antichrist* (1975), John Wesley White's *The Coming World Dictator* (1981), and Doug Clark's *Shockwaves of Armageddon* (1982) typified the scores of dispensationalist paperbacks that flooded the market in these years. In a 1996 poll 42 percent of Americans either "strongly agreed" (28 percent) or "moderately agreed" (14 percent) with the statement "the world will end in a battle in Armageddon between Jesus and the Antichrist."

The entertainment industry seized this lucrative new marketing opportunity. *The Omen* (1976), a film starring Gregory Peck, treated the boyhood of the Antichrist, who in later sequels became a powerful industrialist and ultimately world dictator. Bob Dylan's brief interlude as a born-again Christian resulted in two songs about the Second Coming: "When He Returns" (1979) and "Are You Ready?" (1980). The 1991 movie *The Rapture* featured Mimi Rodgers as a sexually promiscuous hedonist who experienced the cosmic event that is dispensationalism's centerpiece. *The Omega Code*, another Antichrist movie, received a full-scale Hollywood release in 1999.

Dispensationalism's mass market penetration culminated in the *Left Behind* novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins. In *Left Behind* (1995), the central characters, having missed the Rapture, convert to Christ. Successive volumes cover the Antichrist's rise, the Tribulation, and Christ's return at Armageddon—the key elements of the dispensationalist scenario. Enjoying sales of some seventy million copies and many translations, the twelve-volume series became a marketing juggernaut. The tie-in products included a movie, a “prequel,” DVDs, audio- and videotapes, a videogame, a children's version, a Bible study series, greeting cards, and T-shirts. In 2002 the Bantam Dell Publishing Group signed LaHaye to a multimillion-dollar, four-book contract. The new (ghost-written) series was entitled *Babylon Rising*.

Dispensationalism's Political Significance

From the beginning, dispensationalism had political implications, because believers monitored current events for end-time signs. In the Balfour Declaration, Bolshevik Revolution, rise of fascism, World War II, atomic bomb, and beginnings of a global political and corporate order, dispensationalists saw the unfolding of a divine plan. They supported Zionism as a step toward the prophesied reestablishment of a Jewish nation and restoration of the Jewish Temple on Temple Mount (also sacred to Muslims). They opposed Russia not only as a Cold War adversary, but also as a nation whose end-time destruction is foretold in scripture. They dismissed nuclear disarmament efforts, because the Bible predicts the earth's destruction.

Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* was intensely political. He foresaw a nuclear World War III and urged preparation for war with Russia and Communist China, which he linked to the 200 million-man army that dispensationalists believe will advance across the Euphrates River in the end-time (Revelation 9:14–16). He interpreted Israel's occupation of the West Bank in the 1967 war as a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, and dismissed any Mideast peace initiative that involved a Palestinian state, shared governance of Jerusalem, or Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. Many other dispensationalist popularizers echoed the same themes.

Along with the larger evangelical movement, post-1970 dispensationalists were increasingly politicized under the influence of Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority, Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition, James Dobson's Family Research Council, Tim LaHaye's Council on National Policy, Beverly

LaHaye's Concerned Women for America, Donald Wildmon's American Family Association, Gary Bauer's American Values organization, the Southern Baptists' Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission led by the powerful Washington lobbyist Richard Land, and a host of other political pressure groups. Indeed, the dispensationalist insistence that unfolding events have profound prophetic significance added a note of eschatological urgency to the newly politicized evangelical wing of American Protestantism.

With the end of the Cold War, the dispensationalists increasingly turned their attention to the movement toward European unity, the continued expansion of the UN and other international bodies, the rise of a global corporate order, and the spread of computer-based information technologies. All were seen as forerunners of the Antichrist's rule. Spreading fears of global warming and other environmental hazards were linked to prophecies in the book of Revelation of nightmarish disruptions in the natural order. The *Roe v. Wade* abortion decision, the ban on prayer in public schools, the barring of creationist dogma from public school science classes, judicial protection of pornography on First Amendment grounds, and the greater cultural visibility of gays and lesbians were all cited as evidence of the growing end-time wickedness foretold by Christ.

Above all, post-Cold War dispensationalist popularizers focused on the Middle East. Dispensationalists such as Falwell, Robertson, Lindsey, Michael Evans, and John Hagee redoubled their calls for unqualified support of Israel's territorial claims and dismissed the claims of Palestinians and the Muslim world generally as contradictory to God's prophetic plan. After the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, the anti-Muslim theme intensified. In *Beyond Iraq: The Next Move* (2003), Michael Evans, founder of the Jerusalem Prayer Team and other pro-Israel groups, dismissed Islam as “a religion conceived in the pit of Hell.” John Hagee, a San Antonio televangelist, megachurch pastor, and founder of a lobby called Christians United for Israel, struck the same note. Tom DeLay, a dispensationalist who served as Republican majority leader of the U.S. House of Representatives until scandal forced his resignation in 2006, tirelessly fought to align U.S. foreign policy with what he saw as God's end-time plan, denouncing any peace effort that required concessions by Israel.

The growth and political influence of dispensationalism were not, however, unopposed. The mainstream liberal denominations, though weakened, remained influential, rejecting the apocalyptic militancy of dispensationalism and

continuing to promote peace, social justice, and environmental protection—causes dispensationalists viewed as naïve at best and demonic at worst. Resistance to dispensationalism arose even within the evangelical camp, as some called for a recovery of the lost nineteenth-century tradition of engagement with social reform causes. In his book *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (1994), the evangelical historian Mark Noll criticized dispensationalism as theologically unsound and a travesty of evangelicalism's tradition of rigorous biblical exegesis. Two movements from the 1970s, Ronald Sider's Evangelicals for Social Action and Jim Wallis's evangelical Sojourners, rejected both dispensationalism's theology and its political agenda. They urged social action on issues such as poverty, peace, and environmental protection. As the George W. Bush administration came to a close in 2008, amid widespread disillusionment with the Iraq War and uneasiness over the direction of public policy, some evidence suggested that the political mobilization of religious conservatives, energized by dispensationalist beliefs, might be waning. Few observers, however, were prepared to predict that the influence of dispensationalism in the public sphere would soon end.

Conclusion

Crossing the Atlantic from Britain, dispensationalism took root among American evangelicals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was energized by the post-1970 growth and political mobilization of religious conservatives. Exploiting changes in U.S. church life, mass marketing, and communications technologies, popularized versions of this system of prophetic interpretation spread rapidly in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. From obscure beginnings, dispensationalism had become a major force not only in American religious life but also in the nation's popular culture, politics, and foreign policy.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Adventist and Millennialist Denominational Families; Apocalypticism; Bible entries; Evangelicals entries; Fundamentalism; Jehovah's Witnesses; Religious Right; Seventh-day Adventists.*

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Dutch Reformed

The term *Reformed* refers to those Protestant churches that emerged from the Swiss Reformation, especially from the influence of John Calvin of Geneva and to a lesser extent Ulrich Zwingli of Zurich. The Calvinist churches on the European continent usually assumed the name "Reformed." Those in the British Isles became known as "Presbyterian." The Dutch Reformed churches in America originated in Holland and belong to this broader movement.

European Background

The Reformed wing of the Reformation was the most international of the Protestant churches of the sixteenth century. The movement began in Switzerland and spread not only to Holland but also to England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Germany, Poland, Hungary, and other areas of Europe, and to North America.

Like other Protestants of the Reformation, the Dutch Reformed believed in the three basic doctrines of the Protestant movement: the authority of the Bible for the church and the life of the believer, salvation by God's grace and not by human works, and the priesthood of all believers. Each of these ideas had distinctive implications for the Reformed

churches. For example, the emphasis on the Bible led to intense study of it, higher levels of literacy and education so people could read and understand the Bible, and disputes about the Bible's authority and meaning. The focus on salvation by God's grace alone led Reformed leaders, including the Dutch, to advocate God's predestination and election of those who were saved (perhaps no doctrine proved to be more contentious than that of predestination). Finally, by stressing the priesthood of all believers, Reformed Christians launched not only an attack on hierarchical forms of authority but also an affirmation of more democratic and egalitarian forms of authority in both church and civil affairs.

In worship, these Reformed Protestants sought to "reform" or restore the church and its worship to the New Testament's description of early Christian practices. The sermon (the Word of God proclaimed) replaced the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (the Word of God sacramentally presented) as the heart of Reformed worship services. These services were long in duration and simplified to include preaching, the singing of psalms, and extended prayers. Like other Protestants, the Reformed reduced the number of sacraments from the seven in the Roman Catholic tradition to only two—the Lord's Supper and baptism of both infants and adults. For the Lord's Supper, the Reformed held that the bread and wine *symbolized* the presence of Jesus Christ.

In their organization of the church, Reformed Protestants differed from both the Roman Catholic Church and their Protestant cousins. Like all Protestants, they rejected the Roman Catholic emphasis on the authoritative teaching role of the church and its tradition and emphasized the definitive superiority of the Bible (*Sola Scriptura* or the Bible alone). The Reformed leaders also rejected the role of bishops (which Lutherans and Anglicans retained) but still ordained ministers (which many of the Anabaptist groups did not). What distinguished Reformed church government from those of the Roman Catholic and other Protestant traditions was its understanding of power as delegated and balanced. Reformed churches were not radically democratic, vesting final authority in congregations. Instead, the churches were representative democracies—much like the republican governments spawned in their wake. The ministry of the entire church was divided between ministers and teachers (sometimes called teaching elders), elders (sometimes called ruling elders), and deacons (supervisors of ministries of compassion to the poor, the

sick, and the needy). This division of power was evident in the organization of the congregation; authority rested with the minister, the consistory or session, and the congregation itself. Groups of congregations were governed by a balanced relationship between congregations, classes or presbyteries, synods, and a general assembly or general synod (usually defined by national boundaries). Unifying their understanding of the church (and, by implication, their understanding of society), Reformed Protestants believed in the separation and balance of powers—all clearly defined in a constitution.

Reformed Protestants also differed sharply from the Roman Catholic tradition in the frequent Protestant emphasis on stipulated and codified confessions. These human-constructed statements of faith were viewed as subordinate to the authority of scripture, but their authority and interpretation were always subject to challenge and debate. Lutherans and Anglicans had their own confessions or doctrinal standards. For the Dutch Reformed the confessional standards became the Belgic Confession (1561), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), and the canons of the Synod of Dort (1618–1619).

The Reformed tradition has often been described as a "confessional" tradition, and the Dutch Reformed are particularly vivid examples of this impulse in Protestantism. Indeed, the Dutch Reformed churches in America are known for the importance they give to confessions and Christian doctrine. For the Dutch Reformed, ideas about God truly matter. Their history and even present-day practice are molded by the desire to think clearly and correctly about divine truths; more generally, they prize intellectual rigor in all areas of life.

Dutch Reformed in Colonial America

When Dutch Protestants began to migrate to North America, they brought with them the marks of their tradition in Holland, as well as urgent practical concerns. The first Dutch Reformed churches were founded in New York, New Jersey, and Delaware during the seventeenth century. They were some of the earliest Reformed congregations in North America.

The sponsor of Dutch migration was the Dutch West India Company, whose interests were primarily economic and commercial. Initially it shied away from sponsoring any church, but the director of New Netherland (later New York), Peter Minuit, took the lead in appointing the first pastor, Jonas Michaelius (1577–1638). Michaelius founded

“the church in the fort” (now known as Collegiate Church) in 1628, marking the beginning of the Dutch Reformed Church in America.

The most pressing economic challenge for every colony was the need for immigrants to support its life and welfare. The population of Dutch immigrants did grow in New York and New Jersey, but that growth created the most pressing ecclesiastical need—more ministers. The Classis of Amsterdam controlled the Dutch Reformed congregations in America. This control included the power to ordain ministers, which made the supply of ministers even more problematic. Dutch Reformed churches also faced the dilemma of serving a diverse population. New York—and the middle colonies more generally—had the most diverse population of all the American colonies. Some Dutch Reformed churches attempted to reach out beyond the Dutch population, but because services were conducted in Dutch, their efforts were largely futile.

In 1664 the Dutch Reformed lost their privileged status in New York when the English conquered the colony. They protested—successfully—the English desire to establish or strengthen the Church of England in the colony. Their victory was ironic, however, for in protecting their own liberty they had to accept legal protection for all other churches as well. This is an early example of how the experience of diversity produced the reality of toleration in American history.

Migration from Holland waned during the late seventeenth century and so did the Dutch Reformed churches in numbers and vitality. By 1700 New York had fifty churches, and twenty-nine were Dutch Reformed. What the Dutch Reformed may have lacked in numerical and spiritual strength, they made up for in economic influence and social prestige. Dutch families occupied a central role in the development of New York and New Jersey’s political, social, and economic life well into the twentieth century.

In 1720 Theodore J. Frelinghuysen (1787–1862), a young German pastor, came to New Jersey. Frelinghuysen was a pietist who advocated individual conversion and personal appropriation of faith. His evangelistic preaching revived Dutch churches just before the First Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s spread through the colonies.

The ticklish problem of ecclesiastical independence became a source of contention. Some Dutch Reformed pastors wanted freedom from the Classis of Amsterdam and petitioned for autonomy in 1738. Other Dutch Reformed pastors opposed the initiative and wanted Amsterdam to

maintain its power to ordain ministers for the colonies and regulate colonial church life. They also wanted Dutch Reformed ministers to be trained at New York’s King College (now Columbia University).

The Classis of Amsterdam proposed a compromise. It granted the Dutch Reformed in the colonies the right to establish a coetus—an association of churches without ecclesiastical autonomy. The Coetus Party eventually broke with Amsterdam and formed its own classis in 1754, which angered its opponents, the Conferentie Party. John Henry Livingston (1746–1825), who became known as “the father of the Reformed church,” brought the two parties together in 1771, but complete freedom from the Classis of Amsterdam was won only through the colonies’ American War of Independence. This victory was symbolized by the founding of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey in 1784, one year after the end of the American Revolution.

Dutch Reformed in the New Nation

The year 1784 also brought the formation of a synod and classis, and in 1792 the Dutch Reformed organized themselves as the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church. In 1867 the name was changed to the Reformed Church in America (RCA)—the name it uses to this day.

Although the Dutch Reformed largely supported the American Revolution, they found themselves at the fringes of the increasingly English-speaking population. They argued about whether to continue to use Dutch in worship services and attempted to work with Presbyterians and the German Reformed to reach more people, but evangelistic efforts foundered and the new denomination remained almost exclusively Dutch.

That situation did not, however, stifle the theological discussion and division. In 1822 the True Dutch Reformed broke away and protested the influence of revivalism and evangelical Arminianism in softening the strict Calvinism of the Dutch Reformed churches. The schismatic group nearly disappeared, but then its forces grew with the migration of conservative Dutch Reformed Protestants from Holland. In 1834 conservative Calvinists in Holland broke with the state church. They sought a more vital piety, strict application of moral laws to regulate Christian life, and a rigorous interpretation of Christian orthodoxy. But they were met by religious and political oppression, and life worsened in Holland because of the onset of an agricultural depression in the 1840s.

In 1846–1847 these conservatives began what is known as the second Dutch migration to North America. One group, led by Albertus Van Raalte (1811–1876), founded Holland, Michigan, and other communities in the region. Hendrik Scholte (1805–1868) led another group that settled in central Iowa. Both contingents tried to remain independent of the Dutch Reformed Church, but only Scholte's group succeeded. Van Raalte and his supporters united with the Dutch Reformed in 1850.

The debate over the boundaries of Calvinist doctrine persisted, and 1857 saw the most significant and enduring split in the Dutch Reformed churches. At first, the break-away group, led by Gijsbert Haan (1801–1874), was known as the True Holland Reformed Church. Eventually, however, it became the Christian Reformed Church (CRC). The CRC began with few members, but during the late nineteenth century it grew because of more Dutch immigration and a dispute in the Reformed Church in America over Freemasonry.

Dutch Reformed in the Twentieth Century

As these two branches of the Dutch Reformed tradition entered into the twentieth century, they were virtually identical in their geographical distribution. They shared an eastern bloc (New York and New Jersey), a midwestern contingent (Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa), and a western constituency (California). After World War II, another wave of Dutch immigration to Canada and especially Ontario gave the Christian Reformed Church numerical strength across the border and validated its formal name as the Christian Reformed Church in North America. In the early twenty-first century Canadian members of the Christian Reformed Church constituted about one-quarter of its membership.

Throughout the nineteenth century the eastern churches of both denominations exerted considerable influence, but by the end of the twentieth century the two churches found the majority of their members, financial support, and spiritual vitality in the Midwest and West. This significant shift stemmed largely from demographic factors, especially the dramatic growth of California, and economic factors, particularly the significant financial prosperity of the middle and western parts of twentieth-century America.

Three important results flowed from this alteration of the Dutch Reformed landscape. First, both denominations found themselves struggling with and adjusting to the

various forms of twentieth-century evangelicalism. Because of their roots in scholastic and rigorous forms of Calvinism, the Dutch Reformed have had an uneasy relationship with evangelicalism—the dominant influence in American Protestantism. Because evangelicalism was especially powerful in their growing strongholds in the Midwest and West, it was inevitable that the Dutch Reformed would encounter and adjust to it, in manifold ways. For example, during the last quarter of the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, a large proportion of their ministers—especially in the West—were trained at Fuller Theological Seminary, an evangelical institution in California. But the influence worked both ways. In the late twentieth century Fuller's president, Richard Mouw, was recruited from Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church.

Second, both denominations sought to adjust to modern streams of thought and practice—often slowly and gradually, but inexorably. They were not completely spared the debates over theological liberalism and fundamentalism that swept through many mainline Protestant denominations. The Christian Reformed Church underwent three divisions: the formation of the Protestant Reformed Church (1924–1926), the Orthodox Christian Reformed Church (1988), and the United Reformed Churches of North America (1996). Nevertheless, the Calvinist theological affirmation of culture enabled the Dutch Reformed to address modern science and contemporary thought from a critical, constructive, and explicitly Christian stance. For example, Hope College of the Reformed Church in America and Calvin College of the Christian Reformed Church distinguished themselves in the fields of science and the humanities—two hotly contested areas of debate in other Protestant denominations.

Third, both denominations struggled over ethnicity—the issue that gave the churches their popular name, Dutch Reformed. Throughout the twentieth century, congregations, seminaries, and colleges remained strongly tied to the Dutch ethnic base, except in the East and eventually in California. Leaders recognized the diminishing numerical and economic strength of the Dutch population, but the powerful influence of ethnicity prevailed throughout the century. In one crucial area, the Dutch Reformed churches relinquished their Dutch heritage; gradually, worship services were conducted in English. At the same time, ethnicity probably played the most important role in limiting more serious ecclesiastical divisions or mitigating them when they

did occur. These Dutch Calvinists often fought fiercely among themselves, in part because they had so much in common—blood as well as belief.

Twentieth-Century Theological Developments

Theologically, the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church agree on common doctrinal standards—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of the Synod of Dort. Although united on this Calvinist theological platform, the Reformed Church in America has been more moderate in its Calvinism, more ecumenically minded, and more willing to adjust its positions to address issues in American society.

Perhaps the most significant theological difference between the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church during the twentieth century was their stance toward culture. The Calvinist tradition has always advocated a positive attitude toward the world as the product of God's creative design. In confronting its defects and deficiencies, the Reformed Church in America has tended to support the church's role as a transformer of culture. In doing so, it has aligned itself more often with other mainline Protestant theological movements of the last century, including neo-orthodoxy, the theology of Karl Barth, liberation theology, and other theological currents.

By contrast, the Christian Reformed Church has been decisively shaped by the theology of Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920). Kuyper, who served as prime minister of the Netherlands from 1901 to 1905, was known for his theological insistence on applying Christian principles to the social order. In doing so, Kuyper emphasized the role of the church as a creative agency for Christian alternatives to secular culture rather than the transformer of existing institutions. An even more rigorous form of Kuyperian thought was advocated by Herman Dooyweerd (1894–1977) of the Free University of Amsterdam. The Kuyperian impact on the Christian Reformed Church has been pervasive and profound, making its voice and mission in American culture both distinctive and critically distant.

Missionary Activities

Dutch Reformed churches, with their strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God, would seem to be unlikely candidates for participation in the powerful missionary movement of American Protestantism, which has been shaped largely by Arminian theological ideas. And yet the Dutch

Reformed churches' involvement in missionary work far outstrips their comparatively small size and contrasts sharply with their inability to move beyond their Dutch ethnic base.

In the past, Reformed Church in America missionaries have undertaken pioneering work in India, China, Japan, and Saudi Arabia, and their work continues in Japan, India, Saudi Arabia, Africa, and Mexico. In the twentieth century, the denomination also joined forces with other Reformed churches and other Christian bodies to pursue a variety of goals: evangelism, medical care, relief work, and social and economic reform.

Likewise, the Christian Reformed Church launched its own missionary effort in the twentieth century. It remains involved in work with Native Americans and in Japan, South America, Nigeria, Mexico, and Taiwan.

Ecumenism

The distinctive theological accents of the Dutch Reformed churches have shaped their relationships with one another and other churches. Relations between the RCA and the CRC have been more competitive than cordial.

The Reformed Church in America has had close connections with American Presbyterians. In fact, it considered a proposed merger with the southern wing of American Presbyterians, but finally rejected the proposal in 1969. The RCA has been an active participant in ecumenical discussions and a member of the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

By contrast, the Christian Reformed Church has focused its ecumenical attention more narrowly and more confessionally. The CRC was a member of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council until 2001, and it has been a member of the Reformed Ecumenical Council and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Both churches are affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals.

Social Issues

Three social issues have dominated the agenda of American Protestantism in the twentieth century—war, race, and gender/sex. Like most Protestant churches, the RCA and CRC supported World Wars I and II, were divided over the Vietnam War, and maintained a critical distance on the war in the Middle East during the early twenty-first century. Because neither denomination had a significant African American membership, the issues of civil rights and race

were recognized as important but as somewhat distant. By contrast, the role of women in the church and homosexuality have been far more heated and divisive issues. The Reformed Church in America has ordained women for the ministry since 1978. The Christian Reformed Church voted to ordain women in 1995, a decision marked by years of dissension and ultimately the defection of several congregations to other denominations. Homosexuality has been a difficult theological and ethical issue for both churches, and in the early twenty-first century it is unclear whether or how the churches' traditional teaching against homosexuality will change.

Education

The influence of the Dutch Reformed on education in American life has been extraordinary. Measured against their immigrant beginnings, bounded by Dutch customs and language, the Dutch Reformed have nevertheless shaped American education through their institutions and a significant group of influential thinkers. During the colonial era, the Dutch Reformed (the Coetus Party) helped found Queens College (Rutgers), which became the State University of New Jersey in 1945, and they took the initiative in theological education by founding the New Brunswick Theological Seminary in 1784, the first theological seminary in the United States.

The second wave of Dutch immigration quickly led the Reformed Church in America to establish Hope College in Holland, Michigan, in 1866, and a second school for educating ministers, Western Theological Seminary, in 1884. The Reformed Church took over the sponsorship of Central College in Pella, Iowa, in 1916, a Baptist school established in 1853, and founded Northwestern College in 1882 in Orange City, Iowa.

The Christian Reformed Church was barely surviving after the Civil War, but in 1874 it founded Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1955 the Christian Reformed established Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, as well as several smaller colleges in the United States and Canada.

Perhaps the most noteworthy and characteristically Christian Reformed activity in education has been its extensive network of primary and secondary Christian schools. The Reformed Church supported public schools, but the Christian Reformed created their own. These schools are not sponsored by the denomination itself but

mainly by Christian Reformed parents—a product of the Christian Reformed conviction that education is part of the responsibility parents assume in baptizing a child. The schools constitute the largest Protestant private school system in the nation.

The geographic center of Dutch Reformed vitality in higher education is western Michigan—Hope College and Western Theological Seminary in Holland (RCA) and, a mere thirty miles away in Grand Rapids, Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary (CRC).

These institutions have produced an extraordinary number of leaders in various areas of American intellectual, economic, and social life. For example, the Christian Reformed Church spawned Louis Berkhof (theologian), Richard DeVos (Amway co-founder), Peter De Vries (novelist), Vern Ehrlers (member of Congress), William Frankena (philosopher), Paul Henry (member of Congress), Bill Hybels (minister, Willow Creek Association), George Marsden (historian), Richard Mouw (theologian), Alvin Plantinga (philosopher), Patricia Rozema (filmmaker), Leonard Schrader (filmmaker), Paul Schrader (filmmaker), Lewis Smedes (theologian), the Staal brothers (professional hockey players), and Nicholas Wolterstorff (philosopher).

The Reformed Church in America and its educational institutions have produced a similar list of individuals who have left their mark on American life, including Meredith Arwady (opera star), M. R. DeHaan (founder of the *Radio Bible Class*), Vern Den Herder (professional football player), Max De Pree (writer and business leader), Everett Dirksen (U.S. senator), Peter Hoekstra (member of Congress), Jim Kaat (baseball player), James Muilenburg (biblical scholar), A. J. Muste (pacifist leader), Norman Vincent Peale (minister), Ruth Peale (*Guideposts* magazine), Theodore Roosevelt (president), Philip Schuler (leader in the American Revolution), Robert Schuller (TV evangelist), Richard Smalley (Nobel laureate in chemistry), Martin Van Buren (president), and Guy Vander Jagt (member of Congress).

Grand Rapids itself has become an enormously successful religious publishing center, which has an international influence. Four Christian Reformed families, all highly competitive, founded four book publishing firms—Baker, Eerdmans, Kregel, and Zondervan. Zondervan was bought by HarperCollins, but the other three remain under family control. Nearby Muskegon is home to Bible Gateway, one of the most widely used Internet resources for studying the Bible.

In the early twenty-first century the two major denominations of the Dutch Reformed tradition in America were each composed of some 300,000 members. Rarely have so many emerged from so few to accomplish so much.

See also *Antinomian Controversy*; *Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage*; *Congregationalists*; *Pilgrims*; *Presbyterians* entries; *Puritans*; *Reformed Denominational Family*; *Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*.

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E



Eastern Orthodox Tradition and Heritage

Eastern Orthodoxy traces its origins to the beginnings of Christianity. It is not only the form of Christianity dominant in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, but also the second largest Christian communion in the world today. Estimates of adherents vary widely, but most are at over 200 million.

The Eastern Orthodox Church consists of those Christians who belong to what used to be the eastern half of the Roman Empire and beyond, the main body of which persisted after the split between the eastern church and the western (Roman or Latin) church in 1054. It considers itself to be in unbroken historical continuity with the church of Christ's apostles and to have faithfully preserved the apostolic faith. Although Christianity is now largely regarded as a Western religion and is associated with Western Europe, in fact during its first millennium Christianity developed mostly in the eastern Mediterranean and Asia Minor (today's Turkey) and from there spread east as much as west. Indeed, Egypt and Asia Minor were some of the most populous and prosperous regions of the Roman Empire during Christianity's early centuries and its most important centers of development.

Today the Eastern Orthodox Church includes the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople (now Istanbul), who has a relatively small flock in Turkey but is the spiritual leader of a large number of Greek Orthodox Christians in the diaspora (including North America); the ancient patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, all in the

Middle East; the churches of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, together constituting more than half of all Orthodox Christians; the churches of the Balkans (such as Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria); the churches of Georgia and Cyprus; as well as churches in countries where Orthodox believers are a minority. Although these churches are governed independently, they share the same faith and worship and are in communion with each other. In addition to the Eastern Orthodox Church, five other churches constitute a separate communion, usually referred to as Oriental Orthodox: Ethiopian, Coptic (Egyptian), Armenian, Jacobite Syrian (named for early leader Jacob Baradaeus to distinguish this church from other Syrian Christians), and Syrian Christians of India.

Characteristics of the Early Church

Elements of early Christianity were as formative for Eastern Orthodoxy as they were for Latin Christianity. Mechanisms developed to distinguish and defend "orthodoxy" (right belief) from "heresy" (false teaching) included notions of tradition, apostolic succession, a hierarchical structure of the church, and a canon of scripture. The canon of Christian scripture began to form only in the late second century and was not finalized for several more centuries. Therefore, Christian teaching was "handed down" (the literal meaning of the Greek *paradosis*, "tradition") from Christ's apostles to their converts and from there to other Christians. Tradition included not only teaching but also practice, both moral and ritual. When confronted with divergent teachings, early church fathers claimed that the orthodox teaching was distinguished by its catholicity or universality and that it was

the same teaching no matter where one was in the Christian world, as opposed to heresies that were local phenomena. (It is a curious consequence that, after the schism, the East assumed the title “Orthodox” and the West “Catholic,” though each would claim to be both Orthodox and Catholic). Although contemporary historians stress the diversity of early Christianity, it was this notion of adherence to one, unchanging, universal belief that came to dominate the early church.

When divergent teachings arose that claimed to be the true teachings of Christ, particularly those of the Gnostics and Marcion, early church fathers such as Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 130–200 CE) appealed to the notion of “apostolic succession”—that is, that the apostles appointed the heads of every community they founded. The head of each local Christian community, the *episkopos* (overseer) or bishop, in turn, appointed his successor. Moreover, according to Irenaeus, each bishop taught the same doctrine, and this unity was also a witness to the authenticity of the church’s teaching. When the early church fathers sought to determine which Christian texts were to be regarded as normative or canonical, they appealed not only to apostolic authorship (because “heretical” texts such as the Gospel of Thomas also claimed apostolic authorship), but also to the acceptance of the texts in the churches and their agreement with the apostolic teaching as passed down through tradition. Orthodox Christians, therefore, regard scripture as inseparable from tradition.

In the early centuries Christianity was an illegal religion, and Christians were sporadically persecuted by the Roman authorities. Those executed for the faith became martyrs, or witnesses to the truth of Christianity, because of their willingness and ability to follow Christ’s path of self-sacrifice for the truth. Early Christians regarded these martyrs as heroes of the faith and, collecting their physical remains, would gather to commemorate them (see, for example, the second-century text “Martyrdom of Polycarp”). Such practices lay the foundation for the veneration of saints in traditional Christianity.

In the early fourth century the Roman emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, which brought about momentous changes for the church itself. It was instantly transformed from a persecuted religion to a tolerated and even favored one. By the end of the century it would become the official religion of the empire.

The very structure of the church would change in time, as well as the relationship of Christianity to society and the

state. When disputes arose in early Christianity they were addressed by calling together representatives of the broader church (especially the bishops) into regional councils. When Constantine converted, he found the church divided over the Arian controversy about the relationship of the Son of God to God the Father. In response, Constantine called together a council of the entire church’s bishops to resolve the problem. Such councils of the entire church (represented by each community’s bishop) were called ecumenical councils because they brought together bishops from the entire *oikoumene* or inhabited world. These councils became the most important mechanism in the first millennium of Christianity for resolving theological disputes. They enjoy particularly great authority for Orthodoxy precisely because they are understood to represent the voice of the entire church and thereby manifest the presence of the Holy Spirit. No individual, including popes and patriarchs, could presume to speak for the whole church.

The Orthodox recognize seven ecumenical councils held between the fourth and the eighth century. The Councils of Nicea (325 CE) and Constantinople (381 CE) addressed the issue of the relationship of the Son of God (and the Holy Spirit) to God the Father and articulated the doctrine of the Trinity that thereafter became foundational for all traditional forms of Christianity, including Roman Catholic and Protestant. The Councils of Ephesus (431 CE) and Chalcedon (451 CE) addressed the relationship of Christ’s humanity and his divinity, articulating the doctrine of Christ as being fully human and fully divine with his two natures united in one person. This last point was rejected by certain churches that followed the formula of Cyril of Alexandria, which spoke of the “one nature of the incarnate Word,” emphasizing the unity of the divinity and humanity in Christ. These disputes resulted in the first permanent schisms in Christianity, as some Christians (known as the Church of the East, who were primarily in the Persian Empire at the time and in today’s Iraq) rejected the Council of Ephesus’s insistence on Christ’s unity as threatening the integrity of his humanity. Other churches (now known as the Oriental Orthodox) never accepted the Chalcedonian formula. These churches, sometimes labeled by outsiders as “monophysite” because of their emphasis on “one nature,” continue to this day and also have adherents in North America—especially Armenians, who can be found worldwide, and Coptic Christian immigrants from Egypt. The fifth and sixth ecumenical councils recognized by the Eastern Orthodox, the Second and Third Councils of

Constantinople (553 CE and 681 CE), continued to deal with Christological issues raised by the dispute over Chalcedon. The seventh council, the Second Council of Nicea (787 CE), legitimated the use of icons after the iconoclastic controversy. Icons are religious images used in eastern Christian worship depicting biblical scenes or figures such as Christ or the saints.

Schism between Eastern and Western Christianity

The authority structure of the church developed in the early centuries. In the first centuries all bishops were regarded as equal. Over time the bishops of the most important cities of the empire developed greater authority. This was enshrined in what was known in the East as the Pentarchy, in which five great sees were held in particular honor and according to an order of precedence: Rome, Constantinople (the city established by the Emperor Constantine in the 330s to be the eastern capital of the empire, often referred to as the “new Rome”), Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. In the West, only Rome could claim apostolic foundation and therefore it had preeminence above all other bishoprics. In the East, however, numerous cities claimed apostolic foundation, including all the cities of the Pentarchy. Their ranking was understood as deriving from the importance that the respective cities had in the Roman Empire (Rome as the first capital, Constantinople as the second, and Alexandria and Antioch as the next two largest and most important cities and regional centers), with the exception of Jerusalem, which as the “Mother Church” was included out of honor—but only in the last position. The bishops of Rome and Alexandria bore the title of pope (the Coptic bishop of Alexandria still bears that title), whereas the bishops of the other three sees bore the title patriarch. In the eastern conception, even though Rome was accorded first place in the ranking and could claim special authority in the western church, it could not claim universal authority over the whole church; this would serve as one of the major points of division between the eastern and western churches.

Over centuries tensions developed between East and West. Although the Roman Empire collapsed in the West during the fifth century because of the barbarian invasions, it continued to exist in the East. Thus the two halves of Christendom were cut off from one another politically. Moreover, they drifted apart culturally, as fewer people in the West were educated in Greek and fewer in the East in Latin. As a result, Augustine of Hippo, the most important theologian writing in Latin for the first millennium of

Christianity, had little influence in the East, and Greek and Syriac writers had little influence in the West. Certain practical differences were evident as well: in the West clerical celibacy became the norm and was ultimately mandated, whereas in the East only bishops are celibate and parish clergy can marry.

One major issue that divided the eastern and western churches was papal claims to supremacy over the entire church. From the ninth to the eleventh century the papacy established universal authority over the church in the West, and then began to assert similar prerogatives in the East that the East refused to acknowledge because, in the East’s eyes, it was an innovation. These tensions led the Pope of Rome and the patriarch of Constantinople to excommunicate one another in 1054. This date is usually given as the formal date of the schism, although this was only one episode in a long history.

The other major issue that divided the two halves of Christendom was a dispute over the Nicene Creed. The creed was developed at the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople, which stipulated that the creed could not be changed or altered except by another ecumenical council. The western church added the words “and from the Son” (*filioque*) to the creed so that it read, “I believe in the Holy Spirit . . . who proceeds from the Father *and from the Son.*” In the eleventh century the pope and the patriarch of Constantinople issued mutual recriminations about the presence or absence of this clause. The East objected to the clause for two reasons. First, it was unhappy that the creed was changed at all, without consent of the whole church. And, second, it objected on theological grounds because, in the eastern understanding, God the Father is the source of divinity with the Son being “begotten” and the Spirit “proceeding.” To have the Spirit proceed from the Father “and the Son” was to subordinate the Spirit to a lesser position in the Trinity.

The patriarch’s and pope’s mutual excommunication in 1054 was hardly the end of the story, however. The event that did more to make the schism permanent was the Fourth Crusade’s sack of Constantinople in 1204. The crusaders, on their way to the Holy Land, made a detour to Constantinople and, motivated primarily by greed, attacked the capital of the Christian East, desecrated its churches, stole relics, and set up a Latin emperor and patriarch. The Latins held on to the city for about sixty years before the Greeks succeeded in regaining it, but this wound was never forgotten. Nevertheless, reunion discussions continued sporadically, culminating

in the Council of Florence in 1438–1439. At this point Constantinople was under immediate threat of conquest from the Turks, and so it sought military assistance from the West, for which church reunion was a precondition. Out of desperation the eastern bishops accepted most of the demands made by the Latins, though the union was not accepted by the Orthodox populace and the bishops themselves repudiated it once Constantinople fell in 1453. Serious reunion discussions resumed only in the twentieth century.

Eastern Christianity and Society

The relationship of church and state also developed very differently in the East than in the West. After the fall of the western half of the Roman Empire in the fifth century, the Catholic West was plunged into the political fragmentation and cultural backwardness of the feudal era. The one unifying authority for the whole of Western Europe was the papacy, which, over time, asserted even the superiority of ecclesiastical authority over secular authority. This process reached its apex in the papal bull *Unam Sanctam* (1302), in which Pope Boniface VIII claimed that the pope was Christ's representative on earth, sole head of the Catholic Church, and the source of all power on earth. According to Boniface, secular power derived its authority from the spiritual and was delegated by the pope to kings. Therefore the pope could stand in judgment over kings, but God alone could judge the pope. The situation in the Orthodox East was nearly the reverse: there was one powerful secular ruler, the Roman (Byzantine) emperor, and at the same time multiple centers of ecclesiastical authority (Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch). There was, therefore, never any effort (or possibility) for the church to assert its authority over that of the state. The norm, or the ideal, as defined in the legislation of Emperor Justinian (who ruled 527–565 CE) was a “symphony” of church and state in which the two were co-equal partners, the church caring for people's spiritual and moral needs and the state caring for people's earthly needs. In areas in which the activities of the two crossed, they were to support one another. But as a rule the clergy were not to interfere in matters of government and the emperors were not to interfere in the realm of doctrinal matters. The reality, however, was much messier, and there were many instances of emperors who tried to assert their will in the theological realm, although in many of these cases the church successfully resisted this interference.

Augustine of Hippo, in one of the most influential works on Roman Catholicism, *The City of God*, reflected on the

meaning of the fall of Rome in 410 CE. According to Augustine, the “city of man,” the earthly realm of empires and kingdoms, was fundamentally different from the “city of God.” The “city of man” always pursued worldly aims such as wealth and power, and thus no earthly empire was destined to last forever—only the Kingdom of God. Once again the eastern perspective was very different. Because the Byzantine Empire lasted for another millennium in the East, there was a sense that the earthly kingdom reflected the heavenly Kingdom of God, even embodied it to some degree. It was providential that Christ had come to earth precisely at the height of the Roman Empire's power and that Constantine's conversion opened the door for Christianizing the entire Roman world (which stretched around the entire Mediterranean and reached from Britain to Asia Minor). This would be the avenue for Christianizing the entire world. Therefore, the church embraced its union with the empire as a means of Christianizing society. Even after the collapse of the Byzantine Empire and the fall of Constantinople in 1453, this idea of the Orthodox Christian empire lived on, particularly in Russia.

Despite this sense of harmony of church and state in the East, the Orthodox never forgot Christ's saying that “my kingdom is not of this world,” for this sense of tension with the world lived on in the monastic movement. As noted, the conflict between the church and the empire before Constantine led to persecution and produced martyrs, who were regarded as heroes of the faith. After the conversion of Constantine, that role was fulfilled by monks, nuns, hermits, and ascetics, who in a sense put to death their own selfish desires in order to live wholly for God. Two models of monastic life in the Christian East developed in fourth-century Egypt. The origins of monasticism are usually associated with Antony the Great (d. 356 CE). As a young man, Antony heard the gospel reading in church in which Christ said to give away all one's possessions to the poor and follow him, and Antony took this saying literally. He gave away all his possessions and went to live in the desert to devote his entire life to prayer, and eventually his renown as a holy man spread. Antony's model became one ideal that was pursued in the Egyptian and Palestinian deserts—that of the solitary hermit who left the world in pursuit of God. Often these desert fathers and mothers attracted disciples, and so loose communities formed. The other primary form of eastern monasticism, the communal or cenobitic monastery, was also established in the Egyptian desert, in this case by Pachomius (d. 346 CE). In the cenobitic monastery, the monks or

nuns owned no possessions whatsoever; their labor benefited the whole community, which, in turn, provided all of their necessities. Cenobitic monasticism also placed great stress on communal worship, meals, and discipline through obedience to the elders.

The goal of the monastic life in both East and West was the surrender of worldly pursuits of wealth, power, status, and family in the uncompromising pursuit of the Kingdom of God. Through obedience to the abbot of the community or a spiritual director, one learned to surrender one's own will to God's. Christ said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Monasticism was a path of purification through spiritual disciplines such as fasting, celibacy, and prayer. Unlike in the West, which developed distinct religious orders, each united by a particular rule, monasticism in the East was both more homogeneous and more diverse: general patterns dominated, but each monastery was free to develop its own rules within those general parameters. Monasticism still exists in the modern era as one of Eastern Orthodoxy's primary expressions of spirituality.

Language also distinguished eastern and western Christianity. As Christianity spread in the Catholic West the church always insisted on the use of Latin for the scriptures and worship. In the East, by contrast, there was from the earliest centuries a plurality of languages: not only Greek and Latin but also Syriac, Coptic (in Egypt), Ethiopic (Ge'ez), Armenian, and Georgian, to name a few. The language issue was central in the conversion of the Slavs. In the mid-ninth century the missionary brothers Cyril and Methodius invented an alphabet for the previously illiterate Slavs, a modified version of which is known as the Cyrillic alphabet still in use in Orthodox Slavic countries. They also translated scriptural and liturgical texts into their language, which was adopted by the newly converted Bulgarians and Serbs. Thus an entire collection of texts was available for the Rus (the predecessors of the modern day Russians and Ukrainians), whose Prince Vladimir of Kiev (Kyiv) adopted Christianity for himself and his people in 988 CE. The language that the brothers and their disciples used, now known as Church Slavonic, became the liturgical language for all of the Orthodox Slavs, and is still in use today in Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, and Serbia.

Formative Historical Epochs

The formation of eastern Christianity is intimately connected with the history of the Byzantine Empire. Until the

seventh century, the eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire, centered in Constantinople, continued to rule Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece. In the seventh century the Arab Muslims conquered Syria, Palestine, and Egypt—territories that were not only ethnically and linguistically diverse but also religiously divided between those who accepted the Council of Chalcedon and those who rejected it. After the city of Antioch also fell, the Byzantine Empire consisted mainly of Greece and Asia Minor, was more homogeneously Greek, and the patriarchate of Constantinople was left without rival in the ecclesiastical sphere. The new Slavic converts in Bulgaria, Serbia, and Rus, though not part of the Byzantine Empire politically, were clearly in its cultural orbit, constituting what the scholar Dmitry Obolensky termed the "Byzantine Commonwealth" and more or less dependent ecclesiastically upon Constantinople. From the eleventh century onward the Turks gradually took over Asia Minor. Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453, bringing an end to the Byzantine Empire and leaving most of the Orthodox population, from Egypt to the Balkans, under Muslim rule. Many eastern Christians are still living in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon in predominantly Muslim countries. The Orthodox of the Balkans (Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, and to some extent Romania) remained under Turkish rule for about five hundred years, until the nineteenth century.

Orthodox history has experienced a fundamental transformation from an ethnically diverse church united primarily under the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople to a series of separate national churches. The Ottoman Turks created a system, known as the *millet*, under which non-Muslims were governed by their own laws rather than Islamic law and by their own religious authorities in the Ottoman Empire. As a result, the authority of the patriarch of Constantinople actually increased in many ways after the fall of the Byzantine Empire because all Orthodox Christians were under his civil and religious authority, although the patriarchs were subject to considerable pressure from the Ottomans. Revolts in the Balkans in the nineteenth century turned Orthodox religious communities into modern nations, and the church fragmented along national lines. Thus as nations, beginning with Greece in 1833 and followed by Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania, became independent, their churches also became independent from the patriarchate of Constantinople and therefore autocephalous or self-governing. The result is the modern situation in which the Orthodox Church has become closely identified

with national identity (so that one thinks of Greek Orthodox or Russian Orthodox).

Russia emerged as the only powerful, independent Orthodox nation after the fall of Byzantium. The Russian church became increasingly influential in the Orthodox world. It became ecclesiastically independent from Constantinople in 1448, and in 1589 the other eastern patriarchs elevated it to the status of a patriarchate. In the early eighteenth century, however, Peter the Great abolished the patriarchate and replaced it with the Holy Synod, a collegial body composed of leading clerics. This situation lasted for two centuries until the Russian Revolution of 1917, after which Russian Orthodoxy became subject to a militant atheist regime determined to extinguish religion. Especially during the 1930s, hundreds of thousands clergy and believers in the Soviet Union were repressed, sent to the Gulag (prison camps), or executed, and the vast majority of churches were closed. The churches of the Balkans (Romania, Serbia, and Bulgaria) also suffered tragic fates under the hostile rule of communism barely a century after they emerged from Muslim rule. The Orthodox populations of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have faced enormous challenges since the collapse of communism in 1989–1991 in reconstructing their churches, but also have experienced unprecedented revivals.

The history of the Oriental or non-Chalcedonian Orthodox churches has also been a difficult one. Only Ethiopia remained independent, though frequently under pressure from neighboring Islamic powers in the medieval period. As a result of this independence, the Ethiopian church is the largest Oriental Orthodox church today, with some 35 million believers in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Coptic Christians in Egypt and Jacobite Christians in Syria have struggled to preserve their identities in regions that experienced a steady Islamization, though the Coptic Church has undergone a rebirth in the twentieth century. The fate of the Armenians was particularly tragic in the twentieth century, subject to genocide in Turkey and later to Soviet terror.

Orthodox Approach to Theology

Eastern Orthodoxy is often characterized by its adherence to tradition. Outsiders note the apparent unchangeable nature of Orthodox worship and style. This is clearly true by comparison with Protestantism or even Roman Catholicism after the reforms of the Vatican II Council in the 1960s. But tradition for Orthodoxy does not simply mean rigid adherence to past forms and customs. As we saw with Irenaeus of

Lyons in the second century, tradition meant precisely the gospel, the message handed down through the church from the apostles. Tradition has come to mean the totality of church life: not just the basic *kerygma* or evangelical proclamation, but also the liturgical worship, church architecture, iconography, writings of the church fathers, and decisions and definitions of church councils. Tradition is understood as the life of the Holy Spirit in the church as the body of Christ, or how the Spirit is experienced within the church.

Tradition became one of the issues of contention in the western church during the Reformations of the sixteenth century. Protestants rejected the authority of tradition as something manmade, accepting only the scripture as the word of God. Roman Catholics responded by articulating their position that tradition constituted another source of religious authority alongside, and essentially equal to, scripture. The Orthodox do not understand tradition as something separable from scripture. They believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God (although they do not insist on its literal inerrancy in the modern sense). But because the Bible can be interpreted in contradictory ways, the Orthodox maintain that it can be properly or completely understood only within the context of tradition, the entire life of the church as the body of Christ. At the same time, scripture is the fabric out of which all of the elements of tradition (liturgy, patristic commentary, conciliar decisions) are woven.

Orthodoxy also has a distinctive approach to theology. Theology is the attempt to express the inexpressible. Ultimately, according to Orthodoxy, God cannot be defined and categorized through words, but can only be known directly through communion and participation. Therefore, positive theology in the East is always balanced by the apophatic approach, which says ultimately what God is *not* because God transcends all attempts at conceptualization. The purpose of theology is not intellectual but existential; doctrines are pointers to, not propositions about, God. It is evidence of what has been experienced by the saints. At the same time that the Orthodox have insisted on the notion that all language falls short of capturing God, they also have insisted on the importance of proper theological formulations. The history of doctrinal controversies is one of a search for terminology. If doctrinal formulations do not contain the truth, but rather point to the truth and serve as vehicles for its transmission, then it is still vitally important that those formulations be as accurate as humanly possible. Therefore, theology in the East is not the effort to create the perfectly logical and coherent system of thought, as in the scholastic

tradition of medieval Roman Catholicism. Rather, theology is about encounter with God. As one of the early church fathers said, “The theologian is one who prays, and the one who prays is a theologian.” As a result, those who experienced communion with God, or mystics, are regarded as having the authority to speak about God. The East, then, did not experience the conflict that characterized the medieval West between the logical approach of the scholastics and the experiential approach of the mystics (who were often considered as on the verge of heresy).

The Fall, Redemption, and Salvation

The core doctrines of Orthodoxy are those defined during the ecumenical councils. They are shared by most Christians, particularly Roman Catholics but also most Protestants: belief in the Triune God, the second person of whom, the Son, became incarnate as Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, died on the cross, and rose from the dead as the savior of the world. Although the core beliefs are shared in common with other Christians, there are some important differences of emphasis and approach, beginning with human nature and the Fall of Adam and Eve. On the one hand, the Orthodox look upon the Fall as a great catastrophe, a rebellion against God that resulted in separation from God and the broken human condition that followed. On the other hand, the early eastern church fathers tended to view Adam and Eve before the Fall as having existed in a state of child-like innocence rather than a state of perfection. The Fall, though casting humanity into a state of sinfulness and brokenness, of separation from God, was not as devastating for human nature as understood in the West by Augustine, Martin Luther, or John Calvin. Though free will is broken and impaired, it is never erased; there is no sense of “total depravity.”

The eastern understanding of the Fall is therefore fundamentally different from the western notion of “original sin.” The latter concept is rooted in Augustine’s doctrine that humanity inherited not only a broken state, but also the actual guilt for Adam’s sin—so that every human being is, in effect, born guilty and therefore condemned. Much of the difference can be related to one key verse, Romans 5:12: “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned.” The Latin translation rendered the last clause as “in whom all have sinned,” which Augustine understood as confirming his belief in inherited guilt. In the Orthodox East, by contrast, the emphasis was put on the

connection between sin and death: because human life is limited by death and there is struggle for existence, one must be selfish in order to survive and therefore sin is inevitable. Christ, through his sinlessness and perfect obedience (in contrast to Adam’s disobedience), and through his resurrection from the dead, has overcome sin and death. Therefore, those united with Christ through faith and baptism share in this victory over sin and death. Orthodoxy, then, sees Christ’s victory over sin and death as the key to Christ’s work of salvation for humanity. There is also the notion of forgiveness for sin (though one’s own sin, not Adam’s). The East, however, never developed a doctrine of atonement like that of Anselm of Canterbury, which became standard in the West. It stated that Christ’s Crucifixion was necessary payment to God for humanity’s transgression.

The Orthodox understanding of salvation is therefore also different from that in the West. The emphasis is on the notion that Christ, by becoming human, united divinity and humanity, thereby making it possible for humanity to be united with God. A common theme of the eastern church fathers was stated by Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 296–373): “God became human that we might be made god.” The eastern fathers understood the phrase from Genesis as humanity created in the “image and likeness of God” in part to mean that humanity is created in Christ’s image and therefore that Christ represents the ideal human being, what all are called to become “like.” Because Christ is the Son of God, so all are called to be sons and daughters of God, to be by grace what Christ is by nature, in and through him. To follow this path is to become what human beings were created to be, to become fully human. The union with God is ontological, changing the very nature of one’s being, although the essence of God remains transcendent and one’s human personality is not extinguished. This profound emphasis on the unity of God and human in Christ as making possible the union of humanity with God is known in the East as deification (*theosis*). In short, the union of God and humanity was accomplished in the Incarnation, while the victory over sin and death was accomplished on the cross and in the resurrection; both are actualized in the believer through the life in the church.

One of the fundamental debates in western Christianity, beginning with Augustine, was over “faith versus works” and “grace versus free will.” Because Augustine and Protestant Reformers such as Luther and Calvin understood human nature as having been completely impaired by original sin, free will was destroyed to such an extent that one could not

choose God of one's own free will nor do anything to merit one's own salvation—everything depended upon God's action, God's grace, and the only human response was faith. The medieval and post-Reformation Catholic Church, by contrast, insisted that humanity still had free will and that one's own "good works" would be rewarded by God. The East understood this whole dynamic in a fundamentally different way and therefore never had a debate about "faith versus works." Despite the Fall, human beings are still in the image of God, however obscured, so that free will is impaired but never destroyed. Salvation is a process of cooperation (*synergeia* in Greek). Because of the Fall human beings are incapable of union with God by their own efforts, yet because God respects human freedom they must freely accept and work with his offer of grace for salvation. It was not that one "earned" one's salvation through one's "good works" that were rewarded by God—this legal or mercantile way of viewing the problem is completely alien to Orthodoxy. It is not a matter of doing "good works" or obeying God's will as some external set of commandments. Rather, according to the great eastern church father Maximus the Confessor (c. 580–662), by surrendering one's own will to God, one allows God's energy to act in and through one, and one is transformed, transfigured, and deified in the process.

This work of spiritual transformation is understood to be the action of the Holy Spirit in believers. There are two primary approaches to the spiritual life, both generally regarded as indispensable and complementary: one is corporate, liturgical worship and sacramental participation, and the other is private prayer and spiritual discipline. Worship is an essential aspect of Orthodoxy. The most distinct practice of private prayer is the "prayer of the heart." God is encountered in the words of prayer, but God is experienced most fully in stillness and silence (in Greek, *hesychia*). This form of prayer developed for the most part in monasteries, where monks or nuns strive to follow St. Paul's injunction to "pray without ceasing," which is exemplified above all in the "Jesus Prayer": "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me." By saying one simple prayer attentively, one could still distracting thoughts and impulses. Then, in the stillness of the heart that has been purified by spiritual discipline, the Orthodox believe one can have communion with God that transcends words. Such practices, and the theological articulation behind them, are known as Hesychasm and are regarded by many Orthodox as the premier path of deification.

Western Christians have long been ignorant about, and very frequently dismissive of, eastern Orthodoxy, an ignorance perpetuated, at least until very recently, in introductory books about Christianity and its history and theology. With the collapse of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe, Orthodoxy is experiencing a remarkable revival on the world Christian scene. Moreover, there are increasing numbers of Orthodox immigrants to America and Americans converting to Orthodoxy. Finally, Orthodoxy's distinctive contributions to theology, spirituality, and the Christian arts are worthy of far more awareness in the West.

See also Bible entries; *Eastern Orthodoxy*; *Worship: Eastern Orthodox*.

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Eastern Orthodox Worship

See *Worship: Eastern Orthodox*

Eastern Orthodoxy

Eastern Orthodox Christianity traces its origins to Christianity, and it continues to exist in many of the churches founded by Christ's apostles. Composed of a series of autonomous national churches in Russia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East, it is the second largest single Christian confession in the world today.

Paradoxically, most Americans are either completely unaware of Eastern Orthodoxy's existence, or know of it only vaguely through the ethnic festivals held by their local Greek (or Russian or Arab) Orthodox Church. Such ignorance stems primarily from the relatively weak presence of Orthodox Christians in America (estimates vary widely from one to four million) and from the fragmentation that exists among these Orthodox Christians. Though closer to Roman Catholics in their understanding of the nature of the church, in actual practice Orthodox Christians have been closer to a Protestant model. In the nineteenth century, Catholics often established parishes along ethnic lines (such as Irish, German, and Italian), but the parishes remained unified under their Catholic bishops. By contrast, some Protestants set up parallel church structures along ethnic lines (such as Swedish or German Lutherans) or political lines (for example, the Methodists split over slavery). Many of the divisions in the American Protestant world were also theological. Likewise, in the early twentieth century Orthodox Christians created parallel church organizations along ethnic lines and later further divided along political lines. For the most part, however, Orthodox Christians have not been divided over theology.

The Alaska Mission

Orthodox Christianity arrived in North America as a missionary religion from the West. Vitus Bering, a Dane working for the Russian Empire, led an expedition that first mapped the Aleutian Islands and sighted the Alaskan mainland in the 1740s. For the remainder of the eighteenth century, Russian trapper-traders ventured to Alaska in search of sea otter pelts. Many settled permanently, married native women, and learned native languages, but they baptized

their families as Orthodox Christians. In the 1780s a wealthy merchant named Gregory Shelikov attempted to establish permanent trading posts, and he appealed to the Orthodox Church leadership to provide him with a priest. The missionary team of eight monks recruited from the Valaam monastery departed for Alaska at the end of 1793 and arrived on Kodiak Island ten months later, in September 1794. Soon after, the leader of the team, Archimandrite Joasaph, reported back to Russia that they had already built a church and baptized "more than seven thousand Americans," who received the new religion enthusiastically.

Shelikov finally realized his dream when the Russian government chartered the Russian-American Company in 1799. The missionaries, however, soon ran into conflicts with the local manager of the company, Alexander Baranov, over the company's exploitative treatment of the natives. The missionaries complained to Shelikov about these abuses, but receiving no answer, Joasaph and two other monks returned to Russia to report on the situation and to receive more support for the mission. Joasaph was ordained bishop of Kodiak, which would have greatly strengthened his position, but on the return voyage in 1799 his ship sank, and Joasaph and other missionaries were lost. The remaining missionaries, led by the monk Herman, continued to defend the natives and suffer harassment from Baranov. Conditions improved only after Baranov's retirement over twenty years later. His replacement was more respectful of the missionaries, and the Russian government subjected the Russian-American Company to greater control. Father Herman, the last surviving member of the missionary team, retired to Spruce Island (near Kodiak Island) where he observed a very strict ascetic regime of fasting and prayer, but also cared for the natives by running a school and tending the sick. Herman died in 1837; in 1970 he was canonized as the first Orthodox saint of America.

In 1824 a new missionary, Father John Veniaminov, arrived on the island of Unalaska with his family. Following a great tradition of Orthodox missionaries, including Cyril and Methodius who had converted the Slavs, Veniaminov sought to preach the gospel in the local language. He learned Aleut, created an alphabet for the language, and translated some scriptural and liturgical texts into the language. He traveled throughout the Aleutian chain by kayak to conduct his missionary work, taking careful notes on the natural and human environment that were later published and earned his membership in the Russian Academy of

Sciences. A decade later he moved to Sitka (called New Archangel at the time), the capital of Russian America. There he learned the language of the local Tlingit Indians, who initially were more hostile to the Russians. But Veniaminov eventually won over many of them, especially through his help during a smallpox epidemic. After his wife passed away, he was consecrated bishop for Kamchatka (Eastern Siberia) and Alaska in 1840, assuming the name Innocent (priests can marry in the Orthodox Church, but bishops are celibate). For the next eighteen years he energetically developed the Orthodox mission in both Siberia and Alaska. In Alaska he helped construct churches and established a seminary to train native and creole (mixed-race) candidates for the priesthood. In 1868 he became metropolitan of Moscow, one of the most important positions in the Russian church, and in that position he continued to promote the Alaska mission by establishing the Orthodox Missionary Society in 1870. He was canonized in 1877 as “Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to America.”

Unlike the Russian missions to Siberia, where missionaries usually followed government officials and often saw their efforts as Russianizing the indigenous population as much as Christianizing it, the Alaska mission was largely independent of the Russian government and Russian colonial efforts because the Russian presence remained weak in Alaska. The Alaskan missionaries also clearly intended to Christianize, but not Russify, the Alaskan natives. By the 1860s the mission was very successful—it was using local languages, and it had an indigenous or creole clergy as well as native lay leaders. By that point, the some twelve thousand Alaskan Christians had nine churches, as well as schools and orphanages. When Russia sold Alaska to the United States in 1867, an event that Innocent Veniaminov viewed as “one of the ways of Providence by which our Orthodoxy can insert itself into the United States,” Orthodox Christianity was thriving.

The transfer of Alaska to the United States presented the Orthodox Church with serious challenges, however. Although the church and its property were not directly threatened by the U.S. government, the government did try to “Americanize” the natives through aggressive educational programs. Indeed, Sheldon Jackson, Alaska’s first commissioner of education (1885–1906), was a Presbyterian minister who encouraged the establishment of federally funded boarding schools operated by Protestant missionaries. These schools tried to suppress native language, culture, and

religion (including Orthodox Christianity) in their effort to “Americanize” the natives. In the end, however, indigenous Alaskans, including the Tlingit, embraced Orthodoxy with even greater enthusiasm as a way of defending native culture and identity against pressures of assimilation. The Orthodox Church remains strong in parts of Alaska and continues to operate one seminary, St. Herman’s on Kodiak Island, for the training of native clergy.

Immigration

The first group of Orthodox Christian immigrants to come to the New World across the Atlantic arrived about the same time as the Russians. In 1768 a colony of some five hundred Greeks emigrated. The endeavor was the work of Scottish physician Andrew Turnbull, who was married to a Greek. The colony, which was named New Smyrna, was located in present-day Florida. The colony failed, however, before any priest was sent or any church was built.

A great wave of immigrants came to the United States from Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe between 1880 and 1920, and many were eastern Christians. Those who could, sought the few churches already established in the continental United States. When Orthodox immigrants were few and scattered geographically, they tended to band together to establish churches such as that organized in New Orleans in 1864. Thus the churches were multiethnic (made up of Greeks, Russians, Serbs, and Arabs) with multilingual services. Once the number of any one ethnic group climbed sufficiently, however, it formed its own parish.

In the 1870s, recognizing the growing importance of the continental United States for the future of the Orthodox Church, the Russian bishop of Sitka successfully requested to transfer the diocesan headquarters to San Francisco. Aware of the multiethnic nature of the scattered communities, the Russian bishops sought to appoint priests who could speak many languages, such as Greeks or Arabs educated in Russia. One of the most significant developments from the 1890s to the 1910s in the Russian church in America was the conversion of Uniates or Greek Catholics to Orthodoxy. These Greek Catholics were mostly from the Austro-Hungarian Empire (especially the Carpathian Mountain region). These Ruthenians, or Rusyns, were mostly peasants from regions that had once been Orthodox, but under pressure from later Catholic rulers, they had agreed to a union in the late seventeenth century in which they retained their practices but came under the authority of the pope in Rome. Their distinct practices included an

eastern liturgy in Slavonic as well as a married priesthood, thereby distinguishing them from their Latin Roman Catholic brothers. Once such communities were established in America, they would send home for a priest. When these priests arrived, however, they found a less than hospitable welcome by the presiding Roman Catholic bishops. One such priest, Alexis Toth, arrived in Minneapolis in 1889, but his bishop in America, John Ireland, refused to allow him to serve despite the blessing Toth had received from his bishops back at home. Ireland told him that the congregation should simply go to the parish established by the Poles. Unwilling to abandon their customs, Toth's community turned to the Russian bishop in San Francisco, who received Toth and the entire community into the Russian church in 1891. Thanks to Toth's efforts (and to Roman Catholic intolerance), over 160 communities with 100,000 members had entered the Russian Orthodox diocese by 1917. The influx of Greek Catholics naturally changed the nature of the Russian mission by the turn of the century.

Some of the Russian bishops attempted to promote the multiethnic nature of the American diocese. Thus, Tikhon Bellavin, who was bishop in the United States from 1898 to 1907, ordained an Arab, Raphael Hawaweeny, as an auxiliary bishop to minister to Arab immigrants. Tikhon also transferred the diocesan headquarters from San Francisco to New York, because the majority of the new immigrants were settling in industrial areas of the Northeast. Tikhon respected efforts to preserve the ethnic character of Orthodox congregations, but also encouraged the use of English. He established a seminary for training American-born clergy. Tikhon returned to Russia and in 1917 was elected the first patriarch of the Russian church in over two centuries. Despite Tikhon's efforts to create a multiethnic Orthodox Church, the flood of Eastern Slavic Greek Catholic (Uniate) converts into the Russian Church meant that its administration in America was preoccupied mostly with these Slavs to the neglect of other ethnic groups, particularly the Greek Orthodox themselves.

Greeks began arriving in America in large numbers and establishing parishes in the 1890s. Between 1890 and 1922 the number of Greek immigrants rose dramatically, reaching half a million by 1922. Frequently Greeks from particular areas of Greece or the Ottoman Empire would settle together in America and establish parishes, sending home for priests. Such communities operated outside of contact with the Russian bishops or any episcopal oversight. If the congregation immigrated from Greece, it turned to the autonomous Greek church for a priest; if it immigrated

from the Ottoman Empire, it turned to the patriarchate of Constantinople for one. Moreover, these Greek immigrants followed an American-style Protestant church structure and emphasized the independence of the local parish. The board of trustees or parish council made up of prominent laymen controlled the parish church and regarded the priest as their employee, to be hired and dismissed at their will. In 1908 the patriarch of Constantinople, because of the uncertain political situation in Turkey, placed the Greek Orthodox in the New World under the church of Greece, but nothing was done for another decade; they did not receive any bishop, and the congregations retained their independence.

Creation of Ethnic Jurisdictions

The Russian Revolution of 1917 had a dramatic impact on the Russian Orthodox diocese in North America and indeed on all Orthodoxy in America. The ruling bishop returned to Russia to participate in a church council (1917–1918), and the auxiliary bishop who took over was unprepared to handle the challenges that followed. The Russian church in America was thrown into financial crisis, because funds were no longer supplied by Russia. It also was subject to administrative chaos because of its inability to communicate properly with Tikhon, now patriarch of Moscow. The chaos became even more acute when a group of reformist clergy known as Renovationists took control of the church administration in Russia (with support from the Soviets), and also tried to control parishes and church property in the United States as the legitimate Russian church. In response, many parishes, with the support of the patriarchal bishop, transferred rights to property to their congregations, strengthening this tendency in American Orthodoxy.

Although the Renovationist movement did not gain widespread or lasting support in the United States, the Russian church still divided into competing factions. The head of the Russian church in America, Metropolitan Platon (Rozhdestvenskii), declared the church “temporarily self-governing” in 1924 because of difficulties of communication with Moscow; it was called the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America, and usually referred to as the “Metropolia.” At the same time, a group of bishops who fled Russia after the revolution established the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR) in Yugoslavia in 1921. Platon initially cooperated with ROCOR, and then broke with it over political issues (ROCOR's advocacy of restoring the monarchy in Russia) in 1926. The Metropolia and ROCOR were united again from 1935 to 1946, and

after that they divided. In the latter 1920s the leadership of the church in Russia refused to recognize either and attempted to establish its own authority in America. Thus for much of the twentieth century, as a result of the Russian Revolution, three Russian churches were competing in America, of which the Metropolia was the largest. Making matters even more complicated, Ukrainians (most numerous in Canada) who had been a part of the Russian church before 1917 also declared themselves independent. In short, some Russian believers felt they should remain part of the Moscow patriarchal church as an expression of loyalty to their church's suffering in the Soviet Union. Others (especially ROCOR) felt that the church in the Soviet Union had been compromised by the regime, especially after Metropolitan Sergius, head of the Russian church, made a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet Union in 1927 and therefore ceased to deserve their loyalty.

The Greeks in America had operated separately from the Russians even before 1917, though the number of parishes had increased dramatically since the beginning of the century. Their situation changed in 1918 when Meletios Metaxakis, archbishop of Athens, appointed a bishop for the Greek Orthodox. But the years 1918–1922 were a time of political turmoil in Greece as well, for the king had been ousted. Greeks in the United States were also divided between liberals and royalists. When the king returned, Archbishop Meletios was ousted as archbishop of Athens as a liberal, after which he took refuge in the United States (still claiming to be the legitimate archbishop), establishing the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America in 1921. Later that year Meletios was elected patriarch of Constantinople, and after assuming office in 1922 he annulled the 1908 pronouncement placing the Greek Orthodox under the church of Greece and instead placed them under the jurisdiction of the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople. This transfer would have enormous consequences for the ecumenical patriarchate itself, because its flock in North America is far larger than what remains of the Greek population in Turkey itself. Meletios originally had a vision of uniting all Orthodoxy into one church organization, but he later declared that the purpose of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese was to nurture Orthodoxy among the Greeks. Meanwhile, after Meletios was deposed as archbishop of Athens, the new archbishop sent a rival bishop to the United States, so there were competing Greek churches until 1930.

In 1930 the archbishop of Athens and the ecumenical patriarch agreed on appointing a new archbishop for America, Athenagoras Spirou. Athenagoras was an energetic,

skillful church politician, and he succeeded in unifying the disparate and divided Greek communities as well as bringing the parishes further under episcopal oversight. In 1937 he established the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological Institute to prepare American-born candidates for the clergy. The institute was located first in Connecticut before moving to its present location in Brookline, Massachusetts. He also organized the Ladies' Philoptochos Society, which was dedicated to philanthropic activities, and in general Athenagoras succeeded in raising public awareness about the Orthodox Church in America. Athenagoras left the United States when he was elected ecumenical patriarch in 1948; President Harry S. Truman provided his private plane to fly Athenagoras to Istanbul.

Other ethnic Orthodox soon followed by establishing their own ethnic jurisdictions. Serbs set up a separate Serbian diocese in 1921, administered by the remarkable Nikolai Velimirovich. A substantial minority of Romanians had immigrated since the beginning of the century, and the Romanian church sent them their first bishop, Policarp Morusca, in 1935. Policarp established many organizations as well as a center for the Romanian diocese in Michigan. The Bulgarians and Albanians also set up churches in the 1930s.

The Syro-Arab Orthodox Christians had been a part of the Russian archdiocese under Bishop Raphael Hawaweeny. But after his death in 1915 a period of uncertainty followed. In 1923 the patriarch of Antioch expressed his intent to assume jurisdiction over the Syrian and Lebanese Orthodox in America, but Raphael's successor continued to allow a separate independent jurisdiction. The Syro-Arab community was divided between pro-Antiochian and pro-Russian factions. In the mid-1930s the rival bishops both left the scene, and an opportunity for unity arose, but again two rival bishops were elected, and two rival jurisdictions continued for several more decades. One of these bishops, Metropolitan Antony, was incredibly energetic and contributed greatly to the development of Arab Orthodoxy in America for thirty years until his death in 1966. Antony was probably the most visionary Orthodox leader in the mid-twentieth century in encouraging the use of English and trying to balance faithfulness to ethnic identity and customs with ministering to those born in America and speaking English as their first language.

Thus by the end of the 1930s the Orthodox churches in America were organized in a series of separate, parallel jurisdictions along ethnic lines. However, on one level this was a natural development, because the churches served their

communities by offering a sense of community (with those of similar background) and by being a focal point for the preservation of languages and traditions that each group brought with them. At the same time, the situation was anomalous with Orthodox canons, which called for the church to be organized territorially (one bishop per region), not ethnically (multiple bishops per region).

Becoming an American Church

The period from the 1880s to the 1920s saw the greatest immigration of Orthodox Christians. In the early 1920s, however, immigration became more restricted; the National Origins Quota Act of 1924 limited the number of Greek immigrants each year to one hundred, in contrast to nearly 30,000 who had come to the United States in 1921. In this first period (1880s to 1920), many immigrants were unskilled male peasants from Eastern Europe who worked especially in factories in the eastern part of the United States. The majority came only temporarily, to make enough money to return home and live comfortably. Most of them, therefore, were not interested in “becoming” American, they did not expend much energy learning English or adapting in other ways, nor did they have families in the United States. Nevertheless, they did establish various kinds of social organizations for mutual support, including churches, during their stay.

Those who came to the United States after World War I, however, tended to stay. After the restricted immigration in the 1920s and the Russian Revolution, new immigrants shrank to a trickle. After World War II, the socioeconomic status of many Orthodox rose, especially for Greeks who became shopkeepers and restaurant owners. By this time the vast majority were American-born and educated, who often had married outside their ethnic group and identified more as American. One of the major tensions that persisted in the Orthodox Church in America during the twentieth century was over the preservation of ethnic identity versus Americanization. The church often served as a locus for preserving national identity and became inseparable from that aim, so that people identified themselves not so much as Orthodox Christians but as *Greek* Orthodox or *Russian* Orthodox. Often schools were established as part of the parish to teach the language to children after school. By the 1960s or so a greater number of Orthodox Christians were pushing for more English, especially in church services, because they no longer understood the old language and many were leaving the church they could not understand. Moreover, in the western part of the United States, where

the numbers of Orthodox were fewer, new parishes formed that were often multiethnic, with services in English that developed a sense of community without the stress on the ethnic component.

The post–World War II period brought more divisions over politics, however. As other countries of Eastern Europe fell behind the iron curtain, disputes over the relationship to the mother church not unlike those that had plagued the Russians after 1917 divided the Romanian, Serbian, Bulgarian, and Albanian churches. Within each ethnic church some wanted to remain loyal to the mother church, and others believed that the leadership of the mother church was compromised under communist rule.

Despite the great fragmentation of church organizations, Orthodox began entering the mainstream of American life by the 1950s. In 1957 the first Orthodox bishop participated in a presidential inauguration, and a decade later Greek archbishop Iakovos Coucouzis (1959–1996) marched with Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, Alabama. Recognizing that the existence of parallel, ethnically defined jurisdictions was anomalous, Iakovos and others created the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) to increase communication, cooperation, and joint action among the various Orthodox churches. Under the umbrella of SCOBA inter-Orthodox commissions and activities proliferated, such as a Commission on Military Chaplaincies and the Orthodox Christian Fellowship, an inter-Orthodox campus ministry. Many hoped that SCOBA would serve as a basis for developing a united Orthodox church in America, but this did not happen.

Another attempt to create a unified American Orthodox Church came on the initiative of the Metropolia and the Moscow patriarchate. The church in Russia had revived during World War II, and the Metropolia sought to regularize relations while at the same time remaining functionally independent of the church under communist rule. Moreover, with the lack of Russian immigration the Metropolia had become increasingly Americanized and did not wish to be further Russified. In 1970 the Metropolia reestablished relations and communion with the Moscow patriarchate, which, in turn, granted the Metropolia autocephaly or self-ruling status. The new church was called the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) and was self-consciously intended to become an American church rather than a church that perpetuated one or another ethnic identity. Initially the OCA held promise of uniting Orthodoxy in America, and the Romanians, Bulgarians, and Albanians became part of it. In a major blow, however, the ecumenical

patriarch of Constantinople refused to recognize the OCA, claiming that only it—and not Moscow—had the right to grant autocephalous status to new churches.

Although after World War II the various Orthodox churches were becoming increasingly Americanized, the Immigration Act of 1965 opened the door for a new wave of immigration in the last decades of the twentieth century. These immigrants included not only many Greeks and Arabs but also greater numbers of Oriental Orthodox from Egypt (Coptic Christians) and Ethiopia. After the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989–1991, the new immigrants from these countries increased as well. This influx sometimes resulted in tensions within parish communities between those who were second- or third-generation Americans and those who were recent immigrants.

Since the 1960s more and more people from a variety of backgrounds have converted to Orthodoxy. Some, such as the well-known Seraphim Rose, came to Orthodoxy after growing disillusioned with the lack of spirituality in Western churches and experiencing a disappointing journey through Asian religions before finding in Orthodoxy a Christian religion with a deep tradition of spirituality. Many of the converts have been disaffected with mainline Protestant churches over liberalized positions on the ordination of women and homosexuals. Still others are evangelicals in search of the “early church.” In the 1980s entire communities of such evangelicals who had been former leaders in Campus Crusade for Christ in the 1960s converted to Orthodoxy. Along the way they formed an “Evangelical Orthodox Church,” but eventually became convinced they needed to become a part of a historical Orthodox church. In 1987 they were received by the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese as a group—some dozen communities, two thousand strong, throughout the country. They brought with them an evangelical fervor and a devotion to Orthodoxy that often came into tension with the “ethnic” Orthodox who sometimes view their faith as inseparable from their ethnicity.

Theological Education

One of the greatest contributions of Orthodoxy to the American scene is in the realm of theology. In the first part of the twentieth century the Orthodox made several attempts to establish theological schools as church leaders recognized the need to train American-born clergy. But all of these attempts eventually failed, mostly for lack of funds. However, in a new phase Holy Cross Greek Orthodox

School of Theology was founded in 1937, and St. Vladimir’s Russian Orthodox Seminary was founded in New York in 1938. Both are now accredited graduate educational institutions. In the postwar period St. Vladimir’s attracted some world-class theologians who were Russian émigrés or born in Europe of émigré parents such as George Florovsky and George Fedotov, and later John Meyendorff and Alexander Schmemmann. In part through their labors (and St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press) a large number of quality books on Orthodoxy are now available in English, unlike thirty years ago. This development has increased awareness and appreciation of Orthodoxy in America, particularly in theological circles.

Alexander Schmemmann had a particularly important impact on the life of the Orthodox Church in the United States by promoting a liturgical renewal. This renewal entailed a fuller cycle of liturgical service in addition to the Sunday services as well as the frequent reception of communion (in the medieval period it had become the norm in Orthodox churches to receive communion only a few times a year). In general, Father Schmemmann inspired a deeper understanding of the nature of the church and its sacraments.

Unity and Disunity

If the increase in converts and new immigrants has made Orthodox churches more diverse than ever, the collapse of the iron curtain provided an opportunity to heal schisms created over communism. In the 1990s, for example, the two branches of the Serbian church were reconciled. In 2007 the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia reconciled with the Moscow patriarchate, thereby restoring ROCOR to communion with other Orthodox jurisdictions—although now ROCOR and the OCA exist as two parallel jurisdictions of Russian origin.

Other signs of unity and cooperation among Orthodox churches have appeared as well. One of the most successful inter-Orthodox organizations under the aegis of SCOBA is the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), which provides humanitarian aid to regions suffering from war and natural disasters. A high point in the quest for unity came during a meeting of twenty-eight SCOBA bishops in 1994 at Antiochian Village, near Ligonier, Pennsylvania, the largest such gathering of Orthodox bishops in North America. They issued a statement in which they insisted that the term *diaspora* did not accurately describe the situation of the Orthodox in America, and also put forward a vision of a unified Orthodox Church for North America. However,

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew denounced the Ligonier statement as presumptuous and the American church as immature and not ready for greater independence.

In the fallout over the Ligonier statement and the aspirations for greater independence, Archbishop Iakovos—who had led the Greek Orthodox Church since 1959—was forced to retire. He was succeeded by Spyridon Papageorge, the first American-born Greek archbishop. Spyridon attempted to bring the Greek church in America more directly under the supervision of the ecumenical patriarch, which meant stripping parishes and the laity of some of their powers. He also dismissed prominent priests and faculty members from the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. In a classic clash between old world and American expectations, Spyridon raised so much opposition that he was forced to resign in 1999. He was replaced by Archbishop Demetrios Trakatellis, who held a doctorate from Harvard and enjoyed respect both in elite circles and from the ordinary faithful.

The OCA also faced a crisis in the 2000s stemming from accusations of financial improprieties. The bishops tried to handle the allegations in an “old world” manner, claiming it was their problem to fix, but heavy pressure was placed on the church hierarchy for accountability, and eventually the head of the church was forced to resign. In November 2008 the OCA’s All-American Council unexpectedly elected a relatively young bishop as head of the church. Jonah Paffhausen was a convert to Orthodoxy who had been consecrated bishop only two weeks earlier. Young and energetic, Metropolitan Jonah raised the hopes of many that he would lead the OCA out of its prior stagnation, although tense exchanges between the bishop and the leadership of the Greek church and the ecumenical patriarch suggested that the goal of organizational unity would remain elusive.

Despite the fact that during the first decade of the twenty-first century organizational unity appeared unrealizable for the Orthodox in America, there has been much more cooperation between the churches of various ethnic jurisdictions than ever before, particularly at the grassroots level. Tensions continue to persist between American expectations of authority and the old world models, and ultimately organizational unity will remain in the hands of the old world church leaderships. At the grassroots level, however, the major threat of division among Orthodox Christians in America in the twenty-first century arose no longer from politics or ethnicity. Instead, there was growing tension over how to respond properly to the modern, pluralistic

world. A vocal minority of “traditionalists” are adhering to the Julian calendar (the old calendar of the Roman Empire, thirteen days behind the Gregorian calendar), as do the churches of Russia and Serbia. These traditionalists also reject ecumenical dialogue with non-Orthodox Christians and approach the church services and canons that regulate church life in “fundamentalist” ways—that is, they are absolute, unchanging, and unchangeable norms. Others are more open to adapting the church to modern conditions while seeking to preserve what is essential about the Orthodox faith, and also are more willing to engage in dialogue with their non-Orthodox neighbors. In general, the challenge to Orthodox Christianity in America is how to become American while remaining true to its own traditions.

See also *Eastern Orthodox Tradition and Heritage; Ethnicity; Immigration: From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to World War I; Pacific Northwest Region; Worship: Eastern Orthodox.*

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Economics

Economics in the context of American religions entails examining not only the material and financial matters related to religious practices, beliefs, governance, building, and missionizing, but also the place of religious institutions within the context of the local, regional, or national economy. Economics in American religion covers as well an individual’s place within the economy and how his or her religious practices and beliefs relate to that status. And not to be overlooked is the religious economy between religious believers and their gods, between laypeople and religious professionals, and between religious professionals and the institutions of which they are a part.

Religious Economies

Economies of industries and nations are networks and relationships of exchange. Similarly, “religious economies” can be defined as relationships of exchange between humans and supernatural beings and powers. The diversity of

American religious history provides numerous examples of such religious economies of exchange.

The Puritans, an English Protestant group that settled the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, utilized a theology of covenants in their natural and supernatural interactions. They recognized four types of covenant. The first type was the covenant that could be enacted between people over issues of trade, goods, services, and land. The second type was marriage between a bride and groom. The third was that between members of churches. The Puritans understood “church” not as the building in which members worshipped, but rather the assemblage of people who made up the congregation. The covenant between church members outlined the communal responsibilities individuals had to one another. The fourth type, the “federal covenant,” was between God and his people; it outlined the Puritans’ responsibilities to God. This covenant was discussed in John Winthrop’s famous 1630 sermon “A Model of Christian Charity.” In his sermon, delivered before the Puritans disembarked from the *Arbella*, the boat that carried them from England to Massachusetts, Winthrop suggested that the community had entered into covenant with God to establish a model Christian society in the New World, a city upon a hill for all of Christendom to see and strive to replicate. The Puritans perceived themselves to be God’s chosen people, just like the ancient Israelites of the Hebrew Bible, who were bound to enter into covenants with God. Winthrop, a lawyer, suggested that if the Puritan community fulfilled its part of the contract with God by setting up an exemplary Christian society, God would bless it with great success. If the Puritans broke the covenant, however, he assured them that God would respond with righteous fury.

Covenantal relations of exchange between the supernatural and humans are not restricted to Christianity. In North America nearly all religious groups that have some conception of the supernatural engage in rituals and activities of exchange. Sometimes the divine requires a specific action, such as in the Native American Ghost Dances of the late nineteenth century. “Ghost Dance” is the categorical name scholars have given to a variety of predominantly eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Native American religious movements. The most well-known Ghost Dance was in 1889–1890—a pan-tribal Native American movement that combined native and Christian rituals, symbols, and beliefs with an end-time prophecy. Participants believed that the world as known was about to end. Those taking up the Ghost Dance movement’s rituals and lifestyle would survive

the apocalypse and see the onset of a new paradisaical era. The Ghost Dance movement spread rapidly and took on a variety of unique forms and practices within different tribes. The Lakota Sioux, the tribe that had been the most resistant to U.S. government attempts to place them on reservations and who had defeated Gen. George Custer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876, adopted the use of “ghost shirts” during the movement’s dance rituals. The wearers of ghost shirts thought themselves invulnerable to white soldier’s bullets. Though the Ghost Dance movement promoted pacifism and believed the earth’s destruction (including whites and their native collaborators) would stem from supernatural intervention, white settlers’ fears of the Lakota led to heightened tension and precipitated the infamous massacre by federal soldiers of over two hundred Lakota Sioux Ghost Dancers at Wounded Knee on December 29, 1890.

The prophet of the 1889–1890 Ghost Dance was a Nevada Paiute, Wovoka, who was also known as Jack Wilson. Wovoka’s initial vision and prophetic message emerged on January 1, 1889, when he became quite sick during a total eclipse of the sun. In his initial vision Wovoka died, traveled to heaven, and received a message from God to preach on earth. In brief, the Deity told Wovoka to preach a gospel of love, goodwill, and pacifism. The Great Spirit also gave the prophet a dance of harmony to teach to the people. The Spirit told Wovoka that if every Native American performed the dance, evil would be swept away from the earth and the world would be renewed into a paradisaical, precolonial state. Although it was not dubbed a “covenant,” this relationship of ritual obligation and world renewal between the Ghost Dancers and the Spirit is another example of religious economic exchange in the American context.

As the United States has become more diverse through immigration, new forms of religious exchange have been introduced. For example, most immigrant forms of Buddhism in the United States include a karmic-based exchange relationship between practitioners, monks, and temples. Karma refers to the merits one accumulates by one’s actions in the world. One’s “karmic balance” during a lifetime dictates the life into which one will be reborn, or reincarnated, in the next. For example, a Laotian Buddhist temple in Rockford, Illinois, is run by the monks who live in it. They, in turn, are supported by the donations made by the laypeople who belong to the temple. Every donation of food, money, or other goods by the laity results in a positive accumulation of karma, which will either give the laypeople a

better rebirth in the next life or assist the laity’s relatives and ancestors with better rebirths. This form of religious economy, similar to the Puritan and Ghost Dance examples, rewards individual practices that sustain religious institutions and activities with the promise of supernatural benefits.

Beginning in the late 1980s several scholars recognized the importance of religious exchange in the American context by devising theories of religious economy to explain the growth and decline of specific religious movements. The two most well-known proponents of economic and market models of American religion are Rodney Stark and Roger Finke. In their 1992 work *The Churching of America, 1776–1990: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*, they proposed that religious groups be perceived as businesses competing for market shares. Stark and Finke argued that to be successful an American religious business must balance the personal sacrifice required of members with rewarding supernatural and other benefits. In their later work *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion*, Stark and Finke moved away from a focus on movements and toward religious individuals, who they argued should be viewed as rational economic actors choosing in a marketplace of religious products.

Financing American Religions

Economics also enters into American religious history through the study of how religious groups finance themselves. This has been a pressing issue for American religions since the end of the Revolutionary War and the subsequent establishment of a distinctly American form of government. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1791, states that Congress shall make no law establishing religion or prohibiting its free exercise. The first part of this statement, radical for its time, directed that the country would have no officially sanctioned religion and thus no taxation in support of religious groups. This constitutional clause was the culmination of work by statesmen such as Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, who earlier had fought against a bill in Virginia that would have levied taxes for the purpose of religious teaching and missionary activity. The combined separation of church and state and religious liberty that resulted from the First Amendment produced, by the early nineteenth century, a religious free market in which groups competed for members and finances.

One method of garnering church funds has been through tithing. The American religious historian James Hudnut-Beumler has noted that tithing was not actively pursued and

promoted within Protestant denominations until the nineteenth century, when previous methods of securing church funds such as pew rentals and subscription books fell short of monetary goals. Some trends in religious giving have remained the same over time, whereas others have changed. In terms of consistent trends in the twentieth century, the sociologist Mark Chaves, for example, has noted that people with higher incomes give more, that the more people give the more likely they are to participate in the religious organization, and that denominational differences in giving persist. Although Chaves found no correlation between theology and levels of giving, he noted that of people with the same income levels, Pentecostals consistently tended to give more than Presbyterians, who, in turn, gave more than Roman Catholics. One recent change across all religious groups, according to John and Sylvia Ronsvalle, is that individual-level giving as a portion of one's income has fallen since the 1960s.

Frequently, the need to finance institutions and activities in a religious free market requires more than Sunday morning tithing, and the historian David Nord has argued that many early and mid-nineteenth-century Protestants were necessarily at the forefront of corporate business innovations. By the 1820s over one hundred U.S. organizations were committed to producing tract literature, distributing free Bibles, and sending missionaries throughout the United States and abroad. These organizations included the American Tract Society, American Bible Society, and American Sunday School Union. Nord notes that the American Tract Society, dedicated to distributing free Bibles and religious flyers, invented the business model for the nonprofit corporation that continues to be followed into the twenty-first century.

Class and American Religion

One of the most persistent topics in the study of economics and religion has been the issue of class, specifically how one's place within the economic system relates to one's religious practices and beliefs. Observers of American religion—for example, H. Richard Niebuhr in his 1929 work *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*—have long noted that different denominations attract people of differing social status and economic class. Recent studies by sociologists such as Christian Smith, Robert Faris, and others suggest that religious groups continue to reflect the class differences of their membership. Specifically, religious groups whose memberships are higher on the socioeconomic ladder are most often

theologically liberal denominations with hierarchical church organizations and formal liturgical styles. These include the Unitarian Universalists, Episcopalians, Jews, and mainline Presbyterians. Those groups whose members rank lower on the socioeconomic ladder are characterized by theological conservatism, more congregational styles of church governance (polity), and more emotive styles of worship and ritual. These groups include Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, most African American Baptists, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Although studies continue to show a link between one's class and one's religious group, beliefs, and practices, scholars have long debated exactly what "class" entails. Is one's class determined by one's position within the means of production, as the communist philosopher Karl Marx asserted? Is it based on one's cultural consumption, such as what one reads, eats, wears, or listens to? Or is class a symbolically ascribed status leveled by the community in which one exists? Is class based primarily in experiences and relationships fomented by material circumstances, or is it largely a matter of symbolic and rhetorical representation? For sociologists who study American religion, class is usually a combination of three variables: (1) income, or how much money one makes; (2) occupation, or what job one holds; and (3) education, or whether one completed high school, attended or finished college, or attained any advanced degrees. A fourth variable sometimes mentioned but much harder to study is wealth, or how much one has accumulated or inherited. For scholars in the humanities who study American religion, class may include such variables, but it is often more about the cultural identities rhetorically and symbolically made and unmade through representation and discourse. In other words, for many in the humanities, class is a matter of language and the enculturated habits of mind and body. These two conceptions of class—the sociological-based and the humanities-based—are not incommensurable, and both are at work in American religions. In what follows, three scholarly routes of studying American religion and class are examined.

The first and most common consideration of class in American religious history is the study of labor and religion. Scholars assess how different religious groups view laborers, managers, and the developing capitalist economy, as well as how workers utilize religious idioms in their labor activities. American religious historians often ask whether religion is generally supportive of or oppressive toward labor and the working classes. Such scholarship was fomented by the

cultural Marxism of scholars such as the British historian E. P. Thompson, whose classic study *The Making of the English Working Class* suggested that religious theologies such as Methodism both supported the status quo of capitalist owners and were indirectly responsible for giving laborers a means of organizing for workers' rights.

In the American context, one of the most well known of these studies is Paul E. Johnson's *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815–1837* (1978). He argues that antebellum revivals in Rochester aided the ownership classes and disadvantaged working people. Other scholars have come to different conclusions. In his study of Protestantism and labor in the Gilded Age, the historian Herbert Gutman argues that although support of laissez-faire capitalism can be found among nineteenth-century religious leaders, Protestantism was also something that offered discontented American workers religious ammunition to fight against unfair labor practices. Other historians have examined how workers in nineteenth-century Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Providence responded to emergent capitalism through religious idioms and institutions. In short, these studies reveal that the relationship between religion and labor is not simple. Religion played a significant role in both supporting and fighting against labor concerns in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A second route taken by studies of class in American religious history is examining the influence of religion in developing class distinctions and class consciousness among what would become nineteenth-century working- and middle-class Americans. The historians Jama Lazerow and Theresa Anne Murphy, for example, have studied how religious culture influenced antebellum working-class New Englanders. The historian Mark Schantz has similarly argued that a deeply embedded religious culture influenced emergent class formations in antebellum Providence, Rhode Island. Taken together, these studies suggest that American class cultures have long been influenced by—and have influenced—American religious cultures.

A third path taken in mid-twentieth-century and later studies of American religion and class is a theoretical one that seeks to explain the relationship between one's class and one's religious preferences. Modern theories connecting religion and material circumstances have been advanced since the mid-nineteenth century, when Karl Marx argued that the entirety of a person's perceptions and ideas—including religious ones—stemmed from material circumstances and place within the means of economic production.

In the early twentieth century the German sociologist Max Weber examined the affinities among religion, class, and status. Weber suggested that there were important connections between the social locations of individuals, groups, and their religious beliefs and practices. He asserted that the social group within which a religion first developed left a lasting impression on it, and in some of his work Weber set out to determine the connections between certain occupational groups and the theologies of various world religions.

In other work Weber looked for correspondences between theologies of suffering (theodicies), salvation (soteriologies), and class. Among other things, Weber suggested that the disadvantaged classes often focused on the emotional, salvation-oriented aspects of religion, whereas the more privileged groups were attracted to religions that theologically justified their good fortunes and status. In perhaps his most cited study, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930), Weber eschewed causal arguments on the concomitant growth of capitalism and Protestantism, preferring to suggest elective affinities between this-worldly Protestant asceticism and capitalist accumulation and investment.

By the mid-twentieth century, many of the American sociologists and historians studying religion were espousing “deprivation theories,” which suggested that the economically disadvantaged sought out religious beliefs and practices that gave them symbolic succor to psychologically and temporarily relieve their miseries. Pentecostals received much attention from deprivation theorists (Pentecostalism, a Protestant movement formed in the early twentieth century, embraced speaking in tongues, faith healing, and other ecstatic worship practices). For example, deprivation theory played a framing role in the historian Robert Mapes Anderson's groundbreaking narrative *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (1979). He argued that the Pentecostal movement was best viewed as a protest against the urbanizing industrial society in which its early largely agrarian and poor members found themselves uprooted. Anderson viewed speaking in tongues and other physically demonstrative Pentecostal behaviors as responses to the harsh material conditions that they could do little to ameliorate.

By the twenty-first century deprivation theories had largely fallen out of favor among those who studied American religions. Simply put, and as noted by American religious historian Grant Wacker in his work on Pentecostalism, such theories have been unable to account for those who fit the “deprived” class demographic but do not belong to a

“disinherited” movement or, conversely, those who are economically well-off and yet are still members of religious movements of the dispossessed. The most recent theoretical examinations of religion and class have tended to focus on the importance of strong congregational social networks and the comfort of culturally habituated religious styles to explain the persistent link between religion and socioeconomic status.

Religious Responses to Social Differentiation in American History

Class did not come into widespread usage as a term for socioeconomic status until the mid-nineteenth century, but no period in American history was without a language of social differentiation and religious responses to it. Since the colonial period religious groups have developed theologies, instituted programs, and set up institutions to explain and respond to the socioeconomic inequalities within precapitalist, industrial capitalist, and consumer capitalist American economies. Religious studies scholar Sean McCloud has argued that at least four major “theologies of class” characterize American religious history. The first, “divine hierarchies,” was closely tied to the Calvinist theology of predeterminism and suggested that socioeconomic differences were divinely ordained. An example of such a theology can be seen in Puritan John Winthrop’s “Model of Christian Charity” sermon. Winthrop began his sermon by stating that God had established a divinely ordained social hierarchy in which some were destined to be rich and others to be poor. Much of the sermon that followed detailed the reasons for such social differentiation. Puritan predestinarian beliefs suggested that God made humans with no free will to act on their own. Before the world existed, God had determined who would be rich, poor, saved, and damned. All were dependent upon God’s grace, and if it was offered none could resist it. At the same time, if one were divinely destined to deprivations on earth and hell after death, similarly nothing could be done.

A second theology of class, “economic arminianism,” emerged amid nineteenth-century evangelicalism, republicanism, and the development of industrial-class relations. Asserting that all human beings have the free will to progress in both religious and financial endeavors, economic arminianism assumes its most prominent form in the evangelical Protestant movement known as the prosperity gospel. This theological strain appeared as early as 1890, when Philadelphia Baptist minister and Temple University founder

Russell Conwell first delivered his now-famous and often repeated “Acres of Diamonds” sermon. Conwell asserted that God wanted his followers to be rich and believed that becoming wealthy was an excellent means of preaching the gospel. Conversely, Conwell argued that poverty was God’s punishment for sin. Thus one could extrapolate that most charity was therefore at best unhelpful and at worst against God’s will.

Perhaps the most prominent example of economic arminianism in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries was a form of the prosperity gospel known as the Word of Faith movement. The scholar Milmon Harrison places the movement’s origins in a mix of Holiness, Pentecostal, and New Thought theologies. It is promoted by ministers such as E. W. Kenyon, Kenneth Hagin, Reverend Ike, Creflo Dollar, and Frederick Price, and by religious media such as the Trinity Broadcasting Network. Word of Faith theology suggests that each individual has the God-given free will to be economically successful. Focusing on the power of positive thinking, the movement encourages members to “name it and claim it” by repeating positive affirmations and prayers. Conversely, Word of Faith adherents believe that negative thinking produces poverty, illness, and misfortune. Similar theologies of social differentiation appeared in late twentieth and early twenty-first century New Age movements.

A third recurring theology of social differentiation, “social harmony,” emerged in the late nineteenth century. It was represented in many Protestant writings as well as in a Roman Catholic statement on labor and capital, Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (1891). This theology has its roots in post-Civil War notions of the ideal society as a “harmony of interests” among differentiated unequals. Proponents of this class theology argued that laborers and capitalist owners in the emerging industrial economy shared mutual, rather than opposing, interests and goals. Although some criticized Gilded Age robber barons for their exploitive practices, adherents to this view also consistently upheld capitalism, private property, and profits as biblically sanctioned.

The Social Gospel, a diverse, though largely Protestant, movement established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, is a good example of the social harmony theologies of social differentiation. As noted by the historian Robert Handy, what contemporary scholars usually define as the Social Gospel are the writings and activities of a select group of progressive ministers who came out of a much larger and more variant movement known as social

Christianity. Although Gilded Age social Christianity had both conservative and radical arms, Handy describes the progressive Social Gospellers as having attitudes that were mostly middle class—that is, they combined their labor and human rights activism with ideologies of individual rights and responsibilities. For example, the Social Gospeller Washington Gladden argued that “the broad equities of Christ’s rule” suggested that workers and their capitalist bosses get their fair shares. But at the same time Gladden was explicit in arguing for the God-given sanctity of private property and the religious superiority of capitalist economies.

Proponents of a fourth theology of social differentiation, “the class-conscious Christ,” took a rather different view of capitalism than Gladden. Espoused by some Gilded Age supporters of the working classes, this theology envisioned Jesus as a champion of laborers and enemy of capitalism. Rather than a harmony of interests, proponents of the class-conscious Christ viewed labor and capital relations as inherently conflictual. Like social harmony, the theology of the class-conscious Christ had historical roots in the antebellum period and similarly expanded and developed in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Gilded Age and Progressive Eras. This theology included two unique creeds. First, as its name indicates, proponents of this theology focused on Jesus’ working-class roots and ministry. The proletariat, in this theology, was envisioned as God’s chosen people. Second, proponents declared capitalism and its supporters to be anti-Christian and thus inherently evil.

Perhaps the Progressive Era’s most thorough rendering of the class-conscious Christ theology was Bouck White’s 1912 *The Call of the Carpenter*. White, like the labor song authors, asserted Jesus’ working-class roots. He called Jesus a proletarian by birthright and asserted that his gospel was a revolutionary one directed to the masses of his time period. Capitalism, in White’s view, was unbiblical, unjust, and a pathway to despotism.

In addition to the mostly Protestant theologies just described, American religious communities of various creeds responded to social inequalities in a variety of ways, ranging from virtually ignoring the issue to setting up soup kitchens, instituting special tithings for the poor, and running urban ministries that housed the homeless.

Relations between American Economic Systems and Religion

A final pathway in the examination of American religion and economics—and the least-tread one, academically

speaking—traipses the relationship between the dominant economic system and the religious movements that thrive within it. In other words, do certain religious movements display a cultural continuity with existing economic institutions, ideologies, and practices that make them somewhat familiar, if not attractive, to participants? Or, conversely, do particular economic systems develop in ways that complement preexisting religious movements, activities, and theologies? Such questions were first posed near the turn of the twentieth century by the German sociologist Max Weber in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930). Weber examined the concomitant development of capitalism and Protestantism in modernizing western Europe. He argued that there was an “elective affinity” between capitalist accumulation and investment and the work ethic of Protestantism. Weber did not claim that one caused the other, but he did suggest that Calvinist Protestant teachings that promoted the virtues of work, monetary accumulation, and material self-denial were partly responsible for the success of early modern capitalism.

In 1989 the sociologist George Thomas looked to the concomitant rise of evangelicalism, capitalism, and republicanism in the nineteenth century in his work *Revivalism and Cultural Change: Christianity, Nation Building, and the Market in the Nineteenth-Century United States*. In this book Thomas argues that evangelical revivalism articulated the idiom of the rational individual, one who had the free will to accept or reject salvation. He maintains that such a concept of the individual was crucial, first, to the expansion of a capitalist market based on the ability of individuals to freely sell their labor and, second, to the development of an American form of government that depended on the notion that citizens would act autonomously. For Thomas, then, the homologous conceptions of autonomous free-will individuals within nineteenth-century evangelicalism, capitalism, and American political ideology corresponded in such a way as to give all three movements an aura of familiarity and plausibility.

The sociologist Wade Clark Roof has poignantly dubbed the contemporary period a “spiritual marketplace” in which Americans actively seek out and incorporate various religious elements in ways that fit their individual needs. Seeing the contemporary period as one in which identity, community, and meaning are not so much ascribed but are actively sought out by individuals, some scholars such as Roof have suggested that religion has increasingly become a cultural resource in projects of meaning and identity.

People now, more than ever, “shop” for faith by picking, mixing, and combining elements from various traditions in ways that suit their individual needs and lifestyles.

How do such religious trends relate to the current economic milieu? Since the 1950s the United States has moved away from an industrial economy and toward a consumer capitalist economy. In other words, the nation’s financial engine is increasingly run by the consumption of personal goods and services. Rather than relying on the exportation of heavy industrial items such as steel and coal, the current American economy depends on the purchase of lifestyle items, ranging from toothpaste and clothing to televisions and MP3 players. Moreover, in the contemporary “late modern” era people may—indeed must—“choose” the lifestyle with which to identify themselves. Such “projects of the self” are both fueled and alleviated by consumer capitalism, mass-mediated culture divorced from historical contextualization, and the growing authority of subjective experience. Thus, the argument proceeds, more and more people from all social locations seek their identities and communities through increasingly segmented yet ubiquitous mass media and niche market consumer goods, but they also seek such things from their religious activities and practices.

Some scholars argue that contemporary Americans in a consumer capitalist society are increasingly likely to pick out, mix, try on, and “consume” religious ideas and activities, whereas other scholars have focused on the prevalence of consumer-oriented marketing by religious entities. Chain bookstores contain large religion and spirituality sections; churches promote themselves through festivals, concerts, plays, and movie nights; New Age channelers advertise in local media; and seeker churches set up sports leagues, reading groups, and coffee houses to attract potential members. In *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture*, the historian R. Laurence Moore rightly warned readers that the marketing of religion was nothing new. Whether it was the early eighteenth-century revivalist George Whitefield or later ministers such as late nineteenth-century evangelist Dwight Moody, religious figures have missionized through free public spectacles and purchasable commodities. Religion and the market have had a symbiotic, though not always cordial, relationship throughout American history.

Religion has influenced the American capitalist market and American business, as the example of the American Tract Society suggests. But it has also been influenced by

business and the marketplace. The Willow Creek Association, for example, is a large suburban Chicago church that has utilized contemporary advertising and marketing tools to create a “client-consultant” network of denominations that seek to attract individuals by playing down traditional denominational styles and offering events and programs that research suggests will draw in the “unchurched.”

Conclusion

Economics—always about more than just money—has played a substantial role in fomenting the trials and trajectories of American citizens. Generational shifts from farms to factories—and more recently from factories to retail—have moved masses of people from towns to cities, from cities to suburbs, from South to North and back again. Accompanying the fluxes and trends of the American economy have been the shifts, slips, and persistent creativity of American religious ideas, practices, and movements. American religious idioms have been created by, have responded to, and have argued for and against prevailing and passing economic systems, exchanges, and ideas. Economics and religion have always and will likely continue to be closely intertwined and mutually influential in American history.

See also *Benevolent Empire*; *Buddhist Tradition and Heritage*; *Congregations*; *Demographics*; *Denominationalism*; *Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches*; *Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century*; *Historical Approaches*; *Native American Religions: Post-Contact*; *Pentecostals* entries; *Puritans*; *Revivalism* entries; *Social Gospel*; *Sociological Approaches*.

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Ecumenism

Ecumenism refers to efforts to promote Christian unity across denominational lines either through merger (organic union) or through cooperation (federal union). Although ecumenism in America began with Protestant efforts at cooperation, in the twentieth century the federal model expanded to include cooperation and dialogue between Protestants and Catholics and even between Christians and

non-Christians, so that the term *ecumenism* has sometimes been used to describe interfaith dialogue.

Nineteenth Century

In the nineteenth century the United States expanded rapidly westward even as it absorbed immigrants from all over the globe. Lacking an established national church, the country had no single entity defining acceptable American religion or coordinating Christian missions in the frontier. Meanwhile, each wave of immigration increased the diversity of churches on American soil. For most Protestant leaders in the first half of the nineteenth century the single greatest threat to Protestant hegemony was Catholic immigration: between 1820 and 1860 more than a third of all immigrants were Irish.

The first Protestant ecumenical efforts attempted to overcome competition between Protestant denominations while promoting a unified front against the perceived Catholic threat, essentially creating some of the advantages of an established religion without formal establishment. Not surprisingly, the strongest ecumenical voices were those from denominations that had enjoyed a colonial history of establishment, such as the Congregationalist and Episcopal Churches. These early ecumenical ventures, most short-lived, fall into two broad categories: organic union and cooperative agreements.

Organic Union

Among the most vigorous advocates of organic union, creating a single Christian Church by merging various denominations into one body, were Episcopal leaders who envisioned an American equivalent of the established Church of England. In 1841 Rev. Thomas Hubbard Vail of Hartford, Connecticut, called for the merger of all Protestant denominations within the Episcopal Church. William Augustus Muhlenberg, the father of the Episcopal Church school movement, echoed these sentiments at the General Convention of 1853, suggesting that a merger of all Protestants into the Episcopal Church would help Protestants fight "Romanism" and minister to the poor. Likewise William Reed Huntington's *The Church Idea—An Essay Toward Unity* (1870) called on all Protestants to unite in an established "Catholic Church of America."

This plan failed to gain support from the churches rooted in dissent from the Church of England. Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists, to name only a few, absolutely rejected rule by a bishop. Even replacing the word "bishop"

with the (perhaps equally unfortunate) word *overseer* failed to win support for Huntington's plan outside the Episcopal Church.

Cooperative Agreements

Cooperative agreements, in which members of various denominations allied for common goals, proved more successful, especially on the western frontier, which functioned as an internal mission field for most of the century. Although denominations on the frontier competed for converts, frontier conditions also tended to break down denominational barriers. Frontier revivals provided a transdenominational experience of religious awakening, and denominational cooperation offered advantages, as shown by the Plan of Union of 1801.

The Plan of Union allowed Congregationalist and Presbyterian ministers to serve each other's congregations on the northwestern frontier. It also gave these denominations a chance to seize the opportunity presented when the British ceded the territory north of the Ohio River and west of the Appalachians in 1783. Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, and Virginia all initially claimed the territory, but ceded their claim to the U.S. government. The U.S. victory at Fallen Timbers in 1794 opened the area to white settlement. By 1800 statehood was on the horizon for Ohio, with Indiana soon to follow.

Congregationalist Timothy Dwight, president of Yale College in Connecticut where Congregationalism was still established, proposed the Plan of Union to plant the New England Reformed tradition in the west as a step toward a virtual establishment. The allied denominations dominated the northern frontier, although the Baptists and Methodists overtook them in the south. Designed to be even-handed, the Plan of Union respected the governing structure of each denomination. In practice, however, the union favored the more institutionally robust Presbyterians. Fearing that the Presbyterians would absorb them, the Congregationalists left the union in 1851.

Even as Dwight proposed the Plan of Union, revivals swept the western and southern frontiers (Ohio, New York, Kentucky, Tennessee). Known collectively as the Second Great Awakening, these revivals were not precisely ecumenical, but they did create a religious awakening that transcended denominational differences and was a precursor to the later ecumenical movement. New religious movements such as the Disciples of Christ and various movements that simply called themselves "Christian" decried dedication to

fine doctrinal divisions as mere sectarianism, promoting an antidenominational ethos. Lyman Beecher and other evangelists channeled this religious fervor into transdenominational institutions to Christianize society.

Benevolent Empire

Sometimes called the "Benevolent Empire," these institutions anticipated the later ecumenical movement in several respects: they joined representatives of more than two denominations and they were national, sometimes even international, in the scope of their actions and ambitions. Indeed, many had British precursors or partners. They included the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (founded in 1810), American Education Society (1815), American Bible Society (1816), American Sunday-School Union (1824), American Tract Society (1825), American Home Missionary Society (1826), and American Society for the Promotion of Temperance (1826), to name a few.

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) stood out from these societies for their international orientation and emphasis on young people; the YMCA nurtured a generation of future ecumenical leaders. An import from London, where the YMCA was founded in 1844 to rescue young men from saloons, brothels, and other urban temptations, the YMCA flourished in America, growing from a handful in 1851 to fifty-four YMCAs in the United States and Canada by 1855. On August 22, 1855, ninety-nine leaders of YMCAs in Europe and North America met at the Paris World Exhibition to discuss the basis of cooperation among YMCAs. But the "Paris Basis" immediately hit a roadblock: having successfully abolished slavery in 1833, many British evangelicals were reluctant to affiliate with the nonabolitionists among the Americans.

American Abel Stevens countered that the unity of the Church of Christ (the body of believers) transcended political or moral issues, a formula for bracketing areas of irresolvable conflict that would prove valuable in subsequent ecumenical efforts. Referring obliquely to slavery, Stevens stipulated that no disagreement on matters not directly related to the propagation of Christianity among young men should be allowed to interfere with the federation of YMCAs. Accordingly, the Paris Basis imposed only a doctrinal test acceptable to a broad array of evangelical Christians: Jesus as the incarnate Son of God; his mediatorial intercession and reign; and the divine inspiration,

authority, and sufficiency of the Bible for knowledge of God's will.

Evangelical Alliance

Although broadly inclusive of Protestants, the Paris Basis, with its assertion of the sufficiency of the Bible, excluded Catholics. A thread of anti-Catholicism ran through the nineteenth century Protestant ecumenical efforts, intensifying in the second half of the century as fresh immigration brought unprecedented numbers of non-Protestants, especially Jews and Catholics from eastern and southern Europe. Like the frontier, the teeming industrial cities became internal mission fields, and they presented similar challenges: competition among denominations, the perceived threat of Catholicism, and the desire to create a Christian social order. Labor unrest convinced many Protestants that a Christian social order would have to address the exploitation of workers, charging missionary activity with the Social Gospel. These efforts required renewed institutional cooperation: *International Sunday-School Lessons* (first published in 1872), International Council of Religious Education (founded in 1922), and the American branch of the International Evangelical Alliance (founded in 1867).

The Evangelical Alliance under Josiah Strong in 1885 exemplified Protestant internationalism, Social Gospel activism, and anti-Catholicism (Strong ranked Catholicism, Mormonism, and unrestrained capital as threats to the Christian social order). A voluntary association, the Evangelical Alliance promoted evangelical cooperation to secure religious (Protestant) liberty, coordinate missions, and defeat infidelity. Strong called on evangelicals to model themselves on big business: conglomerating into local collective churches that would ally in one national institution. To implement his message, he toured the country, organizing branch alliances to foster ecumenism. He also instituted a Week of Prayer for Christian unity, which continued through the twentieth century. The Evangelical Alliance, supported by volunteers rather than delegates, rose and fell with the vigor of its leadership. It lost energy when conservatives forced Strong out in 1898, although it continued to exist on paper until 1944.

By the end of the nineteenth century all Protestant efforts to create a unified American Christianity had failed, but a considerable network of interdenominational Protestant organizations was in place to address a myriad of social problems. Meanwhile, American Protestants became increasingly international in orientation. American delegates

participated in six international denominational meetings in Europe, which, by establishing regular conferences, laid the foundation for international Christian fellowship in the next century. The Anglican Communion first met at Lambeth in 1867; the Alliance of Reformed Churches (Presbyterian) met in Edinburgh in 1875; the Wesleyan Conference met in Birmingham in 1876; the Old Catholic Churches joined in the Union of Utrecht in 1889; the first International Congregational Council met in London in 1891; and the Baptist World Alliance met in London in 1905. These meetings increased Americans' awareness of the world, particularly of the regions that the European empires had opened to Protestant missions. By the end of the nineteenth century, American Protestants were conceiving of ecumenical cooperation as one element in an international evangelical mission, while at home they were poised to create enduring ecumenical structures.

Twentieth Century

The twentieth century was the ecumenical century. The century began with the creation of the Federal Council of Churches, which finally established a stable convention of delegated representatives of the denominations. The interfaith movement, which grew out of the Federal Council, extended the spirit of inclusion to Jews and Catholics. This new inclusivity both reflected and promoted a more expansive American national identity in the decades following World War II, which encompassed both Jews and Catholics as "real" Americans. After the war the long dream of an international ecumenical body was finally realized with the establishment of the World Council of Churches, an organization that paralleled the United Nations. At Vatican II the Catholic Church opened itself to dialogue with the Protestant and Eastern Orthodox Churches. Although the federal model predominated in the twentieth century, there were significant instances of organic union as denominations entered full communion or even merged.

Despite unprecedented institutional cooperation, two world wars and the Cold War chastened Protestants' faith in Western civilization and the inevitability of human progress. Furthermore, the divide between liberals and fundamentalists would persist into the twenty-first century, rendering organic union of all churches as elusive as ever.

For the time being, however, American Protestants faced the world with confidence. The United States was expanding beyond the North American continent, annexing Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, where Americans

“Christianized” a country once dominated by Catholic Spain. On April 21, 1900, President William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and other advocates of American expansion addressed an audience of more than fifty thousand at the first Ecumenical Missionary Alliance meeting in New York. The 1900 meeting of the alliance laid the foundation for American evangelical participation in the Edinburgh Conference, with its call to bring the entire world to Christ.

Edinburgh Conference

The World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 marked the beginning of the modern international ecumenical movement. For the first time participants were delegated representatives of missionary boards and societies. The North American missionary conference boards, which had met annually since 1893, provided the impetus for the conference, which included representatives of missionary societies in Britain and Europe. Significantly, the Edinburgh Conference focused only on evangelizing non-Christian populations, removing fears that missionaries would attempt to lure sheep from each other's folds. Even the Anglo-Catholics (Anglicans who affirm the Catholic heritage of the English church), a minority that feared evangelical competition, felt comfortable attending the conference. Like the YMCA before it, the Edinburgh Conference shelved discussion of doctrinal differences, and delegates focused not on converting each other but on evangelizing the world.

American John R. Mott, a Methodist lay leader in the YMCA and in the World Student Christian Association, chaired the Edinburgh Conference. Mott assured his audience that this generation, if it worked hard enough, could deliver the whole world to Christ because Christian nations already dominated the globe. To this end he asked for a vote on a Continuing Committee that would put the work of the Edinburgh Conference on a permanent footing. When the motion was carried by unanimous acclaim, the conference leapt to its feet and burst into the “Doxology.” In 1921 the Continuing Committee formed the International Missionary Council.

Two organizations emerged from the Edinburgh Conference: the Faith and Order Movement and the Federal Council of Churches. Although they had overlapping memberships, Faith and Order pressed for organic union, in contrast to the Federal Council whose federal model of ecumenism dominated the twentieth century.

Faith and Order

Although the Edinburgh Conference accommodated Anglo-Catholics, it failed to reach out to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. American Charles H. Brent, who had served as Episcopal missionary bishop to the Philippines since 1902, pressed for inclusion of the Catholic Church in Christian ecumenism. Brent had learned to accommodate Catholics in the Philippines, where he had confined his missionary activities to the non-Christian (chiefly Muslim and ethnic Igorot) population. Now, Brent pressed for inclusion of the Catholic Church, but he also urged the delegates to discuss the differences in theology, practice, and church governance that the Edinburgh Conference had excluded as too controversial.

On October 19, 1910, Episcopal priest William T. Manning, rector at Trinity Church in New York, proposed a Joint Commission on Faith and Order calling on all Christian communions throughout the world to join. With funding from financiers J. Pierpont Morgan and George Zabriskie, Manning convened eighteen Protestant denominations in the summer of 1911 to plan a worldwide conference on faith and order. The American Commission, which met in 1913, created an interdenominational committee composed of Peter Ainslie (Disciples of Christ), Newman Smyth (Congregationalist), and William H. Roberts (Presbyterian) to confer in 1914 with the Free Churches of Britain and the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. They received a favorable response. The Vatican, however, issued a statement that the pope was the only true source of Christian unity. The joint commission of the Episcopal Church planned, nevertheless, to send a deputation to the Vatican and the Orthodox Churches, but the outbreak of World War I halted international cooperation. The Faith and Order Movement remained an American endeavor during the war, but it did not become international in scope again until 1920.

Federal Council of Churches

Even as Brent planned the organic union of all churches, Elias B. Sanford, a Connecticut Congregationalist minister with Methodist sympathies, denounced organic union as a chimera. Instead, Sanford proposed a national conference of delegates appointed directly by their denominations and dedicated to the common objective of Christianizing society: promoting observance of the Sabbath. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ, which met under Sanford's leadership in 1908, was the first ecumenical organization

of official representatives of the denominations rather than volunteers. This arrangement, which ensured ongoing consultation with the constituent denominations, fostered stability.

The Federal Council included thirty-three denominations representing some eighteen million Americans. Present at the founding were most, but not all, of the mainline denominations, including Presbyterian, Reformed, Lutheran (General Synod), Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, Disciples, United Brethren, Evangelical, Moravian, Friends (Quakers), African Methodist Episcopal, and African Methodist Episcopal Zion. All the same, the Federal Council was not as inclusive as its name suggested; in practice it was dominated by the mainline denominations.

Notably absent were several conservative denominations: the Southern Baptists (one of the largest Protestant denominations in the country), Southern Presbyterians, and Lutherans (outside the General Synod). The conservative wing of the Disciples of Christ likewise opposed the federation, holding that the Federal Council could not substitute for the undenominational Church of Christ. On the liberal side, the Unitarians were deliberately excluded because they did not affirm the Trinity or the divinity of Jesus. In an awkward moment, the Unitarians accepted an invitation to join the Federal Council, but Sanford withdrew the offer, claiming it had been sent by mistake.

Despite the ecumenical efforts of many of its members, the Episcopal Church did not join the Federal Council until 1940. Robert H. Gardiner, a Boston lawyer active in the Faith and Order Movement, pressed the church to join the Federal Council in 1908. Opposing him were some, such as William Reed Huntington, who would not settle for less than organic union. Likewise, the Anglo-Catholic wing of the church believed that joining the Federal Council threatened the church's distinctiveness.

Nevertheless, the Federal Council was dedicated to manifesting the unity of the Christian churches of America and to fostering cooperation among them. In practice, that meant evangelizing non-Protestants—an agenda that the council inherited from the Evangelical Alliance—and Christianizing society in accordance with the Social Gospel. Walter Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, with its call to make Christianity a revolutionary social force, had been published just one year earlier, and newspapers printed scandalous stories of the exploitation of the workers and the plight of the poor. The Federal Council accordingly advocated prison reform, the rights of labor,

and temperance as well as greater Sabbath observance, among other issues.

The Social Gospel dominated the council's agenda for several reasons. With theological discussion barred, action became the council's only possible function; no other interdenominational body was addressing all of these issues together. Furthermore, the churches failed to support the council adequately—in its first years the council typically received only half the revenue promised by the denominations—driving the council to raise funds by showing that it addressed pressing social issues of the day. By 1912 more than half the total income of the Federal Council was provided by wealthy individuals, most notably John D. Rockefeller and Cleveland H. Dodge. The council settled into a pattern of relying on the denominations for administrative expenses but turning to individuals for particular, sometimes controversial, programs or causes.

This arrangement entwined the Federal Council with the wealthy and politically powerful. At the beginning of the twentieth century the Federal Council represented a virtual religious establishment inasmuch as it both defined religious respectability and represented the ruling class. Among the benefits of this status was dominance of the airwaves until midcentury, because radio companies preferred working with the Federal Council rather than dealing with individual churches.

The World Wars

The world wars and the Great Depression created pressure for a unified national identity while expanding the power of the federal government. These circumstances increased the influence of the Federal Council because the council acted as a liaison between the churches and the government, especially in providing military chaplains. During World War I the Southern Baptist Convention and most of the Lutheran bodies joined in the Federal Council's General Wartime Commission, chaired by Presbyterian Robert E. Speer.

From this position of power, the Federal Council initiated cooperation with Eastern Orthodox churches, Jews, and Catholics on social issues. By 1927 the Federal Council had begun to explore cooperation with the Eastern Orthodox churches, although no Eastern Orthodox Church would become a member of the council for a decade. Relations with Jews and Catholics were more complicated because of the Federal Council's hostility to the Vatican and because the Home Missionary Council continued to proselytize American Jews. Nevertheless, both Jews and

Catholics cooperated with the Federal Council on social justice issues in the interwar period.

In 1923 the Goodwill Committee promoting better relations with American Jews capitulated to Jewish demands and officially declared that conversion was not part of its mission, essentially extending to American Jews the acceptance that the council had already extended to Protestant churches. This accommodation created friction between the Goodwill Committee and the Home Mission Society, which continued to regard the Jewish community as a mission field. By the end of World War II liberals had backed away from missions to the Jews, leaving such missions to fundamentalists. Although the Federal Council included both conservatives and liberals, the Federal Council's goodwill activity together with its Social Gospel agenda fed the perception that the Federal Council was theologically liberal and politically leftist.

Because of the deepening rift between fundamentalists and modernists within the Protestant denominations, the Federal Council never truly encompassed all of American Protestantism. Social issues sometimes split the council. Offended by the Federal Council's endorsement of birth-control within marriage, for example, southern Presbyterians withdrew from the FCC in 1931 and would not return for a decade. The emerging fundamentalist wing of American Protestantism sought ecumenical unions of its own. In 1942 conservatives set up a parallel organization, the National Association of Evangelicals, which repudiated the word *ecumenical* because of its liberal connotations.

Meanwhile, on the denominational level the depression promoted consolidation as churches recognized the benefits of shared resources. Furthermore, ethnic divisions that had sustained transplanted immigrant churches faded as the immigrant generation passed away. This consolidation was already at work among the Lutherans; the United Lutheran Church in America had formed from the merger of the General Synod, the General Council, and the General Synod of the South in 1918. They were joined by the Slovak Zion Synod in 1919 and the Icelandic Synod in 1940. In 1930 three Lutheran bodies, the Synod of Buffalo, the Synod of Iowa, and the Synod of Ohio, merged to form the American Lutheran Church. In 1934 the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America (a church with Lutheran roots), both historically German, joined to create the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

In 1931 the Congregational Churches and the Christian Churches (General Convention), churches with similar

polity but different historical origins, united, creating the Congregational Christian Churches. The Evangelical Church and the Evangelical United Brethren began to discuss union in 1933, but they did not merge to create the evangelical United Brethren Church until 1946.

In 1939 the majority of American Methodists united in the Methodist Church, bringing an unprecedented number of Protestants into organic union. Negotiations for the merger of the Methodist Protestant Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church South had begun in 1931. The issue delaying union was not doctrinal but racial; the successful compromise created a separate jurisdiction for the African American Methodist churches.

At the local level some congregations did not wait for denominational negotiations but created community churches, combining two or more congregations in a shared facility, often with a loose affiliation with a denomination to provide overhead. In one striking example, members of no fewer than seven denominations (Northern Baptist, Disciples, Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian USA, United Brethren, and United Presbyterian) created a community church and social center at Hoover Dam, Nevada, in 1932.

Postwar Period

The world wars may have consolidated the influence of the Federal Council at home, but both conflicts thwarted international ecumenical efforts. In the interwar period the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, and the International Missionary Council had each met to discuss international cooperation. With the end of hostilities, these meetings bore fruit in the creation of the World Council of Churches, which first met in Amsterdam on August 22, 1948. The World Council met the needs of the United Nations (established in 1945) for a worldwide agency of the churches to consult and collaborate on international issues. Americans instrumental in the creation of the World Council included John R. Mott, elected honorary president for life; Lutheran leader Franklin Clark Fry, dubbed "Mr. Protestant" for his ecumenical efforts; Presbyterian Samuel McCrae Cavert; Presbyterian leader Eugene Carson Blake; Presbyterian Henry P. Van Dusen; and Presbyterian Robert S. Bilheimer, among others.

The Federal Council had served as a model for the World Council, but the Federal Council's structure was quite loose;

ad hoc committees were formed to meet each emerging interest or crisis. In 1936 the Federal Council's Commission for Christian Unity had begun to discuss a more integrated structure in which the denominations would delegate certain functions to the Federal Council, which would function almost as an overarching church. The war diverted attention from institutional restructuring, but in the postwar period the World Council required a stable and active American partner. In 1950 the Federal Council and the International Council of Religious Education merged to form the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States. The merger produced a complex structure in which the General Assembly and General Board exercised final authority, creating a more united institution than the previous federation.

The National Council benefitted from the Cold War emphasis on religion as a counter to Soviet atheism, serving as a national symbol of respectable religion. John D. Rockefeller funded the construction of the Interchurch Center, the National Council's headquarters in New York; President Dwight D. Eisenhower laid the cornerstone for the new building. Given this official endorsement, the National Council continued to pursue the ecumenical vision of Christian unity across national borders. In 1958, for example, former National Council president Eugene Carson Blake and Franklin Clark Fry, chair of the World Council's Central Committee, traveled to Moscow to initiate dialogue with the Russian Orthodox Church. The church became a member of the World Council in 1961.

Second Vatican Council

Despite its increasingly international orientation, the National Council inherited suspicion of the Catholic Church from the Federal Council; virtually the first act of the National Council was to mobilize public opinion against President Harry S. Truman's plan to appoint an ambassador to the Vatican. The Catholic Church still officially discouraged dialogue with Christians outside the church. The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) removed this impediment to Catholic participation in ecumenism and opened the door to fruitful dialogue in the second half of the twentieth century. The Vatican Decree on Ecumenism (November 21, 1964) recommended cooperation with other Christians on social matters and dialogue concerning faith and practice.

The American Catholic response was like the bursting of a dam. In 1966 the National Council and the Catholic

Bishops Commission on Ecumenical Affairs created a permanent joint working group; Catholic churches joined the local councils. That same year the National Council and the Catholic Paulist Press jointly issued a manual to help ordinary people initiate dialogue with their Catholic or Protestant neighbors; 150,000 copies of the manual were sold in three years. In 1966 Protestant, Anglican, Catholic, and Orthodox student associations joined together in the University Christian Movement.

With the Catholic Church's entry into ecumenical dialogue, Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox leaders began to reexamine long-standing theological divisions. In 1966 a commission of Lutheran, Reformed, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox theologians worked out a mutually acceptable version of the Lord's Prayer for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which became compulsory in the Catholic mass. In 1999 the Catholic Church and the World Lutheran Federation signed a joint statement on the Doctrine of Justification, healing one of the divisions of the Reformation. The North American Catholic-Orthodox Consultation, founded in 1965, issued a joint statement on the Eucharist in 1969. In 2003 the Consultation began to discuss the Filioque clause in the Nicene Creed, one of the causes of the tenth-century schism that divided the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Such international ecumenical progress energized the ecumenical movement in the United States.

Organic Union

On December 4, 1960, former National Council president Blake preached a sermon at Grace (Episcopal) Cathedral in San Francisco, challenging Protestants to form a union that would reflect their dedication to one Lord. The Consultation on Church Union convened the following May with the ultimate goal of creating a united church. The churches that joined the Consultation included the African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Episcopal, Disciples of Christ, International Council of Community Churches, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, and United Methodist. Although the memberships of the denominations overwhelmingly rejected the plan for union in 1969, the Consultation successfully pushed for intercommunion in which each member maintained autonomy while recognizing the ministry and rites of the member churches. As this limited success indicates, the ideal of organic union gained momentum in the postwar era, but individual churches also clung to their historic identities. Nevertheless, the

mid-twentieth century saw consolidation within denominational families.

In 1957 the Evangelical Reformed Church merged with the Congregational Christian Churches to form the United Church of Christ. (Dissenting from this union, some four hundred churches formed the National Association of Congregational Churches, dedicated to preserving the historic independence of the local congregations.) In 1958 Blake oversaw the union of the Presbyterian Church (USA), sometimes called the Northern Presbyterians, with the United Presbyterian Church of North America to form the United Presbyterian Church (USA). This new organization finally united with its southern counterpart, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in 1983, healing a rift that dated back to the Civil War. In 1968 the Evangelical United Brethren Church merged with the Methodist Church to form the United Methodist Church. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America formed in 1988 from the merger of three Lutheran bodies (each the result of previous mergers in the 1960s and 1970s): the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

As these unions suggest, historic divisions within denominations were breaking down in midcentury. Inter-marriage rates between Catholics and Protestants, and even between Christians and Jews, increased through the century, a sign of weakening religious boundaries. In a countervailing trend, however, the more conservative members of the merging denominations often broke away to form their own churches.

Thus rather than joining all Christians into a universal Christian Church, the organic unions of the second half of the twentieth century often consolidated a deepening rift between conservatives and liberals. Already present at mid-century, this trend became particularly visible in the resurgent conservatism of the 1980s and persisted to the end of the century. Congregationalist dissenters from the merger of 1957, for example, joined the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, founded in 1948. Asserting the inerrancy of the Bible, conservatives created the Presbyterian Church in America in 1973. In 1981 many of the remaining evangelical Presbyterians, protesting the church's emphasis on social action, left to form the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The Lutheran mergers concentrated liberals in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Meanwhile, the Missouri Synod, following an internal battle over historical criticism of the Bible in the late 1960s and early 1970s, emerged more conservative than before.

Doctrinal issues such as biblical inerrancy divided liberals and conservatives in some instances, but so did a host of social issues rising from the civil rights, feminist, and gay rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s. One consequence of the ecumenical movement after the Second Vatican Council was that Catholics and Protestants could come together for conservative as well as liberal causes. In 1994, for example, Charles Colson of the Prison Fellowship and Catholic priest Richard John Neuhaus of the Institute on Religion and Public Life, with support from Campus Crusade for Christ and other evangelical organizations, drew up a document, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," that called for cooperation in limiting abortion rights and in bringing a Christian voice to the public square. The document did not commit the churches to doctrinal unity, but it did call for better relations in the service of common action.

Looking forward to the next century, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" acknowledged one truth: the mainline Protestant churches that had been a force for ecumenism were in decline at the end of the twentieth century. This document, although controversial in both Catholic and Protestant churches, offered one vision of future ecumenical cooperation. Meanwhile, the Consultation on Church Union moved beyond consultation and joined in Churches Uniting in Christ (2002), which agreed to recognize each other as representatives of the one church of Christ, meeting regularly to celebrate the Eucharist. Among their social missions were an end to racism and an end to exclusion from the church for any reason, including sexual orientation.

From the short-lived union of Congregationalists and Presbyterians in 1801 to the National Council of Churches, the American ecumenical movement has pressed for Christian unity in a religiously diverse nation. The creation of unity within diversity has been a perennial American political issue because fresh immigration continues to challenge national identity. The Federal Council and National Council, representing a virtual establishment, have paralleled expansion and integration of the state, even as the World Council of Churches has paralleled the United Nations. One of the greatest triumphs of the ecumenical movement has been the reduction of the historic hostility between the Catholic and Protestant Churches. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, as at the beginning of the twentieth century, the National Council faces the challenge of integrating new immigrants into American religion. The National Council created a Task Force on Muslim-Christian Relations as early as 1977, but moving that dialogue forward

remains one of the challenges of the twenty-first century. Meanwhile, organic union has remained elusive, despite the efforts of Churches Uniting in Christ, because the churches remain divided by social issues or dedicated to their historical identities. Because the absence of a national church renders religious affiliation a matter of personal identity, it may be that American conditions favor diversity. The ecumenical movement has countered this centrifugal force by creating avenues of cooperation.

See also *Benevolent Empire*; *Canada: Protestants and the United Church of Canada*; *Denominationalism*; *Fundamentalism*; *Holocaust*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Pluralism*; *Protestant Liberalism*; *Roman Catholicism: The Cold War and Vatican II*; *Same-Gender Marriage*; *Social Gospel*.

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Education

The connection between religion and public schooling in the United States is revealed by tracing the historical development of schooling as a vehicle for the government's aspirations, which include civility, the transmission of knowledge, and a form of common piety. Religion is a factor in these aspirations, each of which has changed over time.

The dominant narrative about the relationship between religion and U.S. public schools is about constitutional case law and whether the practices within the public schools are in conformity. The meanings of the establishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment are therefore the central concern. The narrative usually includes a description of the European roots of the connections between church and state and the transformation of those connections in the colonies during the 180 years between the first landings and the writing of the Constitution. Thomas Jefferson's "wall of separation" is then used to encapsulate the intent of the Constitution. The narrative thus recognizes that the development and growth of the public school as a tax-supported institution during the nineteenth century extended the Constitution to include the practices of schools. An examination of twentieth-century case law follows in order to define more precisely the terms *establishment* and *free exercise*. The narrative ends by asserting that whereas religion as a subject may be taught in the schools, any attempts by the school to proselytize, force students to pray, or encourage them in any way to be religious are illegal.

There are, however, some problems with this narrative. First, it tends to be overly legalistic. Understanding the case law on the establishment and freedom of religion clauses of the First Amendment is important, but that alone fails to explain why the controversy over these clauses continues. Ignorance is implied—that is, if more people thoroughly understood the case law arguments there would be fewer questionable religious practices in the schools. A second problem with the narrative is that the historical context fails to establish any deep connection to the role education is thought to play in the development of the individual as a member of society. The role that schools play in civility could be described in many different ways, just as different actors approach the same role in a play in many different ways. A final problem is that the narrative often neglects to connect the changing relationship between religion and schools to intellectual history. Piety and its relationship to civility and learning are a rich woven tapestry, not a single thread.

European Roots

The curriculum of a school describes what the school wishes its students to learn. The description can take several forms. The official curriculum is what the teachers actually teach in their various activities—activities that may go beyond the official curriculum, or skip some parts of it, or both. And then there is what the students actually learn, which, one supposes, is what the curriculum actually turns out to be. Before the twentieth century the official curriculum took the form of a list of subjects, and that set of subjects appeared in some form at the various levels of schooling—in a crude form at the earliest levels and then with increasing complexity and sophistication at higher and higher levels until a student was working with material on subjects in their mature form. Fewer and fewer students were likely in school as the levels of complexity increased because of the distribution of abilities, the availability of the opportunity to study, the means to devote time to study, and a host of other circumstances. The purpose of a school's curriculum, however, was to provide a route (the Latin root of the word *curriculum* refers to a race course) to an appreciation and understanding of the disciplines of knowledge.

For much of the first half of the second millennium religion functioned both as a subject in curricula and, in a sense, as the reason for the curricula's existence. The first schools developed in England during the sixth century with the conversion of the English population to Christianity. The conversion process required clergy who would teach the new beliefs and schools to prepare such clergy. Curricula were based on the texts of both nascent Christianity and the classical texts of the Roman eras, as well as the Latin needed to master these texts. Over the next several hundred years schooling spread beyond the churches but remained essentially religious. Grammar schools were developed to introduce youngsters to Latin, and some of the basic texts and "petty schools" later developed provided a more rudimentary instruction in the basic literacy of the English language and basic numeracy to "slower" students. At times, petty schools were sponsored by commercial interests in order to train the clerks and scribes they needed.

With the advent of the Renaissance in the fifteenth century, schooling increased rapidly both in numbers served and in scope. Greek and Hebrew were added to the grammar schools. The petty schools added materials beyond the catechisms. The development of printing assisted this broadening and growth, but also served to regularize, or standardize,

curricula. As the number of youth subjected to schooling increased, the governing of schooling also became more diverse. Civil authorities and commercial groups assumed more control over schools, reducing the power of the churches. The licensing of teachers became, for the first time, a process beyond the possession of advanced schooling, and the bodies "certifying" teachers involved the civil as well as the ecclesiastical authorities. In a broad sense, the curricula of the schools became a vehicle for promoting civility, and such civility meant an ability to contribute to commerce through labor, the pietistic moral structure to maintain stability, and some mastery of the intellectual diversity then present in Renaissance thinking.

English colonists brought this background to the American colonies in the seventeenth century. Although the Restoration that followed the revolution in England in the middle of the century diminished schooling, the experience of the previous hundred years had established the idea that schooling was needed to develop the colonies. The English, learning from the failed efforts of the French and Spanish to gain much of a foothold in America, followed a colonial strategy of establishing self-sufficient communities. Schooling was one of the ways to do that. Although the English were not the only colonizers, by the end of the century they dominated all the lands that became the original thirteen states.

The Colonial Era

The prime sources of education during the colonial era were the family, the churches, and the schools and colleges. American families tended to be younger than those in England and Europe because people married at younger ages, and they tended to have more children because of the availability of cheap land and jobs. The family instilled the cultural mores of the immediate community while encouraging basic literacy, but the school often provided the liberal encouragement to move beyond the provincialism of the community. The churches were characterized by diversity in doctrine, but they were nevertheless overwhelmingly Protestant. Doctrinal differences increasingly forced church-based education to be more evangelical and to provide more careful indoctrination using catechism.

During the first half of the seventeenth century the rigors of establishing a foothold in new lands both slowed the actual development of schooling and increased the motivation to provide it. By midcentury, schools began to appear. In Virginia, an Anglican settlement and more reflective of

the English culture, a few schools were erected through the bequests of land used to finance them. The Dutch West India Company established schools in New Amsterdam and surrounding communities to encourage the immigration needed to expand their commercial enterprises. In the Massachusetts colony, schools were established in order to maintain the kind of religious purity associated with the settlers' Calvinist beliefs. In 1647 the Olde Deluder Satan Act stipulated the formation of grammar schools and petty schools in any Massachusetts community of at least fifty families, and the title of the legislation suggests the prime purpose of the schooling. The curricula of the petty schools, or dame schools as they were also called, involved the basic alphabet and syllables and then drill in a catechism, Psalter, or primer.

The most popular of the instruction books was *The New England Primer* published in Boston in 1690. It included basic alphabet and syllable exercises (also called a hornbook), a basic primer, and a catechism. The primer was essentially religious, containing words such as "godliness" and "holiness," couplets such as "In Adam's fall we sinned all," and stories titled, for example, "Holiness becomes God's house all." The grammar school curriculum was Latin-based with an introduction to Greek; it progressed through the texts of Virgil, Homer, Hesiod, Horace, and Juvenal. The teachers ranged from the housewives in the dame schools who had little formal education to the graduates of universities who were employed in the larger grammar schools in the population centers. The purpose of this schooling was to instill a certain amount of uniformity among an often disparate group of colonialists, but it surely also liberated some youngsters from a certain provincialism.

Over the next one hundred years or so, remarkable changes occurred in the general society of the colonies and in the schools. Undoubtedly, the colonies were affected by the changes in England brought on by the battle for the throne between the Catholic James and the Protestant William of Orange and his wife, Mary, who eventually assumed the Crown as co-rulers. The Toleration Act of 1689 legitimated dissent, and the ascendancy of the Whigs ushered in more liberal ideas than those tolerated by the conservative Tories. In the colonies these changes translated into the growing influence of local political groups over the various Crown-appointed governors and the legitimization of the religious dissent already under way in the colonies in response to the growing immigration. Dissatisfaction grew with the establishment of one official religion, whether it was

the Anglican Church in Virginia or the Congregationalist Church in New England. This establishment was accomplished by means of taxation to support clergy and teachers and the forced attendance in church of all community members. Where dissenting supplicants numbered enough to warrant support, municipalities established other churches through taxation. As religious establishment became diverse, it also became diffuse, until the disestablishment of religion by government was codified in the U.S. Constitution at the end of the eighteenth century. Actual disestablishment took some time after the signing of the Constitution, but was completed early in the nineteenth century.

The intellectual changes associated with the Enlightenment also made the doctrinal assertions of various religious groups less certain. Work by Isaac Newton in science and James Locke in political philosophy suggested less dependence on God. Newton dramatically changed the way humans saw their relationship with the cosmos, and Locke changed the way humans viewed effective government. Both men embraced a vigorous empiricism and rationalism. What this kind of thinking meant for school curricula was more visibility for empirical and rational subjects and the notion that curricula contribute more directly and forcefully to secular concerns. Benjamin Franklin's experiences are instructive. His father removed him from the Boston Latin Grammar School because of dissatisfaction with the classical curriculum and apprenticed him to a printer. As a young man, Franklin moved, on his own volition, to Philadelphia where he grew intellectually, financially, and politically. He came to champion an academy form of education that was more vocational in intent and included more secular subjects. But a curriculum is not a bottomless pit. When something is added to it, something else must be either reduced or eliminated. Often, then, the secular was added and the religious and the classical were reduced.

By the Revolutionary War, nine colleges in the colonies were chartered to grant degrees. All of these colleges were supported by churches, and yet these colleges provided a broad curriculum based on Enlightenment texts, and they began to offer training for professions beyond the ministry and teaching such as medicine and law. In the latter part of the century the specialized professorship appeared, signaling the growth of specialized knowledge. The day of the "Renaissance Man" began to wane.

Two additional aspects of the growth of schooling help to explain the relationship between religion and schooling. First, the extensive diversity of community and church

coupled with the increased mobility that the literate possessed made for a better match of person with job and church and fostered the desire for the freedom to be mobile. Second, the need to use public funds to finance the growth of schools established schooling as a public policy issue. An overwhelming majority of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were college-educated. They understood the role that education played in the remarkable emergence of the United States. Rising literacy had provided the impetus for public support of the Revolution through the dissemination of newspapers and pamphlets. This enthusiasm for education as a vehicle for the improvement of humankind, however, was troubling for those who viewed the perfectibility of the human as dependent on God.

The Common School Era

During the century between the Revolutionary War and the Civil War, schooling in the United States was characterized by tremendous growth and variability. Expansion into the heartland from the coastal areas and the growth of the metropolitan areas along the coast brought immigrants in large numbers. The growth of schooling, however, was dependent on a perceived need for it. Families and churches were educational forces and may have been viewed as sufficient for those people unwilling or unable to go to school. And yet the leadership and intelligentsia of the new republic convinced the population that schooling was instrumental to creating a nation. The disparate colonial patches and the major land acquisitions in the westward expansions created a need for a climate in which the democratic republic could operate. Although many political tasks had to be accomplished in developing a new nation, the development of a system of education was viewed as crucial to the vigor of the republic, and, furthermore, schools and colleges were identified as the best system to accomplish this on the scale required.

This system of education, tied to the form of government, was to be funded by the public. However, the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution contained no provision pertaining to the education of the citizenry, thereby prohibiting the use of federal funding to carry it out; public education was left to the states. Thomas Jefferson's efforts to establish a system of common schools and a state university in Virginia were influential, but there were others. Benjamin Rush pushed for an educational system to produce "republican machines" in Pennsylvania with the establishment of a

state university in Carlisle. The state of New York created a state department of education to provide funding for schooling outside New York City, which had its own mechanism for funding until midcentury. The important point here is that education was viewed as a function of government, funded, at least in part, by the government and tied in some way to the polity. The administrative mechanisms of state government, however, were ill-equipped to manage the task statewide, and effective control lay with local groups.

The most influential state in the development of the public school system was Massachusetts under its state superintendent, Horace Mann. Mann's political efforts created a statewide system of schools, and his writings provided the impetus for a growing public school movement elsewhere. "Friends of education" groups spread over the eastern part of the country and were politically skillful in creating systems of schooling in several states. As the country expanded westward, the ordinances written to provide for development of these lands contained provisions for land to be set aside for schools.

The goals of this republican system of education were to diffuse knowledge, cultivate learning, and nurture virtue, including patriotic civility. This virtue included a non-denominational Protestant ethos heavy on morality. To that end, the curricula of the schools included basic literacy, arithmetic, writing, and rudimentary science and geography, along with Bible reading (without comment) and group prayers. Standard textbooks such as the McGuffey Readers contained Bible stories, although much less heavily than had been the case with *The New England Primer*.

Over the nineteenth century the three basic forms of schooling from the colonial era continued to develop: petty schools, which were becoming known as primary schools; grammar schools, in which the core was instruction in Latin (although English grammar schools grew in popularity outside the metropolitan areas); and academies. Three new types of schools also emerged: schools for those in early childhood (these were run primarily in homes and later developed into kindergartens as the significance of Friedrich Froebel's work in Germany spread); the high school, which was viewed as an alternative to the Latin grammar school; and supplementary schools for the "slower" students.

The disestablishment of official religion, codified in the First Amendment to the Constitution and its commitment to the free exercise of religion, resulted in the growth of denominationalism among Protestants. Although the growth of churches did not match the growth of schooling during

the nineteenth century, the increased diversity probably sparked the Second Great Awakening, which was accompanied by the growth of millennialism and various sects such as the Mormons, Shakers, and Oneida community. Most Protestant children attended schools provided by the civil authorities, but a few denominations began forming parochial schools, notably the Presbyterians.

The growth of the Roman Catholic populations in the cities led to the first real controversy over the religiosity of the public schools, and that issue remains in the public eye today. The reading of the King James Bible in the schools was an affront to the Catholics, as was the implication that morality could be taught without religious immersion. The issue came to a head in New York City where the Free School Society (later the Public School Society) stopped funding the schools run by the Catholic Church to serve the poor. The political backlash was such that Gov. William H. Seward proposed that sectarian schools be able to hire their own teachers rather than be required to accept teachers licensed and placed by the civil authorities. The state legislature, controlled by the rural populations of upstate New York, rejected the governor's plan, placed the New York City schools under the aegis of the state department of education, and asserted that no public money could be used to support religious schools. In response, the Catholic Church decided to put its efforts into building a parochial school system tied to the hierarchy of the church.

By the Civil War the country had achieved a literacy rate that compared favorably with that of Europe, at least among white males. The war interrupted much of the expansion of schooling, but it also provided the country with its first experience with large-scale organization and its efficacy. Federalism was now a reality that would have mixed effects on the development of schooling in the United States. For example, the Morrill Act of 1862, which provided the impetus for the development of a system of public colleges from the Midwest eastward, was also used as a means of keeping the West tied to the North rather than the South. These colleges grew into the large state universities found in the Atlantic states and the Midwest and, along with a growing secularism among the traditional private colleges with roots in the colonial era such as the Ivy League institutions, resulted in a system of higher education essentially divorced from particular religious traditions.

The occupation of the South by the northern armies both ameliorated some of the pernicious effects of provincialism and exacerbated others. White educators poured into

the South to assist in the education of freedmen. The numbers of black churches grew, and in their concomitant efforts at education they began to try to right the imbalances between black and white. The southern white churches, however, began to use the schools for their evangelistic efforts. By the latter decades of the century, schooling was established throughout the country and generally accepted as an essential component of national life, although still under the control of the states.

The Curriculum Era: Fissures in the Protestant Consensus

The curriculum era extends from the second centennial in 1876 to the end of World War II in 1945. This period saw important shifts in the growth of the nation, changes in schooling and organized religion, and a changing relationship between the two. It was the first time in the country's history that school curricula became a focus of reform. Distinct alternatives were proposed, and each of the alternatives had some impact on the thinking of educators, if not on the actual practices in schools.

The population quintupled in a hundred years. Within this growth was a surge in immigrants from Europe in response to the job opportunities created by rapid industrialization and later in response to political conditions in Europe. This population growth created dense centers—urban areas and suburban satellites connected by rail networks—along with a host of social problems. Although the need to feed the growing population ensured a sizable agrarian population, the differences between rural and urban-suburban groups had social, political, and religious implications. It was also a time of intellectual modernism. The publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859 particularly signaled the impact of modern thought on religion.

The notion of career as something one prepared for through schooling and that one followed throughout life was a creation of the nineteenth century. Career rather than mere occupation soon evolved into the notion of profession. Organizations formed, linking practitioners but also controlling entrance to the practice, asserting the esoteric knowledge needed to practice and acting politically to control the nature of the occupation. The National Education Association (NEA), formed in 1857, not only joined school practitioners together but also university professors and presidents, politicians, and many others interested in education. By the end of the century the NEA would have a

major role in the development of the curricula of public schools.

During the century following the Civil War schooling grew in both numbers and length. More children attended and stayed in school longer. High schools became commonplace by the turn of the century, kindergartens were becoming established, and the junior high school began to emerge. About 90 percent of the children enrolled in school were in public schools, and of those in private schools most were in Catholic schools. Although Oregon attempted in the 1920s to require all students to attend the public schools, the U.S. Supreme Court declared the effort unconstitutional in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925).

Meanwhile, education became a way to create a homogeneous polity from the disparate cultural groups that lived in more dense population centers and a way to ameliorate the growing poverty that industrialism and immigration were creating. Schools taught immigrants English and a common set of values and provided a set of useful skills to lift the poor out of poverty. In 1918 the federal government passed the Smith-Hughes Act, which provided local public schools with funds for manual training (vocational education), agricultural education, and home economics. This was a significant event, for although the Constitution forbade direct federal subsidies for the general schooling of children, it allowed categorical aid to address particular problems thought to be in the national interest. This practice was adopted increasingly by the federal government, particularly after 1950, and is a major factor in the issues surrounding religion and schooling today.

The early public schools had a role in promoting an American set of values, and until the turn of the twentieth century those values included a kind of nondenominational Protestant Christianity. However, the development of science along with the growth of industrial capitalism challenged American Protestantism, causing a split in what was once a tenuous consensus. One part of the split was a kind of social Christianity signaled by the formation in 1903 of the Religious Education Association, which articulated a kind of progressive philosophy of education in which the modernism of science and the arts could coexist with religious beliefs and religious groups could work more vigorously among the poor. The other part of the split was a growth in the fundamentalist wing of evangelicalism, revivalism based on the inerrancy of the Bible, the centrality of conversion, and the imminence of the return of Jesus. Advocates of the fundamentalist wing of evangelicalism

established the World's Christian Fundamentals Association in 1919. These two groups had quite different views of just what the public schools should teach about American religious values. They also represented two quite different demographic groups. The Religious Education Association tended to find favor in the metropolitan areas in the North and West and the World's Christian Fundamentals Association in the more rural areas in the South.

One consequence of using the schools as a major tool in creating an American polity was that they became subject to political conflict. The definition of the *public good* may not have been articulated by the heads of government, but whatever it might mean would presumably be seen in the school curricula. The content of curricula had been left to the educators, and yet controversy over that content occasionally arose from groups outside the profession, such as state legislatures, who could and did act on curricula.

In 1925 the Tennessee legislature passed the Butler Act prohibiting the teaching of evolution in the schools. That act triggered a test of the law in the now-famous Scopes trial. The trial itself was a fairly cut-and-dried affair in which the court found the biology teacher from Dayton, John Scopes, guilty of breaking the law, but issued no finding about the law itself. The law was only rescinded in 1967 after the Supreme Court found Arkansas's prohibition of the teaching of evolution unconstitutional. During the final day of the Scopes trial the prosecution called lawyer and devout Presbyterian William Jennings Bryan to the stand to testify for the prosecution, and the cross-examination of Bryan by Clarence Darrow is now part of the national story. The trial, which received extensive and often derisory newspaper coverage, only exacerbated the demographic split in American Protestantism and pushed to the forefront the question of whether experts, parents, and taxpayers should determine the content of curricula and whether the majority should trump the opinion of the minority.

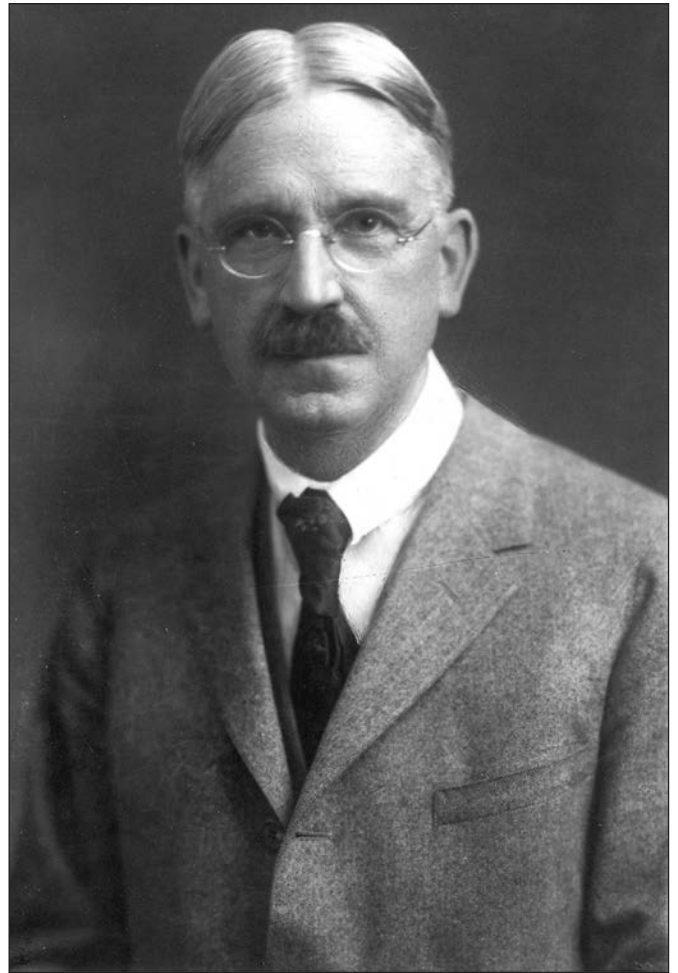
The Curriculum Era: Currents of Reform

Schools tend to be conservative institutions. They see their role as conservators of tradition and transmitters of culture, so any significant change in a school curriculum must come from social forces outside the school. In a sense that is what happened at the turn of the twentieth century. Several factors were at work. First, the existing curricula, which were heavily classical at the upper levels, were based on the college entrance requirements in the Northeast. However, the colleges themselves were undergoing some internal

changes. Charles William Eliot, president of Harvard, had instituted an elective system over the vigorous opposition of the proponents of the classical languages. Under threat, the classical adherents argued that the classics provided training for the mind, a kind of faculty psychology—that is, certain subjects trained parts of the brain better than other subjects (for example, mathematics was good for building logic). Faculty psychology was first criticized by William James, a psychologist at Harvard, and later by Edward Thorndike through his empirical research. Second, the existing curricula were often taught in the lower schools and in the high schools using extensive drills and recitation. This situation was confirmed when Joseph Rice, a physician-turned-journalist, conducted a survey of the nation's schools that revealed an excruciating regimen of drill, physical abuse, and boredom.

A committee formed by the NEA in 1895 made recommendations about the nation's high school curricula. The committee was chaired by Eliot, and the nine other members were notable members of the education establishment. The committee recommended that high school curricula consist of any one of four different "tracks"—all legitimate roads to college but not all classical (indeed, the study of Greek literature was severely reduced). Shortly after that, a committee of fifteen men studied and made recommendations on the elementary schools. The subcommittee charged with making curriculum recommendations was chaired by William Torrey Harris, a superintendent of the St. Louis schools, editor of the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, and later the first U.S. commissioner of education under President Theodore Roosevelt. Harris's committee report was largely fashioned around his own views of knowledge and the role that the disciplines could play in leading children to that knowledge—his so-called windows to the soul. The report reaffirmed the importance of the traditional areas of human knowledge in schooling and of human rationality, which Harris believed was a gift from God.

The report received scathing criticism from three groups. The first, known as the Herbartians, devotees of the German educator George Herbart, criticized the report for promoting insular and uncoordinated disciplines of knowledge rather than a cohesive whole that might be more in tune with the mind of the child. A second group, the empirical psychologists led by G. Stanley Hall, criticized the report for its absence of any recognition of what was then known of child development. The third group, influenced by the scientific study of organizations by Frederick Winslow Taylor,



The work of John Dewey emphasized the connection between the social environment and the individual, and the reality of the child's everyday experiences to school activity.

thought the curricula should be constructed from a study of the skills needed to become a successful adult. Although each of these groups had quite disparate criticisms and radically different ways of approaching curriculum construction, the result was a waning in the influence of the classical humanists on the school curricula for sixty years and the removal of any academically respectable, and thus constitutional, basis for the teaching of religion.

John Dewey (1859–1952) has taken on almost mythical proportions in the history of American education. Even though Dewey considered all his philosophy a philosophy of education, he wrote books on most of the major philosophical themes: political philosophy, aesthetics, natural science, logic and epistemology, history of philosophy, and religion. He attacked the dualisms that led, he argued, to mistakes or wasted effort—such things as mind versus body,

truth versus perception, realism versus idealism, individual versus society. For Dewey, the task of education was to connect the reality of the child and his or her everyday experiences to the funded accumulation of human knowledge and understanding. One result of his work was to reconnect the reality of the social environment to the development of the individual—a connection missing from the ideas of child psychologists—and to reconnect the reality of the child’s everyday experiences to school activity—a connection missing from the humanists and the social efficiency educators. This view gave impetus to reformers interested in the school’s role in a changing society. The dislocations after World War I and the financial troubles in the 1930s, coupled with the early successes of the Soviet economy, provided a rationale for social and political change, often radical.

All of this proposed experimentation with curricula and the actual attempts to implement it in schools have been labeled the progressive movement in American education. As Dewey defined it, *progressive* meant the stepwise movement of student growth. However, progressive education had little to do with the progressive political movements of the times, nor did it constitute any kind of cohesive movement. The Progressive Education Association offered a forum in which people could share ideas on school reform, but groups were too disparate in their views to be connected in any real sense. The only commonality across their positions was a reaction against the curricula as they existed from the nineteenth century and, by association, the classical curriculum. It was also apparent that the so-called progressives found no place for religion in school curricula. Indeed, all these groups, except the humanists, placed human effort at the center of human development and made it the *leitmotiv* of their efforts.

The progressives were, however, under relentless attack from the humanists, primarily on the grounds that if school curricula were changed in any fundamental way public school students would not be well prepared to succeed in college. College entrance requirements had long dominated the assumptions of the academies and the high schools, and proposed changes were often first subjected to that criterion before they were seriously entertained. The Progressive Education Association proposed a test of the college entrance assumptions. The study, known popularly as the Eight Year Study, was carried out and published in 1942. It concluded that students, while in college, were not harmed academically by their progressive high school experiences

and generally had more satisfying extra-academic experiences. The study drew criticism from the humanists, but the nation was in the midst of war and so it drew little attention from the wider population.

The Contemporary Era: The Postwar Context

By the end of World War II some conditions had changed. The United States found itself the most powerful nation on earth, Europe was in ruins, England was nearly bankrupt, and the Soviet Union, although among the victors, had serious war wounds. In Asia, the dominant country, Japan, had been defeated and humiliated and was under occupation. At home, prosperity was rampant, and the return of familial stability ushered in a baby boom and a large influx of war veterans going on to college under the GI Bill. In this general state of euphoria, the progressives resurrected their proposals for school reform by means of a “life adjustment” curriculum that was meant to be an alternative to if not a replacement for the disciplines-based curriculum typical in most high schools. The proposal was enthusiastically supported by most educators for at least a short time. Its demise can be understood in context.

One of the lessons of the war was that technological competence was the key to victory. The best minds in the country had guided the strategic war efforts, and intellect was held in higher esteem than at any other time since the founding of the country. The leaders of the country also realized that the Soviet Union, now controlling most of Eastern and Central Europe, constituted a real threat, despite being an ally during the war. The Soviet ideology was based on an economic system in direct conflict with capitalism; the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin had perpetrated major atrocities among his people to maintain power; and the country, aggressively atheistic, was aggressive in promoting its ideology with neighboring countries. The problem was how to awaken the general public to the threat and how to counter that threat in a euphoric but war-weary country. The possibility that the Soviet Union might develop atomic weapons and do so by spying created a climate of suspicion throughout the 1950s. Patriotism infused school curricula, and the place of God in the national psyche was brought to the forefront. The words “under God” were added to the Pledge of Allegiance, which was now a required daily recitation in almost all schools.

Intellectual competence was also viewed as essential in combating the Soviet threat. The life adjustment curriculum proposed supplanting the traditional discipline areas with

themes connected more directly with the problems of living. Criticism from the defenders of traditional disciplinary competence began to have an effect on the national consciousness, and the life adjustment curriculum withered and died. In 1957 the Soviets launched a satellite by rocket power, demonstrating their technological competence. The launch made the case for more technological competence, particularly in mathematics, science, and engineering, and opened the purse strings of the federal government for massive categorical aid to schools to improve instruction in areas of national priority. The federal government was now a major player in developing and directing school change. New curriculum packages were developed by university academics in mathematics, science, and foreign languages. Large numbers of teachers were trained in the new materials in summer institutes and degree programs. Schools received funds to purchase and use the new materials. Cadres were dispatched to observe and evaluate the effects of such use. The power to influence school curricula had now been taken out of the hands of elementary and secondary school teachers and placed in the hands of university professors.

The sixties brought a resurgence of social consciousness. Lyndon B. Johnson, a man educated in a teachers college, was sympathetic to the power of education to ameliorate social conditions. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, with its categorical titles addressing literacy, innovation, libraries, teacher training, and equity, among other things, brought federal aid to almost all schools in the country. The National Science Foundation funded both science and mathematics education in the schools and provided research funds for colleges. Curriculum packages were created using federal money in almost all subject areas except religion. This practice, however, disappeared after the controversy over “Man: A Course of Study,” a social studies package that tread on the religious beliefs of many people through its discussion of the Eskimo practice of “geriatricide” and its comparisons of human activity to animal groups.

The Contemporary Era: Court Involvement and Continued Conflict

Now that all public schools were receiving federal aid for a variety of educational endeavors, questions began to reemerge about providing such funds to parochial schools. The courts were forced to adjudicate. The Catholic Church had instituted a parochial school system in the nineteenth century after its efforts to share in public funds for education

failed. In *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947) the Supreme Court was asked to rule on reimbursing parents for transportation of their children to parochial schools. The Court decided in favor of the parents; however, the interpretation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment by Justice Hugo Black set a standard of neutrality that became the criterion for a series of landmark cases. The Court disallowed released time for religious instruction on school grounds in *McCullum v. Board of Education* (1948), approved released time for religious instruction off school grounds in *Zorach v. Clauson* (1952), disallowed a required prayer in New York schools in *Engel v. Vitale* (1961), disallowed public Bible reading in schools even if students were excused in *School District of Abington Township v. Schempp* (1963), disallowed using public funds for salaries of teachers of secular subjects in religious schools in *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (1971), disallowed a moment of silence requirement that had a religious intent in *Wallace v. Jaffree* (1985), disallowed prayer at graduation in *Lee v. Weisman* (1992), and disallowed prayer at football games in *Santa Fe v. Doe* (2000). From 1947 to 1997 the court adjudicated fifty-two establishment cases in which the majority involved schools.

It seemed clear that the Court was taking a strict separationist position toward religion in the schools. However, in *School District of Abington Township v. Schempp* (1963) the Court had also stated that a knowledge of religion as a powerful force in the development of humankind was essential to a complete education, and therefore schools might teach about religion, but not inculcate religion. From a curriculum standpoint, this finding seemed to suggest three possibilities: (1) teaching religious traditions, a kind of religions-of-the-world approach; (2) teaching religious sensibility in order to understand its power and attraction throughout the ages; and (3) teaching religion as a way in which a person views reality and his or her place in reality—that is, religion as *weltanschauung*. The first approach is typical of many colleges with a religion department; the study of religions is an option in general education. Teachers could be trained to teach such a course, and yet some religions would undoubtedly be given less attention or no attention.

The argument for the second approach is analogous to the argument that science should be taught in conjunction with laboratory experiments in order for students to appreciate and practice the activity associated with scientific discovery. This approach is even more problematic because the typical school curriculum would unlikely be able to support

more than one such experiential religious exercise and the inculcation charge would surely be forthcoming.

The third approach raises interesting questions. When religion is described as a kind of “worldview,” it can then be equated with science as a worldview, idealism as a worldview, realism as a worldview, pragmatism as a worldview, and perhaps even liberalism, conservatism, and Marxism as worldviews. Furthermore, if science and these -isms are seen as competing worldviews in which there is no absolute criterion to judge the adequacy of a particular view beyond its popularity, then all or many should be taught somewhere in the curriculum on the basis of fairness. All should at least be given a hearing. This argument is being made in the current debates over including intelligent design in biology classes because it is a worldview in competition with evolution and is held by a significant proportion of the nation’s population. This argument played a role in two fairly recent court cases and a decision by a state education board. In 1987 in *Smith v. Board of Commissions of Mobile County*, William Brevard Hand, a district court judge in Alabama, declared that if religion must be removed from schools then all religions must be removed from schools, including “secular humanism,” which he declared a religion. In 1987 in *Mozert v. Hawkins County Board of Education*, the parent of a Tennessee school student brought charges against the school that some stories in the reader used in her child’s class were anathema to her religious beliefs and violated the freedom of religion clause. The judge’s support of her claim was overturned on appeal, but the publisher of the reader dropped the offending stories in the next edition. Finally, in 1999 the Kansas education board voted to remove evolution theory from the state’s standardized tests and leave it to the state’s school districts whether to include instruction in evolution in school curricula. When the ruling was challenged by some parents, an independent committee chosen to make recommendations to the board argued essentially that intelligent design should be included because it is a valid worldview of the beginnings and development of humankind. Should such an approach be undertaken, the practical problems seem daunting. At the very least, any one teacher could be accused of bias because he or she would, by definition, possess some worldview.

The relationship between religion and the schools remains problematic. Many schools completely avoid the subject. Many others, particularly in rural, more religiously homogeneous communities continue school practices that are essentially nondenominationally Protestant. The United

States remains the most religious country in the Western world but also the most diverse religiously. The Pew Research Center lists evangelical Protestants as the single largest category, and yet the combination of evangelical and mainline Protestant categories still totals less than 50 percent. Roman Catholics make up less than 25 percent of the population, and the number admitting no affiliation is over 15 percent, the fourth largest category. Within these categories, denominations and individuals within them may differ in their beliefs. It seems clear, then, that schools could hardly be absolutely neutral toward religion. Surely some practice in a school would violate some group’s beliefs.

The major controversies between religion and schooling revolve around the matter of compulsion to attend school and the use of public funds to support religious schools. These issues are, of course, related. Few parents want no education for their children. But they do want to be able to choose the kind of education their children receive, and many believe that public funds should be made available to support such education. Proposals to ameliorate this concern are school vouchers, charter schools, and home-schooling. Yet public schooling remains the dominant form of schooling in the United States. As of 2003, 49 million children were enrolled in public schools, and about six million were in some form of private schooling, or just over 10 percent. Of the private school children, 80 percent were in religion-affiliated schools, and of that group nearly 60 percent were in Catholic schools. The number of children in nondenominational Christian schools was less than 700,000. The fastest-growing group of nonpublic school students is homeschoolers, although the number remains relatively small at just over one million, and only about half of those do so for religious reasons. The public schools, then, maintain a “market share” of 90 percent of students ages six to eighteen, and conflict over religious belief and practice is most often played out in that setting. Meanwhile, it appears that such conflict will continue with no particular curriculum solution. It seems unlikely that the Constitution could be construed to allow direct public aid to religious schools. Perhaps the wisest route for the public schools is to continue a policy of positive nonpartisanship, correcting egregious insults to religious belief when they occur and experimenting with proposals to teach about religion.

See also *Canada: Church and State; Cult of Domesticity; Education* entries; *Enlightenment; Establishment, Religious; Evolution,*

Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Freedom, Religious; Pledge of Allegiance; Politics entries; Pragmatism; Supreme Court.

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Education: Bible Schools and Colleges

Bible schools and colleges are evangelical institutions that offer lay and collegiate education designed to produce Christian disciples committed to serving as laypersons, professionals, or ordained clergy in church or parachurch ministries. Although Bible schools and colleges share with Christian liberal arts colleges and universities a common Christian worldview and philosophy of education, they offer a narrowly focused curriculum designed to prepare students for a more restricted field of vocational objectives.

Origins

Bible schools began in the 1880s and 1890s. Like other types of vocational training schools that emerged in the decades before and after 1900, they offered education outside the boundaries of the older classical curriculum in American colleges and became remarkably popular. The earliest schools were founded by, among others, Albert B. Simpson,

New York Missionary Training College for Home and Foreign Missionaries (1882); Adoniram Judson Gordon, Boston Bible Training School (1889); and Dwight L. Moody, Moody Bible Institute (1886). Alarmed about the pervasiveness of lukewarm, nominal Christians, these men sought to rectify what they saw as theologically and evangelistically weak churches. They founded Bible institutes to provide systematic biblical and theological instruction, spiritual nurture, and above all, practical training for laypersons, who, as an ever-growing army, would serve as Sunday school teachers, evangelists, and missionaries in local and foreign mission work. Thirty-four schools were founded, largely in the North, between 1882 and 1918.

The Moody Bible Institute's phenomenal success in attracting students—attributable to Moody's prominence as an evangelist, the school's strategic location, and its innovative nature—made it a model for the nascent Bible school movement. On the whole, Bible schools were theologically conservative, emphasizing a conversion experience, biblical authority, and a sanctified life. They typically adhered to the novel dispensational form of premillennialism rooted in the theology of nineteenth-century Brethren writer John Nelson Darby and emphasizing a radical distinction between the nation of Israel and the Christian church and the rapture of the church prior to Christ's second advent. Some Bible schools arose within the early twentieth-century Pentecostal movement. They held that speaking in tongues signified Holy Spirit baptism and taught the continuing presence of the miracle and sign gifts associated with first-century Christianity. Bible schools offered roughly high school-level instruction and provided students with abundant opportunities for hands-on Christian service training.

Influence of the Fundamentalist Movement

Bible schools multiplied rapidly in the decades after World War I, with at least seventy more in operation by 1945. Sixty-six new schools were founded in the 1940s alone, including the Carver Bible Institute in Atlanta, Ozark Bible College in Joplin, Missouri, and Freewill Baptist Bible College in Nashville. This extraordinary expansion is largely attributable to the fundamentalist-modernist controversies of the 1920s. Responding to the liberalism they detected in denominational divinity schools and colleges, many fundamentalists, mainly outside the South, turned to the Bible schools as an educational alternative. As a result, Bible schools not only increased numerically but also quickly developed into complex educational institutions.

Well-established schools purchased and built permanent facilities, expanded their curricula to three or four years, employed full-time faculty, adopted official statements of faith, and, following Moody Bible Institute, experimented with new delivery systems such as correspondence courses, magazines, Bible study guides, radio programs, and extension departments that organized Bible conferences.

Because of these creative responses to the changing religious environment in the United States, Bible schools sustained fundamentalism in a variety of ways during and after the controversies of the 1920s. First, as the conservative theological influence declined in denominational institutions, prominent schools such as the Moody Bible Institute and the Bible Institute of Los Angeles formally entered the field of ministerial education by offering pastoral training courses, a significant curriculum change. Second, Bible schools acted as moderating and unifying influences within a generally cantankerous fundamentalist movement. In addition to encouraging interdenominational cooperation, Bible school leaders ordinarily steered a middle course in disputes between moderate and separatist fundamentalists, especially in disagreements over withdrawing from the mainline Protestant churches. They emphasized the nonsectarian nature of genuine Bible study and evangelism and attempted to promote stability rather than controversy. Third, some Bible schools, such as William Bell Riley's Northwestern Bible and Missionary Training School of Minneapolis, served as regional headquarters for denominational fundamentalist leaders or as denominational surrogates for loosely affiliated groups of independent churches.

This rapidly expanding movement gained some uniformity in 1930 when Clarence H. Benson, a faculty member at Moody Bible Institute, established the Evangelical Teacher Training Association (ETTA). Benson believed that America's Sunday school movement suffered from inadequately trained teachers, and he developed the ETTA program to produce master teachers, who would then teach and certify other teachers in local churches. He employed Moody's program in religious education as a model for the association's standard training course, which required classes in Bible, missions, personal evangelism, Bible introduction, child study, department specialization, pedagogy, Bible geography, and Sunday school administration, as well as in four hours of electives. In addition to setting curriculum standards among the Bible schools, ETTA promoted institutional quality by granting "gold seal" status to those schools that required high school graduation for admission and a

college degree for faculty service. To achieve this "gold seal" recognition, institutions also had to provide dormitories for day students and have a library of at least a thousand books.

Professionalization

In addition to adjusting to the homogenizing tendencies spawned by the ETTA, Bible school leaders responded to national trends in American education after World War II by pursuing academic respectability, a quest that brought further standardization to the movement. In response to the GI Bill-related expansion of higher education and to the increasing professionalization and demand for more advanced credentials within American society, Bible school leaders developed their schools into colleges offering either bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degrees. As they transformed their schools, Bible college leaders revived a suggestion put forth by Moody Bible Institute president James M. Gray in 1918: create an accrediting association to give Bible schools greater legitimacy within the broader world of American higher education. In 1946 Howard W. Ferrin, president of Providence Bible Institute, asserted the pressing need for an accrediting agency, arguing that accreditation through the existing regional associations could undermine Bible school distinctiveness. Other leaders within the movement agreed, and in 1947 they formed the Accrediting Association of Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges (shortened to Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges in 1957, AABC), which accredited schools in the United States and Canada.

Not everyone agreed with these developments. Some school leaders feared that a loss of independent action might lead to modernism and declined to seek accreditation. By 1962 there were 183 Bible schools in the United States and 51 in Canada. About 64 percent of the schools were denominationally affiliated, and the others were independent organizations with interdenominational constituencies. Fifty-two percent of the 234 schools were collegiate-level institutions, and despite concerns about the possibility of theological corrosion, 20 percent of them were accredited by the AABC by 1960. An average of ten additional schools acquired accreditation every five years for the remainder of the century. Bible colleges required applicants to have high school diplomas and offered their students larger libraries, better-credentialed faculty, and the liberal arts subjects required for undergraduates. To fund these developments, many of the schools began charging tuition in addition to the minimal fees they were already charging.

By 1960 Bible institutes and colleges had an estimated enrollment of 35,000 students. In addition to providing thousands of graduates for vocational and lay ministries in North America, the Bible schools played a vital role in the extraordinary expansion of Protestant missions in the twentieth century. By 1969, 70 percent of Protestant missionaries in the world were from North America. In 1974 an estimated 75 percent of North Americans serving in foreign mission fields had received part or all of their training in Bible schools. Some of the earliest schools were begun specifically for training missionaries, and an emphasis on Christian missions continues to be a central component of Bible school education.

Changing Identity

In the decades after 1950, Bible colleges, with few exceptions, continued to evolve into more multifaceted institutions as Bible school leaders pursued higher academic standards and professional recognition. More progressive-minded leaders abandoned the traditional belief that Bible schools should provide only a limited number of terminal vocational programs. Defining the term *ministry* more broadly, they began offering additional majors in elementary education, communications, counseling, music education, and social work, and they established pre-seminary programs that required additional arts and sciences courses. Meanwhile, they encouraged their students to pursue graduate training, and by 1995, 26 percent of the schools accredited by the AABC were offering their own graduate programs in areas such as biblical studies, counseling, and ministerial studies. As they expanded the curricula, some Bible school leaders also sought further academic respectability by seeking accreditation by regional accrediting agencies. By 1995, 28 percent of the AABC-accredited schools had achieved this goal. And by 2008 some 50 percent of the schools accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE)—as the AABC was renamed in 2004 because of its expansion into the field of graduate education and the accrediting of individual programs within an institution—also held regional accreditation, reflecting a growing trend within the Bible school movement. Some schools, however, such as the Raleigh Institute of Biblical Studies in Raleigh, North Carolina, and the Tyndale Biblical Institute in Fort Worth, Texas, continue to view all forms of accreditation as threats to doctrinal autonomy and to the practical, spiritual dimension of their courses.

By the late twentieth century 55 percent of the Bible colleges fit this more progressive profile, although a

significant minority, fearing that such changes prefigured a departure from the original Bible school mission, tenaciously clung to the original vision. By the 1970s sustaining this posture became increasingly difficult in the face of declining enrollments and escalating costs. Colleges' concerns about fidelity to the original mission were not without some foundation. Within the progressive movement a minor trend toward Bible colleges evolving into liberal arts colleges or universities with only regional accreditation was observed as early as the 1950s and included schools such as Messiah Bible College, Cleveland Bible College, and the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, one of the flagship schools of the Bible school movement.

Ninety-six institutions are presently accredited by ABHE, eight hold candidate status, and twenty-four others have applied for accreditation. Currently about twelve hundred Bible schools in the United States are not accredited by the ABHE. Most of these institutions simply lack the financial resources to meet the criteria for accreditation, while other schools, typically associated with large independent churches, either follow the original Bible school vision of training laypersons for nonvocational ministries or eschew accreditation because of its perceived corrupting influences.

In light of the post-World War II developments within the movement and the growing strength of conservative evangelical liberal arts colleges and seminaries, Bible college leaders were in the early twenty-first century reevaluating the movement's institutional mission, reaffirming their commitment to maintaining the Bible major at the core of their curriculum, and adjusting the curriculum to attract students with academic goals and employment opportunities not addressed by traditional Bible college programs.

Historians have demonstrated that the Bible school and college movement has played a far more important role within North American Christianity than statistics related to funding and graduates imply. These institutions provided leaders and thousands of foot soldiers for the parachurch organizations emerging in America in the mid-twentieth century that would contribute to the restructuring of American religious life. Thus Bible schools helped forge the conservative evangelical movement that emerged as a potent force in American political and cultural life in the 1970s.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism*; *Bible* entries; *Education: Sunday Schools*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Fundamentalism*; *Independent Bible and Community Churches*.

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Education: Boarding Schools

The United States is home to nearly three hundred private boarding schools. Although these schools are far from homogeneous in educational philosophy, size, and mission, many of them either maintain explicit religious affiliations or they were founded for religious purposes. However, many have also minimized their religious missions for the sake of what they see as modernity. Sixty-nine percent of boarding schools are located along the eastern seaboard; 34 percent are in New England. Boarding schools are small by public school standards—most have between two hundred and four hundred students. Roughly one-third of the schools have formal religious affiliations.

In 1985 Peter W. Cookson Jr. and Caroline H. Persell identified nine basic types of American boarding schools: academies, Episcopal schools, entrepreneurial schools, girls' schools, Catholic schools, western schools, progressive schools, Quaker schools, and military academies. Some boarding schools, however, are more socially prestigious than others, primarily because of the social class of the families supporting the schools. The most prestigious schools are the older eastern "prep" schools, which have educated generations of students from America's upper-class families. The most elite schools are sometimes referred to as the "Select Sixteen."

Prep school students, however, make up just a small fraction of the overall population of boarding schools. Boarding schools offer students a wide range of educational experiences. Some schools emphasize academic rigor, while others emphasize character development. Some schools have very demanding discipline codes, while others seek to promote individual responsibility.

Some one hundred boarding schools are specifically denominational, including Baptist, Catholic, Episcopal, Free Methodist, Moravian, Presbyterian, Quaker, United Methodist, and Jewish. Over the last twenty years, Christian groups identifying themselves as evangelical have founded residential schools. Many of these schools are dedicated to helping teens who are exhibiting self-destructive or antisocial behavior.

When a school identifies itself as explicitly religious it does not mean that all students who attend that school belong to the school's religious denomination or even that the majority of students come from religious backgrounds. Parents often send their children to boarding school for nonreligious reasons. Nearly all boarding schools are financially driven by the need to demonstrate that they have the educational and social power to enable graduating students to attend selective colleges and universities. In one sense, the most practical "value-added" benefit of boarding school is the increased likelihood of a student's success in the race for admittance to a well-known college or university. However, this secular mission does not always mesh easily with schools' missions to build character and develop religious sensibilities. Maintaining a genuine religious mission in the context of a very competitive society is a challenge facing nearly all religion-oriented boarding schools.

Although it is true that from a denominational point of view the world of boarding schools is far from homogeneous, it is also true that the eastern prep schools are still the cultural and academic leaders of that world. These schools continue to believe strongly that liberal Christianity is the ethical core of the American leadership class. Thus a commitment to the moral imperatives of Christian service and sacrifice remains central to the ethos of many eastern prep schools. Modernity does not stop at the prep school gate, but to be admitted it must acknowledge that the traditional ethical and religious values of the schools' founders are alive and well.

Gentlemen of the Republic—Defining the American Ideal

The first genuine American boarding schools were Phillips Andover Academy (founded in 1778) and Phillips Exeter Academy (1783). The older of the two academies was founded by Samuel Phillips Jr.; Paul Revere designed the school's seal. The central feature of the seal is a beehive symbolizing hard work because the founder "deemed idleness to be the most insidious and demoralizing vice." Self-reliance and service were to be the hallmarks of the new American

man and woman. One of Andover's earliest visitors was George Washington in 1789—the ideal first American. A third academy, Deerfield, was established in 1797 by Massachusetts governor Samuel Adams.

From their founding, the academies required religious observances. Congregationalism, the heir to colonial Puritanism, remained the most prestigious faith in New England in the early republic and prevailed in these first boarding schools. Early morning chapel was required, and, quite often, students attended chapel twice on Sundays. Most headmasters were ministers who were chosen for their moral rectitude. Without godliness there could be no real goodness, and thus the academies reflected the quintessential American belief that action and salvation were not opposites but, together, compelled the otherwise sinful, and possibly slothful, to apply himself (and later herself) to progress and prosperity.

Leaving Nothing to Chance—The Total Institution

The idea that idle adolescents were subject to laziness and temptation fueled the philosophies of various early nineteenth-century educational philosophers. As reported by James McLachlan in 1970, Emmanuel Von Fellenberg, the Swiss educational thinker, maintained that “the great art of educating consists in knowing how to occupy every moment of life in well directed and useful activity of the youthful powers, in order that, so far as possible, nothing evil may find room to develop itself.”

To accomplish this end, the early boarding schools became total institutions. According to the sociologist Irving Goffman, total institutions share four central characteristics: (1) all activities are conducted in the same place under a single authority; (2) daily life is carried out in the immediate company of others; (3) life is tightly scheduled and fixed by a set of formal rules; and (4) all activities are designed purportedly to fulfill the official aims of the institution.

Cookson (1982) examined the nature of students' moral careers within the total institution. Following the research of Sanford M. Dornbush (1955), he identified a set of sequential steps in students' moral careers: suppressing preexisting statuses; learning new rules and adjusting to conflicts between rules; developing solidarity, developing a charismatic spirit, finding new satisfaction in interaction, social mobility and justification of institutional practices; and, last, undergoing reality shock. Total institutions transform those who are exposed to their intense socialization processes, which are not unlike the experiences of novitiates during seminary training.

Founded in 1839, Episcopal High School in Virginia might qualify as the country's first true “prep” school. The school sought to develop character by a simple honor code that is still the cornerstone of the school's culture: “I will not lie, I will not cheat, I will not steal, I will report the student who does.” Although the Episcopal honor code is not unlike the moral codes found at the older New England academies, it does place absolute morality above industry and service—perhaps reflecting a distinctively Virginian evangelical approach to Anglicanism.

As the Civil War came to an end, the country began to industrialize, and colonial America began to fade, a new vision of America began to develop—a vision of global competition and military power. The emerging American upper class looked to England for models of education and discovered the British public school, which had been reinvigorated by Thomas Arnold at the Rugby School in mid-century. Arnold was the very epitome of the rugged Christian gentleman; like the sport named after the Rugby School, the Victorian gentleman was strong, was unafraid of pain, and took privilege as a badge of honor and responsibility.

The Victorian Worldview

The latter half of the nineteenth century marked the era of the great prep school movement. The peak years were from 1883 to 1896; the pivotal year was 1884 when Groton was founded by Endicott Peabody, an English-educated Episcopal priest. Not all the schools were founded by Episcopalians, but the underlying Anglican worldview that emphasized tradition, faith, and reason was present in nearly all of the educational philosophies of the Victorian prep schools.

The moral center of the school was not the classroom but the chapel. And students at Groton still attend chapel four times a week. Saint John's Chapel at the Groton School was designed by Henry Vaughn. On the walls of the chapel are chiseled the names of the school's graduates, who include Franklin D. Roosevelt. Groton and schools like it were and are pipelines to Ivy League colleges, Wall Street, and the State Department.

Over the years, the Victorian worldview has softened. Indeed, if the schools' founders were to return today they might be shocked. Nearly all the schools are coeducational and racially and ethnically diverse, and, perhaps most shocking of all, not all the graduates go to Harvard, Yale, or Princeton. And yet if the founders were to dig a little deeper they might still see the essence of their old schools—the times have changed but the mission remains.

Conclusion

The early founders of America's boarding schools sought to create a generation of leaders fit to lead a country destined for greatness. Their religious convictions were as much a part of the schools' enduring strength as the mortar that holds the original bricks together through the harshest of New England winters. Of course, the schools have changed in some important ways—most are now coeducational, and the age of computers has brought the world onto the campuses. Most of the schools embrace globalization and diversity as part of their educational and moral missions.

Religion continues to play an important role in the educational and moral ethos of American boarding schools. Many denominations are represented among the roughly one hundred boarding schools that explicitly identify with a particular religion. The belief that early religious socialization forges more moral adults persists among those that support boarding schools. History has shown that despite major cultural and economic shifts, this belief has considerable resilience.

See also *Canada: Church and State; Children and Adolescents; Congregationalists; Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools; Episcopalians* entries; *Mainline Protestants; New England Region; Quakers* entries.

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Education: Christian School Movement

The history of the Christian school movement reveals the controversies over public education and the resurgence of evangelical activism that characterized the latter decades of the twentieth century and the beginning of the new millennium. Significant litigation and legislation have accompanied the secularization of public schools and the proliferation of "Christian" (private, evangelical) schools. Centered on the issues of states' rights versus parents' rights and church-state relations, the legal and philosophical battles have spilled over from the classroom into the courtroom, influencing both private and public education. The fundamental questions are: Whose right and whose responsibility is it to teach what to whom? And what kinds of resources will they be allotted?

The contemporary proliferation of Christian schools represents the first widespread secession from public schooling since the establishment of the Catholic parochial school system, but it is not a new phenomenon. Most denominations experimented with religious weekday education throughout the nineteenth century, although the idea never took off. By the early twentieth century most mainline denominations had abandoned the idea of religious day schools altogether. Although evangelicals continued to establish independent postsecondary educational institutions and Bible colleges, it was not until the mid-twentieth century that they began to establish their own primary and secondary schools. They called their schools "Christian," in contrast to other religious schools (those established by Catholics, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Quakers, and Amish, among others). The term *Christian* is used to emphasize a distinction evangelicals draw between themselves as "saved" and others who are "unsaved."

Interdenominational and Protestant, "Christian schools" actually represent a range of evangelical groups. The term *evangelical* is often used inclusively to refer to coalitions or alliances of fundamentalist, Pentecostal, charismatic, and neo-evangelical Christians, all of whom share basic evangelical tenets. These include a belief in Christ as personal savior,

the need for a conversion experience in order to be saved, the Bible as the inerrant word of God, and the need to spread the gospel and convert others to Christ.

A grassroots movement of the 1950s, Christian schools proliferated in the late 1960s and 1970s. Until the 1970s they tended to be scattered, but then they began to organize through Christian school associations. These associations offer a variety of services, including monitoring legislation at the state and federal levels, legal assistance, school and teacher accreditation, professional training, teacher placement, insurance packages, and national competitions in athletics, academic debates, music, and Bible. They serve primarily as lobbying organizations that monitor legislation and defend individual cases at the local, state, and federal levels. According to Robert Liebman and Robert Wuthnow, politically active evangelicals of the 1970s and 1980s cut their political teeth defending the Christian schools they had helped to organize.

Once the sponsors and regulators of the mainstream educational system, evangelical Protestants felt compelled to pursue alternative forms of education in the closing decades of the twentieth century in an effort to restore religious authority, reinforce parental authority, and provide quality education while protecting their children from the drugs, sex, violence, and lack of discipline they believed were rampant in the public schools. They acted in response to a series of perceived threats, the most serious of which was the general secularization of life and the legislatively mandated secularization of public schools. U.S. Supreme Court decisions prohibiting prayer (*Engel v. Vitale* [1962]) and Bible readings and devotions in public schools (*School District of Abington v. Schempp* [1963]) offended evangelicals because these actions excluded God. Just as the Vietnam War and Watergate challenged the notion of America as the “Righteous Empire,” evangelicals believed that their own “civil religion” had been eroded—a righteous patriotism had been excluded from the public schools.

Christian school advocates were convinced that “secular hegemony” was undermining the supremacy and legitimacy of the traditional, white Protestant, middle-class, patriarchal family. They pointed to the culprits: *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), the Supreme Court decision that desegregated schools, the increase in the divorce rate and single parenting, and the civil rights, women’s rights, and children’s rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s. In seeking to preserve the “traditional” patriarchal family, some evangelical parents withdrew their support from public

schools and established their own schools so they could hire teachers who would reinforce their values and authority. Personal character and religious commitment were considered more important in hiring Christian school teachers than academic credentials or pedagogical expertise. That said, Christian school parents were also concerned with the academic quality and social environment of the public schools. The school atmosphere, the way students were taught, and the whole matrix of social relations were as important as the specific information being taught.

By 2000 some 1.3 million students were enrolled in an estimated nine thousand Christian schools (K–12). These enrollments represent about 25 percent of the total private school population and 2–3 percent of the national school population. Even during a period of high unemployment and national economic recession, and when enrollments in both public and nonpublic schools were declining, the Christian school movement grew dramatically. Even though Roman Catholic schools are still the largest group in private education, Christian schools have grown in both numbers and relative influence.

The Educational Philosophy of Christian Schools

Many evangelicals believe that Christians should maintain their own separate form of schooling; if they are true believers they could not possibly entertain the idea of sending their children to public schools. Such strict separatists are accompanied along the fundamentalist–evangelical spectrum by accommodationists, who see Christian schooling as an alternative to public schooling and leave the choice to parents, and by interventionists, who see the public schools as a type of mission field and suggest that it may be un-Christian to abandon them.

Whatever their philosophical and strategic differences, evangelicals are united in their opposition to secular humanism and values clarification in public education. Antihumanist, anticommunist, and antifeminist, they rally around the teaching of “the basics” that once represented the foundations of Protestant, patriotic, and patriarchal culture. As the alternative to public education, Christian schools offer a holistic, authoritative, disciplined, and God-centered education that emphasizes character development and spiritual training. Affective and moral domains are considered at least as important as cognitive domains.

Excerpts from a Christian school handbook in upstate New York articulate the general educational philosophy of the Christian school movement in general:

Mathematics: In light of the order God has produced in the material universe and its set relationships in space and time, we cannot overlook Mathematics as being an instrument for teaching our students concepts of order and logic that Creation itself portrays as a very attribute of God. Mathematics is an exact science and in this present age of “relative truth,” it affords the Christian school an excellent opportunity to teach each student how to comprehend the orderly world around him, created by God who presents Himself as Absolute Truth (John 14:6).

Science: Students should come to view Science not as a discipline that destroys the traditional values of Christian faith, but as a secondary interpretive aid to the Biblical revelation (i.e., understanding how creation works). Because the Biblical perspective is far deeper and more inclusive than the scientific viewpoint, reaching to the area of ultimate meaning, the Biblical revelation has the final priority.

In general, Christian schools stress creationism, the Christian history of the United States, the fight for religious freedom, the integral relationship between patriotism and Christianity, the religious foundation of the polity and educational system, and the religious character of traditional American leaders such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. They emphasize free-enterprise economics and reject the teaching of evolution, multiculturalism, and sex education.

Educational Organization and Curricula

Even though Christian school advocates want to remedy what they consider ungodly and un-American progressivism in the schools, they also acknowledge that they are struggling with how to construct a “Christian curriculum.” The Christian school movement, like the evangelical movement, is not monolithic; rather, the variation among schools reflects the ideological, organizational, and demographic characteristics of the sponsoring congregation as well as the talents and personal styles of those who establish and operate them. Curricula range from secular materials to Christian-based instruction. Although the majority of schools follow traditional styles of classroom interaction and teaching practices, others use more behaviorist models of prepackaged, individualized instruction or intensive group recitation.

Facilities range from poorly equipped church basements to modern, multi-building campuses. Some have computerized labs, while others have no lab equipment at all. Christian schools offer a private education at a lower cost than many other schools.

Economic realities influence, if not determine, educational philosophy and method. For example, many new schools use the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) curriculum program precisely because it is inexpensive. A highly standardized system of education, ACE provides all the information, materials, and equipment necessary to set up a school quickly and inexpensively. Christian curricula (at a cost of less than \$1,000 per year per child), furniture, procedural guides, administrator and teacher training, and even uniforms (red, white and blue, with American flags on the boys’ ties), can be purchased. A church can cheaply and quickly set up a school in its basement, hiring teachers who do not need to be certified or college-educated. Although ACE is not representative of the entire Christian school movement, it is the largest distributor of Christian school curricula and claims close to six thousand schools nationwide. ACE estimates that some two-thirds of Christian schools established in the 1980s initially used ACE.

Whether the schools are using Christian (such as ACE, A Beka, Alpha Omega, or Bob Jones texts and materials) or secular materials, Bible readings, worship, and prayer times accompany regular instruction. Moreover, certain policies and practices are typical of the majority of Christian schools. Discipline is a primary concern. In preparation for the ultimate submission to God, children are taught to obey their parents, teachers, spiritual leaders, and civil authorities, but they are warned against nonbelievers. Referring to the scripture that to “spare the rod is to spoil the child,” Christian schools generally use corporal punishment. One visible way of maintaining school discipline and reinforcing standards about appropriate behavior is enforcing a strict dress code, emphasizing modesty and propriety.

The majority of Christian schools offer only elementary education, but as the children grow older the school often grows with them. Thus increasingly Christian schools are offering secondary education. The enrollment of the average Christian school falls between one hundred and two hundred students, although the schools vary in size from ten to over two thousand. The majority of Christian schools are church-sponsored, but some (such as the Calvinist day schools) are parent-run or board-run.

The question of admissions policies relative to race and ethnicity is an important and controversial one. In the 1970s about one hundred schools lost their tax-exempt status because they were avoiding integration. Although some began as segregationist academies, it appears that most do not now actively discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity. Some, such as Jerry Falwell's Christian Academy in Lynchburg, Virginia, which initially advertised for "whites only," have changed their admissions policies. Other Christian schools are actively committed to racial and ethnic diversity, a number of which are serving black and, to a lesser extent, Hispanic and Native American students.

Impact on Public Policy

The New Christian Right has had an impact on U.S. society not only through the establishment of Christian schools but also through its influence on education in the society at large. It has been influential in blocking the passage of public school referenda, in pressuring publishers to alter the content of public school textbooks, and in minimizing state-regulated standards for private schools and homeschooling.

One evangelical and fundamentalist *cause célèbre* has been the battle to deregulate private schools. New Christian Right victories minimizing the standards for operating a private school and teacher certification have benefited non-evangelical groups as well. Russell Means, leader of the American Indian Movement, indicated that the successful attempts at removing state certification standards for private schools in South Dakota have made it easier to establish a private school in the Black Hills encampment of the Dakota Sioux. Means can now hire uncertified teachers to instruct children in traditional Sioux ways and values. Deregulation has also benefited the homeschooling movement.

The "National Conference of State Legislatures Report on Home Schooling" (1989) suggested that the growing momentum of homeschooling and the litigation surrounding it were in large part the result of the resurgence in religious activism. John Holt and Ivan Illich, founders of the liberal private school movement, were aided in their efforts by the evangelicals' victories that revoked certification standards. Many Christian school leaders initially opposed homeschooling, fearing it would draw students away from Christian schools. Their position was difficult to sustain, however, because much of their rationale for Christian schooling rested on the biblical premise that parents are the ones primarily responsible for the education of their

children. Thus the resistance of Christian school educators to homeschooling has waned.

Textbook publishers have also been influenced by the organized efforts of the New Christian Right, and so they have avoided "publishing material that might be construed as unpatriotic, anti-capitalistic, or anti-Christian." Phyllis Schlafly, conservative activist and president of the Eagle Forum, argues that public schools should use textbooks that do not offend the religious and moral values of parents. Instead, they should use textbooks that "honor the family, marriage, and man's role as provider and protector." One of the most successful attempts to control the content of texts has been Educational Research Analysts, a textbook review service founded by Norma and Melvin Gabler in 1975 out of their home in Longview, Texas. Since that time, their operation has grown into a worldwide organization. Because Texas has one of the largest school-age populations in the country and therefore one of the largest textbook markets, this organization's decisions help determine the content of schoolbooks sold all over the nation.

Evangelicals have objected to the use of the Harry Potter series, to the 1969 film *The Learning Tree* which depicted racial discrimination, and to homosexual authors such as Oscar Wilde, Tennessee Williams, Gore Vidal, and Walt Whitman. The treatment of racial and ethnic diversity in the United States is a major curricular issue, with evangelicals tending to want to limit the discussion of racial pluralism. In the Kanawha County textbook controversy, for example, Alice Moore, the wife of a fundamentalist minister who was the catalyst for censoring school textbooks, claimed that the proposed ban on books was not inspired by racism. However, the list of authors accused of corrupting the basic values of Christian parents included Gwendolyn Brooks, Dick Gregory, Eldridge Cleaver, Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, and Malcolm X. Moore, one of the proponents of the ban, argued that these authors were excluded not because they were black but because they espoused moral and philosophical positions contrary to those of the protestors. She suggested that the best solution would be for the schools to ignore the question of ethnicity and racism and concentrate on the "inculcation of Americanism."

Another battle site in the war over public schools is outcome-based education (OBE), a curriculum innovation used in several states across the country in which students must demonstrate proficiency in certain skills and knowledge before moving on to the next level of instruction. Critics of OBE claim that such programs "intrude upon a

parent's rightful role and promote values established by the government rather than the family."

In one example of the controversy surrounding the adoption of an OBE program, in Pennsylvania in the early 1990s Christians for Excellence in Education (CEE) led the fight against the values component of the program. The "values component" was Outcome #6, which established a goal of "appreciating and understanding others." To CEE, "respect for diversity" and a "tolerance of differences" meant promoting alternative lifestyles, most significantly homosexuality. Rather than teaching students to tolerate diversity, CEE argued, students should be taught a "commitment" to certain values and perspectives. Eventually, OBE passed in Pennsylvania, but only after Outcome #6 was eliminated and the words "attitudes and behavior" were eliminated from all parts of the program.

Concerned about the teaching of environmentalism, Christian Right groups have accused teachers and schools of promoting Satan and the occult, lying to students about the dangers of global warming and ozone depletion, and damaging the economic foundations of communities by teaching students to critically evaluate the effects of industrial pollution. William Griggs, a religious conservative, wrote in the biweekly publication *New American* that "environmentalism is largely based on a kind of secular religion that seeks temporal salvation through an all-powerful global government. . . . The growing environmental education movement is a recruitment drive intended to conscript young students into a pagan children's campaign." Groups particularly object to activities that encourage respect and love for "Mother Earth" and away from "the true and loving God" the Father.

Beginning in the 1960s conservative Christian groups opposed the teaching of comprehensive sex education in public schools. By the 1980s, however, it was clear that the Christian Right was having little success in removing this kind of instruction from schools. The general American public was supportive of sex education programs, and so the Christian Right began to promote abstinence-only programs in public schools. Since 1996, \$1 billion in state and federal funding has been allocated for abstinence-only education despite a lack of evidence supporting the effectiveness of this approach.

Conclusion: The Compromises of Success

Christian schools represent the mobilization efforts of evangelicals to establish greater control over the socialization and

education of their young. Parents and educational leaders of the Christian school movement want to protect their children from the degradation of modern secular life—although they attempt this in very different ways. How successful they are depends on the criteria by which one judges success.

Christian schools represent neither total rejection of secular processes nor total acceptance of patriarchal, evangelical ways. This act of compromise involves a myriad of contradictions as evangelicals selectively reject, accept, and adapt modern ideas, conveniences, and lifestyles. For example, evangelicals have a negative view of the commercialization of culture, but many develop, sell, buy, and use mass-market curriculum packages that dictate virtually every aspect of school life. Although Christian schools stress the values of the "traditional" patriarchal family and the "natural" submission of women, because of their size and curriculum the schools tend not to segregate boys from girls, nor do they present them with different curricula. However, the traditional gender roles are reinforced in the texts themselves, and adult men clearly have more status and authority than adult women within the community. Male teachers also are generally paid more than female teachers.

The establishment of Christian schools in the midst of a society that values educational conformity requires energy, confidence, and resourcefulness. It represents both an act of rebellion (against the dominant culture) and an act of commitment (to "Christian" community). Furthermore, the curricula used in Christian schools reveal both resistance and accommodation to the standard forms of educational content found in public schools. Christian schools may resist public school materials because they are too secular and humanistic, and mass commercialized culture because it is too materialistic and crass, but they often use those materials or buy mass-produced packages of Christian curricula. As evangelicals have reasserted their presence and influence over the last four decades, they have become less separatist. They have established their own separate schools, but they also have become engaged in political battles that have drawn them into the secular courts. Most of the primary goals on the evangelical agenda, however, have not been achieved—especially at the national level. Their attempts to institute tax credits and tuition vouchers that would have promoted greater school choice and school prayer have been, as of the first decade of the twenty-first century, unsuccessful. If significant progress toward evangelical goals is to be made, it will likely be at the state and local levels.

Even though educational policymakers recognize that the Christian school movement and its advocates have played a significant role in raising the issues they are now addressing, most indicated that American public education was and is driven more by economic concerns than religious forces. Yet it is also important to recognize the conservative impact that evangelicals can and do have. If the demand for equity is taken seriously and legitimated by the U.S. Supreme Court, then evangelicals who tend to be conservative and politically active are likely to challenge a major government increase in funding for education, especially if it is to be achieved through higher taxes.

Once the guardians of mainstream American education, evangelicals have now become the “watchdogs,” often criticizing public education and raising concerns that resonate with many Americans who do not necessarily share their evangelical worldview. In order to preserve their rights as evangelical Christians and to protect their schools, they have increasingly moved beyond the borders of their own communities.

What might the future hold? It appears as though the growth of the Christian school movement has plateaued, but that Christian schools will remain a viable option for educating children in the United States for some time to come. Some observers suggest a trend of convergence between public and Christian schooling. If the public schools continue to move to the right of center, with an emphasis on the “neutrality” of status quo “basics,” and if they increasingly approach “accountability” through standardized programs, then evangelical parents may become less dissatisfied with public education and less willing to bear the costs of Christian schooling. However, this conjecture ignores the religious motivation of many Christian school parents who want their children to go to school in an explicitly Christian environment. The decision-making process is complex; mixed motivations and different priorities are assigned to choices involving the education of one’s children, whether in public or private schools. Some evangelical parents are totally committed to Christian schooling, but probably the majority make decisions a year or two at a time, choosing among various Christian and public school and homeschooling options. As it is, some evangelical parents send one child to Christian school and another to public school, depending on what each might have to offer the individual child.

The greatest challenge for Christian schools in the next decade may be internal rather than external. Jim Carper,

professor of education at the University of South Carolina and a supporter of Christian education, argues that the major concerns facing Christian schools today are no longer government control, but rather financial stability and spiritual vitality. How they are able to balance these two concerns will be a test of their maturity as they come of age in the beginning of the twenty-first century.

In the process of trying to “revitalize” American education, both evangelicals and the educational system are being transformed. Although evangelicals have been influential in raising questions that have commanded the attention of many both within and beyond their home states, they have not convinced the culture at large that they have the answers. Thus the debate about what kinds of “revitalization” American education needs and how it will go about that process continues to be part of the contested terrain in the twenty-first century.

See also *Children and Adolescents*; *Education* entries; *Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements*; *Fundamentalism: Contemporary*; *Marriage and Family*; *Religious Right*; *Supreme Court*.

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Education: Colleges and Universities

The history of religious colleges and universities is consistent with the history of religion in North America. The

themes of New World empires, Protestant dominance in the United States, secularity, and diversification in the twentieth century are the same in both narratives. Historically, Protestants and Catholics have dominated the founding of colleges and universities. These two religions have also been present on secular campuses through student ministries. Throughout the twentieth century, additional religious traditions have established schools, adding to the diversity of religion and higher education in America.

New World Empires

The Spanish founded the earliest universities in the Americas. In 1538 the papacy ordered the Dominican seminary in Santo Domingo (now capital of the Dominican Republic) to become the Universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino. It is now the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo. Spanish king and Holy Roman emperor Charles I also ordered the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico in 1551, the first university founded on continental North America. The university closed in 1865. In 1551 Charles I also commissioned the University of San Marcos in Lima, Peru. In total, the Spanish established twenty-three schools, ten of which were founded before Harvard. The French founded a university in Quebec. Monseigneur François de Laval (1623–1708), the first bishop of New France, founded the Séminaire de Québec in 1663. In 1852 England's Queen Victoria commissioned the Université Laval in Quebec City from the Séminaire. It is the oldest university in Canada.

English Colonies

The earliest colleges and universities in the United States began as religious institutions in the colonial era. The Massachusetts Bay Colony founded Harvard under Congregational Puritan auspices and modeled it after Emmanuel College at Cambridge University in England. Emmanuel was a seat of Elizabethan Puritanism and was the alma mater of the majority of educated emigrants to Massachusetts. Founded in 1636, Harvard did not settle in Newtowne (later Cambridge in 1638) until the following year. Following the death of Rev. John Harvard (1607–1638), his estate donated half of his wealth and his entire library to the college, earning the college's namesake in 1639. Although a private college in its founding and governance, Harvard received a portion of the colony's budget. From 1669 to 1682, more than half of Harvard's income came from the government. The first faculty of Harvard

were clergy who were alumni of Oxford and Cambridge. The purpose of the school was ministerial and professional training. Less than half of Harvard's graduates became clergymen. Others became public servants, physicians, teachers, merchants, and soldiers.

Harvard had been founded on the English model of the residential college. The College of William and Mary followed the Scottish tradition of universities having no residency. Founded in 1693 in Tidewater Virginia, William and Mary was an Anglican school of the high-church, non-Puritan sort. Unlike Harvard, a board of prominent laity ran the college, not professional religious faculty. Like Harvard, William and Mary was a school for clergy, professionals, and gentlemen.

Near the end of the seventeenth century, some conservative Puritan Congregationalists feared the liberalism of Harvard's faculty, specifically the supposed Arminianism and Unitarianism of Bostonian divines. Led by Cotton Mather (1663–1728), the son of Harvard president Increase Mather (1639–1723), conservatives founded the Collegiate School in Connecticut in 1701. The school relocated to New Haven in 1716 and later renamed after its benefactor, Elihu Yale (1649–1721).

The revivalism of the middle decades in the 1700s gave rise to new colleges in colonial America. Presbyterians established a network of "log colleges" for the training of ministers. At these schools, ministerial candidates apprenticed under an established clergy. The flagship "log college" was in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, under the direction of William Tennent (1673–1746). Tennent's school would become the bastion of the New Light (that is, prorevival) Presbyterian faction. In 1746 the New Lights founded the College of New Jersey after Tennent's model. In 1896, the school was renamed Princeton.

Revivalist fervor also led to the founding of Dartmouth, Brown, and Rutgers. New Light Congregationalist Eleazar Wheelock (1711–1779) had founded an academy for Native Americans in Connecticut. The school moved to New Hampshire where it became a college for New Light missionaries to natives, named Dartmouth. The Baptists, largely clustered in Rhode Island, founded the College of Rhode Island in 1765, later renamed by its benefactor Nicholas Brown (1769–1841). Dutch Reformed New Light ministers in New Jersey founded Queen's College (later Rutgers) in 1766.

Anglicans gained control of two colleges in the northern colonies. King's College (later Columbia) was begun in 1754

by the Church of England's Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Interreligious struggles resulted in a new charter in 1754 that gave trustee seats to the senior ministers of New York City from Dutch Reformed, Presbyterians, and French Calvinist traditions. The College of Philadelphia (later University of Pennsylvania) was the only school founded as nonreligious. In the Quaker colony where no established church was the rule, neither did its college have an official relationship to a church. Anglicans took control of this school before the Revolution.

Early United States

Various conditions led to the growth of denominational colleges in the United States up to 1860. An increase in geographic territory provided through the Northwest Ordinance and Louisiana Purchase more than doubled the landscape, and citizens moved westward beyond the Appalachian Mountains. Railroads were built from East to West, and the locations of many colleges follow the railway path. The First Amendment prohibited the establishment of any church in the United States, with individual states gradually doing the same. Schools such as William and Mary, Harvard, Yale, and Columbia had to make transitions from enjoying state privilege to being private institutions. In Massachusetts, where the Congregational Church was the established state church until 1833, Harvard, Williams, and Amherst held the Congregational monopoly on higher education until the Universalists founded Tufts in 1852. In the Dartmouth College case of 1819, the Supreme Court limited state legislatures from interfering in the governance of private institutions of higher education. Denominations took advantage of the protections granted to private education and had founded nearly two hundred schools on the eve of the Civil War.

Transitions in Protestantism also contributed to the growth of denominational colleges. With the westward spread of the population, Protestants feared the growth of Roman Catholicism in territories previously under French and Spanish colonial government, and Protestant schooling on the frontier was an attempt to stem Catholic inroads. Congregationalists and Presbyterians joined forces in missionary and educational endeavors. The Plan of Union in 1801, a cooperative in home missions, was followed by the Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education at the West (SPCTEW) in 1843. The SPCTEW gathered funds from Congregational and Presbyterian churches to establish and support Protestant schools.

Congregationalists and Presbyterians founded sixty colleges, ten of which were joint schools.

The Presbyterians led in the founding of Protestant colleges. By 1860, they had forty-nine schools, including Transylvania in Kentucky, Dickinson in Pennsylvania, and Hanover in Indiana. They had schools in twenty-one of the thirty-four states by 1860, some of which resulted from joint efforts with the Congregationalists. The Presbyterians' requirement of an educated clergy resulted in their demand for colleges to follow the migration of its members. The aggressive push of Congregational-Presbyterian education reached Oregon in 1854 with the founding of Pacific University. Today the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recognizes sixty-seven colleges and universities as affiliates with the denomination. Twenty-six of those schools were founded between the Revolution and the Civil War. Eight were founded in the twentieth century.

The Congregationalists founded twenty-one colleges before the Civil War. As with the Presbyterians, Congregationalists required an educated ministry and founded colleges in places where New Englanders relocated. Eastern Congregational colleges served as models for future colleges. Alumni and administration of Yale contributed to the building of these colleges. By 1860, Yale as the "Mother of Colleges" was involved in starting sixteen schools. Oberlin College (1833) in Ohio was a model of evangelicalism and social reform for schools in Michigan and Iowa. As the Congregationalist's "Plan of Union" dissolved—that is, the western spread of new church settlements—local Congregationalists took over some of these joint schools and directed their interests in founding their own. Congregationalists acquired the Methodist Wheaton College in 1860. Wheaton was the Congregational counterpart to nearby Knox College, a collaborative college that became Presbyterian. Today the descendent of the Congregational Church, the United Church of Christ, lists thirty affiliated colleges, four of which are originally from the SPCTEW.

The early start and rapid growth of Presbyterian and Congregational colleges were the products of a need for educated ministers. Other denominations that required educated clergy were also early founders of colleges, though on a much smaller scale. The Episcopal Church founded eight schools following the Revolution, with a total of eleven. However, slowly Columbia, Pennsylvania, and the College of Charleston divested from their Episcopal interests. German Reformed and Lutheran churches founded relatively few colleges and were late in the process. While the German

Reformed Church founded Franklin and Marshall in 1787, Heidelberg College would not be founded until 1851. The German Reformed Church started three schools before the Civil War and inherited Central University (1853) from the Baptists in 1916. Lutherans founded six schools, starting with Gettysburg in 1832. Universalists founded four colleges, beginning with Norwich in 1834. Harvard had become influenced by Unitarians by the end of the seventeenth century, and they exerted increasing influence throughout the nineteenth century. Unitarians also founded Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1853.

Denominations with little or no tradition of educated or professional clergy also founded colleges and universities. The Society of Friends (Quakers) had no professional clergy. Their first three schools, Haverford, Guilford, and Earlham, began as boarding schools in the 1830s and would not be colleges until the 1850s. The Baptists had founded the College of Rhode Island (Brown) in 1765 but would not start another school until Colby College in 1820. With the founding of Vassar in 1861, Baptists had commenced twenty-five schools prior to the Civil War. Twenty-two schools remained in the eastern portion of the United States, though they proclaimed the motto “every state its own Baptist college.” The 1845 schism of the General Baptist Convention resulted in the separation of educational interests of the Baptists. Today the Southern Baptist Convention has fifty-two colleges and universities, and the American Baptists have sixteen. The Disciples of Christ, emerging out of the Baptist churches, also diverged Baptist educational interests. The Disciples founded five colleges between 1837 and 1855, all of which were in the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys.

Methodists were late in founding colleges and universities, compared to Presbyterians and Congregationalists. They inherited schools such as Allegheny, Dickinson, and Adrian from the Presbyterians. The first college founded by the Methodists was McKendree in Lebanon, Illinois, in 1828. Its namesake was the circuit rider-turned-bishop William McKendree (1757–1835). While the next school that they founded was Wesleyan in Middletown, Connecticut, nearly all Methodist schools were west of the Appalachian mountains. Methodists reached the Pacific coast in 1850 with the founding of the College of the Pacific in Stockton, California. As with the Baptists, the 1844 Methodist schism separated schools into respective denominations. Today the United Methodists list ninety-six affiliate schools.

Early U.S. Curriculum and Religious Life

Although ministers were involved in the founding of colleges and universities, especially in western states, other factors contributed. Community leaders were interested in the prestige, population, and economic increases a college brought to the town. Denominational colleges resembled community colleges, except they were run by denominations. These local colleges were small in comparison to the major colleges such as Yale, which had five hundred students by the middle of the nineteenth century. Serving as community colleges, local schools also offered secondary education in areas where there was none. At Wheaton College, only 10 percent of the student population was studying college-level curriculum. Since local colleges commonly admitted college students on low tuition, revenue from secondary education supplemented income.

The curriculum of the antebellum college was similar to the classical curriculum of colonial colleges. After 1815, northeastern schools began to include science into the course of study and purchased laboratory equipment. In addition, these colleges hired professional faculty in the sciences. The number of these instructors grew twelve fold between 1800 and 1850. Schools in the South and West lagged behind in incorporating a science curriculum and professional faculty. Many early educators were tutors with no more than the baccalaureate. In eastern schools, faculty commonly possessed theological training in addition to their college degrees.

Philosophy and theology were part of the classical curriculum, but biblical literature was a later addition. In 1840 Alexander Campbell (1788–1866), founder of the Disciples of Christ, boasted that his Bethany College had the only department in English Bible. Students were expected to know and study the Bible regularly. In the early nineteenth century, students at Princeton gave weekly recitations in the Bible to the school’s president on Sunday afternoons. Oberlin required students to meet in Bible study groups for one hour each week, with the understanding that every student would study the entire Bible in the four years there. The study of comparative religions or history of religions would not emerge until the development of the research universities in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century.

As with the colonial colleges, the literary societies remained the primary extracurricular activity in nineteenth-century colleges and universities. When the societies waned

in influence, athletics took their place. Chapel attendance was mandatory. Students also engaged in social reform movements. Oberlin College became the western hub for abolitionism, and its offshoots encouraged the same. When abolitionism had been achieved, students remained active in reforms such as temperance and women's rights. Campaigns against secret societies, particularly Anti-Masonry, were popular amongst college leaders, but were less so by students who participated in fraternities.

Early U.S. Public Education

Public education also blossomed between the Revolution and Civil War in the form of state universities. The earliest state universities resembled private schools with public charters and public funds. The University of Georgia (1785) received its funds from private sources until state legislators made appropriations in 1881. North Carolina's highest court determined that the state had given land to the University of North Carolina as if to a private party. With these confusions in place, it is understandable that "public" universities often stood for private goals. As early as the 1750s, William Livingstone (1723–1790) had proposed a state-sponsored university in New York. Yet Livingstone was part of a plot to use the state to block Anglican control of King's College. Protestants were invested in the development of both private and public education, though in Illinois denominational colleges opposed a state university until after the Civil War. Presbyterian colleges in Tennessee, Delaware, and California became state universities, remaining affiliated with the denomination for a long while. The University of Delaware was not under sole state control until 1913. Similar developments occurred in other states. In more subtle ways, trustees, regents, presidents, and faculty of state universities privileged Protestantism through their own membership in a Protestant denomination.

Women and African Americans

The integration of race and sex was an ongoing process. In 1837 four female students entered Oberlin College. By 1873, nearly two-thirds of the Protestant colleges were coeducational. While integration at Protestant schools existed, the bulk of educational avenues for women and African Americans were in separate, secondary academies. Female "seminaries" devoted to the preparation of women for missionary service began in the 1820s. Mount Holyoke College, founded by Mary Lyon (1797–1849) in 1837,

began under these auspices. Women's liberal arts colleges began with Vassar College in 1865, followed by Wellesley in 1870, Smith in 1871, Radcliffe in 1879, Bryn Mawr in 1885, Barnard in 1889, and Mount Holyoke, which received its collegiate charter in 1888 but was not officially a college until 1893. Together these schools are known as the "Seven Sisters."

As early as 1774, two men from the Gold Coast (Ghana today) had been accepted to Princeton with the intention of becoming ministers in their homeland, but war disrupted those plans. Presbyterians started the earliest African American colleges for the purpose of training ministers to serve in Africa. Interdenominational Protestant agencies such as the American Colonization Society (ACS) and the American Missionary Association (AMA) founded colleges for the same purpose. Members of the ACS established the African Education Society (AES) in 1819 to promote education for future African American ministers. John Miller Dickey (1806–1878), brother-in-law to AES founder and ACS treasurer Elliott Cresson (1796–1854), established the Ashmun Institute in Pennsylvania in 1854 (later renamed Lincoln University). The first racially integrated and coeducational college in the South was Berea College in Kentucky. John Fee (1816–1901), Berea's founder, was the son of a slaveholder and alumnus of Lane Seminary in Cincinnati. He supported racial equality and built his college on those principles. The school remained integrated until a 1904 decision upheld Kentucky's segregation laws, only to be overturned fifty years later. The Methodists founded Ohio's Wilberforce University in 1856, turning it over to the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1863. Following the Civil War, the Freedman's Aid Bureau contributed to the development of religious colleges for African Americans. The AMA applied for Bureau funds to found Atlanta University in 1865, Fisk in 1866, Howard in 1867, and Hampton in 1868. Methodists sponsored professional schools, like the medical schools at New Orleans University and Walden in Nashville. Protestants entered these endeavors to train black professionals and clergy who would return to Africa and "redeem" that continent.

Education after the Civil War

Policy changes allowed for Protestants to develop higher education. The Morrill Act of 1862 aided in elevating some religious colleges into state universities. The Methodist Bluemont Central College, founded in 1857, became

Kansas State College (later University) in 1862, relocating to Manhattan, Kansas. The founding of land grant colleges gave opportunities for some Protestant schools to gain prestige. But shifts in higher education would ultimately lead to the marginalization of religious colleges. The new emphasis on agriculture and technology promoted in the Morrill Act turned away from the classical education of the liberal arts. An increased volume of public universities replaced the function of Protestant colleges in western states. At the turn of the twentieth century, the division of enrollment in religious and non-religious schools was almost even. By 1965 religious schools accounted for only 17.3 percent of student enrollment. This trajectory followed the transition to public higher education. In 1978, private schools had less than a quarter of the student enrollment.

Curricular changes also marginalized the private religious college. Beginning in 1876, with the founding of Johns Hopkins University, higher education became more professionalized and American universities began to follow German forms of education. In addition to the university format, liberal subject matters challenged Protestant assumptions. Darwinian evolution and higher criticism made their way into colleges and universities from German scholarship. While these subjects were offensive to conservatives, other shifts avoided sectarianism by leaving out religion altogether. In the early twentieth century, the University of Oregon declined a chair of religious studies in the philosophy department in an effort to uphold the state's law regarding religious neutrality. More aggressive efforts sought to expunge religion from public education altogether. The American Association of University Professors made one of its first statements during its inaugural year in 1915 that any school based on a denomination or religious organization should not be public.

Religion was also exerting less influence on the university ethos. Schools began favoring laity over clergy as presidents. Harvard initiated this movement in 1869, and Princeton appointed future president Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) in 1902. Chapel services, a staple of college life, also became lax. The University of Wisconsin dropped its mandatory chapel requirement in 1869, and most state universities had done so by 1930. This process was complicated. Illinois's highest state court upheld the right of the faculty at the University of Illinois to make chapel attendance mandatory for students. Private schools opted for voluntary chapel as a way of encouraging religious life but not mandating it. Harvard switched to the voluntary system

in 1886, with others following suit. These movements away from the older college format, coupled with the break of some schools from their founding denominations, resulted in what scholars call "secularization." Secularization was slower at female and African American schools. Vassar did not abolish mandatory chapel until 1926, the first of the "Seven Sisters" to do so. As late as 1945, 90 percent of students in African American colleges reported attending church at least twice monthly.

Student Ministries on College Campuses

Before these characteristics of "secularization" were in place, conservative Protestants were already changing their approach to the campus. The YMCA began a student ministry prior to the Civil War. The universities of Michigan and Virginia were first to institute the "Y" in 1858. The number of local chapters grew to nearly forty before a national movement was underway in 1877. The YMCA national organization started in 1886. At its peak in 1920, the "Y" had 731 chapters with more than 94,000 students. The YMCA also formed the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) in 1888, an agency that promoted missionary work, though not sending missionaries itself. The SVM peaked around World War I, but afterward both organizations went into numerical decline. By 1940, the YMCA lost 400 chapters and 44,000 members. The SVM lost 550 chapters and 3,700 students between 1920 and 1932. One explanation for this decline was that both organizations became less active in the evangelism of students and instead promoted a "social" form of Christianity that included international peace, justice, and economic development. Without the aggressive evangelism, the organizations were not acquiring members as rapidly as before. In their place emerged InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.

InterVarsity began in England, spread to Canada in 1928, and came to the University of Michigan in 1938, the first in the United States. In 1940 the American organization formed with C. Stacey Woods (1909–1983) as its general secretary. Five years later, the Student Foreign Mission Fellowship merged with InterVarsity. Student members lead the local InterVarsity chapters, and its focus is on spiritual maturity through Bible study, prayer, and evangelism. Campus Crusade for Christ formed at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1951. Founded by Bill Bright (1921–2003), Campus Crusade is a major campus ministry that employs staff to share the "Four Spiritual Laws." The third of the large campus ministries is

Navigators. Started by Dawson Trotman (1906–1956), a U.S. Navy seaman, in 1933, Navigators has a collegiate ministry with 176 chapters in the United States.

Denominational student ministries are also present on campuses. Often these involve student centers next to campus where clergy work. The first student center began in 1905 at the University of Michigan. The Presbyterian Church U.S.A. started the university pastorate. Other denominations are present, including Episcopalians, Lutherans, Baptists Student Unions, and the Wesley Fellowship of the United Methodist Church. In addition to denominational and interdenominational student ministries, many schools instituted a chaplaincy. Fourteen schools had chaplains in 1902. The chaplaincy was a response to the absence of clergy as college presidents and the dissolution of mandatory chapel. Harvard's first chaplain came one year after mandatory chapel ended. Chaplains were local clergy who served the campus part-time. Dartmouth's chaplain became full-time and Fellow in Religion in 1927. Following World War II, a dramatic increase of chaplains occurred. During the 1948–1949 academic year, more than half of colleges and universities had chaplains, the majority of them at small colleges with enrollment of less than 1,500 students.

Jewish and Catholic ministries also developed in the twentieth century to provide for the religious needs at public universities. The Catholic Newman Movement traces its origins to John Henry Newman (1801–1890) and the revitalization of Catholicism at Oxford. In 1883, students met at the University of Wisconsin at the Melvin Club. One of its alumni founded the first Newman Center at the University of Pennsylvania in 1893. In 1905 Pope Pius X (1835–1914) ordered the establishment of chaplains on all college campuses. This mandate was short-lived and later left to the prerogative of the individual diocese. In 1908 the Catholic Student Association began, replaced in 1915 by the Federation of College Catholic Clubs (renamed National Newman Club Federation in 1938). By 1950 the Newman Federation claimed a quarter of all Catholic students enrolled in non-Catholic colleges and universities. During its growth, the Newman Federation had become an independent Apostolate. Following Vatican II, there was a renewed interest in returning campus ministries to the diocesan level. In 1969 the Newman Federation dissolved, giving way to the Catholic Campus Ministry Association for college chaplains. The remnants of the Newman movement merged with the National Federation of Catholic College Students in 1985 to form the National Catholic Student

Coalition. Catholic campus ministries commonly meet in Newman Center facilities.

The Hillel Fellowship began in 1923 at a barbershop in Champaign, Illinois, where Jewish students from the University of Illinois gathered. Rabbi Benjamin Frankel organized Hillel and petitioned the B'nai B'rith for adoption, which occurred in 1924. Hillel spread quickly in northern universities. It became international in 1942 with a chapter at Queen's University in Ontario, followed by the Latin American Fellowship in Havana, Cuba, in 1954. Hillel struggled financially in the 1970s and 1980s, only to re-emerge as Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life in 1994. In 2002, the Hillel headquarters opened in Washington, D.C.

Bible Schools and Conservative Universities

Conservatives disappointed by the secularization of public and denominational schools opted for new institutions of postsecondary education. Fundamentalist dispensationalists founded Bible institutes as places for training ministers for the cities and missionaries for abroad. The first of these institutes was Nyack Missionary School in New York City, founded by Presbyterian A. B. Simpson (1843–1919) in 1882. The flagship school was Moody Bible Institute, the largest and most successful Bible institute. Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899) founded the school in Chicago in 1889, and under the leadership of Reuben Torrey (1856–1928) it became a high-grossing hub of fundamentalist thought. Also in 1889, Baptist minister A. J. Gordon (1836–1895) commenced the Boston Institute (later named Gordon College). The Bible Institute of Los Angeles (later Biola) was founded in 1908 and soon thereafter enlisted Torrey to run the institute's administration. The education philosophy stripped the curriculum of intellectual pursuits for their own sake. Instead, faculty preferred a practical approach, emphasizing Bible study, missions, and practical Christian work. The curriculum also focused on the spiritual development of its students, and many schools required Christian service hours per semester. Bible institutes issued diplomas not degrees. Since the 1930s, more inclusion of liberal arts into the curriculum has caused a transition to issuing degrees. Most Bible institutes became Bible colleges, and some became Christian liberal arts colleges. Biola maintains the thirty credit hours of Bible requirement set by the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges (AABC) accreditation standards, while also offering a variety of liberal arts majors. At the close of the twentieth century, almost all of

the schools accredited by the AABC were Bible colleges not Bible institutes.

New trends in conservative Protestant higher education have left behind the Bible institute and favored the Christian university. Oral Roberts (1918–2009), who had established a Bible institute in the 1940s, founded his Oral Roberts University in 1962. Its doors opened in 1965. Roberts envisioned his schools to be a place of evangelical instruction and professional training. In 1978 Roberts opened the university's medical school, where students were to receive a sound doctrine, excellent professional training, and an appreciation for divine healing as part of medical science. Pat Robertson (1930–) founded Regent University in 1978 and started a law school in 1986. Jerry Falwell (1933–2007) founded Liberty University in 1971 and began a law school in 2004. Administrators of conservative evangelical colleges and universities have formed organizations. The Council for Christian Colleges and Universities began in 1975 and today has 111 member schools and 70 affiliates.

Catholic Higher Education

Historically, Roman Catholics have favored establishing their colleges and universities rather than cooperate with non-Catholics in founding schools of higher education. In 1789 Bishop John Carroll (1735–1815) deeded land for Georgetown, but its charter would not exist until 1815. Prior to 1850, Catholics founded 42 colleges, with another 152 founded between 1850 and 1900, 72 between 1901 and 1950, and 4 from 1951 to 1972. The vast majority of schools were started as all-male. There exist some all-female and coeducational schools. In recent decades, single-sex schools have become coeducational. Both diocese and religious orders have founded colleges. As with Protestant denominations, Catholics founded colleges to promote lay devotions and train vocational religious.

Catholic colleges kept pace with trends in professional higher education in the nineteenth century. The Catholic University of America eagerly sought recognition as a legitimate university and opened graduate schools before undergraduate ones. The Jesuit St. Louis University opened a medical school in 1842. Georgetown did the same in 1849. The University of Notre Dame initiated Catholic law schools in 1869, with Georgetown soon following. In total, Catholics founded nine medical schools and twenty-one law schools before 1960.

Athletics have been vital to the reputation of Catholic colleges and universities in the twentieth century. The

gridiron legacies of Notre Dame and Boston College as well as the basketball successes of Marquette, Georgetown, and Villanova provided Catholic schools with positive reception from the non-Catholic population of the United States.

Jewish Higher Education

Jewish higher education began at the end of the 1850s, when Reform rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise (1819–1900) formed Zion Collegiate in Cincinnati. The intent was to provide preparatory education for men seeking to enter the forthcoming Jewish Theological Seminary. Zion Collegiate closed only one year after commencing. Maimonides College at Philadelphia opened in 1867, under the cooperative orchestration of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites and the Hebrew Education Society. Despite having respected faculty, student enrollment was small and the college closed in 1873. Two years later, Wise opened Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. Starting with Gratz College in Philadelphia in 1897, eleven Jewish schools for training teachers opened by 1929. The Teachers Institute at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City opened in 1909. Its curriculum mirrored the progressive pedagogy of Columbia's Teachers College. One explanation for this increase in higher education institutions for Jews was a response to the movement of Jewish students into public colleges. By 1918 Jews made up 79 percent of the student body at the City College of New York, 48 percent at New York University, 21 percent at Columbia, and 10 percent at Harvard. At this same time, Protestants called for quotas limiting Jewish student enrollment, a policy that went into effect at many major universities. The presence of Jewish higher education became a viable option for the children of nineteenth-century immigrants. Graduate education opportunities also opened for Jewish students. The Dropsie College, founded in 1907 in Philadelphia, became the only independent graduate school devoted to Jewish scholarship. Students who attend Dropsie often seek Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Education degrees.

Diversity of Higher Education

In addition to Jews, other religious groups have established colleges and universities. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) founded the University of Deseret in 1850 (later University of Utah). Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, began in 1875. With five campuses and 28,000 students, it is the largest religious university and second-largest private college in the United States.

The Greek Orthodox founded Holy Cross School of Theology in 1937, and began Hellenic College in 1966. Since the 1960s, eastern religious traditions have founded schools. In 1964 the Institute of Buddhist Studies opened in Berkeley, California, and affiliated with the Graduate Theological Union. A total of nine Buddhist colleges and universities are currently open in the United States. Followers of the Vedic guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1917–2008) founded the Maharishi International University (later Maharishi University of Management) on the principles of Transcendental Meditation and consciousness-based education. The university began 1973 in Santa Barbara, California, and moved to Fairfield, Iowa, in 1974. In the 1980s, Muslims founded the American Islamic College in Chicago.

Conclusion

Religion has remained an important component to the story of higher education in America. It was a vibrant motivation for the founding of the oldest and greatest number of colleges and universities. It persists in various forms on almost every campus. In the early twenty-first century, students who complete secondary education have an array of options for postsecondary education. These options include attending a college or university of various religious commitments and affiliations with denominations. So too, college students have the choice of involvement in any number of campus ministries. The present situation with higher education is a diversity of the market. The plurality of options in higher education means that students have choices based on their values. Religion has not disappeared from public life, and college campuses remain one environment in which students can choose whether or not religion is an important value.

See also *Congregationalists*; *Education: Bible Schools and Colleges*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Judaism: Reform*; *Ministry, Professional*; *New England Region*; *Presbyterians: Colonial*; *Presbyterians: Nineteenth Century*; *Religious Thought* entries; *Revivalism: Nineteenth Century*; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *Women* entries.

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Education: Court Cases

The courts in the United States have adjudicated numerous constitutional questions about religious practice and instruction in public schools. Since their formation in the

mid-nineteenth century, public schools have aimed to integrate religiously diverse students into a common political culture, making public schools a central arena for broader debates about religion's place in American public life. According to the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Observers have not always agreed on what this means for public schools as state institutions. Can students pray or study the Bible in class? Can students refuse to study subjects or participate in exercises they find religiously objectionable? What can science classes teach about human origins? Practices and policies varied across states and communities throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but the U.S. Supreme Court has issued relatively consistent, uniform guidelines since the mid-twentieth century. Schools may not sponsor or promote religion, but they may teach about religion, and students may initiate religious exercises on their own. There has rarely been consensus about how to apply these principles in specific cases, however.

Devotional Practices in the State Courts

While most of the nation's earliest schools had promoted some sort of sectarian belief (beliefs characteristic of a particular Protestant denomination or sect), the trend in the first few decades of the nineteenth century was to reduce intra-Protestant division by promoting "nonsectarian" education. Yet these nonsectarian schools remained pervasively Protestant in character. Reformers eliminated discussion of theological matters that divided the Protestant sects but retained devotional practices such as prayer, hymn singing, and Bible reading without commentary, which they deemed common to all. As the United States welcomed waves of Catholic immigrants during the mid-nineteenth century, such practices came under increasing attack. Catholic leaders argued that reading the King James Bible was actually sectarian, favoring Protestantism in general, and that students should be permitted to read the Catholic Douay translation of the Bible instead, or be excused from Bible-reading exercises. Few nineteenth-century voices called for removing religion from the nation's fledgling public schools altogether. Instead, disputes centered on the meaning of "nonsectarianism" and on the rights of individual dissenters to "opt out" from practices favored by the majority.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, disputes about devotional practices in public schools began to enter the courts. For reasons explained below, federal courts did

not begin hearing cases on religious expression in public schools until the middle of the twentieth century. Until then, state courts adjudicated such lawsuits, which led to great variety in practice and policy across states and communities.

One of the earliest state cases transpired in 1872 (*Board of Education of Cincinnati v. Minor*). Cincinnati's Catholic archbishop complained that having students read the King James Bible daily marked the public schools as sectarian. A group of Jews, Unitarians, Universalists, and Quakers joined his protests. In response, the school board decided to eliminate all devotional exercises. Protestant parents filed a lawsuit, maintaining that Christianity was essential to moral and civic education, and should not be removed from the schools. The Superior Court of Cincinnati agreed, and the court ordered the devotional exercises restored. On appeal, the supreme court of Ohio reversed this ruling, on the grounds that such decisions lay in the school board's hands. While affirming the board's authority, the state's supreme court also lent support to its policy, agreeing that religious majorities should not impose their practices over the objections of dissenters.

Most school boards did not follow Cincinnati's example, however, preferring to excuse students who objected, rather than eliminate devotional exercises altogether. State courts arrived at a range of opinions on such policies. For example, the school board of Edgerton, Wisconsin, maintained that the King James Bible was nonsectarian, but the state permitted students to leave the room, rather than read from it. In an 1890 decision (*Weiss v. Edgerton*), Wisconsin's supreme court struck down Edgerton's policy, finding that such Bible-reading exercises were indeed sectarian, and that opt-out policies did not mitigate their harmful effects, for students who left the room would feel ostracized by their peers. In contrast, Michigan's supreme court in *Pfeiffer v. Board of Education* (1898) agreed that the King James Bible was sectarian but found nothing wrong with reading it in schools, provided students could excuse themselves. Not all school boards permitted opting out, however. One Illinois school district deemed prayer, hymn singing, and Bible reading essential to promoting common morality and good citizenship, and so the district refused to exempt students for any reason. After Catholic parents objected, the Illinois supreme court in *Ring v. Board of Education of District 24* (1910) ruled that such practices violated the state constitution because they were sectarian in nature, and had to be eliminated. Even had the school board sought to institute an opt out

policy, the Illinois top court implied such devotional exercises would still run afoul of the law. Finally, in *Vollmar v. Stanley* (1927), the supreme court of Colorado departed from these earlier decisions by ruling that the King James Bible was nonsectarian, but the court then ordered the institution of an opt-out policy that neither party had requested (the school board thought Bible-reading exercises should be mandatory, while the objecting parents thought they should be eliminated).

Policies thus varied across school districts and states, but common themes can be identified. In each of these cases, state courts were asked to adjudicate between the religious rights of the majority, who deemed practices such as Bible reading, prayer, and hymn singing essential to the public schools' mission, and the religious rights of minority dissenters, who found them objectionable and discriminatory. By the early twentieth century, most state courts agreed that reading the King James Bible was sectarian and could not be required of all students, but courts disagreed as to whether majorities could continue to promote such exercises provided opt-out policies were in place. Yet few voices at this time called for the elimination of religion from public schools altogether. Most observers agreed that the schools should be nonsectarian, but changing social circumstances, marked especially by increasing religious diversity, led to a lack of consensus on what precisely that meant.

School Prayer in the Supreme Court

Because most decisions about education are made at the state or local level, the U.S. Supreme Court did not begin hearing cases about religion and public education until the 1940s (an earlier Court decision in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* in 1925 had guaranteed parents the right to send their children to parochial schools, but that decision was based on parental autonomy, not religious rights). According to the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." These provisions, usually described separately as the establishment clause and the free exercise clause, initially only applied against the federal government; states were free to enact whatever policies they chose. In fact, many states maintained religious establishments long after the passage of the First Amendment. After the Civil War, the Fourteenth Amendment significantly restricted the power of the states; states could not "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law," nor could states deny to any person "the

equal protection of the laws." Since the mid-twentieth century, the Supreme Court has held that the Fourteenth Amendment's due process and equal protection clauses make the fundamental protections of the Bill of Rights applicable against the states, as well. Based on this doctrine of "Incorporation," the Court began to decide cases about religious expression in public schools.

The Supreme Court first applied the First Amendment's establishment clause against the states in a 1947 case, *Everson v. Board of Education*. This decision, which involved a New Jersey plan to reimburse parochial school students for public transportation costs, articulated the basic principles that would govern the school prayer cases. Writing for the majority, Justice Hugo Black famously explained that "The 'establishment of religion' clause of the First Amendment means at least this: Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another." Adopting what many observers have described as a "separationist" account of nonestablishment, Black ruled that the government must remain "neutral" on all religious matters; it could not favor any particular religion, nor could it aid religion in general, no matter how "nonsectarian." While this interpretation of neutrality would prove controversial, it guided the Court's decisions on religion and education for several decades.

In two landmark decisions from the early 1960s, the Supreme Court considered for the first time whether school-sponsored devotional practices, such as prayer and Bible reading, violated the First Amendment's establishment clause. As discussed above, such practices had been widespread since the nineteenth century, but policies varied across states and communities. By taking up these cases, the Court issued national standards for the first time, dictating to states and local school districts what they could and could not do.

The first case, *Engel v. Vitale* (1962), tested a 1958 New York policy that required public schools' classes to begin the day by reciting: "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our Country." The New York Board of Regents had written this broadly ecumenical prayer itself, purposefully avoiding any reference to particular denominational or sectarian teachings. Proponents believed that such prayers would instill proper moral and spiritual values in students, uniting them in the country's Cold War struggle against "godless Communists." In a 6-1

decision, however, the Supreme Court struck down the Regents' prayer as unconstitutional. Writing for the majority, Justice Black found this exercise particularly problematic because state officials had written the prayer themselves. Reviewing the history of the establishment clause, he argued that it was meant, at the very least, to prohibit governments from directing particular forms of religious expression. Despite its broadly interdenominational character, the prayer violated the standard of neutrality. Furthermore, Black emphasized that allowing students to opt out made no difference, differentiating this case from *West Virginia v. Barnette* (1943), which had permitted students to excuse themselves from reciting the Pledge of Allegiance based on the free exercise clause. In terms of the establishment clause, Justice Black maintained, coercion was irrelevant. The government should not be in the business of dictating religious expression.

Justice Potter Stewart offered the lone dissenting opinion in *Engel*. He argued that as long as students had the option to refrain, there was no evidence of improper establishment. Instead, such prayer exercises were in line with the "cherished spiritual traditions of our Nation." Stewart expressed greater concern for the Free Exercise rights of students who might be deprived of the opportunity to pray than for the Establishment concerns that guided the majority's decision.

Similar divisions marked the second landmark case, *Abington v. Schempp* (1963). This case tested a Pennsylvania policy that required every school to begin the day by reading at least ten verses from the Bible without comment, but that included an opt-out provision. In an 8-1 decision, the Supreme Court struck down this practice as unconstitutional, finding that it violated the principle of neutrality. Writing for the majority, Justice Thomas Clark articulated a two-pronged test for assessing neutrality: a valid law had to have a secular legislative purpose, and its primary effect could neither advance nor inhibit religion. The Pennsylvania policy failed this test, for its primary effect was to promote Christianity over other religions and religion in general over nonreligion. Again, Stewart dissented from the *Schempp* decision, arguing that the Pennsylvania policy served only to accommodate the beliefs of the majority. As long as there was no coercion, he saw no establishment clause violation. But according to Clark, the opt-out provision made no difference, for coercion was only relevant for Free Exercise rights, not nonestablishment. Clark also drew a crucial distinction between promoting religion and teaching *about* religion: "Nothing we have said here indicates that such

study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistently with the First Amendment." The *Schempp* decision thus established the basic guidelines that continue to govern cases about religion and public education today. Schools may not sponsor or promote religious exercises, but they may teach about religion, provided they do so objectively.

The *Engel* and *Schempp* decisions were extremely controversial and provoked a passionate public outcry in opposition. As discussed above, policies regarding devotional practices had varied widely across states, but prayer and Bible-reading exercises were widespread and had been since the nineteenth century. For the first time, the Supreme Court had declared all such practices unconstitutional. While many observers, both religious and nonreligious alike, voiced support of the Court's decisions in the name of individual liberty and minority rights, critics contended angrily that the Court was kicking God out of the public schools. Several school districts vowed to ignore the Court's mandate, and anecdotal evidence suggests that many continue to encourage prayer to this day. Repeated attempts have been made to pass a constitutional amendment that would permit state-sponsored prayer in public schools, but all such efforts have failed. The issue remains contested. In addition, many school districts proved fearful of crossing the line that Justice Clark had demarcated between promoting religion and teaching about religion, and these districts decided to eliminate any discussion of religion from the curriculum altogether. Though an unintended consequence of the school prayer cases, this has bolstered critics' complaints that the decisions contributed to the secularization of American public schools.

Later Supreme Court Cases

While the courts have never prohibited student-initiated prayer, many states have worked hard to develop schemes by which voluntary prayer might be encouraged. In the decades following the school prayer cases, many districts instituted mandatory moments of silence, during which students might be permitted to engage in silent reflection, meditation, or prayer. For many observers, moments of silence offer an acceptable compromise on the school prayer issue, accommodating those students who wish to pray, while avoiding state sponsorship. Yet opposition has also arisen from both sides. Opponents see moments of silence as a thinly veiled attempt to reintroduce devotional practices

into the school day, and even some school-prayer advocates reject moments of silence as insufficient for promoting spiritual values and moral consensus.

The Supreme Court has decided only one case involving a moment of silence policy. In *Wallace v. Jaffree* (1985), the Court considered an Alabama statute that authorized a period of silence for “meditation or voluntary prayer.” In a 6-3 decision, the Court struck down Alabama’s scheme as unconstitutional. Writing for the majority, Justice John Paul Stevens found that the primary purpose of the statute was to promote religion, but that the establishment clause required neutrality between religion and nonreligion. (In his dissenting opinion, Justice William Rehnquist disagreed with Stevens, advancing a competing understanding of the establishment clause that would permit governmental endorsement of religion in general, provided no particular sect or denomination was favored.) Stevens based his decision on the fact that Alabama already had a law encouraging a period of silence for “meditation.” The only reason to add the “voluntary prayer” clause would be to encourage prayer impermissibly. But Stevens also confined his decision to the facts of this particular case. A majority of justices agreed that moment-of-silence schemes were generally fine, and lower courts have usually upheld them when challenged.

A different kind of school prayer case came before the Supreme Court in 1992. In *Lee v. Weisman*, a 5-4 majority ruled unconstitutional an ecumenical prayer offered by a rabbi at a Rhode Island middle school graduation ceremony. Writing for the majority, Justice Anthony Kennedy emphasized the coercive nature of this religious exercise. Attendance at graduation ceremonies was effectively mandatory, and school officials had directed the performance of this religious exercise (they had issued guidelines to the rabbi to ensure that his prayer would be generally acceptable to most persons). Therefore, this activity amounted to “a state-sponsored and state-directed religious exercise in a public school.” In a concurring opinion, Justice David Souter agreed that the problem in this case was the appearance of state-sponsorship, but he disagreed with Kennedy about the significance of coercion. Following the Court’s opinions in *Engel* and *Schempp*, Souter held that coercion was not relevant for establishment clause purposes. In a sharply worded dissent, Justice Antonin Scalia disagreed with both Kennedy and Souter, appealing to the long-standing historical tradition of marking graduations with prayer.

The Supreme Court heard two other cases related directly to school prayer. In *Santa Fe v. Doe* (2000), a 6-3

ruling extended the ban on school-sponsored prayer to an invocation that a student offered prior to a high school football game. Even though the student speaker had been elected by his peers, Justice Stevens, writing for the majority, found that the school’s purpose in facilitating the election had been to promote religion in violation of the establishment clause. Finally, in *Elk Grove v. Newdow* (2004) the Court considered whether reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools constituted an impermissible religious exercise because of the inclusion of the phrase “under God.” This was a particularly thorny case politically because precedents suggested that the pledge might indeed be unconstitutional, yet the justices were extremely reluctant to strike down this cherished tradition. The Court avoided having to rule on the matter by dismissing the case on a technicality (the plaintiff Michael Newdow had noncustodial parental rights and thus had no standing to sue his daughter’s school). It is unclear how the Court would have decided the case on its merits.

Each of these Supreme Court cases has proven extremely controversial, because the school prayer issue has been invested with symbolic significance in broader debates about religion’s place in American public life. Yet despite accusations that these decisions removed God from America’s public schools, another series of cases during the past two decades actually expanded protection for religious practice, provided it is student-initiated. Relying more on the First Amendment’s free speech clause than on its religion clauses, these cases have tended to move away from the standard of “neutrality” and toward a standard of “equality,” instructing school officials not to treat religious groups differently from nonreligious groups, thereby guaranteeing them equal access to school facilities. In *West Side Community School v. Mergens* (1990), an 8-1 Court majority required a school district to permit a Christian club to meet on the same terms and conditions as other student groups, despite the fears of school officials that accommodating this group might violate the establishment clause. Similarly, in *Good News Club v. Milford* (2001), a 6-3 majority ruled that a public elementary school could not bar a Christian afterschool program that included prayer and Bible lessons.

While some critics have found these decisions incompatible with the earlier school prayer cases, the Court remained generally consistent in the guidelines it earlier issued to schools. In short, schools may not sponsor or promote religious exercises (though they may teach about religion), but students may pray or organize religious activities on their

own. Yet the line between school-sponsored and student-initiated prayer is not always clear, as in the *Santa Fe* and *Good News Club* cases. Similarly, while attempting to follow the Supreme Court's guidelines, lower courts have not always agreed on where to draw the line between promoting religion and teaching about religion, as in cases involving school choirs performing sacred music or classroom observance of religious holidays. (The Supreme Court has not heard cases about either of these practices).

Curriculum Issues

The distinction between promoting religion and teaching about religion is most relevant for religious components of the curriculum, such as Bible study (permissible if analyzed for its literary or historical significance, but impermissible if read devotionally or as objective historical record). But more subtle curriculum-related issues have raised complicated questions for U.S. courts, policymakers, and educators.

For example, teaching about religion may raise constitutional issues, but so too might *not* teaching about religion. Some observers have suggested that if public schools ignore religion altogether, in the name of "neutrality," they may actually disparage religion by implying that students can understand subjects such as history, literature, economics, and science without taking into account religious values and perspectives. These observers see religion as part of a well-rounded liberal education and contend that by ignoring religion, public schools might even be violating the establishment clause by promoting what they describe as "secular humanism" in its place, though courts have consistently rejected this claim.

In other cases, parents have aimed to have their children exempted from particular components of the public school curriculum that they found religiously objectionable, such as sexual education. In *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972), a group of Amish parents even won the right to exempt their children from high school altogether, but the Supreme Court went out of its way to emphasize that the Amish constituted a special case. In *Mozert v. Hawkins* (1987), the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against Tennessee parents who wanted to have their children excused from using a textbook series that they felt promoted "secular humanism." While the Supreme Court guaranteed parents the right to send their children to parochial schools in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925), these exemption cases challenge courts to determine how far school districts must go to accommodate the religious beliefs of those who remain in public school.

Courts generally have preferred to leave such decisions to the reasonable discretion of school officials, expressing concern for the burden that excessive exemption demands would impose on administrators.

Another set of cases involve religiously motivated decisions by state officials about what to include or exclude from the curriculum. Do administrators violate the establishment clause when they make religion a factor in other curricular decisions? For example, many school districts choose not to offer sexual education classes, or offer abstinence-only classes, in order to appease religious community members (of course, other religious community members might *desire* a broad-based sexual education program). If pressed, school officials can usually offer an alternative, secular reason for their decision. Because it is difficult to determine the "genuine" motivation behind such arrangements, these cases are extremely thorny.

Such issues have arisen most prominently—and most contentiously—in cases involving the teaching of human origins. Since the early twentieth century, many critics have tried to keep evolution out of public school science classrooms. Opponents have offered a range of objections to evolutionary theory, including ambivalence about its social and political implications, but most objections have stemmed, at least in part, from religious concerns that evolution might contradict a literal reading of the biblical story of creation or that it might deny necessarily any evidence for design in nature (although it is important to note that many religious adherents see no conflict between evolution and the teachings of their religion). An important series of court cases have considered whether state and school officials violate the First Amendment's establishment clause when they choose to exclude evolution from the curriculum or to require it taught alongside creationism.

Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design

The first case to test an anti-evolution statute was not about the establishment clause, which was not applied against the states until 1947, but rather the famous Tennessee Scopes trial of 1925. By the 1920s, debates about evolution figured prominently in a broader clash between religious Modernists, who argued that Christian teachings should be made compatible with new scientific and intellectual discoveries, and fundamentalists, who responded by asserting that the Bible was "inerrant" and thus constituted an exact, literal, and reliable account of human and natural history. The public

schools emerged as a central arena for this conflict. At the urging of fundamentalist leaders such as three-time Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925), several state legislatures considered bills during the 1920s that would have prohibited the teaching of evolution in public school science classrooms. The passage of such a law in Tennessee in 1925 prompted the Scopes trial.

John T. Scopes (1900–1970) was a twenty-four-year-old general science instructor and part-time football coach in Dayton, Tennessee, who was encouraged by the American Civil Liberties Union and local politicians to test Tennessee's new statute. Bryan volunteered to prosecute Scopes, drawing a national media spotlight on Dayton, which was further intensified when prominent trial lawyer Clarence Darrow (1857–1938) joined the defense team. Technically, the only question at issue in the case was whether Scopes had violated Tennessee's law by teaching evolution in a public school classroom. But Bryan, Darrow, and the other lawyers who worked on the case used it as an opportunity to debate the legitimacy of the law itself, introducing broader questions about the relationships between religion and science, between academic freedom and popular control over education, and between individual rights and majority rule. In particular, Darrow hoped to discredit any appeal to the Bible as a suitable source of knowledge about the natural world and to question whether it was appropriate for religious beliefs to shape public education policy.

As expected, Scopes lost the case, though his conviction was overturned on a technicality on appeal. According to many accounts, Darrow won the public relations battle, however, gaining popular support for his positions and forcing the fundamentalist factions into retreat. Yet the historical record is more mixed, as anti-evolution activity actually increased in the years immediately following the Scopes trial, Tennessee's law remained on the books, and two additional states passed similar antievolution statutes (Mississippi in 1926 and Arkansas in 1928). In fact, it was Arkansas's newly passed law that prompted the first Supreme Court case on the issue in 1968.

Arkansas's statute prohibited any public school teacher from teaching "the theory or doctrine that mankind ascended or descended from a lower order of animals" or "to adopt or use in any such institution a textbook that teaches" this theory. Arkansas had never attempted to enforce this law, however, and the Little Rock school district adopted a textbook in 1965 that included a chapter on evolutionary theory. In order to protect herself from possible prosecution, a

Little Rock teacher sought to have the law invalidated in a case that came before the Supreme Court in 1968 (*Epperson v. Arkansas*).

In a unanimous decision, the Court struck down Arkansas's anti-evolution statute as unconstitutional. Writing for the majority, Justice Abe Fortas drew on *Everson* to argue that the First Amendment's establishment clause required the government to remain neutral on religious matters; it could neither aid nor oppose any religion. But Fortas contended that the only reason Arkansas passed its anti-evolution statute was because of religious opposition to the theory. Therefore, the law violated the establishment clause (in their concurring opinions, Justices Black and Stewart expressed uncertainty on this question, preferring to strike down the law as overly vague). There was "no secular purpose" for the law, Fortas found; instead, Arkansas was advancing the particular religious viewpoint of those who believed that evolution contradicted the biblical creation story. Though Fortas emphasized the Court's commitment to state and local control over public education, he maintained that policy and curricular decisions could not be motivated by religious concerns.

The *Epperson* decision struck down all state statutes that prohibited the teaching of evolutionary theory. In response, anti-evolution forces pursued two complementary strategies during the 1970s. First, rather than seek to ban evolution, they began to push for "equal time" in the classroom for creationist accounts. Second, they purposefully downplayed the biblical story, describing their preferred account of human origins as "creation science," thus presenting it as a scientific theory, rather than a religious doctrine. Their efforts proved successful when the Arkansas and Louisiana legislatures both passed laws requiring schools to give "balanced treatment" to "creation science" and "evolution science." Public schools did not have to teach either account of human origins, but if they taught one, they had to teach the other, as well.

In *Edwards v. Aguillard* (1987), the Supreme Court in a 7–2 decision struck down Louisiana's "balanced treatment" act as unconstitutional (a federal district court already had struck down Arkansas's statute in 1982). Writing for the majority, Justice William Brennan found that the law's purpose was "to advance a particular religious belief," and thus violated the establishment clause, as in *Epperson*. The Louisiana legislature contended that its purpose was to promote academic freedom, but Brennan rejected this as a "sham," supporting his case with evidence from the bill's legislative

history. Most significantly, Brennan argued that “creation science” necessarily implied a belief in supernatural creation, and was thus inherently a religious belief, not a scientific doctrine. Brennan emphasized that nothing prevented science teachers from teaching scientific objections to evolutionary theory, but they could not advance religious critiques. Because the Louisiana legislature had restructured the science curriculum to conform to a particular religious belief, it had violated the establishment clause.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Scalia argued that the Court should accept Louisiana’s stated secular legislative purpose. Offering students a choice between evolution and creation science would broaden the curriculum and promote academic freedom, he contended, accepting Louisiana’s questionable contention that these constituted the *only* legitimate options. He also suggested that the Court should take creation science’s advocates at their word. If they could advance their theory in scientific terms without reference to religion, then he saw no reason to bar it. Scalia admitted that religious motives had played a role in the Louisiana legislature passing the balanced treatment act, but he provided there was a valid secular purpose; he saw no establishment clause violation. This case thus demonstrates a fundamental disagreement among the justices about whether the First Amendment allows state and school officials to take religion into account when making public school curricular decisions.

Following their defeat in *Edwards*, many of the same groups that had promoted creation science began to advance an alternative theory, which they labeled intelligent design (it should be noted that many creationists have *not* embraced intelligent design). Intelligent design’s advocates have tended to accept the basic contours of the evolutionary account, but they call attention to the theory’s gaps, which they believe offer evidence of an intelligent designer. For its supporters, intelligent design offers a legitimate scientific alternative to traditional Darwinian accounts, and they have pushed for its inclusion in public school science curricula. According to its critics, however, intelligent design merely repackages creationism and should be excluded for the same reasons that Justice Brennan outlined in *Edwards*.

The Supreme Court has not heard any cases involving intelligent design, but a Pennsylvania federal district court dealt its advocates a significant blow in a 2005 case, *Kitzmiller v. Dover*. At issue in this case was a Dover, Pennsylvania, policy that required teachers to read a disclaimer to ninth-grade biology students before studying evolutionary

theory. The brief, four-paragraph statement emphasized that evolution was a theory with gaps, not a fact, and it cited intelligent design as an alternative “explanation of the origin of life.” It further encouraged all students “to keep an open mind.” A group of parents sued the school district, challenging the constitutional validity of this policy.

In a lengthy decision, District Judge John E. Jones struck down Dover’s policy as unconstitutional, ruling that it violated the First Amendment’s establishment clause. As in *Epperson* and *Edwards*, Jones found no valid secular purpose for Dover’s policy, maintaining instead that its purpose was to advance creationism, “an inherently religious view,” and to disparage evolution. After examining closely the intelligent design movement’s history, the circumstances surrounding Dover’s adoption of its policy, and the text of the disclaimer itself, Jones concluded that a “reasonable observer” would interpret Dover’s policy as an endorsement of religion (in a 1984 Supreme Court decision, Justice Sandra Day O’Connor proposed using this “Endorsement Test” to determine a statute’s constitutional validity under the establishment clause). Jones’s decision hinged on his determination that intelligent design was “inherently religious,” not scientific. Intelligent design failed as science, Jones found, because it invoked supernatural causes, it employed the flawed logic of “contrived dualism” (that is, rather than advance positive arguments, its advocates merely asserted that any evidence *against* evolution constituted evidence *for* intelligent design), and because its attacks on evolution had been refuted and rejected by the scientific community. Jones treated intelligent design as nothing more than repackaged creationism and found that the principles of *Epperson* and *Edwards* applied in this case, as well. Because Dover’s school board had formulated its policy to advance a particular religious belief, it had violated the establishment clause.

Conclusion

As in the cases involving devotional exercises, cases about teaching human origins have prompted passionate public debate, but U.S. courts have remained relatively consistent in their rulings. Whether considering antievolution statutes, equal-time measures, or disclaimer policies, federal courts have rejected all attempts to restrict the teaching of evolution or to introduce creationist accounts into science classrooms, describing all such efforts as religiously motivated. The principle underlying these cases has been the same as in the school prayer cases: the government may not sponsor, promote, or endorse particular religious beliefs, though

schools may teach objectively about religion (leaving the door open for comparative religion classes, in which students might study a range of religious beliefs about human origins). Some critics have contended that these decisions actually disparage religion, by permitting schools to teach only a scientific theory that many religious adherents find at odds with their beliefs. While these critics regard this policy as anything but neutral, courts have consistently rejected their arguments. Federal judges have repeatedly emphasized their respect for local control over public education, but they also have demanded that state officials act in a manner consistent with the First Amendment's establishment clause as the Supreme Court has interpreted it.

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family*; Bible entries; *Education* entries; *Establishment, Religious*; *Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design*; *Freedom, Religious*; *Pledge of Allegiance*; *Politics: Twentieth Century*; *Supreme Court*.

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Education: Home Schooling Movement

The home schooling movement is the organized political and educational manifestation of the trend since the late 1970s toward removing children from institutional schools to educate them at home. Historically, in nearly all societies the education of children has taken place mostly in homes, imparted by parents, siblings, relatives, or tutors. Since a critique of the dominant trends of child education first arose in the late 1960s, however, there has emerged in the United States and elsewhere a self-consciously political movement recommending this practice as an alternative to formal education in schools. This home schooling movement has had two goals: securing legislation and legal decisions that affirm home schooling, and providing support to families engaged in the practice. Begun by families on the margins of American life, home schooling has grown since the 1970s into a powerful and popular educational option.

Three Home Schooling Pioneers

The shift from home schooling as the norm for most children to a movement of dissent among a small minority of Americans is best understood as an outgrowth of the development in the twentieth century of the vast public school system and its compulsory, bureaucratic, and increasingly secular approach to education. In the first decades of the twentieth century, public schools expanded rapidly. By 1918 all forty-eight states at that time had passed legislation mandating school attendance. Such laws were challenged on rare occasions throughout the twentieth century, but acceptance of the idea of schooling was nearly universal among Americans of all sorts. By the late 1960s, however, the public schools, as other mainstream institutions, were criticized by many disaffected Americans. Some looked to home schooling as an alternative.

One of the first was John Holt, who wrote several best-selling books in the 1960s critiquing public schools. By the

mid-1970s, Holt had given up on the independent “free schools” he had previously advocated and began to write about the possibility of parents teaching their children at home. Parents who were doing so, often illegally, began to write to Holt, and in 1977 he began the first national newsletter for home schoolers, called *Growing Without Schooling*.

As Holt and his fellow travelers began investigating the legal landscape and swapping practical suggestions, he became aware of many Christian groups engaged in a similar process. While Holt himself had no religious convictions and had previously published ideas about child liberation that would be considered anathema to many conservative Christians, he nevertheless made common cause with a number of religious conservatives, perhaps most notably Seventh-day Adventist educators Raymond Moore (1916–2007) and Dorothy Moore (1915–2002). The Moores had long been critical of public education, especially its rush to push a formal academic curriculum on young children. A steady stream of publications from their foundation argued that early formal education damages children in a number of ways. The Moores advocated keeping children at home until the age of ten at the very least. Together Holt and Raymond Moore, along with many other activists and organizers, traveled the country defending home schoolers in court and appealing to legislatures to legalize home schooling.

Perhaps the most influential Christian home schooling leader of the 1970s and early 1980s was Rousas J. Rushdoony (1916–2001). Rushdoony’s intense biblicism and reconstructionist politics have left a permanent mark on the Christian home schooling movement. He believed that biblical law as recorded in both Old and New Testaments should be the basis of human government, especially the government of the United States—which Rushdoony viewed as a providentially blessed nation commissioned to win the world to Christ—and that U.S. law and government need to be “reconstructed” along biblical lines. For Rushdoony, the family was divinely instituted to train warriors for Christ who would fight to subject all nations to his law. Rushdoony’s theories inspired many of the leaders who created the institutional infrastructure supporting both the Christian day and home school movements, including Paul Lindstrom’s Christian Liberty Academy Satellite Schools (CLASS) with its Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) curriculum, John W. Whitehead’s Rutherford Institute, and the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA).

Success and Schism in the Movement

In the late 1970s and early 1980s these and other leaders like Roman Catholic Phyllis Schlafly and Mormon Joyce Kinmont worked together to secure legislation and judicial rulings favorable to the cause of home schooling. By the late 1980s such efforts had made home schooling clearly legal, even for parents without state teacher certification, in most states. By 1993 the last remaining states had surrendered. But even as they were successful in the courts and legislatures, home schoolers were increasingly segregating among themselves along religious lines.

Throughout the 1980s the movement had grown significantly, but not among the leftist countercultural elements that had flocked around Holt. Many conservative Protestants first heard of home schooling through the Moores’ frequent appearances on Christian psychologist and political activist James Dobson’s radio show *Focus on the Family*. Largely as a result of Dobson’s advocacy, the home schooling movement grew exponentially as evangelicals and fundamentalists, long frustrated with the secularization of public education, began to home school by the tens of thousands in the 1980s. Many of these families were piqued that one of the leading spokespersons for their movement (Holt) was an atheist and the other (Moore) an Adventist, a group many of them considered a cult. The setting was ripe for new leadership, and in the mid-1980s a new organization was born that dramatically changed the movement, the HSLDA.

HSLDA’s first president, Michael Farris, had been converted to home schooling by Moore and was able to secure Moore’s endorsement of his organization at first. But major differences soon surfaced. Farris, a Baptist with strong reconstructionist tendencies, did not consider Moore’s Seventh-day Adventism true Christianity. Moreover, many Christian home schoolers had come out of the Christian day school movement and shared its strong opposition to progressive pedagogies such as whole language reading instruction and child-directed study. They tended to associate the Moores’ lax approach to early childhood education with secular humanism and its archpriest John Dewey. Curriculum makers for Christian schools eagerly followed their constituency into home schooling, and they likewise disagreed with Moore’s nature-based study that downplayed the importance of early formal training. Part of the problem was generational. Holt and Moore had both fought in World War II. For all their pedagogical radicalism, they were in many ways mid-century Americans. The Christian leaders

emerging in the 1980s were almost all baby boomers, and Moore simply did not understand them. In 1988 he published *Home School Burnout*, a book that included a critique of some of the younger Christian leaders for their un-American antigovernment rhetoric, their Protestant exclusivity, and their overly structured approach to early childhood education.

By this time, however, conservative Protestants were the supermajority of the movement. Holt had died in 1985, and after *Home School Burnout*, Moore was increasingly marginalized and isolated by movement activists. Statewide organizations that previously had included a diverse group from fundamentalists to Mormons to pagans in the late 1970s and early 1980s were either split apart or taken over by the Protestant majority, who required that officers and sometimes all members sign Evangelical statements of faith. Home schooling conventions were similarly commandeered, with non-Christian curriculum providers and speakers rejected. Legally, HSLDA initiated dozens of lawsuits in states across the country challenging compulsory school legislation on constitutional grounds. Though they almost always lost the constitutional arguments, their success at organizing large-scale protests, letter-writing campaigns, and call-ins secured legislative victories despite legal setbacks.

Such tactics, however, alienated the minority of home schoolers who did not identify with conservative Protestantism. By the mid-1990s several alternatives to HSLDA had been formed, but these groups had several things working against them. First, there were simply not as many non-Protestant home schoolers. Researchers tracking the home schooling movement estimated that by 1990 perhaps as many as 90 percent of home schoolers were conservative Christians. In 1989, Connecticut attorney Deborah Stevenson, frustrated with HSLDA's Christian exclusivity and devotion to right-wing political causes, created an alternative secular legal defense organization. After almost twenty years of activism, Stevenson's organization boasted a membership of around 2,000 home schooling families, mostly located in New England. HSLDA, by contrast, has a truly national membership of more than 81,000. Second, many of the non-Protestant home schoolers were committed Catholics or Mormons who were content for the most part to keep to themselves, creating their niche cultures and networks and rarely paying attention to what HSLDA and the other Protestants were up to. Finally, even among those who wanted to form some sort of organized alternative to

HSLDA, commitment to 1960s-style bottom-up leadership and consensus-model discussions meant hours of deliberation with little to show for it. Most alternative groups, after an initial burst of energy and activity, petered out.

The conservative Christian wing of the movement since the 1980s, on the other hand, experienced explosive growth, both numerically and in terms of organizational infrastructure. Home schooling became big business. In the 1980s, several organizations that had previously fashioned explicitly Christian curriculum for the many Christian day schools that had been created in the wake of the Supreme Court decisions of the 1960s abolishing government-sponsored prayer and Bible reading in public schools, and sometimes in reaction against desegregation efforts, began marketing this curriculum to home schoolers as well. The three most influential were the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE), Bob Jones Complete, and A Beka Book, but these organizations have been joined by a growth industry of entrepreneurs seeking to tap into the home school market with all sorts of products. This market was accessed most easily by selling products at home schooling conventions that emerged in the 1980s and grew by the 1990s into massive statewide affairs, attracting in many states thousands of attendees and over a hundred vendors annually. Christian bookstores have also done a brisk business selling home schooling supplies. More recently, much of the home schooling commerce has shifted to the Internet.

Home Schooling Today

By the mid-1990s, home schoolers had won their legal battle even in the most resistant states. With the legal ground cleared and support mechanisms in place, home schooling has grown at a fast clip. While accurate numbers are hard to come by, the National Center of Education Statistics estimates that by 2007 there were 1.5 million home schoolers in the country. Public opinion surveys show much more acceptance of the practice now than in the 1980s, and media coverage of home schooling is almost always positive. But the success of the movement in winning over both state legislatures and public opinion ironically resulted in all sorts of unanticipated consequences. School choice advocates seized upon the home schooling model in the 1990s and began using newly passed charter school legislation in many states to create Virtual Charter Schools. Such schools began shipping tax-funded computers and curriculum to thousands of children. In the early years most families who signed up for virtual charters had previously been home

schooling independently, but more recently the lion's share of new recruits has been coming directly out of the public school system.

Whether publicly financed or not, by the twenty-first century home schooling was in fashion. Celebrities and the wealthy embraced it for its flexibility. Child athletes and performers flocked to it for the freedom it gave them to pursue their careers. HSLDA's leadership has decried such trends, predicting that if the movement ceases to place Christ at the center of its identity all gains made over the preceding decades will be quickly lost, but to little avail. Home schooling has come of age and entered the American mainstream.

The social significance of the home schooling movement continues to be debated by home schoolers, their critics, and less-partisan voices. Some celebrate it as a restoration of the antebellum pioneer spirit of self-reliance and a return to the pre-industrial world where work and home, public and private, were not so segregated. Some see home schooling as antimodern reaction, a fundamentalist retreat from pluralism and democracy into self-segregated insularity. Some view home schooling as the crest of a wave of postindustrial, open-source learning that will increasingly typify the hybridized structures and fluid boundaries of twenty-first-century life. Some supporters note how home schooling, despite the heated antifeminist rhetoric of many of its practitioners, is at heart a feminist activity as mothers are empowered by the practice and typically raise their children in a far more gender-inclusive way, teaching boys to cook, clean, and care for siblings and teaching girls every subject boys learn. Whatever its broader significance, home schooling as a movement has matured to the point that it can now be safely predicted to have a long and vibrant future.

See also *Children and Adolescents; Education: Christian School Movement; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Fundamentalism: Contemporary; Marriage and Family; Religious Right; Seventh-day Adventists.*

Milton Gaither

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Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools

A parochial school is a ministry of a local church, educating the children within its parish in religious doctrines and general-educational subject matter. Parochial schools should be distinguished from private religious day schools that are operated by a board of parents and other supporters on behalf of a religious community. These schools have similar aims, but sponsors have their preferred titles. For example, Jewish elementary and secondary schools are called "Jewish day schools," and recently, schools sponsored by American Muslim communities have been referred to both as parochial schools and as Islamic day schools. "Faith-based alternative school" is yet another contemporary equivalent term. In this article "religious schools" and "religious schooling" will be used generally of all forms.

Purpose and Impact

Religious schooling has been characterized historically by the dual purpose of creating and maintaining an orderly society while imparting the knowledge necessary for salvation. The legacy of a religious school is secured by its preparation of the next generation of leaders that espouse a particular faith. Moreover, where they are taught well, religious schools preserve the orthodoxy of that faith through intellectual vigor and inspire passion for faithful living. The rich history of religious schooling in the United States is largely a product of immigration, and of various immigrant communities' efforts to preserve their language and culture (the core of which is typically religious). The long-term success of particular schools, therefore, has tended to reflect the strength of their communities.

Beginning in the American colonial era, various Protestant groups—Anabaptists were among the earliest—freely founded schools. Catholics followed as soon as religious freedom permitted (that is, after the American Revolution). Religious schooling thus preceded all forms of public education—the "common schooling" that arose in the nineteenth century. Jewish day schools, in smaller numbers, also appeared about that time, and Muslim schools began to

appear in the twentieth century. Then, as now, religious school advocates of various faiths have rejected public schooling for their children, although most see it as necessary for the peace and prosperity of the nation and support it with their taxes. Over time, the majority of Americans' increasing confidence in public education, and in the role of the state to educate their children, has led to the hegemony of the public school system, though current surveys estimate that religious schools supply about 11 percent of America's primary and secondary educational needs.

While the nationwide system of public education was under development, during the mid- to late nineteenth century, religious school advocates attempted but failed to garner public support for their schools in the form of tax revenues. Religious schools, therefore, have had to survive on the basis of their success in charitable fund-raising. Legislation mandating public school attendance has challenged religious schools' legal right to exist. By meeting those challenges, religious schooling advocates have strengthened and enlarged the concept of religious freedom in America. The historical trend suggests that new immigrant faith communities, and those long settled, will continue to exercise the right—first won by Catholics—to sponsor religious schools for their children. Moreover, many of the values that inform contemporary education are rooted in historical forms of religious schooling.

Colonial Beginnings

Colonial claims to territory on the eastern seaboard of North America were based on discovery, conquest, and occupation by various groups, thus producing a diverse social climate to which English- and European-style schools were transplanted beginning in the 1600s. While some colonies were established as havens of religious and political freedom, others were enterprises that sought to exploit the natural resources of the New World for governments and investors. Certain regions, such as the Delaware Valley, became home to remarkably diverse populations and settlement purposes. The degree of religious freedom practiced within a particular colony determined which denominations might settle there, establishing their churches and schools. Thus, the Puritans settled in Massachusetts, the Dutch Reformed in New York, Quakers in Rhode Island, Catholics in Maryland, and so on.

The sponsors of formal religious schooling included not only these and other denominations, but also the Society for the Promotion of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, or SPG

(sponsored by the Church of England), colonial governments, town fathers, plantation owners, representatives of colonizing agencies such as the Dutch West India Company, and individual donors of land and money for the establishment of free schools. These sponsors varied widely in their aims but shared many common assumptions. They were diverse in their founding entities (many by collaboration between church, business, and government), in their funding sources (for example, subscription, tuition, and taxation), in their locations (in churches, meetinghouses, parsonages, shops, and sheds), and in their teachers (clergymen, schoolmasters, parents, tutors, lay readers, physicians, lawyers, artisans, and shopkeepers). There was, of course, no school system as it exists today, and with little or no educational standardization, schools had to conform to local needs and resources.

Despite many challenges, by 1650 schooling as an institution had been firmly transplanted to the North American continent. As the population increased so did the need to maintain social order in relation to the welfare of neglected children among the poorer classes. In New England, this need prompted the earliest colonial legislation concerned with education—the Massachusetts Bay Colony's Law of 1642 requiring parents and masters to oversee schooling for their dependents, and the more familiar “Old Deluder Satan” Act of 1647, which required every township of fifty householders (families) to have a teacher for reading and writing and towns of one hundred families to establish a grammar school. The act was framed as a countermeasure to Satan—“that old deluder”—who, by reason of men's ignorance of the relevant languages, kept them from the “true sense and meaning of Scripture.”

Colonial-era “petty schools” taught basic reading, writing, and arithmetic (the equivalent of today's lower elementary schools) and grammar schools (roughly equivalent to today's secondary schools) prepared students for the university by teaching the Latin and Greek classics. In theory, while the reading of scripture in the King James translation was the basic aim of petty schools, training in the biblical languages was carried out by grammar schools. In practice, however, grammar schools often found it necessary to work with lower-level students. In addition to their instruction in the traditional subject matter, teachers drilled students in the catechism. Aside from scripture, the *New England Primer* was the standard reader, providing students a basic sourcebook of the alphabet, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and various short pieces reflecting the Puritan worldview.

Grammar school teachers taught select Greek and Latin classics alongside the Bible and basic Christian doctrine. The typical school day lasted eight or nine hours, and school was open year-round (weather permitting), with the grammar school course lasting a total of seven years. School masters were paid far less than most of the professions—ministers, doctors, and lawyers—and though they could expect assistance with housing and food, many had to hold additional jobs to support their families.

Immigrant Christian Educators

Beginning in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Anglican immigrants established several types of schools with the support of the SPG, including mission schools (to evangelize Native Americans), divinity schools (to prepare clergy), and parochial grammar schools (typically to serve Protestant Episcopal Church parishes). Throughout the 1800s, German immigration led to the establishment of parochial schools (taught primarily in the German language) by Protestants of the Reformed, Lutheran, and Anabaptist traditions, especially in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan. The persecution of Anabaptists in Europe hastened their journey to the New World. The earliest of their schools was founded by Rosicrucian Mystics who undertook their mission to prepare Christian communities for the millennial advent of God's kingdom on earth. Their leader, Johannes Kelpius (1673–1708), arrived in Philadelphia in the 1690s. Finding no established worship or teaching among the German immigrants, he built a school in the secluded countryside outside of Germantown and developed a German-English curriculum suited to the needs of the local children. He taught the scriptures and the “three Rs” in an atmosphere that fostered monastic discipline. Another German school was founded at Ephrata, Pennsylvania, in the 1730s by a Church of the Brethren community whose monks—males and females—offered an advanced curriculum of mathematics, classical studies, and manuscript illumination, in addition to lower-level studies. Their renown headmaster, Ludwig Höcker (1717–1792), authored the school's textbooks and attracted many students from large eastern cities.

Mennonite schools were conducted in the meeting-houses of Pennsylvania's easternmost counties as early as the 1790s. One of these was taught by Christopher Dock (1698–1771) who stressed the importance of motivation and rewards for learning in contrast to the generally punitive approach taken by most colonial schools. Dock's innovative teaching was biblical but nonsectarian, attracting students of

various denominations. Moravian mission schools were established to serve immigrant families, and to reach Native Americans with the gospel, but without eradicating native culture (as was often the case with mission schools). Females received an especially thorough education in Moravian schools on the assumption that “to educate a woman is to educate a family.” The innovative nature of colonial-era Anabaptist schooling was a reflection of religious nonconformism. Fervent piety, not a university education, qualified Anabaptist teachers; separatism, not assimilation, describes their position relative to the society of their era. Few of these schools, however, outlived their founders.

Schools associated with the state churches, Lutheran and Reformed, appeared later than Anabaptists schools but by midcentury outnumbered them. Supportive networks of these schools were established by immigrant pastors Henry Melchior Mühlberg (1711–1787), in the case of Lutherans, and Michael Schlatter (1716–1790) of the Reformed Church. Given the steadily increasing numbers of Lutheran and Reformed immigrants throughout the nineteenth century, one would expect greater numbers of these schools by the end of the century. Yet, the requirement of university credentials made good teachers hard to come by, and there was a tendency of immigrants to assimilate quickly to English-speaking culture. German was used exclusively by immigrant teachers, who viewed the child's mind as a *tabula rasa*. These schools were distinctive more for their respective approaches to the catechism—Luther's or the Heidelberg Catechism—than for novel approaches to general education.

Catholic schools were scarce in this era because Catholic immigrants were few in number prior to the American Revolution. As early as the 1600s, Franciscan and Jesuit mission schools were planted in the American South and West for the conversion and occupational training of Native Americans. However, fears that “Romanists” (that is, Roman Catholics) would oppress the English colonies kept anti-Catholic sentiment high there, and prompted legislation that restricted or banned Catholic activity. Of all the colonies, Pennsylvania and Maryland alone permitted Catholicism.

One early school founded in 1745 by Jesuits was Bohemia Manor in northeastern Maryland. As in all Jesuit schools, for Bohemia Manor the daily schedule and curriculum were set by the *Ratio Studiorum* or “System of Studies” developed by sixteenth-century Jesuits. Each school day was framed by prayer, attendance at Mass, and various devotional practices. Fridays and Saturdays were especially devoted to

instruction in doctrine, but traditional prayers and doctrinal passages provided the material for instruction in Latin grammar during other days of the week. The teacher read passages from Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), for example, and followed it with a vernacular translation to familiarize students with Latin syntax and cadence. Advanced students wrote their compositions in Latin. School discipline was based on motivation and reward for exemplary behavior and scholarship, not punishment. The aim of schooling was the demonstration of knowledge and conduct worthy of a Christian. The first American Catholic bishop, John Carroll (1735–1815), a graduate of Bohemia Manor, in his first pastoral letter (1792) identified Christian education as essential for preserving the faith in the New World. His campaign to establish schools in every Catholic parish mobilized local trustees to raise funds, build schools, and hire teachers.

To summarize, religious schooling prior to the American Revolution, though primarily Christian, was diverse in origin and purpose. While French and Spanish Catholics as well as Church of England missionaries conducted mission schools to Native Americans in the South and West, European Protestant immigrants—especially Germans—established schools in the Northeast and Old Northwest (Upper Midwest today) for the faithful, to preserve old world culture and religious identity. English colonial schools appeared in New England and the Upper South as a result of the revolutionary notion that (religious) schooling must be made widely available for the advancement of piety and learning. Religious nonconformists were generally more open to educational innovation than their state church counterparts: early Anabaptist teachers fostered child-centered educational principles more than a century before their widespread adoption. Conservative Lutheran and Reformed Church teachers emphasized a theologically informed faith and created closed communities that survived the rigors of time and change.

The American Revolution and the Rise of School Systems

The impact of the American Revolution on religious schooling was most immediately felt by Catholics. “Red Coats,” that is, supporters of Britain, became the targets of abuse formerly reserved for Catholics, and legislation permitting the free exercise of religion appeared even prior to the First Amendment (enacted 1791). Catholic participation in fighting the British helped to diminish the portrayal of

Catholics as foreigners. For non-Catholic schools, the impact of the Revolution was more gradual. The Constitution made no mention of religion or schooling, but the Founders believed both to be essential for a virtuous republic. Religious schools were responsible for widespread literacy in the colonies and would continue without federal assistance. The fact that the founders were more interested in academies of higher learning also suggests that basic schooling needs were being met.

As immigration gained momentum, new religious schools were planted with the arrival of each group. For the first half of the nineteenth century, most of these followed the pattern laid down by local colonial models, and even the mission model found new life in schools set up to teach African Americans (both free and enslaved) in the South, prior to 1861. These schools, many of them taught by Episcopalians, introduced basic Christian doctrine through instruction in reading and writing. Classes for children during daylight hours were followed by instruction for adults at night. As the Civil War drew near, many of these schools disappeared from view but maintained a clandestine ministry at the risk of severe persecution.

The 1860s saw the rise of systems of parochial schools alongside the common school movement, and these gradually replaced the hodgepodge of colonial-era schools. After the Civil War, the influx of new immigrants, many of whom were German and Irish Catholics, led to concerns over their impact on American democracy. Advocates for public education proposed “common schooling” as a way to unite the nation through a curriculum of general studies combined with what, in their view, were common (that is, nonsectarian) Christian values, taught through prayer, Bible reading without commentary, and the inculcation of commonly held religious precepts such as the Ten Commandments. McGuffey’s Readers became the standard textbooks of the dominant Calvinistic perspective of nineteenth-century America. While many immigrants were more than willing to send their children to common schools, some religious leaders—particularly Catholic and Lutheran—rejected the idea of common schooling as detrimental to the faith of their people.

Catholic Schools

The American Revolution had opened the door for Catholic churches and schools, but many challenges remained. The cost of school buildings and the support of teachers were beyond the means of most parishes, and the



Elizabeth Bayley Seton founded the Sisters of Charity, whose nuns taught and administered Catholic parochial schools.

full force of anti-Catholicism still lay in the future. As with other nineteenth-century immigrants, Catholics from Ireland, Germany, and France often succumbed to cultural assimilation to avoid negative stereotyping. Catholic leaders foresaw a crisis of parishioners abandoning the faith and proposed parochial schools as the solution. Catholic newspapers became an important vehicle for promoting parochial schools. Individual schools were founded in urban centers, but as the floodgates of immigration widened, these schools were inundated with students. To deal with this problem, some Catholic schools temporarily adopted the widely used monitorial system whereby the older students taught the younger.

The proliferation of Catholic parochial schools, however, was made possible through the establishment of religious teaching orders whose nuns devoted their lives to teaching and administering schools in exchange for subsistence-level support. The first of these was the Sisters of Charity, founded by an American convert to Catholicism, Elizabeth Bayley Seton (1774–1821). During the decade of the 1820s, the Sisters of Charity supplied trained Catholic teachers for fifteen schools in eleven cities, thus setting the pattern for the supply of parish school teachers for the next 125 years.

Prior to 1825, Catholic schools in New York also received support in the form of a share of tax revenues dedicated to education, but this ceased with the founding of the Public School Society and its support for Protestant-oriented public schooling. “Common, not Catholic,” schooling became the battle cry of public school advocates who envisioned interdenominational schooling as the only hope for national unity, and biblical literacy as the best cure for “Catholic superstition.” In the 1840s, New York bishop John Hughes rallied Catholics to petition the legislature for tax support of Catholic parochial schools, and the ensuing social debate became known as “the school wars.” While Catholics responded to public backlash by becoming, generally, more supportive of

the idea of separate Catholic schools, many challenges to a nationwide system of schools remained. Some Catholics, for example, Italians, continued to enroll their children in public schools. Even where Catholic schools were built, shared administration led to regular conflicts between lay-trustees and Catholic clergy.

Armed with papal encyclicals, Catholic leaders continued to appeal to the laity to establish Catholic schools in every parish, while countering the public charges of disloyalty to the nation for their lack of support for public schools. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore of 1884 spoke of the absolute necessity of Catholic schools, and of the obligation of pastors to establish them and of parents to enroll

their children. Catholic leaders rejected the notion that the state was ultimately responsible for the education of their children. Moreover, they identified the Protestant bias inherent in the common school curriculum, centered as it was on the King James Bible and Protestant-oriented McGuffey Readers. Finally, they condemned the notion of “Americanization” as veiled language for the eradication of the Catholic faith.

Increasing support for parochial schools among Catholics and the subsequent emergence of a nationwide system of Catholic schools after the Civil War were the result of many factors. Among these was disillusionment over the rejection by public school administrators of Catholic initiatives aimed at compromise with public education. For example, in locations where Catholics were in a majority, the Church had offered to provide trained teachers for the local public schools at their own expense. A second factor was the demand by millions of later nineteenth-century Catholic immigrants for national parish churches and schools for the preservation of their native cultures. Teachers for these schools could now be supplied from various teaching orders based in Europe. A third factor was the growing secularization of knowledge in public school education as, in modernity, the veneer of Christian culture was progressively stripped away.

A model of a successful, long-term system of Catholic parochial schools can be seen in the historical example of schools established for German and Irish immigrants in Detroit, in the 1860s. There, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) taught girls and boys through the age of twelve a traditional grade school curriculum, beginning each day with instruction in Catholic doctrine and sacred (biblical) history. In partnership with brother teachers, IHM provided advanced instruction in grammar, rhetoric, composition, and the natural sciences. By the turn of the century, the school and academy boasted growing enrollment, and an atypical child-centered philosophy of education, that prioritized students’ interests and career inclinations, and emphasized the importance of education for all children—including the poor—as prerequisite to the development of a virtuous society. For nearly a century, Detroit Catholics and their children experienced the “IHM way,” along with schools established by other teaching orders. National parish churches and schools faded from prominence after World War I, but in 1925 the Supreme Court ruling in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (where Oregon State law mandated attendance at

public schools) guaranteed religious schooling as a constitutional right.

Despite ongoing legal challenges, each decade of the twentieth century witnessed the expansion of the nationwide system of Catholic schools. These increasingly reflected a standard college-preparatory curriculum along with religious instruction based on the Baltimore Catechism of Christian Doctrine (prepared by the Third Plenary Council), taught by nuns in long habits with head coverings exposing only the face. Classroom ambiance was typically austere, accented by the crucifix and a statue of Mary, and the daily devotional exercises—praying the rosary together for example—socialized students in the Catholic faith.

The rise of public high schools encouraged the development of similar Catholic schools. At first, these secondary schools, few in number, grew out of parish-based elementary schools. Later on, “central high schools” sponsored by the diocese or by local religious orders accepted students from surrounding parishes. The founding of the Catholic Educational Association in 1903 paved the way for the standardization of these schools, and acquiescence to state accreditation (to avoid more serious forms of state control) meant that many Catholic schools increasingly conformed to their secular counterparts. While the parochial model of curriculum—centered on Catholic worship and instruction in doctrine—was never abandoned, the need to provide youth of working-class families with the same educational and career opportunities of the privileged middle class subsequently reshaped the aims of Catholic secondary education.

The growth of the Catholic school system peaked in 1960 with more than five million students enrolled in nearly 13,000 schools, or 12 percent of all kindergarten to high school students in the United States. Since then, enrollment has decreased by more than half that number, and many schools have closed for lack of funding. Decreasing participation in Catholic religious orders (nuns and monks who formerly taught the schools) has made it necessary to hire teachers. This in turn resulted from revolutionary changes within the Catholic Church that emerged from Vatican II (1962–1965). The Council’s *Declaration on Christian Education* proposed a new paradigm for Catholic schools, signaling the end of traditional catechetical instruction as a passing on of the faith to a Church that defined itself *against* the world. The present need, as defined by Vatican II, was to *engage* culture for the purpose of building a community in which faithful Catholics could serve as leaven. Since then,

the use of nonauthoritarian instructional methods such as values clarifications has led to a very different approach to Catholic schooling, which some find difficult to distinguish from public schooling, especially given a majority of lay and even non-Catholic instructors, attired in street clothing.

Lutheran Schools

Among Protestants, Lutherans made the earliest inroads toward a system of schools. By 1820 more than three hundred Lutheran day schools—roughly one school for every two congregations—had been established throughout the middle colonies through the work and influence of Henry Melchior Mühlenberg (1711–1787), the father of American Lutheranism. Lutheran leaders among the German immigrants had concerns similar to Catholics regarding the corrupting effects of the rapid assimilation of their people to American culture. The preservation of the language and culture of the old world was seen as essential for the preservation of the faith in the new. Strong immigrant communities built schools for the education of their children and youth as quickly as they built churches. For example, immigrants from Saxony, under the guidance of C. F. W. Walther (1811–1887), founded the conservative Missouri Synod Lutheran Church in 1847, and during the next three decades managed to establish a parochial school connected to each of several hundred local congregations. These schools served as anchors of conservative Lutheran orthodoxy, supplying the next generation of Lutheran ministers and school teachers, both of which were established offices in the church. However, attention was also given to the preparation of students for the study of law, medicine, and other professions. Levels of schooling followed the German model of *Volksschule* (elementary) and *Gymnasium* (secondary), followed by the study of classical languages in preparation for university studies. Scriptures such as Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (“Hear, O Israel”) and the educational writings of Martin Luther (1483–1546) were adduced as evidence that all Lutherans, whether or not they had children, were to support the schools. Meanwhile, the level of excellence achieved by these schools attracted non-Lutheran enrollment.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, there were about 1,600 Missouri Synod Lutheran schools with nearly 90,000 students enrolled. New challenges to the maintenance of these schools and the expansion and improvement of the system arrived with the next wave of German immigrants, many of whom were unwilling to invest in education beyond the elementary level. Some immigrants, moreover,

were converted to Methodism, while others simply became indifferent to their religious upbringing. Other challenges to Lutheran schools leading up to World War I included the growth of the common school movement, the rise of legislative attempts to enforce attendance at public schools, and the program of Americanization that, for a time, banned the teaching of German and other foreign languages. The resurgence after World War II of Missouri Synod Lutheran schools, together with their continued popularity with non-Lutherans, shows that they transcended many of the temporal aspects on which they were founded and have succeeded in combining religious and general education to a degree matched by few others. Enrollment in Missouri Synod schools for the year 2008–2009, from early childhood through twelfth grade, was nearly 271,000 students in 2,500 schools, and this is in addition to other Lutheran Schools. For example, more than 1,500 early childhood centers, 257 elementary schools, and 14 high schools are currently operated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, enrolling a total of 150,000 students.

Calvinist Schools

Dutch immigrants to New Netherlands (New York) were also among the earliest to establish parochial schools in the colonies. As the settlers moved west and were joined by fresh waves of immigrants from the Old World, Dutch Reformed communities in Michigan and Iowa debated the need for “Dutch Christian education.” Many of the faithful saw district (common) schools as sufficient to meet their children’s basic needs, but leaders such as Albertus Van Raalte (1811–1876) decried the “colorless Protestantism” of those schools in denominational newspapers. Lack of both pedagogical vision and resources frustrated attempts to establish schools in which a Reformed epistemology could be integrated into all academic disciplines. Instead, schools were established to maintain doctrinal purity through Dutch language instruction, resulting in cultural isolation.

Other Reformed denominations experimented with parochial schools beginning about the mid-nineteenth century. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, prompted by Princeton Seminary faculty, mandated a system of church-controlled schools to answer their growing concerns over the influence of foreign (European) philosophy, doctrinal disagreements among Presbyterians, the gradual disappearance of religious instruction from common schools, and the shifting control of schools from the church to the state. Presbyterians operated more than

260 parochial schools throughout the East and Midwest between 1846 and 1870, after which the experiment was abandoned due to the limited success of the schools and prohibitive costs. As did Catholics before them, influential Presbyterians, including, for example, the Rev. Charles Hodge, advocated the use of tax revenues for parochial schools. Unlike Catholics, Presbyterian educators believed that the use of the Bible as the primary textbook, together with systematic recitation from the shorter catechism, would yield a thoroughly Christian education. Some schools excelled in the catechism, others in the teaching of general subject matter; few did both well, and fewer still distinguished themselves from the Protestant-oriented common schools by achieving an integration of religious and general subject matter. The experiment was extended for a time through the establishment of mission schools to Native Americans and others, based on the Presbyterian model.

Seventh-day Adventist Schools

The pervasiveness of the belief in religious schooling as a means to the betterment of society is seen in the legacy of Adventist schooling. While Catholics, Lutherans, and others affirmed the role of religious schooling from the outset, concerns for schooling came late among Adventists, who expected Christ's soon return. Adventist educational reformers such as Ellen White (1827–1915) persuaded fellow Adventists that the appreciation of doctrine as well as preparation for missionary work—the duty of every Seventh-day Adventist—called for an approach to education unavailable in the public schools. The development of a successful model awaited White's travels to Australia in the 1890s, and her work with fellow Adventists in founding the Avondale School for Christian Workers. The Avondale model aimed at the preparation of Adventist missionaries and stressed the importance of a remote, rural setting for education, a comprehensive approach to the integration of general and religious knowledge, and the role of manual labor in education.

By the early twentieth century, Avondale had become the model for Adventist schools throughout the United States and the world. In terms of curriculum, various biblical precepts served as the basis of teaching outcomes that subordinated all other aims or methods. For example, White's 1903 publication, *Education*, describes the proper study of language in terms of virtuous speech based on Philippians 4:8 (“whatever is true, whatever is honorable”), thereby prioritizing a “higher point of view” over “mere technical

knowledge” (that is, grammar). Facts about the rule of so many violent and ambitious kings, if only memorized, would foster evil in students; any proper study of history called for instruction in the divine principles showing why such kings ultimately fell. Adventists, mindful of sinful human nature, also discouraged the use of recreation and competition in their schools. While Adventists were slow to embrace religious schooling, their elementary and secondary schools experienced steady growth throughout the twentieth century, becoming one of today's major contributors to non-public education. In 2009, Seventh-day Adventists reported 1,150 schools at all levels with more than 90,000 students enrolled.

Old Order Amish and Mennonite Schools

These private religious day schools are found throughout New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, and serve a range of historical German Anabaptist settlements that preserve both the language and the *Ordnung* or community rule that governs all aspects of Amish life. The schools were founded by parents when public school consolidation led to the closing of most one-room school houses, and legislation made school attendance beyond the eighth grade compulsory. Through legal challenge and even imprisonment, Amish, similar to the Catholics before them, struggled before acquiring the freedom to establish and maintain their schools. The basic curriculum of language arts, mathematics, penmanship, hygiene, and German language instruction prepares children for life in the community—boys for farming and girls for homemaking or school teaching, according to strictly traditional methods (the sciences are not taught). Aside from prayers and the reading of the Bible without commentary, the school is not responsible for the religious instruction of the children, as that responsibility belongs to the home and church. The plain school buildings, equipped with chalkboards and woodstoves, match the austerity of life that characterizes Amish communities as islands of traditional Christian life amidst the tide of modernity.

Academies of the Latter-day Saints (Mormons)

Mormon pioneers to the Salt Lake region began experimenting with religious schools for their children just as soon as mission schools, non-Mormon immigrants, and government regulations challenged their hegemony in the Utah territory. As Mormon influence over district schools waned, Mormon church and educational leaders launched a system of “stake academies” (a stake is a group of wards, or local

parishes), funded jointly by the church, benevolent donations, and tuition. The curriculum was based on the Bible, Mormon scriptures, and Mormon doctrine, along with elementary-level general education subjects and training in domestic and agricultural skills. Beyond the stated aim of the academy—to instill the revealed truth of Mormon prophets—students were socialized in the Mormon culture, while becoming versed in scriptures, church history, public speaking, and methods of church proselytizing. Most academies did not excel in their general education offerings, and lack of widespread patronage of the schools by Mormon members forced the church to designate its teachers as missionaries (that is, volunteers), until increased tithing led to an improved financial base. Of the thirty-three academies that operated from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, most were phased-out thereafter, though some—most notably Brigham Young Academy—became colleges or universities.

Jewish Day Schools

A few early Jewish schools operated during the colonial era, and by 1850 every major U.S. city had several Jewish day schools that were prominent among German immigrants. The advent of public education and Jewish Sunday schools—accepted by many (though not all) Jews—caused most of these schools to close their doors by 1875. Reformed Judaism never embraced the day school strategy. As with other religions, the felt need to assimilate to American culture weakened immigrant-community ties while emphasizing individual responsibility and achievement. A fresh wave of Orthodox refugees seeking asylum in the United States after 1940 founded Torah Umesorah (Torah studies), a national organization for the proliferation and support of schools according to a preferred system of Hebrew education. By the mid-1970s, more than 400 of these Orthodox day schools (75 percent elementary, 25 percent secondary) were in existence, with a total enrollment of more than 80,000, a figure that, since 2000, has grown to more than 700 schools with more than 200,000 students. Reflecting the diversity found even within Orthodox Judaism, the Torah Umesorah schools have varied in their balance of religious and general studies—the traditional *yeshiva* and Hasidic schools devoting the majority of the school day to Torah studies. At the elementary level the Hebrew scriptures are taught. At the secondary level, during a typical day in *yeshiva*, lectures on Jewish law and ethics are interspersed with study sessions (during which

students may work in pairs) that encourage the assimilation of large amounts of material, in addition to mastering the rabbinic forms of argumentation codified in the Talmud (traditional commentary on the Jewish law). As an extension of the synagogue, Jewish day schools have provided a stimulus to the intellectual and ethical life of American Orthodox Judaism.

Muslim Schools

The relatively recent emergence of more than two-hundred Islamic day schools in American cities reflects a renewed interest in learning among African American Muslims as well as Muslim immigrants. Wide differences among the advocates of these schools make it impossible to describe them generally. Schools known as “Sister Clara Muhammad Schools” (originating in Detroit in the early 1930s) were founded by the Nation of Islam and sought to promote a powerful racial identity among African American youth in the years leading up to the American civil rights movement. Formerly these schools stressed learning that would lead to self-knowledge, self-love, and self-sufficiency as an antidote to racial discrimination. More recently these schools have aligned themselves with the African American Sunni Muslim community that takes a more orthodox approach to Islam.

Modern Muslim education is heir to an intellectual tradition that has contributed significant advances in the sciences and humanities, yet Muslim educators seek above all to integrate revealed and human knowledge, a process they refer to as the Islamization of knowledge. More basically, Muslim schools seek to establish a curriculum that reflects the Islamic world view as outlined in the Holy Qur’an, a view that stresses the straight path blessed and revealed by God (Allah). Practically speaking, these schools inform Muslims of their religious heritage and connect them to the wider world of Muslim concerns and resources.

Muslim schools face challenges similar to other religious schools, including the tendency of immigrants to minimize their faith to avoid negative stereotyping and persecution, and to avoid being perceived as “unpatriotic” because of their unwillingness to patronize the public schools. Prior to the American Revolution, Roman Catholics were perceived by most Americans to be a threat to freedom and democracy; afterward, and throughout the nineteenth century, Catholics found public schools to be hostile to their faith. In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Muslim students have been similarly scrutinized. For many immigrants, therefore, religious schooling remains the best

option for enabling their students to explore the implications of their faith for learning while maintaining their “two citizenships”—national and religious.

Conclusion

Within the context of several centuries of immigration to the New World, and the transplanting of a variety of European models of religious schooling beginning in the seventeenth century, the revolutionary English notion of a universal free education took hold in the United States, giving rise to a nonsectarian school movement. By the late nineteenth century, a “system” of district schools (one-room school houses in each community) was in place to meet schooling needs that, formerly, had been met by parochial schools alone. The culturally Protestant curriculum of these early public schools met with the approval of a majority of Americans including many immigrant Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. Some, however, rejected this approach to schooling from the outset as detrimental to their faith and insisted on parochial or private religious schooling as the only viable means of conveying saving knowledge to their students while instructing them in the faithful use of general knowledge. For others, religious schooling was the most important means of preserving the immigrant community’s ethnic identity, the core of which was religious. Still others, though initially pleased with common schools, later rejected them when they found their control over these schools waning, and when consolidation, modernization, and compulsory attendance beyond the eighth grade made them increasingly unsuitable.

To provide an education that effectively combined the three Rs with religious knowledge was always difficult for communities of limited means; often, parochial schools merely offered doctrinal instruction (or invited a member of the clergy to do so) as a “fourth R,” and as the public schools adopted an increasingly secular curriculum, Sunday schools arose to provide that instruction. In time, moreover, religious students found the public school climate far less hostile toward their faith and culture than earlier generations had experienced (except perhaps for Muslims). To conclude that religious schooling has outlived its usefulness, however, ignores important contributions of religious thought to contemporary knowledge and values, as well as the many profound contributions of religiously schooled men and women to the nation. Religious faith continues, for many, to provide the essential framework (“worldview”) for both the content and the process of instruction—and all

the more so in postmodernity, when assumptions about the neutrality of knowledge are being questioned.

Today, the interests of a coalition of prekindergarten through twelfth grade nonpublic schools whose philosophies of education reflect a spectrum of religious and non-religious perspectives are represented by the Council for American Private Education (CAPE), based in Washington, D.C. The National Center for Education Statistics reports the enrollment in these and similar schools at 6,049,000 students, or 11 percent of all U.S. students for 2009, and the number of schools at 33,740, or 25 percent of all U.S. schools for 2007–2008.

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family; Children and Adolescents; Dutch Reformed; Education* entries; *Islam in North America; Judaism* entries; *Latter-day Saints; Lutheran Churches; Nation(s) of Islam; Presbyterians* entries; *Puritans; Roman Catholicism* entries; *Seventh-day Adventists*.

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Education: Religious Issues

Both education and religion play formative roles in the moral and emotional development of children. For this reason, the relationship between religion and education has long been a point of debate in the United States, particularly regarding religious establishment and the free exercise of religion. Parents' choices regarding the setting for their children's formal education; the choices of school administrators regarding student religious expression, school curriculum, and the use of religious language in school activities; and government's concern with balancing freedom of religion with a responsibility to separation between religion and government lead to a complex situation. From education that is explicitly religious to controversies surrounding alternatives to or exemptions from public education to controversies and concerns involving religion in public schools and higher education, intersections of religion and government become particularly complicated when they involve children. The impressionability of those children and the sometimes shared responsibility of moral education by educators and parents suggest that these issues are likely to remain complicated for years to come.

Religious Schooling

Since the founding of the United States, religious communities have maintained adherence to their faith and the integrity of their moral teachings by providing religious educational institutions for their children. For many years, it was only through religious institutions that formalized education was available. Before the rise of mandatory public education, most children received their schooling either in religious schools or at home. The resulting lack of standardization or opportunity for those of low means meant relatively widespread illiteracy and poor education. In 1852, Massachusetts laid down the first law focused on compulsory education for children between eight and fourteen with exceptions for

attendance at other schools, previous education, or disability. Other states followed, with the specific requirements and exceptions varying. In addition to ensuring some level of educational standardization and the ready access of all children to proper education, such laws underscored a belief in the value of education in instilling nationalism and civic identity. Indeed, much of the push for a standard public education system came in response to fears regarding immigration and the nature of private parochial schools.

For immigrants to the United States, religious schooling often ensured the maintenance of religious observance and distinctiveness in spite of the predominance of American Protestant culture. Even when public institutions involved regular prayers and reference to God, those outside of this mainstream culture found it necessary to support their own schools in an effort to support their ideas about religion. For Catholics, parish schools provided the majority of educational opportunities for Catholic children and were supported by donations of parishioners, the work of the clergy, and small fees paid by parents. Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., served as a model for colleges shaped by Catholic doctrine and practice. With the flood of immigrants in the 1840s, Catholics worked extensively to provide education for the increasing numbers of Catholic children while also accommodating the various ethnic identities of these immigrant groups.

In response to these waves of immigration as well as concerns regarding poor education in the population at large, Protestants such as Horace Mann (1796–1859) began to work for mandated public school from the middle of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. These new schools were underwritten by Protestant ideals and often involved distinctly Protestant practice such as regular readings from the King James Bible. The Know Nothing Party advocated such programs in opposition to the rising tides of immigration. These groups felt immigrants needed to be Americanized although some feared that immigrant Catholics could not become full Americans due to their allegiances to the pope.

Realizing both the need for the defense of parochial education in response to nativism as well as the practical utility of parochial education for the maintaining of faith and culture in response to the dominant Protestant culture, Catholic bishops met to solidify their schools and their presence in the United States. Their Third Plenary Council of 1884 marked an official groundswell of development for Catholic education in America. The council mandated the

building of new schools and stated that through such schools the Catholic religion as well as the native cultures of those recently immigrated would be preserved.

While parochial schools continued to be built and grow strong, they received a challenge during World War I when nationalist concerns reemerged and several states moved to mandate public school attendance without exception. Citing concerns about American unity and strength in a time of war that could be weakened by allegiances to the pope or to an immigrant's native land, localities began to enact tougher requirements for compulsory public school attendance. However, the Supreme Court ruled in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925) that parents retained the right to choose nonpublic schools. As immigrant communities became more acculturated in the wake of participating in the world wars, some parochial schools continued to maintain strong funding and attendance, though others suffered from low enrollments and a lack of qualified teachers and funding.

One advantage enjoyed by public schools has been governmental funding and support. Though religious schools have certainly benefited from a lack of regulation and oversight by the government in terms of maintaining doctrinal and organizational integrity, the question of adequate funding and reaching poorer segments of the population have remained salient issues. On this question, religious schooling received a boost with the Supreme Court's decision in *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947). This case involved government subsidy for public transportation to both public and private schools. The Court argued on the side of equal access and allowed for such subsidies to transport children to religious schools as well as public. *Everson* not only provided underprivileged students a better opportunity to attend parochial schools but also underscored the government's responsibility to model neutrality to religion and nonreligion rather than a complete and stark separation from anything like support of parochial schools.

Yet, public schools received further challenges from religious groups, particularly on the compulsoriness of education. In the early 1970s, a group of Amish children who stopped attending high school out of religious conviction directly challenged their state's requirement for mandatory attendance. Amish commitment to noninvolvement with mainstream society and governmental affairs as well as their commitment to community life and work lead many to opt for education within the bounds of their religious communities. Noting that compulsion to attend would ultimately challenge their religious identity as well as their sense of

their own assurance of salvation, the Supreme Court found in favor of the group in 1972's *Wisconsin v. Yoder* and allowed for religious exemption from compulsory education after the eighth grade.

With this ruling, the Amish gained a great victory for their religious ideals but also for parents seeking more control over their children's educational experience. In the years following and on into the twenty-first century, many parents began to explore what was, essentially, the original American educational establishment—the home school. As more and more states allow such practices and home schooling networks and advocacy groups become more developed, this practice grows as well. Motivated by a variety of factors, religious families have chosen home schooling as a means of ensuring the proper religious and broader educational success of their children. In these cases, governments have struggled with relinquishing the standardization and nationalizing benefits of public education in the name of religious liberty and parents' rights.

School Vouchers

For parents with strong religious convictions who choose to place their children in more traditional educational environments, financial concerns can often be a problem. These parents do not enjoy the subsidies available for public institutions. Though court decisions in the past fifty years have clarified the necessarily secular character of American public schools, the issue of governmental support of religious schooling has been a more complex issue. The debate of public school curriculum aside (for that discussion, see below), parents who have chosen sectarian education for their children have begun to advocate vouchers as a means of financing and supporting these alternative educational opportunities. Proponents of school vouchers advocate them as providing parents with reasonable choices in schooling their children and also providing a level of competition that challenges the stagnation and complacency that can come through public schools' monopoly on education.

The concept of school vouchers was first advocated by economist Milton Friedman (1912–2006) in a 1955 essay. Citing the positive competition inherent in this system, he advocated vouchers as a healthy check for public schools. With growing concerns over the state of public school education and legislative milestones regarding religious education, Friedman's ideas found a level of support. In particular, the Supreme Court's rulings in *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) and *Abington v. Schempp* (1963) had removed vestiges of religious

education from the public schools. Opponents to these rulings, or those who wanted religion to remain an integral part of school curriculum and practice, sought ways to make religious education a viable option for parents.

In 1972, the White House's Office of Economic Opportunity tried a voucher program that did not include religious schools, and specific states such as New York provided tuition assistance to those attending private schools. Although the hope was to avoid constitutional conflict by focusing on nonreligious private institutions, the court challenges came. This voucher program was struck down by the Supreme Court in *Committee for Public Education v. Nyquist* (1973). Several other attempts to institute vouchers on the state level failed in the 1970s.

With the election of President Ronald Reagan in 1980, vouchers received outspoken support from the highest political office. Reagan proposed a voucher system in 1983, and though he continued to support this program throughout his time in office, he was unable to pass the legislation. Progress was made, however, on the state level. In 1989, the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program allowed vouchers for nonsectarian private schools and was subsequently revised in 1995 to include religious schools. With this change came significant legal challenges. These challenges reached the Wisconsin supreme court that found the vouchers constitutional, and the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case.

That same year, Ohio launched the Ohio Pilot Project Scholarship Program that targeted troubled districts and established voucher programs within them. Though many opponents challenged this program as well, the Ohio supreme court found it to be constitutional on establishment grounds but struck down the program on an unrelated provision. The program was reinstated in 1999 and was again challenged. This time, it was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court and upheld in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2002). In its decision, the Court commented on the particularly precarious situation of the nation's schools and suggested that this situation mandated new options.

By not ruling against the program on establishment issues, the Court effectively opened the door to other such state programs. While future programs may be limited due to continued resistance on behalf of many Americans and opposition by teacher unions, several states have continued to enact similar programs. In the years following *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, Florida, Colorado, and Ohio successfully instituted voucher programs while Maine and Vermont have had mixed success. Other states have promoted tax

credits instead of vouchers to assist parents in financing both sectarian and nonsectarian private schools and have faced little opposition. Continuing debates largely focus on the effectiveness of vouchers for education overall rather than church and state issues.

Curriculum Controversies

Science curriculum has been a critically important factor in contemporary decisions regarding the choice between religious and secular education. The education of children regarding the origins of life on earth and the development of that life over the centuries can, for religious Americans, involve the deepest of religious questions. Schools committed to providing a nonreligious perspective accessible and nonoffensive to all have found that the evolution-based science of public education is taken, in fact, to be offensive, and contrary to popular religious worldviews. Such debates involve not only questions about the "right" view of human origins but also the relative weight of parental and teacher influence on children's understanding of the world.

Since the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* in 1859, biological evolution became increasingly accepted in institutions of higher learning and eventually found its way into northern public school curriculum by the 1920s. Public backlash against this new curriculum came to a head in the famous Scopes trial of 1925. Prominent fundamentalist and three-time presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925) became a spokesperson for the prohibition of teaching evolutionism. While a creationist himself, Bryan did not advocate that such a theory be taught in public schools but that evolution should not be taught as it was essentially an alternate religion and therefore unconstitutional. John Scopes (1900–1970) was brought to trial for teaching evolution in a Tennessee public high school. Although Scopes was convicted, the trial led many to see fundamentalists as anti-modern and out of step with progress. Though many laws remained on the books outlawing the teaching of evolution in public schools, public sentiment in the northern states had begun to swing in the other direction. In the southern regions of the United States, strong religious influence on curriculum determination and public opposition to Darwin kept evolution out of textbooks.

During the next thirty years, school boards and textbook publishers largely tried to avoid the issue altogether. However, a 1950s influx of funding to support scientific training and research in response to Cold War threats had the effect

of incorporating evolutionary science into public school textbooks. The various Supreme Court cases of the 1960s and 1970s that essentially removed all elements of religion from the public schools combined to support the teaching of this science-based curriculum throughout the country. In 1968, in the Court case *Epperson v. Arkansas*, a public school teacher successfully sued the state of Arkansas for its prohibition of the teaching of evolution. Citing this prohibition as both an establishment of religion and an abridgment of free speech, the Court's ruling had wider implications and effectively nullified all state laws with similar prohibitions. Yet, in affirming neutrality toward religion, this ruling left open the possibility of advocating for equal time for various religious viewpoints.

Limited success for creationists in gaining "equal time" in public school curriculum under the Reagan administration was challenged by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The Supreme Court in *Edwards v. Aguillard* (1987) ruled that the teaching of creationism in public schools violated the establishment clause. Some of the same supporters of creationism began the intelligent design movement, an alternative to the language of creationism, in the late 1990s and 2000s. Supporters of intelligent design tend to accept the basic science of evolution but point out the theory's gaps as evidence of an intelligent designer. However, a U.S. district court in 2005 ruled that the use of the term "intelligent design" in the *Of Pandas and People* textbook was essentially as a substitute for "creationism." The issue of evolution promises to continue to be a hot topic in the political world as those opposed to its teaching try to find ways to allow for their viewpoints to enter the scientific curriculum.

As science curriculum controversies waged on, so too have controversies developed over other elements of religion in public school curriculum. As a result of court cases, such as *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) that clearly discouraged even seemingly broad and voluntary religious language or practice by the school and its employees, some school boards removed all vestiges of religion not only from practice but also curriculum to guard against the establishment clause's challenges. However, the Court in *Abington v. Schempp* (1963) clearly stated that schools could constitutionally teach *about* religion. Realizing the importance of religion in the history and culture of the world and in educating citizens who are knowledgeable about the world and its inhabitants, many school systems began to find ways to integrate religion into their curriculum. The National Education

Association's handbook suggests that while religious instruction belongs in the context of family life, schools have a responsibility to teach the history and influence of world religions.

Such integration has led to further complexities. In particular, certain school districts have faced opposition for too heavily discussing Christianity in their curriculum at the expense of other world religions. For those textbooks and curriculum that do involve a variety of religions, the portrayal of those faiths has been, at times, problematic. In particular, suggestions that Buddhism and Jainism fit a theistic model of faith or that Hinduism is a polytheistic faith strike members of those communities as either false or demeaning. Further controversies have arisen regarding the use of the Bible as a historical or even literary text. Though few educators would deny the Bible's influence in Western history, any discussion of the text in a public school context brings fervent concerns from both Christian conservatives and non-Christians. The very volatility of these issues continues to lead many schools to avoid the treatment of religion altogether.

Prayer and Student Religious Expression

One of the most public and highly contested areas of intersection between educational and religious concerns is the question of school prayer and student religious expression. These controversies involve establishment clause concerns regarding the sponsoring of such prayer by public schools as well as free exercise questions regarding the ability of students to pray and form religiously based groups on public school campuses. Proponents of religion in the schools and advocates for complete separation often come into conflict over these issues.

Though earlier cases addressed religious expressions in public schools, the landmark case mentioned above, *Engel v. Vitale* (1962), paved the way for future challenges to religious establishment in public schools. While school prayer had been regular and largely unchallenged through much of American history, growing controversy surrounding denominational specifications in these prayers led the New York Board of Regents to standardize a nondenominational prayer for its schools. The Supreme Court found even this general prayer to be unconstitutional and thus struck down all school prayer in public schools. The next year, the Court ruled similarly in *Abington v. Schempp* (1963) in declaring unconstitutional the Abington, Pennsylvania, requirement for students to recite ten Bible verses and

the Lord's Prayer during the school day. This time, the Court cited both the free exercise clause and the establishment clause.

These two cases clarified that even a nonsectarian prayer violated the establishment clause and that the fact that the prayers had been written by or selected by the administration made them so. Moreover, in the latter case, the Court clarified that even an allowance for abstaining for those students who objected did not resolve the problem. The fact that such practices were introduced and scheduled by the school is important.

The Court later acted to maintain student expression at public schools as of a different category. In the late 1960s, the Court maintained students' rights to free expression so long as such expression was not disruptive or otherwise offensive. Later cases in the 1980s specified that censorship should be used only in the interest of compelling school interest. However, this question of what constitutes disruption and what constitutes a break of school educational interest remained rather cloudy.

Acting in a cautious way on this subject, many lower courts in the 1970s and 1980s acted to limit the activities of religiously based or affiliated groups at public schools. In 1984 Congress passed the Equal Access Act that clarified the ability of student-led clubs and groups to form and meet at secondary public schools, even if they were expressing a particular religious, political, or philosophical viewpoint. In the wake of this act, a proliferation of religious groups appeared on public secondary school campuses. In 1990 the Supreme Court upheld the act in *Westside Community Schools v. Merges*, a case in which a school had denied a Christian club a staff sponsor. The Court ruled this to be a violation of the Equal Access Act. Other lower court cases struck down similar attempts to limit support of religious student-led groups. This act and other legislation have underscored a movement on the part of the Court to favor free student religious expression rather than caution on establishment clause grounds. Yet, the Court has also consistently prohibited prayers and religious activities sponsored by or organized by schools themselves.

Sexual and Moral Education

While many argue that school prayer is overtly religious, the question of school instruction in morality remains a controversial subject. In fact, the presumption that schools should provide sexual education to adolescents developed relatively recently. Debates over the type of sexual education provided

or whether it should be provided at all have necessarily involved both questions of parental rights and religious perspectives. Prior to the nineteenth century, sexual education typically took place in the home. However, just as citizens and politicians raised concerns regarding the need for standardization and compulsory education generally, so too did citizens and politicians respond to concerns regarding growing immorality and health concerns by calling for standardized and compulsory sexual education.

This movement began in the early nineteenth century as concerns over both increased immorality in the cities and increasing health effects from sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) led to a movement for standardized sexual education. In the 1830s, however, religious leaders and health reformers alike published various books and pamphlets aimed at the sexual health and restraint of young men. The formation of the 1914 American Social Hygiene Association explicitly combined health concerns with moral standards and religiously tinged suggestions for proper living. What followed was the beginning of sexual education in the public schools—a prime forum for reaching youth. Yet, early controversies, particularly with the Catholic Church, pointed to the manner of instruction as problematic. According to many Catholics, taking a scientific approach to sex and giving too much information might result in greater promiscuity. So began a debate that continues today regarding the proper content of such education. Sharing concerns about the problems, various religious and governmental groups differed on the proper response.

It was in the context of World War I that the government first became involved in the issue. By funding sexual education of soldiers in the hopes of avoiding sexually transmitted disease, the government developed films and literature that were later adapted to the public school context. While the moral lessons advocated in this education remained somewhat constant through the 1950s, the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s led to a variety of debates. The patriarchal and overtly heterosexual family model of proper sexuality assumed by the curriculum became too specific for many and necessarily traditional for others.

With growing awareness of HIV/AIDS, sexual education in public schools became even less prescriptive in terms of providing models of proper sexuality and traditional family values. The focus switched to reaching more students and ensuring safety above paradigms of proper morality. Conservative groups opposed such changes and began, in the 1990s, to push for abstinence-only education. Supported most

notably in the 1996 Welfare Reform Act, such curriculum moved away from the more value-neutral approach previously prominent and became much clearer in its advocating of abstinence from sex as the only certain and moral way to address the health and morality issues facing contemporary culture. While religious conservatives continued to support these programs in large numbers into the early twenty-first century, advocates of clearer separation and even the scientific community continued to openly oppose these programs as both inappropriate and wrongly conceived.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance contains one of the most overt references to religion in American public schools. Though many Americans assume the pledge was written as it is now recited, the most controversial phrase of the pledge, “under God,” was a late addition. Though intended as a statement of unity and patriotism, its very message and its requirement in the public schools has led to dramatic and unresolved controversy. The pledge as a practice underscores the principle that the education of youth should involve not only practical knowledge such as reading, mathematics, and other factual knowledge, but that it is also an opportunity to instill a level of civic virtue and good citizenship. Reciting a pledge together not only unites students but daily affirms certain ideals about America as a nation and its inhabitants as citizens.

In honor of the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus’s “discovery” of the New World, Francis Bellamy (1886–1972), a Baptist minister from New York, composed a pledge that was published in a youth magazine and later adopted by President Benjamin Harrison (1833–1901) as a pledge for all of America’s youth. At the time, substantial numbers of immigrants were entering America and disunity caused by conflicts between these immigrants and nativists who objected to this growing diversity led to disunity in the nation as a whole. This pledge, according to Harrison, would not only affirm unity but would remind the immigrants of their allegiance to their new nation and would instill these values in their children. As immigration continued and, with it, concerns about the loyalty of such immigrants, the pledge was made the official Pledge of Allegiance in 1942 by an act of Congress. The phrase “under God” was then added in 1954 in reaction to “godless Communism” and as an attempt to incorporate the tradition of recognizing God’s providence in the history of the nation. Upon this change, President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969)

clearly expressed the importance of continual rededication of the nation’s youth to both the nation of America and to God.

Even before this final addition to the pledge, controversy emerged. Mennonite and Jehovah’s Witness communities objected to the requirement that their children take an oath of allegiance to someone or something other than God. In *Minersville (Penn.) School District v. Gobitis* (1940), the Supreme Court ruled on a case concerning Jehovah’s Witness children who were expelled from public school for their refusal to salute the flag. While the Court recognized the importance of honoring individual religious commitment, it found the school board’s interest in promoting unity and patriotism as of higher importance and upheld the school’s policy.

Immediately following this Court decision, public outrage grew against enforced patriotism, and three years later in the midst of World War II another case emerged with a different outcome. In *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*, the Court reversed its earlier decision and allowed for abstention from the pledge and flag support in recognition of honoring individual conscience. Despite this ruling, the vast majority of states continued to keep laws that required or encouraged regular pledge ceremonies and explicitly advocated the importance of unity and patriotism as elements of public education.

In the 1960s several Court cases restricted the use of religion in public schools. Outlawing school prayer or required Bible readings in schools, the Court demonstrated a growing concern with clarifying the separation of religion and government in the school context. Several lower court cases throughout both the 1960s and 1970s continued to affirm students’ right to abstain from the pledge and debated whether or not a teacher could abstain in the same way. The issue arose again during the 1988 presidential campaign between Vice President George H. W. Bush and Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis. According to Dukakis’s statements and past actions, he saw the requirement that teachers lead the pledge as a violation of their First Amendment rights. The growing influence of conservative religion in the late 1980s led to a strong backlash against Dukakis as not only antipledge but anti-God.

Around this time, the first legal challenge to the “under God” phrase emerged as well. In a lower court case in Illinois, Rob Sherman, an atheist and father, sued the local school district on behalf of his son. Pointing to the pledge as an example of religious establishment, Sherman was

unsuccessful in his suit. The courts pointed to the history of reference to God in the national motto, presidential speeches, and even founding documents and concluded that the phrase “under God” was more ceremonial than religiously significant. The implications were that the pledge served more as an affirmation of American identity than any specific religious ideal and that individual Americans could give this phrase their own meaning.

This issue finally reached the Supreme Court in 2004 in the case *Elk Grove Unified School District v. Newdow*. In this case, plaintiff Michael Newdow, an atheist, filed suit on behalf of his daughter for the same reasons as Sherman had earlier. The Court avoided deciding the case on the establishment clause by dismissing it on the technicality that Newdow had noncustodial parental rights and lacked the standing to sue on behalf of his daughter. While this case shows increasing concern among Americans as to the constitutionality of the pledge, recent polls show continued widespread support for its maintenance.

Religion and American Colleges and Universities

Due to both the fact that the vast majority of their students are legally adults and the greater variety of and lesser state support of the institutions themselves, religion in institutions of higher learning has caused less controversy than in the lower school counterparts. Questions regarding compulsory prayer, religious iconography on university buildings, as well as the support of religiously oriented student organizations have provided significant controversy on the college level. Whether religious institutions may discriminate amongst students based on religious belief or, more controversially, whether a state-supported university can support a student group that does the same are some of the issues that have been debated in the courts.

The earliest and most prestigious of America’s universities began with religious charters and with support from religious denominations and congregations. Though these schools such as Harvard University and the College of William and Mary sought to provide students with more than a seminary’s education, the schools proudly advertised their religious affiliations. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, minority immigrant groups such as Catholics and Jews began to establish their own centers of higher learning. Growing interest in science led to broader curriculum and less religious focus in most colleges. The need for more comprehensive funding and attempts by the government to ensure the ability of underrepresented groups to attend

colleges led to greater governmental involvement and less denominational unity.

This increase in involvement through financial aid programs, student group funding, and athletic and admissions regulations has led to increased constitutional challenges as well. However, due to the age of college students, the Supreme Court has been more lenient with government entanglement with religious institutions of higher education than with elementary and secondary schools. In its decisions regarding higher education, the Court often considers whether a school’s religious affiliation is strong enough so as to make secular and sectarian activities indistinguishable. The “Lemon Test” developed in *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (1971) provided guidelines for evaluating establishment clause claims. In *Tilton v. Richardson* (1971), the Court clearly distinguished between religious colleges and universities and elementary and secondary schools and allowed that the former can have primarily secular purposes. The funding in question in this case involved the construction of nonreligious buildings and thus constituted a decidedly “nonideological” financial assistance. Later cases such as *Roemer v. Board of Public Works* (1976) upheld this concept that religious schools could receive federal funding. Toward the end of the twentieth century, many schools began eliminating or reducing their denominational affiliation to secure more public funding. The emphasis on neutrality to secular and sectarian institutions underscored in *Mitchell v. Helms* (2000) further secured the ability of sectarian institutions to receive aid. Yet, even as both direct and indirect aid were maintained, the governmental scrutiny that came with that aid was often less attractive.

These sorts of conflicts have often risen in regard to the selection of employees and students at sectarian institutions. Though religious institutions often try to select community members who meet certain ideological or demographic characteristics, the government maintains an interest in equal access and ending discrimination. Although the 1964 Civil Rights Act bans religious discrimination in hiring, it also exempts religious institutions from these guidelines. Several cases involving religious higher education institutions allowed for religious preferences particularly in theology departments of parochial schools. The District of Columbia courts also affirmed Georgetown University’s ability to limit gay/lesbian group formation on its campuses.

In 1983, however, the Supreme Court upheld the decision of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to revoke the

tax-exempt status of Bob Jones University due to its anti-interracial dating and marriage regulations. This ruling effectively highlighted the limits on religious liberty in higher education.

In public universities, controversies have abounded regarding the exercise of religious freedom within that context. Instruction in religious studies at public universities has received little legal challenge and has been affirmed in the Supreme Court's *Abington v. Schempp* (1963). However, the question of religious use of facilities has been debated. In *Widmar v. Vincent* (1981), the Court affirmed the right of student religious groups to meet under equal-access claims. Moving beyond the mere right to meet, the issue arose again regarding student publications. At the University of Virginia, a Christian group was prohibited from using funds collected from student fees to publish its religious magazine, *Wide Awake*. The Supreme Court disagreed. In *Rosenberger v. University of Virginia* (1995), the Court determined that the establishment clause did not permit discrimination against religious publication, furthering the religious liberty of religious groups within public universities.

In the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, there has been increased interest in world religions, and greater awareness of religious diversity within the United States; interest in the academic study of religion has grown, along with a growing consensus that such academic programs are as necessary in public institutions as in private, leading to the proliferation of such programs. Yet, schools continue to struggle with how to manage teaching religious studies as opposed to theology and dogma and how to manage freedom of expression of religious commitment on the part of both students and faculty with a commitment to robust, rigorous, and academic treatment of religion as a subject of study.

Conclusion

In the history of American religion and the history of education in America, the intersections of the two have served as a bellwether for current ideas about the separation of religion and politics. Public and private education have involved the intellectual and moral development of the youngest of American citizens, and the activities supported and carried out in educational institutions have affected this development and have ramifications for American ideas of national and moral identity. Vestiges of religious influence have remained in public schools even after the U.S. courts outlawed school prayer. For generations, the school year has

followed the Christian calendars with lengthy breaks over Christmas and Easter. While Jewish students, for example, are allowed to miss school for Jewish holidays, school remains in session. Increasing numbers of Muslim students and teachers have brought to the forefront questions of allowance for regular prayers during the school day and the use of head coverings by Muslim women and girls. As the American religious landscape becomes even more diverse and schooling options more plentiful, these and other issues promise to remain fertile ground for controversy as well as court challenges that seek to clarify the government's proper relationships to the educational institutions of the nation.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Children and Adolescents; Education: Court Cases; Establishment, Religious; Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Freedom, Religious; Jehovah's Witnesses; Pledge of Allegiance; Roman Catholicism: The Impact of Immigration in the Nineteenth Century; Sexuality and Sexual Identity.*

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Education: Seminaries and Theological Education

Western theological education has two foci: the scholarly or philosophic study of religion and the preparation of religious leadership. For most religious organizations in the United States, the same institutions often have served both functions, producing religious leaders (clergy) and religious scholars.

Colonial and European Foundations

The foundations of American theological institutions were in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century European universities. Although no single pattern for these institutions existed, perhaps they were Christian versions of medieval Islamic schools, the *jamiah*, which combined instruction in religion, law, and medicine. Western universities undertook the development of theology and canon law as sciences that used Aristotelian dialectics to organize the content and study of these disciplines. Although the faculties of theology and canon law educated a small percentage of medieval clergy, their graduates often held high ecclesiastical office. Since many university teachers were members of the Dominican and Franciscan orders, a connection existed between theological training and preaching. When city congregations hired their own preachers in addition to the parish priests, these “people’s priests” usually had attended the universities.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Renaissance scholarship transformed the shape of European learning. The humanists, as their contemporaries called these scholars, were the masters of ancient languages, especially Latin and Greek. At the same time, a new educational technology, the printing press, produced relatively inexpensive books. University life changed as the new learning and technology advanced. Sixteenth-century Protestants were advocates of both changes. Led by university professors and urban preachers, the Reformers found the new learning and technology useful in teaching ministers and laity. In Germany and Scotland the Reformers incorporated the new learning into the existing faculties, while in England the new humanism eclipsed the traditional university course of study almost entirely and shifted the focus from the university curricula to the collegiate programs. Originally, English colleges were endowed residences for students that provided libraries and tutors, but they now became semi-independent schools. Much professional training took place outside of the English university. Medicine and common law had their own schools, and clergy read theology in preparation for the bishop’s examination. The college became the educator of the ruling class, or “public,” and a link between parson and squire.

The English pattern of education influenced the British North America colonies. English settlers in Ireland established a college apart from a formal university. Their school, Trinity College, Dublin (1592), had authority to grant the bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees.

Harvard College was the first college, independent of a university, established in the Americas, and college founders followed the same model at Yale, 1701; The Academy of Philadelphia (University of Pennsylvania), 1740; The College of New Jersey (Princeton University), 1746; King’s College (Columbia), 1754; College of Rhode Island (Brown University), 1764; Queen’s College (Rutgers University), 1766; and Dartmouth, 1769. In contrast, William and Mary (1693) was modeled explicitly on the Scottish university, similar to schools on the continent, which had multiple faculties, including a department of theology. With this exception colonial colleges centered their educational program on the education of the ruling class, not on theology, although many of their graduates entered the ministry.

The colonial colleges influenced subsequent American theological education. The holder of the bachelor of arts degree was a gentleman with the manners and learning expected of the ruling class. The degree acknowledged that a minister was a member of the “public,” or ruling class. Despite the democratic aspects of the Revolution, the college degree continued to mark social position. Whenever the leadership of a denomination attained middle-class status, they established one or more colleges to train their own elite.

Postrevolutionary Protestant Theological Education

The American Revolution marked a considerable social and political transformation of the place of religion in the new nation. Although disestablishment had varying meanings in different states, the Constitution moved religion to the private realm. In particular, Christian doctrine became a matter for individual churches or even for parties within denominations to decide. Ironies existed in this new arrangement. While some traditional theological studies, especially historical and biblical studies, maintained a trans-denominational character, theology became progressively less intellectually visible.

The semiprivate character of the denominations contributed to the formation of a new pattern of theological education: the seminary and the divinity school. Initially, the seminary was a school devoted to the study of theology from a particular perspective. The first such institution, Andover Seminary (1808), protected the interest of its founders, the orthodox party in Massachusetts Congregationalism, by two separate governing boards and two separate sets of confessional subscriptions. Although subsequent seminaries rarely carried particularity to this extreme, they

all sought to build fences around their own understanding of truth, usually by an elaborate system of confessional documents. The normally nondoctrinal Southern Baptists adopted an Abstract or Principles when they established their seminary in 1859.

The semiprivate character of the seminary was attractive to non-English immigrants as well. Lutheran immigrants had a substantial university tradition. While they might have preferred to establish continental-styled universities in America, they lacked the resources to do so. The combination of college and seminary created an American approximation of their European tradition. The Missouri Synod exemplified this accommodation but also experimented with a “practical” seminary that did not require the same sophistication.

Before the twentieth century, the handful of seminaries did not educate a plurality of American clergy. Postrevolutionary America witnessed unrestrained religious competition for new members and resources. In such an atmosphere different ways of preparing ministers flourished. Among Presbyterians and Lutherans, two denominations with precise theological convictions, the need to get ministers into new territories meant that some read theology, preferably with a learned pastor, although some prepared without the aid of a mentor. However, theological rigor did not dominate nineteenth-century America. American Christians supported a continually varied religious potpourri that included new denominations and new religious movements. Some were long lasting, others more ephemeral. Initially, at least, they did not want or need the seminary.

The Methodists were the most effective practitioners of nonseminary education. John Wesley had worked closely with his assistants, providing them with reading matter, supervision, and rules for holy living. In the new world, Methodists continued these patterns. In practical terms Methodism had the advantage of moving people quickly into the churches while monitoring their progress and growth in knowledge and piety. After the Civil War, however, Methodists began construction of theological schools as the denomination became increasingly middle class.

The most distinctive feature of Methodist theological education was the tendency, North and South, to make theological schools part of universities. The period from 1860 to 1900 saw considerable creativity in the development of American higher education. The universities, often built on the foundations of earlier liberal arts colleges, rapidly developed professional and graduate schools. Like many

Americans, Methodists were attracted to the universities’ emphasis on intellectual freedom, a perspective in line with Wesleyan theology. Equally important, Methodists appreciated the democratic spirit of the new institutions: their emphases on merit, on the mingling of people with different vocational goals, and on the new social sciences, particularly education and sociology.

More congregational denominations, including the Baptists and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), did not have any set educational standards for their ministers. For their elite churches, Baptists favored colleges, especially the manual labor school. However, the vast majority of Baptist preachers were educated in more homespun ways. The tradition was for a congregation to identify a member who had gifts for leadership and to urge that person to consider a pastoral call. Between congregational nomination and assuming a pulpit, the prospective pastor often served as a licensed preacher, visiting churches in the local association and testing his gifts. The denomination provided the prospective pastor with some aids, including church manuals, and mentoring, although less formal than among Methodists, was common. The Disciples’ pattern was similar. Although they maintained colleges, congregations selected and trained the majority of pastors.

Informal theological education rested on American Protestantism’s implicit agreement on the nature and authority of the scriptures. Since the Bible “without note or comment” was sufficiently clear for the average person to understand, individual study would yield its truth. The faithful reader did not need doctrinal and other guides that might obscure the plain truths universally available to anyone. This method of private study could be fruitful. Abraham Lincoln, not a church member, wove a profound tapestry of meanings from the biblical texts that provided a compelling religious interpretation of the Civil War.

African American Theological Education

African Americans formed the African Methodist Episcopal Church (1816) and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (1821) in protest against racial discrimination by white Methodists. These churches reflected the dual character of African American life, combining African American and white religious and cultural traditions. The AME and AME Zion churches trained their pastors in patterns set forth in their Disciplines, similar to those in the white Methodist Discipline. Although whites excluded African Americans from educational opportunities in the North and the South,

these churches yearned for the respectability that formal education provided. At considerable sacrifice, the AME church established Wilberforce University in Ohio in 1856 and later established there a seminary, named after Daniel Payne, a passionate advocate of African American education.

Antebellum African Americans in the South adopted other patterns. In this region, where the vast majority of African Americans were enslaved, religious life often followed two pathways. Many slaves attended white churches, often under compulsion, where the laws mandated their segregation. Although the white pastors had special messages for slave members that stressed obedience and not stealing, the slave members also heard sermons that dealt with the primary teachings of the faith. At the same time, African Americans maintained their own alternative “church” on the plantations under the guidance of an African American exhorter. The Spirit, perhaps reflecting older African customs, appointed these exhorters, but they served with the consent of their hearers. Interestingly enough, some white masters were proud of their slave preachers and occasionally either went to hear them exhort or invited them to preach to the big house.

The exhorters were not as ignorant as one might assume. Although the law prohibited teaching slaves to read, some acquired the art, either from whites or from other slaves. This opened the Bible—the great educator of western and southern frontier Baptists—to them. Their theological imaginations soared. The slave preachers’ fascination with Moses and other Old Testament heroes provided many of the foundational ideas of later black theology. The slave preachers built, together with their congregations, a rich musical tradition that combined African American instruments, such as the drums and banjo, and western instruments and harmonies. In a world where texts were uncommon, music was a potent educator. European Americans often heard and imitated this music. In turn, African American slave music was a foundation of the gospel music still popular with both races in the South and, hence, also a contribution to the education of white ministers.

After emancipation, the Bible remained the most vital item in African American theological education. Although African Americans founded colleges and seminaries, the most important item in the preparation of an African American pastor was literacy. The various organizations that promoted the ability to read, the Sunday school, the public schools, and tutors, all contributed. Segregated African American education was poor, compared with that available

to whites, but it opened the Book. The newly founded African American colleges and seminaries, however, did prepare an elite that provided leadership for African Americans. And some of the most prominent African American leaders, including Benjamin Mays and Martin Luther King Jr., were educated in both African American and white institutions.

Roman Catholic Theological Education

Two strands in Catholic theological education are related and yet different: the education of secular or diocesan clergy and the education of religious clergy or those clergy who are members of religious orders. In addition, the Catholic Church historically made provision for the education of women religious (nuns or sisters) that included theological and religious training. In addition, each new wave of immigration brought with it priests from the old country with a variety of educational experiences.

The Council of Trent (1545–1547; 1551–1552; 1595–1563) recommended the formation of diocesan seminaries to the bishops, an edict slowly implemented in Europe. In addition, individual religious orders established seminaries, which admitted candidates for the secular ministry, and the orders participated in the life of Catholic universities. With the expansion of Catholicism in Latin America, universities were established under church auspices in Mexico (1551), Peru (1551), Santo Domingo (1558), and other locations. These institutions were to train professionals to serve the colonial population. The most important European precedent for later American schools developed during the seventeenth-century French Catholic renewal. Vincent de Paul (d. 1660) and Jean-Jacques Olier (d. 1657) founded religious societies—dedicated to education and the renewal of the priesthood—that set up branches in the United States. In 1791, Bishop John Carroll invited the Sulpicians to found Saint Mary’s Seminary at Nine Mile Tavern near Baltimore.

After Napoleon’s defeat (1815), *ultramontanism*, a term that literally means “across the mountains,” that is, the Alps, became the dominant Catholic theological movement. The goal of ultramontanism was to center the life of the church in Roman teaching and practice. In diocesan theological education, this meant an emphasis on doctrinal manuals and very strict discipline. The goal was for the priest to believe what the church believed, to do what the church did, and to be loyal to Roman authority. Ultramontanism was particularly strong in Ireland, where Catholicism provided social and religious cohesion.

In 1859 the American College of the Roman Catholic Church of the United States, Rome, Italy, opened, and in 1884, Leo XIII raised the school to the rank of a pontifical college. The American College has played a unique role in the training of the American Catholic leadership, especially of men identified as good episcopal prospects. Before Vatican II, the college was a strong advocate of the ultramontanist position and had a significant influence on both the content and teaching of American Catholic theology.

At the Second (1866) and Third Plenary (1884) Councils, the American bishops expressed their interest in the establishment of a national Catholic university to serve as a center for Catholic scholarship, particularly in religion and theology. Leo XIII granted their desire and urged other Catholic institutions to cluster around the new school and to use its resources. Although Catholic University in Washington, D.C., was indirectly involved in the so-called Americanism controversy, the school has been a center for theological study and reflection since its founding.

Some Catholic theologians have referred to the pre-Vatican II period as that of “ghetto” Catholicism. During this period the Roman Catholic Church constructed its own social organizations to parallel secular and Protestant organizations. In many ways Catholic theological education fit this pattern with philosophy as the necessary preparation for theology, roughly paralleling the Protestant pattern of liberal arts before theology. Yet the structure of pre-Vatican II priestly formation was not the same as its Protestant counterpart. Young men began their priestly formation in high school seminaries and then completed minor seminaries and major seminaries. The minor seminary was a school for prospective priests that taught philosophy on the undergraduate level; the major seminary was a school for prospective priests that taught theology.

The church, thus, separated priestly formation from lay experience. The priest matured as a man apart.

The Shocks of Modernity

When the Civil War ended, the United States fast became a nation of cities and railroads, dominated by the rapid expansion of finance capitalism and seemingly committed to rapidly oscillating circles of boom and bust. These economic and social upheavals challenged theological schools; but, more seriously, new scientific and literary studies raised questions about their core affirmations. Biblical study moved from the theologically safe philological studies to a “higher” criticism, primarily interested in the

authorship and historicity of the texts. Although few Americans could follow the technical arguments, the implications of this new criticism for hallowed theological traditions were obvious. Many believed that the churches needed to revise or abandon the doctrine of inspiration that supported the American veneration of the scriptures. Especially troubling, new emphases in Christology favored the so-called Jesus of history over the Christ of faith. These theological problems became front-page news when denominations convicted leading scholars, including Crawford Toy of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1879) and Presbyterian Charles A. Briggs of Union Theological Seminary (1892), New York, of heresy for their advocacy of the new studies.

However, the study of the Bible was not the only intellectual change on the horizon. Since Copernicus, scientists had been drawing a picture of the universe that seemingly left little room for the God of traditional theism. Natural law seemingly ruled supreme through the universe, rendering such religious ideas as miracles and particular providences less viable. The publication of Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* (1859) further challenged traditional belief. According to Darwin, all plants and animals had evolved from earlier forms. Although some theologians argued that God authored the changes, Darwin’s theory insisted that the evolutionary mechanism was strictly natural and random.

The rapid growth of technology and medicine enhanced the prestige of science. Progress appeared to be part of the very air that Americans breathed, and this optimistic mood challenged a redemptive faith. Humankind seemed to have fallen heavenward rather than into the depths of sin, but, if so, what need was there of Christ, sacraments, or church? Christianity seemed wounded at its core.

The sharp questions of modernity were more complex than a single generation of theologians could answer, but those who wrote theology were conscious that ministers and laypeople wanted answers now. Perhaps the easiest adjustments were in the classical disciplines of Bible and ecclesiastical history. Although the Protestant tradition of the pastor who read Greek and Hebrew never completely disappeared, especially in conservative seminaries, a marked shift toward the mastery of the new critical studies occurred. Teachers believed it more important to understand, for example, the documentary hypothesis of the Pentateuch than to translate the text easily. Although the liberals often masked their changes in the language requirements by

insisting, probably correctly, that few students had ever mastered Greek or, especially, Hebrew, the point was that the text was no longer a repository of sacred mysteries that reverend grammarians might solve. The result was a hole in the center of the curriculum.

Meanwhile, both Baptist and Methodist schools had experimented with courses in practical or pastoral theology. The instructors used pedagogy and other social sciences to teach students how to lead a congregation. Like the curricula of education and social work, the new practical courses emphasized fieldwork. Ministry had changed. The traditional Protestant minister was primarily a teacher who transmitted the content of the faith, especially the Bible and the catechism, to his congregants. The new minister headed up a congregation and was responsible for everything, from the music program to the Sunday school. The relationship between the minister and individuals also altered. When previous generations went to the pastor for guidance, they expected the minister to apply religious teachings to their specific situation. Now parishioners assumed the pastor was a moral and religious guide, almost a psychological counselor, and innovative pastors and seminaries took advantage of the insights of the new psychotherapy for pastoral work. The minister was a helping professional.

The result of these curricular changes was the “professional” model of ministry that was enshrined in the classical surveys of Protestant theological education by Robert L. Kelly (1924) and by William Adams Brown and Mark May (1934). The task of the seminary, as they saw it, was to prepare men to perform the various tasks of the modern ministry. Although it was not explicitly stated, this implied that theology was an instrument that could contribute to a vital religious life rather than an end in itself.

The surveys were part of the process that transformed the Conference of Theological Schools, an ad hoc group formed to discuss the challenges of the First World War to theological schools, into the American Association of Theological Schools (AATS), later the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). The AATS was primarily concerned with setting and maintaining standards for its member schools. By the 1960s, when the first ten-year visits to member schools were mandated, the association could point to a number of successes: the stabilization of the basic degree, the acceptance of the admission standard of an undergraduate degree, and the creation of a community of people informed about theological schools and their needs. The ATS would play an increasing role in the lives of the schools in the later part of the twentieth century.

Conservative Reactions

While the new understanding of theological education established itself in the majority of the existing seminaries, many American Protestants did not feel at home with the new theology. In response to their anxiety, conservatives developed a new dispensational premillennial theology. This teaching had two foci that directly opposed modern optimism. First, the dispensationalists saw the modern world as sunk so deeply in sin that only the supernatural return of Christ could rescue humanity from itself. Second, they argued that the very marks of progress, praised by more liberal Christians and secularists, were signs of the end times, evidence of the growing depravity of humankind.

A new institution was at hand. The evangelical and missionary movement of the nineteenth century generated new “lay” ministries, designed to carry the gospel into the world. To train these workers, missionary enthusiasts established Bible schools, such as Moody Bible Institute (1886), that would equip them with basic biblical knowledge and practical skills. Conservatives found the format very attractive, and the Bible schools became the backbone of the conservative movement. Like the seminaries, the Bible schools developed their own accrediting agencies and degree structure.

Jewish Theological Education and the Founding of Rabbinic Institutions

The nineteenth century was a turbulent period in the history of Judaism throughout the world. Despite Jewish emancipation in most European lands, anti-Judaic rhetoric and practices continued, especially in Germany and France, and pogroms occurred in Russia. However uncomfortable much of this world was for Jews, the nineteenth century was a very creative period during which new forms of Judaism, including the Zionist movement, arose. In no place were these changes more marked than in the United States, where successive Jewish immigrations from different lands created one of the largest and most variegated of Jewish communities.

Although some “pulpit” rabbis came to perform tasks similar to Protestant clergy—especially preaching and pastoral care—traditional Judaism had no clergy. In the period before the messianic rule, the descendants of the priests of the temple were to keep themselves pure, and Jewish custom assigned them certain rituals, including pronouncing the benediction. The synagogue communities developed a variety of offices rooted in tradition or the Talmud. A cantor often conducted the service, with various members

asked to read scripture or to lead particular prayers. In addition, synagogues appointed ritual slaughters and teachers for the yeshiva or community school. In most European countries, a person recognized as a rabbi served the larger Jewish community. The rabbi was a deeply learned person in Talmud and in Torah—in many ways, the ideal Jewish scholar—and the community charged him with the important task of responding to questions about obligations under Jewish law.

The practice of issuing *semikhah*, or diplomas of ordination, began in the fifteenth century. The process combined both formal and informal elements. The rabbi, who supervised a candidate's studies, issued the certificate when he was convinced that his pupil had a sufficient understanding of Talmud and the *responsa* to teach. Two other rabbis were required as witnesses. In time, the new rabbi would authorize his own students so that the *responsa* came to represent particular lines of interpretation or, in the case of Hasidic Jews, piety. The heart of the preparation for the *semikhah* was the careful study of Torah and Talmud expected of every Jewish male. The rabbi was the one who had penetrated further and deeper into these studies and, hence, was qualified to advise others. Jews did not need rabbis for burials, weddings, and other religious rituals.

The earliest American synagogues often followed the earlier pattern with the services and other offices performed by members of the congregation. As immigration from Germany and Central Europe increased, many American Jews were attracted to the congregational model. In Europe a revolution in the study of Judaism, both in the universities and in such Jewish organizations as the Institute for the Scientific Study of Judaism in Berlin, began to apply modern critical methods to the study of Judaism. As in Protestantism (see above), the change in hermeneutics marked other changes, including major alterations in the ritual. The most dramatic changes were, of course, the use of English in many prayers and readings, the use of choirs, the use of fixed forms to ensure decorum, and the occasional substitution of Sunday worship for the traditional Saturday observance. In the worship service, the rabbi functioned as a preacher, presenting a learned discussion of the Torah or a contemporary issue. The rabbi also began to take on the other roles of a Protestant pastor, including counselor, religious educator, and ritual leader. Rabbi Isaac Wise, a persuasive advocate of Reform, established Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati (1875) with a program aimed at producing Reform rabbis and with the authority to issue the *semikhah*. The Jewish Institute of Religion, founded by

Stephen Wise on similar principles, joined Hebrew Union in 1950.

American Conservative Judaism (Masorti) likewise had its roots in both Europe and America. Conservatives modeled the Breslau Jewish Theological Seminary (1854) on Protestant university faculties. Admission requirements to Breslau were the same as those required for German university study, and the school maintained the German tradition of academic freedom. The dominant figure in the school's early years was Rabbi Zecharias Frankel (d. 1875), who believed that Jews should have a positive approach to their traditional practices, while understanding them critically. Conservative Jews established similar schools in Budapest and Vienna. In the United States, the popularity of this approach grew after Hebrew Union served shellfish at the dinner celebrating the first graduating class in 1883. The Pittsburgh Platform, adopted by Reform Jews in 1885, made the schism complete. The Platform recognized Christian and Islam as daughter religions, saw the dietary and other rabbinic teachings as obsolete, and interpreted Torah as training for Israel's historical experience in Palestine. Those Jews who shared Reform's critical spirit but found more positive value in Jewish practices and traditions moved toward Conservative Judaism. For them, the Breslau seminar was an important precedent, and in 1886, led by Sabato Morais (d. 1897), they created Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Of the three first instructors, two, Alexander Kohut (d. 1894) and Bernard Drachman (d. 1945), had *semikhah* from Breslau. All had close connections with European and American universities. Solomon Schechter (d. 1915) became president in 1902 and was the school's second founder. A graduate of the Jewish Seminar in Vienna, Schechter raised funds for the school and cemented its scholarly reputation. Jewish Theological Seminary has strong relationships with Columbia University.

Mordecai Kaplan (d. 1983) represented a radical development in American Conservative Judaism. Although deeply attached to Jewish customs and practices, Kaplan believed that much of the theology of Judaism was antiquated. In its place he proposed a naturalistic understanding of God that rendered many other Jewish theological affirmations obsolete. Kaplan remained part of Conservative Judaism until his retirement from Jewish Theological Seminary in 1963. In 1968, he and his son-in-law, Ira Eisenstein, founded the Reconstructionist Jewish Seminary in Philadelphia as the center for what became a fourth branch of Judaism.

Although Orthodox Judaism continued many traditional practices associated with the *yeshivah*, the postemancipation situation, with its increased economic opportunities, suggested that young Jews needed secular education to flourish in the secular world. Torah was the center of Judaism, but worldly knowledge had its place as well. The Rabbi Isaac Elhanan Theological Seminary, established in 1897, is the rabbinic school affiliated with Yeshiva University. Like Hebrew Union, it requires some Jewish cultural studies, in addition to the traditional mastery of Talmud, and admits men with a college degree.

Modernity's Crisis

Socially, culturally, and intellectually, the nineteenth century ended in 1914 when Europe went to war. Although peace returned in 1919, it was only temporary. In 1939 war broke out again in Europe and ended with the terrible reality of nuclear war, and the post-War world, a world distinguished by a series of minor wars, lived under an atomic shadow. Theologian Paul Tillich captured the mood of the times when he referred to the "shaking of the foundations," an apt biblical citation for a difficult time.

The passionate fundamentalist-modernist battle of the 1920s was a sign of the prevailing anxiety. Although the liberal party won in most denominations and seminaries, the battle deepened the conflict between the two parties. The conservatives, later to call themselves evangelicals, were bitter about their exclusion from the seminaries and dreamed of a great evangelical university. Although such grandiose schemes never happened, they did begin to found seminaries, which by the 1950s were well endowed and taught by people with doctorates from prestigious universities. By the 1980s conservative evangelicals were strong enough to take control of the nation's largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, and their churches were growing rapidly. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, evangelical seminaries enroll more than half the students in ATS seminaries.

The general crisis stimulated mainline Protestant thought. The intellectual and social situation seemed closer to that reflected in the biblical witness than it was to liberal optimism, and Protestant theology flourished as theologians and biblical scholars rediscovered biblical theology. At the same time, the churches grew rapidly, especially after World War II, and reached their highest recorded membership in the 1950s. The combination of a theological renaissance and religious renewal strengthened the place of the seminaries

within the churches and the culture. The seminary degree became the norm, even in denominations that historically had maintained other routes to ordination. Accreditation also grew in importance, as chaplaincy positions required a degree from an accredited school.

Secularity, Pluralism, and the Sixties

By 1964 it was evident that deep changes were taking place in the United States and Canada. These included an increasing diversity in American religion and cultural life, the inner transformation of major religious groups, and the growing secularization of society. These larger trends affected theological schools.

Diversity marked the nation and the seminaries. In 1960, although a few African American schools existed, the vast majority of American seminary students were white and male. Within the next fifty years, this would change radically. Women, African Americans, Koreans, and Latin Americans entered theological schools in increasing numbers, and by the year 2000, white males were a minority in most mainstream Protestant schools. Although administrators expected these new constituencies to swell seminary enrollments, this did not happen. The increase in new constituencies matched a declining enrollment of white men in mainstream schools. The evangelical seminaries were an exception. While conservative schools' gender balance tipped toward men, they tended to attract more foreign students. Although the leadership of the schools changed more slowly, an increasing number of women and minorities were in executive positions.

Perhaps equally important, the variety of American religious life increased as well. In the wake of President Lyndon Johnson's liberalization of the immigration laws (1964), significant numbers of Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus entered the United States. Like pre-nineteenth-century Judaism, these religions had long noninstitutional patterns for training their religious leaders as well as varied patterns of religious leadership. Within these patterns it was not always clear which positions were analogous to Christian clergy. Perhaps these groups will follow the earlier Jewish pattern and select a traditional office, similar to that of rabbi, as their predominant functionary. Hartford Seminary Foundation maintains an influential Islamic studies program, originally part of the Kennedy School of Missions. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, many young Islamic leaders attend to attain American credentials that may enable them

to serve as chaplains and qualify them for leadership in their own communities.

In addition to these religious imports, the United States has continued to generate a variety of new religious movements that range from individual spiritualities, often based in meditative practices, to nature religions, such as Wicca. Some advocates of these new religions have enrolled in Protestant seminaries, especially the more liberal, making student bodies more religiously diverse.

The two events that marked the most dramatic transformations of American religious and theological institutions were Vatican II and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Vatican II was the Roman Catholic Church's negotiated peace with the modern world, and the Council marked significant modifications of traditional Catholic positions on other religions, religious freedom, and the role of the laity. Roman Catholic theological schools in the United States and Canada underwent major transformations. Besides admitting lay students and founding ecumenical programs, they changed their programs of priestly formation in the direction of the Protestant professional model. In addition to historical-critical biblical and historical studies, Catholic seminaries adopted the new practical theology. Most significantly, high school and college seminaries virtually disappeared. The seminary became a school for college graduates. Thus changed, Catholic seminaries entered the Association of Theological Schools as full participants. Ironically, Vatican II, designed to make the church attractive to the modern world, sparked a great decline in religious vocations.

Vatican II also influenced the composition of theological faculties. Catholics joined Protestant faculties, and Protestants joined Catholic faculties, deepening the theological conversation. Both Protestants and Catholics had a renewed interest in Judaism, and Jewish scholars joined some influential divinity school faculties, even in such sensitive disciplines as New Testament. The divinity schools at Harvard and Yale, both historically Protestant, have Roman Catholic deans.

The 1967 Arab-Israeli War changed American Jewry in fundamental ways. Both Reform and Conservative Judaism, which had earlier seriously questioned Zionism, moved to become vocal supporters of Israel, and the new relationship transformed their academic programs. The outward marks of tradition became more important, especially among Reform schools. Some connection with Israel became almost a necessary component of rabbinic training. Hebrew Union, for example, requires a year's study in Israel. At the same time,

Reform and Conservative seminaries added courses in the new practical theology, especially counseling, and advanced the understanding of the rabbi as pastor.

The rapid advance of secularization and the decline of the mainstream Protestant churches also influenced theological education as a whole. The number of people claiming any religious affiliation, including self-identification, dropped rapidly, and many congregations declined in numbers and influence. Ministry became a less attractive profession. For mainstream Protestant schools, serious financial crises in the 1970s, 2001–2003, and 2007–2009 complicated these larger issues. The various denominations were unable to increase their support (and most lowered it), and endowments fell in value. Many mainstream denominations, including the United Church of Christ, began multiple paths to ordination, especially for those serving smaller churches. Perhaps the best sign of the new order was that the mainstream seminaries were in a minority in the ATS. The center had become another minority.

The effects of diminished resources were not only negative. Rising costs forced seminaries to cooperate, especially in the major cities. These cooperative patterns, often called consortia, had their major impact on libraries, where electronic catalogs and buses that carried books from campus to campus provided links between schools. Interseminary course registration did not prove as important as the founders of the consortia had hoped, although students planning graduate studies found the expanded community of scholars invaluable. The most important consortium was the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, founded in the 1960s, which brings together nine seminaries to provide graduate studies in theology and religion.

Perhaps the most dramatic change was the shift in religious and theological scholarship. From the founding of Andover Seminary to the 1970s, seminary faculties wrote the most significant American religious scholarship, especially in Bible, comparative religion, and religious history. By 1980 the tide had shifted, and the university departments of religion, driven by higher standards for tenure and promotion, now produced the most significant scholarship. The meetings of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) grew from small events held at a seminary to large gatherings requiring convention centers and several hotels. Although some leaders of the AAR were people of faith, the organization and the standards of scholarship that it encouraged were self-consciously secular. Moreover, since the universities were the primary source of seminary teachers, those

standards increasingly governed seminaries. In a sense, theological scholarship had come full circle. Originating in the medieval university, it returned to the secular academy.

See also *Education: Bible Schools and Colleges; Education: Colleges and Universities; Fundamentalism; Judaism* entries; *Mainline Protestants; Methodists: Through the Nineteenth Century; Ministry, Professional; Pluralism; Preaching; Religious Studies; Religious Thought* entries; *Roman Catholicism: The Age of the Catholic Ghetto; Systematic Theology; Worship* entries.

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Education: Sunday Schools

Sunday schools, also called Sabbath schools, began as religious education for children not enrolled in religiously sponsored schools. Later curricula allowed for adult education. Laypersons, especially women, have been instrumental in Sunday school organization and instruction. In North America, Protestants have successfully utilized Sunday schools for evangelism and religious instruction. Mormons, Roman Catholics, Jews, and Muslims also appropriate some form of religious education.

Protestantism: Beginnings of U.S. Sunday School Movement

A forerunner to Sunday schools is Martin Luther's 1529 *Der Kleine Katechismus* ("Small Catechism"), a curriculum for instructing children on the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and baptism. Similarly, primers in Puritan New England instructed childhood literacy through biblical passages and prayers. Early foundations for Sunday school include Methodist missions in Georgia in about 1735, Hannah Ball's school for children in her home starting in 1763, and Sunday schools for children in the Pietistic

settlements of Pennsylvania. Most historians credit the origin of Sunday schools to 1780 in Gloucester, England, where newspaper publisher Robert Raikes hired a schoolteacher to instruct literacy and Bible to lower-class children on Sundays. The English Sunday schools had rapid success with 250,000 children enrolled by 1787.

The first American Sunday school began in 1790 in Philadelphia. The First Day Society modeled its Sunday school after those in England, focusing on enrolling non-churched children from lower-class families. Founding members included Episcopal bishop William White, Catholic layman Matthew Carey, Quakers Thomas Pym Cope and Thomas Mendenhill, and the Deist patriot-physician Benjamin Rush. By the 1820s Sunday schools became inclusive of all social classes and encouraged the sharing of reading and religious instruction among all children. In the 1810s schools were inclusive of children from both churchgoing and nonchurchgoing families. Later distinctions were made, labeling as mission schools those for unchurched students and church schools for those children whose families were part of a congregation.

The emphasis on literacy remained a significant component of Sunday schools until the institution of publicly funded schools for children. The focus of Sunday schools would be on children. Other Sunday school associations focused on education for adults, including the Male Adult Association of Philadelphia, founded in 1815. The focus on adult education was short lived. By 1817 members of the Association decided to devote resources for instructing children. Sunday school agents would again emphasize adult education to check the illiteracy of settlers on the frontier. The focus on children at this time also reflected the prevailing approach to children. Most people viewed children as "little adults" capable of instruction, especially instruction about the well-being of their souls. Sunday school teachers viewed their role as participating in the evangelization of children to Christianity.

The American Sunday School Union (ASSU)

The most significant institution in the history of Sunday schools was the American Sunday School Union (ASSU), founded in 1824 in Philadelphia. The ASSU was part of an interdenominational Protestant evangelical enterprise extending benevolent aid and evangelism across the country along with the American Bible Society, the American Home Mission Society, and the American Tract Society. No single denomination was to have the controlling stake over the ASSU, although disputes arose soon after formation.

Non-Presbyterian ASSU members complained that Presbyterians received more positions of leadership. The Protestant Episcopal Church formed its Sunday School Union in 1826. The Methodist Episcopal Church Sunday School Union commenced in 1827.

The ASSU grew quickly, embarking on ambitious missionary campaigns. In 1824 it listed 723 affiliated schools reaching 1.4 percent of the eligible children for enrollment. One year later it had affiliates in 21 states and 2 territories, with enrollment of 2.2 percent. By 1832 there were affiliates in all 24 states and the enrollment was nearly 8 percent. In 1830 the members of the ASSU endorsed the campaign to establish a Sunday school in every settlement of the Mississippi Valley by 1832. The undertaking rested on the shoulders of willing ASSU missionaries, American Home Mission Society missionaries, itinerant preachers, and seminary and college students on short-term assignments during breaks from school. A great number of volunteers were women. Most were single, and some found mates in the male missionaries. The “Valley Campaign” also had its heroes. Stephen Paxson, a farmer from southern Illinois, converted to Christianity after attending his daughter’s Sunday school class. In the 1840s he became a missionary for the ASSU. In more than 20 years of service, Paxson single-handedly started 1,200 schools, most of which developed into permanent congregations. Abijah W. Corey claimed to have established more than 25,000 schools in the lower Mississippi valley between 1845 and 1872. By 1870 the efforts of Sunday school missionaries resulted in 6.5 million students attending schools.

The ASSU’s influence on American education and print culture came with the expansion of Sunday schools across the continent. In most frontier territories and states, Sunday schools provided education to children and illiterate adults in the absence of public schools with significantly less expense to state and territorial governments. Some frontier politicians preferred Sunday schools as the method of instructing poor settlers in regions with sparse population.

The ASSU entered the print industry in 1825. The Union began putting out alphabet primers, spelling books, hymnals, and various catechisms. From the printing house in Philadelphia, agents of the ASSU distributed Union literature as well as Bibles from the American Bible Society and tracts from the American Tract Society. Missionaries served as colporteurs (traveling book salespersons), complete with book catalogs. The ASSU offered the “Sunday School and Family Library,” a collection of one hundred religious and literary volumes for \$10. The availability of this collection

caused an increase in the number of Sunday schools with libraries. In 1826, 17 percent of ASSU affiliates had libraries, averaging thirty-two volumes. By 1832 over 75 percent had libraries, with an average of ninety-one volumes. Sunday school libraries were the majority of libraries in the United States, accounting for 60 percent of the 50,000 public libraries in 1859. In addition to books, the ASSU issued periodicals such as the *American Sunday School Magazine* (1824–1830), followed by the *Sunday School Journal*, *Sunday School Times*, and *Sunday School World*.

Horace Bushnell’s theories on children altered the goals and methods of Sunday schools during the nineteenth century. The Massachusetts Sunday School Society published the first edition of *Christian Nurture* in 1847. Bushnell intended his book for parents, not Sunday school teachers, although it had an effect on both. Bushnell challenged the older assumption that children inherited original sin and must be converted through revival. Instead, he advocated that children mature spiritually through an environment conducive to spiritual growth. Sunday school periodicals of the 1860s and 1870s reflected these changing perceptions of childhood and the shift to religious education fostering growth rather than conversion.

Sunday Schools and Ethnic Minorities

The ASSU found its most significant roadblock in the education of African Americans. Issues of segregation and slave education slowed ASSU offerings to educate all persons. In northern cities integrated schools maintained segregated classes. African Americans were often the most eager pupils because they were excluded from public schooling. One-quarter of the students in New York City in 1817 and two-thirds of the Philadelphia students in 1819 were black. African American adults took advantage of the free education. Half of the black students in New York City in 1821 were adults, with 70 percent being women. Segregation remained a hindrance, causing African American denominations to start Sunday schools. Former slave-turned-missionary John Berry Meachum started the African Baptist Sunday School in St. Louis, Missouri, during the 1820s. In 1829 the African Methodist Episcopal Church started its first Sunday school in the West with a school in Chillicothe, Ohio. The 1831 Nat Turner slave rebellion in Virginia resulted in a significant halt in the education of African Americans. Some people blamed Sunday schools for inspiring Turner’s rebellion. Missionaries to slaves rarely used the word *school* for sessions of biblical instruction. Southern states created laws restricting the education of slaves. Black enrollment in

New York City was cut in half between 1831 and 1847. Some educators, such as Frederick Douglass, who taught a Sunday school in Baltimore, were outspoken about slavery and racial injustice. Most Sunday school officials and agencies remained silent to prevent schism.

Protestant missionaries also established mission schools for Native American children. Missionaries and their patrons believed that these frontier schools extended benevolence to young Indians by rescuing them from their supposed “savagery.” Missionaries designed these schools to instill the Protestant values of conversion to Christianity, morality, civility, and a strong work ethic. Schools were either day schools or boarding schools. Their curriculum mirrored that of common schools in eastern states but also infused religious instruction and vocational training. The federal government began subsidizing mission schools in 1819 and following the Civil War granted contracts to mission groups to establish schools on Indian reservations. At the end of the century most mission schools closed in favor of government schools.

Reforms Following the Civil War

After the Civil War the leadership of Sunday schools shifted to the West under the guidance of the “Illinois Band,” including evangelist Dwight L. Moody, Peoria businessman William Reynolds, Baptist layman Benjamin F. Jacobs, Methodist preacher and later bishop John H. Vincent, and editor Edward Eggleston. The “Band” was responsible for the renaissance of Sunday schools, beginning in 1864 with the efforts of Moody and Reynolds among soldiers.

Vincent instituted curriculum changes. He advocated a standardized, ecumenical curriculum based on the “Golden Text,” a textbook usable to all churches at all levels. He placed less emphasis on intellectual topics and favored a literal interpretation of the Bible. Vincent eschewed higher criticism and proposed making the Bible “plain” to students. He also favored “growth, not conquest” as the education philosophy. In addition to Sunday schools, Vincent was instrumental in the Chautauqua movement. Building off the Lyceum movement for young men in the 1830s and 1840s, Vincent developed an institute for the education and acculturation of adults in the 1870s. In its early years the Chautauqua instructed men and women on singing, prayer, Bible reading, and Sunday school management, as well as literature and culture.

A national convention adopted the curriculum in 1872. By 1900, three million teachers and students were using the

“Golden Text” curriculum. In addition, secular newspapers printed the “Golden Text” lesson in their Sunday issues. Liturgical churches such as the Lutherans and the Episcopalians had difficulty fitting the curriculum schedule to the annual liturgical cycle. Nevertheless, this curriculum would hold until new reforms appeared in the 1950s.

Led by businessmen, the ASSU more closely resembled a corporation than a religious benevolent society. It focused on cities and the administration and organization of resources. The ASSU as a centralized entity dissolved in the 1870s. A system of conventions emerged, patterned off political parties. This system culminated in the first International Sunday School Convention, where delegates from the United States and Canada met to discuss organizational and curriculum reforms. The convention system for Sunday schools benefited female leaders. It allowed for women to serve as delegates to convention meetings. The system boosted the number of women active in Sunday schools while simultaneously decreasing the number of female superintendents. Prohibitionist women especially made use of Sunday schools as a forum to promote their cause. In 1889 all but 6 of the 466 delegates to the Women’s Christian Temperance Union were Sunday school teachers or Sunday school convention delegates.

Into the Twentieth Century and the Decline of Sunday Schools

Further reforms took place at the turn of the twentieth century. A group called “religious educators” advocated for the professionalization of education in local churches. They stated that every congregation should have a staff director of religious education, if the church could afford one. They argued that the success of Sunday schools depended on professional educators, not volunteers. Religious educators formed the Religious Education Association in 1903 and the Council of Religious Education in 1922. The Council promoted “graded classes,” an idea derived from the educational theories of John Dewey, William James, and E. L. Thorndike. The graded-classes model was a series of graduated classes, starting with rudimentary information and building on that foundation with further Bible knowledge. The reforms looked promising, but churches struggled to implement them. Supporters of “old-time religion” disagreed with such progressive reforms. Most churches did not have the means to fulfill these demands. The Great Depression further exasperated the condition as churches trimmed their budgets. Loss of education resources and

internal disputes resulted in significant losses to Sunday school enrollment. Between 1926 and 1936, the Methodists lost 34 percent of their enrollment, the Disciples of Christ lost 23 percent, and the Presbyterian Church (USA) lost 18 percent. Conservative evangelical bodies had huge gains. The Assemblies of God rose 300 percent, while the Pentecostal Holiness churches doubled in enrollment.

The “new curriculum” of the 1950s aimed at practical relevance and application, seeking to stem declining enrollments. This new movement was short lived, quickly giving way to the cultural upheaval of the 1960s. The 1960s were so detrimental that the United Church of Canada closed its Sunday school operations after an enrollment loss of 300,000 in one decade. In recent decades churches have struggled to keep Sunday schools alive. Nondenominational publishing houses in Nashville, Tennessee, and Grand Rapids, Michigan, lead the country in producing resources for churches. There is new life in religious education in the form of small-group meetings on Sundays and weeknights as well as in “cell churches.” Citing the small churches that met in homes during the apostolic period, advocates of “cells” say that small-group meetings are vital to the education and edification of the parishioners. This format circumvents timeless forms and makes the goals of Sunday schools accessible and applicable to new generations.

Latter-day Saints

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) grew out of the fervor of the Second Great Awakening and adopted some of the movement’s most enduring methods. Members of the LDS attend Sunday school as part of their services at the local ward. In Sunday school, members discuss lessons from the Bible and the other “Standard Works”: *Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants*, and *Pearl of Great Price*. After the congregational meeting where members receive communion, male members convene for “Priesthood” class while the women hold the Women’s Relief Society meeting. Herein, members discuss their roles as servants to the stake, the church, and the community.

Roman Catholicism

Spanish missions in the sixteenth through the eighteenth century were the earliest examples of religious education in North America. Missionaries held schools to teach Native America children about Christianity, Spanish, and literacy, as well as vocational training in agriculture. Religious education for European emigrant Catholics began in the 1780s

with the establishment of parochial schools. Catholic involvement in Sunday schools decreased after the founding of the ASSU. When debates over publicly funded education arose in the 1820s and 1830s, Catholics vied for state support of parochial schools, provoking anti-Catholic ire from Protestants. The establishment of public schools allowed Protestants to focus Sunday schools on religious instruction. Catholics turned to parochial schools to fulfill both tasks of religious education and formal education to meet state standards. Many Catholics feared that public schools favored Protestant values and subtly taught anti-Catholicism. They accused Protestant Sunday schools of fostering anti-Catholic nativism. Therefore, Catholics preferred parochial schools for the education of their children.

Although parochial schools existed, there were not enough for all Catholic children. Subsequently, many Catholics attended public school. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884 mandated the building of parochial schools in every American parish and made attendance of these schools compulsory. Some children remained in public schooling. To supplement the formal education with religious education, in 1905 Pope Pius X ordered the institution of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) in every parish. The CCD was a fixture of the Catholic Church since 1562, during the Counter-Reformation. It has become an operation of the churches in the wake of public education being formed in Europe and the United States. The CCD did not become a national movement in the United States until the 1930s. Parishes offer CCD classes on a weeknight—sometimes more than one night—for children in public schools. The curriculum for the CCD is the catechesis in preparation of a child’s confirmation as a member of the church. Children in parochial schools receive similar curriculum daily and are not required to take CCD classes. The Catholic Church also offers Sunday classes of catechism for adults wishing to join the church. Known as Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), the classes often begin in September and end with the individual’s baptism, first communion, and confirmation on Easter. Variations do exist. Adults may attend RCIA for two years if necessary. Sometimes lapsed Catholics wishing to rejuvenate their activity in the church take the course.

Judaism

Philadelphia was also the site for the formation of the Hebrew Sunday School (HSS) in 1838. Started by Rebecca Gratz and the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society (FHBS)

of Philadelphia, the HSS was essential to the religious instruction of Jewish children and the integration of immigrants into American society. An earlier effort by the Rodeph Shalom congregation provided education and financial assistance to offset educational expenses to immigrant children. But the school restricted its languages to German and Hebrew. Progressive critics stated that restrictions limited opportunities for Jews. Gratz was convinced that children of Jewish immigrants needed educational opportunities for social advancement. At a February 4, 1838, meeting of the FHBS, the delegates passed a resolution to commence such a school immediately. They chose six teachers, including Gratz and the Peixotto sisters, Simha and Rachel. The HSS began with all female teachers, and it remained an important avenue for female service in a religion with male leadership.

The school opened in March 1838 with fifty students in attendance at the Peixotto home. Gratz served as the president of the school until 1864. The Peixotto sisters wrote the early textbooks for the school. Teachers required students to submit weekly assignments in Bible knowledge and penmanship. Gratz graded the exercises. The school operated on a graduated system, and students had to pass the annual examination to advance.

The HSS found moral and financial support from the congregation at Mikveh Israel. Isaac Leiser, the cantor of the synagogue, enthusiastically supported the HSS. The congregation also supplied donors and hosted the annual examinations, which served as fund-raisers. Gratz was apprehensive of a close partnership with this synagogue because it represented the well-to-do of Philadelphia's Jewish population. She wished to make the school available to all Jewish children in the city. When the enrollment outgrew the Peixotto home, the school moved to Mikveh Israel briefly before taking up other facilities.

By the 1840s the HSS boasted between 80 percent and 90 percent of the city's English-speaking Jewish children. The success of the school inspired other educational ventures to adopt the HSS model. The Shearith Israel congregation in New York City formed the Association for the Moral and Religious Instruction of Children of the Jewish Faith in October 1838. That same autumn Sally Lopez opened a Sunday school in Charleston, South Carolina.

In 1854 the HSS found its permanent home in Touro Hall, a renovated Baptist church. Touro Hall also housed the Hebrew Educational Society, a day school funded by

philanthropist Judah Touro. Philadelphia laws prohibiting work on Sundays allowed opportunity for children to attend Sunday school. They also attended day school during the week.

The ASSU was not only an inspiration to Gratz and her brainchild, the HSS, but it also provided English copies of the King James Bible and the Protestant catechism, *Child's Scriptural Questions*. Gratz and other teachers edited the texts, removing mention of Jesus. Rachel Peixotto Pyke revised the catechism into one for Jewish students, while her sister wrote *Elementary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*.

In the decades following the division of American Judaism into its Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox factions, Hebrew Sunday schools became points of debate. Beginning in the 1920s Conservative synagogues favored congregational schools in order to control the content of the curriculum. There was also a shift toward Hebrew schools for Conservative children, opting to meet thrice during the week. In 1928 Conservative leader Max Artz warned that Sunday schools were abandoning Hebrew and were likely contributors to losing youth to Reform Judaism. In the 1930s Conservatives initiated new programs for children and youth, including special ceremonies of consecration and confirmation in roughly two-thirds of the congregations. Conservatives eliminated Sunday schools in favor of the three-day Hebrew School in the 1940s and 1950s. Reform Jews preferred Sunday schools as a way for Reform children and youth to remain active in their religion with their friends from temple and public school.

Islam

Muslims gather in small groups called *halqat* (*halqa*, singular) to discuss lessons from the Qur'an. Often these meetings take place in the mosques but are distinct from the activity of prayer on Fridays. The day for meeting is not prescribed and is flexible. *Halqat* generally last for one hour. A volunteer prepares a lesson from a passage of the Qur'an to present to the group, and members discuss the topic for the remainder of the session and close with the *duas*, or prayers of supplication. Protestant Sunday schools did not inspire the *halqat*. There is a long tradition dating back to the prophet Muhammad. *Halqa* literally means "circle," a word associated with Muhammad's audience.

Indigenous North American Muslim groups, such as the Nation of Islam (NOI) and the Nation of Gods and Earths (Five Percenters), use informal instructional sessions to teach

African American youths. The NOI employs a question-and-answer format similar to catechism to instruct youth on the teachings of Elijah Muhammad. The NOI catechisms amount to nearly one hundred tenets to be remembered and recited by pupils. The Five Percenters also teach through catechesis, often in specific schools. From 1967 to 1988 the Allah School in Mecca located in Harlem served as the headquarters for the Five Percenters and as the flagship school for teaching Supreme Wisdom Lessons. Five Percenter education includes the NOI teachings in addition to the “divine sciences” such as the Supreme Alphabet and Supreme Mathematics. The NOI and Five Percenters rely on instruction from male members, often in mentoring relationships between teacher and pupil.

As an American institution, the Sunday school has certain sacredness. President Jimmy Carter is known as much for being a Sunday school teacher as he is for his presidency and involvement with Habitat for Humanity. Historically, evangelical Protestantism has proved dominant in the development of Sunday schools. Roman Catholics, Jews, Mormons, and Muslims have their own traditions of religious education. The history of Sunday schools illustrates the diversity of America’s religious past and the interaction of religious groups in sharing forms of practice and instruction.

See also *African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War*; *Benevolent Empire*; *Children and Adolescents*; *Education* entries; *Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century*; *Islam in North America*; *Judaism* entries; *Latter-day Saints*; *Nation(s) of Islam*; *Revivalism: Nineteenth Century*; *Roman Catholicism* entries.

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The Electronic Church

“The electronic church” refers to religious broadcasting, in general, and conservative Christian television, in particular. These programs spread church teachings over the air in several formats, from a taping of traditional preaching services to a modified talk show centering on testimonies, interviews, or commentary. The phrase *electronic church* reflects the concern among some church leaders that the faithful substitute their worship experiences from traditional churches with televised church programs. By the mid-1980s the term *televangelism* was used more commonly to describe religious broadcasting.

Religious broadcasting varies by format, but most of the programs share similar traits: fundamentalist or evangelical theology, politically conservative ideology, privileging a prosperity gospel that promised material benefits to believers, and calls for donations from viewers. In the mid-1980s the electronic church was well recognized for the financial and sexual scandals of Jim Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, and Robert Tilton. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the electronic church was generally noted for promoting right-wing political beliefs.

History of the Electronic Church

The electronic church is oftentimes considered a late-twentieth-century phenomenon. Indeed, the phrase evolved from *the electric church* in the 1970s to describe the rise of religious broadcasting. However, religious broadcasting is as old as commercial broadcasting, and it accommodated evolving religious trends and broadcasting regulations.

The 1920s–1960s

Fundamentalist and evangelical churches have long recognized radio as a powerful means to spread the gospel, and they began producing local religious broadcasts back in the early 1920s. A year after KDKA became the first licensed radio station in America in 1921, live and taped church services became commonplace programming on Sunday-night radio schedules. WMBI, launched in July 1925, was one of the first stations to run an exclusively religious format.

WMBI's early programming featured preaching and Bible studies from Moody Bible Institute's president, James M. Grey (1851–1935). It also aired religious music as well as lectures from Moody's faculty. As the twentieth century progressed, WMBI began distributing its programming to other religious stations around the country. WMBI was still broadcasting into the twenty-first century as one of the oldest radio stations in America.

One of the more divisive radio personalities in the early 1900s was Father Charles Coughlin (1891–1979). His first broadcasts in 1926 covered religious topics primarily, but his content shifted toward radical, abrasive political commentary in the 1930s. Before his program was canceled in 1940, Coughlin had become known for promoting fascism and anti-Semitism through his religious programming.

Whereas Charles Coughlin alienated listeners, Charles E. Fuller (1887–1968) attracted them. Believing that the Lord called him to preach over the radio, Fuller began preaching full time as a radio pastor in 1933 out of KGER in California. By 1937 his program *Old Fashioned Revival Hour* was broadcasting preaching and music coast-to-coast over the Mutual network. *Old Fashioned Revival Hour* was completely subsidized by donations, despite its considerable expenses. The program's expenses exceeded \$4,000 a week, including the time purchased on Mutual to broadcast the program; by 1943 that figure grew to \$1.5 million for the year.

This financial model of religious programs purchasing airtime on secular networks would remain throughout the twentieth century. But in addition to the revenue, many stations found another benefit to airing religious programming: they used the church-produced programs as an effort to satisfy the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requirement for stations to serve the public good. Fundamentalist and evangelical programs such as *Old Fashioned Revival Hour* tended to purchase broadcast time from smaller stations. The larger radio networks, on the other hand (NBC, CBS, for example), donated airtime to mainline Christian denominations, believing these churches would be less likely to produce programming that would alienate the wider listening audience.

When television became the dominant medium after World War II, producers abandoned radio and modified their shows for TV. The electronic church followed suit, leading to the first televised religious broadcasts. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen (1895–1979) became the first electronic church television star in 1952 when his radio program, *The*

Catholic Hour, jumped to TV and was retitled *Life Is Worth Living*. Like many early television programs, the show was essentially Sheen's radio program *The Catholic Hour* put on television. *Life Is Worth Living* was a relatively simple production: the show resembled a teaching format, with Sheen, dressed in his bishop's regalia, giving a lesson directly into the camera. Despite the relative simplicity of the show, Sheen won an Emmy as the Most Outstanding Television Personality, beating out Lucille Ball, Arthur Godfrey, Jimmy Durante, and Edward R. Murrow. Sheen stopped broadcasting new episodes in 1957, but his programs would rerun on religious networks into the twenty-first century.

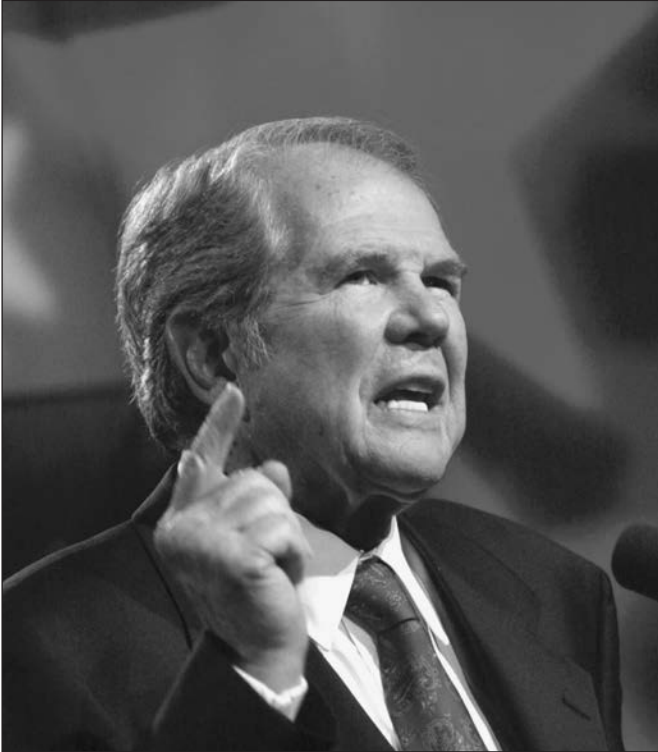
Not all early religious television broadcasts were as well received, however. Oral Roberts (1918–2009), a Pentecostal minister from Oklahoma, first gained notoriety by covering his healing crusades on his radio program *Healing Waters*. His first television special in 1954 featured footage from his charismatic healing services, which drew complaints from viewers unaccustomed to Pentecostal services. The network pulled Roberts's program off the air soon thereafter.

In 1960 the FCC mandated that stations were no longer required to provide community service programming free of charge. As a result, most TV and radio stations stopped donating their airtime to religious groups and replaced it with revenue-generating programming. Many of the mainline and liberal churches that had benefited from the free airtime closed production on their broadcasts. Many of the conservative churches that had been purchasing time on non-network stations, though, continued to purchase airtime. As a result, conservative Christians dominated the electronic church and would remain dominant into the twenty-first century.

The 1970s–1990s

The electronic church reached a critical mass in the late 1970s and the early 1980s for several reasons. First, the growth of cable television made it easier for religious broadcasters to create profitable networks. Rather than having to secure a group of stations or affiliates to broadcast religious programming, cable television allowed networks to carry religious programming nationwide. By the mid-1970s over 90 percent of Americans were within the broadcasting range of at least one religious broadcast program.

Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) is one of the more prominent examples of success with cable distribution. Fundamentalist preacher Marion G. "Pat" Robertson (1930–) founded the first Christian TV station,



The small Christian television station founded in 1961 by Pat Robertson, pictured here, evolved into the successful Christian Broadcasting Network.

WYAH-TV, in Portsmouth, Virginia, in 1961. The operation was crude, with a limited broadcast range and only two hours of programming at first. To generate support and resources for the fledgling station, Robertson called for seven hundred viewers to pledge \$10 a month to WYAH. These donors came to be known as Robertson's "700 Club," and they generated enough funds for Robertson to purchase more fledgling television stations. Robertson's network of stations would grow into CBN, which became one of the first networks to embrace cable distribution. Whereas other television ministries focused on producing programming, Robertson's CBN could distribute programming produced by others.

Second, the political climate of the United States in the 1970s and 1980s complemented conservative Christian programs. The religious right and the Moral Majority wielded significant influence in conservative politics during this time. This politically conservative religious movement relied in part on electronic church broadcasts to galvanize believers. As the Moral Majority became more politically influential, so did the exposure of the electronic church.

The work of Jerry Falwell (1933–2007) demonstrates the relationship between political conservatism and the

electronic church. He was well known for his engagement with politics in the late 1970s through the 1980s, but his contributions to religious broadcasting helped raise his national profile. He began broadcasting *The Old-Time Gospel Hour* as a radio program in 1956, primarily featuring taped sermons from his Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. With a solid audience built up, Falwell used his media presence to support the Moral Majority, a movement to unite conservative Christian support behind evangelical and fundamentalist Christian political candidates. His Moral Majority would take credit for securing Ronald Reagan's election to president of the United States in 1980. The Moral Majority and the religious right in general remained politically powerful until the mid-1980s, when the religious right's base was compromised by scandals in the electronic church, as covered below.

Third, and perhaps most significantly, 1980s televangelism became a fixture in the public square with coverage of sexual and financial scandals. A notable example is the rise and fall of Jim Bakker and *PTL*. Jim Bakker (1940–) produced *PTL* (which stood for "Praise the Lord," and later "People That Love") with his wife, Tammy Faye (1942–2007). By the early 1980s the program had become one of the more popular and profitable electronic church programs. *PTL* viewers contributed millions of dollars annually, helping the Bakkers extend their holdings into Heritage USA, a Christian resort and theme park outside of Charlotte, North Carolina. At the height of their fame, the Bakkers had three homes (including a \$1.3 million parsonage), a houseboat, several luxury and vintage sports cars, and an office Jacuzzi. In three years the Bakkers earned a reported \$4.8 million. But despite this apparent financial success, the Bakkers often maintained to viewers and supporters that *PTL* was in financial dire straits: they pleaded for cash from viewers to keep *PTL* afloat. The investigations into *PTL*'s financial discretions revealed Jim Bakker's 1980 affair with *PTL* viewer Jessica Hahn; Bakker had paid her \$265,000 in exchange for her silence. Jim Bakker was ultimately convicted of twenty-four counts of fraud in December 1988. Among Bakker's crimes was selling 9,700 fraudulent "partnerships" to *PTL*'s Heritage USA theme park at a time when the park could accommodate only 48 such memberships.

In another case, Robert Tilton (1946–) encouraged viewers to mail prayer requests along with donations, promising to pray over the requests. A 1991 news report revealed that the donations were removed from envelopes at Tilton's

bank, and the written prayer requests were left in a dumpster, presumably never reaching the televangelist. In both cases the televangelists were widely criticized as crooks, and their supporters were framed less as religious faithful and more as dupes.

The 2000s

At the turn of the twenty-first century, the electronic church and religious broadcasting continued to evolve with religious trends, media technologies, and communication policies. Web technologies and distribution, including social media and podcasting, did not require the engineering expertise or the financial assets necessary in more traditional broadcasting. As such, these technologies allowed more churches to experiment with mass communications. This is not to suggest, though, that churches were abandoning traditional broadcasting. In fact, when the FCC opened more licenses for FM noncommercial educational stations in the mid-2000s, some Catholic broadcasters took this as an opportunity to increase the number of Catholic radio stations from around 140 to 300 nationwide.

With new media technologies and opportunities came new electronic church superstars. Perhaps the most prominent electronic church leader of this time was Joel Osteen (1963–). Osteen worked with his father, the pastor of Houston's Lakewood Church, primarily as the producer of the church's television show. When his father passed away in 1999, Osteen took over the pulpit, and in 2004 he published his best-selling book *Your Best Life Now*. Some commentators criticized Osteen for promoting a prosperity gospel and for deemphasizing Jesus Christ in his messages. Nonetheless, by the mid-2000s Osteen's church services reached twenty million viewers in nearly one hundred countries each month.

Like their forebears, twenty-first-century electronic church leaders were scrutinized for alleged financial and personal indiscretions. In November 2007, U.S. senator Chuck Grassley probed Joyce Meyer (1943–), Benny Hinn (1952–), and four other megaministry leaders to ensure their lucrative ministries did not violate their tax-exempt status. Also in 2007, the televangelist Thomas W. Weeks III (1967–) was charged with aggravated assault after allegedly attacking his wife in a parking lot. In general, though, these stories did not receive the same degree of public condemnation that the televangelists of the 1980s did, suggesting, perhaps, that the power and interest in the electronic church were beginning to wane.

Some twenty-first-century electronic church leaders were also criticized for promoting what could be considered radical political positions. In the wake of September 11, 2001, Jerry Falwell appeared on Pat Robertson's *700 Club* program and attributed the attack to "the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People for the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger in their face and say 'you helped this happen.'" He was roundly criticized and later apologized for his remarks. Robertson himself was criticized for calling for the assassination of Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez in 2005 and for suggesting the destruction of Hurricane Katrina could be attributed to legalized abortion.

Dominant Themes of Electronic Church Programming

Fundamentalist or Evangelical Christian

There are at least three general reasons why the electronic church is produced and supported almost exclusively by fundamentalist and evangelical Christians. First, conservative Christians tend to privilege proselytizing and evangelism more than do mainline and liberal denominations. As such, these believers have long adopted media as a means toward spreading the gospel, and religious broadcasting is a natural extension of their call. Although mainline and liberal denominations also were noted for airing church services over the radio in the 1950s, they had abandoned broadcasting efforts in the 1960s.

Second, the dominance of conservative Christianity can be attributed to the visually engaging elements of fundamentalist and evangelical worship. Successful television programming must be interesting—static talking heads do not tend to hold the viewer's interest. Conservative Christian worship is oftentimes noted for high-energy music and charismatic preaching, two elements that translate well on screen. The worship in more mainline and liberal churches, on the other hand, is comparatively staid and less suited for broadcast.

Third, many electronic church broadcasts embrace and promote conservative Christian beliefs. Conservative Christianity is oftentimes noted for maintaining an unyielding approach to theology, eschatology, and biblical interpretation. This is to say that conservative Christians tend to reject approaches to the faith that acknowledge any degree of

subjective belief. This black/white approach to the faith works well with religious broadcasting in that there is little abstraction to digest, making the content easier to communicate in a mass medium.

Politically Conservative

In addition to being conservative theologically, religious broadcasting also tends to skew conservative in regard to politics. Although not every program takes an explicitly political stance, the electronic church in general has a history of aligning with conservative views.

Pat Robertson's *700 Club* program is an excellent example of the trend in televangelism from preaching the gospel to preaching politics. When the *700 Club* premiered in 1966, its format reflected late-night talk shows more than Sunday morning sermons. The show featured testimonies with Christian leaders and musicians rather than focusing on preaching the gospel in a formal manner. But by the late 1970s the program's format had swayed more toward political commentary, and Robertson's public profile evolved from mere conservative preacher to political commentator. Robertson was a strong supporter of Falwell's Moral Majority movement (discussed below) and even ran for president in 1988. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Robertson maintained his controversial, right-wing philosophies on the *700 Club* by suggesting Americans assassinate Hugo Chávez and by featuring Jerry Falwell's claim that the 9/11 attacks were linked to America's support of left-wing beliefs.

Prosperity Gospel

As the electronic church grew in the late 1970s some of the new programs strongly promoted a prosperity gospel. The prosperity gospel posits that God's blessings are manifest through financial success. Some of the more prominent proponents of the prosperity gospel suggest viewers will be more richly blessed by making significant donations to their ministries. For example, televangelist Kenneth Copeland (1936–) regularly tells his viewers to expect a hundredfold return on whatever amount they donate to his ministry.

Appeals for Donations

Many religious programs are noted for incorporating appeals for cash. Producing any programming is expensive, secular or otherwise. Since most churches do not rely on advertising to fund the programs, they rely on contributions from viewers. It is not uncommon for 40 percent of time

on a religious broadcast to be committed to appeals for donations.

Electronic church programs have relied on several tactics to raise funds. Most programs offer premiums in return for donations to encourage giving, such as books or recordings. Other programs, though, have relied on more extraordinary means. For instance, Oral Roberts preached in 1987 that God threatened to "call [him] home" unless he was able to raise \$8 million within a few months. Further, many proponents of the prosperity gospel have claimed that God will richly bless those who donate generously to their programs.

Criticisms of the Electronic Church

William Fore identified five main criticisms of the electronic church in the wake of 1980s televangelism. Although these criticisms are rather broad, they tend to be a fairly comprehensive list of the major criticisms of religious broadcasting in general since its first broadcasts in the early 1900s.

First, these programs are noted for failing to offer a comparable degree of community as offered by "real," brick-and-mortar churches. Whereas one of the virtues of community churches is fellowship and face-to-face interaction, which some argue is critical to the Christian lifestyle, electronic church programs are unable to replicate this camaraderie. Theologian Martin E. Marty echoed this sentiment when he called the electronic church "the invisible church." Ben Armstrong, an electronic church defender and former president of the National Religious Broadcasters, countered that some religious broadcasters use their programs in part to encourage membership in local churches.

Second, Fore noted that the electronic church fails to evangelize effectively, reaching primarily an audience of believers instead of nonbelievers. A common defense of religious broadcasting is its potential to reach the unchurched and convince unbelievers to become closer to God. But analyses of ratings and viewing habits reveal that the religious broadcast audience is almost exclusively composed of persons who were already believers.

Third, the revenue-generating facet of commercial television is inherently at odds with religious belief. Television production is an expensive operation by nature, and it is subsidized through advertising. Religious programs also have to generate a significant amount of money to stay on the air, but unlike most secular programs they do not rely on ads. Rather, the programs appeal to viewers for

donations, leading many critics to note that the shows can focus more on getting funds than on religious issues. Further, the programs' popularity on TV, like all other programs, depends in part on not offending or alienating the audience, which inherently restricts much of what the TV pastors can say.

Fore's fourth criticism is related to the concerns about seeking donations from viewers. In order to make religious programming appealing, the shows have to incorporate many of the trappings of secular culture that churches reject, such as materialism, power, and appeals to success. The electronic church undermines an expectation that church leaders reject extravagance. The medium tends to reflect, if not embrace, a sense of overindulgence, which is not a virtue among men and women of the cloth.

Others note that the electronic church tends to skew toward the more charismatic churches, in part because the demographic makeup lends itself more toward television viewers (poor, lower-income, and so forth) and in part because the ambience of the worship services tends to make for better television than the more staid services.

Finally, since churches have to buy time on the air, the underfunded churches are left off the air, which restricts the religious diversity on TV. William Fore reported in 1986 that most of the audience for religious broadcasting tends to skew conservative and fundamentalist. Less than 15 percent of viewers said the programming served as a substitute for attending worship services. Even though the electronic church may fail in its evangelical mission, it succeeds in reinforcing the faithful's beliefs.

See also *Celebrity Culture*; *Evangelicals: Twentieth Century*; *Film*; *Fundamentalism* entries; *Internet*; *Megachurches*; *Positive Thinking*; *Radio*; *Religious Press*; *Religious Right*; *Television*.

James Y. Trammell

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Emerging Church Movement

The Emerging Church movement is a loosely aligned conversation among Christians who seek to reimagine the priorities, values, and theology expressed by the local church as it seeks to live out its faith in postmodern society. It is an attempt to replot Christian faith on a new cultural and intellectual terrain.

It is sometimes referred to as the Emergent movement, Emergent Network, or Emergence Christianity, but insiders prefer the term *conversation* to emphasize the movement's developing and decentralized nature, its wide range of standpoints, and its commitment to dialogue. Most of the dominant contributors are pastors, the majority of them Protestant. Most aligning themselves with an Emerging paradigm are reacting against what they perceive as imbalances in evangelical Christianity and against the church's seeming irrelevance to emerging culture. The spectrum of viewpoints initially identified with the movement in the United States includes the pastors Brian McLaren, Tony Jones, and Dan Kimball; the theologian Scot McKnight; and the denominational leader Alan Hirsch.

Emerging churches are generally urban, youngish, and interested in postmodern thought. Their worship gatherings draw from historical practices and other creative, experiential, and sensory elements but do not represent one particular worship style.

Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger, professors at Fuller Theological Seminary, define the movement in this way: "Emerging churches are communities that practice the way of Jesus within postmodern cultures. . . . The three core practices are identifying with the life of Jesus, transforming the secular realm, and commitment to community as a way of life" (2005: 44, 235). Sociologist Shayne Lee defines the Emerging Church movement as a network of young evangelicals devoted to exploring how new expressions of church might fit into a complex and pluralistic society. Mark Driscoll, pastor of a megachurch in Seattle, defines it as a loosely connected movement of primarily young pastors who are glad

to see the end of modernity and are seeking to function as missionaries bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to emerging and postmodern culture.

History

Origins

The larger social and cultural context that birthed the Emergent Church movement began framing itself in the 1980s. As the baby boomer generation of those born in 1946–1964 continued to age, generational churches arose that targeted their children, who were then teenagers and young adults. Leaders of these next-gen congregations in the United States and the United Kingdom, and to a lesser extent Canada and Australia, at first focused on the unique qualities of this unknown generation, increasingly described as *Generation X* (a term coined in 1964 and popularized by Douglas Coupland's 1991 novel).

These leaders soon came to feel that the challenges facing their churches were not much deeper than the issue of adjusting the baby boomer generation's worship services in order to communicate better with a Gen-X audience. Instead, these leaders decided, the larger issue was the shift from modern to postmodern culture. This shift affected how the truth claims of historic Christianity could best be presented to an audience that is increasingly skeptical about claims of certainty or objectivity. One stream of the resulting conversation led to the Emergent Church movement.

The specific origin of the U.S. version of the movement took place among a group of evangelical pastors. That group, called Young Leaders (and later Terranova), was initially convened in 1996 by Leadership Network, a Dallas-based nonprofit that helps innovative Christian leaders increase their impact. By 2001 members of the group went on their own, no longer associated with Leadership Network. They chose the name *Emergent* and developed a Web site known as Emergent Village (www.emergentvillage.com), with Tony Jones as its national coordinator. The site offers links to blogs, podcasts, resources, and events associated with the conversations and the growing network of friendships that were increasingly being called emergent. During the early 2000s this Web site became the largest hub for people interested in the network of all things Emergent, along with an Emergent conference cosponsored annually from 2001 to 2005 with Youth Specialties, which resigned the partnership in order to retain its focus on youth ministry, and the publisher Zondervan, which sponsored a short-lived branded

book line named Emergent, which in 2007 became the Emersion line for another publisher—Baker. In 2007 the Emergent Village board of directors downsized the Web site, with stated intentions of phasing it out completely in coming years, as they felt the Village had served its purpose as a launching point for a movement.

Another important networking place during these formative years was the Web site www.theooze.com, subtitled as “conversations for the journey.” The Web site name emphasizes that an “oozy” community tolerates differences and treats people who hold opposing views with great dignity, rather than forcing conformity. It was launched in 1998 by Spencer Burke, who had recently resigned after briefly working at a California megachurch. He began to serve as a speaker and networker for people interested in the emergent church. Burke later coauthored *Stumbling toward Faith* (2003) and *Making Sense of the Church* (2004).

Key Texts

An early book that helped catalyze the Emergent Church movement was Brian McLaren's *New Kind of Christian* (Jossey-Bass, 2001). It sold over 100,000 copies in four years. It recounts an ongoing conversation between two fictional characters—a pastor and his daughter's high school science teacher. They reflect together about faith, doubt, reason, mission, leadership, and spiritual practice in the emerging postmodern world. In doing so the dialogue captures a new spirit of Christianity—where personal, daily interaction with God is more important than institutional church structures, where faith is more a way of life than a system of belief, where being authentically good is more important than being doctrinally “right,” and where one's direction is more important than one's present location.

If anyone personifies the Emerging Church movement, McLaren does. A popular and articulate speaker, McLaren resigned in 2005 from the senior pastor role in the church he had founded in order to do even more speaking and writing. His prolific pen has inked a number of books whose titles alone trace his developing thought, including *A Generous Orthodoxy*, *Everything Must Change*, and *Finding Our Way Again*.

Perhaps the most conceptual book that Emerging Church thinkers draw upon is *The Shaping of Things to Come* (Hendrickson, 2003) by Australians Michael Frost, a seminary professor, and Alan Hirsch, a Baptist denominational leader. It argues that Western civilization is entering what they call a post-Christendom era. Most people in the Western world have

seen what the church has to offer and have found it to be lacking. The result is a huge credibility gap and the need for churches to recalibrate themselves, rebuilding themselves from the roots upward. This requires a more “incarnational” approach to mission; the authors urge churches to emulate the model of God becoming human by emphasizing living the gospel out with greater authenticity among those they hope to reach. This oft-quoted book, and several subsequent books by each author, provided foundational ideas for many in the Emergent movement as well as to those in other arenas, such as the recent Missional Church movement and the House Church movement. Other theorists referenced widely by advocates within the Emerging Church movement are missiologist Lesslie Newbigin (Anglican), theologians N. T. Wright (Anglican) and John Howard Yoder (Mennonite), and Protestant spiritual disciplines writer Dallas Willard, a philosophy professor at the University of Southern California.

Terminology

As interest in the Emerging Church movement grew, so did a confusion of terminology, especially during the early 2000s. Some insisted on a distinction between *emerging* and *emergent*, while others saw them as the same. A number of books came out with one of those two words in the title or subtitle. Some books also tried to link *emerging* with *missional*, for instance, Mark Driscoll’s *Confessions of a Reformation Rev.*

The concepts associated with the Emerging Church movement were likewise unclear to many, evidenced by the wide range of voices trying to shape the meaning of the term. This was a lively discussion point on many blogs, especially Scot McKnight’s Jesus Creed (www.jesuscreed.org), and through multiple-author books that offered multiple-option approaches such as *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives* (Zondervan, 2003) and *Listening to the Beliefs of Emerging Churches: Five Perspectives* (Zondervan, 2007).

In 2006, Ed Stetzer, then research director for the Southern Baptist’s North American Mission Board, tried to bring clarity to the divergent streams. He offered three categories, which have been widely adopted. (1) *Relevants*—a word Stetzer created—are those whose main interest is in trying to make their worship, music, and outreach more contextual to an emerging culture. They do not wish to leave or even challenge their orthodox doctrinal moorings. (2) *Reconstructionists*—a term used with no relation to the same-named branch of Judaism—are those who think the current

construct or form of church is frequently irrelevant and the structure is unhelpful. While wanting to make broad changes in the construct of church, they too typically hold to an orthodox view of the gospel and scripture. (3) *Revisionists* are those who question, and in some cases deny, historic beliefs of the church, aligning themselves doctrinally more with liberal than evangelical theologians. They tend to show strong interest in epistemology, the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, its presuppositions and foundations, and its extent and validity.

Shared Assumptions

Leaders in the Emerging Church movement would be the first to agree concerning the great diversity within the contributing voices to the movement, beginning with how to define the term *emerging* (or *emergent*) and whether it is a conversation, network, or movement. While no chartering covenant or foundational document exists, there is general agreement on a number of values associated with the term *emerging*.

Awareness that an old Christendom is being replaced by an emerging postmodern world. Emergents acknowledge that they live in two worldviews. The dominant but fading zeitgeist is the Newtonian world of a clockwork-style universe where scientific rules provide clear, logical explanations for all mysteries. Faith, when framed in this same paradigm, is expressed in clear, nonparadoxical categories. The rising scientific worldview acknowledges truth in such discoveries as Werner Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle and Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity, both of which challenge certainty in commonsense assumptions about the nature of things. Theology, by analogy, needs to speak contextually into a new missional setting: a world where people know and learn differently, a global village marked by increasingly pluralistic worldviews and religions. Postmodern spirituality is less creedal and propositional and instead is more relational, sensory, and experiential. It often associates absolutism with the negatives of modernism.

Emergent thinking also insists that ethereal, abstract ideas must be translated into answers to questions being asked by today’s culture, rather than questions no longer being asked in a hurting world.

Disillusionment with how the Christian faith has been accommodated for the baby boomer generation. Emergents often rally around a perception of the dismal state of things in the current American church. What the church is today, and what it offers especially to a younger generation, is simply not

enough; it is not biblical enough, not spiritual enough, not radical enough, and not relevant enough. Emergents frequently voice a need to bring theology and practice back together in ways compelling to a rising generation.

Emergents commonly voice their disenchantment with extreme statements. Brian McLaren may write that Jesus wouldn't be caught dead as a Christian, were he physically present today, and that if he did show up in church today, Christians not only would dislike him but would call him a heretic and plot to kill him, too. Then in subsequent pages McLaren would acknowledge his statement as an exaggeration.

But the Emerging movement is more than a protest against an establishment faith. It challenges much of current evangelicalism. Scot McKnight describes it as postevangelical in the way that neoevangelicalism in the 1950s was postfundamentalist, resulting in "postmodern evangelicalism." In particular, the Emerging movement tends to be suspicious of systematic theology. And it often shows skepticism about the "in-versus-out" mentality common in evangelicalism, which typically seeks to discern a dividing line between Christians and non-Christians. Emergents are more likely to be inclusive, citing the words of Jesus, "Whoever is not against us is for us" (Mark 9:40). Some go so far, as Spencer Burke's *A Heretic's Guide to Eternity*, as to assert that all are born "in" and only some "opt out."

Eagerness to explore new ways of articulating and living out their faith. This reexamination through dialogue is not a call to depart from the historic faith but to rediscover the faith afresh for a new world, especially in terms of cultural clarity. The process is most often described as a conversation. It is typically conducted in a context of open discussion, wary whenever others push for conclusions or definitive boundaries.

What most characterizes the Emerging Church movement is the concept of praxis—how the faith is lived out. Whether intentionally or not, the movement's shapers are advocating a modified ecclesiology (doctrine of the church). This is not an ecclesiology of worship style. While many in the Emerging movement are creative, experiential, and sensory in their worship gatherings, there is no advocacy or consensus on a particular worship style for emerging churches. Rather, it is a questioning of the messages conveyed through sacred space and ritual. Some emergents such as McKnight note the likeness of a lecture hall to churches with pulpits in the center of a room and pews or chairs lined up in neat rows. He wonders if there is a better way to

express—theologically, aesthetically, and anthropologically—what Christians do when they gather. If the configuration were a circle, would it foster a different theology and praxis? If churches placed the preacher on the same level as the congregation, would it create a clearer sense of the priesthood of all believers? If people lit incense as part of worship, would they practice prayers differently?

Central emphasis on the way of Jesus. Behind these questions of human architecture is an overriding concern about keeping the focus on Jesus—his life, the gospel he taught, and the kingdom he emphasized. Gibbs and Bolger define emerging churches as those that practice "the way of Jesus" in the postmodern era. As such, emerging leaders keep asking whether church could be done in a way that better encounters and models the incarnation of Jesus Christ for the world to see.

Even the Apostle Paul is suspect for some emergents. Brian McLaren asks if followers of Jesus have missed Christianity for "Paulianity," in which Paul's teachings receive far more attention than those of Jesus. Emergents often come back to such questions as "If we are followers of Jesus, why don't we preach his message?" Many enjoy contrasting what Jesus described with what the church has become, opting to start all over again as if for the first time. This fresh rediscovery of Jesus and his radical kingdom vision inspires emerging churches to view the church, the Christian life, and even global concerns in new light.

Likewise the idea of Jesus' mission is often understood to encompass a much wider set of activities than an evangelism that converts others to become followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus went about doing good to bodies, spirits, families, and societies. He attracted social outcasts such as prostitutes and tax collectors; he made the lame walk and opened the ears of the deaf. This model of caring not just about lost souls but also about whole persons and whole societies leads many to a sense of holistic ministry that serves mind, body, and spirit.

For some the social activism also leads into politics, leftward at that, the Democratic Party in most cases. An *NBC Nightly News* segment depicted the Emerging Church movement primarily as a political shift by younger evangelicals away from the Republican Party. Democratic Party adviser Jim Wallis has been a well-received speaker at gatherings of emergent leaders, as has *Sojourners* magazine, which Wallis oversaw for many years. Emergents appreciate the ideals of Walter Rauschenbusch, theologian of the Social Gospel over a century ago, and many wish to follow

Rauschenbusch's intended path by imitating the way of Jesus.

Internal Critical Assessment

These values all have import for North American religious life, both within the Emerging Church movement and among those it influences. Some emergent values have led to concerns within the Christian community, voiced most often by theologians. Criticisms deal mostly with the movement's porous borders rather than its reformist goals.

Questioning more than deciding. Emerging church writers are characteristically postmodern in their suspicion of the controlling structures of religious life and thought, whether church hierarchy, dominant cultural forms, or doctrinal formulations. As a result, the life and practice of emerging church writers are marked by a resistance to these structures. For example, much of McLaren's aim in his writing and lecturing is to challenge the certainties that he feels have controlled too much of the thinking of Western Christians. Modernity taught leaders how to control, and Christians have adopted this practice rather than challenging it. Emerging churches seek to carve a new way: How can a leader lead without being controlling? How do people lead in such a way that they submit to God's kingdom, where every voice is heard, each gift expressed, and consensus reached? The tone of many emerging writers is one that appreciates deconstruction through questioning far more than outcomes that develop positive alternatives.

Separating belief from practice. Emergents perceive society as becoming increasingly postmodern in its values, and they are exploring several different approaches for theoretical engagement. Doug Pagitt, founding member of Emergent Village and pastor at a Minneapolis church named Solomon's Porch, says that some emerging churches minister *to* postmoderns, others *with* postmoderns, and still others *as* postmoderns.

Those in the "to" category typically emphasize postmoderns as trapped in moral relativism and epistemological bankruptcy. Such churches tend to invite postmoderns toward a different set of assumptions, ones based in ideas of propositional truth—statements that can be either affirmed or denied. Those who minister "with" postmoderns accept postmodern thought as the framework into which they are called to proclaim and live out the gospel.

Scot McKnight says the vast majority of emerging Christians and churches fit these first two categories. They don't deny that truth can be known—that truth can be

communicated in the form of a statement or proposition. Further, they don't deny the evangelical views that Jesus Christ is truth and that the Bible is God's word of truth.

A third kind of emerging postmodernity expressed in Pagitt's metaphor—those who minister "as" postmoderns—has attracted attention from the theological community, mostly the evangelical camp that many emergents claim as their own. These emergents speak of the end of metanarratives and the importance of social location in shaping one's view of truth. The idea that humans cannot know absolute truth, or, at least, that humans cannot know truth absolutely, is disturbing to many critics of the Emerging Church movement because it seems to challenge the validity of propositional truth. Many critics find this form or direction of the Emerging Church movement to be harmful and wrong.

Given the Emerging movement's emphasis on praxis, a frequent point of emphasis by emergent writers is the contention that how people live is more important than what they believe. While many grant that orthopraxy (correct living) flows from orthodoxy (correct professions), emergent writers are quick to observe that experience does not prove that those who believe the right things live the right way. They point out Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount, that "by their fruits," not "by their theology," will his followers be known. This leads some emergent writers to downplay the importance or content of belief, which becomes a point of concern for theologians. No one in the Emerging movement argues that one's relationship with God is established solely by how one lives, but the clear shift in emphasis from orthodoxy to orthopraxy is a signal that many critics are questioning.

Disinterest in the institutional church in any form. Emerging church writers emphasize a tension between new ways of doing and new ways of being. They speculate on whether they should do congregational life differently or abandon structured religious life altogether in favor of simply being followers of Jesus in the world.

Likewise, they often find sharp contrast between Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God and the institutional church. They're quick to point out how many people in society like Jesus but dislike church. They do not tend to start churches per se so much as to foster communities that embody Jesus' kingdom. Whether a church explicitly becomes a church is not the immediate goal. Spencer Burke affirms that his fundamental discontent was not in the evangelical megachurch that he left so much as in contemporary Christianity as an institution. Jonathan Campbell, author of

Way of Jesus, is characteristic of the Emerging Church movement when he asserts that it doesn't need church buildings, programs, clergy, or any other human inventions he thinks are replacing genuine spirituality. He says, "I don't believe in any religion anymore—including Christianity . . . but I do believe in following Jesus" (p. 192).

Congregations that identify with the Emerging Church movement typically show great interest in reaching out to those who have been overlooked by the church. This includes people marginalized by society in general and those disenchanted by previous experiences with the institutional church. Emerging churches typically work hard to be welcoming of strangers, especially the disenfranchised.

Conclusion

While the Emerging Church movement has not developed to the point of receiving critique by social scientists, several sociological theories could be applied to it. Nancy Ammerman, sociologist of religion, argues that a movement's religious identity must be tied to one or more institutions if it is to have stability. This movement's strongest mooring to date is through a variety of book publishers and Web sites, but not through a denomination or seminary. Time will tell whether such media alone are cohesive enough to establish and stabilize the movement. Likewise, the social-psychological concept of collective identity has been applied to religious movements. Its theorists might question whether the identity and audience of the Emerging Church movement are well enough defined to prevent it from fracturing into a number of individual expressions, thereby causing the embryonic movement to lose its sustainability.

Finally, social movement theory explores the promotion and resistance of a group's collective action. At present the Emerging Church movement shares less of a behavioral direction and more of a conceptual foundation—a perception of a major change in culture requiring a response from churches. Most of the movement's pleas for reform are tightly tied to its understandings of postmodernism, the church that modernism has produced, and the level to which the proposed new "emerging" form of church submerges itself in the culture it seeks to reach. In the words of Scot McKnight, leaders of the Emerging Church movement are "building a new theology that 'emerges' from the story they find themselves in"—namely, the shift from modernity to postmodernity, even as they continue to wrestle with what it means to be the disciples of Jesus in today's culture.

From that foundation, the actual direction of the movement itself is yet to be determined.

See also *Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; House Church Movement; Independent Bible and Community Churches; Liberation Theology; Megachurches; Postmodernism; Seeker Churches; Social Gospel; Unaffiliated.*

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Emotion

Emotion is a crucial part of religion in America. The earliest scriptural writings in virtually every literate tradition brim with references to religious feeling. Theological writings through the centuries assume its central role in faith, and religious practice has developed everywhere as the cultivation and expression of affect. When we approach religion with an eye to emotional life, we position ourselves to see the richness and complexity of religion, its ambiguities, paradoxes, and multifacetedness, more clearly than if we take

emotion in religion to be something beyond the reach of research and interpretation. Until the late-twentieth-century renaissance in the study of emotion, a project that has gained momentum across the humanities and social sciences and in the agendas of biologists and biochemists, some scholars of religion imagined emotion to be an irreducible datum, a human experience so ethereal and free of cultural influence that it was only barely susceptible to investigation and analysis. Feeling in religion, according to some writers, was the same across cultures, age groups, gender, ethnicity, and other differences so that “fear of God,” for example, was most certainly felt in the same ways among the Jews of ancient Israel, eleventh-century French Catholic peasants, and late-twentieth-century Mormons in Utah. Early twenty-first-century scholarship instead has made the case for the role of culture in emotional experience. People feel in ways that have much to do with where they live and how they live. Emotion is to some extent culturally constructed.

Those who study religion know about collective emotion through the influence of the French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858–1917), whose writings on religion stressed the role of collective emotion in bonding individuals into a cohesive social group. Collective emotion is performed in rituals organized around important religious occasions. The expression of emotion through such performances reminds a religious community of its investments in certain ideas, behaviors, and ways of life. Moreover, the enthusiastic collective display of feeling by celebrants of a holy day, for example, not only reminds persons of the sacred events that occur on that day but also recalls the vital importance of a religious calendar itself, of the boundaries that define place, organize time, and enclose individuals within the community. Individuals remember what matters through performance of emotional rituals, while at the same time those rituals reinforce shared beliefs and practices by way of the affect that they cultivate. Scholars working in the humanities and social sciences have developed ways of studying religion that draw on such insights. In the past few decades, emotions research has become increasingly relevant to the broad study of religion, through its powerful emergence in philosophical debates, cultural studies, cognitive science, and, especially, historical studies.

The historical investigation of religion and emotion relies on the excavation of traces of the emotional lives of people that are imbedded in a wide range of sources. Newspapers, magazines, court records, books, sermons, song lyrics, art, and architecture, among many other sources, provide

testimony about cultural expectations for feeling. Such artifacts hold clues to the “feeling rules” that organize the emotional lives of communities. There is evidence that facial expressions and other physical displays, and the biochemical cascades that are linked to them, differ little from culture to culture. But emotional life in its great complexity, and above all the expression and concealment of emotion in social groups, is largely a matter of learned behavior. We therefore study the ways in which culture imposes on groups certain guidelines for feeling, and we can examine the ways in which individuals—through their self-reporting in diaries, correspondences, drawings, autobiographical writings, and other sources—conform to those guidelines or depart from them. We can discover much in the history of feeling, such as who felt what when, how they expressed it or concealed it, whether their performances of emotion indicated their conformity with more encompassing social rules or rebellion against them, and other aspects of collective emotional life. Approaching American religious history through the investigation of feeling accordingly holds much potential for digging out aspects of the religious lives of communities that have been neglected in previous interpretations.

Early America

Europeans who came to the Americas in the wake of Columbus were awed and enchanted by what they found in the new land. They were terrified by it as well. Columbus himself wrote excitedly about the likelihood of Eden in the Americas, and Spanish explorers followed suit with fevered ruminations not only about Eden but also about the Fountain of Youth and the fabulous Seven Cities of Gold. Expeditions that set out to find such marvels discovered little else besides swamps, mosquitoes, malaria, alligators, impenetrable jungle, blazing deserts, and indigenous peoples who sometimes offered fierce resistance to Spanish imperial aspirations. The new land was enchanted, indeed, in the sense that it was powerful and mysterious. Sometimes, as Cabeza de Vaca (c. 1490–c. 1557) discovered as he traveled on foot across the North American continent, its enchantments were sublime, in the form of natural wonders and the generosity, even adoration, of the natives. At other times the land and its native peoples were a horror, a descent through the circles of hell. For the Spanish, and for the French, English, Dutch, and Portuguese, the Americas prompted both joy and fearful trembling. That complex, even contradictory emotional response to discovery and exploration set the terms

for centuries of European engagement of the land and its inhabitants.

British colonists in North America were certain enough that holy power was so abundantly manifested in America that they conceptualized their migration to New England and their organization of community life in its new towns as a commission from God to build a church of saints. Rejoicing in signs of divine favor, and with words of gratitude for their experience of God's love, they recorded how Providence brought miracles to their lives in the unfamiliar land and how the destiny of their experiment with a purified Christianity was foreshadowed in the beauty of nature and the majesty of the landscape. They likewise cried woe over their lengthening string of setbacks, including famine, cholera, war, natural disasters, apostates, and witches. New Englanders, in short, lived in a state of highly tensed emotional discord, balanced precariously on a fine line between exuberance and terror. Their ministers spoke to them about God's plan for the success of the "holy commonwealths," the towns of saints, and called them to openness to divine love, trust in God, a peaceful mood, and hope. The clergy also sounded the alarm when they thought that the towns deviated from the path of righteousness, stirring up fears about punishments to come should New Englanders fail in their commission. Such warnings, or jeremiads, were especially weighty given the emotional orientation of Puritans—intense and volatile—to the space they occupied. Fear of God and love of God, which never were too far apart in English Puritanism, were drawn more closely together in the emergent emotional climate of early New England.

For Native Americans, encounters with such emotional New Englanders were more often than not occasions for fear and sorrow, and meetings with missionaries occasions for anger. The case was similar for other Europeans who sought contact with Native Americans. Jesuit reports of their efforts among the Indians in New France indicate how the religious enterprise was framed within a rich emotional context. As was the case in New Spain and in other places where Europeans sought to establish some measure of relations with Indians, the Jesuits looked for signs that Indians had experienced a conversion to Christianity. They did not expect that conversions would be accompanied by a great emotional turmoil as was more common among Protestants who were "reborn." Rather, Jesuits looked for assent to doctrine and alongside of that indications that the convert would be able to embrace French Catholic standards for display and control of emotion. The missionaries' attempts

to persuade Native Americans to practice monogamy was, as part of the larger program of Christianization, as much a matter of imposing European feeling rules on Indians as it was a project of behavior modification. Control of emotion, rather than expression of emotion, was key in that regard. The conversion of Indians—who in the eyes of Europeans were uncivilized, emotionally uncontrolled savages—was largely a matter of inculcating Indians in habits of emotional restraint (as conceptualized by Europeans). A conversion was more likely to "take" when emotional life had been ordered in European fashion. Accordingly, the French Jesuits and missionaries of other faiths and nationalities devoted themselves to remaking feeling in Native Americans, so that their emotional performances met European standards for appropriateness, degree, and complexity. Native American cultures had their own standards for such things, and sometimes those standards endured, in spite of missionaries' attempts to link conversion and salvation to alien feeling rules.

Africans who were brought to North America as slaves also were subjected to social regimes that compelled their emotional remaking, and Africans, like Native Americans, responded in mixed fashion, accepting some of the feeling rules foisted on them and rejecting others. The performative cultures of many African tribal groups whose members were enslaved in America valued emotional expression and engineered its cultivation in religious ritual. It would be a mistake to assume that Africans were any more emotional than Europeans, however, and especially to characterize blacks—as many nineteenth-century writers did—as emotionally immature, as childlike in their blend of naiveté and seemingly unfiltered displays of feeling. African American religious life, in plantations and eventually in black churches and denominations, was emotionally varied. Some congregations practiced moderation in the display of emotion, while others were highly expressive. In the latter case the incorporation of chanting, clapping, singing, styles of public speaking, the vocal involvement of the congregation, dancing, and other liturgical practices made for a highly charged emotional setting. Some of that emotional religious culture, which was a hybrid of African and Christian traditions, took root in white churches, so that over time, and especially in the South, white or racially mixed congregations also acquired reputations for their emotional tenor. In observing the place of feeling in black religious life, some abolitionists drew the conclusion that the highly emotional religious gatherings of slaves were evidence of their humanity, while slaveholders distrusted slaves for their seeming lack of

emotional control. At other times African Americans were thought emotionally retarded because of their seeming lack of affect in services. In short, whites constructed black emotionality as both excessive and anemic and argued their cases above all with reference to blacks' practice of religion. For African Americans religion did in fact offer a cultural space where emotional performances that whites considered uncivilized could be enacted in connection with religious praise, grief, longing, or hopefulness. As forced acculturation to white standards was intensified by more deliberate effort and by the passage of time, religion remained an opportunity for the rehearsal of emotional styles that eventually would find expression in music, art, and writing.

Revivals and Religious Ideas

The series of Great Awakening revivals that took place from the 1730s to the 1770s popularized an emotional style of religion throughout the British colonies and set a pattern of public worship that has recurred within Protestant evangelicalism and influenced twentieth-century Roman Catholic "charismatic" devotions. The revivals in general were characterized by displays of feeling in tears, jumping, rolling on the floor, fainting, barking, shouting, laughing, and in other ways. Emotion, enacted in such ways, was closely linked to the process of religious conversion, so that being "born again" came to be understood as an experience so profound in its affective dimension that other kinds of emotional experiences paled in comparison to it.

The proof of conversion in some congregations came to be associated with the intensity of the emotional performance. That understanding was not entirely new to the colonies. The fledgling Puritan congregation in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the 1630s had required for full membership a public "relation" of one's path to conversion, and those accounts, given before the church, were often emotional, although not as demonstrative as the piety of the revivals. The eighteenth-century revivals are among the most important events in American religious history as far as emotion is concerned, because of their regional breadth and the active involvement of both men and women, persons of different social groups, and members of an assortment of denominations. The legacy of the revivals includes the belief, central to the subsequent development of evangelicalism, that emotion can serve as evidence of a connection with God. Not an entirely new idea, it had been a part of the history of Christianity, in kernel form at least, since St. Augustine's *Confessions* (397 CE). In America, however,

it took on a more pointed meaning, namely, that a display of emotion in fact could be proof of God's work in a person. Such an understanding of spirituality subsequently led to the development within Protestantism, since the late eighteenth century, of a focus on religion as a means by which to cultivate the emotions. Feeling eventually came to be the goal of religious exercises, rather than a by-product of them.

Euro-Americans' expectation that some measure of conformity could be achieved in the emotionality of whites, blacks, and Native Americans was grounded in the trust that Christianity rested on a universal human experience of the redeeming love of Jesus Christ. Missionaries and other engineers of cultural conformity accordingly proceeded in their relationships with nonwhites confident that once those people experienced God's love, the gate would be opened for their wholesale reconstitution as properly emotional Christians.

Nevertheless, colonial Americans, and those who followed them, either as descendants or as immigrants, imagined men and women differently as far as their emotionality was concerned. Men typically were understood to be rationalistic, strong, disciplined, and restrained in their emotionality. In religious services men might display a spiritual enthusiasm in tears and groaning, but their everyday religious lives—their regular churchgoing, family prayer, devotional reading, and other practices—were marked by a limited range of emotional expression. Virtually across the spectrum of Protestant denominations in the nineteenth century, and in similar fashion among the rapidly growing Roman Catholic population, male emotionality in religion was subject to restrictive feeling rules. Americans expected women to be significantly more forthcoming in expressing their feelings, and in religious life female performance of emotion was taken as a sign of women's naturally more labile emotional nature, which was powerful, volatile, and less predictable than men's. Among Roman Catholics women's emotional roles in devotions, and particularly in feast day or holy day public worship, were complex in the nineteenth century, and they remain so in the twenty-first. Catholic women behaved emotionally much like Protestant women, however, suggesting that shared emotional cultures survive even in cases where religious beliefs are different.

For centuries before the migration of Europeans to the Americas, philosophers and theologians had struggled to articulate the relation of feeling and thinking, constructing

and reconstructing categories of intellect, affect, will, and other human activities in an effort to understand the complexity of emotional life. The Enlightenment emphasis on reason, developed over several generations of philosophical argument and early scientific investigation, begged for theory that would explain emotionality. Clarification was especially urgent in the case of emotion and religion as the latter suffered defeat at the hands of the Enlightenment, which scored repeated victories in shaping critical discourse and in challenging traditional social orders, including the church. In America, Thomas Jefferson edited out of his New Testament the transcendent and miraculous and urged on the state of Virginia and eventually the new nation a view of religion as a moral rather than salvific enterprise. For rationalists—who came in a variety of stripes but agreed on the capability of intellect alone to understand the ordering of the universe—emotion was valued as aesthetic response to the beauty of creation, but its usefulness was limited beyond that. It was not proof of one's spiritual status, and it was not privileged as a primary means by which one engaged divine mysteries.

In the writing of the Scottish “Common Sense” realists—Dugald Stewart, Thomas Reid, Thomas Brown, and others—emotion became, however, an equal of intellect and will. According to the Scots, feeling, thinking, and acting were the three faculties that together constituted mind. Emotion, or affect, served as a kind of judgment on ideas formed in the intellect and as such played a central role in directing the will. In short, emotion was theorized in its cooperative relation with thinking, rather than as an opponent. As Scottish thought subsequently was interpreted in America in the early nineteenth century, it formed a basis for a recovery of some of the ground religion has lost in earlier debates. In the hands of American evangelical Protestants, Scottish thought served as a means of understanding how, in religion, feeling was knowing. Such an interpretation lost important other aspects of Scottish thought, but it led to a period of American evangelical expansion in which doctrine was not as important as the practice of piety, and piety above all was a matter of emotional excitation. By the time that the nineteenth-century revivalist Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875) had popularized the idea that revivals were largely a “machinery” to stimulate feeling in persons, emotion had become the bedrock of Protestant evangelicalism. Revivalist preachers and born-again religious writers since that time have made a central part of their mission provoking and sustaining in their audiences

profound feelings of fear, love, grief, anger, hope, guilt, and joy. To feel the divine was to know the divine.

Emotion across Denominations

Disestablishment, the constitutional provision for separation of church and state in America, created a religious landscape in which loss of tax support for churches led to innovation. One consequence was that Protestants since the early Republic have been inclined to sample the religious offerings of various groups, changing memberships from time to time and embracing new religious visions and emotional scripts that emerged. For Catholics there was less likelihood of leaving one denomination for another, although in the latter part of the twentieth century that likelihood increased. Catholic religiosity had always been steeped in emotion and manifested that in ways that Protestants did not, namely, through an emphasis on the sensuous, especially as it was represented in the rich material culture of Catholicism. Emotion in American Catholicism, as it coalesced in the colonial Southwest and emerged in other North American regions since the latter part of the nineteenth century, has flourished in music, singing, a vibrant visual culture, awe-inspiring architecture, incense, physical exertion, suffering, and other material means of stimulating feeling. The large-scale immigration of Catholics in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century reinforced that style of religiosity, but Catholic reflection on emotion in religion was not as deliberate as was the case in Protestant revivalism. Emotional ritual and the expectation of feeling in piety were so deeply rooted in Catholic religious life that they did not attract interpretation as did newer Protestant modes of revival.

Not all emotional religion in America has been characterized by public displays of tears, shouting, or unusual physical posturing. The worship that takes place in a Jewish synagogue, while generally solemn, includes chanting that raises affect in the congregation. Prayers and games that characterize Jewish family religion during special times in the religious calendar invoke an assortment of feelings, from delight to fear. Likewise the case for Muslim worship in America, where solemnity prevails but which also has moments of exuberance during domestic rituals or feast day ceremonies. Hindus in America embrace a material culture—analogue in some ways to Catholic culture—that can bring strong emotional responses, and across a wide spectrum of feeling. Individual Hindu gods and goddesses often are associated with specific kinds of emotion—anger, love, jealousy,

and so forth—and devotions focused on those divinities can be structured to foster emulation of those feelings. Devotees of Krishna, for example, who often gather in public spaces to make contact with potential converts, characteristically enact highly emotional religious performances of joy and hope. Buddhism in America is a religion that has a wide range of emphases depending on the national origins of those who practice it and the degree of interpretation that Americans have brought to it. Buddhist practice, however, tends to be less emotionally demonstrative in public settings than other major traditions.

Twentieth Century

The twentieth century and especially the later part of the century brought changes to the ways in which emotion was manifest in religious life. One of the most significant changes was the blurring of the line demarcating male and female emotionality in religion. Catholic charismatic religion featured more robust displays of male emotionality than was common in Catholic services, and the cross-denominational Promise Keepers movement stood gendered emotionality on its head: while men wept openly and sometimes desperately in mass services in football stadiums, women, known as “prayer warriors,” staffed special prayer rooms beneath the grandstand to lead men in focused petitionary prayer, that is, prayer that takes the form of requests. Wiccan religion, which paid particular respect to female spirituality, similarly framed male and female emotionality in a way that challenged traditional gender roles for the expression of feeling. Also important in the twentieth century was the increase in the number of Americans who sought to develop their spiritual lives outside the supervisions of formal religious communities, and what that implied as far as emotionality. Such individualized programs of spiritual seeking, custom-made through cut-and-paste methods that borrowed some ideas and practices from world religions but avoided doctrinal standpoints, typically granted to feeling a primary place in spirituality. Emotion came to the forefront as an indication of spiritual vitality and as a spiritual goal worthy of pursuit in itself.

Religions in America throughout the nation’s history have been closely attentive to life-cycle events such as birth, marriage, the beginnings of adulthood, death, and other key moments. The feelings that accompany these events, whether they be grief or joy, anger or wonder, fear or love, have long been intertwined with religious practice. Virtually all denominations ritually emphasize such events and shape

through various kinds of scripts the emotions that are associated with them. Religion as such profoundly shapes emotionality, setting terms for the ways in which persons express and conceal emotion, alter emotions to fit important social occasions, embrace conflicting emotions, or forget what has been felt. Individuals at the same time sometimes have pushed back against those religious commands, challenging tradition and revising religiously grounded feeling rules.

The debates among Christians in early America about the proper tone of church worship—should it be solemn or joyous, quietly meditative or loudly exultant?—have been played out over time in each generation in changing social settings and amid shifting cultural expectations. Religion as a powerful bearer and enforcer of culture accomplishes much of the work of affective training that has made Americans who they are emotionally. Its survival indeed has depended on its capability to do so. The fact that religious belief in America is declining suggests not only that religious ideas are currently less persuasive than they once were but also that emotional life for Americans is changing in important ways. The fit between the actual feelings of individuals and the feeling rules enforced by religion do not overlap as easily as they did a few generations ago, before cyberworlds, global awareness, and new forms of family began to influence the patterning of emotional life. People adapt emotionally, and so survive. The survival of religion in the twenty-first century will depend in part on its ability to adapt as well, and especially in its role as a reliable authority for emotional life.

See also *African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War*; *Common Sense Realism*; *Devotionalism*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Historical Approaches*; *Marriage and Family*; *Puritans*; *Revivalism* entries; *Romanticism*; *Sociological Approaches*; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends*; *Worship* entries.

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Enlightenment

The term *Enlightenment* refers to the explosion of rationalism in Europe and North America roughly coterminous with the eighteenth century. Sometimes referred to as the “Age of Reason,” the period was characterized by a rejection of religious and political authority and philosophical tradition and an emphasis on reason, science, humanism, secularism, and political and civil reform. Enlightenment thinkers, or “philosophes,” as they came to be called, formed a loose coalition of like-minded men and women who, despite their individual interests and occasional internecine disputes, displayed remarkable continuity in their outlook. Through books, private correspondence, intellectual salons, scholarly academies (for example, France’s l’Académie française and England’s Royal Society of London), and public debates, the Enlightenment thinkers defended a worldview that has come to define the “modern” perspective.

On the scientific front, Enlightenment ideals encouraged the empirical study of nature and rejected earlier “occult” (by which the philosophes generally meant metaphysical) explanations of natural phenomena. Morally, the Enlightenment made the language of human rights part of the international lexicon. Politically, the Enlightenment called into question the rights of aristocrats and kings to govern, promoted republicanism, and fueled the rise of individualism and the middle class. Running throughout the Age of Reason was an optimistic and indeed exuberant sense of standing on the threshold of a new world. Immanuel Kant summed up the mindset well in his essay *Was ist Aufklärung?* when he proposed *Sapere aude!* “Dare to reason!” as the Enlightenment’s motto and proclaimed the period “man’s release from self-imposed tutelage. Tutelage is the inability

to use one’s natural powers without direction from another. This tutelage is called ‘self-imposed’ because its cause is not any absence of rational competence but simply a lack of courage and resolution to use one’s reason without direction from another.”

The Enlightenment played out differently depending on the country in which its proponents lived. In France, which for years had been troubled by an increasingly repressive government, an unjust social structure, and a widely perceived alliance on the part of church and state to retain power, Enlightenment ideals took on a militancy that culminated in the French Revolution, the establishment of the French Republic, and the rise of Napoleon. In the German-speaking countries, the influence of the Enlightenment (the *Aufklärung*, or “clearing out”) was sporadic and negligible—despite the 1740 accession of Frederick the Great, who fancied himself a champion of Enlightenment thought—and much outweighed by the romantic movement, which succeeded it. In Britain and the American colonies and early republic, the Enlightenment exerted a more moderate and enduring influence. It’s not too much to say that the United States, far from being founded on Christian values as many conservative Christians claim, was actually founded on Enlightenment ones.

Even in countries where the Enlightenment’s influence tended to be moderate, a rise in militancy during the second half of the eighteenth century is observable. As the century progressed, Christians and deists tended to give way to atheists and materialists, and critics (erroneously) feared that the Age of Reason was more intent on destroying the old than introducing the new. Edmund Burke’s (1729–1797) fierce denunciation of the French Revolution in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) was based in large part on his perception that the Enlightenment-inspired champions of the Revolution were intent on the indiscriminate destruction of law, social structure, and religion.

British Foundations

As historian Peter Gay pointed out, the “propagandists” of the Enlightenment may have been French, but its “patron saints and pioneers” were British. French philosophes such as Denis Diderot (1713–1784), Jean le Rond d’Alembert (1717–1783), Paul-Henri d’Holbach (1723–1789), Nicolas de Condorcet (1743–1794), and most famously Francois-Marie Arouet Voltaire (1694–1778) were great popularizers of their day’s philosophy and natural science. Especially influential in spreading Enlightenment ideas was the

ambitious *Encyclopedie*, the brainchild of Diderot and d’Alembert, which promised to bring to the general reading public “each and every branch of human knowledge” that had “the power to change men’s common way of thinking.” Suppressed several times by a fearful government, the *Encyclopedie* was finally completed and published in 1772, twenty years after its inception. Leading thinkers from all over Europe contributed to it.

Inspiring the French popularizing philosophes were more technical and difficult British thinkers of the previous century. Three in particular were venerated: Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton, and John Locke. Bacon offered a new methodology; Newton offered a new cosmology; and Locke offered a new epistemology. Together, the contributions of these three men were typically referred to as the “New Learning.” Their influence on the Enlightenment period is immeasurable.

Francis Bacon (1561–1626) provided the foundation for the New Learning with his advocacy of inductive logic—the “new organon”—as a replacement of traditional Aristotelian “syllogistic” reasoning. (Bacon’s repudiation of “Aristotelian” logic is a misnomer in light of the fact that Aristotle is rightfully credited with the invention of inductive logic. Bacon was referring more to late medieval scholasticism than to Aristotle.) The latter, according to Bacon, was an exercise in reasoning from abstract first principles. It was capable of generating logically valid arguments, but because it dealt only with words and propositions, it had little practical value. Consequently, concluded Bacon, it let “nature skip out of its hands.”

Bacon advocated a “new” method that would begin with experience, using empirical data as the starting points for experimentations, generalization, and the inventions of practical works. The emphasis was on the manipulation and conquest of nature rather than the creation of metaphysical (much less theological) systems. Bacon’s rejection of what he thought of as idle speculation and his embrace of instrumental reason was most systematically defended in his *The Great Instauration* (1603). In that work he claimed three advantages for his new method or “science”: “the end which this science of mine proposes is the invention not of arguments but of works; not of things in accordance with principles, but of principles themselves; and not of probable reasons, but of designations and directions for works.” In short, Bacon’s new approach directed attention away from abstract speculation to empirical analysis and instrumental reasoning.

Bacon provided a new method for understanding reality and advancing technology. Isaac Newton (1642–1727) applied this empirical method to his study of physical reality—*Hypotheses non fingo*, “I do not feign hypotheses,” as he famously described his approach—and in the process not only affirmed its usefulness but also formulated a cosmology that persuaded his contemporaries that the universe was a clockworklike mechanism of rational intricacy and fail-safe uniformity. Philosophers and natural scientists prior to Newton had, of course, assumed the lawlike nature of the world (allowing for the occasional divine intervention). But Newton provided a compelling explanation of the lawlikeness. As he wrote to an acquaintance in 1713, the cosmology defended in his *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687) expunged metaphysical mysteries and religious caprice from nature by means of “principles deduced from phenomena and made general by induction, which is the highest evidence a proposition can have.” It’s little wonder that Alexander Pope spoke for his entire generation when he wrote, “Nature and Nature’s laws lay hid in sight; /God said, Let Newton be, and all was light.”

Bacon and Newton were both revered by Enlightenment philosophes. But pride of place went to John Locke (1632–1704), indisputably the most influential philosopher of the period. Bacon suggested that the best way to understand reality was to pay close attention to experience. Newton followed up by doing precisely that in his physics, and he thereby charted the lawlike nature of reality. But Locke provided a philosophical justification for how it is that we can know either methodology or the world by elucidating, as he wrote in his *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690), “the original, certainty, and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion, and assent.” In other words, Locke followed up Bacon’s revelation of the laws of logic and Newton’s revelation of the laws of the universe with an investigation of the laws of reason.

For Locke the ground of belief is experience. Sense data, or “simple ideas,” are the raw material of thought and reflection. Complex ideas are created from simple ones through the mental function of association. Just as there are no occult forces in nature, there are no hidden, innate ideas in the mind. Consequently, every branch of knowledge, be it science or theology, is ultimately based on scrutiny of experience, reflection, and generalization. Moreover, all human minds operate according to this model, just as all natural objects conform to the laws of physics. Internal and external

reality are lawlike, and the same logical methodology—Bacon’s *novum organum*—can be used to explore both.

The New Learning that served as the philosophical bedrock for the Enlightenment, then, rested on Baconian instrumental reason and Newton’s and Locke’s demonstration of lawlike orderliness in nature and the mind. It was the basis for the Enlightenment’s confidence that reality was rational and hence capable of being understood and manipulated by rational human beings. This confidence would motivate the courage needed to throw over the “self-imposed tutelage” Kant wrote about.

Defining Beliefs of the Enlightenment

Built on the foundation of the New Learning, the Enlightenment worldview embraced a number of identifying beliefs. It would be a mistake to think of them as necessary and sufficient principles uniformly held by all philosophes. As historian Carl Becker noted, the ethos was more a “climate of opinion” than an epoch of uniform agreement. But five general beliefs stand out as providing a basic orientation for most of the Enlightenment’s leading spokespersons: (1) the primacy of experience and inductive reason; (2) the importance of science, or “natural philosophy”; (3) a deep-seated suspicion of authority; (4) an emphasis on reform; and (5) a confidence in the perfectibility of both individuals and society.

First, Enlightenment thinkers were, as the commentator Charles Taylor put it, “epistemological innovators.” Following Bacon, they rejected the traditional model of deduction from inherited first principles and relied instead on observation and induction. Following Locke, they accepted that all knowledge is grounded in experience. Both of these assumptions predictably led to an understanding of reason that was predominantly instrumental rather than speculative and focused on the natural world rather than on metaphysics. They also encouraged a suspicion of any putative mode of knowing—such as faith—that claimed to be other than or superior to reason. For the Enlightenment thinker, reason was the exclusively proper tool by which to comprehend and control reality. As the *Encyclopedie* put it, “Reason is to the *philosophe* what grace is to the Christian.”

Second, the instrumentality with which Enlightenment thinkers infused reason catapulted the study of nature into the spotlight. Part of the interest in natural philosophy, to be sure, was a desire to more completely comprehend universal lawlike patterns. But a greater motivation was to understand in order to control. All philosophes shared Bacon’s insistence

that good reasoning leads to the invention of instruments and techniques that promote the happiness of humans.

Third, the new emphasis on reason also underscored the Enlightenment’s conviction that the human mind is a sufficient tool to understand reality, govern society, and regulate individual behavior. In all nations that felt the Enlightenment’s influence, this confidence in reason led to a deep-seated suspicion of religion in general and Christianity in particular. Even in Germany, figures such as Gotthold Lessing (1729–1781) and Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) entered into the Enlightenment spirit of *Sapere aude!* by calling into question their respective Christian and Jewish traditions.

Enlightenment-based resistance to religious authority emerged in Britain with the rise of a group of thinkers who came to be called “deists.” Taking their cue from John Locke’s *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695), which argued that credible faith-based beliefs cannot be contrary to reason, the deists advocated a religion stripped of all supernaturalisms such as divine revelations or miracles. Their God was a First Cause or Divine Architect who created reality, imbued it with reason and orderliness, and then left it to operate on its own without interference. For the deists the best way to arrive at knowledge of this First Cause was to observe God’s handiwork; thus the “sacred scripture” of deism was nature, and the practice of natural philosophy was appropriate veneration of the Creator. Moreover, the best way to worship the Divine Architect was to act virtuously, because virtuous behavior was in accordance with natural rights and duties established by the Creator. For these reasons, deism was also frequently called “rational religion” or the “religion of nature.”

Perhaps the most influential (especially in America) of the British deists was Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678–1751), whose writings on religion, all published posthumously, were of such impact that they were described by Dr. Johnson as a “blunderbuss.” There was little that was original in Bolingbroke’s work, but he did provide a convenient and lively compendium of standard rational religion: observation of natural orderliness reveals the existence of a First Cause; there is no universal revelation apart from nature; and priest craft is the primary cause of the continuance of superstition and ignorance. Less controversial spokespersons for rational religion were a group of British clergy who stopped short of deism to defend a liberal Christianity whose tenets they believed compatible with Enlightenment beliefs. These included Isaac Newton’s friend Samuel Clarke (1675–1729) and George Cheyne

(1671–1743), a physician and fellow of the Royal Society. Their arguments that Christianity’s supernaturalism complemented rather than contradicted natural philosophy’s descriptions of the world generally satisfied neither philosopher nor the orthodox faithful.

Rational religion in France was generally more militant than in Britain. Voltaire, for example, never denied the existence of a First Cause but stridently fought the Roman Catholic establishment for most of his long life. His “*Ecrasez l’infame!*” (“Crush the infamous thing!”) became a battle cry for deists and freethinkers alike who deplored what they saw as the socially, morally, politically, and intellectually corrupting influence of the Catholic Church.

As the eighteenth century progressed, the deism of earlier thinkers gave way to the atheism of a new generation of philosophes. All of the leading authors of the *Encyclopedie* were self-avowed freethinkers. Baron d’Holbach even officiated at regular meetings of an atheistical club, which scandalized more orthodox Parisians. Although not as widespread as in France, Enlightenment rejections of religion became more militant in England, too, in the later years of the century. Edward Gibbon (1737–1794) made no secret of his disdain for Christianity and Judaism in two notorious chapters (XV and XVI) of his *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788). The philosopher David Hume (1711–1776), although a bit more circumspect than Gibbon, was in all likelihood also a freethinker. In his *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, published a year after his death, the character who most seems to represent Hume is a deist. But it’s not clear, especially given Hume’s rejection in other writings of miracles and the immortality of the soul, that he himself believed in a deity.

Fourth, the Enlightenment’s rejection of religious authority and tradition was frequently accompanied by a strong criticism of existing political norms and structures and an equally strong call for reformism. As in the case of religion, this criticism was more militant in France than in England. Indeed, French dissent culminated horrendously in the 1789 revolution and the subsequent Reign of Terror and European wars. The Prussian king Frederick, for all his abstract enthusiasm for Enlightenment values, kept a tight rein on political dissent from his homegrown philosophes. The single most important historical example of the enlightened rejection of political authority was in the American colonies.

Regardless of the locale, the key Enlightenment assumption that called political authority into question was that

humans were rational enough to govern themselves and determine their own destinies without the supervision of aristocracies, royalties, or harshly coercive legal systems. Just as the church wasn’t needed to teach humans about the First Cause, neither was strong government required to hold citizens’ behaviors in check. Humans, the philosophes believed, were endowed with the ability to act virtuously and the will to do so. Failure in the past to live up to full human potential was because church and state had infantilized citizens to such an extent that their critical powers were stunted. Eliminate the retarding influence of strong authoritarianism, educate citizens to use their natural reason, and awaken them to their civic responsibilities, the equality of natural rights, and the blessings of liberty, and humans will be both capable of and enthusiastic for self-rule.

This assumption in turn led to a humanitarian espousal of the primacy of individual liberty and political equality, most often expressed in the social contract model of society, in which all participants agree to burden certain responsibilities for the same of the common good, endorsed by figures such as John Locke, Denis Diderot, and David Hume. It also led to a critical rethinking of penal codes, spearheaded by Cesare Beccaria’s *On Crimes and Punishments* (1764), a treatise that became one of the most enduring legacies of the Enlightenment.

Finally, the Enlightenment’s confidence in reason’s ability to understand and manipulate the natural realm, its sense of liberation from religious and political autocracy, and its exuberant belief that humans were capable of determining their own destinies by the steady erosion of ignorance culminated in a deep faith in the eventual and inevitable perfection of individuals and society. As the philosopher Ernst Cassirer pointed out, “No other century is so completely permeated by the idea of intellectual progress as that of the Enlightenment.” That humans and society were ultimately perfectible was an unquestioned article of faith for the philosophes. In hindsight it appears naïve. But it is understandable in an age in which, as d’Alembert described it, “the kind of enthusiasm which accompanies discoveries, a certain exaltation of ideas which the spectacle of the universe produces in us, [creates] a lively fermentation of minds.”

The Enlightenment Comes to America

The New Learning may be said to have arrived in the American colonies with Jeremiah Dummer’s 1714 gift to Yale of an England-dispatched collection of books that included the works of Bacon, Newton, and Locke. Up to

that point students at Yale, as well as Harvard and Princeton, were still being taught Aristotelian logic. Although Harvard students had been taught Copernicanism since the mid-seventeenth century, young scholars at Yale and Princeton continued to learn an undiluted Aristotelian physics through the first decades of the eighteenth century. But by the 1750s students as well as reading laypersons were familiar with the New Learning and the revolution in thinking it sparked and the American Enlightenment was under way.

In addition to Lord Bolingbroke's works, two of the major Enlightenment influences on colonial thinkers were the essays written for the British magazine *The Spectator* and the writings of a group of thinkers known as the Scottish common sense philosophers. Published in London between 1711 and 1714 (with a break of nearly a year and a half) and founded by Joseph Addison (1672–1719) and Richard Steele (1672–1729), *The Spectator* was subsequently published in eight volumes and widely disseminated, first throughout England and then the American colonies. Benjamin Franklin was one of the many Americans who read and relished the collected essays. He recounts in his *Autobiography* modeling his writing style after Addison's and Steele's. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison also acknowledged themselves great admirers of the essays.

It wasn't only the stylistic grace of *The Spectator* essays that captivated Americans. Even more exciting were their explanations and applications of Enlightenment beliefs. Addison especially wrote articles and sketches that reflected an enlightened view of the world. He paraphrased biblical psalms into deistic hymns to natural beauty and splendor. He published a well-received play, *Cato*, that unabashedly extolled the virtue of republican liberty. And throughout all his writings, he praised reason as an alternative to superstition, encouraged the exploration of the natural world, and encouraged the practice of virtue for the sake of its utility, not because it might be pleasing to God. Addison had the gift of writing plainly, lucidly, and entertainingly. Like the French philosophes, he was an able popularizer of difficult ideas.

The ability to write clearly was a trait also shared by Francis Hutcheson (1694–1726) and Thomas Reid (1710–1796), the two members of the Scottish school who were most commonly read in the colonies. Hutcheson and Reid made the empiricism of Locke accessible to a general educated public and responded to the skepticism, which would eventually find its culminating expression in Hume, that Locke's theory of knowledge unintentionally bred

skepticism. The sticking point was Locke's claim in his *Essay concerning Human Understanding* that the *idea*, or mental impression of reality, is all that the human mind immediately knows. If this were the case, critics worried, the knower could never be confident that his idea of reality actually conformed to the reality it was supposed to represent. What was the guarantee that the knower ever got outside of his mind to make contact with objective reality? The Scottish school countered this worry by arguing that humans shared a "common sense": a universal intuitive faculty by which ideas are immediately appraised. Specific individuals may err at times because of hasty judgments, but in general, commonly shared ideas derived from experience were reliable. Moreover—and this was especially influential in the American colonies—the same thing could be said about virtue. Common sense was a reliable guide in the moral as well as the intellectual realm, allowing humans to discern "self-evident" rights such as, for example, the "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" specifically mentioned in the Declaration of Independence. As Thomas Reid wrote in his *An Enquiry into the Human Mind* (1765), "It is a bold philosophy that rejects, without ceremony, principles which irresistibly govern the belief and the conduct of all mankind in the common concerns of life; and to which the philosopher himself must yield, after he imagines he hath confuted them."

In each country to which Enlightenment came, defenders of the new worldview had to contend with an entrenched culture and tradition. In the American colonies, the prevailing culture was Calvinism, and its attitude toward the Enlightenment was ambivalent. On the one hand, there was an uncompromising strain in American Calvinism that was entirely skeptical of the claim that humans are rational creatures and equally wary of focusing too closely on the physical realm. Insisting on the utter fallenness of humans, the depravity of human reason, and the need to concentrate on God rather than the world, many colonial Calvinists greeted the enlightened worldview with alarm and anger. This pietistic early clash with Enlightenment would help spark the intercolonial revival in the 1740s known as the "Great Awakening."

On the other hand, American Calvinism also greatly respected and cultivated in its clergy deep scholarship and a love of learning. Frequently masters of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, authors of massive biblical commentaries and lengthy sermons, and not infrequently skilled in medicine and astute observers and recorders of natural phenomena, many

Calvinists often felt pulled toward the Enlightenment worldview. Naturally they rejected, and frequently did so ferociously, the infidelity bred by Enlightenment. But many of them nonetheless were caught up in its excitement. So Cotton Mather (1663–1728), for example, could officiate at witchcraft trials and thunder jeremiads warning his congregants that natural disasters were divine punishment for wickedness while simultaneously encouraging inoculation, writing learned treatises that argued for the compatibility of Newtonian physics and Christianity, and getting elected a corresponding member of the Royal Society. Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), perhaps the greatest American philosopher of his generation, worried about the spread of materialism and the lessening of religious emotion or sentiment, and he took an active role in the Great Awakening. But he also wrote sophisticated essays in natural philosophy on topics ranging from flying spiders to optics.

There was, undeniably, tension between orthodox Christians and American defenders of Enlightenment. Moreover, the worldview clash between the two erupted at times into the eighteenth-century equivalent of a culture war. But in general the coming of the Enlightenment to America was temperate and its fruits were long lasting. For the most part, the usual flashpoint was religion. But Enlightenment esteem of rational investigation, interest in the natural world, utility in ethics, and liberty in politics were much more readily received. They fit comfortably with the spirit of self-reliance, pragmatism, and inventiveness that was already associated in the eighteenth century with the American character.

Representative Figures in the American Enlightenment

So many leading figures of the colonial and early Republic eras were influenced by the Enlightenment that any listing of them is necessarily selective. Moreover, the influence was far from uniform. John Adams (1735–1826), for example, privately embraced rational religion but publicly denounced militant deists such as Thomas Paine and steadily moved away from the political libertarianism defended by many enlightened thinkers, including Thomas Jefferson. Benjamin Rush (1745–1813), on the other hand, remained an orthodox Presbyterian but was also a staunch proponent of abolitionism and a pioneer in the reformation of medical and legal treatment of the mentally ill, both inspired by his Enlightenment sympathies. Some Americans embraced a relatively traditional Christianity tinged by Enlightenment ideals, others a liberal Christianity heavily informed by

Enlightenment values, still others a minimal and publicly expedient allegiance to Christianity while identifying themselves with the Enlightenment, and a very small minority publicly repudiated any semblance of Christianity for the sake of an Enlightenment-inspired materialism.

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) and Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) would be included in and likely lead most lists of representative American Enlightenment thinkers. Both of them displayed the encyclopedic interest in politics and science characteristic of French philosophes, were firmly convinced that human progress was best promoted by the steady retreat of religious faith in the face of rational inquiry, and played lively and constructive roles in the promotion of secular education.

Benjamin Franklin's experiments and discoveries in electricity earned him a significant and well-deserved scientific reputation among his peers. His conviction that reason should be promotive of useful rather than merely speculative or abstract knowledge resulted not only in numerous inventions—bifocal spectacles, the Franklin stove, lightning rods, carriage odometers—but also in active participation in the founding of civic organizations such as fire departments and libraries. Franklin's active participation in the American colonies' break from England also attested to his Enlightenment-inspired belief in natural rights and republican forms of government. Raised by Puritan parents, Franklin quickly rejected Calvinism for rational religion, although his writings on such matters remained private throughout his life. In keeping with his Enlightenment orientation, he publicly advocated a life of virtue, self-discipline, and public service as a more genuine form of veneration than conventional worship.

Thomas Jefferson's drafting of the Declaration of Independence reflects the profound influence of Enlightenment political thought, particularly John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government* (1690), which explicitly defended the right (and even obligation) of citizens to overthrow unjust governments. Moreover, his ardent republicanism—a position that clashed with the federalism of Alexander Hamilton and John Adams and eventually led to Jefferson's disgruntled resignation as the nation's first secretary of state—was based on what he saw as the enlightened self-reliance, life of reason, and promotion of virtue that republicanism encouraged. As ardent a supporter of the French revolution as he was of the American one, Jefferson would be castigated by political opponents, especially during his presidential years, as a dangerous Jacobin.

Jefferson's commitment to the Enlightenment extended far beyond his political republicanism. In religion he was a deist who accepted the existence of a Divine Architect but utterly rejected supernaturalism, going so far as to excise all mention of miracles in his personal copy of the New Testament. His intellectual and cultural interests were expansive and inexhaustible. He was an accomplished musician and architect, a skilled ethnographer and archaeologist, and a resourceful inventor. Agreeing with the Enlightenment conviction that ignorance was the single major source of individual and social ills, Jefferson was also a lifelong promoter of public education and eventually founded the University of Virginia. Curiously, and unfortunately, he wrote very little. His *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781), the Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom (1786), and of course the Declaration of Independence are his major public works.

Jefferson and Franklin were both reticent about their allegiance to rational religion, but other Enlightenment-inspired American deists were more frank. Beginning with the 1784 publication of Revolutionary War hero Ethan Allen's (1737–1789) *Reason the Only Oracle of Man*, public excoriations of Christianity and praises for the religion of nature became increasingly public. Elihu Palmer (1764–1806), a lawyer turned deist prophet, was probably the most influential champion of deism of his day. He founded deistic societies in the Middle Atlantic states, which espoused not only rational religion but also radical republican political ideals; edited two widely read deistic newspapers, *The Temple of Reason* (1801–1803) and *Prospect; or, View of the Moral World* (1803–1805); and wrote a book, *Principles of Nature* (1801), that quickly became known as the American deist bible. Largely a collection of Palmer's public lectures, *Principles'* enduring contribution was its presentation of the first completely naturalistic ethics defended by an American.

By far the best-known deist from the American Enlightenment, however, was Thomas Paine (1737–1809). His *Age of Reason* (1795), although actually written as an antidote to French atheism, became notorious for its defense of rational religion and ruined the reputation of an author whose earlier *Common Sense* (1776) had made him the darling of American revolutionists. The *Age of Reason* isn't a terribly original work, but it served as a convenient summary of deism's principles. Paine's declaration "My own mind is my own church" at the beginning of the book was a perfect summation of the Enlightenment's defiant insistence on rational scrutiny and freedom of conscience.

The American Enlightenment produced a number of individuals who contributed to the growth of the natural sciences. In addition to Franklin and Jefferson, noteworthy figures include the New Yorker Cadwallader Colden (1689–1776). Colden remained an Anglican throughout his life and announced his loyalist sympathies at the outbreak of the American Revolution. But his achievements in astronomy, botany, medicine, and mathematics mark him as a notable practitioner of Enlightenment reason, even if not an admirer of Enlightenment republicanism. His 1745 *An Explication of the First Causes of Action in Matter and of the Cause of Gravitation* was the first treatise on Newtonism published in North America. His daughter Jane (1724–1766) was an accomplished botanist who cataloged more than three hundred species of plants in the lower Hudson Valley.

The Coldens were friends of and collaborators with the Philadelphia-based Quaker botanist John Bartram (1699–1777). Generally reckoned as the father of American botany, Bartram was praised by his contemporary Carl Linnaeus as the "greatest botanist in the world." During his lifetime, Bartram not only cataloged hundreds of species of American plants but also sent New World seeds to continental and British botanists and horticulturists, thereby collaborating with fellow scientists on the other side of the Atlantic. Along with Benjamin Franklin, Bartram cofounded in 1745 the American Philosophical Society.

Cadwallader Colden was one of the first Americans to explore Newtonian mechanics. John Winthrop (1714–1779) and David Rittenhouse (1732–1796), equally inspired by Newton, became two of the American Enlightenment's most accomplished physicists, astronomers, and mathematicians. Winthrop, the great-great-grandson of the founder of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, taught mathematics and natural philosophy at Harvard. Styled the father of seismology, Winthrop is especially noteworthy for his insistence in *Lecture on Earthquakes* that the 1755 Lisbon earthquake should be understood as a natural phenomenon rather than as a divine punishment. He also observed and recorded the transits of Venus and of Mercury, traveling to Newfoundland to observe the former. Rittenhouse, who served as the first director of the U.S. Mint, was an accomplished mathematician, surveyor, and mechanic. He was one of the first people in America to build an orrery and a telescope, and he also tracked the transit of Venus. According to lore, he was so excited in the weeks leading up to the transit that he actually fainted when it finally occurred.

Legacy of the American Enlightenment

Bracketing historical periods with dates is a risky business. But it's convenient to locate the American Enlightenment's end toward the end of the nineteenth century's first quarter. John Quincy Adams was the last Enlightenment-educated president to be elected. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, two men who for all their differences in opinion and temperament were both formed by the Enlightenment, famously died on the same day in 1826. With their passing, an era ended.

By the third decade in the century, rationalism had begun to give way to romanticism and transcendentalism among American intellectuals. In a broader context the Enlightenment ethos had already been seriously challenged by the fearsomely violent example of the French Terror on the one hand and, more significantly, the emergence of the revivalist movement known as the Second Great Awakening on the other. The Second Great Awakening stretched over a full generation from 1790 to 1840. The resurgence of Christian zeal and biblical literalism encouraged by the revival, its redistribution of denominational strength from Anglicans and Congregationalists to the more evangelical Baptists and Methodists, and its strong emphasis on reformism (temperance, abolitionism, women's rights) all tended to challenge the Enlightenment intellectual worldview and preempt its reformist agenda.

But in a very real sense, the Enlightenment as a discrete period in American history may be said to have faded away because it succeeded so well in mainstreaming its basic principles throughout American culture. No other nation so absorbed and acted on the Enlightenment ideals of liberty, natural rights, equality, and republicanism. Despite the strong presence of evangelical Christianity, American society continues to insist on a strong separation of the secular and the sacred. The pragmatism that informs the Enlightenment's understanding of rationality, an understanding that values balance and order in all things, is still enthusiastically accepted as a governing characteristic of America's self-identity. Finally, the Enlightenment's sense of adventurous and optimistic risk taking seems to be deeply engrained in the American experience.

See also *American Revolution*; *Bioethics*; *Common Sense Realism*; *Deism*; *Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Idealist Philosophy*; *Nature and Nature Religion*; *Philosophical Theology*; *Philosophy*; *Social Ethics*; *Transcendentalism*.

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Environment and Ecology

Religious ideas and rituals shape the ways Americans perceive and interact with the environment; conversely, concepts and practices of religion may be shaped by the physical environment in which Americans live. For example, Puritans encountering North America often described it as a wilderness in need of salvation or a blessing from God. Those who believed that the natural world was created to fulfill human needs often wanted to reshape their ecosystems to maximize their usefulness.

Though the terms *environment* and *ecology* are common today, throughout most of the history of the United States *nature* and *wilderness* were more common terms. *Nature* typically refers to the world that is in some way distinct from

humanity, either because it has not yet been explored or understood by the humans in question (wilderness), because it is natural or pure, or because it is the realm of everything that is not human. Ecology, the science of the relationships between biota and their inorganic environment, did not emerge until the late 1800s and did not take off as a discipline until the mid- to late twentieth century. Sometimes *ecology* is also used to indicate the environmental movement that prioritizes developing environmentally friendly beliefs and actions (for example, reducing, reusing, and recycling) with some input from the ecological sciences. Religious people in the United States have significantly and increasingly interacted with the ecological sciences and the environmental movement since the late 1960s as they have acknowledged an ecological crisis and have identified and constructed religious responses to that crisis. Thus, religious people reshape or create rituals to emphasize environmental themes, develop religious beliefs about the environment, and engage in environmental activism. The interaction between religions and nature in America has been defined by religious leaders and everyday people both in long-standing religious traditions and new religious movements.

Though the historical relationship of religions and the environment involves many religious traditions at various locations throughout American history, Christianity, particularly Protestantism, has been a dominant force in American religious history, and scholars have done the most research on its relationship with nature.

Native American Traditions

Native American religions were the religions of the land now known as the United States for the vast majority of time this land has been inhabited. With more than five hundred languages, and even more dialects, and each with its own culture and religion, Native American peoples and their relationships with the natural world were certainly diverse. The varied landscapes and weather patterns in which Native Americans lived, the variety of foods that they prized or found taboo, and the many different biota with which they interacted helped shape the diversity of their religions and cultures.

Additionally, Native American religions, like all religions, exhibit temporal diversity; they changed over time as tribes encountered each other, new ecosystems, and new challenges. While such changes have always occurred, they were quite prevalent as Native Americans were displaced by European Americans and forced to live with other tribes on

unfamiliar lands. For example, peyote spread throughout the West; the Ghost Dance was revealed and adopted by a number of tribes; and new symbols, garments, and tools were developed as Native Americans adapted to their new cultural and environmental situation.

Despite all of this diversity, some scholars of religion, such as Catherine Albanese, identify some general trends among Native American religions. For example, Albanese maintains that religious beliefs and practices were deeply infused into the everyday lives of Native Americans. From ceremonies during hunting to rituals in the transitional periods in life (birth, maturity, death), religion was woven into the lives of Native Americans such that they did not conceive of it as a distinct phenomenon separable from the rest of their culture. Additionally, Native American religions tend not to sharply distinguish between the natural and supernatural, divine and human, or human and animal. Rather, nature was typically believed to be permeated with the sacred. Human life was understood to correspond with the rest of the world such that human actions could affect the wider world: restoring harmonies; healing; bringing rain, sun, and game. Native Americans also tended to understand biota and inorganic entities (rocks, rivers, mountains) as relatives. Such relationships were more than mere ecological or evolutionary connections. They were a type of family relationship that entailed dependence on and responsibility to the relatives as well as the possibility of learning from them.

For example, the Kiowa tell a story in which seven girls took shelter on a small rock after being chased out of their camp by bears. In answer to a prayer for safety the rock grew, carrying the girls out of the bear's reach. Trying to reach the girls, the bears clawed deep grooves in the rock, but the girls were safe in the sky where they still can be seen as the Pleiades (a seven-starred constellation). Multiple versions of the story exist among communities with connections to the monument known as Bear's Lodge, Bear's Tipi, or Devils Tower. Most other versions of the story involve seven brothers or sisters, bears, a rock that saves the people, and bears who scratch the rock, though some are more broadly about the creation of the world. All of these narratives link humans, the inorganic world, and biota; the stories of the helpful rock also demonstrate the beneficence of the natural world.

Multiple Native American tribes including the Eastern Shoshone, Kiowa, Crow, Lakota, and Northern Cheyenne met at the Bear's Lodge to perform rituals that would solidify their personal and tribal links with each other and

all of their relatives. These rituals could also help to establish peace between tribes. Individual offerings as well as Sun Dances continue at the Bear's Lodge to this day.

European Americans have typically characterized Native Americans according to dominant European American visions of nature. When nature was understood as an untamed wilderness waiting to be put to use by whites, Native Americans were often perceived as savages who should be conquered and converted. On the other hand, when the environmental movement arose in the late twentieth century, many looked to Native American traditions for wisdom, assuming that they had always lived in perfect harmony with their ecosystems. Scholars now try to avoid denigrating or romanticizing Native American traditions. While Native Americans often adapted to their ecosystems quite well, they did significantly shape their habitats through irrigation, agriculture, hunting, and other practices. Thus, the best available scholarship on Native American religions and nature recognizes Native American wisdom about their many relatives as well as implications of their actions. This tension between the ideal relationship with nature and the actual historical interaction with the natural world emerges in all aspects of American religious environmental history.

Puritans

The Puritans left Europe in the 1600s to gain freedom to practice what they believed was the purest form of Christianity. The Puritans became significant cultural, political, and business leaders of the colonies and, later, of the United States. Because of their cultural dominance, Puritan visions of nature substantially shaped American attitudes and actions toward nature for centuries.

The Puritan responses to the New England environment were significantly influenced by their religious ideals and cultural environmental history. Indeed, early Puritans often envisioned their surroundings using biblical imagery or terms relevant to the English landscape rather than naming the biota and natural features physically surrounding them. Puritans commonly viewed New England as a dangerous wilderness. Threats of starvation, harsh winters, disease, and fierce animals certainly contributed to such an understanding, yet religious beliefs also emphasized the dangers of the land. Many Puritans believed that their environment was filled with evil, corrupted after the fall from perfection into sin. They thought the wilderness could lure people into evil and cause them to become wild. The challenges of the physical environment were also seen as punishment for sin.

Yet these dangers were also thought to draw people to belief in God: when faced with severe danger, many people believe they cannot survive without God's help.

Contrasting with visions of nature as dangerous, the abundant game, clean pure water, and fertile soil of the American wilderness were often understood to be blessings from God to the Puritans. Indeed, some Puritans thought God enabled Europeans to "discover" North America just after the Reformation so Protestants would have a refuge from religious persecution.

Puritan concepts of nature were not, however, limited to the physical. Anne Bradstreet, one of the leading poets of colonial America, expressed the idea that people could find God through nature in many of her poems, though her accounts of nature tend to be abstract and idealistic rather than fully representing what was around her. Cotton Mather, a prominent Puritan minister, reflected upon his environment using natural philosophy (a predecessor to modern science) to understand God, who he believed was the architect of creation. Jonathan Edwards, one of the most famous American theologians, significantly thought about the natural world, finding nature the most fruitful place for meditations as well as a source of analogies about God's nature and the relationship between human souls and God. In contrast to most other Puritans, Edwards believed that nature revealed the truth about God as much as or more than the Bible. While other Puritans certainly looked to nature as a locus of revelation, Edwards emphasized natural revelation more than his predecessors, setting the stage for the transcendentalists, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.

Visions of wilderness as dangerous, as a blessing, and as revelation should not be seen as mutually exclusive; many Puritans drew on all of these images. For example, nature was often understood as a fallen place, far from ideal, that with human effort guided by God could be restored to paradise. This notion, along with the necessity of material survival, prompted Puritans, and many of their descendents, to transform the wilderness of America into "productive" agricultural and industrial land.

The Nineteenth Century—Manifest Destiny and the Transcendentalists

Nineteenth-century Americans championed the idea of Manifest Destiny, that Americans were preordained by God to spread democracy and freedom by expanding their country. Proponents of Manifest Destiny often envisioned the

West as a place of amazing water, weather, soil, and landscapes—a perfect climate with perfect geographical features set up by God for the best country, the United States. Manifest Destiny and its accompanying features—railroads, agriculture, and the murder or eviction of Native Americans—dramatically changed the American landscape. Prairies were tilled, buffalo nearly hunted to extinction, and Native Americans decimated. Echoes of Manifest Destiny can be heard to this day in many cries to use the land.

Yet not all nineteenth-century Americans focused on the material use of nature and the expansion of the country. In the early to mid-nineteenth century, the transcendentalist movement exemplified by Ralph Waldo

Emerson and Henry David Thoreau emphasized the revelation they found in nature over that of traditional revealed Christianity. Though they acknowledged that humanity relied on the material world, transcendentalists focused on how nature could help one connect to the transcendent, that which is beyond the material world.

Through *Nature* (1836), the Transcendentalist Club, and its journal *Dial*, Emerson, in concert with others, developed an idealistic vision of nature in which transcendent realism could be reached by reflecting on nature. Emerson maintained that nature was intended for humanity to use, most crudely as a commodity, and more sophisticatedly through the love of beauty, as a symbol of the spiritual, or as a means to transcend the world. While firsthand knowledge of the world was needed to personally experience this transcendence, Emerson himself often used vague language about nature rather than the precise names and detailed observations of Thoreau.

Thoreau's *Walden* (1854) and other writings extended and developed Emerson's move away from biblical to natural revelation as Thoreau observed and reflected on the particularities of Walden Pond and New England. As he emphasized natural revelation Thoreau used multiple types of



Henry David Thoreau's widely read *Walden, or Life in the Woods* is a reflection of the author's experience in nature and the philosophy of transcendentalism.

religious imagery, often describing the area around Walden as a temple or sacred space. Thoreau also chronicles his meditations on and in nature. In contrast with the dangerous wilderness described by many Puritans, or the vast wilderness to be conquered and subdued by those following Manifest Destiny, in *Walden*, Thoreau often views nature as his home, as his place of sacrality.

The transcendentalist impulse to appreciate nature and to use it to reach the transcendent would have enormous ramifications for American perspectives on religion and nature. Transcendentalists not only developed a new type of nature religion but also inspired many to preserve wilderness in national parks, to develop new nature religions, or to live simply in relation to their environment.

The Creation of the National Parks

Transcendentalism, Manifest Destiny, and Christian visions of nature all played a role in the creation of America's national parks, monuments, and forests, as illustrated by the life of John Muir (1838–1914), one of the major early advocates for national parks. Raised in a strict Presbyterian family that emigrated from Scotland when he was a child, Muir wanted something more than the harsh farming work and

constrained religious life of his family. He sought a college education, and then worked in a factory. While working there he was temporarily blinded in an accident and vowed that he would devote his life to studying God's marvels if he regained his sight. True to his word, Muir walked for a thousand miles on what he called a pilgrimage through the American wilderness. Muir read Emerson and Thoreau and started to believe that humans were one part of nature rather than necessarily superior to it.

After moving to California, Muir wrote newspaper articles and books that spread his thoughts of and experiences in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and Yosemite throughout the country and convinced many that America needed to preserve these lands. His writings often included religious language in attempts to describe the wonders he experienced and to persuade his readers of nature's importance. For example, he likened mountains to altars and the world to a church. Muir found nature astonishingly beautiful and thought that it intrinsically praised God and revealed God to humanity. Muir thought that the Bible and revelation in nature complemented each other well, though he thought it possible that nature was a more delightful and powerful way of understanding God. Yet, he was convinced that human dams, grazing animals, and logging could harm the world. Thus, he fought to preserve it.

Muir and others focused on preserving wilderness with little human intervention, but an opposing view, conservationism, held by Gifford Pinchot (1865–1946), father of modern American forestry, sought to manage the wilderness in ways that would provide for humans' material needs. Conservationism less often used religious language in its arguments but was significantly shaped by the belief that nature was created to support human life, an idea that grew, in part, from the ideas of Manifest Destiny and God providing for all people. While there were conflicts between these positions, particularly over whether Hetch Hetchy Dam should be built in Yosemite, people on both sides deeply valued and appreciated the land, in part for religious reasons. Their activism, along with economic and scientific concerns, helped convince the American public that national parks, monuments, and forests should be created.

Religious and scientific priorities also played a role in the establishment of Devils Tower as a national monument in 1906. Maps of the area from the 1850s and 1870s name the tower as Bear's Lodge or Devils Tower, said to be a poor translation of a Native American name, "Bad God's Tower." This name seems to have resonated with Christian

geologists who learned that the tower was formed when molten rock arose from deep underground, the traditional home of the devil. Although there were significant religious motivations in the movement to establish national parks and monuments in general, official documents about the transformation of Devils Tower from a timber reserve site to a national monument justify this action through the scientific desire to preserve the columnar rock formations of the tower.

African Americans

While the preservationist movement drew upon the transcendentalist and Puritan visions of nature as it used religious language to advocate for wilderness preservation, this trajectory of the development of American attitudes about nature was not uniform. For instance, African American visions of nature have developed along different lines as they were shaped by African religions and Christianity; the experience of slavery and work on plantations; as well as disproportionate exposure to industrial pollutants through degraded air, water, and land. Scholarship of these strands of American environmental history is still rather limited; much more work is needed to understand the trends in environmental thought among African Americans and, indeed, of all people outside of white Protestantism.

Enslaved African Americans were intimately familiar with animals, plants, and the rhythms of the natural world as they worked in the fields, hunted and gardened to supplement their meager rations, and gathered medicinal plants. People from certain areas of West Africa were highly sought as slaves for rice plantations because they had grown rice in Africa and often knew more about this form of agriculture than their white owners. Such intimate knowledge of the land continued among African Americans working on turpentine plantations through the mid-twentieth century. Yet many African Americans living in cities at or after the turn of the twentieth century were not allowed to experience recreational uses of nature as they were barred from many beaches, parks, and recreational activities such as baseball games. These conditions led to the 1919 Chicago race riots and to the organization of church baseball teams and church-led excursions to parks to ensure that African American children had healthy experiences of nature.

These trends—the involvement of church leadership and concerns about the environment in part for health reasons—are two major elements of African American interaction with the environment. African American

churches long provided significant leadership for the African American community. In addition to providing the moral basis for the civil rights movement (God cares for all people; God will liberate the oppressed), church leaders have long been formal and informal civic leaders. Additionally, churches have been a physical meeting space and organizational center for recreational activities and struggles for justice.

Throughout the twentieth century many African Americans were concerned about the ways their environments impacted their families' health as evidenced by church nature trips, Martin Luther King Jr.'s support of sanitation workers, and the struggles against toxic waste dumps and polluting industries. While some scholars have thought such concerns were not properly "environmental" because they were less concerned for a far-off wilderness than the impact of city air, water, and land pollution on people's bodies, these activities are rightly classified as a part of the environmental movement as they focus on improving the complex interactions between humans and their ecosystems.

The environmental justice movement recognizes that people of color and the poor disproportionately suffer from environmental damage. They live, work, and play next to landfills, polluted lands, toxic industries, and high-traffic (heavily polluted) areas, suffering physically, economically, and emotionally from polluted air, water, and land as they experience higher rates of cancer, asthma, and neurological diseases. The environmental justice movement aims to eradicate these injustices by drawing on the civil rights movement, liberation theology, and ecofeminism. Grassroots environmental justice movements are often led by women and use churches as an organizational center as people fight for the dignity, health, and safety of their families and communities. In their advocacy work they often rely on religious knowledge that they too are children of God, that they too deserve safety and health, that God is on their side. The environmental justice movement is just one of many ways that Americans' attitudes toward and advocacy for the environment is shaped by religious convictions. While environmental justice is now becoming a part of mainstream religious activism in America, this activism developed along a different trajectory.

Environmental Theology

Religious ideas, religious rhetoric, and religious leaders have long shaped American attitudes and actions toward the environment. Yet the rising awareness of anthropogenic

environmental destruction and the publication of Lynn White Jr.'s 1967 article "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," published in *Science*, sparked an incredible rise in religious environmental thought and action. White's article claimed that the Judeo-Christian belief that humans have dominion over the world, together with the development of technologies (such as more effective plows) that enabled humans to change the environment more quickly, led people to use nature as if they could do whatever they wanted without negative consequences. White and others claimed that this attitude, aided by technology, led to deforestation; the loss of prairies; species extinction; and incredible pollution of land, air, and water. While White acknowledged that there were eco-friendly traditions within Christianity such as the work of St. Francis, and advocated a revitalization of the tradition to emphasize these trends, many took his article, and others like it, as a hostile denouncement of Christianity and other religions. Seeking to prove White wrong and to address the environmental crisis, many religious scholars and leaders, particularly within Christianity at first, began assessing their traditions' contributions to the environmental crisis and their possible contributions to a solution.

Theologians, historians, and biblical scholars focusing on both Judaism and Christianity examined scripture for environmental themes. They have focused on the creation stories, particularly the implications of God creating the world good and the meaning of Genesis 1:26–28 in which God gave humanity dominion or stewardship over creation. Incredible numbers of articles have been written about the best translations of these verses and whether they imply that humans should care for the land, use it for their own benefit, or some combination of the two. The flood story and some Psalms (8, 19, 104, 145) have also received attention from scholars trying to illuminate the proper relationship between humans and the rest of creation.

Because the Bible has limited verses particularly about nature, some scholars attempt to extend religious ethics to meet environmental challenges. For instance, biblical commands to help the poor, widows, and orphans are reevaluated as people recognize that environmental degradation may contribute to the plight of marginalized groups. Some, such as Sallie McFague, a Christian theologian, argue that the category of those who deserve help should be expanded to include the nonhuman natural world that has been created by God and is subject to harm by humans.

Jewish religious leaders also rely on the Talmud, commentaries on Jewish law, to develop Jewish environmental perspectives. Often-referenced passages involve subjects such as prayers for rain and the implications of regulations about how far from a neighbor's land one may dig a hole, store items, or urinate. (These regulations are intended to respect another's land and could be the basis of contemporary prohibitions of pollution.)

Jewish scholars also work to examine the environmental heritage of major Jewish figures including Moses Maimonides (1135–1204), Martin Buber (1876–1965), and Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972). Similarly, Christians have reexamined the works of major figures in Christian history including the early church fathers, Augustine (354–430), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), Martin Luther (1483–1546), John Calvin (1509–1564), Karl Barth (1886–1968), and others for ecological insights or negative influences on human relationships with the environment. Some find traditional sources quite helpful, but most agree that significant reenvisioning of the tradition is needed to respond to ecological challenges.

Many Christian theologians have now spent long careers developing ecological theologies. For instance, John B. Cobb Jr. (1925–), a theologian who draws upon process philosophy, has maintained that God and the world continually interact in a process of mutual influence. For Cobb, God feels all that the world experiences and responds to the details of its situation. All entities have intrinsic value, value just because they are who they are, but Cobb does not think this implies equal value; humans, for example, have richer relationships that entail other values and moral consideration. Building from this relationship, he maintains that people have a responsibility to avoid and slow environmental destruction. Cobb has also worked extensively on economic issues with Herman Daly, arguing that we should prioritize the long-term societal and environmental benefits that may result from economic activity rather than merely focusing on short-term monetary results.

Rosemary Radford Ruether (1936–), a Roman Catholic ecofeminist, connects the denigration of the natural world with the long history of the subjugation of women. She argues that avoiding hierarchies in which males are more important than females, and in which people are necessarily understood as more important than nature, will be a huge step toward combating environmental destruction and being in a right relationship with the world, other humans, and God. Thus, Reuther maintains that (1) the wisdom and

experiences of women and the earth must be taken seriously and (2) the patriarchy and hierarchy of the church should be eliminated in favor of an egalitarian, compassionate community. While Reuther often radically reshapes Christian theology, she does think that traditional religious ideas such as covenants between God and the world and sacraments in which creation is intimately related to God can have a significant role in ecotheology.

Thomas Berry (1914–), a Catholic scholar who focuses on the natural world, maintains that humanity is estranged from the divine and the universe. Overcoming this estrangement is necessary to be able to praise and worship God, to relate appropriately to our human neighbors and the whole of the universe. Berry draws upon the work of theologians such as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who developed an evolutionary theology, as well as contemporary science to develop a story of the universe that resonates with personal experience, the need for greater meaning, and scientific knowledge. This new story of the origins and development of the universe will be a guide, he believes, in overcoming this estrangement. Berry's work has influenced religious rituals within existing traditions and has been the basis of new religious movements that center their beliefs and rituals on the Universe Story. Berry has also been quite influential among academics such as Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, two of the leading scholars of religion and ecology.

Cal DeWitt, an evangelical Christian who has written about Christianity and the environment since the 1970s, emphasizes that Christians must be stewards of the earth, caring for it and other humans and taking responsibility for all of their actions toward the environment. This vision contrasts with the domination of nature that, in DeWitt's mind, has all too often been the way humans have related to nature. For DeWitt, humans are called to be stewards by Christ who creates all, connects all, and is the one for whom all were created. Thus, DeWitt argues that people need to follow Christ as they work to become stewards of the earth. In this way, DeWitt ensures that God is always at the center of his theology, even as he works to bring ecology in.

Ecological theologians such as Cobb, Reuther, Berry, and DeWitt are routinely criticized by adherents of their own traditions because they supposedly take the environment too seriously, de-emphasizing core ideas of their faith such as Jesus. Yet many within Christian communities support environmentalism through policy statements, advocacy, and ritual.

Theological development about environmental issues also occurs at the level of official religious teaching and policy statements, at least in the religious bodies that use such forms; the organization of Judaism, for example, does not lend itself well to such documents. On an international scale, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of the Eastern Orthodox Church has been the most outspoken Christian leader about environmental issues as he holds conferences on the subject, has issued a variety of statements about environmental issues, and has named environmental destruction a sin. The Vatican has also expressed concern for the implication of environmental destruction on people and on the health of the land for farming. Pope John Paul II (1920–2005) maintained that environmental concerns should be a central part of Catholic faith; Pope Benedict XVI (1927–) appears to be maintaining and expanding this position. These international religious leaders certainly can have a significant impact on the beliefs and actions of Americans who adhere to these religious traditions.

Within the United States, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has long been active on environmental issues such as the plight of salmon in dammed rivers and the necessity of addressing climate change, consumerism, and the effect of environmental destruction on the poor and future generations. Similarly, many Protestant denominations have issued policy statements about the environment in general, as well as upon specialized topics such as climate change, energy use, biodiversity, and endangered species. Many of these religious bodies also advocate at the national governmental level about environmental issues.

However, official religious leaders and theologians are not the only religious people active about environmental issues. Numerous grassroots organizations and individuals are also active advocates. For example, the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, an organization with members from a wide variety of Jewish organizations, has worked to educate people about the environment, advocate for the environment within the government, and act to promote environmentally friendly actions in Jewish communities. Interfaith Power and Light organizations in more than two dozen states involve people from a wide range of religious traditions including Christians of many sorts, Jews, Buddhists, and Muslims. Interfaith Power and Light branches collectively bargain for cheaper energy for the religious organizations that are members, promote energy efficiency, and advocate for environmentally sound energy policies. In 2006, dozens of evangelical leaders took a stand against

climate change, in the Evangelical Climate Initiative, acknowledging the problem and encouraging their members and governmental leaders to act to slow the emission of greenhouse gases. The National Council of Churches and many other local and national organizations have also worked on environmental issues because of their faith.

Environmental Rituals

Connecting new theologies and advocacy for the environment are many new religious rituals and adaptations of existing rituals to emphasize environmental themes.

Within Judaism, Arthur Waskow (1933–) is one of the most prominent advocates of rethinking tradition along ecological lines. Waskow reinterprets the Torah, or law of the Jewish people; Sabbath; and kosher practices. He maintains that to truly understand these concepts they must be related to the environment. For instance, since the Torah is a way to acknowledge and worship the unity of God and includes injunctions against cutting trees or destructive grazing, Waskow believes that the Torah should today be interpreted in light of the best ecological knowledge so Jews can properly worship. Waskow develops the notion of eco-kosher by extending the concept of eating, arguing that kosher laws are properly about whatever people eat, or consume, and that therefore everything people consume should be consumed in ways that are holy, respectful, and life affirming. While kosher laws have traditionally included regulations about butchering, handling, and consuming food, Waskow maintains that people must continually evaluate what it means to eat (or consume anything) in a sacred and environmental way. Thus, he advocates a dynamic vision of eco-kosher rather than constructing specific fixed prohibitions for all time.

Some Christians have also begun to reinterpret rituals along ecological lines. For example, water is used in baptism to bring people into the Christian family by ritually washing their sins away. Environmentally aware Christians may expand upon this ritual, seeing the use of water as a way that humans, the inorganic world, and God are intimately connected. The use of water in this ancient ritual may also prompt reflection and action about the prevalence of polluted waters in our world or the necessity of conserving water.

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, many Christian rituals, such as ecotithing, are emerging in response to environmental crises. Ecotithing is an extension of the traditional practice of giving 10 percent of one's

income back to God. Christians who ecotithe reduce their impact on the natural world as they recognize that the world is not humanity's but God's. Ecotithing may involve eating organic or locally raised foods, reducing one's energy or water use, helping others do the same by contributing to environmental charities, or a host of other activities.

Congregations may also hold Earth Day celebrations, bless community gardens, or plant trees as a part of worship. Services to bless animals are increasingly held in Christian churches around the commemoration day of St. Francis of Assisi. People bring pets, companion animals, and other creatures to worship for a special blessing. The service is also a reminder that animals themselves can praise and glorify God, as noted by St. Francis in his *Canticle of the Sun*.

Eastern Religious Traditions

While Christianity has long been the dominant religion of the United States in terms of numbers and cultural impact, in the twentieth century Eastern religious traditions such as Buddhism and Hinduism became much more influential, especially where environmental issues are concerned. Often Americans know only a few ideas of Eastern traditions such as the interconnectedness of all life, vegetarianism, nonviolence, or karma. Americans may also be familiar with practices related to Eastern traditions such as Ayer Vedic medicine, yoga, and feng shui. Building from these basic ideas and environmental ideals, Americans sometimes develop new religious traditions. These trends may demonstrate the desire of many late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first-century Americans to connect transcendence and the natural in their every lives and their belief that Western religious traditions cannot do so.

Eastern religious traditions are not, however, only influential in American religious history regarding the environment through the impact they have made on European Americans. Hindus, Buddhists, Daoists, Confucians, Jains, and others participate in environmental advocacy groups because of their religious convictions. Additionally, these traditions have spread environmentally friendly activities through their own traditions and rituals. For example, Buddhist retreat centers encouraged vegetarianism when it was less popular and more difficult to do. Buddhists in America have also protested environmentally degrading activities such as cutting old-growth forests and forms of long-term nuclear waste storage that are difficult to monitor.

As more practitioners of Eastern religious traditions come to the United States, their beliefs and rituals may be shaped by the American landscape. Vasudha Narayanan has

chronicled several such adaptations in late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first-century Hindu American communities. Given the sacrality of land, rivers, forests, and biota to various branches of Hinduism, it is not surprising that moving to a new land would shape the religion. For example, Hindu Americans have reinterpreted sacred cosmologies so that some remote locations in the sacred geography are identified with America. Thus, the land of the United States is sacred. Additionally, elements of Hinduism that align with the American landscape have been emphasized in Hindu American communities. For instance, the eagle upon whom Vishnu rides gained importance in America, a land that prizes eagles. Hindus have also connected America to India by bringing sacred waters from India to North American rivers. Through all of these activities, America has become a sacred place for Hindus living here.

Latter-day Saints

American land has long had important religious significance for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), a religion that arose in America. The LDS religion is based on the Book of Mormon, a new scripture revealed to Joseph Smith in the 1820s as an addition to the revelation of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. The Book of Mormon explains that in 600 BCE some Israelites, the family of Lehi of the tribe of Joseph, were led by God to North America. According to this text, some of the descendants of the immigrants were cursed and became the Native Americans. Mormon, one of the others, buried golden plates inscribed with the Book of Mormon in what is now upstate New York. It was these plates that were revealed to Joseph Smith a millennium later. Thus, for the Latter-day Saints, America and Native Americans are intimately connected to revelation. The very land that makes up America is a part of scripture, land that was settled because of God's initiative, much like Israel is a sacred land for Jews and other Christians.

In their early history, Saints were persecuted and driven west from New York to Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, and Utah, seeking the safety of the wilderness and the freedom to worship as they believed. As they moved, their connection to the land also developed through further revelations. For example, the Saints believed that the Garden of Eden was near present-day Kansas City. They also believed that God was calling them to the promised land, often comparing the landscape of Deseret (Utah) to that of Israel. For the Saints, like the Puritans, North American land was not only a place of promise. They too believed that the world was a fallen

place that must be transformed by humanity in anticipation of the Kingdom of God. Once in Utah, they set out to transform the desert into a fruitful place. Early ideals of land use included the communal allocation and use of natural resources. While the Saints intended to improve the land, they, like many throughout America, altered local ecologies and degraded the land as they farmed, irrigated, and provided for their families.

In the twentieth century, as the Saints integrated themselves into mainstream American culture, they as a group became staunch Republicans and outspoken supporters of big business. With these tendencies, some LDS politicians and religious leaders have expressed antienvironmental attitudes such as voting against the Endangered Species Acts, or arguing that the earth can support many more people than it does now with no environmental consequences. Some outspoken Saints challenge this position, arguing that care for the environment is central to their faith as evidenced by scripture necessitating the responsible stewardship of God's gifts of the natural world. They claim that this vision of nature needs to be reclaimed and redeveloped for them to be faithful people and to live responsibly in the world. Between these two extremes are hints of a new, official LDS environmentalism. The LDS monthly magazine *The Ensign*, and Gordon B. Hinkley, LDS president from 1995 until his death in 2008, have articulated environmental positions such as the idea that it is an offense to God when people degrade the environment and that there are actions people should take to avoid such offense. The rise of environmental awareness throughout American society has certainly prompted much reflection in all sorts of religions in America; it promises to be an interesting topic of future research as Latter-day Saints, with their deep connections to the land, engage with the possibility that this land is itself degraded by humanity.

Twenty-First-Century Challenges: Bear's Lodge/Devils Tower

Though the land of the United States has often been viewed as a blessing, a curse, or a way to reach God by Americans influenced by Christianity, the idea that the land itself is sacred has been a difficult one for many Christians to understand since they are used to moving churches wherever they go. Tension about the proper relationship to the land has often resulted in the denigration or suppression by European Americans of Native American religion and cultural claims in favor of Christian ideals and European American ideas about land ownership. In the 1990s a new method of dealing with conflicting religious, cultural, and economic claims

to the land arose in the national parks, as illustrated in the case of the Bear's Lodge/Devils Tower. This approach may prove valuable as growing religious diversity in the United States results in increased conflict over claims on the land.

In northeast Montana a 1,267-foot monolith known as the Bear's Lodge or Devils Tower National Monument rises above the landscape. Long a sacred site for many Native Americans and recognized as a prime geological specimen for more than one hundred years, the monolith is also a prime location for vertical crack rock climbing. Indeed, it draws climbers from around the world who bring tourist dollars into this remote location.

Native Americans continued to perform rituals at the site throughout the twentieth century, though Park Service staff noticed an increase in offerings (bundles of ribbons and sage, tobacco, or other plants) in the 1980s and 1990s. Around the same time, climbing at the monument increased as new facilities made the site more accessible, as climbing guides increased their business in the area, and as climbing became more popular in general.

To respond to the growing popularity in rock climbing, the National Park Service mandated that a climbing plan be created for Devils Tower and other sites to assess the ramifications of such climbing for cultural and natural resources and determine whether climbing was appropriate. A consultation group was formed to bring together people from Native American tribes, environmental groups, local government, and climbing organizations to deliberate about the climbing plan at Devils Tower. Significant efforts were made to educate each side about the other's positions. Native Americans expressed their concern that their sacred land was desecrated by tourists and climbers, particularly those who drilled into the rock to support their climbing. Climbers wanted to experience the thrills of climbing a difficult rise in a gorgeous area and enjoy the spiritual fulfillment of the climb. Climbers were also concerned that strict climbing bans at Devils Tower may set a precedent for bans at other sites, reducing their climbing opportunities.

Eventually a compromise was reached that, among other conditions, mandated a voluntary moratorium on climbing during the month of June (the time of the most extensive and important Native American rituals). Climbers involved in the deliberations agreed to respect the sacred space and felt a voluntary moratorium would set a good, and not too restrictive, precedent. They also promised to work to educate climbers about the religious significance of the Bear's Lodge. While some Native Americans wished for a

complete ban, many came to believe that a voluntary moratorium was most appropriate in hopes that it would foster respect rather than resentment toward their traditions and because they believed that climbers who voluntarily followed the moratorium would deeply show their respect for Native American traditions. *Bear Lodge Multiple Use Ass'n v. Babbitt*, a case in Wyoming's U.S. District Court, challenged the policy on multiple grounds, including the claim that it endorsed Native American religions, but the policy was upheld.

The negotiations about the use of Bear's Lodge/Devils Tower illustrate only a small portion of the variety of attitudes and preferred actions toward the environment in contemporary America. Of course, there have long been significant differences in the relationships between religion and environment in the United States, either because people belong to different religions, live in different places, or have different interpretations of their religion or place. It is likely that this diversity will remain as people continue to think of the land as sacred, as a gift or challenge from the ultimate, or as a way to seek the transcendent and as people increasingly use religious ideas to justify and advocate environmental protection.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Bible* entries; *Buddhism in North America*; *Environment and Ecology* entries; *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Hinduism in North America*; *Jainism*; *Latter-day Saints*; *Liberation Theology*; *Nature and Nature Religion*; *Puritans*; *Roman Catholicism: Early Twenty-First-Century Issues*; *Science*; *Transcendentalism*; *Worship: Contemporary Currents*.

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Environment and Ecology: Colonial Era through the Early Nineteenth Century

Columbus's voyage from Europe to North America, in 1492, initiated the greatest change in religious geography in the earth's history. The Americas were home to a complex of regional religions, varying among language groups and the natural resource economies of the cultures. Religious systems ranged from the temple complexes of Maya and Aztecs, supported by vast areas of cultivation, to the more portable rituals of the Arctic-dwelling and hunting-dependent Inuit. The arrival in the Americas of not just Europeans, but Africans and Asians, resulted in a major transfer of epidemic diseases, including malaria, yellow fever, and smallpox. This "Columbian exchange" also brought Eurasian plants and livestock, such as wheat, sheep, and cattle, to the Americas while carrying such agricultural marvels as maize (corn) and potatoes to Europe. The Europeans manufactured metal tools, which made clearing land and forests more efficient, and they built ships capable of transcontinental trade. While Christians both established their own churches and attempted to replace indigenous religions

with Christianity, from an environmental perspective the colonial period was one of both radical shifts in resource exploitation and economics and of rapid evolution of religions in response to radical environmental change.

The encounter between Christianity and religions indigenous to the Americas resulted in the complete extinction of some religions, along with their associated environmental management practices, and the displacement or near dissolution of others. Christianity and other religions also borrowed from each other, producing a new iconography of human relationship to nature. Christianity itself began a series of major divisions in 1517, when Martin Luther's protests initiated the Reformation. The Protestant movement soon generated multiple sects and denominations, some of which were based in rural communal lifestyles. Systems of environmental care became symbols of a pure and holier life and commitment to right action by the eighteenth century.

Christian Interaction with Native American Religions

Eastern woodland tribes developed religious systems encouraging respect for wildlife and discouraging overharvest. Their religions viewed animals as having societies and religious festivals and rituals of their own. For the Algonkian, the animals embodied the power in nature, and humans arose from the corpses of the first animals. Many of the eastern tribes honored a "keeper of the game," an animal spirit that mediated with humans and allowed them to harvest the animals needed for survival. Calvin Martin has controversially argued that waves of epidemics and the influence of Christian missionaries caused the tribes of the northeast to abandon long-held religious practices, such as apologizing to animals they killed, and to engage in the devastating overharvest of the colonial fur trade. Martin holds that Christian displacement of regional religion degraded environmental care. Indians still resident in the eastern United States continue traditional conservation measures, however.

William Cronon found that Puritans, from 1620 onward, were in conflict with the Native American residents of New England because of differing traditions of land ownership and stewardship. The Indians, who practiced shifting cultivation, protected their fields from wildlife, while not building fences to delimit their lands. The Puritans brought concepts of real property ownership from Europe and introduced grazing livestock, which damaged Indian gardens and crops. European agricultural practices displaced Native American ones,

despite Puritan adoption of crops such as maize. Although Christian intolerance of competing religious beliefs often rationalized the economic transition and encouraged warfare against the Indians, the demand for land deeds and a partitioned landscape was a major factor in driving much Native American culture and religion from New England.

Christianity borrowed nature-oriented rituals and sacred figures from Native American religions. In the Southwest, colonial Roman Catholic missions, while pressing Indians into an unwilling labor force, linked Pueblo religious ritual, such as the corn dance, to the Christian calendar. At San Juan Pueblo, the buffalo dance was combined with the feast day for St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of the pueblo. A procession, including buffalo and eagle dancers, originates at the church and moves through the ordinal points of the village. The ceremony was originally held at the initiation of the seasonal buffalo hunt. Symbols of environmental relationship, including wetland plants, hang in the church or in an arbor at the end of the route. This synthesis of traditions retains the traditional understanding of human dependence on natural production by invoking both the patronage of the saint and the cooperation of species native to New Mexico.

In Mexico, the Spanish conquest, in combination with epidemics, devastated the Aztec religion and culture. Franciscan friars encouraged church acceptance of the visionary experience of an Aztec farmer who had converted to Christianity. In 1531, Juan Diego reported seeing the Virgin Mary in the clothes of an Aztec princess or goddess on Tepeyac, a hill sacred to the Aztecs. An early account was written in the Nahuatl language, making it available to the Aztecs as well as the Spanish. Our Lady of Guadalupe not only cares for the poor, disenfranchised, and ill; she is a symbol of Mexico itself. Appearing in celestial robes, wearing the waist sash of a pregnant Aztec woman, she invokes the importance of the earth and its production and is considered an environmental icon, encouraging humans to care for the land and each other. Her influence has continued into the modern period. In 1914, when a peasant army under Emiliano Zapata demanded Mexican land reform, it carried banners with the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

African Religions, Slavery, and Regional Environments

In the colonial period, conversion of slaves to Christianity was not voluntary. Spanish law, for example, required that slaves be baptized as Catholics in order to be permitted

entry into the West Indies. Despite regular attendance at Christian services, African-heritage agriculturalists retained African religious beliefs about the meaning of nature and hybridized these beliefs with Christian symbols and rituals such as baptism. Slaves utilized wild animals and plants to supplement their diets and to provide materials for crafts and building. They thus developed an intimate knowledge of the forests, rivers, and wetlands where they lived. Slaves met secretly in outdoor settings in the southern United States, which encouraged retention of African styles of ritual singing and dancing. Spirituals such as “Follow the Drinking Gourd” incorporate maps to freedom, identifying key natural features to guide a flight north. Unfortunately, slaveholders utilized Christian theology emphasizing obedience and service to argue for land management systems resulting in damaged soils and abuse of agricultural laborers.

In Cuba, many slaves were of Yoruba origin, from west central Africa. Escapees formed their own communities. Into the nineteenth century both slaves and free African-heritage Cubans continued to celebrate African-style dances and formed religious fraternities, combining Yoruba religion with Catholicism to form a new religion, Santería. Santería retains the African pantheon of spiritual beings called *orishas*, while identifying these forces of nature with Catholic saints. Osanyin, for instance, is associated with St. Joseph and with herbs and forests. Other *orishas* are credited with power over the seas and waters, the hunt, illness, and maternity. Santería retains a respect for the sources of food and useful natural materials, as well as lore concerning uses of wild herbs.

Christian resistance to the slave trade was associated, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with a growing environmental awareness. John Woolman, who rode from meeting to meeting, beginning in 1746, trying to convince the Society of Friends (Quakers) to release their slaves, also refused to wear dyed cloth, because he believed the dyes harmful to the laborers manufacturing the fabric. The transcendentalists, such as Henry David Thoreau, resisted the economic enslavement both of human beings and of the land itself. Abolitionism helped to generate Christian concern for the working conditions of tenant farmers, miners, factory workers, and child laborers. Christian denominations leading the political battle against slavery, such as the Society of Friends, also spoke out about dismal working conditions in mines and other unsafe or unhealthy environments and advocated for the first laws to advance environmental health.

Christian Land Use and Environmental Values

When Christians first arrived in the Americas, they were both frightened by the unfamiliarity of the landscape and inspired to think of the profusion of wood, minerals, and wildlife as God’s blessing on Christians. In Europe, wood was in short supply in the more intensively farmed regions, large game animals belonged to the aristocracy, and almost all arable land was already in family ownership. Environmental mismanagement in Europe resulted in repeated famines, driving peasants to seek passage to the New World. The Americas offered a plethora of resources, including the land itself. While many of the first colonists starved or died in harsh conditions, the Puritans thought of New England as the New Jerusalem, a locale where God’s righteous kingdom would be established. The early colonial environmental perspective is thus conflicted and shifts between extremes: on one hand the New World is the kingdom of Satan, requiring Christian conquest, on the other it is the new Eden, full of God’s bounty and providence.

Christians engaged in explorations of wild settings provided ecologically accurate and enthusiastic descriptions of the animals and plants they encountered. John Wesley, founder of Methodism, preached briefly in Georgia in 1735 and 1736, and he recorded being lost in the woods, as well as briefly describing the vegetation he encountered. John Bartram, a member of the Society of Friends, established a botanical garden and conducted many natural history explorations in the regions around Philadelphia, including the New Jersey Pine Barrens. His son, William, explored the southern Appalachians between 1773 and 1776. In *The Travels of William Bartram*, he writes, “This world, as a glorious apartment of the boundless palace of the sovereign Creator, is furnished with an infinite variety of animated scenes, inexpressibly beautiful and pleasing, equally free to the inspection and enjoyment of all creatures” (p. 15). Both Bartrams contributed greatly to botanical knowledge, and modern ecologists still find William Bartram’s journals scientifically useful.

The concept that Christian environmental stewardship on the frontier was a free-for-all is incorrect. In the seventeenth century, the Puritans regulated wildlife harvest; established common lands, such as town greens, for community use; and practiced fertilization and improvement of fields. Good land husbandry was considered a virtue. By the late eighteenth century, however, many of the farms on acid New England soils were “burned out” from erosion and

nutrient depletion. Construction of mill ponds and dams to power industry depleted Atlantic salmon spawning sites by blocking migrations. Although the problem was understood by the nineteenth century, the demand for water power took precedence over the fishery and water quality. While nature was a product of divine providence, it could also be morally marginalized.

Folk Religion and Sacred Landscape Features

Europeans retained beliefs from pre-Christian religions and continued to practice folk religion. The colonists brought astrology with them to the Americas and used the zodiac to guide seasonal agricultural activity. Folk medicine encouraged a respect for natural products and the biological diversity of the landscape. Conversely, beliefs about ghosts and other supernatural beings, such as trolls, caused fear of landscape features such as dense forests. The Puritans associated witchcraft with wilderness. Judith Richardson has documented the evolution of ghost lore in the Hudson Valley. As different ethnic groups have entered the landscape, they have turned the previous land owners into quaint hauntings or participants in paranormal events that rationalize new economic influences and modifications in land management. Examples are apparitions of deceased Indian chiefs, and even Rip van Winkle.

Concepts of magical landscapes or sacred ground transferred differentially. Holy or magical wells, which generate respect for water and watersheds, are much less common in the Americas than in Ireland and Scotland. Roman Catholics, particularly in combination with Native American beliefs, however, established new pilgrimages to locales with sacred waters or earth, including Santuario de Chimayo in New Mexico, which offers healing earth (ca. 1814), and Lac Ste. Anne, in Canada, where pilgrims wade into the waters and petition for physical and spiritual healing (initiated 1889).

Carolyn Merchant has argued that the cosmos of the colonial farmer was animate, feminine, and symbolic. The Puritans and Enlightenment science encouraged a view of nature as inanimate and mechanistic, reducing environmental respect. Conversely, religious denominations or groups including Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Friends, Episcopalians, Catholics, and Sephardic Jews (who arrived in New York when it was still a Dutch colony) established the first secondary schools, academies, and colleges in North America. They brought with them a respect for applied science, which produced many of the engineering advances of the

industrial revolution, and also fostered the development of modern agriculture, medicine, and environmental management. Their broad institutional legacy includes many of the early twenty-first century's premiere institutions of higher education, such as Harvard University, a leader in conservation biology.

Communitarian and Nonconformist Sects and Land Management

The Americas have both generated and sheltered religious sects with beliefs encouraging withdrawal from the greater society. Communitarian rural lifestyles, guided by Christian teachings, generate an emphasis on sustainable levels of environmental exploitation and of improvement of the land's productivity. The Anabaptists, including the Mennonites and the Amish, left Europe to escape persecution. The first Mennonite families arrived in Pennsylvania in 1683, to be followed by more Mennonite and Amish immigrants through the eighteenth century. Both the Amish and Mennonites value farming as a righteous vocation, which encourages families to work and live together. Although some of the early colonies floundered and suffered from environmental deficiencies such as crop failures and depleted soils, as the Anabaptists became better organized, religious values forwarded conscientious care for their fields, pastures, and soils. They still occupy the original lands they settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, which remain highly productive. The Anabaptists historically discouraged excessive resource ownership or use by any one family as proud, greedy, and damaging to Christian community. As pacifists, they avoid the environmental destruction generated by war.

The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, commonly known as Shakers, emigrated from England with their leader, Mother Ann Lee, in 1774. They purchased tracts of land to establish communitarian farms, and by the 1830s, when they achieved their greatest numbers, the Shakers had settlements in several states including New York, Massachusetts, and Ohio. Despite their millennial beliefs, they practiced scientific agriculture, experimented with new methods of farming, and utilized piped-in water to power innovative machines in their wood-working shops. Taking nothing to excess and valuing simplicity, their restrained yet productive industry caused little environmental degradation. Today's environmentalists continue to utilize the Anabaptists and Shakers as models for environmental stewardship, simplicity, and sustainability.

Morality and Aesthetics of Nature

During the colonial period, Christians praised nature and God simultaneously through poetry and art. Anne Bradstreet, who arrived in Massachusetts in 1630, invoked classical models of nature as she became one of the first English-language poets in the Americas to combine Christian spirituality with vivid natural imagery. Jonathan Edwards, a Calvinist leader of the Great Awakening in the first half of the eighteenth century, frequently inserted natural metaphors and examples in his sermons. Edwards sees the beauty of God's moral order and God's glory displayed in nature. Rather than being mere material stuff, the environment emanates from God; and although the created world is "an image of an image," it also is a communication from a transcendent deity humans cannot directly observe. Thomas Jefferson, while believing that everything including the Bible should be questioned, thought nature was a source of truth. Jefferson pursued a natural theology, strongly synthesizing creation and creator. Jefferson was an astute observer of nature; encouraged scientific land management on his own properties; and took a preservationist interest in a unique geologic feature, Natural Bridge, Virginia, which he purchased in 1754. Jefferson used the adjoining property as a retreat. The depiction of natural features, such as streams and forested mountains, to demonstrate divine providence or to reflect the beauty of God continued with such nineteenth-century authors as William Cullen Bryant, whose "The Riverlet" identifies God's hand in the small stream originating on his farm.

The Hudson River Valley School of landscape painting, and other early-nineteenth-century artists, including the Luminists, drew on America's natural riches—rivers, forests, and mountains—to illustrate the relationship between God and the increasingly self-confident republic. Thomas Cole, in *The Oxbow* or *The View from Mount Holyoake*, shows a half-forested, half-cultivated region where rain brings the providence of God to southern New England. Fredrick Edwin Church, a deacon in the Dutch Reformed Church, proves God's continuing interest in the American project in glowing skies over the mountains, not just of Maine, but also of tropical volcanoes in South America and the icy seas off Labrador. Thomas Moran's *Mountain of the Holy Cross*, of a frontier peak in Colorado, displays a glacially carved cross in the face of a mountain in the midst of a wilderness landscape. The cross invokes the belief of a Christian God being present in the Americas from primeval times. While being

optimistic about colonization of the frontier, this genre of romantic art encouraged environmental stewardship. Thomas Cole, for example, was worried about the impact of tourists and railroads on the Catskill Mountains, New York, as early as the 1830s.

Transcendentalism and Alternative Religions

Transcendentalism, a movement with deep roots in Puritanism and Unitarianism, began in the literary circle centered in Concord, Massachusetts. Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Nature*, published in 1836, became the manifesto of the transcendentalists, while Henry David Thoreau's *Walden, or Life in the Woods* is probably the most widely read statement of transcendentalist experience in nature. Other important transcendentalist authors include Amos Bronson Alcott, the educator, and Theodore Parker, a Unitarian theologian. The movement influenced such literary figures as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Lousia May Alcott (Bronson's daughter). Transcendentalists found spiritual and cosmic meaning in the realm of nature, through careful and experiential observation of natural phenomena. Transcendentalism is inherently mystical, invoking the concept of correspondence—that by engaging the microcosms of human and natural community, one can grasp the sense of transcendence and unity imbedded in concepts of the greater cosmos. Transcendentalism has helped to generate a preservationist ethic in American environmentalism. Thoreau's sojourn at Walden Pond taught the value of setting nature aside for contemplation and aesthetic viewing, as well advocating simplicity in the face of nineteenth-century materialism. John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club and advocate for Yosemite National Park, expresses transcendentalist values in his own writings, arguing for the importance of leaving some natural areas largely free from human development.

The early nineteenth century was a period of religious diversification. The transcendentalists read Hindu and Buddhist texts, which slowly became available in translation. While remaining largely imbedded in Western Neo-Platonism, they reconstructed Eastern concepts such as the merger of Brahman and Atman and the harmony-seeking disciplines of spiritual paths. Since Thoreau's time American environmental thinkers have continued the exploration of Eastern philosophy. Gary Snyder, an influential contemporary environmental poet, is a Buddhist. In another emerging religious trend, nineteenth-century spiritualism and séances

emphasized discovering one's previous lives and understanding the ghosts of place. This has evolved into contemporary New Age practices for developing environmental understanding such as seeking "Indian Guides" who still guard undeveloped landscapes, or reliving previous lives as animals or as a member of an ancient culture still in touch with the land.

New communitarian denominations also appeared. Joseph Smith's visions of the angel Moroni, beginning in 1823 and culminating in the reception of the Book of Mormon in 1830, led to the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Troubled by persecution in the eastern United States, and desiring to establish a New Zion, the Mormons moved west to finally establish settlements in Utah's arid Great Basin. Retaining the Puritan values of frugality and industry, as Mark Stoll writes in *Protestantism, Capitalism and Nature in America*, they adopted land and water stewardship "as central tenets, which under the firm hand of church direction, resulted in policies such as central control and conservation of water, timber, and minerals" (p. 113). While unintentionally overexploiting some more fragile lands, the Mormons were successful in building a viable economy in a difficult terrain, at least partially because they believed "that if God gave the earth to the care of humans, they must use it wisely" (p. 115).

The Importance of Religion to Environmentalism

Environmental historian Donald Worster has concluded that the development of the conservation and environmental movements in the United States is deeply rooted in American religion, insofar as environmentalism has adopted Protestant asceticism (waste not want not), volunteerism, and service of the greater good. Mark Stoll has chronicled the complex relationship between Protestant beliefs about the meaning and value of nature and the development of the resource-extraction-based colonial economy, followed by industrialization and the romantic reaction to it. By the nineteenth century, Protestantism was both rationalizing optimization of environmental exploitation and calling for preservation of national parks and wilderness areas. Furthermore, alternate religions, with roots in the spiritualist and communitarian movements of the nineteenth century, and Native American religions attempting to maintain or revive their historic practices have adopted strongly environmentalist stances emphasizing awareness of natural values. While colonial collisions between regional religions

and Christianity resulted in much environmental degradation and cultural loss, many of America's greatest contributions to environmental care, such as the national park system and successful examples of simple lifestyles, also have roots in American religious ethics, aesthetics, and community.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Anabaptist Denominational Family; Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures; Invisible Institution; Latter-day Saints; Mexico: Indigenous Religions; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; Nature and Nature Religion; New England Region; Puritans; Quakers* entries; *Romanticism; Santería; Shakers; Transcendentalism.*

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Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues

Environmentalism as a social movement in America predates the emergence of the academic discipline known today as religion and ecology or ecological theology. The publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962 represents, if not the precise starting point of the environmental movement, at least a significant milestone. Carson was among the first to question whether humans have the right to alter and control nature to suit our own end. Her particular target was chemical pesticides. She did not call for a complete ban on these chemicals, but she strongly cautioned against their overuse and encouraged the development of alternative, biological solutions to pest problems. While not explicitly religious in tone, Carson's writing about nature evoked a sense of reverence for its mystery, beauty, and power. Moreover, *Silent Spring* clearly cast environmental harms as a moral issue, not merely a scientific or practical one. Carson defended an attitude of humility rather than arrogance in our dealings with the natural world and warned against citizens placing inordinate faith in scientific or governmental authorities. Carson died in 1964, but by the time the first Earth Day celebration took place on April 22, 1970, legislation to protect the environment was already in place.

Early environmental legislation included the Clean Air Act (1963) and the Wilderness Act (1964) and the beginnings of an Endangered Species Act in 1966 (expanded in 1973). In 1970 a law was passed establishing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Environmental and animal advocacy movements in the late 1960s and early 1970s grew up alongside and in close relationship to civil rights and liberation movements. When Peter Singer published *Animal Liberation* in 1975, he drew explicit connections between

the oppression of animals (in factory farms, for example) and oppression of and discrimination against minorities and other groups. Singer defined "speciesism" as a parallel concept to racism, an arbitrary form of discrimination against a group based on characteristics that are morally irrelevant. The language of liberation for nature and animals was also adopted by more radical environmental groups whose religious or spiritual orientation might be described as pagan. Radical environmental groups such as Earth First! (which began in 1980) and the Earth Liberation Front (in the early 1990s) often describe their commitment to nature in terms of nature's intrinsic value or even sacredness. As in the civil rights movements, these activists turn to a range of strategies that includes civil disobedience and demonstrations. In the case of the Earth Liberation Front, economic sabotage and arson have also been deployed in defense of nature's value versus purely economic values.

Despite the unmistakably moral tone frequently taken in defense of animals and the environment, for the most part the environmental movement did not take on religious flavor until religion—particularly the Judeo-Christian tradition—was directly targeted as a major source of the environmental crisis. In 1967, Lynn White, a medieval historian, published his now-famous essay titled "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis" in the journal *Science*. White charged that the Judeo-Christian tradition, and a certain Genesis "dogma" of creation on which it is based, constitutes the most anthropocentric form of religion the world has ever known. On White's account, biblical conceptions of human dominion provide a divine mandate for humans to exploit and neglect the natural world. He alleged that the general dualistic framework of the Judeo-Christian tradition, which separates spirit from matter and values the former over the latter, renders nature a mere backdrop to the human quest for salvation and eternal life.

Greening Protestantism: Theoretical Developments

Responses to White's critique were partly defensive and partly apologetic. Some theologians, particularly within Protestant Christianity, acknowledged the otherworldly orientation of their tradition and its values, while others sought to highlight the positive environmental dimensions of existing beliefs and practices. As in the secular realm, some early forms of religious environmentalism took inspiration from social concerns and movements promoting human equality or liberation. One of the most prominent Protestant theologians to make this move was Sallie McFague (1933–). As a

feminist theologian, McFague challenged traditional Christian conceptions of and language about God. In works such as *Metaphorical Theology* (1982) and *Models of God* (1987), McFague called for an end to monarchical, patriarchal, and transcendent conceptions of God as a father, king, or lord who resides in an otherworldly realm. The immanent metaphors McFague offered in lieu of these, such as God as mother, lover, or friend, put God in a closer relationship to the created world and imply that the deity is vulnerable to human-inflicted harms, including harms to the natural world. Drawing on the doctrine of Incarnation, which in her view confers value and dignity to embodiment, McFague suggested that Christians envision the world as God's body. This conception of God set the stage for an ecological turn in theology; it also appears to move Christian theology in the direction of Eastern religious conceptions of the physical world as an emanation of the divine (White's critique had suggested that Eastern religions largely lack the dangerous dualisms found in the West). With works such as *Super, Natural Christians* (1997), McFague argued for extending Jesus' ministry to bodies (not just souls) and to the nonhuman world and urged Christians to view nonhuman forms of life as our oppressed neighbors in need of love and liberation as well as physical healing. These features of McFague's theology respond to White's critique of the spiritual and otherworldly preoccupation of Christian theology.

Some of these features are also found in the work of Protestant ecotheologians such as John Cobb (1925–). His 1972 book titled *Is It Too Late? A Theology of Ecology* was a pioneering work in ecotheology and ethics. Strongly influenced by the process thought of Alfred North Whitehead, Cobb's theology likewise understands God to be interactive with and influenced by natural processes. God is seen as the force that lures creation forward, without forcing it into particular directions. The evolutionary process as a whole displays novelty and open-endedness, and this in turn allows individual life-forms to respond in creative ways to the challenges presented by their natural environments. Creative responses to such challenges propel the evolution of life forward, culminating in rich experience and consciousness in some organisms. The important implications of this account, from an environmental and ethical standpoint, are that each organism is valued as an experiencing subject and God is intimately bound up with natural processes, thus bridging the spirit/matter dualism. The process account of God and nature led Cobb to propose an ethic of liberation of all life from social and scientific forms of oppression in

works such as *The Liberation of Life* (1981, coauthored with process thinker and biologist Charles Birch). Cobb and Birch identify oppression with human domination of the natural world as well as with scientific paradigms that objectify life-forms insofar as they regard them as machine-like, valueless objects of study.

At the heart of these and many other ecotheological accounts is a proposal for an alternative "ecological model" to displace mechanistic models that have held sway since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The ecological model highlights the radical interrelationality, subjecthood, and interdependence of all life and proposes an ethic of mutual-ity, liberation, care, and even love for other forms of life. In turning away from mechanistic science, this model looks to newer scientific paradigms, most notably the "new" or "postmodern" physics of relativity and quantum theory. Its proponents claim that the ecological model resonates with quantum dissolution of dualistic constructs such as sharp subject/object delineation, or distinctions between knower and the known. That is, both models seem to suggest that all entities are constituted by their relationships with other entities and with the environment generally. Nothing exists unto itself.

Greening Protestantism: Social Developments

It is difficult to gauge how much impact this scholarly discourse and debate has had on mainline Protestant churches. Certainly, many congregations are now aware of their ecological footprint, and many have established recycling programs and have sought ways to reduce their energy consumption. It is no longer uncommon, particularly among the more liberal Protestant denominations, to find churches incorporating aspects of ecological theology into sermons and classes, or organizing discussion groups on books in ecotheology. With the twenty-first century, climate change became the issue that especially galvanized religious environmentalists in faith-based and grassroots movements, as well as academic circles.

One of the first Protestant theologians to offer a comprehensive, theological response to climate change was Anglican priest and University of Edinburgh professor Michael Northcott in his 2007 book *A Moral Climate*. Building upon ecological notions of interrelationality of all life, Sallie McFague turned her attention to climate change in her 2008 work *A New Climate for Theology*. These theologians critique what they see as a morally indefensible economic order underlying and perpetuating environmental

destruction and argue for responses to climate change, including major lifestyle changes, that better reflect Christian values and biblical materials.

Among grassroots movements targeting climate change, Interfaith Power and Light (IPL), founded in 2000, has garnered great attention. Led by Sally Bingham, a priest in the Episcopal Diocese of California, IPL is a nationwide movement to mobilize religious responses to global warming. IPL seeks to provide churches, mosques, and synagogues with the means to switch to cleaner and more efficient forms of energy. At the conservative end of the Protestant spectrum, the Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN), founded in 1993, launched a campaign early in the twenty-first century called “What Would Jesus Drive?” modeled on the question, “What would Jesus do?” Environmental scientist and evangelical leader Calvin DeWitt, who helped to found EEN, advocates earth stewardship or “creation care,” grounded in the biblical teachings and example of Jesus. DeWitt also calls attention to the earth-keeping mandate found in Genesis 2:15, in which Adam is given the task of protecting and keeping the garden. Targeting sport utility vehicles in particular, EEN argues that transportation is a moral issue and urges Christians to consider the negative impact of their lifestyle choices on other life-forms, both human and nonhuman. The movement received a boost from environmental writer and activist Bill McKibben, who in 2006 spearheaded his own campaign against global warming called Step It Up. Step It Up organizes rallies and demonstrations to put pressure on local and national governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. McKibben’s speeches and essays frequently invoke explicitly theological language.

Greening Catholicism: Official Church Responses

White’s criticism of Judeo-Christianity did not call for abandoning these traditions altogether. White held up the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, patron saint of children and small animals, as a symbol of a greener form of Christianity awaiting cultivation. White’s portrait (some might say caricature) of Christianity bore some resemblance to Protestantism, and most early efforts to green Christianity emerged from the Protestant circles. The Catholic Church has traditionally placed far less emphasis on a literal reading of the Genesis account than Protestant sects and put more emphasis on the natural world as a normative order reflecting divine providence, as in the natural law tradition. On the one hand, these features have made the Catholic

tradition a less likely target of critics like White who worry that nature has no spiritual or moral significance in Christianity. On the other hand, the church’s official teaching on birth control remains highly controversial in an overpopulated world. Moreover, some discern in Catholic theology a pernicious hierarchical view of humans and nature, wherein humans, by virtue of reason, have an exalted status vis-à-vis all other forms of life, which are unable to participate rationally in the created order. Human life is of paramount value.

With regard to population issues, the church attempts to address these in the context of respect for nature, respect for human life, and respect for the freedom of married couples to choose the number and spacing of births. Valuing human life and natural family planning is consistent with, not contrary to, an overarching respect for nature and natural processes, church leaders contend. Catholic moral theology seeks to balance the value of human life with other values including the natural environment. However, the ban on artificial birth control, reaffirmed in the 1968 document *Humanae vitae*, remains firmly in place.

Catholic approaches to environmental issues have been significantly shaped by the church’s long-standing commitment to social justice. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops launched an Environmental Justice Program (EJP) in 1993, calling Catholics to a deeper reverence for creation and urging parishes and diocese to address local environmental problems, especially those that impact the poor. The EJP is built upon principles articulated in papal encyclicals, particularly statements of John Paul II.

Since the 1960s, various papal encyclicals and statements have alluded to the value of the created world and stewardship obligations. As early as 1963, Pope John XXIII, in the encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, characterized the world as an interdependent global community with a common good. Catholic teaching has continued to build upon this principle of the common good, linking environmental concern with concern for social justice and workers’ rights. In the early 1990s, Pope John Paul II characterized the ecological crisis as the responsibility of everyone, individuals and governments alike, and included in the common good the preservation of the natural environment.

John Paul’s successor, Pope Benedict XVI, has been cast as the “Green Pope.” At a Vatican conference addressing climate change in 2007, Benedict argued that abuse of the environment is contrary to the will of God and emphatically

embraced sustainable development. He has characterized pollution of the environment as a sin requiring repentance, along with sins such as “obscene” wealth. The Vatican has purchased carbon offsets to compensate for the energy it consumes. Like those before him, Benedict has stressed the connection between environmental responsibility and the responsibility to protect the world’s most poverty-stricken communities, the same communities heavily impacted by climate change.

Greening Catholicism: Theological Responses

A good deal of Catholic environmentalism occurs at the margins of official church teaching, and some of it has run afoul of those teachings. A prominent figure in religious environmentalism with ties to Catholicism was Thomas Berry (1914–2009), a Passionist priest whose work was influenced by the French Jesuit priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Berry described himself as a “geologist” as much as a theologian—a historian of the earth and earth processes. In works such as *The Dream of the Earth* (1988), *The Great Work: Our Way into the Future* (1999), and *The Universe Story* (coauthored with mathematical cosmologist Brian Swimme, 1962), Berry proposes a new cosmology that combines the thought of Teilhard with elements of Confucianism, as well as Native American and other indigenous traditions. Also crucial to this cosmology is a “reenchanted” evolutionary account of the unfolding of the earth and the cosmos as a whole.

Berry seeks to replace our modern scientific, disenchanting narrative of the evolution of our universe with a powerful creation myth that remains rooted in sciences yet speaks meaningfully to each of us as a being situated within the story. This “New Story” (or “Universe Story”) describes a universe charged with consciousness of many varieties. Humans exist on a continuum with other conscious entities, but our particular form of consciousness entails that we have unique moral obligations to ensure that the unfolding cosmogenesis continues. The human community, Berry emphasizes, is situated within and dependent upon the earth community. From this sweeping evolutionary perspective, it makes little sense to think of ourselves, or any animal, as having dominion over earth.

Berry’s work has had an enormous impact on ecologically minded Catholic women’s communities. Often referred to as “green sisters” or “eco-nuns,” these women have founded ecological learning centers, organic farms, and eco-spiritual retreats. Important examples include Genesis Farm

and Ecological Learning Center in New Jersey, founded in 1980, and the Green Mountain Monastery in Vermont, founded in 1999. The sisters grow food as a form of spiritual practice, and many are vegetarians. Though some critics charge these sisters (and Berry himself) with espousing pantheistic or neopagan religion rather than Catholicism, they maintain their fidelity to the tradition.

Matthew Fox (1940–) is a proponent of an earth-centered creation spirituality with a cosmology similar to Berry’s. Fox seeks to reacquaint Western Christianity with its own mystical heritage, and, like Berry, he celebrates a blend of modern scientific mysticism and ancient wisdom. Fox was ordained as a priest in 1967 but was subsequently disciplined by the church for his teachings and dismissed from the Dominican Order in the early 1990s. He became an Episcopal priest thereafter and established his own university in 1996 in Oakland, California, calling it the University of Creation Spirituality (later named Wisdom University). Fox’s creation spirituality supports the idea that each person is capable of mystical and prophetic insight. He embraces all creation as an original blessing, explicitly rejecting any notion of original sin. His eclectic religion combines an emphasis on feminist perspectives and eco-justice with Native American-inspired rituals and a “Techno Cosmic Mass”—a religious rave of sorts, with rap and electronic music, trance dancing, and drum circles.

Another ecotheologian with ties to the Catholic tradition is ecumenical and feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether (1936–). Not unlike McFague, Ruether’s abiding concern with church patriarchy and masculine imagery led to a focus on ecological issues in her work. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Ruether’s writings sought to present the figure of Jesus in a new light, as a radically egalitarian and feminist figure whose central message undercuts hierarchy and dominance in social relations. From this interpretation of Jesus, Ruether moved toward an ecofeminist analysis of the environmental crisis. In works such as *Gaia and God* (1992), Ruether identified connections between destruction of the environment and structures of social domination and oppression. Influenced by the Gaia hypothesis of atmospheric scientist James Lovelock, which sees the planet as a living organism, Ruether suggests that we embrace both Gaia and God as a way of moving beyond entrenched dualisms of male/female or transcendence/immanence. Ruether has remained within the church, while steadily critiquing the Vatican’s stance on issues such as contraception and sexuality.

Judaism and the Environment

Many Jews (and perhaps some Christians as well) would likely contest the notion, implicit in portions of White's critique, that Judaism and Christianity form a monolithic "Judeo-Christian" tradition. Jewish environmentalists have identified many green features of their tradition that distinguish it from Christian thought and practice, as well as features shared between the two traditions.

For example, Jewish scholars have noted the green potential of practices such as kosher and Shabbat. Rabbi Arthur Waskow (1933–), who helped to found the Shalom Center in 1983, has presented arguments for broadening the category of kosher to include "eco-kosher" products and practices. Just as animals raised and slaughtered under certain conditions may not be considered kosher, Waskow argues, so should Jews consider whether drafty windows, pesticide-drenched produce, or gas-guzzling automobiles are eco-kosher. In Jewish belief and practice, moreover, food has traditionally been a spiritual center of life, eating a sanctified activity. Some scholars have suggested that Judaism's emphasis on humane treatment of animals and dietary laws (*kashrut*) can be pushed further in the direction of total vegetarianism or even veganism. The careful attention to the origins and preparation of one's food, required by kosher and *kashrut*, finds parallels in increasingly popular "slow food," conscious eating, and local eating movements.

Shabbat, or Sabbath, embodies ideals of stewardship and sustainable ways of living, some Jews argue. Humans are understood to be tenants of the land that belongs solely to God; as such, humans must abide by certain rules and restraints in their use of the land. The Shabbat of the seventh day of the week, the seventh month, and the seventh year prescribe rest and renewal not only for humans but for animals and nature as a whole. The essence of Shabbat is limits and constraints on technology, energy use, and monetary exchange. If more widely incorporated and regularly observed, such limits might significantly reduce consumption and pollution levels, giving Earth itself a rest.

Jewish environmentalists also point to the ideals of *tikkun olam*—"repair of the world"—and *bal tashchit*—the obligation not to waste or destroy natural resources in wanton and unnecessary ways, even in the midst of war. The central teaching of *tzedek*, or justice, extends to concern with environmental justice and the disproportionate impact of environmental degradation on the poor and marginalized.

Organizations such as the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL), founded in 1993, foster environmental education and outreach in synagogues and other local Jewish organizations across the full spectrum of Jewish religious life. Finding God in nature, COEJL members insist, is an ancient Jewish practice, and numerous Jewish teachings have direct relevance for the environmental crisis and the safeguarding of all forms of life. Other scholars, such as Eilon Schwartz (founder of the Heschel Center for Environmental Learning and Leadership), contend that Judaism displays an ancient ambivalence toward nature, stemming from Judaism's strong rejection of pagan conceptions of an immanent God contained within nature. Jews, he argues, are especially wary of attempts to derive morality from nature or to interpret nature normatively in general, given the dangerous uses to which "naturalistic" ethics, such as Social Darwinism, have been put. But in rejecting a morality of nature, Jewish ethics may still embrace the significant, spiritual role of nature in Jewish life and history. Moreover, Judaism has traditionally rejected a strict spiritual/material dichotomy, as evidenced by Judaism's view of the body as a category of spiritual existence.

Conclusion

Clearly, debates similar to these can be found across the spectrum of Jewish and Christian belief, and it remains to be seen how religious communities will resolve internal issues as they continue to adapt and respond to the ecological age. On the whole, we find theologians, scholars, and activists seeking ways to bridge gaps between the physical and the spiritual realm, between the creator and the created world. We also find environmentalists making connections between injustice in human communities and injustices perpetrated against the greater community of life, between the rights of humans and the rights of the nonhuman world. As they have branched out in these directions, many religions—not only within the Western traditions but among the religions of the world as a whole—have discovered important common ground in their beliefs and values regarding nature and the human-divine-nature nexus.

The academic community has played a crucial role in fostering dialogue and consensus on environmental problems among the major world traditions. In the late 1990s, for example, a series of conferences were held at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University examining the attitudes and contributions of various faiths to ecology and the environment. From these conferences

emerged the Forum on Religion and Ecology (FORE), founded by scholars and activists Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. FORE supports research, education, and outreach on environmental issues and encourages dialogue not only among religious traditions but also between the various religions and scientific and economic sectors.

See also *Bioethics*; *Environment and Ecology* entries; *Feminism*; *Food and Diet*; *Healing*; *Health, Disease, and Medicine*; *Judaism: Tradition and Heritage*; *Liberation Theology*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Nature and Nature Religion*; *Religious Thought: Feminist*; *Roman Catholicism: Early Twenty-First-Century Issues*; *Science*; *Social Ethics*.

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Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures

The natural environment plays a central role in the cultures of those Native North Americans who practice their traditional religions and engage their environments from ecological perspectives. Like indigenous peoples from other parts of the world, Native Americans or American Indians see their identities, their religious practices, and the

landscapes upon which they live as intimately intertwined. This means that Native American cultures are as varied as the geography of the United States. Still, precisely because they are culturally bound to certain landscapes, traditional members of otherwise discrete Native American groups share a vision of the world in which those landscapes are full of life, inhabited by beings with whom individuals can and should engage in mutually beneficial, reciprocal relationships.

The United States Census conducted in the year 2000 helps define the demographic contours of Native America. According to the census, approximately two and a half million Americans identify themselves primarily as American Indian or Alaska Native. More than four million more identify themselves as part American Indian or Alaska Native. Many of these persons are enrolled in one of the more than 560 federally recognized Native American "tribes" or nations. Others are enrolled in nations holding only state recognition, and others still, for a number of reasons, have no legal affiliation with any nation. There are also a significant number of native people in Canada, which has 600 federally recognized indigenous nations within its borders. Native people are found throughout the entirety of Latin America too. Therefore, while this entry focuses upon the United States, the reader should understand that native peoples populate nearly every part of the Americas.

Members of diverse populations embrace different religions. For instance, many Native Americans are now Christians. Others continue to practice the religious traditions passed down to them by their ancestors. As noted previously, these traditions are unique to each nation. This is because these traditions are land-based; they were developed to help their practitioners live successful lives in the physical environments to which the practitioners are native. As environments across North America change, so do these traditions. Of course, some of these traditions have changed diachronically, across time, too, as the environments—the geographic and cultural landscapes—of the continent have also changed.

Traditional Native Americans speak their own languages, and their languages convey very different worldviews than does the English language. In describing native cultures, then, we must use our words carefully, so as not to misrepresent these different worldviews. Accordingly, the reader should understand that, in this entry, the term *environment* refers literally to that which surrounds a person or people. Mainstream Americans often equate the environment with "nature." Generally, they also consider nature

distinct from culture, so that, in common usage, “nature” is that which is separate from humans and human activity. This distinction does not hold for traditional Native Americans. They perceive their worlds to be inhabited by many beings besides humans. Moreover, they regard these beings as capable of behaving like persons. As persons, these beings are often a part of, and not distinct from, Native American “cultures.”

Traditional Native American worldviews are appropriately described as ecological. In mainstream American terms, *ecology* denotes a view of or approach to the world that prioritizes the “relationships between living organisms and their environment” (Oxford English Dictionary Online, s.v. “Ecology”). Because traditional Native Americans inhabit worlds in which interpersonal interactions may include other-than-human beings, and because they emphasize the need to pay special attention to the consequences of those interactions, they see their environments as marked by webs of relationship. Their worldviews, and their actions within their worlds, are therefore very ecological indeed.

Religion shapes these worldviews and actions. Thus, traditional Native American religions are fundamentally relational. Many scholars suggest the word *religion* derives from the Latin *religare*, meaning “to bind.” Traditional Native Americans are “bound” to the places to which they are indigenous. Their relationships with the beings who inhabit those places form the ties with which they are bound. Their religions, which include cultural narratives, rituals, and social protocols, dictate just how and why these relationships should be initiated, maintained, and renewed.

Living Landscapes and Reciprocity in Traditional Religious Cultures

Again, Native American cultures vary tremendously. Examples appearing later in this entry of specific ecological and religious practices will illustrate this diversity. The views discussed so far, however, are held in common, and they are grounded in the fact that Native Americans across culture groups perceive themselves as parts of living landscapes. Most of these peoples have resided in the same geographic areas for hundreds or even thousands of years. They have watched individual elements of their landscapes change, and they regard those changes as evidence of vitality. So along with humans, animals, and plants, they also include among living things the rivers that cut new courses, the rocks and mountains that wear over time, or the storms that pass overhead. Just as important, most Native Americans equate the

vitality of such things with the potential for personhood. This means they believe most living things also have the ability to interact socially with other beings, including humans. They usually regard this ability, and life itself, as a gift from the most powerful being within their worlds. In many cultures, this being is responsible for creation itself. Sometimes it is thought of in personal terms, as a particular spirit, with a particular personality. Other times, however, it is conceived of in much broader terms, as a force that animates a group of particularly powerful beings, or even as an energy manifest in all living things.

Personhood, for traditional Native Americans, is more than an ontological category (a category of “being” or “beings”). It is also an ethical one. A true person is a being that utilizes its potential to interact with others and, moreover, does so in ways that demonstrate a conscious understanding of how one’s actions affect others. This reflects an ethic of “reciprocity” that is universal across the otherwise diverse indigenous religions. This ethic dictates that one act in positive, generous ways, so that other beings, who can offer their skills and powers to help him or her live a fulfilling life, will reciprocate his or her actions in kind. The concern for reciprocity explains nearly every religious act in traditional Native American religions. Through ceremonies and other rituals, Native Americans engage in formal procedures that honor other beings in order to elicit needed aid or to give thanks for aid received. Importantly, however, successful existence in these densely inhabited environments requires that one pay attention to his or her actions and the possible consequences of those actions all the time and not just during ceremonies.

While the themes of the living landscape, the personhood of other beings, and reciprocity are common to all traditional Native American religious cultures, these themes manifest in each culture differently. Because each culture group resides in a different environment, members of each group live among different populations of other-than-human beings who also reside in those environments. Furthermore, members, past and present, of each group have developed different religious means of establishing, maintaining, and renewing relations with their fellow humans and with the other-than-human beings upon whom they rely for aid.

In all cases, though, traditional Native American religious cultures are constructed around the themes discussed here, and in all cases, the religions have an “ecological” character. The following examples, taken from different culture

groups, of how Native Americans interact with their environments in both subtle and highly ritualized ways demonstrate these points. In each example, for the people or peoples described, their identities as “persons,” their religious practices, and the landscapes they inhabit are clearly and intimately intertwined.

The Blackfeet, Bloodclot, and Buffalos

There is a cycle of narratives told by the Blackfoot peoples of present-day Montana and Alberta, Canada, of a culture hero named Katoyís. These stories, and many other Blackfoot narratives, convey to the members of the four divisions of Blackfeet, who refer to themselves collectively as the Niitsítapiiksi or “Real Persons,” a great deal of knowledge about their native environment. This environment is the massive mountain and plains region east of the Continental Divide, between the North Saskatchewan River in Alberta and the Yellowstone River in Montana.

The Blackfeet, who speak a language belonging to the Algonquian language family, were historically a hunting people. They relied heavily upon buffalos, which they ran off cliffs or “jumps” and then butchered for sustenance (with the arrival of the horse from Europe, they hunted from horseback). The Blackfeet augmented buffalo meat with that of other animals as well as plant foods gathered from the landscape. Their agricultural activities were limited to the growing of tobacco, a practice that is now being revived. The significance of the buffalos to the Blackfeet is evident in the narratives explored here.

According to these narratives, Katoyís (“Blood Clot”) is born from coagulated buffalo blood and grows to become a great champion of those Blackfeet who live as “persons” really should. In the beginning of the narratives, he destroys several individuals who hoard buffalos. One of these individuals was so selfish that he herded any buffalo that survived a local jump into a large cave, to be killed and consumed at his leisure. Later, Katoyís punishes and destroys several families of other greedy beings, who take animal form. In each story, he leaves one animal being alive, so that the species will continue to inhabit the Blackfoot environment.

Native American interactions with animals and other beings should not be romanticized. While they regard these beings as potential persons, traditional Native Americans do not typically communicate with them as easily as they do with humans. The Blackfeet communicate with other-than-human beings through “medicine bundles.” Medicine

bundles contain a variety of plants, animal skins, and so forth, in which other-than-human beings willingly embodied themselves during mythic encounters in the past. In a large bundle known as the “Beaver Bundle” (so named because Beaver was the first of many beings who embodied himself therein), there are embodied buffalos. Inside this bundle, and most others, there are also *iinísskims* or “buffalo rocks.” As tiny persons themselves, these rocks were used to call buffalos to the jumps or to hunting grounds, when the buffalos still roamed freely (*iinísskims* have additional means of aiding humans, which make them relevant today). Thus, there were and still are a variety of ways in which the Blackfeet can access or contact buffalos and other animals as “persons.”

Some Blackfoot narratives explain that the buffalos were created to be eaten by humans. Logically, however, buffalos must be treated with respect, rather than killed indiscriminately or hoarded, as they are in the Katoyís stories. The buffalos were given life by *Iihtsipáitapiiyop’a*, the animating force in the Blackfoot world (thought of in more personal terms as *Nató’si* or “Sun”). As living things, buffalos are potential persons, and they must be treated according to the ethic of reciprocity. The Bloodclot stories remind the Blackfeet of this. So do their interactions with the spirits of buffalos and other animals during the medicine bundle ceremonies.

Another cycle of Blackfoot narratives, about *Náápi* or “Old Man,” also emphasizes that buffalos must be treated respectfully. *Náápi* is initially a representative of Sun, aiding in the creation of the Blackfoot world. Later, though, he becomes a “trickster” and through his selfish actions shows the Blackfeet how not to act. In one story, *Náápi* learns from Fox how to act so comically in front of the buffalos that he makes them die from laughter. He soon kills so many through his foolishness that the buffalos attack him. Implicit in the story is that disrespect and selfishness will bring negative consequences: fewer available buffalos or even buffalos that reciprocate negative treatment in kind.

Plainly, an ecological sensibility governs Blackfoot interactions with the other beings of their environment. This sensibility is conveyed through ancient narratives and reinforced through ceremonies. Of course, the buffalos no longer roam freely, and the Blackfeet no longer run them off buffalo jumps or hunt them from horseback. Still, contemporary Blackfoot traditionalists treat the remaining beings of their environment, and each other, in ways that highlight personhood and emphasize reciprocity. They are reminded

to do so through the medicine bundle ceremonies and the cultural narratives, both of which are still very much a part of their culture.

Direct Engagement with the Environment

There is a persistent image of the stereotypical Indian living perfectly in tune with “nature,” never directly influencing it, let alone influencing it negatively. A close look at the Blackfeet proves this image false. The Blackfeet engaged and continue to engage their environment physically. Consequently, they had and continue to have a direct impact upon it. Moreover, the Katoyís and Náápi stories acknowledge explicitly that this impact can sometimes be negative. Such was the case when the Blackfeet hunted buffalos, and such is the case today, when the Blackfeet raise cattle and horses. In the contemporary world, some Blackfeet try to engage in practices that minimize negative environmental impact. Some others, though, may allow their cattle and horses to overgraze and destroy native grasses, or they may pollute the water by ignoring the runoff of waste from feedlots. All of this, both positive and negative, reaffirms that the nature/culture distinction simply does not hold for Native Americans.

A common concern in the American West during the latter twentieth and early twenty-first centuries is the increase in forest and grassland fires. Experts point out this is partly due to a combination of changing weather patterns and an increase of fuel—dead wood, shrubs, and other types of vegetation. Scientists continue to debate the role humans play in influencing the climate, but it is well known that many of North America’s forests used to be less dense due, in part, to human actions. In one of the most vivid examples of direct engagement with the environment, well into the nineteenth century, many Native Americans, including the Blackfeet, set fire to their forests or grasslands. They did so to drive game animals, to facilitate the growth or destruction of certain plant species, or to clear forests (to create better grazing, easier travel, fewer hiding places for enemies, or to drive away enemies altogether). Understandably, there are some historical accounts of such fires burning out of control with unintended consequences.

Scholars do not completely agree upon how many culture groups engaged in this practice. Nor do they agree upon the environmental impact of the fires that were set. Regardless, those Native Americans who did engage in the practice did so with distinct purposes in mind, fully

informed by the ideas that are emphasized so strongly in their religions. The fact that some culture groups lit fires to influence the plant life or animal habitats of their areas reflects a strong ecological awareness. This fact supports the idea that Native American peoples were, and still are, engaged reciprocally with their environments; just as their environments shape their closely linked identities and religions, they also shape their environments.

The Navajos, Holy Persons, and Corn

This discussion of the intentional use of fire brings us to another people, the Navajos, whose present-day reservation includes parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. They consider their historical territory to be a mountainous and desert region bordered by four living, sacred peaks. In English, these are Blanca Peak (in Colorado), Mount Taylor (in New Mexico), the San Francisco Peaks (in Arizona), and Hesperus Peak (in Colorado). Navajos speak a language belonging to the Athabascan family.

The Navajos are primarily an agricultural people. Historically, they used fire to clear fields in preparation for planting. They planted melons, squash, beans, and corn. After the arrival of the Spanish to the region, they began to cultivate peaches and wheat, and they raised sheep as well. They would drive the sheep they raised through their crops, trapping destructive grasshoppers in the sheep’s wool.

Like the Blackfeet, the Navajos of the past and present rely upon living medicine bundles to access and honor the beings inhabiting their landscape. This access and honor is very important, as proper, reciprocal relations with others help traditional Navajos, who are the Nihokáá Dine’é or “Earth Surface Persons,” to achieve the important goal of *hózhó*. *Hózhó* is often translated as “beauty,” but ethnolinguist Gary Witherspoon explains that the prefix *ho* connotes the environment. Hence, *hózhó* implies a beautiful or ideal environment. Positive relations with the *Diyin Dine’é* (usually translated as “holy persons”), who created the Navajo landscape and continue to inhabit it, are particularly important to achieving such a positive state of existence.

Complex ceremonies, often drawing upon medicine bundles embodying the living powers of certain, benevolent holy persons, help individuals establish, maintain, or reestablish relations with other beings. Some ceremonies honor the holy persons to avoid negative consequences for individuals that may result from offending those beings. Other ceremonies reestablish relationships with beings who have already

been offended, as a result of a Navajo having violated the ethic of reciprocity.

Traditional Navajos use medicine bundles in farming. Through the bundles, they secure or direct the help and powers of holy persons, who often represent “natural” forces within the Navajo world, to raise crops successfully. Of course, the very crops they hope to raise with the help of other beings are persons too. This is especially clear in the case of corn, which is directly associated with life itself. On the practical level, corn, like other crops, sheep, and game animals, helps give life in the form of sustenance to all Navajos. On another level, ancient narratives tell contemporary Navajos that much of the living landscape, including humans, was created long ago through the powers of a “Magic Corn Bundle” by “First Man” and his adopted holy person daughter, “Changing Woman.” Reinforcing the identification between corn and human life is the belief that the life cycle of corn and the life cycle of humans are parallel. Additionally, Navajo consider actual corn and the human body as comparable. For instance, both have hair.

When we consider how traditional Navajos relate to their environment, we see that their actions are shaped by an ecological perspective. In other words, they are deeply concerned with the relationships between all parts that make up the whole of their world. They carry this concern, in practical ways, to their subsistence activities. They rely upon their own unique characteristics or skills as humans, together with those of woolly sheep and specific benevolent holy persons, to complement each other and maximize the success of their crops. These activities are informed by their religious worldview, which tells them they are bound to the world around them through their relationships with these other beings. These binds are so tight that the very identities of Navajos as “Earth Surface Persons” are inextricably connected with their understandings of corn, from which they were created and upon which they continue to depend. Once again, it is impossible to distinguish the “natural” from the “cultural” in the traditional Navajo world—a world in which Navajo ecology involves reciprocal relationships between human and other-than-human elements within the environment.

Historical Problems and Contemporary Developments

Since the arrival of Europeans and other immigrants to North America, traditional Native American religions and

land-based practices have faced severe challenges. Because these religions and practices are intertwined, anything that affects the religions affects Native American engagement with the physical world, and vice versa. This has not always been understood by non-Native Americans, since most of them adhere to religions such as Christianity, which places faith or belief ahead of religious practice and which places little if any emphasis upon the land.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, representatives of the U.S. government often restricted or forcibly changed Native American religious and land-based practices intentionally, as part of their attempts to “civilize” the American Indians. Sometimes, however, they also did so unintentionally, simply because they did not understand how Native American religions and the physical world are connected and because they did not understand that these religions emphasize practice rather than belief. For instance, governmental representatives banned Native American religious rituals and ceremonies for several decades, beginning in the 1880s. Around the same time, they forced many culture groups to alter their subsistence activities or to give up those activities altogether. Most notably, they required many hunter-gatherer groups, such as the Blackfeet, to turn towards agriculture. Always, the government programs affected the relationships that the Native Americans had with the other-than-human persons of their worlds. Because such relationships are central to Native American religions and land-based practices, the programs had wide-ranging effects upon Native American cultures.

The nineteenth-century U.S. federal policy of “removing” Native American peoples to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) or restricting them to reservations in the American West probably had the greatest impact upon traditional Native American religions and ecologies. In some cases, whole nations were relocated, far away from the landscapes upon which they had depended for physical and spiritual aid for centuries. In many other cases, peoples were restricted to smaller territories than they had previously inhabited, and they were largely deprived of their abilities to visit or to exercise ecological care for sacred places, where particular other-than-human persons lived. Native Americans have also had to deal with environmental degradation—the degradation of their living landscapes that resulted from the westward expansion of non-Native Americans in the nineteenth century and the many types of major landscape alteration that have taken place since.

Many Americans, politicians and otherwise, still do not completely understand the distinctive land- and practice-based qualities of Native American religious cultures, but they are beginning to appreciate an ecological approach toward the environment—an approach that prioritizes relationships between the constituent parts of the environment and acknowledges human participation in those relationships. Hunting is now regarded as an integral part of game management that needs to be carefully regulated. This lesson was learned most vividly with the near extinction of the buffalos in the late nineteenth century, which resulted from pressures against wild buffalo populations exerted by new, non-Native American sport and skin hunters suddenly combined with those exerted by Native American subsistence hunters. The U.S. Forest Service and other land management agencies are increasingly recognizing the benefits of forest fires and sometimes engaging in controlled burning, as Native Americans did in centuries past. Non-Native American farmers and consumers of agricultural foods are turning toward “organic” means of controlling insects and diseases that affect crops and farm animals, just as the historic Navajo used their sheep to “clean” their crops. At the same time, mainstream Americans are paying more attention to the ways they affect their environments negatively, both directly and indirectly. Debates about the impact of human activities and population growth upon such things as climate, oil supply, and water quality are now commonplace. In many ways, all these developments represent mainstream American concerns for “relationship” and “reciprocity,” concerns that are so central to traditional Native American religions and ecologies.

For those Native North Americans who practice their traditional religions, relationship and reciprocity with what they consider as the living beings and potential persons inhabiting their landscape are paramount. They see their identities, their religious practices, and the environments in which they live as intimately intertwined. Because of this, Native American cultures are fundamentally diverse, varying as widely as their living landscapes. Yet as this entry shows, the views held by traditional Native Americans of the world as a place that must necessarily be engaged physically and spiritually in order to live successfully mean that all traditional Native Americans are bound to their environments. These perspectives render the practical distinction, held by so many non-Native Americans, between the “natural” and “cultural” worlds untenable. Traditional Native American worlds are characterized by constant, interpersonal give and

take between humans and other-than-humans. In such worlds, religion and ecology are one.

See also *Canada: Aboriginal Traditions; Environment and Ecology* entries; *Healing; Mexico: Indigenous Religions; Nature and Nature Religion; Native American Religions* entries; *Southwest as Region*.

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Environment and Ecology: Since the Mid-Nineteenth Century

The concepts of environment, evolution, and ecology are playing an increasing role in North American religious life. Ecological science reveals the interdependence of all life, and evolutionary science, by disclosing the descent of all living organisms from common ancestors, establishes the common kinship of all life on earth.

Strictly defined, *ecology* is the branch of biological science that studies the relationships between living organisms in a given environment or ecosystem and between those

organisms and the physical components of those environments. The term was first coined by the German biologist Ernst Haeckel in 1866 and was understood by him in this limited scientific sense. However, *ecology* has also been used more broadly to describe concern for environmental quality. Thus, in the 1960s and 1970s, an ecologist was any person concerned with threats to environmental quality. Beginning with the first Earth Day in 1970, such people began being referred to as *environmentalists*, and the term *ecologist* returned to its more narrow definition as students and scientists in the field of ecology. An ecologist may be an environmentalist and vice versa, but the connection is not a necessary one. Because ideas about ecological science and about the environment globally or locally are necessarily connected, ecology can in common parlance be understood as the science of environments.

The idea of *ecology* (defining the relationship between human beings and nature) predates Haeckel and extends far back into antiquity. The modern ecological view was given expression in 1749 by the Swedish botanist Carl von Linné, more commonly known as Linnaeus, in his essay “The Oeconomy of Nature,” which remained very influential throughout the nineteenth century, influencing biologist Charles Darwin and many American thinkers such as transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, as well as national park advocate John Muir.

Darwinian evolution is intimately related to ecology. Indeed, contemporary science views the two concepts as inseparable. Evolution, in its simplest formulation, holds that the genetic composition of a given population of any species as physically embodied in the DNA of the population’s individuals will change over time via the mechanism of natural selection. It is now well known that environments or ecosystems also change over time, and evolution is in part the engine of that environmental change. Thus, contemporary science often speaks of evolutionary ecology. However, within American religious institutions, evolution and ecology are often treated separately. Some religious responses to these branches of science embrace ecological ideas while rejecting or at least minimizing evolutionary models, some can and do embrace both, while some reject both. Religions that reject evolutionary science often justify the rejection by noting that it conflicts with the common religious understanding of humanity as having special God-given superiority and dominion over the rest of creation. Within contemporary scholarship of religious studies, ecology and evolution provide useful analytic tools for identifying some

of the fissures and fault lines within contemporary American religious life and the origins of these various divisions.

God, Humanity, and Nature in the Hebrew and Christian Bibles

To understand the mid-nineteenth to early twenty-first centuries, some reference to the antecedent ideas is necessary for context. Richard Elliott Friedman, in *The Hidden Face of God*, noting that the ancient Israelites produced the first enduring monotheism, says further that the

difference between Israelite monotheism and pagan religion . . . was not a simple matter of arithmetic: one God rather than many. The pagan religion that dominated the ancient world for four millennia was tied to nature. . . . Pagan religion personified [Nature’s] forces, ascribed a will to them, and called them: gods. . . . Having one God who controlled all these forces was another (more appealing?) way to . . . deal with these [natural forces]. (pp. 87–88)

Thus, “Israel’s monotheism, for the first time, conceived of a God who was outside of nature, controlling its deified forces.” This divorce of God from nature had other ramifications. Imagining God as completely transcending the natural order and not immanent within it allowed these Israelite biblical writers to envision humans as occupying a more exalted position in the natural order.

The Hebrew Bible contains two dramatically different creation accounts written approximately four centuries apart. The more ancient version, which refers to the Israelite deity as Yahweh, is found in the second chapter of Genesis, beginning in the second half of verse 4. The later version of the Israelite creation story contained in the first chapter of Genesis, and the first three verses of chapter 2 were most likely composed in the mid-sixth century BCE during Israel’s period of Babylonian exile. In this version, humanity is given this command: “God blessed them, and God said to them ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth’” (Genesis 1:28, New Revised Standard Version). In addition, this version declared that humanity, alone in all creation, was made in “God’s image” (Genesis 1:26). Another key passage from the Hebrew Bible’s book of Psalms restates this point, declaring that God made humanity “a little lower than God” and was given “dominion” over God’s creation, putting “all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and

also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas” (Psalms 8:6–8). As Clarence Glacken noted in *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* in regard to Psalm 8 and Psalm 115:16 (“The heavens are the Lord’s heavens, but the earth he has given to human beings”), the “theme that man, sinful though he be, occupies a position on earth comparable to that of God in the universe, as a personal possession, a realm of stewardship, has been one of the key ideas in the religious and philosophical thought of Western civilization regarding [humanity’s] place in nature” (p. 155).

These passages in the Hebrew Bible have been influential in both Judaism and Christianity. In Christianity’s New Testament, this Israelite idea that there is an absolute separation between God and the natural created order was decisively declared by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, stating that God had abandoned pagans because they “worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator” (Romans 1:25). This is probably the most frequently quoted passage by conservative American Christians when they criticize belief systems that venerate nature. As Glacken also notes, this passage establishes “a theme repeated often in Christian theology: worship the Creator, not the creature. . . . God is transcendent, [and] . . . worship is for the Creator alone” (p. 161). Curiously, another passage also attributed to Paul is at least susceptible to a much different interpretation. In the account of a public sermon by Paul at Athens’s Areopagus, Paul, approvingly quoting an unspecified Greek poet, declared that God “is not far from each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said” (Acts 17:28). This verse, which imagines a much more immanent, less transcendent God, may be quoting the sixth century BCE Greek poet Epimenides, but it is more likely a passage from the first century BCE Stoic pantheist poet Posidonius. This passage is probably the most quoted passage by liberal Christian theologians who seek to reconcile Christianity to contemporary ecological and evolutionary science. Given the decisive role of the Bible in the history of American culture, it is also frequently cited by non-Christian nature philosophers. These biblical passages continue to be decisive in contemporary Christian and Jewish theological debates over the relationship between God, humans, and nonhuman nature.

Wilderness in American History

Christian and Jewish ideas about the separation of God and nature also influenced early American ideas about

wilderness, which in turn have influenced cultural attitudes toward ecology and the environment. When William Bradford stepped off the *Mayflower*, he perceived a “hideous and desolate wilderness.” In *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Roderick Nash interprets this harsh reaction as having two components. First, the natural environment new colonists encountered was unfamiliar and was a formidable threat to their very survival. Second, in large measure as a result of their Christian ideology, they imagined wild country as a moral vacuum fit only for pagan rites that they were mandated to civilize for the glory of “nation, race, and God” (p. 33). The more the settlers conquered the wilderness by civilizing it, the greater their sense of achievement. Tocqueville, that early observer of the American experience, observed that living in the wilds “produced a bias against them.”

However, this hostility toward nature began to weaken, at least in some sectors, by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and, indeed, to turn toward veneration. This began in Europe and was present in the writing of Edmund Burke and romantic writers like Rousseau. Also emerging was the related idea of primitivism, which Nash argues was one of the more important ideas to flow out of the romantic thinkers. Primitivism postulates that human happiness and well-being decrease in direct proportion to the degree of development and civilization. These ideas were carried forward in the late twentieth century by writers like Paul Shepard, Daniel Quinn, and Edward Abbey, who, inspired by primitivist philosophy, conclude that the real human fall from grace was the invention of agriculture ten thousand years ago. However, this primitivist idea had at least one early proponent among the American republic’s generation of founders. Benjamin Rush, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, declared “man is naturally a wild animal, and . . . taken from the woods, he is never happy . . . ’till he returns to them again” (quoted in Nash, p. 56). Ironically, this enthusiasm for wilderness and for sublime nature was developed among sophisticated urban Europeans surrounded by books and then surfaced among America’s urban, educated elite.

Swedenborg’s Influence on American Ideas about the Physical and the Spiritual

A decisive influence on American ideas regarding ecology and the environment was the eighteenth-century Swedish scientist and religious ecstatic Emmanuel Swedenborg. Largely forgotten now, Swedenborg was one of the most

widely read authors in antebellum nineteenth-century America. He believed God had given him the power, through vision, to travel in spirit to other planes of existence. Swedenborg's ecstatic visions led him to a distinctly immanent understanding of the divine or sacred. According to Sarah Pike in *New Age and Neopagan Religions in America*, this "threatened and angered the church with the argument that God is immanent, not transcendent, and the scientific community with his belief that God exists." To Swedenborg, while God might transcend the cosmos and exist apart from it, God also existed within and interpenetrated the natural order. Because of this, "the natural world was divine . . . [and] God communicated to humans through nature" (p. 49). In so arguing, Swedenborg arguably made the first self-conscious effort to reconcile science and religion.

Catherine Albanese, noting in *Nature Religion in America* that Swedenborg conflated "spirit and matter" by perceiving "influx' of the divine" into mundane reality, observes his strong influence on Emerson and Johnny Appleseed, who enthusiastically spread Swedenborgian literature along with apple trees (pp. 122–123). Swedenborg also influenced Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, an early American spiritualist. Thus, Swedenborg triggered two, largely incompatible, indeed diametrically opposed, streams of religious reaction to ecology and the environment, with Emerson serving as this decisive fork in the road. One stream descends through Emerson, Thoreau, Muir, Leopold, Abbey, and current manifestations of religious naturalism such as deep ecology and naturalistic pantheism that deny the supernatural but ecstatically embrace the physical reality in which humans find themselves. The other stream also descends through Emerson, but then diverges into Quimby, his student Mary Baker Eddy (founder of Christian Science), and on into current manifestations in New Age ideas that radically deny physical reality or any ultimate importance to physical matter. In this stream, only the unseen spirit realm is truly real, with physical matter being mere illusion. Eddy's remark that the seeming reality of physical matter is mere false belief and an error of "mortal mind" illustrates this view. This dichotomy remains potent in contemporary American religious life.

Focusing on Emerson as this decisive fork in the road, he declared in his famous 1836 essay *Nature* that "nature is the symbol of the spirit." Following in the tradition of Plato and Kant, Emerson saw natural objects as important because, if rightly seen, they reflected universal spiritual truths. Thus, nature was important primarily for the lessons it could teach humans. Albanese notes the way that Emerson divided

nature into "nature major" and "nature minor," with nature minor being the physical world knowable through our senses and nature major being what Emerson would later call the "over soul," where the influence of Plato is obvious and ultimately triumphant. Emerson's *Nature* is perhaps the first American manifesto of panentheism (discussed below), though that term was not yet in use in English, conceiving a God who is here in all that is but also up in the sphere of the Platonic forms, the sphere that Emerson thought to be of ultimate importance. This focus on the spiritual was developed into the denial or de-emphasis of the physical in New Age thought and has also long been present in many forms of Christianity that imagine an immortal soul that separates from and survives the death and decay of the physical body.

In contrast, Thoreau, who had been a disciple of Emerson and in his youth displayed a more spiritual emphasis, ultimately turned decisively in the other direction in the last decade of his short life. Though the term was coined four years after Thoreau's death, recent scholarship has demonstrated that Thoreau can be seen as ecology's first American field scientist. The last decade of his journal is primarily taken up with field notes of an ecological nature. He read Darwin's *Origin of the Species* in 1860 and began applying Darwin's evolutionary ideas to his own ecological studies. Nash notes that for Thoreau, Nature became valuable, not as a symbol, but as the primary reality, citing these lesser known passages: "[I]s not Nature, rightly read, that of which she is commonly taken to be the symbol merely?" and "let us not underrate the value of a fact, it will one day flower in a truth" (p. 85), thereby expressly rejecting David Hume's assertion that human values can never be derived from physical facts. Thus, as Albanese notes, Thoreau moved back toward earth and away from Emerson's fascination with the rarified heavens, seeing physical reality, here on earth, as the important (and perhaps only) reality. Albanese argues that John Muir, the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century conservationist and founder of the Sierra Club, under the influence of both Emerson and Thoreau, then amplified this strong turn toward physical nature, venerating and, at least arguably, deifying it. In so doing, he turned decisively away from his Calvinist upbringing. According to Albanese, Muir's "embrace of nature went beyond Emerson and Thoreau in its sensuousness, in its sheer and unqualified delight in matter." Thus, at the same time that Quimby and Eddy were urging Americans to deny matter, Thoreau and Muir were urging its ecstatic embrace.

The Debate over Christianity's Anthropocentrism

An important development in the discussion of the role of religion in American attitudes toward the environment was the publication in 1967 of Lynn White's still influential essay, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." There, White opined that much if not most environmental degradation is directly traceable to Western Christianity's radical anthropocentrism. This indictment of Christianity provoked an explosion of theological and philosophical reflection over the past four decades, and this debate continues. Many see White as essentially right. Two examples illustrate. A Baptist church in Idaho prints and distributes this wordy bumper sticker: "Forget 'Save the Earth'; What about your soul? The earth is going to burn, What about you?" Then there is Calvin Beisner, a conservative Presbyterian theologian and global warming denier, who when interviewed by Bill Moyers in 2006 said that even if he is wrong about global warming, the error is of little consequence because the important issue is whether one will live in heaven or hell for eternity. The fate of this planet simply is not important. Consistent with White's thesis, it is hard to have much concern about this planet's fate if one is convinced God will soon destroy this planet and make humans a new one, as many conservative American Christians believe, or will soon take humanity to a spiritual heaven far from this present planetary human home.

Other theorists have argued that, contrary to White's thesis, Christian and Jewish scriptures can be and, indeed, are most accurately construed as having strong proenvironment themes and moral mandates for ecosystem protection. They note that in the Genesis account of creation, the created order is declared by God to be "very good" and that human dominion cannot be construed as a license to destroy God's creation. Instead, God's ultimate ownership of all creation is emphasized, and because humans are ultimately accountable to God, we are to exercise wise and judicious stewardship of his property. This so-called "stewardship model" is the most common ecotheology among Christians, from conservative to liberal branches. Stewardship Christians tend to embrace ecological science, looking to it for instruction on how proper stewardship can be exercised while still meeting legitimate human needs. However, other Christian theorists note that the stewardship model conflicts with evolutionary science, because this model assumes that the rest of nonhuman creation needs humanity as God's appointed stewards. If humanity is a very late arrival in evolutionary history, from 100,000 to 1 million years ago, depending on how

"human" is defined, these theorists ask how a creation that managed without humans for most of its 3.5-billion-year history can be said to require God-appointed humans as its stewards. These theorists instead tend to prefer a model that sees the presence of the divine in the creation itself and in its natural laws and processes.

Process Theology and Creation Spirituality

Two types of contemporary Christian thinking about divine immanence and the environment are process theology (derived from the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead) and creation spirituality. Whitehead conceived of all reality as a dynamic, ever-changing, emerging process, all of which in some sense contains consciousness and is imbued throughout with the sacred, divine, or God and is not static, inert, or unconscious. Thus, for Whitehead, "God is both a creature of the world, and the world's creator" (see Gregersen, "Whitehead," p. 1737). Thus, some Christian thinkers saw in Whitehead a way of imagining God that was consistent with ecological, evolutionary science and with the Apostle Paul's sermon to the Athenians (see discussion above). *Creation spirituality* is an alternative label for this way of thinking, thought to be more evocative and less dry than *process theology*, and has been popularized by two thinkers in this vein, Matthew Fox and Thomas Berry.

These new theologies are often regarded as heretical or at least suspect by conservative Christians as being against Paul's prohibition of pantheistic understandings of the divine contained in Romans. To refute this critique, proponents of these immanent theologies often rely on the relatively new metaphysical label popularized in America by Charles Hartshorne in the 1950s of *panentheism*, which they carefully distinguish from the related but traditionally heretical concept of pantheism. The Oxford English Dictionary defines *pantheism* as "a belief or philosophical theory that God is immanent in or identical with the universe," while defining *panentheism* as the "theory or belief that God encompasses and interpenetrates the universe but at the same time is greater than and independent of it." Conservative branches of Christianity still hold to a completely dualistic understanding of God and maintain that the divine realm is entirely separate from the mundane universe in which humanity resides, even if God is aware of events in the physical realm and may miraculously intervene on occasion. In mainline to liberal streams of Christianity, pantheistic interpretations of divinity are frequently advanced, often citing Paul's sermon to the Athenians. These branches of Christianity usually embrace ecological science as

demonstrating the interdependence of things and frequently draw on ecology as an exhortation to return humanity to an Arcadian garden of harmony with nature.

These theorists usually also claim to accept evolutionary science. However, as Lisa Sideris has noted, liberal Christian theorists often de-emphasize the aspects of evolution that suggest that natural selection operates in a manner that is blind, random and purposeless. Almost all branches of Christianity still affirm belief in some form of conscious, supernatural deity that controls or at least influences events within earthly existence, including the manner in which evolution occurs, even if this deity interpenetrates the whole cosmos. However, there are small movements within Christianity that understand the processes of evolution and their physical manifestations as the primary divine reality and accept its random nature. Such Christians, in fully embracing evolutionary science and the model of nature provided by it, often reject all elements of supernaturalism and reject or are at least agnostic about claims of an afterlife. Individuals in such movements still see themselves as Christian in that they still believe in God—even though their God is mere physical reality and its attendant natural laws; they still revere Jesus as an important teacher of ethics while rejecting the idea that his execution had any particular cosmic significance; and they still appreciate the Christian Bible as their common inspirational text while rejecting it as in any sense inspired by some external deity. Fully accepting reality as revealed by contemporary science is central to these Christians and, thus, is a Christian manifestation of the new movement of religious naturalism discussed next.

Religious Naturalism

Religious naturalism is another new movement that consciously embraces naturalistic assumptions about the cosmos as revealed by ecological, evolutionary, and all other branches of science yet still insists on using the term *religious*. The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science in 2003 developed a statement of religious naturalism that declared in part that

Our religious quest is informed and guided by the deepening and evolving understandings fostered by scientific inquiry. . . . We may describe our religious sensibilities using various words that have various connotations—like the sacred, or the source, or god—but it is our common naturalistic orientation that generates our shared sense of place, gratitude, and joy.

These religious naturalists self-consciously describe their project as constructing systems of human meaning based on what is scientifically revealed about the cosmos.

Religious naturalism appears in unexpected ways. For instance, two well-known, vigorous advocates of atheism, Daniel Dennett and Sam Harris, nevertheless use traditional religious language to promote their brands of atheism. Dennett declares that the world is sacred; and Harris says in *The End of Faith* that “there is clearly a sacred dimension to our existence and coming to terms with it could well be the highest purpose of human life” (p. 16). Even Richard Dawkins, another zealous advocate of atheism, makes clear in chapter 1 of his book *The God Delusion* that he is not attacking “the pantheistic reverence [for the cosmos] which many of us share with its most distinguished exponent, Albert Einstein,” or what he elsewhere calls the “metaphorical or pantheistic God of the physicists,” and is only calling ideas about supernatural gods delusional, thereby leaving the constructed meanings of the religious naturalists outside his intended zone of attack.

Judaism, Islam, and the Environment

The theological range of developments within American Judaism and Islam concerning the environment shares much in common with and closely parallels the range of developments within Christianity. This is perhaps to be expected, given that all three of these Abrahamic traditions draw heavily on the creation narratives in Genesis for their respective understandings of God, nature, and humanity. As with Christianity, more conservative branches of Judaism and Islam usually will take the Genesis accounts more literally (with a corresponding rejection of evolutionary models of cosmic origins), while more liberal branches emphasize divine immanence, developing their own uniquely Jewish and Islamic strains of process theology and creation spirituality. Kabbalistic Judaism, a mystical branch of Judaism, and Jewish Renewal are especially inclined to emphasize the immanent aspect of the divine, while still also affirming a transcendent dimension to the divine, thereby describing, usually not by name, what in essence is a panentheistic metaphysics. These branches are often involved in efforts to promote environmental protection. In a like manner Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam, affirms the indwelling of the divine in physical reality and argues for environmental responsibility based on this. However, the stewardship model is also present in conservative branches of Judaism and Islam that emphasize divine transcendence and has led to declarations of a duty of environmental protection for God’s creation.

The Environment in Contemporary African American Spirituality

Ecological science has not yet significantly impacted religious expressions within African American communities. As Kimberly Smith said in “Black Agrarianism and the Foundation of Black Environmental Thought,” you will not “discover a black Thoreau” when looking at the ways that African Americans discuss “the relationship between humans, nature and the American landscape” (p. 268). African Americans are predominantly drawn to the more conservative Christian denominations that in general interpret the Bible literally and therefore often reject the evolutionary models of science. However, African American concern for the environment does receive considerable expression within the movement for environmental justice. The environmental justice movement focuses on patterns of racial discrimination whereby polluting industries target poor minority communities as locations for especially pollutive plants or for toxic waste disposal, knowing that these communities are often politically weak and lack the means to mount effective opposition. In the past two decades, this has often led to new alliances between these poor, often African American communities and environmental groups such as the Sierra Club and progressive faith communities that unite to provide increasingly effective resistance to this business strategy. The example of the biblical prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos and their outspoken condemnation of the oppression of the weak by the politically powerful is often called upon in these political battles.

Recognizing the social science literature that has demonstrated that appreciation of nature for its own sake may be dependent on positive early childhood contact with nature, organizations like the Sierra Club sponsor nature outings for inner-city youth in poor, disadvantaged minority communities. These efforts are already producing small but growing wilderness preservation movements among African American and Hispanic churches in large urban centers. How significant this movement will become remains to be seen.

The Contemporary Religious Debate over the Environment Continues

As global warming and climate change take on increasing importance in public policy debates, a fissure has become increasingly apparent within conservative evangelical Christianity. Some high-profile evangelicals like Rick Warren, Pat Robertson, and Richard Cizik criticized the

George W. Bush administration for what they asserted were lackluster and inadequate responses to climate change, while other prominent evangelical Christian leaders like James Dobson continue to deny the existence of human-generated climate change and to allege that such environmental issues draw attention away from more urgent traditional evangelical concerns like opposition to abortion and gay marriage. Both sides cite the Christian Bible for support. Secular environmental groups increasingly partner with religious groups, and numerous new expressly religious environmental or Creation Care groups have emerged within the past ten to fifteen years.

Survey data demonstrate that the more conservative a religious person is (usually with a correspondingly literal interpretation of sacred texts), the less likely he or she is to be worried about issues of environmental quality, habitat destruction, and species extinction. In contrast, secular and religiously progressive Americans are more likely to voice concern about these issues. In sum, no consensus has yet emerged within American society over environmental issues. However, growth rates of conservative religious groups are decreasing, and growth rates in the purely secular segments of society, though beginning from a relatively small part of American society, are rapidly increasing. It is therefore possible that concern for environmental issues may increase over the future decades. This seems particularly likely if the current scientific predictions for climate-related environmental stress over the coming decades prove accurate and environmental issues take on a greater sense of urgency.

See also *Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief*; *Bible entries*; *Christian Science*; *Deism*; *Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues*; *Nature and Nature Religion*; *Politics: Twentieth Century*; *Romanticism*; *Spiritualism*; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends*; *Transcendentalism*.

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Episcopalians: Early Republic

The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (also known since 1967 as The Episcopal Church) is the denomination formed by the members of the Church of England in the United States following the American Revolution (1775–1783). At that time members dropped the unpopular name "Church of England" and elected to use the name "Episcopal," a term used a century before during the English Civil War by those who favored church government by bishops (Greek, *episkopoi*) rather than congregational or presbyterian forms of church order. The Episcopal Church is the third (following the Church of England and the Episcopal Church of Scotland) independent member of a family of churches that since the middle of the nineteenth century has been known as the Anglican Communion. Churches in the communion acknowledge kinship to the archbishop of Canterbury, use a fixed form of worship (the Book of Common Prayer), and preserve the three traditional orders of ministry (bishop, priest or presbyter, and deacon). Although relatively small in numbers, Episcopalians were active in American life between the Revolution and

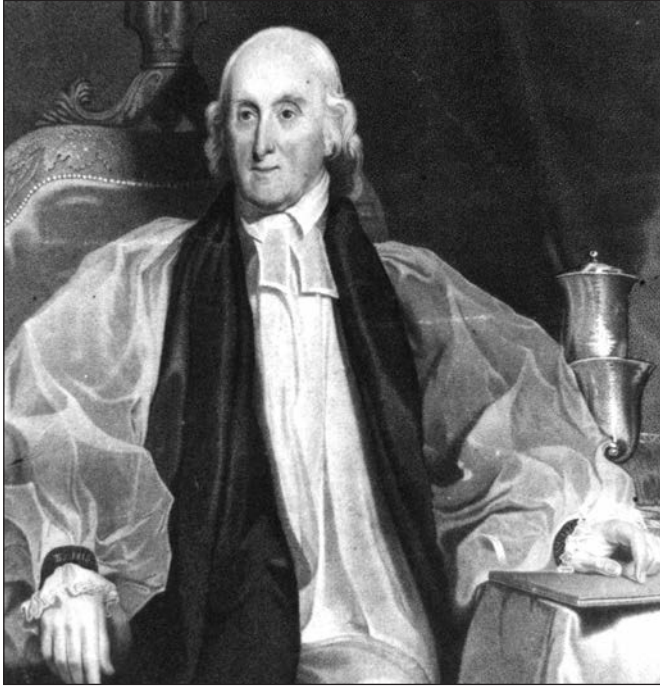
the Civil War, which began in 1861, in a number of ways. Seven of the first fifteen presidents (Washington, Madison, Monroe, W. H. Harrison, Tyler, Taylor, and Pierce) were Episcopalians, and an eighth (Jefferson) was raised in the Anglican/Episcopal Church.

By the end of 1789 the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America had completed the first stages of postrevolutionary reorganization. In 1784 Episcopalians in Connecticut had secured consecration of a bishop (Samuel Seabury, 1729–1796) by the non-juring bishops of the Episcopal Church of Scotland. (The nonjuring bishops were still loyal to James II of England and his son and were unwilling to swear allegiance to those on the English throne after James's overthrow in the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688.) Episcopalians in Pennsylvania and New York had succeeded in having two candidates for the episcopate (William White of Pennsylvania, 1748–1836, and Samuel Provoost of New York, 1742–1815) consecrated by English bishops in 1787. Episcopalians in the middle states and the South had created a national governing body, the General Convention, in 1785. Four years later representatives from Connecticut and Massachusetts joined those from Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia in an expanded General Convention, which agreed upon a revised constitution and a set of canons (church laws), and approved a revised form of the Book of Common Prayer.

The national Constitutions and Canons and those adopted in individual states made the church significantly more democratic than its English counterpart. Bishops were to be elected by state conventions of clergy and laypersons; parish rectors were to be selected by parish vestries; and the vestries themselves, which had become self-perpetuating bodies in colonial America, were to be elected by parishioners. The American edition of the Book of Common Prayer included a new preface justifying the need for liturgical changes and replaced prayers for the British royal family with prayers for the president of the United States. A significant long-term leader of the church, Bishop White of Pennsylvania, had also emerged. He served as the denomination's presiding bishop in 1789 and would do so again from 1795 until his death in 1836.

A Weakened Church

Much, however, was still to be done. The church had yet to decide upon the status of the Articles of Religion, the



William White of Pennsylvania, a candidate for the episcopate, consecrated by English bishops in 1787.

statement of faith to which clergy of the Church of England were required to subscribe. Three major colleges that once had Anglican ties or leanings—William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, King’s College (later Columbia) in New York City, and the College of Philadelphia (University of Pennsylvania)—had cut those ties at the Revolution. One important new institution (Washington College, in Maryland, chartered in 1782) was founded, but overall the church’s educational resources were much weakened at the end of the war.

Dioceses (the statewide units that elected representatives to the national General Convention) were themselves on weak footing. They were composed of parishes that lacked firm funding. The dioceses generally had no budgets of their own. The role of bishop was a part-time job for a clergyman in a prominent parish or university position. In some cases, as in Virginia and South Carolina, diocesan councils adopted resolutions limiting the authority of bishops.

The church also suffered from significant financial problems. The Revolution had brought an end to the primary means of financial support for the colonial church. State support had been a source of funding in Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, where the church had been established by law; additional funds came from three English

missionary societies: the Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and Dr. Bray’s Associates (which was dedicated to education and evangelization of African Americans). The missionary societies had not only supported a major percentage of parish clergy outside Virginia, but they also supported ministry to Native Americans (particularly in western New York) and schools for African Americans. (The strongest strictures against the education of African Americans would not begin until the nineteenth century.) The church in Virginia faced another problem when the legislature decided in 1799 and again in 1802 that county welfare authorities could sell the assets of vacant Anglican parishes. Parishes adopted a system of pew rents to supply the lost revenue, but time was needed to build a new financial base.

In the years after the Revolution, clergy, whose numbers had already been depleted by the departure of British Loyalists and by the long hiatus (1776–1784) in which ordination was no longer possible in England but not yet possible in the United States, scrambled to supplement their income. Some were involved in teaching or in serving educational institutions in administrative ways. Among the best known of these enterprising clergy was Mason Locke Weems (c.1759–1825), a clergyman turned author and bookseller. “Parson” Weems’s moral tales, including that of George Washington and the cherry tree, became standard elements in American primary education.

Ministry to Native Americans and African Americans

Not surprisingly, it was mission to the most disadvantaged that suffered most as a result of the loss of state and English financial support. Ministry to Native Americans in western New York, for example, ended for a generation, and many Native Americans with ties to the Anglican Church moved to Canada. It would not be until after the War of 1812 that the Episcopal Church revived its efforts among Native Americans.

The African American schools funded by Dr. Bray’s Associates (in Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, and Rhode Island) disappeared, but some memory of Anglican outreach to African Americans remained, and significant initiatives by African Americans in Philadelphia and New York led to the creation of the first two free-standing African American Episcopal congregations. In Philadelphia, Absalom Jones (1746–1818) led a group of former members of St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church to form the African Episcopal

Church of St. Thomas (1792). Jones, a friend of African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) founder Richard Allen (1760–1831), was ordained a deacon in 1795 and priest in 1802, becoming the first African American ordained in a hierarchical church. In New York, Peter Williams Jr. served as rector of St. Philip's Church (1818).

In the following decade, African Americans created congregations in Baltimore (St. James', 1824), New Haven (St. Luke's, 1844), and Detroit (St. Matthew's, 1851). These early African American congregations were generally denied the representation in diocesan conventions that was accorded to congregations of European descent, on the grounds that black clergy had lower levels of education than that expected of European Americans.

Generally, African Americans who were enslaved did not have their own churches or clergy. In some cases they attended church with their masters or sat in separate slave galleries. In the two decades before the Civil War, however, patterns would change and separate slave chapels would become common in the South.

Gains and Losses

The first generation of Episcopal Church leaders was able to chip away at some of the remaining problems in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth. The General Convention finally agreed on a revised form of the Articles of Religion, in 1801, and a list of theological texts, in 1804, that included Gilbert Burnet's *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles* (1699). Burnet (1643–1715), a bishop who had argued for acceptance of greater theological diversity in the Church of England following the Glorious Revolution, suggested in his commentary that Anglicans were permitted to hold either a Calvinist or an Arminian position on predestination. The Calvinists (a label commonly used for those supportive of the judgments of the Synod of Dort, 1618–1619, and the Westminster Assembly of Divines, in the 1640s) argued that salvation rested on God's choice alone and not on any human effort. Arminians argued that salvation was in part dependent on human cooperation with the grace offered by God. Burnet's acceptance of either position quieted the concern of some New England Episcopalians about the character of the Articles of Religion. (For much of the eighteenth century apologists for the Anglican Church in New England had criticized the Congregational Church's stance on predestination. Congregational critics had responded by pointing to the seventeenth of the Thirty-nine Articles,

which to interpreters less agile than Burnet seemed to require the same view of predestination found in Congregational statements of faith.)

A second problem that took years to resolve concerned the status of church lands. A Supreme Court decision in 1815, which dealt with church property in Virginia territory that had been ceded to the District of Columbia, found the Commonwealth of Virginia's attempts to take over church land unconstitutional. The decision did not apply directly to the remainder of the territory in the Diocese of Virginia, but it had the effect of halting further seizure of church property in Virginia.

Nevertheless, the Episcopal Church's efforts prior to 1810 were, at best, a rear-guard action to limit the degree of loss. Those in the first generation of leaders of the church were exhausted, and most had either died or retired. By 1805 White was the only one of the first four bishops still active as a leader. Seabury of Connecticut had died, and Provoost of New York had retired. Bishop James Madison (1749–1812) of Virginia was still alive and leading the College of William and Mary, but he devoted little attention to the church, and there are no extant copies of journals from the Diocese of Virginia between 1805 and Madison's death in 1812. (Madison, a cousin of the president of the same name, in 1790 had been the last of the American clergy of the revolutionary period to receive consecration to the episcopate in England.)

In some cases the church's diocesan structure effectively disappeared. When Bishop-elect Charles Pettigrew (1744–1807) of North Carolina (elected in 1794 but never able to reach the triennial General Convention for consent and consecration) died in 1807, North Carolina ceased to function as a diocese. South Carolina sent no delegation to the General Convention between 1785 and 1814. On a parish level, there was little significant new growth, no concerted missionary effort to the western territories, and continuing losses in the number of parishes until 1810.

New Growth

In the second decade of the nineteenth century the church began a period of slow growth. Church statistics are incomplete for the period, but the number of clergy reported in the *Journal of the General Convention* of 1820 (314) would be roughly 75 percent greater than that reported in 1811 (178). The number of communicants (those who were baptized and confirmed and received Communion) tripled from 1830 to 1850. Even so, Episcopal communicants

accounted for less than 50 percent of the U. S. population in 1850.

Historians have disagreed as to why the church halted its decline in the second decade of the century. George Hodges (1856–1919), an apologist for the Episcopal Church, attributed the change to the uniform support that Episcopalians gave to the American side in the War of 1812. Many Anglicans had been Loyalists in the Revolution. In contrast, Hodges could point to support for the War of 1812 by Episcopal laity and clergy. Episcopal layman Francis Scott Key (1779–1843), author of the national anthem, was an example of this new patriotism. Presidents Madison (in office during the War of 1812) and Monroe (secretary of state during the war and Madison's successor as president) were also Episcopalians.

Instead of political explanations for new growth, mid-twentieth-century authors, such as William Wilson Manross (1905–1987), looked to a pair of new leaders: Bishop John Henry Hobart (1775–1830) of New York and Alexander Viets Griswold (1766–1843) of the Eastern Diocese (Rhode Island and other portions of New England that lacked bishops), both consecrated in 1811. Late-twentieth-century authors have looked in yet other directions. Historian Richard Rankin argued, in *Ambivalent Churchmen and Evangelical Churchwomen* (1993), that the growth of the Episcopal Church in North Carolina in the antebellum years was an indirect result of Methodist revivalism. Men, Rankin argued, become active in the Episcopal Church to keep their spouses away from Methodism.

In all probability it was a combination of these causes—a public image of being American rather than English, the appearance of a new, younger generation of leaders, a participation in (and reaction against) the revivalism of the Second Great Awakening, and the efforts of dedicated laywomen—that led to the improved fortunes of the church. The Diocese of New York clearly led, with both the vision of Bishop Hobart and the financial resources of Trinity Church, Wall Street, of which he was rector. Trinity Church wisely leased and rented—rather than sold—its land in the heart of New York City's financial district. It amassed financial resources that it devoted not only to parish initiatives but also to the diocese and the national church. Hobart presided over a sustained growth in his diocese, with clergy and congregations in the western part of the state increasing by an approximate average of 30 percent a year from 1812 to 1826.

Among Hobart's efforts was the revival of ministry among Native Americans, dormant since the time of the Revolution. Hobart supported the ministry of Eleazar

Williams (1788–1858) to the Oneida in western New York. In 1822 the Oneida moved to Wisconsin under pressure from the U.S. government. Williams, who may have had Mohawk ancestry but claimed to be of French royal descent, moved with them. Once in Wisconsin, Episcopal missionaries expanded their ministry to include the Ojibwa. Further Indian removals during the Civil War spread the Episcopal Church's ministry to South Dakota.

Hobart also led the formation of an effective high church party. He taught a high doctrine of the episcopacy—that the ministry of bishops was an essential element of the Christian faith. For Hobart, the apostolic tradition provided certainty and stability in a changing and uncertain age. He discouraged clergy participation in the American political system and rejected cooperation with churches that lacked episcopacy. He declined to offer employment to Episcopal clergy who were members of such evangelical ecumenical organizations as the American Bible Society or the American Sunday School Union. His attitudes toward the conduct of worship were not distinctly different from those of other Episcopalians, but he was more ready than many of his coreligionists to stress differences between Episcopal and Reformed doctrine that lay behind parts of the service. He criticized the Reformed doctrine of immediate rewards and punishments on death, for example, noting that the Episcopal burial service spoke of a resurrection that would be delayed until Christ's return.

One indirect result of Hobart's policies in New York was the creation of an opposing evangelical Episcopal party in the Washington, D.C., area. Natives of Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia joined with clergy from New England and New York who disagreed with Hobart's attitudes on ecumenism and politics or were denied the possibility of employment there. By the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century, the "District clergy" led a lively evangelical party that stressed cooperation with other Protestants and the importance of adult conversion. William Holland Wilmer (1782–1827) and other leaders of this evangelical party had no scruples about involvement in the political order and often had personal ties to the political leaders in the new Republic. Evangelical clergyman and later bishop Charles Pettit McIlvaine (1799–1873) was, for example, the son of a U.S. senator, and clergyman James Milnor (1773–1845) was himself a member of Congress before his ordination. Historian Allan Guelzo has argued that from 1830 until the Civil War, evangelical Episcopalians were most often aligned with the National Republican

Party or the Whig Party. Three Whig Episcopalians served as presidents in the 1840s—William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, and Zachary Taylor—and Whig congressional leader Henry Clay of Kentucky became an Episcopalian in 1847.

The number of states represented at the General Convention began gradually to climb in the second decade of the nineteenth century. New Hampshire sent its first deputation in 1811. South Carolina began to send a deputation again in 1814. The first North Carolina deputation appeared in 1817. The first deputation from west of the Appalachian Mountains—Ohio—appeared in 1823. It was soon followed by Mississippi (1826), Kentucky (1829), and Alabama, Tennessee, and Michigan (1832).

In 1820 deputies to the General Convention from Pennsylvania, which had its own diocesan missionary organization, persuaded the convention to create the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. The General Convention tinkered with the constitution of the organization for fifteen years before arriving at a successful combination in 1835: a revised canon indicating universal membership for members in the Episcopal Church and a new canon allowing the board of directors of the Missionary Society to suggest new missionary districts for which the General Convention would elect missionary bishops. Before 1835 laity and clergy who had migrated west formed parishes and elected and funded their own candidates for bishops without denominational support. Individuals and organizations in New York became the largest contributors to the new national organization, which supported a succession of missionary bishops for the West, most of whom were sympathetic to the high church ideas common in New York. Evangelical candidates were, however, often elected to serve in overseas missions such as Liberia, China, and Japan.

Women and Men in Mission

From early on, missionary teams sent by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society included both men and women. The Episcopal Church's first overseas mission team went to the newly independent nation of Greece (which had fought a war of independence from the Ottoman Empire, 1821–1832). By 1835 the team headed by John H. Hill included Frances Maria Mulligan Hill (Hill's spouse), Elizabeth and Frederica Mulligan (Frances Hill's sisters), Julia A. Henshaw Robertson (spouse of mission team member J. J. Robertson and sister of Episcopal bishop John P. K. Henshaw), and Mary Briscoe Baldwin (first cousin of educator Mary Julia Baldwin after whom a college in Staunton, Virginia, is named).

The efforts of the national missionary society were undergirded by a series of local and diocesan societies and support groups. As historian Pamela Darling has noted (in *New Wine*, 1994, p. 15), so many of the local or diocesan auxiliaries supporting the society were women's groups that "the term 'auxiliary' gradually became almost synonymous with women's organizations."

Some women, such as the unnamed Philadelphia resident who wrote to Presiding Bishop White in 1811 requesting ordination to the priesthood, sought leadership on equal grounds with men, but their successes in these efforts were limited. More often women supported ministries for which they did not receive full public recognition. Even the name of this early advocate of women's priesthood has been lost; Bishop's White's nineteenth-century biographer removed it from the correspondence to her that he reprinted in a life-and-letters volume.

Women worked as church school teachers, organized the social events that raised a significant percentage of church funding by the mid-nineteenth century, and after 1845 served in church sisterhoods. The first such sister, Anne Ayres (1816–1896) of New York, was admitted as a sister in 1845. It was not clear at the time whether she distinguished between the orders of nuns that were growing rapidly in the Roman Catholic Church and the order of deaconesses that had been revived in the Lutheran Church in Germany in 1836. In the second half of century, it would be clear that Episcopal women were following both of these patterns.

New Educational Institutions

By the 1820s Episcopalians were able to found a new round of colleges—the institutions now known as Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, New York (1822); Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut (1823); and Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio (1824)—as well as the denomination's first theological seminaries—General Theological Seminary in New York (1822); Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia (1823); and Bexley Hall (the theology department of Kenyon College, which was founded in 1824). Two decades later Episcopalians founded a school for women, St. Mary's College, in Raleigh, North Carolina (1842).

The seminaries proved a more efficient means of preparing candidates for the ministry than had the earlier pattern of candidates preparing for ordination with individual clergy. The new institutions may, however, have also added to the theological tensions in the denomination. The General Theological Seminary in New York became a center of

theological controversy about the ideas of the Oxford Movement and the Cambridge Camden Society. The Oxford Movement began at Oriel College, Oxford, England, in 1833. The Oxford divines, or “Tractarians,” as they were known for the series of pamphlets (Tracts for the Times) that they published, criticized the state control of the Anglican Church in England and Ireland, rejected adult conversion experiences as illusory, looked to the early and medieval church for models of church life, and called for a stronger leadership by bishops. The Cambridge Camden Society (founded at the University of Cambridge in 1839) advocated a revival of Gothic architecture and a more elaborate ritual than what was then generally practiced.

Early supporters at General Theological Seminary and elsewhere in the United States were criticized as crypto-Roman Catholics. The House of Bishops sent a team of visitors to examine the attitudes of the General Theological Seminary faculty. Evangelical scholars, such as Bishop McIlvaine of Ohio, wrote books denouncing the new ideas, and individual bishops disciplined clergy and seminarians suspected of holding improper ideas. Some of the early American advocates of the adoption of Oxford theological ideas and Cambridge ritual ideas followed the example of English Tractarian John Henry Newman (1801–1890) and entered the Roman Catholic Church. Among those who did so were at least twenty-nine Episcopal clergy, including Bishop Levi Silliman Ives (1797–1867) of North Carolina, the son-in-law of Bishop Hobart. Later in the century, however, it would be the supporters of Oxford theology and Cambridge ritual who would remain in the church, while some of their evangelical coreligionists would leave to form the Reformed Episcopal Church (1873).

The Anglican Communion

Episcopalians in the years after the American Revolution had emphasized their separation from England. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, they began to reclaim and expand on some of the ties to the Church of England that they still maintained. They used a form of the same liturgy and traced the episcopal succession of their bishops to English and Scottish Anglicans.

What is known today as the Anglican Communion—the worldwide family of churches that descend from the Church of England—lacked any institutional expression prior to the Civil War. Episcopalians in the United States played a leading role in the creation of such structures. The General Convention of 1838 initiated correspondence with

the primates of England, Ireland, and Scotland. In the 1840s Episcopalians began to include references to the Anglican Communion in church publications, such as the *Episcopal Church Annual*. In 1851 Bishop John Henry Hopkins (1792–1868) of Vermont wrote a public letter to the archbishop of Canterbury suggesting a meeting of Anglican bishops from throughout the world. Bishop William R. Whittingham (1805–1879) of Maryland and Bishop Francis Fulford (1803–1868) of Montreal soon supported the idea, but it would not be until 1867 that such a gathering (the Lambeth Conference) finally took place.

Attitudes About Slavery

The Episcopal Church’s experience with slavery in the 1840s and 1850s was in many ways the mirror opposite of that of the Baptist and Methodist Churches. The latter churches divided prior to the Civil War because they disagreed strongly about slavery. In the Episcopal Church, in contrast, it was the onset of war that brought divisions over slavery to the surface.

A curious balance of attitudes and church parties kept Episcopalians silent about the morality of slavery prior to the outbreak of war. A significant percentage of Episcopal clergy and laity in the South were slave owners, and some Episcopalians in the North, such as the DeWolf family of Rhode Island, benefited significantly from the slave trade. Many members of the high church party, moreover, honored Bishop Hobart’s legacy by refraining from involvement in political issues. Evangelical Episcopalians did favor involvement in the political arena, but most of those in the South either supported the institution of slavery as biblical (the position taken by Bishop Leonidas K. Polk, 1806–1864, of Louisiana, who owned three hundred slaves) or favored gradual methods of abolition, such as encouraging voluntary emancipation by individual owners and immigration of black people to Liberia (a position taken by Bishop William Meade, 1789–1862, of Virginia).

There were three important exceptions to this noninvolvement in the abolition movement. African American clergy, such as Peter Williams Jr. (1780?–1840) of New York, spoke out against slavery. They were, however, marginalized in the church (often unrepresented, for example, in the diocesan convention) and therefore limited in their opportunity to convince others to share their antislavery views. Some Northern evangelical laypersons (such as William Jay, 1789–1858, of New York and Salmon P. Chase, 1808–1873, of Ohio) and clergy (such as Bishop McIlvaine of Ohio,

Dudley Tyng, 1825–1858, of Philadelphia. E. M. P. Wells, 1790–1875, of Boston) spoke out against slavery, particularly after 1850. Some Southern women, such as Anne Meade Page (1781–1838, the sister of Bishop Meade), Mary Berkeley Minor Blackford (1802–1896), and Margaret Mercer (1792–1846) of Virginia, and Angelina (1805–1879) and Sarah (1792–1873) Grimké of South Carolina (who left the South and the Episcopal Church) were also vocal about their opposition to slavery.

The onset of the Civil War freed Northern evangelical Episcopalians to take a more active role against slavery. Salmon Chase, President Abraham Lincoln's secretary of the Treasury, and Bishop McIlvaine lobbied for Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which would free the slaves, and McIlvaine traveled to England in an attempt to convince the English not to support the Confederacy. The Reverend Stephen Tyng (1800–1885), who had been less supportive of abolitionism than was his son Dudley, joined the American Tract Society of Boston, which was abolitionist in sentiment, and addressed its May 1860 meeting.

Division and Reunion

Episcopalians in the South organized a separate General Council following the secession of the Southern states. The council made minor political changes in the Book of Common Prayer and in the Constitutions and Canons. The Northern states, which remained in the General Convention, adopted a resolution and pastoral letter critical of the South, but with the war's end the bishops of North Carolina (Thomas Atkinson, 1807–1881) and of Arkansas (Henry Lay, 1823–1885) were admitted to the General Convention of 1865. The fact that the church's presiding bishop, Bishop Hopkins of Vermont, had written a defense of the scriptural nature of slavery during the war, and that the two returning Southern bishops had little enthusiasm about secession before the war undoubtedly contributed to the ease of reunion. Seeing the favorable reception of their colleagues, other Southern bishops agreed within months to disband the separate General Council and rejoin the General Convention. One remainder of the Southern experience during the Civil War survived; some Southern dioceses retained the name of "council" for their annual diocesan gatherings, rather than returning to the name of "convention" that was more generally used in the Episcopal Church.

See also *Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Canada: Anglicans; Education:*

Seminaries and Theological Education; Episcopalians entries; Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Great Awakening(s); Missions: Native American; Politics: Nineteenth Century; Women: Protestant; Worship: Anglican.

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Episcopalians: The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era

The Episcopal Church underwent considerable growth and major changes in the years between the end of the Civil War, in 1865, and the late 1920s, enhancing its reputation as the church of the urban elite, while simultaneously providing leadership in the Social Gospel movement to apply Christian principles to the reform of the American social and economic order.

During the Gilded Age, a term coined by Charles Dudley Warner and Mark Twain (and the title of their novel of 1873), in the decades that followed the Civil War, vast new fortunes were accumulated by "captains of industry" (also known as robber barons) in the course of the nation's transformation through urbanization, industrialization, and

immigration. Many of these newly rich urbanites were given to conspicuous display of their wealth and looked to Britain as the pacesetter in fashion. This Anglophilia was manifested in part in their attraction to the Episcopal Church, which had long been associated in the American imagination with aristocratic culture. The Progressive Era, which overlapped the Gilded Age in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and extended through President Woodrow Wilson's administration in the early twentieth, was characterized by a sense of progress not only through advances in science and technology but also in employing a scientific approach to urban poverty and corruption through "good government"—that is, municipal reform based on the application of the social sciences to real-life problems. Many Episcopalians were active in Progressivism, especially through their participation in the Social Gospel movement.

This tension in American Episcopalianism was exhibited on November 6, 1895, when the heiress Consuelo Vanderbilt was forced by her mother into marriage to the ninth duke of Marlborough, an English nobleman whom she loathed. The wedding was celebrated at St. Thomas Episcopal Church on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue, with New York bishop Henry Codman Potter presiding. This same Bishop Potter was also one of his age's leading advocates of the rights of labor, as expressed in his mediation of many strikes and his authorship of pastoral letters such as "The Laborer not a Commodity." That this church leader should be able to cater to an Anglophilic social elite in their sometimes dubious antics while simultaneously serving as a prophetic witness to the rights of the oppressed is a key to understanding the complexity of the Episcopal Church in the decades between the Civil War and the beginning of the Great Depression in 1929.

The Gilded Age was also a time of rapid growth both in numbers and in prestige for what was still officially known as the Protestant Episcopal Church. Although the denomination's social standing had roots in its established status in several of the American colonies and the at least nominal adherence of many of the founders of the Republic, disestablishment after the Revolution had tarnished the church's cachet, and it was forced to share the status of an elite church with other regionally rooted traditions, such as Boston's Unitarians, Philadelphia's Quakers, and Pittsburgh's Presbyterians. The Gilded Age's newly wealthy, however, were powerfully attracted to this predominantly urban church that boasted an aristocratic English lineage and the

ceremonialism and decorum of which contrasted favorably with the liturgical drabness of the Reformed denominations. As a national upper class began to emerge during this period, the Episcopal Church presented itself—together with art museums, country clubs, and church-sponsored prep schools—as one of the premier institutions through which the "best" families of the nation's northeastern quadrant could network and intermarry. Paradoxically, this was also a church at the forefront of the Social Gospel movement, and one of the active and innovative denominations in responding to the intertwined challenges of immigration, industrialization, and urbanization.

Factionalism

The 1865 General Convention of the Episcopal Church—a triennial legislative assemblage composed of bishops and lay and clerical "deputies"—was a tacit act of reconciliation of the tensions within the church brought about by the "recent unpleasantness," during which the Southern dioceses had withdrawn to form the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America. This short-lived group dissolved with little fanfare as its representatives appeared at the convention without controversy. The postbellum church, however, would rapidly resume the arguments that had previously divided it over questions of theology focused, as befitted Anglicans, on matters of worship and ritual. For some decades Episcopalians had divided along lines of "high church"—those emphasizing the centrality of sacramental worship and the institutional continuity represented in the "historic episcopate," or apostolic succession of bishops—and "low church"—those who saw Episcopalianism as one among a variety of forms of evangelical Protestantism stressing the need for personal regeneration and worship based on biblical preaching.

The high churchmanship of the antebellum era, represented by New York's Bishop John Henry Hobart and that city's General Theological Seminary, was transformed during the century's middle decades by the impact of the Oxford Movement in England, which gave a new centrality to the "catholic" character of Anglicanism as exemplified in its sacramental worship and the apostolic origins of its lineage of bishops. A number of both British and American "Tractarians," as the movement's adherents came to be known, actually converted to Roman Catholicism. Tractarianism morphed during the Victorian era into what became known as "Ritualism," a designation that highlighted the stress placed on the elaborate minutiae of worship (clerical

vestments and chancel apparatus, including candles and crucifixes, which bore Latinate names evocative of their “Romanist” origins).

Ritualism spread rapidly in the later nineteenth century, manifested in parishes such as Boston’s Church of the Advent, New York’s Saint Mary the Virgin, Philadelphia’s St. Mark’s and St. Clement’s, and Chicago’s Ascension, whose frequent use of incense and other liturgical devices gained them the sobriquet of “bells and smells.” The Chicago area and nearby Wisconsin, especially the newly created diocese of Fond du Lac, became the geographical center of the movement and gained the (somewhat derisive) nickname “the Biretta Belt,” after the distinctive Roman-style headgear favored by its clergy. (A photograph of such-minded bishops, gathered in 1900 for an Episcopal consecration—and arrayed in disparate, colorful, and elaborate garb—became known as the “Fond du Lac Circus.”) The Nashotah House seminary in Wisconsin remains to this day the primary training ground for the movement, although New York’s General Theological Seminary historically has been associated, though less dramatically, with this Anglo-Catholic wing of the Episcopal Church.

The introduction of ritualistic practices in these parishes frequently earned the hostility of “low church” bishops, such as Massachusetts’s Manton Eastburn and Ohio’s Charles Pettit McIlvaine, and the General Conventions that followed the Civil War saw any number of resolutions introduced against what were perceived as the excesses of the Anglo-Catholic faction. The election of James DeKoven as bishop first of Wisconsin and then of Illinois in the mid-1870s was rejected by the House of Bishops. The more extreme faction of the evangelical party, however, which stressed the need for personal conversion and the authority of scripture, did not regard a minor series of victories and compromises as sufficient to affirm indubitably the distinctively Protestant character of their church; in 1873 Assistant Bishop George Cummins of Kentucky and Charles Cheney, who had been deposed from the priesthood in Chicago, founded the Reformed Episcopal Church as an alternative to the parent group, but it has never flourished numerically.

The Broad Church Movement

Both the Anglo-Catholic and evangelical factions, together with their ever-shifting subfactions, continued as constituents of the Episcopal Church, but their efforts to dominate the church came to naught as a new movement began to eclipse them in both numbers and influence. The adherents

of this Broad Church movement never sought to form a faction, and consequently never formulated a coherent or consistent platform. The origins of the movement lay in mid-nineteenth-century England, beginning with the publication of *Essays and Reviews* by a distinguished avant-garde group of theologians in 1860. These essays were among the first to bring the fruits of German biblical scholarship to the Anglo-American public, and they left considerable controversy in their wake. American Broad Church advocates, whose origins lay in the ecumenical vision of William Augustus Muhlenberg in the antebellum era, combined an expansive view of the church’s relationship to the broader array of Christian denominations with an optimistic openness to the era’s new intellectual currents—most prominently, Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution—and their implications for Christian thought and life. That the Episcopal Church avoided the wrenching conflicts experienced by other denominations during this era—most notably the Presbyterians—over issues of fundamental belief and especially scriptural interpretation is an indication of the success of Broad Church principles. (Charles Augustus Briggs, professor of biblical studies at New York’s Union Theological Seminary, was suspended from the Presbyterian ministry for drawing unorthodox conclusions from his scholarship; he was soon thereafter ordained as an Episcopal priest.)

One of the most prominent exponents of Broad Church principles was William Reed Huntington, rector of New York’s Grace Church, who helped articulate and promote the growing conviction of many Episcopal leaders that their denomination could serve as the basis for an inclusive national church. Although such efforts toward ecumenical union bore little immediate fruit, Huntington’s ideas did serve as a major stimulus toward the adoption by the American church in 1886 and by the Church of England two years later of resolutions that became conflated into what has since been known as the Chicago–Lambeth Quadrilateral. This brief document, now looked upon as the basis of a common Anglican identity, makes no assertions about particular contested doctrinal points, such as the virgin birth, but rather identifies four fundamental vehicles through which religious truth has been conveyed since early Christian times: the Holy Scriptures; the two sacraments, baptism and the Eucharist; the creeds of the early church; and the historic episcopate, that is, bishops whose authority has been passed down in direct succession from their prototypes, the twelve apostles of Jesus. The adoption of the Quadrilateral

on both sides of the Atlantic was a formative moment in the emergence of a shared heritage among the churches that had their origin in the Church of England and, though some had now gained independent status as the British Empire began its gradual dissolution, nevertheless were united by “mystic chords of memory” and worship based on the Book of Common Prayer. The conferences of bishops from the entire Anglican world at Lambeth Palace, in London, first convened by the archbishop of Canterbury in 1867, have been a major vehicle for promoting a sense that the Episcopal Church shares a heritage and continuing commonality not only with its parent church but with others of similar provenance and practice.

Another leading advocate of Broad Church principles was Phillips Brooks, rector of Boston’s Trinity Church in newly fashionable Copley Square and later bishop of Massachusetts. One of the “princes of the pulpit” at a time when the clergy of downtown churches were renowned for their eloquence and their sermons were printed in Monday’s newspapers, Brooks gained his celebrity not through the originality of his thought but through his ability to convey a sense that Christians could be at ease in the new American urban culture they were helping to shape. Brooks was also instrumental in the “Church Congress” movement, a series of conferences sponsored by the Episcopal Church and designed to provide a forum for a multitude of viewpoints on religious and social issues of the day.

The Social Gospel

The Social Gospel was another current in the discourse of American Christians at the turn of the twentieth century in which Episcopalians exerted leadership and reflected the Broad Church emphasis on the interaction of the church with the broader society. Although Episcopalians were not among the most prominent theologians of the movement, they responded in a variety of creative ways to the social crises that had resulted from massive immigration and rapid industrialization and urbanization. New York’s bishop Henry Codman Potter, cited at the beginning of this essay for his blessing of one of the more notorious marriages in Gotham society, used his considerable influence to lobby for progressive social legislation and to mediate labor disputes. The social teachings of English theologians such as F.D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley, and the early settlement houses such as London’s Toynbee Hall that resulted from their impact, were highly influential on the vision of social action of American Episcopalians, who adapted them to local circumstances.

William S. Rainsford, the Irish-born rector of St. George’s Church in Manhattan’s Stuyvesant Square, was another example of the seeming paradoxes of the Episcopal role in the social crises of the time. St. George’s long-time senior warden (or chief lay leader) was J.P. Morgan, arguably the most powerful financial leader in the America of his day, who prided himself on holding vestry meetings in what is now the Morgan Library and Museum on Madison Avenue. Despite Morgan’s conservative social views and evangelical leanings, he gave his full faith and credit to Rainsford’s ministry, once he had satisfied himself as to the soundness of his rector’s character. The result was the growth of St. George’s into a prototypical “institutional church,” a new and distinctively American response to the urban age. Such churches, which proliferated in Manhattan and other major cities among other denominations as well, were characterized both by their massive physical plants—financed heavily, in St. George’s case, by Morgan’s munificence—as well as by the programming they sponsored not simply for their own parishioners but for the largely immigrant poor who still in this era were not geographically isolated from the well-to-do. Health services, educational programs, summer camps, employment counseling, and other sorts of social outreach—as well as religious services offered at offshoot missions—were provided by lay volunteers as well as by the religious professionals who made up the often extensive staffs of such churches.

Episcopalians participated in the Social Gospel movement in a variety of other ways. Richard T. Ely, who taught economics at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and the University of Wisconsin, helped reformulate economic theory in a way that substituted Christian principles for the amoral and impersonal laissez-faire theory of markets that constituted the conventional wisdom of the day. W.D.P. Bliss, an Episcopal priest and socialist, edited the *Encyclopedia of Social Reform* (1908) as a comprehensive source of accurate data on social issues and also helped found in 1887 the Church Association for the Advancement of Labor (CAIL), which numbered some fifty bishops among its membership.

Women’s Roles

It was in the realm of social service and reform that Episcopal women began to play an active role in a church that barred them from ordination until the 1970s (and even from serving as deputies at the General Convention until 1967). Although formally disenfranchised, they had by the

mid-nineteenth century began to play active roles in church life that reflected Victorian America's conception of women as most appropriately engaged in nurture and service. These roles began with voluntary staffing of growing parish neighborhood outreach programs and support for the Women's Auxiliary to the Board of Missions, which was for several decades, beginning in 1872, energetically led by the four Emery sisters. (Mary Abbot Emery; her sisters Julia, Susan, and Margaret; and two brothers who became Episcopal priests were part of a remarkable New England family dedicated to the work of the church.) Episcopal women, though barred from formal leadership roles, demonstrated that they could nevertheless exercise powerful leadership in shaping their church's mission.

The opportunities for women to serve in the church reflected the bifurcation of Anglican–Episcopal identity along Catholic–Protestant lines. Beginning in 1852, when Anne Ayres and William Augustus Muhlenberg founded the Sisterhood of the Holy Communion in New York City, the revival of the religious orders that had begun in Victorian England in the wake of the Oxford Movement now found itself translated into the United States. (These orders had been suppressed during the English Reformation in the 1530s and 1540s by Henry VIII, largely because the king coveted their extensive land holdings.) Other orders, some branches of those founded in England, for both men and women followed. The Society of Saint John the Evangelist—also known as the Cowley Fathers—was perhaps the best known, and its members found themselves in continual difficulty as they introduced Anglo–Catholic ritualism into parishes such as Boston's Church of the Advent in the face of the hostility of local bishops. Although these orders never came close to approaching the dimensions of their Roman Catholic counterparts, their presence helped provide a Catholic dimension to American Episcopal identity, manifesting itself primarily in the areas of social service and education.

Anglican sisterhoods engaged in a variety of such activities, including the management and staffing of hospitals, orphanages, and schools for girls. Their reputation was enhanced by the heroism shown by the Community of St. Mary during the yellow fever epidemic that shook Memphis in 1878, during which four members of the order died while caring for the sick. Despite such achievements, the notion of sisterhoods based on the Roman Catholic model did not sit well with many Episcopalians, and a more Protestant model for women's service emerged in 1889 with

the establishment of the office of deaconess by the General Convention. Deaconesses, who had counterparts in other American denominations, differed from religious sisters or nuns in that they did not take perpetual vows or live in community. They also differed from male deacons in that they were not considered to have been ordained to the ranks of the clergy. These unmarried women were trained for religious and social service, such as nursing, at a number of urban centers established for the purpose. They went on to help staff institutional churches, administer charitable organizations, and serve as foreign missionaries, a role for women promoted by the increasingly activist Women's Auxiliary.

Another way in which the spirituality and activism exhibited in these women's lives combined in a distinctively Anglican fashion was in the founding of lay organizations for both men and women. The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, for example, founded at St. James Church (later Cathedral) in Chicago in 1883, became popular nationally as a way in which young men could become involved in devotion, evangelism, and social service. A similarly influential organization for women was the Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross, founded in 1884 by Emily Malbone Morgan of Hartford, Connecticut. Composed of lay women living according to a monastic-like rule stressing personal spirituality and social justice, the companions were an active presence in Progressive Era reform causes. Prominent among them was Vida Dutton Scudder, a professor of English at Wellesley College who was active in the College Settlement House Association in Boston. Scudder wrote copiously, in fictional and other form, about her social and spiritual ideals, which she believed to have been derived from those of St. Francis of Assisi. She and her kindred spirits actively involved themselves in the investigation of the labor disputes of the period and successfully pressured the denomination to take a more active role in reform causes. Episcopal women were generally prominent in the settlement house movement, a campaign led mainly by women to establish centers where urban immigrants could come for education, recreation, and social services. Among them were Ellen Starr Gates, Jane Addams's companion at Hull House in Chicago, and Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch at Greenwich House in New York City.

Education

Another area where women, the religious orders, and others in the Episcopal community came together during this era was education. The Episcopal Church, unlike most other

denominations, put few resources into college founding; only a handful of institutions of higher learning, such as Sewanee in Tennessee, Kenyon in Ohio, and Hobart and William Smith in upstate New York had formal church relations. The one exception to this principle were several schools in the South, founded during the Reconstruction era as part of the church's outreach toward the newly freed slaves, such as St. Augustine's in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Voorhees in Denmark, South Carolina. The area of education in which Episcopalians did make a distinctive contribution was the "prep school" movement, that is, private boarding schools, mainly at the secondary level, that were founded with the mission of socializing an emergent elite for positions of leadership in the new urban American society that was taking shape. This complex of academies, mainly located in New England, was nicknamed "St. Grottlesex" after a conflation of the names of several of their most prominent exemplars: St. George's in Newport, Rhode Island; St. Mark's near Boston; St. Paul's in Concord, New Hampshire; and Groton and Middlesex in eastern Massachusetts. Other schools, such as Rosemary Hall in Connecticut (now merged with Choate), provided a church-affiliated alternative for young women that stressed rigorous academics combined with an emphasis on character and the "muscular Christianity" espoused by Endicott Peabody, Groton's legendary founding headmaster. These schools enjoyed a close relationship with Ivy League colleges, especially Yale, and shaped several generations of political and financial leaders, including Franklin D. Roosevelt (Groton, '00) and John F. Kennedy (Choate '35.) These schools still thrive, but their student bodies are intentionally diverse and their Episcopal affiliations often attenuated.

Church and Cathedral Building

One of the outward and visible signs of the identity of the prep school was its chapel, usually in the Gothic or Colonial Revival mode and designed by one of the leading ecclesiastical architects of the day such as Henry Vaughan or Ralph Adams Cram. These chapels were an outlying part of the larger assemblage of churches and cathedrals that can still be found in almost any American city of a certain size. The shaping forces behind this building campaign were the rapid growth of cities; the wealth available from both the *anciennes* and the *nouveaux riches* who made up a significant part of the laity; the drive for centralization of authority that led previously indifferent bishops to desire cathedrals as emblems of

a visible episcopal presence in their dioceses; and the Cambridge Movement that originated at the University of Cambridge in England in the 1840s. This "ecclesiological" movement, as it was also known, argued that only medieval Gothic architecture was appropriate for the authentically sacramental Christianity advocated by the parallel Oxford Movement; it soon had its followers on this side of the Atlantic. Richard Upjohn, the designer of Manhattan's Trinity Church (1846), helped popularize the style among American Episcopalians and other denominations, and invented the widely dispersed "Carpenter Gothic" style easily made from wooden planks. Upjohn's many Episcopal churches were augmented and sometimes replaced—as in the case of St. Thomas on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue—by later Gothic work by Ralph Adams Cram and his partner, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. The National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., conceived by that city's first bishop, Henry Yates Satterlee, was intended to be "a house of prayer for all people," a stunning architectural monument to the Episcopal ambition to serve as an unofficial church for the entire nation. The foundation stone for the cathedral was laid in 1907. Its subsequent uses for burials—Woodrow Wilson lies entombed in one of its aisles—and public events—George W. Bush addressed the nation following the events of September 11, 2001, from its pulpit—are evidence of the at least partial realization of Satterlee's vision.

Diversity

The Episcopal Church has often been characterized as embodying the culture of WASP (white Anglo-Saxon Protestant) America, and there is considerable truth in this characterization, especially for this era. Episcopalians, however, have never been uniformly of northwestern European origin, and the Episcopal Church did in fact engage in serious efforts to extend its presence to "all sorts and conditions," both domestically and abroad. Part of its non-Anglo constituency derived from its rooting both in the colonial South and in the British Empire more broadly. Although many freed slaves left their masters' churches—including the Episcopal—following the Civil War to affiliate with traditions of their own making, some stayed on. Similarly, new immigrants from the British West Indies found a familiar Anglican home at Episcopal churches in their new country. Most cities had at least one parish that was African American—St. Philip's in Harlem is a venerable example—often ritualistic in orientation and attracting the more affluent and better educated members of the black community.

In 1922 these parishes numbered 288 with 176 clergy and some 32,000 communicants.

The Episcopal Church's approach to nonwhites in the post-Civil War period can best be described as paternalistic. The church had never taken a formal stand against slavery, and opinion on that institution had been divided even in the North. Blacks had been ordained to the priesthood for some time, and in 1884 Bishop Payne Divinity School was founded as a segregated facility for training priests. (It later was merged into its parent body, Virginia Theological Seminary.) In 1918 two African Americans, Edwin T. Demby and Henry B. Delany, were consecrated as suffragan (assistant) bishops in Arkansas and North Carolina, respectively, but their supervisory work was restricted to black clergy and parishes. It would not be until the 1950s that the Episcopal Church would begin to move toward integration and serious involvement in the struggle for civil rights within the denomination and the broader society.

Episcopalians also engaged in outreach to other peoples and became responsible for particular Native American tribes as the federal government divided up responsibilities among different denominations following the Civil War. William Hobart Hare, the bishop of Nebraska, earned the honorific "Apostle to the Sioux." By the time of Hare's death in 1909, some half of the native peoples in South Dakota had become Episcopalians, and a number of native men had been ordained to the priesthood in various parts of the West where an Episcopal missionary presence had become established. Foreign missions also followed the spread of American influence abroad, including Brazil, Mexico, Haiti, Hawaii, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, with considerable work being done in China and Japan as well.

From the Civil War to the 1920s the Episcopal Church had experienced considerable numerical growth and expansion of influence, its name closely linked with the notion of an informal "Eastern Establishment" that wielded disproportionate influence in government, industry, and higher education. Although its attitudes were not always those of the nation at large—many Episcopalians demurred from the evangelical campaign for Prohibition—its membership was disproportionately found in the pages of the *Social Register* and *Who's Who*, and the graduates of its schools found easy access to Yale and subsequent berths on Wall Street or the State Department. Even so, many of its clergy, bishops, and laity continued throughout this time to use their influence, as avowed reformers or behind-the-scenes negotiators, to

alleviate the wretched conditions in which the urban poor especially found themselves laboring, even though few of those largely immigrant poor ever joined the Episcopal Church. It was, in short, a church of tensions and paradoxes that would continue to unfold in the decades that followed.

See also *Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Canada: Anglicans; Architecture: Protestant, From the Nineteenth Century to the Present; Education: Boarding Schools; Episcopalians entries; Mainline Protestants; Settlement Houses; Social Gospel; Women: Protestant; Women Religious; Worship: Anglican.*

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Episcopalians: Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

What is now the Episcopal Church came to North America as a branch of the Church of England in the colonial period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. After the American Revolution (1775–1783), the church organized its own life while holding closely to the worship and ministry of the English church and became part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Episcopalians thrived in the United States because of the church's democratic structures and emphasis on lay initiative. By the twentieth century Episcopalians were influential beyond their numbers and were an integral part of the religious mainstream.

At the annual meeting of the Church Congress on religious and social issues in 1902, Herbert Welsh, a layman from Philadelphia, gave a paper that probed the Episcopal Church's readiness to face a world in flux. Amid the "opportunities and dangers of a new century," Welsh wondered if the church could make "practical application of the truths taught by Christ to the changing needs of the modern world." He hoped the church could advance "the true standards of Christian civilization" and secure a role in "the guidance of national life. . . ." Welsh affirmed that "Christian civilization can be permeated and inspired by the mind and motive, the spirit and commands of Christ." The "fundamental truth which our Lord proclaimed was the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." Similarly the Reverend Loring Batten declared that the chief subject of Jesus' discourses was the kingdom of God and that "His mission in the world was to establish that kingdom." Batten described God's kingdom as an ideal society in which the principles of the gospel would govern life. It was an expression of eternal truth that would transform the world into its likeness.

The Centrality of the Kingdom

During the twentieth century Episcopalians clung to this ideal while refining church life in response to social and intellectual challenges. By the end of the twentieth century the kingdom of God would still be the defining ideal of church life, but it would be focused more on finding the proper shape of religious life than on transforming the world. In time, profound conflict over the meaning of this ideal would divide the church.

The kingdom of God was an ideal that originated in the Church of England and in liberal American Protestantism in the nineteenth century. It inspired the Social Gospel movement, which became noted for ministries to the poor, especially in cities. Episcopalians such as William Reed Huntington encouraged the idea of a national church on the basis of God's kingdom. He envisioned the church as a catalyst for remaking American life. The national church ideal entailed urgent attention to the needs of disenfranchised persons as well as to a dynamic view of faith. These intentions surfaced at the Church Congress in 1902.

Early in the twentieth century there was a widespread consensus among Episcopalians that the church had a formative social role to play and that in order to fulfill this role it must retain a clear, distinctive identity. The church seemed well balanced between an emphasis on its role in society and

its own identity, and the kingdom of God was the concept that provided the foundation for that balance. This ideal encouraged an elaborate church structure that envisioned the kingdom in practical terms. Episcopalians viewed their task as building up the church so that it could transform the world. One of the first church leaders to articulate this vision was Bishop William Lawrence of Massachusetts (1850–1941). Lawrence insisted that the church must adopt advanced methods of organization and business practice lest the world not take it seriously. A friend of industrialist J. P. Morgan, himself an Episcopalian, Lawrence persuaded Morgan to make major donations to the church, including funds to create pensions for Episcopal clergy.

Lawrence was not alone in his focus on improved organization as the means to the kingdom of God. Certain of their responsibility for the divine kingdom, Episcopalians were intent on functioning efficiently. Major parishes such as Trinity Church, Wall Street, in New York City, and Trinity Church, Boston, organized their life around committees with delegation of responsibilities, evaluations of the impact of their ministries, and regular reports. At the same time, the national organization of the church became centralized and regularized. This was apparent in the growth of departments touching all facets of church life in its New York City headquarters. Particular emphasis was given to mission, to Christian education, and to women's work. Modern business management shaped the pathway to the kingdom.

This pathway required a critical eye on society. Thoroughly integrated into American life, Episcopalians were not slow to cite trends they found disturbing. The records of church conventions from the early twentieth century include resolutions decrying alarming trends, such as alcoholism and divorce. Episcopalians were intent on being catalysts for moral improvement and for ministering to those who were disaffected. The presence of many Episcopalians in business, government, and community life combined with the ideal of the kingdom of God to give the church an influential public role. Episcopalians also were prominent in religious life, notably in ecumenical affairs. Early in the century Charles Henry Brent (1862–1929), who served in the Philippines and as bishop of Western New York, was a leader in international talks among Christian bodies. Later Bishop Stephen Bayne (1908–1974) was a leader of ecumenical and intra-Anglican discussions. Similarly prominent lay persons such as Robert Gardiner (1855–1924) also left indelible impressions of Episcopal leadership.

Increasing attention to worship also reflected the church's intention to be God's kingdom on earth. In 1928 the General Convention, a triennial meeting of clergy and laity, authorized a new edition of the Book of Common Prayer, but it did not expect that this version of the Prayer Book would stand for all time. The convention created a Standing Liturgical Commission to standardize worship practice and to anticipate future changes in liturgy. By the twentieth century Episcopalians were not only devoted to managing the church effectively and keeping a critical eye on society, but they began to assume that ongoing social changes would require future adjustments in the way the church and its offices were constituted.

For most of the twentieth century this focus on building the church so that it could build society proved fruitful. The combination of the church's emphasis on effectiveness in its operations and security in its social niche afforded Episcopalians an impressive capacity to minister to American life. Episcopalians were among the most educated and affluent of religious groups. With their membership concentrated on the East Coast and in major cities Episcopalians were visible in the nation's elite circles. It seemed fitting that in New York City and in Washington, D.C., the church would begin construction of major cathedrals, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (in 1892) and Washington National Cathedral (in 1907). As focal points, these structures dramatized the church's intention to offer an American expression of the kingdom of God.

The Need for Diversity

The Episcopal Church was never homogeneous and was not composed solely of social elites. African American Episcopalians, after the Civil War, created an impressive church subculture in the face of discrimination. They sustained their own parishes, in a few dioceses had assisting bishops, and were often educated in separate schools and colleges. Edward Demby (1869–1957) was the first African American to serve as bishop. He became suffragan (assistant) bishop for “colored work” in Arkansas in 1918 and was joined two months later by Henry Delany (1858–1928) of North Carolina. The number of African American Episcopalians grew during the twentieth century, and they responded to prejudice with a firm vision of God's kingdom. When women were ordained priests in the 1970s, an African American, Pauli Murray (1910–1985), was one of the first. A prominent civil rights lawyer, she fulfilled a life-long dream when ordination became possible. Similarly, tiny

numbers of Hispanic and Asian Episcopalians also increased as diversity became a principal mark of Episcopal advance toward the kingdom of God. But until the last decades of the century diversity in the church masked acceptance of inequalities more than it prompted efforts to overcome them. Consensus was the priority for most of the century. Apparent church unity masked differences in worship and leadership style.

There was a fault line between “high church,” or Anglo-Catholic, Episcopalians and those who were “low church.” High church adherents valued the Eucharist as the central form of worship, accompanied by elaborate forms of ceremony, and emphasized Roman Catholic dimensions of the English past, while low church, or evangelical, Episcopalians elevated the church's Reformation heritage, diminished the role of ceremonial practices, and stressed the centrality of the Bible and pastoral care. Anglo-Catholics were prominent in parts of the upper Midwest, while low church Episcopalians defined church life in the mid-Atlantic region and parts of the Northeast. In the Deep South a high church tendency was apparent, and this inclination spread as the church grew westward. It was a portent of the church's later emphasis on enhanced ceremonial and the Eucharist. This emphasis became a principal expression of the commitment to a distinctive identity focused on the kingdom of God.

Church leaders sought to build Episcopal life according to this ideal. In the century's early years this intention reflected an optimistic view of history and of the world. Bishop William T. Manning (1866–1949) of New York promoted construction of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine as a dramatic expression of the church's ability to redeem the world while sustaining a distinctive Christian identity. Notable Episcopal missionaries shared this intention. Henry St. George Tucker (1874–1959) went to Japan late in the nineteenth century and became bishop of Kyoto during his service there. Tucker expanded church schools and hospitals as primary expressions of the intention to redeem the world. Tucker believed that the twentieth century would witness a realization of Christianity's capacity to shape modern life. In 1923 he resigned his post and returned to the United States, convinced that the Japanese church should have Japanese leadership. Later presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, he anticipated the end of colonialism after World War II.

In Search of Revitalization

Manning sensed the end of an era in which it was possible to believe that the course of world events and the church's

intentions were aligned. He emphasized the church's ministries as means of redeeming an imperfect world, and he stressed that the church should retain a distinctive identity. The church must minister to the world but must also be distinct from it. He spoke for many Episcopalians whose sensibilities were jolted by World War I. The United States entry into the war in 1917 had been supported by most Americans, but pictures of wartime Europe left troubling images of mass destruction. The application of technology for the purpose of taking human life and flattening human communities eroded the optimism of the early twentieth century. Episcopalians became wary of aspects of modern life that veered from the pathway toward the kingdom. They resolved that the church must mend the world's flaws. The need for the church to assume this stance became apparent with the onset of economic depression late in 1929.

Several Episcopalians became known for formulating social critiques. Vida Dutton Scudder (1861–1954), a teacher, writer, and socialist, linked her political stance to Christian belief in the incarnation. With a small group of women she founded the first successful settlement house in a poor Boston neighborhood to identify with and assist the poor. Her political position became increasingly radical, and by 1930 she had espoused pacifism. Scudder was an exemplar of ground-breaking leadership by a woman before women could be ordained clergy. A further social critique came from Bishop William Scarlett (1883–1973) of Missouri. Friend of theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, Scarlett became known as “the conscience of the community” for his efforts to bring a Christian perspective on social issues. He advocated for the jobless and homeless during the depression years. His compassion fueled other liberal intentions such as permitting divorced people to remarry in the church. In the aftermath of World War II he led a church commission that cited atomic weapons and race relations as subjects of moral conflict. Scudder, Scarlett, and others urged that the church become activist in presuming to model what society must become.

As some Episcopalians sought social revitalization, others pursued renewal of the church's faith and worship. From the early 1950s there was a concerted movement to revise the church's Book of Common Prayer. Seminary professor and liturgy scholar Massey Shepherd (1913–1990) defined the shape of this initiative. Steeped in the new scholarship on ancient liturgy, Shepherd worked patiently to lay a thorough foundation. Through the church's Standing Liturgical Commission, pamphlets steadily appeared presenting suggested

modification and emphasizing recovery of an emphasis on baptism as the mark of Christian identity, on the Eucharist as the central act of worship, and on the role of the laity in leading worship and church life. Liturgical revision was an extended process that would culminate in the mid-1970s amid turmoil in the church that Shepherd and other worship scholars could not have foreseen.

A need for deepened spirituality was clear to some. Prior to World War II, parish priest Samuel Shoemaker (1893–1963) promoted moral and spiritual reform, notably contributing to the development of Alcoholics Anonymous from his post at Calvary Church, New York City. Moving to Calvary Church, Pittsburgh, in 1952, he emphasized spiritual renewal through small groups meeting to discuss personal faith and Christian life. Politically conservative, Shoemaker became an anti-communist speaker and writer. Late in his career he emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit and so laid a basis for the charismatic movement that blossomed in the 1970s.

Beginning in the 1950s efforts to link social justice and spiritual reform would diverge as liberal and conservative factions in the church hardened. However, in the wake of two world wars and economic depression, Episcopalians agreed that the world must be redeemed and that the faith and the church must be revitalized for this task. After World War II a new spirit of church initiative burst forth. It was apparent not only in efforts at spiritual renewal and in revising the liturgy, but in fresh energies for the church's ministries. The expansion of suburban America brought unprecedented growth to the Episcopal Church, and its locus began to shift from older urban settings toward the suburbs and toward growing metropolitan areas in the South, Southwest, and West. An emphasis on building the church while securing its identity took hold, and a deepened sense of the church as an institution was apparent. Church committees guided the process toward liturgical revision, produced materials such as the Seabury Series to promote a unified approach to Christian education, and provided loans that allowed church expansion. Professional staff at the church's headquarters implemented decisions of the triennial General Convention and worked with clergy and local leaders in taking steps toward the kingdom of God in American life. Although its authority was dispersed among bishops, dioceses, and local churches, the Episcopal Church of the 1950s acted with unanimity and clarity. Episcopalians proclaimed a lively faith while building the church; they ministered to society while securing

a distinctive identity. In retrospect this was a fragile combination.

The Erosion of Consensus

Discontent over the state of society and the church's expression of faith could not be contained within institutional bounds. In the 1950s it became clear that activist individuals and groups would press the church to change and so test the consensus that unified it. Two issues were prominent: first, the search for an authentic faith and, second, social justice. Beneath the surface of American life in the 1950s there was evidence of personal anguish as modern life tested historic forms of self-assurance. Among Episcopalians several voices proposed a way of being faithful that would address this challenge. A variety of theologians such as Albert T. Mollegen of Virginia Theological Seminary and Norman Pittenger of General Theological Seminary became noted writers on faith and modern life.

A more radical impulse caused controversy in the church. In the 1950s Bishop James A. Pike (1913–1969) of California stridently called for revised views of the basic tenets of Christian faith. He later left the episcopate and embarked on an idiosyncratic spiritual quest that led to his death in the Sinai, in Israel, where he had gone to find the soul of his deceased son. Pike's acerbic style and unrelenting assaults on historic belief set a tone others would match. In the 1960s Joseph Fletcher (1905–1991) became a pioneer in bioethics and coined the phrase "situation ethics." Fletcher concluded that there was no absolute moral law other than love, which could take various forms in diverse contexts. In the 1970s Bishop John Spong (1931–) of Newark began publishing a stream of books challenging basic Christian beliefs and calling for revised moral norms. Spong married the search for contemporary faith with an emphasis on justice as he advocated for the acceptance of gays and lesbians in the church. Building on Pike's initiative, Spong became a vigorous advocate for those whom society and the church had disregarded.

In the postwar period the sense that the modern world was leaving many people beleaguered became impossible to ignore. For many Episcopalians this meant that the church must mirror the divine kingdom by embracing the civil rights movement. Calls for racial equality surfaced among Episcopalians in the 1950s and challenged historic patterns in some branches of the church. In 1952 a majority of the faculty at the School of Theology of the University of the South (Sewanee) resigned when the university's regents

refused to admit African American students. The church's General Convention of that year passed a resolution deploring racial injustice and issued similar statements in subsequent conventions. In 1959 a group of clergy organized the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity (ESCRU), with the goal of removing racial and social division from the church. As protests against segregation intensified, Episcopalians were prominent. In 1964 the wives of three bishops, one of whom was African American, were arrested for attempting to eat together at a segregated Florida restaurant. More than five hundred Episcopalians joined the march for civil rights in Selma, Alabama, in March 1965. Later in 1965 seminarian Jonathan Daniels was shot while serving as a civil rights worker in Alabama. His death solidified the activist resolve of many Episcopalians.

Not all Episcopalians approved of activism. Although convinced that racial discrimination was wrong, a prominent swath of Episcopalians was cautious in confronting it. Alabama bishop Charles C. J. Carpenter and clergy of other denominations opposed activism for civil rights in their state. In their view a gradualist approach would succeed where confrontation would fail. But other Episcopal leaders pushed ahead. When he became presiding bishop in 1965, John Hines of Texas proclaimed a faith that announced Jesus Christ as savior and led to involvement in social change. Hines organized a program of economic empowerment for poor people. He called a special General Convention in 1969 to encourage involvement in the "Black Manifesto," a demand for economic justice for African Americans. Hines also encouraged liturgical renewal, the ordination of women, and other progressive causes. More than any other Episcopal leader he linked activism for civil rights with multifaceted change in the church.

By the 1970s activism for change had become broad-brush among Episcopalians. In 1970 women became eligible to serve as deputies at the General Convention. At the same time calls for the ordination of women intensified. Women's activities in the church had been confined to separate spheres (although there had been women's organizations since the late nineteenth century and in 1889 the church created the order of deaconess allowing women to enter full-time church service). But in 1970 the General Convention allowed women to be ordained as deacons, an ancient order previously held only by men, as distinct from deaconesses, a modern order created for women, setting the stage for the convention of 1976, which approved the ordination of women to the priesthood. This action followed a

controversial liturgy at a Philadelphia church in 1974 in which three retired bishops, Daniel Corrigan, Robert DeWitt, and Edward Welles, ordained eleven women as priests. In 1975 retired bishop George Barrett ordained another four women as priests. Approval of the ordination of women in 1976 produced tension in the church, but acceptance soon was widespread. The consecration of Barbara Harris, an African American woman, as suffragan bishop of Massachusetts in 1989 was a milestone, and the elevation of Katharine Jefferts Schori to the post of presiding bishop in 2006 seemed a fitting culmination.

The 1976 convention also passed on first reading a revised version of the Book of Common Prayer, which received final approval at the convention of 1979. In 1982 a revised hymnal appeared. In conservative eyes such seemingly radical changes revealed a liberal drift in the church that portended abandonment of essential aspects of belief and practice. In retrospect both the liberal and conservative positions had similar origin: The 1970s were as much a period of spiritual renewal for Episcopalians as a time of activism and change. Beginning in the 1960s growing numbers of Episcopalians declared that they had received the gift of the Holy Spirit and had spoken in tongues. This charismatic movement drew a widespread following and found centers in parishes in Connecticut, Ohio, and Texas, with leaders such as Terry Fulham, Graham Pulkingham, and Dennis Bennett. Bennett helped to spark the movement in 1960, when, as a parish priest in California, he announced that a profound experience of the Holy Spirit had changed his life decisively. The movement that resulted built organizations such as Faith Alive and Episcopal Renewal Ministries, which promoted not only personal spirituality but conservative theological concerns and opposition to liberal intentions.

The Course of Protest and the Turn to the Grassroots

Over the last quarter of the twentieth century the activism of conservatives and liberals intensified. Various conservative-minded groups sustained protest through magazines such as the *Christian Challenge* and the *Living Church* and interest groups such as Forward in Faith and the Society for the Preservation of the Book of Common Prayer. There had also been tiny separatist movements such as the Anglican Orthodox Church launched by James Parker Dees in the 1950s. Conservative protest escalated when the Prayer Book was revised and the ordination of women was approved.

Meanwhile, liberal hopes turned from worship and the ordination of women to the place of gay people in the church. In 1974 Integrity arose as the first gay advocacy group among Episcopalians. Bishops Paul Moore of New York and John Spong of Newark ordained openly gay people as priests in the 1980s and 1990s. By century's end it was clear that there was a noticeable gay presence among clergy and laity, and calls for an openly gay bishop led to the election of Gene Robinson of New Hampshire in 2003. Although the Episcopal Church largely preserved unity in the face of earlier changes in its life, significant rifts occurred over homosexuality.

In response, new separatist groups such as the American Anglican Council arose, and conservative leaders such as Bishop Robert Duncan of Pittsburgh forged ties with notable figures in the wider Anglican world, including Archbishop Peter Akinola of Nigeria. A small-scale "realignment" began as some conservative Episcopalians found affiliation with like-minded Anglicans overseas. A lengthy court case in Virginia centered on the legal right of eleven breakaway congregations to retain their property when they disavowed the Episcopal Church for overseas ties. Across the country there were instances of conservatives claiming they could switch affiliations. Majorities in four dioceses—Fort Worth, Texas; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Quincy, Illinois; and San Joaquin, California—voted to align with a South American branch of the Anglican world.

Despite the public furor less than 5 percent of Episcopalians took such steps. The extent of conservative militancy was unprecedented, but a larger trend overshadowed it. Amid struggles between liberals and conservatives Episcopal life increasingly was defined by unofficial groups and initiatives unrelated to "culture wars" issues. A proliferating number of unofficial groups encouraged new forms of spirituality, education, and ministry without ideological intention. Education for Ministry and Disciples of Christ in Community, two projects of the University of the South, gained popularity as study programs conducted in local settings. Similarly, Alpha, an English program in basic Christianity, gained American adherents and transcended its evangelical origins. Various programs and networks linked Episcopalians in study and mission. By the end of the twentieth century more Episcopal parishes were engaged in mission projects locally and beyond than ever before. Such connections could involve local churches with little connection to national church life. Many churches sustained local projects that had considerable impact on assuaging human need.

In one sense grassroots trends that sought to transcend conflict reflected the differences within the church. Various Episcopal groups justified their intentions in terms of building the church as the kingdom of God. Liberals spoke of inclusivity and acceptance, conservatives in terms of adherence to tradition, especially scripture. But most Episcopalians sought to avoid conflict by turning inward to personal and small-group spirituality and mission that might work toward building the kingdom. The kingdom of God bespoke a new emphasis on local faith community and a diminished reliance on ideologies or institutions.

See also *Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Architecture: Protestant, From the Nineteenth Century to the Present; Bioethics; Canada: Anglicans; Episcopalians entries; Latino American Religion: Mainline Protestants; Mainline Protestants; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Social Ethics; Social Gospel; Women: Ordination of; Women: Protestant; Worship: Anglican.*

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Esoteric Movements

Esotericism refers to a broad array of movements that have explored religious mysteries outside the Western biblical heritage. The word *esotericism* derives from the Greek *esoterōs* or “inner,” thereby drawing attention to religious paths characterized by interest in exploring the innermost regions of the self through philosophical investigation or experiential techniques. Esotericism’s emphasis on inner exploration as the path to spiritual awakening extends back in Western history at least to Plato and has been implicated in a wide range of American religious expressions, including those that are variously referred to as occultism, perennialism, harmonialism, metaphysical religion, or New Age.

The term *esotericism* has many meanings. In a strict sense the word connotes the quest for *gnosis* or inner knowledge, the knowledge gained by entering into the self to attain spiritual enlightenment. What constitutes a religious movement as esoteric is thus that it values forms of religious knowledge that are not available through the common or public teachings of the institutional church. To learn this esoteric knowledge, individuals must be taught how to turn inward and descend into progressively more enlightened states of spiritual awareness. Some commentators emphasize esotericism’s tendency to see itself as part of the “perennial tradition” that is said to constitute the mystical core of all religions and that is predicated on the belief that the individual soul is intimately connected with absolute reality. Other commentators highlight the role of “secrecy” in esoteric traditions and the fact that some esoteric movements require special initiatory rites before newcomers can be entrusted with their teachings. While it is true that esoteric movements believe that not all people are prepared to undertake the inward journey that will initiate them into the higher mysteries of spiritual knowledge, few are secretive in the sense of deliberately hiding or disguising their teachings. Perhaps the most distinctive features of American esotericism have been its fascination with certain mystical states of mind and its belief in the self’s interior connection with higher spiritual realities.

Esoteric spirituality is thus distinguished by its emphasis on the individual’s quest for special knowledge leading to

spiritual attainment. At the root of all esoteric movements lies the human longing for mystical illumination. Unlike the nation's churches or synagogues, however, American esoteric movements teach that such illumination can be attained outside the biblical tradition and without the mediation of either a savior or a religious institution. Yet despite esotericism's seeming variance from cultural orthodoxy, many of its distinctive beliefs have over time become part of America's cultural consciousness.

European Background

The forms of esoteric spirituality that have flourished in the United States have varied historical roots. Awareness of these historical sources of esotericism is especially important for understanding how successive generations of Americans come to embrace these somewhat offbeat religious systems. Unlike persons who affiliate with institutional religion, individuals almost never become introduced to esotericism through typical processes of religious socialization (for example, family attendance at organized worship services, Sunday schools, formal catechism lessons). Instead, persons learn about esotericism through personal reading, attending a lecture, or chance conversation with those who have already investigated alternative paths to spiritual attainment. A single idea is often enough to incite fascination with novel understandings of the self and to kindle a desire for personal transformation.

Beginning with Plato, many Westerners have pondered how one might expand personal consciousness to experience directly those realities that transcend sensory apprehension. Plato's confidence that the properly disciplined mind can discern eternal truths has inspired numerous versions of Neoplatonism, as exemplified in the writings of Plotinus in the third century (CE). Both ancient Orphic religion and early Greek Gnosticism also taught that one must pierce behind outer sensory appearances to discover transcendent truths. The classical foundations of Western philosophy thus contain mystically charged elements that might inherently arouse fascination with the hidden depths of the human psyche or kindle desire to embark on a path of self-transformation.

A renewed interest in Neoplatonism helped esotericism to flourish during the Renaissance. Ficino's translation of a Greek manuscript that has come to be known as *Corpus Hermeticum* sparked interest in non-Christian spiritual philosophies. Although we now know that the text was written in Alexandria sometime during either the second or third

century (CE), it was originally thought to have been authored by the legendary Hermes Trismegistus in ancient Egypt. What came to be known as Hermeticism derives from the text's evocative explanations of how magic, astrology, and philosophy might combine to show a path to spiritual attainment. Those who longed for ecstatic spiritual discovery embraced Hermeticism as an authoritative guide to direct knowledge of the divine without the mediating role of the Christian church.

Hermeticism dovetailed with other Renaissance expressions of esoteric spirituality. Both Christian and Jewish Kabbalah stimulated interest in the "correspondences" that connect diverse levels or realms of the cosmos—both visible and invisible. Material reality, the inner psyche, the stars, and the higher spheres inhabited by angels were all understood to exist as emanations from the godhead and to be intimately connected with one another through metaphysical laws. Alchemy, astrology, and eventually Paracelsus's romantic philosophy of nature provided additional avenues for speculating about the metaphysical correspondences between inner and outer worlds. The emergence of Rosicrucianism and the mystical philosophy of Jacob Boehme in the seventeenth century as well as freemasonry in the eighteenth century provided spiritually adventurous European thinkers even more systems through which they might explore metaphysical mysteries. Even today many of those who come upon these historical sources of esoteric spirituality are emboldened to journey outside the official institutions of Judaism or Christianity in their quests for spiritual edification.

Colonial Beginnings

Relatively few citizens in the American colonies were churchgoers. In the late 1600s, less than one-third of adults belonged to a church. Over the next hundred years this percentage actually declined to the point where, at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, church membership had declined to only 15 percent of the population. But this is not to say that colonial Americans were nonreligious. While most did not belong to a church or profess any fixed creed, nearly all held beliefs about supernatural forces.

Divination, fortune-telling, astrology, and witchcraft permeated everyday life in the colonies. Belief in magic and the occult filled the same needs that Christianity did. They explained how superhuman powers affect human life and offered techniques for invoking these powers for protection and prosperity. Divination was the most widespread of these

non-Christian attempts to understand and manipulate supernatural power. Divining rods, for example, were used throughout the colonial period for detecting sources of underground water or locating lost treasure. Explanations of how divining rods worked were vague. Some theories attributed their power to the existence of natural sympathies between wood and water; other theories maintained that the rod was a conduit for the ritual magic emanating from the mind of the practitioner. Implicit in either theory was the belief that the natural and supernatural worlds lie in close correspondence with one another and that under certain circumstances action in one world can have causal influence over the other.

Fortune-telling was also relied on as a means of gaining supernatural insight into the powers affecting one's life. Fortune-tellers utilized a variety of techniques, but all worked on the assumption that certain individuals have especially developed connections with the supernatural realm from which they derived their prognosticating powers. The colonial era's best-selling almanacs printed horoscopes and astrological charts in response to popular desire for information on metaphysical forces influencing their commercial, agricultural, or romantic affairs. Virtually every colonist believed that certain individuals could harness supernatural power through the use of charms, conjures, and spells. Witches were but one of the many varieties of "cunning persons" who were thought capable of drawing on supernatural power to influence worldly actions. And thus, even though almost no Americans considered themselves witches, a majority nonetheless subscribed to the basic belief system underlying the practice of witchcraft.

Interest in magic and the occult was not restricted to the common folk. The library inventories that have survived from colonial estates indicate that the upper classes also dabbled in metaphysical speculation. Wealthy colonists avidly collected works dealing with astrology, alchemy, Hermeticism, Rosicrucianism, and other decidedly heterodox mystical philosophies. Thus, from the very onset, Americans of all social classes subscribed at some level or another to systems of thought that at least touched upon esoteric themes.

Nineteenth-Century "Isms"

Interest in esoteric philosophy during the colonial era was sporadic and mostly confined to the solitary reading interests of isolated individuals. The first appearance of what might be called an esoteric movement in America was the

rise of freemasonry during the eighteenth century. The European origins of freemasonry are not entirely clear. It probably arose out of periodic gatherings of the stonemasons who built churches and cathedrals in England. What was first an association concerned with the occupational development of stonemasons eventually developed an interest in ancient wisdom, particularly as promulgated in contemporary esoteric philosophies such as Rosicrucianism. The tools of masonry (the square and compass) became symbols for building moral and spiritual character. By the early eighteenth century, the movement began to organize into "lodges" that were responsible for recruiting, initiating, and educating new members. The movement spread to France, Scotland, and eventually colonial North America, where more than forty lodges had been established by the time of the American Revolution.

Freemasons used symbol-laden ceremonies to initiate new members and to mark their progress through successive levels of character development. Part of freemasonry's esoteric aura undoubtedly stemmed from the fact that it, like Rosicrucianism, used secrecy and ritual initiation to set itself apart from mainstream culture. Its teachings were also esoteric in nature. Masonry combined the impulse toward progressive thinking with a desire to understand religious mysteries. Masons were taught, for example, to move beyond biblical descriptions of God and to use the era's rational categories to view God as the impersonal grand architect of the natural order. The higher degrees of Masonic teaching initiated members into more expressly esoteric matters such as cabalistic Judaism, alchemy, and Rosicrucianism. Although many undoubtedly joined seeking solely the convivial, social side of Masonry, the movement nonetheless succeeded at popularizing a new approach to religion that blended Enlightenment rationality with a mystical appreciation of the hidden mysteries of our universe.

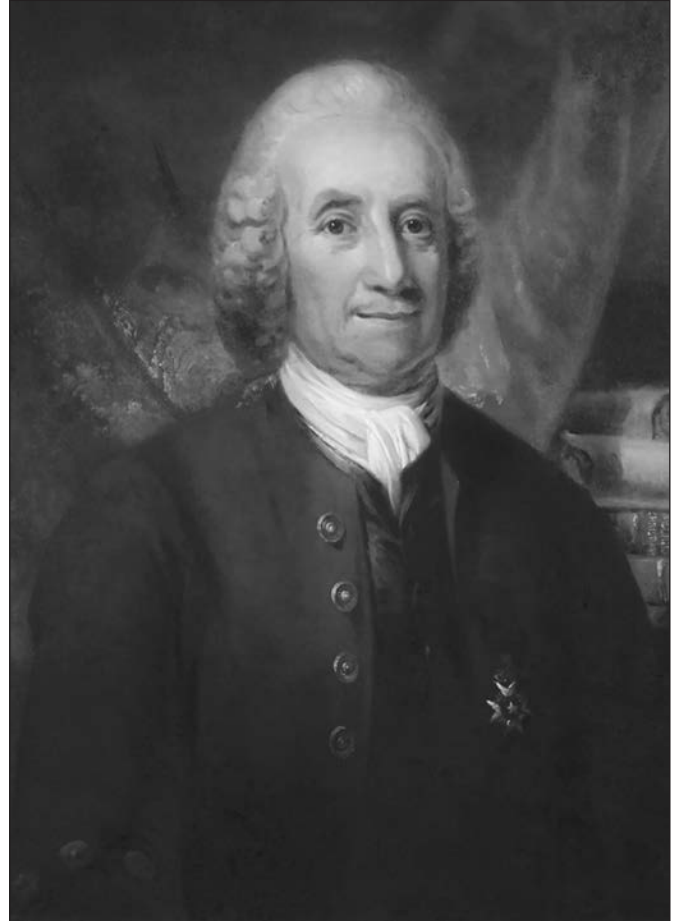
Another wave of mystical enthusiasm hit American shores with the nation's first introduction to the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772). Swedenborg had already distinguished himself as one of the greatest scientists in Europe when, in 1745, he claimed to have been visited by angelic beings. These celestial beings selected Swedenborg to be the earthly vessel through which they communicated a series of spiritual teachings that explained the metaphysical structure of the universe as well as "the spiritual sense of the Scripture." Swedenborg's angelic guides taught him that the universe consists of seven interpenetrating dimensions, such as the physical, mental, spiritual, and

angelic. Spirit and matter are thus not opposed to one another but, rather, complementary and inseparable dimensions of a single universal system. The doctrine of metaphysical “correspondence” implied that all seven dimensions are intimately connected with one another and that the laws that govern any one level of the universe are but reflections of the laws that govern every other level. It also implied that physical events are, when seen in their full metaphysical context, often the images or results of the lawful workings of “higher” dimensions of existence.

Swedenborg’s vision of metaphysical correspondence led directly to his doctrine of influx. He taught that causal power is constantly emanating from God. Divine spirit flows outward from God through the successive dimensions of the universe. All true progress proceeds according to influences received from above. The physical body achieves inner harmony by becoming attuned to the influx of energies coming from the soul, the soul through contact with superior angelic beings, and so on up the metaphysical ladder. Anyone might obtain the requisite gnosis to make contact with higher spiritual planes through diligent study or by cultivating mystical states of awareness. The benefits of such interior contact with higher spiritual dimensions were numerous: spontaneous insight into cosmological secrets, conversations with angelic beings, intuitive understanding of scriptural verses, and the instantaneous healing of both physical and emotional disorders.

Translations of Swedenborg’s writings found a receptive audience among America’s self-styled “progressive thinkers” during the 1830s. Those whose spiritual outlook had been tempered by Enlightenment rationality were particularly drawn to Swedenborg’s emphasis on freeing religion from a literal reading of the Bible. Swedenborg’s notion of correspondence excited those who were drawn to science since it implied that scientific discoveries were incrementally shedding light on spiritual matters, too. And finally, those who yearned for intense, personal religious experience were inspired by Swedenborg’s own mystical experiences and his descriptions of humanity’s inner connection with higher, spiritual realities.

Swedenborg’s writings had a profound influence on one of America’s most admired thinkers, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882). Emerson was introduced to Swedenborg’s writings while he was a student at Harvard. Years later, in his treatise *Representative Men* (1850), Emerson acknowledged his debt to the Swedish visionary and made it clear that many of his own views were inspired by



Swedish scientist and religious ecstatic Emanuel Swedenborg claimed to have been visited by angelic beings who communicated spiritual teachings to him. Swedenborg’s writings, based on these conversations, explained the metaphysical structure of the universe as well as “the spiritual sense of the Scripture.”

Swedenborg’s doctrines of correspondence and influx. These beliefs help explain why Emerson eventually resigned his Unitarian pulpit to become a spokesperson for a religious philosophy that came to be known as transcendentalism. Emerson, like Unitarians generally, rejected Christian belief in the special divinity of Jesus. Nor could he believe that the Christian Bible was really a revelation from God. But unlike the majority of Unitarians, who embraced reason as humanity’s highest faculty, Emerson was a mystic at heart and believed that each of us is inwardly connected with universal being. For these reasons Emerson severed his formal connections with the Unitarians and joined with a number of like-minded seekers (George Ripley, Theodore Parker, William Henry Channing, Orestes Brownson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller) to form the Transcendental Club.

Emerson and his fellow transcendentalists articulated a form of esoteric spirituality that resonated perfectly with American culture's commitments to individualism and self-actualization. The core principle of transcendentalism is that every human being is, at depth, connected with an infinite spiritual power that infused our universe with law, beauty, and joy. This notion of divine immanence had important psychological consequences. It implied that God, as universal spirit, is always and everywhere available to the properly attuned mind. Emerson borrowed from Hindu mysticism the view that only a self-imposed, psychological barrier separates us from complete harmony with God's spiritual presence. For this reason Emerson emphasized the need to cultivate spiritually receptive states of mind. He personally found the quiet of nature conducive to such mystical reverie. In "Nature," Emerson wrote, "All mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God."

Transcendentalism taught that true spirituality has nothing to do with church attendance, belief in the divinity of Jesus, or blind faith in biblical dogmas. Authentic spirituality is instead a solitary quest. It requires that we learn to become inwardly receptive so that we might establish inner correspondence with higher, metaphysical realms from which we might expect an "influx" of spiritual energy. In this way, transcendentalism was also teaching that the full human development is a spiritual attainment. The causal power that makes full self-actualization possible does not derive from the activities of the rational mind but rather from the in-streaming presence of an immanent divinity.

The transcendentalists succeeded in adapting esoteric spirituality to the needs and purposes of the American middle class. Hermeticism, Neoplatonism, Swedenborgianism, and Kabbalah contain far too many theological nuances and require far too arcane an intellectual sensibility to penetrate very far into cultural thought. Most of the classic works in esoteric philosophy utilize terminology rooted in either ancient or Renaissance European history. But transcendentalism developed a vocabulary that adapted esoteric principles to the basic issues that have historically defined American identity: a covenant linking humans with God, the existence of a higher law, the progressive bent of both nature and history, the free and morally responsible individual, and the work ethic that holds that effort and self-discipline lawfully result in prosperity. This process of linking esoteric principles with enduring themes

in American culture continued in two more nineteenth-century "isms"—mesmerism and spiritualism.

The Austrian physician Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815) added another chapter to the history of Western esotericism when he induced sleeplike trances in his patients only to have them experience profound healings and inner transformations. "Mesmerized" patients claimed they felt the influx of an invisible energy that Mesmer termed *animal magnetism*. This subtle energy was thought to be a vital, life-giving energy that permeates the universe. Any disruption of the flow of animal magnetism into, or through, our body deprives us of this vital force and leads to disease. Medical cures therefore require placing patients into receptive states of mind that facilitate the inflow of animal magnetism into their systems. Even more astonishing than these instantaneous healings were the claims that persons who could be placed into the deepest mesmeric trances spontaneously evidenced feats of paranormal mental powers including telepathy and clairvoyance.

Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, Americans flocked to public demonstrations of the "science of animal magnetism." Audiences were amazed as friends and neighbors were mesmerized right before their eyes. Testimonies of medical cures and paranormal feats seemed to offer empirical proof that the human mind has access to unlimited spiritual powers. Mesmerism was thought to be bringing the physical and spiritual laws governing our existence into a single scientific system. Even though mesmerism had no overt connection with institutional religion, it resonated with the era's Protestant theology in a way that made a seamless connection between Protestant revivalism and esotericism. Mesmerists, no less than the revivalist preachers, taught that human brokenness comes from having fallen out of rapport with the invisible spiritual workings of the universe. Mesmerism, like revivalism, provided inwardly troubled individuals with an intense experience believed to restore them to harmony with unseen spiritual forces. And the mesmeric trance, no less than the emotion-laden conversion experience, gave powerful and convincing experiential grounds for the belief that humanity's lower nature can be utterly transformed and elevated when brought under the guiding influence of spirit.

Yet the mesmerists differed from revivalists in one very important respect. Far from reproaching individuals for questioning religious orthodoxy, they encouraged them to do so. Mesmerism thereby emboldened those who, while committed to reason and science, nonetheless hungered for a spiritual outlook on life. Mesmerism taught them that the

successively deeper levels of the human mind lawfully correspond to the successively more subtle levels of the universe that had hitherto eluded scientific detection. There was, then, an esoteric message at the heart of mesmerism's "discovery" of the spiritual powers available through our unconscious minds.

There were numerous reasons why Americans developed an interest in mesmerism. Healing testimonies gave mesmerism the aura of an empirically based science that furnished practical results. Reports of paranormal mental feats added a fascinating lure that, among other things, appeared to provide scientific evidence that the human mind has previously untapped potentials. During the 1880s and 1890s, mesmerism gave rise to a popular movement known variously as Mind-Cure or New Thought that linked belief in the "power of positive thinking" with its belief in the self's inner connection with subtle energies. Although some embraced New Thought beliefs as a psychological strategy for obtaining worldly prosperity, others discovered an esoteric worldview that articulated the metaphysical principles of correspondence and influx. Importantly, Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), a former patient of a mesmerist healer, blended mesmerism's esoteric teachings and biblical Christianity in such a way as to develop a religious movement known as Christian Science. Both through the Church of Christ, Scientist and Mrs. Eddy's many publications, Christian Science has played a significant role in bringing esoteric concepts into Americans' religious vocabulary.

As early as 1843 a young man by the name of Andrew Jackson Davis (1826–1910) volunteered to serve as a subject during a lecture-demonstration of mesmerism in his hometown of Poughkeepsie, New York. Davis was apparently adept at entering the deepest levels of the mesmeric trance. He spontaneously performed such feats as reading from books while blindfolded, telepathically receiving thoughts from those in the audience, or traveling clairvoyantly to distant locales. More amazing still, he claimed that while in this state of mystical reverie he made contact with the spirits of deceased persons. Davis thus became the first American to develop a wide reputation as a "spirit medium" or "trance channeler."

The spiritualist movement that flourished over the next five decades frequently gave rise to gaudy séances and obvious charlatanry. Yet we cannot overlook the fact that from the movement's outset there was always a deeper, esoteric core to spiritualist thought. Davis claimed that one of the first spirits to make contact with him was none other than

Emanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg and other spirits dictated messages through Davis articulating an elaborate metaphysics that shares many principles with Neoplatonism, Hermeticism, and other versions of Western esotericism. Davis's so-called "harmonial philosophy" taught that the universe consists of several concentric spheres arranged in such a way that causal energies can flow from "higher" spheres to "lower" ones. Davis was thus giving new expression to such classic perennial beliefs as the continuity between the material and spiritual worlds, the inner divinity of every person, and the common truth underlying all religious beliefs.

The esoteric philosophies that attracted nineteenth-century American audiences were decidedly less arcane than their counterparts in Renaissance Europe. Public interest in these countervailing religious systems always teetered between sheer curiosity over paranormal phenomena and serious philosophical inquiry. The very cultural forces that made esoteric principles popular to a wide cultural audience simultaneously fated these principles to become amalgamated with broader (and decidedly nonspiritual) goals and ambitions. It seems, moreover, that Americans were decidedly interested in the practical benefits to be obtained from esoteric teachings, whether these be measured in terms of physical healings, emotional serenity, or economic success. Even by the time theosophy appeared near the turn of the twentieth century, Americans had already begun to filter diverse esoteric systems through a fairly uniform set of cultural filters.

Theosophy's Esoteric Legacy

Another significant stage in the process that has introduced esoteric concepts into Americans' cultural consciousness came when Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891) immigrated to the United States in 1872. Little is known about Blavatsky's early life in Russia. It appears that she traveled extensively through Europe and gravitated toward people who dabbled in mesmerism, spiritualism, and other occult philosophies. In New York she earned a reputation as a trance medium, channeling messages from advanced spiritual teachers whom she referred to as the "mahatmas" (the Hindu term for "great souls"). She eventually met up with Colonel Henry S. Olcott, a lawyer who was deeply interested in the scientific and religious implications of spiritualism. As it turned out, the mahatmas took special interest in Olcott. Through Blavatsky's trances the mahatmas sent Olcott a message instructing him to found

an organization for the purpose of disseminating spiritual wisdom neglected by Western religious institutions. By 1875, Olcott and Blavatsky had launched the Theosophical Society, dedicated to bridging the gulf between science and religion through the study of mesmerism, spiritualism, and the universal ether.

Blavatsky claimed that during prior travels through Asia she had come upon the mahatmas, members of the Universal Mystic Brotherhood who lived in the Himalayan Mountains of Tibet. The mahatmas were humans who had so developed their inner connections with higher realms that they were now spiritually evolved and could both travel and communicate through purely psychic means. The mahatmas passed their spiritual secrets on to Blavatsky, which she in turn published in such classic esoteric texts as *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. In these publications Blavatsky synthesized the major teachings of the Western esoteric tradition. She articulated an emanationist cosmology that explains how life originated with the emanation of a “divine spark” into the world of matter—a spark that is now gradually evolving back to its divine source. This cosmology enabled theosophy to embrace Darwinian theories of evolution, yet do so in a way that reduced biology to but a lower level of a more cosmic, spiritual process.

Blavatsky went even further, teaching that we exist in a multidimensional universe. What is often referred to as the theosophical “law of seven” explains that there are seven hierarchically arranged levels of mind, seven metaphysical planes, seven stages of cosmic evolution, and seven grades of masters. Borrowing from Asian vocabularies that describe the “subtle” layers of selfhood, Blavatsky taught that we exist simultaneously on seven levels—including what she termed the astral and etheric planes. Other theosophical writers expanded upon this theme and taught that we consist of seven subtle bodies. These other bodies connect with our physical body at the seven chakras (or spiritual centers) located at various points along our spinal columns. Theosophy explained that meditation opens our chakras up and enhances our connection with these other planes of existence (from which we receive higher energies that promote physical health, emotional serenity, and expanded mental powers).

Theosophy thus introduced American audiences to such classic esoteric themes as an emanationist cosmology, the multidimensional structure of the universe, and humanity’s inner connection with these other cosmic dimensions. Blavatsky also emphasized the perennialist belief that the

world’s religions represent cultural elaborations of a common set of mystical insights. In theory, then, Blavatsky claimed that all religions share a common esoteric source. Yet in practice she seemed especially anxious to argue that Jesus’ teachings were not original, that the Bible merely copies other ancient texts, and that Christian theology has largely distorted the mystical insights on which it was originally founded. Theosophy’s anti-Christian polemic undoubtedly prevented it from penetrating deeply into the American middle class. At the same time, its bold confidence in non-Christian philosophies added a certain aura to those eager to explore decidedly exotic forms of mystical spirituality.

Even at the height of its popularity, theosophy never had more than ten thousand members in the United States. Despite these relatively small numbers, however, theosophy has exerted considerable influence on the historical transmission of esoteric spirituality in the United States. *Isis Unveiled* sold a thousand copies in the first ten days after its release and has sold more than 500,000 copies to date. Moreover, persons directly influenced by theosophy have exerted a tremendous influence on those aspects of American religion that exist outside of formal religious institutions (for example, Rudolf Steiner, Alan Watts, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Edna and Guy Ballard, Alice Bailey, and D. T. Suzuki). And theosophy can also be credited with injecting into Americans’ spiritual vocabulary such decidedly esoteric concepts as chakras, subtle energies, ascended master teachers, and Asian meditation practices that aim toward ecstatic experiences of enlightenment.

A few of theosophy’s direct legacies deserve special mention. Following Blavatsky’s death, Charles Leadbeater (1854–1934) and Annie Besant (1847–1933) assumed leadership of the Theosophical Society. Schisms, however, eventually split the group into two rival movements, the American Theosophical Society and the Theosophical Society in America. One especially talented theosophist, Alice Bailey (1880–1949), channeled a series of messages that established her as one of the movement’s leading authorities. Bailey’s teachings of the cosmic hierarchy, the seven rays, and humanity’s ongoing spiritual evolution reinforced basic theosophical principles. Bailey also stirred up eschatological fervor by teaching that humanity was making rapid spiritual progress, thereby making the dawn of a new age imminent. This new age, Bailey explained, would be one in which unprecedented numbers would be trained in special esoteric schools and divine light would radiate down through the cosmic

hierarchy into the minds and hearts of humans. Although the Arcane School that she founded did not survive her death in 1949, Bailey's teachings live on in any number of New Age and metaphysical systems.

Another fascinating movement spawned by American theosophy is the "I AM" movement founded by Guy (1878–1939) and Edna Ballard (1886–1971). The Ballards tell how, in 1929, Guy was hiking on Mt. Shasta, California, when he was visited by the seventeenth-century occultist Saint Germain who had now transformed into an ascended master. Saint Germain taught Ballard to think of God as the primal light or "I AM" presence emanating from the creative source of our universe. Reiterating the emanationist cosmology found in many esoteric systems, Saint Germain taught Ballard to understand that primal light emanates from God and is the basis for everything in the universe. As the "I AM" becomes individualized, it forms the essence of every person. The Ballards' "I AM" movement therefore understood its principal mission to be that of teaching persons to invoke and activate the "I AM" presence within themselves. Another key doctrine was belief in the existence of ascended masters who through several human incarnations have evolved beyond human limitations and now seek to tutor other souls as they progress along their individual paths of spiritual evolution. These ascended masters can be called upon to guide or assist us if we but learn to open ourselves to the love and power they radiate toward us.

The "I AM" movement's influence on American religious life extends well beyond the number of individuals who formally affiliated. Its classes and publications provided thousands of Americans with a vocabulary for expressing their desire to receive spiritual guidance from ascended beings and to call upon the "I AM" presence deep within themselves. Perhaps the clearest example of how these teachings continued to ripple outward toward larger numbers was the work of Mark and Elizabeth Clare Prophet, who incorporated them into their own new religious movement, the Summit Lighthouse (an organization encompassing both Summit University and the Church Universal and Triumphant), that eventually issued more than seventy-five books on the teachings of the ascended masters.

Theosophy also influenced another of the twentieth century's most gifted esoteric writers, Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925). Steiner lived in Austria, where he became interested first in the more radical spiritual implications of

the writings of Goethe, Nietzsche, Franz Brentano, and Wilhelm Dilthey. By 1904 Steiner was appointed by Annie Besant to head up the Esoteric Society for the German and Austrian sections of the Theosophical Society. Steiner eventually severed ties with theosophy and developed his own competing organization, the Anthroposophical Society. Steiner's anthroposophy taught that humanity retains only a vestige of its original consciousness. Yet it can recover its capacity for horizonless vision by developing initiatory openings through such means as study, art, music, and the informed use of imagination. The Anthroposophical Society was more about books and ideas than organizational practices. Lectures, publications, and private study were the primary vehicles through which Steiner's ideas eventually influenced recent American esotericists such as Richard Tarnas and Ken Wilber.

More Recent Vehicles of Esoteric Thought

Contemporary American esotericism, much like its historical predecessors, consists of a loosely connected complex of metaphysical ideas. Many are introduced to this countervailing system of thought through private reading and study. Thus, for example, the writings of two twentieth-century European esotericists, G. I. Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky, have attracted a small core of modern readers to the contemplation of spiritual mysteries. The transmission of esoteric teachings is thus largely a solitary endeavor guided by the idiosyncratic interests of those "spiritual seekers" who feel compelled to venture beyond established religious institutions. Occasionally, however, certain individuals or groups have emerged and introduced esoteric themes to larger numbers of people through some combination of paranormal phenomena and well-orchestrated promotional efforts (lecture tours, weekend seminars, or publications). Esotericism, then, is a varied phenomenon in which rarefied philosophical treatises exist side by side with sheer enthusiasm for paranormal displays. Newcomers to esoteric concepts might find themselves initially attracted by elements from either end of the spectrum.

By the last few decades of the twentieth century, esotericism had succeeded at becoming part of the vocabulary with which Americans understand the dynamics of personal transformation. Indeed, there has been a steady undercurrent of esoteric references in a great deal of the literature through which Americans learn about various forms of self-discovery, self-healing, and self-actualization. One path through which esoteric ideas first reached larger American

audiences was the work of the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung (1875–1961). Jung had, for example, been attracted to medieval alchemy and recognized how the quest to transmute base metals into higher metals was, at root, a deeper spiritual quest for self-transformation. Jung's elaboration of the collective unconscious and its archetypes gave modern expression to the age-old esoteric belief in the self's inner connection with the absolute and the symbolic forms that guide the journey toward such connection. The mythologist Joseph Campbell (1904–1987) also expanded on the archetypal nature of the psyche and encouraged American reading audiences to find deeper, symbolic significance in expressions of the literary imagination.

During the 1960s and 1970s a movement developed within American psychology that encouraged serious consideration of the subtle complexities of the human psyche. The school of humanistic psychology popularized by Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Abraham Maslow, and others gave rise to a renewed interest in "transpersonal psychology." Transpersonal psychology sought models of human consciousness that could account for the experiential aspects of such varied phenomena as meditation-induced transformations, psychedelic experience, out-of-body experiences, and instances of paranormal cognition. Stanislav Grof, Ken Wilber, Ram Das, and Timothy Leary are but a few of those who infused modern psychological discourse with ancient esoteric concepts. One consequence is that today's large range of "self-help" literature is sprinkled with concepts that evoke esoteric views of self and cosmos. Fragments of esoteric philosophy have thus infiltrated American cultural consciousness, even if many who employ esoteric terminology have not fully considered its stark contrast with more conventional religious and secular outlooks.

Almost any so-called New Age organization—whether confined to the Internet or located in a distinct retreat center or school—helps transmit esoteric ideas to Americans who pursue spiritual edification outside Judeo-Christian institutions. Two examples of contemporary organizations that have sustained serious investigation of esoteric philosophy are the Institute of Noetic Sciences in Petaluma, California, and the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California. Both organizations provide institutional support for ongoing programs of research and education in addition to offering short-term retreat experiences aimed at fostering personal transformation.

The word *esotericism* often conjures up the image of a select few individuals devoted to the disciplined study of

arcane texts. The historical record indicates, however, that a persisting minority of Americans have been attracted to movements advocating such distinctive esoteric themes as (1) the correspondence of visible and invisible levels of the cosmos, (2) the multiple levels of the human mind, and (3) the role that awakened knowledge of these other levels of self or cosmos has in producing experiences of self-transformation. These are, moreover, the major themes of the spirituality that characterizes perhaps 15 percent of the American public who, while actively interested in spiritual topics, are nonetheless not affiliated with a religious organization. Those attracted to esotericism today, as throughout American history, are motivated by a variety of interests ranging from sheer fascination with the paranormal to an abiding desire for felt connection with a higher spiritual order of things. Esoteric movements thus constitute an enduring tradition of spirituality in America and have, in fact, succeeded in becoming an identifiable component of popular culture.

See also *Christian Science; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Hindu Tradition and Heritage; Idealist Philosophy; Judaism; Jewish Science; Megachurches; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements* entries; *Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Positive Thinking; Psychology of Religion; Spiritualism; Transcendentalism; Wicca and Witchcraft.*

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Establishment, Religious

Colonists settling in America created communities in which they enjoyed both freedom from religious persecution and the ability to create ideal societies based upon their particular religious worldview. Many European immigrants fled the persecution inherent in life as a minority in a country with an established state religion. Yet this did not mean that all colonists rejected religious establishment outright. The reality of established religion in Europe meant that an official state religion directed governmental affairs. This meant not only that particular religious beliefs and practices were financed and determined by the government but that religious minorities were often persecuted for a failure to conform. Some who came to the New World sought a new system of government in which religious freedom ruled instead of a religious establishment. For others, America provided an opportunity to establish their own religion, free from the influences of others and free to persecute those who failed to conform to the new majority faith. Yet as these communities came into contact with one another and religious diversity grew, these establishments were challenged. Religious establishments ended with the creation of the United States of America and the drafting of the Constitution. Though the Bill of Rights sets out a clear mandate against established religion, controversies over the nature and extent of this clause have led to numerous controversies, many involving U.S. Supreme Court cases, that will likely continue for years to come.

For those who sought religious toleration and those who sought new forms of establishment, the beauty of America rested in the opportunity to create an ideal community centered on their own religious and civic principles. As more of these communities arrived on American soil and as these communities began to organize into a nation, conflicts arose. Even after religious establishment was clearly prohibited on the federal level by the U.S. Constitution, the actual ramifications, limits, and boundaries of this clause have been contested by those within and outside of the religious mainstream.

Colonial Establishment

The Puritans stand as a prime example of this twin desire for religious freedom and establishment as the earliest Puritan settlers clearly articulated their belief that God stood on their side, watching over and blessing their efforts provided they showed faith, humility, and a sense of purpose.

Individuals such as John Winthrop, early governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, articulated a type of civic religion that marked their purpose as a divine one, their colony as one that enjoyed divine providence, and their people as faithful and humble. This covenantal Puritan perspective on the relationship between religion and government foreshadowed that of the early republic. While the founders justified their belief that church and state should be separated by articulating a concern for the integrity of religion and an avoidance of corruption, this same commitment to religious vigor underlay colonial establishments of religion in the various societies.

Underlying this view as well was the belief that God underwrote and watched over both the church and the state. All-powerful, God called the church to spread the message of true religion, right living, and the path to salvation. Moreover, the church existed under a mandate of service to both God and man. The state served as God's instrument for the regulation of human activity, the punishment of evil, and the reward for right living. Through the cooperation of church and state, society would remain godly and righteous. In practice, this meant that though official separation existed for the protection of religion, church and state would enjoy mutual support. The state would provide the church with land and other economic support while structuring its laws and regulations on citizen behavior to underscore regular church attendance and proper morality. The church would likewise support governmental functions by opening church buildings for civic purposes such as meetings, trials, and ceremonies. Moreover, the clergy regularly encouraged civic involvement through sermons preached each Sunday.

In Virginia, the Church of England held sway. The ruling elite managed not only the governmental offices but also church offices. Officeholders were required to affirm allegiance to the Church of England, and the legislative bodies heard not only civil cases but also cases involving immorality and failure to regularly attend church. The Virginia House of Burgesses of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries instituted taxes to fund ministerial work, to maintain and build church buildings, and to support needy members of the community. The General Assembly also regulated the punishments and free exercise of dissenting religious groups. Most opposition to this arrangement came from either religious minorities seeking greater freedom or those within the Church of England who worried that too much governmental entanglement would negatively impact their religious work.

North Carolina became the first southern state to separate religion and government. Though the Anglican Church attempted to maintain and create a strong presence and influence on the government and citizens of these colonies, the establishment never took hold. The disorganization of the ruling bodies combined with a diversity of inhabitants meant that public support never matched the original ideal. Based on many principles of John Locke, the Fundamental Constitution of 1669 failed ratification, but the revised constitution that followed struck a balance that eliminated many of the feudal elements of the earlier document while maintaining a commitment to freedom of religion for theistic faiths. As a result, the Carolinas became a haven for religious minorities.

Controversies and Protests Involving Colonial Establishment

Even in colonies with a clearly established religion, controversies emerged over right doctrine, right systems of rule, and the right connection between religion and government. Within the Puritan stronghold of New England, theological disputes caused lasting divisions. In 1636, a woman named Anne Hutchinson drew criticism for articulating a theology distinct from the accepted norm. A devoted follower of John Cotton, the well-known preacher, Hutchinson had begun to hold small group meetings during the week to discuss Cotton's sermons. Over time, she began to use these forums to espouse her own interpretations. These small groups soon turned into lectures that drew substantial attention due both to the numbers in attendance and the nature of her message.

Of particular concern were her statements regarding the covenant of grace. Hutchinson emerged from a Calvinistic theology that argued that the elect received salvation as part of the covenant with God that mandated their belief in Christ. For these elect, after their justification, good works would follow, not to achieve salvation but as evidence of their election. Hutchinson altered this understanding by de-emphasizing works. The idea that works follow justification undermined, for Hutchinson, the basic Protestant idea of salvation through faith alone. If salvation was unearned, no benefit or value would be connected to works. For the clergy of New England, such an understanding could lead the weak to a life of immortality. Thus, Hutchinson was labeled an "antinomian" for what was perceived as her rejection of moral law. Her anger at the accusations and statements against the clergy of the colony almost led the colony into schism.

Similar controversies brewed within Baptist groups. The distinction between General and Particular Baptists arose during the seventeenth century as the former espoused a theology dependent on the possible salvation of all humanity and the idea of salvation as a choice to be faithful. For the latter group, the Calvinistic theology of predestination and salvation through God's grace alone reigned supreme. Despite bitter disputes amongst Baptists, these groups faced an even larger challenge—persecution by the Church of England. This persecution stemmed largely from the conviction of nearly all Baptists that the Bible clearly rejected any type of church establishment or interference of the government with religion. The Baptist belief in the believer's baptism clashed not only with the Church of England but also with other minority groups such as Congregationalists and Presbyterians who suffered less persecution as a result.

The Baptist insistence on clear separation between church and state was perhaps most famously articulated in the letter from the Danbury, Connecticut, Baptist Association to recently elected President Thomas Jefferson in October 1801. In this letter, the group expressed concerns regarding the lack of safeguards in their state on religious liberty. In his reply, Jefferson first employed the metaphor of a wall of separation between church and state in his support of their sentiments and concerns.

Other minority communities also articulated a commitment to religious freedom. For example, Pietistic Separatists took their Calvinistic understandings and applied them in new ways to advocate a clear separation between religion and government, as did early evangelicals and Quakers such as Roger Williams and William Penn. These opponents to establishment advocated their position out of a conviction that communities should value freedom of religious conscience not only because this free choosing of faithfulness marked true faith in the world but also because of a belief that the state was necessarily corrupt, worldly, and, by definition, contrary to the focus and purpose of religion. Strict separation would thus lessen these corrupting influences and allow religion to flourish. As a result, the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania were known for their openness to a variety of religious communities and commitments. Beginning as early as the 1640s, the Cambridge Platform and the 1649 Maryland Act Concerning Religion were enacted to emphasize a commitment to religious freedom and free exercise of religion for all Christians. Expanded more broadly, these ideas would find later expression in the Bill of Rights.

Yet increasing diversity brought on by continued immigration led to conflicts in several colonies. Anglicans, Baptists, Roman Catholics, and Quakers began to arrive in the mid-seventeenth century, and the Puritan stronghold in New England faltered. While Quakers settled in Pennsylvania and Catholics in Maryland, other Protestant groups dispersed throughout the colonies. Varieties of nationalities began to arrive—Germans, Scots-Irish, and other groups came seeking religious freedom and the ability to practice their faiths autonomously and with integrity. Despite the wealth of land available for individual groups to start their own communities, intermixing occurred. As diverse groups began to interact and larger-scale organization began to take shape, persecution entered the arena as well. While the Puritans remained the majority faith following their arrival in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620, other groups began to arrive, and the government worked to fine, punish, and persecute those who failed to live up to the Puritan standards of right living and morality. The Salem witchcraft trials of the 1690s and the continued persecution of Quakers throughout Massachusetts demonstrated both concern for proper doctrine and fear of subversion of government and perversion of religion. As diversity grew, such persecution became less practical and less popular, and it ultimately subsided as the inherently peaceful and demonstrably Christian nature of the Quaker believers and the falsehoods underlying charges of witchcraft came to light.

Though each colony possessed a religious authority and emphasized its particular perspective on the proper relationship between church and state within its boundaries, a growing consensus mandated some level of freedom for religious minorities, and this growing sentiment was soon codified. Another contributing factor to this increase in cooperation was religious revivalism. The Great Awakening of the mid-eighteenth century served to solidify the importance of religion in the American identity in a way that highlighted a common denominator of Christian faith amongst various denominations. It thus encouraged religious Americans to see past denominational differences and understand their fellow countrymen and -women as part of the same mission and working towards the same goal. Indeed, from the late seventeenth through the mid-eighteenth century, a growing unity amongst colonies began to emerge, centered on the Puritan ideas of covenant and divine providence. The Continental Congress (1774–1789), burdened with the task of reconciling differences amongst the colonies while maintaining the sovereignty of each,

integrated religious language into its ceremonial practices—regular prayer, fast days, days of prayer, and religious tests for public office—while maintaining a commitment to religious liberty. Both commitments were carried on into the constitutional period.

Constitutional Period

When the American colonies successfully fought the Revolutionary War and set about uniting as one country, a primary question for the founders was the proper relationship between religion and government, particularly considering the wealth of religions present in the young nation. Keenly aware of the variety of world religions, not only variations of Christianity, the founders recognized both the uniquely religious underpinnings of American identity, brought forward by the justifications for most early settlements in America, and their desire to create a nation centered on principles of equality, freedom, and common values of virtue.

The awareness of religious diversity led the founders to also address this pluralism in their work on the Constitution. James Madison saw this very diversity as the primary safeguard for religious freedom. In his *Federalist Papers*, Madison simultaneously expresses concern over possible tyranny resulting from religion and celebration of religious diversity. That many of those involved in the framing of the Constitution subscribed to a deist worldview—which, though it shared much with its cousin Christianity, differed on many points as well—also affected this perspective.

Thomas Jefferson receives credit for the earliest articulations of what would become the First Amendment. His work in Virginia to ensure freedom from and for religion received support from James Madison. Jefferson wrote a bill to that effect in 1777 and proposed it in 1779 to the Virginia legislature. With a passionate speech in support of its principles by Madison and after several amendments and long debates, the bill was passed in 1786. Moving beyond Patrick Henry's insistence that a general Christian faith underlie America's new government, Jefferson and Madison insisted that even the most general and generic statement of faith would put in the hands of the government a concern best left to rational and reasonable individual minds.

During this period of discussion and debate, the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1787, this body determined that the federal government would not make religious tests, oaths, or other particular religious convictions requirements for eligibility for holding

public office. No official religion would be recognized as the state church, and religious individuals such as Quakers who morally objected to swearing oaths would be allowed to affirm them instead. This early form of the Constitution addressed many of Jefferson's concerns but, in his opinion, remained incomplete because of its lack of a statement on religious freedom. Although Jefferson did not attend the Constitutional Convention, he greatly influenced its proceedings on this matter. Madison demonstrated this influence when he proposed the first of ten amendments known now as the Bill of Rights. Madison's original wording was condensed and solidified to the present wording in September 1789.

The end results of this period of discussion and debate were the establishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment. The former reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion," indicating not only that the government may not establish a national religion but also that more subtle support for or cooperation with religious bodies would not be permitted. For the first century and a half of the nation's history, few questions were raised as to the nature and limits of this clause. Moreover, before the Fourteenth Amendment was codified following the Civil War, the establishment clause was understood to only apply to the national government.

In the drafting of the Constitution, the question of religious tests for public office also took center stage. Discussions about Article VI of the Constitution, which eliminated such tests from requirements for federal office, centered not only on the need for religious freedom but also on theological concerns. Proponents of such tests advocated their continuation as a means of ensuring that men of good conviction and morality governed the new nation, while opponents argued that God alone could require such a test of the faithful and that it was completely inappropriate for the government to do so.

Supreme Court Jurisprudence

With a clear Protestant majority, those practices and customs that may have violated this separation were overlooked or assumed to be acceptable by those who shared the convictions behind them. In the years following the creation of the establishment clause of the United States Constitution, debate has continued as to the limits and reaches of this clause for various applications in American government and religion. Speaking generally, two schools of thought have controlled discussions of such cases. Those of the separationist

argument argue for a strict division between government and religion. For these individuals, Jefferson's wall of separation should be understood clearly as mandating an impermeable barrier that allows neither support nor even cooperation between these two realms of society. On the other side are accommodationists, who suggest that although separation means a careful limiting of all interactions between the realms, some cooperation and intermingling is not only acceptable but necessary for a well-functioning society. Moreover, they argue, sometimes such intermingling is necessary to prevent discrimination against religion.

Several court cases, beginning in the mid-twentieth century, have shown the changing perspective of the Supreme Court as it has vacillated between separationist and accommodationist rulings. Each case has helped to further define the boundaries of establishment and has developed methods for determining future establishment cases. One of the most well-known of these cases was 1947's *Everson v. Board of Education*. This case concerned the subsidizing of transportation of students to various schools via public transportation. In ruling to allow such subsidies for students in not only public but private (including parochial) schools as well, the Court affirmed the concept that the government has not only a mandate for separation but a mandate for neutrality. To limit the funding to public schools only would unfairly discriminate against private schools and the families that choose to send their children there. The funding was found constitutional also because it did not go directly to religious schools but to the parents, who then decided which school was to receive the funds. The opinions delivered in this case suggested that religious freedom and disestablishment ranked as one of the liberties protected by the due process clause, and in *Everson's* wake it became clear that all forms of government, at all levels, were subject to his requirement.

Addressing a concern regarding establishment in the government itself, the 1961 case *Torcaso v. Watkins* struck down any attempt to require religious tests for individuals holding public office. Though many states had mandated some testament of religious belief, even if a very generic one, such as belief in God, the Court ruled that the government should not undertake to force or coerce religious belief. The Court concluded that even something as seemingly innocuous as general belief in God amounted to establishment. The Court later refused to hear appeals of cases in the 1970s that challenged the constitutionality of the national motto, "In God We Trust." Two other cases in the 1960s came to

separationist conclusions. In 1962, *Engel v. Vitale* ended public school prayer as a clear violation of the establishment clause, particularly if mandated and orchestrated by the school administration. In 1963, *Abington School District v. Schempp* determined that recitation of biblical verses and the Lord's Prayer in public schools was also unconstitutional.

The limits of cooperation between religion and government were specified more fully in the 1971 case *Lemon v. Kurtzman*. In this case, the Court struck down a state law that reimbursed religious schools for textbooks and teachers that did not teach religious subjects. The court expressed particular concern for the subsidizing of teachers who might subtly or inadvertently advance religion even while teaching secular subjects. Perhaps the most forward-looking case thus far, *Lemon v. Kurtzman* laid out a three-pronged test for determining future establishment cases. For a policy to avoid establishment, its purpose must be secular, its primary effect must not be to inhibit or advance religion, and it must not foster an excessive entanglement of government and religion. By providing this threefold test for determining the limits of establishment, the Court attempted to clarify the limits of cooperation between religion and government. Recognizing that such cooperation would inevitably happen, the Court hoped to secure a healthy balance that provided equal opportunities and support to religious and nonreligious groups and individuals as well as limits to any indirect or ideological influence between religion and government. However, in 1997, the Court modified the Lemon Test in *Agostini v. Felton*. The Court clarified what the "effect" element of the test meant and suggested three primary criteria for determining whether a governmental action or program had the primary effect of advancing religion—government indoctrination, limiting beneficiaries of governmental benefits by religious conviction, or excessive entanglement. Though the Lemon Test and the alternate test offered in *Agostini v. Felton* continue to provide concrete and structured methods for examining establishment cases, their continued use is controversial. Certain justices find them ultimately unhelpful because of their vagueness; others who advocate greater involvement between religion and government see them as too restrictive.

Contemporary Concerns

Policy questions involving morality and religious conviction continue to push the boundaries or test the strength of the establishment clause. Governmental regulation of health care and lifestyle choices such as abortion, stem-cell research, sex

education in schools, and same-sex marriage consistently walk a sometimes dangerous line between moral prescription and necessary governmental involvement.

Increasingly, the question of establishment has arisen in regards to international initiatives and involvements of the United States. While the nation may be clear that it does not espouse one religion in any strict sense, more basic ideas about morality or human rights have raised questions as well. National standards on these questions have found their way into documents such as the Universal Declaration for Human Rights, and the concept of religious liberty has been exported and encouraged in a variety of international contexts.

Indeed, just as growing religious diversity and interactions with other cultures and communities challenged the earliest examples of religious establishment in colonial America, so too are growing religious diversity and interactions with other nations challenging the last vestiges of religious establishment in the United States. In the early twenty-first century, American citizens who do not ascribe to a monotheistic or even theistic religious belief, and other nations who either see American ideals and policies as contrary to their idea of God or argue for a more broadly providential God who has not singled out America from other nations, began to challenge the language of a providential God, America as a chosen nation, and even the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance. Such issues continue to complicate the question of whether religious language and traditions in American culture will fall away or these elements are too fundamental to American identity to disappear.

See also *American Revolution; Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Antinomian Controversy; Education: Court Cases; Freedom, Religious; Pledge of Allegiance; Puritans; Supreme Court.*

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Ethics

See *Bioethics; Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues; Social Ethics*

Ethnicity

To understand religion in America, one must know the relationship between religion and ethnicity. Moreover, since both the concept of ethnicity and its relationship to religion have undergone substantial development over the course of American history, it is also important to trace the transition of this concept over time. To some, religion is one of the clearest markers of ethnic distinction, and certainly religious groups have been some of the most important carriers of ethnic traditions in the United States. Yet the relation of religious belief and ethnic identity is complicated and multifaceted, so that no clear and absolute relation can be drawn between the two.

The Concept of Ethnicity

The definition of the word *ethnicity* is simple, while the definition of its root word, *ethnic*, is complicated. *Ethnicity* refers to the set of qualities that define a group as being ethnic and, therefore, is a cluster of characteristics that any particular population might hold in common and that would define it as a separate entity. *Ethnic*, on the other hand, has a complicated history; it defines a certain group of people based on common characteristics. These characteristics might include distinctive racial, national, linguistic, cultural, or religious traits, as well as any number of combinations of these traits that would define a common ethnic group. There may well be other situations in which a group might be divided by one characteristic (such as language) and yet united by another of these characteristics (such as culture).

With the rise of nationalism and racial theories in early modern Europe, the concept of ethnicity often took on

racial and biological overtones; many sought the origins of ethnicity in purely physical characteristics. With the rejection of these racial theories in the twentieth century, the term *ethnicity* began to take on more of a cultural definition, stressing the intricate interweaving of cultural assumptions and decisions that united any group of people into a clearly defined group. The recent emphasis has been on ethnicity as a culturally conditioned, and often intentionally constructed, identity that serves as a common bond for a group of individuals, providing meaning and identity for them. The borders of ethnicity are often porous and allow for individuals and groups to maintain more than one identity at a time, as a member of a particular national group as well as an ethnic subgroup within that nationality. Religion adds another complicating factor here, as members of an ethnic group might be divided along religious lines, or as members of a religious group might seek solidarity with each other along confessional lines, while maintaining separate ethnic identities.

In the United States, ethnicity has often been a means by which one seeks to find identity within the cultural and religious pluralism of the country. Many seek to have both an ethnic and a national identity, resulting in the concept of a “hyphenated” identity, in which one is, for example, Polish-American, or Cuban-American, without wishing to reduce his or her primary identity to one or the other. At one point in American history the term *ethnic* meant a group not assimilated into the dominant American culture; thus, the ethnics were on the margins of society. With the increasing pluralism and celebration of diversity of cultures in the modern United States, the term has taken on more positive connotations, implying that all Americans are, in one form or another, ethnic, at least as a subgrouping of culture within the larger culture of the United States. But the blurring of religious, cultural, and racial characteristics through social mobility and intermarriage suggests that ethnic lines and theories of ethnicity may well change and develop in the future, further complicating attempts to identify and quantify the concept of ethnicity.

The history of the words *ethnic* and *ethnicity* in English demonstrates their changeable nature. The root of the words comes from ancient Greek, in which the word *ethnos* meant a nation or a race and the word *ethnikos* was the corresponding adjective describing the characteristics or nature of such a nation or race. These words in Latin connoted those who were outsiders to the core grouping, either Greek or Latin. Thus, *ethnic* took on a meaning similar to the words

barbarians or *nations*, assuming that those who were *ethnos* were outside of the Greco-Roman culture and, thereby, uncultured outsiders. In medieval and early English usage, the word shifted to mean a group of people who were non-Christians, known as *heathens* or *pagans*.

This use of *ethnic* to connote people being outside the center of society was maintained in the United States up through the early twentieth century. The original thirteen American colonies and the early republic were dominated by Protestant white settlers from England, and the culture of these immigrants defined the center of American society. When the great migration of other European peoples began in the middle of the nineteenth century, these “core” Americans began to characterize the new immigrants as those who differed from them by means of religion, language, or culture; thus “ethnics,” or outsiders. The largest divisions were racial, but even within the same racial classification, there were more localized, ethnic divisions. Unlike racial qualities, which were seen as biological, and thus impossible to overcome, ethnic qualities of language, religion, and culture could be overcome, and the ethnics could be (and should be) assimilated into the core culture of the United States. Thus, Norwegian or Irish or Italian or Greek immigrants could be molded into Americans through education and acculturation, and this was seen as a positive necessity; indeed, it was assumed that society itself might collapse if this transformation were not accomplished. Ethnics were those being transformed into Americans; “core” Americans did not have the qualities of being ethnic.

In the twentieth century, the term and idea of *ethnicity* took on more positive overtones. Though millions of ethnic immigrants and their children adjusted to American culture and life in many significant ways, many of them began to question the idea of complete assimilation as it had been previously envisioned. Many immigrant groups sought to maintain some elements of their ethnic identity and distinctiveness, or to rediscover those elements that had been lost. Second- and third-generation immigrant Americans began to wear ethnic distinctions as badges of honor, rather than as signs of being somewhat less than fully American. Especially after World War II, and the full discrediting of Nazi racial theories, there was a shift toward a positive understanding of ethnic differences. American cultural and religious pluralism was an undeniable fact of life, and thus the category of the ethnic American, or the hyphenated American, suggested that these groups could maintain some of their distinctions and still be “100 percent Americans.” Debates still raged

about the limits of ethnic pluralism, and around the larger issue of race, but the older idea of ethnicity as defining those outside of the cultural core of the nation was less prevalent. Ethnicity is now a much more positive idea, and those without an ethnicity are often seen as culturally impoverished. This is not to posit an agreement on a definition for *ethnic*; scholars and others clash over how to define the word and how it fits into the wider world of American culture.

The Historical Development of Ethnicity and Religion in America

If viewed in modern terms, there was considerable tension between religion and ethnicity in the identity of the early settlers in British colonial North America. For the most part the settlers were ethnically English, Welsh, or Scottish. Religiously, however, they were not predominantly members of the Church of England but dissenters of various types: Puritans, Presbyterians, Quakers, Roman Catholics, and others. In addition, there were Dutch Calvinists, Swedish Lutherans, German Lutherans, Reformed, French Huguenots, and Sephardic Jews, many of whom were dissenters in their homelands, and certainly not British. Colonial America was a loose amalgam of various peoples and religions, with no clear sense of a common ethnic identity; most saw themselves as British, but with an increasingly separate American identity as well. After the American Revolution, the adoption of voluntary religion and religious freedom within the new nation meant that religious differences would remain. But it was a religious diversity within narrow confines; most Americans were some variety of Protestant Christian (mainly Calvinist), and the postwar religious revivals, led by the Methodists and Baptists, led to the development of a common religious identity to match the growing American ethnic identity. In the first part of the nineteenth century there was a remarkable consensus among the main American denominations, the beginnings of what we now would call evangelical Protestantism. This consensus would define, for a time, a common religious identity for most Americans and create a religious norm that would match the developing American identity. These two developments would define the concept of Americanism; outsiders to this identity would be “ethnics” and would be candidates for assimilation into the American norm.

Ahead, however, was a century of mass immigration to the United States (1820–1920) that seriously challenged and expanded this identity, both religiously and ethnically. The first wave of immigration, up to about 1880, consisted

primarily of Germans, Scandinavians, and Irish. The Germans and Scandinavians were prime candidates for assimilation, for they were Protestants and shared many religious and cultural norms with most Protestant Americans. The Irish, on the other hand, were a problem, for their Roman Catholicism and differing cultural norms, along with their “clannishness” and refusal to assimilate to the dominant culture, marked them as ethnic outsiders, not likely to fit in. Beginning around 1880 the composition of the immigration changed dramatically, shifting more toward immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe (and on the West Coast, Japanese and Chinese), people whose ethnic and religious identities were, like those of the Irish, significantly at odds with the established group of Protestant Americans.

These latter immigrants of the period 1880–1920 came in huge numbers and challenged the Protestant consensus of America: primarily Roman Catholics from Italy, Poland, and Lithuania; Orthodox Christians and Ashkenazi Jews from Eastern Europe; and Buddhists and Shinto from Asia. Not only were there religious differences; there were also varied linguistic and racial backgrounds: Mediterranean, Slavic, and Asian. The sheer numbers and the differences between them and their “Anglo-Saxon” Protestant neighbors were a daunting hurdle to those, on both sides, who sought assimilation and acculturation into a common, American identity. It also occasioned the strong nativist, anti-immigrant backlash that brought about severe restrictions on immigration in the early twentieth century.

Ethnic and religious bonds (often indistinguishable) were crucial to the survival of immigrant communities and provided a means of affiliation and mutual support. Immigrant religious institutions were, in almost all cases, the largest and most important organizations in the varied ethnic communities. They were a source of support for new arrivals, a place where they could worship in their own language, make connections with others of their own ethnicity and culture, and find assistance and encouragement in the strange American environment. Religion and ethnic identity combined to give the new immigrants a group identity, even if there were some who wished to leave this identity behind and quickly become assimilated Americans. Ethnicity could also mark them as a subgroup within their own religious grouping: the separation of Roman Catholics into various “ethnic” parishes (Irish, German, Polish, Italian, or others) or into separate denominations (such as Scandinavian and German Lutherans). Often this led to tensions within the religious group, as earlier, more assimilated groups clashed with later

arrivals, for example, the conflict between assimilated Reform Judaism and the newly arrived Conservative and Orthodox Jews from Eastern Europe.

In the first half of the twentieth century, the transition from immigrant to American was assumed to be a process that was vital both to the immigrants themselves and to the country as a whole. Changes in the immigrant communities were rapid, as second- and third-generation descendants of the immigrants took control of the ethnic institutions, including the religious ones. World War I resulted in a resurgence of nativism and xenophobia and a severe restriction on immigration, which meant that the ethnic immigrant communities would no longer receive their refreshing tide of new arrivals to help reinforce their ethnic and religious identities. In the middle of these developments, however, the ethnic communities still found strength in a composite ethnic identity, that of being a “hyphenated” American. The descendants of the immigrants took renewed pride in being both citizens of their ethnic culture and of the larger United States; they were Italian-Americans, or Swedish-Americans, or Polish-Americans; and it was these groups of “hyphenated” Americans that defined the “ethnic.”

An open question at this time was whether this ethnic hyphenated identity was a permanent fixture of American life or a temporary way station for the immigrants on their journey from being immigrants to becoming American. The construction of these new hyphenated ethnicities was often highly selective and eclectic, as second- and third-generation immigrants melded elements of both the immigrant culture and American culture to form an often romanticized version of the two. The survival of these forms of ethnic pride were practiced by those whose ordinary, everyday lives were essentially American; hyphenated ethnic identities could be “switched on” for special occasions but were often selectively employed. From a position of increasing assimilation, ethnic Americans could creatively use a highly selective reappropriation of immigrant culture to define their group identity, albeit no longer in an exclusive sense.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, continued social and cultural changes meant a more positive appreciation of the role of ethnicity in American life and encouraged its continuation. Renewed immigration after 1965 led to a new flood of immigrants, this time mainly from Latin America and Asia, with smaller numbers from Africa and Eastern Europe. This new immigration led to an even greater diversity of peoples in the United States

and questions about the process of assimilation itself; was it possible to have a common American ethnic identity, and even if it were possible, was it desirable? The old “melting pot” metaphor of assimilation was being replaced with a new one: America as a “salad bowl,” in which the various ethnic elements of society retained their distinct elements while contributing to the overall flavor of society. Led in the 1960s by the example of African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans, who sought a renewal of ethnic pride in their origins, ethnic differences were increasingly seen not as an obstacle to creating a strong national society but as a contribution to its strength. Even white “Anglo-Saxon” Protestants were exploring the roots of their own ethnic cultures and taking pride in a reappropriation of them. Mass immigration of peoples of very different social and religious ethnicities was still seen as a potential cause of friction and divisiveness, but the elimination of ethnic characteristics is now less likely to be seen as the way by which these difficulties should be addressed. *Ethnicity* is now a more positive term and often universally applied to all Americans as an important element of their identity. To be sure, assimilation and intermarriage are factors that often blur the ethnic identities of many American citizens, but many can still describe their ethnic backgrounds, even if they must refer to proportionality to describe them.

Varieties of Religion and Ethnicity in American Culture

The intersection of religion and ethnicity in American life is strong, to be sure, but it is hardly uniform. It differs in nature between one group and another, it often grows and develops over time, and it plays different roles in group culture and life depending on the group’s background and experience. The correlation between religion, ethnicity, and national identity is very important here, especially among those immigrants in the United States where ethnicity and nationality have been fluid over time. Many immigrants from outside Western Europe have found that immigration resulted in dramatic changes that have substantially altered their ethnic “location.” National boundaries and identities shift over time, being formed and re-formed, so that ethnic identities and loyalties in America must be readjusted to meet the new situation. Members of groups and tribes who never had much to do with one another in the “old country” now find themselves as conationals. Needs of affiliation and survival in the United States sometimes mean that conationals divided by religion have found it expedient to

cross religious lines to unite with others. Still other groups have found that political and religious developments subsequent to their immigration have divided them from other ethnic nationals or have split ethnic religions into warring camps. In the construction of an ethnic and religious identity, sometimes outside developments push situations in unintended directions.

The past two centuries have seen the development of dozens of new nation-states and the construction of new national identities. The breakup of old empires and colonial systems has meant that groups have found themselves as members of new nations that have not always been formed along rational ethnic lines but, rather, combine distinct and sometime hostile peoples. Nations have sought to combine regional identities into a single national identity, or have shifted their allegiances by shifting boundaries. For example, nineteenth-century immigrants from Sweden often defined themselves not by their Swedish identity, but by the *lan* or district from which they came; if they were Swedes from western Finland, they would eventually have to decide whether they wished to remain Swedish or adopt an affiliation for their new Finnish homeland (Swedish-Americans have done both). Another example might be Italian- or German-Americans, whose countries had not achieved a united political identity until later in the nineteenth century, or various Eastern European ethnic and religious groups that found their regions combined into the country of Yugoslavia after World War II; the question arose whether they would affiliate with their ethnic and religious rivals or continue to remain separate in the United States. A similar question faced those from the former Ottoman Empire, Soviet Union, or Indonesia. The formation of new nation-states and attending national identities does not always mean that the hyphenated Americans from those regions will readily adopt the new national and ethnic identity.

Many distinct nationalities have sought, on the other hand, to separate themselves from a larger, corporate identity, often along linguistic, ethnic, and religious lines. The stirring of new national and ethnic identities within national states has meant that those whose primary ethnic identity was to a nation-state have now decided on a different primary affiliation. Thus the Welsh Methodists and Scottish Presbyterians in the United States have developed new identities that are not tied to Great Britain; the same may hold true for Basques or Catalans whose identity might once have been Spanish. The ethnic and religious divisions of India produced both Pakistan and Bangladesh but have

left many on the “wrong side” of the border and many recent immigrants whose ties to sublocations and subgroups might be much stronger than their national identities.

The same might be true of immigrants from African countries, where ties of religion and tribe are stronger than loyalty to a newly formed nation-state. Thus one might be an immigrant from Ethiopia, but in America one might divide along dozens of ethnic or linguistic lines, or between Protestantism, Orthodox Christianity, or Islam. Some groups, such as Jews, Kurds, or Bahá'í, have had no real national identity at all but have found that their religious and ethnic identity transcends national borders. Some groups have found a new ethnic identity while undergoing mistreatment at the hands of the dominant American culture—thus the development of an African-American ethnic identity among formerly enslaved Africans in the United States, or the resurgence and renewal of Native American identities following attempts to assimilate them into the dominant culture.

There are many different levels of correlation between religious and ethnic identity, often depending on the nature of religious adherence between religion, ethnicity, and nationality in the home country. Some groups form a high correlation between religion and ethnicity; often these are groups who have not had a primarily national identity. Thus Jews, Armenians, Sikhs, Jains, Zoroastrians, many Eastern European groups, and African tribal groups see themselves essentially as ethnic groups for whom a singular religious identity is absolutely crucial to their survival. Their religion is a primary focus for maintaining group identity in an often hostile national environment, and they still maintain this tight, “in-group” identity in the United States. Other groups in this category would be those immigrants who come from countries where religion, ethnicity, and nationality are so tight as to be almost inseparable, such as Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Poland, and Japan.

In the middle of the scale of correlation between religion and ethnicity are those countries where there is a dominant religion, often linked closely to the state, but whose religious landscape allows for the existence of other religions that dissent from the national norm. This would include immigrants from most of the Western European nations with established state church systems as well as the large multireligious nations of the world, such as China, Indonesia, India, and South Africa. In these countries one might reasonably expect immigrants to bring the dominant religion along with them, but one also would not be surprised to find that

they brought another religion, or switched religions once in the United States. Thus German-Americans might be Lutheran, Reformed, or Roman Catholic; but one could also find German Baptists, Methodists, or sectarian groups among them. Chinese immigrants might bring Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Islam, or forms of Christianity; given the recent communist domination of China, it is not uncommon to find many Chinese immigrants who claim no religion at all. While each group may well have a primary religious identity, there are a significant number of people who hold the dominant ethnic or national identity but not the corresponding religious identity. One such group might be Arab-American Christians, who make up the majority of Arab-Americans although they were always minority populations in their home countries.

The low degree of correlation between ethnicity and religion might be discovered either in those smaller or newer religious groups developed in the United States, among people who claim a mixed ethnic or national background, or among those from countries with no strong religious identity that predominates. This might be seen in the colonial English settlers of North America, where one might just as easily be a Puritan, Presbyterian, Quaker, Baptist, or Methodist as Anglican. Among many mainline Protestant groups in America, which may have had ethnic shadings in the past, there is now little or no ethnic character. Among groups like the Baptists, Assemblies of God, Churches of Christ, Disciples of Christ, and others, no clear ethnicity ever really existed. There is some possibility that, given time and space, ethnically nonspecific religious groups might actually form a new ethnic group in the United States, but that would require a high degree of separation from the dominant culture.

Ethnicity and Christianity in America

The vast majority of Americans with a definite religious preference choose some form of Christianity: Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, or Eastern Orthodoxy. While about one-half of all Americans claim at least a “preference” for Protestantism, roughly another quarter claim Roman Catholicism, and another three to five million are affiliated with Eastern Orthodox groups. This predominance, along with the generally Christian origins of the first colonial settlers, leads some to claim the United States as a “Christian” nation. This might be true in a cultural or numerical sense, but hardly in a legal or organizational sense. There are areas of the country where Christianity is

overwhelmingly dominant, such as in the rural Midwest or South, but there are other areas of the country where Christianity is not even the religion of the majority of the people, especially in the large metropolitan areas of the East and West Coasts. Even in those areas where Christians are a majority, they are often divided between the major family groups of Christianity and within these by differences in denominational groups. It would be impossible to claim a single Christian ethnic identity; indeed, the major differences between Christian groups are often based as much on ethnicity as they are on theology.

Protestantism

Protestants are divided into thousands of different-sized denominations, from 15 million members in the Southern Baptist Convention to small groups with membership in the hundreds. These thousands of groups can usually be considered together in eight to ten denominational families. Most of these Protestant groups can be traced back to Western European countries, to American adaptations of European Protestantism, and to their missionary endeavors worldwide. Protestants in the Lutheran, Reformed (Calvinist), and Episcopal (Anglican) denominational families were established from roots in the Protestant state churches of Western Europe. Baptists, Methodists, and Anabaptist traditions (Amish and Mennonites) were brought over by groups of religious dissenters from Europe, while the remaining proliferation of American Protestant groups (including the Restorationist and Pentecostal/Holiness families) is the result of homegrown American developments. While a majority of Protestant Americans are white, a vast predominance of African-Americans and a significant number of Hispanic-Americans are Protestant, as are substantial proportion of recent immigrants from Asia and Africa.

Most of the mainline Protestant denominations (Congregational, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, and Northern Baptist) have roots in Britain and were established in America during the colonial period. As such, they have a fairly low degree of ethnic identity and specificity among them. One might identify the Scots with the Presbyterian group, or the Welsh with the Methodists, for example, but it would be impossible to make an exclusive correlation in the opposite direction. Most of these denominations grew in the United States during the early republican period and came to form the backbone of the evangelical Protestant consensus that came into being during this time; they are the essentially American Protestant denominations that defined

the center of American identity against the masses of "ethnic" immigrants in the nineteenth century.

Two of the other Protestant groups now counted primarily among the mainline denominations had their beginnings as ethnic denominations: the Lutherans and the Reformed. Though both had initial colonial representation (the German Lutherans and Reformed, the Dutch Reformed, and the Swedish Lutherans), the main bulk of these ethnic (non-English-speaking) communities were composed of nineteenth-century immigrants. The Lutherans formed synods along national and linguistic lines, from Scandinavia and northern and central Germany, while the German and Dutch Reformed followed a similar path. The ethnic correlation between Dutch Reformed or Norwegian Lutheran was tight, though not absolute, as many ethnic immigrants slipped out of the circle of these ethnic denominations. These various ethnic communities were viewed by mainstream Americans as "desirable" immigrants; they were Northern European and Protestant, and good candidates for the Anglo-Saxon "melting pot." These ethnic Protestants did assimilate in time; once their language barriers fell, they joined together in multiethnic Lutheran or Reformed denominations, except for confessional loyalists, such as the Christian Reformed Church or the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. By the middle of the twentieth century the multiethnic Lutheran and Reformed denominations had assimilated to the point where they were considered to be a part of the American Protestant mainline.

There were a number of Continental Protestants who arrived in the United States as ethnic minorities within non-Protestant countries: French Reformed (Huguenots), Hungarian Reformed and Lutherans, Slovak and German-Russian Lutherans, among others. For these ethnic minorities existing in Roman Catholic or Orthodox territories, their ethnic and religious identities were the means of their confessional survival, and they held tightly to their religious communities as their primary focus, a habit that some of them still continue. Anabaptist Protestants (Mennonites, Hutterites, and Amish), who had always existed as small minority populations, continued to live apart from the mainstream of the American population, though some elements of the Mennonites moved eventually into the American cultural mainstream, while maintaining traditional Mennonite traditions, such as pacifism. American Protestant work with immigrant populations resulted in some new Protestant communities, such as Italian, Greek, Hispanic, and Arab Protestants, though these were small

communities. Mission work abroad in Asia and Africa bore fruit in some areas, such as sub-Saharan Africa and among Chinese, Koreans, and some Southeast Asians who migrated to America after 1965. Finally, a significant number of Hispanic immigrants self-adopted evangelical and Pentecostal forms of Protestantism, and these congregations constitute a growing portion of American Protestantism.

For many of these last groups, becoming religiously Protestant was, at least in part, an entry into American life that provided advantages their non-Protestant ethnic counterparts did not enjoy, though it often did separate the two groups under one ethnic heading. Hmong and other Southeast Asians who adopted forms of evangelical Protestantism in Southeast Asian refugee camps had a ready entry into American life, but the religious restrictions of monotheism often keep them from participating in ethnic and family rituals, which are often wrapped in Buddhist or Animist traditions. Often these ethnic Asian Protestants are quite zealous in their missionary work among their ethnic counterparts; while Protestantism is still a rather small proportion of the total Chinese population abroad, Chinese Christian congregations in the United States have become the largest institutions in the Chinese-American community, far outpacing the Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist temples in influence.

Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Christians

Unlike the Protestant immigrants, the nature of Roman Catholic ecclesiology is such that these immigrants did not divide into completely separate ethnic denominations; almost all of them remained under the general control of the American Roman Catholic hierarchy. However, under the "big tent" of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, the various ethnic immigrants often formed autonomous national organizations of parishes, religious orders, and institutions that, if not independent from control of the bishops, certainly remained independent of any contact with Roman Catholics of any other ethnic background. Indeed, many ethnic Roman Catholics had more to do with non-Catholics with whom they shared an ethnic identity than with fellow Roman Catholics of another ethnicity. Considerable ethnic tension existed within American Roman Catholicism, especially over the composition of the hierarchy and the relative independence of each ethnic group. Often the various ethnic Roman Catholic groups held stronger bonds to the hierarchy of their home countries

than they did to the American bishops in their midst; this was especially true of the religious orders, who traditionally had not been under the control of the local bishops.

The first Roman Catholics in colonial America were from England, settling in the colony of Maryland, or French Canadians, who filtered down into the northern areas of New England. Later, scattered French Roman Catholics would be added in the new American territories of the Louisiana Purchase, in New Orleans and up the Mississippi River. These Roman Catholics were a small minority in a largely Protestant country; at first they were under the direction of European Roman Catholic leaders, until they received their own bishops after American independence. Although most Protestant Americans had been educated with a strong anti-Roman Catholic bias, there were initially few problems between these religious groups.

The first major influx of ethnic Roman Catholics came in the 1840s, with the great wave of more than one million Irish who left their home country during the Potato Famine. The arrival of so many ethnic Roman Catholics in such a short period of time was bound to create trouble, both within American Roman Catholicism and American society in general. Since the Irish arrived destitute in the American cities, they did not disperse out into the rural countryside but remained in their ethnic enclaves within the cities of the North and Midwest. By sheer numbers, as well as political aptitude, they soon gained control of the American Roman Catholic hierarchy as well as the political life of major American cities, causing resentment on both accounts. They did not share some of the major social attitudes of American Protestants, especially concerning temperance and Sabbath observance, and these elements combined to create hard feelings between the groups. As a result of these tensions, Irish-Americans held even tighter to their own Catholic identity as a form of group solidarity than they had in Ireland. While some of the accounts of anti-Irish sentiment in nineteenth-century America are undoubtedly exaggerated, it is clear that many Protestant Americans viewed the Irish immigrants with contempt and saw their arrival as a sign that they were losing control of their Protestant country. Also at this same time there was a large, but less dramatic, immigration of German Roman Catholics as well as an inclusion of Hispanic Catholics in the United States by means of territorial accessions in Texas and the Southwest from Mexico. Because the Germans tended to settle in rural areas, and the Hispanics were in territories far removed, they did not intrude as far into

the American popular imagination, though they did at times clash with the increasingly Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy.

After the Civil War, immigration shifted heavily toward Roman Catholic arrivals from Southern and Eastern Europe, especially from Italy, Poland, Hungary, Croatia, and Lithuania, as well as Uniate Roman Catholics from the Ukraine and the Middle East. This massive immigration contributed to the rapid growth of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, which was the single largest denomination in the country by 1890. Though Protestants would still collectively outnumber Roman Catholics, their strong growth and numbers made them a force with which to be reckoned. As the ethnic immigrants moved into the United States, they followed a very common pattern of affiliation and institutional growth. Ethnic parishes were formed along linguistic and nationalistic lines, in which the ethnic forms of piety and sociability could be observed. Parish clergy and religious orders (monks and nuns) were brought from the old country to minister to their needs and set up ethnic institutions, especially parish schools, and later colleges. Confraternities and other lay forms of religious devotion were also developed, along with ethnic cultural and assistance groups, all of which created a tight ethnic and linguistic community. Ethnic tensions sometimes developed between various Roman Catholic groups, mainly when there were bishops of one ethnicity presiding over parishes of a different ethnicity, who felt that their rights were being infringed upon. In several midwestern urban dioceses these tensions erupted, often between German and Poles, or Irish and Italians. In the most extreme case, a number of Polish Roman Catholic parishes left the church to form the Polish National Roman Catholic Church, which was not recognized by Roman authorities.

In the twentieth century new groups of Roman Catholic immigrants repeated the same process; this time it was Hispanic, Vietnamese, Filipino, and Nigerian and other African groups who came and formed their own parishes or worshipping communities within larger, multiethnic parishes. As the older immigrant groups made the slow acculturation to English and American society, these new groups took over inner-city parishes and began the same route that other Roman Catholics had followed. Ethnic roots tended to fade as the second- and third-generation Roman Catholics moved to the suburbs, where ethnicity was necessarily downplayed in the new suburban parishes. There are still many ethnic elements to Roman Catholicism in the United

States, though for older immigrants the locus of this has shifted from the parish to the family.

Eastern Orthodox Christians who immigrated to the United States followed an ethnic pattern that was closer to that of Protestantism than to Roman Catholicism, in that Orthodox Christians did not have a unified ecclesiastical hierarchy in America under which they could develop their ethnic parishes. The Orthodox Christians organized separate jurisdictions based on ethnic and linguistic origins, and additional bodies were formed as ethnic groups split over issues in their respective homelands. There are now at least fourteen independent Orthodox bodies in the United States, and although they do manage to cooperate on some levels, they are not close to any kind of unity. Some Orthodox religious bodies (like the Russians) are independent (autocephalous), while others function as American dioceses of the Orthodox home church (such as the Greeks and Antiochenes).

The initial organization of Orthodox Christians in the United States was the Russian Orthodox Church, stretching down the Pacific Coast of America, from Alaska to California, and then to the ethnic settlements in the east. The Russians initially sought a multiethnic Orthodox Church under their direction, but the more numerous Greeks would not enter into this arrangement. Soon there were congregations of Serbians, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Armenians, and various smaller Middle Eastern groups in the United States, each of which formed its own ethnic organization. World War I and the rise of communism in many Orthodox countries led to further divisions, as many ethnic churches divided between those who remained loyal to the home church (even under communist control) and those who resisted the communist-dominated hierarchy and formed their own independent churches. So, for example, there were eventually two separate Serbian Orthodox Churches, one having ties to the Serbian Church in Serbia and one independent of it; the ethnic diversity of Orthodox Christianity was further splintered by ongoing political developments.

The Orthodox population of the United States has undergone the same process of assimilation to American culture as have other groups, but more slowly. Immigrants from Orthodox areas slowly continued to come to America throughout the twentieth century, keeping the native language and traditions alive; some of these were refugees from communism and others from ethnic turmoil in the Middle East (notably Armenian and Arab Orthodox groups). They

have also gained from Uniate (Greek Catholic) groups in the United States, some of which were pushed back into the Orthodox fold by American Roman Catholic leaders who did not understand or value their distinct traditions. The Orthodox groups may well follow the lead of such Protestant ethnics as the Lutherans and Reformed and form multiethnic Orthodox Church bodies, but this is still just a possibility; currently they remain ethnically fragmented.

Ethnicity and Non-Christian Religions in America

Christians, even those of a strongly outside ethnic variety, still have a significant advantage in the United States over those whose religion is not Christian. This is not to say that the United States is a Christian nation; even if there were no other religions in the country, it would still not be legitimate to say this. However, the strong numerical predominance of Christianity in America does create a strong influence on American culture and ways of being religious, so that Christianity most naturally defines the rhythms of life and conceptual outlook of the dominant culture. This is accepted as normal by most Christian Americans, but it can cause strong problems for many non-Christian groups and can be a source of internal and external controversy for them. For monotheistic “Western” religions such as Judaism and Islam, the logic of their systems fits well into the culture and rhythm of Christianity, but their implicit or explicit claims of exclusivity do not. For “Eastern” religions, most notably Hinduism, Buddhism, and Chinese religions, their theistic systems allow for more compromise and adaptation with alien systems, such as American Christianity, but their general conceptual world and the rhythm of their devotion are often quite out of sync with American norms.

In some respects, Judaism is the prototypical ethnic religion in the United States; indeed, the ties between ethnicity and religion in this group have been seen as almost absolute. Traditionally, a Jew who converts to another religion is no longer a Jew, though new developments in modern American Judaism have called this into question. The ties between Jewish religion and ethnic identity have been very tight, and while they were residents of many different countries in Europe and the Middle East, their ethnic identity was not tied primarily to these countries of residence. In the United States, however, Jews found that religious freedom and toleration promised the hope of full citizenship, and many Jews readily embraced this new country. Modern Reform Jews adapted their worship and life to the rhythms of modern

America, and even Conservative and Orthodox Jews found themselves at home in the United States. Jews could move into the mainstream of American life, and a large number even dropped religious observance while maintaining a Jewish cultural identity. Inter-marriage between Jews and others became common, though recently even the most assimilated Jews have come to see this as a major problem for Jewish survival.

Modern developments have complicated the question of Jewish ethnic identity. Inter-marriage begs the question of a separate identity, and of the place and participation of those of partial Jewish identity within the community. Messianic Jewish groups, blending Jewish identity with evangelical Protestant theology, insist that they are still Jews. Black Hebrew groups, and others who have adopted elements of Judaism, insist on their inclusion within the people of Israel. And some ethnic Jews have melded their traditional religions with others, most notably blending Judaism and Buddhism. The atheism of Jewish communists and socialists has further complicated the ties between Jewish ethnicity and religion in the United States. Once the question of Jewish ethnic identity seemed simple, but no more.

Muslims in the United States face many of the same issues as their Christian and Jewish neighbors, although their communities are not as old. Officially, there are no ethnic or cultural divisions within the Islamic community (the House of Islam), but in actuality there are a number of ethnic divisions. The emphasis on Arabic language and context of the religion means that there is a clear divide between Arab and non-Arab Muslims. As Islam moved out in concentric rings from Arabia, it moved into new cultures, drawing in black Africans, South and Southeast Asians, and the peoples of Central Asia as far as China. Some of the largest Muslim countries, and the largest sources of Muslim immigrants to the United States, are Asian countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. The number of Muslims in the United States is a highly debated question, but estimates average about three to four million.

Like Protestant immigrants, Muslims bring a wide range of ethnic backgrounds to America; like Roman Catholics did once, they worship in a common language. While in a few parts of the country Muslims are able to set up separate ethnic mosques for different immigrant groups, in many places this is not possible, so multiethnic mosques are necessary, at least for the time being. There are some aspects of an ethnic dimension to the Sunni-Shiite divisions, especially in the relations between Arab and Iranian immigrants. Since

the majority of Arab-Americans are Christian, related to the Christian minorities in the Middle East, there is some inter-ethnic tension within this community. And because a number of Muslims are from Africa, or are African Americans who have converted to Islam, there are some racial overtones to Muslim ethnic divisions. Like most of the twentieth-century immigrant groups, Muslims are just beginning to explore the relation between ethnicity, culture, and religion in their American communities.

Hindus in America follow a path similar to Muslims, except that most of their ethnic diversity is within the Indian subcontinent, rather than between different countries and areas. The actual term *Hinduism* is, in fact, an external term to describe the multifaceted religions of the Indian subcontinent, in which there is an amazing diversity of ethnicities and religious devotions, all built on a common metaphysical platform. Like Muslims, Hindus often face the problem of needing to develop multiethnic, multitrade temples to serve a varied population of Indian Americans, and this can lead to tensions at times. Hinduism has the advantage, however, of being practiced mainly within family observance and life-cycle rituals, as well as major temple festivals, so that populations can employ the services of the temple with less interethnic tension. The adoption of Hinduism by some European Americans, through groups such as the Hare Krishna and others, brings into question the Indian ethnic character of Hinduism.

American Buddhists are equally divided by ethnicity and language, and most Buddhist communities are divided along major national lines: Chinese, Taiwanese, Southeast Asian, Japanese, and Korean. In the Asian immigrant communities there are often ethnic temples when there are enough adherents, and though there is some cooperation between them, their ties and leadership are often more oriented toward their homeland, much like Eastern Orthodox Christians. There are some internal ethnic divisions between schools of Buddhism, such as the existence of Pure Land and Zen communities among Japanese-Americans, as well as groups like Soka Gakki, who actively seek out and make converts from non-Asian Americans. Like the Hindus and Muslims, the ethnic elements of American Buddhism are still rather fluid, and the course of assimilation and acculturation is still in flux.

Conclusion

It is clear that though the relationship of religion and ethnicity in America is very deep, it is a complex relationship

that has evolved quite strongly over time and continues to develop as older religious populations evolve and as new religious communities arrive and take root. Though there are many instances where group ethnic identity and religion are very closely linked, there are other ethnic groups that are divided by religion and religions that are divided by ethnicity. Some religious groups are highly correlated by ethnicities, while other religious groups show a low correlation; there are groups where ethnicity plays a very limited or even nonexistent role in forming a common religious identity. As American religious groups grow and assimilate, and as notions of ethnicity and culture evolve, the relationship between religion and culture in the American context will only become more complex.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Anti-Semitism*; *Eastern Orthodoxy*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Hinduism in North America*; *Immigration* entries; *Islam in North America*; *Jainism*; *Judaism*; *Jewish Culture*; *Latino American Religion* entries; *Race and Racism*; *Religious Prejudice* entries; *Sikhs*.

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Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches

Anthropological approaches explore how religious life shapes, and is shaped by, culture and society. Anthropologists are primarily concerned with the lived experiences of individuals, groups, and communities, rather than the texts, official teachings, or formal institutions of organized religions. The entire range of human experience in all societies, past and present, is of concern; anthropology does not privilege Western or literate traditions. Much of the most influential work in the anthropology of religion has focused outside North America and Europe, in studies of indigenous peoples, developing countries, and local variants of world religions.

Anthropologists draw widely from many streams of social theory, philosophy, the sciences, and literary and artistic criticism, and anthropological methods overlap with other academic disciplines. Anthropology is distinct in its commitment to pay attention to non-Euro-American peoples and to insist that any general discussion of religion must include non-Western as well as Western traditions.

In studying American religions, anthropologists' attention to cultural diversity, combined with a disciplinary ethos of concern for the less powerful in society, tends to favor research with people and practices that are not well known

or that are new or changing. Scholarship has focused on Native Americans; immigrants and ethnic groups; new spiritual movements; popular and domestic devotions and spiritual healing; and local variants of Christianity, Judaism, and other mainstream faiths.

Anthropology does not see religion as something separate from other aspects of life such as economics, politics, and social relations. Anthropological approaches are holistic, meaning that they treat religious phenomena as part of larger social and cultural systems and recognize that it is often difficult to determine what is "religious" and "not religious." There are long-running debates over the meaning and boundaries of the Western category of religion; some anthropologists avoid using the term, preferring to speak of worldviews, cosmologies, or symbolic systems.

Common to almost all anthropological approaches is an emphasis on understanding religiosity and spirituality in relation to social context, which includes cultural ideas and values; language; and patterns of gender, family relations, race, ethnicity, class, and other societal institutions. Theoretical debates and disagreements often revolve around the relative weight given to these various factors.

Ethnography and Ethnology

Ethnography is a key research method in anthropology, sociology, and religious studies. *Ethno-* derives from the Greek *ethnos*, meaning a people, nation, or class. *Ethnography* is writing about a group of people based on data collected through intensive observation, conversation, and participation in the group's activities. This method is best suited for studying relatively small groups, communities, and events such as rituals or celebrations. Ethnography tends to uncover realities and complexities in social life that may not be evident, or are difficult to study, with quantitative methods such as surveys, questionnaires, or statistical analysis. Ethnographers also use these and other quantitative methods, and they analyze language, documents, texts, artifacts, and visual images. But direct observation, conversation, interviews, and in-depth familiarity with a group of people in their social context are the bedrock of ethnographic studies of religion.

Ethnographic research requires substantial fieldwork, often involving at least a full year of intensive study, or work done periodically over several years. The relations of trust, rapport, and mutual understanding necessary for successful research open possibilities to learn about informal, nonpublic aspects of congregational cultures and social dynamics. Ethnography is often the only way to study the more

private, experiential, or performative dimensions of religion about which little is written. Its emphasis on paying attention to how people actually think; act; and use ideas, symbols, and rituals may be especially relevant to understanding religious life in an American cultural landscape that historically has been characterized by an emphasis on the private, individual nature of faith and spirituality.

Ethnography is useful for testing theories and generalizations to see whether they hold up in practice. It often points to limitations in prevailing concepts and assumptions. For example, ethnographer Meredith McGuire notes that whereas surveys typically categorize respondents by religious denomination and measure religiosity with indices such as frequency of church attendance, ethnographic research consistently shows that individuals do not fit such neat categories. Many North Americans combine elements from different faiths, and many spiritually meaningful experiences take place outside formal religious contexts.

Ethnology is a term more widely used today in Europe than in North America. In Europe, *ethnology* is more or less synonymous with *social anthropology*. In North American usage, *ethnology* generally refers to broad, cross-cultural comparison, in contrast to *ethnography*, which studies a specific group or community or examines one issue in different contexts (*multisited ethnography*).

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, ethnological analysis predominated in the anthropology of religion, which searched for universal principles and patterns. Today, evolutionary theory addresses the origins and development of religion. Cognitive studies draw upon evolutionary biology and psychology to identify mental processes that shape human perception, thought, and emotion to create religious ideas such as belief in gods, spirits, and supernatural forces.

In the study of religions in North America, most contemporary scholarship is ethnographic rather than broadly comparative. A notable exception is Swedish anthropologist Ake Hultkrantz's (1920–2006) work on Native American traditions. Hultkrantz advocates developing typologies of religious belief and practices such as concepts of the soul and patterns of worship, rather than “reducing” these to be explained as the product of nonreligious social, economic, political, or psychological factors.

Intellectual Roots

The academic discipline of anthropology developed in the late nineteenth century, at a time when Victorian thinkers

were questioning religious authority and when belief in religion was declining in Western Europe and North America. With the expansion of colonial administrations and Christian missionary work abroad, there was a wealth of information about non-Western religions and rituals. For nineteenth-century thinkers, the main question was how to explain differences and similarities among religions of the world. They generally saw the spiritual practices of non-Western and non-Christian peoples, especially “tribal” peoples, as irrational superstitions that demonstrated the mental inferiority of nonwhite races. Anthropology was born from attempts to develop scientific methods to challenge this notion of biological determinism, the assumption that differences in human thought and behavior are the product of genetic inheritance (that is, race).

Native American cultures were the major focus of anthropological studies of religion in the United States and Canada until World War II. In the mid-nineteenth century, Lewis Henry Morgan (1818–1881), a lawyer in upstate New York, did some of the earliest systematic scholarship. Morgan wrote about the Iroquois, a confederation of six indigenous nations east and south of Lake Ontario. He documented Iroquois religious beliefs and ceremonies, including the new religious movement inspired by the prophet Handsome Lake, which combined Christian and Iroquois elements. Morgan's account of this movement was based on writings by Ely S. Parker, a Seneca who became commissioner of Indian affairs during Ulysses S. Grant's presidency. The role of knowledgeable local intellectuals and collaborators like Parker in producing scholarly works is a recurring theme in the anthropology of religion in North America, especially in Native American studies.

British ethnologist Edward B. Tylor (1832–1917) was a leading figure in establishing anthropological approaches to religion. Tylor and Morgan reflected nineteenth-century biases in seeing non-Christian, “tribal” beliefs (such as Native American religions) as backward and irrational. Both developed models of cultural evolution that ranked animism (the perception that nonhuman beings or things have spirits) lowest in the historical trajectory of human societies' development. But their evolutionary models were progressive in assuming that all people have the same intellectual capacities and that, over time, they develop more logical, “civilized” ways of thinking. Animistic religions would evolve toward more sophisticated polytheism (belief in multiple deities), eventually achieving the pinnacle of rationality,

monotheism. Morgan applied this model to the Iroquois, whom he saw in transition from “limited pantheism” (the belief that everything in the world has a spiritual essence that is manifested in nature) to polytheism.

Hierarchical models of cultural and religious evolution fell out of favor in the twentieth century. Contemporary anthropology rejects the notion that some religions are more primitive, simple, or irrational than others.

Franz Boas (1858–1942), a German American Jew, established the first academic department of anthropology, at Columbia University, and trained the first generation of American anthropologists. The “Boasians” established theoretical perspectives that have oriented much of American anthropology’s approach to understanding religion and culture.

A year spent living with the Inuit (Eskimo) on Baffin Island, Canada, in the 1880s, and lifelong research with Kwakiutl and other native peoples in the Pacific Northwest, gave Boas firsthand experience of the sophisticated knowledge and morality of so-called “primitive” peoples. Boas and his students rejected evolutionary hierarchies and were skeptical about the possibility of identifying universal laws of societal development. Instead, they emphasized intensive study of particular groups through ethnographic research and historical reconstruction. Convinced that neither race nor environment explained human differences, they developed the concept of “culture” to explain why people have different beliefs and practices. Culture is the shared knowledge, habits, and patterns of behavior that individuals learn as members of a social group. It is not static tradition; rather, culture is fluid and dynamic, constantly changing and open to innovation.

Early anthropological work on Native American religions was mostly “salvage” ethnography, aimed at documenting traditions that were believed doomed to die out under the oppressive conditions of poverty and reservation life. One of Boas’s first, most influential students, Alfred Kroeber, became a leading scholar of native Californian religions and cultures. Like other early Boasians, Kroeber concentrated on recording traditions, myths, and stories and reconstructing how religious traits spread and changed as they moved from group to group. Other analyses of the origins and diffusion of religious ideas and ceremonial complexes included Robert Lowie’s study of Crow religion, Leslie Spier’s writings on the Plains Indians’ Sun Dance, Ruth Benedict’s analysis of the guardian spirit concept in Native North America, Weston La Barre’s study of the

Peyote Cult, and Cora DuBois’s work on the Ghost Dance movement of 1870.

Boas welcomed talented women into his circle of students. American cultural anthropology historically has included more prominent female scholars than other social sciences. Women’s distinct perspectives and approaches to ethnography have long been part of the anthropological conversation about religion in North America.

Ella Deloria (1888–1971), a Yankton Dakota Sioux who studied with Boas in the 1910s, was one of the first bilingual, bicultural anthropologists. Between 1927 and 1948, Deloria documented Lakota Sioux myths and sacred stories, focusing on the Sun Dance and other religious ceremonies.

Zora Neale Hurston (1891–1960) was an African American ethnographer, folklorist, and novelist who studied with Boas in the 1920s. Hurston researched religion in the southern United States and the Caribbean. She was especially interested in identifying West African and Caribbean elements in African American church traditions, such as similarities between ecstatic Christian worship and spirit possession in the Haitian religion, vodou (voodoo). Hurston’s writings presaged trends in late-twentieth-century ethnographic writing; she often brought herself into the narrative and carried on dialogs with the stories she recorded, creating texts composed of multiple voices and perspectives.

By the 1930s, the evident resilience of Native American communities, combined with new theoretical perspectives, reoriented American anthropology to more dynamic views of religion in society. Boasian analyses highlighted integration and internal consistency among cultural elements, especially religion’s links to language, emotion, aesthetics, morality, and social relations. In her studies of religion, myths, and dreams among the Zuni and other Pueblo peoples, Ruth Benedict (1887–1948) highlighted vision, imagination, beliefs, and rituals as key aspects of religion that she considered to be shaped by individuals’ need for a sense of security and their desires for transformation of the world. This concern with individual psychology, and recognition of religion as a context for envisioning social change, are part of the Boasian legacy in American anthropology’s approach to religion.

Psychological analyses emerged as a major mid-twentieth-century approach. Building on Benedict’s focus on the individual in society, the field of culture-and-personality studies examined how culture shapes thought and emotion. Children’s socialization and patterns in dreams, myths, and

individual biographies were central concerns. Culture-and-personality studies in North America included Clyde Kluckhohn's analyses of Navajo witchcraft beliefs, studies of the Hopi by Dorothy Eggan and Laura Thompson, and Esther Goldfrank's work on Hopi and Zuni socialization. Freudian psychology provided the framework for Weston LaBarre's analysis of the Ghost Dance and George Devereux's work on Mohave shamanism and ritual. Other writers analyzed psychological themes in the life stories of charismatic Native American religious leaders.

An emphasis on society and its institutions, rather than culture and the individual, oriented the approaches called *functionalism* and *structural-functionalism*, which dominated British social anthropology from the 1920s onward and were influential in North America as well. The ideas of French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) were a major influence in functionalism; Durkheim is in fact a foundational influence in most anthropological and sociological theories of religion. Durkheim emphasized how religion reinforces social arrangements, authority, and collective norms. He saw rituals directed toward the sacred as activities that promote social solidarity and cohesion by giving people an experience of unity in a moral community.

Early-twentieth-century functionalism aimed to show how religion (especially “exotic” practices like magic, witchcraft, and rituals that look irrational to outsiders) fulfills useful purposes that benefit individuals or the group as a whole. Functionalist explanations (which continue to exert a pull in many contemporary analyses) can emphasize different purposes. Some explain religion in terms of its material effects (distributing resources or limiting population growth). Others emphasize religion's psychological effects (reducing anxiety, providing cognitively reassuring explanations) or its social effects (reinforcing solidarity, promoting equity and harmony, or, conversely, legitimating an inequitable social order). Mid-twentieth-century functionalism tended to demonstrate how particular religious practices helped to perpetuate existing social institutions and preserve the status quo.

From the 1930s onward, functionalism drew Boasian anthropologists toward seeing religion as a cultural institution that actively promotes cooperation and solidarity. In studies from the southwestern United States, Elsie Clews Parson analyzed how religion created a sense of common identity that helped unite various Pueblo communities with high rates of intermarriage. Ruth Murray

Underhill showed the role of ceremonials in promoting shared Native American regional identities. The power of religious movements to forge new forms of cultural cohesion and individual and collective revitalization was a theme in functionalist studies of Native American communities from the 1960s onward. These included Anthony Wallace's analysis of the Ghost Dance movement, Joseph Jorgensen's study of the Sun Dance, and Wolfgang Jilek's work on the role of guardian spirit rituals in promoting mental health among Coast Salish in British Columbia. The Native American Church and its Peyote Way rituals drew attention from a number of scholars, including Paul Radin, David Aberle, George Spindler, Nancy Lurie, James Slotkin, Omer Stewart, and others.

Separatist religions, and religious groups with distinct ethnic backgrounds, have been long-standing interests in U.S. and Canadian anthropology. Numerous ethnographers have examined beliefs and practices as well as issues of identity and group dynamics among the Amish, Hutterites, Mennonites, Orthodox Jews, utopian communes, and experimental spiritual communities.

Contemporary Theoretical Orientations

In the 1960s, political and cultural developments—including anticolonial independence movements in Africa and elsewhere, the U.S. civil rights movement, and cultural and political ferment on many fronts—intersected with academic dissatisfaction with functionalist approaches that treated culture as static and harmonious. Renewed attention to historical change and recognition of conflict, dissent, and protest as normal parts of social life called for more dynamic approaches.

Ritual and symbolic studies in the United States blossomed through the work of British anthropologist Victor Turner (1920–1983), who built on models proposed by Durkheim, Arnold Van Gennep, Mary Douglas, and others. Turner saw ritual as a social process with a dramatic structure that could transform participants' subjective experiences. In ritual, “structural” aspects of society (including hierarchy, division, and inequality) come into play in contrast to antistructural elements (including egalitarianism, community, and transgression). In a ritual's transitional phase, participants are in a “liminal” state, temporarily removed from their former identity and role, “betwixt and between” statuses. Liminality is conducive to *communitas*, an intense, transcendent experience of equality and unity. Turner came to believe that *communitas* and structure have

a neurophysiological basis corresponding to the right and left hemispheres of the brain.

Turner identified liminality and *communitas* in contemporary American contexts as diverse as the Franciscan order of Catholic friars, late-1960s “hippie” culture, and Catholic Church rituals. He coined the term *liminoid* to describe moments of *communitas* in secular activities such as sports events, rock concerts, carnival, and cultural performances such as theatre or art. Turner suggested that in complex, industrial societies, such experiences of transcendence often occur spontaneously, in activities that are not overtly religious. This idea exemplifies the anthropological tendency to see the sacred not as fixed and eternal but as a kind of consciousness and experience that can appear in various contexts. Anthropologists are attuned to recognize quasi-spiritual dimensions in secular practices such as “rave” dance parties, yoga, or the home birth movement. Turner’s recognition that rituals are not just repetitions of prescribed performances, but can effect personal transformation and social change, contributed to a shift toward seeing rituals and symbols as resources that people draw upon and modify to cope with life stresses, express protest, and forge alternative subjectivities and social dynamics.

In the 1970s, interpretive anthropology and political economy emerged as influential orientations. Political economy takes inspiration from Karl Marx and focuses on illuminating structures of power and inequality and their consequences. Interpretive approaches build on Max Weber’s ideas and emphasize issues of individual meaning.

American anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1926–2006) was a major influence on interpretive approaches to religion, which explore how people make sense of their world and how this meaning-making shapes their emotional orientations and creates a framework to guide their actions. Geertz was influenced by Weber’s ideas about how religious ideas and the psychological, emotional, and ethical orientations they promote correlate with particular economic and political systems. Geertz advocated a semantic approach that treats a religion as a cultural system, an organized set of inter-related meanings and symbols, beliefs, and practices that can be “read” like a text.

In Geertzian approaches, worldview and ethos are key elements that reinforce one another. A worldview is a set of beliefs that explain fundamental realities, a “model of” how the world works. An ethos is a “model for” behavior, a set of ideas that tell people how to act. Religious symbols fuse worldview and ethos into a congruent experience of reality.

Religion lends authority and emotional weight to a cultural interpretation of the world. The interpretive anthropologist’s job is to understand a cultural system from the point of view of people within it, to grasp “the native’s point of view.” Interpretive accounts examine what people say about what they do and think and how they use ideas and symbols. Analysis is not limited to what people say but extends to identifying unconscious meanings and patterns. Interpretive ethnography aims to understand how people use religious ideas and symbols to orient and legitimate their actions.

Where earlier generations saw belief as the dominant factor in religion, contemporary anthropology tends to emphasize praxis, the process by which ideas are translated into actions. *Practice theory* is a general term for various approaches concerned with identifying connections among systems of meaning, the habits and actions of daily life, and larger structures of power and processes of social change. French sociologists Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault, British sociologist Anthony Giddens, and American anthropologists Marshall Sahlins and James Scott are major influences in practice theory.

In the 1980s, the body emerged as a focal theme in the humanities and social sciences. From Mary Douglas, sociologist Erving Goffman, Bourdieu, Foucault, and other theorists came models calling attention to the patterns and politics of categorizing, controlling, and channeling human bodies and bodily experiences. Phenomenological analyses aim to describe individuals’ lived experiences, with particular attention to nonlinguistic, nonsemantic dimensions, including sensory, aesthetic, and performative aspects of spirituality, ritual, and healing. Music; rhythm; artworks and altars; dramatic performances; and complexes of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile sensations are integral to the feel and psychoemotional impacts of religiosity and spirituality.

Ethnographies in North America direct attention to issues such as the physical arrangement of sacred spaces; ideas about purity and impurity; the postures and gestures of prayer, meditation, and worship; practices of meditation, fasting, feasting, song, and celebration; and the roles of gendered, sexual, racialized bodies in religious discourses. Embodied experience and cultural performances often resonate with and reinforce messages conveyed in the language and rhetoric of religious texts and rituals. Thomas Csordas’s work on ritual healing among Navajos and Charismatic Catholics exemplifies a phenomenological analysis at the intersection of religion, psychology, and medicine.

Spiritual healing is a major topic. Anthropology distinguishes between curing (focused on eradicating disease) and healing, which goes beyond physical health to include psychological and social well-being. The approach called *critical medical anthropology* emphasizes how individual experiences of bodily and emotional suffering are linked to political-economic structures of inequality. The concepts of structural violence and social suffering recognize that societal forces such as racism and inequalities of class, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation inflict pain and trauma that afflict not only bodies but also mind and spirit.

Where earlier approaches saw cultures as systems that people are socialized into and focused on analyzing how systems work, contemporary anthropology has shifted to emphasize more dynamic analyses of processes and discourses. Individuals (influenced by their gender, ethnicity, and class identities and other social locations) are recognized as active agents who shape and use knowledge and culture, including the resources of religion and spirituality.

Epistemological and Methodological Challenges

For North American ethnographers, studying people and issues “close to home” has advantages, but it also poses special challenges. Working in one’s own society reduces many difficulties of working in foreign countries; when researchers and those they study share a common language and certain cultural understandings, there is less culture shock (the discomfort of encountering unfamiliar practices) and fewer communication barriers. Ethnographers often focus on topics and settings with which they have some familiarity, and their initial contacts often come through personal networks. Familiarity can be a liability, however, if it leads a researcher to fail to inquire deeply into the reasons behind what people say and do, because he or she assumes the answer is obvious.

When ethnographers work in foreign societies, they struggle against the limitations of being outsiders, trying to get as close as possible to groups of which they are not members. For those who work in North America, the problem may be the opposite: not to simply participate as a member of the group but to strive for more distanced, objective perspectives.

Insider/outsider boundaries are often unclear. Much debate and discussion has examined issues of objectivity and subjectivity, power relations in research and writing, and ethnographers’ responsibilities to those they study. The 1970s

brought waves of critical self-reflection in anthropology, with streams of critique converging from several directions.

Feminist anthropology challenged scholarship that ignored or marginalized women’s distinctive concerns and forms of religious identity, experience, rituals, and agency and called for reexamining taken-for-granted concepts and analytic categories. Attention to gender (which later expanded to emphasize sexuality and sexual orientation) was invigorated by works by Margaret Mead, Simone de Beauvoir, Michelle Rosaldo, Louise Lamphere, Sherry Ortner, Marilyn Strathern, Nancy Scheper-Hughes, Judith Butler, and others that heightened awareness of how one’s background (religious, ethnic, class, gender/sexuality) can create blind spots and biases in scholarship. Such blind spots may be especially common regarding aspects of religious life that take place in private, within households (“domestic religion”) and other nonpublic, noninstitutional contexts.

Postcolonial scholarship criticized anthropological representations of marginalized groups. In 1969, scholar-activist Vine Deloria Jr. (1933–2005), who was Ella Deloria’s nephew, blasted anthropologists and their writings. Deloria denounced unequal power relations in the academic politics of research and writing about Native Americans and raised pointed questions about who has the right to speak for whom. These concerns are especially relevant in regard to spirituality and sacred cultural knowledge. These criticisms, and a growing consensus that indigenous people should have more control over representations of their own cultures, contributed to a shift away from the former focus on Native American studies in the anthropology of religion. Nonetheless, Native American intellectuals and activists continue to be prime interlocutors in anthropology’s continuing struggles to come to terms with its roles and responsibilities within and beyond the academy.

In the 1980s, epistemological concerns coalesced around issues of how ethnographic knowledge is produced, evaluated, and presented. Influential critiques by anthropologists George Marcus, James Clifford, Michael M. J. Fischer, and others examined how academic politics and theoretical and personal orientations affect the selection of research topics and methods, the conduct of fieldwork, interpretation of data, and styles of presentation in ethnographic writing. In response to these debates, anthropological ethics evolved to insist on an honest accounting of the research process, even when this entails uncomfortable self-revelations. For example, when Vincent Crapanzano, a leading contributor to

critiques of ethnographic writing, studied wealthy fundamentalist Christians in Los Angeles, he wrote about his personal struggles to understand and empathize with their perspectives.

Ethnographers increasingly acknowledge the complexity of their relations with people they study and the fluid boundaries that emerge among the roles of scientific observer, friend, and advocate. Research “subjects” often become teachers, mentors, and intellectual partners. Especially in North American settings, research “subjects” often read and respond to the scholarly work. This feedback can become part of the research process. Increasingly, ethnography is conceived not as a one-way act of studying “others” but as more of a process of collaboration based in mutual dialog, questioning, and learning.

Ethnographic writing involves translating other people’s worldviews into terms that readers can understand. Especially when dealing with subjective experiences of emotion, spirituality, and the sacred, academic language may be a poor fit. Writers of ethnographies have experimented with various techniques to include multiple voices and perspectives and convey more of the “feel” of events by encompassing other genres and techniques, including self-reflexive personal narratives and essays, dialogues, poetry, and other people’s eyewitness accounts (testimonios).

Earlier assumptions that field research can be an objective science that produces firm, noncontingent truths have given way to recognition that all knowledge, including scientific knowledge, is to some degree interpreted and constructed. Acknowledging the contingency of interpretation does not, as some critics have alleged, lead to moral relativism or purely subjective representations. Some interpretations are better than others. Good ethnography is based on systematic study, in-depth knowledge, expertise in local languages, comparative perspectives, and clear theoretical frameworks. James Spickard argues that although completely objective truth is impossible to attain, it remains a “regulative ideal” that pulls ethnography toward systematic methodology and critical, self-questioning awareness.

In their professional capacities, anthropologists try to avoid passing judgment on the truth, rationality, or value of the beliefs and practices they study. Instead, they try to understand how and why these make sense to the people involved. Cultural relativism is a methodological principle that requires researchers to take account of how their own biases and circumstances may influence or impair understanding. Relativism requires temporarily suspending

judgment and moral evaluation long enough to understand other people’s perspectives.

Cultural relativism is a method to attain better data and clearer understandings. It is often confused with moral relativism, which is the belief that all cultural practices must be considered equally good and valid. Anthropology affirms the value of cultural relativism as a research principle but rejects moral relativism. Anthropologists recognize that some cultural practices and political, economic, and social arrangements are harmful and should change.

When ethnographers develop expertise on an issue, they often are drawn into advocacy or activism, such as writing reports or presenting testimony to explain a group’s beliefs, practices, or situation to policy makers or the public. Applied anthropology and applied ethnography are subdisciplines that use ethnographic skills to address social problems and shape policy. Ethnographers increasingly are challenged to direct their research in ways that respond to the needs and concerns of the communities they study. “Engaged ethnography” is an emerging approach that sees ethnography as a tool for political activism in partnership with communities and social movements. The tension between activism and the “regulative ideal” of empirical research is a thorny issue.

Contemporary Ethnography of North American Religions

A classic work that encapsulated trends in interpretive ethnography and innovations in ethnographic writing was Barbara Myerhoff’s *Number Our Days: Culture and Community Among Elderly Jews in an American Ghetto* (1978). Myerhoff studied a group of Eastern European American Jews in Venice, California, most of whom were Holocaust survivors. Drawing on Turner’s ritual models, she showed how they coped with poverty, frailty, loneliness, and neglect by using stories, memories, rituals, symbols, and music to create community and fill life with meaning and celebration. Myerhoff used the concept of “domestic religion” to highlight how homes became spaces sanctified with meaning through rituals, devotions, and storytelling. Woven through the text are reflections on her own religious roots, her role as anthropologist, and her future identity as an elderly Jewish lady.

Life histories are another genre in interpretive ethnography. Instead of studying groups, life histories illuminate a religious system by examining an individual’s biography, knowledge, and practices. Karen McCarthy Brown’s *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn* (1991) combined the life story of a charismatic Haitian American adept in the

African-based religion vodou and experimental literary techniques, including fictional stories and accounts of Brown's own initiation into vodou. Consistent with the call for transparency about the circumstances and effects of research, a later edition (in 2001) recounted how the book's publication changed Mama Lola's life.

With its commitment to portraying real individuals and events as accurately as possible, ethnography tends to reveal the "messier," more nuanced aspects of the spiritual lives of local communities. It often reveals gaps between doctrine and practice, tensions between competing values, and the creativity and flexibility with which people construct religious identities. For example, James L. Peacock and Ruel W. Tyson studied Primitive Baptist congregations in the Appalachian region of North Carolina where Max Weber observed American fundamentalist Protestantism in 1904. Their study highlighted contrasts between theology and practice. In a Calvinist theology that idealizes fellowship and dismisses the efficacy of ritual, congregations devoted elaborate attention to performing rituals and had long histories of internal conflict and schism. In the kind of recursive, mutually questioning process that is the heart of effective ethnography, church leaders challenged the ethnographers intellectually, forcing them to rethink their assumptions about issues such as the meaning of ritual and Weber's definition of charisma.

Ethnographic findings often contradict stereotypes and taken-for-granted assumptions. For example, Janet Benion's research with wives in polygamous (specifically, polygynous) marriages in a rigidly patriarchal Mormon sect found that women experienced their marriages as paths to upward mobility and personal autonomy. Susan Harding's work with fundamentalist Christians in the Virginia congregation of the influential preacher Jerry Falwell found that, in contrast to public images of doctrinal certainty and monolithic political positions on the religious right, lay believers entertained personal doubts about many issues. Melinda Bollar Wagner's study of conservative Christian schools revealed that despite an ideal and rhetoric of separation from American popular culture, there was a great deal of accommodation with secular society and many "gray" areas between religious and nonreligious education. Several studies in sociologists Penny Becker and Nancy Eiesland's *Contemporary American Religion: An Ethnographic Reader* (1997) demonstrate how the political labels "liberal" and "conservative" fail to capture the complexity of positions among laypeople in U.S. congregations. Other studies in this volume describe

religious phenomena that might look like oxymorons: evangelical feminists, Messianic Jews, and a Gospel Hour at a gay bar in Atlanta that confounds distinctions between the sacred and the secular.

Contemporary sociological and anthropological approaches to the ethnography of religion overlap considerably. Sociologists tend to focus more on organizational structures and issues such as social networks, while anthropologists place more emphasis on culture and individual experience.

The 1990s brought the so-called "ethnographic turn" in studies of religion in America. Increased attention to "lived religion," private devotional practices, and activities that integrate secular and spiritual goals led growing numbers of scholars in various disciplines to use ethnographic fieldwork methods. Religious studies scholars Robert Orsi and R. Marie Griffith, and sociologists Nancy Ammerman and Meredith McGuire, have been leading voices in this movement.

The fluidity of American religious identifications, in which people often move from one denomination to another, lends itself to ethnographic examination. Ethnography is well suited to studying on-the-ground processes of change and how religious meanings and identities shift as spiritual practices move into different contexts.

Religious syncretism, the fusion of elements from different belief systems, has been a long-running topic in anthropology. Examples include the mix of Christian and Native elements in the Native American Church's Peyote Way rituals, the Afro-Caribbean religions of Santería and vodou, and African influences in black church worship traditions. Some scholars interpret syncretism as a strategy for disempowered groups to develop identities, practices, and affiliations that help them adapt and survive. Others see this as forced accommodation to dominant powers or as a form of deception. Critics emphasize syncretism's connotations of blending and assimilation and the political implications of contrasting "pure," "authentic" traditions and "impure," mixed forms. Some propose alternative concepts such as hybridity, creolization, symbiosis, or mosaics to describe cultural mixtures that juxtapose elements without erasing their distinct sources and the agency of individuals who creatively combine them to create identities out of multiple sources.

Questions about authenticity and tradition have received considerable attention from anthropologists, who tend to view new American spiritual practices against the backdrop

of cross-cultural research. For example, after studying firewalking in the rural Greek Orthodox Anastenaria cult, ethnographer Loring Danforth was contacted by leaders of the American Firewalking movement. At first irritated by this New Age appropriation of a practice he knew in its “genuine” religious context, Danforth confronted his biases and tried to learn what firewalking means to its American practitioners. His analysis contrasts the individualistic empowerment attained in American firewalking with the therapeutic social support created in the Anastenarias’ place-based community. Michael F. Brown followed a similar trajectory, moving from studying native Amazonian shamanism to exploring New Age channeling, in which spirits speak through mediums. Brown analyzed how channeling reflects core cultural values and anxieties in contemporary American life.

As North American ethnic diversity has expanded with recent immigration from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, ethnographers have examined the roles that religion plays in immigrants’ adaptation. Studies of Latino immigrants find frequent changes from Catholicism to Protestantism, or vice versa. Religious conversion can be part of an attempt to fit into the new society, or a strategy to disengage from the homeland. For example, Karen Richman found Haitian Americans converting to Protestantism partly as a way to distance themselves from the demands of family members in Haiti and the vodou spirits associated with them.

Concepts of religion as a bounded, coherent belief system are challenged by studies showing that many immigrants combine elements of different traditions. Asian immigrant converts to Christianity often continue to practice ancestor veneration; Haitian immigrant Christians may use elements of vodou. Ethnographies of the growing numbers of North American practitioners of Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism, paganism, and neoshamanism highlight limitations in conventional definitions of religion based on belief in divine powers, worship, and separations between religious and secular activities. As globalization intensifies flows of people, ideas, and practices across national, ethnic, and religious boundaries, ethnographic attention to processes of constructing identities, meanings, discourses, and practices will track changes in this North American religious landscape characterized by pluralism and the coexistence and mixing of many peoples and faiths.

See also *Demographics; Economics; Feminist Studies; Geographical Approaches; Historical Approaches; History of Religions, Approaches;*

Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Popular Religion and Popular Culture entries; Religious Studies; Sociological Approaches; Unaffiliated; Visual Culture entries.

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Evangelicals: Colonial America

Though Protestants had used *evangelical* as a self-descriptor from the sixteenth century, evangelicalism as a movement originated within the Atlantic world during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It began within small groups of Protestants who sought a deeper spiritual experience than they were finding in their existing congregations and churches, individuals who thought that religion had grown too cold and formal and had little connection to their daily lives. These seekers were scattered in locations on both sides of the Atlantic, including English Independents and Methodists, Scottish Presbyterians, Saxon and Moravian Pietists, New England Congregationalists, and Pennsylvania and New Jersey Presbyterians. Though separated geographically, these sects shared a set of common convictions that would define evangelicalism. One scholar of evangelicalism, David Bebbington, identifies its defining attitudes as

biblicism, a particular regard for the Bible (for example, all spiritual truth is to be found in its pages); *crucicentrism*, a focus on the atoning work of Christ on the cross; *conversionism*, the belief that human beings need to be converted; and *activism*, the belief that the gospel needs to be expressed in effort. Historian Thomas Kidd has added a fifth distinction: a dramatically new emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit in conversion, especially as manifested in periodic revivals, defined as special seasons of God's outpouring of grace.

Seventeenth Century: Puritan Origins

Though evangelicalism in colonial America was most evident in the early eighteenth century, particularly during the revivals known as the Great Awakening, its seeds were planted by the Puritans who arrived in Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1629. That tiny band of believers led by John Winthrop (1588–1649) expressed two central evangelical tenets. First, they believed that their lives needed to be changed and that they were on an “Errand into the Wilderness” to find God's grace. Indeed, they believed that their colony would be a “City upon a Hill,” a beacon to Protestants in Europe, not because of their efforts but because God's work in the desolate New England wilderness would dramatize that he alone was the dispenser of grace. Second, they believed that on occasion God poured out extraordinary showers of blessing and that Christians must be ever alert to signs of such outpourings.

Winthrop set forth an evangelical vision that not only inspired the Puritans on the *Arbella* but has continued to stir Americans in general and evangelicals in particular. He indicated that Protestants in England and in Europe had failed to complete the great work of God begun in the Reformation. He said, “whatsoever we did or ought to have done when we lived in England, we must do that and more.” It was no accident that the Puritans had come to America; through God's providence New England would be the arena for an extraordinary effusion of grace. Winthrop declared that “the work and end we aim at are extraordinary,” and, therefore, “we must not content ourselves with usual ordinary means.” Casting the Massachusetts Puritans as a special covenanted people of God, he called upon them to so live their lives that future generations would glorify their name as a New Israel.

But at least in the minds of the clergy, future generations did not live up to the evangelical ideal. Puritan sermons, known as jeremiads, abounded with lamentations about decline in spiritual commitment among the children and

grandchildren of those sturdy men and women of faith who envisioned a holy commonwealth in New England. Some Puritan divines believed that the quest for profit and the lure of material wealth overshadowed the original spiritual “errand into the wilderness.” Others decried the growing formalism that characterized worship services where form seemed to trump substance, where performance of routine substituted for life-changing conversion. By 1662, a synod of the churches of New England found that only a minority of congregants could point to a personal conversion experience and thus count themselves among the saints, that is, attest to divine election as evidenced by the indwelling Christ. The implications were dire; not only was a generation lost, but so were their children. Eager to keep all people under the aegis of the faith, the synod initiated the so-called Half-Way Covenant that granted partial membership to the grandchildren of saintly grandparents.

Some evangelicals denounced the Half-Way Covenant and insisted on genuine conversion. One such pastor was Solomon Stoddard (1643–1729) of Northampton, Massachusetts, on the Connecticut River. He believed that when spiritual light was at its dimmest, God sent the light of grace in dramatic and unusual dispensations. Such showers of grace to men and women, he maintained, came solely at God's discretion. “God is very Arbitrary in this Matter,” Stoddard wrote in *Efficacy of the Fear of Hell* (1713); “God takes his own time to Refresh their Hearts.” Evangelicals must be ever alert to signs of those “special seasons wherein God doth in a remarkable Manner revive Religion among his People.” When they see indications of revival, they must “preach the acceptable Year of the Lord” (pp. 185–186). Thus, the ordinary means of grace—praying and preaching—are to witness the extraordinary outpouring of grace. For Stoddard, that meant “preaching down” revival by scaring the hell out of people, that is, confronting them with the certainty of eternal damnation for those outside God's grace and the futility of individuals to win their own salvation.

The Great Awakening: Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield

It was Stoddard's grandson, Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), however, who became the most influential and best-known theologian of evangelical revivalism in the eighteenth century. After succeeding his grandfather as pastor at Northampton in 1729, Edwards led his congregation in a series of spiritual awakenings that by the 1730s spread to

other New England communities. Edwards insisted that revivals were the work of God and that signs of a revival were apparent to believers. Furthermore, in 1737 he published *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God*, a revival narrative that described the Great Awakening that occurred in Northampton; circulated widely among evangelicals on both sides of the Atlantic; and inspired others to identify, describe, and publish similar works of God in their communities. Then in 1741 Edwards published *Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*, both as a defense against those who dismissed the awakenings as enthusiasm of overheated imaginations and as a biblical guide for evangelicals to follow in detecting a genuine outpouring of God's grace. The last great work that Edwards wrote to define evangelicalism in general and revivalism in particular was *A Treatise concerning Religious Affections* (1746), a disquisition arguing that true religion was a matter of emotions or affections that attached the Christian to God.

While Jonathan Edwards was evangelicalism's leading theologian, George Whitefield (1714–1770) (pronounced *Whit-field*, with a short *i*) was its foremost preacher. As a student at Pembroke College, Oxford, Whitefield had joined John Wesley's "Holy Club," an informal gathering of students who were dissatisfied with what they regarded as the Church of England's dry formalism and who, through Bible reading, prayer, self-examination, and evangelical preaching, sought to make the gospel more central to their lives and, through them, to the wider community. Upon graduation, Whitefield began preaching in London, first in churches, and then, when his criticism of the Church of England resulted in his banishment from pulpits, in public spaces such as parks, race courses, and marketplaces. Crowds estimated as high as sixty thousand people gathered to hear the dynamic, twenty-one-year-old Methodist preacher declare the necessity of the "one thing needful," a spiritual new birth. When he announced his intentions to carry his message to Americans in late 1739, colonists awaited his arrival with great anticipation. For months prior to his disembarkation at Lewes, Delaware, in October, colonial newspapers reprinted accounts from English papers of the huge crowds that attended his outdoor preaching meetings in the coal fields of western England and the public parks of London. The arrival of George Whitefield in 1739 transformed the local revivals in British North America into an intercolonial evangelical awakening.

Both contemporaries and scholars have offered many explanations for Whitefield's popularity as well as for the

revivals he ignited. Some suggest that curiosity attracted many to his unconventional services. Indeed, many on both sides of the Atlantic testified that they were first drawn to Whitefield because of the huge crowds that gathered in such venues as public parks, market squares, race courses, and coal fields. Some find more convincing Whitefield's remarkable oratorical powers, arguing that many who attended his preaching services were entranced by his theatrical performances and his powerful oratory. London actor and playwright David Garrick was one who attended Whitefield's sermons for the sole purpose of studying his dramatic delivery of lines. He was reputed to have said that Whitefield's pronunciation of *Mesopotamia* was itself a theatrical tour de force. Others were attracted for more substantive reasons.

Whitefield's extemporaneous sermons were lively, fresh, and passionate. Frequently he turned current events—a hanging, an earthquake, a battle, a horse race—into occasions for driving home his message of the necessity of a new birth experience. Rather than stilted discourses on theological tenets read from manuscripts, Whitefield's sermons appealed to the heart, not the head. And thousands responded with powerful emotions, weeping and laughing and shouting and dancing as they experienced a conversion moment that first took them to the brink of eternal hell and then delivered them into the security of a saving God. With his dramatic flair, Whitefield transported his audiences to the horrors of eternal damnation and to the bliss of everlasting life in heaven. Still others note that Whitefield was an innovator, adopting the latest merchandising techniques of his day to promoting and "selling" his brand of evangelicalism.

Attacked by opponents for preaching a "new" message that came from his imagination rather than from the word of God, Whitefield insisted that his was not a new message but one that the Church of England had long neglected. His spiritual lineage, he asserted, was that of the New Testament, the Reformation, and Puritanism. What was new were the modern means of delivering his message. His traveling companion, William Seward, promoted Whitefield and his revivals through an aggressive advertising campaign centered on newspaper publicity. Moreover, Whitefield refused to confine his services to days and hours prescribed by the established ministry, preaching instead virtually every day of the week, often two or three times a day. He took his message to where people lived and worked rather than waiting for them to come to him. He preached in streets, markets, and commons as well as in churches and churchyards.

Whitefield's wide-ranging preaching tours knew no social, gender, racial, or ethnic boundaries. Indeed, he and other evangelicals took seriously the New Testament Great Commission of spreading the gospel to all people. They believed that they were under a divine mandate to carry the gospel to lost souls at home and around the world. Thus, in the 1740s and 1750s, when the Great Awakening was arousing white settlers to the indwelling Christ, some evangelicals undertook initiatives to convert Native Americans to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. In a 1758 letter to one of the leading missionaries, Eleazar Wheelock (1711–1779), Ebenezer Pemberton gave voice to the undertaking and its significance: “Nothing can be more Agreeable to our Christian Character tha[n to] send the Gospel to the benighted Pagans; Nothing more Conducive to our Civil Interests than to bring them to a Subjection to the Religion of Jesus” (in *Papers of Eleazar Wheelock*, 1971, no. 758618). Missionary results, however, never matched expectations. Evangelical missions led only small numbers of Native Americans to permanent commitments to Protestant Christianity, in part because of the confusing competition with Catholic missionaries and in part because of the mixed motives of missionaries, who were as eager to make the natives more pliable for political ends as to bring them into the kingdom of God. Moreover, natives resisted the Protestant message that called on them to throw aside their own religious traditions and embrace totally the new beliefs and practices of the arrogant and aggressive Europeans who claimed to possess superior knowledge and laws.

Evangelical missionaries had far greater success among slaves. Believing that the gospel should be preached to all persons, including those in bondage, evangelicals employed a wide range of strategies to convert slaves. German Moravians sent missionaries among slaves in the West Indies and in the southern mainland colonies. Itinerants of the Great Awakening exhorted blacks to experience the new birth and invited new converts to testify before racially mixed crowds. The message of evangelicalism proved to be a bridge for slaves of West African descent to cross from their animist heritage to the creation of a distinct African American religion. The supernatural played a central role in traditional African religion, just as it did in evangelical Christianity. Furthermore, attempts to relate to the spirit were similar, involving a free form of worship that included singing and dancing. Finally, the message of the new birth was liberating, loosening the bonds of sin and delivering converts to a promised land of freedom. To the dismay of

white evangelicals, some converted slaves placed their own construction on the new birth experience, giving it an interpretation that implied an earthly as well as a heavenly equality. When slaves revolted in New York City in 1741, some whites blamed George Whitefield and his evangelical followers for filling slaves' heads with notions of freedom and equality.

Conflict among Evangelicals: Moderates and Radicals

Though most eighteenth-century evangelicals took seriously the charge to preach the gospel to all people, they were far from being a monolithic group. While they all had in common the necessity of a spiritual conversion and the belief in periodic extraordinary outpourings of God's grace, they differed over how God's Spirit worked. Though evangelicals could be found along a broad spectrum of belief, they can for convenience be analyzed under two headings: moderates and radicals. Moderates, such as Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and Gilbert Tennent (1703–1764), contended that God's grace operated according to recognizable scriptural signs. Edwards in particular took issue that personal experience based on inward impulses was taking precedence for some over the authority of God's revelation in scripture. While recognizing the validity of emotion and will in the drama of salvation, he maintained that in the end it was God's work as set forth in the Bible that was most important. He was particularly worried about the claims of “enthusiasts” who insisted that they had received direct, personal revelations from God, revelations that superseded those of sacred scripture.

Moderates also believed that God was a God of order who worked through human agents in an orderly way. That meant, for them, an educated and ordained ministry. Like Puritans before them, eighteenth-century moderate evangelicals believed in divine “calling.” God's general calling was that of election, whereby he called some to salvation and some to damnation. His special calling was that of vocation, wherein he called individuals to their work on earth, whether that of a farmer or merchant or lawyer or minister. The calling of minister was a special calling solemnly affirmed through the sacred ritual of ordination and prepared for through diligent study of the Bible, its doctrines and applications. Most moderate evangelical ministers in New England were graduates of Harvard or Yale, which at the time were primarily seminaries dedicated to training orthodox ministers.

Disputes between moderates and radicals became public in a print war that surfaced in the early 1740s. In 1742, Jonathan Dickinson (1688–1747), a New England Congregationalist who led his Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, congregation into the New Side (prorevival) Presbyterian camp, published a work that voiced moderate concerns about the radicals' teachings concerning salvation. His book, *A Display of God's Special Grace*, won the endorsement of such prominent moderates as Benjamin Colman (1673–1747) of Boston. Written in the form of a dialogue between a moderate and a radical evangelical, the book defended many of the revival behaviors denounced by the antirevivalists, particularly ecstatic outbursts by persons undergoing the new birth experience. Dickinson claimed that such emotional displays were part of the conversion process and should not be condemned. He did, however, voice concern about the radical notion that people could be saved instantly and that they could then receive immediate and absolute assurance of their salvation. Dickinson argued that salvation was a process that included a period of preparation as one first repented of sins before experiencing the joys of conversion. He attacked the radical position that the inner witness of the Spirit confirmed salvation and warned that such private impressions could be deceiving. The best proof of conversion, Dickinson contended, was a moral and holy life filled with good works.

Andrew Crosswell (1737–1796), a radical New Light from Groton, Connecticut, offered a scathing rebuttal of the moderate stance on salvation and assurance. In *Mr. Crosswell's Reply to a Book* (1742), he asserted that sinners could come to Christ immediately and that "God's grace flooded a sinner's soul in a flash." Moreover, the sinner could know for a certainty the moment of his or her salvation, claiming that it is "the greatest Absurdity in the World to suppose that the Soul should trust Jesus Christ for Salvation, and love him, and not be sensible of it." He denounced Dickinson's emphasis on moral works as "soul-destroying Arminianism," not faithful Calvinism (pp. 5–8, 18–23).

Some radicals concluded that the only way they could practice "pure and undefiled" evangelical faith was to withdraw from their congregations and start new churches. Known as Separatists, these radicals condemned "unconverted" ministers and formed new congregations headed by ministers who could testify to having had a new birth experience. By 1745 there were forty-five Separate congregations in New England alone. These radicals drew up confessions of faith that highlighted their differences with

moderate evangelicals, as the confession of the Mansfield, Massachusetts, Separatists attests. It avowed that "all doubting in a believer is sinful, being contrary to the command of God." Furthermore, it avowed that "every brother that is qualified by God for the essential qualification for preaching is wrought by the Spirit of God; and that the knowledge of the tongues and liberal sciences are not absolutely necessary" (quoted in Joseph Tracy, *The Great Awakening*, 1841, pp. 317–318).

Throughout the Separatist movement, and indeed in much of the entire evangelical movement, there was growing suspicion of an educated ministry, that is, one educated at such institutions as Harvard and Yale. Even to moderates like George Whitefield, those institutions had become tainted by a too-cozy relationship with nonevangelicals, such as revival critic Charles Chauncy (1705–1787), and with secular notions, especially those of the Enlightenment. In 1740, Whitefield wrote in his published *Journals* that "Discipline is at a low ebb" at Harvard. He charged that "Bad books are becoming fashionable among the tutors and students." By "bad" books, he meant those by Anglicans and nonevangelicals, rather than those by evangelicals, especially the "good old Puritans" such as Solomon Stoddard and Thomas Shepard. The danger of Harvard's abandoning the evangelical standard was a ministry that was grounded in rational propositions but knew little of personal faith. Whitefield charged that "many, nay most that preach, I fear, do not experimentally know Christ."

Responses to Evangelicalism

Such attacks by evangelicals did not go unchallenged. Indeed, the Great Awakening engendered powerful criticism of revivalist teachings and tactics, criticism that did not differentiate between moderates and radicals. In both New England and the middle colonies, sentiment among the clergy and laity was sharply divided between those who embraced evangelical revivalism and those who attacked it. Charles Chauncy, pastor of the First Church of Boston, was one of the awakening's severest critics, and he attacked it at the most basic level by disputing evangelical claims that it was a mighty "work of God." Indeed, he saw a huge gap between events taking place in the so-called revival and evangelical interpretations of those events. While evangelicals insisted that they were merely bearing witness to an extraordinary outpouring of God's grace, Chauncy portrayed the revival as primarily the work of overzealous, self-promoting enthusiasts. To him there was

much “Noise and little Connection” between the trumpeting of evangelicals and the work that they trumpeted. In response to one evangelical claim that New Englanders were witnessing a mighty work of God, Chauncy rejoined that not “*near so much hath been done, as to warrant this Gentleman’s high Encomium upon this Work.*” He concluded that if thoughtful people separated from the so-called revival all the “enthusiastic Impulses, and such-like Concomitants, . . . [they would] reduce it to a small Thing, that is, in Compare with what it is *made to be* by some who have wrote upon it” (*The Late Religious Commotions in New-England*, 1743, p. 2).

Chauncy was hardly alone in his criticism. A group of ministers from Massachusetts and Connecticut assembled in Boston in the summer of 1743 because of their concerns that the revival was creating disorders and divisions detrimental to the good order of the gospel. In their published critique, the seventy-odd ministers voiced grave concerns about the evangelicals’ central teaching: the “new birth” as the “one thing needful” for salvation. They charged revivalists with uncritically accepting individuals’ conversion accounts based on “secret impulses” rather than on “the *written Word* [and] the *Rule* of their Conduct.” If salvation is reduced to unverifiable private experience, then religion mocks the rule of “*Scripture and Reason*” that had guided the Puritans. To New England opponents of the revival, the so-called Great Awakening was nothing more than warmed-over antinomianism in which subjective claims of divine revelation take precedence over God’s revealed Word. Furthermore, persons who are truly awakened by God’s grace should demonstrate their new birth through good works. Charles Chauncy could find no evidence that the new birth espoused by evangelicals resulted in improved behavior. He saw much evidence of “*enthusiastic Heat*” and a “*Commotion in the Passions*” but saw none that “Men have been made better.” He added,

’Tis not evident to me, that Persons, generally, have a better Understanding of Religion, a better Government of their Passions, a more Christian Love to their Neighbour, or that they are more decent and regular in the Devotions towards God. Rather, they exhibit the same pride and Vanity, the same Luxury and Intemperance, the same lying and tricking and cheating, as before. (Quoted in *The Great Awakening: Documents*, edited by Richard Bushman, 1970, p. 120)

To him and other critics, the revival generated a lot of noise about faith but made little substantive difference in the lives of people.

Evangelicals during the Great Awakening both united and divided people across British North America. They united Protestants by declaring the same message in every part of the land and by publicizing similar responses in every region. Readers in New England, for instance, read accounts of revivals in Pennsylvania and New York that were strikingly similar to awakenings that they had experienced. Wherever they went, itinerants preached the same message of the heart, and those who had a spiritual conversion related a similar story of how the indwelling Christ had overwhelmed every part of their being, making them first aware of all human efforts to save themselves and second of God’s sufficient grace for transforming their lives. Moreover, evangelicals forged linguistic bonds that transcended regional dialects and sectarian vocabularies. New Lights everywhere began to speak a common evangelical language using such shared phrases as the new birth, the indwelling Christ, and heart religion.

At the same time, however, evangelicals during the Great Awakening caused fissures among Protestants. Their insistence on conversion as the only thing needed for salvation divided people into the converted and the unconverted. Either one had experienced the new birth or not, and it mattered not what other claims to Christian devotion one might make. Educated clergy with long and distinguished service as pastors were not exempt; if they could not or would not publicly relate a personal conversion account, then New Lights numbered them among the “unconverted clergy.” Then there were organic divisions, splits within particular denominations: New Light and Old Light Congregationalists, New Side and Old Side Presbyterians. After a period of rancorous debate between the latter groups when each group castigated the other, they went their separate ways, each forming synods and seminaries that promoted their beliefs and practices. Separation became competition as New Side Presbyterians sent itinerant missionaries throughout the land seeking converts among church members as well as those outside the church. It no longer mattered if one were a Presbyterian; one must subscribe to the right branch.

Evangelicalism, the Enlightenment, and the American Revolution

Evangelicals lived in a society that was secular as well as sacred and contended with new ideas, especially those of the

Enlightenment, which challenged the very bases of their beliefs. At the same time as the Great Awakening, Enlightenment ideas challenged revelation itself as an authority for understanding humans and their world. Like the awakening, the Enlightenment was imported from Europe. Inspired by the scientific worldview promoted by such men as Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton, the Enlightenment substituted a natural for a supernatural explanation of the world. Though most adherents acknowledged God as creator, they relegated God to the sidelines of human existence. God was the cosmic watchmaker who wound up the created order and allowed it to run on its own with no divine intervention. The world operated according to natural laws discernible to human reason. And the enlightened person used his or her reason to understand the natural order and bend its laws to human benefit. To some evangelicals, such reasoning if pushed too far could undermine biblical authority. Human observation and experimentation, not divine revelation, was authoritative for devotees of the Enlightenment, and that was a dangerous notion for evangelicals like Jonathan Edwards. Indeed, deism, the religion of the Enlightenment, represented a grave threat to revealed religion. Edwards described deists as those who

Wholly cast off the Christian religion, and are professed infidels. They are not like the Heretics, Arians, Socinians, and others, who own the Scriptures to be the word of God, and hold the Christian religion to be the true religion, but only deny these and these fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion: they deny the whole Christian religion. Indeed they own the being of a God; but they deny that Christ was the son of God, and say he was a mere cheat; and so they say all the prophets and apostles were; and they deny the whole Scripture. They deny that any of it is the word of God. They deny revealed religion, or any word of God at all; and say that God has given mankind no other light to walk by but their own reason. (*A History of the Work of Redemption*, 1773, pp. 281–282)

For Edwards, reason was a God-given faculty intended to aid men and women in understanding God's revealed truth, but he also placed great importance on what he called "holy affections" in the drama of salvation. Redemption came through the indwelling Christ, not at the end of deductive reasoning.

Although there were profound differences between the worldviews of evangelicals and devotees of the Enlightenment, there were also noteworthy similarities. Both rebelled against traditional authority, and each stressed the primacy of the individual. The Enlightenment encouraged people to think for themselves rather than blindly following the ideas of others, including political and ecclesiastical leaders. Knowledge of the world comes through observation and experimentation, not through received wisdom. Similarly, evangelicals were wary of those ministers, no matter how impressive their academic credentials, whose faith was rooted in anything other than a life-changing conversion experience. By stressing the importance of the individual, evangelicals taught a message that coincided with liberalism at its most fundamental level. Like Lockean liberals, evangelicals fought for political as well as ecclesiastical freedoms. Both the Enlightenment and evangelicalism would shape the responses of Americans to the ideas and events of the American Revolution.

Historians have debated evangelicalism's influence on the American Revolution. Some, like Alan Heimert, have argued that evangelicalism, perhaps more than the Enlightenment, shaped patriot responses to British tyranny. Jon Butler questions how the Great Awakening of the 1740s could have influenced political attitudes and events of the 1770s. There is an argument for a powerful indirect influence, that is, one that changed the political culture of British North America. As historian Gary Nash has noted, New Lights were empowered by their new birth experiences to challenge the authority of church leaders, and it was a short step to extend that challenge to the political arena. Moreover, the Great Awakening was a movement "out of doors," that is, a religious movement that protested the prevailing religious teachings and practices, a movement that literally took place outside the confines of established institutions, in streets, marketplaces, and parks. In Massachusetts, New Lights took to the streets in 1741 in support of the Land Bank, which would increase the money supply and ease the burdens of debtors. Those contending that evangelicals exercised considerable influence on the American Revolution argue that they contributed to a new, popular form of politics wherein empowered individuals challenged entrenched power.

Evangelicals played an important role in shaping political culture in the Revolutionary period. Like the Enlightenment, evangelicalism challenged all authority, ecclesiastical and civil, that interfered with the individual's religious

rights. Specifically, the teaching that salvation was experiential, that it occurred within the individual, meant that evangelicals were opposed to any authority who deigned to intrude on that most sacred of experiences. So when rumors surfaced that the King-in-Parliament was considering naming a resident bishop for the American colonies, evangelicals led the resistance in the name of religious liberty. Furthermore, they joined the opposition to the Quebec Act, which gave rights to Canadian Catholics, a move, Protestants claimed, that signaled a British design to make the thirteen colonies Catholic or at least to subvert religious freedom. But evangelicals did more than protest British actions; they also called on Americans to make their resistance a moral crusade. Believing that nothing happened without God's knowledge, they asked why God was visiting the British oppression on them. They concluded that it was because of their own moral laxity, expressed as growing worldliness manifested in the consumption of luxury goods and manifested in a complacency toward things of God. So evangelicals called on the nation's citizens to repent; only then could they expect divine approbation of their resistance to British tyranny.

Religious Freedom and Evangelicalism after the Revolution

Evangelicals also played a central role in the fight against religious establishments and the fight for religious liberty. While many historians have questioned the radicalism of the American Revolution, especially in comparison with, say, the French Revolution, all agree that the separation of church and state was truly revolutionary for the time. Evangelicals were in the forefront of the fight against advocates of religious establishment, first in state constitutions and then at the federal convention in 1787. Virginia was the scene of a decade-long battle over the question of religious liberty, and the final settlement, embodied in the *Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom*, became the model adopted for the federal government. In 1776, the Virginia Assembly was dominated by members of the Church of England, most of whom were sympathetic to the clergy's insistence that the establishment of a successor Episcopal Church would best serve the state. The clergy argued that religion was the foundation of republican virtue, and thus essential to society, and that moral teachings "can be best taught and preserved in their purity in an established church." Evangelicals disagreed. They took seriously the Great Commission and had been successful in spreading the gospel throughout Virginia.

Having arrived in Virginia in significant numbers only about forty years before the Revolution, evangelicals had experienced rapid growth, and by 1776, according to Thomas Jefferson, they constituted about two-thirds of Virginia Protestants. They believed that all sects would be well served in a free religious marketplace where the government had no say. To them, faith was a matter of conscience and a transaction between God and the individual.

So when the Virginia Assembly considered various measures calling for an Episcopal establishment, evangelicals demurred. With their tradition of supporting the separation of church and state, Baptists petitioned the legislators on behalf of unfettered religious liberty. A Baptist Association from Prince Edward County expressed the hope that "all church establishments might be pulled down, and every tax upon conscience and private judgment abolished, and each individual left to rise or sink by his own merit and the general laws of the land." Presbyterians joined in the antiestablishment movement. The Hanover County Presbytery petitioned for the rejection of any establishment, including that of the "Christian religion." Patrick Henry had proposed that Virginia endorse a nonsectarian establishment, that is, one that made Christianity itself the official religion in Virginia. The Presbyterians rejected such a notion. They explained,

There is no argument in favor of establishing the Christian religion but what may be pleaded, with equal propriety, for establishing the tenets of Mohammed by those who believe the Alcoran; or if this be not true, it is at least impossible for the magistrate to adjudge the right of preference among the various sects that profess the Christian faith, without erecting a chair of infallibility, which would lead us back to the Church of Rome. (Quoted in William Henry Foote, *Sketches of Virginia*, 1850, pp. 323–324)

To the Presbyterians, any state endorsement of religion is an endorsement of a *particular* faith based on a *particular* interpretation of biblical and ecclesiastical authority. Those are judgments that belong to the individual and God, not to politicians and the state.

After the Revolution, evangelicals flourished in the free marketplace of religion that they had been so instrumental in creating. Indeed, aided by another Great Awakening that began in the late 1790s on the Tennessee and Kentucky frontiers and still burned brightly in northern communities

well into the 1830s, evangelicals became the dominant churches in the United States. According to one estimate, by the mid-1800s, two-thirds of all Protestants were Baptists and Methodists. Whereas in 1775 Congregationalists had twice the number of ministers as any other American church, by 1845 Methodists had ten times more ministers than the Congregationalists. So dominant were evangelicals in American culture that one historian claims that in the first half of the nineteenth century evangelicalism emerged as the country's "functional equivalent of an established church." Another scholar calls the evangelicals' God of the period "America's God." Moreover, evangelicalism was at the center of what one historian has called the "democratization" of American Christianity. Evangelicals' message that salvation was a matter of individual choice, of persons' accepting Christ by faith, fit almost seamlessly in a democratic culture of individual freedom. And mass evangelism was expressive of American ebullience as the country expanded geographically and economically.

Evangelicalism's colonial roots are evident in the movement's ongoing vitality and growth in the present. With a continued emphasis on individual soul-winning and mass revivals, evangelicals enjoy dramatic growth, both in the number and size of congregations. Furthermore, like eighteenth-century evangelicals, their successors are innovative and adaptive. More than any other religious group, evangelicals have changed with the times, building, for example, megachurches with corporate structures that mobilize large numbers of people engaged in expansive programs of spiritual, social, and educational outreach. And just as Whitefield pioneered the exploitation of newspapers for promoting his services, modern-day evangelicals embraced the electronic media, especially the Internet and cable television, to reach wider audiences.

See also *African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War; American Revolution; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Congregationalists; Deism; Emotion; Enlightenment; Evangelicals* entries; *Freedom, Religious; Great Awakening(s); Missions: Native American; Puritans.*

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Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements

At the turn of the twenty-first century, American evangelicalism bore all of the hallmarks of its rich and colorful history: an emphasis on the Bible as God's revelation to humanity, an acknowledgement of the centrality of conversion, and an impulse to evangelize, or bring others into the faith. Evangelicalism throughout its history has demonstrated an uncanny ability to speak the idiom of the culture, from the open-air preaching of George Whitefield in the eighteenth century to the circuit riders and the colporteurs of the nineteenth century to the radio and television evangelists of the twentieth century. As the idiom has shifted in recent years, so too have evangelical strategies.

The Megachurch Phenomenon

Megachurches (generally defined as congregations in excess of two thousand) emerged as a kind of evangelical franchise late in the twentieth century. Although Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) built what was arguably the first megachurch in the 1920s, the Angelus Temple in the Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, the trend expanded considerably in the ensuing decades. The question of whether Robert Schuller (1926–) qualifies as an evangelical might inspire a lively debate in some circles, but his techniques certainly fit the pattern of evangelical innovation. In 1955 Schuller, pastor of a Reformed Church in America

congregation in Riverside, Illinois, accepted what was essentially a missionary posting to Orange County, California. Very quickly Schuller discerned that postwar Southern California was a culture dominated by the automobile. He rented the Orange Drive-In Theater and circulated flyers inviting locals to “Worship as you are . . . in the family car.” Schuller perched himself on the roof of the concession stand and preached to the automobiles. Soon the congregation expanded, and Schuller relocated to a venue a couple of miles down Chapman Avenue and built the Garden Grove Community Church. After further expansion, aided by radio and television, he constructed a massive glass structure, designed by Philip Johnson, which Schuller dubbed the Crystal Cathedral.

In nearby Costa Mesa at the turn of the 1970s, Chuck Smith (1927–) transformed a congregation of twenty-five contentious souls, on the verge of disbanding, into another megachurch, Calvary Chapel. Smith, who had been part of Aimee Semple McPherson’s International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, tapped into the vestiges of the hippie movement, welcoming refugees from the counterculture to his church. As attendance swelled, the church moved to a larger property in Santa Ana, and many erstwhile hippies testified to deliverance, sometimes instantaneous, from drug and alcohol dependencies.

In 1975, a recent graduate of Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois, sought to start a church in the northwest suburbs of Chicago. Bill Hybels (1951–) consulted with Schuller and others and then conducted a door-to-door market research survey to learn why suburbanites were staying away from church. On the basis of those findings—an aversion to religious symbols, a desire to remain anonymous, not wanting to be dunned for money—Hybels proceeded to design a church that would overcome those objections. By the turn of the twenty-first century, Willow Creek Community Church, in South Barrington, Illinois, was drawing close to twenty thousand suburbanites every weekend to its sprawling campus, where those in attendance can choose from hundreds of programs for a variety of interest groups in addition to the standard services, which generally feature musical and dramatic productions followed by a sermon from one of the church’s many pastors. A visitor would likely spend some time in the complex’s food court, modeled on shopping malls.

Willow Creek and other megachurches—Joel Osteen’s Lakewood Church in Houston, for instance, or Rick Warren’s Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California—thrive

in part because of the variety of their offerings, a kind of cafeteria Christianity, and because of their market-friendly approach to churchmanship. Leaders of the congregations tinker with what they call the “worship experience,” and both the preaching and the underlying theology tend to be inoffensive and anodyne. The “What We Believe” tab on the Willow Creek Web site, for example, contains phrases like “we are among those Christ came to seek and save” and defines the church’s mission as turning “irreligious people into fully devoted followers of Christ.” The tab yields no insight whatsoever into the church’s position on the virgin birth, the resurrection of Jesus, or the role of sacraments in the life of the congregation.

Nondenominationalism

The popularity of megachurches among evangelicals also points to another characteristic: the lack of denominational identity. The fundamentalist-modernist controversies in the 1920s triggered a defection of many (though by no means all) evangelicals from mainline Protestant denominations. Some of the defectors joined explicitly evangelical denominations, but many remained suspicious of denominations of any sort.

This suspicion of institutional forms has even deeper roots in evangelicalism, arguably dating back to the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. Both Continental Pietism and the Methodist movement within the Church of England were reactions to the kind of institutional calcification that evangelicals find inimical to piety. The holiness movement of the nineteenth century, in turn, sought to call Methodists away from their middle-class aspirations toward a more authentic, affective piety. Much of the suspicion that evangelicals directed toward denominations had to do with educational institutions. Among holiness people, there was a strong prejudice against educated clergy, the supposition being—and not entirely without warrant—that education crowds out piety. Many twentieth-century evangelicals were convinced that seminaries had proven to be theologically cancerous. It was no accident that one of the major defections of evangelicals from a mainline denomination was triggered when J. Gresham Machen (1881–1937), an evangelical, was forced out of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1929.

The other characteristic that militates against denominational affiliation for evangelicals is a weakness for a kind of cult of personality. In the absence of hierarchical structures, liturgical rubrics, creedal formulas, or strong polity,

evangelicals tend to coalesce around charismatic individuals who are skilled preachers and teachers. These evangelical leaders, in turn, tend to chafe at any sort of institutional constraint, such as those attending denominational structures. Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel effectively left his denomination, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. Bill Hybels of Willow Creek Community Church holds no denominational ordination, nor does Joel Osteen (1963–). The single major exception is Rick Warren (1954–) at Saddleback Church. Both the pastor and the congregation are Southern Baptist, but Warren makes a point of not advertizing that fact.

The paradox—or, perhaps, the sociological inevitability—here is that as these megachurches grow, and as other ministers and congregations seek to emulate their success, they tend to form their own associations that bear a strong resemblance to denominations. Smith at Calvary Chapel insisted for years that the network of likeminded congregations for which he is a spiritual leader was not a denomination: “Calvary Chapel is a non-denominational church movement focused on the inerrancy of the Bible and the expository teaching from Genesis to Revelation.” But the organization allows that the congregations “are connected by the fellowship and like-mindedness of the men who serve as their senior pastors” (see www.calvarychapelcostamesa.com). Similarly, Hybels formed the Willow Creek Association in 1992, a federation of likeminded congregations and individuals, though he generally stops short of calling it a denomination.

Worship Styles

No discussion of current trends in evangelicalism would be complete without a reference to styles of worship. In the middle of the twentieth century, there were essentially two types of evangelical worship: fundamentalist and Pentecostal. Fundamentalist worship was sedate and dignified: congregational singing of hymns, some anthem from the (volunteer) choir, perhaps a song from a soloist or a musical ensemble, culminating in a sermon (often called a “message”) from the pastor or a visiting preacher. Such sermons were exegetical and, more often than not, very long in duration. Pentecostal worship included many of the same elements, but the principal differences were possibly a shorter sermon and a good deal more enthusiasm, including speaking in tongues and divine healing.

The rise of the Jesus Movement in the early 1970s, however, radically altered evangelical worship styles. Once again,

Calvary Chapel was pivotal to this transition. As Smith attracted erstwhile hippies to his church, many of them sought an outlet for their musical talents, and the result was a musical outpouring unmatched in the annals of evangelicalism, with the possible exception of the Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley era. A group that called itself Love Song became, effectively, the house band at Calvary Chapel; but other groups and individuals emerged as well, including Danny Lee and the Children of Truth, Larry Norman (1947–2008), John Fischer (1947–), and Randy Matthews (1951–). The new music ranged from Christian rock to the lilting melodies that became the basis for what would come to be called “praise music.”

The new music owed little to the traditional gospel songs found in hymnals. Because the music was new and unfamiliar (and *not* found in hymnals), the lyrics very often were projected onto a screen or simply a wall using an overhead projector. This, in turn, freed up the worshippers’ hands; no longer did they have to fumble with a hymnbook. In time, evangelicals began to raise their hands while singing, a posture more common among Pentecostals. Much of the music tended to be gentle and rhapsodic. It was simple and undemanding, with a fairly narrow range of notes, making it accessible to everyone—unlike, say, old standards like “Wonderful Grace of Jesus,” with its multiple parts and countermelodies. In time, the overhead projector gave way to PowerPoint, and the new “praise music” became ubiquitous in evangelical worship, thereby narrowing the gap between fundamentalist and Pentecostal worship to almost nothing.

Organs and pianos, the staples of evangelical worship accompaniment for most of the twentieth century, were rendered passé, often the objects of derision, especially to a younger generation of evangelicals. The new requirement for evangelical worship was what came to be called a “praise band” or a “worship team,” consisting of some combination of guitars (acoustic or electric, often both), drums and other percussion, keyboard (usually electronic), and an array of singers, whose task it became to lead the congregational singing by projecting their own voices into handheld microphones. Amplification was considered essential to any praise band or worship team, even in the smallest venues—and often to the consternation of older evangelicals, many of whom expressed nostalgia for the old hymns.

To a remarkable degree, preaching also came to reflect this new style of evangelical worship. Although any such generalizations are perilous, evangelical sermons around the

turn of the twentieth century tended to be less structured and theological, more anecdotal and topical.

Evangelicals and Politics

Since the late 1970s, the topicality of evangelical preaching has extended to politics, once considered taboo in most evangelical pulpits. For half a century following the Scopes trial of 1925, evangelicals by and large shied away from political engagement. Politics was considered a “worldly” endeavor, an enterprise so laden with compromise that any person of principle would be undone by its machinations. Also stoking this aversion was premillennialism, regnant among evangelicals since the late 1800s, the doctrine that Jesus would return to earth at any moment. This effectively absolved evangelicals of social engagement. This world, after all, was doomed and transitory. The best a believer could do was to ensure that he or she was ready for the return of Jesus—and try to bring others into the fold through evangelism.

For a variety of reasons, those insular attitudes began to change in the 1970s. Televangelists, taking advantage of changes in FCC regulations, saturated the airwaves, and a Southern Baptist Sunday school teacher mounted a successful, long-shot bid for the presidency in 1976. Jimmy Carter’s declaration in the course of the campaign that he was a “born again” Christian caught the attention of evangelicals, southerners especially, who helped propel him to the Democratic nomination and then to the presidency.

Paradoxically, however, many of these same evangelicals turned dramatically against Carter four years later. Although the leaders of the Religious Right would later claim that the United States Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision of January 1973 provided the catalyst for their entry into politics, that account disintegrates on closer examination. No less a conservative force than the Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution in 1971 calling for the legalization of abortion, a stance reaffirmed in 1974 (after the *Roe* decision) and again in 1976. When the *Roe v. Wade* ruling was handed down, several prominent evangelicals, including W. A. Criswell (1909–2003), pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, heralded the decision as marking an appropriate distinction between personal morality and public policy.

Rise and Fall of the Religious Right

The real catalyst for the rise of the Religious Right was another court ruling, decided in the district court for the

District of Columbia on June 30, 1970. In a case called *Green v. Connally*, the court instructed the Internal Revenue Service to withhold tax-exempt status from a religious school that practiced racial discrimination. In the succeeding years, the IRS applied that ruling to other schools, including Bob Jones University, a fundamentalist school in Greenville, South Carolina. When, after years of warnings, the IRS finally rescinded the tax status of Bob Jones University on January 19, 1976, evangelical leaders interpreted that action as an assault on the integrity and independence of evangelical institutions and mobilized to reverse it. In the latter years of the 1970s, they banded together to resist the IRS and, in so doing, found other issues to unite them: prayer in school; opposition to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution; and abortion, which until 1978 was regarded by most evangelicals as a Roman Catholic issue.

The Religious Right chose to anoint Ronald Reagan as its political savior in the 1980 presidential election, even though his status as a divorced and remarried man probably would have disqualified him from evangelical favor a generation earlier. Reagan also, in 1967, had signed into law, while governor of California, the most liberal abortion bill in the nation. Leaders of the Religious Right, however, shrugged that aside and helped to elect Reagan over two other candidates who also claimed to be evangelicals: Carter and John B. Anderson, a Republican member of Congress turned independent.

The Religious Right enjoyed a thirty-year run of extraordinary influence in American politics, from the United States Senate election in Iowa in 1978, when a little-known Republican edged out a popular Democratic incumbent, until the election of Barack Obama to the presidency in 2008. During those three decades, politically conservative evangelicals altered the American political landscape through such organizations as the Moral Majority, the Traditional Values Coalition, Focus on the Family, Vision America, the American Family Association, and the Christian Coalition. So confident was the Religious Right of its political muscle that one of its own, televangelist Pat Robertson (1930–), mounted a credible bid for the Republican presidential nomination in 1988.

The political machinations of conservative evangelicals, however, yielded mixed results. Judicial appointments by Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush undeniably tilted the federal bench in a more conservative direction. Legislative accomplishments, on the other hand, were sparse. Despite the campaign promises of all three Republican

presidents during this era, none of them made any serious effort to outlaw abortion. From February 1, 2006, when Samuel Alito was sworn on to the United States Supreme Court, until January 3, 2007, when the newly elected Democratic majorities took control of Congress, all three branches of the federal government were in the hands of the Republican–Religious Right coalition. The chief executive, the majority leader of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives all claimed to be evangelical Christians and unalterably opposed to abortion. Yet during that eleven-month period, they made no effort whatsoever to outlaw abortion, their stated goal.

By the time of the 2008 presidential election, a generation gap was discernible among evangelicals. The older leadership of the Religious Right—James Dobson (1936–), Chuck Colson (1931–), Donald Wildmon (1938–), and others—continued to insist that the only salient moral issues were abortion and same-sex marriage. A growing number of younger evangelicals, by contrast, detected a much broader spectrum of issues with a moral valence: poverty, the environment, AIDS, war, and the George W. Bush administration's persistent and systematic use of torture against those it labeled “enemy combatants.” In addition, these younger evangelicals were relatively uninterested in the matter of sexual identity, the issue that so fixated their elders. As a consequence, many of these younger evangelicals—32 percent of those aged eighteen to twenty-nine, according to one survey—voted for Obama, double the percentage that had supported John Kerry, the Democratic nominee four years earlier.

Niche Evangelism

As the Religious Right voting bloc began to crumble, evangelicalism itself became less and less homogeneous. Immigrants, some of whom were evangelicals in their native lands and others who converted after coming to North America, began quite literally to change the complexion of evangelicalism in the decades surrounding the turn of the twenty-first century, and evangelicals adapted by devising a kind of “niche evangelism,” targeting their appeals to specific ethnic and interest groups

The changing face of evangelicalism together with changing cultural circumstances prompted a redirection of evangelistic efforts away from what was commonly known as mass evangelism in the twentieth century to this niche evangelism. In many respects, Billy Graham (1918–) personifies this transformation. Graham came to prominence at

a unique moment in history, when various new media technologies—radio, television, motion pictures—were just beginning to reach large audiences. Graham jumped on these media with a vengeance and made himself into the twentieth century's most recognized religious celebrity. Graham perfected the stadium rallies, which he called “crusades,” massive events that drew thousands in person and many times that through various forms of media.

As Graham began to wind down his remarkable career late in the twentieth century, however, there was no obvious successor, although some in the media anointed Rick Warren as Graham's heir, a designation that Warren himself resisted. Clearly, no single individual could approach Graham's unique combination of charisma, gravitas, and celebrity. Coincident with Graham's retirement, media also began to change. Whereas when Graham began his career there were three television networks, by the turn of the twenty-first century cable television and the Internet provided thousands of outlets for media.

Evangelicalism, the most protean religious movement in American history, has found ways to adapt. Instead of the massive stadium rally, evangelicals now target niche audiences, defined by age group, ethnicity, marital status, musical tastes, or interest: skateboarding, scrapbooking, the tattoo subculture.

Even the megachurches themselves, which have always used cells or special interest groups to draw visitors into deeper levels of involvement, face the challenge of remaining relevant to a newer generation and altered cultural circumstances. An intentionally loose movement called the Emergent Church arose, at least in part, as a protest against the bland, suburban-style consumerism of the megachurches. Led—or, more accurately, represented—by such individuals as Brian McLaren (1956–) and Tony Jones (1968–), the Emergent movement emphasizes decentralization. The worship is wildly eclectic, drawing on a diversity of liturgical forms, musical styles, and artistic expressions.

Niche evangelism, the targeting of specific audiences, represents merely the latest adaptation of evangelicals to shifting cultural currents. The movement that, throughout American history, has demonstrated time and again its ability to speak the idiom of the culture is finding new ways to refresh itself and remain relevant to American life in the twenty-first century.

See also *Abortion; Education: Home Schooling Movement; Emerging Church Movement; Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical*

Issues; Fundamentalism: Contemporary; Gender; House Church Movement; Megachurches; Music: Contemporary Christian; Positive Thinking; Religious Press; Religious Right; Seeker Churches; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends; Television; Worship: Contemporary Currents.

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Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century

Nineteenth-century evangelicalism was an amalgam of sometimes discordant Protestant submovements that nonetheless contained certain unifying characteristics inherited from eighteenth-century evangelical life and thought. It developed distinctions from earlier evangelicalism through the revivalism of the Second Great Awakening and reactions to late-century theological trends in Europe. Mark Noll has described evangelicals as displaying five core values: a Protestant attachment to the authority of scripture; a belief that true religion came from a personal experience of God; some level of bias against all institutions; a highly flexible ability to embrace, modify, or discard current strands of intellectual, political, social, and economic thought; and finally a belief in and practice of personal and social discipline. All evangelicals shared these traits but were far from monolithic. They could be Calvinists or anti-Calvinists, deeply political or apolitical, intellectuals or anti-intellectuals. During the century the term itself did not carry the modern connotation

of participation in a wider, supradenominational movement. Rather, it was a series of religious emphases and common experiences setting apart certain sets of Christians from the rest of Protestantism. Only after the fact, in the early twentieth century, did a self-consciously “evangelical” identity harden in such a way as to require definitions of who was “in” and who was “out.” By this time two distinct branches of evangelicalism had emerged and would blossom into the early-twentieth-century fundamentalists and Social Gospel evangelicals.

Theology and Thought

The Second Great Awakening, a revival movement that swept the North and West from the 1790s to the 1840s, did not create but rather permanently remolded American evangelicalism as a phenomenon distinct from the eighteenth century. The experience refashioned Protestant religious culture through revivals that focused on the individual, with special care taken to the atmosphere, methodology, and marketing of the revival meetings. Populist elements, empowering the poor and socially less influential to experience God in ways that flaunted establishment structures, created an evangelical culture that was of the people in reflection of the growing democratic spirit. The Awakening helped re-create evangelicalism in ways peculiarly suited for its time and place in America.

The early-nineteenth-century evangelical mind was firmly rooted in a combination of common sense realism (ethics emphasizing the individual’s ability to know truth), the Baconian method (inductive reasoning), and attachment to an infallible Bible. This intellectual mindset proved inadequate to the management of pre-Civil War controversies over revivalism and slavery as well as postwar challenges emanating from Europe such as positivism (the belief that truth is scientifically verifiable) and higher criticism (that scriptural texts must be scrutinized scientifically without regard to faith). When the century began, orthodox Calvinism in the mold of Jonathan Edwards was the preeminent theological bent of American evangelicalism, though its contours were being challenged in divinity schools such as Yale. This theology espoused God’s justice ontologically (based theoretically in who God is), human virtue (concern for the public welfare), human agency as a response to God’s predestined work, and freedom as one aspect of the human experience to share in government.

The aftereffects of the cultural creativity of nation building and the power of the revival movement forever changed

these definitions in ways that conformed to and in return informed the growing democratic spirit of America. Justice became something God used, not something the Divine Being was. Virtue became a private standard of morality. It ceased to be a participation in the public good but something that must be protected from outside corruption, such as a woman's virginity or a man's humility. Freedom was transformed from a participation in government to an innate human equality and became the key interpretive hermeneutic of the human soul. These theological alterations in evangelicalism created an American evangelicalism that was customized to its surroundings. Roadblocks to human agency were removed, and popular theology eventually centered on the people's ability to reason in commonsensical ways about God, the Bible, the world, and themselves. The resulting transition in focus, from God-centered to human-centered, created a religious environment that was ripe for public activism born of the desire for personal virtue and the redemption of collective society from individual vices. From midcentury onward participation in these kinds of reforms rose dramatically. Orthodox Calvinists, meanwhile, wrestled with the adoption of revivalist methods and adapted worship practices without abandoning the theology of Edwards.

After the Civil War the major theological issues and transitions came from the evangelical encounter with the philosophy of positivism, Darwinism, and the scientific examination of the Bible. These were collectively part of the phenomenon of modernism that questioned existing ways of thinking across all fields. Jeremiah Lewis Diman (1831–1881), professor of theology at Brown University, suggested in 1880 that the positivism of Auguste Comte had its greatest impact on theology. The encounter with modernism as a whole created several different evangelical responses and molded evangelicals into camps that have remained largely intact to the present day.

The early evangelical encounter with the theory of evolution was characterized by a general willingness to accept the concept so long as it was wedded to a belief in the providential hand of God. Evolution met most of its resistance from guilt by association with positivism, a philosophy that undercut the evangelical belief in divine revelation. Evangelical theologians experienced a similar phenomenon with biblical criticism, the process of which could glean exegetical insights but the positivism of which seemingly undermined the authority of the Bible itself, since it treated the Bible as no different than any other historical literature.

These associations in the popular consciousness, neither completely accurate nor entirely fallacious, created reactions that hardened or moved away from the older Baconian-based common sense reasoning of earlier evangelicals. As the extreme conservative reaction, early fundamentalists attached themselves strongly to the old philosophy that accepted divine revelation as beyond scientific questioning and yet able to withstand completely all common sense scrutiny. The emerging liberal movement moved toward philosophic idealism with emphasis on immanence, incarnation, the humanity of Jesus, and the social call of the gospel. Moderates such as Henry Boynton Smith, J. L. Diman, and James McCosh sought to espouse a middle way that kept the essence of common sense realism but modified approaches to apologetics (arguments that Christianity was true), their view of God to be less anthropomorphic, placed greater emphasis on social concern, and married Scottish and German philosophical tenets. In the coming century moderates were largely swallowed whole into the emerging liberal evangelical tradition as the hardening of fundamentalist and modernist camps occurred.

Evangelicalism experienced two slightly parallel but nonetheless counterpoised positions in regard to the Bible itself. The first was a desire to pursue a pure, original textual translation. This effort saw over thirty-five new biblical translations from 1808 to 1880 and almost two thousand different editions. The flood of differing renderings of Holy Writ was largely driven by the desire to clarify doctrinal and liturgical disputes through effective exegesis and aided by the boom of print culture that allowed varied colorful and picture-filled productions of the text itself to become a many-splendid thing. An unintended consequence was that the constant pursuit of the "true text" left many evangelicals' trust of biblical changelessness in doubt as awareness of the human element in biblical production became increasingly clear. The other significant transition in encountering the Bible occurred as evangelicals first confronted biblical criticism's claims to scientifically look at the origins of the text. Here the reaction was equally divergent, both undergirding the emerging Social Gospel and serving to crystallize an emerging conservatism as a cultural reaction.

Denominations

Historically it may be more accurate to understand evangelicals ideologically and experientially rather than denominationally. Primitivism, pietism, revivalism, antirevivalism, and fundamentalism were strands of evangelical life that

found their way into a broad spectrum of religious sects. However, each denomination's experience was unique in its encounter with these broader trends. The nineteenth century also saw an increase in individuals' identities being connected to denominational allegiance, called denominationalism. Although theology and revival played leading roles in this advancement, it was also a product of the extreme ethnic pluralism that saw a previously unimagined number of religious strands transplanted into the American landscape through European migration.

Nationally organized Protestant church bodies, especially Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist, Episcopal, and Lutheran, were more than ecclesiastical entities. They also embodied and accentuated distinct identities. Historian Curtis Johnson organizes evangelicals into three categories in a typology of formalist (embracing traditional church structures), antiformalist (priority of function over form in church government and worship), and African American. Noll subsequently modified this typology. Noll proposes a grid in which axis Y runs from formalist to antiformalist while axis X moves from enthusiast (embracing emotional expression in worship) to antienthusiast (an aversion to outwardly emotive worship). His analysis allows for variations including the antienthusiast, antiformalist Baptists, enthusiast antiformalist African Americans and early Methodists, and High Church Methodists who were enthusiast formalists. Over time Methodists formed an expanding flexible circle in the middle between primitive early and modern High Church identities. Eventually, every American denomination would wrestle with the broad appeal of evangelicalism.

No denomination felt so completely the cultural shift of the century as did the early nation's largest denomination, the Presbyterians. The revivals' growing appeal to human agency and deemphasizing of the debilitating human depravity at the heart of Calvinism divided the Presbyterian Church into competing factions. The Old School, which gained most of its strength from the established Northeast and the South, advocated a strict adherence to the Westminster Confession and a wariness of the excess of revival. The New School Presbyterians, centered on Yale Divinity School, embraced the revivals and held an increasingly high view of human ability. They were not, however, theological innovators. Rather, they tended to subjugate doctrine to utilitarian applications. As these lines hardened, the two sides split in the schism of 1837–1838. Historians vigorously debate the degree to which the division was based in

theology or views of slavery. The New School movement is also significant because it remained tied to denominational identity when many other evangelicals were fleeing denominational strictures. The denomination reunited in the North in 1867. By century's close Presbyterianism had fallen far behind the Methodists and Baptists in adherents, and the once dominant role of Calvinism on the intellectual landscape had receded. Though the Presbyterian Church was still a significant Protestant body, wrestling with the emergence of a distinctly nineteenth-century form of evangelicalism rocked the church in a way from which it never fully recovered its earlier predominance in American Christianity.

Methodism's denominational identity followed its experiential one. As a pietistic Protestantism that emphasized the conversion of the heart through sensory experience within broadly orthodox theological boundaries, it became the heart and soul of American evangelicalism. In many ways the evangelicalism of other denominations was a response to and effort to keep up with Methodism. The Methodist message controverted Calvinists' claims of the human inability to act because of sin's corruption. Many Methodists also openly derided the theological schooling and bickering of Calvinists. Early Methodism was more a shared experience of the people than an institution. It was a liminal event, meaning a religious encounter where divisions of class, gender, and race were muted. It carried with it the hope for the re-creation of that liminal world on earth. The Methodists sought to remove all borders between the sinner and God, a desire dialectically informed from and informing their attachment to concepts of personal liberty as the extreme agency of the individual. Emphasis on personal holiness used individualism toward communal ends.

The Methodist movement thrived in the revivalist environment of the Second Great Awakening. Growth has been estimated at almost 300 percent between 1800 and 1820, and by 1830 it had become the largest denomination in the United States. In this period divergent theological emphases appeared within the movement itself: one a moral philosophy of humankind's accountability and the other a call to personal holiness. Culturally, Methodists followed the course of other evangelicals in the expanding civilizing process of the frontier. As outposts became towns and towns became prominent centers of cultural life, Methodist clergy and members sought increasing levels of respectability in areas of erudition, education, and social influence in reform movements. The move was largely successful and quick. The

Methodist condemnation of slavery was tempered, especially in the South. Methodists shared in the post–Civil War evangelical call for social reform but now did so as an established church rather than a continuing shared experience.

Historian Donald Mathews has argued that the liminal aspects of evangelicalism were most fully embraced by African American evangelicals whose evangelical experience brought present relief and future promise of a world without boundaries. Whereas white liminal religion offered increased agency in the current order, black Christianity offered a taste of an altogether different world. This was especially the case for early black Methodists, whose emphasis on preaching, experience, and tight-knit community fit well the needs of a community denied literacy, autonomous institutions, and free social interaction. Slave culture was, by necessity, extremely adaptable to new religious symbols and concepts.

Evangelicalism provided a key bridge between black and white cultures in the form of the conversion experience. Similar to the African concept of possession by the devout spirits, evangelical conversion allowed widespread entry into the Christian religion from an experiential place. Historians have speculated that the emphasis on self-doubt and personal sinfulness were less motivating factors than they were for whites, on the whole. The two cultures experienced evangelicalism in different ways but similar forms. Other forms, such as congregational singing and baptism, mirrored preexisting cultural references in the slave community. The differences were more than just of degree. As white evangelicalism became less radical and more culturally mainstream, slave evangelicalism became attractive for increasingly radical reasons—hope and freedom. Some have suggested that these differences are so severe that evangelicalism does not adequately describe black Christianity. However, both shared an emphasis on conversion and an emphasis on the work of the cross, and both created distinctive communities of shared faith in a personal encounter with God in some kind of Christian formulation. That white Christians emphasized the victory of Christ in the present, and slave Christians emphasized that hope for the future is not so fundamental a distinction as to preclude the possibility of antebellum black evangelicalism.

Slave- and free-blacks participated in white churches within strict social boundaries, especially primitive churches. Many slaves found their primary worship outlets in brush arbors, where slaves met in secret for worship. Slave Christianity was paradoxically institutionalized and without

structure, visible in the culture yet invisible to white eyes. Black preachers could receive licenses from white congregations for ministry, but other preachers found authority from spiritual anointing. During Reconstruction, black evangelicalism found a more institutional identity and was increasingly segregated from white religion. The predominantly black denominations became increasingly important within black communities. Mainstream black evangelicalism saw the gospel as a liberating message both spiritually and culturally, and the evangelistic mission took on increased cultural and social significance. Denominations that had evangelical roots include the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the National Baptist Convention of America, the National Baptist Convention USA, and the National Missionary and Progressive National Baptist Conventions.

The Baptist movement exploded as a result of the Second Great Awakening, especially in the South. Wary of denominational structures and committed to local congregational autonomy, many Baptists nonetheless created a loose coalition through the Triennial Convention in 1814 by joining together several eighteenth-century Baptist associations. Many southern churches left to form the Southern Baptist Convention in 1841 in large part over the slave question. Baptists functioned together primarily through voluntary missionary and publishing associations. Antebellum Baptists maintained a keen sense of exclusion from the secular world and developed a tradition of democratic tension between an extreme view of the liberty of conscience and the strict discipline of the democratic community of believers. This evangelical exclusivism demanded a conversion experience, commitment to orthodox purity, and submission to the discipline of fellow church members. Baptists were unique in the way they moderated the potentials for individual excess with the authority of the believing community. After the Civil War, church discipline waned with the push to enforce church norms on the larger society. More attainable with their increased size, reform movements trended away from a Baptist identity that was separate from the secular world. Church discipline became less necessary to clarify the purity of the church apart from the larger society.

Society and Culture

Historians debate the extent to which evangelicalism shaped the culture of America or evangelicalism was shaped by the culture. Most modern historians argue that both were true. While early evangelicals tended to be radical on issues such

as slavery and women's issues, it was only after later evangelicals dropped these views and sought social respectability that evangelicalism became a lasting force. Some speculate this transition happened before 1800. It is more likely that the transition was ongoing. As evangelicalism emerged, it increasingly sought acceptability, while its burgeoning acceptability increasingly helped it to grow.

The populist impulse that caused evangelicalism to explode gave way by midcentury to an earnest desire for middle-class social acceptability. Established churches slowly replaced frontier revivals as the center of religious community. College-educated pastors replaced passionate circuit-riding preachers in many congregations. Evangelicalism became respectable, often featuring the most prominent local leaders in politics, medicine, jurisprudence, and religion as adherents. But the formative events of the 1790s–1840s left three indelible marks on American Protestantism. First, in an effort to retain control of the religious marketplace in an egalitarian society, mainline churches increasingly incorporated elements of radical revival methodologies into worship parlance and practice. Second, former fringe groups now dominated the religious landscape, especially Methodist and Baptist churches. Third, since most evangelicals found in the movement an avenue of social mobility, the populist appeal moved to the evangelical periphery. This hardened antiformalist, anti-intellectual, and anti-Calvinist evangelical fringe paved the way for twentieth-century fundamentalism, whose roots lay in part in a militant attempt to maintain the peculiarities of nineteenth-century evangelicalism.

Evangelicals were key actors in social reform movements of the period. Whiggish New School Calvinists, for their part, pushed for a morally upright society that would be a model of republican citizenship, while in Nathan Hatch's scholarship democratic and Arminian evangelicals, Methodists prominent among them, preferred to promote more general populist advancement over a Calvinist program of moral reformation. These two competing emphases, on religious social control and extreme religious liberty, characterized most of the evangelical involvements with social reform for the remainder of the century. Reforms included temperance, Sabbath observance, literacy, slave literacy, and the abolitionist movement.

The evangelical encounter with slavery led to a crisis among evangelicals as to how to interpret the Bible, paving the way for future evangelical hermeneutical (biblical interpretation) approaches in the postwar era. Proslavery

evangelicals, as they increasingly sought respectability in the town centers of the South, abandoned eighteenth-century discomfort with slavery as a foible of the past. They committed headlong to a moderate proslavery millennialism that interpreted the institution, when in the hands of a pious master, as a humanizing and deeply spiritual force that offered salvation in the gospel and modernization to people in need of progress. Few southern evangelicals rejected slavery outright; rather, they sought to ameliorate it in ways that displayed their racialized notions of black inferiority. This impulse echoed what Noll calls the "reformed (that is, Calvinist) literal hermeneutic," proscribing an out-and-out rejection of slavery for fear of undermining even a surface reading of biblical passages referring to "slaves" and "servants." Northern adherents continued the traditional evangelical discomfort with slavery but found that the prevailing hermeneutic of the day favored the southern argument. Northern evangelicals therefore increasingly turned to new approaches of biblical interpretation, relying more on concepts of overarching thematic emphasis of liberty, equality, and value that would render certain proslavery verses applicable only in their ancient contexts.

Evangelicalism at times supported and at times undermined the exclusion of women from religious leadership. Although not everywhere, many women took on the role of "exhorter" at revivals. Some of these exhorters became preachers in their own right, especially in the Stone-Campbell Movement, Free Will Baptists, and Methodists. In contrast to such shifts, the rise of Victorian middle-class morality and the heritage of revival preaching created paradoxical religious tensions for women, whose spirituality was the crown jewel of the home but whose religious experience, especially in rural areas, occurred in the socially patriarchal community of faith. Written conversion testimonies of both sexes gradually discontinued use of the rapturous love language of God as bridegroom (popular in the eighteenth century) in favor of God as the generous fatherly presence. Men recorded these experiences as enlightening events that led to decisive personal actions. Women typically expressed being at the mercy of the guidance of the Spirit's leading and spoke of being led into counterculture actions such as religious leadership only out of passive obedience. Evangelicals reified Victorian morality with biblical language to formulate a view of the "Christian marriage," with highly distinct social roles of work and home. Work, which was virile, was to be done away from home by men. Women at home did homemaking and child rearing, which embodied

innocence and purity. As the century closed, gender roles were challenged through education, suffrage, and the increasing percentage of women who found leadership roles within the church. In some conservative circles this led to an increasing emphasis on the manliness of evangelicalism in an attempt to reach more male adherents. Revivalists and antimodernists were especially prone to characterize their struggle to evangelize the lost as a manly one and to spurn the growing freedom of women as dangerous to evangelical culture.

The evangelical emphasis on personal conversion and mobile revival naturally lent itself to a concern for evangelism on a broader, supranational scale known simply as “missions.” Most denominational evangelicals embraced this ethic of responsibility for what they called “domestic” as well as “foreign” missions. The sending of missionaries, often through voluntary contribution societies within and across denominational lines, grew substantially prior to the Civil War. The greatest period of growth in foreign missions activity occurred between 1880 and 1920. Primitive evangelicals (congregations that sought to avoid traditional ecclesiastical structures) spurned denominational bureaucracy and machinery and instead emphasized the work of their local, usually rural, churches over missions.

The expansion of college education became a major legacy of evangelicalism. Eastern colleges could not provide enough clergy for the expanding western populations. Smaller denominational colleges throughout the western states served as more accessible training grounds for potential clergy, but they also served the community as readily available means of social mobility. These institutions spread evangelical culture by emphasizing the reasonableness of Christian thought, classical education, and Baconian reasoning. They also served as the scene of periodic student revivals. The rapid expansion of education during the antebellum period included at least 117 evangelical-operated institutions of higher learning, meaning the expansion of college education in the antebellum United States was an explosion of specifically evangelical education. Dual traditions arose in evangelicalism regarding educated clergy. Across many denominations, town-based evangelicals increasingly sought social respectability and employed ministers who could function as local public intellectuals. Meanwhile, other evangelicals spurned the idea of an educated clergy, fearing its deleterious effects on spiritual vibrancy and a confusion of the distinctiveness of the church in the world.

Political Culture

Religion was rarely the primary factor in determining political engagement for evangelicals. Rather, it informed political perspectives and often hardened already existing social ties of ethnicity, class, gender, and ideology. The early evangelical encounter with politics in America was largely, but not exclusively, antagonistic. In the wake of the mass conversions of the early century, evangelicals increasingly sought social and political relevance. Lay evangelicals, now significant and often dominant in number, found the realistic prospect of cultural redemption a natural outgrowth of individual conversion. In the early South, historic tensions between authority and freedom, discipline and individualism, created a political and religious paradox that finally ended with the melding of an evangelical ethos and southern conservative political norms. These breakdowns were not exclusively regional.

The growing revivalist movement and the growing spirit of Jacksonian democracy mutually informed one another, emphasizing personal agency and individual liberty. Denominational adherents most likely to embrace the Democratic Party included those whose former status as religious minorities, such as Baptists and Methodists, made them wary of established religious influence on jurisprudence. Whig politics, both the creed of that political party in the age of Jackson as well as the intellectual legacy of the Revolution, focused on communal responsibility and liberty kept in check by self-discipline. Whiggish Protestantism later became the civil religion of the nineteenth century, enabling evangelicals to enter more fully into the national mainstream on issues such as Sabbath observance.

Even where most evangelicals agreed, as they did on public education, their reasons were divergent. Whig evangelicals desired to create a literate, model society of social reform. Jacksonian Democrats also desired literacy, but for equal access to advancement and power. Antebellum evangelicals divided over many issues, including temperance, Indian policy, and slavery. Most evangelicals were animated by a fierce anti-Catholicism, but many antiestablishment strains in Methodism and the Baptists made them equally fearful of the “church and state” Whiggish reformers and thus precluded any broad evangelical political alliance. As the Whig consensus fell apart in the wake of booming capitalistic individualism, nativism, and the crisis over slavery, sectionalism became the political order of the day. Southern evangelicals tended to find homes within the Democratic

Party's calls for social conservatism. Northern evangelical Congregationalists and New School Presbyterians formed the moral core of the emerging Republican Party. This in effect wedded competing evangelical elements—individualistic western revivalism and southern Calvinist orthodoxy—against the progressive postmillennial evangelicalism of the North. These allegiances lived on after the war. Northern evangelicals continued in the social reforming, progressive approach to politics, while they found staunch resistance from rural, government-wary southern evangelicals. In the South political power was primarily local. More often hierarchical than democratic, this localism provided an initial barrier to the social reform movements of northern evangelicals and a base of support for the post-Civil War Democratic Party.

A unique and lasting development of the nineteenth century was the evangelical attachment to the U.S. Constitution as a quasi-inspired document. Eighteenth-century evangelicals were largely anti-Federalists, a political position that opposed the Constitution's centralization of power and, for evangelicals, its failure to mention God. Most early Christian constitutional thinkers believed the Constitution to be a dialectical document open to revision from the people. However, in the early nineteenth century, as evangelicalism expanded and sought to ensconce the story of the nation within a peculiarly evangelical framework, a mythology grew up around the founding of the nation that was decidedly evangelical. Not coincidentally, this coincided with the emergence of evangelicalism as a significant cultural force in the young nation. Evangelicals Christianized their national memories. In the 1820s–1830s, the use of Benjamin Franklin's never realized call to prayer at the Constitutional Convention became commonplace in evangelical discussions that ascribed a special Christian nature to the United States. James Madison responded to this increasing rhetoric with the forceful reminder that Franklin's motion had been tabled. Some believe this equation of evangelical and American cultural values became so pervasive that the core ideology of the two became virtually indistinguishable: a belief in immutable natural or moral law, the freedom and power of the individual, and a belief in the redeeming work of the United States in history.

Prominent Leaders

Several key individuals were responsible for evangelicalism's increasing importance as a cultural force in the nineteenth century. The emphasis of evangelicals on the individual's

ability to understand the Bible, experience conversion, and become personally involved in religious activity led to the rise of several leaders whose message resonated with evangelical audiences.

Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875) was a prominent evangelist, theologian, social reformer, and college professor. A former lawyer whose formal theological training was minimal, Finney was known as a fierce debater and persuasive preacher. His methods were a product of the growing wave of revival, but he also served to codify and further advances in approach to worship, evangelism, preaching, and church participation. His preaching in upstate New York contributed to the so-called Burned-Over District, an area so active in the fire of revival that there were few souls left to save. Finney was a Presbyterian who preached an adapted form of Calvinism. He emphasized the ability of preachers to create conversions with the right use of methods. This teaching, part of a larger movement called New School Presbyterianism, eventually was part of what split that denomination in 1837. Finney's "new measures" revivalism, as it was called, included an anxious bench for those contemplating conversion, protracted meetings, opening of public prayer to women, and the immediate admission of the converted to communicant membership. Prominent opponents of Finney, often called Old School Presbyterians for their emphasis on traditional Calvinist teachings, included Asahel Nettleton and Lyman Beecher. Finney became the unrivaled leading thinker of the New School Presbyterians, and his wealthy merchant allies underwrote his ministry. In his most influential writings, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (1835), he argued controversially that revivals were not miracles but the right use of constituted human means. He was an ardent social reformer, advocating literacy, temperance, and the refusal of communion to slaveholders. Finney traveled to Great Britain twice, helping to establish a direct tie between British and American evangelicalism. He, his followers, and his students at Oberlin College formed a network of like-minded evangelicals that would survive into the twentieth century.

Charles Hodge (1797–1878) was an Old School Presbyterian professor of theology and biblical languages at Princeton. He was the foremost thinker in orthodox Calvinism during the nineteenth century. In his fifty-year career he tutored more future clergy than any single seminary in the United States. As the primary proponent of Princeton theology, Hodge espoused a devotion to piety, belief in biblical inspiration, commitment to the Westminster Confession,

and continued reliance on common sense realism. He was the editor of the *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*, an academic journal known as the most prominent forum for evangelical theological debate. His defense of confessional Calvinism gave intellectual energy to the Old School church, and his was the most thoughtful evangelical voice against competing theologies and ideologies of the century.

Phoebe Worrall Palmer (1807–1874) was the most influential female evangelical of the nineteenth century. The daughter of Methodist lay parents in New York City, she married physician and Methodist lay preacher Walter Clark Palmer in 1827. Initially a religious poet, she traveled and spoke widely in collaboration with her husband. Her career as a religious feminist began as a speaker at women's prayer meetings and grew into a full-scale championing of women's ministries, among them the early settlement house movement. Although she did not consider herself a theologian, her seventeen books and her editorship of the *Guide to Holiness* from 1864–1874 reached hundreds of thousands with her message of entire sanctification through baptism into the Holy Spirit, emphasizing that all humankind could enjoy the instantaneous spiritual empowerment experienced at Pentecost. Not just Methodists but also Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Congregationalists in the United States flocked to her banner, and whole segments of the Protestant world—Wesleyans, Nazarenes, the Salvation Army, and the Keswick movement in Britain and America—subscribed to her Holiness movement.

Dwight Lyman Moody (1837–1899) was a Chicago-based revivalist who bridged the traditions of Finney out of the Reconstruction era and into the cusp of the twentieth century. Like Finney, he used a utilitarian approach to evangelism that addressed the voluntary nature of American religion by presenting a compelling message the consumer should purchase. A product of the booming urbanization of the nation and the anxieties and necessities that entailed, he became the most successful traveling evangelist in the English-speaking world. Moody imitated many aspects of Finney's success, including transcontinental and transatlantic revival tours and targeting respected business leaders for support. In response to this, his detractors often accused him of religious profiteering. Theologically he embraced premillennial dispensationalism, a belief that Christ's return would include a physical rapture of believers out of the earth to avoid the tribulations described in the Book of Revelation. Moody helped wed this belief to revivalism in a way that would formatively shape the coming wave of fundamentalist

thought and practice with an emphasis on avoiding the coming tribulation by becoming converted. It is speculated by some historians that the base of support he built became the core of the fundamentalist movement of the twentieth century.

Critical Assessment

Nineteenth-century evangelicalism in the United States was forged by the experience with and reaction to two major events, the Second Great Awakening and modernism. In the process the phenomenon itself was transformed into something vastly different from its eighteenth-century roots. The Second Great Awakening not only multiplied but also forever changed the nature of evangelicalism to fit booming capitalistic and republican ideologies. Though never a unified front, it changed the culture at large and was in turn shaped into the image of emerging American dynamics. Smuggled into this dialectic, however, were the seeds of cultural crisis. Evangelical thought retained from its earlier ideology a wedding of common sense realism to biblical interpretation. A supreme confidence in the plain comprehensible nature of the Bible proved ill equipped for the issue of slavery, where the "plain" reading of scripture was claimed by both sides. This intellectual foundation faltered further when it encountered the problems of positivism and higher biblical criticism. The authority of the Bible, previously considered to be itself a form of scientific proof, was now under attack. Unable to utilize common sense realism or a strictly Baconian reasoning to justify itself to the larger culture, evangelicalism moved in two directions. The first was inward on itself, into the profundamentalist movement that would be fully realized in the next century. This phenomenon was in many ways an attempt to maintain nineteenth-century evangelicalism by reverting to a stance of antagonism with the wider culture. The other direction was to leave behind the ideologies of the past without abandoning the central tenets of orthodoxy. These evangelicals, with their continued emphasis on the salvation of the culture through reform, became the nucleus of the Social Gospel evangelicalism of the twentieth century but left unresolved how orthodoxy and deductive science reconciled with one another.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Adventism and Millennialism; Benevolent Empire; Bible entries; Civil War; Common Sense Realism; Education: Bible Schools and Colleges; Evangelicals entries; Fundamentalism; Great Awakening(s); Pietism; Politics;*

Nineteenth Century; Revivalism: Nineteenth Century; Scriptures: American Texts; Social Reform; Stone-Campbell Movement.

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Evangelicals: Twentieth Century

America's evangelicals—those who define themselves by fidelity to the Bible as God's revelation to humanity and who believe in the centrality of a conversion, or “born again” experience—entered the twentieth century tentatively and with a great deal of caution. Evangelicalism in America emerged from the confluence of three “Ps” in the eighteenth century: Continental Pietism, Scots-Irish Presbyterianism, and the remnants of New England Puritanism. These movements came together in what historians call the Great Awakening, a revival of religion in the 1730s and 1740s that swept along the Atlantic seaboard and contributed to the Patriot cause during the American Revolution.

Whereas evangelicalism had been the dominant religious expression of the nation for much of the nineteenth century, especially after the Second Great Awakening, evangelicals began to lose their hegemony after the Civil War.

Intellectually, the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859 cast doubt on literal interpretations of the Creation account at the beginning of Genesis, and the German discipline of higher criticism called into question the authorship of several books of the Bible.

Socially and economically, the United States was changing, and not in a way that evangelicals found congenial. Massive urbanization and industrialization dramatically altered the demographic landscape late in the nineteenth century. The influx of non-Protestant immigrants, most of whom did not share evangelical scruples about temperance, also represented a threat. And whereas evangelicals earlier in the nineteenth century worked feverishly to construct a millennial kingdom on earth—and, more particularly, here in North America—by the close of the nineteenth century the teeming, squalid tenements on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, for example, no longer resembled the precincts of Zion that evangelicals had so confidently predicted.

The Roots of Fundamentalism

In response to these changing circumstances, evangelicals glommed on to a new mode of biblical interpretation, dispensational premillennialism, imported from Great Britain. John Nelson Darby, a member of the Plymouth Brethren, first visited the United States in 1862, during the Civil War, with his teachings that Jesus would return to earth before the millennium, the one thousand years of righteousness predicted in the Book of Revelation. This contrasted with the regnant evangelical belief, called postmillennialism, which held that Jesus would come again to earth after his followers had constructed the millennial kingdom. In the midst of the social changes of late-nineteenth-century America, Darby's views (also called dispensationalism, because all of human history, he argued, could be divided into different ages, or “dispensations”) caught on. Reflecting this new dispensational premillennial scheme, Dwight L. Moody, the Chicago evangelist, famously declared, “I don't find any place where God says the world is to grow better and better, and that Christ is to have a spiritual reign on earth of a thousand years. I find that the earth is to grow worse and worse, and at length there is going to be a separation.”

Moody's sentiment came to typify evangelicals' attitudes at the turn of the twentieth century. No longer were they actively setting the social and political agenda for the nation, as they had in the antebellum period with abolitionism, temperance reform, the formation of common schools, and woman suffrage. The adoption of dispensationalism signaled

instead a readiness to retreat from the larger society. At the same time that more theologically liberal Protestants embraced the Social Gospel, the ideology that Jesus was capable of redeeming not only sinful individuals but sinful social institutions as well, evangelicals steadily retreated from the cities and from the arena of social reform. This would be their posture as they entered the twentieth century.

The perceived drift toward liberal theology, or “modernism,” on the part of mainline Protestants hastened the evangelical retreat. In an attempt to arrest that drift, two evangelical laymen, Lyman and Milton Stewart of Union Oil Company of California, established a fund of \$250,000 for the production and dissemination of twelve pamphlets to every pastor, missionary, and Sunday school superintendent throughout the English-speaking world. This series of twelve publications, known collectively as *The Fundamentals*, each contained several articles written by evangelical theologians who staked out very conservative theological positions on everything from the virgin birth of Jesus and his bodily resurrection to the authenticity of miracles and the inspiration of the Bible. Some evangelicals, anticipating the emergence of a doctrinal touchstone for even more evangelicals later in the twentieth century, affirmed that the scriptures—Genesis through Revelation—not only were inspired by the Holy Spirit but were also without error in the original autographs and that any apparent errors or contradictions had crept into the text through the agency of copyists throughout the centuries. This doctrine of “inerrancy,” though implicit in the writings of some earlier theologians, had been articulated with special force and clarity by A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield in the pages of the *Presbyterian Review* in 1881. *The Fundamentals*, which included strong statements affirming the reliability of the scriptures, appeared between 1910 and 1915 and gained wide circulation among theologically conservative Protestants. Those evangelicals who affirmed the conservative doctrinal statements contained in the pamphlets came to be known as “fundamentalists,” a term that has since been applied more broadly to conservatives in other religious traditions: Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Mormonism, and others. The word, however, historically belongs to evangelicalism in North America.

Pentecostalism

Whereas the fundamentalists’ desire to maintain doctrinal purity impelled them to separate from those they regarded as unbelievers (including, at times, other evangelicals),

other strains of evangelicalism defined themselves quite differently. At the turn of the twentieth century a movement known as Pentecostalism emerged onto the evangelical scene. Pentecostalism, in turn, had evolved from a nineteenth-century evangelical impulse called the Holiness movement. With its emphasis on probity and a warm-hearted piety, the Holiness movement sought to revitalize various evangelical denominations, especially Methodism. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, Holiness people had been marginalized in those denominations, so many of them reorganized into their own Holiness groups, such as the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Church of God, Anderson, Indiana, and the Church of the Nazarene.

Still other Holiness people were drawn to Pentecostalism, which represented, in effect, a radicalization of Holiness impulses with its insistent belief in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues (glossolalia). The gift of tongues, as it became known, initially descended as “tongues of fire” on the first-century Christians on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Various individuals and groups throughout church history, such as the Camisards, also spoke in tongues, but the impulse coalesced into a discernible movement around the turn of the twentieth century. Scholars and the faithful disagree about the modern origins of Pentecostalism, but one rather prominent venue is Topeka, Kansas, on the first day of the new century: January 1, 1901. There, students at Charles Fox Parham’s Bethel Bible College had been studying the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and on New Year’s Day one of the students, Agnes Ozman, began speaking in tongues. Others followed, and Parham, an itinerant evangelist, carried news of what became known as the Topeka Outpouring with him on his peregrinations.

One of the people Parham influenced was an African American hotel waiter named William Joseph Seymour, a member of a group called the Evening Light Saints. Seymour attended one of Parham’s classes in Houston, Texas (although because of segregation Seymour had to listen from the hallway). When Seymour headed west to Los Angeles several years later to interview for a position as pastor, he carried with him Parham’s teachings about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. While staying with friends at 216 North Bonnie Brae Street in Los Angeles, Seymour began to attract crowds of the faithful and the curious. Speaking in tongues broke out, and soon the gatherings were so large that the front porch collapsed. Seeking another venue, these

early Pentecostals located an abandoned African Methodist Episcopal Church building at 312 Azusa Street. The meetings commenced there, at what became known as the Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission, on April 14, 1906, and continued for years thereafter. People flocked to the Azusa Street revival from across the continent. The movement's newspaper, *The Apostolic Faith*, reported scores of people being healed of various maladies. Those in attendance spoke in tongues. "Meetings are held in a tumble-down shack on Azusa Street," the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "and the devotees of the weird doctrine practice the most fanatical rites, preach the wildest theories and work themselves into a state of mad excitement in their peculiar zeal. Colored people and a sprinkling of whites compose the congregation, and night is made hideous in the neighborhood by the howlings of the worshippers, who spend hours swaying forth and back in a nerve racking attitude of prayer and supplication. They claim to have the 'gift of tongues' and be able to understand the babel."

Indeed, one of the hallmarks of the Azusa Street revival was its interracial character—Seymour himself was African American—as well as its inclusion of women, many of whom went on to become important leaders in the Pentecostal movement. According to Frank Bartleman, a contemporary, "The color line was washed away in the blood of Jesus." Sadly, however, as Pentecostalism institutionalized into denominations, it became racially stratified; over the course of the twentieth century ordained women became increasingly rare and marginalized in such Pentecostal denominations as the Assemblies of God.

Although the immediate effect of the Azusa Street revival was personal transformation, the long-term effect was the Pentecostal missionary impulse. Pentecostals left Azusa Street and fanned out across North America and, eventually, the world, bringing with them not only the evangelical experience of conversion but also the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" as evidenced by speaking in tongues. The Pentecostal missionary enterprise would be felt throughout the world, especially in Africa and Latin America.

Evangelists

Throughout its history evangelicalism has benefited from the innovations of a series of evangelists, especially itinerant preachers. George Whitefield (1714–1770), an Anglican priest who had been trained in the London theater, swept through the Atlantic colonies in the mid-eighteenth century with his extemporaneous preaching. And in a culture

without a theatrical tradition, Whitefield was enormously successful with his stentorian voice and his dramatic flourishes; contemporaries said that he could bring tears to their eyes simply by saying, "Mesopotamia." During the Second Great Awakening, in the decades surrounding the turn of the nineteenth century, Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875) introduced several techniques to the revival tradition, including advertising, protracted meetings, allowing women to testify, and the use of the "mourner's bench," or "anxious bench," where auditors could gather to contemplate the state of their souls.

Dwight Lyman Moody (1837–1899), a former shoe salesman in Boston, brought revivalism to the cities, especially his adopted home of Chicago. And William Ashley Sunday (1862–1935), better known as "Billy," a former outfielder for various major league baseball teams, including the Chicago White Stockings and the Pittsburgh Alleghenies, initially served as an advance man for another evangelist, J. Wilbur Chapman (1859–1918). Sunday began his independent revival career at the opera house in Garner, Iowa, in 1896 before moving beyond what he disparagingly called the "kerosene circuit" to America's burgeoning cities following the turn of the twentieth century. Sunday used vaudeville tactics to entertain his audiences, and he took particular delight in his anti-intellectualism. "I don't know any more about theology than a jackrabbit does about ping-pong," he'd declaim, "but I'm on the way to glory."

Equally flamboyant was Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944), a Pentecostal evangelist known almost universally as "Sister Aimee." Born in Ontario, Aimee married evangelist Robert Semple, and in 1910 they headed for China as missionaries. Robert died of typhoid fever, however; Aimee remained in Hong Kong for the birth of their daughter and then returned to North America. She cycled through various jobs and stints as a traveling evangelist before setting out for California in 1918 in her "Gospel Auto," stopping along the way to attract crowds, preach, collect an offering and head to the next town. By 1923 McPherson had dedicated her spectacular Angelus Temple in the Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, an auditorium (arguably the original "megachurch") with a stage for her lavish sermon productions. She recognized that she was competing with Hollywood across town, and more often than not she held her own. McPherson also branched out into the new medium of radio with her own station, KFSG ("Kalling Four Square Gospel"), and she formed her own denomination, the International Church of the Foursquare

Gospel, dedicated to Jesus as “Savior, Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King.”

Billy Graham and Neoevangelicalism

By far the most influential evangelist of the twentieth century, however, was Billy Graham (1918–). Reared on a dairy farm in North Carolina, William Franklin Graham was converted during a 1934 revival meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, conducted by Mordecai Ham (1877–1961). Graham spent a semester at Bob Jones College (now University) before transferring to Florida Bible Institute and then to Wheaton College, where he graduated in 1943. After a brief (and undistinguished) stint as a pastor, Graham was hired as a traveling evangelist for a new organization called Youth for Christ.

The young, charismatic evangelist soon established himself as an effective and crowd-pleasing preacher. His career received an enormous boost during his 1949 revival campaign in Los Angeles, where he preached beneath what he called the “canvas cathedral” on the corner of Washington and Vine in downtown Los Angeles. Newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, impressed with Graham’s anti-communist rhetoric and his ability to draw large audiences, instructed his papers to “puff Graham.” The nascent Graham organization, which would incorporate itself as the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association the following year, worked the machinery of publicity brilliantly, effectively making Graham into a religious celebrity by marketing him in print, radio, television, even motion pictures.

Early in his career, Graham, who had been reared as a fundamentalist, made a conscious decision to reject the narrow, sectarian fundamentalism of his past in favor of a broader, more inclusive evangelicalism (also known as neoevangelicalism). This suited Graham’s irenic nature, and it also ensured a greater audience for his preaching. He also rejected the challenge of his friend and fellow Youth for Christ evangelist Charles Templeton (1915–2000) to attend Princeton Theological Seminary. Graham, following a period of intensive prayer and soul-searching, decided while on a spiritual retreat in the San Bernardino Mountains of Southern California simply to accept the Bible at face value and “preach the gospel.” Templeton, on the other hand, attended Princeton, served briefly as an evangelist for the National Council of Churches, and then left the faith altogether. For many twentieth-century evangelicals, the divergent paths of Graham and Templeton served as a kind of morality play, a cautionary tale about the perils of unbridled intellectual pursuits.



North Carolinian Billy Graham is often cited as the most influential evangelist of the twentieth century.

Despite Graham’s own lack of seminary training, however, the neoevangelicalism he represented was not anti-intellectual. In 1947 several evangelical leaders led by Harold John Ockenga (1905–1985) of Boston’s Park Street Church, theologian Carl F. H. Henry (1913–2003), and others cooperated in the founding of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Named for radio pioneer Charles E. Fuller (1887–1968), and funded in large measure by contributions solicited on his *Old Fashioned Revival Hour*, Fuller Seminary aspired to provide intellectually respectable and theologically sound education for evangelicals, a safe haven from what many evangelicals perceived as the entrenched liberalism at such places as Princeton Theological Seminary.

As his career and renown blossomed in the 1950s, Graham also recognized the importance of popular communications. Up until that point the magazine *Christian Century* was considered the standard publication for American Protestantism. In the mid-1950s Graham urged the

formation of an evangelical alternative to *Christian Century*. The magazine known as *Christianity Today* began publishing in 1956 and eventually surpassed *Christian Century* in circulation.

The Evangelical Subculture

Despite the efforts on the part of Graham and others to move evangelicalism beyond the narrow confines of fundamentalism, the sectarians still asserted a powerful hold for much of the twentieth century. When Graham enlisted the cooperation of mainline Protestant clergy during his famous 1957 Madison Square Garden crusade in New York City, for example, he earned the lifelong enmity of such fundamentalist leaders as Bob Jones Jr. (1911–1997), Jack Wyrzten (1913–1996), and Carl McIntire (1906–2002) for consorting with the (theologically liberal) enemy.

Indeed, many evangelicals in the twentieth century infinitely preferred to remain cosseted within the evangelical subculture, a vast and interlocking network of evangelical congregations, denominations, Bible camps, Bible institutes, seminaries, publishing houses, and missionary societies. The evangelical subculture was constructed in earnest during the middle decades of the twentieth century, and the catalyst (symbolically, at least) was the Scopes trial in 1925. After the Tennessee legislature passed the Butler Act, which forbade the teaching of evolution in public schools, civic boosters in Dayton, Tennessee, recruited a teacher from the local high school, John T. Scopes, to stand trial and test the constitutionality of such a law. Two of the most famous attorneys in the country, Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan, three-time Democratic nominee for president, squared off in the second story of the Rhea County courthouse in a trial that attracted media attention throughout the nation. Although Bryan ostensibly won the case—Scopes was convicted of violating the Butler Act and fined \$100—Darrow had succeeded in making Bryan and, by extension, other evangelicals look foolish in the larger courtroom of public opinion.

Evangelicals responded to the Scopes trial by withdrawing from a world that they increasingly regarded as both corrupt and corrupting. The evangelical subculture became a refuge, a secure redoubt from the larger culture and, not incidentally, a safe haven for their children. Evangelical camps, colleges, and institutes flourished in these middle decades of the twentieth century. Many evangelicals, still looking for the imminent return of Jesus, forswore political activity as both a waste of a believer's time and as yet another

seduction of Satan. "Believing the Bible as I do," Jerry Falwell (1933–2007), pastor of the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, famously preached on March 21, 1965, "I would find it impossible to stop preaching the pure saving gospel of Jesus Christ, and begin doing anything else—including fighting communism or engaging in civil rights reforms."

Evangelicals and Media

One of the most durable myths about evangelicals is that they are somehow suspicious of modernity and technology. Although evangelicals distrust modernity in the sense of a moral valence, as exemplified by moral relativism and ethical laxity, evangelicals in the twentieth century embraced technology, especially communications technology, with great enthusiasm. Evangelicals such as Lois Crawford, Aimee Semple McPherson, and Charles E. Fuller were pioneers in the use of radio as an evangelistic medium; similarly, Oral Roberts (1918–2009), Pat Robertson (1930–), Jerry Falwell, and others were pioneers in television.

Marion G. "Pat" Robertson, a graduate of Yale Law School who failed the bar exam and a graduate of Biblical Seminary of New York (now New York Theological Seminary), purchased a defunct television station in Portsmouth, Virginia, in 1961 and grandly dubbed it the Christian Broadcasting Network. Robertson hired a young couple, Jim (1940–) and Tammy Faye (1942–2007) Bakker, who were both Assemblies of God evangelists specializing in youth ministry. The Bakkers provided programming with puppets, and Jim Bakker added a talk show, modeled unabashedly on the *Tonight Show*. When seven hundred donors responded to Robertson's call for financial support, he named the show the *700 Club*. Soon, aided by a favorable ruling from the Federal Communications Commission, Robertson added affiliates and, eventually, a satellite.

Robertson decided to take over as host of the *700 Club*, whereupon the Bakkers left to help found the Trinity Broadcasting Network in Southern California with Paul and Jan Crouch. A boardroom putsch forced the Bakkers out once again; they returned east to the Carolinas, where they founded the PTL television network (short for "Praise the Lord" or "People That Love" or, according to critics, "Pass the Loot"). Jim and Tammy Faye proved remarkably successful at adding affiliates and attracting donors. They too secured a satellite and began construction on a massive theme park in Fort Mill, South Carolina, called Heritage USA.

At the height of its popularity, Heritage USA was the third most attractive tourist destination in the United States, after Walt Disney World and Disneyland. A sex scandal that came to light in 1987, however, involving Jim Bakker and a church secretary from Long Island brought the whole empire down. Bakker was eventually convicted of mail fraud in connection with his fund-raising for Heritage USA and sentenced to prison. Shortly thereafter, another scandal brought down Jimmy Swaggart (1935–), a fellow Assemblies of God televangelist, based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The Politicization of Evangelicalism

Despite Billy Graham's very public friendships with a series of American presidents, beginning with Dwight Eisenhower, evangelicals remained profoundly suspicious of political engagement until the 1970s. By the mid-1970s, however, in part as a reaction to the corruptions of Richard M. Nixon (paradoxically, one of Graham's closest friends), many evangelicals responded to the candidacy of Jimmy Carter, a Southern Baptist Sunday school teacher and former one-term governor of Georgia. Evangelicals were heartened by Carter's open declaration, in the course of his 1976 run for the Democratic presidential nomination, that he was a "born-again" Christian. Although by no means did all evangelicals support him, Carter's successful campaign for the presidency in 1976 lured many evangelicals, southerners especially, into the political arena.

At the same time, however, other political operatives had very different designs on evangelical voters. As early as 1964, conservative organizer Paul Weyrich (1942–2008) recognized the untapped electoral potential of evangelicals. According to his own account, he tried various issues to interest evangelicals in the machinations of politics: prayer in public schools, pornography, abortion, and others. A court ruling in 1971, however, provided the opening that Weyrich sought. On June 30, 1971, the district court for the District of Columbia sided with the Internal Revenue Service in the case *Green v. Connolly*, ruling that any organization that engages in racial segregation or discrimination is not, by definition, a charitable organization and does not, therefore, qualify for tax-exempt status. In the ensuing years, the IRS sought to enforce the provisions of *Green v. Connolly*, seeking compliance from various so-called segregation academies but also targeting a fundamentalist school, Bob Jones University, in Greenville, South Carolina.

Until 1971, Bob Jones University refused to admit African Americans to its student body. Finally, after years of

warnings, the IRS rescinded the university's tax exemption on January 19, 1976, in an action that would eventually find its way all the way to the United States Supreme Court in the fall of 1982 (the Court upheld the IRS in an 8-1 decision). The perception on the part of evangelical leaders that the government was intruding into the affairs of the evangelical subculture, however, provided the presumed offense that Weyrich was able to translate into evangelical political activism late in the 1970s. The 1978 U.S. Senate race in Iowa, in which the Democratic incumbent, Dick Clark, narrowly lost to Roger Jepsen, the Republican challenger, demonstrated to Weyrich and other leaders of the incipient religious right the utility of abortion as a political issue. Two years later the religious right, led by Jerry Falwell, James Robison (1943–), Tim LaHaye (1926–), and others, used abortion to help defeat Carter, a fellow evangelical, in his bid for a second term.

Although *Newsweek* had designated 1976 as the "Year of the Evangelical," in large measure because of Carter's run for the presidency but also because of the popularity of a book entitled *Born Again* by convicted Watergate felon Charles Colson (1931–), the year 1980 was even more portentous for evangelicals. All three major candidates for president—Carter, the incumbent; John B. Anderson, Republican member of Congress from Illinois running as an independent; and Ronald Reagan, the Republican nominee and former governor of California—claimed to be evangelical Christians. Reagan, the man with arguably the most tenuous connection to the movement, won the majority of evangelical votes and swept into office.

Evangelicalism No Longer a Counterculture

When evangelicals operated almost entirely within their own subculture, especially during the middle decades of the twentieth century, their attitude toward the larger society was decidedly suspicious, especially on matters of affluence. With political success and media presence, however, that posture began to change. Evangelicals became more prominent in politics (with the rise of the religious right), in entertainment (with the success of such "crossover" artists as Amy Grant and Jars of Clay and the popularity of a genre called Contemporary Christian Music), even in the academy (with the emergence of several evangelical scholars and the academic study of evangelicalism itself).

As evangelicals emerged from their subculture and into the broader society, however, their attitude toward that larger world began to change. A movement called prosperity

theology, which had emerged in the 1940s but had always been an aberration among evangelicals, became popular during the Reagan era of the 1980s. This theological innovation, especially as propagated by the televangelists, promised worldly emoluments to the faithful—fine jewelry, fancy automobiles, vacation homes—especially if they channeled contributions to the televangelists themselves.

Some evangelical leaders, in particular, relished their own access to the councils of political power. The religious right's opposition to abortion, beginning in the late 1970s, and the castigation of what its leaders called "secular humanism" had transformed evangelicals into a potent political force, making them the backbone of the Republican Party, much the way that labor unions once supplied organization and volunteer efforts for the Democratic Party. Grateful politicians courted the support of politically conservative evangelicals, especially the leaders of the religious right.

Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century

Evangelicals exited the twentieth century far differently from the way they entered. With only a small contrivance, evangelicalism's posture toward the wider society can be divided into four twenty-five-year periods. From 1901 until 1925 evangelicals were growing more and more *suspicious* toward the larger world, especially the theological and intellectual currents that threatened to overwhelm them. From 1926, the year after the Scopes trial, until 1950, evangelicalism was characterized by *separatism* from a culture that evangelicals came increasingly to regard as both corrupt and corrupting. Beginning at midcentury evangelicals began, albeit cautiously, a period of *engagement* with the larger society, an attitude of cooperation that was exemplified in many ways by Billy Graham, who adopted corporate-style management techniques and who initiated a series of very public friendships with American presidents. Finally, the campaign of Jimmy Carter in 1976, followed (paradoxically) by the rise of the religious right in the late 1970s, ushered in a period of *worldliness*, when evangelicals made their mark in politics, media, entertainment, and the academy.

By the turn of the twenty-first century, evangelicals had insinuated themselves into virtually every niche of American society and culture. In so doing, they restored the movement to a level of influence it had not enjoyed since the antebellum period.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Celebrity Culture; Education: Christian School Movement; Education: Home Schooling Movement; Emotion; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements;*

Fundamentalism entries *Literature: Contemporary; Marriage and Family; Pentecostals* entries; *Pietism; Politics: Twentieth Century; Puritans; Radio; Religious Right; Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant; Television.*

Randall Balmer

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Evangelicals: Women

See *Women: Evangelical*

Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design

In 1859 the British naturalist Charles Darwin (1809–1882) published *On the Origin of Species*, setting the scientific and religious worlds off in a still-vibrant debate. A work several decades in the making, *Origin* proposed a theory of undirected biological development in which all living things were related to each other and to a common ancestor. Further, Darwin asserted, this evolution occurred over a period of millions of years and through a process of natural selection, whereby natural forces selected from among the multiple variations of creatures the ones most fit for the environments in which they lived. The theory proved controversial in Darwin's England because it was seen as challenging existing religious understandings of humans' place in a divinely created and controlled universe. Such controversies have proven even more volatile and long-lived in the United States.

Scientists have investigated and refined biological theories of evolution since the 1860s, although the modern evolutionary synthesis accepted by the vast majority of working biologists builds largely on Darwin's theories. Creation science and intelligent design (ID) are both twentieth-century developments of an older philosophical tradition that argues for a divine or supernatural creation of all life. Creation science emerged in the 1960s when efforts were initiated to challenge the science and teaching of evolution by presenting conservative Protestant versions of narratives of creation from the biblical Book of Genesis sprinkled with scientific language. Drawing upon medieval Christian arguments for God from the design of the universe, intelligent design was born in the 1980s. By the early twenty-first century, it had emerged as the leading antievolutionary theory, arguing that scientific theories of evolution are insufficient for explaining the origins and complexity of biological life. The only recourse is to assign credit to an unidentified intelligent designer that many Christians could recognize as the God of Genesis.

Scientific Responses to Darwin

The practice of easily substituting the terms *Darwinism* and *evolution* for each other is complicated by at least three factors. First, Darwin's own theories changed over time. Second, many scientists who had embraced evolution by the early 1900s did so without fully embracing Darwin's understanding of how evolution operated. Third, the modern evolutionary synthesis that dates to the 1940s has greatly modified Darwin's original theory through continuing research and the development of new branches of science such as population genetics.

Before the appearance of *Origin*, several transmutation or development theses were circulating among Western scientists, but Darwin provided compelling evidence of development within existing species, the emergence of new species, and the common ancestry of many current life forms. In writing *Origin*, Darwin asserted he had two goals, the most important of which was to discredit understandings of a separate, divine creation of all life forms. Second, he offered the new and stunning argument for the mechanism of natural selection as the engine behind these developments. Early adopters of Darwin's evolutionary theories typically accepted his first argument but not his favored mechanism of natural selection.

Darwin's account of organic development proved attractive to biologists in the latter half of the nineteenth century, in part because of biologists' growing self-consciousness

about relying on divine intervention to explain the origins and speciation of biological forms. Earlier in the century, the science of geology had been remade through Charles Lyell's (1797–1875) and others' insistence on uniformitarianism, or the assertion that only forces of nature detectable at the present time could be invoked to explain geological history. Darwin's theory did not require divine intervention but instead relied on natural laws with observable results. By 1880 the majority of American scientists embraced the concept of evolutionary development.

The world after 1859 was increasingly marked by a cultural competition between science and religion for primacy in explaining the history and organization of the natural world. Christians in the nineteenth century and before had viewed science and theology working often in concert, not opposition. Working with the concept of a Creator God who revealed himself in two "books"—nature and scripture—most Christians assumed that the God revealed in the natural world and the God of the scriptures were the same. Given such a worldview, any apparent contradictions between the science and religion were assumed to arise from imperfect human understanding.

In the twentieth century, it became increasingly difficult to argue that evolution followed any sort of supernatural design or that biological history showed a divine purpose. Whereas Christian intellectuals had in centuries past pointed to the natural world for evidence of God's existence and creative power, they were forced by the implications of the evolutionary theory to reassess the relationship between religion and science.

Religious Responses to Darwin and Evolution

The transmission of Darwin's theories to North America meant that by the beginning of the twentieth century American Christianity would divide into two camps that disagreed not just about evolution but over the sources of truth and knowledge. One side viewed Darwin's hypothesis as incompatible with existing understandings of God and his creation as related in the Bible. They opposed the theory of naturally explainable organic development, fearing a dilution of human uniqueness. The other side (the greater number of religious intellectuals) assumed that natural scientists—the vast majority of whom by 1900 had embraced some version of evolution—were correct. Holding to their belief that science and theology did not ultimately conflict, they sought to reconstruct theology in light of the new science to see God's creation and thus relationship to the world as progressive and continuous.

In the 1860s scientists seemed divided, and many were even dismissive of Darwin's theories. But as the tide of scientific opinion turned toward his transmutation theory, by the 1870s American religious thinkers were forced to reconsider their alliance with scientists. Princeton's Charles Hodge perhaps best represents the small but influential ranks of Protestant intellectual opponents of evolution in the late nineteenth century, arguing in his 1874 book *What Is Darwinism?* that belief in evolution was nothing short of atheism. By denying the possibility of divine design in nature, evolutionists were in fact denying the existence of God.

While Hodge and his followers stood firm in their belief that the Bible provided a complete and inerrant guide to divine truth, Protestant intellectuals willing to accept the notion of evolution instead found in the revelations of science a new way to understand the divine's relationship with humans. Instead of believing that revelation ended with the events recorded in scriptures, progressive theologians put greater emphasis on human powers of reason, a continuing act of creation (through evolution), and an ongoing revelation of divine truth. Lyman Abbott was perhaps the most outspoken of these thinkers, arguing in *The Theology of an Evolutionist* (1897) that human evolution allowed an ever-greater ability to understand God.

The majority of Christian intellectuals and everyday believers sought some form of theistic evolution as an accommodation between the new sciences and old beliefs. Evolution of animals and plants was one thing, but the majority of American Protestants at the turn of the twentieth century sought to exclude humanity from evolutionary history, maintaining at least a special creation of mankind. Still, even most conservative Christians accepted the growing paleontological evidence for an ancient Earth. Science and scripture did not contradict, they argued, because the account of creation in Genesis could be interpreted by treating the "days" of creation as instead vast ages of time or by positing an immense chronological "gap" between the first ("In the beginning") and later verses that described the Edenic creation taking place in more traditionally understood days of twenty-four hours.

Organizing Creationism

The first half of the twentieth century would witness the rise to prominence of a number of religious critics of evolution who claimed scientific authority. Although opponents of evolution are sometimes labeled as "creationists," the great variety of theological and scientific beliefs held by

antievolutionists render the term a bit vague. Most opponents of evolution in the early twentieth century were willing to accept evidence of an ancient Earth, while others—a few at the time but many more by the end of the twentieth century—had a much more constrained timeline. Some accepted changes within species, but none allowed for the creation of new species. To accommodate the mounting evidence for an ancient Earth, believers in creation science could follow the "gap" theory presented in the Scofield Reference Bible, which posited a time lapse after the first verse of Genesis. Or they might believe, like attorney and antievolution crusader William Jennings Bryan, that each "day" of divine creation in the Genesis account of creation could actually be a longer geological "age." Antievolutionists would work—and find some success—in limiting the presence of evolution education in American classrooms, but their disagreements would forestall uniting around a theologically coherent and scientifically respectable account of creation.

Concerned that the divisions among evolution's religiously motivated opponents was blunting their message, a California farmer named Dudley Joseph Whitney organized the Religion and Science Association (RSA) in 1935 with the hope of harmonizing the various creationist interpretations of Genesis. His plan was to gather a number of like-minded scientist-theologians who could serve as an authoritative body for fundamentalists, but the RSA's board of directors included representatives of several different religious organizations (Missouri Synod Lutherans and Seventh-day Adventists, among others) who could not agree on a single interpretation of creation.

Although the organization sought the trappings of scientific legitimacy, ultimately the RSA founders were committed to an interpretation of Genesis that required a radical rejection of scientific evidence for an ancient Earth. Before 1925, Whitney had believed, along with many other conservative evangelicals, in a ruin-and-restoration theory (which held that life on Earth had been ruined and then restored as described in the Genesis account) that could explain the ancient age of fossils yet preserve a recent creation of humans as described in Genesis. While some members remained committed to ruin-and-restoration or the day-age or gap theories, Whitney and the RSA would later become advocates of flood geology. This theory was originally promoted by George McCready Price (1870–1963), a Canadian-born Seventh-day Adventist who in some six decades worth of publications argued against the mainstream

scientific understanding from fossils and their placement that the Earth was ancient. Instead of Lyell's uniformitarianism, Price advocated what he would call the "new catastrophism," arguing for a young Earth and a worldwide flood as described in Genesis that could explain the placement of fossils. Dismissed by scientists as a crank and kept at a distance by many fundamentalists because of his Adventist sectarianism, Price continued publishing his theories of flood geology and would find vindication in the late twentieth century, when the majority of creationists adopted his ideas as their own.

After the demise of the RSA, Price and some of his disciples persevered, forming the Deluge Geology Society in Los Angeles in 1938. Even though the society limited membership to believers in flood geology, it too foundered within a decade as members disagreed over the age of the Earth and how best to explain the diversity of life forms. As the middle of the twentieth century approached, mounting scientific evidence for evolution and an ancient Earth would increasingly trouble some Christian scientists. The American Scientific Affiliation (ASA), founded in 1941 by evangelical scientists, demonstrates the transition of many Christian scientists toward theistic evolution and the widening gulf between evangelicals and fundamentalists that would mark the second half of the century.

At their initiation, ASA members pledged an oath that harkened back to an older idea: God's word was written in both scripture and nature, and thus the two cannot conflict. While the pledge could read as an endorsement of biblical inerrancy, in reality its spirit seemed to allow or maybe even mandate that members reconsider not just the science of evolution but also their theology. Soon after the ASA founding, leading ASA members focused not just on evaluating evolutionary science but also on dismantling the patently unscientific claims of fellow Christian antievolutionists like George McCready Price. In the 1950s the organization was divided theologically, though the majority of the membership endorsed a theistic form of evolution that allowed for the natural, if divinely guided or inspired, development of all life, including humans.

Many antievolutionists are motivated by a sense that evolution and Christianity must conflict, yet the ASA was joined in the last decades of the twentieth century by an increasingly vocal generation of scientists who proclaim both Christianity and an acceptance of biological evolution. Kenneth R. Miller, author of one of the most widely used biology textbooks in American high schools in the early

2000s, a cell biologist at Brown University, and a devout American Catholic, promoted the ability to be both scientist and believer in his *Finding Darwin's God: A Scientist's Search for Common Ground between God and Evolution* (1999). Similarly, Dr. Francis Collins, who headed the Human Genome Project, has argued in print and numerous media appearances that the more he learned of human genetics the more he appreciated the divine role in evolution. Internationally, John Polkinghorne, a British particle physicist and ordained Anglican priest, has written widely on his continuing embrace of a unified truth available in both scientific investigations of the world and theological approaches to scriptures.

The Genesis Flood and a Creationist Revival

While the history of the American Scientific Affiliation suggests a victory of science and liberal Protestantism in the mid-1900s, fundamentalism was not dead. Indeed, in the late 1950s fundamentalism was poised for rebirth, springing to prominence with an updated version of flood geology, Price's new catastrophism that had once been on the fringe even within fundamentalist circles. This new wave was led by Old Testament scholar John C. Whitcomb Jr., who held undergraduate degrees in history from Princeton University and theology from Grace Theological Seminary, and hydraulic engineer Henry M. Morris, a Southern Baptist Phi Beta Kappa member who earned his PhD from the University of Minnesota before spending nearly two decades on the faculty at Virginia Tech. The two scholars cooperated in the production of *The Genesis Flood*, which first appeared in 1961. Opening with an affirmation of their belief in the inerrancy of scriptures, the authors revived, largely without direct attribution, Price's theory of deluge geology. Whitcomb explained the theology while the engineer Morris sought to explain the science. While the book did little to soothe the division among Christian scientists that was revealed in the ASA's struggles, its popularity among evangelical readers resulted in a steady growth of young Earth creationism among conservative American Protestants.

The publication of *The Genesis Flood* was the leading edge in a creationist revival that continues into the twenty-first century. Coauthor Henry Morris would band together with other committed creationists to found the Creation Research Society (CRS). Based in San Diego, California, around Morris's Institute for Creation Research, the CRS adopted a militant stance on the compromises that had

marked previous organizations like the ASA. The CRS began as a movement within the ASA, which had by the early 1960s moved toward an embrace of theistic evolution, the view that evolution was the method used by God in “creating” the universe and that God is the force behind evolution. CRS leaders included, in addition to Morris, young Earth creationists and flood geology advocates like Missouri Synod Lutheran, former member of the Deluge Geological Society, and PhD biologist Walter Lammerts. Like Lammerts and Morris, the leadership of CRS all had graduate science training, seven having earned doctorates in science or engineering. They sought to ground their creationism in science, stripping off biblical references from their antievolution arguments.

The flood geology and young Earth creationism of George McCready Price was very much alive in the work of the CRS, yet it now appeared as “scientific creationism” or “creation science.” At first the society focused on building a respectable scientific record for creationism. As new controversies over the place of evolution in public school classrooms erupted in the 1960s, Henry Morris saw an opportunity to retask the arguments of *The Genesis Flood* and the work of the CRS. When Texas antievolutionists objected to the state’s adoption of new biology texts that explicitly placed evolution at the center of the science, they searched in vain for alternative texts. Zondervan publishers brought out CRS’s *Biology: A Search for Order in Complexity* in 1970, quickly selling out its first printing when several states approved the text for use. But before the text could be widely adopted, it became mired in legal controversy as some parents objected to its explicit biblical references and arguments for creation. Undeterred, the CRS would use the royalties from book sales to fund some research in creation science and consider how to get its ideas into the broad public school market.

Evolution and Religion in the Legal Arena: The Scopes Era

The situation of the CRS textbook provides a good example of the legal context within which American creationists would most visibly struggle against evolution. At the same time that evolution was gaining acceptance in American scientific circles, the role of government in the lives of Americans was growing significantly. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Progressive education reformers were working to formalize schooling by the state to reach more children. Gradually, in the place of

a nineteenth-century model of education based in the home or church, Progressive reforms substituted state-run schools with standardized curricula and compulsory attendance laws. Even as creationists continued to debate among themselves how best to interpret the Genesis account of creation, or how much to accommodate the findings of modern science, if they wanted to contest the presence of evolution in the American public square they would have to go to legislatures and courts.

The first tactic, when preaching against evolution had seemed to reach its limit of effectiveness, was to outlaw the teaching of evolution in public schools. The 1925 trial of Tennessee high school teacher John T. Scopes (*State v. John Scopes*) was central to the development of American understandings of the relationship between evolution and religion. Scopes, a young science teacher new to the small town of Dayton, Tennessee, agreed to help town leaders eager for publicity and a nascent American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) test a recently enacted state law forbidding at any publicly supported school instruction that “denies the Story of Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animal” (Tennessee House Bill 185, 1925).

Tennessee had only recently expanded its public education system to include a high school in every county, thus introducing many more students and their parents than previously to what by the time had become scientific orthodoxy: biological evolution. Several other states, among them Oklahoma and Florida, had enacted antievolution laws in the preceding year, but Tennessee’s provision of punishment to an offending teacher raised the possibility of a legal challenge. Pitting two legal and political celebrities—three-time presidential candidate and prosecutor William Jennings Bryan squared off against the outspoken atheist defense attorney Clarence Darrow—the two-week trial captured a national audience. WGN radio broadcast the trial while a large pool of reporters telegraphed stories to newspapers across the country. In the end, to nobody’s surprise, Scopes was convicted and fined. His conviction would be overturned on appeal because of a technicality, but Tennessee’s law would remain on the books for more than four decades after the trial’s conclusion.

Despite the prosecution’s legal victory and the growing number of states that introduced antievolution legislation in the following years, some contemporary observers and a number of historians since have pointed to the 1925 trial as the death of the antievolution movement. In 1926 *The*

Christian Century pronounced (prematurely) the death of fundamentalism, and the midcentury stage play turned popular motion picture *Inherit the Wind* painted the end of the *Scopes* trial as a demise to the antievolution movement. William Jennings Bryan—the most visible spokesman against evolution—died in the days following the trial’s conclusion.

But even the critic H. L. Mencken, who disliked Bryan, predicted by October 1925 that Bryan’s work would continue and perhaps even grow. Antievolution measures would be introduced in fourteen different states in 1927, and Tennessee’s law remained on the books until 1967. Market forces and the caution of textbook publishers perhaps gave antievolution advocates their greatest victory.

High school biology books were new creations in the early twentieth century; they were written by the first generation of natural scientists to have grown up with evolutionary theories and thus they prominently featured Darwin’s ideas. Teacher Scopes was not sure he had taught the theory but in court pointed to the state-approved textbook, George W. Hunter’s *Civic Biology* and its explicit coverage of evolution—including human evolution—as proof. All high school science teachers in the state could have faced the same legal jeopardy as Scopes. To avoid controversy and thus sell more texts to the increasingly national school market, publishers decreased coverage of evolution or removed it altogether. The American Book Company produced a new version of Hunter’s text in 1926 that eliminated the use of the word *evolution* and downplayed most of the explicit coverage of the concept that had marked the previous version of the schoolbook.

The ALCU had orchestrated the challenge of the Tennessee antievolution law with the goal of reaching an appellate court that could rule on the law’s constitutional merits. When the trial judge set Scopes’s fine, instead of allowing the jury to do so, he unwittingly provided the means to overturn the conviction without having to address the constitutionality of the law itself. The U.S. Supreme Court had not yet begun to apply the religion clauses of the First Amendment to the actions of state governments, so it is not likely they would have ruled Tennessee’s law unconstitutional. Although the Supreme Court gradually incorporated these changes in the 1940s, it would not be until the late 1960s that it applied them directly to the issue of antievolution legislation by state governments. When Arkansas schoolteacher Susan Epperson, joined by several parents, challenged that state’s antievolution law (enacted 1928), the

Supreme Court moved unanimously to invalidate the statute (*Epperson v. Arkansas* [1968]). Choosing among several reasons to oppose the law, Justice Abe Fortas’s majority opinion focused on the U.S. Constitution’s establishment clause prohibition against laws having only a religious intent or primarily a religious effect.

A Cold War Creationist Revival

The Cold War environment proved a mixed blessing for conservative Christians: while the specter of “Godless Communism” would give new inspiration to a blending of patriotism and religion, the military threat implied by Russian rocket science would inspire greater emphasis on science education in American schools. In 1957, when the Soviet Union launched the satellite *Sputnik*, American defense and educational interests became more explicitly connected than ever before. Federal funding of scientific research, alongside efforts to improve science education, had more than tripled by 1959. The Biological Sciences Curriculum Study led to a series of textbooks that would feature evolution, including human evolution, at the center of biology. These books would introduce evolution to millions of Americans, but at the same time they would give new inspiration to antievolution efforts. In the ensuing decades what historian Ronald L. Numbers has termed a “creationist revival” would grow.

The new face of antievolution in the 1960s and beyond would show the marks of nearly a century of theological and legal struggle. Instead of seeing the Supreme Court *Epperson* verdict as a total defeat, antievolutionists saw in it a way to reach their goals. Although a ban on teaching evolution, or to require explicitly religious teaching, was no longer feasible, the new creationism of the 1960s and beyond would present itself not as religion but as a valid scientific alternative to evolution. Whitcomb and Morris’s *The Genesis Flood* provided an important center to this creationist revival of the 1960s and 1970s, and their “creation science” would dominate the antievolution platform through the 1980s.

Tennessee had only recently repealed its antievolution statute when the 1973 legislature mandated that public school textbooks give “equal space” to theories other than evolution “including, but not limited to, the Genesis account in the Bible.” The legislative debates leading to the law’s passage left no doubt of the law’s religious intent, and the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in *Daniel v. Waters* (1975) found that it violated the establishment clause. In the wake of this apparent defeat, antievolution continued to evolve, and its

promoters would strive to downplay or mask the religious intent or effect of their actions and instead to emphasize their scientific goals and impact. Yale Law School graduate Wendell Bird would join forces with Henry Morris's Institute for Creation Research to draft a model equal-time resolution for supporters to push in their own states. In 1981 Arkansas and Louisiana passed equal time laws, but despite Bird's improvements, these laws suffered the same legal fate as Tennessee's 1973 law.

The Supreme Court decision in *Edwards v. Aguillard* (1987), overturning Louisiana's equal time law as an unconstitutional attempt by the state to promote religion, still left room for a new generation of antievolutionist arguments. In general, these have moved in two complementary directions. Chastened by the failure of state laws to limit or balance the teaching of evolution, science opponents have concentrated on securing their goals at the level of local schools or state educational standards. Creationist readings of the *Edwards* decision seemed to allow schoolteachers to introduce critiques of evolution voluntarily, and polling from the 1990s suggests a significant number of teachers (as high as 69 percent in Kentucky) supported teaching some form of creation science. At the same time, these antievolutionists have continued to stress, at least in public, their nonreligious motivations for opposing the teaching of evolution in public schools.

The Era of Intelligent Design

While Morris and Whitcomb were the leading figures of the creationist revival of the 1970s and 1980s, University of California law professor Phillip Johnson was the leading figure or at least the strategic genius behind the cultural and legal assaults on evolution at the end of the twentieth century. Inspired by the extreme arguments of Richard Dawkins, a British evolutionary biologist (1941–) that evolution allowed or even necessitated atheism, Johnson argued in his 1991 book *Darwin on Trial* that the methodological naturalism of scientists was itself a religion. Early efforts to bar the teaching of evolution as an establishment clause violation have not successfully survived constitutional challenge, but Johnson's contentions that introducing students to critiques of evolution can further a secular educational goal has been of more lasting consequence. Antievolutionists have sought to discredit evolution as "only a theory" and to require the teaching of alternative theories of biological development in public schools. In 1996 the state of Alabama attached a warning label to public school

biology textbooks, which read in part, "No one was present when life first appeared on earth. Therefore, any statement about life's origins should be considered as theory, not fact." The Alabama stickers have been altered twice since 1996, but they remain in use. Similar stickers added to Cobb County, Georgia, biology texts in 2002 were removed as the result of a 2006 legal settlement.

Johnson was also closely connected to the rise of a new and potent form of antievolution: intelligent design theory. ID has some allegiance to the natural theology of Britain's William Paley (1743–1805). It maintains that the complexity of life and the universe point to the likelihood that there must be an intelligent designer behind their appearance. Proponents of ID not only challenge the modern evolutionary synthesis, at their most ambitious they argue that the naturalistic methodology that has driven science since the Enlightenment is inadequate for understanding the natural world. Lehigh University biochemist Michael Behe has been the scientific face of ID, touting what he terms the "irreducible complexity" of life systems, especially at the cellular level. Behe argues that the removal of any portion of some cells would make it impossible for them to survive; thus they either miraculously appeared all at once as an intact system or improbably evolved despite overwhelming odds. Evolutionary scientists dismiss ID as not a theory or scientific research program but rather a too simple and too quick conclusion that what science has not yet explained must be the result of divine design or intervention. Indeed, some of the questions Behe first raised in the 1990s have been answered by further molecular research. Johnson, an adult convert to conservative evangelicalism, and other ID proponents are usually careful not to specify who or what the intelligent designer might be, though they imply to some audiences that it could be the Christian God of previous generations of antievolutionists. Even as ID gained stature for its apparent legal viability, creationism continued the same disunity that has plagued the movement since the nineteenth century: creation science proponent Henry Morris has criticized ID proponents for not clearly identifying the designer as the Christian God.

While the intellectual origins of the movement have a long pedigree, in organization ID is a relatively recent phenomenon that bears the marks of the legal evolution of the creationist movement. In the mid-1980s, as Louisiana's equal time law was working its way through the appellate courts, a group of conservative Christian scientists questioned the

limitations of evolutionary science in books suggesting that evolution was a theory on the brink of collapse. The new movement aimed at popular audiences and, in particular, at public school children. Creationist scientists Dean Kenyon and Percival Davis originally titled their school text *Biology and Creation* but, in the immediate aftermath of the *Edwards* ruling, removed explicit references to a Creator and creationism from their draft, substituting in their place “designer” and “design theory.” Their renamed book, *Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins*, first appeared in 1989.

The growth of ID owes much to a Seattle think tank, the Discovery Institute, which in the 1990s established a Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture that has since provided more than \$1 million to support research in and publicity for ID. The Discovery Institute has sought to convince audiences that ID is a scientifically valid critique of evolution and that therefore public schools interested in good science and good scientific pedagogy should teach the controversy between evolution and ID. And they have enjoyed some success: on the state level, in the Kansas and Ohio education standards, and nationally in 2001 when Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA) attached a brief for ID to the No Child Left Behind bill.

Santorum’s home state of Pennsylvania in 2004 and 2005 provided intelligent design’s first major legal test, after the Dover Area School District Board required teachers to read a disclaimer before the lessons on evolution stating it was a “theory . . . not a fact,” naming ID alone as viable alternative, and pointing students to the sixty copies of *Of Pandas and People* in the high school library. The Discovery Institute initially supported the school board action, but as the prospects for victory dimmed it sought to limit the damage to its ID strategies. The school board’s case was argued by the Thomas More Law Center (a Christian law firm funded by conservative Catholic pizza magnate Thomas Monaghan) that had sought for years to find a school board willing to test ID and clear its path to mainstream education. The case (*Kitzmiller v. Dover* [2005]) in U.S. district court hinged, as had previous antievolution cases, on the establishment clause question of whether the board action was endorsing religion through its advocacy for ID. Several board members clearly had that intent, but more damaging to the cause of ID was the revelation during the trial of ID’s close relationship with creationism as demonstrated by the quick change of terminology from *creation* to *design* in the drafts of *Pandas* before and after *Edwards*. The judge in the case, a

conservative Lutheran and recent Republican appointee to the bench, ruled that ID was “not science” but religion and thus unconstitutional to include in public school curricula.

The Twenty-First-Century Scene

At the dawn of a new century, creationism is not just a legal strategy but a cultural movement. A \$27 million Creation Museum opened in northern Kentucky in the summer of 2007. A project of the international organization Answers in Genesis, the Petersburg, Kentucky, institution uses fossils, videos, and animatronic displays to present a creationist version of natural history. Dinosaurs and humans cohabitate the Earth, with a timeline of quick development driven by the organization’s commitment to biblical literalism and a young Earth little more than 6,000 years in age. The museum’s exhibits show an allegiance to the flood geology popularized by Whitcomb and Morris. The exhibits also portray belief in scientific evolution as the cause of many modern social ills. The creationists associated with the museum, as well as the proponents of intelligent design, go to great lengths to portray their work as science.

Antievolution is on the rise internationally. Yet, when compared with more than thirty other industrialized nations, U.S. citizens are far less likely to accept the science of evolution as probable (only Turkey boasts a higher percentage of doubters). Despite the defeat of ID at Dover, creationism—whether of the ID or young Earth variety—has continued to grow among Americans in the early twenty-first century. News stories in mainstream press outlets have unwittingly reinforced the Discovery Institute’s claims of an ongoing scientific controversy over evolution. In 2005 polling, nearly two-thirds of Americans supported teaching both evolution and challenges to the theory in public schools; this continued ambivalence about evolution seemingly guarantees future legal challenges and continues to drive the legal evolution of creationism.

See also *Education: Court Cases; Environment and Ecology entries; Establishment, Religious; Fundamentalism; Politics: Twentieth Century; Religious Right; Science; Supreme Court.*

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F



Faith-Based Community Organizations

Faith-based community organizing is a form of social justice activism that works through religious congregations. Ecu- menical and sometimes interfaith federations of congrega- tions organize on their own behalf to gain improvements for their communities. Faith-based community organizing draws from concrete resources that congregations offer, such as stable organizations, money, organized members, pastoral and lay leaders, and meeting places. It also draws from their cultural resources such as public legitimacy, shared beliefs and values, solidarity, and religious motivation to sustain long and demanding campaigns. Although “faith-based community organizing” sounds general, its principles and methods are specific, drawn from Saul Alinsky’s organizing practices (see later) and linked to religious values.

Faith-based community organizations (FBCOs), which are federations of 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations (religi- ous congregations), are also nonprofit. As such, FBCOs are prohibited from conducting partisan campaigns, includ- ing running or endorsing candidates for office. However, they can lobby, advocate, and inform members and the pub- lic about issues and candidates. They concentrate on improving their cities and neighborhoods through pressur- ing decision makers (public officials or private corporations) to enact programs in areas such as health care, housing, jobs, public safety, transportation, and education. FBCOs are multi-issue organizations. Their ultimate goal is to gain the power that low- to moderate-income people need to advo- cate for themselves. They gain power by winning issue

campaigns. Members are empowered by beginning with relatively modest goals, such as getting a stop sign installed at a dangerous intersection, and gradually gain the skills to help lead multiple-organization statewide campaigns: for example, state bonds for new school construction or broad- ened health care for working families. Issues both train members in civic and political skills and gain improvements for poor, working-class, and even middle-class people and their communities.

FBCOs may collaborate with single-issue-based groups on common goals. For example, in 1999 the San Jose People Acting in Community Together (PACT) (then fifteen churches) joined the California Nurses Association and the Consumers Union to pressure a hospital that converted to for-profit status to establish a \$14 million charity care fund. In 2000, PACT joined a labor think tank to win guaranteed health care for all children in Santa Clara County, California (Swarts 2008). This required pressuring a county legislature as well as the San Jose City Council to prevail over hostile mayor Ron Gonzalez. PACT exerts pressure by organizing “actions” (sometimes rallies, sometimes formally run meet- ings with officials) of several thousand church members, which demonstrate PACT’s influence and voting power; by lobbying recalcitrant city council members; and by using all the tools that interest groups use, except that PACT’s power is rooted in organized people rather than in money.

The goals of FBCOs differ starkly from those of the reli- gious right. FBCOs seek greater political and economic democracy and pursue redistributive campaigns that place them on the religious left. FBCOs avoid issues that are likely to divide their members (for example, homosexuality and

abortion). Instead, they address broadly shared needs. This allows Catholic and black Protestant churches that are economically liberal but socially conservative to unite with mainline churches that are socially liberal. Organizing congregations allows organizers to reach into all communities—urban, suburban, and rural—and across lines of race, class, and religion.

FBCOs are also known as “congregation-based,” “broad-based,” and “institution-based” organizations. Practitioners prefer the terms *congregation* and *faith* to *church*-based because the groups sometimes include Jewish, Muslim, and other congregations. Most member congregations are Christian (both Protestant and Catholic), with many Unitarian-Universalist congregations also. Some include nonreligious groups such as labor unions.

Some local FBCOs are independent, but most are members of national or regional “networks”—linked umbrella organizations of local federations. Local FBCOs may start from the top down or bottom up: An FBCO network may initiate an organization, or local pastors who seek to meet parishioners’ needs may approach a network to help them start a local group. The national networks provide local affiliates with trained organizers, national training sessions for members, senior consultants with strategic expertise, and opportunities to undertake coordinated action with their other affiliates. In this, FBCOs are somewhat similar to union locals affiliated with an international union that supplies organizers, strategic direction, and coordinated campaigns.

History

The Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) developed the FBCO method of organizing through churches after thirty years of community organizing. The IAF was founded in 1939 by famed organizer Saul David Alinsky (1909–1972). As organizer Heather Booth put it, “Alinsky is to community organizing as Freud is to psychoanalysis” (Boyte 1980).

Alinsky was born in Chicago to Russian Jewish immigrant parents. A U.S. populist, Alinsky was influenced by Chicago machine politics, founding fathers Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, homegrown radicals such as Samuel Adams and Thomas Paine, and the strategy and tactics of labor leader John L. Lewis. Alinsky entered the University of Chicago in 1926. “Chicago School” sociologists taught him that cities were organized systems shaped by larger structures and processes. Therefore, the first phase of organizing

was researching the social relations and power brokers of the community. The depression helped politicize Alinsky, but he was never a dogmatic leftist. Conservatives often attack Alinsky inaccurately as a Marxist, whereas leftists criticize him as insufficiently Marxist because he believed democracy was possible within capitalism.

Alinsky founded his first organization, the Back of the [Stock]Yards Neighborhood Council, in 1939 to support the union drive in the stockyards made famous by Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle*. Alinsky continued organizing community groups around the country through the 1950s, but the 1960s put him back in the center of the action.

Alinsky first recorded his ideas in *Reveille for Radicals* (1946). His second book, *Rules for Radicals* (1971), challenged what he perceived as the naive romanticism of 1960s radicals. Alinsky anticipated the Reagan Democrats’ turn to the right. He noted that the working and lower-middle classes

cannot be dismissed by labeling them blue collar or hard hat. They will not continue to be relatively passive and slightly challenging. If we fail to communicate with them, if we don’t encourage them to form alliances with us, they will move to the right. (Alinsky 1971)

With prescience he observed that not just working-class, but middle-class U.S. citizens lacked control over the institutions that controlled their lives. Today’s FBCOs recruit economically and racially diverse congregations, whose members learn that they often have more in common than not: a need for public-serving programs and a countervailing force that keeps government responsive.

After Alinsky’s death in 1972, senior organizer Ed Chambers became the IAF director. He and organizer Ernesto Cortes developed the “new” IAF faith-based model. The difference was that Chambers advocated community federations of churches, rather than individuals or local clubs and businesses, because churches bring organized people and shared values, which he felt would undergird issue organizing, act as the glue of shared identity and solidarity, and thereby help organizations survive. After the decline of inner-city neighborhoods after urban renewal and white flight, the most stable institutions in these neighborhoods were the churches. Raising sufficient funds through a local “sponsoring committee” before beginning to organize allows FBCOs to pay organizers as career professionals.

Hundreds of organizers have been trained in this method—including President Barack Obama, who described his formative work as a faith-based community organizer in Chicago in *Dreams From My Father* (1995).

The Faith-Based Model in Action

The first IAF organization using the FBCO method was Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS). In San Antonio, Texas, Hispanics were a majority of the population, but the government was run by wealthy Anglos. This lack of political clout resulted in Hispanic neighborhoods' unpaved roads, poor schools, and frequent, deadly floods. In 1973 to 1974, IAF organizer and former seminarian Cortes went to San Antonio and began to recruit organizations. A core group of twenty-five Catholic parishes emerged, along with Catholic and Protestant financial support. As COPS grew, the group won a city bond issue for massive improvements in the barrio. District city council elections that COPS helped win, combined with a Hispanic population of 53 percent (in 1980), helped shift the balance of power in San Antonio. By 2001, COPS had won more than a billion dollars in improvements for poor communities.

As the political mood shifted rightward in the 1970s and 1980s, the IAF framed its work not as “radical” but as a force that improved communities and strengthened the vitality of congregations and empowered members. The IAF also continued the pressure group strategy of “holding politicians accountable” rather than backing or running them for office. Subsequent FBCO networks have continued this practice, partly to allow a working relationship with whichever candidate wins.

Beliefs and Practices

Faith-based community organizing draws from both secular community organizing and religious culture. Both secular and faith-based organizations teach that good first issues are “concrete, specific, and winnable” so that disempowered groups can experience success before taking on greater challenges. “Organizers”—the paid, expert staff—are coaches who recruit and train “leaders”—grassroots members who can draw followers. Many distinctive FBCO practices are not explicitly religious. FBCOs institutionalize the practice of “challenging” one another to make commitments and be “accountable” to fulfill them—even “agitating” members into anger over injustice, and then action. An emphasis on grassroots democracy leads organizers to

identify problems using a labor-intensive bottom-up process. Congregational organizing team members conduct from one hundred to three hundred interviews, or one-to-ones, with their congregants to identify the most widely felt issues. These are goal-directed conversations designed to identify a person's self-interest and values. The one-to-one interview is used at all levels, among organizers and grassroots leaders. It builds the web of social networks that groups mobilize to large actions. These are usually public meetings with officials, the most common strategy of exercising power—mass meetings that seek commitments from authorities, who risk losing electoral support if they do not deliver concessions. Grassroots leaders practice conducting these meetings with formality, discipline, and control.

All FBCOs teach Alinsky's principle that power, often defined neutrally as “the ability to act,” is desirable, and powerlessness is not virtuous. The power of organized people rests in their relationships. One needs power to act on one's self-interest. The FBCO innovation is that it ties self-interest to values, which are what people believe in, act on with regularity, and defend publicly—such as justice, community, and human dignity.

Other National Faith-Based Networks

The IAF inspired other groups to adopt its methods. After the IAF, the three largest networks of local organizations are People Improving Communities Through Organizing (PICO) National Network, the Gamaliel Foundation, and Direct Action Research and Training (DART). Several smaller networks and independent local federations also exist. All the groups are multi-issue organizations that seek to build power through numbers so their members can tackle problems such as lack of jobs; crime-ridden, dilapidated neighborhoods; and poor schools.

People Improving Communities Through Organizing (PICO) National Network

Jesuit priest John Bauman founded the neighborhood-based Oakland (California) Community Organizations (OCO) with another priest in 1972. In 1981 OCO helped pressure Oakland into instituting city council elections by local district, as COPS did in San Antonio (earlier), which opens access to candidates rooted in and accountable to specific neighborhoods. Although originating in California, PICO has affiliates nationwide and is known for its strong emphasis on developing grassroots leaders. PICO's more

than fifty local affiliates have won hundreds of local victories. Together, the 21-federation PICO California project has mobilized thousands in state campaigns on education and health care. In 2006 PICO California and health advocates placed Proposition 86 on the ballot, which taxed cigarettes to fund an estimated \$2.1 billion annual for health care, plus \$405 million to cover uninsured California children. In 2001 the statewide PICO coalition and the California Primary Care Association won \$52 million for health clinic infrastructure and services.

Gamaliel Foundation

The Gamaliel Foundation, started in the 1960s in Chicago's West Side, focused on multi-issue organizing after former priest Gregory Galluzzo became director in 1986. (Gamaliel was a teacher of Paul, in the Book of Acts 5:38–39.) Gamaliel maintains several "strategic partners" including Myron Orfield, Jon Powell, and David Rusk, policy experts on urban sprawl, concentrated black poverty, and a regional approach to solving inner-city problems. The network teaches local members a sophisticated analysis of the link between urban devastation and suburban sprawl. Concentrated in the Midwest but with affiliates throughout the country, Gamaliel's plan for 2000 to 2010 was to build a metropolitan organization in every major population area in the United States, raising the necessary money and recruiting two hundred professional organizers. The Gamaliel Foundation is likely the least well funded and staffed of the major networks, and matching its resources to its vision is its major challenge. However, Gamaliel has notable achievements to its credit, such as registering 47,000 new voters in 2003 to 2004 in nineteen states. It has run national campaigns on immigrants' rights and improved federal funding of transportation infrastructure. Work by its locals on transportation equity (funds for urban mass transit, not just more highways) is coordinated with its national transportation campaign (Swarts 2008).

Direct Action Research and Training (DART)

DART was founded in 1982 by its executive director John Calkins, who got his start in the Peace Corps and welfare rights organizing. In 1980 a three-day race riot broke out in Miami after an all-white jury acquitted four white police officers of killing an African American man. Calkins and others led an organizing drive among African American congregations in Miami to work on such issues as minority hiring, job creation, and accountability for police violence

toward African Americans. The subsequently founded organizations constitute DART, which shares the same FBCO methods and multi-issue focus as the other networks.

Funding

Raising funds is a major challenge for FBCOs. Part of their strategy is to mobilize resources through congregations and national denominations. A single FBCO's income is usually a patchwork of member congregation dues, grassroots fundraising, foundation grants, and sometimes grants from area businesses. Successful FBCOs with notable achievements, especially in affluent regions, may have budgets of \$1 million or more, whereas struggling groups may raise just \$100,000 or less annually. Although a \$1 million or more budget may seem large from a parish perspective, it is small considering that local FBCOs usually battle city administrations, developers, and big business with billion-dollar budgets and political contributions. PICO affiliate San Jose PACT fought for funding for better schools, anti-drug and antigang neighborhood programs, and community reinvestment, policies that competed for funds with a downtown sports arena championed by the mayor and extravagant downtown development projects. Operating with a bare-bones budget throughout the 1990s, PACT had to rely on people power. By 2000, PACT won, conservatively, \$45 million in neighborhood-serving programs (Swarts 2008).

Organizers see congregational dues and internal fundraising as the ideal because they provide maximum self-sufficiency. In reality, member congregations are rarely able or willing to provide most of the budget. However, dues demonstrate the local support necessary to obtain outside grants. Bodies exist whose mission is to fund or advocate funding for community organizing. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), the antipoverty funding arm of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, seeks to address the "root causes of poverty" rather than ameliorate its effects. Supported by an annual collection in all U.S. parishes, the CCHD has granted almost \$300 million since its founding in 1969, much to community organizing. Other funders include the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Ford Foundation, McKnight Foundation, Discount Foundation, and Needmor Fund. The Neighborhood Funders Group and the National Center for Responsible Philanthropy actively promote organizing. Interfaith Funders, a collaboration of religious denominations and grant makers, has sought to broaden support for FBCOs since 1997. From

1998 to 2004, Interfaith Funders raised \$1.8 million for nineteen FBCO groups in five FBCO networks.

Religion and FBCO Organizing

Following the civil rights movement and the 1960s, the political valence of socially active religion moved to the right. Although the religious right's fortunes have waxed and waned, it moved the Republican Party to the right, defeated many local gay rights ordinances, and moved public opinion and many state laws on abortion to the right. There was no similarly coherent "religious left." FBCOs are one attempt on the left to link congregants' faith to political action. Most FBCOs begin meetings with a prayer or "reflection." Biblical references are scattered richly through trainings, meetings, and speeches; for example, Moses and Paul are framed as great organizers. Pastors are adept at using Bible stories to illustrate organizing principles. Churches link their faith to organizational needs (such as prayer breakfast fundraisers) and rituals become part of their repertoire of contention. For example, an FBCO may hold a "prayer walk" in which members tour an area and pray at sites of shootings or drug trafficking. Although this appropriation of religious culture may seem merely strategic, in successful FBCOs the link between religious faith and public action is authentically felt. Many organizers are clergy or religious laypersons. As one organizer explained, "You never finish, because you're disciples."

Strategies

Christian congregations have cultural drawbacks as well as resources. Secular organizing groups sometimes criticize what they see as FBCOs' tactical timidity. Some Christians understand "turning the other cheek" to mean that conflict is destructive. Although FBCOs have occupied decision makers' offices (if they refused to meet) and used other unruly tactics, they more typically use "public meetings" with authorities, a more orderly form of contention. However polite, these meetings flex their muscle by amassing hundreds or thousands of voting citizens to observe a leadership team propose policy reforms to officials and witness their commitments—or refusals, which will certainly lead to escalated organizing.

However, the public meeting is just a tactic. FBCOs' larger strategies are to build deeply rooted local affiliates in the belief that, like politics, all organizing is local, and to keep participants committed, FBCOs must continually identify new local issues. However, they harness these

networks to tackle regional, statewide, and national issues. Since Alinsky's time, the decisions that affect local communities are more often made at the state, national, or international levels. Cities that have lost federal funds and much of their economic base have fewer resources for community groups to bargain for. This has challenged FBCO strategists to educate members about where political decisions are made. Although community organizations traditionally targeted city officials for concessions, today they may collaborate with these officials in pursuing funds at the state and federal levels. The networks differ in their willingness to work with nonreligious groups. The IAF includes labor unions and others in its federations. However, the PICO network does not recruit unions to local federations because staffers find it difficult to integrate religious and labor union cultures. Nevertheless, the IAF, PICO, and the Gamaliel Foundation regularly form alliances with labor and other advocacy groups.

Influence of FBCO on Congregations

Recruiting congregations into faith-based community organizing is challenging because they have limited funds and numerous projects and initiatives. Pastoral leadership is critical to surmounting these barriers. Participating congregations often report corresponding benefits for themselves. A 2004 study of forty-five congregations in thirteen cities by Interfaith Funders and the University of New Mexico investigated possible benefits to congregations from FBCO participation. Almost all reported some benefits, including deepened relationships within congregations and with members of other faiths; stronger leadership skills such as public speaking, identifying issues, and running meetings; greater lay participation in church; public visibility for the congregation; and heightened focus on their faith's call for social justice. Some congregations reported membership growth. Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Unitarian-Universalist assessments also identified alliances across lines of race, class, and ethnicity as a benefit.

Civic and Political Impact

FBCOs have many different positive outcomes: For example, sociologists Mark Warren (2001) and Warren Wood (2002) assessed FBCOs as an engine of social capital, democratic process, and civic engagement for the disempowered. P.W. Speer and J. Hughey (1996) assess FBCOs' impact from a community psychology perspective. Heidi Swarts measured the value of policy outcomes for the PICO Network

and Gamaliel Foundation, in dollars and number of people affected. Swartz, Stephen Hart (2001), and other scholars emphasize FBCOs' in-depth leadership development.

The election of Barack Obama boosted visibility for FBCOs. In December 2008, 2,500 Gamaliel Foundation members met with a senior advisor to the president-elect to present their policy platform. Since 2004, PICO's New Voices campaign brought activists from all over the country to lobby Congress twice a year on children's health insurance. In February 2009, PICO leaders witnessed President Obama sign the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) legislation, twice vetoed by President George W. Bush. These FBCOs cannot take sole credit for such victories—they were part of a larger advocacy network. To gain national influence, FBCOs will have to join broader coalitions. However, they are growing and increasingly acting nationally. Their unchallenged achievement is to recruit and empower many thousands of U.S. citizens in the skills of civic engagement, revitalizing democracy and linking it to religious values.

See also *City Missions; Civil Religion in the U.S.; Congregations; Faith-Based Initiatives; Latino American Religion: Struggles for Justice; Philanthropy; Religious Right; Settlement Houses; Social Gospel.*

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Faith-Based Initiatives

Faith-based initiatives are partnerships between faith-based organizations (that is, religious congregations and faith-related nonprofit agencies such as the Salvation Army) and government agencies to provide social welfare services to a community, especially through the transfer of public funds to faith-based organizations (FBOs). They exist at all levels of government—federal, state, and local—and range from partnerships for the production of affordable housing to the operation of day care and after-school programs to prisoner rehabilitation.

Prominence of Faith-Based Initiatives

The term "faith-based initiatives" gained prominence during and after the 2000 presidential election. Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Al Gore proclaimed support for public-funded social welfare delivery by FBOs. Both candidates promised an expansion of faith-based initiatives. Their agreement on the issue reflected the bipartisan consensus that some FBOs may provide social services better—more efficiently and effectively—than would government and that government should encourage FBOs to provide or expand community outreach (that is, services intended to increase the potential of the needy to live healthy lives, form and maintain families and communities, and achieve self-sufficiency).

After becoming president, Bush created the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) to assist the federal government in expanding funding opportunities for FBOs and strengthening the capacity of FBOs to address social needs in communities across the United States. Although Bush favored new legislation to expand and sustain faith-based initiatives, he did not devote political capital to moving such legislation through Congress. Instead, Bush used Executive Orders to design, promote, and manage faith-based initiatives by federal agencies, opening a range of federal grants and contracts to competition by FBOs. State governments assisted his efforts. They passed legislation and adopted rules and regulations

that created state-level offices and liaisons for faith-based initiatives and provided greater opportunities for FBOs to be awarded contracts and grants.

Supporters like John Ashcroft, the first U.S. attorney general during the Bush administration, saw faith-based initiatives as efficient and effective means by government to reduce the scale of social problems. Proponents of faith-based initiatives rested much of their support on claims that FBOs had interest in tackling large-scale social problems, the capacity to do so, and successful records of doing so. Opponents of faith-based initiatives, such as the liberal Americans United for Separation of Church and State, saw them as affronts to the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution, especially in their potential to entangle government with religion and possibly to infringe upon the free exercise of religion. Opponents also charged that faith-based initiatives were retrograde efforts to diminish the welfare state and political tools to influence votes and award partisan supporters.

A Catalyst for Faith-Based Initiatives

Like those in Western Europe and other parts of the world, governmental partnerships with FBOs to provide social welfare programs are not new to the United States. Nonetheless, since the mid-1990s, government officials have attempted to increase the number and scale of faith-based initiatives to deliver government-funded social welfare. A catalyst for the expansion of faith-based initiatives was the federal “welfare reform” during the second administration of Bill Clinton. Specifically, the 1996 enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act included a set of new federal laws and regulations, dubbed “Charitable Choice,” encouraging FBOs, especially religious congregations, to partner with government to reduce the welfare caseloads among the states through the receipt of direct federal funding for services provided by FBOs. While partnerships between government and faith-related agencies were not new, the encouragement and direct funding of religious congregations was a significant policy change.

Until 1996 government normally required religious congregations, often referred to as “pervasively sectarian institutions,” to create independent nonprofit organizations to receive public funding for social services delivery. Direct funding of congregations was assumed to be unconstitutional. However, due to Charitable Choice and subsequent changes in social policy, along with the creation of

the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and similar offices by the Bush administration, public policy no longer mandated that congregations have separate secular agencies to receive public funding.

Fundamentals of Faith-Based Initiatives

Charitable Choice rests on four fundamental principles. First, faith-based initiatives do not necessarily provide new and increased social welfare funding, nor do they create funds reserved solely for FBOs. Charitable Choice merely provides funding opportunities to organizations that may have been excluded from applying for and receiving federal social welfare funds. In short, FBOs compete against secular organizations for existing funding. Governmental monies are not expressly set aside for FBOs. Second, governmental agencies are allowed—not required—to contract with congregations or other FBOs. Proponents of faith-based initiatives, such as John DiIulio, the first director of the OFBCI, claimed that before the expansion of Charitable Choice FBOs faced an “unlevel playing field,” tilted to favor secular nonprofits and large faith-related agencies like Catholic Charities. After Charitable Choice, when contracting for the delivery of social services, government agencies must consider the proposals and qualifications of FBOs on an equal, nondiscriminatory, and neutral basis. They may neither advantage FBOs nor disadvantage them in relation to secular organizations.

Third, while FBOs cannot use federal funds for religious worship, instruction, or proselytism, faith-based initiatives do not affect other aspects of the religious character of faith-based organizations. Before Charitable Choice, government agencies pushed FBOs to, among other things, conceal crucifixes and to change their names to downplay their religious affiliations. Additionally, the religious character of FBOs participating in faith-based initiatives is protected by exemptions from antidiscrimination laws related to hiring. FBOs, according to most interpretations of statutes and case law, are allowed to maintain faith-based employment preferences even if they receive federal funding. A Jewish faith-related agency such as Jewish Family and Children Services, for example, may hire Jews alone, if they deem it essential to the agency’s religious identity and mission. Fourth, individuals seeking government-funded social welfare are not required to receive it from FBOs. Social welfare consumers have the right to refuse to utilize services provided by a religious congregation or faith-related agency and to request services from secular social welfare agencies. Yet it is unclear

how that right would be exercised in jurisdictions that lack secular alternatives.

Public Opinion on Faith-Based Initiatives

In the early twenty-first century, faith-based initiatives generally accord with public sentiment and opinion. A majority of the public agrees that government should collaborate with FBOs to address social welfare problems and concurs that FBOs can be effective at reducing the scale of such problems. Core supporters tend to be white evangelical Protestants, black Protestants, Hispanic Catholics and Protestants, Muslims, individuals with lower education and income, southerners and midwesterners, and younger adults. Public opinion suggests, however, that the nation believes that faith-based initiatives would be more effective in social welfare areas such as feeding the homeless, counseling prisoners, and mentoring youth than in areas like job training, health care, addiction recovery, and child care. Furthermore, public opinion opposes faith-based initiatives when FBOs exercise religious hiring preferences or proselytize to consumers of social services.

Although public opinion favors governmental funding of FBOs to provide social services, it opposes such funding for FBOs outside the religious mainstream in the United States, such as the Nation of Islam, Hare Krishna, and even the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons). Despite strong support for the broad idea of faith-based initiatives, surveys suggest that Jews and, not surprisingly, atheists and those who generally favor secular solutions to social welfare problems are chief opponents of faith-based initiatives.

Contentious Issues

Among the knotty issues raised by faith-based initiatives is whether religious congregations or faith-related agencies that expressly incorporate religious doctrines and teaching into their community outreach programs (for example, Teen Challenge) can directly receive public funding. Direct public funding of such FBOs raises constitutional concerns about the establishment of religion and the free exercise of religion. Generally, the U.S. Supreme Court has determined that such funding is constitutional if it fosters a secular purpose, its primary effect does not advance nor inhibit religion, and it does not excessively entangle government with religion (see, for example, *Lemon v. Kurtzman* [1971] and *Mitchell v. Helms* [2000]).

As a means of avoiding the issue altogether, without banning faith-based initiatives, some advocates propose that the government indirectly fund FBOs regardless of how central religion is to the organizations and their programs. Government would provide the needy with vouchers for social services, much like school vouchers or food stamps. Recent Supreme Court rulings such as *Zelman vs. Simmons-Harris* (2002) provide constitutional support for indirect funding when the choices are made by consumers, not government. However, indirect funding through consumer choice may not provide adequate and consistent revenue to sustain service provision by FBOs. Social welfare agencies prefer financial contracts that identify and perhaps guarantee the amount of revenue to be earned by partnering with government agencies.

A related issue, perhaps the most contentious of all, pertains to religious hiring preferences. May FBOs, whether permeated or just associated with religion, use religious preferences in their hiring and receive public funding? Legally, the question is whether FBOs participating in faith-based initiatives have a constitutional right to hire coreligionists. Supporters such as the conservative Center for Public Justice rely on the ministerial exemption to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to claim that government funding does not remove the right of FBOs to determine who will best represent and perform the mission and manifest the values of their organizations. Also, they argue that requiring FBOs that receive public funding to hire nonreligionists creates an excessive entanglement of government with religion and infringes upon the free exercise of religion. Opponents of religious hiring preferences, like Representative Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA), claim that organizations supported by public funding must not discriminate. They contend that such discrimination counters long-standing American beliefs about the import of merit in the workplace and is in opposition to public opinion.

As of the dawn of the administration of President Barack Obama, the Supreme Court had yet to rule on a case involving religious hiring preferences by FBOs receiving public funds. Although the Court has generally accepted the argument that government cannot influence the hiring decisions of religious organizations not receiving public money (for example, *Corporation of the Presiding Bishop of the Church of Latter Day Saints v. Amos* [1987]), lower court rulings such as *Dodge v. Salvation Army* (1989) and *Pedreira v. Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, Inc.* (2001) have been

inconsistent in deciding whether the receipt of public funds by FBOs permits government to influence hiring decisions.

Another thorny issue is the capacity of FBOs to serve civic purposes. Despite the claims and beliefs of many supporters of faith-based initiatives, national and local surveys suggest that congregations and small faith-related agencies have a limited capacity to play lead or central roles in faith-based initiatives. Furthermore, studies from across the states suggest that the general interest of FBOs in partnering with government is less than the levels suggested by proponents of faith-based initiatives. Additionally, there is disagreement over how one would measure the effectiveness of FBOs to serve civic purposes at government expense.

While the award of public funds to FBOs, inclusive of sectarian institutions and faith-related agencies, via faith-based initiatives is aimed to reduce poverty and other social ills, critics charge that faith-based initiatives become nothing more than political favors. Critics such as Rabbi David Saperstein of the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism and Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State contend that faith-based initiatives have been used to award public funds to political allies and to influence partisan support in elections. Investigative journalism by the *Washington Post* and *Boston Globe* in 2006 suggest that the award of federal grants and contracts to FBOs by the Bush administration, for instance, deliberately coincided with elections, went to districts where political allies were up for election or reelection, and rewarded religious organizations that mobilized voters for political allies.

Furthermore, critics of faith-based initiatives such as Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr. of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and Rev. Jeremiah Wright of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago charge that faith-based initiatives are intended to reduce the ability of FBOs to speak truth to power. They aver that public funding of FBOs is a means by conservative political coalitions to reduce the political activism and weaken the ability of FBOs to function as social justice advocates. The logic of the argument is that public funding of FBOs will make them reliant on government and that their dependence will make them less likely to challenge public policies for fear of losing their funding. Moreover, some progressive activists such as Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund worry that focusing on faith-based initiatives begets a false belief that the provision of social services is enough to address the problems of the

poor without attending to structural causes of need and impoverishment in the United States.

Conclusion

Faith-based initiatives are a conventional approach to addressing social welfare problems in the United States. Although elements and activities of faith-based initiatives remain controversial in some quarters, the idea of partnerships between government and FBOs to provide social welfare services, even at public expense, is widely accepted by policymakers and the general public. The biggest change from the Bush to Obama administrations may be in FBO hiring practices. While Obama supports faith-based initiatives and has called for expanding their number and scale, he has declared opposition to FBOs that receive public funding hiring only coreligionists. Moreover, he has stressed that government must improve its monitoring of faith-based initiatives to ensure that public money is not used for religious worship or proselytism. Nonetheless, faith-based initiatives are expected to endure in and beyond the Obama administration.

See also *Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; City Missions; Congregations; Establishment, Religious; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Freedom, Religious; Philanthropy; Politics: Twentieth Century; Religious Right; Supreme Court.*

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Feminism

Feminism is a social, political, and religious movement that advocates the rights of women. Feminists believe that, in society, women tend to be unequal in status and resources, and the feminist movement seeks to eradicate this inequality.

Although the term *feminism* was not used to refer to the movement until the end of the nineteenth century, various people and events have advanced the rights of women in North America since the founding of the British colonies in the seventeenth century. Three distinct waves of feminism are identifiable in American history, each one advancing a different agenda and dealing with different social circumstances. Consequently, it is appropriate to recognize multiple feminisms rather than to describe feminism as a monolithic category.

The Meaning of “Feminism”

The word *feminism* (from Latin, *femina*, “woman”) dates back to 1851. Originally, it simply referred to being feminine. In 1872 the term *féministe* was coined in France and referred to one who is an advocate for the feminine. The term was imported into the English language in 1894, when feminism became synonymous with the promotion of women’s rights. Since then, feminism has been defined in many ways by many people. Supporters of feminism have defined it positively—as the idea that women are fully human; that women should be equal with men; and that women should be given the right to define themselves on their own terms.

Those who consider themselves to be humanist feminists use the “sameness” approach, arguing that women are the same as men. Because both men and women share a common humanity, humanist feminists believe that both men and women should be entitled to the same rights. Gynocentric feminists, on the other hand, use the “difference” approach, arguing that women are fundamentally different from men. This does not mean that women should have fewer rights than men, but rather that women are entitled to different rights under the law, such as the right to be protected from an abusive husband. Women are unique, gynocentric feminists believe, and have a unique perspective. In order to overcome patriarchal oppression, society must value the uniqueness of women. Feminists who use the “dominance” approach tend to think that the argument between the sameness approach and the difference approach misses the point. Instead of focusing on whether women are the same as or different from men, proponents of the dominance approach maintain that patriarchal oppression is based on the subordination of women. To end such oppression, women must be liberated from this role of subordination. In contradistinction to dominance feminists, Marxist feminists believe that the root cause of the subordination of women

is not men, but rather capitalism. Women must be liberated from the oppressive forces of capitalism, according to Marxist feminism.

But how should women be liberated? Who gets to decide? Are all women really oppressed in the same way? Should all women be liberated in the same way? Such questions tend to be asked by postmodern feminists who have little faith in the epistemology of the sameness, difference, dominance, and Marxist approaches. Postmodern feminism claims that gender and gender roles are not biological facts but rather are social constructions. However, other feminists have criticized postmodern feminists for preferring questions over answers, dilemmas over solutions.

Although most people in the United States today might look favorably on some of the ideas of feminism described above—such as the idea that women should be equal with men—the term *feminism* often carries a negative connotation. Feminists often are portrayed in popular media as men-hating lesbians who attend protests and burn their bras. Because of this negative portrayal, many individuals and social institutions have remained indifferent to feminism or have adopted an antifeminist stance. Those who self-identify as antifeminists tend to think that feminists are too radical and alienate men. Conservative religious institutions, especially in the late twentieth century, began to adopt antifeminist rhetoric to argue that God created men and women differently; therefore, they should have different roles in society. Oddly enough, such rhetoric sounded similar to the arguments made by gynocentric feminists who used the difference approach. Yet conservative religious institutions asserted so loudly that they were antifeminist that the American public began to believe that all religion was antifeminist. Some feminists who believed religion to be inherently patriarchal also helped to spread the misconception that religion and feminism are essentially opposed.

However, since the seventeenth century feminism has had a complicated relationship with religion. Because feminism has taken on many different meanings over the centuries and because religion itself refers to numerous traditions, the relationship between feminism and religion cannot be described in essentialist terms. For instance, it is not accurate to state that religion is essentially opposed to feminism; nor is it accurate to state that religion is essentially supportive of feminism. Feminism is not essentially opposed to religion; nor is feminism essentially supportive of religion. Multiple, diverse feminisms relate differently to multiple, diverse religious traditions. This essay will trace the impact these

feminisms have had on various religious traditions throughout American history, beginning with the colonial era.

The Colonial Period

The Puritans often are characterized as austere, misogynist, doom-and-gloom traditionalists who used their religious ideology to denigrate women. However, in Puritan New England during the seventeenth century, women were valued as important members of the religious community in particular and of society in general. The most fundamental unit of society was the family, and the glue that held the family together was the relationship between husband and wife. This relationship between men and women in the form of marriage was imbued with divine symbolism. Although Puritans did not believe marriage to be a sacrament, it was viewed as a symbol of the relationship between Christ and the church. Men were representatives of Christ in a marriage, and women were representative of the church. Men were supposed to love their wives as Christ loved the church, while women were supposed to submit to their husbands as unto Christ. Although on the surface this religious ideology may seem to be antifeminist, or in opposition to the rights of women, the spiritual elevation of marriage actually led to the elevation of women. Women were the “helpmeets” of their husbands, and filling this role of helpmeet did not necessitate the relegation of women to the domestic sphere. If need be, women could move in and out of the public sector of society as representatives of their husbands.

Furthermore, Puritan women were often seen as more spiritual than men. Because each Puritan was thought to be “married” to Christ, Christ was portrayed as the male in the relationship, while humans—both men and women—were portrayed as the female. The female role was characterized by submissive obedience. Women assumed the “female” role in their relationship with Christ and in their relationship with their husbands. Because women had to learn to be submissive in their relationships with their earthly husbands, Puritans generally believed that women found it easy to extend this submissive attitude to their relationship with their heavenly husband, Christ. Men, on the other hand, were supposed to fulfill the male role in their relationship with their wives and the female role in their relationship with Christ. Consequently, men were thought to be less adept at submissiveness. In order to learn to be more submissive in their relationship with Christ, men could look to women as spiritual exemplars. In a counterintuitive way, the

religious ideology of the Puritans tended to elevate the status of women rather than denigrate women. Thus it could be said that the Puritan tradition had a positive relationship to what we now conceive of as feminism.

Similarly, the first Great Awakening helped to advance the rights of women. The first Great Awakening was a religious movement that took place in England and the American colonies during the 1730s and 1740s. This movement, led by Protestant theologians and clergymen such as Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), John Wesley (1703–1791), and George Whitefield (1714–1770), emphasized the belief that every person was inherently sinful. To undo the damning effects of this sinful nature, every person had to undergo a spiritual “awakening,” or religious conversion, also known as the new birth. The new birth was the beginning of one’s personal relationship with God. Because new-birth theology mandated that everyone—men and women, clergy and laity—must be born again, traditional church hierarchies were overturned. Born-again women or African American slaves were viewed as more spiritual than white clergymen who were not born again. By gaining this informal authority in the churches, many women were able to secure formal authority also. In the middle colonies and in New England, women began to speak in churches and teach others about the new birth. In the southern colonies, women also became deacons and elders. Thus the first Great Awakening had a countercultural effect that gave women more authority in the churches than in other spheres of life. In this way, the beginnings of evangelical culture, which was birthed in the first Great Awakening, could be viewed as implicitly supportive of feminism.

The first Great Awakening gave American colonists a sense of unity and divine purpose. This unity allowed the colonies to feel secure in fighting Great Britain for independence in the Revolutionary War. During the writing of the new Constitution of the United States of America, Abigail Adams (1744–1818) famously implored her husband, John, the future president, to “remember the ladies,” to take seriously the issue of women’s rights. Despite the implorations of Adams and the hopes of American women, the Constitution did not include any specific mention of the rights of women. From a legal standpoint, women were just as dependent on and as subordinate to their fathers and husbands as they had been before the Revolution. After the Revolution, women, African Americans, and non-landholding white men became disillusioned with the promises of the new republic.

The Nineteenth Century

Such disillusionment made American society ripe for the Second Great Awakening, a series of revivals that took place in the early nineteenth century. Itinerant ministers like Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875) traveled around the country preaching about the importance of emotionalism, private and public holiness, personal salvation, and the power of the Holy Spirit. Such preaching had the ability to incite emotional outbursts from those assembled at the camp meetings. Oftentimes, those assembled would bark, jerk, laugh, fall down, dance, or do anything they felt the Holy Spirit was leading them to do. Participants in the Second Great Awakening believed that God could make sinful individuals holy in this life, not just in the afterlife. By extension, they believed that God could transform a sinful society into a perfect one.

This perfectionist idealism gave rise to many utopian communities that adopted unconventional religious practices and beliefs. The Oneida Community, which settled in Oneida, New York, taught that Christ had already accomplished his Second Coming and therefore people could experience heaven on earth in the form of sinless perfection. Because the Bible states that people will neither be married nor be given in marriage in heaven, members of the Oneida Community believed that monogamous marriage did not have to be practiced on earth. Instead, the practice of free love was viewed as a better way to prepare oneself for heaven. Sexual intercourse was viewed as holy, and freely giving sex was the path to holiness, although sexual intercourse between two partners had to be preapproved. To a certain extent, free love allowed the members of the community to challenge traditional gender roles. Rather than marrying at a young age, bearing several children, and being relegated to the domestic sphere, Oneida women had multiple partners and only a select few were encouraged to have children. Those who did have children were able to put the children in the nursery so that mothers could work. Some historians have noted that the Oneida Community was not as feminist-oriented as it may have appeared. Often women were not allowed to choose their sexual partners, and they were still viewed as spiritually inferior to men. Although at times the Oneida Community challenged the gender status quo, at other times it reinforced it.

Another utopian community that was nontraditional in its gender expectations was the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, which originated in England.

Also known as the Shaking Quakers or Shakers, this group formed many communal societies, mostly in the northern United States. Much like the Oneidas, the Shakers believed that no one in heaven married, that heaven could be experienced on earth, and therefore that marriage was not necessary on earth. Unlike the Oneidas, however, the Shakers believed that sexual intercourse was the root of evil. Therefore no one in the Shaker community was allowed to marry or to have sex. To ward off temptation, men and women lived in separate quarters and worshipped in groups separated by gender. On the one hand, this arrangement gave women power and freedom. Each position in the hierarchy of the Shaker church was occupied by both a man and a woman. Because no one was allowed to have sexual intercourse, women were freed from the responsibility of bearing children. On the other hand, Shaker women were still expected to do “women’s work,” like cooking and cleaning and taking care of the children who had been adopted. Thus both the Shaker and the Oneida communities had ambivalent relationships to the rights and freedoms of women.

The idealism and desire to perfect society that came from the Second Great Awakening not only led to the formation of utopian communities but also to reform movements. Evangelical Protestants believed that God wanted them to reform society. Individuals who experienced perfection and holiness were expected to help society become perfect and holy. This fusion of personal and public godliness, albeit with other mitigating factors, was the reason for the popularity of the temperance movement, which gained strength in the early nineteenth century. Many Protestants in general and evangelicals in particular believed that alcohol could be a detriment to the social order. In the 1870s the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was founded (and continues to exist today). The WCTU insisted that alcohol was harmful to women. Men who drank too much alcohol tended to beat their wives and children, squander their paychecks, and act immorally. With the protection of women as its founding purpose, it is not surprising that some of the group’s leaders and members considered themselves to be feminists. Besides advocating prohibition, the WCTU also took up other reform issues, such as advocating women’s suffrage, opposing prostitution, and supporting public health.

Another reform movement that gained support after the Second Great Awakening was abolitionism. White male northerners, former African American slaves, and women all took an active role in abolitionism for various political, religious, and social reasons. Many women Christians, including

sisters Sarah Grimké (1792–1873) and Angelina Grimké (1805–1879), used their religious beliefs to condemn the institution of slavery. In her “Appeal to the Christian Women of the South” (1836), Angelina Grimké sought to prove that slavery went against the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902) and Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906), in addition to supporting temperance, also became deeply involved in the antislavery movement.

First-Wave Feminism

Becoming involved in antebellum reform movements, like temperance and abolitionism, gave vast numbers of women a sense of empowerment and a reason to believe that they could make a difference. Many women were criticized for stepping outside their domestic role as wife and mother into the public world of political activism, and consequently they felt the need to defend their participation in reform movements. Catharine Beecher (1800–1878), sister to Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–1896), criticized the Grimké sisters for behavior not befitting of women. In response to such criticism, Sarah Grimké wrote “Letters on the Equality of the Sexes” (1837), in which she demonstrated that the Bible taught that men and women were equals. Similar to the way in which they defended the rights of African American slaves, the Grimkés made an appeal to the common humanity that women shared with men, therefore deserving the same rights and respect.

Women were not only criticized for participating in reform movements by those on the outside, but they were also discriminated against by those on the inside. Abolitionist women like Stanton and Anthony were angry that women had to sit separately from men at antislavery conferences and that they were not given sufficient leadership roles in antislavery societies. In 1848 Stanton organized the first women’s rights conference, in Seneca Falls, New York, to highlight the discrimination of women. The Seneca Falls convention, under the guidance of Stanton, produced the Declaration of Sentiments, which was modeled after the Declaration of Independence. In it, Stanton objected to the tyranny of men who wield authority over women, and she demanded that women be allowed to fulfill the equal role which their Creator entitled them to. Later on, in 1895–1898, Stanton and a “revising committee” wrote *The Woman’s Bible* because she maintained that previous versions of the Bible were prejudiced against women.

Although the Declaration of Sentiments was groundbreaking and caused a stir, the demands of the antislavery movement quickly proved to be more pressing. During the Civil War (1861–1865) women’s rights concerns were set aside, as women’s rights activists endeavored to support the cause of the Union and abolition. However, many of these feminists were disappointed and bitter when the Fifteenth Amendment was passed after the war, stating that the right to vote should not be denied on the basis of “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” Women like Stanton and Anthony demanded to know why the amendment did not give women the right to vote as well. In language that bordered on racist, they insisted that many women were more educated, and therefore would be better voters, than African American men who previously were slaves and had little or no formal education.

Sojourner Truth (1797–1883) was the first African American woman to point out that white women benefited from the privileges of white men in a racist society. Truth was the embodiment of the connections between the Second Great Awakening, antebellum reform movements, and first-wave feminism. Born a slave in New York, she was freed when slavery was outlawed in the state of New York in 1827. After she was freed, she underwent a religious conversion and began attending church and revivalist camp meetings. She joined a small utopian community in New York City, where she worked as a domestic servant. After the utopian community disbanded, Truth became an itinerant preacher. She befriended various abolitionist leaders and eventually used her speaking skills to deliver speeches at antislavery conventions. In 1851 in Akron, Ohio, Truth attended a convention on women’s rights where she gave her famous “Ain’t I a Woman?” speech. In addition to drawing attention to the plight of African American women who did not have the pleasure of occupying the delicate, domestic role of well-off white women, Truth claimed that the teachings of the Bible presumed that women possessed inherent strength and power. If Eve had the power to turn the world upside down with her sin, then surely women had the power to turn the world right side up again. Men did not have the right to stand in the way of women who wanted to do so, Truth contended.

Yet not everyone who shared Truth’s evangelical background also shared her convictions about the rights of women. Early feminists were concerned that some evangelical groups denied the most private and basic rights of women, such as the right to monogamy. The polygamous

practices of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as Mormons, were abhorred by feminists in particular and by most of the American population in general. The Latter-day Saints instituted plural marriage, a polygynous form of polygamy, in the early 1840s (but officially renounced it in 1890). Although the percentage of the Latter-day Saints who practiced polygamy was relatively small, the popular media placed a huge spotlight on the perceived harm that it inflicted on women and children. Slavery and polygamy were thought to be twins of the same barbaric system. Early on, women's rights activists contended that giving the right to vote to women in Utah, which had a large Mormon population, would help to end polygamy, because surely Mormon women would vote against such barbarism. In 1870 Utah was second only to Wyoming in giving women the right to vote. At this time, many who supported women's suffrage expected that Mormon women would stand up for themselves and vote their way to monogamy. When this did not happen, and Mormon women voted in tandem with Mormon men, women's rights activists worried that Mormon women were being brainwashed into thinking that polygamy was anything but abuse. Proponents of women's rights began to see Mormon women as objects of reform rather than as agents of reform, as women who desperately needed help because they could not help themselves. Both Stanton and Anthony condemned polygamy and what they saw as its inherent misogyny. After a trip to Utah, Stanton came to the conclusion that Mormons, especially Mormon women, were held in slavery by the Mormon church. They were not allowed to think for themselves, and consequently the progress of their society was stifled.

The women's rights movement in the nineteenth century, led by Stanton and Anthony, later came to be known as first-wave feminism. Focusing on de jure (legal) discrimination, first-wave feminism was unified by the goal of giving women the right the vote. Many first-wave feminists argued their case from the sameness approach, insisting that women shared a common humanity with men and therefore should be extended the same rights, especially the right to vote. Other first-wave feminists took the difference approach, insisting that women were different from men in the area of morality. They argued that because women were inherently more virtuous than men allowing women to vote could restore morality and accountability to the corrupt world of politics. As noted previously, religion had an ambivalent relationship to early feminism. Although it could be claimed

that women's rights activism was a product of evangelical Christian reform movements, it could also be shown that many evangelical groups, including Mormons and utopian communities, did not share the same goals as first-wave feminists.

The Twentieth Century

Because first-wave feminists were united by the common goal of women's suffrage, first-wave feminism largely subsided after women were given the right to vote with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. Yet the search for women's freedom and self-determination did not end. The "Roaring Twenties" was a time when young women known as "flappers" cut their hair, wore short dresses, and defied sexual norms. These women who lived extravagant lifestyles and snubbed traditional gender roles in the 1920s were forced to be dutiful wives and mothers during the hardships of the Great Depression of the 1930s. When the depression lifted during the World War II years (1941–1945), women were expected to enter the workforce in greater numbers to fill in the economic gaps left by the men who went to fight in the war. Women who helped their country by working in factories and producing weapons during the war were then forced to retreat to the domestic sphere when their men returned from war and needed their jobs back. Harking back to the "cult of domesticity" prized by Victorians in the nineteenth century, middle-class women of the 1950s were taught that being a wife and mother was their most important role in society. They were encouraged to be content with making a home and taking care of their families. However, by the 1960s, some women began to wonder if there was more to life than cooking and cleaning and raising babies.

Second-Wave Feminism

During the forty years from 1920 to 1960, only one organization self-identified as "feminist." The National Woman's Party, founded in 1916, was the only group willing to associate itself with feminism because many other groups were fearful that they would be accused of being radicals or communists, or both. This avoidance of the term "feminist" changed drastically with the rise of second-wave feminism in the 1960s and 1970s. It could be said that second-wave feminism was born in 1963, the year that Betty Friedan (1921–2006) published *The Feminine Mystique*. Friedan's book highlighted the disillusionment that many educated, middle-class women felt toward domesticity. While first-wave

feminists focused mainly on de jure discrimination, second-wave feminists, much like the civil rights leaders of the 1950s and 1960s, sought to focus their attention on de facto discrimination. De facto discrimination is discrimination that is not necessarily sanctioned by law but is sanctioned by practice. One of the battle cries of second-wave feminism was, “The personal is political.” This meant that the ordinary things in a woman’s life that were normally deemed private—such as the clothes she wore, the number of children she had, the career she chose—were not private matters at all but were actually power-laden choices determined by a patriarchal society.

Shulamith Firestone (1945–), perhaps one of the most influential of radical feminists, wanted women to have more options than getting married and raising children. Firestone developed what she labeled “revolutionary alternatives” to the oppressive nature of the patriarchal structuring of society. These alternatives included artificial reproduction to take the burden of child bearing off women altogether; economic independence of women and children; the full assimilation of women and children into society at large; and the complete sexual independence of women and children. On this issue of sexuality, many radical feminists believed that sexual intercourse between a man and a woman would always be about male dominance of the female and therefore could always be considered rape. Consequently, many radical feminists converted to lesbianism so that they did not have to participate in the heterosexual domination of women’s bodies. Luce Irigaray (1932–), a Belgian scholar, explicated the phallogentrism of Western society, which privileged the male penis during intercourse and the male perspective in intellectual life. Yet not all second-wave feminists blamed men for the oppression that women faced. Evelyn Reed (1905–1979), a prominent member of the Socialist Workers Party, supported Marxist feminism by arguing that patriarchy was the result of capitalism and by advocating the overthrow of capitalism in the United States.

Mary Daly (1928–), on the other hand, did not believe that capitalism was the reason for Western society’s oppression of women. Instead, she argued that religion—that is, Christianity—was the main tool used by society to oppress women. Daly’s first book criticized the Roman Catholic Church for being misogynist; her second book, *Beyond God the Father* (1973), called for the death of God as a male father figure. Daly’s work was very influential, convincing many second-wave feminists that religion was a major source of oppression. This was especially true for feminists when it

came to the issue of abortion. Second-wave feminism advocated the right of every woman to have access to a legal and safe abortion. Most conservative Christians, including evangelicals and Catholics, loudly opposed abortion, considering it to be the destruction of God-given human life. Feminists retorted that women should be free to choose what happens with their own bodies without the interference of religion or government. This conviction led to the popular statement, “Keep your rosaries off my ovaries.”

Even as some feminists denounced religion for supporting centuries of patriarchy, others wanted to revamp their own religious traditions to make them less patriarchal and more feminist friendly. Some Christian denominations took seriously Daly’s indictment of patriarchal language and began to use the phrase “in the name of God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier,” rather than “in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” Reform Jews, Conservative Jews, and liberal Christian denominations began to ordain women as rabbis, ministers, and priests.

Although several religious groups accepted the goals of feminism as their own, others waged war on feminism. In America during the 1980s Christianity, Judaism, and Islam experienced a conservative backlash against the liberalizing tendencies of the 1960s and 1970s. Many groups within these religious traditions felt that second-wave feminism was anti-God, antireligion, and antifamily. Conservative Christians argued that God created woman for a specific plan and purpose. A woman’s body was created differently from a man’s body so that she could be the bearer of children. While feminists sought to transcend the perceived biological limitations of women’s bodies, antifeminist Christians saw the biology of women’s bodies as their destiny. A woman’s role in society and in the home was to be different from yet complementary to a man’s role. Reminiscent of Puritan theologians, conservative Christians sought to reappropriate the idea that women should be submissive, especially to their husbands, the clergy, and the authorities that God has placed above them. If women abandoned the role that God has given them—by pursuing the goals of feminism, for example—they would never truly be happy or experience fulfillment. Conservative Christians were also appalled by the feminist movement’s support of abortion and homosexuality, which they felt were unbiblical.

Third-Wave Feminism

Third-wave feminism became a distinct movement in the 1990s. Although third-wave feminists grew up enjoying the

rights and privileges secured by the success of second-wave feminism, they critiqued second-wave feminists for assuming that the concerns of white, middle-class American women were the concerns of all women. Lower-class women, African American women, Native American women, Mexican American women, and immigrant women did not feel that their particular needs and rights were addressed or represented by second-wave feminists. They asserted that there were multiple ways of being a woman and multiple ways of being a feminist. Embracing the postmodernism described at the beginning of this essay, such women became comfortable with, even insisted upon, multiplicity and contradiction. One did not have to burn one's bra or avoid sex with men to be a good feminist. In fact, for third-wave feminists being a good feminist actually meant celebrating the different ways that different women fight injustice and inequality in their everyday lives. It became acceptable for women to be both feminine and a feminist. They could embrace their reproductive bodies without denying their intellect. These women insisted that they could have it all: an education, a career, a husband, a family.

Perhaps because of this profamily atmosphere, more religious denominations began to adopt feminist-friendly attitudes, even if they did not explicitly identify themselves with the feminist movement. Some women in traditionally antifeminist denominations became more receptive to third-wave feminism. Third-wave feminists who were still uncomfortable with organized religion developed their own women-centered spirituality through what became known as ecofeminism. Ecofeminists believed that domination, whether speaking of the domination of women, nature, or people of color, is a structural problem throughout Western society, and especially in Western theological traditions. Focusing on issues of food, sanitation, health, and sustainable population growth, ecofeminists sought to help meet the needs of poor women and children in an environmentally friendly way. Other third-wave feminists criticized ecofeminists for participating in the essentializing of women by presuming that women are innately closer to nature than are men or essentially better at taking care of the earth than are men.

In addition to rethinking feminism's relationship to religion and nature, third-wave feminism began to rethink feminism's relationship to sexuality. Not all heterosexual sex had to involve the domination of women, as feminists from the second wave suggested. Many third-wave feminists thought men should not be the only ones who enjoy sexual

intercourse—women should also derive pleasure from sex. Although some felt that heterosexuality was compatible with their feminism, others saw homosexuality, transsexuality, and even asexuality as more conducive to helping them achieve their feminist goals.

Critical Assessment

While first-wave feminists endeavored to rid the United States of de jure discrimination by seeking to give women the right to vote, second-wave feminists were more concerned with de facto discrimination and the ways in which cultural practices oppressed women. Third-wave feminism, on the other hand, emphasized that different women were oppressed in different ways and therefore needed different feminisms to battle oppression. Thus there is little consensus on the goals, agenda, or definition of feminism. Because of the multiplicity of feminist ideas and movements, feminism has had an ambivalent relationship with religion. Sometimes religion has supported the goals of feminism, while at other times religion and feminism were viewed as diametrically opposed to one another. Yet since the colonial era feminism and religion have been intertwined.

See also *Abortion; Cult of Domesticity; Feminist Studies; Gender; Great Awakening(s); Marriage and Family; Oneida Community; Puritans; Religious Thought: Feminist; Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology; Same-Gender Marriage; Scriptures: American Texts; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Social Reform; Women entries.*

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Feminist Religious Thought

See *Religious Thought: Feminist*

Feminist Studies

Feminist studies arose as an academic field in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Feminism, which is concerned with political, economic, and social equity between women and men, encompasses both the personal and the political; it includes

equity in individual choices and in the institutional structures of society. A feminist consciousness begins with a recognition that inequities exist and are not a result of “natural” differences between women and men.

Historically, feminism is descriptive of social movements for change, identified by feminist historians as “waves.” The central issue of the first wave of American feminism was the suffrage movement, an endeavor that began in a Wesleyan Methodist chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848 with some three hundred women and a few men; it ended seventy-two years later, in 1920, when women gained the “sacred right to the elective franchise,” with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The second and third waves refer respectively to the contemporary movement beginning after World War II and the post-1990 generational shifts in strategies and tone for promoting political, legal, and social equality.

Women's Studies: The Beginnings

Feminist studies or women's studies developed out of various streams of change. During and after World War II women's employment and educational opportunities in the United States expanded. When women were able to achieve higher levels of education and wider work experience with added earning potential, the marginalization of women became less acceptable than it had been in previous generations. In order to understand changed expectations regarding women's roles, President John F. Kennedy appointed, in 1961, a Commission on the Study of Women headed by former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt. It became increasingly clear that both legal change and academic study and analysis were needed.

The Feminine Mystique, published in 1963 by New York magazine writer Betty Friedan, addressed the effects of changing roles for women. Friedan identified “the problem that had no name” as the lack of identity that many suburban, recently college educated women (white and middle-class) felt when their lives were shaped only by housework, child care, and husband “care.” The underutilization of women's skills in American society hurt both women and America. Friedan's analysis resonated broadly with women. By 1966 the National Organization for Women (NOW) had formed with a focus on legal equity.

At the same time college-age women were experiencing discrimination as they worked in the civil rights and antiwar movements. These younger women began to discuss social

justice from their experiences as women. They formed discussion groups known as consciousness-raising, or CR, groups. As they tried to make sense of changing roles, they looked to the past and to other fields of study. The first accredited women's studies class was held at Cornell University in 1969. The impetus for this course came from the recently formed Cornell-Ithaca Chapter of NOW. Women's studies courses took hold across the country, from California to Michigan, Ohio, and the eastern seaboard. The first women's studies program was started in 1970 at San Diego State University in California. Today there are more than nine hundred programs in women's studies or gender studies offered at undergraduate and graduate levels in the United States. In 1977 the National Women's Studies Association formed to support the academic enterprise. The NWSA's Web page reports that women's studies programs have the largest enrollments compared to other interdisciplinary fields. Women's Studies Online Resources (<http://userpages.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst>), affiliated with the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, in 2009 listed over sixty international women's studies offerings; the site is periodically updated to identify additional programs.

Women's Studies and Religion: The 1960s and 1970s

The conversation about women's roles was also present in churches, religious education, and religious life. In the fall of 1969 members of the first feminist or CR group at Yale University, the Yale Women's Alliance, shared their frustrations at the biases of the theology department. One result of their sharing of personal stories and insights was the publication a decade later of *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (1979), edited by Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow.

The increasing attempts by feminist scholars of religion to change how theology was done built on writings from the recent past. In 1958 theologian Krister Stendahl (later dean of Harvard Divinity School, 1968–1979, and bishop of Stockholm) had laid the foundation for the ordination of women as priests in the Church of Sweden in "The Bible and the Role of Women: A Case Study in Hermeneutics." In this essay, Stendahl systematically set the inclusive vision of Galatians 3:28 as the centerpoint of biblical instruction on women's roles. The issue found expression throughout the church. During the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), Pope John XXIII suggested that women can indeed be priests. In his 1963 encyclical *Pacem*

in Terris he wrote: "Human beings have the right to choose freely the state of life which they prefer, and therefore the right to set up a family, with equal rights and duties for man and woman, and also the right to follow a vocation to the priesthood or the religious life."

In 1968 Mary Daly's *Church and the Second Sex* was published. Daly, a Roman Catholic theologian, responded in part to Simone de Beauvoir's 1949 book *Le deuxième sexe* in which de Beauvoir named the Christian church as a source of women's oppression. Daly's extensive critique of the misogyny of the church included analyses of church dogma, the Bible, and the writings of church theologians over the centuries. She revealed a history written by both women and men that at the same time diminished women as second-class and affirmed them as equal to men because both women and men were created in the image of God.

One measure of the broad religious impact of the early secular women's liberation movement is an article that appeared in the *Ladies' Home Journal* in December 1970 by evangelist Billy Graham. In "Jesus and the Liberated Woman," Graham stated that boredom is "the problem that has no name" in reference to the question Friedan had posed in *The Feminine Mystique*. Graham called women's problem a spiritual problem: a failure to accept God's plan for men as husband, father, and protector and for women the role of wife, mother, and homemaker. Graham said that Christ brought women new prestige, but Christ did not free women from the home.

In 1973 Harvard Divinity School founded the Women's Studies in Religion Program to reshape theological education. It was only in 1955 that women had first been admitted to the divinity school, but by the mid-1970s nearly one-third of the student body was female. In another five years more than 50 percent were women. The program quickly evolved into a research format and in 1980 began supporting research associates, who worked on research projects and taught in the divinity school.

In 1974 a small magazine, *Daughters of Sarah*, edited by evangelical feminist women in Chicago, focused on interpreting the Bible and acknowledging historical women who had shaped the Christian tradition. The stories of biblical women such as Deborah, Sarah, Hagar, the unnamed concubine in Judges 19, and Mary and Martha were retold with the women as central figures rather than marginal to the story of men.

The importance of uncovering and collecting texts both against women and by women was an early focus of

feminist theologians. In 1974 theologian and historian Rosemary Radford Ruether edited a collection of essays, *Religion and Sexism: Images of Woman in the Jewish and Christian Traditions*, that brought together theology and psychology, from medieval, Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic viewpoints. A year later, in *New Woman, New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation* (1975), Ruether showed relationships among sexism, economic systems, racism, psychology, and religious beliefs.

The interdisciplinary nature of feminist studies in religion was always important. Scholars were interested in history, biblical interpretation, psychology, sociology, and social issues. Topics of interest ranged from inclusive language to homosexuality and reproductive rights. Diversity of religious traditions was equally part of the conversation. Evangelical women focused on methods of interpretation and found the Bible to be a rich resource in support of the equality of women in conservative Christianity. The most significant book from the evangelical community was *All We're Meant to Be*, published in 1974 by sociologist Letha Scanzoni and church historian Nancy Hardesty. Their argument centered on two texts: Genesis 1:27 and Galatians 3:28.

The Rebuilding of the Canon: The 1980s Onward

As well as recovering missing “herstories,” feminist scholars also began to ask questions about reconstructing and reimagining theology and biblical hermeneutics, or interpretation of texts. Many significant books appeared in the 1980s. In the same year, 1983, Ruether published *Sexism and God-Talk* and New Testament scholar Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza published *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*. The use of gender analysis added new and exciting dimensions to religious studies scholarship. Concepts such as theology and the biblical canon were recast. Ruether reinterpreted traditional theological categories informed by a view of Christian tradition as the “liberating prophetic tradition.” The theological category of “man” was no longer assumed to be a generic human understanding but included the experiences of women. Fiorenza created the “hermeneutic of suspicion,” an approach to biblical interpretation that focused on the limits of an androcentric biblical text. She encouraged readers to read the silences and traced two streams within the biblical text that emerged from Jesus’ discipleship of equals: a patriarchal hierarchical stream and a liberating egalitarian stream.

Religious history, theology, and hermeneutics were vital to the enterprise of feminist studies in religion, but also important was the practice of religion. New subjects emerged for theological and ethical reflection. Katie Cannon, in *Black Womanist Ethics* (1988), brought a new approach to studying ethics by using African American women’s fiction as a resource and context for ethical reflection. Psychologist Marie M. Fortune examined abuses within the church in *Is Nothing Sacred? When Sex Invades the Pastoral Relationship* (1989). Both *The Inclusive Language Lectionary* (1983–1985) and Nancy Hardesty’s *Inclusive Language in the Church* (1987) were helpful resources for ministers and liturgists concerned about the role of language in perpetuating male dominance and privilege. This awareness of the role of language was initially expressed by Mary Daly’s dictum: “When God is male, the male is god.”

Feminist studies in religious history also reshaped established understandings of religious movements. Betty A. DeBerg, in *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism* (1990), described fundamentalism as more than an intellectual theological debate. She agreed with other social historians that fundamentalism was also a reaction to the social changes of the early twentieth century, such as industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and World War I. However, she also noted that one of the most dramatic, pervasive, and intensely personal social changes of the period, the shifts in meanings of femininity and masculinity, had received scant attention. DeBerg examined the plethora of popular literature, namely, sermons, tracts, and periodical literature. In her analysis of these sources, she discovered rhetoric that was dominated by what she described as domestic relations, human sexual identity and behavior, and women’s and men’s spheres of activity. Her work demonstrated how feminist studies can enrich and broaden the insights of religious history.

Despite the wealth of insights from feminist studies in religion over the past four decades, gender analysis in the academy continues to strive to be considered mainstream. In November 2002 historian Ann Braude, director of the Women’s Studies in Religion Program at Harvard Divinity School, convened a conference to document the history of religion’s engagement with feminism. Twenty-five women, activists and academics, told their stories from Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Jewish, Muslim, Mormon, Buddhist, womanist, *mujerista*, and goddess perspectives. These stories have transformed religious education and practice. Indeed, the discipline of feminist studies in

religion is a necessity to fully understand North American religious life.

See also *Abortion; Cult of Domesticity; Education: Colleges and Universities; Feminism; Gender; Historical Approaches; Marriage and Family; Politics: Twentieth Century; Religious Thought: Feminist; Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology; Religious Thought: Mujerista; Religious Thought: Womanist; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Sociological Approaches; Women entries.*

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Film

New media technologies, such as film, have great impact on religious, social, and political life and can be used by communities and authorities for many diverse ends. At the same time, each and every “new medium” throughout history has been an extension and continuation of the media that came before. Clergy, journalists, and filmmakers, as well as judges and lawyers, have long contributed to the general relationships between religion and cinema in the United States.

The responses of two Protestant religious leaders to the cinematic portrayal of the Passion of Christ are instructive for seeing the relationship between religion and film at two points in time:

[I]t is easily the most heart-wrenching, powerful portrayal of Christ's suffering that I have ever seen. . . . I believe it has the potential to dramatically impact Christian viewers and, even more importantly, change the lives of the many unsaved audience members who could potentially be drawn to it.

Intensely realistic they are, and it is this feature which gives them truthfulness and makes them instructive. Painful they are necessarily to sensitive and sympathetic souls, and so are many of the pictures which surmount some of the altars of our churches. . . . I cannot conceive of a more impressive object-lesson for Sunday school scholars.

The first quote is from evangelical leader James C. Dobson, written in 2004 in response to Mel Gibson's *Passion of the Christ* (in “The Greatest Story Ever Told,” www2.focusonthefamily.com/docstudy/newsletters/a000000767.cfm, 2004). The second, in response to Thomas Edison's *Passion Play of Oberammergau*, was written in 1898 by the Reverend R. F. Putnam (originally published in *Home Journal*, February 15, 1898, quoted in Charles Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907*, 1990, p. 216). Both praise the realism of the respective films, both note the emotional impact that images can have, and both see the films as efficacious for religious life: the saving of souls and/or instruction. Yet the films are separated by more than a century, a century that spans the history of cinema, and the films are radically different from each other.

On one hand are films that make religious claims (and claims on religion), while on the other hand are religiously motivated responses to those films. This essay outlines both the production and the reception of films within the religious cultures of the United States. First, it is important to note that film and religion have been intertwined in the United States since the dawn of cinema. Second, while the subject matter of films is important in a religious studies context, the response to films is equally important. Although not immediately apparent in the sentences quoted above, their larger context reveals that Dobson and Putnam were writing apologies, defending the films against other political and religious leaders who had castigated the films for

theological reasons. The second part of this essay charts some of the commentaries and debates that have ensued in light of evolving filmic technologies.

A Brief History of Religious Films in the United States

“Religious films” here refer to those films with manifest religious subject matter (*The Passion Play*, *The Ten Commandments*, and so forth), though other films with latent religious foci also warrant attention since religion increasingly lies dormant within contemporary, seemingly secular cultural productions. When dealing with over a century’s worth of U.S. film productions, significant social, cultural, and religious changes are evident, and the cinema becomes a fascinating lens through which to view such changes.

Early Film and the Incarnation

While the oft-acknowledged inventors of cinema, the Lumière brothers—Auguste and Louis—were unveiling their cinematic technologies in France, screening short films on the walls of cafés in Paris in the 1890s, Thomas Edison was working to perfect his own motion-picture cameras and projectors in the United States. Edison’s first impulse was to create single-viewer projectors, such as the kinoscope, but eventually he realized the potential for projecting large images for a large audience. Once the early technological issues of recording and projecting were worked out, and once the novelty of cinematic projection began to wear off, a key issue of cinema turned to content: what to show? At first, as with the Lumières’ films in France, American films were motion images of everyday life: workers and performers, celebrations, sporting events, and the like. Soon, however, there was a desire for reproductions of events not always immediately accessible to viewers. By the late 1890s, according to early film historian Charles Musser, two subjects stood out: boxing matches and Passion plays.

Within a decade of the first cinematic projections, several versions of the Passion play were made and screened around the world (some as “motion pictures” but many also as illustrated lectures accompanied by organ music, hymns, and slides). Louis Lumière produced *La vie et la Passion de Jesus Christ* in 1898 in France, while the *Horitz Passion Play* opened in Philadelphia about the same time. But it was Edison’s 1898 production of *The Passion Play of Oberammergau* (dir. Henry C. Vincent) that became immensely popular and for all practical purposes started the quest to represent the life and death of Jesus on film. The Edison-produced film was a motion

picture decidedly still a part of a theatre world with its staged tableaux and stable camera, yet the “realism” affected by the moving images on screen was of great interest to audiences. According to reports, more than thirty thousand people saw the film in its first three weeks of screenings.

Other Passion plays and films on the life of Christ were successful in the decades following, with *From the Manger to the Cross* (dir. Sidney Olcott, 1912) becoming perhaps the first great, successful Jesus film. Olcott’s film was striking for its production costs (between \$20,000 and \$25,000 at the time) and the fact that it was filmed in “original locations” in Egypt and Palestine. Skipping ahead fifteen years, Cecil B. DeMille’s *King of Kings* (1927) becomes the first “truly American Christ,” as religion scholar Stephenson Humphries-Brooks claims, “and neither the church nor Hollywood would be the same after 1927” (*Cinematic Savior: Hollywood’s Making of the American Christ*, 2006, p. 9). Film-makers in future decades continued to create films based on the life and death of Christ, as the divine-human connection changed with the times and technologies.

Beyond the Silent Era

After the advent of sound films, for various reasons, major U.S. film production turned decidedly away from stories of Jesus and away from explicit biblical stories in general. There was no major production of a biblically based film from the 1927 release of *King of Kings* until DeMille’s *Samson and Delilah* in 1949. There were a number of Bible story films created by specific Christian production companies for small, target audiences that began to emerge during this time, but their effect on the general American culture is unclear and is beyond the scope of this essay.

Even if the trend was to turn away from Bible stories per se, religious subjects with a heavy-handed dose of moralizing became prominent through the 1930s and 1940s. *Boys Town* (dir. Norman Taurog, 1938), *The Song of Bernadette* (dir. Henry King, 1943), *Going my Way* and its sequel *The Bells of St. Mary’s* (dir. Leo McCarey, 1944, 1945) were all big hits and multiple Oscar winners that helped to re-create a unique vision of U.S. religiosity. Christianity became embodied in single individuals who struggle against institutional structures (even if that meant the church itself) to bring goodness, truth, and justice to a troubled environment. Such stories, in a secularized form, continue today in such films as *Lean on Me* (dir. John G. Avildsen, 1989), *Mr. Holland’s Opus* (dir. Stephen Herek, 1995), and *Take the Lead* (dir. Liz Friedlander, 2006), films that share

plot structures of the earlier films but are emptied of their religious dimensions to become secularized images of the strong individual in the face of adversity.

After the success of DeMille's *Samson and Delilah* (which reiterated the single individual versus institution theme, now reinterpreted through the biblical tradition), the way was cleared for big-budget "sword and sandal" epics to take prominence. A brief list includes *David and Bathsheba* (dir. Henry King, 1951), *The Ten Commandments* (dir. DeMille, 1956), a new rendition of *King of Kings* (dir. Nicholas Ray, 1961), *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (dir. George Stevens, 1965), and myriad other Christian-biblical themed films. Meanwhile, *Quo Vadis* (dir. Mervyn LeRoy, 1951), *The Robe* (dir. Henry Koster, 1953), and *Ben Hur* (dir. William Wyler, 1959) each did well, with their religious, tangentially biblical themes. All these films utilized biblical stories, which proved their upstanding nature; at the same time they provided grist for the expanding Hollywood titillation mill with their depictions of lies, murder, greed, and lust, subjects that permeate the Bible itself. Many of the films appealed to audiences who identified as Christian and saw them as instructional, and even at times devotional, so much so that many of these pictures actually created the imagery and understanding of theology and the Bible for masses of people.

"Religious films" have almost always been bound up with representations of Christian themes. Other religious traditions are seldom seen, and when they are, they tend to be cast in a negative light. This is especially true of representations of Judaism. Important to note, as some commentators already have, is that many of these midcentury pieces are not simply "biblical" films, but are in particular "Christian oriented" biblical films in which the Bible is understood via "supersessionist" reinterpretations. That is, Christian theology, through the New Testament, completes and fulfills the prophetic roles given in the Hebrew scriptures; thus Christianity is understood to supersede the "old covenant/testament." Furthermore, in these films Jesus is often portrayed not merely as a new and improved Semite of ancient history but as a new and improved European and, increasingly in the contemporary United States, a "superhero."

At the same time, the fact is that even within the specific locale of the United States there are myriad Christian traditions: There are always "Christianities," not simply "Christianity," and the varieties of Christian figures in films cannot be underestimated. Moreover, though in a more limited way, "Jewishness" (most films until the late twentieth century

cannot be said to deal with "Judaism" as such but with a more vague idea of what it is to be "Jewish") emerges at a number of cinematic spots. Starting with *The Jazz Singer* (dir. Alan Crosland, 1927), but especially coming to the fore in post-World War II movies such as *Gentleman's Agreement* (dir. Elia Kazan, 1948), with its theme of "passing" as Jewish, and eventually in *The Last Angry Man* (dir. Daniel Mann, 1959), films in American history dealing with Jewishness and Judaism have touched on issues of identity, assimilation, and anti-Semitism. With the 1971 *Fiddler on the Roof* (dir. Norman Jewison), we also find nostalgia for an earlier way of Jewish life, for all that was in place "before"—before the pogroms, before assimilation, before the Holocaust.

Midcentury Film and Ideologies of Race

Bound up with these overarching representations of Christianity and Christian morals are issues of race and ethnicity. This is true in relation to representations of Jews, as it is to representations of African Americans. D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* (1915) disturbingly re-creates a creation story of the United States based on purportedly Christian principles that affirm white supremacy and indicate that Christianity and the United States are founded on such. To the contrary, a significant genre of film that is often elided in religious film history are so-called race films, created mainly by black producers and actors for African American audiences. The 1920s and 1930s were decades with a very active black film industry, with Oscar Micheaux (1884–1951) being one of the most significant filmmakers. Black director King Vidor mentioned religious relations when discussing his 1929 *Hallelujah*: "Perhaps films can help us learn about life and living. Does the chance to watch shadows of ourselves in the speaking dark of a movie house explain cinema's great attraction? How else are we to express our human-ness? How else are we to express God?" (Quoted in Judith Weisenfeld, *Hollywood Be Thy Name: African American Religion in American Film, 1929–1949*, 2007, p. 22).

The critically acclaimed *Green Pastures* of 1936 retells biblical stories, but the setting is the contemporary South. The film had an all-black cast, including the actor Rex Ingram who played God himself, yet it was created by a primarily white filmmaking crew, and there was significant controversy over the depictions of African American religious beliefs and practices. The film was influential enough to shape many future filmic depictions of African American religiosity and thus also the image of black religion in the white imagination.

As filmmaking was consolidated into a handful of big commercial companies in the 1930s, black filmmaking began to disappear. Into the twenty-first century there is a smaller African American presence in U.S. cinema than there was eighty years ago, though two contemporary filmmakers, from radically different perspectives, should be noted. Julie Dash confronts African American identity through a retelling of history in *Daughters of the Dust* (1991). The story is of a Gullah family living on the Sea Islands off the coast of South Carolina at the turn of the twentieth century. The film makes extensive use of a complex, African American mythological framework to tell the story and thus preserve the past. And Spike Lee, even if his films are not “religious” by most stretches of the imagination, has nonetheless made some important comments on religion and race relations.

The 1970s Onward: Beyond Christianity

The period since the 1970s has seen its fair share of “Jesus films” in the United States, though by this time there was a need for a new Jesus for a new generation of Americans. These newer films each pushed the orthodox limits of how to depict Christ, including most significantly *Jesus Christ Superstar* (dir. Norman Jewison, 1973), *The Last Temptation of Christ* (dir. Martin Scorsese, 1988), and *The Passion of the Christ* (dir. Mel Gibson, 2004). If the first two were criticized for emphasizing Christ’s humanity, the latter has been seen as emphasizing if not his divinity at least his super-humanity. Both Scorsese and Gibson emerge from strongly Roman Catholic backgrounds, and their films can be seen expressionistically as part and parcel of their own faith backgrounds.

The last thirty years have brought new types of “religious films” that do not fit the traditional Christian model. There have been farcical productions such as *Oh God!* (dir. Carl Reiner, 1977) and *Dogma* (dir. Kevin Smith, 1999), as well as stories that give strong attention to religion yet pull on traditions other than Christianity. Among the latter are *The Legend of Bagger Vance* (dir. Robert Redford, 2000), a retelling of the *Bhagavad Gita*; *Kundun* (dir. Martin Scorsese, 1997), dealing with Buddhism in Tibet; and the comedic yet provocative *Keeping the Faith* (dir. Edward Norton, 2000), in which a rabbi and a priest play the key friendship role. There are also films that work syncretically, piecing together mythic and ritualistic elements from several traditions; prominent among these are two science fiction works: *Star Wars* (dir. George Lucas, 1977) and *The Matrix* (dir. the Wachowski Brothers, 1999).

Further, although many films throughout cinematic history are noted for their religious subject matter, directly borrowing from established religious traditions, a great many more films borrow from the formal structures of religion. Mythological modes of storytelling, ritualistic renditions of space and time, and the use of symbolic imagery have each been refitted for filmic purposes via editing, cinematography, and screenwriting. Myths, rituals, and symbols re-create the world as it is, repackaging it for religious consumption. Similarly, editing refigures the temporal flow of normal time, making it repeat, slow down, or move backward; cinematography sets a rectangular frame of vision onto the world, excluding some elements and including others; and screenwriting can unfold from a small story, or can be expansive and function as grand creation myths.

Experimental films such as *Koyanqsqaatsi* (dir. Godfrey Reggio, 1982) and *Baraka* (dir. Ron Fricke, 1992) make great use of editing to piece together disparate parts of the world and show the world as an interwoven organism, for better or worse. Films by Paul Thomas Anderson (*Magnolia*, 1999, and *There Will Be Blood*, 2007) and Tim Burton (*Big Fish*, 2003, and *Sweeney Todd*, 2007) are striking in their dramatic use of storytelling in ways that mimic mythological methods. And, more specifically, classical narrative elements of hero myths are continually reworked in films. Examples are *The Lion King* (dirs. Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff, 1994), *Braveheart* (dir. Mel Gibson, 1995), *Gladiator* (dir. Ridley Scott, 2000), and *Finding Nemo* (dir. Andrew Stanton, 2003). Classic pilgrimage structures are remade through films such as *The Straight Story* (dir. David Lynch, 1999).

Myths, particularly the stories pertaining to heroes, make for inspiring cinema, drawing viewers into the world of the screen. For younger viewers Simba (in *The Lion King*) and for older viewers Maximus (in *Gladiator*) each recast classic hero-myth structures. Each has the standard “call to adventure,” an acceptance of the challenge, the accompaniment and help by a strange group of others, a facing of trials, and eventually the finding of the source (whether that means dying in the meantime or not is beside the point of the hero’s journey). As in ancient hero stories, modern cinema attempts to inspire its audiences through psychologically relevant narratives.

Documentary and the Avant-Garde

Two genres of filmmaking deserve special notice, if only because they have often been ignored by religious studies scholars: documentary and avant-garde film.

Documentary film with religious significance begins with the dawn of cinema, even if the category “documentary” was not yet in place. One important example was the work of W. K. L. Dickson, who in 1898 received Pope Leo XIII’s cooperation to film a dozen scenarios of the pope’s ins and outs. These were shown at Carnegie Hall, in New York City, on December 14, 1898, generating newspaper comments like this: “His Holiness blessed the instrument which had recorded his movements, and through it . . . those who would see the pictures afterwards” (quoted in Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema*, 1990, p. 220). This is an amazing technophilic claim that suggests much about the perceived power of the media. Later popes, however, treated cinema with more caution.

Over the decades, documentaries increasingly developed a self-awareness of the differences and interminglings of subjective and objective points of view. Meanwhile, contemporary documentaries dealing with religion are prevalent. From anthropologically oriented pieces to more experimental works, documentaries excel at depicting religious life at a local level. Several such works appeared as part of a package put together through Auburn Media called “Faith on Film,” including *Investigation of a Flame* (dir. Lynne Saches, 2003), *The Smith Family* (dir. Tasha Oldham, 2002), and *A Time for Burning* (dir. Bill Jersey, 1966). Since the dawn of the twenty-first century, documentaries such as *Hell House* (dir. George Ratliff, 2001), *Trembling Before G-d* (dir. Sandi Dubowski, 2001), *The Education of Shelby Knox* (dirs. Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt), and *Jesus Camp* (dirs. Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady, 2006) have offered intriguing entries into conservative religious traditions through various channels.

Avant-garde film is seldom seen outside universities and museums, and it has not had a major impact on the viewing public. There is plenty of room to suggest that avant-garde film influences industrialized cinema, and so the indirect connection is important. But, even so, too strong a focus on “popular” film may be equally misguided. Even if, say, *Star Wars* and *The Passion of the Christ* are box-office successes (that is, they made much more money for the producers than they cost to make), it does not mean we can extrapolate from these films to make assumptions about American religious life. Scholars sometimes suggest that “popular” films allow us insight into mass culture, generally forgetting that most people have not seen even the most popular of movies.

Stan Brakhage, Maya Deren, and Hollis Frampton, among others, were outstanding experimental filmmakers in the mid- to late twentieth century, and their contributions have been felt across the filmmaking industry. Their work is deeply engaged with issues of religion, ritual, and mythology. In the early 1960s Brakhage wrote something of a manifesto for the religion and avant-garde relationship, claiming that the new artists “are essentially preoccupied by and deal imagistically with—birth, sex, death, and the search for God” (in “Metaphors on Vision,” *The Avant-Garde Film*, ed. P. Adams Sitney, 1978, p. 120). Meanwhile, commenting on *Wavelength* (1967)—a film that for forty-five minutes does little more than slowly zoom in on a small picture from across a somewhat empty room—filmmaker Michael Snow stated, “I wanted to make a summation of my nervous system, religious inklings and aesthetic ideas” (see Sitney, *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde, 1943–2000*, 2002, p. 352). We might query what possible “religious inkling” could be expressed through such an experimental format, yet such comments should be intriguing to those interested in the religion–film connection. Can films really affect our “nervous system” and our “religious inklings”? The experimental film form of Snow and others offers something uniquely different to the film viewer, making the receptive experience of watching film something like a religious experience that appeals to viewers’ bodies and spirits.

Responses to Film and Its Medium: Detractors and Supporters

Inevitably, there have been various responses to the religion–film relationship. First, the medium of film—the formal way it represents space and time, its projected setting, and its existence in a generally “public” milieu—is critical to take into account beyond the explicit subject matter. This was particularly true in the early years of film as the new technology began to reach mass audiences. Second, religious authorities, journalists, and others have responded to the filmic re-presentations of the world and thus have become part of the broader cultural field we call “cinema,” even as some of these responses have reached the U.S. Supreme Court.

Early Responses to Film’s Media and Presentation

The presence of religious subject matter in early cinema in the United States is tied to a number of agents and circumstances that are carried through at least the first half of

the twentieth century, to a greater or lesser extent. Such circumstances include the need for screening venues and the related needs to show film as wholesome (Edison himself quipped in 1907 that the success of motion pictures relies on films “of good moral tone”); the monetary greed of the “showmen” who set up screenings; religious authorities who saw cinema as potential blessing and/or curse; the artistic sentiments of filmmakers who attempted to create new and previously unseen imagery; and masses of people who created their own responses even as they could be swayed by prominent authorities and marketing motives. Musser (in *The Emergence of Cinema*, 1990, p. 221) makes an intriguing suggestion that “in the end amusement entrepreneurs exploited religious subject matter for their own commercial purposes and ultimately absorbed it within their own cultural framework. Religious subjects did not necessarily oppose the flourishing world of popular amusement but rather were often subsumed by it.”

In the United States, as elsewhere, new technologies meet religious acceptance and opposition, often to mixed results: The faithful who are pro-technology end up with messages that easily surpass what authorities thought they were good for, while those resistant to new technologies generally cannot maintain their opposition if they remain anything other than sectarian. So, while the subject matter of films has always been a central issue in the religion-film relationship, there is also the issue of film as a specific audio-visual medium, presented formally in specific environments, and there are responses to that larger package of material. The best of early cinema might have been concerned with subjects of “good moral tone,” but there was a countering negative impulse concerning such crucial material matters as lighting in the theatres, since the morally minded did not like to imagine what was going on in those “dark holes.” Morality in every new medium is as much about content as formal presentation, and both are part of the subject to which people respond.

Responses by Religious Leaders

As religious groups, and the general public, settled in to the presence of cinema as a major player in U.S. cultural life, various individuals and groups worked to respond to and regulate the emerging industry. A great many of these were religiously motivated. Many of the early films on the life of Christ were acceptable to the general religious public because they found visual inspiration from scenarios by the

French artist Gustave Doré, whose illustrations for Bibles in the nineteenth century were popular across the Western world.

Even so, the varied versions of Passion plays produced in the United States in the first two decades of cinema became a notorious issue for public theological debate. One key problem, carried over from theatrical versions of the Passion, was that human (presumably sinful) actors played the part of Jesus, thus problematizing the human-divine synthesis of the orthodox Christian understanding of the Incarnation. Particularly disgraceful was that an actor would be paid as a professional to depict the holy figure. As with the preceding centuries, in which Christian images have been exalted, prayed to, argued against, and destroyed, the next hundred-plus years of filmmaking have taken up similar challenges of representation and Incarnation. Gibson’s *Passion of the Christ* was merely one more contentious link in a chain of images spanning the length of religious cinematic history.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, many religious leaders, especially Protestant, published articles and gave sermons on the topic of cinema, some promoting it and others condemning it. An article by Protestant minister Dr. Percy Stickney Grant in 1920 praises film’s potentials for teaching as well as for offering entertainment value after a hard day’s work. The evangelist John Rice, in *What Is Wrong with the Movies* (1938), pleads with his readers, “I warn you that continuing to see the movies may harden your heart until you will be enamored of sin.” Many other leaders could be quoted, and these two merely indicate that there was no coherent religious response to cinema, especially among Protestants.

Yet it was the zealous work of Will H. Hays—a Presbyterian layman, national chair of the Republican Party, and U.S. postmaster general—that really began the work of standardizing and censoring the morality surrounding film subject matter. By the mid-1930s the “Hays Code” (officially, the Motion Picture Production Code) was in place, with the help of the Jesuit priest Daniel Lord. The code severely restricted displays of sexuality and crime that had become rampant in cinema of the 1920s. The code continued to hold sway (often in minute detail) for film production until the 1968 adoption of the rating system by the Motion Picture Association of America.

Meanwhile, Roman Catholics in the United States organized and unified their approach to cinema. U.S. bishops helped create the Legion of Decency in the 1930s, leading

Pope Pius XI to respond with an encyclical, *Vigilanti Cura* (1936). The encyclical attempts to be balanced by noting how motion pictures can promote good and insinuate evil, but it clearly falls on the side of caution, arguing strongly for regulations begun by the Legion of Decency. Through the midcentury, the U.S. Catholic Church became a key force in the censorship of film, and Hays worked alongside the Legion of Decency to shape the way films were produced and what was presented to audiences.

Ambivalence toward film continued through the latter half of the century, though the ire and acclaim became increasingly focused on individual films, not on “cinema” as a whole. Controversies continued over representations of Jesus Christ in Martin Scorsese’s *Last Temptation of Christ* (1988), in which an all too human Jesus is condemned by conservatives, while on the flip side liberals condemned Mel Gibson’s *Passion of the Christ* for excessive violence and an all too superhuman view of Jesus. After the uproar over Gibson’s film, smaller scuffles have broken out more recently in response to *The Chronicles of Narnia* (dir. Andrew Adamson, 2005), with many criticizing its thinly veiled Christian apologetics, and others blasting *The Golden Compass* (dir. Chris Weitz, 2007) because it was based on a book by an atheist writer, Philip Pullman.

Supreme Court Cases

These controversies have generally been set within and bounded by popular media: newspapers and television news and, more recently, Internet outlets like blogs and Web sites. Yet they have also surfaced in the legal system, with a number of cases reaching the U.S. Supreme Court. Two examples are a case in the early 1950s over Roberto Rossellini’s film *The Miracle* and a 2005 case that harkens back to DeMille’s *Ten Commandments*.

The Miracle stands at the heart of *Burstyn v. Wilson*, a case ruled on by the Supreme Court in 1952. In the film a somewhat confused and inebriated shepherdess has sex with a wandering stranger (played by Federico Fellini), envisioning him to be St. Joseph. When she becomes pregnant she imagines the child must be divine as well. The woman is mocked and scorned by her neighbors for her beliefs, and in the end she flees town and gives birth in a church on top of a mountain. The National League of Decency, a private Catholic organization, called the film “a sacrilegious and blasphemous mockery of Christian religious truth,” while in New York, Francis Cardinal Spellman led protests against the screening of the film. Once called the “American pope,” Cardinal

Spellman and the protests were initially successful, causing the New York film board to ban screenings, relying on a state law that allowed censorship boards to deny licenses to commercial films that were deemed “obscene, indecent, immoral, inhuman, sacrilegious.” The Supreme Court ultimately reversed the New York State ruling, asserting the right to free speech set out in the First Amendment and effectively rewriting the laws on censorship and film that had been in place since the dawn of theatres in the United States. Literature had been protected until this point, but not film.

A half-century later, another Supreme Court case displayed the role of film in a U.S. political and legal context. *Van Orden v. Perry* (2005) concerned the display of the Ten Commandments in and around courthouses, one of those being a six-foot-high granite sculpture outside the Austin, Texas, state capitol and adjacent courthouse. The monument was erected in 1961, though little attention was paid to it for the following decades, and it is only one of many Ten Commandment sculptures outside courthouses, capitols, and urban squares in the United States today. A great many of these monuments actually came into being through the publicity stunts of DeMille as he was finishing his second version of *The Ten Commandments* in the mid-1950s. As promotion for the film, DeMille got in touch with the Fraternal Order of Eagles, a nationwide association of civic-minded clubs (founded in 1898, interestingly enough, by a group of theater owners), who had been distributing copies of the Ten Commandments to courtrooms across the country as “guidance” for juvenile delinquents. DeMille and the FOE commissioned hundreds of granite sculptures of Moses’ tablets to be placed outside courthouses across the United States, including Austin, Texas. DeMille died in 1959, but the FOE continued the task of planting the sculptures through the 1960s, and they are now the focal point of Supreme Court decisions that impinge directly on church–state issues in the United States.

Conclusion

Through the twentieth century, cinema became a vital sociopolitical force that has had many repercussions for religious traditions. The connections between religion and film are vast, intersecting with politics, church–state relations, and the justice system; social tensions of race and gender; and the role of technology and media in evolving religious traditions. A thorough understanding of twentieth-century life in the United States cannot afford to ignore the role that cinema has had on religion.

The continued rise of the “new media” provides both new challenges and opportunities for religious traditions in the United States. Cinema’s dominant cultural influence is undoubtedly waning in the wake of videogames and Internet-related innovations. On the other hand, a thorough understanding of the history of film, especially early film, reveals reactions and responses that are uncannily similar to those being developed toward new media today. Gibson’s *Passion of 2004* and other films like *The DaVinci Code* (dir. Ron Howard, 2006) show that film continues to be an important player in symbolic struggles.

See also *Angels; Anti-Semitism; Celebrity Culture; Electronic Church; Holidays; Internet; Journalism; Judaism; Jewish Culture; Literature* entries; *Music: Appalachian Religious; Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Race and Racism; Radio; Religious Press; Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact; Scientology; Sport(s); Television; Visual Culture* entries.

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Folklore

Artifacts, art, craft, architecture, beliefs, behaviors, private and public customs, habits, foodways, dress, ways of speaking, bodily communication, dance, music, and song—these are among the cultural expressions of religious affiliation or observance that constitute religious folklore and folklife in the American context. The terms *folklore* and *folklife* refer to specific cultural creations, the process of their creation, their conscious and unconscious performance, as well as their transmission between individuals and communities.

The field of folklore and folklife studies the multitude of aesthetic forms that constitute daily living and include a wide range of subjects associated with American religion—from New England Puritan diaries to Italian Catholic St. Joseph Day altars, from African American preaching styles to Pennsylvania Lutheran baptismal certificates, from Mormon missionary narratives to Polish Easter food customs, from Sacred Heart of Jesus tattoos to apocalyptic Internet sites proclaiming the Rapture. All these examples are based on the Christian tradition, but any number of Native American, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Wiccan, and Neo-Pagan topics in myriad expressive forms have informed the study of American religious folklore.

Contemporary studies of American religious folklore tend to analyze and compare the cultures of communities

defined by their religious belief systems. Such communities can also be defined through shared geography, age, gender, economy, occupation, leisure, and medical, political, or other beliefs. Religious folklore stresses the significances of aesthetic or artistic creativity and creation; historical process; the varieties of construction of mental, verbal, or material forms; and the enduring relationship and subtle balance between utility and creativity in such forms within cultures. The methodology of religious folklife includes exhaustive historical research using all available historical sources as well as field studies that include ethnographic observation, thick description, and interviewing. This method and subsequent analysis allow people to speak for themselves using their own aesthetic and classificatory systems to explain their religious beliefs and practices.

Developments in the Study of American Religion

Since the 1980s scholars who specialize in American religion have been moving away from concentrating solely on the history, texts, leadership, and theological controversies of religious institutions. What had been known as the study of American “church” history is now more broadly and openly referred to as American “religious” history. Scholars presently have a greater sensitivity to and interest in the realities of religion as it is actually lived, not only among ministers or administrative functionaries of a religious institution, but also among the laity whose beliefs and practices actually sustain those religious institutions. Meanwhile, written or published sources are no longer given primacy over other cultural forms or expressions of religion such as speech, music, and art as sources for telling the multiple and complex stories of American religious communities and individuals. Complementing the desire to study the historical parameters of people’s religion is the greater interest in studying the cultural life of contemporary religion using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Folklorists are attentive to the documentation and analysis of American religiosity in historical and contemporary settings and in rural, urban, suburban, agricultural, industrial, face-to-face, mass-mediated, and generational contexts. Folklore studies particularly challenge both academics and nonacademics to learn from and analyze the cultural production of all people and communities within a society, not solely the socially elite, academically trained, or politically powerful. Folklorists, therefore, endeavor to focus on all individuals, cultures, and lifeways found within the context of a local region, but also as these are manifested globally.

Folklorists and American Religion

American folklorists were drawn to study the noninstitutional dimensions of American religion, as well as its vibrant cultural expressivity, several decades before their scholarly counterparts in church history and religious studies. In the first half of the twentieth century, before formal academic programs in folklore existed in the United States and Canada, scholars of American folklore were divided between those who identified themselves as anthropological folklorists and used fieldwork to gather data, and those who identified themselves as literary folklorists studying aspects of American religion by, for example, emphasizing historical text as a form of information-laden literature over a concentration on cultural context.

The anthropologist Franz Boas (1858–1942) and his students Ruth Benedict (1887–1948), and Gladys Reichard (1893–1955) were editors of the *Journal of American Folklore* from 1908 to 1940. They wrote and published many studies on Native American religion, mythology, and worldview bringing the anthropological fieldwork-oriented approach to religion into the discipline of folklore. Benedict wrote *Zuni Mythology* in 1935, and Reichard published *Prayer: The Compulsive Word* in 1944, and *Navaho Religion: A Study of Symbolism* in 1950. Boas’s ethnographic approach influenced his student Zora Neale Hurston (1891–1960), whose article “Hoodoo in America” in *JAF* in 1931 and her subsequent writings about African American folklore and beliefs are significant ethnographic accounts. Melville Jean Herskovits (1895–1963), another of Boas’s students, studied survivals of African cultures in the family life and in the material and spiritual life of African Americans. Herskovits’s student, William R. Bascom (1912–1981), who served as president of the American Folklore Society from 1952 to 1954, is known for his studies of Yoruba religion. He conducted early research among the Gullah people of South Carolina and the Georgia Sea Islands in 1939. Bascom’s work in African, Afro-Caribbean, and African American folklore stresses the importance of understanding the social and cultural contexts of religious beliefs and practices.

George Pullen Jackson (1874–1953) was a text-centered early researcher of American folklore. A professor of German at Vanderbilt University, Jackson reserved his greatest scholarly enthusiasm not for German legend or oral epic, but for the study of American religious folksong. He was the first major scholar to describe and classify the sources of religious folk music, which he traced from New England to

the South. Relying on printed texts and the detectable melody and lyrics, especially nineteenth-century American “shape-note” songbooks—a nonstandard method of musical notation employing shaped characters associated with particular pitches—he formulated typologies of folk hymns, revival spirituals, and religious ballads. Jackson discerned the significance of religious folksong in American evangelism, revivalism, the camp meeting and “singing schools” (summer sessions taught by itinerant master singers), but insisted, problematically, that any traceable African influence was minimal.

Other Genre-Oriented Approaches

In the generation of scholars who immediately followed Jackson, folklorist Wayland Hand (1907–1986) specialized in an area of text study that he framed as “popular belief and superstition.” Hand approached American religion from the perspective of the study of oral genres or the “lore” of religious people and was, like Jackson, interested in the diversity and cross-cultural spread of such beliefs. He assembled religious, medical, magical, miraculous, and occult beliefs from the field and from thousands of scholarly and popular print sources to create the UCLA Archive of Popular Beliefs and Superstitions. Hand also worked on the collected “popular beliefs” of North Carolina (assembled from the “Frank C. Brown Collection”), Ohio, and Utah, preserving, classifying geographically, and annotating these narratives as items of belief.

American Religious Folklife: Yoder

The interface of folklore and American religion was developed most prominently by Don Yoder (1921–), one of the most influential and well-known American folklorists. Yoder applied European “folklife” approaches to the American scene. Moving folklore studies away from oral materials and related texts, he prompted the study of new “texts” with a greater sensitivity to the context in which they were found. Beginning in the early 1950s, Yoder took the scholarly methods he had learned as a doctoral student in American church history in the 1940s at the University of Chicago and integrated them with the approaches to regional ethnology, or the study of local cultures, used by scholars in continental Europe. Equipped with knowledge of pre- and post-World War II German-language folklore scholarship, Yoder took the European *religiöse Volkskunde* or “religious folklife” approach from German and Swiss scholars such as

Georg Schreiber, Heinrich Schauerte, Rudolf Kriss, Adolf Spamer, and Richard Weiss and applied it to the American context. These men had chronicled the traditional oral, material, and ritual lifeways of Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians in regions of Central Europe emphasizing, for example, systems of pilgrimage, customs of the church year, holy day foods, and the material expressions of saint devotion.

In applying the lessons learned from *Volkskunde* to the American religious scene, Yoder developed an “American folklife studies” approach. He directed that approach toward the collection and analysis of the cultural output of religious communities, especially in the mid-Atlantic region, that had been transplanted from Europe and successfully adapted to America. These communities included church and sectarian groups such as the Lutherans, Swiss Reformed, Amish, and Delaware Valley members of the Society of Friends, who had come originally to Pennsylvania at the invitation of the English colony’s founder, William Penn, the Quaker exemplar of religious toleration.

Among Yoder’s many scholarly contributions was the journal *Pennsylvania Folklife*, which he cofounded with folklorist and colleague Alfred L. Shoemaker (1913–?), and a series of innovative courses, beginning in 1957, at the University of Pennsylvania. Yoder did not neglect the study of the leading personalities and theological controversies of relevant denominations, but he worked to balance the study of such biographies and texts with the rich oral, material, and performative forms present in the everyday lives of the faithful. He believed these folklore materials should spur American religious historians to rethink the preeminent established discourse, which asserted that the overarching narrative of American religion ostensibly issued forth from the influential roots of New England Puritanism. Yoder suggested that such a narrative was better founded in the equally complex narrative of American religious toleration and plurality that existed in Quaker Pennsylvania. From the intricacies of Moravian women’s clothing and the prevalence of occult narratives among the Pennsylvania Germans to the search for a Quaker material culture and the distinctiveness of religious folk song observed in the “white spiritual” in Pennsylvania, Yoder chronicled and analyzed the origins, variants, vibrancy, meaning, and influence of such expressive culture, which he used as keys to unlock the ideas, fears, joys, emotions, and longings of mid-Atlantic religious cultures. Within the tapestry of American religious life, as Yoder detailed, those could be found in the Pennsylvania

German *fraktur* or illustrated manuscript art, the painted hex signs on the barns of some Pennsylvania Dutch, the hand-drawn and -colored picture Bible of an American Pietist, and the celebratory customs marking Christmas, New Year's, and Easter.

An American "Folk Religion"

Yoder's approach to what he termed "folk religion" in America was as a context-centered, not genre-centered, assemblage of people's religious oral and material lore/culture. He often cast what he saw as the folk practice and folk interpretation of religion into a rubric he called the folk cultural dimension of religion. Again relying on European folklife precedents, he conceptualized religion as a dichotomy between institutional perspectives, or "official religion," and everyday religious belief and practice and interpretation, or "folk religion." He included within this definition the totality of all people's views and practices of religion apart from and alongside the strictly theological and liturgical forms of the official religion.

Other folklorists influenced and inspired by Yoder over the last forty years have applied his conceptualization to the American scene. Their research is illustrative of the variety of communities, contexts, and approaches of the folklorist to American religion. Elaine J. Lawless, for example, studied the oral expression and life history of Pentecostal women in Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, later using reflexive ethnography to study Missouri Pentecostals. Jeff Todd Titon concentrated on speech, chant, and song in an Appalachian Independent Baptist congregation. Jodie Shapiro Davie analyzed the conversion stories of Presbyterian women in New Jersey. Lydia Fish concentrated on Polish Catholic celebrations and customs in Buffalo, New York. Daniel Wojcik investigated traditionalist Catholic Marian apocalypticism at a Queens, New York, shrine. James S. Griffith explored the architecture and sacred topography of the Southwest. Yvonne J. Milspaw examined Protestant home shrines in Pennsylvania. Yvonne Lange described the influence of Catholic paper ephemera on the folk sculpture of New Mexico. And David J. Hufford probed the boundaries of supernatural beliefs for Americans through attention to the traditions of supernatural assault and their transmission as *memorates* or first-person accounts of the supernatural.

Yoder consistently asserted that in a complex society there are no religious traditions, periods of their existence, or particularities of setting that do not have relevant folklore present to appreciate and research. Each religious context

should be observed to see which folklore genres are present and appropriate for consideration and study, such as folk speech, narrative, ritual and festivity, music, belief, and humor. Daniel W. Patterson, another folklorist and contemporary of Yoder, contributed significantly to the study of a distinctive American religious movement and culture. Patterson worked and published on the musical traditions of the intentional utopian community known as the Shakers.

Toward a Theory of American "Vernacular Religion"

Beginning in the 1960s, the application of what is now called performance theory—an emphasis on mode of presentation in a social context versus mere collection and documentation—to the study of folklife complemented the earlier perception that tradition is a living process exhibiting both conservative/passive and dynamic/changing qualities. Performance theory further prompted folklorists to see religion in its various forms of expression as vibrant, never static, continually transforming as individuals receive and adapt traditional knowledge and practices to specific circumstances. Thus the expressive culture of religion from a performance theory perspective does more than simply reflect the worldview of a religious tradition; it actually assists in the creation of a culture, and, if needed, its reconstruction.

In the 1990s Yoder's student Leonard Norman Primiano, influenced by the theoretical developments of performance theory in folklore, noted the limitations of a dichotomous two-tiered approach to understanding lived religion. In 1995 he introduced the term *vernacular religion* to replace the term *folk religion*. Unhappy with the designation of institutionalized religion as "official" and folk religion as "unofficial," Primiano adopted the term *vernacular religion* to define more clearly religion as human beings encounter, understand, interpret, and practice it. Primiano called on folklorists, and religious studies scholars alike to pay special attention to the complex process of acquisition and formation of beliefs accomplished by means of conscious and unconscious negotiations of and between believers, and to the artistry of their verbal, behavioral, and material expressions of religious belief.

Material Expressions of American Religion

Many contemporary folklorists have found material culture to be an invaluable source of vernacular knowledge, artistry, and practice regarding religion both within formal institutions and of believers themselves. Material culture is the

embodiment in various media of living creatures' impulse and ability for survival, communication, and creativity. For humans it encompasses both mundane and artistic creation and use and reciprocal relationships between objects and individuals. It often reflects and influences societal values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions. The folklorist defines religious material culture broadly to include artifacts, texts, interior and exterior environments or landscapes, and architecture that are communal and individual expressions of religious belief, affiliation, or faithfulness. Material culture in the historical and contemporary perspective of global religious traditions can be further delineated using sacred, decorative (or aesthetic), and more utilitarian categories. Like any material culture, religious material culture can be observed in paintings, drawings, prints, sculpture, photography, books, foodways, clothing, bodily alterations and adornment, architecture, agriculture, town planning, furniture, furnishings, and even machines and devices.

Material culture research is a relatively new scholarly pursuit among American folklorists. Not until the 1960s did the study of material culture become more fully accepted and included in definitions and explanations of American folklore. It was Don Yoder's marriage of the genres of folklife studies into a comprehensive regional culture approach that prompted an emphasis on the materialization of religion in the United States. Along with Yoder, other notable advocates have been Alfred Shoemaker, Warren Roberts, Michael Owen Jones, and Henry Glassie. The study of the material culture of religious Americans further blossomed with the work of Colleen McDannell, Yvonne Lange, Robert Thomas Teske, Kay Turner, Donald J. Cosentino, Laurie Beth Kalb, Holly J. Everett, Sabina Magliocco, and Joseph Sciorra, among many others. Such scholarship has been shaped by the identities and worldviews of particular religious communities studied as outlets for traditional behavior, performance, and creativity. Folklorists portray the material expression of belief not as something esoteric but as something that people have done and continue to do in their lives.

One early important attempt at synthesizing religious folk art in America was the 1983 exhibition "Reflections of Faith" at the Museum of American Folk Art in New York City. The breadth of the exhibition was emblematic of a fluid conceptualization of American religious material culture as an aesthetic form that could also include objects that had been previously classified as folk, fine, tourist, ethnic, rural, urban, or popular art. Drawing on various perspectives,

the exhibit reflected on Americans' association of spiritual beliefs and personal and community values. A carved winged Tlingit Native American canoe ornament, a twentieth-century New Mexican saint carving known as a *santo*, a detail of a Rhode Island 1793 gravestone, a 1978 *pysanky* or Ukrainian dyed Easter egg—this exhibition looked to how these and other objects were important because of their creation and use in context, and not because they were collectible commodities on the Americana art market. Such objects represented the breadth of material artistry, as well as the complexities of appreciating and preserving such examples of American religiosity as both historical and ethnographic evidence and as collectible art objects.

A multitude of material expressive forms in various shapes, sizes, colors, densities, conditions, and surfaces define American material religion at the traditional, institutional, and personal levels of enactment and use. Contemporary folklorists as ethnographers are students of such use, the relationship of objects to traditional creation and perception by believers and nonbelievers alike, and the dynamic complexities of continuity and change over time in a variety of circumstances. A sensitivity to such materializations of belief engages folklorists seeking to understand the nuances of American religious life. Their explorations include theoretical considerations of the importance of belief in the meaning of religious folk art; contemporary ethnographic readings of vernacular memorials found in American cemeteries; and reflections on memory, imagination, taste, race, and ethnicity in the creation and understanding of the constellation of religious buildings and environments that inhabit urban ethnic landscapes.

Each culture and religious tradition articulates its own beliefs and related practices between the sacred and the material. The plurality of religions in America therefore indicates the national presence of quite different investments in sacred materiality by the populace. Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists, for example, frequently use images of their deities in public and private devotions and intercession. Jews and Muslims forbid sacred iconography depicting their God. Still, each religious tradition has produced forms of material expression related to its religious belief system. Religious iconography in the form of image or text of various sizes and forms exemplifying local, lay, personal, and even national knowledge of interest to folklorists is evident in and on public and private spaces in America. Some American Roman Catholics attach to their refrigerators or keep in their pockets the paper ephemera known as "holy cards"

that are distributed to family and friends at the funerals of loved ones. The cards bear the name, birth and death dates, and an image of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, or a saint. American Mormons wear religious ritual garments after their consecration in Mormon temples. American Greek Orthodox have traditionally worn cloth amulets under their garments for protection from evil. American Jews may wear a gold Star of David or *Chat* sign on a chain around their necks. American evangelical Protestants might keep a wooden cross in their pocket or purse or possess a key chain with a biblical verse on it to remind them of their personal relationship with Jesus. American Muslims may wear the name of God or select a Qur'anic verse as a medallion, or hang the *subha*, Islamic prayer beads, from their car mirror. Like oral folklore, material culture affords folklorists an opportunity to study such human creativity and the variety of ways in which religious Americans interact with the power of institutional religion.

Vernacular Catholicism

Until the 1980s the majority of ethnographic research on religion by American folklorists stressed what could be called “folk Protestantism.” With the exception of Yoder’s work on Pennsylvania, such studies of Protestant Americans tended to center on independent southern congregations. William M. Clements, for example, researched the “folk church” in northeast Arkansas and from that study drew a typology of traditional elements in American “folk Protestantism.” Twentieth-first-century scholarship on Protestant Christian communities—also centered in the South—by scholars trained in folklore such as Glenn Hinson and Richard Cunningham Jr. has no interest in typologizing and makes use of both historical and ethnographic methods focusing analyses on the complexities of the experience and influence of religion in America.

Catholic folkloristics—the study of Catholic folklore and folklife in America—gradually emerged in the 1980s as a part of the study of American ethnic folk traditions. Folklorist Jack Santino keenly observed that ethnic Catholicism, the identification of Catholics with specific ethnic communities in the United States, has been balanced, and in some cases overpowered, by the identification of Catholicism itself as an ethnic group, especially since the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Both traditional and innovative beliefs and practices can be found among contemporary American Catholics in the nearly half-century since the theological, liturgical, devotional, and administrative reforms

of the Council. Such examples of Catholic folklife continue even in the face of secularization and lower level of participation in organized church life.

Many of the traditional practices still involve the home and the use of objects in it. Secular objects such as food can be given a religious purpose, and religious objects can be used for public display. Examples of the use of food are the Italian American Christmas Eve custom of serving a meal of “seven fishes” and the Polish American blessings of Easter tables filled with holiday foods, including dyed eggs and butter in the form of a lamb symbolizing Jesus. Examples of the use of secular objects are hanging palm crosses on doors, placing Marian holy corners in prominent spaces, or presenting window displays of religious statues or images. The elaborate home altars dedicated to St. Joseph or St. Anthony by Sicilian Americans living in Gloucester, Massachusetts, are a most compelling example of such a living vernacular religious tradition. These feasts for the eyes of color and spirit and creativity are rooted in the religious tradition of making vows to God for granting some blessing or healing. Such cultural performances celebrating the past and present vitality of vernacular Catholicism are complemented by contemporary manifestations of the Catholic tradition created and re-created by faithful believers, from the weekly liturgies and commitment ceremonies of same-sex Catholics to the physical changes in worship spaces required by nuns who wish to hold nonpatriarchal, nonhierarchical, and non-male priest-dominated Communion services.

Primiano defines “vernacular Catholicism” as the uniquely Catholic formulation of the impulse for religious expression. Vernacular Catholicism (and, by extension, vernacular Protestantism, vernacular Judaism, vernacular Islam, and so forth.) must not only take into account traditional customs, foodways, devotional practices, narratives, and such, but also consider the ways in which a Catholic individually expresses his or her understanding of the Catholic tradition—that is, the history, structures, laws, customs, beliefs, and practices of believers. Vernacular Catholicism involves absorbing, learning, accepting, changing, denying, embellishing, and appreciating the spiritual and cultural parameters of Catholicism in one’s life. Expressions of American vernacular Catholicism can be found wherever one finds American Catholics, whether through the prism of religious beliefs and practices of the individual Catholic or through the vernacular religion of the group.

American Jewish Folklore

Study of American Jewish folklore and community traditions is surprisingly underdeveloped, but rich with opportunities for observation and research. The cultural communication of this American ethnic, yet also religious, community grew out of the mass immigrations of eastern Europeans from 1880 to 1920, and later the twentieth-century movements of Jews from lands such as Germany, Russia, and Israel. American Jewish folklore expresses both conservative and dynamic qualities in various contexts and expressions: linguistically in the use of Yiddish, Judeo-Spanish, and Hebrew; musicologically in abundant music and song traditions; materially in distinctive foodways; and customarily in rites of passage such as the *brit milah* or *bris* ceremony of male circumcision, the bar/bat mitzvah ritual for boys/girls at age thirteen, and holiday celebrations such as Passover and the American celebration and elevation of Hanukkah from a minor to a major religious event. A particularly significant theme that attention to folklore brings to the discussion of the lives of American Jews (for example, in the work of Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Hannah Kliger, and David Shuldiner) is the challenge for some of maintaining a distinctive ethnic or religious identity while balancing and responding to the influential challenges of both American Christian and secular culture. The transnational quality of the Jewish experience between, for example, the United States and Israel sets a tone for research, but limits concentration on purely American topics.

Mormon Folklore in America

Mormon folklore is one of the richest resources of religious lore in America. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or the Mormon Church, recognized early in the twentieth century that their communities growing out of the church's center in Salt Lake City, Utah, represented a religious culture that was shaped and sustained by a unique folklore. Mormons emerged as leaders in the study of the expressive culture found among their own people

Mormon folklore studies reveal the variety and richness of the folklore of a sometimes persecuted religious community. Scholars have examined genres such as jokelore, folk art and craft, vernacular architecture, family folklore, folk medicine, folk song, and narrative traditions—from pioneer and folk hero legendry and missionary testimony to first-person accounts of the supernatural, including near-death

experiences. Cycles of stories both serious and humorous work to reinforce Mormons' claims about the truth of their doctrine and reports of remarkable conversions.

The contemporary Mormon folklorist William A. Wilson, while engaged, like Wayland Hand before him, in a variety of other folklore research, has memorably contributed to the content and methodology of American religious folklife by collecting and analyzing forms of the Mormon narrative, including Mormon humor, missionary tales, and memorates of the miraculous, while reminding his readers that it is not only attention to the memorable in religious folklore, such as dramatic tales of the supernatural, that lies at the heart of the Mormon experience. Rather, he argues that the tales of quiet lives of committed service to each other and others are often overlooked but central expressions of the everyday experience of Mormon life that especially need identification and attention by scholars of religious folklife. Although this scholarship represents an invaluable understanding and appreciation of American Mormonism as a culture, it awaits the next step in a critical consideration of all dimensions of Mormon life.

Resources

Resources for the study of folklore and American religion abound in colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. Material examples of vernacular religious art and craft can be found in local museums and outdoor folk cultural settings, as well as in the larger institutions such as the American Folk Art Museum in New York City, Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore, and many other significant ethnic, religious, customary, architectural, and costume collections found throughout the country. And not to be overlooked are the federally funded institutions such as the Smithsonian Institution and the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress. The Smithsonian Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies is especially interested in issues of cultural representation, conservation, and creativity. Smithsonian Folkways has produced and preserved important recordings of American religious folk song and preaching styles. Every summer the Smithsonian's Festival of American Folklife, a research-based cultural exhibition, is held outdoors on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. It brings together local and regional American tradition bearers to demonstrate their traditional skills, and religion has frequently become a central concern.

Various archives also contain considerable resources on American religion, including those of religious organizations, research centers, and public libraries. The American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress has sound, film, and video archives documenting aspects of American religious life from the 1930s to the present, including hymn singing, gospel music, spirituals, church services, sermons, revivals, and interviews recorded in the field.

Conclusion

Folklore and the context of its role in everyday life offer an exciting prospect for students of American religion. As folklore ethnographies have blended oral, musical, and material traditions of religious Americans, they have emerged with rich understandings of neglected communities, forms, and functions. The folkloristic contribution to American religion celebrates the significance of the artfulness of American religion—that is, it appreciates the ways in which religious belief and practice are embedded in American society and continue to thrive among the multiethnic, multiregional American population.

See also *Death and Burial Practices; Devotionalism; Food and Diet; Frontier and Borderlands; Holidays; Judaism: Jewish Culture; Latter-day Saints; Literature* entries; *Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact; Sociological Approaches; Spirituality* entries; *Tourism and Pilgrimage; Voodoo; Worship* entries.

Leonard Norman Primiano

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Food and Diet

What, how, and with whom the religious peoples of North America eat or do not eat are significant expressions of their beliefs, community, and values. Food is a, if not the, central ingredient of worship in most traditions that have made a

home on the continent, from the sacred corn of many Native American tribes to Christianity's communion bread and wine or Hinduism's *prasad*.

Foodways, the know-how and folk practices associated with food, are a much-beloved means of enacting and preserving community, from the Methodist potluck to Muslim fast-breaking meals. Some traditional foods eaten on holidays or in community gatherings, such as *vareniki* (filled dumplings) for Canada's Russian Mennonites or pork barbecue for southern evangelicals, are sacred symbols in themselves because they communicate the powerful combination of family, ethnic or regional heritages, and religious tradition. Whether skipping several meals a month and donating their cost to the Mormon Welfare Program or abstaining from eating pork altogether, Mormons keeping the Law of the Fast and Jews keeping kosher embody religious identity and values in their diets.

Although the functions of food and diet in North American religions are hardly unique, food has taken on special significance in two ways in shaping North American religion and culture. The first is the role of food in maintaining identity and continuity with historical religious traditions in new situations. This process takes place primarily (and ironically) through many different forms of adaptation. The second is the striking emphasis relative to that of other cultures on diet and abstinence—*dieting*—in the “land of plenty,” particularly in the dominant tradition, Protestant Christianity.

Food is also a valuable lens for bringing into focus central aspects of religion that are often overlooked in favor of institutional and theological concerns, especially those that take place in daily life and in which laypeople rather than clergy may be the chief actors. Foodways are “faithways” in which people of all walks of life make sense of, negotiate with, and live out religion. They are especially significant for understanding the complex relationships between women's leadership and subordination and other gender dynamics in religious communities and religious expression located primarily in home and family. They provide ample evidence for the overlap of religious and secular ways of understanding reality and for exchange between religious groups in this pluralistic society. Foodways may blur many of the lines by which religion has been defined, but they also clarify the dynamic nature of religion in North America.

Although food in America recently began to attract academic as well popular interest, culinary historians and anthropologists have paid little attention to religion when

examining food in North America, and scholars of religion have only begun to study the connections. Yet in the books and articles that do address the topic, food's centrality to religious life in North America across traditions, time, and geography emerges plainly, especially as exemplified in the themes just outlined.

Continuity and Adaptation in Minority Religious Groups

Foodways have been an important means by which minority peoples in North America have held onto religious identity, especially when they have suffered oppression or the threat of extinction. For Native Americans, the arrival and eventual dominance of Europeans in North America threatened almost every aspect of their cultures, including foodways and religion, which were deeply intertwined. Food rituals can be very resilient through time and dramatic change, however, and they have helped to perpetuate an indigenous religious identity. The Festival of the Green Corn has been celebrated by some tribes in the U.S. Southeast for centuries. The Muskogee, who were among the tribes relocated in the 1830s by the U.S. government from the Southeast to the Oklahoma Territory down the “Trail of Tears,” still observe this annual rite, which celebrates the food most important to their traditional way of life very much as was done when the ritual was first recorded in the nineteenth century and, presumably, far earlier. Beginning with a fast and ending with a feast, this “new year's” ritual not only renews life according to the sacred myths of the Muskogee but also reaffirms the connection of a people in vastly different circumstances with revered ancestors.

For the Oglala Sioux, the last buffalo hunt in 1875 could have marked the end of their religious identity because Oglala myths and rituals of sacrifice and feasting revolved around the symbolic power of the buffalo and its centrality to their diet. Rather than abandoning their religion, the Oglala adapted by doing what might have been unthinkable otherwise; they adopted and ritually hunted cows as “spotted buffalo” and accepted beef, previously considered unpalatable “white man's food,” into their sacred meals and regular diet.

Eating together is a powerful way in which African American churches remember heritage, celebrate hope, and perpetuate community. The foods themselves—soul foods—communicate these connections because they hearken back to the creativity-in-suffering of the slave cooks who brought

food traditions and symbolic associations from Africa. These symbols were adapted to the biblical language of white Christianity. The “gospel bird” of Sunday dinners, for example, may have a distant connection to African bird symbolism. Feasting on soul food realizes the hopes of those oppressed ancestors for “passing over” to eat at the “welcome table.”

African American Protestantism, more than the white churches, has connected feasting with worship. Many congregations still extend their Sunday meetings with meals. One African American movement founded in the early twentieth century did this quite literally. “Father Divine” and his followers in the International Peace Movement did not distinguish between church dinners and Communion. Their Holy Communion banquets were full meals in which, he taught, God’s love became tangible for and in diners, uniting bodies and souls.

For African American Christians, foodways have been important not only in persevering to maintain an oppressed minority tradition but also in transforming the dominant culture. As surely as soul foodways have influenced the American diet, the meaning African American Christians gave them has helped to prompt change in American culture. Christian leaders of the civil rights movement not only strategized over soul food but also made breaking down racial eating taboos a hallmark of integration.

But for those African Americans who lost hope in racial and religious integration, soul food could no longer be redeemed or be redemptive. As they saw it, soul food was the food of slavery and still enslaved black people by harming them psychologically and physically. Wallace Fard Muhammad, founder of Nation of Islam (NOI), believed that by advocating dietary change Islam could significantly benefit black people. He also saw such a change as necessary to severing ties with African American Christianity. Mohammad wrote manuals promoting Islamic dietary rules for healthier eating, but members of the Nation of Islam knew they needed a food symbol of their own, something that said “black” and “Islam.” Its exact origins are disputed, but bean pie, a combination of African American baking and the bean-based cuisines of traditional Islamic cultures, became that symbol of Black Muslim identity. It appeared at NOI gatherings, was sold on street corners for fund-raising, and announced the presence of a new religious movement in African American culture.

Foodways continue to be vehicles for immigrant groups to maintain their identities when they come to North

America. Since 1965 when the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act reopened the country’s doors to South Asians, Hindu temples have sprung up nationwide. For Hindus food is integral to temple worship, a central means of communicating with deities. Offerings of food are presented to and partaken of by the deities, thereby becoming *prasad*—a divine gift that is then returned to devotees for consumption. But in a new land the emphasis of temple activity is on eating together and treating all foods consumed in the temple complex as *prasad*.

Although Hindus may eat Indian dishes that keep them connected to their homeland and their gods, they may do so in ways that reflect the new context and need to connect to each other across traditional boundaries. Many temples have potlucks, a peculiarly American form of communal religious eating. Although Indian and Hindu food traditions are quite complex, varying by region, caste, or Ayurvedic disposition, the differences that might prevent Hindus from eating with each other in India are often renegotiated in America where they may matter less or threaten the coherence of the community. Some temples adapt by employing a chef who can (by virtue of caste and training) cook for all. And some avoid foods such as onions or garlic that cannot be eaten by some of their members.

New Variations on Old Themes in Protestantism

By the time the Puritans arrived on the shores of New England, European Christianity had already endured more than a century of division over the meaning and practice of its ritual meal. The names by which Puritans called it, “the Lord’s Supper” or “Communion,” were intended to express a pronounced difference with the medieval church’s emphasis on the transformation of the bread and wine into Christ’s body and blood that imparts grace to communicants, the sacrificial action of priests through which those miracles occurred, and the elaborate style of the Mass that paralleled the high theology of sacrament and priesthood. Puritans believed the meal should resemble the one described in the scripture: a simple gathering of the few true disciples doing what their Lord asked, remembering him with a common meal.

Yet stripping away the “magic” of the Mass did not altogether strip away the sense of awe associated with the meal or end the controversy surrounding its meaning and practice for those first Protestants who came to North America or their heirs. The new circumstances that arose in the new culture repeatedly called for resetting the Lord’s table. What

has remained constant through those developments is a concern for protecting the holiness or purity of the meal and a profound sense of danger associated with its violation.

Early New England Puritans were not of one mind about precisely what made the Communion meal efficacious for the faithful. Some sounded not all that far off from their theological archenemies, the Anglicans, asserting that the bread and wine might effect conversion or reveal Christ's presence, while others held firmly that what mattered was the believer's preparation. But if Puritan theology of the Lord's Supper was muddled, the dangers of violating its sacredness appear to have been quite clear. Preparation guides, devotional poetry, and other works from the period emphasize its holiness as well as the importance of proper observance. Only full church members—those who had testified satisfactorily to an experience of conversion as well as received baptism and lived uprightly—could partake in Communion. Such conversions happened less among the New England-born children of the first generation, so that by the end of the seventeenth century only a quarter of New England's churchgoers were partaking in Communion. Although some clergy argued for broader inclusion at the Lord's Supper, laypeople were quite reluctant to partake out of fear of the consequences they might incur by violating the meal's sacred boundaries.

In the mid-nineteenth century the holiness of the Communion meal was at stake again for Protestants. Rather than the purity of those who partook, the purity of what they drank became the main issue as the temperance movement raised fears about the evils of alcohol. How could the Communion table be set with something so physically and spiritually poisonous as an alcoholic beverage? But how could churches abandon the drink that Jesus and his disciples shared?

The "two-wine theory" was first proposed in the 1830s by Andover Theological Seminary Bible scholar Moses Stuart, and it spread widely through the end of the century. This theory advocated nonalcoholic Communion while preserving biblical tradition. Its proponents held that the wine Jesus drank at the Last Supper was really "good" unfermented grape juice, whereas the wine associated with drunkenness elsewhere in the scripture was indeed the "bad" alcoholic variety. In 1869 a Methodist dentist, Thomas Welch, discovered how to pasteurize grape juice in bottles, making "good" wine more feasible for churches. Meanwhile, temperance advocates warned that even one

sip of "bad" wine at the altar rail could start one down the slippery slope of sinful addiction. Fear and innovation were enough to convert most churches to grape juice well into the mid-twentieth century, with more conservative branches of Protestantism still observing the ban on wine.

A few decades later, how communicants drank came under scrutiny, and once again the purity of tradition was at odds with other purity issues arising in the changing society. The traditional use of a common cup ran counter to the new medical research on sanitation and fears of a new wave of immigrants perceived to be "dirty" by many. Individual cups, drunk from at the same moment in worship, became the alternative for some Protestant groups.

Abstinence and Diet in American Protestantism

The connections Protestants have made between purity, morality, and holiness in their sacred meal parallel tendencies in their outlooks on everyday eating and communal meals. Although many churches still enjoy community dinners at which prodigious amounts of food are consumed, a profound ambiguity about eating has also pervaded American Protestantism, as many a recipe in church cookbooks with titles such as "Sin Pie" attests. How Christians should eat, even more than how they should commune, has been a lively topic in American Protestant circles.

The 1621 Plymouth harvest feast that is considered the origin of the American Thanksgiving holiday was just one of many "thanksgivings" held by Puritan communities. Days of thanksgiving could be held whenever a special providential blessing had been bestowed. Most often, they came after fast periods had assuaged God's displeasure with the community.

Seventeenth-century Puritans observed far more fast than thanksgiving days, which involved twenty-four-hour abstinence from food during which prayers and sermons rang out in the churches. These public communal events often centered on working up guilt or pressuring moral conformity among members. Puritan leaders also encouraged private fasts for spiritual discipline and humiliation for personal sins, just as public fasts were a sign of communal humiliation before the Almighty.

Early Methodists and other evangelicals also observed communal and private fasts. Some thought it useful for fomenting revival. By the nineteenth century, however, fasting had fallen out of favor with Protestants. But as it waned, interest in the connection between daily diet and spiritual and physical health came to the forefront in almost every

Protestant group from evangelical social reformers to transcendentalists and the Restorationist and Utopian movements, which saw diet and bodily holiness as integral to purifying the world. Almost all new religious movements had dietary teachings. By the late nineteenth century, morality and diet were virtually inseparable and permeated mainstream culture, secular and religious.

Puritan thinkers had already connected diet and physical health to spiritual and moral well-being. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, believed excessive eating and drinking made one unfit for Christian service. Many religious reformers in the nineteenth century also believed that certain foods and drinks were prone to lead to sin through overstimulation rather than just overeating. These included not only the obvious stimulants such as coffee and tea but also sugar (and desserts), spices, and meat. Alcohol was at the top of the “bad” list, and there was a strong connection between temperance and dietary reform. A bad meal, however, could be as bad as a drink.

In sermons, manuals, and cookbooks, the most important religious and social leaders of the day warned against an overstimulating diet—it, along with slavery and illiteracy, was a social evil. The women of leading reform-inclined families led the charge. In 1858 Mary Peabody Mann began *Christianity in the Kitchen* with a dire warning directly from scripture: “There’s death in the pot” (2 Kings 4:40). The ingredients she wanted to keep out of the Christian cook pot included those just mentioned, but also “whitened” flour was a particular target. A decade earlier, Catherine Beecher in *Miss Beecher’s Domestic Receipt Book* (1841) had already surmised, “What had been the staff of life for countless ages” had become “a weak crutch.”

The person credited most for this attack on white flour was Presbyterian minister Sylvester Graham. Known today primarily for the “graham” cracker named for him, he was the most influential diet teacher in the early nineteenth century, mesmerizing crowds and spawning numerous followers and offshoot movements. Graham’s theories were broader than advocating whole wheat flour for health; he also included vegetarianism. His overarching premise was that diet should reflect creation. Healthy foods, Graham held, were the foods closest to the way the Creator had made them, not industrial products. Attempts to enhance natural foods with spices, even salt and pepper, he taught, were corruptions and might cause immorality or madness. Even cooking itself could be a “moral abuse” as well as a

“waste of woman’s time,” as Graham’s colleague William Alcott, the first president of the American Vegetarian Society, put it in his *Law of Health* (1853).

Among the sectarian groups identifying most fervently with Graham’s ideas were the Seventh-day Adventists. Founder Ellen Gould Harmon White had a vision in 1864 in which she was told to avoid meat, alcohol, and tobacco. Diet became an expression of holiness and a path to health for the Adventists. Their home base, Battle Creek, Michigan, became a dietary and medical center. The dietary teachings of White’s follower and head of the sanitarium there, John Harvey Kellogg, mirrored those of Graham. Like him, Kellogg is now remembered mostly for a product with mass appeal, developed from his emphasis on reforming the American breakfast with whole-grain “cereals.”

The late twentieth century saw more of a focus on diet in and out of Protestant circles. New vegetarian societies, raw foodists, and others, whether overtly religious or not, shared a worldview that stressed dietary purity as a means of renewing the world and improving the spiritual and physical health of individuals. Today, much reminds of the Protestant literature of the nineteenth century, but latter-day reformers often place more emphasis on the welfare of animals, as in the writings of theologian Stephen Webb (*Good Eating*, 2001), and on the environment.

One trend, however, is both a continuation of previous developments and a departure. In the mid-twentieth century an emphasis on weight loss and slimness—dieting—as a means to holiness emerged in the works of evangelical Protestants such as Charlie Shedd, a popular spiritual writer and Presbyterian minister. The recurrent themes in Shedd’s *Pray Your Weight Away* (1957), in a vast amount of subsequent literature, and in Christian dieting organizations such as the Weigh Down Workshop are the sinfulness of fat and thinness as a sign of closeness to Christ.

Cultural critics today sometimes blame Protestantism for the culture’s paradoxical obsession with health foods and overconsumption. To blame food “puritanism” alone is overly simplistic. Various factors have conspired to create a worried and overly well-fed culture. In the nineteenth century those included industrialization of the food system, medicalization of diet, and fears about impurity prompted by immigration. In the twentieth century agribusiness, globalization, the diet industry, and ever-increasing amounts of confusing medical advice topped the list. Religion does provide a symbolic language for the confusion of concerns about food. The history of diet in American Protestantism

reveals, however, a two-way exchange in which cultural concerns transform religious communities as well.

Foodways as Faithways

Foodways often make religion dynamic and real for people, but they are just as often overlooked when religion is thought of primarily as doctrinal or confined to official worship space. For one thing, foodways can bridge private life and public religion, turning laypeople into the chief agents of a religious community. Whether African American Protestants frying up chicken in their kitchens for the church dinner, Greek Orthodox women gathering to make mountains of stuffed grape leaves to sell at their church's Greek festival, or Zen Buddhists hoeing the community garden before making a communal meal of its bounty, preparing food is a major way in which laypeople live out religious community. Community building, or fellowship, outside of worship is the main way in which foodways contribute to religious life. In part, however, these are such powerful community activities because they parallel sacred ritual in worship. African American church dinners and Greek festivals are festival times—that is, they are ritually charged events that bring the community together and reconnect it to its origins, whether each Sunday or once a year. As in the act of worshipping together, eating together incorporates members into the larger body. For Buddhists who hold that everyday activities can be opportunities for enhancing awareness, gardening, cooking, and doing the dishes together can be acts of communal meditation.

A well-known aspect of American church tradition is the potluck meal. This meal may have its origins in the evangelical camp meetings of the nineteenth century. These were practical meals for those traveling long distances to the meetings. Sharing provisions in a “dinner on the ground” persisted as churches were established. The name even persisted long after the meal moved indoors and around a table. Many churches in the South still celebrate an annual “Homecoming” to which former members living at a distance may return. The center of the event is a dinner on the ground, where regional dishes and the particular specialties of church matriarchs recall childhood, cultural, and religious origins all at once, drawing participants once again into the fold.

Through the taste of a familiar casserole or someone's special pie, those “coming home” are literally reincorporated as they take these meaning-filled foods into their bodies. Flavors, textures, and aromas are experienced in the body and incite memory and meaning. They are powerful aspects

of food as a meaning-making tool. Some Italian American Catholics who grew up in the New York neighborhood around the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel have described their primal experiences of religion as hearing the sounds and smelling the aromas of cooking—the sizzling of sausages at the street festival of Our Lady or mothers and aunts stirring the simmering tomato “gravy” that was always part of the meal served after every Sunday Mass.

Such associations literally bring religion home as well, personalizing the broader experience to the level of mother's gravy. Sunday dinner as a sacred routine or memory may be as much a part of religious experience as Sunday Mass. It may even enhance the experience of the Mass as it extends the experience of sacred time into private life.

Foodways can also offer insight into the ways in which laypeople negotiate or reinterpret official religious teachings and values to suit personal situations or preferences. Although the teachings and preachings of Protestant religious reformers in the nineteenth century advocated strict dietary rules, laypeople sometimes balked or met them only halfway. When revivalist Charles Grandison Finney, as president of Oberlin College, instituted dietary restrictions that included abstinence from tobacco, alcohol, coffee, and tea, the campus complied. When he tried to mandate a vegetarian diet, however, students and faculty objected.

Dynamic Foodways in American Judaism

American Judaism is an especially interesting case study of negotiation and personalization in foodways. Judaism is often called a domestic religion because of its ancestral heritage and because much of its worship takes place in home-based rituals, including the annual Passover seder and Friday evening Sabbath meals. *Seder* means “order,” and the ritual itself is highly ordered, with a prescribed series of blessings, table setting, drinks, and foods reflecting the sacred story of the first Passover. Like the foods that ritually appear on the seder plate—bitter herbs, shank bone, *charoset*—foods at a weekly Sabbath meal, perhaps a *cholent* (meat stew) or *kugel* (baked noodle custard), have taken on symbolic meaning as well, tying a particular ethnic heritage or family tradition to religious tradition. A study of one family's seder reveals that individuals give meaning to the ritual in highly personalized ways, involving family dynamics and relationships that charge the event with meaning beyond that of its historical and religious relevance. To eat as a Jew can mean to eat as a Jew in a specific family as well as to be part of a venerable tradition.

Originally, the Jewish dietary laws or *kashrut* were most likely intended to be markers of holiness and purity distinguishing the Hebrew people from others. Today, keeping these laws is a means of being a holy and distinct people and is a link to the ancient past for many Jews, especially in the Orthodox and Conservative branches of Judaism. *Kashrut* and its interpretation have developed over time, however, and “keeping kosher” (an Anglicization of *kashrut*) eventually became as much a distinguishing factor among denominations of Judaism in the United States as a marker of Jewish identity. Indeed, controversy over *kashrut* figured prominently in the division of the traditional and progressive movements into full-fledged religious denominations.

In 1883 the menu for a banquet held in honor of the first graduating class of Hebrew Union College included nonkosher foods such as shellfish and frogs’ legs and also violated *kashrut* by serving milk and meat in the same meal. Observant participants were scandalized, but seminary leaders were unapologetic, insisting that the dietary laws no longer mattered. The incident became known as the “*Trefa* (unfit or nonkosher) Banquet,” and, as a result, some congregations left the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and called for the establishment of a more conservative seminary. Two years later the defining document of Reform Judaism, the “Pittsburgh Platform,” declared that keeping kosher was irrelevant to modern Jewish life.

Foodways—even ones of ancient ancestry that have been at the center of more recent historical divisions—are dynamic, however. By the end of the twentieth century both the Reform and Reconstructionist branches of Judaism were reexamining *kashrut*. Some began to reinterpret the dietary law as an important symbol of identity and guides to a moral lifestyle, especially related to animal, human, and environmental well-being. Reform Judaism’s 1999 “Statement of Principles” reaffirms the value of *kashrut* but leaves its observance to personal choice.

These events at the institutional level reflect the negotiations that individuals, families, and communities have been undertaking all along in American Judaism. Since first arriving in the United States, Jews have interpreted *kashrut* for themselves with a great deal of creativity and variety, in large part by necessity. Until the mid-nineteenth century few rabbis were on hand to offer guidance or enforcement, and so laypeople had to figure out for themselves how to manage their diets. With few *shochtim* (ritual slaughterers) and limited access to kosher foods, Jews had to make do,

following as best they could but often having to compromise the laws. Eventually, vibrant Jewish neighborhoods developed around bakeries specializing in ethnic Jewish delicacies, kosher butcher shops, and grocers who stocked kosher goods. Indeed, Jews often moved to be near a kosher food supply. And yet even today in small towns and rural areas obtaining kosher meat can be difficult, although mail order and the Internet have made it easier if not less expensive.

To ensure against false claims of kosher purity, in the early twentieth century the Union of Orthodox Rabbis began certifying foods as kosher so that wherever Jews shopped for food they could be assured of the purity of foods marked with its symbols. It was a sign of Jewish culture moving into the American mainstream when food corporations began marketing specifically to Jews. Crisco, a shortening developed in 1911 from vegetable oil, is *pareve* or a neutral food that makes keeping kosher easier and was marketed as such.

For those who do not or cannot keep strict observance, there is an infinite range of interpretation. Some keep part of the law. Avoiding pork but eating shellfish has been a popular compromise. Some keep kosher at home but not when eating out. Others who usually do not follow the dietary laws keep kosher in the presence of more scrupulous relatives or friends or during holidays. The term *kosher style* is now applied to some of these methods of negotiation as well as foods prepared according to Jewish ethnic traditions but not necessarily the kosher rules.

Sometimes negotiation with other identities calls for negotiation with the dietary laws. A recent study of southern Jews reveals a range of negotiation for “born and bred” southern Jews with the South’s pork-based cuisine. Some Jews express southernness by eating pork barbecue, ham, and bacon in public while keeping kosher at home. Others acknowledge the irony of being Jewish and southern and fully indulge in porcine dishes. Barbecue, an important symbol of southern culture, has been adopted and adapted by southern Jews. Memphis, the holy city of barbecue, has seen creative variations in its Jewish community. An Orthodox congregation adapts barbecue to the dietary laws with a kosher barbecue contest, substituting other meats for the traditional pork. The Jewish owners of one of Memphis’s most popular barbecue chains, known for its sublime pulled pork, made kosher versions of some products when inaugurating a new cooking facility—before it became defiled with pork.

Gender, Food, and Religion

Nowhere better than through foodways can the complex roles that gender plays in religious communities be examined. Looking at food exposes a world of women's involvement and leadership that is often hidden and inevitably interwoven with women's subordination. While men have dominated church leadership from the worship spaces above, down in the basements of churches and temples women have lead, built, and perpetuated community out of kitchens and dining halls.

When women have been the primary leaders of religious communities, the traditional feminine roles of nurturer and food provider have often been distinctive marks of their leadership and spiritual charisma, and foodways have been important for communal identity. Ellen G. White's charisma was linked to her visions about diet. Her dietary teaching became a centerpiece of the Battle Creek community and a hallmark of the Adventist lifestyle as the tradition developed. Mama Lola, a Haitian vodou (voodoo) practitioner studied by Karen McCarthy Brown, maintains her relationship with the spirits largely through rituals that involve preparing food and drink for them and her community of Haitian immigrants in New York. She also must return to Haiti periodically, in part to prepare elaborate feasts for the poor as well as the spirits. Her charisma is largely related to her knowledge of how to please each spirit with just the right foods and drinks and her hospitality to communities in both her new and old homes.

Even in traditions in which women's public leadership is minimal or nonexistent or in which the symbolic elements of bread and wine are kept in the hands of a male priesthood, women are ritual specialists when it comes to food. They take the lead in rites of passage, in comforting the bereaved with casseroles and coffee cakes and in validating weddings, baptisms, and bar mitzvahs with feasts. Their expertise can parallel priestly functions, reinforcing church rituals with the home rituals over which they preside. A grandson remembering his Polish Catholic grandmother's Easter preparations detailed the specific route on which he accompanied her as she gathered from the ethnic shops in their community the food items needed for the Easter feasts. He recalled watching her prepare a special basket reserved for the Easter foods, and watching her, along with a procession of other women, present them to the parish priest for blessing before returning home to prepare the dishes to be served after Mass on Easter. His remembrance concluded

with his grandmother presiding over the table, serving each family member herself. Unconsciously, he described a kind of sacred ritual in which his grandmother was the religious expert who prepared and presided over the festival table, a role not unlike that of her priest.

Women also have traditionally handled the preparations for church rituals and created the symbolic foods that express religious identity. In Episcopal churches women's altar guilds prepare the bread and wine, polish the silver, and iron the linens for the Eucharistic table. Women in Orthodox Christian congregations make the *prosphora*, the bread at the center of worship, working it into shapes reflective of theological and spiritual principles such as the nature of Christ and devotion to the Virgin Mary. Meanwhile, a pioneering woman member of the Nation of Islam (which one is a matter of some debate) devised the bean pie symbolizing the combination of African American and Muslim cultures.

The most obvious areas of women's leadership involving food, however, are their initiatives in community building. Food is often at the center of fund-raising. From bake sales to festival fund-raising dinners, women's cooking has paid for worship space, internal programs, and mission projects. It has also helped to increase the numbers as well as the girth of church members. Nineteenth-century southern evangelical women, for example, held dinners that included entertainment to draw in the men, who were less likely to come to worship services.

Women have perpetuated communities as well through documenting their food traditions and providing guides for maintaining them in cookbooks. Realizing that their community was attracting new members more familiar with McDonald's than with the foodways of its heritage, the women of St. Nectarios Orthodox Church produced *A Lenten Cookbook for Orthodox Christians* in 1972 for those who "have not grown up in an Orthodox environment where lentil, fish, and other 'fast foods' were essential parts of their diets." While keeping the past alive, the cookbook also charts changes in the community as it integrated into the broader culture from which the new members came. The recipes include seafood jambalaya and peach crisp as well as Greek specialties.

The cookbooks that women have written often present histories of religious life that go untold in official accounts. And they are especially important for recording women's leadership. One Presbyterian cookbook begins with a brief history of the church told primarily as the history of its male

clergy, but the remainder of the book tells the story of women's agency through their recipes, helpful hints, and narratives of fellowship events. Compiling the book in itself was an initiative women took to raise money for building improvements.

The records women have left in community cookbooks can also enlighten the big picture of religious history. The changing attitudes in Reform Judaism toward dietary laws could be traced by means of official documents, but the cookbooks produced by temple sisterhoods over the years document them as well in particularly vivid ways. One rabbi's survey of editions of his congregation's cookbook revealed that the first edition from the 1920s contained recipes using pork while an edition fifty years later omitted those but included shellfish recipes. The most recent edition is kosher.

Foodways have been the vehicles through which women have been moral exemplars and taken initiative in reform and charitable outreach. Feeding the hungry, through cooking for soup kitchens and canning thousands of cans of vegetables for distribution to the poor, has been a major activity for women in some communities (the Mennonites, for example). The prominent roles of women in temperance and diet movements have already been noted. Although reformers in the male clergy such as Horace Mann and Lyman Beecher had pulpits from which to push their reform agendas, their wives' and sisters' housekeeping manuals taught other women how to incorporate those principles into their daily routines and leave a more detailed understanding of the worldview of Protestant reform than treatises and sermons might.

The connection between women, morality, and food has placed a heavy burden on women. Blame as well as praise has been heaped on women's foodways in religious communities, and in some the standards for nurturer and moral exemplar have been impossibly demanding. Although many women eagerly participated in dietary reform movements of the nineteenth century, its leaders, male and female, often placed heavy blame for ill health and moral decline in men and children on what and how wives and mothers fed them. Some even accused women of trying to improve on God's creation, showing off with their spices, cooking methods, and unhealthy cakes to the detriment of their families' health. Nation of Islam founder Wallace Fard Muhammad blamed black women and their soul food cooking for weakening black men.

In the Christian dieting movement that arose in the twentieth century, the focus moved to women's bodies rather than what women did to others. Christian dieting manuals and organizations largely target women, colluding with a social standard that assigns status to female thinness. In these organizations body shape and size are scrutinized as evidence of holiness or disobedience. Women who do not measure up (or, rather, down) are considered inferior Christians.

Foodways as markers of gender are very ancient. The Muskogee celebration of corn begins with men fasting and ends with women preparing a feast. Foodways can reinforce gender assignments that keep women out of the pulpit and in the kitchen regardless of proclivity or calling. Even in the leadership that foodways afford women, there is subordination. Foodways may offer opportunities for creativity, leadership, and female community within religious groups, but these almost always come with a price for women. All that cooking and cleaning at church is a lot of work, often unacknowledged or overscrutinized, and in addition similar to labors at home.

As women have moved into the professional clergy and other religious leadership roles and gender roles have relaxed somewhat in society, foodways in some religious groups are reflecting these changes. Professional church chefs, take-out or catering, and fewer social events because fewer women are willing or capable of taking on the task of cooking for large numbers of people are options religious groups find themselves exploring. Now that cooking is not just "women's work," more men rise to the occasion, joining altar guilds and volunteering to cook, but there are fewer than needed to replace the women whose daughters and granddaughters channel their energies elsewhere.

Some worry that foodways may be slipping away, not only because of the changing roles of women but also because of the proliferation of convenience and fast foods. There is much nostalgia in religious communities as well as society at large for grandmothers' cooking. Indeed, some women are rethinking the value of foodways let go by recent generations. For some, retrieving them may not appeal primarily because of community but rather as a personal way—even the only way—of relating to religious heritage or as a spiritual discipline. A popular example in Jewish circles and out is Elizabeth Ehrlich's story in her best-selling *Miriam's Kitchen* (1997) of how she came to adopt a kosher lifestyle by reflecting on the life of her mother-in-law.

Food And Religious Exchange

Dietary rules often distinguish religious traditions from each other, but foodways can provide means of exchange between religious groups. Even the boundaries themselves sometimes create unexpected opportunities. For example, Middle Eastern groceries that carry ethnic foods common to Jews, Muslims, and Christians can be religious meeting grounds. Especially in areas where obtaining kosher or *halal* foods is difficult, a kosher market can become a place where Jews and Muslims shop together (some Muslims will accept kosher meats as *halal* or “permitted” under Muslim dietary rules). Foodways can be intentional opportunities for cooperation and dialogue, such as dinners sponsored by inter-faith organizations or joint charitable projects to fight hunger. Vast numbers of others, however, are at the same time celebrations of a religion’s distinctiveness and outreach to the larger community. In particular, fairs and festivals held annually by minority religious groups in communities have multiple purposes—fund-raising, preserving tradition, and reaching out to others as good neighbors. In many American towns the annual festival held by the local Orthodox church is a time when everybody “goes Greek,” with Protestants coming after church to have Sunday lunch of spanikopita and souvlaki and to tour the church facility, learning something of its traditions. In the nineteenth century and beyond, Jewish temple fairs, centered around selling ethnic foods, were opportunities for Jews to celebrate their distinctive heritage and to reach out to the community, displaying their good citizenship and sometimes including addresses by civic leaders.

Foodways can also be a form of mission or conversion, intentional or not. The International Society of Krishna Consciousness, founded in North America in 1966, is as well known for its free Sunday Love Feasts as for its ecstatic dancing and Indian-style attire. At a Love Feast, diners observe Krishna devotion and are invited to join, but they are already converted in a sense that they are eating *prasad*. Thus they take in Krishna’s blessing.

A recent study of Mennonite foodways found that many people first learned of this church rooted in the Anabaptist tradition (like its better-known kin, the Amish) through a cookbook authored by Doris Janzen Longacre and published by the Mennonites’ Herald Press. In the seventies *More with Less* (1975) struck a chord with many people who were seeking to simplify their lifestyles and were concerned

about environment. Looking for recipes and dietary advice, they found a tradition that emphasized peacemaking and simple living. Although the numbers of converts attributed to *More with Less* may not be numerous relative to its publication history (forty-seven printings and almost one million copies sold), the book has raised awareness of the Mennonite mission perhaps more than any “religious” work could. The most popular theological work of the tradition, John Howard Yoder’s classic *The Politics of Jesus* (1972), has sold about one-tenth as many copies.

The Mennonites also offer an example of how foodways are part of exchanges that expand a tradition. In 1991 Herald Press published Joetta Handrich Schlabach’s *Extending the Table: A World Community Cookbook*. Commissioned by the Mennonite Central Committee, the church’s relief branch, it contains recipes and stories from places around the world where Mennonites provide aid. The book reveals that the church’s international missions have converted its culture to a global one. Alongside shoo-fly pies and beef and noodle casseroles, curries and stir-fries now appear at Mennonite potlucks from Kansas to Kenya.

Sacred Ideas in Secular Foodways

This discussion has presented evidence of the dynamic interplay of religion and culture in foodways. Cultural concerns such as changing understandings of health and diet, gender roles, and ethnic identity overlap religious issues, eventually becoming part of religious practice or teaching. Other examples, however, illustrate how religion provides a language for making meaning in secular foodways. In contemporary food literature, “Zen” has come to signify a style of cooking and eating that is disciplined, slow, and simple whether Asian or not. Studies of two populations at opposite ends of the food spectrum have shown how behaviors and language in secular phenomena rely on religious symbolism for structure and articulation. Some women who suffer from eating disorders describe their desire for extreme thinness as a quest for redemption from being unworthy in a culture that glorifies the thin female body. The rituals of dieting, starvation, and exercise they undergo are spiritual disciplines through which bodily suffering is understood to lead to holiness. For those immersed in the wine culture, wine tastings are ritual events designed to evoke sensibilities that reflect experiences of holiness and create a special community among imbibers as the religious symbolism of wine carries over into these secular events.

Of course, wine was first brought to North America for use in religious services. That is just one way in which religious traditions have influenced cuisine on the continent. Although such traditions have been gateways for foods from bagels to graham crackers into the culinary vocabulary, religion has also provided a language with which to speak about food's significance as something more than fuel. As America's greatest food writer, M. F. K. Fisher (*The Art of Eating*, 1954), put it, "There is a communion of more than our bodies when bread is broken and wine is drunk."

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family; Cult of Domesticity; Environment and Ecology* entries; *Islam in North America; Judaism: Jewish Culture; Krishna Consciousness; Latino/a Religious Practice; Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Nation(s) of Islam; Native American Religions* entries; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Puritans; Seventh-day Adventists*.

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Freedom, Religious

True religious freedom, or the notion that citizens can hold beliefs and engage in activities related to their faith commitments free of any government restriction, is an ideal that in reality often requires that the needs of the religious adherent

be balanced against the dictates of society and its legal structures. In the United States this balance is grounded in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and its guarantee is ostensibly protected by the federal judiciary. But as with all legal documents the First Amendment has emerged from a complex cultural, social, and legal history; it has been subject to divergent legal interpretations, and it has been affected by the nation's political processes and cultural sensibilities, meaning that the limits on—and possibilities for—religious freedom have shifted over the course of American history.

Toward a First Disestablishment: The Colonial and Revolutionary Years

During the colonial period the pursuit of religious freedom most often associated with the Pilgrims of New England was less about religious egalitarianism and more about religious dominance for a particular religious community at the expense of others. A modicum of tolerance—rather than freedom—was often the best for which politically and culturally marginal religious communities could hope. Religious “establishments”—that is, the integration of religious and government interests, if not of institutions—were common throughout the colonies, with Congregationalism dominating the New England colonies and the Church of England dominating the mid-Atlantic region. Religious deviance was not tolerated well, corporal punishments and expulsions for doctrinal differences were not unheard of, and political competition between religious traditions (mostly between Protestants and Roman Catholics, but also between the Protestant denominations) was often fierce. The 1620 Charter of New England, for example, stated that since “we [those embarking on the colonization endeavor] would be loath that any person should be permitted to pass that we suspected to affect the superstition of the Church of Rome, we do hereby declare that it is our will and pleasure that none be permitted to pass. . . .”

Several colonies were more expansive in their understanding of religious freedom. In its 1682 Frame of Government, Pennsylvania—often cited as a leader in religious toleration—extended public office to all who “possess faith in Jesus Christ,” meaning that Catholics as well as Protestants could run for office, and he stated that citizens of the colony “who confess and acknowledge the one Almighty and eternal God, to be the Creator, Upholder and Ruler of the world,” and were willing to live in peace with their fellow citizens, “shall, in no ways, be molested or prejudiced for their religious persuasion, or practice, in matters of faith and

worship, nor shall they be compelled, at any time, to frequent or maintain any religious worship, place, or ministry whatever.” The 1663 charter for the Rhode Island and Providence Plantations—founded by Roger Williams, who had been expelled from Massachusetts for expressing religiously unorthodox ideas—supported similar language.

The transformation of Virginia provides one of the best illustrations of emerging notions of religious freedom. Drafts of what would become Article XVI of its Declaration of Rights, written in early 1776 as the colonies prepared for a war of independence from Britain, initially declared that “all men should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion. . . .” James Madison argued against the notion of “toleration,” and the article’s final language was altered significantly to reflect his objections: “all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion. . . .” Three years later, a bill drafted by Thomas Jefferson to disestablish the Church of England in Virginia was tabled by the legislature. However, in 1785, shortly after Patrick Henry introduced legislation to raise taxes to pay for church schools, Madison organized a petition campaign among the increasingly religiously diverse population in western Virginia. His text accompanying the petitions (“Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments”)—and the fact that Henry had been in the interim elevated to serve as governor—turned the tide, and the tax bill was defeated. With Jefferson in France, Madison then reintroduced his colleague’s 1779 bill (“An Act for Establishing Religious Freedom”), which passed in 1786, and Virginia was for the first time without an official state church. The following year, acting under the Articles of Confederation, the United States Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which, in language reminiscent of the charters of Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, stated that “No person, demeaning himself in a peaceable and orderly manner, shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or religious sentiment, in the said territory.” The geographical designation was less a limitation than an extension of religious freedom, since many of the states still maintained their own religious establishments and would not have been subject to any federal declaration related to religious freedom articulated by Congress at this time.

By 1789 Congress was taking up the issue of a Bill of Rights to amend the U.S. Constitution. Early drafts of the religion clauses—written by Madison and built around his experiences in Virginia—contained a broad freedom of conscience that was later removed, and the final wording as it now exists (“Congress shall make no law respecting an

establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; . . .”) passed without significant recorded debate. Reflecting this disestablishmentarian spirit, in 1797 the U.S. Senate ratified a treaty between the United States and Tripoli that stated that “the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion. . . .” By law, this was now true—at least on the federal level; the official separation of religion from federal law, commonly known as the separation of “church and state,” had effected a first national disestablishment. By culture and custom, however, this was not necessarily so, and a second disestablishment—the loosening of the monopoly enjoyed by Christianity in American public institutions on the federal, state, and municipal levels—would require more time.

Toward the Second Disestablishment: The Nineteenth Century and Public Protestantism

For the eighty years following the ratification of the Bill of Rights, religious freedom continued to be politically determined; those who had political power could safeguard their own religious freedom, while those who did not, could not. The limitations of colonial charters and the lack of a significant record surrounding the debate over the language of the First Amendment suggest that it was not as revolutionary a statement as it has come to be seen in the more recent past; what is now identified as the First Amendment actually was the third amendment sent to the states for ratification (the first two addressed representation and congressional salaries). Many historians have argued that, in context, it is more reasonable to interpret the religion clauses not as uniquely enlightened statements of the rights of all citizens, but as a recognition of the political reality of religious competition and political suspicion extant in the early Republic.

One reason for downplaying the initial impact of the First Amendment is that the extension of religious freedom—and the concomitant disestablishment of religion—was neither universal nor instantaneous following the amendment’s ratification. The Virginia Declaration of Rights, itself a model for the First Amendment, stated “that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other,” immediately after it recognized the religious rights of all of Virginia’s citizens, including the Jewish community of Richmond (established in 1769). Massachusetts—the last state to “disestablish” its religious institutions—did not do so until 1833, and until then it required taxpayers to stipulate to which church—from an official list—they wanted their tax dollars sent for

their children’s education. Because the U.S. Constitution’s prohibition of religious tests (Article VI) applied only to the federal government, many of the constitutions of states that originally had been colonies retained religious test oaths for elected office well into the nineteenth century—the last was removed in the 1890s—requiring belief in the Trinity, for example, or forsaking all foreign authority (religious as well as political). (The Ninth and Tenth Amendments permitted states established after the adoption of these two amendments to grant freedoms that were equal to or greater than—but not less than—those protected in the U.S. Constitution.) Concerned that religious rivalries might threaten the establishment of a truly United States, drafters protected state establishments by prohibiting federal intrusion, while reassuring competing religious authorities by providing no advantage in the emerging federal government. In 1845 the Supreme Court maintained this federalist relationship, ruling that a religious dispute between New Orleans and one of its citizens was a state concern and not worthy of First Amendment protection since Congress was not a party (*Permoli v. First Municipality of New Orleans*). The guarantee of religious freedom was still considered a federal matter well into the 1870s. In 1875, in debates over a proposed constitutional amendment that began “No State shall make any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,” no mention was made of the seeming overlap with the opening words of the First Amendment, which apparently no one thought applied to actions between citizens and the states.

Another reason for downplaying the initial impact of the First Amendment is that most citizens in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries understood religious freedom differently from the way we do today. By the end of the American Revolution, Roman Catholics represented the largest non-Protestant religious identity in the United States, but by then even the originally Catholic colony of Maryland was predominantly Protestant in both population and political control. At the same time, Jews—who had settled in the colonies as early as 1654, and on the North American continent as early as the 1520s—were few in number, and were found mostly in the largest cities. What religious diversity existed in the new country was mostly within the spectrum of Protestant denominations. This was particularly true of the public institutions responsible for drafting, executing, and judging the kinds of laws that safeguarded religious freedom. Although not a law, the Declaration of Independence had only one signer who was not

Protestant; the Articles of Confederation likewise; and the U.S. Constitution was signed by only two non-Protestants, both Catholic. Studies of the state ratifying conventions suggest a similar pattern.

Not surprisingly, this lack of diversity was reflected in the laws of the Christian majority. Many states maintained laws against blasphemy—understood only as the defaming of the Christian God—and required Bible reading and prayer in schools. State and federal courts also maintained Sunday closing laws (“blue” laws) to protect the Christian Sabbath, in some cases permitting only behavior that did not interrupt Christian worship and in others prohibiting all activities considered improper. But more than simply a matter of the law’s substance, the law’s essence—even as it was initially articulated on the federal level—reflected Protestant theology. “Freedom” did not mean a religious person was free to select if, when, and how she adhered to her chosen religious identity, but rather that government was theologically prohibited from interfering in the relationship between the believer, her conscience, and God. This was based on the Protestant doctrine that understood all believers to have the facility to read the gospel and communicate with the divine, and that privileged faith over good works as the path to salvation. Madison’s amendment to Virginia’s Declaration of Rights, for example, defined religion as “the duty which we owe to our Creator and the manner of discharging it,” but noted nonetheless that it could be “directed by reason and conviction, not by force or violence,” and that “all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion” specifically so that they could comply with the “dictates of conscience.” His initial drafts of what became the First Amendment stated that “[t]he civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or on any pretence, infringed.” Similarly, Jefferson’s “Act” granted that “Almighty God hath created the mind free” and that “truth is great and will prevail if left to herself” even as it noted that “it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government, for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order.” Conscience and beliefs were the domain solely of the divine; behavior was left to the state to monitor.

Though often considered silent on the matter of religion during this period, between 1815 and 1878 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled a number of times on matters related

to the relationship of religion and government, and in most instances it maintained the relationship as articulated in these early documents. In a handful of “glebe” (church) property cases, for example, the Court supported religious belief and morality as community values separate from institutional claims of ownership. In other cases, the Court maintained state Sunday work prohibitions or declarations of holy days. One of the most prominent voices of the Protestant theological approach was that of Justice Joseph Story, who wrote most of the decisions related to religion during his tenure on the high court (1811–1845). In one such opinion authored by the justice in 1844, the Supreme Court acknowledged Christianity as a part of the common law of Pennsylvania, concluding that a will was not offensive to that law simply because it prohibited clergy from teaching religion (*Vidal v. Girard’s Executors*).

Expressions of a close relationship between Protestantism and government reflected the culture’s larger unease with non-Protestants, who, since the colonial period, were limited in their enjoyment of full religious freedom. Anti-Catholicism in particular belied any notion that the First Amendment effectively guaranteed religious freedom to all. In the debate over emerging notions of public education, for example, American Catholics faced entrenched Protestant practices, and serious conflicts developed over the use of the King James Version of the Christian scriptures as a reading primer. When Catholic school children were punished for objecting, Catholic leadership organized what developed into the Catholic parochial school system, opting to educate their own children rather than have them subjected to Protestant theology in the name of public education.

Native Americans fared no better. Their religious expression was often misunderstood, overlooked as inauthentic, or seen as inferior to the Western religious traditions, particularly Christianity. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Congress (or its delegated territorial authorities) prohibited various Native American religious practices—most infamously the Sun Dance and the Ghost Dance, practices of Southwest and emerging pan-tribal communities—while enacting legislation designed to “civilize” them by limiting nomadic behavior and requiring farming and land ownership. Those living on federal reservations were also not included under the protections of the First Amendment; they wouldn’t be granted full American citizenship until 1924, excluded largely because of the way in which relations between them and the federal government had developed since the colonial period.

By the late 1860s the federal government was funding President Ulysses S. Grant's "peace policy," which provided religious organizations with federal funds for their missionary work among Native Americans, in the hope that—either by conversion or acculturation—the organizations would serve as surrogates of the federal government in pacifying the Native Americans. One unintended consequence was the realization of many mainstream Protestant organizations that, with most of the money going to Quaker and Roman Catholic charities, they were now uncomfortable with the federal government funding religious activities, and a new separationist ethos arose from the uneasiness of their anti-Catholicism.

In many ways, the high point of the close identification of Protestantism with American culture came in an 1878 Supreme Court decision in a case challenging a law making the Mormon practice of plural marriage a federal crime (*Reynolds v. United States*). The Court disagreed with the challenge, citing the history of the fight for religious freedom in Virginia and in the Constitutional Convention, and agreed with Jefferson and Madison that "Congress was deprived of all legislative power over mere opinion, but was left free to reach actions which were in violation of social duties or subversive of good order." Calling the Mormon religious practice "odious"—particularly "among the northern and western nations of Europe" (in other words, the Protestant ones) and "almost exclusively a feature of the life of Asiatic and of African people"—the Court concluded that "Laws are made for the government of actions, and while they cannot interfere with mere religious belief and opinions, they may with practices." Mormons could believe in plural marriage, but to maintain order the state had to regulate actions, particularly "when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order," as polygamy was presumed to.

This dichotomy between actions and beliefs would rule the federal judiciary's approach to religious freedom for the next sixty-two years. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the challenge to the Protestant monopoly in public culture was increasing on a variety of fronts. Since the 1840s Roman Catholicism had been the single largest religious denomination in the United States, and by century's end immigration from traditionally Catholic countries beyond Ireland supplied an even greater presence. The numbers of Jewish immigrants accelerated rapidly between the 1880s and 1920s, bringing this community's population from roughly 300,000 to nearly 3.5 million by the end of World

War I. Additionally, the image of a monolithic mainstream Protestantism, enhanced by cooperative efforts throughout the nineteenth century, was shattered in the denominational divisions that were taking place over traditionalist and literalist camps on the one side and modernists on the other. Modern Protestant fundamentalism, evangelicalism, and Pentecostalism took greater shape during this period, providing yet greater diversity within the Protestant world.

These factors provided the impetus for a backlash against traditionally marginalized religious communities in the United States, even as they provided opportunities. Anti-Semitism reached a zenith with the revival of the Ku Klux Klan in the South and the 1915 lynching in Atlanta of Jewish factory manager Leo Frank. Anti-Catholicism also reached a high point in the public opposition to New York governor Al Smith's 1928 presidential campaign, with primarily southern conservative Protestant ministers raising allegations of alcoholism and divided loyalty against the Catholic Democrat. While this period also saw the confirmation of the first Jewish justice to the Supreme Court (Justice Louis Brandeis, who joined the high court in 1916), and an increase in Catholic political organization in several large U.S. cities, well into the twentieth century many were still drawing connections between Protestant Christianity and American citizenship. Justice George Sutherland, writing for the Court in a 1931 decision involving a conscientious objector who was seeking to become a naturalized American citizen, noted that "[w]e are a Christian people, according to one another the equal right of religious freedom, and acknowledging with reverence the duty of obedience to the will of God" (*United States v. Macintosh*).

The Flowering of Religious Freedom: 1940–1990

The dramatic demographic changes in American society would lay the foundation for the possibility of expanded religious freedom, not only through changes in the political and social climate, but also through changes in judicial interpretation and conceptualization. Throughout the preceding century, the courts and legislatures had most often classified rights according to group identity—all Mormons were responsible for the church's position on polygamy; all Native Americans were in need of civilizing and Christianizing; all "peace" church members qualified automatically as conscientious objectors. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, these stereotypical assignments were being challenged, not particularly in the area of religion but in the political arena of free speech rights.

Initially interpreting the Fourteenth Amendment as protecting the economic rights of those engaged in business, the Court left to the states disputes over actions most often involved in claims of restricted religious freedom. With the onset of World War I, and the passage of legislation like the Sedition Act (1918), the federal government found itself involved in policing these behaviors in the name of national security. In successive decisions starting in 1919, the Supreme Court increasingly expanded the right of free speech to protect those alleging state as well as federal restriction. By 1934 Justice Benjamin Cardozo had argued in a concurring opinion that the Fourteenth Amendment also protected against state restrictions related to the religion clauses (*Hamilton v. Regents of the University of California*), a position that became more firmly established in law when, in 1937, he wrote it into the majority opinion (*Palko v. Connecticut*). In 1940 the Court made explicit the authority of the “free exercise” clause of the First Amendment over state restrictions (*Cantwell v. Connecticut*).

The impact of this transformation was profound. Up until this point, cases involving claims of limitations on an individual’s religious freedom had been controlled as much by the 1846 Court decision (*Permoli v. Municipality No. 1 of the City of New Orleans*) keeping the federal government out of state action as by the 1878 decision (*Reynolds*) separating belief from action, and most of the religious behaviors that ran afoul of the law were considered state concerns: breach of the peace, for example, or violations of laws related to public education. However, with the First Amendment now applicable to state actions by virtue of the Fourteenth Amendment, state limitations of religious freedom could now be scrutinized by the federal judiciary. Writing for the Court in 1943, Justice Robert Jackson noted that “[t]he very purpose of a Bill of Rights was to withdraw certain subjects from the vicissitudes of political controversy, to place them beyond the reach of majorities and officials and to establish them as legal principles to be applied by the courts,” including the freedom of worship and assembly (*West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*).

The proof of how profound this change was can be seen in the sheer number of religious freedom cases argued before the Supreme Court, which grew exponentially after 1940. It can also be seen in the litigation history of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, a religious community often in court between 1938 and 1960 for its religious practices, including door-to-door distribution of religious material and the refusal of Jehovah’s Witness schoolchildren to salute the American flag. In cases

where the organization’s legal counsel relied either entirely or in large part on free speech arguments, the community was overwhelmingly successful. In cases where it relied solely on religious freedom arguments, the organization was singularly unsuccessful.

The series of cases won by the Jehovah’s Witnesses provided a foundation for the expansion for the protection of religious freedom in the United States. In the 1940s the organization won the right to preach without a license (*Cantwell*) and for their school-age children to refuse to salute the American flag (*Barnette*). Other nonmainstream religious organizations were able to capitalize on the expansion of the legal protections. In a 1944 decision from a case involving allegations of mail fraud against the IAM religious community, the Supreme Court ruled that the substance of a believer’s beliefs could not be questioned, only the sincerity with which they were held. “Men may believe what they cannot prove,” wrote Justice William Douglas for the Court (*United States v. Ballard*).

Arguably the most influential decade for the expansion of religious freedom was the 1960s, when law and politics converged with demographics to transform the landscape. In 1961 the U.S. Supreme Court expanded religious freedom to include freedom from religion, striking down a Maryland test oath challenged by an atheist who had been denied public office (*Torcaso v. Watkins*). The following year the Court ruled for a Seventh-day Adventist who had been denied unemployment compensation because she had refused work on Saturday, her Sabbath (*Sherbert v. Verner*), concluding that the distinction articulated in the 1878 *Reynolds* decision between belief and action was a false one. The Court then delineated what came to be known as the “Sherbert test” for determining when citizens could expect to have their religious freedoms protected, and when the state or federal government could reasonably limit those freedoms. If the religious adherent could identify an actual burden on his religious exercise, the government was required to identify a “compelling interest” for the restriction and then prove that the restriction was being administered in the “least restrictive means” possible before a religious practice could be restricted. Three years later the Court extended religious freedom protection to a man who had refused military induction as a conscientious objector even though his objections were not based on specific religious training or practice, noting that his beliefs occupied in his life the position of traditional religious beliefs in the life of a traditionally religious person (*United States v. Seeger*).

By the middle of the 1960s factors other than the interpretation of the First Amendment would also have a significant impact on religious freedom. The election of Sen. John F. Kennedy as the first Catholic to be president of the United States was the pinnacle of Catholic integration into American public society. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 included religion among the list of categories that were protected against discrimination by the federal government, while the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 not only reopened America to a new generation of immigrants but also abolished the old quota system that had favored people from northern and western Europe. In increasingly larger numbers, people from South and Southeast Asia started coming to the United States, bringing with them their religious traditions and patterns, including an explosion in the numbers of “ethnic” Buddhists and Hindus. Passed at the end of the decade, the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 extended First Amendment religious freedom protections to Native Americans living on federal reservations.

Although the 1970s saw a number of important cases involving the First Amendment’s free exercise clause, the decade was marked also by the number of “no establishment” clause decisions, as the federal government worked to diminish the Protestant monopoly over public practices, particularly in the public schools. The Court also granted conscientious objector status to a man who denied having a religious ideology (*Welsh v. United States*, 1970), conversely denied conscientious objector status to a man who justified his position based on the traditional Catholic “just war” doctrine (*Gillette v. United States*, 1971), and permitted Amish parents to withdraw their children from public education before they reached the stated mandatory age (*Wisconsin v. Yoder*, 1972). Native American cases involving claims of religious freedom restrictions began appearing before the Supreme Court by the mid-1980s, but they were universally unsuccessful (*Bowen v. Roy*, 1986; *Lyng v. Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association*, 1987). The growing corpus of church–state decisions meant that many controversial issues—religious refusal of medical treatment, for example—were litigated in lower federal courts and were not heard by the high court.

Religious Freedom since 1990

The protection of religious freedom was challenged in the Court’s 1990 decision in *Employment Division, Oregon v. Smith*. Smith, a drug counselor, was fired for ingesting peyote—a controlled substance in Oregon—during his free

time at a ritual ceremony of the Native American Church. The Supreme Court obliterated the Sherbert test by ruling that, in violating a generally applicable law, Smith had no right to unemployment compensation and that the state had no burden to prove its legislation was motivated by a “compelling interest” enforced through the “least restrictive means.”

After appealing unsuccessfully to have the case reheard, a coalition of religious organizations worked with members of Congress to pass the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA, 1993), which directed state and federal courts to use the Sherbert test in cases involving questions of religious freedom. That same year, the Supreme Court clarified its own position in a case involving a municipal ordinance that prohibited religious animal sacrifice but permitted secular animal slaughter (*Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye v. City of Hialeah*). In its ruling the Court noted that, unlike in *Smith*, the law here was not generally applicable and had been written with a specific religious community in mind. In 1994 Congress added amendments to the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA), granting Native Americans federal protection for the ritual use of peyote.

The Court ruled on RFRA’s constitutionality in 1997, when, in a case involving a historic preservation board’s rejection of a Catholic church’s renovation application, it declared that Congress had overstepped its authority by including state as well as federal courts in its directive (*City of Boerne v. Flores*). In response, a number of states passed their own versions of the now-limited RFRA, and Congress passed the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLIUPA, 2000), which required any government to apply the Sherbert test before it could impose land-use restrictions on a religious person or congregation, or substantial religious exercise restrictions on those incarcerated or institutionalized. In 2005 the Supreme Court affirmed RLIUPA’s use in protecting the religious exercise rights of Ohio state prisoners (*Cutter v. Wilkinson*), and in 2006 the Court affirmed RFRA’s federal mandate, affirming a small religious community’s right to import hallucinogenic herbs for ritual purposes (*Gonzales v. O Centro Espirita Beneficente União Do Vegetal*).

Possible Future Arenas for Conflict

The coming of age of the baby boom generation—those born between 1946 and 1963—has had a significant impact on all of American culture. Most significantly for religious

freedom, it has introduced a greater acceptability of religious “identity switching,” noninstitutional “spiritual pursuit,” and the downplaying of religious identity entirely. As a result, loyalty to one’s religious identity is no longer necessarily as meaningful as it had been for most of American history, and religious institutions have been playing a less dominant role in the lives of many Americans.

Ironically, one result is that there are greater opportunities for expanded religious freedom, and more visible signs of religious diversity and a spirit of pluralism that accepts that diversity. For example, the Supreme Court—which saw its first non-Protestant member in 1836 (Roger Taney, Catholic) and its first non-Christian member in 1916 (Louis Brandeis, Jewish)—had a non-Protestant majority by 1999 (three Catholics, two Jews), a Catholic majority by 2005, and more Jews (two) than Protestants (one) by 2009. In 2006, despite a rash of post-September 11, 2001, anti-Muslim sentiment, American citizens elected the first Muslim to Congress (Keith Ellison, D-Minn.).

As the culture assimilates this religious diversity, and as the Court builds a body of precedence related to religious freedom, more of the conflicts that might have come before the Supreme Court have been resolved on the lower federal and state court levels. There has also been a shift in the parties litigating in the name of religious freedom; conservative Protestants whose ideological forebears once enjoyed a greater cultural monopoly are more frequently seeking protection of their religious freedom rights, in such venues as the public schools (*Westside Community Schools v. Mergens*, 1990) and institutions of higher learning (*Rosenberger v. University of Virginia*, 1995). Like the Jehovah’s Witnesses who pioneered the issue of religious freedom in the 1940s, the Court in many of these cases has relied on free speech rather than “free exercise” justifications (*Van Orden v. Perry*, 2005; *McCreary County v. ACLU*, 2005; *Pleasant Grove City v. Sumnum*, 2009).

Another result of these changes is the migration of conversations about religious freedom from issues generally identified with the First Amendment’s religion clauses to those more traditionally identified with the Fourteenth Amendment’s individual rights protections. Starting in the last decades of the twentieth century, Justice John Paul Stevens in particular articulated concerns about such issues, including abortion and euthanasia. In *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* (1989), Justice Stevens noted that a Missouri statute’s preamble, which defined life as beginning at conception, was entirely without secular purpose and therefore

a violation of the no establishment clause of the First Amendment. The following year, in *Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Department of Health* (1990), Stevens, citing his earlier statement in *Webster*, argued that, by keeping a young woman alive artificially, the state of Missouri was “establishing a sectarian definition of life.” More recently, legal scholars have identified state and federal restrictions prohibiting gay men and lesbians from enjoying the full benefits of marriage as a religious freedom issue. This argument is based in part on the argument that, by maintaining the prohibition, the various state governments have embraced a position that many see as justifiable only in religious language, and that they have therefore “established” the religion of conservative social theology.

Although identified as “no establishment” issues, these three areas—and others involving personal liberties—represent possible future arenas of conflict over the meaning of religious freedom. While the framers may have written the two religion clauses of the First Amendment for separate purposes—a possibility that continues to be a source of debate among legal scholars and historians—there is little doubt that today they are seen by many as intimately and inextricably related, a zero-sum game in which the establishment of one person or group’s position is a threat to the religious freedom of another’s. In contemporary America, where conservative Christians are as likely as Jehovah’s Witnesses to challenge laws they feel restrict their religious freedom rights, there are very few truly privileged political positions. The period of the “establishment” representing a particular religious position has transitioned into a period of greater diversity, in which more of the participants are vying to participate equally. As “Publius” (either Madison or Alexander Hamilton) suggested in *The Federalist*, No. 51, securing civil as well as religious rights depends on a “multiplicity of sects” and a “multiplicity of interests.” Religious freedom in the United States has enabled the former; cultural, political, and legal transformations in American have facilitated the latter.

See also *America, Religious Interpretations of; American Revolution; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Constitution; Education: Court Cases; Establishment, Religious; Faith-Based Initiatives; Holidays; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Pilgrims; Politics entries; Religion, Regulation of; Same-Gender Marriage; Sunday and the Sabbath; Supreme Court; Theocracy.*

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Frontier and Borderlands

The concepts of frontier and borderlands have shaped the way American historians, including religious historians, have thought about the development of the United States and its religious history. Colloquially, *frontier* has generally referred to the western edge of Euro-American society. The term *borderlands* has usually referred to the border between the United States and Mexico and the American Southwest more broadly.

In the 1980s scholars began to reconsider both terms. As a result, they have redefined both terms in an effort to make them more inclusive and generally able to carry more meaning. American religious historians, though usually not taking an active part in the debates over these terms, have implemented the results in their work. The changing concepts of the frontier and borderlands have thus shaped scholarship on American religious history, particularly those works aimed at the American West and Southwest.

Frederick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis

In 1890 the U.S. Census Bureau declared the American frontier closed. By this the bureau meant that there was no longer a clear boundary separating land with a population density of less than two people per square mile from areas more densely populated. Three years later, historian Frederick Jackson Turner proposed his famous "frontier thesis" at a meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago. "The existence of free land," he said, "its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward explain American development." This process, Turner argued, shaped the character of Americans and their institutions, promoting individualism, democracy, innovation, strength, pragmatism, and a host of other virtues. Later elaborated in his book *The Frontier in American History*, Turner's thesis about the centrality of the frontier in the development of the United States shaped generations of American historians. Scholars have wrestled with the implications of the frontier thesis ever since.

Turner's thesis had at least two important implications. First, it rejected the prevailing "germ theory" of civilization that held that American institutions were transplantations from Europe, brought across the Atlantic by colonists, in favor of an environmental determinism that attributed American character, institutions, and ideas to the influence of the physical conditions of the new continent. Second, it introduced a definitive periodization in American history based on the successive openings of new frontiers as the nation pushed westward, with a decisive break in 1890 when the frontier disappeared. The frontier was thus a moving target, proceeding inexorably, if unevenly, westward from the initial European settlements on the eastern seaboard. Perhaps most important, Turner shifted the attention of his field to the frontier, so that even those who did not agree with him were forced to acknowledge the importance of this aspect of American history.

Turner recognized the importance of understanding the role of religion—by which he meant, primarily, Protestant Christianity—in the development of the American frontier. Seeing religion as principally a means of social control, Turner argued that missionary work was one of the main ways that the East attempted to regulate the development of the frontier. However, even though he asserted that religious competition on the frontier “must have had” significant effects on religion in the United States as a whole (an assertion that logically followed from his thesis), he left these effects unenumerated, stating only that this aspect of American history needed study.

William Warren Sweet and American Religious History

Although most American religious historians have not been followers of Turner, by turning historians’ attention to the westward movement of the United States, Turner had a significant impact on the study of American religion. Perhaps most notable in this regard was William Warren Sweet, a Methodist from Kansas who grew up to be the first professor of the history of American Christianity in the United States. Long before he was called to that position at the University of Chicago Divinity School, Sweet developed an influential synthesis of American religious history that depended on the American frontier. For Sweet, the frontier was a “proving ground” where denominational success determined which churches would be successful nationwide and would come to be regarded as “typically American.”

Articulated first in *Our American Churches* (1924) and later elaborated and popularized in his influential textbook *The Story of Religions in America* (first issued in 1930), Sweet’s synthesis emphasized institutional success as a criterion for inclusion in the group of “typically American” churches. The basis for this success, it became evident, was a strong, centralized ecclesiastical organization that could coordinate the denomination’s westward expansion combined with an enthusiastic and skillful use of revivalism as a way of reaching western settlers. For Sweet, the Methodists embodied these characteristics most fully and were, therefore, the prototypical “American” church. Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists, though not as successful as Methodists on the frontier, also received the stamp of approval. Other denominations, despite their sometimes very large size, did not interest Sweet. He disregarded both Catholicism and Lutheranism, which he considered too “foreign,” as well as minority ethnic and religious groups

such as African Americans and Jews. The success of the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists on the frontier, Sweet argued, made them the most “American” of churches, and thus justifiably the focus not only of histories of frontier religion, but of histories of American religion in general as well.

Despite the centrality of the “Turner frontier thesis” during his lifetime, Sweet was not himself a “Turnerian.” For Sweet, accepting Turner’s thesis would have meant accepting that the frontier had an indelible influence on the churches that evangelized the western edges of American society. Instead, Sweet focused on how Protestantism shaped frontier settlements. Turning Turner’s frontier thesis on its head, Sweet held not that the frontier made Protestantism American, but, as James L. Ash Jr. asserts, that the Protestants made the frontier American, and thus contributed to the development of American democracy and national character. Nevertheless, Sweet’s argument that denominational success on the frontier determined the fortunes of denominations in the nation as a whole fit nicely with Turner’s suggestion that religious competition on the frontier had important implications for the religious organization of the nation as a whole.

Sweet’s Legacy

Sweet trained an impressive cadre of graduate students, many of whom, after earning their doctorates, proceeded to develop programs in American church history at the institutions where they were hired. Quite a few of Sweet’s students, including Robert T. Handy, Winthrop S. Hudson, and Sidney Mead, went on to become luminaries in the field of American religion and to train even more of graduate students. Later generations of American religious historians found Sweet’s work on frontier religion, including the source materials whose publication he oversaw while at the University of Chicago, a fertile source of ideas and jumping-off points for their own work. Trained by Sweet or his students, or simply swayed by the enormous influence of his synthesis, Handy, Martin E. Marty, Sydney E. Ahlstrom, and Edwin S. Gaustad all recognized the importance of the frontier in their own syntheses of American religious history, though they rarely featured it as prominently as Sweet.

Sweet was, of course, not the only influence on later generations of historians, and other trends in religious studies and history also had their effects on the ways later historians used Turner’s thesis and Sweet’s synthesis in their own work. The general trend was toward greater

inclusivity—a broadening of the subjects of inquiry from Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists to include Catholics, Lutherans, and other denominations as well as nonwhite and non-Christian groups. Still, denominational history remained an important concern throughout the twentieth century. Ferenc Morton Szasz, for example, has emphasized the importance of denominational identity in the American West during the frontier era and well beyond. Sounding somewhat Turnerian, and certainly emphasizing themes dear to Sweet, Szasz has asserted that the American West shaped the national religious landscape in the twenty-first century.

The “New Western History”

As the quincentenary of Columbus’s voyage to the New World and the centenary of Turner’s frontier thesis approached, a loose group known as the New Western Historians began to question the thesis’s validity and usefulness. Patricia Nelson Limerick, Richard White, Donald Worster, and others objected in particular to Turner’s vague and sometimes racist definition of the term *frontier*, the ethnocentrism of Turner’s focus on Euro-Americans, and the tendency of the frontier thesis to obscure continuities in western history, marking instead a sharp break at 1890, with the closing of the frontier. Disparaging the term *frontier* as “the F word,” some among this group looked for alternatives that would be more inclusive, less Euro-centric, and more conducive to conceiving of the West as a region. The focus turned to place (the West) and away from process (the frontier).

Perhaps most notable among the New Western Historians was Patricia Nelson Limerick, whose book *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* synthesized many of these ideas. Limerick argued that western historians’ preoccupation with the frontier led them away from describing the continuities that shaped western reality. Limerick sought to find a new way of telling western history in which the story was not divided into two acts by the closing of the frontier in 1890. To that end, she focused on continuities, describing western history in *The Legacy of Conquest* as “the study of a place always undergoing conquest and never fully escaping its consequences.”

Though they argued for the treatment of the West as a region with its own “unbroken history,” the New Western Historians never fully abandoned the idea of the frontier. Instead, they sought to redefine the frontier as a “zone of contact” between culturally different groups of people and

thus to remove much of the ethnocentrism in the prevailing conception of the frontier as the furthest edge of Euro-American society. This redefinition allowed historians to attend to both sides of the cultural divide, writing more inclusive, less triumphalist histories of the American West.

The Frontier in Contemporary Scholarship on American Religious History

As historians debated and refined Turner’s frontier thesis, religious historians quietly proceeded to apply the results to the study of American religion, particularly in the West. Michael E. Engh, adopting the notion of the frontier as a zone of contact, explored the religious diversity of early Los Angeles, California, in his *Frontier Faiths: Church, Temple, and Synagogue in Los Angeles, 1846–1888* (1992). Distinguishing between this frontier situation and other frontiers, in other times and places, Engh pointed out that Sweet’s “typically American” churches fared poorly at first, while minority faiths such as Judaism and Chinese religions enjoyed much more approval than they were finding elsewhere in the United States. Engh attributed the high level of tolerance and ecumenism evident in early Los Angeles to the frontier conditions found there: the imperative of depending on one’s neighbors, regardless of their religious convictions, and the common desire for community development.

Absorbing as well a new interest in “lived religion,” religious historians focusing on the frontier turned their attention away from institutional history to examine the effects of religion in ordinary people’s lives. Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp, in her study of Gold Rush California, *Religion and Society in Frontier California* (1994), examined the same four denominations that had occupied Sweet: Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists. However, Maffly-Kipp rejected the notion that missionaries from these denominations could somehow transplant their eastern institutions into the West. Instead, she argued along Turnerian lines that the conditions of frontier California encouraged the modification of eastern forms of religion and, indeed, the creation of new forms of religious practice and belief more compatible with the physical, economic, and social milieu of Gold Rush California.

Mormonism

Mormon history was left out of this development for a long time. In many ways the grand exception to the frontier rule—communal rather than individualistic, hierarchical

rather than democratic (though only in certain ways), institutional rather than interdenominational or extra-ecclesiastical—the history of the Mormons was written in large part by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). Members of academia who did not belong to the church avoided this history for various reasons. Most prominent was the general discomfort among historians with the subject of religion, exacerbated by a long-standing academic prejudice against Mormonism that made it difficult for even religious studies scholars to take Mormonism seriously.

In one sense, Mormonism had always been a frontier religion: it began in New York's "Burned-Over District" and moved westward with, or ahead of, the tide of American expansion. In general, however, even though the frontier was the setting for the story of Mormonism, few academics considered it a decisive influence in the elaboration or practice of the religion. Other factors, such as the religious genius of founder Joseph Smith, the organizational abilities of the Mormons' second leader, Brigham Young, and the prejudices of the surrounding non-Mormon community, took center stage in explaining the history of the church. Some scholars have recognized the benefits of the frontier isolation that the beleaguered LDS community found in Utah. Nevertheless, although Mormon history has become more integrated into western history as a whole, the concept of the frontier has not proven a powerful analytical tool in this area.

Herbert Eugene Bolton and the Borderlands School

William Warren Sweet's exclusion of Catholicism from consideration among the American frontier faiths created a significant lacuna in the study of American religions on the frontier that has been filled primarily by scholars trained in the "borderlands school" of history. Herbert Eugene Bolton, considered by many to be the "dean of the borderlands," trained generations of scholars in the history of the northern frontier of New Spain. Although he considered himself one of Turner's students, Bolton never applied Turner's frontier thesis to his own area of study—nor did his students. Nevertheless, Bolton's work and that of his students have been enormously important to those scholars of American religious history working on the area known as the borderlands—primarily that region of the American Southwest that once belonged to Mexico and before that to Spain.

In 1848 Mexico ceded about a third of its territory to the United States under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe

Hidalgo. These concessions were later expanded, resulting in the ultimate transfer of about half of Mexico's land base to the United States. The acquisition of this territory by the United States brought with it the addition of a primarily Spanish-speaking Catholic population that became the target of Protestant missionaries determined to evangelize and Americanize these new citizens. Long before the Protestants arrived, however, Roman Catholic priests constructed missions throughout the American Southwest in an effort to Christianize and Hispanicize the local indigenous populations. Unlike the Protestant missionaries who would come later, these Catholic priests were often an integral part of Spanish military expeditions, and their missions were officially sponsored by the Spanish crown. As Herbert Eugene Bolton observed in his influential 1917 article "The Mission as a Frontier Institution in the Spanish-American Colonies," these missions did double duty, working for both the Catholic Church and the Spanish empire. Bolton called these multipurpose establishments "frontier institutions," but he did not use the term *frontier* to refer to Turner's process-oriented thesis. Rather, for Bolton *frontier* meant simply the farthest reaches of the Spanish empire. Bolton's focus on the missions was typical of the borderlands school treatment of religion: in general, scholars focused on the institutional church and its efforts to absorb the Indian populations along Spain's northern frontier. Indigenous religions, and the effects of the frontier on Spanish Catholicism, received little consideration.

As was true of American history more generally, borderlands historians gradually expanded their focus beyond Spanish institutional history to consider the multiple sides of the cultural encounters resulting from Spain's northward expansion. Many scholars have explored the religious dimensions of these encounters, taking seriously both the Roman Catholicism of the priests and colonists as well as the traditional religions of the native inhabitants of the areas Spain invaded. For example, Ramón A. Gutiérrez's book *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500–1846* (1991) explores both Pueblo and Hispanic worldviews, taking both seriously as a way of understanding why historical actors behaved as they did.

Contemporary Scholarship on Borderlands Religion

The nearly exclusive association of the term *borderlands* with the history of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the

Southwest has meant that for religious historians the term signifies Catholicism and increasingly Mexican American folk religions such as *curanderismo* and *espiritualismo*. More recently, scholars of borderlands religion have begun to think of their subject in explicitly transnational terms, examining the cross-border flows of ideas, practices, and material culture in religious contexts. Luis D. León's *La Llorona's Children: Religion, Life, and Death in the U.S.-Mexican Borderlands* (2004) is a good example. León discusses the literal and symbolic border crossings involved in contemporary devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe, the practices of *curanderismo* and *espiritualismo*, and the rise of evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity in Mexico and Los Angeles. The transnational focus in León's work and that of other scholars highlights the fluidity of borders and identities and brings into stark relief the dynamics of power—especially state power, but also the economic and cultural power that ultimately controls the flows that shape religious belief and practice on both sides of the border.

More important perhaps has been the political appropriation of the term *borderlands*, turning the word from a geographic designation into a metaphor for the unsettled political, social, and emotional space in which Mexican Americans find themselves. Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, first published in 1987, defines the borderlands as “a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary.” Anzaldúa uses the term to describe a state that religious studies scholars and anthropologists recognized as a form of liminality. According to Anzaldúa, borderlands themselves were constantly in transition, and the people who lived in them were typical liminal figures—that is, those on the margins of mainstream society. For Anzaldúa this was, among other things, a spiritual condition, one dealt with by utilizing and reinterpreting the resources of ancient Nahuatl religion as well as more contemporary Mexican American Catholic religious practices. Although Anzaldúa draws on her own experience as a Mexican American, and specifically *tejana*, lesbian, she clearly intends to describe the condition of Mexican Americans in the United States more generally, whether they lived in the Southwest or elsewhere.

This metaphorical turn has allowed scholars of religious studies to amplify their meanings when discussing the lives and religious practices of Mexicans and Mexican Americans. León, for example, understands the borderlands in a strict sense as the territory on either side of the U.S.-Mexican border, but draws on Anzaldúa and other Mexican

American cultural critics to explore this space as a social, political, economic, psychological, and mythical space as well. The geographic borderlands thus become a space in which to examine the symbolic narratives that shape Mexican American spirituality, a “religious poetics” that subverts what Anzaldúa sees as the “unnatural boundary” that divided the Mexican Americans' homeland of Aztlán between Mexico and the United States.

Nepantla

Scholars have also experimented with other terms. For example, elaborating on a word that Anzaldúa and other Mexican American cultural critics had employed, Rudy V. Busto suggested the Nahuatl term *nepantla*, meaning “middle place.” According to Busto, the term originally referred to both place, because of the word's technical meaning, and process, based on the root word's reference to mutuality or reciprocity. Busto adopted the term as a way of understanding both the religious situation of indigenous Mexicans after the Spanish invasion (the context in which the term was first recorded) and the later populations of Hispanics and Filipino Americans who find themselves between religious systems, partaking of both but at home in neither and sometimes creating a third option using the religious materials at hand. *Nepantla* has been taken up less explicitly by other scholars working on Mexican Americans' religion.

Conclusion

This metaphorical turn has thus brought the discussion full circle: taking terms originally used to refer to geographical space, such as *borderlands*, or more ambiguously to some combination of spatial location, temporal position, and social interaction, such as *nepantla*, scholars have turned them into ways of talking about process.

Although *nepantla* has yet to be fully theorized or widely adopted, the terms *borderlands* and *frontier* continue to be common in the historiography of American religion. Still, both remain problematic, primarily because their referents—the U.S.-Mexican border or the westward-moving edge of Euro-American society—privilege certain, usually white, people and their usually Christian religions at the expense of other, often brown, people and their often non-Christian religions. Some scholars such as Eldon G. Ernst and Maffly-Kipp have tried to remedy this problem by imagining American religious history from the opposite direction, beginning in the West and moving eastward. This exercise, which tends to privilege groups and religions that have been

given short shrift in the traditional narratives of American religious history, has sparked the imaginations of many scholars. However, it has yet to produce a major new synthesis of American religious history. In the meantime, the focus of *frontier* on change spurred by new environments and the use of *borderlands* to discuss transnational aspects of religious belief and practice ensure that these terms will retain their utility for some time to come.

See also *California and the Pacific Rim Region; Geographical Approaches; Historical Approaches; Latino/a Religious Practice; Latter-day Saints; Lived Religion; Mexico* entries; *Mountain West and Prairie Region; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; Pacific Northwest Region; Southwest as Region.*

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Fundamentalism

Definitions of fundamentalism range from the sociological to the theological. Older assessments portrayed fundamentalism as the reaction of southern rural uneducated folk

against the northeastern urban and academic elites during the early decades of the twentieth century. H. L. Mencken, the era's most prominent journalist, popularized from his perch at the *Baltimore Sun* the idea that fundamentalism was "a holy war upon every decency that civilized men cherish." As he wrote in "The Collapse of Protestantism," for him fundamentalists "constituted, perhaps, the most ignorant class of teachers ever set up to lead a civilized people . . . even more ignorant than the county superintendents of schools."

Mencken's remarks, though provocatively amusing, were not altogether different from H. Richard Niebuhr's analysis in his essay on fundamentalism in the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (1937). Despite being a theologian, Niebuhr tried to interpret fundamentalism sociologically as a movement that developed out of a conflict between America's rural and urban cultures. In its more aggressive forms, according to Niebuhr, fundamentalism was most prevalent in isolated communities where "the traditions of pioneer society had been most effectively preserved" and were "least subject to the influence of modern science and industrial civilization." The image of fundamentalism as a rural, backward, anti-intellectual form of twentieth-century Protestantism persisted in many texts on American history published during the 1940s and 1950s and culminated with Richard Hofstadter's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1962), which cited fundamentalism as one of the best examples of the perennial hostility of American culture to advanced learning and the life of the mind.

One of the first historians to shift from identifying fundamentalism as a social movement and to consider it chiefly in religious and theological terms was Paul A. Carter. In an article published in 1968, Carter noted how important ideas and doctrines were to conservative Protestants who opposed liberalism. He argued against the historical and sociological consensus that fundamentalists possessed their own set of beliefs and ideas and that these systems of thought were complex in their own right, even if foreign to the world of research universities and city newspaper editors. In other words, rather than constituting an anti-intellectual form of belief, fundamentalists were just as interested in ideas and learning as their Protestant foes who were attempting to harmonize Christianity and modern learning.

Carter's work was soon followed by important historical studies that explored in great detail the ideas that made the fundamentalist mind tick. The work of Ernest R. Sandeen located fundamentalism in the intellectual rigor of premillennial teaching about the return of Christ and the

doctrine of biblical inerrancy. It was followed by the benchmark work of George M. Marsden, who added depth by examining a constellation of ideas that included Wesleyan teaching on holy living, convictions about Christian America, and a philosophical disposition with roots in Scottish common sense realism. The definition of fundamentalism that emerged from these revisionist accounts was that fundamentalism was not anti-intellectual or even anti-modern, but that conservative Protestants who opposed liberalism were possibly more intellectualistic than liberals and just as modern as the rest of the Protestant world.

Yet even the recent discovery of fundamentalism's intellectual roots has its limits. If fundamentalism is defined simply as the 1920s conservative opposition to liberal ideas, such as theological appropriations of biblical criticism and Darwinian science, then the timing of fundamentalism remains a mystery. Soon after the Civil War American Protestant churches were beginning to introduce critical theories about the Bible and working out terms of peace between evolution and the first chapters of Genesis. A fundamentalist controversy in the 1890s would have been more understandable than one occurring when many of the new views about evolution, creation, and the human (as opposed to divine) qualities of the Bible were already several decades old. As it happened, the fundamentalist controversy was as much a reaction to the ecumenical movement within the churches, Protestant expectations about America's religious character, and populist developments outside the largest denominations as it was to theological innovation.

The Promise of Protestant Unity and Christian Social Order

As much as new learning emanating from the research universities and their divinity schools could have polarized American Protestants into liberal and conservative factions, denominational cooperation and good will characterized the Protestant existence between 1865 and 1920. This was the era in which the largest Anglo-American denominations such as the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, and Baptists established ties of commonality that forged what became known as "mainline" Protestantism. As William R. Hutchison wrote in the preface to *Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900–1960* (1989), these denominations through their cooperative efforts would emerge in the early twentieth century as the Protestant establishment—that is, as those churches that "felt responsible for America: for its moral

structure, for the religious content of national ideals, for the educative and welfare functions that government would not . . . carry out."

Care for social order in the United States was not new for Protestants after the Civil War. In fact, before 1860 the Protestants who took the lead in organizing social life in the new nation were those in the revivalist tradition and who grew numerically and regionally during the Second Great Awakening. The evangelical awakenings of the colonial and antebellum eras taught American Protestants a conception of the relationship between faith and social activism that would be crucial to mainline Protestants. Because genuine conversion naturally led to holy living, born-again Protestants sponsored a host of social reforms that were designed to create a Christian culture in the United States. The task of the array of voluntary societies founded by evangelicals, known as the Benevolent Empire, was to purge America of sinful behavior and establish a righteous society. Many of these organizations were explicitly religious, such as the American Board of Foreign Missions (1810), the American Bible Society (1816), and the American Tract Society (1825). But some were also explicitly social in purpose—such as the American Colonization Society (1817), the American Sunday School Union (1824), and the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance (1827). Other efforts were devoted to women's rights, penal reform, abolition, Sabbath observance, and antismoking.

The greatest example of evangelical activism was that aimed at abolishing slavery. This campaign included social reformers from both religious and secular backgrounds, but the greatest support for ending slavery came from the promoters of revivals, who believed that chattel slavery was sinful and that the United States could not advance the kingdom of God until it rid itself of the evil institution. Evangelicalism also fed the discontentment with efforts to reform slavery gradually. Revivalists insisted that slaves be freed as immediately as individuals decided to follow Christ and as quickly as believers exhibited holy living. But not all evangelicals opposed slavery. In the fifteen years before the Civil War slavery divided Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians into northern and southern branches, divisions that set into motion the secession of the South from the Union. Southern evangelicals especially went from ambivalence to outright defense of the institution as necessary to domestic tranquility and social order. But evangelicalism was such an important factor in the conflict that it is possible to speak of the Civil War as the last chapter in the Second Great Awakening.

Support for religious voluntary associations that were not directly connected to the churches and the logic of cooperation in moral and social activism carried over from the antebellum era to the postbellum period, when increasingly the logic of unity appealed not simply to individual Protestants but also to denominational leaders. The appeal of union was especially powerful at a time when the nation's own unity had first been threatened and then restored through a destructive and tragic war. War had taught Protestants on each sectional side of the divide that if they could cooperate during the time of conflict for a common purpose, then the same trust and camaraderie should characterize peacetime church endeavors. The lesson of working together against a common foe made particular sense during the last decades of the nineteenth century, a time marked by the rise of new industries, the arrival of immigrants to work in those businesses, and those immigrants' settlement in urban centers marked by ghettos, criminal activity, and lewd behavior and indecency. Protestants' growing discomfort in their united nation was not helped by the record number of Roman Catholics migrating to the United States. In effect, many Protestants believed that churches needed to cooperate for the negative purpose of combating secularism, materialism, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, socialism, and Roman Catholicism. On the positive side, Protestants hoped to maintain a Christian America.

One of the first cooperative endeavors emerging from this constellation of concerns was the Evangelical Alliance, an agency founded in London in 1846 and that in 1867 gained an American branch. The alliance regularly sponsored conferences featuring pastors and university professors who reported on social conditions in the United States and invariably recommended policies or educational or family structures that reflected Anglo-American Protestant religious and cultural conventions. In 1908 Protestant denominational cooperation culminated in formation of the Federal Council of Churches. The federated structure ensured that the denominations would retain their own identity and control of their own resources. However, members of the council took the informal associations from the previous decades and melded them into a single formal institution that would provide an outlet for Protestant activism. In fact, the Federal Council's first piece of business was to adopt the "Social Creed for the Churches," a fourteen-point program. Its recommendations for business owners, government officials, and labor leaders were aimed at putting an end to the unrest between workers and the owners of large-scale

industry. This creed was the embodiment of the Social Gospel, which was a new form of teaching within Protestantism that posited the realities of sinfulness that extended beyond those of the individual, and the need for a social message of salvation as much as an individual gospel. Even so, as much as the Social Gospel was evident within the Federal Council's activity, so too were various evangelists and pastors known for their revivalistic ministries. The Federal Council, even if achieving institutional heft unimaginable by antebellum Protestantism, maintained the earlier balance between revivalism and social reform.

The next stage of Protestant cooperation was reached, just as it had begun, after a war. Thanks to the common efforts of Protestant churches during World War I, as well as to a desire for greater unity, the members of the Federal Council began in 1919 to consider plans for an organic union of Protestant churches—a proposal that would have done away with separate denominational structures and yielded one united Protestant church of the United States. Although this plan failed (unlike in Canada where in 1925 a similar proposal produced the United Church of Canada), it was nevertheless the culmination of American Protestant efforts to rally behind a common effort to preserve a moral and orderly society under the banner of Christian resolve. The social influence of the churches, in other words, went hand in hand with ecumenical aims. As a result, distinct aspects of denominational identity, whether in doctrine, polity, or worship, were less important for many American Protestants than a generic sense of mission that Anglo-American Protestant communions held by virtue of their identification with an American way of life that included Protestantism.

In contrast, then, to the seminary professors who were polarized into conservative and liberal camps thanks to new learning associated with Darwinism and higher criticism, from 1870 to 1920 clergy and church members were experiencing a groundswell of enthusiasm for greater cooperation among the denominations. This desire for church union, combined with its institutional manifestations, was arguably as important a backdrop for the fundamentalist controversy as the alleged scholarly threats to beliefs about the Bible.

The Limits of Cooperation and Unity

Outside the mainline denominations the concerns about a Christian social order and organizational solidarity were less important than the biblical preoccupations and devotional

convictions that would eventually produce dissent from ecumenical Protestantism as well as the building blocks of fundamentalism.

One important nineteenth-century doctrinal development for opposition to ecumenism and also to liberalism was dispensationalism, a particular way of interpreting the Bible—especially the prophetic passages—that also generated a network of teachers, schools, and conferences outside the denominations. Dispensationalism divided salvation history into seven eras or dispensations, each of which was marked by God establishing terms of fellowship with believers, the failure and wickedness of those called to faithfulness, and the divine response of judgment and punishment. This perspective on the Bible located the church, the Christian era, in the last dispensation, and taught that the church, just as believers had in the previous eras, would fail in its spiritual responsibilities. The Second Coming of Christ would end the church age. His return was to save true believers and judge the rest.

Dispensationalism offered a markedly different understanding of history and its unfolding. In contrast to many in the mainline churches who believed in a progressive unfolding of the kingdom of God that could be identified with the advance of the civilized world, dispensationalists believed that the world, including the church, was growing ever more corrupt. This pessimism extended to the United States, which may have once held a special place in the divine plan of redemption for dispensationalists but was going to follow the general example of the rest of humankind.

Dispensational teaching arose first in the United Kingdom through the work and writing of John Nelson Darby (1800–1882) and spawned the Plymouth Brethren association of Christians. After the Civil War Darby traveled to the United States for a series of preaching tours that gave his teaching a wider hearing. Among the important disseminators of Darby's views were William E. Blackstone (1841–1935), James H. Brooks (1837–1890), and James M. Gray (1851–1935). These evangelists were, in turn, responsible for establishing a network of Bible and prophecy conferences that further popularized dispensationalism within a specific sector of American Protestantism. The most influential of these meetings was the Niagara Conference movement, which began in the 1870s. It met in a variety of locations, and from 1883 to 1897 at Niagara-on-the-Lake, in Ontario, Canada. Although the original aim of the Niagara Conferences was to encourage a better understanding of the scripture, over time it developed doctrinal emphases that would

also be common in fundamentalism, especially the inerrancy of the Bible and the “personal and premillennial” return of Christ, also known as “the blessed hope.”

Although the Bible conference movement faded from importance, especially after the death of Brooks, another institution soon took its place in popularizing the teachings of dispensationalism. In the late nineteenth century, Protestants who sensed an urgency to train religious workers, evangelists, and missionaries created the Bible institute or Bible college as a way to address the need for laity who wanted to engage in full-time Christian service. In 1886 the famous revivalist Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899) established one of the first of these schools, the Moody Bible Institute, in Chicago. Earlier, in 1884, A. B. Simpson (1843–1919), a Canadian Presbyterian who would form the denomination known as the Christian and Missionary Alliance, erected the New York Missionary Training College (later Nyack College). The Bible institutes were important for providing Protestants of a revivalist temperament with an alternative to the liberal arts college and the theological seminary. Their instruction in the Bible and in practical techniques of ministry or support services was designed to produce graduates quickly who were prepared to evangelize non-Christians in often difficult circumstances, whether in the slums of the industrial city or non-Western societies.

The sense of urgency that spearheaded the Bible institutes arose directly from dispensationalism and its sense of imminent divine judgment and the return of Christ. If the end of history was near, Christians needed to send out as many evangelists and missionaries as possible to reduce the number of people facing eternal perdition. Dispensationalism, in turn, determined the content of the curriculum at Bible colleges and institutes. C. I. Scofield (1843–1921) was another of the popular speakers in the Bible conference movement, and his book *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (1888) established him as the leading teacher of dispensationalism. He also created a correspondence course that attracted large numbers of lay Protestants and eventually became part of the curriculum at Moody Bible Institute. With their rival interpretation of history and alternative form of disseminating dispensationalist ideas, these Protestants created an alternative identity to the ecumenically and progressive-minded Protestantism of the mainline denominations. At the same time these methods of reading and interpreting the Bible provided a substantial counterweight to the historical-critical methods becoming popular in American seminaries and divinity schools. Increasingly, the



Revivalist Dwight Moody established one of the first Bible institutes, which were designed to produce graduates who would evangelize non-Christians.

world of the largest denominations and that of a more populist strand of Protestantism were operating in two different universes.

One additional source for a Protestant faith that existed on the margins or outside of the largest denominations was Wesleyan teaching on sanctification made popular through the Holiness movement. The idea of Christian perfection or the higher Christian life stemmed from John Wesley's own teaching about the possibility of living a life free from sin. The Wesleyan understanding of sanctification not only was popular among Methodists but also attracted parts of the Congregationalist and Presbyterian world. It informed Charles Finney's lectures on theology and was the doctrinal position of Oberlin College. Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874) and Hannah Whithall Smith (1832–1911) wrote books that were arguably more important than Finney for spreading Holiness views. By the postbellum era the Holiness movement was fueling camp meetings under the auspices of the National Campmeeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness and the Keswick Convention, an English conference for perfectionist teachings that Dwight Moody imported to the United States with his Northfield Conferences in Massachusetts. Holiness teaching also spawned a "come-outer" impulse among Methodists, which, in turn, led the most zealous advocates of Holiness to form new denominations such as the Church of God (1881) and the

Church of the Nazarenes (1907) where Christian perfection could flourish without compromise.

The most novel form of Holiness teaching and practice emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century. In Pentecostalism evidence of entire sanctification was speaking in tongues (glossolalia, a type of activity described in the New Testament as part of the early church's experience). The first denomination to embody this form of Holiness teaching was the Assemblies of God, formed in 1914. Not only did the Holiness movement thrive in settings comparable to those of dispensationalism and outside the mainline churches, but Pentecostalism

also drew upon a sense of the "end times" when trying to justify behavior that some Protestants and even those in the Holiness movement found strange.

Protestant Dissent Organized

If late nineteenth-century grassroots Protestant interest in dispensationalism and holy living revealed the limits of the mainline church's agenda for cooperation, developments within those mainline denominations after World War I threatened the harmony and common resolve that had prevailed among Protestants for almost fifty years. A harbinger of this threat came in the form of a pamphlet series, *The Fundamentals*, published between 1910 and 1915. Although commonly regarded as the beginnings of a fundamentalist movement because of its name, the series involved figures who would in the 1920s avoid identifying with the cause of purging liberal theology and evolution from the churches and schools. Even so, *The Fundamentals* did signal the emergence of an effort to reassert the basic convictions of historic Protestantism over the perceived doctrinal indifference of the mainline churches.

The man who conceived of the series was a wealthy oilman from California, Lyman Stewart, who also funded the series and sent an estimated three million copies to English-speaking religious workers. If the series had a theological viewpoint it was dispensationalism. Amzi C. Dixon

(1854–1925) and Reuben A. Torrey (1856–1928) were among the better-known editors of the twelve volumes; both were also well known in Bible conference and Bible institute networks. Even so, *The Fundamentals* also received contributions from notable Calvinist theologians such as Benjamin Warfield of Princeton Seminary and James Orr of the Free Church College in Edinburgh who had no particular affinity with dispensationalism and who worked within the mainstream denominational structures. Although authors like Warfield and Orr were by no means a natural fit within the dispensationalist and Holiness convictions of most of the contributors to *The Fundamentals*, the doctrine of biblical inerrancy as articulated by Reformed theologians did prove to be a welcome weapon in the emerging fundamentalist arsenal.

The dispensationalist-minded editors of *The Fundamentals* were able to call on nonpremillennial authors in part because of the aim of the series. Instead of functioning as a positive treatment of a distinct biblical outlook, *The Fundamentals* defended traditional Protestant views of the Bible and salvation. Approximately one-third of the articles defended scripture from ideas commonly associated with higher criticism. Other themes were arguments against liberal conceptions of older teaching, such as the person and work of Christ, or criticism of evolutionary theory even while expressing tolerance for theistic evolution. Yet another layer of writings in *The Fundamentals* concerned practical matters in the lives of Christians or anecdotes from the experience of prominent pastors. Essays in this category demonstrated the continuing popularity of Holiness teaching.

In sum, *The Fundamentals* became significant by acting as a rallying point for conservatives. By no means doctrinaire, the series drew together a variety of Protestant views that were arguably theologically and ecclesologically incompatible. And yet by indicating the broad outline of a conservative agenda, *The Fundamentals* foreshadowed the emergence of a conservative opposition to liberal trends within the mainline churches.

The next level of organized conservative dissent emerged in 1919 with the formation of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association (WCFA). Undoubtedly, the term *fundamentals* was important for the new organization and tapped whatever energy had been created by the pamphlet series of that name. Unlike *The Fundamentals*, the WCFA was aggressive in identifying threats to Christianity in America and in assuming an explicitly oppositional posture. The man who

created and ran the association, William Bell Riley (1861–1947), targeted evolution and theological liberalism as the chief errors afflicting the nation's churches and schools.

In many respects the WCFA was less important as an organization than it was as a vehicle for Riley who would emerge as a key figure in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. In fact, in 1924 when Riley became sick and had to withdraw from association activities for six months, the organization teetered on disbandment. Yet the WCFA was significant in Riley's efforts to marshal conservatives into a united front against liberalism. On the one hand, the association built on the pattern of Bible prophecy conferences that had helped to popularize dispensationalism. On the other hand, under Riley's influence the WCFA adapted dispensationalism from an outlook that motivated evangelism and missions to one that became the basis for opposing liberal ideas about progress and the moral superiority of the United States as a defender of the civilized world in World War I. In fact, for the WCFA dispensationalism led directly to antievolution and antinaturalism because both Darwinism and cultural progressivism removed the miraculous and supernatural from Christian teaching about human origins and the end of human history.

Riley, who hailed from Indiana, became a convert to Christianity at the age of fourteen during an evangelistic meeting. He received his theological training at Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville and held pastorates at a series of churches in the upper Midwest before arriving at First Baptist Church of Minneapolis where he established a national reputation for combating liberalism. Like many fundamentalists, Riley interpreted the Bible according to the dispensationalist scheme and found it remarkably well suited for diagnosing national and international affairs. He opposed the teaching of evolution in tax-supported schools, not so much on biblical or scientific grounds, but rather because of what he believed evolution did to the morality of children thanks to its obliteration of the distinction between men and monkeys. Without a sense of sin, Riley warned, men and women, boys and girls, would revert to the brute morality of the jungle. By the 1930s he would use biblical prophecy to spot conspiracies within the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt as well as the communist empire of the Soviet Union.

Although Riley, like many fundamentalist leaders, operated independently, he was still intimately connected with other conservatives on the two main fronts of the battle between conservatives and liberals: public schools and

churches. In 1925 he recruited William Jennings Bryan to be the chief prosecutor at the Scopes trial in Dayton, Tennessee, and played an important role in the denominational controversies among both southern and northern Baptists.

The Scopes Trial and Anti-Darwinism

Riley's argument connecting Darwinism to moral decline took on added plausibility after World War I when anti-evolutionists tied Germany's perceived aggression to the consequences of scientific ideas that were no longer controlled by scripture. The important factor prompting a backlash against evolution in the 1920s was not the wartime experience as much as it was the expansion of public education in the South. As various states began to require universal education, teachers, parents, students, and school board members encountered textbooks that taught evolutionary biology. In response, the legislatures in many southern states considered laws that would ban the teaching of Darwinian science and several adopted such legislation. Tennessee's law, passed in early 1925, was among the most explicit in condemning evolution. It prohibited teaching "any theory that denies the Story of Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animal."

The Tennessee legislature could not have predicted the national attention and local interest its law would generate. The American Civil Liberties Union set out to make a test case of the Tennessee law and sought someone they could use to test the law's constitutionality. The man who stepped forward was John T. Scopes, a science teacher in Dayton. Scopes received encouragement not only from national organizations opposed to the apparent restriction of free speech and scientific inquiry but also from local business groups who calculated that a trial in Dayton would attract the national spotlight and bring journalists and tourists to a town that, for business purposes, needed to be put on the map. Adding to the potential for a national spectacle were figures such as Riley and his World's Christian Fundamentals Association. These fundamentalists wanted to ensure that they would win such a public contest over the Bible and its place in American institutions.

The selection of William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925) to be the chief prosecutor for the state only intensified the spotlight that the nation and its press would shine on the small town of Dayton. A native of Illinois who was trained as a lawyer, Bryan was the most active layman in the religious controversies of the 1920s. He represented Nebraska

in the U.S. Congress before gaining the Democratic nomination for president in 1896, 1900, and 1904, all of which he lost. As a politician, Bryan supported progressive reforms such as woman suffrage, prohibition, and regulation of big business. But he also earned a reputation as a man of the people and an advocate of the economic interests of farmers and rural America. In fact, his most famous speech, "Cross of Gold," argued for a silver standard for the American currency so that cash-starved farmers who were increasingly dependent on and yet alienated from America's banking system might have better access to cheaper money and credit. Although Bryan was portrayed as the champion of lost causes, his political concerns were sufficiently mainstream for him to serve as Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state, a position from which Bryan would resign because of his unwillingness to support the country's entry into World War I.

In retirement from public service, Bryan remained active as a popular speaker and religious teacher. His newspaper columns were read by millions of Americans. When he took up the issue of evolution in the early 1920s, calling Darwinism a "menace," Bryan became the most prominent of national spokesmen who were defending the biblical account of creation. His involvement at the Scopes trial was a natural development of his own legal and religious background. Bryan believed that not only was evolution a threat to traditional Christian morality but its inclusion in the curriculum of public schools represented the imposition of scientific and educational elites upon the ideas and mores of average Americans. In fact, within the arguments before the court the more pressing issue in Dayton was less the truth of Moses or Charles Darwin than it was the power of the majority of local citizens in a democratic community to determine its own affairs, including education.

As plausible as Bryan's political arguments may have been and as popular as he was as a political figure and religious leader, he was no match for the lawyers and journalists who descended upon Dayton for the proceedings during the summer of 1925. Clarence Darrow, one of the era's most famous attorneys, led the defense, and H. L. Mencken led the hundreds of journalists who reported on the spectacle and often wrote disparaging stories on the backwardness of rural Tennessee. Although Darrow at times bested Bryan in arguments—even baiting Bryan to take the stand and defend biblical stories such as the flood and the whale that swallowed Jonah—Bryan actually won the trial by the court's standards. The judge found Scopes guilty of violating

Tennessee's law and fined the teacher \$100. Although the decision would later be overturned on a technicality, the law remained on the books for several more decades. Meanwhile, journalistic coverage of Bryan's victory in court turned his efforts into a cultural defeat for religiously backward Americans who seemed to oppose science, education, and the assertion that progress that came from new discoveries. Only five days after the trial, Bryan died in Tennessee. His death underscored the sense of defeat for fundamentalists before the bar of public opinion.

Fundamentalism in the Denominations

The year of Bryan's death was also important for the major denominations that were experiencing opposition between conservatives and liberals, and the results were not much better for fundamentalists. Some denominations—including Methodists, Episcopalians, Disciples, Southern Presbyterians and Southern Baptists—felt the turbulence of these disputes, but the biggest battles were among Presbyterians and Baptists in the North. These were the only controversies that resulted in the formation of new denominations.

Because of the independent character of the church polity of Baptists, much energy in the Northern Baptist Convention among fundamentalists was local and lacked coordination. As such, in Baptist circles the efforts of individual pastors could be as substantial as institutional efforts. William Bell Riley illustrates this point. His own involvement in his church in Minneapolis, as well as his founding of a Bible college and the WCFA and his lengthy efforts to combat evolution in public education, demonstrate the way in which one Baptist pastor could cast a long shadow among conservative Protestants, both Baptist and those in other denominations.

This was no less true for another important Baptist fundamentalist. John Roach Straton (1875–1929) was a prominent Baptist who acted locally but also participated in denominational associations to oppose modernism. Born in the Midwest and educated at Southern Baptist institutions, Straton gained notoriety in the North when he served as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in New York City from 1918 until his death in 1929. Unlike the reputation that fundamentalists may have gained at the Scopes trial, Straton showed that they also were engaged in progressive social and urban activism. In fact, like Bryan (not to mention his liberal opponents), Straton believed that the well-being of the United States depended on true religion. Unlike liberal proponents of the Social Gospel, however, Straton refused to

isolate social reform from individual salvation. The social ills could be remedied only through the conversion of individuals. To this end, Straton visited red-light districts to protest prostitution, supported Prohibition, and advocated the minimum wage, mothers' pensions, and profit sharing. Nevertheless, whatever good these policies might accomplish was far from the ultimate good that came through the Christian faith. In fact, Straton's emergence as a fundamentalist stemmed from his own frustrations with liberal Protestants who he believed were abandoning evangelism to pursue reform almost exclusively.

Straton achieved fame among fundamentalists during debates in 1923 and 1924 with Charles Francis Potter, a Unitarian minister in New York. Not only were Straton's debates published in book form, but they also attracted front-page coverage in newspapers and were broadcast on the radio. The topics were biblical inerrancy, evolution, and the deity of Christ. In the end, Straton's arguments were conventional for Victorian Protestants. He asserted that the very foundations of the American Republic stemmed directly from the pages of the Bible, which taught the basics of civilization—the practice of monogamy, the sanctity of marriage, the value of men and women, and the importance of the family. Even though, unlike Riley, Straton was not a leader in Northern Baptist fundamentalist organizations, he did join and support them during the 1920s.

J. C. Masee (1871–1965) was another Baptist fundamentalist to come up through the ranks of Southern Baptists. Born and reared in Georgia, Masee attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and held a series of pastorates before arriving in 1922 at Boston's Tremont Temple, where he gained a following locally. Dispensationalism heavily influenced Masee, but instead of using it to call attention to the nation's moral degeneracy he used it in the more typical manner as an incentive for evangelism. But this interest in evangelism did prompt his opposition to signs of liberalism among the ranks of Northern Baptist missionaries and his call for investigation of modernism in the foreign mission fields. Even so, Masee's opposition to liberalism never prompted him to leave the Northern Baptist Convention with other fundamentalists or to engage in the political and cultural battles that occupied Riley and others. Masee was content with the strategy of evangelism.

The fluidity of Baptist denominational structures would draw another Southern Baptist into the controversy in the North. J. Frank Norris (1887–1952) was known by many as the gun-toting Baptist because of the 1926 incident in

which he shot a man who threatened him in his office (Norris was found not guilty of wrongdoing). He labored chiefly among Baptists in Texas. After studying at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, he ministered in Dallas and then for the rest of his life at First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, a post he would eventually split with ministering at Temple Baptist Church in Detroit. Norris was editor of the magazine *The Fundamentalist*, founded in 1927. He also was a supporter of the Baptist Bible Union, an organization that drew support from Northern Baptist fundamentalists.

Baptist Fundamentalists Organized

Founded in 1923, the Baptist Bible Union became the formal outlet for one form of fundamentalist opposition to modernism in the Northern Baptist Convention. Leaders such as Norris and Canadian T. T. Shields (1873–1955) gave the union a measure of visibility, even if they had their own Baptist identities outside the northern communion. The union had particular appeal among Northern Baptists concerned about the direction of foreign missions in the convention. By the early 1930s the potential for the union's leaders to be distracted from the organization's affairs led to the formation in 1932 of the General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB).

Robert T. Ketcham (1889–1978) was the early leader of GARB. He lacked a formal higher education but still pastored in congregations in Pennsylvania and Ohio and was active in the Baptist Bible Union. By 1928 his opposition to liberalism had led to the founding of the Ohio Association of Independent Baptists. When GARB was formed four years later, it adopted the New Hampshire Confession with a premillennial emphasis. The association has remained careful about associating with other Baptist communions and, to avoid the dangers of denominationalism, has chosen to conduct a variety of its work through other independent institutions.

The Bible Baptist Union was not the only resource for Baptist fundamentalists in the North. Preceding the union by a couple years was the Fundamentalist Baptist Fellowship, which spearheaded conservative opposition to liberal teaching in Baptist colleges and seminaries. Perceived as not as radical as the union, the Fellowship tried to pressure the Northern Baptist Convention to adopt a confession of faith based on older Baptist creeds. But the convention affirmed instead that the Bible summarized its faith and the Fundamentalist Baptist Fellowship never regained its standing. Even so, the Fellowship persisted, and in the 1940s

when questions about foreign missions resurfaced, the Fellowship led the opposition. Eventually members of the Fellowship became frustrated with the Northern Baptist Convention's unresponsiveness and formed the Conservative Baptist Association, a communion that also received Riley's blessing and membership before his death that year. The Fellowship would go on, but the Conservative Baptists achieved greater visibility and influence, especially through their seminaries in Portland and Denver. During the 1970s the seminaries became identified with the evangelical movement associated with Billy Graham and *Christianity Today* magazine.

The Presbyterian Controversy

Compared with Baptist disputes, the conflict within the Northern Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in the USA (PCUSA), revolved less around personalities and individuals. Even so, Williams Jennings Bryan was arguably the most prominent Presbyterian in the controversies of the 1920s. He was an elder in the Presbyterian Church and participated in some of the important debates within the denomination, always lobbying for the church to condemn the consumption of alcohol and evolution. As a scion of Cumberland Presbyterianism, a branch of American Presbyterianism that rejected the covenantal and Calvinistic teachings of the Westminster Confession, Bryan failed to see the theological fine points that liberalism signified to his Presbyterian colleagues.

Other leading figures in the Presbyterian controversy were John Gresham Machen (1881–1937) and Clarence Macartney, both of whom were associated with Princeton Theological Seminary, which was the center of the organized opposition to the theological discrepancies within the PCUSA. Machen grew up in Baltimore where he attended Johns Hopkins University before studying at Princeton Theological Seminary and Princeton University. He taught New Testament at the seminary until 1929 when he led in the formation of Westminster Theological Seminary to be Old Princeton Seminary in exile. Because of Machen's association to Princeton Theological Seminary, an institution widely known for the doctrine of inerrancy, the tendency has been to interpret conservative Presbyterian objections to liberalism as a function of Princeton's doctrine of scripture. But Machen's most popular book, *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923), demonstrated that liberalism's greatest defect for conservative Presbyterianism lay in the doctrinal realms of sin and grace. Because liberal Protestantism taught a

different view of salvation, Machen argued, it was “an entirely different religion” from Christianity.

Macartney (1879–1957) grew up among the Covenanters (Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America) in western Pennsylvania, but entered mainline Presbyterianism by attending Princeton Theological Seminary on his way to ordination in the PCUSA. He went on to minister at prominent congregations in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and he served on the board of trustees of the Princeton and Westminster seminaries. Macartney emerged as a leading conservative in 1922 when in response to Harry Emerson Fosdick’s provocative sermon “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” Macartney wrote an article critical of Fosdick and spearheaded Presbyterian opposition. Macartney served as moderator of the PCUSA’s 1924 General Assembly, the only fundamentalist to be elected to that post during the controversy. He joined Machen in efforts to promote Westminster Theological Seminary by serving on the new school’s board of trustees. But Machen and Macartney would part in the 1930s over ecclesiastical politics and the best way to defeat liberalism within the Presbyterian Church.

The Presbyterian controversy went through three phases. The first ran roughly from 1922 to 1925 and involved conservatives opposing bold expressions of liberal Protestantism. In 1922 Fosdick preached what turned out to be the opening thrust in the match between conservatives and liberals with “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” A liberal Baptist who was responsible for regular preaching as a guest minister at New York’s First Presbyterian Church, Fosdick more likely spoke with Baptist controversies in mind than the Presbyterian situation. He accused fundamentalists of intolerance and called their essential doctrines, such as inerrancy and premillennialism, minor matters in the scope of world events. The Presbytery of New York City added to conservative alarm when it ordained two men who would not affirm the virgin birth. Conservatives regarded these events as ample evidence of liberalism and tried to force the Presbyterian officials in New York to comply with denominational guidelines. In several successive General Assemblies, however, the denomination displayed a concerted unwillingness to be intolerant or divisive. The Presbyterian bureaucracy, with tacit support from the laity, chose administrative solutions to ease the tensions and maintain church unity. One of these measures involved the appointment in 1925 of a study committee whose report blamed conservatives for acrimony in the church and called for all sides, especially conservatives, to cease from public polemics.

A similar response to controversy characterized the second phase of the Presbyterian conflict, 1927–1929. Here the general warning to conservatives about public criticism of liberalism was specifically applied to Princeton Theological Seminary. Between 1927 and 1929 the General Assembly appointed another study committee to explore antagonisms that were afflicting the seminary, in this case between conservatives such as Machen, who opposed broadening the Presbyterian Church, and evangelicals such as practical theology professor Charles Erdman, who believed church unity was more important than theological purity, a desire that was theoretically possible but practically impossible. The committee recommended reorganizing Princeton, a solution that gave the president greater authority and reduced the conservative majority in the seminary’s board of directors to a minority. Machen responded in 1929 by resigning from Princeton and founding Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia to be the institution of conservative Presbyterian dissent within the PCUSA.

The third and last phase of the Presbyterian controversy, which began in 1932, was unexpected and again involved an administrative response to doctrinal and practical problems. In 1932 an interdenominational report on foreign missions, *Re-Thinking Missions*, exposed what for conservatives amounted to a serious weakness in the witness of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, one of the sponsoring agencies of the study. The report argued that the old motive for missions—salvation from sin and eternal death—was backward and that a new rationale was needed, one that involved cooperation with other religions with the goal of advancing civilization. Conservatives responded by trying to show how this Presbyterian agency was failing to maintain denominational standards in doctrine and ministry. After being rebuffed by Presbyterian officials, many of whom such as Robert E. Speer (1867–1947) were not liberal but evangelical, conservatives, led by Machen, founded the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. In 1934 denominational officials ruled that this independent institution was unconstitutional and ordered members of the new missions board to be brought to trial. Machen’s was the most sensational of these proceedings, in part because the ecclesiastical court trying him refused to hear any arguments about the constitutionality of the 1934 mandate. In 1935 the Presbytery of New Brunswick convicted Machen of violating his ordination vows on six counts and suspended him from ministry and membership in the PCUSA. He appealed to the national meeting of

Presbyterians in 1936, but his conviction was upheld. Within a week after his appeal, Machen led other conservative Presbyterians into a new denomination, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Small at the beginning (5,000 members), this denomination remains small (approximately 31,000 in 2009) because of the controversies that caused some conservatives to leave, as well as its attention to doctrinal correctness that has often been off putting to evangelical Protestants.

Consequences and Legacy of Fundamentalism

Although it played out in particular settings with distinct sociopolitical, theological, and denominational convictions, the fundamentalist controversy was important from the broad perspective of American Protestantism as a whole. Its chief significance was to divide the largest white Protestant denominations of Anglo descent—the American Protestant mainline—into two camps, one liberal and one conservative. Before the 1920s this expression of Protestantism had combined evangelism and social reform as part of the church's efforts to redeem individuals and transform America. After the 1920s social activism and evangelism would go in different directions. The so-called liberal or mainline churches continued to adopt ministries and programs designed to Christianize the United States and even the world. To be sure, the rise of neo-orthodoxy in the 1930s and 1940s infused mainline Protestantism with a more sober estimate of the relationship between progressive social policy and the advance of God's kingdom. Even so, after 1930 American Protestantism had two clear parties: the mainline churches and fundamentalists, those who dissented from the mainline. What overwhelmingly characterized these dissenters was a commitment to evangelism and foreign missions in a way that insisted that the eternal destinies of people were of far greater consequence than improving temporal social conditions.

By the 1940s, however, some fundamentalists had become frustrated with the otherworldly outlooks of their peers and worked for an alternative form of conservative Protestantism. Led by Harold John Ockenga (1905–1985), Carl F. H. Henry (1913–2003), and Billy Graham (1918–), these neoevangelicals, as they were originally known, attempted to forge a union of the diverse groups and leaders within fundamentalism and to restore a concern for American society and global affairs among those intent on evangelism and missions. The institutions that gave coherence to neoevangelicals initially were the National

Association of Evangelicals (established in 1942), Fuller Theological Seminary (1947), and *Christianity Today* (1956). Although the efforts of neoevangelicals ultimately failed to unify conservative Protestants outside the mainline, these leaders were responsible for carving out *evangelical* as a conservative Protestant identity distinct from *fundamentalist*.

The political and social developments of the 1960s and 1970s that seemingly turned the United States into a post-Protestant society animated both evangelicals and fundamentalists to return to the political activism of an earlier Protestant era. Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority and Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition (in addition to Robertson's bid for the Republican presidential nomination in 1988) were notable institutions for channeling Protestants who were known for being otherworldly back into the realities of electoral politics and international relations. Some have interpreted this fundamentalist and evangelical political activism as a threat to America's tradition of the separation of church and state. But as much as the Religious Right's policies and understanding of the nation may be out of step with the religious and cultural diversity that characterizes twenty-first-century America, the desire for and effort behind Christianizing America has been a hallmark of the largest Protestant denominations in the United States since 1800. The real anomaly for American Protestants may be the fundamentalist era, when conservative Protestants abandoned hopes for realizing the kingdom of God in the United States and looked instead to the crisis of Christ's return to judge the nations as the culmination of salvation history.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Baptists: Southern; Benevolent Empire; Common Sense Realism; Ecumenism; Education: Bible Schools and Colleges; Evangelicals* entries; *Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Fundamentalism: Contemporary; Glossolalia; Neo-Orthodoxy; Pentecostals* entries; *Presbyterians: Since the Nineteenth Century; Prohibition; Protestant Liberalism; Religious Right; Revivalism* entries; *Social Gospel; Women: Evangelical*.

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Fundamentalism: Contemporary

As the decade of the 1980s opened, friends could rejoice, and opponents could warn, that fundamentalism was now "back with a vengeance," as the historian Martin E. Marty put it. This time, however, the opponent was not theological liberals within the denominations but secularizing forces within the nation.

American Protestant fundamentalism was born in the 1910s, it retrenched from the 1930s to 1950s, and it has resurged since the mid-1970s. At its core the movement has always been theological. Unlike the nineteenth- and twentieth-century moves to modernize Christian theology to accommodate developments in science and biblical scholarship, fundamentalism has built its house on biblical inerrancy—affirming the accuracy of the Christian Bible in every detail, interpreted as literally as possible. It has battled the scientific theory of Darwinian evolution for theological reasons, often insisting that the earth was created less than ten thousand years ago in six literal days (a commitment based on a literal reading of the opening chapters of Genesis). The movement has grown through evangelism, often with the sophisticated support of communications technologies. It has viewed the mission field of the world through the lens of premillennialism—a bleak view of human culture as suffering from a severe and irreversible decline from which believers will be rescued only by the personal intervention of Jesus Christ, the returning King come to establish his thousand-year kingdom on earth. Meanwhile, among a significant minority of fundamentalists the quest for theological purity has entailed strict separation from nonfundamentalists, and indeed even from other conservative Christians who themselves associate with nonfundamentalists.

Although the theological dimensions of fundamentalism have always been primary, the movement has also maintained a strong ethos of cultural concern. Emerging as it did from the nineteenth century when evangelical Protestants could comfortably behave as custodians of a presumptively Christian American culture, fundamentalism reacted strongly whenever it saw this Christendom vision threatened. Higher biblical criticism and Darwinian evolution were not just theological threats but also threats to America's Christian civilization. At first, fundamentalists saw such godless intellectual trends behind the German barbarism of World War I. Then they perceived them in worldwide communism. By the 1970s the forces of godlessness seemed to

have rooted themselves within America itself—attacking American children in their schools, American families in their cohesion and sexual identity, and American institutions in their moral moorings. If there was such a thing as a “fundamentalist resurgence” in the 1970s (and this depends on the definition of *fundamentalism*), then it was growth in a new sort of fundamentalism—one in which the cultural battle now eclipsed the theological battle both as motivator and as an engine of growth. The old theological commitments were still present. Now, however, the crusade was not primarily denominational and theological, but cultural and political; it was not about how to read the Bible or understand the end times, but how to vote and act on abortion, feminism, homosexuality, school prayer, and a host of related issues.

The Fundamentalist Battlefields

The cultural concerns of fundamentalists after the late 1970s arose from the counterculture agitations of the 1960s and 1970s. The civil rights movement of the late 1950s and 1960s became the pattern and impetus for radical feminist and gay rights activism, and the sexual revolution of the 1960s fostered sexual permissiveness. The 1960s and especially the 1970s also saw conservative Christians enter a new era of political involvement as they faced state intervention in matters such as religion in the classroom and abortion. In addressing religion in the classroom, the U.S. Supreme Court declared in *Engel v. Vitale* in 1962 that government-imposed prayer in public schools was a violation of the establishment clause of the Constitution. The following year the Court declared in *Abington Township School District v. Schempp* that school-sponsored Bible reading was unconstitutional as well. In addressing the abortion issue, the Court found in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) that a woman had the right to terminate her pregnancy.

For fundamentalists each of these developments alone was troubling enough, but taken together, they seemed to amount to a full frontal secularizing attack. No longer, as in the era of the flappers, could conservative Christians dictate public behavior from the high ground of moral authority automatically associated with the Protestant establishment. By the 1970s there no longer was a Protestant establishment. Simply shaming transgressors would not work anymore: a group rapidly losing status in the nation it had for decades and centuries thought of as its own preserve now had to discover new modes of public persuasion and political action.

This evolution in cultural approach did not happen automatically or smoothly from within fundamentalist ranks. In fact, the Roman Catholics led the charge. The issue was abortion—not a concern that originated in Protestant circles. Abortion had long been treated as an excommunicable sin in Roman Catholic canon law, but in 1968 Pope Paul VI (1897–1978) explicitly reaffirmed this stance in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. Then in 1973 the *Roe v. Wade* decision triggered a wave of Roman Catholic antiabortion activism. Politically active right-to-life organizations were founded without official Roman Catholic ties, but they were staffed by Roman Catholic laypeople. To make headway in the cultural battle, the fundamentalists had to swallow centuries of confessional pride and join with Catholics.

One issue in the new culture war was, however, distinctively Protestant, at least in its origins and its key constituency: the posing of a quasi-scientific theory of “creationism” to counter the Darwinian theory of evolution by natural selection. Since World War I fundamentalists had understood Darwinism to be the biggest threat to Christian civilization in America—matched only, perhaps, by the new winds of higher biblical criticism blowing across the Atlantic from Germany. By the early twenty-first century, although creationism was still solidly a fundamentalist preserve, linked as it was to a literal reading of the Genesis Creation accounts, it had also expanded to include many evangelicals and even some mainline Protestants. This creationist argumentation was pushed into the mainstream with the help of the “intelligent design” movement. Originating in the 1980s from the thought of scientist and historian Charles B. Thaxton, and then carried forward by mathematician and philosopher William Dembski and biochemist Michael Behe, intelligent design argues that some organisms and organs in the natural world are far too complex to have arisen by mere chance.

Today, the Roman Catholic Church, which historically has supported a qualified evolutionary position, is beginning to reconsider that support. Even some nonreligious folks, drawing on postmodern understandings of the subjectivity of scientific knowledge, have begun to waver in their support for evolutionary theory. Activist preachers and their followers have continued to focus on creationism, and creation science institutes, think-tanks, and museums have developed multimillion-dollar budgets and sophisticated literature campaigns. All of these advocates have focused their argumentation on portraying Darwinian evolution as a “theory” that is shaky and unproven.

Creationists have proved to be savvy political lobbyists, drawing support in recent years from highly placed Republicans such as House majority leader Tom DeLay of Texas, Senate majority leader Bill Frist of Tennessee, and President George W. Bush. Across forty-three states, activists have brought their movement to legislatures, school boards, and school districts. As a result, some districts have adopted standards allowing for critiques of evolutionary theory within the science curriculum, and others have either allowed creationism to be taught alongside evolution or have avoided teaching evolution altogether.

But not all the developments have favored the creationists. Evolutionists have fought back in many states and school districts, with battles see-sawing from year to year. For example, in *McLean v. Arkansas Board of Education* (1982) a federal court declared that Arkansas's statute requiring public schools to give "balanced treatment" to "creation-science" and "evolution-science" violated the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution. Moreover, the court refused to admit creation science as legitimate science. Creationist literature was taken to be religious literature, and thus the Arkansas statute was interpreted as defending a religious position.

During this ongoing legal skirmish, the creationists' coalitions with other conservatives have also waxed and waned as some conservatives have become concerned about being associated in the public's mind with "crackpot theories." But the creationists have never flagged in their belief in the rightness of their cause and the wrongness of evolutionary theory.

Portrait of an Enemy: "Secular Humanism"

In the 1970s one phrase, "secular humanism," came to encapsulate the fundamentalists' sense of cultural malaise and frustration with perceived government-imposed secularization. "Secular humanism" was a concept developed by Francis Schaeffer (1912–1984), an influential conservative Reformed (that is, Calvinist Protestant) writer and speaker.

Schaeffer had studied first under the old-school fundamentalist John Gresham Machen (1881–1937) at Westminster Theological Seminary, and then under the fundamentalist separatist Carl McIntire (1906–2002). When, after World War II, McIntire became increasingly invested in anticommunist and antiecumenist crusades, Schaeffer split from him and established his Swiss think-tank and retreat center, L'Abri. Schaeffer drew from the Reformed tradition that insisted that Christianity should transform culture. His film

series *How Shall We Then Live?* contrasted the Christian synthesis of the first nineteen centuries of the church with modern secular humanism, which had proved empty and destructive in the fragmentation and moral relativism of the twentieth century.

Schaeffer was also instrumental in raising *Roe v. Wade* to a position of preeminence as an example of a secularist takeover of government to promote an anti-Christian and licentious agenda. In 1979, working with C. Everett Koop, a physician who was soon appointed U.S. surgeon general by President Ronald Reagan, Schaeffer came out with a follow-up film series, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* It portrayed abortion as murder and the legalization of abortion as the natural result of the secular humanists' emphasis on freedom of choice in the service of self-indulgence.

With the rhetorical help of fundamentalist author and family values activist Tim LaHaye, secular humanism morphed from syndrome to conspiracy—a useful rallying cry to inspire the fundamentalist troops to urgent action. Many fundamentalist parents concluded that the public school systems had already succumbed to the conspiracy. They continued a trend begun in the 1960s to create alternative Christian schools whose explicit aim was to train young men and women to be armed against secular humanism both intellectually and politically.

Thus a remarkable shift occurred during the 1960s and 1970s. Fundamentalists had long contented themselves with blanket condemnations of "the world" as a corrupt realm from which good Christians must protect themselves. Turning their backs on a long heritage of evangelical social reform, they had for decades refused most forms of social action, proclaiming loudly that Jesus would set everything right upon his imminent return. Meanwhile, their sacred task was to save souls from the cultural wreckage. But now, in the face of what seemed to be the rampant secularization of a once-proud Christian nation, fundamentalists were increasingly joining in a cultural crusade active in the schools, the courtrooms, and the halls of political power. Their crusade was selective, but their new cultural engagement led observers and insiders alike to wonder whether "fundamentalism" was still the right word for this movement.

"Christian America" and the Imminent Second Coming

The positive vision that accompanied the negative campaign against the supposed conspiracy of the secular humanists was

a narrative of “Christian America.” From the late 1970s on, as fundamentalist leaders labored for a package of political reforms that would turn the tide against humanism, they portrayed the promised land as a familiar place: the same land of virtue and piety created by the founders and sustained by the Protestant hegemony of the 1800s.

The fundamentalists knew that this vision of America could not be regained by legislation alone, and so they continued to pray and organize for national religious revival and personal conversion. “If my [God’s] people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways,” they insisted, in the words of 2 Chronicles 7:14, “then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

In this effort at national conversion, the rhetoric of cultural recovery mixed uneasily with that of end-times prophecy. The fundamentalists’ chosen narrative of dispensational premillennialism had always insisted that the world—including America, presumably—would become increasingly evil and chaotic until Jesus returned, caught up his “saints” in a global extraction movement called the Rapture, and set up his thousand-year reign on earth. This narrative was vividly portrayed in Hal Lindsey’s *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1970), which, by 1990, had sold 28 million copies. The *Left Behind* books by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins would take over where Lindsey’s account left off, selling over 62 million copies by 2004.

Fundamentalists raised on this apocalyptic vision became adept at finding in their nation’s evident moral decline, or in the threat of communist takeover, or in the litany of other cultural concerns, evidence of this declension. But now such views existed in paradoxical conjunction with concerted efforts to institute long-term change in the fabric of American society.

Although fundamentalist premillennialism did not seem to affect most areas of fundamentalist politics, there was one significant exception: U.S. policy on the state of Israel. The founding of that state in 1948 had provided dispensationalists with a shining example of fulfilled prophecy—a seemingly airtight piece of evidence that the events leading to Christ’s return would soon roll into motion. Believers only had to await the invasion of Israel by a Soviet-Arab force, which would trigger the Battle of Armageddon. Yearning to be found on the side of God in this final conflict, fundamentalists continued through the end of the century to insist that the United States do its utmost to protect God’s favored nation.

Jerry Falwell and “True Fundamentalism”

By 1980 a leader had emerged to channel fundamentalism’s newfound cultural concern and social action: Rev. Jerry Falwell (1933–2007). Falwell had begun his ministry in 1956 as the founding pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. Through the 1990s his sympathies lay with the independent fundamentalist movement (Thomas Road was affiliated with the fundamentalist Baptist Bible Fellowship International). By the late 1970s, reading the signs of America’s conservative religious landscape, Falwell turned the label “fundamentalist” to his own uses as a rallying cry in his crusade to bring the voice of a silent but powerful “Moral Majority” to bear on American cultural politics. In 1979 Falwell cofounded the organization of that name with *Left Behind* author and Bob Jones University graduate Tim LaHaye and Southern Baptist pastor Charles Stanley. Moral Majority became the bulwark of the new, culture-warring fundamentalism and helped elect Ronald Reagan to the White House in 1980. (A later iteration of the Religious Right’s political machine was the Christian Coalition, cofounded in 1987 by televangelist Pat Robertson and Republican strategist Ralph Reed.)

Falwell laid out the Moral Majority’s agenda in a 1981 book he commissioned, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon: The Resurgence of Conservative Christianity*. In it, Ed Dobson and Ed Hindson, both professors at Falwell’s Liberty University (then Liberty Baptist College) in Lynchburg, claimed that fundamentalists were on the rise—and would likely eclipse all other groups in growth during the coming decades. Then they staked out a definition of “true fundamentalists” as opposed to the separatist “hyper-fundamentalists” on the right and the effete, elite, and dangerously compromising evangelicals on the left. Their hyper-fundamentalists included figures such as fundamentalist newspaper editor John R. Rice (1895–1980), the three generations of Bob Joneses of Bob Jones University in South Carolina, and Carl McIntire, founder of the separatist American Council of Christian Churches and the Bible Presbyterian Church. Their evangelicals included members of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), readers of *Christianity Today*, and constituents of Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California.

Falwell and his writers also listed the weaknesses of fundamentalists, but they were clearly aiming at the hyper-fundamentalists. They had little capacity for self-criticism, and they overemphasized external spirituality, resisted

change, elevated minor issues, added “hobby horses” to their Bible preaching, depended too much on dynamic leaders, worried too much about labels and associations, saw all issues as black or white, approached matters of discipline in too authoritarian a way, and questioned the salvation of other Christians who did not think like they did.

Falwell concluded the book with an “Agenda for the Eighties.” It was a rallying cry to the solid fundamentalist middle, who, he argued, represented the nation’s “moral majority,” defending America’s Christian moral foundations which had been largely eaten away during the decadent 1960s and 1970s. The war of the 1980s to reclaim America for God was to be founded on Christian understandings, but unlike the doctrinal battles of the original fundamentalists of the first half of the twentieth century, it was not to be fought in the churches. Its battlegrounds would be the schools, courts, and halls of political power. To save Christian civilization in its flagship nation, fundamentalists must organize on every moral front and at every level, from the local to the national.

The targeted enemies of this fundamentalist crusade were many: abortion, euthanasia, creeping “humanism” in the public schools, the threat to godly sexuality posed by pornography and homosexuality, new gender roles in the family, issues in medical ethics, antiwar rhetoric putting national defense preparedness at risk, the continuing communist threat, and the forces arrayed against the state of Israel. As they fought these enemies in the name of Christian morality, Falwell urged fundamentalists not to slacken in their efforts to evangelize, plant churches, and improve Christian education. All fundamentalists must join the moral and spiritual army. Those evangelicals who had not capitulated to elite culture must join as well or get out of the way.

In the decades that followed, Falwell continued to eschew the separatism of the hyper-fundamentalists and began to build a broad conservative political consensus beyond his fundamentalist base. This consensus included not only evangelicals who were willing to stand militantly and faithfully for fundamentalist values, but also conservatives among Roman Catholics (at one point the largest single bloc within Moral Majority), Mormons, Jews, and other groups concerned about a perceived moral deterioration in America. On the outside looking in were the old separatist fundamentalists. George Dollar, author of the insider *History of Fundamentalism* and former dean of Central Baptist Seminary in Minneapolis, spoke for them when he derided

Falwell as a “pseudo-fundamentalist” for his coalition-building connections with nonfundamentalists.

In 1996 Falwell left the ranks of the independent conservative Baptists and brought his Thomas Road Baptist Church into the Southern Baptist Convention. Was he still, at that point, a fundamentalist? The answer to this question may become clearer by looking at the Southern Baptist Convention and the history of conservative Christianity in the South.

A Southern Surge

Fundamentalism itself was a northern phenomenon because from the 1920s through the 1960s southern conservative Protestants did not face nearly the degree of cultural challenge confronting their northern brethren. However, the post-1970s surge of newly politicized fundamentalism is very much a southern story. Illustrative are the statistics from the “Southern Crossroads” states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas—that is, the land of Republican politicians George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush, Mike Huckabee, and John Ashcroft. In this region, Moral Majority and its successor, the Christian Coalition, had a large impact on the Republican Party during the 1980s. Only in the Pacific Northwest did the Christian Right influence state Republican parties as much as in the Southern Crossroads. Next in the rankings were the South, Mountain West, and Midwest, with the Pacific, Mid-Atlantic, and New England regions lagging far behind. What accounts for this southern political clout of the Christian Right? What has made the South the most religiously conservative and politically pugnacious region of the country—the epicenter of the culture wars?

For one thing, the effects of pluralism and secularization were longer in hitting the South. Despite the controversy that the famous Scopes trial of 1925 brought to Tennessee, well into the 1960s southerners still thought of their region as a “Zion,” dedicated to Christian conservative values. But in the 1960s and 1970s the larger national changes began to be felt even in Zion, and by the end of the 1970s southerners were united in feeling that their heartland was in danger of becoming instead a “Babylon,” infected with the secularizing trends of modern culture. Thus when America began to organize against these trends, southerners led the charge. Disturbed from their slumber by the divisive campaign for civil rights, second-wave feminist and gay activism, and signs of secularization, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and James Robison, among others, became national leaders in the

fundamentalist political reaction. Fundamentalism was born in the North, but it came of age in the South.

Speeding the incipient cultural reaction of the formerly isolated South was the massive northward migration from the 1930s through the 1950s. Complacent southerners, accustomed to maintaining the Christian status quo in their home states, moved into the North and encountered there the alarming signs of imminent cultural collapse. Northern fundamentalists were beginning to respond to the secularizing trends, and so from California to New England transplanted southerners joined these fundamentalist crusades, which were often focused on the public schools. Before long, these crusades migrated back into the South, and by the 1960s few aspects of fundamentalism's cultural crusade lacked a southern phalanx. Falwell's leadership in the emerging Moral Majority carried this trend into the 1970s and 1980s, and southern "Bible-believing" Christianity effectively became hybridized with the old fundamentalism of the North.

Unlike northern fundamentalism, the southern variety did not focus on denominational battles, but there was one major exception: the nation's largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Until the late 1970s, Southern Baptists were controlled by a solid majority of denominational moderates. On the left wing were progressives and on the right wing were conservatives, both seeking to move their denomination to a more active stance in the public arena. But the Southern Baptist Convention, at ease in its comfortable Zion, had not yet sensed the cultural crisis endemic in the North and had never associated with northern evangelical activism.

Southern Baptists did not, in fact, like to apply the label "evangelical" to themselves, even though they shared with northern evangelicals commitments to orthodoxy, conversion through Christ, and evangelism. The SBC aversion to interdenominational affiliation was a remnant of southern sectionalism—southerners still remembered the previous century's rancorous denominational and national splits over slavery—and the SBC especially balked at making common cause with paedobaptistic (infant-baptizing) groups such as the Presbyterians, who were prominent in northern fundamentalism. For such reasons, SBC conservatives of the 1960s and 1970s consistently found themselves on the outside of denominational power looking in. Their proud denomination did not yet see a reason to join with the scattered parachurch and interdenominational coalition of northern evangelicals. After all, all of their

seminaries taken together did not come up to the number of SBC seminarians!

What led, then, to the "fundamentalization" of the Southern Baptist Convention? During the 1960s and 1970s leaders and future leaders of the denomination headed north for college or graduate school, and there they began reading the northern evangelicals. Especially important were Carl F. H. Henry (1913–2003) and Francis Schaeffer, two heralds of cultural crisis who woke up these southern Christians to the dangers of creeping (even galloping) secularization. The messages of these northern evangelical authors resonated with SBC leaders such as Richard Land, and when they returned home to find secularizing trends in their own towns and school systems, they began to draw on northern evangelical ideas to arm their parishioners against the coming cultural storm.

As never before, these conservatives within the denomination began to rally around the fundamentalist standard of biblical inerrancy against all secular cultural rivals. Throughout the 1970s this mission proved sufficiently compelling to enough people in the denomination that they became willing to make common cause with northern fundamentalists and seek wholesale change in the power structures of their own denomination. In the late 1970s Texans Paul Pressler and Paige Patterson built a coalition within the denomination (largely drawn from Southern Crossroads states) aimed at electing an SBC president who stood firmly on scriptural inerrancy and who would appoint an interlocking structure of leaders who shared that conviction. In 1979 their efforts paid off, and an inerrantist president, Adrian Rogers, was elected. At the 1980 convention another inerrantist president was elected, and convention goers passed a resolution that required all SBC seminary faculty members to teach biblical inerrancy. This resolution was accompanied by the passage of many others on abortion, school prayer, and endorsement of Christian political candidates. By 1990 the moderates were in full retreat, and the Southern Baptist Convention had armed itself for the culture wars with a new, fundamentalist identity.

Fundamentalism: A Question of Definitions

A good argument could be made that "fundamentalism" is not the appropriate label for the politicized evangelical movement described here. Many self-described fundamentalists with separatist convictions have vehemently disavowed their culturally engaged brethren of the Falwell ilk. Indeed, those stricter fundamentalists in the tradition of

Carl McIntire and the Bob Joneses seem to be cut out of a different cloth than members of the post-1970s movement. The stricter fundamentalists espouse complete separation from religious liberalism; believe in an extreme version of inerrancy that amounts to a process of divine dictation through authors who add nothing of their own perspective; frequently view the King James (Authorized) Version as the inerrant text of scripture; view other churches, including all major Protestant bodies not committed to their own values, as apostate, and therefore see the ecumenical movement as a dangerous cabal of apostate bodies; observe taboos against a long list of personal “sins,” including smoking, drinking, and dancing; and support the anti-communist crusades of leaders such as Carl McIntire. Above all, these stricter fundamentalists seek separation from a world far gone in sin. They seek to present a distinctive Christian witness to the world, and when this act means division from other, less culture-averse Christians, they are willing to divide. Meaning is to be found exclusively in the “things of God,” and not at all in the inevitably declining (according to their premillennial commitments) world outside their doors.

By contrast, the new breed of “open” fundamentalists (the term coined by Canadian theologian Clark H. Pinnock) have tried to distance themselves from their separatist coreligionists. Despite their continuing commitments to creationism and premillennialism (though often in a form modified from the old dispensationalism), they are now eager to work for change in their nation, and they are willing to engage higher education and the intellectual life, social reform, and even self-criticism in that pursuit. For these kinds of reasons, historians such as Barry Hankins, author of *Uneasy in Babylon* (2003) on the Southern Baptist Convention takeover by conservatives, eschew this use of the term *fundamentalist* altogether when describing nonseparatist groups. Such scholars would reserve the term for the “strict” fundamentalists who are strictly separatist or who self-identify as fundamentalist or who are both. The application of this definition results in a scenario not of *resurgence* of fundamentalism starting in the 1970s, but, if anything, of *contraction*. To take just one example, the premillennial dispensational theology still espoused by many “strict” fundamentalists is now in retreat, even undergoing extensive critique and revision in the school that historically has been its fortress, Dallas Theological Seminary.

But the argument in favor of using “fundamentalism” as a label for this new, post-1970s group is also strong. Cultural engagement is nothing new for fundamentalists. The movement arose from a nineteenth-century evangelicalism that believed itself to be the custodian of American culture—that is, adherents were the keepers of the faith who would guide this “chosen nation” in the path of godliness. Any secularizing influence that has threatened that path has always been actively opposed by conservative evangelicals—in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries alike. In fact, fundamentalists share with their evangelical forebears a tendency not just to combat modernity’s depredations, but also to thrive positively on that combat.

It is true that the issues absorbing fundamentalist attention have changed. But the dual sense of cultural custodianship and embattlement against cultural trends has continued, and indeed heightened. This prophetic and embattled American-ness has proved to be a potent and invigorating compound for the politically active fundamentalists of the 1970s and beyond.

In short, politically active conservative Christians who affirm traditionally fundamentalist items of faith seem still to be “fundamentalists” whether they prefer to use the label or not. Thus Jerry Falwell (who eschewed the label “fundamentalist” late in his ministry), Christian psychologist and crusader for “family values” James Dobson, Pat Robertson, and other conservative Christian leaders, organizations, and churches that share a belief in biblical inerrancy, a sense of cultural crisis, and an activist commitment to respond to that crisis would be “fundamentalists” in a coherent and defensible sense.

One even broader definition of the term *fundamentalist* has been contested, at least at points, by many scholars of American religion. This broad definition takes the idea of a religious orthodoxy that opposes aspects of the “outside world,” abstracts it from the twentieth-century American religious scene, and applies it across religious boundaries, from Islam to Buddhism to Hinduism and beyond. At heart, this definition focuses on the political activism of these movements, while recognizing that their antagonism with “the world” arises from their religious convictions.

This definition was initially expressed in works such as Bruce Lawrence’s *Defenders of God* (1989) and Norman J. Cohen’s *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon* (1990). It is perfected and elaborated in the five-volume *Fundamentalism*

Project, assembled under the editorial direction of Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby between 1991 and 1995.

Although some scholars question whether the term *fundamentalist*, rooted as it is in the American 1920s, can accurately be extended as a descriptor to conservative groups within far-flung groups such as the Sikhs, Muslims, and Orthodox Jews, there are certainly fruitful parallels between American Protestant fundamentalism and such world movements. In particular, historian George M. Marsden notes qualities of militancy, concerns about preserving religious identity and patrolling community “borders,” and a desire to provide social modalities that stand against the secular world around them.

Marsden also insists that there is one crucial difference between American fundamentalists and the militant religionists worldwide to whom this label has been applied: fundamentalists have their evangelical roots deep in the American Enlightenment. Their evangelical forefathers consistently affirmed freedom of religious choice, separation of church and state, and populist religious modes. Thus today, although they do seek legislation that supports their values on certain issues, they are more comfortable with persuasion and voluntary action than state coercion. And even though they do hold dear a vision of “Christian America,” for most fundamentalists the heart of that vision is religious freedom.

But this principle of liberty and the lack of literal militancy do not extend to foreign policy. In that department, fundamentalists tend to see their nation uncritically as an agent of God against “the forces of evil.” If the fight against those forces requires the exercise of military might, then many fundamentalists are willing to support such action.

Insider, Fellow Traveler, and Ethnographic Views

Particularly important when examining a group that has drawn such negative public portrayal is the ability to see inside the group from the perspective of participants and sympathetic observers. Such perspectives can never stand on their own, uncriticized, as the final word on a group, but they can enrich the critical understanding.

Insider accounts of fundamentalists see beyond their political involvement and into their theological commitments, spiritual lives, and communal structures. Such accounts reveal a fundamentalism that is not just reactive and militant but also characterized by strong continuity with a larger spiritual tradition—a conversionist tradition of

Protestant revivalism—that goes back to the seventeenth century in America and beyond, to earlier European groups such as the Puritans and pietists. To ignore this spiritual, personal, and transformational dimension is to mischaracterize the movement. It is true that antimodern concerns, rhetoric, and action characterize both the fundamentalism of the 1920s and the more politically active movement since the 1970s. But at the heart of the movement are still such distinctively religious concerns as the “born-again” experience of conversion and the disciplines of a holy life.

At the center of the fundamentalist consciousness is an understanding of Jesus Christ as the exclusive savior of the world. Out of this understanding flows a sense of personal redemption as well as a compulsion to evangelize—not just to gain members but to see people’s lives transformed. Fundamentalists believe such a transformation can happen only when they preach “the blood”—that is, Christ’s death is interpreted as paying the debt of people’s sins—and when they absorb and live by the very words of the Christian Bible.

Richard J. Mouw, president of the evangelical Fuller Seminary, grew up as a fundamentalist. Although he is critical of such fundamentalist theological commitments as dispensational premillennialism, he singles out some “spiritual merits” that have resulted from that commitment: good preaching on the Old Testament, preaching about a savior who loves gentile and Jew alike, and loving action in ministries such as inner-city rescue missions. In short, says Mouw in his book *The Smell of Sawdust* (2000), dispensationalism “embodied a spirituality that produced some of the most Christlike human beings I have ever known.” He also appreciates aspects of dispensationalism’s intellectual legacy, especially its understanding of historical change—a sense that God has intervened time and again in crises, and that he will continue to do so. The proof is in the pudding, and the dispensationalists’ belief that “war and poverty and famine” would continue to blight the globe was vindicated, while twentieth-century liberals’ optimism that those problems would soon be licked has proven hollow.

That such virtues could, despite fundamentalists’ combative public stance, produce a humane and warmly supportive community life is depicted in an ethnography of a fundamentalist church community by James M. Ault Jr. In *Spirit and Flesh: Life in a Fundamentalist Baptist Church*, an expansion of his award-winning documentary film *Born Again*, Ault reports his three-year experience as a participant-observer in a fundamentalist Baptist church in Worcester,

Massachusetts. Ault, a Harvard-educated sociologist with a research interest in feminist and other leftist activism, launched into this study in order to better understand the Religious Right. What he discovered was a warm, close-knit community in which everything revolved around relationships—a stark contrast in this largely working-class church to the autonomous individualism of the professional classes in America.

The portrait that emerges in Ault's study is one of "popular conservatism as an effort to defend family obligations as sacred duties against the tide of individualism and individual rights unleashed in the 1960s and 1970s." The family dimension extended to the congregation. One of Ault's most helpful insights came from observing the on-the-ground implementation of convictions that, to outsiders, seem inflexible to the point of inhumanity. For example, when faced with instances in their midst of teen pregnancy, abortion, and divorce, the congregation proceeded in supportive and flexible ways that belied their absolutist political rhetoric.

In response to the disorienting and anti-God cultural shifts they have perceived, contemporary fundamentalists have taken organized action both to affirm their own deepest values through evangelism and community and to recover those values at a societal level through persuasion and political pressure. Their commitments to an inerrant scripture have led them to affirm beliefs that place them outside the mainstream of American life. These beliefs include scientific creationism, theologically motivated pro-Israel activism, and end-times narratives involving the supposed "Rapture" of believers at Christ's imminent return. Unlike the fundamentalists of earlier decades, however, contemporary adherents have spent more time and energy on the crusades of cultural politics than on the minutiae of

theological debate. This pragmatic approach has publicized moral causes, swayed elections, and worried liberal pundits, resulting in a torrent of public ink and bandwidth.

See also *Abortion; Baptists: Sectarian; Bible: Interpretation of; Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Fundamentalism; Historical Approaches; Independent Bible and Community Churches; Literature: Contemporary; Marriage and Family; Megachurches; Religious Right; Women: Evangelical.*

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Gender

Gender is a category of analysis that investigates how and why roles assigned to females and males in multiple and diverse religious communities are socially constructed, theologically undergirded, and lived out. It includes homosexuality and heterosexuality, femininities and masculinities, and it acknowledges a growing variety and complexity of sexual identities. Gender analysis investigates (a) how and why relationships between women and men, women and women, and men and men are ordered according to the worldviews of particular communities; (b) how power and authority in religions are gendered and reinforced based on sexual differences perceived as spiritually significant; (c) how binary language structures related to gender and sexuality circumscribe possibilities for responding creatively to differences; (d) how gender issues overlap with other markers of social stratification such as race and class; (e) how gendered structures in religions overlap with those found in political, economic, cultural, and educational institutions; and (f) how insights from other disciplines—philosophy and feminist critical theory, psychology, biology, anthropology, literature—cross-pollinate with gender-related topics in religious studies, theology, and ethics.

Scholars who write books and essays about gender and religion in America often begin by acknowledging that this is a very difficult subject to take on. At one level it appears to require a deceptively simple acknowledgement of the obvious: being female or male, homosexual or heterosexual, in a given religious tradition is a matter of definitive importance when it comes to what one is permitted to do, compelled to do, or forbidden to do. More than forty years of

scholarship about gender has demonstrated beyond dispute that it is not “ability” that determines these prescriptions. They follow from particular communities’ interpretations of the spiritual and social meanings of sexual identities. Ignoring this reality results in failure to comprehend an essential aspect of religion in general and religions in particular. Unless scholars acknowledge gender critique as an essential component of studying religions in particular and in general, they will have seriously inadequate as well as unsophisticated understandings of a major element of the traditions they are studying.

At the same time, there are aspects of studying gender that render it a complex and baffling enterprise. These are related both to the realities of “bodies,” in their physicality and in the religious significance of their sexual identities, and to intensely debated theories about the extent to which language—discourse—and social customs construct and impose experiences of being female or male, homosexual or heterosexual. In addition, the study of gender in American religion and religions requires the consideration of two arenas of inquiry that have their own distinctive complexities—the academy and religious communities—and thus gender studies move back and forth along a spiraling continuum that includes not only highly abstract theories but also the challenges of daily life in religious communities.

Further, gender is not a category of analysis that simply takes its place with others such as ritual, worldview, doctrine, moral codes, and governance. It is, instead, a category that applies to all the others. How, for example, are ritual roles allotted by sexual identity in a particular tradition and for what reasons? Where do religious worldviews place women and men relative to each other? What distinctive qualities

are attributed to women and men, and how are those qualities valued within the tradition? What kinds of sexual relationships are legitimated, and which are forbidden—and for what reasons? What do language analyses of particular traditions and their ways of speaking about the sacred and humankind reveal about assumptions concerning gender? In matters of language, the fact that there are “only two” gender designations—female/male—and the additional binary construction of homosexual/heterosexual have frustrated and sometimes confounded efforts to interpret stories that reflect multiplicities of gender and sexual identities. Efforts to break out of these language binds have, ironically, given rise to other binary constructions—social constructionism and essentialism; insider and outsider; similarity and difference. These have stirred their own debates about theoretical and practical issues that have filled the history of gender critique with contradictions, ironies, and paradoxes. They offer convincing evidence that the subject of “gender” in American religion is not a problem to be resolved but an endlessly unfolding arena of inquiry.

Finally, what has come to be called gender critique in American religion had its beginnings in the middle 1960s, not just as a search for information about male and female roles in American religions but also out of recognition of unjust asymmetries related to gender roles in American religions. It was motivated at first by the secular women’s movement—the second wave of feminism—and took shape as an effort to reveal and then to dismantle the ways that construction of gender roles concealed women’s absence and ignored and undervalued women’s presence in history, in theology, and in the lives of religious communities. That dual enterprise became more complicated and more multifaceted with every succeeding decade.

Where We Were

From the vantage point of the early twenty-first century, it is almost impossible to comprehend that as recently as the 1960s *gender* was perceived as an uncomplicated, either/or designation—male or female. It functioned in the academy, in religious institutions, and in popular culture not as a category of analysis but as a synonym for sexual identity. If it were investigated at all, it was a subject more typically of concern to anthropologists and social scientists studying religions considered unorthodox or exotic in some way. It was not understood as an arena of inquiry that was both significant and essential for the work of religious historians, theologians, and ethicists studying long-established American

religious traditions. Nor was it a subject of widespread debate in religious communities. *Gender* carried with it few if any connotations of manifold and disputed meanings. Most dictionaries—some to this day—defined *gender*, first, as related to linguistic constructions in languages and only second or third as pointing to physical, emotional, and spiritual characteristics traditionally associated with males and females.

There was little recognition of the implications for scholarship and for the life of religious communities of a double reality that seems so obvious in retrospect. First is the fact that religions are thoroughly gendered. There are structurally embedded, theologically grounded, and powerfully imposed differences in the ways that women and men, homosexuals and heterosexuals, participate in their communities precisely because they are embodied in particular ways as sexual beings. Second, what follows inevitably from that mostly undisputed fact is the reality that women and men, homosexuals and heterosexuals, therefore experience their traditions differently and reflect on them and live them out in distinctive ways.

The emphasis here is on the extent to which critical awareness of gender—asking why and when and how about taken-for-granted relationships between gender roles and sexual identities—was absent in the academy and in religious communities. In fact, the study of gender took shape in religious studies and theology later than it did in other disciplines. Even though gender patterns were obvious to anyone with eyes to see, there was not much interest in their origins, almost no awareness of their power in the lives of religious communities, and few laments about the near non-existence of methods for investigating the theological, linguistic, and internal governance structures that upheld them. There was minimal critical consciousness of what it meant, why it mattered, and to what extent it was just or unjust that gendered roles permeated all parts of religious traditions. There was little recognition that gender formation may be as powerful an influence on how people live out their individual and communal lives as are racial, class, economic, and political constructions and not much sense, either, of how deeply traditional gender roles are rooted in religion.

There was minimal analytical awareness—little interest or surprise or concern—that gender patterns in almost all religious communities in American culture accorded the most public and authoritative roles to men and that with very few exceptions, mostly of women considered “dissenters,” the names of women were missing from the histories of their



Religious studies scholar Valerie Saiving's groundbreaking 1960 article *The Human Situation: A Feminine View* presented ideas that many viewed as novel, even eccentric. Saiving speculated that sexual identity—the experience of being a woman or a man—has a bearing on how members of communities experience their traditions.

communities even though they had outnumbered men in their congregations for most of the four centuries since European settlement. It was difficult to find traces of collective memory in academia or in religious communities that issues of gender particular to Jews and Christians, blacks and whites, traditionalists and liberals had been debated at previous moments in American religious history. As to homosexual members of religious communities, they were invisible—hidden, in fact. About sexual orientations alternative to heterosexuality, there was silence apart from the occasionally repeated anathemas against lived-out homosexual relationships and judgments rendered against homosexual identity as unnatural.

Rita Gross, a scholar and practitioner of Buddhism, a founder of the subject of women's studies and feminist studies in religion, and one of the first to take the subject of women in world religions seriously, began early in the 1970s to use the term *androcentric* to indicate the traditional way of studying religion that assumed the male as human norm and the female as "other." When she took her preliminary

examinations at the University of Chicago in 1968, exams that included her interest in women and world religions, she was asked by one committee member why she, as an intelligent person, didn't understand that the "generic male" included women as well. Gross was not the first but certainly among the earliest scholars in American religion to call for the study of gender as essential to the understanding of religion. Together she and Valerie Saiving provided early clues about how issues of gender would unfold in the academy and in religious communities. Debates about relationships between discourse and "bodies" would become the focus of ongoing revelations about the complexities of gender, and these, in turn, would foster intense debate in the study of American religion and religions.

Where We've Been

Since the 1960s there have been three major turning points related to the significance of gender in American religion, and all three continue to have implications in academia and in the lives of religious communities. The first, and the one that has produced the most scholarship thus far, was the discovery of the vital presence of women in religious communities in contrast with their absence from history and from positions of public authority. It includes the work of historians, theologians, and ethicists, most of them women. This first discovery has also led some scholars, although fewer by comparison, to investigate how gender patterns in American religion have affected the roles and lives of men—men in particular rather than "mankind." The second has been a recognition of the immense diversities of human experience that have been subsumed under the binary categories of "women" and "men" and how diversities—of race, economic status, cultural context, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and practices—are related to matters of gender. The third, more recent, has been the emergence of studies about varieties of sexual orientation as key to subverting the binary categories of male and female, heterosexual and homosexual, and thereby further opening up issues of gender.

One way to look at these moves in the study of gender and American religion is to say that they have given rise to each other. Each has revealed aspects of how gender is embedded in religion that the previous insights had not. Yet none has completed the work of the previous. These are overlapping arenas of inquiry. They continue to foster new questions and research, ongoing attempts at social transformation, and further efforts—often contentious—to

articulate the social, political, and personal intricacies by which gender roles are constructed and integrated with sexual identities.

Where Are the Women?

It was not a call from religious communities for justice that motivated the beginnings of gender study in American religion. It was, rather, the influence of the second wave of feminism that stirred in the early 1960s, an as yet barely articulated uneasiness about the unquestioned assumption that traditional gender roles were rooted in nature and therefore immutable. As the asymmetrical power arrangements between women and men emerged more visibly in the secular culture, that same reality became more obvious in religious communities and emerged as a topic of serious interest in the academy. There was increasing skepticism that women and men held appointed places in religion determined by the sexual identities of their bodies and that “as bodies” with correspondingly distinctive natures and roles, they functioned as complementary partners in a divinely ordained plan for human relationships.

In the academy and in religious communities the question “Where are the women?” motivated new kinds of scholarship. Historians documented women’s absences from positions of public power and the reasons for those absences: how they were grounded in expectations and prohibitions for women and for men and reciprocally reinforced by gender role configurations in the secular culture and in the teachings and practices of religious traditions. Increasingly sophisticated efforts took shape to recover the multiple ways in which women have been present but forgotten as creative contributors to their communities: forgotten because they were not considered historically noteworthy, because they were controversial, or because evidence existed in places that had escaped the notice of historians. To what sources would one go, for example, to find information about the lives of clergymen’s wives, who were often as powerful in the lives of congregations as their husbands but whose histories were unrecorded except, perhaps, in an obituary or in a diary that remained in the possession of their families?

Chronicling the history of women in American religion required new questions, new methods, and new sources. Scholars such as Barbara Welter and Nancy Cott found themselves asking how constructing the history of women needed to be different from traditional ways of doing history, in which both women’s presence and absence had escaped notice. What alternative assumptions had to be developed

about historical significance—which persons and what developments mattered enough to be recorded? What nontraditional sources—diaries, journals, congregational membership rolls, minutes of meetings, material objects—needed to be unearthed, consulted, and interpreted? Would they carry as much weight in the interpretation of religious communities as the scholarly writings of clergy written for an educated audience? Might there even, in fact, be scholarly writings and sermons by women that had been lost to history?

This search for women in American religion and for new and more complex narratives about how gender has functioned in American religious history has uncovered multiple examples of women’s leadership, significant contributions, and distinctive religious experiences. Historians have revealed the existence of many more female preachers, black and white, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than had previously been imagined, a great surprise, since women were officially barred from public preaching. Analysis of congregational financial reports has turned up evidence of the heavy financial support of congregations by women’s organizations, even if they influenced its spending only indirectly because they could not serve on congregational councils.

Historians likewise came to discover new kinds of authority in religious communities: women’s offering or withholding approval of clergymen who on the surface appeared to hold all the authority in the congregation; the widespread authority of Roman Catholic sisters who founded hospitals and colleges; the power and influence of African American rural churchwomen in the civil rights movement; the healing authority of Mormon women open to them in the early years of the movement. Studies proliferated about the extent to which women who learned organizational abilities in religious women’s groups went on to use their skills and their confidence in wider political and social arenas. Scholars eventually tuned in to the reality that women in communities considered theologically conservative, Pentecostalism, for example, found ways to circumvent prohibitions against their speaking publicly. As historians uncovered evidence that ran contrary to assumptions about the circumscribed roles of women in American religion, it was increasingly obvious that although women were generally barred from learning, preaching, and teaching publicly, it was not lack of ability that prevented them from doing so. It meant, rather, that such activities were gendered male rather than female. As one nineteenth-century clergyman exclaimed after hearing an eloquent female preacher, it was

not that she was incapable of preaching but that it was not decent that she do so. Discoveries such as these led to the acceptance of an insight that has become commonplace in the study of gender: gender roles and sexual identity are not, indeed, synonyms for each other; rather gender roles are assigned through various cultural means based on anatomical differences between women and men and reinforced through social custom and religious reinforcement. This has not been an undisputed insight, as will become clear, but it was an early intuition about how socially constructed gender roles take precedence over ability. It gave rise to the conviction that gender roles and sexual identities could be separated from each other—even if not neatly or easily.

As historians delved more deeply into the history of women in American religions, broader patterns emerged beyond the gendering of specific roles. Among the earliest, now so famous that it appears on T-shirts and bumper stickers, is colonial historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's claim in a 1976 article about colonial women that "well-behaved women seldom make history." Women's theological venturing forth has been tied to fears of social chaos. Examples range across the centuries: from Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643), whose minister suggested that, given her heretical views, she was likely to be unfaithful to her husband, to the "new woman" chastised for her wantonness by fundamentalists of the early twentieth century, to disputes about male and female seating in Reform synagogues, to the accusations against participants in the theologically controversial Re-Imagining Conference in Minneapolis in 1993, most of whom could be accurately described as "church ladies," women's theological venturing forth has been tied to fears of inevitable social and theological chaos. Historically, religious dissent has often been gendered female.

There have been persistent concerns, as well, about whether, in spite of male dominance in positions of public power, religion itself is a "feminine" enterprise and therefore lower in status than other cultural institutions and, on the whole, unappealing to men. Thus, if leadership in American religions has been gendered male, membership has been gendered female.

Discovering Diversity

By the 1980s the diversity of women's experiences was becoming obvious, and it emerged as both a contentious issue and a stimulus to creativity. Women learned to claim the authority of their particular experiences, integrating those of race and class with gender. This wave of

recognition about the diversity of women's experiences gave rise to theological articulations distinctive to particular communities—feminist, womanist (African American), *mujerista*, Jewish, goddess, New Age, Buddhist, Mormon, Asian, lesbian. They gave substance to themes they saw as de-emphasized and undervalued in traditional male theology and elaborated on them. For example, in their own distinctive ways women of many communities explored the theological possibilities of immanence, that is, the indwelling of the divine. They pointed to the sacredness of the earth, of women's bodies, and of ordinary life. The radical interrelatedness of all creation and the power of relationships and communities emerged as another powerful theme in contrast, as women articulated it, as a counter to traditional overemphasis on individualism. It was not that themes like these had never appeared in the writings of male theologians but that they were expanded on and particularly valued in the writings of women. The diversity of approaches to such themes from the perspectives of specific traditions illustrated ever more powerfully that "women's experience" in the singular and, by implication, as a universal category was not a phrase that did justice to the particularities of women's diverse experiences.

By 1990 historians and theologians had accomplished several decades' worth of groundwork for the study of gender in American religion and had exploded any possibility of making general claims about "women's experience" or, for that matter, "men's experience." Womanist (African American) theologians, among them Delores Williams and Cheryl Kirk-Duggan; *mujerista* theologian Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz; and Jewish theologians Judith Plaskow and Carol Ochs illustrated the particularities of experience in many different communities of women.

Along with its insights, diversity brought urgent interpretive issues related to gender and its overlapping with matters of race and class. More than most historians and even first-generation theologians, the second and third generations of women theologians—those born in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s—became interested in the intersections between women's theologies and the varieties of feminist theorizing about gender and sexual difference. These were emerging from both American and Continental philosophical and literary studies, whose ideas were articulated by feminists thinkers such as Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva. That early insight about gender—that it is not synonymous with sexual identity but rather based on socially constructed roles—while still widely accepted did not hold up very long

as undisputed, because it seemed to assume that “sexed bodies” are the blank canvases on which gender roles are imposed. The growing insistence among feminist theorists—Judith Butler, for example—that there are no universal categories of experience including male and female that are always and everywhere the same stirred further explorations of gender and diversity, even to asking, “Is it possible to say any longer that there are ‘women’ and ‘men’?”

Questions like this one offered linguistic and by implication philosophical ways out of the either-or bind of gender terminology. They functioned heuristically to force new understandings of gendered categories of experience that are taken for granted as givens. Asking questions this radical also prompted fears that, finally, there would be no philosophical or moral basis on which to make claims about justice for those who are diverse in the particular experiences of their lives but who nonetheless undergo common kinds of oppression. Debates ensued over whether there was any “essential” connection between gender roles and embodied sexual identities or whether gender roles were totally socially constructed by “discourse”—language about gender and by implication about how power is distributed. Many American women theologians, among them Rebecca Chopp, Sheila Greeve Davaney, Paula Cooney, and Lisa Sowle Cahill, have agreed that somewhere between the poststructuralist rejection of the binary, fixed opposites of male and female and, on the other side, claims for universal and eternal categories of feminine and masculine lay the territory that women’s theologies could make sense of and seek justice for: the suffering bodies of individuals in all their particularities and the broken body politic.

“Men,” Not Mankind

In spite of continuing emphasis on diversity, an irony of scholarly attention to gender in American religion has been the relative lack of attention to men, at least those who were not prominent leaders. The study of men and religion became an institutionalized and ongoing focus of study of the American Academy of Religion only in 1990. In fact, gender studies for many years was so much associated with women, to the detriment of better-integrated knowledge about both women and men, that women scholars have cautioned that *gender* is not a synonym for *women* and that it is not only women who are “gendered.” Thus at the beginning of the twenty-first century it is accurate to say that historians know more about famous men and not-so-famous women than they do about the religious lives of

ordinary laymen. While this is not true in all cases, there are still anthologies of essays on American religious history, in which entries under sections titled “Gender” cite mostly research about women.

Recently, there has been intriguing research by David Hackett and Mark C. Carnes, among others, about how fraternal lodges function as gathering places, as an alternative to religious communities for white men and as communities of significance for black men that often overlapped with church membership. Response to the feminization theory has inspired research on some of the several ways men argued about whether it was manly to be religious at all, or whether true manliness required the abandonment of religion for the kind of rational life of the mind that was assumed to exclude religion. There were also efforts to reclaim a more manly form of Christianity called “muscular Christianity,” which promoted devotion to a masculine Jesus and urged the development of an athletic physique with the promise that taking religion seriously did not necessarily diminish one’s masculinity. Recent historical studies that emphasize “body” point to such practices as fasting and food deprivation that, as R. Marie Griffith points out, have traditionally been gendered feminine in American religion but were embraced by men as well.

Some early feminist critiques by scholars such as Mary Daly, Rosemary Radford Ruether, and Rita Gross described all traditional theology as so androcentric that it might as well be called male theology, but just as women began to construct theologies with the consciousness that they were speaking “as women,” men have begun to do some of the same kind of work. Men’s theological work, such as that of James B. Nelson, Stephen B. Boyd, W. Merle Longwood, and Mark W. Muesse, construct male spiritualities that respond to the dual pain of “hegemonic masculinity”: an idealization of white, middle-class, educated, professionally successful, publicly powerful males that excludes a very large number of men, maybe the majority, in American culture and religion. The critique of hegemonic masculinity has stimulated research on varieties of “masculinities.” A prominent theme in men’s spiritualities, whether they come out of social justice models, return-to-head-of-the-family movements, or the Iron John model of hyper-but-authentic maleness, has involved the construction of strategies to alleviate the pain that comes from trying to live within the structures of what it means to be a “real man,” even if one is not in a community of men that qualifies for either the benefits of hegemonic masculinity or the stresses that come from trying to

emulate it. Mary Daly, one of the first Christian feminist theologians and now a post-Christian lesbian feminist, identified the deleterious effects for women of exclusively male language for God—“When God is male, the male is God.” There are now forceful interpretations of how male imagery for God has been harmfully restrictive for men as well, even if in different ways. On the whole, though, greater attention to the particularities of men’s experiences in American religion as another imperative for investigating issues of gender is a project awaiting more concentration and new methods.

Varieties of Sexual Identity

The study of gender in American religion has been significantly broadened and complicated by serious attention to homosexuality since at least the 1980s. Homosexuality as an all-encompassing and static category of sexual identity that is “the opposite” of an equally static heterosexuality has given way to the acronym LGBT—lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender—an analytical category of multiple designations that includes more varieties of publicly proclaimed sexual identity, gender crossing, and gender bending than could have been imagined fifty years ago. A relatively new body of scholarship, “queer studies,” has emerged as a challenge to historically disproportionate emphasis on heterosexuality; as a response to evidence from the biological and social sciences that sexual identities are fluid and multiple rather than binary and fixed; and as an impetus to more research about sexual identities and practices in different religious, historical, and cultural contexts. This research has included theological analysis and reflection by LGBT persons, among them Marvin Ellison, Mary Hunt, and Kathy Rudy, on their own experiences of themselves as spiritual-sexual beings and as members of religious communities.

Among many flourishing debates are those about nomenclature. Assumptions about men-identified-men as feminine and women-identified-women as masculine, such a long-standing cultural and religious cliché about homosexuality, have long since been discredited. There is intense discussion but not widespread agreement about terms such as *third gender*, which points to gender identity other than heterosexuality but does so in the singular rather than with attention to distinctively male and female experiences. There are studies of “berdache,” a concept related to gender variance in Native American communities and used by some religious studies scholars as a way to point to nonbinary kinds of sexual identities, but many contemporary Native American scholars and activists have dispatched with that term in

favor of *two-spirit people*. Evangelical scholar Virginia Ramey Mollenkott has written theological reflections on what she calls “omnigender,” in order to explore the experiences of “trans” people who do not experience themselves as fitting into the categories of male or female, homosexual or heterosexual.

Some of the earliest critiques of theological writings about homosexuality came from lesbians such as Sally Miller Gearhart and Mary Hunt, among the first to object that the voices of gay men were being taken as the authoritative experience on homosexual experience, with little recognition that the lives of lesbian women were very different from those of gay men. This claim included the fact that male homosexuality has been more highly regulated by legal means whereas lesbian relationships are more subject to scrutiny in domestic settings. LGBT, or GLBT, as it is sometimes called, began to call for sexual ethics that are created in realistic ways for members of the LGBT community and not imitative of norms and values for heterosexuals. Deprived for so long of any ethical response other than castigation in their religious communities, LGBT people are creating new definitions of “good sex”: ethics grounded in spiritualities of same-sex relationships that include the sexual-as-pleasurable, the interpersonal, the spiritual, the communal, and the political.

If dynamic, more flexible terminology about LGBT experiences is of ongoing concern in the academy, it is “bodies” and their differences and their sexual identities that remain the primary and often polarizing focus of religious communities. Almost all contemporary religious communities are dealing with same-sex love and the place of LGBT people in those communities. Many mainline Christian denominations welcome LGBT people as members, but they have been embroiled for years in battles about whether gay people, particularly those who are in open, committed relationships, can be ordained. The Presbyterian Church (USA), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Methodists, and the Episcopal Church all continue to be in the process, sometimes highly acrimonious and sometimes nearing reconciliation, of making this decision—or deciding not to make it until there is greater clarity and consensus. Gay marriage is another divisive issue on which American religious traditions take different stands. Arguments persist about whether “family” as it has been configured traditionally can be expanded in ways that are responsive to the realities of LGBT persons. Debates rage on about whether homosexuality itself is unnatural and chosen

and can and should be “cured,” or whether it is “inherently disordered” but not sinful if not acted on, or whether it is part of a continuum of sexual identities that should not only be included in religious communities but also affirmed and supported.

In the meantime, LGBT people have created their own forms of spirituality and spiritual communities and even their own denominations, such as the Metropolitan Community Church founded by Troy Perry in California in 1968, with approximately 300 congregations by 2008. There are also specific communities, such as Spirit of the Lakes Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, affiliated with the United Church of Christ since 1992 as the first congregation of a mainline denomination serving LGBT people. Studies of religious communities’ varied perspectives on homosexuality can be found in recent volumes such as *Homosexuality and Religion: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Jeffrey S. Siker (Greenwood Press, 2002) that catalog themes related to the law, the social and biological sciences, and spirituality, AIDS and “coming out,” and includes essays on major and smaller religious groups in America. These studies demonstrate that diversity of experience is just as significant an ongoing part of gender critique in the LGBT communities as it has been for women’s histories and theologies.

Where We Are

What has changed regarding gender and gender studies over the last half-century in the academy, in religious communities, and in the overall culture? The answer might be this: more than anyone could have imagined in 1960 and less than there was reason to assume as women’s studies and then gender studies demonstrated beyond any possibility of refutation that being male or female, heterosexual or homosexual, in religious communities had tremendous consequences for how members participate. Women’s studies and gender studies have not been creatively incorporated into religious studies, theology, and ethics given the proliferation of scholarship now available. British scholar Ursula King has voiced what is also a common perception among American scholars: that religious studies has been and still is surprisingly gender-blind and that other disciplines—the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences—are religion-blind in their disinclination to see religion as relevant to their own interests, even when those interests focus on gender. Gender studies is still widely perceived as “women’s work”—by women and for women—without much relevance for broader historical and cultural narratives.

Debates continue about whether those who are perceived as different or other (there are whole bodies of research related to “difference”) should make claims for recognition of their full humanity based on similarity or on difference, or on the paradoxical insistence on both.

And yet . . . there are women’s studies and gender studies programs in colleges, universities, and seminaries all over the country. Research on gender continues to unfold in multiple areas of American religion, and creative discussions persist about how to integrate theory with practice and utilize in practical ways the fruits of gender analysis in the academy and religious communities. More sophisticated questions are emerging about why and how traditional gender roles remain so very intractable in religion despite ongoing insights into the extent to which they are socially constructed and inextricably connected with race, economics, and politics. The work of gender studies, now recognized as both significant and essential in the study of American religion, will, of course, continue, because it deals with some of the most basic, pervasive, and mysterious experiences of human beings and communal life.

See also *Cult of Domesticity; Feminism; Feminist Studies; Food and Diet; Liberation Theology; Lived Religion; Marriage and Family; Masculinity; Religious Thought: Feminist; Religious Thought: Gay Theology; Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology; Religious Thought: Mujerista; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Spirituality* entries; *Women* entries; *Women Religious*.

Mary Bednarowski

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Geographical Approaches

Cultural geography seeks to describe how humans function in relation to the space they occupy. Scholars may study the impact of the physical landscape on religion as well as religion's impact on the landscape. They consider the distribution of religions across the land and how and why distribution has changed over time. They examine the religious traits of a people in a defined zone, and how such traits vary or remain constant from one location to another. Some of the most interesting questions about how religion develops, spreads, and affects lives are rooted in geographical factors (what happens where, and how the "where" affects what happens). In its broadest sense geography, like history, is not the examination

of anything in particular, but a particular way of examining anything. It is less a compilation of facts about districts of the earth than a singular way of looking at the world. Focused on religion, it is a way of seeing that takes into account religion's enactment in its environment. Like all people, believers inevitably interpret their environment. When they do, an alchemy occurs: "space" becomes "place." The physical environment itself is often less important than the environment perceived.

Religion in the United States is so diverse, and the country so large, that studying and comparing distinct regions has become increasingly necessary. Indeed, the major culture regions of the United States are poorly understood if one ignores the influence of religion. So important is this approach that the *Encyclopedia* treats "region," as well as particular regions, in independent entries.

While inevitably brushing up against regional concerns, this essay will illustrate other aspects of the geography of American religion. It will examine how the land influenced settlement and the formation and character of religion. It will consider something of religion's spatial distribution across time—a denominational geography—and will glance at possibilities for mapping religion. It will touch on the creation of sacred space. Along the way it will notice advantages and limitations of geographical approaches to understanding and explaining the religious history and culture of the United States.

Geography's Influence on Religion

"Religion among us seems to wear the face of the country; part moderately cultivated, the greater part, wild and savage." So said the Reverend Thomas Bacon, reporting in the mid-eighteenth century from Maryland to his sponsoring mission society in England. Bacon was neither the first nor the last to notice a relation between religion and its natural environment. Remarkably, however, a great many histories have treated countless topics without explicit attention to the terrain that hosted, shaped, and was shaped by human actors.

This omission seems flagrant in the study of religion. The three great Western religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, are, after all, grounded in the tradition of the ancient Abrahamic covenant. And core to this covenant that God was said to make with Abraham was the notion of the promised land. A concern with sacred geographic zones informs both biblical testaments, at many points. The themes of exodus, exile, return, and diaspora; the contested boundaries of Israel itself; preoccupations with specific places such as Mt. Sinai, Jerusalem, Galilee, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Judea,

the Temple, the Holy of Holies—all these attest to an awareness of sacred physical space.

Subsequent Christian history is scarcely comprehensible apart from geographical awareness. The emergence of the papacy at Rome because of the city's cultural and political preeminence over Antioch, Alexandria, and others of its metropolitan rivals is a case in point. So are the deepening political and theological tensions between the eastern and western halves of the empire that, a millennium after Jesus, sundered Christendom into Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman (Western) Catholicism. So too are the Crusades, bloody contests over occupancy of lands construed as sacred. The later Protestant Reformation was not only theological but also geographical, dividing Europe north and south. Consequent intractable wars were at last resolved geographically: whatever the religion of the ruling prince was would be the legal religion of the territory. Geographic concerns today continue to color the lives of religious practitioners throughout the world, as when Muslims face the holy city of Mecca five times each day in prayer, or when Hindus or Buddhists, no less than Christians or Muslims, make pilgrimages to sacred sites.

In religiously more diverse North America, geography entwined with religion from the beginning. Detailed knowledge is scarce concerning the religions of the prehistoric Siberian tribes who made their way across a land bridge into North America, then dispersed southward to people a hemisphere. But modern clues suggest that their practices and beliefs hinged on a tribe's means of subsistence, which in turn depended on geography. Hunters sanctified the game they pursued. An individual hunter, ritually prepared, might depart from his tribal companions at crucial times to seek guidance from the spirits. Refraining from food and drink, he might imbibe a psychotropic drug and travel in a sacred manner on a sacred path to a sacred place to contact a guardian spirit. He sought protection against disease, animals, competitors, or battle. The land on which he hunted for his people was sacred land.

The religions of agricultural peoples were different but not less geographical. These tribes invested the soil, the sun, the water, and what they grew with sacred import. They typically worshiped a fertility spirit associated with the earth, as opposed to the hunters' sky god. Agrarian communal rituals differed from hunters' more individualistic stress on personal guardian spirits. Southward, agriculture flourished more commonly. There the tribes, more stationary than hunters, developed more elaborate rituals and symbols.

Some tribes combined hunting and agriculture, a union reflected in their religions. Geographic relocation inspired religious amendments: a hunting religion grew less compelling if game was scarce and the tribe now planted crops or gathered previously unknown fruits. Geography and the sacred intersected in other ways and across the generations, as when Lakota aligned their tepees with sacred points on the horizon. In short, the religion of the early natives and their heirs connected fundamentally with the environment. In considerable measure religion *was* the environment: the land, and the weather, seasons, directions, harvests, prey, herds, spirits, peoples, and cosmos that interacted with it.

Geography and Religious Settlement

The geographical fact that kept these peoples so long protected from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century invasions that were to come was, of course, the ocean. And once the Europeans were ashore, the ocean remained the dominating geographical influence throughout colonial history, at least for the eastern terrain that would become the original United States. The ocean functioned as a permeable but daunting membrane separating the peoples of two continents. Voyages across the treacherous waters required from four to twelve weeks, at extravagant cost to purses and often to health and lives. The Atlantic challenged and hampered those religions that treasured close ties to superiors abroad. Communication was slow and erratic. The ocean constricted the numbers who came, the sort who came, the pace with which they came, and whether or not they stayed.

This great watery obstacle impinged dramatically on Anglicanism, which did not manage to complete its ecclesiastical organization until after the American Revolution. Young colonists seeking Anglican ordination had to do so in England, forced to risk crossing the sea a second time and to absorb the costs of both journeys. Many aspirants demurred. By contrast, churches whose polity was less hierarchical—Baptists and Congregationalists, in particular—found the three-thousand-mile barrier to their advantage, once they had safely arrived. They enjoyed the distance from potential ecclesiastical overlords. As religious freedom emerged over time, it owed as much to topography as to legal theory.

The theology of these transplanted Europeans was less directly tied to geography than was the religion of the natives they encountered, but geography nonetheless dictated much. The malarial near-swamp in and around Jamestown, for example, rendered life expectancy in that colony markedly shorter than that in generally healthier

New England. Patterns of settlement followed geographic contours. America's Atlantic seaboard offered to explorers and settlers a more welcoming coast than the Pacific. The Gulf of Saint Lawrence and Chesapeake Bay presented safe havens. Wide, navigable rivers (the Saint Lawrence, Connecticut, Hudson, Delaware, Potomac, and James, among others) would serve for centuries as liquid highways for travel and trade into the interior of the continent.

Against their initial intent to plant small towns and matching, efficient parishes, Anglicans found Virginia's rivers lent themselves to long and narrow plantations. This yielded a crop of hopelessly dispersed parishioners. Like the ocean, the lay of the land and its rivers thus cramped the coherence and efficiency of southern colonial Anglicanism. Another river, named after Henry Hudson, who explored it in 1609, ran north and south; this dictated the direction of the movement of seventeenth-century settlers and their Dutch, German, and English churches in New Netherland, soon to become New York. The early immigrant Puritans found their refuge in Plymouth and Massachusetts bays. By their large numbers and their disproportionately religious intent amid a comparatively compact geography, they formed colonies of religious and cultural consistency unparalleled elsewhere.

Those rejected by these in New England and by others in New York often found their own refuge in a colony formed around another bay: Narragansett, in Rhode Island. Catholics found theirs at yet another—Chesapeake Bay—farther south. Begun long prior to William Penn's securing a charter for his large American colony, the migration of English Quakers received a great boost when Pennsylvania officially opened its port in 1682. Eastern Pennsylvania promptly became Quaker terrain. The Friends' religious and political influence, however, was soon diluted by the colony's policy of religious tolerance, which brought a rapidly growing diversity, one that came to exceed even that of Rhode Island. Africans were made Americans against their will, becoming slaves whose minds, circumstance, and religion shaped and were shaped by a land that grew cotton. In the eighteenth century, this meant concentration in Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia.

Before the American Revolution, geography had conditioned the arrival in the New World of these and many others, including Jews, Huguenots, and Mennonites. Rivers and fall lines directed where they initially settled. In turn, interior mountains discouraged a flow of the population westward. Politics, theology, and social allegiance combined

with physical geography to create a denominational geography in America.

Denominational Geography in the Early Republic

While both demography and religion as it was actually lived were of course complex, large patterns in this denominational geography are clear. By 1790, Baptists were the largest religious group on Long Island and in two Rhode Island counties, thereby interrupting Congregationalist dominance in the rest of New England. The largest church body in what would become North Jersey and in New York was Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed strongholds having retreated northward to the vicinity of Albany. The Middle Atlantic states were especially diverse. Quakers were the largest group in southern New Jersey, southeastern Pennsylvania, and pockets of North Carolina and Georgia. Lutherans held sway in a great swath of eastern Pennsylvania and predominated from much of Pennsylvania Dutch country down into Maryland and Virginia. Pluralism obtained among Germans in Pennsylvania, where Lutherans, the German Reformed, and diverse sects shared their buildings. Frontier settlements of the Scots-Irish made Presbyterians predominate in the backcountry of Pennsylvania, and they shared the honor with Baptists in the backcountry of Virginia and the Carolinas. Vestiges of old Catholic Maryland endured, and the Methodists were the largest group only on the southern half of the Delmarva Peninsula in Maryland and Delaware. Episcopalians remained strong in the old settlements of the Tidewater South but had yielded their dominance in the Piedmont and mountain areas.

In the decades that followed, the young country's populace crossed the Appalachians and swarmed westward; by 1836 three states were already established beyond the Mississippi River. Religion followed, with a vengeance. Congregationalists moved west into New York and the "New Connecticut" of the Ohio Western Reserve, then witnessed many of its churches turn Presbyterian as the 1801 Plan of Union between the two denominations worked its effect. Roman Catholics showed strength along the old French terrain of the Mississippi River valley and by a rising tide of immigration that after midcentury would make it the nation's largest religious group. For many Protestants this constituted the threat articulated in Presbyterian evangelist Lyman Beecher's famous "Plea for the Churches": Papist strength demanded Protestant funds, schools, and evangelizing in a west in which "the religious and political destiny of our nation is to be decided." When Protestant

missionaries arrived as far as New Mexico after the Mexican-American War, they discovered that Franciscans had preceded them by more than two centuries. Protestant success was limited, but by the end of the century several thousand Hispanic Methodists, Presbyterians, and others resided in the area.

As impressive as were the changes wrought by immigration and territorial expansion on America's denominational geography, equally dramatic was the appearance in the early republic of diverse new religious expressions native to the country and, on a far larger scale, the virtual conquest of that republic by the populist theology and methods of farmer-preachers and circuit riders. Mormons had first appeared in New York, inciting commotion in the 1830s and 1840s as they migrated, flourished, and were expelled from Missouri, Ohio, and Illinois. Restorationist Christians were, soon after their birth, the largest religious group in pockets of eastern Kentucky, western Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. But despite all this and much else of interest and importance, the Age of Jackson was, religiously, the Age of Methodists and Baptists. So explosively successful were their populist methods and message that either one or the other was, by 1830, the largest denomination in three-quarters of all U.S. counties. South of New York City, that predominance included even the eastern seaboard. Anglicans (by now Episcopalians) had everywhere ceded influence before the onslaught. Having dominated the colonial Tidewater South, Episcopalians were by 1830 the largest denomination in fewer than a dozen U.S. counties; only three of them were in Virginia.

Denominational Geography at the End of the Nineteenth Century

By 1890 the frontier was closed, and despite an ongoing flood of immigration, the major patterns that would characterize much of the twentieth century had been established. The West Coast was by then populated, and it remained only for some of the western interior to fill in. The legendary waves of late-nineteenth-century immigrants from southern and eastern Europe brought significant numbers of Jews to eastern cities and rendered Catholicism the largest religious body in almost all of the major urban areas of the North and the West, as well as in most of New England, an influence that extended westward through New York and into the upper Midwest. Catholics were also largest in the French and Spanish areas of Louisiana and southern Texas and, outside of Washington State and the Mormon heartland, in most counties in the West as a whole.

As opposed to Catholic expansion, the Methodist Age was about to approach its twilight. Methodists remained the largest U.S. Protestant body until yielding to Baptist growth in 1925. But in the coming decades Methodist geographical predominance began to constrict from national might to a horizontal belt running east from Nebraska and Kansas to the historic hearth of the Delmarva Peninsula and New Jersey. The constriction would continue throughout the twentieth century, though by century's end Methodists remained the next-largest group after Roman Catholics in New York and scores of counties throughout Pennsylvania and the Midwest, and next-largest also after Baptists throughout the South. Outside a cluster of counties in New Hampshire, the New England predominance of Congregationalists had by 1890 almost everywhere disappeared behind the deluge of Catholic immigration and, in Maine, Baptist growth, though Congregationalist influence in political and social spheres remained disproportionately strong—a reminder of the importance of the historical base beneath the shifting demographics. The number of Presbyterian-dominated counties had shrunk dramatically, though they remained substantial in eastern Pennsylvania and in a three-county area in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia.

Episcopalians had surrendered numerical superiority in every county along the eastern seaboard, while gaining ascendancy in a few scattered counties in the West, notably in the southern tip of Texas and in South Dakota (where their adherents were not primarily English but Native American). Yet another colonial church, the Dutch Reformed, had disappeared from the map of predominance in the East, though they were the largest body in two counties in Michigan—the start of a small empire—and one in South Dakota. Outside of Maine and a few scattered counties elsewhere, the former mainline Baptist predominance in the North had all but disappeared, balanced by a widening reign of more evangelical Baptists in the South that was soon to eclipse the Methodists altogether. The Lutheran “kingdom” in the upper Midwest, made up of newly arrived Germans and Scandinavians, was by 1890 well formed, marbled with Catholicism, while the colonial Lutheran domain in eastern Pennsylvania remained intact. The Mormon cultural region in the Great Basin had by then spilled over from Utah into southern Idaho, Nevada, Arizona, and Wyoming. The early religious pluralism of the Pacific Northwest was already evident. In no other region of the country would religious predominance be less stable during the subsequent century.

By the early twenty-first century the basic patterns established a century earlier could still be discerned. The largest denomination in each U.S. county created a surprisingly simple picture of regional dominance. With exceptions, Southern Baptists ruled the South, Lutherans much of the upper Midwest, Mormons the Great Basin in the West, Methodists the remnants of their traditional horizontal belt from Nebraska and Kansas to Delaware and Delmarva Maryland, and Catholics everywhere else. Beneath this image, however, was fabulous complexity and change. Alterations in immigration law in the 1920s and 1960s had built on the nation's fundamental religious geography and altered its most recent layers. The consequences altered the country's consciousness. The arrival of significant numbers of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others in the later decades of the century had a particular impact. So too was the uneven erosion of ethnic, racial, and religious prejudice, an occurrence that among other things induced interfaith marriages, with deep implications for subsequent generations. For a wide variety of reasons, by the early twenty-first century, the fastest-growing religious category was the "Nones": those who reported to surveyors that they held no formal religious attachment. This was true throughout the nation but particularly in the West, except among Mormons, and in the Northeast. The appearance of radio, television, the Internet, and other forms of mass communication, and the development of modern and rapid transportation and a consequent national and global consciousness—all wrought effects on America's religious composition and sensibilities. They have even fostered the illusion among some that regional distinctions have evaporated. These and other developments are considered elsewhere in the *Encyclopedia*.

Physical Geography and Region

What is pertinent here is how geography conditioned evolving and enduring regional differences. California, for example, boasts an appealing climate and oceanic ports of entry. It is far from the East Coast despite the influence of mobile easterners who helped establish the territory. It is farther yet from Europe. Instead, Asia is more proximate, and Mexico more so. Much of the terrain was in fact formerly native and Mexican land. At 26 percent, California claims the highest percentage among all states of citizens who were born outside the country. It receives immigrants from 85 percent of the world's countries. Latinos constitute 20 percent of all Protestants—again the largest proportion in the country.

California's location has historically nurtured cross-cultural borrowing. This mix and the state's geography have over time produced a zone that harbors more than its proportionate share of Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Jews, Mormons, New Age adherents, Hispanic Catholics, Hispanic and Asian Protestant groups, Holiness and Pentecostal faiths, and those who identify with no religion. Buddhism in California is perhaps more diverse than in Tibet, Japan, Southeast Asia, or anywhere else on the planet, because all the Buddhisms of the world have been imported there. Strong evangelical and mainline Protestant pockets may be found as well as, of course, a strong and evermore Hispanic Catholicism. But relatively little sense of "Judeo-Christian" cultural influence thrives amid the astonishing diversity. Religious institutions are comparatively weak on the West Coast, but interfaith cooperation on the environment and other civic matters is comparatively strong. More than in other regions, religion there tends toward eclectic, individualized, and innovative spiritualities. Nonconformity is almost normative. It is not difficult to link the state's religious makeup and its geography.

Nor is it difficult elsewhere. The fact that nearly 70 percent of religious citizens in New England are Catholic owes its explanation in large measure to the Italian and Irish immigrants attracted during the nineteenth century to the area's urban-industrial landscape, which had preceded other areas in developing factories, industrial cities, and employment. The scarcity of such urban and industrial cities in the South deflected the waves of new immigrants, including those from southern and eastern Europe who sought a living in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. Hence the Baptists and Methodists who assumed religious dominance in antebellum times bequeathed to the region an enduring legacy, enriched by the substance and cadences of black religion. Much of African American religion, in turn, was itself made possible by the earlier importation of Africans to a New World region whose principle crop seemed to demand cheap labor. Black religion derived also from the admixture of Christianity with the tribal religions of the people providing this labor and with sensibilities arising from their experience working the land *as* slaves. Geography was thus a crucial element in developing the Southern evangelical style.

Religion in the intermountain West, to cite another example, is similarly conditioned by physical realities. Religion there is characterized by a triad of subregions having more in common geographically than religiously

and culturally. This three-way partition developed in part because the region's climate, limited water, and rugged topography created, across time, a few urban centers separated by hundreds of miles of scarcely populated space. The region does share a backdrop of Catholicism behind the diversity and a certain cultural libertarianism in which each spiritual community claims its own ground, values, and style. But the Mormon culture region of Utah and adjacent counties in Wyoming, Idaho, Nevada, and Arizona is isolated and sharply distinct from the Hispanic Catholicism dominating New Mexico, the southern-California-like diversity that leavens a predominant Catholicism in Arizona, and the small but potent pockets of contrasting religious centers in Colorado (evangelicalism in Colorado Springs; New Age/Buddhist/Muslim adherents in Boulder).

All this, in turn, is at variance with the many Native American enclaves in the West, a result of nineteenth-century U.S. policies of ghettoization. Emerging from their native geographies, and particularly since the identity-revitalization movements of the 1960s, many reservations have developed distinct cultures, each with its own native practices and symbols. Sometimes these movements of renewal have emerged from contests over land deemed sacred to a tribe but important for tourist or commercial purposes by government or business interests.

Cartography

In some instances and some respects, the relationship of religion and space can be represented visually. A photograph capturing three or even four churches of differing denominations at a single intersection, for example, may tell us something of the history and character of a town and its carved space, and how religion may leave its mark on the landscape, as it does, say, in the districts of Amish farms. More locally yet, a schema of a Puritan chapel, its pulpit front, center, and raised, may disclose something of its historical occupants' theology—the importance of the Word. This may become the more apparent when juxtaposed against a diagram of a Quaker meetinghouse, with no pulpit, its democracy implied by benches surrounding an empty center. Likewise, the contrast between the landscape of a seventeenth-century Congregationalist cemetery in Boston and a nineteenth-century Catholic one in Baton Rouge may jar us into awareness of or curiosity about the sensibilities of their sponsoring cultures.

Another way to explore religion and space is through the making of maps. But cartography, like all scholarship, is a

precarious enterprise. Visual maps, like verbal ones, both reveal and distort. Religion, after all, may be abstract and ethereal or practical and enacted, but maps are flat or round. If deftly accomplished, such representations may illuminate or even beguile, but they do not interpret themselves. Maps deceive to show us otherwise obscure truths. Viewers should view them critically, asking what they disclose and what they mask; attending to what information has been included, what excluded; noting what is portrayed as “central” or “above” and what as peripheral or below; pondering what a map's framework tells us about the framer as well as that which is framed.

A simple and helpful map may convey the location of all Buddhist temples in Chicago or all megachurches in the South. Another may portray the national distribution and density of fundamentalist denominations in 1950 or 2010, or both, suggesting that the change over time is significant. In relation to regional distinctions discussed earlier in this essay, scholars have constructed maps depicting the largest denomination in each U.S. county for every twenty-year period of the nation's history; broad patterns of predominance are thus disclosed.

More customized cartography sometimes plots what may at first seem insignificant but in the end proves revealing. Scholars Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, for instance, rendered more explicable the outbreak of witchcraft hysteria in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692–1693, by linking local geography, politics, and social tensions. They plotted the residence of every known accused witch and their defenders, as well as every accuser and their supporters. The resulting map showed that those accused of witchcraft (and their defenders) resided predominantly in Salem Towne, while the witches' accusers and their supporters lived almost exclusively in adjacent Salem Village. The map makes us ask why this should be so. Additional research revealed that the Village had for years been dominated by Salem Towne in matters of taxation, church jurisdiction, and prestige, and it had long struggled, unsuccessfully and with increasing resentment, to gain corporate independence. The cartography of Salem's resentment helps unravel a historical puzzle.

Cartographic lenses may be placed over a great mass of data to make visually and intuitively obvious religious-geographic relations otherwise obscure. One such lens, for example, demonstrates that in some respects the United States is less possessed of a Bible Belt than a Bible Suspender—a broad vertical pattern of counties twisting from Minnesota and the Dakotas down through Oklahoma

and Texas—that is more dense in its attachment to organized religion than is the horizontal, mythic Bible Belt in the South. Another pair of lenses makes cartographically clear how a generation after the Civil War, Northern and Southern Baptists were still almost completely separated along an extended Mason-Dixon line; in the twentieth century, however, the Southern Baptists succeeded in establishing a national presence, while Northern Baptists failed to penetrate the South. Another lens yet may make apparent the relation between the denominational composition of each state and its inclination to go red or blue during a given presidential election. Another may make clear how American Jews are almost entirely resident in large cities, with Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, and Unitarians predominantly urban as well, while Baptists, Holiness, and other groups are sharply less so. Potential insights and questions to be extracted from such cartographic lenses await only the imagination and diligence of their creators.

Sacred Space

While scholars may scrutinize the relation of people, religion, and space, the people themselves grow conscious to varying degrees of their relation to their environment. Believers may inherit, experience, or create a spiritual geography, a kind of geo-theology, whether formally expressed or merely sensed. This can take many forms.

One trace of this relationship inheres in the religious names assigned to places, sometimes in earnest, sometimes with whimsy. Religious place-names are “storied” places, “place-tales,” locations made sacred because of experiences remembered and stories told about them. How some village came to be called Damascus or Sodom or Faith or Saint George may be particular to each instance. As a whole, however, the place-tales disclose a process of heritage- and identity-making, as people impose their beliefs or yearnings on their surroundings or incorporate their environment into their beliefs.

Perhaps 800 biblical place-names attach to U.S. locations. California and Texas together claim nearly 100 cities named after saints, quite apart from rivers, hills, and other features of the landscape. Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest know Mount Rainier as Tahoma: “the Mountain that was God.” Missionary Ridge in Tennessee and Georgia was named after a David Brainerd mission there. Hardshell and neighboring Soft Shell are eastern Kentucky communities forged by contrasting Baptist sensibilities. Germans of differing sects arriving in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

in Pennsylvania and North Carolina bestowed religious names on their communities: Emmaus, Ephrata, Nazareth, Bethlehem. Kansas Mennonites conjured good relations at Liebenthal (“Valley of Love”); Quakers in Indiana championed simplicity in Plainfield; hopeful and communal Rappites christened Harmonie in the same state. Dozens of westward-moving towns attracted the label *Salem* (“peace”; a shortened form of *Jerusalem*). The words that speak America’s religious past do not always form full sentences.

Sometimes the land itself exudes the holy: The extraordinary landscapes of Sedona, Arizona, for example, have long evoked awe in Native American tribes. Non-Native devotees have discovered their own holy place there. Sometimes their attachment has an affinity with their interpretations of Native American spirituality. Thousands are drawn by Sedona’s “enhanced energy vortexes,” said to facilitate prayer, meditation, metaphysical insight, mind/body healing, exploration of the divine, and insight into one’s relationship with the soul. Seekers and dispensers of spiritual wisdom have generated there an eclectic culture of healers, astrologists, shamans, metaphysicians, prophets, and followers.

More pervasively, believers link memory of sacred experience with the space and place of their occurrence. Such memory may be individualistic and of one’s own direct experience, as reflected in the stories and poems of Wendell Berry or in Kathleen Norris’s spiritual meditations in *Dakota*. Or memory of sacred space may ground the understandings of entire religions. Like all Muslims, American Muslims know that Muhammad heard the voice of the reciting angel Gabriel in a lonely cave on Mount Hira, near Mecca. Previously following Jewish tradition by praying toward Jerusalem, the Prophet received a revelation instructing him to turn his back on it and face Mecca. Muslims since then not only follow suit in prayer but also are forbidden from spitting or relieving nature facing that sacred direction. Similarly, biblical memory tells of Moses obediently removing his sandals out of respect for holy ground, before the Burning Bush on Mt. Sinai. Buddha reached enlightenment under the Bo tree near Gaya on the floodplain of the Ganges.

Millions of individuals and groups live according to such mythic geographies—spaces that scholar Mircea Eliade called *real*, as distinct from “objective, abstract, non-essential” space that people do not really live in. Holy terrain can inform the nation’s civil religion, as is apparent in the vibrant reverence that fills the air surrounding the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. And sacred space may inform the consciousness of the adherents of specific religions. This is the

case with the Mormons at the Hill Cumorah and the “sacred grove” in upstate New York, site of Joseph Smith’s earliest visions; at Nauvoo, Illinois, where a majestic reconstructed temple informs tourists and reminds Latter-day Saint pilgrims of a sacred, tragic past where their kingdom once flourished and where their founding prophet was martyred; and in Casper, Wyoming, where each summer hundreds flock to ritually reenact the pulling and pushing of handcarts that their ancestors transported across the plains in exodus and exile from their former country and toward their latest promised land. In these and many other ways, geography may become not just an approach for scholarly scrutiny but the very stuff of religion.

Historian Sidney Mead has suggested that, in contradistinction to Europe, the relative importance of space and time was inverted when the United States came into being. That is, in the nation’s early years, space overshadowed time in the formation of the ideals of the American mind and spirit. At the epicenter of those ideals was freedom. And religious freedom in the sparsely inhabited New World entailed the freedom to move on, to escape the constrictions of class, custom, and law by going, when necessary, to another place. Even before the nation formed, Rhode Island served as a colonial example, assuming a role played two centuries later by the entire American West: as a repository for malcontents and social outcasts. In these and other ways we have considered, and against many who assume otherwise in an age of mass communication, hypermobility, and globalization, human relationships to the land may be shown to be important. Indeed, further study might sustain the thesis that a modern sense of rootlessness has a correlation with a selective decline in religious faith. In any case, a scholar hoping to understand American religion while ignoring geography proceeds at severe peril.

See also *Appalachian Mountain Religion; Atlantic World; California and the Pacific Rim Region; Demographics; Frontier and Borderlands; Great Lakes Region; Great Plains Region; Historical Approaches; Mountain West and Prairie Region; New England Region; Pluralism; Sociological Approaches; South as Region; Southwest as Region; Tourism and Pilgrimage.*

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Glossolalia

The term *glossolalia*, often called speaking in tongues, has been used since 1879 to refer to the phenomenon of speaking in a language that the speaker has not learned. It comes from two Greek words, *glossa* (“tongue” or “language”) and *lalein* (“to talk”). Glossolalia usually occurs in a religious setting and consists of unintelligible language-like sounds that are unknown to the speaker. A famous example is the oracle at the temple dedicated to the Greek god Apollo in Delphi in the fifth century BCE. Glossolalic utterances by the Delphic oracle were followed by personal prophecies delivered by the oracle in a state of trance. Other examples are found in the Hindu vedas and Buddhist sutras in India, in the Tibetan tantras, and in the expressions of some Sufi mystics. Although accounts of tongues speech have been reported in many cultures throughout history, it is best known in the Western Hemisphere as a phenomenon occurring among Christians, from the beginning of the church until the present day.

Forms of Glossolalia

Three distinct types of tongues speech have been reported. *Heteroglossa* is a language that is unknown to the speaker but understood by the hearers. This seems to be the type of tongues described in the Bible, in Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost. *Glossolalia* is the utterance of a tongue that is

unknown to the speaker and also to the hearers; it requires a gift of interpretation to be understood. This type is described in I Corinthians 12 in relation to the manifestation of the *charismata*, or gifts of the Holy Spirit. The third type, *zenoglossa*, occurs when the speaker speaks in his or her own language, but those listening understand the tongues as being in their language. St. Francis Xavier (1506–1552), for example, is reported to have preached in his native Portuguese in Goa, on the western coast of India, while the people listening to him understood him as speaking in their language.

In modern times, glossolalia has been the object of extensive historic, scientific, and psychological research. Early studies made the assumption that tongues speech was a pathological phenomenon that occurred among the mentally ill and the economically deprived, often in times of great stress or persecution. Charges of mental instability among tongues speakers were often made during the early part of the twentieth century. Later studies done after World War II have largely discounted the earlier pathological theories and have seen tongues speakers as within the range of normalcy, and in some studies to be better adjusted than the control groups with which they were compared. Scholars are investigating the role of ecstasy as one mode of religious experience that for Pentecostals would include tongues, prophecy, and divine healing.

Glossolalia in the Christian Tradition

Although there were hints of glossolalia in the Old Testament, no clear cases were recorded. Speaking in tongues was a New Testament phenomenon and related to the very beginning of the Christian church. As recounted in Acts 2, about the year 30 CE Jesus and his followers were in Jerusalem for the Jewish festival of Pentecost. As they were gathered for the feast day, the Holy Spirit descended on them. A flood of glossolalic utterances from the twelve disciples resulted in the conversion of three thousand Jewish listeners who were confounded by hearing Jewish followers of Jesus speaking in their own native languages. (Some have called this the “Jewish Pentecost.”) Soon afterward glossolalia appeared among Roman gentiles in Caesarea, in Judaea, under the preaching of Simon Peter (Acts 10). Peter was astonished that non-Jewish people had also received this manifestation. (This is sometimes called the “Roman Pentecost.”) Sometime after this, the apostle Paul visited Ephesus, a Greek city in Asia Minor (Acts 19), and tongues appeared again in a very different cultural setting. (This has been called the “Greek Pentecost.”) On two other occasions, people received the Holy Spirit without tongues being

specifically mentioned. The first was among half-Jews in Samaria (Acts 8), where Simon Magus attempted to buy the Holy Spirit from Simon Peter. In Acts 9 when Saul (also known as Paul) received the Holy Spirit, tongues was not reported, but Paul’s later statement, “I thank my God that I speak in tongues more than you all,” leads many scholars to conclude that he first spoke in tongues at that time.

There are some references to tongues during the post-apostolic era, but these are few and tend to decrease in number as time goes by. Tongues were reported among the followers of Montanus (156–172), by Ireneus (175), and Novatian (230). In the nonbiblical Jewish Testament of Job (chapters 48–50), a young girl is said to have spoken “in the dialect of the cherubim.”

By the fourth century, tongues seems to have declined to the point that St. Augustine (354–430) announced a theory that the miraculous gifts had been sent to authenticate the beginnings of the church, but they had ceased with the death of the last apostles. This was the beginning of the “cessation theory,” which has persisted to this day in the West, though it was never adopted by the Eastern Orthodox churches. Some scholars, such as Eddie Ensley, see a continuation of glossolalia in the “wordless songs of praise” known as the Jubilate. In time, this form of singing developed into the Gregorian chant, becoming the first use of musical notation. More recent Roman Catholic scholars, such as Kilian McDonnell and George Montague, have found that the ritual of laying on of hands to receive the Holy Spirit with the accompanying charismata persisted in most parts of the ancient church for at least eight centuries.

During the Middle Ages, a time of abundant miraculous claims, glossolalia was notable by its rarity. Most reported claims of glossolalia were contained in the hagiographies of the saints. Often, speaking in tongues was cited as one of the miracles required for canonization. However, research indicates that many of these claims lacked contemporary evidence and that these hagiographies became in essence art forms rather than historical documents.

Glossolalia in Modern Times

There is no evidence that the leading Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century such as Martin Luther and John Calvin approved of the practice of glossolalia. In general, they accepted the cessation theories of the Western church and opposed the prophecies and other spiritual manifestations of the radical reformers such as the Anabaptists. In the seventeenth century, claims of glossolalia and other motor

phenomena abounded among the prophets of the Cevennes region in southern France. These French Protestants, also known as Camisards, later attracted the attention of John Wesley, the founder of the Methodists in England, who cited them as proof of continuing and authentic glossolalia.

Glossolalia reappeared in the nineteenth century among British restorationist groups, such as the Shakers and the Irvingites, and also among followers of the Church of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, in the United States. In the 1830s Edward Irving and his British friends organized the Catholic Apostolic Church, which claimed to restore not only the gifts of the Spirit but the apostolic office as well. As a pre-Pentecostal theologian, Irving permitted tongues in his London Presbyterian congregation; he announced that they were the “standing sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit” and the “root and stem” out of which all the other gifts flowed. Among Mormons, Joseph Smith spoke in tongues, and Brigham Young preached entire sermons in tongues accompanied by interpretation. Mother Ann Lee, founder of the Shakers, spoke in tongues and composed songs in tongues to accompany the spiritual dances that were the main feature of Shaker worship.

Glossolalia in Early Pentecostalism

The surge of glossolalia in the twentieth century came with the rise of Pentecostalism at the beginning of the century. Under the teaching of the Holiness evangelist Charles Fox Parham, Agnes Ozman spoke in tongues in January 1901, in Topeka, Kansas, thus beginning the modern Pentecostal movement. Most of the earliest Pentecostals were former Methodists, who had left the church because of debates over whether a second distinct experience (a “second blessing”) of sanctification or holiness followed on conversion or justification (the “first blessing”). Parham began to teach that the baptism in the Holy Spirit was now a third blessing certified by the “Bible evidence” of speaking in tongues.

Parham’s new Pentecostal movement grew slowly until one of his students, William Joseph Seymour, opened the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, in April 1906. Seymour, an African American, drew thousands of people of all races and classes to his mission. To promote the revival, Seymour published a paper, the *Apostolic Faith*, which was sent free to fifty thousand subscribers. Miraculous healings and tongues speaking drew multitudes to Azusa Street. Services were held three times a day, seven days a week for more than three years. Azusa Street “pilgrims” soon carried the Pentecostal movement to all parts of America and around the world.

The American South was the most fertile early ground for the spread of glossolalia. The first Pentecostal denominations had southern roots; among them were the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), the Church of God in Christ, and the Assemblies of God. In their statements of faith, all of these denominations eventually adopted the “initial evidence” doctrine (that is, an experience of speaking in tongues; speaking in tongues was the “initial evidence” that one had received the Holy Spirit). With few exceptions, this doctrine became the position of the Pentecostal churches that eventually became known as “classical Pentecostals.” After 1916, with the appearance of the “Oneness,” non-trinitarian Pentecostals, glossolalia among them was elevated to the point of being necessary to salvation. The major churches of this tradition were the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World and the United Pentecostal Church.

The teaching of initial evidence deeply divided the Holiness and fundamentalist movements after 1910, with some critics charging that tongues were demon inspired. This was the claim of Alma White in her 1910 book, *Demons and Tongues*. The ultimate cessationist work attacking glossolalia and other miracles was that of a Princeton fundamentalist scholar, Benjamin Warfield, who, in his 1918 book, *Counterfeit Miracles*, claimed that there had been no authentic miracles, including tongues, since the death of the last apostle. Despite such attacks, as well as theological ostracism, the Pentecostal churches continued to grow in the United States, and after World War II they made dramatic advances throughout the world.

In 1960 glossolalia entered the mainline Protestant churches in what came to be known as the charismatic movement. This movement was sparked by Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal priest in Van Nuys, California, who believed he had received a personal baptism with the Holy Spirit. By 1967 glossolalia also began to appear dramatically in the American Roman Catholic Church. From North America, speaking in tongues soon spread to all parts of the global church, including Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox Christians.

The mainline charismatics did not adopt the Pentecostal claim of “initial evidence,” but they saw glossolalia as a valid and desired manifestation of the Spirit, though not the only evidence of the Spirit-filled life. By the 1970s Pentecostal preachers such as Oral Roberts were popularizing the teaching that tongues was a “prayer language” for use in worship, in addition to being evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Among charismatics, “singing in the Spirit” became the favorite way of using tongues as a language of worship.

In the 1960s and afterward the movement drew new impetus through the television ministries of such evangelists as Oral Roberts, Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart, and Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker. In the 1980s tongue speakers from all traditions became part of the “religious right,” backing political candidates who opposed abortion on demand and supported prayer in public schools. They were active in the elections of Ronald Reagan as president and the two George Bushes.

After the turn of the century in 2000, the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement was the fastest growing Christian movement in the world, becoming the second largest Christian denomination after the Roman Catholic Church. By 2007 studies showed that glossolalists had grown to be significant percentages of the populations in many African, Asian, and Latin American nations. In two countries, Guatemala and Kenya, studies showed that they composed an absolute majority of the population. It would be safe to say that there are more people practicing glossolalia around the world now than at any other time in history. The Pentecostal movement is by far the largest religious movement to originate in the United States.

See also *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements; Holiness Denominational Family; Holiness Movement; Jehovah's Witnesses; Pentecostal Denominational Family; Pentecostals* entries; *Serpent Handlers*.

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Great Awakening(s)

Great awakenings are times of religious revival and revitalization that respond to perceived social and cultural upheavals and restore stability. These awakenings involve a restoration of religious piety among practitioners, a return to traditional

religious and cultural practices, and often conversions of nonreligious persons to a religious tradition. Historians of religion in America have focused on the macrosocial phenomena of great awakenings in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The so-called first Great Awakening involved a series of revivals in New England and the Middle Atlantic colonies in the 1730s and 1740s. The Second Great Awakening, which lasted from the 1790s until the 1840s, was a time of pervasive revival fervor in New England, western New York, Tennessee, and Kentucky. The Second Great Awakening initiated a long-standing tradition of revivalism in America, leading many historians to claim that the history of Great Awakenings is a history of revivalism. Revivalism has been an important component of America's Great Awakenings. At the end of the nineteenth century an event that some historians call the Third Great Awakening included the religious revitalization of celebrity revivalists. Some historians also look at the resurgence in religious adherence and the rise of new revivalists after World War II as a Fourth Great Awakening. These four Great Awakenings privilege a Protestant narrative of American religious history. Restoration movements of Native Americans, Roman Catholics, and Jews also help to illustrate that Great Awakenings are more than Protestant revivalism. They are also social and cultural phenomena that radically reorient the population.

Native American Awakenings

From the time of their early contacts with Europeans and Americans of European descent, Native Americans had religious awakenings that were in part a response to those contacts and in part were influenced by religious hybridity. Indian prophets such as Neolin (Delaware) in the 1760s, Tenskatawa (Shawnee) in the early nineteenth century, Kenekuk (Kickapoo) in the 1820s and 1830s, Wabokieshiek (Winnebago) in the 1830s, Abishabis (Cree) in the 1840s, and Skolaskin (Yakama) in the 1870s led their respective tribes in revitalization movements to return to traditional native religion. Some, like Neolin, and Tenskatawa, advocated turning away from the religion of the white settlers. Others, like Abishabis and Skolaskin, used a hybrid form of native religion and Christianity to revitalize their tribes. Abishabis called himself Jesus and used lines from a Methodist hymnal as inspiration for his “track to heaven” message. Skolaskin eschewed native practices of dancing and healing and preferred organized Sunday meetings.

Many prophets claimed to have experienced severe illness or temporary death, a metaphor representing the condition of Indian life since the coming of Europeans. In the early nineteenth century the Seneca prophet Handsome Lake claimed that three messengers had visited him during an illness and told him to preach against alcohol, witchcraft, abortion, and love potions. He viewed these social ills as evidence of the waywardness of the Seneca from their traditional religion and culture and toward assimilation of Euro-American culture. In his early career Handsome Lake promoted these reforms, stressing the revitalization of Seneca traditions. He later added a message of peace with white settlers and an emphasis on morality in domestic life. Modern-day Native American religious practices called the longhouse religion or Handsome Lake religion follow the moral code set by the prophet.

The Ghost Dance was an awakening that occurred among the tribes in the American West. The Ghost Dance began in 1869, when the Paiute prophet Wodziwob claimed to have received messages from the dead while he was in a trance induced by dancing. He preached to the Paiutes at the Walker River Reservation in Nevada, proclaiming that the dead would return and bring terror followed by a restoration of precontact native life. Like Handsome Lake before him, Wodziwob viewed contact with white people as harmful to traditional Indian ways. Two of Wodziwob's disciples traveled to other reservations to promote this pan-Indian revival of traditional religion. Frank Spencer (also known as Weneyuga) preached to the Paiutes as well as to the Washoe in Nevada. Tavibo was another itinerant preacher who served on Wodziwob's behalf. The first Ghost Dance revival lasted a few years.

Tavibo's son, Wovoka (also called Jack Wilson), became the leader of a second Ghost Dance revival in the 1890s. Wovoka experienced a trance during a solar eclipse on January 1, 1889, and claimed that the Creator and the dead had visited him, giving him the ability to prophesy, invulnerability to weapons, and songs that would control the weather. Wovoka taught natives a "dance in a circle" to be performed for five days, wherein they would experience communication with the dead. He preached peaceful coexistence with white people. This revival spread from Nevada onto the Great Plains, especially among the Lakota. As it spread, subtle variations occurred among different tribes. Christian missionaries and U.S. government representatives worried that the native revival would provoke violent resistance to federal laws and white settlers. The Battle of Wounded Knee, in

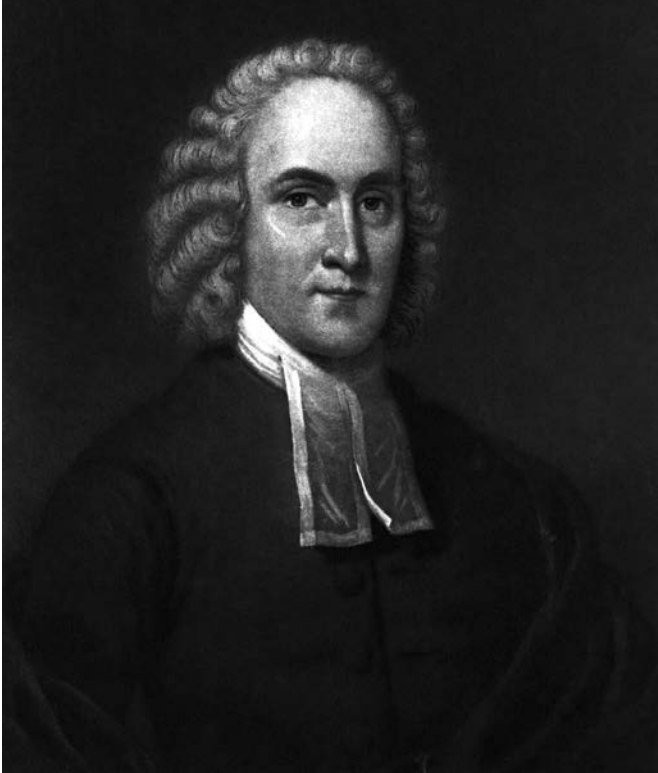
1890, was a result of military action to curtail the native revival. The significance of Native American awakenings lies in how they illustrate that revitalization and restoration are important components of great awakenings.

Colonial America and the First Great Awakening

European colonists in North America also held rituals of religious revitalization. Puritans in New England held covenant renewals in which they rejuvenated their individual and corporate covenants with God. These covenant renewals were intended to stem the perceived tide of impiety among the parishioners. The sermon on election days, often called the jeremiad, emphasized the need for annual covenant renewal. These renewals were common in and around Boston. In the Connecticut River Valley, Solomon Stoddard (1643–1729) reported six "harvests of souls" in Northampton, Massachusetts, during his tenure as pastor. Along with "Pope" Stoddard, William Williams and Timothy Edwards participated in local revivals. These men were elder relatives of Jonathan Edwards, whose Northampton revival in 1734–1735 is credited with being the catalyst for the first Great Awakening.

The first Great Awakening was a religious response to the social and cultural upheaval of the early eighteenth century. The feudal agricultural system of medieval and early modern Europe had given way to a mercantile and capitalist economy. The feudal system, with its lords and servants, had instilled in the public an idea of their relationship with God as a lord who oversaw his servants. The mercantile economy elevated the idea of the self-sufficiency of the individual. The eighteenth-century Enlightenment elevated the rational individual. Ministers feared that these developments were a threat to the piety of their congregations. The age of orthodoxy in the seventeenth century also emphasized doctrine more than piety. A movement in Europe known as Pietism reasserted the importance of heartfelt piety over doctrine as the necessity for faith and salvation.

Pietists inspired Theodorus Frelinghuysen (1691–1747), a Dutch Reformed pastor who came to New Brunswick, New Jersey, from Germany in 1719. Believing that religious devotion was a matter of the heart, not the head, he was frustrated by his congregation's lethargy. He aggressively preached heartfelt conversions rather than doctrinal knowledge. Gilbert Tennent (1703–1764), a Presbyterian minister in New Brunswick who also disapproved of his parishioners' lethargy, supported and cooperated with Frelinghuysen. Both pastors withheld Communion from any persons not



A staunch Calvinist, Jonathan Edwards believed that individual conversion, local revival, and great awakening were products of God's predestination of when, how, and who experienced religious revitalization. His Northampton, Massachusetts, revival in 1734–1735 is credited with being the catalyst for the first Great Awakening.

showing evidence of a conversion. Although they endured controversy regarding their careers, both saw an increase in the number of conversions.

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) was a contemporary of Frelinghuysen and Tennent who advocated an elevated view of God's majesty over heartfelt piety. Edwards inherited Solomon Stoddard's—his grandfather's—congregation in Northampton in 1729. Stoddard and Timothy Edwards, Jonathan's father, taught Jonathan about revival. A staunch Calvinist, Edwards believed that individual conversion, local revival, and great awakening were products of God's predestination of when, how, and who experienced religious revitalization. He was prepared to see revival come to Northampton when it did in 1734. By his estimate, three hundred persons converted during the revival in 1734–1735. From Northampton, the awakening spread throughout the Connecticut River Valley. Edwards recorded the events at Northampton in his *Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* (1737). The *Faithful Narrative* granted

Edwards international fame and encouraged pro-revival “New Lights” in New England, dissenters in England, as well as Methodist founder John Wesley. The New Lights were ministers who upheld the Puritan tradition of Calvinist doctrine while also advocating revival as a means to ensure religious conversions. The *Faithful Narrative* told of the conditions leading to revival, described the process of conversion using examples from Edwards's congregation, and inspired future accounts published in Scotland and England, and in the magazine *Christian History* (1743–1744) in America. In later decades, Edwards instructed New England clergy called the New Divinity, who claimed to follow Edwards's spirit of revivalism.

George Whitefield (1714–1770) and John Wesley (1703–1791) were proponents of the “new birth,” a term to explain the change in one's heart when converted. Both Whitefield and Wesley were Anglican priests and members of the Methodist movement at Oxford. Wesley went to Georgia to preach the new birth and start Methodist societies in Anglican parishes. In 1738 he invited Whitefield, who was a celebrity preacher. Whitefield developed outdoor preaching as the method by which to reach large audiences for mass conversions. He made nine preaching tours throughout America and England, winning him the title “Grand Itinerant.” Whitefield's ministry illustrates two important aspects of the first Great Awakening: itinerancy and the Atlantic world. Itinerant ministry was vital for the promotion of revivals. Pro-revival ministers traveled from church to church or town to town and preached the new birth. Second, this great awakening was taking place in continental Europe, Scotland, England, Wales, the American colonies, and the Caribbean. Revivalists crossed the Atlantic, and so did information about revivals in the form of printed accounts. Moravian missions in the Caribbean inspired revivals among African slaves.

The first Great Awakening inspired controversies, particularly in the Middle Colonies and New England. Whitefield provoked ire from Anglican priests by his criticism of their unwillingness to accept the new birth. Tennent received persecution for his accusations in a famous sermon, “The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry” (1739). In New England the battle raged most fiercely. After Whitefield's visit in 1740, revivals continued in nearly one-third of Boston's churches. James Davenport followed Whitefield to hold follow-up revivals. He drew the criticism of Old Light Bostonians who banned him from pulpits. Pro-revival Benjamin Colman and Gilbert Tennent also spoke out

against Davenport. Charles Chauncy issued his *Enthusiasm Described and Cautioned Against* (1742) as a treatise against the excessive emotional displays of revivals. Jonathan Edwards publicly debated Chauncy. By 1743 the more radical supporters of revival and of Davenport had separated from Congregational and Baptist churches in New England.

Some historians date the end of the first Great Awakening at 1742, when Whitefield was not welcome during his second visit at Harvard. By the mid 1740s the controversy over revivalism in general and Davenport in particular shifted the society away from having revivals to an evaluation of the appropriateness of revivals. In the 1750s revivalism waned in New England, with a short burst between 1762 and 1765. To say that the first Great Awakening ended in 1742 neglects to take into account the geographic scope of the awakening. The South experienced the first Great Awakening as early as Wesley's and Whitefield's work in Georgia in the 1730s. Missionaries came to the South from New England and the Middle Colonies in the 1740s. Samuel Davies came to Virginia from Pennsylvania in 1748. James Davenport itinerated in Virginia in 1750. Separate Baptists, who dissented from the Regular Baptists, found success in the South, especially under the labors of Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall. Baptist itinerants spread throughout the South and were often jailed for fomenting public unrest. Methodists also found success. Anglican Devereux Jarratt welcomed Methodist itinerants into his Virginia parish, and he promoted revival among parishioners. In the 1760s–1780s revivalist Presbyterians and Baptists moved into the backcountry of the Deep South, penetrating into western Virginia and the Carolinas, as well as into northern Georgia.

The awakening promoted a revitalization of Christian piety in a time that Jonathan Edwards called a period of “extreme dullness in religion.” Americans also experienced upheaval during the awakening. The controversy over the awakening hinged on an important component of the social and cultural reorientation of the first Great Awakening. The awakening reaffirmed the individual in new ways by stressing individual conversion and piety. Social groups such as the Congregationalists were no longer monolithic wholes but associations of individuals. For union to be maintained, individuals within the social group had to agree. Debate caused fissures within the Congregationalists. The reorientation of social units as associations of individuals allowed Americans to think of themselves as being part of an intercolonial association. The awakening fomented the antiauthoritarian ethos of some dissenting clergy and parishioners. In the South

dissenting revivalist Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists challenged the authority of the Anglican Church. With the formation of associative communities and opposition to authority, the first Great Awakening had given Americans the cultural tools with which to build an idea of an independent nation.

The Second Great Awakening

Some historians have difficulty identifying the seam between the First and Second Great Awakenings. The persistence of revivalism in the South and the efforts of the New Divinity in New England indicate that revival fervor never died in the latter decades of the eighteenth century. Another period of social upheaval and lull in religion preceded the revivalism of the 1790s–1830s. During these decades Americans experienced new calls to restoring “true” Christianity as well as another cultural reorientation.

With the onset of the Revolutionary War in 1775 and the early years of crafting a republic, Americans seemed less concerned with religion than they had been previously. The Enlightenment advocated rationality and “natural religion,” a form of religion that was rational and universal and not revealed through divine intervention. Deism, the belief in God's transcendence that invalidates his intervention in human and natural affairs, was popular. Books like Ethan Allen's *Reason, the Only Oracle of Man* (1785) and Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* (1794, 1795) illustrated an intellectual shift from piety and revelation to reason. Statistics reveal the opposite. Church admissions in Connecticut between 1740 and 1749 were 13.0 percent of males ages 30–34 and 6.7 percent of females ages 30–34. Between 1750 and 1798 church admissions of the same age group rose to 21.3 percent of males and 19.1 percent of females. Nevertheless, ministers in the North and the South feared the outcomes of the Enlightenment, particularly irreligion and lapsed morals. Both parties pointed to Sabbath breaking, swearing, gambling, and alcohol abuse as signs of moral decay in the absence of piety. As the United States acquired more land westward across the Appalachian Mountains, ministers feared that avarice for land left unchecked would cause social strife and violence. As citizens relocated, they experienced social and commercial dislocation in ways that brought insecurity. The Second Great Awakening not only revitalized Protestant evangelical religion in pervasive ways, but it also assuaged the anxieties that Americans experienced.

Southern clergy moved with migrants across the Appalachian Mountains. They brought an expressive religion that

created some of the most significant forms of revival. Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterians brought with them a spring-time Communion ceremony that collected parishioners outdoors. These events were perennial revivals that renewed the religious life of the individual and of the community. Near the end of the eighteenth century, a series of these revivals began to take place in Kentucky. Presbyterian itinerant James McGready (1763–1817) reported revivals at his parishes in 1798 and 1799. The sacramental meeting at Red River, Kentucky, in June 1800 brought together McGready's three parishes, with more than four hundred in attendance during this outdoor ceremony. In July 1800 Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists met at Gasper River for a sacramental meeting. Persons came from disparate areas and camped at this location for the weeklong gathering. Historians point to this event as the first camp meeting. The most famous camp meeting is Cane Ridge, which took place in August 1801. Barton W. Stone (1772–1844) organized the outdoor revival and promoted it for a month. Between twenty thousand and thirty thousand people attended Cane Ridge.

Camp meetings remained a fixture of revivalism in the western states. In later years New England revivalists held camp meetings. These were controversial events in which some eastern clergy were outraged by the ecstatic “exercises” of those participating in camp meeting revival. Camp meetings also influenced the local congregation and urban revivalism promoted by Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875). Although Presbyterians began camp meetings, Methodists continued the activity in the latter half of the nineteenth century and instituted camp meetings as official revivals in late summer.

New Divinity Congregationalist clergy were preaching revival and doctrine in New England, causing Connecticut to become alive with local revivals in the 1790s. Preaching by Yale's president Timothy Dwight led to a campus revival in 1801–1802, winning Dwight the recognition of initiating the Second Great Awakening. In New England, New Divinity men led the Second Great Awakening. True to their Calvinist doctrines, they believed that God had ordained a season of revival when the elect professed their faith.

As New England Yankees moved into western New York, revival spread with them into the “burned-over district,” so named because of the number of revivals that ignited in the region. In this district, Charles G. Finney emerged as the new celebrity of the Second Great Awakening. Finney was a lawyer by training, but he joined the ministry after a sudden conversion experience. He taught

that any person could be converted as long as the individual followed the steps of conviction, faith, and repentance. He also taught that revivals happened according to the “new measures” that ministers used to promote revival. Those measures included plain speech during sermons directed at the audience and the “protracted meeting.” The protracted meeting was a modification of the camp meeting. Finney's revivals often took place over a week or more in one town. He held services every evening for businessmen to attend. At times these revivals took place in local churches, but public buildings were also used to accommodate large audiences. The protracted meeting extended the time of the religious service to ensure the likely conversion of as many people as possible. Finney mobilized women in voluntary roles to promote and prepare for his revivals. Women distributed announcements of upcoming revivals and walked streets praying for individuals and families who might attend a revival meeting. Finney produced results as a traveling revivalist and as a local pastor.

The influence of New Divinity and Finneyite revivalism was manifested in nineteenth-century reform movements, such as temperance and antislavery. Urban revivals promoted reforms of personal morals and advocated social reforms. Benevolent societies such as temperance societies, antislavery societies, and aid for the poor emerged. Aggressive societies of interdenominational evangelicalism, such as the American Sunday School Union, American Bible Society, American Tract Society, and American Home Mission Society, spread the evangelical message of conversion and repentance to people near and far.

The Second Great Awakening gave American history four legacies. First, during the presidency of Andrew Jackson, it harnessed the power of individualism in what came to be called Jacksonian democracy (1820s–1830s). The awakening's revivalism led to controversial demagogues and self-proclaimed prophets who claimed autonomous authority in an age that appreciated individual success. Second, the awakening gathered people into social units and gave them a sense of community, just at a time when they began to sense social dissolution as a result of mobility, industry, and commerce. People joined churches and new religious movements such as the Oneida community in Vermont and later in New York; the Adventist tradition following the prophetic preaching of Baptist farmer William Miller; and the Church of Christ founded by Joseph Smith (later called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints). In the early decades of the nineteenth century, when Americans were

searching for national cohesion, religious awakening provided a cultural phenomenon for them to rally social cohesion. Ironically, one of the outcomes of the awakening was the diversification and fragmentation of American religious culture, just as the same phenomenon was taking place among political parties prior to the Civil War.

Third, the awakening helped Americans to grasp a sense of national purpose, as expressed in the term Manifest Destiny. Westward expansion in the trans-Appalachian and trans-Mississippi frontiers took on a religious significance. Americans experiencing a restoration of evangelical religion looked at the newly acquired geography as a field of experimentation where they would see fulfilled their goals of redeeming the world and being dutiful to God's providential plan. Theirs was a destiny of building, refining, and extending a righteous empire across the continent.

Fourth, the awakening made revivalism a mainstay throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Prayer meeting revivals such as the "Businessmen's Revival" of 1857–1858 in northern cities were frequent occurrences. Prayer meetings also initiated the Holiness Movement within the Methodist tradition. Sarah Worrall Lankford began her Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness at her New York City home in 1835. Her sister, Phoebe Palmer, soon joined the meeting, which advocated the Wesleyan teaching on Christian perfection among Methodists. Methodists also institutionalized the camp meeting as a forum for promoting holiness. Revivalism was primarily a northern phenomenon. The South was all but immune to the 1858 revival in which businessmen in industrial northern cities gathered to pray. Holiness also spread slowly in the South. Southerners distrusted Holiness preaching. Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South separated from the northern church over issues regarding slavery, and they viewed Holiness preaching at places such as Oberlin, Ohio, to be the culprit of abolitionism. Later, after the post-Civil War Reconstruction period in the South, Holiness revivalism spread in the lower areas of the region.

The persistence of revivalism as a cultural phenomenon in America makes difficult the determination that the Second Great Awakening ended in the 1830s or 1840s. Historians state that the Second Great Awakening was over by the 1840s, when political issues regarding slavery were escalating toward Civil War. By the 1840s, debates over abolitionism and the ensuing violence of the 1850s indicated that the righteous empire caused social strife through sectional bitterness. As a phenomenon that oriented Americans toward

collectivity and mission, the Second Great Awakening ended when collectivity dissolved in the conflict of competing missions.

The Third Great Awakening

The Third Great Awakening is a contested historical phenomenon. Some historians debate whether the awakening took place. Others who do accept its existence debate its time frame. The renewal of mass evangelism by Dwight L. Moody in the 1870s and the escalation of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the 1920s provide bookends for the Third Great Awakening. This awakening also involved the Social Gospel, a movement in Protestant liberalism that emphasized social reform over piety and conversion. The irony of the Third Great Awakening is that it began with the restorationist impulse of Moody and Billy Sunday, who promoted "old-time religion" in the form of mass revivalism, but ended with a cultural shift toward modernized liberalism that drove a divisive wedge in American society.

The social situation in the wake of the Civil War was bleak. The South was laid to waste during the North's campaign to break the Confederacy. The North reeled from the atrocities of property destruction and loss of population. As they were at the end of the Revolution, Americans were more immediately concerned with taking care of their temporal necessities than worrying about their souls. Skepticism, like that evinced by the agnostic orator and political leader Robert Ingersoll, spread throughout the country. Jewish and Catholic emigrants from Europe to the United States altered the religious composition of a population once dominated by Protestants. With mass immigration also came new ideas about religion and science. Higher criticism, an import from German universities, questioned the inerrancy of the Bible by pointing out textual and historical inconsistencies. Darwinian science and social Darwinist ideas colored people's understanding of the world and led them to question its origin. In this age of uncertainty and flux, Americans also had to answer the question of how to mend a divided nation. The Third Great Awakening offered multiple answers that ultimately brought new divisions.

Moody (1837–1899) was a product of the revivals in the 1850s. Converted in 1856, just before the "Businessmen's Revival," Moody became an advocate for Sunday schools and the YMCA. The height of his revivalism was 1873–1877, when successful revivals in England and in the American urban North won him fame as an effective evangelist. With the help of his songster, Ira D. Sankey (1840–1908),

Moody held the most successful revivals of the 1870s, challenging the influence of the national camp meetings. Moody and Sankey also perpetuated the urban setting of evangelical revivalism. Near the close of the nineteenth century, the cities were ablaze with revivals as evangelists sought to correct the moral corruption of industrial America. Moody's revivals are famous for promoting "old-fashioned religion with modern improvements," using modern mass media to promote himself and his revival message.

Another proponent of old-time religion who rose to celebrity status was Billy Sunday (1862–1935). Sunday began working for the YMCA in Chicago in the 1890s after a professional baseball career. In 1896 he held his first successful revival at Garner, Iowa. Throughout the first years of his ministry, Sunday preached to small and medium-sized towns in the Midwest. He employed musicians, much as Moody did. His first musician, Fred Fischer, learned contemporary arrangements for hymns and gospel songs from the style at Moody Bible Institute. By 1907 Sunday was a celebrity in the national press. In the 1910s he went on successful preaching tours to the major northern cities, with his ten-week revival in New York City in 1917 the zenith of his career and influence. After World War I ended in 1918, Sunday, much like religion in general, went into decline.

The legacy of Moody and Sunday was two-fold. On one hand they advocated a restoration of older forms of revival rooted in the evangelical tradition of the Second Great Awakening. Their theological simplicity and reliance on a literal interpretation of the Bible was integral to the burgeoning fundamentalist movement. Sunday would later criticize liberals for straying from the evangelical tradition. On the other hand, Moody and Sunday introduced modern adaptations to "old-time religion." Both made use of mass media in promotional ways. Moody used modern business practices to organize his revivals. Sunday updated revival by incorporating Progressive Era reforms as well as altering the gendered aspect of Protestant spirituality. He advocated a muscular, masculine form of religion against the feminized religion that had predominated during most of the nineteenth century. Despite their attempts to restore evangelicalism to its traditional message and potency, Moody and Sunday were part of the modernization impulse of the Third Great Awakening.

Another mix of restoration and modernization was the Social Gospel, which placed social reform at the core of the Christian message. Social Gospel proponents claimed to be revitalizing traditional Christianity in its original biblical

teachings on ethics. They also perpetuated the postmillennialism of nineteenth-century evangelicalism, claiming that reform would prepare society for Christ's return. Social Gospelers were also part of the Progressive Era. They made use of modern sociological and economic theories to explain social conditions.

In both the revivalism of Moody and Sunday and the Social Gospel, the Third Great Awakening was a reorientation toward a progressive restoration of the ideal society. Late in his career, Moody advocated more social reforms to aid Chicago's poor. Sunday advocated temperance to solve social ills. The driving ethos of the Third Great Awakening was to stabilize a society in flux. Division soon developed. Followers of the revivalist tradition of Moody and Sankey preferred biblical literalism and theological conservatism. They perceived modernization as dangerous—particularly higher criticism and liberal theology. The result was a rift between conservatives and liberals that historians call the fundamentalist–modernist controversy. Moderates who were in the middle of the theological spectrum soon fell into the liberal camp, dismayed by the intolerant rhetoric of conservatives. The Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925—which revolved around the teaching of Darwin's biological evolution—polarized the nation, separating conservatives from moderates and liberals. With this schism, the so-called Third Great Awakening and its propulsion toward a stabilized, cohesive society had come to an end.

The Fourth Great Awakening

The seeds of division caused social unrest, but some liberals remained optimistic. The stabilizing spirit of the Third Great Awakening was not dead. In the 1930s major church leaders devised efforts to bring Protestant denominations together in a great ecumenical movement. Economic depression in that decade gave way to the morass of war following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. Four years of warfare during World War II left Americans with a deep sense of anxiety. In the wake of victories over Germany and Japan, Americans regained their confidence and turned to religion as a way of regaining stability. After World War II a new awakening occurred that has involved conservative and liberal Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews. Whereas 49 percent of the American population claimed church affiliation in 1940, that number had risen to 62 percent by 1956, and in 1960 it rose to its highest point, at 69 percent. People attended church in greater numbers than they ever had in American history. A pervasive piety in American society led

to the inclusion of the phrase “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954 and the acceptance of “In God We Trust” as the national motto.

In the postwar years American revivalists rose to prominence once more. Oral Roberts (1918–2009), an evangelist and faith healer, saw a boost to his career during the 1940s and 1950s, thanks to his use of mass media. Billy Graham (1918–), who, like successful revivalists before him, utilized mass media, also ascended in popularity. Graham had a successful radio ministry based in Chicago and affiliated with the Moody Bible Institute. His 1949 revival in Los Angeles won him national acclaim. Over a period of more than sixty years, Graham led major revivals in the United States and abroad. Although his fame as an evangelist is well established, his greatest success may have come during the postwar awakening.

Protestant evangelicals were not the only ones to participate in the awakening of the late twentieth century. Roman Catholics participated in an awakening of parish renewal. After the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), reforms of the liturgy allowed for some Catholics to find new vigor in participating in the Mass. The late 1960s also saw the start of a charismatic, or Pentecostal, awakening in Catholicism. Two lay faculty members at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, committed themselves to prayer and recitation of the hymn from the Mass of Pentecost. The prayer group grew in the next year, and twenty people testified to experiencing glossolalia, or speaking in tongues. The charismatic renewal movement spread to the University of Notre Dame and the student parish at Michigan State University in 1967. By 1970 there were 203 charismatic prayer groups in the United States.

Jewish Americans also experienced a renewal after World War II. When the state of Israel was established in 1948, Zionist zeal breathed new life into some Jews. As Jews moved upward socially and outward from the cities, many increased participation in synagogue activity. The number of Conservative synagogues doubled between 1937 and 1956, and the number of member families rose from 75,000 to 200,000 in the same time period. Reform temples grew from 290 with 50,000 families in 1937 to 520 temples with 255,000 families in 1956. Relocation to the suburbs allowed Jews to redefine their Jewishness in terms of religious earnestness. Observance of Jewish holy days paralleled that of the Christian holidays. Postwar observance of Hanukkah increased as Jewish families celebrated their religion in the Christmas season. Jewish education rose in midcentury as

parents provided their children with instruction in their religion and heritage.

The Fourth Great Awakening has no clear ending, just as no great awakening does. President Dwight D. Eisenhower best expressed the ethos of this awakening when he stated that America’s best trait is its firm religious conviction, whatever that religion is. The interreligious quality of this awakening has given some hope for a religious multiculturalism in the present and near future.

Historical Debate

Historians disagree about much with respect to great awakenings. Some question whether these events have ever occurred. Jon Butler claims that there was no first Great Awakening because the religious revival was too limited by geography, religious tradition, and social groups. Others have suggested that the Second Great Awakening had similar limitations. Regional studies on the South and on the larger Atlantic context demonstrate that the first two great awakenings were far more widespread than localized religious revival and indeed effected broad social and cultural transformation. Recent studies by Frank Lambert and Kathryn Long have shown how people participating in religious revival interpreted and conveyed a sense of awakening. The Third and Fourth Great Awakenings are highly questionable for some historians who do not see a general religious awakening during those times.

Nor can historians agree on how to delimit time periods to identify a great awakening. The dates 1739–1742 for the first Great Awakening are tied to the success of George Whitefield but neglect earlier revivals in the 1720s–1730s under the likes of Frelinghuysen, Tennent, and Edwards, and later revivals in the South in the 1740s–1770s. The Second Great Awakening is equally problematic. Revival fervor persisted in the South and moved across the Appalachian Mountains, and New Divinity clergy in the North promoted revival as a means of gaining converts. But historians claim the 1790s as the start of that awakening. The end of the Second Great Awakening is vague because revivalism became an American institution after the influence of Finney.

Perhaps the most important debate involves the substance of an awakening. The nomenclature of “Great Awakening” is contested. The phrase did not appear until 1842, when Joseph Tracy, a Congregational minister in New England, published *The Great Awakening*. Tracy’s history explains evangelical revivalism as a great awakening. Some historians

maintain that revivalism is the substance of an awakening, and they look at church records on conversions and admissions as evidence of an increase in religiosity. Others say that great awakenings are deeper social and cultural transformations. The historian William McLoughlin proposed that great awakenings are revitalization movements. Inspired by anthropologist Andrew Wallace's thesis on revitalization movements, McLoughlin argued that great awakenings provided social cohesion in times of anxiety by promoting an idealized traditional religion. Donald Matthews advanced a similar idea with respect to the Second Great Awakening. McLoughlin claimed that five distinct awakenings occurred in American history and argued that each provided Americans with a sense of social reorientation and cohesion.

Conclusion

The irony of great awakenings is that they develop out of social fragmentation and anxiety in order to promote stability and cohesion, only to produce new sets of factionalism. New England clergy debated the viability of revivalism during the first Great Awakening. The Second Great Awakening, with its ideals of Manifest Destiny, caused regional competition that eventually erupted into the Civil War. The Third Great Awakening polarized theological conservatives and liberals, causing restructurings during the Fourth Great Awakening that maintained that division. Theologians and politicians have predicted a coming great awakening in the global age when media connect people at greater speed and with greater ease. Whether this awakening will be an event for a particular religious tradition or an egalitarian interfaith renewal is yet to be seen, if such an awakening will occur at all.

See also *Baptists* entries; *Camp Meetings*; *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements*; *Deism*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Fundamentalism*; *Historical Approaches*; *Judaism: Reform*; *Methodists* entries; *Native American Religions: Post-Contact*; *Pentecostals* entries; *Pietism*; *Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*; *Revivalism* entries; *Social Gospel*.

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Great Lakes Region

The five Great Lakes states—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin—have their origins in the western lands ceded by Great Britain to the United States at the conclusion of the Revolutionary War. Anticipating rapid, large-scale migration into what became known as the Northwest Territories (and later, the Old Northwest), the U.S. Congress enacted a series of ordinances to control settlement. These included the Ordinance of 1785, which called for the surveying of the entire territory into a grid of rectangular townships, followed by the Ordinance of 1787, which put into place a system of governmental stages by which the territory would be divided and new states created. Significantly, appended to the Ordinance of 1787 was a set of articles that functioned as an early bill of rights—four years before an equivalent set of rights were added to the federal Constitution. Two of the Northwest Ordinance's articles bore directly on the subsequent religious history of the region. Article I guaranteed religious freedom ("No person demeaning himself in a peaceable and orderly manner shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or religious sentiments in said territory"), and Article III enjoined (in addition to fair treatment of Native Americans) the promotion of religion through education ("Religion, Morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, Schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged"). It is not exactly

clear what the framers' intent was in terms of the relation of religion and education in Article III. Scholars and other interested parties still debate the meaning of this seeming endorsement of state sponsorship of religion. The mandate of Article I, however, was clear, making the Great Lakes states a unique early testing ground for U.S. values of pluralism and voluntarism.

Anglo-American Protestants in the Old Northwest

Settlers began to pour into the fertile lands of the Old Northwest once Indian resistance had been broken after the War of 1812. Drawn predominantly from three of the four culture hearths of the Atlantic seaboard—the Upland South, the Midland, and the Yankee Northeast—migrants from each quickly established churches of all the major denominations: Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Episcopal, Quaker, and Campbellite (Disciples of Christ). The three migration streams, though, did not spread evenly over the land. As a result, clearly identifiable ethnic subregions emerged in the Old Northwest, indicated partly by the preponderance of specific denominations in each subregion. Upland southerners were the first to arrive, settling the southern portions of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; here Baptists were represented in numbers greater than in the rest of the region. Proceeding directly west from Pennsylvania, a broad Midland band, partially mixed with the southern, established itself in the midsections of these states. Scots-Irish Presbyterians predominated here. Latest were the Yankees who mostly stayed north, colonizing the Western Reserve of Ohio, parts of northern Indiana, and much of northern Illinois, southern Michigan, and southern Wisconsin. The presence of Congregationalism testified to the Yankee influence in the northern parts of the Old Northwest. To this day, clear cultural differences are perceptible as one travels north to south in the region, and the denominational markers remain.

Despite ethnic and denominational rivalries, there were several unifying factors among the Anglo-American Protestants in the Old Northwest. The most prominent was the pervasiveness of a specific religious style: Wesleyan evangelicalism. The republican principle of religious freedom encouraged a fierce competition for church members on the frontier, and those denominations best able to satisfy the reigning needs of the majority were destined to dominate in this religious “free market.” In the Old Northwest, as in the most of the Midwest, the Methodists outperformed them all, chiefly through the heroic efforts of such circuit

riders as Illinois' Peter Cartwright and Michigan's Elijah Pilcher. Methodism quickly became the largest and the most influential Protestant denomination in the region. Wesleyan evangelicalism, with its emphasis on Arminianism, perfectionism, and revivalism, spread far beyond the Methodists: Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists all adopted Wesleyan elements to varying degrees, as did—perhaps most unexpectedly—the Quakers. Starting in the 1830s, the Indiana Yearly Meeting of Friends came under the influence of the evangelical Quaker Joseph John Gurney and later Methodist revivalists; from then on, the so-called Quaker Trace of eastern Indiana became the dominant seat of evangelical or “Guerneyite” Quakerism in the United States. Given its influence, it is no wonder the region still exhibits an “enduring Methodist tinge” (Noll in Barlow and Silk, 2004).

The early evangelical culture of the Old Northwest was also notable for its urgent concern for social reform. Outstanding in this regard was the Reverend Lyman Beecher, a Connecticut Congregationalist who moved to Cincinnati in 1832 to assume the presidency of Lane Theological Seminary. (The Plan of Union of 1801 permitted Congregationalist-Presbyterian cooperation in this region.) Beecher argued in *A Plea for the West* (1835) that the destiny of the United States lay in the Mississippi Valley, and that without strong moral guidance the region risked developing into a corrupt society lost to debauchery, vice, or worse—Roman Catholicism. Beecher was tireless in establishing voluntary societies for the promotion of temperance, Sabbatarianism, Sunday Schools, and a whole host of humanitarian reforms. Beecher also preached a strong antislavery message from his pulpit, and his daughter Harriet conceived the idea for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) in Cincinnati. Another Presbyterian clergyman of reformist sentiments was the Yankee-Yorker Charles Grandison Finney. First as a faculty member and then as president, Finney transformed Ohio's Oberlin College into a preeminent center of perfectionist-inspired social reform, including radical abolitionism. Of all the social reform issues, antislavery dominated the Northwest (or what is now the Midwest) and not simply among Yankees. The Northwest Ordinance permanently barred the holding of slaves, so the region was a magnet for antislavery southerners who sought free soil in the West. For example, the North Carolina Quaker Levi Coffin worked tirelessly to protect runaway slaves and free blacks in Indiana and Ohio, and was known nationally as the “President of the Underground Railroad.” And it was the Virginia-born Methodist James B. Finley, long-time Ohio

circuit rider, whose agitation against slave-owning bishops led directly to the denomination's North-South split.

Finally, education formed an abiding concern among many of the migrants to the Old Northwest, with evangelical Anglo-Protestant clergy in the vanguard. This was the heyday of the founding of the region's denominational colleges, a surprisingly high proportion of which continue in operation (for Ohio alone, one can cite Congregationalist Marietta [1797], Presbyterian Miami [1809], Episcopalian Kenyon [1824], Baptist Denison [1831], Methodist Ohio Wesleyan [1841], and Disciples of Christ Hiram [1850]—not to mention those founded by German evangelicals). Despite their denominational identities, many of these colleges tended to encourage the admission of students and the hiring of faculty regardless of affiliation, again contributing to the region's undercurrent of nonsectarian evangelicalism. As for elementary and secondary education, denominationally sponsored academies for both sexes were plentiful, and many a minister supplemented his income by running a subscription school on the side. Moreover, evangelicals supported the creation of public school systems, perhaps because they interpreted Article III of the Northwest Ordinance as requiring religious instruction and thus saw public schools as an opportunity to bring evangelical Christianity to a larger audience. Readings from the King James Bible and hymn singing were commonplace, as was the use of the highly moralizing Eclectic Readers compiled by William Holmes McGuffey, a Presbyterian minister and professor at Ohio's Miami University. Such educational practices lasted for decades in the Old Northwest. Only in 1872 did the Ohio Supreme Court strike down reading from the King James Bible in the public schools in response to a suit brought by an unlikely alliance of Catholics, Jews, and free-thinkers from Cincinnati.

Germans in the Old Northwest

Concomitant with Anglo-American migration into the Old Northwest came large numbers of northern European immigrants, greatly complicating the religious scene. Some of this immigration was heavily localized, resulting in, for example, concentrations of Swedish and Norwegian Lutherans in northern Illinois and Wisconsin, and a pocket of Dutch Reformed in southwest Michigan. Germans, however, made up the largest, most pervasive immigrant stream during this period. By 1850, for example, 57 percent of the foreign-born in Milwaukee, the majority of the town's population, were from Germany. Cultural geographers still refer to the area

bounded by Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Milwaukee as the "German Triangle." Despite their numbers and common language, German influence was mitigated by their division into Catholics and Protestants, by the numerous sectarian separations within German Protestantism, and by intramural conflicts over modernization and Americanization that became acute with their movement west. The reasons for the intensification of these conflicts at this time and place are complex: Partly they stemmed from clashes of fresh immigrants from the Old Country with second and third generation Germans, whose ancestors had come to the American colonies the previous century; the conflicts also resulted from the extremes of cultural conservatism and liberalism that frontier life seemed to engender.

Whatever the reasons, within the full spectrum of German Protestantism—Lutherans, Reformed, Anabaptists, and Pietists—none managed to avoid schisms over the issues of modernization and Americanization in the Old Northwest. German Lutherans divided into bodies that were either relatively liberal (the Ohio Synod [1818], for example) or deeply conservative (the Wisconsin Synod [1850]), and the Mennonites, who are now found in force in northeast Ohio and northern Indiana, divided and subdivided, such that today there are at least sixteen separate Mennonite groups. Even the Amish, for whom antimodernism is a way of life, did not escape division as they gathered in the Old Northwest. Less complicated, but just as enduring, were the splits within the Pennsylvania-born Church of the Brethren that resulted in progressives (the Brethren Church) headquartered in Indiana, conservatives (Old Order Dunkers) in Ohio, and moderates (Church of the Brethren) in Illinois. German Protestants were capable of uniting in the face of external threats such as the rise of nativism in the 1850s and 1880s, but in general, like their Anglo-American cousins, German Protestants took full advantage of the region's freedoms to work out the various permutations of their faith.

About half of all German immigrants to the Great Lakes states at this time were Catholics. According to Jay P. Dolan, "It is the German presence that sets Midwest Catholicism apart" (Dolan in Barlow and Silk 2004, 111). In recognition of the large German population, John Martin Henni was appointed bishop of Milwaukee in 1844. Henni, like many of his compatriots, was convinced that the loss of German language in the United States would lead to an erosion of German culture and, ultimately, to a rejection of the Catholic faith. Among other actions, Bishop Henni appointed only German-speaking priests to his German parishes and

insisted that school instruction in these parishes be in the German language. This greatly concerned many Irish in the hierarchy who feared that this would lead to a rejection of the church by the predominantly Protestant United States. Bishop John Ireland, perhaps one of the most extreme “Americanists,” demanded that English should be the sole language of the American church, and he even went so far as to say that Catholics should send their children to public schools to ensure a degree of assimilation. The conflict between German and Irish Catholics smoldered for decades until finally, in 1899, the Vatican condemned the extreme “Americanizing” position seemingly held by some Catholic liberals such as Ireland. Although the intent of this condemnation was more to preserve the integrity of the American church and not ethnicity *per se*, the impact of the regional conflict between Germans and Irish was to ensure the survival and expansion of language parishes throughout the United States well into the twentieth century.

The German migration to the Great Lakes states brought with it a small but vibrant population of Jews. By 1850, noticeable Jewish populations could be found in Cincinnati, Cleveland, and St. Louis; in the following decades Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, and Columbus also emerged as important centers of Jewish life. Before the Civil War, Jewish immigrants came unaccompanied by rabbis or other religious specialists, and thus were thrown to their own devices to preserve their faith. In the predominantly Protestant environment, changes to synagogue practice were made, such as English services, sermons, choir singing, and family seating. Such Americanizing accommodations facilitated the rise of Reform Judaism in the region. Reform Judaism, which had begun in Germany in the 18th century, championed the notion that Judaism was adaptable to the times, and to this end, its leaders suggested major changes in ritual and Jewish law (*halakah*), as well as outright rejection of such things as messianism, dietary restrictions, and the inviolability of the Sabbath. In 1853, Isaac Mayer Wise, who became the great leader of Reform Judaism in the United States, became the rabbi of Congregation Bene Yeshurun in Cincinnati. He immediately led the congregation away from traditional practices, and in 1857, published the book of Reform service, the *Minhag America* (*American Ritual*) to codify these radical changes. Of even more lasting importance perhaps were the series of national Reform organizations spearheaded by Wise. At a conference of Reform congregations held in Cincinnati in 1873, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations was formed. At

its first meeting in Cleveland the following year, the union voted unanimously to establish the Hebrew Union College, which opened in Cincinnati in 1875 with Rabbi Wise as its president. Finally, Wise was also instrumental in the creation of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) in Detroit in 1889. Although based in the Great Lakes states, each of these organizations helped strengthen the cause of Reform throughout the country.

Urban Protestantism in the Industrial Heartland

With the concurrence of abundant natural resources, available capital, growing transportation links by water and rail, and the catalytic action of the Civil War, the Great Lakes states entered a period of massive industrialization beginning in the 1860s. By the beginning of the twentieth century—and with the rise of the automobile industry—the Great Lakes states were the heart of the nation’s industrial economy. Industrialization necessarily led to greater urbanization, and across the region, previously insignificant towns burgeoned into ungainly metropolises. Chicago, ranked eighth among U.S. cities in 1860, was number two in 1890 when its population reached more than a million. Many cities in the region also saw explosive growth during this period, either through new foreign immigration or in-migration. Such immigration shifted the ethnic balance of the region yet again: Although Germans and Irish remained the largest foreign-born groups in most cities, they were now joined by large numbers of Scandinavians, Slavs, and Italians. And once foreign immigration was effectively stopped after World War I, the region’s industries attracted new mass migrations, this time of blacks and whites from the South.

Anglo-American Protestants, despite stereotypes associating them with rural and small town environments, adapted quite well to the growing urbanism of the Great Lakes states. As one historian put it, Protestants during this period were very much “at home in the city” (Lewis 1992). Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, and Baptists all typically maintained large congregations and expensive physical plants downtown as symbols of their civic influence. Beyond simply status, many Anglo-American Protestants also saw city ministries as a golden opportunity for mass evangelism. Dwight L. Moody, a Congregationalist layman who settled in Chicago in 1856, saw most clearly the possibilities for urban missions. First working to evangelize the city’s poor and then as president of the Chicago Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), Moody discovered his gifts as a popular revivalist

and cultivated a powerful non-denominational message. After an extended revival tour through the great cities of Britain, during which he and his music director, Ira Sankey, perfected the use of popular hymnody, Moody returned to the United States to conduct a series of extremely successful urban revivals in major U.S. cities. His model of urban revivals was widely copied with varying degrees of success, setting off an extended period of revivalism that was particularly strong in the cities and towns of the Midwest. Later generations of urban evangelists such as Billy Sunday and Billy Graham owed a debt to Moody's pioneering work. Widely acknowledged as the most effective revivalist of the Gilded Age, Moody capped his work in 1886 with the founding of a practical training school for urban evangelists, the Chicago (later Moody) Bible Institute.

Although they saw opportunities in the city, Anglo-American Protestants were not blind to the immense social problems created by urbanization, especially civic corruption and the plight of the working classes. Many a pastor of a downtown church worked tirelessly, if quietly, "to clean up the city" and rid city government of graft and tolerance of vice. Many advocated the creation of the so-called institutional church, which offered recreational and educational opportunities that, it was hoped, would make it more attractive than the saloon or pool hall. Moreover, this was the era of the urban rescue mission, such as Chicago's Pacific Garden Mission, that, in addition to religious services, offered food, temporary lodging, and employment help. Several Protestant church members, however, influenced by various currents of modernist theology, political progressivism, and academic sociology, felt that more needed to be done than saving souls—that society itself must be redeemed by reforming its economic structure. This line of thinking became known as the Social Gospel and flourished in a loosely articulated movement from about 1870 to the 1920s. The rapidly urbanizing industrial heartland produced several key leaders of the movement, including the Congregationalist clergyman Washington Gladden. From his pulpit in Columbus, Ohio, Gladden preached a powerful critique of laissez-faire capitalism, which he expanded into books with titles such as *Working People and Their Employers* (1876), *Applied Christianity* (1887), and *Social Salvation* (1902). In a few instances, Social Gospel ideas penetrated to the level of practical politics and informed policy, as in the case of Samuel M. ("Golden Rule") Jones, elected mayor of Toledo in 1897. Living up to his nickname, Jones based his public policy on a Christian-inspired egalitarianism, once

saying that he "consider[ed] the rights of the weakest child in the city as being equally important with those of the greatest and wisest man" (Teaford 1993, 115).

Urban Catholicism in the Industrial Heartland

After the Civil War, the Catholic Church in the Great Lakes states was largely an urban church, with most new foreign immigrants attracted to the industrial jobs in the cities. In light of this, Roman Catholics, too, addressed themselves to the larger social problems engendered by urbanization and industrialization. At first still outsiders, most Catholic clergy shied away from overt criticism of the economic system of the United States and devoted themselves mainly to charity work. The Catholic hierarchy maintained cool attitudes toward labor, and they were especially suspicious of labor organizations because at this time they functioned much like secret societies. Nevertheless, in 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which, while condemning socialism, recognized the rights of labor to fight for social justice. The bishop of Peoria, John Lancaster Spalding, interpreted this to mean that now the church should focus on the saving of society as well as souls. An entire generation of Catholic clergy were similarly inspired and became actively involved in issues of labor and in the creation of a specifically Catholic Social Gospel. Accordingly, in 1893, the Columbian Catholic Congress met in Chicago to discuss the rights of labor, and in subsequent years, Catholic bishops including Spalding were instrumental in the successful mediation of protracted strikes. Well into the twentieth century, the region's Catholic Church would be noted for being the most reform minded in the nation, with the archdiocese of Chicago leading the way by generating several effective organizations dedicated to labor issues and social justice generally.

In addition to the problems of urbanization and industrialization, the church also faced a massive influx of Catholics from Eastern Europe (primarily Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks) and Southern Europe (primarily Italians). Of these "new" immigrants, the Slavs—especially the majority Poles—were the most visible and voluble; indeed, the Polish Catholic presence in Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, and Milwaukee long set these cities apart from the still strongly Teutonic Catholicism of Cincinnati and St. Louis. Chicago's first Polish parish, St. Stanislaus Kostka, was erected in 1867, and by 1899 it was reputed to be the largest in the world, counting some 50,000 parishioners. By 1910 some 400,000 Poles made Chicago their home, whereas Milwaukee and Detroit

played host to 100,000 each. This stunning growth was not without its challenges. In a time when most of the hierarchy was de-emphasizing ethnic separatism within the American church, Polish Catholics were even more fiercely committed to national parishes than were the Germans before them. Confronted with the threat of schism over this issue, the hierarchy eventually appointed Polish bishops, and the Polish language continued to be taught in some parochial schools until the 1970s. Polish Catholicism remains a distinctive presence in the cities of the Great Lakes, especially in places such as Chicago that received renewed Polish immigration in the last decades of the twentieth century.

The Great Migrations

Beginning with the industrialization of the upper Midwest in the late nineteenth century, large numbers of southerners, both black and white, were attracted to the relatively high paying jobs industry offered, thus setting off the greatest internal migration the nation has yet known. Southern migrants came in three waves: the period from the beginning of the twentieth century to the outbreak of World War I; the period after World War I, which saw severe restrictions of foreign immigration accelerating southern migration; and the period starting with World War II and the boom in defense work, which lasted until the late 1970s. By this time, the Great Lakes and Plains states hosted some 1,485,658 southern blacks and 3,167,995 southern whites. Both “great migrations,” black and white, profoundly affected religion in the Great Lakes states.

Once in the northern cities, African Americans had a range of choices to fulfill their religious needs. Many joined white denominations, which created segregated congregations to accommodate them. For example, after 1900, new all-black congregations of Catholics, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Northern Baptists arose in Detroit. Others joined the all-black denominations (Baptist, African Methodist Episcopal [AME], or AME Zion), swelling these churches’ membership rolls and often leading to the creation of several new satellite congregations. In Chicago, the prestigious Olivet Baptist Church grew from 4,000 in 1915 to almost 9,000 five years later, becoming the largest Protestant congregation in the United States. In turn, it spun off five new congregations by 1919, and many of these became prominent churches in their own right. Although many older members of these established black churches feared the social effects of absorbing so many rural migrants, most sought to ease their transition. Chicago’s Olivet Baptist

Church began a relief program for unemployed blacks in 1908, and Bethel AME of Detroit created separate social services, housing, and labor departments to reach out to the new migrants. Perhaps the most ambitious of such efforts was that spearheaded by the Reverend Reverdy C. Ransom, whose Institutional Church and Social Settlement of Chicago, founded in 1900, applied the methods of the Social Gospel to the problems of the black urban poor. Despite attempts at outreach, not all migrants found the established churches welcoming: Many were too large and too impersonal, were too concerned with social issues and less with salvation, had worship that was too formal, and provided few opportunities to participate in the leadership. Many migrants therefore opted for the small house or “storefront” churches, mainly of the sanctified (Holiness and Pentecostal) variety. Others abandoned Christianity altogether, joining new sects such as the Nation of Islam, which had its roots in 1930s Detroit.

As with southern blacks, southern white migrants were also highly religious and tended to regard as important locating an amenable congregation near their new homes. Since there were no racial barriers, many joined existing white congregations, although northern religious styles tended to be unfamiliar and at times intimidating. Northern white churches, it must be said, did much less than their black counterparts to attract southern migrants. White southern migrants in this situation did what their black counterparts did: They built their own churches—churches often with a marked southern fundamentalist flavor. Although some were Holiness and Pentecostal churches (Rex Humbard, for example, established the seat of his televangelist empire near Akron, Ohio, in 1958), most were Baptist. The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) had agreed with the Northern Baptist Convention not to found churches in the North (the 1894 Fortress Monroe agreement), so the new Baptist churches founded by southerners were either independent or members of small, ultra-conservative Baptist associations. After World War II, however, the SBC changed its policy, citing the fact that many of the Baptists in the North were un-churched southerners. A veritable explosion of SBC church building outside the South ensued. In the Midwest, in addition to the Illinois association founded in 1907, Southern Baptist state associations were founded in Ohio (1954), Michigan (1957), and Indiana (1958). In the 1970s, Southern Baptist growth in the region slowed, as southerners began to migrate to the Sun Belt, either to retire or because the industrial jobs on which

they depended were, ironically enough, shipped to the less expensive South.

Rust-Belt Religion

After World War II, there were massive changes in the economy and social geography in Great Lakes states. Beginning well before the war, but accelerating greatly after, the central cities of the region began to lose their upper- and middle-class populations to the ever-expanding suburbs. The percentage of owner-occupied houses (a good indication of suburbanization) increased exponentially, and by 1950 the nation's top twelve metropolitan areas in terms of this percentage were found in Michigan (the highest), Indiana, and Ohio. Following this largely white exodus to the suburbs were retailers and other downtown employers, leaving the now largely black inner cities to decay as "reservations for the impoverished" (Teaford 1993, 211). The simultaneous decline of heavy industry and manufacturing throughout the Great Lakes states exacerbated the situation, turning the region into what journalists by the late 1960s were derisively calling the "Rust Belt." Moreover, except for the Chicago metropolitan area, the large-scale foreign immigration and domestic in-migration that had so characterized the region throughout most of its history had ceased by the 1970s and 1980s. To a large extent, each of these changes is reflected in the postwar religious history of the Great Lakes states, presenting several interesting case studies of the behavior of religious people and institutions in times of wrenching socioeconomic change.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, new suburban developments in places such as Livonia east of Detroit and Parma south of Cleveland attracted many young middle-class couples that, after wartime delays, were looking to own their own homes and start families. Like their pioneer forebears, these people accepted the lack of established community and cultural institutions of new suburban developments as a necessary sacrifice for cheap homesteads. But, also like their forebears, these pioneer suburbanites just as quickly set about creating these community institutions, especially the schools and churches so necessary for the socialization of their children. A large part of the celebrated religious revival of the 1950s was actually the result of the success of mainline denominations in catering to this demographic through massive church and synagogue-building campaigns and financial support to newly organized suburban congregations. Ecclesiastical architects soon discovered that the same prefab construction techniques that made suburban

developments so profitable could also be applied to make church construction cheap and cost effective (hence the proliferation of cinderblock sanctuaries and "abstract" stained glass windows). What these churches lacked in elegance and solidity, they made up for in sheer numbers, and their modernist architecture became a proud symbol of the new suburban lifestyle. In addition, the young clergy who staffed these new churches tended to be sociologically trained, organizationally minded, and more liberal than their elders, lending a certain progressive tone to suburban religion.

Not all were happy with the success of suburban churches. Beginning in the mid 1950s and continuing into the 1960s, a series of sophisticated jeremiads appeared decrying the shallowness of much suburban religion. One the more famous of these came from the pen of Gibson Winter, an Episcopal priest based at the Parishfield Community Center outside of Detroit. In his widely cited article, and later book, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches* (1961), Winter contended that suburban religion was a bland, conformist faith that was ultimately doomed to extinction. Although much of the bitterness of such critiques probably reflected the clergy's frustration that suburbanites did not take the opportunity of new beginnings to totally dedicate their lives to religion, the charge of shallowness was undoubtedly correct. As the newness of the suburban churches wore off and their modernist architecture became dated and dowdy, memberships began to drop, especially as the Great Lakes states' economies began to sag. Many first-generation postwar suburbanites retired to the Sunbelt, while their baby boomer children gradually replaced churchgoing with a variety of leisure activities.

When later generations of suburbanites did return to church—mainly in search of a community in which to socialize their children—they increasingly eschewed the neighborhood church and sought out large megachurches, such as the now-famous Willow Creek Community Church outside of Chicago. One observer has argued that the popularity of such megachurches in the Midwest reflects the region's lingering "Methodist tinge" and the legacy of camp meetings (Noll in Barlow and Silk 2004). This may be true, but probably more important is that megachurches are far more shaped by suburban values than Winter would have ever believed possible. Most megachurches are denominationally independent and led by charismatic preachers who theatrically purvey a highly simplified, homogenized, and sentimental evangelical spirituality, thus appealing to a suburban clientele little interested in theological issues but

intensely interested in success, celebrity, and spectacle. Moreover, suburbanites value convenience, and megachurches function like shopping malls by offering several services under one roof—from worship services to softball teams to Starbucks (unlike the Social Gospel–inspired “institutional” churches of the inner city, megachurches are wholly consumer-driven phenomena). Finally, the massive congregations of megachurches help preserve the anonymity with which most suburbanites are comfortable, thereby allowing them maximum flexibility in the depth of their commitment. Anonymity makes megachurches a little less restricted than neighborhood churches in class (members commute to these churches and are rarely next-door neighbors), but even more susceptible to rapid membership turnover. Despite this, megachurches have become increasingly common in suburban communities, and as suburban values have become U.S. values over time, the church has found its way into the rural countryside and the city.

Throughout the Great Lakes states, from Cleveland to Detroit to Milwaukee, postwar suburbanization coupled with the loss of heavy industry contributed to the precipitous decline of most of the region’s central cities. The result has been the death of many of the white middle- and upper-class mainline congregations once proudly located downtown. Many of the grand architectural monuments built by these congregations during a city’s heyday have either been demolished or sold, primarily to black congregations. Indeed, what religious vibrancy there is in the region’s central cities is now found almost exclusively in African American churches. Long barred from the suburbs, the black middle class has continued to support downtown churches so that many older congregations such as New Bethel Baptist of Detroit and Cleveland’s St. John’s AME still thrive despite urban decay and growing poverty. And, as inner-city politics have increasingly become controlled by African Americans, the pastors of “establishment” black churches have come to play a prominent political role equal to that played by ministers of the white downtown churches before World War II.

Of all the cities in the Great Lakes region, only one has managed to overcome the malaise of industrial decline and white flight: Chicago is the only city in the region to emerge as a global city—that is, a hub in the global service economy. As such, the city attracts both the very wealthy and a huge population of service workers, mainly newly arrived immigrants from around the world. What this means for religion is the strong presence of vibrant and increasingly diverse Christian churches spread fairly evenly throughout the

metropolitan area, including its core. Unlike most of the old industrial towns of the Great Lakes region, Chicago’s old downtown churches such as Fourth United Methodist Chicago Temple, Old St. Patrick Catholic Church, and Fourth Presbyterian continue to serve active and growing congregations, mainly by reaching out and welcoming more and more heterogeneous populations—a strategy adopted by many of Chicago’s more successful churches. This increasing openness to cultural diversity (a necessity in a global city) has also encouraged the survival and modest growth of Chicago’s Jewish community, and it has paved the way for the appearance of relatively large and self-sustaining congregations of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists, thus making Chicago the most religiously diverse city in the Midwest.

Many factors went into the evolution of the religious life of the Great Lakes states, factors ranging from a foundational commitment to religious freedom and pluralism, to a changing constellation of ethnic and racial diversity, to the relatively peaceful coexistence of Protestant and Catholic cultures for more than a century and a half. And yet, if one were to point to one overarching force that has shaped the region’s religious history, one would have to point to the impact of large-scale economic shifts on the region, especially their impact on the changing loci of religious vitality within the region. In the frontier period, a vibrant and creative religious life spread almost evenly across the landscape, only to be concentrated in the major cities upon industrialization and the suburbs upon de-industrialization. Such economic shifts and such relocations of religious vitality have occurred in other regions, but the rapidity and thoroughness of the process at each stage is perhaps unique to the Great Lakes states. Moreover, unlike any other U.S. region, with the advent of globalization, the religious vitality of the Great Lakes states has become concentrated in Chicago, a single massive metropolis whose cultural domination over the region is destined to grow even stronger with time. What impact this centralization of religious energy and creativity in a single global city will have on the subsequent religious development of the region will be the key question for observers of religion in the Great Lakes states in the decades to come.

See also *Appalachian Mountain Religion; Atlantic World; California and the Pacific Rim Region; Frontier and Borderlands; Geographical Approaches; Great Plains Region; Mountain West and Prairie Region; New England Region; Pacific Northwest Region; South as Region; Southwest as Region; Suburbanization.*

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Great Plains Region

To understand the religions of a region, it is helpful to examine its environmental characteristics and its history of human occupation because interpretations and forms of worship often reflect the environment with which believers cope. Although characteristics of the natural environment are intricately incorporated into most ancient religions, this relationship may be less obvious in religions with creeds and sets of beliefs enunciated by historic figures. The focus here is on how the religious history of the Great Plains distinguishes it from other parts of America.

Defining the Great Plains Region

Comments about the distinctiveness of the Great Plains are dependent on its definitional boundaries, which involve regionalization: the division of the earth's surface into areas that simplify the tremendous variations in one or more phenomena. Regions are defined in the same way as classes, namely, in a manner that minimizes the variations within each one and maximizes the differences among them.

The task of regionalization is often complicated because some boundaries realistically are transitional zones, where the characteristics of one area shade gradually into an adjoining one. In the case of the Great Plains, for example,

the eastern edge merges almost imperceptibly into what is considered the Midwest.

According to common understanding, the Great Plains is regarded as distinct on the basis of two factors: location and climate. The location refers to its position in the interior of the United States. In contrast to most other regions, no part of the Great Plains has a coastal border. This interior position affects at least two major factors.

One factor is the region's general dryness. Being a long ways from the maritime sources of moisture, much of the Great Plains receives limited precipitation and is defined as semiarid. This climatic condition, in turn, has affected the population density of the region. Although much of the land was filled by Euro-American farmers living in small towns in the latter part of the nineteenth century, within half a century depopulation began. Farmers realized that under a system of commercial agriculture, the number of crops that could be grown profitably in a dry climate was limited. Even though irrigation could compensate for the lack of moisture, it required a large investment, which led to consolidation of farm ownership. This trend continued as most rural counties in the Great Plains lost population when farm families, along with the persons providing small town services, left and moved to urban areas.

Combined with the physical limitations of a dry climate is the isolation of the region from major markets. The distance to markets, both domestic metropolises and port cities with foreign connections, greatly limits the economic viability of the region. This isolation is exacerbated because even regional markets tend to be located on the periphery of the Great Plains. This factor of inaccessibility tends to complicate efforts to overcome the limitations of climate. The net effect is a region that has experienced, and continues to experience, rural depopulation, along with attitudes and perspectives associated with declining communities.

The low population density, especially in nonmetropolitan areas, affects the cultural milieu in innumerable ways. It is related to the frequency with which individuals interact, the diversity in personal interactions, the availability of social and commercial services, the kind and size of public events, the time spent in traveling to work and school, and the laws enacted for low-density situations. Apprehension about population decline permeates the cultural climate and religious perspective of the region.

The factor of location has contributed also to the history of the Great Plains, with settlement by Euro-Americans occurring later than in most other parts of the country.

During the earliest years of intrusion into Native Americans' land, the expansion was justified in terms of Manifest Destiny. The land was primarily traversed from the settled East to the new lands of the West. Later, following the Civil War, settlement of the land occurred rapidly over the next few decades. This region, therefore, is distinctive because it lacks both the long history and the prospects for economic growth that are more common elsewhere in America.

These criteria of dryness and isolation apply equally to parts of Canada, but here the focus is on the United States, which means the northern extent of the Great Plains is defined by the international boundary. On the west, the region is delineated by mountains and the resultant climatic divide. The southern boundary, which is partly defined by the international border with Mexico, corresponds to the Bolcones Escarpment, which excludes the area identified as the Texas Gulf Coast.

The delineation of the eastern edge of the Great Plains, however, differs greatly because of variations in the criteria utilized. In an attempt to discover a consensus, Rossum and Lavin examined fifty published versions of the regional boundaries. They discovered all the versions of the eastern boundary generally lie along two paths. The more restrictive path approximates the 98th meridian, which means the eastern portion of the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas are not regarded as part of the Great Plains. The other path places the eastern boundary at the Mississippi River but excludes Louisiana and often Arkansas and Missouri. For the *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains*, the editor compromised these two sets of lines by utilizing the state boundaries of the Dakotas, Nebraska, and Kansas for the eastern boundary. According to this definition, the region encompasses approximately six hundred counties in ten states. This is the definition generally accepted here, but it is expanded to include the transitional states of Minnesota and Iowa.

Further refinement in the description of this region is achieved by noting internal differences. A major locational factor that must be acknowledged when generalizing about the Great Plains is the contrast between rural and urban areas. This differentiation is important in part because the population is declining in most of the region, while it is increasing in the urban areas. Since most of the major cities situated within the boundaries defined for this region are on its periphery, one could logically argue that they are not truly a part of "the Great Plains."

Another factor contributing to internal variations within the Great Plains is implied by the fact that some geographers

consider the 98th meridian as differentiating the physical landscape between west and east. Differences are reflected also by the socioeconomic association with livestock ranchers in the west and crop farmers in the east.

In spite of these internal differences, the question arises: Can a region be defined in such a way as to be applicable in understanding religious variations? Are there characteristics of religion that are distinctive in this part of the United States?

Distinctive Characteristics of Religion

Differentiating religious behavior in the Great Plains from other regions of the United States can be approached by examining the areal distribution of various components of religion. Even though studying maps of religious characteristics provides an effective way of detecting regional differences, this technique possesses limitations.

One problem concerns what constitutes a particular religious group (which here is called a *denomination*, irrespective of its spiritual perspective and organizational characteristics). The task is straightforward for many denominations because they exist as established religious bodies; consequently data on their memberships have been collected and can facilitate discerning patterns. However, for several groups, especially those following a New Age belief or a recent variant of an Asian religion, questions about their religiousness and "membership" complicate the collection of data. Furthermore, even for the more mainstream denominations, comparisons among them are complicated by different definitions of what constitutes membership.

Closely related to this problem is the task of grouping the multitude of denominations into meaningful categories, which is necessary for forming generalizations. Here broad terms for the four leading denominations of Lutheran, Catholic, Baptist, and Methodist are examined, but with the recognition that within each of these major groupings are smaller denominations (except for the Catholics). Although the subgroups within each general denomination may retain similar names and/or institutional structures, their beliefs and practices often vary considerably.

Another problem encountered when analyzing spatial data concerns the size of the areal unit from which statistics are collected. The generalizations stated here arise primarily from analyzing religious data for counties, which constitutes a good compromise between data for entire states and individual towns or census districts. Of course this decision affects, for instance, the observed degree of religious

diversity because larger areal units normally enclose a greater number of denominations.

One characteristic having relevance is religious adherence, which is measured by the percentage of church members in a given population. Even though mere membership in a church does not necessarily indicate congregants' theological positions, attitudes about social issues, or degrees of involvement, the number of persons belonging to various denominations in each county generates an indicator of religious differences. In spite of these limitations, this statistic provides a practical index to the concept of religiousness.

The mapping of church adherence for U.S. counties by geographer and social scientist Lisa Jordan reveals a high level of adherence within the boundaries of the Great Plains. In the central part of the United States, a major north-south swath of counties has adherence of 55 percent or above. With exceptions of the "Mormon region" in the west and some scattered counties in the east, the area of high adherence coincides well with the region defined as the Great Plains. Evidence that the counties with high adherence do form a distinctive regionalism is further supported by an analysis of spatial clustering—that is, the degree to which adjacent counties are similar. Jordan found this index of clustering to be moderately strong in this part of the United States. In summary, counties in which church adherence is relatively high form a region that does, indeed, coincide with the area defined as the Great Plains.

Even though the distribution of high religious adherence in the United States exposes the distinctiveness of the Great Plains, internal variations do exist. In addition to the western counties having lower percentages than the eastern ones, Jordan's mapping reveals that there is a north-south divergence, with the central portion having lower levels than the north and south. Differences also reflect the degree of urbanization, with urban counties generally displaying lower adherence than rural ones.

Another pattern of religion can be produced by determining the denominational diversity within each county. Measuring the degree to which residents in a county differ in their religious beliefs and practices is difficult because of the many internal variations within most denominations, which are accentuated when grouped into broad categories. In addition, the lack of data for some religious groups complicates a precise measurement of diversity.

The spatial distribution of religious diversity in the United States does not match adherence and, therefore, does not depict a pattern that corresponds closely to the Great

Plains. To illustrate, many contiguous counties in Texas and Oklahoma show little diversity, but this homogeneity does not extend to other broad areas of the Great Plains. Also complicating a spatial generalization is the observation that the eastern edge of this subregion is indistinct. Even though more diversity generally occurs in the northern portions of the Great Plains, counties with the highest diversity tend to be scattered. This characteristic undoubtedly reflects the fact that adjacent rural counties with smaller and more homogeneous populations contain fewer different denominations, while urbanized counties normally have higher population densities that support a greater variety of churches.

The locations of members of the four leading denominations generally cluster into subregions. Baptists are concentrated in Oklahoma and most of Texas; and Lutherans are the dominant denomination in Minnesota, most of North Dakota, eastern South Dakota, and northern Iowa. Catholic counties include most of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and southern Texas. The Catholic region also extends into western South Dakota; and Catholicism is common (it ranks second) in the "Lutheran" region. Except for a relatively small area in western Wyoming where the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the plurality denomination, the remaining part of the Great Plains might be identified either as Methodist or "mixed." In this subregion, which covers Nebraska, Kansas, and southern Iowa, the pattern of counties showing a particular denominational strength is scattered. Although Methodism is the plurality denomination in many counties, they are not contiguous.

A Historical Perspective

Understanding these patterns of religion is enhanced by reviewing a few historical components of the region and the denominations. The non-Native American population migrated into this region predominately from the 1860s until the 1920s. Settlement replicated the normal flows of migration as newcomers clustered into ethnic and religious communities. In some cases, these aggregations were initiated by European religious leaders who brought many congregants to this newly "opened" land. This selectivity in destinations resulted in subregional variations in the population. In the northeastern portion of the Great Plains the settlement was dominated by Scandinavians and Germans; in the central portion by Germans, Irish, and English; and in the south by Germans, Irish, English, African Americans, and Mexican Americans.

In the early years of settlement, the cultural outlook was a mixture of both independence and dependence. Immigrants,

by their willingness to leave the security of family and community in their original homes, became deeply involved with solving their physical needs and establishing a functional society in this “new” land. Independence in thought and practice was characteristic of the people who had left traditional cultures and were facing new and difficult challenges. Simultaneously, the population of the Great Plains was highly dependent on outside economic forces. Policies regarding land ownership were made by the government in Washington, D.C.; markets for agricultural products, which were critical for economic survival, were located outside the region; and the transportation of goods was highly dependent on railroads owned by outsiders.

The characteristics of the Great Plains underwent numerous changes in the first half of the twentieth century. Although the “Dust Bowl” and “Great Depression” were dramatic, these events represented conditions that extended over a longer period. The initial euphoria generated by advertisements luring prospective settlers, by several years of sufficient rainfall, and by periods of good prices for agricultural goods was soon replaced by more realistic awareness of the limitations of the region. Farmers eventually realized that the fluctuating cycles of wetter and drier weather could result in phases when precipitation in the Great Plains would be insufficient for arable crops. When these adverse weather conditions coincided with economic recessions, many families abandoned their homes and moved to other regions of the United States. The rural depopulation that was publicized widely in the 1930s actually commenced with the turn of the century and has continued since then.

These climatic and economic conditions apply particularly to the “core” of the Great Plains. At the eastern edge of the region, where physical characteristics merge into the Midwest, the effects of drier years are lessened and the accessibility of markets is increased. On the western edge, where the aridity was always accepted as a given, the land is utilized for ranching. This does not mean generalizations about the Great Plains do not apply to the entire region, but they tend to be especially typical of the central north-south swath.

In more recent decades, the climatic problem of aridity has been partly solved for crop farmers by investing in irrigation, but recent controversy over access to ground and surface water has become a restraint. The economic dependence on outside markets persists. In rural counties, depopulation continues as commercial farming operates with larger landholdings and many small farmers abandon the land and seek employment elsewhere, usually in urban centers, either

within the Great Plains or in other regions. These changes result in rural areas continuing to reflect traditional cultural characteristics, while urban centers resemble the mixtures of American population in general.

Associated with these changes in the economic and cultural history of the region are religious characteristics. When early immigrants established a new society in a strange land, church membership was often important. When a community was dominantly one ethnic group, the church was a vital component of community life. Where towns were less ethnically homogeneous, several denominations often built churches and competed for new members. As rural communities declined with depopulation, many open-country and small town churches disappeared. The remaining ones, however, frequently increased their importance because they continued to serve the societal need of belonging to a community.

In contrast, religion in urban areas became more denominationally diversified, as arrivals came from numerous formerly homogeneous communities within the region and from a variety of foreign areas. With the tremendous variety of organizations and social opportunities, the role of urban churches has varied. Survival for some has meant expanding their mission to include an assortment of activities, while others maintain their strength through strong ethnic identity and sense of community.

Differences among Four Denominations

Additional understanding of religion in the Great Plains can be gained by noting some of the differences among denominational histories and current significance. Main attention is given here to the major Christian groups of today and to the dominant religion prior to the mid-nineteenth century, but a few non-Christian religious organizations are also discussed briefly.

Christian religions were introduced into the Great Plains first by Catholic priests, who accompanied Spanish explorers into what is now New Mexico and Texas. Not only was this nonindigenous religion located in just a small portion of the region, but the number of adherents was relatively small. This denomination grew in importance when Catholic Euro-Americans migrated into the area and became part of the resident population. Nearly a third of the Germans, who constituted approximately a fourth of European immigrants in the last half of the nineteenth century, were Catholic. The Irish, who were a significant segment of the immigrant population into the Great Plains, also increased

the Catholic population. A century later, Catholics from Latin America and Southeast Asia became a significant part of the immigrant population.

In spite of the nineteenth-century prevalence of hostility to Catholics by many evangelicals who regarded Protestantism as the “national” religion, growth of the Catholic population also occurred through conversions. By the end of the twentieth century, the distributional pattern of Catholics in the Great Plains revealed their importance throughout the region. Although the Catholic subregion suggests a concentration in the western portion of the Great Plains, Catholics are numerically important in many counties elsewhere, especially in the areas settled by Germans, such as the Lutheran subregion.

The pattern produced by counties with high percentages of Catholics does not necessarily reveal their numerical importance in urban areas, where the proportion of all Catholics is considerably greater than for the other three denominations examined here. Because of the diversity of denominations, the percentage of Catholics in urban centers is diluted, which affects the mapping of denominational strength by counties; nevertheless, their sizeable total makes them a major religious group in the Great Plains.

Lutheranism became a significant part of the religious landscape in the Great Plains, with the immigration of Scandinavians and Germans in the second half of the nineteenth century. This religious affiliation persisted, so the area where they settled now forms a Lutheran region today. Although this areal concentration suggests a religious homogeneity, diversity of beliefs occurs within this denominational grouping because a multitude of synods, based on ethnic heritage and geographic origins, merged and recombined through time. Diversity within the subregion also results because several counties having Catholic communities, with similar geographic roots, are intermixed with the Lutheran ones.

Later generations of Lutherans have moved to urban areas, so the original rural communities are no longer the overwhelming residential setting, but the remaining ones retain the strengths of religious affiliation. In small towns that have experienced depopulation, the Lutheran church has become increasingly important as the center of community life and an important influence in the social and political behavior of the residents.

The Baptist subregion is located primarily in Oklahoma and most of Texas. The development of this denominational concentration contrasts with those of the Catholics and Lutherans because it resulted more from family migrations from other parts of United States and from individual

conversions than from the settlement of ethnic communities. Furthermore, the earliest establishment of Baptists in these two states differs because of their unique histories. In Texas, evangelical Christianity commenced when the prohibition against all denominations other than Catholicism ended in 1834. Within a few years, Baptist missionaries from other parts of the United States held camp meetings and organized congregations. By 1850, 70 Baptist churches (compared to 173 Methodist and 47 Presbyterian churches) had been established. Generally these were located in the eastern portion of the state, where the agricultural economy mirrored that of the South. As the denomination grew, numerous splits—some caused by views about slavery—and mergers led to a variety of theological and social differences; nevertheless, the Baptist family of churches continued to grow faster than other denominations. By 1906, Baptists were the largest denomination in the state. Even in counties having a Catholic majority, Baptists now are often the second-ranked denomination in percentage of adherents.

In Oklahoma, some of the first Baptists were members of one or more of five Native American tribes who were deported to Indian Territory, even though for a while, Creeks persecuted those who became Christians. The growth of the Baptist churches developed as a result of missionary efforts in the Indian Territory and later expanded when the territory was opened for settlement. The message of Baptist preachers and the structure of their organization appealed to the lives of the settlers on the frontier. Eventually the Baptist family of churches became dominant in Oklahoma, and currently this denomination has more than half of all religious membership in the state. Baptist growth in the Great Plains has nearly doubled in the past four decades, accentuating the homogeneity of this subregion.

The essence of the remaining subregion is its mixture of religions. Seldom do more than half the adherents in each county belong to any one denomination, but Methodists, Catholics, and Lutherans are usually the largest religious populations. In most counties, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, and Mennonite churches, as well as numerous other smaller groups, contribute to the variety of denominations. In addition to this multiplicity within counties, the spatial distribution of counties by denominational strengths does not form contiguous areal groupings.

This subregion can be identified with Methodism because of its ubiquity, with churches in nearly all counties. This extensiveness resulted from its rapid growth during the settlement period. Methodist, as well as Baptist

and Presbyterian, preachers spoke to the spiritual needs of struggling families on the frontier. In contrast to the established churches of the East with formal sermonizing, the message of Methodism was compatible with pioneer conditions. Camp meetings and circuit riders were especially effective in contacting a population scattered across a land with limited infrastructure. Its localized church organization was conducive to the formation of small congregations in this region of sparse population.

Although rural depopulation in the Great Plains has meant a decline in the size of congregations outside of the large cities, Methodist churches are still common in most small towns and hamlets. In many surviving hamlets, the Methodist church is one of the few institutions remaining, long after schools, retail shops, and other services disappear. Generally Methodism has a larger number of adherents in rural areas than other denominations. Nevertheless, the community cohesion fostered by a Methodist church in small towns is seldom as strong as in those dominated by Lutherans.

Non-Christian Groups

In addition to these four main denominations, as well as numerous other Protestant churches, a variety of non-Christian groups are present in the Great Plains. The dominant religions prior to the nineteenth century were those of Native Americans. The expression of religion in stories and rituals varied among the several tribes, with those in the east relating more to agriculture while those in the west connected with the role of bison. Nevertheless, here they are grouped together for the purpose of generalization.

Most beliefs and rituals seek cosmic harmony and the renewal of spiritual powers. Associated meaning and values are expressed often by the geometry of constructed features. In addition, central to the Native American religions is a reverence for the natural environment, which includes a belief attributed to special places. Crucial for believers is worship at specific sacred sites.

As Native Americans were dispossessed of their lands, forcefully moved to other areas, and subjected to attempts at cultural conversion, numerous religious changes took place. The attachment to a particular place was severed as many tribes were assigned to reservations elsewhere, and the massacre of Wounded Knee in 1890 convinced many individuals of the futility of continuing their previous ways of living. Many rituals, especially certain dances, were outlawed. Worshipping at sacred sites was prohibited. Conversion to Christianity was encouraged.

Today indigenous religions are practiced by only a small minority of citizens in the Great Plains. Even though the proportional size of the Native American population in this region is larger than in most others in the United States, few residents follow the religion of their ancestors. Many have joined one of the major Christian denominations. Others are members of the Native American Church, which combines elements of traditional religions with tenets of Christianity. All-night worship sessions, participation in the Sun Dance, and the ritualistic use of peyote attest to the merger of traditional religious beliefs and practices with mainline Christianity.

Although some of the previously hostile restraints have been relaxed in recent decades, contemporary Native Americans still encounter difficulties in practicing their faith. This is most obvious when worshippers make a pilgrimage to a sacred site such as to Bear Butte, Bear's Lodge, or a Sacred Hoop.

Mato Paha (Lakota for "Bear Butte"), located near the Paha Sapa (Black Hills), is the place where many tribes come to pray, especially in May, June, and July. The enduring importance of this particular place is evidenced by artifacts that date to ten thousand years ago. Current worship, however, is sometimes disrupted by the actions of nonworshippers who engage in drag racing, other recreational activities, and commercial enterprises.

Mato Tipila (Lakota for "Devil's Tower") is another spectacular Great Plains landmark that engenders conflicting views about the use of space. Lakota worshippers who journey to this site, especially in June, seek solitude for their pipe ceremonies and vision quests. The majority of common tourists voluntarily respect this religious period, but a small group of mountaineers have insisted their members have the right to climb this geologic tower at any time.

The Sacred Hoop ("Medicine Wheel"), located on a mountaintop in the Big Horn Range, presents a third illustration of conflicting views about religious practices in the Great Plains. Although many sacred hoops have been constructed across North America and are not always distinctive landscape features, this one is uniquely sited at one of the ten nuclei of continents. It is revered by religious pilgrims as a place having inner spiritual energy and healing. The kind of conflict over the use of place is not as intense here as, for example, at Bear's Lodge/Devil's Tower, but crowds of tourists are not compatible with the ambiance desired for worship.

In contrast with the Native American adherents, who live in both rural tribal lands and urban centers, most other

non-Christian groups are almost entirely residents of metropolises. Some Jewish groups first settled originally in rural areas, but soon most moved to cities. Today the small Jewish population in the Great Plains is almost entirely urban. Likewise, members of the Bahá'í faith are 'primarily in cities, where larger and more diversified populations offer the setting for alternative religions.

The diversity of religions in the cities increased rapidly after the 1960s because the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 changed the composition of immigrants and because societal changes in the United States involved the rise of numerous New Age sects.

Most immigrants since the late twentieth century have moved as individuals or single families and have settled in urban areas, where employment opportunities are the greatest. Immigrants who came as a group, such as the Muslim community in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, which built a mosque before 1930, are the exception. However, refugees from particular countries often form new communities in only a few cities. Although those from Latin America and Eastern Europe expanded membership in Catholic churches in the Great Plains, immigrants from Asia usually brought non-Christian religions. These include, among others, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, and Buddhism. Some migrants, both first- and second-generation, have adhered closely to the traditions of their home areas, but others have adapted their rituals and forms of worship to the social environment of their new homes. Because some religious communities are small and unable to build and maintain temples, pilgrimages and festivals are important, especially for members of South Asian religions.

The other main sources of non-Christian religions arose from the rapid conversion to an established faith (especially Islam), from the revival of early religions (for example, paganism), and from the development and adoption of new spiritual groups. Illustrative of the latter are Transcendental Meditation, the Unification Church of Reverend Moon, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and various modifications to traditional Buddhism and Hinduism. Adherents tend to be persons seeking a fundamental change in American values and behavior. Acceptance is highest among individuals in cities. Those supporters who live in more remote areas may interact with other believers electronically.

Conclusion

As is true for all of America, considerable diversity in religion exists in the Great Plains. In several respects, however,

the expression of religion is distinctive in this region. Adherence to religion, as measured through membership and participation in various denominations, contrasts with other parts of America. This distinctiveness is related to the low density of the rural population, which reflects the climatic conditions and geographic location within the United States. This relationship demonstrates clearly the interactive effects between environment and religion.

See also *Appalachian Mountain Religion*; *Atlantic World*; *Baptists: Denominations*; *California and the Pacific Rim Region*; *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Geographical Approaches*; *Lutheran Churches*; *Methodists* entries; *Mountain West and Prairie Region*; *Native American Religion* entries; *New England Region*; *Pacific Northwest Region*; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *South as Region*; *Southwest as Region*.

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Hare Krishna

See *Krishna Consciousness*

Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion

Harmonial or metaphysical religion, emerging as mental science and mind cure in the last half of the nineteenth century, and maturing into New Thought by the turn of the twentieth century, is a distinctly American set of theologies supported by loosely affiliated religious groups. New Thought is based in a wide variety of philosophical and religious systems, from Platonism (ideas over matter) and Hegelianism (idea of spiritual progress); Swedenborgianism (emphasis on spiritual interpretation of Scripture); transcendentalism (divinity pervades nature, including mankind); and Eastern religion, particularly Vedanta Hinduism (monism: God is all substance).

The best known New Thought groups are Divine Science, Unity, and Religious Science, though there are numerous smaller organizations and independent congregations. All emphasize the mystical experience and power of individuals to practice the presence of God in their own lives. This is accomplished through realizing their divine essence and connection to the power of God, unleashed through positive thinking, affirmations, concentration, and silent meditation, in order to demonstrate health, spirituality, and prosperity. Harmonial religions, as defined by church historian Sydney E. Ahlstrom in *A Religious History of the American People*, are “those forms of piety and belief in which

spiritual composure, physical health, and even economic well-being are understood to flow from a person’s rapport with the cosmos” (p. 1019).

By 1900 there were one hundred publications devoted to New Thought ideas. These told their readers about mental methods consisting of spiritual affirmations that would ensure individual spiritual evolution, health, social progress, and individual success and prosperity; and many believed that through these methods New Thought would liberate humanity from its bondage to materialism. New Thought also introduced meditation to some Americans and clearly produced the groundwork for numerous contemporary self-help and therapeutic systems, such as those taught by Deepak Chopra, Louise L. Hay, and Eckhart Tolle, and popularized by Oprah Winfrey.

Without a centralized organization or ritual practice, by the 1890s, Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, St. Louis, San Francisco, and Los Angeles had significant New Thought centers; and local clubs began to be formed in hundreds of cities, and towns into the early twentieth century. While there were many names of these new groups and just as many teachers and publications, they all agreed on the noninstitutional nature of the truths that they all taught.

These early groups practiced metaphysical idealism, the belief that all reality is mental and/or spiritual. While much of early New Thought was influenced by Protestant Christianity, its believers emphasized mystical, monist, and panentheistic ideas (God is greater than the universe but includes and interpenetrates it). The metaphysical tradition that ensued was formed through the influences of many different writers, both religious and secular/scientific, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emanuel Swedenborg, Franz Anton

Mesmer, Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, and Swedenborg and Quimby follower Warren Felt Evans.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Harvard philosopher William James recognized that New Thought was one of the most important speculative and practical contributions to religious thought in America in its systematic cultivation of optimism and healthy-mindedness. James stated that the influences in New Thought were the Gospels, Emerson, idealism, “spiritism” (with its emphasis on underlying laws of progress), popular science evolution, and Hinduism.

Early Contexts of New Thought

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) of Concord, Massachusetts, was leader and seer of American transcendentalism. His philosophy, with its emphasis on individual self-reliance and pragmatism, and also on the validity of inner mystical experience, was instrumental in introducing the idea that the life of man was the essence and even substance of the divine mind, another name for God. Inspired by Swedenborg and Eastern religion, particularly the Vedas, Emerson recognized a power of life that emanated throughout a beautiful and unified nature. As man recognized this power, he aligned himself with the good, the unity of all things, and awakened his spiritual senses. His was a mystical and moral idealism that suggested that man’s higher spiritual self was part of a divine oversoul, a unity that bound each individual together. Emerson inspired a religious liberalism that valued silence and meditation, recognized the individual’s cravings after things spiritual, sought insights in sacred texts beyond the Bible, and emphasized the immanence of the transcendent in nature and individuals—all elements that informed metaphysical religion or New Thought.

Tantamount to New Thought’s success was the idea that these spiritual truths could be demonstrated in physical healing and improved lifestyle. In the late nineteenth century, Americans were faced with a remarkable medical marketplace of patent medicines, water cure, Graham’s pure food system, mesmerism, magnetism, electricity, homeopathy, and naturopathy, while advocacy for symptomatic medicine was rising with the formation of the American Medical Association (founded in 1847). Earlier concepts of mind, spirit, and body were increasingly compartmentalized in the emerging medical science. The relationship between matter and spirit was crucial: where Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy’s idealism was absolutely clear on the ultimate unreality of matter and the sole reality of the divine mind and its spiritual ideas, in New Thought the human

mind was a conduit between spirit and matter. Matter was part of God’s creation even if spirit could dominate it and thought could materialize it.

Early mental science was also informed by an interest in mesmerism, Austrian physician Franz Anton Mesmer’s (1734–1815) developing methods of hypnosis and suggestion, based on his studies of “animal magnetism.” These studies resulted in the idea that thoughts could transfer influence and energy between persons and heal nervous and physical ailments. His follower Charles Poyen brought mesmerism to America.

In the area of spirituality, another eighteenth-century Swedish scientist, Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), was advancing his mystical and spiritual interpretations of the Bible, revealed through his visions and angelic visitations, in a series of books and glossaries beginning in 1748. These contained a neoplatonic theology of correspondences between the world of the spiritual and material reality. In 1817 this theology was organized into the Church of the New Jerusalem, or the New Church, in the United States. Swedenborg’s penchant for spiritually interpreting scriptural objects, names, and situations became a method also used by metaphysical teachers from Eddy, whose *Key to the Scriptures* was added to her textbook *Science and Health* in 1883; to Ernest Holme, who wrote *Science of Mind* (1926); to Charles Fillmore, author of the *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* (1932).

Phineas P. Quimby and His Followers

Phineas P. Quimby (1802–1866), the practical spiritual pioneer and forefather of New Thought, started as a Maine clockmaker before he became a mesmeric hypnotist/healer, with an early practice inspired by Charles Poyen’s demonstrations of mesmerism that Quimby saw through a Dr. Collyer in 1838. Quimby became a circuit clairvoyant performer with partner Lucius Burkmar before he embarked on a healing practice that included reading and manipulating the invisible magnetic fluid of the life force.

Quimby finally gave up mesmerism and found that he needed to simply convince his patients that their illnesses were mental in nature and could be healed by the power of the mind. He used placebo effects like rubbing and hypnosis, but at the base of his practice was the idea that patients could heal themselves.

Quimby was an amateur theologian and healer who denounced the negativity of much religion and medicine. He came to believe simply that matter was a “fine interpenetrating substance” susceptible to change and influence by

the mind. Mind was an independent reality. He believed that errors of the mind, coming from the beliefs in sickness and mortality, could condense into material diseases. God was wisdom that could be accessed as a source of good mental impressions and health.

Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy came to Quimby for healing in the early 1860s and subsequently tried to fit his mind/body ideas into a Christian framework. Quimby helped many of New Thought's first leaders, from Warren Felt Evans to Julius Dresser.

Where Quimby left only unfinished manuscripts, Warren Felt Evans (1817–1889) emphasized spirituality as important to health, as he melded Swedenborg with Quimby into a more systematic form. As a minister of the New Church, he was an articulate preacher and author, who in many ways clarified Quimby's ideas in his emphasis on the divinity within each individual. Evans's mental healing practice began in Boston in 1867, and his books, mixing idealism and transcendental mysticism, including *The Mental Cure* (1869), created an esoteric/mystical and philosophical lineage for New Thought from idealism, through German romanticism, into what he called Christian Pantheism.

Julius A. Dresser (1838–1893), a one-time Baptist minister, and Annetta Seabury Dresser, who were patients and students of Quimby in the early 1860s, began a mental healing practice inspired by his teachings in Boston in 1882, after the rise of Eddy's Christian Science movement, and began teaching students using Quimby's manuscripts. The publication of Julius Dresser's *The True Story of Mental Science* in 1887 stirred up controversies about Eddy's relationship to Quimby.

The first efforts at adding intellectual vigor to emerging mental science ideas were undertaken by the Metaphysical Club, founded in Boston in 1895. Henry Wood (1834–1908), a businessman and member of the Metaphysical Club in Boston, gave a more rational and systematic method. In his *Ideal Suggestion through Mental Photography* (1899), he recommended that patients use disciplined meditations on short visual mantras or suggestions and provided examples to be written on placards, such as "Healing is Biblical," "Mental Healing is Scientific," "Health is Natural," and "I Rule the Body," all supplemented with visualization techniques and short treatments.

Also important was the rise of Horatio Dresser, son of Julius and Annetta Dresser, whose *The Power of Silence* (1895) emphasized the internal meditation that many New Thinkers would subsequently develop as a method for

reaching inner peace and accessing spiritual power. The Boston Metaphysical Club promoted an interest in positive affirmative spiritual philosophies of life, taught that right thinking could bring one's loftiest ideas into perfect realization, and advanced study in the systematic treatment of disease by mental methods. By the mid-1890s a periodical was in place, the *Journal of Practical Metaphysics*, with Horatio Dresser as editor. A Church of the Higher Life gave the club a more religious outlet.

Horatio Dresser began practicing Quimby's method in 1886 and soon launched a campaign to undermine Eddy's authority. He studied with William James at Harvard and finished his PhD in 1907, making him the most trained leader in the New Thought movement. In 1919 he published the first full-length history of New Thought, *History of the New Thought Movement*; and in 1921 he published *The Quimby Manuscripts*, taken from copious notes by Quimby. Subsequent historical research reveals that Eddy's monistic thinking departed from Quimby's mind/body dualism. Her Christian orientation was basically foreign to Quimby's original ideas, which clearly had been supplemented by his early followers with more Christian overtones.

Christian Science: Mary Baker Eddy and Emma Curtis Hopkins

Mental science or mind cure began with Quimby, Evans, and the Dressers in New England, where Boston became the center of Eddy's far-flung and highly successful Christian Science movement. Eddy's genius for organizing started with her founding the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, whose four thousand students by 1910 spread Christian Science rapidly across the United States, and particularly in the Middle West.

Eddy had sought out Quimby's help in 1862 and had been helped by him during an extended stay in Portland. She was excited by the prospects of healing, praised Quimby in the press, and became concerned to articulate Quimby's method. But she could not accept his ideas fully, as he was often hostile to the Christian faith she held sacred. After Quimby died in 1866, Eddy's fall on the ice became the falling apple of the emergence of her Christian Science. For the next decade she studied the scriptures, publishing her ideas in *Science and Health* (1875). In 1879 she and her students founded the Church of Christ, Scientist to commemorate Jesus' teaching and to heal according to his method. As she survived the challenges from the Quimbyites, she still had significant defections.

While most of Eddy's students remained loyal to her leadership, several, such as Ursula Gestefeld (1845–1921), who had taken a class with Eddy in Chicago in 1884, broke with her Christian roots in favor of the prosperity gospel and the attraction of eclectic Eastern ideas, and many of her once-loyal students started their own versions of her teaching. Like Christian Science, New Thought found Chicago and the West to be the most fertile ground for its publishing and therapeutic activities.

The "teacher of teachers," a feminist and an important founder of New Thought, was also originally a student of Eddy. Emma Curtis Hopkins (1849–1925) was first attracted to Christian Science in 1881. Hopkins took a primary class with Eddy in late 1883, lived at the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, and was listed as a Christian Science practitioner in 1884. She became editor in September 1884 of the *Christian Science Journal*. She edited issues nine through fourteen before being dismissed in October 1885. Hopkins was a loyal student of Eddy, not Quimby, but she was also a spiritual eclectic interested in Eastern religion and mysticism.

In 1886 she founded the Emma Curtis Hopkins College of Christian Science. She taught mainly women and formed a student's association similar to Eddy's. In 1887, her colleague Mary Plunkett founded the magazine *Truth, a Magazine of Christian Science* to serve the school and student association. Hopkins continued to teach in Chicago and also in San Francisco, Milwaukee, and New York, leaving in place a number of affiliated teaching institutions. Hopkins produced Bible lessons, published in the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* from 1890 to 1898, began a new periodical with Ida Nichols called *Christian Science*, and renamed her school the Christian Science Theological Seminary. It functioned under that name until 1895.

Hopkins's charismatic teaching was legendary, and her pamphlets and books such as *Class Lessons* (1888), *Scientific Christian Mental Practice* (1888), and later *High Mysticism* (1920) were important in consolidating her influence. Hopkins educated more than one hundred ministers, nearly 90 percent women, whom she ordained to take their version of her mystical Christian Science, then becoming New Thought, across the United States, particularly in the Midwest and West.

Hopkins's emphasis on the feminine nature of the Holy Spirit and women's importance to the complete revelation of God in history aligned her with Gnostic (esoteric knowledge) and early medieval mystical interpretations of the Bible, particularly concerning the Trinity, where God the

Father was associated with the Old Testament, the Son with the New Testament, and the Holy Spirit, or Mother Principle, with the present period.

Hopkins Students Spread New Thought Ideas, and Organizations Prosper

Hopkins was the teacher of Annie Militz, founder of the Homes of Truth; Malinda Cramer, cofounder of Divine Science; Clara Stocker, teacher of Albert Grier, founder of the Church of Truth; popular poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox; Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, founders of Unity Church; Harriet Emilie Cady, an important author of the Unity textbook *Lessons in Truth* (1896); Frances Lord, who took New Thought ideas to Britain; and Ernest Holmes, founder of Religious Science.

Annie Rix Militz (1856–1924) was taught by Hopkins in 1887 and ordained by her in 1891. She and her sister Harriet Rix started a metaphysical bookstore in San Francisco in the early 1890s, calling it first the Pacific Coast Metaphysical Bureau and later the Home of Truth, with a permanent house built in 1905 for the group in Alameda, California. Enamored of Swami Vivekananda's Hindu teaching, introduced at the World's Parliament of Religion at Chicago's Columbian Exposition in 1893, Militz began integrating Eastern ideas into her teaching and hoped that the Home of Truth would be an interfaith organization with emphasis on both Christianity and Hinduism. She also continued to work with the Fillmores in their new Unity movement, published the *Master Mind* magazine between 1911 until her death in 1924, and supported the opening of several Home of Truth centers along the West Coast and in Boston, Chicago, and other cities where New Thought made inroads.

The World's Parliament of Religions was the watershed moment in the introduction of new Eastern religions to America. After the Chicago Fair, New Thought began to develop into regional clubs that joined together to form the International New Thought Alliance (INTA) in 1914. Also after the Fair, there was growing interest in world spirituality focused in the summer retreat movement. Sarah Farmer, inspired by the Parliament of Religions, created a center for the study of world religions in 1894. She created a summer community, similar to Chautauqua, called Greenacre, in Eliot, Maine, that entertained ideas from Vedanta (a branch of Hinduism) to Bahá'ism. In its early years, New Thought and mental science were often topics.

Ralph Waldo Trine, an esoteric mystic and social reformer, had gone to Greenacre to write what became the best-selling

In Tune with the Infinite: Fullness of Peace, Power and Plenty (1897). Trine thought of God as the spirit of infinite life, a transcendent font of power that would flow into the lives of those prepared to receive it. Thoughts were forces: good thoughts worked in mankind's favor, while bad thoughts became manifested in the body as worry and disease—fundamental New Thought ideas that were to have a decisive influence on Ernest Holmes. By 1895, texts by Trine and Dresser were attracting millions of readers in the United States.

Chicago continued to be an important center for both Christian Science and emerging New Thought theologies, attracting a number of significant writers in New Thought, inspired both by spirituality and ideas of success. The Psychic Club and the Atkinson School of Mental Science were founded in Chicago by William Walker Atkinson, who became an important New Thought proponent, publishing several magazines between 1900 and 1916. He and partner/publisher Sydney Flower became interested in Hinduism and taught yoga and Hindu-oriented New Thought. His 1906 *Thought Vibration of the Law of Attraction in the Thought World* inspired Rhonda Byrne's 2006 movie *The Secret*.

A less Christian, more scientific/secular view of New Thought emerged after the turn of the twentieth century, using psychological concepts through writers such as Judge Thomas Troward, whose writings on mental science, tinged with Eastern philosophy, particularly his *Edinburgh Lecture on Mental Science* (1909), later inspired Ernest Holme's Science of Mind (SOM).

The first conventions of New Thought groups were held between 1894 and 1899 under the auspices of the International Divine Science Association; between 1899 and 1908 under the International Metaphysical League; between 1908 and 1914 under the National New Thought Alliance; and, beginning in 1914, under the International New Thought Alliance (INTA), the major attempt at unifying the various strands of New Thought. A lessening of the Christian focus is evident in the platform adopted in 1916: "To teach the Infinitude of the Supreme One; the divinity of Man and his infinite possibilities through the creative power of constructive thinking and obedience to the voice of the indwelling presence, which is our source of inspiration, Power, Health, and Prosperity." At the International Alliance's Sixth Annual Congress in Cincinnati, in 1919, a new plank concerning "Christ Standards" was voted into the Declaration of Principles, upon which plank the Unity Movement and the Divine Science College of Denver entered the alliance. A revised statement was produced in 1957.

Divine Science

Malinda Elliott Cramer of San Francisco, founder of Divine Science, was healed through spiritual means in 1885. After taking an 1887 class with Hopkins in San Francisco, she started a magazine, *Harmony* (1888–1906), and opened the Home College of Divine Science in 1888. Cramer published *Lessons in the Science of Infinite Spirit* in 1890. Divine Science came together as a movement that same year, when Cramer and Nona Brooks of Pueblo, Colorado, who had taken a class with one of Hopkins's students, decided to share the name Divine Science after they realized the similarities in their theologies. In 1898, after being ordained by Cramer, Brooks and her sisters started a church and formed the Colorado College of Divine Science in Denver to spread their teachings, with Cramer's *Divine Science and Healing* (1904) and Nona's sister Fannie James's *Truth and Health* as major textbooks. Several periodicals were published between 1902 and the 1960s. Nona led the church and became the first female pastor in Denver, attracting a number of followers, mostly women, to the ranks of Divine Science. In 1922 the organization built a handsome classical edifice in Denver and officially joined the INTA. Troward-inspired Emmet Fox (1886–1951) was ordained by Nona Brooks and in 1931 took over the pulpit of New York's Church of the Healing Christ, founded in 1906 by once-Christian Scientist William John Murray. Fox's lectures attracted thousands, and his *Sermon on the Mount* (1934) became one of the most widely read popular religious books of New Thought. Fox also inspired Bill W., founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, who had his followers read Fox's books. In 1957 the Divine Science Federation International was organized as a union of Divine Science organizations, with less than twenty congregations today.

Unity

Charles Fillmore (1854–1948), a real estate agent, and Myrtle Fillmore (1845–1931) experienced spiritual healing through the Illinois Metaphysical College, and both became students of Hopkins, who ordained them in 1891. They started the work of Unity in 1889, with the launching of their magazine *Modern Thought*, renamed *Unity* in 1894. Unity's first textbook, *Lessons in Truth* by Hopkins's student H. Emilie Cady, was also published in 1894. Myrtle was instrumental in forming the Society of Silent Help, a prayer ministry now known as Silent Unity, in 1890. Myrtle also founded a children's magazine, *Wee Wisdom* (1893–1991). By

1903 the Unity Society of Practical Christianity was formed as the first Unity church, located in Kansas City. Publishing and prayer activities increased, and in 1914 the Fillmores founded the Unity School of Christianity for publishing and education work. In 1919 the Unity Farm (later Unity Village) was formed, and the group moved to Lee's Summit, Missouri. Unity was a member of the INTA until 1922. In 1966 an association of Unity churches was established, and today more than nine hundred ministries are listed in the United States that provide worship services, healing meetings, prayer groups, counseling, study classes, and youth development, including Sunday schools.

The Fillmores, not unlike Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy, believed that their "practical Christianity" was based on the words and works of Jesus and was actually the primitive Christianity taught by Jesus. Admitting that other spiritual paths would lead to spiritual unfoldment, including a belief in vegetarianism and reincarnation, the Fillmores nonetheless emphasized the authority of Jesus' teachings as the foundation of their ministry. Jesus is the Wayshower, who expressed perfection and became the Christ, leading us to an understanding of God as divine mind, absolute good. We are spiritual ideas in mind and manifest the Christ in an individualized way. Prayer is conscious communion with God, made practical through affirmations and denials that strengthen our relationship with God, and therefore prayer creates a path for goodness, healing, and prosperity to enter our lives.

Religious Science and Science of Mind (SOM)

Ernest Holmes (1887–1960) was a minister of Divine Science until he founded the Institute of Religious Science and Philosophy in 1927 (later emerging into two groups: the United Church of Religious Science in 1953 and Religious Science International), as a practical metaphysical teaching institute correlated from philosophical, religious, and scientific insights. His teaching is basically a great synthesis of insights from Christian Science and New Thought writers, together with psychology and physics. His 1926 Christian-centered text, *The Science of Mind*, was inspired by Emerson, Troward, and Trine and informed by his classes with Emma Curtis Hopkins. SOM teaches how to experience a spiritual sense of things through affirmative prayer, suggesting that everyone can realize the Christ consciousness that dwells uniquely within each of us. It deals with the human mind as an instrument through which the divine mind particularizes itself. God is all, and

the objective universe is the body of God. To see the spiritual sense of things in back of the physical is to use the mind that Jesus used. Today there are more than 350 ministries associated with Religious Science.

Ernest Holmes mentored Norman Vincent Peale, who was the pastor of the Marble Collegiate Church in New York from 1932 to 1984, a congregation of the Reformed Church in America, founder of Foundation for Christian Living in 1945, and later a religio-psychiatric clinic. He wrote his blockbuster *Power of Positive Thinking* in 1952 and used the radio as a medium for his sermons. He and his wife, Ruth Peale, founded *Guideposts* magazine in 1945. Peale influenced Robert H. Schuller, who used Peale's positive ideas in his own theology and preaching at the Crystal Cathedral, while pastor there from 1955 to 2005.

Other Groups and Megachurches

After World War II and up to the present day, many New Thought ideas have become part of the New Age. Joel S. Goldsmith, a Christian Science practitioner turned revelator, wrote *The Infinite Way* (1947), which asked seekers to look for God in the silence and stillness of the inner kingdom of mind, inspiring some of popular self-help lecturer Wayne Dyer's teachings. Goldsmith was also author of *The Art of Meditation* (1956). Another important teaching similar to Goldsmith's is Dr. Helen Schucman and Dr. William Thetford's *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM), published in 1976.

There are several other sizable and influential New Thought congregations in the United States, including the Living Enrichment Center in Oregon, now New Thought Ministries of Oregon; Dr. Johnnie Coleman's twenty-thousand-member Christ Universal Temple, founded in Chicago in 1956 after she took courses at the Unity School of Practical Christianity; the Agape International Spiritual Center in Culver City; Dr. Barbara L. King's Hillside International Truth Center in Atlanta; Della Reese's Understanding Principles of Better Living Church in Los Angeles; and Renaissance Unity Interfaith Spiritual Fellowship in Warren, Michigan, whose one-time minister was Marianne Williamson, a popular ACIM teacher and author of *Return to Love* (1992).

See also *Christian Science; Hindu Tradition and Heritage; Idealist Philosophy; Judaism: Jewish Science; Megachurches; New Age Religion(s); Positive Thinking; Transcendentalism.*

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Hasidism

Hasidim (Hebrew for "pious ones") are Orthodox Jews who follow both Jewish law and the teachings of a male charismatic leader called a *rebbe*. Hasidism, which emphasizes forms of spirituality, began in eighteenth-century Ukraine; was severely threatened by the Shoah; but by the twenty-first century had communities in the United States, Israel, Canada, and many other countries. Over time Hasidism slowly developed from a reactionary, populist movement to a strict, often separatist movement, but throughout has continued its emphasis on spiritual connection with God. Hasidim are also called "haredim," "traditional-orthodox," or "ultra-orthodox," especially when they are grouped with other very traditionally observant Jews.

European Origins

The Jewish spiritual movement of Hasidism emerged from the teachings of Ukrainian Rabbi Israel ben Eliezar

(1698–1760). As ben Eliezar became known for his piety, healing, and miracles, he earned the name Ba'al Shem Tov (literally, "master of the good name") for his closeness to God. The Ba'al Shem Tov became a revered figure, and followers told so many stories about him that it is difficult to discern which are historically accurate. However, he lived a simple life, and although he was very learned in Jewish sources, he advocated a more heart-centered, rather than text-centered, approach to the human relationship with God. He would use simple and ordinary stories as teaching tools to illustrate religious morals or values. Following certain aspects of Kabbalah, he saw God in every piece of the world. The human task, then, was to celebrate and live a joyful rather than an ascetic life. *Devekut*, or attachment to God, was accessible through storytelling, melodies, and dancing, just as much as through the intense study of Rabbinic Judaism. According to the Ba'al Shem Tov, joy and humility were the best way to serve an omnipresent God.

The Ba'al Shem Tov's spiritual approach to Judaism and his openness to all people attracted many disciples and admirers during his lifetime. Jews in need of healing and spiritual guidance came great distances, and many peasants were drawn to an accessible Judaism. After his death in 1760, the movement continued to grow both numerically and geographically under the auspices of his successor, Rabbi Dov Ber of Mezritch. Dov Ber, also known as the Maggid or "preacher," was a renowned Talmudic scholar; he took up the mantle of the Ba'al Shem Tov, writing and organizing Hasidic thought into a comprehensive movement.

Early Hasidism proved to be a popular movement: because its philosophy emphasized prayer as a valuable primary path to God, it validated the religious experience of men and women who did not have the education to approach God through the traditional path of textual study. In addition to the many peasants who found a spiritual home in this new pietistic Judaism, those who had felt their spiritual needs unmet through study of the Talmud or traditional Kabbalah also flocked to Hasidism. The movement and its followers sought to unseat scholarship as the sole or best way to be Jewish, and elevate bodily practices like prayerful praise to its religious level. It also democratized this access to God. For instance, whereas in other Orthodox Jewish communities, a man called the *hazan* was the sole prayer leader and singer, all Hasidim would sing and chant prayers.

Hasidic practices in Eastern Europe became a major source of, first, discomfort and then disagreement with

non-Hasidic, traditional rabbinic Jews. The visible and audible characteristics of Hasidic ritual made these differences clear: Hasidim would dance wildly, sing, and shout during prayer. They also separated themselves by less sensual ritual boundaries such as writing a separate prayerbook. As the movement grew, Hasidim began to live in separate communities where they could live and pray according to their own religious standards. Followers organized themselves around different charismatic leaders in different cities, with each community (or court) named after its city. The group based in Ger would call themselves the Gerer Hasidim, while those in Bobov would be the Bobover Hasidim.

The orthodox opponents of Hasidism—or *mitnagdim*—argued that these innovations detracted from proper Judaism by disparaging traditional Torah study and elevating rebbes to the level of the divine, which they saw as idolatrous. Despite their decrees against Hasidism, which included a writ of excommunication in 1772, the *mitnagdim* had difficulty stemming the group's growth or encouraging its followers back into the non-Hasidic community. Over time, however, the two groups began to reconcile because of similarities and the emergence of a common enemy. In the early years of the nineteenth century, many Hasidic leaders began to reemphasize textual study, and some even sided with the *mitnagdim* and criticized the fulsomeness of their own rituals, but the most significant factor of the rapprochement was shared opposition to the Jewish enlightenment. Both Hasidim and *mitnagdim* agreed that dismissal of ritual, critical study of text, and privileging of reason above other religious ideals were destroying the essence of Judaism. In many places in Eastern Europe, the two once-opposed groups began to do business, intermarry, and even worship together again.

Persecution and Violence

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, pogroms (organized violence against Jews), threatened the lives and livelihoods of many Jewish families in Russia and Eastern Europe. The far-reaching violence and resultant political reorganization of the First World War uprooted many Hasidic communities. Forced to relocate after the destruction of their homes or villages, these Hasidim often split up or fled to cities far from their rebbes. A few would immigrate to the United States along with large numbers of other Eastern European Jews, but most stayed and continued their way of life. But neither the secularism of the Jewish

enlightenment nor the violence in the first decades of the twentieth century would match the terrible toll taken by the Shoah during the Second World War.

Historians estimate that the Nazis and their allies killed about 80 percent of Hasidim, a much greater proportion than non-Hasidic Jews. Because of their distinctive ways of dress, especially for the men, they were easy to identify. As observant Jews who “looked” Jewish with women's wigs or men's beards and hats, they also made symbolic targets for the anti-Semitic Nazi regime. Unlike other less observant and secular Jews who could speak without accents and dress and act according to secular customs, Hasidic men and women were generally unable or unwilling to assimilate and thereby pass as non-Jewish.

In addition to being targeted for their obvious espousal of Judaism, Hasidim also held to their way of life even when it might imperil them. Early in World War II, most rebbes counseled their followers to stay in Europe. According to these leaders, the bodies of the Hasidim might be endangered in the Old World, but the New World would endanger their souls. The rebbe, as the spiritual center of the community, acted like a magnet for his followers: where the rebbe stayed, his people stayed.

When they were taken to camps, many Hasidic prisoners drew strength from the Hasidic traditions of teaching and storytelling, but for others the mass murders shook their faith in God and their rebbes. While some wondered how God could desert them in such a time of need, others prayed nightly or steadfastly refused to eat any possibly non-kosher food. Survivor Ester Gold, for example, would take her prayerbook each night and stand under the lone lightbulb before going to sleep. When the other women derided her for her naïveté, she explained that the prayers were the only thing sustaining her.

Few Hasidim escaped the persecutions alive, and most survivors were left with nothing. In some cases, the Nazis had murdered the inhabitants of entire Hasidic villages, but even survivors faced an enormous challenge if they wanted to rebuild a Hasidic lifestyle. Not only had they lost their belongings but also their homes, villages, and families. Left with little choice, they moved away from Europe, mostly to the United States and Palestine. Among the survivors were a handful of Hasidic leaders, including the rebbes of Klausenberg, Skver, Satmar, and Bobov. After the war some Hasidim felt betrayed by their leaders, who had insisted upon the piety of remaining in Europe but then used connections to gain rescue for themselves. But the remaining rebbes and

many of the survivors were committed to restoring Hasidism even after its nearly complete destruction.

Hasidism Comes to the United States

Although the largest number of practicing Hasidic immigrants arrived in the United States in the wake of the devastation of World War II, they were not the first Hasidim to live on American soil. Rabbi Joshua Segal, who arrived in 1875, became the chief rabbi of a conglomerate of small Hasidic congregations. Immigrant Rabbi Pinchos Dovid Horowitz founded the first American Hasidic court in Boston in 1916. In the years after World War I, a number of Hasidim from different communities came to live and study in New York without the benefit of their rebbes. For instance, although the Lubavitcher Hasidim officially organized in 1924, the community was unable to ensure unity without the presence of a rebbe, and by 1931 a small group called the M'lochim (angels) had broken away. A few rebbes, such as the Chernobler and Skverer, came in the twenties and thirties with small followings. Perhaps the exemplar of the pre-World War II period, because of its slow struggle with acculturation rather than dramatic division, was a community originally from Boyan in Russia. Despite warnings about America as the "unclean land," in the mid-1920s the Boyaner Rebbe and his family left the unstable political climate of Russia and joined a small group of his followers in the United States. Like other immigrants, they struggled financially but felt that freedom could offer them opportunities. The rebbe's children, for instance, all attended college. But this freedom also brought consequences for Jewish observance: young men like the rebbe's sons did not want to grow beards and sidelocks, and they were embarrassed to be seen wearing yarmulkes. Many children of Hasidim decided to leave the observant lifestyle, and the community trickled away from its Lower East Side neighborhoods to Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens.

The Shoah changed the Hasidic landscape in America completely. As the war ended, large numbers of Hasidim arrived along with a few high-profile leaders, such as the Lubavitcher Rebbe in 1940, the Satmarer Rebbe in 1946, the Bobover Rebbe in 1946, and the Klausenburger Rebbe in 1947. Once in the United States, these Hasidim faced the question of creating a viable Orthodox life in a new, metropolitan area. Unlike the former villages in Europe, the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Williamsburg, Borough Park (often spelled "Boro Park"), and Crown Heights were densely populated and urban, which would require different

social structures. No longer would thousands of followers travel long distances to see their rebbe; now they would see him weekly or even more frequently. Courts and rebbes that had been separated by language and many hundreds of miles were suddenly living on adjacent streets.

While difference from Europe was forced upon these Hasidim, they actively sought to retain difference from America. Unlike most earlier Jewish immigrants, these Hasidim did not seek to learn American culture; rather, they sought to build Hasidic communities set apart by both language and culture. They retained the names of their villages to mark their separation. To demonstrate the difference physically, Hasidim from many communities instituted strict norms of appearance long ignored by Jews in the United States: married women wore wigs or complete hair coverings and men wore full beards and sidelocks. If they could not re-create their communities from before the war, at least they could honor God and those who had died by building new pious lives.

Hasidic Life in the United States

The postwar groups of Hasidic immigrants created complete Hasidic lifestyles more successfully than their earlier counterparts. Because of their large numbers and because of their strong commitment to the memory of the departed, these newly arrived Hasidim built vibrant, observant Jewish societies. Estimates of Hasidic population in the United States in the first decade of the twenty-first century range from 150,000 to 300,000, but all agree that large family sizes are feeding continued rapid growth. Satmar and Lubavitch are the two largest courts, each estimated at upwards of 50,000 members. More than twenty smaller courts, such as Belz, Bobov, Boston, Breslov, Ger, Klausenberg, Skver, and Stolin, remain active.

After settling, Hasidic groups who previously organized mainly by geography suddenly needed to decide how to organize their societies. In the United States, as in Europe, the central organizing feature of the community is the rebbe. Individuals and families identify themselves by court, but their allegiance is to a rebbe rather than a city. The Bobover Hasidim, then, identify primarily with the Bobover Rebbe's community rather than with the city of Bobov. Therefore, many courts can live in close proximity to one another in Brooklyn, for example, and retain their differences by the instructions and example of their rebbes. After the death of a rebbe, a son or son-in-law will slowly assume the mantle, thereby ensuring continuity within the community.

The rebbe is a charismatic and learned character; he is enormously respected by all of his followers. They solicit his advice on everything from appropriate marriage choices to employment, and they often emulate his dress or mannerisms. He functions as a religious leader who conducts prayers, teachings, and songs but also as a religious exemplar who is holy and closer to God at all times. The rebbe's followers look up to him as one might a grandparent, but the men who gather around him will push aggressively to be nearer (most courts do to permit women to touch male nonrelatives, especially the rebbe). In addition to his religious charisma, each rebbe also makes practical decisions, although often in conjunction with advisors, about how his community should run. These might be decisions about schools, housing, building projects, or industry.

In addition to their interactions with the rebbe, Hasidim weave religious practice into all parts of their lives. Hasidic women, noted for high levels of modesty, express their religiosity primarily through the home and family. Raising children, cleaning, and cooking, along with more overtly religious activities such as lighting Sabbath candles, define most Hasidic women's lives. They may also attend religious gatherings with the rebbe and other men but must sit quietly in the balcony. Men, on the other hand, often pray enthusiastically, rocking back and forth while humming, singing, or shouting. Men focus their religious lives on the study of holy texts, often in community with others.

Physical appearance sets Hasidim apart from most others in American society and to lesser degrees separates the courts from one another. Hasidic women wear modest clothing that covers the collarbone, elbows, and legs. Most married women also shave their heads and wear wigs or kerchiefs for the religious reason that a woman's hair may be alluring to men who are not her husband. Some courts, including Satmar and Belz, require hats on top of the wigs, while others like Lubavitch allow women to cut their hair short rather than shave it. Hasidic men dress more uniformly but also maintain differences in detail according to court. They wear long beards and sidelocks, which boys begin to wear at age three during a religious haircutting ceremony. Like their forebears in Eastern Europe, men tend to wear white collared shirts and dark pants, shoes, coats, and hats each day. On holy days and the Sabbath, a man wears a long silk overcoat and a special fur-trimmed hat called a *shtreimel*. Hasidic men generally do not wear neckties, and their coats button right to left in contrast to common menswear. The number of buttons and cut of the coats, sock color, and hat

style most notably distinguish men of one court from another. For instance, Gerer *shtreimels* are taller than others, and Bobover Hasidim typically wear white knee socks over their dark pants as opposed to under the pants.

Family, Education, and Work

While Hasidic marriages are not strictly arranged, most take place with the help of a matchmaker. Grown children most often marry another member of the community and remain within the court. A typical young woman might meet with one or two young men recommended by the matchmaker before agreeing to a match in consultation with her family. Both the young woman's and young man's families will look for integrity, piety, and financial stability in a match. Marriage comes before love. Divorce is not unheard of, but the man must initiate the proceedings. Hasidic culture values women primarily in their duties as wives and mothers, and any domestic or child-rearing work done by men is generally seen as a favor to the women. Most Hasidim understand the biblical injunction "be fruitful and multiply" to mean that they should have as many children as God will give them. The median number of children in Hasidic families is between six and nine, and twelve is not uncommon.

Not surprisingly, then, girls' education revolves around the home, while boys' schools emphasize religious learning. Hasidic communities have established their own network of schools, from nursery to high school, structurally modeled on American public school. Although they comply with secular minimum state standards, the courts choose the teachers and methods with the explicit goal of safeguarding the cultural identity of the community. Books are heavily censored, although to different degrees in different courts. Satmar schools, for instance, often block out pictures of gentle children because of their clothes or activities.

In all Hasidic communities, work is not important as personal fulfillment, but simply as providing sustenance. Many young married women work while their husbands continue to study religious texts for several years after the wedding. Women do not drive, but they are often bused to and from their jobs if they are in other parts of the city. Many women, despite their large families, continue to work while their children grow. Although many young men desire religious study as a community-supported vocation, monetary restrictions allow only a few men to do so. Most work in small business settings such as electronics and diamond sales as either owners or employees. Because of limited secular education, few Hasidim are doctors, lawyers, or the like. Indeed, in part

because of the decreased cultural significance of secular education and careers, as many as 20 percent of Hasidim in the United States live below the poverty line.

Hasidic Relationships with Other Groups

Different courts have different attitudes toward the secular world, but all consider some aspects dangerous. Most shun television programs, although they may permit televisions for closed-circuit programming from within the community. Prohibitions and strictures are particularly apparent in education, but they extend to adults. Public libraries and secular newspapers are off-limits in most communities. Unlike some other insulated religious communities, Hasidim do not shun all technology but only the culture that it can bring. For instance, they will use music players to listen to Hasidic recordings but not other music. Many own computers for business and educational use, but they see the Internet as potentially dangerous. Ger has gone so far as to suggest that individuals remove their computers because of this peril. Some communities, such as Lubavitch, tend to be more permissive when it comes to interactions with the secular world, while others, such as Satmar, are stricter. To help ensure a continued separation from secular culture, most Hasidim speak Yiddish at home and in their communities.

At times the insularity and cultural difference of Hasidim has caused friction and conflict with their non-Hasidic neighbors. Often the clash occurs over scarce housing resources, or growing Hasidic communities expanding into areas formerly inhabited by other groups. In Crown Heights, Brooklyn, a 1991 incident inflamed otherwise tense relations between African Americans and Hasidim. A motorcade with the Lubavitcher Rebbe accidentally hit and killed a black child. Witnesses accused the Hasidic ambulance personnel of ignoring the child and helping the Hasidic driver; others said the second (non-Hasidic) ambulance had already arrived and was tending to the child. Riots followed, and a young black man stabbed an uninvolved Hasidic student who was visiting from Australia. Tensions between the communities continued for many years.

Despite their overwhelming similarities in dress and lifestyle from the perspective of outsiders, Hasidic courts often perceive their differences from other courts as significant. Lubavitch and Satmar have often come into conflict because of the former's recruiting efforts and tolerance of some American culture and the latter's strict defense of its often isolationist and anti-Zionist policies.

Zionism and the state of Israel remain issues of contestation among Hasidic communities. Some see Zionism as an important commitment to Jewish survival and flourishing after the Shoah. After almost all of his followers perished during the Shoah, the Gerer Rebbe escaped to Jerusalem in 1940, and there he began to build anew a pious community. In an ideological break from some of his followers and most other Hasidim, he proclaimed support of Zionism to be a commandment. Other Hasidic groups would soon warm to the idea of Zionism and support of the state of Israel when it came into existence in 1948. The Lubavitcher court supports and influences Israel, while others such as the Belzer Hasidim recognize that involvement in Israeli politics can benefit Hasidic groups. Satmar and several smaller Hungarian courts, on the other hand, remain absolutely anti-Zionist. They believe that only the coming of the Messiah will bring the true return to the Holy Land, and therefore any human attempt to establish a Jewish state in Palestine is blasphemy.

Hasidim also differ in their positions vis-à-vis other Jews. Most Hasidic courts agree that strict Orthodoxy is the one true Judaism, and therefore they do not recognize Reform, Conservative, or Modern Orthodox Jews. Many will derisively refer to a less observant Jew as "goy" or "non-Jew." A few communities like Lubavitcher and Bostoner Hasidim promote proselytization of non-Hasidic Jews and are therefore more tolerant of other Jews in the hopes of winning them over to a Hasidic lifestyle. These newly observant or "returning" Jews are called *ba'alei teshuva*, and while the community generally welcomes them, they tend to marry and socialize primarily with other *ba'alei teshuva*. Most courts, however, would prefer to employ and interact with non-Jews, whom they see as neutral outsiders, rather than less observant Jews, whom they see as poor role models for their children.

Because of their rich history and stories, Hasidim have also inspired literary works. Jewish authors such as Isaac Bashevis Singer, Chaim Potok, Bernard Malamud, and Michael Chabon have portrayed Hasidim in their novels and short stories, while scholars such as Martin Buber have collected stories told by Hasidim themselves. The Hasidic man most familiar to many Americans comes from Singer's "Tevye" stories and has entered the popular imagination through the musical "Fiddler on the Roof." While the jokes of the play may not be fully representative of Hasidic life, the characters' reverence for God and family orientation are common features.

Hasidim have a rich set of religious traditions and vibrant communities. Their growing numerical and cultural presence in the United States suggests that the communities will have an increasing influence in American life, even as they continue to see themselves as existing apart from secular values. In this sense, then, these pious Jewish communities have created new life and strength since their near-destruction during the Shoah.

See also *Chabad-Lubavitch*; *Devotionalism*; *Holocaust*; *Judaism: Tradition and Heritage*; *Worship: Jewish*; *Zionism*.

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Healing

Seeking healing from suffering is a central task of religious traditions. Yet experiences of suffering, and therefore of healing, are shaped and continually reshaped by changing social conditions, cultural forces, and theological frameworks. In North America, practitioners of religion in every historical era have debated definitions of sickness and health, as well as meanings and methods of healing. Questions about the nature and causes of disease, the proper modes of coping with affliction and means of pursuing well-being, and the relationship between divine and human agency in the therapeutic process have exercised religious communities from the precolonial period to the present. Numerous factors have prompted and influenced these deliberations, including episodes of encounter and competition among religious groups; shifting intellectual currents associated with Enlightenment liberalism and

postmodern pluralism; the development and proliferation of new technologies for alleviating pain and curing illness; and transformations in the economic and social spheres resulting from modernization, immigration, and globalization. The history of healing in North America reveals how various religious traditions have adapted their interpretation of suffering and pursuit of health amidst a host of changing circumstances.

Healing in Colonial North America: Contact, Encounter, and Cultural Transformation

When European colonists arrived in North America, they encountered indigenous communities for whom healing was a fundamental feature of religious life and practice. Diverse tribes practiced distinctive religions in different regions of the continent, yet common to all Native American traditions was an emphasis on maintaining harmony among humans, the natural world, and sacred beings. Sickness and suffering resulted from disruptions in cosmic balance; healing involved restoring right relations through ritual ceremonies.

Native American Healing: Post-Contact

Because healing was central to their own religious traditions, Native Americans sometimes viewed the Europeans with whom they initially came into contact as conduits of sacred healing power. Jesuit priests in New France during the early seventeenth century, for example, asserted that Huron and Iroquois Indians regarded them as healers who had the power to protect and cure people from sickness through rituals of prayer, anointing, and especially baptism. Capitalizing on perceived resonances between Catholic and native traditions, Jesuit missionaries presented themselves as ritual healing specialists whose practices were superior to those of tribal shamans.

As epidemics of smallpox and other diseases decimated indigenous populations over the course of the seventeenth century, Native Americans became increasingly distrustful of Europeans and doubtful about the efficacy of their religious healing rituals. In New France, many Indians came to believe that Christian baptism was the cause of rather than the cure for cosmic disturbance, communal disintegration, bodily illness, and death. In the English and Dutch colonies, Native Americans were even more likely to view Europeans as agents of harm rather than healing. As the primarily Protestant settlers in these regions encroached upon Indian lands, indigenous peoples began to reconfigure rituals of

religious healing to address the radical disruptions resulting from European imperialism.

Protestant European Colonists' Attitudes towards Healing: Post-Contact

Although they rarely recognized resemblances between their own religious traditions and those of Native Americans, Protestant European settlers also conceived of healing in ways that linked individual, community, and cosmos. As participants in the Reformed tradition that sought to purify Christianity from “superstitious” practices, Dutch colonists in New Amsterdam and Puritans in New England rejected Catholic means of seeking individual bodily healing, such as praying to the saints, making pilgrimages to sacred shrines, or venerating holy relics. According to the influential Protestant theologian John Calvin, Jesus had performed miracles of healing to demonstrate his divinity, but once the Christian church had been established, miraculous signs were no longer necessary. The age of miracles had ceased with the apostles, he argued; therefore, appeals to the healing power of saints or material objects such as relics undermined true faith in Christ and violated biblical prescriptions against idolatry.

Given this theological perspective, it is not surprising that Protestants looked askance at Native American healing ceremonies that employed sacred objects and involved ritual specialists who served as mediators of divine power. Often likening Native American modes of healing to “corrupt” Catholic rites, colonists in New England and elsewhere condemned Native American traditions as idolatrous. Unlike the Jesuit priests who sought to win native converts by demonstrating their superior power to defend against and cure disease, missionaries such as Puritan minister John Eliot emphasized the urgent need for spiritual salvation rather than what they saw as the lesser hope of relief from physical affliction. According to Reformed theology, suffering was a blessing sent or allowed by God to lead the sinner to repentance and sanctification.

Within their own communities, Protestant colonists stressed the redemptive role of suffering, urging Christian believers to welcome afflictions as God-given opportunities for pursuing personal Holiness. Although they did often pray for the restoration of bodily health, Puritans endeavored to endure suffering with patience and equanimity for the sake of their souls. True healing only took place in heaven, when the “weary pilgrim,” as Puritan poet Anne Bradstreet put it, would finally be free of sickness, cleansed of sin, and reconciled to God.

For colonial Protestants, and especially for New England Puritans, healing also had communal connotations. Even prior to their arrival in Massachusetts Bay, Puritans such as John Winthrop (1588–1649) worried that they would fail to fulfill the “special commission” they had received from God to establish an exemplary Christian community in the New World. When the colonists did face threats to the social fabric of their community in various forms—theological dissent, interpersonal discord, outbreaks of disease, cases of “possession” or “witchcraft”—they assumed these adversities were manifestations of God’s judgment upon sinful behavior. Rituals of repentance, including fast days and public confession, were means of renewing the community’s covenant with God and thereby restoring health to the body social. Healing in Puritan New England sometimes involved more stringent forms of public purification, in which “infected” members of the group who remained unrepentant were purged from the community through excommunication, exile, or execution.

Eighteenth-Century Shifts in Attitudes to Religious Healing

In the aftermath of the Salem witch trials (1692–1693), colonial Protestants began to reconsider these corporate rituals of healing. During the eighteenth century, the increasing influence of Enlightenment ideas put pressure on traditional Protestant assumptions about the nature of suffering—both individual and social. Growing belief in a benevolent deity who desired harmony among and happiness for all human beings challenged traditional Protestant conceptions of God’s “afflictive providence” and wrath. Confidence that scientific inquiry was uncovering “laws of nature” that reflected a divinely ordered universe inspired hope that sickness might be overcome through more sophisticated therapeutic methods (such as inoculation). Faith in reason resulted in rising optimism about human nature, encouraging Protestants to propose alternative explanations for disease and to question the notion that patient endurance was the proper Christian response to physical suffering.

Developments in the political and economic arenas over the course of the eighteenth century also helped reshape traditional Protestant approaches to healing. The democratic fervor accompanying the American Revolution and the founding of the United States fueled a growing emphasis on self-determination as the hallmark of a healthy society. Within this context, many people began to question the authority of medical experts in favor of healing systems that

stressed the importance of individual agency in maintaining or restoring physical well-being. With the expansion of markets and the rise of entrepreneurial capitalism, competition among medical practitioners increased and commercial remedies proliferated. Sick persons seeking health soon had access to an abundance of physicians, patent medicines, and inventive new therapies.

Healing in the Early National Period: Revitalization and Reform

By the turn of the nineteenth century, transformations in the social and cultural landscape had set the stage for the emergence of a variety of health reform and new religious healing movements. The establishment and territorial expansion of the United States also had profound consequences for American Indians in these years. Throughout the 1800s, a variety of Native American leaders would instigate movements of religious revitalization through which they sought to address increasingly cataclysmic forms of bodily and social suffering.

Revitalization of Native American Healing: Among American Indians and Anglo-Americans

In 1799, the Seneca prophet Handsome Lake (ca. 1735–1815) began experiencing visions that prompted him to initiate a new religious movement among the Iroquois. After the American Revolution, the once-prosperous Iroquois confederacy had lost half its population and most of its land, and its people suffered from starvation and sickness. In these circumstances, Handsome Lake received a series of apocalyptic communications from messengers of the Great Spirit, who prescribed moral and communal practices such as sobriety, marital faithfulness, the use of medicinal tobacco, and land preservation to relieve the suffering of the Iroquois people and restore them to prosperity and health.

During the early national period, a number of American Indian leaders also inaugurated movements of resistance and renewal that sought individual and communal healing through “sacred revolts” against territorial imperialism. In the “Red Stick Revolt” of 1813–1814, for example, Muscogee warriors inspired by prophetic visions of world renewal rebelled against the United States in an effort to resist colonial invasion and restore harmony to the cosmos. As the century progressed, healing remained a central theme in Native American religions, as various tribal groups struggled to sustain distinctive lifeways on increasingly diminishing tracts of land in the West, to cope with the harsh realities

of reservation existence, and, ultimately, to heal the wounds of colonialism by restoring cosmic balance.

Ironically, during the same period when the U.S. government was developing and enforcing policies of “Indian removal,” Anglo-Americans were becoming increasingly enamored of native practices of healing. Early-nineteenth-century medical manuals began to promote the use of Native American herbal remedies as an indigenous form of medicine, and some European American healers posed as “Indian doctors” endowed with the ability to draw upon the restorative powers of nature in pursuit of health. The allure of Native American modes of healing reflected a broader restlessness with the “heroic” forms of therapy that dominated mainstream medical practice in these decades. Although physicians continued to prescribe blistering, bleeding, purging, and toxic drugs such as opium and calomel throughout the nineteenth century, health reformers had begun to question the efficacy of these treatments by the 1830s.

Alternative Medicine: Christian Physiology and Spiritualism

In their critique of “orthodox” medical approaches, a host of “alternative” practitioners asserted that bodily purity was a key factor in the prevention and cure of disease. “Christian physiologists” such as Sylvester Graham (1795–1851), a Presbyterian minister associated with revivalist evangelicalism, promoted a vegetarian diet, abstinence from alcohol, and sexual restraint as means to health and healing. William Andrus Alcott (1798–1859), who had family connections to the transcendentalist movement, urged both dietary reform and “physical education” as methods for pursuing purity. Proponents of hydropathy extolled the cleansing properties of water, and homeopathic physicians argued that avoiding large quantities of noxious drugs was essential for preserving well-being. All of these movements shared the conviction that “regular” or “allopathic” physicians contradicted the healing powers of nature by recommending deleterious therapies and polluting the body with poisons. The best way to maintain or restore health, in this view, was to keep oneself uncontaminated by debilitating substances and to live in accordance with the God-given laws of nature.

Implicit in this understanding of how to avoid illness and achieve health was a crucial assumption about human nature that set homeopaths and health reformers apart from Protestants, who taught that disease was an affliction of divine providence to which one must remain patiently resigned. If pain and illness were the products of human error, and

purity and health were the results of human effort, then sick persons were both responsible for their own infirmity and capable of overcoming it. This “physical Arminianism,” as the historian James Whorton first called it, resonated with the more optimistic anthropology that characterized both liberal theology and the evangelical revivalism of the Second Great Awakening. Undermining the traditional Calvinist assumption that human beings were powerless to affect their spiritual destinies, let alone their physical health, “Christian physiologists” argued that human beings could and should work actively toward both spiritual regeneration and physiological renewal.

The widespread appeal of health reform among antebellum Protestants of all sorts suggests that many individuals were eager to cast off Calvinist interpretations of suffering and to adopt strategies of healing that assumed the primacy of God’s goodness, mercy, and love. A growing tendency to emphasize God’s munificent character also inspired a large cohort of Protestants to participate in spiritualism, a movement that assailed Calvinist assumptions about the relationship between spiritual health and bodily distress. As with their contemporaries in various health reform movements, spiritualists argued that well-being was the natural condition of human beings and consequently refused to see disease either as a deserved punishment or as a God-given blessing sent for the sick person’s sanctification.

The Return of Miracles

Challenges to the Reformed tradition also prompted many American Protestants to reject Calvin’s conviction that God had ceased to work miracles of healing after the apostolic age. Drawing upon the “biblical primitivism” that characterized so much of nineteenth-century Protestantism, religious movements of the antebellum era such as Mormonism and Adventism claimed miraculous healings as an essential feature of true Christianity. According to Joseph Smith (1805–1844), founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the recovery of the lost legacy of divine healing among Mormons represented a return to a purer and more powerful form of Christian faith.

Mormons were not the only antebellum Protestants to reclaim the reality of miraculous healing in the “modern” world. In his 1858 treatise *Nature and the Supernatural*, Congregationalist pastor Horace Bushnell (1802–1876), whom many later identified as the father of American theological liberalism, argued that God performs miracles in every era, including the present age. Although Bushnell, like his

Mormon contemporaries, did not reject the use of “natural agencies” and “secondary causes” such as medicines and physicians as methods of pursuing health, he also insisted that sick persons should remain open to the possibility of direct, supernatural intervention. Miraculous cures, in Bushnell’s view, offered evidence of God’s vital, personal, and ongoing presence in the face of what Bushnell saw as the growing skepticism, materialism, and naturalism of modern culture.

Healing in America from the 1860s to the 1950s

Following the Civil War, many religious believers in America echoed Bushnell’s concerns about the debilitating effects of modernity on individual and communal health. During this period, several movements devoted to “divine” healing sought to counter the “swelling unbelief” of late-nineteenth-century culture through their theories of sickness and (re) definitions of health.

Protestant and Metaphysical Healing from the Late Nineteenth to Mid-Twentieth Centuries

Christian Science, New Thought, and evangelical divine healing all emerged and spread rapidly across North America and beyond in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Bemoaning the materialism of contemporary life to varying degrees, each of these religious movements argued for the legitimacy of spiritual interpretations of illness and healing in the face of mounting hostility from medical professionals aggressively working to consolidate their authority over the process of diagnosing and treating sickness.

Beginning in the late 1870s, Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) contended that the “metaphysical method of cure” she called Christian Science enabled participants to obtain freedom from the illusions of bodily illness, sin, and death by aligning their minds with the eternal divine spirit. During this same period, proponents of New Thought, a diffuse and diverse movement inspired by nineteenth-century healing systems such as animal magnetism and mesmerism, also began to promote a version of “mind cure” that emphasized the power of thought to shape physical reality. Drawing upon the teaching of earlier mesmeric healers such as Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802–1866), New Thought leaders such as Ralph Waldo Trine (1866–1958) encouraged participants to obtain “peace, power and plenty” by opening their minds to an inflow of divine healing energy. Trine’s best-selling inspirational text, *In Tune with the Infinite* (1897), remained popular throughout the twentieth century,

inspiring later proponents of metaphysical healing such as Protestant minister Norman Vincent Peale, Catholic Bishop Fulton Sheen, and Rabbi Joshua Liebman, all of whom, in the post–World War II era, attributed material and spiritual well-being to the power of positive thinking.

At the same time that Eddy and Trine were advocating mind cure, proponents of evangelical divine healing were insisting that sickness and health were spiritual conditions requiring religious remedies. Participants in “faith cure,” a movement that emerged in the 1870s, argued that miracles of healing provided a powerful antidote to the “materialism and infidelity” of the modern era. Drawing on the work of Bushnell and others who defended God’s ability and willingness to perform supernatural acts in the present, these believers contended that Christ, the great physician, provided both forgiveness of sins and triumph over sickness for the person who claimed these gifts through faithful prayer. All proponents of divine healing prescribed scriptural practices such as prayer, laying on of hands, and anointing with oil as means of pursuing health. Some also discouraged medical treatment. Although outright prohibitions against physicians were relatively rare among earlier participants in divine healing, the emergence of Pentecostalism in the early twentieth century led to increasing tensions with medical professionals. By the mid-twentieth century, Pentecostal faith healers were more inclined to disparage doctors and drugs as agents of demonic oppression. Although some Pentecostals, most notably evangelist Oral Roberts (1918–2009), sought a rapprochement with modern medicine following World War II, emphasis on the supernatural dimensions of illness, health, and healing remained prominent.

Negative attitudes toward scientific materialism brought practitioners of both mind cure and divine healing into conflict with the medical profession throughout the first half of the twentieth century. But not all religious believers were as skeptical as these groups about the benefits of the biomedical model. Some Protestants at the turn of the twentieth century attempted to reconcile spiritual and scientific approaches to healing. Drawing on the burgeoning field of psychology, Episcopal clergymen Elwood Worcester (1862–1940) and Samuel McComb (1864–1938) established a counseling center at the Emmanuel Church in Boston, in 1906. Envisioned as a cooperative endeavor involving trained neurologists, physicians, and ministers, the Emmanuel movement combined insights from medicine and theology to promote physical and psychic wholeness.

Protestants such as Worcester and McComb sought a rapprochement between religion and medicine as a means of

promoting individual well-being, but they were also concerned with healing the body social. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both evangelical and liberal Protestants worried about the effects of urbanization, industrialization, and laissez-faire capitalism on personal and public health. Evangelistic organizations such as the Salvation Army sought to assuage social ills, including poverty and crime, by providing food, shelter, medical care, and education to the indigent. Proponents of the social gospel suggested that reforming oppressive social structures that caused sickness and privation was a, if not *the*, central task of Christianity.

Catholic and Jewish Healing from the Late-Nineteenth to Mid-Twentieth Centuries

American Catholics also attempted to bring the resources of Christian healing traditions to bear on sickly economic and social conditions. For centuries, Catholics sought individual and communal health through devotion to the saints and participation in sacramental practices, such as penance and the Eucharist. Unlike their Protestant critics, who rejected the idea that material objects and ritual actions could serve as conduits of supernatural healing power, Catholics insisted that venerating sacred images, partaking of consecrated bread and wine, and being anointed with holy water were legitimate means of seeking spiritual and physical well-being. By the late nineteenth century, Catholics in both Europe and North America were experiencing a devotional revival marked in part by the increasing popularity of healing shrines at the sites of Marian apparitions such as Lourdes in France and the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico. Cures that occurred at these pilgrimage sites were assiduously investigated by the Catholic hierarchy, and only those confirmed by the church’s medical bureau were deemed miraculous. Just as Protestants promoted divine healing as a riposte to modern materialism, so too did Catholics assert that miracle cures proved the reality of the supernatural in an era of scientific skepticism.

While Catholics always insisted on the reality of miraculous healing, they never denied the association between sanctity and suffering that became suspect among some nineteenth-century Protestants. Like their medieval predecessors, most American Catholics embraced the idea that God sent sickness and physical pain for spiritual purposes. Even as they idealized suffering saints, however, American Catholics also worked tirelessly to relieve bodily afflictions and heal social maladies. During the nineteenth century, Catholic orders such as the Sisters of Charity founded

hundreds of hospitals and charitable organizations in North America. In response to the plight of millions of impoverished immigrants, Catholic theologians and reformers of the Progressive Era developed critiques of exploitative economic systems and lobbied for structural improvements such as national health insurance.

Both Catholics and Protestants struggled, in a variety of ways, to resist the wholesale medicalization of healing during the early decades of the twentieth century. A small contingent of American Jews also promoted a form of spiritual healing in these years. In his 1916 book, *Jewish Science: Divine Healing in Judaism*, Reform rabbi Alfred Geiger Moses (1878–1956) combined elements of the New Thought tradition, emerging discourses of psychology, and Jewish spirituality in an effort to encourage Jews to consider the religious dimensions of illness and health. Although some responded to Geiger's appeal, most Jews in mid-twentieth-century America discounted divine healing and traditional Jewish curative practices in favor of biomedicine. In American Jewish culture, as in the culture at large, healing involved patronizing preeminent physicians and helping to build the medical profession.

Healing since the Late Twentieth Century

A series of cultural and social shifts in the 1960s helped reshape theories and practices of healing during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The Immigration Act of 1965 led to heightened religious and cultural diversity in the United States. Although traditions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism had long been a part of the North American religious landscape, cross-cultural encounters resulting from increased immigration fueled an explosion of interest in non-Western healing systems and practices such as Chinese acupuncture, Japanese Reiki therapy, and Indian Ayurvedic medicine. The embrace of these and other “alternative” modes of healing also prompted renewed consideration of Native American healing resources, particularly among practitioners of New Age spirituality—a diverse and decentralized movement with roots in the American metaphysical tradition. Espousing an ethic of cultural pluralism, New Age healers draw upon multiple religious traditions in their quest to access the curative powers of “subtle energies.”

The pluralist ethos and religious diversity of the late twentieth century also influenced how American Catholics sought healing. Immigrants from Mexico, the Caribbean, and Latin America brought with them devotions to unfamiliar

holy figures (such as El Santo Niño de Atocha in Los Angeles), whose shrines have become popular pilgrimage sites for American Catholics seeking health and well-being. Practitioners of Cuban Santería, many of whom also identify as Roman Catholic, have pursued healing in ways that both draws from and challenges traditional Catholic theology and ritual. Healing also featured prominently in the charismatic revival that swept through numerous Catholic communities in the late 1960s, prompting many churches to start special services devoted to prayer for healing through the power of the Holy Spirit. Theological and liturgical changes introduced by Vatican II (1962–1965), such as the reconfiguration of the sacrament of extreme unction as “Anointing of the Sick,” contributed to the growing presence of healing services in mainstream Catholic churches. Liberation theology, which emerged in part out of Vatican II's expressed concern for the oppressed, inspired both lay and clerical Catholics to conceive of healing in communal terms by seeking to reform social structures that perpetuate poverty, violence, racial discrimination, and gender bias.

Social revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s, including the civil rights movement, second wave feminism, and environmentalism also sparked new ways of defining healing among American religious communities. Protestants, Jews, Native Americans, Wiccans, and New Age metaphysicians have all paid increasing attention to systemic ills such as racism, sexism, colonialism, and degradation of the natural world. Some have created new religious rituals of repentance or reconciliation designed to restore broken relationships and correct harmful patterns of behavior.

While the social dimensions of healing have garnered the attention of an increasing number of American religious communities since the 1960s, the pursuit of personal well-being and wholeness has remained a central preoccupation for believers of all persuasions. During the last two decades of the twentieth century, a religious healing movement emerged among American Jews. The National Center of Jewish Healing, established in 1994, works to reclaim the resources of the Jewish tradition as means for coping with illness. Mainline and evangelical Protestant churches influenced by the charismatic renewal promote divine healing through services of prayer, anointing, and laying on of hands. Pentecostal healers such as Creflo Dollar, Benny Hinn, and Joyce Meyer encourage petitioners to claim the blessings of health and prosperity through positive affirmations of faith. As they broadcast their revival meetings around the world, the message of these word of faith preachers resonates with

the experiences of expanding Pentecostal and charismatic communities in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, for whom promises of wealth and well-being are central components of the Christian gospel. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, globalization continues to heighten concern about sickness and health, pushing religious communities in North America and elsewhere to adapt their interpretations of illness and pursuit of health to changing economic, social, and cultural conditions. Within this context, healing remains central to religious life.

See also *Bioethics*; *Charismatics/Charismatic Renewal*; *Christian Science*; *Environment and Ecology* entries; *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion*; *Health, Disease, and Medicine*; *Judaism: Jewish Science*; *Lived Religion*; *Native American Religions* entries; *Nature and Nature Religion*; *Puritans*; *Science*; *Transcendentalism*.

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Health, Disease, and Medicine

Physical health and well-being are areas of enduring concern to most religions. In the Christian tradition, for instance, Jesus of Nazareth healed the sick, and Christian institutions played a central role in establishing medical facilities over the course of many centuries. In the American context, religion and medicine have brought varying perspectives to the challenges associated with health and disease, producing a relationship that has shifted considerably over time. From the substantial overlap of religion and medicine among Native Americans and in the early period of European settlement to the considerable distance and tension

between the two fields that marked most of the twentieth century, the intersection of religion and medicine has been especially fluid and complex. Still, the general course of development has followed the pattern of modernization in advanced societies by moving toward greater distance and clarification between areas of human experience that previously overlapped more fully. Since the 1970s, however, there has been a remarkable resurgence of interest in the connections between religion and medicine and a huge array of resulting therapies. The twenty-first-century popularity of alternative therapies and religiously informed medicine makes this an especially timely topic.

Religion and medicine are united by a common focus on health, whether spiritual or physical health. As social and cultural enterprises, religion and medicine seek to enhance human flourishing and keep at bay disorder and disease, spiritually understood as sin or a malady of the spirit and physically understood as bodily impairment. Both arenas ultimately address human mortality. For religion and medicine, death is the common enemy, the ultimate impediment and mystery. Medicine seeks to stave it off, to fight back its emissaries and manage its ultimate arrival; religion seeks to make it meaningful and sufferable. In the face of death, both religion and medicine offer visions of human well-being and urge people to live as fully and faithfully as possible in the limited time they have, whether by exercising and avoiding smoking and fatty foods or by believing, repenting, and praying.

Given the commonalities of religion and medicine, a persistent issue in American history has been the relationship between these fields. How have these fields intersected, and what convictions and standards should govern their interactions? From a historical perspective, we can discern five eras that have marked the relationship between religion and medicine and affected religious understanding of and approaches to health and disease. First, before and soon after colonial settlements, there was substantial overlap between religion and medicine, sometimes to the point that there was little to distinguish them. Second, through the influence of the Enlightenment and commercial development on eighteenth-century colonists, a stronger demarcation between the realms of religion and medicine developed, coinciding with clearer lines of professional authority among ministers and physicians. Third, shaped by the ideological and social consequences of the American Revolution, the nineteenth century witnessed a democratization of the professions and religious and medical innovations that destabilized the

relationship between religion and medicine, creating an amorphous period marked by the search for authority. Fourth, scientific advances and increasing societal modernization prompted medical professionalization under the banner of science beginning in the mid-nineteenth century and increasing in intensity after the turn of the century, resulting in strictly demarcated religious and medical territories. Fifth, in recent decades, alternative therapies and scientific research at the intersection between religion and medicine have complicated the relationship by raising fresh questions about the body, health, and well-being.

These five periods cannot be precisely delimited chronologically. Instead, they identify significant historical shifts that have occurred over decades. They suggest in broad outlines a pattern of alternation between increasing differentiation of the religious and medical arenas, on the one hand, and significant interpenetration, on the other. Modernization has entailed institutional and cultural fragmentation, but it has also prompted sustained efforts to understand and care for human beings in holistic ways. The periods examined here suggest large-scale changes over time, but it is vital to recognize the thoroughgoing diversity that has characterized the American context. Pluralism in matters religious and medical has marked the American setting from the beginning, so countervailing examples to the identifiable patterns of development could readily be identified.

Overlap of Religion and Medicine among Native Americans and Early Colonists

Native American Healing

Among the Native American tribes who populated North America for centuries prior to sustained European settlements, there existed only limited differentiation between religious and medical activity. Many Indian tribes had no word that translated as “religion.” Spiritual activity and belief was so fully integrated into the daily course of life that it made no sense to identify a distinct sphere as religious, to abstract out of the whole that segment of existence. Additionally, Native American tribes held to a monistic understanding of the world. No basic distinction existed between nature and supernature, since all of life was inspired and the gods and spirits were fully immanent and natural rather than transcendent and supernatural. Just as it made no sense to designate an area of human experience as religion, it was nonsensical to think of the body primarily in materialistic terms. The physical and spiritual worlds were

united and interdependent, so one could not segregate the religious from the medical, the spiritual from the physical. In various tribes, shamans, medicine men, or priests bridged religion and medicine.

Shamans functioned as a primary form of medical care for many Indian tribes. For the Mi'kmaq, a northeastern woodland tribe, shamans entered a trance state and invoked their *manitou* or spirit helper to enable them to supplicate offended spirits and powers. Diseases arose from the violation of taboos, such as those associated with hunting, or from the failure to enact proper rituals, leading angry spirits to visit sickness upon guilty parties. Shamans would diagnose disease and its causation, then function as spiritual intermediaries. Physical ailments had spiritual causation, necessitating an expert who could travel to the spirit realm and parley with the attacking spirits. Through trance voyages, sometimes induced by rigid asceticism or hallucinogenic substances, shamans of various tribes would propitiate the spirits that caused sickness, thus healing the individual and restoring order and harmony to the tribe by renewing its ecological and spiritual equilibrium.

Among Pueblo Indians of the Southwest, such as the Acoma, medicine men blessed newborns with the essential gifts needed to start a healthy and prosperous life as a member of the tribe, thereby enmeshing them in a kinship network shaped by gift exchanges and indebtedness. In their sacred *kivas*, where ritual interactions with the gods created a cosmos by keeping away evil and chaos, medicine men prayed to animal fetishes for power, utilized bear claws and feather plumes to whip away diseases, sucked foreign objects often symbolized by a feather out of diseased bodies, or fought as shamans with witches to reclaim a patient's heart. For the Catawbas of the Carolinas, priests or conjurers utilized herbal medicines and their sacred ritual authority in manipulating spiritual forces to counteract sickness. Disease arose when evil spirits or the shades of the dead entered the body, and priests engaged in rituals to propitiate the spirits and thus produce healing. Priests would draw upon the resources of their natural environments, utilizing river water, fish teeth, local herbs, and feathers. These examples illustrate a common etiology among Native Americans: disease arose from the infiltration of the alien into the body, which produced disharmony; whether physical or spiritual, this alien object or spirit needed to be overcome and removed. Health then entailed a return to harmonious existence, where the previously sick person was restored to right relations within

the human and spiritual community and the natural environment, and the tribe renewed its cosmos.

Early Puritan Medicine

Early European settlers to North America faced stark trials, including famine, warfare, and a new disease environment. The diseases colonists brought with them proved to be the single greatest factor in decimating native populations, but Europeans also had to adapt to major medical challenges. The well-known stories of death and destruction at Jamestown and Plymouth reinforce the enormity of establishing new settlements at such great distance from home and civilization as the colonists knew it, a task that often proved hazardous to life and health.

European settlers brought to America a conception of two distinguishable realms of human endeavor, religion and medicine, each with its designated specialists. As products of Christian culture, Europeans adhered to a worldview in which the natural and supernatural were distinct, even if intersecting at points. Still, in practice there was substantial overlap between the realms of religion and medicine among seventeenth-century colonists, since the sovereign God of creation was the lord of both heaven and earth. Under God's providential care, human health and disease were areas of divine concern and theological reflection. Christians have always prayed to God for relief from disease and suffering and for strength and faith to endure illness and make it meaningful, with varying expectations as to how God might answer such prayers. Like most of the children of the Protestant Reformation, the Puritans held to the doctrine of cessationism, believing that miracles ceased with the end of the apostolic age, since their purpose had been to authenticate Christ and help establish the church. This doctrine served as a bulwark against Catholic superstition and attempts to manipulate divine power. The Puritans believed God's continual agency infused and sustained the material world and that he could act in the world in whatever fashion he chose, but typically he worked in the material realm through secondary causation. If God willed it, he could provide direct healing in an act of "special providence," but the normative pattern was for God to bless human efforts to steward natural resources for improved health and well-being.

Simultaneously, New England Puritans balanced a focus on the natural causation of disease with a tendency to attribute specific diseases to individual or collective sin. Like hurricanes and other natural disasters that Puritans termed "remarkable providences," epidemics or plagues betokened

God's displeasure at human sinfulness, especially the failure of God's people to maintain faithfully their covenant with him. But God's rebuke also brought his invitation to repentance and faith. Increase Mather (1639–1723) recorded stories of such *Remarkable Providences* (1684) to serve as a warning to the spiritually lazy and to detail the extraordinary divine deliverances they entailed. While Puritans recognized two distinct realms of religion and medicine, in belief and practice they overlapped, with the extent depending upon the circumstances. Certainly there was no hard and fast distinction between sickness of the body and sickness of the soul. For instance, "religious melancholy" was an enervating, destabilizing illness that involved wrestling with sin, confessing to God, and seeking his mercy. Today, we would recur to psychological or psychiatric diagnoses and treatments, but Puritan culture had few such resources at hand. More important, while the body served as the temple of the Holy Spirit, it was also the temporary abode for the soul, which had an eternal destiny. Spiritual understanding shaped medical insight and often treatment.

Given this understanding of nature and supernature, physicians functioned in an accepted role in Puritan culture, as was true more broadly in colonial America, but they remained ultimately subordinate to religious understanding and practice. Doctors obtained medical training through apprenticeships, with wide variations in quality. Given the exigencies and limitations of colonial life, physicians were relatively scarce. It therefore fell to ministers, almost always the best-educated members of their communities, to provide some measure of medical care through the distribution of medicines as well as prayers for healing. For instance, Michael Wigglesworth (1631–1705), minister at Malden, Massachusetts, studied medicine and cared for his parishioners' bodies as well as their souls. The work of religious historians David Hall and Jon Butler has revealed the wide popular use in colonial New England of charms, potions, amulets, and other religious items to ward off disease and the demons that caused it. Many early New England settlers believed the material realm could be infused with spiritual portent, and clerical censure of these magical and pagan practices did not prevent common folk from protecting themselves in whatever way seemed efficacious.

A notable episode that demonstrates the overlap between religion and medicine in the early eighteenth century involved Cotton Mather (1663–1728) and Zabdiel Boylston (1679–1766). The leading minister in Massachusetts and the prodigious author of hundreds of books, Mather engaged in

scientific experiments in his spare time. The physician Boylston was a pioneer in the realm of surgery, performing the first known removal of gall bladder stones in America and first excision of a breast tumor. In 1721, Boston faced a smallpox epidemic, and Mather and Boylston promoted inoculation against the disease. Mather had first learned of inoculation fifteen years earlier from his Sudanese slave Onesimus, who had been inoculated as a child in Africa, but his efforts to promote the practice among physicians had failed. As smallpox raged, however, Mather persuaded Boylston to try inoculating patients. Boylston's son and two slaves received inoculations and recovered within a week. In the face of extraordinary public opposition stoked by fears of the alleged poisoning effects of inoculation, Boylston went on to inoculate dozens of patients to good effect, published the results, and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society. Mather and Boylston's experimental efforts suggest the influence of Enlightenment empiricism, the intellectual impact of which increased over the course of the eighteenth century.

Growing Differentiation in the Enlightened Eighteenth Century

Historians have located the early development of American commercial society in the eighteenth-century colonies. Advances in communications and transportation enhanced commercial activity, resulting in significant increases in material goods and a growing segmentation of the social world. Intellectual and cultural developments also promoted this movement toward the differentiation of life into distinct spheres, including those of religion and medicine. Enlightenment thought encouraged rationalism, empiricism, an emphasis on personal experience, and a deep distrust of received authority. Two religious movements with broad influence in the eighteenth century that drew upon these currents were the transatlantic evangelical awakenings, particularly the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s, and the growth of rationalistic religiosity among cultural elites, particularly Unitarianism and deism.

Great Awakening and Methodism

Beginning in the 1730s, the Anglo-American religious world experienced substantial Christian revivals. In England, brothers John (1703–1791) and Charles (1707–1788) Wesley sought to renew Anglicanism through their evangelical preaching. They urged conversion and the second blessing of sanctification through the power of the indwelling Holy

Spirit. Knowing in the depths of their being the reality of Christ, believers were to live with heartfelt devotion and faith. The Wesleys and their many followers in what became known as the Methodist movement preached personal knowledge and appropriation rather than lifeless forms rooted in settled authority. Experiencing the power of God affected the body as well as the soul. John Wesley's personal journal is replete with instances of miraculous healings and answered prayers for improvements in health. Notably, Wesley also distributed medicines and medical advice to those in need and urged his fellow Methodist ministers to do likewise. Wesley went so far as to write a popular textbook on *Primitive Physick* (1747), which contained home remedies for all sorts of ailments. Many colonial American ministers in frontier or sparsely populated regions or those working among the poor followed Wesley's example by trying to alleviate physical suffering and providing limited medical care. Often, as with Wesley, this was accompanied by a stinging critique of overpriced, deficient physicians, who took the money of patients but provided dubious results.

The colonial Great Awakening arose through the efforts of ministers such as Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) and George Whitefield (1714–1770). The brilliant theologian and pastor of Northampton, Massachusetts, Edwards used the Enlightenment thought of John Locke and Isaac Newton to promote evangelical awakening. He preached that sinners received a "new sense of the heart" through God's grace in conversion, which enabled them to know God's love, beauty, and goodness. Whitefield's preaching tours of the colonies created a sensation, as thousands amassed to listen to the famous English evangelist. Critics like Charles Chauncy (1705–1787) cited the Awakening's tendency to take Christianity from the authoritative space of the church into the marketplace and open fields, thereby inviting indecorous and highly emotional behavior. Historians have suggested that this decentralization of Christianity and the accompanying democratization of authority that led to revival preaching from laity, women, and even slaves enabled many Christians to adapt to the increasingly fragmented world of commercial society. Among radical evangelicals, God's present power in the Awakening not only included fainting, trances, and other bodily exercises but also healing miracles. The well-publicized healing of Mercy Wheeler of Plainfield, Connecticut, in 1743, for example, was one of many that encouraged heightened expectations among radical evangelicals and brought rebuke from more moderate evangelicals and ridicule from critics.

Deism and Unitarianism

Even as the Great Awakening prompted some Christians to unite religion and physical health in expectation of miraculous healings, a more culturally influential trend in the eighteenth century moved in another direction. Shaped by Enlightenment rationalism and distrust of orthodox Christianity, figures such as Chauncy and Jonathan Mayhew (1720–1766) turned away from the Trinitarian tradition of their Congregational Church and toward Unitarianism. Additionally, deism grew as a live religious option in the latter half of the eighteenth century, with many of the leading figures of the American founding associated with it. For the fledgling Unitarian movement and for deists, the creator God removed himself from active intervention in the natural world. God ordained nature and its laws, but then withdrew, allowing his finely tuned instrument to carry on according to its own dictates. This effectively removed the divine from the physical realm, including medicine and the body.

Simultaneously, the Enlightenment stress on science and empiricism encouraged scientific study of the human body. The polymath Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) not only invented bifocals and the urinary catheter, he also conducted medical experiments. With moderate to limited success, Franklin tried to assess the effect of electricity on paralysis, epilepsy, hysteria, and melancholia. During his residency in France, he played a key role in refuting the declarations of Franz Mesmer (1734–1815), whose mesmerism utilized magnets to control “animal magnetism” within the body, thereby reestablishing bodily harmony and curing diseases. In 1784, Franklin served with the chemist Antoine Lavoisier and others on a royal commission that investigated Mesmer and found his colossal claims wanting, effectively putting an end to his public career. For Franklin and others like him, human reason, empirical study, and experimental knowledge guided medicine, not dubious metaphysical claims about the agency of unknowable powers.

Another representative figure of the age was Benjamin Rush (1745–1813), signatory of the Declaration of Independence and a prominent physician in Philadelphia. After attending the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) and studying medicine as an apprentice in Philadelphia, Rush received a medical degree from the University of Edinburgh, since formal medical education was still in its embryonic phase in the American colonies. Rush proceeded to become a professor of chemistry and then professor of the theory and practice of medicine at the College of Philadelphia (now the University of Pennsylvania). Rush practiced

the “heroic” medicine common to his day, which relied upon purging, bloodletting, and other evacuations based on Galen’s ancient humoral understanding of the body. Rush pioneered inquiry into mental illness, publishing the first American textbook in the field, which classified different forms of mental illness and speculated as to their origins. In addition to his scientific prowess, medical achievements, and many humanitarian ventures, Rush was a Presbyterian and founder of the Philadelphia Bible Society, who gradually moved away from his hereditary Calvinism towards a universalist understanding of salvation and an ambiguous relationship with institutional religion. Like Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) in matters of church and state, Rush and Franklin adhered to a separation of religion and medicine into spheres that may have united ultimately in theory but remained distinct in practice. Yet as revolutionary stalwarts and founding fathers, they helped unleash social forces that muddied their clear Enlightenment waters.

Democratization and the Search for Authority in the Nineteenth Century

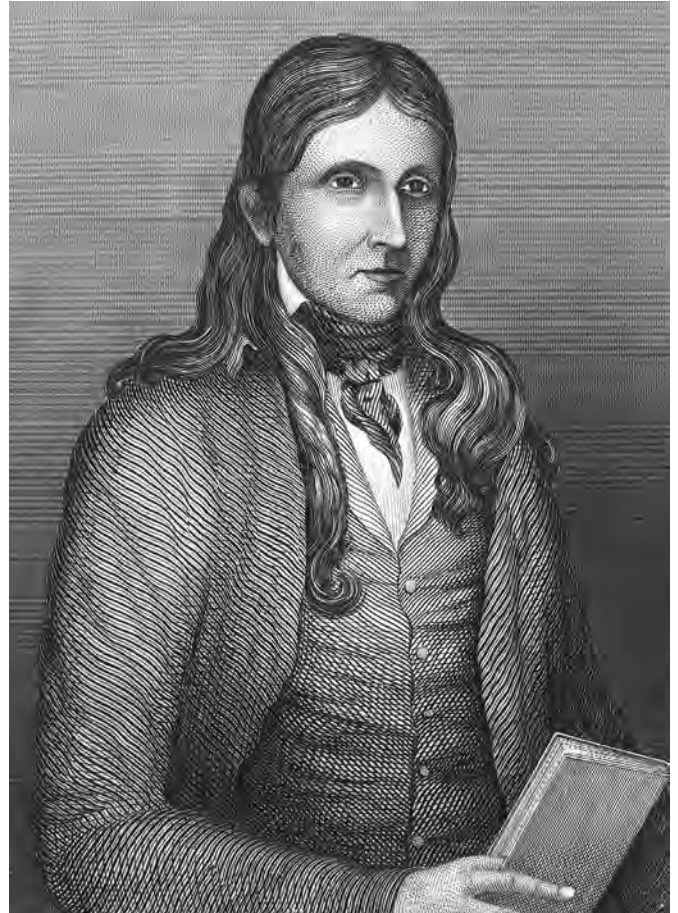
In the wake of the Revolutionary era, common men and women came to believe in their capacities in new ways. Regular people imbibed the message of the Revolution and declared their independence from social hierarchy and vested authorities. The decades after the founding witnessed a remarkable growth of the twin forces of democratization and individualism, which helped fuel the westward expansion of the country by giving rise to a restless hunger for progress and the individual’s belief in the pursuit of happiness. Education, social standing, family heritage, professional standards—none stood against the driving conviction of common folk that they could be and do what they wanted. Social elasticity and the desire to escape the standards and institutions of settled society encouraged a spirit of innovation in religion and medicine, with dozens of new groups and movements that thrived in the early republic. Consequently, the relationship between religion and medicine became more ambiguous in this period, as the colonial push toward standards, rigor, and a differentiated medical sphere that we see in Benjamin Rush became derailed, and new claims for authority arose.

Second Great Awakening

The Second Great Awakening, usually dated from roughly 1790 to 1830, altered the open religious marketplace of the early republic, where success in religion would be

determined by the capacity to persuade and move people, not by social and political power. Revivalists preached a Christian gospel premised on free will and human agency, while vibrant newer denominations like the Baptists and Methodists promoted their evangelical faith. The Methodists especially represented and benefited from the currents of the age. Arriving in the colonies in the 1760s from England, Methodism grew at an astounding rate, becoming the largest denomination in the country by 1830. Through a system of circuit riders, small group gatherings, lay leadership, and strong moral discipline well suited to the challenges of an expanding frontier, Methodism found a receptive audience. Leaders like Francis Asbury (1745–1816) and Peter Cartwright (1785–1872) traveled thousands of miles on horseback organizing expanding churches in far-flung locales. Like their forebear John Wesley, these itinerant ministers often distributed medicines or medical advice to those who did not have access to physicians because of distance or poverty. Perfectly suited to a democratic age, Methodist ministers required no formal training or social stature. No longer would figures like Cotton Mather be seen as authorities by virtue of their advanced learning, wealth, or standing. Instead, the early nineteenth century produced leaders like Lorenzo Dow (1777–1834), whose lack of education was matched only by his lack of decorum. Known as “Crazy” Lorenzo Dow, he preached to crowds of thousands at camp meetings and other revival gatherings, utilizing a full range of emotions and persuasive techniques to draw sinners into God’s kingdom.

Like hundreds of other self-trained preachers, including many women and African Americans, Lorenzo Dow functioned as a physician for some of his followers. Since the medical field also faced the democratic onslaught against hierarchy and professionalism, reform movements abounded in the nineteenth century. Dow, Elias Smith (1769–1846), John Leland (1754–1841), and other revivalist preachers critiqued “orthodox” medicine and favored sectarian alternatives. Religious dissent from the older established churches tended to go hand-in-hand with medical dissent. The universalist Elias Smith worked alongside Samuel Thomson (1769–1843) to promote the latter’s botanical remedies. Natural medicine, they believed, would liberate the people from the tyranny of regular physicians, with their torturous practices of induced bleeding, purging, sweating, and blistering. Rather than relying on calomel and mercury, Thomson turned to the lobelia as a natural emetic, a practice that went back to the Penobscot Indians. Thomson’s system thrived



The nineteenth-century evangelist “Crazy” Lorenzo Dow served in the role of physician for some of his followers. Dow and other revivalist preachers critiqued “orthodox” medicine and favored sectarian alternatives.

primarily through its democratic and individualistic rhetoric; just as in religion and politics, the people should decide for themselves what best served their medical needs. Other advocates for Thomson’s botanical remedies included Mormons, whose founder Joseph Smith (1805–1844) and his successor Brigham Young (1801–1877) urged the use of sectarian medicine in their movement.

Sectarian Medical Innovations

The faith in progress, outsized expectations for human potentialities, and optimistic revolt against received wisdom that fed religious innovations in the early republic also shaped medical reforms. Based on the teachings of the German physician Samuel Hahnemann (1755–1843), homeopathy taught the use of infinitesimally small doses of preparations—achieved through repeated dilutions—that produced

symptoms similar to the patient's in a healthy person. After its introduction in the United States in the late 1820s, homeopathy grew in influence throughout the nineteenth century, producing thousands of practitioners and more than twenty homeopathic colleges by the end of the century. Along with vegetarianism and temperance, dietary reformer Sylvester Graham (1794–1851) promoted foods rich in whole grains and free of chemical additives in the decades before 1850, and his thought eventually had a significant influence on the Seventh-day Adventist movement. Hydropathy, or the “water cure,” flourished in the mid-nineteenth century and following, promising the afflicted healing from all manner of disease through cold water baths, natural springs, wet compresses, and the copious drinking of clean water.

Arrival of Catholicism

American religious and medical pluralism grew through immigration, voluntary or involuntary, as well as through innovation. Catholics began to arrive in the United States in large numbers in the 1820s and 1830s, bringing with them a sacramental theology that stressed the capacity of material objects to be infused with restorative grace. Like other Americans of the nineteenth century, Catholics relied upon orthodox and sectarian medicine to varying degrees. They also drew upon a long tradition of miraculous healing focused on relics, shrines, or apparitions. The “miraculous medal” ensued from a Marian apparition in Paris in 1830; it promised special grace for those who wore it and became associated with unusual healings. Mary appeared again in France, this time in 1858 in the town of Lourdes. A peasant girl named Bernadette Soubirous followed Mary's instructions to dig in the earth, thereby uncovering a spring whose waters have become a source of healing to thousands of pilgrims. Within years of its authentication by the Catholic Church, the healing efficacy of Lourdes water spread throughout the United States by means of the distribution system enacted by the Church of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart at Notre Dame University, which also built a replica grotto for those who could not travel to northern Indiana but not southern France.

African American Healing Practices

African Americans also brought their traditions to America, though their capacity to retain and transmit them was limited by the brutal realities of slavery. On southern plantations, blacks relied upon herbal medicines, often drawing upon the wisdom of the elders to concoct remedies from available

plants. Slaves utilized conjuration—also called “rootwork” or “hoodoo”—to harness spiritual forces for healing and protection or for harming enemies. Relying on monistic African religious traditions, blacks made use of the spiritual and magical forces inherent in animal bones, herbs, roots, and other natural objects. The escaped slave Henry Bibb (1815–1854), for example, described his extensive—and for him ultimately unsuccessful—use of conjure to curse his master and win the heart of his beloved. With their access to regular or even common alternative medicines severely limited, slaves relied upon conjure to assert control over their bodies and their environment and to bring order to life experiences that continually threatened chaos and destruction. The illness experience became more manageable and hopeful with spiritual powers working on the person's behalf.

Professionalization, Modern Biomedicine, and Religious Dissenters

The nineteenth-century proliferation of religious and medical pluralism continued into the latter half of the century and provoked a strong reaction from orthodox physicians, who worked to define their theory and practices as medically legitimate and deny legitimacy to alternative approaches. Scientific advances such as the development of germ theory and associated medical applications in the 1860s and 1870s revolutionized the understanding and treatment of disease, laying the groundwork for vast improvements in public health and hygiene, as well as the development of antibiotics in the twentieth century. Building upon such scientific developments, orthodox physicians sought to professionalize under the banner of science. They increasingly presented themselves as scientists applying the fruits of the laboratory to the human body, whereas alternative practitioners engaged in quackery rooted in greed or ignorance. Success in this endeavor pushed clinical treatment toward scientific standards of depersonalized objectivity. The body came to be an independent organism subject to disease and disorder, remediable through scientifically verified drugs and techniques, rather than an integral part of a complex, whole person.

Modernizing Medicine

Key markers in this transition to modern scientific medicine included the founding of the American Medical Association (AMA) in 1847, the passage of the Food and Drug Act of 1906, and the Flexner Report of 1910. As competition grew from alternative practitioners, orthodox physicians banded together in the AMA to further their interests, define and

protect their turf, and establish professional standards. Although weak at first, the AMA gave physicians an increasingly important institutional presence and voice to promote their agenda and delegitimize alternatives. The Food and Drug Act enacted regulations for the medical marketplace, which had existed for decades as a pharmacological Wild West. A trip to the local chemist shop or apothecary could secure for a sufferer opiates like laudanum or morphine, while an exceptionally wide range of home brews, tonics, and patent medicines contained mercury, cocaine, and other addictive or harmful substances. Finally, Abraham Flexner's lengthy study for the Carnegie Foundation on medical education in North America exposed a dismal state of affairs, in which many doctors received training at third-rate proprietary schools with little scientific grounding. Using Johns Hopkins Medical School as his model, Flexner proposed numerous reforms that helped standardize medical education and move it into the modern era.

Further medical and social developments helped define medicine as a sphere essentially distinct from religion and family. By the late nineteenth century, physicians increasingly relied upon dedicated physical spaces to conduct their professional activity. For centuries the home had been the primary site of illness and healing, but by the turn of the twentieth century doctors' offices with clinical apparatus and hospitals were becoming normal and eventually standard. This had the effect of physically segregating professional medicine from the rest of life, including prayer and religious devotions that occurred in the home. It also limited access to patients from clergy, family, and friends. Illness became less something that was endured at home in the normal course of life than something cordoned off to a delimited realm. This physical segregation of illness reinforced the notion that healing required specialized medical training. Similarly, the rise of the funeral home industry around the turn of the century isolated death and the dead. Whereas families traditionally cared for their suffering loved ones unto death in the home, then washed, dressed, and cared for their deceased bodies while awaiting the funeral, modernization entailed dying in the hospital and embalming at the mortuary. Arguably, these changes further distanced and distinguished health, illness, and medicine from religion. Broader patterns of modernization, as seen in the social, economic, and cultural changes of urbanization and industrialization, contributed to and reinforced this process of fragmentation.

By the 1920s there was a clear cultural differentiation between religion and medicine and a common conviction

that these two realms should remain distinct, even if they overlapped at limited points. Certainly, religious people went on praying for God or the divine to bring healing to their relatives, but they knew to leave the primary care to the doctors and nurses. Even as the great majority of Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and other religious adherents adapted to and supported this changing medical world, a variety of religious innovators dissented from the division of medicine and religion, especially during the major decades (1870–1930) in which this transformation occurred.

Religious Dissenters

Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) spent years as a suffering invalid before discovering the key to health in the metaphysical teachings of Phineas Quimby (1802–1866) and in a radical understanding of the nature and teachings of Christ. Through her book *Science and Health* (1875) and her Christian Science movement, Eddy taught that all reality is spiritual and matter is illusory. This thoroughgoing idealism stressed the oneness of all in God, understood as an impersonal force of love and goodness. Sin, evil, disease, and suffering all proved to be unreal, false notions rooted in wrong thinking. Healing, then, entailed changing one's thinking to reject the illusion of a body in pain and embracing instead the goodness of being.

Such "mental healing" or "mind cure" was also central to the New Thought movement, which in its varied incarnations stressed the unity, goodness, and spiritual nature of all being. New Thought metaphysics taught positive thinking, the law of attraction, the divinity of the self, and a conception of the life force into which practitioners needed to tap. As in Christian Science, healing in New Thought groups such as the Unity School of Christianity and the Church of Divine Science occurred through mental acceptance of metaphysical reality and rejection of false ideas. In the early twentieth century, rabbis Alfred Moses (1878–1956) and Morris Lichtenstein (1888–1938) promoted a Jewish version of New Thought known as Jewish Science, which stressed affirmative prayer and healing through right thinking. Aspects of New Thought have proven extremely influential in American religious life, including in the revival of positive thinking in the 1950s via the teachings of Joshua Loth Liebman (1907–1948) and especially Norman Vincent Peale (1898–1993), whose best seller, *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952), urged millions to associate positivity and good thoughts with health, happiness, and success.

Among radical evangelical Christians, growing numbers of believers relied upon faith healing after 1870 in the context of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements. Arising out of Methodism, the Holiness movement sought freedom from inbred sin through John Wesley's experience of sanctification. Extending the logic of perfection from the soul to the body, some Holiness believers began expecting God to heal them directly in response to the prayer of faith. Faith healing advocates like A. B. Simpson (1843–1919), founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, insisted that what they called “divine healing” was rooted in Christ's atonement. Just as Jesus paid the price for our sins on the cross and we can be forgiven through faith in him, so he paid for our diseases since sickness arises from sin, whether personal or general. Thus, if believers have faith in Christ for it, they assuredly will be healed. Pentecostals from the African American pastor William J. Seymour (1870–1922) to the flamboyant healing evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) taught healing in atonement, urging believers to accept in faith Christ's gift of a restored body. Radical proponents such as John Alexander Dowie (1847–1907), who established a Christian utopian community in Zion City, Illinois, stressed the necessity of rejecting doctors and medicine as agents of the devil seeking to draw believers away from trust in God. As with Christian Science and New Thought, failure to achieve healing arose from the inability of the sick person to change his or her thought or put faith in Jesus, claims that no doubt added to the suffering of many.

Other Communities

Other religious communities fused spirituality and health. Catholics continued to look for supernatural help in times of distress. Among many other options, St. Jude, viewed as the saint of hopeless causes, drew the prayers of thousands after the introduction of his devotion in Chicago in 1929. Letters to his shrine suggest that St. Jude produced miracles of healing for the sick, lame, and depressed. Among Episcopalians, the Emmanuel movement brought together psychotherapy and religious healing in the early twentieth century. Episcopal priests Elwood Worcester (1862–1940) and Samuel McComb (1864–1938) established a clinic at the Emmanuel Church in Boston, which relied upon physicians for medical services as well as New Thought principles of suggestion and positive thinking. Metaphysical thought also helped give rise to chiropractic medicine in the late nineteenth century. Founder D. D. Palmer (1845–1913) based his teachings on vitalism, the idea that a vital spark,

or energy undergirds living organisms. Specifically, Palmer focused on “innate intelligence,” or the inborn vitalistic power that structured, maintained, and healed the human body, which could operate freely when spinal adjustments aligned the spine.

These religious and medical dissenters drew millions of followers, but from the latter part of the nineteenth century through the middle of the twentieth century the demarcation between religion and medicine grew apace. As medicine became more grounded in science it prided itself on being disinterested, data-driven, and specialized. This had the effect of segmenting patient care into ever more tightly defined disciplines. Medical advances such as penicillin demonstrated the undoubted power and success of this modern biomedical approach, but by the last few decades of the twentieth century a growing chorus of critics suggested the costs had been high as well. Advocates of alternatives suggested that in its drive for scientific grounding, biomedicine had sacrificed the art of medicine, thereby losing enormous insights into human health and illness and providing a diminished quality of care.

Renewed Challenges in Recent Decades

Since the 1970s, the dominant biomedical model has faced renewed challenges from alternative medical therapies, which have often been motivated by religious convictions and fueled by increased immigration. Today numerous treatment modalities exist alongside the main biomedical model. As advocates have publicized their critiques of biomedicine and advanced alternatives to the dominant approach, there has been a huge growth in what has come to be called “complementary and alternative medicine,” including therapies that draw upon religion in diverse ways.

Criticisms of Conventional Medicine

Building upon the cultural and social revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, critics of biomedicine have focused on several shortcomings. While recognizing in the main the success of modern medicine in treating certain kinds of diseases through pharmacological advances and improved surgical procedures, proponents of alternative medicine have argued that biomedicine treats patients as detached physical organisms rather than whole persons. It thereby neglects the emotional, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of human experience. Since the illness experience entails a search for meaning and order in the midst of the insult and threat introduced by serious disease, these broader dimensions of

lived experience can and should be involved in meaningful ways in the healing process. By overlooking them, biomedical practitioners neglect the art of medicine and diminish the quality of patient care. Many patients need to be heard as they narrate their illnesses in the context of family tensions, stress at work, grief over the death of a friend, or any number of other experiences that affect health and well-being. Instead of attending to the full lives of patients through empathy and personal engagement, thus assessing their illnesses in a more complete framework, physicians too readily see themselves as scientists attacking a localized physical problem. This criticism of biomedicine has fueled holistic approaches to disease, health, and medicine that seek to understand the body in the full context of personhood, in all its complex and mysterious dimensions, rather than simply as a physical organism driven by biochemistry subject to medical manipulation.

New Religious Healing Movements

The revolution of the 1960s and 1970s stressed liberation from inherited norms, including sexual and health norms that governed the body. New forms of birth control, the legalization of abortion, and a sexualized youth culture promoted sexuality far beyond the marital bond, while the widespread use of illegal drugs promoted a vision of the body as an existential tableau, a realm of experimentation and imagination. Fresh religious organizations flourished, including communes built on new understandings of the body and personhood. For example, the Children of God (today the Family International), organized by David Berg (1919–1994) in California in the late 1960s and early 1970s, practiced unfettered sexuality, including with children. Such new religious movements provoked outcries and significant controversy, but they captured in sometimes extreme forms the ethos of the age. The attack on received authority led many away from the Christianity or Judaism of their upbringing and toward pagan, pantheistic, or other forms of religiosity. Many groups established on these foundations came to be classified as new age or neopagan, and their desire to live in holistic fashion and in harmony with the natural world led them to promote herbal remedies, crystal therapies, and much more. For instance, contemporary Wiccans have located in witchcraft a spiritual home for feminism and holistic living, which includes the use of magic and herbal medicines in matters of health. Since the 1970s, an invigorated vegetarian movement has drawn upon environmentalism and neopagan religiosity to express a

deep concern for the natural world and desire for harmony with nature.

Neopagan and especially new age groups have relied extensively on Eastern religiosity, albeit often in haphazard ways. The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 opened American borders to a massive influx of immigrants from around the world, resulting in significant changes in the religious and medical spheres. Immigrants have brought with them to American shores religiously infused medical therapies, such as the Chinese tradition of acupuncture or Indian treatments based on the concept of chakras. Popularizers such as Deepak Chopra (1946–) have reached millions through best sellers touting the “mind-body medicine” of Asian religious traditions. Among immigrant communities, a wide array of religiously based health practices exist, such as the Mexican Catholic veneration of El Santo Niño de Atocha as a source of healing in Los Angeles or Hmong shamanism in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Along with a growing number of foreign-born neighbors and colleagues at home, spiritual seekers could rely upon huge advances in communications and transportation to access the accumulated wisdom of other cultures.

Herbal Remedies and Fitness

New religious conceptions have contributed to a seemingly endless array of new herbal remedies and therapeutic programs. The unregulated arena of herbal medicines has proven to be a boon for marketers and the bane of many biomedical physicians. St. John’s wort for depression, echinacea to prevent colds, aloe vera for burns and wounds—these and much more are available at the local drugstore. Aromatherapy is based in herbal medicine, using plant compounds and essential oils to produce olfactory healing and mood enhancement. Today’s medical marketplace bears some resemblance to that of the late nineteenth century, with numerous innovations and grand and dubious claims to efficacy. Still, while many physicians initially tried to marginalize alternative medicine, it has grown into a multi-billion-dollar industry and has gained widespread recognition. Its more common designation today, “complementary and alternative medicine” (CAM), suggests that it has achieved acceptance, if not in all of its forms. But a surprisingly wide range of therapies that extend beyond the biomedical model have received marks of legitimacy. Signs of this include the establishment of a National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine under the aegis of the National Institutes of Health and, consequently, the extensive research on CAM that is being done at reputable research universities.

The health and fitness craze has also produced closer connections between religion and medicine. Along with jogging, weightlifting, and aerobics, Americans have turned to karate, tai chi, and other martial arts that often have underlying metaphysical claims. The exercises involved in yoga, for example, entail mental discipline and meditation rooted in Hinduism. Like modern chiropractic, these practices frequently are shorn of their religious implications as they are packaged for popular consumption as exercise programs with health benefits. Still, many practitioners of yoga embrace its metaphysical dimensions. Even as contemporary Americans struggle with obesity, heart disease, and other symptoms of poor health management, they have invested physical health and bodily fitness with quasi-sacred qualities. Iconic images of youthful, muscular bodies, vigorous and beautiful, fill the popular imagination with ideals that remain otherworldly for most Americans. Magazines such as *Spirituality & Health* combine holistic sensibilities with the promotion of health and fitness, while secular publications such as *Self* and *Women's Health* often broach spirituality as they preach physical strength. For those who fail to keep up their athletic and culinary discipline, a massive dieting industry awaits, including Gwen Shamblin's Weigh Down, touted as a biblically based weight loss program.

Faith Healing, Mainline Rites, and Spirituality in Biomedicine

New forms of faith healing also abound, most notably the Word-Faith (or Word of Faith) movement. Such popular television preachers as T.D. Jakes (1957–), Joel Osteen (1963–), and Joyce Meyer (1943–) preach prosperity and health to their followers. Combining aspects of Christianity with New Thought metaphysics, these megachurch leaders and televangelists teach that the power of faith and the words to express it shape reality, including the reality of healed bodies. Just as they believe God spoke reality into existence, as little gods we can do likewise, if we truly believe. Not incidentally, such belief is often signified by sending in a generous donation, since God multiplies our blessings in response to acts of faith. Whether a new car or a healed joint, trusting and proclaiming will lead to possessing. Benny Hinn (1952–) in particular has focused on healing in his Word-Faith ministry, not without a great deal of controversy.

Another substantial development that has reflected the closer connections between religion and medicine is the growth of health-related rites in mainline Protestant,

Catholic, and Jewish communities. With the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the Catholic Church renamed as the “anointing of the sick” the sacrament long known as “extreme unction” and given as part of the last rites to a dying member. This reflected a concern that the church minister to the seriously ill who may yet recover and the belief that the sacrament conveys grace to the suffering. Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, and other mainline denominations have also demonstrated a renewed interest in the health and well-being of their members, reflecting the influence of both the charismatic movement of the 1960s and 1970s and a reinvigoration of their own traditions of ritual concern for the body. For instance, St. George's Episcopal Church in Maplewood, New Jersey, holds weekly healing services in the belief that anointing with oil and the laying on of hands during prayer can channel healing power to sufferers. In addition to the esoteric healing practices of mystical Kabbalah, mainstream Judaism is also rediscovering the healing resources in its traditions and thus offering opportunities for adherents to combine divine and medical resources in fighting sickness.

While biomedical practitioners do not give credence to the more outlandish faith healing claims, and they regard many herbal medicines with suspicion or cynicism, increasing numbers of them recognize a role for religion in medicine. The connections between religion and medicine in promoting health have been the subject of a great deal of scientific study since the 1980s. Pioneers such as Harold Koenig at Duke Medical School and Herbert Benson at Harvard Medical School have discovered substantial health effects for a wide variety of religious practices. Koenig and many others have identified health benefits associated with prayer and spiritual disciplines, regular attendance at religious services, and more. Though not without controversy from medical and religious detractors, hundreds of studies have affirmed in general that religion has a positive effect on health and medical outcomes if it contains a positive conception of the divine; a communal dimension such as provided by a vibrant synagogue, mosque, or church; and strong elements of faith and hope in the power of the divine. Far from being on the medical fringe, the authors of these studies have founded centers for the study of spirituality and medicine at Duke, George Washington, the University of Minnesota, and other first-rate research institutions. Their work has had a profound impact on medical education, leading to the establishment of a curriculum in spirituality and medicine in the great majority of medical schools.

Conclusion

Developments since the 1970s have complicated what had been a fairly straightforward picture of biomedical ascendancy and strict separation between religion and medicine. Americans in large numbers have embraced holism in the realm of health, and they see religion as potentially beneficial in addressing illness. Befitting American pluralism, even in times of religious or medical dominance there have been dissenters from the reigning paradigms. In other eras, like the first half of the nineteenth century and since the 1970s, new innovations and claims rise to such levels that settled assumptions become unsettled and religion and medicine negotiate new relations in an ambiguous, ongoing process. In their various ways, both religion and medicine speak to the deepest questions and largest challenges of human existence, and their relationship will continue to spark interest and controversy.

See also *Abortion; Bioethics; Christian Science; Deism; Enlightenment; Environment and Ecology* entries; *Great Awakening(s); Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Healing; Holiness Denominational Family; Judaism: Jewish Science; Methodists: Tradition and Heritage; Native American Religions: Pre-Contact; Nature and Nature Religion; Pentecostals* entries; *Positive Thinking; Puritans; Science; Scientology; Sport(s); Unitarians.*

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Hindu Tradition and Heritage

Hinduism is considered one of the world's oldest religions, practiced in 2009 by 81 percent of the populations of both Indian and Nepal and a sizeable, worldwide diaspora. Its precise historical origins are indeterminable, given that it has no founder and the very concept is a late-eighteenth-century invention to describe an array of religious texts and devotional styles. Significant sectarian and regional diversity is found throughout the South Asian subcontinent, and various caste groups often also practice quite distinct forms of Hinduism. Scholars have expressed divergent opinions, therefore, about whether it is appropriate to characterize it as a single religion at all, but those arguing for the legitimacy of the concept "Hinduism" point to its fairly bounded geographical identity; Hindus' near universal acceptance of the sacredness of the ancient Vedic texts; and their embrace of a worldview shaped by the concepts *dharma*, *karma*, *samsara*, and *moksha*.

Early Religious Culture in South Asia

Although the specific claims are often controversial, archaeological evidence from the first urban society in India, the Indus Valley or Harappan Civilization (ca. 2500–1500 BCE), suggests the existence of some religious ideas that persist into the early twentieth-first century. A body of literature spanning approximately 1500 to 500 BCE—and collectively referred to as the Vedas—is acknowledged by nearly all Hindus as their sacred and foundational texts. They occupy a distinct class of Hindu literature called *shruti* or "heard," to distinguish them from *smriti* or "remembered," texts. As *shruti*, the four Vedas (the *Rig Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, and the *Atharva Veda*) are regarded as eternal and primordial sound, prior even to the creation of the cosmos, and encountered or heard by the ancient sages called *rishis* rather than composed by them. Each of the Vedas consists of the *samhitas* (hymns) and the commentary, ritual guidelines and explanatory apparatus attached to them. The *Rig Veda* is the most revered and oldest of the four Vedas, although it is

clear that its 1,028 hymns were written over several centuries, likely from 1500 to 1000 BCE. The major theme of the Vedas is the proper conduct of sacrificial rituals that function in a set of reciprocal exchanges between divine beings and humans, who employ Agni, the god of sacrificial fire, as their intermediary. Agni transforms and transmits the substances offered to the gods, who are thereby fortified to maintain natural and social order.

Written in an early form of Sanskrit, the sacred language of Hinduism, the Vedas consist chiefly of hymns to a pantheon of gods, most of whom were incorporated under other names into later Hinduism or came to assume fairly minor roles. The religious culture described in the texts is often referred to as Vedism or Brahmanism to distinguish it from Hinduism proper, which emerged as a synthesis of Vedic and popular practice around the turn of the first millennium CE. Nevertheless, the religious culture of the people who composed the Vedas and called themselves Arya (“the noble”) survives in various guises in contemporary Hinduism. While only the trained religious elite can now understand or recite them, the Vedas are treated with unsurpassed regard by Hindus. Chanted at various daily and life-cycle rites by Brahmin priests, they constitute the backdrop to everyday Hindu practice. The Vedas describe a religious worldview oriented toward an elaborate sacrificial complex requiring the offices of various priestly ritual specialists. *Rig Veda* 10.90 describes an early version of the Indian caste system that protected the purity of these Brahmin priests, the highest *varna* (caste), by a division of labor that apportioned other tasks to Kshatriyas (warriors and royal rulers), Vaishyas (merchants and agriculturalists), and Shudras (servants to the upper three varnas).

Other texts are also included in the Vedic corpus of shruti literature, although all are associated with one of the four major Vedas and considered derivative from them. The Brahmanas and Aranyakas are sets of ritual manuals. A more influential set of Vedic texts for later Hinduism, the eleven principal Upanishads, contains philosophical reflections on the major themes of the Vedas and generally offers monistic interpretations of those themes. The oldest and most important are the *Brihadavanyaka* and *Chāndogya Upanishads*. Composed between roughly 600 and 100 BCE (contemporary with the rise of Buddhism and Jainism), some Upanishads assert that individual meditation on the divine principle within oneself will reveal the identity of the impersonal, universal animating force and principle, *brahman*, with the individual soul, or *atman*. The texts’ focus on individual acquisition of insight is complemented by their description

of a teacher-disciple method of instruction, transmission, and succession. In multiple ways, then, the Upanishads mark a significant and newly philosophical orientation in the emergent Hindu tradition.

While the older Vedic hymns highlighted the complex ritualism of the sacrifice and the ritual status of the priest, the Upanishads underscored the essential identity of all being, and, in de-emphasizing or even challenging the caste system, they suggested the necessity of individual pursuit under the guidance of an initiated teacher or guru. Rather than shifting Hindu thought and practice in a new direction, however, the Upanishads represent an early instance of a well-established pattern in Hindu history: distinct layers of ideas and orientations are successively laid down, each of which contributes to commonly articulated notions and supplies the rationale for various sects and institutions.

The Emergence of Hinduism

As the centuries unfolded, political and textual developments converged that contributed to the emergence of classical Hindu forms and ideas. The appearance of the Mauryan (321–184 BCE) and Gupta (280–550 CE) dynasties forged a political unity in the subcontinent that allowed an emerging cultural cohesion. These and other lineages also contributed to the rise of the institution of the king, who became patron and protector of temples and Brahmans. Codification of Hindu social and moral codes followed, and Hindu legal texts called the Dharmasastras were composed. Chief among them was the *Manusmriti*, or *Laws of Manu* (ca. 200 BCE–200 CE). These texts detailed such matters as the roles, obligations, and status of distinct caste groups; gendered codes of conduct; the performance of life-cycle rites; and purity and pollution regulations.

The two major Sanskrit epics of the Indian subcontinent were also composed and disseminated in these periods. The epics articulate and enshrine values that informed Hindu culture for centuries. Continuously retold and reinterpreted in vernacular texts as well as folk and classical performances, and undiminished in popularity to the present day, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* have long been cultural reference points for all Hindus.

In just under fifty thousand lines of verse, the Sanskrit *Ramayana* tells the story of the righteous king Rama whose wife, Sita, is abducted while Rama is serving a self-imposed fourteen-year exile in the forest. Her captor, the ten-headed demon king Ravana, had fallen in love with her and held her at his palace on the island of Lanka

(modern Sri Lanka), hoping to win her affection there; but while captive, Sita remains steadfastly faithful to her husband until he rescues her with the aid of the Hindu monkey god, Hanuman. The themes of kingship and the duty of the king to protect his subjects and preserve virtue in his kingdom are woven throughout the tale. Also understood to be an incarnation of the god Vishnu, Rama represents the ideal king and model husband, while Sita embodies the paradigmatic virtuous, chaste, and beautiful wife. Hanuman, with his fierce and selfless dedication to the couple, suggests the attitude of an ideal devotee.

The *Mahabharata* presents a set of more morally complex and ambiguous characters than the *Ramayana*. At nearly one hundred thousand verses, its main narrative is supplemented by multiple storylines and subplots, and its cast of characters is immense. The primary narrative depicts the rivalry and eventual war between two sets of paternal cousins, the five Pandava brothers and the one hundred sons of their uncle, King Dhritarashtra. As sons of the deceased former king Pandu, the Pandavas are rightful heirs to half of the kingdom of Bharata, but in a fixed dice match, the eldest, Yudhishthira, gambles away their right to ascend the throne to their cousins, the Kauravas; and they are forced into exile, along with their common wife Draupadi, for thirteen years. When they return after fulfilling the complex terms of the agreement, Duryodhana, the eldest of the Kauravas and the Pandavas' chief antagonist, balks, sparking a horrendous eighteen-day war. Treachery and rage that defy the code of warrior conduct are displayed by both sides, and the eventual result is a Pandava victory at tremendous human cost. Save the Pandavas themselves, nearly every combatant and all the children of Draupadi are killed.

At the center of the *Mahabharata* is one of the world's most famous sacred texts and among the most influential works in Hindu literature, the *Bhagavad Gita*, or Song of God. It takes the form of a dialogue between Arjuna, the third Pandava, who is leading his brothers and their armies into battle, and Krishna, an avatar of the god Vishnu, who acts as Arjuna's charioteer. When Krishna drives Arjuna onto the battlefield to survey the troops arrayed on either side and Arjuna sees kinsmen and his gurus among the enemy, he experiences a moral crisis and failure of resolve. In a series of exchanges that outline fundamental concepts of the Hindu worldview and moral imagination, Krishna convinces Arjuna that it is not only his caste duty to fight this war to the just conclusion that will install the rightful kings to the throne but also that

only by doing so will he perform his duty to protect order in society and, by extension, the cosmos.

The period of epics also saw the first textual codification of the philosophy and practice of yoga, the *Yoga Sutras*. Seeking spiritual liberation from thoughts bound to the instabilities of experience and memory through the discipline of the mind surely dates back at least to the early Upanishads, with some evidence locating such practices as early as the *Rig Veda* or Indus Valley Civilization. Buddhism and Jainism share closely related ideas and practices. The *Yoga Sutras*, attributed to the Sanskrit grammarian Patanjali, form the basis for numerous later commentaries, sectarian schools, and guru lineages that cultivate meditative practices.

Particularly as a result of the social stability and political unity established in South Asia by the Gupta Empire, the pantheon of classical and contemporary Hinduism was developed alongside the mythology that depicted the offices, personalities, and narratives of the deities. The Puranas are compendia of myths, royal genealogies, and cosmologies that shaped the beliefs and practices of theistic, devotional Hinduism and helped spawn the culture of temple worship of major deities in the regional kingdoms of the medieval period that succeeded the breakup of the Gupta Empire. The Puranas celebrate the powers of the major deities of the Hindu tradition, Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, while also sketching a complex cosmos populated with *devas* and *asuras* (gods and demons) and the qualities and tales of some goddesses such as Lakshmi and Parvati, consorts of Vishnu and Shiva, respectively. By extolling the glory and power of sacred sites such as Allahabad, where the Ganges and Yamuna Rivers converge, and Kashi (also known as Benaras and Varanasi), the holiest and most ancient Hindu site on the Ganges River, the Puranas promote a concept of the sacred geography of India and the practice of pilgrimage to its various sites of divine manifestation. There are eighteen major and eighteen minor Puranas, each articulating a sectarian loyalty to Shiva or Vishnu and the other deities associated with them. The rise of regional kingdoms and their courtly patronage of pilgrimage sites, temples, and religious institutions further promoted *bhakti*, or devotion to a particular chosen deity, in line with the Puranic concept of multiple divine personalities and manifestations.

Modern Hinduism

Due to social and political forces introduced by European colonialism, the nineteenth century was a period of significant developments in Hinduism. The preaching of

Christian missionaries, the spread of English education, and the Hindu encounter with Enlightenment rationalism contributed to the emergence of uniquely modern forms of Hindu expression. Explicitly monotheistic Hindu sects appeared, claiming their roots in the true teachings of the Vedas. Raja Rammohan Roy (1774–1833) formed a society that came to be known as the Brahmo Samaj in 1828 to promote the nonidolatrous and congregational worship of a single universal God.

Dayananda Saraswati (1824–1883) based his Arya Samaj (“Noble Society,” founded 1875) on a radical reforming program that rejected the personal deities and myths of the Puranas, as well as the devotional practices such as pilgrimage, in favor of his vision of a pure Vedic religious reverence for an impersonal, all-powerful God. Dayananda aimed to forge a reformed and monotheistic Hinduism as a force to counter aggressive Christianity and Islam. Both the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj advocated social reforms alongside religious reforms, advancing such causes as female education, the abolition of *sati* (the immolation of Hindu widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands), and the rejection of the caste system.

Later nineteenth-century movements such as the Ramakrishna Mission, whose founder, Swami Vivekananda, captivated the Chicago Parliament of World Religions in 1893, showed another face of modern Hinduism: a global and universal religious outlook that preached the unity of all religions and the relevance of a Hindu worldview to all modern peoples. Each of these organizations illustrates how colonialism inspired the “Semiticization” of Hinduism, whereby literate and elite Hindus, as a result of contact with Western as well as Islamic religious ideas and institutions, began to articulate a set of rationalized and coherent principles as the basis of a global Hinduism that might compete on similar terms with the great monotheistic traditions. The twentieth-century fruits of these movements included exclusionary forms of Hindu nationalism that oppose Muslim and Christian influences and inclusionary global outreach to non-Indians in forms such as the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) and the Transcendental Meditation (TM) movement, which introduced many westerners to Hindu practices beginning in the 1960s and 1970s.

Central Hindu Concepts

A particular set of concepts provides a common reference point for most Hindu worldviews, although Hindu

interpretations of these ideas vary widely and there are points of sharp disagreement. *Dharma*, or religious duty; *karma*, the cosmic law of moral cause and effect; *samsara*, the cycle of rebirth according to one’s karma; and *moksha* or *mukti*, the eventual liberation of the soul from repeated rebirth, together constitute a general framework for understanding Hindu religious traditions.

Dharma encompasses the wide-ranging obligations each Hindu has toward the gods, the Hindu tradition, family, and society. The scope of dharma is wide: for Hindus, religious duty stretches to every element of one’s life and relationships. Dharma is specific to individual circumstances and often, as in Arjuna’s dilemma in the *Bhagavad Gita*, difficult to discern. Traditionally it is said to consist of the duties incumbent on one’s caste identity and station in life (student, householder, retiring forest dweller, renunciant approaching death). Gender is also a major component, as the traditional dharma of women is to support and nurture the dharma of their husbands.

Karma is the notion that all deeds include their own consequences, generally experienced in a future birth. It is less a doctrine of reward and punishment than a principle that no act is without ramifications, positive and negative, or “fruits,” which one cannot avoid experiencing. Inscrutable because unseen directly, the precise workings of karma have been the subject of much historical debate. One common conception is that the eventual blossoming of all karma will exhaust it; another is that total accumulation of merit and demerit determines the specific birth of an individual soul, from the basest animal form to the highest caste and even beyond in heavenly realms.

Samsara refers to the cycle of rebirth according to one’s karma through which every soul must pass, and moksa is the eventual release from this cycle, experienced by every soul once the karma that binds it to rebirth is expended. Many Hindus believe souls may reside for times in heavens or hells between births, and many imagine moksa as a sort of heavenly state. Among the more philosophically inclined, however, moksa is a blissful absorption into the universal spirit in which individual experience and identity dissolve.

A common Hindu claim is that “all paths lead to God,” meaning that any religious discipline adopted sincerely and pursued rigorously is conducive to spiritual advance. This idea is the source of what many Hindus and non-Hindus alike describe as the “tolerance” that is a central value of the tradition. Practically and historically, it has often meant that Hindus have accepted the legitimacy of all other religions

and have not adopted conversionary practices, although some modern groups have more recently developed conversion and reconversion rites. Hinduism itself names four paths that one might pursue within the tradition itself, each appropriate to those with particular inclinations and dispositions. The path of knowledge, *jnana yoga*, appropriate for the intellectually inclined, consists of the study of texts and meditation upon their meaning; the path of devotion, *bhakti yoga*, involves theistic devotion to particular gods and goddesses; according to *karma yoga*, the path of action, one performs one's dharma without attachment to the outcome or consequences of that action; in *raja yoga*, one pursues meditative practices to achieve moksa.

Like the pantheon of contemporary Hinduism, Hindu concepts of time emerged in the Puranas, which depict repeated, endless cycles of creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe with no teleological purpose or culmination. Each cycle of the universe proceeds from a golden age, the *Krita Yuga*, in which humans enjoy long life spans and in which piety and pursuit of dharmic duty are the norms, through a decline to the fourth era, the *Kali Yuga*, corresponding to our current age, in which corruption and impiety are rife. Each of the four ages is successively shorter, as decay accelerates, until the entire cycle—conceived as a single day in the life of Brahma—is brought to an end in order that a new cycle may begin.

The caste system is often believed to be a central component of Hinduism, and historically, Hindu practice has been closely correlated with caste, although the religious elements of caste have been eroding since India gained independence from Great Britain (1947), and caste has become more a marker of social and political identity. The classical caste system first described in the *Rig Veda* outlines the nature of four *varnas*. Although the ancient varna system remains the reference point for what caste means, and most Indian communities associate themselves with one of the varnas, when Hindus refer to their caste, they most often refer to a more narrowly defined birth group called *jati*. There are estimated to be three thousand *jatis* in India, but the number is uncountable, as names vary from region to region, there may be disagreement about what distinguishes one *jati* from another, and there is no institution that attempts to catalogue them. *Jatis* are endogamous birth groups associated with a traditional occupation such as potter, merchant of particular materials, or specific lineage of priest.

Few Hindus at the beginning of the twentieth-first century practice their traditional caste occupation. *Jatis* are

ranked hierarchically according to relative ritual purity, although there may be strong disagreement about the rank of any with respect to another in a given area. Theoretically each *jati* belongs to one of the Vedic varnas or is designated a *Dalit* or Scheduled Caste, those once known as *untouchables* and called by Mohandas Gandhi *harijan* (children of God). In orthodox and traditional Hinduism, performing one's caste occupation and accepting its hierarchical rank and privileges, its rights, responsibilities, or limitations, was an important dharmic duty. Adopted in 1950, the constitution of independent India outlawed both discrimination on the basis of caste and the practice of untouchability, but caste remains a social and political force in much of India, and in some rural places, it still rigidly segregates communities. Lower-caste Hindus including Dalits may act as religious specialists and administrators, but often for deities considered inferior to the major gods of the Hindu pantheon, whose temple priesthood remains the province of Brahmins and who are worshipped by Hindus of all castes.

Hindu Concept of the Divine

Hinduism envelops six schools of philosophical thought and a great number of popular sects and traditions, each with its own particular understanding of the nature of the divine and its relationship to humans. A general characterization of the most common understanding would emphasize the unity of all being, divine and otherwise, and the worship of that divine unity in the multiple forms that the various gods of Hinduism represent. The pantheon of popular Hinduism is vast. An oft-cited passage of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* begins to suggest the complicated nature of the question, "How many gods do Hindus worship?" placing the number as high as 330 million or as low as one (3.9.1).

The pantheon within twenty-first-century Hinduism, while rooted in the Vedas and taking shape during the Puranic period, continues to evolve. For example, the goddess Santoshi Ma, originally a creation of the 1975 feature film *Jai Santoshi Ma!* and the post-Independence Indian nation itself, has her own temples and images. One tradition teaches a "trinity" of main Hindu deities. It names Brahma as the creator god who initiates each cycle of universal creation, Vishnu as the god who preserves the universe through its evolution and decline, and Shiva as the god of destruction and transformation who brings the world to an end and aids its dissolution into its primordial form in anticipation of a new cycle of creation. Most Hindus worship the major deities as well as local and regional gods at appropriate times

and places while maintaining a principal ritual and personal relationship to one.

The god Shiva is renowned for his ascetic practices and the power that he continuously acquires and displays as a result of those practices. He is generally pictured clad in a single cloth with matted locks of hair, with the begging bowl and staff favored by wandering ascetics and some representation of the Ganges River goddess, whose descent to earth Shiva softened by absorbing its force with his head, in his hair. He is generally worshipped, however, in the abstract cylindrical form called the *linga*, which represents the raw creative power he possesses. Vishnu is depicted in more regal clothing, often with the multiple arms of some Hindu iconography. The mythology of Vishnu describes ten “avatars,” or earthly incarnations that Vishnu has taken to confront specific threats to dharmic order on earth or in the heavens. He is frequently worshipped in these specific forms. A particularly popular avatar is Krishna, a figure who first emerged among pastoralists in north-central India. His mythology features well-known stories of his mischievous childhood and amorous youth among the *gopis* (cow-herding women) who adored him. A second popular avatar of Vishnu is Rama, hero of the *Ramayana*, generally depicted with a bow and often with his wife Sita.

Most Hindus acknowledge some form of the Hindu goddess Devi, each of which embodies the divine feminine energy called “*shakti*.” Devi is worshiped both as the mother of the world—a source of life and bounty—and in innumerable specific manifestations. Some of these specific goddess figures are local deities, often village protectoresses or locally malevolent forms requiring pacification. Others are pan-Hindu deities. Well-known forms who show the fierce demon-destroying capacity of unbridled female energy are Kali, often pictured with lolling tongue and necklace of human skulls, and Durga, who defeated a buffalo demon and is depicted riding a lion and armed for battle. Other goddess figures embody *śakti* in its tamed and harnessed state and are paired with male deities as their wives or consorts: Parvati with Shiva; Saraswati, the goddess of learning, with Brahma; and Laksmi, goddess of wealth and prosperity, with Vishnu.

Two other Hindu gods are among the most commonly worshipped today. Ganesa is the beloved elephant-headed god who is son of Shiva and Parvati and the “Lord of Obstacles,” the deity who can remove obstructions to the completion of social, professional, or ritual goals. Ganesa is, therefore, often worshipped first in major rituals and at the outset of any major undertaking. Hanuman, the monkey god first seen in the *Ramayana* and renowned as the model

devotee for his unflinching loyalty and service to Rama and Sita, displays his strength and martial discipline that also makes him patron of wrestlers, athletes, and, today, those advocating a more confrontational, “muscular” Hinduism.

Temple, Home, and Pilgrimage

As Hinduism accommodates a wide spectrum of belief, participation in Hindu ritual is typically a more important indicator of piety than belief in specific doctrines. Much Hindu ritual takes place in the home and centers around the family, and most Hindu homes have a room or area set aside for ritual. These typically host many gods of the Hindu pantheon, and families may also have a particular family or lineage deity to whom devotion is offered. Daily worship, called *puja*, is conducted early in the morning and perhaps at other times of the day to images of the gods. These *murtis* are believed to house the spirit of the deity, making him or her, in effect, a guest in the home. Foodstuffs are offered to the murti and incense and lamps are waved before it, accompanied by the chanting or singing of verses and prayers. The daily devotions of Hindu women are often performed for the welfare of other family members as an element of their dharma. Puja is also performed in small and large temples by priests of the Brahman caste. Temples are dedicated to a single god or goddess, but usually with shrines to other deities in addition to the central shrine. Deities in temples are awakened in the early morning, bathed, fed, and entertained at specific times throughout the day. Devotees may come to a temple on days of the week or during festivals specifically sacred to that deity, who may also oversee a particular area of life in which a devotee seeks assistance.

Hindu sacred geography depicts the Indian subcontinent itself as a giant site of divine manifestation. The strong ties that many Indians living abroad (Non-Resident Indians, or NRIs) continue to feel can be partly attributed to the sacred character of the land. Hinduism does not require pilgrimage as Islam does, but major temples, mythological sites, and features of the natural landscape are common sites of Hindu pilgrimage throughout India. Tirupati in south India is one of India’s most visited and wealthiest temples, hosting tens of thousands of visitors a day who offer their hair in fulfillment of vows. Managing these visitors, their needs, and the hair they offer requires a vast infrastructure and administration. Pilgrimage sites in the Himalayan Mountains, including the glacial sources of the Ganges and Yamuna rivers, also see hundreds of thousands of pilgrims a year from all over India.

The Ganges River, called Ganga by Indians, is the single most sacred feature of all Hindu geography and a goddess in its own right. Emerging out of a glacier high in the Himalayas, it descends through the mountains to enter the plains at the important pilgrimage city Hardwar. Flowing through and irrigating much of the north Indian plains, its most famous site is the ancient city of Benaras, also called Kashi and Varanasi, where many Hindus aspire to die to achieve rapid liberation. Hindus believe bathing in the Ganga cleanses one of all past sin. Its intrinsic divine nature is associated with the goddess's descent from the heavens.

All Hindus undergo a series of important life-cycle rites called *samskaras*. These extend from conception to death and beyond, as the living continue to nurture the souls of departed ancestors. Samskaras not only mark transitions in the course of an individual life but aim, through ritual, to affect the development of the person by obstructing malign forces while channeling auspicious ones and impressing the soul with particular marks and characteristics. The most important and widely practiced samskaras include a child's first haircut, the male child's initiation and donning of the sacred thread that marks the entrance of the upper three castes into religious adulthood, marriage around a Vedic fire pit, and the funeral ceremony, in which the body is cremated and the soul sent on the first stage of its journey to the next life.

Hindu Nationalism

As the British Raj entered its final decades, Indian nationalist sentiment was inspired principally by two personalities. Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), the architect of nonviolent resistance he called *satyagraha* (“clinging to the truth”), gave the emergent nation a spiritual leader who urged India to embrace its religiously diverse heritage. Jawaharlal Nehru sketched the secularist and socialist vision that would shape the Indian state and later became India's first prime minister. The Indian constitution came to institutionalize their ideals by declaring a secular principle for handling religious diversity. Called “Mahatma,” or “Great Soul,” Gandhi preached a set of norms that many have since associated with modern Hinduism: a nonviolent stance toward other life, including that of one's enemies; a tolerance of all religions; and a rejection of the practice of untouchability.

Although less well known at the time, Hindu religious nationalism had its birth at the same moment in resistance to Gandhian and Nehruvian ideals of secularism and tolerance. Naturam Godse, Gandhi's assassin, was associated with several Hindu nationalist groups. In the outcry following the

assassination, the movement retreated underground and slowly grew from a radical grassroots movement to a strong political force by the 1990s. Espousing an ideology distilled into the movement's watchword, *Hindutva*, or “Hinduness,” Hindu nationalism identifies the Indian nation not with secular democracy but with the purported Hindu character of the history, culture, and land of India. Historically and ideologically related to early-twentieth-century fascisms, radical Hindu nationalism claims that Indian culture is fundamentally Hindu in character and that members of nonindigenous religious such as Christians and Muslims are foreigners with correspondingly reduced social standing and political rights. Hindutva politics aims to confront and diminish non-Hindu influences in government and society on the basis of the charge leveled by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, one of Hindu nationalism's founding thinkers, that non-Hindus, whose holy lands were in the Middle East, would never feel absolute loyalty to India.

The Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), founded in 1925, emerged as the grandfather of allied Hindu nationalist organizations, which are grouped together under the name Sangh Parivar, or “Family of Associations.” The RSS is active abroad under the name Hindu Swayam Sevak Sangh (HSS). The other Hindu nationalist organization prominent outside India is the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), whose primary goals are the strengthening of Hindu society and the cultivation of Hindu identity among Hindus living outside of India. The political party representing Hindu nationalist ideals in electoral politics in India is the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which rose to prominence in the 1989 Lok Sabha (lower house) elections. It has formed the government three separate times in India, most significantly in 1999 to 2004, when it lasted its full five-year term. Together, the BJP and VHP agitated for the destruction of the sixteenth-century Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, claiming it had been constructed on the site of the Hindu god Rama's birthplace. The destruction of the mosque in December 1992 led to rioting and Hindu–Muslim violence throughout India but further underwrote the Hindu right's fortunes. Disputes over the fate of the Ayodhya site, often led by Hindu nationalist organizations, have spurred Hindu–Muslim violence at several points since then, most notably in 2002, when a train car carrying Hindu activists back to their homes from the site was burned at a station in the west Indian city of Godhra, killing fifty-eight Hindus. Violence responsible for the deaths of over one thousand more, the great majority Muslims, quickly spread through the state of Gujarat.

Hinduism in the Diaspora

Hinduism has spread outside South Asia due to a series of historical developments stemming initially from Western colonialism. During the period of British rule, indentured Hindu laborers emigrated to such other parts of the British empire as the Caribbean, South Africa, and East Africa. In these places, Hinduism has now long existed and thrives, largely independently of ongoing contacts with India. Immigration to other parts of the world, especially the English-speaking countries of Europe and North America, occurred after World War II and Indian Independence (1947) and consisted largely of educated and professional workers. A significant number of Hindus also emigrated to Persian Gulf states to work in the oil industry beginning in the 1970s.

Hinduism in the diaspora shows important continuities with Indian tradition but also many innovations and transformations. The historical adaptability of Hinduism to changing cultural and social circumstances continues to contribute to the development of fully indigenized forms of Hinduism in more recent host countries. In Trinidad, Canada, and the United States, for example, temple architecture has evolved to cultivate congregational worship and Sunday school-like education more reminiscent of Christian and Jewish religious practice than Hindu practice in Indian temples, which emphasize individual worship. In its newer homes, Hinduism has tended to shed deities, practices, or ideas specific to regional or caste groups and to emphasize the broader, pan-Hindu features that immigrants from different castes and regions might have in common. In such places, the November festival of Divali has developed into the major holiday of the Hindu calendar, a time at which temples hold large religious and cultural programs that also serve as cultural outreach and education, with many temples advertising the programs to the general public. In areas such as Toronto and Atlanta, where much larger numbers of Hindus now live, temples and religious centers that cater to more regional or sectarian Hindu groups are increasingly common.

Among late-twentieth and early-twenty-first-century waves of professional classes of Hindu immigrants, nostalgia for their Indian homeland, the desire to transmit the Hindu tradition to the next generation, and the proud display of Indian religious traditions in their adopted homes have also produced significant effects in India itself. One of the founding aims of the VHP had been to nurture Hinduism

abroad; and in diaspora temples, many of which it founded itself, the VHP has been active in programming and fundraising as well. These transnational contacts have provided a reliable source of funding and organizational support for Hindu nationalist causes in India.

See also *Architecture: Asian Religions; Buddhist Tradition and Heritage; Devotionalism; Hinduism in North America; Jainism; Krishna Consciousness; Transcendental Meditation.*

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Hinduism in North America

Hinduism, the largest religion in India, includes a wide range of texts, philosophical positions, deities, and practices. Philosophical components of Hinduism generally develop from interpretations of texts such as the Upanishads, a collection of writings attributed to ancient spiritual teachers, and address issues such as the relation of humanity to the rest of the cosmos. For centuries, spiritual teachers, known as gurus, have presented their philosophical interpretations and taught meditation and other practices that foster the spiritual understanding that the philosophies highlight. Since 1893, when the first guru visited the United States for Chicago's World's Parliament of Religion, gurus have added to America's religious landscape. Beyond philosophy, devotional practices focus on various gods and goddesses, which some texts describe as different manifestations of one universal spirit. Although some early gurus in the United States emphasized devotional practices, the increasing immigration of Hindus from India after changes in immigration law in the Hart-Celler Act in 1965 increased the prominence of devotional practices in American Hinduism. These diverse elements add significantly to the religious complexity of American communities, sometimes fostering positive relations and sometimes facing opposition.

Early Influence of Hinduism in America

The influence of Hindu texts and philosophical approaches first entered the culture of the United States in a prominent way through American transcendentalism, which arose in New England in the first half of the nineteenth century. Transcendentalists drew inspiration for their critique of contemporary American society and Christianity from translations of Hindu texts that emphasized the monistic principles of Hinduism and the conception that human perception of reality is an illusion. Most notably, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) and Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) both refer to the Vedas, considered the oldest texts in Hinduism, and the philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita*, a central Hindu devotional and philosophical text. Emerson incorporated aspects of Hindu thought into his own writings, including reincarnation and the unity of being in Brahman, the universal spirit. Thoreau also related his withdrawal from society to the austerity and contemplation that he derived from English translations of Hindu texts and the practices of Hindu ascetics.

The 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago brought teachers of various Asian religions to the United States. Most famously, Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902) presented the concepts of Advaita Vedanta, a Hindu school of philosophy that emphasizes the unity of all in one universal spirit, and received an enthusiastic response. Desiring to spread Vedanta, Vivekananda toured the country for two years immediately after the Chicago Parliament and then again in 1899 and 1900, gaining many followers. He established the first Vedanta Society in New York City in 1894 and also taught in other cities across the United States. Although Vivekananda died in 1902 in India, Vedanta Societies continued to develop, as other teachers arrived from India, including Swami Paramananda (1884–1940), who established Vedanta Societies in Boston and Los Angeles. Vedanta Societies in California also built the first Hindu temples in the United States, in San Francisco in 1906, in Hollywood in 1938, and in Santa Barbara in 1956. Their emphasis on philosophical interpretations of Hindu texts differs from the centrality of devotional practices in later Hindu temples in the United States.

Other gurus came to teach their conceptions of Hinduism in this period. Soon after the turn of the twentieth century, Baba Premanand Bharati (d. 1914) spent five years lecturing about devotion to the Hindu god Krishna and establishing societies focused on Krishna in New York City and Los Angeles, though these communities did not survive his death. In 1920, Swami Paramahansa Yogananda (1893–1952) participated in an international conference on religions in Boston, Massachusetts. He then remained in America to spread his methods for attaining spiritual understanding through the Self-Realization Fellowship, which continued to propagate his ideas after his death.

Hindu Influence in the Mid-1900s

Continuing in the model of Vivekananda, in the 1950s, Chinmayananda (1916–1993) began the Chinmaya Mission Worldwide to spread the conceptions of Vedanta beyond India. Spending considerable time in the United States, he developed an *ashram* in California in 1979, known as the Shri Chinmoy Center. Branches of the Chinmaya Mission continue to meet across the United States. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1917–2008) similarly brought his spiritual practices, known as transcendental meditation, to Hawaii in 1959, which he then carried to the mainland United States.

Although these gurus spread their specific interpretations among their followers, other Hindu ideas influenced American history more broadly, most notably through the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968) adapted the philosophy of Mahatma Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869–1948) and the Indian independence movement that had opposed the British rule of India. Gandhi's concept of nonviolent noncooperation, which King adapted to the American struggle, drew largely on Gandhi's interpretation of Hindu teachings about nonviolence and nonattachment to the results of actions, which primarily comes from the *Bhagavad Gita*, along with ideas Gandhi adapted from Christianity and other religions.

Expansion of Hinduism in America since 1965

As an outgrowth of the civil rights movement, the United States Congress passed the Hart-Celler Act in 1965, which removed the European bias from immigration policies and allowed more people of Asian heritage to immigrate to the United States. Over time, this change altered the ethnic, cultural, and religious composition of the United States.

Immigration law favored immigrants from India and elsewhere who were either highly educated or entrepreneurs with capital to invest in new businesses. Such restrictions, combined with the aspirations and hard work of those who came from India, has resulted in Indian Americans' earning one of the highest per capita incomes among ethnic groups in the United States.

Along with their economic success, many Indian American families, who are predominately Hindu, have established religious practices in their homes, often using a shelf, a kitchen cabinet, or a corner of a room to create a home shrine that contains statues and pictures of various gods and goddesses. One or more family member may conduct rituals at the shrine daily to honor the deities, request blessings, and express gratitude. The rituals include offerings of flowers, water, a lighted oil lamp, and food while chanting and singing devotional hymns.

The home often becomes the center point for special rituals celebrating life events and festivals. Specific rituals for life events often involve the services of a priest. Although some immigrants have learned particular rituals and perform them for other families on a volunteer basis, formally trained priests from India have also immigrated to serve as temple priests and to perform home rituals. In areas without a local priest, families sometimes hire a priest from another city to perform rituals. Many festivals in India and the

United States involve family members reciting particular texts and performing special rituals, along with a family meal, all within the home. In the context of migration, festivals also have become important opportunities to gather with other families with the same heritage, celebrating together with rituals, food, music, and dancing.

Hindu Temples in America

Although Hindu home rituals and festivals in America reflect practices in India, many Indian Americans have expressed a need for religious institutions that instill in their children knowledge and pride about their heritage. Temples also match the symbolic place of a church for American Christians, making their commitment as Hindus more recognizable to other Americans. In many cities, informal home gatherings to socialize and express religious sentiments became the foundation for the formation of a temple. Hindu immigrants in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, were among the first immigrants to create a temple in America. They met occasionally in homes to sing devotional songs before deciding to form a temple. In the mid-1970s, the community purchased a church building and established a cultural and religious center where Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs performed their own rituals. Conflicts arose, however, as some Hindus wanted a formal temple with full-time priests. They formed a second temple, which they dedicated to Lord Venkateswara, a manifestation of Vishnu, with statues ritually installed in 1976. This split followed regional differences, as the second temple adopted South Indian architectural and ritual forms, including bringing artisans from South India to complete sculptures on the temple, and attracted many South Indian Hindus, although many immigrants from North India focused on the original religious center. With its traditional architecture, the Venkateswara temple in Pittsburgh became one of the first temples in the United States to resemble large temples in India. Major temple building projects began in the next few years in other urban centers with significant immigrant populations, including Flushing, New York (1977); Houston, Texas (1979); Malibu, California (1981); and Chicago, Illinois (1983).

Observers often organize Hindu temples in America into multiple categories. Pan-Indian temples incorporate Hindu traditions from across India; regional temples emphasize the language, architecture, and ritual forms of a specific region; and sectarian temples promote the teachings of a guru or branch of Hinduism. Many cities, like Pittsburgh, have multiple temples that often develop out of an initial pan-Indian

temple. However, the dynamics within Hindu communities are unique to each context. The Raleigh, North Carolina area, for example, has a significant population of successful Hindus who began meeting in homes in the 1970s. They purchased a Jehovah's Witness church to create a temple in 1980 and constructed a temple and community center, known as the Hindu Bhavan, in 1986, to meet the needs of the growing community. In contrast to the Venkateswara temple in Pittsburgh, the Hindu Bhavan's exterior does not resemble North or South Indian temples. The Hindu Bhavan also includes a range of gods and goddesses, selected by community members, to create a pan-Indian temple with an open shrine that allows members to approach the images without the assistance of a priest. Although the split in Pittsburgh occurred when the original temple was still in a formative stage, the Hindu Bhavan remained largely united for almost fifteen years. However, as the community continued to grow, regional and sectarian commitments gained strength. Some South Indians, dissatisfied with the informality at the Hindu Bhavan, established a Venkateswara temple in 1999 that followed the example of the Venkateswara temple in Pittsburgh in its architectural plans and ritual commitments. Interestingly, some of the leaders of the Venkateswara temple maintained amicable relations with the Hindu Bhavan, which they identified as a cultural center. A sectarian temple that focused on the Swaminarayan guru movement from the Gujarati region of India also developed in the area.

Hindu temples in the United States are not limited to major urban areas. Because of economic and employment opportunities, some immigrants, especially medical doctors and hotel owners, live in medium-sized cities and small towns. Although the lack of an Indian American community in an area posed an initial challenge, continued immigration to even many small cities has created a critical mass of Hindus who can conduct Hindu rituals and Indian American social activities on a periodic basis. As with the example of Pittsburgh, the desire to establish a Hindu temple increases as the size of an area's Hindu community grows. After meeting in homes for years and traveling to other cities to visit a temple, Hindus in



The Sri Venkateswara Swami Temple in Malibu, California.

Tuscaloosa, Alabama, converted a house into a temple in 2007. New temples continually develop in the United States, both in major cities with existing temples and in smaller cities without any temple.

Practices outside Temples and Homes

Even with the formation of temples in an area, a range of Hindu events continue outside of the temples. Beyond the family rituals in homes, many guru movements hold weekly or monthly gatherings in homes to sing devotional songs, recite passages from significant texts, and listen to a recorded

discourse by their guru. Although earlier guru movements primarily attracted non-Indians, many movements now attract exclusively Indian Americans or a mixture of followers. Many Indian American participants in these movements immigrated to the United States without much exposure to the particular guru movement and began attending because the regular gatherings were in their area. Individual Hindu immigrants, therefore, do not simply re-create activities from their experiences in India but discover new personally meaningful elements within the diversity of Hinduism in America.

Indian festivals also provide an important expression of Hinduism outside of temples. Although many temples conduct special activities for festivals, regional associations organize the majority of the festival commemorations, following their particular region's traditions. Regional associations sometimes use a temple's facilities but often create a temporary Hindu site in hotel banquet rooms or community centers. Activities generally include special rituals associated with the festival, musical and dance performances, and food. With various regional associations in larger cities, many American cities have multiple celebrations of popular Indian festivals. Indian American communities also celebrate Indian political holidays, such as Indian Independence Day on August 15. As many communities use these occasions to showcase Indian culture to non-Indians, expressions of Hinduism are often important elements in these festivals as well.

Guru Movements since 1965

A number of gurus among the immigrants since 1965 have followed the model of Vivekananda, bringing their interpretations of Hinduism and universal spirituality to non-Indians. However, the relation of many guru movements to Hinduism remains ambiguous, as some gurus reject that label and incorporate ideas from other traditions into their teachings. In 1971, the leader of the Divine Light Mission, Prem Rawat (1957–), came to the United States to expand his father's movement. After internal difficulties with members of his family, he made the movement more universal and eliminated much of the obvious Indian influence on his practices, while still emphasizing meditation and inner peace. In 1983, he changed the movement's name to Elan Vital, which he continues to lead. Migrating to the United States in 1981, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (1931–1990) brought his ideas, along with many non-Indian followers who had joined him in Pune, India. Rajneesh emphasized a universal spirituality and revised traditional Hindu practices, such as asceticism, by incorporating concepts from a range

of Asian and Western religions. With his migration, some of his followers established Rajneeshpuram, an intentional community in Oregon. The extreme dedication of his followers, who lavished gifts on him, and radical elements in his philosophy brought media scrutiny and an antagonistic relationship with the broader society. When Rajneesh revealed the criminal activities of his appointed emissaries, who were taking control of his movement, the Oregon community dissolved, and Rajneesh was soon after deported on charges of immigration violations.

Perhaps the best-known Hindu guru movement in the United States is the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), commonly known as the Hare Krishnas. In 1965, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada (1896–1977) came to the United States at the behest of his guru to teach non-Indians about ecstatic devotion to Krishna. Although commonly viewed as the founder of a new religious movement, Prabhupada was initiated into a lineage of gurus who emphasized devotion to Krishna as the way to deepen spiritual consciousness and escape rebirth in the world. Arriving in New York City, Prabhupada attracted young people who were disaffected from American society. He established his first center in New York City in 1966, from which the movement expanded over the next decade. ISKCON has temples in numerous cities and agricultural communes in some rural areas. The movement, however, has experienced opposition on several fronts. Persistent efforts of some followers to solicit money and to spread Krishna consciousness in airports led to local restrictions, which the Supreme Court upheld in 1992. Also, family members of some converts opposed ISKCON, expressing concern about the changing lifestyle of devotees who became ascetics, leaving family and careers or school. Despite being targeted by anticult efforts, ISKCON continues to have a significant presence in the United States and has incorporated Hindu immigrants in some ISKCON temples.

Tensions in Ethnically Diverse Movements

Indian American Hindus and non-Indian converts converge in some guru movements, often creating complex dynamics in their local centers. The Indianapolis Sai Baba Center follows a Hindu guru who has claimed to be a manifestation of God and who considers his teachings beyond Hinduism. Founded in the mid-1980s, the center originally attracted European Americans who met together in homes. In the 1990s, the center began to grow, attracting more Indian Americans, who eventually dominated the membership. The

increasing prominence of specifically Indian practices coincided with a decline in non-Indian members, possibly because Indian practices made the center less appealing to non-Indians. A similar tension is visible in many ISKCON temples. Prabhupada founded a temple in Atlanta in the early 1970s with a significant number of African Americans and European Americans. By the mid-1990s, the temple attracted similar numbers of Indian Americans and people of non-Indian heritage. As many of the non-Indian converts, with their countercultural views, valorized the act of renunciation and lived on the temple premises to devote themselves to Krishna, many professionals within the Indian American community expressed frustration over the financial burden that the renunciants created. Ironically, the non-Indian converts had adopted a traditional Indian valorization of asceticism, although many Hindu immigrants reflected contemporary American attitudes towards the material world that many converts had specifically rejected when they joined the movement. Such tensions relate to the contrast between Hindu immigrants, who often participate in temples to promote cultural heritage generally, and non-Indians, who commit to the teachings of a specific guru, especially as both Sai Baba and Prabhupada considered their movements beyond Hinduism.

Americanization of Hinduism

The influence of American culture on Hinduism extends well beyond such tensions in particular movements. Since many Hindu temples in India depended on major historical donors, not contemporary visitors, most Hindu immigrants were not accustomed to supporting temples financially. Most temples have established membership dues to provide basic funding for operations, along with fees for specific rituals. Although temples generally emphasize individual and family worship in temples, as in India, and therefore have a priest available at regular hours, some communities have created more congregational forms. The Vedic Center in Greenville, South Carolina, for example, depends on volunteers to open the temple every evening and perform the ritual with whom-ever can join them at the specified time. Hindus from the Caribbean also continue their distinctive traditions by gathering on Sunday mornings to sing devotional songs and conduct the community-wide rituals. Most temples also adjust their schedules to coordinate with the American calendar. Festivals are often conducted on the nearest weekend to the traditional date, and times for important rituals, such as the laying of a foundation stone or the consecration of a

new statue, are set according to both the traditional astrology of India and the American work calendar.

Many Hindu immigrants specifically link the development of temples to the need to provide a positive religious and cultural identity for their children. Hindus in America have also developed programs to educate their children, who grow up separated from both a majority Hindu society and extended family members who traditionally provide informal religious education in India. Many temples, guru movements, and other Indian American organizations provide religious, cultural, and language classes for children, loosely on the model of Christian Sunday schools. Despite the communal gatherings, membership lists, and weekend classes, most temples do not constitute a congregation in the Christian sense of expecting an exclusive commitment. Some Hindus remain members of multiple temples, and many participate in a wide range of activities, including visiting different temples.

Relations between Hindus and Non-Hindus in America

Various controversies have occasionally created problems for Hindus in America. In addition to disagreements over conflicting understandings of Hinduism, some Hindus oppose the efforts of guru movements to convert non-Indians, asserting that conversion to Hinduism contradicts a Hindu concept that all religions lead to the same supreme being. Some Hindus also fear that efforts to convert non-Hindus heighten tensions with the broader American society. Several guru movements with non-Indian followers, in addition to ISKCON, have faced opposition from Christian anticult movements, which both reject the conversion of young people from Christianity and fear subsequent lifestyle changes and complete submission to the guru. Accusations of criminal activity and misconduct have also arisen within specific movements, heightening the controversies. In addition to Rajneesh's arrest, misconduct by the non-Indian successors to Prabhupada in ISKCON, including charges of murder, and accusations of sexual misconduct against several gurus have fed negative stereotypes of gurus among both Hindus and non-Hindus.

Such tensions and controversies are not the only type of encounter between Hinduism and non-Hindus in America. Many temples have maintained amicable relations with the larger community. The common Hindu assertion that conversion to Hinduism is unnecessary can reduce opposition to the presence of Hinduism in America, and the

professional relationships between Hindus and non-Hindus also foster positive interaction. One neighbor of the Hindu Bhavan in Raleigh, North Carolina, who maintained his Christian and American identity by displaying flags in his yard, actively assisted the temple, largely because a Hindu cardiologist had saved his life.

Concerns about the attitudes of Hindu children towards Hinduism have also spawned efforts to challenge representations of Hinduism in the United States. The Hindu American Foundation and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP; World Hindu Federation), among other organizations, have fought what they identify as biased anti-Hindu presentations by scholars of Hinduism and educational institutions. In California, some Hindus challenged the State Board of Education over a sixth-grade textbook's representation of Hinduism. Their efforts received support from many educators over the removal of some demeaning representations of Hinduism. Disagreements, however, remained, as some Hindus attempted to alter discussions of more controversial elements of Hinduism and the history of India generally to create a more sanitized image, although others, Hindu and non-Hindu, found the requested changes distorting.

The VHP of America, a component of a global organization that promotes a contemporary understanding of Hinduism, is perhaps the most famous organization promoting the political power and positive image of Hinduism. In its effort to display the unity and political power of Hindus throughout the world, the VHP emphasizes a narrow version of Hinduism that some Hindus reject. Because of its prominence and political activism, some fear that the VHP's version of Hinduism will become the standard view among future generations of Hindus in America.

The VHP and similar organizations also work to secure symbolic recognition of the Hindu presence in America. On September 14, 2000, and July 12, 2007, Hindu religious leaders led the opening prayer for a session of the U.S. Congress and Senate, respectively. When some expressed disdain for the inclusion of non-Christian religions, the VHP and other organizations praised the inclusion, emphasizing the concept of religious liberty. The VHP of America has also pressured the U.S. Postal Service to issue a stamp commemorating the Hindu festival of Divali.

Some have also opposed yoga, a practice commonly associated with Hinduism that has become a common form of contemplation and exercise in the United States. According to Hindu traditions, yoga should combine physical exercises with meditative disciplines and moral control to

gain spiritual understanding. In the United States, some of the spiritual and moral components are often neglected in favor of the physical and mental elements of the yogic postures. Nevertheless, some non-Hindus object to the use of yoga within schools and other contexts because they associate it with Hinduism. Among immigrant Hindus, other forms of yoga, involving more philosophical elements also influence their practice of Hinduism.

Despite the challenges of establishing Hinduism in the United States, Hindus and Hinduism have become a significant component of the multireligious landscape of the United States. Over the course of the twentieth century, Hinduism has moved from a curiosity to a physical and human presence in cities of many sizes. Its cultural influence on the United States is even broader, ranging from American transcendentalism and Martin Luther King's nonviolent philosophy to common practices and understandings at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

See also *Architecture: Asian Religions; Buddhist Tradition and Heritage; Devotionalism; Food and Diet; Hindu Tradition and Heritage; Immigration: Since the 1965 Immigration Act; Jainism; Krishna Consciousness; New Religious Movements: Twentieth Century; Sikhs; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends.*

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Hispanic Influence

The dominant character of religious cultures in the United States has always been shaped, in large measure, by the religious traditions of immigrants and displaced migrants. While early immigration to the nation was largely of European origin, this changed dramatically during the course of the

twentieth century. In 1965, the signing of the Hart-Celler Immigration Act phased out the national origins quota system that favored European immigration. With a pen stroke, a new era of mass immigration began where the most common point of origin for newly arriving peoples became Latin America and the Pacific Rim. And as these groups have introduced their forms of faith, the religious landscape of the United States has been radically and permanently changed.

In 1980, the U.S. Census Bureau counted slightly more than fourteen million Latinos in the United States. By 2000, the Latino/a population stood at thirty-five million, and it is estimated that by July 2005 it had grown to forty-two million. While these figures are remarkable, they are likely conservative due to the difficulty of tracking populations with circular patterns of migration across the most frequently crossed border in the world. As of 2009, 64 percent of the nation's Latino/a population were of Mexican ancestry; another 10 percent were of Puerto Rican background; and about 3 percent each were of Cuban, Salvadoran, and Dominican origins. The remaining 17 percent were of other Central American or South American origins. This population is greater than the entire population of Canada or that of the most populous U.S. state, California. And although investment in the idea of a North/Latin divide between the Americas is still common, the United States is close to becoming the third-largest Spanish-speaking nation in the world. Today the impact of Latin American culture on American religious life is profound and undeniable.

On many levels, Latino/a individuals, families, and communities have been the loci of extraordinary cultural blending and transformation. They have been the agents through whom hybrid religions and religious practices such as *Santería* and *Curanderismo* have come to flourish in the United States. And once arrived, they have also altered religious traditions and impacted institutions in the United States in innovative ways, in order to meet new challenges and circumstances. Though majority Catholic, they have also adopted Protestant Christianity and Mormonism in large numbers, with sometimes subtle and sometimes radical transformative effects on those faiths. Furthermore, the religious life of Latinos often also exists beyond traditional institutional forms and includes a host of devotional practices, personal beliefs, and social conventions that challenge easy categorization. The contribution of Latinos to the broader religious life of the United States is long-running and multifaceted; it is shaped by experiences of migration, discrimination, economic hardship, war, and other powerful social forces.

War and Migration

Following Mexico's independence from Spain (1821), opportunities for travel and commerce opened along the nation's northern frontier, resulting in some of the first significant religious encounters to occur between the religious cultures of the United States and those of Latin America. Initially migration ran principally from the United States towards Mexico, as considerable numbers of American farmers and merchants settled in Mexican Texas and California. These individuals were required by Mexican law to convert to Catholicism as they and their families became American-Mexicans. The establishment of the Santa Fe Trail provided another early point of contact. In combination with the Chihuahua Trail, it became a bustling international conduit for commercial and cultural interchange running nearly three thousand miles from Mexico City to Franklin, Missouri. But shortly after its creation, this same trail provided a route for the American invasion, conquest, and occupation of Mexico's northern territories during the Mexican American War (1846–1848). And this transformation of Mexico's North into the United States's Southwest initiated a number of long-running clashes around issues of religious and cultural difference.

Clergy-Laity Tension and Circular Migration

Some of the earliest and most significant of these conflicts came about as a result of the uneasy relationship between American Catholic clergy and Hispano laity in New Mexico. Historically, clergy had been sparse in the region, and, as a result, the piety of the region's ethnic Mexican population was characterized by the prominent role played by laymen and laywomen in the creation and perpetuation of religious traditions. However, following the war, Jean Baptiste Lamy (1814–1888), the first American Catholic bishop of New Mexico, implemented a host of reforms aimed squarely at curbing lay influence, centralizing religious authority, and Americanizing religious practice. Lamy's reforms were resisted by powerful Hispano penitential confraternities as well as the few remaining ethnic Mexican clergy, most notably Father Antonio José Martínez of Taos, who was excommunicated by the bishop for his opposition to the imposition of a tithe and a number of other disagreements. Lamy was ultimately successful in limiting the power of the local-born clergy by recruiting French priests and nuns from across the Atlantic, whenever possible, to staff his growing New Mexican Church. This

bias became so ingrained that Catholic clergy of the state were overwhelmingly of French origin until the early 1970s, effectively keeping Latino/as from positions of higher authority within the American Catholic Church for more than a century.

However, this form of exclusion encouraged the continuation of devotional practices outside of institutional structures that are typical of Latino/a religious life and have come to be celebrated as folkways central to the region's identity. Chief among these is the centuries-old Santero tradition of manufacturing and reproducing religious art with a long-established vocabulary of stylistic forms. These religious *bultos* (statues) and painted *retablos* typically depict images of holy persons such as Jesus (as the infant Santo Niño de Atocha or as the Man of Sorrows), the Virgin of Guadalupe, and a host of saints. This form of ethnic religious art-making flourished in the United States during the twentieth century as a result of the piety and autonomy of the laity, and also in part because of the efforts of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Artists' Project during the Great Depression to document and portray this spiritual aesthetic as a regional American tradition.

Similarly, eighteenth-century colonial Spanish and Mexican mission church architecture had a profound influence on the creation of the signature architectural styles of the American Southwest in the twentieth century. And these same churches, predating annexation by the United States, came to serve as historical landmarks and markers of regional identity in American civic culture.

Though native-born ethnic Mexican populations in the Southwest formed a foundational Latino/a presence in the United States, migration from Latin America to the United States escalated around the turn of the twentieth century as a consequence of the Spanish American War (1898) and the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920). Following the war with Spain, continuing American political intervention in Puerto Rico and Cuba provided the impetus for the formation of the first sizable émigré communities from the islands in the United States. And Mexican immigration to the United States increased dramatically during the 1910s and intensified even further with the explosive growth of agribusiness in the American West in the 1920s. Census data show that between the years 1900 and 1930, the Mexican-born population of the United States grew from 103,000 to 1,400,000, with the largest waves of immigration occurring in the 1920s and dramatically marking the first large-scale arrival of Latin American culture to the United States.

Although a great number of Mexico's Catholic clergy went into political exile in the Southwest during the 1910s and 1920s, Mexican participation in American Catholic services remained low, but domestic piety in the form of home altars and prayer groups remained as common expressions of faith, much as it had for earlier Catholic immigrant groups. The proximity of the Mexican border and the speed of rail travel further limited incentives to actively assimilate or convert. These factors, combined with racism and segregation, resulted in fairly insular Mexican and Mexican American communities in the early twentieth century. Even though by 1928 Los Angeles had the largest Mexican-born population of any city outside of Mexico, from 1910 to 1930 only one in ten Mexican nationals in the United States applied for permanent residency or citizenship.

In the 1930s, global economic depression fanned the flames of anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States and spurred the creation of a repatriation program designed to rid the United States of foreign-born Mexicans. But beginning in 1942, just five years after the end of these campaigns and as a result of the advent of World War II, the U.S. government initiated a bilateral labor agreement with the Mexican government to recruit desperately needed workers. This agreement, known as the *Bracero* program, brought more than five million Mexicans, mostly men, to the United States. Although most *Braceros* would eventually return to Mexico, their presence greatly increased the size of the nation's Mexican American communities. More importantly, the *Bracero* program firmly established a circular pattern for Mexican immigration to the United States that would last through the rest of the twentieth century: during times of plenty, Mexican laborers would cross the border; and during lean times, they would return to Mexico—resulting in prolonged exchanges between Mexican and American religious cultures and a renewal of lay traditions.

Cursillo Movement

In the midst of this expansive growth of Mexican cultures within the United States, the American Catholic Church launched its first concerted outreach programs among Latino/as. Easily the most influential Catholic campaign of the mid-twentieth century was the *Cursillo* movement. Originating in Majorca, Spain, in 1947 and arriving in the United States a decade later, the *Cursillo* has had a great impact on Latino/a religious life. Participants in the *Cursillo* would undertake three-day “retreats” for religious renewal and dedication. And although the clergy would often

participate in organizing the retreats, the aim of the *Cursillo* was to stress greater responsibility among laypersons in the maintenance of the church and their own spiritual lives. This reinforced the extant pattern of Latino/a religious practice taking place in the home, but it also inculcated a broader commitment to social justice. Thus, the *Cursillo* movement also had a significant impact on the larger American culture because it fostered social activism among Mexican Catholics. The movement can be credited with influencing Catholic civil rights leadership; César Chávez of the United Farm Workers (UFW), for example, became a *Cursillista*.

With the advent of the civil rights movement in the 1950s, Mexican Americans witnessed African Americans' successes through demonstrations, picketing, and direct confrontations with racism. By decade's end, they began to emulate these tactics in both the political and religious spheres. In 1965 César Chávez headed the first attempts by Mexican agricultural workers in California to unionize under the banner of the UFW. During Lent in 1966, members of the new union undertook a three-hundred-mile march of "Pilgrimage, Penitence and Revolution," from Delano to Sacramento, under the banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe and both Mexican and American flags. The use of this most Mexican image of Mary by the UFW was an expression of ethnic identity and also a strategic use of symbolism to counter accusations of communist agitation. Criticism of the union helped to foster communication and dialogue between field workers and American Catholic clergy as both sides reached out to each other—union leaders seeking protection from cold war nativism and a new generation of activist clergy seeking to participate in the moral project of the civil rights movement.

Urban Transformations

While many cities in the southwestern United States have had significant Latino/a populations since 1848, migration from Latin American in the twentieth century has had a transformative effect on the religious life of nearly all of the nation's major urban centers. Puerto Rican and Dominican immigration began a sharp rise in the 1950s, with most of these migrants settling in the Northeast and the greatest populations arriving in New York. It is significant that as a result of Puerto Rico's status as an autonomous commonwealth of the United States, Puerto Ricans are born American citizens. Therefore all Puerto Ricans, unlike other Latino/a immigrants, arrive already naturalized. By the late 1990s, they were largest Latino/a group in New York City

and among its fastest-growing immigrant populations. Slightly over a decade later, the Bronx had a majority Latino/a population, and the borough's Catholic, Pentecostal, and Mainline Protestant churches all commonly offered Spanish-language services. In areas of particular Latino/a density, many churches, especially small storefront churches, still conduct worship exclusively in Spanish. As is typical of most Latin American ethnic groups, Marian devotion often serves as an ethnic marker, with veneration of the *Virgen Santa de la Providencia* common among Puerto Ricans and of the *Virgen de la Alta Gracia* among Dominicans.

In 1959, just prior to the Cuban Revolution, the number of ethnic Cubans in the United States was estimated to be 124,000, about 30,000 of whom resided in Florida. For the next three decades, hundreds of thousands of Cubans left Cuba and began a new life in the United States, with the majority settling in and transforming Miami. There have been four distinct waves of Cuban immigration to the United States since the revolution in 1959. The first was an initial wave of post-Castro exiles; the second was the airlifts of 1965 to 1970; the third was the Mariel boatlift in 1980; and the fourth, from the mid-1990s to the present, has seen more than 40,000 arrive by water vessel. While earlier migrants were typically fleeing Cuba for political reasons, more recent migrations have been fueled by declining economic conditions as well.

In 2009 there were more than a million persons of Cuban descent in the United States, and almost 80 percent of those born in Cuba and 64 percent of those born in the United States identify as Catholic. Fourteen percent of Cuban migrants and 10 percent of U.S.-born Cubans follow some form of Protestantism. Most Protestant Cubans belong to mainline Protestant denominations; however, there are increasing numbers of Cuban American Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Seventh-day Adventists. This growth mirrors the growth of these churches throughout Latin America. The Jewish Cuban community, while small, is also a visible part of Miami's religious landscape.

Santería and Court Cases

The most recent waves of migrants from Cuba have renewed and expanded the presence of Afro-Latin religion in the United States, principally through the popularization of *Santería* (also known as *Lukumí*). This tradition is a centuries-old hybrid of Yoruba (West African) and Spanish Catholic religious beliefs, symbols, and rites. Adherents of *Santería* seek the protection and guidance of the *orishas*,

powerful spirits and ancestors, who manifest themselves in healing rituals and possessions and are sometimes offered animal sacrifice. This aspect of Santería practice has caused considerable controversy in the United States, most famously when leaders of a Santería congregation challenged a municipal law prohibiting animal sacrifice.

In the late 1980s, the city council of Hialeah, Florida, was faced with public concern that the Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye had leased land and was planning to establish a church, school, and cultural center within city limits. In an effort to forestall the practice of animal sacrifice, the city passed an ordinance that forbade the “unnecessary killing of an animal in a public or private ritual or ceremony not for the primary purpose of food consumption.” The church argued that this violated their First Amendment rights to freely exercise their religion. After a series of legal challenges, the case of *The Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye v. City of Hialeah* was heard in 1993 by the U.S. Supreme Court, which ultimately ruled that the law against ritual animal sacrifice was in fact unconstitutional. Moreover, this case had the effect of making Santería a more broadly recognized faith in the United States.

The unique experiences of all generations of exilic Cubans make the interconnections between religion and the politics of migration more explicit than for most other Latino/a groups. In November 1999, five-year-old Elián Gonzales, his mother, and twelve others left Cuba on a small boat intending to make the ninety-mile trip to seek asylum in the United States. Elián’s mother and ten others died in the crossing, but he and two others survived at sea, floating on inner tubes until they were rescued and turned over to the U.S. Coast Guard. The ensuing political battle between the exilic Cuban American community in Miami and the Cuban government transformed the young boy into a powerful political and religious symbol. Among adherents of Santería, Elián’s miraculous journey came to be viewed as proof alternately that he was the personification of the orisha Elegua, the patron spirit of travelers, or a child of Ochun, the patron of the sea. Cuban Christians often allegorically referred to his crossing as being like that of Moses in the Red Sea, from bondage into freedom, and there were a number of sightings of the Virgin Mary above the Miami house he stayed in with his extended family. Ultimately, Elián was returned to his father in Cuba, sparking large protests among Cuban Americans and a political backlash by these crucial swing voters against Al Gore in the 2000 presidential race.

On the West Coast, migration from Latin American has similarly had a considerable impact on American religious culture. Activism on the part of Latino/as would help to foster a series of reforms within the Catholic Church, such as the elevation of the first Latino bishop, Patricio Flores (in 1970) and the spread of the Spanish-language mass. However, lay practice has continued to be the vibrant heart of Latino/a religious life; and transformations in religious culture that would touch the daily lives of ethnic Mexicans also occurred outside of the church, principally through innovations in the expression of religious visual culture through the spread of the Chicano/a mural movement beginning in the early 1970s.

Muralism

The production of public murals offered a medium through which ethnic Mexicans could visually articulate their own religious and cultural iconography beyond institutional settings and, in so doing, employ these sacred icons to distinguish the urban spaces they inhabited and claim them as their own. Among the first ethnic murals in Southern California were those painted in the early 1970s at the Estrada Courts and Ramona Gardens housing projects in East Los Angeles. Resident youths, often talented gang graffiti taggers, were recruited by social activists to work collaboratively with artists to create art that set up a political and religious dialogue with the surrounding city. Murals began to proliferate very quickly, becoming a commonplace element in barrio streetscapes that had previously been demarcated principally with stylized gang graffiti. By the end of the 1970s, many of the city’s housing projects would be home to hundreds of murals depicting religious images, such as the Virgin Mary, the Crucifixion, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus, side by side with portraits of Aztec and Maya warriors, Mexican revolutionary leaders, and contemporary civil rights leaders (such as César Chávez, Luis Valdéz, Reies Tijerina, Martin Luther King Jr., and John F. Kennedy), as well as banners spelling out messages of social uplift.

The combination of religious and political imagery made murals a locus for the expression of the experiences and conditions endured by the community. All at once, murals functioned as communal markers and, through their presentation of religious imagery, as responses to suffering. As such, they regularly became devotional and commemorative sites. While depictions of Jesus, particularly as the man of sorrows, were common, no image better conjoined the assertion of

Mexican ethnic presence and religious practice than that of the Virgin of Guadalupe.

The ubiquity of this Marian image, as well as the multiplicity of forms in which it is reproduced, speaks to the power of the symbolic link to Mexico that Guadalupe provides ethnic Mexicans in their creation of homes in the United States. As a result, the public places where Guadalupe is displayed, particularly though the public medium of muralism, can become sites that represent the spiritual hearts of their respective communities.

The continued longevity of these devotional mural sites, as well as that of many others like them, speaks to the success of early muralism as a nexus of Latino/a religious and political praxis. As the mural movement evolved in metropolitan areas with large Latino/a populations such as Los Angeles, San Diego, Chicago, El Paso, and San Antonio, Chicano/a art became a regular feature of American city streetscapes. Throughout the late seventies, murals became popular in civic renovation or so-called Barrio Beautiful campaigns that attracted support from municipal budgets, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act. However, with the election of President Ronald Reagan in 1980, federal funding for these projects was abruptly terminated. And though this decline in financial support marked the end of many community mural programs, the remarkable productivity of the movement had succeeded in firmly establishing a tradition of ethnic vernacular art with a strongly religious cast.

The clergy's recognition and embrace of religious murals created by lay practitioners speaks to the dramatic change in the relationship of the church to Latino/a parishioners, perhaps most explicitly in Latino/a majority cities such as Los Angeles. According to the 2000 Census, nearly half of the population of Los Angeles is Latino/a, and one in three Angelinos is an ethnic Mexican. And these figures do not include the bulk of the city's undocumented population. As a result, in the past forty years, Catholicism in Los Angeles has been transformed. Currently, more than 60 percent of the four million lay members of the Archdiocese are Latino/as, all seminarians are required to learn conversational Spanish, and Spanish-language masses are offered in 187 of its 287 churches. The lived religious consequences of these institutional changes are made clear in the nearly universal presence of Guadalupan shrines in Catholic churches throughout Southern California. At the very center of the city, in the plaza of the original pueblo, the Our Lady Queen of the Angels Church, or "*La Placita*," is home to a large-scale

outdoor tile mural depicting Guadalupe that spans the entire side of the church. Prayer vigils and public devotion in the form of flowers and candles are a constant. And every December 12th, the mural serves as the backdrop for the largest celebration of Guadalupe's feast day in the city, with thousands in attendance. Similar large-scale celebrations are now occurring across the nation, from processions in New York City to candlelit vigils in North Carolina.

Continuing Contributions

Many reforms instituted in the late 1960s by Vatican II, such as the vernacular mass, provided powerful new methods for outreach in ethnic parishes. In the early 1970s, Spanish-language services became increasingly popular and took inventive new forms, such as the "mariachi mass" that featured Latino/a musicians in the performance of the liturgy. And immigrant traditions have been revitalized and in some cases re-imagined with the church's blessing. For instance, Chicano/as have popularized the Mexican tradition of *El Dia de los Muertos*, which like the Feast of All Saints honors the ancestral dead, and it has been incorporated into the liturgical calendar of many parishes and has become a centrally important holiday in most ethnic Mexican communities in the United States.

Theological Developments and "New Immigration"

Among Catholics, the post-Vatican II improvement in church-lay Latino/a relations also resulted in a number of theological developments. Liberation theology made its way to the United States from, South and Central America. Mujerista theologians have shown the central role of women in the perpetuation and creation of Latino/a religious traditions and provided critical tools in the struggle for social justice and women's rights. And *Mestisaje* or racial and ethnic blending has also been proposed as the basis for a new theology that makes sense of the cultural experiences of Latino/as.

In the 1980s and 1990s, large-scale immigration from Latin America became one of the most significant elements of what scholars of immigration to the United States have come to term "the new immigration." This immigration is characterized by a large-scale flow of legal and undocumented immigrants that intensified rapidly after 1980. In the 1990s there were more legal immigrants to the United States from Mexico alone than from all of the countries of Europe combined.

Many of these "new" immigrants in the United States are transnational citizens rather than simple transplants. These

recent arrivals are emerging as important actors in American society and civic life, while still participating in their home countries' religious, economic, political, and cultural spheres. This situation is not lost on Latin American politicians—former Mexican president Vicente Fox toured the border region in December 2000 to personally welcome back a few of the estimated one million Mexicans traveling south for Christmas. The popularity of Fox's dual nationality initiative, whereby Mexican immigrants becoming U.S. citizens retain a host of political rights in Mexico, suggests an emerging transnational framework for the identities of these "new" immigrants.

Increased openness on the part of the Catholic Church to Latino/a concerns about social justice for immigrants led to the involvement of clergy in political issues surrounding American foreign policy in Latin America. In 1980, a decade-long civil war erupted in El Salvador as a result of a coup by anticommunists that was ultimately backed by the United States. The resulting violence displaced more than a million refugees, roughly half of whom headed north to Mexico and the United States. A similar and contemporaneous civil war broke out in Guatemala, displacing a large portion of that country's population as well. Once in the United States, this large and mostly undocumented population faced execution and/or torture if deported back to their homelands; however, they were not typically granted political asylum. Beginning at the La Placita Church in Los Angeles in 1982, Catholic clergy and Latino/a parishioners initiated a coordinated response in what became known as the Sanctuary Movement.

The movement came to consist of hundreds of individual churches across the country, principally Catholic but also of several other denominations, that declared themselves as safe havens from deportation for Central American immigrants. Beyond providing much-needed humanitarian aid, the movement was also a powerful critique of U.S. foreign and military policy in Central America. While the movement was spearheaded by clergy and a few individual bishops, the American Catholic Church itself did not endorse it and was not officially critical of U.S. policy in Central America until a series of bishops' conferences held in 1988.

Future Prospects

While contemporary immigrants have found the American Catholic Church more sympathetic than did earlier generations Protestant denominations (especially charismatic churches) have had significant success in their conversion efforts. Many of these churches make use of transnational

networks to establish satellite congregations in Latin American hometowns, thereby creating important support networks for their members and religious cultures that are American and Latin American all at once. And rather than converting in the United States, many Protestant Latin American émigrés bring their expression of their denominations to the United States. As of the year 2000, Protestants made up 25 percent of Guatemala's population and 22 percent of El Salvador's; and in Mexico, more than one hundred Pentecostal denominations have over four million members.

The role Latino/as play in American politics and public affairs is greatly influenced by distinctions in their religious faith. Most Latino/as see religion as a guide in their own political choices, and most Latino/as view the pulpit as an appropriate place to address social and political issues. Evangelical Protestant Latino/as are twice as likely as Catholic Latino/as to identify with the Republican Party. And while often socially conservative, Latino/a Catholics are much more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, with this latter trend increasing in the 2008 election. Given its rapid growth, the Latino/a population will have an increasingly dramatic impact on the intersection of American religion and politics.

The Latino/a population of the United States is growing faster in the South than anywhere else. From Georgia to North Carolina to Alabama, substantial Latino/a populations have arrived in communities where Latino/as were a negligible presence just a decade or two ago. In cultural and religious terms, these southern communities differ greatly from areas of the country where Latino/as have traditionally settled. Most of these new arrivals are foreign-born, and as a result the growth of the Latino/a population in the South will have a distinctive and as yet unforeseen impact on religious life and public policy. But as in other gateway regions, churches and religious organizations in the South will be challenged to assemble and offer the tools to facilitate settlement and mediate cultural differences between Latino/a immigrants and their host communities.

See also *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Immigration* entries; *Latino American Religion* entries; *Latino/a Religious Practice*; *Mexico* entries; *Music: Coritos/Spanish-Language*; *Religious Thought: Latino/a*; *Religious Thought: Mujerista*; *Santería*.

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Historical Approaches

The earliest historical accounts of religious experience among English-speaking colonists in the New World were chronicles that sought to justify a particular denomination's presence there. To be sure, there were early Spanish and French writings as well. A Franciscan named Alonso de Benavides (c. 1580–1316) wrote an overview of missionary efforts in New Mexico, but his work was merely self-serving propaganda to aid his chances of being appointed bishop of the province. French Jesuits made annual reports, termed *Relations*, about their efforts to convert Native Americans. As their superiors in Canada collected these over the years, they constituted something of an historical survey, but single reports were little more than truncated annals.

Significant Historical Accounts in the Colonies and Early Republic

The first historical account of substantial content was produced by a pious layman, William Bradford (1590–1657), one of the original colonists aboard the *Mayflower* in 1620. He recorded material drawn from firsthand observations, and his treatise entitled *Of Plimouth Plantation* depicted the tenor of Pilgrim life from the founding of Plymouth until 1647. The manuscript was misplaced and not published until the mid-nineteenth century, but it is now recognized as one of the most valuable sources on religious beginnings in America. Another observer of Puritan efforts in the New World was Nathaniel Morton (1613–1685), who grew up in the family

of William Bradford and was responsible for much of the routine government activities at Plymouth. In 1669 he published *New England's Memorial*, which is filled with details about early colonial laws and the Puritan minority who sought to make their establishment a holy commonwealth and beacon for all Calvinist transatlantic immigrants.

The most outstanding historical treatise of early years, in both depth and scope, was written by Cotton Mather (1663–1728), a second-generation Puritan born in the Massachusetts Bay Colony town of Boston. His magisterial work, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (Great Works of Christ in America), was published in 1702, and it purported to describe all the major events in the ecclesiastical history of New England from its first planting to Mather's contemporary times. He portrayed succeeding generations of Puritans as earnest participants in a lifestyle dedicated to creating in Boston a "City set upon a Hill," a model of godliness and disciplined obedience to God's instructions. He sought to inspire younger Puritans, who he hoped would continue to fashion lives according to scriptural teachings and Massachusetts law. Though many townspeople regarded him as meddling and domineering, Mather was nevertheless industrious in writing about the place of religion in daily life. He authored the staggering total of 450 books, many of which aimed at maintaining excellence within American Puritanism and safeguarding its perpetuation.

Few writings of the eighteenth century can be termed historical. The tendency of Enlightenment thinking was to seek the ideal in government and social relations in a golden age in the distant past. Rationalists had little interest in historical development and ignored the years between their ancient ideals and present circumstances. They transferred prior examples of virtue to their own day, spurning what they believed to be the corrupting influences that had accumulated during intervening centuries of superstition and decay. Moreover, revival experiences in the Great Awakening and political arguments over independence from England took precedence over inquiries into the past. Save for chronicles and denominational defenses, there were no writings of historical import in the 1700s.

Writers in the nineteenth century gave much more attention to the processes of historical development and the impact of previous actions and precedent. The first to put this perspective into print was Samuel Miller (1769–1850), whose two-volume work, *A Brief Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century* (1803), highlighted the importance of religion in the cumulative experience of American events. Miller had

an encyclopedic mind, and he began his work with the creation of the world and tracked important occurrences through Jewish history, the early church, medieval encrustations, Reformation emendations, and the culmination of refinements in the Presbyterianism of his own day. He also touched upon other subjects such as ethics, politics, natural science, theology, mechanical and fine arts, and the cause of human rights, especially the wrongs of slavery. All his writings and lectures adhered to the view that vital Protestant doctrines were derived from the Word of God and that a proper understanding of the past provided examples of both warning and pious emulation, models for preserving orthodox beliefs and strict religious propriety.

The next and far more well-known of this generation of church historians was Robert Baird (1798–1863), a Presbyterian whose career had a wider perspective. After ordination, Baird served as a schoolteacher, then as a Bible distributor for a state missionary society, and next as traveling emissary for the American Sunday School Union. In 1834 he accepted a position as a Protestant evangelist in France and spent much of the rest of his life explaining the essentials of American Protestantism to predominately Catholic audiences in Europe. His most well-known work, *Religion in America* (1843 in Scotland and 1844 in New York), depicted the dynamics of church life in the United States to a transatlantic population.

Baird strenuously defended such characteristics as separation of church and state, voluntary support for church programs, and revivals as the best means of producing conversions and increased membership. In another work, *The Progress and Prospects of Christianity in the United States* (1851), he held that freedom of religion among Protestant evangelical groups was the key to growth for the mainstream American denominations. In contrast to these genuine representatives of American religious genius, Baird commented negatively on all contravening forms of religion in the new republic, including Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and Unitarianism. In his view, the traits of these groups were not consistent with the American way of life and would not survive in the free atmosphere of republican culture.

Philip Schaff and the American Society of Church History

The historical approach to understanding American religion had many native observers and seminal authors, but the most influential individual on American scholarship in the nineteenth century was Philip Schaff (1819–1893).

Self-described as Swiss by birth, German by education, and American by choice, his overarching interest was the historical development of experiences in Christianity, the organic connections between past and present. Using biblical terminology to describe his model of progress, he foresaw the Petrine and Pauline versions of Christianity eventually blending into a Johannine fusion of the best of the earlier movements. In his earlier books, *Principle of Protestantism* (1845) and *What Is Church History?* (1846), Schaff introduced Americans to a theoretical basis for sound methods in historical scholarship, discussing religious developments in America against the backdrop of ancient, medieval, and Reformation occurrences.

Schaff produced historical works of remarkable breadth and scope. His six-volume *History of the Christian Church* (1882–1892) alone places him as a leading historian of religion of his day, but he did much more, especially concentrating on distinctive ecclesial characteristics that had emerged in the United States. Schaff wrote a series of lectures, *America: A Sketch of the Political, Social, and Religious Character of the United States of North America* (1855), in an attempt to explain features of American church life to European audiences. He wrote articles and speeches on American religion, one outstanding effort being *Church and State in the United States* (1888), published under the auspices of the American Historical Association. As with earlier observers, he endorsed the principles of religious freedom, competition between and among evangelical groups, and the authority of scripture as the ultimate rule for ethics and liturgy. Unlike others, however, Schaff also perceived promise in Roman Catholicism, hoping to see the day when Protestant and Catholic would reunite.

This irenic vision, dedication to accuracy in documentary evidence, and emphasis on providential direction of events, gave inspiration and motivating energy to historians who followed Schaff's precedent. More than eighty publications bear his name and helped create a more profound appreciation of critical historical studies in the United States. In 1888, he was instrumental in founding the American Society of Church History, which has ever since been the flagship of scholarly excellence in ecclesiastical history.

The subsequent American Church History Series (1893–1897), a thirteen-volume set of denominational histories, put the study of religions in America on an altogether higher, more inclusive, and ecumenical level. At that time it was the most ambitious undertaking of a historical overview of American religious phenomena, touching on no less than

twenty different denominations. Schaff chose authors for each segment and urged them to emphasize elements compatible with other churches, the better to highlight shared goals for future cooperation and growth. One such tome, *The Religious Forces of the United States* (1893), drew heavily on the government census of 1890 and employed statistics as a means of demonstrating the importance of Christianity to American culture. The final volume, *A History of American Christianity* (1897), written by Leonard W. Bacon (1830–1907), provided a masterful summary of denominational activities up to that point. His blending of various denominational endeavors helped integrate ecclesiastical work into larger cultural categories.

Contemporary with Schaff was John Dawson Gilmary Shea (1824–1892). After withdrawing from Jesuit formation, Shea supported himself as a journalist and editor of ladies' magazines, dedicating his spare time to writing the history of Catholic beginnings in the New World. A staunch defender of the Roman church, which he treated as the exclusive possessor of religious truth, Shea amassed a formidable array of documentary evidence and produced a four-volume magnum opus entitled *A History of the Catholic Church within the Limits of the United States from the First Attempted Colonization to the Present Time* (1886). In a history of early Catholic missions to Native Americans and in many articles published in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, he wrote indefatigably to defend his church against frequent Protestant criticisms. Shea marshaled evidence to argue that Catholics were genuinely qualified to be American citizens, that they had sustained republican values for generations, and that they had repeatedly proved their loyalty to the federal government by defending it during wartime.

Another contemporary of Schaff and Shea was Methodist minister Daniel Dorchester (1827–1907), who diametrically opposed any favorable view of Catholicism. Dorchester's writing reflected dominant attitudes in popular culture at the time, and he never referred to Catholic activities or influence without making disparaging remarks. Dorchester was noted for his use of statistical tables and charts. He compiled these cumulative figures to emphasize developmental progress, a palpable improvement over earlier beginnings. Instead of venerating the past and legitimizing current forms by linking them with colonial precedent, Dorchester exalted modern conditions as the best forms of religious expression made heretofore. His *Christianity in the United States from the First Settlement down to the Present Time* (1888) compiled massive documentation to prove that American

Protestant churches were improving moral and social conditions as never before in national life. His idea of religious growth epitomized the zenith of pan-Protestant dominance in American culture, just at the time when new influences from such immigration would make his arrogant conceptions obsolete.

Early-Twentieth-Century Church History and the "Frontier Thesis"

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the historical approach to understanding American religious expressions had reached a higher level. Of course some writers continued to focus narrowly on single denominations in isolated, apologetic defenses. Others branched out to interdenominational surveys that stayed safely within mainstream Protestantism, ranging from Baptists to Episcopalians and Lutherans to Disciples of Christ. But in a new century of historiographical rigor, these historians began increasingly to conform to rules regarding documentary evidence used in modern universities. Secular interpretive themes came to dominate the study of religious history, relying on the same standards that held sway among students of social and political topics. One bellwether publication was *History of Religion in the United States* (1924) by Henry K. Rowe (1869–1941). Rowe's survey resembled the views of other progressivist historians who celebrated the triumph of free church ideals over ecclesiastical establishment, the predominance of evangelical enthusiasm over formalized worship. Rowe's account of religious change emphasized an upward progression of acquired freedoms and a core of democratic characteristics that distinguished American religion from other countries.

A scholar who flourished during the same decades as Rowe was Peter K. Guilday (1884–1947), a farsighted and influential academic who deserves to be regarded as the father of modern Catholic historiography in the United States. He succeeded Shea as the foremost historian of Roman developments in American life, and his interest in placing ecclesiastical growth within the context of more general cultural progress added a dimension that gave his works a wider appeal. Guilday also espoused critical historical methods, which gave his studies an authenticity with an increasingly professionalized constituency. He produced lengthy biographies of bishops John Carroll (1922) and John England (1927), as well as a history of *conciliar dicta* issued from the archdiocese of Baltimore (1932). Guilday was instrumental in establishing *The Catholic Historical Review* in 1915, where he served as editor until 1941. He was also the

leading figure behind founding the American Catholic Historical Society in 1919, serving as secretary until general retirement in 1941. All of his activities used a progressivist perspective to vindicate Catholic activities in a country where nativist antagonists had unfairly discounted Catholic contributions to liberty.

A major interpretive theme in the first half of the twentieth century was known as “the frontier thesis.” Popularized in an 1893 essay by Frederick Jackson Turner (1861–1932), the thesis suggested that immigrants had developed a new society because of open land that lay west of the Atlantic seaboard. Americans acquired new characteristics because the frontier environment helped nurture such innovations. The first religious historian who capitalized on this hypothesis was Peter G. Mode, whose book *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity* (1923) stood in the forefront of scores of others that used American experiences on the frontier to explain religious developments. Prior to that seminal work, Mode also charted the way in this school of thought by issuing a *Source Book and Bibliographical Guide for American Church History* in 1921. In an all too brief career at the University of Chicago, Mode set a historiographical precedent that remained vigorous for the next half century.

Following closely on the heels of Mode at the University of Chicago was William W. Sweet (1881–1959), who emphasized the frontier elements in American religion so much that the frontier perspective became a dominant theme in the scholarship of his day. Sweet was the first to occupy a chair of American church history, and as an advocate of training in secular historical methods, he inaugurated a program of graduate studies that concentrated on American subject matter, a field he considered woefully neglected. Sweet also began collecting documentary sources and made Chicago the richest depository of primary source materials in the country. Adhering loyally to the frontier thesis, he held that life on the American continent had shaped new features and emphases in religion. These innovative forms of institutional and intellectual life became the interpretive framework for his classic narrative, *The Story of Religions in America* (1930), which quickly became the standard textbook. Between 1931 and 1946, Sweet also compiled selections from his storehouse of documents to exhibit distinctive characteristics of the most vigorous denominations active on the expanding frontier: Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists. He held that these churches exhibited individualism, hard work, recklessness, upward social mobility, and an occasional ability to cooperate with others.

While many twentieth-century historians followed this emphasis on frontier influences, some concentrated instead on colonial precedents, especially on the intellectual giants who flourished in those early generations. By the 1930s, Puritan studies had become obscure or ignored, but Perry G.E. Miller (1905–1963), a professor of English and American Literature at Harvard, inspired a remarkable resurgence of interest in the genre. He portrayed the full sweep of Puritan influences in New England and produced acute biographies of two major figures: Jonathan Edwards in 1949 and Roger Williams in 1953.

Additional studies of orthodox thought in Massachusetts and of the controlling ideas behind colonialism in general culminated in Miller’s two massive syntheses of Puritan life: *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (1939) and *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (1953). Detailing every major aspect of religious thought, sometimes offering quite controversial interpretations, Miller traced the continental and British roots of Puritanism and helped clarify the extensive framework of its scope. His analysis laid bare the tensions and strengths of religious influences that had an impact on burgeoning social developments and were affected by them. Intellectual historians since Miller have stressed either the inherent cogency of religious ideas or their practical consequences, but both approaches have enhanced the scope and content of religion studies.

Mid-Twentieth-Century History and “the American Character”

An additional major element in historiographical approaches to understanding religion in America also emerged by mid-century: the search for a consensus regarding values that epitomized “the American character.”

After the trauma of World War II, historians pursued American identity to find reassuring continuities with past generations. Consensus historians no longer emphasized progress through challenges but rather sought to portray a homogeneous culture where shared ideals had permeated minor cultural variations and had fashioned a normative American culture. Winthrop S. Hudson (1911–2001), in *The Great Tradition in American Churches* (1953), identified the core values of national life as having stemmed from Puritan times through revivals and free church traditions. His *American Protestantism* (1961) also made splendid use of specialized studies for purposes of a useful overview of basic traits.

Another outstanding author of this genre was Sidney E. Mead (1904–1999), who published little but whose short

pieces were very influential. At least two generations of historians have reckoned with his suggestive interpretations that were disseminated primarily through articles, reviews, and lectures. Nine such essays were put together in a seminal volume entitled *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America* (1963). There Mead incorporated masses of evidence to exhibit the tradition of religious freedom as the driving force that shaped American cultural patterns. Unlike Hudson, who traced the roots of freedom to Puritan precedents, Mead found the genius of liberty and toleration to lie in the Enlightenment. He argued that since rationalists placed social tranquility over orthodox beliefs, they made certain that federal laws would not support an established church nor prevent the free exercise of various creeds and liturgies. Mead regarded the sometimes oppressive resurgence of evangelical fervor as a challenge to the more detached and neutral attitudes in Enlightenment thinking. His charge to other scholars was to untangle the threads of pietism and rationalism in order to appropriate the strengths of both traditions for effective cooperation. These strands could then, he hoped, shape democratic forms and ideas for the good of American society in general.

An additional influential writer who helped inspire and embody this renaissance of historical approaches to American religion was Sydney E. Ahlstrom (1919–1984). Rather than follow Mead's theory of Enlightenment ideas as the most influential force behind religious freedom in America, Ahlstrom found more persuasive elements to lie in Puritanism, intellectual and cultural emphases that flourished in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He labored for decades to encapsulate this perspective in the fullest, most complete overview of diversified spiritual life in this country, and his *A Religious History of the American People* (1972) was the magisterial result. This massive volume contains three discernible but not separable themes. On one level, Ahlstrom portrayed religious life as exhibited in institutional structures. He noted that most people at most times have believed and behaved within organized religious groups, and he analyzed their historical existence by reference to sociologically defined categories. Secondly, he also recognized that many religious activities flourished outside traditionally organized patterns, and he included discussions of many religious sensibilities that flourished outside mainstream channels. Finally, Ahlstrom focused on the reciprocal interaction between religions in America and the larger spheres of social and political life. He continued a historiographical tradition that went back to Robert Baird

by interpreting America as a nation with the soul of a church, a New World phenomenon where evangelical Protestantism had informed popular national ideals during much of its history.

Another high-ranking scholar in this golden age of historical studies was Robert T. Handy (1918–2009). Adept at producing popular lectures and essays, he also wrote a 1971 study of Protestant dominance in nineteenth-century America, where he suggested that attempts to Christianize national culture produced the ironic result of Americanizing basic Christian values. He also pursued an ambitious project entitled *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada* (1977), which for the first time included in a single volume an account of religious activities in both countries. This integrative concept has since challenged many others to pursue additional investigations along the same lines. Together with H. Shelton Smith (1893–1987) and Lefferts A. Loetscher (1904–1981), Handy also edited and wrote explanatory notes for *American Christianity: An Historical Interpretation with Representative Documents* (1960, 1963), one of the most valuable anthologies of primary source documents.

A fifth luminary of the most seminal period of historical studies was Edwin S. Gaustad (1923–). Like others in this age of synthesis, he contributed a survey of the pluralistic expressions of spirituality in *A Religious History of America* (1966), a success in the textbook market. Gaustad had already begun working in a much more original fashion with his *Historical Atlas of Religion in America* (1962). There and in several revised and expanded editions he demonstrated how maps, statistical tables, charts, and denominational surveys could be both isolated and integrated to enhance a better understanding of churches in and of themselves, as well as factors in shaping national virtues. In addition to constituting a geographical history of American religions, the *Atlas* ranks as one of the best generic overviews ever correlated. And in yet another vein, Gaustad improved on the primary source anthologies by issuing two volumes that include the finest judgments about religious expressions in this country. *A Documentary History of Religion in America* (1982–1983) presents a collection of reprinted materials from the variegated features of both mainline traditions and sectarian innovations. Ranging from staid bureaucratic memoranda to the heartfelt exhortations of impassioned souls, his pages comprise the finest compendium of diverse materials on the subject yet to be printed.

Martin Marty and John Tracy Ellis

One of the longest-lived and most prolific authors in this constellation of scholars is Martin E. Marty (1928–). His publications span a period of almost fifty years and number well over one hundred separate items. The titles are numerous and varied; topics range from the role of religious action in political revolutions and social change to studies of liturgies and doctrine in traditional churches and creative experimentations found in evangelical revivals. Biographical sketches related to “infidels” as well as profound believers, including a subtle and nuanced new look at Martin Luther, plus ecumenical overtures have also attracted his attention. Like many others, he produced sweeping overviews: in 1984 alone, he wrote a survey of Christianity in the New World from 1500 to 1800 and then a five-hundred-year interpretation of American Christians, whom he termed pilgrims in their own land. Over the years, however, Marty has indicated a preference for comprehending religious changes in recent centuries. Just two titles that attest to his recurrent interest in such themes are *The New Shape of American Religion* (1959) and *Modern American Religion* (1986).

But perhaps Marty’s single most influential historical perspective was broached in his 1970 publication *Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America*. His discussion of the idea of a “two-party system,” the culmination of several notions he had developed in previous writings, had a lasting impact on other thinkers. Marty advanced the idea that the differences between denominations in modern America were less important than differences between members of the same denomination. People gravitated toward various clusters of opinions about various issues, and it was important to recognize that liberals and conservatives within churches of the same name had less to do with each other than they did with their ideological counterparts who belonged to churches with different names. The old organizational, institutional labels were obsolete and did not accurately portray the complex membership patterns of any contemporary denomination. A better analytical tool was to identify an issue such as confessional orthodoxy, civil rights, ecology, or abortion, and then study the ways people from all sorts of churches used religious expressions and activities to address the issue. Denominational histories will continue to appear in isolated studies, but Marty provided a bold, incisive, and creative alternative to the old parochialism.

Finally, the sixth great historian of the twentieth century was John Tracy Ellis (1905–1992), the most prolific and widely read historian of American Catholicism in the twentieth century. Ellis was originally trained as a historian of European ecclesiastical affairs and was requested rather late in his academic career to assume responsibility for American topics, of which he quickly became master. Some of his less extensive writings touched on seminary education; early years of the Catholic University of America; the balance between religious faith and secular learning; and the lamentable relationship between Catholics and serious, critical intellectual pursuits. He provided aid to generations of students and scholars by compiling *Documents of American Catholic History* (1956), which, together with other guides and bibliographies, went through several reprints in the subsequent three decades. In those works Ellis displayed unerring judgment in choosing pertinent materials and an impressive capacity for explaining their significance in succinct introductory remarks.

Biographical studies were another of his interests, as indicated by publications on Cardinal E. Consalvi (1942) and John L. Spalding (1961). The most impressive item in this genre was a two-volume work, *The Life of James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, 1835–1921* (1952). In that painstakingly thorough opus, he captured the spirit of a church and its leadership, whose wise policies and pastoral care made it the largest single denomination in American history. In an attempt to give students a concise interpretative discussion of Catholic experience from its beginnings, Ellis issued *American Catholicism* in 1956, and this lucid overview still finds appreciative readers in present times. A further comprehensive survey that is also still useful is *Catholics in Colonial America* (1965), where Ellis compares and contrasts the Spanish, French, and English forms of Catholicism that were practiced in the Western Hemisphere.

The Late Twentieth Century: A Wide Range of Topics

Counterbalancing the predominantly mainstream topics emphasized by such authors as Ahlstrom and Marty, some historians have chosen to highlight less well-known expressions in American religious life. Multiple editions of *Popular Religion in America* (1980), by Peter W. Williams (1944–), have been and continue to be a useful guide to denominational minorities. Featuring a variety of uncommon enthusiasms is the survey by Catherine L. Albanese (1940–), entitled *American*

Religions and Religion (1981 and subsequent editions), in which she investigates such impulses as naturalistic holism and metaphysical mental healing. Another publication that celebrates the complexity of American religious expressions is *American Religion: A Cultural Perspective* (1984), by Mary F. Bednarowski. All these books hold the implicit thesis that the culture of the United States has accumulated a great number of different perspectives and these are now so diverse that no single overview of all of them is possible. The only practical alternative for future historical studies is to investigate a select range of topics within limited chronological and geographical contexts.

Another form of Christianity that has remained a somewhat discrete entity, and has been regarded so by most historians of religion, is the large group known as Latter-day Saints, or, more colloquially, Mormons. A wide range of Mormon scholars work within the rubrics of today's critical historical methods, and they avoid such questions as whether Joseph Smith Jr. really was a divinely inspired prophet or whether miracles have actually happened. Substantial publications were issued in 1958 by Leonard J. Arrington (1917–1999) on the economic history of the Great Basin; in 1965 by Robert B. Flanders (1930–) on Mormon experience in Illinois; and in 1979 by Mark P. Leone (1940–) on the roots of Mormon faith as it has developed today. More recent studies of note include *Mormonism in Transition: The Latter Day Saints and their Church, 1890–1930* (1984), by Thomas G. Alexander (1935–), and *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (1985), by Jan Shipps (1929–). A useful sourcebook is *Mormonism in American Culture* (1972), edited by Marvin S. Hill (1928–) and James B. Allen (1927–).

An additional religious tradition in America that traces its ancient roots is Judaism. After rather meager beginnings in colonial times, immigration swelled the number of American Jews by the end of the nineteenth century. Sophisticated studies of these and subsequent events have emerged to take a rightful place among other scholarly historical approaches. To provide a compilation of documentary evidence, Jacob R. Marcus (1896–1995) edited a three-volume set entitled *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775–1865* (1955–1956) and then *American Jewry: Documents* (1959). Meticulous gathering of primary sources plus industrious research allowed Nathan Glazer (1923–) to produce *American Judaism* (1957), a compact, useful overview. A more comprehensive survey is that by Joseph L. Blau (1909–1986), entitled *Judaism in America: From Curiosity to Third Faith* (1976). The most recent and

interesting of such historians is Jonathan D. Sarna (1955–). His works include a wide variety of subjects, such as the effects of evangelical revivalism on Judaism and the Americanization of Jewish culture in the twentieth century. The publication that crowns the list of Sarna's achievements is *American Judaism: A History* (2004), a stimulating interpretation and analysis that is already being recognized as a classic in its field.

During the past two decades no significant theme has emerged to attract the attention, or occupy the time, of historians interested in American religion. Of course several important areas of study existed in the twentieth century and still do today, but many contemporary authors seek to distance themselves from previous historiography and choose topics for no apparent reason other than novelty.

Serious topics, however, continue to attract responsible historical students. One of the most widespread and important of these has to do with the general phenomenon of immigration.

American history is largely the record of those who have immigrated here. Therefore, historical studies of religions have recently concentrated on groups heretofore slighted, including Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics in all their different cultural identifications. Then, too, that women have contributed to the panoply of America's religions is a focal point of tremendous significance in today's historical analyses. It has become apparent that there are a myriad of valid themes featuring important contributions made by women to theology, preaching, institutional leadership, and social policy. Biographies, histories of religious orders, and narratives of sectarian creativity are other promising areas of research regarding the varied activities pursued by women in the United States.

After the frontier thesis lost its fascination for historians, it became increasingly apparent that urban America held a large number of important topics as well. When late-nineteenth-century immigrant populations ceased moving into rural areas and settled predominantly in cities, the shift gave urban conditions even more significance in modern religious expressions. Liberal theology burgeoned, as did fundamentalist reactions; human misery in slums evoked various social gospels; and individualistic evangelism continued along with sensationalist revivals. Urban settings have provided the context for studies ranging from an increased denominational sophistication to charismatic leaders in city ghettos who exhibited various emphases in store-front

provenances. Finally, charismatic/Pentecostal emphases have grown to impressive proportions. No longer considered peripheral expressions of Christianity, Pentecostal churches are now regarded as part of mainstream Protestantism, and they invite comparative analysis with their traditional counterparts in the historical approach to understanding religions in America.

Several new approaches have emerged in recent decades to enrich our historical understanding of religions in America. Immigration from Asia and the Near East has introduced religious traditions that are relatively new in North America, especially the United States. Now, after centuries when Protestant themes first predominated, then combined with Catholic and Jewish ones, such new religions as Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism have begun to appear. This enrichment of the American kaleidoscope has also introduced new analytical and interpretive perspectives for a better understanding of religions in general.

This genuinely pluralistic framework has allowed students to utilize more universally applicable tools that derive from the social sciences. Many contemporary surveys of American religious thought and action, or any localized segment thereof, have broken new ground by not assuming that a Christian, or Western European, standard should serve as a measure of religious practices. These new perspectives draw on a wider, more inclusive "history of religions" point of view that uses tools derived from sociology, anthropology, linguistics, and psychology. Students have learned from the social sciences to define a particular religious topic as an integral part of a specific cultural context. Using methods familiar to cultural and intellectual historians, they have expanded our ways of understanding the function of religious belief and behavior within a variety of cultural situations.

As more sophisticated methodological perspectives have developed at the turn of the millennium, prospects of a deeper and broader understanding of American religions have become increasingly bright. Historians are no longer obliged to defend theological affirmations or denominational authenticity. They are now free to consider how church members, or those of even looser affiliation, are affected by institutional proclamations and how, in turn, religious expressions are influenced by their social surroundings. The emergence of new topics and methods has benefited contemporary scholarship by providing a variety of innovative ways to view a wide range of topics, both centuries old and recently considered. Variegated subject matter has allowed for helpful comparisons between and among chosen topics,

pointing out common denominators as well as highlighting distinctive characteristics. We can anticipate further developments in the dynamic historical approaches to what Philip Schaff called the "motley sampler" of religions in America.

See also *Demographics; Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches; Feminist Studies; Frontier and Borderlands; Geographical Approaches; History of Religions, Approaches; Immigration entries; Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Puritans; Religious Studies; Revivalism entries; Sociological Approaches.*

Henry Warner Bowden

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History of Religions, Approaches

The history of religions, also commonly called comparative religion in the United States, is a methodological approach to the study of religion that examines diverse religious traditions both historically and systematically. It has encompassed the major “world religions,” such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, as well as what previous generations of scholars have referred to as “primitive” or “archaic” religions, those of premodern or smaller societies. Historians of religion examine the history of different religious traditions and of the idea of “religion” itself to compare various myths, rituals, or symbols manifested within religious conceptions of the sacred. This approach flourished in the United States in the decades following World War II, especially under the influence of Mircea Eliade, its chief scholar and doyen based at the University of Chicago.

Establishing a Science of Religion

While interest in the study of religion has existed in the West for centuries, scholarly attention to the comparative study of religion dates back to the late nineteenth century, when German scholars in particular initiated what they termed *Religionswissenschaft*, loosely translated as the science of religion, though often rendered in the United States as the history of religions. The creation of the academic study of religion ought to be understood within the historical context of the modern West at this time. Protestant Christianity played a dominant role in scholarly understandings of what religion ought to look like, even as orthodox Christian faith was also under attack and sometimes radically reformed at this time, as it came under pressure from the rise of scientific authority and Darwinian evolution. The nineteenth century was also a period of expansive European colonization across the globe, and interest in religious comparison often developed out of broader colonial interests that pitted a modern West against what people took as an exotic and frequently a less developed “other.” The Christian and colonial biases of this scholarship has been notably challenged by historians of religion since the 1960s. But it was within that context that the German-born Friedrich Max Müller became a leading figure in the development of the modern scientific study of religion, when he delivered a series of lectures at London’s Royal Institution in 1870, later published as *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (1873).

Trained as a student of comparative philology, Müller, who spent most of his career in England, located the origins of religion in man’s perception of the infinite, on the one hand, and in language or, more precisely, a “disease of language,” on the other. According to Müller, religion arose when ancient peoples mistook the powerful and inexplicable events they witnessed in nature to be manifestations of various gods. Words once used to name the sun, for example, became personified and elevated, as in the example of Apollo, the god of the sun, among ancient Greeks. In his terms, *nomina* became *numina*—names became gods—and premodern people sewed together elaborate myths to describe these gods. Müller organized his science of religion around the philological study of myths, the religious stories people told themselves. Moving away from speaking of religions as “true” or “false,” “revealed” or “natural,” he set a path for classification and comparison among many religions, for as he famously noted, “He who knows one [religion], knows none.”

The anthropological study of religion in the late nineteenth century provided an alternative account of the origins of religion. Heavily influenced by Darwinian theories of evolution, it focused more on the historical and social development of religion than on language. Edward Burnett Tylor held the first academic post in the field of anthropology, appointed at Oxford University in 1884. In *Primitive Culture*, first published in 1871, he developed a theory of animism and the concept of “survivals.” Both have significantly influenced the study of comparative religion. Animism locates the origins of religion in the idea that primitive or ancient humans understood all phenomena, natural and human, to have spirits or souls and imbued them with aspects of human personality. The theory of survivals claims that these prehistoric manifestations of religion have survived into the present, even as humans have progressed through evolutionary phases, from savagery to civilization. Eventually, Tylor claimed, animism itself evolved among some societies into belief in a single supreme deity. Reflecting his own cultural bias, Judaism and Christianity provided his leading examples of the final stage of evolution. Tylor’s theory of survivals allowed for the comparison between people living in small-scale societies, the subject of anthropological research at this time, and the modern, civilized West.

British anthropologist James George Frazer further developed Tylor’s theories in his foundational work, *The Golden Bough*. Frazer argued that “primitive” thinking could be divided into two types, magic and religion. Magic

arose when people connected two different phenomena on the basis of similarity or attachment—things that are physically associated with one another become mentally associated as well. As primitive thinking evolved, Frazier thought, people would see the mistakenness of magical thinking, and religion would eventually replace it. With religion, people believed that supernatural beings, not magical laws, controlled the workings of nature. Finally, Frazier contended, humans would advance to scientific thinking, in which time the coexistence of magic and religion would be attributed to the “survivals” that Tylor discussed. This early anthropological and ethnological tradition, along with Müller’s approach based in the methods of comparative philology, provided two significant bases for the development of the comparative study of religion in the early twentieth century, both in Europe and in the United States.

Comparative Religion in North America

By the late nineteenth century, the academic and theological study of comparative religions was already taking hold in the United States. James Freeman Clarke joined the Harvard Divinity School in 1867; Boston University appointed William Fairfield Warren in 1873; and Frank Field Ellinwood held the post of professor of comparative religion at New York University, serving as a central organizer for the American Society of Comparative Religion in 1890. Harvard University and the University of Chicago established two more significant milestones in the history of the comparative study of religion in the United States when George Foote Moore became the first chair of the history of religions at Harvard, and Chicago established its Department of Comparative Religion, calling George Stephen Goodspeed to teach in the areas of comparative religion and ancient history. By the end of the century, Chicago had established two influential lectureships in comparative religion, and the American Oriental Society founded a section for the historical study of religion.

Perhaps the most significant event to spur the comparative study of religions in the United States occurred with the opening to the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago. More popular than academic, the general committee for the World’s Parliament included men of diverse religious backgrounds, including various stripes of Protestant, as well as Unitarian, Catholic, and Jewish members. Echoing the cultural ethos of religious pluralism common to liberal Protestants at the time, the committee called for religious representatives from a number of traditions,

including not only Christians and Jews but also Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists, to exhibit the highest tenets of their faith. The tenor of religious liberalism envisioned continuity among the diverse world religions, now on stage for all to see.

The popularity of comparative theology and religious studies lasted through the 1920s. During the period between the World Wars, however, the study of comparative religion began to take new form under Albert Eustace Haydon, who replaced Goodspeed as the chair of comparative religions at Chicago in 1919. Haydon proposed a shift from comparative religion to the history of religion. The shift in name marked his criticism of comparative religion and its relationship to theology, which he argued erroneously assumed a fundamental law of religious development that ran from primitive to modern, leading inevitably to the natural superiority of Protestant Christian faith. The humanistic study of religion, as opposed to theological interest in comparative faith, was not firmly established in American universities until after the Second World War, with the appointment of Haydon’s successor, Joachim Wach, in 1945. Under Wach, a systematic approach to the history of religions became fully developed.

Wach emphasized the differences between theological study and the general science of religion, the latter of which includes various methodological fields such as phenomenology, historical study, psychology, and sociology. Even more, according to Wach’s 1967 introduction to *The History of Religion, Religionswissenschaft* claimed a different field of study than did theology: not our own religion (presumably Christianity) but rather “foreign” religions, as Wach called them. The central question was not “what must I believe?” but instead “what is there that is believed?” (p. 2). Focusing on the beliefs of various religious traditions, Wach adhered to a hermeneutical, or interpretive, approach to the study of religion borrowed from German philosophers Rudolph Otto, Edmund Husserl, and Wilhelm Dilthey and the Dutch scholar Gerardus van der Leeuw, a leading figure in the development of the phenomenology of religion. Wach called for scholars of religion to be trained to interpret their material with sympathetic understanding. The hermeneutical approach to comparative religion would be further developed at the University of Chicago by two of his students, Joseph Kitagawa and Charles Long. But the central figure in this scholarly tradition has been Hungarian historian of religions Mircea Eliade, who replaced Wach in the 1950s and cemented the

University of Chicago's central place in establishing the history of religions in the United States.

Along with Kitagawa and Long, Eliade founded the journal *History of Religions* in 1961, which quickly rivaled in prestige existing European journals for the study of comparative religion, including *Numen*. The journal hosted articles on the descriptive history of specific religions but also set forward a program for systematic study across religions. In the inaugural issue, Eliade bemoaned that historians of religion increasingly specialized in a single tradition. He called for more attention to the development of a hermeneutical program that would allow for comparison among religions and restore the science of religion to its highest cultural function, a "new humanism" that would seek a deeper knowledge of humankind. Though not alone in this endeavor, from his post at Chicago Eliade would popularize an approach centered on the history and phenomenology of religious experience, training students and encouraging a school of thought that still resonates in the academic study of religion today.

Mircea Eliade and the History of Religions

Eliade's significance in the development of religious studies in North America would be difficult to overstate. Even today, most undergraduate courses designed to introduce students to religion include works by Eliade, especially *The Sacred and the Profane*, published in 1959, which lays out most succinctly his theory of religion. Eliade's scholarly work ranged from specific studies of yoga and shamanism, to broader concerns with conceptions of the sacred and the profane, and with time and history. Eliade divided mankind into "archaic" and "modern"—categories meant to denote states of mentality more than a historical evolution. Modern man lives in historical time, within the ongoing processes and evolution of history, and is represented in Eliade's writing by Judeo-Christians. Archaic man includes both prehistoric peoples and contemporary people living in small-scale societies. Archaic man lives in cyclical time, in which he constantly attempts to return to the beginning of time through rituals meant to re-create the mythic origins of the world, a theory Eliade called the myth of the eternal return. Through these rituals, which symbolically destroy linear, historical time, archaic man escapes what Eliade calls "the terror of history," the march of time devoid of sacred content that consequently contributes to modern man's feelings of anxiety and nihilism.

Central to Eliade's account of religion are the categories of the sacred and the profane. He drew from the French

sociologist Emile Durkheim, for whom the division of the world into sacred and profane was a foundational aspect of religion, one of its elemental forms. For Durkheim, writing at the beginning of the twentieth century, the division of sacred and profane and the development of religion allowed society to express its needs to itself. In this sense, religion served a social function. Eliade too saw the division of sacred and profane as central to the development of religion, but he strongly objected to Durkheim's explanation, as well as other definitions that reduced religion to merely human functions. Famously, Eliade claimed, religion could only be understood on its own terms, ontologically distinct from other aspects of human life. "To try to grasp the essence of such a phenomenon by means of physiology, psychology, sociology, economics, linguistics, art or any other study is false," Eliade declaimed in *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. "It misses the one unique and irreducible element in it—the element of the sacred" (p. xvii). Following Otto and van der Leeuw, who described religion as the experience of the holy or the divine power, Eliade held the sacred to be *sui generis*, a trans-historical phenomenon revealed through religious experience. For Eliade and his students, the phenomenological study of religious experience was essential to the efforts of the historian of religions, as it provided historical study with a common point for systematic analysis across religious traditions. By utilizing the phenomenological method, Eliade and other historians of religions signaled that religion was to be understood from the standpoint of the believer, on its own terms, rather than from that of the sociologist, historian, or psychologist.

From his perch at the University of Chicago, Eliade trained numerous scholars in the history of religions and significantly shaped the development of the academic study of religion in the United States. Since the 1970s, however, the study of comparative religion has drawn severe criticism. The development of postmodernism and postcolonial theory, especially as represented by Michel Foucault and Edward Said, targeted the modern Western biases often found in scholars' grand, universalizing claims. This trend called for greater attention to the methods of new historicism that focused on local contexts rather than comparison, and it has emphasized the central role of Western imperialism and colonialism in the construction of modern thought. Scholars of religion began to reflect on the often Orientalist and colonialist assumptions undergirding previous definitions of religion, including the presumed historical progression of humans from "savagery" to "civilization," or from

animism to monotheism, which suspiciously specified Protestant Christianity and the modern West as the highest stage of advancement. Other scholars have criticized the enterprise of comparison itself, which too often stripped religious phenomena from the historical and cultural contexts necessary to comprehend fully their meaning, in order to make generalizations across vast geographic distance and time. Indeed, the ability to compare an essential, universal entity called “religion” across various cultures soon seemed troubling in itself.

Revised Versions of Comparative Religion

Wilfred Cantwell Smith, a Canadian scholar of comparative religion and director of the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard, anticipated many criticisms of the category of “religion” in his 1962 classic *The Meaning and End of Religion*. Cantwell Smith provided perhaps the first argument against the essentialist definitions of religion put forth by previous scholars, including Eliade. Strictly speaking, according to Cantwell Smith, there is nothing in the world that the noun *religion* properly refers to; it refers, rather, to an abstraction that scholars then reify (or define as something real). Cantwell Smith instead preferred the adjective *religious*, which he argues escapes this threat of reification. He further proposed that scholars employ the category of “faith” to mark the internal and personal dimension of religious experience, and “cumulative tradition” to account for the outward, social dimensions of religious history. Cantwell Smith’s categories, too, have been criticized more recently. The idea of a personal faith as transcendent, internal, and universal has particularly Protestant roots, and, as anthropologist of religion Talal Asad has pointed out, these concepts further elide the significant role of practice and discipline in the creation of religious lives, including the inwardly focused dimension of faith.

One of the most significant figures in the revision of comparative religion and the development of histories of the study of religion has been Jonathan Z. Smith. An historian of religion and successor of Eliade at Chicago, Smith famously stated in *Imagining Religion*, “There is no data for religion. Religion is solely the creation of the scholar’s study” (p. xi). For Smith, religion serves as an academic category imposed by scholars to support “imaginative acts of comparison and generalization.” Smith redirected the study of religion to important issues of theory and method, including historical investigation into the concept of religion itself, a category that arose not only from a legacy of Enlightenment

and Romantic thought but also from the West’s contact and colonial relations with North America, Asia, and Africa. Since the 1980s, scholars aligned with Smith’s project such as Bruce Lincoln, Ivan Strenski, Russell McCutcheon, and Tomoko Masuzawa have significantly challenged and revised many of the categories essential to the history of religions, such as myth, sacrifice, ritual, the sacred and the profane, and the concept of world religions, among others. They have argued for the importance of theorizing about religion in reference to the colonialist and often Christian origins of the term and alongside understandings of practice, power, and ideology that have shaped its analytic potential, both in the scholar’s craft and among the materials under survey. Largely as a result of these criticisms and the push for academic specialization, scholars have narrowed their focus to various area studies, such as Hinduism and Indian religion or Japanese religion. This shift has brought the history of religions closer to fields in the humanities and social sciences that focus on the historical, anthropological, and sociological analysis of a single religious tradition.

The strong turn against the comparative study of religion has all but eliminated serious comparative work from graduate training in the history of religions, but more recently scholars have attempted to set out new terms by which comparative methods may still be relevant to the study of religion. The edited volume *A Magic Still Dwells* (2000) represents the most useful recent assessment of comparative religion. In the postmodern period, the contributors collectively contend, attention must be paid to religious differences and similarities when making comparisons, and more reflection must be paid to the scholar’s own cultural positioning in the process of any comparative enterprise. The volume features a single essay by a scholar of American religion, Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, who contends, as the title of her essay asserts, that “American Religion Is Naturally Comparative.” This essay provides a useful point for considering the influence of the history of religions approach for the study of North American religion.

History of Religions and American Religious History

According to Sullivan, the study of comparative religion was less influential in the study of American religion for two reasons: comparativists for the most part shied away from studying Christianity, whereas Americanists until quite recently have been preoccupied with Christianity; and most comparativists lamented the turn to area studies, which

Americanists exemplified. A quick foray into the history of the study of American religion clarifies this observation. The study of American religion has at least four genealogical streams: the study of American church history, American literature, the sociology of religion, and religious studies.

American church history has focused largely on the history of Christianity, and Protestant Christianity and theology more specifically. And it has often been situated within the broader study of the history of Christianity, which developed alongside the history of religions. But these two fields rarely found common ground in their methodological approaches or subject matter. Indeed, the history of religions was often premised on the study of “other” religions, “foreign” religions as Wach called them, which frequently meant religions other than Christianity and, to a lesser extent, Judaism. The resurgence of Puritan studies in the American academy under the literary scholar Perry Miller at Harvard University in the 1930s also influenced the study of North American religion, reframing narratives of American religious history around a mythical Puritan heritage in the New World. These two fields occupied the central concerns of historians of American religion through the 1960s and 1970s, evidenced in studies by Martin Marty, Sydney Ahlstrom, Edwin Gaustad, Edmund Wilson, John Wilson, and the early work of David Hall. While this generation of historians sometimes pushed against the legacy of theological and church history, they focused mostly on the Protestant history of America and drew their analytic categories more from American history and literary scholarship than from historians and phenomenologists of religion. Reflecting in part the enormous influence of Eliade on the study of religion in the American academy, the generation of scholars trained since the 1970s, often by the aforementioned historians, has been far more influenced by the field of religious studies and the sociology of religion, as well as by broader trends in the development of cultural history, feminist and critical theory, and social anthropology.

To claim that the history of religions has had a direct and significant impact on the study of religion in North America would probably be an overstatement. The legacy of church history and American literary studies has had a more significant influence, and historians of religion tended to focus on religions outside of the West. But scholars of American religion have been in dialogue with historians of religions for decades. Even in the heyday of the history of religions at the University of Chicago, scholars of American religion were present. Charles Long, for instance,

published several essays on African American religion and called for historians of religion to pay more attention to the context of colonialism and their focus on the “other” within the field. Additionally, he thought more sustained attention ought to be paid to the religious situation of contact between the West and other cultures, including Americans and Europeans and Europeans and Africans. The theme of contact itself, he argued, could be interpreted as a religious mode. Finally, Long’s distinction between ordinary and extraordinary religion—the social aspects of religion versus the central importance of the experience with the supernatural—has been taken up by the historian of American religion Catherine Albanese in her 1981 textbook, *America: Religion and Religions*.

The study of American religion, as opposed to American church history narrowly understood, “burst wide open,” according to Sullivan, with the publication of Albanese’s textbook. Trained at the University of Chicago, Albanese moved away from strictly chronological narratives of American religion that detailed Christianity from the Puritans to the present day. Instead, she employed analytic categories of symbol and myth, ritual and violence, and sacred and profane space and time. And she explored numerous religions, attending to Native American religions, nature religion and spirituality, and the influence of Spanish and French colonization in the New World, along with Catholics and Jews in America and the religious lives of African Americans. Albanese produced in the end a textbook that represented a veritable “religious studies” approach to the history of American religion.

Long and Albanese represent two early alternatives for the study of American religion, and other scholars in the field have picked up their cue. Since the 1980s, scholars of American religion have increasingly shown interest in combining the theoretical reserves and approaches of religious studies with the study of American religion. Three recent trends illustrate the possible directions in which this shift has been taken: the study of world religions in North America; the use of categories borrowed from religious studies, such as the sacred and the profane; and the examination of the history of the category of religion, particularly as it has been developed within the United States.

History of Religion and the Study of Religion in North America

From its beginnings, American religious life has been diverse. Protestants and Catholics came into contact with

Native American, Jewish, Muslim, and indigenous African religious practices from the earliest days of American colonialism, often forming novel religious traditions in the process, such as Santería and voodoo. And this diversity has only been on the rise since the earliest days of European contact, especially since the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 eliminated national immigration quotas, allowing larger numbers of Asians, Africans, and Middle Easterners to settle in the United States. New denominations of Protestants have sprouted and prospered, and more Jews now call the United States home than any other nation. Numbering about six million, Muslims have become the second largest religious group in the United States, second only to Christians, and Hindus and Buddhists have flourished in American cities and suburbs from New York to Los Angeles. Indeed, the United States itself has become the most religiously diverse country in the world.

Given this context, scholars have begun to study the presence of various religions in America. Historian of Judaism Jacob Neusner's *World Religions in America* (1994) includes essays from leading scholars covering a significant range of religious diversity, including Native American and African American religious traditions; the history of Catholics, Mormons, and Jews in America; as well as the history of Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims. But perhaps no one has done more to document American religious diversity and to move away from the inaccurate model of a "Christian America" than Diana Eck, professor of comparative religion and Indian studies at Harvard. Eck has forged the way for the study of religious pluralism in the United States through the creation of the Pluralism Project at Harvard University and popular publications such as *New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (2001). Eck's research not only catalogues religious diversity but also urges interfaith dialogue that moves beyond mere toleration to a more thorough acceptance of religious pluralism. Indeed, the optimistic liberal spirit of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century scholars and theologians reverberates in Eck's work. To the extent that research on world religions in America places more emphasis on non-Western religious traditions, it risks obscuring the diversity found within American Christianity and Judaism and reproducing a problematic East/West binary, one found in the very separation of the history of religions from the history of Christianity in many American graduate schools. The presence of religious innovation, such as that among Korean evangelicals or Latino Pentecostals,

two quickly growing communities in North America, reminds scholars that religious innovation occurs in numerous ways and across various ethnic, cultural, racial, and geographic lines. Research on religion and immigration in North America, such as *Gatherings in Diaspora: Religious Communities and New Immigration* (1998), has usefully documented some of these developments.

Scholars of North American religion have also employed categories borrowed from the history of religions approach to interpret American religious phenomena in new ways. Studies of popular religion have usefully employed the categories such as sacred and profane, ritual and pilgrimage, that have provided an analytic language to comment upon cultural events not usually understood as "religious." Toward this end, scholars of American religion have directed us to the sacred spaces of shopping malls and sporting events, to spiritual pilgrimages to Ground Zero or even Graceland, and to the gospel of Oprah Winfrey. Echoing scholars of American civil religion, such as sociologist Robert Bellah, historians have also illustrated how Americans have sacralized various national spaces, such as Plymouth Rock, the National Memorial, or Mount Rushmore, which have become sites of both individual and national significance. This attention to popular religions has not only borrowed from but has also reframed categories such as sacred and profane. As historian of material religion Colleen McDannell has argued, separations between sacred and profane in American Christianity often prove more muddled than we commonly assume, as when religion mixes with cultural forms often considered not only secular, but indeed profane, such as radio and television or business and consumer culture. Moving the site of religion from the church to the television screen, or selling religious books for profit, for instance, present new interpretative opportunities that scholars of American religion have taken up.

Exploring sacred space in America, religious studies scholars David Chidester and Ed Linenthal have argued for a correction to Eliade's theory of sacred and profane. Following Jonathan Z. Smith, they offer two definitions of the sacred, as substantial or situational. In the first definition, the sacred is a given, uncanny phenomena, or what we could call a presence. Understanding the sacred as situation, in contrast, means that nothing is inherently sacred. Rather, a place or object can become sacred through the labor of consecration and ritual. Rather than a presence, we could call this a representation. The intermingling of the mundane and the sacred in examples listed above, then, exposes how

sacred sites and objects are not simply present, waiting to be discovered, but rather actively created by people through religious practices. Shifting from sacred space to visual culture, art historian David Morgan has shown for instance how kitsch art, such as the famous image of Jesus painted by Warner Sallman in the first half of the twentieth century, can take on religious meaning to become a sacred image, even as it is reprinted on mundane objects, from T-shirts to key chains. This interpretative move in the study of American religion has enriched the analytical language scholars have used to describe religious phenomena, but it has also, and perhaps more importantly, allowed scholars to redefine what gets to count as religion or religious and, indeed, to reflect on how they have used categories of religion in their scholarship.

Using the analytic tools of religious studies to comment on mainline and often white American Protestantism, for example, has allowed scholars to reverse what historian of American Catholicism Robert Orsi has called the modernist paradigm, the assumption that religious traditions mature through a phase focused on bodies and material objects to a rational faith, or from superstition and ritual to morality and belief. The application of categories drawn from comparative religions shows American Protestantism in a new light, as more similar to the “other” religious traditions—which have included at various moments Catholicism and Judaism, Christian evangelicalism and African American religious traditions, as well as non-Western religious forms—against which historians of American church history have too often premised their scholarship. Following this line, scholars have recently become interested in the reflective study of the history of the category of religion, along with the history of the study of religion, and they have begun to suggest new ways to think about these broader histories in reference to North America.

Historians such as Leigh Schmidt, Ann Taves, and Robert Orsi have suggested that existing histories of the study of religion have focused too heavily on its development in Europe and on the role of intellectual elites. Tomoko Masuzawa, for example, offers a trenchant criticism of the paradigm of “world religions” as it developed in the nineteenth-century European academy from a background of Christian theology and Western preoccupations with universalism. Yet she and others understate, Orsi has argued, how the study of religion emerged not out of a simple binary of Christian and “other,” in which Christian theologians and scholars co-opted the latter, but through more

complicated relationships between the West and other parts of the world, and even within the West itself. The focus on European intellectuals has also clouded the participation of American theologians and scholars of religion in the creation of the study of religion. American psychologist William James, for example, authored one of the most important studies in the United States, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. First published in 1902, this study played an important role in the study of religion by redefining religion in a particularly liberal Protestant mode as individual experience, a lead later picked up by Eliade as well as other professional and amateur scholars of religion in Europe and the United States. Likewise, more attention ought to be given to amateur scholars of religion. Too often, scholars have argued, amateur historians and comparative scholars, often women, have been excised from histories of the formation of the discipline in favor of professionalized, male scholars writing from the platforms of elite institutions. Telling this alternative history also leads to new stories about how people have employed or contested the category of religion.

In his cultural history of hearing and religion in the American enlightenment, Schmidt describes how hearing the divine, once a common medium for religious experience, was deemed increasingly unreliable over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Divine sound was largely muffled, replaced by an absence constructed by new aural technologies, from the art of ventriloquism to the invention of the stethoscope. Hearing, once quite central to religious experience, thus increasingly fell under the purview of science and reason, further afield from the world of enchantment. Historian Tisa Wenger offers a cultural history of the deployment of the category of religion among a group of Pueblo Indians. When the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs attempted to suppress ceremonial dancing in the 1920s, Pueblo leaders strategically defended their traditions by redefining them as religion to legitimize them. They adopted the Western category of religion to make a case for religious freedom within the American legal system. Taking on the Western category of religion, Wenger shows, provided the Pueblos with a unique strategy of resistance. By showing how ordinary people employed and contested categories of religion in everyday life, these historians have pushed the history of the study of religion in new directions. Taken together, researches into the presence of world religions in North America, the translation of categories such as the sacred and the profane to American materials, and investigation into the cultural history of religion in the New

World suggest the potential reach of the history of religions approach in the study of North America, even as the approach itself has come under revision.

Conclusion

To be sure, scholars of American religion consistently deploy modes of comparison. To paraphrase Jonathan Z. Smith, comparison is how we think. But the topics of comparative study in American religion have less often been those of the history of religions. American religious historians have tended to show less interest in concepts of myth, sacrifice, and even the sacred and profane than their cousins in the history of religions. But they have had their own concepts of comparison all along, including notions of contact and exchange, colonization and acculturation, and elite and popular religion. More recently, investigations into agency and resistance, gender and sexuality, dietary practices and the body, health and well-being, hearing and vision, and various other aspects of religious practice have come to the fore. What historians of American religion have lacked, perhaps, are systematic understandings of the comparative enterprise itself. Indeed, they would do well to reap the benefits of recent writing from historians of religion to avoid their shortcomings and to further the investigation of religious life in North America in all its diversity, conflict, and abundance.

In recent years, the field of American religion has been heavily influenced by the development of “lived religion.” This approach builds on the theoretical work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and historian Michel de Certeau, among others, to highlight religious practice. One of the leading figures of this field, historian Robert Orsi, has called scholars of American religion back to the idea of sacred presence. Too often in modern life, he has noted, given the fads of secularism, the focus has shifted to sacred absence. But how, he asks, do contemporary scholars of religion, working within modern disciplines, talk about the realness of sacred presence alongside social and psychological explanations, particularly as this presence is represented by the people whose lives they study and share? The question does not quite return us to Eliade, but neither does his absence solve the dilemma.

See also *America, Religious Interpretations of; Demographics; Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches; Feminist Studies; Geographical Approaches; Historical Approaches; Immigration entries; Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Religious Studies; Sociological Approaches; Systematic Theology.*

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Holidays

Holidays are “Holy Days”: days set aside and marked as sacred through myth, symbols, and ritual acts. Holidays structure the seasonal calendar through meaningful changes to daily routines. They are socially recognized events but are not always legal holidays. While the word *holiday* may connote a happy, festive celebration, the occasions evoke a spectrum of moods and motivations, including penitence and voluntary self-deprivation. Across religious traditions, different days direct participants to similar purposes, such as atonement, thanksgiving, commemoration, and celebration. Abundant feasts with special foods are integral to some days, while others promote solemn reflection. Holidays vary in degree of importance. The American cycle includes both distinctly religious commemorations as well as civil and cultural celebrations with religious dimensions. In the United States holidays refract a spectrum of themes and social tensions. Often, groups negotiate questions of identity through unique observances or refusing to participate in the celebrations of dominant society. Holidays can also be integrative and reinforce national myths and cultural patterns.

The American Holiday Mosaic

Holiday beliefs and behaviors are among the best testimonies of a longstanding pluralism in American religion and culture. The American holiday calendar is a composite of celebrations universal and specific to particular groups.

Because Christianity has been the dominant religious tradition in America, the Christian calendar has been the major structure for American holiday life, and it often intrudes on the particular observances of religious minorities. Yet religion actually cuts across American holiday life on several axes. Some holidays, such as the Fourth of July, tie into the national myth of “civil religion.” Others, such as Palm Sunday and Ramadan, are specifically religious occasions. For a third category, including St. Patrick’s Day and Valentine’s Day, the original religious dimensions have given way to a spirit of cultural celebration.

Holidays give religious communities a sense of continuity with the past, of keeping traditions alive and thereby participating in something greater than ourselves. Yet the rituals, beliefs, sentiments, and aesthetics associated with an event change over time, with elements added and others dropped. For this reason the idea of a “traditional” style of observance is in some ways an illusion; rather, holidays are better seen as cultural amalgamations that reflect changing historical contexts.

As the scholar Amitai Etzioni has observed, holidays tend to be of two types—those that reinforce the values of the community and those that release social tensions through revelry and limited periods of tolerated disorder. Holidays have distinct centers, such as the home, street, and church, which often can be competitive arenas of social expression.

Celebration in the Colonial Period

The treatment of holiday celebrations in the colonial period reflects two conflicting impulses that the colonists inherited from Europe. The Reformation introduced a preference for simplicity in religious life, which affected holiday observances. By pruning the calendar of religious holidays and prohibiting public festivities, the Puritans and other Protestants limited both the occasions for and expressions of merrymaking. At the same time, Protestant austerity competed with the carnivalesque folk culture that also was a part of the colonists’ European heritage.

Having earned their name from their hope to purge all pagan elements from Protestantism, the Puritans did away with most of the European festive calendar. In New England, religious and civil authorities banned festivities on Christmas, New Year’s, Easter, and “Whitsuntide” (Pentecost), and imposed sanctions on violators of the ordinances against celebrations. Some colonists attempted to restore traditional festivities—for example, Thomas Morton, who led a group of “madd Bacchinalians” in a dance around a Maypole in 1627. More somber members of the Mount Wollaston, Massachusetts, community attacked him, and Morton later was deported.

The Puritans’ life was not devoid of ritual commemoration, but their “holidays” did not look anything like today’s celebrations. They were deeply Sabbatarian, honoring God’s commandment to rest on Sundays with limitations on work and leisure. Towns and colonies regularly scheduled days of thanksgiving, repentance, and humiliation. Most of these occasions were intended to bring communities closer to God and were observed with church attendance and fasting.

The Puritans did, however, hold a Harvest Home festival similar to those celebrated across Europe. It is likely the community feast at Plymouth Plantation in the fall of 1621 was such an event, with a far different character than the prototypical “Thanksgiving” holiday to which it was linked in the nineteenth century.

In New England the resistance to jollification was surprisingly long-lived. There, stores were open on Christmas Day into the early nineteenth century, and through the eighteenth century, Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and the Society of Friends refused to celebrate either Easter or what Quakers called “the Day called Christmas.” Yet not even in New England was the attempt to banish traditional behavior successful, and in other regions many colonials saw holidays as reasons for rowdy behavior that upended all Protestant expectations of decorum. Carnivalesque fetes often included the upending of social roles and ritual challenging of boundaries of gender, race, and class. In the mid-Atlantic and southern colonies Christmas, New Year’s and other occasions were celebrated as in Europe, with feasts, drinking, and games.

By the eighteenth century a rowdy men’s culture had developed that resembled that of western Europe. Shrove Tuesday and Easter Monday were traditional days for both drinking and “gander pulling,” the sport of attempting to grasp a greased goose suspended by a rope from a tree. “Masking” or “mumming” was another revelry of European origin, which has contributed to the celebratory style of modern-day New Year’s, Mardi Gras, and Halloween. In colonial America the Christmas season was a masculine time, when “masquerades” of young men reveled in the streets.

The American Revolution forged some of the earliest symbols for American civil religion. From the time of the Early Republic, commemorations of the birthday of George Washington and the signing of the Declaration of Independence animated community life and promoted national unity. At first, however, civil holidays were oriented to men’s political culture. “Election Days” and the Fourth of July were celebrated by all-male dinners for political factions or members of the local militia.

The nationalism of civil religion was balanced by regional and local solidarity rituals. In New England, “Forefathers Day” was observed starting in 1769. Held a few days before Christmas, the day commemorated the arrival of the Pilgrims in 1620, not the harvest feast held in autumn 1621. Late December was not the optimal time for public

celebrations, though, and in the 1820s the Pilgrim Society proposed “Embarkation Day,” marking the Pilgrims’ departure from the Netherlands in August 1620, as an alternative. These events were important antecedents to the modern Thanksgiving. Nor was regional identity the only social denominator reinforced through holiday observances. Small groups often have celebrations special to their tradition, and even in the colonial period, religious minorities maintained distinct practices. By the late 1730s, Moravians in Georgia had begun holding “love feasts”—rituals modeled after the agape services of the early Christians. After Mother Ann Lee died in 1784, it became the custom for Shakers to honor on March 1 the February 29 birthday of their founder by baking a “Mother Ann cake” flavored with peach and sometimes rosewater.

Victorian Holiday Domestications

Traditional carnivalesque celebrations persisted through the nineteenth century. Across many cities groups of young men dressed in rags, blackface, or women’s clothing took control of the streets on both religious and civil holidays. That their merrymaking could take a violent turn, with bands of white Protestants harassing and even attacking Catholic immigrants and African Americans, illustrates how holidays could be times when social tensions erupted. Changing public attitudes brought this kind of celebration largely to a close by 1900, by which time the masqueraders were commonly regarded as a public nuisance. That the masqueraders’ behavior was increasingly seen as deviant reflects a major shift in Americans’ understandings of festive behavior. In the nineteenth century several cultural trends converged to reorient many holidays, away from the rowdy world of the streets and toward the home and family.

Victorian sensibilities fostered the development of a new holiday style, which celebrated decorum, sentimentality, domesticity, and evangelical Protestant piety. Arminian theology, which stressed the role of free choice in obtaining salvation, contributed to a new understanding of child development. In the mindset of “Christian nurture,” the moral state of children depended on neither election nor dramatic conversion but rather on their long-term spiritual “cultivation” by loving parents and teachers. As American culture became more child centered, women gained a special place in family life. Period gender assumptions, communicated through the “cult of true womanhood,” elevated woman’s roles as guardian of the home and nurturer of the family. Holidays gave women the opportunity, and also the

responsibility, to express these values through increasingly elaborate preparations. By the 1850s, when men still went door-to-door shooting off guns and firecrackers, women's role of holiday shopper was firmly established.

The market revolution changed holidays more profoundly than any other social development. All the forces of commerce—production, distribution, advertising, and sales—were engaged to expand holiday celebrations. Fears that religious holidays could be corrupted or even profaned by commercialization and excessive carousing were periodically aired. Valentine's Day, although nominally based on the feast day of a Christian martyr, was attractive because it was free of overt religious content and thus avoided controversies about religious propriety. The formation of Valentine's Day as the first "greeting-card" holiday involved several stages, as outlined by Leigh Schmidt. As sentimentality came to define the aesthetics of the period, it became fashionable to give Valentine's Day cards to friends and loved ones. The cards affirmed social bonds and kinship networks, as well as relations between lovers. In the 1830s and 1840s the cards were largely homemade, though the givers were helped in their task by store-bought "valentine writers," booklets of suggested valentine verses. In this time Valentine's Day also provided an outlet for ritual social transgression very much in the spirit of street celebrations, as Americans antagonized one another with the sending of Valentine's Day parodies to those whom they disliked. By the 1850s, however, store-bought lithographed valentines were common, and the practice of sending "anti-valentines" had fallen off.

In the nineteenth century many of the elements of the "traditional" American Christmas were introduced, but this happened over several decades. In the early 1800s many Protestants were reluctant to celebrate "Catholic" holidays. In fact, the practice of attending church on Christmas was a relatively late addition. Into the mid-nineteenth century people attended Christmas services if the holiday happened to fall on Sunday but otherwise stayed home. Many Americans celebrated a festive New Year's but avoided merrymaking on Christmas, especially in New England.

In the eighteenth century Americans seldom exchanged presents, though it was customary to "tip" apprentices and servants. After 1780, Americans began to give "holiday presents," first on New Year's and only later on Christmas. These often were trinkets given to friends, though gifts of religious books and such toys as Noah's Ark sets became common presents for children, too. Over time the focus of gift giving shifted away from acquaintances and toward family members,

and the presents grew more expensive. The explosion of print media made "Christmas books" a popular gift item. In the 1840s, Charles Dickens's story *A Christmas Carol* out-sold the Bible in the American market. By then Americans were also buying tastefully bound editions of popular science and history books as well as collections of short stories for children. These "respectable" early gift exchanges paved the way for the custom of giving presents to develop in the Victorian period.

The American representation of Santa Claus was formed in the first half of the nineteenth century. The figure was based on the character of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, the third-century bishop of Anatolia, who in European renditions was alternately depicted as black or white, thin or fat. His arrival was celebrated on different days in several countries: December 5, Christmas Eve or Day, and New Year's. Two poems published in the 1820s helped to introduce the American public to Santa Claus as a portly, red-suited driver of a sleigh pulled by reindeer. "The Children's Friend," was published in 1821 with an unnamed author. Two years later an anonymous poem entitled "A Visit from Saint Nicholas" appeared in the *Sentinel* newspaper in Troy, New York. Clement Clarke Moore, a Bible professor from the Episcopal General Theological Seminary, later admitted he had written the poem, more commonly known as "'Twas the Night before Christmas," although his authorship has been disputed. Stephen Nissenbaum argues that Moore divorced Saint Nicholas from his Christian symbolism of divine reward and punishment and reduced him to a friendly, magical gift giver—the jolly Santa Claus as he is known today.

The "American Christmas" is the product of customs and folklore from many European countries, especially England, Germany, and Scandinavia. Christmas trees originated in Germany. In the United States the Amish had trees by the 1820s. A Harvard College German professor and Unitarian named Charles Follen introduced the custom to mainstream Protestant America in 1832. By 1900, 20 percent of American families had Christmas trees.

A shared language gave the British Isles disproportionate influence on American holiday music, which actually encompassed two different musical traditions that both dated to the Middle Ages. As seen in the song "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," the practice of "caroling" door-to-door has close ties to English masking revelries. Christmas hymns also were a longstanding part of the English Christmas tradition, but liturgical songs were suppressed briefly during the Commonwealth period. The Restoration expanded the

tradition of High Church music, and English hymnody blossomed in the eighteenth century with the songs of Isaac Watts, who wrote more than 750 songs, including “Joy to the World.” Despite the high representation of English contributions, in the nineteenth century translations of French and German hymns and carols entered the American holiday repertoire, including popular songs such as “Oh, Christmas Tree” (“*O Tannenbaum*”) and “Angels We Have Heard on High” (“*Les Anges dans nos Campagnes*”). Best known of these international additions is “Silent Night” (“*Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht*”), an Austrian hymn that James Freeman Young, an Episcopal bishop, translated and published in 1859.

Unbeknownst to many Americans, our emotional expectations of family gatherings continue to reflect Victorian sensibilities. In the nineteenth century sentimentality became the dominant affective style for many major holidays, which were seen as days to extol family, piety, and “tradition.” Among the best examples of how holidays reflected Victorian expectations can be found in the creation of Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving has its origins in the New England “Forefathers’ Day” commemorations, which were based on the English Harvest Home festival. In the 1840s, Sarah Josepha Hale, a popular writer and editor of *Godey’s Lady’s Book*, first proposed a national observance celebrating the Pilgrims as the “founders” of America. In 1863 she wrote a letter to Abraham Lincoln, who issued a proclamation that fall. Thanksgiving was envisioned as a day for families to come together in the affirming of national unity at a time when many families were separated by the war. Thanksgiving was sentimentally associated with travel to the homes of loved ones through the popularization of Lydia Maria Child’s 1844 poem “A Boy’s Thanksgiving Day,” which began with the famous line “Over the river and through the woods.” The regional dimensions of the holiday were promoted through the “traditional” Thanksgiving menu of foods believed to have been eaten at Plymouth in 1621, including roast turkey, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie.

In the years immediately following the Civil War, observance of Thanksgiving was not uniform. Catholics were wary of the implicit Protestantism in the ritual commemoration of the Massachusetts Pilgrims. Immigrants, especially Jews, did not identify with American culture enough to invest in a holiday they saw as reserved for the native born, and other ethnic communities, as well as Southerners, resisted embracing the holiday for some time.

That the holiday focused on a communal feast highlighting the domestic skills of women illuminates the longstanding association of Thanksgiving with football, which offered a

masculine counterweight to feminine domesticity. By the 1890s the Ivy League championship game, held on Thanksgiving, had become a very popular event. In the twentieth century, high school, college, and professional teams drew in millions of Americans as participants and spectators of holiday games.

The Making of American Holidays, 1860–1930

Until the Civil War, holidays were seldom recognized by the United States government. Rather, their observance and dissemination were the result of efforts by other social forces—business, religious bodies, and prevailing cultural attitudes. Lincoln’s proclamation of Thanksgiving ushered in a new government interest in the creation of national holidays. Between 1870 and 1930 many major holidays were added to the American calendar, along with others that withered on the vine. In the Progressive Era holidays were a “nationalizing process”—first to unify the country after the Civil War, which quickly was followed by the even larger project of creating a common cultural identity amid mass immigration from Europe.

With the rise of the Victorian holiday paradigm, civil holidays such as the Fourth of July that originally were men’s social occasions became family-centered events. This was evident in early observances of Memorial Day, which began as “Decoration Day” in 1868. Decoration Day processions were solemn affairs that often ended at cemeteries, but it soon became customary for families to follow the parade with a picnic. During Reconstruction, white Southerners who still were resentful of the Union honored their war dead on different days, but by the 1870s the North and South shared a single commemorative holiday.

The late nineteenth century saw other holiday additions to “civil religion.” Americans began to celebrate the birthday of George Washington while the first president still was in office, but in 1880 Congress declared February 22 a holiday for government workers in the District of Columbia. Washington’s Birthday became a full federal holiday five years later. The first public commemoration of Lincoln’s birthday was in 1874. The birthday of Abraham Lincoln on February 12 has never been nationally commemorated, though today it is recognized by many states.

In the Progressive Era, public schools took on the role of teaching civil religion and promoting a unified “American” culture. Thanksgiving was one of several holidays promoted through the public school system. The theme of peace between Pilgrims and American Indians became a model for assimilating immigrants into a mainstream “American” culture

that still regarded white Protestant identity as the ideal. By the 1920s Thanksgiving was celebrated in most public schools and thereby communicated to the entire nation.

Pressured to adopt “American” holiday observances, immigrants’ responses were a mixture of rejection, embracement, and adaptation. In the late nineteenth century Italian and Irish members encouraged the Knights of Columbus to press for the public observance of Columbus Day. By presenting Christopher Columbus as the first “immigrant,” American Catholics sought to create a countermyth to the Pilgrims that would also be ratified in holiday behavior.

Christmas was first declared a federal holiday in 1870. Over the next sixty years American consumer culture grew even more elaborate. This changed many holidays and helped in the making of entirely new ones. American business interests saw opportunities in bringing national versions of holidays to the public, and consumption became a potent force for cultural cohesion. Even the Fourth of July was commercialized, as fireworks intended “for home use” came on the market.

Americans harnessed new technologies to enhance the holidays. On December 31, 1907, a glass-and-wood sphere, illuminated with one hundred 25-watt lightbulbs, descended from a flagpole on the One Times Square building in downtown New York City. A century later as many as one million people gather in Times Square to watch the “Ball Drop” on New Year’s Eve. Above all other celebrations, Christmas became a spectacle of parades and displays, lights and sights. The first public Christmas tree was in Madison Square Park in New York in 1912. Eight years later Gimbel’s department store in Philadelphia, which was owned by a Jewish family, began its holiday parade, and Santa Claus enjoyed a prominent role. The proximity of the New York City Gimbel’s and Macy’s department stores, both located in Herald Square, was likely an impetus for Macy’s to start its Thanksgiving Day Parade in 1924.

In the Progressive Era representations of Santa Claus took on a standard appearance, deriving from Thomas Nast’s depictions in *Harper’s Weekly* and reinforcing the image of a red-suited man bearing mountains of presents. Santa’s status as an embodiment of the American Christmas season was sealed in 1897, when *New York Sun* editor Francis Pharellus Church responded in print to eight-year-old Virginia O’Hanlon’s question with the affirmative, “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.”

Mother’s Day was a new addition that derived from older evangelical religious values. In 1907 Anna Jarvis started the

holiday, by handing out white carnations to all the mothers in the congregation of her own deceased mother’s Methodist church in Grafton, West Virginia. The increasing commercialism of Mother’s Day led Jarvis to publicly denounce its style of observance in 1920, to little effect. Jarvis inspired another woman, however, to circulate a petition in 1910 calling for the establishment of a day honoring fathers. Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, found support from proponents of “muscular Christianity,” including participants in the Men and Religion Forward Movement. Into the 1930s, though, Fathers’ Day was primarily a local event in Spokane, after which interest spread to other American cities and towns. Richard Nixon made the holiday official in 1972.

The development of the “American” Easter reflects the homogenizing power of the market, as well as the increasing cultural diversity of America in the Progressive Era. The “American” Easter borrowed symbols and customs from many countries. The Easter lily was imported from Japan in 1882, and it quickly became the holiday emblem. German immigrants brought the custom of dyeing eggs to the United States in the mid-1800s, but the practice was not popularized until after the Civil War. The “Easter Bunny” also had roots in German culture, where the hare was an old symbol for springtime. By 1890 German American chocolate makers were selling candy rabbits. In 1878 Rutherford B. Hayes presided over the first White House “Easter Egg Roll,” giving official recognition to a practice that had been performed informally.

Much more than Christmas, which often has been celebrated by Americans who are not Christian, Easter continues to be understood as a major religious occasion. Yet in addition to commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Easter is a holiday of springtime and fertility. In Europe and the United States, Easter is associated with symbols of regeneration such as flowers and baby animals—some mark the start of the season with new clothing as well. In the 1870s the Easter Parade started in New York, giving stylish participants the chance to show off their festive spring outfits. Commercialization blurred the boundary between religion and consumption. In the 1890s, taking their inspiration from the seasonal church decorations of Catholics and Episcopalians, store owners began creating festive window displays that often featured acutely religious symbols such as crosses.

With Easter, no less than the rest of the American holiday cycle, immigrants to America sometimes found it challenging to preserve older customs. While in some eastern

European cultures, Easter is primary, the holiday is less important in the United States. As a result some ethnicities, such as the Poles and Russians, downgraded their own celebrations to fit in with national expectations. Yet the holiday also offered the chance for eastern Europeans to assert ethnic pride. In Europe, Easter Monday was one of several religious days given over to carousing. Boisterous celebrations were mostly phased out in the early twentieth century but are still celebrated in some communities.

Holidays and the American Way of Life

The consumption that had long been part of American holiday practice was curtailed by the Great Depression. The economic crisis provoked responses from many dimensions of American society. Widespread unemployment forced many families to cut back dramatically on holiday observances. At Christmastime families relied on homemade gifts and decorations, and when necessary they refurbished old toys and gave them to children as “new” presents. Religious groups and charities invoked Americans’ fondness for the “spirit of Christmas” and expanded their December fundraising. The Salvation Army had begun collecting donations with a red kettle in the 1890s, but the Depression gave new prominence to the bell ringers, who became a symbol of the season. In 1939 Franklin Delano Roosevelt moved Thanksgiving up one full week in order to plump the economy by extending the holiday shopping season.

The economic austerity of the Depression years did not check Americans’ desire for consumer holiday fantasies. New entertainment media worked a kind of alchemy on the spirits of hard-pressed Americans, who turned out for the film industry’s musicals and comedies with holiday themes. Department stores conceived of new gimmicks to draw people in. Store Santas lifted the spirits of Depression-minded shoppers, and in 1939 copywriter Robert May wrote the song “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” as an advertisement for Montgomery Ward. Via the rapidly expanding technology of radio, May’s song soon entered other public spaces, including rival places of business. Radio thus affected the locations where Christmas music was heard. Radio also directed its content away from religious themes toward a more general festive sentiment, aptly captured in Burl Ives’s song “Holly, Jolly Christmas.” Partaking of this holiday spirit did not require a commitment to Christianity; some of the most famous Christmas songs of the twentieth century, such as “Happy Holiday” and “White Christmas,” were written by Jewish composer Irving Berlin.

The attack on Pearl Harbor shattered the 1941 Christmas season. Throughout the war years Americans were ambivalent about lavish celebrations. With millions of GIs serving overseas, it felt inappropriate to be festive. With most men going to the military, Santa left few bicycles for children. Families saved their butter and sugar rations weeks before the winter holidays to make such requisite desserts as fruitcake and pies. Many Americans found solace in popular culture’s sentimental promotions of family togetherness. Singer Bing Crosby gave expression to their sense of longing in “I’ll Be Home for Christmas” and promised the continuity of tradition in “White Christmas”—both hit songs.

“Peace on Earth” has long been a theme associated with Christmas. Just as Andrew Johnson’s 1868 “Christmas Pardon” of members of the Confederacy signaled an official end to the Civil War, President Harry Truman signed a proclamation of “selective amnesty” for all religious conscientious objectors on Christmas Eve in 1947. That same year the film *Miracle on 34th Street* was released, delivering a message of the triumph of the “true Christmas spirit” over cynical consumerism. It was a timely message for Americans seeking to restore a sense of normalcy. The challenge ahead would be finding authenticity in an era of unprecedented prosperity.

The 1950s saw continuities with historical assumptions about gender. Women bore primary responsibility for shopping and cooking for holidays, but the way these roles were performed changed. As mass food production and advertising introduced brand names, Libby’s pumpkin, Butterball turkey, and Ocean Spray cranberries became holiday staples.

By their nature holidays provide an escape from everyday life, but they are not immune to current events. Real-life events intruded on holiday observances in the 1950s and following decades. Anxieties over “Godless Communism” led President Harry Truman and the U.S. Congress to issue a joint resolution establishing the National Day of Prayer in 1952. Ronald Reagan’s 1988 proclamation gave the day a permanent place on the American calendar, setting aside the first Thursday in May. Veterans Day had been known as Armistice Day since it was established by Woodrow Wilson in 1919. Dwight Eisenhower called for the name to change in 1954, in order to acknowledge the additional wars the United States had fought. That same year the White House Easter Egg Roll was open to black children for the first time, at the insistence of First Lady Mamie Eisenhower.

In the second half of the twentieth century, television wielded great power in shaping ritual life. Televised coverage

expanded the audiences for parades on Easter, football games on New Year's, and both such events on Thanksgiving. Beginning in 1956, millions of Americans tuned their sets to CBS to watch the Times Square New Year's Eve coverage. Fifty years later the event was watched by 100 million Americans and as many as 1 billion people around the world. Years after they ran in theaters, films such as *It's a Wonderful Life* were rebroadcast on television. In 1964 a "stop motion" story about Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer aired for the first time on NBC, featuring the singer Burl Ives. *Rudolph* was followed by dozens more holiday "specials," including *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Frosty the Snowman*, and *Mr. Magoo's A Christmas Carol*. The cast of Charles Schultz's *Peanuts* comic strip was featured in programs airing for Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, Valentine's Day, and Halloween. In all these instances television programs took on the iconic status as holiday "traditions."

Television advertising fed the increasing consumerism of the second half of the twentieth century. In 1968 Congress passed the Uniform Holidays Bill, placing four federal holidays on "permanent Mondays": George Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Columbus Day, and Veterans Day; Veterans Day was later restored to its former date of November 11. This rationalization of the holiday cycle had unintended commercial consequences. Americans took their cue from advertisers, who promoted "Presidents' Day" as a joint holiday honoring both George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. This is the name by which the commemoration now is known to most Americans, for some of whom the February weekend represents good "deals" on cars, mattresses, and durable goods.

By the 1990s Christmas had grown to a \$150 billion event, the biggest holiday of the year in the United States. Americans expressed cynicism about consumption but seemed powerless to stop its relentless growth. In 1992 Protestant and Catholic clergy came together to condemn the commercialization of Christmas in an open letter entitled "Celebrate Christmas, not Commercialism." The letter was largely a symbolic gesture, made at a time when shopping had become the focal point of the holiday for many Americans. Christmas had come to be seen by many as an ecumenical winter holiday. Not surprisingly, over the twentieth century American Christmas music shifted in emphasis, away from a celebration of the nativity and toward seasonal festivities. As Christmas music became "secularized," popular singers took to recording original or traditional holiday songs. While Elvis Presley's release of several Christmas

albums arguably made him "King" of the seasonal genre, everyone from Bruce Springsteen to Madonna seemed to get into the act. Such recordings came to dominate the airwaves, making Christmas music ubiquitous and inevitably raising church-state issues. In 1980 the U.S. Supreme Court reaffirmed the "secular" nature of Christmas music. In *Florey v. Sioux Falls School District*, the Supreme Court sided with the lower district, which found that the music, art, and literature of traditional American holidays has "acquired a significance which is no longer confined to the religious sphere of life. It has become integrated into our national culture and heritage." Christmas had become synonymous with "the American Way of Life."

In the late twentieth century increasing ethnic and religious diversity expanded and changed the American holiday calendar, and anxieties over the meaning of cultural pluralism caused some Christian activists to call for recognition of what they believed were the religious origins of the nation through public support of Christian holidays. Tensions seemed to abate in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, al-Qaida attacks, which provoked calls for both national unity and religious tolerance in the immediate aftermath. The interfaith memorial services held in many locales deliberately include imams and other Muslim representatives, in acknowledgment of the "Judeo-Christian-Islamic" heritage of the United States. In 2002, September 11 seemed ready to become the latest addition to America's Civil Religion, when commemorations were held across the country. Since 2002, though, observances of September 11 have fallen off.

At the moment, it appears that the latest addition to the holiday calendar with the greatest prospects for longevity is Earth Day, which celebrates ecological and environmental concerns. Earth Day first was observed in 1970, with two different commemorations of the same name. Today, a non-profit organization, Earth Day Network, coordinates events in more than 170 countries. The internationalization of Earth Day makes it the first American contribution to a global ritual calendar, a holiday that rapidly has transitioned from countercultural to "mainstream."

Religious Pluralism and Holiday Practice

American holiday observances have been enriched by contributions from many religious and ethnic subcultures. At the same time, many groups have maintained distinct holiday customs, and some groups commemorate events of special importance to them. For example, Latter-day Saints

honor the July 24, 1847, arrival of the first group to the Salt Lake Valley on “Pioneer Day,” by staging walks on the Mormon Trail. The impact of these culturally specific occasions varies widely, however. Few Americans commemorate the birthday of L. Ron Hubbard, founder of the Church of Scientology, or observe “Parents Day” in honor of Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Hak Ja Han, the leaders of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (the Unification Church). Even so, some religious and ethnic minorities have voiced their presence in American culture through holiday behavior to a degree that warrants their separate consideration.

Catholic and Russian Orthodox Observance

The American Catholic experience, and to a lesser extent the Eastern Orthodox one, carry the conflicting attitudes of identification with “mainstream” American culture and resistance to its homogenizing pressure. From the nineteenth century on Catholics celebrated both religious and ethnic solidarity through pageants, parades, and festivals. St Patrick’s Day was celebrated as early as the 1840s in New York. Originally an Irish fertility festival that was relatively nonsectarian, the holiday became more Catholic in the context of Protestant nativism. Because in the mid-nineteenth century the Fourth of July was an occasion for nativist demonstrations, Catholic organizations such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians organized their own parades in protest, as they did in New York in 1852.

The aesthetics of church and home decoration, ritual behavior, and special foods all helped immigrants identify with the “old country.” From the Progressive Era into the twentieth century, ethnicity defined the religious life of these communities, so that shared religious doctrines were given diverse expression. Thus, because Christmas Eve was a “meatless” fast day for all Roman Catholics until its elimination from Canon Law in 1983, Italian Americans traditionally served a dinner of “Seven Fishes,” while cheese and potato dumplings (pierogi) were favored by eastern Europeans.

Both Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Christians hold feast days in honor of different saints; these vary country by country and often are specific to particular communities or regions. Hungarian Americans celebrate St. Stephen of Hungary on August 16; Mexican Americans honor the Virgin of Guadalupe on December 12. Since 1926, Italian Americans have held the San Gennaro festival in Manhattan in honor of the patron saint of Naples. Each

September, participants pin money to a statue of the saint as it is paraded through the streets of Little Italy, with the proceeds going to the local Catholic church. The Feast of St. Basil is important to many Orthodox Christians, and especially to Greek Americans.

Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions operate on different calendars, but each one has a liturgical calendar that honors key events in the life of Jesus and the development of the church. The weeks leading up to Christmas and Easter are more important in Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy than in many Protestant traditions, where the liturgical seasons are less emphasized.

Advent is a time of spiritual preparation in advance of the commemoration of Christ’s birth. For Roman Catholics and High Church Protestants, the progress of the four weeks leading up to Christmas is announced with special liturgical readings as well as the lighting of candles on an Advent wreath, with one additional candle lit on each Sunday as Christmas approaches.

During Lent many Christians commemorate Jesus’ time in the desert, imitating Christ through fasting, prayer, abstinence from bodily pleasures, and acts of penance. It is common for Catholics, along with large numbers of Protestants, to “give up” something enjoyable—for instance, alcohol or smoking. Millions of children forgo ice cream, candy, and even television. Despite the end of meatless Fridays with Vatican II, many Catholics continue to abstain from meat on Fridays during Lent, although the asceticism of the season has lessened for Catholics when compared with earlier periods. Lenten fasts may be broken on Sundays because they are traditional feast days, but many Catholics do not avail themselves of this possibility, especially those who have chosen to give up such a vice as drinking. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, when worshipers receive blessings of smudged ashes from the burnt palm crosses from the past year. Ahead of this day it has been customary for centuries for Catholics to begin the period of self-denial with a festival of partying. In some countries the Carnival season starts with the Feast of the Epiphany in January, as is the custom with Mardi Gras in New Orleans. In other instances the revelry is confined to Shrove Tuesday, on which day thousands of American Catholic churches continue to hold pancake suppers. For Catholics, Lent culminates in “Holy Week”—Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday. In 1970, Vatican II ended the practice of veiling all statues in Catholic churches during the last two weeks of Lent, which were known until then as *Passiontide*.

There are some differences between Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic observance. Many national Eastern Orthodox churches use the Julian calendar, celebrating Christmas, Easter, and other religious holidays thirteen days later than the Western Gregorian calendar dates. Eastern Christians also place greater emphasis on asceticism: during both the Great Lent and the Nativity Fast, Eastern Christians abstain from meat, dairy, eggs, wine, and oil on most days. Regardless of the subtle distinctions in Lenten practices, however, Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox together have helped spread interest in Lent beyond the Episcopalians who also traditionally celebrate it, to an increasing number of mainline Protestants, and some evangelicals.

Jewish Holidays

Even more than American Catholics, the American Jewish experience entails anxieties about proximity to Christianity. This has affected holiday observances. Traditional Judaism maintains an elaborate lunar calendar inherited from the time of Temple Judaism, but many holidays are no longer celebrated by most American Jews. The modern Jewish calendar also commemorates more recent events, such as the Holocaust, which has been commemorated on Yom HaShoah since 1951. Holocaust Memorial Day falls in July or August. The month of Tishrei, falling in September or October, is the holiest season in Judaism. The High Holy Days begin with Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. It is customary to welcome the new year by wearing new clothes. The sweetness of the new year is symbolized in the eating of honey cake and apples dipped in honey. American Jews crowd synagogues to hear the blowing of the ram's horn, the *shofar*. On the afternoon of the first day of Rosh Hashanah, observant Jews gather at lakes and streams, for *tashlikh*, where they recite prayers and throw bread into the water, symbolically casting away sins. Rosh Hashanah ushers in a ten-day period of spiritual reflection leading up to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, on which Jews repent of their sins through fasting, prayer, and attending religious services. Believed to be to the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur commemorates the day when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, the inner chamber of the Temple in Jerusalem that housed the Ark of the Covenant and the original Ten Commandments. Sukkot (Sukkos, and other alternative spellings) starts barely a week after Yom Kippur. During the weeklong "Feast of Booths," an observant family may build a temporary hut known as a *sukkah*, in which they eat meals and spend much of their time, in

commemoration of the historic pilgrimage of Jews to the Temple in Jerusalem. Tishrei ends with Simchat Torah, which marks the end of the annual cycle of Torah readings. Fewer American Jews celebrate Sukkot and Simchat Torah than Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, for which one commonly needs a "ticket" to attend synagogue services.

Passover, or Pesach, is the most observed Jewish holiday in America. On the first two nights of this eight-day festival, Jews hold seders, meals of traditional foods that represent the events described in the book of Exodus. For the entire holiday observant Jews abstain from wheat and other grains and eat matzo, which is unleavened bread whose contact with water during preparation is limited. According to the 2000–2001 National Jewish Population Survey, nearly 90 percent of American Jews attended a seder meal, though the percentage who cleaned their houses of all leavened products or ate matzo for eight days was far lower. The popularity of Passover among American Jews has made the holiday an outlet for their many understandings of their tradition. Since the 1970s Jewish feminists began placing an orange on the Passover seder plate as a symbol of support for the ordination of women as rabbis. Like the fruit on the plate, they argued, women's ordination transformed the ritual but did not violate Jewish law. Many progressive Jews have adopted this practice. American book publishers have taken advantage of the variety of Passover interpretations by offering an abundance of Haggadoth, religious texts used as guides for the Passover meal. Not only are dozens of interactive and "child-friendly" versions now available, including at least one comic book, but Jewish feminists, secular humanists, and vegetarians can all find Haggadoth ratifying their views, as can Jewish converts to Christianity and Buddhism who wish to observe the holiday from an interfaith perspective. This current range of options stands in contrast with much of the twentieth century, when many Jews used the Haggadah printed by the Maxwell House coffee company.

Hanukkah is the Jewish holiday best known to non-Jews. The "Festival of Lights" commemorates the story of the Maccabean Revolt from the Apocrypha. Jews celebrate the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem by lighting a menorah, a nine-branched candelabrum, and eating foods cooked in oil, especially potato pancakes and jelly doughnuts. Hanukkah bears the marks of American Jews' experience as a religious minority in a dominantly Christian nation. In Judaism, the importance of a holiday is reflected in whether the day is considered a "working day" or a "day of rest," when the thirty-nine *melakhot* restrict many categories of

activity. Many Jewish holidays include prohibitions on the work that can be done, which includes many activities not regulated in most other religious traditions. Originally, Hanukkah was a minor Jewish festival not even marked with days of rest. Before the Civil War few American Jews celebrated Hanukkah, and many Jews did in fact celebrate Christmas. This prompted Jewish Sunday schools to introduce Hanukkah in the 1870s. Through much of the twentieth century, Hanukkah was promoted by Jewish leaders as an alternative to Christmas. Not only did the practice of gift giving grow more extravagant, but also Jewish families, religious leaders, and marketers devised an array of strategies to make the Jewish holiday an effective counterweight to the Christian one. By the 1950s this endeavor had given rise to the Hanukkah “stockings” and “bushes” that traditionalists scorned and comedians spoofed. In the 1960s younger Jews who identified with the counterculture and participants in the Jewish renewal movement (Havurah) advocated a return to simplicity that eventually was taken up by much of the Jewish American population. Today Hanukkah celebrations and the associated gift giving can be lavish or simple, depending on personal interpretation and local custom.

Until the 1970s, Jews’ reactions to Christmas were directed primarily to other Jews. Some activists protested the explicitly Christian songs in children’s holiday programs, which led many public schools to include a Jewish holiday song to balance a program of Christmas carols. Very often, the featured Jewish song was “Dreidl, Dreidl, Dreidl,” about the children’s top that is used in a Hannukah game. Reduction of the Jewish holiday down to this one piece of music inspired resentment among some Jews, who came to regard it as “the infamous Hannukah carol.” More often, though, American Jews did not bring their concerns about Christmas beyond the Jewish community. This changed in 1974, when the Chabad-Lubavitch branch of the Hasidim began holding “Menorah Parades” in several American cities, at the encouragement of their grand rebbe, Menachem M. Schneerson. Chabad expanded their outreach in 1986, when Schneerson called for the placing of menorahs in public holiday displays.

In contrast to Hanukkah, Purim is the Jewish holiday that traditionally most closely resembled Christmas. Purim is a time of merrymaking; it is a positive commandment to overindulge in alcohol. Children dress in costume, and in some communities they receive presents. Though not celebrated by most Jews through much of the twentieth century, Purim is enjoying a resurgence more recently. This change

reflects the return to traditional religious observance seen across the spectrum of American Jewish subcultures.

African American and Native American Commemorations and Celebrations

African Americans have maintained a distinct holiday calendar and practices for centuries. In New Orleans, Carnival celebrants dress in many sorts of costumes, but one of the longest-standing Mardi Gras traditions is the “Indian tribes.” Since the 1890s bands of African American men costumed as Plains Indians have formed street parades and gone house-to-house in a manner reminiscent of eighteenth-century masqueraders. Their historical disenfranchisement and exclusion from much public life led many African Americans to find a release of social tensions through revelry. Pinkster was held from the seventeenth century, when the slaves of Dutch colonists in New York enjoyed time off from work while their owners observed the religious holiday of Pentecost, from which the name of the holiday derived. The June festival celebrated fertility and a libertine spirit, which led to its being banned in the Hudson Valley in about 1811. After the Civil War African Americans marked the end of slavery with “Emancipation Days,” held on different dates in various locales. Over time, the nineteenth of June grew to be the day most commonly chosen, which was the date of the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Galveston, Texas, in 1865. “Juneteenth” observances vary in different communities. In some places the day continues to be associated with celebration, but it also is a day of commemoration of African American history.

Themes of history and memory reverberate in two African American holidays that have become established additions to the American calendar since the 1960s. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, to honor the leader’s birth date in January, has a special meaning for African American people. The day was made a federal holiday in 1986 but not without controversy. Some states, including Arizona, Montana, and New Hampshire, refused to recognize the day as a state holiday, demanding that state employees be present at work. In 1998 an Indiana chapter of the Ku Klux Klan held a rally in Memphis, Tennessee, to protest the holiday. A riot broke out when twelve thousand people showed up to protest the demonstration. As Americans have increasingly accepted the new January holiday, it has become a day for interfaith religious services and volunteer work.

Ron Maulana Karenga, a professor at UCLA, created Kwanzaa in 1966 as a response to the Watts riots in Los

Angeles. Kwanzaa modeled the celebration on African harvest festivals; its name derives from a Swahili phrase meaning “first fruits.” Kwanzaa celebrates the *Nguzo Saba*, or seven principles that have sustained African people in the diaspora. On each of the seven days of Kwanzaa, a different value is honored with the lighting of a candle in a special holder known as a *kinara*. This has invited comparisons to the Jewish Hanukkah and has made some people question what they see as the syncretic nature of the holiday. Over time, though, Kwanzaa’s success has assuaged much of the skepticism among both blacks and whites about its authenticity. In 2000 as many as five million African Americans celebrated Kwanzaa, and *Ebony* magazine estimated sales of Kwanzaa-related goods and services totaled \$700 million that year. In its commercialization Kwanzaa reflects broad patterns in the American holiday experience, but this “commodification” causes special concern, given Kwanzaa’s roots in countercultural black nationalism and a rejection of the capitalist ethos.

Until the late twentieth century, American Indian culture was systematically oppressed in an effort to assimilate Native people into non-Indian society. Traditional festivities such as the Plains Indian Sundance or the Potlatch ceremony of the Pacific Northwest were banned on reservations. Native Americans preserved their cultures by linking tribal celebrations to mainstream holidays—holding the Sun Dance on the Fourth of July, and continuing the Potlatch under the guise of giving Christmas presents. After 1970, American Indian cultures underwent a resurgence, and since then tribes have felt freer to celebrate Native holidays in their own right. Most Native American festivals are specific to tribes or cultural regions. The Lakota and the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes mark their 1876 victory over George Armstrong Custer and the U.S. 7th Cavalry on “Little Big Horn Day,” on June 25. In contrast, the Cherokee hold their own national holiday on Labor Day weekend.

Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim Traditions

Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism have become more visible parts of American religious life since 1965, when changes to federal immigration law opened the door to arrivals from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists observe their own holidays, and each of these traditions uses a solar or lunar calendar that does not coincide with Gregorian tabulation.

Many religions honor their founders with specific commemorations. The *Báha’í* mark important moments in the life of the Bab, including his birth and martyrdom.

Buddhists celebrate the birthday of the Buddha on Vesak in May, as well as the Buddha’s enlightenment on the December holiday of Bodhi. Sikhs commemorate the birthdays and martyrdom of the Gurus with festivals called *gurpurbs*, where the Sri Guru Granth Sahib is read and free vegetarian meals are offered to the general public.

Some holidays transcend religious boundaries and are shared across ethnic populations practicing different religions. Divali (Diwali or Deepavali) is a major festival in Hinduism, but Sikhs, Jains, and some Buddhists also observe versions of it, pointing to its status as a major festival on the Indian subcontinent. In Hinduism Divali encompasses several myths, including Rama’s victory over the demon Ravana, Krishna’s defeat of the thunder god Indra, and the birth of Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and good fortune. Jains commemorate Lord Mahavira’s attainment of nirvana, and Sikhs celebrate Divali as the return of the sixth guru, Har Gobind Ji, to the town of Amritsar following his imprisonment. Across these diverse theological justifications, Indian Americans observe the five-day autumn holiday in similar ways: by lighting small oil lamps called “divas” and congregating in temples, *gurdwaras*, and rented social halls for communal banquets.

As America’s Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist populations have grown, their holiday cycles have become more visible parts of the American holiday landscape. For many years residents of New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., have jammed the streets on Chinese New Year to cheer processions of “Lion Dancers”—long dragon-shaped puppets that take several men to animate. Recently the winter festival has become the focus for community celebrations in smaller American cities, and even in some public schools.

The growth of America’s non-Christian population also has inspired greater calls for public accommodations to other faith traditions. The month of Ramadan, which is the most important period in the Islamic calendar, was officially recognized in 2007. Some Muslim Americans have lobbied for the study of Islamic holidays to be part of school curricula and have petitioned city and state governments to recognize the two major holidays of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha as official school holidays. In New York City, parking regulations are now suspended on Jewish, Christian, and Muslim holidays.

Conclusion—Contested Meanings in Holiday Practices

Public commemorations often have generated conflicting patterns of meaning. In the current context of cultural pluralism, holidays frequently highlight and also call into

question social boundaries. Among the best illustrations of such social dynamics are Christmas and Halloween, which also reign as the two largest consumer events today.

Like Valentine's Day, Halloween has distant religious origins but has become almost entirely secularized. Scots-Irish immigrants first brought Halloween practices to America. The eve of All Saints' Day was traditionally viewed as a night of magic and witches, and a time when children indulged in pranks and mischief. In about 1912 the Boy Scouts, public schools, and civic organizations began promoting alternatives to the petty vandalism that "Devil's Night" inspired. Encouraging children to beg for candy was a domestication of the holiday. In the early twentieth century many children, especially Catholics, dressed in rags and went door-to-door collecting pennies on Thanksgiving. The practice of "Trick or Treating" thus transposed the Thanksgiving activity onto All Hallows' Eve; by the 1930s, "Trick or Treating" was commonplace. In the 1990s, Halloween overtook Valentine's Day as the second-largest consumer event after Christmas. A conservative estimate valued the economic activity of Halloween at more than \$400 million by 2000. This increase in spending has coincided with a rise in adult interest in the holiday. In a return of the carnivalesque, Halloween is now celebrated through house parties, on college campuses, and in parades in several American cities.

Many Americans find little religious content in Halloween, but among some subcultures the holiday provokes a spectrum of responses. Some observant Jews and conservative Protestants opposed to Halloween for its sorcerous connotations still recognize its attractiveness, and therefore offer religiously appropriate alternatives. In the case of Judaism, the late-winter holiday of Purim is promoted as an alternative day for wearing costumes—including, ironically, those of witches. Some evangelical Christians hold "harvest parties" and encourage children to dress as the fruit and vegetable characters from the video series *VeggieTales*. Others appeal more directly to the "scary" aspects of Halloween. Since the 1970s, conservative Christian churches have offered "Hell House" tours using live actors to depict gruesome scenes of sinful life and the penalties of eternal damnation. Other Protestants, especially Missouri Synod Lutherans, celebrate October 31 as Reformation Day, thus assigning a new meaning to the day.

While Halloween prompts a centrifugal reaction among some religious subcultures, other groups align their distinct traditions with mainstream practices. Mexican Americans increasingly blend Halloween symbols and customs into the

two-day celebration of Día de Todos los Santos and Día de los Muertos (All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day), celebrated on November 1 and 2. Wiccans and pagans celebrate November 1 as Samhain (pronounced "Sah-win"), the day marking the death of the earth.

The dissonant voices of Halloween seem quiet in comparison with the din of Christmas, which as the biggest holiday of the year bears on Americans of all faiths. At mid-century, the Jehovah's Witnesses who rejected Christmas were sometimes perceived as deviant, but a few decades later several religious bodies voiced dissent against the holiday.

The "Christmas Wars" convolute reactions to two different challenges: the consumerism that has shaped American life for so long and responses to the pluralism that characterizes American religion and culture. The month of December harbors holidays important to many religions and ethnicities and highlights the challenges of creating civility in a diverse society. While the greeting "Happy Holidays" has been common since the Progressive Era, it grew more popular as an ecumenical acknowledgment of the season in the late twentieth century. This led some conservative commentators to decry its use, arguing that the phrase was anti-Christian hate speech. Radio and television pundits urged audiences to insist on "Merry Christmas" and to boycott stores that posted general "holiday" greetings. Rejection of the phrase, and use of "Merry Christmas" instead, was framed as a "reminder" of the religious dimensions of the holiday. It also was an attempt to reestablish the dominance of Christianity. Conservative Christian activists have sought a more public recognition of Christmas as a religious holiday by the government. In response civil libertarians, secularists, and freethinkers argue against the government promotion of any religion.

A major front in this culture war is the debate over religious symbols in public displays that has wended through the American legal system over recent decades, starting with the case *Lynch v. Donnelly* (1984). When the city of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, included a nativity scene in a display of holiday decorations, alongside Santa Claus and a Christmas tree, some town residents argued that the crèche was unconstitutional, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the display did not violate the First Amendment. Noting a long precedent of government acknowledging religion in American life, the court found that religious symbols need not be excluded from government-sponsored displays. Rather, when placed alongside other decorations—and here a Christmas tree was taken to be a secular symbol—a nativity

scene could function as a relevant seasonal symbol without being an endorsement of Christianity. This has become known as the “plastic reindeer rule.” It was tested five years later when the Supreme Court took up another case, *County of Allegheny v. Greater Pittsburgh ACLU*, that evaluated two different displays in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A Roman Catholic group had placed a nativity scene in the county courthouse, while the Chabad-Lubavitch organization had erected a menorah outside a government office building. Both Christian activists and the American Civil Liberties Union challenged the placing of menorahs on public property; the ACLU objected to the crèche as well. In a split decision with Justices Blackmun and O’Connor as pivotal votes, different majorities found that because the crèche stood alone, it was an overtly religious symbol, unlike the 18-foot menorah, which stood beside a Christmas tree.

This mixed decision has left lower courts with few clear guidelines as to the constitutionality of religious displays, and the issue continues to be decided on a case-by-case basis. Some localities have chosen to cancel holiday displays. Another possibility is to honor the requests, including menorahs or nativity scenes when groups have asked for them. Some communities have expanded on this second option, by opening up public space to a range of groups for temporary displays.

The goal of tolerance, however, may have practical limits in some instances. What those limits actually may be is unclear, but holidays are certain to remain vibrant prisms for the expression of American religious life.

See also *Buddhism in North America*; *Chabad-Lubavitch*; *Civil Religion in the United States.*; *Civil War*; *Cult of Domesticity*; *Eastern Orthodoxy*; *Establishment, Religious*; *Film*; *Hinduism in North America*; *Islam in North America*; *Judaism: Jewish Culture*; *Music* entries; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture*; *Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact*; *Sikhs*; *Sunday and the Sabbath*; *Supreme Court*; *Worship* entries.

Holly Folk

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Holiness Denominational Family

Various denominations and groups emerged from the Holiness movement such that, at the turn of the twenty-first century, these encompassed millions of Christians worldwide (an estimated ten to twelve million). These are organized into congregations, associations, denominations, partnerships, and informal fellowships, as the products of an influential branch of North American Protestant Christianity, together with their missions to every inhabited continent. Representative aims of the Holiness denominational family include holy living (“being in but not of the world”) and evangelism and social service aimed at the poor and oppressed. While eighteenth-century British Methodism was the source and model for the American movement, the latter was diverse and pragmatic, shaping and being shaped by the currents of nineteenth-century American culture. In fact, the earliest Holiness body, Primitive Methodists, migrated from Britain to America as a result of the preaching of American revivalist Lorenzo Dow at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Important questions for understanding the Holiness movement relate to the denominational family as well: have

they maintained their historical charter as articulated by the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, or have they transformed it and, if so, how? The analysis offered here presumes that a degree of doctrinal drift is inevitable but also that each new context requires an authentic application. Three overlapping but roughly chronological developments are examined here: (1) Holiness revival and reform movements, (2) Holiness associations and camp meetings, and (3) Holiness mergers and missions. First, millennialism—the widespread anticipation of an era of peace and prosperity associated with the Second Coming of Christ—shaped early-nineteenth-century American culture, and the Christian version of that doctrine shaped early Holiness denominations as corporate reform movements. Second, complex patterns of Holiness association emerged amidst the later-nineteenth-century cultural dynamics of urbanization, feminization, and the growth of the middle class, thus proliferating Holiness networks and organizations and sharpening individual Holiness expressions. Third, the fading prominence of Holiness—the demise of its relevance or doubts about the character of its corporate expressions—enabled, by the turn of the twentieth century, the merger of formerly distinctive groups, especially under the banner of evangelistic world missions. The line between Holiness bodies and more broadly evangelical groups thereby blurred.

Holiness Revival and Reform Movements

Schisms that arose in the Methodist Episcopal Church (the MEC, formerly the largest American Methodist body), especially in the later nineteenth century, played a fundamental role in the development of the Holiness denominational family. The backdrop for Holiness-related church schisms, however, is found in the antebellum Methodist reform movements that opposed slavery and drunkenness and in the increase of wealth, education, and social engagement among Methodists.

The Wesleyan Methodist Connection (WMC)

The WMC was organized in 1843 in Utica, New York, by radically reform-minded clergy and laity from the MEC, but with the participation of others. Their stated purpose was to form a church free from slavery and the oversight of bishops and with the “disciplinary regulations as are necessary to preserve and promote experimental and practical godliness.” This quotation is from the *True Wesleyan*, published by MEC minister Orange Scott (1800–1847), to communicate the founders’ reforming agenda. The name “Wesleyan”

expressed their desire to reassert the ethics of the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, who opposed slavery and advocated the spread of scriptural holiness. “Connection” meant that the church existed as independent, local bodies, which, though associated with one other, were not under denominational rule like the MEC and similar *connectional* churches. The fact that Reformed Methodists, as well as Baptist, Episcopal, and Christian Church representatives, were among the founding participants underscored both the demand for a congregational-form church government and the hope for a renewed emphasis on the doctrine of sanctification (Holy Spirit-enabled growth in holiness). Lay participants at the organizing conference outnumbered clergy more than three to one and were rewarded with an equal voice in decision making of the sort denied them in their home denominations. They considered their actions necessary for the restoration of primitive Methodism.

WMC founders Orange Scott and Luther Lee (1800–1889) embodied the early movement’s radical egalitarianism. Poor and self-educated MEC revivalists joined the abolitionist movement in the 1830s and realized a call to take a stand against the institutional church’s (MEC’s) silence on slavery. Scott followed closely William Lloyd Garrison’s abolitionist newspaper, the *Liberator*, purchasing subscriptions for one hundred of his fellow MEC ministers. Lee preached the ordination of Antoinette Brown, the first female minister in America, in 1853. Scott and Lee were censured by MEC bishops on account of their “antislavery agitating,” withdrawing in 1842. That their views were representative of rank-and-file MEC ministers and laypersons is seen in the existence of local churches called “Wesleyan Methodist” prior to the WMC founding conference and in the conference’s enrollment of two hundred ministers and six thousand members in their first year (1843), with an additional fifteen thousand over the next two years.

The Utica convention had amended the MEC *Discipline* by abandoning the traditional threefold order of ministry—bishop, elder, and deacon—in favor of a “parity of the ministry”—that is, ordaining deacons (“servants”) alone and granting the laity equal representation at conference. The business of the local church had been thoroughly democratized, with classes electing their own leaders and church members convening business meetings. In its articles of religion, the WMC *Discipline* affirmed Wesley’s original wording in prohibiting slave holding or its approval and added a new article based on the command (of Jesus) to love God and one’s neighbor, thereby undergirding the corporate

social action of the churches in abolitionism and other reforms. A revised article on the use of alcohol went beyond Wesley's wording that forbade drunkenness and the use of liquor "unless in cases of necessity" by prohibiting the manufacture, sale, or use of hard liquor, with few exceptions. Articles on the resurrection of the dead and end-time judgment were added to check the spread of contemporary heretical teachings (Millerism) prophesying that Christ's return would occur in 1843 (the same year, coincidentally, of the WMC's founding).

Wesleyans, no less than Millerites, embraced the millennial vision—the belief in Christ's thousand-year reign on earth during an era of peace and righteousness—though they denied that anyone could predict the date of its advent. The redemptive impact of various revivals on corrupt society was evidence that the Holy Spirit was at work in anticipation of the Second Coming; to participate in the reforms was to hasten his coming. Like Methodists in general, Wesleyans attacked the institution of slavery as the "sum of all villainies" (Wesley's words) since it tore families apart, forced adulterous relationships upon innocents, and condemned an entire race to suffering. Wesleyans became active supporters of the Underground Railroad, openly flaunting their disregard for the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. A stream of antislavery literature issued from Wesleyan authors, who admonished their fellow Wesleyans to cast their votes in favor of freedom (abolitionist) candidates. Wesleyan reformers worked with equal fervor to secure freedom for those "enslaved" to alcohol by joining the assault on the tavern and by "voting dry." This, in turn, inspired additional reforms such as support for women's suffrage. Identical reform emphases were of course seen outside of Wesleyanism and the broader church, but this did not erase the fundamental distinction between gospel-inspired good works and other reforming efforts. Another Wesleyan founder, L. C. Matlack (1816–1883), defended in the pages of the *American Wesleyan* his plan to conduct a series of camp meetings in the Middle West as "an opportunity to vindicate the identity of radical reform with living piety." His statement tied reform to the revival and pointed to individually sanctified lives ("living piety") as the building blocks of true reform.

The division of the MEC along anti/pro-slavery lines in 1844 brought to an end the ban on debate—the northern bishops' insistence upon church neutrality in the matter of slavery—prompting a return of some Wesleyans to the MEC. After the war, to the dismay of remaining Wesleyans, founders Lee and Matlack also defected. The Union

Movement, as it was known, coincided with a series of failed merger attempts between the WMC and various denominations. These failures presaged the elusive nature of unity among Holiness bodies and revealed the institutional weaknesses of the Connection when compared with denominations—weaknesses that resulted in the loss of the WMC stake in Adrian and Wheaton Colleges. Through the leadership of Adam Crooks in the postwar period, the WMC found its identity in the nationwide Holiness revival where, as the first Holiness "church" to have included sanctification in its articles of religion, it once more had a leading role to play.

The Free Methodist Church

The Free Methodist Church was born in 1860 of a schism of MEC (North) laity under the leadership of dissident clergymen Benjamin Titus Roberts (1823–1893) in the East and John Wesley Redfield (1810–1863), who conducted widespread revivals in the (Middle) West. Both were Holiness advocates and students of Phoebe Palmer's "shorter way" (to entire sanctification, the belief that sin could be entirely eradicated in believers), who charged the MEC bishops with worldliness and the resultant neglect of Methodism's central doctrine of sanctification.

Roberts founded Methodist laymen's conventions in the "burned-over" region (so-called for its pervasive revivalism in the 1820s and 1830s) of western New York, beginning in 1858. These fueled the already pervasive abolition sentiment and made lay participation in church government a sore point at a time when MEC bishops sought to placate Methodists in the border conferences to prevent their defection (and, thus, their states' defection) from the Union. Consequently, the MEC General Conference of 1860 voted to soften its antislavery rhetoric and to deny lay delegations as inexpedient, thus embittering Roberts and his followers. Redfield conducted highly successful revivals in MEC churches in Wisconsin, Missouri, and Illinois, and subsequently inspired a dissident Methodist lay movement that sought reforms similar to those advocated by Roberts. Both men abhorred the increasing worldliness in the institutional church, which they identified with formality in worship, participation in secret societies, ornate church buildings, and pew rentals (an approach to church fund-raising that Roberts derided as "charging admission"). Surreptitiously, Roberts established a parallel itinerancy for dissident (Free Church) congregations to be supplied by expelled (for slavery agitation) MEC ministers. His publication of remarks

critical of the bishops (in violation of the *Discipline*) prompted charges of insubordination. The MEC displayed support for Holiness but not for schismatic activity by setting Bishop Matthew Simpson over Robert's Genesee Conference trial and by inviting evangelist William Taylor to preach the conference's opening sermon; both proclaimed Holiness and were friends of Phoebe Palmer. The Free Methodist schism made Holiness rhetoric a weapon in the struggle for lay representation at the conference. Roberts and his followers became known as "Nazaries," emphasizing their separatist bent. Some said that Redfield's Holiness preaching planted the seeds of fanaticism, and many influential Free Methodists—including lay evangelist Harriet Damon ("Auntie") Coon—were converted under his preaching. Like the WMC before them, Free Methodist leaders revised Wesley's articles of religion by adding articles on entire sanctification and on future rewards and punishments.

Holiness Camp Meetings and Associations

The national revival of 1857–1858 kindled hopes for an era of interdenominational unity among Christians and heightened opposition to schismatic behavior among Holiness advocates. Nevertheless, conflict over Holiness continued, though more on the basis of organizational preference than theology: Holiness advocates preferred testimony meetings—informal gatherings where believers shared spiritual experiences—as the locus for defining the church's mission and for determining ministry assignments, over the business-like committee meeting that increasingly characterized MEC administration. Daily union prayer meetings, weekday home meetings, and annual camp meetings were increasingly utilized in the wake of the revival—each contributing to a social network of independent Holiness agencies critical of the MEC and preparing the way (if unintentionally) for the emergence of independent denominations.

Weekday meetings in urban homes were modeled after the Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness conducted by Phoebe Worrall Palmer (1807–1874) and her husband Walter (1804–1883), a physician, in their New York City home from the late 1830s until Phoebe's death in 1874. These influential meetings, which continued to the turn of the century, hosted MEC bishops sympathetic to the Holiness movement; founders of the annual Holiness camp meetings; religious journalists (including opponents); and admirers of Palmer's writings, for example, *The Way to Holiness* (1843). MEC minister and revivalist John Inskip (1816–1884) and his wife Martha were guests of the Palmers and,

under her influence, began similar meetings in their own home. Thereafter, Inskip helped to lead the first National Camp Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness (hereafter, "the National") in 1867 in Vineland, New Jersey, with the assistance of other MEC ministers including Bishop Matthew Simpson, who preached the meeting's opening sermon. Inskip became president of the National, which, beginning in 1870, sponsored three annual national meetings to which Phoebe Palmer was invited to present her views on Holiness. The annual national camp meetings spawned scores of similar regional meetings, establishing outposts for Holiness teachings throughout the rural hinterland. Both the weekday meetings and conventions provided extrachurch leadership opportunities for Methodist laity and a venue for public speaking for women. Here, the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification—a controversial subject in many churches—could be freely promoted.

Key nineteenth-century social dynamics ensured the influence of Palmer's Tuesday Meetings, including the rise of an evangelical print culture that nurtured a Holiness community not bounded by geographical restrictions. Best-selling books by Timothy Merritt (*The Christian's Manual*, 1824), Asa Mahan (*The Scriptural Doctrine of Christian Perfection*, 1839), William Boardman (*The Higher Christian Life*, 1858), Phoebe Palmer (*The Promise of the Father*, 1859), and Elizabeth Prentiss (*Stepping Heavenward*, 1869), shaped this culture, along with Holiness-themed journals such as Merritt's *Guide to Holiness*, which promoted the Palmer's "shorter way" and encouraged readers to publish their own experiences.

Another dynamic, related to the refinement of American Methodism, helped Methodists and others pursue "moral earnestness" (Christian authenticity) while avoiding worldliness and superficiality. For those in attendance at the Tuesday Meetings, Phoebe Palmer modeled a balance of middle-class respectability and fervent commitment to Holiness. The cultivation of decorum, good taste, and manners was seen as serving a higher purpose than social advancement. Likewise, material possessions were viewed as God's blessing so long as they were lightly esteemed, freely shared, and met the criterion of usefulness (to "kingdom work"). Returning to a former example, the Inskips had moved from a rural "western" parish, where John was censured by his Ohio Conference for liberalism and pandering to wealthy parishioners. Welcomed into the Palmer home, John Inskip found his former opposition to sanctification (as evidenced in his *Methodism Explained and Defended*, 1851) giving way to his

embrace of the experience and the dedication of his ministry to its propagation. In contrast to dissident Free Methodists Roberts and Redfield, Palmer and Inskip profoundly influenced the MEC bishops from their privileged positions as insiders.

Finally, on the heels of the financial panic of 1857, daily union prayer meetings (open to all denominations) awakened in many urban businessmen an unction to see scriptural principles applied to the marketplace. Wealthy “businessmen’s revival” participants funded many urban and international mission projects, as urban laity assumed leadership roles in Holiness associations. The interface of business and revival concerns, previously seen in the Great Awakening under George Whitefield, had encouraged the “marketing” of the revival in newspapers. The Second Great Awakening saw the development of permanent Holiness resorts—the original being the Ocean Grove (New Jersey) Camp Meeting—hosting perennial Holiness conventions. Here, prosperous Christians could receive Holiness instruction in a restful, temperance-oriented vacation setting.

In responding to the nineteenth-century dynamics of urbanization, feminization, and the rise of a middle class, Methodism thus effectively transformed its primary tools of frontier class meetings and revivals into weekday home meetings and Holiness retreats. Consequently, Methodism itself was being transformed to reflect the values of modern American culture. The National Camp Meeting Association mobilized to accommodate the phenomenal growth in popularity of the early national camp meetings, from 10,000 in attendance at the first meeting in 1867 to 250,000 at the third in 1869. This growth prompted many among the MEC laity to request reduced local church responsibilities as they busied themselves with conference organization and promotion. The bishops responded by affirming the sincerity of those who zealously maintained Holiness ministries but also by deploring the tendency to act as an autonomous arm of the church. The proliferation of independent Holiness camps and associations therefore exacerbated tensions within the MEC, frequently necessitating that the National play the role of mediator.

Thus, throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, the rise in the popularity and national visibility of Holiness revivals and camp meetings helped to move the doctrine of entire sanctification to center stage in American Protestantism, where, as “Holiness,” it became both a banner—the hope for the revitalization of the church—and a shibboleth for an increasing number of evangelicals. Toward

the end of the period described here, the geographical center of the Holiness movement shifted from New England to Chicago.

In 1872 the Western Holiness Association was established in Illinois, complementing the work of the National Camp Meeting Association back east. Many regional camp meetings and associations were spawned in its wake, including the Texas Holiness Association (1878), the Iowa Holiness Association (1879), and the Southwest Holiness Associations (Kansas and Missouri, 1879). These associations advocated denominational support, yet permitted the establishment of independent Holiness small groups in places where MEC (North) officials were antagonistic toward “Holiness agitation.” These “Holiness bands” soon gave birth to independent Holiness congregations and denominations. Responding to the movement’s growing divisiveness, the MEC (North) censured “Holiness agitation” just as, previously, it censured “slavery agitation.” The bishops reacted to the criticisms originating from Holiness circles by appointing pro-Holiness ministers to anti-Holiness congregations and anti-Holiness preachers to pro-Holiness churches.

In avoiding the MEC tactic of mismatching pro-Holiness ministers and congregations, the Southern California and Arizona Holiness Association was perhaps first to permit the formation of small Holiness bands, leading to the founding in 1880 of a connection of independent congregations known as the “Holiness Church.” The Southwest Holiness Association (SHA), following this trend, allowed Holiness bands to appoint their own pastors. The resulting association of independent congregations grew in power and influence until it managed to take over the SHA. Former MEC minister John Brooks became the theorist and spokesman for this and other “come-outer” movements with the publication of *The Divine Church* (1891), which opposed connectionalism (MEC polity) as contrary to “true holiness.” Brooks had experienced entire sanctification in a rural Illinois revival in 1869 and had subsequently edited the Western Holiness Association’s journal, the *Banner of Holiness*, read widely throughout the Holiness movement.

The Church of God (Anderson)

A third Holiness attempt at restoring the primitive church was led by Daniel S. Warner (1842–1895), eventually becoming the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) (the location is added to distinguish this group from other denominations called the Church of God). This was at first called the “Church of God movement” by Warner and his

converts, in contrast to the *Churches of God* organized by John Winebrenner earlier in the century, from which Warner had been expelled for testifying of his experience of entire sanctification. At first, Warner followed others in the Northern Indiana Eldership of the *Churches*—a schism based on the *Churches'* failure to denounce worldly associations such as membership in secret societies. However, Warner came to oppose ministerial licensing and other formal church practices of the eldership as a false basis of fellowship and withdrew from this group as well. The fellowship of local churches subsequently established by Warner kept no membership records, believing that the Church of God included all Christians who had experienced the second work of grace, or entire sanctification.

The restoration movement among Holiness churches was thus inspired by what proved to be an elusive ideal of unity that sought grounding in the New Testament. When no consensus emerged, leaders of the independent movements were left with a functional view of unity based on the experience of sanctification. The result was a strict separatism, spurred on by the offense of what was perceived as the institutional church's compromise with the world—the materialism and superficiality that marked the fin de siècle. Lacking a centralized form of church government, which they opposed, the restoration movements were often characterized by internal strife and discord. The separatism that marked the Church of God movement also reflected the economically poor and socially marginalized character of its participants. In that social setting, women were encouraged to preach and to pastor churches, and there was an emphasis on outreach both to immigrants and to African Americans, with Jane Williams starting the movement's first African American congregation in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1886. The Church of God (Anderson) has ever since remained one of the few racially integrated denominations, with African Americans comprising approximately 20 percent of its membership at the turn of the twenty-first century.

The Church of the Nazarene

According to Timothy L. Smith, the Holiness movement's most prominent historian, immersion in social work tended to alienate the urban Holiness leaders from the MEC. Church of the Nazarene founder Phineas Bresee (1838–1915) served as Smith's example, since Bresee's ministry to the poor in Los Angeles through the Peniel Mission brought his long career as an MEC minister to a close.

Bresee brought abolitionism with him from his western New York home and helped elect abolitionist Gilbert Haven an MEC bishop. During the national revival of 1857–1858, Bresee ministered in rural Iowa, where he encountered sanctification and began a series of revivals that gained him notoriety both as an evangelist and as a fund-raiser able to bring prosperity to so-called “hardscrabble circuits.” He later described his grasp on Holiness at this period as tentative—an assessment that seems borne out by his involvement in a failed venture capitalist scheme.

Bresee left Iowa penniless but arrived in Los Angeles in the late summer of 1883, where invitations to preach at prominent MEC churches were immediately extended to him. In Los Angeles, Bresee excelled at Methodist Conference work and befriended Holiness advocates among the laity, becoming the champion of several prominent businessmen seeking to advance the Holiness revival in Southern California. With their backing he augmented the Southern California and Arizona Holiness Association through a series of revivals and comprehensive social initiatives. Bresee's Iowa-tested revival methods sparked opposition from the cosmopolitan Los Angeles ministers. Although he viewed his own presentation of entire sanctification as cautious and diplomatic, Bresee's strategy of inviting nationally known Holiness evangelists to California to speak fanned the flames of “Holiness agitation” in the conference, earning him, by 1894, an assignment to a heavily indebted church whose members were hardly enthusiastic about Holiness. At this point in his career Bresee was unable or unwilling to do for the “grand tabernacle” of Los Angeles (Simpson MEC) what he had done for many others, and when his request for reassignment to inner-city mission work was denied, Bresee withdrew from the MEC. Based on his belief that the conference ministers had mobilized against Holiness only lately, and then only at the prompting of anti-Holiness bishops, Bresee lamented his initial caution in advancing Holiness in the conference when most doors were wide open to him.

The congregation first called the Church of the Nazarene gathered about Bresee at Peniel Mission where he developed the Nazarene creed, together with its polity as a democratized form of Methodism. The local, mission-focused body attracted like-minded congregations throughout California and the Midwest. The official founding of the denomination resulted from the 1908 merger with other churches similar to those already described in this article: earlier schisms over Holiness teaching from various MEC churches in New England and New York yielded

independent Holiness congregations and were subsequently gathered up into the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene and the Association of Pentecostal Church of America (for whom “Pentecostal” signified the baptism or fullness of the Holy Spirit, resulting in Holiness). In the Southeast, remnants of a restorationist body—the New Testament Church of Christ—joined with independent Holiness congregations in Texas to form the Holiness Church of Christ. These groups were connected through the efforts of C.W. Ruth, an Indianapolis-based Holiness evangelist who became a traveling secretary for the Church of the Nazarene.

Holiness Mergers and Missions

Evangelistic missions were characteristic of the Holiness movement from its earliest years as a reform enterprise. The story of William Taylor (1821–1902) is representative of the widening horizons of Holiness missions. A gifted preacher, Taylor was recruited from his rural Virginia circuit for evangelistic ministry in Baltimore before being sent to California as a missionary during the Gold Rush. The national bank failure of 1857 brought an end to Taylor’s Seaman’s Bethel ministry, and he returned to New York to publish a book of his experiences to pay his debts. There he met Phoebe Palmer and became involved in the national revival of 1857–1858, preaching Holiness in New York, Canada, and throughout the Midwest. Billed as “California Taylor,” his independent missionary bravado endeared him to his growing Holiness constituency. His subsequent missions throughout the world were self-funded through the sale of his books and guided entirely by the “leading of the Holy Spirit,” apart from the knowledge or approval of the Methodist Board of Missions. By 1896, when he was forced to retire, Taylor had established independent churches, missions, and schools in Australia, India, Latin America, and Africa, most of which reflected a Holiness perspective. Taylor’s autonomous mission strategies—described in his *Pauline Missionary Methods*, published in 1879 by the National Camp Meeting Association—taxed the patience of politically minded mission board members. His surprising election as missionary bishop to Africa in 1884 was seen as a vindication of his methods by his Holiness supporters. Many Holiness associations and denominations subsequently commissioned their own missionaries who, like Taylor, paid little attention to formal comity arrangements.

The Salvation Army (SA)

The Salvation Army is a Holiness denomination that combined reforming zeal with centralized authority. Though

British in origin, the SA established a beachhead in Philadelphia in 1879 and spread rapidly throughout the United States. The SA’s mission was to reach souls trapped in poverty and related miseries in the inner city, and this ensured its influence in every major urban center; its officer training appealed to recruits, for whom it served as a Protestant religious order; and its military discipline naturally complemented a life of Holiness. Through the publication of its paper, the *War Cry*, and best-selling works of officers such as Samuel Logan Brengle (1860–1936), the SA influenced Holiness theology by tempering the “shorter way” theology of Phoebe Palmer. The SA’s strong organization and centralized authority provided an enviable model for those who lamented the challenge of reaching consensus with the partners of independent Holiness associations. Its pervasive work has made the SA the best-known corporate representative of the Holiness life and the most widely supported charity in America.

Later Developments of the Holiness Denominations

Late in the nineteenth century the WMC became the “Wesleyan Methodist Connection (or Church) of America”—the addition of *or church* signaling a new tolerance, if not appreciation, for the need for central ecclesiastical authority. That same year, 1891, a general secretary was installed to coordinate the necessary churchwide support for world missions. While repeated attempts to merge with the Free Methodist Church failed, the WMC became the “Wesleyan Methodist Church” through its union in 1968 with the Pilgrim Holiness Church, having already received several Holiness associations into its membership. By way of these and later mergers, the WMC became responsible for missionary work throughout the world, growing to a constituency of four hundred thousand, in four thousand churches, in eighty countries by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The Free Methodist Church, traditionally a rural body, sponsored urban missions as early as the 1860s (the decade of its founding), with Jane Dunning ministering among African Americans in New York City. By the 1880s the Free Methodist Church began sending missionaries to the Far East and Africa, and its subsequent missionary endeavors have established general conferences throughout the world. By 2010, the denomination’s U.S. constituency was only about 10 percent (fewer than sixty-five thousand), with the balance of its seven hundred thousand total membership in

India (18 percent) and Africa (53 percent) and the remainder in Vietnam and elsewhere in Asia.

Like other Holiness bodies, the Church of God (Anderson) was shaped in the twentieth century by the rising social class of its leadership and the influence of corporate models of organization. With a U.S. constituency of about 250,000 (as of 2010), the Church of God (Anderson) remains one of the few racially integrated denominations, of which about 20 percent is African American. True to founder D. S. Warner's convictions, the church remains without formal membership.

The Church of the Nazarene—a merger of existing Holiness congregations and associations—gained missionaries in India and Japan at the time of its founding in 1908. Additional mergers after 1915 added missions in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Later on it received into its membership a number of indigenous Holiness congregations in Australia, Canada, Great Britain, and Nigeria. In contrast to the Free Methodist denomination, which is composed of the independent Free Methodist conferences, Nazarene congregations throughout the world are directed by the American church.

Interdenominational Holiness Associations

The same concerns that gave rise to Holiness denominations are seen in the development of later, interdenominational Holiness associations—especially a perceived laxity in behavioral standards and the centralization of decision-making authority. Like their predecessors, these Holiness advocates are averse to launching new churches and take care to avoid being perceived as “come-outers.” Participants gather to pray for the revival of their respective denominations and to hear teaching on the doctrine of sanctification. Some of these associations serve practical, pastoral ministry concerns, while others are academically oriented.

The prototype of interdenominational Holiness associations was the (already mentioned) National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness, which sponsored annual national meetings from 1870 to 1942. Thereafter the National served as a resource and clearinghouse for annual local and regional camp meetings, some of which still meet. In 1910 the National founded its own missionary society (now the World Gospel Mission). In 1971 the National became the Christian Holiness Association and in 1998 the Christian Holiness Partnership, both with a view toward offering informational seminars to participating Holiness denominations and institutions. Several years after the 1998

name change, the Partnership became, and as of 2010 it remains, inactive.

Still active is the Inter-Church Holiness Convention, which began in 1951 under the leadership of Holiness publisher H. E. Schmul (1921–1998). Its participants meet annually in Dayton, Ohio, to worship, to pray for revival in the various Holiness denominations represented, and to encourage teaching on the doctrine of entire sanctification.

Active scholarly associations in the Wesleyan Holiness tradition include the Wesleyan Theological Society, an offshoot of the National founded in 1966 to encourage research and fellowship among Wesleyan scholars, and more recently the Aldersgate Forum, sponsored by God's Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio, to promote dialogue and scholarship on the conservative Holiness movement.

Scores of Bible and Christian liberal arts colleges and seminaries were established during the late-nineteenth-century consolidation of various Holiness associations. Many of these, such as God's Bible School in Cincinnati, founded in 1900, were training schools for missionaries and urban Christian workers. Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky, was founded as the Kentucky Holiness College by MEC evangelist John Wesley Hughes (1852–1932), graduating world-renowned evangelist E. Stanley Jones in 1907. Some Holiness schools were newly founded (such as Asbury in 1890), and others took over older institutions. Taylor University was purchased by the National Association of Local Preachers in 1890, which renamed the “old Methodist College” of Fort Wayne, Indiana (est. 1846), for their champion, William Taylor, whose name was synonymous with Holiness evangelism and independent lay missions.

Conclusion

This threefold survey of the Holiness denominational family may be summarized in terms of the initial quest for a corporate identity (a “true Wesleyan” reform), followed by the diversification of the movement with its many individual expressions and associations, and a subsequent merging of Holiness constituencies into denominations and national or international partnerships or conventions. These later mergers produced Holiness missions, which, in turn, have revitalized Holiness life abroad through indigenous congregations worldwide.

In what ways did the Holiness denominational family succeed or fail? The answer, of course, is intertwined with the Holiness movement itself. Certainly, the constituent organizations failed in their quest for unity, which some

advocates considered the *sine qua non* of any Holiness worthiness of the name. Indeed, unity appears to have been most lacking in seasons when Holiness essentials were most clearly articulated. Moreover, in reminding the church of its responsibility to uphold a key tenet of Christian orthodoxy, to what extent did Holiness leaders faithfully represent their concerns? For example, were B.T. Roberts's criticisms of the MEC bishops motivated by his desire to advance the role of laity in decision making? What role did the gentility of Phoebe Palmer's Tuesday Meetings play in transforming John Inskip, formerly an opponent, into a leader of the national camps meetings? No "clear and definite" testimony to entire sanctification materialized for Phineas Bresee until he left his rural Iowa circuit for a circle of wealthy lay supporters in Los Angeles, where his conflicts with the MEC began. Bresee's limited grasp of Holiness, however, cannot have been entirely determinative for the course of the Church of the Nazarene he helped to found. The same would be true for the other founders described here: their religious heirs may revere and strive for their ideals without romanticizing their lives. The larger Holiness denominations surveyed here, like their smaller counterparts, continue trying to represent a living legacy of outreach through testimony and faithful living that strives to obey the command, quoted in 1 Peter 1:16, "Be holy, for I am holy."

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Adventism and Millennialism; Camp Meetings; Education: Bible Schools and Colleges; Great Awakening(s); Holiness Movement; Methodists* entries; *Methodists: Tradition and Heritage; Pentecostals* entries; *Revivalism* entries.

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Holiness Movement

The Holiness movement includes persons who embraced Oberlin, Wesleyan/Holiness, or Keswick theology beginning in the nineteenth century. It expresses the impulse to achieve perfection that has persisted throughout church history. While some individuals in the movement used the word *perfection* to describe their quest, others substituted *sanctification*, *holiness*, *higher life*, *victorious living*, or other synonyms to describe their growth process toward maturity as Christians. By the end of the nineteenth century, millions professed holiness.

John Wesley and Holiness

John Wesley's (1703–1791) understanding of perfection became the basis for the modern Holiness movement. Wesley was a priest in the Church of England during the eighteenth century. When he spoke of the state of holiness, he most frequently used the term *perfection*. Most Christians believed that sanctification occurred simultaneously at conversion or

justification (the beginning of a new life in Christ), a term preferred by Wesley. Wesley, however, maintained that sanctification was a distinct experience following justification. Wesley believed that a period of growth followed justification. Then, God's act of entire sanctification took place in an instant when the consecrated Christian exhibited faith in God's promise of perfection. Wesley affirmed the doctrine of original sin and maintained that entire sanctification cleansed Christians from inbred sin, resulting in a pure heart or holiness. Another consequence of the experience was the renewal of the person in God's image. At this point in the Christian life, Wesley claimed, an individual was perfect. Controversy arose over his definition of "perfection" as it related to sin. Wesley did not help matters, since he appeared to claim both that sanctified Christians did not sin and that the most perfect person could commit transgressions. Confusion over this aspect of perfection continues to this day, causing some to avoid the term altogether.

Unfortunately, Wesley did not author a systematic statement of his view of perfection. He compiled *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (1777), but the content does not live up to the title. His discussion of perfection and sin illustrates this shortcoming. Rather than a well-organized rendering of his views, the book consists of portions of his sermons, letters, and magazine articles, as well as hymn lyrics written by his brother Charles.

The theme of love was central to Wesley's theology. He defined perfection as perfect love for God and neighbor. Perfect love would increase as Christians matured. Growth in love would continue throughout one's life. Perfection was not a static condition.

Wesley's emphasis on perfection was not unique. He read widely and consulted diverse theologians, including the Eastern Fathers of the Church. Pietists, after the teachings of Lutheran pastor Philipp Spener (1635–1705), were particularly influential in Wesley's acceptance of experience as a source of theology. The Pietists' emphasis on love and holy living as well as the conviction that growth in these areas must characterize Christians likewise helped shape Wesley's theology.

Wesley supervised priests and lay preachers who followed his practice of traveling throughout the British Isles. They preached justification and perfection in churches or outdoors and established local Methodist societies. Wesley's message spread to the North American colonies when he commissioned preachers to serve as itinerants there. One, Francis Asbury (1745–1816), noted in his diary that he

sought to preach sanctification or Christian perfection in every sermon. Wesley's followers in the United States founded the Methodist Episcopal Church (now the United Methodist Church) in 1784 with Asbury as one of the first bishops. While the doctrine is no longer emphasized throughout the denomination, candidates for ordination still are asked if they are going on to perfection and expect to be made perfect in this life.

Oberlin Perfectionism

This branch of the Holiness movement takes its name from Oberlin College in Ohio and made inroads in Reformed circles. Prodded by a student's question about sanctification, President Asa Mahan (1799–1889) and Professor Charles Finney (1792–1875) researched the topic. For both men, the outcome of this research was a personal experience of perfection during the winter of 1836–1837. Finney is best known as the prominent revivalist of the Second Great Awakening during the nineteenth century. Although Finney was ordained a Presbyterian, his opponents accused him of abandoning the Reformed doctrine of predestination and embracing Arminianism or the belief in free will. This perception is not surprising in light of his revival messages that promised conversion instantaneously when individuals freely repented of their sins and sought God's forgiveness. Christians also exercised free will when pursuing perfection. The revival ethos eroded the belief in predestination and made it possible for those with a Reformed heritage to actively pursue perfection. Mahan formalized his theological shift by leaving behind his Reformed background in the Congregational church and joining the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, a Wesleyan/Holiness group that affirmed Arminianism. Finney's link to Methodism, while not as strong as Mahan's, included reading Wesley's *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. It is not surprising that Oberlin theology manifested a strong Wesleyan influence.

Mahan was the primary theologian of Oberlin perfectionism and, for the most part, he followed Wesley's views. One distinction was that Oberlin perfectionists placed more emphasis on the human will. Entire sanctification occurred when the Holy Spirit overwhelmed the will. This difference did not prevent cooperation between advocates of Oberlin theology and Wesleyan/Holiness believers.

Controversy surrounds the origin of equating the baptism of the Holy Ghost with perfection. Some claim Wesley was the source of Pentecostal language to describe

perfection, but he seldom used it. Others trace the association of Pentecost and Holiness to John Fletcher (1729–1785), a close colleague of Wesley. Mahan frequently used the phrase “baptism of the Holy Ghost” and authored a book with that as the title. Mahan found these words in Acts 1:4–5, when Jesus assured his followers to wait in Jerusalem where they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Jesus’ words were fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4). Mahan identified Pentecost as the moment of perfection for those who had stayed in Jerusalem.

Phoebe Palmer and Wesleyan/Holiness Theology

Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874) developed the theology that became the basis for the Wesleyan/Holiness movement. She believed Holiness involved three vital components, the first of which is *consecration*. She borrowed biblical language not used by Wesley but instead relied on Hester Ann Rogers (1756–1794), one of his close friends, who wrote that consecration involved “laying all on the altar,” which she identified as Christ (“the altar sanctifies the gift” Matthew. 23:19 KJV). By this, she meant that everything and everyone in the seeker’s life needed to be symbolically placed on the altar before Holiness could occur. Despite Palmer’s dependence on Rogers, the use of altar language to describe the process of consecration generally is attributed to Palmer. The second component of Holiness is *faith*, which Palmer defined as trusting God. God has promised Holiness, and the person pursuing Holiness must claim that promise. The presence of faith assured Holiness. When these requirements were met, God cleansed the heart and Holiness resulted. The third requirement was *testimony*, which was required to maintain the experience. All three steps required action on the individual’s part, but a divine act was necessary to bring about sanctification and make the person holy. Palmer’s view of Holiness clearly relied on Wesley’s theology.

Palmer’s explanation of Holiness reflected the revival atmosphere of her time. Following the revival pattern, Christians often claimed Holiness quickly rather than after an extended quest. Phoebe Palmer’s language reflected this difference. She described a “shorter way” that did not involve an emotional confirmation. Her own experience had been prolonged because she initially believed that an emotional response was necessary. Following the shorter way, she experienced Holiness in 1837.

Some have accused Palmer of departing significantly from Wesley’s theology. She did disregard the period of growth between justification and Holiness. But contrary to

her detractors, she emphasized growth following Holiness as continually keeping one’s all on the altar. While Wesley did not use “altar” language, the focus on growth was identical. She simplified Wesley’s theology but, for the most part, differences were due to emphasis.

Phoebe Palmer popularized her views by writing numerous articles and authoring several books. *The Way of Holiness* (1843), her personal testimony, appeared in more than fifty editions. *Entire Devotion to God and Faith and Its Effects* were other major books devoted to Holiness. She began editing the magazine *Guide to Holiness* in 1864 but had contributed articles since its inception in 1839.

The Wesleyan/Holiness Movement

Phoebe Palmer deserves the title “Mother of the Wesleyan/Holiness Movement” in the United States. Besides establishing its theology, she played a prominent role in disseminating it. In 1840, Palmer became responsible for the Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness, begun in 1836 by her sister Sarah Lankford, for Methodist women from two churches in New York City. In 1839, the meetings were opened to men, including clergy and bishops. Members of other denominations attended the informal gatherings, which sometimes swelled to three hundred people. These meetings played an important role in promoting Holiness and served as the model for more than two hundred similar meetings around the country. Palmer expanded her influence by preaching to more than a million people at more than three hundred revivals and camp meetings. Contemporaries claimed 25,000 conversions and thousands of people sanctified under her ministry. Besides her extensive ministry in the United States and Canada, she spent four years preaching in the British Isles.

In the early nineteenth century, camp meetings had become a popular form of revivalism. In 1867, a camp meeting in Vineland, New Jersey, resulted in the organization of the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness. Preachers promoted Palmer’s version of Holiness doctrine. Even though Methodist clergy initially dominated the leadership of the group, the association welcomed members of other denominations to the camp meetings. Soon, state associations emerged and camp meetings took place throughout the country. Leadership gradually shifted to Wesleyan/Holiness leaders who had left Methodism because they believed Holiness doctrine was being neglected. Renamed the Christian Holiness Association and, most recently, Christian Holiness Partnership, the group included

Wesleyan/Holiness denominations, camp meetings, independent mission agencies, schools, and individuals who remained loyal to Palmer's theology.

The denominations comprising the Wesleyan/Holiness movement embraced the doctrine of Holiness as preached by Wesley and Palmer. Some small established groups added Holiness to their confessional statements, while others organized explicitly to emphasize Holiness. The denominations are all Arminian. While they agree on orthodox Christian beliefs, there is a wide range of difference, particularly in terms of polity and eschatology. The three largest Wesleyan/Holiness denominations are the Church of the Nazarene, the Salvation Army, and the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana).

Another distinction of Wesleyan/Holiness denominations is their affirmation of women preachers. One factor supporting this practice relates to camp meetings and revivals that recognized prophetic authority in which the Holy Spirit "is no respecter of persons" and chooses who will be gifted to preach. All groups recognized prophetic authority and most ordained women at their inception. The theology of Holiness supported women in the pulpit. Palmer played a prominent role not only by her example but by authoring *Promise of the Father* (1859), a defense of women preachers. The title is a quotation by Jesus in anticipation of the events of Pentecost when his followers, men and women, received power from the Holy Spirit to share the gospel (Luke 24:49; Acts 2). Palmer equated Holiness and power. Hundreds of Wesleyan/Holiness women preachers justified their ministry by quoting Palmer's words. They claimed the power of the Holy Spirit enabled them to challenge restrictive gender roles. Other advocates in the Wesleyan/Holiness movement wrote book-length defenses of women in ministry during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was highly unusual, since very few women were ordained in other denominations during this time. Authors furnished examples from the Bible, including Paul's favorable mention of women coworkers. Experience was also a key source, in that churches acknowledged a woman's personal call to ministry.

The percentage of women clergy, however, has declined dramatically in most Wesleyan/Holiness churches. One denomination reported 32 percent women pastors in 1925 at a time when most mainline Protestant churches refused to ordain women. That percentage sank to single digits in some groups by the end of the twentieth century. Several denominations are addressing this issue and implementing programs that are resulting in an increase in the number of

women clergy. They also support Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy, International, founded in 1991. This group promotes Palmer's legacy by encouraging and promoting women in professional ministry and women preparing for ministry.

Most Wesleyan/Holiness denominations developed along racial lines. The exception is the Church of God, which proclaimed a message of Holiness and unity. Holy living defined as unity resulted in racial unity, which the church practiced from its inception in 1880 until 1917. Then, blacks began forming separate parallel structures within the church as a result of heightened tension between the races. They continued to participate in programs sponsored by the church headquartered in Anderson, Indiana, even though they were marginalized. Reflecting the Black Power movement, the Black Caucus formed within the church in 1970 and demanded leadership in all national church agencies. The church met their demands, and African Americans have held top leadership positions in the church since then. Currently, African Americans comprise approximately 20 percent of the Church of God.

The Wesleyan/Holiness movement has been particularly influential in the area of Christian music. Song writers in the movement have contributed songs such as "The Old Rugged Cross," "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms," and "Blessed Assurance" to the broader Christian world. Popular singers such as Bill and Gloria Gaither and Sandi Patty (also spelled Sandi Patti) are part of the movement as well.

Keswick Movement

Americans Hannah Whitall Smith (1832–1911), her husband Robert Pearsall Smith (1827–1899), Asa Mahan, and William Boardman all played key roles in Holiness meetings that were instrumental in establishing the Keswick (ke'-zik) movement. The Smiths, who were Quakers, encountered Holiness through a member of the Wesleyan/Holiness movement. Hannah Whitall Smith is best known for her book on Holiness, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* (1875), which is still in print. The book's popularity bridged the Holiness groups. Boardman, a Presbyterian pastor, was influenced by Oberlin perfectionism but also attended Palmer's Tuesday meetings. Mahan was active in all three Holiness groups.

Begun in 1873, the meetings moved permanently to Keswick, England, in 1875, and the theology adopted the name of the town. Keswick theology found its way to the United States, most notably through the Northfield Conferences sponsored by revivalist Dwight L. Moody. Even

though Moody clearly belongs in the Keswick camp, his experience of sanctification resulted from the urgings of Sarah Cook and Sister Hawxhurst, two Wesleyan/Holiness urban workers in Chicago.

Popular synonyms for Holiness among Keswick believers were *higher life* or *victorious life*. Adherents refrained from any discussion of perfection and avoided the word. Even though the synonyms differed, Keswick believers, for the most part, belonged to the Reformed tradition, as did adherents of Oberlin perfectionism. Also, corresponding to the Oberlin position, Keswick theology was indebted to Wesley and Palmer.

There are more similarities than differences between the Wesleyan/Holiness and Keswick doctrines. Both emphasize consecration and faith as requirements for Holiness. They also agree that the experience occurs in a moment that is followed by a lifelong process of growth. Some have sought to distinguish the two by attributing a focus on power for evangelism and missions to Keswick theology, but this is not an accurate distinction since the Wesleyan/Holiness movement also stressed power. The contrast between the two theologies relates to original sin. Believers in the “higher life” rejected the view that sin can be eradicated and instead held that the sinful nature remained following sanctification but with continual surrender, the power of the Holy Spirit provided victory over any known sin. Sin was counteracted by victorious living, reflecting the Reformed doctrine that one should “let go and let God.”

Adherents of Keswick theology maintained their denominational allegiances. Moody Bible Institute, Dallas Theological Seminary, and Wheaton College were among the schools that taught Keswick theology. Interdenominational gatherings were another means of promoting the doctrine.

One denomination defies classification in any of the Holiness groups but perhaps fits best in the Keswick category. Its founder, A. B. Simpson (1843–1919), a Presbyterian minister, experienced Holiness in 1874. He became aware of Holiness by reading a book written by Boardman. He founded two ecumenical groups in 1887, one to support missions and the other to promote sanctification and divine healing. They merged in 1897, forming the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA). Simpson’s Reformed heritage and the fact that the C&MA does not believe in the eradication of original sin distinguish it from the Wesleyan/Holiness movement theologically. However, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries, many people from both groups worked together in urban slums to alleviate problems caused by poverty.

Social Christianity

It is not coincidental that the area of upper New York “burned over” by revival fires of the Second Great Awakening was also the center of social reform. It is impossible to separate revivalism and Oberlin perfectionism in terms of their role in promoting Christian efforts to create a perfect society. Finney preached conversion to sinners and perfection to Christians. Finney, his converts, and Oberlin graduates sought the perfection of society as well. Finney’s commitment to the antislavery cause is a primary example. One of Finney’s “new measures” also affirmed women preachers at revivals. This practice extended to promoting equality for women in the political arena.

Several issues, including abolitionism, led the Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America (now the Wesleyan Church) to split from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1843. Members participated in the Liberty Party, which was committed to ending slavery and securing the rights of women through the political process. A Wesleyan Methodist congregation hosted the first woman’s rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. Like Finney, these church members refused to limit perfection to individuals and worked to create a perfect society.

Some refer to Wesleyan/Holiness involvement in social Christianity as “sanctified compassion” or “social Holiness” to distinguish it from the Social Gospel. Wesley provided a solid foundation for social Holiness by consistently stressing the need to love God and love neighbor. He refused to separate inward and outward Holiness and practiced social Holiness by meeting physical needs of the poor.

Palmer professed the Christian’s duty to be useful and set the example for Wesleyan/Holiness believers. Among other activities, she ministered in the notorious Five Points neighborhood of New York City. The mission she helped establish there included a chapel, housing for families, and a school.

Particularly following the Civil War and through the turn of the twentieth century, many Wesleyan/Holiness women and men worked with the poor in urban slums providing job training for former prostitutes, dealing with the ravages of alcohol, or offering shelter and food. Wesleyan/Holiness workers spoke of love of neighbor as the motivation for their actions. The Salvation Army is the best-known Wesleyan/Holiness group that exemplifies social Holiness.

Relationship to Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism

The Holiness movement's affinity with fundamentalism depends on which group is being considered. Sometimes, the Wesleyan/Holiness branch is identified with fundamentalism, but that is generally because of the mistaken assumption that Wesleyan/Holiness maintains the Bible is inerrant. While fundamentalism affirms inerrancy, most Wesleyan/Holiness denominations focus instead on the purpose of the Bible, stressing its value in terms of explaining salvation rather than claiming it has no scientific or historical errors. The Wesleyan/Holiness movement holds a high view of scripture, believing that everything that relates to faith and practice is true. Also, dispensational premillennialism is often associated with fundamentalism, but it did not make inroads in Wesleyan/Holiness denominations.

The majority of the Wesleyan/Holiness movement did not identify with fundamentalism, when fundamentalism originated in the early twentieth century as a militant response to modernism. It is more accurate to speak of the Wesleyan/Holiness group as being among the many "innocent bystanders" that did not take sides in the modernist/fundamentalist controversy. Over time, the small minority of Wesleyan/Holiness adherents who initially embraced inerrancy has been joined by others. Contemporary fundamentalists who rejected the movement toward neoevangelicalism do not include these Wesleyan/Holiness believers in their camp, notwithstanding their affirmation of inerrancy. Fundamentalists reject their theology of Holiness.

On the other hand, Keswick theology found itself in harmony with fundamentalism rather than fostering new denominations. This is evident in Scofield's Reference Bible, published by C. I. Scofield (1843–1921) in 1909, which continues to be popular among many fundamentalists. His annotations promoted dispensational premillennialism and also traced the relationship between Keswick doctrine and dispensationalism. The "higher life" is still preached from fundamentalist pulpits, although there is no way of determining the extent of its influence today.

There is no agreement on the definition of *evangelicalism*. Scholars have suggested from three to fourteen classifications. Narrow and broad definitions abound, although the word has numerous meanings depending on the time and place. This makes it difficult to assess the term as a possible label to describe groups in the Holiness movement.

Using an historical approach, a group of fundamentalists began calling themselves "neoevangelicals" during the late

1940s. Billy Graham (1918–) was the most well-known member of the group. Neoevangelicals retained fundamentalist doctrines but sought to be more engaged in cultural and intellectual arenas. *Neo-* eventually was dropped and *evangelical* now describes this position. Evangelicals are heirs of fundamentalism; the Wesleyan/Holiness movement does not belong in the evangelical category because it traces its roots to Wesley rather than to fundamentalism.

Others favor a broad sweeping definition of "evangelical" that includes Wesleyan/Holiness believers and many other "innocent bystanders." In this case, *evangelical* refers generically to conservative Christians who preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. This definition assumes that Christians are either conservative or liberal when, in fact, they fall along a wide spectrum and do not neatly fit into these two categories. While many Wesleyan/Holiness adherents and several denominations today accept "evangelical" as a self-designation, others reject it because of its historical ties to fundamentalism. They fear that identifying with evangelicalism will result in the further loss of Wesleyan/Holiness distinction.

Holiness and Pentecostalism

The Wesleyan/Holiness movement is sometimes confused with the Pentecostal movement because of its identification with Pentecost and the use of Pentecostal language. By 1900, this language was commonplace, and the Holy Spirit played a primary role in Holiness theology. Both movements looked to Pentecost as the precedent for their theology. Several Wesleyan/Holiness groups initially incorporated "Pentecost" in their names. To distance themselves from the Pentecostal movement, they later dropped the word. Some minimized Pentecostal language and also the relationship between power and Holiness that stemmed from an emphasis on Pentecost. Equating speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) with the baptism of the Holy Spirit led to further problems with differentiation, since the latter term also had been used as a synonym for sanctification by Wesleyan/Holiness advocates.

However, it is clear that Pentecostalism was an outgrowth of the Wesleyan/Holiness movement. Agnes N. Ozman (1870–1937) spoke in tongues, the primary distinction of Pentecostalism, in 1901. She was a member of a Bible study begun by Charles Parham, a Wesleyan/Holiness preacher. But it was the Azusa Street revival beginning in 1906 that catapulted the experience into a worldwide phenomenon. The revival originated under William Seymour (1870–1922), a Wesleyan/Holiness preacher. Numerous Wesleyan/Holiness believers attended and began speaking in tongues. They

defined glossolalia as a third work of grace, following conversion and sanctification. Several Wesleyan/Holiness denominations such as the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) and the Church of God in Christ embraced glossolalia.

Many C&MA members found speaking in tongues compatible with their faith. While the denomination did not adopt the practice, A. B. Simpson's emphasis on the fourfold gospel of Jesus as Savior, Healer, Sanctifier, and Coming King contributed to Pentecostal theology.

The Holiness Movement Today

Oberlin perfectionists aligned with the Keswick movement. A shared Reformed heritage was one factor in making this transition. There is no separate group of Oberlin adherents today. Officially organized in the United States in 1913, Keswick conferences have met at Keswick Grove, New Jersey, since 1923.

The Wesleyan/Holiness movement provides a classic example of sect/church typology. Originally, denominations were sectarian because Holiness included outward purity, which meant separating oneself from "worldly" activities such as card playing, dancing, attending movies, and fancy dress. These distinctions gradually have been abandoned. The sect/church cycle has recurred as small groups have split from established Wesleyan/Holiness denominations to maintain the earlier sectarian understanding of outward Holiness. They have joined together with like-minded individuals and independent congregations as members of the Interdenominational Holiness Convention, which organized in 1947.

Holiness doctrine has lost its emphasis in many churches that claim a Wesleyan/Holiness heritage. To counter this trend, several denominations have explicitly focused on describing Holiness so that it is relevant. In 2006, ten denominations issued a Holiness Manifesto that restated Holiness theology for a contemporary audience. These activities indicate a heightened interest in reclaiming the defining doctrine of the movement.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Camp Meetings; Cult of Domesticity; Dispensationalism; Evangelicals: Twentieth Century; Feminism; Fundamentalism; Great Awakening(s); Holiness Denominational Family; Methodists: Tradition and Heritage; Pentecostals; Pietism; Revivalism* entries; *Social Gospel*.

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Holocaust

The subject of the Holocaust (in Hebrew, *Shoah*), the near-total destruction of the Jews and other groups in Europe during World War II, is of great moral significance in the history of Western civilization. Genocide, the obliteration of all members of a national group, is one of the most horrible of crimes and one of the most difficult to deal with in the field of social studies; it reveals the human race at its worst. Researchers in the shadow of the Holocaust testify to the stubborn persistence of the Shoah to "the past that weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living," as Jean-Paul Sartre once described history.

The "deadly weight" of the Shoah—the horrific tradition of state-sponsored victimization and murder and the uncountable human, spiritual, and material loss that followed—has aroused many Christians and Jews to speak out against revisionist history of the Holocaust—that is, distortion of the Holocaust facts. For example, on May 5, 1985, President Ronald Reagan and Chancellor Helmut Kohl of West Germany visited Bitburg's Kolmeschohe military cemetery, where soldiers from the Second SS Panzer Division are also buried, to honor soldiers killed during World War II. The occasion was to commemorate in good faith the fortieth anniversary of the end of World War II. However, many veterans' groups, members of Congress, and Christian and Jewish groups protested this event as revisionist history, because it appeared to discount that soldiers from one of Hitler's brutal SS units were also buried there, and in

so doing seemed to dishonor the millions of victims of the Holocaust.

Encountering the Shoah

Advances in understanding of the Shoah (causes, effects, responses) have been dramatic and widely chronicled in the second half of the twentieth century. Holocaust studies have occurred in successive waves. The first recounted the horrors of the Nazi treatment of Europe's Jews, 1933 to 1945, in the historical context of deep-rooted religious anti-Judaism, secular anti-Semitism, and renewed nationalism. Though many Catholic and Protestant churches and laypeople accepted and endorsed the virulent anti-Semitism of the Nazi state, fed in part by scriptural and church teachings (for example, charges of deicide and misanthropy), they pursued a policy of compromise and accommodation with the Nazi regime because of concerns about possible anti-Christian repercussions emanating from its fascist ideology. Some church leaders courageously opposed the Nazi treatment of Jews, and a network of resistance and rescue movements helped Jews flee from the Nazi regime. Also, statements and resolutions from the provisional World Council of Churches (Geneva, November 16, 1938), General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA (May 1939), and Federal Council of Churches, United States (December 11, 1942) spoke out against racial persecution and anti-Semitic propaganda and for full justice for Jews in Western civilization.

The second wave of Holocaust studies indicted the German and Austrian nations, the Roman Catholic Church leadership, the French, English, and Soviet governments, and the free world for their lack of intent and will to combat morally the threat of and from Nazism. Christian complicity in the Nazi war against the Jews was roundly criticized in "Ten Points of Seelisberg" (Switzerland 1947), and the founding meeting of the World Council of Churches condemned anti-Semitism as irreconcilable with Christian belief and practice (Amsterdam 1948). Also, in this second wave arose questions of theology and theodicy—that is, issues regarding the interrelationship between human and divine responsibility—following the horrors of Auschwitz, the Nazi extermination camp in Poland.

In a third wave, during the last decades of the twentieth century, a number of Jewish and Christian scholars exposed and debunked disingenuous Holocaust denial and revisionism among historians and others. They argued against the denial and the minimization of the event and emphasized that moral bankruptcy among those who deny the historicity of the Shoah is an early warning sign of genocidal tendencies

now and in the future. Finally, the rise of Jewish-Christian discussion groups, symposia, and conferences interfacing on post-Holocaust morality and theology is notable in the last decades of the twentieth century and at the start of the twenty-first century.

Perhaps because of the tendency to focus on the Shoah itself, one aspect of Holocaust studies has been less carefully considered: the impact of the Shoah on America and, more specifically, on Jewish life and Christian belief in America. There are a number of questions in this area of Holocaust studies. When and what did Jews in America know about the European Judeocide? How effective or ineffective was the American Jewish response to the murder of European Jewry? How do Shoah survivors who came to America deal with shattered memories, and why do many (but not all) feel the need to educate others? How do survivors in America relate to scholars whose research endeavors to objectify their years of agony, pain, and torment? After decades of silence by many American Jews, why has the Holocaust become a black hole around which their Jewish identity is spiraling? How—in American terms—are we to deal with Jewish theology after the Shoah? How successful is academic Christian-Jewish dialogue in helping the American Christian in the pew to distinguish between Christian verities and teaching of triumphalism (the triumph of Christianity over other religions), which contributed to Nazi *Geistigkeit* (enthusiasm) in the bosom of Christendom? How does one "sensitize" an American Christian culture to not sanitize or Christianize proper memory and respect for the Shoah?

Jewish-Christian Dialogue

In some Christian theology on the Shoah, the measures appear to be the church and its sacred texts and traditions. However, for the dialogically minded Christian and Jew, this sort of theology, while valuable, will not suffice in a post-Auschwitz age. They acknowledged that a comprehensive sense of understanding holocaustal events by way of interfaith dialogue is critically important.

The modus operandi of the scholars involved in dialogue is straightforward and transforming: as practicing Jews or Christians, they examine the impact of the Shoah on their religious commitment by demonstrating how a dialogical encounter with selected biblical texts and postbiblical religious texts of both traditions can foster mutual understanding and respect, as well as personal change among its participants. Moreover, because they believe study of the Shoah requires that they transcend the objectivity and data-driven detachment of standard academic

approaches, those involved in dialogue encourage students to enter into a confrontation with the reality of the Shoah, its aftermath, and the directions that they can take in a post-Auschwitz world.

The development of an interfaith approach, as presented by Shoah scholars who are also committed to a variety of religious faiths and confessions, offers a model for dialogue, as well as an interdisciplinary approach to learning. Focus on texts is only one version of a model for many other research topics, and only one approach among many possible options. The twenty-first century presents a turning point among researchers. This generation of scholars is the generation of dialogue. They are not only modeling a way of doing Shoah research but are also modeling a style of being in the world that is ultimately the only way to say “Never again.” This may be the basic intent of such research and teaching: that is, the aim is not merely to expose the evil of the past or even just to sustain the memory for the sake of the survivors but to build a world for the new generations. This world is a world of dialogue.

For instance, the mandate of the first American Scholars Conference (Wayne State University, 1970), as well as its immediate successors, has been clear and precise: to root out the anti-Jewish bias (or *contra Judaeos*) found in some Christian preaching and teaching; to stress the importance of the study of Judaism on its own terms so that Christians are able to assess the positive value of rabbinic cult, rite, and law on the early church and on the later history of Christianity; to confront the “teaching of contempt”—traced back to certain New Testament passages and the comments of the early church fathers—that Christians have projected onto the Jews for the past two millennia across denominational barriers; to take seriously the concept of the Jews as God’s covenantal people, whom Christians in their understanding of God’s Word in scriptures and tradition are morally bound to support and protect; to rediscover the deep Jewish roots of the *corpus Christi* (Body of Christ) and live the *imitatio Christi* (way of Christ) without anti-Semitism; and finally, to avoid Christian-centered agendas (manifest, for example, in the argument that Christians suffered equally as did the Jews in the Shoah), as well as Jewish-centered agendas (for example, the argument that Jews are best suited to teach about the Shoah to Christians, whose primary role should be to listen passively) by learning intellectually and honestly the lessons of the Shoah in a setting that is interreligious, international, and interdisciplinary. Overall the aim of this first American Scholars Conference and successive conferences

was to lay a solid dialogical groundwork for a believable and workable interfaith response to the Shoah.

In sum, no single philosophy can be superimposed on the Shoah agenda. Suggestions come easily when they deal with facts and figures, but Shoah education reflects the vitality of live concepts. Thus, interfaith discussion mirrors causes of existence and conditions of being and responds to the imperative “Remember and do not forget” in ways different from exclusively piloted agendas (for example, those found in strictly ecclesiastical or survivors’ conclaves). Also, Shoah thinking cannot function under ideological imperialism. Its stream of consciousness is like the natural world: only diversity and adaptation will energize it.

Jewish Religious and Theological Responses

Elie Wiesel, Shoah survivor and Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1986), has stated that the Holocaust transcends history and that the living are neither capable nor worthy of recovering its mystery. Nonetheless, American Jews grapple with the historicity of the Shoah, as they present a wide range of literary, pedagogical, religious, and theological concerns and approaches that attempt to pinpoint ways in which it is possible to remain human and seek meaning in an age of technologically administered mass death.

Responses by survivors reflect their excruciating experience so that others can learn. Many relate witness stories promoting Jewish survival as an unshakable dogma after Auschwitz. Exceptional are the words of Wiesel in his memoir *Night* (1958), which are read at many Yom HaShoah commemorative events at schools and in communities:

Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp which has turned my life into one long night. . . . Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turn into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky. Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever. Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget to live as long as God Himself. Never. (p. 32)

Wiesel’s memoir does not diminish the paradox of the Shoah (that is, end of childhood innocence, question of simple faith) but serves to make the issue more troubling and therefore also more full of hope. Survivors strongly advocate that the specific lessons of the Shoah should never

be forgotten. Their eyewitness approach to the event, which is rooted in the redemptive quality of memory, carries the message that one can survive with morality, a message that appeals to all who have suffered and will suffer.

To explain the worst calamity in Jewish history, the ultra-Orthodox view the Nazi atrocity as a punishment for Jewish sins (for example, assimilation and secular Zionism) or a wake-up call against a far worse collective tragedy. Religious humanists argue that the Holocaust suggests the absence of the biblical-rabbinical God in contemporary culture and the demise of a core doctrine, the Chosen People of Israel. Others opine about post-Shoah Jewish existence. The survival of the Jews is learned from the everyday acts of prisoners in the death camps nurtured and sanctified by the way of Torah. Thus, the standard for millions of Jews trapped in Adolf Hitler's inferno was neither nihilism nor despair nor suicide but the practice of Judaism to the extent possible under such horrendous conditions. This behavior of *tikkun 'atsmi* ("repairing of self") points the way to healing the rupture of the Jewish people after the Shoah. That is to say, Jews must survive as Jews—ethically, morally, and ritually—and under no circumstances must a posthumous victory be granted to Hitler.

How may Jewish theology explain the effects of the worst catastrophe in Jewish history on the faith of Israel? Traditionally, the basics of Judaism are derived from an encounter between God and Israel begun at Sinai and renewed during the centuries of prophetic leadership and later rabbinic thought. The Lord is a creator God and the world of his creation is purposely designed as less than perfect, for if it were perfect there would be no need for history or of the finite realm. God is not the elusive "absolute" of philosophers, but, as expressed in the biblical-rabbinic imagery, he is involved in history and cares for his creation. He shows his loving concern through ethical-religious channels.

Humankind, made in the image of God, properly lives that image by performing Godlike actions of justice, mercy, and righteousness. God purposely hides his face (*hester panim*) so that humanity can exercise freedom of ethical choice, thereby becoming a partner—albeit subordinate—with him in bringing about a universal era of wholeness—that is, peace and redemption. Nonetheless, Shoah is a dramatization of faith shattered when humanity fails and *hester panim* prevails. Thus Judaism's encounter with covenantal theology treats all who died in the European hell, believers and nonbelievers alike, as *kedoshim* (saints, martyrs).

From this recognition comes the breakthrough of faith after the Shoah in American Judaism.

But is it Judaism as usual? In view of what the Shoah presents, the murder of millions coupled with a horrifically hidden God, the role of Israel's covenant and the mythos of Israel's election must be revised, reevaluated, and renegotiated. Indeed the very word *Holocaust* invokes images of fire and burnt offerings. It is associated with the *akedah*, the binding of Isaac in the biblical story in which Abraham is tested and Isaac is victimized (Genesis 22). The use of that word consequently empowers the Jew to question the intentions of God. On the other hand, the term *Shoah* (devastation, destruction) focuses on the human propensity to dislike the unlike and ultimately eliminate land, nature, and humankind.

An element of post-Shoah theology argues that the imposed covenant at Sinai is no longer essential after Auschwitz. It cannot be otherwise; it has failed. Centuries of persecution have chipped away at its words, and the flames of the Shoah have obliterated its authoritative words that "descended on it in fire" (Exodus 19:18; NIV). In lieu of the shattered obligatory covenant, a new covenant has arisen by virtue of the actions of survivors and other Jews who choose not to assimilate, die, or forget but to survive as a people. Jewish survival by any means necessary, including secular activity, is the central tenet of the new voluntary covenant. Shifting from obligatory to voluntary does not compromise the unity of Judaism any more than the unity of God. It is responding to the faithless Jew, existing in the shadows darkened by the inferno smoke of the Nazi crematoria, who lives Judaism either by being, or by being in the process of becoming, but not necessarily by following the Torah of Sinai. Covenant living in the image of God, not logic or straight belief, is a new process in American Judaism in shaping Jewish values after the Shoah.

Christian Responses: Remembrance and Repairing

Shortly after his election as *Reichkanzler* (head of government) in 1933, Hitler spoke to a group of Methodist women meeting in Obersalzberg about his admiration for Frederick the Great, Otto von Bismarck, and Martin Luther. When asked, "Where do you get the courage to undertake the great changes in the whole Reich?" Hitler responded, with Luther's New Testament commentary in hand, "From God's word." while Hitler's mandate for the *drittes Reich* (politically, "Third Empire" but theologically, "Third Kingdom") is not rooted in German trinitarian pietism, it cannot be denied

that centuries of church teachings of alienation from and contempt for the Jewish people contributed to Hitler's policy of lethal anti-Semitism. Questions of why, how, and who in the Christian support of the Nazi demonizing of the Jews and what we can learn about Christian (Catholic, Evangelical, Lutheran, Orthodox) culpability in the near-total destruction of European Jewry, are the *raison d'être* for reflection, remembrance, and researching the Shoah in Christian America. The ecclesiastical, pedagogical, and pragmatic objectives are to evaluate and identify the contributing factors in scriptural Christianity and historical Christendom that impeded the ability of European Christian clergy and laity in 1920s to 1940s to proclaim and to condemn National Socialism as evil.

Certainly, Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon, but theological anti-Semitism was linked to modern racial anti-Semitism within Europe's Catholic and Protestant churches, which strongly nullifies the position that anti-Semitism and anti-Christianity in Nazi ideology are the same. The detrimental impact of Hitlerian Judeocide on the "Body of Christ" is realized by contemporary mainstream denominational church bodies, and transformational steps are taken by post-Shoah Catholic and Protestant authorities to reconsider traditional negative teachings (for example, deicide, misanthropy, conversion) about the Jews and Judaism in Christian salvation history in order to reconcile with the Jewish people. This involves treading and shredding scriptural and theological traditions and language bias that have polarized acceptance and recognition between two monotheistic Abrahamic faiths, sometimes despite the best intentions of bearing witness and reconciliation.

One example involves the Christian response, "Love your neighbor," to rectify *extra Ecclesiam salus non est* ("No salvation outside the Church"). Jesus came "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23; NIV) and proclaimed that "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22; NIV). However, this blessing is forever stained by the portrayal of some Jewish authorities, especially the temple priests, as accomplices in the Crucifixion of Jesus as it is scripturally attested: "His blood be upon us and on our children" (Matthew 27:25; NIV); "The Jews [that is, only the Jews who] who killed the Lord Jesus. . . . They displease God and are hostile to all men" (I Thessalonians 2:14–15), and elsewhere. Still Christ loved his own, and this has empowered the campaign to convert the Jews to believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus to ensure their salvation. To teach otherwise is to deny the Jews eternal salvation, and this is unacceptable.

However, for Jews, this standard call of the church in history, and especially after Auschwitz, to be fulfilled in Christ Jesus is unconscionable. It is not a proclamation of conscious malice, but a misguided spiritual voice in the valley of the fallen ashes on the crooked road from Calvary to Auschwitz and beyond.

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, there has been a dramatic and positive shift in Christian perspectives on the Jews, nurtured by ecclesiastical declarations seeking common religious ground between the church and the synagogue. Following the Vatican II declaration *Nostra Aetate* (1965; "In Our Times," the statement on the relationship of the Roman Catholic Church to non-Christian religions) and subsequent Roman Catholic pronouncements of the Holy See on the Jewish people, declarations from 1974 to the early twenty-first century, especially those of Pope John Paul II, address the relationship between Catholics and Jews. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) have reflected upon and enlarged these documents in statements and guidelines issued in the United States.

Likewise, mainstream Protestant denominations (the World Lutheran Federation, for example) have taken a strong position against the "teaching of contempt" that some Christians projected in their depictions of the Jews. They have rejected the teachings of this nature over the past two millennia as based on errant scriptural reading (for example, by emphasizing Jewish guilt in the Passion narrative, the New Testament account of Christ's persecution and death), misguided and fallacious theology, and ignorance of the influence and impact of postbiblical Judaism on both the early church and the later history of Christianity. Christians have been challenged to rediscover the deep Jewish roots of their faith and to live the life of Christ without theological anti-Semitism. When relevant in Christian preaching and catechesis, the Jewish understanding of God, Torah, and Israel are to be presented without polemics, politics, or paternalism. Post-Shoah official statements from the World Council of Christian Churches, including North American member churches, represent a corrective theological change for the better in portraying the acute core of Jewish religious and ethnic identity (biblical, theological, ethical, ritual, historical, and political).

In comparison, Jewish reciprocal correctives about Christianity have been less forthcoming. This may be attributable to lingering Jewish hostility toward past Christian policies against the Jews in word and deed. Moreover, many Jews

have perceived that they are in a “no gain” situation in respect to Christian attitudes on basic theological matters. They have questioned, for example, whether believers in the new covenant and its messiah, “this perfect gift from above” (as John Paul II called it), could ever accept Israel—God’s special people, “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:6; NIV)—as religiously coequal. They have wondered whether viable common theological ground could be achieved when, unlike Christians, Jews cannot see trinitarianism (the doctrine holding that God exists as three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) in the plain meaning of Hebrew scriptures. In addition, there have been differences of opinion within the Jewish religious organizations that impede a responsible collective response to the varied Catholic and Protestant statements about the Jews. This may explain the dearth of a communal reply to the Vatican documents that suggest the establishment of the State of Israel is not “in itself religious” and reports the “sad fact” that most Jews did/ do not accept the salvific role of Jesus in history, while, in contrast, this is a basic tenet of classical Christianity.

However, this attitude among Jews would change in 2000, when a cross-denominational Jewish statement (although not supported in the main by Orthodox Jews), *Dabru Emet* (“Speak Truth”), and its accompanying book, *Christianity in Jewish Terms*, categorically delineated how contemporary Jews are encouraged to view Christianity, and, by extension, what is thought to be proper and not proper in the Christian view of Judaism. The hope is that the call to “speak truthfully” about two thousand years of the relationship of Judaism and Christianity is now being heeded.

To conclude, there is no question about the significant contribution of philo-Semitism (a favorable attitude toward Judaism) to Shoah remembrance and commemoration. Post-Vatican Council II interfaith dialogue among Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Jewish ecclesiastical bodies successfully addresses Jewish-Christian relations (scriptures, liturgy, Jewish evangelism, anti-Semitism, the State of Israel, and so on) and manage to convert age-old disputation into respectful dialogue. Honest discussion helped diffuse the controversy surrounding the 2008 Good Friday reestablishment of the Tridentine Rite (conversion of the Jews) and the 2009 Vatican approach to pre-Vatican II Catholic Holocaust revisionist clergy. Pondering Shoah and its aftermath are centripetal forces in the spiraling spiritual reconciliation of Jews and Christians on contemporary North American shores.

See also *Anti-Semitism; Ecumenism; Ethnicity; Judaism* entries; *Religious Thought: Jewish; Pluralism; Race and Racism; Religious Prejudice; Roman Catholicism: Cold War and Vatican II; Torah; World War II; Zionism.*

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House Church Movement

House church or *home church* is a generic term for a small informal assembly of Christians, usually Protestant evangelicals, who intentionally gather in a home or similar convenient location other than a church building. Participants in house churches typically worship, pray, learn, and care for one another on a personal level. House churches place emphasis on participation by everyone in the group and on sharing life together in a sense of community and mission that extends beyond meeting times. Within the United States, the house church movement is a late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century phenomenon.

House churches tend to be small in size, both because of the physical limitations of their locations and a bias toward functioning as smaller relational groups. House churches adopt different labels, some chosen to avoid the word *house* or *home* in order to put less emphasis on location and more weight on the type of meeting that takes place. Common alternate titles are *simple church*, *open church*, *organic church*, *relational church*, *primitive church*, *body life church*, *micro church*,

koinos church (from the Greek word meaning “all things in common”) and *biblical church*.

House churches are not the same as small groups or cell groups associated with a conventional church. House churches may network with other house churches, but each views itself as a complete church, not a subunit of a larger church. Some see themselves as deliberate alternatives to traditional or established churches.

Origins and History

Christians who meet together in homes or locations other than a church building usually do so in order to follow what they see as the apostolic model found in the New Testament. Many believe that small extended family-sized churches were the pattern intended by Jesus Christ and followed by Christians in the first century.

After Jesus’ death, the Apostles gathered not in the temple but in an upper room. The New Testament repeatedly provides examples of house churches, such as 1 Corinthians 16:19 (NIV), “Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets in their house.” Such statements lead some to conclude that the New Testament church was primarily a house church movement.

For the first three centuries of Christianity, followers of Jesus commonly met in homes. Early church fathers like Clement of Alexandria wrote of worshiping in a house. A private house in Dura-Europos (near Baghdad), excavated in the 1930s, was used as a Christian meeting place in CE 232, with one small room serving as a baptistry. During the Middle Ages, Brethren of the Common Life gathered to worship in homes across Europe. Some scholars say these house churches helped lay the foundation for both the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation.

House churches have been found worldwide, especially in countries where Christian groups have been persecuted or banned. In some countries such as China during the latter half of the twentieth century, when all missionaries were expelled and many established churches closed, the Christian faith expanded dramatically, largely through a context of house churches.

Impact on North American Religious Life

The origins of the house church movement in North America are varied. Many traditions that downplayed the role of clergy easily embraced house church ideals. These ranged from the Restorationist movement, which began in the nineteenth century and emphasized a return to New Testament standards,

to the Plymouth Brethren, a mid-nineteenth-century group whose best-known teacher was John Nelson Darby. The charismatic renewal movement begun in the 1960s has formed many Bible study groups, most of which remain part of their respective churches, but some of which have branched off as house churches. The Jesus movement of the 1970s inspired many informal groups, some of which associated with a denomination and others which became house churches.

A general cultural bias against institutional religion has also fueled the idea of house churches. So has what sociologist Wade Clark Roof calls a “salad bar approach” to religion, where people pick and choose those elements of religious practice that appeal to them, many opting for increased spirituality without becoming associated with an established local church.

Since the 1990s the house church movement has been encouraged by the publishing initiative of house church advocates such as seminary professors Robert Banks and Wolfgang Simson, and pastors Del Birkey, Neil Cole, Tony and Felicity Dale, Robert Fitts, and Larry Kreider. These writers represent a variety of Protestant backgrounds. The Internet also has contributed to the phenomenon’s growth during the early twenty-first century, enabling many previously unconnected individuals to discover and network with each other. Some of the more widely used Web sites are www.simplechurch.com, www.house2house.com, www.housechurchresource.org, and www.hccentral.com, many of which promote annual national conferences, social networks, and discussion lists for house church leaders. Local networks of house churches have also begun to form, with gatherings of house churches in an area getting together periodically for fellowship or joint worship celebrations.

During the 1990s and early 2000s, most media attention went to megachurches as the ascendant mode of conservative American faith. However, in 2005, George Barna, evangelicalism’s best-known pollster, indicated a dramatic growth in the number of believers who had stopped going to a standard church and instead were part of a house church. In 2006 Barna released a book titled *Revolution*, suggesting that the house church movement might well result in a third great awakening in American spiritual life. Mainline media responded as the *New York Times*, *Time* magazine, NBC News, CNN, and others wrote about the house church, heightening its level of exposure and acceptance.

Not everyone agrees with Barna’s numbers, which claimed that as many as 9 percent of adults—or 20 million people—have attended a house church during a typical

week, and as many as 70 million adults have at least experimented with house church participation. Even fewer agree with his predictions of how many people will adopt the house church as their primary faith community. The Southern Baptist Convention, for example, which is the largest Protestant denomination in the United States, responded to Barna by conducting their own study of house church participation in 2007, finding a growing interest in house churches, but at a level of 4 million at most—far less than Barna’s report but still not a small number.

Leadership, Meeting Format, and Finances

In a house church, everyone is expected to participate and look for ways to use their talents, abilities, and gifts. A commonly held belief in the American house church movement is that the Protestant Reformation did not go far enough to demonstrate the New Testament idea concerning the priesthood of all believers under the leadership of Jesus Christ as head of his church.

Most house churches are not held together by written principles and do not have detailed standards of conduct. They generally do not ask new members to sign a covenant or pledge. Rather, people typically become members of house churches relationally when a friend or family member invites them to attend.

Within that framework, some house church assemblies have almost no leadership structure, while others develop elders and deacons who serve their members. Some house churches also accept ministry from church planters and itinerant workers they consider to be apostles.

According to a 2006 survey by George Barna, 80 percent of house churches meet every week. The most common meeting days are Wednesday (27 percent) and Sunday (20 percent). Most house churches are family oriented; the average size of a house church is twenty people, including seven children under the age of eighteen. The typical house church gathering lasts for about two hours, with practices characterized as follows:

- 93 percent have spoken prayer during their meetings;
- 90 percent read from the Bible;
- 89 percent devote time to sharing personal needs or experiences;
- 85 percent spend time eating and talking before or after the meeting;
- 83 percent discuss the teaching provided;
- 76 percent have a formal teaching time;
- 70 percent incorporate music or singing.

The rapid growth in house church activity is evident in the fact that 54 percent of the people who are currently engaged in an independent home fellowship have been participating for less than three months. In total, 75 percent of house church participants have been active in their current gathering for one year or less. One out of every five adults has been in their house church for three years or more.

Some house churches legally incorporate and others do not. House churches emphasize financial generosity, such as giving a tithe (10 percent) of one’s income to spiritual purposes. It is not unusual for 80 to 90 percent of the offerings received in a house church to go to benevolence and missions both local and foreign. By contrast, typically 50 percent of a traditional church’s budget goes to staff costs and another 25 or 30 percent to facility costs, leaving little for good works beyond the church’s walls.

Critical Assessment

While the house church movement is growing in size in the United States, it is not without challenges. Sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) identified a number of social forces that contribute to “the routinization of charisma” in which a charismatic authority, such as Moses or Jesus, is succeeded by a bureaucracy vested with authority, such as the priesthood, laws, and rules. These institutionalize the charismatic leader’s thoughts and direction and thereby perpetuate the founder’s ideals. Recent house church impetus has come largely through a series of writers, Internet resources, and conferences. There is no cohesive structure for long-term continuity, and indeed house churches are resistant to such, just as they are to other potential stabilizing factors such as owning property, utilizing legal charters, developing membership rolls, or establishing institutions for training future house church leaders or members. As a result, house churches are typically very fluid organizations. They may meet for awhile and then dissolve. Or they may change directions in doctrine. Critics worry that small pastorless groups can become doctrinally or even socially unmoored.

Some theologians raise concerns about the ecclesiology—doctrine of the church—found in house churches. They ask whether a house church, over time, is able to fulfill all the biblical requirements of being a church, including conducting ceremonial events such as weddings, funerals, and baptisms, but also having a sufficient knowledge base for nurturing new generations in the faith.

House church replication, essential for the overall growth of a movement, is likewise an issue that few house churches have successfully addressed. For those churches who have

multiplied from one house church to several, how should the leaders or groups reconnect, especially as the replication process continues? These issues are common to all first-generation organizations and must be addressed if the movement is to grow.

House church leader and trainer Neil Cole has said that the task of the house church (which he calls the “organic church”) is to lower the bar of how to have church while raising the bar of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Theologian Wolfgang Simson has said the goal of the house church is to shift from organized religion to original Christianity, thereby giving the church back to ordinary people. History is still undecided as to whether the house church movement can successfully accomplish these ideals.

See also *Congregations; Denominationalism; Emerging Church Movement; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Mega-churches; Polity; Seeker Churches; Unaffiliated.*

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I



Idealist Philosophy

While idealist philosophy is perhaps more accurately described as a metaphysical orientation or framework—that is, an orientation or framework for conceptualizing the universe—rather than a specific doctrine or set of beliefs about the universe, idealist philosophies appear generally to share the view that humans and human experience are fragmentary yet genuine expressions of the real nature of the world. Idealist philosophies also often hold that mind or spirit constitutes fundamental reality.

Idealist philosophy, or idealism, has taken a variety of forms over a wide expanse of time, with its origin most typically traced, in Western thought, to the ancient Greek philosopher, Plato, and his theory of the Forms or Ideas. Also regarded as a primary figure in the history of idealist philosophy is George Berkeley, an Irish philosopher of the eighteenth century, perhaps best known for his own brand of idealism, emblemized in the epithet, “To be is to be perceived or to perceive.” Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, a German philosopher of the nineteenth century, is famous for his idealist conception of Spirit as the self-knowing and self-actualizing synthesis of Idea and Nature.

This trend of variegated articulations of idealist philosophy continues in the hands of American idealists. Although eighteenth-century figures such as first president of New York’s King’s College (Columbia University), and Jonathan Edwards, the renowned Awakening preacher and theologian are typically classified as early American idealists, the nineteenth century marks the true emergence of idealist philosophy as a palpable and sustained force in American thought. While idealist philosophy was influential in American

thought in the early and middle twentieth century, it is generally agreed that idealist philosophy fell out of favor in American thought with the rise in popularity of analytic philosophy—a metaphysical orientation and framework rooted in new developments in logic and language analysis—in the mid-twentieth century.

St. Louis Hegelians

The St. Louis Hegelians is the name commonly given to a group of nonprofessional philosophers, based in St. Louis in the 1850s to 1880s, who were immersed in the idealist philosophy of Hegel and related thinkers. To say that the St. Louis Hegelians were nonprofessional is not to suggest a lack of intellectual rigor but to note that they were not formally affiliated with any university or educational institution. The St. Louis Hegelians were trenchant translators and incisive interpreters of philosophical texts, most in the German language and tradition. Founded and led by Henry Conrad Brokmeyer (1818–1906) and William Torrey Harris (1835–1909), the group started the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, in which they published their own translations and ruminations, as well as those of several professional philosophers of significance in the development of the philosophical landscape in America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Among those whose thought was published in the pages of the journal were Transcendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Frederic Henry Hedge, Amos Bronson Alcott, James Elliot Cabot, and Pragmatists such as Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, Josiah Royce, and John Dewey. Although steeped in transcendentalism, Brokmeyer and Harris were drawn to Hegelian idealism for what they saw as its potential to enable social reform.

Holding that aspects of Hegelian thought as seemingly disparate as his logic and social philosophy were of a piece, since all types of philosophy were to be tested against lived experience, they melded their Transcendentalist roots and idealist philosophy with a Pragmatist ethos.

That this ferment should develop in St. Louis was not accidental. A gateway to those seeking fortune in the West during the California Gold Rush of the 1840s–1860s, and a route of return for those whose search for fortune had failed, St. Louis was a frontier town. At the same time, it was a cosmopolitan city with a population diverse in ethnicities, occupations, and passions, a culturally rich center with aspirations of becoming the nation's capital. All the while, it was also a locus of disruption, surrounded on nearly all sides by slaveholders and Confederate sympathizers, although it was itself a city that was strongly antislavery. In short, the city was the site of straining tensions, the alleviation of which Brokmeyer and Harris thought might be achieved in the promotion and adoption of idealist philosophy. Their concern was not provincial, however, as they believed that idealism held melioristic promise for all who might embrace it. While versions of American idealism are undoubtedly as variegated as those that preceded them, it may be argued that common to all American idealist thought is the belief that despite the fragmentary nature of human existence, the world stands malleable to human touch; humans have the ability to effect positive change in the world and their experience within it. This notion was fundamental to the social, political, moral, educational, and religious thought of the St. Louis Hegelians and served as backbone to the idealisms that followed.

St. Louis Hegelians and Religion

Although Brokmeyer was a founder and leader of the group, he wrote little, with much of his influence exerted through speech. The most prolific writers of the St. Louis Hegelians were Harris and Denton J. Snider (1841–1925). Although certainly not their only area of focus, Harris and Snider both placed a strong emphasis on religion. Because of this emphasis, their views are treated as furnishing a fair representation of the religious thought of the St. Louis Hegelians. Still, the religious thought of Harris and Snider does not exhaust that of the St. Louis Hegelians. Rather, Harris and Snider stand out as the most prominent among the St. Louis Hegelians in formulating and articulating a religious philosophy.

Harris believed that religion is the foundation of social life insofar as that social life belongs to the history of civilization. Religion is a great social process of intellect, will,

and heart, with its ideas not those of individual scholars in ivory towers but of the aggregate results of a social activity of intellect. Humans develop and progress via communion with fellow humans and the formation of institutions of civilization such as the family, civil society, the state, and the church. While historical institutions are finite and thus may perish, their archetype, the invisible church, is infinite and thus enduring. The spirit of the invisible church is the Holy Spirit. Harris conceives of the Holy Spirit as the Third Person contained in a triune conception of God. The First Person is God as absolute self-activity, who begets the Second Person, a self-knowing being equal to the First. The Third Person, or Holy Spirit, proceeds from the free union of individuals assuming the form of the Second Person.

The institution of the church proves vital to Snider's religious thought as well, for religion exceeds the subjective realm of personal belief and is objectified when grounded in a communal institution. Whereas secular institutions such as the family, civil society, and the state affirm the finite will concerned with finite ends, the religious institution of the church affirms the infinite will of God, which is the ideal end of the universe. While Snider saw the Christian church as the highest development of the religious institution at his time, he envisioned a universal religious institution that would integrate the various religious institutions of the world. For Snider, such a vision was plausible on account of what seemed to already be a great deal of agreement among major religions of the world concerning concepts of humanity, charity, and love.

While both Harris and Snider believed it was of primary importance to place religion in an institutional context, they differ insofar as Harris sees the Trinity embodied in the church as archetypal of all institutions, while Snider sees the archetypal religious institution arriving in the future. That the religious thought of each is cast within the framework of the historical evolution of religion and religious institutions is indicative of their Hegelian influence.

Personal Idealism: Borden Parker Bowne

Personal idealism, more commonly referred to as "personalism," is a type of idealism that places an emphasis on the individual self or person. Personalists seek to avoid the negation or trivialization of the person, a perceived danger of emphasizing Spirit or the Absolute, as in Hegel's idealism. American personalists of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries included Ralph Tyler Flewelling,

Albert Cornelius Knudson, Edgar Sheffield Brightman, W.H. Werkmeister, and Peter A. Bertocci. The most influential of the American personalists, however, were Borden Parker Bowne (1847–1910) and George Holmes Howison (1834–1916).

Bowne was influential as a teacher and lecturer, especially during his professorship at Boston University from 1876 to 1910. Bowne is most known, however, for defending and promoting personal idealism in writing, with what is perhaps the definitive statement of the philosophy presented in his *Personalism* of 1908. “Personality” is the central concept in Bowne’s thought, with his using the term to refer to selfhood, self-consciousness, self-control, and the power to know. Bowne believes that any being, finite or infinite, that has self-consciousness, self-control, and knowledge is “personal,” but finite persons, because they are, by nature, unable to attain full self-consciousness, self-control, and knowledge, cannot achieve full personhood.

According to Bowne, there exists one infinite and absolute being. The relationship between this being and finite beings is illuminated upon considering a potential problem in holding both that ultimate reality is personal and that all humans satisfying the requirements for personality are persons—these presuppositions may lead to a system in which each individual person reigns supreme, and community is rendered impossible. Bowne responds that persons continually depend upon one infinite and absolute being such that the uniting force of this Being is that which makes the interacting plurality possible in the first place. In short, Bowne solves the problem of unmitigated independence by eliminating independence. Finite persons, as created manifestations of the infinite person, interact and thus mutually determine each other, on account of the presence of the same Infinite Being in them all.

Bowne is remembered for saying that because philosophy can never be allowed to commit suicide, it is bound to accept those views consistent with its own existence, and for this reason, philosophy must always be theistic. To propose a theory denying an infinite, controlling mind in the universe would be to undermine the confidence of the finite mind in itself, presumably a manifestation of the infinite mind. Such a proposal is self-contradictory, however, for the finite mind would be trusted in order to establish the untrustworthiness of the finite mind on account of the supposed absence of an infinite, controlling mind. Bowne offered an equally pithy argument for the personal nature of the infinite being. The fact that finite minds can comprehend the

universe by thought indicates that the universe was founded in thought; otherwise, there could be no connection between minds and things. Because thought is a distinctively personal phenomenon, the founder of the universe must be a person, and because the infinite being is the founder of the universe, the infinite being is a person.

Personal Idealism: George Holmes Howison

Like Bowne, George Holmes Howison was influential as a teacher and lecturer, especially during Howison’s professorship at the University of California at Berkeley from 1884 to 1909. Unlike Bowne, Howison published little defending and promoting personal idealism, although the short volume *The Limits of Evolution and Other Essays Illustrating the Metaphysical Theory of Personal Idealism*, published in 1901, stands as an exception. Howison believes that all existence is either that of minds or the items and order of the experience of minds. These many minds form what he dubs the “Eternal Republic.” All members of the Eternal Republic share the aim of fulfilling the same rational ideal, with God the impersonated ideal of every mind. Thus, similar to Bowne’s conception, God reigns as the fulfilled type of every mind and the living bond of their union. Unlike Bowne’s conception, however, at the same time that God reigns, he does not fulfill the function of “Prime Mover.” The world, or “World of Spirits,” is an unmoved mover that moves all things including God, when united through recognition of God. Because this process involves the purposive movement of all things changeable toward a common ideal, Howison described it as “Evolution.” This label should not be interpreted as implying determinism, however, for the Eternal Republic is composed of free and self-subsistent, though not self-contained, citizens in mutually free relation with each other and the common ideal, a personal God. This personal God is also free and self-subsistent and exists not as an all-encompassing Absolute, but as a First among equals.

Absolute Idealism: Josiah Royce and the Absolute

Josiah Royce (1855–1916) is undoubtedly the most prominent of American idealists. His brand of idealism is that of absolute idealism. The term *absolute* is derived from the systems of Hegel and other German idealists, but Royce was influenced at least as much by American pragmatism, especially the thought of Charles S. Peirce and William James, with whom he was a contemporary and colleague at Harvard University. The son of parents who had migrated to

California in the midst of the California Gold Rush, Royce was a lecturer at the University of California at Berkeley from 1878 to 1882 and a professor at Harvard from 1882 until his death in 1916. Royce's unique contributions to philosophy, in general, and religious thought, in particular, are many and varied.

Royce formulated several arguments for the existence of the Absolute in his career. One of his most known is from his first book, *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, published in 1885. Therein, Royce argues that finite error implies absolute truth. Royce proceeds by observing that an idea cannot be deemed true or false in and of itself; it must be judged so against some other idea or ideas. Likewise, these ideas must be judged against some other idea or ideas, ad infinitum. Therefore, if any thought is in error, it can only be so if all reality is present to an inclusive infinite judge, or Infinite Thought. Royce calls this conclusion a "religious insight," and dubs this judge, the Absolute, the "religious aspect of philosophy."

Royce offered a related argument in *The Conception of God*, published in 1895, referring now to "Absolute Experience." Royce begins with the observation that every intelligent interpretation of an experience involves the appeal from a particular experienced fragment to some more organized whole of experience. The fragment of experience has a unity or organic place in the more organized whole, thus to speak of any reality which this fragmentary experience indicates, is to speak of part of the content of the more organized experience. Therefore, there is an Absolute Experience that is the organic whole to which our own experiences are related as fragments. In short, finite experience implies Absolute Experience. Royce refers to Absolute Experience as Omniscient Being or God.

Royce offered another related argument in *The World and the Individual*, published in 1901, again tweaking his terms. Royce begins by supposing that ideas have internal meanings and external meanings. The internal meaning of an idea is its embodiment of a single conscious purpose, while the external meaning of an idea is its correspondence to facts that are themselves not part of the idea. Truth is the correspondence of internal and external meanings of an idea. Because humans are finite, they can never know the complete internal meaning of any particular idea; to do so would be to know the entire set of all possible finite ideas. In order for a complete internal meaning to exist, however, some knower must know it in one inclusive act. This knower is the Absolute Idea or Self-Conscious Knower.

Absolute Idealism: Josiah Royce and the Problem of Evil

The problem of evil is classically described as such: How can evil coexist with an all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-good God? Royce recognizes the problem as such, but addresses the problem in the context of the situation of Job, in *Studies of Good and Evil*, published in 1898. A popular solution to the problem is to hold that God uses evil for the ultimate benefit of humans, in the way that a physician may prescribe bitter medicine to an ill patient or a parent may punish a child for wrongdoing. Royce believes that such a solution fails because God is directly responsible for the world and for the evil in it, in a way that the physician is not responsible for the illness and the parent is not responsible for the wrongdoing. Another popular solution to the problem has it that it was best for God to create humans with free will, and that evil initially arises because humans exercise their free will in evil ways. God then responds to these evils with attendant evils, in the interest of divine justice. Royce rejects this solution, too, for God often declines to protect the innocent, who consequently suffer undeserved evil.

For Royce, a suitable response to Job must show that evil is a logical necessity, something the nonexistence of which would contradict the very essence or perfection of God's nature and power. Royce's conception of the Absolute qua God leads him to the position that since human experience is fragmentary to the more organized whole of God's experience, human sufferings are God's sufferings, not God's external work. Thus, God both suffers along with humans and hopes along with humans for the overcoming of this suffering. Royce goes on to argue that it is not those innocent of evil who are fullest of the life of God, but those servants of the good who have faced evil and suffering and triumphed over them. At the same time, the ultimate triumph over evil is God's, but with human experience part of Absolute Experience, humans may see God's eventual triumph over evil as their own.

Absolute Idealism: Josiah Royce and Loyalty and Community

The concept of the struggling servant of the good articulated in Royce's consideration of the problem of Job was central to Royce's ethical and social thought, with another figure from Christianity, Paul, also serving as an important model.

In *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, published in 1908, Royce defined loyalty as the willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause. With “practical,” Royce meant that loyalty is never mere emotion; the loyal person serves his or her cause in action. Perhaps with Job in mind, Royce asserted that in a world of wandering, of private disasters, and unsettlement, the loyal are always at home, for however they may wander or lose, they view their cause as fixed and worthy. According to Royce, justice, charity, industry, wisdom, and spirituality are all definable in terms of enlightened loyalty. With “enlightened” loyalty, Royce has in mind his notion of loyalty to loyalty. Loyalty to loyalty consists in humans serving their individual causes so as to promote the greatest increase of loyalty among humanity.

In *The Problem of Christianity*, published in 1913, Royce contends that Christianity is, in its essence, the most highly developed religion of loyalty, and that loyalty itself is a perfectly concrete form and interest of the spiritual life. Royce believes that Paul learned the meaning and value of universal loyalty from the social and religious life of the early Christian communities and enriched and transformed the meaning and value of universal loyalty through his own work as missionary and teacher. Royce advocates what he views as Paul’s understanding of the genuinely and loyally united community and resonates with personalist idealism in the process. Such a community lives a coherent life and is thus in a perfectly literal sense, a person. Royce interprets Paul as believing the church of Christ to be such a person. For Royce, whatever may come of Christian institutions or traditions, the religion of loyalty must survive and direct the future of religion and of humanity, if humanity is ever to achieve salvation.

Absolutistic Personalism: Mary Whiton Calkins

Mary Whiton Calkins (1863–1930), who studied with Royce at Harvard and, except for a stint to return to graduate work, was a professor at Wellesley College from 1891 to 1927, shares affinities with Royce’s absolute idealism but also explicitly incorporates personalist idealism in her thought. Calkins gives a name to her variety of idealist philosophy in the title of “The Philosophical Credo of an Absolutistic Personalist,” published in 1930. The influences of personalist idealism and absolute idealism are seen upon considering the tenets of her credo. First, the universe contains distinctively mental realities; it may or may not also contain nonmental entities, but in any case irreducibly

mental entities exist. Second, the directly observed mental phenomena are not percepts, thoughts, emotions, and volitions in unending succession, but rather perceiving, thinking, feeling, and willing self or selves. Third, the universe is through and through mental in character; all that is real is ultimately mental, and accordingly personal, in nature. Fourth, the universe literally is one all-inclusive, and accordingly, complete, self of which all the lesser selves are genuine and identical parts, or members. Calkins’s religious thought is perhaps best seen through the lenses of “The Nature of Prayer,” published in 1911, in which she argues that prayer is the intercourse of the human spirit with a reality, or being, realized as greater than human and either conceived or treated as personal. That prayer is conceived in terms of intercourse is key, for the event is a genuinely mutual transaction between persons finite and infinite. Echoing Royce’s emphasis on loyalty, Calkins describes prayer as a reciprocal relation between human person and God, in which humans fuse the passion of desire with loyal adoption of God’s purpose and full submission to his will, while God’s response to prayer is that of recognition of humans’ love and trust and expression of God’s love of humans.

Absolutistic Personalism: William Ernest Hocking

Also a student of Royce’s, as well as a professor at Harvard from 1914 to 1943, William Ernest Hocking (1873–1966) adopts an absolutistic personalism similar to that of Calkins but applies his metaphysical theory to the practical more overtly than Calkins, as evidenced in texts such as *The Spirit of World Politics*, published in 1932. Hocking’s religious thought is most extensively articulated in *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, published in 1912. According to Hocking, religion is the present attainment in a single experience of those objects that in the course of nature are reached only at the end of infinite progression. This attainment is best understood as an interrelation of feeling and thought, or nonrationality and rationality. Religion is a great emotional response to the felt perils and glories of the situation of the finite human, yet all emotions are underwritten by guiding ideas. The value of religion for humans is found in the ideas that they have formed of reality and God. Hocking’s ideas include the notion that if there is a God at all, God is a fixity in the universe whom humans must accept and not undertake to change; although humans can shape some parts of reality, it is beyond the ability of humans to shape the divine. At the same time, because the world would be consistent with or without God, humans must

postulate God. Humans find themselves with this postulation already constituted and possessed, Hocking contends, when in suffering, they demand justice of their creator. Also echoing Royce's emphasis on loyalty, Hocking describes faith as the loyal determination and resolve that sees the world as it is capable of becoming and commits its fortunes to the effort to make real what it thus sees. Thus, Hocking's absolutistic personalist idealism leads to a melioristic religious philosophy, akin to that formulated by the St. Louis Hegelians nearly a century before him.

See also *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Pragmatism; Philosophical Theology; Philosophy; Social Ethics; Transcendentalism.*

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Immigration: From the Colonial Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century

Spanish Roman Catholic explorers initiated settlements in what would become the territory of the United States as early as 1513, when Juan Ponce de León (1460–1521) arrived on the coast of what would be named the Florida

peninsula. By the early 1520s, Spanish priests arrived in order to start settlements and establish missions among the Native Americans.

Sixteenth Century: Spanish Exploration and Colonization

The natives, initially, were very successful in driving the Spanish away; however, following half a dozen failures the Spanish succeeded in establishing the first permanent colony in the future United States. The settlement of Saint Augustine in Florida was founded in 1565 by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés (1519–1574) along with eight hundred men. When Avilés set sail from Spain, he came to Florida in an attempt to destroy all French settlements, which culminated in the massacre of the French Huguenots who had settled at the mouth of the Saint Johns River in 1562.

In the 1540s, Spanish colonization efforts within the border of the future United States had focused on the territory north of Mexico. In attempting to claim the Seven Cities of Cibola for Spain, Francisco Vásquez de Coronado (1510–1554) was sent north for a major expedition in search of treasure. He located the Grand Canyon, the future territories of Kansas, Oklahoma, and the Texas panhandle, all of which contained an immense mission field of native tribes; however, he failed to find silver or gold. This mission field would be neglected until 1598, when Don Juan de Oñate (1550s–1630) claimed these lands for Spain and founded the first settlement in the future territory of New Mexico. Oñate named the settlement San Juan de Caballeros; he established it with one hundred soldiers, four hundred settlers, and seven Franciscans.

Seventeenth Century: Spanish Missions

By 1630, immigration had brought at least fifty Spanish priests into the territory, and they had established some twenty-five thriving missions; however, the 1630s brought a steady decline in immigration and missions. The 1680s brought a widespread Native American revolt that resulted in a massacre, pushing the Spanish back to the Mexican border settlement of El Paso. Around 1694, Don Diego de Vargas (1644–1704) reconquered the territory for Spain, allowing for the return of Spanish missions. This conquest led to increased Spanish immigration, and by 1744 the non-Native American population numbered more than 10,000. Spanish missions were also successful during this time, and by 1750 the territory boasted more than twenty-two missions, with some 17,500 Native American converts. In 1848,

when the United States gained control of the land area of the New Mexican province, which included the territories of New Mexico as well as much of Texas, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and Arizona, the Spanish population had increased to around 30,000 settlers.

The Catholic priest Eusebio Francisco Kino (1645–1711), who was born in Italy, came to Mexico in 1681 and six years later traveled north to the Arizonian territory. In 1700, he founded the mission San Xavier del Bac near present-day Tucson. During his twenty-four years of missionary service, he traveled thousands of miles exploring and mapping the area while establishing missions. He claimed to have personally baptized 30,000 Indians. In spite of his personal efforts, missions and immigration in the New Mexican province never thrived, and by 1821 little remained of the missions he founded.

Immigration to the territories of Texas and California was never enthusiastically embraced by the Spanish. By 1810, fewer than 3,000 Spanish had settled in Texas and had established only half a dozen missions in which they converted very few Native Americans. Immigration to California was equally weak; however, like Kino in New Mexico, Franciscan Father Junípero Serra (1713–1784) established Spanish missions in California. He built the mission in San Diego in 1769 and established a series of missions along the California coast, the most successful of which were the missions of Santa Barbara, San Jose, and Los Angeles. By the end of his work he had founded twenty-one missions and converted some 21,000 Native Americans. Even with the success of Serra's missions in California, by 1800 only around eighteen hundred Spanish had settled within that territory. By 1854 all the territory of New Spain that was to become part of the continental United States had been lost by Spain because of revolution, annexation, conquest, or purchase.

Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries: French Colonization

While Catholic Spain began its exploration of the Americas in the Caribbean during the fifteenth century, Catholic France would initiate its interest in the Americas through shipping vessels exploring the Newfoundland coast and fleets of fishing vessels making frequent visits to the Grand Banks. Jacques Cartier (1491–1557), a French explorer, was the first European to chart the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and the banks of the Saint Lawrence River. In 1534, Francis I (1494–1547) commissioned him to explore the northern

waters west of Newfoundland in order to find a passage to the valuable markets of Asia. By 1541 any thought of finding a passage to Asia was gone; however, Cartier returned to the Saint Lawrence with five ships in order to establish a permanent settlement.

In 1608, Samuel Champlain (1567–1635), the royal French geographer, developed a colonial interest; he founded Quebec during the third of his eleven voyages. During the first winter, only eight men survived; however, by the year of Champlain's death the settlement was secure enough that he believed he had founded a permanent colony. In spite of this success, by the mid-seventeenth century the Canadian population was rather insignificant; immigration to Canada had only produced a population of some 2,500 traders, officials, and priests. In addition, these immigrants were primarily focused on trapping and missions and in general had neglected to build defensive fortifications.

In an attempt to change this lack of financial success and to motivate increased French immigration to New France, France in 1663 made Canada a royal domain; the new minister of finance, Jean Baptiste Colbert (1619–1683), established a policy whereby the mother country would maintain a trade monopoly over its colonial empire. A few years following this French policy, René Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle (1643–1687), traveled to New France. In 1669, he initiated his first exploration in search of a route to China, during which his canoe party were most likely the first Europeans to traverse the Ohio River. All of his explorations during the 1670s led to his most famous expedition in 1682, when he, still in search of a route to Asia, canoed down the Mississippi River. La Salle named the Mississippi River basin Louisiana in honor of King Louis XIV (1638–1715), and while canoeing down the Mississippi River he built Fort Prud'homme near present-day Memphis, Tennessee. When he reached the mouth of the Mississippi River, he erected a cross and an inscription claiming the territory for France. He conceived of the idea and convinced the royal court that the French should control the land mass extending from Quebec to the mouth of the Mississippi River and from the Ohio River to the Rocky Mountain springs of Missouri.

Jesuits immigrated to New France in greater numbers after 1625, primarily to establish missions to the Huron and Iroquois Indians. The Jesuits had some success in persuading their fellow French citizens to journey to New France. In 1641, Jesuits gained the support of Jean Jacques Olier (1608–1657) and his Sulpician community of diocesan priests. They had obtained a land grant on the Island of Montreal, where

they established a permanent settlement. During the first year of Montreal's settlement, Jeanne Mance (1606–1673) established a Catholic hospital named in honor of Saint Joseph. In 1653, Sister Marguerite Bourgeoys (1620–1700) immigrated to Montreal with additional Sulpician priests, and she set to work to founding the Church of Notre Dame, which was to become well known for its school for girls.

French immigration never became large enough to significantly affect the North American region that would become the United States. While the immigration effort of explorers, trappers, and Jesuits was at times impressive, they could not overcome the French inclination to stay in France, especially during the ongoing wars that occurred during the seventy-two-year reign (1643–1715) of Louis XIV. In addition, French influence in the region was diminished when Louisiana was ceded to Spain in 1762 and when French Canada was surrendered to Britain in 1763.

Sixteenth to Seventeenth Century: Early English Colonization

Although exploration by the English began shortly after the successful voyage of Christopher Columbus, immigration and colonization would have to wait until the early seventeenth century. John Cabot (1450–1499) was commissioned by King Henry VII (1485–1509) in 1497 to explore the coast of the Americas above the Spanish settlements in the Caribbean. During his two voyages Cabot charted the American coast from as far north as Newfoundland to as far south as the Chesapeake Bay. His voyages established England's rights to the northern coastal lands of America.

In 1607, three merchant ships funded by the Virginia Company set sail for America. The ships would arrive in May at the mouth of the James River, and the voyagers would found Jamestown, which would be the first permanent English settlement in America. These first immigrants were motivated by the prospects of monetary gain, especially since the plan for colonization originated with the merchants of London and Plymouth in an attempt to compete with the colonization of Spain and France. In addition, England was motivated by competition with the Roman Catholic influence that Spain and France produced within their colonies. England was determined to establish a Protestant influence within the North American coastal territories. The Virginia colony failed as a capitalist adventure. In 1624, the Virginia Company went bankrupt after losing some £200,000, and the viability of the settlement as a lasting colony was often in jeopardy. In 1616, only 350 settlers

were still alive, and by 1623 only 1,200 settlers remained in Jamestown in spite of immigration to the settlement by more than 4,000 English. After the financial failure of the Virginia Company, King James I (1566–1625) made Jamestown a royal colony and established Anglicanism as the official church of the colony.

The next English settlement on the North Atlantic coast was established by immigration of the Pilgrim Puritans to New England in 1620. The Pilgrims' original destination was just north of Jamestown, as their charter had been granted as an extension of the Virginia Company; however, they ended up settling far to the north in the territory charter of the Council for New England. The next decade brought very limited immigration from England, and by 1630 the colony grew to only around three hundred settlers.

In March 1629, King Charles I (1600–1648) extended a large portion of the New England charter to a newly formed group of wealthy Puritans who had established the Massachusetts Bay Company. In 1630, under the direction of John Winthrop (1588–1649), nearly 1,000 Puritans set sail from Southampton. Landing at Massachusetts Bay, they quickly established several villages and created a self-sufficient colony. Restrictions on Puritans in England motivated more than 20,000 English to immigrate to the Bay colony by 1641. With the initial success of this colony, several settlements sprang up along neighboring territories. In the mid-1630s, the Reverend Thomas Hooker, along with his entire congregation, immigrated to the Connecticut territory. By 1662 the Connecticut colony had at least fifteen settlements.

In 1636, Massachusetts Bay exiled Roger Williams (1603–1683), mainly for his heretical belief in the separation of civil government from church establishment. His irreconcilable difference with Puritan doctrine and Governor John Winthrop's enforcement of church policy led Williams to settle the colony of Providence, which would provide a safe haven for many outcast who would not conform to Puritan civil regulations. In 1644, Williams received an English charter to establish his own government. A government was created in 1647 in order to safeguard individual freedoms, including the freedom of religion, which made it a very attractive destination of immigrating Baptists and Quakers. By 1740 there were about eleven Baptist congregations in Rhode Island, and Quaker immigration increased following the 1672 visit of George Fox (1624–1691).

English colonial aspirations were put on hold for the next two decades of civil war and the rule of Oliver Cromwell

(1599–1658). In 1660, a few years following the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II (1630–1685), a charter was granted to settle the tract of land south of Virginia. The Carolina colony was granted to men who had grand visions of a prosperous feudal society. After several failed attempts, in 1670 a settlement was founded at Charles Town. Soon thereafter English immigration established several small villages to the north of Charles Town. South of Carolina, the English set up the colony of Georgia in large part to protect the Atlantic coastline from incursion by Spanish or French settlements. In 1723, Thomas Bray (1656–1730) envisioned the colony as a safe haven for the poor and destitute in England as well as a home base for his plan to “evangelize the negro.” Ten years later, a group of twenty-one wealthy trustees was granted a charter, and in that same year five hundred of England’s poorest citizens established a settlement at Savannah. Over the next twenty years, more than 1,000 poor immigrants from Europe found a home in Georgia.

Seventeenth Century: Immigration of Minority Groups

Dutch

Immigration during the 1620s and 1630s brought settlements to the mid-Atlantic and southern coastal colonies. In 1609 Sir Henry Hudson (1565–1611) was chosen by the Dutch West India Trading Company to discover a water passage to the East. Thus, he explored the Hudson and Delaware rivers in 1609, and in 1620 the Dutch West India Company sent a small party to establish a settlement on an upstream island on the Delaware River. In 1624 Dutch settlers established New Amsterdam as a permanent colony on the Hudson River basin. However, Dutch immigration to these two settlements would fail to produce a thriving outpost. In 1638 there was a joint venture with Sweden to build a fortified colony on the territory along the Delaware River, and that pact resulted in the establishment of Fort Christina. But the colony still lacked sufficient immigration up through 1664, when the British would take over the territory even though the colony had drawn immigrants from two European nations.

Dutch immigration was hampered by Spain’s refusal to recognize their long-held right of independence until 1648. Another factor that hindered immigration was the Dutch West India Trading Company’s sole interest in profit from trade. The company simply failed to establish any agricultural communities that could support a growing population.

Thus in 1664, when England took over the colony, it was still sparsely populated. When James, the Duke of York (1633–1701), was granted possession of the colony by Charles II, he renamed it New York and established a colony that was much more supportive of increased immigration, that could support a growing population, and that sought religious toleration. By 1695, immigration to New York City had brought nearly nine hundred families, the vast majority of whom were Dutch.

Jews

In 1654, some Jewish families immigrated to New Amsterdam after being forced out of Brazil following the Portuguese reclaiming of the territory from the Dutch. Merchant Jews from Holland had begun living in Brazil as early as the 1630s, when Jews participated in Holland’s colonial efforts in South America. Jewish families had originally fled to Holland during the late fifteenth century, when Spain and Portugal established Roman Catholic monarchies requiring Jews to convert or to relocate. During the exiting of Jews from Brazil, the Dutch West India Company encouraged them to settle in New Amsterdam in spite of the objections from the governor. By 1664, when the British took over the city, many Jewish immigrants had become successful property owners and merchants.

These earliest Jewish immigrants to America were Sephardic Jews whose religious tradition was influenced by a deep desire not to forget the beliefs and practices of the Babylonian exile. This tradition was renewed during the sixth century CE and strove to create religious rituals designed to provide a constant remembrance of the legacy of separation from their homeland. The Jewish communities in America remained small throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; however, by 1692 they had established the first synagogue in North America, in New York City, and by 1763 another community of Jewish immigrants in Newport, Rhode Island, constructed a synagogue. Further Jewish immigration, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, had established small Jewish communities along the Atlantic coastal cities from New England to South Carolina in places like Savannah, Philadelphia, and Charleston. In the early nineteenth century, an increase in German immigration to America brought an increase in the number of German Reformed Jews. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Reform Judaism was the fastest-growing Jewish tradition in America. In 1846, when Isaac Wise (1819–1900) immigrated to America, he became the most influential

leader of the more liberal Jewish religious movement. In 1850 Wise moved from Albany, New York, to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he led the movement in embracing both modernity and a patriotism that would not have been acceptable to the European Jewish sensibility. A large increase in European Jewish immigration would not unfold until a few decades after the Civil War.

Catholics

North of Virginia was the English settlement of Maryland. This colony was chartered by James I (1566–1625) and granted to the Roman Catholic George Calvert (1580–1632), who was the former Lord Baltimore. The charter was received by Calvert's son Cecil (1605–1675), who never actually traveled to Maryland. The colony was a refuge for harassed English Catholics since it was founded on religious toleration. In 1634 Cecil's brother Leonard arrived in Maryland as the colony's first governor, and five years later religious freedom was guaranteed by legal decree. Throughout the colony's history, Catholics remained a minority in Maryland, although by 1770 some 10,000 Catholics—by far the most of any colony—lived in Maryland. The religious toleration in Pennsylvania made it the second most attractive colony for immigrating Catholics, but by 1770 its Catholic population had grown to only around 3,000.

Quakers

In 1681, William Penn (1644–1718), who was a Quaker and the son of the highly successful Admiral Penn (1630–1684), received a charter for a large tract of land south of the New England colonies and west of New York and Delaware. By 1682, when Penn arrived there, his future colony was already home to some 4,000 European immigrants. The large immigration from several European nations (primarily English, Scotch, and German) and various religious traditions demonstrated that various groups could live and prosper within a single commonwealth. Although immigrants came from all over Europe, the vast majority of seventeenth-century immigrants to Pennsylvania were English Quakers, and by 1700 there were more than forty Quaker meeting houses, many of them large and growing. German immigration to Pennsylvania was also significant. Prior to the Revolutionary War, more than 80,000 Germans immigrated through the port of Philadelphia. While the Quakers of Pennsylvania were active in fighting against the Atlantic slave trade, most European nations profited from

the practice that resulted in one of the largest forced migrations in world history.

Germans (Mennonites, Amish, Dunkers, and Moravians)

William Penn's decision to make Pennsylvania a colony of religious toleration brought to that colony the largest concentration of German immigrants. The Anabaptist Reformation traditions had been subjected to some of the most bitter persecution of all the more radical Protestant traditions. This motivated their acceptance of Penn's generous offer of land for settlements. Anabaptists were a group of deeply dedicated Protestant traditions that refused infant baptism and sought to live in complete conformity to the commands of Christ, which led them to, among other things, reject military service, civil service, and the taking of oaths. An early group took their name from Menno Simmons (1492–1559), and they began to immigrate to America in 1683, possibly traveling with some Dutch Quakers settling in Germantown, Pennsylvania. By 1708, with increasing Swiss immigration, the Mennonites began to migrate west, settling in the rich farming lands of rural Lancaster County.

Around 1727, a more conservative Anabaptist group, the Amish, began to arrive in Pennsylvania. They were founded by a Swiss Mennonite preacher, Jacob Amman (1644–1730), who in 1693 separated from the Mennonite community and espoused a more strict disciplinary practice and a simpler lifestyle. The Amish began to arrive in Pennsylvania in more significant numbers in the 1740s, settling around Berks and Lancaster counties and continuing in their more conservative ways. The Amish in America dressed simply, refused the use of church buildings, and enforced the shunning of excommunicated members. As more and more Mennonites and Amish immigrated into the rich farmlands of southeastern Pennsylvania, some groups migrated west to Ohio and south to Virginia. Swiss Mennonites immigrated to Ohio and Indiana in large numbers between 1810 and 1830, forming many communities not associated with the Pennsylvania Mennonites.

The Dunkers were the earliest of the pietistic groups to immigrate to America. They gained their name from their practice of baptism by threefold immersion in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The movement had its origin in 1708 in Schwarzenau, Germany, when Alexander Mack formed his German Reformed Bible study into a new congregation. Pietism focused on individual experience and

feelings of the heart, pointing people back to a relationship with God. Church historians quite often refer to Philip Jacob Spencer (1635–1705) as the father of pietism. The first Dunker community in America was established in Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1719. Immigration by the German Dunker community was disorganized and lacked funding; by the American Revolution there were barely more than 1,000 Dunkers forming around twenty communities in southeastern Pennsylvania and northern New Jersey.

Moravians first came to America in 1735, settling in Georgia under the command of Augustus Spangenberg (1704–1792) in an attempt to evangelize the Creek and Cherokee Indians. The Moravians originated in the fifteenth century as a pietistic movement that developed out of the preaching of John Hus of Prague. While in Georgia, Spangenberg met George Whitefield and followed him to Philadelphia to construct a school for “Negro” children. By 1740 the Moravians had already rejected Whitefield’s Calvinistic theology, and Whitefield’s finances had run out. The Moravians established their own community, which they named Nazareth, north of Philadelphia and purchased the land from Whitefield. In December 1741, when Count Nicholas Ludwig Zinzendorf (1700–1760) immigrated to Pennsylvania, he helped the Moravians establish another community they named Bethlehem. They were a small movement even by the beginning of the Civil War; they numbered slightly more than 8,000 and were scattered across the East Coast but concentrated in Pennsylvania.

Scotch-Irish

Father Francis Makemie (1658–1708) was a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian minister ordained in 1681 in Northern Ireland as a missionary to America. In 1706, he organized the first American presbytery by calling together all the Presbyterian ministers to a gathering in Philadelphia. The majority of Presbyterian churches were located in the southeastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey colonies. Scotch-Irish immigration to the mid-Atlantic colonies would continue at an impressive annual rate of around 3,000 to 6,000 through the middle of the eighteenth century. By 1729 the Presbyterian Church in America was large enough to hold its first general synod, and this group officially accepted the Westminster Confession for the American Presbyterian Church. Following 1801, the majority of Presbyterian church growth can be attributed to frontier missions rather than to foreign immigration, but the numbers are impressive, nonetheless, since membership

rocketed from 18,000 in 1790 to more than 220,000 by 1840, a mere fifty years later.

Africans (Slave Trade)

A Dutch ship carried twenty slaves into the harbor of Jamestown in 1619 to be sold as laborers in the tobacco fields of the Virginia colony. Over the next three decades, the forced migration of Africans was slow, and records indicate that around three hundred slaves were imported by 1649. By 1660, however, slaves began pouring into the colonies of both Virginia and Maryland. In the Massachusetts Bay Colony to the north, slave ships began arriving around 1638. Thus, the English settlers, both Anglican and Puritan, participated in the slave trade and enjoyed the financial benefits of slavery. This began the colonial policy that would bring approximately half a million African slaves to the coast of what would become the United States.

By the early nineteenth century the slave trade into the United States had slowed. Much of the decrease stemmed from the outlawing of the trade in 1808, which meant slave ships entering U.S. ports had to be smuggled. Despite this decrease in forced importation of slaves, by the beginning of the nineteenth century there were approximately one million slaves, which equaled about 20 percent of the total population. By the end of the Civil War the freed slave population had grown to around four million. Most of these forced immigrants attempted to maintain their West African religious traditions, and many African slaves were influenced by the growing presence of Islam in West Africa.

The vast majority of slaves traveled from West Africa, where their religious traditions varied greatly from the European religious sensibilities. There was much diversity within the various groups within each West African tribal area; each possessed its own sacred stories, gods, types of healers, and ritual practices. However, within this diversity was a similar sacred worldview in which all aspects of life were interconnected. Each individual had a deep-rooted connection to his or her community. For West Africans, ancestors were protectors of the community and clan who could mediate between humans and deities.

West Africans had elaborate rituals designed to keep the memory of ancestors alive so that time would reinforce their memory and their relationship to the community. Ancestors could be transformed into gods, and there was no radical distinction between the sacred and the profane within the West African religious worldview. Spiritual power was present in all of life, and power could be possessed and used by

the one who was sensitive to the gods and ancestors. West Africans classified the gods by their power. The high god was the creator god, who created everything but who was not active in history. The secondary gods were named after animals or natural forces; these gods could disrupt history and empower humans. The music of drums and dance rituals were used to summon the gods into the presence of the people. Often during these West African communal rituals, the gods would possess a person and the person would go into a trancelike state.

Nineteenth Century: Catholic German and Irish Immigrants

While the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century immigration to America brought much regional, civil, religious, and racial diversity, it also produced a dominant, homogenized Protestant culture that was ill prepared to adjust to the increasing numbers of non-Protestant immigrants who would begin to pour into the United States in the 1820s.

According to twentieth-century scholar William R. Hutchison, English-speaking Calvinist Protestants, who had spent two hundred years developing their own cultural prerogatives, made up 85 percent of colonial America's population. Numbers of established religious communities reveal the limitation of immigration of non-Protestants to America. In 1780, America could boast of some 3,200 religious congregations, out of which only 56 were Catholic and only 5 were Jewish. Thus, what was perceived as diversity was largely an increasing variety of Protestant denominations. In addition, the vast majority of Protestants were Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists.

From the mid-1840s to the mid-1850s, some three million immigrants came to the United States at a time when the nation's population was only around twenty million people. This 15 percent increase in population represented the largest ten-year increase in the nation's history. The fact that most of the immigrants were not English Protestants brought a whole new level of cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity to American shores. While the vast majority of these three million immigrants came from Europe, there were increasing numbers of non-Europeans who left their homelands in search of better lives. An example of this increasing non-European immigration to the United States occurred from around 1848 to 1858, when approximately 50,000 Chinese left China to find work and new lives in America, many of them coming, like the Spanish conquistadors, in search of gold.

By far the two largest groups of immigrants traveling to America in the early nineteenth century were Germans and Irish. While German immigration included some Roman Catholics, the two greatest changes brought by German immigration from 1790 to 1860 was an increase in Lutheranism, which reduced the proportional dominance of Calvinistic Protestantism and spurred an increase in German-speaking communities. In 1820 there were fewer than eight hundred Lutheran churches in America; however, by 1860 there were more than 2,000. In addition, these German immigrants also established more than 1,000 non-English-speaking congregations.

Roman Catholicism had the greatest increase in immigration to America of any religious group during the time period of 1790 to 1850. Within those six decades, the Catholic population in America grew from an insignificant minority to become one of the largest religious minorities. During these decades, well over one million Catholics immigrated to the United States. In 1790, out of a population of nearly four million people, fewer than 35,000 were Catholic. By 1860, the U.S. population had grown to about twenty million people, out of which more than three million were Catholics. During this time period, Roman Catholics accounted for more than one-third of all German immigrants and for the vast majority of Irish immigrants. This in-flood of Roman Catholic immigration, especially from the 1820s to 1860, reduced the Protestant majority within America's population from 90 percent to around 75 percent. Nearly 70 percent of immigrants coming to America during those four decades were either German or Irish.

The immigration from Ireland steadily increased from 1790 until the 1820s, when immigration rates shot up. Following the end of the Napoleonic Era in 1815, economic conditions worsened in Ireland, while American industrialization was rapidly developing, creating a need for more and more labor. In the 1830s, more than 200,000 Irish immigrants entered American cities. In the mid-1840s a prolonged period of cold and damp weather produced a fungus that destroyed the potato crop, a staple that impoverished farmers had grown ever more dependent upon since 1815. In Ireland from 1845 to 1855 approximately 1.5 million people starved. Following the potato famine there was a desperate Irish migration to America in an attempt to stave off starvation. In the year 1850 more Irish entered the United States than in the entire decade of the 1830s, pushing the population of Irish Catholics in America to almost

one million. By 1860 the Irish Catholic population in America had grown to more than 1.6 million people.

The tremendous increase in immigration of impoverished Irish fleeing a famine was not without financial consequences in America. It produced an influx of poor immigrants who lived in slumlike surroundings. The deteriorating conditions within America's eastern cities were exacerbated by the new arrivals, who were too poor to relocate elsewhere, and resulted in urban slums; too much available labor resulted in ever-lower wages for back-breaking work. Often labor-intensive public projects tore apart families as men were forced to find low-paying jobs such as canal, railroad, and dam construction and women often flocked to any available industrial job regardless of the working conditions. The Catholic Church hierarchy struggled to keep up with the demands of an ever-growing Catholic population within the urban centers of America.

The first generation of Irish Catholics remained faithful to the Catholic Church in America; the church helped them maintain their ethnic identity and survive politically and economically in a capitalistic society. Irish Catholics, when compared to Catholics of other nationality, were more focused on personal morality and spirituality as they sought a religious practice with stricter adherence to church law. Irish Catholics were very enthusiastic participants in church life, and parents strongly encouraged their children to enter into Christian service as priests and nuns. Since the Irish Catholics were willing to enter Christian service, they soon began to take over the majority of leadership positions in the American Roman Catholic Church. This included the founding and staffing of many Catholic schools.

By 1850, German immigrants were the second-largest ethnic group of Europeans in America, with a population of approximately half a million. Many of these German, especially those who arrived after 1820, were Roman Catholic. These Catholic immigrants not only were well educated, but they were financially equipped to travel out of the eastern port cities and acquire farm land in the upper Midwest region around Ohio, Wisconsin, and Missouri. These German Catholics held on deeply to their ethnic identity and founded their own churches and schools in which they could maintain their German language and larger cultural identity.

Conclusion

Immigration to the future U.S. territory began in the early sixteenth century by Roman Catholic explorers on the

Florida peninsula. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Catholic Spain was motivated by building empire and missions. Catholic France during the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries sent immigrant priests and traders to try to evangelize natives and to tap the wealth of the new continent. English colonization prepared the way for the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century immigration of oppressed European religious groups, primarily English, and for the forced importation of African slaves. As the English Protestants established Virginia, New England, and Rhode Island, Dutch Protestants were attempting to plant settlements on both the Hudson and Delaware rivers. Jews, in 1654, began immigrating to New Amsterdam. The colonial charter to the Roman Catholic George Calvert began another wave of Roman Catholic immigration to Maryland. Thus, colonial diversity began to expand and shape the future of what would be a growing acceptance of religious tolerance in American colonies like Pennsylvania. The Quaker William Penn, who founded Pennsylvania in 1681, made the colony a safe haven for all persecuted sects in Europe, so while English Quakers still dominated immigration to Penn's colony, many persecuted German religious sects traveled there as well. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the slave trade uprooted hundreds of thousands of West Africans and transplanted them into the eastern coastal port cities to be sold to southern colonies and states. Africans who survived the slave ship journey struggled to maintain their cultural and religious traditions in America. In the early eighteenth century, large numbers of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians immigrated to New Jersey, Delaware, and southeastern Pennsylvania. Immigration of large numbers of German-speaking Lutherans from the 1790s through the 1850s brought a cultural change to the Calvinistic English-speaking majority in America. The last large wave of Roman Catholic immigration that occurred during this time period occurred from the 1840s through the 1850s, when the Irish attempted to find food and jobs in America during a time when there was famine in their homeland.

See also *African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War; Anabaptists; Immigration entries; Latino American Religion: Catholics, Colonial Origins; Latino American Religion: Catholics, in the Nineteenth Century; Moravians; Pietism; Presbyterians: Colonial; Quakers through the Nineteenth Century; Roman Catholicism: French Influence; Roman Catholicism: The Impact of Immigration in the Nineteenth Century.*

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Immigration: From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to World War I

The period of mass immigration to the United States from 1840 to 1920 was one of the largest human migrations in recorded history. The immigration of more than 33 million people from Europe and Asia to the United States profoundly changed not only the United States but also the immigrants themselves. Because religion was deeply important to the identities of both the settled American community and the immigrants, the resulting diversity of religions made for complex changes in American religious life through the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth.

Prior to 1840, American religious life had been narrowly defined by elements of Reformed Protestantism, primarily from Great Britain, and by indigenous offshoots of this tradition. By the beginning of the twentieth century, this tradition had been transformed by the mass immigration of non-English Protestants from Germany and Scandinavia; Roman Catholics from Ireland, Italy, and central and eastern Europe; Orthodox Christians and Jews from Russia and eastern Europe; and Buddhists and members of other Asian religious traditions from Japan and China. Obviously this dramatic religious transformation occasioned periods of conflict and struggle, but the American religious tradition managed, on the whole, to adjust to this influx of new religions without major disruptions. The older, settled American religious traditions eventually came to an accommodation with the new immigrant religions, while the immigrants adapted their own religious traditions to the free and pluralistic world of American religion.

First Period of Immigration, 1840–1890

From 1840 to 1860, the largest share of immigrants to the United States came from northwest Europe: 1.7 million people came from Ireland, 1.4 million from Germany, and 700,000 from Great Britain. This antebellum immigration resulted in the sudden inclusion of a sizable Roman Catholic community in the United States. Prior to 1840, the American religious community had been overwhelmingly Protestant, and despite denominational fragmentation most were united in a common revivalist and reform-oriented religious tradition. Protestants were also united in a common heritage of anti-Roman Catholicism, tracing back to the English Reformation, which colored Protestants' view of many of the new immigrants and caused a major backlash especially against the Irish. The pace of European immigration to the United States continued and accelerated from 1840 to 1860, as the American need for labor and the social and economic pressures in Europe combined to push immigrants toward the New World. Immigration was temporarily depressed by American economic troubles in the 1850s and the Civil War (1861–1865) but resumed and accelerated after 1865. The immigration from 1861 to 1890 was predominantly from Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia; of the 8.6 million Europeans who immigrated to the United States, 5.9 million were from these countries. Irish immigration added another 1.6 million from 1861 to 1890, but the pace and proportion of this immigration clearly slowed. Immigration from southern and eastern Europe picked up dramatically during this period, from only 25,000 in 1861–1870, to 165,000 in 1871–1880, and 775,000 in 1881–1890. (See Table 1.)

As noted, the pace of immigration from Ireland slowed dramatically after 1860, while immigration from Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia rose sharply. Since most of those from Britain and Scandinavia, as well as a substantial number of the Germans, were at least

Table 1. Immigration by European Region, 1861–1890

	1861–1870	1871–1880	1881–1890
Total immigration (net)	2.1 million	2.6 million	4.9 million
Britain/Germany/Scandinavia	1.5 million	1.5 million	2.9 million
Ireland	437,000	436,000	655,000
Eastern/Southern Europe	25,000	165,000	774,000

Source: Conrad and Irene Taeuber, *The Changing Population of the United States* (New York: Wiley, 1958), p. 56, and U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1870* (Washington, 1975), pp. 105–109.

nominally Protestant, the majority of immigrants during this period were added to the Protestant membership rolls. The still large number of Roman Catholic immigrants, however, continued to attract public notice and controversy, with public concern about the increasing immigration numbers from southern and eastern Europe replacing that directed toward the Irish.

Immigration from 1861 to 1890 coincided with the opening of the trans-Mississippi frontier and the settling of the western United States. Many immigrants were attracted by the promise of homestead lands in the West and, encouraged by railroad land companies, rushed west to stake their claims. Immigrant communities in the Midwest were replenished by newer immigrants from Europe, but because of the destruction of the Civil War and postwar isolation, relatively few immigrants settled in the American South. By 1890, the “foreign stock” of the American population (foreign born and their children) made up 33 percent of the American population, while white “native stock” constituted 55 percent of the whole. Immigrants tended to settle in the urban areas of the North and Midwest, where they constituted 53 percent of the urban population by 1890.

Second Period of Immigration, 1890–1920

The second period of immigration saw a dramatic change in the nationality of the immigrants, who increasingly came from eastern and southern Europe. Immigration from Britain, Ireland, and Germany dropped dramatically after 1890, while Scandinavian immigration held its own. But the increase of immigrants from Italy, Austria-Hungary, Russia, and eastern Europe was huge; at the peak of immigration, from 1901 to 1910, some 5.8 million immigrants from these countries entered the United States. (See Table 2.) That these immigrants were overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish fanned the fears of American Protestants that “their” country was slipping away from their



U.S. inspectors examine the eyes of immigrants at Ellis Island, New York. The new immigrants created their own religious institutions and challenged the Protestant majority for control, at least numerically, in the urban areas and in certain rural enclaves.

control. The new immigrants created their own religious institutions and challenged the Protestant majority for control, at least numerically, in the urban areas and in certain rural enclaves. By 1890 the Roman Catholic Church in the United States was the single largest unified religious organization in the country, though there were still more Protestants than Roman Catholics in number.

The nature of this second immigration differed from the first, and not just by religion and country of origin. By 1890 the American agricultural frontier was essentially closed, and the vast majority of the second wave of immigrants settled in urban areas, with some others populating mining and forestry areas. The growth of American industry was made possible by this inexpensive immigrant labor.

The characteristics of these immigrants changed as well. As the second period of immigration continued, the composition of the immigration changed, with more single young men and women coming to the United States to

Table 2. Immigration by European Region, 1891–1920

	1891–1900	1901–1910	1911–1920
Total immigration (net)	3.7 million	6.3 million	2.5 million
Britain/Germany/ Scandinavia	1.1 million	1.4 million	688,000
Ireland	388,000	340,000	146,000
Eastern/Southern Europe	1.7 million	5.8 million	2.9 million

Source: Conrad and Irene Taeuber, *The Changing Population of the United States* (New York: Wiley, 1958), p. 56, and U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1870* (Washington, 1975), pp. 105–109.

Note: Figures may exceed the total due to substantial remigration back to Europe.

look for employment. These young people were not constrained by family ties, were much more mobile, and were much more likely to be in the United States for a limited number of years before returning to their home countries. Advances in transportation allowed some immigrants to make multiple trips to the United States and home again, earning in America a sizeable amount of money to bring back to their native countries.

Immigration from Outside Europe

Though the majority of immigrants during the period from 1891 to 1920 came from Europe, there were other areas that contributed immigrants to this vast movement of people. More than 200,000 Chinese came to the West Coast and Hawaii during the second half of the nineteenth century, and although nativist (anti-immigrant) legislation, beginning with the Asian Exclusion Act of 1882, drastically limited immigration from these areas, a number of immigrants arrived from Japan. These Asian immigrants brought Buddhist practices that took root on the West Coast, although immigration restrictions that severely limited the number of women immigrants and the transient nature of Asian contract labor hampered the formation of a tradition. Japanese Jodo Shinsu Buddhists formed the Buddhist Mission of North America, the forerunner to the Buddhist Churches of America, in San Francisco in 1899. Chinese Buddhists formed a number of local Buddhist temples on the West Coast.

Immigration from other countries in the Western Hemisphere added to the diversity of religion in the United States. During the first two decades of the twentieth century came a total of 920,000 immigrants from Canada, one-third of whom were French-speaking Roman Catholics from Quebec who formed their own Roman Catholic parishes in the northeastern United States. During the same time

270,000 immigrants came from Mexico and 230,000 from the West Indies, mainly to the southern and southwestern United States; they brought with them their own forms of Roman Catholicism. Though none of these immigrations could match the size of the earlier European immigration, they added their own distinct traditions of worship and piety, increasing the diversity of American religious life.

The Effects of Religion on Immigration, 1860–1920

In social and religious aspects, the mass immigration of 1860–1920 caused a revolution in what had been a rather homogeneous American culture prior to the Civil War. Though American Protestants were often sharply divided among themselves along denominational lines, their overall forms and assumptions of religious life were generally uniform. Growing out of the Second Great Awakening (after 1790), American Protestants reached a general consensus on a form of Reformed Protestantism modified by the new revivalism that was optimistic about building the kingdom of God on earth through the efforts of voluntary reform and mission societies. Though this consensus was shaken by the controversy over slavery and the initial flood of Irish Catholic immigrants during the 1840s, it held dominant sway in the United States through the Civil War.

Because of the changes brought by mass immigration after 1865, and also because of internal divisions within the American Protestant consensus in the late nineteenth century, the dominance of American Protestantism was shaken. Native-born American Protestants began to divide along liberal and conservative lines over how to respond to secularism and scientific modernity. Numerically, native-born Protestants were losing ground to foreign-born Protestants, Roman Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and Jews. Among the Protestants, non-English-speaking groups grew rapidly, and by 1900 the largest of these groups, the Lutherans, had become the fourth largest Protestant denomination in the country, and other groups, mainly German and Dutch Reformed, were also growing. The number of American Roman Catholics increased dramatically, from 50,000 in 1800 to 12 million in 1900. The immigration from eastern Europe and Russia after 1900 would bring some 3.5 million Jews to the United States, and although they were not all regularly practicing or observant, they had a large affect on Christian America. Similarly, the small numbers of immigrants practicing Asian religions had impact beyond their numbers, simply because of their differences with the

dominant culture, among both Americans who feared the new religions as well as those who were attracted to them.

Native-born American Protestants responded to these new immigrant religions in a number of different ways. One approach was to build alliances and relations with like-minded immigrant religious groups, such as German, Scandinavian, and Dutch Protestants. Although differences in language and confessional issues kept these immigrant groups separate from other American Protestants (and from each other), native-born Protestants attempted to reach out to these new groups. The Congregationalist American Home Missionary Society subsidized a number of immigrant home missionaries, and the Methodists formed several different foreign-language districts to take in the immigrants. Almost every settled American Protestant denomination had some form of outreach to these new Protestants, though their efforts were sporadic and not often successful. Some sought to move the foreign-language Protestants into their own folds; others simply tried to build strategic relationships with them.

Roman Catholics, Jews, and Buddhists were often targets for organized Protestant proselytization, and Protestants formed numerous mission societies focused on outreach to these newcomers. Many of these efforts were focused on the burgeoning urban immigrant populations who were crowded into unhealthy slums and subject to economic and social stresses. Many of these missions focused on providing for the basic economic needs of the new immigrants, with additional assistance in education and adjustment to this new country. Behind much of this work, however, was a religious fear of the new immigrants and the worry that Protestant America was under siege from these new, non-Protestant groups. Although these missions were often very helpful to the immigrants themselves, they were not very effective in converting the immigrants to Protestantism.

Growth of the Immigrant Religious Traditions

Just as the American Protestants who attempted religious outreach to the new immigrants were less than successful, those who worked to keep these immigrants faithful to their Old World religious traditions also faced difficult challenges. Especially with the new immigrants who came into the United States at the end of the nineteenth century, immigrant religious leaders struggled, often with very few resources, to build ethnic religious denominations and institutions in the United States. The immigrants themselves were not always very interested in the religious message of

these leaders, or they wished to be free to make their own religious choices, including no religion at all. Adaptation of the Old World religious institutions and traditions to the chaotic religious and cultural world of the United States was often difficult, and generational differences often split first-generation immigrants from their American-born children.

Some religious leaders in Europe were skeptical and hostile toward immigration to the United States and worked actively to discourage it. Leaders of the Scandinavian state churches were very active in the anti-immigration societies in their respective countries, and European Roman Catholic bishops worked with political officials to restrict immigration to the United States. Certainly they were worried about the loss of members in their own parishes, but more than this, they were not sure that it would be feasible to establish their religious traditions in the United States. Most of the European churches were state supported, not only by governmental funding but also through laws that restricted dissenting religious groups. Many religious leaders saw America as a “godless, anarchistic society” with few social and religious institutions. They could not imagine a pluralistic America, dedicated to freedom of religion, and a free, non-state-supported denominational structure. European Roman Catholics, especially, worried that the establishment of a Roman Catholic Church in the United States would be impossible in such an intensely Protestant nation, and that their immigrants would be lost once they reached the New World. Jewish leaders in eastern Europe, threatened by severe persecution and restrictions, were equally threatened by American culture and urged their people not to leave for America.

The fears of these religious leaders were not unfounded. Many immigrants had been attracted to the new religious groups and ideas that were being spread in Europe and were seeking to push beyond the restrictive state-church religiosity of their homelands. The strong tradition of European anticlericalism evident in many countries had already indicated that many immigrants were disaffected from their local religious leaders and were willing to consider religious or nonreligious alternatives. With the added considerations of American Protestant proselytization efforts and the lack of state support for religion, the transplantation and survival of the European and Asian religious traditions to the United States seemed almost impossible.

Immigrant Religious Institutions

The task of reestablishing and reformulating these Old World religious traditions in the United States fell mainly

on adventurous clergy and their lay supporters who saw opportunity in the New World. These immigrant religious leaders saw the free American situation as an opportunity to establish, and often to purify, their native religious traditions in order to serve the immigrant community. Sometimes their most difficult battles would be with Old World religious superiors who sought to limit their power to establish and innovate, fearing a loss of control of the “core” of the religious tradition.

The immigrant religious denominations and institutions formed by these leaders and their ethnic immigrant populations were by far the largest and most effective ethnic institutions in the immigrant communities—no other immigrant institutions even came close to the reach of these religious groups. There were, of course, a multitude of immigrant cultural, social, and educational societies and nonreligious groups, such as the socialists and the labor federations, that attempted to build institutions parallel to those of organized religion. But these efforts fell far short of those of the religious groups, who were the main institutions for continuing the ethnic and linguistic traditions of the immigrant community.

This is not to say, however, that all the immigrants joined these ethnic denominations, nor did they always support them. Figures are inexact, but it is clear that at best, fewer than half the immigrants and their children joined their American ethnic denominations, and in the case of many nationalities, rates of membership were in the single digits. Though the traditions of anticlericalism and American religious freedom (including freedom from religion) were in part the cause of this, there were many more pragmatic reasons for the low level of participation in organized immigrant religion. There were very few clergy who could speak the immigrants’ languages, and even less funding available to support them. Many groups of immigrants were spread over wide geographical areas and were continually on the move to find new and better opportunities. The American tradition of voluntarily supported religion allowed for a much greater freedom, of course, but the converse was that organized religion cost money, which had to come directly out of the pockets of the immigrants. Also, the American voluntary system was predicated on a Protestant understanding of “membership”: that a person would actively choose to become a committed member of a certain religious group, usually after some sort of conversion experience. In the Old World, there was no category of “membership”; your nationality and ethnicity

determined your religious identity, without any volitional choice. The idea that one might have to “join” a church and support it financially was foreign to almost every immigrant. Many did not bother to formally join an immigrant congregation but utilized the services of the group just as they might in the Old World, for special holidays, rites of passage, educational and cultural gatherings, and to socialize with others of the same ethnicity. This dynamic has led some scholars to speculate that immigrant religious denominations had a “sphere of influence” that was probably two to three times larger than their formal membership might indicate.

Some other immigrants bypassed the immigrant religious organizations altogether. Influenced by the Old World heritage of anticlericalism, by American concepts of freedom of religion, and by new antireligious ideologies such as socialism, some of the immigrants completely abandoned religion as a part of their lives. Other immigrants had neither the time nor resources for a “luxury” good like religion; they would employ their time and resources in more efficient ways. This was especially true for the young single laborers who had come to America to make money but not necessarily to put down permanent roots. The likelihood that an immigrant would become a member of an ethnic religious organization was much greater if he or she were part of a larger family or kin group, or if he or she decided to settle permanently in a particular location.

Some immigrants saw the value in religion but did not want to join a foreign-language, ethnic religious group. They had come to the United States to learn English and become Americans, so the idea of joining a “foreign” religious group did not appeal to them. Also, there were often economic and social advantages to joining an “English” church; such churches often provided social prestige and contacts into the wider society that immigrant denominations could hardly afford on their own. Immigrants of a higher educational and social class often looked down on the immigrant churches, full of laborers and servants, as being beneath their station in life; immigrants who became economically successful in the United States often came to share the same attitude. Finally, American-born children of the immigrants often struggled against the conservatism of their parents’ congregations, which tended to be especially slow in adapting to the new American surroundings, especially in the use of the English language. Intermarriage was another factor. It is hard to tell how many of those who did not join an immigrant religious group joined an

“American” denomination instead, but it is likely that this number was substantial.

The Internal Development of Immigrant Religion

The ethnic denominations and religious groups formed in the United States by nineteenth-century immigrants were hardly clones of their Old World counterparts; they could not be so, even if the immigrants wanted this, which in many cases they did not. Rather the ethnic religious groups were carefully crafted compromises, attempting to blend the Old World traditions of religiosity with the realities of a pluralistic and free religious America. Immigrants did initially form linguistic ghettos and enclaves in which many of the traditions of the old country were maintained. But even these separate societies were porous; the immigrants lived in two worlds, and much of American culture invaded the immigrant enclaves, whether they liked it or not. The immigrant religious institutions could not shield their members from the outside world; rather, they were carefully constructed attempts to mediate the new world of America into the immigrant community and to manage the rate of change, preserving the core of the immigrant religion in the new situation of America. The nature and rate of that change were a source of continual struggle within these religious groups.

The most pressing need for these immigrant religious organizations was leadership, especially leadership that could function within the American situation. For these immigrant religious groups, there were never enough pastors, priests, rabbis, monks, and nuns to meet their needs. The initial leadership came from those who traveled with the immigrants, but most Old World religious leaders were not likely to leave the settled areas of Europe and Asia to travel to the United States. Protestant pastors and Jewish rabbis accompanied parties of immigrants, while missionary priests and nuns were sent by their superiors to the New World, as were Buddhist priests on the West Coast. But these leaders, important as they were, could hardly begin to meet the needs of millions of new immigrants. The solution was to train immigrant religious leaders in the United States, and the initial priority of most immigrant religious groups was to establish educational institutions—colleges, seminaries, and other such schools—to accomplish this. Eventually these institutions were expanded beyond their original intentions to provide a broader education for immigrant youth.

Since there was no mechanism for government financing of religion in the United States, the immigrant religious leaders had to found their institutions along the lines of American

voluntary religion. This meant that churches, parishes, synagogues, and temples had to be self-financing and self-governing, and lay members of the community would have to take over many of these roles. This was a new and often daunting experience for immigrants, many of whom had limited education and experience in these areas. Nevertheless, the new local religious institutions flourished, becoming “training schools” for immigrants to practice the skills of democracy and capitalism. This also led to clashes with immigrant clergy, who were used to more autocratic control over religion. Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christian communities often had the most trouble in this area; Protestant and Jewish groups had more of a tradition of self-management. The American system empowered the lay religious members, who could leave and join (and financially support) another religious institution if they did not like where they were; immigrant clergy had to take this dynamic seriously.

Immigrant religion was also often divided internally along confessional and ethnic lines, with coreligionists not able to bridge the linguistic and theological gaps with each other. Older immigrant groups, who had settled into America and acculturated to its religious patterns, were many times unable to connect to newer immigrants or even felt threatened by them. English-speaking Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Reform Jews were overwhelmed by the tide of their new immigrant counterparts and often more than a bit resentful of them. For the Jews and the Lutherans, the newcomers generally bypassed their congregations to form separate ones; among Roman Catholics, the new Irish, German, Italian, and Polish immigrants founded separate ethnic parishes and religious orders.

There were also tensions within the immigrant communities themselves. Some had to do with theological or confessional issues, brought from the old country but made worse in the United States. Protestants readily divided up into smaller denominations; by 1900 there were, for example, more than twenty different Lutheran denominations in the United States. Similarly, American Jews divided into Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox organizations. One major issue was how much to accommodate to a Protestant American religious culture; groups like Reform Judaism and the Japanese Buddhist Churches of America who accommodated readily to American culture were often strongly opposed by more conservative groups who sought little or no change in their Old World traditions.

Most often, however, the divisions within the immigrant religious world were ethnic; language was the key identifier,

and groups often developed separately along linguistic lines. For immigrant Protestants, Orthodox, and Buddhists, this meant separate ethnic denominations; although the Russian-dominated Orthodox Church of America attempted to be *the* church for Orthodox immigrants, the newer Greek and eastern European immigrants instead founded their own ethnic church organizations. For American Roman Catholics this was not readily possible, although a Polish National Roman Catholic Church was formed out of ethnic rivalries (not recognized by the Vatican, however). Rather, American Roman Catholicism became a patchwork of different ethnic parishes, each of which represented a different linguistic and devotional heritage, led by ethnic clergy. The development of Catholic religious orders of monks and nuns was also along ethnic lines, and this leadership often was at odds with the hierarchy of the American Roman Catholic Church, especially if the bishop of a diocese was seen as favoring his own ethnic group at the expense of others. The dominance of the American Roman Catholic hierarchy by Irish Americans caused a great deal of unrest in the Midwest, for example, where German, Polish, and Italian Roman Catholics chafed under the control of Irish American bishops.

Nativism and Reactions against Immigrants

Prior to the beginning of the mass immigration to the United States in the 1840s, America was in many ways a very homogeneous country. Although there were social conflicts (especially over slavery), sectional disputes, and differences among political parties and religious groups, the United States demonstrated a large measure of uniformity. This uniformity was based on a common set of constitutional values, a religious consensus on a form of Protestantism, and a general ethnic heritage derived from Great Britain. It is hardly surprising, then, that the massing of new non-English-speaking immigrants from Europe and Asia would lead to social and religious conflicts between the native-born Americans and the new arrivals. American Protestants were raised on anti-Roman Catholic literature and were conditioned by missionary groups to see Buddhists, Jews, and others of different religions as targets for conversion. As immigration increased through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, many native-born Americans worried that the hordes of new immigrants would not be acculturated into the United States and would overwhelm their society. These fears led to conflict.

The initial target of anti-immigrant sentiment, or nativism, was the mass immigration of the Irish from 1840 to

1860. Though reports of actions against the Irish have been overstated, it is clear that there was a strong bias against the Irish in many areas of American society, especially because of strong adherence to Roman Catholicism among the Irish and their reputation for excessive consumption of alcohol. German Roman Catholic immigrants came under similar suspicions, but the massing of Irish immigrants in the new American cities made them a target for nativist groups such as the Know-Nothing Party. The antidraft, antiwar sentiments of some urban immigrants during the Civil War, seen in the draft riots in northern cities, also made the new immigrants unpopular.

The resumption of mass immigration after the Civil War led to a renewal of nativist sentiments. Because the first period of immigration (1840–1890) was dominated by Protestant immigrants from northern and western Europe, the fears were muted. But with the late-century shift toward Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish immigration from southern and eastern Europe, nativist sentiment increased dramatically. Fears of Asian immigration were similarly present on the West Coast of the United States. Though there were many other aspects of this nativist sentiment, such as political and economic rivalry, racial ideals, and social discomfort, religion played a primary role. Since the “others” were not “good Protestant Americans,” and not likely to become so, their arrival seemed to threaten American society.

One of the major areas of dispute between native-born Americans and the new immigrants were the separate institutions developed by the newcomers to maintain their language and ethnicity. Foreign language institutions and separate schools, especially the parochial schools developed by Roman Catholics and others, were seen as an attempt to evade the acculturating (and Protestantizing) nature of an American icon, the public school. Native-born Americans feared the political power of the new immigrants, seen especially in the Irish domination of urban politics, and worried that Roman Catholic voters would blindly follow the dictates of their bishops and the Vatican to the demise of American democracy. Close contact with formerly distant religious groups, such as Jews and Buddhists, led to further nativist fears and backlash.

One approach to this issue by native-born Protestants was to try to convert and acculturate these new immigrants into the older American Protestant consensus. All sorts of outreach and evangelism, some less obvious than others, did not result in the conversion of many immigrants. Though

the immigrants were very open to experiencing American economic and political culture, many of them preferred to maintain their distinct social and religious traditions, at least as these traditions were slowly being modified to meet American norms.

The political and legal movements against immigration were more successful. Beginning with the Asian Exclusion Act of 1882, the U.S. Congress passed a series of measures restricting (or in cases eliminating) immigration to America. In 1891 the American government took over permanent control over immigration and began to screen immigrants for “undesirable” traits, such as disease, poverty, and unpopular political ideas. Eventually these policies would lead to an almost complete cessation of immigration during the 1920s. Native-born American religious leaders were often strongly supportive of these measures; immigrant religious leaders were generally opposed, though it depended on whether their groups were affected or not.

Conclusion

The massive immigration to the United States from 1840 to 1920 dramatically changed America, and in few areas was this transformation greater than in religion. Millions of immigrants brought their new and often different religious traditions with them and attempted to establish them in the United States, much to the dismay of native-born American Protestants. Religion was a key factor that identified the new immigrants, and their religious institutions became centers of their ethnicity and survival. But as the new immigrant religions transformed America, America transformed the immigrant religious institutions. The new immigrants adapted their Old World traditions to meet the needs of a pluralistic and religiously free America. These transformations were not without conflict, both between native-born and immigrants and within the immigrant communities themselves. Nativism and interethnic tensions threatened the religious freedom of the country. But both native-born and immigrant religious communities learned to cope with the new pluralistic situation of American religion, and many of them thrived in the new competitive situation. American religious culture proved to be much more adaptive and resilient than many Americans had thought.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Hispanic Influence*; *Immigration entries*; *Missions: Domestic*; *Roman Catholicism: Impact of Immigration in the Nineteenth Century*.

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Immigration: From World War I to the 1965 Immigration Act

This period of American immigration history, situated between the high-water mark of European immigration and the extremely diverse new immigrants of the late twentieth century, is often thought of as a “low-water” mark—a time when nothing happened. In fact, this era is shot through with complex immigration and entrance legislation, the ongoing assimilation of European immigrants, and the struggles of new immigrant communities—particularly communities of color—to find their place. These forty years laid the groundwork for the religious and cultural explosion of the 1960s that was triggered by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.

European Immigration and Assimilation

This period begins with the Reed-Johnson Act of 1924, also known as the National Origins Act. The intent of the act was to restrict immigration to the United States almost completely to northern and western Europeans, leaving out or minimizing immigration from southern and eastern Europe, and the legislation succeeded in accomplishing this. However, because of the Great Depression in the United States, World War II in Europe, and the economic success of the Marshall Plan (1947–1948) in northwestern Europe, there were fewer European immigrants during this period than in the period before 1924. Quite simply, the people of northwestern Europe, with the exception of Germany, were not very interested in immigration. Others, who were interested, found it more difficult to enter; and the restrictive laws against immigration became tragically entangled with the need to provide refuge to those fleeing the Holocaust during World War II.

In religious and cultural life, this was the era of “Protestant, Catholic, Jew”: the time when the children of immigrants of the pre-World War I era, largely European in origin, continued the process of assimilation to American life. Religious institutions played a major role in this assimilation. Ethnic Protestant churches, Catholic national parishes, and Jewish synagogues established prior to World War I continued to consolidate and grow institutionally through the early period. Continuing immigration from Europe was funneled into existing institutions: German Lutherans could find German Lutheran churches, while Scandinavian Lutherans could find their favorite variety of Lutheran churches as well;

Italian Catholic immigrants had national parishes already established, and Polish Catholics could come to Chicago and find their local Polish National church, complete with Polish priests and Polish religious art, eager to embrace them and help them find their way around the new culture.

As the children of earlier immigrants learned the English language and American culture, they became less attached to their language and culture-specific ethnic institutions and began to look for English-language churches in which they could feel more “American” and less “immigrant.” By the third generation, according to scholarly understanding based on the experiences of these immigrants, a German American was functionally indistinguishable from a Scandinavian American but was still distinguishable from an Irish American or Italian American, because the former groups would be almost certainly Protestant and the latter groups almost certainly Catholic.

The three great divisions of religious life—Protestants, Catholics, and Jews—became the divisions of cultural life. Protestants remained hegemonic, the most influential and powerful of the religious-cultural groups through this period, but Catholics began to catch up, especially after the election of President John F. Kennedy. Jews, the third of the great culturally recognized religious divisions, continued to struggle in many ways for acceptance in the larger culture until well after World War II. During World War II, the continued presence of anti-Semitism in American life meant that the American government did not act in any substantial way to help or support Jewish refugees from the Holocaust. Even refugees sponsored by prestigious American Jewish institutions and universities were often turned back to die in concentration camps. Internationally famous Jewish refugees, such as Albert Einstein, might be welcomed, but thousands more were refused or even, as in the case of a boatload of a thousand Jewish refugees who tried to land in Miami, turned back from American shores to face almost certain death in wartorn Europe. The utter failure of American immigration authorities to act quickly and responsibly in this refugee situation influenced later efforts to create a more accommodating system for emergency acceptance of those fleeing persecution and death, but the system remained piecemeal and often inadequate to need until the wholesale overhaul of immigration law in 1965.

Non-European Immigration

By 1924, Asian immigration was already largely restricted. Since 1882, the Chinese had been forbidden to immigrate

but were permitted to bring over their children, which led to a flourishing trade in “paper sons,” young males who were sons only as a legal fiction. The Japanese had been forbidden to immigrate since 1907, but they were permitted to bring over wives—the “picture brides,” women selected as mates at long distance, known to their prospective husbands only through photographs—until 1924. East Indian immigrants had been barred in 1917. For these communities, the period after 1924 told stories of attempting to survive in a continually hostile and racist environment.

The Reed-Johnson Act of 1924 did not apply to the Western Hemisphere, which meant that Mexican and other Latin American immigrations were not affected by its quotas; Asian immigrants continued to trickle in because of various exceptions and the exigencies of America’s conquests or relationships in Asia. Immigration from Asia, Mexico, and Puerto Rico during this time added to America’s religious and racial diversity, generally to the intense dismay of those who had intended Reed-Johnson to safeguard “white America” (a goal that was hardly kept secret during the racially charged debates about immigration law in the 1920s and earlier).

The immigration restriction legislation reflected the intense focus on Americanization or assimilation of immigrants during this time period. European immigrants from the earlier periods of immigration did, in fact, largely Americanize and assimilate—and their churches and synagogues were deeply involved in this process. The churches understood their role with immigrants to be one of supporting Americanization and assimilation. The goal of the church was to Americanize the immigrant. Immigrants who did not belong to established “American” churches, however—non-Christians and those who had not immigrated in large numbers during the pre-1924 period—found themselves in a very different religious situation.

Chinese and Japanese Immigrants and Religions

Not much has been written about the religion of the Chinese in this period. Though Chinese had been entering the United States since 1850, after 1882 they suffered from intense immigration restrictions and were largely unable to bring Chinese women over as wives. This loss of family and descendants must have been particularly terrible, in a religious as well as emotional sense, for Chinese men, since traditional Chinese religion places strong emphasis on respect and relationship with ancestors and emphasizes the importance of male children to honor an individual’s spirit

after death. After 1943, Chinese immigrants received a tiny immigration quota as recognition of the Chinese role as an ally in World War II; this sliver of an opening led to a growing Chinese community in America. The Chinese Protestant churches also grew. Chinese converts became more common in Chinatowns, and the few second-generation Chinese joined Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) organizations. The “joss houses” (*joss* is a corruption of the Portuguese word for God) of an older generation—temples where ancestor and other worship was practiced—largely died out; it was not until the new immigration of 1965 that Chinese temples began to become active again. The children of the immigrant Chinese often wished to assimilate to American society and American churches, but American antagonism to their race made this impossible.

Japanese immigrants had a shorter time period (roughly 1870 to 1924) to enter the United States before they, too, were excluded, but between 1907 and 1924 they had an opportunity to bring Japanese women to the United States. During the 1924–1965 period, therefore, the Japanese community was raising its first American-born, American citizen generation—the *Nisei*. The Japanese were overwhelmingly Buddhist, but Christian Japanese were growing in numbers and tended to be vocal in their relations with the dominant society.

Both religious groups—Buddhist and Christian—were eager to show that Japanese citizens were part of American society, but the Buddhists were viewed with much greater suspicion as an “alien” creed. Like many immigrant religious organizations since, Buddhist missionaries and priests caring for the Japanese communities struggled to make their religion more American, with churchlike buildings, meetings on Sundays, and Young Men’s and Young Women’s Buddhist Associations. These groups provided some of the most important arenas in which the *Nisei* could feel completely at home, work together as leaders, and support their own cultural and religious values.

The Japanese Christian groups also had access to the YWCA and YMCA, but since these groups were overwhelmingly white, the Christian *Nisei* did not have the same experience of complete welcome within them and often were made to feel unwelcome because of their race. The YPCC—Young People’s Christian Conference—was different, an organization specifically for Japanese Christians, and Christian *Nisei* found the YPCC to be an important center for their lives. Japanese ministers organized Japanese

American churches for their communities and created Japanese groups within and between denominations.

During World War II, Japanese immigrants and Japanese American children—almost all of whom were American citizens—were forcibly taken from their homes to internment camps, an immensely traumatizing experience. In these camps, the Buddhist and Christian Japanese associations worked hard to support their people and to prove that the Japanese were “American.” The camps saw some of the first interfaith work in America, as Japanese Buddhist and Japanese Christian organizations cooperated in worship and social action to care for the internees. The organizations continued to focus on social service, even within these constrained circumstances. And when the war ended, both religions continued to serve the communities as they struggled to rebuild.

Catholicism and Latino and Filipino Immigrants

Before entering a detailed discussion of the religious life of the mostly Catholic immigrants from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines, it is worth making note of some important similarities and differences among them, and between these immigrants and the “old” Catholic immigrants from Europe. The Spanish Conquest had led to a strong folk Catholicism in its colonies in the Americas and the Philippines. Sometimes this Catholicism is called “syncretistic,” melded with native traditions and customs or with those of Africans brought as slaves. The folk Catholicism of these groups differed from nation to nation and between classes and regions within countries, but in general it focused on relationship rather than doctrines or institutions. The individual was in relationship with God, with Mary, with Jesus, and with the saints as well as with the living and dead members of their own communities. Baptism was important because it brought children fully into this community; beyond this, there was relatively little concern for the sacraments or for the priests.

Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico were affected religiously by the transfer of sovereignty from Spain to the United States after the Spanish–American War (1898) in that very large portions of their clergy, who had come from Spain, requested to be repatriated rather than remaining in the former colonies. The Puerto Ricans in particular had almost no native clergy. The situation for the Filipino Catholics was similar, complicated by much greater syncretism with the strong indigenous tradition in the Philippines and, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the defection of

a significant proportion of the native Filipino Catholic clergy to the Aglipayan or Filipino Independent Church. There simply were no Filipino Catholic clergy on offer for many years after Filipino immigration began. The Cubans, like the Filipinos, had a strong syncretistic tradition but had at least a moderate number of Cuban Catholic clergy despite the fact that the Catholic Church in Cuba was institutionally fairly weak. Almost all of these clergy accompanied the first wave of Cuban immigration after the Castro revolution in 1959, making Cuban immigrant religion unique in American life.

These Catholic communities differed significantly from the earlier European Catholic immigrants in their relations to the church. The American Catholic churches were strongly influenced by Irish Catholicism. Irish Catholicism emphasized loyalty to the institutional church, accurate understanding of doctrine, regular acceptance of the sacraments, regular attendance at church, and obedience to the authority of the priest. This was almost a perfect recipe for trouble when Irish Catholicism was confronted with the folk Catholicism of the Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Cubans, and Filipinos, which was indifferent toward the church as an institution, had relatively little role for priests, and was focused on home devotion and the saints rather than church devotion or sacraments. In addition, the Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Filipino Catholic immigrants did not have national parishes on the old model, and the Catholic assimilation experienced by European Catholics in the second and third generations did not occur for these communities. All of these communities in America began a renegotiation of their relationship with the Catholic Church upon entering the United States.

Filipino Immigrants and Religion

Filipino immigration to the United States began in the early twentieth century, after the islands became American territory in 1898, and lasted until the islands achieved independence in 1934, when the Filipinos were reclassified as aliens. During this time Filipinos lived in a legal limbo in the United States.

Like the other Spanish Conquest communities, Filipinos were numerically almost entirely Catholic, but they also had access to a native indigenous tradition. This native tradition, as well as the Filipino Independent Church (Aglipayan) and Protestant missionary work, was well represented among the immigrants. An Aglipayan priest and a Filipino Methodist minister served the immigrants in Hawaii quite early on.

Filipino Protestant churches were established in Los Angeles and Stockton, California, and became strongholds of the community, and the Protestant missions developed Filipino churches in Hawaii. The Filipino immigrant community also joined semi-religious fraternal orders such as Dimas San Alang, and at least one Filipino religious group had its start in the United States—a *colorum*, or a fraternal-religious organization dedicated to Filipino independence and based in mystical practices in the tradition of Mount Banahaw, a site in the Philippines known for shrines built around its many springs. Filipino Catholics, however, had little or no access to Filipino priests or institutions, and if they went to church, they joined English-speaking parishes.

Mexican Immigrants and Religion

The Mexican community in the United States was older than the United States as a whole. After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, thousands of Mexicans suddenly found themselves to be American. The result was less than good for most of the Mexicans who remained in the newly American territories, and the rights, status, and economic well-being of the community deteriorated with the influx of Anglo-Americans into the Southwest. In addition, the Catholic churches of the Mexican Americans now were under the authority of American, not Mexican, bishops.

Mexican immigration was not subject to the quotas of the Reed-Johnson Act, and during this period Mexican immigration increased both in absolute numbers and as a proportion of total immigration. In addition, in an effort to fill the gap in agricultural labor left empty by the restriction of Asian immigration, beginning in 1942 the United States and Mexico developed the Bracero Program, a guest worker agricultural program. In a sense, there were two Mexican American communities during this period—the settled dwellers, both new immigrant and old American, and the *braceros* or migrant workers. Both groups had their own religious lives.

Mexican Catholics rarely had churches of their own in the sense of a national church. A few national churches were established, but most Mexican churches became majority Mexican by default rather than intention. The Mexican Catholic churches were served by Spanish-speaking, but not Mexican, priests and religious, who often were uncomfortable with the practices of Mexican Catholics. The bishops and priests of the American Catholic Church largely believed that their role was to Americanize the Mexicans—and by making them good, American-style Catholics, they

intended to do so. Priests and religious struggled to reach out to the *braceros* and migrant workers as well. Rural and migrant Mexicans could go years without seeing a priest, but their religious life continued nonetheless. A priest visiting the migrant camps noted that every camp, no matter how poor, had an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the holy patroness of Mexico.

Struggling to maintain their community life despite little support from the Catholic hierarchy, settled Mexicans joined church-based sodalities such as the *Hijas de María Sociedad Guadalupeana*, and the *Vasallos de Cristo Rey*. Sodalities provided social functions as well as religious ones and gave Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans the ability to exercise their leadership and creative skills in ways the larger society would not permit. In this way, the sodalities performed the work that national parishes had done for the older Catholic immigrant communities.

The folk Catholicism of Mexicans was focused on the home, with home altars and home devotions such as the rosary. Mexicans would sometimes engage the saints with vows to accomplish something in return for a favor—*la promesa*. These vows to the saints, which might involve pilgrimage, were taken very seriously. Mexican communities also celebrated their faith in the streets, with prayer in the shape of processions of sodalities with their saints. December 12, the Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe, was a special occasion for these public prayers and celebrations. The enthusiasm of Mexicans for their saints was sometimes very troubling to American bishops and priests—in particular, the practice of dancing before the image of the Virgin on special occasions, which was considered un-American.

There were Protestant Mexicans as well. The main Protestant denominations all had works and missions among the Mexican communities from the late nineteenth century; in addition, the Pentecostal movement, which began with a multiracial revival in California in 1907, made great inroads in the Mexican community. Faith healers and charismatic preachers were very popular among the Mexicans, as they fit in well with the folk Catholic category of the *curandera/o*, or healer. The Mexican Protestant churches, unlike the Catholic Church, had Mexican ministers. However, there was a certain amount of antagonism toward converts to Protestantism among Mexican Catholics. Many Mexicans had a strong sense that, regardless of how well or badly the institutional church served them, their culture was essentially *muy catolico*. Protestant churches often rejected Mexican religious culture even more strongly than did the Catholic Church.

Puerto Rican Immigrants and Religion

Puerto Ricans began arriving in the United States in large numbers in the 1940s and 1950s, from an island with a strong tradition of folk Catholicism and a weak attachment to the institutional church. An overwhelming proportion of the Puerto Ricans settled in New York City, but they also frequently visited their home island, since they enjoyed the privileges of American citizenship from 1917 on. Puerto Rican Catholic priests and bishops were nearly all imported to Puerto Rico from the United States and were dedicated to Americanizing the Puerto Ricans in their church and society. By the time Puerto Ricans began to immigrate, they had lived with “Americanization” schemes that were supported by the institutional Catholic Church for almost half a century. While happy to be citizens and thinking well of America in general, Puerto Ricans were strongly and definitively *puerto-riquenos*—not *Americanos*—and defined themselves by their culture, their folk Catholicism, and their Spanish language.

Puerto Rican Catholicism, however, was unfamiliar to the Catholic hierarchy in America. Puerto Ricans had relatively little relationship to the institutional church or to the regular sacraments, including marriage—consensual relationship, rather than church or civil marriage, was quite typical in many parts of Puerto Rico—and had few priests. They also came to the United States at a time when the New York hierarchy, particularly Cardinal Spellman, was determined to resist efforts to create new national parishes. The Puerto Ricans were therefore assigned to territorial parishes, with the expectation that a Spanish-speaking priest would be provided for their care.

The Puerto Ricans in New York did not have strong attachments to these territorial parishes, which they felt, accurately, were not “theirs.” There were not enough Spanish-speaking priests to serve the community, nor were the Puerto Rican forms of Catholic worship and society understood. Two priests in the New York hierarchy, Father Joseph Fitzpatrick and Father Ivan Illich, set themselves in different ways to amend this problem. Since they could not create national parishes, they influenced Cardinal Spellman to create a priestly resource that could better serve the people. All seminarians were required to learn Spanish and to study at the Center for Intercultural Studies created by Illich in Puerto Rico. Eventually, this provided the two hundred priests necessary for the numbers of Puerto Ricans in New York, although Puerto Ricans continued to feel alienated from the church because of the lack of their own culturally appropriate parishes.

More successful was Fitzpatrick’s creation of the Fiesta for St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Puerto Rico. The first celebration of a pontifical Mass for San Juan Batista in 1954 drew 5,000 people to St. Patrick’s Cathedral. A few years later, the fiesta was day-long, the premier Puerto Rican event in New York City, drawing more than 30,000 people to worship, celebrate, and picnic together. The celebration became less popular as the church refused to become involved in all–Puerto Rican issues, focusing only on Catholic Puerto Ricans; gradually the Puerto Rican community created purely civic festivals to replace it.

Pentecostal and other Protestant churches were making inroads into the Puerto Rican community as well, partly as a result of the lack of leadership possibilities for Puerto Rican laypeople in the Catholic Church. The introduction of the Catholic *curso* (a three-day retreat) into the American Puerto Rican community began to change this situation in the late 1950s.

Cuban Immigrants and Religion

Cuban immigration to the United States began in the nineteenth century and continued into the early twentieth with the establishment of a cigar-making factory town, Ybor City, in Florida. Religion in Ybor City seems to have been minimal. Most Cubans were not very religious, and the Cubans working in the cigar factories were part of the radical Cuban “proletariat” who were suspicious of religious institutions.

The massive Cuban immigration that began in 1959 with the fall of the Batista regime and the beginning of Fidel Castro’s rule was very different. The first wave of the immigrant refugees included many island elites. Among this class, although the men tended to be skeptical of religion, women tended to be quite religious and attached to the Catholic Church. Their sons and husbands had attended elite Catholic schools, run by the Jesuits, and were part of influential alumni associations and networks. These new exiles were the Cubans who were most likely to be attached to the institutional church if they were religious at all. They were accompanied by almost all the Catholic clergy in Cuba, including the Jesuits, who relocated their entire school and alumni network.

This community was welcomed by the Catholic hierarchy in Miami. The diocese provided huge amounts of material aid to the exile refugees, who were perceived as having taken a stand for their faith against godless communism. In this situation, it is not surprising that the exiles themselves

began to interpret their exile as a religious one, and their destiny of returning to Cuba as a religious destiny. This divinization of exile continued through the next decade. It was not until later in the 1960s that lower-class Cubans, who practiced Santería (an Afro-Cuban religion), began to migrate, and Cuba's religious diversity was better represented in the United States.

See also *African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights*; *Buddhism in North America*; *Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence*; *Devotionalism*; *Holocaust*; *Immigration* entries; *Judaism* entries; *Latino American Religion: Catholics, Twentieth Century*; *Latino American Religion: Pentecostals*; *Mexico: Twentieth Century*; *Roman Catholicism: The Age of the Catholic Ghetto*.

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Immigration: Since the 1965 Immigration Act

Today's American immigration policy has its roots in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (often called the Hart-Cellar Act). The act struck down the national origins quota system that had defined U.S. immigration policy for over forty years and had limited the possibility of immigration from entire areas of the world. In its place, the 1965 immigration reform created a system that rewarded family reunification and granted no favored status to specific countries or regions. Its passage marked the reopening of large-scale legal immigration to the United States.

The act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on October 3, 1965, in front of the Statue of Liberty. This venue was chosen not because supporters of the Immigration Act believed the act would alter the demographic and religious composition of the country (it did), but to provide propaganda value in a refugee dispute with Cuba. Indeed, a significant portion of Johnson's signing statement dealt with Cuba, not the Immigration Act.

The 1965 Immigration Act and its subsequent revisions, most notably those enacted in 1990, are not the only immigration policies that have contributed to reshaping the demographic and religious landscape of the United States. Refugee policy, especially the Refugee Act of 1980, allowed millions of persecuted persons, many for religious reasons such as Tibetan Buddhists, Russian Jews, Iraqi Chaldeans, and Bosnia Muslims, to emigrate to the United States. Policies governing temporary immigration have allowed hundreds of millions of foreign nationals to visit, work, study and worship in the United States, some of whom have become legal immigrants.

Globalization

Increasing globalization at the end of the twentieth century accelerated people's opportunities, and more often than not their need, to seek work and settlement outside of their country of origin. Economic changes fostered by the processes of globalization—the free movement of capital and the reduction of trade barriers—transformed labor markets, creating new employment opportunities for some while taking the jobs of others. Improvements in communications technology have facilitated the quick dissemination of migration opportunities, while advancements in and expansion of transportation systems have reduced the time and cost of travel.

The International Organization for Migration estimates that in 2008 about 200 million persons were living outside their country of origin. Migration theorists are quick to point out that the expansion of trade and the opening of once protected markets have increased the supply of immigrants, especially from developing countries. It is not surprising, then, that most immigrants to the United States come from developing countries. Indeed, since the 1980s only a handful of developed countries can be found in the list of the top sending countries of immigrants to the United States. The constant and long-term demand for labor has made the United States the leading migration magnet globally.

Size of Early Twenty-First-Century Immigration

Since passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, the United States has experienced a steady increase in the number of immigrants arriving at its borders. Not since the great European migration at the turn of the twentieth century have so many newcomers settled in the United States. Between 1967—the year the changes took effect—and 2007 the country received more than 29.8 million legal immigrants. Average annual legal immigration was 450,000 in the 1970s, 734,000 in the 1980s, 910,000 in the 1990s, and 1,020,000 in the 2000s.

The continuing flow of undocumented immigrants is adding to the demographic change. Precise estimates of the total number and yearly flow of undocumented immigrants are difficult to derive. Nevertheless, most research suggests that the total number of undocumented immigrants in the United States is between 7.0 and 11.9 million.

The result of this post-1965 immigration is that in the United States the proportion of the foreign-born population has steadily increased over the last three decades. In 1970 foreign-born constituted 4.7 percent of the population; in 1980, 6.2 percent; in 1990, 7.9 percent; and in 2000, 10.4 percent. Although these numbers are high, they have not yet approached the historic benchmarks of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which ranged from 13.3 percent to 14.8 percent.

Diversity of Early Twenty-First-Century Immigration

The racial and ethnic heterogeneity of American immigration is unprecedented. Before 1965 the majority of all immigrants came to the United States from Europe. Over the last thirty years, however, Latin America and Asia have consistently accounted for nearly 76 percent of all immigrants; Europe is the origin of only 14 percent and Africa 4 percent. Country-level data yield even more detail on diversity. Throughout this first decade of the new millennium the United States received legal immigrants from some two hundred countries and territories. More significant, immigrants from twenty countries represented about 70 percent of all immigrants to the United States. Over the last three decades Mexico has been the single largest sender of immigrants—in 2006 slightly less than one in eight legal immigrants. The four other top sending countries—India, China, Colombia, and the Philippines—account for an additional 20 percent of all immigrants.

Of the immigrant streams associated with the post-1965 immigration reforms, African immigration has shown the largest percentage increase over the last three decades. From 1970 to 2000 the percentage growth in African immigration was 525 percent, compared with 30 percent from Europe, 61 percent from Asia, and 59 percent from the Western Hemisphere. In the 1970s some 7,100 African immigrants came to the United States a year compared with 64,000 a year in the 2000s. If the growth rate of African immigration remains unchanged, it may well exceed European immigration to the United States by the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century. Another way to put the numbers in context is to note that at the beginning of the twenty-first century more Africans are immigrating to the United States on a yearly basis than at any point during the transatlantic slave trade.

About 70 percent of all immigrants live in only a few states: California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, and New Jersey. California alone is home to some 30 percent of the nation's foreign-born population—that is, slightly more than one in four Californians is foreign-born. Nevertheless, data from the 2000 census and other sources indicate that increasing numbers of immigrants are taking up residence in other states. Southern states such as Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Maryland, and Arkansas have witnessed large-scale growth in their foreign-born populations, as have western states such as Arizona, Nevada, and Colorado. At the county level, nine of the ten counties with the largest percentage increase in foreign-born population between 2000 and 2006 were located outside traditional immigrant receiving states.

Immigrants from particular countries tend to settle in specific states and regions. For example, most Cubans can be found in South Florida, and most Nigerians reside in the New York region. Portland, Maine, has a large concentration of Somalis; Atlanta, Georgia, has growing numbers of Mexicans. Networks based on ethnicity, family, and friendship serve to draw immigrants to certain areas. Other factors that influence the settlement patterns of immigrants include religious institutions, ethnic networks, businesses and enclaves, and employment opportunities.

Quantitative Estimates of Impact on American Religious Life

Estimating with any precision the quantitative effects of post-1965 immigration on the shape and composition of American religious life is difficult. The decennial census is

the most thorough accounting of the country's sociodemographic structure. However, it is legally prohibited from asking questions about religious affiliation or identity, thereby making it impossible to link the questions it does ask, such as ancestry or foreign-born status, to religion. The same is true of immigration data collected by the Departments of State and Homeland Security. Although immigration data do document country of origin, making inferences from the data about religious affiliation can result in inaccurate numbers. Iraq is a case in point. Even though Muslims make up an overwhelming proportion of the country's population, a significant number of Iraqis admitted to the United States are Chaldean Christians. Likewise, knowing the distribution of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Jain adherents in India, one of the primary immigrant sending countries over several decades, has little predictive value for estimating the size of each in the United States because one cannot assume that each group emigrates proportionally.

The most thorough accounting of immigrants and religious affiliation is found in the 2007 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. The large sample size of the study allows the generation of reasonably reliable estimates. According to the Pew data, 78 percent of the total population of the United States identifies as Christians. Of all immigrants, slightly less than three-quarters identify as Christians, and of those the majority are Catholic. Catholic immigrants arriving since 1990 outnumber Protestant immigrants by over a two-to-one margin and represent nearly half of all immigrants. Catholic immigration is largely—though not entirely—fueled by the widespread Hispanic immigration. Buddhist, Muslim, and Hindu adherents represent a little less than 2 percent of the country's population. Slightly over one-quarter of Buddhists are foreign-born, compared with about two-thirds of Muslims and five in six Hindus. For U.S.-born Hindus and Muslims it is likely that a significant number are second generation. Because Buddhism was established in America well before the new immigration began, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of native-born Buddhists are beyond second generation.

Americans' Changing Attitudes toward Immigrants

Americans' attitudes toward the assimilation of immigrants shape the environment to which newcomers adapt, and these attitudes have changed considerably over the last century. In the early decades of the twentieth century,

immigrants were strongly pushed to shed their ethnic identities and adopt American ones. The Americanization movement best exemplifies the role of public policy and public education in hastening the assimilation process. The movement called for immigrants to speak English, forget their native tongue and culture, and behave like "Americans." Although some Americans saw assimilation in less stark and absolute terms, it was regarded nevertheless as inevitable as well as highly valued. The "melting pot" metaphor captured the notion of the transformation of immigrants' cultural identities into new ones based on American ideals and values—preferably the Anglo-Protestant ethic and culture.

By the beginning of the post-1965 immigration scholars of assimilation had already begun to examine the empirical evidence supporting the notions of the melting pot and straight-line assimilation—the assumption that the longer immigrants lived in the United States the more they adopted mainstream or American culture. Scholars found that the ethnicity of immigrants had not "melted" away. Instead, the children and grandchildren of immigrants maintained distinct cultural patterns and continued, for the most part, to practice the faiths of their parents. The empirical reality that immigrants retained much of their native culture—called "cultural pluralism"—became the basis for questioning the paradigm of straight-line assimilation as something to be valued. The metaphor of the "melting pot" was replaced with that of a "salad bowl" in which individual parts still made up something whole but nevertheless remained distinct. Cultural pluralists argued that immigrants did not have to give up their cultural norms, values, and traditions to be American. Or as Andrew Greeley wryly observed in 2006 in "Why Can't They Be More Like Us?" the new immigrants "don't have to be like us. They are entitled to be 'strange.' Just as the rest of us are." Such a statement would have been almost inconceivable a century earlier.

Cultural pluralism emerged just as Catholicism and Judaism were being recognized as mainstream American religions just as legitimate as Protestantism. Including the faiths of immigrants not representing the biblical tradition in the cultural or religious pluralism framework required only extending its domain, not its underlying assumptions. A country in which cultural pluralism, not "Americanization," is the norm creates a profoundly different environment in which new immigrants can practice their religion. This is not to say that the religious practices and holidays of Jews, Sikhs, Muslims, and Buddhists receive the same recognition and

accommodation as those of Christians, nor is it to argue that there is no bias or hostility toward non-Christian religious practices. However, non-Christians face far less pressure to conform to a Protestant American ideal than was true in the past. On many American college campuses it is common to see female Muslim students wearing *hijabs* and even an occasional *burka*, just as it is to see male Jewish students with skull caps. These statements of religious identity in publicly funded institutions of education are not banned, nor are they discouraged as they have been in other countries.

Transnational Context of Immigrant Religion

Communications and transportation technology has strengthened transnationalism, making it easier for immigrants to remain connected to family, friends, and religious institutions in their home countries and complicating the process of assimilation into American society. Immigrants' religions are now tied more than ever to their home countries: culture and religion transcend borders. Modern communications technology allows religious services to be broadcast from the home country to the United States and the United States to the home country. Modern transportation makes it possible for monks, imams, priests, and ministers to visit their countrymen and -women in the United States. Indeed, a growing phenomenon is the establishment of religious franchises in which churches or temples, from say Brazil or Thailand, are re-created in the United States and overseen by the same religious leader. U.S. immigration policy makes it possible for religious franchises to flourish by granting special immigration visas to religious leaders.

Language

Because language is the expression of culture and thus is often connected to religion, one cannot look at the religious practices of immigrants without also examining language issues. English is not the native language or mother tongue of most post-1965 immigrants. Indeed, only a handful of immigrant-sending countries use English as their primary language. Immigrants must, then, navigate social institutions that are mostly English only. For many post-1965 immigrants, especially those who are skilled and educated, the dominance of English presents few if any challenges because they have acquired English-language proficiency in their country of origin through school or work and have only to refine it further once in the United States. By contrast, immigrants with low levels of skill and education often arrive in the United States with little English-language proficiency

and confront very real language barriers. The numbers here are not small. The 2000 U.S. Census estimates that several million immigrant families are linguistically isolated, meaning family members speak English less than well.

Tensions over English-language barriers, on the one hand, and retention of native languages, on the other, are played out in immigrant families and communities and the religious institutions they attend. For example, Hispanic Catholic immigrants who retain their native language often choose to worship in Spanish. Unlike for earlier waves of European Catholic immigrants such as Italians and Poles, insufficient numbers of Catholic clergy from Latin American countries have immigrated to attend to the spiritual needs of Hispanic immigrants. Depending on their time of arrival and where they have settled, Hispanic immigrants have found themselves attending English-language masses that offer rituals, routines, and saints that are foreign to them. Over the years urban Catholic parishes have accommodated Spanish-speaking parishioners by assigning to them native-born, Spanish-speaking priests who are familiar with cultural traditions of Hispanic immigrants such as the *quinceañeras* (coming-of-age celebrations) and the veneration of religious figures such as Our Lady of Guadalupe. Nevertheless, accommodating the language needs of Hispanic immigrants remains very much a work in progress for the Catholic Church, largely because Hispanic immigrants are now settling in new areas of the country such as the South and West where parishes have little or no history of offering services in any language but English. Parishes in Virginia and North Carolina are now struggling with the same language accommodation issues that confronted parishes in California or Texas a generation or two ago.

But it is not just a matter of accommodating one non-English-proficient immigrant group in parishes and churches. The multiethnic communities served by urban churches are often multilingual. A Catholic Church in a multiethnic neighborhood may offer masses in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. However, because of the language divide parishioners may have little in common other than that they attend the same church. They may not find that church membership provides a common platform to address interests and concerns.

The retention of languages central to the practice of some religions poses challenges to immigrant adherents, especially for members of the second and third generations who are caught in the gravitational pull of the English language. Data on the English-language acquisition of children

of immigrants consistently show that the children become overwhelmingly proficient in English by adulthood. Second- and third-generation children largely lose the ability to communicate in their parents' native language unless it is spoken in the home or is reinforced by social institutions such as schools or religious study classes. When religious texts are in Arabic or worship services are conducted in Hindu, unilingual English-speaking adherents cannot fully participate in the religion of their ancestors. Just as earlier generations of Jewish immigrants dealt with this issue by having their children attend Hebrew school, immigrant groups such as Hindus and Muslims are developing language schools to maintain their religious traditions. Language retention and religion may be further reinforced by the transnational nature of immigration. Modern travel makes it relatively easy for second- and third-generation immigrant children to become immersed in the language and religious practices of their family's homeland by visiting it for short or extended periods.

The Changing Landscape of American Religion

This description of the demographic change produced by the post-1965 immigration has pointed to the obvious fact that most immigrants have come from countries and regions where Protestantism is a minor religion. Asia is the region of the world most responsible for altering America's tripartite religious pluralism (Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism). The faiths such as Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism brought by Asian immigrants are not necessarily new to the United States in that practitioners of those faiths had already gained a toehold in the country by means of the small numbers of immigrants who arrived prior to the 1960s. Nevertheless, the post-1965 immigration greatly increased the numbers of Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus. As adherents of those religions then branched out in their settlement they introduced their faiths into new areas of the country.

As indicated earlier, Hispanic immigrants have been responsible for adding to the ranks of Catholic adherents. Nevertheless, evangelical and Pentecostal movements in Latin America have made inroads into the hegemony of the Catholic Church, with the result that increasing numbers of Hispanic immigrants are coming to the United States as Protestants. Moreover, the abundance of Pentecostal storefront churches in Hispanic neighborhoods indicates that many Catholic immigrants convert to Protestantism once they arrive.

African Immigration

Even though immigration from Africa is increasing in number and scope, it has largely occurred under the radar of scholars of immigration and American religion. For example, in her influential and widely read book *A New Religious America*, Diana Eck does not include African immigrants and their religious institutions. In other instances, scholars have, for analytic convenience, classified East African immigrants with those from the Middle East. Writing about African immigrant churches in 2007, scholar of African Christianity Akintunde Akinade notes, "This religious movement remains, by and large, terra incognita to many well-informed people in the West." African immigration is bringing new adherents to religious denominations long established in the United States such as the Congregationalists and Catholics as well as to more recently arrived religious traditions such as Islam.

Immigrants from Africa (as is true of many Hispanic immigrants) hold conservative positions on the social issues of the day such as abortion and gay rights. Indeed, many African Christians have denounced the West's support of gay rights, and Anglicans have spoken of separating from the mother church over the issue. What little research that exists on African immigrants indicates a reverse missionary phenomenon whereby African clergy have come to the United States to steer the faithful back to a more conservative interpretation of Christian doctrine. It remains to be seen whether African clergy will be able to expand their sphere of influence beyond their African compatriots or whether the acculturation process will alter their positions.

See also *Buddhism in North America; Hinduism in North America; Hispanic Influence; Immigration* entries; *Islam in North America; Pentecostals; Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics; Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century.*

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Independent Bible and Community Churches

According to the American Religious Identification Survey and the Barna Research Group, in 2008 nondenominational churches served 2.489 million adults in the United States (www.adherents.com/re1_USA.html). Independent, nondenominational Bible and community churches represent a segment of this larger independent church family.

Primarily an urban phenomenon that began in the early to mid-twentieth century, these churches not only are unaffiliated with denominations but also are unaffiliated with

organized fellowships of churches such as the Independent Fundamental Churches of America, National Association of Evangelicals, Berean Church Fellowship, Sovereign Grace Ministries, and Open Bible Churches. Like many of the churches represented by such fellowships, these independent Bible and community churches originally emerged from the revivalist empire of evangelist Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899) and the millenarian movement in the United States, which is rooted in the teachings of Brethren Bible teacher John Nelson Darby (1800–1882) and centered institutionally in the Moody Bible Institute and Dallas Theological Seminary.

Roots

The nineteenth-century millenarian movement inspired by Darby's theology contributed to the emergence of these independent churches and, along with traditional American revivalism, significantly shaped their identity. Darby, a deacon in the Anglican Church serving in Ireland, formulated dispensationalism, an innovative form of premillennialist theology. He drew a distinction between the nation of Israel, which he believed held an "earthly citizenship" shaped by ties to political and social structures related to an earthly existence, and the Christian Church, which he saw as being "in Christ" seated in heaven and possessing a "heavenly citizenship" shaped by spiritual realities not yet shared by Israel. Darby interpreted the scripture and fashioned his theological beliefs through the lens of this dualism.

Darby's dualistic hermeneutic produced the corollary beliefs that helped to fashion the core theological identity of the independent Bible and community churches. His innovative interpretation of scriptural prophecy was particularly important in forming a central feature of these churches' identity. They subscribed to Darby's teaching that biblical prophecy concerned earthly things related to Israel. As a distinctively Pauline revelation, the Christian church is absent from biblical prophecy. The prophetic timetable for earthly Israel, according to Darby, was suspended at the Crucifixion and will be resumed after the dispensation (or parenthesis) of the church, which ends with the Rapture of the church to its heavenly home prior to the Tribulation, a seven-year period of judgment upon the earth. This understanding of the church's uniqueness shaped these independent churches' views of Christian living. As God's heavenly people, Christians were not subject to Israel's law, a code concerned with priests and an earthly, legal

righteousness that served as a rule for man's life on earth. The gospel operated not through law but through grace, by means of which the church acquired justifying righteousness, union with Christ, and a heavenly rule of life.

Thus the theological concepts that formed the distinguishing theological features of these independent Bible and community churches is a distinction between Israel and the church; a spiritual life shaped by an emphasis on grace instead of the Mosaic Law and legalism; and the novel belief in a pretribulational Rapture that precedes an apocalyptic judgment upon the earth. These churches' discerning of the "signs of the times" and consequent stress on the nearness of God's judgment produced a cottage industry of weekend prophetic conferences in local churches; revivals; the publication of tracts, magazines, and books (and later the production of movies) to promote Christian living; and strenuous evangelistic efforts to convert as many as possible in the time remaining.

Reception and Dissemination of Dispensationalism in America

American evangelicals began absorbing these features of Darby's theology between 1862 and 1877, the period during which Darby traveled seven times to Canada and the United States. His beliefs spread through several institutions that subsequently proved crucial to the later emergence of the independent Bible and community churches in the United States. His dispensational views were initially circulated through the interdenominational Bible and Prophetic Conference movement, where they were particularly well received by evangelicals within the Reformed wing of American Protestantism. The Niagara Bible Conference (1876–1897), one of the earliest and most influential of these conferences, was led by Presbyterian minister and dispensationalist James Hall Brookes (1830–1897). Dwight Moody's Northfield Conferences, extremely popular in the 1880s and 1890s, were equally influential in broadening dispensationalism's appeal in America and in inspiring people to establish similar conference centers elsewhere. The publication of the *Scofield Reference Bible* in 1909 by Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (1843–1921), one of the most popular conference speakers of the era, cemented dispensationalism's place within American evangelicalism and was chiefly responsible for its enormous popularity among laymen and laywomen.

Beyond the dissemination of dispensational beliefs through their meetings and associated periodicals such as Brookes' *Truth* and Adoniram Judson Gordon's *Watchword*,

the Bible and Prophetic Conferences also placed a strong emphasis on Bible teaching that became for much of their history a much advertised trademark of the later independent Bible and community churches. The pastor, typically identified as the "pastor-teacher," preached systematically through books of the Bible, carefully expounding the author's central theme and tracing it paragraph by paragraph and verse by verse through the book before making the appropriate applications for his audience. Pastors occasionally offered topical series, but they remained deeply grounded in scriptural texts tied to their contexts. Indeed, teaching books of the Bible and stressing context and original languages remained the emphasis in these Bible and community churches in stark contrast to the traditional preaching style and anecdotal content observed in most denominational churches. Unlike denominational congregations influenced by the rise and spread of dispensationalism within America, these independent churches owe their emergence, growth, and distinguishing characteristics to Darby's theological influence, particularly as it was mediated through key evangelical educational institutions.

Educational Support Structure

Beyond the major conference centers, Darby's beliefs reached millions of Americans through the influence of educational institutions, principally the Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) in Texas and the Moody Bible Institute (MBI) in Chicago. These two schools and other institutions derived from or shaped by their teaching and graduates were critical catalysts for the rise of independent Bible and community churches in the United States. Leaders at both schools, but particularly at MBI, spoke each year at hundreds of Bible conferences sponsored by local churches, where people were eager for teaching on Bible prophecy and on holiness themes. DTS and MBI, along with a variety of parachurch organizations that arose out of this same milieu, provided an institutional framework that sustained independent churches and enabled them to prosper.

Dallas Theological Seminary has long been recognized by historians of American religion as the academic focal point of dispensationalism in America. DTS was founded in 1924 by moderate Presbyterian fundamentalist Lewis Sperry Chafer (1871–1952). Chafer was Scofield's key disciple and a second-generation leader of the Bible and Prophetic Conference movement. His writings, particularly *Systematic Theology* published in 1948, provided a systematic and slightly modified version of Darby's dispensational beliefs.

Chafer founded DTS initially as a means of preserving and extending the work of the Bible conference movement. In the context of the growing peril from European theological liberalism, Chafer saw Bible conferences, especially those promoting dispensationalism, as an important bulwark for orthodoxy within American Christianity. By the 1920s he believed the influence of the Bible and Prophetic Conference movement was threatened by the declining strength and death of its first-generation leaders and the rise of militant fundamentalists, whose rancorous preaching would surely damage the movement's status within American Protestantism. Chafer founded DTS to train expositors and ensure the survival of the movement's Bible teaching ministry. Most of Chafer's students, to the disappointment of the more strident fundamentalists, followed his moderate style and sought to roll back the incoming tide of liberalism by promoting truth, as they saw it, rather than belligerently attacking the perceived enemies of the gospel. Chafer's moderate fundamentalism formed part of the ethos of the independent Bible and community churches, because most of them were founded by DTS graduates or by people influenced directly or indirectly by the seminary.

Much of DTS's influence on the Bible and community churches was channeled through independent Bible schools. Although Moody Bible Institute was organized in 1889 to provide biblically trained home and foreign missionaries, its structure and ethos, like those of the few independent Bible schools that existed at the time, were altered by the fundamentalist/modernist controversy of the 1920s. MBI and other Bible schools in the decades following the establishment of DTS were increasingly shaped by the seminary's theological agenda as more and more of Chafer's graduates filled faculty positions in the burgeoning independent Bible school movement. Enjoying the prestige of association with Dwight Moody and blessed with innovative leadership, MBI served as a model for other Bible schools that emulated its curriculum and teaching style. Bible school faculty and alumni disseminated dispensational theology and founded independent churches throughout the United States. Bible schools helped sustain these churches by supplying theological leadership, conference speakers, pulpit supply when pastors were absent, and ministerial staff when it was not obtained directly from DTS.

Most Bible school leaders were also important in forming a moderate fundamentalist ethos within the independent churches. They typically steered a middle course in disputes between moderate and separatist fundamentalists,

especially in disagreements over withdrawing from mainline Protestant churches. They emphasized the nonsectarian nature of genuine Bible study and evangelism and encouraged stability rather than controversy within their constituencies. Because of these schools' close association with the independent Bible and community churches, they largely were not and are not products of the separatist beliefs of sectarian fundamentalism that Chafer rejected.

Emergence of Independent Churches

Most of the first independent churches were established in the decade or so prior to 1945, typically by people from Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, and, to a lesser extent, Methodist backgrounds. These churches were founded either as by-products of the denominational battles over dispensational premillennialism within American Presbyterianism or as the fulfillment of people simply desiring a local church where they would have continual access to the kind of Bible teaching associated with the Bible conference movement. The latter sentiment is a constant refrain among the founders of these early churches.

When denominational wrangling over dispensational theology was an issue, the founding of independent churches occasionally involved a church split, such as the one that occurred within the affluent First Presbyterian Church of Memphis, Tennessee. Pastor Albert C. Dudley, a firm proponent of dispensational theology and Bible conferences, began a Bible conference ministry upon his arrival at First Presbyterian in 1928. Chafer's close friend Harry Ironside, pastor of Moody Memorial Church in Chicago and associated with MBI's extensive Bible conference ministry, as well as an adjunct instructor at DTS, spoke at the first conference. Chafer followed Ironside as speaker for the church's second Bible conference and established a close and enduring friendship with Dudley. By 1933 denominational traditionalists within First Presbyterian, alarmed by the church's growing association with the dispensationalist Bible conference movement and its financial support of Chafer's independent seminary in Dallas, took steps to eliminate Chafer's influence. Unable to overcome this opposition and not wanting to lose their association with the Bible conference ministry, sixty-five members of the congregation, many of them prominent leaders within the congregation, left First Presbyterian and founded the nondenominational Evangelical Community Church, where they were quickly joined by some sixty evangelicals from other mainline Memphis congregations who had attended Bible conferences at First Presbyterian.

This split was not a result desired by Chafer, but he served, nevertheless, as a trusted guide for the separation and for establishing the new congregation. The new church entered a close, mutually beneficial relationship with DTS and began supporting independent mission organizations. Similar splits of local churches have been interpreted as by-products of separatist fundamentalism and its concerns about theological purity. Although the founders of these Bible and community churches were religiously conservative, maintaining theological purity, particularly in the South, was not often among the motives for forming an independent church. Even when it was a motive, it was frequently combined with other reasons that more generally influenced those who decided to leave denominational churches and pursue an independent ministry.

Independent Church Ministry

Although these independent churches lost access to denominational support systems, they were not isolated and left to their own devices. Typically they were involved in symbiotic relationships with DTS and one or more of the independent Bible schools. Through these institutions, independent church leaders were able to quickly associate their churches with a variety of other independent, nondenominational evangelical organizations. They fulfilled their missionary responsibilities through cooperation with independent mission organizations such as China Inland Missions, African Inland Missions, and South Africa General Missions. Their Sunday school materials, if not generated by Sunday school teachers trained at one of the Bible schools, was obtained through nondenominational publishers such as David C. Cook or from MBI's Bible Institute Colportage Association, renamed Moody Press in 1941. Adult classes often used the flood of popular books being published by faculty at DTS or one of the Bible schools. Chafer's *Major Bible Themes*, a popular survey of Bible doctrine published by DTS in 1926, was used in churches to teach Christian doctrine survey classes.

Some aspects of their approach to ministry set independent Bible and community churches apart from America's revivalist milieu in which evangelical church services were focused primarily on converting the lost. In these independent churches, a pastor's primary responsibility typically reflected the pattern presented in Chafer's *True Evangelism*, a controversial book published in 1911 that assailed the traditional evangelistic ethos of evangelical church services. Unlike the evangelist whose work was to reach the

unevangelized, a pastor-teacher's work was to instruct and train Christians. Thus sermons in Bible and community churches tended to be didactic, aimed at producing biblical literacy and Christian maturity. In harmony with the preaching style just described, if the text was not evangelistic or moralistic neither was the sermon. After the sermon a brief presentation of the gospel was made for the benefit of any unbelievers in the audience, who were then given the opportunity to respond in the privacy of their own thoughts; no altar call was given. People who wished to inquire further were invited to speak with the pastor-teacher or an elder after the service.

In accord with their principal concerns, most of these churches replaced the traditional annual revival services held in America's evangelical churches with an annual Bible conference. Although the use of large Bible conference sites did not die out completely, Bible conferences increasingly came to be held in local churches and often in association with an independent Bible school.

Because of their dispensational beliefs, independent church leaders rejected tithing, which they considered a legal requirement limited to Israel, and so many Bible and community churches did not take up an offering as part of their services. Instead, they typically provided an offering box in the church vestibule and taught their congregations the nonlegalistic form of giving for the church age—that is, to give cheerfully according to how much the Lord had prospered them. In most churches, unless the pastor's text was specifically about money or supporting God's work, nothing was said from the pulpit about the subject. Such practices set this independent church community apart from mainline Protestant churches in America, particularly in the South. Indeed, until recently independent church leaders there often placed literature in their vestibules explaining the distinguishing characteristics of a Bible church to allay the suspicions and criticism of traditional-minded denominationalists.

Spread of Independent Churches

In addition to the continuing pull of the characteristics shared within the early community of parachurch institutions and independent churches, nondispensational mainline Presbyterians opened the floodgates to independency in the mid-1940s by purging the dispensational influence from their denominations. In the 1930s, widespread disaffection with and resistance to dispensational premillennialism stiffened within the mainline Presbyterian denominations in the

United States. Chafer and the Dallas Theological Seminary were identified by traditionalists in these denominations as the principal purveyors of dispensationalism within their ranks. This opposition forced Chafer into a defensive posture and produced growing conflict within Presbyteries over the ordination of DTS graduates. By the mid-1940s both Presbyterian denominations (northern and southern) had officially identified dispensational premillennialism as incompatible with the Presbyterian doctrines enunciated in the Westminster Standards, effectively eliminating the chance that DTS graduates would fill Presbyterian pulpits and destroying Chafer's vision of rescuing these denominations from the growing influence of liberals in their midst.

After the Presbyterian purge DTS realigned itself to serve the small but growing independent church community. DTS's influence declined after 1945 within the mainline Presbyterian denominations, but its alumni began to found independent Bible and community churches. DTS also became a key resource for staff in the fast-growing parachurch movement, which included, in addition to Bible schools, organizations such as independent mission agencies, Child Evangelism Fellowship, Young Life Campaign, and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. Chafer's graduates, who were spread throughout in these institutions, were responsible for founding some of them. Along with DTS and the Bible schools, these institutions formed part of the institutional network contributing to life within the independent church community.

Independent Bible and community churches emerged in a variety of ways after 1945. Reflecting their roots in the Bible and Prophetic Conference movement, they were largely an urban phenomenon. Most of the new churches founded after the purge began with home Bible studies initiated by faculty members, students, or alumni from DTS and the Bible schools. Believers Bible Church in Lufkin, Texas, began in 1958 as a women's Bible study that eventually included couples and was taught for years by DTS students, one of whom became the first pastor when the church was founded in 1970. Cornerstone Bible Church in Lilburn, Georgia, emerged in 1971 from two home Bible studies taught by two DTS alumni who came to Atlanta to plant a church, a practice that continues to the present. In addition to alumni planting churches in this fashion, DTS and the Bible schools often received requests for help in starting independent churches from groups generally consisting of ten to twenty committed persons around whom to build the church.

The planting of sister churches by established congregations has been another major source of new churches within this community. For example, Fellowship Bible Church in Dallas, Texas, founded by DTS professor Gene A. Getz in 1972, is responsible for a growing number of Fellowship Bible Churches around the country. In addition to the traditional influences, these churches have been shaped by principles of church renewal developed by Getz in response to DTS student comments about the anti-institutional culture in America in the 1960s. Getz published these principles in his influential *Sharpening the Focus of the Church* in 1974. Getz's views are also disseminated through his Center for Church Renewal and Center for Church Based Training in Richardson, Texas. His work has influenced other churches within and outside the independent Bible and community church family.

Social Profile

Bible and community churches are largely an urban phenomenon and typically involve well-educated, middle-class evangelicals. In the early stages of the movement's history, these churches were largely established by comfortable to affluent white evangelicals from established mainline denominational churches. Although these congregations grew in numbers through conversions and internal growth, much of their growth historically has stemmed from transfers from denominational churches or from other independent churches within the movement. The social profile of Shades Mountain Bible Church in Birmingham, Alabama, produced in the early 1990s provides a general picture of the social characteristics of these churches.

Shades Mountain emerged from a home Bible study rooted in the influence of professors at Southeastern Bible College (SBC), an independent, interdenominational school with close ties to Dallas Theological Seminary. After SBC's founding in the early 1930s its leaders avoided involvement in establishing independent churches because SBC was originally launched to serve the needs of denominational churches. But during the 1950s and early 1960s the SBC leadership gradually developed an interest in establishing independent Bible churches in Alabama and neighboring states. With encouragement from SBC's president and at least two of its faculty members, Shades Mountain Bible Church was formally established in the fall of 1963 by three Birmingham businessmen, their families, and a student at SBC who served as the congregation's first pastor. As a special-purpose church that offered a strong program of

Bible study and discipleship, Shades Mountain was not solely dependent on the local community but also drew members from residents of the suburbs and cities adjacent to Birmingham. By 1982 the church had 225 members. Its offerings for that year amounted to \$264,455, out of which \$59,585 was used to support faith mission organizations.

By 1991, the year of the congregational self-study upon which this social profile is based, Shades Mountain had 310 official members, although some 150–200 more persons attended regularly. Its offerings for that year amounted to \$812,657, out of which \$148,852 was committed to supporting mission efforts. The following data reflect the responses of a balanced mix of official members and regular attendees to a profile questionnaire. Sixteen percent of respondents had attended college for one to three years, 37 percent had attended for four or more years, and 17 percent had earned graduate degrees. Twenty-seven percent of respondents held managerial or professional occupations; 14 percent held technical, sales, or administrative support positions; 3 percent worked in production industries; 4 percent were retired; 23 percent were students; and 21 percent were housewives. Among the employed respondents, 10 percent earned less than \$20,000 a year; 11 percent \$20,000–35,000 a year; 28 percent \$35,000–50,000 a year; and 35 percent more than \$50,000 a year, a wage equivalent in 2007 dollars to almost twice that amount, or \$96,632 (<http://measuring-worth.com>).

Independent Bible and community churches continue to emerge and to serve primarily middle- to upper-middle-class constituencies. The true number of churches and people represented by this wing of the nation's nondenominational churches is unknown because of the limited historical and sociological research targeting these congregations. However, some data may be suggestive. By 2007 DTS alumni were serving as staff in 1,144 independent Bible and community churches. A nationwide sample of some 250 of these churches revealed a collective average attendance on Sunday mornings of 308,016, of which 209,842 were attending the fifty-one megachurches (attendance of 2,000 or more) represented in the sample. There were sixty-four large churches (over 500), sixty-one medium churches (200–500), and eighty-one small churches (fewer than 200). Based on research on megachurches by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research (www.hartfordinstitute.org/mega-church), it is safe to assume that the sample accounts for most of the megachurches within this wing of the independent church community. The average attendance of the

non-megachurches is 479. If the average attendance of the 1,093 non-megachurches is conservatively estimated at 350, then this portion of the independent Bible and community churches, including the megachurches, serves a minimum of 592,392 people. Studies are needed to establish the overall size and influence of this wing of the nation's independent churches and to explain the growing number of ethnic churches, particularly African American congregations, within this community.

See also *Bible* entries; *Dispensationalism*; *Education: Bible Schools and Colleges*; *Education: Colleges and Universities*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Fundamentalism*; *Megachurches*; *Ministry, Professional*.

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Internet

The Internet is a global network of linked computers that allows users to access information uploaded (that is, placed online) by one computer from a remote terminal, whether a workstation in a university library, a desktop computer in one's home office, or a laptop in a coffee shop. Thus, a member of a Hindu temple in Mumbai can view, download, and respond to material posted online by a religious studies professor in Miami. A congregant on vacation in Venice can watch sermons from her home church in Vancouver, and a Muslim in Surrey can follow his son's *hajj* via e-mail and uploaded photos or video. Despite industry hyperbole and enthusiast rhetoric that the world is now "globally connected," however, in 2008 just under 22 percent of the

world's population had Internet access, with the technologized nations of the West leading in overall social penetration (that is, the percentage of a given population with access to the Internet and the economic means to use it), whereas Asia and Africa lead in Internet usage growth, though there is tremendous variation of Internet access between and freedom of usage within countries in these two continents.

Although the Internet existed many years before its popular emergence in the mid-1990s, the invention of the World Wide Web and the introduction of user-friendly graphical interfaces—Web browsers such as Netscape Mosaic (later Navigator) and Internet Explorer—brought what had been the almost exclusive domain of the technological *cognoscenti* into the realm of popular use and culture. Now, less than two decades later, in many countries of the world Internet technology has become almost transparent: We are no longer surprised to see laptop computers in university classrooms or on pastors' desks; e-mail and Web addresses are as common as telephone numbers and need no special explanation; users are as likely to check the Internet for news, weather, and sports as they are to check television or the radio. In many ways, computers have become part of the furniture. Although many users have gone online for some purpose related to religion, the most popular use of the Internet, especially in its most recognizable form as the World Wide Web, is the sending and receiving of e-mail; the advent, however, of Weblogs (blogs), social networking sites (such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter), and open participation platforms such as YouTube are changing the shape of electronic communication and increasing the ability of users to participate in online communities, where they might engage in conversation, and, not infrequently, conflict.

In many ways, religion has been a part of the Internet from the beginning, just as it has been in every major revolution in communications technology: from the invention of writing to moveable type and the printing press; from radio and television to online sermons, prayer groups, and ritual practice; from 1200-baud modems that took several minutes to download a single page of text to broadband, wireless Internet, and powerful handheld computers such as the BlackBerry and the Apple iPhone. Before the advent of graphical browsers, religiously inclined users posted messages on text-only bulletin boards (BBSs) hosted on early online services such as Delphi and participated in complex and often hotly contested discussions on a wide range of Usenet newsgroups such as alt.religion.scientology, alt.religion.buddhism, and alt.religion.zoroastrianism. Many

exchanged prayer requests and shared with co-religionists their stories of lived religion, commiserating and celebrating in turn. A few attempted online rituals—prayer circles or invocations to the gods and goddesses—all of which were text-based and many only marginally successful. What these initial attempts did, though, is excite users about the possibilities presented by this new technology.

Although some early researchers argued that the lack of real world contact meant that any claims to an Internet community were illusory at best, others were quickly convinced that online interaction did herald a new form of religious community, a new “place” where people who might never meet in real life could interact, come to know one another, and share meaningfully in each other's lives. The introduction of graphical interface browsing greatly increased both the number of users who could (or would) access the Internet and the ability of those users to participate in online activity. Indeed, no communications technology in history has so rapidly and deeply penetrated society, and now in many countries online activity of all sorts is as common as a telephone conversation and often takes place more frequently.

From Religion Online to Online Religion

The most basic conceptual distinction is between “religion online” and “online religion,” that is, between use of the Internet to provide a variety of information services related to religious belief and practice and the use of the Internet as a site for religious ritual and devotion. Although researchers initially framed these as discrete categories—either religion online or online religion—it became clear relatively quickly that they are more usefully understood as endpoints on a continuum and that many Web sites and patterns of Internet usage include aspects of both. Indeed, as Internet technology becomes more sophisticated and its social penetration more pronounced, the strict division between religion online and online religion becomes less and less distinct, though no less important. For example, Hindu users may access certain Web sites to perform *puja* (rituals) online, and students in introductory religious studies class can navigate to the same site to learn about *puja*, to become familiar with its various ritual elements, or to understand how Hindus are using Internet technology for ritual purposes.

Fundamentalist Christian groups can point to online *puja* sites as putative evidence for what they regard as the problematic nature of Hinduism and the ongoing need for evangelism. Thus, for two very different faith groups, the site provides examples of online religion, and for another

group, religion online. Despite the rhetoric that so often accompanies Internet advertising—that there is something qualitatively different, qualitatively better, about online activity—these examples indicate activities that are no different from the relationship between religious practice and the observation of or opposition to that practice off line. Indeed, what occurs online is little more than a reflection or a refraction of off-line activity. The nature of the interface may make the experience seem different—and, as will be discussed later, the Internet does shape religious belief and practice in identifiable ways—but there is little if anything that occurs in the online world that cannot be found off line. Bearing in mind these caveats, consider some of the ways the oldest of human social behaviors has become a part of the newest of human communication technologies.

Religion Online

Put simply, *religion online* is the provision of goods, information, or services related to particular religious traditions through the Internet. Roman Catholics who want to purchase rosaries, votive candles, or holy cards, for example, can navigate to any number of online supply stores—many of which only exist on the World Wide Web and, like Amazon.com, have no off-line retail location—make their purchases, and have them delivered to their doors in a few days. Buddhists can go to Web sites maintained by their favorite magazine and order back issues, books, or other items related to their practice, and modern pagans can purchase Tarot cards, religious statuary, and ritual clothing online. Although the convenience here is obvious, this is little more than catalogue shopping; it is simply mediated through a different communication technology—e-mail rather than “snail mail.” Similarly, the Web has given believers access to a wide range of religious news heretofore either unavailable or difficult to locate. Users can bookmark their browsers or set Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds to download news or podcasts from favorite Web sites automatically. Although this, too, has the advantage of convenience, in many ways it contributes to a self-limiting organization of online religious behavior. Once again, however, this is little different from off-line activity.

In more technologically developed nations—particularly those of the Group of Eight (G8) industrial democracies—it is rare now to find a religious congregation that does not have even the most rudimentary Web presence. Even those that do not maintain their own sites are now listed in a variety of community listings, often with basic contact

information and a link to an online locator service such as MapQuest or Google Maps. Congregational Web sites range from simple home pages detailing only the group’s address, contact information, and perhaps service times, to elaborate, professionally developed Web sites that rival the most sophisticated available anywhere. Here, congregants can use the Web for a wide variety of purposes: online prayer notices and prayer chains both keep members informed about the needs of the congregation and allow shut-ins to feel connected in meaningful ways; religious leaders can use e-mail or social networking sites to communicate with their congregations, methods that are far more efficient (though some might argue impersonal) than letters, personal calls, or the venerable telephone tree; religious services can be recorded and uploaded both for the benefit of congregation members and to attract potential new members; dedicated Facebook or MySpace sites can be created and tailored to the needs of special congregational groups—religious classes, membership courses and catechisms, age- or gender-specific fellowships, or congregational trips, pilgrimages, and special events.

Religion Online and Online Religion

Much of the activity on more elaborate congregational Web sites includes aspects of both religion online and online religion, and often the precise line between them is difficult to discern. Learning about the prayer needs of others, for example, then responding to a Web-based prayer chain invokes both facets. Arguably, however, one of the most important confluences of religion online and online religion is use of the Internet for religious education, particularly when it takes the form of initiatory preparation, membership classes, or catechises. Many religious traditions require extensive instruction before someone is accepted into a congregation, yet offering classes leading to membership can be time-consuming and difficult to schedule. Online classes allow students to participate when and as they can, progressing through a series of structured lessons leading to initiation or formal membership. As with most aspects of online activity, though, this, too, is a compromise. As a social phenomenon, and though there are rare exceptions, religion is predicated on community activity, on the real world interaction of members one with another, and with the various elements of their faith. This kind of interaction is distinctly limited online, and can often assume the character of distance education, so many congregations use Web activity as an adjunct to more formal off-line classes rather than as a replacement for the off-line classes.

Some traditions, especially those that occupy more marginal positions in society, have used the Internet as a means to establish and legitimize their presence on the religious landscape, both online and off-line. Often lacking the ability to form local ritual and social groups, for example, many modern pagans (that is, modern witches, Wiccans, druids, and goddess-worshippers) have created Internet-based communities of like-minded people—online covens, circles, and groves (the variety of modern pagan ritual working groups)—and brought into contact those who might otherwise never meet. Using threaded discussion forums such as MSN and Yahoo! groups, Wiccans, witches, druids, and nature worshippers of all type share news, resources, encouragement, and problems. Here, too, though, online behavior reflects off-line activity. The reality for many religious communities is that a relatively small percentage of members account for the bulk of group activity. Online this appears no different. Many modern pagan discussion groups have hundreds of members—because “membership” is a function of pressing a button and often requires no more commitment than that—but only a tiny fraction post to the group, and many groups average less than one message per month per member. This highlights the disjunction between the often bombastic claims for the value of Internet communication and the reality of Internet use. These groups, however, can serve as valuable tools for personal and cultural religious legitimation. In 2001, for example, news that census data appeared to indicate that modern paganism was one of the fastest growing new religions in the West was quickly replicated on hundreds of discussion boards, e-mail lists, and Web sites around the world, became for many pagans almost an article of faith, and seemed to reinforce their sense of legitimacy as a religion in proportion to the number of times the claim was repeated.

Online Religion

From Wiccan Web sites that offer practitioners an online coven, complete with degree initiations, ritual opportunities, and community interaction, to a variety of Hindu *puja*, in which worshippers click-and-drag onscreen icons representing bells, flowers, incense, and *aarti* lamps before a representation of one or more gods and goddesses, from online adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a service provided by monastics dedicated to that particular devotional practice, to the creation of a virtual diocese by a Catholic bishop suddenly out of favor with Rome, the search for a “pure” online religion—one that exists only and entirely through the

Internet—continues. Though some scholars are convinced that online religion of this type is inevitable, and a few contend that it already exists, others are less sanguine about the possibility, arguing instead that our ineluctably embodied nature prevents us from living life online to the exclusion of off-line activity, interaction, or reference. That is, we can be off line without being online, but short of “uploading” (a hope shared by some transhumanists—that is, those who believe in the scientific and technological enhancement of human abilities and capacities—that the entirety of a human consciousness will someday be transferred to a computer), the reverse is not the case. Indeed, some religious groups that initially organized online—for example, the Egyptian-oriented House of Netjer—quickly realized the value and desirability of off-line contact and interaction. What began on the Internet has established itself in the real world, as members began meeting away from their computers to socialize and celebrate rituals together.

For the moment, at least, and for four principal reasons, anything approaching the ideal type of an online religion remains elusive. First, it must be entirely online in its liturgical, ritual, and social interaction. The online presence of an off-line group, movement, or tradition is not the same. Second, it must be identifiable as a religion, not simply an amalgam of icons, buttons, and Web paraphernalia that someone uploads with the invitation to “Click here to join my religion!” Some scholars have pointed to online parodies of religion, claiming that these are examples of online religion, yet that begs the question of whether something should be considered a legitimate religion in the virtual world if it would not be so in the real world. Third, because religion is a social phenomenon, there must be the facility for co-religionists to interact in meaningful ways. Simply “clicking to join,” but with no further requirement or opportunity for interaction, is rather like signing up for a university course but never attending any of the classes. This would result in a failing grade, and questions whether such a person could legitimately be called a student. The same obtains with putative online religions: What does membership mean and when does online membership rise to the level of legitimate community? Fourth, an online religion must have some way to ensure its durability. Once again, if a new religion begins off line but does not last longer than a few weeks or months, it is a curiosity on the religious landscape but little more. If someone “starts” what he or she considers an online religion, then loses interest and does not update the Web site regularly or allows the domain license

to be purchased by someone else, then it seems unreasonable to consider it a viable religion. Though the speed with which computer design is advancing cannot rule out the possibility that more and more opportunities for online religion will emerge, a religious tradition that exists exclusively on the Internet seems out of reach at the present time.

Religious Response to the Internet

Like many other technological advances, the Internet has proven both boon and bane for religious communities. Some have embraced it in an attempt to attract new members, but others only use it as long as it serves their particular needs. In caveats similar to those made about radio and television, some have cautioned their followers that Internet activity cannot substitute for real world participation in ritual and devotion, and still others have pointed ominously to the Web as an integral component of apocalyptic prophecy.

On paper, the United Church of Canada is that country's largest mainline Protestant denomination, claiming more than three million members. In reality, like so many denominations of its kind, the United Church has been in decline for decades and, by the early twenty-first century, only a small fraction (about 7 percent) of those who claim membership attended worship on a regular basis. To address this decline, in late 2006 the church launched its "Emerging Spirit Campaign," a set of advertising initiatives designed to attract the attention of non-church-going people between the ages of thirty and forty-five. In addition to more traditional print media, the campaign relies on Web technologies such as "viral video" (a video clip that is transmitted and replicated through e-mail, instant messaging services, RSS feeds, and Web sites) and the mainstay of the program, a dedicated discussion site called WonderCafe. Intended to tap into a social and cultural demographic that has had Internet access for a significant portion of its lives and has the economic means and technological comfort to access Emerging Spirit on a regular basis—that is, for whom the technology has become largely transparent—WonderCafe resembles hundreds of similar sites, both religious and not. It offers a variety of threaded discussion groups, dedicated blog space, the ability for users to customize their versions of WonderCafe, and e-mail accounts that are accessed from the site. Only two years old at the time of this writing, and supported by a multimillion dollar bequest to the church, it is too early to determine what if any effect the online campaign has had, but it does point to two particular realities of

the religious response to the Internet. First, the World Wide Web cannot be ignored. With the Internet's depth and breadth of social penetration, avoiding use of the Web would be like deciding to remove one's answering machine or telephone from the church office. Second, though this is by no means certain, embracing an online presence can open one's religious presence to a market share unavailable through more traditional advertising.

For many years, the Church of Scientology has similarly embraced the advertising potential of the Internet, maintaining a sophisticated set of interconnected Web sites designed to communicate basic information about the group and its teachings, to allow members to purchase Scientological materials and remain current on news of the church, and, through its online Oxford Capacity Analysis test, to encourage potential members to investigate its teachings. Since the mid-1990s, however, the often-controversial movement has also vigorously contested the right of different countermovement groups to repost online what it considers sensitive material related to the upper, or OT ("Operating Thetan"), levels of teaching and practice. Originally placed in the public domain as part of a defense to a libel suit, these Scientological esoterica were quickly uploaded to the Internet and have survived all attempts by the church to have them removed. In their attempts to forestall online replication of private teachings, Scientologists were urged to flood Usenet groups such as alt.religion.scientology with spam (multiple posts designed to overload a particular server's bandwidth, or carrying capacity) and employ "cancelbot" programs that automatically deleted Usenet group messages that contained objectionable material. In some cases, lawsuits were brought against Internet service providers that refused to remove the OT material. None of these had the desired effect, and many commentators have argued that they did the Church of Scientology more harm than good. Perhaps more than any other single example, this highlights the prime directive of Internet communications: Data must flow.

For the Roman Catholic Church, the world's largest Christian denomination, the Internet presents a different range of potential and a different set of problems. On the one hand, like the United Church, parish and diocesan personnel can use the Web to communicate with congregants, update Catholic news items gathered from a variety of sources, and inform members of special events. The Vatican's official Web site contains a wealth of information related to church teachings, papal encyclicals, and research material.

That is, the Internet functions in its capacity of religion online. On the other hand, some Catholics have begun to use the World Wide Web for what they regard as sacramental or quasi-sacramental purposes—online religion. As noted earlier, for example, sites exist on which regularly updated Web camera photos of the Blessed Sacrament are loaded and that Catholics who do not have off-line access to the devotional practice of adoration are encouraged to visit. Although some Catholics regard this as tantamount to idolatry, others consider it a valuable part of their faith lives and even report instances of visions or miracles associated with online viewing of the Blessed Host. In a number of statements addressing the issue of the Internet, though, the Vatican has made it clear that there is no such thing as an online sacrament. Millions of Catholics around the world may go online for any number of reasons, but online activity can never substitute for one's lived Catholicism off line.

Finally, there are those who view computers and their virtual progeny, the Internet, as one more indicator that the apocalypse is imminent. In the late 1990s, news of the so-called Y2K bug—the alleged inability of computers to adjust for the rollover from “1999” to “2000” in their internal clocks and the supposed devastation that would occur in its wake—was interpreted by many fundamentalist Protestants as a sign that end-times were beginning. Some, such as well-known televangelists Jack van Impe and Pat Robertson, predicted that Y2K heralded the beginning of the tribulation and that the return of Christ could not be far off. Many dispensationalist Christians believe that the rise of the Antichrist will unite the world under one government and into one religion, and some consider the World Wide Web as the ideal technological tool for achieving this.

Internet Issues

Although a variety of issues face both religious believers who use the Internet either as consumers or contributors and religious traditions that either embrace the online world or regard it with a jaundiced eye, two particular concerns obtain for all: the problem of open source information and online accuracy, and the question of the Internet as a venue for religious proselytization.

In the early years of the Internet—the late 1980s—most users were restricted to simple, text-based communication: principally, the reading and posting of online messages. Relatively few had sufficiently mastered the arcana of HTML and, later, Java, two of the major building blocks of Web pages, to add significantly to the emerging online

world. By the early 1990s, however, the advent of graphical browsing, increased Internet infrastructure, and the introduction of WYSIWYG (“What you see is what you get”) Web page editors—Microsoft FrontPage and Macromedia Dreamweaver, for example—suddenly meant that millions of believers could become contributors to the World Wide Web, not merely spectators or consumers of it. First on rudimentary home pages, but now through Web sites, blogs, social networking sites, podcasting, and graphics sharing services such as Flickr and YouTube, hundreds of millions of people to whom publication in any kind of commercial venue would be denied have a creative outlet. Although not restricted to religion on the Internet, three important and interrelated aspects of this development have been noted by researchers: (1) the abundance of style over substance, (2) the replication of online material under the guise of original writing, and (3) the Wikipedia effect and the problem of open source information.

First, although many Web sites have a very pleasing aesthetic and appear to represent the work of professional organizations, closer inspection often reveals that they are the product of individuals who may or may not have particular expertise in that area. Members of the evangelical Christian apologetic movement, for example, conservative Protestants who believe that all religions other than theirs—and often any understanding of Christianity that differs from their own—are both theologically erroneous and spiritually dangerous, have established a number of very sophisticated Web sites to advance their religious agenda. Over time, as these sites have been visited and hyperlinked more frequently and as their creators found new ways to promote them, these sites began to appear more frequently in search engine results. The sites, and by implication their creators, took on the appearance of authority. Yet, in many cases, though these creators often present themselves online as experts in Christian apologetics (that is, those who make theological arguments both for their own faith and against the faiths of others), their biographical information indicates little or no formal training in Christian theology, religious history, or religious studies. Users who are looking for basic information on a particular religious group, then, but who may not know enough to recognize biased or faulty information, are easily persuaded that the views and opinions offered on these sites are accurate and trustworthy representations of the groups in question. In many cases, they are not.

Second, the issue of online authority is especially problematic when a number of Web sites replicate similar

material, a circumstance that plays into our cognitive bias toward repeated information. Anyone who has spent significant time exploring religious information on the World Wide Web is aware of the tremendous amount of repetition. Rather than offer extended original material, for example, many religiously oriented blogs are simply filled with a hodgepodge of items cut-and-pasted from different sources and threaded together with a few sentences from the blog owner. Other blogs pick these up, sometimes with attribution, often without, and the process of online replication assumes something of a viral quality. Other Web sites, however, rely all but entirely on “shovelware”—large tracts of basic information about a religious tradition that are taken from online or off-line sources and reposted to the Internet. Again, this material is often used without any acknowledgment. In the early days of the World Wide Web, many users regarded the online world as an unrestricted data space, a new world of information in which the off-line constraints of copyright and proper attribution did not apply. Though they are working within a family of religious traditions that highly values originality and creativity, for example, many modern pagan Web sites—some of which claim to function as online covens or ritual working groups—cut, paste, and repost pagan material readily available on any number of other sites. This may not pose much of an issue for religious traditions that maintain an established doctrinal framework against which online material may be checked, but many modern paganisms are predicated on freedom from convention and an expectation that individual pagans will forge their own spiritual paths, establish their own relationships with patron deities, and develop their own ritual and devotional practices. Thus, the viral replication of similar modern pagan material online can contribute to an incipient orthodoxy that is at odds with the basic tenets of paganism off line.

Third, and integrally related to these first two issues, there is what one might call the Wikipedia effect, named for the online free encyclopedia: the overall lack of authentication for information placed online and the ability of users to change, adapt, modify, or simply invent material at their pleasure. Many readers will be familiar with Wikipedia, a network of online encyclopedia projects, the principal characteristic of which is its open source architecture: Anyone can log on and change an entry, whether the change is accurate or not. Neither vetting nor source standardization is required. The problem this presents for religion on the Internet, especially when users are seeking initial information about a particular person, group, or practice, is that the users

may not know enough to know that they don't know anything. That is, they are not in a position to evaluate the accuracy and worth of the information provided on a blog, discussion forum, or Web site, and may give it more credence than is reasonable. In the online world, as in the off-line world, unfamiliarity can breed vulnerability. This process is exacerbated by three well-known social psychological principles: confirmation bias, the process by which we tend to value more highly information with which we agree; the memory effect, our predisposition to remember more easily information with which we agree; and source dissociation, our inability over time to recall the source of information with which we agree. Because information placed online is often not subject to the processes of vetting and authorization that obtain off line, and contrary to the hopes of many that increased information will result in increased tolerance for different religious beliefs, these principles often result in a foreshortened perspective, a self-limiting construction of reality that reduces the user's ability to differentiate between accurate and inaccurate information.

If the issue of online authenticity has proven itself a very real problem, another early fear about the Internet has not. One of the major concerns about the World Wide Web and its ability to influence users emerged in the immediate wake of the Heaven's Gate suicides in 1997. The Heaven's Gate group members used the Internet both to support themselves (through a moderately successful Web design company) and to promote their religious vision (through a Web site dedicated to their beliefs and participation in various discussion forums). In the media frenzy following the suicides, the connection between the Internet and the group was made explicitly by both secular anticult and evangelical countercult activists who claimed that the World Wide Web could serve as an effective recruiting tool for dangerous new religions. The equation was simple: because Heaven's Gate members owned computers and used them both to finance their group and to promote their agenda, the Web was guilty by association in the suicides. Drawing on studies of new religious conversion and an emerging sociology of the Internet, however, further research revealed how simplistic this answer is. First, the processes of new religious affiliation and disaffiliation are sufficiently complex that no one mechanism can influence them to the extent claimed by countermovement activists. Second, even groups that have intensive and prolonged personal contact with potential adherents have extremely poor recruitment and retention rates. Third, despite its increasing social penetration, the Internet is an

ephemeral and voluntarist technology. That is, any number of things, from hardware failure to server collapse to thunderstorms, can interrupt online activity, preventing the kind of prolonged persuasive contact critics feared, and leaving the Internet as easy as turning away from the screen or pressing the off button. That people will use the Internet as a recruitment tool is not the issue—of course, they will—but the very depth of its social penetration—its increasing transparency—means that it will not have anything close to the recruiting power suggested by these countermovement activists.

The Future of Religion and the Internet

What is the future of the Internet and its relationship to religion? Short of global and catastrophic network failure, the Internet will continue to develop and its social penetration will increase, though perhaps at something less than the astonishing pace set over the past two decades. Similarly, there is no reason to believe that religion will not continue to play an important role in online activity, a prospect researchers have viewed through lenses both utopian and dystopian.

On the one hand, some commentators have suggested that the virtual world will eventually supplant the real world and that most of our religious activity will be carried out online, that somehow the communications advances precipitated by the Internet will facilitate our quest for transcendence in a qualitatively different, qualitatively better way than ever before. This seems unlikely. First, there is the issue of embodiment and religious history. No matter how precise the image, watching a video of Kumbh Mela, the largest religious gathering on Earth during which tens of millions of Hindus make a pilgrimage to one of four sacred sites, on one's thirteen-inch MacBook screen can hardly compare with the experience itself. Likewise, although getting an e-mail of support from a friend is a welcome event, being held in prayer by that friend at a time of great loss has a qualitatively different affect. Second, some traditions will embrace online religious behavior, but others will continue to insist that it can serve as an adjunct to off-line ritual and devotion, but nothing more than that. Modern pagans will continue to explore the possibility of entirely online covens, and the Roman Catholic Church will continue to insist that physical copresence is a requisite condition for sacramental participation.

On the other hand, as Internet technology advances, different uses for that technology will develop—uses that may not be immediately apparent. Although millions of people now consider social networking through Facebook and

MySpace an integral part of their day, for example, what may appear less obvious to them is the surveillance aspect of Web technology that this behavior effects. That is, millions of people are voluntarily reporting their activities on an ongoing basis and often providing evidence of those activities in the form of pictures and videos. Videos posted to open participation platforms such as YouTube—and which replicate virally from there—have already demonstrated the capacity to affect events in significant ways. Cell phone video recorded at religious services or meetings can be uploaded to the Internet within seconds, replicating virally within minutes or hours. In some cases, these videos can return to haunt religious leaders who might want to step back from more extreme pronouncements; in other cases, these videos can be used repeatedly by critics to demonstrate the danger they believe these pronouncements represent.

Neither the Internet as a major communications technology nor religion as a principal human activity seem in danger of disappearing anytime soon, so understanding the relationship between them remains important. This is especially so as the technology becomes increasingly transparent and researchers are apt to consider it no more remarkable than the telephone or the television—both of which had tremendous impact on the way religious communities constitute themselves. Religion will continue to shape Internet use and continue to be shaped by it.

See also *Celebrity Culture; Education; Electronic Church; Journalism; Popular Religion and Popular Culture: Since the Mid-Twentieth Century; Radio; Religious Press; Television.*

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Invisible Institution

From the Africans' first encounter with the absurdity that was chattel slavery in the New World, they and their descendants had to struggle with issues of identity and their sense of self. Torn from their homes and their families, not allowed to speak their own language or to find solace in their customs and cultural expressions, these enslaved people became "stalkers after meaning" and "seekers after hope." Over time they took elements of the world they had known, as well as aspects of the one they encountered in North America, and developed a unique, vibrant religious tradition. The crucible in which this transformation took place was what scholars have come to refer to as the "invisible institution."

African Traditions and Christian Revival

The first Africans in the English North American colonies were the twenty persons acquired from Dutch slavers. They were purchased as indentured workers for the English settlement of Jamestown in 1619. By the mid-nineteenth century the number of enslaved Africans in the United States would approach four million.

The vast majority of Africans who experienced the religious atmosphere of the early 1800s were born in North America and had little if any access to the specifics of their ancestral religious practices and beliefs. Because the slavers mixed Africans from different ethnic, cultural, and social groups and enforced the various prohibitions on the use or expression of African languages and rituals, much of the comprehensive religious systems held by those who had experienced the Middle Passage firsthand had faded in the collective memory. Yet not all had been lost. There were significant commonalities among the Africans brought to America, such as the notion of a supreme deity, or high god, as well as a spiritual dimension of reality that was immanent, active, and connected one with another as well as with the

past, that would be retained. Indeed, these religious Africanisms would have a profound impact on Christianity associated with the invisible institution.

Despite contemporary efforts to assert that the United States was founded as a Christian nation, the reality is that it was not until after a series of revival movements—the Great Awakenings, the first from 1730 to the 1750s and the second from 1790 to 1840—that a significant segment of the American population was exposed to Christianity in an intentional fashion. Indeed, this was the case for both Africans and European Americans.

Clandestine Religious Lives of Slaves

Unfortunately, a great deal remains unknown about the religious lives of enslaved Africans. What is known derives primarily from cultural products such as slave narratives, autobiographies, folktales, and musical forms such as spirituals. Perhaps the most significant source of information about the invisible institution is George P. Rawick's *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*. Known as the Slave Narrative Collection, these volumes grew out of a 1936–1938 study by the Folklore Division of the Federal Writers' Project, established during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt as a means of white-collar employment during the Great Depression.

The narratives provide glimpses into the religious lives of enslaved Africans. The first discovery is that the invisible institution was a clandestine endeavor, existing beyond, or at least on the periphery of, the dominant society. Often in the middle of the night in locations variously described as hush, bush, or brush arbors, Africans came together, creating a space of their own in which to encounter the sacred. The arbors were makeshift structures that could be erected from found and standing timber and then covered with bushes or other foliage in order to enclose those gathered while providing a modicum of visual and acoustic protection. In other instances, Africans availed themselves of empty or abandoned dwellings or barns. Some were so daring as to hold gatherings within their own quarters.

These meetings were marked with prayer, singing, preaching, and general fellowship. Consistent with an African aesthetic, worship involved the whole body in praise and the shout. There was an emphasis as well on orality and aurality, consistent with African vocalities and ironically well suited for a society that made it illegal to teach Africans to read, although some acquired the skill at great personal risk.

As noted by the historian John B. Boles, some Christian slaveholders believed themselves responsible for their chattels' bodies and souls, and thus provided some form of religious instruction. Enslaved Africans not part of the plantation system occasionally attended services with their owners, creating "bi-racial" religious communities. In the rarest instances, predominantly African congregations were founded, such as the First African Baptist Church near Savannah, Georgia, whose immediate antecedent predated the Revolutionary War by three years.

The narratives, however, reveal a consistent preference among the Africans for the secret meetings over the public gatherings. According to numerous narratives, only in the secret meetings could one worship as the spirit led. Yet in an atmosphere in which even the most docile and timid slave was viewed as potential flight risk or perhaps an agent of rebellion, any unauthorized and unsupervised assembly exposed those attending to the harshest penalties, up to and including death. Indeed, great care was taken to monitor the movement of Africans at all times. Slaveholders routinely sent out evening patrols through the slave quarters as well as the woods. In response, the Africans stationed look-outs and set traps to prevent their detection or capture. Songs such as "Steal Away to Jesus" not only spoke to longings for the next world but also might indicate when all was clear. Other strategies for avoiding detection included, in addition to building hush arbors, digging holes in fields so that worshippers could lie down to pray. Others would seek out hollows in which to sing and shout. Finally, a common practice at meetings was to turn a pot or kettle upside down to absorb sound.

Dominant Themes of Worship

A significant consequence of Africans creating spaces of their own was its profound impact on their appropriation of a Christian or biblical worldview. Africans developed their own interpretations and understandings, which often ran counter to those of their masters. For example, as opposed to the messages might instruct them to be obedient to their earthly masters as unto God, Africans emphasized a God of justice who supported the poor and the oppressed.

Perhaps the most dominant theme associated with the religious tradition of Africans within the invisible institution was their embrace of the Exodus narrative. The biblical images of Egypt, Exodus, Israel, and the promised land were very prominent. According to the scholar Hans A. Baer, Africans identified with Israel, seeing America as another

Egypt and their masters as Pharaoh. Central to such faith was the belief that if God acted to free the Hebrew slaves, God would do the same for them. Thus many Africans prayed expectantly for their future day of deliverance.

Other Africans adopted a more proactive posture toward securing their emancipation. For example, some took on the mantle of Moses, acting as God's instrument in the divine plan of liberation, to lead their people to a "promised land," whether it was the American North or Canada. One such "Moses" who became a celebrated conductor on the Underground Railroad was Harriet Tubman. The clandestine religious gatherings were frequently the staging grounds for such undertakings.

Still other Africans were inspired by other elements of the biblical tradition—the prophetic and apocalyptic narratives—to take even bolder actions. Texts that spoke to the destruction of Israel's enemies resonated with the desires of enslaved Africans to see their masters suffer punishment for the evil of slavery. Indeed, Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey, and Nat Turner, who directed the most well-known slave insurrections during the nineteenth century, were perceived by other Africans as uniquely gifted emissaries of the divine.

Numerous scholars have noted that Africans embraced an image of Jesus as one actively engaged in combating evil rather than the images of Jesus as the "Prince of Peace" or the "Lamb of God" favored by those within the dominant Christian culture. The Jesus to whom they bore witness in their preaching and teaching was a warrior king "seated on a milk white horse" with a sword and shield in his hands. He was a conquering hero who did not know defeat. The historian Lawrence Levine attributes this imagery to Africans' emphasis on themes within the biblical tradition that might sustain their hope for not only salvation for their souls, but also release from their physical oppression. Meanwhile, the Old Testament patriarchs, along with Jesus and the New Testament saints, were part of the religious lives of the slaves as well. In keeping with the African tradition of the ancestors, the biblical characters were immanently present and active in behalf of their descendants.

Religious diversity persisted throughout the invisible institution. There was no orthodoxy, no universal creeds, or dogmas. Although at times explicitly and intentionally Christian, "congregants" and their leaders embraced and evinced varying degrees of hybridity and syncretism in their convictions, rituals, and everyday life. Many pastors, preachers, and elders were also conjurers, root workers, hoodoos, and gopher doctors. In such capacities they would invoke

spiritual power for various purposes, such as healing, protection, and self-defense. Indeed, the African American religionist Theophus Smith has noted that for many the Bible in its objective presence was frequently a powerful magical formulary, used along with roots, herbs, and incantations to heal, to harm, and to transform one's circumstances. Such spiritual practices may have allowed Africans to procure some additional measure of control over their lives.

Legacy

Ultimately, however, the invisible institution dissolved into the visible black church. In the wake of the Civil War, African Americans in the South attempted to establish stable families, communities, and institutions, with the black church often occupying a pivotal role. African Americans who had been active in biracial churches left en masse to join the burgeoning African American congregations. Furthermore, independent African American churches in the North mobilized mission efforts for freedmen throughout the South. However, the religious legacy of the invisible institution remains a component of African American religion in all its variations.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War; African Traditional Religions; Civil War; Great Awakening(s); Literature: African American; Methodists: African American; Music: African American Gospel; Music: African American Spirituals; Santería; Voodoo.*

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Islam in North America

Though populations of Muslims living in North America remained rather small until the late nineteenth century, they have had a sustained presence and influence on the continent since the colonial period. Muslim North American history encompasses the narratives of two separate but often overlapping lineages: Muslims of African descent brought to America as slaves and Muslims who immigrated.

In 2009 Islam was the fastest-growing religion in North America, with estimates of up to 6 million Muslims in the United States, 500,000 in the Caribbean, and 1 million in Canada. Throughout North America the Muslim community is highly diverse, with large populations of South Asian, Southeast Asian, European, Arab, and African American believers. These Muslims have adapted their religious beliefs to new social and national contexts, often contending with significant resistance, violence, and prejudice from individuals and groups with negative views of Islam and its people.

Colonial History

Historically well known for expertise in navigation and exploration, Muslims may have visited the Americas as early as the fourteenth century. In fact, Christopher Columbus's voyage to the Americas was led by Muslim navigator Pedro Alonso Niño and staffed with Muslim crew members forced to affirm Christianity. Muslims were living in North America by the early sixteenth century, because some of the African slaves brought to New Spain practiced Islam. Transported from regions of Africa with large Muslim populations such as Senegambia, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and the Bight of Benin, Muslims made up 10–20 percent of the total number of slaves in the New World.

Muslim populations were not evenly distributed throughout North America during the colonial period. Instead, Muslims tended to be concentrated in certain locations because of the size of slave populations, the strictness of white oversight, and the trade relationships that slave traders had with Muslim-dominated regions of West Africa. In the North where slave populations were small and residential, scholars find little evidence of a Muslim presence. However, in parts of the American South and the Caribbean where slaves from Muslim regions were often preferred and slave communities were large with little white oversight, there is overwhelming documentation of a Muslim presence. States and countries with large Muslim populations—South Carolina, Georgia, Jamaica, Trinidad, and San Domingue

(Haiti)—have produced accounts of Muslim slaves who could read and write in Arabic, who organized religious communities, and who performed prayers throughout the day. Scholars have also recovered artifacts, including amulets, copies of the Qur'an and Qur'anic verses, and prayer beads. In the Caribbean the memory of Islamic and Moorish roots has even been retained in elements of language, naming, and cultural practice.

Throughout the American South and the Anglophone Caribbean, Muslim slaves were generally highly valued and treated differently from other Africans. Slaveholders tended to see Muslims as intelligent, qualified for skilled labor, capable of taking on supervisory positions, and less rebellious than other slaves. Documents praising the loyalty and intelligence of Muslim slaves are often the only sources that draw attention to individuals. For example, the lives of Muslim leaders Muhammad Kaba and Abu Bakr come to light only when Irish special magistrate R. R. Madden praised the men for not being involved in the subversive slave activities that occurred around 1820. Indeed, distinctions between Muslims and non-Muslims were made by African Muslims themselves who generally believed they were superior to non-Muslim Africans, whom they criticized as lazy, immoral, drunk, and unthriftful. For example, Muhammad Bath, the leader of a Muslim community in Trinidad, formed an Islamic society that sought to free its members from slavery by purchasing non-Muslim slaves that could be exchanged for the freedom of a Muslim. Although African Muslims did not desire to be enslaved themselves, they often did not oppose slavery as an institution and sometimes became slaveholders themselves after gaining their freedom.

Perhaps the most famous African Muslim living in North America, Omar Ibn Said, wrote fourteen Arabic manuscripts, including an autobiography, during his enslavement in North Carolina. Born in Futa Tooro, a region in Western Africa and formally trained as a Muslim scholar, Said was captured in 1807 during a military conflict and taken to the United States as a slave. After escaping, Said was recaptured and sold to James Owens in Cape Fear, North Carolina. The Owens family, intrigued by Said's intelligence and facility with Arabic, gave him ample time to study an Arabic translation of the Bible that Said's owner had procured from Francis Scott Key, the composer of "The Star Spangled Banner." Though scholars have argued over whether Said eventually converted to Christianity, Said asserts his dedication to Islam in his 1831 autobiography and annotated his Arabic Bible with praise to Allah. Evidence suggests that Said



African Muslim Omar Ibn Said wrote fourteen Arabic manuscripts, including an autobiography, during his enslavement in North Carolina.

retained much of his Muslim identity, as did many other first-generation slaves whose names are lost to history.

Until the early nineteenth century, demographic facts, combined with findings about the behavior and lifestyles of some slaves, indicate that during their enslavement Muslims, to the best of their abilities, continued to practice their religion. Indeed, significant historical events such as the Haitian Revolution have been linked to Muslim organizing and religious thought. However, by the nineteenth century the end of the international slave trade and the persistence of evangelical Christians had resulted in a dramatic, if not nearly complete, disappearance of Islam among slaves. Although the twentieth century would witness a resurgence in adherence to Islam among people of African descent, the history of Muslims in nineteenth-century North America lies primarily with the thousands of Arab and European Muslims who came to the continent seeking political refuge, economic opportunities, and new beginnings.

Immigration, 1875–1960

Held to advertise America's economic and technological prowess, the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876 attracted an international complement of merchants and

vendors, including, for the first time, Arab Muslim entrepreneurs interested in selling their goods in the United States. Fueled by increased attention to American economic opportunities and success stories from other Arabs, the first wave of Muslim immigration began at the close of the decade.

From 1875 until World War I Arab Muslims and Christians from Syria and Lebanon immigrated to the United States to escape the economic and political deterioration brought on by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Almost entirely young, male, and uneducated, these Arab laborers came to the United States to find economic advancement. A few dozen settled in Manhattan and Brooklyn, while most gradually moved westward, settling throughout the Midwest. Conditions in the United States were generally harsh for new immigrants and worse for the Arabs, who were often the victims of racism and other forms of prejudice or misunderstanding. Discouraged, many Muslim immigrants chose to return home. Those who remained in the United States endured a long spell of cultural and religious isolation.

Indeed, the historical and demographic realities of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America affected immigrants' abilities to practice and retain Islam as they had known it in their homelands. Practically speaking, worship led by a religious expert in a mosque was nearly impossible for most Muslims until well into the twentieth century. Those who continued to practice and maintain their faith worshipped in their homes and often looked to correspondences with friends and family as sources of religious inspiration and advice. Moreover, the cultural norms and dictates of American life were not well suited for the maintenance of many Muslim religious practices, especially the five daily prayers. Inevitably, the formation of new communities, minority status, and the contact with Christianity changed and challenged Muslims' religious worldviews. Faced with a new landscape, immigrant Muslims quickly began to forge new communities and create a distinct American Muslim subculture. Often the creation of a community was necessary to help immigrants survive mentally and physically in their new homes. In fact, it was not uncommon to find individuals with a highly diverse range of religious orthodoxies and backgrounds sharing a community.

Whether motivated by religious or secular concerns, the development of small Islamic communities throughout the Midwest by these first-wave settlers established important early networks for welcoming and supporting future immigrants. For example, in 1895 Syrian brothers Musa, Ali, and Abbas Habhab arrived in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and established

what is now the oldest continuously existing Muslim community in the United States. By 1920 nearly sixty Muslims were living in Cedar Rapids, and on June 16, 1934, the community dedicated the first Islamic house of worship in North America, known today as "America's Mother Mosque." Syrian-Lebanese immigrants, both Christian and Muslim, established communities in Ross, North Dakota; Michigan City, Indiana; Dearborn and Detroit, Michigan; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. These communities were populated by Arabs and Muslims from Central Asia, Iraq, Northern Africa, and the Middle East during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Like those who came before them, these newcomers were from the working class—poor farmers and unskilled workers who adopted new skills and labored as merchants, entrepreneurs, and factory workers.

But not all Muslims who came to America during the first wave of Muslim immigration were from Arab nations. Muslims were always within the throes of newcomers who hailed from Europe, where Islam has been practiced since the seventh century. Immigrants from Poland, home to a small Muslim community, and from Albania, whose citizens were mostly Muslim, settled in communities in Maine, Connecticut, and New York. By 1926 European Muslims in all three states had built mosques to serve their neighborhoods. In the American and Canadian West, thousands of Muslims from the Punjab region of India relocated to southwestern Canada, California, Oregon, and Washington to work on the railroads and in mining, logging, and farming.

There was no significant break in the presence of Muslims in the Caribbean during the nineteenth century as occurred in the United States. Although the communities of African Muslims in Jamaica, San Domingue, and Trinidad shrank dramatically after the slave trade ended, the system of indentured servitude that replaced slavery in the nineteenth century brought new groups of Muslims to the countries. Hundreds of thousands of East Indian Muslims flooded into Guyana, Trinidad, and Suriname, and smaller groups worked throughout the other countries. Not surprisingly, Indo-Pakistani varieties of Islam, especially the Ahmadiyya movement, flourished in the Caribbean. After the passage of the U.S. Immigration Act of 1924 prohibited Arab immigration and established a strict 2 percent quota system, the influx of Muslims into North America attenuated. However, between 1930 and 1938 when the Great Depression drove immigration, Arab immigration, and subsequently Muslim immigration, spiked when Middle Easterners came to the United States to work as laborers. This brief influx, however, was halted by World War II.

Scholars estimate that prior to World War II several thousand Muslims were living in America. The country experienced a second wave of Muslim immigration in the 1950s in response to the ongoing political and social upheavals in Muslim countries. Most notably, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War displaced 80 percent of Palestinian Muslims. Hundreds of thousands relocated to the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean. Also among these immigrants were Europeans, Syrians, Egyptians, and Iraqis fleeing governments hostile to their interests as political upheavals rocked Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Immigration laws throughout North America continued to strictly limit the number of individuals admitted, and laws favored families, political refugees, and merit-based immigration. Muslim professionals—primarily physicians—settled in the country for educational and professional opportunities. As a result of increased immigration and an explosion of conversions among African Americans, by 1960 a quarter-million Muslims were living in the United States.

Converts

Until the late nineteenth century, conversion to Islam was a largely unknown phenomenon in the United States. Although Muslim Africans converted a small number of their fellow slaves to Islam, nearly all Muslims living in America before the twentieth century brought their religion across the Atlantic. In the last fifty years, there has been an extraordinary increase in the numbers of Muslims in North America. In the United States almost one-third of Muslims are converts, and one-third of those converts are African American. Indeed, the history of Islam in North America cannot be told without paying significant attention to the innovative creativity of the African Americans who were responsible for the spread of Islam throughout Canada, the United States, and the Caribbean.

The first known American convert to Islam was Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb (1846–1916), a white U.S. consul to the Philippines. Raised Presbyterian, Webb experimented with a variety of religions before reading the Qur'an and converting to Islam in 1888. At the time of his conversion Webb had never met a Muslim or participated in any Islamic community. Nevertheless, Webb quickly threw himself into the study of Islam and embarked on a tour of India to meet important Muslim leaders. After his return to America, Webb dedicated himself to spreading Islam and founded the first American mosque in Manhattan in New York City. Although the mosque closed shortly after its

founding, Webb did successfully establish study circles in dozens of cities to support the small communities of the new, mostly white converts who followed in his wake. Through publications and speeches, most notably at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, Webb was an active proponent of Islam until his death in 1916.

Like Webb, the first major African American proponent of Islam, Noble Drew Ali (1886–1929), had little contact with Muslims or Islam before he proclaimed himself the prophet-leader of the first black Muslim organization in America, the Moorish Science Temple. Noble Drew Ali, born Timothy Drew, founded the Moorish Science Temple in the belief that Islam was the true religion of American blacks. His new sacred text, the Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America (also called the Seven Circle Koran), taught that American "Africans" were actually Moors—people of Moroccan descent—who had been tricked into believing they were Africans by the whites who enslaved them. Drew himself claimed both Cherokee and Moorish heritage and encouraged members to signify their Moorish ancestry by wearing fezzes, displaying the Moorish flag, and affixing "El" or "Bey" to their surnames. In 1913 Noble Drew Ali founded the Canaanite Temple in Newark, New Jersey. After a schism among his followers, Drew Ali moved to Chicago in 1925 and established temple #9 of the Moorish Science Temple of America. With the founding of temple #9, Moorish Science grew rapidly, attracting about 15,000 members at its peak. Despite their embrace of Islam, the teachings laid out in the Moorish Science Temple diverged significantly from classical Islam. For example, Moorish Science Temple believers did not adopt the Qur'an as their primary sacred text and maintained that Drew, rather than Muhammad, was the final prophet. Members of the temple concerned themselves with practical improvements in their social and economic lives and with the reeducation of Moorish Americans. Like other African American forms of Islam founded in industrial midwestern cities in the 1920s and 1930s, Drew's Moorish Science Temple was a response to the era's racism. Drew urged his followers to reject the derogatory labels such as black, colored, and Negro and taught that Chicago would become a second Mecca. By the 1940s the Moorish Science Temple had been eclipsed by the popularity of a new form of Islam. Today the Moorish Science Temple maintains a presence in several dozen northern cities.

The Nation of Islam, inspired by Noble Drew Ali's Moorish Science Temple, was a black nationalist organization that

was critically important to the civil rights movement and commanded significant social and cultural power through the middle of the twentieth century. Founded in Detroit by Wallace Fard Muhammad in 1930, the Nation of Islam sought to resurrect the black community by uplifting the race to its fullest religious and social potential. The Nation emphasized strict gender roles, reform of criminals in prison, and black separatism. All of this was held together by what the Nation termed *Islam*, which was somewhat different from what Muslims elsewhere in the world practiced. The Nation taught that Fard Muhammad was the messianic fulfillment of Islamic and Christian prophecy. Although the group maintained that the Qur'an was a central sacred scripture, it adopted an idiosyncratic creation and apocalypse story that Elijah Muhammad, Fard's first disciple, claimed to have learned from Fard in the 1920s. The elements of Fard's apocalyptic vision reflected the Nation's emergence at the height of American's eugenics hysteria and offered a kind of alternative religious explanation for the place of eugenics scientists—Muhammad's story credited a "mad scientist" with creating the white race, who would go on to oppress blacks for hundreds of years. Although the Nation was an important part of the civil rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s, the group's influence quickly declined when Elijah Muhammad died in 1975. By the 1990s the Nation had a very small membership of less than 50,000 adherents and found itself increasingly under attack from Jews, who claimed the Nation's leaders made anti-Semitic remarks, and from more orthodox Muslims, who claimed the Nation was a departure from Islam.

Less powerful and pervasive than the Nation of Islam and the Moorish Science Temple, the Indian Ahmadiyya Muslim movement met with success in converting African Americans. Founded in Punjab, India, in 1889 by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Ahmadiyya Islam was brought to America by Indian missionaries who aimed to convert ethnic Muslims. In 1920 the first Ahmadiyya Muslim missionary to arrive in America, Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, quickly discovered that whites and ethnic Muslims had little interest in the Ahmadiyya message and so was largely unsuccessful in his efforts to establish Ahmadi communities. Ten years later, Sufi Mutiur Rahman was able to convert blacks to Islam by preaching a message of tolerance and diversity. Ahmadiyya Islam therefore became an Indian-led movement with a mostly African American following. Under Rahman's leadership, in 1950 the community constructed the first mosque in Washington, D.C. By 2009 hundreds of Ahmadiyya mosques were

scattered throughout Canada, the United States, and the Caribbean. The largest mosque in Canada, the Baitun Nur Mosque in Calgary, serves the Ahmadi community established there in 1963.

People of African descent were the first significant populations in North America to convert to Islam. Islam spread quickly through the prison system, and conversions were fueled by the new and often unsatisfactory urban condition of blacks resettling in the north as part of the Great Migration. Disenchanted and poor, African Americans from the urban north converted for a variety of reasons, but for some the poverty and racism they encountered in those cities rendered the Nation of Islam's message about white devils and black superiority plausible. Presented as the "natural" religion of Africans, Islam was empowering. Embracing Islam meant rejecting Christianity as a religion of oppression and enslavement. Moreover, Islam reaffirmed gender roles and personal dignity for black men and women who believed that slavery had undermined the black family and relationships between the sexes. Indeed, the broad alignment of Islam with black nationalism and civil rights causes meant that for a time in the 1950s through the 1970s black Islam was a powerful political and religious voice.

The sometimes significant departures from classical Islam embraced by many black Muslims were not generally well received, however, in the larger Muslim world. In particular, immigrant Muslims were often appalled by the differences they observed in groups like the Nation of Islam, the Ahmadiyya, and the Moorish Science Temple. Faced with contradictory accounts of Islam, many African Americans repositioned themselves as part of the Islamic mainstream and adopted Sunni Islam in a transition that began in the 1970s.

After 1965

In the hundreds of years that Muslims had lived in America they had established a small but enduring community infrastructure. They founded national political and social action organizations such as the Muslim Student Association, Islamic Society of North America, and Federation of Islamic Associations of the United States and Canada, built mosques, and settled in communities. This groundwork would accommodate and support the population surge that occurred when North American immigration laws were liberalized in the 1960s. As more Muslims came to the continent to work and attend school, early settlement patterns were reinforced because newcomers elected to live in areas with Muslim

communities and institutions. Northern California, for example, remains a center of Indo-Pakistani immigration. Farming undertaken by Indian immigrants in the nineteenth century continues to be carried on today by second- and third-generation family members and new settlers. Dearborn, Michigan, settled in the nineteenth century, maintains its status as an Arab American nerve center. With an Arab American population of 30,000 (30 percent of the city's total population, according to the 2000 census), Dearborn is home to the Arab American National Museum and the largest mosque in North America, the Islamic Center of America. New centers of Muslim life also emerged. In Canada, French-speaking Muslims from North and West Africa and Syria resettled in French-speaking parts of Canada. In Quebec, Islam is the third largest religious denomination, and in some parts of Alberta Arab Muslims are so prominent that Arabic is taught in public schools. In the Caribbean the largest Muslim populations are in Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname, where the religion is slowly losing its exclusively Indian character because Islam has made a comeback among people of African descent.

Demographically, most Muslims who immigrated after 1965 were educated, fluent in English, and Westernized. In large part the decision to immigrate was driven by dissatisfaction with political or social conditions in people's home countries. The continuing Palestinian diaspora, the Iranian Revolution, the Lebanese civil war, and the pro-Soviet coup in Afghanistan all contributed to increased emigration from those regions. After passage of the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act, immigrants generally left their home countries with no intentions to return, significantly reshaping the demographics of the U.S. Muslim community. For the first time in history a significant number of Muslim women and children lived in North America. Women and men interested in gender equality and feminism then organized groups such as the Association of Muslim Women in America, which seeks to create community for women, advance equality, and educate. The more open immigration situation also led to a significantly more diverse American Muslim population. Because immigrants from all over the world could now more easily enter the United States, American Islam began to reflect the international diversity of the religion. Practitioners of nearly all varieties of Islam, from convert to ethnic and from Arab to Asian, and members of all the three major branches of Islam (Sunni, Shi'ite, and Sufi) have significant communities in North America. Although Shi'a Muslims make up only 10 percent of the

total Muslim population worldwide, in the United States about 20 percent of Muslims are Shi'a, most from the Middle East. Shi'a Muslims constitute a majority of Muslims in Iran, Iraq, and Bahrain and sizable minorities in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Even smaller groups such as the Ismailis, a sect of Shi'a Muslims, have a presence in the United States and Canada. Nearly all of the 40,000 Ismailis in the United States are immigrants who were seeking refuge from politically unsettled regions of central Asia and Africa. In the United States, the Ismaili community is centered in Houston, Texas, where the Ismaili population numbers about 13,000, according to a 2003 Harvard University Pluralism Project report.

The many Muslim groups that have settled in North America have often found that their religious and cultural practices are unable to translate directly in the American context. In most areas the Muslim population is not dense enough to support significant ethnic and religious factionalism. Indeed, often differences that would be important in people's countries of origin cannot be successfully enforced, such as the factionalism between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims. Although differences are not always ignored, American Muslims tend to downplay them in exchange for participation in a broad community, and 90 percent of the 12,000 mosques in America have members who are a mix of Asians, Arabs, whites, African Americans, and Latinos. In fact, the very character of the mosque itself has changed. Mosques traditionally served only as religious structures, but in America today they often include some secular features such as schools, day care centers, banquet halls, and athletic facilities. The resulting complex is often called an Islamic Center. The Islamic Center, then, serves not only as a mosque that provides religious services, but also as a community center that creates a space for Muslims to come together in contexts outside of worship. It is not uncommon for secular members of Muslim families or cultures to participate actively in the Islamic Center as a way to have access to an ethnic or cultural community.

Other changes in the ways in which Islam is generally practiced in North America reflect the specific living conditions in North American countries. For example, because of the structure of society in most parts of North America Muslims find it difficult to observe daily prayer. Moreover, many Muslims now carry out their religious services on Sundays rather than on Fridays. Similarly, demographic diversity has led groups traditionally disinclined toward conversion to Islam to become increasingly integrated,

including whites, Latinos, and Native Americans. In the United States, particularly in the West and California, certain expressions of Islam have become very attractive to some people, primarily whites, participating in the New Age movement. Sufism, a small branch of Islam that emphasizes the mystical and emotional elements of the religion, has been embraced in some circles as an ancient and expedient route to greater religious awareness. Women, especially, seem to find the music, dance, and ritual in Sufi worship attractive. Many New Age American Muslims believe that Sufism emphasizes the democratic elements of Islam, and is therefore especially well suited to the American context.

Controversies

Throughout North America Muslims face unique circumstances within their communities and the nation. They not only navigate participation in local religious communities that bring together believers with dramatically different backgrounds and interpretations of Islam, but also simultaneously deal with issues related to the reception of Muslims broadly. These issues include religious misunderstanding, prejudice, racism, and minority status, and Muslims have long faced misunderstanding of and discrimination for their religious beliefs. In North America, and especially in the United States, concerns about Islam have generally centered around two major issues: gender and violence.

Gender and Sexual Orientation

Religious teachings on gender relate to both the role of women in Islam and the validity of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) identities. Both subjects have long been a topic of conversation in Islam, and they have been receiving even more attention in recent years as the American media frequently depict Muslim women as subjects of oppression and as LGBT Muslims come out of the closet. As in the other Abrahamic religious traditions, the sacred scripture of Islam, the Qur'an, can be interpreted to condemn homosexuality, delimit valid sexual practice, give men authority over women, and advocate for strict gender roles. However, other understandings are available and practiced, because Muslims do not participate in a monolithic religion or culture. Among the various ethnic and convert varieties of Islam is a diversity of views on gender and sexuality that ranges from the very conservative to the very progressive.

For many Americans one of the most visible symbols of Islam is a woman wearing a head covering or *hijab*. The veiled Muslim woman has come to be a symbol of the

backwardness, oppression, and danger of Islamic militancy. Despite the fact that many Muslim women do not wear the veil and do practice many different versions of Islam and vary in their orthodoxy, the notion that Islam is inherently oppressive to women has become one of the most politically and culturally powerful notions among Americans today. Muslim women have been placed in defensive positions on veiling and—whether they advocate veiling or not—have had to engage the prevalent assumptions that veiling is always a coercive and oppressive religious practice.

The controversy over veiling and the rights of women in Islam is at least twofold. On the one hand, Muslims, especially American Muslims, are concerned about the negative effects of using images of veiled women as evidence that oppressive practices or teachings characterize all Muslims or Islam. On the other hand, Muslims disagree over whether female veiling is required by Islam and whether veiling is an inherently oppressive practice. Muslim feminists often point out that although some women have been coerced into veiling, others have chosen to take up the veil out of a political or personal commitment to Islam, or as an expression of their identity. Indeed, it is highly likely that in any American mosque one could find individuals willing to aggressively critique or support veiling.

The issues surrounding the acceptance of LGBT men and women in Islam bring up an entirely different set of concerns, at least in part because the overwhelming tendency of Islamic communities to view homosexuality as sinful and deviant is accepted by many Americans, especially conservative Christians, who are often the most vocal in deriding Islam on other issues. For this reason Islamic opposition to LGBT identity or civil rights is not frequently used to attack the religion—with the exception of some human rights advocates or LGBT rights activists concerned about violence against and intolerance of gay Muslims. Nevertheless, within the Muslim community as a whole a growing contingent of LGBT Muslims and their allies—mostly from North America and Europe—are attempting to challenge long-standing positions. Indeed, the vast majority of American LGBT Muslims describe extreme marginalization from their religious communities, which largely teach that homosexuality is wrong and stress the nonfluidity of male and female gender roles. Muslims living in America and overseas often see homosexuality and gender nonconformity as a result of contact with a licentious Western culture. Therefore, the cultural and ethnic

resistance to adopting Western ideas of sexuality and gender are often just as strong as the religious reasons given for rejecting homosexuality. This feeling of oppression and misunderstanding is only compounded by the stereotyping of Muslims in the broader culture that identifies Islam with terrorism, and is generally suspicious of all people of color—especially Arabs.

Violence and Terrorism

After the attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., by Saudi Arabian Muslims on September 11, 2001, American Muslims found themselves in an especially precarious position. President George W. Bush exacerbated their difficulties by calling the retaliatory war in Afghanistan a “crusade,” but he also quickly moved to affirm that Islam was “a religion of peace.” Meanwhile, American Muslims were left to deal with the social and political fallout from the 2001 attacks. Socially, people who appeared to be of Arab descent, including South Asians and Persians, were targeted by xenophobic Americans who associated Arab ethnicity with terrorism against the United States. Since the events of September 11 the tendency to conflate Islam with Arab descent has continued, a misstep that not only ignores the vast ethnic and racial backgrounds of Muslims but also overlooks the fact that a large number of Arabs are Christians. During the months following September 11, 2001, several mosques and Islamic centers were vandalized with anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiments.

Although President Bush and most other government officials officially affirmed the belief that Islam was a religion of peace and that Muslims were law-abiding American citizens, programs put in place in 2001 seemed to contradict those beliefs. Prominent Muslims found that a variety of law enforcement agencies, from the local police to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), suspected them of plotting terrorist attacks because they were Muslim. In California, FBI agents were directed to collect demographic information about terrorists by conducting research on the heavily Arab and Muslim neighborhoods and communities, and were further told to count the mosques in a given area in order to determine which areas needed the closest monitoring. The USA PATRIOT Act (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) passed six weeks after the September 11 attacks abridged many constitutional protections that all Americans had previously enjoyed, but prosecutions based on its provisions tended to be focused only on

men of Arab ethnicity and Muslim religion. Muslims also found themselves targeted by an increasingly vigilant Immigration and Nationalization Service (INS). In the aftermath of the 2001 attacks the INS took dimmer view of immigration violations, but focused especially on implementing a “zero tolerance” policy for immigrants from the Middle East and other Muslim countries. Finally, a provision of the Patriot Act called for enhanced scrutiny of charitable giving, and once again this scrutiny fell primarily on Muslim and Arab-affiliated charities. In the five years following 2001, some prominent Muslim charities had their assets frozen under Patriot Act rules, which required no reporting or warning and a minimal appeal process. With their assets frozen, these charities often found themselves unable to mount a legal defense, and several folded under the weight of unknown accusations. Some Muslims asked the U.S. government to provide a list of approved Muslim charities, a request that was denied, making it impossible for Muslims to escape suspicion by being accidentally associated with a charity accused of supporting terrorism.

Since the events of September 11, Muslims have increasingly become subjected to Christian missionary efforts. Operating under the assumption that adherence to Islam inclined people toward terrorism, some conservative Christians initiated or increased long-term efforts to expose Islam as an illegitimate religion and convert Muslims all over the world to Christianity. Leading evangelical leaders, most notably former presidential candidate Pat Robertson, led a media crusade to “prove” that Islam was innately violent, backward, and deceptive. In doing so, he frequently brought former Muslims who had converted to Christianity onto his show to expose the brutal truth of Islam. Discussions of Islam and its relationship to terrorism provoked a national conversation about “true Islam.” Each side attempted to prove that the innate essential character of the religion was peaceful or violent in order to determine whether the terrorists who carried out the September 11 attacks were really Muslim.

This new legal and cultural environment mobilized American Muslims in unprecedented and unexpected ways. For one thing they engaged in an extensive public relations campaign in which the Council on American-Islamic Relations, for example, famously issued a post-September 11 *fatwa* against terrorism. Political change was also under way as Muslims became increasingly concerned about U.S. foreign policy. Throughout the 1980s and until 2000 most Muslims voted for Republican candidates for public office.

In the 2000 presidential campaign candidate George W. Bush promised to revoke a 1995 ruling allowing the use of secret evidence in certain courts, thereby prompting Muslims to support his candidacy. But after passage of the Patriot Act in 2001, as well as the onset of two protracted wars against Muslim-majority countries, Muslims supported Democrat John Kerry by a nearly 20 percentage point margin in the 2004 presidential election. Perhaps more significant, American Muslims began to see the critical need to voice their opinions in political matters, leading to the creation of new grassroots organizing efforts that turned record numbers of Muslim voters out to the elections in 2004, 2006, and 2008. As a result, in November 2006 in a major political achievement, Minnesota Democrat Keith Ellison became the first Muslim to be elected to Congress. The historic significance of this election was sullied only by the controversy that ensued when Ellison indicated that he would be bringing Thomas Jefferson's copy of the Qur'an to his swearing-in ceremony.

In the twenty-first century crimes against American Muslims have fallen substantially, and American Muslim organizations have found themselves able to give voice effectively to the concerns and problems that Muslims and Arabs in America experienced after the September 11, 2001, attacks. As a result, the political and social climate in the United States has dramatically improved. Nevertheless, polls of Americans continue to register negative opinions about the loyalty of Muslim and Arab citizens as well as suspicion about Islam as a religion. The persistence of negative valuations of Islam came to light again during the 2008 presidential campaign when Republicans questioned Democratic candidate Barack Obama's presumed Muslim background and middle name, Hussein. Obama, who is a Christian, was forthcoming in defending his religious identity, and although he stated that he had never been a Muslim, he challenged the idea that it would have been a problem if he had been a Muslim. Given this climate, Muslims in America continue to advocate for their interests through political action groups, increased visibility, and education.

See also *African American Religion: Post-Civil Rights Era; Angels; Architecture: Muslim; Canada: Pluralism; Children and Adolescents; Devotionalism; Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools; Education: Sunday Schools; Islam Tradition and Heritage; Literature: Early Republic and the "American Renaissance"; Nation(s) of Islam; Qur'an; Women: Muslim; Worship: Muslim.*

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Islam Tradition and Heritage

For the historian of religion, Islam begins in Arabia with the birth of Muhammad in 570 CE. Judaism and Christianity were both known in Arabia, and Islam is seen alongside these earlier traditions as another ethical monotheism. For the believing Muslim, however, Islam is not a religion created by Muhammad, but the religion of God, given to Adam, the first created human being. Muslims believe that Muhammad was the last in a long line of prophets (beginning with Adam), refer to him as the prophet Muhammad, and add a formula of praise and blessing after his name ("May God bless him and give him peace," or "Peace be upon him").

Historical Beginnings

Muslims consider the year 622 CE to be Year One of their calendar. This was the year the prophet Muhammad and his

followers left their native city of Mecca to migrate to the neighboring city of Medina. For thirteen years preceding this emigration [*hijrah* in Arabic] from Mecca, the prophet Muhammad had been receiving revelations that commanded him to warn the people of his city against polytheism and social injustice. Mecca had long been the spiritual center for the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula with many individuals annually journeying to the city to visit the idols housed in an ancient Meccan sanctuary, the *Ka'ba*. The leaders of Mecca became increasingly indignant about Muhammad's revelations because they threatened the status quo in religion and politics. His attacks on idolatry involved attacks on the business of the city in welcoming pilgrims to the idols. Finally, after an unsuccessful attempt on his life, Muhammad and his followers left. For later Muslims, this model of leaving home for another place became a symbol of the notion that faith is not linked to living in any one place.

When the Muslims arrived in Medina, they built the first place of prayer known as a *masjid* (literally, "the place of prostration," referring to the bowing down that occurs in Muslim prayer) or mosque, and set up a way of life based on the series of revelations that had come to Muhammad. Three times their enemies from Mecca attacked them trying to destroy the new Muslim community, but each time the attack failed. The successful defense of the community bolstered the faith of all the members, and the community expanded rapidly as new people converted. In 630, not long before the Prophet's death, the expanded Muslim community launched a campaign to capture the sanctuary in Mecca. The result was the destruction of all idols housed in the sanctuary, the rededication of the *Ka'ba* as the temple originally built by Abraham and Ishmael to honor God, and the conversion of all other peoples of Mecca and the Arabian Peninsula to monotheism.

Throughout the period when the Prophet had been receiving revelations, he had recited what he received to his followers. Many of the new believers often memorized the verses, and sometimes the verses were used for prayer. This is comparable to the way in which Jews and Christians use words of the Bible in worship. After the death of the Prophet, the leaders of the community undertook to compile the verses into a collection known as the Qur'an. Their sources were the memorized verses, as well as words copied down on palm-leaves, stones, or other writing materials that had been available to the community of followers. The accepted final version of the Qur'an was established during the caliphate of Uthman (644–656 CE). Although the

written version of the Qur'an was recognized as the word of God, for the ritual life of the community, hearing the recitation of the Qur'an remained the basic way for Muslims to enter into a feeling of closeness to God. From the origins of the Islamic religion until the present, the recitation of, and listening to, the Qur'an has been understood to be a significant form of religious practice.

Although the Qur'an has been translated into other languages, Muslims recognize the Arabic version as the true word of God. Any translation is by definition a change from what Muslims consider to be the divine word. As such, Muslims are required to conduct their prayers in Arabic, and children are encouraged to memorize the Qur'an in Arabic regardless of mother tongue.

After the Prophet's death, the community became responsible for selecting the caliph, the leader. The main differences between Sunni and Shi'i Muslims center on this question of who the appropriate successor should be. The majority, the Sunni, selected one of the senior members of the community to be leader. Revelation was no longer received and prophecy had ended, but in other respects, the caliph was the leader. The Shi'i maintained that Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, and his heirs should have been the leaders of the community. Today, the Shi'i still claim that leadership of the community should rest with a direct descendant of Muhammad. Most Shi'i claim that there were twelve of these descendants who exercised authority; they are known as the twelver Shi'i. The Ismaili are a minority within the Shi'i; they claim to recognize seven of the descendants. Many of them acknowledge the Aga Khan as their present-day spiritual guide.

For centuries, most Muslims considered the Sunni caliph to be the central political authority of the Muslim world. Finally, after more than a thousand years, the last Sunni caliph was exiled from Turkey in 1924. The abolition of the caliphate coincided with the onset of the Turkish revolution that heralded the disintegration of the last remains of the Ottoman Empire. Since that time, Muslim countries have been developing new modes of government, usually based on constitutions and legislative assemblies. Following the end of World War II, several Muslim countries have been successful in implementing these changes. However, many Muslims have emigrated to Europe and North America, often because of political unrest in their countries of origin. As a result, Islam is now the second largest tradition in Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, and perhaps the United States as well.

Muslim Practices: The Hadith of Gabriel

A famous saying in the Muslim tradition, known as the “hadith of Gabriel,” begins the section on faith in one of the standard collections of hadith (the sayings of Muhammad).

The story takes place in Medina, where a number of people are gathered around the prophet Muhammad. Into their midst comes a mysterious stranger, who bears no mark of the traveling required to reach that oasis town. The stranger calls Muhammad by his given name instead of his title, the Messenger of God, and places his hands on Muhammad, indicating a close personal relationship between them. The stranger asks Muhammad to tell him about Islam. Muhammad responds that Islam means that you bear witness that there is no God but God and that Muhammad is the messenger of God, perform prayer, give to charity, fast during the month of Ramadan, and make the pilgrimage to Mecca if you have the financial means to do so. When Muhammad finishes, the man tells Muhammad that he is correct. The companions of Muhammad are puzzled at this, a stranger asking the Messenger of God about Islam, and then telling Muhammad that his answers were correct. However, Muhammad is nonplussed about the situation. The man then asks Muhammad to tell him about faith. Muhammad replies that faith means that you have faith in God, in God’s angels, in God’s books, in God’s messengers, in the Day of Judgment, and in the measuring out of God’s justice. Again, the man tells Muhammad that he is correct. Then the man asks Muhammad to tell him about doing what is beautiful. Muhammad replies that doing what is beautiful means that you worship God as if you see God—for even if you do not see God, God sees you. The man then asks Muhammad to tell him about the Hour of Judgment. Muhammad refuses to answer this question, saying that he knows no more about it than the man does. The man persists, and asks Muhammad to tell him some of the signs that mark the Hour of Judgment. Muhammad responds that you will see slave girls giving birth to their masters, and barefoot, destitute shepherds competing with one another in building magnificent buildings. After this, the mysterious stranger turns around and leaves. Muhammad waits for a while, then tells the people that the stranger was not a man, but the Angel Gabriel who came to teach them their religion.

For Muslims, this story speaks to them about the truth of their religion. Muhammad is visited by the Angel Gabriel to confirm the teachings that he has brought. Of course, once Muhammad’s companions realized that it was Gabriel and not an ordinary human person who was asking the questions,

it all made sense. Gabriel, being an angel, was able to travel and arrive in Medina unannounced, bearing no marks from what otherwise would be a long journey from any direction. Being Gabriel, he could also be quite familiar with Muhammad, calling him by name and being in his personal space. Also being Gabriel, he knew the answers to the questions that he asked. Interestingly enough, he asks what might be considered a trick question about the final judgment of God. Muhammad neatly sidesteps the problem, telling Gabriel that neither of them knows the answer to that question—it is a matter known only to God. What Muhammad does talk about is an inverting of the social order that defies conventional logic, slaves giving birth to their masters and poor shepherds creating fantastic buildings. We will discuss each of the four questions that Muhammad answers as a way of describing what it means to be Muslim.

Islam (Surrender): The Five Pillars of Islam

The first question that Muhammad is asked is about Islam. Literally, the term *Islam* translates as surrender or submission to God. However, this is not a passive submission, but more of an engaged surrender to God. In his answer to this question, Muhammad identifies five activities, which are often known as the Five Pillars of Islam. Just as a pillar is a support for a building, so these five activities are the support for the religion of Islam. Islam, like Judaism, is often described as a religion of orthopraxy, “right conduct,” compared with Christianity, which is usually described as being more concerned with orthodoxy, or “right belief.” This is not to say that Christians do not believe in doing the right thing, but that for many Christians, doing all of the good works in the world will not save you, only belief in Jesus as the Christ will save you. Muslims and Jews, to be sure, also have an understanding of what is right belief, but they are more concerned with the performance of actions. The first point to be made about the Five Pillars is that they are all activities. Some are activities that you may never do or do only once, such as the pilgrimage to Mecca, but others such as prayer are repeated throughout the day.

The second point to be made about the Five Pillars is that they place an emphasis on community. Muslims refer to their community as an *ummah*, in a usage parallel to that of the church for Christians. The church is the body of believers, and only secondarily is it the physical building in which that community may worship. Similarly, the *ummah* is the community of Muslim believers. The prophet Muhammad said that anyone who performs the prayers and eats the ritually

acceptable food is a Muslim, indicating the importance of community. Some of the Five Pillars can be done in private, but they are all encouraged to be done in community. Muslims value the idea of corporate worship, just as Jews and Christians do. So, it is perfectly acceptable to pray at home alone, but better to pray with others; perfectly acceptable to break one's fast alone, but better to do it in community. The pilgrimage and the giving to charity can only be done, by definition, in community. A discussion of each of the Five Pillars follows.

Witness (Shahadah), or Faith Statement

The first pillar is the statement of faith. This is literally one sentence in two parts: I bear witness that there is no God but God, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God. The only thing that is necessary to convert to Islam is to say the faith statement, with sincerity, in the presence of Muslim witnesses. The first part of the faith statement indicates the monotheism of Islam. There is no one worthy of worship other than the one true God. For Muslims, this is believed to be the same God worshipped by Jews, Christians, and other monotheists. A saying of the prophet Muhammad is that all children are born with this true faith, but their parents turn them into Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, or Muslims.

The second part of the faith statement indicates the importance of Muhammad. A number of times in the Qur'an, Muslims are commanded to obey God and Muhammad, for example: "Obey God and the Messenger that you might find mercy" (3:132). For Muslims, Muhammad is the exemplar; one is to observe the pillars in the way in which Muhammad performed them. Observant Muslims will recite the faith statement numerous times throughout the day in their daily prayers.

Prayer (Salat)

Salat is the second pillar. For Muslims, the daily prayers are of primary importance, a reminder throughout the day for all things created by God to praise and surrender to their creator. Anyone who has seen Muslims pray will know that the prayers are embodied, meaning that one does not remain in a stationary position such as sitting in a pew in church. The prayers consist of standing, bowing, and prostrating one's self, symbolizing their prostration before God. The place of prostration, literally, in Arabic is *masjid*, which as described earlier is the name given to a Muslim house of

prayer. Sometimes, this is also known as a mosque. Prayers are to take place at five times during the day: in the morning, at noon, in the afternoon, in the evening, and at night.

Before the prayers begin, one is to be in a state of ritual purity. This is accomplished through ablution, washing the hands, face (including mouth and nostrils), arms, and feet. A full bath ablution is required after activities such as sexual intercourse, which leave a person in a state of ritual impurity. Women are required to have their heads covered for prayer, but this head covering is optional for men. Both men and women are required to dress modestly. One can pray in any clean place, and individual prayer is permissible but congregational prayer is preferred. If two or more people are praying, then one person stands slightly in front, and leads the prayer. This person is known as an imam, or prayer leader. A woman can lead a group of women in prayer, but a man traditionally leads a group of men or a mixed-gender group. In 2005, however, there were a few cases known where women led mixed-gender prayers in the United States and Canada. For congregational prayer, men and women line up in rows behind the imam. The prayer is segregated by gender, meaning separate rows of men and women. Sometimes, there are separate prayer areas for women. Canadian Muslim filmmaker Zarqa Nawaz has directed a documentary about her experiences with gender segregation in mosques, entitled *Me and the Mosque* (2005). Wherever Muslims are when they pray, they line up facing the Ka'ba in Mecca, believed to be the first place of monotheistic prayer.

Observant Muslims are required to pray five times a day. The Muslim religious calendar, discussed later, is a lunar calendar, much like the Jewish religious calendar. Months go from new moon to new moon. However, the prayer times depend on the movement of the sun. In this way, both the lunar and the solar cycle are incorporated into Muslim life. The morning prayer takes place between dawn and sunrise. The noon prayer takes place after the sun has reached its peak in the sky, but before afternoon. The afternoon prayer takes place between the noon prayer and sunset. The evening prayer takes place after sunset. Finally, the night prayer takes place between the evening prayer and dawn. Each of the prayers consists of a fixed number of cycles of prayer, involving standing, bowing, and kneeling. The morning prayer consists of two cycles, the noon prayer of four cycles, the afternoon prayer of four cycles, the evening prayer of three cycles, and the night prayer of four cycles.

The prayer begins with a call to prayer (*adhan* in Arabic). Traditionally, this was broadcast outside the mosque, to let

people in the community know that it was time for prayer. However, with noise restrictions in many places in North America, Muslims often have to make the call inside the mosque, to those who are already assembled for the prayer. The call is translated as follows from the Arabic:

God is Greater (repeated four times)
 I bear witness that there is no God but God
 (repeated twice)
 I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of
 God (repeated twice)
 Come alive to the prayer (repeated twice)
 Come alive to the good (repeated twice)
 God is Greater (repeated twice)
 There is no god but God.

For the morning prayer, with the understanding that some people may have a difficult time getting out of bed, the line “Prayer is better than sleep” is added to the call after “Come alive to the good.” The prayers are then recited in Arabic. They consist of the first chapter of the Qur’an, along with other short verses or chapters of the Qur’an as chosen by the person leading the prayer. After the formal prayer, one can make one’s own personal prayer to God, in whatever language one chooses.

All other prayers may be prayed alone, but the Friday noon prayer is offered in congregation. For men, this prayer is obligatory, but for women it is optional. Unlike the other noon prayers, which consist of four cycles of prayer, the Friday congregational prayer consists of two cycles, with two short sermons taking the place of the other cycles. The person who leads the prayer usually gives these sermons.

Charity (Zakat)

Numerous times the Qur’an links prayer with charitable giving, which is the third pillar. For Muslims, wealth is not seen as a bad thing in and of itself, but as a blessing from God. That said, those who have are expected to care for those who do not have. In Christianity, we might refer to this charitable giving as a tithe. In Islam, it is referred to as *zakat*, which has a meaning of “purification” or “increase” in Arabic. This obligatory charity is incumbent on all adults who have more than the minimum amount of certain assets. This obligatory charity is fixed at 2.5 percent of one’s wealth above that minimum amount. The wealth includes gold and silver, savings (bank accounts, stocks, bonds), livestock or agricultural produce, goods for sale, and rental income. One is to calculate one’s

wealth each year and give 2.5 percent of that for charitable purposes. Traditionally, those eligible for this charity have been understood to include the poor and needy, those who administer the charity, those who have recently converted or might convert and may need financial support, slaves who need money to buy their freedom, those in debt, needy travelers, and in the cause of God. The traditional understanding is that this money must be owned by those who receive it, so it cannot be used to build facilities such as a hospital or a mosque. The money also cannot be given to one’s immediate family. Some Muslim scholars think that part of this money can be given to non-Muslims, under the category of “those whose hearts are to be reconciled.” In addition to *zakat* is the voluntary charity, described in the Qur’an as a “loan to God” (2:245). Giving more than the obligatory 2.5 percent is considered voluntary charity, as is doing a number of other things such as feeding the hungry or contributing to a hospital or even smiling at your neighbor.

Fasting (Sawm) in the Month of Ramadan

The Muslim calendar, like the Jewish calendar, is a lunar calendar. This means that it has 12 months, but each month goes from new moon to new moon, a period of 29 or 30 days. On average, this means that the lunar calendar year has about 354 days, and is some 11 days shorter than the solar calendar. In the Jewish tradition, a “leap month” is added every few years to keep the lunar calendar synchronized with the solar calendar. The Qur’an specifically forbids this type of intercalation. Also, in the Jewish tradition, one can use astronomical tables to determine the beginning of a month. In the Muslim tradition, the new moon must be physically observed to begin a new month. What this means is that the Muslim lunar calendar cycles through the solar calendar.

The ninth month of the Muslim calendar is the month of Ramadan. In 2009, this month was started in North America on August 21. In 2010, it should start near August 12, and will move back through the solar calendar about eleven days each year. The fourth pillar, Ramadan is the month of fasting, where all adults who are able to are required to fast during daylight hours. The fast includes no eating, drinking (not even water), smoking, or sexual activity from dawn to sunset. When Ramadan falls during winter months in the Northern hemisphere, the dawn to sunset period is not long. However, when Ramadan falls during summer months, the time of the fast is longer because the days are longer.

There is no set age at which one begins the fast. Children as young as 8 or 9 may begin by fasting a day or two during the month, with the number of days increasing every year as the child gets older. By adolescence, many Muslims are fasting for the entire month. The fast is not meant to be harmful, so anyone who could be hurt by fasting is exempt. This includes small children, pregnant or nursing women, diabetics, people who are ill, travelers, people who are not mentally responsible for their own actions, and the elderly. Women who are menstruating are exempt from fasting, but they must later make up the days missed.

During the month, one wakes up before dawn and eats a small meal. One then declares his or her intention to fast for the entire day. Some people try to limit their physical activity during the month of fasting, but they are expected to carry out their normal work duties. At sunset, one breaks the fast and prays the evening prayer. One is encouraged to break the fast in community, and many people sponsor *iftars* (what these ceremonial meals are called) for their family or community.

For Muslims, Ramadan is a spiritual month. The equivalent is the Sabbath in the Jewish tradition. There, you are expected to work for six days, and then rest on the seventh day. The Sabbath is a day for rest, time with family, and spiritual reflection. For Muslims, the month of fasting is like a month of Sabbath. For eleven months out of the year, one makes one's way in the world. During the month of fasting, individuals reflect more on their religious lives. They are encouraged to break the fast at home with their families. During this month, Muslims are encouraged to spend time reading the Qur'an and to pray extra prayers in the mosque at night. On certain nights at the end of Ramadan, devout Muslims may spend the entire night in the mosque, praying to God.

Ramadan is seen as a spiritual exercise, a way to practice one's surrender to God. Voluntarily, one is giving up things that are perfectly normal to do, such as eat and drink. Having done this, perhaps it increases one's willpower to avoid doing things that one should not do. During the fasting, one is to prevent oneself from getting angry, from lying, and from gossiping about others. This is the interior dimension of the fast, to become more aware of God, and to behave as if one were in God's presence, which one always is. Also, this is to make one thankful for the simple pleasures of food and water that God provides. Muslims, like Jews and Christians, are expected to give thanks to God before each meal. However, some forget to do this. Ramadan is a reminder of dependence on the providence of God.

For many Muslims, the fasting is a connection to those who are hungry all the time. One chooses not to eat during the day, but many people have no other choice. The message is clear: Those who have felt what it means to be hungry and thirsty will be more inclined to work toward a world where no one is hungry and thirsty. Those who miss a day of fasting are obligated to feed a needy person for a day. This stresses the idea of community responsibility. However, the fasting is also a private affair, something between the individual and God. One could pretend to fast in public, but secretly break the fast in private, but God would still know.

The end of the month of fasting is a large festival called Eid al-Fitr (literally, the celebration of the breaking of the fast). This is a day of congregational prayer and celebration, with family members exchanging gifts and new clothes and giving money to charity. Before the beginning of this celebration, the head of each household must give a donation to charity.

Pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca

The last of the five pillars is that all Muslims who have the financial resources must make a pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj* in Arabic). This occurs during the Month of Pilgrimage, the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

Traditionally, as with pilgrimage in any religion, the journey to Mecca was as important as the arrival. It could take several months or more to complete the journey, and one might have to save for it for one's entire life. Also, because one might die on the journey, one must make sure that all of one's debts were paid before starting out. Since the 1980s, however, most pilgrims have arrived by commercial aircraft at the airport that was opened in Jeddah, the closest airport to Mecca. This airport, King Abdulaziz International Airport, has a Hajj terminal that is used only during the pilgrimage. The convenience of modern air travel and facilities means that the pilgrimage involves some two million people every year. Although this is a small fraction of the world's estimated one billion Muslims, it requires tremendous skill to manage.

Historically, all of Mecca has been considered a sacred area, and forbidden to non-Muslims. This has been a problem for some people in the modern, ecumenical age. However, the rites of the pilgrims are not a secret and are broadcast around the world by Saudi television each year and webcast on numerous Muslim Web sites. Instead, the idea is that only Muslims can enter the sacred area. This is no different than the historic Jewish temple in Jerusalem

that only Jews could enter, or in the modern world where only devout Mormons can enter a Mormon temple (as distinct from a Mormon church, which is open to everyone), or although are all welcome to attend, only Catholics can take Communion in a Catholic church. Some religious rituals are meant only for the members of that religion.

For Jews and Christians, the story in the Book of Genesis is that Abraham offers his son Isaac for sacrifice on Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem. God does not want the child sacrificed, so a ram is slaughtered in Isaac's place. For Muslims, Abraham offers Ishmael (although interestingly enough, the Qur'an never explicitly names him as the son who is offered) for sacrifice, and this sacrifice takes place in Mecca. Ishmael is sent to Mecca with his mother, Hagar, when they are expelled by Sarah. In Mecca, God reveals the well of Zamzam to provide water for Hagar and Ishmael, which later is used to provide water for pilgrims. Abraham and his son Ishmael build the first place of monotheistic prayer, the Ka'ba, also known as the House of God (Qur'an, 2: 124–129) in Mecca.

The rituals for the pilgrimage are outlined in the Qur'an (22:26–29). Once the pilgrims arrive in Mecca, they wear simple white cloth outfits that signify their pilgrim status and lessen the distinctions between people, with everyone wearing the same thing regardless of financial status or country of origin. All are equal before God. In Mecca, they circle counterclockwise around the Ka'ba, and run between two hills, remembering the frantic search by Hagar in search of water for her son, Ishmael.

The formal pilgrimage begins on the eighth day of the Month of Pilgrimage, when the pilgrims migrate some 20 kilometers east to the plain of Arafat. On the way, some of the pilgrims stop for the night at Mina. Once they reach Arafat, the pilgrims enact the central ritual of the pilgrimage, the standing at Arafat. Here, they stand from noon to sunset, praying and asking for the mercy of God. It is considered a sort of practice for the standing on the Day of Judgment, when all of humanity will be resurrected and stand in this way before God. On the plain of Arafat Muhammad gave his farewell sermon and the last verse of the Qur'an was revealed to him shortly before his death: "This day have I [God] perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and chosen for you Islam as a religion" (5:3).

From Arafat, the pilgrims go back to Mecca, stopping at Muzdalifah. There, they pick up pebbles for a ritual to take place at Mina. The Muslim tradition tells that it was at Mina

that Abraham was commanded to sacrifice his son, and Satan tempted Abraham to disobey God's command. Abraham resisted this temptation and in response threw stones at Satan to cast him away. In emulation of Abraham's actions, the pilgrims throw stones at pillars that have been erected to represent Satan. Following this ceremonial stoning, the pilgrims offer an animal sacrifice, representing the sacrifice of Abraham. This occurs on the tenth day of the Month of Pilgrimage and is known as Eid al-Adha, the celebration of the sacrifice. The pilgrims then have their hair cut, circumambulate the Ka'ba, and finish the pilgrimage.

Shi'a Variations

The five pillars have been described in the way that Sunni Muslims understand them. Shi'a Muslims perform all of these activities with slight differences. The faith statement is identical for both Sunnis and Shi'as. With respect to prayer, there are differences in the call to prayer. Shi'as add the line "Come alive to the best of works" after the line "Come alive to the good," and they do not add the "prayer is better than sleep" line to the call for the morning prayer. In addition, Shi'as may add the lines "I bear witness that Ali is the friend of God" and "I bear witness that Ali is the proof of God" after the line "I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God." In the Shi'a tradition, the noon and afternoon prayers, and the evening and night prayers may be combined, resulting in what looks like three prayers per day. There are also slight differences in the position of one's hands during the prayer. In the Shi'a tradition, one's head comes to rest on a baked piece of earth from Karbala, rather than on a prayer mat. This is connected to the martyrdom of Imam Hussain described later with the holiday of Ashura.

When it comes to the giving of charity, Shi'as give the same 2.5 percent of their wealth, which may be given to the religious leader that they follow for distribution to the poor and needy. In addition, the Shi'a give an extra amount to charity, equivalent to 20 percent of their net income.

For the month of fasting, Shi'as fast a bit longer than Sunnis, waiting until the sun has completely set before breaking the fast. Finally, the pilgrimage is the same for both, but Shi'as may visit the tombs of some of the imams after they complete the Hajj.

Iman (Faith): The Six Articles of Faith

The second question that Gabriel asks Muhammad is, "Tell me, Muhammad, about faith." Muhammad responds by telling Gabriel the six things that Muslims are to have faith in.

For Muslims, faith (*iman* in Arabic) is self-commitment or understanding. It is an acceptance of the truth of what God commands. As such, it is at a deeper level than the actions described previously, for one may do the right things for the wrong reasons. The Qur'an makes a distinction between actions and understanding: A group of Bedouin came to the prophet Muhammad and told him that they have faith. Muhammad was commanded to tell them, "Say, 'We do not have faith.' Instead, say 'We have submitted,' for faith has not yet entered your hearts. If you obey God and God's messenger, God will not diminish anything from your actions" (Qur'an 49:14). The heart is the organ of faith. The Prophet said, "Faith is a knowledge in the heart, a voicing with the tongue, and an activity with the limbs."

For Muslims, the proper way to be is in a state of thankfulness to God. This is known as *shukr* in Arabic, and is contrasted with *kufir* or "refusal," the act of being ungrateful. The term for someone who does not have faith is a *kaffir*. Literally, it means someone who says no to God. Tragically, it became a term of racial abuse in South Africa during the days of apartheid when the English, Dutch, and Afrikaans folk used *kaffir* as a denigrating term for all black people.

God—Oneness of God

For Muslims, the cardinal principle of faith is the oneness of God. This is known as *tauheed* or "unity" in Arabic. Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam is a monotheism, and Muslims worship the one true God. This is the same God worshipped by Jews and Christians. Jews, Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and Muslims all agree that they worship the same one God. There are differences in their understanding of God, but it is the same God. Some conservative Protestant and evangelical Christians take a different view, saying that they worship a different God than Muslims. The usual reason given is that Muslims do not believe that Jesus was God. Of course, Jews don't believe this either, and because Jesus was Jewish and Christianity emerged from Judaism, it causes no small amount of theological difficulty to say that Jews and Christians worship different gods. For Muslims, the greatest sin is to associate others with God.

Angels

In the contemporary world, angels have made something of a comeback. One sees guardian angel pins and cards, and pictures of angels everywhere these days. In the Muslim tradition, they never left. Belief in God's angels is the second of the articles of faith. Muslims believe that angels surround us

at all times, recording our deeds. When Muslims greet one another, the greeting is "*al-salaamu alaikum*" ("Peace be upon you"). The response is "*wa alaikum al-salaam*" ("and upon you, peace"). What is interesting here is that the "you" in the Arabic is the plural form. This makes sense when groups of Muslims greet other groups of Muslims, but the same greeting is used when a single Muslim greets another single Muslim. The reason for this is that when one greets another person, the person is greeting the other person and the angels that accompany the person. This is also true in prayer, which ends with the same greeting of peace whether or not one is praying in congregation. If praying alone, one says this to greet the angels on either side of the person praying.

The Angel Gabriel, the angel of revelation, is not the only angel mentioned in the Qur'an. The Qur'an names the Archangel Michael, as well as Harut and Marut who taught in Babylon. In addition, the Muslim tradition identifies Seraphiel as the angel who will blow the trumpet to signal the end of the world, and Azrael as the angel of death. The angels perform other functions as well, such as supporting the throne of God and bringing down God's blessings to the world.

The Revealed Books

The third article of faith is that Muslims believe that God sent previous revelations before the Qur'an. These were a text given to Abraham that is now believed to be lost, the Torah given to Moses, the Psalms to David, and the Gospel to Jesus. For Muslims, all of these texts were later altered, and so the Qur'an was sent down as the final revelation. As such, Muslims use only the text of the Qur'an for liturgical and religious purposes.

Messengers and Prophets

For Muslims, the fourth article of faith is that Muhammad is the last in a long line of prophets. The Qur'an names a number of prophets but also says that numerous other prophets have also been sent, each speaking the language of the people to whom they were sent. Muslim tradition puts the number of prophets at 124,000. Messengers are a smaller group of prophets who are given a specific message, and the Muslim tradition identifies more than 300 of these.

The Last Day

The fifth article of faith is the Last Day. Another of the questions posed dealt with the Hour of Judgment. Muhammad had very little to say about this. Muslims have a very similar notion of eschatology as Jews and Christians do. Just as there

was a first day of creation, so there will be a last day. Sunni Muslims believe Jesus will return to lead the final battle between good and evil, but Shi'a Muslims believe the Hidden Imam will return as the Mahdi or divinely guided one. Everyone will be resurrected and stand before God.

The Measuring Out of the Justice of God

On the Last Day, the Day of Resurrection, people will get what they deserve, according to the sixth article of faith. Those who deserve punishment and hell for their wrongdoing will earn it, and those who deserve paradise as their reward will receive it. For Muslims, as for Jews and Christians, there are similar questions about the afterlife. Who will God assign to heaven, and who to hell? Will God who is merciful really punish people eternally with hell? Will everyone eventually get to heaven? According to Muslims, the answers to all of these questions are known only to God.

Ihsan (Doing What Is Beautiful)

The third question that Gabriel asks Muhammad is about doing what is beautiful. Muhammad responds that doing what is beautiful means that one worships God as if one sees God. This is the realm of intentionality. For Muslims, the intent behind an act is more important than the performance of the act with bad or no intent. A person may intend to go to the evening prayer in the mosque, but his or her car won't start and so the person prays at home. This person is better than is someone who makes it to the mosque but is only there to impress someone. At the beginning of each day's fast during the month of Ramadan, for example, one begins with a statement of intent, saying "I intend to fast this day during the month of Ramadan." Without declaring your intent, the fast is not valid.

The Qur'an describes a quality that separates people from each other. In Arabic, this is known as *taqwa* and translates best as awareness of God or God-wariness. In the Qur'an, God says, "Oh humankind! Truly We [God] created you from a single male and female, and made you into tribes and nations that you might know each other. Truly the most honored of you in the sight of God is the one with the most God-wariness [*taqwa*]. Truly God is All-Knowing, Aware" (49:13).

This awareness of God is at the core of Muslim life, to do things that are always pleasing to God. This resonates deeply with Jewish and Christian religious life as well. Jews are called to be a holy people because God is holy. This awareness is done in everyday acts of worship, as well as in the creation of extraordinary art.

Sometimes the God-wariness is expressed through the language of poetry. This is common among the mystics of Islam. Other times, it is expressed in song. Often, God-wariness is expressed through works of art. Many people are familiar with architecture, the most visible of the arts of Islam. There are beautiful Muslim buildings, from mosques to mausoleums, throughout the world. Perhaps the most beautiful building in the world is the Taj Mahal, a mausoleum built by an Indian Muslim ruler in Agra. Muslim art is also expressed through textiles and ceramics, as well as works on paper such as calligraphy. One of the finest calligraphers in the Muslim world is Mohamed Zakariya, who lives and works in Arlington, Virginia.

Islamic Festivals

All Muslims celebrate two major holidays. They both are called Eid, from the Arabic word meaning celebration. The greetings on these holidays are "Eid Mubarak," literally, "the blessings of the celebration." The first Eid is Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the month of Ramadan. It begins on the first day of the following month. The second is Eid al-Adha, which marks Abraham offering up his son for sacrifice. This is celebrated by the pilgrims on the Hajj on the tenth day of the Month of Pilgrimage. Traditionally, the head of every household slaughtered an animal, and the meat was eaten and distributed to the poor. These days, when many Muslims live in cities and have no access to animals—nor the knowledge required about how to slaughter an animal—they rely on commercial butchers to do the slaughtering for them. Both of these holidays are great celebrations with congregational prayer, feasting, and giving to charity.

Many Muslims celebrate the birthday of the prophet Muhammad, known as the Mawlid, on either the twelfth or the seventeenth day of Rabi'a al-Awwal (the third month of the Islamic calendar). This is often done with the singing of devotional songs about the Prophet. Some Muslims frown on this practice, believing that it puts too much emphasis on Muhammad and takes away from the glory of God. They fear that it may become a holiday like Christmas, which has become commercialized.

Shi'a Muslims have their own important celebration of Ashura. This occurs on the tenth day of the Month of Muharram in the Islamic calendar. It commemorates the death of Hussain, the third imam for Shi'a Muslims. Hussain was martyred in Karbala, Iraq, by a political rival. This is not a holiday of celebration but rather one of sorrow and

remembrance. In this respect, it is a somber holiday such as Good Friday for Christians. As with the Passion play at Easter, Shi'a Muslims tell the story of the martyrdom of Hussain through a play, where a white horse without a rider symbolizes the fallen Hussain. As mentioned earlier, when Shi'a Muslims pray, they use a disc of pressed clay from Karbala, where the very blood of Hussain was spilled. So the death of Hussain is remembered each time one's forehead touches the earth in prayer.

See also *Angels; Architecture: Muslim; Canada: Pluralism; Devotionalism; Islam in North America; Nation(s) of Islam; Qur'an; Women: Muslim; Worship: Muslim.*

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J



Jainism

Most Americans know of Mahatma Gandhi, but far fewer can identify Jainism, the religious tradition whose tenets of *ahimsa* (nonviolence), *aparigraha* (nonattachment), and *anekantvad* (the recognition of the relative validity of different points of view) deeply influenced Gandhi's teachings. One of India's many religious traditions, Jainism has a comparatively small number of adherents—an estimated 2 percent of India's population is Jain—and is relatively unknown outside of India. But from the early 1960s, with the arrival of students and professionals, to the present, the United States and Canada have seen the development of a vibrant North American Jain community with transnational links.

Origins and Teachings

The Jain religion can be traced back to the Indian subcontinent, where in the sixth century BCE visionaries and philosophers explored religious truths. One was the Buddha, whose followers formed the earliest Buddhist community. Another was Mahavira, who came from a long line of enlightened beings exemplifying a religious path leading to liberation. Collectively they are known as Tirthankaras, "Ford-makers," those who perceived the way, or Jinas, "Conquerors," from whom the word *Jain*, a follower of the self-realized Jinas, is derived. Of this lineage, Mahavira is the twenty-fourth; Parshva, another historic figure, is the twenty-third. All Tirthankaras are revered, with Mahavira especially venerated.

The teachings they promulgated understood the cosmos to be sentient, with life existing in earth, water, air and fire. Plants, animals, even clods of earth are possessed of souls

(*jivas*), with the difference between higher life forms and lower ones the complexity of their interactive capacity. Humans and other higher life forms have the full range of sensory abilities, while the lowest forms might only be able to react to touch. According to Jain teachings, not only is the world made up of sentient beings, but it is also interactive. Any act of harm, such as kicking a stone, even if done unintentionally, is seen to have an effect on the object of the action—the stone, which experienced the violence of the kick—and on the agent of the action—here the human doing the kicking. That effect causes karma to accrue to the soul of the person committing the action. As in other Asian religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, karma in Jainism concerns actions and their consequences, but Jains view karma as a subtle form of matter that actually attaches itself to the soul.

Jain teachings accept the idea of reincarnation, the soul's ongoing existence from one life form to another, believing that the accumulation of too much karma weighs the soul down to such an extent that its next existence will be in a lower life form. Addressing this possibility, the teachings also prescribe various means of purifying the soul, ridding it of karma, through fasting and other acts of penance. The accumulation of some karma is nearly impossible to avoid for most people because humans eat, drink and move in the world, but the key is to minimize the karmic residue resulting from careless or harmful actions. Hence, the cultivation of awareness of the impact of one's actions is crucial, leading to practices that will reduce the possibility of harming other life forms. The aphorism *Ahimsa paramo dharma* (nonviolence is the highest teaching of all) summarizes this outlook.

Monastic and Lay Life

Early Jainism saw the development of a community of monks and nuns whose lives were characterized by strict asceticism; from its inception onward the restraint and vigilance of Jain ascetics have embodied the ideal expression of the tradition. The tradition would have died out very early, however, had there been no lay community to support the ascetics and to carry on their teachings. As Jains, laypeople have had the responsibility to cultivate the fullest possible expression of *ahimsa* within the realities of ordinary life. A vegetarian diet—one that even excludes root vegetables, thought to contain complex life forms—matched with practices such as fasting, not eating at night, and filtering drinking water to avoid harming microscopic life; avoiding occupations such as farming, which could harm other living beings; maintaining ethical practices in business; abstaining from sexual excesses; upholding generosity in giving; and a range of other activities exemplify the ideal householder's life. All Jains, monastic and lay, cultivate attentiveness to their actions' impact on the multitude of life around them.

Over the centuries differences in regional practices have led to the emergence of subtraditions. The main division, dating to the first century CE, stemmed from differences over the rigor of ascetic practices, with the issue of whether the monks should clad themselves or not a pivotal question. Contemporary identification as either a Shvetambara or Digambara Jain traces back to this sectarian history. Shvetambaras ("white clad") not only wear white garments but also carry alms bowls. They affirm that all humans, women included, can attain the highest spiritual states. Digambaras ("sky clad") renounce clothing, use only their hands to receive food, and hesitate on the question of women's attainment. Apart from their monastic codes, certain other differences in ritual practices, and some disputes over the control of holy places such as Mount Girnar in Gujarat (the westernmost state in India), there are no other major doctrinal divergences between the two traditions.

Settlement patterns have contributed to the development of distinctive communities. Up through the medieval period, South India had the larger concentration of Digambaras. Hindu resurgence from the ninth century onward absorbed, violently in some cases, much of the Jain population in the South, leaving a few small pockets of Digambaras in the states of Tamilnadu and Karnataka. Gujarat and other parts of western India have continued to see a concentration of Shvetambara communities. Further subtraditions,

of which there are many, relate to affiliations with ascetic lineages and caste background. Contemporary communities among the Shvetambaras include the Osvals and Srimals, known for their business skills.

Jain Practices

Jains from all communities participate in a rich ritual tradition. Remembering and revering the lineage of Jinas, particularly Mahavira, through devotional practices is especially important. Shvetambara and Digambara Jains have a long history of building temples and prayer halls for community gatherings. Temple rituals involve honoring the Tirthankaras through praise and offerings in rites that resemble Hindu *puja* (worship). Jains, however, are not worshipping a God but instead are honoring their enlightened teachers and expressing the hope of following their path. At temples Jains will take care to be in a physically pure state, to calm their thoughts, and to follow other ritual protocols such as circumambulation of the shrine in a clockwise fashion to ensure the sanctity of their actions. Many families maintain shrines in their homes where they undertake daily worship and meditation before icons of Mahavira and other Tirthankaras. Some sectarian movements, notably the Sthanakvasis and the Terapanthis, reject the use of images in their religious practice. Their prayer halls are devoid of icons.

In accordance with the view that lay behavior should mirror that of ascetics, the cultivation equanimity through meditation (*samayika*) is done by many Jains. In prayer halls, in temples, or at home, laypeople may sit in meditative posture with fixed consciousness in front of the Tirthankara icons or in front of a monk for a certain duration. To aid focus and to serve as a reminder of Jain teachings, prayers, and meditations, religious and social gatherings begin with the *Namaskara mantra*, salutations that start with ritually greeting the twenty-four Tirthankaras or Jinas and then other emancipated souls, heads of monastic orders, great teachers, and the orders of monks and nuns. *Namo Jinaman* ("I bow to the Jina") is the salutation used when entering a temple.

Fasting, a spiritual discipline drawing on Mahavira's example, is a further lay practice modeled after ascetic restraint. Depending on their lives' circumstances, the traditions they follow, and their degree of religiosity, both men and women may undertake fasts; even children are encouraged to learn to discipline their appetites. Women, however, are particular exemplars of vows (*vrats*) and often do so to generate a positive force to benefit their families.

The fasts involve the restriction of food intake and can include complete abstention from food and water, the elimination of favorite foods or certain foods such as milk or fruits, the reduction of the number of meals, taking foods only at certain times, and many other expressions of purification and self-control. Individuals will fast on Jain holy days according to the lunar calendar, with particularly rigorous fasting done in a community hall accompanied by other activities such as worship, listening to religious discourses, and ritual confession (*pratikrama*), where one publicly expresses remorse for any harm caused, wrongdoings, or duties left undone. Among Digambaras, the ten-day period known as Dashalakshana Parva is a traditional time of fasting; for Shvetambaras, the annual time is Paryushana Parva, an eight-day period that traditionally coincides with the end of the rainy season in India.

Vows in conjunction with food restrictions may also be taken to minimize harm to other living beings, such as the practice of not eating green leafy vegetables at certain times to avoid the accidental ingestion of tiny insects or vows not to consume milk products in light of how animals are treated in the commercial dairy industry. Further lay expressions of religiosity include offering material support for community rituals by sponsoring meals or making other generous donations; by donating one's time to activities that support the community, such as offering instruction to children; and by otherwise practicing the virtues of nonviolence and nonacquisitiveness.

Settlement outside of the Indian Subcontinent

Throughout history, mercantile and other interests prompted Jains to travel and settle outside the Indian subcontinent. Textual sources mention Jain merchants doing trade with Persia, the Arabian gulf, East Africa, and central and Southeast Asia. With the export of indentured labor from the subcontinent under the British Empire, a sizable Indian community developed in East Africa in the nineteenth century. Arriving as merchants and clerks, Jains from Gujarat settled there and with their increasing prosperity built temples and prayer halls. In the twentieth century, however, political changes resulting from decolonization led to the expulsion of Jains, first from Kenya and Tanzania in 1967–1968 and then from Uganda in 1971. This expulsion accelerated Jain migration to Britain and to North America. Population estimates suggest that up to half the Jains who have settled in North America came by way of East Africa and England.

Knowledge of Jainism in the West

Outside of the Indian subcontinent and other regions where Jains have settled, Jainism was relatively unknown until recently. Up to the latter part of the nineteenth century, Western scholars considered Jains to be Buddhists or from a Hindu subgroup. It was only after Hermann Jacobi, a German scholar renowned for his study of India, cited textual evidence identifying discrete practices and doctrinal positions held by Jain ascetics in an 1879 study that Jainism was recognized as a tradition in its own right. Shortly thereafter, North America received its first introduction to Jain teachings in Chicago at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions. Among the delegates was Virchand Raghavji Gandhi from Gujarat, who explained the philosophical basis of the Jain way of life. Interest in what he said enabled him to attract some converts during his subsequent lecture tours in England and America.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, works introducing Jain practices and teachings became available to Western audiences. In addition to *Jainism in Western Garb* by Herbert Warren, one of V. R. Gandhi's converts, the Jaina Literature Society of London published a series of works covering topics such as Jain culture, psychology, logic, penance, and law by the English-trained barrister turned philosopher-scholar Champat Rai. He also addressed the World Fellowship of Faiths held in Chicago in 1933. These efforts along with the later outreach of the World Jain Mission, founded by Kamata Prasad Jain in India, garnered interest in Jainism in North America

Establishment of Jain Communities in North America

Restrictive immigration policies in both the United States and Canada prevented any significant settlement of Jain families in North America until the late 1960s. In 1965 the United States changed its immigration laws to allow the entry of qualified professionals, regardless of their country of origin. Two years later Canada shifted from a quota system restricting immigration from certain countries to a point system allowing eligible individuals the right of entry. These changes in immigration policy served to open North America to immigrants of non-European background.

From the mid-1960s onward, several phases of immigration history characterize the formation of the Jain community. Initial immigrants were professionals and students. Subsequent provisions for family reunification allowed for

family settlement. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw an increase in the numbers of Jains arriving, many of whom were political refugees from East Africa. They arrived either directly from Africa or via the United Kingdom. By the mid-1970s Jains had become a recognizable group among other South Asian immigrant groups. This period saw the establishment of Jain centers and organizations in the United States and Canada. Most families who came in the 1970s and subsequent decades have stayed, and now Jains are well established throughout North America. The organizations established earlier to serve the spiritual and cultural concerns of immigrant families now turn their attention to the needs of the second and even third generations.

In their early years of settlement in North America, Jains turned to their own resources for their spiritual needs. To assuage feelings of isolation, Jains celebrated religious events by gathering in their own homes. As numbers grew and people became more established, the community aspired to have its own religious centers. By 1966 Jains in New York founded the first North American center, followed by centers in Chicago, Boston, Toronto, and Los Angeles. From the late 1980s to early 2010, the number of Jain centers and temples saw a significant increase, from thirty-four, in 1987, to well over sixty.

Fulfilling social and educational as well as religious purposes, these centers enabled Jains to gather for community rituals. Often, the early centers were former churches transformed by consecration ceremonies into Jain sacred space. In these instances the centers retain church features, with changes to the façades and interior remodeling to allow for the installation of Jain icons. They have proved vital in fostering community identity through deeper understandings of what it means to be Jain. The resulting social capital enabled various Jain communities to take on the more demanding and more expensive project of building a temple from the ground up. The 1980s saw many centers sponsoring temple-building projects. Now, some twenty years later, these same communities are replacing their smaller temples with exquisite complexes modeled after renowned temples in India

Hindu-Jain Temples

Another phenomenon of the early years of settlement in North America was the pooling of resources with Hindu immigrant families to create Hindu-Jain temples. These shared facilities reflect both Jain and Hindu patterns of inclusivity and the willingness of members of different South

Asian religious traditions to support each other's religious needs where their numbers are small and finances limited or where there are strong linguistic and ethnic connections. At such temples, icons of Hindu deities and of Mahavira and other important Jain Tirthankaras are installed within the same temple. Religious specialists of the respective traditions will typically conduct the specific rites required of each tradition, allowing for the expression of the nuanced differences between the two religions.

One finds Hindu-Jain temples from California to South Carolina. Not all Jains, however, are entirely supportive of this practice. Observing that the tenets of Jain beliefs are not the same as Hindu beliefs, some Jains express concern that shared facilities may lead to a blurring of the differences of Jain practices. North American Jains wish to preserve the vitality of their religion and to pass that on to their children.

A Challenge

A challenge faced not only by North American Jains but by all overseas Jains is how to preserve their traditional relationship with the ascetic community. As exemplars of Jain values, monks and nuns serve both as teachers and models for the lay community. Their rigorous vows of nonviolence, however, restrict the mobility of mendicants to the mindful steps they take with their unshod feet. All other forms of movement cause more harm to living beings. For that reason monks use no mechanical means of transportation, making travel outside of India impossible. Initially bereft of their ties with ascetics, the overseas community filled the resulting lacuna with visiting scholars and other teachers.

In 1970 Muni Chitrabhanu, a Shvetambara monk, broke with tradition by traveling to Geneva to attend a spiritual summit, a decision that unsettled many traditionalists. One year later he renounced his monastic life and came to America, where he lectured widely. His work led to the founding of Jain Meditation International, headquartered in New York City, with other centers worldwide. Serving as spiritual adviser to many Jain centers, he remains an important teacher in North America.

Four years after Chitrabhanu arrived, Acarya Sushil Kumar likewise decided to take his religious work to America. A Sthanakvasi Shvetambara monk and religious activist who up to his death, in 1994, promoted interfaith understanding and global peace, he worked tirelessly with the diasporic community to prompt their self-awareness as Jains. His involvement was instrumental in launching programs of Jain studies at Columbia University and the University

of Toronto in the 1990s. He also founded Siddhachalam, a Jain retreat community in Blairstown, New Jersey.

Numbers

Estimates of the number of North American Jains in the early twenty-first century vary, ranging from 25,000 to 100,000; the higher estimates come from extrapolations of attendance figures at large Jain gatherings. Securing more precise figures is challenging because U.S. census returns do not report religious affiliations. Canadian census reports do, however, and in 2001, 2,455 people in Canada self-identified as Jain, 97 percent of whom were of South Asian background. Most of that population resides in the Toronto area in Ontario.

Faced with questions of the extent of their community, North American Jains have compiled their own demographic data. In the 1970s the Jain Center of Greater Boston launched a project resulting in the 1979 *Jain Directory of North America*. Its purpose was to foster a shared identity by creating an open database of the Jain population in North America. Recognizing that a critical mass of Jain families was essential to sustain the religion, members of the Boston center envisioned the *Directory* as laying down the infrastructure for community networking by enabling scattered individuals and families to be in contact with one another.

The *Directory* was undertaken when none of the electronic search engines and social networking sites taken for granted today was available, and its compilation demanded considerable time and effort. Volunteers scoured telephone books for people whose names—Jain, Shah, Mehta, Parikh—indicated probable Jain identity. Other volunteers followed up with contact, while state-of-the-art software allowed data entry from multiple off-site locations.

In the end the *Directory*, completed in 1979, included listings of names, addresses, and professional and background information, including place of origin. One thousand copies were distributed free of charge to Jains in the United States and Canada, and subsequent editions followed. Through its listings the *Directory* promoted more than just a sense of community; in some instances the awareness of co-religionists in the same area helped people mobilize to create local Jain centers.

JAINA

Within two years of the release of the *Directory*, a Jain convention was held in Los Angeles that attracted participation from Jains throughout North America. One of the

outcomes of that 1981 gathering was the creation of an umbrella organization, the Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA), to facilitate communication among the regional centers and to further their shared purposes. JAINA is headquartered in a suburb of Buffalo, New York, and its wide-reaching activities shed light on the concerns of North America Jains. In addition to organizing a biannual convention, JAINA organizes pilgrimages to sites of historical and religious significance in India. Other efforts include community development and outreach through educational activities. The organization's Web site provides guidelines on the development of regional centers, with advice on everything from needs assessment to zoning permits to considerations of accommodating sectarian differences. Its library of publicly accessible online publications introduces readers to the intellectual heritage of the tradition while also addressing ethical and practical concerns specific to the diasporic community.

Much of this work is focused on making Jains more aware of their own tradition, particularly the second generation, whose outlook and orientation is North American, rather than Indian, but the outreach is also addressed to non-Jains. By working to promote better understanding among different faith communities, JAINA's activities demonstrate the doctrine of *anekantvad* while garnering notice of Jain contributions to the religious landscape of North America. In much the same vein, JAINA's endorsement of humanitarian work and its advocacy of vegetarianism and nonviolence offer evidence of the lived expression of Jain teachings. Publications promoted by JAINA point out how the Jain principles of *aparigraha* and *ahimsa* support social cohesion and ecological sensitivity. Reflecting contemporary environmental concerns, the theme of JAINA's 2009 convention was ecology and how Jainism teachings promote the active awareness of the interconnectedness of all living things, human and nonhuman.

Similarly, its youth wing, the Young Jains of America, emphasizes the contemporary relevance of Jain thought by reminding the second generation that Jainism entails much more than prayer or worship. At the 2006 convention the former Jain monk and social activist Gurudev Chitrabhanu took up the theme "Jain Evolution: Making Our Life Our Message" to reflect on how core Jain teachings such as *ahimsa*, the active cultivation of not harming others, can enable one to live a socially responsible life. In this context Jain evolution referred to the capacity of Jain thought to continue to evolve in response to the demands

of contemporary North American life—but, according to Chitrabhanu and other community activists, without any sacrifice of its original genius.

The maintenance of a Jain religious identity and its transmission to successive generations in North America are central to JAINA's mandate. Its winter 2009 newsletter draws attention to the importance of the development of a standardized curriculum for the *pathshala*, programs of religious education offered at regional centers. Another concern is marriage. As members of a minority tradition not only in North America but also in the Indian subcontinent, many Jains of the first generation want their sons and daughters to marry within their religious tradition. However, with their relatively smaller numbers especially in the earlier years of settlement in North America, the challenge was finding suitable marriage partners. The early Jain directories helped address this question by serving as a source of matrimonial data with their inclusion of information about home regions in India and other details related to education and professional status. With the advent of database search engines, JAINA now maintains a subscriber-based Jain Networking Forum, housing personal profiles of individuals from North America, Europe, Asia, and elsewhere. Discussion groups and seminars also offer advice on how to negotiate the sometimes competing expectations of family and ambient North American culture.

Such challenges notwithstanding, the Jains who have settled in North America and the successive generations who have been born here have demonstrated their ability to draw on their abundant religious and social resources to forge a community that maintains its distinct identity while actively contributing to life there. With its roots in India and its followers worldwide, Jainism is a transnational religion that has adherents who call North America home.

See also *Architecture: Asian Religions; Baha'i; Buddhist Tradition and Heritage; Devotionalism; Hindu Tradition and Heritage; Krishna Consciousness; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Sikhs; Transcendental Meditation; Zen Buddhism.*

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Jehovah's Witnesses

In 1872, a Pittsburgh draper named Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916) founded what later became known as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society—the official name for the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses. Russell had a fascination for biblical eschatology (that is, beliefs in the end of the world based on biblical prophecy)—a fascination that played a huge part in the expansion of what is now one of the world's fastest-growing religious movements. Devotees are Christian puritans, heterodox puritans of Judeo-Christian orientation who make an exclusive claim to religious truth and to monopolize truth; hence, they refuse ecumenical relations with all other religious organizations. Their worldwide membership increased from a mere 44,080 in 1928 to an extraordinary 6,741,444 in 2006—a total net growth of 5 percent per year. Even the most conservative estimates indicate that by the year 2020, there will be about 12.5 million members.

The movement has had a checkered evolution. From the moment of their foundation, the Witnesses have remained steadfast in their millenarian beliefs—that is, that the end of the world is imminent and that a New Kingdom is about to be inaugurated. The years of 1874, 1914, 1918, 1925, and 1975 were all earmarked, to a greater or lesser extent, as times for the messianic age, yet all brought disappointment. Despite these well-documented prophecies and their lack of fulfillment, the movement continues to expand.

Origin and Evolution

Millenarian tenets are, by their very nature, disruptive because they challenge conventional beliefs and behavior. Historically, millenarian movements both in Europe and in the United States were formed by dissidents who rejected mainstream religious authority and who were often regarded as opponents

of widely accepted religious truths. The Witnesses' eschatology is based on the texts of the New Testament, and almost all their literature refers to the end of wickedness at Armageddon. Their theological mission is to proselytize to as many prospective converts as possible before this event occurs.

During his initial years as a draper, Russell abandoned Presbyterian Christianity in favor of more liberal Congregational beliefs, but even these eventually gave way to a firm conviction that an omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient God was incompatible with conventional doctrines of suffering and hell. At this point, Russell became an avowed skeptic and discarded the Bible altogether, but in 1870 he attended a meeting held by some Seventh-day Adventists in a basement near his store. This meeting appears to have been a significant influence in the restoration of Russell's faith, for although he failed to join the Adventists, they did at least persuade him of an alternative creed to Christendom. He gathered some like-minded friends and acquaintances, and together they formed a Bible study group in Pittsburgh where they met on a regular basis. Witnesses today believe that this was the point at which Russell founded the one true religious faith.

Undoubtedly influenced by the Seventh-day Adventists, Russell espoused doctrines such as the annihilation of the wicked, the denial of hell, the extinction of the soul at death, and a new code for salvation. By 1880, some thirty congregations had sprung up in several U.S. states. Although few sources link Russell's way of thinking to the social, cultural, and political climate of the late nineteenth-century United States, his disillusionment with modern society in general and with orthodox Christianity in particular likely led him to establish this alternative Christian theology.

Throughout the twentieth century, the movement continued to expand, albeit at a checkered rate. By 1971, the Witnesses were active in Brazil, the British Isles, Canada, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, West Germany, and Zambia. Other countries in which the Witnesses claim to have had more than 5,000 active members in 1971 include Argentina, Australia, France, Italy, Jamaica, and South Africa. Millions of copies of the society's two magazines, *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, are sold throughout the world every year, and Witnessing takes place in more than two hundred countries. The February 1, 2007, issue of *The Watchtower* recorded more than one million Witnesses in the United States alone in 2006 and almost 100,000 congregations worldwide. All these countries have seen substantial increases in membership during the last three and a half decades, although the movement has remained static in Australia, Belgium, Britain, Germany,

Scandinavia, and Spain in recent years. By 2008, the Witnesses were gaining most of their recruits in Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, Latin America, and many parts of Africa.

Doctrines

The Witnesses' one imperative belief is that the Bible, from beginning to end, is the inspired word of God. Watch Tower beliefs are scripturally supported, and most of the Bible is interpreted literally. The exceptions are the recorded visions in the Books of Daniel and Revelation. The rest is regarded as historically accurate, including the Book of Genesis. Scriptural texts are used by the Witnesses as a constant frame of reference. World catastrophes such as war, famine, environmental pollution, genocide, and international terrorism all help validate the movement's beliefs. When ministering on the doorstep, it is not unusual for Witness evangelists to use biblical texts to explain recent world events. These events are presented as evidence of signs of the last days.

The movement's governing body teaches its members that God has a personal name—Jehovah (Exodus 9:16). The Witnesses' God is the God of the Old Testament (though they have their own version of the Bible known as *The New World Translation*) and they reject trinitarian doctrine, declaring it unscriptural. The Witnesses maintain that since the deception in the Garden of Eden, Satan has misled the world, and the most important reason for the existence of humankind is the vindication of Jehovah over Satan. Instead of destroying Satan, Jehovah decided to test the loyalty of the rest of humankind, after which, say the Witnesses, the righteous will enjoy eternal bliss.

The Witnesses believe that since Pentecost, Jehovah has been preparing a "Bride of Christ," a "Little Flock," a body of 144,000 faithful people (the figure cited in Revelation 14:3) to share heavenly life and leadership. Thus, an anointed class of 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses will win heavenly reward immediately after Armageddon, and the remainder (that is, Witnesses currently asleep in their tombs) will spend eternity in a different paradise here on earth.

Like their founders, Witnesses today continue to renounce the conventional Christian doctrine of hellfire on the basis that it is unscriptural and contrary to Jehovah's loving nature. They claim that hell is nothing more than an insensible state of complete annihilation that Jesus will execute upon Satan and his demons at Armageddon. The Witnesses believe that the righteous will be saved at this catastrophic event, so the doctrine of salvation plays an important role in Watch Tower ministry.

The society forbids its members to participate in annual celebrations such as Christmas, Easter, birthdays, and national festivals. It teaches that Jehovah does not acknowledge these events because, wherever they are cited in the scriptures, they are always characterized by sin or apostasy. The Witnesses also refuse blood transfusions on the grounds that blood is a sacred life source that should not be consumed by humans (Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:11–12; Acts 15:28–29).

Despite their belief that Satan controls the present world, the Witnesses do not generally go as far as members of religious organizations such as the Plymouth Brethren in isolating themselves completely from nonmembers. Nonetheless, their persistent refusal to partake in political activities such as voting in elections or joining pressure groups demonstrates their wariness of secular society. The Witnesses continue to object to both jury and military service on the grounds that both practices endorse legitimate governmental authority. Though some devotees join social and leisure clubs and progress to post-compulsory education, the movement encourages Kingdom interests and frowns on activities that detract from its teachings. Witnesses everywhere are expected to adhere to this strict social, moral, and ascetic code.

“Studying”

The Witnesses have no ordained clergy, and they use the term *studying* to refer to the process both of becoming a member and of retaining one's membership. Becoming a faithful Witness involves reading large amounts of textual information (mainly the movement's own literature and specific version of the Bible) in preparation for a never-ending series of meetings, so *studying* is a more appropriate term for describing their weekly activities than is *worship*. Speaking in tongues, creed recitation, even periods of silent meditation are so far removed from the Witnesses' activities that someone claiming to have had an experience of a transcendental nature would be unlikely to find solace in a Kingdom Hall (the official name for the Witnesses' place of worship). In a modern age in which social movements articulate expressive and aesthetic identities, the Witnesses' style of worship stands out as rational, didactic, and authoritarian.

The notion of *studying* is conducive to a community that eschews the kind of mystical and charismatic experiences found in Roman Catholicism and evangelical Christianity. Watch Tower literature repeatedly warns of the dangers of apostasy, for example, by showing pictures of Catholics invoking images of saints for intercession—practices that the Witnesses regard as irrational—and elders impart the view

that venerating anything or anybody other than God constitutes false worship. Though they are religious in the sense that they believe in the supernatural and offer their allegiance to an omnipotent deity, the Witnesses' theology draws on the forces of modern reason.

The Witnesses' rational orientation is manifest in the layout of Kingdom Halls and what they contain. Unlike the Roman Catholic tradition, for example, in which relics, crucifixes, statues, and tabernacles are part of the religious ethos, the Witnesses' place of worship is sparse and disenchanting. Kingdom Halls are essentially functional meeting places.

Witnesses are expected to attend three weekly meetings, two of which are held at Kingdom Halls. The third meeting—the *Book Study*—is held in a member's home. The two Kingdom Hall meetings include sermons, ministry, and discussions of theological issues from various publications. *Book Study* meetings consist of subgroups of about twenty people. Copies of *The Watchtower* and the movement's own study books are used at these meetings in almost every country in the world. So uniform is the movement's theology and content of meetings that, in principle, every Jehovah's Witness in the world will read the same literature and follow the same weekly program. These centralized procedures create an atmosphere of uniformity that the Witnesses regard as a tangible source of truth.

The Witnesses' determination to bring forth the millenarian age is epitomized in the industry with which they approach their evangelistic mission. Photographs of devotees from all ethnic backgrounds happily evangelizing to prospective converts all over the world appear in most of the movement's publications. Although these images of international expansion confirm the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, they also remind the Witnesses that this work must be complete before the arrival of Armageddon and that no one can be allowed to join the organization without becoming actively involved in ministry.

Certainty in an Uncertain World

Paradoxical as it may seem, the Witnesses are flourishing because of the so-called freedom of the modern world. Liberty and freedom produce questioning and uncertainty, and from this perspective, the Witnesses' version of truth is the answer to modern doubt. The belief that the inerrant word of God has been correctly translated from original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts has earned Witness theologians a deference not unlike that of papal infallibility. The movement's biblical literalism signifies a *revealed* truth that

guards against moral and epistemological relativism and that holds good for the whole of humanity. The certainty offered by scriptural texts is the proverbial stick with which to beat modern societies in which all manner of life options, religious as well as secular, are available.

Millenarian doctrines such as those of the Watch Tower Society are as significant in the twenty-first-century United States as any other time in history. Although the anticipation of an imminent paradise ostensibly offers the Witnesses hope, it is also a means by which they are able to consign their opponents to a future holocaust.

As they patiently await Jehovah's intervention, the Witnesses' relationship with the modern world remains paradoxical. They are modern rationalists in the sense that their belief system lacks the mystical content often found in other versions of Christianity, but conversely, they are antimodern in their resistance to many of the freedoms that characterize U.S. citizenship.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Adventist and Millennialist Denominational Families; Apocalypticism; Bible entries; Fundamentalism entries; Religious Right; Seventh-day Adventists.*

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Journalism

Coverage of religion has been a staple of U.S. journalism since newspapers first came into existence during the colonial period. From the beginning, U.S. journalists have tended to portray religion as a good thing—provided that it was the right kind of religion. In the Massachusetts Bay Colony of the late 1600s, that meant both supporting the clerical establishment and reminding readers that God's providence was at work in their world. However, critical

appraisals of religious institutions and individuals, though less common, date back almost as far. In the early 1720s, Boston's clerical establishment found itself under assault by the *New England Courant*, an independent and iconoclastic paper published by James Franklin with the help of his younger brother Benjamin.

The Making of Religion Coverage

Although no comprehensive history of religion coverage in the U.S. news media has yet been written, religion has been treated as most newsworthy in direct proportion to its importance in public life generally, and in politics especially. During the early 1800s, for example, Baptists in Connecticut mounted a campaign to change the state's standing religious order, which mandated tax payments to support religious institutions so as to favor the Congregational churches. This fight, which concluded with disestablishment of these churches in 1818, elicited more attention to religion in the *Connecticut Courant* and other state papers than in the decades before or after.

The rise of the penny press in the 1830s transformed coverage of religion just as it transformed coverage of other subjects. Across the board, no one was more responsible than James Gordon Bennett, the founding editor of the *New York Herald*, which became the largest circulation daily in the country. Bennett, a Scotsman by birth and a liberal Roman Catholic by faith, pioneered sensationalist reporting and believed that religion could be just as entertaining a subject to write about as crime and politics. He was the first editor of a secular newspaper to devote space to the yearly meetings held in New York by denominational bodies and faith-based groups devoted to women's rights, temperance, and the abolition of slavery—and he wrote about them in a way that brought them to life. He sent reporters out to report what the city's preachers were saying. Most notoriously, he happily assailed any religious activity or pronouncement that did not meet his standards for what religion ought to be—from the Episcopalians' lavish Christmas decorations to the antiliberal pronouncements of Pope Pius IX to the histrionics of itinerant evangelists.

Not many editors were prepared to go as far as Bennett, especially when it came to criticizing pillars of the religious community. But they did follow many of his pioneering approaches to religion coverage. Urban revivals, notable public spectacles that promised widespread moral and social reform, became a staple of nineteenth-century religion reporting. No self-respecting daily was without its weekly

sermon reports, and it became common to publish writing by leading clergy, some of whom produced regular columns that were widely syndicated. The Sunday newspaper, though initially criticized by some pastors as a desecration of the Lord's Day, became a home for edifying religious prose—sometimes with purposely contrasting theological points of view. In the early 1900s, for example, the *Atlanta Journal* featured facing Sunday columns by the Methodist bishop of Georgia and the pastor of Atlanta's First Baptist Church. On the eve of the 1925 Scopes "Monkey" trial, the former wrote in support of Darwinian evolution, the latter against.

The Church Page Era

As early as the 1870s, some newspapers were publishing full pages devoted to religion, complete with columns of church announcements and syndicated features such as the "International Sunday School Lesson," which offered a mainline Protestant perspective on the history and meaning of the Bible. Meanwhile, major metropolitan dailies grew increasingly sensitive to the religious diversity of their increasingly diverse readership, and increasingly reluctant to involve themselves in religious controversy. Free listing of religious services gave way to paid advertising, resulting in the creation of the "church page," which typically included listings of church activities and friendly articles on ecclesiastical affairs. In most newspapers it appeared on Saturday to be fresh in the minds of any readers seeking a place to worship the following day. According to a 1952 survey of religion editors, most of the copy used on their pages came directly from church press releases. Like other special sections sustained by advertising, the page was not where scandals and other controversial matters involving religion would appear, if they appeared at all. Major stories with significant religious dimensions—the civil rights struggle, for example—typically fell outside the religion beat.

That is not to say that the twentieth century was void of good religion coverage. Beginning in the 1920s, a number of leading newspapers employed serious and committed reporters to cover religion full time. On occasion, they were barred from covering church meetings and conferences by denominational officials concerned that the resulting stories would be insufficiently protective. In 1949, a group of these reporters formed the Religion Newswriters Association and, through the presentation of awards as well as discreet lobbying within the newspaper industry, began a process of enlarging and upgrading the beat. Their struggle bore some fruit during the so-called Eisenhower revival of the 1950s,

when religion rose in prominence and prestige through growth in membership and as a supposed source of ideological commitment to the U.S. way of life during the Cold War. The era was not without its interfaith skirmishes, largely over Roman Catholic efforts to secure public education funds and a U.S. ambassador to the Vatican. But the skirmishing came to an end with the election of John F. Kennedy as the first Catholic president and the opening of the Catholic Church via the Second Vatican Council—stories that represented a high-water mark of important religion stories that were also "positive" manifestations of religion in public life.

Over the next couple of decades, however, the religion beat did not keep pace with an increasingly sophisticated and professional journalistic community. Although a cadre of high-quality religion writers kept the faith, the beat once again became something of a backwater—a place where, for the most part, pious or over-the-hill reporters took care of the Saturday page and wrote little to give religious leaders or their flocks anything to complain about. The subject was covered as a service for readers but was hardly a priority for editors.

The Golden Age

The golden age of religion reporting, brief but extraordinary, dawned in the early 1990s, thanks to a confluence of commercial, cultural, and political forces. The recession of the late 1980s jolted the U.S. newspaper industry into an intense preoccupation with the long-term decline in market penetration—the proportion of the population buying papers. Among the various efforts undertaken to reverse or slow the decline was to beef up religion coverage in hopes of attracting new readers. At the time it was commonly noted that more U.S. citizens attended worship services on Sunday than sporting events. Increased attention to religion was also driven by the culture wars, in which conservative commentators made a practice of portraying "the media" as an institution hostile to the traditional values of ordinary U.S. citizens. Concerned that there was something to this, some editors strengthened their religion coverage as a way to reassure readers that their newspapers were tuned in to their deepest concerns—that it, so to speak, "felt their faith."

But above all, journalists came to recognize the growing public role of religion in the United States and around the world. After the Iranian Revolution of 1979, political Islam was recognized as a major force in world politics. Likewise,

in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, religion became a new source of ideological conflict worldwide. Domestically, the rise of the religious right at the end of the 1970s ushered in an era of religious politics in the United States that showed little sign of abating. National organizations such as the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition had, in alliance with the Republican Party, made issues such as abortion and gay rights into central arenas of partisan combat. Increasingly, political reporters needed to acquaint themselves with what was going on in U.S. religion and to fill their rolodexes with the names of religious leaders and academic experts who would talk to them about the politics of religion. Religion, in short, was a multifaceted story the news media could not afford to ignore.

Led by the *Dallas Morning News*, dozens of newspapers expanded their church and religion pages into freestanding “faith and values” sections. Membership in the Religion Newswriters Association doubled. The weekly news magazines also devoted increased attention to religion and found that a religion cover story sold more copies off the newsstand than any other kind. ABC News became the first network news operation to hire a full-time religion reporter, and public television began broadcasting a weekly religion news show, *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly*, which aired on more than two hundred channels around the country. By the end of the twentieth century, religion coverage was enjoying unprecedented popularity in the U.S. news media and was sustained by a level of apparent economic prosperity that kept newspaper profits at historic highs.

The Catholic Crisis

The culmination of the golden age, journalistically speaking, was the Catholic child abuse cover-up scandal of 2001 to 2003. Coverage of child abuse by Catholic priests was not a new story. Beginning in the late 1980s, a succession of local scandals—notably in Louisiana, New York City, and Dallas—highlighted cases of predatory sexual behavior by Catholic priests, directed for the most part at adolescent boys. But when the *Boston Globe* began publishing the results of its investigative series on the Boston archdiocese’s handling of abusive priests, it took the story to an entirely new level. Making painstaking use of court documents and church records, the paper was able to show how the diocesan hierarchy in Massachusetts, with the help of law enforcement and the psychotherapeutic community, covered up case after case of abuse, transferring known abusers from parish to

parish, and in some cases sending them off to other dioceses with clean bills of moral health.

Within weeks, newspapers all over the country were following the *Globe*’s lead, looking to see whether their own bishops had acted similarly—and very often discovering that they had. At a national level, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops had to address what soon became the biggest crisis ever faced by the Catholic Church in the United States, establishing an independent commission to report on the handling of abuse cases. In due course, Boston’s Cardinal Bernard Law was forced to resign, and court settlements pushed a number of dioceses into bankruptcy. Meanwhile, similar cases began to be reported around the world. At once local, national, and international, this turned into the biggest religion story in the history of U.S. journalism. It is hard to imagine a time in the future when a comparable amount of journalistic effort could again be deployed to undertake such coverage according to the traditional norms of the craft.

Other Media

Outside of newspapers, the most important purveyors of religion news in the secular media were the news magazines. *Time*, the first of the newsweeklies, led the way for decades, thanks to its founder, Henry Luce. Brought up in China as the son of Presbyterian missionaries, Luce maintained an intense interest in religion in the United States and did not hesitate to put religious leaders, including theologians, on the cover of his magazine. “Is God Dead?” *Time*’s 1966 cover story on the so-called Death of God theologians, represents an important moment in postwar religious history. In the last decades of the twentieth century, *Time* was joined by *Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report* as important sources of religion news.

By contrast, the broadcast media offered much less in the way of religion coverage. The television networks always covered major events such as the election of a new pope, and from time to time turned their attention to other religious phenomena. In 1994, ABC News retained a reporter to cover religion as a regular beat, but let her go during a round of budget cuts in 2001—about the same time CNN began its own experiment with a religion beat reporter. Perhaps the most important religion reporting job in broadcasting was on National Public Radio, which inaugurated a religion beat in 1993. Such positions have, however, been rare, largely because broadcast journalism has never had large enough staff to afford the array of specialty beats common to even the smaller newspapers.

The Big Chill

The implosion of the newspaper industry in the first decade of the twenty-first century dealt a severe blow to religion coverage. Faith and values sections were taken down; the extra staff assigned to put them out, redeployed. As with other specialty beats, some papers concluded they could no longer afford a full-time religion reporter. Increasingly, those interested in news of religion turned to other sources: Web sites and blogs dedicated to one or another specialized religious arena. Anyone interested in following the Catholic Church could not afford to overlook *Whispers in the Loggia*, a one-man tip sheet run by a young graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. When denominational controversies such as the schism in the Episcopal Church or the financial scandal in the Orthodox Church in the United States broke out, the best places to view the action were the blogs and Web sites of the various combatants.

If only by sheer volume of words, the blogosphere began to take over conventional religion reporting. At the *Washington Post*, for example, an online religion section called “On Faith,” featuring daily commentary by a wide array of guest contributors, tended to outweigh the stories produced by the paper’s own reporters. At many news outlets, the reporters themselves were encouraged to start their own blogs, which they filled with an array of notes, comments, and press release information. A host of new “information providers”—pastors, professors, and employees of para-church lobbies and think tanks—suddenly became part of the daily mix of news and opinion. Although the impact of this new quasi-journalistic world is difficult to calculate, it seems likely to weaken the conventions of coverage that had defined the religion beat since the days of the penny press.

Norms of Coverage

To understand the conventions of religion coverage, it is useful to think in terms of certain moral attitudes that govern how religion stories are formulated. These attitudes, called *topoi*, embody basic ideas about the nature of religion that derive from the Western religious tradition, resulting in religion stories that “make sense” in U.S. culture generally. The following list of *topoi* is not meant to be exhaustive, but does mark the basic territory within which much traditional religion coverage takes place. Each *topos* should be understood as pointing, explicitly or implicitly, to one or another anti-*topos*, moral opposites also capable of generating news stories.

Good Works

Doing good is a basic characteristic of religion as it is understood in Western religion. Religion coverage has always been replete with stories of religious people and institutions helping the poor, ministering to the sick, offering relief to those who have suffered natural disasters. Although important U.S. Christian traditions—notably within evangelical Protestantism—have emphasized saving souls over good works, the news media have tended to embrace an attitude more associated with the Social Gospel. Anti-*topoi* of good works may be religiously inspired evil-doing, hypocrisy (see later), false prophecy (see later), or simply doing nothing for the least among us. Public policies, such as the “faith-based initiative” of President George W. Bush’s administration, generally receive favorable media treatment, at least initially, because of this *topos*.

Tolerance

Legal and political issues involving the First Amendment’s ban on religious establishments and protection of religious free exercise are too varied and complex to be handled journalistically simply within the context of “separation of church and state.” Instead, church-state issues have been easier to deal with in terms of the *topoi* of tolerance and intolerance. Tolerance is always good and intolerance bad; opposition to political candidates because of their religious faith is always frowned upon. The debate is likely to be about who is truly tolerant or intolerant. Conservative Christian activists may be portrayed as religiously intolerant, yet they seek to have themselves portrayed as the objects of secularist intolerance.

Hypocrisy

The U.S. news media have long reflected the special antagonism shown by the Western prophetic tradition toward those who fail to practice what they preach. The televangelist scandals of the late 1980s and cases of pedophilia by Catholic priests both prompted an extraordinary amount of news coverage. In the pedophile cases, the violations of law were generally serious, the activities of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart less so. Although hypocrisy is not in itself a crime, but considered a moral defect, the news media often expose such stories as a matter of cultural tradition.

False Prophecy

If the hypocrisy *topos* points to those who fail to adhere to the moral standards they themselves profess, the *topos* of

false prophecy concerns those who may or may not be hypocrites, but whose teachings are themselves considered wrong. News coverage of the Mormons in the nineteenth century was preoccupied with the issue of polygamy and the importance of showing its evils. Similarly, much coverage of new religious movements, or cults, in the latter part of the twentieth century has gone forth under the topos of false prophecy. True prophecy, the anti-topos, governs coverage of exemplary religious leaders like the evangelist Billy Graham, the Catholic nun Mother Teresa, the Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, and the Dalai Lama.

Inclusion

Inclusion is a topos related to tolerance but specifically concerned with the recognition of unfamiliar or previously disfavored religious groups. The Mormons, first subjected to “false prophecy” treatment, in due course were deemed to merit coverage as a worthy religious group meriting full acceptance in U.S. society. Inclusion is primarily a topos to be applied to domestic religious groups, so complications may arise when the religious group in question includes significant numbers of co-religionists abroad. For example, because “inclusion” does not govern coverage of Islam outside the United States, Muslims in the United States have taken offense at how their religion is characterized in reporting of Muslims abroad. In response, the U.S. news media have taken special pains to provide “positive” (in other words, inclusive) coverage of Muslim communities in the United States when there are “negative” (exclusionary) stories of violence perpetrated by Muslims abroad.

Supernatural Belief

It is often asserted that the news media have a difficult time with religion because journalism is about proving facts and religion is about faith that is beyond proof. This is especially likely to be the case when the religious subject matter at hand has to do with the miraculous or supernatural. Yet religious traditions are far from uninterested in empirical demonstration—witness the Roman Catholic Church’s insistence on proof of miracles to canonize a saint. And journalism often seeks not demonstrable evidence but sources prepared to assert that something happened. For this reason, the topos that governs coverage of supernatural events is the faith of the believers; belief is the story, whether it has to do with a miraculous healing or an apparition of the Virgin Mary. The contrary topos is disproof—showing

the alleged miracle to be a fraud or a delusion. The latter, however, generally requires a good deal of careful investigative journalism, and so is far rarer.

Declension

The decline of religion has been a theme in Western religion since Moses came down from Mount Sinai to discover the golden calf, and in the United States almost since the arrival of the Puritans in New England. New (or allegedly new) religious phenomena—whether cults, megachurches, New Age practices, or religion “shopping”—are commonly seen as evidence of spiritual decline from an earlier age of traditional (“old time”) faith and practice. To be sure, the opposite topos of religious revival periodically comes to the fore—for example, after the attacks of September 11, 2001, when signs of increased religious attendance were detected. Soon enough, however, the attendance settled down to previous levels, which led to a host of “no revival,” that is, declension, stories. That is the prevailing cultural inclination.

Conclusion

As the secular news media merge into the world of new media, there is every reason to expect religion to remain a central area of interest and concern. The profusion and intensity of online responses to religion news and commentary indicate that the beliefs, practices, and institutional goings-on of faith communities matter greatly to many U.S. citizens. One way or another, they will make it their business to find out what they need to know about their religious passions and imaginations.

The diversity of sources and interests is, however, likely to weaken the common values that the news media have tended to strengthen by means of the topoi discussed earlier. These have portrayed “good religion” as tolerant, inclusive, and community building, while picturing intensive and eccentric religious expressions as bad. The new media environment enables U.S. residents to resist this value system more easily.

See also *Internet*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Radio*; *Religious Press*; *Roman Catholicism: Early Twenty-First-Century Issues*; *Television*.

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Judaism: Conservative

Conservative Judaism is a religious movement dedicated to conserving traditional Judaism and adapting it to the changed conditions of modernity. On the one hand, Conservative Jews consider themselves bound by *halakhah*, Jewish law. On the other hand, committed to change within that framework, Conservative Judaism has responded to the challenges of modernity by developing responses to traditional legal strictures that it deemed antithetical to modern sensibilities.

Late Nineteenth Century: Positive-Historical Judaism and the Influence of Reform Judaism

The intellectual forerunner of Conservative Judaism, Positive-Historical Judaism, developed in central Europe in the mid-nineteenth century in response to the challenges of the Enlightenment and Jewish emancipation. Its founder, Rabbi Zecharias Frankel (1801–1875), believed that Jewish law has always adapted over time in response to changing conditions. Opposed to what he considered to be the radical approach of Reform Judaism, Frankel broke from German Reformers in 1845 over the issue of whether it was desirable for Jews to recite traditional prayers in Hebrew. He believed that change ought to evolve organically and be rooted in Jewish history and communal practice. He also advocated the application of modern methods and sensibilities of critical, historical inquiry to the study of Jewish religious texts. In 1854, he assumed the presidency of the Jewish Theological Seminary of Breslau, which trained rabbinical students using this approach.

In the United States, Conservative Judaism adopted a similarly moderate approach to change. It developed in the

mid-1880s, also in response to what it believed to be the Reform movement's radical approach to change. In 1883, the Reform movement's Hebrew Union College served non-kosher shellfish at its first ordination dinner, what later became known as the "*trayfe* banquet." Two years later, the Reform movement issued the Pittsburgh Platform, which accepted "as binding only the moral laws, and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives" and rejected the Jewish religious-political organizations' designation as a nation in favor of seeing itself solely as "a religious community" that did not anticipate a return to Palestine. Several congregations resigned from the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and began to plan for a more traditionalist organization. The recently arrived Hungarian rabbi and rabbinic scholar Alexander Kohut (1842–1894) championed this "conservative" approach to modern Judaism, coining the term "the Judaism of the Golden Mean" to describe it.

In 1886, this moderate group founded the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) of America, appointing Rabbi Sabato Morais (1823–1897) as its first president. As articulated in the preamble to its constitution, its mission was to preserve the knowledge and practice of historical Judaism. In 1887, JTS held its first class, with ten students, and began preparing them to realize this goal as rabbis. This institution has for more than one hundred years served as the intellectual center of Conservative Judaism.

Solomon Schechter and the Growth of Conservative Judaism

The Conservative movement began to take shape in the United States under Solomon Schechter (1847–1915); he developed the institutional structure through which Conservative Judaism could be disseminated and nurtured. A scholar of rabbinics from Cambridge University, renowned for his discovery of the Cairo Genizah, a treasure trove of ancient Jewish texts and documents, Schechter served as president of the reorganized Jewish Theological Seminary from 1902 to 1915. He transformed JTS into a center of Jewish scholarship and leader of Conservative Judaism by force of his personality, his commitment to scholarship and Jewish life, and his administrative achievements. He recruited a faculty of outstanding scholars, including Louis Ginzberg (1873–1953), Israel Davidson (1870–1939), Israel Friedlaender (1876–1920), and Alexander Marx (1878–1953). Marx amassed a world-renowned library of Judaica books and manuscripts, including some that Schechter had discovered in the Genizah. Schechter also transformed the

rabbinical school into a graduate-level institution that would train English-speaking rabbis for American Jews; in 1909, he established the Teachers Institute under the leadership of Mordecai M. Kaplan (1881–1983) as a vehicle for preparing men and women for careers in Jewish education. In 1906, Schechter issued “Zionism: A Statement,” in which he unequivocally embraced the Zionist cause as the “great bulwark against assimilation.” Though Schechter was careful to explain that his endorsement was personal and not institutional, his support reflected the views of most of the faculty and placed Conservative Judaism squarely in the Zionist camp from the earliest days of the movement.

In 1913, Schechter established the United Synagogue of America as the national organization of Conservative synagogues. Founded with twenty-two synagogues, United Synagogue was dedicated to maintaining Jewish tradition and loyalty to Torah in its historical expositions and preserving hope for Israel’s restoration.

Schechter’s wife, Mathilde, brought the spirit of Conservative Jewish living to JTS through prayer, holiday celebrations, and home hospitality. Convinced that women played a key role in strengthening Jewish life, Mathilde founded Women’s League of the United Synagogue with one hundred women in 1918. Its mission was the perpetuation of traditional Judaism in the home, synagogue, and community.

During the fifty years after World War I, Conservative Judaism became the fastest-growing American Jewish religious movement. Conservative Judaism appealed to children of eastern European Jews who felt comfortable with Jewish tradition and devoted to the Jewish people but who also wanted to integrate into American life. These Jews were also drawn to Conservative Judaism because it resonated with their ethnic sensibilities without judging them for lapses in observance. By 1929, United Synagogue boasted a membership of 229 affiliates, and the rate of growth accelerated still further after World War II. More than one thousand synagogues were built or restored, mostly in suburbia, between 1945 and 1965, with each congregation forming a hub for Jews to meet for social, educational, philanthropic, and religious purposes, and each rabbi serving as the *marā d’atra*, religious authority, of his congregation.

During the period of rapid growth of the institutions of the Conservative Movement in the interwar and post–World War II period, rabbis and their wives played an instrumental role in bringing Conservative Jewish living and learning to new, fast-growing congregations throughout the United States. As rabbis provided pastoral, religious, intellectual, and

spiritual leadership to their congregations, their wives often enhanced their effectiveness by teaching classes, hosting meetings, and modeling Jewish living. Congregational Sisterhoods—local chapters of Mathilde Schechter’s Women’s League—also formed the backbone of the educational mission of the Conservative synagogue. Sisterhood women successfully took on many projects—such as organizing classes, raising funds for charity, maintaining the synagogue gift shop and religious school, and decorating and refurbishing the synagogues—that greatly enhanced Conservative Jewish life in their synagogues. Women’s League also played a crucial role in the national Conservative scene through its fund-raising capabilities. Responsible for collecting sufficient funds to open the Mathilde Schechter Residence Hall at JTS, Women’s League also raised needed scholarship funds for JTS students.

The Influence of Mordecai Kaplan and the Development of Conservative Halakhah

During this period, Conservative Judaism was heavily influenced by Mordecai M. Kaplan, the founder and leader of Reconstructionist Judaism. Kaplan, a Lithuanian-born Jew and a son of a traditional rabbi, was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1902 and acquired traditional ordination in 1908 in Europe. In addition to serving as dean of the Teachers Institute, Kaplan was professor of homiletics and philosophy of religion, teaching rabbinical students for more than five decades and influencing several generations of Conservative rabbis. In 1922, Kaplan founded the Society for the Advancement of Judaism (SAJ), which, within a few years, considered itself the prototypical Reconstructionist congregation. In *Judaism as a Civilization: Toward a Reconstruction of American-Jewish Life* (1934), Kaplan described Judaism as culture, language, Zionism, music, art, social activities, sports—as a civilization rather than a halakhically based religion. For Kaplan, Jewish law should have “a vote not a veto,” and he rejected the notion of a supernatural God who punished individuals who transgressed the commandments. For Kaplan, God was the force that makes for salvation in the world. Similarly, Kaplan rejected the chosen people concept, preferring a more democratic view of humanity that promised all humans equal access to Godliness. He believed that people should and would observe rituals that were intrinsically satisfying and that would strengthen Jewish civilization. This vision of Judaism proved popular with eastern European ethnic Jews who felt closely tied to Jews around the world, drawn to the Zionist

vision of establishing a Jewish homeland, and connected to Jewish traditions. Kaplan's view of Judaism also dovetailed with the emerging view of the synagogue as a center that provided diverse opportunities for Jews to spend time with one another through social, educational, recreational, and religious programming and facilities.

In 1947, this expansive view found expression in the establishment of the University of Judaism in Los Angeles as the West Coast branch of the Jewish Theological Seminary. It helped galvanize and enrich the Los Angeles Jewish community, as it began to offer classes and other programming that fostered learning, identity, and meaning.

Kaplan's views challenged Conservative Jews to articulate the distinctiveness of their vision of Judaism, one that retained a commitment to Jewish law while demonstrating how it ought to adjust in accordance with the needs and realities of the people. Over the years, the Rabbinical Assembly's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards has issued several rulings that addressed this challenge. In 1950, analyzing the halakhic restrictions that might prohibit the use of a motor vehicle on the Sabbath and acknowledging that "in our time regular attendance at the synagogue has become a sine qua non for the maintenance of Judaism," the majority of members decided to permit driving to the synagogue on the Sabbath.

In 1953, the committee also adopted what came to be known as the "Lieberman clause," which made the Jewish marriage contract into a civilly binding agreement that committed both husband and wife to abide by the recommendations of a Jewish court of law if their marriage ended. The "Lieberman clause" served to greatly reduce the incidence of *agunot*, literally "chained women," that is, women whose husbands have left them without issuing a Jewish bill of divorce and who are unable to remarry as a result. Though widely used throughout by Conservative Jews, it did not fully resolve the *agunah* problem, and in recent years, the Joint Bet Din [Jewish Court of Law] of the Conservative movement has become more aggressive in dealing with this problem, both by certifying Conservative rabbis qualified to write *gittin* (bills of divorce) and by using *hafka'at kiddushin* (annulment of the marriage) as a tool against recalcitrant husbands.

The Sabbath and Festival Prayer Book and the Leadership Training Fellowship

In 1946, the Conservative movement issued the *Sabbath and Festival Prayer Book*. This prayer book (*siddur*) included

minimal ideological emendations in liturgy, an introduction about the uniqueness of the Conservative ideology, many supplementary English readings, and a modern translation of the Hebrew text. Omitting nonessential prayers and difficult or obscure liturgical poems or *piyyutim*, the editors also included nonliteral translations for passages—such as accounts of temple sacrifice—that no longer resonated for a mid-twentieth-century congregation. By 1949, more than 80 percent of United Synagogue congregations had adopted the *siddur*, forging a sense of unity among Conservative congregations. According to the sociologist Marshall Sklare, by 1955 the overwhelming majority of Conservative synagogues also adopted mixed seating during worship, a practice that most clearly differentiated Orthodox from Conservative synagogues.

In 1955, the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards responded to the changing role of women in the synagogue—the first bat mitzvah ceremony was performed for Mordecai Kaplan's daughter, Judith, in 1922 and had since gained in popularity—by deciding to permit women to be called up for *aliyot* (Torah honors). After reviewing the halakhic literature on the topic and noting that the prohibition was based more on long-standing custom than on law, the author of the *responsum* (rabbinic written response to a halakhic question) Aaron H. Blumenthal, concluded that "the time has come for someone to reverse the direction in which the halakha has been moving for centuries."

During the postwar period, the Conservative movement also recognized the importance of Jewish education. The three-day-a-week supplementary congregational school for boys and girls became the norm, with the goal of teaching Hebrew, prayer, and Jewish culture in preparation for bar and bat mitzvah. But movement leaders also wanted to cultivate a new generation of leaders. To that end, several new organizations were established, including the Leadership Training Fellowship (LTF) in 1945, which worked with rabbis to identify promising youth within Conservative synagogues and motivate them to engage in Jewish study and fellowship. In the summer of 1947, Camp Ramah opened in Conover, Wisconsin, with a goal of providing an intensive Jewish learning environment grounded in Conservative Jewish teaching and living. During the past sixty years, Ramah grew into a network of camps. In summer 2008, more than five thousand campers participated in overnight camps along with another twelve hundred campers in Ramah day camps. In 1951, the United Synagogue founded its youth group division (USY). While LTF catered to elite

Conservative youth, USY aimed to involve all young Conservative Jews in religious, educational, and social activities. Camp Ramah, LTF (disbanded in 1978), and USY modeled Conservative Jewish living and values and inspired thousands of young people to live more intensively Jewish lives. Also in 1951, day school education under Conservative auspices began in Rockaway Park, New York. Over the years, this option grew in popularity for Conservative Jews, and the umbrella organization of Conservative day schools, the Solomon Schechter Day School Association, was founded in the mid-1960s. In 2007–2008, 16,692 students attended the fifty elementary schools, three combined elementary and upper (K–12) schools, and one high school. All of these institutions have been successful sources of recruitment for future rabbis, educators, cantors, and lay leaders for the movement.

Louis Finkelstein and Abraham Joshua Heschel

During Louis Finkelstein's tenure as chancellor of the seminary (1940–1971), JTS positioned itself not only as the preeminent American institution for higher Jewish learning but also as the voice of American Jewry for both Jews and gentiles. Dr. Finkelstein appeared on the October 15, 1951, cover of *Time* magazine and later gave the invocation at the inauguration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. He began producing the *Eternal Light* radio program, the first major use of broadcasting by an American Jewish religious movement, in 1944. This half-hour radio series, produced in conjunction with NBC, debuted on television in 1952 and lasted through the 1980s on both media. Aired on a rotating basis with Protestant and Catholic programs, the *Eternal Light* emphasized the common ground among the nation's mainstream religions.

During the 1960s, Abraham Joshua Heschel, professor of Jewish ethics and mysticism at JTS from 1945 until his death in 1972, emerged as a prophetic voice and public activist in civil rights, interfaith dialogue, and opposition to the Vietnam War. Placing theological emphasis on awe, transcendence, and dialectical interaction between God and humans, Heschel influenced a generation of students to act on the moral and ethical lessons gleaned from Jewish sacred texts. In 1965, Heschel joined Martin Luther King Jr. on the famed civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. Working with the American Jewish Committee, Heschel met with Germany's Augustin Cardinal Bea to discuss the Vatican's reformulation of the church's relationship with the Jewish people that resulted in the Vatican's 1965

document *Nostra Aetate*. Though the final version watered down the wording of the original drafts and did not renounce the charge of deicide, Heschel still saw it as a step forward in interfaith dialogue.

1960s: Movement toward Women's Equality

In the 1960s, Jewish life faced challenges from the counter-culture movement and second-wave feminism. Many young people who had grown up in the Conservative movement found synagogue life to be impersonal and uninspiring, and they founded *havurot*—small, informal, and nonhierarchical worship and study communities—that emphasized a more intimate engagement with God and community. In 1972, *Ezrat Nashim*, a group of young, well-educated women, most of whom were products of the camps and schools of movement institutions, presented to the Rabbinical Assembly a call for the public affirmation of women's equality in all aspects of Jewish life. They demanded that women be granted membership in synagogues, be counted in a *minyan* (the quorum of ten that is necessary for public prayer), be allowed full participation in religious observances, be recognized as witnesses in Jewish law, be allowed to initiate divorce, be permitted and encouraged to attend rabbinical and cantorial school and perform as rabbis and cantors in synagogues, be encouraged to assume positions of leadership in the community, and be considered bound to fulfill all the *mitzvot* (commandments) equally with men. They stopped just short of demanding rabbinical ordination and investiture as *hazzanim* [cantors] for women. This call evoked a sympathetic response from many Conservative rabbis; as expected, Women's League also became an early and vocal advocate for *Ezrat Nashim's* views.

Women's equality in synagogue ritual precipitated widespread and often heated and divisive debate within the various arms of the Conservative movement over the next decade as it struggled to articulate the implications of Conservative Judaism's commitment to evolutionary change within the boundaries of Jewish law. In 1973, the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards passed a *takkanah* (enactment) allowing women to count equally with men in the *minyan*. The committee also adopted resolutions that further equalized men and women in areas of ritual, including service as prayer leaders. In 1973, the United Synagogue of America resolved to allow women to participate in synagogue rituals and to promote equal opportunity for women in positions of leadership, authority, and responsibility in congregational life. From 1972 to 1976, the number of

Conservative congregations giving *aliyot* to women increased from 7 percent to 50 percent. In 1996, 83 percent of congregations in the United States and Canada counted women in the *minyan*, and today egalitarianism is a nearly universal in Conservative synagogues.

In September 1977, the seminary's chancellor, Gerson D. Cohen, appointed a Committee for the Study of the Ordination of Women as Rabbis that recommended in 1979, eleven to three, that women be ordained. At that time, the Rabbinical Assembly voted to take no action on the question prior to the decision of the JTS, but the faculty did not vote on the issue that year. In 1983, the Rabbinical Assembly decided to consider for membership Beverly Magidson, a graduate of Hebrew Union College. Though widely supported, her admission fell short of receiving the necessary three-quarters vote of rabbis present at that time. However, this spurred the seminary to reconsider the issue, and on October 24, 1983, the seminary faculty voted 34 to 8 to admit women to the seminary's rabbinical school. In 1985, Amy Eilberg became the first woman to be ordained by JTS. The Jewish legal basis for women's admission acceptance was the *Teshuvah (responsum)* of JTS Talmud professor Joel Roth that held that individual women could become rabbis (and prayer leaders) if they chose to assume the same degree of religious obligation as men. Individuals opposed to the decision to admit women formed the Union for Traditional Conservative Judaism, which became a separate group in 1990, changing its name to the Union for Traditional Judaism. In 2009, there were 261 women in the 1,600-member Rabbinical Assembly.

Women have entered the rabbinate in increasing numbers. In 2008, women made up 40 percent of the student body at both the JTS and the Ziegler rabbinical schools. The latter school opened in Los Angeles in 1996 at the University of Judaism (now American Jewish University).

The struggle for acceptance of women as cantors took a different course, since women had been eligible to study in the Cantors Institute since its inception in 1952 as candidates for the degrees of Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate of Sacred Music. In 1987, Seminary chancellor Ismar Schorsch announced that JTS would confer the diploma of *Hazzan* to two women, Marla Barugel and Erica Lippitz. By 2008, approximately fifty women had graduated from JTS's H. L. Miller Cantorial School. In 2010 women make up nearly 70 percent of its student body. In 1990, the Cantors Assembly voted to admit women to its group, and in 2010, 68 of the 540 current members are women.

The vast majority of Conservative synagogues now accord women partial or full equality in religious services, although the official position of the movement is to endorse both egalitarian and nonegalitarian services based on majority and minority opinions issued by the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards. Ceremonies for the naming of baby Jewish girls, performed in an ad hoc, experimental way by individuals for a generation, have entered the mainstream with the publication of Women's League's *Simhat-Bat: Ceremonies to Welcome a Baby Girl* (1994). It is no longer unusual to see women reading Torah or donning historically male Jewish religious garb for prayer. During the past twenty-five years, small numbers of Conservative women have begun to wear *tallith* (prayer shawl), *tefillin* (phylacteries), and *kipot* (skullcaps). This commitment to egalitarianism came to define and invigorate Conservative Judaism at this time.

1980s to Early Twenty-First Century: Emet Ve-Emunah and Creative Tension

In 1987, the Conservative movement issued its first statement of principles, *Emet Ve-Emunah*. Developed by a commission of rabbis, academics, and lay leaders, this forty-page statement reaffirmed the movement's commitment to Zionism, study, prayer, and Jewish peoplehood. It articulated a view of *halakha* as the community's understanding of God's will and therefore subject to change or reaffirmation in every generation. Characteristically Conservative, *Emet Ve-Emunah* does not present a monolithic view but rather includes constructs like "Some of us believe X, others Y." It also describes Conservative Judaism as a dynamic, evolving form of engagement, characterizing the "Ideal Conservative Jew" as a willing, thinking, and striving Jew.

Around the turn of the twenty-first century, Conservative Judaism further expanded its reach. The movement grew in Israel through its Israeli counterpart, the Masorti movement, and through institutions such as the Conservative Yeshiva, which was founded in Jerusalem in 1995 to meet the need for serious study of traditional Jewish texts in a coeducational and open-minded environment. The Schechter Institutes ordain Masorti rabbis and grant graduate degrees in Jewish studies to prepare teachers to serve in Israeli schools. In 1996, JTS established the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education, bringing the number of schools at JTS to five, including rabbinical, cantorial and graduate schools and the undergraduate Albert A. List College of Jewish Studies. Through its schools and programs, JTS continues to train lay and professional leaders for

the American Jewish community and provides an intellectually compelling and spiritually meaningful voice on contemporary issues. Under the leadership of Chancellor Arnold Eisen, the JTS faculty voted to admit gay and lesbian students to the rabbinical school in March 2007, based on Committee on Jewish Law and Standards responsa that opened the door to gay and lesbian clergy. A world-renowned scholar of American Judaism, Eisen is committed to the revitalization of the Conservative movement through passionate study of Torah and spirited practice of tradition.

The Conservative movement has always suffered from a gap between the ideology and decisions of its rabbis and leaders and the practice of the large majority of its members. In every generation, its leaders struggled to adapt Jewish law to the exigencies of the times, while its members held to a pattern of ethnic togetherness that included some observance of tradition. This gap has declined somewhat thanks to the success of movement organizations such as Ramah. Conservative worship is noteworthy for incorporating camp tunes, and for the involvement of lay members in reading Torah and delivering *divrei* Torah (brief talks about portions of the Torah). Younger Conservative Jews have surpassed their parents in ritual observance and level of Jewish education obtained. Yet challenges remain as the movement strives to find a meaningful message for a new generation of American Jews bound less by ethnicity than by personal meaning. As of 2001, 46 percent of Conservative adults were age fifty-five or older. Membership in Conservative synagogues has shrunk accordingly. In 1995, 760 congregations affiliated with the movement; today that number has declined to 700. Some Conservative Jews feel drawn to contemporary Reform with its more relaxed approach to tradition, emphasis on personal autonomy, and openness to intermarried families. As a result, as of the 2000–2001 National Jewish Population Survey, more than one-quarter of American Jews born into Conservative families now identify with the Reform movement (by way of comparison, just 6 percent of current Conservative Jews were born into Reform families). Some of the most observant Conservative Jews joined Orthodox communities, finding there a critical mass of individuals committed to Jewish law. Still others shun denominational labels; like the founders of the *havurah* movement (small fellowship groups) in the 1960s, they are establishing independent egalitarian prayer and study groups.

The creative tension that lies at the heart of Conservative Judaism—a movement that considers itself bound by

halakhah and yet committed to change—is both its strength and its weakness. In many ways, this nuanced approach has caused the movement to struggle most deeply and agonizingly over the challenges of modernity, including feminism, intermarriage, and gay rights, and this has often divided the movement and inhibited its growth. Some leaders believe this dialectic to be essential to its essence, and they feel confident that such struggles will ultimately provide compelling answers for yet another generation of American Jews. Others feel the movement must retool its message to flourish in this postmodern era. Always committed to evolutionary change, Conservative Judaism will itself continue to undergo its own evolution as it prepares to meet the needs of future generations.

See also *Architecture: Jewish; Canada: Pluralism; Chabad-Lubavitch; Hasidism; Judaism* entries; *Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Women: Ordination of; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Judaism: Jewish Architecture

See *Architecture: Jewish*

Judaism: Jewish Culture

The challenge of defining an American Jewish culture is reflective of the extraordinary variety of ethnic and national traditions that make up the contemporary American Jewish community. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Jewish culture has evolved to a state at which it is both more openly ethnic and more integrated into American life than ever before. This reflects the increased acceptance of Jews in American society and of ethnic characteristics and particularism—that is, maintaining a distinctive identity—in general, as well as the remarkable success of Jews in contributing to the American cultural landscape. The number of nations and traditions represented in the contemporary American Jewish community makes it virtually impossible to identify one distinct “Jewish culture.” However, the Jewish cultures that coexist and flourish in America are united in some of their challenges and allegiances.

Jews have lived in America for more than three and a half centuries, but it was the immense waves of immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that

brought most identifiable Jewish culture to the United States. Each new wave of immigrants has introduced elements that continue to redefine American and Jewish culture. The most significant of these, both in numeric terms and with regard to its lasting effect on American Jewry's image of itself in popular culture, is the massive immigration from eastern and southern Europe that brought nearly two million Jews to America's shores. This wave lasted principally from the 1880s to the 1920s, when restrictive laws passed in 1921 and 1924 effectively ended open immigration to America.

Likewise, in a powerful reciprocal relationship, the Jewish community in the twentieth century and beyond has played a significant role in shaping much of contemporary American entertainment and literary production; Jewish and American popular cultures have become closely identified and in some respects almost synonymous. Some of these areas of overlap include the film, comedy, comic book, and musical theater industries, in which Jews have played prominent and sometimes formative roles for decades.

Early Jewish Presence in America

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the population of Jews in the American colonies and the young United States numbered fewer than three thousand. Most of the original Jewish settlers, in the latter part of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, came from England, Holland, Brazil, and Poland. Early Jewish communities in the Americas were composed of a majority of Sephardic Jews. Sephardim trace their ancestry from a combination of sources, including Jews who had been in the Middle East and Africa since the Roman Empire and Jews who had lived in Spain and Portugal until their expulsion in the late fifteenth century. Those who came to America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had roots primarily in the Iberian Peninsula. Their language, cuisine, synagogue architecture, and religious customs reflected their origins; many of the immigrants spoke Portuguese or Ladino, a fusion language composed mostly of Hebrew and Spanish that had become the lingua franca of Sephardic Jewry.

Sephardic Jews swiftly learned and primarily used English and adopted styles of dress that prevailed among the colonial merchant class, with their appearance dependent more on their economic status than on their religion. Even the work of the leading Jewish craftsman of that period, silversmith Myer Myers (1723–1795), reflected genteel taste even as it beautified Jewish ritual objects. In the

realm of food, recipes incorporating Sephardic customs include green beans, almonds, pilafs, artichokes, and herbs. *Kashrut*, or Jewish dietary law, seems to have been followed by some early settlers, but the majority of the community seems to have relaxed its observance. By the 1800s, most of this group had assimilated into the general American population, thus reducing the effect of Sephardic culture on American Jewry, although aspects of it continued to dominate synagogue life well into the nineteenth century.

German Jewish Immigrants

In the mid-nineteenth century, roughly spanning the years 1820 to 1880, approximately 250,000 Jews from central Europe—Germany, Austria, and parts of Poland—arrived in the United States. Many of these Jews remained deeply immersed in the language and culture of their native lands for decades after their arrival. The custom of teaching German to children ultimately waned, but German Jewish immigrants and their descendants continued to publish German-language periodicals with Jewish content, from the weekly *Die Deborah* published by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise (1819–1900) in mid-nineteenth century Cincinnati to the *Aufbau* newspaper founded in New York in 1934. The Jewish press would continue to be one of the most effective ways for the community to reinforce its cultural identity while providing a conduit to American society. In this sense, the German Jews established a model that has lasted into the present day. To the extent that a unique Jewish culinary culture existed at the time, these immigrants increased its repertoire, transmitting recipes for schnitzel, sauerkraut, kugel, gefilte fish, and strudel that would identify families with their central European roots long after they had fully integrated into American life.

The impressive record of this group in laying the foundations of American Jewish institutional life was largely due to their pride in having common antecedents and their persistence in creating networks that advanced their interests in business, culture, and religion. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jews of central European extraction would create several bodies to safeguard and promote Jewish culture, from the Jewish Publication Society founded in 1888 to the twelve-volume *Jewish Encyclopedia* published between 1901 and 1906. These accomplishments evidence their creators' growing realization of the imperative to preserve their history and culture even as their community became more vulnerable to changes wrought by America's relatively open society.

Yiddish Culture in America

Jews had come to America from the eastern European Tsarist and Austro-Hungarian empires at least since the eighteenth century, but it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that a confluence of political and economic factors led to the largest Jewish migration in history. By far, the country that received the largest number of Jewish immigrants during this period was the United States. Between 1881 and 1924, nearly two million Jews—approximately 20 percent of the world's Jewish population in 1900—arrived in America, mostly from lands that were part of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires of pre-World War I Europe. The impact of this mass migration on American Jewish life and on American culture in general was immense. From the array of institutions reliant on the Yiddish language to the development of music, food, and humor in America, the influence of this group of Ashkenazim—Jews with roots in central and eastern Europe—continues to be felt long after their collective experience of Jewish life in that region has become a memory.

Much of Ashkenazi Jewry's identity and cultural legacy is bound up with the language spoken by most Jews in eastern Europe before World War II, Yiddish. A Germanic fusion language written in Hebrew characters, Yiddish was created in approximately the tenth century by merging medieval High German with Hebrew and adding vocabulary from the predominant languages of the countries where Jews resided, especially Russia and Poland. The vast majority of Jewish immigrants to America at the turn of the twentieth century were Yiddish speakers, and in their early years they established a number of significant cultural institutions that relied on and propagated their native tongue. Among these were schools, societies, and a host of periodicals, estimated at 150 published between 1880 and 1914. This included six Yiddish daily papers, four of which were published in New York City alone. The world's best-known and most widely read Yiddish newspaper, the *Forward* (in Yiddish, *Forverts*), was founded in New York by Abraham Cahan (1860–1951) in 1897.

Probably the most legendary American Jewish cultural institution in the first half of the twentieth century, however, was the Yiddish theater. Attendance at Yiddish theatrical productions became one of the most beloved and popular pastimes enjoyed by the new immigrant community. In New York City alone, it was not unusual for a dozen Yiddish theater companies to be performing at one time. Several of them had their own lavish theater buildings that boasted

such stars of the Yiddish stage as Jacob Adler, Boris Thomshefsky, and Maurice Schwartz. The locus for most of this activity was Second Avenue in downtown New York. Modes of entertainment connected to the Yiddish stage were realized in the post–World War II era in the areas of comedy and English-language theater, some of the most widely appealing and successful industries that prominently feature American Jews.

Another example of Ashkenazi Jewish culture that has made its way into the fabric of American life is music, particularly the instrumental aspects that endure long after the Yiddish lyrics have become inaccessible to most listeners. The genre of music known as *klezmer* (from the Hebrew for “instrument of song”), usually played with easily portable instruments like violin and clarinet, comes from a long tradition of folk music that reflects the peripatetic lives of its musicians. Its characteristic blend of exuberant tunes and long, wailing notes combines elements from eastern European Jewry’s Slavic surroundings and from traditional cantorial melodies.

A wide array of foods accompanied eastern European Jews: stuffed cabbage, blintzes, challah bread, knishes, *kishke* (stuffed beef intestines), *kreplach* (meat-filled dumplings), matzah ball soup, and many other dishes.

Sephardic Jewish Communities in America

The international upheavals at the turn of the twentieth century brought thousands of Sephardic Jews to the shores of the United States from North Africa, Greece, the Ottoman Empire, and areas of the Balkans. (Sephardic Jews from North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula are more properly referred to as *Mizrahi* Jews, from the Hebrew word for “East.”) Numeric estimates for these immigrants range from 50,000 to 70,000 by the beginning of World War II, with more than 25,000 arriving in the first two decades of the century. Syrian, Greek, and Turkish Jews settled mostly in New York at first and brought cuisine featuring ingredients from North Africa, the Middle East, Persia, and Spain. Rice dishes with meats, legumes, and vegetables using spices such as cumin, coriander, and turmeric were complemented by sweets flavored with honey and rosewater.

Sephardic Jews in this wave of immigration brought musical and linguistic traditions with them as well, with Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) songs and Turkish coffeehouses permeating the atmosphere of their neighborhoods. The Sephardic community in early twentieth-century New York

had one major Judeo-Spanish newspaper, *La America* (published from 1910 to 1925). Like most ethnic periodicals, the paper served as both information source and community clearinghouse through which immigrants could find work and, often, each other. The near-total eradication of many Ladino-speaking communities, such as the Jews of Salonika, Greece, and former Yugoslavia, during the Holocaust meant that these pre–World War I immigrants would be the largest group ever to transport Judeo-Spanish language and culture to the United States.

The Ladino tongue is now mostly spoken by a dwindling population of elderly immigrants and new initiates. This group organizes performances and holds fund-raisers and educational events to display the richness of their heritage. Bolstering the efforts of these groups is a scholarly community that aims to correct a lack of information about the Sephardic experience through the publication of academic articles and books and the creation of forums devoted to the formal study of Sephardic history and culture.

Smaller Jewish Groups in America

Other groups who came to the United States in the mid- to late twentieth century have had their own extremely varied impact on Jewish cultural life in America. Prominent among these are the various Hasidic subcommunities, Jews from the former Soviet Union, Jewish communities from Central Asia, Iran, and Iraq, and expatriate Israelis. A longer list might include the roughly 100,000 refugees who fled central (and, to a lesser extent, eastern) Europe immediately prior to World War II, the 250,000 Holocaust survivors who arrived between 1945 and 1960 (this includes most of the Hasidim), the thousands of Egyptian, Lebanese, and Syrian Jews who fled their native countries in response to a hostile political climate following wars between Israel and its Arab neighbors, the Hungarian and Czech Jews who left their homelands in 1956 and 1968, respectively, after the failed anti-Communist revolutions there, and the Cuban Jewish community that fled to Puerto Rico, Miami, and New York after the Castro-led revolution in the early 1960s. All of these groups brought their own culinary, linguistic, and religious (or affirmatively nonreligious) traditions and their political and educational perspectives to bear on the internal dynamics of the American Jewish community and on its relationship with the larger American society.

The Hasidim provide perhaps the most unique case of a powerful, insular culture and identity that has made waves in

the political-legal and sociocultural American landscape. Groups like the Persian Jews (the preferred name for Jews from Iran), Syrian Jews, and Bukharian Jews retain their distinctiveness through linguistic, culinary, ritual, and other customs that not only set them apart from the majority Ashkenazi culture of American Jewry but also from most Sephardim. Most Persian Jews fled after the 1979 Iranian Revolution and settled in affluent parts of New York (especially in Great Neck, Long Island) and Los Angeles, as well as the Chicago suburbs and other similar regions. The community is proud of its ancient culture, exemplified by the still-flourishing use of Iran's historic language, Farsi, and the existence of many specifically Iranian synagogues. It is common for Persian Jews to marry within their community and unusual to marry Ashkenazim—though the longer Persian Jews stay in America, the more common it is to marry outside the group.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, thousands of Syrian Jews immigrated to the United States, mostly from the large Jewish communities in Aleppo and Damascus, and settled in Sephardic neighborhoods on the Lower East Side of New York. In the early 1970s, due in part to the political fallout surrounding the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the majority of the Syrian Jewish community emigrated from their homeland, with a large percentage moving to parts of Brooklyn, New York, and the New Jersey shore. Like the Persian Jews, Syrian Jews have musical and culinary traditions that have more in common with the lands of their birth than with most American Jews. Syrian Jewish food features grilled food on skewers (kebabs), pomegranate, bulgar, and sweets made with sesame, anise, and fruits. Religiously, Syrian Jews have maintained a strong attachment to their customs and remain opposed to intermarriage. In a period when the rate of American Jews marrying outside the faith hovers around 50 percent, the Syrian Jewish average in America remains at 2 or 3 percent.

With the breakup of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, several thousand Central Asian Jews, mostly from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, came to the United States. These so-called Bukharian Jews have settled mostly in Queens, New York, with groups also in California, Arizona, and Florida. They speak either Russian or a dialect of Persian, and their Hebrew language literacy is high compared to other Jews in America. They have maintained a strong cultural presence by establishing Bukharian newspapers and through the many eating establishments that reproduce foods of their native land, such as *manti* and *pelmeni* (dumplings), *plof* (rice with lamb and pineapple), and *lagman* (vegetable and noodle

stew) served in a Persian-Russian-influenced style that includes such flavors as pomegranate and poppy seed. Ties between the two largest Bukharian Jewish communities in the world, in Queens, New York, and Israel, are very close and are now reinforced by use of the Internet. A Hebrew-language Web site that originates in Israel but is popular among Bukharis in the United States includes such features as “B-Date”—a Bukhari Internet dating site that helps ensure that young people will marry within their community. In addition to strong family ties, this group maintains a strong Zionist identity even outside Israel.

Because of their distinctiveness, group loyalty, linguistic and food culture, and self-awareness of their history, the Persian, Syrian, and Bukharian Jews in the United States are rare examples of Jewish communities that have successfully acclimated to America without losing their historic cultural identities.

Cultural Interpretations of the Jewish Experience

Some of the most popular aspects of Jewish culture at the beginning of the twenty-first century, designed especially for American Jews who have diminished ties with their history, are programs and institutions that reinterpret Judaism and the Jewish experience for a modern, often secular public. Thus, sites of nostalgia like Ellis Island and the Lower East Side of New York have seen glossy renovations, often supported by members of the Jewish community. Purveyors of Jewish foods and religious items are flourishing. Walking tours of former Jewish neighborhoods teach new generations about traditional Jewish foods and customs and elevate once-humble buildings to the status of historic icons, perhaps most successfully in the Tenement Museum, housed in a once-condemned building on Orchard Street. The century-old Eldridge Street synagogue, once a towering edifice and then a crumbling ruin, is being painstakingly restored. New York is far from the only locale for such energy; for instance, the historic “Sixth and I” synagogue in Washington, D.C., was purchased in the 1990s by three Jewish real estate developers. It received a multimillion-dollar renovation that recalled it to its former glory as a Moorish-style synagogue and was established as a major cultural center that hosts folk and rock musicians, speakers, book groups, singles and children's events, political discussions, and of course religious services—but, significantly, it is not affiliated with any of the major Jewish religious movements.

Jewish museums have proliferated around the country, displaying mandates ranging from general Judaic knowledge



Holocaust survivors Elie Wiesel (left) and Miles Lerman mix soil from the Nazi concentration camps Auschwitz and Dachau into the foundation of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., during groundbreaking ceremonies held October 16, 1985. The museum opened in 1993.

to Holocaust education to fine arts. Perhaps the most symbolically significant event was the 1993 opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum next to the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

This deeper interest in Jewish history and culture has found expression in academia as well; more than a hundred university departments and programs devoted to the Jewish experience have grown in scope and enrollment, and there are postgraduate programs that relate specifically to American Jewish culture, offering degrees in Jewish material culture and Jewish art. Many activities celebrate Jewish life in America, including the events and exhibitions in 2004 to

commemorate the 350th anniversary of American Jewish life. In the twenty-first century, American Jews are reimagining their experiences to mesh with a larger American narrative that celebrates ethnic flavor while seeking commonalities between groups.

Jews and Contemporary American Culture

The partnership between Jews and American culture in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has been a fruitful one. Jews have introduced aspects of their own cultural legacy in such arenas as humor, literature, and the performing arts. This high degree of involvement in and influence on American society has been evidenced through such creative outlets as Tin Pan Alley and vaudeville, the birth and development of the American film industry, the fine arts and comics industries, television, Broadway musicals, photography, the folk revival and other popular music, and comedy.

A small sampling of Jews associated with culture in America, who often serve or served as bridges between their identities as members of their ethnic group and their country includes Sophie Tucker, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, Woody Allen, Art Spiegelman, Gertrude Berg, Lenny Bruce, Adam Sandler, Barbra Streisand, Jerry Seinfeld, Steven Spielberg, and Mattisyahu. Prominent writers who have identified equally with their Jewish backgrounds and American present include Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, Henry Roth, Cynthia Ozick, Norman Mailer, Muriel Rukeyser, Adrienne Rich, Michael Chabon, and Allegra Goodman.

Aspects of specifically Jewish culture—often nonreligious in nature and reliant on Yiddish words, outsider humor, and images of food and overweening parents—have become intertwined with American life. In particular, the absorption of Yiddish terms such as *schlep*, *klutz*, *schlemiel*, and *chutzpah* into American English illustrates the extent to which Yiddish and the Jewish experience are often used for humor and ethnic flavor. This phenomenon has reached into American law, where Jewish and gentile lawyers alike have drawn on Yiddish expressions to add color and emphasis to arguments

in legal briefs; a *Yale Law Journal* (1993) argues that Yiddish is “supplanting Latin as the spice in American legal argot.” Beginning in the late twentieth century, klezmer music (inspired by music of the villages and ghettos of eastern Europe) has become one of the most visible trends in the ever-growing fascination with Jewish ethnicity in America.

The glorification of Jewish food, language, and other parts of group identity can serve as a model for other ethnic groups who have enjoyed success on the American scene. This is slightly ironic given the countervailing impulse of many Jews to fit in with mainstream America, yet it is reflective of—and probably also a cause of—the rising acceptance of ethnic characteristics in the nation’s populace. In many respects, then, the degree of visibility of Jewish culture in America has always been and continues to be a bellwether for the acceptance of other cultures as well as a testing ground for the endurance of Jewish traditions in an increasingly open and modern society.

See also *Chabad-Lubavitch; Film; Food and Diet; Hasidism; Holocaust; Immigration entries; Judaism entries; Literature: Contemporary; Music: Jewish; Popular Religion and Popular Culture entries; Religious Press; Women: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Judaism: Jewish Identity

The nature of Jewish identity is the great theme of U.S. Jewish history. Key to any discussion of Jewish identity is the meaning of the word *Jewish*. Before the nineteenth century, *Jewish* referred to members of a religion. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, its meaning expanded to encompass an ethnic group, a nationality, and a population with similar cultural, social, and political values and a common history. There were multiple causes for this. The eighteenth-century Enlightenment led Jews to reject much of traditional Judaism and to develop new religious forms more in keeping with modern thinking. In Europe during the nineteenth century the growth of nationalism, Jewish economic and social mobility, the acculturation of European Jews, an increase in anti-Semitism, and the emergence of new political ideologies such as communism, socialism, and anarchism resulted in the appearance of Zionism and other Jewish ideologies professing new definitions of Jewish identity. U.S. social and political conditions accelerated this process.

Jewish-American Self-Reinvention

The U.S. stress on individualism has, in the words of the sociologist Paul Hollander, encouraged individuals “to reinvent themselves in order to achieve a sense of self that will be most gratifying.” Religious and ethnic groups were urged to reshape themselves in this “*novus ordo seclorum*.” It was inevitable in this land of the self-made person that definitions of Jewish identity would be variegated and that Jews would cast aside old forms of Jewish identity and invent new ones. Here the traditional division between “Jews by birth” and “Jews by choice” has been a distinction without a difference, and Jews have gone from being a chosen people to a choosing people. U.S. freedom and the absence of ghetto walls meant that Jews had to choose whether to remain Jews

and to select the content of their Jewish identity. In the late twentieth century a U.S. senator named Cohen chose not to identify as a Jew, but a black intellectual named Julius Lester did. Although Sabbath and kosher observance declined among Jews, Hanukkah, previously a minor holiday, became a major event on the Jewish calendar, undoubtedly because of its proximity to Christmas. This willingness to reinvent their Jewishness, this combining of “the immediate and the transcendent, the quirky and the hallowed,” the historian Jenna Weissman Joselit wrote, “was virtually without parallel in modern Jewish history.”

For most U.S. Jews, Judaism is merely one aspect, and often a minor aspect, of a broader Jewish identity involving culture, politics, and memories. And because Jews relate differently to these matters, unanimity regarding what constitutes Jewish identity is impossible. The *sui generis* character of Jewish identity, this mixing of religion, history, and ethnicity, has provided U.S. Jews with a unique perspective for viewing U.S. ethnic identity. “No group in twentieth century America,” the historian Moses Rischin wrote, “has been so consistently and clinically concerned with the problems of human identity, in relation to group morale, psychology, personal fulfillment, inter-group relations, and inevitably to group survival as have America’s Jews. . . . Jews have seen their own dilemmas as part of the common plight. They have sought to identify, to define, and to conceptualize perceptions heightened by their own personal and collective autobiographies in universal terms.”

In his “American scholar” address of 1837, Ralph Waldo Emerson urged his fellow U.S. citizens to free themselves from “the sere remains of foreign harvests,” to cease listening “to the courtly muses of Europe,” and to “walk on our own feet” and “speak our own minds.” The Jew especially took to heart Emerson’s advice to leave behind “ancient prejudices and manners” and to receive “new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new ranks he holds.” In this nation where citizenship for Jews was a matter of right and not sufferance and there was no officially sanctioned anti-Semitism, U.S. Jews were particularly attuned to this U.S. newness and eager to become part of it. They were never more American than when pondering the nature of U.S. nationality and asking what it meant to be an U.S. Jew.

The three most important paradigms of U.S. ethnic identity were written by Jews, and each had the U.S. Jewish condition in mind. The first of these was Emma Lazarus’s 1883 sonnet “The New Colossus,” which was engraved on

a plaque placed on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. The poem depicted the statue as a symbol of hope to the Jews and other immigrants then pouring into New York City. “Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” But in the next line Lazarus described the immigrants as “The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.” Historians have puzzled over this seemingly derogatory description of the immigrants as “wretched refuse.” The historian John Higham noted that in the 1880s “wretched” was a synonym for “distressed,” and “refuse” was used to denote objects considered valueless as well as worthless. Perhaps Lazarus had these non-pejorative meanings in mind. In any case, “The New Colossus” became part of the canon of Anglo-conformity, the belief that the immigrants were acceptable only to the extent that they purged themselves of their undesirable traits and rapidly Americanized.

The British writer Israel Zangwill had a different view of U.S. and U.S. Jewish identity. His widely popular 1908 play *The Melting Pot*, the most important response to the ideology of Anglo-conformity, envisaged a process whereby immigrants and Native Americans alike were thrown into the melting pot and out emerged a new nationality, combining the best that each group had to offer. The American, he wrote, was not already formed but was in the process of being created by “God’s crucible . . . God is making the American.” *The Melting Pot* recounts the New York City romance between David, a Russian Jew, and Vera, a Russian Christian, whose father had been responsible for the pogrom in which David’s parents perished. When David discovers this, he is tempted to break off the romance. But in a melodramatic finale, love triumphs over European memories, and David reaffirms his vision of a U.S. identity then being forged. “Yes, East and West, and North and South, and palm and the pine, the pole and the equator, the crescent and the cross—how the great Alchemist melts and fuses them with his purging flame! Here shall they all unite to build the Republic of Man and the Kingdom of God.”

Zangwill’s message of “E Pluribus Unum” was directed at all U.S. citizens, but especially at Jews. He believed they only had two options. Either they could maintain their Jewish identity and help build a Jewish society in Palestine, or they could throw themselves into the U.S. melting pot and contribute to a new U.S. identity combining Hebraism, Christianity, and Hellenism. Seven years after Zangwill’s *The Melting Pot* appeared on Broadway, a Jew published the most important attack on the melting pot concept.

Horace Kallen, the son of eastern European Jewish immigrants, had been influenced while an undergraduate at Harvard by William James, the philosopher of pluralism, and Barrett Wendell, who believed the Hebraic spirit had greatly influenced U.S. literature and culture. Kallen concluded that being a good Jew and being a good American were complementary, and that Jews need not throw themselves into any melting pot or conform to Anglo ways. Kallen published his thoughts on U.S. identity, and by implication on U.S. Jewish identity, in his 1915 essay "Democracy Versus the Melting Pot." His metaphor for the United States was an orchestra. Just as the beauty of an orchestra stemmed from the different sounds produced by dozens of instruments harmonizing with one another, so the richness of U.S. culture came from the contributions of dozens of different ethnic groups. The national spirit, Kallen wrote, "is constituted by this union of the different. It is sustained, not by mutual exclusions, nor by the rule of one over others, but by their equality and by the free trade between these different equals in every good thing the community's life and culture produce." Kallen was impressed by the persistence of ethnicity. It was, he said, the most important social trait of a person, "the efficacious natural milieu or habitat of his temperament . . . the center at which he stands, the point of his most intimate social relations, therefore of his intensest emotional life." Kallen noted that a person could change many things, but he could never change his grandparents. But neither could grandparents predict how their grandchildren would turn out, particularly whom they would marry.

Ethnicity and Religion

Lazarus, Zangwill, and Kallen saw U.S. Jews more as an ethnic than a religious group. Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people, but in their daily lives, peoplehood has generally trumped religion. Jewish ritual practices and beliefs have played a major role in the daily lives of only a minority of Jews. The strongest ties among Jews are not religious practices but ethnic memories, social and political ties with other Jews, fear of anti-Semitism, and membership in a myriad of institutions and organizations. Jews have been one of the most secular elements within the U.S. population.

Most Jewish immigrants brought with them to the United States a skepticism regarding traditional Judaism, and this skepticism deepened on arrival. The restrictions on diet, attire, sexual behavior, and employment on the Sabbath and religious holidays were viewed as incompatible with national ideals of individualism and self-actualization and as obstacles

to acculturation and social and economic advancement. For most Jews, Orthodox Judaism was an anachronism and even an embarrassment, although this attitude, as seen for example in Abraham Cahan's great novel of immigrant adaptation, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, could coexist with a nostalgia for the old religious ways. European-trained rabbis were horrified by the ease with which Jews in the United States gave up the trappings of traditional Judaism. The United States, in their eyes, was a "trefa" (impure) land, where Jews did not observe the Sabbath, religious holidays, dietary restrictions, and other religious commandments.

The often peripheral role of Judaism in U.S. Jewish identity is indicated by the many Jews who have been ideologically hostile to religion in general and Judaism in particular but who still have considered themselves part of the Jewish community and have been considered as such by other Jews. A Roman Catholic atheist or a Protestant atheist is an oxymoron, but the Jewish atheist (or agnostic) is a common phenomenon. Jews take pride in nonbelievers such as Baruch Spinoza. Yeshiva University, an Orthodox institution, even named its medical school after Albert Einstein, a religious skeptic. As a result of this intermixing of ethnicity and religion, even members of messianic groups such as Jews for Jesus claim that they have not ceased being Jewish simply because they have converted to Christianity. They argue that becoming a Christian logically flows from their ethnic identity as Jews. (They ignored Heinrich Heine's witticism that Jews did not make good Christians because no Jew could believe in the divinity of another Jew.)

One of the most important of the versions of Jewish identity that the eastern European immigrants brought with them was Yiddishism. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European Yiddish intellectuals asserted that the core of Jewish identity in eastern Europe was not religion, which most of them disdained, but the Yiddish language and Yiddish culture. At this time the Yiddish theater, Yiddish newspapers, Yiddish schools, and Yiddish literature in Europe were flourishing, and Yiddish-speaking immigrants hoped to recreate in the United States the cultural world they had left behind. For a time they were successful, particularly in New York City where there were a variety of Yiddish newspapers, stage productions, and book stores. But the heyday of Yiddish culture in the United States was fleeting. By the end of World War II, just three decades after the peak of Jewish immigration, Yiddish cultural institutions were in a state of free fall. Yiddish culture had little appeal to the children of the immigrants who had been educated in the public

schools, had served in the military where their horizons broadened, and no longer lived in neighborhoods populated by Yiddish-speaking immigrants.

This was no surprise to Cahan, for half a century the publisher of the New York *Forward*, the most widely read of the daily Yiddish newspapers. Cahan had no illusions that a Yiddish newspaper could attract nonimmigrant readers, nor did he see any particular intrinsic value in the perpetuation of Yiddish language or Yiddish culture in the United States. For him the Jewish ways brought from Europe were obsolete and destined to disappear with the passing of the immigrant generation. In the meantime the *Forward's* role was to propagate socialism among the immigrants and to facilitate their adaptation to their new land.

One way the *Forward* fostered acculturation was through the answers it provided to readers who had written for advice on how to behave in the United States. The anonymous writer of the letters-to-the-editor column became a wisdom figure to these readers, who were befuddled by their new surroundings and convinced that the traditional authority figures familiar to them in Europe were out-of-touch with U.S. realities. Introduced in 1906, the column became the most popular section of the paper, and soon other Yiddish papers established advice columns of their own. One typical letter to the *Forward's* "Dear Editor" asked whether the writer should allow his son to play baseball, a "wild and silly game." He did not want his son to become "a wild American runner. But he cries his head off." The editor answered that there was nothing wrong with playing the U.S. national pastime as long as this did not interfere with his son's education. U.S. Jewish children must not grow up as "foreigners in their own birthplace."

The Yiddish writer and future Nobel Prize winner Isaac Bashevis Singer shared Cahan's doubts regarding the future of Yiddish in the United States. Singer moved from Warsaw to New York City in 1935, and eight years later published his essay "Problems of Yiddish Prose in America." "Life here is so rich and varied," Singer wrote, "that English words and phrases inevitably have crept into Yiddish while, at the same time, hallowed Yiddish terms and expressions have disappeared." "The stubborn few who insist in speaking 'pure Yiddish,'" he continued, have become "objects of ridicule and the butt of jokes," and the U.S. Yiddishist was forced to dine on leftovers. "Only food prepared in the old world can nourish him in the new." In the United States, Singer concluded, "the dream of a secular Jewish culture . . . has played itself out."

Yiddish is still spoken in the United States, but not by those for whom secular Yiddish culture is the basis of their Jewish identity. The last redoubts of Yiddish as a vernacular language are neighborhoods in Brooklyn and elsewhere populated by Orthodox sectarians. For the Orthodox, Yiddish is not valued because it liberates Jews from religious obscurantism and enables them to join the world of literary modernism and high culture. Rather, Yiddish embodies the heritage of Eastern European Orthodoxy and helps isolate them in their own encapsulated world. For other Jews, Yiddish is a post-vernacular language of interest mainly to historians and literary scholars at major universities and at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City. Many of the books used by researchers at these institutions had been rescued from oblivion by Aaron Lansky's National Yiddish Book Center in western Massachusetts. The funds supporting the National Yiddish Book Center came mainly from U.S. Jews who were not fluent in Yiddish, but who nevertheless wanted to perpetuate in an admittedly attenuated form the secular Jewish culture of eastern European Jewry that had been destroyed during World War II.

Brandeisian Zionism

Zionism was another form of Jewish identity that was recast in the United States. Zionism emerged in Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as an answer to what was called the "Jewish question." Europe was becoming increasingly hostile to Jews, and Zionists argued that Jews for their own safety and self-respect needed a nation of their own, whether in the Middle East or in East Africa. The traditional messianic longings for a third Jewish commonwealth were transformed by the Zionists into a modern secular movement. But a Jewish identity revolving around secular nationalism had little appeal to Jews living in the United States. In the United States there was no Jewish question for which Zionism was the answer.

U.S. Jews viewed Jewish nationalism with wariness because it raised doubts about their ultimate loyalty to the United States and their identity as U.S. Jews. For U.S. Jews, the United States was their promised land and Washington their Jerusalem. For every European Jew who settled in Palestine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, more than forty settled in the United States, and they did not come as mere sojourners. They immigrated as families at a higher rate than did other immigrant groups, and once here they had a lower repatriation rate. They also became citizens more quickly. U.S. Jews were thus unsuitable

prospects for a Zionism preaching the abnormality of Jewish life in the diaspora. Zionism would have to be recast if it was to appeal to U.S. Jews.

This task fell to Louis D. Brandeis. There was nothing in the background of Brandeis, the first Jewish Supreme Court justice, that could have predicted his becoming the major spokesman for Zionism in the United States in the early twentieth century, and why he did so has not yet been fully explained. He was an assimilated Jew and a notable Progressive Era reformer. Brandeis professed to see similarities between the efforts of Progressive reformers to create a more democratic and just society in the United States and the attempts of the Zionist pioneers to create a secular democratic homeland for Jews in Palestine. For him, Zionism involved progressive reform, not Jewish nationalism, and he encouraged U.S. Jews to support the struggling Zionism movement, not by settling in Zion, but through lobbying and philanthropy. Being U.S. citizens, he told U.S. Jews, required that they be good Zionists, and being Zionists demanded that they be good U.S. citizens. U.S. and Jewish identities were not contradictory but symbiotic.

Brandeis believed that the Jewish nationalism and immigration to Palestine basic to European Zionism were irrelevant for U.S. Jews. They already lived in a country in which they felt at home, and they did not want their patriotism to be questioned. U.S. Jews could be good Zionists without ever personally participating in the building of a new Jewish society in the Middle East or even learning to speak Hebrew. The European Zionists accused Brandeis and his followers of lacking an emotional attachment to the Zionist dream of a Jewish homeland for all Jews, of divesting Zionism of its nationalistic *raison d'être*, and of transforming it into a charity emphasizing refugee relief. Brandeisian Zionism was the butt of the witticism that Zionism was a movement in which one person raised money from another person to send a third person to Palestine. Brandeis's approach to U.S. Zionism continued to be the operative model for U.S. Zionists. Relatively few U.S. Jews have settled in Israel, and most of these have eventually returned to the United States.

By the 1960s, what one scholar called "Israelism" had become the lowest common denominator of U.S. Jews and the operative religion of many, if not most, U.S. Jews. Jonathan S. Woocher titled his examination of the ideology of the pro-Israel leadership of Jewish federations *Sacred Survival: The Civil Religion of American Jews*. This civil religion had its own educational system (leadership development programs), annual rites (the fund-raising campaign), pilgrimages

(missions to Israel), communal activities (fund-raising dinners and telethons), weekend retreats, and norms of behavior (acceptable financial commitments). Jews were not ostracized from the Jewish community for rejecting Judaism, but they were denied communal honors and were fiercely criticized for questioning Israel's policies.

The fervent support for Israel initially stemmed from memories of the state's establishment in 1948 and its subsequent wars. Israel's image, as seen for example in Leon Uris's blockbuster novel *Exodus* (1958), was of a plucky, outnumbered, and brave nation threatened by its bloodthirsty, teeming, and wealthy Arab neighbors. That Israel was an obstacle for communist penetration into the Middle East also endeared the country to U.S. Jews and gentiles alike. By the twenty-first century, however, the generation that had lived through the early and tumultuous period of Israel's founding was fading from the scene, and Israel was now projecting a different image. It had the most powerful army in the Middle East, and its economy on a per capita basis was equivalent to that of many advanced European countries. In place of the romantic image of Israel was the picture of an economically advanced, technologically proficient, and militarily powerful nation. Public opinion polls among Jews revealed a direct correlation between Israelism and the age of respondents, with younger Jews less committed to Israel than were their elders. Observers concluded that Israelism was no longer able to bolster U.S. Jewish identity as it had once done. U.S. Jewish identity required something more than a vicarious identification with Israel.

Holocaust remembrance was another form of Jewish identity popular in the United States in the late twentieth century. The Holocaust should be central to the defining of Jewish identity, some argued, because all Jews bore its scars. Jews, and particularly survivors, funded dozens of Holocaust museums and memorials throughout the United States, subsidized scholarship on the Jewish catastrophe; encouraged the study of the Holocaust in schools so that the lessons of the Holocaust, however these were interpreted, could be disseminated; made Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) part of the Jewish calendar; helped the writer Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor, become an iconic figure; and made Auschwitz, the largest of the Nazi murder camps, a place for quasi-religious pilgrimages. "Within the American Jewish community," wrote Michael Berenbaum, project director of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, "the Holocaust has entered the domain of shared sacrality." Holocaust remembrance and Israelism had a symbiotic

relationship. The Holocaust had made the state of Israel necessary, and Israel made a second Holocaust unlikely.

Critics of Holocaust remembrance questioned whether what they cynically referred to as the “Holocaust industry” or “Shoah business” was a viable basis for U.S. Jewish identity. Martyrs command respect, Rabbi Daniel J. Silver of Cleveland said in 1986, but Jews required a sense of purpose consisting of something “more substantial than tears.” Few Jews, these critics feared, would be attracted to an historical narrative featuring victimization and powerlessness, particularly when it encouraged inaccurate and dangerous analogies. Among these was the equating of the situation of modern Israel with that of European Jewry during the 1930s. Some U.S. Jewish philosophers and theologians also noted that Holocaust remembrance, by emphasizing that God had been silent during the Jewish catastrophe, raised doubts about the covenantal relationship of Jews with God and even about God’s existence. Holocaust remembrance thus had the potential of moving Jews in a profoundly non-Jewish or even anti-Jewish direction. Furthermore, its sanctifying of death was inappropriate for a people and religion that had always highly valued life. Finally, it was troubling that, according to public opinion surveys, the Holocaust was more important to the Jewishness of most U.S. Jews than were the exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai.

Other forms of Jewish identity popular in the United States involved food, philanthropy, and liberal politics. For secular Jews, who comprised most U.S. Jews, eating became the most pleasant and easiest way to reaffirm one’s Jewishness, and delicatessens and restaurants became rivals to the synagogue. Jews eager to profess their Jewish identity but unwilling to give up religiously prohibited foods did not have to observe the kosher dietary restrictions but could instead eat “kosher-style.” Other Jews preferred to observe the dietary laws at home but not outside, as if the purpose of these laws was to make houses and apartments, but not Jews, holy. Such preferences indicated how an essentially secular population could maintain its Jewish identity while preserving its freedom to choose. For such Jews, a home-grown U.S. Jewishness revolving around food and life-cycle events supplemented and even replaced the normative Judaism of the rabbis and the seminaries.

Philanthropy was another form of Jewish identity. U.S. Jews have supported an impressive number of religious and secular institutions—schools, hospitals, shelters, summer camps, museums, social welfare agencies, synagogues—even

though they never constituted more than 4 percent of the general population. These institutions have competed for a limited number of dollars, and much of organized Jewish life has revolved around fund-raising. By the early twenty-first century, U.S. Jews were giving several billion dollars a year to domestic and overseas Jewish causes. The most tangible manifestation of Jewish identity for many Jews was the checks they wrote, and status was largely determined within the official Jewish world by the size of these contributions. Skeptics believed this “check-book Judaism,” “I am because I give,” will be unable to sustain a strong Jewish identity because future generations will have different charitable priorities, and skeptics pointed out that a growing percentage of the dollars donated by U.S. Jews are going to non-Jewish institutions and causes. A major contribution to the Metropolitan Museum of Art or to Harvard University has more cachet within the general society than one to Yeshiva University or to the Jewish Theological Seminary. In the face of widespread acculturation, it is unlikely that Jewish institutions and causes will continue to attract the same level of support, just as it is unlikely that Jews will continue to gravitate to Jewish foods and restaurants offering traditionally ethnic cuisine.

Liberal politics was yet another source of Jewish identity. For some Jews the essence of U.S. Jewish identity was a political liberalism derived from “Jewish values.” The belief that liberalism was the essence of U.S. Jewish identity was the theme of Leonard Fein’s 1988 book, *Where Are we? The Inner Life of America’s Jews*. Only a concern for economic and social justice, Fein wrote, “can serve as our preeminent motive, the path through which our past is vindicated, our present warranted, and our future affirmed.” This emphasis on the centrality of liberalism to Jewish identity left unexplained why the most Jewish of U.S. Jews, those living in Orthodox enclaves in New York, New Jersey, Florida, and elsewhere were not sympathetic to the liberal political agenda that supposedly flowed inevitably from Jewish values. If liberalism was the essence of Jewish identity, then those who ate only Jewish foods, wore only Jewish clothing, had only Jewish spouses, and read only Jewish books should have been ardent supporters of modern liberalism, but this was hardly the case.

Judaism and U.S. Jewish Identity

The question of identity shaped the history of Judaism in the United States. The fluidity of U.S. life and its openness to religious diversity encouraged the emergence of new

Jewish religious forms that were more compatible with middle-class U.S. norms than was European-style Orthodoxy. From the beginning of Jewish settlement in the United States, Jews sought to demonstrate that they were 100 percent U.S. citizens and that Judaism was fully compatible with U.S. values. At the dedication of the Beth Elohim synagogue in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1841, Rabbi Gustav Poznanski declared, "This synagogue is our temple, this city our Jerusalem, this happy land our Palestine." This reconciling of Jewish and U.S. identities became the life work of Isaac Mayer Wise, the greatest figure in U.S. Judaism during the nineteenth century, if not in all of U.S. Jewish history.

Wise preferred to use the term *American Judaism* rather than *Reform Judaism* when referring to the Judaism he hoped to see spread throughout the land. He even believed that a suitably Americanized Judaism might eventually become the majority U.S. religion. He titled his 1857 prayer book *Minhag America (American Custom)*, he named his organization of synagogues the Union of *American Hebrew Congregations*, and he called his organization of rabbis the Central Conference of *American Rabbis*.

In 1885 a group of rabbis affiliated with the Reform movement continued the Americanization of Judaism when they enunciated the Pittsburgh Platform. This statement of principles stressed the full compatibility of Judaism with U.S. values and rejected those elements of Judaism that distinguished Jews from other U.S. citizens. These included the dietary laws and the wearing of skullcaps in synagogue. (Reformers, it was quipped, were willing to give up traditional Judaism at the drop of a hat.) "We consider ourselves," the rabbis said, "no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the states concerning the Jewish state." One of the rabbis involved declared that the platform had freed U.S. Jews from "the yoke of Mosaic-Talmudical Judaism."

This redefining of Jewish religious identity continued in the United States during the twentieth century. A new form of Orthodoxy called Modern Orthodoxy or Centrist Orthodoxy appeared in the early twentieth century. Its advocates were convinced that European-style Orthodoxy had no future in the United States. Only an Americanized Orthodoxy, purged of irrelevant and embarrassing religious beliefs and practices and attuned to middle-class U.S. religious norms, such as English sermons and decorous behavior within the sanctuary, could attract the native-born and upwardly mobile. Within the Conservative movement,

Mordecai Kaplan, a professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, developed a new approach to Jewish identity that came to be called Reconstructionism. Kaplan's 1934 book, *Judaism as a Civilization*, perhaps the most important book written by a U.S. Jewish theologian, argued that intellectual modernity was incompatible with a Judaism revolving around the worship of a personal God. He proposed rather to ground U.S. Judaism on a Jewishness that transcended religion. Jews were Jewish because they were part of a civilization, Kaplan argued, and he recommended that the synagogue should immerse its congregants in this civilization by sponsoring educational, cultural, and artistic activities. Although the Conservative movement rejected Kaplan's theology, many Conservative synagogues accepted his program. It became popular for Conservative synagogues to call themselves "centers," to have gymnasiums, game rooms, and catering halls, to employ youth directors, and to sponsor a full range of activities for adults and children, including game nights, trips to resorts, and Boy Scout chapters.

One of the more curious aspects of this metamorphosis of U.S. Judaism occurred in 1963 when Sherwin Wine, an atheist, founded the Society of Humanistic Judaism. By the early twenty-first century, the society had grown to include about thirty congregations. Nonbelievers have been a prominent part of Jewish history for centuries, but only in the United States did they feel compelled to manifest their ties to Jewishness within a quasi-religious setting of rabbis, congregations, statements of faith, canonical texts, and celebrations. The context for the society's founding was the rapid decline in the secular components of Jewish identity, the post-World War II religious revival, and the migration of Jews to suburbia where Jewishness was increasingly seen in religious terms. One manifestation of this was Will Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* (1955), the most popular and controversial book published on U.S. religious sociology during the 1950s. Herberg, a left-wing intellectual turned conservative theologian, argued that with the coming to the fore of the grandchildren of the immigrants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, U.S. citizens, Jews included, were now likely to answer the question "who am I" in religious terms. There were either Protestants, Catholics, or Jews.

Pessimists and Optimists

By the twenty-first century, "identity" had replaced "anti-Semitism" as the great buzzword of U.S. Jewish discourse. This reflected a new concern with Jewish continuity and

even survival. The fundamental premise of U.S. Jewish life—that the Jewish and U.S. identities of U.S. Jews were mutually reinforcing—was no longer simply assumed but was now being seriously reexamined and even questioned. In June 1952, *Look* magazine published Rabbi Morris Kertzer's article titled "What Is a Jew?" Kertzer's answer was that a Jew was like everyone else but only more so. Jews and Christians, he wrote, "share the same rich heritage of the Old Testament. They both believe in the fatherhood of one God, in the sanctity of the Ten Commandments, the wisdom of the prophets and the brotherhood of man." Kertzer's piece was published at a time when the image of the United States as a Judeo-Christian country was being popularized. Left unstated was the obvious question: If Jews were like everyone else, and if being Jewish did not place distinctive demands on Jews, then why should Jews continue to identify as Jews?

This question became increasingly relevant in view of widespread acculturation, assimilation, and intermarriage. The sociologist Samuel Heilman ended his somber 1995 volume, *Portrait of American Jews: The Last Half of the 20th Century*, speculating on whether Judaism and Jewishness could survive in the United States. "If I am to be certain that my children and their children will continue to be actively Jewish," he wrote, "then the boat that brought my family here to the United States in 1950 may still have another trip to make." This hypothetical trip would be to the Jewish state of Israel. The political scientist Charles Liebman was also skeptical that Jewish and U.S. identities could be easily reconciled. In his 1973 book *The Ambivalent American Jew*, he argued that U.S. Jews were "torn between two sets of values—those of integration and acceptance into U.S. society and those of Jewish group survival." Liebman himself had affirmed the latter of these by migrating to Israel.

The pessimism of Heilman and Liebman regarding the status of U.S. Jewish identity was challenged by a group of sociologists who believed that, when other criteria were used to evaluate U.S. Jewry, the U.S. Jewish future was rather hopeful. These criteria included whether Jews had Jewish friends, whether the organizations they belonged to were Jewish ones, and whether they preferred to live among Jews. The survey research cited indicating that U.S. Jews still valued being Jewish, however, was unable to make any judgments regarding the quality of the Jewish identity of those polled. How important was it from a Jewish perspective if Jews interacted with one another on the golf course or in livingrooms while watching football games? Was there anything Jewish in the lives of such Jews worth surviving?

The major challenge to U.S. Jews has always been to establish that balance that could satisfy the demands of being both Jewish and American. At the end of the American Revolution, Mordecai Sheftall of Georgia wrote a letter to his son predicting that in this new U.S. society nothing will be beyond the aspirations of Jews. "An entire new scene will open itself," he prophesied, "and we have the world to begin again." Sheftall's descendants, as he had predicted, prospered in this new scene, but by the twenty-first century hardly any of them identified as Jews. And yet the experience of the Sheftall family is not the whole story. Jews, the historian Simon Rawidowicz pointed out, have been "an ever-dying people," and this remains true today in the United States when many question whether Jewish identity can survive the challenges of U.S. freedom, individualism, and opportunity. On May 5, 1964, *Look* magazine published an article titled "The Vanishing American Jew." *Look* soon vanished, but not the U.S. Jew. Whether *Look's* editors will have the last laugh, however, remains to be seen. Prophecy, as the Bible teaches, is the province of fools.

See also *Chabad-Lubavitch*; *Children and Adolescents*; *Hasidism*; *Holocaust*; *Judaism* entries; *Music: Jewish*; *Women: Jewish*; *Zionism*.

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Judaism: Jewish Music

See *Music: Jewish*

Judaism: Jewish Religious Thought

See *Religious Thought: Jewish*

Judaism: Jewish Science

Jewish Science is a philosophy of Judaism that seeks to find health and happiness within a specifically Jewish context. First coined by Rabbi Alfred Geiger Moses (1878–1956) of Mobile, Alabama, in a slim volume entitled *Jewish Science: Divine Healing in Judaism* (1916), the term *Jewish Science* later became identified with small religious groups aimed at spreading its teachings. The most successful and long lasting of these was the Society of Jewish Science, founded by Rabbi Morris Lichtenstein (1888–1938) in New York City in 1922.

The explicit intent of Moses, Lichtenstein, and other leaders of Jewish Science was to stem the tide of U.S. Jewish attraction to Christian Science, a movement founded by Mary Baker Eddy in Boston in 1879. Although it is not clear how many Jews formally became affiliated with Christian Science, Reform Rabbi Stephen Wise guessed that by the 1920s, the years of Christian Science's greatest growth, there

were probably few Christian Science churches in the United States without Jews among their members. In 1928, Rabbi Louis Gross estimated that in Greater New York 100,000 Jews had become Christian Scientists, and Rabbi Samuel Felix Mendelsohn, writing in 1936, asserted that 70,000 Jews in New York City alone had become members. This figure is not inconsistent with an earlier figure from a column in the London *Jewish Chronicle* in 1924 that estimated that 60,000 Jews in New York City had joined Christian Science. Actually, the number may be as little as 4,000 and is probably no larger than 40,000. Still, throughout the 1920s and 1930s, a significant number of rabbis spoke out from the pulpit against this growing “defection.” The allure of Christian Science included its emphasis on spiritual healing, prayer, and the immanent power of God.

Alfred Geiger Moses and the Early Formulation of Jewish Science

Rabbi Moses envisioned the teachings of Jewish Science as creating a spiritual renaissance within the U.S. Jewish community. Asserting that the body was real, just as sickness was real to the sufferer, Moses maintained that the teachings of Christian Science, which denied the reality of the body's organs and functions, needed to be rejected as contrary to reason. In the revised 1920 edition of his book, he labeled *Jewish Science* an applied psychology of Judaism, equating divine healing with the power of autosuggestion. Throughout the 1920s, Moses traveled and lectured extensively, sharing his religious ideas in synagogues and auditoriums throughout the United States. He participated in conferences that focused on spiritual healing and lectures to groups associated with the Protestant-based alliance New Thought. Although most New Thought adherents did not deny the reality of physical illness or death, they focused their attention on those functional diseases from which modern middle-class men and women were prone to suffer, such as nervous tension, sleeplessness, excessive worry, and depression. It was their belief, as it became the belief of Jewish Science, that such illnesses could be cured through right thinking and moderate living. Beginning with the presupposition that happiness is normal and that we possess the power within us to retain or achieve this normal state, leaders of New Thought, like secular psychotherapists, emphasized the power of suggestion in conquering disease and attaining health. Although some, such as those later affiliated with Jewish Science, may have advocated the use of modern medicine in helping to fight such diseases, they believed, as

did Christian and Jewish Scientists, that ultimately the mind governs the body.

Without explicitly acknowledging his indebtedness to New Thought, Moses was clearly influenced by its ideas. One can see this influence in his description of silence as a mental technique and spiritual state, ideas taken from Ralph Waldo Emerson and other transcendentalists (who greatly influenced New Thought teachings) and Ernest Shurtleff Holmes, founder of what eventually became known as the (New Thought) Church of Religious Science. Yet equally important was the influence of classical Reform Judaism. The son of Rabbi Adolph Moses, one of the leaders of nineteenth-century Reform, Alfred Moses viewed the recognition of the God-consciousness within not as a realization of one's own internal power, as it was for members of New Thought, but rather as an awareness of God's presence, or, echoing Reform's concept of mission, a bearing witness to the reality of God. The identification of the divine with one's conscience, the prophetic "still, small voice" within, was a belief Alfred Moses shared with many Reform rabbis of his day. Moreover, his insistence that communion with the divine led one to seek righteousness and truth because God is not just the source but the law of morality, reflected Moses' concept of Judaism as ethical monotheism, the heart and soul of classical Reform Judaism.

Between 1917 and 1922, Moses received letters from traditional and Reform rabbis who praised his work and from Jews already attracted to the ideas of New Thought. Some began to conceive of ways in which groups might be formed to study and live by Jewish Science teachings, and at least one group in New York City, which identified itself as both the First Society of Jewish New Thought and the Jewish New Thought Center, was formed as a result of Moses' writings. The group's founders and leaders were Lucia Nola Levy and Bertha Strauss, two Jewish women who sought to spread throughout the U.S. Jewish community the message of health and happiness, as articulated by Moses and New Thought preachers. Although their initial hope was that Moses himself would move to New York to lead the group, there is no indication that Moses ever approached his congregation in Mobile with these plans. Indeed, the minute books of Sha'arai Shomayim's Board of Trustees reveal Moses' apparent satisfaction with his work and his hope for remaining the congregation's spiritual leader. Moses did, however, accept Levy and Strauss' invitation to lend his name as honorary president of their organization, which was formally established in the fall of 1920 as the First Society of Jewish New Thought.

In February 1921, Levy and Strauss considered applying for membership in the International New Thought Alliance (INTA). Approaching James Edgerton, president of INTA, about her intentions, Lucia Nola Levy made it clear that although dedicated to the principles of New Thought, their center did not equate the divine with an inner Christ-consciousness. She thus needed to know whether in joining the alliance they would be presumed to be assenting to specific theological propositions that ran counter to Jewish beliefs. Edgerton assured her that as long as they believed in the power of the mind they were welcome to join, but his address to INTA members, in which he remarked that the only way to salvation was through "Jesus, the Christ," convinced Levy that INTA was indeed a Christian organization and that Jews, as Jews, were not welcome.

The Development of Jewish Science as a Movement

By late 1921, Levy decided to step down as the society's leader, and Strauss began the search to replace her. In December, the *New York Times* proclaimed, "Society of Applied Judaism (formerly known as Jewish New Thought) announces lectures and classes to start in January [with] Rabbi Morris Lichtenstein [as] lecturer and teacher." By the end of January 1922, Lichtenstein (1888–1938) had become far more than Lucia Levy's replacement. He began to reevaluate and redefine the teachings of the society, hoping to create a movement that was less indebted to the teachings of Alfred Geiger Moses than to his own. There is no evidence to suggest that Moses or Lichtenstein were ever in direct contact with one another. Moses retained a great interest in Jewish Science, and at least hundreds of Jews continued to read and were inspired by his earlier writings, but he focused on his daily responsibilities as a congregational rabbi while fighting what by the 1940s had become a losing battle against his own slowly deteriorating mental health. Ironically, despite his belief that mental illness was an illusion, Moses spent the last years of his life in the state mental institution.

Without denying the significance of modern psychology, both Morris Lichtenstein and his wife Tehilla Hirschensohn Lichtenstein (1893–1973), who succeeded him, emphasized the theological insights of Jewish Science. Viewing God as a non-supernatural power or divine mind within every human being, they insisted that each individual has the capability to tap this inner power through such methods as visualization and affirmative prayer to overcome worry and fear and achieve happiness, health, calm, and other states of

personal well-being. Drawing on Jewish literary and liturgical sources in their sermons and published writings, they made the Jewish context of Jewish Science clear. This context was further illuminated through religious school classes, writings by the Lichtensteins that appeared in the monthly *Jewish Science Interpreter*, and weekly Sabbath and holiday services held in Manhattan and, from 1956 to 1977, at the society's synagogue in Old Bethpage, Long Island.

Reform Rabbi Clifton Harby Levy (1867–1962), who helped establish and led the Manhattan-based Center of Jewish Science from 1924 until his death in 1962, emphasized the efficacy of both affirmative and petitionary prayer. Although he also focused on God as healer, he drew on more traditional images of divinity, describing prayer as a feeling of closeness to God rather than a feeling of one's own internal power. A member of the Central Conference of American [Reform] Rabbis (CCAR) until his death, as were Morris Lichtenstein and Alfred Geiger Moses, Levy helped popularize Jewish Science ideas within the Reform movement. He created educational programs on Jewish Science for use by Reform congregations, delivered a major address on spiritual healing at the annual CCAR conference in 1927, and kept alive within the CCAR issues concerning medical and religious cooperation. In 1937, thanks to the efforts of Levy and others, Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati offered as part of the rabbinical school curriculum its first elective course in pastoral psychology. A course in pastoral counseling has long since become a requirement in the rabbinic program of its Cincinnati, New York, and Los Angeles campuses, and similar courses are now offered at other rabbinic institutions.

Jewish Science Today

The Society of Jewish Science, the largest of the Jewish Science groups, reached a membership peak of one thousand during Morris Lichtenstein's tenure as leader (1922–1938). By 2008, under the governance of an executive director and a board of directors, with religious services and study classes led by Rabbi Joyce Reinitz, a graduate of the trans-denominational seminary, the Academy of Jewish Religion, the society's membership was less than 150. In 1995, the society purchased a brownstone in New York City that houses its administrative offices, a Judaica library, and a sanctuary. Based in New York, the society, which also identifies itself as the Center of Applied Judaism, has a number of volunteer-led chapters on the West Coast as well. In numbers, Jewish Science never grew significantly as a movement.

Still, the teachings of Alfred Geiger Moses, Morris and Tehilla Lichtenstein, and Clifton Harby Levy have directly affected thousands of U.S. Jews. Thanks to the Society of Jewish Science, the works of the Lichtensteins are particularly accessible. Predating the current Jewish interest in spiritual healing by more than seventy years, Jewish Science's emphasis on the connection between the mind and the body; its belief that illness cannot be overcome by medicine alone; the use of visualization, affirmation, and meditation to discover and draw on one's inner divine powers; and its overriding message that to *do* well one must *be* well, remain Jewish Science's greatest legacies.

See also *Christian Science; Healing; Judaism* entries; *Religious Thought: Jewish; Transcendentalism*.

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Judaism: Jewish Women

See *Women: Jewish*

Judaism: Jewish Worship

See *Worship: Jewish*

Judaism: Orthodox

Orthodox Judaism teaches that Jews are obliged to follow the *halacha* (Jewish law), which it believes was first dictated by God in the Torah, through the theophany on Mt. Sinai, and as applied authoritatively by the rabbis in the Talmud and in the later codes of Jewish law. The freedom and

opportunities the United States granted to its Jews have posed daunting challenges to the perpetuation of Orthodox Jewish life. The openness of U.S. society and culture and the desire of this minority group to advance and to live harmoniously with those around them have caused most Jews to either ignore or to oppose traditional regulations that might retard their integration or mobility. Given the legal separation of church and state and the religious voluntarism that have contributed to the U.S. way of life, Orthodox religious leaders and institutions have had few weapons available to prevent masses of Jews from disconnecting from the faith and its practices. Moreover, since the mid-nineteenth century, U.S. Jews who wished to maintain a religious identity but did not care for Orthodoxy's strictures have had the option of affiliating with other Jewish religious expressions, most notably Reform or Conservatism. These modern movements have either—in the case of Reform—rejected the bindingness of the Jewish legal system or have offered—as in the case of Conservatism—a more nuanced understanding of the halachic system.

In response, Orthodox officials and their institutions have manifested two basic modalities of behavior. *Resisting* rabbis and lay leaders have attempted to avoid changing the teachings and practices of the faith despite the pressures of the host culture. They have often rejected even making sociological modifications in Orthodoxy's ways—such as Americanizing or anglicizing religious services—at the expense of losing potential adherents. These preservers of past policies and procedures have generally been intolerant toward co-religionists who made very different types of religious decisions.

Accommodationist Orthodox leaders—sometimes even more than their Reform and Conservative counterparts—have been the object of the resisters' ire and critique. By definition, the accommodationists have believed that sociological modifications can be made in Orthodoxy's outlook in encountering U.S. culture. For example, they had few problems using English in worship services. Otherwise, this most traditional Jewish religious expression would have little chance of maintaining the allegiance of most acculturated Jews. Accommodationists have been far less perturbed than resisters about the ideas and activities of more modern Jewish expressions. Occasionally, these Orthodox rabbis and lay spokespeople have found common cause with Conservatives and Reformers in fighting against assimilation.

Variant approaches among rabbis often had much to do with where and how they were trained. U.S.-educated

Orthodox rabbis usually were more lenient than were their European-ordained counterparts. Strictness also had much to do with where the rabbi was located in the United States. In most cases, rabbis who worked within large eastern urban centers were more dogmatic than were colleagues who served smaller Jewish communities. The various approaches that Orthodox lay leaders harbored have been even more variegated.

“Orthodox” Life in Early U.S. Jewish History

From the beginnings of Jewish settlement in the United States in the seventeenth century, until the mid-1820s, when Jews attended a synagogue, they prayed and socialized in an “Orthodox” synagogue. (That nomenclature only entered the Jewish lexicon in the nineteenth century when religiously liberal critics used that term to denigrate their traditional opponents as fossilized and unresponsive to modernity.) There were eight synagogues in the United States, the oldest of which was the Shearith Israel in New York, and most of them adhered to the Sephardic (descendent of Spanish Judaism) rite. Outside the precincts of congregations, however, most Jews did not adhere to halachic strictures. In many times and places, the unavailability of the basics for maintaining religious life—such as kosher meats or wines, Passover matzos, or sacred books and objects—made observance difficult. The U.S. Jews' desires to advance in this country also caused them to work on Saturday at the expense of Sabbath (Shabbat) observance. In addition, the miniscule population pool made finding a Jewish spouse problematic. Moreover, there was a general absence of trained religious functionaries to help those who were interested in maintaining ancestral traditions. The first ordained rabbi, Abraham Rice (1800–1862) from Gochsheim, Germany, did not arrive in this country until 1840. Before then, itinerant—and in larger towns, permanent—Jewish all-purpose functionaries served their communities as cantors, ritual slaughterers, and performers of circumcisions and officiated at weddings and so forth.

In response to religious nonconformity, lay leaders who controlled U.S. Jewish congregational life vacillated between inclusionary and exclusionary policies. Hard-line protocols prescribed fines and denial of synagogue rights and honors to those publicly known to be less observant than the rule setters. Accommodationists, on the other hand, overlooked the activities of religious miscreants. Synagogues frequently oscillated over time between the two positions. Accommodationists made few efforts to change the way the Orthodox

service was conducted to make worship more attractive to potential members. A noteworthy adjustment began in the mid-eighteenth century with the creation of open galleries for women worshippers who chafed at their inability to see activities at the altar. This architectural departure also satisfied the Jews' need to conduct themselves, and to build their religious edifices, in a U.S. way to garner the approbation of their non-Jewish neighbors.

Mid-Nineteenth-Century Denominational Challengers

Beginning in the 1830s, in addition to dealing with the ongoing dilemmas of nonobservance, Orthodox Jewish leaders faced the challenges that liberal Judaism posed. Incipient Reform and Conservative congregations were established; most stemmed from immigrant Orthodox roots. These religious opponents proffered attractive forms of religious life. Keeping up with their desire to conform to U.S. styles of public prayer, many who affiliated with these modern congregations liked their new synagogue's family pew seating. They also were attuned to the shorter, English-based service that often included the playing of instrumental music and a mixed-voice choir. Moreover, these liberal expressions of the faith were popular because they countenanced personal Jewish religious lifestyles that deviated from traditional practice.

Some prescient Orthodox groups fought to prevent transformation of their synagogues—before they lost out in membership plebiscites—through social adjustments in their services. For example, to project themselves too as U.S. congregations, accommodationist elements added English prayers and discourses to the traditional devotions, emphasized the need for decorum during the prayers, and curtailed or abolished the unsightly sale of synagogue honors. More combative Orthodox forces rested their hopes for institutional survival upon strict exclusionary control of synagogue governance—such as restricting who could vote on ritual policies. The most resistant cohorts placed their faith on even stricter exclusionary policies, such as denying membership to Jews known to be Sabbath violators. When Orthodox efforts failed within congregational ranks, there was also the option of seeking civil court relief. There, the disenfranchised argued that reforms violated publicly filed articles of incorporation that specified that services be run along Orthodox lines. However, few of these synagogues remained Orthodox through the end of the 1870s. Some were drawn into the Reform or Conservative orbits. Others

became comfortable with a hybrid ceremonial. They called themselves “Orthodox,” but despite halachic constraints, they permitted men and women to sit together during prayers even as they disdained other liturgical changes. Indeed, when the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America (OU)—that movement's first national Orthodox organization—was created in 1898, a number of its constituent synagogues had family pews.

The leading accommodationist cantor—communal leader of the time, Isaac Leeser (1806–1868)—he was not an ordained rabbi—attempted to do more than to just hold sway within his congregation. He tried to both battle back against the tide of assimilation that undermined all religious efforts and to oppose the most radical of ideological expressions that deviated strongly from traditional religious teachings. So, for example, in 1855 Leeser joined with the then-compromising Reform rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise (1819–1900) and others in developing national religious unity schemes. The resultant Cleveland Conference dealt programmatically with the idea of a universally acceptable U.S. ritual but also directly addressed the radicalism that the inflexible Reform rabbi David Einhorn (1808–1879) advanced.

Thirty-one years later, in 1886, Rabbi Sabato Morais (1823–1897) brought together a more important coalition. To combat the antinationalistic and antitraditional ritual postures that the Reform movement adopted in its 1885 Pittsburgh Platform, Morais led rabbis Henry W. Schneeburger (1848–1916), Henry P. Mendes (1852–1937), Bernard Drachman (1861–1945), and other Orthodox spokesmen into an alliance with Conservative leaders. Together they formed an institutional bulwark against the growth of Reform in the United States through the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), a school that at its inception—and long thereafter—trained rabbis who occupied both Americanized Orthodox and Conservative pulpits.

Varieties of Orthodoxy among Immigrant Eastern European Jews

With the arrival of eastern European immigrants en masse starting in the early 1880s, Jewish denominational strength in the United States changed dramatically. Soon—certainly by 1890—the hundreds of immigrant Orthodox synagogues that served the spiritual and social needs of tens of thousands of newcomers outnumbered the existing Americanized congregations. But even as transplanted Orthodox piety was on large-scale display daily and on the Sabbath within the sacred precincts of downtown neighborhoods, most

immigrants were not committed to Orthodox regulations. In other words, when Jews in the first settlement quarters attended services, they had to be at an Orthodox shul of the eastern European variety. However, as they strove to advance in this country, they attended their *shtetls* (storefront synagogues) with ever decreasing frequency. Many new Americans did not have time for long Sabbath services, if they worked on the Sabbath day.

The world of transplanted Orthodoxy held little attraction to the children of immigrants. They could not relate to the Old World social mores and languages that resounded through their parents' synagogues. As second-generation U.S. citizens, anxious to succeed, they had even less patience than did their elders for Orthodox religious obligations that would retard their progress.

Organized in 1887, the Association of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, representing fifteen of the largest congregations on New York's Lower East Side, promoted a fundamentally resistant approach toward addressing religious problems. The plan focused on a chief rabbi who would inspire a religious revival among the immigrants and their children. That same year, they recruited Rabbi Jacob Joseph (1848–1902) from Vilna and assigned him the difficult mission of engendering mass commitment to Old World religious values. Specifically, he was to motivate adults and young people to observe the Sabbath more scrupulously. He was to convince parents to send their sons to the Yeshiva Etz Chaim, the small *heder* (Jewish school) established a year earlier in the neighborhood. In this highly parochial Jewish educational environment, youngsters would be spared the assimilatory pressures of U.S. public education. And Rabbi Joseph was told to bring order to the always unmonitored and often corrupt kosher meat industry.

Despite all of his best efforts, this country's culture proved too powerful to overcome. Even downtown rabbinical families acted just like the immigrant masses. Caught up in the lures of the promises of public education, they also refused to remove their children from those schools. The chief rabbi also could not control the lay leaders who tampered with his efforts. The rabbi wanted to supervise kosher meat markets without passing the costs on to consumers. The association's leaders demanded a surcharge on such produce—a move that infuriated many downtowners and weakened further Rabbi Joseph's hold upon potential followers.

In the days immediately following Rabbi Joseph's death in 1902, a more enduring effort was hatched to inculcate an Old World religious way of life within the United States.

The Agudath ha-Rabbanim (Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada [UOR]), made up initially of fifty-nine eastern European-trained rabbis, recognized that it would take a continent-wide organization and many pooled resources and energies to counteract Americanization. In one of their first acts, these committed resisters designated the Yeshiva Rabbi Isaac Elchanan—also known as the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS)—as its favored U.S.-based institution. Founded in 1897, this extension of Yeshiva Etz Chaim, and the forerunner of the rabbinical school of Yeshiva University, trained rabbis as they were then being educated in the great Lithuanian yeshivas. It offered Torah and Talmudic studies exclusively, with no regard for modern professional, ministerial grounding.

However, for all its difficulties with the New World around them, the UOR, over time, compromised with the realities of Jewish life in this country. For example, the association maintained its support for the Yeshiva while that school, between the beginning of the twentieth century and 1915, moved slowly toward introducing the practical sides of modern rabbinical training into its curriculum. In acquiescing to the changes that the Yeshiva's first permanent president, Dr. Bernard Revel (1885–1940), brought to the school, the UOR tacitly acknowledged that for young Orthodox ordainees to be competitive, both against assimilation and the graduates of the Conservative Seminary, the Yeshiva could Americanize its operation.

If the Agudath ha-Rabbanim grudgingly recognized that some U.S. realities had to be served, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America openly admitted that to survive, Orthodoxy had to work within this country's culture. This accommodationist organization developed new congregational, political, and educational initiatives to suit the lifestyles of Americanized second-generation constituents. As early as 1900, its youth wing began organizing modern Orthodox services under the auspices of the Jewish Endeavor Society (JES). Conducting its devotions on Shabbat afternoons—after the U.S. work week was completed—it opened its doors to young folks who were laboring while Saturday morning prayers droned on in half-filled immigrant synagogues.

The Endeavorers demonstrated fidelity to Orthodoxy through their gender-separation during prayers, use of the traditional prayer book, and maintenance of unabridged services, complete with the Saturday p.m. Torah reading. Their modernity was evidenced through the weekly English language sermons, the recitation of some prayers in that

vernacular, and ancillary congregational activities such as synagogue suppers and Saturday night dances. A more enduring Young Israel movement beginning in 1913 continued JES work within, and beyond, immigrant Jewish neighborhoods for several additional generations.

While the JES opened its doors wide to those who had to work on the Jewish holy day, the OU's political wing lobbied hard for the removal from the onerous blue laws that legally undercut observance of the Sabbath. On the educational front, the OU accepted that immigrant Jews of their time believed that their children had to receive a public school education. The OU endeavored to capture youngsters back toward Jewish life by developing modern Talmud Torahs. Operating during the available after (public) school hours, these institutions offered boys and girls educational, social, and recreational activities designed to make them feel comfortable with a new U.S. Jewish identity, rooted in traditional teachings.

Interwar Crises and Compromises

The years between the two world wars witnessed new challenges for American Orthodoxy's resisting and accommodating groups. The Old World-looking contingent faced the reality that many of its transplanted rabbis and much of its base of lay followers died between 1920 and 1940. And the strict immigration quotas that Congress passed in 1924 limited the number of first-generation Jews whom the Agudath ha-Rabbanim's members might seek to influence. If these resisters harbored any optimism, their faith rested with an idiosyncratic group of second-generation Jews that resided primarily in interwar Brooklyn, New York. These youngsters came from families that did not succumb to most of the lures of Americanization that transformed other Jews and supported the establishment of yeshivas such as Williamsburg's Mesifita Torah Vodaath—or its distaff counterpart Bais Yaakov—ensconced in that same neighborhood or Yeshiva Chaim Berlin of Brownsville. A few like-minded schools could be found elsewhere in New York and in Baltimore and New Haven. These institutions tried to renew the effort—that had once fired up the old Etz Chaim-RIETS crowd—to reconstitute the past religious civilization on foreign U.S. soil. These resisters did not approve of Bernard Revel's compromised efforts to raise well-integrated U.S. Orthodox rabbis and lay people. Only several thousand families were then part of this effort, but these communities formed a home base for even greater separatism among post-World War II resisters.

Concomitantly, accommodating rabbis continued their struggle to intrigue the majority of generally disinterested U.S. Jews. Often these Orthodox leaders did what their Conservative counterparts did outside the sanctuary. Within their own synagogue centers, they promoted a broad range of ancillary activities, from dances to sports to theater productions, all predicated on the notion that those who came to play might be convinced to stay to pray. Some of these rabbis went even further in approximating what Conservatives did and adjusted synagogue practice to conform to congregants' lifestyles. Many OU affiliates sat men and women together during services, particularly during the high holidays, when many Jews appeared for their yearly visit and wanted to sit with their entire family around them. These, and other, self-defined Orthodox synagogues often conducted late Friday night services to attract those who would not leave work at early sun-down during winter-time. By the early 1940s, accommodations that violated halachic strictures were commonplace enough that the lines of demarcation between U.S. Orthodoxy and Conservatism were effectively blurred. This lack of distinctiveness was particularly true among midwestern and southern Jewish communities. But commonalities of practice could also be found within Orthodoxy's New York epicenter, though not in the heart of the Brooklyn resistant neighborhoods.

Postwar Transformations

After World War II, accommodationist Orthodoxy followed U.S. Jewry to suburban locales and there began to battle against Conservatives, and to a lesser extent Reformers, for the allegiance of the next generation. A robust competition among these Jewish movements took place during an era of religious revival when it was an important national value to affiliate with the religion of your choice. In projecting their version of the faith, members of the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA)—founded in 1937 and made up primarily of RIETS graduates—were highly inclusive of all Jews who might approach their synagogue's portals, regardless of personal levels of observance. In keeping with their traditions, from interwar days, these rabbis continued to approximate what liberal Judaism's leaders did outside of sacred spaces. Where postwar modern Orthodox rabbis differed from their immediate predecessors was in their lack of tolerance for congregations and their religious leaders that called themselves Orthodox but deviated from the halacha in their synagogue practices.

Much of the confidence that this new breed of RIETS rabbi effused can be attributed to the presence in their midst of Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik (1903–1993). As the most distinguished *Rosh Yeshiva* (Talmudic sage) at RIETS, he set, for hundreds of disciples, authoritative parameters for what constituted acceptable forms of approximation of what the Conservative movement was doing. Although accommodationist Orthodox rabbis and their lay supporters won only a minority of the campaigns for Jewish allegiances on the suburban frontiers, they were secure in their minority status.

The early postwar years also saw a new beginning for strident resistant Orthodoxy. Some of the refugees from and survivors of the Holocaust added members and vitality to old-line forces. These newcomers were the people who had implicitly harkened to the advice of those eastern European sages who admonished believers against settling in the *treif* (also *trefa* or *traif*, meaning unkosher) United States. Now in this county because their world had been destroyed, these so-called Yeshiva World groups or Hasidic sects went about recreating European Jewish conditions on U.S. soil with emphatic zeal. The Yeshiva World constituencies retained their allegiance to the tradition of rarefied Jewish learning that was the hallmark of the seats of Lithuanian Torah centers of the prior centuries. The Hasidic cohorts were deeply loyal to the pietistic values and the charismatic leadership of their “Rebbs” who personified and upheld religious traditions that stemmed from seventeenth-century Polish, Romanian, and Hungarian Jewish roots.

Spokesmen for this group—whether they identified organizationally with the Agudath Israel (the U.S. branch of this European-based organization founded in 1913 that rose to prominence in the United States subsequent to World War II), with the long-standing UOR that the Agudath effectively took over after 1945, or with independent Hasidic entities—had little good to say about accommodationist Orthodoxy. And they were dogmatically opposed to cooperation with, and even recognition of, more liberal forms of Judaism. One early sign of these resisters’ presence on the U.S. scene was the demand of the UOR’s Council of Torah Sages, in 1956, that the OU and RCA cease their work with the interdenominational Synagogue Council of America. That some RIETS faculty members and some RCA members acceded to that demand evidenced the beginning of the resisters’ impact on accommodationist values.

In the most recent period (since the 1970s), accommodating rabbis have ministered to a different type of Americanized

constituency. A winnowing of Orthodoxy took place during these decades as the number of Jews who identified with that movement declined. Many of its less-observant types who had affiliated out of filial piety or nostalgia became more comfortable in Conservative and Reform settings. But those who remained in most modern Orthodox synagogues—particularly in this country’s largest Jewish urban centers—tended to be punctilious in their observances, notwithstanding their high degree of acculturation to U.S. society. However, in smaller U.S. towns and cities, many less devoted types still could be found in Orthodox precincts.

The modern followers of halacha were, more often than not, products of the burgeoning Orthodox Jewish day school movement, an institution that had been born in the 1920s and 1930s but that expanded exponentially in the postwar period. There, youngsters were educated in the ways of living harmoniously with both Jewish religious and U.S. secular cultures. And although not all of its products remained within the fold, many of its alumni, Orthodox “baby boomers,” rose to community-leadership positions. Meanwhile, as the twenty-first century began, the growing camp of resisters—its birth rate was much higher than that of any other cohort of twenty-first-century Jews—was becoming ever more resolute in its mission. Indeed, its social values and way of life, from its dress and speech, to its strict rules on gender separation, even to its undervaluing the importance of secular education, permeated deeply into the behavior and consciousness of observant, modern Orthodox Jews.

Contemporary Resisters versus Accommodators

By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, Orthodox resisters and accommodators are far from agreeing on all social policy and religious issues. One major measure of demarcation both between and within factions is their attitude toward female roles in their communities’ congregational and social life. Generally, resisters have not countenanced the active participation of women within their synagogues. Indeed, these men and women have loudly opposed what they perceived as the deleterious impact feminism has had on U.S. Jewish life. They have censured liberal Jewish leaders for their broad redefinitions of women’s roles and have criticized those Orthodox accommodators who have stretched the halacha to allow women greater public ritual and religious leadership.

At the same time, those who have altered the architecture of synagogues to make women more comfortable in

Orthodox precincts, who have elected women as presidents of their synagogue boards, or who, beginning in the 1970s, have supported the creation of women's *tefilla* (Orthodox prayer) groups have acted in accord with their long-standing belief that for traditional Judaism to survive here, it had to, and could, adjust to the U.S. environment. These accommodationists have not always agreed about the degree of female participation permissible in religious life. Although the most progressive have even appointed women to quasi-clerical positions in their synagogues and have predicted that eventually women will be ordained and recognized as Orthodox rabbis, others have focused their efforts on providing women with ever-increasing Jewish educational opportunities comparable with those available to men. In 2000, a new Orthodox rabbinical seminary, Yeshiva Chovevei Torah, was established in New York to train "Open Orthodox" rabbis committed to strong accommodationist religious policies. Nonetheless, as the new century has begun to unfold, the sympathies of most committed Orthodox Jews in the United States have increasingly gravitated toward resistance of many contemporary U.S. mores, albeit in a variety of nuanced degrees.

See also *Architecture: Jewish; Canada: Pluralism; Chabad-Lubavitch; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism* entries; *Music: Jewish; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Judaism: Reconstructionist

Reconstructionist Judaism emerged as a school of thought in the United States in the mid 1930s but did not become a separate denomination in U.S. Jewish life until the founding of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in 1968. Reconstructionist Judaism is based on the philosophy of Mordecai M. Kaplan (1881–1983), who denied the divine origin of Jewish text, ritual practice, and culture, and sought to provide an alternative rationale for maintaining Jewish life. Completely rejecting Jewish chosenness, Kaplan forwarded a thoroughly non-supernatural view of God. Reconstructionism continues to adhere to these core principles, but its ideology has evolved in response to contemporary spiritual sensibilities and concerns.

Reconstructionism's Ideological Founder: Mordecai Kaplan

Like his father, Kaplan was an ordained Orthodox rabbi. Mordecai's early exposure to biblical criticism, coupled with his later studies in sociology, led him to view religion as the product of group creativity emerging gradually from shared experience. In his eyes, a thriving Jewish community became a prerequisite for continued Jewish vitality. At his first pulpit in New York, the Orthodox synagogue Kehillat Jeshurun, Kaplan concluded that the younger generation no longer believed in the divine origin of the tradition and had no alternative rationale for living as Jews. He began searching for a Jewish theology based on "some tenable faith which would not be refuted by established facts," a theology that would revitalize the new generation's commitment to Judaism.

Kaplan left Kehillat Jeshurun in 1909 to teach at the Jewish Theological Seminary. In 1922, he founded the Society for the Advancement of Judaism (SAJ), a synagogue in which to put into practice his emerging vision. His work in these two contexts was crucial to the development of Reconstructionist thought. Both Kaplan's innovative *Passover Haggadah* (1941) and *Sabbath Prayer Book* (1945) were originally developed for use at the SAJ. The first U.S. bat mitzvah—that of Kaplan's eldest daughter, Judith—took place soon after the SAJ was inaugurated.

Core Principles

Kaplan argued that Judaism is a religious civilization or culture. Like other cultures, Judaism has a special relationship to a particular territory (Israel), its own language (Hebrew), shared practices (rituals), stories, beliefs, and ideals

that justify these practices, communal structures, and forms of artistic expression. These have evolved naturally over time and have been reinterpreted, occasionally changed, and frequently supplemented in response to new needs and modes of thinking. As a culture, Judaism's value lies not in its supernatural origins—which he denied—but in its making positive contributions to the lives of its members. For Kaplan, the performance of Jewish rituals and the study of Jewish texts help form and maintain group consciousness, cultivate appreciation for life, enrich daily living, encourage moral behavior, and sensitize Jews to God's presence. All the elements of Judaism are essential to maintaining it as a separate, vibrant, and relevant civilization.

Kaplan criticized the Reform movement of his day for diminishing Jewish ritual usage and dismissing essential elements of Jewish civilization, including Hebrew and the land of Israel. He also believed a more radical approach to Jewish life, rather than a Conservative Judaism approach, was needed—one that would deal with laws and rituals inconsistent with contemporary belief and modern morality. Such laws and rituals turned Jews away from their tradition, could not be performed or followed wholeheartedly, and undermined Judaism's ethical stance. Kaplan maintained that changes that help preserve Jewish civilization are self-justifying and do not need to be sanctioned by Jewish law. He believed that Jews should gather in their communities and democratically formulate standards for Jewish ritual and institutional life in a process where “the past has a vote, but not a veto.”

Kaplan did not believe in a personal, supernatural God who controls nature, performs miracles, reveals his will in discrete words, or punishes evil and rewards good. For Kaplan, the biblical view of God is undermined by human experience and by scientific discoveries. Kaplan did believe, however, in a creative force that “brings all nature under the operation of dependable law” and is manifest “in all creativity and in all forms of sovereignty that make for the enhancement of human life.” This godly force guarantees that over time, all of humanity's attempts to improve society will succeed. Its essential role in the promotion of universal good allows continuity with traditional concepts, such as the view of God as Creator and Redeemer, and the idea of living a life that reflects God's will, albeit God's will as understood by people. The unconscious nature of the godly force Kaplan proposes negates other traditional concepts, however, such as chosenness (for an unconscious natural force affects everyone equally), and prayer as dialogue. Prayer becomes, instead, a

vehicle for expressing hopes, reconnecting with ideals that should inform our lives, and developing mindfulness.

Kaplan's approach to the reconstruction of Judaism is well reflected in the many liturgies that he edited between 1941 and 1963. These rid the texts of formulations that he considered either theologically untenable or morally unacceptable. To streamline the text, repetitions were eliminated and prayers of lesser standing in Jewish law and historical memory were shortened. These were replaced by a large selection of new readings—given in both English and Hebrew—that voiced the prayer book's themes in a modern idiom and addressed issues that Kaplan felt were missing from the inherited text. The radicalism of these changes is counterbalanced by maintaining the structure of traditional prayer, most of its central texts, and the prevalence of Hebrew. The goal is to make Jewish prayer more edifying while preserving its historical character. Change is not intended to make the tradition easier to follow but rather more worthy of being followed.

Reconstructionist Institutional History

The publication of Kaplan's *Judaism as a Civilization* in 1934 was a turning point for the dissemination of Reconstructionist thought, the first complete exposition of its author's views. To capitalize on the interest generated by the book, Ira Eisenstein, Kaplan's son-in-law and assistant rabbi at the SAJ, suggested founding a journal devoted to Reconstructionist ideology. The SAJ board of trustees agreed to sponsor the undertaking, and Kaplan and Eisenstein assembled an editorial board chaired by Kaplan and consisting of past supporters, including Eisenstein, Eugene Kohn, and Milton Steinberg. The first issue of *The Reconstructionist* appeared on January 11, 1935, and it remains a major vehicle for the exposition and examination of Reconstructionist thought.

In his book, Kaplan critiqued the existing Jewish religious movements in the United States. Many of his supporters now expected him to sever ties with the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS)—which by the 1920s had become the rabbinical seminary of Conservative Judaism—and declare Reconstructionism an alternative denomination. Kaplan refused, believing that the proliferation of separate movements undermined the Jews' sense of interconnection and that consciousness of kind was essential to group vitality. In his view, if the philosophy was properly explained and understood, it could be adopted within the existing denominations. In particular, Kaplan hoped that Conservative Judaism would formally recognize Reconstructionism as its left wing. Personal factors,

such as a lack of nerve and an emotional attachment to JTS, may also have played a role in Kaplan's reluctance to turn Reconstructionism into a full-fledged denomination.

In 1940, the Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation was created to help fund lectures and written work about the ideology. By the 1950s, Kaplan and his disciples had distributed thousands of pamphlets, written numerous articles and books, lectured across the United States, and created an independent publishing house (the Reconstructionist Press). Kaplan's philosophy had an impact on Reform Judaism's approach to Zionism and Jewish ritual, and many individual Reform and Conservative rabbis were influenced by Kaplan's writings. In contrast, his ideology had little impact on the formal institutions of Conservative Judaism. There were no signs that either denomination would support the general Reconstructionist platform, and most of Kaplan's ideas remained untried.

Although Kaplan's intransigence tied the hands of the leadership of the foundation, it did not prevent individual supporters from creating institutions devoted to the application of Reconstructionist principles. In 1955, four congregations formed the Reconstructionist Fellowship of Congregations. Meeting in Buffalo in 1963, members of this group convinced Kaplan that his philosophy would never truly influence the lives and thought of contemporary Jews without a rabbinical school to train those who would spread Reconstructionism. Kaplan resigned from JTS that year, and in 1968 the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) opened its doors under the leadership of Ira Eisenstein and Arthur Gilbert. The RRC graduated its 300th rabbi in 2008. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association was founded in 1974.

As hoped, the creation of the college has led to the expansion of the Reconstructionist movement. The Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, which had 19 congregational affiliates in 1969, had grown to approximately 110 affiliates by 2008. The movement remains numerically small, as many of these congregations have fewer than 150 member-households. According to the National Jewish Population Survey of 2000 to 2001, 2 percent of U.S. Jews (82,000) consider themselves Reconstructionists. The movement enjoys more influence than these statistics indicate because most of RRC's graduates serve non-Reconstructionist institutions and apply Reconstructionist principles in their work. The movement's current prayer book series, *Kol Haneshamah*, has influenced other contemporary Jewish liberal liturgies, including the Reform movement's *Mishkan T'filah*.

Reconstructionism Today

From the start, graduates of RRC asserted their right to differ from Kaplan. In practice, however, very few of his core positions have been abandoned. Reconstructionism today is still understood as a religious civilization recognizing no a priori obligation to Jewish law, no supernatural God, and no traditional concept of Jewish chosenness. The movement is open to Jewish mystic practices and religious vocabulary that were foreign to Kaplan's universe. Whereas a few of the formulations that Kaplan removed from his liturgies for theological reasons have been returned in *Kol Haneshamah*, the prayer book's commentary indicates that they are not understood as literally true. Movement members still maintain higher levels of ritual observance than do Reform Jews but fall short of the standards that Kaplan set.

Reconstructionists today have expanded the democratic sensitivity inherent in Kaplan's approach to religion. Congregations feature a high degree of lay-rabbinic partnership. Lay leaders and rabbis jointly formulate position papers published by the movement. Kaplan's campaign to give women equal rights and responsibilities has been extended to make religious vocabulary and ritual more responsive to women's experience. The RRC was the first U.S. rabbinical school to accept women. It voted to ordain openly homosexual rabbis more than a decade before Reform and Conservative Judaism did and has been a leader in the creation of Jewish religious rituals to sanction the unions of gays and lesbians. Reflecting trends evident in U.S. religion, worship is less formal than it was in Kaplan's time, and guitars are sometimes used to accompany the prayers. Members play a leading role in the running of religious services, especially in congregations that are too small to support a full-time rabbi.

Assessment

Reconstructionism is founded on a comprehensive religious philosophy. Its influence on U.S. Jewish life continues to exceed its institutional strength. This has been a mixed blessing: As Reconstructionist ideas become more mainstream, the uniqueness of Reconstructionist synagogues is less evident. Reconstructionism is likely to remain small in the coming years. Most U.S. synagogues have long-standing affiliations that they are unlikely to abandon. Few new synagogues are being founded, and a weakening interest in denominations makes it less common for new institutions to affiliate. In this sense, Kaplan's reluctance to institutionalize

Reconstructionism in the 1930s has greatly curtailed its prospects for growth.

See also *Architecture: Jewish; Chabad-Lubavitch; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism* entries; *Music: Jewish; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish.*

Eric Caplan

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Judaism: Reform

The Reform movement in Judaism was the first of the modern interpretations of Judaism to emerge in response to the changed political, cultural, and intellectual conditions brought about by the emancipation of the Jews in Europe. The increasing political centralization of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries undermined the societal structure that perpetuated traditional Jewish life. At the same time, Enlightenment ideas began to influence not only a small group of intellectuals but also wider circles. The resulting political, economic, and social changes were profound and led to the founding of the Reform movement.

History

European Roots

The first Reformers—usually identified as “German” Jews but actually from various central European countries—were seeking a middle course between traditional Judaism, which they wanted to break away from, and conversion to Christianity, which they wanted to avoid. Looking for a way to remain Jewish while adapting to the prevailing social customs, they hoped that by introducing modern aesthetics, including greater decorum, they could make worship services

more attractive to the many central European Jews who were drifting away from traditional Judaism but had not become Christians.

Most of the early reforms focused on minor cosmetic changes: They abbreviated the liturgy and added a sermon in the vernacular, added a mixed male and female choir accompanied by an organ, and read prayers in German (as well as Hebrew). From the point of view of Jewish law, reading additional prayers in German was a relatively minor deviation from traditional practice. But for the congregants eager to create a synagogue service that would look respectable to their neighbors and at the same time feel authentic to themselves, such a change carried great import.

By the early 1840s, a trained Reform rabbinic leadership had emerged in central Europe. Abraham Geiger (1810–1874), called to the Breslau Jewish community in 1839, developed into the most distinguished intellectual defender of Reform Judaism in nineteenth-century Europe. Reform rabbinical conferences in Brunswick in 1844, Frankfurt in 1845, and Breslau in 1846 gave rabbis an opportunity to clarify their beliefs and the practices that could follow from them. A debate about the use of Hebrew in the services led Zacharias Frankel to walk out of the 1845 conference, a moment many see as the beginning of the historical school, which advocated positive-historical Judaism. Frankel accepted the evolutionary character of the Jewish religion but insisted that the “positive” dimensions of Jewish tradition needed to be preserved. This perspective later evolved into Conservative Judaism. Although most of the rabbis at these conferences were much less traditional than Frankel, they taught in the established Jewish community, the *Einheitsgemeinde*, and therefore had to remain sensitive to and conversant with traditional rituals and observances.

Nineteenth Century: Reform Comes to the United States

The history of Reform Judaism in the United States differs profoundly from that in Europe. Whereas in Europe the movement developed under the shadow of anti-Semitism and the threat of conversion to Christianity, in the United States a much freer and more pluralistic, more heterodox atmosphere prevailed. There was no established religious community and no support from the state.

The first attempt at reform occurred in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1824, when forty-seven members of Congregation Beth Elohim signed a petition requesting that their congregational leadership institute certain ritual

reforms, including the introduction of prayers in English. The congregational board rejected the request, and a small group of intellectuals decided to form a new congregation, to be based on enlightened liberal values.

Beginning in the 1830s, large numbers of central European Jews, later mistakenly referred to as “German” Jews, began arriving. These immigrants established congregations that gradually moved toward Reform. Particularly notable was the Har Sinai Verein, a small religious group that met to discuss Reform theology and conduct services, established in Baltimore in 1842. In 1845 a similar group founded Emanu-El in New York City, which developed into the largest and most prestigious Reform congregation in the country.

As more congregations developed in the antebellum period, the need for strong rabbinic leadership grew. Not all congregations felt this need; many treasured their independence and many local lay leaders enjoyed dominating communal affairs. Despite the difficulties, rabbis carved out a leadership niche for themselves. Numerous immigrant teachers and ritual functionaries were interested in serving in the rabbinate and, in some cases, in assuming leadership roles on a regional or national level. One of the best known was Isaac Leeser of Philadelphia. A traditionalist minister who published an influential newspaper, *The Occident*, Leeser also promoted many other intellectual, social, and educational projects. However, Isaac Mayer Wise had the charisma and determination to develop into a national Jewish religious leader and to actively work to build U.S. Jewish institutions and organizations.

Isaac Mayer Wise and Major Reform Institutions

Wise arrived from Bohemia in 1846, and although he was advised to become a peddler, Rabbi Max Lilienthal encouraged him to consider the pulpit rabbinate and sent Wise in his stead to dedicate a number of synagogues. This led to an opportunity for Wise to begin serving as rabbi in Albany, New York, where there was a famous confrontation between Wise and the congregation’s president, the first of many clashes between rabbis and lay leaders.

When he was offered a life contract in 1854 to become the rabbi of Congregation B’ne Jeshurun in Cincinnati, Wise accepted, and the pulpit became his base for building the U.S. Reform movement. Wise established a newspaper, *The Israelite*—later *The American Israelite*—and edited a prayer book called *Minhag Amerika: Tefillot Beney Yeshurun/Daily Prayers*. Credited with establishing or being the driving force behind the founding of all three major institutions of the

Reform movement, he founded the Hebrew Union College (HUC) and the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) and he inspired one of his lay leaders to establish the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC, later Union for Reform Judaism [URJ]).

Although Wise had hoped to build a U.S. Judaism that included all U.S. Jews rather than just the more liberal elements, a moderate form of Judaism that combined some ritual reforms with traditional elements, this vision proved unworkable especially after the incident of the Treif Banquet in 1883, often cited as one of the events leading to the creation of the Conservative movement. After the ceremony marking the first ordination of Hebrew Union College, numerous forbidden foods were served at a festive dinner, shocking and scandalizing some of the more traditional guests.

The Reform movement was the first Jewish religious movement in the United States to organize itself on a denominational basis. Reform Judaism includes three types of organizations, each with its own territorial parameters: the congregational organization, today represented nationally by the UAHC; the four campuses of the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC–JIR) in Cincinnati, New York, Los Angeles, and Jerusalem; and the rabbinate, represented by the CCAR. The movement pioneered this “tripartite polity”—a congregational body, a rabbinic organization, and a seminary—which was subsequently adopted by the other major denominations of U.S. Judaism.

In the early 1870s, Wise, who had been trying for many years to create a national association of U.S. congregations, encouraged Moritz Loth, the president of Wise’s Congregation B’ne Jeshurun, to issue a call to congregations to meet in Cincinnati for the purpose of establishing a Hebrew theological college. In July 1873, representatives from 34 congregations from 28 cities, mostly in the Midwest and the South, came together to found the organization. The following year, 21 additional temples joined. By the end of the decade, 118 congregations belonged to the UAHC, more than half of all identified synagogues in the United States.

Characteristics of Classical Reform Judaism

Classical Reform was the type of Reform Judaism that developed in the late nineteenth century. U.S. Jews, most of whom were of central European background, saw the tremendous influence that liberal religion had on their Protestant neighbors and wanted to develop a form of Judaism equivalent to Episcopalianism, Presbyterianism, and

especially Unitarianism. As presented in the 1885 Declaration of Principles, known as the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform, Classical Reform Judaism minimized Judaic ritual and emphasized ethics rather than ethnic particularism, stressing universalism while reaffirming the Reform movement's commitment to Jewish particularism through the expression of the religious idea of the mission of Israel. The document defined Reform Judaism as a rational and modern form of religion in contrast with traditional Judaism on one hand and universalist ethics on the other.

The platform also repudiated Zionism, then a relatively new and extremely controversial political movement that sought to build a Jewish national home in Palestine. Most Reform Jews saw Zionism as potentially undermining their claims to be loyal to the countries of their birth. Indeed, one of the founding principles of Reform Judaism was to reinterpret all of the religious principles that suggested a return to Zion, transforming them into universal aspirations or removing them entirely. This anti-Zionism was never universally accepted by all Reform Jews—there were always a handful of pro-Zionist Reform rabbis, as well as an unknown number of congregants, sympathetic to the goals of the Zionist movement. The entire Reform movement gradually embraced a moderate form of Jewish nationalism in response to political events in the first three decades of the twentieth century.

Reform Judaism has historically emphasized what it interpreted as the central message of the prophets: the need to fight for social justice. The Reformers believed deeply in working with their Christian neighbors to help make the world a place of justice and peace, and this belief was a central part of the religious worldview. The platform emphasized the prophetic mandate to work tirelessly for the rights of the downtrodden, and the term *prophetic Judaism* described the Reform vision of following the dictates of the prophets to create a just society on earth. Coupled with the emphasis on its interpretation of prophetic Judaism, the early Reformers in particular spoke frequently about the mission of Israel, which presented the idea that the prophets of the Bible served as advocates of ethical monotheism. Ethical monotheism combined the Jewish belief in one God with rational thought and modern innovations in scientific knowledge.

They believed that the prophets stressed universalism rather than particularism, and therefore the Reformers felt justified in likewise stressing the universal over the particular. At the same time, the concept of the mission of Israel justified the continued existence of the Jewish people—their

ongoing survival as a religious group was essential if the Jews were to bring their universalistic message of ethical monotheism to the world. David Einhorn used a version of this argument to oppose intermarriage with non-Jews because “the small Jewish race” (a term acceptable at that time) needed to preserve itself as a separate entity to fulfill its religious mission on earth. Taken to its extreme, the mission of Israel concept helped Reform leaders present Judaism as the ultimate expression of ethical monotheism.

As the purest form of monotheistic religion, Judaism was therefore the strongest theological argument for ethical behavior. As such, it deserved to be taken seriously as a way of thought and a way of life by all individuals committed to finding a true understanding of God and God's place in the world. This allowed Reform leaders such as Wise to declare that Judaism was destined to become the faith of all humankind, or at least of all U.S. citizens who held liberal religious beliefs. Reform leaders believed that as time passed, humankind would be better able to understand the will of God, and thus society was certain to become a better place. This belief became most pronounced in Classical Reform.

Twentieth-Century Changes in Reform Judaism

The Reform movement changed its direction as a consequence of the increasingly brutal nature of the twentieth century. World War I jump-started the process of reexamining the liberal sense that had propelled Reform religious thought until that time. The movement's optimistic view of human progress in collaboration with God underwent further change after the rise of the Nazi movement in Germany and the subsequent murder of six million Jews. In the aftermath of that tragedy, the Reform movement veered away from its universalistic triumphalism toward a more ethnically based cultural identity.

But the breakdown of this optimism did not mean the end of either Reform Judaism or the Reform movement. Congregations continued to attract new adherents as sociological patterns shifted. Many Jews found that the Reform temple met their need for a nominal religious identification, while allowing them to join the stew in the U.S. melting pot. From 1881 until 1920, the Reform movement grew slowly relative to the increase in the U.S. Jewish population, with 99 congregations consisting of 9,800 members in 1900 and 200 congregations with 23,000 members in 1920 while the U.S. Jewish population increased fourteenfold. The Reform movement went from being the single most important voice of the Jewish U.S. community to being a small

minority. Although the elite nature of many Reform Jews meant they retained a high profile, they were swamped by the eastern European organizations and ideologies.

Even though the 1885 *Declaration of Principles* had argued that Jews should remain together solely as a religious group to fulfill their mission of bringing ethical monotheism to the world, the terrible rise in anti-Semitism in the 1930s threatened Jewish physical survival, a concern that far outweighed theological considerations. The CCAR adopted the Columbus Platform in 1937, officially named *The Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism*. This new platform embraced Jewish peoplehood and leaned toward support of political Zionism. Evidence of a revolutionary shift in the ideology of the U.S. Reform movement, the new platform encouraged a diversity of opinion and a multiplicity of approaches. It marked the end of a single Reform theological approach, creating the religious pluralism that marks contemporary Reform.

By 1945 the Reform movement was well on its way to accepting Zionism and the soon-to-be-created State of Israel. The interwar period saw the rise of two strongly Zionist Reform rabbis, Stephen S. Wise and Abba Hillel Silver. Wise (no relation to Isaac Mayer Wise) began his rabbinic career in Portland, Oregon, then moved to New York, where he established his own congregation after Temple Emanuel refused to promise him freedom of the pulpit. In 1922, he established the Jewish Institute of Religion (JIR) in New York City to provide a Zionist alternative to Hebrew Union College. Wise believed in both the importance of social justice and the centrality of Jewish peoplehood. Like him, Abba Hillel Silver was a prominent leader in U.S. and world Jewish affairs as well as a congregational rabbi. After serving as a rabbi in Wheeling, West Virginia, he became rabbi of the temple in Cleveland, Ohio. From this pulpit he worked tirelessly to build up the U.S. Zionist movement in the hope of establishing a Jewish state. With Wise, Silver formed the American Zionist Emergency Council, which lobbied the U.S. Congress on behalf of the Zionist movement. Silver was the leader who announced to the United Nations that Israel had declared itself an independent state. Both men were Classical Reformers devoted to Jewish nationalism, a synthesis that would have been nearly unthinkable just a few decades earlier.

The aftermath of World War II brought a massive suburban construction boom that benefited the Conservative branch within U.S. Judaism most. Conservative Judaism appealed to the now Americanized eastern European immigrants and

their children because it appeared substantially more traditional than Reform but allowed far greater flexibility than Orthodoxy. Nevertheless, Reform Judaism benefited from this suburbanization trend as well. The 265 congregations in 1940, with 59,000 members in the UAHC, grew by 1955 to 520 congregations and 255,000 members.

Many suburban Jews who joined Reform congregations saw the temple mainly as an extracurricular activity for their children. Congregations that moved most rapidly to meet the needs of these new suburbanites thrived. The temple became a social center that substituted to some degree for the loss of the old Jewish neighborhoods, such as those once clustered on the Lower East Side or Brownsville in New York and its equivalents in other major urban settings. The Reform leadership faced the challenge of conveying a religious message to congregants who had not joined their synagogues primarily to share a religious vision. Yet the leaders needed to captivate and motivate them to care and to feel that the congregation was helping them fulfill themselves as ethically concerned people.

Authority in Reform Judaism and a "Return to Tradition"

Although Reform Judaism stood for the autonomy of the individual and against the belief that *halakhah* (Jewish law) was binding in its entirety, in the post-World War II period Reformers took a variety of positions on religious authority and how it can be reconciled with individual autonomy. Some argued against all boundaries, but others tried to develop a post-halachic justification for some form of Jewish legal authority. Reform thinkers understood that the freedom of action they advocated could result in unintended consequences. If individuals could make their own decisions about what to observe, then what would stop those individuals from observing nothing at all? Some even used the Reform movement to justify apathy and even apostasy.

No obvious solution presented itself. In 1965, W. Gunther Plaut recommended to the CCAR that a Sabbath (Shabbat) manual be written as a beginning toward a comprehensive guide for the Reform Jew. Plaut edited the result, *A Shabbat Manual*, published by the CCAR Press in 1972. The manual went much further than any previous CCAR publication in urging Reform Jews to perform certain mitzvot—to light Shabbat candles, to recite or chant the kiddush, and to avoid working or performing housework on the Sabbath. This watershed publication led to additional efforts to “return to tradition.”

Yet a return to tradition should not be misunderstood as an acceptance of halakhah as a binding system. Most Reform Jews believe that religion in general, and Judaism specifically, is very much a human institution. They believe that it is impossible to know with absolute certitude what God wants from us. Certainly, behaving ethically is necessary for people of all faiths. But we cannot know what ritual behavior God expects from us. The traditional belief that the mitzvot are binding because they are God-given is reinterpreted to acknowledge God's indirect inspiration in what is essentially a process of human spiritual expression.

By the late 1960s, many felt that *The Union Prayer Book*, used in Reform congregations since the 1890s, had become outdated; new prayers would better express how people felt in response to the volatility of that era. Joseph Glaser, executive vice president of the CCAR, initiated a campaign in 1971 to write and publish new forms of liturgy. A thick blue prayer book, *The Gates of Prayer*, replaced *The Union Prayer Book* in 1975 to a mixed response—great excitement at the numerous options, but horror at the drastic changes. It was joined in 1978 by a completely reworked High Holy Day prayer book, *The Gates of Repentance*. Both new prayer books included more Hebrew and more traditionalist elements than their predecessors had. Ten different Friday night services were offered, most of which presented a specific theological approach, as well as services that catered specifically to children or those preparing for bar mitzvah.

The Schindler Years: Social Justice, Proselytization, Patrilineal Descent

Alexander M. Schindler, who became president of the UAHC in 1973, gained renown for his assertive support of the social action agenda of the Reform movement of the 1970s and 1980s, including civil rights, world peace, nuclear disarmament, a “Marshall Plan” for the poor, feminism, and gay rights, as well as his opposition to the death penalty. Schindler is perhaps best remembered for two issues: his outreach to intermarried couples and his advocacy of patrilineal descent. Intermarriage had long been a taboo in the Jewish community, and many parents ostracized children who “married out.” Schindler felt strongly that this taboo was counterproductive as well as inappropriate. At a meeting of the UAHC's board of trustees in Houston in December 1978, he issued a public call to the Reform movement to reach out to the non-Jewish spouses in interfaith marriages.

Even more surprising, he urged making the Jewish religion available to unchurched gentiles. This controversial call

to proselytize those with no connections of blood or marriage to the Jewish community seemed like a dramatic departure from two thousand years of Jewish religious policy against proselytization. His critics argued that such a move would encourage certain Christian groups to launch campaigns against the Jewish community, using Schindler's call as an excuse for proselytizing unaffiliated Jews. Despite the attention that this suggestion created, little proselytizing of unchurched gentiles has occurred in the succeeding years, whereas many outreach programs to interfaith couples have been developed.

During the Schindler years the Reform movement adopted the patrilineal descent resolution, which stated that the child of one Jewish partner is “under the presumption of Jewish descent.” Although the document's vague wording led to some difficulties, the patrilineal descent policy ensured that if one's father was Jewish and one's mother was not, one would still be regarded as Jewish, provided that one was raised as a Jew. This requirement of raising a child as a Jew was more stringent than halakhah. This supplemented rather than replaced the traditional matrilineal descent policy, which established that the children of a Jewish mother would be Jewish regardless of their father's faith or even how they were raised.

Feminist Trends from the 1970s to the Twenty-First Century

Also during Schindler's presidency, the Reform movement allowed women to assume a more central role in the synagogue, a direct consequence of the feminist movement that influenced every aspect of U.S. life. As U.S. women in the 1960s and 1970s took on a far greater role in religious life than had those of previous generations, the Reform movement responded quickly and actively to the changing gender role expectations. Increasing numbers of congregations allowed women to assume responsibility for all aspects of religious and communal life, even the rabbinate. In 1972, Sally J. Priesand became the first woman ordained a Reform rabbi at HUC-JIR, a revolutionary breakthrough. Since 1972, hundreds of women have enrolled in HUC.

Many modern U.S. women found the language of the traditional prayer book restrictive and even sexist. Based on biblical models that portrayed God solely in masculine terms, the prayers assume that public worship is an obligation primarily for men. For example, the prayer that began “Praised be our God, God of our Fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob” now seemed exclusionary.

Where were the matriarchs? In 1972, a task force on equality, arguing that such language misleads worshipers about the true nature of both human beings and God, recommended altering masculine references in prayer. In the resulting effort to rewrite the prayers to reflect the growing egalitarian nature of U.S. Jewish thinking, the names of the matriarchs were added in a series of gender-sensitive prayer books published in the early 1990s. The same prayer now reads, "Praised be our God, the God of our Fathers and our Mothers: God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob; God of Sarah, God of Rebekah, God of Leah, and God of Rachel."

Dealing with the names of God framed in the masculine form was more difficult. In English, Reform prayer books had referred to God as "He" and "Him" and called God "the Lord." These references could be changed, but the practical problem of replacing prayer books in use for only a short time was daunting. Some congregations developed a list of gender-sensitive words that could be substituted for masculine references to God. Thus, the word "God" might be used to replace "the Lord" each time that phrase appeared in the prayer book. But this could confuse congregants, who had to be exceptionally alert to make all the correct substitutions in the right places and at the right times. In the mid-1990s a series of soft-cover experimental gender-sensitive prayer books, then a hard-cover gender-sensitive version intended to be semi-permanent, gradually supplanted the original Sabbath prayer book *Gates of Prayer*. A new prayer book with full gender sensitivity was finally published in 2007.

The Reform movement has embraced religious equality for gays and lesbians. The CCAR first dealt with the issue of homosexuality in the mid-1970s and soon after was supporting human rights as well as civil liberties for gays and lesbians. Most Reform rabbis took liberal positions across the board and so were quick to embrace what many saw as another liberal social cause. HUC-JIR later admitted a transgender student without controversy. Most congregants accepted gay and lesbian clergy without too much prejudice, although there were issues, especially in the first few years.

Eric H. Yoffie and Early Twenty-First Century Trends

Reform practice today, especially in the synagogue itself, is characterized by the partial restoration of a number of formerly abrogated rites and rituals. Ritual items eliminated by the Classical Reformers, such as the yarmulke, tallit, and

even tefillin, have been brought back. But because of the concept of religious autonomy, individual congregations cannot and do not require congregants to wear any of these traditional prayer items. Rather, they are offered to those who find them religiously meaningful or who prefer to wear them as an expression of traditionalist nostalgia.

In a remarkably smooth transition of leadership, Eric H. Yoffie, the president of the UAHC since 1996, inherited a movement that had grown substantially in numbers yet was perceived as having fundamental problems. Yoffie moved quickly and boldly to address these challenges, taking advantage of the new enthusiasm for spirituality and launching a systematic campaign to rebuild the entire Reform movement.

Yoffie outlined a plan to reform Reform: "I propose, therefore, that at this biennial assembly we proclaim a new Reform revolution. Like the original Reform revolution, it will be rooted in the conviction that Judaism is a tradition of rebellion, revival, and redefinition; and like the original too, this new initiative will make synagogue worship our Movement's foremost concern." Yoffie urged that this "worship revolution" be built on a partnership among rabbis, cantors, and lay people. The URJ leadership has prepared a series of initiatives that taken together constitute "a Reform revolution."

Yoffie has only begun the process of reorienting the movement to meet the sociological challenges that Reform Judaism faces in the contemporary United States. At the same time, the rabbinic leadership has proposed a number of controversial initiatives, most notably a new Pittsburgh Platform. This restating of Reform religious beliefs generated a firestorm of controversy in 1998 and 1999. Although the CCAR at its annual conference in Pittsburgh in May 1999 eventually passed a revised version called A Statement of Principles for Reform Judaism, supporters found it severely watered down, whereas Classical Reformers viewed it as a betrayal of the Reform legacy in the United States. Despite a year and a half of conflict over this issue, the values that inspired people to join the Reform movement have kept them from splitting off or leaving altogether. Although the recent economic downturn has forced the URJ and HUC to cut their staff and programming, large segments of the Reform movement remain vibrant and enthusiastic. Primarily situated in the United States, Reform Judaism will thrive if liberal forms of religion succeed in attracting increasing numbers of followers and will decline if liberal religion stagnates.

See also *Architecture: Jewish; Canada: Pluralism; Chabad-Lubavitch; Education: Colleges and Universities; Feminism; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism* entries; *Music: Jewish; Religious Press; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Judaism: Sectarian Movements

In recent decades, U.S. Judaism has broadened itself to include many new manifestations of the Jewish spiritual experience. Whereas in the immediate post–World War II period Judaism was seen as being represented by the three major denominations, U.S. Judaism now includes a much wider and more diverse grouping of movements, streams, and factions.

The primary impetus for this dramatic structural change was the increasing interest in the spiritual quest as a journey that emphasized the dynamic aspect of the process. Rather than stressing the community obligations of the individual Jew to the Jewish people, the new spirituality emphasized meaning, which differed based on an individual's particular journey. God is experientially accessible through the cultivation of one's inner life. Thus the quest for spiritual fulfillment could lead to God and the search for God could lead to spiritual fulfillment. In any case, the dominant ethos emphasized experiential spirituality rather than institutional spirituality.

Denominational Judaism developed in the United States in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Each of the three major denominations—Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox—developed its own institutional structure. They each founded rabbinical seminaries that were supported by their congregational unions. Religious thinkers began writing theological and historical works that emphasized the particular denominational perspective. Observers of the U.S. Jewish scene in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s saw a U.S. religious group that was clearly divided into three institutionally distinct streams. Although this structure appeared to be solid, it began to change dramatically and broaden in response to the new interest in post-denominational and trans-denominational spirituality.

Nondenominationalism, Post-Denominationalism, and Trans-Denominationalism

Whereas many U.S. Jews had never identified themselves as Reform, Conservative, or Orthodox, the popular perception was that most of the Jewish community did identify with a denomination. By the 1980s, however, it was becoming increasingly clear that many Jews were not denominationally affiliated. Various terms have been used to describe these individuals: nondenominational, post-denominational, trans-denominational, cross-denominational, and even anti-denominational. These terms are not necessarily interchangeable, and it is important to define what each means.

Nondenominational Jews are those who identify themselves in telephone surveys as “just Jewish.” Although it's hard to know exactly what they mean by this, they clearly do not identify with any of the denominational choices offered them by the telephone interviewer. They are not Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, or Reconstructionist (a fourth denomination that developed after the other three). In practice, this usually means that they are not involved in Judaism as a religion, but that they have a Jewish ethnic background and are willing to acknowledge that fact. There is a great deal of controversy regarding who is included in this group and how the organized Jewish community should respond to them.

Post-denominationalism refers to those individuals or congregations that do not affiliate with any of the national synagogue movements. Some of the most creative initiatives in U.S. Jewish religious activities in recent decades have been post-denominational, although as time goes on, these post-denominational Jews may evolve into a denomination (or several denominations) in their own right. About two

hundred congregations are not members of any of the established denominations. Some believe that the trend is a practical response to the high cost of such affiliation, but others see post-denominationalism as an ideological movement. Some post-denominational Jews believe that their approach allows them the best of both worlds; they can remain independent while drawing on the best features of each of the religious streams.

Related to post-denominationalism, anti-denominationalism is the active opposition to the concept of denominations. Anti-denominationalists deliberately avoid denominational involvement, believing that the focus on denominational Judaism has tended to stifle, rather than stimulate, spirituality. They see the synagogue movements as the creation of East and West Coast elites who have manufactured distinctions to justify their honorary positions in redundant denominational organizations. They blame the movements for perpetuating the stereotype of Judaism as dull and boring and believe that without the constricting labels of Reform, Conservative, or Orthodox, U.S. Judaism would have thrived. This type of criticism is frequently expressed by young rebels who situate themselves at the edge of or even entirely outside of the Jewish community.

Orthodox outreach organizations have been quick to use the anti-denominationalism so prevalent among younger U.S. Jews. Full-color magazine inserts were put into the various local Jewish newspapers describing the “Ashkefardi-Ultrarefconservadox Generation” and how Judaism had a great deal of spiritual meaning that could be found if one were able to get past all of these divisive labels. Those who responded to the ad were sent on to Orthodox outreach organizations, which could legitimately claim that they indeed rejected the denominational divisions; they believed that there was only one true Judaism. If others chose to refer to them as Orthodox, then so be it. They were following Judaism the way it was supposed to be followed. All the others were simply misguided. Orthodox triumphalists believe that the trend toward anti-denominationalism will, in the end, lead back to Orthodoxy. Others believe that it is more likely to lead to radical assimilation.

Trans-denominational refers to an approach that brings Jews of different religious outlooks together. Many if not most of the recent successful communal initiatives share a trans-denominational goal. Also referred to as cross-denominational, this orientation stresses what U.S. Jews have in common or what they can learn from each other. Much of the trans-denominational bridge building began after the

1990 National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) found that there had been significant erosion in Jewish communal cohesion. Many believed that trans-denominational programs have been quite successful at helping Jews see what they actually have in common, rather than what they thought they had in common.

The Havurah Movement and Jewish Renewal

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, increasing numbers of young Jews were seeking to re-spiritualize Judaism. They were not sufficiently compelled by the “civil Judaism” that stressed loyalty to the Jewish people rather than spiritual meaning. Many were inspired by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, the charismatic Polish neo-Hasidic philosopher who taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) in New York. Small but influential numbers of U.S. Jews began insisting on more emotional content in their Judaic ritual. They wanted more intimate and spiritually satisfying worship rather than what they saw as the staid and hollow services that were offered at most establishment synagogues. In contrast to shallow suburban religious practices, Jewish Renewal and other neo-Hasidic religious approaches sought authenticity and depth of spiritual experience.

The beginnings of Jewish Renewal can be traced to the development of the Havurah movement, which was named for the fellowships that Jewish pietists had organized in the early rabbinic period. A *Havurah* literally means “fellowship.” The concept of a Havurah is used in the Talmud (Tractate *Pesachim*) to refer to the group of people registered for a single Passover sacrifice, as well as those who held a seder together. The Passover seder is perhaps the prototypical group ritual (traditionally) held outside a synagogue involving the sharing of communal experiences, Jewish learning, and prayer. The Havurah (Havurot, plural) was an experimental fellowship set up by young political and social activists who wanted a place where they could engage in heartfelt prayer and study. Many of the early Havurah members had seen how groups of hippies had formed communes, and they wanted to create a Jewish religious alternative.

They placed the emphasis on kavannah, the intention to concentrate. In addition to the regular Hebrew prayers, they sang niggunim, wordless Hasidic melodies, with great fervor to help themselves focus. They hoped that communal prayer could bind them together, but they differed on what type of community it should be. Some had the idea of creating rural communities, others hoped to create residential urban centers, and still others were inspired by the monastic life of the

ancient Dead Sea Scroll sect. They wanted to create an “authentic Jewish community” that took tradition seriously but was willing to make the types of changes that they thought were necessary. This included gender equality and also an array of other political and social causes important to the New Left, such as peace activism, social justice, and for some, vegetarianism.

The Havurat Shalom Community Seminary was the first such commune, established in Somerville, Massachusetts, just outside of Cambridge in 1967, with funding from the Danforth Foundation of St. Louis. Arthur Green, a recent graduate of the rabbinical school at the JTS, envisioned the creation of a counterculture seminary for serious Jewish textual study that would transcend denominational divisions. He planned to include the then almost unheard of subject of mysticism, as well as specific topics of contemporary importance such as the Jewish roots of pacifism and antiwar activism. The Havurah members eliminated the goal of creating a seminary from their mission statement at the end of their first year. They instead decided that their Havurah would become a nonresidential religious community devoted to prayer and study. (Decades later, Green opened a nondenominational rabbinical school at the Hebrew College in Boston.)

Other Havurot were soon created in most other large cities. They each had their own focus, but they all shared a number of things. In particular, they were resolutely nondenominational. Even though many or most of their members had come from Conservative backgrounds, the Havurah members were determined to create a new type of Judaism that was neither Reform, Conservative, nor Orthodox. Most of all, they wanted a Judaism that was vibrant, and they criticized the existing denominations for making synagogue members passive “consumers” of a commodity, rather than active participants who would create and build.

The Havurot initially attracted little attention. But in 1973, Michael and Sharon Strassfeld and Richard Siegel published *The Jewish Catalog*. Subtitled “A Do-It-Yourself Kit,” it was modeled on the recently published counterculture *Whole Earth Catalog*, which was first published in 1969. *The Jewish Catalog* stressed that readers could actually do Judaism rather than just watching rabbis and synagogue elders do it. The catalog also suggested that readers could incorporate Judaic ideas and rituals into their own lives, transforming both Judaism and themselves in the process.

The early Havurot referred to their desire for “religious renewal,” and they are seen as the precursors to what

became known as the Jewish Renewal movement. The exact relationship between the Havurah movement and Jewish Renewal is difficult to describe. Many of the same people were involved in both groups, and much of their basic thinking is complementary, if not identical. The Havurah movement focused primarily on the Havurot, whereas Jewish Renewal is a broader term encompassing all aspects of alternative Judaism. Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi is acknowledged as the spiritual leader of the Jewish Renewal movement, and Rabbi Arthur Waskow is one of the movement’s main organizers and popularizers.

The Ba’al Teshuvah Movement

Other young U.S. Jews took an entirely different turn. They also felt uninspired by the synagogue experience of their youth, but they were not interested in going the hippie route. Rather, they wanted a completely traditional form of Judaism, a Judaism that actually demanded the full observance of the mitzvot (commandments), just as described in the Shulchan Aruch (the Code of Jewish Law, literally “set table” referring to the practical focus of the code) and based on the Torah and the Talmud. These Jews wanted to study in Talmudic academies called yeshivot (singular is yeshiva) that would explain the actual beliefs of traditional Judaism, without reinterpreting everything to allow for maximum flexibility.

These young people began observing more of the commandments, something that was very difficult to do in the suburban environment. It was difficult to walk to synagogue because most houses were many miles away from the nearest house of worship. Few families kept kosher, and unless they were lucky enough to live in or near an Orthodox suburb, there were not likely to be any kosher restaurants nearby. Their parents were probably well-meaning, but completely uncomprehending. Most eventually left home for what became known as ba’al teshuvah yeshivas, religious seminaries that specialized in teaching adult beginners.

The word *ba’al teshuvah* is a Hebrew term that literally means “a person who has repented.” The term historically referred to a Jew who had been raised in a traditional home, but had then chosen to willingly transgress the halacha, Jewish law, only to later repent and return. The term can also be used in a general sense to refer to anyone who has done a bad thing and then repented. Since the 1970s, the term has been popularly used to refer to a non-Orthodox Jew, frequently coming from a secular background, who decided to embrace Orthodoxy. These individuals may become

modern Orthodox or Haredi (meaning “god-fearers,” the group formerly referred to as “ultra-Orthodox,” a term that is now viewed as derisive by many)—the term may refer to either of these possibilities. Ba’alei teshuvah (the plural form) saw themselves as returning to the faith of their ancestors, recreating themselves as well as reconnecting with the Judaism that they had lost touch with. The ba’al teshuvah refashions their identity, creating a new persona, as well as a new lifestyle.

Much of the enthusiasm was a result of the startling victory of the State of Israel in the Six Days’ War, fought in June 1967. In the weeks leading up to the outbreak of hostilities, many assimilated U.S. Jews who had never previously felt a visceral connection with the Jewish state suddenly felt that their own lives were at risk. Orthodox believers saw Israel’s victory as the beginning of the messianic redemption from galut, exile. They believed that one of the necessary prerequisites for the coming of the messiah was strict ritual observance, and they were determined to help those nonobservant Jews who expressed an interest in learning more about traditional Judaism.

Jewish Renewal and the ba’al teshuvah movement thus differed enormously in the type of individual who was attracted to them, as well as in the beliefs and practices of those who identified with each of these groups. What they shared was that both saw the suburban Judaism of their youth as superficial and lacking in spirituality. They wanted something more intense that would bring them a sense of fulfillment and that would seem more “religious.”

In recent years a widespread consensus emerged that the Jewish establishment had not been aggressive enough in innovating and that the ba’al teshuvah and Jewish Renewal movements had developed cutting-edge responses to both the substance and marketing of Judaism. Along with a number of other Jewish religious sectarian movements such as Chabad-Lubavitch, a form of Hasidic Judaism that stresses outreach to nonobservant Jews, these new spiritual approaches to contemporary Judaism have revolutionized U.S. Jewish perceptions and practices of religion. This is all the more remarkable because these groups are not large, even within the relatively small Jewish world—the ba’al teshuvah movement is a minority within Orthodoxy, which may number about 10 percent of U.S. Jewry, and Jewish Renewal is smaller than even the smallest of the four major established denominations, Reconstructionism, which may be 2 percent of U.S. Jewry at most. The mainstream Jewish world is now in the process of catching up, using new

techniques to recapture the essential spiritual qualities of Judaism that many felt had been lost.

See also *Architecture: Jewish; Chabad-Lubavitch; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism entries; Music: Jewish; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Judaism: Secular

Judaism, though historically and mainly considered a religion—indeed, often credited as the first of the great monotheistic civilizations—has also spawned a variety of secular forms. *Secular Judaism* would appear to be an oxymoron, if one assumes that *Judaism* is fully analogous with other religious ideologies such as Buddhism, Hinduism, or Roman Catholicism. Yet Judaism differs in type from certain other religious “isms.” It is somewhat more commodious and embraces other aspects of personal and group identity, such as ethnic kinship, nationhood, and culture, all of which afford potentially viable and enriching ways of being Jewish; these alternatives are especially important to those who eschew a worldview based on belief in a personal God or cannot accept the behavioral discipline of a religious code. Judaism is notoriously nonrigid when it comes to defining its outer boundaries.

The Persistence of Jewish Identity

Like many members of other modern faith communities, Jews are motivated in varying degrees to identify themselves nominally with their family heritage, and some do

so even in the absence of positive religious conviction or commitment. Freedom of conscience in modern democracies permits the individual maximum latitude in self-definition. Freedom *from* religion, in the sense of release from normative doctrines, coercive authority, or onerous and intrusive duties, is a basic aspect of freedom *of* religion. The secularization of modern society, which means that most civic and social functions are no longer conducted solely or even largely within religious rubrics, is what engenders phenomena such as “secular Judaism.”

Religious institutions tend toward a narrower definition of their ideology and often prescribe some nominal ideal of observance or practice, but they do not often seek to exclude or to restrict potential members, if at all, on behavioral or doctrinal grounds. Among Jews, especially in the United States, such exclusion, either formal or informal, verges on being next to unknown and is certainly impracticable. Whereas, for example, it was expected in the past for a Jew to disassociate himself or herself from the orbit of Judaism on marriage to a gentile—because it was expected of those around them to socially reinforce that dissociation—that is no longer the case, especially for most U.S. Jews (some 90 percent) who are non-Orthodox. With out-marriage having risen from just 13 percent in the 1960s to 47 percent in the last decade of the twentieth century, it is not unlikely for a U.S. Jew to be married to a non-converted, non-Jewish spouse, but it is highly unlikely for such a Jew to be barred from any synagogue.

There is virtually no religious test that sharply divides the practicing from the nonpracticing or secularized Jew; the only consensual exception is that self-professed “messianic Jews,” who assert their belief in Jesus as their own spiritual savior, are by and large considered to have ceased practicing Judaism by anyone else’s standard. All other nonnormative or relativistic positions, ranging from agnosticism to humanism to atheism, regularly fail to be excluded in principle.

Indeed, many agnostics or atheists have a particular tradition in mind when disclaiming any transcendental beliefs. A Jewish atheist is one who professes disbelief in the Jewish God, but by the same token would not consider the possibility of choosing another God. In taking up the position of a religious “rebel” or skeptic, or even a position of indifference, rather than that of a potential apostate, a secular Jew very often retains rather strong ties to other Jews, not just at the level of family kinship and extended-family commitments, but also in the sense that, like other Jews, the Jewish atheist finds all other faiths to be foreign and personally

unacceptable. From 1990 to 2001, as reported in authoritative Jewish identity surveys, self-defining “Jews with no religion” (that is, who have not chosen to affiliate with any other faith community but do not consider themselves Jews “by religion”) increased from 15 percent to 21 percent of a sample of U.S. adults with at least one Jewish parent. That is, about one of every five Jews in the United States (or an estimated 1 million people) is secular by self-definition; those who define themselves in this way indicate that they carry out few or no Jewish rituals, hardly ever attend prayers at a synagogue, do not observe Jewish dietary codes, rarely if ever mark Jewish holy days, are indifferent to religious principles, or disagree philosophically with religion as a truth-system—all this, yet without relinquishing their claim to be Jews.

Participation in Jewish Rites

De facto, then, large populations continue to find social, ethnic, or cultural meaning in their own self-definition as members in good standing, or lapsed members, of various faith communities, and Jews are no exception. Estimates vary from country to country, but like many of their fellow Jews in Israel, Europe, and Latin America, many thousands of Jews in the United States today prefer to define their Judaism as “cultural” or familial, rather than strictly as “religious,” and consider secular identity a way of being Jewish.

Perhaps ironically, but not surprisingly, secularized Jews are apt to avail themselves of certain religious rites of passage or to participate in marking others’ life-cycle rituals: religiously sanctioned birth, marriage, and burial ceremonies often retain their popular appeal even among the otherwise nonobservant. Although some faith communities demand the performance of a reentry ritual (such as baptism or confession), as a “prerequisite” for participation in a rite of the sanctioned religious community, such is not the case among Jews. The more stringent culture of Orthodox Judaism would draw the line at refusing an avowedly lapsed or non-observing Jew the right to act in the capacity of congregational leader or to perform other public, obligatory functions in the name of the congregation. Nonetheless, the same Jews would normally be permitted such essential religious rites as the circumcision of their male newborn children, marriage (and divorce) by Jewish clergy, participation in the prayers of the congregation, and burial.

Thus, it is routine for anyone “of the Jewish faith”—including all those born or converted into a Jewish family, regardless of their lack of actual Jewish practice year-round and over many years—to be wed or buried according to

religious rite and to pray with the congregation on an equal basis should the occasion arise. Such occasions would include, for example, participating in a festive meal, either in a family or institutional setting, where blessings are recited over food and wine, participating in the prayer service attended by family and relatives to mark the occasion of a child's coming of age (bar or bat mitzvah), and attending certain annual holiday observances (such as the two so-called High Holidays of the Jewish calendar—Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), when family obligation or custom sometimes outweigh the lack of inner religious conviction.

Indeed, in life-cycle rituals as well as in the occasional passive or active participation in a religious ceremony, tacit or explicit consideration for one's parents', one's children's, or one's spouse's religious sensibilities can often subjectively legitimate religious activity by the nonreligious, in purely cultural or humanistic terms, and no religious bar exists to prevent such activity. Many Jews often go through life in this fashion, without attempting to "consummate" their quasi-religious performances at an ideational level as part of a system of sacred belief. This is a particularly prevalent form of secular Judaism today.

Another factor that tends to blur the boundaries between secular conviction and occasional "lapses" into religious performance is that secular Jews very often live in societies, such as the United States or Israel, where religion is widely perceived as a universal or national common denominator, with a core of ethical or moral legitimacy at the societal level, regardless of individual faith commitments. Comfortable in their nonobservance, secular Jews are not necessarily "antireligious," though they tend to be vigilant about what may appear to them as the trespass of religious doctrine into the civic sphere.

Some secular Jews find much to admire in the aesthetic culture of their neighbors, such as Christmas trees, or in spiritual traditions even further afield, such as meditation practices borrowed from Eastern religions. They may imagine that their own Jewish humanism is enhanced by freely borrowing customs or practices, originally embedded in other religious traditions, but whose quasi-sacred status in another faith system is culturally or personally nonintimidating or even irrelevant. At the same time, such Jews are likely to take offense at attempts to proselytize them on behalf of a non-Jewish religious community and do not understand that missionaries might mistake them for "unchurched" people. Jewish secularism is culturally broad-minded but also typically ethnocentric.

Organized "Ethical" or "Humanistic" Judaism

In 1876, Felix Adler (1851–1933), the son of a Reform rabbi, and himself having trained to take up the pulpit, founded the New York Society for Ethical Culture. Based socially for the most part on other "enlightened" Jews, Ethical Culture sought to remove the obstacle of separate rites and dogmas from the common quest of all right-thinking people for a rational system of ethics. It aimed to educate people of different religious heritages toward a common set of humanistic values and to overcome bigotry and ignorance.

Nearly a century later, in 1967, Sherwin T. Wine (1928–2007), ordained as a Reform rabbi, founded the Association of Humanistic Rabbis, which was followed by the 1969 founding of the Society for Secular Humanistic Judaism (SHJ). Like Ethical Culture in some ways, SHJ strives to emphasize the rational, the humanistic, and the universal elements in Judaism's classical tradition and to position the Jewish ethical tradition within a larger world culture. Unlike Adler, however, who created nondenominational "societies" of Ethical Culturalists (not "ethical Jews"), Wine wanted to develop his humanistic Jewish alternative without breaking his followers' ties with the ethno-cultural Jewish sphere in which they had been raised. Indeed, he referred to his groups of followers as "congregations," retained the use of his own rabbinical title (as his colleagues continue to do), and at one point tried, unsuccessfully, to bring his movement within the Union of American Hebrew Congregations—the national association of Reform Jewish synagogues. Claiming some two dozen "congregations and communities" across the United States, SHJ has created a hybrid form of "secular synagogue," but it cannot claim to represent the largely amorphous secular wing of U.S. Jewry, as described earlier.

The Growth and Decline of Immigrant Communities

The historical and social basis for today's secular Judaism is ultimately rooted in the experiences of the masses of Jewish immigrants to the United States, most of whom came from countries in eastern Europe before and after the beginning of the twentieth century. Those immigrants, and their children after them when they had grown up, lived in largely urban, densely concentrated neighborhoods along with thousands of other Jewish families. This preponderant experience of environmental, social, and cultural homogeneity gave rise to an "effortless" Jewish socialization pattern,

without regard for its institutionalization in religious associations or synagogues. When sociologist Nathan Glazer (1924–) wrote his now-classic work on *American Judaism* (1957), he referred to the interwar experience of urban U.S. Jews as marking a shift from “Judaism” (the ancestral religion) to “Jewishness”—a contemporary social fabric woven of friendship patterns, typical occupational and residential networks, a group-based leisure culture in favored vacation spots, common tastes in food (not drink) or books, a widely disseminated vernacular culture, and ethnocentric family bonding, all of which resisted a doctrinal or theological definition.

Not all immigrant Jews or their U.S.-born children were secular by conviction, by any means. Among those who were, however, many also tended to be staunch proponents of an alternative political faith: socialists, anarchists, feminists, or Jewish nationalists in the Zionist vein—advocates of national self-determination for Jews in Palestine and of Jewish people’s solidarity abroad. Many of these ideological secularists, properly speaking, referred to themselves in Yiddish, the ethnic Jewish language of Ashkenazi (eastern and central European) Jewry, as “*fraye*” (pronounced FRY-eh)—freethinkers. Some of their spokesmen referred to secularism as “worldliness”—*veltlikhkayt*—and to secular Jews as worldly Jews: *veltlikhe yidn*. Secularists of this stripe founded a variety of Jewish ethnic institutions in U.S. cities, from daily newspapers and literary monthlies to political societies, charitable organizations, social clubs, benevolent societies, feminist circles, labor unions, theatrical companies, housing cooperatives, teachers’ colleges, musical ensembles, schools and summer camps for children, and old-age homes. They constituted a lively counterculture within the Jewish world of their day.

The institutionalized web of a secular Jewish life in the immigrant and second-generation community that arose in the urban United States was closely related to sibling communities abroad—Paris, Buenos Aires, Tel-Aviv, Montreal, and Melbourne—all of which grew out of the rebellion of immigrant sons and daughters, all bent on distancing themselves from what they remembered as the stultifying effects of their parents’ strict, if unlettered and superstitious, folk religion. In all these cases, they advocated “free thinking” and “worldliness” as a positive Jewish response to modernity, as free and unfettered citizens of the world and members-at-large of the culture of progress. This foundational experience remains the historical yardstick by which avowedly secular endeavors in the Jewish realm have come to be

compared and measured, and to which they look when seeking to claim a cultural heritage worthy of emulation.

Yet, by the 1960s, the myriad of secular, mainly Yiddish-based cultural and social institutions had been vastly reduced, almost to the point of extinction. More important, perhaps, the cultural optimism of “progressive” and similar political ideologies that prevailed before the Holocaust and the Cold War, an optimism that critically buoyed the credo of Jewish secularism, gave way increasingly to psychoanalytical and postmodernist critiques of modernity and its veneer of human self-improvement.

Secular Judaism in the late twentieth to early twenty-first century has typically lacked the wide-ranging, multipurpose communal infrastructure that characterized its early twentieth-century prototype. Secular Judaism rests, instead, on the noninstitutionalized, nonideological fraternization that Glazer had referred to as “Jewishness,” and its hallmark is less a rebellion against the piety of illiterate grandparents than an expression of discomfort with denominationalism, “organized religion,” and hollow pieties.

Continuities in Secular Jewish Experience

There are two continuities, however, that represent a seam in the history of secular Judaism in the United States. One such continuity revolves around a bedrock egalitarian outlook: This outlook rejects hierarchy in Jewish life—there are to be no “better” Jews and “worse” Jews, only Jews. The outlook also resists traditional gender role differentiation, which historically had ordained separate “male” and “female” spheres, comportment, and functions. Finally, this outlook typically adopts a positive attitude toward social causes, often dubbing such proactive activity in the public realm on behalf of others as *tikkun olam* (pronounced tee-KOON oh-LOM). The latter Hebrew phrase, meaning restoring or repairing the world, was in its premodern classical setting a kabbalistic (mystical) doctrine, prescribing the restoration of ontological, divine, cosmic meaning, but since the 1960s, *tikkun olam* has become secularized and known in Jewish circles as a synonym for social justice and social action. This outlook functions, for the most part, to provide secular, humanistic activity with a particularistically Jewish rationale, and thus imparts to Jewish secularism a political spin that is reminiscent of older forms of Jewish “worldliness.”

The second continuity revolves around Jewish peoplehood. The particular form this orientation may take is open-ended, and may exhibit itself as an enthusiasm for Yiddish folk culture, empathy with oppressed Jewish communities

abroad or with Jewish victimhood in the past (such as during the Holocaust), or simply an expressed desire to take “pride” in being Jewish. Crucially, the advent of Jewish political sovereignty in the State of Israel, since 1948, and Israel’s role since then in “gathering” Jews from the historic lands of oppression, have reinforced one of the important pillars of modern secular Judaism. As with the case of *tikkun olam*, solidarity with Israel creates avenues for political activity in the public arena, even as it generates powerful emotional satisfaction that can be plausibly related to Jewish sensibilities.

It is relevant here, as well, that the State of Israel has fostered its own version of a Jewish civil religion, based on the revived Hebrew language, the symbolism of ancestral space, national civic holidays and remembrance days, a posture of armed vigilance, and a social aesthetic of simplicity and directness in interpersonal relations. Some elements of this “worldly” Jewish-Israeli culture of a fused physicality and sentimentality have been refracted within U.S. Jewry, where they function alongside other ethno-cultural elements as points of identification.

Along the same vein, Israel’s constitutional laws include the Law of Return, which requires the state to grant automatic citizenship to any Jew who immigrates, as well as to non-Jewish close relatives of a Jew (such as a non-Jewish child, grandchild, or spouse). The Jewish state thus recognizes criteria for “Jewish” affinities on the basis of kinship alone—not faith—that go well beyond the traditional (halachic) rabbinical definition of Jewish lineage, and these wider criteria, backed up by the force of law, undergird the national civil religion. Although the Israeli system of government has reinforced Orthodox Judaism by granting the regnant Orthodox rabbinate sole legal custodianship over official Jewish religious functions (marriage and divorce in particular), it has undeniably also reinforced some secularizing tendencies in modern Jewish life.

Secularization of Jewish Learning

One of the manifestations of secular Judaism in the United States has been the remarkable development of English-language Jewish studies at universities. Whereas classical Judaic culture, particularly related to biblical text study, Hebrew, and Aramaic, was well represented in the academic curriculum of some of the earliest and most prestigious U.S. institutions of higher learning, this was often a supplement to New Testament studies aimed at Christian divinity school students and scholars. Jewish learning in the traditional

mode, in contrast, continued for many years to be maintained largely at sectarian Jewish institutions, informal study circles, rabbinical seminaries, and yeshivas (Talmudic academies). The synagogue itself had historically functioned as a study house: the Yiddish word for “synagogue”—shul—is identical to the word for “school.” Jewish learning in this sense was a liturgical and theosophical endeavor, rather than something abstract and purely intellectual, and it is referred to in Judaic culture as *Torah*.

Formal academic scholarship in Jewish history, literature, philosophy, and linguistic studies aimed at uncoupling “wisdom” from “belief,” and separating “learning” from “Torah,” began in earnest in central and western Europe during the nineteenth century and was transferred to the United States beginning in the first half of the twentieth century. By the post-World War II era, and especially since the 1960s, the number, variety, and academic standing of programs in Jewish studies in U.S. universities began to reach unprecedented levels. The growth spurt and the demand evidenced by growing course registrations coincided with several intersecting trends: the parallel development of ethnic, African American, and women’s studies programs, as U.S. intellectual culture began to embrace diversity; the heightened awareness of Israel and of modern Hebrew—as opposed to classical biblical or rabbinic Hebrew—as a part of Middle East area studies programs; and not least the ability of universities to tap funding sources among Jewish alumni and elsewhere within the Jewish community, who were willing to aid in this sort of development.

As an academic endeavor, Jewish studies programs constitute a secularized venue for the mastering of Jewish texts and languages, for debating issues of approach and agenda that are of scholarly concern to the entire university community, and for fostering the integration of a non-Christian civilization into the core curriculum of Western academia. Jewish studies have focused on integrating contemporary humanistic or social-scientific methodology into a gamut of courses and degree programs whose field is the Jewish experience writ large.

Appealing in particular to faculty trained in various academic disciplines but specializing in Jewish research and aimed largely at Jewish-raised students who may or may not be active religiously, this form of Jewish learning is nonsectarian in character and content. Unlike classical Torah, it aims for critical intellectual achievement rather than for spiritual refinement and transcendental enlightenment. It sees Jewish culture in the context of world civilization,

rather than as a working out of divine commandment. The field has spawned a large number of scholarly journals, dozens of books published annually, and a minor industry of conferences, lectures, literary and scholarship awards, and a whole new generation of eminent authorities.

The option of studying Jewish history, languages, literatures, and philosophy in a secular, academic setting may be especially attractive within the U.S. Jewish population, given the relatively high proportion of young Jewish men and women who go to college. Jewish studies on campus provide such students with adult experiences of study, reading, and research, often at a time in their lives when most are probably unaffiliated with any Jewish religious or communal institution or synagogue. It may also be particularly appealing to encounter the Jewish heritage within a campus culture that promotes an open marketplace of ideas, rather than within a prescriptive framework.

See also *Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Holocaust; Judaism entries; Music: Jewish; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Judaism: Tradition and Heritage

Judaism is the religion that is portrayed in the Torah (the Instruction), which is God's revelation to Moses at Mt. Sinai, and particularly in the Five Books of Moses. Judaism is one of three monotheistic religions. The other two monotheistic religions, Islam and Christianity, affirm that same theology of the unity and uniqueness of God. Distinguished from polytheist religions, with multiple gods, all three monotheisms maintain that God is one and transcendent, not subject to the rules of nature but wholly other. But these three religions differ. Judaism differs from Christianity in recognizing as God's revelation only the Hebrew scriptures, or

Old Testament, but not the New Testament. Judaism differs from Islam in holding Moses to be unique among prophets and in recognizing no prophecy beyond the scriptural record.

The Diversity of Judaisms

Differentiating Judaism from its close affines, Christianity and Islam, is easier than is defining Judaism. The world today knows a number of Judaisms, and times past witnessed diversity as well. That is for two reasons.

First, Judaism encompasses a variety of closely related religions, past and present. These share a number of traits—for example, they all revere the Torah revealed by God to Moses at Mt. Sinai. But they also differ among themselves in important ways. So to define Judaism as a single, unitary, and uniform religion, unfolding in a continuous history from beginning to present, is simply not possible.

Second, Judaism is the union in modern times of the ethnic and the religious. Today some Jews are secular and do not practice Judaism in any form. People generally assume that "Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people," so they identify the attitude and social traits of the ethnic group, the Jews, with the religion, Judaism. That yields confusion.

Defining Judaism as a Religious System

A religious system comprises three components:

1. Worldview, the explanation of the world as perceived by the group; in general, what a system of Judaism defines as "the Torah" will contain the worldview of that system.
2. A way of life, in concrete deeds expressing that worldview and linking the life of the individual to the polity; what a system of Judaism sets forth as the things someone must do describes that holy way of life.
3. An account of a particular social group, explaining who the adherents of the religious system are, where they come from, and what they must do. All Judaic religious systems invoke the scripture's narrative of "Israel" to tell the story of their particular group.

A Judaic religious system answers an urgent question with a self-evidently valid answer. It says the same thing about a great many things. That is how these components of a religious system of the social order come together.

A conception of a single, unitary, and continuous history forms a principal part of the worldview of any Judaic religious system. Each one ordinarily situates itself in a single historical line—hence, as part of a linear history—from the

past. Commonly, each system sees itself as the outcome of an increment of time and change. When we can identify the principal symbol to which a given system on its own appeals, we have a wholly distinct and distinctive Judaic system of the social order, a Judaism.

Judaism as a Way of life: The Festivals and the Calendar of Nature

Common to most Judaic religious systems is the outline of a way of life. The calendar of Judaism celebrates the lunar months, each new moon occasioning a holiday. The months of the Jewish calendar then are signified by the phases of the moon, from the new moon, the first day of the lunar month, to the full moon, the fifteenth day of that same lunar month, and on to the end of the same lunar month and repetition of the cycle. But besides the lunar months into which the year is divided, Israel's years are signified by the solar calendar, which governs the seasons here on Earth. The solar equinoxes, spring and fall, signal critical changes in the ecology of the Land of Israel, marking the end of the winter rains and the advent of the season of dew and the initial barley harvest, in March and April, and the final harvest and the beginning of the winter rains to replenish the life-giving water of the land, in September and October. So the two noteworthy occasions in the solar calendar are the full moons following the vernal and the autumnal equinoxes.

Passover/Pesach: "You Shall Tell Your Child: 'It Is Because of What the Lord Did for Me When I Went Free from Egypt'"

With the advent of spring and renewal after the fructifying winter rains in the Land of Israel comes the holiday of Passover. Passover's celebration of the Exodus from Egypt, matching nature's beginnings at spring tide, sets the stage for all the other parts of the story. The master-narrative of Judaism begins with the story of the origins of Israel: the descent of Israel into Egypt, four centuries of slavery there, then God's sending Moses to the Egyptian pharaoh to liberate the Israelite slaves and lead them to the promised land.

Weeks/Shavuot: The Season of the Giving of the Torah

Seven weeks after Passover, the holiday of Shavuot (Shabuoth) ("Weeks") marks Israel's emergence as the community of those who accept God's dominion as laid out in the Torah. And in the narrative of Judaism, just as everyone, the living and those destined to live, was saved from Egyptian bondage,

so now, on Shavuot, every Israelite through all time is regarded as standing at Mt. Sinai and receiving the Torah. What is at stake? Israel at Mt. Sinai forms an ethnic group, an extended family propagated by birth, and especially, a religious community defined by a common commitment to God and his instruction. Continuous with Passover, Shavuot celebrates God's freely giving, and Israel's willingly receiving, the Torah at Mt. Sinai.

The Ten Days of Awe: The New Year/Rosh Hashanah (the Day of Remembrance and Judgment) and the Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur (the Day of Mercy and Forgiveness)

In the autumn, the first ten days of the lunar month of Tishré (Tishri), the New Year (Rosh Hashanah), and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) together are called "the Ten Days of Awe" and mark days of solemn penitence. The fifteenth day of that same month, the first full moon after the autumnal equinox, marks the advent of Huts/Sukkot.

The story realized in the holy season of the Ten Days of Awe concerns the individual Israelite in the setting of all of humanity. The story tells that the New Year commemorates the creation of the world, and on the New Year, every creature comes before God to be judged in accord with deeds done in the past year. Then, ten days later, the decree is sealed on the Day of Atonement, which, on its own, has the power to atone for sin, so the judgment of the New Year is mitigated or even set aside by the atonement of the Day of Atonement, an occasion for forgiveness from sin. The scripture is clear that the advent of the day on its own brings forgiveness.

Huts/Sukkot: The Season of Our Rejoicing

Called simply "The Festival," the festival of Huts (in Hebrew, Sukkot [Sukkoth], which is frequently translated as "Tabernacles" and sometimes called "Booths") forms the climax of the autumnal holy day season, the counterpart to the sequence of Passover and Shavuot after the vernal equinox. Just as the vernal season begins at Passover and concludes fifty days later at Shavuot, so a span of time is covered in the fall as well. Sukkot does not concern itself with freedom and the giving of the Torah but, rather, with sin, forgiveness, and rejoicing.

Restoring Eden: The Sabbath

Israel (the Jewish people) on the Sabbath, the seventh day of creation, restores the conditions that prevailed when God and Adam were last together, that perfect Sabbath when

God, having perfected creation, blessed and sanctified the Sabbath day in celebration of the perfection of creation, and entered upon repose. As God rested on the seventh day of creation, so Israel rests on the seventh day, from sunset on Friday through sunset on Saturday.

Minor Holidays: Hanukkah

Beginning on the 25th of the lunar month of Kislev, corresponding to December, Hanukkah, the festival of lights, commemorates the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem after it was desecrated by idolaters in the second century BCE. It does not form “the Jewish Christmas” in any way.

The Life Cycle of Judaism: Birth, Puberty, Marriage

Birth

The rite of passage of circumcision in Judaism requires cutting off the foreskin of the penis on the eighth day after birth. Called *berit milah*, the covenant of, or effected through, the rite of circumcision, *berit milah* seals with the blood of the infant son the contract between Israel (the Jewish people), beginning with its birth in Abraham and Sarah, and God.

Entering the Age of Responsibility

The advent of puberty is marked by the bar mitzvah rite for a young man and a bat mitzvah rite for a young woman. At these rites, a young person becomes obligated to keep the commandments; *bar* means son and *bat* means daughter, with the sense that “one is subject to,” and *mitzvah* means a divine commandment. The rite is unadorned: The young person is called to pronounce the benediction over a portion of the Torah lection in the synagogue and is given the honor of reading the prophetic passage as well.

Marriage: Adam and Eve in Eden

The marriage rite invokes the great themes of the restoration of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel, and of Adam and Eve to Eden. Under the huppah (chuppah), the marriage canopy, the singular couple stands for the Israelites restored to their ancestral land, and Adam and Eve in Eden. The rite unfolds in stages, beginning before the couple reaches the marriage canopy and ending long afterward. Seen in sequence, the rite follows this pattern: (1) the ketubah (marriage contract) is witnessed, (2) the bride’s veil is put in place by the groom, (3) under the huppah betrothal,

erusin, occurs, and (4) under the huppah completion of the wedding, or *nissuin*, occurs.

Everyday Life: Eating, Praying, Studying the Torah

Eating

Sustaining life, which is a gift from God, involves two matters: first, what Israelites are to eat or refrain from eating, and second, how they are to eat. The scripture, (for example, Leviticus 11), as interpreted by the rabbinic sages, specifies a variety of foods that may or may not be eaten. All fruits and vegetables are permitted, so too fish that have fins and scales, but not scavengers or bottom-feeders. For meat, only animals that have cloven hoofs and chew the cud may be consumed by Israelites. Animals slaughtered for meat for Israelites (“kosher” or suitable meat) are slaughtered with a perfectly sharp knife, swiftly to prevent suffering, with the recitation of a blessing; the blood is drained, and the meat inspected for blemishes and indications of disease. “You shall not seethe a kid in its mother’s milk” (Exodus 23:19 [American KJV]) is understood by the sages to mean not consuming dairy products for a span of time after eating meat (from two to six hours, depending on the custom), and different sets of dishes, one for meat, the other for dairy products, are required.

In general, the food regulations form an exercise in sanctification, a perpetual discipline of divine service, and obedience to God’s will in the humblest transactions of everyday life. Among contemporary practitioners of Judaism practice varies, with Reform Judaism not requiring the observance of dietary rules and Orthodox Judaism strictly keeping those rules. It is not uncommon for Conservative Jews to keep the dietary laws at home but to ignore them when eating outside the home. Most public institutions of the Jewish community of the diaspora and Israeli government facilities follow the dietary rules.

The meal, in Judaism, presents itself as an occasion of thanksgiving, which encompasses the entirety of the story Judaism tells. To put matters simply: Every time the faithful Israelite eats a meal, he or she rehearses the whole Judaic narrative, Land, Exile, and Redemption. Blessings before eating food and an elaborate grace after meals transform the act of nourishment to a direct encounter with God, who has provided the food that is eaten, and a reprise of Israel’s condition in time and eternity. The secular facts of hunger and satisfaction now, in an exact sense, *embody* exile and return, sin and remission of sin, and this world and the world to

come. The blessing before eating food and the grace afterward complete the metaphor.

Praying

Prayer in Judaism is obligatory. The community and its members pray upon rising, at dusk, and after dark. Public prayers encompass three important matters: to whom the prayer is addressed, the petition that is presented, and the identification of the community by whom the petition is set forth. These take shape in (1) the recitation of the creed, twice daily, morning and night, called “the Shema,” which means, “Hear . . .,” from the first word, “Hear O Israel . . .”; (2) petition, at the three specified times, for the needs and welfare of the community and the individual, called The Prayer, or Eighteen Benedictions, and (3) the situation or identification of the community in its larger setting, called “Alenu.” These latter two prayers are said morning, dusk, and night.

The Shema. Evening and morning, Israel (the Jewish people) individually and communally proclaims the unity and uniqueness of God: “Hear O Israel, The Lord is our God, the Lord is one” (Deuteronomy 6:4 [New International Version]). The proclamation is preceded and followed by blessings. The whole constitutes the credo, “what the Jews believe.” The three elements of the creed cover creation, revelation, and redemption—that is to say, God as creator of the world, God as revealer of the Torah, and God as redeemer of Israel. The recital of the Shema is introduced by a celebration of God as creator of the world. Morning and evening, Israel responds to the natural order of the world with thanks and praise of God who created the world and who actively guides the daily events of nature. Whatever happens in nature gives testimony to the sovereignty of the creator. And that testimony takes shape in the ordinary events: sunrise and sunset.

The Prayer. The Shema is followed by the second of the three required components of obligatory public worship. The Prayer comprises prayers of petition on weekdays. What the community asks for, always in the plural, concerns the public welfare and covers matters today would be assigned to the category of public policy as much as personal need. In the morning, noon, and evening, these weekday prayers of petition are called “the Eighteen Benedictions” (in Hebrew, *Shemoneh Esre*), which are requests concluding with a blessing. Some of these, particularly those at the beginning and the end, recur in Sabbath and festival prayers.

Alenu. Every synagogue service concludes with a prayer before going forth, called *Alenu*, from its first word in Hebrew, meaning “it is incumbent upon us [to praise . . .].” The third of the three components of the communal worship, *Alenu* draws the community outward into the world.

Studying the Torah

Judaism maintains that humanity finds God in books through the act of learning. Torah study (in Hebrew, *Talmud Torah*) recapitulates the encounter at Mt. Sinai. This means that when Israel assembles for the study of the Torah, God is present. Learning itself constitutes an act of worship.

The Ethics of Judaism

The main point of the Torah, stated simply, is this: The Torah, written and oral, aims at transforming Adam, who represents all humanity, into Israel, and transforming Israel into God’s image, after God’s likeness, which was God’s original plan. But God created all humanity “in our image, after our likeness,” and the qualities that in humanity replicate God’s traits cannot, therefore, be set forth in language particular to Israel. Ethical imperatives are addressed in the Torah by God to Israel, but they pertain to all humanity, defining what it means to be a human being. What that means is defined in a variety of ways, but common to all of them is a stress on ethics and virtue, which pertain to everyone, a common heritage of humanity at large. The Talmud phrases what is at stake in simple sayings, such as, “The All-Merciful wants the heart,” “The commandments were given only to purify humanity,” and the like. The scripture itself is explicit: “You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but reasoning, you shall reason with your neighbor, lest you bear sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord” (Leviticus 19:17–18), which some authorities identify as the most important law of the Torah.

Right takes priority over rite, as the prophets make clear, and saving a life trumps all other religious obligations and commandments. These sayings, with their insistence on right attitude, one in which the heart of the human being willingly accedes to the will of God, stand no great distance from the story of Adam and Eve in Eden and Israel at Mt. Sinai, rebelling against God while Moses was yet on the mountain.

Then, so far as the weight of Judaic counsel, from the scripture onward, what matters most is ethical conduct

toward one's fellow human being. That is at the heart of Judaism's story of the good life.

The golden rule of Leviticus 19:18 maintains that the main point of the Torah is for people to refrain from doing to others what they do not want done to themselves. More often than not, the highest virtue is good will, which encompasses every other social virtue of generosity, foresight, neighborliness, and the rest. The worst vice is not envy, bad neighborliness, or defaulting on a loan, but ill will, which generates all other vices.

Yohanan, a noted rabbinical scholar of the first century CE, finds the source of all specific virtues in the attitude of good will because in his view, attitude and intention in the end define the human being: We are what we want to be, the world is what we want to make of it. The entire message of the Torah for the virtuous man and woman is summed up in that conviction, which, furthermore, is embodied in the law of Judaism governing the social order.

Gender in Judaism

In telling its tale, Judaism in its classical documents joins traits explicitly marked as male to those explicitly classified as female and insists on both in the formation of models of virtue. Judaism therefore may be classified as androgynous, exhibiting the traits of both sexes as the religion itself defines those gender qualities. In this world, holy Israel (the Jewish people) is to emulate women's virtue, the condition of the coming of the Messiah. And women's capacity for devotion, selfless faith, and loyalty defines the model of what is required of Israel for its virtue.

The sages of the normative writings, Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, thought in terms of the holy community, rather than isolated individuals. Gender roles formed part of the larger statement that sages proposed to craft concerning the coherent life of the community overall. Sages' doctrine of feminine virtue, therefore, makes sense only within its larger systemic context. The dual Torah, beginning to end, taught that the Israelite was to exhibit the moral virtues of subervience, patience, endurance, and hope. These would translate into the commendable traits of humility and forbearance. And Israelites would yield to social virtues of passivity and conciliation. The hero was one who overcame impulses, and the truly virtuous person was the one who reconciled others by giving way before the opinions of others. All of these acts of self-abnegation and self-denial, accommodation rather than rebellion, were required to begin with the right attitudes, sentiments, emotions, and impulses, and the single

most dominant motif of the rabbinic writings is its stress on the right attitude's leading to the right action, the correct intentionality's producing the desired decision, and above all, accommodating in one's heart to what could not be changed by one's action. And that meant the world as it was. Sages prepared Israel for the long centuries of subordination and alienation by inculcating attitudes that best suited people who could govern little more than how they felt about things. As we shall now see, sages themselves classified the desired virtues as feminine, and they proposed to feminize Israel, the holy people.

When we speak of virtues as feminine and masculine, it is not to perpetuate contemporary stereotypes, but to pay close attention to sages' own judgment of matters. How do we know how the framers of the dual Torah, who bear the title "our sages of blessed memory," classify virtues, whether as masculine or as feminine? In the classical writings, several systematic exegeses focus on women and therefore permit us to characterize sages' conception of women's virtues and, it follows, the virtues the sages classify as feminine. Sages' reading of the scriptural books of Ruth and Esther and their treatment of Miriam the prophetess and other scriptural prophetesses allow access to their thinking on what characterizes the virtuous woman.

Among the expositions pertinent to that matter, however, none more reliably records sages' conception of the feminine and of the feminine in relationship to the masculine than does their reading of the Song of Songs in the exegetical compilation, *Song of Songs Rabbah*, a writing contemporary with the Talmud of Babylonia, ca. 600. There, in reading the Song of Songs as a statement of the relationship of God and Israel, Israel is identified as the female-beloved, God as the male-lover. We need not speculate, therefore, on correct traits for women; in the document at hand, they are those explicitly assigned to feminine Israel.

The History of Judaism: An Overview

The history of Judaism begins with the formation of the Pentateuch, what Jews call the Torah, the Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Rabbinic tradition holds that God revealed the Torah to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and this remains a core belief of Orthodox Judaism. Modern scholarship holds that the Torah took shape after two axial events. First came the destruction of the First Temple of Jerusalem in 586 BCE along with the exile of the Israelites to Babylonia. Then



Jews from around the globe make pilgrimages to the Western Wall, a supporting section of the Temple Mount, all that remains of the Second Jerusalem Temple from the year 70. The wall, a powerful symbol of Judaism, is the closest access to the site of the original Holy of Holies, the sacred area of the temple, where Jews believe that the divine presence abides. Worshippers gather at the wall to pray and hold ceremonies. Many write messages and petitions to God on small pieces of paper and insert them in the wall's crevices.

came the restoration of Israel to the Land a generation later, ca. 538 BCE. Judaism answered the question, What is the meaning of the exile of the Israelites from the Land of Israel and their restoration to the Land? From that starting point, the history of Judaism is divided into four periods:

1. The age of diversity, in which many Judaic systems flourished, from the period of the formation of the Hebrew scriptures, ca 586 BCE, and the return to Zion in 538 BCE, to the destruction of the Second Temple, in 70 CE. Among the Judaic systems of the age of diversity were Pharisaic, Essene, and Sadducean Judaisms, and the Christianity of Paul and the Gospels competed as a Judaism too.

2. The formative age, from 70 CE to closure of the Talmud of Babylonia, ca. 600 CE. In that period, Rabbinic Judaism shaped the biblical canon, deciding which books would be included in the Bible and which not. The rabbis also declared that, at Mt. Sinai, God revealed the Torah to

Moses in two media, writing and memory, and that the rabbis possessed the memorized or oral Torah.

3. The classical age, from late antiquity to the nineteenth century, in which the rabbinic definition of Judaism dominated the lives of the Jewish people nearly everywhere they lived.

4. The modern age, from the nineteenth century to our own day, when an essentially religious understanding of what it means to be part of the Jewish people, or Israel, came to compete among Jews with other, secular views and symbolic expressions of those views.

The Age of Diversity (586 BCE–70 CE)

The Formation of Judaism: The Pentateuch

The Pentateuch is important because it forms a critical component of the holy writings of every Judaic religious system ever known before the present day.

The Pentateuch's narrative of the destruction of the Temple in 586 BCE followed by the return to Zion emphasizes two points:

1. The formation of Israel and its covenant with God, time and again insisting on the holiness of Israel and its separateness from the other peoples
2. The conditional possession of the land as the mark of the covenant

The people have the land not as a given but as a gift. As long as the people obey the covenant, the land will be theirs and they will prosper in it. If the people violate the Torah, the conditions of the covenant, they will lose the land. The key chapters are Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 32.

Exile and Return as the Enduring Structure of the First and the Subsequent Judaisms

The scripture said that Israel suffered through exile, then atoned, attained reconciliation, and renewed the covenant with God as signified by the return to Zion and the rebuilding of the temple. Although only a minority of Jews both went into exile and came back to Zion, the Judaic system of the Torah made normative that experience of alienation and reconciliation. Judaism transformed the experience of a handful of the community into a paradigm, a recurrent pattern of experience.

1. The conclusions generated by the paradigm derived not from reflection on things that happened but from the logic of the paradigm.
2. That same paradigm would create expectations that could not be met, so would renew the resentment captured by the myth of exile, while setting the conditions for remission of resentment, thus resolving the crisis of exile with the promise of return.

This self-generating paradigm formed the self-fulfilling prophecy of exile and return that Judaic religious systems have offered since the beginning as a source of generative tension and critical symbolic structure.

First came the system, its worldview and way of life, then came the selection, by the system, of consequential events and their patterning into systemic propositions. And finally, at a third stage came the formation and composition of the canon of writings that would express the logic of the system and state those events that the system

would select or invent for its own expression. The system created the paradigm of the society that had gone into exile and come back home.

Why did the system of exile and restoration persist as the pattern of Judaism? With the continuing authority of the Torah in Israel, the experience to which it originally responded was recapitulated through the reading and authoritative exegesis of the original scripture that preserved and portrayed the paradigm: "Your descendants will be aliens living in a land that is not theirs . . . but I will punish that nation whose slaves they are, and after that they shall come out with great possessions" (Genesis 15:13–14). The long-term reason for the persistence of the priests' Judaism as the self-evidently valid explanation of Israel's life derives from two facts.

First, the scriptures themselves that told the story retained their authority and were celebrated in regular gatherings of the community.

Second, as long as the people perceived the world in such a way as to make urgent the question that the scripture framed and answered, the paradigm would endure. Jews continued to envision the world through that original perspective created in the aftermath of destruction and restoration. They went on to see the world as a gift instead of a given and themselves as chosen for a life of special suffering but also special reward.

Therefore, the urgent question answered by the Torah retained its original character. The scripture kept reminding people to see the world through the experience of exile and return.

The Formative Age of Rabbinic Judaism (70–640)

Continuing the paradigm of exile and return in a distinctive way, the particular Judaism that predominated from ancient times to our own day, Rabbinic Judaism, appealed to the myth of divine revelation to Moses at Mt. Sinai of the Torah in two media, oral and written. The Judaism of the so-called dual Torah came to full expression in the writings of the sages of the Land of Israel (that is, "the Holy Land," "Palestine") of the later fourth and fifth centuries. These sages maintained that God revealed both a written and an oral Torah at Mt. Sinai. The written Torah is the Hebrew Bible (which the Christian world calls "the Old Testament.") The oral Torah, transmitted orally and memorized by great prophets, then sages, down to the time of the rabbinic sages themselves, is preserved in the Talmud.

The Classical Period of Judaism (640–1787, 1789)

A measure of the remarkable success of the Judaism of the dual Torah is readily at hand. Shortly after the closure of the Talmud of Babylonia, in 640, Islam swept across the Middle East and North Africa, conquering territories that by that point had been Christian for half a millennium. Vast once-Christian populations accepted Islam. Christianity that had triumphed by the sword of Constantine fell before the sword of Muhammad. Judaism held its own. It served as the system of a vanquished people because it explained the situation of the defeated nation. And the same Judaic system flourished into the late nineteenth century in eastern Europe, and down to the middle of the twentieth century for the Judaic communities in Muslim countries. Rabbinic Judaism remained the self-evident answer to the urgent question confronting the Jews and answered in this Judaism. Rabbinic Judaism explained why the gentiles flourished while Israel languished. In the long intervening age, 640 to 1789, whatever important ideas or issues developed were worked out within the categories of the Judaism of the dual Torah.

For example, a variety of mystical ideas and practices entered the world of Judaism and attained naturalization within the Torah. Furthermore, a philosophical tradition restated the truths of the Torah in terms of Greek modes of thought represented by Aristotle and Plato as the Muslim philosophical schools transmitted those modes of thought to the West. In the mystical tradition, the great work was the Zohar, written toward the end of the thirteenth century in Spain, and, in the philosophical tradition, the most important figure was Moses Maimonides (1135–1204), who restated the whole of Judaic law and theology in a systematic way using the categories of philosophy.

Both of these encompassing modes of thought, the mystical and the philosophical, transformed “the one whole Torah of Moses, our rabbi” from a mythic-narrative doctrine into an intellectual experience of God. This involved, on the one side, an intensely felt and profound doctrine of the true nature of God’s being, and, on the other side, an intellectually rich and rational statement of the Torah as truth.

The Modern and Contemporary Scene (1787–)

The year 1787 refers to the U.S. Constitution, which inaugurated the new political setting in which the Jews would find their way. For Europe, 1789, the start of the French Revolution, gives the same signal. The Jews began to attain

civil rights, but on that account had to confront a new urgent question: how to be Israelites and citizens of the countries in which they lived. The issues of a vanquished nation dwelling alone and living its life subordinated by “the nations” now confronted new realities. Jews had to figure out how to be both Israel and something else—French or German or U.S. citizens as well.

Throughout the nineteenth century, a number of other Judaic systems—worldviews, ways of life, addressed to an “Israel”—developed to respond to this new and urgent question. The first and most important of these was Reform Judaism. Reform took seriously the political changes that accorded to Jews the rights of citizens and demanded that they conform, in important ways, to the common culture of their countries of citizenship. Reform took shape in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Some decades later, in the middle of the century, an integrationist Orthodoxy stated the position that one may observe the law and enter into the civilization of the West. Affirming the divine origin of the Torah, integrationist Orthodoxy effected a selective piety—for example, affirming secular education in addition to study of the Torah.

Historical Judaism, known in the United States as Conservative Judaism, occupied the center between these two and maintained that change could become reform, but only in accord with the principles by which legitimate change may be separated from illegitimate change. Conservative Judaism discovered those principles through historical study. In an age in which historical facts were taken to represent theological truths, the historicism of Conservative Judaism bore compelling weight.

Each of these Judaic systems exhibited three characteristic traits. First, each asked how one could be both Jewish and something else, that is, also a citizen of a nation. Second, each defined *Judaism* (that is, its system) as a religion, thus leaving ample space for that something else—namely, nationality—to speak to and for the nation’s Jewish citizens among others. Third, each appealed to history to prove the continuity between its system and the received Judaism of the dual Torah.

The importance of history in the theological thought of the nineteenth-century Judaisms derives from the intellectual heritage of the age, with its stress on the nation-state as the definitive unit of society and on history as the mode of defining the culture and character of the nation-state. History as an instrument of reform, further, had served the

Protestant Reformation, with its appeal to the scripture as against (mere) tradition and its claim that it would restore Christianity to its (historical) purity. The one thing the Jewish thinkers wanted to accomplish was to show the rationalism, the reason—the normality—of the Judaism they constructed. Appealing to (mere) facts of history, as against the unbelievable claims of a scripture, placed on a positive and this-worldly foundation that religious view of the world that, in the received system of the dual Torah, rested on a completely supernatural view of reality.

A self-segregationist Orthodoxy prevailed in parts of eastern Europe, which continued the received system without change.

Modern and Contemporary Judaisms in the Context of Rabbinic Judaism

Rabbinic Judaism had encompassed the whole of the existence of the Jews. In the way of life of that system, a Jew was *always* a Jew, and he or she was *only* a Jew. But in modern times, Jews would also be more than only Jewish: Jews and Americans, Jews and workers, Jews and Israelis, and so forth. Contemporary Jews are never Jews alone, in the sense of God's people Israel, as portrayed by the scripture.

Instead, a process called “emancipation”—part of a larger movement of the freeing of serfs, women, slaves, Catholics in Protestant countries, and others—encompassed the Jews as well. The historian Benzion Dinur defines this process of emancipation as follows:

Jewish emancipation denotes the abolition of disabilities and inequities applied specially to Jews, the recognition of Jews as equal to other citizens, and the formal granting of the rights and duties of citizenship. Essentially the legal act of emancipation should have been simply the expression of the diminution of social hostility and psychological aversion toward Jews in the host nation . . . but the antipathy was not obliterated and constantly hampered the realization of equality even after it had been proclaimed by the state and included in the law. (Benzion Dinur, “Emancipation,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 6:696–718. Quotation: col. 696)

The political changes that characterize the process of Jews' emancipation began in the eighteenth century, disrupting the long-term stability that had characterized Jews' social and political life from Constantine onward. These political changes raised questions not previously found

urgent and precipitated reflection on problems formerly neglected.

Many scholars trace three periods in the history of the Jews' emancipation. The first (1740–1789) marks the point at which the emancipation of the Jews first came under discussion, the second (1789–1878) is the period in which western and central European states accorded to the Jews the rights of citizens, and the third (1878–1933) brought to the fore a period of new racism that in the end annihilated the Jews of Europe. Nazism ended the political emancipation of the Jews of Germany. Meanwhile in Russia the Communist regime, which began in 1917, closed the schools that transmitted Judaism among the vast Jewish populations subject to its rule and substituted communism for Judaism as a matter of state policy. The Nazis were defeated in World War II in 1945, and the Communists lost control of Russia and the Russian empire in 1989. Nevertheless, the twentieth century witnessed a shift in the central question that all forms of Judaism were called on to address. In the wake of emancipation, the question was how the Jews could be both Israel and something else, but now the question was, how can the Jews continue to *be* at all.

The Twentieth Century and Its Mythic Ideologies

Three Judaisms were born in the twentieth century—two in 1897, one in 1967. The first was Jewish socialism and Yiddishism; the second, Zionism; and the third, three generations later, the U.S. Judaic system of Holocaust and redemption. Jewish socialism took shape in the bund, a Jewish union organized in Poland in 1897. Zionism was founded in the World Zionist Organization, created in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897. U.S. Judaism—“the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption,” explaining in ethnic and political terms why and where one should be Jewish in the formulation under discussion—came to powerful expression in the aftermath of the 1967 war in the Middle East.

All three Judaic systems answered profoundly political questions. Their agenda attended to the status of the Jews as a group (Zionism, U.S. Judaism), the definition of the Jews in the context of larger political and social change (Jewish socialism, Zionism). It follows that the urgent questions addressed by the twentieth-century Judaisms differed in kind from those found acute in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, powerful forces for social and economic change took political form, in movements meant to shape government to the interests of particular classes or groups—the working

classes or racial or ethnic entities, for instance. The Judaic systems of the century responded in kind.

Jewish socialism presented a Jewish-ethnic system congruent to the political task of economic reform through state action. The Jews would form unions and engage in mass activity of an economic and ultimately, therefore, of a political character. Cultural unity would find expression in the Yiddish language.

In that same century the definition of citizenship, encompassing ethnic and genealogical traits, presented the Jews with the problem of how they were to find a place in a nation-state that understood itself in an exclusionary and exclusive, racist way—whether Nazi Germany or nationalist Poland or Hungary or Rumania or France. Zionism declared the Jews “a people, one people,” and proposed as its purpose the creation of the Jewish State. The Hebrew language, renewed from biblical times, would serve as medium for the nationalism of the Jewish people.

Later on shifting currents in U.S. politics, a renewed ethnicism and emphasis on intrinsic traits of birth, rather than on extrinsic ones of ability, questioned Jews’ identification with the democratic system of the United States as that system defined permissible difference. A Jewish ethnicism, counterpart to the search for roots among diverse ethnic groups, responded with a tale of Jewish “uniqueness”—unique suffering—and unique Jewish ethnic salvation and redemption in the Jewish State—far away, to be sure. The ethnic language was U.S. English.

So three powerful and attractive movements—Jewish socialism, Zionism, and U.S. Judaism—presented answers to critical issues confronting groups of Jews. All of these movements addressed political questions and responded with essentially political and secular programs. Zionism wanted to create a Jewish state, U.S. Judaism wanted the Jews to form an active political community on their own, and Jewish socialism in its day framed the Jews into political, as much as economic, organizations, seeing the two as one, a single and inseparable mode of defining economic activity and public policy.

Why Distinguish Secular Jewishness from Religious Judaism?

When people confuse an ethnic group with a religious community, they take random, individual opinion as a representative and definitive fact for the beliefs of the faith. Then they see Judaism as the sum total of the opinions held by individual Jews—a mass of confusion and contradiction.

The confusion emerges when we consider statements such as, “But I’m Jewish and I don’t believe that” or “I’m Jewish and I’m not religious at all.” Both statements speak for perfectly commonplace ethnic Jews, but they tell us nothing whatsoever about Judaism, either as represented in its official writings and teachings, or as practiced by those who claim to meet God in those writings and teachings.

The ethnic group and the religion shape the life of one another, but the fate of Judaism as a religion is not the same as the fate of the Jews as a group. If the Jews as a group grow few in numbers, the life of the religion, Judaism, may yet flourish among those that practice it. The self-segregationist Orthodox Judaisms certainly take that view. And if the Jews as a group grow numerous and influential, but do not practice the religion, Judaism (or any other religion), or practice a religion other than Judaism, then the religion, Judaism, will lose its voice, even while the Jews as a group flourish.

The upshot is simple. A book (that is, a set of religious ideas, divorced from a social entity) is not a Judaism, but the opinions on any given subject of every individual Jew in the aggregate also do not add up to a Judaism. Many of the great debates among Judaisms focus on the definition of the word “Israel,” meaning not the nation-state, the State of Israel of our own day, but the people Israel of which the scripture speaks. That is not a question of the here and now but an issue of what it means to form the people descended from the saints and prophets of that “kingdom of priests and holy people” that God calls into being at Mt. Sinai, that defines itself within the Torah. This matter of “What is ‘Israel,’” and “Who is a ‘Jew,’ meaning, who belongs to ‘Israel,’” has occupied our attention, much as it is a center of ongoing, contemporary debate among Judaisms and among Jews. We cannot define Judaism if we identify the history of the Jews with the history of Judaism, just as we cannot define Judaism if we regard the faith as a set of ideas quite divorced from the life of the people who claim to hold those ideas. The upshot may be simply stated: all Judaists—those who practice the religion, Judaism—are Jews, but not all Jews are Judaists. Those who are can attest to the definition of the religion, Judaism.

See also *Anti-Semitism; Architecture: Jewish; Canada: Pluralism; Chabad-Lubavitch; Death and Burial Practices; Food and Diet; Hasidism; Holidays; Holocaust; Judaism entries; Music: Jewish; Religious Thought: Jewish; Sunday and the Sabbath; Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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K



Krishna Consciousness

Krishna Consciousness is the ultimate goal proposed by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). ISKCON is a Hindu movement that traces its history to fifteenth-century India, and ultimately to the Hindu God Krishna, but which has been active in North America since 1966. This movement teaches that living entities were originally spiritual, realizing themselves as part and parcel of the Supreme God Krishna. However, living entities are now, within the influence of their material existence, under the illusion that they are in control of their lives and in control of their worlds. They no longer acknowledge that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This ignorance accounts for their personal suffering as well as for the ills of society. People have taken the partial freedom given by Krishna and have misused it in seeking to fulfill their own desires and passions. Only by going “Back to Godhead,” the title of the organization’s magazine, can living entities have hope for peace and fulfillment.

Religious Beliefs

Since living entities are submerged in ignorance and passion as the result of their material existence, it is only by the grace of Krishna that deliverance is possible. Human entities are encouraged to do all they can to remove obstacles to Krishna’s grace so they can return to Krishna Consciousness and the ultimate awareness that they are part and parcel of Krishna himself. Complete surrender to Krishna usually takes many lifetimes. But if one surrenders to Krishna at the beginning, Krishna’s grace will lift the devotee to the

transcendental level, and that entity will dwell with Krishna in Krishna’s heaven. This will be a spiritual existence and the entity will have a spiritual body, which is what was intended from the beginning.

As with other Hindu systems of thought, one’s rebirths are governed by *karma*, the results of one’s thoughts, words, and deeds. One’s desires are determinative of one’s rebirths in the world. Whatever one desires will be granted by Krishna. If one desires wealth, or sexual indulgence, or gluttony, one can have it. Krishna, the administer of *karma*, will grant one’s desires. But such material desires lead one deeper and deeper into the morass of material life. Only by surrender to Krishna is one raised above the affects of *karma* and lifted to the reality of Krishna Consciousness. In the state of Krishna Consciousness, in Krishna’s abode, one does not lose one’s individuality, as is the case with some other Hindu systems of thought. Just as in the material world there is variety, so it is in the spiritual world. Moreover, the material world may be the context in which living entities are covered with ignorance, but it is not inherently evil, since it is the body of Krishna. The entire universe has many worlds, but they are part of Krishna and not separate from him. The world, then, is not a creation *ex nihilo* as in the Judeo-Christian tradition, but rather it is formed from the very body of Krishna.

Religious Life

Some of the practices that help to remove obstacles to Krishna Consciousness are chanting the name of Krishna (Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare; Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare). Just as

chanting is seen to be effective in other Hindu or Buddhist traditions, so here it has a spiritual and mystical power to transform consciousness. Devotees have a string of 108 beads to help them count the sixteen rounds of chanting they are encouraged to do daily.

A devotee will remove obstacles to Krishna's grace by introducing others to Krishna Consciousness. This is done by inviting people to the temples that are in most major American cities, by encouraging the reading of founder's Swami Bhaktivedanta's books, by eating vegetarian food first offered to Krishna, and by selling the books of their founder.

Devotees are not permitted to engage in any form of illicit sex, are forbidden to eat meat, fish, eggs, or onions, are not permitted to take any kind of stimulants, including drugs, tobacco, alcohol, coffee, and tea. No form of gambling is permitted.

Hindu Context

Although ISKCON is often classified as a "new religion" in America, it is anything but new. Although it was introduced first in New York in the 1960s, its founder was initiated into the Vaishnava movement, which traces its heritage to Chaitanya (a Hindu saint, b. 1486), and ultimately to the Supreme God of the universe, Krishna himself. It claims, as do most Hindu sects, to be based on the *Vedas* (ancient Hindu texts). But this movement sees the *Vedas* as meaning divine knowledge and holds that therefore all *Vedas* point to and teach of Krishna. The texts that are most important for ISKCON are the writings of Chaitanya, the four *Vedas*, the *puranas*, and the *Mahabharata*, which contains the celebrated *Bhagavadgita*. One comes to understand the teachings of the founder, Swami Bhaktivedanta, by reading his commentaries on these important texts.

In addition to its dependence on these ancient Hindu scriptures, ISKCON emphasizes the importance of submission to a bona fide guru who is in disciplic succession. Krishna is the source of scripture, and the reliability of the message is guaranteed through disciplic succession. It is not enough to study ISKCON's scriptures on one's own or with the help of reputable scholars who are often seen as "mental speculators." The essential quality of a disciple is not an inquiring mind but submission to a spiritual master. Being in disciplic succession preserves the authenticity of the message but not the perfection of the messenger. When Mahadeva, one of the eleven individuals chosen to succeed Swami Bhaktivedanta as an initiating guru, was accused of resorting to hallucinogenic drugs to increase the intensity of

his devotional experience and rejoining his wife after he had taken *sannyasa* (celibacy), it was noted that although the guru might not be perfect, the message is. Thus is the teaching preserved in its purity through guru succession, regardless of the moral shortcomings of an individual guru.

American Context

ISKCON was founded by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896–1977) who arrived in New York City's Lower East Side in 1965. He was urged by his own spiritual master, Bhakti Siddanta, to carry the teachings of Krishna Consciousness to the West. He was born Abhay Charan De in Calcutta in 1896 and graduated from the University of Calcutta with majors in English, economics, and philosophy. He worked off and on as a chemist until he retired in 1954 to devote himself to the spreading of Krishna Consciousness. He arrived in New York at the age of sixty-nine and worked from storefronts and in parks, chanting and preaching Krishna Consciousness. In 1966 he founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Although he preached strict rules of behavior, he was remarkably successful in drawing to himself a group of devotees from among the hippie generation.

Although Bhaktivedanta arrived in America without resources, within ten years he had established a worldwide movement with several thousand committed members and more than seventy-five ISKCON communities around the world. By the time of his death in 1977 he had initiated more than five thousand disciples. The movement spread from New York to California; young members settled in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. Los Angeles was home to one of the most influential early ISKCON temples and also to the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

In the early years of the movement, disciples were required to renounce their previous lives, live in the temple with other devotees, and have little or no contact with former friends and family. This isolationism, coupled with the oddness of disciples' garb (loose, full-length robes) and their aggressiveness in proselytizing in airports and other public places, led to public hostility. Parents of devotees sometimes hired "deprogrammers" who would kidnap the devotee and keep him or her in isolation while they aggressively sought to convince the devotee to give up his or her new faith and return to "normal" society. ISKCON was considered to be a cult that engaged in mind control. This public perception was partly the result of people's not understanding this strange new religion on American soil and partly the result of ISKCON's aggressive recruitment tactics.

Struggle for Legitimacy

In the succeeding years, ISKCON sought to move from perception as a cult to acceptance as a denomination. Methods of recruitment were modified. The movement went from aggressive selling techniques, not always revealing the identity of the seller, to more ameliorating approaches to outsiders.

ISKCON sought freedom of religion through the courts. Often the claim of government was that since it was a cult and not a religion, ISKCON was not able to avail itself of the First Amendment right of freedom of religion. In one celebrated case from the 1970s, the New York temple requested a grand jury hearing on the alleged kidnapping of Merylee Kreshower (age twenty-four) and Ed Shapiro (age twenty-two), who had been living in the temple. Shapiro had requested \$20,000 from a fund set up for him by his father. His father had him committed for psychiatric examination, but Shapiro was found to have no mental disorder. Instead of pursuing the charges of kidnapping, the grand jury inquiry focused on the teachings and practices of ISKCON, resulting in the arrest of two temple officials on the charge of unlawful detainment and mind control. In 1977, however, the New York Supreme Court affirmed that “the Hari Krishna movement is a *bona fide* religion with roots in India that go back thousands of years.” The court ordered that the defendants be free to practice their religion. There were also a number of cases that granted ISKCON freedom to profess their faith in the context of state fairs, at welcome areas on national turnpikes, and freedom to proselytize on the streets of American cities. Overall, a large number of cases pursued from 1975 through 1979 were successful in granting members of ISKCON protection under the First Amendment as a legitimate religion.

ISKCON also appealed to scholars of Asian religions for legitimacy. At the 1976 annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in St. Louis, ISKCON members circulated a petition asking scholars to declare that ISKCON was a *bona fide* religion. In 1980–1983, the six-volume *Sriila Prabhupada-lilamrita* was published by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Each volume of this authorized biography of Bhaktivedanta contains a preface by a recognized scholar. A volume titled *Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna: Five Distinguished Scholars on the Krishna Movement in the West* was published in 1983. A refrain running through the essays was that not only is ISKCON not a “cult,” but it is not really a “new” religion. In 1985 the movement inaugurated a new journal intended for an academic audience: *ISKCON Review: Academic*

Perspectives on the Hare Krishna Movement. Finally, the negative assessment of other religions proposed by founder Swami Bhaktivedanta himself has been significantly tempered. ISKCON leaders called for dialogue with the Catholic Church and engaged in conversations with a variety of Christians in the book *Christ and Krishna: The Path of Pure Devotion* (1985).

Crisis of Authority

ISKCON faced a crisis of authority on the passing of Bhaktivedanta in 1977. In 1970, he had appointed a board intended to govern the movement after he died. This GBC (Governing Body Commission) preserved some continuity, but its authority was challenged by the eleven gurus Bhaktivedanta had initiated. Given the importance of disciplic succession and unswerving submission to one’s initiating guru, it was natural that there would be questions raised as to whether the GBC had authority over these new gurus or whether the new gurus had independent authority. Conflict arose over authority when certain of the gurus behaved in a manner that seemed incongruous with the teachings and example of the founder. Some members objected to one of the gurus desiring a larger seat placed in the Bombay temple for the spiritual master and demanded that his disciples do *guru puja* or worship of him as was done to Bhaktivedanta. They saw his moves as an attempt to equate himself with the founder.

In 1980, the Berkeley police uncovered an arsenal of weapons at the sect’s ranch. The guru who resided in the Berkeley community was considered responsible, and considerable debate occurred as to what to do about this guru. Eventually his guruship was revoked for one year by the GBC.

Conflict also occurred over how best to preach and raise money for the support of the movement. Fund-raising had begun to decline prior to Swami Bhaktivedanta’s death. Initially, funds were raised by selling Swami Bhaktivedanta’s books, which was considered a form of preaching. In time, other kinds of objects were sold. Some held that this would free up devotees to preach, while others considered it an inappropriate change in mission. These conflicts led some disciples to leave the movement; some formed their own movements, and others simply became less committed.

In the early years, disciples renounced their former lives and lived in the temples, giving full-time service to Krishna. There are those who continue that tradition, but others have families, often live in the vicinity of a temple, hold down full-time jobs, giving their spare time to the movement.

ISKCON seems to have successfully moved to the status of a denomination. Its members are less aggressive in proselytizing, and the large number of books written by Swami Bhaktivedanta assures a doctrinal base and a continuing presence, however small, for ISKCON.

ISKCON temples exist in most major North American cities. Often they are buildings or churches that have been converted for the worship of Krishna. For some time, they were frequented by Indian immigrants who at first questioned temple priests who were not Indian offering *puja* to the deities, but who found in ISKCON temples the only place of Hindu worship available to them. Indian immigrants who frequent these temples are some of the largest contributors to the continued financial stability of the movement. The Los Angeles temple continues to be important, as is the magnificent temple constructed by Indian craftsmen in West Virginia. It is said to be the second most frequented tourist attraction in that state.

See also *Architecture: New Religious Movements; Esoteric Movements; Food and Diet; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion;*

Hindu Tradition and Heritage; Hinduism in North America; Neo-Paganism; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements entries; Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult; Spiritualism; Transcendental Meditation; Transcendentalism; Voodoo; Wicca and Witchcraft.

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L



Latino American Religion: Catholics, Colonial Origins

At the very beginning of the Spanish colonial enterprise in the Americas, in the sixteenth century, the Spanish crown and the Roman Catholic Church entered into agreements that made Catholicism the exclusive non-native religion within the Spanish “new discoveries” and gave it state support. Before anyone realized they were dealing with vast continents rather than mere islands (the “West Indies”), the church gave the Spanish crown control over many aspects of church life: for example, approving the clergy sent to the Americas and nominating them to important church positions. During the following centuries, the powers of the state in this *Patronato Real* (royal patronage) over the life of the church were unilaterally increased by the Spanish government to include such things as approving the establishment or change of mission territories and censoring communications with the church in Rome.

Thus the expansion and maintenance of Spanish colonial Catholicism within what is now the mainland United States was never without political considerations, more precisely European colonial rivalries. For the missionaries, of course, the primary motivation was religious—that is, the salvation of the Native Americans who were considered doomed to damnation by the European missionaries. Such conversions were also a goal of the Spanish crown, and on occasion the deciding one, resulting in the decisions to continue the missionary efforts in Florida and New Mexico after disappointing beginnings.

The initial expeditions of Catholic Spaniards and their allies from the Caribbean and central New Spain (colonial Mexico) into what is now the United States took place in the first decades (1520s–1580s) of the Spanish conquest of the Americas. Advancing deep into the U.S. Southeast and Southwest, Spanish adventurers often took part in disreputable conduct, including onerous exactions, slaving, and rape. They were typically met sooner or later by Native American resistance, and zealous but imprudent missionaries who ventured or stayed among the Native Americans without military protection were invariably killed.

Permanent Hispanic Catholic foundations began with St. Augustine in Florida in 1565. This was followed by northern New Mexico in 1598, the El Paso district (then a part of New Mexico but now in Texas) in 1682, the Spanish province of Texas (the eastern half of today’s state) in 1716, southern Arizona (colonial northern Sonora) in 1732, the Texas Lower Rio Grande country (colonial Villas del Norte of northern Nuevo Santander) in 1749, and California (colonial Upper California) in 1769. Spain also briefly assumed control of French Louisiana between 1766 and 1803. Thus Hispanic Catholic districts were started at varying times over a period of two centuries in seven distinct Spanish colonial provinces stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with most of the provinces at a great distance from each other.

From the beginning, Hispanic soldiers and civilians worked alongside and were closely connected with the missionary efforts to convert Native Americans. These Hispanic groups consisted of Spaniards and, increasingly, *mestizos* (mixture of Spaniards and natives), *mulatos* (mixture of

Spaniards and black Africans), and further combinations among these. The settlements of Hispanics were given a separate organization from the mission communities and usually had their own church buildings and religious services. Those living closer to a mission than to an Hispanic settlement would attend religious services at the mission.

Missions

Priests and brothers, called “religious” because they committed themselves for life to groups joined together by religious vows, were typically more available for and better structured to take on new fields of conversion efforts. The Franciscan friars, preceded initially and briefly by the Jesuits in Florida and Arizona, sought to convert Native Americans in Florida and the U.S. Southwest throughout the colonial period. In the provinces along the coastlines (Florida, Texas, Nuevo Santander in Mexico, California), the missions were initially begun to establish a Spanish presence in the face of colonizing threats by other European powers. In the provinces deep in the interior (New Mexico and Arizona), missions were more the result of steady northward expansion. On the whole and in each province, the missions did not succeed in permanently converting anywhere near the majority of Native Americans, due to the resistance to changes in Native culture and religion that the missionaries demanded as well to as the existence of intertribal hostilities. But there were Native Americans, and indeed sometimes the majority of entire groups, who became Catholics.

“No single model of cultural interaction can encompass the range of Indian-Spanish relations” (Hackel, p. 2). This statement, referring to California, applies also to the other provinces. Native interest was usually tied to Native Americans’ desire for Hispanic goods and their seeking of military alliances against their enemies. The friars typically but often unsuccessfully tried to block interaction between the missionized Native Americans and the local Hispanics, fearing negative influence by the latter. While this policy helped to preserve and protect Native communities, in practice those communities completely controlled by the friars were not treated as independent adults, thus hampering the full integrative process into Spanish civilization that the missionary effort had been charged with accomplishing.

Inevitably, Native Americans and Hispanics interacted outside the friars’ control. In earlier Florida and New Mexico, missionized Natives were obligated to provide labor squads (*repartimientos*) for the Hispanic officials, a practice continually protested by the missionaries. The friars in Texas,

who established subsistence-economy missions, successfully opposed the contracting of missionized Native Americans for labor by the civilians and the military, but in the surplus-economy California missions, the friars allowed such arrangements. Hispanic trade with Native Americans outside the missions was also a factor in promoting relations. Non-mission Native Americans became desired servants—captive or voluntarily—undesired “vagabonds,” and eventually lower-class residents in Hispanic communities, especially as the mission systems waned in strength. An important factor in driving Native Americans and Hispanics closer together in many cases was the mutual threat of strong pressure from hostile Native groups such as the Creek in Florida, the Apaches in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, and the Comanches in New Mexico and Texas.

The Hispanic presence unintentionally brought European diseases that decimated the Native population everywhere. The use of physical punishment in the missions, including flogging, was fairly prevalent. This seems to have been particularly so in California, due to the greater labor needs in those missions to meet their contracts for supplying the military garrisons. Native Americans upset by religious, economic, and cultural impositions resisted through noncooperation, withdrawal from the missions, or at times violent uprisings. Oftentimes Native nations were split internally in their allegiance, with some warning or protecting the missionaries during disturbances.

But where Hispanics succeeded in imposing themselves, an accommodation was eventually arranged, and in various places Native and Hispanic alliances and strong interaction developed. Where there were viable settlements of Native nations, such as the Timucua and Apalachee in inland Florida, the Pueblos in New Mexico and one of its El Paso branches (Ysleta del Sur), and the Caddo in East Texas, Native Americans retained significant control over their lands and societies. Missionaries established residences among or near them, and from that base visited outlying villages (*visitas*). The two missions in Arizona, with a mixture of semi-sedentary Pima and more migratory Papago (now jointly known as O’odham), experienced stronger missionary control at the mission center but much less in the outlying villages. Even at the mission centers, however, the O’odham controlled their own farming parcels; the missionaries managed only certain communal tracts of land that the people were obligated to work for them. Because of this traditional Native control and enduring possession, none of these missions was ever “secularized” in terms of land

ownership—that is, transferred from communal Indian property to private tracts parceled out by colonial authorities among Native Americans and then Hispanics.

It is precisely these missionized groups that retained some colonially recognized control over their lands and societies that endured as Native cultural units beyond the colonial period, with the major exception of the Timucua and Apalachee, who were killed, enslaved, or displaced by the English and their Creek allies in the first decade of the 1700s. All of these nations, due to their long-standing participation in the mission system, came to identify themselves as Native Catholic with significant Hispanic influence. The sole exception were the Caddo, who never responded in any significant way to the missionaries' religious overtures because they had the alternative of French traders close by in Louisiana.

Those nations who were more migratory, such as in coastal Florida, central and south Texas, and California, were encouraged to settle into missionary-controlled and often missionary-initiated villages (*congregaciones* or *reducciones*), so that they might be more easily "reduced" to "civilized" Christianity. This was the missionaries' preferred approach. But as Native numbers decreased because of epidemics and withdrawals from these missions, neophytes (candidates for conversion) had to be recruited from increasingly greater distances. When the Native population was in serious decline or flux in some mission districts, the missionary would accept that less-Christianized migratory Natives would reside in the missions only when it suited those Natives.

The recurring dynamics of disease and withdrawal among Native Americans eventually meant that Hispanics in increasing numbers were allowed into these mission "reductions" to keep the mission economies functioning. By the end of the colonial period, in 1821, the older, more established missions such as those at San Antonio (partially secularized in 1793–1794) and at Socorro in the El Paso district had more Hispanics than Native Americans among their congregations. Those Native Americans who chose to remain within the missions became Hispanicized Catholics and for the most part gradually melded into the lower ranks of the *mestizo* population. The same thing happened later with those few Native Americans who remained at the sites of the more recently founded California missions, after the missions were secularized during the Mexican period (1821–1846) and became Hispanic towns. The only California mission groups to endure as autonomous Native Catholic cultural units were those at the *asistencias* (inland ranch

villages with chapels) of Pala and Santa Ysabel, who, together with the Luiseños and Diegueños, other Mission Indians who took refuge with them, were mostly left to fend for themselves and eventually had some of their land recognized as "reservations" by the government.

In the last decades of the colonial period, the Franciscans were still founding new missions in California. They were also seeking approval to extend the mission frontier in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, where they found the transient Refugio mission in 1793. But the changing times were against them. Hostile Native attacks, decreasing numbers of Native residents, liberal ideologies, Spain's international wars, and the Mexican independence movements left the missions institutionally weaker, politically challenged, destitute of material support, and forced to make unpaid loans to the military and the government and with diminished local authority over their congregations. The California missions, however, still had the unique benefit of the Pious Fund, a very large trust fund established by the Jesuits to support the California missions and managed by the government after the Jesuits' expulsion from New Spain in 1767.

Hispanic Parishes and Military Chaplaincies

In Florida and the northern frontiers of New Spain (today's Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California), the religious missionaries whose primary purpose was to convert Native Americans initially shouldered the pastoral care of the Hispanic military and civilians everywhere except St. Augustine. Hispanics were typically served by diocesan or "secular" priests, so called because these priests did not take religious vows and belonged directly to a diocese (a church territory administered by a bishop). But these frontier provinces were at vast distances from the headquarters of any diocese, and the Hispanic newcomers were initially greatly outnumbered by the prospective Native American converts. Also, the relatively few Hispanics, struggling for survival on the frontier, usually could ill afford to take on their normal responsibility of financially supporting their own pastors and local church needs. Thus the religious missionaries, whose salaries were paid by the government for the task of converting the Native Americans, also provided care for the local Hispanics.

By exception, St. Augustine, perhaps due to its access by sea and its large military force of 150 to 250 men and their families, plus a number of civilians, regularly had two to four diocesan priests who served as pastors, military chaplains, hospital chaplains, teachers, and eventually even priest-sacristans. In sharp contrast, Santa Fe, founded forty-five years later in

1610, deep in the northern interior of New Spain, with no official military garrison but perhaps 750 Hispanics and converted Native Americans, by 1630 was pastored by the Franciscans who also tended to the Mexican Indian chapel of San Miguel and the nearby Native town of Tesuque. This same arrangement was maintained even after 1693, when a garrison of one hundred men was stationed in the New Mexico capital. All the Hispanic settlements and military garrisons in the rest of the northern frontier of New Spain, as well as San Luis (near today's Tallahassee) in seventeenth-century Florida, were provided religious care in this same way.

Another avenue for Hispanics to obtain priests supported by outside funds was to have a military chaplain who was salaried by the government. Franciscans supplied these chaplains at Pensacola and San Marcos de Apalachee in Florida, Santa Fe in New Mexico after 1779, Tucson in Arizona, and San Elizario in the El Paso district. It was these salaried chaplaincies that opened the door for secular clergy to begin serving on the northern frontiers. This happened first in San Antonio (1731), followed by La Bahía (later Goliad) in Texas (1776) and Pensacola (1794). A secular priest, partially subsidized by the bishop of Guadalajara, was sent as pastor to Laredo in 1760 in a mostly failed effort to assert his jurisdiction along the Lower Rio Grande of today's Texas. It was not until the 1790s that secular pastors without outside financing began to take over the stronger parishes of the Lower Rio Grande and New Mexico. The Franciscans in the three New Mexico towns had ceased to receive mission subsidies in 1768, and the same thing had occurred in the Lower Rio Grande towns in the 1780s.

During the 1763–1784 (1781 for Pensacola) hiatus of English control over Florida, almost all of the Hispanics left that province, in obedience to royal orders. During this time, Minorcans recruited by the English as indentured servants in Florida successfully appealed their oppressive treatment and migrated to St. Augustine, forming the core element of the reconstituted Hispanic Catholic community there upon the resumption of the Spanish regime. During the brief Spanish period (1766–1803) in Louisiana, that province was placed under the direction of the captain general of Cuba and the bishop at Havana, just as Florida and its secular clergy had been for a long time. In an effort to provide more Hispanic influence in Louisiana, beginning in the late 1770s around two thousand Canary Islanders and some other Spaniards were recruited as settlers. The Canary Islanders formed their stronger church communities at San Bernardo and Valenzuela, which became

Spanish ethnic enclaves in a French and increasingly Anglo-American society.

During this time, Spanish Capuchins and Recollects and Irish diocesan priests trained in Spain became the principal clergy in Louisiana, Pensacola, and St. Augustine. One reason that the Irish clergy were sent was the growing number of Anglo-Americans entering legally or illegally into these Spanish territories. The Spanish policy in the face of this noticeable increase was to tolerate the presence of Protestants for the sake of economic growth, as long as there was no public manifestation of their religion. In 1793 Spain had the pope establish the new Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, with its headquarters in New Orleans, to give closer direction to the challenging religious situation in those provinces.

There were slave and free Africans in Hispanic towns, especially in Florida, and in previously French Louisiana. A 1789 royal edict intended to improve the condition of slaves was only partially observed in Louisiana, where there was a contested clergy effort to allow slaves to marry and to prevent their working on Sundays and special religious feast days. Slaves were granted a limited right to sue their masters when laws were ignored, and they were given the right to purchase their freedom. While the number of slaves in Louisiana tripled during the Spanish regime, the number of free people of color mushroomed from 97 to 1,566, fully half the number of slaves. In Florida at this time, the visiting bishop issued edicts criticizing the general failure to instruct and baptize slaves.

It must be emphasized, in refutation of the standard literature, that none of these Hispanic towns from Florida to California were without clergy service during the entire Spanish colonial period. Most of them always had resident clergy, and in half a dozen places more than one priest. The four garrisons and three civilian towns of California did not have resident priests, but they were regularly pastored by the two Franciscans from the closest mission, at a distance of anywhere from just next door to nine miles (Los Angeles). The one area and time period in which there were Hispanic communities at considerable distances from the closest priest was in the new villages developing in post-1780 New Mexico, in its northern mountainous region. There the economizing reductions in the number of friars in the 1780s by the New Mexico governor to curry favor with the Spanish government prevented the Franciscans from adequately responding to this growth of Hispanic population. But these communities were visited periodically.

There was a checkered history of local vocations to the priesthood and vowed religious life during the Spanish

colonial period. New Orleans was the only place where there was a community of vowed religious women, the Ursulines, who had arrived to teach young women during the earlier French period. The Ursulines received some young Spanish women among their vowed members, but their convent was decidedly French in culture. Nevertheless, when the anti-church French Empire briefly resumed ownership of Louisiana in 1803 before selling it to the United States, a Spanish nun was the superior of the convent and one of the sixteen sisters out of twenty-seven who withdrew to Havana.

At St. Augustine during the 1600s at least sixteen local men were ordained to minor orders (the first steps toward the priesthood), and at least three of them, probably more, were ordained priests. Another two men from St. Augustine are known to have been ordained in the 1700s. In New Mexico the first local Hispano was ordained in the 1720s, but there were apparently no other seminarians from northern New Mexico until four left to pursue studies for the Durango Diocese around 1817. Between 1790 and 1805, eight or more young men from the Lower Rio Grande towns, three San Antonians, and one Californian were ordained. All of these priests except two Franciscans from Florida were ordained for their dioceses, and most returned to serve their own people.

Colonial Hispanic spirituality had a rich variety with some strong central themes. Among the Hispanics (and Catholic Natives) religious observances included, besides Mass and the sacraments, the community and family praying of the rosary, adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament (the safeguarded consecrated hosts believed to be the real presence of Jesus), including public processions on the feast day of Corpus Christi, prayers for the deceased, and the rituals of Holy Week that brought to a climax the season of Lent “with a replica of Christ’s tomb, processions, sermons, and explanations of those supreme mysteries” (Kessell, p. 70). Daily conversation was evangelized, one standard greeting being “Ave María purísima,” with a typical response of “sin pecado concebida” (conceived without sin). Another greeting common in New Mexico was “Buenos días le dé Dios” (God grant you a good day). In similar recognition of God’s providence guiding all, people would declare they were traveling someplace “si Dios quiere” (if God so wants) or would accomplish something “Dios mediante” (by God’s help).

Of course, not everyone at all times was pious, and some government officials in particular were noted for their

brazen impiety or anticlericalism. There was also recourse to practices, such as incantations and sorceries derived from Spanish, African, and Native sources, that were frowned upon by the church. The Inquisition had local agents in some provinces, whose function was to maintain vigilance over morality and religion. But in New Spain, and even more so on its northern frontier, the Inquisition was a much more limited institution than usually alleged.

A fairly typical notion of the religiosity of the late colonial period in northern New Spain is given by the two dozen booklets of novenas (nine successive days of special prayers) ordered by the Santa Barbara garrison in 1793 for each of ten devotions: Christ of Esquipulas (a Guatemalan-origin image of the crucified Christ), Our Lady of Sorrows (Mary sharing the trials and sufferings of her Son), Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Joseph, the Souls of the Departed, St. Anthony, St. John Nepomuk, St. Raphael, and St. Rita. The locally supported religious trust funds (*obras pías*) of the Santa Fe parish in 1818 presented the same mixture of universally held devotions—Jesús Nazareno (Jesus standing bound and crowned with thorns) and his Holy Burial (the deceased Christ laid in an open casket), Our Lady of Solitude (Mary bereft of her Son), and the Souls of the Departed—and the local devotions to Our Lady of the Rosary (known as *la Conquistadora* after the reconquest of New Mexico) and Our Lady of the Light.

Rather than indicating morbidity or fatalism, the devotion to Christ in his Passion (persecution and death) placed one’s trust and hope in a savior who shared the trials and sufferings so common on the poor and dangerous frontier. Also exercising a primary role were the various devotions to Mary, the mother of Jesus, with those to Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of the Conception (Mary conceived without sin) the earliest and most prominent. Devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe came afterward and in most places remained secondary to the other Marian advocations until the 1770s or later. St. Joseph, the husband of Mary, was popular in the late colonial period, with a strong custom being to honor Mary and Joseph by giving these names, alone or in combination with others (José Antonio, for example), to one’s children. There were two pilgrimage sites that developed during this time: Nuestra Señora de la Leche y Buen Parto (Our Lady of Milk and Good Birth, for expectant mothers and infants) above St. Augustine and Our Lord of Esquipulas at Chimayó, New Mexico.

Colonial Legacy

By 1821, the few Hispanic Catholic communities of Florida and Louisiana were already isolated ethnic enclaves in an Anglo-Protestant-dominant United States, and the Native Catholics in Florida had been driven out or had disappeared as autonomous cultural units. But the institutions and faith traditions developed by the Hispanic Catholics helped to preserve their cultural identity and Catholic faith, as they lost the state support of their culture and religion. At the end of the Spanish colonial period, Hispanic Catholics still had their churches, their bilingual priests, and their devotional traditions. Spain had bequeathed to Louisiana its own diocesan governance, and the Catholic communities of St. Augustine and Pensacola would be two of the three bases for the establishment of the new Catholic Vicariate of Florida and Alabama in 1826. By that time the Minorcan community of St. Augustine would give birth to the future first Catholic bishops of San Antonio and Brownsville in Texas.

In the territories that became northern Mexico in 1821, the older missionary programs in Texas and Arizona were in serious decline, while the more recent one in California was just reaching its peak. Permanent Hispanic Catholic and Native Catholic communities and institutions stretched from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean in districts remote from one another. They too had their own clergy everywhere except the mountain villages and several of the Native pueblos of central and northern New Mexico. The vibrant and varied faith traditions of the Hispanic Catholics permeated every aspect of their society. In Texas the local vocations to the priesthood had apparently halted with the onset of the devastating decade of insurgency there, but in less tumultuous New Mexico a promising growth of vocations was just beginning.

During the Mexican insurgency period, outside funding ceased to arrive for the missionary clergy and became problematic for the military chaplains; in fact, military and government officials exacted loans from local church funds. Even though still the official religion, the Catholic Church on the northern Mexican frontier was entirely supported by its local congregations everywhere except California. In that province the Pious Fund was still in operation and would be the key economic justification for the creation of the California diocese two decades later. Finally, the future of the system of mutual privileges and responsibilities established between the state and the Church under Spain would prove to be a very contentious issue in independent Mexico.

See also *Atlantic World*; *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Latino American Religion: Catholics, in the Nineteenth Century*; *Mexico: Colonial Era*; *Mexico: Indigenous Religions*; *Missions: Native American*; *Native American Religions*; *Native American Religions: Post-Contact*; *Roman Catholicism: Catholics in the Atlantic Colonies*; *Southwest as Region*.

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Latino American Religion: Catholics, Nineteenth Century

As the United States expanded from the original thirteen colonies to span the North American continent during the first half of the nineteenth century, approximately 100,000 Spanish-speaking Catholics were incorporated into the

growing nation. In broad strokes, during this era Hispanic Catholicism encompassed three historical experiences: the period under the governments of Spain (up until 1821) and then Mexico (1821–1848); the U.S. takeover and Mexican residents' responses to it; and, during the final three decades of the 1800s, increased immigration, especially from Mexico, Cuba, and Puerto Rico.

The Southwest under Spain and Mexico

Though Louisiana was under Spanish control from 1766 to 1803 and Florida until 1821, during the early nineteenth century most Hispanic Catholics in what is now the United States resided in the Southwest. Mexico's war of independence from Spain (1810–1821) and frequent changes of national leadership in the newly formed Mexican Republic left Mexican Catholics in that region largely to fend for themselves in the isolated outposts on the far northern frontier. Many Spanish priests returned home after independence rather than serve under a Mexican government they saw as illegitimate. By the 1830s, all of the missions that Spanish subjects had founded among the native peoples in the Southwest were secularized—that is, transferred to civil authority. Conflict with Native Americans and the expansionist designs of the United States exacerbated the plight of Mexican Catholics. Enduring communities of faith revealed their tenaciousness in places like Nacogdoches, Texas, where Mexicans continued to hold Catholic worship services in private homes even after their priest was murdered and their church burnt to the ground, as Anglo-Americans wrested political control of the town. Parishes from Texas to California continued grassroots religious traditions, sometimes with resident priests and in other cases despite their unavailability.

As it had been for more than two centuries, New Mexico remained the northern territory most populated with Spanish-speaking Catholics and priests. While the number of Spanish Franciscan friars declined, the diocesan priests—those who worked in a specific regional territory under the authority of a bishop—increased, thanks to recruitment of local youth who traversed all the way to the diocesan seminary in the Mexican city of Durango for their training. Between 1823 and 1826, four New Mexicans completed their seminary formation and returned home to begin their ministries as priests. When the Mexican government lost its northern territories to the United States after the war between the two nations (1846–1848), in New Mexico some seventeen or eighteen diocesan priests, most of them

recruited locally, served the spiritual needs of New Mexico's parish communities.

U.S. Conquest

The conquest of northern Mexico began with the war between Texas and Mexico (1835–1836), which resulted in the establishment of an independent Texas Republic. Nine years later the United States annexed Texas and another war erupted in disputed territory along the Rio Grande near Brownsville, Texas. The war resulted in Mexico's loss of nearly half its territory: the present-day states of Texas, Nevada, California, Utah, as well as parts of New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Wyoming. In 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo brought an official end to this war and, in addition to establishing new borders between the two nations, purportedly guaranteed the citizenship, property, and religious rights of Mexican citizens who chose to remain in the conquered territories.

Military defeat merely initiated the process of U.S. conquest and expansion. As new territories changed hands through victory in battle and subsequent treaty negotiations, law enforcement personnel, judicial and political officials, occupying troops, and a growing Anglo-American populace imposed U.S. rule. Violence against Mexican Catholics at times reached epidemic proportions, but the judicial system afforded little if any protection for them despite their U.S. citizenship. Anglo-American newcomers further consolidated the conquest by asserting their dominion over political and economic life. When Texas became a state in 1845, for example, Mexican San Antonians lost control of the city council their ancestors had established and led for more than a century. They also lost most of their land holdings, often in biased legal proceedings and in some cases through outright criminal removal from their homes and property. Increasingly Mexicans became a working underclass. Demographic shifts facilitated the diminishment of their political and economic influence. Nowhere was this shift more dramatic than in California, where the Gold Rush altered the demographic profile almost overnight.

Religion after U.S. Takeover

Hispanic influence in religious life and public celebrations also dissipated in the half-century after the U.S. takeover of the Southwest. By 1890 in the formerly "Catholic" town of Los Angeles, there were seventy-eight religious organizations, including Congregationalists, Jews, Buddhists,

Baptists, Unitarians, and an African Methodist Episcopal congregation. In various locales, Anglo-Americans promoted the participation of Mexican-descent residents in the parades and ceremonies of newly organized U.S. holidays such as the Fourth of July.

Parishes and other elements of Catholic life were not immune to change during the turbulent period of transition. Dioceses were established at places like Galveston (1847), Santa Fe (1853), San Francisco (1853), Denver (1887), and Tucson (1897). European clergy served in many areas of the Southwest, with the French predominating in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona and the Irish in California. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Catholic bishops' appointments in the region reflected this same pattern, with the exception of two Spaniards who served as bishops in California. Scores of religious sisters also crossed the Atlantic and began schools, hospitals, orphanages, and other apostolic work in the Southwest.

Frequently differences in culture and religious practice led newly arrived Catholic leaders to misunderstand and criticize their Mexican coreligionists. The most well-known conflict was between Father Antonio José Martínez, a popular leader among native-born New Mexican Catholics, and Frenchman Jean Baptiste Lamy, the first bishop (and later first archbishop) of Santa Fe. Upon his arrival in New Mexico, in 1851, Lamy encountered Catholic communities with long-standing traditions and the largest group of local clergy in any of the conquered territories. Within three years of his arrival, Bishop Lamy suspended several New Mexican priests, reinstated mandatory tithing, and decreed that heads of families who failed to tithe be denied the sacraments. Padre Martínez publicly protested Bishop Lamy's actions; the resulting controversy led to Martínez's eventual suspension and excommunication. The first resident bishop of Los Angeles, Thaddeus Amat, oversaw an 1862 synod meeting that forbade Mexican Catholic faith expressions like *los pastores* (a festive proclamation of the shepherds who worshiped the newborn infant Jesus), a prohibition promulgated because European and Anglo-American Catholics found Mexican public rituals too boisterous and indecorous. Amat and the synod fathers also decreed that public processions, funeral traditions, and religious feasts strictly adhere to the rubrics of the Roman ritual. Thus they banned long-standing local practices such as festive displays of devotion during public processions, interring corpses within church buildings, cannon salutes as a form of religious devotion, and the fiestas and entertainments that accompanied religious celebrations.

In other instances, foreign clergy acclaimed the religious practices of Spanish-speaking Catholics and even initiated new religious traditions that resonated with Hispanic faithful. Frenchman Jean Marie Odin, the first bishop of Texas, participated in Mexican religious feasts, such as local celebrations in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and spoke enthusiastically of the religious zeal demonstrated in these celebrations. In Ysleta, Texas (near El Paso), the ministry of Italian Jesuits resonated so strongly with the local populace that the new clergy were able to inaugurate an annual feast day celebration in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Celebrated in a festive Mexican style with colorful decorations, elaborate church services, outdoor processions, a marching band, bonfires, and fireworks, this feast day drew an enthusiastic response from Mexican Catholics in the local parish and throughout the surrounding area.

A number of Protestants were utterly condemnatory in their assessment of Mexican Catholicism. After observing public devotion during the Mexican feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Monterey, California, Congregationalist minister Walter Colton mockingly quipped that Guadalupe probably knew or cared little about such religious exhibitions. Baptist minister Lewis Smith wrote from Santa Fe that, along with various other rituals, Mexicans reenacted the "farce" of Jesus' Crucifixion, a retort directed at a Way of the Cross procession Smith found too graphic for his sensibilities. Undoubtedly the most renowned of the attacks on Hispanic traditions was aimed at the brotherhoods of *Los Hermanos de Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno* (Brothers of Our Father Jesus the Nazarene), or *Penitentes*, in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. Local residents frequently deemed outside observers of their rites "Penitente hunters" because of their intrusive presence and the sensationalistic reports they wrote about the brotherhoods' religious practices.

Mexican Resistance

Conquered Mexicans resisted the U.S. takeover in various ways. Some offered military resistance to the foreign invaders, such as Californians who defeated U.S. forces at battles in the Los Angeles area and at the hamlet of San Pasqual, before peaceably coming to terms with their more numerous and heavily armed foes. Violent resistance erupted in various locales even after the U.S. conquest. In the decades following the U.S. Civil War, guerrilla leaders such as Tiburcio Vásquez in California and Juan Cortina in Texas led retaliatory movements protesting the endemic violence and injustice their

people suffered at the hands of Anglo-Americans. Mexican residents also defended their rights in the political arena, as at the 1845 Texas Constitutional Convention when José Antonio Navarro was able to prevent passage of a law that restricted voting rights to Anglo-American residents.

Conflicts between Mexicans and Catholic leaders at times resulted in public controversy and even open resistance. When his religious superiors reassigned Father José González Rubio from Santa Barbara, California, to Zacatecas, Mexico, in 1856, some thousand parishioners and other supporters “kidnapped” the popular priest by blocking his entrance to the boat on which he was to depart. They then enlisted the support of Archbishop Joseph Alemany in San Francisco and remained firm in their resolve to keep their priest until his superiors changed his appointment and allowed him to stay. Similarly, in 1875 Bishop Dominic Manucy of Brownsville, Texas, rejected a request that twenty-two exiled Mexican sisters reside in the area and serve Mexican-descent Catholics. Local Spanish-speaking Catholics were incensed at Bishop Manucy’s decision, particularly since they offered to pay the living costs for the sisters. On the day the women religious were to board the train and depart from Brownsville, an angry crowd removed their train from its tracks and refused to let authorities replace it.

Even more conspicuously and consistently, local communities in conquered territories asserted their Mexican Catholic heritage in the public spaces of civic life through their long-standing rituals and devotions. From Texas to California, various communities continued to enthusiastically celebrate established local traditions such as pilgrimages, *los pastores*, Holy Week, Corpus Christi, and established patronal feast days such as that of the Mexican national patroness, Our Lady of Guadalupe. The persistence of religious traditions is particularly striking in light of Catholic and Protestant leaders’ attempts to ban, replace, and condemn them. In the face of such efforts, as well as military conquest and occupation, indiscriminate violence and lawlessness, political and economic displacement, rapid demographic change, the erosion of cultural dominance, and the appointment of Catholic leaders from foreign lands, Spanish-speaking Catholic feasts and devotions had a heightened significance. These religious traditions provided an ongoing means of public communal expression, affirmation, and resistance to Anglo-American and other newcomers who criticized or attempted to suppress Mexican-descent residents’ heritage. Undoubtedly fear and anger at their subjugation intensified religious fervor among many devotees.

Enduring Religious Traditions

The most renowned lay group that served as the protectors of treasured local traditions was the aforementioned Penitentes of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. Penitente brotherhoods evolved in towns and villages well before the U.S. takeover of the area. Their most noticeable function was to commemorate Christ’s Passion and death, although they also provided community leadership and fostered social integration. Organized as separate local entities, Penitente brotherhoods had a leader named the *Hermano Mayor* (literally “older brother”) and a *morada* (literally “habitation”) or chapter house where they held meetings and religious devotions. Despite the sharp criticism they often received from outsiders, and Catholic Church officials’ attempts to suppress the brotherhoods and their ritual and devotional practices, especially flagellation and other penitential acts performed during Lent and Holy Week, the Penitentes continued providing leadership for prayer and social life in numerous local communities.

In more urban areas, activist Mexican laywomen and laymen continued traditional feast days and faith expressions in Catholic parishes such as Tucson’s San Agustín and San Antonio’s San Fernando. The annual series of celebrations for Tucson’s original patron saint, St. Augustine, lasted for an entire month. Similarly, in the decades following their political separation from Mexico, San Fernando parishioners organized public rituals and festivities for Our Lady of Guadalupe, Christmas, San Fernando, San Antonio, San Juan, San Pedro, and other feasts. Most conspicuous among these rites was the annual Guadalupe feast, which the parish community celebrated in the Mexican way of a colorful outdoor procession with flowers, candles, elaborate decorations adorning the Guadalupe image and their parish church, gun and cannon salutes, extended ringing of the church bells, and large crowds for services conducted in Spanish.

Newcomers such as Protestants, Anglo-Americans, and Catholic clergy participated in the rituals and devotions of Spanish-speaking Catholics. An 1861 Anglo-American visitor to Santa Barbara marveled that during the Holy Week services he attended, the predominantly Mexican-descent congregation was joined by Native American, North American, Irish, German, French, and Italian worshippers. He declared that only in California could such diverse groups be observed worshipping together. Both in Santa Barbara and in Tucson, Chinese immigrants attended Mexican Catholic celebrations. The presence of newcomers at these Hispanic celebrations illustrates Mexican Catholic attempts to prolong

local traditions and incorporate these newcomers into their expressions of religious and communal identity.

Religious Pluralism and Mexican Identity

Once other groups were sufficient in number to form their own congregations and social circles, their participation in Hispanic Catholic faith expressions frequently abated. With the emergence of religious pluralism and the organization of diverse public celebrations, particularly U.S. holidays such as the Fourth of July, the dominance of Mexican faith expressions and festivities ceased. As various scholars have pointed out in studies of ethnicity, in addition to elements of perceived group commonality such as language, customs, behavior patterns, religion, and political and economic interests, interaction with other groups also shapes ethnic identity. Such interaction enables a group to overcome what scholars of religion and ethnicity have called “pluralistic ignorance” and become aware of their own tradition as distinct from other traditions. This awareness is accentuated when prejudice, conflict, and an imbalance in the distribution of power characterizes the contact between groups. Thus while Mexican Catholic faith expressions and festivities were an identifying mark of towns and local communities in the years prior to the U.S. takeover, afterward they increasingly differentiated Hispanics from other groups that settled in the occupied territories. The rise of religious and cultural pluralism in conquered lands enhanced the perception that Mexican Catholic faith expressions were a distinguishing characteristic of their ethnicity and group identity.

Women frequently played key leadership roles in public worship and devotion. Young women served in processions as the immediate attendants for the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the principal ritual object in annual Guadalupe feast day celebrations. They occupied similar places of prominence in processions for feast days such as the Assumption and Corpus Christi. Even when male Penitentes provided significant leadership for communal worship, women played vital roles in local traditions such as the annual procession for the feast of St. John the Baptist. The contribution of women in preparing and enacting public religious traditions illuminates what Ana María Díaz-Stevens calls the “matriarchal core” of Latino Catholicism—that is, women’s exercise of autonomous authority in communal devotions despite the patriarchy of institutional Catholicism and Latin American societies. Mexican-descent women extended their domestic efforts to preserve familial heritage and devotion into a role of community leadership

that shaped Mexican Catholics’ public ritual expressions in the wider society. At the same time, however, these leadership roles reinforced the notion that piety was primarily the responsibility of women, did not significantly alter restrictions on women in other public functions, and symbolically linked the purity of young girls dressed in white with the icons such as the Virgin Mary, a communal accentuation of feminine chastity that lacked a corresponding association between young boys and Jesus.

A number of communities in the Southwest struggled for their very survival. In the process their observance of long-standing traditions often abated or even ceased. Nonetheless, as Bishop Henry Granjon of Tucson noted in 1902 during his first pastoral visit to Las Cruces, New Mexico, many Mexican-descent Catholics in the Southwest continued to practice their own customs and traditions even after the U.S. takeover of their lands. According to Bishop Granjon, in the Southwest these traditions served to “maintain the unity of the Mexican population and permit them to resist, to a certain extent, the invasions of the Anglo-Saxon race.” The leadership initiatives of Mexican Catholics enabled a number of local populations to adapt and continue their treasured expressions of faith, defend their sense of dignity, fortify their resistance to the effects of conquest, express their own ethnic legitimation, and endure as Mexican Catholic communities.

Hispanic Newcomers

Though an open border between the United States and Mexico allowed Mexican citizens to migrate even after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, their numbers were relatively small until the last three decades of the nineteenth century, when gradually a larger group of immigrants and refugees began to arrive. After the U.S. Civil War ended in 1865, mining, agriculture, and railroad construction in the regions from Texas to California, and then in Mexico itself, linked the regions economically, creating migration flows of Mexican labor north. The Porfirio Díaz regime (1876–1911) in Mexico promoted economic growth linked to foreign interests, leading to prosperity for some but displacement and migration for others, who went to the United States looking for work. U.S. interests in Caribbean products, particularly sugar and tobacco, also encouraged the movement of Puerto Ricans and Cubans to the United States. Intermittent struggles for independence on both the islands of Puerto Rico and Cuba led some political activists into U.S. exile. These newcomers augmented the diversity of Hispanics in the United States.

For the most part, political exiles were skeptical if not outright antagonistic toward the Catholic Church and its leaders, who in their native lands consisted largely of Spaniards and others who supported Spanish rule. Cuban exiles were particularly prone to abandon Catholicism as they turned to other ideas, religions, and philosophies of life, including freemasonry, Protestantism, anarchism, and socialism. Only a relatively few Cubans in exile identified themselves as practicing Catholics, and a generally anticlerical attitude prevailed among expatriates such as José Martí (1853–1895), who from exile organized the revolt that eventually led to Cuban independence. Martí died in the struggle and was acclaimed as the father of his country.

Among Catholics, one of the earliest Cuban exiles and certainly the most famous was Father Félix Varela (1788–1853), who fled to New York in 1823 after the Spanish regime he opposed as a Cuban delegate to the Spanish Cortes (parliament) condemned him to death. In exile, Varela worked as a parish priest and eventually rose to the position of vicar general for the Diocese of New York. But even in the midst of a busy pastoral life among Irish and other New York Catholics, he continued to advocate for Cuban independence from Spain and the abolition of the slave trade, along with writing and thinking about politics, philosophy, and religion. He published an important exile newspaper, *El Habanero*, in which he promoted Cuban independence, and maintained active correspondence and intellectual exchange with his compatriots on the island. Although the Spanish government pardoned him in 1833, Varela refused to acknowledge that his support for constitutional rule represented criminal activity. He remained in exile and never returned to Cuba. Recognized as a precursor of Cuban pro-independence thought, Varela is often described by Cubans as “the one who first taught us to think.”

Ethnic Parishes

Some Cuban lay Catholics formed faith communities in exile, such as workers and their families in Key West, Florida. Cubans began arriving in Key West in significant numbers after October 10, 1868, when insurgents declared Cuban independence and launched a bloody war against Spanish colonialism on the island. Though Spain pacified the island by 1880, Cubans continued to leave their homeland for political reasons and to work in an emergent Cuban cigar industry in Key West, where a largely cigar worker community persisted in conspiring against Spain and helped launch the final independence war in 1895. Despite the alienation of

many Cubans from the Catholic Church, priests and the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary worked among them. Key West’s first Catholic church, Saint Mary Star of the Sea, was dedicated in 1852. The Sisters of the Holy Names arrived from Canada in 1868 and opened schools for girls and boys. By 1879 so many Cubans had arrived in Key West that church officials supported the establishment of a Cuban chapel, named after *Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre* (Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre), the most prominent Marian icon and devotional tradition in Cuban Catholicism. Church records reveal Cuban Catholic practices such as the *Caridad del Cobre* feast, other Spanish-language Marian devotions, Christmas pageants, and even a celebrated pastoral visit from the archbishop of Santiago, Cuba.

The establishment of a Cuban chapel in Key West illustrates the tendency of Spanish-speaking Catholics to prefer national or ethnic parishes. Like European Catholic immigrants to the United States, many Hispanics advocated for such parishes as a means to retain their language, cultural practices, sense of group identity, and Catholic faith. As early as 1871, Catholics in San Francisco proposed a national parish to serve the Spanish-speaking population in their growing city. Although most Spanish-speaking residents were of Mexican descent, representatives from the consulates of Chile, Peru, Nicaragua, Colombia, Bolivia, Costa Rica, and Spain were among the leaders in this effort, making it one of if not the first Pan-Hispanic Catholic initiative in the United States. These lay leaders contended that a national parish was necessary both for monolingual Spanish speakers and for bilingual Catholics, who longed to offer the prayers their mothers taught them in their native Spanish language. Four years later, in 1875 San Francisco archbishop Joseph Alemany established the national parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

In the Southwest, the proximity of their native land and its traditions enhanced Mexican Catholic efforts to retain their religious practices, language, and culture. Although he moved from his native Sonora to Tucson in 1882, for example, Federico José María Ronstadt returned home regularly to visit family members and celebrate religious feasts such as Christmas and Holy Week. Similarly, Catholic life, ministry, and devotion in borderlands cities such as El Paso–Juárez transcended the political border that “divided” Mexico and the United States.

Conclusion

Latino American Catholicism at the end of the nineteenth century encompassed a predominantly ethnic Mexican

contingent in the Southwest and a smaller but growing population of Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and other Hispanic groups. Though in raw numbers the Hispanic population had increased dramatically during the previous hundred years, relative to the accelerating population of the United States the Hispanic presence had diminished. From Key West to San Antonio to Tucson to San Francisco, both emergent and enduring communities of faith struggled in an often hostile environment. Yet their generally tenuous existence was the foundation on which Latino immigrants and refugees would build during the massive migrations of the twentieth century, beginning with the wave of northward immigration initiated at the outset of the Mexican Revolution in 1910.

See also *Frontier and Borderlands; Hispanic Influence; Immigration: From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to World War I; Latino American Religion* entries; *Mexico: Independence to the Mexican Revolution; Roman Catholicism: The Impact of Immigration in the Nineteenth Century; Southwest as Region.*

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Latino American Religion: Catholics, Twentieth Century

The U.S. acquisition of territories in Louisiana, Florida, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California during the first half of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of a significant Hispanic Catholic presence in the United States,

a presence that accelerated considerably through mass immigration during the twentieth century. As with most immigrants in U.S. history, Latinos immigrated to escape difficult economic and political conditions in their places of origin caused by a debilitating colonial heritage and as a result of displacements provoked by European and U.S. capitalist expansion into the region. Latin American immigrants came to the United States from many different regions and countries at different historical moments, bringing diverse experiences and perspectives. In the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century, Latinos arrived mostly from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. After the 1950s, these groups continued to arrive, but immigrants from the Dominican Republic, Central America, and South America added their numbers to the mix of Latino communities. At the end of the twentieth century, Latinos numbered approximately 36 million and constituted about one-third of Catholics in the United States. Latino Americans introduced new and distinct cultures and identities to a U.S. Catholic Church traditionally dominated by Euro-Americans. These newcomers built local communities but also national and transnational Pan-Hispanic Catholic movements and identities.

Immigrants and Exiles

Like Europeans before them, Latino Catholics of varying ethnicities gathered together in communities throughout the country, congregating in parishes and worshiping according to their own traditions. Mexican immigration accelerated with the outbreak and spread of the extraordinarily violent Mexican Revolution in 1910. The anticlerical orientation of the revolution and its aftermath, the Cristero War in the late 1920s, forced hundreds of thousands of Catholics across the border to cities such as San Antonio and Los Angeles, where they influenced parish life. They settled among already established Mexican Americans, refreshing the Mexican traditions and culture of those communities, but also looked to the church to sanction new parishes. The church in Los Angeles, for example, founded twelve parishes for Mexicans during the 1920s, and some forty-four existed in southern California by the middle of the 1930s. Persecution against the Mexican Church also forced large numbers of clergy, including almost the entire church hierarchy, to leave Mexico. Most settled in the United States and worked among the rapidly growing Mexican communities in the Southwest.

Massive Mexican immigration began again after the 1930s, during which anti-Mexican sentiment led to deportations or voluntary return of thousands who faced unemployment

and hostility. With the outbreak of World War II, the nation's increased demand for labor in the United States led to a U.S. guest-worker agreement with the Mexican government known as the Bracero Program. During 1942–1964 some 5 million contracted temporary laborers worked in the United States, many of whom managed to remain. This established fresh migratory streams that encouraged many undocumented workers to cross into the United States after the 1960s, again infusing Mexican American parishes with Mexican culture and traditions.

Mexican immigration also moved beyond the Southwest in the 1920s to industrial cities such as St. Louis, Kansas City, Chicago, Gary, and Detroit, where Mexican immigrants established parish communities. Many Mexicans in Chicago, for example, originally settled among other ethnic groups, especially Italians, and worshiped in their parishes, but in time they created their own churches. In South Chicago, Our Lady of Guadalupe church became well established, and in subsequent years many other parishes included large Mexican congregations.

Hispanic migration to the Northeast, especially New York, which began in the nineteenth century and accelerated in the early twentieth, led to a significant Latino Catholic presence. In 1902 Hispanics worshiped at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish on West 14th Street, and in 1912 Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza in Washington Heights attracted Spanish-speaking worshipers of many backgrounds. But in time Puerto Ricans came to constitute the largest migratory group to New York and the surrounding regions.

Puerto Rican immigration began in significant numbers after the U.S. occupation of the island in 1898 and the granting of citizenship to its population in 1917. Puerto Rico's subsistence farming and primarily agricultural economy increasingly became a sugar-based cash crop enterprise, concentrating land and displacing many who eventually left for the United States. Migratory pressures became even more dramatic after World War II, when policymakers introduced incentives to create a manufacturing base on the island known as Operation Bootstrap, producing a nascent middle class but also an urbanizing rural population that received few economic benefits and departed for the mainland. In the 1920s Puerto Ricans worshiped in two New York parishes established specifically for them, La Milagrosa and Santa Agonía, and twenty years later six churches served Puerto Ricans and other Spanish speakers almost exclusively. As Puerto Rican migration increased in the 1950s, more parishes became predominantly Puerto

Rican, including St. Rose of Lima church in Washington Heights, on Manhattan's upper west side.

Similar patterns occurred in south Florida with the dramatic increase in Hispanic immigration beginning in the late 1950s. Revolution in Cuba in late 1950s, initially supported by most Catholics, turned communist after 1959, initiating an exodus that resulted in more than a million Cubans arriving in the United States during the next thirty years. As the Cuban presence expanded in the 1960s and 1970s, Cubans congregated in at least thirteen Dade County parishes, including San Juan Bosco, St. Michaels, SS. Peter and Paul, Gesu, Corpus Christi, and St. Mary's Cathedral. Mexican and Puerto Ricans farm laborers also attended churches in south Florida rural areas beginning as early as the 1950s. Mexicans settled in Homestead, south of Miami, and attended the Sacred Heart Parish. Missions appeared to serve Hispanic migrants in Belle Glade, Pompano, Lake Wells, and Naranja, among other towns in Florida.

During the final third of the century, immigrants from places other than Mexico, Cuba, and Puerto Rico settled across the United States in the wake of national immigration reforms in 1965 that facilitated accelerated entry. Industrialization and urbanization enveloped Latin America generally in the postwar era, causing increases in birth rates and life expectancies, growing expectations for a better life, improved transportation and communication, and the creation of dynamic migratory streams to the United States. The regional ethnic distinctions observed earlier declined as Hispanics settled nationally. Dominicans migrated to New York and Florida, South American immigrants fleeing economic distress, including Colombians, Ecuadorians, Peruvians, Brazilians, Argentines, Chileans, and Venezuelans, went to Florida, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and many other cities.

The other major influx came from Central America. A socialist revolution in Nicaragua caused many to leave, and government-led repression, supported by the United States, against revolutionary groups in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras caused hundreds of thousands more to flee the region seeking safety and work in Mexico, the United States, and Canada. In the 1970s and 1980s, former European immigrant parishes in the Chicago suburbs of Cicero, Berwyn, and Melrose Park became heavily Hispanic, and parishes in New York, often dominated by Puerto Ricans, made room for other Hispanic ethnicities. Latin American immigrants transformed many parishes in Dade County, Florida, from almost exclusively Cuban worshipers to diverse Latino congregations.

Latin Americans arriving in the United States included people fleeing poverty and unemployment and exiles who arrived with a heightened sense of political consciousness and a strong desire to return to their place of origin as agents of change and redemption. The differences between immigrants and exiles may sometimes be overemphasized, but some distinctions are useful for understanding Latino communities. Exiles more than immigrants maintained a strong focus on the homeland and, though most never returned home, they built communities reflecting a commitment of daily homage to their heritages and nationalities. They developed a somewhat different psychological frame than immigrants, since they were generally people who had coped in their homelands and never intended to leave until forced by political circumstances. Exile communities generally worked toward one day returning home to rebuild their societies according to Christian values and traditions. The most prominent exile communities included those fleeing the 1910 revolution in Mexico, the 1959 Castro revolution, and the Central American revolutions in the 1970s and 1980s. Mexican exiles, for example, arriving in San Antonio in the 1920s reinvigorated parish life at San Fernando Cathedral, and Cuban exiles nearly forty years later created an exilic Catholicism in many parishes in south Florida, particularly at San Juan Bosco, which was established originally as a mission church for exiles.

Identity and Integration

Latin American Catholic groups arriving in the United States brought with them cultures and traditions markedly different from those of Anglo-American Catholics but also distinct from each other. Characterized by *mestizaje*—that is, racial and cultural mixing among Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans over four centuries—Latin American Catholicism included traditions quite distinct from its North American counterpart. Catholicism arrived in Latin America from Spain and Portugal in the early sixteenth century, prior to the Protestant Reformation, and was distinctly medieval. Though certainly influenced subsequently by post-Reformation Catholicism defined by the Council of Trent (1545–1563), especially in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in many ways Latin American Catholics remained steeped in faith traditions expressed through devotions, processions, and pilgrimages characteristic of the earlier church. Furthermore, it represented a Catholicism influenced by African and Native American traditions that added to its distinctiveness.

During the twentieth century, the U.S. church, much influenced by post-Reformation Catholicism and English-speaking Irish American Catholic culture, viewed the growing Latino Catholic presence with considerable alarm and often acted in contradictory ways. Concerned about what was perceived as unorthodox religious devotion among Latinos, the church worked to assimilate them to American Catholic standards and practices but also discriminated, leaving them marginal in society. During the first half of the century, Hispanics faced aggressive Americanization policies emphasizing citizenship and language classes for the foreign born. The U.S. church also taught immigrant women U.S. standards of diet and hygiene and especially focused on influencing children to be “Americans,” emphasizing religious instruction consistent with U.S. Catholic norms. The church sponsored settlement houses, social service and charitable agencies, religious education programs and used parochial schools and national parishes with Spanish-speaking priests and religious to catechize immigrants.

The growth of churches and parishes demographically dominated by Latinos reflected continuing immigration and residential concentration, but also the tradition in the U.S. church of using national parishes as a strategy for organizing religious life among immigrants. Though successful in keeping ethnic communities connected to the church, in the twentieth century church officials became increasingly uncomfortable with national parishes, viewing them as divisive and a drag on assimilation. Most Anglo-American priests preferred to serve Hispanic faithful in integrated parishes, but parishioners defended national and language parishes even when the church no longer encouraged them. Often, Latinos simply congregated at particular churches in large numbers, creating de facto national or language churches. In either setting, however, Latinos did not easily dispose of deeply rooted traditions, and the U.S. clergy learned to tolerate their religious customs and practices while encouraging them to embrace American ways.

The continual arrival of immigrants throughout the century reinvigorated Latinos' ways of worship. Latino devotional traditions became permanent cultural expressions in communities throughout the United States. For many Latinos, the home, not the parish church, represented the principal devotional space, which often included altars, holy water, candles, rosaries, and religious medals. Public devotions included yard statues of religious figures, neighborhood processions and celebrations filled with music and

sacred significance. Latino Catholic immigrants were generally less committed to Sunday Mass than were U.S. Catholics, although as they integrated into new parishes attendance rates increased. Also, they tended not to be particularly close to the clergy, except among Mexicans in the 1920s and Cubans in the 1960s, who brought a robust cadre of priests fleeing revolution.

Hispanic immigrants and exiles preferred Spanish or at least bilingual Masses, and this remained a constant throughout the century. Much committed to Marian traditions, Latinos expressed their devotion to Mary in their homes and parishes. Mexicans retained a deep commitment to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Many parishes carried her name and churches usually had an image of *La Morenita* (an affectionate reference to the brown-skinned Virgin). When Cubans arrived in South Florida, they continued their devotion to Our Lady of Charity, the Cuban patroness, in the 1960s, quickly building *La Ermita* (hermitage), which became the most important devotional space for Cuban Catholics as well as a symbol of their anti-communist exile identity. In the 1970s, Dominican migration to New York was highlighted by the first public celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Altagracia, patroness of the Dominican Republic, at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Other Latinos created devotional spaces dedicated to their Marian patronesses.

Latinos also insisted on their own lay organizations and traditions. Among Mexican American women, the *Guadalupanas*, devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe, became important lay organizations in Mexican communities across the country. Among Puerto Ricans, Catholic men formed the *Caballeros de San Juan* in the 1950s, aimed at evangelizing and attracting men to the church. The numerous councils had social, recreational, and self-help activities and encouraged the formation of women's auxiliary groups. Cubans established numerous lay organizations in south Florida, some transplanted directly from Cuba and others created to address the specific needs of a displaced people in a new environment, including *Agrupación Católica Universitaria* (Catholic University Group), *Movimiento Familiar Católica* (Catholic Family Movement), and numerous others.

One particularly important movement among Latinos was *Cursillos de Cristiandad* (Little Course in Christianity), founded in Mallorca, Spain, in 1949 but brought to the United States a decade later. Initially for men, the *cursillos* ignited Christian militancy among Latino Catholics at the grassroots by encouraging spiritual self-reflection and

conversion through religious retreats. Characterized by displays of emotion, songs, and sharing experiences, the *cursillos* spread throughout the Hispanic Catholic world and the United States, where it gained widespread acceptance among Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans. Latinos flocked to retreats that not only promoted religious renewal but also provided a space to engage Catholicism within the context of their own language, ethnic, and cultural traditions.

Ethnicity and Rights

Latino Catholics became faithful members of the U.S. Catholic Church, but despite the rhetoric of the "melting pot" and the "Americanization" programs of the 1920s and 1930s designed to promote assimilation, Euro-Americans did not welcome Latinos on equal terms. Historically, Latinos defended themselves against Euro-American supremacist attitudes expressed racially and culturally, and more often than not Latinos found themselves marginalized and found little acceptance within the U.S. church for their traditions, language, and other worship practices. In struggling for their place, Latino Catholics faced ethnic and cultural discrimination and economic inequality and poverty, which mobilized them into political action in the 1960s and 1970s.

In formulating strategies for change, many Latino Catholics looked to Latin America for inspiration to improve their condition in the United States. Many Catholics committed to social justice embraced the tenets of liberation theology, a vision first formally articulated in the late 1960s that called on Latin Americans to take a forthright position against poverty and an unapologetic "option for the poor." While liberation theology was inspired by the Latin American socioeconomic context, many U.S. Latinos considered this thinking relevant to their reality as well and called for greater economic justice in the United States.

Though the liberationist class framework informed much Hispanic Catholic activism, it was not necessarily the paradigm that made most sense to U.S. Latinos. Their difficult experiences finding acceptance in the United States gave them a minority perspective that reinforced their ethnic consciousness. With the acceleration of Latin American immigration after the 1965 reforms, new Latino communities formed that affirmed traditional customs and identities, reengaging old ethnic communities with their cultures of origin, broadening their territorial reach across the country, and giving Latinos the possibility of maintaining an

ongoing ethnic world even after several generations in the United States.

Ethnic solidarity rather than emphasis on class distinctions within their communities offered Latinos the best possibilities for successful political action. Mexican American Catholic leaders in the 1960s especially hoped to unify their people by advancing a struggle based on cultural affirmation and pastoral emphasis. Culturally defined pastoral strategies challenged Hispanic marginalization, advanced evangelization, and at the same time confronted political, socioeconomic, and racial grievances. And in any case this cultural focus did not prevent Catholic activists from protesting poverty within their communities, particularly among migrant workers who received little pay and suffered abhorrent living conditions in the fields.

The civil rights movement swept away the grossest political barriers in the 1960s and 1970s, and Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other Latino Catholics worked to remedy the political, cultural, and social barriers they faced in society and in the church. While many progressive archbishops, bishops, clergy, and women religious advocated for their Latino constituencies throughout the twentieth century, within the context of the civil rights movement Latino Catholics themselves defined and led their struggles.

Politically active Mexican American religious founded *PADRES* (Priests Associated for Religious, Educational and Social Rights) in 1969 to promote greater Hispanic representation in the church hierarchy. A group with an explicitly transformative vision from its inception was *Católicos por la Raza* (Catholics for the Race). They identified themselves as Catholics committed to the lives of the poor, devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe, and determined to fight racism. Puerto Rican youth organized *Noborí*, a Catholic group identified with Latin American liberation theology. *Las Hermanas* (The Sisters) organized women religious. Initially an association of Chicanas (Mexican women), *Las Hermanas* later welcomed other Latina religious and laywomen into their membership, forging a national network that challenged women to raise consciousness and work for change. Though politically more conservative and often suspicious of their generally more left-leaning Mexican and Puerto Rican colleagues that often idealized the Cuban revolution, Cubans also embraced ethnic and cultural activism in the church. They organized numerous lay movements that promoted their culture, language, and worship traditions. Ironically, as Latino Catholics struggled for rights and greater integration, they also

demanded pluralism in the church and respect for cultures and traditions that they fully intended to retain.

The Latino Church

The struggle for civil rights among the various Latino groups mostly developed independently of each other, and their willingness to work together was the exception rather than the rule. But this changed. A demographic mixing, which accelerated especially after World War II, led Hispanics of diverse backgrounds into closer proximity with each other in large urban centers such as New York, Chicago, south Florida, and Los Angeles. And their numbers grew dramatically. During the final thirty years of the twentieth century, the number of Latino Catholics increased by more than 18 million and accounted for 86 percent of the growth in the U.S. Catholic population. While Latino Catholics remained distinct in their identities and their customs, they recognized that they shared many of the same problems in U.S. society and took the initiative to create a national movement within the church. The crosscurrents of immigration, integration, and politics influenced Latino Catholics who, rather than seeking assimilation into a culturally Anglo-American church, sought space for their own forms of worship under the rubric of integration without assimilation. They demanded respect for their traditions, language, and religious practices, which the church cautiously accepted within a paradigm of the new pluralism of the 1960s and 1970s.

The first national effort to advance issues of Hispanic ministry in the U.S. church began in 1945 with the creation of the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking in San Antonio. In 1970, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops moved this office to Washington, D.C., and then established the Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs. These offices coordinated initiatives to support Hispanic ministry in the United States, including National Encounters (*encuentros nacionales*) in 1972, 1977, 1985, and 2000 that brought together Hispanic Catholics from across the country. The meetings called for Latino unity and integration into the church based on equality and mutual respect and insisted on Hispanic leadership opportunities within all levels of the church.

Latinos also paid attention to the theological implications of a national Catholic movement that defined itself as Hispanic. In the 1980s, many at the universities explored what it meant to be a Latino Catholic, offering a theological and intellectual rationale for this Pan-Hispanic identity. The emergence of Latino theologians during the decade led to the foundation of the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians

of the United States (ACHTUS). Leading Hispanic theologians argued that Latin American Catholics in the United States enjoyed much in common, including expressing their religion with a collective spirit and a deep interrelatedness between spiritual and temporal aspects of life.

Many Hispanic Catholics applauded the U.S. bishops' principled embrace of the pluralistic model inherent in the Latino Catholic vision of church, though others were dismayed by their often conservative implementation. The church, for example, supported the designation of Hispanic bishops, but certainly not in proportion to their numbers or even necessarily representative of the views of rank and file Latino Catholic leaders. And while Latino Catholic leaders continued to see the U.S. church as a critical institution for their people, many expressed disappointment at what they perceived as a diminished commitment to Hispanic ministry after 2000. The decline in commitment of the U.S. Council of Bishops to Hispanic ministry was symbolized in the 2007 disbanding of the Bishops' Committee for Hispanic Affairs and National Secretariat in favor of a new Secretariat of Cultural Diversity intended to include all minorities and promote church unity.

At the same time, the Vatican took note of the surging Hispanic population in the United States. Already strongly drawn to the Latin American church, developments in the U.S. church relating to Latino Catholics were not lost on Pope John Paul II. During his pastoral visit to the United States in 1987, the pope traveled, among other places, to Miami and San Antonio, where he met with Spanish-speaking congregations, acknowledging their importance in the U.S. church. A decade later the pope issued *Ecclesia in America*, which defined the American church as a transnational entity composed of North, Central, and South America, suggesting the importance he placed on the role of Latin Americans across the Western Hemisphere in the future of the church.

A New American Church

At the end of the twentieth century, Latino Catholics in the United States remained severely underrepresented within the power centers of the mainstream Anglo-American church, especially as priests and bishops, but at the grassroots Hispanics emerged as a core constituency of the U.S. Catholic Church. Latinos influenced the culture and identity of local churches and parishes just as Latinos conformed to Catholic culture in the United States, but the story is not over. The process of Latin American immigration continues unabated, cultural negotiations in the parishes remain in

play, and all indications are that time will produce a new and more invigorated U.S. church with strong Latino influence and links to Latin American Catholicism that will advance Pope John Paul II's vision of an American church in the broadest sense of the term.

See also *Ethnicity; Frontier and Borderlands; Hispanic Influence; Immigration: Since the 1965 Immigration Act; Latino American Religion* entries; *Music: Coritos/Spanish Language; Religious Thought: Latino/a; Religious Thought: Mujerista; Roman Catholicism* entries; *Southwest as Region*.

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Latino American Religion: Mainline Protestants

Latinos in mainline Protestant denominations consist of those persons of Hispanic and Latin American descent who joined denominations that trace their roots to the continental and English Reformation, including, but not limited to,

Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Baptists, and Congregationalists. Although a few Protestants had engaged in evangelization among the Spanish-speaking in Texas during its period as a republic (1836–1845), the first Latino congregations emerged in the U.S. Southwest a few years after the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) through the efforts of a handful of Anglo-American Protestants. Likewise, although a handful of indigenous Protestant congregations already existed, mainline Protestantism did not enter Puerto Rico until the conclusion of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Mainline Protestantism was a concomitant phenomenon that accompanied the expansion of U.S. territories into those previously held by Spain and Mexico. Born from both a Puritan and evangelical missionary spirit, mainline Latino Protestantism reflected the beliefs and practices of that particular religious tradition as well as the cultural values and customs of the Anglo-American missionaries who introduced Protestantism into their communities.

The Term Hispanic Mainline Protestant

While one can properly talk about Latinos who are members of churches affiliated with mainline Protestant denominations, one can also differentiate mainline Latino Protestantism according to other categories, such as evangelical, liberal, fundamentalist, conservative, and Pentecostal/charismatic. Latino mainline Protestants share their roots in historic Protestantism, but they have a variety of spiritual and political identities. Hence, one can be a Latino mainline Protestant with a high educational status and liberal political views, while another Latino mainline Protestant can consider himself or herself a charismatic or evangelical and politically conservative. The majority of Latino/a mainline Protestants consider themselves born-again Christians, but there are others who do not identify with this religious category. In short, there are strands of religious beliefs and practices that cut across denominational affiliation.

Protestant Missions' Relationship with U.S. Expansion

Mainline Anglo-American Protestantism was a religious component of the political and economic extension of the United States into new territories. Protestantism accompanied U.S. military, political, and economic forces into territories previously held by Spain and later Mexico. As soon as Texas declared its independence from Mexico in 1836,

Protestant denominations sent missionaries into the nascent republic. Until then, Protestantism had been illegal in Texas under Mexican sovereignty. Likewise, Protestant denominational and independent mission boards sent missionaries into the Southwest following the U.S. annexation of Mexico's far northern territories in 1848. The missionaries had religious as well as political motives for their work. They certainly desired to save the souls of the Spanish-speaking inhabitants, but they also believed it imperative to Americanize the Mexicans now under U.S. sovereignty. Such Americanization would prevent a Catholic population from gaining control of territorial and state government and would annihilate the "otherness" of Mexican Americans. The overall goal was to mold a population that would resemble white, middle-class American Protestants.

Protestant accompaniment of U.S. political, territorial, and military advancement also occurred in Puerto Rico upon the victory of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Many of the denominations entered Puerto Rico only one year after the Treaty of Paris ceded the island from Spain to the United States. A comity agreement among several North American denominations (Christian & Missionary Alliance, Evangelical United Brethren, Presbyterian, Congregational, American Baptist, Methodist Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran, and Disciples of Christ) occurred in 1898 immediately upon the U.S. annexation of territories held by Spain following the Spanish-American War. Through that agreement, Protestant mission agencies divided the island into several regions, each one dedicated to a particular denomination. For this reason, one's denominational affiliation was based upon the region of the island in which he or she resided. Southern Baptists, the Episcopal Church, and Pentecostals did not participate in these comity agreements. In addition to the Protestant denominations, North American mission societies, the American Mission Society, the American Bible Society, among others, also entered Puerto Rico. Because the U.S. president William McKinley installed the first governors on the island, the Protestant missionaries maintained a close relationship with the government on the island, often being influential in shaping policy.

Mexico and the Southwest

Presbyterians

Four Presbyterian missionaries—Sumner Bacon, William C. Blair, John McCullough, and Melinda Rankin—engaged in work among the Spanish-speaking throughout the

nineteenth century in Texas, but their work did not result in permanent congregations. The first organized congregation in Texas was in Brownsville in 1877. It was founded through the evangelistic work of Mexicans from the church in Matamoros, Mexico, part of the Presbytery of Tamaulipas, Mexico. This presbytery eventually founded other Spanish-speaking churches throughout the lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas. The second church founded in Texas was also the product of Mexican Presbyterians. José María Botello, an elder from the Presbyterian Church in Matamoros, founded a Spanish-speaking congregation in San Marcos, Texas, in 1887. By 1907, Presbyterians had established seventeen congregations, with nearly one thousand members. These congregations were organized in 1908 into the Texas-Mexican Presbytery in San Marcos, Texas. This separate Spanish-language presbytery gradually expanded during subsequent decades. Over time, faced with a lack of self-sustaining churches and indigenous pastors, in 1955 the presbytery was dissolved and merged with the existing presbyteries of Texas. Without an organized, semi-autonomous structure, Mexican American Presbyterianism in Texas gradually declined following the dissolution of the Texas-Mexican Presbytery.

While the southern branch of Presbyterianism focused on Texas, northern Presbyterianism in New Mexico focused its work on northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. Unable to succeed with evangelistic work, southern Presbyterians shifted to educational and social ministries. Twenty-four schools with forty-eight teachers existed by 1888. The schools, which provided the only means of education in many towns, were gradually eclipsed by public schools after the New Mexico territorial legislature established a territorial board of education in 1891. By 1920, eight Presbyterian schools remained in northern New Mexico and one in southern Colorado. The Spanish-speaking churches were closely tied to the schools, for the schools provided a conduit from the local community to their churches. Subsequent to their emphasis on education, Presbyterians shifted their focus to medical and social ministries. Beginning in 1914, Presbyterians opened their first of several clinics and hospitals. Facing pressures similar to those of the Texas-Mexican Presbytery, Mexican American Presbyterians saw a retrenchment of congregational development throughout the Southwest through the course of the twentieth century.

Methodists

Methodism among the Spanish-speaking began with missionaries sent to Texas following its independence from

Mexico, followed by missionaries entering Mexico and the U.S. Southwest in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Mexican and Mexican American Methodists formed their first conference in 1885, the Mexican Border Missionary Conference.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, the northern branch of Methodism, gained a foothold in New Mexico. The first foray into New Mexico by Methodists occurred in 1851, when the Methodist Episcopal Church's mission board sent Rev. E.G. Nicholson, Rev. Walter Hansen, and Benigno Cárdenas, a former priest from Mexico and New Mexico, to begin evangelistic work there. While their stay was brief, they left a dedicated layperson there, Ambrosio González, who maintained a small Methodist class in Peralta. New Mexico Methodism got its second start when Thomas and Emily Harwood arrived from Wisconsin in 1869. After their work there divided along languages, the Harwoods remained with the Spanish-speaking district. Thomas Harwood served as the superintendent of the New Mexican Mission from 1872 until his retirement in 1907. Methodism in New Mexico reached its apex upon Harwood's retirement. Devoid of a strong, charismatic leader, Spanish-speaking Methodism in New Mexico gradually declined.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, although having a few churches in New Mexico, focused its work in Texas, northern Mexico, and southern California. The first ordained Protestant Latino in the United States was Alejo Hernandez, a native of Mexico who was ordained by the bishop at the 1871 annual meeting of the West Texas Conference in Leesburg, Texas. Although a missionary had been appointed to the Spanish-speaking work in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas in 1859, the first organized effort began in 1872, when the Rev. Alexander Sutherland was appointed the superintendent of the Mexican Border Mission District of the West Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, with six appointments on both sides of the Rio Grande. A second district emerged, eventually resulting in the Mexican Border Mission Conference, the first Spanish-speaking Methodist conference in 1885. The conference spanned both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. Other districts and conferences emerged in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and northern Mexico. When three major branches of Methodism merged in 1939, the northern and southern branches of Hispanic Methodism in the Southwest merged, resulting in a Mexican-American conference in California and Arizona and another in Texas and New

Mexico. The latter conference, the Rio Grande Conference, continues to this day.

Southern Baptists

The first permanent work of Southern Baptists in Texas began with the establishment of a congregation in Laredo by John and Thomas Westrup in 1880 and 1881. Shortly after that, a Spanish-speaking church was organized in San Antonio. With twenty-four congregations in operation, messengers from these churches met in Brownsville, Texas, to organize the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas in 1910. The autonomous convention continued to grow throughout the twentieth century. Caught up in the national trend toward integration, the convention merged with the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1960. Unlike Presbyterians, Mexican American Baptists continued to increase in Texas following the merger of these two organizations. Unlike any other mainline denomination, the Baptist General Convention of Texas now maintains its own Hispanic-oriented university, Baptist University of the Americas. With its emphasis on evangelism, fewer educational requirements for pastors, and the ability to establish independent congregations, Mexican American Baptists had greater flexibility to create new congregations than other mainline denominations.

Missionary Influence of Hispanic Protestantism

Throughout much of its history, missionaries and denominational mission boards dominated the leadership of Latino mainline Protestantism. Even when Latinos established autonomous organizations, such as the Texas-Mexican Presbytery, the Rio Grande Conference, and the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas, Anglo-American missionaries continued to serve as the leaders and decision makers of these organizations. This is one reason for the push toward autonomy by the Protestant churches in Mexico and to some extent in Puerto Rico. During the missionary period of mainline Latino Protestantism, which lasted into the 1960s in some cases, the decision making by denominational mission personnel regarding the establishment of congregations, the placement of personnel and pastors, the control and allocation of finances, and the boundaries of ecclesiastical jurisdictions was unilateral and excluded the participation of the ones affected by their decisions. While Latino leadership did emerge, it was not until the 1960s that Latinos were able to effectively assert

their leadership over their congregations, judicatories, and organizations.

The Mexican Revolution

The Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) had a significant impact on Latino mainline Protestantism. The consequence of the political turmoil and Mexican Protestant autonomy was the migration of Protestant missionaries in Mexico to the U.S. Southwest. Until that time, U.S. mission agencies had allocated more resources to their work in Mexico than to their work in the U.S. Southwest. With Mexico no longer a viable mission field, many of those Protestant missionaries who had operated in Mexico transferred their energies to the Mexican American population in the U.S. Southwest. There was plenty of mission work in the Southwest because a vast number of immigrants from Mexico entered the region during and following the Mexican Revolution. In fact, more persons migrated from Mexico than the existing population of Mexican Americans in the Southwest. This large number of new immigrants challenged Protestant churches, both national and local, to respond to the needs of these new arrivals.

The Chicano Movement

The legacy of missionary-led mainline Latino Protestantism continued even into the 1960s. However, the civil rights movement, followed by the Mexican American farm worker movements in the 1960s, brought about a change in consciousness of many Latino mainline Protestants. A cadre of Latino Protestant leaders called for an end of missionary-based structures and decisions regarding their organizations and judicatories. These Chicano and other activist Latino Protestants, determined to exercise their autonomy regarding decisions affecting their churches, found themselves in conflict with their denominational leaders and even local church leaders. After much consultation and negotiation, Chicano Protestants gained control of their judicatories. A counterpart of Chicano Protestants existed in other parts of the country, especially in the Northeast, southern Florida, and Puerto Rico. In several of the denominations, leaders in each of these regions organized into national denominational caucuses. They were not simply interested in the autonomy of their local judicatories; they proposed to change denominational policies that discriminated against them and denied them leadership positions in their denominations.

The Chicano movement also brought about a change in the identity of many Latino mainline Protestants. Previously, a sharp division existed between Latino Protestants and Catholics. While antagonism between the two groups continued, those who identified with the Chicano movement were able to cooperate under the rubric of justice and social change. In this sense, Chicano Protestants shifted their primary identity from that of denominational loyalty to one of cultural and political advocacy. The primary mission of the church, evangelism, was replaced with an emphasis on justice and social change. Likewise, there was also a shift in the differentiation between what was Roman Catholic and what was cultural. Latino mainline Protestants began to practice rituals that had previously been considered Roman Catholic, such as *Quinceañeras* ("sweet fifteens," coming of age ceremonies for fifteen-year-old girls), the imposition of ashes during Ash Wednesday service, and the ritual of *Las Posadas*, a reenactment of Joseph and Mary's entrance into Bethlehem. In the area of worship and ritual, many Hispanic Protestants adopted what was previously considered Roman Catholic, including the use of stoles, paraments (altar linens), candles, and processions.

Issues

Proselytism or Evangelism?

There is significant disagreement about the interpretation of the entrance of Latinos into mainline Protestantism. Apart from the Native American populations, the inhabitants of the U.S. Southwest were of Spanish and *mestizo* descent. Roman Catholicism was the official religion of Spain and its American territories, including the lands currently comprising the present-day U.S. Southwest. Protestant missionaries to these territories faced a Spanish-speaking population that was singularly Roman Catholic. With an inherent anti-Catholic disposition, Protestant missionaries understood their call to deliver Mexicans and Mexican Americans from the control of what they considered a corrupted and un-Christian tradition. With this attitude, the Protestant evangelization of the Spanish-speaking became a clash of Hispanic and Anglo-American cultures, as well as a religious competition for the loyalty of the Spanish-speaking peoples.

Reflecting the contest between Roman Catholicism and mainline Protestantism, there exist opposing interpretations of the evangelistic ministries by Protestant missionaries. Those critical of this work refer to it as proselytism, which is popularly called "sheep stealing." They argue that

by virtue of their baptisms in the Roman Catholic Church, the Mexican and Mexican American people were already Christian. The evangelistic work of Protestants refused to recognize the validity of their Christian faith. Those who prefer to interpret this work as evangelization argue that the Mexican and Mexican American people had little knowledge of Christianity because of the lack of Roman Catholic priests and churches. They argue that the faith of these groups was misguided and rooted in unnecessary accretions of beliefs and practices, such as the adoration of saints. Thus, the study of the history of Latino mainline Protestants needs to take into account the historic tension that has existed between Protestantism and Catholicism as well as between English/Anglo-American and Spanish civilizations. The student of this phenomenon should recognize that the use of the terms *evangelization* and *proselytism* connote particular evaluations of this historical tradition.

Protestantism and Pentecostalism

Some of the mainline Protestant denominations (Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist) established Spanish-speaking congregations before the emergence of Pentecostalism in the early 1900s. Nonetheless, Latino Pentecostalism gradually eclipsed the number of Latinos in mainline Protestantism. In New York City, a survey of Latino Protestants observed that Latino Pentecostal churches increased rapidly between 1937 and 1967, from 25 to 250 churches. Throughout the twentieth century, the number of Latino Pentecostal congregations outpaced mainline Protestant churches in the United States and Puerto Rico. One reason for the slower growth of Latino mainline Protestantism is the complex governance system of denominations. The polity of each mainline Protestant denomination did not take into account the context of Latino congregations. For example, the standards for ordination in the Presbyterian Church required a thorough education, including knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. Few Latinos in the Presbyterian Church, as well as in other denominations, had access to higher education until the 1950s and 1960s. Requirements for the establishment of congregations made the establishment of new congregations a more bureaucratic process. Because of the lower income levels of most Latinos, only a few of the Latino Protestant congregations were able to gain self-sustaining status. Meanwhile, Pentecostals as well as Baptists had less stringent educational requirements for ordained ministry and favored the establishment of independent congregations. Mainline Protestantism did not provide

the flexibility for ministry and congregational development that was present among Pentecostals.

In addition to structural and institutional differences, Pentecostal predominance among Protestants developed because of its ability to gain a level of acceptance not present among most mainline Protestants. Emerging from the farm worker camps and from the *barrios* of cities, Pentecostal pastors spoke a language that resonated with the struggles and aspirations of the various Latino communities. Pentecostals were unencumbered by the Anglo-American middle-class values that had accompanied mainline Protestant missions among the Spanish-speaking.

Recent Trends

A long-term challenge to the growth of Hispanic mainline Protestantism has been the dearth of effective indigenous pastoral leadership. In 2007, the Episcopal Church had fewer than fifteen Hispanics enrolled in masters-level degree programs designed for ordained ministry in the eleven Episcopal Church seminaries. Approximately 40 percent of the Hispanic parishes and missions of the Episcopal Church are staffed by Anglo-Americans. A report by the denominational office of the United Methodist Church's office of Hispanic/Latino ministry observed that one of the greatest challenges to the development of Hispanic United Methodist congregations has been the lack of effective Hispanic pastoral leadership. As a result of the dearth of U.S. Latino clergy, mainline Protestant denominations have relied heavily on clergy immigrating from Latin America. Frequently, immigrant Protestant clergy bring with them a concept and practice of ministry that does not fit with the context of U.S. Latino communities. They may focus almost exclusively on immigrant Latin American populations rather than on long-term Latino populations.

More recently, mainline Protestant denominations have awakened to the increasing number of Latinos throughout the country. The rapid increase in the Latino population, due to several years of high levels of immigration, primarily from Mexico, and due to higher birth rates, resulted in many neighborhoods shifting from Anglo-American or African American to primarily Latino in cities throughout the country, especially in Texas, California, and Florida. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the rapid increase of immigrants from Latin America, especially Mexico, in several cities has made ministry among Hispanics a requirement in order to maintain congregations in the urban areas. In Dallas, the percentage of Latinos increased

from 8.9 percent in 1980 to 37.7 percent in 2006, eventually eclipsing non-Hispanic whites as the largest population group. In Los Angeles, the percentage of Hispanics grew to 44.6 percent in 2000, to become the largest population group in that region. Thus, many urban churches established during the first half of the twentieth century, when many new churches were built and filled with Anglo-American members, found their membership dwindling to a few dozen while the surrounding neighborhood became primarily Latino. A special form of ministry has occurred since the 1990s, called "transitional ministry," to help historically Anglo-American churches make the transition toward becoming multiethnic or Latino churches.

Institutions

A hallmark of Protestant missions in Latin America and among the Spanish-speaking in the United States and Puerto Rico has been the creation of institutions. Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians established schools, community centers, clinics, and kindergartens in the Southwest and Puerto Rico. The mainline Protestant denominations created an ecumenical seminary in Puerto Rico, called Seminario Evangélico, near San Juan. Continuing the penchant for institution building, the Reverend Justo L. González, a Cuban American United Methodist, probably the first Latino mainline Protestant to earn a Ph.D. in the study of religion (church history), led various efforts to found three important institutions benefitting Latino Christians. He authored a study on Latino theological education that resulted in the establishment of the Hispanic Summer Program (HSP) in 1989, a consortium of a few dozen educational institutions offering accredited masters-level courses for Latinos in theological education. He provided leadership for the foundation of a Latino ecumenical organization in 1991, the *Asociación para la Educación Teológica Hispana* (Association for Hispanic Theological Education), also known as AETH. In 1996, he became the first executive director of the newly formed Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI), which fostered the increase of Latinos in doctoral studies in theological education and religious studies. While each of these institutions is ecumenical, Latino mainline Protestants have provided significant leadership and participation in these organizations.

Scholarship

A number of quantitative and qualitative national studies on Latino Christianity have been conducted since the

1980s that include consideration of Latino Protestantism. Among the most significant national studies are those conducted by Andrew Greeley, David Maldonado, Larry Hunt, Edwin Hernandez, Justo L. González, Anthony Stevens-Arroyo, and the Pew-sponsored study titled “Hispanic Churches in American Public Life” under the leadership of Virgilio Elizondo and Jesse Miranda and directed by Gastón Espinosa.

See also *Baptists* entries; *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements*; *Latino American Religion: Struggles for Justice*; *Liberation Theology*; *Methodists* entries; *Mexico: Protestants*; *Missions: Domestic*; *Music: Coritos/Spanish Language*; *Presbyterians* entries; *Religious Thought: Latino/a*; *Southwest as Region*.

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Latino American Religion: Pentecostals

To suggest, as many media observers have, that the growing number of Latinos who are Pentecostals is a recent phenomenon is historically inaccurate and does not allow for a full picture of the complexity of Latino religious life, especially with regard to issues of conversion, assimilation, and new religious identities within the larger framework of American Protestantism.

1906–1930s

In its short history of just over one hundred years, Latino Pentecostalism has gone through several periods of growth and decline. In the early years of the movement, roughly 1906 to the 1930s, the fervor of evangelism, fueled by an equally fervent belief in the imminent Second Coming of Jesus and an often overt anti-Catholic ideology, brought a steady stream of Latinos into Pentecostal churches. Within these first thirty years, there was a broad swath of geographic diversity as well as theological diversity that marked the movement. Churches sprang up all along the borderlands of the southwest United States, major urban areas of the Midwest and Northeast, and in areas such as the Central Valley of California, where, as part of its initial attraction, Pentecostal churches opened in places where Latinos worked; in central California, farm workers became part of the churches' first cohort of converts.

As the movement stabilized in growth, it also experienced many splits due to theological differences, and also due to the perception among several major Latino ministry leaders, that to stay under the auspices of white leadership in denominations such as the Assemblies of God would not ever lead to autonomous Latino leadership within those denominations. A major theological rupture began in white churches of the Assemblies of God, soon spread to the African American church, and eventually found its way to the small group of Latino Pentecostals who had converted in southern California on the heels of the Azusa Street revival in 1906. The split between the trinitarian Pentecostal groups, chiefly the Assemblies of God, and the Oneness (non-trinitarian) groups, occurred shortly after a revival held in southern California in 1913, where an alternative baptismal formula was preached as part of a new revelation, and soon thereafter Oneness adherents began to seek to rebaptize fellow Pentecostals in the name of Jesus only, eschewing

the traditional “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” formula. Romanita Carbajal Valenzuela, converted in Los Angeles sometime shortly after the Azusa Street revival, became a Oneness adherent, and went back to her native Mexico to help found what today is the largest Pentecostal group in Mexico, the *Iglesia Apostólica de la Fe en Cristo Jesus* (the Apostolic Church of the Faith in Jesus Christ). The American branch of the church, the Apostolic Assembly, is still one of the strongest Latino-majority denominations in the United States, expanding from the traditional areas of strength in the southwest United States to newer bases of expanded immigrant growth in the Pacific Northwest, rural Midwest, and the rural southeast United States.

1940s-1980s

This steady stream of converts, to both Oneness and trinitarian varieties of Pentecostalism, continued to make modest gains from the 1940s to 1960s. These years marked the rise of the first English-dominant generation to be raised in Pentecostalism and, for churches brought with it, the challenges of retaining second-generation children in the movement, and assimilating into the dominant culture to keep their English-speaking children in church. The Jesus movement of the 1960s (an evangelical movement among young people with roots in California) began to reignite not only classical Pentecostal churches (Assemblies of God; Four-square; Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee), but also to reignite a charismatic renewal in mainline churches as well. This diffuse movement introduced Pentecostal spirituality and evangelical fervor to people in a less dogmatic, more accessible way. It also meant that Latinos who found Pentecostalism through the Jesus movement were finding in their churches less a reinforcement of ethnic identity than an emphasis on obtaining and maintaining a vibrant charismatic religious identity that did not need to be tied to traditional Pentecostal denominations, did not seek to be dogmatic, and offered second- and third-generation Latino Pentecostals a way to be Pentecostal outside the confines of their parents’ churches.

As the Jesus movement faded in the late 1970s, Latino Pentecostalism began to find its own revitalization, much in the same way as it began, as a part of the religious expression of Spanish-speaking first-generation Latino immigrants from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. The theological diversity, autonomous leadership, and tremendous spike in the growth of the movement all have occurred with this latest wave of adherents. It is this wave

that many media observers have taken note of; this latest surge, which began roughly in the early to mid-1980s, has received the bulk of attention by popular and academic observers alike.

Historical Origins: Key Figures

Francisco Olazábal (1886–1937) was a Mexican evangelist who became part of the Assemblies of God in the late 1910s. Olazábal soon became one of the most successful traveling, healing evangelists in the denomination. This success met with some trepidation among the Assemblies leaders, many of whom openly distrusted placing too much power in Olazábal’s hands. Of particular concern were a series of disputed events that occurred throughout 1923, when Olazábal sought to raise money for his fledgling ministries in south Texas as well as open a Bible school in the area. Assemblies leader J. Roswell Flower did not allow Olazábal to raise funds for the Bible school and instead placed former missionaries Henry C. Ball and Alice E. Luce in charge of the Mexican outreach in the borderlands, including the running of both the Texas and California Bible institutes. Olazábal and his followers soon left the denomination and formed their own group, the Council of Latin American Churches. Olazábal’s story is not out of the ordinary in Latino Pentecostal history; one of the consequences of outreach to the community has been attitudes of paternalism that, despite decades of autonomy, continue to be a cornerstone of Latino-white relations within Pentecostal churches.

Maria Atkinson, affectionately known as the mother of Mexican Pentecostalism, is another important figure within Latino Pentecostalism. Because she was a woman in leadership, and a Latina, Atkinson’s work for the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), in Mexico and the borderlands, is significant for a number of reasons. First, her leadership demonstrates that gender issues intermixed with issues of ethnicity formed a double barrier to women’s rise on the leadership ladder. Blocked from leadership because of traditional readings of gender roles as well as an emphasis on assimilation (probably on Atkinson’s part), Atkinson never held an official leadership position, though she founded dozens of churches, trained pastors, and was singularly responsible for the presence of Latinos in the Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, from 1898 to 1940.

In today’s Latino Pentecostal churches, gender issues are as divisive as they have always been, particularly in denominations that do not accept any leadership role for women. The debate over assimilation versus acculturation also continues

into the early twenty-first century. What identity matters to Latino Pentecostals? Is it that they are Latino, or that they are Pentecostal? Do the historic attempts to Americanize Latino converts have any effects today? If so, is that such a bad thing given the hotly contested immigration debates?

Current Efforts

The demographic reality of the growth of the Latino community makes its growth in Pentecostal denominations quite understandable. A continuous immigration flow, changing patterns of settlement in older neighborhoods that are in transition from one ethnic group to the next, and a sustained effort through decades of outreach has resulted in a stabilized and steady presence of Latinos in nearly all quarters of American Pentecostalism. Because the movement is so diffuse, it is difficult to generalize about what these many outreach efforts have produced; they have produced everything from progressive Latino Pentecostal parachurch organizations, autonomous churches that vary from English-speaking, progressive emergent groups to traditional, conservative, and sectarian brands. Although Latinos make up significant numbers of members in the largest white denomination (Assemblies of God, roughly 15 percent), their rise to leadership positions during the twentieth century was arduous and filled with setbacks. This is not true of only the Assemblies; other white denominations such as the Foursquare denomination have not begun to move Latinos into leadership positions in nearly the numbers that are proportional to their numbers in the denomination. According to much of the outreach literature of the past two decades, the desire to diversify among many Pentecostal denominations has not derived from an enlightened view of Latinos but of the demographic reality of their becoming the largest minority group in the United States.

Strengths of Outreach Efforts

One of the key strengths of outreach historically and currently is to recognize that Latinos wanted to receive ministry in their own language and that they were separated from the mainstream of American society because of entrenched social class and economic issues. Pentecostals did and still do outreach anywhere that Latinos work and live. They did and still do outreach in Spanish and English, cognizant of cultural issues that make family ties central to the core of Latino communities. Pentecostals did and still do emphasize the supernatural nature of the Pentecostal message, particularly that divine healing is not an abstraction in ancient texts

but a reality anyone can access with sufficient faith. The ability to have Pentecostalism fill not just spiritual needs but practical needs within an alternative health care system seems to be a factor in the sustained presence of Pentecostalism in Latino religious life.

Weaknesses of Outreach Efforts

The most serious weakness in the outreach efforts to Latinos was the patronizing efforts to gain converts by appealing to rampant anti-Catholicism and using the “inferiority” of Latinos as a way to raise funds and support mission work, and thereby perpetuate for more than a hundred years racist attitudes about Latinos. The worst infractions of this kind occurred earlier in the twentieth century, but appealing to anti-Catholic sentiment has continued to be a part of some conversion efforts among Latinos. The early years of outreach in effect set up leadership systems that made Latinos dependent on better-educated and better-funded white supervisors to support their churches. Despite decades of trying to break free of this dependency, many Latino Pentecostals, especially those who are in first-generation immigrant churches in large majority white denominations, are often at the mercy of white superintendents for funding and often for things as essential as spaces to worship.

Another serious weakness is that historic and many contemporary Pentecostal ministry models conflated Christianity with Americanization, and while this conflation is certainly not exclusive to Pentecostalism (the Catholic Church had decades of the same model in ethnic communities), this conflation created a false idea in the minds of many Pentecostals that for one to be truly converted not only meant a change in spiritual ideas but also a change in attitudes. One often had to display a sufficient amount of national pride, along with a cessation of pride in one’s own ethnicity; in a more subtle way, conversion also required a change of political ideas that reflected a more “biblical” way of seeing things such as abortion and homosexuality.

Weaknesses within the Latino Pentecostal movement cannot all be blamed on classism or racism; often disparate Latino Pentecostal groups adopt strategies that promote sectarianism and cliquishness based largely on perceived theological threats but in reality are rooted in ethnic chauvinism and theological legalism. The schismatic nature of the Latino Pentecostal movement soon surpassed any desire for spiritual solidarity. This lack of cohesion still plagues Latino Pentecostalism in the early twenty-first century, as there seems to be no cohesive core to the movement but

hundreds of competing agendas, theological and otherwise, that often play themselves out as mere secular concerns about power and politics.

Latino Pentecostalism and the New Immigrants

New immigrants since the 1980s are providing Latino Pentecostalism with not only stable growth but also theologically innovative Pentecostalism that has veered away from the traditional centers of power in established denominations to dozens of independent neo-Pentecostal churches. Such churches do not have the historical baggage of assimilation, offer plenty of leadership opportunities, and support cultural markers that tie immigrants closely to their home countries. Latino immigrants gravitate to Pentecostal churches because they serve as places of spiritual and cultural solace amid the harsh realities of living in the United States.

The theological innovations found in these independent churches vary, but a quick glance will find traditional trinitarians, Oneness adherents, ultraconservative legalistic churches, prosperity gospel churches, neo-Calvinist Pentecostals, Pentecostals who have embraced some Mosaic laws, and many other variations. One reason for this phenomenon may be because there are no roots in any established denominations; therefore there are no set theological proscriptions to uphold. As such, adoption of the prosperity gospel, for example, is just as likely to occur because of ties to prosperity teachers or from varieties of media sources. The benefits of these independent Latino Pentecostal churches may be autonomy and self-governance, but such autonomy often means that churches and pastors forego stable sources of funding. Pastors in these independent churches often have little economic security, employ family or friends to help run the church, and run the church on a shoestring budget.

Latino Pentecostal Clergy

A study of Latino evangelical clergy (of which more than half identified as Pentecostal/charismatic) noted that compared to either white or black clergy, the average Latino clergy has little or no theological education. Latino clergy are often very much like the people they minister to, meaning that they are themselves working-class individuals. This makes outreach easier, since they are familiar with the demographics of their congregations. Most Latino Pentecostal clergy are men. Though a significant number of women do an enormous amount of church work, women often do not pastor, even though women are not prohibited from doing so among two of the larger denominations,

Assemblies of God and Foursquare. In other denominations, women clergy are strictly prohibited, but women comprise most of the congregation, do much of the work, and lead and teach through varied other means outside the pastorate.

Institutional Structures and Latino Pentecostals

What once began as a movement confined to a few select denominations has become a movement that can change overnight by the dropping of a church name, a change in theology, or, more rarely, a new revelation that church must be done differently. Like other evangelicalism, Latino Pentecostalism is seeing the end of denominational identity as critical to one's religious identity. There are many reasons that denominational ties have weakened; among Latino Pentecostals, generational change means that second-, third-, and even fourth-generation Latino Pentecostals may experience their faith differently than did their parents. Hence, later generations would like their church experience to be in English; they are not as legalistic as their parents; they want to see modernization come to the church in the form of gender equity; and they are more concerned with social justice issues than were previous generations. These Latino Pentecostals have more often than not separated from the denomination in which they were raised in lieu of a generic evangelical church or mainline church that appeals to their progressive theological and cultural outlooks. If they are seeking to retain any part of their Latino Pentecostal identity, they often do so privately and in parachurch organizations where their faith lives as Pentecostals are valued and their social issues addressed.

Another institutional structure that has been changing in an attempt to meet the growing demands of successive generations of Latino Pentecostals is the role of the Bible school or institute in the training of pastors. Bible schools have not historically, nor are they currently, capable of offering the kind of theological education students would find in the average seminary. The longevity of the Bible schools in the case of Latinos lies in the communal nature of many of these schools. Bible institutes are intimate, practical, affordable, and accessible. Though they do not have the resources to offer as many courses and they often do not hire faculty with postgraduate theological training, they do provide a crucial link between pastors and established seminaries.

Struggle for Justice

Part of the reason that social justice efforts did not affect Latino Pentecostal churches in the same ways they affected black churches is that Latinos largely adopted the eschatological

fervency of their white supervisors. Although there are countless examples of white Pentecostal clergy who were aware of the often degrading and dehumanizing conditions Latinos were forced to live in for most of the twentieth century, there are few examples of white Pentecostal leaders who had the theological tools to be able to carve out a social justice agenda. Such paralysis continues into the early twenty-first century, as many Latino Pentecostals have not been able to construct a vibrant social justice agenda, often subsuming that under the urgency of evangelism. Efforts to mobilize Latino Pentecostal leaders around particular issues such as immigration are often conducted at the leadership level, or at the level of highly educated theologians or clergy, who are not the majority of Latino Pentecostals. Additionally, by concentrating on single-issue politics such as immigration, many progressive Latino Pentecostals do themselves a disservice by taking their already limited political capital too far in one direction, to the detriment of a host of issues that never receive much discussion in Latino Pentecostal circles.

Critical Assessment and Projections for the Future

Like most religious movements, Latino Pentecostalism ebbs and flows. There are always peaks in membership, interest, and intensity; there are stabilizing periods; and there are downward turns. Like most movements, generalizations do not do it justice. However, it is likely that if the life of a Latino Pentecostal church begins in a storefront in a major urban area, or a rural one, the pastor began his ministry somewhere else. Possibly disaffected with an established denomination, he runs his storefront church with the help of his immediate family and a few friends. The church is small, as is its membership; over the life of that church, it may peak at about fifty members. This church will be Spanish-dominant and veer toward the conservative legalistic side; women will not preach and all members will adhere to a dress code and a heightened sense of piety that often is the topic of the sermons. There will also be a heightened sense of spiritual gifts. More than the average middle-class white Pentecostal church, this church will have a more experiential feel: more speaking in tongues, prophecy, music, dancing, falling out under the Holy Spirit. Because often ethnic churches view themselves as the last bulwark against the liberalizing tendencies of modernity, this storefront will erect a strict barrier against heterodox ideas. Yet despite the best attempts by the pastor and congregation, religious life is not static. The language, music, culture, and theology all will change—as soon as the next

generation realizes that they don't want to worship in Spanish, they don't like hymns, and they don't see a problem with women wearing pants and preaching. Thus the search continues for another church in which this new generation can find its own identity.

The future of Latino Pentecostalism will likely be post- and transdenominational: postdenominational because that is the only way theological innovations can take place outside the auspices of denominations that have a stake in protecting their own theological identities and do not allow theological differences; transdenominational because some worshipers want to participate theologically in more than one denomination—some want to be Calvinist and Pentecostal, some want to be liturgical and charismatic, and some are Catholic and Pentecostal. Because it is continually replenished by a steady stream of immigrants and new converts, Latino Pentecostalism grows and shows no real movement to stabilize into another ethnic church. Historically, subgroups within the larger movement of Latino Pentecostalism that have refused to change have not grown; for example, Olazábal's church and the Council of Latin American churches—which have been content with generational growth, or have sought to maintain a particular national identity—have not grown. For every storefront that opens up tomorrow, there will be a Spanish Foursquare or Assembly of God church that will close its doors.

For all its promise, the future of Latino Pentecostalism is bleak in at least one regard. Progressively minded Latino Pentecostals lament the lack of a cohesive social justice agenda. This omission has caused nearly a generation of leaders to leave the churches that introduced them to the faith, and it is this lack that continues to keep Latino Pentecostalism relegated to the margins of evangelical Christianity. Unless this lack of a core is remedied by a new generation of leaders who are willing to stay in their churches until change occurs, the exodus of Latino Pentecostals will continue.

See also *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements; Glossolalia; Healing; Latino American Religion* entries; *Liberation Theology; Mexico* entries; *Music: Coritos/Spanish Language; Pentecostal Denominational Family; Pentecostals* entries; *Religious Thought: Latino/a; Religious Thought: Mujerista*.

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Latino American Religion: Struggles for Justice

The term *struggles for justice* presumes that Latinos and Latinas in the United States of America suffer from injustice. An educated public in the early twenty-first century is likely to accept as fact the notion of historical injustice against Latinos and Latinas by comparing their experiences with those of African Americans or the historical patterns of discrimination against various European immigrants. In the first case, racism was at the core of the criticism; in the second, the focus was upon intolerance of ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious differences. In all cases, struggles for justice imply imperfections in U.S. policies and attendant social forces in America's history.

While Latinos and Latinas of faith have struggled against racism and ethnic discrimination, they present a historically different category of injustice. Before the thirteen English colonies became the United States of America in 1776, Spanish-speaking people had established cities and built churches in Texas, New Mexico, and California. The original European settlers from Spain often had married members of the Native American population to create a people of mixed race. With the annexation of Texas and of the Mexican territories in the nineteenth century, however, these ancestors of most of today's Latinos and Latinas were forced to comply with a new legal code. Some advantages came with the new form of government, but these were accompanied by backward steps such as restoring legal slavery, a nefarious practice that Mexico had previously abolished. Moreover, an influx of English-speakers from North America seeking land and fortune upset the existing social prominence enjoyed by Spanish-speaking residents, particularly in Texas and California. In 1898, Puerto Rico was conquered, which brought many of the same negative effects to the Puerto Ricans. In the case of Puerto Rico, however, there was no large in-migration of conquerors.

Simply put, the Latino presence in the United States was not the result of Hispanics traveling to America but rather of the U.S. military invading and annexing Latino homelands. Racial discrimination used against Mexicans and Puerto Ricans to subdue and rule the annexed lands had a different context from the African American struggles to abolish slavery or to end Jim Crow laws (laws enforcing segregation). Likewise, the arguments in favor of European immigrant assimilation do not neatly apply to Latinos and Latinas in conquered lands. While many argued that European immigrants should assimilate, the same did not apply to Latinos. Imitating the ways of the first settlers would have meant that the burden of adjustment was on the incoming English-speaking North Americans. This unique aspect of Latino history as one of the conquered peoples of America colors every struggle by Latinos and Latinas for justice.

Patterns of Religious Mobilization and Types of Organization

Churches have been cradle to some, but not to all, Latino struggles for justice in the twentieth century. Most faith-based efforts to achieve social justice take two approaches: (1) work through grassroots movements that create effective organizations; and (2) coalesce around issues large enough to engage existing organizations (including secular ones) in a common plan to remedy injustice.

People of faith can be characterized by their priorities toward the struggle for justice. Are the issues that motivate struggle for justice internal or external to the church? An example of the internal focus might be an after-school program that teaches young people about the Bible. The external effect would be a soup kitchen staffed by parish volunteers to feed the poor.

Differences of focus are further affected by the concept of authority in the social justice struggle. Some have a hierarchical view of religious leadership, in which the role of the faithful is to implement the policy decisions made by church leaders. If these persons are focused on internal church change, we call them "disciples." Examples are members of a parish or congregation who register to vote only when so instructed from the pulpit that voting is a means of advancing the church's mission to the world. Persons interested in social questions outside the church are "politicians," who typically seek church approval for a specific issue such as a law against gay marriage or in favor of immigration reform. Whether of left or right, this type relegates church struggle to top-down decision making.

The other types of religious participation in social issues perceive their role as participants who collaborate with each other and with secular organizations. Those who dedicate themselves to such struggles out of a concern for the church are called “pastoralists”; those whose target for change is secular society may be categorized as “liberationists.” These groups often collaborate on many issues but have different criteria for evaluating the struggle. Take, for instance, an effort to picket a factory to end discrimination in hiring practices. Liberationists would consider the picket to have failed unless the discrimination is ended. Pastoralists are likely to respond, “Well, the picket was a failure, but at least the church was present to them in their struggle—sharing, growing, failing, suffering, but always loving.” This difference is particularly noticeable in coalitions and alliances. Liberationists are not as reluctant as pastoralists to struggle for social justice as allies with secular organizations.

The Great Depression

Before the Great Depression of the 1930s, the most common form of Latino social justice organizations were various brotherhoods, more or less in the model of civic organizations that also attended to community needs such as places to hold meetings, dances, and fiestas. In Ibora City, the Cuban cigar factory set up in today’s Tampa, Florida, was a self-contained civic community. In New York, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Cubans developed brotherhoods fashioned to meet the needs of urban migrants. The Knights of Labor and the Knights of Columbus also followed the brotherhood model. In Corpus Christi, Texas, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) held its first convention on May 18, 1929, joining together smaller local groups with names such as the Order of the Sons of America and the Knights of America. LULAC was not a religious organization, but it enlisted many religious persons in its campaigns for social justice. These brotherhoods fit into the liberationist group because they were focused on goals external to the churches and were based on cooperation among different groups and nationalities.

The most visible religious initiatives to address social justice issues in the period leading up to the New Deal of President Franklin Roosevelt had been the settlement houses. Hull House in Chicago, founded in 1889, was the first and perhaps most famous of these institutions, which focused upon self-help through education, particularly for women. Often church groups sponsored settlement houses in service to the social gospel, with the primary beneficiaries newly

arriving European immigrants, but some—like the Mexican Christian Institute (later the Inman Institute) in San Antonio, Texas—began with service to the Spanish-speaking. Casita María in Spanish Harlem (1934) used the settlement house concept for Catholic service to Puerto Ricans.

While there was a history of Latino struggles for justice before the Great Depression and the New Deal of the 1930s, today’s movements are best understood in light of events after the first third of the twentieth century. The Depression fractured the segregated isolation of Mexican Americans on the U.S. mainland and devastated the agricultural economy of the island of Puerto Rico. There were two basic effects of this fracturing of nineteenth-century patterns. First, the massive federal government interventions with social programs under the New Deal brought Latinos and Latinas into political networks. Existing labor movements with Latino and Latina workers were able to join with established majority groups such as the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Second, Latinos and Latinas began to move about the United States, migrating away from the Latino homelands.

This migration that followed in the wake of the New Deal was greatly intensified by World War II. These Latinos were not immigrants from a foreign land, but U.S. citizens by birth who had been segregated into Spanish-speaking communities. Often enlisted as a replacement workforce by factories that had lost their employees to the armed forces, these 1940s migrants expanded the existing *colonias* or Latino neighborhoods scattered throughout the United States.

Also secular, but with an appeal to religious identity, was the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party under Pedro Albizu Campos (1891–1965). The party platform breathed life into the revanchist (that is, restoration of a conquered group) drive for independence from the United States and added a cultural matrix that identified the island with Catholic tradition and an economic model based on papal encyclicals. Pedro Albizu Campos was imprisoned and the Nationalist Party, first in 1936 and later in 1950, was repressed by the U.S. government as communist. In the vacuum, the New Deal secularism of Luis Muñoz Marín (1898–1980) met many social justice needs while eschewing separation from the United States. The absence of a religious linkage for Muñoz’s political party would lead in the 1960 presidential election to a bitter confrontation with the Catholic bishops over state sponsorship for birth control programs.

Church support for the programs of the New Deal was highly visible, particularly from Catholics and mainline

Protestants committed to social justice. Moreover, Latino educators, writers, poets, and political thinkers contributed to the slow but convincing emergence of intellectuals. Some, such as Mexican American Carlos Eduardo Castaneda (1896–1958) and the Puerto Rican Isabel Gutiérrez de Arroyo (d. 1987), paid particular attention to religious factors in their scholarship.

Post-World War II

The general prosperity of the postwar years produced the Great Puerto Rican Migration (1946–1964) that transferred 40 percent of the island's population to the U.S. mainland, principally to New York City. For Mexican Americans in southern California, the era created a cultural identity problem. As descendants of the original settlers of cities such as Los Angeles, they were not Mexicans, but as lifelong urban dwellers, neither were they migrants from rural towns. This urban group celebrated its differences in distinctive clothing and a style of talk in Spanish called *Caló*. From this group emerged the *pachucos* or “Zoot-Suiters.” Characterized as urban juvenile delinquents or gang members by critics, the *pachucos* anticipated later self-help Latino militancy against discrimination. What Eleanor Roosevelt described as a “race riot” was sparked by the 1943 beatings of *pachucos* by U.S. Marines and sailors. The violence took place in a Los Angeles barrio called “Chavez Ravine.” Classified as a slum, its homes were later demolished to make way for a baseball stadium. The east coast version of these young and defiant Latinos was featured in the Broadway musical *West Side Story*, about a Romeo-and-Juliet-like encounter between Euro-Americans and Puerto Ricans.

The size and scope of the demographic changes in urban areas outside the Latino homelands launched the first important nationwide service effort from the Catholic Church. The Bishops' Committee for the Spanish-Speaking was created in 1945 as an interregional network of churches to provide services for the seasonal migratory farm workers as they left Texas and passed through the Midwest. A decade later, the Archdiocese of New York created a similar regional effort in the northeastern United States to coordinate Catholic programs for the Puerto Rican migrants. Because the Cuban exodus after the fall of the Batista dictatorship in 1959 brought to the United States not the rural poor but a relatively prosperous urban middle-class Cuban, it was the exception rather than the rule to the urban migration of Latinos. But the model perfected among Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans for an apostolate of pastoral

outreach and organized social concern benefited these Cubans, who settled mostly in south Florida and parts of New Jersey. The early 1960s were characterized by Catholic Church involvement, along with similar commitments from mainstream Protestant churches, in addressing the material needs of Latinos on a scale not previously matched.

While Latinos and Latinas were not excluded from these kinds of faith-based social service providers, for the most part these agencies were run by non-Latinos. It was relatively novel for the Catholic Church, unlike Protestant and Pentecostal churches, to engage in a nationwide effort to place Latinos and Latinas in church leadership. The Catholic *cursillo* movement spread throughout Latino communities in the decade of the 1960s. Moreover, because only the laity were to hold official titles in the movement, by the 1970s the *cursillo* served to develop lay Latino leaders and bring them into national networks.

The Second Vatican Council, Civil Rights Movement, Immigration Reform, and the War on Poverty

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) of the Roman Catholic Church was of major consequence to all religious bodies, although of course its principal effect was on Catholicism. The council redefined the church's role in politics and the modern world, while introducing participatory democracy and greater transparency within the church. The council also required that the Mass be celebrated “in the language of the people” rather than in Latin. In 1965, the National Council of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) decided to allow Spanish to be substituted for Latin in parishes serving Latinos, making the United States a bilingual country for Catholicism, two years before the U.S. government voted in 1967 to create the first federally funded bilingual education program.

The changes in church outlook were enhanced by the cultural and political tides of the times. These converging forces would rapidly bring Latino struggles for social justice into sharp focus. Latinos gradually entered into the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King Jr. that focused on the injustices committed against African Americans, making the argument that Latinos, too, suffered from racism. Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York added to the 1964 Voting Rights Act a clause that required a bilingual ballot in electoral districts with high concentrations of Spanish-speaking peoples. Thus, race and language were put into the mix of social justice issues.

When President Lyndon B. Johnson launched the War on Poverty in 1964, the federal government began to direct funds into poor neighborhoods, but to receive these funds, organizations had to have local leadership. In Latino *barrios*, this meant Latino leaders. Moreover, just as the War on Poverty was gathering resources, existing racial quotas for immigration were abolished with new legislation in 1965. The Dominican Republic and the nations of Central America quickly joined Mexico as major societies in the Western Hemisphere that sent immigrants to the United States. Significantly, the wave of Latin American immigrants encountered Latino leaders who were not inclined to repeat the century-old doctrine of Americanization by the churches.

The struggle against Americanization had a long history in Puerto Rico, where the independence movement had continually opposed colonialism. The radical temper of the late 1960s also had its impact upon Mexican Americans in the United States, who revived nineteenth-century concepts of revanchism. Latino militants of the late 1960s not only opposed U.S. intervention in Vietnam but also embraced anti-imperialist heroes from Latin America. Puerto Ricans born and raised in New York and Mexican Americans who had never lived in Mexico claimed sovereign rights for their homelands. This premise helped popularize the term *Chicano* to refer to people of Mexican ancestry; Puerto Ricans wanted to show that they were neither Mexican nationals nor “hyphenated” Americans and were in fact *Niurican*, Puerto Ricans of stateside birth. Young people, particularly Latino university students, were attracted to militant organizations, such as the Brown Berets and the Young Lords, that advocated confrontation with the power structure. In the earliest stages, however, these groups did not have direct links to churches. In fact, the Young Lords began by occupying a Methodist church that was characterized as out of touch with the Latino community.

The recourse to militancy in a religious defense of rights had a Latin American intellectual counterpart in the theology of liberation. The connections between the Latin American phenomenon and its Latino counterparts was to be strengthened in later years, but already in 1967 the pieces were in place for a Latino social movement to arise. The most important spur to religious struggle for justice, however, was the cause of the farm workers led by César Chávez.

The Latino Religious Resurgence

The reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the theology of liberation, the War on Poverty, new immigration and civil

rights laws, a cohort of Latino university students, antiwar protests, bilingual education, national networks of public Latino leadership, the emergence of national Latino television networks—all were factors that interacted with the others. It is possible that if any one element had been lacking in the mix, the religious movement either would not have occurred or would have been less effective. These elements were present in an extraordinary mobilization of religious believers in a period that has been described as “The Latino Religious Resurgence.”

The signal event that marshaled the religious forces was support for the Mexican American farm workers’ strike—appropriately called *La Causa*—organized by labor leader César Chávez in Delano, California. Historians sometimes overlook this effort’s religious roots. Chávez was a different kind of labor leader because his ideological commitment to organizing was accompanied by a *curillista*’s understanding of Catholicism. His followers among the migrant farm workers were mobilized by both his labor organizing and a fervent evocation of his faith. The black eagle of the nascent farm workers’ association was accompanied by the banner of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The picket lines at Delano were supported by a wide range of church people who saw Chávez as a man of faith: *Time* magazine profiled a Latino Martin Luther King Jr. in its article of July 4, 1969. Sensing that public opinion would prove a powerful ally against the growers, Chávez called upon the general U.S. public to boycott the table grapes produced in the Delano fields in support of the unionization of the workers. The National Council of Catholic Bishops, the World Council of Churches, and a host of other church organizations mobilized their members to join in solidarity with the farm workers. In Los Angeles, on the campus of Loyola Marymount University, the Chicano student group *Católicos por la Raza* (CPLR) was formed in the autumn of 1969 to press the church to support Chávez. In February 1970, two dozen Chicano priests from around the country decided to form an association in support of the farm workers. But the priest organizers recognized that larger issues of discrimination needed to be challenged. Changes in the Catholic Church were now on the agenda, including the naming of Mexican American priests as bishops, so that never again would the hierarchy make decisions without Mexican American input. The new group took the title *Padres Asociados para Derechos Religiosos, Educativos y Sociales*, with the acronym PADRES.

In 1971, *Las Hermanas*—the sisters—was formally organized for religious women. Different from PADRES, its male counterpart, *Las Hermanas* extended full membership to all Latinas, not just to Mexican Americans. Both of these organizations set goals that went well beyond the immediate task of supporting the farm workers. They sought a general reform of the church to make it more responsive to Latinos and Latinas on two fronts: commitment to issues of social justice and education in cultural and theological matters in order to sustain that commitment. They echoed the secular conviction that institutional aid to Latinos should be organized and led by other Latinos. According to the typology mentioned earlier, PADRES and *Las Hermanas* were pastoralists when they focused on change internal to the church and liberationists for secular society. Joining both goals widened the appeal of such organizations.

If the movement had consisted only of PADRES and *Las Hermanas*, the voice of Latinos would have been left outside church circles of power, waiting for an invitation to internal discussions. But these grassroots efforts found a highly visible office in Washington funded by the bishops. On the one hand, the movement organizers were able to gain an immediate hearing in the halls of power; on the other, the office had footsoldiers and grassroots supporters directly engaged in ministry.

This marriage of forces produced the *Encuentros*. These were church-sponsored congresses in which Latino and Latina delegates from parishes and dioceses came together to draft pastoral plans of action. The First National Encuentro was held in Washington in 1972, but dozens of local Encuentros were held at the same time. The participants appealed to the declarations of the Second Vatican Council for democratization of church leadership. By structuring the workshops so that each produced a set of resolutions and a working plan that was voted upon, the Encuentros blazed new ground for democracy within U.S. Catholicism—and not only for Latinos and Latinas. Lay leaders, especially women, were able to participate as equals with priests and sisters in the Encuentro deliberations.

The key to the movement was education. The Encuentros recommended empowerment, especially for lay leaders. Thus, a Latino whose ministry might have been characterized as a disciple would be educated to think more like a pastoralist or liberationist. At the same time, local parishes benefited from a more open climate that encouraged grassroots engagement in government programs. Moreover, many of these faith-based organizations

were strong enough to confront so-called community leaders who treated federal funding for social services as patronage for the old-fashioned political machine.

Protestants in the historic mainline denominations were able to embrace these goals, and the period was marked by its ecumenical spirit. Often, Latino Protestants and Latino Catholics found themselves closer to each other because of their Latino heritage than to their non-Latino co-religionists. While many secular counterparts such as *La Raza Unida Party*, MEChA (*Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán*), and the Young Lords floundered in the 1990s, Latino church movements have demonstrated more stamina.

Social Justice since the Resurgence

The election of Republican Ronald Reagan as president of the United States in 1980, close on the heels of the pontificate of the conservative Pope John Paul II, ended the Latino religious resurgence. Militancy waned as federal funds were withheld from community agencies; pastoralists were divided from liberationists as church officials narrowed the vision of mission to the world; and the generation of leadership grew grayer.

Still, the legacy of the resurgence endured and heard an echo in efforts of Protestant congregations working toward similar goals. Most Latino religious community organizations followed the model of matched pastoralist and liberationist ideology. Efforts were directed at empowerment of church leadership funded from government sources to address such local issues as housing, employment, and education. One of the more ecumenical efforts in Chicago hired a young college graduate named Barack Obama for the program and offered him lodging in a Catholic rectory.

Early in the first administration of George W. Bush, the Republican president launched a faith-based initiative. Federal funds for social services had been given to church organizations by administrations since Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, but restrictions that separated church and state were relaxed in 2001. The principal beneficiaries of this new program among Latinos were evangelicals and Pentecostals. Believers best characterized as disciples could now engage in social service delivery as part of church outreach, including recruiting new members and paying secular salaries to ministers who did double duty as agency directors. Not surprisingly, Washington's largesse to Latino evangelicals was followed by a large defection of Latino Protestant voters away from the Democratic Party and into the Republican Party, although Latino Catholics refused this route.

Sweeping immigration reform was passed by the House of Representatives in 2005 and proved to undo the Latino drift toward the Republican Party. Known as the “Sensenbrenner bill,” the legislation promised strongly punitive measures against undocumented persons among the Latino population. Among its most controversial sections was to criminalize the providing of social services to undocumented immigrants, even if these were offered by religious organizations in a spirit of ministry. Prominent religious leaders such as Cardinal Roger Mahoney of Los Angeles assumed a major role in orchestrating a series of public protests against the measure, which failed to pass in the Senate. Latino evangelicals, who had favored Republicans in previous elections, returned a majority of their votes to Democrats in the 2006 elections, a trend that carried over to the 2008 presidential election won by Barack Obama.

Within his first hundred days as president, Obama expanded the office coordinating federally funded social services through faith-based organizations to include neighborhood partnerships. The principal change was to funnel money through neighborhood coalitions rather than through individual congregations. The rejoining of the pastoralist and liberationist types might be anticipated.

The struggle for justice by Latino religious groups will likely result in the creation of groups that serve as alternatives to the delivery of social services through purely secular groups. Such agencies, even those yet to be created, will contribute to the Latino struggle for justice.

See also *Ethnicity; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Faith-Based Initiatives; Hispanic Influence; Latino/a Religious Practice; Latino American Religion* entries; *Liberation Theology; Music: Coritos/Spanish Language; Popular Religion and Popular Culture: Since the Mid-Twentieth Century; Race and Racism; Religious Thought: Latino/a; Roman Catholicism: The Cold War and Vatican II; Settlement Houses; Social Reform.*

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Latino/a Religious Practice

Latina and *Latino* are terms designating women and men of Latin American origin, especially those in the United States; people in Latin America proper, while recognizing themselves as *Latina* or *Latino*, are more likely to identify by their nation (Guatemala and Cuba, for example) and by region (particularly in Mexico). Religions throughout Latino communities are a mix of various native practices, indigenous to the region, and various forms of Iberian Catholicism (from Spain or Portugal), as well as African traditions brought over in the course of the slave trade. Religious formations face a complex of many different yet related elements, including doctrine, thought, or theology; material culture; imagery; and the ways that people actually live—practice, or in terms of acting out a religious agenda, *praxis*. Yet a Latino religious practice exists only in theory; it is contrived by cultural theorists who study and interpret faith expressions produced by people of Latin American origin.

The story of contemporary religion for Latinos across the U.S.–Latin American borders, the borderlands, begins with Spanish colonialism. In 1421 the *Mexica* or Aztec Mesoamerican capital, Tenochtitlan, fell to an army headed by invading Christians from the Iberian Peninsula; in 1533 the Inca Empire of South America lost its imperial capital, Cuzco, to the same fate. These victories heralded a new colonial order throughout what is now Latin America, from the Tijuana border, to the southern tip of Argentina, to the former Spanish colonial islands of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. In the nineteenth century, Latin American colonies liberated themselves from Spanish rule

and became hybrid republics, torn among their indigenous, European, and African underpinnings. For the most part, Latin American statecraft came to manage the inevitable process of cultural blending and synthesis by recognizing and celebrating its creative potential and effects rather than condemning its perceived impurities.

Latino religious practice is a result of imperial Christian impulses and indigenous resistances, emergent in a repertoire of performances that continue to change form. This evolutionary phenomenon is in no way unique to Latinos; indeed, it happens in all human societies. Yet the historical and geographical contexts are dissimilar and contribute to a particular regional matrix of variations and local culture. Traditions develop that possess the aura of having always existed so that multitudes invest great meaning in them; the traditions become important enough to ground individuals' personal and national identities.

For the ancient Mexican Nahuatl speakers, the place of tradition was known as *nepantla*: the space in between worlds. Colonial Christians were bewildered by the wonders they encountered in fifteenth-century Mesoamerica. When one Indian wise man was asked why he continued practicing his religious traditions after having formally received Christian confirmation, his answer was prophetic. "Don't worry Father," he reassured, "we are still *nepantla*." The place of in-between, occupying the porous borders at once connecting and separating Maya from Aztec, Taino from African, indigenous from Spanish, Christian from pagan, and ultimately Latino American from the United States.

Latino Religious Poetics

There, in the realm of *nepantla*, the poetry of religion emerges in practice spoken in many tongues: religious poetics. The term *religious poetics* is used in the Greek, Aristotelian sense of poetry as performance, from the Greek *poesis*, doing or acting. This is true particularly for religious terms or for the religious context. The best known of the early recorded uses of the term appears in the canonized Christian scriptures, James 1:25 (ESV): "He will be blessed in his doing." Similarly, the Greek *poetes* signifies one who does something, or the maker of a poem. In sacred poetics, religious actors can manage the often harsh and potentially overwhelming conditions they confront (the battle for survival and more, dignity, love, freedom) by deploying the most powerful weapons in their arsenal: signs, myths, rituals, narratives, and

symbols. And empowered by their freshly perceived role in the cosmic drama, agents of social change appeal to, create, and reinvent religious institutions and their place in the lives of constituents. *Consejos* or *dichos* (proverbs or sayings) poetically narrate the world as part of a larger theology and system of ethics always under construction but always returning to the basic principles of "conscience," the good, and the virtuous. Religious practice in the borderlands and elsewhere is of course not singularly triumphant and comedic. It is often tragic.

When the promises of religion, as they are meted out by institutions and by "religious specialists," are insufficient to meet expectations and to quiet the fears, confusion, pain, and agonies of people on the margins of power, the meanings of religious symbols can be redirected, reinterpreted, or conjured anew to fill the gap between what ought to be and what is. Poetic, creative religious practice does not occur only at the boundaries of institutions, but within, parallel to, and sometimes in direct conflict with established traditions. In short, religion—broadly and personally defined—in addition to serving power as an ideological mechanism of social control, exploitation, and domination is also effectively deployed in attempts to destabilize those very same forces by people who have access to only the bare resources that constitute conventional power through the performance of a Latino religious poetics.

Focusing Latino religious practice involves contextualizing religiosity within a postcolonial condition of domination and exploitation. This endeavor requires asking, How do people survive and make meaning under conditions of discrimination, poverty, and deprivation? How do they negotiate racism, sexism, and general hatred? How do they resolve conflict? How do they love, and how do they die? What diseases do they get, and how do they heal them? How do they raise children? What salvation narratives appeal to their passions, dreads, and desires? What is borderland religion? How can it be represented, theorized about, and appreciated? In practice, Latino religions emerge in stories—poetic narratives when storytellers speak as cosmologists and prophets.

Even after colonization, colonized peoples across the American borderlands never entirely surrendered control of their bodies, memories, and sacred places; their control remained partially in the realm of the spiritual. Religions are shaped and reshaped in the struggle for political power. Classical nineteenth-century social theorist Émile Durkheim once correctly noted that human nature does not explain

religious phenomena; instead we must look to their social contexts for explanations.

Borderland Religions

Throughout Latin America, national identity narratives were long in the making and soon rolled easily off the lips of millions. Key among these was *mestizaje*. A term used mostly in Mexico and on the Latin American mainland, it translates into English as “miscegenation.” But in Latin America its usage goes beyond racial mixing to include cultural, linguistic, and religious mixtures. Regional variations include *Ladino* in Central America and *mulatto* in Cuba.

Mestizaje and its variations name the uncanny borrowings, impositions, overlaps, and inventions that characterize cultural formations and the continuing processes of improvisation and invented traditions. The establishment of the United States as sovereign nation and its expansion into and colonization of Mexico and the Caribbean added a new cultural patina, further complicating the already dense *mestizaje* layers. As a result, in contemporary Latino studies, the term *borderlands* has emerged as a descriptive and metaphorical category to fathom *mestizo* cultural artifacts, especially north of the U.S.–Latin American borders.

Contemporary religious expression among people of Latin American origin, Latinas and Latinos on both sides of the U.S.–Latin America border—the borderlands—is a product of many historical collisions and social collusions. The myths and realities of Spanish colonialism interfaced and merged tensely with the indigenous Americas. In the Caribbean and on the eastern coast of South America, this religious matrix combined with the myths and realities of African traditions brought to Latin American shores during the slave trade to produce radically innovative hybrid religions. Borderland religion owes its origins to at least three main sources of religious tradition and innovation: the indigenous Americans (chiefly Maya, Inca, and Aztec); a primitive form of Spanish Catholicism that ironically resembled the beliefs and expressions it sought to eradicate; and West African Yoruba rites and practices.

Mesoamerican indigenous thought at the time of conquest was largely analogical rather than dialectical. In other words, Indian sacred thought and practice is based on the principles of similarity and reciprocity. In this worldview, multiculturalism is likely to be celebrated for the connections that can be woven from resemblances in religious discourse and symbolism: symbols and myths are comprehensible in their likeness to others. Conversely, Christian

imperialists viewed their sacred teachings as structurally incompatible with other claims to that which they viewed as singular and absolute. Indigenous truth was subjected to a colonial regime that divided the world into a dialectics of holy and profane. This religious calculus produced a distinctly Christian mandate to either convert or exterminate the natives and their religions.

Still, however, indigenous traditions survived in processes of subterfuge, dissimulation, and outright defiance. The phrase “idols behind altars” has been used to capture the ways that the indigenous peoples of Latin America rejected the singularity of Christianity well after formal indoctrination was imposed. In Cuba and throughout the Caribbean, African slaves were imported en masse to fill the labor void left by the largely decimated indigenous Taino populations; many Indian survivors fled to mountainous island interiors that soon attracted escaping African slaves and thus became productive venues of religious experimentation—producing fresh Catholic–African hybrids, *Santería* chief among them.

In African diaspora religious formations, the crossroads marks the meeting place of the living and the dead, wherein spirits cross the border between life and death. Crossings symbolize action, movement, transformation: the “cross” is a verb. Pilgrims carry and enact the cross from South to North America, from the Third World to the First, from certain poverty to uncertain poverty, from the old to the new, refiguring multiple covenants of grace and hope. The cross bears several meanings but becomes most significant in Latino religious practice as both noun and verb. Migrants intersecting the northern border reenact a drama of religious transformation that is centuries old, at least: a life translation. Conversion, new life, transformation, a renewal of spirit are realized in the intersections created by the cross.

Latino immigrants typically follow the seasonal patterns of crops and other labor rhythms (the demand for construction workers is greater during the nonrainy months). And inasmuch as migrants touch and inform the lives of permanent residents in the spaces they inhabit, entire communities are affected by cycles of return: various communities and social collectives experience ebb and swell as a function of migration. For a community delimited by border crossing, fluidity, and movement, religion is experienced as flux and flow; the greatest religious movements occur at times of crisis.

When people come to the United States, they bring their religious traditions with them; when they come as temporary workers, they return to Mexico with the commodities

and cultural influences they accumulated while in exile, and both are disseminated in their homelands. Thus, the cultural rhythms of the United States pulsate into Mexican religious systems, and vice versa, in various means of transnational exchanges. Both nations are influenced by the transnational movement of peoples—bodies and souls—a cycle that takes place again and again.

The borderlands is a crossroads, functioning at once as symbol and reality for millions of Latinos who cross boundaries of many kinds when forging plausible and effective realities for themselves and their progeny. The cross as metaphor can be effectively used to connote Latino religious practice, insofar as borders isolating traditions from one another are diminished when practitioners draw from many spiritual resources in their struggles to survive the oppressive legacy of colonialism. The borderlands is also a place of great social, economic, and political barriers wherein great masses of people suffer extreme deprivation to benefit a small segment of society. As a result of marginalization, people rely on inherited as well as improvised faith actions in their practices of everyday life. Certainly the colonized make choices when drawing from pools of religious traditions to confront personal and public situations. But the marginalized were compelled to accept Christ, for the most part, a historical stroke that painted a rich Catholic veneer over spiritual expression layered thick with surplus indigenous legacy. Intensified Spanish vigilance drove Native religions further underground where they were disguised as variations on Christianity and systematized.

Religions of the Borderlands

Santería

Santería is perhaps the most identifiable discrete religious system to emerge from colonialism. Cuban elites cared little for the spiritual condition of their African slaves; the Catholic institution on the island commanded only cursory attention from modernist-leaning capitalists bent on earning earthly fortunes rather than eternal salvation. Yet the church was paid mind, and African idols were banned from public Cuban space in the nineteenth century in favor of Christian idols. As a result, African deities were assigned Christian images and narratives in a grand counter-hegemonic sleight of hand to bring into being what is now a postcolonial religious masquerade. In Santería practice, Christian iconography becomes a symbolic border connecting (while paradoxically dividing) Africa and Europe.

West African Yoruba religious thought and praxis divided the spiritual world into three distinct but connected realms, the highest occupied by a God who does not incarnate but from whom all positive energy, *ashe*, is generated. Some call him Olofi, and his avatar is typically (but not always) Jesus Christ. The second spiritual realm is dominated by the *orishas*, who are deities of nature. Chango, the African god of fire and thunder, for example, is associated with St. Barbara because of the overlap in their principal colors (red and gold) and with the elements of fire and thunder central to their respective mythologies. Ellegua, the trickster figure and messenger deity, is deemed to be El Santo Niño de Atocha, in another popular combination, because both of their mythologies involve travel and a childlike spirit. La Caridad de Cobre, patron saint of Cuba, has become the avatar of Oshun, the orisha of the sea. The third spiritual realm is commandeered by human ancestor spirits, called the *egun* by some. These ancestral spirits are typically singled out and honored on the Days of the Dead, November 1 and 2, continuing a tradition of reuniting the living and the dead that began in ancient Latin America.

In Santería practice, the body becomes the crossroads for the exchange between the living and the dead, as *egun* and *orisha* spirits possess the bodies of believers during the ceremony. Initiates into Santería are “crowned” by one of dozens of orishas who choose and compete for devotees. Once initiated, practitioners follow devotional patterns and ritual mitigation, offering gifts and erecting elaborate altars to their *muerto mayor*, or major spirit. Spirits are known for their distinctive tastes, but most enjoy rum and cigars. *Santeros*, priests and priestesses, belong to different and loosely affiliated traditions and congregations, each with doctrinal and practical idiosyncrasies. Religious specialists in Santería act as shamans, communicating with the spiritual world, healing bodies, remedying social illness, and divining destinies.

In its colonial history and religious function, Santería approximates other mediumship and healing practices throughout Latin America. Throughout the Americas, natives practiced the healing arts, mapping illness and healing onto the human body through religious and empirical experimentation. Rather than eradicating existing faith practices, Christianity provided another rich source of symbols and narratives for the Indians, and there was considerable if not ironic overlaps in beliefs between the various Native, African, and Christian faith practices. Colonialism and slavery occasioned religious creativity and produced hybrid sacred truths on both sides of the sword, all under the guise of orthodox Catholicism.

The triumphant moment of the revolution of Fidel Castro in Cuba in 1959 was fraught with the symbolism of Santería. Revolutionaries made their base camp in the town of Oriente—a haven for former slaves and a nucleus of indigenous religion on the island. Castro and his army took La Habana on January 1, which, on the Catholic calendar, signifies el Santo Niño de Athocha; for Santeros, it is the celebration for the Orisha avatar, Ellegua, the messenger and trickster. Rebels were adorned in Santería beads and warrior colors—red and black. When Fidel addressed the cheering throngs of supporters from a microphoned platform, doves landed on his shoulders. At that moment, Castro occupied prime sacred real estate—the borderlands between Christianity and Santería—for doves are sacred symbols in both traditions.

Curanderismo

Extant postcolonial systems of religious specialization, forms of shamanic practices, offer the most vivid illustrations of the crossings, innovations, and poetic and political impulses of borderland religions. Santería is remarkably similar to *curanderismo*, found more commonly on mainland Latin America; the term *curanderismo* comes from the Spanish verb *curar*, “to heal” or “to cure.” Across the borderlands, *curanderismo* signifies a wide variety of community-based curing traditions organized around charismatic and prophetic healers. In contemporary Latino communities, Santería and *curanderismo* are often practiced in tandem and become nearly indistinguishable. On the eastern coasts of Brazil and Venezuela, African-origin Santería is known as *candomble* and has adapted many elements of the more Aztec, Maya, and Inca artifacts found in *curanderismo*. (In the French Caribbean and its diaspora, the Africanized Catholicism is Vodou.)

People who practice *curanderismo* range from those who occasionally use herbs to matriarchs who administer spiritual cleansing to full-time healers whose rituals are shamanistic. Religious healers are both female and male: *curanderismo* seekers demonstrate no preference between genders; they go by reputation alone. *Curanderismo* is a collection of religiously based tactics, especially healing with herbs and teas, massage therapy, midwifery, card reading, and divination. Also common are more elaborate symbolic or spiritual “operations,” including unclogging arteries, healing cancer, and addressing other physical, social, and personal problems—including financial, legal, and personal or familial. The most common procedure is the spiritual cleansing, or *limpia*. A *limpia* releases negative energies while conjuring positive spirit through prayer, recitation, and a laying on of hands. Spiritual

healing ceremonies involving a laying on of hands are central both to *espiritualismo*, Mexican spiritualism, and to *evangelicos* or evangelical/Pentecostal—a Protestant movement growing throughout the borderlands.

The crux of *curanderismo* is formed in the religious milieu emergent in colonialism: it inscribes ancient Mexican rituals and idioms onto Catholic grammars and symbols. *Curanderismo* is an expression of religious poetics that emphasizes the body and restructures the order of the world through gifting, reciprocity, and exchange. In *curandero* practices, individual religious agents contest the borders of institutional religion and healing. Like Santería, *curanderismo* praxis crosses the boundary separating indigenous traditions from Catholicism through various movements, particularly a praxis-wavering across the Enlightenment boundary separating the logics of modern science and spirit.

Historically, *curanderismo* synthesizes pre-Tridentine Catholicism and Spanish-Moorish medicine, combined with ancient indigenous American medicine and religion. Spanish Renaissance ethnographers documented the presence of indigenous healers, wise medicine women and men who labored as religious specialists, arguing and debating truth with the colonial priest—a debate that still rages in the twenty-first century.

Like Christianity, *curanderismo* operates on a conceptual binary: between light and dark, good and evil, inside and outside, wet and dry, up and down, male and female, and especially between hot and cold. These forces are continually in dynamic tension, fluid and shifting in motion amorphously but also embodied in a pantheon of deities who are characterized by duality, fluidity, and complementarity. For example, the highest Aztec deity, Ometoatl, is at once male and female, embodying the duality and complementarity of gender. Cosmic dualities affect individual bodies. The difference between hot and cold, for example, is manifested in the body, and every individual is thought to have a hot or cold type that delimits the personality one has, the kinds of diseases to which one is prone, and the care one should take to achieve equilibrium. If predisposed toward cold, then balance, or equilibrium, is achieved by eating more hot foods. The body is at the center of perception and knowledge. Still, these beliefs sometimes obviate regular medical care.

Espiritualism and Espiritismo

Throughout Latin America *curanderismo* has been institutionalized into churches and denominations as distinctly Latino forms of spiritualism, or *espiritualismo*, and spiritism, or

espiritismo. The largest group in Mexico, the Espiritualistas Trinitarios Marianos, are dedicated to a hybrid shamanism resembling Catholicism. With the intercession of the spirits, they labor to cure their peers physically or by spiritual consultation. Generally, they manifest their gifts in local temples specifically dedicated for this purpose. *Espiritualismo* emphasizes the spiritual level of healing and mediumship. It is both popular medicine and a distinctly Latino religious protest or protestantism: a modernist impulse in Latino religious practice stubbornly tied to ancient traditions. *Espiritualismo* began as popular dissent against the limits of the Catholic Church; as such, it shares narratives and sensibilities with Catholicism and cohabits the same spaces.

Espiritistas (Mexican spiritists) share beliefs with *espiritualistas* regarding communication with spirits, clairvoyance, and divine healing. The two traditions developed simultaneously during the nineteenth century throughout Europe and the Americas. Distinctive to *espiritualismo*, however, are its prophetic regional founders. Conversely, *Espiritistas* trace their origins to the French medium and teacher Hippolyte Leon Denizard Rivail (1804–1869), who published under the name Allan Kardec. Though both are medium-based traditions organized into churches, the two movements differ in their teaching on reincarnation. Latino spiritualism differs also from American spiritualism in that the former is hierarchical and resembles the structure of the Catholic Church, whereas American spiritualism is congregational and based on the Protestant model of local control.

Curanderas posit a number of origins for imbalance or illness—the predicament of being physically displaced. Some attribute it to supernatural forces and others to more conventional causes; poor body maintenance, smoking, drinking, and eating excessively are said to bring about an imbalance in the body’s humoral system, for example. *Curanderas* consider themselves knowledgeable about anatomy and physiology and recognize that viruses and other biological infections can afflict the body. Therefore, *curanderas* also value conventional medicine and will refer patients to doctors. But relationships to doctors are problematic. Spiritual healing has thrived throughout current Latina/o communities as a result of the high cost of medical care and the difficulties that visiting a doctor presents for many Latinos, especially for undocumented workers in the United States. Like Santería, *curanderismo* holds that illnesses exist that doctors cannot cure.

Healing across the borderlands is enacted on three fundamental levels: physical or body, family, and community.

Curanderas have self-identified specialties. Common to all specialties and levels are the ritual tools for healing. Material cultural objects typical of *curanderismo* include eggs, garlic, candles, lemons, Christian symbols such as crosses and saints, and more standard medical fare such as cotton and rubbing alcohol. Herbs used for cleansing purposes and for treating all manner of diseases in hot- and cold-water teas are perhaps the most commonly prescribed cures. Eggs are thought to have absorbing or cleansing properties; they are believed to soak up negative energy from the human body and from the environment, as are garlic, cloves, and lemons. *Agua preparada*, or “prepared water”—prepared by prayer and blessing, either by a Catholic priest or another religious specialist—is central to ritual practice. Water, it is postulated, has curative properties and is especially powerful because it functions as the physical connection between the realms of the living and the dead. The symbolism of water is charged with formative properties in Mesoamerican discourse and also holds (re)generative forces for *curanderas* and *espiritualistas*. The broad traditional practices identifiable as *curanderismo* and Santería are but two of the many religious systems that were introduced by the multiple border crossings made during colonial expansion.

The “cult of saints” within Spanish colonial Catholicism coalesced with indigenous forms of faith through practice and symbolism. Santería demonstrates the synthesis of two broad pantheons of deities; in Cuba Oshun became Caridad de Cobre. Similarly, in Mexico, the conglomerate of mother deities was synthesized into the Virgin of Guadalupe, “Our Mother,” patron saint of Mexico. Devotion to images of Our Lady is common to every pueblo throughout Latin America. Latinos have adopted localized and hybrid images of Mary that have come to discursively construct, in a poetic and mythical fashion, postcolonial personal and national identities.

Guadalupe

According to the foundational myth of the *mestizo* Mexican people, on Saturday morning, December 9, 1531, a humble Aztec Indian, Cuauhtlatoatzin, known by his Christian name, Juan Diego, was visited by Mary, the Mother of God, at the hill called Tepeyac on the outskirts of Mexico City. Central to this story is that the Virgin Mary spoke to Juan Diego in his native tongue, Nahuatl, and manifested herself in the form of a brown-skinned Indian. In this encounter between the Virgin, ostensibly of Spanish/European origin, and the Mexican Indian, two competing conceptualizations of time, space, and

corporeality interfaced with each other and coalesced: a sacred human mix, or *mestizaje*. Henceforth, this meeting and its place have become central to the communities of Mexico and Mexican Americans, and indeed to the greater Latin Americas. On his visit to Mexico in 2002, Pope John Paul II declared December 12 a holy day in the Americas; on the same occasion he and President Vicente Fox both submitted to a *limpia* from a *curandera*.

The Virgin of Guadalupe is the primary symbol of Mexican Catholic identity. Guadalupe's current symbolic "capital" emerged in complex spatial, historical, and political processes. It wasn't until 1754 that the Vatican officially declared Guadalupe the patroness and protectress of New Spain, even though Mexicans had declared her their queen seventeen years earlier, after her agency was credited with saving Mexico City from a pandemic illness. The efficacy of Guadalupe was born from the pain of Mexican history with which she was inseminated: Guadalupe arose as the mother of Mexico precisely when Mexico needed a mother most, during the time of mass deaths among Mexico's native population. Guadalupe's myth and memory thrive in that interstitial *nepantla* space of associations and ruptures.

Tepeyac is three miles north of the center of Mexico City; originally it was not within city limits but on the borders, although today the capital has swelled to envelop the hilly ritual complex. There a shrine existed to Tonantzin, the Aztec mother goddess of sex and fertility. It was during the winter solstice in December that Indian pilgrims came to worship her shrine, offering gifts at her altar. By chance, the time of Guadalupe's apparition falls near the time of the original pilgrimage. Skeptics argue that this temporal coincidence is far too great, and that the event was likely a Spanish plot to manipulate the Indians into unwittingly performing Christian practices. The Guadalupe prototype continues to exist and is said to have been painted by the angel Gabriel upon the *tilma*, or cape of Juan Diego. The image bears many Native symbols. It hangs in the Guadalupe Basilica at Tepeyac, which millions of pilgrims visit each year. Indians continue to venerate her as Tonantzin.

In no small way, Guadalupe's prominence is indissolubly bound to the capital of Mexico, Mexico City, known to *mexicanos* simply as Mexico—as if it were the nation itself. Mexico is sacred in multiple (re)visions: the city of Aztec emperors and goddesses, the capital of the Mesoamerican world, the seat of the Spanish colonial empire, and the capital of the Mexican nation. Guadalupe draws from Mexico City, and Mexico is in turn supported by her vast following.

Guadalupe devotion is a borderland religious tradition, crossing, straddling, and blurring lines of religious demarcation. As such, it lends itself to the tactics and strategies of political struggles: fragments of her myth and image have been used in many political struggles on both sides of the border.

Because of her *mestiza* heritage, in 1810 Guadalupe was adopted by anticolonialist revolutionaries as a symbol of the *nepantla* racialized identity of Mexico. One hundred years later, anti-Catholic Mexican revolutionaries raised her image over their armed battalions. In the 1960s, she came to symbolize César Chávez's political struggles for social justice, *La Causa*. Today she is the template for vibrant and brilliant parodies of orthodox motherhood across Latina communities. Chicana feminists have painted her as a sex goddess of many varieties—reconnecting her to her Mesoamerican archetype, Tonantzin. In contemporary Chicana art, Guadalupe has been ingeniously reimaged and revisioned in support of many revolutionary social justice causes.

Our Lady of Caridad Del Cobre

The town of Santiago del Prado, now Cobre, is located on the southeastern shore of Cuba, forming a near-straight cross from the island nation's capital, La Habana (Havana), seat of colonial power. Founded in 1550 as a Spanish copper mine, Santiago del Prado employed African slaves and Taino Indians to perform the backbreaking mining. There, in 1608, two Taino brothers, Rodrigo and Juan de Hoyas, and a ten-year-old slave, Juan Moreno (John Black), were gathering salt off the coast when stormy weather struck, causing them to camp overnight. At daybreak they sailed into calm seas, where they saw a white bundle floating in the water. It was a small statue of the Virgin Mary, carrying the Christ child in her right arm and a gold cross in the other. She floated on a board bearing the inscription, *Yo soy la Virgen de la Caridad*, "I am the Virgin of Charity." Key to this poetic narrative is that the statue was entirely dry, despite having emerged from the ocean (the orisha, Oshun).

During colonial times, the church in El Cobre was dedicated to Santiago, St. James, the powerful patron of the Spanish conquest, so the statue of the Virgin was placed in a thatched hut instead of in the church. But on three successive nights, according to the story, the statue disappeared from the hut and was found on top of the hill above El Cobre. Nuestra Señora de la Caridad resided in several small shrines until 1630, when the copper mine was closed



Cuban women touch the glass case protecting a statue of the Virgin of Charity of Cobre, the island's Roman Catholic patron. The Virgin of Charity, *Nuestra Señora de la Caridad*, is depicted as mulatto, making her attractive across Cuba's multihued racial spectrum. She also has an appeal beyond pure Catholicism as the *Santería* deity Oshun, who is a maternal, sensual figure, and a mistress of love, femininity, and water.

and the slaves were released. It was in that revolutionary moment that she deposed Santiago and assumed her place above the high altar in the church, a triumphant emblem of the strength of the oppressed people over the Spanish conquerors.

Spanish slavery in Cuba did not cease officially until 1886, and Caridad is credited for her political prowess, especially inasmuch as she aided the slaves in their struggle for liberty. Her shrine quickly became a thriving site of pilgrimage for devotees of the goddess Oshun. Pilgrims cross many borders in their devotion to her; she represents, if even in the mind of believers, the *mestizaje* of African and Catholic faith now distinctly Cuban, but nonetheless a borderlands religion in practice.

In 1916, Pope Benedict XV visited the shrine of the Virgin of Charity and declared her the patron saint of Cuba.

El Cobre Basilica was built to house her in 1927. In 1998, Pope John Paul II crowned her statue during his historic visit to communist Cuba. In the 1950s, Ernest Hemingway gave the Virgin the Nobel Prize for Literature he won after writing *The Old Man and the Sea* in Havana. The mother of Fidel and Raul Castro left a small golden guerrilla fighter at the feet of the Virgin as her sons battled the government of dictator Fulgencio Batista.

Nuestra Señora de la Caridad continues to represent border crossing. Consider the common objects left in more recent times, including replicas of rafts, representing safe journeys to America, and photos of activists who have been imprisoned by Castro's government. Perhaps most impressive is the Marxist-atheist wall she crosses, separating church from state as many members of the Communist Party regularly offer gifts to her there.

Devotees also offer gifts in Miami, at her shrine on the shores of Biscayne Bay, on the border between the exilic Cuban community and their imagined spiritual homeland. In 1973 a conical shrine was erected there, *Ermita de la Caridad*, or “Hermitage of Our Lady of Charity,” where she connects and divides Catholicism from Santería, the diaspora from the homeland, and Cuban exilic religious practitioners from their Euro-American counterparts who barely know the hermitage exists.

Evangélicos

Enumerations of borderland religions are vexed inasmuch as they rely on static and singular identity categories; *mestizaje*, multiplicity, and movement are better suited to defining the realities of Latino religious practice. With this caveat, data produced on Latino communities in recent years map interesting trends, especially the increase of Pentecostal, born-again, fundamentalist conversion, known in the vernacular simply as *evangélicos*. But the data are contradictory. Recent studies have shown conflicting patterns, with increasing secularization as well as a healthy presence of *evangélicos*; according to some studies this group is growing. Generally Catholics account for nearly 70 percent of the 40 million or so Latinos in the United States. Protestants account for some 20 to 25 percent of Latinos, and of this group *evangélicos* are said to constitute 80 percent.

Of all the Protestant traditions, the evangélicos are closest to the native and postcolonial traditions of the Americas. The narrative of dejection and the drama of becoming born again, so central to *los evangélicos*, is strikingly akin to the discourses of Guadalupe devotion and pilgrimage, or, after being healed, to those of *curanderismo* or *espiritualismo*. As followers of a borderland religion, *los evangélicos* practice spirit possession, religious healing, religious gifting and play, cultural affirmation, as well as communication with sacred and ancestral spirits. *Los evangélicos* cross practical, spiritual, religious, and erotic boundaries that have been articulated so completely within the postcolonial religious matrix that it is difficult to distinguish precise origins.

The body is at the center of each of these religious practices. Believers experience their own bodies, other worshippers' bodies, and indeed the communal body and the city in new and powerful ways, which give them will, determination, and the perceived ability to negotiate the precarious social terrain of the borderlands. The religious machinations of *evangélicos* reproduce modes of empowerment just as they reproduce mechanisms of domination. In devotional

Catholicism, *curanderismo*, *espiritualismo*, and Santería, *evangélico* practice sometimes facilitates tragedy and suffering, enabling people to passively (or prayerfully) accept, or even become agents of, their own oppression and more.

Manuel Gamio's famous study of Mexican immigrants to the United States, conducted during 1926–1927, addressed religious dimensions of immigration, especially the phenomenon of Protestant–*evangélico* conversion. His wry observations are instructive for religions of current Latino migrations to the United States. In Mexico, he claims, there are two religious types: secular humanists and religious enthusiasts. This latter he divides into the following categories: pre-Columbian religions, the Catholic mixed religion (combined with indigenous traditions), the Catholic religion, and the Protestant religion. This latter, he claims, is practiced mostly by the middle classes in Mexico, of both white and mixed ancestry. According to Gamio, the religious Mexican migrating north across the border takes on one of three identities: a normal, nonfanatic Catholic; indifferent or an unbeliever; or a Protestant. *Evangélico*–Pentecostal conversion makes this Protestant option more attractive because of its consistency with other postcolonial religious systems.

Conclusion: Still Nepantla

Latino religious practice arises through a poetics of religion. Religious praxis responds to the crisis of everyday life from a place of *nepantla*, a space in between and across worlds now described as the borderlands. Colonists fought a religious war of attrition when crossing the Americas. Eventually, natives relented to the colonial discourses. However, conversions were half-hearted at best; natives clung to their original ways in practices of subterfuge and subversion of the colonial order. What emerged was a process of poesis, of religious making, as the philosophy of *nepantla* teaches, wherein the product is secondary to the act. In other words, *nepantla* is the state where the process—the cross, that is—the practice is the goal rather than an external end result discernable from a distance. To fathom the praxis, the action itself, is to understand and appreciate borderland religions.

See also *Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence; Frontier and Borderlands; Healing; Hispanic Influence; Latino American Religion* entries; *Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Mexico* entries; *Music: Coritos/Spanish Language; Native American Religions* entries; *Pentecostals; Religious Thought: Latino/a; Religious Thought: Mujerista; Santería; Tourism and Pilgrimage.*

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Latino/a Religious Thought

See *Religious Thought: Latino/a*

Latter-day Saints

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the LDS Church) has its origins in the great revivals of America's early nineteenth century, but it has long since outgrown its roots. Today, half of its thirteen million members, often known as Mormons, live outside the United States, and Spanish is its majority language. Its signature canon, the Book of Mormon, which is available in 107 languages, is carried around the world by more than fifty thousand missionaries. In 2008 it was the second-fastest growing church in the United States, though it constituted only 1.4 percent of the population. Headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah,

with followers making up 70 percent of the state's population, the LDS Church is a dominant force in the region's cultural, economic, and political life.

The church's continuing growth in the face of increasingly fluid Protestant denominational attachments has made it a more prominent actor on the national stage in the early years of the twenty-first century. Its several charitable agencies have quietly dispensed more than a billion dollars in cash and material assistance in 165 countries. The ready response to disasters, as well as community service initiatives, by volunteers from the church's 28,000 congregations has also improved its otherwise clannish reputation. Increasingly it is known for its 4,500 publicly accessible Family History Centers and its rich online databases that constitute the largest and most popular source of genealogical information in the world.

Notwithstanding these efforts to show themselves to be responsible and responsive citizens of the world, the Latter-day Saints have not entirely outgrown suspicions, original to the early nineteenth century, that they are a threat to the American way of life. The church's nontraditional Christian beliefs and expansive proselytizing programs, which make no distinction between Christian and non-Christian audiences, have aggravated some of their coreligionists, especially evangelical Protestants. In the first half of the church's life these fears were expressed in charges of sexual licentiousness, theocracy, and antimarket economic communalism. Most recently, discomfort with Mormonism tends to be expressed in terms of its traditional sexual scruples, conservative politics, and economic success. Nearly two hundred years of anxiety about and antagonism toward the LDS Church have given it a distinctive role in American religious life. In particular, Mormonism has been one of the quintessential outsiders against which mainstream religious America has defined itself.

Joseph Smith's Life and Death

The LDS Church originated in upstate New York in the 1830s, a time when many seekers were rejecting sectarian religion and its competitive revivalism. Among them were several who claimed authority for their decisions through recourse to the Bible and in visions, even theophany, as did Mormonism's founder Joseph Smith (1805–1844). Like many of his contemporaries, Smith was unable to choose among the competing truth claims made by the several evangelical Protestant revivalists of his day. In the spring of 1820, encouraged by the Bible's invitation to pray for

discernment, Smith experienced what is commonly called “the first vision”: an appearance of God the Father and God the Son, as separate personages, warning him off all existing sects. Only fourteen at the time, Smith apparently considered this a private experience, related only to his personal salvation. Three years later, however, he had a second vision in which an angel directed him to recover and translate an ancient record written on “golden plates” and hidden in a nearby hill. This experience catalyzed the production of new scripture in 1830 and constituted the basis for Smith’s public ministry. Called the Book of Mormon, the new scripture was offered as evidence that Smith was a modern Moses: writer of divinely revealed history, mouthpiece for God, and restorer of God’s law and covenant.

Smith’s scripture resembled the Bible in style and structure. A nearly six-hundred-page historical narrative, written by multiple prophetic recorders, the Book of Mormon told the story of an early civilization in the Americas that anticipated the birth of Christ and was taught by him after his resurrection. The Book of Mormon did more than read like a Bible, however. It claimed to restore many “plain and precious” parts lost to the Bible, as a result of uninspired or corrupt handlers over the ages. Many of Smith’s contemporaries were dedicated to restoring primitive Christianity through a close reading of the Bible. Smith, however, was unique in his claim to restore the Bible itself, and not by scholarly but revelatory means. The Book of Mormon embodied Smith’s broader contention that revelation through prophets was not limited to the Old World and had not ceased with the canonization of the Bible; it was universal and ongoing, even modern. This dramatic message spurred dramatic responses both for and against the religion that grew up around the book, its prophet-translator, and the church he founded. To Smith’s followers the Book of Mormon added value to the Bible by clarifying and confirming its truths. To everyone else, it was a blasphemous and fraudulent attack on the Bible.

In April 1830, within three weeks of publishing the Book of Mormon, Smith formally organized his small group of twenty followers into a church. Missionaries were sent out searching for readers in the environs of upstate New York. Within eight months, 280 had joined the new religion; over the next two years that number grew more than tenfold. As the numbers of Smith’s followers increased, so also did hostility toward their church. The ideological antagonism that coined the pejorative term *Mormonites* and later the *Mormons* rationalized violence toward the new church and soon

caused its removal from New York to the Ohio frontier. The church’s doctrine of gathering all the faithful to a single place to create a holy society further aggravated their neighbors’ fears of being dominated politically and economically.

The cycle of new revelation, renewed hostility, and flight was repeated in the church’s subsequent relocations further westward, ending fifteen years later in the Rocky Mountains. With each remove, Smith built relatively sophisticated towns as sites of gathering for large numbers of proselytes. Soon after arriving in Ohio, Smith directed that a second site of gathering be established in Independence, Missouri. It was intended to be the crowning achievement of his movement: a temple-centered Zion, comprising a sanctified people prepared to meet Christ at his Second Coming. The influx, however, of a large and socially exclusive, antislavery population to an already volatile American frontier threatened the political and economic status quo and attracted increasingly violent attacks.

For several years the Latter-day Saints and their neighbors fought in unsaintly fashion, the Mormons losing ground on nearly every occasion. The final blow came in 1838, when Missouri’s governor directed the state militia to assist the efforts of local mobs to expel the Mormons by any means necessary. During that fall and the winter of 1839, the governor drove approximately ten thousand of his citizens out of the state. National reaction was mixed. Outside observers were moved by the stories of carnage, privation, and terror and were shocked by the trampling of rights in their new republic. But only Quincy, Illinois, offered the victims shelter.

The refugees fled east to Illinois, where they began again to build their Zion, this time on the banks of the Mississippi River. Called Nauvoo, a neologism signifying beauty and respite, it was Smith’s last and most complete effort to create a social order expressive of his theological vision. The temple at the town’s center was an enormous structure for its time and place. It held 3,500 people in its main hall and rose 165 feet on the skyline. The temple’s primary purpose, however, was not to be a meeting place but to be a locus for creating salvific kinships through marital and adoptive “sealings” among the faithful. These sealings promised not only the continuance of familial connections after death but also the inculcation of the divine nature through grace and covenant. Deemed illicit and polygamous by critics, including several leading members of the church, Latter-day Saint “plural marriages” soon became a major flash point that eventually drove the Latter-day Saints from Nauvoo.

Sexual scandal was not the sole cause, however, of the church's troubles. Nauvoo's charter granted judicial and military authority that not only frustrated the church's enemies but also made its neighbors nervous. As before, the church's growth and geographic cohesion aggravated these concerns. Large numbers of converts made Nauvoo the rival of Chicago in size, and the relative sophistication of its citizenry gave it significant economic and political influence. In addition, old enemies from Missouri still harassed the church's leadership, bringing charges of treason, among other crimes. Harder to measure, but no less a problem, was the effect of Mormonism's doctrinal differences with America's dominant Protestant culture, which believed democracy itself depended on a Bible-reading citizenry free of religious "superstition." Mormons—with their prophet, literal priesthood of all believers, and new scripture—seemed a potent threat to the Republic. Finally, the Latter-day Saints' communitarian social structure mixed the religious and the temporal, raising fears not merely of a religious establishment but of a theocracy or a church-controlled civil government. In combination, these factors proved catastrophic. In 1844, while in state custody for destroying an antagonistic local press, Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were killed by a mob. For the next eighteen months, as the Latter-day Saints worked to finish their temple, mob attacks increased in number and force. Finally, in February 1846, the Mormons were forced to begin their exodus from Nauvoo. Eventually they would settle in the Great Basin on the western side of the Rocky Mountains, but not before schism and death would reduce their numbers considerably.

From Brigham Young to the Politics of Plural Marriages

Struggles over succession led to the creation of a number of breakaway groups, such as the Strangites and the Cutlerites, as well as sects led by church luminaries. Comprising relatively few adherents and scattered across the Midwest, the majority disbanded or became obscure outposts on America's religious landscape. These failures prompted a coalition of the scattered faithful around Smith's eldest son, Joseph Smith III, in 1860, and creation of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By far the greatest numbers of Smith's believers followed Brigham Young (1801–1877) west in 1846. Along with large numbers of converts from Europe, they pioneered settlements throughout the Rocky Mountain region from Edmonton, Canada, to colonial Juárez in Mexico and as far west as San Bernardino.

From their haven behind the mountains, the Latter-day Saints would agitate the rest of America for the remainder of the century, not least because they took advantage of their independence to openly practice plural marriage but also because they aroused the familiar fears of the church's political and economic power. Hearing rumors of Mormon rebellion in the West, the U.S. Army was dispatched in 1857 to subdue the "Mormon Kingdom." The confrontation, called the "Utah War," caused much trauma and expense but little change. The greatest trauma was the brutal execution of emigrants traveling via wagon train by war-inflamed Mormon settlers at Mountain Meadows. Although Brigham Young was deposed as Utah's governor, the Mormons continued to build their kingdom of God in the West under his direction during the Civil War. When the Civil War ended in 1865, and slavery was outlawed, the United States turned its attention back to what was considered the nation's "twin relic of barbarism": Mormon polygamy.

The Latter-day Saints believed that their plural marriages, as practiced by consenting adults and as an expression of religious conscience, were as moral and legal as the rest of America's monogamous ones. Church approval was required before plural marriage could be undertaken. The parties were required to demonstrate the spiritual maturity to live in harmony and the economic capacity to support the family. This was an ideal sometimes not realized, but divorces were granted liberally when the unions failed. No one was required to practice polygamy. Historians estimate that only 20–25 percent did. Seldom did more than two women marry one man, Brigham Young's twenty-seven wives being a notorious exception. The primary purpose of plural marriage appears to have been the birthing of children and the care of those unsupported by families, specifically immigrants and widows. Studies have shown that polygamous women did not have more children than did their monogamous contemporaries. Although it was commonly assumed that LDS women were oppressed by the practice of plural marriage, they vigorously defended their marriages and in some respects appear to have been more autonomous than many of their contemporaries. They owned property and income-generating businesses; obtained professional licenses, such as medical degrees; and presided over church programs. Utah was the first state to enfranchise women and to elect a woman to public office.

The liberty in—much less the fidelity of—Latter-day Saint plural marriages was lost on the rest of America, however. The national reform movements took particular

interest in stopping the church's marital practices and found increasing support within the Utah Territory. Completion of the transcontinental railroad and consequent growth of mining and mercantile interests had attracted non-Mormons to Utah. The first Protestants came to the Utah Territory either as representatives of the federal government who were appointed to dismantle the Mormon kingdom or as missionaries for the eastern reform establishment who were commissioned to convert Mormons away from Mormonism. The antagonism members of each denomination felt for the other, based on experiences in the East, was aggravated by the fact that the postbellum antipolygamy campaign was supported by allegations and evidence provided by Protestants who lived among the Latter-day Saints in the West.

Utah's Protestant ministers were extremely popular on the eastern lecture circuit for their dramatic presentations on the evils of Mormonism. Indeed, the major source of funding for their fledgling congregations came from the ministers' efforts to convince national mission boards and eastern Protestants that Mormon barbarism was a threat to the nation. Their efforts contributed to a national press that made the Latter-day Saints universal objects of ridicule and scorn. Burlesque treatments in plays and romantic novels made the Mormon man a symbol of unrestrained and predatory sexuality, the Mormon woman a dupe and sexual toy in a Rocky Mountain harem, and Mormon children the abused and deformed offspring of monstrous parents. This history of intolerance is a cultural memory that subtly colors the relation of Latter-day Saints to America's mainstream even today. Arguably, the LDS Church's twentieth-century display of middle-class values, emphasis on law-abiding love for country, and even its pride in achievement within the larger culture reflect an ongoing rebuttal to its nineteenth-century experience with Protestant America.

The nineteenth-century Protestant campaign did more than hurt feelings, however. It had very real political consequences for the LDS Church and its members. Beginning with the Morrill Act of 1862, which equated plural marriage with bigamy, cultural norms were coupled with federal legislative might to impose criminal penalties on individual Latter-day Saints and political sanctions on the Utah Territory. The U.S. Congress eventually enacted three additional antipolygamy statutes that successively placed Utah's territorial courts under federal jurisdiction, imposed civil penalties such as disenfranchisement, and simplified proof for polygamy convictions. The courts ultimately dissolved the corporate status of the LDS Church, in 1887, and confiscated

its property. Eventually, more than a thousand Latter-day Saints were sentenced to federal penitentiaries. Since these men constituted the local leadership of Latter-day Saint communities, and since the chief leaders of the church, who had yet to be arraigned, were in hiding, the church was under tremendous organizational strain. In addition, heavy fines for those convicted, the loss of family support previously provided by those in prison, and confiscation of church property by federal agents impoverished the church and its members. State lawmakers, too, joined federal ones to impose additional burdens on the Latter-day Saints. In 1884 any Idaho citizen affiliated with a group that believed in polygamy was stripped of the right to vote, to hold public office, and to serve on juries.

Beginning in 1890, after a series of Supreme Court decisions upholding the constitutionality of these various statutory regulations and penalties, the church began to end the practice of plural marriage. The process would take twenty years and lengthy negotiations over the seating of Reed Smoot, a high-ranking Latter-day Saint official, in the U.S. Senate. But in the first decade of the twentieth century, the church's president, Joseph F. Smith, nephew and namesake of the first prophet, announced that the practice of plural marriage was to cease, and the church began to enforce the new policy through excommunication of dissidents. These excommunicates formed the core of fundamentalist sectarian groups that perpetuated forms of polygamy, such as the group at Yearning for Zion Ranch, in Texas, that was raided by state authorities in 2008. Also as a result of the Senate's four-year investigative hearing on Senator Smoot, the church was able to demonstrate that it was not anti-democratic and that it was not monopolistic in its economic activities. These developments gave the church a measure of social acceptance by, and peaceful coexistence with, their fellow Americans. Apostle Smoot's representation of and intervention on behalf of the church during his thirty-year senatorial career enabled it to thrive domestically and, in the first half of the twentieth century, to follow the America flag abroad. The church spent the second half of the century growing beyond its North American borders.

Beliefs and Practices

The Latter-day Saints do not engage in traditional theological reasoning, nor does scholastic theology carry any doctrinal authority for them. This is due in large part to their view that philosophical disputes corrupted early Christianity, as well as their inheritance from Joseph Smith

of a large canonical corpus, and their belief in the revelatory power of their contemporary prophet. Those within the church who write about doctrinal matters tend to do so as commentaries on LDS scripture or in the form of homilies published by the church's press.

Four books make up the church's canon and are considered equally authoritative: the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Doctrine and Covenants. The church prefers the King James Version of the Bible. As indicated earlier, Mormons believe that the Book of Mormon is a thousand-year historical narrative of a family's flight from Jerusalem in the sixth century BCE and establishment of a civilization in the Western Hemisphere where, later, the resurrected Christ appeared. The Pearl of Great Price comprises Smith's other revelatory translations. It includes the Book of Abraham, an account of Abraham's covenant with God, and the Book of Moses, Smith's reworking of the Genesis narrative. The most discursive of Smith's canonical works—The Book of Doctrine and Covenants—consists of revelations directed to the contemporary church. Smith's theology was expressed largely through these texts that expanded upon the Bible, which he deemed true “as far as it is translated correctly.” Not surprisingly then, in what is called the “Inspired Version” or the “Joseph Smith Translation,” Smith rewrote significant portions of the Bible by adding events and dialogue to create a variation on the traditional Judeo-Christian salvation history.

The Latter-day Saints worship a godhead composed of three separate divine personages: God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. Thus, the Latter-day Saints do not accept conciliar Christianity's trinitarian understanding of God. This view, combined with the church's doctrine of “eternal progression,” a belief that humans have divine potential, has led some to argue that it is not Christian. Yet the LDS Church shares with traditional Christianity the doctrine of the sovereignty of the Father and the divinity of Christ as God's only begotten, born in the flesh, whose sacrificial atonement and Resurrection provided the sole means of overcoming human sin and death. Equally central to LDS beliefs are the traditional Christian doctrines of repentance, faith in Christ, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. The church observes the primary events of the Christian calendar: Easter and Christmas. Latter-day Saints are, however, deeply committed to their sectarian identity as distinct from traditional Christianity. Thus, they commemorate definitive moments in their own history, especially the first generation's exodus from Illinois and heroic crossing of the American continent.

As indicated previously, among the Church's distinctive doctrines is the belief in modern revelation. While endorsing the traditional biblical revelation of God through Jesus Christ, the Latter-day Saints believe also that God has spoken and continues to speak through prophets called to lead the church. The chief example of this is, of course, Joseph Smith's prophetic activity. In addition, however, the Latter-day Saints believe that God continues to speak through those called today to direct their church. The church's president is also its prophet. Individual members are expected to seek divine revelation on matters of individual concern, especially with respect to their personal salvation and church responsibilities.

In terms of ethical and social practices, the Latter-day Saints subscribe to the classic values associated with New Testament Christianity: love of God and love of neighbor broadly defined. The church's doctrine of human agency and its experience of being the subject of religious violence make the church supportive of religious freedom. Moreover, being seen as a good citizen in any of its host countries is highly valued by the LDS Church, and it welcomes opportunities to cooperate with other religions for the benefit of society at large. Nevertheless, believing itself to be uniquely authorized by God, the church does not participate in doctrinally motivated ecumenical movements.

In addition to its emphasis on moral integrity, the church places a high value on sexual chastity, including abstinence prior to and fidelity within marriage. The church's sacramental view of marriage and the family situates it on the conservative side of many controversial questions, especially those related to sex and gender. The church discourages delay of childbearing, mothers working outside the home, and divorce. It proscribes abortion except in certain extreme circumstances related to the health of the mother, rape, or incest. In the 1970s the church opposed ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and disciplined members who publicly criticized its position. Currently the church is a leader in the political resistance to same-sex marriage. Although the church is careful not to take a position on the origins of homosexuality in nature or human choice, homosexual practice is regarded as sin.

Latter-day Saints dress in the fashion of their respective cultures, adapting it only to observe certain standards related to modesty. Temple-going church members wear an undergarment that symbolizes, not unlike a clerical collar, their formal dedication to serving God. The church continues to observe a dietary code believed to have been divinely

revealed to Smith in 1833 that forbids the consumption of alcohol, tea, coffee, and tobacco and advocates healthy eating habits as a foundation to spiritual, not just physical strength.

All members are expected to tithe 10 percent of their income. Offerings are made to the poor in conjunction with a fast on the first Sunday of each month. The measure of the offering is left to the member, but it is suggested that it be no less than the generous equivalent of two meals. Other offerings are secondary and relate to the church's humanitarian, welfare, missionary, and building programs. No fees are charged for participation in church activities. All tithes and offerings are forwarded to church headquarters and redistributed to cover the costs of church units throughout the world. The construction and maintenance of all chapels and temples, as well as all other church expenses, local and international, are paid from the general funds of the church as a whole.

Formal Latter-day Saint worship occurs in both chapels and temples. Chapels are the site of regular Sunday worship services and are architecturally most distinctive for the absence of the cross, a nineteenth-century commonplace in America, which has been theologized to express Latter-day Saint emphasis on the Resurrection. More distinctive are the nearly 150 temples built throughout the world. After dedication, these are closed to all but active members of the church. Highly symbolic in design, temples portray Latter-day Saint cosmology and its theology of the immediacy of the divine.

The LDS Church is extremely unitary and hierarchical in its operation. It functions under the direction of a lifetime-appointed three-man presidency and quorum of twelve apostles. Latter-day Saint congregations are organized geographically and are denominated "wards." Several wards make up a "stake." Several stakes constitute an "area," the aggregation of which covers the world. Each unit is presided over by a lay president serving a limited tenure. The church employs no professionally trained ministry: laity perform all church functions. This is possible because all male members of the LDS Church, if found worthy and at least twelve years old, are ordained to priestly authority for the purpose of administering church ordinances. As described in detail in the next section, these ordinances are the blessing and naming of infants at birth; baptism by immersion for those eight years and older; confirmation for the gift of the Holy Ghost; the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; ordination; marriage; healing through the anointing with consecrated oil and by the laying on of hands; and the dedication of graves for the

burial of the dead. The church has been accused of propounding racist views over the years, and during the era of Brigham Young, males of African descent were excluded from the church's lay priesthood. Beginning in 1978, these exclusions were removed and church offices were integrated.

The status of women within the LDS Church is ambiguous at best. Although women are not formally ordained, the lay nature of Latter-day Saint organization means that they perform virtually all aspects of traditional Protestant ministry, except explicitly sacramental acts such as baptizing or blessing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Women give sermons; organize and preside over a wide range of official church gatherings, as well as routinely offer prayers of invocation and benediction; teach doctrinal classes; minister to the sick; prepare the dead for burial; and serve proselytizing missions. In the temple, they officiate in ordinances. Nevertheless, there are a number of aspects of church leadership and sacramental practice in which they explicitly cannot participate. These include serving in the policymaking offices of the church and performing any ordinances outside the temple. While women historically did perform ordinances of healing and blessing, especially in connection with childbirth and local church stewardship, they were discouraged from doing so in the early twentieth century, as the church entered the mainstream of American culture.

Worship and Ritual

The LDS Church's mix of prophetic and priestly forms, coupled with a belief in open canon and the necessity of sacraments, has created a complex ritual practice that orders both communal and personal life. In addition to the ordinances listed above, a number of other liturgies structure Latter-day Saint worship in chapels, homes, and temples. Sunday services are held in chapels and, while in the Protestant model of sermons and classes, are focused on the administration of Communion. On Monday nights the home is the site of family worship designed to teach gospel principles and strengthen family relations through wholesome activities. Daily prayer and scripture reading, both as practiced by individuals and as families, is strongly encouraged. On any day but Sunday members who receive the necessary authorization based on worthiness attend temple to perform ordinances, such as baptism, for those who did not receive such ordinances while alive and are believed to be able to choose the Christian gospel after death and before resurrection. In addition, the temple is the preferred site of Latter-day Saint

marriages, since only in the temple may a couple be joined for eternity. Those who choose to be married in Latter-day Saint chapels are considered joined until death.

The commemoration of the Lord's Supper is the definitive liturgical action of Latter-day Saint public worship each Sunday, and for it the word *sacrament* is reserved. All other rituals are called ordinances. Hence, in Latter-day Saint usage, the Sunday meeting, which all members are required to attend, is the "sacrament meeting" where they partake of "the sacrament." In the order of Sunday services, the sacrament is followed by two to three sermons or "talks" given by previously invited members of the congregation, who are expected to base their remarks on scripture. This Sunday service consists of set components, with only minor variations from week to week, even on such traditional holy days as Christmas and Easter. The meeting, which is opened and closed with prayer and hymn, centers on the performance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and the presentation of sermons by members of the congregation. The prayers spoken during the blessing of the sacrament are scripturally prescribed and are unique for their being read verbatim from the text. First recorded in the Book of Mormon, these prayers are virtually identical to the prayers used today. The only change is the substitution, also in 1830, of "water" for "wine" to reflect concern for impurities. The sacrament obliges its partakers to "witness . . . that they are willing to take upon them the name of [Christ], and always remember him, and keep his commandments . . . that they may always have his Spirit to be with them." The sacrament is not a memorial, but rather expresses the hope of immediate physical communion, figured by the ritual communion, with Christ.

The Latter-day Saints designate their homes "the fundamental unit of the Church." This reflects their understanding that all the sacramental powers at work in the congregation are also present in the family. Indeed, many of the sacraments are performed by family members, even when conducted in congregational settings. This is especially true of blessing infants and baptizing and confirming children. In addition, anointing the sick and blessing those in need of guidance and comfort are performed routinely in the home. Doctrinal instruction is considered the responsibility of the parents and has been formalized by the incorporation of a specific liturgy to be conducted by all church families. Called "Family Home Evening," the program is to be conducted each Monday night and include prayer, hymn singing, and both catechetical and social activities that strengthen family bonds and church devotion. To ensure that

those without priesthood authority in their homes have access to all ordinances, each member of the congregation is assigned male "home teachers" who are to visit regularly to provide such aid and instruction as is desired. Women visit other women as "visiting teachers" to provide assistance of a nonsacramental nature.

For Latter-day Saints, the temple represents a means of being "endued" (King James Version) or "clothed with power from on high" (Revised Standard Version, Luke 24:49). Thus, the temple ritual is called the "endowment." Because the church does not publish its temple liturgy, even for members, the only authoritative description of the endowment is contained in *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (1992), published by Macmillan with the church's cooperation and defining four aspects of the rite. First, the candidate is ritually washed, anointed, and dressed in white clothing. Second, he or she receives a series of "lectures and representations," including "a recital of the most prominent events of the Creation, a figurative depiction of the advent of Adam and Eve and of every man and every woman, the entry of Adam and Eve into the Garden of Eden, the consequent expulsion from the garden, their condition in the world, and their receiving of the Plan of Salvation leading to the return to the presence of God." Third, the candidate makes covenants which are considered to be "the unfolding or culmination of" the baptismal covenant. Finally, the ritual cultivates "a sense of divine presence" for the purpose of receiving revelation necessary to return to God.

In addition, Latter-day Saints go to their temples to be married. This ceremony is called a "sealing" and makes of the couple and their progeny an "eternal family." This is understood in two senses. Most obviously, it means that by death they do not part. Second, it places the members of the family in a salvific relationship: giving them power to bless each other's lives, even assisting in each other's salvation. Thus, "eternal marriage," as it is called in the church, partakes of the same elements as the scripturally familiar "eternal life." All temple ordinances, as well as those performed in the church, such as baptism and confirmation, are performed in the temple on behalf of the deceased also. The church's genealogical resources enable members to identify ancestors who have died without benefit of saving ordinances in order that these ordinances may be performed by proxy in the temple. In sum, the temple hosts those ordinances that are designed to sanctify individuals and make their extended family relationships eternal.

The worship practices of the Latter-day Saints—in homes, churches, and temples—provide order for them

within a sacred cosmology and give meaning to their daily lives. Their complex liturgy of word and sacrament molds them into forms of Christian discipleship and covenant-based tribal bonds that extend to those who came before and are yet to come.

Related Churches

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the largest and best known of the churches that trace their origins to Joseph Smith, but it is not the only one. After Smith's murder in 1844, his followers splintered in several directions. Contesting claimants to its presidency led small groups to Wisconsin and Texas. Individuals, too, scattered under pressure from mobs that raided Nauvoo and its environs. Many of the scattered gathered in 1860 into what became the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, recently renamed the Community of Christ. Today, with approximately 200,000 members and headquartered in Independence, Missouri, the Community of Christ has evolved doctrinally and ecclesiastically in a manner that has allowed its rapprochement with mainstream American Protestantism, but caused schism with a third of its membership who wished to retain a restorationist orientation. The Utah-based Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has maintained the nineteenth-century church's original name and Smith's broad prophetic claims. The remaining religious groups who look to Smith for their origins are typically small, tribe-like organizations located primarily in isolated parts of the western United States. The best known among them are generally called fundamentalist Mormons and are identifiable by their continuing practice of polygamy. These groups arose in reaction against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' abandonment of plural marriage in the early twentieth century and in many cases were founded by excommunicates. Each group looks upon the other as apostate and anathema. Regardless of these deep divisions, the various churches that make up the Latter-day Saint movement share the conviction that Smith was a modern prophet, though the definition of this role may range from a mild acknowledgement of his religious genius to a strong conviction that he was a Moses-like lawgiver and mediator of heavenly power.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Architecture: New Religious Movements; Book of Mormon; California and the Pacific Rim Region; Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools; Environment and Ecology; Frontier and Borderlands; Mountain West*

and Prairie Region; Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Revivalism: Nineteenth Century; Scriptures: American Texts; Theocracy; Tourism and Pilgrimage; Violence and Terror; Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Art from the Revolution to the Civil War; Zionism.

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Liberation Theology

The birth and growth of liberation theologies, especially in the developing world and amid U.S. minorities, is one of the most remarkable theological developments of the twentieth century. The many expressions of liberation theology presume that the purpose of belief is to free (liberate) persons from whatever forces keep them from reaching their full human potential. Consequently, these theologies challenge Eurocentric, patriarchal, de-historicized assumptions about developing or constructing a theology. They highlight the importance of social location and a preferential option for the oppressed and marginalized. In general these voices emerge from the underside of society, critically engaging the historical Christian tradition and contemporary understandings of theological sources, norms, and loci.

The theological reflection on liberation centers on the experience of oppression as framed by each particular voice. Liberation theologians take the religious faith and life

context of marginalized peoples as the starting point and content of their theological reflection. They are critical of mainstream theology's failure to address questions of justice and refusal to take seriously the faith life of marginalized peoples globally. Liberation theologians question the authenticity of any theology that does not emphasize the oppressed. Liberation in this context means liberation from oppression, whether it is racism, sexism, classism, or ethnic prejudice. Liberation theologians are well aware that liberation from oppression will never be fully realized until the eschaton, or end of the world, for this event is ultimately and exclusively the work of God. Liberation theologians, however, demand that Christians actively work toward liberation in the here and now, even while recognizing that the kingdom of God will never be fully realized in the present.

The emphasis on oppression, which often is expressed through interdisciplinary research on critical theory, sociology, ethnography, and literature, also leads to one of the strongest critiques of liberation theologies, namely that one finds little theology within their work. Critiques in this vein argue that the emphasis on the context in which one reflects theologically often eclipses constructive theological writing. Another strong critique of these voices is their emphasis on humanity's participation in the construction of the kingdom of God. Liberation theologians are accused of reducing salvation history to human history.

Latin American Liberation Theology

Perhaps the best-known expression of liberation theology globally is found in Latin America. Latin American liberation theology, born in the late 1960s, argues that the poor must be the center of theological reflection. This theology functions on three levels: the popular, the pastoral, and the academic. The first two inform and give life to the third. Thus, the spirituality and political praxis of grassroots Christian communities informs theoretical theological reflection. Grounded in the belief that economic and social justice must be at the center of the mission of the church, this Latin American theological movement has created a radical new ecclesial reality that centers on grassroots Christian communities and an innovative vision of the theological task.

Feminist Theology

In North America, paralleling the irruptions in developing countries, were the voices of women and U.S. minorities. In contrast to other U.S. liberation theologies, such as black and Hispanic, feminist theology developed as the struggle

of an oppressed majority. The invisibility of women within religious institutions fueled the outrage and fervor behind this movement. Feminist theologians rallied against Christianity's complicity in historical and contemporary manifestations of sexism, arguing that any hierarchical and oppressive understanding of humanity based on gender, sexual identity, race, and class was contrary to the Christian message. The 1968 publication of Mary Daly's *The Church and the Second Sex* marks the birth of this movement in the United States. Many consider Daly, Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and Rosemary Radford Ruether to be the "foremothers" of feminist theology. In their work, one finds a hesitancy to give Christian tradition, scripture, and theology any sort of normative status due to its male-centered foundation. Therefore, women's experiences and struggles for liberation often become the central commitment and norm in their scholarship. Fundamental to these theologians' work is recovering women's intellectual histories and the implications of this task. By making gender a primary analytic category, feminist theologians seek to highlight the ideologies operating in historical and current understandings of Christian tradition.

A Christian theological writing or movement is deemed revelatory if it promotes the full humanity of women in contrast to a sexist construction or practice. For Schüssler Fiorenza this concept is described in terms of women-church. Within her theology, the radical nature of feminist theology is in its accountability: to women in churches and not to the church. Because the church has historically been an institution that denies the full humanity of women, feminist theology does not answer to it. Instead, feminist theology is accountable to women who have remained committed to Christianity in spite of their marginalization. Ruether argues that the Christian tradition must be weighed against the critical principle of feminist theology, the promotion of the full humanity of women, to determine whether or not a given doctrine, practice, or belief promotes the full humanity of women. Whatever denies women's full humanity is not redemptive; what promotes it is "holy." Daly is now a post-Christian thinker who finds the Christian tradition as a whole irredeemable from patriarchy. More recent feminist theology has become more theoretical in focus, and this turn to theory is found in the work of Serene Jones, Mary McClintock Fulkerson, Rebecca Chopp, and Katherine Tanner.

Black Liberation Theology

Feminist theologians are not alone in uncovering an alternative understanding of Christian history and theology. Black

liberation and black feminist or womanist theologians have made historical recovery central to their theological task and a principal resource for constructing contemporary theologies. Black liberation theology emerged in the mid-1960s as an explosive theological movement in the United States. Nurtured by church leaders and academic theologians, black liberation theology claims that the Christian God is a God of liberation and love. Black theologians promoted a message of self-love for African Americans, as children of God born in the image of God. Included in this message is the denouncement of racism, which defies God's will for humanity and stands in contrast to the kingdom of God. The 1969 publication of James H. Cone's *Black Theology and Black Power* marked the birth of the academic branch of this movement. Foundational to the study of religion in black theology is slave religion, also known as the invisible institution. A liberationist interpretation of the Bible also plays a central role in black theology. In addition to black experience and identity, perhaps no other concept within black theology carries such force as the notion of the black church, which encompasses the plurality of black churches and denominations in the United States.

Cone is considered the academic father of black theology, and his extensive corpus looks at both historical and contemporary sources of black religious experience. From his work on Malcolm X to his work on the spirituals, the retrieval of black experience as central to liberationist theological discourse has been a hallmark of his scholarship. Dwight Hopkins is another influential voice in this field. His work on slave narratives and figures in African American folklore demonstrate the centrality of historical African American religious experience as a primary source for black theology. Critical voices also have emerged in the newer generation of black scholars. Victor Anderson has waged a sharp critique of what he describes as "ontological blackness," an understanding of the essence of black identity and experience he argues is operating in black theological discourse.

Womanist Theology

Womanist theology emerged in the mid-1980s as a black feminist theological movement that both draws from and critiques black and North American feminist theologies. Womanists highlight the shortcomings of early black theologians regarding discussions of gender in their work, and they critique feminists for the racism prevalent throughout white feminist scholarship and social justice movements. Womanist theologians use a multidimensional analysis of

race, class, and gender as their hermeneutical lens for the theological task. They rely heavily on literature and other forms of African American women's cultural production as primary sources for the scholarship.

Novelist, essayist, and activist Alice Walker opens her 1983 collection of essays, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*, with a definition of a womanist. Among other things, a womanist is a "black feminist." Womanist theologians have appropriated this definition of womanist within theological discourse to name themselves and their focus on the intersection of racism, classism, and sexism as it touches the lives of black women. Walker's 1982 novel, *The Color Purple*, also plays a fundamental role in womanist theology. In addition, the voices of Delores S. Williams, Stephanie Mitchem, and Katie Cannon are central to womanist theology. Questions of ethics and survival, community, and everyday life are fundamental to their work.

Latino and Latina Feminist Theologies

Latino/a theologies place the faith and struggles of everyday Latino/as as the starting point and center of their theological reflection. Latino/a theologians combine a strong commitment to social justice while simultaneously taking the cultural contours of Latino/a faith expressions into serious consideration. Although Latino theologians do not claim a liberationist voice in their collective work, the corpus of Latino/a theology clearly stands in conversation with and participates in the legacy of liberation theologies globally. Central themes in Latino/a theology include *mestizaje/mulatez* (cultural hybridity of Spanish, African, and indigenous), popular religion, and *lo cotidiano* (daily life as a fundamental starting point of theological reflection). Similarly, Asian American theologies reflect the influence of liberation theologies globally, but also take seriously questions of culture and interreligious dialogue.

Within Latino/a theology the writings of Virgilio Elizondo are foundational. Elizondo's work on *mestizaje*, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the border are the starting point of U.S. Latino/a theological reflection. Orlando O. Espín has highlighted the centrality of popular religion for understanding Latino/a faith and spirituality. His more recent works look at the fundamental role of popular or local religion in light of the broader Christian tradition. Roberto S. Goizueta has made a groundbreaking contribution in his writings on the unity of the aesthetic and the ethical within Latino/a theology. With Alejandro García-Rivera, Peter Casarella, and Michelle A. Gonzalez, Goizueta has established theological

aesthetics as a fundamental dimension of contemporary Latino/a theology.

Latina feminist theology is a liberation theology with a multilayered hermeneutic and analysis of the reality of U.S. Latinas. As a liberation theology, Latina feminist theology understands its scholarship as reflection on the divine emerging from the context of a marginalized people. Its theological influences and sources can be traced to the emergence of three philosophical developments in the latter half of the twentieth century: Latin American liberation theology, feminist theology, and U.S. Latino/a theology. The sources of Latina feminist theology are not reduced to these three, but it is from these theologies that Latina feminist theologians derive their analysis of the economic, patriarchal, and ethnocentric structures and constructs that oppress Latinas. The voices of Jeanette Rodríguez and María Pilar Aquino are major contributors to this discourse. *Mujerista* theology is a Latina feminist theology, primarily articulated in the work of Ada María Isasi-Díaz, who uses an ethnographic methodology to maintain grassroots Latinas as the central subjects and authors of *mujerista* theology.

The Future of Liberation Theology

In the early 1990s eulogies on the death of liberation theologies abounded. Such notices were premature. Liberation theology may be associated with a particular moment in the late twentieth century, but the theologians who were the fathers and mothers of liberationist movements in the academy remain vital contributors to the theological academy. In other words, although liberation theology as an umbrella term for a group of theologians with a particular set of socio-political commitments now refers to a historical (albeit recent history) theological movement, the authors of the movement remain contemporary vital voices. In addition, many of the concerns liberation theologians raised about the human condition—overwhelming poverty, racism, sexism, and ethnic prejudice—are still relevant and pressing. It may be too soon to determine liberation theology's future, but it is clear that the movement may not be exiled to the past as irrelevant.

See also *Bible, Interpretation of; Emerging Church Movement; Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues; Feminist Studies; Latino American Religion* entries; *Literature: African American; Lived Religion; Nation(s) of Islam; Practical Theology; Religious Thought* entries; *Social Ethics; Systematic Theology*.

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Literature

Literature (from the Latin *littera*, or "letter") encompasses the creative written works of a culture, including fiction, short stories, poetry, and drama; it can also include essays, memoirs, and other works of nonfiction. In a religious context literature also embraces sermons and other homiletical works that are published in print after being spoken aloud to an audience. American literature (which generally incorporates those literary works published in what is now the United States from colonial times to the present) has often wrestled with deeply religious themes of divine inscrutability, human nature, identity formation, and the just society. Questions of morality, freedom, and individual responsibility have tended to animate American literature. Although scholars and writers sometimes make distinctions between "literary" works and popular or "genre" works (for example, romance, science fiction, or thrillers), for historical and social purposes it is imperative to consider popular literature alongside its more prestigious and highbrow counterpart.

Historical Overview

Although oral stories and dramas were in circulation among Native Americans long before European colonization, the absence of written language among most Native Americans meant that these orally transmitted works have been largely lost to history. Some of those stories were drawn or

painted on cave walls or expressed through sculpture and pottery, but most were not recorded. After European colonization began in the sixteenth century, some European missionaries—including French and Spanish Jesuits—began writing down the folktales, epics, ballads, and oral literature of various indigenous American peoples. While these texts are obviously of great value, it is important to remember that they are mediated, since they were solicited and documented by missionaries who hoped to convert the people to Roman Catholicism. In general, however, Native American stories speak to the divine origin and sacred nature of the earth, the infusion of animals with spiritual wisdom, and the importance of visionary experiences.

Religious Literature in Colonial America

The late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries are regarded as one of Europe's finest literary ages. In England playwright William Shakespeare wrote and produced dramas and comedies that are still standards of the English language; in Spain, Miguel de Cervantes fashioned the unforgettable character of Don Quixote and set the bar for the modern creative novel; and in France various playwrights excelled at comedy, tragedy, satire, and chivalric romance. Moreover, the invention and dissemination of the printing press ensured that these works could be enjoyed not just by a noble elite but by an emerging middle class as well. However, the literary explosions enjoyed in Europe by powerful nations such as England, Spain, and France—which, along with the Netherlands, were the most significant competitors vying for a foothold in the New World—did not necessarily translate to America. For the first two centuries after Columbus set foot on a Caribbean island, America's fledgling literary tradition produced a few memoirs, many letters home, and some noteworthy sermons, but almost no poetry, drama, or fiction.

There are several practical reasons for this long period of relative silence. First of all, the American colonies were in a perpetual state of unrest. War with the French, and with various Native American tribes, left colonists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries little time for literary activities such as writing or reading for pleasure. Even in times of relative peace, the incessant demands of building a society and making a living from the earth rendered literary pursuits a luxury the colonists could ill afford. Also, some of the early colonists were illiterate men (and, in the English colonies, women), who decided to emigrate precisely because they had so few opportunities for education and

advancement at home. Only one of the original *Mayflower* emigrants had gone to college, for example. These early colonists did not comprise a sufficient reading audience for the production of a homegrown American literature. Although the Puritans valued the written word enough to bring over a printing press from England as early as 1638, it took at least another generation for reading to become part of mainstream culture. Books were such a precious resource that in estate inventories of the era books were often listed individually by title; they were valuable enough that each one might be part of the family will.

As the seventeenth century drew to a close, more colonists could read but what books did exist were overtly religious in nature, such as sermon collections or providential accounts of the colony's founding. In fact, the colonists' strict religious faith was another reason for their dry spell of literary creativity. For the English Pilgrims and Puritans, the French and Spanish Catholics, and even the Dutch Calvinists, the decision to make a home in the Americas was motivated as much by a desire to purify the Christian faith and to promulgate a particular version of it as it was by a drive to conquer and profit from a new land. Among the English Puritans who gained hold of New England in the 1630s and retained that tight grip until well after the Revolution, literature was seen as a sybaritic diversion at best and the devil's own distraction at worst. While the English colonists made rapid gains in literacy in seventeenth-century America, this did not necessarily translate into the production of plays, poems, or novels. In fact, live theater was banned in Puritan strongholds until nearly the nineteenth century, so that no less a literary pacesetter than Mercy Otis Warren in the late eighteenth century wrote her own plays without having seen a single theatrical production and without hoping that her creations would ever be brought to the stage. Anglican Virginia and Catholic Maryland were the only two of the original thirteen colonies where live theater was never banned by law.

In French and Spanish Catholic areas such as California and the Upper Midwest, while no bans existed to oppose novels or live theater, literature and performance were not a priority. Jesuit, Franciscan, and Dominican friars did write copious reports of life in the New World to their superiors, some of which were collected in book form and published to satisfy a reading audience of curious Europeans. Some Spanish missionaries did write or translate *autos*, religious and morality plays, which could be performed at festivals and on Sunday afternoons for a curious public. By putting

these theatricals into various native languages and employing indigenous actors, the missionaries hoped to use drama as one more means to impart the gospel to Native Americans in language they could understand.

Along the East Coast, what the English colonists had in abundance were sermons. From John Winthrop's iconic sermon "A Model of Christian Charity," delivered during or after his 1630 voyage from England, through the colonial period, Puritans wrestled with the importance of their holy experiment, feeling the eyes of the world on their attempt to carve out a pure Christian society. Their sermons reflect their concerns with a retreat from the corruption of the world, much like the chosen people of Israel had eschewed their heathen neighbors in the Bible's Old Testament. In their unadorned meetinghouses they preached a plain gospel, frowning on the rhetorical flourishes and embellishments of Anglicans and Catholics.

These plain sermons happened not only on Sunday but also during the week at lectures, prayer meetings, or fast and feast days. The quotidian interweaving of the Puritan sermon with the everyday life of the New England colonists paved the way for sermons to also become significant additions to culture in their written form: in colonial New England, published sermons outnumbered other print publications (newspapers, almanacs, pamphlets, and so forth) by a ratio of four to one. And because so many of these sermons castigated New Englanders for their perceived lapses, often calling upon the biblical prophet Jeremiah, they sparked a new American literary tradition: the jeremiad. Jeremiads helped the colonists make sense of challenging circumstances (for example, Indian attacks and bouts of small pox) as God's judgment for their sins.

In other forms of seventeenth-century American literature, God's sovereignty was also paramount. The poetry of Anne Bradstreet, for example, emphasized a Christian's patience in enduring suffering. In "Upon the Burning of Our House July 1666," Bradstreet interpreted the disturbing event of a family fire as God's will. "I blest his grace that gave and took," she wrote. One of her contemporaries expressed the same sentiments in the literary form of the Indian captivity narrative. When Mary White Rowlandson was captured by Narragansett and Wampanoag Indians during King Philip's War in 1675, she endured great tragedy and witnessed the deaths of several friends and family members. Upon her release she wrote *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God: Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* to inform her peers about what had

happened to her and, more importantly, to emphasize God's power and holiness even amid suffering.

In the eighteenth century, American literature fell under the sway of Enlightenment rationalism. Although Enlightenment ideals were perhaps best expressed in the essays of the era, sermons were not immune but sought to reconcile a biblical Christian faith with new discoveries in science, medicine, and philosophy. Simultaneously, however, a new pietism arose that emphasized the role of the heart in conversion and the necessity of inward transformation alongside or perhaps even in the place of enlightened intellectualism. Revivalist literature described people's conversion experiences and issued a direct invitation to readers to turn to God before it was too late. Pamphlets by the SPCK (the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) found a ready audience among colonists eager to learn more about baptism, Communion, and daily prayer.

The eighteenth century saw the importation of the novel and even the creation of a few American novels alongside the ones that were popular in Europe. Chief among the imports were the novels of Samuel Richardson, especially *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, epistolary tales of two young women's struggles to hold on to their virtue. These novels were widely read in America, with (mostly female) fans exhorting their moral Christian character whenever novel reading was decried as an unsuitable or unprofitable amusement. Decades later these themes were echoed in America's first indigenous novel, *The Power of Sympathy*—a title that would prove prophetic for the sway of fiction for decades to come. Published in 1789, William Hill Brown's story of seduction and incest tugged at the heartstrings of American readers, employing "sympathy" to address matters of pressing social concern.

Many of the novels of this period were satirical about religion or highly rational in nature, reflecting the late eighteenth century's preoccupations with rationality, empirical proof, and natural explanations of alleged supernatural phenomena. Charles Brockden Brown's brilliant 1798 novel *Wieland*, for example, suggests the deep dangers of religious fanaticism and the superiority of scientific accounts over claims to visionary experience.

The Nineteenth Century "Age of the Printing Press"

The nineteenth century challenged many of the established ways of thinking about religion, as the detached logic of Brockden Brown gave way to literature that was increasingly romantic, unapologetically supernatural, and fixated

on liberal ideas of God's love. The Romantic movement sweeping Europe appealed to emerging American ideals of personal freedom and boundless possibility. Moreover, the liberal religion of the nineteenth century was the perfect mate of the novel form, which shared liberal thinkers' preference for example over dogma and human experience over doctrinal propositions. Sentiment, not creed, became the watchword of the age.

Changes in the publishing and printing industries greatly facilitated the dissemination of these ideas to a growing reading public. In just the decade between 1800 and 1810 the number of newspapers in America nearly doubled, to 375; by 1835 there were 1,200. Printing offices—which moonlighted as publishing houses in an age of unenforced copyright laws and widespread literary piracy—sprouted up as well, printing books with inexpensive bindings and serializing popular stories for a growing audience of middle-class readers. Between 1825 and 1850 membership at America's subscription libraries tripled, and authors exploited a growing lecture circuit as a viable means to sell their books near and far.

The nineteenth century also saw the segmentation of the reading audience into niches and target markets. For example, children's literature developed throughout the century and reached its full flowering in the late Victorian age. While Horatio Alger's dime novels encouraged his audience of mostly boys to espouse the American ideals of hard work and up-from-the-bootstraps entrepreneurial success, the *Elsie Dinsmore* novels instructed girls about such values as virtue, friendship, and helpfulness to parents. Even the McGuffey Reader, the quintessential nineteenth-century schoolbook that used uplifting stories and Bible tales to teach school subjects, found its way into a vast number of American lives; between 1836 and 1890, 107 million copies of the reader were distributed to schools across the nation. Never before had American literature seen so much content directed toward children and youth, from illustrated Bible picture books to novels to magazines such as *The Youth's Companion*. Over and over again such literature stressed children's innate goodness and eventual reunion with God in heaven. (To put this in historical context, the best-selling children's literature in early New England was Michael Wigglesworth's 1662 rhyming verse, *The Day of Doom*. Even that could be better described as doggerel for grown-ups rather than poetry specifically aimed at children, in keeping with the Puritan idea of children as miniature adults. Whatever its audience, the message of *The Day of Doom* was clear: people were born

sinners and needed to repent or face a heinous eternity.) In the nineteenth century, as childhood became romanticized as a sacred time, writers celebrated children as having a natural spiritual closeness to God. Children were thought to be innocent in their souls, which did not mean they did not need guidance—hence the development of a thriving moral literature for their instruction.

Not surprisingly, many of the authors of the new literature for children were women. The Victorian ideal of women as the divinely ordained nurturers of children had the unexpected side effect of opening literary careers to women who wrote books for children. But women also entered the fray in all kinds of literary endeavors, writing poetry for the many new denominational and religious periodicals, contributing short stories to the missionary magazines, and, especially, writing novels. The novels of the age, whose content was shaped by women writers and the tastes of women readers, celebrated virtue, exhorted readers to greater moral goodness, and eschewed theology for the practical morality of lived religion. For example, Catherine Sedgwick began writing novels because she was tired of male ministers splitting minute theological hairs rather than improving practical morality and helping the causes of the day. Fiction enabled Sedgwick to publicly defy Calvinist orthodoxy on the one hand and skepticism on the other, giving her a broad, highly visible platform when the pulpit was closed to her. In novels such as *A New England Tale* and *Redwood*, Sedgwick affirmed the fundamental goodness—even the angelically divine nature—of humanity, confidently striking a blow to the Calvinist depravity doctrines of her childhood.

Women writers rejoiced that they could make a living with their pens in an age when they could not do much more than teach school. Although she was an exceptional case, the Southern religious novelist Augusta Evans Wilson earned \$100,000 in eight years from her books and serializations. Not everyone was thrilled with the rise of the woman novelist in America, however. Nathaniel Hawthorne, whose own sales were respectable but not stellar, fumed that the nation was “wholly given over to a damned mob of scribbling women,” and that it was impossible for a serious literary novelist to succeed “while the public taste is occupied with their trash.”

Secularization and Religious Resurgence in the Twentieth Century to the Present

The trends toward increasing commercialization and a nationalized reading audience continued in the twentieth

century. The term *best seller* emerged in the early twentieth century as the business of publishing became ever more sophisticated and sales were tracked in a more standardized manner. International authors breathed a sigh of relief at the passage of the International Copyright Law of 1891, which effectively closed the loophole that had allowed American publishers to pirate the works of such non-American authors as Dickens while reporting no sales revenue and paying no author royalties. (The passage was equally good news for American authors, whose works were no longer deemed too expensive in comparison with their pirated and inexpensive foreign counterparts.) Meanwhile, the reading public continued to expand in number—there were, for example, 9.5 million public school students in 1878 and 15 million just twenty years later—as well as in maturity of literary taste.

Americans in the twentieth century did not want just sentimental fiction but realism. Romanticism and unchecked optimism gave way to the muckraking novels of the Industrial Age and the disillusioned creations of the “lost generation” of writers after World War I. (Not surprisingly, this shift also marked the decline of the great age of poetry that had consumed much of the nineteenth century.) Many of the novels penned by realist writers dealt with dark issues such as war, the human propensity for evil, and nihilism.

Some of these books also took up the cry in the fight for social justice. Although novels of social protest had long been a hallmark of American fiction, the twentieth-century social protest novels had a different flavor than their predecessors. If the archetypal social protest novel of the nineteenth century was Harriet Beecher Stowe’s 1852 *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, which fused a folksy piety with moral outrage, its twentieth-century counterpart was more likely something like Theodore Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* (1900), which did not depict good triumphing at story’s end. Both types of novel had the effect of raising social awareness, but the twentieth-century version did so with an ironic sense of the likely futility of it all.

Literature persevered, even thrived, despite the advent of other forms of entertainment in the twentieth century. By 1924 about a hundred million people were going to the movies each week; by 1930 at least 40 percent of American families had one radio; and by the 1950s increasing numbers of Americans had home televisions. Despite naysayers’ many prophecies about the certain death of the book, publishing continued and some segments, including religious publishing, enjoyed double-digit increases even at the end of

the twentieth century, when the publishing industry as a whole suffered setbacks.

Religious Themes in American Literature

Over the course of several hundred years, the development of an “American” literature has resulted in certain recognizable traits. It is instructive to explore not only what religious themes are routinely present in American literature but also which ones are conspicuously absent: namely, a myth of origins, an established tradition of meditation and contemplation, and a genre of martyrdom narratives and persecution tales. The first omission reflects America’s melting pot of metanarratives—apart from Native American groups, who had their own traditions of origins, most Americans imported religious traditions from their homelands. The third (the dearth of martyrdom literature) demonstrates the nation’s commitment to avoiding the religious wars that had so divided England, France, Spain, and other colonial powers. Although there were notable exceptions (for instance, the violent persecution of Quakers in Massachusetts and other colonies), by the late eighteenth century, the period when American literature was just taking off, religious persecution occurred in local or regional outbursts but not pervasively enough to create a widespread literary genre along the lines of Europe’s *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*. Indeed, some American writers looked to European examples for their own stories of religious persecution: in American poet T. S. Eliot’s 1935 play *Murder in the Cathedral*, he used the twelfth-century martyrdom of English saint Thomas Becket to illustrate the great theme of loyalty to God taking precedence over allegiance to the powers of this world.

The second lacuna, the lack of a strong contemplative literature, is more complicated to explain. From its beginnings, American religious literature emphasized activism over meditation and lacked the mystical and contemplative counterweights found in its mostly European antecedents. Even what is arguably America’s most celebrated meditative work, Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden*, was written by a New Englander who was just as renowned for his political activism opposing slavery, excessive taxes, and the Mexican-American war as he ever was for spiritual guidance. Catholic literature in America—from the early letters of Jesuit missionaries, which stressed conversions and building projects, to twentieth-century-writer Dorothy Day’s beautiful memoir *The Long Loneliness*, which defended the primacy of justice for the poor—has been

distinctively vigorous and of this world. Later American spirituality writers such as Thomas Merton continued this tradition of merging contemplation with an activism that was very much of this world, with Merton agitating against the Vietnam War, racism, and the atomic bomb. In America there is virtually no tradition of contemplation existing without corresponding action, at least among the most well-known writers.

It is difficult to pinpoint the reason for this. In parts of Europe, particularly in France, deeply serious nonfiction is such an ingrained part of the adult reading experience that a weighty philosopher such as Michel Foucault can become a best-selling author and household name. America has no equivalent to this; our philosophers remain firmly within the ivory tower of the academy, with little demand for their services from general readers. Moreover, our religious writers typically maintain a firm focus on this world; although mysticism and contemplation are regular undercurrents in American literature, they have not become mainstream. For example, although the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet, has published widely in the United States, his esoteric and contemplative works have found far smaller audiences than those for his self-help best sellers *The Art of Happiness* and *The Art of Happiness at Work*.

Below we discuss seven of the most prominent and enduring themes of American literature, focusing attention on some of the most significant works from the seventeenth century to the present.

Biblical Witness

American literature is replete with biblical allegories and allusions, as writers have endlessly mined the book that English poet William Blake once called “the great code of art.” In large part, the deep reliance on the Bible in American literature reflects the nation’s Protestant heritage: for Protestants, belief in both the foundational importance of scripture and the do-it-yourself ethos of individual interpretation resulted in a flowering of fiction, poetry, essays, and of course sermons with biblical themes. Literature was a vehicle for grappling with the great issues raised in the Bible, including both secular topics (nationhood, heritage, and justice) and overtly religious ones (salvation, piety, and divine intervention in human affairs). In quintessential American novels such as *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *Moby Dick* (1851)—in which, among other things, a sermon recalls the repentance as well as the maritime adventures of

the biblical character Jonah—allusions to biblical characters and settings are commonplace.

Beginning in the 1830s a new genre of “biblical fiction” became popular, including novelizations of the Bible and imagined dialogues with its various characters. Although very little of this explicitly biblical rumination would be considered great literature, some of it was tremendously popular, especially Lew Wallace’s 1880 best seller *Ben-Hur*. It was subtitled *A Tale of the Christ*, though the novel is as much about the action-packed world of the Roman military as it is about Jesus. Religious teaching is implicit but gives way primarily to entertainment, an important precursor for the more secular fiction of the twentieth century.

Although such novels as *Ben-Hur* attempted to conjure up explicit connections to biblical figures and settings, more often American writers simply dug into the great themes of the Bible for inspiration. This is particularly evident in the recurring literary themes of exodus and the search for the promised land in American history. The Puritans, for example, saw themselves as a remnant of Israel fleeing into the wilderness to escape the corruption and profanity of the world. Their literature reflects a preoccupation with casting themselves into the leading role of various biblical narratives and with imposing an ancient story onto the new land they sought to inhabit.

The fascination with the biblical theme of exodus is reflected in a simultaneous preoccupation with that of exile, another important aspect of the biblical story. As the American novelist John Updike observed in *A Month of Sundays* (1975), despite the human drive for and commitment to the promised land, “the wilderness is always there, pre-existent and enduring.” In other words, themes of national salvation and exodus always exist in tension with ones of wilderness and exile in both the Bible and American literature. This is an especially prominent touchstone in twentieth-century literature, as in William S. Faulkner’s *Absalom! Absalom!* (1937). In this masterpiece of Southern fiction, modern characters recapitulate the rupture and alienation that existed between the biblical King David and his sons. Fittingly, Faulkner’s twentieth-century literary interpretation of the Bible picked up not on an easy triumphalism, as in *Ben-Hur*, but in its murky examples of family estrangement and exile.

American Identity

Throughout its centuries of history, American literature has effectively grappled with what it means to be “American”:

Is it an ethnic identity? A religious one? Or is “American” to be always preceded by an additional identity—for example, African American, German American, or Jewish American? In the earliest examples of American-identified literature in the late eighteenth century, essayists, homileticians, and playwrights all began speaking of a shared American destiny that was distinct from the fate of the older European powers. Moreover, they found in America a unique religious hope and even ascribed to it a divinely appointed place in world history. From John Winthrop’s “city upon a hill” speech in 1630, Americans have perceived, rightly or no, the eyes of the world on them. Some American literature has self-consciously attempted to demonstrate the superiority of democracy as a way of life. Much of that writing is propagandistic and forgettable; more interesting is the literature that uses such democratic confidence to hold a mirror up to America and challenge it to live up to its own ideals.

Several African American writers have beautifully expressed the tension between feeling pride in America and feeling anger at America’s lack of pride in them. One of the earliest writers to expose that tension was Frederick Douglass, who escaped from his slave master (with the ironic name of “Mr. Freeman”) in 1838 to begin a career as a famed abolitionist writer and orator. His 1845 autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, expressed optimism about his newfound freedom and the abolitionists he met. Later writings, however, are tempered by dismay at the apparently glacial pace of abolition and frustration with President Lincoln’s seeming halfhearted commitment to the cause of emancipation.

In twentieth-century African American literature, the legacy of slavery again emerges as a dominant theme. During the Harlem Renaissance, a flowering of African American culture in the 1920s and 1930s, writers reached back to Africa for inspiration and guidance in understanding their lives as Americans. Zora Neale Hurston’s novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), which explores one woman’s life and self-knowledge through the lens of her marriages to three very different men, exposed the interracial and intraracial prejudice of the early twentieth century while also exploring the African American characters’ abiding religious faith and fear of judgment. The book was not universally well received by black writers. One of its harshest critics, Richard Wright, went on to write the autobiographical works *Black Boy* (1945) and *American Hunger* (published posthumously in 1975), which detailed the racism he had experienced, his loneliness as an African American writer,

and his eventual decision to embrace communism as the only viable solution to America’s racial ills. A generation later, novelist and Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison explored the legacy of slavery in *Beloved* (1987) and the murkier tale *A Mercy* (2008), which exposed the ways slavery destroyed every character who came in contact with it, not only slaves but also their masters.

Jewish literature has also wrestled with the questions of American identity in sometimes profound and poignant ways. In the nineteenth century, Jewish writers, many of them women, wrote fiction and poems that portrayed Jews as patriots and authentic Americans, while also depicting them as outsiders who fought to maintain their beliefs and cultural heritage against the threat of assimilation. Emma Lazarus, who penned the poem whose words “give me your tired, your poor” have become inextricably associated with the Statue of Liberty, called America the “Mother of Exiles” in that same poem. To Lazarus, and to other Jewish writers, America stood as a beacon to the “wretched refuse” of other nations, where Jews were persecuted and unwanted. However, Lazarus was sensible of the precariousness of her own and others’ situations as Jews in a land that did not fully accept them as equals. “Even in America, presumably the refuge of the oppressed, public opinion has not yet reached that point where it absolves the race from the sin of the individual,” she wrote in an impassioned 1883 essay (“The Jewish Problem,” appearing in the February issue of *The Century*).

Contemporary Jewish literature follows many of the same tropes, uncovering this unease anew for a fresh generation still grappling with the Jewish presence in America. In his acclaimed 2004 novel *The Plot Against America*, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Philip Roth explores the reversal of fortune of a middle-class Jewish family in New Jersey in the 1940s. By changing one element of factual history—positing that the anti-Semitic aviator Charles Lindbergh, and not Franklin D. Roosevelt, was elected president of the United States in 1940—Roth conjectures an America that is at once far-fetched and eerily plausible. In Roth’s counterfactual historical novel, Lindbergh’s candidacy and election unleash all of the latent anti-Semitism of the American people, and the nation embarks on a Nazi-esque persecution of the Jews. In one early sequence, the patriarch of the family takes his wife and children to Washington, D.C., to tour the nation’s capital and instill a sense of American history in the boys. What they experience, however, is an abhorrent series of insults from fellow tourists and hotel staff, causing the father to reflect that Lindbergh’s presidency is a dream for other

Americans but a nightmare for the Jews. With disturbing accuracy, Roth highlights the instability and insecurity of being Jewish in America.

Those themes are also addressed in *Landsman*, Peter Charles Melman's 2007 novel about a Jewish street thug who fights for the Confederacy in the Civil War. In the story, protagonist Elias Abrams leaves the gang-ridden life of crime he had fallen into in New Orleans to wage war on the Union. The title is at least a double entendre: a landsman is 1) a person who works on the land, 2) a Jew who comes from the same European district or town as oneself. Throughout the book, Melman muses on questions of Jewish identity by playing the rebel status of a Confederate soldier against the outsider status of Jewish Americans. Throughout, the second definition becomes gradually less important than the first. Elias is a "landsman" in the traditional Jewish sense but also in the very American sense of the homesteading movement: he is staking a claim on the American land and intentionally making it his home.

In a very different kind of novel, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* (2007), Michael Chabon takes Melman's theme of Jewish outlander status and merges it with Roth's genre of the counterfactual or alternative history. Like Roth's *The Plot Against America*, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* changes a single fact from mid-twentieth-century history and imagines how that slight change might have caused history to turn out very differently for the Jews. In this case the changed fact is the site of the Jewish homeland: in Chabon's novel, Jews settled in Alaska, not Israel, in the 1940s. The main character—named Landsman, significantly—inhabits an insular society where Yiddish is regularly spoken, messianic expectations are very real, and intra-Jewish conflict is well established and dangerous. Jews in the rest of North America call their Alaskan compatriots "the Frozen Chosen," and the entire novel raises important questions of Jewish and American identity. How much of anyone's ethnic and religious identity is mutable? How much is tied to the places where we live?

Conversion

It is perhaps not surprising that America—a nation legendarily built on the vision of self-made individuals who eschewed birthright for merit and favored personal achievement over inherited legacy—should produce a thriving literature of conversion. Conversion, from the Latin *convertere*, or "to turn around," is about lives transformed, about individuals taking their destiny into their own hands and

choosing the direction of their future. For American Christians a nominal or inherited faith, often including an infant baptism that they had not chosen for themselves, was simply not enough: they needed to forge their own futures by making religion their own. And from the beginning of American history, some of those individuals chose to record their conversion experiences.

Much of the focus on conversion narratives in America has been on the Baptist and Methodist accounts from the early nineteenth century, when itinerant preachers traversed the young republic and called sinners to repentance in public revivals. Certainly, these evangelical Protestants placed conversion on a new pedestal as an essential ingredient in "true" religion: for them faith needed to be warmhearted as well as rational. However, it is important to remember that the explosion of conversion narratives in the early nineteenth century, hastened both by the revivals of the Second Great Awakening and the burgeoning newspaper and magazine industry that disseminated conversion accounts, stood firmly within an older tradition of well-orchestrated religious transformation. In the eighteenth century, pockets of the American colonies enjoyed revivals and dramatic conversions. Although the reach of the first Great Awakening in the 1730s and 1740s was hardly national, it had a profound effect in New England and the mid-Atlantic regions. After theologian Jonathan Edwards witnessed a revival in his Northampton congregation in the 1730s, he wrote about it in *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God*, which was published in the colonies and in England. Edwards's account influenced evangelists George Whitefield and John Wesley, who in turn encouraged waves of revivalism before and after the American Revolution.

The usual trope of a conversion narrative emphasizes—and sometimes exaggerates—the sinfulness of one's life before repentance. In a narrative tradition stretching back to Augustine's *Confessions*, memoirists and novelists highlight the profound change of heart that occurs when God enters their lives and scourges sin. In his 1953 roman-à-clef *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, for example, James Baldwin draws on his own experiences of being converted in an African American storefront church at the age of fourteen. The novel emphasizes the physical and immediate effects of conversion, with the protagonist dancing wildly in ecstasy in the midst of the congregation. *Go Tell It on the Mountain* takes spiritual concerns out of the head and into the body, as African American worshipers are struck down in the Spirit and express their bliss through fierce celebration.

Most conversion literature in American literature is less corporeal but just as visceral, including Malcolm X's famous *Autobiography*, which chronicles his unexpected transformation from street hustler and petty thief to sectarian black nationalist and finally to peace-talking Sunni Muslim leader. The initial conversion of Malcolm X, which occurred in prison, was influenced by a combination of intellectual and social factors. Family members who had already become members of the Nation of Islam visited him in prison, sent him literature to read, and put him in touch with movement leader Elijah Muhammad. Malcolm X proved to be an electrifying acolyte of his new religion, using his pre-Nation past as a foil for the righteous life he embraced in the Nation of Islam.

The starkness of this contrast between the convert's old life, which is held up as a model of sin and estrangement, and the new life of purpose, fellowship, and holiness is nowhere more apparent than in the writings of Trappist monk Thomas Merton. Merton recounts in his best-selling autobiography *The Seven Storey Mountain* (1948) that in his schoolboy and university days, a kind of world-weary jadedness merged with an intellectual restlessness to create a deep but undiagnosed longing in his soul. Merton's memoir focuses not so much on the exterior and obvious sins—the days of sloth and drinking, the young woman he got pregnant—as on the deep-seated nihilism that infected his soul like a cancer. After his discovery of the monastic life, everything changed, and it is a testimony to Merton's intuitive skills as a writer that he was able to communicate his joy at the austerity and strict discipline of monastery life. The book sold over 100,000 copies in its first year, a startling result for an unknown thirty-one-year-old monk, and has sold several million more since then. Merton's conversion story paved the way for other spiritual memoirs in the mid-twentieth century, most famously his fellow Catholic Dorothy Day, whose autobiography, *The Long Loneliness* (1952), followed Merton's in its basic cadences. Day's story tells of a profligate urban life (drinking, various affairs, an abortion) followed by a profound and wholly unanticipated conversion to Catholicism. Although her Catholicism was not monastic in the manner of Merton, it had an asceticism all its own, as Day devoted her postconversion life to a vigorous activism on behalf of the poor.

Social Reform and Social Protest

Dorothy Day's memoir called on not only the conversion trope in American literature but also another theme just as enduring: a pressing concern with moral responsibility, on

both an individual and societal level. In American literature this concern has expressed itself most memorably in the pages of fiction. The novel of social reform began gaining ground in the early nineteenth century, found a voice with the abolition novels of the 1850s, and reached its zenith after the Civil War. These stories were "prophetic" in the biblical sense of that word: their authors sought to speak truth to power and thus to change the world around them. Lofty religion met practical morality in their pages, which called people to repentance and action, often on timely, specific issues of the day.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) is probably the best-known example of American social protest literature. Today it is read in high school and college classrooms as an abolitionist manifesto, and it certainly was that for readers in the 1850s. But nineteenth-century readers also understood the story as a deeply Christian statement about the power of love to reform society, as evinced by the character of the gentle slave Tom, who feels compassion for his wicked master despite the man's repeated abuses. Stowe—the wife, daughter, and sister of renowned Protestant ministers and educators—consciously depicted Tom as a Christ figure, a literal suffering servant whose determination to turn the other cheek was intended as an example to all readers. These themes are also underscored in the character of the precociously pious child Eva, whose deep Christian faith is a witness to everyone around her, even as she succumbs to an appropriately valiant nineteenth-century death. Through Tom and Eva, Stowe wanted to show Christian nobility in the face of unimaginable sorrow and pain.

This is not to say that the story didn't show a fighting spirit in striking the century's most devastating blow against slavery: in its first year of publication, it sold several hundred thousand copies, an amazing feat for the era and particularly unexpected considering that the novel had already been serialized in the penny press. (To put this in perspective, after the warehouse of Herman Melville's publisher burned down in 1853, there were only sixty salable copies in the world of the author's 1851 masterpiece *Moby Dick*. However, sales were so abysmal that those sixty copies lasted until the novel was reprinted in 1863. It did not require a third printing until 1892.) Many of the earliest editions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* contained a foreword by a Congregationalist minister who was an abolitionist activist, further demonstrating the novel's fusing of Christian ideals with the language of social protest.

Other social and religious causes furthered the tradition of social protest fiction in the nineteenth century. In the

1830s a full 12 percent of the fiction published in America addressed the issue of temperance, using stories to demonstrate how alcohol destroyed lives and families and to advance the cause of its banishment from society. Many of those stories were serialized in the penny press or available for free in tract form. (Even Walt Whitman wrote a temperance novel in 1842, joking later in life that he had penned *Franklin Evans* purely for the money and with the aid of copious shots of port.) The 1870s and 1880s gave rise to the genre of the antipolygamy novel, depicting the moral outrage that many writers felt toward Utah Territory, where polygamy was openly practiced by a large segment of the Mormon people. Some antipolygamy novels were obviously fiction, but others presented themselves as memoir, with authors sometimes claiming to know “escaped” plural wives or even to have been such poor creatures themselves.

In blurring this line between fact and fiction, the antipolygamy novel drew on more than half a century of tradition that had been established in the anti-Catholic novel, in which imprisoned innocent females, corrupt males, and sexual predators were all familiar stock characters. The genre of anti-Catholic fiction had found a willing audience during the mid-nineteenth century, when Protestants were alarmed by a rapid influx of Catholic Europeans. Anxiety about the creation of a Catholic majority in America made readers eager to believe the prurient Gothic fantasies of a novel such as *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk* (1836), which purported to be a memoir of a young woman’s salacious escapades as a nun.

Novels also called attention to the plight of the nation’s poor. At the end of the nineteenth century, the novels of the Social Gospel movement sought to educate the American public during the high-flying Gilded Age that poverty was appalling and should be eradicated. Some of these novels imagined what Jesus would make of America in that day, giving rise to such titles as *If Christ Came to Chicago* (1894) and *If Jesus Came to Boston* (1895). Among dozens of Social Gospel novels of that era, the most popular was minister Charles Sheldon’s story *In His Steps: “What Would Jesus Do?”* (1896), which the author estimated sold nearly eight million copies in America and a further twelve million abroad. Although that figure is contested—accuracy in this case is difficult to ascertain because the lack of a proper copyright meant that there were multiple pirated editions, none of which paid the author a royalty—it was certainly one of the most popular books in American history. It remains in print more than a century after its first appearance

and has generated unlikely merchandising efforts, from WJJD (What Would Jesus Do) bracelets to bumper stickers.

The Glory of Nature

Much of the social protest literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries focused on problems that were perceived as urban—poverty, immigration, temperance, and the like. (It is quite debatable whether the popular perception that these were primarily urban issues was actually true, but such was the general image.) It is not surprising, then, that this same time period saw the corresponding rise of a literature that emphasized the beauty and simplicity of rural America. In essays, novels, and especially in the growth of the “Western” story, American writers idealized the rustic countryside, whether it be the family farm or the beckoning frontier.

Not unexpectedly, the rise of the romanticized “rural” novel perfectly coincided with the industrialization and urbanization of America. Just as Americans toiling in factories began longing for the allegedly simpler ways of life their parents and grandparents had enjoyed, a spate of country novels arose in the early twentieth century to remind them of a world where folks helped one another build log cabins and make jam. Novels such as *David Harum* (1898) and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1903) idealized a recent but seemingly mislaid American past, built on neighborliness and a shared folk religion. It was bolstered by a renewed national attitude about the salubrious effects of being out-of-doors, made famous by the many photographs of President Theodore Roosevelt shooting game or riding horses. For men, in fact, a subgenre of frontiersman fiction began to flourish in the early decades of the twentieth century, adding to the Westerns and cowboy tales that had been popular in the nineteenth. These often featured the religious conversion of one or another rough-hewn frontier character—or, even better, the salvation of a city slicker who came under the influence of one of those “real” men of God on the American plains.

If the growth of rural fiction suggested that Americans were eager for stories stressing the freedom and integrity found down on the farm, the early twentieth century also saw great interest in fiction about urban decay. Upton Sinclair’s novel *The Jungle* (1906) was a shocking exposé of the Chicago meatpacking industry. Edith Wharton’s subtly critical *The Age of Innocence* (1920) and F. Scott Fitzgerald’s even more ascetic Jazz Age story *This Side of Paradise* (1920) were novels that in one way or another critiqued the urban sophisticate.

Real religion, as depicted in the literature of the day, was to be found not in America's thriving cities but in its forgotten byways. In the mid-nineteenth century Henry David Thoreau left the confusion of town life for a cabin on Walden Pond, finding spiritual purity in a life of relative isolation and independence. His enduring 1854 classic *Walden* is replete with criticisms of urbanization, from the train whistle that daily interrupted his thoughts to the tendency of individuals to clump themselves together in towns (though Thoreau managed to make his way into Concord several times a week to chat with residents and hear the news). Infused with the ideals of American transcendentalism, which emphasized the superiority of life in nature, *Walden* spoke to a generation that was suspicious of industrialization and anxious about the rapid disappearance of country life.

A century later Thomas Merton, as we have seen, catalyzed a generation of spiritual seekers with *The Seven Storey Mountain* (1948). And while the book is rightly considered to be conversion literature, a compelling case can be made for its equally important place in the literature extolling rural America. Merton writes disparagingly of the deadening effects of his life in such cities as New York, Paris, and London. True peace and vitality occurred only at Gethsemani, the monastery in Kentucky's backwoods where Merton labored on the land while he tussled with the Spirit. His writing is permeated with a celebration of the natural world, which is perhaps not surprising from an author who, even before his conversion to Christianity, wrote a master's thesis on poet William Blake's religious symbolism and joy in nature.

It is not only Christian literature that found more meaning in pastoral settings than urban ones. In Jack Kerouac's *The Dharma Bums* (1958), Buddhism is as much a love affair with mountains and trees as it is rooted in any recognizable Buddhist tradition. The novel juxtaposes a city life of jazz clubs and drinking against the characters' far more meaningful escapes from the city to hike in the woods, climb mountains, and find themselves.

The trope of true religion existing best in the country continues to flourish in what is called contemporary Christian fiction, a thriving segment of evangelical publishing. These novels have been criticized for their familiar plots of urban characters who journey to a small village, often one where they grew up or which they visited as children, to contend with some past issue or family legacy, such as an inheritance. The fact that the same plot is recycled

repeatedly has not impeded sales; in fact, readers seem to flock toward popular literature that values old-fashioned community, closeness to the land, and the moral superiority of small-town life. Novelist Beverly Lewis has created a cottage industry of novels set in Amish communities such as Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Most readers of these books are not Amish but find something comforting in literature that has a modern setting but a bucolic, nostalgic sensibility. Beverly Lewis's novels had sold a combined total of ten million copies by 2008, with fewer than a quarter million Amish in the world. Other popular novelists, including Jan Karon and Philip Gulley, also have capitalized on an American nostalgia for small towns.

Death and the Afterlife

In addition to wrestling with religious issues that are very much of this world—social protest, rural romanticism, and so on—American writers have also tackled the enduring themes of the world to come. It has been noted that ideas about death lie at the core of all the world's religious traditions. Preparing for death, understanding it, coping with its reality when it strikes those we love—these themes have underscored many a great poem, drama, or novel.

American writers' understandings of death and the afterlife have often mirrored larger cultural and theological currents. The nineteenth century witnessed a profound turning toward a more liberal theology that emphasized God's love and goodness over earlier themes of judgment. Whereas hell had been a prominent and enduring theme in much of eighteenth-century American literature (perhaps best exemplified by Jonathan Edwards's classic 1741 sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"), heaven emerged as a favorite topic of nineteenth-century popular literature. Earlier American writers had refrained from detailed or lively speculation about heaven (reserving that level of specificity for their Dante-esque sermonical tours of hell), but nineteenth-century writers turned the tables, offering readers appealing glimpses of heavenly life. Some novels, such as Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's *The Gates Ajar*, depicted heaven with the cultured domesticity of a Victorian sanctuary: children, pets, and friends convene on front porches and in parlors, and residents of the Chautauqua-like heavenly community can witness a composer conducting one of his own masterpieces in concert or converse with a biblical figure about a particularly thorny passage of scripture. Such musings were especially welcome when *The Gates Ajar* was published, in 1868, to a nation still reeling from the deaths

of the Civil War. (The author herself lost a fiancé at Antietam.) The novel sold 100,000 copies within the first few years after publication and spawned several sequels, one of which posited that hell was merely separation from friends and family. Other novelists weighed in to create a thriving subgenre of domestic heaven novels, describing the afterlife as a picturesque, perfected earth. The popularity of these books became so great that one of Mark Twain's fictional characters quipped that their vision of heaven was so home-like as to be deadly dull. Twain also criticized Phelps's heaven as being for the white middle class only, calling it "a mean little ten-cent heaven about the size of Rhode Island."

Along with the new stress on heaven, American writers began incorporating more angels into their literature, adding these heavenly intermediaries as friendly reminders of God's care and intervention in human life. Harriet Beecher Stowe famously remarked in 1859 that a century before, theologian Jonathan Edwards had knocked out all the rungs in the ladder between heaven and earth, making it impossible for people to understand heaven. Stowe's fiction, including *The Minister's Wooing* (serialized in 1858 and 1859), wittily derided the theological failings of her ancestors' Calvinism. Stowe and other nineteenth-century writers aimed to restore angels and intermediaries to the equation, leveling the playing field so that people could better understand what they needed to do to gain a blissful eternity. Although it is not an American novella, *A Christmas Carol's* wild popularity in the United States indicates that Dickens's 1843 story struck a chord with American readers who were eager to hear that heavenly intermediaries could be sent to help wayward people rediscover the path of righteousness.

More modern literature has also employed angels as heavenly intermediaries, but in a more ambiguous, less overt way. In Catholic writer Flannery O'Connor's classic 1965 story "Revelation," Mrs. Turpin, a self-righteous, racist, and arrogant woman, is brought down to size by a rude and possibly unstable girl in a doctor's waiting room. When the girl becomes murderous and physically attacks Mrs. Turpin, calling her an old warthog from hell, everyone dismisses her words and actions as those of a lunatic and epileptic—except Mrs. Turpin, who becomes livid as she interprets the message as coming directly from God. The epileptic girl (with the highly significant name "Mary Grace") is, in Mrs. Turpin's understanding, a divine messenger—the biblical meaning of the word *angel*. However, O'Connor's angel is not the sweet, caring intermediary of nineteenth-century literature, inspiring the earth-bound to greater acts of

charity. This angel is a brimstone harbinger of repentance for the self-satisfied, offering the titular "revelation" that even the unreflective Mrs. Turpin cannot ignore: her presumed virtues are in fact deep shortcomings. The final sequence, which O'Connor added later to the stark original ending, has Mrs. Turpin receiving a vision of herself and others like her marching off last in a parade to heaven, behind all of the people she once rejected as beneath her.

Apocalypticism

In keeping with a focus on death, heaven, and the afterlife, American literature has consistently demonstrated an abiding concern with the end of days. The most famous example of apocalyptic literature is undoubtedly the *Left Behind* series, which sold more than 63 million copies in the late twentieth and the early twenty-first century, including sixteen adult novels, a children's series, dramatic audio versions, devotional books, and a few spin-offs. The series' success astonished even its publisher, Tyndale House, which had initially planned a robust 75,000-copy print run for the 1995 debut novel cowritten by evangelical powerhouse Tim LaHaye and novelist Jerry Jenkins. Readers thrilled to the series, which opened with a dramatic depiction of the Rapture, a calamitous event many evangelicals expect will usher in the final days: Jesus will return to carry home the faithful, and the rest of humanity must soldier on for seven painful years during the time of Tribulation.

In the novels a motley crew of those "left behind" after the Rapture band together, discover Christian truth, and oppose a charismatic world leader who has arisen to unite the human race in a desperate age. Calling themselves the Tribulation Force, these new Christians courageously do battle with a very slick and corporate Antichrist, alone recognizing the signs of the times that have been prophesied in scripture. They fight to survive massive earthquakes, deadly plagues, and persecution by the increasingly repressive government. Although academics and literary critics ridiculed the books' biblical literalism, racial stereotyping, conspiracy theories, and fire-and-brimstone theology, many readers responded to the characters' certainty that in the end evangelical Christians would decisively win the war against evil. At one point, *Left Behind* books simultaneously claimed four spots on the *New York Times* best-seller list—and this despite the fact that the *Times* list did not factor in Christian bookstores' sales of the series.

Although their unprecedented commercial success made it appear as though the *Left Behind* books came out of

nowhere, they in fact stood firmly in an American tradition of apocalyptic literature that was embraced by a popular audience. American prophecy literature has existed since before the United States became a nation and has tended to spike during times of national crisis: the Revolutionary and Civil wars, the Great Depression, the atomic age, and the aftermath of 9/11. Picking up with the idea that “wars and rumors of wars” would be one characteristic of the last days, Christian writers (primarily evangelicals) sought to place unsettling current events within the expected warp and woof of biblical foretelling. As a way of making sense of disturbing or unprecedented experiences, prophecy writing has the advantage of taking what is new (economic changes or political fissures) and re-ordering experience according to what is very old. To this end, what is emphasized about biblical prophecies has changed according to the times: in the 1950s, for example, Americans who were anxious about atomic capabilities made connections to prophecy about the earth being destroyed by fire; in the 1990s the Left Behind books pointed to the dangers of political and economic globalization and one-world government.

Although there are innumerable examples, two major apocalyptic works deserve special mention. In 1909, Cyrus Scofield, a ne'er-do-well lawyer who converted to Christianity and became a leading Bible lecturer, published the Scofield Reference Bible, which became the leading work of “dispensational” premillennialist theology. In essence this view taught that God had divided history neatly into seven distinct dispensations, or epochs, and that the whole of biblical history could be understood in the light of those seven eras. Scofield's work on the biblical Book of Revelation was tremendously influential for many of the prophecy writers who followed him. Scofield's original Bible was almost Talmudic in format, with the biblical text in the center and the author's commentary—much of it eschatological—in the margins. Sales exceeded 5 million copies for the 1909 and 1917 editions, while the 1967 revision sold an additional 2.5 million copies.

One of the authors most indebted to Scofield was Hal Lindsey, whose 1969 nonfiction title *The Late Great Planet Earth* (cowritten by Carole C. Carlson) was one of the best-selling books of the 1970s. By 1990 the book had sold a total of 28 million copies. Lindsey captured Americans' imaginations with his bold assertion that the generation alive during the 1948 creation of the state of Israel would personally see the return of Christ. He also capitalized on current events by tying the prophecies of Ezekiel, Daniel,

and Revelation to the fledgling attempts at European unification, the Six-Day War of 1967, or goings-on in the much-feared Soviet Union.

Although the end has not yet come, and the vast majority of these books' prophetic utterances never came to pass, the genre of apocalyptic literature remains a thriving industry in America today. Americans will no doubt continue to be fascinated by eschatological speculation so long as time as we know it continues. Like other themes in American literature, including the promotion of justice and the attempt to understand death and the afterlife, apocalypticism speaks to readers' deepest anxieties and hopes for a better future.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion* entries; *America, Religious Interpretations of; Apocalypticism; Bible* entries; *Buddhism in North America; Deism; Enlightenment; Evangelicals* entries; *Film; Great Awakening(s); Judaism; Jewish Culture; Literature* entries; *Music* entries; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Puritans; Religious Thought: Womanist; Revivalism* entries; *Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact; Spirituality* entries; *Television; Transcendentalism; Visual Culture* entries.

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Literature: African American

Through all phases of its history, religion—as worship, context, idea, trope, symbol, influence, value, and inspiration—has abounded in African American literature. Since the first Africans arrived on the shores of the New World, the imaginative impulse to envision and create has shaped the development of African American religious life; and the expression of religious doctrines and creeds has provided source material, formal techniques, symbolic language, and thematic orientation for African American literature. The relationship between religion and literature began in anonymity, with the “unknown bards” of the spirituals who had to “steal away to Jesus.” And it continues in the highly public and idiosyncratic personalities of hip-hop poets who know that “Jesus walks” with them. Examples are more easily identified and the religious idiom more traditional up to the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, when artists and intellectuals explored in new ways the historical experiences of black America and contemporary experiences of black life. Although religious elements become more diffuse and diverse, they were present nonetheless.

Religious Imagination

In *Beloved* (1987), a novel steeped in biblical and folk religious traditions, Toni Morrison sets forth the unique relationship between religion and literature in African American culture when the character Baby Suggs intones that “the only grace they could have was the grace they could imagine.” The exercise of imagination has been vital to the articulation of religious faith in African American

culture. Likewise, religious experience and observance have influenced all forms of African American literary production. Telling stories, whether oral or written, was never seen as an exclusive or proprietary talent reserved for an elite class but as an indispensable skill for all to apply in identity formation and culture building.

Both African American religion and literature have reflected how things are and illuminated how they could be. The religious dimensions of African American cultural output are usually interpreted in one of two ways: from the point of view of a religious doctrine or practice to which one applies a literary methodology or by beginning with a literary text of any genre to which one applies a methodology derived from religious studies. In both cases religion and literature have reflected cultural patterns that highlighted tensions, affirmed traditions, and innovated strategies through which African Americans survived and endured and also thrived and created.

The “double consciousness,” articulated by W. E. B. Du Bois in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) as a defining characteristic of African American identity also aptly illustrates the relationship between religion and literature in African American culture: a sustained tension of existential orientations that leads to an ongoing conversation about black life in both the creative and spiritual realms of existence. Indeed, Du Bois’s cultural analysis exhibits in its literary expression a sustained indexing of black culture to black religion. Articulating the ambition to merge the double self into a “truer and better self,” Du Bois names the effort a “spiritual striving,” and references such an arrival as occurring in the “kingdom of culture,” an obvious allusion to Christian scripture. *The Souls of Black Folk* even concludes with a prayer, an invocation to “O God the Reader,” that there will be an “awakening”—a classic Christian allusion to conversion—on the part of individuals and culture where African Americans will be “judged by souls, not skin,” a sentiment echoed some sixty years later by Martin Luther King Jr.

Christianity

Christian practices and beliefs have provided the dominant paradigm for the relationship between African American religion and literature but their influence is paradoxical. Christianity has played a tremendous role in the lives and artistic production of African Americans while the perversions of Christianity—first evident in slavery and ongoing in racism—have been indelibly stamped on the consciousness of African American writers. The literature, therefore,

contains evidence of the uplifting and transformative power of religion in the lives of its characters, as in *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) when Harriet Jacobs expresses her gratitude upon receiving her freedom: “God raised me up a friend among strangers. Friend, the word is sacred.” The literature also contains evidence of religion’s absence and failure in their lives. Representative of the betrayal of religious hope are lines found in Countee Cullen’s poem “Gods” (1925), which, in addition to disappointment in Christianity, expresses nostalgia for African spirituality: “God’s alabaster turrets gleam / Too high for me to win / Unless He turns His face and lets / Me bring my own gods in.”

The Bible

From slave narratives to fiction, from spirituals to rap songs, from political manifestos to sermons, meaning has been expressed scripturally. In the hands of black exegetes, be they theologians, writers, or the folk, the Bible (Hebrew and Christian) has served a variety of functions, primarily as a key to interpreting meaning. The Bible is responsible for inspiring and informing literary expression but also for presenting problems for those steeped in proclamation and interpretation. As set forth in the Gospel of John, the Bible functions in African American culture as *word*—embodied divinity—animated by the engagement of literary and religious forms. In literary texts and oral traditions of storytelling, as ancient history and as present reality, African American writers have often answered questions about the present by citing biblical examples and images. The way the spiritual “Go Down, Moses” adapts the Exodus story for relevance to slavery is one compelling example. Likewise, African American theologians, particularly in the formation of liberation theologies in the 1970s, turned to literary sources to illustrate the tenets of those theological investigations and practices, as did Delores Williams in *Sisters in the Wilderness* (1993).

An ability to read the Bible for themselves and thereby “keep the white folks from meddling” in their interpretation of scriptures was the motivation cited in many slave and spiritual narratives for acquiring the skills of literacy. For example, in her visionary writings collected as *Gifts of Power* (1830–1864), Shaker minister Rebecca Jackson credits a divine miracle for her acquisition of the ability to read. Yet from the first encounters with the Bible, African Americans have recognized the ways in which biblical principles and narratives have been manipulated to serve two contradictory functions: to sustain systemic racism but also to promote

liberating activity. Henry Highland Garnet’s “Address to the Slaves of the United States” (1865) or Maria Stewart’s “Address Delivered at the African Masonic Hall” (1833), among other abolitionist texts, represent a dominant theme in early black writing, neatly summarized by Douglass in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845) when he proclaims that between “the Christianity of this land and the Christianity of Christ there is the widest possible difference.” Sometimes the perversion of Christianity is attributed to southern slaveholders and complacent northern whites, but African American authors also challenged their own people for their passivity in ignoring their claim to full humanity as set forth in scripture, as in Galatians 4:7—“So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God” (NRSV).

Biblical Tropes

African American literary and religious traditions have borrowed freely from each other; as a result they share characteristics that convey both textual and spiritual principles. Several tropes associated with biblical hermeneutics can be applied to African American literature. Among them is conjuring, the summoning of spirits by invocation or incantation, which has long been associated with folk spiritual practices in southern black communities. Since Zora Neale Hurston’s portrayal of the protagonist in *Moses, Man of the Mountain* (1939), conjuring has been linked to divine power as revealed in the Bible. Hurston depicts Moses as a Hoodoo medicine man who possesses “power-compelling words” derived from the Bible, “the greatest conjure book of all.” The theologian Theophus Smith, in *Conjuring Culture* (1994), argues that conjure is imaginative power exercised to transform the condition of black lives and that the Bible is central to this activity.

Furthermore, the ways in which African American writers, such as Hurston, freely adapted the most sacred text of Western culture, illustrates a foundational aesthetic characteristic of African American culture. The technique of sampling, or borrowing, from the Bible derives from the ways in which African Americans approached the sacred text as a magical formulary or ritual prescription for reenvisioning and transforming history and culture. This eclectic application of the Bible was practiced first by the authors of the spirituals but was cast in comic tones by folklorists who established an aesthetic form and a theological hermeneutic for future collaborations between literature and religion.

Conjure, in other words, is both a theological and an aesthetic metaphor for cultural and ideological transformation. Derived from the synchronization of retained African and acquired Christian practices, conjure—as an act and as a trope—empowers African Americans denied customary access to forms of power and invigorates sympathetic magic with the power to make things happen. As Hurston saw Hoodoo practiced in New Orleans, it was an intrinsic part of African American religion because it offered a means by which blacks could exert control over their interior lives. As a result, at the root of conjure is the African principle that does not distinguish between the sacred and the profane, thereby establishing from their origins a natural reciprocity between religion and literature in African American cultural production.

Speaking in tongues is a biblical image derived from the event of Pentecost, when Christ sent the Holy Spirit to humanity, eliciting a cacophony of languages being uttered as evidence of spirit possession. As a literary device and theological principle, speaking in tongues refers to the intricate interplay of self and other, known and unknown, familiar and unfamiliar speech that characterizes African American writing. A form of double discourse, speaking in tongues is a spiritual, aesthetic, and practical expression. It engages language or words only known to the divine and the faithful; it adapts history and present reality to convey the language of possibility; and it empowers the speaker and hearers who understand the coded dialogue while simultaneously protecting them from the intrusion of the dominant culture.

Speaking in tongues aptly sets forth the complexity and diversity of African American religious and imaginative lives. Speaking in tongues as *heteroglossia* (languages that speak to a wider world and common culture) affirms the common and universal principles of equality, liberation, and justice so prominent in black literature and theology. Speaking in languages known only to God (*glossolalia*) sustains the secret and ecstatic experience of blacks that requires interpretation for others outside the experience. Furthermore, glossolalia gives evidence of what is different and diverse in American culture, both the generative distinctions that promote multicultural independence and the destructive distinctions that separate and exclude one from full engagement with a pluralistic society. All these distinctions are endowed with divine authority when the trope of speaking in tongues is applied.

One of many examples of the principle of speaking in tongues can be seen in spirituals that were designed to communicate on more than one level. Songs such as “Steal

Away” may have served as a means to convene secret resistance meetings, while “Deep River, My Home Is over Jordan” may imply a wish to cross over to Africa or the North. Included as a form of speaking in tongues is *signifying*, articulated by the theologian Charles Long in *Significations* (1986) as the most widely accepted interpretation of the religious practice of indirect verbal play. Henry Louis Gates’s adaptation of the trope of the *talking book* in *The Signifying Monkey* (1988), which examines the ancient poetry and myths found in African and Pan-American culture, represents an influential approach to speaking in tongues as a form of intertextual transmission and revision of various biblical and African-derived spiritual beliefs.

The jeremiad, or prophetic denunciation of present conduct and the forewarning of eventual trouble, characterizes much of biblical history set forth in the Hebrew Bible, where, along with other prophets, Jeremiah predicts the coming downfall of the Kingdom of Judah because its rulers have broken the covenant with the Lord. Prophecy highlighting the relationship between humanity and divinity is later iterated by the gospel writer’s portrayal of Jesus as Christ. The books of the prophets and the words of Jesus serve as models for literary works in which the author bitterly laments the state of society and its morals in a serious tone of sustained invective with a corresponding prophecy of society’s imminent downfall.

Although not limited to African American literary production, the form of a jeremiad and the power of its biblical precedent endowed such liberation struggles as abolitionism and the civil rights movement with a divine sanction. As with other biblically derived tropes, the spirituals record the first jeremiads when they ask, “Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?” In prose David Walker’s *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World, and Very Expressly, to Those of the United States* (1848) reminds people that “God rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, having his ears continually open to the cries, tears, and groans of his oppressed people.” Later the Pan-African writings of Marcus Garvey, as in his “Appeal to the Conscience of the Black Race to See Itself” (1923), urged a return to Africa because “the evil of internal division is wrecking our existence as a people, and if we do not seriously and quickly move in the direction of a readjustment it simply means that our doom becomes imminently conclusive.” The jeremiad is memorably extended by James Baldwin in essays collected in *The Fire Next Time* (1963) that constitute a moral manifesto whose extraordinary power resides in Baldwin’s evangelical

eloquence about systemic racism. Further, Baldwin links the “salvation” of America and “another country” without such racism to African Americans’ ability to educate white minds and hearts into a new maturity and decency. The modern jeremiad reaches its climax, perhaps, in the speeches and sermons of Martin Luther King, as in a collection of his essays that includes “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (1963), when he challenges even those who profess to support the civil rights movement to understand why African Americans “can’t wait.”

Slave Narratives

Spirituals and slave narratives are the two original genres of African American literary production that first engaged biblical tropes and introduced aesthetic innovation. As such, they serve as models for subsequent literary production, which can, in most cases, be traced back to the influence of one or both genres. Slave narratives and especially spirituals have transcended their particular context and now symbolically represent a direct challenge to forms of racial oppression with a corresponding universal hope of liberation from oppression, key tenets of black theology throughout the history of African American experience.

Authors of slave narratives engaged Christian discourse as personal affirmations of faith but also as a rhetorical device to persuade other Christians to enact their religious principles in service to the abolitionist cause. In some cases, as with the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, rites of passage in Christian life are linked with stages of liberation from slavery by way of the attainment of literacy. His baptism is when he is taught by his mistress the rudiments of language; conversion is when he tests and improves his knowledge by way of public engagement; his confirmation occurs after reading antislavery tracts when he realizes he no longer could be a slave; and his ordination takes effect when he accepts a public career as orator and a call to preach for human rights. Similarly the *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (1850), while constructed by an amanuensis, represents Truth’s rhetorical performances in public settings when she applied a strategy to combine biblical allusions with her own personal experience to convince people of the true meaning of scripture. Furthermore, like Julia Foote in *A Brand Plucked from the Fire* (1879) or the memoirs of other free black women such as Zilpha Elaw (1846) or Jarena Lee (1836) and other authors of spiritual and slave narratives, Sojourner Truth claims, “I talk to God and God talks to me,” to validate her arguments and claim the authority to preach.

Slave narratives also represented the first articulations of the jeremiad but often with a twist, for rather than a pessimistic conclusion, they often ended in triumph after a successful escape, as when Henry Brown boxed and shipped himself to freedom. Furthermore, they were among the first instances of a social critique of Christianity, thereby giving permission for later challenges to the religion as practiced by the dominant culture and as it disables the aspirations of African Americans. Richard Wright’s autobiography, *Black Boy* (1945), and James Baldwin’s novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953) illustrate this influence. By contrast, Margaret Walker’s *Jubilee* (1966) and other neo-slave narratives resoundingly affirm the spiritual legacy of the slave narrative tradition as a liberating guide—although not without irony, as seen in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* (1987).

Finally, slave narratives have served as important documents that preserve folkways derived from African religious practices, thereby affirming the intentional survival of ancestral influences. For example, Frederick Douglass describes an instance of sympathetic magic when he was instructed by an elder to carry a root for protection from an overseer. Harriet Jacobs also cites the use of charms and fetishes among slaves and records details of a Methodist shout and Johnkannaus festival, both of which provide striking similarities to spirit possession in dances and other performances of African religious rituals. In the autobiography *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789), the writer provides considerable detail about his Ibo culture to demonstrate its equality with European forms of civilization, making analogies to the Bible to explain the spiritual dignity of African beliefs in ancestor reverence, a sacred cosmos, dreams, and other practices.

Spirituals

In 1927 James Weldon Johnson paid tribute to the “Black and Unknown Bards” who “sang a race from wood and stone to Christ”: the creators of spirituals; the form Johnson illustrates in images is the first instance of an ongoing pattern in African American literary production and spiritual development that extends, elaborates, and refines basic principles of creation and truth. Principally associated with African American church congregations of the antebellum South and the earlier, more informal, and sometimes clandestine gatherings of enslaved people, spirituals were created as a result of a process of mutual influence and reciprocal borrowing—the same spiritual and aesthetic principle applied to conjuring—from evangelical sermons and hymns, biblical stories, traditional African

chants and praise songs, and the combined experiences of enslaved people in the South.

Features of the spirituals that can be found in later literary production include a demonstration of the ways in which a simple lyric can serve several functions. In the spirituals enslaved people critically analyzed their conditions, fashioned a creative theological response, indicted their oppressors without overtly denigrating them, reasserted the influence of an African sensibility, and empowered themselves by exercising a form of resistance that would endure longer than the conditions to which they were subject. The theology of spirituals was based not in doctrine but on ethics, instructing enslaved people not what to believe but how to act.

In creation as well as performance spirituals exhibited the essential characteristics of spontaneity, variety, and communal interchange. The form of the spirituals was flexible and improvisational, thereby able to fit an individual slave's experience into the consciousness of group, creating at once an intensely personal and vividly communal experience, a hallmark of African American writing that often was expected to uplift the race, as in Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* (1901). Call and response characterizes this dynamic relationship between the individual and the community. As practiced in spirituals, call and response embodies the foundational spiritual principle behind their performance, denoting the dual requirement of what is necessary for completion. When spirituals were sung by enslaved people, they amplified their desire for liberation and created conditions of sacred space and time in a ritual act, wherein the biblical stories of which they sang were transformed and the history of the ancient past became the history of the present.

Synthesizing sacred and secular meaning, the spirituals drew images from the Bible to interpret their own experience, measuring it against a wider system of theological and historical meaning. Later African American writing adapted biblical themes, performance techniques, and images derived from spirituals to create an ongoing theological aesthetic whereby the Bible and the spirituals became the glossolalia for informed readers. For example, Martin R. Delany's *Blake* (1859), J. Saunders Redding's *No Day of Triumph* (1942), and John O. Killen's *Youngblood* (1954) incorporate spirituals to structure their plots and advance their themes. The most revered novel in the African American canon, Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952), employs the spirituals and folk forms they engendered as influences on the characters, plot, and figurative language. While Toni Morrison freely adapts biblical stories and images in her fiction, in *Song of Solomon*

(1978), as in Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow* (1983), striking moments of call and response are incorporated into the denouement of their plots. Margaret Walker's poems collected in *For My People* (1952) also engage a biblical idiom.

Along with slave narratives and spirituals, other pre-Civil War African American literary texts easily accommodate religious themes and complement authors' diverse subjects in many rhetorical forms: addresses and speeches, orations, sermons, petitions and pamphlets, letters, confessionals, and other autobiographies. Whether the *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* of Phyllis Wheatley (1773), the letters of Benjamin Banneker to Thomas Jefferson (1791), the sermons of Absalom Jones (1746–1818), or the speeches of Maria Stewart (1803–1879), all these literary pioneers pondered, explained, exhorted and demonstrated that their sisters and brothers should seek edification—intellectual, moral, spiritual, and practical—in order to improve in all spheres of human development and to uplift the race.

Gospel and Blues

The spirituals also shaped the development of the sacred lyrics known as gospel. Thomas A. Dorsey (1899–1993), composer of such standards as “There Will Be Peace in the Valley,” is considered by many the father of gospel music. As a young man he accompanied some of the most famous blues singers of all time, such as Bessie Smith (1894–1937). He also promoted the career of Charles A. Tindley (1851–1933), composer of “We’ll Understand It Better By and By.” In his essay “Rock, Church, Rock,” poet and novelist Arna Bontemps (1902–1973) observed how traditionalists in the black church considered the blending of the sacred and the secular as “the devil’s music” and initially shunned gospel music. But because the aesthetic and spiritual impulse behind the composition of gospel music was authentic and characteristic of black creation, the form survived and continued to thrive in the works of James Cleveland (1931–1991) and others, providing further demonstration of the eclectic arrangement of language in African American literary forms.

Spirituals also had a direct influence on blues lyrics. Described by James Cone as a secular spiritual—even when Robert Johnson (1911–1938) is lamenting a “hellhound on [his] trail” or W. C. Handy (1873–1958), the father of the blues, wrote about them in “Beale Street Blues”—blues forms served a functional role. They were created and performed in a ritualistic way to affirm the essential worth of black humanity. And in the case of Johnson and

his mysterious death at the crossroads, a background myth supports the religious elements. In *Stomping the Blues* (1976), Albert Murray makes a case for the ways in which the blues, in composition and performance, complemented existing religious forms of worship but contributed an additional element that more completely described the reality of black life. While one would still get up for church on Sunday morning and face the tedium of work on Monday, on Saturday night juke joints replaced churches and the blues substituted for hymns. It is the aspect of affirmation that connects blues theologically with spirituals: to preserve black humanity through ritual and drama and to transform—if only temporarily—existence. James Cone's *The Spiritual and the Blues* (1972) articulates the ways in which theological principles are iterated in secular forms of black cultural production. As he states, the blues are not *about* but *are* the essence of the black experience. As such the blues have become an idiomatic element in African American cultural production that combines art and life, the symbolic with the real, matter with spirit. The blues are an artistic response to the chaos of life that, although temporary and not directed toward salvation or an eternal reward, helps one cope and find meaning in an otherwise overwhelming set of circumstances. Furthermore, because “you’ve got to pay your dues to play the blues,” accompanying any invocation of the blues is a stamp of authenticity, a proclamation that what is being preached is true. Since disbelieving northerners challenged the veracity of slaves’ accounts of their experience, authenticity (or “keeping it real,” in modern parlance) has been an ongoing value in black cultural production.

Folklore

Although the institutional black church grew in visibility and influence, coincident to this development were the ways in which religious feelings and perspectives were expressed in black communities as a folk tradition. This is where the African, Christian, and other elements combined and where much of the retained religious feeling and lore resided. Following emancipation, communities dispersed and the church ceased to have such an all-encompassing function. Furthermore, African Americans could finally speak in realistic terms of their desire for more secular goals such as material success, integration, or migration north for new opportunities.

Since the beginnings of their literary production, African Americans have saved religious traditions and spiritual folkways and applied them for aesthetic pleasure. The

early appearance of Africanisms notwithstanding, nontraditional forms of black religious life begin to appear in the literary canon when Zora Neale Hurston (1891–1960) and others introduce an appreciation of the oral tradition sustained in folklore. Hurston bears the distinction of being among the first to preserve the spiritual expressions of black life that appear in more secular forms such as work songs and folktales. As gathered in *Mules and Men* (1928), *Tell My Horse* (1937), and *The Sanctified Church*, a collection of essays from the 1920s and 1930s, folklore and customs illustrate how religious ideas and practices endured and emerged from the experience of slavery. Principles of black folklore assigned by Hurston include the spiritual dimensions of identity formation and community building. Stories told by the folk in a signifying and competitive performance were often adaptations of biblical stories or original stories peopled with biblical figures. And because God “never finds fault with or censures the Negro,” God is portrayed in human terms that relate to their own experience, and “the apostles walked and talked like section hands.”

Additionally, the principle of applying to life and storytelling “the will to adorn,” as observed by Hurston, dignifies the creative and spiritual impulse in whatever form it takes and links the aesthetic and theological in a harmonious act of cultural production. James Weldon Johnson, who with his brother, J. Rosamond, is credited with saving and introducing to the public many of the spirituals, also wrote one of the most memorable sequences of African American poetry that illustrates the power of folkways to preserve traditions, build community, and sustain hope. *God’s Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse* (1927) elevates the African American sermon to the level of lyric poetry while at the same time, in “The Creation,” painting a picture of life’s origins and the maker God as unmistakably black. A similar effect is achieved by Langston Hughes in *Tambourines to Glory* (1949).

By the creation of heroes with extraordinary and often mystical abilities but who resemble ordinary people, such as High John the Conqueror, folktales underscore the collaborative quality of creation—between artist, community, and Creator—revealed in earlier aesthetic forms that also project a sense of religion that does not crush the individual but encourages originality. Also consistent with the past, storytelling sessions were public ritual performances that alluded to biblical incidents and folktales to project moral lessons that show virtue rewarded or greed punished, consistent with conventional Christian doctrine.

While folktales exhibited the characteristics of call and response and improvisation, they were also a ritual response to reality. In one creation story related by Hurston, “How Black People Became Black,” the condition of black skin that leads to discrimination is explained by exploiting stereotypes of presumed African American laziness and greed, thereby using humor to soothe lingering hurts and to diminish facts of life that could otherwise be overwhelming. Related to the use of humor is the introduction of a trickster figure, derived from West African tales such as that of “Anansi, the Spider” and reconfigured in black folklore as the devil or, most memorably, as Brer Rabbit. As with conjure, the trickster provides an example of spiritual power that is available to people often cut off from traditional forms of power. Through wits and craft one can change one’s reality or heal the indignities of life in a racist culture. Finally, as set forth in many African religious systems and aesthetic forms, where the goal of life is balance and harmony, African American folklore adopts religious doctrines that are at once realistic and hopeful: “God don’t like ugly and he ain’t stuck on pretty”; “God may not come when you want him but he’s right on time.”

The ongoing influence of folk beliefs and practices can be seen in twentieth-century fiction. Hoodoo and other forms of sympathetic magic and spirit possession, as well as African-derived religious practices such as Rastafarianism, Santería, and Vodun, appear in a variety of works, including *Mumbo Jumbo* (1972) by Ishmael Reed, *Damballah* (1981) by John Edgar Wideman, *Sassafras and Cypress and Indigo* (1982) by Ntozake Shange, *Mama Day* (1988) by Gloria Naylor, *Dessa Rose* (1986) by Shirley Anne Williams, and *Temple of My Familiar* (1989) by Alice Walker. References to folk spiritual practices and beliefs, however, can be found as early as 1936, in *Black Thunder* by Arna Bontemps, and in Ann Petry’s novel *The Street* (1946). Yet it was Alice Walker’s epistolary novel *The Color Purple* (1982) that had a singularly compelling impact on the perception and expression of a black theology rooted in folk forms. It later influenced the theology of *womanists* such as Emilie Townes and Katie Cannon, who adopted for their female-centric liberation theology the term coined by Walker and creatively embodied in the novel.

The Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement

The way in which Hurston drew attention to the African American cultural tradition as providing a means for survival and forms of creativity also underscores how religious

attitudes and values are conditioned by culture and, in turn, sustain culture. Ever evolving value systems and ethical practices that emerge from folk traditions challenged accommodationism and materialism and reinforced the self-affirming, ethnocentric qualities of black religion and spiritual identity. Hurston, however, represented more than a southern folk revival. By proximity and patronage she is linked to Harlem, the site of a great cultural movement that emerged in the 1920s. The Harlem Renaissance was the first organized attempt to initiate a cultural movement after slavery, and it is associated with some of the legendary figures of African American literature, including Richard Wright and Langston Hughes. Part of the cultural revival involved the development of new religious belief systems that performed a function similar to folklore and that both inspired and brought forth a creative output. For example, the movement led by Father Divine is cited as the source for Ras the Destroyer in Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*. The Nation of Islam is prominent in the works of Amiri Baraka (1934–), and Sonia Sanchez (1934–), and, of course, Malcolm X, or el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz (1925–1965).

The Black Arts movement of the late 1960s promoted the repudiation of European bases for aesthetics, including Judeo-Christian forms, which Larry Neal (1937–1981), a poet and leading theorist of the movement, viewed as old spirituality. African American writing and, indeed, life were in need of new spirituality specific to the black experience, which frequently sees the world from the perspective of the oppressed. Often associated with the Black Power political movement, in many respects this cultural movement was a spiritual antecedent of liberation theology, which rooted divine power in black power. Less esoteric and more mainstream was the quest for ancestors highlighted by Alex Haley’s *Roots* (1976), which inspired a phenomenon of recovery of the past, both spiritually and historically, on the part of individuals and families.

Conclusion

Hurston’s novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) may be the defining literary text in illustrating the unique relationship between religion and literature in African American culture. The novel is not conventionally religious in any sense, and its protagonist, Janie, is far from conventional or pious. But throughout the story of her search for love and identity, both qualities are linked to a spiritual source that goes back to the origins of African American religiosity. She awakens to spiritual possibility through an appreciation of God’s creation; later that joy will be tempered with

humility when she faces the dangerous aspects of natural power. But through her intimate identification with divinity through nature, or her beloved Tea Cake, whom she describes as having “the keys to the Kingdom,” Janie envisions a kingdom of God that in its simplicity and sincerity embodies the truth of the beatitudes: that the last shall be first, that the spiritual has more value than the material, and that what is blessed is not always found in a sanctified setting. Most important, perhaps, for a traditionally marginalized community is the sense of accountability expected by the people from their God. While God’s eyes may always be on the people and God’s intervention in human affairs may be possible, the people’s eyes are watching God. This secular presentation of a scenario of black life affirms the sacred grounding and the African origins of cultural production by African Americans. It defines the relationship between the individual and society and delineates the differences between civic and private responsibilities. It elevates the originality of the individual but only in the context of a community of kin. And it shows how that which serves a practical function—for example, the everyday use of a quilt—can also be a source of creative delight, spiritual edification, and an occasion to affirm the sacred origins of African Americans.

If Hurston’s novel serves as the creative symbol of the relationship between African American religion and literature, the work of Nathan A. Scott Jr. (1925–2006) represents the theoretical tradition of theological interpretation of the sacred literary output. More than any other African American of his generation, Scott—an ordained Episcopal priest with a PhD in literature—lived and wrote on the boundary between religion and literature: between the sacred and the secular, ancient and modern, theology and culture, and the church and the academy. He wrote eloquently about the religious dimensions of African American literature when, in 1979, he contributed the essay “Black Literature” to *The Harvard Guide to Contemporary American Writing*. In it he credits African American writers with a sacred purpose, to move their “own people toward a deeper understanding of themselves.” He also encourages them, as rhetoricians, to be “agent[s] of self-discovery for the nation at large,” to assent to the belief that it is “within the power of a disciplined language to alter consciousness and thus redeem the human reality.” As a sacred act literary production that upholds the relationship between religion and literature in African American culture is both ontological and teleological: it demonstrates a way of life and a reason to live.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion* entries; *Baptists: African American; Folklore; Glossolalia; Invisible Institution; Methodists: African American; Music: African American Gospel; Music: African American Spirituals; Nation(s) of Islam; New Religious Movements: Black Nationalist Movements; Pentecostals: African American; Race and Racism; Religious Thought: African American; Religious Thought: Womanist; Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics; Spiritualism; Voodoo.*

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Literature: Colonial

The bookends defining literary periods are negotiable. Many believe that the colonial period in American literature begins with the founding of Jamestown in 1607 and extends beyond Thomas Jefferson’s (1743–1826) explosive Declaration of Independence in 1776, when American political identity shifted outside the purview of British control, even though that identity remained in flux.

Colonial writings are multihued and include the oral traditions of native peoples, sermons and theological treatises, secular memoirs and spiritual autobiographies, lyric poems and captivity narratives, political pamphlets

and chronicles of the struggles and successes of the colonies. Many pieces are deeply introspective. Early colonial literature reveals hearts infused with the Puritan Calvinist vigilance for determining evidence of God's election to salvation, the ambiguous realities of being "in the world, but not of it," and the desire to identify America with ancient Israel, as God's chosen nation. These themes pulsate in American literature in some form well into the nineteenth century, but later colonial literature, influenced by the intellectual surges of the European Enlightenment, emphasized the rationalist and deist impulses reflected in the philosophy of John Locke and the mechanistic universe of Sir Isaac Newton.

Conformity and Community

William Bradford (1590–1657) begins his chronicle *Of Plymouth Plantation, 1620–1647* by reflecting on Satan's desire throughout history to persecute the faithful saints of the Christian church. Bradford's Calvinism emerges as a crisis theology, as the faithful persevere against a tide of enemies, both within the community and outside of it.

Just as biblical prophets document the struggles of ancient Israel, so Bradford chronicles the pattern of apostasy and belief in the new community. *Of Plymouth Plantation* moves steadily from an account of hope to one of despair and admonition. Where Jeremiah and Isaiah write about the captivity of Israel following the Babylonian invasion, Bradford writes about a captive Plymouth that has turned away from its first love. The elegiac tone culminates in the 1642 chapter "Wickedness Breaks Forth." Bradford struggles to comprehend how the godly community, now well into its second generation since coming to America, has degenerated into scandal, drunkenness, sodomy, and buggery. Bradford names one offender, Thomas Granger, who after being discovered in a compromising situation, confessed to buggery with "a mare, a cow, two goats, five sheep, two calves, and a turkey." In compliance with the law against bestiality in Leviticus 20, Granger was executed. Bradford begins to rationalize the presence of such horrific actions within the godly community: where God sows good seed, there will also be tares; while the godly are busy with industry, their servants are engaged in wickedness; while Moses dealt with a "mixed multitude" who fled from Egypt, so must Bradford. To trump this spiritual failure, the following chapter celebrates the first generation's Reverend Elder William Brewster, who exemplified devotion and service to God. The obituary culminates in Bradford's reflecting on the shared

tribulations of the first generation that drove them to rely on God. *Of Plymouth Plantation* ends abruptly in 1647; there are no entries for 1648, but in the manuscript two blank leaves are inserted, followed by a listing of the original members of the *Mayflower* who founded Plymouth Plantation. These names perhaps serve in Bradford's mind as a "saving remnant," both a despairing reminder of human promise and frailty and as an encouragement to the next generation to seek God's Providence.

Governor John Winthrop (1588–1649) of Massachusetts Bay Colony also sought to find signs of God's favor upon the colony's endeavors, struggled to enforce conformity, and worked to stamp out heterodoxy. An early entry in his *Journal* (July 5, 1632) relates an incident in which several colonists witnessed a battle for survival between a mouse and a snake, in which the mouse killed the snake. One Boston pastor interpreted it as an allegory of the victory of God's meek saints over the great serpent himself. For the years 1636–1638, his *Journal* records the community's increasingly troubling confrontations with Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643), whom many viewed as a serpent in the mouse's nest. When Hutchinson was brought before the General Court in Boston in 1637, a split in the Bay Colony was already evident. On one side were those who advocated Puritan covenant theology in which one's spiritual works served as the fruits and signs of election. On the other were a growing number of New Englanders such as Anne Hutchinson who subscribed to the notion of "free grace" and the authority of the spirit. These "antinomians" held that personal revelation and the inner workings of the spirit, not works performed under the law, signaled one's salvation. Hutchinson's friend and ally, the contentious Roger Williams (1603–1683), often credited with founding the first Baptist church in America, wrote several minor poems that questioned the ease with which the "visible" saint could be discerned. In one poem Williams admonishes his fellow puritans, "Boast not proud *E[n]glish*, of thy birth and blood, / Thy brother *Indian* is by birth as Good," which is to argue a shared natural condition deserving wrath "Till Grace *his* soule and *thine* in Christ restore" (1–2, 6). Williams then asserts a possibility that would have scandalized many Bay Puritans: "Make sure thy second birth, else thou shalt see, / Heaven ope to *Indians* wild, but shut to thee" (7–8). Banished from Massachusetts Bay in 1635, Williams secured a charter for the colony of Rhode Island in 1644. His crackling *Bloudy Tenent of Persecution* (1644) is an imaginary dialogue between Truth and Peace that argues for toleration and the liberty of

conscience. Like the obstinate Williams, Hutchinson was excommunicated and banished in March 1638, and Winthrop comments that it only renewed her energies.

Encounters with Natives and Witches

Hutchinson and Williams presented a threat to doctrinal unity, but Indians threatened communal survival. Mary White Rowlandson (c. 1635–c. 1678) records her eleven-week captivity among the Narragansett Indians that dramatically confirms the workings of divine grace in a blend between spiritual autobiography, travelogue, and narrative of cultural assimilation. She begins her account with the sudden attack in February 1676; within hours, her house had been set on fire, and several neighbors and members of her extended family had been killed: “Thus, were we butchered by those merciless heathen, standing amazed, with the blood running down to our heels.” In the narrative’s Third Remove, Rowlandson comments that several days of travel to the Indian camp reminded her of how derelict she had been “of God’s holy time, how many Sabbaths I had lost and misspent and how evilly I had walked in God’s sight.” God had every right to punish her, cast her from his presence, or kill her, she admits, but though he “wounded me with one hand, so He healed me with the other.” Her ordeal provided time for the introspective self-examination fueling seventeenth-century Puritan culture. Even though she witnesses the dire straits of the Indians themselves, she notes how God’s strange Providence preserves and provides for them, and ultimately strengthens them “to be a scourge to His people.”

Throughout, Rowlandson interweaves verses from the Bible as a way of maintaining identity and making sense of her various trials. Like many Puritans, she read the Bible experientially, as readers identify with characters or situations. In her own exile, she echoes the lament of Israel in Babylon in Psalm 137; she is the aged Israel of Genesis 42:36 wailing for Benjamin; she is the prodigal of Luke 15 returning to her father in repentance; she is Job who has lost everything and does not understand the cause; she is the Hebrew slave fleeing the captivity of Pharaoh in Exodus 14:13; and, finally, she is the one whom God loves, for her affliction is evidence of God’s favor, as the writer of Hebrews 12:6 confirms.

Rowlandson graphically articulates the widespread fear of Native Americans that colonists felt. There are moments of identification with her captors, but these are fleeting, and the reader is left with her overall impression of their

savagery and the lingering external threat posed to the community. The Puritan minister Cotton Mather (1663–1728) collected miscellaneous captivity narratives and anecdotes in his massive *Magnalia Christi Americana; or, the Ecclesiastical History of New England* (1702) to demonstrate God’s preservation of his people in the new wilderness. Other narratives, such as Quentin Stockwell’s more secular *Relation of his Captivity* (1677), were preserved, edited, and heavily annotated with a Puritan focus by the elder Increase Mather (1639–1723) in *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* (1684).

By the end of the century another insidious enemy arose just as the communal pressures of conformity, orthodoxy, and stability reached critical mass. Increase and Cotton Mather grappled with what was then perceived as the most sinister internal threat at Massachusetts Bay: witchcraft. The hysteria in Salem in 1691–1693 is not easily accounted for, but the witch trials made clear that even if there were no *de facto* witches at Salem, there was a rhetorical need for them as a catalyst for reanimating spiritual devotion and strengthening communal ties. The paranoia in Massachusetts began as several young women fell into unexplainable “fits”; when physical causes could not be ascertained, metaphysical causes were suspected. Several young girls from the colony and a West Indian slave named Tituba confessed to midnight dealings in the forest with the devil, whom many described as resembling a “black man” or an “Indian.” By 1693 some 150 citizens had been jailed; 29 of these were convicted on capital charges; 19 persons were hanged, and 1 was pressed to death. George Burroughs, once a minister in Salem, was charged as the ringleader and was executed; no one, it seems, could be trusted.

Cotton Mather’s *Wonders of the Invisible World* (1692), his chronicle of five of the trials, reasons that the presence of witches bears testimony that the devil grew “exceedingly disturbed” by the righteous workings of the colony. Despite his confidence in the colony’s providential favor, the younger Mather fears that because an “army of devils is horribly broke in upon the place which is the center . . . the first-born of our English settlements,” their sinister designs would spread uncontrollably to neighboring communities, and eventually would amount to “no less than a sort of dissolution upon the world.” Mather’s heightened language to describe the affliction of the colony also resonates with anticipation of Christ’s imminent return as a new century approaches, a millenarianism that his father, Increase, had preached to an earlier generation in *The Mystery of Israel’s*

Salvation (1667). Such an apocalyptic vision is also described in Michael Wigglesworth's (1631–1705) long poem *The Day of Doom* (1662), which sold 1,800 copies in the first year and became standard fare for New England school children learning their catechism and the doctrinal lessons of the *Bay Psalm Book* (1640) and the *New-England Primer* (1685).

Evidence for charging someone with practicing witchcraft was sketchy. At Salem that evidence included strange behavior or apparent healing powers, the unexplained appearance of “spectral” forms of the accused in odd or multiple places, the presence of a witch’s “teat” on the accused that was believed to be used to suckle a familiar or personal demon, and, remarkably, outright confessions of guilt. Of the latter, Mather states that twenty confessed to signing their names in the devil’s book. But outright confession was the quickest way to be exonerated and perhaps the strongest evidence of true conversion. No doubt a few villagers took opportunity to bring up old quarrels with their neighbors as evidence against the accused. Increase Mather and several other Boston ministers were vocal in their caution and opposition to the witch trials.

Conversion and Spiritual Autobiography

The colonies’ financial, communal, and spiritual successes and failures are reflected more minutely in personal conversion narratives, or spiritual autobiographies. The genre emerges in connection with church membership. If the church minister and elders determined an individual’s grace experience to be genuine, they then extended full church membership. Many scholars have identified a pattern of linear “movements” in the genre of spiritual autobiography: knowledge of sinfulness, a time of preparation (often including physical illness), spiritual conviction and faith, doubt and despair, and, finally, true assurance. Gradually, the spiritual vicissitudes of autobiography in the seventeenth century gave way to more secular concerns in the eighteenth century, as in the *Diary* of Samuel Sewall (1652–1730) and the *Autobiography* of Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790).

Winthrop’s own *Christian Experience* (1637) fits the linear mold of spiritual autobiography. Spiritual autobiographies such as Winthrop’s consistently speak of the old/new life of the individual, typologically identified with Paul’s distinction between Adam as the “old man” and Christ as the “new man” (Romans 5–6; Colossians 3). A season of physical sickness functions for Winthrop as an external signifier of internal spiritual sickness; the crucible of pain awakens the

possibility of death, and with it, the anxieties of separation from God. The conviction of his sin leads Winthrop to a new life of devotion, but one characterized by outward legalism that subsequently leads him back to despair. On the verge of publically proclaiming himself a hypocrite, he experiences the spiritual epiphany of complete wretchedness, a primary tenet of Calvinism. After suffering doubt and defeat, Winthrop bloomed into the assurance of God’s mercy and love.

Similar patterns emerge in the spiritual autobiography of Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), the dominant figure of New England’s “Great Awakening.” This cultural movement was a Calvinist spiritual revival in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Edwards relates its varieties and imaginative trajectories in a lengthy letter to the Reverend Benjamin Colman of Boston, titled “A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God” (1735). Although Edwards was determined to show the ways in which “the light breaks through the cloud, and doubting and darkness soon vanish away,” he did not always possess such confidence, as he acknowledges in his *Personal Narrative* of conversion, written in 1739 and published posthumously in 1765. Edwards narrates that as a boy he was deeply struck with religious affections and duties, but, as the years passed, he became increasingly infused with doubt as those passions faded. At Yale he fell sick, and the experience caused him to make seeking for salvation “the main business of my life.” In January 1722 Edwards formalized his conversion by committing to paper his vows to God. Some of these vows emerge in his list of seventy holy *Resolutions* (composed 1723–1724) for daily living. The rest of Edwards’s *Narrative* relates his discovery of God’s holiness and the depths of his own wickedness. The character that emerges from its pages is of a mind restlessly turning over profound questions, of a life desperate in its love for God, and of a heart suffused with great movements of passion in a century given to the rationalist program.

Edwards was no enthusiast, however, and one need only read his works on philosophical theology, such as his *Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746), or his painstaking *Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of Will* (1754), to see that he is firmly rooted in the Enlightenment. But his extant sermons demonstrate his keen ability to tap into the dynamic emotional lives of his parishioners to guide them to conversion. His most famous sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* (July 8, 1741), is an attempt to shock congregants out of their spiritual

complacency. One must not view this sermon as wholly representative of Edwards's preaching or writing, but as the rhetorical instrument that hammers into his congregants' hearts the assertion that God's will and pleasure defy human attempts at understanding his plans for salvation. Influenced by the natural discoveries made by the Royal Society, Edwards infuses the sermon with vivid images drawn from nature: sinners are compared to chaff spinning in the whirlwind of God's wrath, spiders dangling over a fire, prey that are about to be devoured by the serpent, and reeds or branches breaking by the flood—all with a view to impressing a sense of spiritual urgency.

For Elizabeth Ashbridge (1713–1755), conversion from the Church of England to Quakerism unleashed the mockery and wrath of her husband. Ashbridge's *Some Account of the Fore-Part of the Life of Elizabeth Ashbridge . . . Wrote by Herself* (published in 1774) is a fascinating glimpse into the multivalent social attitudes toward religion and its various communities in colonial New England. Ashbridge recounts coming into Pennsylvania to visit relatives, all of whom were Quakers. Many, both dissenters and Anglicans, saw the Quakers as a dangerous fringe group—antinomians run amok, who disregarded civil and ecclesial authorities, extended preaching privileges to women, and exalted the whimsical moving of the spirit (called the Inner Light) more than the scriptures. Ashbridge confesses her prejudice against the sect, preferring the hated “papists” to the Quakers, and expresses her “mortification” on learning that her relations followed the sect's teachings.

But throughout the *Account*, Ashbridge describes herself as having the heart of a spiritual seeker. After one service when she falls asleep and nearly falls down, she vows never to reenter the meetinghouse. Later, however, she hears the preaching of William Hammans. He convinces her that the sacraments and rituals of the Church of England are empty now that Christ is come in full righteousness to live in the believer. She converts and sends for her husband without telling him of her news; before he arrives, however, he learns about her new faith. Thereafter, she suffers ridicule, beatings, and separation from her husband, and patiently endures censure from her former Anglican minister. Even after her husband's death, she does not retaliate in the *Account*, declaring that although “he was so bad, I never thought him the worst of men,” and blesses God for giving her the strength to persevere as a wife and a widow. Ashbridge's quiet submission to her cruel husband can be understood within the patriarchal social structures that were oppressive to many eighteenth-century women. Alternately,

however, one might read her narrative against the grain and say that her converting to Quakerism and submitting to the mysterious Inner Light gave her an authority that these power structures feared. Because she was exalted by God, Ashbridge found her debasement by humans paradoxically empowered her, rendering her radically available to be used by the Holy Spirit.

The *Journal* of another Quaker, John Woolman (1720–1772), also demonstrates an awareness of larger social concerns while still remaining a narrative about conversion. As a young man, Woolman earned his living as a tailor and later became an itinerant preacher for abolition. Unlike many Puritan accounts, Woolman's *Journal* is less occupied with determining evidence of salvation and more concerned with documenting his eventual giving over to the radical authority of the Inner Light. Key to understanding this submission is Woolman's emerging awareness of the moral and social evils multiplied through the institution of slavery. Initially, Woolman makes small changes in his tailoring business. Even though the expensively dyed garments were the principle sources of his profits, he became convinced that selling them committed a violence against the free man and the slave alike, who must burden themselves on behalf of someone else's vanity. Woolman's skill in drawing up legal documents also contributed to the cause of abolition, as he refused to draft the wills of fellow Friends who desired their slaves to be transferred as property.

A prominent African voice opposing the slave trade was that of Olaudah Equiano (1745–1797). *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789) provides the template for many later slave narratives and autobiographies and chronicles his terrifying experiences during the Middle Passage and his life as a slave. During the transatlantic voyage, he marvels at the “magic” of the operations of the sailing ship, as well as the cruelty of his white captors, whom he thought were evil spirits set on devouring him. When he arrives in Virginia, he describes his debilitating sense of alienation. Without a common culture or language among them, slaves were more easily controlled, were more focused workers, and were more dependent subjects. Without common language, genuine community was nearly impossible. Equiano narrates his desire to wash off his blackness in order to be like a young white playmate. In another episode, he relates his growing paranoia when the eyes in a portrait appear to follow him whenever he enters the room.

The thrust of his narrative, as he describes in a prefatory letter to the British Parliament, was to make state dignitaries

aware of the horrors of the slave trade. One of the ways that Equiano establishes his credentials, and his humanity in the eyes of white culture, is through the rhetoric of conversion and the guidance of Providence throughout his life. Providence protects him from death after he plunges from the upper deck of a ship; Providence guides him when he is educated by a kind master; Providence provides money and circumstance in his securing his freedom; Providence heals him during a prolonged illness and saves him from a shipwreck. White slave culture consistently denied that Africans had souls or asserted that they were too brutish to understand Christianity's doctrines. Not only does Equiano present himself as an African with a soul, but he is an African with a soul predestined for salvation, and an African with a divinely inspired mission to ban the slave trade. Equiano's autobiography becomes more than a conversion narrative; like Woolman's account, Equiano's narrative blurs into the literature of social protest and political reform.

Spiritual Struggle and Devotional Verse

Like spiritual autobiography, colonial American devotional verse contained all the dramatic elements of temptation and doubt, introspection, spiritual failure, and grace assurance. America's first great poet, Anne Bradstreet (1612–1672), travelled with Winthrop's party aboard the flagship *Arbella* to Massachusetts Bay. Before disembarking, she heard Winthrop preach *A Model of Christian Charity* (1630), wherein America is envisioned as the "city upon a hill." Bradstreet was self-conscious about her writing, as she confesses in the *Prologue* to her book of poems *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America* (1650). In "The Author to Her Book," she meekly calls her book the "ill-form'd offspring of my feeble brain" and the "rambling brat" that is "unfit for light" (1, 8–9). The revised but posthumous second edition of *The Tenth Muse*, retitled *Several Poems* (1678), contains the poems that form the core of her poetic reputation. "As Weary Pilgrim, Now at Rest" dwells on natural images that are emblematic of human suffering; storms, stony paths, a blazing sun, and briars and thorns no longer afflict the pilgrim who has gone to his death. As a fellow traveler who is vexed by sorrow, pain, and a "Clay house mouldring away" (19–22), Bradstreet looks toward her own resurrection when Christ returns. In "The Flesh and the Spirit," flesh and spirit are described as two sisters who contend for prominence. Spirit winningly trumps, "My garments are not silk nor gold, / Nor such like trash which Earth doth hold, / But Royal Robes I shall have on, /

More glorious than the glist'ring Sun" (79–82). These poems seem straightforward declarations of the poet's resolve toward the life to come.

A similar resignation exists in the poems commemorating the deaths of her grandchildren, Elizabeth (d. 1665) and Simon (d. 1669). "In memory of my dear grand-child Elizabeth" questions why the poet should "bewail thy fate" because Elizabeth is now "settled in an Everlasting state" (5, 7). Death is part of the natural order, and God possesses the solitary hand "that guides nature and fate" (14). Yet the reader confronts the repeated "Farewel" in the first three lines that address the "dear babe," "sweet babe," and "fair flower" who has departed. Elizabeth was "my hearts too much content" and the "pleasure of mine eye" (1–2), and a tone of grief pervades for the earthly pleasures of a presence no longer to be enjoyed. In her poem commemorating the death of Simon, Bradstreet writes that even though Elizabeth, Simon, and their sister Anne have all been "Cropt by the Almighty's hand; yet is he good," for when Christ returns he will "make up all our losses" (4, 9). But the poem continues, "Let's say he's merciful as well as just" (8), an ambiguous statement that belies the poet's struggle to come to terms with God's goodness. Furthermore, both of these poems are emblems of Bradstreet's conviction that this world is worth remembering and preserving. Bradstreet's poems demonstrate an investment in the world even as she eschews it. Similar spiritual ambiguity can be found in "To My Dear and Loving Husband," "A Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Publick Employment," and "Upon the burning of our House, July 10th, 1666."

America's other major poet of the seventeenth century was Edward Taylor (1642–1729). His sizable personal library contained a single volume of poetry: Bradstreet's 1678 *Several Poems*. Despite his prodigious body of work, the only poetry published in his lifetime were a few stanzas from "Upon Wedlock, & Death of Children," a moving elegy written to memorialize the infant deaths of five of his eight children by his first wife, Elizabeth Fitch. Taylor's other occasional verses include love poems, paraphrases of the Psalms, and meditations on the natural world. "Upon a Spider Catching a Fly" is an allegorical poem that likens a spider's web to hell's "stratagem" (37), which are woven as "Cords" and "nets" to "tangle Adams race" (33–34, 36). Taylor pleads that God's grace would be the instrument to "breake the Cord" (43). In "Huswifery" Taylor prays that he would be made into God's "Spinning Wheele compleate" (1), with the wheel's various mechanic components and the

thread likened to Taylor's emotions, soul, understanding, and will transformed by the spirit and the Word. "The Ebb and Flow" is a meditation on his lackluster devotion, wherein he expresses his anxiety that his devotional fire is nothing more than "a mocking Ignis Fatuus" (14), a false fire. Yet this doubt is transformed into a favorable sign of election, for when his "ashes" are blown away, "thy fire doth glow" (18). *God's Determinations Touching His Elect . . .* (c. 1680) contains thirty-five sequential poems that follow the arc of creation, fall, and redemption in the epic struggle for a person's soul. In "The Souls Groan to Christ for Succor," Taylor confesses the justice of his condemnation, only to be answered in the next poem, "Christ's Reply," with addresses of "my Hony," "My Little Darling," "my Dove," and "my Love" (1–4). This conversational structure governs this entire series of poems. These are public poems, but Taylor's poetic reputation firmly resides in his private *Preparatory Meditations*, poems on the Lord's Supper written over the course of forty-three years, which suggests that Taylor approached the composition of these poems as a spiritual exercise. In *Meditation 1.1*, which sets the tone for all the poems that follow, Taylor marvels at the Incarnation—the event wherein God demonstrates his "Matchless Love! Filling Heaven to the brim!" and "Overflowing Hell" (7, 9). Yet in the last six lines, God's abundant love is unrequited by Taylor's "Lifeless Sparke," "Fireless Flame," and "Chilly Love, and Cold" (15–16). Like so many of the *Meditations*, this poem ends with Taylor's desire for God's complete mastery over an unfaithful desire through grace.

Deity and Enlightened Revolution

Devotional literature faded by the mid-eighteenth century as colonial authors consistently invoke the God of deism: not the personal God of the Puritans, but a God who is the great clockmaker of the universe. This distant God creates by design, governs justly and benevolently through universal moral laws and observable natural laws, and is most discernible through rationality rather than through private revelation or the rites of the church.

Note this deist impulse in Jefferson's phrasing in the *Declaration of Independence*: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Truth is not privately "revealed," but is communal and discoverable through observation. By "equal" Jefferson means that the Creator has endowed all humanity with

their highest capacity: to behold moral truth and to exercise virtue. These two ideals are upheld late in Jefferson's life when he compiled his *Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth* (c. 1817), a gospel that Jefferson wove together from Jesus' teachings. All that survives of this document is his listing of the biblical texts to be included. True to the Enlightenment, he avoids the miracles, including the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection; moreover, he elides nearly all the gospel of John, which portrays the most theologically confrontational Jesus of the four gospels. Instead, Jefferson's gospel records the life and parabolic teachings of a historical—though mortal—man.

Deist sympathies are more explicit in the *Letters to an American Farmer* of James Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur (1735–1813), written during the 1770s and published in 1782. In these twelve letters, Crèvecoeur speculates on what it means to be "American," praises self-interest, reflects on political and moral dilemmas, and confesses divided loyalties between Britain and the colonies. Unlike the pressures to conform and the compulsory tithes in the Church of England, organized religion in America demands only a heart full of gratitude to the Creator, as he describes in Letter III. In Letter XII, he fantasizes about fleeing the contradictions of the Revolution to live with the Indians. Unlike the earlier savage portraits of the Native Americans, Crèvecoeur's farmer is generous and emphasizes his holding the values that deism celebrates: Indians seemingly have no laws, but understand justice; they have no temples or priests, nor religious doctrine, but display reverence for the Creation and the Supreme Being. Should he retreat to their community, the farmer would continue to instruct his family in religion, but would only teach the Decalogue—God's commandments given to Moses that have universal application. While the Puritans of the previous century had consistently looked to the biblical past, Crèvecoeur's farmer persona looks to the future.

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) shared Crèvecoeur's optimism. Unlike the Puritans, Franklin comprehended his life according to the operations of reason, the industriousness of the self, and the personal "errata" that interfere, as he describes it in the *Autobiography*. Franklin wrote the *Autobiography* as letters to his son at different times in his life (1771, 1784, and 1788), and he implicitly offers himself up for imitation—a self-made American man, the youngest son of a youngest son. As a young man Franklin read the skeptical works of the third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713) and Anthony Collins (1676–1729), which led him to become a "real Doubter in many Points of our Religious Doctrine"

(18). He subsequently published several treatises on deism: *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain* (1725), *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion* (1728), and *On the Providence of God in the Government of the World* (1730). His *Articles of Belief* is an alternate liturgy that Franklin states he practiced alone instead of attending religious services. While agreeing that Sunday services were important, he found that preachers were engaged in polemics or the explication of dogma, rather than encouraging human beings to be better human beings.

Like Jonathan Edwards, Franklin also wrote a list of resolutions, from which he derived a “bold and arduous Project of arriving at moral Perfection.” Edwards would have been scandalized at such a goal, and Franklin sought to practice thirteen secular virtues. While Edwards’s resolutions were for “Christ’s sake,” as he states in his preface, Franklin’s resolutions were for their own sake, as Franklin sought to become master of himself and shaper of his public persona. While Edwards confesses he is unable “to do anything without God’s help,” Franklin reasons that success is measured by the rational replacement of one habit with another. Throughout, Franklin makes himself the butt of jokes, and his attempt at moral perfection is no exception. Discouraged by his frequent failures, he relates a parable: A man came to the blacksmith wanting the whole of his axe to gleam as brightly as the edge. The smith tells the man to turn the wheels of the grinder. The man soon becomes fatigued and concludes (like Franklin), “I think I like a speckled Ax best.” Franklin reasons that a man of moral perfection would be the object of scorn and envy. A man who conducts business with the world ought to be benevolent but not perfect, so as to “keep his Friends in Countenance.” In Franklin’s world, the secular virtues celebrated by deism were second to utility.

The tenets of deism had rhetorical utility as well. As the Revolution unfolded, Thomas Paine (1737–1809) appealed to the deist God, the universal moral law, and the optimism in human rationality to justify the colonial break from Britain. In Part III of *Common Sense* (1776), he argues that America has long “made large sacrifices to superstition,” principal among them that Great Britain is a benevolent protector. For Paine, Britain’s insistence on being the “mother country” amounts to a “low papistical design” to enslave thinking minds. Reconciliation with Britain is not plausible, argues Paine, who quotes John Milton’s Satan in *Paradise Lost*: “For never can true reconcilment grow/ Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc’d so deep” (IV, 98–99). Britain’s repeated violations of justice strike a

chord against the “unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes” that the “Almighty hath implanted in us.” America’s cause is therefore a universal human cause: the fight against tyranny. In “The Crisis, No. 1” (December 23, 1776), Paine argues that God will not subject his people to destruction and tyranny if they have exhausted every means of avoiding war, nor has God “relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils.” As Paine describes it, the colonies’ struggle is universal; the resulting order accompanying the final break will reflect the larger divine government of the universe.

One of the clearest articulations of deist philosophy is Paine’s treatise *The Age of Reason* (the first part published in 1794). The aim of the document is to separate rationally the superstitions and false theologies that have corrupted religion from the pure belief in one God, the duties owed to one’s neighbor, and the moral principles that lead to a liberated mind. Paine ardently asserts that “[m]y own mind is my own church.” The state too often wields religion as an “engine of power” that “serves the purpose of despotism.” If something is to be believed, argues Paine, it must be universally acceptable through rational “proof and evidence.” Like Jefferson, Paine agrees that Jesus was an extraordinary man whose teachings are surpassed by none, but to believe in his divinity, the Virgin birth, or his Resurrection transgresses that empiricist rule. What can be universally trusted, however, is the theology to be found in the “scripture called the Creation,” which no person can alter or deny. The book of nature transcends culture and language and is independent of the whims of a single mind. In nature a person can discern the attributes of the Creator: intelligence, generosity, wisdom, immutability, and goodness. Christianity distorts this vision of the Creator and offers a God who acts “like a passionate man, that killed his son, when he could not revenge himself any other way.” For Paine, this is not a God worthy of praise. His rejection of Christian doctrine is offered upon the altar of universal reason and moral truth, and he ends the treatise hopeful that the free exchange of ideas in matters of religion and government will “powerfully prevail.”

Had they met, William Bradford and Thomas Paine may have viewed one another with contempt. They did, however, share the same convictions that America is destined to be the guarantor of the liberty of conscience and that it is chosen by God as a nation of exceptional people. Bradford’s Puritan imagination and Paine’s myth of American exceptionalism are deeply ingrained, as the subsequent

generations in American literature grapple with their legacy.

See also *African American Religion: Colonial Period through the Civil War; America: Religious Interpretations of; Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Antinomian Controversy; Common Sense Realism; Deism; Enlightenment; Evangelicals: Colonial America; Great Awakening(s); Literature entries; Music: Christian; Popular Religion and Popular Culture: From the Colonial Period through the Civil War; Politics: Colonial Era; Presbyterians: Colonial; Puritans; Religious Thought: Reformed; Systematic Theology.*

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Literature: Contemporary

At least two characteristics mark the post–World War II era in American literature. First, the threat of nuclear annihilation sparked by the dropping of atomic bombs in 1945 on two Japanese cities gave rise to uncertainty—if not outright anxiety—about the existence of metaphysical truths. This existential dread caused some writers to strengthen their belief in a divinity and others to qualify, question, or reject such belief. Second, the postwar era witnessed a broadening of the literary spectrum to include a greater number of nonwhite, non-Christian, and female perspectives. These two characteristics exhibit the extent to which the

collective American literary imagination has departed from its seventeenth-century Puritan origins.

The Christian Search for Meaning in Postwar America

Roman Catholicism: Robert Lowell and Flannery O'Connor

The gulf between America's Puritan origins and postwar angst is exemplified by the poet Robert Lowell (1917–1977). A descendant of famous Massachusetts Puritans (as well as poets James Russell Lowell and Amy Lowell), Lowell rejected his patrician Protestant upbringing and converted to Catholicism at age twenty-three. His disillusionment with Protestant theology in general and Puritanism in particular is captured in the poem “Jonathan Edwards in Western Massachusetts,” which declares outright that “Edwards's great millstone and rock / of hope has crumbled” (1–2). Lowell's poetry shows a deep brooding about Americans' spiritual moorings in an age of consumerism, conformity, and psychological isolation. In his confessional poem “Memories of West Street and Lepke,” Lowell juxtaposes his pacifist Catholicism with the spiritual numbness of the “tranquillized” 1950s. The embodiment of the new era is the lobotomized assassin Czar Lepke, who lives his life of incarceration “in sheepish calm” (49). Yet just as Lowell had abandoned Protestantism at an earlier moment in his life, he later became similarly disenchanting with Catholicism. In his poem “Beyond the Alps,” Lowell looks skeptically at the Vatican's decision to make Mary's heavenly assumption official dogma, asking, “Who believed this?” (23). The skepticism turns even darker as the poem invokes Mussolini, who sparked the same type of mass enthusiasm that dogmatizing Mary's assumption had. The poem leaves readers to wonder what, if anything, in the postwar world separates religious fervor from Mussolini's mob mentality.

Lowell's contemporary, Flannery O'Connor (1925–1964), retained her belief in Catholicism, though her two novels and thirty-two short stories are not without the ironies that characterize so much of postwar literature. At the heart of O'Connor's fiction is an ardent belief in the need for salvation, or if not for salvation, at least the spiritual revelations that can allow the free-willed individual the chance for grace. In so many of her stories, violence is a prerequisite for any change of heart. Her famous 1955 short story “A Good Man is Hard to Find” depicts an elderly woman, known simply as “the grandmother,” who converts

from petty selfishness to compassion—even showing love for the Misfit, who systematically kills members of her family. Echoing Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor, the Misfit justifies his murderous actions by explaining that because there is no way of knowing whether Christ is really divine, he does not feel limited by Christian threats of damnation. Although the story never proves the Misfit wrong on this point, the grief-stricken grandmother gestures toward the Christ-like love the Misfit eschews. In fact, her own need to touch him is what prompts him to shoot her just as she calls out, "Why you're one of my babies. You're one of my own children!"

An extended meditation on achieving grace through violence is found in O'Connor's 1952 novel *Wise Blood*. If the carnage of World War and the ensuing threat of nuclear annihilation are largely responsible for the existentialist turn in American literature, then Hazel Motes, the novel's protagonist, is in many respects the voice of his generation. Before leaving for the war, Hazel had every intention of becoming a preacher, just like his grandfather before him; but the war helped him to realize that he has no soul. Ironically, then, by determining that he does not have a soul, Hazel searches for salvation from damnation by simply not believing in damnation. His faith in no faith is tested by a number of charlatan preachers, and by the end of the novel, he has embraced the self-abnegation and mortification typical of martyred saints, even binding himself with barbed wire and walking with broken glass in his shoes. As with "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," *Wise Blood* suggests that both revelation and salvation are offered through suffering, and despite Hazel's earlier efforts, his grandfather's lesson would still ring true: "Jesus would have him in the end!"

White Protestantism: John Updike and Margaret Atwood

The white Protestant investigation of faith in postwar literature has perhaps its greatest articulation in the novels of John Updike (1932–2009), whose Rabbit series of four novels and one novella—*Rabbit Run* (1960), *Rabbit Redux* (1971), *Rabbit Is Rich* (1981), *Rabbit at Rest* (1990), and *Rabbit Remembered* (2001)—portrays an America that struggles to live up to the sober-minded ethics of faith, responsibility, and hard work. At the center of this cycle of novels is Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom, who, as his last name suggests, is full of angst over getting older and no longer being able to indulge in the kinds of sensual pursuits otherwise afforded

to younger unmarried men. Through Harry, these novels investigate American Protestantism's preoccupation with the middle—the middle class and personal moderation in particular. Harry's lack of self-restraint throughout the cycle reveals the Protestant middle's darker underside: mediocrity. After the death of both his parents, Harry realizes that his past fame as a high school athlete from a mid-sized Pennsylvania city is virtually meaningless. He is, in the broader view, simply mediocre. Religious cures for mediocrity appear impotent in Rabbit's world. Neither the serious-minded Lutheran pastor Kruppenbach nor the easy-going Episcopal priest Eccles can offer a spiritual remedy for the adultery, immaturity, and irresponsibility that results from Rabbit's disgust for mediocrity. Harry seems more concerned with lustful thoughts about Eccles's beautiful wife than reconciling himself to his unfulfilling role as Janice's husband or Nelson's father. Spirituality is as much on the run as Rabbit himself.

The spiritual disillusionment found in postwar society, coupled with memories of the totalitarian regimes that sprang up in the western world in the first half of the twentieth century, has its most distilled voice in the fiction of Margaret Atwood (1939–). Although a Canadian citizen, Atwood attended graduate school at both Radcliffe College and Harvard University; and her most famous novel, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), uses the United States as the setting for a futuristic authoritarian society based on oppressive fundamentalist Christian doctrine. The tale is told in retrospect from the perspective of Offred, who in her lifetime witnesses the fall of the United States (including the deaths of the president and members of Congress) and takeover by the fundamentalist Sons of Jacob, who then set up the Republic of Gilead. Having abolished the Constitution, the new government sets itself up according to Old Testament law; women are given marginal status and African Americans are labeled the Children of Ham and relegated to "homelands" in the area of the former Dakotas. Offred had received a college education before America's dissolution, but in the new regime she is prohibited from reading—or even speaking—and is forced to become a reproductive concubine for Commander Fred (hence her name "of Fred"). Written in part as a response to both increasing tensions in American-Soviet relations and U.S. political parties' overt courting of religious voters, Atwood's dystopian novel addresses what the melding of church and state could hold for women and ethnic/racial minorities. While speaking in terms of "traditional values," the men

who control the Republic of Gilead are exposed as brutal, self-serving, and irrational.

African American Writers: James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison

The postwar era proved an explosive time for African American authors, whose writings are often framed within the larger historical context of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s and its aftermath. The African American Christian experience recorded by these writers is punctuated by concerns not only of racial equality, but also gender and class equality. James Baldwin (1924–1987), one of the most prominent writers of the period, embraced these themes in his semiautobiographical novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953). This first novel presents a complex vision of the black church, as a place of both communal solidarity and of deep hypocrisy. This hypocrisy is most evident in Reverend Gabriel Grimes, the stepfather of the main character, John. Despite his prominent position in the church, Gabriel is a womanizer and abusive to his family. John's acceptance of Christ provides a sense of closure for the novel, but even that closure is qualified with the threat that Elizabeth, Gabriel's wife, may learn of her husband's dark past. Baldwin takes an equally complex view of the black church in his 1964 play *Blues for Mister Charlie*, based loosely on the murder of fifteen-year old Emmitt Till in 1955, in rural Mississippi. The play centers on Reverend Meridian Henry, who advocates passive resistance to racial oppression in the wake of his son's murder at the hands of a white man. The outraged black community finds an ally in Parnell, the white newspaperman assigned to cover the murder and ensuing trial. The play offers qualified hope that blacks and whites can reach across their segregated religious communities to find an end to racial hatred. When Parnell asks if he can join in the protest march at the end of the play, Juanita, a member of Henry's congregation, replies, "Well, we can walk in the same direction, Parnell." Juanita's response suggests that even well-intentioned whites cannot truly comprehend the black American experience. The play asks what can provide the best antidote for racism. Will Martin Luther King Jr.'s New Testament injunction to "love they neighbor" prevail, or does Christ-like forgiveness prove ill-equipped in the face of such persistent problems? When is it time—and in fact justified—to raise the sword?

These spiritual questions find amplification in the works of Baldwin's contemporary Ralph Ellison (1913–1994). Unlike Baldwin, who for a short time early in life was a

preacher, Ellison kept Christianity at arm's length. His worldview and his understanding of American history and culture, however, were deeply set within a Christian framework, as is evident in his literary essays and in his two novels, *The Invisible Man* (1952) and *Juneteenth* (1999). Ellison believed that slavery and racism constituted America's original sin: "Thus the new edenic political scene incorporated a flaw . . . [that] embodied a serpent-like malignancy that would tempt government and individual alike to a constantly-recurring fall from democratic innocence . . . racism took on the force of an original American sin." The drama of the Fall and its repercussions play themselves out in *The Invisible Man* through the unnamed main character, whose literal descent underground by the novel's end carries with it a knowledge of the good and evil that populate the collective American consciousness. Along the way, the novel presents readers with a number of fallen creatures, among them the trickster-preacher Rinehart, whose resemblance to the narrator suggests among other things the relative interchangeability of black individuality in the eyes of the larger society.

The center of *Juneteenth*, Ellison's unfinished, posthumously published novel, is A.Z. Hickman, an African American preacher. Charged with caring for Bliss, the son of a white woman partially responsible for the death of his brother, Hickman sees himself as a latter-day Job scrambling for answers before an inscrutable God. Paralleling O'Connor's necessity for suffering in the quest for illumination and salvation, Hickman concludes that "[God is] going to beat us till we almost melt and then He's going to plunge us into ice-cold water He means for us to be a new kind of human." Bliss eventually rejects his "father," and later in life he uses the pulpit rhetoric he had learned as a child for crass political advancement. Still, the aging Hickman persists in loving "the boy whom the man had been," and the novel gives a glimmer of hope that Christ-like love is still the most resilient remedy for an American psyche corrupted by the original sin of racial oppression.

Popular Fiction: *Left Behind* and *The Da Vinci Code*

Christianity and related aspects of spirituality have been the subject of popular fiction as much as they have been the subject of literary fiction. Novels about the "end of days" detailed in the book of Revelation have taken on a life of their own since World War II, especially since the advent of various social liberation movements (for women, gays, and ethnic minorities) in the late 1960s. So-called

“dispensational fiction” by Hal Lindsey (1929–), Larry Burkett (1939–2003), and Frank Peretti (1951–) has also come in response to a general sense of meaninglessness or nihilism that pervaded much of postwar American literature. Life’s meaninglessness and the constant deferral of truth are the central themes of the postmodern novels of Thomas Pynchon (1937–), Don DeLillo (1936–), and John Barth (1930–). Clearly, the most successful writers of dispensational fiction, in terms of both readership and financial profit, are Tim LaHaye (1926–) and Jerry Jenkins (1949–), the authors of the *Left Behind* series. The series began with one novel, *Left Behind*, published in 1995, and then grew to a trilogy with the addition of *Tribulation Force* (1996) and *Nicolae* (1997). The series has since grown into double digits. The novels concern a group of characters whose life choices rendered them unsuitable for the Rapture. The Rapture signals the start of the seven-year Tribulation in which Satan’s minion Antichrist, in the form of the Romanian media mogul, Nicolae Carpathia, attempts to seize control of the world through a reorganized version of the United Nations. Having learned the errors of their ways, the members of the Tribulation Force spend the seven years before Christ’s arrival to thwart Carpathia’s efforts at world domination. By the early years of the twenty-first century, the sales of the series had exceeded \$50 million. The success of these novels has been attributed not only to the demographic increase of middle-class, suburban evangelicals in the United States, but also to the novels’ ability to provide guidance and identity to an evangelical readership that regards itself as simultaneously participants in and victims of modernity. The protagonists who make up the core of the Tribulation Force must use their advanced technological savvy to defeat Carpathia, who himself is a master of modern communications systems. Moreover, unlike previous dispensationalist novelists whose fiction typically offers no hope for those characters who have been left behind after the Rapture, LaHaye and Jenkins suggest that the seven-year period before Christ’s arrival can provide a reprieve to those who have the insight and courage to renounce their previous sinful ways.

But if a postmodern novel such as Pynchon’s *The Crying of Lot 49*, replete with moral relativism and a preoccupation with conspiracy theories, would cause concern among evangelical readers looking for metaphysical certainty, it would find kindred spirits in the novels of Dan Brown (1964–), *Angels and Demons* (2000) and *The Da Vinci Code* (2003). The latter has become one of the best selling novels

of all time, selling 60.5 million copies in its first three years of publication. Unlike the *Left Behind* series, *The Da Vinci Code* cultivates its readers’ suspicion about the reliability of traditional Christian narratives. The novel revolves around two characters, Robert Langdon and Sophie Neveu, who learn that Jesus Christ married Mary Magdalene (challenging the legend that she was a prostitute), and that at the time of Christ’s Crucifixion, the pregnant Mary escaped to a Jewish settlement in Gaul (present-day France) where she gave birth to Christ’s daughter, Sarah. The Holy Grail is therefore not the cup Christ used during the Last Supper to metaphorically share his blood with the disciples, but rather the very body of Mary, which is the receptacle of her husband’s seed and which keeps Christ’s bloodline alive. Sophie, the novel ultimately reveals, is the descendant of that line. Both the novel and its 2006 film adaptation had to be defended against accusations of heresy and anti-Catholicism. The simultaneous success of *The Da Vinci Code* and the novels comprising the *Left Behind* series, as diametrically opposed as they are in their treatment of metaphysical truth and biblical narrative, reveals Christianity’s durability as a fertile ground for the literary imagination.

Jewish American Writing in the Wake of the Holocaust

The Jewish experience in postwar America has been chronicled by a number of famous writers, among them Philip Roth (1933–), Bernard Malamud (1914–1986), Joseph Heller (1923–1999), Isaac Bashevis Singer (1902–1991), Cynthia Ozick (1928–), Irena Klepfisz (1941–), and Wendy Wasserstein (1950–2006). The literary record of the experience, although diverse, frequently returns to a number of themes, including coming to terms with the Holocaust (even if the authors or their characters did not experience it firsthand) and reconciling one’s Jewish identity with one’s American identity.

Philip Roth

Philip Roth in particular takes up these themes in his many works. In *The Anatomy Lesson* (1985), the narrative explains how Mrs. Zuckerman’s brain tumor prevents her from remembering or writing her own name, but it does not prevent her from writing the word “Holocaust,” even though “before that morning she’d never spoken that word aloud.” For postwar Jewish American writers such as Roth (or his fictional alter ego Nathan Zuckerman), one need not be involved in the Holocaust for it to be a part of one’s

consciousness. At other times in Roth's fiction, the Holocaust or the prewar immigration experience can provide a strong point of juxtaposition for American Jews living a life of material comfort. The juxtaposition is made clear in Roth's early novella *Good-bye Columbus* (1959), which depicts Neil Klugman's summer romance with the spoiled, acquisitive Jewish suburbanite Brenda Patimkin. Drawn in by Brenda's beauty and by her family's parvenu wealth, Neil periodically suffers a conflict of conscience, especially after being reminded of the difficult immigration experiences his family members of an earlier generation experienced. For that group, Jewishness is bound up in this diasporic struggle, but for the Patimkins, Jewishness becomes synonymous in Neil's mind with crass, yet seductive, materialism. *The Plot Against America* (2004) sets up a "what-if" scenario in which Charles Lindbergh beats Franklin Roosevelt in the 1940 presidential election and quickly signs a nonaggression pact with Hitler. The novel forces its Jewish characters—one of whom is young Phil Roth, another fictional alter ego of the author—to find and retain those parts of an American identity that do not conflict with their Jewish identity.

Cynthia Ozick

While Roth's characters often show significant ambivalence in holding tight to traditional Jewish culture and spirituality, the characters of novelist and short story writer Cynthia Ozick find a more affirmative and instructive vision for a Jewish American identity. Ozick explains her vision for a Jewish American literary voice in her essay "Toward a New Yiddish," found in the collection *Art and Ardor* (1983). This literature, she declares, should be "centrally Jewish in its concerns," yet not reductive or overtly moralizing. The essay also enjoins like-minded authors to write in New Yiddish—a cross between English and Yiddish—so that they may "pour not merely the Jewish sensibility, but the Jewish vision, into the vision of English." In terms of themes, Ozick's fiction frequently takes up the persistent tension among Hellenism, Christianity, and Hebraism in the life of American Jews. Her first novel, *Trust* (1966), depicts an unnamed female protagonist whose mother's three husbands embody each of these traditions. Hebraism, represented in Enoch Vand, ultimately holds the most rhetorical and moral sway in the novel. Through his research into the Holocaust, Vand is able to achieve a sense of historical imminence with the event and with his fellow Jews that many characters in Roth's fiction fail to achieve. Vand is able to carry out many

of the prescriptions that Ozick later made in "Toward a New Yiddish." Her short story "Envy; or Yiddish in America" (1989) is thematically similar to *Trust*, portraying the poet-protagonist Edelshtein, whose concern over the loss of Yiddish language and literature in American Jewish life prompts him to seek out a translator. The story is not without its ironies, however; Edelshtein may criticize those such as Roth and Saul Bellow for ignoring or rejecting Yiddish, but his search for a suitable translator constantly reminds the reader of his own shortcomings and inconsistencies.

Wendy Wasserstein

Wendy Wasserstein, one of the leading Jewish women's voices in theater, was born to a wealthy Jewish father and a Jewish mother from Poland. Wasserstein is known for humorous dramas that explore the lives of the educated upper-middle class. Unlike many of the characters in Ozick's fiction, however, the Jewish characters in Wasserstein's plays are typically more secular, and they often progress by seeking some form of accommodation with the larger non-Jewish, patriarchal world around them. As is evident in *Isn't It Romantic* (1983) and *The Sisters Rosensweig* (1992), Wasserstein's female characters in particular must find these accommodations even within their own families. Janie Blumberg, the main character of *Isn't It Romantic*, is not only concerned with "having to pay the telephone bill, be[ing] nice to the super, find[ing] meaningful work, fall[ing] in love, [and] get[ting] hurt," but also she feels the old familial pull to be the dutiful daughter. At her mother's prodding, she dates a wealthy Jewish doctor, even though he belittles her. In these dramas, burgeoning Jewish womanhood typically confronts the specter of motherhood, be it in the form of the main characters' own mothers or in the main characters' attempt to become mothers themselves. In many of Wasserstein's plays, the main female characters find their mature identities by reconciling their previous idealism and commitment to progressive politics (much of it sparked by the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s) with the realities of adulthood. Heidi Holland, the protagonist of Wasserstein's Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning play, *The Heidi Chronicles* (1988), laments the lack of female solidarity she had experienced at Mount Holyoke, saying, "I thought the point was that we were all in this together." By the end of the play, Heidi (whose religious background is ambiguous) finds peace by adopting a daughter, which is simultaneously a break with patriarchal patterns and a reaffirmation of motherhood.

Beyond the Judeo-Christian Tradition

The writing of the postwar period contains the deepest exploration of religion outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The tension between Native American and European-American cultures, the conflict over religion and religious rituals, and the role of religious belief are among the themes embodied in the literature of what has been called the Native American Renaissance.

Native American Renaissance

Leslie Marmon Silko (1948–) M. Scott Momaday (1934–), James Welch (1940–2003), and Louise Erdrich (1954–) are among the guiding forces behind the Native American Renaissance. Silko, of European, Mexican, and Native American (Laguna Pueblo) descent, addresses the inevitable confrontations between Native American and Euro-American cultures in her novels. Her earliest and still most famous novel is *Ceremony* (1977), which depicts Tayo's return home to the Laguna reservation from the Philippines, where he survived the Bataan death march during World War II. Tayo's homecoming is less than heroic, however. His constant vomiting and urination show how deeply traumatized he is by the loss of his cousin Rocky on the death march. Moreover, Tayo returns home to his aunt, who raised him but who also resents him for surviving while her own son perished. Moreover, Auntie's conversion to Catholicism provides a continual source of agitation for Tayo as he seeks relief from his emotional and physical traumas. Help first comes in the form of the medicine man Ku'oosh, but it is not complete until Navajo healer Betonie provides a ceremony that allows Tayo to understand the interconnectedness of people—white and native alike. Attesting to the scarring effects of the Second World War, Tayo envisions the nearby Trinity site, where the U.S. government tested the first atomic bomb, and he realizes that the menace of nuclear annihilation must be resisted through the power of stories and religious ritual. By placing the main narrative alongside sections detailing various Laguna myths, the novel gives readers the chance to see Tayo's struggle through a completely non-Anglo, non-Christian perspective. Still, *Ceremony* does not insist on the primacy of any single religious tradition to make Tayo whole. Tayo himself is of mixed blood, as is the healer Betonie. Although the novel looks disapprovingly at Auntie's embarrassment about her life before her conversion to Catholicism, it makes the case that stories and rituals must adapt to the changes and diversity found in human societies.

Like Silko, feminist essayist and poet Gloria Anzaldúa (1942–2004) looked toward the Southwest for a source of spiritual and aesthetic cultivation. Having first coedited the groundbreaking anthology *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (1980) with Cherri Moraga, Anzaldúa then published *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), a text written in both English and Spanish that is simultaneously a personal manifesto, a religious treatise, a regional history, and a book of poetry. The Mexico-United States border is the main geographical focus of the text, but Anzaldúa explains in the preface that “[t]he psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands and the spiritual borderlands are not particular to the Southwest. In fact, the Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory.” The book then addresses the ways in which the line separating the United States from Mexico has been the source of hatred, violence, and spiritual isolation. Rather than understanding identity as a fixed and rigid set of markers, Anzaldúa argues, it should be regarded as fluid and open to outside influences. The thrust of this exploration of physical and emotional borderlands is facilitated by references to the *Coatlicue*, an ancient Aztec goddess who “depicts the contradictory. In her figure, all the symbols important to the religion and philosophy of the Aztecs are integrated. Like Medusa, the Gorgon, she is a symbol of the fusion of opposites: the eagle and the serpent, heaven and the underworld, life and death, mobility and immobility, beauty and horror.” Religions indigenous to the borderlands are also prominently featured in the book's poetry. “La curandera” tells the story in verse of a woman who returns from death and is taught by mystical serpents how to cultivate certain plants to become a healer. In one of the closing poems of the book, “To live in the Borderlands means you,” Anzaldúa explains, “To survive the Borderlands / you must live *sin fronteras* [without borders] / be a crossroads.” Personal identity, as the example of the goddess *Coatlicue* makes plain, is a kinetic mixture of opposing forces.

African American Literature: Beyond Christianity

Two African American women writers, Toni Morrison (1931–) and Alice Walker (1944–), rose to prominence in the early 1970s. Walker's fiction in particular depicts the Judeo-Christian tradition as a point from which her African American characters—especially her female characters—depart in their explorations of myth, history, and self. Unlike Lowell or Updike, Walker does not see spirituality

as a dead force in the world; rather, she sees it in need of recovery or reconceptualization. Such an undertaking, however, will involve a religious vision that expands beyond the white male–authorized versions of Christianity found throughout western history. Her most famous fictional attempt at reconceptualization is in *The Color Purple* (1982). The novel is told through a series of letters, most of them from the main character, Celie, to the Judeo-Christian God. In these letters, Celie confides in God her most intimate secrets—particularly her rape by her stepfather and her developing love for another woman, the blues singer Shug Avery. As her relationship with Shug grows and as she finds a stack of concealed letters from her sister Nettie in Africa, Celie rejects the Judeo-Christian notion of God in favor of a more inclusive, less male-centered deity. At one point Shug admonishes Celie for not recognizing God's presence in a field of beautiful purple flowers; in response Celie adopts a new understanding of divinity that in many ways resembles the pantheistic God found in Ralph Waldo Emerson's transcendentalism. Walker's 1989 *The Temple of My Familiar* furthers these expansive notions of divinity. The story is often told from the perspective of Lissie, an African-based deity who over the ages has manifested itself as both male and female (and at other times even in nonhuman form). A record of Lissie's experiences is recovered by the academic Suwelo and his ex-wife Fanny (Celie's granddaughter). From these records they both learn a new type of inner and interpersonal harmony. Fanny in particular pushes past conventional notions of Christianity, seeing her newfound ability to masturbate as a triumph over the male-centered creeds that insist on self-abnegation and the marginalization of women.

The Beats and Buddhism

Allen Ginsberg (1926–1997) is another writer who moved beyond the Judeo-Christian tradition for personal growth and artistic inspiration. Born to Jewish parents in Newark, New Jersey (also the birthplace of Philip Roth and the setting for many of his novels), Ginsberg incorporated many Jewish themes and motifs in his poetry; but after his conversion to Buddhism in 1971, he then drew on Buddhist philosophy to drive his poetics. Early in his career, Ginsberg became known as a member of the Beats, a group of writers that included William S. Burroughs, Jack Kerouac, and Gregory Corso. Although the work of these individuals is varied and wide-ranging, they frequently address what they view as a conformist, postwar America that has become tired, or “beat.” The name can equally apply to the writers'

experiments with rhythmic poetry and prose (based largely on jazz and bop). The Beat movement was equally concerned about spirituality, for as Kerouac once remarked, “beat” stood for “beatific.”

Such concern with spirituality is found throughout Ginsberg's poetry of the period, most prominently the long poems *Howl* (1956) and *Kaddish* (1961). In *Howl* the poet appears as a latter-day Jeremiah, decrying the spiritual and imaginative degeneration he sees around him and foreseeing his country's further capitulation to a mechanistic, soulless mindset. Typical of prophetic poetry, sight is a major vehicle for the poem's development. *Howl* begins: “I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked, / dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix, / angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the machinery of night” (1–4). These references to men groping for, but ultimately losing their hold on, a spiritual vision carries through to the poem's later section, which is addressed to Moloch, an ancient Phoenician deity to whom, appropriately enough, the young were sacrificed. In *Howl*, however, Moloch has its modern analogue in industrialized civilization. The Jewish tradition is even more evident in Ginsberg's later long poem *Kaddish*, an elegy resembling a traditional Jewish *Kaddish* (or prayer of mourning) written for his mother. The poem begins, “Strange now to think of you,” and continues as if the poem provides a means by which Ginsberg can reacquaint himself with his dead mother, whose institutionalization and lobotomy he authorized. In the final section of the poem, the poet envisions his mother's gravesite, where “crows shriek in the white sun.” The poem ends on a brooding note with the recitation, “Lord, Lord, Lord,” which struggles to lift above the shrieks of the crows.

After becoming the pupil of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, a renowned Tibetan Buddhist, in 1971, Ginsberg made the conversion to Vajrayana-style Buddhism. Jokingly referring to himself from then on as “the Buddhist Jew,” he incorporated Buddhist themes and philosophies into his poetry. The poem “Plutonian Ode” (1978) is an example. In it, the poet addresses the looming specter of mass human annihilation and proposes Buddhist principles of introspection and meditation as the means of thwarting such a threat: “Take this wheel of syllables in hand, these vowels and consonants to breath's end / take this inhalation of black poison to your heart, breathe out this blessing from your breast on our creation” (60–61). Ginsberg's devotion to Buddhism also changed his view of the world. He felt that he no longer had

“a negative fix on the ‘fall of America,’ ” as is evident in a poem such as *Howl*. Rather, the “fatal karmic flaws” he saw in the country he also saw in himself; such an epiphany had prompted him to find “some basis for reconstruction of a humanly useful society, based mainly on a less attached, less apocalyptic view.”

Nation of Islam

Islam has one of its most famous and most vocal postwar representatives in the controversial poet Amiri Baraka (b. 1934 as Everett LeRoi Jones). Baraka’s literary career has been marked by a number of philosophical, political, and religious upheavals. After graduating from Howard University and serving in the military in the mid-1950s, Jones moved to New York, where he fell under the influence of the Beat movement. By the 1960s he had committed to black nationalism, and as a part of this commitment, he converted to Islam, rejected his birth name (considering it to be his “slave name”), and was reborn spiritually and politically as Amiri Baraka (meaning “Blessed Prince”). Although Baraka had committed to Marxist socialism by 1974, his poetry from the late 1960s and early 1970s reveals the extent to which his black nationalism was infused with his Islamic faith. In “A Poem for Black Hearts” (1969), Baraka eulogizes the slain black Muslim leader Malcolm X, lamenting, “For Great Malcolm a prince of the earth, let nothing in us rest / until we avenge ourselves for his death, stupid animals / that killed him, let us never breathe a pure breath if / we fail, and white men call us faggots till the end of / the earth” (23–27). For Baraka, Malcolm X’s philosophy of militant separatism was the right course of action for blacks looking to distinguish themselves politically from both whites and from a complacent black bourgeoisie. In other poems, such as “It’s Nation Time” (1970), Baraka invokes Allah as the source of not only his poetic inspiration, but also as the source of the nascent black nation on American soil. Using the same inflammatory style found in “A Poem for Black Hearts,” Baraka exhorts: “niggers come out, brothers are we / with you and your sons your daughters are ours / and we are the same, all the blackness from one black allah / when the word is clear you’ll be with us / come out niggers come out” (75–79). Yet as the poem “When We’ll Worship Jesus” (1975) suggests, Baraka’s turn toward socialism left him questioning Islam and black cultural nationalism. At first explaining, “We’ll worship Jesus / when jesus do / Some-thin” (1–3), he then warns, “[Jesus] and his boy allah / too, need to be checked / out!” (48–50). Neither Christianity’s directive to “turn the other cheek” nor an Islamic jihad

based on black solidarity can get at the root of race antagonisms, because at the base of such antagonisms, as scientific Marxism contends, lies the looming specter of economic exploitation.

Conclusion

As the literature of the post–World War II period shows, neither the existentialism sparked by the threat of nuclear annihilation nor social and political upheaval signaled the end of the Judeo-Christian tradition. At the same time, this tradition changed to meet an evolving nation—a nation whose literature found a more diverse spectrum of religious representation than it had ever before witnessed.

See also *Buddhism in North America; Fundamentalism: Contemporary; Frontier and Borderlands; Judaism: Jewish Culture; Literature: African American; Nation(s) of Islam; Native American Religion: Post-Contact; Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Women: African American.*

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Literature: Early Republic and the “American Renaissance”

The development of American religion and the emergence of an American literary tradition are often viewed as two distinct features of the American landscape. And yet American religion and American literature were interdependent, often mutually enforcing, phenomena in the early days of the United States. The two had much to say to each other and may be enriched when considered together. Religion depends on narrative and poetic form for its expression as much as literature has its origins in religious belief, crisis, and dissent.

Colonial Origins of a National Literature

In the colonial and early national period, conventional clergymen attacked the novel and fiction as deleterious to religious meaning. From their perspective, storytelling violated the truth value of religious doctrine. Puritan theology eschewed embellishment in the interest of preserving doctrinal purity. Prominent Puritan leaders such as Cotton Mather and George Whitefield declared in the mid-eighteenth century that the secularizing forces of plays, romances, and imaginative writing would preclude entrance into heaven. Even after the American Revolution in the last part of the century, this view remained largely unchanged among Calvinist ministers. Timothy Dwight, for example, asserted that there was an impassable gulf between the Bible and novels or poetry.

Poetry

Discrimination against narrative form was particularly acute when the author or subject matter challenged the social order. The African American poet Phyllis Wheatley came under unusually virulent attack for her religious verse. Wheatley was the author of such poems as “On the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield” (1770) and “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773). In the first, Wheatley contemplates the spiritual power of a religious leader, and in the second she explores the possibilities and perils of religious conversion. Although Wheatley declares that “’Twas mercy brought me from my *Pagan* land” and “taught my benighted soul to understand/ That there’s a God, that there’s a *Saviour* too,” she cautions American religious leaders who “view our sable race with scornful eye” that “*Christians, Negroes, black as Cain, / May be refin’d, and join th’ angelic train*” (*The Oxford Anthology of*

American Literature, p. 529). Challenging the racism of Christian leaders even as she endorses the superiority of Christian belief, Wheatley both upholds and abhors religious piety. Such poetry outraged not only religious but political leaders. Thomas Jefferson asserts in *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787) that “religion may have produced a Phyllis Wheatley; but it could not produce a poet.”

More than a hundred years earlier Anne Bradstreet had encountered similar vitriol from religious leaders for poems like “The Flesh and the Spirit,” “To My Dear and Loving Husband,” and “Upon the Burning of Our House, July 10th, 1666.” Bradstreet, the first English-speaking North American poet, found herself critiqued for transgressing gender roles as well as religious precepts. Her later poetry addressed the spiritual struggles of a Christian confronting doubt and skepticism, and therefore challenged rather than enforced religious determinism, but religious leaders were outraged at her earlier writing because it challenged a spiritual order in which godly love preceded and overpowered earthly or carnal love. Bradstreet’s self-avowed struggle between the flesh and the spirit as well as her intense love for her husband, family, and home upset a hierarchical order in which God ruled supreme over human bonds and an individual’s most important relationship was with the divine rather than with a mortal being.

Captivity Narratives

Captivity narratives, which offered writers an opportunity to describe life on the frontier as a religious trial, became popular reading for early American Christians. *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1676) was by far the most popular of this genre. In this firsthand account of an Indian attack on the frontier village of Lancaster, Massachusetts, Mary Rowlandson describes the Indians as instruments of Satan who have come to test her faith. Using scripture passages, she likens her removal to an Indian community and her subsequent enforced relocations to biblical stories of migration and captivity. She describes her ordeal as a faith journey in which her initial understanding of herself as a pious believer is transformed and challenged before being reaffirmed. Because captivity narratives like Rowlandson’s showed the triumph of the godly over harsh wilderness and pagan evil, they were more acceptable fare than purely imaginative writing.

And yet we see imaginative elements clearly at work in Rowlandson’s seemingly literal transposition of biblical narrative onto captivity story. The narrative is organized not by

chapters but by “removes.” The trajectory of events goes from attack to the first remove all the way to the twentieth remove. During her enforced flight through the wilderness, Rowlandson experiences the loss of a child, enslavement, extreme hunger, pain, and despair. These extremities are not alleviated easily once she escapes and is returned to home, family, and church community. Looking back on her trial, she admires the wonderful power of God to allow her to see the vanity of worldly concern and material comfort. She insists that we must rely solely on God and our whole dependence must be on him.

In this way, Rowlandson’s narrative works, unlike Bradstreet’s, to reinforce the unquestioned and unquestioning primacy of the individual’s relation to God. Furthermore, unlike Wheatley’s writing, Rowlandson’s narrative seems to assume that God’s disciples on earth are above critique—transparent and disinterested purveyors of his divine will. And yet her narrative ends not only with an affirmation of Christian principles but with the acknowledgement that the captivity has also produced an uneasy wakefulness and distrust of her surroundings that belie her assertions that she puts all her faith in God’s goodness. God’s power is great in that he carries her through many trials and returns her to safety in order to teach her a faith lesson, but this knowledge does not give her absolute peace and faith. It also breeds a nocturnal watchfulness: Rowlandson says that she remembers a time when she slept peacefully, but after her restoration she remains awake when all are asleep, dwelling upon things past.

Puritan Sermons

Despite the fact that Puritan theology often dismissed literary expression as biblically inauthentic and therefore secularizing, some of the most famous Puritan sermons explicitly rely upon literary devices like metaphor, simile, metonymy, and imagery to powerfully move their listeners. John Winthrop’s “A Model of Christian Charity” (1630), for example, challenges Puritan voyagers to understand themselves to be undertaking a world-changing experiment in religious freedom and to imagine this new society they were preparing to build as “a city upon a hill” that would draw the eyes of all people throughout the world. On the one hand, Winthrop depends upon the extensive use of imagery and simile to help his listeners visualize their future to be like a new city, the likes of which the world has never before seen. But he also invokes literary expression to warn them of the high risk of their undertaking, when he declares that should they fail in their endeavor they will be made a “story and a by-word

through the world.” This story will have great power to unleash the mouths of enemies who will spread stories that will shame God’s servants and draw curses rather than prayers for the Puritan project. Winthrop’s sermon became a template that would guide the first generation of Puritan settlers in the making of a civic society based upon principles of human affiliation and collaboration. He delivered his sermon while aboard the *Arbella*, en route from England to the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and listeners included Anne Bradstreet, who, as we have seen, turned to literary expression as spiritual outlet and alternative. Winthrop’s sermon continues to be read as a founding piece of American literature as well as a founding document of American religion, and is consistently featured in anthologies of American literature.

During the colonial period, subsequent ministers did sometimes strategically rely on literary devices to challenge the spiritual comfort of their parishioners—often to great effect. The most powerful example of this technique can be found in Jonathan Edwards’s “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (1741). In this classic “fire and brimstone” sermon, Edwards effected religious conversion or “awakening” in congregants by describing the precariousness of human life and redemption through extended simile and the rich use of metaphor. Edwards paints a terrifying picture story in which an angry God holds sinners over a pit of hell, burning with glowing flames that represent the wrath of God. Confronted with hell’s wide gaping mouth, the sinner has no defense against this final moment of reckoning—nothing except the power and unearned mercy of a justly angry divine presence. The sinner is held by God “like a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire,” dangling precariously and subject to the vicissitudes of an all-powerful and wrathful divine will. Human will is no more than a spider’s web trying to stop a falling rock the weight of which reflects the magnitude of human evil. Edwards’s sermon, like Winthrop’s, was powerful. Both ministers painted different visions of divine providence, but they transformed Americans’ spiritual realities with their dramatic and highly effective imagery.

Religion and Literature in the Nineteenth-Century

These diverse literary engagements with religiosity—whether in the form of poetry, fiction, nonfiction prose, or even the sermon, as we have observed—suggest a growing need of Americans to think seriously about the place of religious practice in their lives. Between 1785 and 1850 a growing number of ministers and congregations became dissatisfied with traditional theology and what they found to

be impenetrable, esoteric theological debate. Many ministers, in this time of liberalization and secularization, turned to narrative and the novel to overcome religious opponents and to advance a simple code of morality and pious feeling. Indeed the rise of religious tolerance throughout the nineteenth century was accompanied by the tendency to communicate religious lessons with narrative and stories rather than with sermonizing. Edwards’s and Winthrop’s impulse to turn to literary tools to awaken the interest and engage the moral conscience of congregants, in other words, became more developed and widespread as theological debate became increasingly dry and disconnected from the moral conundrums that Americans faced in daily life. By late in the nineteenth century this trend had become so marked that Mark Twain would assert, in 1871 (in *The Galaxy*), that the Jesus story was disseminated to the American public through “the despised novel . . . and NOT from the drowsy pulpit!” Although literary expression was anathema to most seventeenth-century and much of eighteenth-century theology, literature in the nineteenth century was religion’s most powerful vehicle.

Why did American congregations turn away from the pulpit and to the novel for spiritual and religious guidance? And more particularly why and how did Americans come to see the novel as diverting and the pulpit as “drowsy”? First, many churchgoers found that conventional religious literature and sermons focused on orthodox dogma to the exclusion of all else. Ministers’ entrenched resistance to casting moral lesson in the garb of lived experience caused resistance and incomprehension among congregations. As one church member, Caroline Thayer, put it, “the light, unthinking mind, that would revolt at a moral lesson from the pulpit will seize, with avidity, the instruction offered under the similitude ‘of a story’” (in *The Gamesters; or, Ruins of Innocence*, p. iv-v). In order to meet their parishioners’ increasing need to understand theological truth in relevant, everyday experience, popular ministers such as William Ware, E. P. Roe, and Charles Sheldon became popular novelists, promulgating their religious messages. Ministers less successful at sermonizing likewise experimented with novel writing to try to generate interest in their religious views.

Domestic Literature and Women Writers

Ministers were not the only or even the primary literary agents of religiosity in the antebellum United States. Popular author Catherine Sedgwick, declaring herself frustrated by “the splitting of . . . theological hairs” and “utterly useless

polemical preaching,” turned to the novel to explore important religious and spiritual themes (in *Life and Letters of Catherine Maria Sedgwick*, p. 59). Not only did Sedgwick become an avid novel reader, but she wrote numerous fictions that carried important religious messages to readers. She began *A New England Tale* (1822) during a period of intense spiritual indecision. She disliked Calvinism’s rigidity but was disappointed in Unitarianism, which she found cold and overly rational. Begun as a Unitarian tract, *A New England Tale* quickly became a novel about the follies of orthodoxy and the power of celestial imagery. Jane Elton, the novel’s heroine, is an angel of goodness who confronts and conquers those characters who uphold the evils of Calvinist dogma. The novel does not include lengthy disquisitions on religious doctrine but rather encourages readers to identify and sympathize with Jane because of her goodness.

Like *A New England Tale*, Sedgwick’s most popular novel, *Hope Leslie* (1827), features female protagonists who take on angelic qualities in order to redeem their communities. Hope Leslie and Magawisca, the Native American protagonist, save a Puritan community that is compromised from within and from without. By setting her novel in Puritan times, Sedgwick put her critique of contemporary religious practice at a historical remove from readers, but the message of the novel had great currency for its antebellum readers: Spiritual redemption and religious faith are achieved by recognizing the potential divinity (rather than dwelling on the essential sinfulness) of each human being, no matter how different. Magawisca is a spiritual exemplar whose self-sacrifice inspires Hope, but Hope, as her name suggests, personifies a virtue from which her stern Puritan town leaders eventually learn. Not only does Hope teach the Puritan community spiritual principles of liberality, free thinking, and inclusiveness, but she has the power to root out the social threat of Roman Catholicism. At one point mistaken for the Virgin Mary by a Catholic laborer, Hope successfully uncovers a plot intended to establish Catholicism as the one true religion in the infant colonies. The novel’s message is clear: Spiritual vitality and democracy are jeopardized by dogma.

Harriet Beecher Stowe and Catharine Beecher’s immensely popular domestic handbook *The American Woman’s Home* (1872) would develop this theme of religious patriotism by equating the principles of Christianity with the principles of democracy. Enjoying the same kind of popularity that Martha Stewart does today, Beecher and Stowe imagined the middle-class bourgeois home as a

blueprint for a civilized world, and at the center of this home were religious principles, albeit ones that tacitly worked against as much as in concert with Puritan models of Christianity. The middle-class world of the antebellum era normalized not only a class identity but a religious identity, thereby ensuring that a particular strand of Protestant Christianity became a symbol of middle-class values. Indeed, white Protestants within the emerging middle class attempted to convert the entire nation and eventually the entire world to the truths of Protestant Christianity, and they used narrative and the novel to achieve their ends. *The American Woman's Home* was literally a guide to help American housewives create a successful home through teaching domestic and religious principles.

But it is in Harriet Beecher Stowe's earlier writings that she makes her most profound contributions to American literature and religion. When asked about the authorship of her internationally famous *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), Stowe replied that she did not write it—God wrote it. In the book that, as Abraham Lincoln declared, started the Civil War, Stowe features religious feeling as the cornerstone of her antislavery argument. “Feeling right” is more important than legal arguments that uphold slavery. Fictionalized religious leaders who condone slavery are lambasted in Stowe's novel, as they are in slave narratives by such writers as Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass. But most important, the promise of spiritual salvation and redemption guide characters and readers alike toward the promised land of freedom. Uncle Tom is a Christ figure who agrees to sacrifice himself for the greater good of his family, the other slaves, and the Shelby family who own him. His gradual descent into the hell of slavery culminates in his final, and fatal, confrontation with his third and most demonic slave owner, Simon Legree. Legree tries to force Uncle Tom to take up the whip against the other slaves. When Tom refuses, he is beaten to death. But it is not only Tom's refusal to comply with his owner's demands that incites Legree. As Stowe writes, Legree “understood full well that it was GOD who was standing between him and his victim and he blasphemed him” (in *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, Life among the Lowly*, p. 558).” Legree's violence toward Tom is violence toward God, and Tom's spiritual reliance on Jesus sustains him as he too becomes a martyr.

Many Americans described the reading of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a spiritual awakening—an awakening that transformed them from being passive bystanders in the anti- and proslavery debates to becoming active participants in the

abolitionist movement and finally into taking their stands as courageous soldiers on the battlefield. Many Union soldiers carried copies of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in uniform pockets over their hearts because they believed that it had talismanic power to protect them during battle.

Conversely, popular southern proslavery novels such as Caroline Lee Hentz's *The Planter's Northern Bride* (1854) and Augusta J. Evans's *Beulah* (1859) served the same spiritual purpose for Confederate soldiers. In such novels bourgeois northern women with preconceived notions about the evils of slavery move to the South only to learn that benign slave owners protect and guide their slaves in spiritual principles. Converting the heathen to the one true faith, slave owners function as de facto missionaries and ministers for their easily misguided charges. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* recognizes southern slave owners' capacity to model Christian principles to the needs of slaves and acknowledges the limitations of northern Calvinism in the project of assimilating African slaves into Protestant Christianity. Miss Ophelia, for example, is a northern spinster whose Calvinist worldview is insufficient to instruct the unruly child slave Topsy in Christian values. It takes the example of the truly spiritual, angelic child little Eva to exert moral suasion successfully such that Topsy wants to be good—to be just like Eva. When Eva's goodness and angelic nature confront the evils of slavery they “sink into her soul” and prove to be too much for her, causing her to languish and finally to die. Eva's death crystallizes Topsy's desire for moral goodness and leads Miss Ophelia to recognize that her religious principles have not enabled her to overcome her unchristian prejudice against slaves. Unruly black slave and rigid Calvinist spinster form a Christian bond, recognizing the power of love to overcome prejudice.

In her lesser-known novels, Stowe returns to these themes of the Christianizing influence of middle-class true womanhood. *The Minister's Wooing* (1859), for example, features a young girl through whom Stowe attempts to work through the torments of New England Calvinism. Mary functions as a Protestant Madonna in the novel, bringing James, a middle-aged minister as well as Mary's true love, a renewed spirituality and religious passion. This bundling of amorous passion and religious passion is a pervasive feature of much woman-authored sentimental fiction in the antebellum era. Maria Cummins's novel *The Lamplighter* (1854) was second in sales only to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* during the 1850s, and its popularity was due in large part to the story of religious awakening at its center. Gerty Flint, the young, indigent heroine of the story, is a street urchin, abandoned

by her parents and evicted by a wicked caretaker when she tries to nurture a stray cat. She is informally adopted by a local lamplighter, Trueman Flint, whose childlike religious faith, once coupled with the benevolent religious ministrations of a local gentlewoman, gradually transform the unruly and violent child. When the lamplighter brings her a Samuel—a figurine of a child praying—Gerty begins to learn in earnest about God, prayer, and the redemptive power of love. Much like Uncle Tom, Trueman Flint has a seemingly infinite capacity for love of others, which is required to transform the young delinquent into an icon of true womanhood. Gerty must go through many tests of her faith, but she learns the lesson of Christianity and is rewarded by novel’s end. Not only does her father reappear, but she marries her one true love, has her fortune restored, and finds herself surrounded by loved ones as she creates a happy home of her own.

A variety of novels during the antebellum era would treat this theme of religious education through domestication. Indeed, the ties that bound middle-class domesticity with religious integrity were so profound that many began to criticize the ministry for becoming feminized. Once theologically rigorous and male dominated, American Protestantism was in danger, according to some social critics, of becoming overrun by women religious zealots who used novel writing as a kind of pulpit from which to preach.

The American Renaissance: Hawthorne and the Transcendentalists

It was to this group of women writers that Nathaniel Hawthorne was referring when he railed against the “damned mob of scribbling women” overrunning the U.S. literary scene. This now notorious comment has been interpreted by scholars as a sign of Hawthorne’s discomfort with literary competition from the ladies, but it also reflects his more particular discomfort with the competing religious visions distinguishing his less popular dark romances from best-selling woman-authored domestic fiction.

Nathaniel Hawthorne’s Fiction

In his writing, Hawthorne returns to the Puritan religious culture of his forebears rather than to the antebellum visions of benevolent, infinitely redemptive and theologically indeterminate domesticity with which his female contemporaries were concerned. In his novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), as well as in short stories such as “The Minister’s Black Veil” (1836) and “Young Goodman Brown” (1835), Hawthorne

explores the Puritan origins of nineteenth-century American life, and he considers the influence of this legacy on his contemporaries who are facing unprecedented challenges to national unity. The scarlet *A* for which Hawthorne’s novel is named is a symbol of the adulterous affair in which the novel’s heroine, Hester Prynne, is involved. Although the Puritan community does not learn what is going on until late in the story, readers soon discover that the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, the most prominent religious leader of the community, is the father of Hester’s illegitimate child. Dimmesdale is complicit not only in the affair but in the punishment meted out to Hester by religious leaders once the affair becomes apparent, in the person of Hester’s daughter, Pearl. The scarlet *A* that Hester must wear as punishment brands her as an adulterer, but it also symbolizes the hypocrisy and weak-mindedness of religious precepts that target one sinner but leave another at large.

What happens when the unpunished sinner continues to be responsible for the spiritual well-being of a community? This is one of the questions that *The Scarlet Letter* asks. Scholars have long acknowledged Hawthorne’s interest in Puritan religiosity and the damage that hypocritical and self-interested holiness does to innocent victims. Hawthorne’s own family history was traceable to Puritan settlers, and his critique of the Puritan practices upon which the United States was built reflects a sense of personal gain at the cost of human pain and suffering. In *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), Hawthorne explores how religious leaders’ acquisition of a homestead through unfair manipulation of religious law continues to poison the happiness and opportunity of future generations of a family who must live in the shadow of this destructive religious legacy. In *The Scarlet Letter* Dimmesdale internalizes his culpability—too weak to wear a scarlet *A* on his ministerial vest, he literally stitches one on his breast. Branded on his skin, the scarlet *A* is the cross that Dimmesdale carries undetected through his daily religious duties. Is his own self-inflicted punishment greater or lesser than Hester’s? Is it fair or right to punish two individuals for loving one another? Is it ethical to scapegoat one individual—demanding that she carry the burden of another’s sin? These are the questions that *The Scarlet Letter* asks its readers to consider.

Because it is set in Puritan times, Hawthorne’s novel at first glance can appear to be unconcerned with the questions Americans were wrestling with at midcentury. Is it right to enslave one race of people and justify the institution of slavery as a necessary part of liberal democratic ideals? How can a

nation based on the concepts of liberty and freedom for all strip these rights from certain sectors of the national community? How can a religion be used to justify enslavement? These were the questions Americans were asking with increasing frequency as Hawthorne was writing. But these are also questions that Hawthorne explores through critique of the Puritan mores upon which the nation was founded. According to some readers the scarlet *A* may stand not only for “adultery” but also for “abolition.” Nineteenth-century abolitionists’ challenge to an established order that refuses freedom to some community members is not unlike the Puritans’ challenge to a national order that refused them freedom of worship. And the corruptness and weak-mindedness of Puritan leaders such as Dimmesdale is similar, Hawthorne seems to be saying, to American leaders’ hesitancy to speak out against the social injustice of slavery. In such an interpretation of Hawthorne’s writing, the religious history of the United States is integral to envisioning the future of the country. The nation’s Puritan roots are not irrelevant to contemporary political debate—far from it. The corrupt legacy of some religious practice is what the nation must contend with, and the fight to free slaves becomes nothing less than a fight to save the religious integrity of the country.

The Transcendentalists

Novels thus became a rich medium for commentary, critique, and contestation of religious precept. American transcendentalist writers, as with their novel-writing peers, found much to criticize in religious tradition. Originally a protest against the doctrine of the Unitarian Church as it was taught at Harvard Divinity School, the American transcendentalism espoused by such writers as Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Sophia Peabody, and Margaret Fuller argued that an ideal spiritual state transcended physical, doctrinal, and empirical precepts and was achieved through individuals’ intuition rather than their conformity to the laws of religious institutions. Writing primarily in nonfiction prose, American transcendentalists sought to reclaim the authenticity and honesty of human interaction and spiritual being that they perceived to have been compromised by religious and intellectual institutions.

Views of Islam and Roman Catholicism

In Hawthorne’s writing we begin to see how American literature not only engages but also dissents from American religious practice. Herman Melville’s literary career is a case in point.

Melville’s Literary and Religious Explorations

When we think of Melville’s mariner stories we may not think of religious commentary, and yet Melville’s interest in religious practice and social welfare spanned his entire literary career. From the time he was a teenager in 1839 through the later poetry preceding his death in 1891, Melville engaged with—and sought alternatives to—the Protestant culture of the mid-nineteenth-century United States. In particular, as Timothy Marr has illustrated, Melville utilized Islamicist rhetoric as a literary resource. In so doing, Melville was taking part not only in his own thought experiment in religious practice but in a larger, sustained exploration among American literary figures of Islamicism. While Hawthorne, as Luther Luedtke has shown, embedded Orientalist notions in his fiction, Melville developed a more transgressive literary vision of Islamicist practice. The famous opening line of *Moby-Dick* (1851), “Call me Ishmael,” announces Melville’s interest in the figure more widely known in the nineteenth century as the Abrahamic ancestor of the Arabs, but it is in his late long poem *Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage to the Holy Land* (1876) that we see the most developed Muslims in American literature. Through fictional figures that represented his poetic Islamicism, Melville expressed his continued search for contentment and spiritual fulfillment in what he found to be an increasingly materialistic American culture. Melville visited Palestine in 1856, and over the following twenty years used literature as a way of exploring questions of faith, doubt, and God. Yet it is in his twenty-thousand-line poem that we get his most complex theological commentary. The poem is nothing less than a quest for religious clarity and a poetic wish to believe. It asks why humans suffer and die, why God remains hidden and silent, and why spiritual comfort and certainty are so difficult to achieve.

Other American Writers and Islam

Why might Melville turn to Islam to ask these religious questions in his poetry and prose? Not only did Islam offer Melville an alternative spiritual model in an increasingly secular American culture, but it had long offered American writers a means of commenting on and critiquing American religion. Islam is the only religion other than Judaism and Christianity commonly invoked by American writers, in large part because its precepts are not dissimilar to the three major strands of American liberalism—Arianism, Unitarianism, and Arminianism. American writers used an Orientalized motif for representing religious ideas that challenged the tenets of New England orthodoxy—the reward of

virtue; perfectibility; toleration; and the universal benevolence of God. These ideas were still unpopular with late-eighteenth-century Calvinist thinkers, and so fiction with invented Middle Eastern settings allowed American liberals to challenge Calvinist precepts while avoiding strict theological debate. Popular novels such as Royall Tyler’s *The Algerine Captive* (1797) featured American sailors who are taken prisoner by Turks or Algerians and so have the opportunity to report on unfamiliar religious practices. Conversely, novels like Peter Markoe’s *The Algerine Spy in Pennsylvania* (1787) and Samuel L. Knapp’s *Ali Bey* (1818) feature visitors to America who write home about doctrinal controversies in ways that implicitly weigh in on religious piety and make pleas for religious toleration.

Anti-Catholic Writing

While Islam continued to offer writers rich opportunities to rethink prevailing tenets of American Protestantism, Roman Catholicism offered them equally important opportunities to advocate for Protestant Christianity as the one national religion. Anti-Catholic writing abounded throughout the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The villain of Sedgwick’s *Hope Leslie*, for example, is an Italian Catholic who infiltrates an American Protestant community with the secret goal of setting up a Vatican in the New World. In his popular tract *A Plea for the West* (1835), prominent Presbyterian minister Lyman Beecher spread anti-Catholic sentiment by suggesting that the pope planned to take over the American West as an outpost of a Catholic empire. Anti-Catholicism or nativism flourished in the 1830s and 1840s because devastating potato famines in Ireland brought unprecedented numbers of Irish Catholics to the United States and because the United States acquired vast territories from Mexico (through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848) that transformed a large number of Mexican (predominantly Catholic citizens) into U.S. citizens. Anonymously written sensational accounts of convent life fueled anti-Catholic sentiments. Maria Monk’s *Aufful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu* (1836) created such a public outcry that the convent in question was searched by civic leaders to determine whether the “firsthand” accounts of rape, infanticide, and torture were truthful. Southern and border fiction such as Augusta J. Evans’s *Inez: A Tale of the Alamo* (1855) likewise represented priests as propagating sinister plots to seduce young girls and the nation away from Protestant ideals. Catholic characters represented pervasive threats to religious integrity throughout much American literature.

If Islam offered authors alternatives and opportunities to challenge Protestant hegemony, Catholicism became a rich tool for upholding and encouraging it. With novels such as Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Marble Faun* (1860), literary commentary on Catholicism moved beyond the geographic borders of the United States to Italy, where the Vatican and Italian Catholicism become rich subjects of literary contemplation of the American nation’s religious traditions and exclusions. Hawthorne’s interest in Italian Catholicism reflects many nineteenth-century American writers’ association of Catholicism with the splendid corruption of an Old World Spanish and Italian past. Henry Longfellow’s *Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie* (1847), for example, was one of the most widely read narrative poems in the nineteenth-century United States. It sold tens of thousands of copies, was translated into many languages, and subsequently generated spin-offs and even movies. As scholars have observed, part of its popularity results from its rewriting of Catholicism as Protestant romance.

Native American and African American Traditions

As we have seen, American evangelicalism and its democratizing, charismatic, and separatist energies were not simply important touchstones for much American literature; rather there was a mutually interdependent dynamism at work between American literary and religious pursuits that made the two integrally connected and, arguably, inseparable. African American and Native American communities, like their Anglo-American counterparts, developed effective literary strategies for engaging, contesting, and channeling American evangelical zeal. As early as 1774 Native Americans such as Samson Occom, a member of the Mohegan nation, wrote hymn texts (published as *A Choice Collection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs*) that strategically adapted Christian theologies to separatist movements. Occom was a friend of Phyllis Wheatley, and he and Joseph Johnson, a Native American colleague, developed literary strategies not unlike Wheatley’s to stimulate an intertribal Christian community in Brotherton, New York. Occom and Johnson were the only Native Americans who wrote and published their literary works in the eighteenth century, and these literary works simultaneously engaged existing religious communities and were a key to the development of alternatives to American evangelicalism.

In 1790 African American evangelist and author John Marrant published his *Journal*, in which he described his three-year mission to the people of Birchtown, Nova Scotia, the largest all-black settlement in North America. In his *Journal* Marrant described a covenant theology that reflected

and was practiced by this particular community. When we think about African American writing in the pre-Civil War period, we tend to think about the famous slave narratives of writers such as Harriet Jacobs, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Hannah Crafts. Key to these narratives is a critique of ministers who use scripture to uphold the institution of slave owning and of religious communities that condone human injustice. In Douglass's narrative, slave songs as well as religious practices and beliefs deriving from voodoo become powerful gateways to slave resistance. However, writers such as Marrant, Absalom Jones, and Richard Allen used literature to describe new religious communities to others even as they used their firsthand involvement with these communities as the occasion to credential themselves as writers. Jones and Allen, who founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church, wrote *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People, During the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia* (1794) to tell the story of their community's involvement in a yellow fever epidemic and their endurance as a spiritual community in the face of disaster.

Conclusion

The interconnections between religious practice and literary expression intensified as the Civil War neared. Not only did the question of slavery generate writing that turned to religious precept for guidance, but religious figures increasingly relied on literary form, popular narrative techniques, and poetic techniques to affirm their congregants' pro- or anti-slavery leanings. Abraham Lincoln, in 1858, while running for the U.S. Senate, paraphrased Jesus when he asserted that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," and this metaphor held true for the house of God as well as for the nation's domestic policy. The Civil War (1861–1865) produced a crisis of faith as well as a crisis of literary expression among Americans, and the interconnections between faith and writing would dramatically change form in the postbellum period. However, the bonds between literary and religious imagination were forged during the period of the early Republic and the first half of the nineteenth century, when both literary form and religious life were instrumental in developing a new nation—a nation that emerged from Puritan ideals and that imagined separation between church and state. American literature was key to this development, connecting people to their preachers, challenging spiritual smugness, and conceptualizing ethical responsibility in a changing national landscape. Religious and literary innovators formed a loose but lasting collaboration that continues to shape how Americans read, listen, and pray.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Cult of Domesticity; Great Awakening(s); Literature: Colonial; Puritans; Roman Catholicism: Catholics in the New Nation and the Early Republic; Transcendentalism; Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts from the Revolution to the Civil War.*

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Literature: From the Civil War to World War I

American religious life underwent a dramatic change in the mid-nineteenth century as the nation fought a bitter civil war. Religious beliefs had helped to generate social justification for the conflict. The idea that slavery was

morally wrong gained widespread support through churches, and Union soldiers often described their reasons for fighting as stemming from religious conviction and a strong sense of right and wrong. As the war persisted, however, the horrific carnage and its toll on the people challenged religious institutions, faith networks, and spiritual communities in unprecedented ways. The sheer number of dead and severely wounded fractured communities. If religious conviction had helped to spur support for the war, religious conviction was sorely challenged by the war's effect on individuals, families, and local communities, as well as on the national family. American writers grappled with the spiritual challenges posed by the war in various ways.

Civil War Responses

American writing not only faced its most difficult subject yet, but also confronted an audience who brought new needs to the reading of literature. The writing career of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps (1844–1911) illustrates the postbellum literary milieu particularly well. Born in 1844, Phelps, whose father was a pastor and then a faculty member in a theological seminary, grew up in a Calvinist religious tradition. From childhood, she was surrounded by sickness and loss—her mother died when Phelps was young, and her father suffered a breakdown—but it was the war that tested Phelps's faith and her writing most severely. Although she had written children's stories before the war, she attained fame with her postwar literary efforts. In *The Gates Ajar* (1868) she undertook to imagine life after death for readers suffering intense grief, loss, and spiritual crisis. The title refers to the gates of heaven, and the book explores daily life after death inside the pearly gates. Like her readers, Phelps wanted to imagine an afterlife that was not disconnected from earthly concern, but rather a natural extension of it. Instead of a heaven on earth, *The Gates Ajar* provides readers with an earthly heaven. Selling more than 100,000 copies in the United States and England, this novel was translated into French, Italian, and German. The only nineteenth-century novel to outsell *The Gates Ajar* was *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

As Mary Louise Kete has argued, the three novels that Phelps wrote in the Gates series—the other two are *Beyond the Gates* (1883) and *The Gates Between* (1887)—helped readers contend with personal loss by joining a community of grieving readers. Realizing that they were not completely abandoned by departed loved ones and that others were suffering similar feelings of bereavement, readers of Phelps's Gates series took part in a collective mourning process.

Novels were crucial to this healing community; rather than isolating individual readers within the pages of a book, Phelps's novels helped readers join a group constituted through shared suffering. Key to the success of Phelps's fiction was her vision of salvation. Rather than providing readers with an abstract concept of life after death, Phelps sketched a picture of heaven that shared familiar attributes with life on earth and reassured grievors that the dead remained connected to the families they left behind and thereby retained a vital link to earthly life. In the 1890s and 1891 Phelps and her husband co-wrote two Biblical romances, but the Gates series remained the most popular of her fiction, precisely because of its delineation of the afterlife.

Emerson and Whitman

As Phelps's writing makes clear, Americans were in search of answers to spiritual dilemmas, and they brought renewed energy and urgency to this search in the postbellum period. We can see the development of this phenomenon by considering the work of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) and Walt Whitman (1819–1892). Emerson's contribution to American religious thought occurred before the war, but it formed a cornerstone of the vision of American spirituality that Whitman perfected in the second half of the century. In 1832 Emerson preached a sermon on the Lord's Supper to the Second Church of Boston congregation. In it he argued that the individual needs no mediator between himself and God, nor does the individual need church, priest, or doctrine. Rather, the individual finds spirituality by turning to the self as the center of understanding. God was within human beings and nature and simultaneously extended beyond them to include the whole universe. Emerson's transcendentalism asserted that individuals achieved unity by perceiving the soul to be at one with the cosmos. In poetry and essays, as well as in sermons, Emerson was an outspoken advocate of individual freedom as opposed to an endorser of the authority of religion. In his first book, *Nature* (1836), Emerson asks why we should not have (1) a poetry of insight rather than of tradition and (2) a religion of revelation rather than of historical precedent. He contends that the individual is both nothing and everything—that the currents of a universal being flow through individuals that make them part of a divine as well as an earthly, finite cosmos. In "The Divinity School Address," which Emerson delivered to the graduating class of Harvard's Divinity School, he attacks the supernatural basis of Christianity, challenging Americans to worship without a mediator

between themselves and the divine and to receive truth immediately from God rather than through translation.

Emerson saw Whitman as the poet who would embody the truth he was evoking. Whitman produced six editions of *Leaves of Grass* between 1855 and 1892, constantly revising and perfecting his long poem. The text represents his life-long literary project of representing American democratic ideals in poetic form. In Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, Emerson and many other Americans found a religion of the common man—a religion that celebrated every aspect of the self and that contained all elements of humanity. Whitman drew from America's religious background to create a poetry that would unify a nation fractured by the war. Yet this was a poetry that warned readers to beware of churches and priests and that asserted that sublime ecstasies of the soul cannot occur within the constraints of organized religion. In Whitman's estimation, even more than in Emerson's, churches were what stood in the way of real religion in the United States. God is everywhere if we could but know it, and the most sacred temple is not built with bricks and mortar, but is human flesh and the human body. Whitman's celebration of physical humanity—of the body's sensations, sexual urges, and drives—made Emerson uncomfortable. Conversely, Emerson's disinterest in a socially oriented transcendentalism and in the social ramifications of religious autonomy and free-thinking concerned Whitman. Whitman most fully and ambitiously drew upon and revised the American tradition of religious free thinking. In the process, he became one of America's most prophetic poets and most poetic prophets.

Whitman is read in literature classes, and selections from his *Leaves of Grass* can be found in every American literature anthology. As a result, it is easy to forget that his contemporaries and followers also widely recognized him to be a prophet as much as a poet. Emerson's "The Poet" calls for a distinctly American verse that represents a distinctly American religiosity in which nothing is sacred but the integrity of the individual's mind. In Whitman Americans found such a poet, but they also found a spiritual leader—a successor to Jesus and the Buddha as much as a successor to Wordsworth, as Michael Robertson points out. One admirer suggested that future Americans would celebrate the birth of Whitman just as they currently celebrated the birth of Christ. Another described *Leaves of Grass* as providing a religion to live by and to die by. Another described it as the most religious book he had ever read. Whitman understood his writing to be propounding a radically democratic theology and to have a primarily religious purpose. He rejected the idea that there

were sharp distinctions between religion and literature or religion and science. In his cosmic consciousness, distinctions between priest and poet were nonexistent, and therefore he was as much prophet as poet.

Mark Twain

American psychologist William James classified Emerson and Whitman's type of religious optimism as a religion of healthy mindedness, because both writers tend to conceive of good as the essential and universal aspect of human beings. Both writers accept the world and life as it is because they believe both are permeated with the spirit of God. The challenge for Americans is to find this reality, not to believe in its lack of existence. Not all American writers were so optimistic about American spirituality. Mark Twain (1835–1910) is one such example. Born Samuel Clemens, Twain was a life-long humorist, writer, and social critic, and religion was an important touchstone and theme in all of these forms. His writing career spanned the second half of the nineteenth century, and he is best known for *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), which has been called the great American novel. But Twain wrote many novels, as well as satires and verse. In all of them religion and belief play major roles. In *Huckleberry Finn* the friendship between a white youth and a black man (Huck and Jim) provides an image of American democracy at its best. Central to that relationship is the tense relationship of race and religion. Huck rejects the churchgoing of adult members of his community, choosing to join Jim, a runaway slave. But he cannot outrun the question of racism. Faced with the conundrum of revealing Jim's whereabouts to his owner or rejecting his culture's church-sanctioned understanding of Jim as property, Huck declares that he will risk going to hell before he will betray Jim. By pitting religious teaching against the common humanity of his characters, Twain is pointing out the limitations of organized religion and its complicity in upholding America's "peculiar institution."

Throughout his writing, Twain criticizes the logical inconsistencies in American religious thought. His best-known quips often skewer religion. Twain made readers laugh at religious truth. In *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), he asserts that the power of training and education can bring a body up to believe just about anything. He later claims that he is sure that in matters concerning religion a man's power to reason is not above a monkey's, and that religion consists of things that the average man thinks he believes and wishes he was certain of.

He tells readers to go to heaven for the climate and hell for the company. This satirical irreverence earned him a healthy readership who found in his humor astute social commentary.

Much of Twain's literary material came from his own religious training and the cultural milieu of his time. He was raised in the Presbyterian church, which formally split over slavery—a fact that troubled Twain throughout his life. Subsequently critical of the power of belief, Twain became interested in the power of unbelief to emancipate. In other words, his writing explored the power of a humorous critique of organized religion to transform people's attitudes toward church-sanctioned social injustices. Such a literary project led him use prayer as a literary medium of social critique, when he writes, "O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead" (*The War Prayer*, 1904). In his final work, Twain goes the furthest in his commentary on religion. In his unpublished *The Chronicle of Young Satan*, the devil is a sympathetic figure—the scapegoat of a Christianity unwilling to look at its commitment to injustice and oppression. Twain devoted his literary career to exploring and exposing the duplicities hidden within organized religion in America. At the core of this literary critique was American racism.

African American Writers: Sutton Griggs and Charles Chesnutt

Twain was not the only American writer to comment on race and religion. In the career of African American minister and novelist Sutton Griggs (1872–1933), we can find a powerful complement to Twain's literary vision. While Twain used literary forms to criticize the church, Griggs preached and wrote about the racial injustices of post-Reconstruction America. We can see how his religious training and literary ambition worked together by considering his nonfiction and fiction writing. Born in Chatfield, Texas, Griggs was the son of the Reverend Allen Griggs, a preacher who also established the first black newspaper in Texas. Father and son were both instrumental to the genesis of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, and Sutton Griggs was a preacher throughout his life. He was also a novelist and author of numerous nonfiction pamphlets. As Wilson Jeremiah Moses has observed, with the possible exception of W. E. B. Du Bois, Griggs was the only black novelist of his period who deliberately undertook the writing of novels as part of a plan to create a national African American literature. His religious

training was essential to this literary project. Griggs believed that the art of making literature was fundamental to the successful progress of the African American people, and he undertook novel writing as a way of elevating the race. Griggs wrote more than a dozen novels and many nonfiction prose pieces, which he printed and disseminated on his own. Believing that the African American community needed its own press and circulation system, Griggs was author, publisher, and marketing department for African American literature in the late nineteenth century. His experience as a preacher was essential to his understanding of a distinctly African American literary tradition. Griggs was used to addressing a congregation of believers, and he approached literature with the same assumptions in mind. Early novels such as *Imperium in Imperio* (1899) and *Overshadowed* (1901) use the rhetorical strategies of the sermonic tradition to persuade readers of the importance of African American liberation. His novels often feature a preacher protagonist, but they also include long monologues of oratory in which characters persuade listeners (and readers) of the importance of African American equality. In *Imperium in Imperio*, the male protagonist is a Christ-like figure who is lynched but rises from the dead, escapes, and forms an African American community based on the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Worthy individuals enter this hidden community through a reverse ascension into the brotherhood—a literal life after death and entry into a heaven of racial equality.

In his nonfiction prose Griggs uses his position of religious prominence to garner the attention of readers. *The Race Question in a New Light* (1909), *Wisdom's Call* (1910), and *Beyond the End* (1911) draw on the oratorical tradition and the preaching style he developed while pastor of the First Baptist Church and the Tabernacle Baptist Church. Griggs's literary career has recently become the subject of scholarly attention. Prominent African American Studies scholar Cornel West has identified Griggs as one of the most important public intellectuals of his generation, and his first novel, *Imperium in Imperio*, as the first major political novel written by an African American. Key to the quality and quantity of Griggs's work is his religious training, which informs the plot, characters, and narrative style of his writing.

While Twain critiqued the hypocrisy of organized religion's racism in his writing, Griggs used his religious training and position to begin to shape a distinctly African American literary tradition. A contemporary of Griggs's, African American writer Charles Chesnutt (1858–1932) also featured religious belief in his stories. Born to free black

southerners, Chesnutt grew up after emancipation and began his literary career in the late nineteenth century. Unlike Griggs, Chesnutt used the white-controlled publishing industry to disseminate his literary message. Indeed, he was the first African American writer of fiction to make effective use of it. In short stories that he published from 1899 to 1905, Chesnutt commented on different religious training and belief systems separating whites from blacks in the South. In “Po’ Sandy” the African American protagonist, Uncle Julius, tells his white listeners the story of Sandy and his wife, Tenie. Manipulating their history of slavery, Uncle Julius describes how conjuring transformed Tenie into a tree, so she could stay close to her love instead of being sold away. This story of conjure depicts slave belief systems, but it also is strategically used by Uncle Julius to persuade his listeners to give him the lumber from the tree to build a new African American church. By putting the religious traditions of slaves into the service of contemporary African American religious aspirations, Uncle Julius manages to secure a new building for his congregation. It is concern that the slaves’ ghosts haunt the tree that convinces his white listeners to offer the tree as building material for the church, rather than to use it as lumber for a new kitchen. When asked if Sandy’s ghost would disturb worship, Uncle Julius replies that ghosts never disrupt church services, but if the spirit should stray into the meeting by mistake, the preaching would do it good. Uncle Julius is the storyteller throughout Chesnutt’s collection of short stories, *Conjure Tales: Stories of the Color Line*. These stories consistently show both the importance of conjure as a belief system for blacks during slave times and the value of that belief system for free blacks, like Julius, who must negotiate as free people with whites. Conjure becomes not only a way for slaves to sustain their spiritual wholeness and community belief system under slavery, but also a way for free slaves to succeed in a socioeconomic world to which they have not historically had access.

Feminist Writing: Charlotte Perkins Gilman

This impulse to turn to religion as a way to think through social injustice is not unique to African American writing, but is also evident in much feminist literary practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the United States. Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935) is a prime example of the intersections of religion, feminism, and literature. Although we tend to think of religion and feminism as opposing forces in American culture, the interconnections run wide and deep. Rejection of religious authority and

religious and moral struggle are connected with Gilman’s struggle against submissiveness, dependency, and the suppression of self so endemic in Victorian understandings of American femininity. Being passionless and pious were the desired attributes of bourgeois angels of the house. But this gender-specific understanding of religious belief ran counter to full human development, according to Gilman and other feminists. Much like other cultural practices aimed at subordinating women, mainstream American religion worked to marginalize, stunt, and disempower women. Some thinkers decried the feminization of religion in the antebellum period, but Gilman and others argued conversely that religion helped to make male dominance a natural and unquestioned part of life. The price for women was not spiritual growth but spiritual death. In *His Religion and Hers: A Study of the Faith of Our Fathers and the Work of Our Mothers* (1923), Gilman documents the gender bias built into faith practice in America. The American woman’s true duty as a member of the nation is, according to Gilman, to bring into being a religious practice that liberates all citizens, regardless of sex or race, and that does not enslave any of its believers or distinguish between them based on color, gender, or social station. Gilman believes that women congregants are uniquely equipped to achieve this utopian religious community. Because of women’s maternal role, they have the experience of nurture and development necessary to this important task. When we think of Gilman, we tend to think of her famous short story, “The Yellow Wallpaper,” in which the first-person narrator goes slowly mad after giving birth to her first child. A powerful feminist critique of American medicine as well as American gender norms, “The Yellow Wallpaper” was thought to induce madness in women readers and was therefore banned for a number of years. The story was based on Gilman’s own experience of motherhood, and she subsequently abandoned her family to become a writer.

Gilman’s literary vision of an egalitarian religious community is utopian. Much like Whitman, she imagines a world in which Americans pursue spiritual growth unencumbered by religious dogma and institutional history. For Whitman, spiritual authenticity is inherent in every individual and can be found in nature—everywhere. For Gilman, the realization of spiritual equality occurs in an imagined, utopian land called *Herland* (1915). Gilman’s novel imagines a community of women who have survived a natural disaster and have subsequently built a society of, for, and by women. There are no men in this world, nor have any of the women had any

interaction with men. Inducing pregnancy through a remarkable force of will, this female-only world marries religion to life such that the two are indistinguishable from each other. In the world of Herland, religion has no name, no domain apart from the nation, no rituals or holy days; rather, the inhabitants' daily life is an ongoing celebration of a clear, established connection between God and woman. The inhabitants of Herland do not practice religion or subscribe to a particular religion—they collectively *are* a religion. In this way, they embody an Emersonian and Whitmanesque spirituality unachievable in late nineteenth-century American society, but not unimaginable in the literary imagination of American writers like Gilman.

Science, Religion, and Literature

As Gilman's work illustrates, late nineteenth-century literature was reinventing and retooling not only literary techniques but also the very founding assumptions of religion to meet the needs of an age that was increasingly secular, scientific, and pragmatic. Like many Americans, postbellum writers were shaken by Charles Darwin's scientific concepts of human evolution, natural selection, and survival of the fittest. Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1870) created shock waves in American religious communities when they arrived in the United States, and they called into question organizing principles of religious concepts such as divine selection, the creation of heaven and earth, and salvation, among many others. Was it possible that human beings were descended from apes and not made in the image of God? Was it possible that the Earth had not been made in seven days but over the course of a much longer period? Finally, was it possible that "salvation" was less a matter of personal redemption and absolution of sin and more a matter of evolutionary principles that naturally selected certain traits as more useful than others? These questions rocked religious communities and created crises of faith among American believers. In the wake of the Civil War, Americans had questioned a God who could allow such human suffering and loss, but with scientific "proof" that discounted many religious precepts, Americans found themselves forced to confront an entirely new and unprecedented set of challenges to their faith.

American writers responded in a myriad of innovative ways in their literary works. Sentimental literature of the antebellum era had emphasized religious growth and

spiritual awakening as integral to social transformation and success. Writers such as Louisa May Alcott (1832–1888) had written extremely popular novels such as *Little Women* (1868) that relied on sentimentality and religious growth as a major feature of characters' development. Reading *Pilgrim's Progress* gives shape and texture to the five March girls' lives as they develop into women, and they learn important lessons in right and wrong through daily challenges. Alcott's novel was very successful, and she quickly followed it with *Little Men* (1871). In this sequel the March sisters are grown, with homes of their own. Jo March has started a school for indigent boys called Plumfield. The school aims to turn at risk boys into upstanding members of society, but the boys must first conquer their sinful natures. Sin in *Little Men* is imagined in Darwinian terms, and the seven deadly sins become evolutionary challenges that individual boys must overcome through internalizing adaptation techniques. Rather than being likened to religious pilgrims, the boys are repeatedly equated with animals—colts, owls, squirrels—and like these animals in the natural world, they must adapt to their surroundings or become extinct. Through extensive literary metaphor Alcott explores what it means for human beings to be incrementally rather than essentially different from animals. She provides examples of nature untamed when she describes one of the boys' pets—a crab—eating its offspring. In the world of Plumfield, human beings must evolve beyond these savage, animalistic origins and natures if they want to succeed in life.

American writers' interest in the religious significance of scientific discovery and innovation was not limited to evolutionary theory, but included new scientific fields of study such as psychology. Psychology emerged as a distinctive discipline in the 1890s, largely through the pioneering work of William James (1842–1910), brother of the famous American writer, Henry James. William James explored the depth and complexity of the human mind and developed a distinctive school of American psychological thought. In his monumental *Principles of Psychology* (1890), James did more than any other individual to establish psychology as a formal scientific discipline. What is the place of religion in this new scientific field? How does psychology think about spirituality? How does writing represent these complex questions accurately? These are questions that James explored in his many writings and lectures while at Harvard University. Scientific and literary innovation dovetailed when James coined the term "stream of consciousness" to describe the mind's connection to the world. This psychological term was taken up by

modernist writers and became one of the defining traits of modernist literary technique. American modernist writers such as William Faulkner used a stream of consciousness narrative strategy in which subject and verb do not necessarily agree, sentences are interrupted, and characters interrupt each other as a way of capturing the nonlinear, ungrammatical, and spontaneous nature of human thought.

In *The Will to Believe* (1897) and *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), James addresses the role of religion in the modern man's mental composition. There is a danger, according to James, in believing too little or too much. James used psychological methods to explore and arguably to justify religious belief. For James the question was not if God existed but rather what human benefits are derived from believing in God. In other words, God's "existence" is proved by what belief in God brings to a person's life. Religion and belief are important elements of psychological study precisely because they produce significant psychological outcomes for believers or dissenters. In fact, psychologists should study intense, even pathological, religious mentalities because they highlight mental processes. For this reason, James pursued the study of religious innovation and genius rather than the study of religious institutions or church history. Additionally, he was interested in mystical experience—mesmerism, spiritualism, and mediums. In 1909 James published his first-hand experiences with a medium in the journal *Science* and in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. Connection to the spiritual world as well as religious belief, in James's writings, became the subject of scientific inquiry.

Literary Legacies

William James's nonfiction writing on religion and science, however, was atypical in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century United States. New literary genres of American realism and American naturalism adopted the scientific method and sought to depict American life "as it was," without spiritual window dressing and with an emphasis on natural competition in the marketplace. The very absence of religious subject matter or spiritual development in this writing gives us the clearest indicator of the rising secularism and disillusionment with religious institutions that characterized the turn of the twentieth century. Theodore Dreiser (1871–1945) is a clear example. The heroine of his novel, *Sister Carrie* (1900), succeeds, not because she has come to believe in God or has a spiritual awakening, but because she has managed to secure economic autonomy and

affluence for herself through manipulating the law of the market to her advantage. Her solitary rocking in a rocking chair at novel's end signals the emptiness of her success, and the narrator declares that she will know neither contentment nor serenity. Instead, she is left dreaming of a happiness that she cannot feel. Edith Wharton (1862–1937) and Henry James also describe intensely secular worlds of social climbing and modern sexual mores. Influenced by Sigmund Freud's early twentieth-century theories of psychosexual development, these writers and others turn to sexuality as a primary source of narrative energy and complexity. The deep interest in religion and spirituality of nineteenth-century writers became by the early twentieth century an interest in the psychodynamics of desire, longing, and secular imagination. Emerson's objections to the eroticism of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* might indeed strike writers such as Wharton as quaint. In her *House of Mirth* (1905), the church is a place to seal profitable social contracts (like the marriage contract) and to appear for social advantage. Not substantively different from the theater, the church is no longer clearly distinguishable from secular forums for entertainment and distraction.

It is precisely this narrative focus away from spiritual and religious themes throughout much of the twentieth century that has tended to encourage readers of American literature to see religion and literature as distinctive fields of thought. Yet as we have seen, American literature and religion have had much to say to each other from the early national period onward; indeed, the two are profoundly interconnected. Once we see the longer history of this relationship, we can understand the popularity of contemporary novels that treat religious topics, such as Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* (2004). A controversial detective novel about the Catholic church and the history of Christianity, Brown's novel was a worldwide best seller and translated into forty-four languages. But it also has occasioned much conversation and controversy in churches across America. Writing and American religious thought have a long history—a history of ever more importance in America today.

See also *Civil War; Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Feminism; Immigration: From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to World War I; Literature: African American; Literature: Early Republic and the "American Renaissance"; Popular Religion and Popular Culture: From the Colonial Period to the Civil War; Psychology of Religion; Science; Transcendentalism.*

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Liturgical Arts

The arts of painting, stained glass, sculpture, and metal work have been vital elements of liturgical spaces since Americans started building places of worship in the New World. Whether “high” (characterized by elaborate ritual) or “low” (emphasizing the word), worship has reflected more than theology. Because religion is ineluctably associated not only with moral but also with cultural behavior, confessional beliefs have expressed both status and economic power. Religion is also associated with fidelity to tradition, so that stylistic influences have frequently been of long duration and often, but not always, independent of concomitant styles in secular society.

Conspicuous Display in Colonial America

The first experiences in the New England colonies were informed by a belief that life is a pilgrimage through a transient world. William Bradford's words at the founding of Plymouth, Massachusetts, rejected attention to “outward objects.” The word was dominant, and in this culture of remarkable literacy, Bibles, primers, catechisms, and even printed sermons gained importance. The “plain style” encouraged Communion tables to be indistinguishable from good-quality domestic products, so in the First Parish Church of York, Maine, a simple wooden tankard was used

as the Communion cup. Unadorned pewter basins were impressed for the ceremony of baptism, deliberately distinct from the traditional Roman Catholic baptismal font. The pewter basin brought from England for the First Church in Hingham, Massachusetts, however, was silver-plated, a harbinger of the trend in prominent congregations in Virginia, Philadelphia, or Boston, to make use of donated silver from prestigious makers. Within the stark white simplicity of the “churches on the green” that had become icons of American Protestantism by the time of the Revolution, such objects had become markers of late colonial status and influence. Most frequently donated were Communion cups and baptismal basins, but candlesticks and other such objects also appeared. As church architecture followed an aesthetic modeled on private homes and other secular structures, the style of the plate mirrored that of domestic uses. John Hull (1624–1683), who learned his trade in London, was probably Boston's first silversmith. Hull, his partner Robert Sanderson, their apprentice Jeremiah Dummer, and others produced Communion service for the New England area, as well as commemorative plate.

A typical example is the plate associated with Christ Church Congregational in Cambridge, Massachusetts, now on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Of the four tankards, two are a pair made by John Coney of Boston and inscribed “The Gift of Mr. William Wilcocks to the Church of Christ in Cambridge N.E. / Anno Dom 1654.” Tankards and drinking cups were favored because their forms distanced them from the chalices of the Roman Catholic church, repudiated during the English Reformation. By using vessels associated with the values of social gatherings, fellowship and equality were emphasized over the values of ritual. Private individuals often melted their coin to provide material for a silver service, which achieved the goal of keeping one's liquidity and displaying it, too. These practices paralleled the manner in which precious materials functioned as elements of ready capital for pre-modern institutions. Colonial silver was also the mark of aesthetic savoir-faire, exemplifying the transmission of style from the center (such as London) to the periphery (the colonies). Silver was the first expression in art or architecture to mirror progressive trends, as seen in Paul Revere's shift from rococo forms to the neoclassical before 1790.

The Taste for Sentiment, Embellishment, and Image

The Romantic movement that began to develop in Britain in the later eighteenth century gave rise to a taste for the

Middle Ages and its religious and artistic expression that displaced or at least competed with the classical, not only in architecture but in the collecting of works of art. These tendencies fed into what became the Anglican ecclesiological movement of midcentury toward more elaborate ritual and greater visual display in worship. This transformation of taste affected the United States, at first modestly, as revealed by the 1836 *Essay on Gothic Architecture* by John Henry Hopkins, Episcopal bishop of Vermont. Hopkins was a firm supporter of stained glass to modulate light in order to produce an atmosphere conducive to prayer, as opposed to the clear glass favored in the era of neoclassical taste and Enlightenment values exhibited in colonial Anglican churches. He argued against High Church trappings in his essay *The Law of Ritualism* of 1866, but acknowledged an inevitable increase in liturgical embellishment, noting that the age was one of “excitement” and that a color-filled and welcoming environment appealed to natural tastes and feelings. Given the limited technical and financial resources of Americans, he suggested that transparencies painted on linen or muslin in the Gothic style could be fixed inside church windows. Hopkins’s own church of St. Paul in Burlington had such stained glass substitutes until true stained glass was installed during a renovation campaign in 1851.

Even when early architects used leaded glass, it was most commonly quarry glazing, small sections of glass in a lattice pattern, a style very popular in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century English country churches and Tudor secular buildings. Not simply expedience, but a general Protestant iconoclastic tendency to distrust imagery appears to have encouraged these choices in the first half of the century. Hopkins’s *Essay* argued that it was “lawful” to represent events from scripture through pictures and statues, as memory aids. He concluded, however, that the danger of superstition and idolatry had been so great in the history of Christianity that on the whole he would recommend only symbolic images and scriptural passages.

Under the direction of Benjamin Webb, John Mason Neale, and Alexander Beresford-Hope, England’s ecclesiological movement gained influence. Its journal, *The Ecclesiologist* (1841–1868), and its progeny, *New York Ecclesiologist* (1848–1853), were major vehicles for High Church ideals. The Episcopal Church of St. James the Less in Philadelphia, constructed between 1846 and 1850, was modeled on St. Michael’s, Long Stanton, Cambridgeshire, dating about 1230. Plans were provided by the Cambridge Camden Society, the original promulgator of ecclesiological values.

St. James’s pulpit, lectern, rail between nave and chancel, and window sash were imported from England. The builders were deeply committed to the use of natural materials, requiring finely cut stone, well-seasoned oak, and the avoidance of plaster and paint. The windows above the high altar were fabricated in 1849 by the renowned Parisian studio of Alfred Gérente. The tall narrow lancets of the chancel showing a Tree of Jesse are similar to the windows at Jesus College, Cambridge, for which the English gothicist Augustus Welby Pugin (1812–1852) had designed the glass in an early thirteenth-century style in which the appearance of three dimensions is scrupulously avoided.

In contrast is Minard Lafever’s Episcopal church of the Holy Trinity, Brooklyn, built between 1843 and 1847, which was also influenced by the ecclesiologist movement. The stained glass, the first major commission on American soil, was designed and fabricated by William Jay and John Bolton. The fifty large windows show a remarkable harmony of color and figure, modeled in form and iconography after the early sixteenth-century three-dimensional Renaissance style in King’s College, Cambridge, that the designers had known from their youth.

Nineteenth-Century Developments and European/English Influence

As the nineteenth century progressed, American studios, such as that of Henry Sharp of New York, were frequent choices for architects, most notably Richard Upjohn (1802–1878), for Gothic Revival style decor. Sharp’s fourteen double-lancet windows using a simple quarry design for Upjohn’s Bowdoin College chapel, Maine, in 1850, are still extant. Sharp produced an important series of windows for St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Newburyport, Massachusetts, about 1863, and for the Church of the Good Shepherd, Hartford, Connecticut, in 1868, commissioned by Elizabeth Colt, widow of Samuel Colt of firearms fame.

Silver service remained important for religious use. Gorham Company, founded in 1831 by silversmith Jabez Gorham of Providence, Rhode Island, developed an ecclesiastical division, producing not only service items for liturgical use, but plaques and other commemorative elements for installation or for temporary use. At mid-century, the dominant style was the Gothic, and many of the works, including chalices, crucifixes, and thuribles or censers (for burning incense), reflect Pugin’s influence.

As economic and social aspiration progressed, however, more and more foreign ecclesiastical designers came into

favor. St. James the Less subsequently commissioned James Powell and Sons, Whitefriars, and a number of other prominent London firms for its glass. H. H. Richardson's neo-Romanesque masterpiece Trinity Church, Boston, exemplifies many trends related to church construction in the 1870s in a sophisticated urban setting among a Protestant elite. Although Episcopal, it was a "broad church" in inclination, prioritizing preaching and downplaying the chancel area where ritual was performed. Phillips Brooks (1835–1893), Trinity's rector, attracted major figures in the Boston area, such as Harvard graduate Martin Brimmer (1829–1896), founding director of that city's Museum of Fine Arts. When the first windows were commissioned and installed in 1877–1878, it was obvious to the patrons that no American studio could compete in quality with studios from France and England. Trinity's designers selected the London studios of Clayton and Bell, Cottier and Company, Henry Holiday of Powell and Sons, Burlison and Grylls, and William Morris and Company, as well as the Parisian studio of Eugène Oudinot. The first American windows were designed by the eminent muralist, John La Farge (1835–1910), whose decorative scheme turned Trinity into a masterfully integrated ensemble of the various arts.

Opalescent Stained Glass: Renaissance Revival

The taste for opalescent stained glass in the 1880s and 1890s corresponded to a taste for greater opulence in both domestic and public spaces. Luxuriant colors and textures, achieved by the use of inlays and veneers of marble and wood, wallpaper, stenciled painting, and leaded windows all combined for an unusually rich effect often described under the rubric of the American Renaissance. La Farge's ecclesiastical innovations were furthered by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848–1933). La Farge had combined selected stained glass in a variety of tones with a new material, an opalescent type of commercial glass previously used mainly as a porcelain substitute in toiletries such as brushes and mirrors. The process became the hallmark of American studios. At the height of his studios' popularity, Tiffany oversaw a huge enterprise and willingly worked with other artists and designers. He also frankly acknowledged his adaptation of well-known paintings as the basis for stained glass designs, such as his *Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit* after Sandro Botticelli's fifteenth-century painting, *Virgin and Child Attended by Seven Angels*, and *Christ Leaving the Praetorium*, after the popular nineteenth-century print by Gustave Doré. The studio's most characteristic figural work, however, was indebted to

Frederick Wilson (1858–1932), an Englishman who came to New York in the 1890s and stayed for more than thirty years. The ethereal faces of Wilson's angels characterize thousands of windows. The near-universal acceptance the new windows achieved is attested to by the frequent example of "low" denominations scheduling renovations. Arlington Street Church, built by Unitarians in Boston in 1861, adopted a full sequence of complex opalescent windows on the Beatitudes designed by Wilson, begun in 1898 and extending over thirty years. In Charleston, South Carolina, the historic, and image-free, Episcopal church of St. Michael's, built in 1761, was renovated at the turn of the century to include a chancel and figural opalescent windows designed by Tiffany Studios.

Nonsectarianism: Stanford University Memorial Chapel

Another significant enterprise in the liturgical arts in this era was J. and R. Lamb Studios. Founded in 1857 by English-born Joseph Lamb and his brother Richard, it was the first American firm to specialize in all facets of ecclesiastical design. At mid-century, Lamb Studios worked in the dominant Gothic style, concentrating on wood, stone, and textiles in the medieval revival styles. By the 1890s its dominant style was opalescent, and later, the twentieth-century Gothic Revival.

One of J. and R. Lamb's major commissions included the more than sixty windows installed between 1899 and 1903 for the Memorial Chapel of Stanford University, Stanford, California. Jane Stanford (1828–1905), the project's patron, planned the designs modeled on time-honored paintings of the life of Christ. To explore the Stanford University Memorial Chapel is to understand the pervasive Christian, albeit nonsectarian, aspect of America's common culture. Stanford conceived of a university chapel as a memorial to her husband, Leland Stanford, who had died in 1893. Following their joint theology, she constructed the church as an homage to the moral principles of religion, resting, in her words, upon "the simple religion of Jesus Christ and His beautiful life."

The windows reflect nineteenth-century collections of religious images that were standard elements of Sunday school instruction and framed prints, and included among the subjects were the flight into Egypt by Bernhard Plockhorst, and similar biblical scenes by popular artists such as Doré, John Heinrich Hofmann, William Holman Hunt, Bartolome Esteban Murillo, Sibyl C. Parker, and Axel Hjalmar Ender. The Reverend Frederic Farrar's *Story of a*

Beautiful Life Illustrated (1900) may have provided many of the sources of imagery to Lamb and Jane Stanford. Sources also include companies such as Perry Pictures of Boston. Founded in 1897, Perry distributed low-priced half-tone reproductions of works of art, targeting its distribution to the average citizen. It also published monthly the *Perry Magazine*, promoting the use of such images.

New Subject Matter: The Individual, Family, and Nature

Stanford's chapel is an example of what we now term as religion's "private sphere": family life and personal morality. Imagery emphasizing the family life of Christ and the infancy of the Virgin, although developed to an extent during the seventeenth century, came to dominate popular imagery. What was popular in widely circulated books with religious themes—a major expression of Protestantism in graphic form—also dominated imagery in liturgical spaces. Invariably, churches contained some rendition of the marriage at Cana with details of the youthful couple, worried host, solicitous mother, and Christ's gesture of kindness. Charity was a common theme, including the parable of the good Samaritan, and of female agency: Dorcas, Mary and Martha, or Naomi and Ruth (brilliantly depicted by John La Farge in Vassar College's chapel). The parable of the wise and foolish virgins (frequently truncated to the scene of the wise virgins welcoming the bridegroom) and that of the sower and reaper enabled buildings to glisten with figural imagery. The Sermon on the Mount and representations of the Beatitudes were also popular.

Images of Christ as child, youth, healer, and compassionate leader were particularly successful in striking a receptive note. Heinrich Hofmann (German, 1824–1911) created renditions of episodes of the life of Christ that became staples of reproduced images in American religious instruction. So understandable were they that the full image, sections, or even the isolated portrait could be used. As nondoctrinal images, their sense of reality allowed Protestants and Roman Catholics to accept Hofmann's work. The painting of *The Boy Jesus Amidst the Doctors of the Temple* was used by Roman Catholic Holy Name Societies and organizers of Protestant prayer rallies alike. Hofmann's image of *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane* became the standard rendition of the subject rendered in innumerable wall paintings and windows.

Landscape alone, or with a biblical inscription, also became a new devotional subject. The appreciation of Renaissance art coinciding with the academic taste of the

nineteenth century supported this development. Brimmer suggested that Millet's landscapes with laboring peasants could be termed religious images, as redolent with meaning as the depiction of angels by Botticelli. Landscape, exemplified by the huge production of Tiffany Studios windows in this genre, meshed with the American religious direction towards broad views, where God's immanence was seen to be inherent in the natural beauty of the land, and therefore visible to all, regardless of denomination.

The image of Christ generally followed northern European precedents, specifically the photographic realism of the type painted by Warner Sallman (1892–1968) that was to be challenged in the mid-twentieth century under more keenly felt ethnic and racial marginalization. At the turn of the century, however, realistic imagery was generally associated with progressive thinking, as an effort to bring Christ into the everyday world. D. W. Griffith's *Intolerance* was produced in 1916 as the filmmaker's protest against the slaughter on the battlefields of World War I. In showing the scenes in Nazareth and Jerusalem, such as Christ sitting down to eat with sinners, Griffith cites the authority of French painter J. James Tissot. Although present-day interest associates him with the Impressionist movement, Tissot was known for his illustrations of Hebrew and Christian scripture in *The Life of Our Savior Jesus*, in three volumes published by Werner Company, 1899–1900, and *The Old Testament*, published by M. de Brunoff in 1904. Tissot's influence reflects the context of the nineteenth-century's canon of great works of art, communicated through photograph, engraving, and literary description.

Catholic imagery reflecting recently augmented devotionism, is attested to by statues, wall paintings, and stained glass, as well as holy picture cards. Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a means of emphasizing for the faithful Christ's compassion for humanity, continued a tradition from medieval times. Margaret Mary Alacoque's (1647–1670) description of her vision provided the devotion with its codified form. In 1856 Pius IX made the feast of the Immaculate Conception and its special liturgy on the Friday following the octave of the feast of Corpus Christi a universal feast. In 1870 Pius IX instituted the feast of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, lending official recognition to the great surge of interest. Joseph already had become a popular image as the patron of a happy death because he was believed to have died in the presence of Jesus and Mary. Although absent from scripture, the scene became a popular Catholic "icon" in the mid-nineteenth century, for it depicts Joseph dying attended not only by his



Mary Magdalene Washes the Feet of Christ, stained glass, Church of St. Mary of the Assumption, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1890s. *Royal Bavarian Art Institute for Stained Glass, F. X. Zettler, Munich, Germany.*

loved ones, but in the presence of God himself. Pius VII in 1814 authorized an act of consecration to St. Joseph.

Continental Stylistic Influences and Roman Catholics

As Catholics began to acquire more economic and political power, they also began to differentiate their buildings from those of Protestants. European companies in Paris around the area of the church of St. Sulpice exported small goods,

including medals, statues, and works on paper, especially certificates of first Communion, Confirmation, and marriage. Carl Benziger and Sons, later known as Benzinger Brothers, of Switzerland, opened a branch in Cincinnati as early as 1838 and expanded elsewhere in the United States. The favored vendors of stained glass were the Catholic studios of Franz Mayer, Franz Zettler, Gustav van Treeck, of Munich, and the Tyrolese Glass Painting Establishment (TGA) of Innsbruck, Austria. The studios prolonged the German Nazarene painting style of the 1840s and 1850s, melding Catholic religious sentiment with a Raphaellesque air of idealism and sweetness. The glowing colors, Renaissance figural types, and smoothly polished surfaces achieved by the Nazarene movement in oil were eminently suited to glass. Probably the most influential commission was for the nineteen windows for Our Lady of Help in the new suburb of Au outside Munich. All the costs for the windows were borne by King Ludwig of Bavaria. Two folio publications, one of black and white and later another of chromolithograph plates, made the windows of Au accessible to a broad European audience. Similarly, Ludwig's donation of all the windows in the south transept of Cologne Cathedral proclaimed the style as the preferred Catholic expression.

The Cathedral of the Holy Cross (1866–1875) in Boston is a striking example of Nazarene influence, as its windows were probably executed by a Munich or Rhenish studio under contract to the Morgan Brothers of New York. Significantly, when the cathedral was glazed, the vestry of Trinity Church, Boston, was keenly aware of the denominational association of these works. In 1875 Trinity's window committee characterized two styles, the English glass, of which the committee approved, and that in the "Bavarian" style, a definition that appears to have included most of the continental Catholic expressions, which was not acceptable. Stained glass installations in American Catholic churches, many of them now falling victim to church closings in major urban centers, numbered in the thousands. The diocese of Hartford, Connecticut, which then included Rhode Island, was often supplied with stained glass from the TGA firm of Innsbruck. Some of TGA's most sophisticated windows, such as *Abraham and the Three Angels*, appear in Providence's Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul.

The Arts and Crafts Movement and the Twentieth-Century Gothic Revival

By the turn of the twentieth century a renewed interest in craftsmanship and a dislike for routine, machine production

supported the growth of the Arts and Crafts movement. Here, however, there also emerged an interest in past precedents, especially the art of the later Middle Ages. Charles Eamer Kempe (1837–1907) of London had established a thriving studio responsible for many commissions in the United States, such as the great Jesse Tree of the Church of the Advent, Boston (Episcopal, 1897), and the windows of several chapels of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York (Episcopal, 1916 and 1918). Kempe's style evoked fifteenth-century glazing and panel-painting traditions, exemplified by the creed window from Hampton Court, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Figures in vibrant color, set against white glass backgrounds, are framed by architectural canopies also framed by deeply saturated colored glass. Englishman Christopher Whall, who was a profound influence on American art, emulated late medieval juxtapositions of large amounts of uncolored glass with segments of color and silver-stain yellows.

Under the aegis of architects such as Ralph Adams Cram (1863–1942), however, the United States experienced a twentieth-century revival of historicism, even as the country saw the beginning of early modernism under designers such as Frank Lloyd Wright. Cram, however, like Wright, was interested in the entire configuration of the buildings, from woodwork to textiles, to windows and wall paintings. One of the favored woodcarvers was Johannes Kirchmayer (1860–1930), born in Oberammergau, Bavaria. Working in Boston in the 1880s, he was a founding member of the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts, with his work featured in an 1887 exhibition. After 1898, in the employ of Irving and Casson, a Boston woodcarving company, he produced many installations, notably the woodwork for the Church of the Advent in Boston's Beacon Hill. Advent, designed by John H. Sturgis in emulation of ecclesiologist English architecture such as All Saints, Margaret Street, London, was a center of Anglo-Catholic (or High Church) Episcopalianism. Cram himself designed a monstrance for the rite of the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at Advent, to which Kirchmayer modeled the complex figural design of eloquent supporting angels.

Cram's sometime partner, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue (1869–1924), was instrumental in the interior design of many of the churches on which they collaborated, including St. Thomas Episcopal (1911–1913) on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue. Goodhue worked closely with artists in a variety of media, particularly the sculptor Lee Lawrie (1877–1963), who was responsible not only for the stunning Art



St. Peter, wood, Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Walpole, Massachusetts, about 1914. *John Kirchmayer, Boston, Massachusetts.*

Deco-style reredos in St. Thomas but also for the Atlas statue outside nearby Rockefeller Center. Goodhue was also responsible for the Byzantine-style mosaic work on the interior of St. Bartholomew's (Episcopal, 1917–1930) a few blocks away on Park Avenue, and his firm continued after his death to design remarkable artistic assemblages such as the interior of Christ Church Cranbrook (Episcopal; Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, 1925–1928).

Cram characterized opalescent windows as inappropriate for a spiritual atmosphere and gave explicit directions to studios to avoid them. His disdain for opalescent glass

appears associated with its ubiquity. His efforts began the twentieth-century polarization that generally relegated American stained glass to mere church decoration, a situation that lasted until the 1960s when stained glass became again linked to contemporary work in the fine arts. Cram was also explicit in his criticism of Munich style windows. Writing for the journal *Stained Glass* in 1931, he stated that they were “too terrible to contemplate” and argued that it had become a question of how to get rid of them without impiety. Cram called for replacement windows of the same subject “but made by real artists.”

Like Pugin, Cram was a writer, organizer, and scholar, and one of the founding members of the Medieval Academy of America. It is therefore not surprising that his taste in glass paralleled his overall program of reviving the arts, crafts, thought, religion, and social organization of the Middle Ages. Given the importance of the architect in the selection of stained glass studio, American studios quickly adopted the medieval style, until it became almost universal. Italian-born Nicola D’Ascenzo (1871–1954) of Philadelphia worked in a variety of styles but is best remembered for windows inspired by the Middle Ages, such as those in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City. Cram patronized another Philadelphia studio, William Willet (founded 1898), that was responsible for the *Seven Liberal Arts* window, 1913, as well as for Proctor Hall and its windows and the windows for the Chapel at Princeton University. Cram explicitly advised Willet to model the Proctor Hall windows after those of the clerestory of Chartres Cathedral. Coming to the United States in 1914 at Cram’s behest, English-born Clement Heaton was a versatile artist who had designed Art Nouveau work around 1905. In the United States, he produced French-inspired Gothic Revival, as seen in the west rose window of the Catholic Church of the Blessed Sacrament in New York, as well as English style in the Episcopal church of St. Philip, Charleston, South Carolina.

Boston saw the rise of large and influential studios working in a Gothic Revival style, such as those of Wilbur Herbert Burnham, and Reynolds, Francis, and Rohnstock, both with significant windows in the National Cathedral, Washington, D.C., as well as George C. Ball, Earl Edward Sanborn, Harry Wright Goodhue, and Margaret Redmond, with work in Trinity Church, Boston. Charles J. Connick (1875–1945), however, was the movement’s chief polemicist and directed what was possibly its most prolific studio. His window, *The Holy Grail*, for Proctor Hall, Princeton University, in an Arts and Crafts mode inspired by Whall, is

consonant with Cram’s program of restructuring medieval religious media to refer to modern goals of education. By the late 1920s, as demonstrated by Connick’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* window in the Princeton Chapel, and through the 1950s seen in the commissions for St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Cathedral, New York City, the studio drew inspiration from the twelfth-century Romanesque style typified by Le Mans cathedral and the thirteenth-century Gothic style exemplified by the windows in Sainte-Chapelle, Paris.

Carefully crafted windows that closely emulated medieval precedents were possible because the American Gothic Revival studios, like their European predecessors, could rely on publications by restorers of stained glass. Many restorers published books with lavish reproductions and tracings or other detailed restoration drawings. N.H.J. Westlake’s *A History of Design in Painted Glass*, for example, was an essential reference for American studios. Translations of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc’s section on stained glass from his *Dictionnaire* (1854–1868) were also available. Indeed, many of the illustrations that Connick used for his own work, *Adventures in Light and Color*, 1937, were borrowed from the books of Westlake and Viollet-le-Duc. Like the works of Westlake and Viollet-le-Duc, Hugh Arnold and Lawrence Saint’s *Stained Glass of the Middle Ages in England and France* (London, 1913) was cherished by glass studios for its clear overview of what had become the canon of great medieval windows: Le Mans, Poitiers, Canterbury, Chartres, York, through Rouen and Fairford (Gloucestershire) of the fifteenth century.

Modernist Directions

Architecture in the 1940s began to evolve to reflect an ahistorical direction along with a new sense of integration felt by many church organizations. Congregations wanted their churches to be relevant to a modern life-style and to look like it; they were often eager to show—as in the colonies of the eighteenth century—a sense of progressive, contemporary style. In addition, modernist art professed a spiritual agenda—a search for universals, basic forms that would strike deep chords in a broad spectrum of viewers. Artists made a moral commitment to transcend cultural barriers, welcoming interior designers as colleagues, and promoting work in color field, abstract expressionism, and minimalism.

Lutherans were among the most progressive, both in pursuing ecumenical ties and in formulating principles for interior design and worship service stressing “honesty in materials.” Christ Church Lutheran, in Minneapolis, was

designed by the renowned Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen in 1949. The exquisite simplicity of a building comprising minimalist forms focusing attention on proportional harmony and the materials of brick, stone, wood, and metal is reflected in the furnishings of altar, cross, and candelabra. Other Lutheran churches supported progressive stained glass design such as that by Mark Gulrud for Resurrection Lutheran Church, Tucson, Arizona, where the abstract, translucent form of the risen Christ interacts with the beauty of the landscape seen through the window.

The formal graphics pioneered in Germany in the 1950s reverberated in the United Kingdom and the United States. In postwar Germany, concerted efforts to rebuild and rededicate churches increased opportunities for artists working with glass. One artist who visited Germany after World War II was Robert Sowers. His book, *The Lost Art* (1954), was particularly important in bringing developments from France and Great Britain to the attention of the American public. Ludwig Schaffrath, the most influential personality of the German Modernist movement, credits him as the first American to discover the new German glass.

Museum installations have gravitated to the spiritual, inspired by the seminal work of Wassily Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, of 1910, in which the Bauhaus artist emphasized abstraction as transcendental. The sheer size of a color field painting could create a “field” that could exert a physical force on the spectator. One of the purest examples is the Rothko Chapel, part of the Menil collection in Houston, Texas. Opened in 1971, the chapel was conceived with three elements in mind: an octagonal brick church, Marc Rothko’s paintings, and Barnett Newman’s *Broken Obelisk* set in a reflecting pool facing the chapel. The obelisk was later dedicated to the memory of Martin Luther King Jr. The chapel is uncompromising as a sacred space, stressing meditation. Rigorously rejecting representation, the paintings’ meanings are developed by the spatial presence of deep color set within subtly varied rectangles. The chapel operates in a manner similar to installations of glass where the light, with or without recognizable image, permeates an interior.

Many places that had traditionally downplayed artistic expression shifted to embrace modernist work. Reformed Judaism beginning in the 1950s supported considerable attention to innovative architecture and interior design. Consonant with the tradition of avoiding imagery of the divine, Judaism was receptive to the abstract spirituality of modernist form. Jacob Agam, the pioneering Israeli artist in optic and kinetic art, produced windows and interior furnishings for New

York’s Hebrew-Union College Synagogue. Other artists transferred trends in more painterly expression of window design, exemplified by Ellen Mandelbaum’s Adath Jeshurun Synagogue in Minnetonka, Minnesota. The windows, each one larger than the one before, represent the minyan (ten worshippers needed for prayer).

Whereas modern architecture advocated a single “international” or “nonstyle” style, the postmodern architecture that began in the 1980s was far more varied in expression and accepting of a wider variety of shapes and materials. Contemporary architecture is often deliberately eclectic. In window design, David Wilson’s (1941–) many collaborations with architects on large-scale works for both public and private buildings create patterns of structured light that bathe the interior space. A carefully selected gamut of glass carries out his graphic systems. Wilson has also incorporated dichroic glass into many compositions, as well as mouth-blown antique French and German glass and beveled glass. His mingling of geometric abstraction and image is exemplified in his award-winning 1992 Reorganized Church of Latter-day Saints, Temple and World Headquarters in Independence, Missouri. Motifs of wheat represent the bread of life, and Wilson juxtaposes transparent glass in green rectangles set against the opaque segments. As light plays off the window, certain areas appear to glow from within while others scintillate.

Liturgical Revival

Concomitant with general trends in the arts, a new call to energize worship produced an American liturgical revival. Variations in twentieth-century interior design reflected the growing diversity in views on the importance of ritual. As the practice of the reception of Communion in the forms of both consecrated bread and wine became more widespread, especially for Roman Catholics, a “Low Church” approach was favored, stressing equality in an effort to mesh liturgical experience with everyday experience. This direction encouraged simpler forms. For some congregations simple glass chalices were favored for the distribution of the sacrament.

Two buildings, both associated with the Benedictines, stand as exemplars of these trends. St. John’s Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota (1953–1961) exemplifies the strength of that order’s commitment to renewal of ritual, song, and the visual arts. The architect, Marcel Breuer (1902–1981), a colleague of Walter Gropius and professor at Harvard’s school of design, was equally distinguished for his design of furniture.

The façade is filled with a huge honeycombed window of colored glass designed by Bronislaw Bak (1922–1981), a professor of art at Saint John’s University. The abstract canopy hovering over the altar echoes the geometric modules of the window. Portsmouth Abbey Church and Monastery in Rhode Island, consecrated in 1959, is the work of Pietro Belluschi (1899–1994) and sculptor Richard Lippold (1915–2002), whose creations appear in prominent American collections such as the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art. Lippold’s hallmark style is seen in the multiple lines of thin, gleaming wire radiating from the cross suspended above the altar in a gesture that speaks both to the theological meaning and the aesthetics of animating space.

One of the new techniques of wall treatment for these churches was a sculptural installation called *dalle-de-verre*. Chunks of glass are imbedded in a concrete or epoxy matrix, producing a wall of prismatic forms. Artists such as Robert Pinart and Jean-Jacques Duval emigrated from France and introduced the technique, but French commissions on American soil were also substantial. Gabriel Loire, head of a large French studio in the village of Levres, two kilometers from Chartres, was particularly influential. Loire’s seminal work for America was his First Presbyterian Church, Stamford, Connecticut (1956–1957), where great concrete ribs arch upwards within a fish-like structure.

Current Trends

Proponents of modernism so emphasized the integration of God and God’s community with contemporary life in ritual and form that for some the secular and sacred became indistinguishable. On a pastoral level, the promulgations of Vatican II (1961–1965) affected building design in ways associated with modernist stylistic ideals, but with hierarchical decisions often at odds with the central message of inclusion. In many circumstances liturgical designers were called to renovate extant buildings, imposing a formulaic program that excluded ornament and mandated natural materials that could convey intrinsic aesthetic and spiritual meaning. In some instances the spaces were enhanced, but in others this program of renewal resulted in the destruction of historic fabric and the juxtaposition of incongruous elements. In opposition, the importance of the “transcendent,” so clearly a part of the eclectic revivals of the preceding century, has resurfaced among self-proclaimed “traditional” architects, liturgical designers, and a significant element of the public.

See Also *Architecture* entries; *Cult of Domesticity*; *Death and Burial*; *Devotionalism*; *Lived Religion*; *Music: Hymnody*; *Romanticism*; *Tourism and Pilgrimage*; *Visual Culture* entries; *Worship* entries.

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Lived Religion

Lived religion denotes an approach to the study of religion that foregrounds practice: “lived” in the sense of the performed or enacted.

Lived religion thus directs us to religion as experienced. In attending closely to practice and experience, this approach makes room for the personal and private in the midst of (or as alternatives to) the bureaucratic and the institutional. More tellingly, this approach requires historians to rethink the utility of large-scale constructions—such as “mainstream,” “liberalism,” “evangelicalism,” and “secularization”

that have little resonance among ordinary people and rarely coincide with the complexities of everyday practice or experience. Nor does the concept support overly rigid assertions of identity or tradition. To seek lived religion is to find it in unexpected places: habits of dieting, bathrooms and hospital beds, street festivals, the “gospel blues,” and cyberspace. Religion becomes highly mobile, constantly transgressing, ever taking risks.

To proceed in terms of lived religion is also to acknowledge the ambiguities that pervade all forms of practice. In *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice*, it is argued that practice “encompasses the tensions, the ongoing struggle of definition, which are constituted within every religious tradition and that are always present in how people choose to act” (p. xi). The implications of this argument are strongly antihierarchal: such tensions or ambiguities are felt as much among ordinary people as among religious professionals and leaders; and it is the modes of practice among such people, modes of practice that cannot be understood in linear or tightly bounded ways, that are central to any history of lived religion. At its best, this approach encourages us to be explicit about the politics of practice, most specifically the limited effectiveness of any efforts to control or prescribe what people do. Always, it presumes the mutual interpenetration of the religious and the social.

Sources of the Concept

That the concept has gained a wide currency has much to do with its roots in major tendencies of the 1960s and 1970s, in particular the recovery of ritual, the tentative beginnings of an interest in “experience,” the new alertness to the agency of ordinary people, and the articulation of “popular religion.” A fuller genealogy would encompass the work of European and American sociologists of religion in the first half of the twentieth century, an influence supplemented (or supplanted) after 1960 by cultural and social anthropology. Another reason for the currency of the concept at the beginning of the twenty-first century is the widely shared recognition that people who think of themselves as religious no longer depend as much on institutions (churches, synagogues, seminaries, and the like) as they did some fifty years ago. Everywhere, institutions fade into the background, an observation widely shared among sociologists of religion in contemporary America. Such a perspective proceeds from the assumption that individuals in the United States (and in other countries or regions touched by modernity) make their own way through the

world, creatively incorporating elements of the old and the new into patterns of behavior that are satisfying to them. Lived religion can thus be regarded as an artifact of its times in four respects: mirroring the severely weakened authority of institutions, the influence on historians of approaches to culture and society that emphasize the resourcefulness of laypeople and the vitality of outsiders, a skepticism about social science-style generalizations, and a determination to pass beyond the confusions that beset the term “popular religion” (who, after all, are the people?).

The Lived as Multitudes of Possibilities

It appears that students of contemporary religion locate the “lived” in the choices being made by individuals, not by institutions. “In contrast to religion-as-preached . . . each individual’s religion-as-lived is *constituted* by . . . often-mundane practices for remembering, sharing, and creatively assembling their most vital religious narratives.” So declares the anthropologist Meredith McGuire in “Embodied Practices: Negotiation and Resistance” (p. 187). Each of the key words in this sentence deserves close attention, if only to illuminate the freight they carry. To emphasize the creative is to extol our agency as humans; we are free to move around within a highly diverse world of signs and meanings. To speak of “assembling” is to assume that people mix and match without much regard for consistency—or to accept as “consistent” the ease with which someone moves about among a plethora of signs, meanings, and practices. (Pushed to an extreme, religion *becomes that very plethora of possibilities*.) McGuire has described a woman in modern America who behaves in this very manner, appropriating five different theologies of healing in the course of her daily life. A much articulated translation of this point of view occurs when, in everyday speech as well as in the discourse of scholars, the term “spirituality” is put in play. In a letter published in the July 2008 issue of *O The Oprah Magazine*, a Californian writes, “I hope spirituality, which doesn’t seek to control or conquer, becomes the primary guiding force all our lives instead of fundamentalism.”

There is, however, more to lived religion than this emphasis on assembling and seeking; if the concept is to flourish, it must attend as well to what happens within institutions. The remainder of this essay is organized around five topics: (1) institutions and the practices they define, promote, and regulate; (2) the ever-apparent, yet ever puzzling, intermittencies in how laypeople behave and the analytical questions prompted by these intermittencies;

(3) the relationship between “experience” and the lived; and (4) the possibilities for understanding what people do as something else than narrowly instrumental or functionalist.

Institutions and Lived Religion

The necessary place of institutions in any adequate understanding of lived religion begins with the recognition that some religious practices are collective and recurrent, their periodicity dictated by the great life passages, by calendars that differentiate sacred from ordinary time, and by key events in the making of civil dynasties or nation-states. Because religious institutions are both site and source of a great many of these events, the history of lived religion is inescapably associated with how those institutions have defined and regulated what constitutes the religious. How they did so is always historically contingent, for definitions of good religion change over time. Beginning with the twin reformations in sixteenth-century Europe, major movements have recurrently insisted that “tradition” was corrupt or inadequate. The reorienting of everyday religious life within the Lutheran version of the Protestant Reformation called for parents to begin taking the Eucharist in both forms and to do so much more frequently than had been expected under Catholicism. The “Ave Maria” that many had been accustomed to praying fell into disuse, as did most of the holy days and festivals of the late medieval calendar. No longer were saints’ days or similar celebrations marked by the parading of relics. The Reformed wing of Protestantism made other changes, and the Catholic Counter-Reformation weighed in with fresh demands for participation.

Practice in Motion: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

In the nineteenth century, some Christians and Jews in the West were coming under the influence of another version of reform, the “liberal” understanding of religion that emphasized the freedom of the individual over the authority of creed, clergy, and institution. By the middle of that century, re-Christianization or, as some historians have argued, a “devotional revolution” swept across many parts of Catholic Europe. On the Protestant side, the rapid rise of evangelicalism brought about a fresh emphasis on self-discipline, as manifested in movements to curtail the use of alcohol and to reinvigorate the Christian Sunday. Another great rupture in Catholic practice occurred in the 1960s with Vatican II. In these postwar years, and especially after the sixties, new

versions of cultural and religious liberalism were beginning to curtail or change the rules (some of them very old, others dating from disciplinary movements of the nineteenth century) that tied sex to marriage.

These moments of large-scale change forcefully remind us of the capacity of institutions to shape social practice. Usually, the leaders of these institutions or movements have articulated a theological framework that guides their decision making about worship, liturgy, and the moral life. Within the Church of God in Christ (COGIC), founded in the United States in 1895, the theological motif of “sanctification” underlies a cluster of practices that those in this community regard as signifying deliverance from sin by the Holy Spirit: in a word, sanctified living. Such practices include fasting, abstinence from alcohol, and, for women, “modest” forms of dress. When the leaders of COGIC absorbed aspects of Pentecostalism shortly after the turn of the century, speaking in tongues became another sign of sanctification. The American Seventh-day Adventists who brought their message to Kenya in the twentieth century were similarly concerned with practice as evidence of deeper changes. Requiring local people to abandon long-established ways of living, Adventists insisted that their converts renounce polygamy, alcohol, and animal sacrifice, and, in turning toward a new way of life, begin to practice Western forms of thrift, self-discipline, and prosperity. Adventist women dressed their children differently, sang hymns while working in the fields or households, and in many other ways set themselves apart from Catholics and those who continued to observe “traditional” African religion.

From Belief to Formation

These two examples of institution-driven practice may seem to emphasize “belief” as the motor that drives what people do. Yet in any analysis of lived religion, we should probably refuse to dichotomize belief and behavior. What has often mattered within Christianity and Judaism is not “belief” on its own but belief made visible in behavior. A term that, for some historians of religion, works to unite belief and behavior is “formation” in the sense of a church-initiated experience of learning to accept and act out certain modes of behavior. Used in this way, formation elides the emotional (affective) and the cognitive, body and mind. The descriptions that come down to us of Protestant revivals in colonial America make these conjunctions visible in the performative aspect of these events. Usually it is the evangelist/speaker

who is at the center of these accounts, but in Jonathan Edwards's *Faithful Narrative of Surprising Conversions* (1738), the focus is on the young people of his Northampton congregation. Edwards attributed the "surprising conversions" of so many in the town to the sermons he preached on the doctrine of justification by faith alone. But the *Faithful Narrative* also makes it clear that the abrupt "awakening" of a young woman set off waves of similar behavior as others learned to perform religion in a stylized but seemingly spontaneous manner. As nurtured and shaped within religious institutions, practice flows from processes of learning (or transmission) too complex to be driven solely by belief.

The Religious and the Social

Within the framework of lived religion, attending to institutions requires us to explore the intertwining of the religious and the social in local communities. As historians of Christianity in the late middle ages have demonstrated, the late medieval village in England depended for its solidarity or social peace on practices such as confession and penance that enabled neighbors to reconcile with one another. Adopting a Durkheimian perspective upon a New England town (Newburyport, Massachusetts, in the 1930s), the American sociologist W. Lloyd Warner emphasized the congruities between symbolic forms and social values. According to Warner's analysis, the rituals associated with Memorial Day in "Yankee City" foregrounded cooperation instead of competition and conflict; on this occasion, the townspeople overcame their differences and acted out a unity embodied in the symbolism of that holiday. The chapter on the "domus" in Robert Orsi's *The Madonna of 115th Street* is a tour de force description of a strongly enforced family system within Italian American culture. For the sociologist Gabriel Le Bras, the Catholic parish in nineteenth-century rural France was a place where the social and the religious converged. In such communities, time, space, and social networks were bound up with the ringing of the church bells, processions and cemeteries, baptism, death, and a calendar charged with feast days and other ceremonies. Even in modern America the Catholic parish can serve as a site of deeply felt rules and boundaries. And for some historians, ethnicity and race play a kindred role as self-enclosing markers that elide the social and the religious.

Regularities of Practice: The Usefulness of Quantitative Data

The regularities of institutional and community-based practice make it possible to employ quantitative data in

describing how people have behaved. We owe some of this data to churches or other religious institutions that want to know how closely behavior and obligation are aligned. To cite an obvious example, rates of participation in the sacraments have long been regarded as significant within Roman Catholicism. When Le Bras set out to study "practice" within French Catholicism, he turned to parish registers for the information that enabled him to determine how often people came to the mass or (in nineteenth-century France) chose civil marriage over one that was fully Catholic and sacramental. Incidental evidence that some people in early New England were bringing children to be baptized within a week or so of birth prompted a much fuller study that paired vital statistics and church records to demonstrate the breadth of this pattern in early-eighteenth-century Essex County, Massachusetts. Quantitative studies of church attendance and other aspects of participation in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe have abetted the questioning of secularization as a unidirectional process (in, say, cities or among the working class) but have also demonstrated its presence in surging rates of divorce and changing uses of time. Another benefit of quantitative studies has been to demonstrate the "feminization" of Western Christianity. Be it in early-twentieth-century France or seventeenth-century New England, women participated more often than men in devotions and were much more likely to become church members. Yet another benefit has been to differentiate regional patterns of behavior, a question of special interest to sociologists and historians of religion in France and, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the United States.

To learn from this kind of work that large groups of people behave in the same way is to be reminded that lived religion must indeed acknowledge regularities and the institutions within which these regularities occur. Because sociologists tend to take this for granted, there is much to be learned from them about how quantitative data can enlighten our understanding of practice and the changes it undergoes. At the same time, narratives of practice can easily be distracted by data sets that employ misleading categories or rely on self-reported behavior—for example, the widely cited figures on church attendance in contemporary America, which greatly exaggerate how much of their Sundays people really devote to religion.

But the more important point about churches and similar institutions is that they are never monolithic. Nor can the historian of lived religion ignore the capacity of institutions to incorporate the improvisational and the divergent. The

parish priests in East Harlem may not have welcomed every aspect of the feast of the Madonna as Orsi describes that event, but they allowed it to unfold. More tellingly, the lay-centered charismatic movement that arose within Roman Catholicism in the 1970s, though in certain ways profoundly individualistic, was sanctioned by a cardinal and gradually folded into the church. Here as in general, a perspective that emphasizes practice requires us to resist easy dichotomies.

Acknowledging Intermittencies and Inconsistencies

Quantitative data is important for another reason: its capacity to demonstrate difference. Alongside the evocations of community that imply or assert consensus and uniformity, we must place a very different picture of diversities of practice; alongside accounts of institutions as capable of regulating behavior, we must place stories of resistance and indifference. To his great credit, Le Bras allowed the data he amassed from parish registers to override his fervent Catholicism, data showing that in early-twentieth-century France, the active practitioners were but a minority in most parishes. Some did conform, for every parish contained a group of people, most of them women, who constantly participated in confession and mass and turned out for every pilgrimage. Then there were the persons who showed up mainly for Easter services or the occasional saints' days, and some who simply turned their backs on the church. Ever curious about local practice, during a stint of military duty in 1938 Le Bras asked a local priest to describe his congregation. The priest responded that preach though he did to the crowd that turned up for Easter service on the importance of returning regularly for the mass, he had not persuaded a single person to do so.

That local people did not walk in lockstep is a lesson powerfully visible in a second body of work: the studies of popular religion (mainly by historians) that have occurred in such abundance since the 1970s. This work has repeatedly exposed the limited reach of the Protestant Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany or, for that matter, the eighteenth. In general, studies of popular religion have made us wary of assuming that what institutions or leaders wanted was how laypeople behaved. As well, these studies demonstrate the presence of the unauthorized or the unexpected in everyday religious life. All this was greatly to the good, especially when historians of popular religion began to take seriously a host of beliefs and practices that fell outside the boundaries of a regulating institution. Yet the question remained, what constituted the "popular"? Within one tradition of analysis, the popular was construed as an alternative

to orthodox or official religion, with assumptions about the "folk" lurking in the background. Within another, the popular was construed as the bottom layer of a hierarchical array of modes of culture, with social class as the key determinant. These two perspectives have largely given way to an understanding of the popular as a set of practices and motifs that, far from being specific to a particular social group or emerging from the folk, are widely reproduced and appropriated. Moreover, the emphasis now falls on the interchange between high and low, the official and the popular.

Explaining Change

Explaining these multiple and overlapping forms of practice in a given society is ever more challenging now that the interpretations so common a generation ago have been questioned. Foremost among those interpretations of behavior was the argument that "secularization" or "modernity" was eroding traditional patterns of practice in modern Europe and America. Le Bras took such a process and its close kin, industrialization, for granted. Secularization still deserves a place in our arsenal of possibilities despite the powerful criticism in recent years of this model of change. "Class" has also fallen out of favor, though before World War II sociologists of religion in the United States found it a useful tool for understanding differences in behavior. For historians of Catholicism and Judaism in the United States, immigration and the disruptions that preceded and followed it continue to be regarded as consequential for religious practice, and with immigration becoming a global phenomenon, this perspective is likely to flourish, as are such factors as a "free market" in religion, the "consumer revolution," and the much-evoked factor of "pluralism."

The most persuasive alternative to class may be gender. The recovery of the religious history of women and the foregrounding of gender as a key factor in how people have behaved has made visible the distinctive behavior of women, notably (as the French data covering several centuries of Catholicism indicates) a rate of participation in the sacraments that far exceeded the rate of participation by men. Why it is that women have been more active than men may have much to do with the roles made available to them within religious institutions, Catholic and Protestant. For example, in "Religion and Popular Culture in Modern Europe," Caroline Ford has suggested that women's orders in nineteenth-century France flourished because "the religious life provided opportunities and avenues of social mobility that were unavailable anywhere else" (p. 172). In other

settings, their being active seems related to childbirth and the responsibilities of motherhood. Women found St. Jude (a devotion that originated in the United States in the 1930s) a figure they could carry with them into hospitals at a time of transition from home births to hospital maternity wards.

A Golden Age?

Perhaps the most difficult challenge in our pursuit of an institutionally located lived religion is to hold together in a single narrative the elements of persistence and regulation with diverse rhythms of participation. One possibility is to posit a transition from the one to the other, as though modernity is synonymous with deregulation. Narratives of this kind are useful, but it was Le Bras who repeatedly insisted that there was never a “golden age” when everyone in France conformed to the rules and expectations of the church. A better model may lie in those studies of popular religion that refuse to isolate it from prescriptive or institutional practice. In such a model, the differences that emerge retain a connection with shared values. Indeed, any differences in practice (or confusion about what should be happening) may indicate that everyone is wrestling with master symbols and motifs, each of them charged with several possibilities for meaning. How this perspective can be of benefit for lived religion is demonstrated in Orsi’s description of responses to the “dark-skinned other” (Puerto Ricans, Haitians) who began to turn up at the festa on 115th Street. Here, the master symbol is race (darkness) and how a marker at once so explicit and uncertain affected practice. Similarly, anyone who attempts to understand baptismal practice in seventeenth-century New England eventually recognizes that the tensions and differences surrounding this practice have a great deal to do with the very different meanings invested in the sacrament: lots of saving grace at one extreme, no grace at the other.

Understanding Experience or the “Vital”

Is the “lived” necessarily “vital,” as though it can be contrasted with a realm of experience that is inert or lifeless? The history of Christianity in the West teems with situations when reformers have sought to reawaken the truly vital or “sincere.” Historians are susceptible to the same impulse, especially at a moment when institutionally based religion can seem inert or ineffectual. But can we make such a distinction? The longer Le Bras pondered his data and how it spoke to the situation of the Catholic Church in France, the more he found himself drawn to a question to which his

data gave a blurry, confusing answer. Wherein lay the “vitality” of religious practice, he wondered, and what techniques would enable him to measure this aspect of religion? As any historian of radical Protestantism in the West (the early Quakers, the Moravians, the early Methodists, the early generations of “Puritans”) should know, these movements were obsessed with the same question and built it into their institutional practice: limiting church membership and/or access to the sacraments to people deemed truly “vital” and demanding that anyone who prayed and preached do so spontaneously, on the grounds that “set” prayers were inadequate. Within these movements, countless sermons and hundreds of books limned the differences between the “real” or “sincere” Christian and the hypocrite or “formalist.” Nor were such efforts limited to the radical fringe. Seeking to purify and reinvigorate traditional practices, Martin Luther declared that repetitive prayer was “not real prayer.” Only those that arose from the “heart” were genuine.

The example of these reformers, none of whom had the success (at least longer-term success) that they thought they would, should give us pause, if only because we are aware of the problems, at once theological and social, that eventually defeated such distinction-making. When we extol the creativity of individuals in modern society, are we on any firmer ground in estimating what is “vital,” or are we caught up in an illusion fostered within Christian primitivism that somewhere, somehow, people are more immediately connected with the divine and more fully embodied in their spirituality? Has a normative understanding of “good” religion burrowed its way into our category despite the emphasis on imaginative play and multiple possibilities?

The distance from “vital” religion to an emphasis on religion as experience (or, as is increasingly said, to “lived experience”) is short. Good things can happen if we follow this road, for the category of experience alerts us to all sorts of materials that older versions of church history excluded as too unusual or extreme. Lived religion does us all a service if it circumvents any such process of exclusion and embraces the fullest possible rendering of the religious. Where it may do less good service is if it distracts us from recognizing the elements of “story” that attach themselves to narratives of experience. Such narratives are constructed out of sources (for example, long-enduring stories of martyrdom) that can easily be identified.

Which is to say, experience is always mediated. Looked at closely, these mediations involve strong rules that regulate not only practice but how “the real” is construed. There may

be something that counts as “raw” experience, but for the historian of lived religion it seems prudent to assume that “the vital” or the real can occur as much within the frameworks of institutional regulation as without. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Protestant liberalism is a good case in point, a mode of spirituality that professedly cast off the rules of the past in favor of creative appropriation. Yet in retrospect those appropriations can be seen as patterned, even normative.

The Utilities of Practice

What, then, do practices accomplish? No general answer may be possible, but a tendency in studies of lived religion and kindred categories such as ritual is clear, to hedge or complicate any single outcome or meaning, much less a functionalism of the kind that informed W. Lloyd Warner’s interpretation of “Yankee City.” Once again it is worth noting how, in studies of popular religion, historians have moved away from claims that this or that practice had specific social or cultural consequences—for example, that “carnival” functioned as a form of resistance or that witch hunting accomplished its professed goal of cleansing a community of outsiders. Too many players, too many meanings, too many unintended consequences get in the way of such one-to-one connections. The same is surely true of the practices encompassed within lived religion. The women who participate in the cult of St. Jude are, from one vantage point, becoming empowered by associating themselves with the power of the saint in contexts that are extrainstitutional. From another, however, they experience the repositioning of gender norms. Pondering the “prosperity gospel” as it is preached by TV evangelists, Marla Frederick is struck by the incongruities between the message and the situation of the African American women in a North Carolina county who watch them. Ostensibly, the message is that God will elevate you into the ranks of the middle class or higher, a message embodied in the lavish dress and lifestyle of some these evangelists, who repeatedly narrate their own life stories of being lifted out of brokenness and poverty into affluence and power. For most of the women Frederick studies, however, this message is more fable than fact: few if any of them will experience the passage from rags to riches made visible to them on television. Yet they find it absorbing, perhaps because it offers them “hope” that the conditions they endure may not be permanent. Or is it that the story into which they write themselves encourages a sense of moral order?

Understanding Healing

Histories of faith-centered healing have to face this problem head-on: what indeed is “healed” in such settings? As with the witnessing to change in the prosperity gospel, testimonies abound of transformation from physical sickness to physical health. Miracles may happen; and in the realm of the merely human, distress can certainly give way to ease. It may be that healing is also about a story into which people insert themselves, a story (to cite one narrative framework) of God’s love for those who suffered; or (to cite another) of hopefulness, as though a reorienting of self and spirit can alter the material or the physical. Healing may also become moments of letting go when long-contained emotions of anger, sorrow, and love are publicly expressed. Or, as Carol Greenhouse has suggested in her study of the “intimate lives” of ordinary people, religion may encourage a rhetoric of “acceptance” and, in doing so, offer relief from anxieties about conflict.

For sure, the framework for understanding the work being done must acknowledge the ambiguities and intermittences that surround all forms of practice. The only possible answer to the question, What did baptism mean to the people of early New England? is that it entailed a cluster of discordant possibilities—for example, that baptism was a means of grace but also something entirely “external” to the workings of the Spirit. The only possible answer to the question, What does the devotion to St. Jude do for the women who become devotees? is that it works both to empower and constrain them, as Orsi has argued in *Thank You St. Jude*.

Can Lived Religion Make Room for Discrepancies of Power?

In their indifference to the official and the hierarchical, studies of the lived run the risk of ignoring the forms of power that are strongly present within the field of religion. These studies lie downwind of the discovery of “popular religion” with its emphasis on the agency of ordinary people, and they are easily tempted by a narrative that contemporary informants sometimes articulate of newfound freedom (or, to evoke William James, a narrative of experience as never reaching closure), as in the example previously quoted of the woman who extols “spirituality” as the opposite of “fundamentalism.” The concept can also tempt us to reject the long-standing assumption that values shape behavior—values meaning those that are publicly

articulated by religious organizations. But as Orsi has rightly insisted, we must not lose sight of power in our fascination with the intimate, the local, and the everyday. It may be that the most significant challenge going forward is whether studies of lived religion can develop a grammar that connects the more public or corporate forms of power with the workings of the personal and the private.

See also *Celebrity Culture*; *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements*; *Death and Burial Practices*; *Devotionalism*; *Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches*; *Folklore*; *Food and Diet*; *Geographical Approaches*; *Liberation Theology*; *Marriage and Family*; *Material Culture, Approaches*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Religious Studies*; *Sociological Approaches*; *Spirituality* entries; *Tourism and Pilgrimage*; *Violence and Terror*; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Lutheran Churches

Lutherans first arrived in North America during European colonization. Lutherans in Canada and the United States organized themselves into congregations and extra-local bodies on the basis of ethnicity, piety, theological positions, and occasionally geographic location. In the early 2000s, Lutherans supported a handful of large denominations, more small ones, and numerous free-standing institutions and organizations such as colleges and social service agencies. In contrast, during the heaviest period of European immigration in the late 1800s, there were more than sixty synods and churches. Throughout the twentieth century, as mergers and the establishment of new bodies reconfigured the institutional shape of American Lutheranism, the churches’ internal life was affected by shifting patterns of immigration, the ecumenical movement, response to general cultural trends, and some members’ movement into the social mainstream. These

churches share commitment to the authority of the Bible, the ecumenical creeds, and the theology of the sixteenth-century reformers; however, they are distinguished from one another, in part, by disagreements about the nature of biblical authority and the ongoing significance of the Lutheran Confessions for the life of believers and the church.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, nearly two dozen Lutheran churches had a combined membership exceeding 8 million. The largest two, both located in the United States, accounted for more than 90 percent of the total. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) had more than 60 percent. It reported a 2006 membership of 4.7 million in nearly 10,500 congregations. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LC-MS) accounted for more 30 percent. It reported about 2.5 million members in 6,155 congregations. The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), also in the United States, was third largest with nearly 400,000 members in 1,276 congregations. The addition of the two largest Canadian bodies accounted for nearly 98 percent of all North American Lutherans. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) had 182,000 members in 620 congregations. The Lutheran Church—Canada (LC-C) had 72,000 members in 324 congregations. (Most recent membership figures are reported on denominational Internet pages.) The remaining bodies ranged from about 250,000 members to less than 500, some with less than ten congregations.

Whether founded in recent doctrinal disputes or old groups with common ethnic roots, the smallest groups generally professed a conservative interpretation of Lutheran tradition, emphasizing biblical authority and commitment to evangelism. The ELCA and the ELCIC, each the largest Lutheran denomination in its nation, were regarded as more liberal with respect to the biblical and confessional tradition, more demographically and culturally diverse, and engaged in wider ecumenical cooperation. The dual transition—from many to fewer churches and development of larger denominations with internal variety and greater affinity with the surrounding culture—suggests a primary plot line in the history of North American Lutheranism.

Defining Lutheran

Evangelical, confessional, and Lutheran: these descriptions point to the movement's origin in the sixteenth-century, magisterial Reformation and to ongoing debates about its defining characteristics. Some Lutherans dispute the appropriateness of the term "church," asserting that a "reform

movement within the church catholic" cannot be contained by denominational institutions and labels. One wing of late-twentieth-century Lutheranism described itself as evangelical and catholic while other members found more in common with Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Methodists with whom the ELCA engaged in dialogue. The simplest definition of Lutheran is a formal one. Lutheran churches trace their origin to Martin Luther (1483–1546) and their doctrine and practice are rooted in his reforms. By analogy, individual Lutherans either belong to such a church or their theology and piety are rooted in the Reformers. This allows that some members of Lutheran congregations do not subscribe to all the church affirms and that some nonmembers profess a Lutheran form of Christianity.

In historical context the term "evangelical" highlighted the Reformers' emphasis on the gospel of Jesus Christ, proclaimed by the New Testament evangelists and found throughout the entire Bible. Thus the Lutheran claim to be evangelical links the church to Jesus while asserting that the Bible is the Word of God and plays a central, authoritative role in these churches. The term also distinguished evangelical Lutheran Protestants from reformed Calvinist Protestants, with whom they had much but not everything in common. In the United States, where most of mainstream Protestantism has Calvinist roots, "evangelical" came to denote a stream of Christianity marked by emphasis on personal conversion, antimodernism including biblical inerrancy, and social conservatism. Some Lutherans' affinity with American evangelicalism should not lead to including all Lutherans within its tent. Lutherans affirm the importance of each believer's recognition that God's gifts are "for me," but they downplay individual conversion especially when it seems to depend on personal decision rather than God's action. Furthermore, the basis of biblical authority is a matter of debate among Lutherans, many of whom, along with Luther, regard the book as the cradle where the Christ child is found.

At the generative heart of Luther's reform was his freeing experience of God's gracious love for him even when he knew himself as a captive to sin. This good news, received through the Bible, propelled his efforts to bring the church into conformity with the gospel. Following him, Lutheran Reformers proclaimed the gospel, refined their teaching, and renewed the church through changes in worship, governance, education, and programs of social service. Luther's principal theological insight was articulated in the slogan, "Grace alone; faith alone; scripture alone," and developed in carefully crafted statements of Lutheran doctrinal positions,

both those they held in common with other Christians and those that set them apart. These Confessions, including the Augsburg Confession (1530) and Luther's *Large Catechism* (1529) and *Small Catechism* (1529), were collected into the *Book of Concord* (1580), along with the ecumenical creeds.

The designation "confessional" refers generally to the ongoing centrality of theology in the Lutheran tradition and specifically to the Confession's normative function. Potential competition between the Confessions and biblical authority is addressed by grounding confessional authority in and limiting it to conformity with the Word of God. Unlike nineteenth-century American Restorationists who claimed no creed but the Bible, Lutherans read the Bible in dynamic interaction with historic creeds, Confessions, and liturgy, always expecting a new word of grace for their own day. Indeed the Bible's authority is in its capacity to convey the Word of God that is also incarnate in Jesus and proclaimed through preaching and the sacraments. If a tradition can be understood as an ongoing argument about the matters its adherents hold most dear, then Lutherans are aptly described as those who argue about such matters in conversation with the Confessions.

The Augsburg Confession informs Lutheran understanding of the church. Article 7 defines the church as "the assembly of saints, in which the Gospel is taught purely and the Sacraments are administered rightly." This succinct statement highlights the constitutive significance of preaching and the sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper). Lutheran theologians affirm this definition and debate about proper criteria for evaluating pure teaching and right administration of the sacraments in sermons and Sunday worship as well as in other arenas, including all modes of teaching, loving behavior toward neighbors, and proper conduct of rituals. Differing judgments in these matters prevented North American Lutherans from recognizing one another, much less others, as authentically Christian and limited fellowship and cooperative work. Some bodies set stringent standards of agreement prior to common activity, with the highest requirements for shared worship and lesser standards for cooperation in external work such as relief services. Women's ordination provides a vivid illustration. The 1970 decision by the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) and the American Lutheran Church (ALC) to ordain women increased their distance from the LC-MS. As the LC-MS retreated from fellowship discussions, the ALC was more inclined to increased cooperation with the LCA, and the possibility of the LC-MS entering into a merger diminished.

Institutional exclusivism based in doctrinal purity and right practice suggests that the church is a voluntary association constituted by like-minded members who chose to gather themselves. Lutherans' voluntary gathering has often been prompted by shared ethnicity intertwined with common belief. However, Lutheran teaching asserts that God calls and gathers the church through word and sacrament. Day-to-day American Lutheran churches may operate according to the first view; nonetheless, the second view undermines the assumption that human beings are the arbiters of right teaching and right administration. God is the agent and divine grace is both the first and the final word.

Observers identify other distinguishing Lutheran characteristics. H. Richard Niebuhr categorized Lutherans as an immigrant church. Popular expectation of affinity between Lutheran and ethnic identity is a legacy of this origin, often from countries where a state church linked national and religious identity. Into the early 1900s, some congregations conducted worship in languages other than English. In the early 2000s, European holiday customs and other expressions of their founders' ethnicity continue in some congregations; nonetheless, North American Lutherans are as likely to worship in Spanish or Mandarin as in Swedish or German. Lutheran foreignness was also reinforced by worship practices, which varied from formal, high liturgy to quite simple, but appeared to onlookers as more Catholic than Protestant, particularly prior to the ecumenical liturgical reform movement. Liturgical worship, congregational singing, and the reputation of college choirs informed Lutherans' reputation as fine musicians. Pietist concern for personal morality and orthodox concern for right belief contributed to the perception that Lutherans stood outside the mainstream of American religious life, preoccupied with internal disputes more than with matters of general cultural concern. Involvement in charitable and social service programs rather than political issues fostered the stereotype of Lutheran quietism. Only after the mid-twentieth century did scholars categorize some Lutherans in the Protestant mainstream.

Since its beginnings, North American Lutheranism contained vast cultural variety along with a wide spectrum of doctrinal positions, styles of piety, and liturgical practices. Each difference contributed to formation of congregations and to their joining together in denominations with supporting institutions. Efforts to transcend these differences in organizational unity began before the American Revolution, occupied much of the twentieth century, and reached their closest fulfillment in the formation of the ECLA and

ELCIC. The fewer, larger bodies contain the religious variety that once generated many churches, as well as a rich array of cultures resultant both from expansion beyond old ethnic communities and from the arrival of Lutherans from Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Following the world wars, North American Lutherans assumed increased responsibilities and leadership in their communion worldwide. The ELCA and ELCIC are members of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, and the National Council of Churches and Canadian Council of Churches. Along with Lutherans from other nations they pioneered bilateral ecumenical dialogue. The LC-MS is the largest of the two dozen members of the International Lutheran Conference.

Three, Three-part Schemes

This double movement—to organize churches on the basis of similarity and then to bring them into cooperation or unity—required much discussion, involved myriad personalities, and sometimes turned on subtle distinctions. Three scholars provide schemes helpful for following these developments. Sydney Ahlstrom, historian of American religion, identified three impulses present within Lutheranism across time, place, and culture: the scholastic, the pietistic, and the critical. Each impulse may be expressed by an individual, group, or church, but usually the three co-exist and interact in varying proportions. The scholastic is concerned with objective truth, for ensuring that teaching is pure and that the sacraments are administered rightly. The pietistic attends to more subjective matters of personal reception and appropriation of the gospel in believers' lives. The critic holds the others in fertile conversation with each other and their context. The first two have affinities with historic movements known as Lutheran Orthodoxy and Pietism; however, Ahlstrom suggests that each movement contains all three impulses. His scheme highlights similarities between groups within Lutheranism even when adherents disagree about what they hold in common.

Speaking to Germans in 1854, Philip Schaff (1819–1893), a Swiss immigrant and Reformed theologian, offered a snapshot of the main American Lutheran groups as they clarified their positions and took institutional form. Schaff pointed to “multifarious differences of opinion and schools . . . representing almost all those of the mother church, besides specifically American tendencies.” Within this thicket he discerned three types: New Lutherans, Old

Lutherans, and Moderate or Melancthonian Lutherans. The New Lutherans, who are also known as Platformists or American Lutherans, were led by native-born Americans, some generations from immigration. This group was influenced by friendly contact with other Protestants, particularly Methodists and those descended from Puritanism. In all settings their primary language was English. Their adherence to the Confessions involved radical revisions. In 1820 they formed the General Synod. The Old Lutherans, many of whom were German immigrants informed by European revival of Confessional consciousness, often continued to use German, and insisted on strict adherence to all of the Confessions as the requisite of fellowship. The Synods of Missouri and of Buffalo, both of this type and leaning toward Ahlstrom's scholastic impulse, were divided in their understanding of the pastoral office. Among the Moderates, Schaff included the Synods of Pennsylvania and of Ohio. This group contained descendents of colonial Lutherans and recent immigrants. In adapting to the New World, some adopted English while others continued using the language of their homeland. Consistent with their Pietist leanings, these Lutherans emphasized the Augsburg Confession and Luther's *Small Catechism* rather than the entire *Book of Concord*. Although the names of players and groups change, this trifold scheme remained useful for sorting Lutheran denominations until the mid-1900s when the New and Moderate Lutherans amalgamated in merged bodies.

Historical theologian Jaroslav Pelikan contrasted the development of American Lutheranism with its European mother church. In Europe the ferment and creative energies of the Reformation was followed by Lutheran Orthodoxy, whose proponents refined and preserved the Reformers' theological insight by careful systemization and institution building. The Orthodoxy proponents contributed a more developed articulation of Lutheran teachings that responded to the intellectual currents of the day. Orthodoxy was strongest in the century after 1580 when normative statements of Lutheran teaching were gathered into the *Book of Concord*. Pietism emerged, in part, in reaction to Orthodoxy's tendency toward formalism, dispute, and spiritual dryness. Pietists strove to awaken right believing Lutherans into an experience of faith, expressed in right feeling and right action. Personal morality, social service, and evangelism were expected from all believers. Pelikan suggested that in the New World these phases occurred in reverse order. Colonial Lutherans were formed by Pietism and received leadership from its center in Halle, Germany.

Schaff's Lutheran neighbors were wrestling with Orthodox concerns. Perhaps in the past seventy-five years, North American Lutherans have entered a phase more akin to the dynamism of the Reformation.

Shifting Alignments

As they found their place in the North American religious landscape, Lutherans adapted to religious freedom, the absence of government support, and the need to attract and retain members; they developed leadership and established schools, colleges, and charitable institutions; and they learned to articulate a shared identity beyond ethnic and theological differences. Their history divides roughly into three periods marked by centenaries of Luther's Ninety-five Theses posted in 1517. During the first two centuries, 1617–1817, the churches were *planted*, often haphazardly. In the next century, 1817–1917, Lutheran churches *gathered* members, gathered together in synods, and *sorted* themselves into cooperative associations. After 1917, churches *merged* into new denominations, *moved* into the mainstream, and engaged more fully with the surrounding culture.

Planting

The Lutheran church first appeared in the New World in 1619 when a Danish Lutheran conducted worship in Hudson Bay. Lutheran presence (first recorded in the 1630s) in New Amsterdam was more enduring and influential. Atypically Lutherans from the Netherlands belonged to a minority church, tolerated but not supported by the civil government. Contrary to that prior experience, Lutherans in New Amsterdam were required to be in public conformity with the Reformed church, and their requests for a Lutheran pastor were long denied. Because preaching and the sacraments could be performed only by a pastor, this was a major hardship. The shortage of well-prepared, authorized pastors continued as long as North American Lutherans depended on European sources. Only when the English took over the colony in 1664 did the Lutherans, from several nations, receive adequate pastoral leadership and organize a congregation stretching from Manhattan to Albany. Their constitution, following a Dutch model and influenced by Reformed practice, allowed lay involvement in governance and was well suited to their minority status and the ongoing shortage of pastoral leadership; this constitution provided the pattern for congregations throughout America.

More typically Lutherans in New Sweden (now Delaware Valley) and the Danish Virgin Islands came from established churches. Initially those churches and local civil authorities were responsible for their country folks' spiritual well-being; however, the colonists' religious needs were neglected for years at a time. The congregation in St. Thomas (now U.S. Virgin Islands) was the second in the Western Hemisphere. When the Danish islands were sold to the United States in 1917, the majority of its Lutherans were African. In New Sweden, John Campanius (1601–1683) translated Luther's *Small Catechism* into Lenni-Lenape, a Native American language, in the 1640s. Although they gave up the colony in 1655, Swedes continued intermittent religious support until after the Revolution. Periods of fine pastoral leadership alternated with long vacancies in which lay people improvised worship, made do with unauthorized and sometimes unfit clergy, or attended other churches. Increasingly they used English as their daily language and intermarried with non-Swedes. By the 1840s, unable to sustain themselves, all colonial Swedish Lutheran congregations had transferred to the Episcopal Church.

The territorial principle that established Lutheran churches in Sweden and Denmark authorized expulsion of Lutherans from Salzburg (now Austria) by their Roman Catholic ruler in 1731. The exiles' religious motivation was rare among Lutherans, who usually were immigrants looking for greater opportunities rather than refugees from religious or political oppression. In route to Georgia, the exiles were aided by German Lutherans and the English Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge. In their tightly knit community, the secular and religious were nearly coincident and property was held in common. After initially rejecting slavery, within two decades they adopted it and included slaves in their congregations. By the Revolution the colony was declining. The Salzburgers were unable to maintain an established church, even on a small scale, neither were they able to sustain other countercultural efforts: rejection of private property and slavery.

Germans, concentrated in Pennsylvania but spread from Georgia to Nova Scotia, were more successful in planting Lutheran churches. They began to arrive in the thousands early in the eighteenth century, first from the Palatine (now southwestern Germany) and then other regions. Many were redemptioners, indentured servants until they paid the debt for their passage. German religious variety spanned the spectrum of European Christianity; in this period, the vast majority of immigrants were Lutheran or Reformed. With

no German church responsible for them, Germans in English colonies fended for themselves, relying on untutored lay leaders or on the ministry of other churches, and were vulnerable to self-appointed pretenders to the pastoral office. In numerous Pennsylvania settlements Lutherans and Reformed members cooperated in union congregations. The few Lutheran pastors traveled from community to community preaching, baptizing, celebrating the Lord's Supper, and adjudicating conflicts. The 1703 ordination of Justus Falckner (1672–1723), a German educated at the University of Halle (now located in Germany) by Swedish pastors in Philadelphia, was a notable episode of cooperation among pastors whose infrequent contacts could be contentious. The divergence between orthodox clergy such as William C. Berkenmeyer (1686–1751) and pastors sympathetic to Pietism was one source of conflict.

The patriarch of American Lutheranism, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711–1787), arrived from Halle in 1742 to serve three Pennsylvania congregations. Committed to planting the church, not just congregations, Muhlenberg led colonial Lutherans toward a common church body and responsibility for its life. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania was formed in 1748 at a meeting coinciding with the dedication of a church building and an ordination. The Ministerium was composed of clerical members with laity invited to report. Its work involved examination and ordination of pastors, oversight of congregations and schools, and provision of an order for worship. Despite minimal confessional standards, the Ministerium was grounded in theology rather than shared German heritage. Nonetheless, many Swedish clergy and those more inclined to an Orthodox position remained outside, and the Ministerium failed to unite Lutherans in a single body. Geographic expansion led to organization of regional bodies: for example, the Ministerium of New York (1792), the North Carolina Synod (1803), and the Ohio Conference, 1818, later Synod). Before long, differences of theology and ideology led to establishment of alternative bodies.

Gathering and Sorting

Lutheran response to the American Revolution was mixed. Loyalists moved to Ontario, which was still under the British Crown, and established a second Canadian concentration of Lutherans. Others were active supporters of the Revolution. Subsequent, native-born generations lacked personal experience of Europe, had wider encounters with other

Americans, and were fluent in English. In 1807 the New York Ministerium adopted English as its official language. Renewed immigration from Germany and Scandinavia in the 1800s widened the churches' theological range and increased their ethnic variety. These developments and encounter with "specifically American tendencies" were the basis of new denominations sorted into Schaff's three types.

A fifth-generation American, David Henkel (1795–1831), along with his father and brothers, spearheaded formation of the Tennessee Synod (1820) in opposition to the North Carolina Synod's lax confessional standards and in protest against the proposed connective General Synod's undue claim to authority. The family's press produced both German and English materials, including the first English version of the complete *Book of Concord* (1851). In upstate New York, the Franckean Synod (1837), named for Pietist August Hermann Francke (1663–1727), marked the edge of New Lutheranism. Although they honored the Augsburg Confession when it concurred with the Bible, the Franckean did not require a declaration of agreement from members. Slaveholders were excluded from membership; strict Sabbath observance was expected; revivalist methods were condoned; and sacraments were accorded a diminished role. The moderate Pittsburgh Synod (1845) and William A. Passavant (1821–1894) established charitable and educational institutions, including coeducational Thiel College, and addressed the needs of new immigrants moving into U.S. territories in the Midwest and parts of Canada.

Samuel Simon Schmucker (1799–1873) pressed his co-religionists toward institutional maturity, responsibility for training leaders, and clear expression of their beliefs in conversation with other Christians. Schmucker founded both Gettysburg Seminary (1826) and a college to prepare students for entry. He cooperated with other Protestants in the Evangelical Alliance and supported their moral standards. Schmucker's attention to the particularity of Lutheran teachings contrasted with the relative indifference of the pre-Revolutionary churches, but his criticism of the Confessions (for example, rejecting baptismal regeneration and affirming "Puritan" Sabbath practice) showed his affinity with nineteenth-century, mainstream Protestantism and brought him into conflict with Moderate and Old Lutherans. In the 1820s, he proposed drawing regional synods into a single body. Opposition focused on the plan's minimal confessional stance and its centralized oversight of liturgical forms and ministry. As with the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the General Synod (1820) failed to unite all Lutherans.

Instead it and Schmucker's Definite Synodical Platform (1851), which offered an American Recension of the Augsburg Confession, stimulated significant controversy that clarified the fault lines within American Lutheranism.

Nineteenth-century immigrants brought the customs and language of their homelands along with their particular strains of Lutheranism and adapted following patterns forged by earlier arrivers. Canadians formed connections with ethnically and theologically similar Lutherans in the United States rather than establishing independent churches. Newcomers' native languages separated them from each other, from Americanized "Muhlenberg" Lutherans, and from other Christians. The influx of arrivals into New York prompted that synod to reinstitute German. Initial cooperation among Scandinavians usually gave way to separate churches. Many moved to U.S. territories in the Midwest where they formed congregations with women's organizations and youth groups; gathered local churches into synods; established colleges and seminaries to prepare pastors; and developed ministries to care for their members and spread the gospel in foreign lands. Most were sympathetic to the Old Lutheran or Moderate groups.

Germans participated on several sides of debates about Lutheran union. Their rejection of projects to unite Lutheran and Reformed churches prompted the founders of the Buffalo Synod (1845) and the LC-MS to leave Germany. Led by C. F. W. Walther (1811–1887), the Saxons established the LC-MS characterized by confessional conservatism, commitment to congregational autonomy, and strong educational programs that began with parochial schools and included teachers' colleges as well as seminaries. Following a series of theological consultations, the LC-MS joined similarly conservative synods including the Wisconsin Synod (1850) and the Norwegian Synod (1853) to form the Synodical Conference (1872), on the basis of strict adherence to all the Confessions and with the expectation of uniformity of practice. In the 1870s and 1880s, the predestination (or election) controversy divided the Synodical Conference into those stressing the absoluteness of God's gracious action—the Missourians—and those asserting the importance of believers' faith—including the Anti-Missourian Brotherhood within the Norwegian Synod.

Other Germans joined previously established synods and allied themselves with the moderate General Council (1867). Like other nineteenth-century Lutherans, the General Council struggled to remain faithful to their theological heritage while adapting to America. Its approach was more

theologically flexible than the Synodical Conference, but more Confessional than the General Synod. A federation, it required subscription to the Augsburg Confession of 1530 but not the whole *Book of Concord* and allowed member churches autonomy in their internal life. Charles Porterfield Krauth's (1823–1883) *Fundamental Principles of Faith and Church Polity* outlined its theological position. Continued debate and varying practice about chiliasm (millennialism), altar and pulpit fellowship, and membership in secret societies—the Four Points—pushed conservative churches to organize the Synodical Conference.

The Swedish Augustana Synod (1860) joined the General Council although some of its practices were more restrictive. Swedish Methodist, Baptist, and Evangelical Free churches gave Swedes alternative religious communities where they found a shared ethnic culture, but Augustana Lutherans were remarkably cohesive. Controversy over the atonement prompted formation of the Swedish Mission Covenant (1878). Within Augustana, Pietism melded with a strong sense of the church. Frequently Augustana stood between other churches, sometimes moving toward the liberal group and others reaching toward the conservative. Thus it offers a useful window into nineteenth- and twentieth-century controversies and projects.

The variety of religious groups within the Church of Norway spawned several American churches distinguished by stress upon the objective claims of the gospel or upon subjective reception of it; by use of the Church of Norway's liturgical forms or of simpler patterns; by inclination toward centralized organization or toward congregational autonomy and democratic polity; and by concern for clerical position or willingness to allow lay leaders. The Pietist Eilsen's Synod (1846), named for an early lay preacher, rejected formal worship, admitted lay preaching, and expected members to display a reformed, moral life. The Norwegian Synod resembled the state church in teaching, formality, and university trained pastors. Its early association with LC-MS was disrupted by disagreements over slavery and the predestination controversy. Despite a reputation for contentiousness, Norwegians led the way toward unification while preserving internal variety. In 1890 the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in America (the United Church) merged the Anti-Missourian group and two groups from the center of the spectrum; then, in 1917 the United Church, the Norwegian Synod, and Hauge's Synod (1876) formed the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (later the Evangelical Lutheran Church [ELC]).

Other Scandinavians tended to ally themselves with larger groups until they reached a critical mass for organizing separately. The Danes sorted themselves according to imported groups: the so-called Happy Danes, influenced by Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig (1783–1872) in the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (1878, the Danish Church), and the Sad or Holy Danes, influenced by the Inner Mission Movement in the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church (1896, later the UELC). As the groups' nicknames suggest, the Danish church adopted Grundtvig's affirming stance toward folk culture while the UELC had stricter expectations for holy behavior. Despite common ethnicity, the two remained separated until the late 1900s. Finns organized the Suomi Synod (1890) and several smaller bodies. Icelanders, concentrated in Canada, formed the Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Synod of America (1885). Slovaks divided themselves between the LC-MS and the Slovak Zion Synod (1919).

Merger and Movement

By 1917 North American Lutherans were on a path toward greater cooperation and institutional unification and into the mainstream of American religious life. The world wars encouraged intersynodical cooperation and expanded contacts. Informal anti-German sentiments and legal measures hastened transition to English. The Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare (CSSW) and the Lutheran Service Board in Canada brought churches into cooperation with each other and national government. Following World War II, resettlement of European refugees laid the groundwork for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, and similar responses to Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans. In mid-century the national churches launched vigorous missions to gather mobile Lutherans into new congregations and to reach out to potential members. By the late twentieth century, Lutheran Social Services and similar agencies were among the largest in the United States offering health care, adoption services, and housing for the elderly. Although supported by Lutherans, these independent agencies offered their services without regard to religious or ethnic affiliations. Similarly a network of colleges maintained lively relationships with Lutheran heritage while serving religiously and culturally diverse student bodies.

Following the Norwegian unions, two phases of organic union reconfigured North American Lutheranism in the twentieth century. Following several decades of

collaborations, including the Common Service (1887), the United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA, 1918) reunited the oldest groups: the General Synod, the General Council (except Augustana), and the United Synod, South. Later the Slovak Zion Synod joined as a nongeographical unit. The National Lutheran Council (1918) built on the CSSW's experience and expanded the scope of common activities. Its distinction between external activities that did not require complete agreement of doctrine and internal activities, such as shared worship, that did, were inadequate for the more conservative bodies. These formed the American Lutheran Conference (1930), where fuller theological agreement allowed collaboration in ministries such as student work. Also in 1930, the American Lutheran Church (ALC) united several synods with German roots. Debate about how to express commitment to the Reformation principle of biblical authority failed to resolve the issues.

Negotiations toward further cooperation and institutional unity continued alongside common projects, increased leadership in world Lutheranism, and Americanization. The *Service Book and Hymnal* (1958) provided common worship patterns, eased movement between congregations, and anticipated the second set of mergers. The American Lutheran Church (1960) brought together the ELC, the ALC, and the UELC, bodies generally associated with Norwegian, German, and Danish ethnicity, although those designations were dropped in mid-century. Having withdrawn from the United Church, the Lutheran Free Church (1897) joined the ALC in 1963. The Lutheran Church in America (1963) also mingled ethnic communities when it joined Augustana (Swedish), Suomi (Finnish), AELC (Danish), and the ULCA (German and Slovak). Old ethnic designations obscured the reality in congregations that included African Americans, Eastern Europeans, Americans generations from immigration, and members of other ethnic groups. The vast majority of Lutherans belonged to the LCA, the ALC, or the LC-MS. The LC-MS was the more doctrinally conservative. The ALC was regarded as in the middle ground between the LC-MS and the LCA; however, a wide range of theological views and religious styles was present in both newer churches. After 1966 the Lutheran Council in the United States of America (LCUSA) was the primary vehicle for interchurch cooperation. The Canadian Lutheran Council (1952) facilitated cooperation among the Canadian units of various churches, excluding the LC-MS. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada (1967), the first autonomous body, separated from the ALC.

The momentum of the 1960s encouraged optimism about bringing all American Lutherans into a single church; however, steps forward were matched by steps away. The three-way partnership to develop a new hymnal yielded two similar books. LC-MS struggled with internal controversies over biblical interpretation, confessional integrity, and responsiveness to cultural trends. Following a major rift at Concordia Seminary and nearly a decade of widespread acrimony, in 1976 the moderate minority constituted the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) and pledged itself to promoting Lutheran unity. In 1980 the ALC, AELC, and LCA agreed to the widely participatory process that formed the ELCA (1988). The ELCIC (1986) united a similar set of Canadian churches. The LC-C (1988) was formed by Canadian congregations affiliated with the LC-MS.

At the turn of the century, new initiatives in worship and Bible reading, increased female leadership, expanded attention to multiculturalism, ecumenical fellowship agreements, and a new focus on social and political matters occupied Lutherans. The ELCA entered into full communion with the Episcopal Church, the Moravian Church, the Presbyterian Church USA, the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ, and continued formal dialogue with Disciples, Methodists, Orthodox, and Roman Catholics. These enterprises generated both enthusiasm and dissent. Social teaching statements (for example, on the economy, the environment, and sexuality) intended to foster moral deliberation also stimulated controversy. Most ELCA response was organized as loyal opposition. Those congregations and individuals dedicated to “an evangelical, confessional Lutheran future” and opposed to theologically indifferent ecumenism and liberal social practices gathered in WordAlone, a grassroots network. Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries drew on “Lutheran confessional history, liturgy, and practice” in support for ordination of sexual-minority pastors. Like other mainline churches, the ELCA faced declining membership and falling churchwide revenues. Efforts to discipline a pastor who took part in a post-9/11 interfaith prayer service brought the LC-MS to brief national attention. Continued confessional orthodoxy, traditional defense of biblical authority, and frequently conservative social positions within the LC-MS tended to increase distance from the ELCA, although collaborations were possible through organizations such as the Lutheran Educational Conference of North America and local projects.

See also *Architecture: Early America; Bible entries; Congregations; Denominationalism; Ecumenism; Ethnicity; Great Lakes Region; Great Plains Region; Latino American Religion: Mainline Protestants; Lutheran Tradition and Heritage; Mainline Protestants; Ministry, Professional; Pietism; Protestant Liberalism; Worship: Protestant.*

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Lutheran Tradition and Heritage

The lineage of the seven and a half million Lutherans in the United States and Canada and their coreligionists around the globe today can be traced to the spiritual insight of a sixteenth-century Augustinian monk teaching Bible at a newly founded university in Wittenberg, a provincial German town. Both Martin Luther (1483–1546) and his spiritual descendents point to the objective reality of divine love and gracious forgiveness apart from human sin, efforts, or accomplishment as the heart of the gospel that is revealed in the person of Jesus, the living Word of God to whom the Bible bears witness. Martin Luther's assertion that he had no intention of starting a new church looms large in the mythos of his biography, and Lutherans' claim that their confession of faith adds nothing to the gospel is a constant in their collective self-identity. Nonetheless, Brother Martin's questions about medieval Roman Catholic practice launched a movement that traces its origins through Augustine and Paul to Jesus and that now extends into churches on every inhabited continent. Sometimes in Latin and sometimes translated into the vernacular, the reformers' motto, "Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone," identifies the stable fulcrum upon which Lutherans balance the rich variety of their devotional practices and ministries and the dynamics of their doctrinal debates.

God's grace is central for Lutherans in every time and place, and yet in each context the message must be translated into the local language, and the faith's actions must be responsive to local culture and circumstances. A beloved and well-known Lutheran hymn begins, "Now thank we all our God, with hearts and hands and voices." When many singers join in the hymn, expressing their gratitude in multiple parts and in various languages, the polyphony of the tradition rings in the ears; the tradition also encompasses an array of pieties and a varied repertoire of activities serving members and their neighbors. Linked by personal relationships, by institutional history and connections, and by shared theological and spiritual heritage, these churches and their members vary in their languages, nationalities, and cultures; in their piety and polity; in the degree of their veneration for

Luther; and in the authority they grant to the Confessions, formal statements of belief written in the sixteenth century.

So too Lutherans are linked to other Christians by belief, practice, and relationships. The patterns of similarity and difference vary by time and place. Often Lutherans are found between two contrasting or even contesting options. In the United States, for example, Lutheran worship has sometimes appeared more akin to Roman Catholic liturgy than to Protestant services prior to the twentieth-century liturgical reform movement. Disagreements that divided Protestants in the earliest generations or that mattered intensely on the American frontier lost power in mid-twentieth-century suburbs. Formal ecumenical dialogues have produced statements of agreement and facilitated cooperation with Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Methodists, Reformed churches, and other Christians. However, even as Lutherans around the world have become more ecumenically minded, they retain their traditional focus upon God's gracious love, upon the authority of God's word, and upon faithful living.

The Founder and Foundations (Sixteenth Century)

"We are all beggars." Widely regarded as Martin Luther's final words, this sentence describes his life and his life's work. As much as his teaching, Martin Luther's life story remains potent among Lutherans as a model for Christian living. This promising son of a miner was studying law when a thunderstorm prompted him to join a monastery, where his sense of his own unworthiness plunged him into a spiritual struggle, a sort of begging for assurance of his salvation. The penitential practices available only intensified Luther's agony. Obedient to his superior's direction, he began teaching Bible at the new university in Wittenberg. The power of God's grace came to him through his study of scripture. Having received the gift of faith, he was compelled to speak to other beggars of God's freely given love. In 1517 Professor Luther challenged the theological basis for sale of indulgences that were purported to grant release from punishment prior to entry into heaven; his posting of the ninety-five theses or topics for debate marks the beginning of the evangelical Protestant movement sometimes called by his name.

A quarter century after Columbus's journey west, European sacred and secular institutions were closely aligned. Luther's proclamation of Christian freedom in academic debates, treatises, sermons, letters, and biblical commentaries disturbed religious and political authorities alike, prompted

reconstitution of churches, and contributed to reorganization of public life. After taking his stand with the gospel and scripture at the imperial Diet of Worms (1520), Luther was excommunicated as a heretic by Pope Leo X (1475–1521) and rendered subject to execution by Emperor Charles V's (1500–1558) forces. His protector, Frederick the Wise (1463–1525), sheltered him at the Wartburg Castle, a mighty fortress not unlike the image of God evoked by the first line of Luther's most famous hymn. There Luther labored on his translation of the Bible into the vernacular language; his German Bible made its message available to the many who did not understand Latin and contributed to the development of German as a literary language.

Luther, his colleague Philip Melancthon (1497–1560), and their contemporaries operated in a time of intense debate and rapid innovation. They expected that when they preached the word of God it would generate right belief and right living in their hearers; nonetheless, as the movement grew, conflicts raged among temporal authorities and theologians. By signing the Augsburg Confession, written by Melancthon, Lutheran princes and representatives of free cities defended their belief as truly Christian at an Imperial Diet in 1530. Although the official audience was the emperor, the document was read in German and before an open window so that those assembled below could hear its declaration that justification comes from God for Christ's sake, not by human "strength, merits, or works."

Reformers, united in rejecting much of medieval Roman Catholicism, nonetheless disagreed about such issues as Christ's presence in the sacraments, the role of faith in baptism, and alliances with earthly governments. At the Marburg Colloquy, a meeting at the Marburg castle in 1529, the so-called magisterial reformers agreed on nearly every point, but Luther was unable to convince Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531) of Christ's real presence in, with, and under the elements of the Lord's Supper. Lutherans continued to baptize infants, stressing God's action in salvation rather than a Christian's own faith; Anabaptists required a declaration of belief prior to baptism and demanded a holy life from those within their communities. Radical reformers, such as Thomas Müntzer (c. 1488–1525) and the theocratic community at Münster, strove to bring in God's reign on earth while Luther understood God's governance through both hidden, spiritual means and imperfect human ones. More moderate reformers maintained that Christian communities could continue to cooperate with temporal authorities and did so in Wittenberg, Geneva, and elsewhere. John Calvin

(1509–1564) and his followers, like his spiritual descendents in the United States, were more confident that they could discern and establish God's intentions in their communities than was Luther, who dismissed the peasants' claim that political freedom should follow from Christian freedom.

If they rejected the possibility of establishing a heavenly kingdom in Germany, Luther and his followers offered their fellow beggars what they had. They aspired to reform the church, to bring the freedom of the gospel to every child, and to ensure that the town's hungry people were fed. Visitations to parishes revealed that none of this would happen quickly or without effort. Evangelical pastors were trained and sent out to preach the gospel. The order of worship was revised, adding German hymns and inviting the congregation into more active participation. The people received both bread and wine when they communed. The sermon was given a more prominent place, but without removing the "sermons in pictures" displayed in windows and paintings.

New church ordinances, such as the Leisnig Order of 1523, also established mechanisms that made local communities responsible for the welfare of their members, as they assumed the charitable work formerly carried out by monasteries. At Luther's urging and with Melancthon's leadership, schools were founded. Girls as well as boys were taught to read the Bible and the Catechism and prepared to serve God and neighbor in their daily activities. Luther married Katherine von Bora in 1524, and their household in the former Augustinian priory became a model for both the Protestant parsonage and the Christian home as a school for faith.

Despite his observation that "a true Christian is a rare bird," Luther's voluminous writing, frequent preaching, and regular teaching were above all practical, intended to articulate the gospel and to foster faithful living, a daily dying to sin and rising in grace. That a person can be totally free and totally obligated—the seeming contradiction succinctly stated in his 1520 treatise *The Freedom of a Christian*—rests on Luther's core contention that it is God's grace that releases sinners from captivity to the necessity, or possibility, of gaining divine favor and then turns them toward their neighbors to act in love.

This dual movement into grace and toward the neighbor pulses through the life of a Christian, giving comfort and stimulating action. It is a central theme of the Lutheran tradition. It is the deep logic of Luther's Small Catechism, whose brief exposition of the Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments has been the

foundation for most Lutherans' earliest theological training even when little else of Luther's writings are known.

In the twenty-first century, Americans, Lutheran or not, have access to much more. The Luther Renaissance of the early twentieth century generated scholarly reassessment of Luther less determined by ecclesiastical partisanship than in previous centuries. Controversial charges that Luther was a source of Hitler's anti-Semitic program prompted careful, critical attention to his polemics against Jews who rejected the gospel in his time and in response to his other opponents. More recently, Finnish scholars have highlighted the mystical aspects of Luther's theology. Publication of the fifty-five-volume American Edition of Luther's Works beginning in the 1950s made much more of his work available to a wide, English-speaking audience.

Lutheran Emphases and Eras (Late Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries)

The dialectical concern for correct teaching and proper action that Luther balanced on the singular truth of God's grace given through faith and revealed in the living word continued into the following generations. Sometimes the emphasis tilted toward doctrine, sometimes toward behavior. A person or group shifting in one direction usually provoked someone else to counterbalance in the other. The dynamic tension that holds these two concerns together appears again and again in the Lutheran tradition. For example, it raises an objection equally to absolutism in theology or perfectionism in piety. It informs Lutherans' double recognition that God can and does work through earthly governments and that no government's agenda or actions coincide perfectly with God's intentions. Even noble human enterprises are shot through with motives that are at best mixed and often self-serving. The individual Christian is totally free and completely constrained.

In *Christ and Culture*, his classic study of Western Christian stances toward culture, H. Richard Niebuhr placed Luther in the ideal type he characterized as paradox. The Christian lives in the midst of perpetual struggle, between the fulfillment of Christ's promises and the present reality of earthly life. Some call this disposition toward dialectic a preference for "creative tension." If the tent within which Lutherans dwell is to stand, the tension between the poles is vital. Much of Lutheran history since the mid-sixteenth century is a story of emphasis shifting toward one perimeter pole or another and then being pulled back to balance on the center pole of God's love. While an era, a movement, or

a person may be typified by one emphasis or another, usually all are present in varying degrees.

Political disputes within the so-called Holy Roman Empire and dangers from without, notably the threat of the Ottomans who laid siege to Vienna in 1529, heightened the significance of right belief. Carrying forward the centuries-old pattern set by Constantine, the first Holy Roman Emperor, military alliances required common religious confession. Theologians drafted statements of religious teaching and belief that served as the basis of alliances such as the Protestant Smalkald League. Christian armies arrayed against Muslim soldiers, Swedish Protestants battled German Catholics: the armed conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries suggested that God takes sides and that one army knows better than the others what is God's intention for the world.

Although Luther wrote vehemently against both Muslim Turks and European Roman Catholics, in his more measured work he maintained that good and evil are mingled in human governments, even as they are in individual Christians who remain simultaneously redeemed by God and yet sinners. The Peace of Augsburg (1555) and then the Peace of Westphalia (1648) established the principle that the ruler's religion would determine the religion of the ruled (*Cuius regio, eius religio*). This provided a basis for reduced conflict between rulers without resolving the questions about the mode of God's activity in temporal, earthly governments.

Theological battles, fought with words, produced books. For Lutherans the Bible, the written word of God, stands in first place, followed by the Book of Concord, an authoritative collection of public statements of belief published in 1580. These documents, also known as the Confessions, stake out Lutherans' place within Christianity, assert their distinctive common teachings, and provide criteria for evaluating their disputes with one another. Inclusion of the three ecumenical creeds—the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian—places Lutheran teaching firmly within the mainstream of Western Christianity. The remaining confessions are three written by Luther, three by Melancthon, and the Formula of Concord.

Of these the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism are most widely known and highly regarded. Luther's brief explanations of the chief parts of Christian life and faith have been the core of basic theological instruction through time and around the world. The Augsburg Confession defined Lutheran teaching on key matters—including

justification and the theological basis required for Christian cooperation—and distinguished those teachings from other sixteenth-century positions Lutherans judged false. The Augsburg Confession functions within the Lutheran tradition analogously to the U.S. Constitution. Even as Lutheran churches are united by their profession of allegiance to it, they debate about how the Augsburg Confession is best interpreted in particular circumstances and the degree to which it is binding.

After the first generation of reformers died and the Reformation was institutionalized, a series of controversies erupted within the Lutheran movement. Some, the Gnesio-Lutherans (that is, the genuine Lutherans), leaned more toward Luther's theology, while others, the Philippists, leaned toward Philip Melancthon, particularly concerning such issues as proper understanding of the role of works. The group of German theologians who composed the Formula of Concord (1577) aimed to establish agreement, or at least harmony, among their coreligionists. Disputes continued, nonetheless, as Lutherans endeavored to articulate their faith and live faithfully.

During the period from the publication of the Book of Concord into the mid-eighteenth century, the so-called Orthodox Lutheran theologians used philosophical tools to refine, systematize, and secure the insights of the sixteenth century. They countered Jesuit efforts to win Protestants back to Catholicism and mounted arguments in support of the reliability of the Bible and its authority. Emphasis upon right teaching is often at the expense of the religion of the heart; so too Orthodox Lutheran scholasticism is typically described as arid and lacking spiritual warmth. The gruesome experiences of the Thirty Years War (1618–1648) made the potentially horrific consequences of zealous religious dispute vivid to theologians as well as ordinary believers and opened them to other aspects of faith.

In the later decades of the era, Orthodox Lutherans such as Johann Gerhard (1582–1637) produced devotional literature and hymnody as well as polemics. The soul's longing for God, the comfort and joy that come with divine mercy, and gratitude for Jesus' loving sacrifice: worshippers from the seventeenth century into the twenty-first are given words for all of these in hymns by Paul Gerhardt (1607–1676). The career of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) overlapped with both orthodoxy and pietism. The most well-known and influential Lutheran musician, his chorales and organ compositions are widely regarded as a high point in

Lutheran cultural production. Their polyphony is a sonic expression of the traditions' patterned variety.

The Pietist movement, the apparent counterbalance to Orthodoxy, revived concern for faithful living without surrendering the core Lutheran emphasis on divine grace. Although the movement began in the late seventeenth century, its origins can be traced to Johann Arndt's (1555–1621) devotional writings, of which the most enduring is *True Christianity* (1605). In response to the reformers' focus upon Christ's work on behalf of sinners, Arndt encouraged those united with Christ to live out their faith. Three quarters of a century later, Philip Jakob Spener (1635–1705) wrote *Pia Desideria* or "Heartfelt Desire for God-Pleasing Reform" as a preface to Arndt's book. Spener outlined a program for church reform and personal devotion in the midst of doctrinal controversy and spiritual dryness.

Pietists expected that Christians would experience an awakening to their own sinfulness followed by an intense awareness of God's gracious forgiveness that would generate lives characterized by personal holiness and action for others. Religion of the heart moved the hands to work for the neighbor. Mandatory catechetical instruction, domestic devotional reading, and small prayer and Bible study groups (*collegia pietatis*) all encouraged the believer in this process of renewal. Educational, publishing, medical, and charitable institutions established in Halle by Spener's younger contemporary August Hermann Francke (1663–1728) gave Pietism its institutional form. Francke, who also taught at the University of Halle, is frequently regarded as the founder of Pietism.

From the center in Halle the movement spread to Scandinavia, where it enjoyed royal patronage, with immigrants to North America, and with missionaries around the world. A second wave of Pietism swept Scandinavia beginning in the late eighteenth century, energizing the peasant class to take responsibility for its own religious life as well as promoting a high moral standard. The implicit potential for social unrest and political subversion provoked state church authorities to enforce previously enacted Conventicle Acts restricting unofficial religious gatherings. Norwegian Hans Neilson Hauge (1771–1824) was imprisoned for several years for his unauthorized preaching.

Lutheran Pietism had much in common with the evangelical movement that included the Great Awakening in colonial North America and emerging Methodism, but it was restrained by Lutheranism's commitment to infant baptism, its nonperfectionism, and the recurring assertion of its

Confessional teachings. If Orthodoxy leaned toward over-emphasis upon doctrine, Pietism was inclined to the dour self-scrutiny, hypermorality, and judgmentalism portrayed in “Babette’s Feast,” a short story by Isak Dinesen. In this story and in the film based upon it, the daughters of a Pietist leader do good works in their community and also shelter Babette, a French refugee. The extravagant meal Babette provides for the sister’s devout guests breaks through their pious austerity, awakening a sense of wonder and gratitude. This outcome hints at a more tender aspect of Pietism that is evident in hymns including those by Lina Sandell (1832–1903), whose *Children of the Heavenly Father* portrays God’s nourishing, protective care for his children with the image of a nestling.

A third, critical strand of Lutheranism was evident in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries both in the universities and in congregational life. Coincident with the Enlightenment, Lutherans again turned toward the philosophical and were influenced by rationalism. Efforts to safeguard revealed truth from human criticism contributed to development of new methods of biblical interpretation and historical study by scholars such as Johann Salomo Semler (1725–1791) and Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792–1860). Higher criticism attempted to distinguish the enduring, inspired word of God from culture-bound, ephemeral aspects of the Bible. This goal is captured by Rudolf Bultmann’s (1884–1976) phrase, “demythologizing the Bible.” Reduction of religion to morality impoverished worship life: the Lord’s Supper was celebrated infrequently; the liturgy was diminished; sermons were long and didactic.

Both the second wave of Pietism and the neo-Confessionalism in the nineteenth century were to some degree reactions to this rationalism. The three hundredth anniversary of Luther’s ninety-five theses provided the formal occasion for reuniting Lutheran and Calvinist streams of Protestantism in the Prussian Union in 1817. Opposition to such “unionism” heightened Lutheran attention to the distinctive teachings of the Confessions, notably among the German immigrants who formed the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Historian Jaroslav Pelikan (1923–2006) insightfully observed that Lutherans first moved from the ferment of the Reformation to scholastic orthodoxy to Pietism. Then in North America they reversed the order: having begun as Pietists, they moved in the nineteenth century into neo-Confessionalism, and perhaps after the Reformation’s quadricentennial regained something of the movement’s initial effervescence. The momentum of the

twentieth century was toward deeper engagement with American culture, greater openness to non-Lutherans, and more productive relations between Lutherans.

Geographic Spread

In the early twenty-first century Lutherans worldwide are linked in two associations. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), headquartered in Geneva, includes 140 churches in 79 countries with more than 68.5 million members. The International Lutheran Council (ILC), headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, is an association of 34 churches. All Lutheran churches grant some degree of authority to the Confessions, with the Augsburg Confession as the usual minimum. Members of the ILC adhere to a stricter standard than required by the LWF.

From its Germanic origins, coinciding with the European age of discovery, the Lutheran form of Christianity was carried around the world by reformers, missionaries, and immigrants. It has been planted in monarchies and democracies, as one of many churches, and among many religions. Wherever Lutherans have founded churches they have, on the one hand, nurtured their theological and cultural inheritance from Luther and their other forbears, and, on the other, struggled to follow Luther’s example of translating the gospel message of Christian freedom into the realities of that place and time. Increasingly they have confronted circumstances where the alliance of church and civil authorities that Luther took for granted does not obtain, and thus they have wrestled with how best to engage in cultural and political concerns.

News of the Reformation stirring in Wittenberg traveled quickly to Scandinavia with students who returned to their homes in Sweden and Denmark. As in the Christianization of the region, royal initiative was a key factor in the evangelical reforms that spread from Sweden to Finland and from Denmark to Norway and Iceland. Without the religious abuses and political dynamics in force in Germany, the Scandinavian Reformation was gradual and less dramatic. Bible translation and education were central. Worship was adapted in line with Lutheran practice. Among the Confessions, only the Augsburg Confession and Catechisms were granted authority and widely used. Revised polity severed allegiances to Rome; episcopal ordination, however, was maintained in Sweden without polemic. The only vigorous opposition to reform, in Iceland, was short-lived.

In contrast to the situation in German lands where one area’s ruler and residents were Roman Catholic, another

Calvinist, another Anabaptist, and yet another Lutheran, in Scandinavia the institutional alignment of the single church and civil government forged a strong affinity between each distinct national identity and the shared religious culture: being Norwegian, Icelandic, Danish, Swedish, or Finnish almost inevitably also entailed being Lutheran. Post-Reformation clergy were civil servants as much as spiritual leaders. Compulsory catechetical instruction was the foundation for widespread literacy. Pietism spread throughout the region, activating faith that had been taken for granted, stimulating moral reform and missionary endeavors, and fostering peasants' political consciousness. In Sweden, Pietists formed non-Lutheran congregations, not allied with the government, and thereby encouraged the free church movement.

The influence of two nineteenth-century Danes continues: Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) and N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783–1872). Kierkegaard's philosophical work is studied around the world and beyond Lutheran circles. Grundtvig is known for his advocacy of the folk-school, for his hymns, and for his assertion that one is first a human being, then a Christian. A similar notion seems prevalent in contemporary Scandinavia, where extensive government welfare systems have replaced the churches' charitable role, and individual participation in church life is often minimal. Legal ties between civil government and the Lutheran churches loosened in the late twentieth century; nonetheless, Lutheranism remains the ambient religious tradition in the Nordic countries even as the presence of non-Lutheran and non-Christian traditions expands.

Orthodox Lutheran interpretation of the territorial principle made rulers responsible only for the religion of those they ruled and thus restrained any impulse to missionary enterprises until the early eighteenth century. Danish King Frederick IV was stimulated by Pietism to sponsor a mission in the small Danish colony of Tranquebar, on the southeastern coast of India. Upon their arrival in 1706, Germans Bartholomew Ziegenbalg (1682–1719) and his colleague developed principles of operation based on their training in Halle that would characterize subsequent Lutheran missions. Schools were established. The Bible and Catechism were translated into the vernacular language. The missionaries set themselves to learning the local language and culture in order to preach the gospel, bring their hearers to Christianity, and train Indian leaders for the church. Ziegenbalg composed a Tamil grammar, wrote extensively on Indian religions, and collected artifacts for the Cabinet of

Curiosities at the Halle Orphanage school. His successors' cooperation with English missionary societies demonstrated the affinities between Pietist Lutherans and the larger evangelical movement. In contrast to the ongoing significance of the Danish Royal Mission, the prior work sponsored by the Swedish king among the Lenape Indians in New Sweden (now Delaware), begun by Johan Campanius (1601–1683) in the 1640s, had little enduring effect.

Once begun, Lutheran missions expanded into many fields. Early on, Lutherans' presence was particularly strong in India, China, New Guinea, and southern Africa. The independent, flamboyant, and entrepreneurial German Karl Gutzlaff (1803–1851) was an untiring promoter of Chinese missions. Support for these ventures came from societies established specifically for the purpose, from church bodies, and from auxiliaries such as women's missionary federations associated with churches in the United States. This rather unsystematic organization resulted in establishment of multiple Lutheran churches in a single area, each associated with a different mission and manifesting its sponsor's characteristics as well as its own cultural patterns. The outbreak of war early in the twentieth century prompted increased cooperation between the missions and promoted the churches' autonomy. When internment of German nationals left their missions "orphaned," other European and American missionaries assumed their work.

Also in the early twentieth century, local leaders took greater responsibility for their churches. The Lutheran Church of China (LCC), for example, was formed in 1920, bringing together churches founded by five missionary groups. Throughout its thirty-year existence, the LCC worked toward increased autonomy while cultivating relationships with other Lutherans through membership in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), founded in 1947. The legacy of the LCC continues in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore. Other Lutheran churches have begun as missions have grown in numbers, autonomy, and world leadership in recent decades. As the twenty-first century turned, the general secretary of the LWF was Ishmael Noko, a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe. In 2009 the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus celebrated its fiftieth anniversary as a church and 110 years of Lutheran presence with membership of about five million, surpassing the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the largest Lutheran body in North America.

From the mid-seventeenth century, colonists and immigrants carried the Lutheran tradition with them into new

circumstances, particularly in the Western Hemisphere and Australia. In nations such as Australia, Brazil, and Canada, as well as the United States, Lutherans found themselves a minority without government support and often reliant upon erratic assistance from the church in their “old country” for clerical leadership and other resources. These diaspora situations allowed formation of churches defined by language and national origin as well as Confessional stance and styles of piety and necessitated development of means for self-support and self-government distinct from old European patterns. The many Lutheran church bodies in nineteenth-century North America reflected the variety of their members’ ethnicity; in contrast, the Lutheran churches in Argentina, Brazil, and Australia were predominantly German-speaking.

As typical in missionary settings, these transplanted Lutherans founded schools and the full range of charitable institutions, initially directed to care for their own members. Each church learned to raise its own financial resources and established seminaries to train its own pastoral leaders. Continued use of a foreign language and preoccupation with Confessional issues and institutional concerns contributed to isolation, inhibited outreach, and discouraged productive interaction across denominational lines. By the mid-twentieth century, emphasis shifted away from maintaining old cultural practices and defending Confessional identity toward ecumenical openness and outreach beyond the descendents of immigrants; members of the ILC, however, retain a stricter standard of theological agreement as the basis of cooperation. Particularly in the United States and Canada, the arrival of Lutherans from Africa, Asia, and South and Central America has further expanded the ethnic mix.

International Lutheran cooperation developed in parallel with worldwide ecumenism. Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1930) Archbishop Nathan Söderblom (1866–1931) was a vigorous advocate for greater unity among Christians, in addition to his scholarly interests in comparative religions. His leadership in the Life and Work movement contributed to the eventual formation of the World Council of Churches. Following the 1925 Life and Work Conference in Stockholm, Lutherans formed the Lutheran World Council as a vehicle of cooperation, but its goals were delayed by World War II; after the war, they pursued those objectives through its successor, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

The first assembly of the LWF, held in Lund, Sweden, in 1947, brought together delegates from churches whose nations had been armed enemies not long before. They

determined not to be divided by war, but rather to work together for the unity of the church. LWF now describes itself as a communion of churches in the Lutheran tradition. Among its members is Huria Kristen Batak Protestant, HKBP, of Indonesia; although the HKBP does not subscribe to the Augsburg Confession, the LWF accepted its 1951 Batak Confession as the basis of membership in the federation. The federation’s 1977 assembly in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, declared that racial separation within the churches of South Africa, in accord with apartheid, compromised the gospel and constituted a “*status confessionis*” that required public, unequivocal opposition by Lutheran churches.

North American Lutheranism

If comic stereotypes and nostalgic recollections told the whole story, all North American Lutherans would live in rural enclaves, gossiping about their neighbors’ morality in foreign-accented English, eating hot dishes and Jell-O salads at church-basement potlucks, and singing in angelic, four-part harmonies. Lutheranism was introduced to this continent by Northern European immigrants, but by the twenty-first century most Lutheran churches and many of their members have entered the religious and cultural mainstream. The number of extralocal church bodies (synods, churches, or denominations) has been reduced by merger into larger national churches that encompass the entire range of emphases described above. In a countertrend, asserting their greater faithfulness to the Bible and Lutheran teaching, a number of smaller bodies have organized.

North American Lutherans live in suburbs and cities as well as small towns across the continent, with concentrations in the upper Midwest and Pennsylvania. The vast majority of members continue to be Euro-Americans. Official policies encourage outreach beyond the descendents of nineteenth-century immigrants to the whole range of Americans, regardless of their ethnicity, race, or language. Some congregations also declare a welcome to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Sunday morning worship, including Eucharist, may be conducted in English or Spanish or Mandarin and might include African drums or Taize chants, along with pipe organs and chorales. Concern for neighbors is directed toward social well-being. Lutherans occupy most positions on the political spectrum; although there is no identifiable block of Lutheran voters, more tend to vote Republican than Democratic. Along with theologians, Internet lists of “famous” Lutherans include movie stars, country singers, athletes, elected officials, and a travel

guru, although the basis upon which the identification is made may be debatable in some cases.

The ethnic and Confessional boundaries that once defined American Lutheranism and its subgroups have grown blurred and more permeable in recent decades, as is common in the postdenominational era. This is not to say, however, that Lutherans are indistinguishable from other North American Christians. Approximately two-thirds of North American Lutherans belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC); the remaining third belong to more strictly Confessional churches, including the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS). Key theological commitments and practical emphases remain central: God’s gracious love, the word of God, and active faith. Historian Mark Noll identified three Lutheran characteristics as potentially valuable contributions to the American religious arena: a rich sense of history, a moderating approach to involvement in political activities, and theological emphases that include stress upon the objective nature of salvation and human nature as marred by original sin as a state of being. He also highlighted Lutherans’ understanding that the church is constituted by God’s action through the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments and thus prior to human response, as a corrective to a common American view that equates the church with other purposive, voluntary associations of like-minded members.

Vigorous debates over styles of worship suggest that preaching and the sacraments continue to be essential to Lutheran religious life. Other observers highlight the ecology of Lutheran institutions that encompass congregations and denominations along with social service agencies, health care facilities, all level of schools, and a variety of special purpose organizations. Many of these carry out social ministries that are a primary means of Lutheran public engagement. Late-twentieth-century institutional mergers and ecumenical agreements brought competing Lutheran views into clear relief: high or low liturgy, functional and other notions of ordination, prescriptive or deliberative approaches to social and moral issues, congregational or centralized polity.

Congregational life, nonetheless, remained most Lutherans’ primary involvement with the tradition. Since the mid-twentieth century, educational materials and liturgical practice emphasized baptism as the beginning of a way of life rooted in God’s grace. Growing numbers of congregations moved to weekly Eucharist and reduced the age of first Communion to elementary school or even infancy.

Churchwide innovations and local initiatives yielded wide variation in the details of worship and musical repertoire, but the basic structure usually remained. Lay members assumed greater responsibility for leading worship, even as the liturgical pattern of exchange between leaders and congregation continued. Sermons were based upon a three-year cycle of biblical readings shared with other churches. Biblical passages and themes were woven through the liturgy and hymns. Each new worship resource gave congregations access to a wider selection of hymns from around the world, while retaining favorites from previous centuries. Typically the congregation was dismissed at the end of worship with the words, “Go in peace. Serve the Lord,” to which they responded, “Thanks be to God.”

Serving the Lord took place in and through the congregation, through the larger church in the national and global community, and through each member’s vocation. Luther broadened the notion of Christian vocation from its medieval Catholic use for a calling to specialized religious life to the obligations all Christians have to be “little Christs” to their neighbors. Their motive for service flows from their baptismal identity. They turn toward their neighbors, not to please God or impress one another, but in grateful response to having received God’s loving embrace. This entails the whole of life, in all of what German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945) termed one’s “places of responsibility.” While the public office of word and sacrament is vital to the church, all honorable offices—friend and citizen, parent and professor, spouse and artist—are valuable to the community and pleasing to God. Lutheran support for education, like Luther’s own, rests upon the necessity of preparing students to assume responsibilities that provide all manner of daily bread—actual food and whatever else is needed for earthly life. The practice of service takes many forms, from providing cake to a funeral lunch, to farming or operating a restaurant, to advocating for just food policy. In doing so, the individual Lutheran joins with others—other Christians as well as non-Christians—in response to God’s beloved world. The scope of vocation was well illustrated by the work of two brothers, Pastor Arthur Simon, who founded the advocacy group Bread for the World, and Senator Paul Simon of Illinois.

Like Luther, his spiritual descendents reject the medieval Catholic notion of a treasury of merit and are suspicious of good works. Although they operate hospitals and provide life insurance, make quilts and sing in choirs, lobby for just laws and vote, Lutherans do not anticipate establishing God’s

reign on earth by their efforts any more than they expect to work their way to personal perfection and salvation. Nonetheless, their works of love, understood as participation in God's sustaining care for the world, increase the resources for social well-being within their communities. Although no causal relationship can be proven, it is notable that areas of the nation sociologists identify as richest in these resources, or social capital, generally also have a large Lutheran population.

Decades ago, following the example set by the Pietists at Halle, Lutherans in North America established orphanages, homes for the elderly, and hospitals. At their founding, these institutions were usually intended to serve Lutherans. The commitment to care remains the same today, but now services are offered to all people whatever their religion or ethnicity. During World War I, the need to care for members in the military prompted several Lutheran churches to launch cooperative work, even when some groups' concern for purity of doctrine prohibited shared worship. Similar cooperation continues throughout the United States among the supporters of Lutheran Social Services, autonomous agencies offering assistance in areas such as adoptions, family and financial counseling, services to the elderly, and aid to persons with disabilities. Since 1997 more than three hundred Lutheran-affiliated health and human services agencies have been linked through Lutheran Services in America (LSA). The institutions and agencies of LSA provide care to approximately one of every fifty Americans each year. Official church response to domestic crises such as natural disasters and the 9/11 attacks in 2001 is coordinated through Lutheran Disaster Relief. Professional staff members draw upon the energy, experience, and efforts of thousands of volunteers recruited through congregations. Analogous work is carried out around the world by Lutheran World Relief, supported by church members' donations of time, money, and material resources such as school supplies, layettes, and locally crafted quilts.

Immigration from Scandinavia and Germany was still a vivid memory in many Lutheran congregations when World War II produced thousands of refugees and displaced persons needing a place to settle. The National Lutheran Council's efforts on behalf of these European coreligionists activated a pan-Lutheran network of individuals, congregations, and social service agencies across the United States and became the foundation for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS). By the mid-twentieth century, new political crises around the world expanded the scope of LIRS's work

beyond helping Lutherans to assisting persons of other religions, from Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, in their resettlement and adjustment to the United States. Lutheran sponsorship contributed, for example, to the large number of Somalis and Hmong who settled in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Individual and congregational involvement in resettlement fostered Lutherans' personal engagement with global and national political issues. That LIRS's involvement in advocacy for just immigration laws and policies grows out of direct service is a typically Lutheran pattern, moving from engagement with the particular realities of life to concern for general principles and policies.

From the movement's beginnings in a university and its early involvement in establishing schools for children, Lutheranism has been deeply committed to education for both members and leaders. In the United States, Lutheran educational ministry has expanded to include providing high-quality education to nonmembers as well as to their own children. The nineteenth-century German immigrants were committed to parochial schools that nurtured both religious and ethnic identity. Teachers were granted high status and a quasi-clerical role. When nativists opposed German language usage in schools and supported the Bennett Law (Wisconsin, 1890), Lutherans joined with German Catholics in protest. Young boys identified as potential pastors were sent to boarding schools to begin early training in languages and preparation for seminary. In contrast, Scandinavians, after some debate, tended to support the public schools and to provide religious education in special summer sessions. Early in the twenty-first century, LCMS congregations operate more than one thousand local schools. Particularly in urban districts, where they offered attractive alternatives to public schools, these drew students from outside the congregations.

Approximately three dozen colleges and universities are affiliated with Lutheran churches, with Gettysburg College, founded in 1832, as the oldest. The relationship between these schools and their churches varies from legal ownership to overlapping constituencies and shared history. At the time that most were founded in the nineteenth century, they were closely tied to a specific church. For instance, each of the two Danish Lutheran churches had its own college: Dana College for the so-called "Holy Danes" and Grand View College for the "Happy Danes." Ten schools associated with LCMS now are linked into the Concordia University system. After several rounds of church mergers and Lutherans' movement out of ethnic enclaves into the cultural mainstream, the student

body, faculty, and staff of these schools are also more culturally diverse, and the proportion of non-Lutherans often exceeds half. Lutheran colleges and universities offer their students programs that combine, in varying proportions, liberal arts curriculum with preparation for occupations. Several, such as St. Olaf College, are well known for their exceptionally strong music programs and choirs. In the ecology of American higher education, Lutheran institutions are located between the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, such as Wheaton College (in Illinois), on one side; and, on the other, formerly church-related schools with little memory of their Christian founders. In keeping with their theological roots, they claim freedom to study all topics using the best of human resources and the obligation to use what is learned for the benefit of the world.

Lutherans have been more prone to theological, doctrinal debate and concern for personal, moral life than to political debate or social activism. Insistence that God's grace is not dependent upon human actions has sometimes produced unwillingness to engage in any work that might tempt the worker to self-righteousness or opposition to any church teaching that might be construed as works-righteousness. Pietists in particular are accused of quietism. Nonetheless, by the final third of the twentieth century Lutheran church bodies became increasingly engaged with American social issues and issued a continuing series of statements on topics such as the economy, education, immigration, and racism. Intended to guide members' deliberation rather than as declarations of official doctrine, some statements raised barely a whisper of response, while others generated vigorous debate and prompted dissent. ELCA efforts to produce a statement on sexuality, begun in the 1990s, were particularly controversial. Following a multiple-year process of study and consultation, and after fifty days of prayer in preparation, in August 2009 the assembly adopted a statement that included openness to committed, same-sex relationships and made provisions to allow persons in such relationship to serve as pastors.

As they lifted the walls of their tents to join their neighbors in social service, invited greater cultural diversity in their membership, and took steps toward institutional unity, in the mid-twentieth century Lutherans became vigorous participants in ecumenical conversation and cooperation, in formal theological dialogues and in local, community projects, both internationally and in North America. Joint Thanksgiving services, sponsorship of food-shelves, pastors' study groups, and shared space were typical examples of

grassroots ecumenical activity. Coordination of Lutheran participation in official bilateral dialogue through the Lutheran Council in the United States of America (LCUSA) and the LWF fostered inter-Lutheran conversation in tandem with ecumenical discussion. However, differing approaches to cooperation endured among Lutherans, as evidenced by the fact that only the ELCA is a member of the National Council of Churches.

Each round of bilateral dialogue focused upon topics carefully selected to address historical points of disagreement. Dialogue partners span the spectrum of Christian churches from Orthodox, to Roman Catholic, to mainstream and conservative Protestant. In addition to published reports, these dialogues moved Lutherans toward renewed appreciation for other Christians and opened the way for new expressions of shared identity and mission. Significantly, the 1999 Joint Declaration on Justification, agreed upon by the Vatican and the LWF, was celebrated in Augsburg, Germany, where, four and a half centuries earlier, the emperor rejected the Lutheran reformers' central confession and claim to be true Christians. By 2009 the ELCA and six churches (Presbyterian Church USA, Reformed Church in America, and United Church of Christ in 1997; Episcopal Church and Moravian Church in 1999; and United Methodist Church in 2009) were in full communion: mutual recognition of baptisms, welcome of one another's members at Communion, exchange of clergy, and mutual lifting of any condemnations that existed between them.

Debates prior to agreements with the Episcopal Church and Reformed churches exposed differing positions on matters of polity, ordination, and theology within the ELCA. Some objected that the centrality of justification and the gospel was compromised by an agreement to bring ordination practices in line with episcopal polity requiring participation by a bishop. The disparate polity of previous church bodies and the regional variety of Lutheran experience across the nation intertwined with theological disagreement. Generally, but not unanimously, Lutherans who were a smaller minority in their region were more likely to support greater cooperation with the Episcopal Church, and those from bodies with a congregational polity were not. After the proposal was defeated by the ELCA churchwide assembly in 1997, it was revised and passed two years later as "Called to Common Mission." Opponents to the agreement formed Word Alone Network, a grassroots organization active within the ELCA to promote reform and renewal in conformity with the authority of the Bible.

Alongside the trend toward institutional consolidation and increased external engagement that characterized much of twentieth-century American Lutheranism, there was a counterforce calling for greater attention to the Bible and to the Confessions, for less ecumenical cooperation, and for adherence to conventional social mores. Some congregations declined to join new church bodies formed by mergers throughout the century. When conflict erupted in the 1970s, it split the LCMS; the moderate “exiles” became part of the ELCA, with whom LCMS members are advised not to pray. Following the ELCA’s adoption of a liberal social statement on sexuality in 2009, leaders of Lutheran CORE (Coalition for Renewal), Word Alone, and other opponents began seriously considering alternative organizations, including a non-geographic synod. These developments challenge the stability of the large-tent Lutheran tradition, raising institutional and theological questions about the basis and form of Lutheran unity. Although Lutherans have never achieved unification in a single organization, they have depended upon one another to provide the counterweight that brings all parties back to the center of God’s loving grace. Just how that will happen in the twenty-first century remains to be seen.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Bible* entries; *Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage*; *Ecumenism*; *Education: Colleges and Universities*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Latino American Religion: Mainline Protestants*; *Lutheran Churches*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Pietism*; *Protestant Liberalism*; *Roman Catholicism: Tradition and Heritage*; *Same-Gender Marriage*; *Sexuality and Sexual Identity*; *Systematic Theology*; *Worship: Protestant*.

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Mainline Protestants

The term “Mainline Protestantism” refers to an influential segment of American Protestantism, including seven denominations (or denominational clusters) that have exercised major influence in American religious life since early in the nation’s history. With some variation, they share a similar social and economic status, theological orientation, and sense of responsibility for American culture. Mainline Protestant denominations include American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church. But defining Mainline Protestantism precisely is complex. Several of these denominations are mergers of predecessor denominations. Others, such as the Reformed Church in America, could be included along with Presbyterians as part of a broader Reformed cluster. On the other hand, virtually all of them have sister denominations that consider themselves more evangelical than mainline, such as the Presbyterian Church in America. Finally, a number of historically African American denominations, such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church, are related to but independent of their Mainline Protestant counterparts.

Generally middle and upper class, mainly white, well educated, moderate to liberal theologically, and influential in business and politics, Mainline Protestantism functioned almost like an informal religious establishment from the early nineteenth century until at least the last third of the twentieth century. That is no longer the case in the twenty-first century. But even though these denominations now

occupy merely one portion of the American religious spectrum, they remain influential beyond their numbers.

Early History of Mainline Protestant Denominations

With the exception of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), all of these denominations trace their histories to the Protestant Reformation in Europe and date their history in the United States to the colonial period, which was dominated religiously by Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Anglicans. Virtually all of the denominations, however, have subsequently experienced major organizational change, including merger, schism, and denominational name change.

The United Church of Christ, for example, emerged from the Congregational churches of colonial New England. In England, Congregationalists had dissented from the established Church of England, some criticizing it from within while others separated from it. Both Non-Separatists (in Massachusetts Bay) and Separatists (mainly in Plymouth) came to New England in the early seventeenth century, creating in Massachusetts a Congregationalist establishment. Congregationalists remained strong in New England throughout the colonial period, despite the fact that some who preferred a somewhat more hierarchical form of church governance became Presbyterians.

Presbyterians traced their history back through the complex English Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to John Calvin’s Geneva. Although present in New England and other colonies, Presbyterians were strongest in the middle colonies, organizing the first American presbytery in Philadelphia in 1706. In 1801, Congregationalists and Presbyterians agreed to coordinate their mission

efforts on the midwestern frontier. But due partly to their insistence on an educated clergy, neither group succeeded in the frontier revivals as did Methodists, Baptists, and Disciples. Nonetheless, Congregationalists flourished mainly in New England, while Presbyterians were found throughout the United States.

Anglican establishments existed in several colonies, including New York, Virginia, Maryland, Georgia, and North and South Carolina. But since most of their clergy remained loyal to England, Anglican fortunes declined during the Revolutionary War, and only after the war did the church welcome its first resident bishop. The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America organized officially in 1789 and eventually regained influence in several areas where it had been strong, especially Virginia and New York City. But, gaining little from the frontier revivals of the early nineteenth century, its growth elsewhere remained slow.

Baptists in the North dissented from those early Congregationalist and Anglican establishments in the interest of religious freedom and congregational autonomy, most prominently in Rhode Island but later in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and elsewhere in New England. By the late eighteenth century, Baptist growth centered on the South and frontier areas further west, especially during the Second Great Awakening and beyond. In 1845, Baptists divided into Northern and Southern branches over the issue of slavery, and subsequent growth was far more rapid among the Southern Baptists. The Northern Baptists (currently American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.) suffered particularly from the fundamentalist/modernist controversy in the early twentieth century.

American Methodism developed from the evangelistic efforts, mainly in England, of Anglican preacher and theologian John Wesley. But his followers also enjoyed success in the colonies, and the Methodist Church was organized in the United States at the so-called "Christmas Conference" in 1784. Methodism thrived on the frontier, thanks largely to the organizational innovation of the circuit rider—a preacher (usually, but not always, ordained and often with little formal theological education) assigned to preach and serve throughout a broad geographic region rather than settling in one location. This strategy was remarkably well adapted to frontier conditions, and rapid growth made the Methodists the largest denomination in the United States by 1844.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) emerged in 1832 out of the Stone-Campbell Movement on the American frontier. Like the Methodists and Baptists, the

Disciples benefited greatly from the revivalism of the early nineteenth century. Although several of its major leaders had been either Presbyterians or Baptists, the movement advocated a simple, nonhierarchical church structure based entirely on the New Testament. Ironically, although it tried to avoid denominationalism altogether, the Stone-Campbell Movement gave rise to several denominations, including the mainline Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Although a few Lutheran congregations existed in the colonial period, major Lutheran growth was fueled by post-Revolutionary immigration, especially in the nineteenth century. Since immigration continued for several decades, the immigrant influence on Lutheranism remained strong, resulting, for example, in the persistence of German or Scandinavian languages in many Lutheran churches until the early twentieth century. In fact, the major Lutheran denominations in the early twentieth century, including the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, reflected to some extent the continuing influence of particular ethnic groups until the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1988. Long before that date, however, both denominations were an integral part of Mainline Protestantism. But a number of other Lutheran denominations, most notably the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods, remained firmly within the evangelical part of the Protestant spectrum. It should be noted that despite the contribution of immigration to Lutheran growth, the major benefits of immigration went to the Roman Catholic Church, which, by 1850, had become the largest single religious group in the United States. But it would be more than a century before Catholics exercised a comparable clout in business, politics, and culture as their Mainline Protestant contemporaries.

Mainline Protestantism: A Collective Story

If each of the Mainline Protestant denominations has its own individual history, they also share a collective one. By the 1830s, they constituted a dominant Protestant culture that functioned much like an unofficial religious establishment. Distinctions among these denominations certainly existed, reflecting ethnic, regional, social class, theological, and institutional differences. Taking theology as an example, Lutherans, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians maintained their own theological distinctives. Presbyterians and Methodists differed significantly, for example, on the role of free will in the moral life, and Episcopalians and Lutherans differed from both of them on the proper nature of Christian worship. But despite

these differences, they shared a broad theological consensus that included a high view of biblical authority, a trinitarian theology, a philosophical orientation based on Scottish Common Sense philosophy, an emphasis on warm personal religious experience, and a sense of responsibility for the shape of the broader culture. Their members supported numerous voluntary associations that addressed a number of social problems, from slavery to alcohol abuse, a collective reform effort known as the Benevolent Empire. In fact, more united these denominations than divided them.

The one great exception to this consensus was slavery, and the mid-nineteenth century saw three major Mainline Protestant groups split over the issue: Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. Although details varied slightly, each divided into Northern and Southern branches. The Methodist division lasted until 1939 and the Presbyterian until 1983. The Baptist split endures in the early twenty-first century.

In referring to “denomination” in the nineteenth century, some care should be taken. Prior to the Civil War, denominational identities were forming, but the elaborate bureaucratic structures that came to characterize Mainline Protestant denominations had not yet taken shape. Denominations tended to be decentralized coalitions of congregations held together by a common history and theological tradition. But simultaneously with corporate developments in the business world in the last third of the nineteenth century, denominational structures became more centralized and complex. The Mainline Protestant denominations thus entered the twentieth century in a form that would be more or less recognizable today and in a position of relative strength and influence in the culture.

That strength, however, was seriously tested early in the twentieth century by the so-called fundamentalist/modernist controversy. By the late nineteenth century, three major challenges to Protestant tradition had emerged. First, urbanization and the immigration that fueled it brought millions of new residents into the United States, many of whom were Catholic or Jewish, thus challenging the Mainline Protestant predominance rather than reinforcing it. Second, the scientific challenge represented by Charles Darwin and evolution presented Protestants an alternative way of looking at the world. Third, awareness of biblical criticism, which had largely developed in Europe, spread in the United States, challenging traditional ways of reading the book that constituted the preeminent source of Protestant authority.

These three challenges stimulated a resistance movement among some Protestants who suspected modern science and

rejected historical criticism in favor of a literal reading of the Bible. In addition, largely rooted in small towns and rural areas (although not exclusively so), they were somewhat suspicious of both immigrants and the cities that housed them. This religious resistance movement came to be known as fundamentalism. Fundamentalists were not all alike. If many were simple and uneducated, others were well-educated seminary professors and influential political and business leaders. Convinced that the fate of Christian orthodoxy was at stake, the fundamentalists attempted to root out what they saw as heretical trends in their own denominations. Fierce intradenominational battles resulted early in the twentieth century, especially among the Presbyterians and Northern Baptists, spilling over more widely into the culture as in the famous Scopes trial in Dayton, Tennessee. But in virtually all cases, by the 1930s, the fundamentalists lost the fight and withdrew into other denominations more to their liking.

Despite the fundamentalist/modernist controversy, the Mainline Protestant denominations did relatively well in the first half of the 1920s. Many deplored what they regarded as a decline in moral standards during the “Jazz Age,” and there were, in fact, reasons for concern. The increasing popularity of the automobile, for example, enabled persons to drive to such competing attractions as sporting events and movies, instead of Sunday evening services. On the other hand, financial contributions to churches remained fairly strong, and Mainline Protestant congregations undertook numerous church building projects that had been delayed by World War I.

But both financial support and building programs came to an abrupt halt with the advent of the Great Depression. In fact, historian Robert Handy identifies 1925 as the beginning of a “religious depression,” characterized by sharp drops in such signs of institutional vitality as giving to missions and volunteering for mission service. Church attendance flagged, and giving to churches declined dramatically. As a result, both congregations and denominations suffered, first in the Depression and then during the Second World War.

But they survived both depression and war, and some consider the late 1940s through the early 1960s as the high-water mark of mainline Protestant influence in the United States in the twentieth century. Membership in most of these denominations peaked by 1965, and they remained influential in politics and business. The religious affiliation of Supreme Court members, for example, suggests this Mainline Protestant influence. In 1966, the nine members of the Court included three Presbyterians, two Episcopalians,

one Catholic, one Jew, one Baptist, and one “Protestant.” By contrast, the Court membership in 2008 included five Catholics, two Jews, one Episcopalian, and one “Protestant.”

But the fortunes of virtually all these denominations have ebbed considerably since 1965, and the theme of Mainline Protestant “decline” has dominated scholarly discussion of them since at least the 1970s and 1980s. Although denominational experiences vary, sharp membership decline has characterized virtually all of them. For example, the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and United Church of Christ denominations, so overwhelmingly influential in the colonial era, had a combined membership of 7,605,517 in 1950. That figure increased to 9,774,778 in 1965. But it then declined to 7,884,334 in 1980 and to 6,892,699 in 1990 (only 91 percent of the 1950 membership despite rapid population growth in the meantime).

Financial giving to religious causes, which declined steadily from the mid-1930s through World War II, recovered somewhat after the war. But though significant in absolute terms, giving as a percentage of income declined again after 1961. At the same time, congregations began to keep more of their funds for local causes, thus providing less support for their denominational bodies. Consequently, one denomination after another found it necessary to restructure organizationally and relocate to less expensive locations. Those developments, in turn, caused many to wonder just what the role of denominations should be in the twentieth century and whether they would survive very far into the twenty-first.

It was also during the period from 1965 to 2005 that most Mainline Protestant denominations experienced controversy over social justice issues, from civil rights in the 1960s to various issues of sexuality in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. During these controversies, some congregations even left Mainline Protestant denominations, and various “renewal movements” developed among others who remained within them. Even among evangelical denominations, which continued to grow, the growth rate declined as the accepted role of religion in American life became less certain and more contested.

History of the Term

But if each of the Mainline Protestant denominations has a long history, the term “Mainline Protestant” has a much shorter one. These denominations came to be known as “mainline” only in the mid-twentieth century. By 1958, sociologist E. Digby Baltzell used the term “mainline”

(which originally referred to a commuter rail line linking Philadelphia and its suburbs) to refer to a social and economic elite—the so-called WASP (white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant) establishment. Sociologists have regularly used the term ever since.

But although American religious historians were somewhat slower to adopt it, the term eventually provided a way of linking contemporary Protestant history to the colonial history of the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Anglicans and to the nineteenth-century Benevolent Empire. During those earlier periods the seven denominational traditions had, in fact, exercised considerable influence in American public life, religious and otherwise. By adopting the term “mainline,” scholars of American religious life were suggesting that these denominations dominated American religious life, much as their secular counterparts dominated business and politics. But by the time the term became common, that influence was clearly on the wane, and the word “decline” frequently accompanied “Mainline Protestantism” in the scholarly literature.

In addition, several historians began to criticize the extent to which their colleagues described American religious history from a Mainline Protestant perspective, with its focus on white, male Protestants from the Northeast. They advocated instead new ways of telling the story from other points of view, including those of women, racial/ethnic minorities, and other religious groups.

By the 1980s some observers began to substitute “mainstream” for “mainline,” seeking, perhaps, to soften the elitist connotations of “mainline.” That attempt failed, however, as nonmainliners judged “mainstream” to be small improvement. In some ways it was worse. “Mainline,” although admittedly elite in its origins, did not necessarily connote numerical predominance, as “mainstream” seemed to. For their part, some nonmainliners employed a different railroad metaphor, using “old line” or “side line” to describe the Protestant group from which they were excluded, but those terms are perhaps more pejorative than the term they seek to supplant. In sum, the term “Mainline Protestantism,” though imprecise and contested, remains a useful way of referring to an influential and enduring strand within the large tradition of Protestantism and the still larger landscape of religious life in the United States.

Characteristics of Mainline Protestantism Today

Although no list is definitive, the core characteristics of Mainline Protestantism include at least the following:

(1) middle- and upper-class socioeconomic status; (2) white, European ancestry; (3) a dedication to education for both lay and clergy; (4) a commitment to ecumenical cooperation with other groups alongside a relatively low level of denominational commitment; (5) a tradition of involvement with social issues, from the civil rights movement to antiwar efforts to the women's movement; (6) a sense of custodial responsibility for society; (7) centralized denominational structures; and (8) liberal or neo-orthodox theological tendencies.

Although there are exceptions, Mainline Protestants tend to be middle and upper class in terms of their income, educational level, and social status. They long have been heavily represented in the leadership of business, politics, and higher education. Originally of Northern European ancestry, and despite their official advocacy of racial inclusion, these denominations remain overwhelmingly white. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), for example, is almost 92 percent white. The major exception is the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A., which includes a substantial number of African American congregations, many of them jointly affiliated with a historically African American denomination as well.

Not only do Mainstream Protestants tend to value education for themselves, but they also value an educated clergy. Indeed, an educated clergy always characterized United Church of Christ, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Anglicans and has come to characterize Methodists, Baptists, and Disciples as well. In fact, one of the major contributions of Mainline Protestant denominations to American society has been their role in founding colleges and universities as well as theological seminaries. Related to education is their general acceptance of scholarly biblical translations, biblical criticism, and the contributions of science.

The ecumenical movement of the twentieth century, embodied in the Federal Council of Churches (1908) and the successor National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (1950), was largely a creation of Mainline Protestantism. So also was the spirit of denominational cooperation on which it built. In some ways, ecumenism reflected the genius of American denominationalism. The very term "denomination" implies that "Presbyterian," for example, designates or denominates only one group of Christians among others; it does not suggest that "Presbyterian" is the only true church. Denomination thus implies diversity, toleration, and ecumenism. To some extent, it implies as well a relatively low level of denominational loyalty, reflected perhaps in the ease with which persons switch from one mainline denomination to another.

Although controversy sometimes results, the denominations of Mainline Protestantism have often been involved in campaigns for social justice. This tradition dates back at least to the Benevolent Empire of the 1830s and the abolition movement it included. More recently, Mainline Protestantism supported the Social Gospel of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s; the antiwar movement of the 1960s and 1970s; and the women's movement of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

This social engagement suggests the Mainline Protestant sense of custodial responsibility for society. This characteristic reflects a fundamental aspect of established churches in the Reformation in Europe as well as several colonies in the New World. But even after the constitutional disestablishment of religion, Mainline Protestants retained a sense of engagement with the world and obligation for the common good, and for a time in American history, they assumed an almost unexamined custodial role in the culture. To a considerable extent, they felt entitled to speak for the common good, even after their dominance of American religious life had passed. Thus, Mainline Protestantism has had a distinctive relationship to the culture, although that relationship has changed over time.

As noted above, the denominations of Mainline Protestantism adopted centralized, bureaucratic structures from the business world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Those structures, which worked rather well in the mid-twentieth century for both business and religion, have become increasingly dysfunctional in the twenty-first century, and the denominations' organizational future remains controversial.

Finally, although it would be incorrect to say that Mainline Protestants share a theological consensus, their moderate to liberal theological identity has certainly been shaped to a considerable extent by liberal and neo-orthodox theologies. On one hand, there are important theological differences between Mainline Protestants. On the other hand, by and large, they once mattered more than they do now, and most Mainline Protestants share to some extent a theological legacy shaped by the liberal theology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (including the Social Gospel) and the neo-orthodox theology of the mid-twentieth century. Although neo-orthodoxy was in some sense a reaction against extreme forms of liberal theology, both have influenced Mainline Protestantism. From liberal theology, Mainline Protestants continue to value science and education, endorse the historical-critical approach to the Bible, and

emphasize the centrality of ethics in religion. From neo-orthodoxy, Mainline Protestants continue to value the Bible (even if interpreted with contemporary scholarly methods), the church (even when critical of it), and the doctrinal tradition of Reformation Protestantism (even if adapted to a new day). These theological commitments, more pronounced among denominational “elites” than among the rank-and-file members, continue to distinguish Mainline Protestantism from more evangelical denominations.

The historical influence of Mainline Protestantism in the United States is clear, but its current health and future prospects are less certain. Although it faces many challenges in the twenty-first century, three in particular stand out: (1) decline in membership and cultural influence, (2) the religious substance or spiritual vitality of the Mainline Protestant tradition, and (3) the role of Mainline Protestantism in a religiously plural world.

Mainline Protestant Decline

Much scholarly work on Mainline Protestantism in the past three decades has focused on documenting and attempting to account for institutional decline, in terms of both membership and cultural influence. Since 1965 virtually all Mainline Protestant denominations have experienced membership losses, even at a time when both the nation’s population and the membership of many evangelical denominations continued to grow. For example, between 1965 and 1990, United Church of Christ membership declined 23 percent, while the Assemblies of God membership increased 227 percent. In fact, the roots of this decline actually began in the early 1950s as the Mainline Protestant growth rate began to decrease. By 1965, Mainline Protestantism was losing members quickly, despite rapid growth in the population at large.

Sociologists have identified with some certainty several geographic and demographic factors that account for much of this membership decline. They note, for example, that whereas mainline denominational strength lay in the Northeast and Midwest, population growth in the late twentieth century centered in the South and West where evangelical Protestants dominated. Second, as noted above, Mainline Protestants are relatively affluent and well educated. But sociologists have established, for reasons that are not altogether clear, that as wealth and educational levels increase, religious affiliation tends to decrease. Third, since Mainline Protestants tend to have lower birthrates, they are older as a group than other parts of the population and have a higher

death rate. With a lower birthrate and a higher death rate, membership loss is difficult to avoid. Fourth, religious groups can grow by producing their own members, with high birth and retention rates, or by converting outsiders. However, alongside their low birthrate, Mainline Protestants failed to retain their young and demonstrated little enthusiasm for evangelism.

In addition to these geographic and demographic factors, Mainline Protestantism suffered from the broader suspicion of institutions (from universities to political parties) and the growing emphasis on individualism that began to shape American popular culture in the 1960s. Whereas religious affiliation with the denomination of one’s parents was expected and unexamined in the 1950s, by the late 1960s, that was no longer the case. Individual autonomy and individual choice operated in religion as elsewhere in American life.

Between 2006 and 2008, Mainline Protestant membership continued to decline, but at a slower rate for most of the denominations. At the same time, the rate of membership growth slowed among several conservative denominations. Alongside these membership patterns, it should be noted that poll numbers show a marked increase in the percentage of persons who tell pollsters that they have no religious affiliation. Religious nonaffiliation, that is, is an increasingly acceptable option in American society.

Equally serious as Mainline Protestant membership loss has been a parallel loss in broader cultural influence. Until the mid-twentieth century, Mainline Protestants were heavily represented among the ranks of political, business, and educational leaders and dominated religion coverage in the mass media. For example, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, who addressed a broad reading public, including prominent political leaders, appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine in March 1948. By contrast, other Christian groups, especially evangelicals and Roman Catholics, have dominated media discussions of religion in recent decades.

Clearly, Mainline Protestants no longer occupy their prominent place in the culture. Despite that fact, they remain considerably more influential than their declining numbers would suggest. But their precise public role is still being negotiated, especially in relation to the growing religious pluralism of the United States.

Mainline Protestantism and Religious Vitality

Given the reality of declining membership and cultural influence, some wonder whether Mainline Protestant

denominations will survive. In fact, given their long tradition in the United States, they are unlikely to disappear despite the challenges they face. But what conditions are necessary in order for them to survive and even thrive? Alternatively, how should these denominations and their leaders respond to their changing fortunes to remain both institutionally strong and religiously authentic?

As with any social movement, Mainline Protestantism faces the challenge of recruiting and retaining group members, providing them with sufficient reasons to join and to stay. In the case of a political movement, for example, such reasons might include the movement's ability to identify benefits sought by the members, its ability to influence other political actors to achieve those benefits, and so forth. As a religious movement, Mainline Protestantism must provide sufficient religious grounds for the recruitment and retention of group members. That is, to survive and fulfill its religious mission, Mainline Protestantism must recover its spiritual vitality.

At least three major developments are required if Mainline Protestantism is to recover its religious vitality: a renewal of Mainline Protestant worship, a retrieval of spiritual practices, and a renewed attention to youth. In fact, movements in all three directions are evident in the early twenty-first century, although it is too early to know how successful they will be.

First, Mainline Protestants are paying new attention to the importance of vital worship, the constitutive activity of Christian community. For some Mainline Protestants, this means the adoption of contemporary worship models, including the use of new worship music and a less formal worship style. In other places, it might mean the retrieval of classic Protestant worship practices adapted for a new day. But there is widespread agreement among scholars of Mainline Protestantism that a renewal of Protestant worship is essential if Mainline Protestantism is to become once again a vital religious movement.

Second, Mainline Protestant religious vitality depends on a retrieval of certain traditional spiritual practices. In contrast to the apparent emotional and spiritual vitality of some other Protestant groups, such as Pentecostals, Mainline Protestants have often been described as rational, reserved, and lacking in spiritual vitality. In response, there has been a growing movement to retrieve a number of spiritual practices from the earlier tradition of the Christian church, such as Sabbath keeping, hospitality, spiritual direction, monastic retreats, meditation, and pilgrimage. Some of these, such as

Sabbath keeping, were long central to Mainline Protestantism, had fallen into disuse, but are now being recovered and retooled for the new conditions of the twenty-first century. Others, such as spiritual direction and monastic retreats, are more typical of Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox denominations but are being adapted for contemporary Protestant use.

A third condition necessary for vitality is a renewed attention to youth. As noted above, although religious groups can grow by converting outsiders or by having more children and keeping them in the faith, Mainline Protestants have not been particularly successful at either task. Although little can be done about their declining birthrate, Mainline Protestant leaders know that they must redouble their efforts to retain the younger members they have, including renewed attention to campus ministries. It is too early to know how well those efforts will succeed, but it is essential that they do so.

Mainline Protestantism in a Pluralist World

The issue of religious vitality, of course, most appropriately concerns Mainline Protestants and their leaders. But Mainline Protestantism's survival as a viable religious movement has broader public significance as well, given its historical importance and contemporary influence. Assuming that Mainline Protestant denominations survive in some form, they continue to face several major challenges with broad implications for American public life. Among them are (1) discerning the appropriate role for Mainline Protestantism in American public life, including its role in social justice advocacy; (2) broadening membership beyond Mainline Protestantism's traditional white base; and (3) coming to terms with the increasing religious pluralism of the United States.

Unlike in many other Western industrialized countries, religion in the United States retains an exceptionally important public role. As noted above, Mainline Protestant denominations once played a prominent role on the public stage. But in recent years, a resurgent evangelicalism has relegated Mainline Protestantism to the periphery of that stage, leaving open the question of what appropriate public role it should fill. Indeed, this issue is part of the much larger question concerning the appropriate public role of any religious group in a religiously pluralistic society.

Traditionally, Mainline Protestant denominations have taken an active public role on behalf of a number of social justice issues. Protestant involvement in the civil rights

movement of the 1960s is a case in point, and Mainline Protestants have been among the leading religious advocates on behalf of environmental issues. Both issues illustrate a link between Mainline Protestant social activism and religious motivations. Protestant involvement in the environmental movement, for example, brings together concerns over the consequences of global warming with a notion of the world as God's creation. But on some other contemporary issues, including questions of sexuality and social welfare, a Protestant consensus is less clear. Given the long Mainline Protestant attention to (and custodianship for) the broader social order, however, it is inconceivable that Mainline Protestants can simply withdraw from taking any role whatsoever in public life. But what that role will be in the years ahead is an open question.

A second major challenge facing Mainline Protestantism in a pluralist world is how to broaden its membership beyond its traditional racial/ethnic base in a country characterized by rapidly increasing diversity. Although all of these denominations proclaim their racial inclusiveness, their actual progress in diversifying their membership has been modest. Clearly more must be done if Mainline Protestantism is to thrive in the twenty-first century.

A third challenge, related to the above, is the necessity of coming to terms with the increasing religious pluralism of the United States. In some sense, Mainline Protestantism has been facing this challenge since the immigration of large numbers of Eastern European Jews to the cities of the East Coast in the late nineteenth century. Prior to that time, most immigrants had been either Protestant or Catholic Christians. In the twenty-first century the challenge may be even more complex, given the large numbers of immigrants from non-European settings and non-Christian religious traditions. But complex though it may be, meeting this challenge is a nonnegotiable task for Mainline Protestantism.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges it faces in the twenty-first century, Mainline Protestantism remains an integral part of the nation's religious history and an important part of its current religious landscape. Consequently it is likely to retain a significant, if reduced, religious presence in the future, the exact shape and extent of which remains to be seen.

See also *Baptists* entries; *Canada: Anglicans*; *Canada: Protestants and the United Church of Canada*; *Common Sense Realism*; *Congregationalists*; *Denominationalism*; *Disciples of Christ*; *Episcopalians*

entries; *Fundamentalism*; *Latino American Religion: Mainline Protestants*; *Lutheran* entries; *Methodists* entries; *Neo-Orthodoxy*; *Pluralism*; *Protestant Liberalism*; *Social Gospel*; *Sociological Approaches*.

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Marriage and Family

In North America families have traditionally been the site in private life for the practice and transmission of religious beliefs. Native American oral sources typically presented the harmony of the sexes as the foundation of tribal integrity, and the Judeo-Christian Bible of European settlers symbolically sanctioned familial relationships in images of Adam and Eve, Abraham and his household, and Jesus' divine paternity. Both ideals called upon parents to sustain community by teaching their children inherited values.

Nevertheless, individualism and freedom challenged pious descent beginning in the colonial period. Protestantism in the British colonies, especially in evangelical groups emphasizing a conversion experience, introduced a wedge between individual salvation and family devotion. The religious heterogeneity of Europeans who spread and intermingled across the continent prevented a simple match between public dogma and household beliefs. Love of liberty ambiguously produced a zest for religious self-expression and restraint of faith in civic life, epitomized by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. By 1800 the family as a conservative religious institution felt the pressures of personal autonomy and state secularism alike.

The home did not disappear from the American religious landscape, however; rather, it became a place of private dialogue and a subject of public debate. Widespread religious tolerance of self-defined spirituality and interfaith marriage since the 1960s has been accompanied by growing social acceptance of unconventional families such as unmarried and same-sex couples. The same ethos of freedom that encourages

these liberal choices sustains a countervailing conservatism. Parents in rising immigrant communities of Hispanic Catholics, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists precariously balance family traditionalism and economic aspiration. Their children reenact intergenerational religious conflicts long familiar among immigrants. In moral debate, relaxed family standards have provoked strenuous criticism. Defense of the traditional family, defined by its advocates to mean heterosexual marriage, sexual restraint, and opposition to abortion, unites religious conservatives across denominational lines. Through all, the family remains the essential backdrop of personal religious exploration and cultural negotiation because of its historical role as a social foundation for faith.

Patriarchy and Selfhood

In contrast to Catholic missions to the indigenous populations of French Canada and the Mississippi Valley before 1700, the Protestant colonial migration was largely composed of families. The English Puritans who settled New England after 1630 were especially devoted to biblical principles and sharply felt the tension in the Reformed tradition between loyalties to family and self-reflection. The Fifth Commandment of the Hebrew Bible to honor parents justified all Puritan social authority, casting the commonwealth in familial terms. At home, it was the duty of fathers to enforce moral order in households consisting of wives, children, apprentices, and servants.

At the same time the Puritans' Calvinist theology of election and ecclesiology of the gathered church set personal salvation in delicate balance with social hierarchy. Only the minority who experienced grace might join a church, and when some children of the first settlers did not hear God's call, families were religiously divided. This demographic and spiritual crisis precipitated the Half-Way Covenant of 1662, sanctioning baptism for infants of unconverted parents among the founders' descendants. The step was predictable in a group committed to both an individual saving experience and family obligation. The combination of self-scrutiny and civic-mindedness found in the classic diary kept for a half century after 1674 by Samuel Sewall—Boston merchant, father, judge, and church member—typified the Puritans' divided allegiance to private spirituality and kinship.

Individualism increasingly dominated religious thinking in the eighteenth-century British colonies. Enlightenment philosophy, celebrating the agency of the unimpeded man, inspired the First Amendment's guarantee in 1791 of religious "free exercise" for each citizen. Benjamin Franklin's

Autobiography, published posthumously the same year, described his program of moral self-improvement. A descendant of the Puritans, Franklin recounted his flight as a young man from Boston to more tolerant Philadelphia but insisted that responsible independence still required ethical restraint. The crowds up and down the Atlantic coast that experienced conversion during the revivals of the Great Awakening, beginning in the 1730s, believed, unlike Franklin, that redemption was an unmerited gift. Their dramatic public transformations were as separate from family nurture, however, as was Franklin's character building.

Frontier life nevertheless afforded many families unprecedented self-determination. Institutionally, a religious frontier in North America was anywhere beyond established religious authority. The absence of rabbis and traditional Jewish lay councils (*kehilot*) on the eighteenth-century American continent meant that the Jewish families clustered in port cities managed religious affairs ranging from circumcision (*brit milah*) to burial. Catholic families that moved west across the Appalachians after the Revolution depended on occasional visits from itinerant priests for the sacraments, otherwise practicing on their own. Accidents of migration that curtailed communal regulation or clerical oversight indirectly enhanced domestic religion.

Redemptive Motherhood and Domestic Alternatives

Rapid social and intellectual change in the United States after 1800 added new influences to disturb family religious cohesion. The expansion of cities and commerce and the development of technology and science favored cosmopolitanism and critical thinking. Especially among urban elites, men drifted toward religious skepticism, well-placed Protestants became Catholic converts, and interfaith marriages were more common. As many as half the Jews in antebellum New Orleans, a thriving port, married Christians. In the spirit of Romantic philosophy, Transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson urged the individual to turn inward to heed private intuition in his Divinity School address delivered at Harvard in 1838.

Spiritual freedom, although gaining in practice, was still the intellectual cause of a small minority only. The nation's Protestant majority responded to choice and openness by reaffirming conservative family piety. The mother, not the father now distracted by worldly business, was to be the home's spiritual head. Advice literature written largely by and for women, such as Catharine Beecher's *Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1841), pictured female moral leadership as

a patriotic duty. In the realm of theology, Horace Bushnell, a Hartford Congregationalist minister, issued *Christian Nurture* (1847) to critique the sudden individual conversions witnessed decade after decade after 1800 in the revivals of the Second Great Awakening. Christian training should instead be administered gradually in the patient spirit natural to women.

Although a Bible displayed on the parlor table became the icon of the nineteenth-century middle-class home, praise of matriarchy was a sign that the new domesticity did not restore the traditional family. The doctrine of female moral superiority countered the age-old belief in Eve's frailty and facilitated women's entry into voluntary associations devoted to pious and benevolent causes ranging from missions to antislavery. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, founded in 1874, became the largest American temperance organization and largest women's organization of the era. The public activity of mothers formed a new bridge between society and households.

The attachment of mainstream Protestants to the mother-led home was matched by experimentation with domestic relationships by religious dissenters. Familial language, striking notes of intimacy and memory, strangely aided the proliferation of new movements. Shakerism, brought to America from England in 1774 by "Mother" Ann Lee, renounced monogamous marriage and sexual activity in favor of the communal family. The Oneida Community, a later holistic reform venture, practiced "complex marriage" to bind members by physical as well as spiritual love. After publication of the *Book of Mormon* in 1830, Joseph Smith secretly introduced patriarchal polygamy as leader of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a practice remaining normative among Mormons until Utah statehood in 1890. Southern planters, though not religious leaders per se, claimed moral authority by comparing themselves to the patriarchs of the Hebrew Bible who once ruled over extended households of kin and servants.

At a time when the sanctity of the nuclear family was nearly an American orthodoxy, the dissenters' exploration of alternative forms of kinship as part of their spiritual quests was as natural as it was controversial. Reverence for family across the culture, however, coexisted uneasily with the rich opportunities for private religious inquiry of a literate market democracy.

Self-Styled Spirituality and the Fundamentalist Family

By the late twentieth century, both self-directed faith and strict family morals were making headlines, and it often

seemed that these choices represented separate paths. To an extent it is true that religious liberals and conservatives engage in a culture war. Selfhood and domestic traditionalism may both be part of a single life cycle or family history, however. Modern freedom has accentuated polarization, but no simple fragmentation of the Puritans' dual expectation of pious family governance and private spiritual experience has occurred.

Although the matriarchal ideal of nineteenth-century Protestants declined after 1900, the establishment of a triple melting pot in the 1950s that included Catholics and Jews, particularly visible in American suburbs, revitalized family religion. The sheer diversity of ethnic faiths and families brought to America by millions of European immigrants between the Civil War and World War I diminished the hegemony of Protestants. An internal Protestant rift between modernists and fundamentalists at the same time blocked transmission of coherent family teachings. Will Herberg heralded the triumph of a new religious sociology in his landmark study, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* (1955). The immigrants' drive for assimilation led to the submergence of myriad differences of custom in broader religious identities. The multiethnic suburban church or synagogue of the postwar years symbolized the change, and member families, the descendants of immigrants, were more egalitarian than patriarchal in temper.

Weekly rituals of family worship nevertheless masked evidence of individual self-assertion. From World War II on, the homogenization of denominations and ethnicities in wide faith communities encouraged institutional switching and interfaith marriage. In a heralded sociological study in 1944, Ruby Jo Kennedy documented rising rates of interethnic marriage within each of the three dominant religious groups. By 1954 Episcopal bishop James A. Pike called attention to the willingness of couples to cross religious lines as well, when he described "mixed marriage [as] one of the most common phenomena of our time" in *If You Marry Outside Your Faith*. Such families faced adjustment and compromise despite their growing numbers. Some religious organizations responded to the sharp increase in interfaith marriages with confusing policies that complicated a family's affiliation. In 1973, for the first time in its history, the professional body of Reform rabbis (Central Conference of American Rabbis) officially opposed the participation of its members in mixed-faith weddings. The resolution remained in force in 1983 when the same group agreed to recognize the children of non-Jewish mothers who received a Jewish

education. How welcome interfaith families were in these congregations was unclear, and households had to assess the costs of public practice at the same time that they coped privately with diverse customs and beliefs.

Despite these difficulties, religious mobility and particularly intermarriage across denominational, ethnic, and more recently national boundaries continued unabated. One-quarter of Americans questioned for the 2008 "U.S. Religious Landscape Survey" conducted by the Pew Foundation had left their childhood faith, and in four of ten marriages, the partners were of different religions. Clearly, a drive for self-expression in religious matters affects families and organizations alike. Habits of personal choice spilled over from established institutions to more unconventional practices beginning in the 1960s. Many Americans cultivated spiritual insight using the meditative techniques of Asian and Native American religions or new belief systems such as Scientology. Often a seeker's path could be eclectic and idiosyncratic, making the individual, not the family, the decisive religious agent.

Fervent defense of the nuclear family as a religious cornerstone in the late twentieth century was equally rooted in Cold War domesticity, however. Liberal and conservative impulses contended within the Catholic Church of the 1960s when the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (1968), issued by Pope Paul VI, quickly followed unprecedented endorsements of lay rights and ecumenism by the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). The papal letter's immediate purpose was to censure artificial birth control, but it also explicitly sanctioned sexual activity only in marriage and parental obedience to the natural rhythms of conception as manifestations of God's will. The image of the devout family soon formed a bridge between conservative Catholics and Protestants who championed "family values." James Dobson of the Church of the Nazarene began the advocacy group Focus on the Family in 1977, and Baptist Jerry Falwell dramatically injected private morality into American politics when he founded the Moral Majority in 1980 as a Christian electoral voice. The ensuing success of a "pro-life" agenda of opposition to abortion, stem cell research, and gay marriage rests on Americans' deep historical attachment to heterosexual monogamy as natural and godly.

Advocacy of pious domesticity coincides with the popularity of living in religiously regulated households. Strict morals, female modesty, and a family-centered outlook are practiced not only by conservative white Christians but also African American Christians, Black Muslims, Sunni and Shiite Muslims, and Orthodox Jews. Individuals from liberal

or secular backgrounds sometimes choose family traditionalism. *Ba'alai teshuvah*, “masters of return” to Jewish orthodoxy, are an example of such new conservatives. They suggest the curious modern fusion of self-determination and family moral order.

The Household as a Religious Place

Beyond these historical trends, the religious lives of American families may be considered from several additional perspectives: physical space, life-cycle events, minority experiences, and cultural symbols.

From the early days of colonial settlement, the household was a religious site. Protestant fathers led daily prayers, Catholic mothers said devotions at a *prie-dieu* (kneeling bench) in a bedroom corner, and Jewish householders visually declared their observance by affixing a *mezuzah* to the doorpost. Even in communities that emphasize public rites or restrict the use of pious symbols, the home has served as a location for religious expression. One step removed from religious authorities, domestic privacy encourages family variations in customs. The proliferation of religious information in print and electronic media offers resources to personalize household practice.

Although a strict stance against idolatry made devotional books the sole material aids to worship in early Protestant homes, mainstream denominations grew more relaxed about tangible symbols by the middle of the nineteenth century. Gothic designs recalling medieval churches became a popular architectural style for houses, and inspirational pictures such as Warner Sallman's *Head of Christ* (1941) adorned interior walls. Catholics and Jews, less opposed in principle to religious art, displayed a crucifix or welcomed the Sabbath with a crafted Kiddush cup, as the case might be.

Families almost instinctively modified traditional ways. The last remnant of one character's Jewish practice in *Other Things Being Equal* (1892), a novel by Jewish writer Emma Wolf, was to light a private *yahrzeit* candle on each anniversary of a parent's death. Other Jews added Christmas decorations and gifts to their own annual holidays, reported *The Occident*, a Jewish magazine, in 1866. Decisions about household milieu could alternatively reinforce religious rigor instead of dilute it. In recent times some Orthodox Jewish parents declined to own television sets and carefully selected their children's books. Christian home-schooling likewise seeks a homogenous childhood environment. Whether a family makes its physical space religiously eclectic or uniform, material goods contribute to a spiritual effect.

As ceremonial settings, homes are most often the principal site of worship in groups where religious authority is widely shared. In Amish sects, where there are no churches or professional clergy, responsibility for hosting Sunday services rotates among households, symbolizing the intersection of family and communal order. The egalitarian tone of this custom coexists with social hierarchy and moral discipline. Age, gender, and spiritual gifts precisely determine the status of an Amish individual, and neighborly visiting for the purpose of worship reinforces conformity among believers who disapprove generally of individuality and innovation. Many Jewish rituals are held at home, with or without a rabbi. They range from the circumcision of a son or the naming of a daughter to the formal week of mourning (*shiva*), including nightly prayer services, after a death. When occasional life-cycle ceremonies persist in families that no longer regularly attend synagogue, they signal selective loyalty to tradition. Both Amish and Jewish home observances, despite their differences, confirm that the social practice of religion is not confined to public institutions and occurs importantly in domestic locations.

Sex and Death in Family Life Cycles

Perhaps every religion offers guidance for life transitions, and these teachings reflect assumptions about family behavior. Americans inherit a deep ambivalence about the natural processes of procreation and disease. The Book of Genesis begins by celebrating fecundity and yet associates original sin with shame of nakedness. Redemption in Christian theology depends on Jesus' ignominious death. Conception and dying, life events typically experienced in families, elicit a mixed religious response in Western culture of respect for nature and a wish to control it. Medical advances since the 1950s have reinforced attention to the body and related moral issues that families face.

Age-old reliance on heterosexual marriage as the means of religious transmission has inevitably produced resistance to any disruption of the union of family, fertility, and faith. Nineteenth-century clergy widely censured interfaith marriage, but more recently, liberal and conservative religious opinion has divided over birth control pills, reproductive technologies, and open homosexuality. Especially in combination, these options potentially remove conception from the traditional family, identified by its advocates as the sole natural arrangement. The Worldwide Anglican Communion has been especially polarized following the failed compromise on homosexuality in the Lambeth Resolution of 1998.

Although North America has been a center of moderation, where many congregants respect gay rights as essential to freedom and spiritual development, dissonant American Episcopalians have formally allied themselves with conservative branches of the Communion in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

In daily practice, visible personal tokens of sexual restraint have become commonplace in the same religious groups that favor large families. Many American Muslim women cover their hair with a *hijab* beginning in adolescence as part of a rejection of sexual display. At the same time Muslims, along with Mormons, are the communities where parents raise the largest numbers of children, according to the 2008 Pew study. Female modesty in general accompanies family traditionalism. Orthodox Jewish women often cover themselves with wigs, long sleeves, and skirts below the knee, and some fundamentalist Christian women emphasize gender distinctions by not cutting their hair. Ironically, belief in female modesty makes these women easily recognized symbols of doctrinal positions in a heterogeneous public environment.

Religious conservatives who seek to honor nature through childbearing nevertheless depart sharply from inherited views of disease and suffering. Nineteenth-century Seventh-day Adventists and Christian Scientists were early voices rejecting the inevitability of illness as the fruit of sin and the consequent duty of patiently bearing pain. Twentieth-century Pentecostalism vastly popularized faith healing as the spiritual privilege of modern believers seen to be living at the millennial end of history. In all these communities, the expectation of bodily health restored through prayer challenged old-fashioned resignation at physical decline.

By the year 2000 prayers for healing had become a standard part of mainstream American worship. Prayer is the keystone of a pious counterscience so widely heralded that some medical practitioners welcome supplemental spiritual therapies. When death comes, fervent praise at the prospect of resurrection takes over from hopes for bodily cure. Among Pentecostals especially, faith-based answers to human frailty oddly share the optimism of medical science. For most Americans, death, like birth, remains a family event given meaning by religion.

Minority Families and Religious Institutions

Despite commonalities, American religious experiences have long included a range of choices. On one level Protestantism and patriarchy represent the main stems of American religious and family customs, but dissent and

diversity are so central to historic practice that pluralism might be considered normative instead. Real confusion about who are insiders and outsiders where all religions are legally equal makes identifying marginal situations complex. Protestants facing mounting spiritual competition have reported for the past half-century that they feel like a minority, although they remain the largest American religious bloc. Hispanic Catholics, often recent immigrants and their families, today support their church, just as Catholics of established ethnicities tend to be leaving it. The numerical importance of Latinos, however, does not match their ecclesiastical power. If minority status is defined as social or religious marginality, or both, it is at least clear that family dynamics at cultural borders have a bearing on religious activity.

Not surprisingly, families in racial and ethnic communities are often distinctive from mainstream models, although each type of household is also in flux. As a young social scientist in the 1960s, Daniel Patrick Moynihan described black families as pathological due to high rates of unwed pregnancy, divorce, and female leadership. He acknowledged white complicity by tracing the pattern to slavery, but still passed judgment by defining difference as deviance. African Americans remain, according to the 2008 Pew survey, the most likely of any racial or ethnic group to join religious institutions, particularly flourishing historically black denominations such as the National Baptist Convention, African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Pentecostal Church of God in Christ. Active women's groups have distinguished black Protestant bodies since Reconstruction, and despite the limitations of Moynihan's logic, strong family and church roles for black women may be related. To call these female leaders "church mothers," as is customary, casts their work in the familial terms so widely used in organized religions.

In immigrant families, assimilation as a multigenerational process intersects with religious observance. Sociologist Marcus Lee Hansen observed in the 1930s that the Old World ways rejected by the children of immigrants later intrigued the third generation searching for roots. Whether Hansen's theory is correct in its details, it highlights religious outcomes of generational tensions. Modern-day coordination of ritual and secular calendars at the Srivaisnava Hindu temple outside Pittsburgh, which aimed to facilitate attendance by working South Asian American families, may be criticized in the future by more rigorous descendants. Although many Muslim teenagers now chafe at parental

control of courtship, others ask to leave public high schools for Muslim academies offering classes segregated by gender. Household dialogues in such cases influence religious communities.

Some combinations of domestic and spiritual choices instead set families and religious institutions at odds. The Catholic Church declines to offer the sacrament of marriage to divorced individuals. Self-identified atheists are disproportionately young single men. The absence of a clear connection between their ideas and demographic status does not lessen their social distance from family-oriented congregations. Gay and lesbian couples must shop around for an institutional home in religious groups internally divided over homosexuality. Reform and Reconstructionist are the only Jewish branches that officially sanction same-sex commitment ceremonies and in that sense welcome gay families. These instances of alienation suggest how much public religious practice in America remains rooted socially in the conventional family.

Families as American Religious Symbols

Images of family give expression to religious commitments in America because domestic life so powerfully shapes belief. The variety of symbols, however, attests to diversity and change in households and values. Puritans who modeled their commonwealth on Abraham's covenant endorsed patriarchy. Harriet Beecher Stowe's great evangelical and domestic novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), portrayed her society's moral dilemma of bondage and freedom as the disruption and repair of the household. Catholics who for decades have honored the Madonna in annual street processions acknowledge the debt that communal identity owes to motherhood. School prayer remains an emotional issue because it suggests lone children at the mercy of a secular state.

Individualism and the legal separation of religion and government, in tandem with the social pluralism nurtured by immigration, impel recurrent transformations of families and their faiths. As long as public dialogues about American religious identity continue, the private beliefs and practices of families will figure importantly, though less visibly, as potent determinants of religious experience.

See also *Abortion; Children and Adolescents; Cult of Domesticity; Feminism; Fundamentalism; Gender; Masculinity; Religion, Regulation of; Religious Right; Religious Thought: Feminist; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Women* entries.

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Masculinity

Masculinity became a major topic in American religion in the nineteenth century with Muscular Christianity and other movements that centered on men in religious life and was rekindled in the twentieth century in response to second-wave feminist critiques of gender. Muscular Christianity emerged with Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes in Victorian England and had its thematic origins in eighteenth-century notions that emphasized physical education as tantamount to moral education. A key promoter was Dr. Thomas Arnold, headmaster of the Rugby School of Warwickshire from 1828 to 1842. The movement arrived in America in the mid- to late nineteenth century and was championed by such figures as Dwight L. Moody. Its ideas gave rise to the formation of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), a British movement that established its first American branch in Boston in 1851, and echo in twentieth-century groups like Athletes in Action, a men's organization founded in 1966 that uses sports and the public platform that many athletes have to promote Christianity.

The emphasis on masculinity and religion in some twentieth-century movements can also be seen in groups that focus primarily on the place of men in the social order. Responding, in part, to critiques of men and masculinity by second-wave feminists, groups such as the GodMen and Promise Keepers make masculinity and men's roles central, as did the Million Man March, sponsored by Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam on October 16, 1995. Some suggest that 850,000 to well over a million African American men met in Washington, D.C., to affirm an agenda to establish (or reestablish) men as the heads of households, protectors of women, and spiritual leaders in families and communities. Promise Keepers, GodMen, Man in the Mirror, and other predominantly white evangelical Christian organizations have similar goals; and the Promise Keepers' "Stand in the Gap" gathering of 1997, arguably influenced by the Million Man March, claims to have assembled more than one million Christian men in Washington, D.C.

Masculinity: What It Is, What It Is Not

Popular conceptions understand masculinity as something that is pre-given and fixed at birth. In other words, it is what heterosexual men "are" or are "supposed to be." Such views understand masculinity as correlated to the presence of the penis. The correlation of the social construction of masculinity with biological organs assumes heterosexuality as normative and as the privileged orientation among sexualities in general. Heterosexuality, generally, may be seen as the belief (or practice) that sexual relationships occur appropriately only between consenting-aged men and women, and in many American religious groups, these sexual relationships are further regulated by the idea that they occur in legal and religious terms within heterosexual marriage. This position views gender and sexuality as "ordered" by God and fixed in "creation." Masculinity is seen as the ideal of what a "man" (one born with a penis) is supposed to be in terms of his social activity, labor, sexuality, household position, and religious authority. Any departure from this ideal is seen as a corruption of creation, as immoral, and by some as psychologically and physiologically deviant. Such perspectives conflate the sexual and biological appearance of "maleness" (as indicated by the penis) with the issue of gender or masculinity, which is socially constructed.

Likewise, some also associate masculinity with a limited set of personal characteristics: physical strength, assertiveness and aggressiveness, competitiveness, emotional distance, and rationality. These factors, for some, are essential to masculinity

and contribute to an ideology of masculinity that believes that these features ensure that men continue to be the leaders over women, in homes, businesses, politics, education, and religion. Furthermore, the ideology of masculinity serves to buttress the activities and social position of the dominant group (men and white men, in particular) and to reproduce that position of dominance in subsequent generations. Ideologies like this allow the process of "gender," in this case masculinity, to be stabilized socially and to appear as "natural" and fixed rather than a process that occurs over time in response to social, psychological, and cultural processes.

Some religious ideals argue from analogy and suggest that the body indicates that men are to be aggressive (masculine) and women passive (feminine). They contend that the presence of a phallus protruding from male bodies and entering a woman's sexual orifice (vagina) indicates a creative design making men assertive, the movers and shakers, active, and so on. On the other hand, women's bodies, some argue, indicate the opposite creative intentionality, that is, that they are the passive recipients of male desire and activity, and that this dynamic can and ought to be extended to social and even power relations in society where men dominate. The argument often includes rejection of same-sex physical relationships on the grounds that the divine intention with respect to appropriate sexual relationships can be clearly discerned rationally by reflecting on how male and female bodies correspond with one another in the biological reproductive process.

Assumptions such as these are not devoid of theological and religious justification. That is to say, such constructions of gender, of masculinity and femininity receive endorsement in notions of personhood, theological anthropology, and constructions of God or divinity that express something about what it means to be male and female. Such constructions and images not only say something "universal" about what it means to be male and female, but in many instances they also produce violent images that endorse and reify structural and social violence. All of this roots masculinity in social, economic, cultural, and theological constructions. The suppositions behind them are not erected in a vacuum. They are ideas that have age-old histories. In the area of constructive theology, feminist and Womanist theologies have given sustained attention to the signs, rituals, images, and theological constructions that cause women across cultures and social boundaries to ask such powerful questions as whether a male God can save women. Womanist theologians add to the challenge by raising issues of race.

Scholars such as Judith Butler, R. W. Connell, John Beynon, and others generally use the term “masculinities” to account for the many ways in which it is understood and performed. For the most part, social scientists and theorists reject a notion of masculinity as something that is innate or fixed but rather view it as socially and culturally constructed. Along these lines, experts understand masculinity as a variety of behaviors, beliefs, and practices that are culturally specific and change over time. What is more complicated is that “masculinity” is not bound to heterosexuals or to men. Hence, masculinity is a social reality that upholds and maintains the production of gender, which ultimately is used to stabilize and uphold what we call sexuality as such. These complications point to the reality that the construction of masculinity is not separated from issues of race and sexuality in particular. In this sense, women, as Freud has pointed out, can possess and sometimes exhibit and express traits that have been seen or understood as “masculine,” as do some gay men and transgendered persons, for instance. On the other hand, some men can assume traits that society considers “feminine” and yet be heterosexual. Constructions of masculinity and its practices are complex, and although these terms are used to characterize and define gender, one should also keep in mind that the very use of the word “masculinity” for descriptive purposes is automatically a limitation of the very complex notion of gender. That is to say, with any talk of masculinity or femininity, there are always bodies or expressions that do not fit neatly into such categories.

To this end, the dominant type of masculinity in America is what Connell calls “hegemonic” masculinity, which has already been alluded to above. This is the notion of masculinity that is deployed not only to legitimate the patriarchal rule of men over women but also of white men over men of color and men who are not heterosexual in their orientation. This form of masculinity often characterizes men of European lineage who are middle class, heterosexual, and culturally Christian. Again, for many, this type of social arrangement in which (white) men are seen as the legitimate cultural patriarchs is established by appeal to religion and religious doctrines. Nonhegemonic masculinities are those that account the standards of behavior for Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Jewish (and “non-Christian”) men; gay men; and working-class men. At the same time, while the internal dynamics of hegemonic masculinity may serve to rank men into various class, “racial,” and physical statuses, it continues to function,

despite changing social and racial dynamics in America, because of its external distinction between “men” and women that gives *all* men power and benefits because of their maleness. In other words, all men benefit from being men regardless of their class, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

The Problem of Masculinity in American Religion

Masculinity in American religion is a problematic response to many developments and practices in the social dynamics of American society. Perhaps the most significant of these in America is the notion of “race.” Seen by some as biologically determined, race and racism have been the source of many of the struggles to define what it means to be a man. Understood in popular terms as hierarchical and dominating, some white men such as those in Promise Keepers and GodMen, who have historically enjoyed the privileges and power that come with that station in life, may see such privilege as being in jeopardy. This is due to the perspective that white masculinity is being threatened by men of color, who are gaining power positions that were traditionally held by white men and helped to define white hegemonic masculinity as the dominant form in the country. For some, the election of Barack Obama to the presidency in 2008 may be a symbol of the threat to the white male ideal. Clearly, this will be read by many as not simply shifting social arrangements but as religious, given that historically white male domination was seen as given by God and fixed as a permanent social arrangement. The nostalgic desire for some to maintain this ideal social order will result in aggressive activities and discourses that seek to “correct” these changes and to revert to the “original” notion of the divine election of white male rule.

But the issue of racism in American religion has also impacted those men who have been excluded historically from benefitting from the privileges of white patriarchy. This can be seen in many African American religious groups, such as black churches and the many Nation of Islam groups (there are multiple splinter groups), for instance. Founded by Master W. D. Fard Muhammad in Detroit, Michigan, in 1930, the Nation of Islam has had many famous members including Malcolm X and former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali. Led by Minister Louis Farrakhan from the latter part of the twentieth century to the early twenty-first, the “Nation” has maintained historically that white supremacy has kept “the Black man” from his rightful position on the planet. So the organization often frames

racism in terms of the denial of “manhood.” This was also a theme of the civil rights movement of the late 1950s and the 1960s. Racism is, thus, viewed as something that has emasculated African American men.

One response has been overexaggerated performances of masculinity, taking the form of discourses that advocate that black men be leaders and “heads” of black households, as well as protectors of African American women from the desires of white men, and defenders of feminine “virtues” such as chastity and domesticity. The Nation of Islam, for instance, has an auxiliary called the Fruit of Islam or “F.O.I.” The F.O.I. can be seen escorting Minister Farrakhan into an arena when he makes public appearances or performing security searches on those who attend Nation of Islam activities. Under Elijah Muhammad, Farrakhan’s predecessor in the religious group, they were used more extensively to supervise women in the religious organization, who were not permitted to walk home alone, for example. Many of these practices are intended to restore “respectability” to black men that was believed to have been taken away by white men through the practices of slavery, raping of black women, lynching, and social exclusion.

Although one could argue that white evangelical Christian groups such as GodMen and Promise Keepers have also reacted to the issue of changing racial and power dynamics in America (ostensibly “antiracism” is a foundation for being godly men in Promise Keepers), the more obvious issue that has influenced them is the feminist movement. Based in Denver, Colorado, Promise Keepers was founded by Bill McCartney, who at the time was the head coach of the football team at the University of Colorado at Boulder. The mission of the group is to “unite and ignite men to become warriors who will change their world through living out the Seven Promises” (www.promisekeepers.org/about/), and in this sense, they locate their vision to transform men “worldwide.” The group is made up of evangelical Christians, who emphasize men taking their natural and divinely ordered leadership roles in society and in their homes. Another evangelical Christian organization, the GodMen, state that their ultimate desire is to encourage men to lead lives that are committed to daily acts of courage. The group seeks to guide men into new ways of being masculine that are modeled by Jesus. According to the primary founder, Brad Stine, Jesus was more masculine than he is often depicted and as such provides a manlier symbol for Christian men, who would be more attracted to a tougher version of the religion rather than the feminized one in mainstream America.

Given that these religious groups see the hierarchical and gendered social order as God-given, any movement of women that advocates egalitarianism in society and church could be seen as a threat to male power. Again, what these groups believe they are protecting is God’s established order, which authorizes and requires men to be the heads of households, the “priests” of their families, and leaders in business and civic affairs. These groups represent larger trends in American religion that seek to reorder the family and reestablish the divine role of men in religious and social matters. Often this desire is in conflict with feminist groups. No doubt, the issue of abortion is an important issue for many feminist organizations like the National Organization for Women, and what gets framed as a woman’s right to choose what is appropriate action for her body by feminists sometimes is seen as a religious issue by many men who oppose the practice. It follows, then, that feminism is often seen as a threat to masculinity and to the family as a religious institution and the cornerstone of the American civilization.

But some scholars such as Howard Eilberg-Schwartz and Stephen C. Finley argue that the problem facing men and masculinity in much of American religions is the issue of a gendered God who is understood as male—as “father.” This is an issue in the various forms of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and beyond. What is problematic is how to construct a masculine identity in light of a view that God is male, and not only that, but the ultimate and all-powerful male, to whom other men have to submit, and who is the object of male adoration and affection. This homoerotic circumstance that Eilberg-Schwartz simply understands as the love of a male worshipper for a male God is perhaps the most pervasive and yet least acknowledged problem for men in many American religious circles. Important questions arise in the face of such a circumstance, according to Eilberg-Schwartz and Finley. Namely, how is a man to understand his own masculinity when he is the subordinate partner in a symbolic relationship with an all-powerful male God? How can one maintain a sense of masculinity in religious contexts when worshipping God means submitting to God and being symbolically entered by this male divinity? How is a man to conceive of his gender in a religious system that recognizes appropriate intimate relationships as functioning between a man and a woman only when the relationship with God as male constitutes a symbolic same-sex relationship?

These and many other perplexing problems are the subjects of intriguing studies on men, masculinity, and the

divine in American religion. Finley suggests, for example, that the reason GodMen desire to put emphasis on the aggressive activities of Jesus, such as the story of his turning over the tables of the money changers in the temple in the New Testament, is because in the face of a dominant God, men's sense of masculinity is fragile and insecure, especially given that they are the subordinate partners in the relationship. That is, they are feeling emasculated in the face of a perfect, beautiful, and dominant God, with whom they are not equals. For instance, the GodMen suggest that masculinity is an issue for many Christian men because only the meek and "weak" perspective of Jesus is presented in sermons and artistic representations. Jesus, they argue, was actually aggressive and "manly."

The implication is that hypermasculinity and an emphasis on aggression including the desire to rule over women and others is a reaction to or overcompensation for feeling emasculated in religious circumstances. Some theorists like Eilberg-Schwartz argue that the same dynamics are at work in Judaism, where Yahweh is imagined as male, and in Islam, where the interdictions against depicting Allah and anthropomorphizing God are an attempt to veil the problems that may arise in the face of such homoerotic circumstances. In short, the desire not to depict God artistically is in reality an attempt to avoid depicting God as male. One of the potential problems with emphasizing the "aggressiveness" of Jesus and with the ideology of men taking their place as the heads of households, however, is that it could result in the marginalization of women. Moreover, such an emphasis implies that masculinity means being aggressive and even violent. At the least, such religious responses to the problems of masculinity suggest that God ordains such relationships that are predicated on notions of hierarchy and domination and require that women play subordinate and domesticated social roles.

The Nation of Islam had a similar issue with God historically. Only, in its case, God was not symbolic or transcendent as in the case of Judaism, Christianity, and other forms of Islam—God was actual and fleshly. For Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the Nation of Islam until his death in 1975, God was Master W. D. Fard Muhammad, a *man* of unknown ethnic and national origins. God was immediate and present with Muhammad and the early religious group. Comparable dynamics of God as immediate and male can be found in another prominent American religion—that of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as the Mormons. In 1830, the founder, Joseph Smith, reported having a revelation that claimed to restore true and authentic

Christianity to its original state as it was practiced by the biblical apostles and early Christians. According to Smith, this revelation was given to him directly by God the Father and Jesus (always depicted as white, with blond hair and blue eyes), who apparently appeared to him bodily. As the two quintessential American religions, the Nation of Islam and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have both rugged and masculine notions of manhood and corresponding roles for women that relegate their primary function to the household and to child rearing. In the case of the Mormons, part of this emphasis on masculinity and male privilege can be seen in the doctrines of plural marriage, in which males in good standing with the church can have multiple wives. Much more can be said about masculinity in American religion that is of interest.

Masculinities in American Religion

Many have reflected on masculinity and American religion and some of the issues that are posed by social conditions and images of the divine. Björn Krondorfer argues, for example, and Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen contends similarly, that part of the problem in Protestant Christianity is that religion moved from the public domain, in which men held significant positions of prestige, to a more privatized and individualized orientation. The church was an important arena in which masculinity could be constructed and exercised respectably. As an expression of modernity, Krondorfer suggests, "phallic power" or male vigor and activity was dislocated from the church and was situated in secular institutions such as the military and political and economic positions. The more such secular institutions gained respectability, the more popular they became, and the less meaningful religious establishments became as symbols of male power. Men progressively sought meaning and masculine authority and affirmation in nonreligious public institutions. Accordingly, religion was increasingly seen as both a private and feminine affair. Finally, the privatization of religion, some conclude, may help to explain why men feel impoverished "spiritually" or why many feel an absence of masculine meaning in religion even though they continue to enjoy power and prestige in society. The social spaces that men leave in the religious realm may have created opportunities for women in religious denominations. Even so, in part because both religion and men's bodies are seen as private, white religious traditions that discuss gender and sexuality have offered few opportunities for healthy and honest conversation about male sexuality.

Men's "spiritual" movements like Promise Keepers, God-Men, and others have tried to fill these voids by providing safe religious spaces in which men could address masculinity, sexuality, and ostensibly racism. Such movements are called "mythopoetic"—a term that arose in Robert Bly's *Iron John: A Book about Men*—and are characterized by attempts to engage a sense of alienation from religion and meaning that so many men report feeling. As a "new" form of male religiosity, these predominately white groups appeal to the "wounded man" or this alienated being, although some argue that little work is done with respect to their wounding of other groups of people. Rather, some see them as efforts to consolidate male power and to redeploy it in religious language and symbolism and, as Krondorfer puts it in *Men's Bodies, Men's Gods*, a "male-revisionist agenda" (p. 13). While diverse, what binds the mythopoetic movement together is a strong sentimentalism and nostalgia for male-centered religious mythologies that reestablish men as the objects and centers of divine activity and intention. Such myths are often accepted uncritically. Finally, mythopoetic movements such as Promise Keepers, GodMen, and Man in the Mirror hold feminism largely responsible for the emasculation of men, given that women are viewed as being out of place in the divine order that understands men as leaders in significant matters and institutions.

Furthermore, some scholars, including Krondorfer, argue that patriarchy is based in or on God's "body," since God is seen as male. But as stated earlier, this perspective also creates some problems for some men who feel feminized in the face of such a male God. Images of God and of Jesus, then, become important for the maintenance of certain forms of hegemony that support white male domination. This may help to explain why such depictions of the divine, even for African Americans, are typically white. At the same time, the uncomfortable anatomical details are often excluded from such images, especially those of Jesus, who is generally depicted with feminine features and tearful emotions that are seen as feminine. Furthermore, Jesus is often scantily clad with a cloth concealing his genitals or in a long white flowing gown. On the other hand, according to Robin Hawley Gorsline in "Facing the Body on the Cross," some gay men (and he includes himself) experience Jesus as lover, not in the symbolic but as a real embodied man. The images of Jesus as presented above, Gorsline suggests, allow men to enter into relationship with Jesus as lover, whose image, bare chest, nude body, and poses are similar to other sexually arousing visual images. Many men have to negotiate the

homoerotic implications of images of Jesus' and God's body to justify locating the authority for sexism, heterosexism, and racism in a (generally white) male gendered body.

Finally, some of the religious groups discussed in this essay are millenarian and apocalyptic in essence, including the LDS church, the Nation of Islam, and the mythopoetic movements. They view manhood and masculinity as experiencing a crisis due to forces working against them. Whether one is speaking of the rise of women, people of color, or competing religious traditions, the desired and expected end result of such a crisis is that God will reestablish the rightful role of men in the face of such calamity and chaos and reorder the world so that it reflects God's intention for men to rule or rather for particular men to dominate. Such a world is viewed in terms of a utopian reality, a golden age of masculinity that existed prior to feminist or Womanist movements, gay rights, and civil rights. Such perspectives presuppose a theology that posits God as completely knowable and whose intentions and activity are clearly discerned.

Responses to the Problems of Masculinity

There have been numerous responses to the problems of masculinity in American religion, most notably in the theological discourses of Womanist and white feminist theology as well as more recent collaborations between these theological constructions and queer theory and theology. In the mid-1980s and early 1990s black women in the theological academy, such as Jacquelyn Grant, Katie G. Cannon, Delores Williams, and others, began not only to challenge the racist assumptions of white feminists and their universalization of "women's experience" but to bring forth a stringent critique of the patriarchy of black (male) liberation theology. Caught between the crossroads of triple oppression (race, class, gender), constructive proposals challenged the inherent male centeredness of black religious thought, which was concerned most often with challenging white racism rather than its own sexism and classism.

While white feminists, such as Mary Daly, concerned themselves more with the issues of a "male" God, African American women did not limit their analysis to the "maleness" of God but considered other forms of oppression. This speaks to the contention made earlier that the construction of "masculinity" cannot be isolated without considering the ways in which its constitution is complicit in other areas of oppression such as race and class. One of the more helpful insights that the Womanists offered to their African American male theological counterparts is

the recognition of the importance of engaging numerous forms of oppression in their theological discourses, not simply racism.

Queer Theory: Gender as Performance

Although feminists and Womanists have taken the issue of patriarchy and masculinity seriously in their theological analyses, perhaps the most radical critiques come from the arena of queer theory. The work of queer theorists such as Judith Butler has made such discussions even more complicated. Butler has argued that gender is no more than a performance. In other words, the social system dictates ways of being male and female in the world, and people act in accordance with these norms and expectations. Moreover, she asserts that what we think of as a “natural” gendering of bodies is nothing more than an enactment that is used to maintain the coherence and stability of what religions generally view as normal gender and sexuality. In this sense, gender is real and yet not real. It is real to the extent that it is given power in the religious systems. On the other hand, gender is only real to the extent that it is performed. What Butler is attempting to say is that unlike religious perspectives that one is born male or female with certain inherent duties, rights, and destinies, one *becomes* male or female through the performance or enactment of expectations and religious discourses on what males and females *should be*. This repetition of performance ensures that male and female roles will be continued for generations. For Butler, gender is nothing more than a social convention that is used to maintain and uphold the “differences” between what is called “masculine” and “feminine.” While many are uncomfortable with the notion of gender as an illusion constructed through language and performance, what makes Butler’s theory useful is that this process is not fully determinative. Rather, it is open-ended. That is to say, if gender is a performance, then this allows spaces for performances of alternatives that have the ability to displace dominant masculine and feminine models. In other words, while performances of gender function to stabilize gender, they can also help to destabilize and undo gender. Butler’s theory of gender and sex are increasingly being incorporated into studies of religion and theology. Her progressive and subversive ideas serve as a response to masculinity in general.

Reconstructing Masculinity

One problem in responding to the issue of masculinity is that for many people, identity is wrapped up in one’s ability

to differentiate oneself among others, utilizing social markers such as gender. Although it would be unfair to suggest that what we call gender should be completely dismissed, given that the notion of gender norms are deeply embedded in religious ideology, perhaps a more appropriate way to address such an issue is in the theoretical realm of accepting difference. That is to say, there is no “right” or “wrong” way for one to be male; rather, maleness and masculinity come in a variety of forms and are acted out in many different ways. As a means of addressing these issues, religious groups may begin to confront the traditional ways they have understood and practiced “family values,” “what it means to be a man,” “doing a man’s duty,” “heading the household,” and similar notions of social and domestic norms. These metaphors are often invoked in religious circles under the banner of responsibility, self-help, godliness, and righteousness because they invariably communicate something from religious perspectives about what it means to be a man and to perform one’s masculinity.

Of course, men have responded in a number of ways. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, groups of middle-class, white, heterosexual men came together in movements loosely termed freethought. Nineteenth-century freethought was a collective of enclaves and congregations of atheists that championed masculinity, freedom of thought, and an alternative to “superstition” and tyranny, which it suggested Christianity could not offer because such ideas were deployed through biblical laws and religious teachings. Unlike many churches that are predominantly female, men constituted 70 to 80 percent of these movements. Freethought contended that the only way to attain authentic manhood was to reject Christianity, which it viewed as emasculating and feminized, and embrace a rational and atheistic worldview and lifestyle.

Some religious men in movements such as GodMen, Promise Keepers, and Man in the Mirror counter that Christianity is warlike and that the way to overcome the problems posed by movements such as those mentioned above is to emphasize the “militant” and “masculine” aspects of the religion that have far too long been ignored in favor of political correctness. Such was the response of the Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911–1912, which was founded in Silver Bay, New York, to promote Christian living for men and boys. It was perhaps the first Christian movement to target its mission outreach specifically to men. Another was the mythopoetic movement of the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries that is related

thematically and programmatically to such early groups. They use religious language and sentiments to “re-create” the mythic utopia of an ordered world in which particular men dominate. This domination, they believe, they are entitled to and required to enact since God, who is male, is the great dominator to whom all are subject.

Another response to the problems of masculinity in American religion has come from academic groups, such as the Men’s Studies in Religion Group of the American Academy of Religion started in 1990. Such groups challenge the assumptions that issues with men are generically “human” rather than specifically “male.” They seek to understand and dislodge notions of maleness as universally human and to see men and men’s issues as particularities. The Men’s Studies in Religion Group is making important contributions to understanding the relationship between religion and masculinity and their interplay. Masculinity in American religion will continue to be a dynamic and interesting field of study for new generations of scholars.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Cult of Domesticity*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Feminism*; *Gender*; *Latter-day Saints*; *Liberation Theology*; *Nation(s) of Islam*; *Religious Right*; *Religious Thought*; *Gay Theology*; *Sexuality and Sexual Identity*; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends*.

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Material Culture, Approaches

The study of material culture involves looking at that historical evidence which is composed of any kind of artifact or object. It includes not just art but furniture, landscapes, buildings, books, devotional objects, and any other sort of thing.

With an understanding that almost anything can constitute material culture, objects are evidence. With material culture as evidence, scholars engage the object and describe it. Ethnographic methods are often used in this encounter with the object to record the environment, the location of the object (in a home, church, or the like), or to describe the building or built landscape under analysis. After the encounter with the object, it is necessary to uncover the history of the object by finding out whether it was mass-produced or handmade, how it was put together or built, if there were

particular craftspeople, the time period in which it was created, the purpose of the object, for what ritual setting it was used, and so forth. This interrogation allows an understanding of what the object was used for, who used it, and why it had value.

Material Culture Studies

The analysis of material culture is the study of artifacts, landscapes, and architecture. It involves not just using objects as examples for historical arguments but understanding the form, distribution, and function of objects as well as charting how the character of objects and environments changes. All people use objects. We wear clothes and jewelry, own furniture, drive cars, decorate homes, read books, take photographs, eat, and so forth. We live in a world of things. Material culturists have pointed out that by examining things we can gain a glimpse of beliefs and culture in different time periods. By examining these objects, scholars can uncover these belief patterns. Historians, however, have been primarily trained in the use of texts, and thus, objects have not long been considered legitimate historical evidence. American religious historians are beginning to embrace object analysis, but many narratives still rely upon textual analysis. Textual analysis tends to privilege certain elite groups, which in American religious history is particularly white, male Protestants. For Colleen McDannell, a leading proponent of material culture in religious studies, material studies are deeply related to the impetus for social history. Material studies seek the ordinary. Object study could counteract the elitism present in written sources because only a small group of Americans left such sources behind, but many Americans have relied upon religious objects in worship and devotion. McDannell noted that the more common an object the greater the cultural meanings, because the more common the object the more likely that it was used by a diversity of people.

Additionally, material culturists pointed out that words and texts are not the only ways to experience the world; rather, people also engage with the materiality of the world. We speak and read, but we also touch, smell, taste, and feel. Leigh Schmidt argued that the focus on verbalization has caused American religious historians to ignore the other methods in which religious people communicate with one another. Schmidt further reflected that American religious historians know quite a bit about what people heard and read, but they have paid less attention to what people saw or wore. Schmidt believed that without knowing the full religious experience (hearing, seeing, wearing, and feeling), one

misses the rich, religious culture of Americans. Verbalization was only a part of the religious experience because religion was embodied and practiced, too.

Material Culture and Religious Studies

The use of material culture for religious studies provides another genre of historical evidence, which allows historians to see what objects religious peoples used to live their lives. Religious historians can look beyond doctrinal assertions of the separation between the sacred and the profane and see how religious people uphold and bend the doctrinal distinctions of their faith traditions in their everyday lives. Material culture as source is most useful for the study of religious groups that have not left behind written texts, but it also furthers historical analysis of those that left behind written documents as well because it allows scholars to move beyond verbalization to what people saw and touched in their religious lives. For religious historians, material culture demonstrates the porous boundaries between the sacred and the profane.

The study of material culture and religion includes three categories of evidence: architecture, landscapes, and artifacts. Architecture includes churches, temples, synagogues, and other structures in which religious people worship. These buildings are often created to reflect community values. Thus, a Unitarian church surrounded by trees and gardens, made primarily of combinations of stone and wood, designed to reflect simple lines and angles, might reflect the congregation's eco-friendly stance as well as its desire for faith in tune not only with God but nature, God's creation. Landscapes include any sort of sacred space, from forests to monuments to mounds to athletic stadiums. Colleen McDannell explores the rural cemetery movement, particularly Laurel Hill Cemetery, to show how Victorians wanted to concretize their immortality in the construction of monuments and marked graves. Edward T. Linenthal's work on monuments and museums demonstrates how space becomes sacred for Americans and the importance of memorials to demarcate sacred space on American soil. Artifacts include rosaries, candles, garments, pictures, furniture, tapestries, T-shirts, hats, medals, and so forth. Artifacts can present the religious lives of individuals as well as their affiliations to religious communities. Christian T-shirts, Bible covers, rosaries, and fish car decals all suggest how one identifies with one's religious community as well as how one chooses to express faith visually and materially. Moreover, with artifacts, we can see how religious peoples live their religion.

Scholars of religious studies already have familiarity with systems of belief, and thus, they might approach material culture beginning with the beliefs about the objects and then analyze their use. Religious traditions imbue objects with meaning but also how individuals negotiate the meaning of objects. Moreover, some objects are not necessarily an official part of a tradition but might augment particular ideas. For example, Christian retailing and products provide ways for Christians to proclaim their faith and to proselytize. Thus, Christian T-shirts augment the belief of some Christians of the importance of being evangelical, proclaiming their faith. Again, religious scholars would have to examine the theological structures of the groups they study, but the use of objects might not necessarily fit with doctrinal or institutional values. This dissonance is useful for scholars of religion. Another crucial part of this analysis would examine how religious objects and their meanings change over time or maintain similar meanings.

After considering the object and the belief system, scholars move beyond the religious purpose of the object to analyses of other functions of the object. For instance, Leigh Schmidt demonstrated that clothes were not just forms of adornment in early America but communicated social standing, religious affiliation, and piety, as well as functioned as a vehicle for dissent. Material culture requires analysis of both the physical and the ideological. The interpretation of material culture is important because material studies usually focus upon the everyday objects, which are often not written about because they are taken for granted by historical agents. This study of everyday lives of religious people shows how religious stuff fostered and negotiated religious belief. Religious stuff matters. The stuff of religion provides a body of evidence, which can provide understandings of how religion is lived every day. Material culture is just one way to approach the religious past, and by far it is not the only way. Analysis of objects further develops our study of religion by exploring the sensual world of religion and by fleshing out how religious lives are lived. Material culture as evidence provides a venue to examine the lives of believers and allows a fuller picture of groups and movements. Material culture studies enable a richer description of religious worlds.

Material Culture in American Religious History and Life

From 1995 to 2001, the Material History of American Religion project sought to understand how American

religious history was more than just about ideas or institutions but also about objects and behaviors. The scholars involved argued that American religion was not merely defined by texts or words but rather practices that involved bodies and objects. American religious historians of material culture hoped to illuminate those underrepresented aspects of the lives of religious Americans and underrepresented groups within the American religious experience. These scholars believed that material culture provided a way to construct the religious past, which would allow new voices to populate religious histories. The analyses of religious objects allowed for an arena to understand how religion was practiced in day-to-day life. To explore the world of religious things allows scholars to fill in the gaps of previous narratives of American religious history by inserting people and practices that might be overlooked in histories that center on religious ideas and institutions. Those who create texts have often defined American religious history in sermons, letters, book, poems, memoirs, diaries, and newspapers, among others. Those who did not create texts and those who could not read texts are often overshadowed in narratives. Material culture approaches offer a profound challenge to histories of the American religious past by suggesting that the things of religion provide glimpses into the religious lives of Americans at least as significantly as textual and institutional analyses. Members of the Material History of American Religion project published on topics ranging from diet and the body in American religion to the documentation of religion in government photography to the history of money in Protestant denominations to the urban religion of the Salvation Army.

This concern with religious practice has led to an increased awareness of how people used things in their religious lives. Studies of popular religion (and later lived religion) noted how religious peoples did not just absorb the words and doctrines of their religious systems; rather, they combined religion with folklore, magic, and the mundane. David Hall argued that Puritans used horseshoes as well as books in their religious praxis. To examine the material culture of the Puritans complicated the vision of them solely as a textual people and demonstrated the blending of elite and popular religion. Robert Orsi explored the objects used in Catholic devotionism from wax body parts to candles to rosaries that helped foster the devotional world of Italian Catholic women. The use of devotional artifacts helped create the Catholic world of Italian immigrants, and these objects communicated particular devotions to this Madonna

and demonstrated how the laity used novelty in their worship beyond the bounds of tradition. These early examinations of lived practice pointed to the use of religious objects in the lives of the laity. These American religious historians emphasized the lives of the laity to see how religious ideas were embodied and re-created. The study of religious practice moved American religious history from the pulpit to the pews and included laity as well as ministers, women and children, men, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans as well as whites, Catholics, and Protestants. This study shifts the American religious story from churches to homes and from public spaces to private.

Colleen McDannell: The Sacred and the Profane

The interest in material culture in American religious history emerged from the emphasis on religious practice as well as a desire to see how religion in everyday practice was different from institutional and doctrinal dictates. Colleen McDannell, a foremost American religious historian of material culture, argued that the material dimension of American Christianity had been overlooked because of biases present in the methods of religious studies and in the assumptions of American religious historians. First, she noted that religions are not about passive learning but rather are actively practiced through seeing, doing, and touching. Practicing religion embodies religious beliefs, values, and norms; and novelty also appears in practice. Adherents to religious systems do not simply embrace all of the system but also mold religious systems to fit in with their lives. Second, the material dimension of religion was unexplored. McDannell argued that scholars of religion such as Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Mircea Eliade describe religion as a bifurcation of sacred and profane. The separation was antagonistic. The material was associated with the profane, and the spiritual, of course, signaled the divine.

Moreover, Christianity separated the world between divinity, the disembodied, and humanity, the embodied. This Christian separation of the sacred and profane applied to understandings of all religions. American religious history, in particular, was bound to a Protestant ethos, from the Reformed tradition, which emphasized this separation, as opposed to the Catholic understanding of the continuous blending of sacred and profane. This Protestant bias has regulated belief as constitutive of faith and informed the work of American religious history. McDannell called this the “Puritan model,” which has operated as a common historiographical frame and masked the heterogeneity of

American religious practice. Within this model, Christian practice is separated from the profane. That separation obscured Christian uses of objects. Rather than see the Christian use of objects as religious, historians as well as sociologists have pointed to the secularization of Christianity. What McDannell argued instead was that American religious practice involved a constant mingling of the sacred and the profane. Sally Promey has pointed to similar problems for the study of the visual culture, a subset of material culture, of American religions. Promey demonstrated that the emphasis on the Puritans in American religious history means that iconoclasm within religion became the frame to interpret the relationship between religious people and images. This vilified reaction to images obscured that Protestants, and other Christians, employed pictures for devotional purposes as well.

Thirdly, McDannell pointed out that the reason material culture has not been explored by historians is because of the types of people who rely upon objects. McDannell argued that the use of objects is often deemed by scholars as less authentic religious practice, and those who rely on the tangible rather than words are viewed as lesser. The uneducated, women, and children were drawn to these material forms. According to McDannell, historians accepted the emphasis on Christian iconoclasm by Protestant theologians, and thus, the historians of the “Puritan model” ignored those Christians who used objects to worship because they were somehow lesser than scriptural Protestants. McDannell, however, demonstrated that not only did the uneducated, women, and children use religious objects, but educated men did as well. Material forms not only allowed a venue to illuminate the religious lives of masses, but these forms also allow historians to explore how the “elite” used objects as well. McDannell and others have attuned American religious historians to objects, landscapes, and architecture to explore religious practice.

Visual Culture of American Religions

American religious historians employ art history, geography, folklore, fashion theory, sociology, and anthropology to explore the religious lives of Americans. Art historian David Freedberg is often cited because of his understanding of the power of sacred objects and the diversity of their interpretations. For Freedberg, objects have sacred power and meaning for the people who interact with them. The study of visual culture, a subset of material culture, primarily focuses upon images and how these images affect, create, and maintain

cultural ideas. Not surprisingly, religious historians who have ventured into the realm of visual culture have applied art historical methods to describe and interpret images. In *The Visual Culture of American Religions*, David Morgan and Sally Promey bring together a series of articles interrogating the role of religion and visual culture that consider art, media, santos, illustrations and postcards. This work moves beyond the mere appreciation of art for art's sake to an understanding of the cultural impact of images. Images have the ability to foster community, signal religious ritual, and contain power over the mundane as well as the sacred. Morgan has examined representations of Jesus as well as Protestant print culture to show the communications of religious values. Art can also contain the religious and spiritual, which allows for a glimpse into the artist's visions of religious worlds. The visual representations of religion signal the importance of seeing for religious experience.

Material Culture and Religion: Selections

Geography

Geography is useful in the conceptualization of sacred space. Native American peoples have staked claim on various geographies in the United States as sacred spaces to their religious praxis. Something as ordinary as dirt takes on sacred significance for the Navajo, who used dirt from the San Francisco Peaks for the pouches of their medicine men. Robert S. Michaelsen argued that the sacred geography of the Navajo was overlooked in the U.S. court system because it falls under the category of land rights. The courts have not recognized the religious rights of the Navajo for this area because of American understandings of property. Examining the conflicts over geography demonstrates the importance of space and object, dirt, in the religious worldview of the Navajo, and this conflict also highlights the difference in understanding what religion actually encompasses. Thomas Tweed relied heavily upon geographic metaphors to understand the sacred space in his analysis of the shrine for Our Lady of Charity in Miami, Florida. He examined the details of the natural landscape as well as the construction of the shrine. Tweed also noted the power of artifacts to help create and maintain collective identity in medals and prayer cards. The shrine, Tweed argued, created a collective identity for devotees as a diasporic people. It was positioned to mimic the Cuban landscape; the cornerstone contained elements of native soil; souvenirs, flags, and maps create a collective past and give hope for a future liberated Cuba. For Tweed, the

shrine not only functioned as a diasporic religious symbol but also constructed the collective identity of the Cuban exiles who visited it. These men and women might enter the shrine as exiles, but they emerge from the structure as people bonded together in diaspora with a hope for the "true" Cuban nation.

Architecture

Architecture is also employed by American religious historians to understand the creation of chapels, churches, and temples. Peter Williams's work on religious architecture catalogued American places of worship all over the country to demonstrate how these places communicated religious vision and belief. His goal was to show how constructed environments of religion impacted expression of belief and the cultural meaning of these sites. Region, denomination, and style defined these houses of worship. Each region contained distinct religious movements that found expression in different types of architecture. Jeanne Kilde examined the building of churches by evangelicals in the nineteenth century and the communication of their religious beliefs in the structure of the building. Kilde noted that the theatrical style of worship was mimicked in the architecture, so that the changing style of evangelicalism also took place structurally in the creation of churches.

Dress

Folklore and anthropology are increasingly helpful because both fields teach material culturists to rely on their senses in interaction with objects. Colleen McDannell argued that this attention to the senses would allow intimate response to the objects of study, which would connect the scholar to those who created and used the object. American religious historians find themselves enmeshed in particular fields to figure out how specific artifacts function, like excursions into fashion theory to understand religious dress. For instance, Leigh Schmidt approached not only theories of dress but also histories of costume to explore early American religious dress. What becomes increasingly clear is that to study the material culture of religion, a scholar must be ready to employ a multiplicity of models to understand artifacts, which often are found with no written history of their own.

Religious Items and Collective Identity

People use objects in devotions, as decorations, and, most important, to identify religious affiliation and help

maintain collective identity. Teapots in the shape of John Wesley's head, rosaries, baseball caps proclaiming Jesus as Savior, Quaker plain dress, T-shirts and flags with the image of Our Lady of Charity, Mormon garments, the *hijab*, crucifixes, Christian fish decals, and bottled Lourdes water are all religious goods that proclaim their owner's affiliation with a religious tradition. Religious objects signal that one belongs to a religious group. Ownership of these objects illuminates the difference between in-group and out-group. Religious goods mark the members of religious communities. Religious objects can be private testaments of one's faith or bold exclamations of affiliation. Colleen McDannell demonstrated that Methodists have purchased and displayed commemorative teapots with John Wesley's likeness beginning in 1775, and the teapots were reproduced in the 1880s, early 1900s, and 1960s. These teapots were not relics, and they did not carry the power of John Wesley to Methodists. What the teapots did convey was that their owners were faithful Methodists.

Mormon Garments

McDannell also explored the function of Mormon garments, which Mormons are supposed to wear after their initiation rites. These garments demonstrated the Mormon commitment to God and to community because wearing them showed that one was a Mormon. This practice, additionally, set Mormons apart from the wider community because wearing garments separated Mormons from non-Mormons. Their clothing visibly demonstrated their piety and their commitment to their belief system. For McDannell, being a Mormon was obvious more by what one did than by how one thought. For example, Mormons who did not agree with church teachings still wore their garments to be a part of the group despite their reluctance to accept institutional beliefs. For Mormons who did not accept doctrine, wearing the garments was a method to maintain their collective identities but to protest doctrinal inadequacies.

Quaker Dress

Leigh Schmidt and Pamela Klassen also traced the linkage of dress, a material artifact, to community. Schmidt examined how Quakers used dress, or lack thereof, as a vehicle of dissent from hierarchical religious traditions of early America. Schmidt argued that Quakers asserted themselves as a people through plain dress. For Quakers, plain dress marked the boundaries between saved and unsaved. Clothes became the symbol in early America that defined communities and

enforced communal boundaries. Dress was the method for Quakers to distinguish themselves from the rest of colonial America and proclaim their religious message of spiritual equality. Schmidt also noted that itinerant preachers abandoned clerical garb to demonstrate their solidarity with common people rather than authority. Clothes became a tool to announce one's affiliation as well as protest against other religious groups. Pamela Klassen noted that clothes became a tool for African American women in the nineteenth century to define themselves and their communities. Women of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) used dress to counter stereotypes of African American women's sexuality, and they wanted their clothes to represent the respectable character of their communities. These women adopted both plain dress and "respectable dress," fashionable yet reasonable (and reasonably priced) dress. African American women adopted plain dress for many of the same reasons that Quakers did: to uplift spiritual equality and to mark group identity. Many AME women turned to respectable dress as a way to show their piety and to develop a community ideal of respectability. These women dressed in a way that would demonstrate (to whites) that their communities were civilized. For AME women, dress was a tool to construct their collective identity in their own terms.

Jewish Prayer Texts and Shawls

Material culture approaches to American Judaism have also signaled the centrality of community as well as moved beyond textual understandings of Judaism. Jeremy Stolow examines how ArtScroll, an Orthodox Jewish publisher, made print culture as well as artifacts essential to Jewish social life. He suggests that the Jewish people are labeled as textual, but engagement with texts is concrete and embodied. Consumers of ArtScroll's texts engage them materially as well as intellectually. They do not just read their prayer books but display them. The Jewish people who purchased ArtScroll's products were able to identify themselves and their piety through which products they bought. The texts were admired for their quality as well as the spiritual knowledge contained within the pages. In her study of the *tallit*, the prayer shawl, Ayala Emmett demonstrates how women's appropriation of the shawl, which had primarily been worn by men, expresses the gender dynamics of Conservative Jewish synagogues. Jewish women adopted the prayer shawl like their male brethren. Emmett notes that just because women embraced the masculine garment does not mean that gender roles are that different in these synagogues. The

synagogue was not feminized, but rather the adoption of the shawl signaled that the synagogue reflected the gender dynamics of modern times. Women wrapped in prayer shawls would be unrecognizable to previous generations of Jews. By adopting the ritual garments, women in the synagogue expressed their faith and a desire for gender equality. The analysis of the tallit provided a glimpse into the life of the synagogue.

Nation of Islam Diets

Edward E. Curtis IV's study of the Nation of Islam (NOI) relied upon dress, cartoons, and food to communicate how black Muslims understood their faith and proved their commitment. The focus on diet among NOI members demonstrated their commitment to bodily purity. To keep unclean elements out of the body made not only members strong but also the whole community. The rules about dress signaled NOI's concern with modesty and civilization. Curtis pointed out that through restrictions on food and dress, this religious community presented its concern with purity and the importance of the black body. By examining the material culture of NOI, Curtis demonstrated the central values of the movement that others missed by focusing on the fantastic theology of NOI.

Elvis Artifacts

The study of artifacts also allows an understanding of how something that might not seem religious could qualify as religion. Erika Doss's work on Elvis fans and their devotion to the King demonstrates the religious dimensions to this devotion. Doss showcases how fans of Elvis perform acts of piety using images and objects in their homes and in public culture. Graceland becomes a shrine, a place of pilgrimage where fans leave flowers, books, stuffed animals, and other gifts in remembrance of Elvis. The gifts serve as both tributes and thank-yous for the presence of the King in his fans' lives. Not only are devotions to Elvis religious in nature, but this hints to the religious nature of other memorials and tourist sites in America. Reflecting upon spontaneous memorials, Doss noted that material culture and mourning are intimately related. The material culture present at the Columbine memorial demonstrated how Americans use objects to manage the difficulty of grief and tragedy. The memorials become tangible relationships between the living and the dead. Things communicate the grief of the living and their continuing relationships with the dead. The patterns of mourning become more visible and understandable through

the use of material analysis. The study of things moves scholars past traditional notions of what is and is not religious.

Bodily Construction in Religion

The study of material culture and religious praxis demonstrates how the body is created by and creates religion. The examination of Christian material culture demonstrated the connection between spirituality and the body. Not only is Christian language filled with bodily images, but Christian practice also involved the body. Lourdes water was a cure for the body that produced signs of supernatural healing. For Mormons, religious objects, garments, marked the body as a part of the community and protected the body from physical harm. The dualism of Christianity, which marks the body as profane, obscured that Christians have used their bodies to express their religious allegiance. Through the examination of material culture (especially dress), one can see how religion is inscribed onto bodies. This inscription entails that the body is molded by the religious system to reflect values and ideas as well as to perform certain bodily comportments. For instance, Mormon garments inscribed not only communal ties but also values about sexuality and purity. The body became a reflection of God and a sacred space to be protected from the uninitiated. In addition, the garments served as material reminders for the Mormons of their commitment to the sexual mores of their religious system. McDannell noted that the sacred garments allowed Mormons to connect their physical and spiritual selves.

Leigh Schmidt noted how dress and dress-wearing bodies could reflect virtue and doctrinal significance. In colonial America, Puritans and evangelicals sought to control women's bodies, through dress, to define norms of piety as well as femininity. Women also embraced fashions, which would counter the ministerial preference for dress, to assert autonomy over their bodies. The dressed body could conform, resist, or represent religious injunctions. Schmidt, like McDannell, demonstrated how important bodies and their adornments were for religious systems. Robert Orsi argued that religion not only creates bodies but also is created by bodies. Orsi examined how children made Catholicism real through bodily practice. Religion might have inscribed ideals on believers' bodies, but religion came to life in the bodies of believers. By disciplining children's bodies in prayer, adults made children's bodies attentive to the presence of religion. Certain postures, genuflections, and the handling of religious objects made religion real for children. Material culture and bodily praxis created religion for believers, and

thus, the study of religious material culture becomes paramount to how we study religion.

Critical Assessment

Despite the focus on material culture approaches as methods of inclusion of various religious peoples, material Christianity dominates much of the scholarship. The focus on the Protestant nature of religious studies meant that studies of American Catholics proliferated to show the sensual side of religious experience. Studies of the materiality of American Jewish practice are apparent, though this requires more study to show how text and artifact are central to religious practice. However, there is still a need for works that catalogue the materiality of Asian religions, Native American religions, Islam, and new religious movements. Material Christians populate most studies, so it would be beneficial to have works on material Muslims, Hindus, and pagans. The material practice of Asian religions appears in works about these religions globally but not necessarily in North America. Thomas Tweed notes that the American media have portrayed both Buddhism and Islam in ways that downplay the complexity of the traditions. The visual imagery of Buddhism presents a sole figure meditating in the lotus position, which does not reflect the religious praxis of most Buddhists globally or in America. Moreover, images of Islam center on polygamy, Muhammad, and violence. Buddhism has been disassociated from violence in our visual culture, while Islam is mired in it. Understandings of the visual and material culture of both movements could counteract the stereotypical representations of each movement in American public culture. Laurie Maffly-Kipp notes that material culture can be used to rewrite the narratives of Euro-American encounter by including reactions to Asian religions and immigrants. Her work explores the reaction to Chinese immigrants and religions in print and visual culture. By exploring newspapers, Maffly-Kipp suggests that scholars can move beyond studies in American religious history on elite traditions and illuminate popular practices of immigrants and lay practitioners. To begin to examine the materiality of various religious movements, not just Christianity, in American religious history would allow a richer narrative of how Americans practice their religions.

Despite these shortcomings, material culture approaches to the study of religion force scholars to think about religion beyond belief and doctrine. Material religion signals the complexity of religious life that encompasses belief and action, the abstract and the embodied. The approach to

religion becomes more holistic and inclusive. The focus on practice and things does not signal the secularization of a movement but rather the novelty of members of various movements who combine artifacts, bodily postures, and beliefs in their own ways. This use of objects signals the creativity of religious peoples to make religion fit into their lives and to make sense of the world around them. The study of religious material culture illuminates how members practice their religion in everyday life. This shows how the faithful navigate the doctrinal and theological components of their movement as well as how they practice their faiths in novel ways. Examining the material culture can illuminate the power struggle between elite and popular religion. Doctrinal statements might suggest a focus on words and the abstract, but popular reaction might suggest something different, like devotion with wax body parts or theological statements on bumper stickers. Yet material religion also showcases the mingling of elite and popular in religious praxis. Clergy participate in these practices as well. Religion is not limited by the textual. The material culture of religious movements shows that religion is not just about belief or practice but an intimate melding of both. The creation of the journal *Material Religion* in 2005 demonstrates how focus on material culture has affected religious studies. The journal centers upon the material dimension of religious life globally, and its creation and popularity signal how material culture approaches have become more mainstream in American religious history as well as religious studies broadly. The stuff of religion tells new stories or reaffirms old ones. Teapots, cemeteries, and dirt all explain dimensions of religious experience that are sensual and physical. Religion is about the transcendent and the embodied. Material culture approaches illuminate the wide spectrum of religious devotion and adherence. Religious people interact with spiritual, unseen worlds as well as material, tangible worlds, and they somehow manage to navigate both. The materiality of religion allows for a fuller understanding of the lives of Americans, devotions to Elvis, prayer shawls, fish decals, food, clothes, churches, temples, or even landscapes. Americans practice their religions in a multitude of spaces, using texts and objects to communicate with the divine. The material nature of religion allows scholars to develop richer, sensual narratives of what it means to be religious and to showcase the tangible side of religious experience.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Celebrity Culture*; *Death and Burial Practices*; *Devotionalism*; *Ethnographic and Anthropological*

Approaches; Folklore; Food and Diet; Geographical Approaches; Historical Approaches; History of Religions, Approaches; Lived Religion; Popular Religion and Popular Culture entries; *Religious Studies; Sociological Approaches; Tourism and Pilgrimage; Visual Culture* entries.

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Megachurches

The term *megachurch* is frustratingly vague, suggesting more a weight class than a religious and social phenomenon. Broadly defined, a megachurch is a church with a congregation numbering 2,000 or more regular attendees. Size is only half the story, however. In fact, megachurches have fundamentally altered the American religious landscape. Megachurches have redefined the concept of church. For millions of Americans, church is a place with a food court, a celebrity pastor, and a dizzying array of service options catering to every age and taste. Megachurches are willing and able to craft the delivery of their message in order to cater to cultural trends and specific demographics. They respond to every desire and anxiety of the prospective newcomer, facilitate thousands of highly specific small groups to maintain membership ties, and tailor sermon topics and services around popular culture, demographic shifts, and attention spans. In short, megachurches are in the business of marketing.

Demographic Characteristics

Megachurches are almost exclusively evangelical, often with fundamentalist leanings. Some are denominationally affiliated, but most eschew denominational membership to facilitate a broad appeal. The leaders are charismatic, but casual and plainspoken—and they are more likely to have degrees in business than in divinity. The congregations are obviously large, but typically not diverse. The majority of attendees are white, middle-class or upper-middle-class suburbanites, although there are predominantly African American congregations as well. Although these latter tend to cater to a middle-class community, they are more likely to draw from urban areas. Megachurches got their start in the sun belt, but have since spread nationwide. Some, like Joel Osteen’s Lakewood Church in Houston, occupy former sports stadiums, but most are custom-built, multi-facility complexes.

Despite this formula, each megachurch caters to a particular niche. Megachurches are designed to attract a target market; as such, each church is unique. What unites them is

the priority they place upon attracting that target demographic. Megachurches decide who their consumers are and then package their product according to what that consumer requires. It may seem strange, and perhaps even distasteful, to describe evangelical Christianity as a product, or believers as consumers; however, this language offers the most accurate characterization of what megachurches do—and it is language, after all, that megachurch leaders themselves are least shy of using.

In his best-selling book *The Purpose Driven Church*, Rick Warren (1954–), the founder of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, offers a visual representation of the man he calls “Saddleback Sam,” the personification of his target market. In extreme detail, Warren describes Sam’s likes and dislikes, habits, and hobbies. Noticeably, very little in the description speaks directly to Sam’s religious views. “Sam” is the sketch of a lifestyle. Warren explains that understanding Sam’s lifestyle makes it easier to cast Saddleback as a compatible part of that lifestyle. Where many religious organizations, particularly in the United States, may have committees and events devoted to outreach, megachurches are built from the ground up to suit the needs and desires of would-be congregants. This approach is not entirely new.

Historical Forerunners: Institutional Churches and the Jesus Movement

From the boisterous revivals of the Second Great Awakening of the early nineteenth century to the modern Christian rock concert, evangelicals enjoy a legacy of religious innovation and entrepreneurialism. One such innovation was the nineteenth-century “institutional church.” Arguably a forerunner of the megachurch, the institutional church was an urban facility built by what we now call the mainline traditions. Institutional churches were designed to attract the masses of young people abandoning rural communities and small towns for burgeoning urban landscapes. They offered religious services, but also secular activities such as socials, adult education, and child care. Like the modern megachurch, institutional churches were physically large plants with expansive sanctuaries but also basketball courts, classrooms, and recreation space to accommodate community events. Some of these churches, for example Chicago’s Fourth Presbyterian and Boston’s Trinity Episcopal, remain today active members of their (albeit changed) communities.

In many ways, the megachurch may seem the next evolution of the institutional churches of the nineteenth century. However, philosophically they are very different. Where

urban institutional churches sought to improve the community by offering alternatives to the cities’ less exalted entertainments, megachurches rarely have such local goals. This is in part because they are so often located in disconnected exurban or suburban communities. Megachurch attendees tend to be more concerned with the needs and challenges of their own families than with broader social concerns. As such, most sermons, workshops, and other church activities are more likely to address individual rather than social improvement.

Other forerunners to the megachurch include Aimee Semple McPherson’s Angelus Temple and Robert Schuller’s Crystal Cathedral. Not coincidentally, both of these churches are located in Southern California, which has long been (and continues to be) a hotbed of evangelical innovation. When Schuller (1926–) arrived in Los Angeles in 1955, he immediately recognized that it was a car-centered culture. In deference to the all-powerful automobile, Schuller gave his sermons at a drive-in movie theater. Twenty-five years prior to Schuller, Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) tapped into the power of Hollywood by crafting her energetic sermons to entertain as much as to inspire. The controversial and eccentric founder of the Church of the Four-Square Gospel, McPherson railed against evolution and pushed for racial equality with popularly inspired music and elaborate stage productions. When McPherson’s Angelus Temple was completed in 1923, it was capable of holding more than 5,000 people.

Like Schuller and McPherson, today’s megachurch leaders adapt their methods and styles to suit social and cultural trends. In the mid-1960s, pastor Chuck Smith (1927–) began preaching to the young “hippies” he saw gathering on the beaches near his Costa Mesa, California, church. Responding to the tumultuous antiauthoritarian underpinnings of the counterculture, Smith recast Jesus as the ultimate rebel. In so doing, Smith launched the Jesus Movement, an evangelical counterculture phenomenon that blended evangelical fundamentalism with “hippie” popular culture. Smith’s Calvary Chapel grew exponentially, and today it hosts more than 5,000 congregants at its weekend services and oversees more than thirteen hundred branch churches worldwide.

The Styles of Contemporary Megachurches

The Jesus Movement dwindled away with the counterculture, but in the 1980s, with consumer culture booming, a young businessman turned minister named Bill Hybels (1951–) was preparing to build a church to suit the new

cultural trends. Before proceeding Hybels, acting on his business acumen, conducted a market research survey to discover why suburban Chicagoans were not attending church. He learned that many people avoided church because it was “stuffy” or made them uncomfortable, they didn’t find it personally relevant, or they just found church boring.

Hybels believed that if evangelicalism was going to compete in the free market of American religion, the concept of church needed redefining. Church needed to become a place where the target demographic felt comfortable, a place that was entertaining, uplifting, and never dull. The result was Willow Creek Community Church, in South Barrington, Illinois, arguably the first contemporary megachurch. With a congregation now numbering more than 20,000, Willow Creek is prototypical of the megachurch movement. Boasting a massive multi-functional campus, Willow Creek looks like a corporate office complex. With its architecture, as with its programming and organization, Willow Creek has crafted a distinctively un-churchly image, and in doing so has changed the definition of church for thousands of people.

At Willow Creek, as at most megachurches, the services are highly choreographed, yet seemingly impromptu. Dress depends on the community the church is attempting to reach: flip-flops and board shorts are perfectly acceptable at Smith’s Calvary Chapel while at Bellevue Baptist in Memphis, Tennessee, male congregants are more likely to wear a tie. The sermons are precisely timed and often augmented by dramatizations, film clips, and Power Point slides. To facilitate intimacy and dispel hierarchy, pulpits are usually absent. Traditional Christian symbolism is also muted. At Osteen’s Lakewood Church no cross appears on the center stage. Similarly, at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado (formerly headed by Ted Haggard), large speakers and colossal video screens flank the stage. There are no hymnals. The lyrics to the upbeat songs appear on giant screens. Music is usually very important. Many megachurch leaders consider it the key to their success and may allot nearly half of the service time to music and congregational singing. At Saddleback Church, for example, congregants can choose from a variety of “venues,” each offering a different musical style, ranging from gospel to country.

Megachurch leaders choose sermon topics and craft their tone based on whether their congregants are surfers or CEOs. It is through cultural mimicry that a megachurch’s architecture offers the most visible evidence of a particular church’s demographic target. Like Willow Creek, Warren’s Saddleback was informed by local market research. Warren,

however, wasn’t aiming at the corporate culture of a mid-western commuter suburb. His church could not look like an office complex. Instead Saddleback looks like one of Orange County’s many outdoor promenade malls. It features Spanish tiles on the roof and several large plazas with outdoor cafes, hanging flower baskets, and mosaic tile. The architecture is consciously un-churchlike, responding as it does to a specific demographic accustomed to a casual but wealthy Southern Californian lifestyle.

Theology in Megachurches

Theologically, megachurches occupy various corners of the nebulous evangelical category. Most hold to basic theological tenets. Although they may use different language, most megachurch statements of belief will purport that salvation is given through God’s grace when one accepts Jesus as one’s savior. Most megachurches also hold to the imperative to evangelize and to some form of biblical inerrancy. Some may claim that the Bible is literally true; others may qualify this with “in its original manuscripts” disclaimers, thereby allowing for flexibility. Megachurch leaders typically avoid eschatology; however, most hold to a pre-millennial dispensationalist theology.

Some megachurches utilize prosperity gospel theology—the notion that spiritual righteousness is rewarded with material gain. Perhaps as a result of a legacy of discrimination and economic disenfranchisement, megachurches with predominantly African American congregants are more likely to fall into this category. Despite statements of faith, in practice most megachurches avoid discussion of difficult or controversial theological concepts in their public services. Instead they opt to focus on the Bible’s practical applications, offering comfort and guidance in the common challenges of ordinary life.

Marketing and the Growth of Megachurches

Megachurches are often described by their founders as miraculous demonstrations of the power of the evangelical message. Pastors discuss their churches’ growth with a tone of humility and surprise, characterizing the stadium-sized auditoriums as necessary for handling the exponential and unexplainable growth. This characterization is not entirely untrue, but it is not entirely accurate either. Careful target marketing makes churches grow, but the growth itself becomes a reason to attend if the target demographic believes that bigger is better. By being one among thousands, megachurch-goers can count themselves as part of something powerful and

popular without having to commit to the responsibilities that membership at a smaller church may require. It is accurate to say that these churches are multi-functional mega-complexes because their numbers require them to be so, but it is also true that they attract such numbers because they are multi-functional mega-complexes.

This focus on marketing has, perhaps ironically, sheltered megachurches from the political and social trends that continue to dismantle the religious right. Despite the fact that on paper megachurches typically fall theologically in line with the religious right and the socially conservative evangelical agendas that gained prominence in the 1980s and 1990s, their careful avoidance of divisive theological and political issues has given them a guise of inclusivity that serves to safeguard their popularity.

Post 9/11, some megachurch leaders began to steer the movement toward a globally conscious and politically balanced agenda. At the helm of this shift was Warren. In tackling such causes as AIDS, climate change, and global poverty, Warren is addressing issues previously considered untouchable by evangelical pastors. During the 2008 presidential campaign, Warren invited political candidates from both parties to his church and frequently partnered with other religious and secular leaders to campaign for his causes. Most significant, his actions to shift away from the socially conservative domestic issues have generated little criticism from the megachurch movement or from the evangelical discourse more generally.

Critics have lobbied that megachurches prompt religious homogenization—that they are “McChurches” peddling “Christianity Lite.” Although the characterization does capture the highly polished environments and practical theology, supporters believe such criticism unfairly casts the megachurch as the cause of consumerist religion. Such a charge, they contend, neglects the defining characteristic of a megachurch—cultural responsiveness and mimicry. Others argue that if megachurches are in fact “McChurches,” it is because they are attempting to reach a market that *wants* a “McChurch.” Megachurches, these observers maintain, are simply mirrors of the surrounding culture, one that might be dubbed a “McCulture.”

See also *Congregations; Emerging Church Movement; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Fundamentalism: Contemporary; House Church Movement; Independent Bible and Community Churches; Ministry, Professional; Positive Thinking; Religious Right; Seeker Churches.*

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Metaphysical Religion

See *Occult and Metaphysical Religion*

Methodists: African American

In the rise of Methodism from its arrival in America during the revivalist awakenings of the mid-1760s to its assumption of place as the most popular religious tradition in the United States a mere half century later, African Americans played a significant role. According to early black Methodist Richard Allen (1760–1831), the “plain and simple gospel” of the Methodists was more suitable to African Americans than any other religious doctrine. A Methodist advantage that Allen noted was their acceptance of “unlearned” people. The sense of community engendered by Methodists’ ecstatic revivals cut across lines of race and class. In the South, the Methodists’ first American bastion, both poor, less educated whites and blacks were attracted to this new religious movement, and from Maryland to South Carolina, it was not uncommon for African American adherents to greatly outnumber white adherents, often by two to one (some Maryland congregations) or even ten to one (Charleston, South Carolina, prior to African American withdrawals from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the mid-1810s).

Early Tensions between Integration and Segregation

During the early organizing period of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) in the early 1780s, culminating in the Christmas Conference that met in Baltimore in 1784, Methodists, both white and black, followed the anti-slavery doctrine set forth a decade earlier in England by their

founder John Wesley (*Thoughts upon Slavery*, 1774) by passing church regulations against slave owning and slave merchandising. By 1785, the MEC had already begun to relax these regulations, especially as they applied to clergy, under pressure from southern whites, but the reputation of Methodists as an antislavery denomination second only to Quakers persisted for decades afterward. This social aspect of the Methodist gospel had concrete results exemplified in Richard Allen's own emancipation; it was in the aftermath of an antislavery sermon delivered in the home of Stokely Sturgis, Allen's master, that Sturgis decided to enter into an agreement with Allen in 1780 that permitted the latter to purchase his freedom from savings earned from his own labor.

White Methodists were often ambivalent in how to include African Americans, especially African American leaders, in the denominational fold. African American converts included preachers and ministers of great ability, such as Allen, Harry Hosier (d. 1806), and Henry Evans (d. 1810). Sometimes it was an African American minister who took the initiative in establishing Methodism in a given locale, as was the case with Evans in Wilmington, North Carolina, from about 1790 to 1810. When Harry Hosier traveled in the ministry with a white yokefellow, it was frequently Hosier's preaching that was most highly praised. Hosier, though illiterate, preached well-informed, zealous, and moving sermons; as would be the case with many other black ministers in following decades, his extraordinary memory compensated for his illiteracy.

Still, the patterns of racial association that developed among the early Methodists were usually segregated ones. All-black bands and classes were the rule. Allen, the leading black Methodist preacher in Philadelphia, preached in the mid-1780s to segregated services at St. George's Methodist Church preceding the main services. Hosier's ministry was announced invariably for the African American portion of the audience, although his preaching was so famous that usually white listeners stayed to hear him. Black ministers were treated as junior partners. When Bishop Francis Asbury sought black traveling companions, he openly warned them that they would not be allowed to socialize with slaves and that they would often have to sleep in his carriage. Not all African American ministers found such conditions acceptable. Allen was one who did not.

Rise of Separate Black Methodist Congregations

Separate black Methodist congregations and denominations arose out of a complex set of factors, including racial

discrimination for whites and a desire for some degree of cultural autonomy among many African Americans. In an event that has been dated variously from 1787 to 1793, a group of African American Methodist leaders including Allen exited St. George's Methodist Church after a white deacon threatened to pull them off their knees for sitting in the wrong part of the church. Allen, citing recent renovations to the church, asserted that the African Americans had been unclear as to their appropriate seats and recalled that they offered to move at the conclusion of prayer, but that this had been unacceptable to the deacon. A more pervasive problem was the refusal of white Methodists to allow suitable ordinations to black preachers. Beginning with Allen, Bishop Asbury ordained nine African Americans as local deacons (a status unrecognized in the Methodist discipline) in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia between 1799 and 1809, but then he stopped, and no more black ministers would be ordained until after his death in 1818. No African Americans had the higher ordination of elder conferred upon them during Asbury's lifetime, and very few prior to the Civil War.

Other offensive or racially discriminatory actions that black Methodists sometimes encountered included unequal access to the sacraments, publication of pro-slavery books by white ministers serving largely black congregations, unequal access to church cemeteries, and attempts to restrain the loudness of expression of African Americans during worship services. Each of these actions served, at some time during the first half century of American Methodist history, as grievances cited by African Americans when they decided to form separate black Methodist churches.

Between 1794 and 1813, separate black Methodist congregations formed in several American cities, including Bethel in central Philadelphia and Zoar in northern Philadelphia (1794); Zion (1796) and Asbury (1813) in New York; Sharp Street in Baltimore (1797); Ezion in Wilmington, Delaware (1805); and Mount Zion in Washington, D.C. (1812). Many of these congregations formed around a charismatic leader. Thus, in Philadelphia, Allen was the highly respected pastor of Bethel, and Lunar Brown, a layman, was a prominent organizer and early trustee of Zoar. Jacob Pindergrass and, increasingly, Peter Spencer (1779–1843) provided spiritual leadership at Ezion, and Daniel Coker (ca. 1780–1846) was the most renowned of the African American ministers as Sharp Street. The Zion Church in New York had a more diversified leadership. During these two decades, all of these separate black congregations maintained a connection with the predominantly white

MEC. For example, Bishop Asbury presided over the consecration of Bethel in 1794 and the ordination of Allen as local deacon five years later.

But the denominational affiliation of some of these black Methodist congregations was to change between 1813 and 1822, when three new independent black denominations were organized. The majority of Ezion's congregation members withdrew from the MEC in 1813, unhappy that the white denomination maintained control over almost all aspects of Ezion's affairs, including the assignment of a pastor, invariably white. They formed a new congregation (the Old Stone Church) and a new denomination (the African Union Church), choosing Peter Spencer as their pastor. Over succeeding years, the African Union Church grew slowly, with its greatest concentration of membership in the Delmarva Peninsula. Since 1865, there has been a separation between those in the Spencer tradition who favor an episcopal form of church government and those who do not; the first denomination is known as the Union American Methodist Church, and the second, the African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church.

African Methodist Episcopal and African Methodist Episcopal Zion Churches

Meanwhile, Richard Allen and the black Methodists in Philadelphia's Bethel Church were in a long-standing battle with white Methodists in their city over the ability of white Methodists to appoint ministers to Bethel and the validity of Bethel's bylaws as amended by its "African Supplement," approved in 1806; with the supplement, the bylaws gave Bethel members great power over their congregational affairs. A January 1816 decision by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled on behalf of Bethel and Allen, setting the stage for the organizing conference of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church three months later. In this new venture, Allen was joined by Coker and a minority of Baltimore's black Methodists. Allen was chosen by the delegates as the first bishop of the AME Church. His long-time friend Absalom Jones, now a priest for the St. Thomas African Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, participated in Allen's ordination as an elder and consecration as bishop on successive days at this founding conference. In succeeding decades, the AME Church gained considerable membership in large swaths of the United States, including the Midwest and southern border states.

Among the Zion Methodists in New York, the most pressing issue was the unwillingness of white Methodists to

ordain any elders or sufficient ministers at the lower rank of deacon for the needs of their congregation. In 1822, they held their organizing convention, and they also chose the name African Methodist Episcopal Church, although this would in 1848 be changed to African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church for easier distinction from Allen's denomination. Friendly white elders assisted in the ordination of three of the Zion Methodists to the rank of elder, with one of these new elders—James Varick—also set aside as the new superintendent of the denomination.

Their less hierarchical intentions were demonstrated by their choice of "superintendent" rather than "bishop" to designate their denomination leadership, in addition to their regulations that superintendents did not serve for life—as was the case in both the AME and ME Churches—but were to stand for election every four years. By 1880, however, the AMEZ Church would conform to the patterns prevalent throughout most of the rest of American Methodism by reversing its stand on both issues and electing bishops for life. The AMEZ Church was always the second largest of the black Methodist denominations, after the AME Church, but it had similar aspirations for a far-flung missionary effort.

Additional Branches of Black Methodists

Many black Methodists, however, did not join any of these independent black denominations but decided to remain within the predominantly white MEC to continue the struggle for justice and equality there. Among the predominantly black congregations remaining within the MEC were Zoar in Philadelphia and Sharp Street in Baltimore (without the congregational minority led by Coker into the AME Church). In 1822, Zoar successfully sought its financial independence but still remained within the Philadelphia Conference of the MEC. By the 1830s, the Philadelphia Conference had begun ordaining black ministers as elders, although still not conferring upon them equal status with whites; its appointments to the Zoar pastorate were drawn from the ranks of these ordained African Americans.

A fifth major branch of black Methodism, the Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, arose in the South following the Civil War. The main progenitor of the CME Church was the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS), which had separated from the MEC in 1844 over the issue of whether James Osgood Andrew, a Methodist minister, was disqualified from the episcopacy because he owned slaves. (The occasion for this schism had of course been obviated by the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S.

Constitution, but reunion between the MEC and the MECS would not come until 1939.) The ME, AME, and AMEZ denominations all competed vigorously for the loyalty and membership of the freed people who belonged to the plantation missions and the urban black congregations that had, prior to the war, fallen under the aegis of the MECS. While each of these denominations, with their northern bases of operation, made some headway among the South's freed people, there were a minority of southern black Methodists who desired to affiliate with none of the denominations that arrived in the aftermath of emancipation and U.S. Army occupation. These Methodists affiliated instead with the CME Church, which held its first General Conference in Jackson, Tennessee, in 1870, although state conventions of what was to become the CME Church had been held as early as 1865.

The first two CME bishops were William Henry Miles (1828–1892) and Richard Vanderhorst (1813–1872), the latter a former AME minister. Although initially the CME Church appeared to counsel against political involvement more than other African American Methodists, and also to court a closer relationship with southern white Methodists, these distinctions turned out to be short-lived. In 1954, the name of the denomination was changed to the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Black Methodism and the Antislavery Movement

Black Methodists pursued diverse antislavery strategies from 1810 to 1860. Only a few, such as Daniel Coker, supported the settlement in Liberia sponsored by the American Colonization Society, but more widespread in the 1820s was a movement to emigrate to a newly independent Haiti. Richard Allen supported this movement, and his son, Richard Allen Jr., moved to Haiti for a time. From the 1830s onward, the abolitionist movement led by William Lloyd Garrison attracted many black Methodists in the North. Jermain Loguen (1809–1872), an AMEZ minister in Syracuse, New York, was a leading activist in the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad, facilitating the 1851 “Jerry Rescue,” when abolitionists stormed the Syracuse jail to free African American barrel maker William Henry, who had been detained under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.

Thomas W. Henry (1794–1877), an AME minister, had to flee his Hagerstown, Maryland, home when his name was found in the papers of John Brown, leader of an 1859 antislavery insurrection in Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Despite such

activism, the most notable contribution of black Methodists to antislavery during the mid-nineteenth century may well have been their quiet building of African American community institutions, places of refuge from white hostility, exploitation, and violence.

Some southern white Methodists, while loudly proslavery, quietly nurtured future black church leaders, including Henry McNeal Turner (1834–1915), a minister in the AME Church after 1858, and the CME's Lucius Holsey (1842–1920). A significant minority of southern Methodists were opposed to laws forbidding instruction in literacy for African Americans, and future African American leaders such as Turner sometimes benefited from their quiet circumvention of such laws.

African American Methodists, such as AME bishop Daniel Payne (1812–1893), cheered President Abraham Lincoln's emancipation policies from 1862 onwards, and Turner and a few other black Methodist ministers served as chaplains in the Union Army. In efforts beginning in Union Army-liberated areas and accelerating at war's end, black Methodists such as James Lynch, an AME minister who later joined the MEC; James Hood; and Turner welcomed southern black Methodists into their respective denominations, conducted successful revivals swelling the membership of their southern churches, and participated in efforts to establish Reconstruction governments in southern states. Southern whites strongly opposed their political work, but their church work continued largely unimpeded, and by the 1880s a large majority of the two largest black Methodist denominations, the AME and AMEZ Churches, existed in the former states of the Confederacy.

Mission work in Africa claimed the attention of the larger branches of American Methodism, both those that were predominantly white and those that were predominantly black. The first African American bishop in the MEC was Francis Burns (1809–1863), a missionary to Liberia; he was consecrated in 1858. In the southern states during Reconstruction, some MEC ministers such as the abolitionist Gilbert Haven (1821–1880) in Atlanta worked hard to encourage racially integrated congregations, but with little success. Most MEC congregations in the South had overwhelming majorities of either white or black. There were, however, racially mixed annual conferences.

Women in Black Methodism

Black Methodist women, such as the AME's Jarena Lee (1783–ca. 1850) and the AMEZ's Zilpha Elaw (1790–ca.

1845), were instrumental in missionary work among African Americans. On the basis of their gender, they received equivocal support from some black Methodist clergy such as Richard Allen and pointed opposition from others. Lee, an evangelist who was not ordained as a minister, was unsuccessful in persuading AME men to open the ranks of the ordained ministry to women. In 1848, she even began a short-lived parallel connection of female ministers. Many black Methodist women followed in the footsteps of Lee and Elaw, evangelizing widely but not seeking ordination. One such was the famed Holiness evangelist Amanda Berry Smith (1837–1915), who triumphantly addressed the 1872 AME General Conference in Nashville, asserting that she had no need for the denomination's blessing for her ministry, because she was "satisfied with the ordination that the Lord has given me."

Some women, however, did continue to seek an official ordination as minister. Turner ordained Sarah Ann Hughes of North Carolina as a deacon in the AME Church in 1885, but his action was overturned on gender grounds two years later; Turner was reprovved by the AME General Conference in 1888 for having exceeded his authority. In 1894, Julia A. J. Foote (ca. 1823–1900) was ordained as a deacon in the AMEZ Church, and Mary J. Small (1850–1945) was ordained to the same office in the following year; Small was then ordained as an elder in 1898, and Foote to the same office two years later. These ordinations were not overturned. In 1915, two CME women were ordained as deacons, but "full ministry rights" were not granted to CME female preachers until 1966; in that same year, Virgie Grant was the first CME woman to receive the ordination of elder. The first AME ordination of a woman that was not overturned was that of Rebecca Glover in 1948. Women's church organizations such as female missionary societies were an important and less controversial avenue for black female Methodist leadership in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Black Methodist Consideration of Mergers

Talks regarding union of Methodist denominations with black Methodist members began in the 1860s and have continued with meager results. Some such talks involved only predominantly African American Methodist denominations. Thus, in 1864, the AME and AMEZ Churches agreed on a merger four years later, but that merger was never consummated. The CME and AMEZ Churches have been in a protracted dialogue about merger, but the outcome

remains uncertain. Controversy over the name of the resulting merged denomination has often been a stumbling block, with the word "African" seen as indispensable to some and undesirable to others. Other talks have involved both predominantly white and predominantly black Methodist denominations. The AMEZ and ME Churches, for example, discussed merger in the 1860s but were unable to reach agreement.

In the early twentieth century, after decades-long negotiations, a merger between the MEC and MECS in 1939 resulted in the lumping of all African American Methodists together in a segregated, unwieldy, continent-wide Central Jurisdiction, thus bringing to an end racially mixed annual conferences in the MEC, which in any case had suffered attrition and widespread resegregation since Reconstruction's end. At issue was whether African American Methodists could ever be permitted to exercise authority over white Methodists. The obvious second-class nature of black Methodist citizenship in the merged denomination came under attack before, during, and after the merger process; but the Central Jurisdiction endured for almost three decades, until it was abolished in 1968 as part of another merger that formed the present United Methodist Church. The first African American bishops in the MEC were Robert E. Jones (1872–1960) and Matthew W. Clair Sr. (1865–1943), both elected to the episcopacy in 1920; they were both assigned to superintend African American churches exclusively during their entire episcopal careers. The first African American Methodist bishop assigned to supervise predominantly white churches was James Thomas (1919–), who presided over the Iowa area of the United Methodist Church beginning in 1964.

Black Methodist Higher Education

The first black Methodist college was Wilberforce College near Xenia, Ohio, founded by AME bishop Daniel Payne in 1856. Following emancipation, the MEC, AME, AMEZ, and CME Churches all established colleges in the South open to African Americans. Some, such as the MEC's New Orleans University, clearly intended an integrated faculty and student body, although obstacles posed by the Louisiana legislature and the native white population ensured that the college served almost entirely African American students. It subsequently merged with a Congregationalist college to form Dillard University. Other colleges were founded, especially by the historically black denominations, with an African American student body as the desired goal. Each of

these denominations founded at least one theological seminary for African Americans. Three seminaries in Atlanta—the MEC's Gammon, the AME's Turner, and the CME's Phillips—eventually consolidated, along with other denominations, to form the Interdenominational Theological Seminary. In addition, the AMEZ seminary, Hood, was located in Salisbury, North Carolina; and another AME seminary, Payne, was located alongside Wilberforce College in Ohio.

The “Great Migration”

As the oppression of African Americans in the South intensified in the early twentieth century, black Methodists participated in a large-scale exodus from the South to northern cities such as Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York. A study of five selected northern cities found that Methodist churches increased their numbers by 85 percent between 1916 and 1926, a more modest level of growth than the Baptists' 151 percent increase. Many black Methodist pastors and church members were hospitable to the southern migrants. But this was also a turbulent time in black Methodist history, as long-established members frequently battled newcomers for control of congregations. One such conflict was responsible for the removal in 1920 of Robert Williams from the pastorate of one of the most high-profile AME churches, Philadelphia's Mother Bethel AME Church founded by Richard Allen. One strategy to address the urban problems faced by rapidly swelling numbers of black Methodists was the Social Gospel theology advanced by such black Methodists as Reverdy Ransom (1861–1959) and Richard R. Wright Jr. (1878–1967), but this too was controversial. AME minister (later bishop) Ransom's Institutional Church and Social Settlement, founded in 1900, included vocational training classes, child care, and an employment agency. Ransom resigned this pastorate in 1904, shortly before he would have been forced out by other AME Church members who did not believe that “bearing a message of social, moral, economic and civic salvation [was] a function of the church.”

Black Methodists in the Struggle for Civil Rights

Many of the civil rights and black power activists of the mid-twentieth century were black Methodists. Daisy Bates (1914–1999), an activist during the Little Rock school desegregation struggle; Roy Wilkins (1901–1981), longtime head of the NAACP; labor leader A. Philip Randolph; and Oliver Brown (1903–1961) and his daughter Linda, on

whose behalf the *Brown v. Board of Education* suit was filed, were all members of the AME Church. Septima Poinsette Clark (1898–1987), heading the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC's) voter education project and active in many other phases of the movement, was associated with the Old Bethel Methodist Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Joseph Lowery (1921–), who provided leadership for the SCLC over a period of several decades, was a United Methodist minister. Ruby Doris Smith Robinson (1942–1967), organizer of sit-ins and a leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, was one of the CME members involved with the movement.

Many black Methodist churches, including the Brown Chapel AME Church in Selma, Alabama, provided vital meeting places for civil rights activists. Eleven of the forty-eight signers of the “Black Power” statement of the National Conference of Black Churchmen were identified as black Methodists, representing four different denominations: five were AME, four United Methodist, and one each AMEZ and CME. In the wake of these movements, black Methodists sought and often gained offices at the local, state, and federal level. For example, Floyd Flake (b. 1945), pastor of the Greater Allen AME Church in Queens, New York, was also a member of Congress from 1987 to 1997.

Black Methodist Leadership in the Early Twenty-First Century

In the United Methodist Church, African Americans are far more strongly represented in ecclesiastical leadership than in the past. As of 2008, ten of fifty active U.S. bishops were African American. In 1984, United Methodists elected their first African American female bishop, Leontine T. C. Kelly (b. 1920), now retired. The first woman elected to the episcopacy of a historically black denomination was the AME's Vashti McKenzie (b. 1947) in 2000. Other African American women have subsequently been elected as bishops in both of these denominations.

Black Methodists for Church Renewal note that there are at least 2,400 black United Methodist Church congregations and about 500,000 African American members. Yet the organization is not satisfied with this level of involvement, noting that while African Americans have been increasing as a percentage of the U.S. population, African American membership in the United Methodist Church has been declining. Black Methodists for Church Renewal seeks to “expose . . . racism” in church agencies, to encourage black Methodist involvement in the work of economic

and social betterment, and to further strategies “for the development, maintenance and growth of strong Black churches.” In the AME Church, charismatic and neo-Pentecostal movements have contributed to notable growth in some congregations.

Future of Black Methodism: Organic Union or Further Distinction?

Maintenance of the subtle brand distinctions between the several branches of black Methodism has appeal to some, especially to the bishops who administer those branches, but church revitalization efforts probably would receive a boost if African American Methodists, scattered among denominations of various sizes, were able to coalesce into one body. Yet efforts toward organic union of the historically black Methodist denominations, as well as that of black Methodists with United Methodists, continued to be stymied; ecumenical relationships through the National Council of Churches and other venues seem to be the most that can be managed.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion entries; Ecumenism; Education: Colleges and Universities; Holiness Movement; Invisible Institution; Methodists entries; Music: African American entries.*

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Methodists: Through the Nineteenth Century

The Methodists are a denominational family of Protestant Christians born in England from the theological and ecclesiastical reforms of John Wesley (1703–1791) and his brother Charles Wesley (1707–1788) starting in the 1730s. Methodism became one of the most influential religious movements within the North American landscape by the middle of the nineteenth century. Beginning with the immigration of Methodists from the British Isles in the 1760s, which followed the revival influence of George Whitefield (1714–1770) in the colonies, this reform movement within the Church of England became a new denomination in America in 1784 known as the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC).

Over the course of the following century, the movement would divide and multiply to the extent that on the eve of the Civil War, the MEC was the largest Protestant denomination in the United States. Primarily exhibiting Arminian rather than Calvinist theological roots, the Methodists emphasized the availability of salvation to everyone, leading to their rapid expansion despite the higher moral rigor demanded of members in comparison to many other denominations. This theological and moral foundation often led to a convergence of progressive and conservative social and political stands, placing the Methodists in the center of public debate on a wide variety of topics such as abolitionism and temperance.

Beginnings of the Movement

In November 1729, John Wesley and three others at Oxford University began to meet regularly to pursue life according to the method of biblical religion. This group, known as the Holy Club, can be designated as the beginning of Methodism. The Wesleys, as well as Whitefield and the few others who joined the group, would go on to become leaders in the

great revival of religion in Great Britain and in the British Colonies in North America sometimes known as the first Great Awakening. Whitefield, though not in full theological agreement with Wesley's Arminianism, was a direct leader in America, spending time across the Atlantic through seven evangelistic journeys spanning Georgia to New England. Both Wesleys had for a short time lived in Georgia in the 1730s, and though this time was not successful for them either personally or professionally, it was instrumental in the later success of the Methodist movement through Wesley's exposure to the Pietism and small group methodology of the Moravian missionaries there.

After his return to England and the famous "Aldersgate experience," Wesley spent the next decades growing the Methodist movement in England through the establishment of weekly society meetings that met in parallel with normal attendance at Anglican (and Dissenting) churches for the sacraments and normal church life. This movement was progressively organized into a "connexion" of societies that would essentially stand on its own by the time of Wesley's death in 1791. Much as it would in America, the movement exhibited a tension between the democratization of religion—the opening up of religion to the masses—and a hierarchy tightly controlled by the charismatic John Wesley. As the movement grew, Wesley authorized men to travel and preach just as he did, although until his death Wesley saw himself as a faithful Anglican priest and did not take it upon himself to ordain these lay preachers as clergy in England.

In the 1760s Wesley began encouraging some of his followers to make the journey to the British colonies in America. Barbara Heck (1734–1804), known as the "mother" of American Methodism, was instrumental in these earliest days. After being converted to Methodism in Ireland, the Palatine German immigrated to New York City in 1760. According to a story with a hagiographic tint, in 1766 Heck walked into a room of her fellow German immigrants and saw them playing cards—the final straw of immorality upon her back. She promptly walked over and swept the cards into her apron and deposited them into the fire. She then quickly convinced her cousin, Philip Embury (1729–1775), to begin preaching; and she, along with her husband, a working man, and a black female servant became—in one version—the first Methodist society in North America. She would later be instrumental in building the first Methodist church building in New York, and then, after revolutionary tensions arose and her family moved north to find more loyalist safety, she founded the first Methodist society in Canada.

While there is evidence that Whitefield may have started societies in the southern colonies earlier than the first in New York, these did not last. This is not the only claim to southern priority, though. Some have concluded that the earliest Methodist roots in America lie in the labors of lay minister Robert Strawbridge (ca. 1732–1781) in Frederick County, Maryland, in the 1760s. The traditions place this work as earlier, perhaps as early as 1762, but the evidence is less definite than the clearer New York tradition. The societies started by Strawbridge in the Delmarva region (Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia) were solidified with a concerted effort there in the 1770s. Regardless of which region had chronological priority, it was the southern expression that would eventually have more to say in the sociocultural nature of American Methodism.

To solidify these burgeoning works in the colonies, Wesley dispatched experienced lay preachers to the colonies. The first pair to go was Richard Boardman (1738–1782) and Joseph Pilmore (1739–1825), who arrived in Philadelphia in 1769. Boardman was the more senior and was placed in charge of the American work. He left Pilmore in Philadelphia to better organize the society they unexpectedly found there, led by the colorful layman Captain Thomas Webb (1724–1796), while he went on to New York, their original destination. While Webb was a diligent organizer and a passionate speaker, he had not adequately formed the Philadelphia society into the proper mold. Pilmore, the more energetic and effective of the two ministers Wesley had sent, worked in cooperation with the Anglican clergyman of St. Paul's Church in Philadelphia as he began preaching open-air meetings, organizing prayer meetings, visiting prisoners, and eventually taking possession of Old St. George's church building for housing the parent society in Philadelphia.

Pilmore also initiated the practice of the love feast. This was the Methodist practice, influenced by the Moravians, of meeting to pray, sing, experience fellowship over bread and water, and give impromptu testimonies. Only members in good standing, as evidenced by possession of admission tickets received after completing a quarterly examination at the class meeting, were allowed to attend these love feasts. Although the Methodist movement as a whole was referred to as the "Connexion," the basic building block of the movement was the class meeting. The class meeting was born out of financial pragmatism as a means for lay leaders to collect donations, but it became the basic discipleship tool through its weekly meetings. These meetings of approximately twenty to thirty Methodists not only served

as the primary forum for discipleship and spiritual accountability; it was the home to leadership training as most of the itinerant preachers started off as class leaders. Between the class meetings and the love feasts, the growth of the Methodist movement in America was propelled through a distinct emphasis on camaraderie and fellowship. Additionally, the Methodists met in quarterly meetings to conduct church business. These quarterly meetings were based on the circuits to which preachers were appointed. These were regions that contained preaching locations and societies that the preachers would regularly visit. There may have been local preachers who assisted with the circuit, but the circuits were overseen by a traveling preacher, or circuit rider. They were originally centered in larger cities, such as New York and Philadelphia, and then branched out increasingly into rural areas.

With the growing revolutionary spirit taking root in the colonies and then the War of Independence itself, many of the Anglican priests and Methodist preachers were forced to withdraw from the colonial mission field and return to the political safety of England, where they were surrounded by friendly Tories. The practical, ecclesiastical, and liturgical result was that the Methodists were without access to the sacraments. Thus, while Anglican polity required a bishop to ordain priests, in 1784 John Wesley, Thomas Coke (1747–1814), and James Creighton (1737–1819) (each a priest in the Church of England, but none a bishop) ordained two preachers as deacons and elders—Richard Whatcoat (1736–1806) and Thomas Vasey (ca. 1745–1826)—in order that they might be sent to America to administer the sacraments and provide clerical leadership. At the same time, Wesley also ordained Coke as superintendent of the work in America. In December of that year, Methodist preachers came together in Baltimore, Maryland, a gathering that would later be known as the “Christmas Conference.” At this meeting the lay preachers were ordained by Coke, including Francis Asbury (1745–1816), who, under instructions from Wesley, was ordained as deacon, then elder, then superintendent. Asbury accepted the position of superintendent only after the preachers voted unanimously to proclaim him as such. Perhaps in this act one can see that a bit of the American democratic spirit had already rubbed off on him despite the exhortations of Wesley, who was against the Revolution. Wesley was incensed when he found out that Asbury and Coke had changed their title from superintendent to bishop. It was also at the Christmas Conference that, due to both internal and external factors, the group organized as the

Methodist Episcopal Church, a separate denomination from the remnants of the Church of England in the new nation that would soon become the Protestant Episcopal Church. This move to official independence would come later in England when in 1795 the movement separated from the Church of England. In addition to these measures taken at the conference in Baltimore, the group (which included sixty of the eighty-one Methodist preachers on the continent) also affirmed their allegiance to Wesley, strongly opposed slavery, and banned the use of intoxicating drinks by the clergy.

The Movement Gains New World Momentum

Francis Asbury had arrived in North America much earlier than the Christmas Conference. Born near Birmingham, England, and converted under one of Wesley’s itinerant preachers, Asbury had served as the leader of the Methodists in Northamptonshire before being dispatched to the colonies in 1771 in the second delegation. Asbury proved to be a relentless missionary, rooting out converts and congregations throughout the colonies, and is considered the greatest of the early leaders of American Methodism. He showed the other preachers the way out of the relative comfort of the coastal towns and cities to the expanding population in the mountains of Appalachia and the West. He soon became the de facto leader of the American Methodists and was recognized as such by Wesley. Asbury worked tirelessly (and celibately) in his travels to preach, organize societies, settle disputes, and impose discipline. During his ministry he traveled over a quarter million miles on horseback providing leadership by example to the other ministers in the movement. Asbury exemplified the manner in which the Methodists went about conquering the new territories. Circuit riding preachers would be assigned an area within which they would travel to speak in chapels, homes, fields, and anywhere else people would listen. They would establish classes and societies and build congregations together out of the intrepid pioneers forging further and further west. The Methodists were not always popular on the frontier. It takes a certain type of person to venture into the unknown, to do the hard work of establishing farms, towns, and cities where they did not exist before. These people tended to be adventurous and rough, people who sought to be their own authority. The Methodists came preaching temperance and holiness, and this did not always set well. Yet these Methodist preachers and laypeople were on a divine mission and adventure of their own. Persistent and dedicated, they won

convert after convert, sometimes one by one, sometimes in droves, especially at camp meetings.

The camp meetings were a new phenomenon. Established on the American frontier as a way to bring large groups of people together for extended time periods for religious purposes, people would set up tents surrounding a central meeting area. The meetings were held during off seasons for farmers and during the warm months and would last a week or longer. Those who came would gather several times a day for prayer, worship, and exhortation from both clergy and laity. Though this technique was not exclusive to them, the Methodists and their progeny were prolific in its employment. Although the format of the camp meeting evolved over the years, the form used in the Second Great Awakening in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries proved enduring among Methodists and their spiritual descendents. Camp meetings would be utilized during the revivals later in the nineteenth century, though they were often adapted to more urban settings, and they even persisted into the twentieth century. That which had originally been a highly emotional, agrarian spiritual retreat became a part of urban revivalism or merged with the quarterly circuit meetings into a hybrid of business meeting and spiritual awakening.

It was in this revivalist setting that Methodism took on a somewhat different flavor. While the Wesleys and Whitefield had been educated at Oxford, overwhelmingly the early Methodists were not of that stripe. The itinerant preachers were much like their parishioners—lower- to middle-class artisans and tradespeople who tended to have a common school education, at best. Likewise, the clergy were grossly underpaid in comparison to those in the more established denominations. In 1800, Congregationalist ministers, many of whom had been educated at Yale or Harvard, received an annual salary of \$400. Meanwhile, a single, full-time Methodist minister was rejoicing in his recent raise to \$80 per year. This socioeconomic setting therefore engendered a different set of priorities and skills.

In 1597, Richard Hooker had laid out in *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* the “threefold cord” of Bible, church, and reason that was the standard of Anglican theology. Expanding on this, Wesley championed a fourfold religious epistemology that scholars later called the Wesleyan Quadrilateral. Wesley pointed to the four corners of scripture, tradition, reason, and experience that were to be kept in complementary relationship as valid sources of knowledge about God and the way one ought to live in the world. Though driven

to the fields from his high-church origins, Wesley never fully embraced a radical emotionalism—yet in the camp meetings, emotion burned long and bright. The preaching of the circuit riding and camp meeting preachers was performed in the everyday language of the working folk in attendance. Not only was it performed in understandable language, it was delivered with passion. The Methodist sermons well fit Abraham Lincoln’s popular description of his favorite preaching style: bee-fighting. A response from the hearers was obligatory, and in firsthand accounts one finds widespread occurrence of trances, visions, shaking, screaming, barking and other animal sounds, and being “slain in the Spirit.” Methodists would proceed in later years to found numerous educational institutions, many of which are now considered top-tier schools, such as Duke and Vanderbilt Universities. The first one for training ministers was the “Bible Institute” in Boston, later to be Boston University School of Theology. This emphasis on reason was never completely absent, and the Bible and church were always at the forefront, but in the early and mid-nineteenth century emotionalism fueled the expansion of the movement.

A Segmented Movement

Methodism was never a blandly uniform or hermetically sealed unit. The earliest partitions within the Methodist family can be found not in groups that split off of the central branch, but in similar groups that were begun somewhat independently and would later become part of the United Methodist Church. The first of these was begun by a German immigrant, Philip William Otterbein (1726–1813). Having been educated in Germany, Otterbein moved to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where he served as pastor of the German Reformed congregation. In 1754, he experienced a dramatic religious experience that drove him toward evangelical thinking and preaching. He came into contact with the ministry of Martin Boehm (1725–1812), a Mennonite who was later disfellowshipped because he too was overly evangelical for his denomination. The two men gathered a group of preachers and followers around them over the next thirty years, who then organized, with Otterbein and Boehm as the first superintendents, as the United Brethren in Christ in 1800. This movement was structured much like the Methodists, with whom the United Brethren carried on a lively fellowship. In fact, Otterbein was an invited participant in the ordination ceremony of Francis Asbury.

A second related denomination was first known as “Albright’s People” and would later assume the name

Evangelical Association. Jacob Albright (1759–1808) was born in Pennsylvania of a German Lutheran background that was filtered through Pietism. After converting to the Methodist movement and becoming an exhorter, Albright began building classes in eastern Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Shenandoah Valley. In 1799, he gathered his assistants together for a meeting that would prove the beginning of a distinct movement. Albright and his associates organized as a society and by 1807 had established a “regular” annual conference and were developing an ecclesial code of discipline based on the Methodist *Discipline*. At the same time, they adopted the label “Newly-Formed Methodist Conference,” which signaled their own interdependence with the Methodist movements on the whole. Albright soon passed away, but the movement carried on under new leadership. The movement hung true to its German roots, clinging almost exclusively to the German language and culture, at times even at the risk of excommunication. It was at its first General Conference in 1816 that the name Evangelical Association was adopted. Through the first half of the nineteenth century, the Evangelical Association was able to establish “Articles of Faith,” a publishing wing, and a missions program.

The first schism within American Methodism dealt with issues of polity. James O’Kelly (ca. 1735–1826) had been ordained at the Christmas Conference and had early been inspired by Asbury, but he was to become the proverbial thorn in Asbury’s side. At the General Conference of 1792, O’Kelly, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, moved that preachers should have the right to appeal to the Conference in response to episcopal appointments—a direct attack on what he deemed to be an overly authoritative bishopric. Having just fought in defense of representative principles, O’Kelly thought the same should apply to church policies. His motion was defeated, however, and he left to start the Republican Methodist Church. This new church would build a substantial following in North Carolina and southern Virginia, but the Christian Church (as it became known in 1801) would not last, and its members filtered into various other groups in the early nineteenth century: some returned to the MEC, while others were drawn into the Stone–Campbell Movement.

The Methodist Protestant Church formed in 1830, the result of a failed reform movement that had been active over the previous decade. In the 1820s, a group of preachers organized around the principle of more egalitarian church politics. They had argued at conferences and through

publications in favor of four changes to Methodist polity: elimination of the rank of bishop, presiding elders to be elected rather than appointed, Annual and General Conferences to have an equal representation of laity and clergy, and local preachers to be elevated to full ministerial rights. When their efforts failed and a number of the movement’s participants were expelled from the MEC for “ecclesiastical treason” they formed the Methodist Protestant Church, which implemented each of the principles, save the last. Though always one of the smaller Methodist denominations, it enjoyed growth throughout its history until reunification into the Methodist Church in 1939.

The Holiness movement, not originally a Methodist splinter group but the church’s own revival movement, would eventually produce several new denominations in the face of what was perceived to be a growing spiritual compromise within Methodism. One of the most popular figures of the nineteenth century was the Holiness writer, teacher, and revivalist Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874). Palmer would have one of the greatest impacts on post–Civil War evangelicalism through her teachings concerning the higher Christian life. Through Palmer, Wesley’s ideas concerning sanctification were even more clearly and rigidly taught—and extended. Through the “Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness,” a Methodist society meeting held at her home in New York City from the mid-1830s through the mid-1860s; her popular books such as *The Way of Holiness* (1843) and *Entire Devotion to God* (1845) and the periodical she edited for many years, *Guide to Holiness*; as well as her immensely popular services at camp meetings and conventions, Palmer spread the message of entire sanctification. She delineated this doctrine in three steps: a private decision to surrender fully to God, an “altar” faith that focused on a sacrifice of the self that was to be worked out in the prayers at the front of the revival meetings, and a public testimony of the personal experience of sanctification by the recipient. Palmer’s version of sanctification was a more private understanding of the experience than that proffered by both the Calvinist Puritans and by Wesley, who gave more credence to the communal recognition of holiness than to personal testimony. Palmer’s version of entire sanctification also had a direct relationship with the surrounding society—opposition to it. For Palmer, holiness meant a consecration away from social gentility and all of its trappings and adornments. The biblical call to “be not conformed to this world” insisted upon restrictions from dancing, the theater, fashionable dress, and other frivolous activities. Her

emphasis on personal piety had a lasting influence in the Holiness movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (including the Salvation Army, Church of the Nazarene, and Wesleyan churches), as well as the traditional Pentecostal movement begun around the turn of the twentieth century (including the Church of God [Cleveland, Tennessee] and the International Pentecostal Holiness Church).

With Palmer, we can also see another side—a bent toward social activism. Although not rare among evangelicals of her day, it nevertheless did not have the same lasting effect within conservative evangelicalism as her theology. Palmer never sought ordination herself (the first woman to enjoy ordination in American Methodism was Helenor Davison of the Methodist Protestant Church in 1866), but she pushed strongly against the norm by being a wildly popular public speaker. She also published in 1859 the four-hundred-page tome *The Promise of the Father* in which she resolutely argued for the position of women in ministry. And although she was careful to not make the issue a topic of her public teaching, Palmer labored behind the scenes in the abolitionist movement and did so publicly in the temperance movement. Activism among Methodist women was also brought to the fore by the prominent leader of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Frances Willard (1839–1898). Willard was a leader in the suffrage movement; advocated for the ordination of women; was involved in the labor movement later in life; and was pivotal in the establishment and development of higher education for women, becoming the founding president of Northwestern Ladies College, which later merged with Northwestern University.

Methodism among African Americans

African slaves had been a part of Methodism in America from its beginning, worshipping together with whites under a relatively loose set of social guidelines. This arrangement did not always work without tension, however. Former slave Richard Allen (1760–1831) was converted to Methodism at the age of seventeen. After itinerating with Richard Whatcoat and preaching under the appointment of Asbury, Allen and Absalom Jones (1746–1818) led a movement in 1786 to preach to the blacks of Philadelphia. This move was rejected by the largely white St. George's Methodist Church and subsequently led to even more radical measures against Allen and the black Methodists following him. Through stages, Allen and Jones founded two separate black congregations. Jones led those who had become overly impatient

with the Methodists, founding a congregation that later became associated with the Protestant Episcopal Church. Allen led the group that wanted to remain within Methodism. By 1816, even Asbury had felt the pressure from the southern Methodists and had silenced his antislavery efforts and stopped ordaining blacks as deacons. This led Allen's group from Philadelphia to merge with other discontented African American churches in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, establishing the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church with Allen as its first bishop. Allen's leadership of the AME Church along with his social activism in partnership with Jones places him as among the first black leaders in America with national prominence.

The first female approved to preach by Bishop Allen in the AME Church was Jarena Lee (b. 1783), though her ministry was much broader than this single denomination. From the 1820s through the 1840s, Lee was one of the more popular preachers in North America. Although most of those who attended her meetings were of African descent, that was by no means exclusive. White Methodist lawyers, doctors, and merchants were commonly in attendance. Inundated with criticism and pressure to abandon the controversial practice of preaching by a woman, Lee argued the point extensively in language that would set the stage for later feminist arguments on this issue. Although nothing is known of the last years of her life, Jarena Lee had a profound and enduring impact upon the nature of evangelical, and specifically Methodist, culture in the nineteenth century.

James Varick (1750–1827) was elected the first general superintendent of the African Methodist Episcopal Church—Zion (AME-Zion) in 1822. This culminated a long process of separation that included attempts at reconciliation with the MEC, attempts at unification with the Philadelphia-based AME group led by Allen, and lingering liturgical and sacramental leadership by white ministers of the MEC. Originally born out of success in the John Street Church and its overcrowded services in the 1790s, the African American members desired to meet on their own. By 1801, they had purchased their own property and incorporated the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York (Zion Chapel). In 1820, a conference was held in which the preachers Varick, Abraham Thompson, and Christopher Rush (1777–1873) were ordained as elders by the MEC, negating the need for white ministerial intrusion. The process ultimately led to the official separation and establishment of the church named after its first chapel in New York

City. Varick was followed as bishop by the popular Christopher Rush in 1828. Though not the largest of the African American Methodist movements, the AME-Zion church does boast such illustrious figures as Sojourner Truth (1797–1883), Frederick Douglass (1818–1895), and Harriet Tubman (ca. 1820–1913) among its historic constituents and contributors.

Splits over Slavery and Civil War

In terms of numerical and socioeconomic effect, perhaps the most significant of the divisions within nineteenth-century Methodism is the 1844 split between the MEC and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS). During the early nineteenth century, the once unified position of the American Methodists—a stance in vocal opposition to slavery—had become diffused, largely on geographical and social grounds, rather than theological. John Wesley had stated that the American version of slavery was “the vilest under the sun,” but as time moved on and social conditions changed, the position in the church moderated and dissenting voices raised their volume. Whereas the 1785 *Discipline* of the MEC described slavery as standing against the “Golden Law of God . . . the unalienable Rights of Mankind” and “every Principle of the Revolution,” the church’s position by the 1816 General Conference was laissez-faire. When the General Conference of 1836 brought the issue up for debate in response to the burgeoning abolitionist movement, the conclusion was to come to no conclusion. This reflects the general trend toward compromise with the pro-slavery party that had already been seen in the General Conference decision of 1804 to publish different versions of the *Discipline* for regional distribution. The southern version included the “spiritual part” without the portion on slavery.

This lack of action led some of the more committed antislavery advocates to withdraw under the leadership of New England preacher Orange Scott (1800–1847). In 1843 they organized the Wesleyan Methodist Connection with about 6,000 members. A year later, at their first General Conference, they reported more than 15,000. From the 1840s through the Civil War, the group had a two-pronged ideological front: a clear-cut stance against slavery and dedication to Wesley’s doctrine of entire sanctification. Although the first prong tended to draw in members, the second tended to discourage growth. After the War Between the States, the focus of the church was limited to the message of holiness and the movement’s growth moderated. The

presence of stringent guidelines on daily life was a factor in limiting net growth to only 7,000 additional members by the 1920s. This movement became known as the Wesleyan Church in its 1968 unification with the Pilgrim Holiness Church.

The United Brethren and the Evangelical Association were somewhat immune from the pressure to accept slavery due to their geographical placement in non-slaveholding areas, and they thus retained strong statements against it in American society. For the larger number of Methodists, however, the issue came to a head in 1844, after heated debates concerning the suspension of a preacher from Maryland and a bishop from Georgia because of their acquisition of slaves through marriage. Within a few days of the vote on Bishop James Andrew, a Plan of Separation was given to the Conference by its southern delegates. The plan allowed for the annual conferences of the slaveholding states to withdraw from the MEC to form a new organization, while the conferences and local churches in border states would be permitted to join either church through the majority vote of their membership. Ministers could choose with which church to affiliate. Church property issues were also addressed in the plan. The plan resulted in the creation of the MECS at a meeting of delegates the next year.

Although many hoped to retain amiable relations despite the official separation, this was not to be. Animosity only grew between the two churches. Many northern Methodists saw the split as against the church’s polity and as such attempted to retain control over all assets, especially those of the publishing house. The southern church would eventually gain a share of the publishing venture through court order. Rather than a civil, democratic process within the border states in choosing denominational affiliation, church meetings quite often ended in heated arguments. In the midst of this chaos, the churches nevertheless showed great public strength—they were each the largest Protestant denomination in their regions, the northerners having almost 800,000 members and the southerners more than 600,000 in 1850.

Such a large group was unable to stand on the sidelines when the hostilities reached a climax in the war. Methodists, like most religious groups, found themselves fighting on opposite sides, each convinced they were battling in the Lord’s army. Consequently, even in defeat, the MECS played a large role in the creation of a southern civil religion—the religion of the Lost Cause. Sam Jones (1847–1906), a renowned Methodist evangelist from Georgia, regularly

used Confederate veterans in his revival meetings to testify of God's work in their lives, especially as an inspirational force during the war. The heroes of the war thus became the heroes of the faith, and the cause of the South was sanctified. Although there had been some talk of reunification with the MEC soon after the war, the southern church resisted and redoubled its efforts to rebuild from its losses of both membership and property.

Era of Reconstruction

One decision that had to be made, though, was what to do with the black members of the MECS. In a radically changing society that was perceived to be turned on its head, the southern church felt a need to clearly delineate the ecclesial roles of the races. In December 1870, a new church was formed named the Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, and all of the black members—about 60,000—were transferred into it. They were led by the newly elected bishops William H. Miles (1828–1892) of Kentucky and Richard H. Vanderhorst (d. 1872) of Georgia. Miles had spent some time in the AME–Zion Church, and Vanderhorst had spent some time in the AME church prior to reuniting with the MECS. This separation was cordial enough, as both sides were eager to try to find their way in their new world, but a restriction on political activity was placed on the CME Church in exchange for a transfer of church property. This led to a particular picture of the CME Church as socially conservative and politically inactive, an image that would later be shed. In the 1950s, the name of the church was altered so that “Colored” was replaced with “Christian.”

Conclusion

The process of division and segmentation especially prevalent within American Methodism in the nineteenth century was a two-edged sword. On one hand, the splits and schisms were often quite emotionally charged and reflective of negative personal and social issues, for example, personal ambition and slavery. On the other hand, this phenomenon is reflective of the burgeoning democratic and capitalist society of the new nation. Nowhere else did people have the amount of religious options available to them as in the United States. This was especially noticeable and beneficial in the arena of ethnic diversity. During the nineteenth century, the golden era of immigration, the Methodist churches were intentional in their efforts to bridge ethnic gaps, largely by providing autonomous or semi-autonomous ethnic movements, especially among Native Americans,

Hispanic Americans, Germans, Scandinavians, and Japanese. New leaders were discovered who were able to gather people around them in a wild diversity of related groups. This diversification led to great numerical growth. In 1900, the Evangelical Association had a membership of just over 166,000. This stands in comparison to 184,000 for the Methodist Protestant Church, 241,000 for the United Brethren, almost 3 million for the MEC, and nearly 1.5 million for the MECS.

Not only did the Methodists exemplify growth through division principle, they also reflected the stereotypical movement from lower-class and uneducated to middle-class and ambitious. Not only did they found numerous institutions of higher education, their membership largely transformed from working-class laborers and artisans into business owners and sociopolitical leaders. Similarly to the embrace of the slave society in the South by Methodists in the region, Methodists throughout the nation sought after social respectability through a subtle compromise with social mores and norms. Reflective of an always-present tension between being social rebels and champions of social and ecclesiastical order, the moral discipline of the class meetings wavered, and increasingly Methodists were no longer seen as peculiar people. Methodist preachers who had originally been drawn from the theologically uneducated membership were increasingly expected to be seminary-trained professionals. Simultaneously, these newer Methodist preachers were increasingly interested in planting families, which resulted in appointments to stations and charges (one to three churches in a small area) rather than traveling a widespread circuit with frequent reassignments. Early in Methodist history, it was difficult to become a Methodist and very easy to be expelled. By the end of the nineteenth century, this had reversed. Methodists had passed this legacy off to their sanctified progeny, the Holiness movement, and had moved on to social respectability.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War; Camp Meetings; Great Awakening(s); Holiness Movement; Methodists* entries; *Pietism; Revivalism: Nineteenth Century; Women: Protestant.*

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Methodists: Since the Nineteenth Century

At the dawn of the twentieth century Methodism in America was one of the largest and most powerful denominations in the country. Methodists had good reason to be optimistic. By 1900 no fewer than four U.S. presidents had embraced Methodism; denominational rivalry had given way to interdenominational cooperation; and, in 1910 in Edinburgh, Scotland, a Methodist, John R. Mott, was presiding at a World Missionary Conference that would signal a full-fledged ecumenical movement. Methodism was healthy and vibrant.

The Expansion of Methodism

Contentious debate in the nineteenth century over the issues of race and states' rights had splintered the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) into several segments, and multiple attempts at reconciliation had proven unsuccessful. By the beginning of the twentieth century Methodism consisted of two larger branches, the MEC and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS), and several smaller branches, among

them the Methodist Protestant Church and the United Brethren Church. Although the church would ultimately succeed in its efforts to reconcile its two larger branches, new tensions rose to the surface during this period.

The rise to prominence of the Social Gospel movement was one critical issue that proved divisive. A response to the excesses of the late nineteenth century's Gilded Age, the Social Gospel movement was a pan-denominational enterprise aimed at improving the social welfare of all persons. Although other Protestant denominations helped in its launch, Methodism emerged as the movement's leading denominational force during the first half of the twentieth century. This period saw Americans developing a new social awareness as problems in society multiplied in the wake of industrialization and rapid technological advancement. These advances, while making life more convenient, also made life more dangerous as working conditions worsened and poverty increased. The Social Gospel movement, like woman suffrage and temperance, was a response to the tenuous social conditions. Progressive Methodists believed they had a cure for the ills of society and that a change of perspective among Methodists was needed in order to promote the welfare of all Americans.

Prior to the influence of the Social Gospel, Methodists primarily desired and promoted a personal moral righteousness. By contrast, Social Gospelers believed that the social, political, and economic problems within society superseded individual issues; a collective moral righteousness, they insisted, needed to be developed and nurtured. They maintained that the gospel compelled them to promote and work towards a socially just society, one in which a concern for the individual was balanced by a concern for all persons. To attain "social salvation" Social Gospel Methodists sought to develop a social ethic. Leading the charge were renowned minister Frank Mason North, president of the Federal Council of Churches, and Harry F. Ward, professor of ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. At the Northern General Conference of 1900 North called on Methodists to construct a social Christianity aimed at confronting the problems of the urban-industrial environment. Methodists took seriously North's charge, and in 1907 Ward co-founded the Methodist Federation for Social Service, later renamed the Methodist Federation for Social Action. In the same year Ward co-authored the "Social Creed of the Churches," which was subsequently adopted by three Methodist denominations and the newly formed Federal Council of Churches. The Social Creed denounced child labor, advocated better working

conditions for the poor, and called for the safeguarding of the economic rights of all workers. Although the Social Creed would undergo several revisions in subsequent years, it persisted as the definitive statement of Methodism's views on social issues until 1972, when the General Conference reconfigured and renamed it "Social Principles of the United Methodist Church" in an effort to more accurately represent the social principles of contemporary Methodism.

Emergence of Liberal Theology

The growth and spread of liberal theology generated perhaps the most heated debate among Methodists during the early twentieth century. While theological liberalism was by no means a unified movement, it is generally recognized that advocates of liberal theology attempted to unite modern intellectual thought with traditional Christianity. Furthermore, they emphasized the need for a historical-critical interpretation of the Bible, for making explicit the relevance of the Christian religion to contemporary life, and for safeguarding intellectual liberty in the pursuit of truth. Freedom of inquiry combined with new historical methods of interpretation led in some forms of liberalism to the rejection of such orthodoxies as the virgin birth and the resurrection of Christ. In spite of its heresies, liberal theology took firm hold in the nation's Methodist denominational colleges and seminaries, and by the 1930s nearly every major Methodist theologian had embraced some form of liberal theology.

The reinterpretation of Methodist theology by liberal theologians found support in the work of scholars such as Borden Parker Bowne. Bowne, a professor of philosophy at Boston University School of Theology, developed the philosophical approach to theology known as "Boston school personalism." This theological position affirmed that God had a profound personal nature, although it tried to avoid anthropomorphic terms to describe that nature. Likewise, it affirmed that human beings, because they had distinct personal character, were of ultimate value and that this personal character provided a link with the personal nature of God. Dissemination of these views quickened the spread of liberalism to younger ministers, and through them liberal ideas filtered to the pews. It is no coincidence that theological liberalism's rapid spread among Methodists and other Protestant denominations occurred in concert with the growth of the Social Gospel movement. A common theology and ethics existed. Both shared, for example, the belief that the kingdom of God was present in, and worked through, culture. And culture, moreover, was held by both to advance

through evolutionary progress. Throughout this period theological liberalism and the Social Gospel movement maintained a symbiotic relationship.

Conservative Response

Although extremely popular, the appropriation of liberal theology was not universal. For some the new theology presented major problems. A number of theologians perceived a strong tension between, on the one hand, the historical-critical method of investigation and Darwin's theory of evolution and, on the other, traditional Protestant Christianity. The result for some Methodists was the conviction that these new and innovative theological ideas were inconsistent with the doctrinal standards of Methodism and of Protestant Christian orthodoxy.

Not surprisingly, the spread and general acceptance of liberalism provoked a backlash from conservatives and some moderates. For example, in 1895, and again in 1900 and 1905, Hinckley G. Mitchell, Old Testament scholar at Boston University School of Theology, was accused of doctrinal heresy for holding lax views of scripture. Mitchell's insistence on intellectual freedom landed him in front of the Judiciary Committee of the General Conference of 1908. After much debate the committee ruled in Mitchell's favor. This outcome represented a considerable step forward in the development of academic freedom and helped to establish a tradition of tolerance and diversity within the MEC.

Conservative attempts to curtail the spread of liberal theology did not desist, however. Leading conservative figures such as John Alfred Faulkner, professor of church history at Drew Theological Seminary in Madison, New Jersey, and Harold Paul Sloan, a prominent pastor of the New Jersey annual conference, sought to minimize the spread of liberal theology. Faulkner published a work in 1921 entitled *Modernism and the Christian Faith* in which he identified the scriptures as divinely inspired historical writings and emphasized founder John Wesley's belief in miracles, the divinity of Christ, and the virgin birth. Views that denied these theological truths, Faulkner asserted, were to be rejected. Sloan, alarmed at the adoption of liberal thought in the Conference Course of Study, a program for educating and training pastors within the denomination, helped to create the Methodist League for Faith and Life in 1925. Conservative efforts to define the parameters of Methodist theology sparked furious debate, prompting a response by the General Conference of 1928, which again rejected conservatives' attempts to suppress liberal teachings at Methodist institutions.

Other conservatives threw their efforts behind the controversial neo-orthodox movement, which arose specifically to oppose liberal theology. Edwin Lewis, professor of theology at Drew Theological Seminary, was one such figure. Lewis's understanding of the Christian faith was once in tune with liberal thought and practice, particularly that of Boston personalism. But after encountering the writings of the German theologian and leading figure of the neo-orthodox movement, Karl Barth, Lewis published *A Christian Manifesto* (1934), in which he argued for a Christianity more sympathetic to traditional Protestant orthodoxy. Following this work Lewis cemented his role as a proponent of conservatism within Methodism through numerous lectures and dozens of publications.

Similar upheaval was occurring in the MECS. Vanderbilt University, founded in 1886 in Nashville, Tennessee, and sponsored by the MECS, struggled from 1905 to 1914 to free itself of ecclesiastical control. Although the contention generally centered on finances, perhaps more tellingly the university sought to challenge Methodist identity and authority. To receive funds from the Baptist-leaning General Education Fund and the Carnegie Foundation, which required recipients to be denominationally independent, the financially ailing university attempted to appoint a Baptist as dean of the university and made arrangements to free itself from the MECS. These actions were pursued over the objections of the MECS, particularly those of Bishop Warren Candler, who believed the prominent position should be given to a Methodist and that the church should retain control over the institution. A lawsuit ensued. The church ultimately lost control of the university when the Tennessee Supreme Court ruled in favor of the university. Bishop Candler's reaction, aided by his wealthy family and powerful friends, was to shift support to the MECS-controlled Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, where Candler and his allies had invested more than \$8 million by the 1930s. Similar developments occurred at other MECS-controlled schools such as Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and Duke University, formerly Trinity College, in Durham, North Carolina. Through these efforts the MECS made clear its commitment to keeping its institutions distinctly Methodist, both administratively and theologically.

Liberal Theology Prevails

The conservative response to theological liberalism was neither powerful nor unified. The absence of a forceful resistance is generally attributable to a lack of strong conservative

leadership. Additionally, the denomination's reluctance to define the contours of its theology with the exactitude characteristic of, for example, Presbyterians allowed for greater theological freedom. As a result conservative attempts to buttress traditional Christianity failed to block the dissemination of theological liberalism among the general population of Methodists. The spread of new intellectual and theological ideas, combined with larger socioeconomic changes during this period, created a general shift in the religious and moral attitudes of Methodists.

Reconciliation and Cooperation

In 1844 the MECS separated from the MEC over the issues of slavery and states' rights. Nearly one hundred years later the issue of race and the place of African Americans remained as salient as ever. Even as Methodism's generally liberal shift in belief and attitude brought about in 1939 the convergence of the MEC and the MECS, racism remained pervasive. African American Methodists were no more exempt from discrimination than their counterparts in the general population. In the two decades following World War I, 528 lynchings were recorded across the United States. Although northern Methodists were quick to endorse anti-lynching legislation and advocate justice and equality for African Americans, they failed to fully comprehend the social, economic, and religious discrimination experienced by the nation's African Americans.

The agreed-on plan of reunion between the northern and southern branches called for the continued segregation of African Americans from the rest of the denomination. Five regional jurisdictions were drawn up, and one additional, nongeographic jurisdiction was created: the Central Jurisdiction. This jurisdiction encompassed African American Methodists and was the product of the denomination's attempt to appease largely southern Methodists who believed the church should remain segregated. Critics have dubbed this move the "crime of '39." In their view, the church's decision to choose expediency over racial reconciliation was a grave mistake.

Another quarter century passed before the General Conference of 1964, in an effort to end the long-standing system of Methodist segregation, adopted a plan to eliminate the Central Jurisdiction. The plan initiated a phased process whereby African American members would ultimately join with their respective regional jurisdictions. In 1968, when the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church (EUB) combined to form the United Methodist

Church (UMC), the Central Jurisdiction was terminated. By 1972 members of the former Central Jurisdiction had joined their respective regional jurisdictions, beginning a process of integration within local churches. While the move was controversial—some local churches exited the denomination—the plan for desegregating the jurisdictions found approval among most Methodists.

The Black Methodists for Church Renewal convened in 1968 at the First National Conference of Negro Methodists in Cincinnati, Ohio. That same year the newly formed UMC created the General Commission on Religion and Race to help correct past discrimination and further racial equality. White Methodists were also involved in the civil rights movement in various capacities. Despite these efforts Methodism throughout the twentieth century remained a primarily white denomination. In 1940 African American Methodists accounted for 4.2 percent of the denomination's members. By 1976 African American membership had experienced a slight decline, accounting for 3.57 percent of the total ethnic minority membership of 4.25 percent. The dominance of a white constituency has continued into the twenty-first century, with the church reporting in 2002 that 93.2 percent of its membership is white. To a certain extent these figures are unsurprising. African American Methodists tend to gravitate towards one of two denominations that split from the MEC in the nineteenth century, the African Methodist Episcopal Church or the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Other minorities, including Asian Americans and Native Americans, account for a fraction of church members. In 1996 Korean American Hae-Jong Kim was elected the first Asian American bishop in the UMC.

Political and Social Involvement

By the last decade of the nineteenth century Methodists had become deeply involved in politics, both locally and nationally. William McKinley, a devout Methodist, entered the White House in 1897. Methodists' committed political activity persisted into the twentieth century and was expressed in varying ways. In particular Methodists proved eager to apply their newly developed social ethic to the political and economic landscape of America.

Role of Women in the Church

Over the course of its history the Methodist Church has seen women in leadership roles. The Countess of Huntingdon and Mary Bosanquet in the eighteenth century and Phoebe Palmer and Maggie Newton Van Cott

in the nineteenth each held prominent positions in Methodism. The accomplishments of these women notwithstanding, equal rights for women was no more the norm in Methodist circles than in American society at large. At the beginning of the twentieth century the national woman suffrage movement, established in 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York, had little to show for its five decades of pioneering activity. Although some women had exercised leadership in the missionary and temperance organizations for many years, Methodist women did not achieve full laity rights until 1900; four years later they were admitted as delegates to the General Conference. In 1920, after intense pressure and nearly seventy years of organized agitation, the U.S. Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment granting women the right to vote. In 1922, on the heels of this decision, the MECS followed the MEC's lead and granted women full laity rights.

The creation of the EUB in 1946 represented a bitter-sweet moment for Methodist women. On the one hand the schism between the Evangelical Church and the United Brethren Church (UBC) was repaired. On the other women who had held clergy rights in the UBC lost those rights when the two branches united. It was not until the EUB joined with the Methodist Church in 1968 that women's full clergy rights were restored.

The advancement of women in leadership roles progressed. In 1955 Paula Mojzes was appointed the first female district superintendent in the Methodist Church, and in 1956 women gained full clergy rights. Another boon for women came in the 1960s when Methodist theologian Georgia Harkness was awarded tenure at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. In 1972 the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women was created, and in 1980 Marjorie Matthews became the first woman to be elected a bishop. By 1990 fifty women were serving as district superintendents in the UMC.

Social Reform: Prohibition

The fight for the prohibition of alcohol sparked strong political involvement among Methodists during the early twentieth century. Like the Social Gospel movement, the temperance movement had roots in nineteenth-century America. Many Methodists, through Sunday school literature and organizations such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, which was founded in 1880 in Evanston, Illinois—at the time a hotbed of Methodist political activity—supported total abstinence. It was not long

before widespread disdain for the consumption of alcohol took hold in church circles. This deep concern over the use of alcohol was in evidence in 1880 when, at the General Conference, it was determined that whenever practicable Methodist ministers should use grape juice in place of wine. By 1916 the use of grape juice was mandatory. The belief that society's ills could be traced to the abuse of alcohol convinced many Methodists that the prohibition of alcohol was the only way to rehabilitate America's conscience. Methodists joined with others to press Congress to pass legislation prohibiting the manufacture, sale, or transportation of alcohol. The Eighteenth Amendment, which did all these things, was ratified in 1919. Arguably a noble experiment, Prohibition famously proved a lost cause. Thirteen years later, Congress passed the Twenty-first Amendment repealing the Eighteenth and ending Prohibition.

Social Reform: Capitalism

The stock market crash of 1929 ignited widespread concern over the economy and, for Methodists in particular, the morality of capitalism. During the 1920s and 1930s church members debated the role of capitalism in society. The view that capitalism was undemocratic and reflected an unconscionable concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a small coterie of elites found favor among Methodists. As the Great Depression dragged on Methodists became embroiled in debates over capitalism and Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal response. At the General Conference of 1932 critics went so far as to state that the industrial order of America was both unethical and un-Christian. This attack on capitalism found expression in the Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA), which began to monitor and analyze the New Deal. The MFSA concluded that the New Deal represented "organized poverty," its economic principles governed by a capitalist ideology that favored one social class, the wealthy, over another, the poor. These views would later haunt the MFSA when the onset of the Cold War and the rise of anticommunist sentiments in the United States left it open to accusations of communist infiltration. The MFSA experienced a resurgence of activity and support in the 1960s and 1970s, support that continues today, enabling it to remain active in promoting peace, equality, and justice both within Methodism and in the broader society.

Social Reform: Pacifism and War

Pacifism and American participation in war were particularly contentious subjects among Methodists in the first

half of the twentieth century. A minority of Methodists participated in pacifist activity during World War I, but as public opinion shifted toward the support of American involvement Methodist sentiment followed. During the interwar period Methodists ardently promoted world peace. Prominent ministers such as Albert Edward Day, minister of several eminent Methodist churches and vice president of the Federal Council of Churches, and Ernest Fremont Tittle, renowned minister of First Methodist Church in Evanston, Illinois, passionately urged Methodists not to endorse or participate in the promotion of war during the 1940s. This issue ignited a heated debate at the General Conference of 1944 when pacifists sought affirmation in a declaration they had prepared. Many clergy supported the declaration; an overwhelming majority of the laymen, however, voted against it, believing America's involvement in the war just. The declaration was not affirmed.

Methodists continued to express ambivalence toward American involvement in war in later decades. As the Vietnam War escalated, for example, the General Conference of 1968, now representative of the newly formed UMC, issued a statement calling for the immediate withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam. In 1972 the General Conference declared that the actions of the United States in Southeast Asia amounted to crimes against humanity. In so doing the conference affirmed the view that war was incompatible with the Christian teachings of Methodism. At the same time the church, somewhat paradoxically, maintained that when all efforts towards peace are exhausted war is preferable to tyranny and genocide. This view has since been reaffirmed in the UMC Social Principles, issued by the General Board of Church and Society. Further statements by the UMC have condemned any use of nuclear weapons, terrorist acts of violence, and the indiscriminate use of military force to combat terrorism. More recently Christian pacifism has found new impetus in the nonviolence teachings of Methodist theologian Stanley Hauerwas of Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina. Although not fully embracing pacifism, the UMC continues to reject war as incompatible with the teachings of Christ.

The latter half of the twentieth century saw Methodists exercising their tradition of political activity through the founding of various organizations aimed at influencing domestic and foreign policy on a wide variety of issues. The United Methodist Building, completed in 1923 and currently the only nongovernment building on Capitol Hill, was established to lobby Congress and the executive

branch on matters of importance to Methodists. In the 1950s Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam was transferred to Washington, D.C., to take advantage of his friendship with John Foster Dulles, secretary of state under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The Methodist Church's Washington-based advocacy stands as testament to its determination that the church's religious and political concerns be taken seriously.

New Political Groups

A different type of political group began to emerge in the years surrounding the Vietnam War. Although political groups had previously existed within Methodism, they tended to be of an ad hoc nature and to generally represent the sentiments of the denomination as a whole. These new political groups, however, began to function not as member organizations or commissions within the denomination, but as affinity groups that arose alongside the denomination. They developed their own political and religious agendas, disseminating information in a prophetic fashion in the hopes that their ideas would be appropriated by other Methodists and even officially sanctioned by the denomination. In subsequent years these groups multiplied. In most cases their intentions have been to strengthen Methodism; in some instances, however, their actions have been viewed as aggressive and insensitive by those in disagreement with their political and religious ideas.

One of the earliest of these groups to emerge was the Good News movement in 1966. Believing that church leaders were too liberal and therefore out of step with a majority of church members, the Good News movement sought to voice the concerns of conservative evangelicals. It threw itself into all areas of church life, from Sunday school curricula and seminary education to world missions. The group's primary aim has been to support and encourage conservatives in the church and to monitor and maintain what it holds to be the theological beliefs and spiritual practices of the church.

Two newer groups are the Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) and the Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD). The RMN, known as the Reconciling Congregation Program between 1983 and 2000, is dedicated to the inclusion of all people in the UMC, particularly gay, lesbian, and transgender individuals. Its central aim is to change church policy concerning the membership, ordination, and marriage of gay and lesbian Methodists.

The IRD, founded in 1981 and based in Washington, D.C., seeks to influence political decisions and American

political philosophy by placing faith in a more central role. The IRD aims to "reform their churches' social witness, in accord with biblical and historic Christian teachings, thereby contributing to the renewal of democratic society at home and abroad." The institute's members and religious and political efforts have generally been conservative. The majority of their effort is directed towards upholding a traditional view of marriage and advocating a pro-life position on abortion.

In the early twenty-first century Methodists have risen to the top echelons of U.S. political life. Former president George W. Bush and Hillary Rodham Clinton, secretary of state in the Obama administration, are both members of the Methodist Church. Moreover, one of the UMC's flagship universities, Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, was selected in 2008 to be the home of the George W. Bush Presidential Center. Methodists continue to make significant contributions to the political life of American society.

Belief and Practice

Methodist thought and practice during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are notable for their diversity. As Methodism strives to engage in critical and creative theological reflection, it cannot help but be influenced by the surrounding social and cultural context. This context fosters in Methodism a broad-ranging theological and experiential palette. The UMC in the twenty-first century in its doctrine and polity seeks to accommodate this diversity while retaining the contours of its traditional faith and practice.

Church Polity: Governance and Organization

The UMC maintains an episcopal system of governance. Although bishops provide the highest form of leadership, in many ways the church's style of governance is similar to a democratic system, as evidenced in the organization of its General Conference. The General Conference is an assembly within the Methodist Church comprised of elected representatives, both clergy and laypersons, who gather every four years to discuss matters related to the denomination as a whole. As the chief governing body this delegation has the authority to modify church law and is the only assembly that can make official policy decisions. The General Conference elects members to the Judicial Council, which is comprised of nine members who serve eight-year terms. When issues are formally brought to its attention, the Judicial Council will monitor the UMC to ensure that its actions conform to the principles of the Methodist constitution.

The Council of Bishops is another assembly that provides oversight. Bishops are elected by the jurisdictional conferences and meet semi-annually to discuss matters relating to the church. To be elected bishop a person must be an ordained elder. There are no other requirements. More than fifty episcopal areas exist across the United States. Each is presided over by a single bishop who exerts over that area ultimate leadership responsibility.

The UMC consists of districts that are comprised of groups of local churches. Each district is overseen by a district superintendent. Districts are part of a regional conference that meets annually to share fellowship and discuss the life of the church. The annual conferences are attended by all clergy and an equal number of laypeople selected by the local churches. There are presently sixty-three annual conferences, supervised by more than fifty bishops in five U.S. jurisdictions: Northeastern, Southeastern, North Central, South Central, and Western. These U.S. jurisdictions, along with the overseas-based Central conferences, are supervised by the General Conference.

Theology

The Methodist Church shares the same commitment to traditional orthodox Christianity as most other Protestant denominations. It upholds the classic historical creeds, such as the Apostle's Creed, that have been incorporated into the United Methodist Hymnal, as well as the authority of scripture and the justification of sinners by grace through faith in Christ's atoning death on the cross. Finally, it affirms the role of sacraments as signs of God's grace, especially Holy Communion and Baptism.

In addition, Methodists emphasize a number of distinct beliefs that distinguish their theology from that of other Protestant denominations. In the latter half of the twentieth century Albert Outler, a leading Methodist theologian, developed a fourfold pattern of priorities rooted in the works of John Wesley. Outler and other Methodists argued that Wesley interpreted scripture through the lenses of reason, tradition, and experience. For many Methodists the Wesleyan quadrilateral, as the conceptual theological pattern came to be known, offered a model through which to identify and distinguish Methodist beliefs. The quadrilateral has subsequently served as a guide for modern Methodist doctrine, appearing in each new issue of the *Book of Discipline* since the founding of the UMC in 1968. However, the degree to which this model accurately represents Wesley's thought and its adequacy for theological analysis has been

seriously challenged by contemporary Methodist theologians and historians.

The four notable Wesleyan theological distinctives that can be identified within Methodism are prevenient grace, Christian perfection or entire sanctification, assurance, and justification. The first of these, prevenient grace, is a divine grace that comes before salvation and facilitates an individual response to God's offer of forgiveness. It is free to all—as opposed to the doctrine of election, which declares that God only elects some people for salvation—and serves to illuminate the way of salvation, allowing people to freely choose to repent of their sins.

The second theological distinctive, Christian perfection, is the concept of perfection, or entire sanctification, whereby a person is made holy or sanctified by God's grace and obtains a state of perfect love. This distinctive has generated much debate as theologians struggle to decide whether the process of attaining Christian perfection is instantaneous or gradual. Although there is flexibility in this doctrine, Methodists tend to believe that Christian perfection is a gracious gift from God and is obtained after a life-long process during which individuals earnestly strive for holiness in belief and conduct.

Christian assurance and justification, the final two theological distinctives, are intimately linked. Christian assurance is the state wherein an individual possesses surety of his or her salvation or pardon from sin and is aided by the inward witness of the Holy Spirit. This inward testimony follows conversion and is a natural process for all those who embrace Christ.

Justification by faith refers to the way in which a person is saved from the penalty of individual sin. Methodists affirm that Christians are justified when they believe that Christ's divine act of atonement removes the penalty of sin from their lives. The merging of these distinct beliefs with traditional Christian orthodoxy provides Methodism with a unique flavor that is identifiable as evangelical Arminianism.

Evangelism and Mission

Perhaps the single most important purpose within Methodism is to share the gospel of Christ. While Methodists in the twentieth century focused primarily on social concerns, recent years have seen a revitalized commitment to evangelism and a renewed focus on missionary activities and dissemination of gospel around the world. Methodists continue today to develop a holistic view of evangelism

and mission in which the evangelical witness is mutually reinforced by Christian social action. Methodist missionary efforts are overseen by the General Board of Global Ministries of the UMC.

Worship

Methodist churches practice a variety of worship styles. For example, some congregations sing hymns while others favor contemporary music. Most use a lectionary, which is a book consisting of scripture passages assigned for reading during worship, as well as hymns, which in the Wesleyan tradition tend to be faithful expositions of Christian teaching. In addition to Christmas and Easter, many Methodist congregations, influenced by their Anglican heritage, continue to celebrate aspects of the liturgical calendar, such as Ash Wednesday and the Advent season.

During the 1980s Methodists recognized the need to produce songbooks with greater variety to reflect the growing cultural and ethnic diversity within their denomination. In 1989 a new hymnal was issued that included a new Psalter and revised liturgies for baptism, the Lord's Supper, weddings, and funerals. The Methodist hymnal continues to receive revisions as new concerns emerge.

Expressions of New Vitality: Resurgence and Diversity

The UMC in America has witnessed a steady decline in membership since its creation in 1968. Between 1970 and 2007, for example, membership decreased by an average rate of 7.3 percent per decade, from 10.6 million members to 7.8 million. In contrast, the number of Methodist constituents—those persons who are not church members but who participate in the life of a particular congregation—increased by nearly 7 percent between 2001 and 2007, from 1.4 million to 1.5 million.

In the face of this decline in membership and the accompanying reduction in financial support, a growing number of American Methodists have been striving for spiritual and theological renewal. In particular, the two transdenominational voices represented by the Confessing movement and the Welcoming Church movement have gained prominence within Methodism in recent years and have helped to lend to it a revised focus and a renewed vitality.

The Confessing movement has given rise to a new generation of Methodists who are rediscovering the church's eighteenth- and nineteenth-century evangelical roots. These Methodists are injecting the church with a new theological

sobriety and combining it with action directed at social issues such as environmental stewardship and the elimination of poverty to appeal to contemporary concerns. They are also experimenting with alternative worship styles and new methods of evangelizing.

The Welcoming Church movement seeks to create and embody a holistic concept of church. Methodists who identify themselves with this movement are working towards building a membership that more fully reflects the diversity of God's people. They seek those individuals who are socially, ethnically, and economically marginalized, believing that the established church and persons on the social periphery can mutually benefit one another in the project of imagining and constructing a more inclusive church. Toward this end, the Welcoming Church movement actively pursues racial reconciliation in the church, believing that here no less than in the wider American society the issue of race relations remains a significant challenge.

The particular emphases of these two fresh expressions of Methodism have contributed to the hardening of old divisions, as the Confessing movement and the Welcoming Church movement have tended to align themselves, respectively, with conservatism and liberalism. A result has been the injection of new tensions and conflict into Methodism.

One especially salient issue is that of homosexuality in the church. Beginning in 1972 the General Conference, recognizing an increase in discussions about homosexuality in church and society, revised its Social Principles document to affirm the sacred worth of homosexuals but not the practice of homosexuality. Some Methodists, however, have repeatedly challenged this view, believing that gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Methodists should play an active role in church life. In 2003 Methodist minister Irene Elizabeth Stroud admitted she was a lesbian and in a committed relationship. The following year she was placed on trial and found guilty of violating church doctrine. Her ordination credentials were subsequently withdrawn. Since its initial statement on the topic in 1972, the General Conference has created a number of committees and task forces to explore the issue of homosexuality. Today the UMC continues to uphold its view, affirming the individual while rejecting homosexuality and homosexual union.

Despite these tensions and the divisive tendencies they evince, the UMC strives in the twenty-first century to generate a deeper commitment to the Christian faith among its members and develop new and creative ways for Methodists to minister to one another and the larger world.

Methodists are increasingly cooperating with other denominational organizations and institutions to create mutually beneficial relationships in pursuit of these goals. Finally, Methodists today draw inspiration and hope for the future from the expansion and vigor of Methodism in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

See also *Ecumenism; Episcopalians: Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries; Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Evangelicals: Twentieth Century; Holiness Movement; Mainline Protestants; Methodists entries; Missions: Foreign; Neo-Orthodoxy; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Pentecostals; Protestant Liberalism; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Social Ethics; Social Gospel; Social Reform; Women: Protestant; Worship: Contemporary Currents.*

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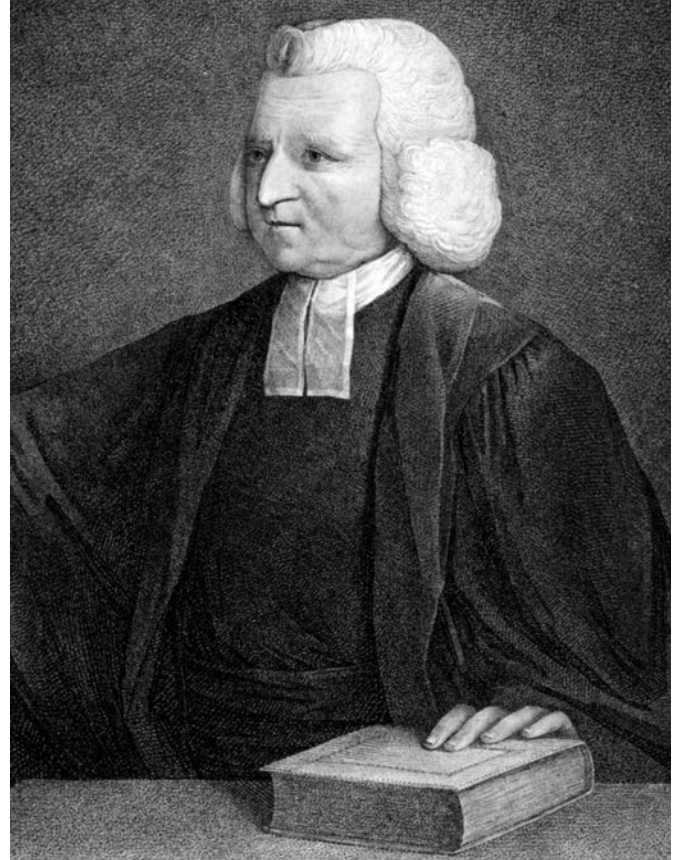
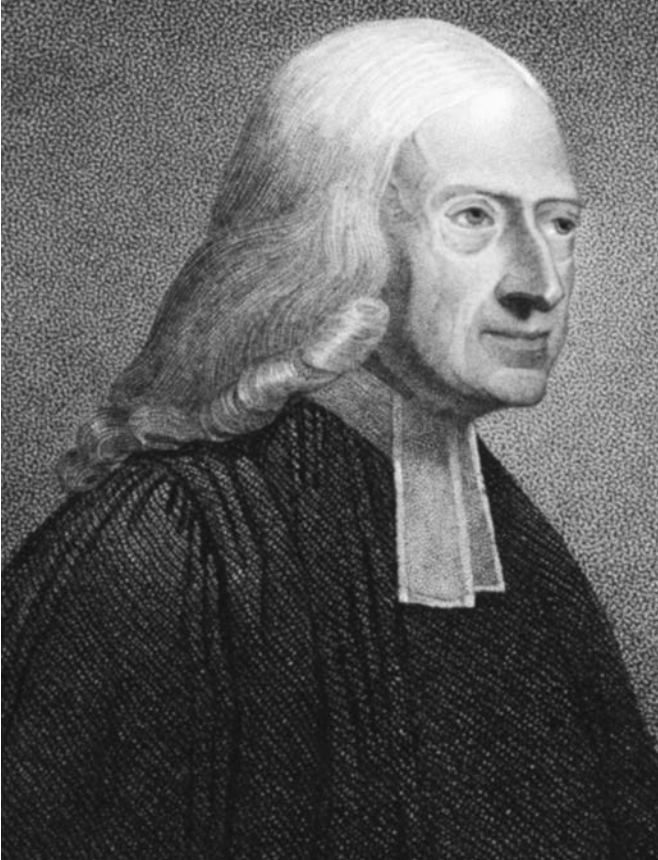
Methodists: Tradition and Heritage

Methodism, arguably the most American of all the Protestant denominations, began life in England as part of the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival, a movement originally meant to reinvigorate, not replace, the state church. Though

important (and still extant) in the country of its birth, where it emerged from the work of two otherwise conservative Anglican priests, the brothers John (1703–1791) and Charles (1707–1788) Wesley, it achieved its most spectacular successes after migrating to British North America. Arriving in the decade prior to the Revolution and establishing itself as a fully fledged church in 1784, the year following the ratification of a peace treaty, Methodism found a niche among disparate populations (including artisans, farmers, women, and African Americans) both on the eastern seaboard and on the opening frontier to the west. It drew energy from the seeming opposition of two defining characteristics—an exuberant popular supernaturalism and a disciplined organization—and proceeded to become the largest and best-distributed European Protestant tradition in the United States by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Theological, liturgical, organizational, racial, and regional conflicts appeared along with this ascendancy, and some of the schisms were never healed. Nevertheless, by the end of the twentieth century the mainstream United Methodist Church, thoroughly middle class with most of the rough edges rubbed away and waning in membership, was still the third largest religious organization in the country, behind the Roman Catholic Church and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Its influence continues in the twenty-first century, especially if one considers the wider denominational family, including groups that broke off from the original Methodist Episcopal Church over some of the tensions mentioned above but maintained a recognizable Wesleyan DNA. Examples included several African American denominations, notably the African Methodist Episcopal (AME), the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ), and Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Churches, and Holiness offshoots such as the Wesleyan Church, the Free Methodist Church, and the Church of the Nazarene. That genetic influence is noteworthy and perhaps even more important beyond schismatic organizational developments as an influence in wider cultural and religious tendencies. Wesley's Arminianism (his belief that Christ died potentially for all people and not just a predestined few) and his related emphasis on "Christian perfection" (or less controversially, "scriptural holiness"), for instance, helped promote the "declension" of New England Calvinism; and similar tendencies leant themselves both to a broad nineteenth-century push for personal holiness and to the "Social Gospel" movements of the early twentieth century. Pentecostalism, too, is arguably descended from aspects



Methodism emerged in England from the work of two otherwise conservative Anglican priests, brothers John and Charles Wesley. The movement succeeded after migrating to British North America.

of Methodism, in a generation of holiness advocates who also drew on the emotional expressiveness that had typified conversions in John Wesley's and George Whitefield's (1714–1770) field preaching as well as the proverbial “shouting Methodists” of the Second Great Awakening in the early nineteenth century. An ecumenical inclination and a typically positive engagement with science and education is also traceable back to the Wesleys. Furthermore, the fruit of Methodist overseas missions, growing at a swift rate in post-colonial Africa in the early twenty-first century, is further evidence of a lively and influential heritage, even as it occasionally rebukes the tree from which it grew.

Though no longer fully comfortable with its revivalist origins, Methodism was itself part of a wider early modern “awakening” or “revival” sweeping through many Reformation (and other) traditions in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Europe and North America. Like many other “new religious movements,” it received its name not from its founders but rather—years before it took hold on either side of the Atlantic—from “cultured despisers,”

in this case bemused Oxford undergraduates making fun of the precise piety of the Wesleys and their friends at the university.

Wesleyan Origins

John Wesley, the organizer of early Methodism, and Charles Wesley, path-breaking hymn writer and jealous guard of Methodism's Anglican connection, were born in 1703 and 1707, respectively, in the obscure north Lincolnshire town of Epworth. Their father Samuel served as rector of the parish for upwards of thirty-five years, and their mother Susanna presided over the rectory and the initial education of the ten children (seven girls and three boys) who survived infancy. Both parents had begun life as dissenters (members of Protestant denominations objecting to Prayer Book worship and episcopal government in the state church). They both converted from their moderate Puritanism to a conservative Anglicanism in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Restoration London, where the Stuart monarchy, Church of England bishops, coffeehouses, and the theater and other literary

production coexisted. Oxford education, followed by ordination, was then available to Samuel; and continued deep reading, writing, and teaching of “practical divinity” engaged Susanna as they married, began a family, and found preferment, full-time appointment as a parish priest, in the church. Unfortunately for his clerical ambitions, Samuel was never able to move beyond the Epworth assignment, and though he made good effort as a priest, he never felt completely comfortable with his parishioners, far from the ecclesiastical and literary center of London.

Nevertheless, the family setting proved formative for the two youngest Wesley brothers. In the first place, they could draw on an ecclesiastical heritage from both parents that comprehended both Puritan and High Church elements of English Protestantism, as interpreted through the latest thought and practice from London. For instance, Samuel Wesley tried to start an Anglican “religious society” (a pre-Methodist model of small-group moral and religious work within the Church of England). He was also an early supporter of recently founded missionary organizations such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. A generously stocked rectory library meant that he could pursue his scholarly and literary aspirations (he was something of a pedant and a poet). Meanwhile, Susanna could savor contemporary practical theology (including the latest scientific theory) as well as John Locke’s empiricism, wrestling with it in her spiritual journal and employing it all in her own unpublished catechetical writing and her children’s home-schooling.

Secondly, the brothers were shaped by the experience of growing up in the Epworth rectory. From their mother, who ran a tight ship, a *methodical* household, they imbibed not only the rudiments of Christianity but also a loving and rational discipline (a necessity, one might argue, in a household of roughly a dozen people). From their father and their older brother they absorbed the habits of academic, literary, and clerical life as they often combined in the universities and the church of the day. From their sisters, the brothers gained an appreciation for female intelligence in a culture that did not often encourage it, particularly in the rural north.

Finally, particular family experiences have grown into Methodist myths of origin. One was the family’s miraculous escape from a devastating rectory fire in 1709 (possibly set by disgruntled parishioners). In that scenario, six-year-old John’s rescue through a window from a flame-swept upper-story room marked him as a “brand plucked from

the burning” for future service. The second account involves John’s presence a few years later at an “irregular” evening prayer service, conducted for all and sundry by Susanna Wesley in the rectory kitchen during her husband’s absence in London and against his will. Historians have speculated that some of his own later departures from strict Anglican practice (a greater openness both to services held outside of church and to women’s leadership) may have been nurtured here.

At any rate, John and Charles soon thereafter left for formal “public” schooling in London. John attended the Charterhouse beginning in 1714, Charles, Westminster in 1716; and both successfully prepared for study at Christ Church, Oxford, starting in 1721 and 1726, respectively. John received his bachelor’s degree in 1724 and, with encouragement from both parents, began preparing for ordination, following the “holy living” tradition traceable to the practical theological work recommended by his mother: authors such as Thomas à Kempis, Jeremy Taylor, and William Law. He took deacon’s orders in 1725, became a fellow of Lincoln College the following year, received his master’s degree the year after that, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1729. During the last couple of years he absented himself from Oxford to assist his father and gain pastoral experience back in Epworth, but he soon returned to take up his teaching duties at Lincoln. At that point Charles, still an undergraduate, was meeting with a loosely knit group of pious students; and John, with his more advanced academic and ecclesiastical status, soon began to take a leadership role. They read scripture and studied primitive Christianity; prayed, fasted, and attended the sacrament together; and visited the poor and imprisoned. Still informal, the group was visible enough to attract notoriety among less devout undergraduates, who variously branded them Bible Moths, Sacramentarians, the Holy Club—and Methodists. Looking back later from the perspective of a more fully established movement, John labeled this extended Oxford experience as “the first rise of Methodism.”

The movement’s pursuit of holy living, including diary keeping, self-examination, and promotion of what they took to be a primitive Christian lifestyle caught on with some, but it also ran into a number of roadblocks. A rumor spread charging Methodist asceticism with the death of William Morgan, a sometime member of their group; and an unflattering anti-Methodist pamphlet was published, “framing” the issue more persuasively for some than Wesley’s sermon before the University (“Circumcision of the Heart”) that

outlined his positive rationale for a life of holiness. Meanwhile, a number of the Oxford Methodists were leaving to take up positions and pursuits beyond the university, and John Wesley himself was at a bit of a vocational crossroads, pressed by his ailing father to assume the living at Epworth (a sacrifice Wesley was not ready to make). Following his father's death in 1735, though, a new option cropped up: missionary service in James Oglethorpe's North American colony of Georgia, a scheme that Samuel Wesley had early supported.

An Initial American Experience

The Wesleys' brief and not particularly successful sojourn in Georgia occasioned what John later called the "second rise of Methodism." Even though the experiment did not closely resemble the movement that appeared in England soon after his return to London two years later, much less the Methodism that remade its way to America in the 1760s, it is nevertheless hard to imagine the Wesleyan revival, and Methodism as a movement and a church, without this one experience.

John was recruited as a voluntary missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and the recently ordained Charles became secretary to Governor Oglethorpe. They sailed in October 1735 with two other acquaintances and a large group of emigrants, both English and German. The most exotic possibility would have been a mission to the Indians, but John Wesley's own motivation seemed to be saving his "own soul" and "doing more good in America"—in other words, a continuation of his Oxford spiritual program, only now in the wilds of North America. Landing in February 1736, John was assigned as priest in Savannah and Charles in Federica, where they either inherited or founded religious societies along the Anglican and Oxford Methodist model.

That much was not unexpected; nor was the cultural pluralism of colonial life in Georgia. An initial encounter with a local chief of the Creek nation revealed an understandable level of caution with the English missionaries, based on the harsh treatment his people had already received at the hands of the Spanish. Neither did Wesley find the Chocktaws receptive; and since Oglethorpe was loath to leave the Savannah church without a priest, there was little motivation on any side to turn Wesley loose with the Indian peoples. He did, however, take a more active role with regard to African Americans. In addition to recording his catechetical conversation with a young black girl, he also

worked out a scheme for the evangelization of slaves on plantations and began noticing instances of inhumane treatment that doubtless fueled his later stands against the slave trade. Other residents of his two-hundred-mile-long parish included Sephardic Jews (inducing Wesley to learn Spanish); Vaudois, the pre-Reformation group also known as Waldensians, for whom Wesley led prayer in Italian; as well as French and German Protestants.

He had first encountered a community of the last group, the so-called Moravians, on board the *Simmonds* en route from England. Also known as the *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of the Brethren), they traced their origins to pre-Reformation Hussites, but they had left Bohemia under persecution and were granted refuge on his Saxony estate Herrnhut by the Pietist Lutheran Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf. Their warm-hearted Christocentrism led them not so much into evangelism as into piety and outreach rooted in communal living. Wesley attended their shipboard evening worship services and contrasted his own and others' terror during a raging Atlantic storm with their calm and simple faith (women and children included). Impressed by the assurance he lacked, he sought out Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg, a Moravian leader, on reaching Savannah. He learned German, began translating their hymns, which he published in *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns* in 1737 (the first hymnbook in North America), and started an important theological conversation that was to continue with other Moravians in London. Unfortunately, he did not fully acquire their warmhearted Lutheran piety soon enough. It might have attenuated the disciplinary extremes of his High Church Anglicanism—which contributed to his hasty exit from the colony less than two years after his arrival.

The presenting cause was a botched relationship with a young woman, Sophy Hopkey, whom he was tutoring in French and divinity. Never very surefooted in affairs of the heart, Wesley had trouble admitting an interest in Hopkey either to her or to himself and certainly was not ready to make a commitment. She, reading the situation more accurately, lost interest in Wesley and eventually married another man. Wesley's response (again, not very self-aware) included refusing the newly married couple Communion on their return to Savannah, based on a technical reading of the Prayer Book rubrics. Good discipline it may have been, part and parcel of the quest for holy living, and yet it rankled the small community. More to the point, Hopkey's uncle and guardian was the colony's chief magistrate, and there was no shortage of others willing to help a grand jury fill in an

indictment. Most of the particulars involved Wesley's zeal-ousness in church discipline: taking a firm stand on who might or might not be baptized, admitted to Communion (including Sophy Hopkey Williamson), and buried. No heinous crimes had been committed, but significant opposition had developed; and Wesley, knowing vindication would be difficult, left under cover of darkness and boarded ship for England in December 1737 before a trial could take place.

What had his two-year American experience provided Wesley? (1) A taste, at least, of "propagating the gospel in foreign parts"—to native people of North America and to Africans and African-descended people, both slave and free, as well as to a host of immigrants from various European settings. (2) A feel for the theological and political difficulties of being a conscientious frontier parson. (3) A stock of metaphors, not all of them complimentary, to describe the weather or the behavior he would later observe in his itinerations around the British Isles; as well as images that would help him, when ensconced back in England, interpret the later "work" in North America. (4) The beginnings of hymn singing in Methodism (at the time not Church of England practice). The *Collection of Psalms and Hymns* was soon followed by dozens of additional volumes published during the rest of the century and featuring the poetic talents of Charles Wesley. Charles had himself run into political and ecclesiastical difficulties in Georgia, as well as ill health, and left the colony after only five months on the job; his return trip included a month's stay in Boston before a final voyage back to England, arriving in early December 1736. (5) The most important result of all was Wesley's discovery of the "heart religion" that he had experienced among the Moravians.

"Our Little Society" and the Revival's Beginning

The "last rise" of Methodism in Wesley's calculation took place under this increased influence of Moravians and particularly one of its leaders, Peter Böhler (1712–1776), who was then passing through London. Forty or fifty people met on Wednesday evenings for conversation, singing, and prayer in a room in Fetter Lane. But the format (something of a cross between a Moravian meeting and an Anglican religious society) was not as important as the new lived sense of an old Reformation doctrine that Böhler promoted—justification by faith, which brought with it a full experience of assurance. Böhler convinced Wesley that he did not have such faith but suggested he might "Preach faith *till* you have it, and then, *because* you have it, you *will* preach faith." This

Wesley began to do—in interesting contrast, as Henry Rack comments, to later Moravian doctrine and the parallel evangelical and Pietist contention that an "unconverted ministry" might be not only ineffective but dangerous. Wesley was effective on two accounts: many hearers were convinced, and many clergy began to close their pulpits to him and this "novel" doctrinal emphasis. Wesley, though, soldiered on, discovering in the process that the Moravian definition of faith was not so different from that laid out in his own church's Book of Homilies: "A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God." Theoretically, at least, Moravian faith not only balanced Anglican holiness but helped shed light on a forgotten element in that same Reformation tradition.

Wesley's own appropriation of the newly discovered (or rediscovered) doctrine became paradigmatic for his movement, but it drew on a much wider set of revivals then moving through North American and European Protestantism. The Moravians were only one small, somewhat idiosyncratic branch of the late seventeenth-century Pietist movement emanating from A. H. Francke's work at Halle, a movement that was building a more practical, less theologically arid version of Lutheranism and the Reformed tradition. Other parallel and related awakenings and revivals included the continuing seventeenth-century Scottish tradition of outdoor sacramental occasions (predecessors of the American camp meetings a century later); a Welsh awakening under Griffith Jones, Daniel Rowland, and Howell Harris; and the Great Awakening in Jonathan Edwards's Northampton, Massachusetts, and beyond. Closer to home a new evangelical star was streaking across the sky, a man who would in some ways connect these movements (though also divide them) and become their most famous exemplar: George Whitefield.

Whitefield, a younger undergraduate colleague of the Wesleys at Oxford, literally read himself into a conversion the same year John and Charles volunteered for Georgia (the persuasive book was Henry Scougal's *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* [1677]). Ordained in 1736, he achieved immediate success as a preacher in London, Bristol, and elsewhere. Just as John was returning from Savannah, Whitefield was leaving to replace him there in what was to be the first of seven visits to North America. Dramatic preaching, conversion, and "heart religion" were all very much in the air. To top it all off, Charles Wesley had experienced his own conversion on Pentecost Sunday 1738, composing a hymn

in celebration, “Where Shall My Wandering Soul Begin.” John, very much in a searching mode following his perceived “failure” as a colonial missionary and as a result of his intense connection with the Moravians, was ripe for a similar experience.

That iconic moment, much promoted and contested in later Methodism, came on May 24, 1738. Earlier in the day he had meditated on scripture, attended evensong at St. Paul’s Cathedral, and then, “very unwillingly,” a society meeting in nearby Aldersgate Street. Like the Fetter Lane Society, this gathering consisted of Moravian and Anglican participants—both Böhler and Whitefield had exercised leadership there at one point or another in the previous year. This night what caught Wesley’s attention was a reading from Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. His famous journal entry continues the story:

About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

Scholars argue that this event was not the only important turning point in Wesley’s life. He did not gain total freedom from doubt and despair, and he rarely if ever alluded to his experience later. Nevertheless, it was his personal appropriation of “salvation by faith,” his own experience of assurance, his own evangelical rite of passage. Böhler’s advice had worked: he had “preached faith” prior to “Aldersgate,” and now he could proclaim it *because* he had it. This he did in his University Sermon at Oxford less than three weeks later. “Salvation by Faith” may not have elicited the total approval of his academic congregation, but it did become his evangelical manifesto both within and beyond the university and was accorded pride of place as the first in his published collection *Sermons on Several Occasions*. Meanwhile, Aldersgate, with its precise noting of the “strangely warmed” heart, has become for some *the* Methodist myth of origins and the paradigm for all good followers of the Wesleys.

Wesley was not only experiencing assurance but a vocational conversion as well. Though he kept his college fellowship (in absentia) until his marriage some thirteen years later, it was clear his life’s work would not be as a university teacher but as a preacher and organizer in the church (to the extent it would let him) and in the wider society. The exact

shape of his calling, however, was still to be determined. His discernment process in part involved activities both intentional and serendipitous. He arranged to visit Herrnhut, the German headquarters of the Moravians, where he experienced their community. There he observed several practices he later adapted for Methodists: the division of societies into smaller, more spiritually focused “bands” and “classes” along gender or geographical lines; the reinstated New Testament ritual meals known as “love feasts”; and religious conferences. He also read and was influenced by Jonathan Edwards’s *Faithful Narrative* of the Spirit’s power in the Northampton Awakening. He continued to read in the Church of England homilies as he began to question Moravian theology. He started to back away from the insistence that faith and assurance were one and that it was an all-or-nothing situation. And he maintained contact with a number of religious societies in London and Oxford while preaching in the few churches that still welcomed him.

Of particular note was his continuing association, not always smooth, with George Whitefield. Briefly back from Georgia to raise money for his projected Savannah orphanage, Whitefield met with Bristol’s religious societies and preached to huge crowds—in churches until he was disinvented and then out of doors. As the revival grew he wrote Wesley, urging him to leave London and join him. Before setting out for Bristol, Wesley responded to a criticism that he had no business preaching in other clergy’s parishes (whether in Oxford, London, or Bristol). Partly a rationalization based on his status as a priest appointed as a fellow of a college and partly a provocative statement based on his new spiritual awareness, it has become another oft-repeated Methodist phrase: “I look upon all the world as my parish.” It became the mythic basis of Methodism’s itinerant ministry.

In justifying the extension of his ministry into Bristol, though, Wesley had no idea what he was getting himself into: full-scale revival with attendant “enthusiasm” and much ecclesiastical irregularity. The newly assured, forgiven, saved, and emboldened Oxford don arrived in the western port city and overlapped with Whitefield only briefly. The younger but more experienced evangelist was soon off to nearby Wales, though not before Wesley observed him in the act of “field preaching” to vast multitudes. Outdoor sermonizing was a format that challenged Wesley’s Anglican sense of “decency and order,” but it required no or minimal permission, could accommodate huge crowds that might be uncomfortable in church, and was made to order for a dramatic and powerfully voiced preacher. Possibly to

convince himself, Wesley even tried on for size (indoors to a small society meeting!) a text from Matthew recounting the Sermon on the Mount, “one pretty remarkable precedent of field preaching,” as he remarked later in his published journal. The precedents worked, both Whitefield’s and Jesus’. The next day, Wesley “submitted to be more vile” (the biblical reference is to David’s “disgracing” himself by dancing in front of the Ark of the Covenant) and preached to 3,000 people in a brickyard just outside the city. He continued the practice in the following days and began to notice “results” in listeners who seemed to be having experiences much like his at Aldersgate, though often with more dramatic bodily expressiveness—agitation, shouting, convulsions, and finally a sort of peace. Such conversions might be momentary expressions of “enthusiasm,” emotional excesses disdained by arbiters of the Enlightenment. However, they might also prepare good members for the societies and bands, where community discipline and education could move forgiven men and women toward the “godly, righteous and sober” lives described in the Book of Common Prayer.

Methodist Distinctiveness Emerges

Emotional expression and organizational discipline each played an essential role in the Revival, and they were often functioning simultaneously. Thus, the consolidating process seemed to be at work in the Bristol area, even as the emotional height of new conversions continued. Although both revival leaders had a hand in both elements, Wesley excelled at the regularizing process, even as Whitefield’s particular gift seemed to be more venturesome preaching. The former continued to meet with the several societies, still recognizably Anglican, and to organize bands, small spiritual growth groups segregated by gender, age, and marital status, following the Moravian model. An organizational transition was at hand, however. As numbers grew, the use of private homes or rented rooms became cumbersome, and institutions more recognizably Methodist began to evolve. Two of the larger societies acquired land, and Wesley himself contributed funds toward building a “New Room” that became the first of three regional headquarters and is still a place of Methodist pilgrimage. Wesley made sure he maintained legal ownership and control, a centralizing feature that has followed Methodism’s buildings ever since.

In addition to field preaching and the construction of Methodist-owned property for the use of societies and bands, the Bristol area provided one other important first:

the Kingswood School. Begun in June 1739 for the children of impoverished miners to whom Whitefield and Wesley often preached, it symbolized the Wesleyan attachment to education, as well as salvation, for all. Eventually it became a school for the sons of Methodist preachers, Wesley’s Methodist curricular equivalent of an Oxford or Cambridge college. Finally, it moved to nearby Bath in the mid-nineteenth century, evolving into a respected boarding school that still maintains its Methodist connection. Kingswood signaled further educational ventures, including Wesley’s robust publishing program: his own sermons and journals; periodical literature such as *The Arminian Magazine*; and *The Christian Library*, a series of (heavily edited and condensed, but cheap) theological classics for distribution to the people called Methodists. Kingswood was the first of a number of educational foundations. Methodism did not originate the Sunday school but was heavily involved in its development and growth on both sides of the Atlantic. The Wesleyan movement, as we have seen, began in a university, and it has distinguished itself particularly in North America with the foundation and sponsorship of more than a hundred colleges and universities.

Wesley began to hammer out a distinctive Methodist set of doctrinal emphases in controversy with two important previously positive influences: the Moravians and George Whitefield. The former group, so helpful in recalling the searching Wesley to his Protestant roots, finally lost him by insisting on a doctrine of “stillness”—the abandoning of all “outward works” including the Lord’s Supper and other “means of grace” until God supplied adequate faith. Steeped in Anglican practice and theology, Wesley countered that the means of grace were just that: the Eucharist could be a “converting ordinance” and a strengthener of faith and ought not to be given up. Meetings of the Fetter Lane Society became contentious, as the Moravian “quietist” position drew opposition from Wesley and other likeminded members. Finally the latter group withdrew and founded its own society in the first half of 1740. The secession corresponded to Wesley’s acquisition and renovation of a ruined cannon foundry in the City of London, not far from the present site of Wesley’s Chapel. Much like the “New Room” in Bristol, “the Foundry” provided a multipurpose facility under Wesley’s own control. With preaching, meeting, and living space, it quickly became the hub of Wesley’s operations.

George Whitefield’s Calvinism, with its focus on divine power, predestination, and “perseverance of the saints,” was a second intrarevival irritant. As good Anglican members of

the anti-Calvinist “Arminian” camp, the Wesleys understood that Christ’s sacrificial death was “for all,” not just for “the elect,” and that human freedom and agency played a role in the drama of salvation. One could choose to accept or reject God’s offer of salvation; one could also “backslide” after having been justified; and alternatively—and controversially—one could continue to “go on to perfection” in this life. Thus, Whitefield and Wesley not only possessed differing talents when it came to the business of revival but represented *the* major rift in Protestant theological thinking. Scholars note the divide existing already during the Bristol revival, not just at the leadership level but among members of the societies and bands. Despite surface courtesies and a measure of cooperation with one another, it is hard to deny their competition for the revival’s leadership, which lasted until Whitefield’s death in 1770.

A third area of Methodist identity development was with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England, Wesley’s ecclesiastical home. Claiming to be a true son of the church, he wished both to defend it and to freelance various alternatives for his movement when circumstances and the gospel compelled him. The revival’s irregularities, real and imagined—behavioral, theological, and organizational—provided church authorities plenty to grouse about. Charges of “enthusiasm” had already been noticed and were hard to refute, given the pervasiveness of emotional phenomena in outdoor preaching as well as indoor society meetings, and given the publicity accorded such behavior in both Whitefield’s and Wesley’s accounts of the revival. Thus, when the anti-Methodist tracts began to pour forth from bishops and other guardians of ecclesiastical order, Wesley, a trained logician as well as theologian and revival leader, argued that his doctrine of assurance was not the mindless ranting of the mad. In one sermon he granted his critics’ point that there might be a problem (in fact he was ready to dismiss preachers he felt guilty of such “false, imaginary inspiration”) but simultaneously defended the experiential basis of the revival:

May we not steer a middle course? Keep a sufficient distance from that spirit of error and enthusiasm without denying the gift of God and giving up the great privilege of his children? Surely we may. (“The Witness of the Spirit—Discourse I,” 1746)

Contention over alleged supernatural experience and its physical expression was to be expected in the Age of Reason, but Wesley’s Anglican critics also attacked him on “justification by faith,” as if that entailed the denial of

“good works,” and misidentified Whitefield’s trademark predestination as his.

Less Anglican offense was taken at Methodist doctrine than at the movement’s violation of parochial and diocesan discipline. Wesley admitted the difficulty just before following in Whitefield’s steps and taking up field preaching, which also brought visions of unruly early Quakers and other Civil War sectarians. Clergy refused to host him in their churches, and many who might have been disposed to were forbidden by their bishops to do so. Some bishops, like Butler of Bristol, refused to license Wesley in their dioceses. Wesley’s typical reaction to such criticism was (1) to argue legalistically (I am in fact not in violation of canon law) and (2) to fall back on his theological bottom line (serving God and saving souls trumps even canon law).

These retorts were used to defend another irregularity: lay preaching, which Wesley began to permit in his movement as early as 1740. Though Wesley would not admit it, he was cobbling together a set of alternative ecclesiastical institutions, a “connection,” with its center and supervisory authority in him. In this parallel to the Church of England, which Wesley never left, there were functional equivalents. “Helpers” (lay preachers) were a kind of clergy equivalent. Buildings such as the New Room and the Foundery, and soon other “preaching houses,” gave the movement a community presence in much the same way parish churches or nonconformist chapels did. The “love feast” served as a sort of evangelical folk Eucharist. Perhaps most important in the long run, Methodist preaching and small-group work began to feature Charles Wesley’s amazing hymn output. Among his more than 6,000 sacred songs, many celebrated evangelical experience (“And Can It Be that I Should Gain”) and Methodist doctrinal emphases (“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”), as well as the Church’s Holy Communion (“Come, Sinners, to the Gospel Feast”) and its major festivals (“Hark, the Herald Angels Sing” and “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today”). In place of canon law and the various Anglican parishes, Wesley developed multiple sets of rules (most particularly, the 1743 “General Rules of the United Societies”) to set the ethical and spiritual tone of Methodist organization. Then beginning in 1744, he called together sympathetic clergy as well as lay preachers to attend a “Conference” to work out details of faith, practice, and polity. This annual gathering soon typified Methodist “connectionalism” (the interdependent Methodist polity and ethos, with John Wesley at the center). There was plenty for the church to oppose in this growing alternative spiritual culture, and

that opposition took the form not just of anti-Methodist publications but, occasionally, in the early days, anti-Methodist riots. Even within the movement there were those, most notably led by Charles Wesley, who resisted the spin-off toward irregularity, denominationalism, and what looked like (despite the founder's protestations) dissent.

Further Growth and Consolidation

However, the two decades before Methodism remigrated across the Atlantic, the 1740s and 1750s, saw further growth and consolidation of the new movement. "Classes" were instituted as the basic unit within the local societies, when a member in Bristol suggested a fund-raising strategy for retiring the New Room debt. If the entire society were divided into groups of twelve, a leader could supervise the donation of a penny a week from each member, and if any were too poor could make up the difference. The scheme did produce money, but classes proved more important for small-group fellowship, soon eclipsing the bands; and the class leader evolved into a pastoral associate rather than a collector of donations. In following years spiritually mature society members, people Wesley could trust, were challenged to become class leaders. The financial responsibilities soon devolved upon society "stewards," who collected and dispersed moneys, whether for building upkeep, programmatic and living expenses, or poor relief.

Methodism's spread was dependent on the traveling ministry of John (and initially, at least, Charles), as well as the evangelistic work of some of their clergy friends in other parts of the nation. They expanded their preaching and connecting itinerancy beyond the original London and Bristol headquarters north to the Countess of Huntingdon's estate near Derby to Yorkshire and finally in 1742 to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where John built yet another facility: an orphan house that functioned also as a preaching house and became Wesley's northern headquarters and, along with the New Room and the Foundery, the third point of an annual tour of the country.

By 1746 Wesley had established seven smaller regional "circuits" or "rounds," staffed by two or three of his lay assistants, who would move around the societies in the area for about a month before reassignment. In addition to London, Bristol, and Newcastle, circuits existed in Cornwall, Evesham, Yorkshire, and Wales. Traveling preachers in these circuits provided an efficient and flexible way to reach people for revival and for their placement and nurture in societies and classes. If the call came from a "new" location, the

Wesleys and/or some of their assistants could travel there, preach, and organize local people. Such was the case in 1747 when Methodism spread to Dublin and Cork in Ireland, and by 1751 Wesley added Scotland to his travels, though with minimal success in that bastion of Calvinism.

By this point a process had been developed by which preachers were called, examined, and put into full-time probationary work. Though there was no expectation of university or seminary training, they were urged to study the Bible and the various works that Wesley was publishing as guidelines to his doctrinal emphases. His three volumes of *Sermons on Several Occasions* (1746–1750) and the *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (1755) became the doctrinal test for the preachers, indeed for the movement as a whole, though these were hardly a set of confessional propositions. In 1749 Wesley published a summary of his various doctrinal and disciplinary decisions from the earlier Conferences; these were expanded and updated, and after 1753 became known as the "Large" *Minutes*, copies of which were given to the new preachers admitted on trial.

Beyond the doctrinal and disciplinary guidelines, other study aids for Methodist preachers, class leaders, and ordinary society members poured forth from the presses. Wesley's quick tour of religious classics, his multivolume *Christian Library* (beginning in 1749–1755), was one key example, but his entire publishing program served the Methodist educational venture. Apologetic, controversial, and historical pieces such as *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* (1743), *A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London* (1747), and *A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists* (1749) helped situate Methodism positively and defend it within the intellectual and ecclesiastical context of the time. Collections of hymns provided poetic renderings of the movement's core spirituality, useful in various worship and fellowship settings. Tracts (for example, "A Word to a Drunkard" and "A Word to a Smuggler") underscored the Wesleyan ethical worldview—and so did most of his published sermons, providing reflection "On the Use of Money," "On Dress," and on "The Reformation of Manners," among other issues. The famous *Primitive Physick* (1747, with many editions thereafter), Wesley's collection of "tested" home remedies, demonstrated the movement's concern with bodily as well as spiritual health. Additional publications included dictionaries and other secular educational books and periodicals (*The Arminian Magazine*, started in the furor of a reignited predestination controversy in 1777, soon became a vehicle for recounting the experiences of various

Methodists, printing excerpts from journals, letters, sermons, and poetry). Many of these publications, along with some that Wesley never intended to be published (for example, his shorthand diaries, as opposed to his highly edited-for-publication journals), are included in *The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley*, its thirty-four volumes nearly completed.

As the movement continued to expand and consolidate, its maturing structure, including its Wesley-centered, albeit benevolent, hierarchy, implicitly challenged the Church of England, if not the nation as a whole. This in part was Wesley's precise intention, though he clearly wanted it both ways. In typical Methodist question-and-answer mode, the "Large" *Minutes* established Methodism's *raison d'être*, all the while protesting (too much?) that this really was not an alternative religious movement, a new dissenting denomination, a repudiation of the state church.

Q. What may we reasonably believe to be God's design in raising up the Preachers called Methodists?

A. Not to form any new sect; but to reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land.

Answering the question in that form indicated the problem. The Wesleys could urge church attendance, especially for the sacrament, as much as they liked, but Methodist members voted with their feet, especially in parishes where the clergyman was not sympathetic toward the movement; and preachers soon pushed for some sort of ordination—and thereby authority to administer the Lord's Supper. Although Wesley's reading of early church polity convinced him that a priest might, in extraordinary times, function as a bishop and ordain, he refused to take the step, at least until extraordinary events in America overtook him in 1784. In the 1750s his clergy friends, especially his brother, were able to stop any movement in that direction with the slogan, "ordination is separation." By 1760 the Conference had discussed the issue, and the Wesleys had together published a list of twelve *Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England*.

By the 1760s Wesley and his preachers were working out the movement's doctrinal emphases. Given his Anglican orientation, Wesley's Methodism could not deviate too far from his church's *via media* between perceived extremes of Rome and Geneva. As a churchman, he could assume basic tenets of Christianity, as represented in the Apostles' and the

Nicene Creeds and the solid Reformation overlay of the "Articles of Religion" (looking the other way at its Predestinarian Article XVII). But the revival, along with the mixture of influences that helped form Methodism and the multiple controversies that Wesley had to face early in its life, resulted in the foregrounding of four characteristic doctrines: original sin (the Augustinian legacy he shared jointly with both Catholics and Calvinists); justification by grace through faith (part of his Reformation heritage and the antidote to sin); assurance (the revival's signature doctrine: the believer can know and feel his or her sins forgiven); and, most controversially, perfection (the "holy living" side of Wesley's background, a "Catholic" doctrine newly fashioned in the context of evangelical Protestantism).

In the early twentieth century, a British Methodist summarized these distinctive Arminian emphases as the "Four Alls": "All need to be saved; all can be saved; all can know themselves to be saved; and all can be saved to the uttermost." It constitutes a "way of salvation" for the individual, but it implies (indeed demands) the holiness of heart and life laid out in Jesus' summary of the law: loving God with all one's heart, mind, soul, and strength; and loving one's neighbor as oneself.

Methodism's Reintroduction to North America

If Methodism's first visit to North America was mainly a clerical affair, the intentional but brief Georgia mission of the Wesley brothers, followed by that of Whitefield, all in the 1730s, its reintroduction as a mature movement came almost as an afterthought through the work of "unsent" laypeople in the decade of the 1760s. Of course, the "Great Awakening," partly the result of Whitefield's constant and effective itinerations up and down the East Coast, linked the two moments, keeping popular preaching alive, converting thousands, and in the process giving the British colonies a common experience that helped weld together a common stand against the crown in 1776. However, there was little to show in terms of Methodist connectional activity until two Irish Methodist families immigrated independently, one to a farm in central Maryland, the other to New York City. Seeking their fortunes in North America, they recognized a need in their respective communities and reverted to their Methodist practice in Ireland.

Robert and Elizabeth Strawbridge were active in rural Frederick County, Maryland, by 1760, several years later establishing a class meeting (that included at least one African American), converting local agricultural workers, and

building a log chapel (now commemorated in a facsimile near New Windsor, Maryland). Philip Embury and his cousin Barbara Ruckle Heck, sensing a moral decline since landing in New York (card playing seems to have been the straw that broke the Methodist matriarch's back), started holding a Methodist-style class and rented a sailing loft in lower Manhattan as a meeting space. Then, with the help of Captain Thomas Webb, a one-eyed retired British soldier and self-proclaimed "spiritual son of John Wesley," the small community founded a congregation on John Street (a building and congregation still extant). These unofficial initiators of Methodist activity established the class and society structure in the Chesapeake region (soon with an influential center in Baltimore) and New York. Abetted by Captain Webb's energy, Methodism quickly took hold in another important city in between, Philadelphia, where St. George's Church remains as a testimony. People throughout the middle colonies were being converted, class leaders and preachers were being raised up, and the need for organization of the movement was recognized.

Word of developments in North America began to reach England, and by the time Wesley agreed to allow an entrepreneurial itinerant preacher, Robert Williams, to emigrate on his own expense, other, more formal appeals for help had reached him. Wesley's response was the appointment of four pairs of official missionaries from the British Conference in 1769, 1771, 1773, and 1774. Though several of these eight young preachers possessed evangelical and pastoral gifts, only one, Francis Asbury (1745–1816), combined these traits with organizational abilities and a commitment to stay the course, despite the difficulties that the American Revolution would throw in the way. Only twenty-six at the time he began his service in 1771, he became the architect and "master builder" of American Methodism, its most important leader until his death.

During his initial tenure as an "assistant" and the higher-ranking "general assistant," Asbury worked to establish Wesleyan doctrine and practice in the colonies and, after the Revolution, to "superintend" the transition of a movement as it became a new church in a new nation. Two years before his arrival there were an estimated 600 members; two years after, at the first American Conference in 1773, membership totaled 1,160. By 1784, there were nearly 15,000 American Methodists, the majority in Maryland and Virginia. Together with these gains came administrative translations from the old country as the Americans adapted an itinerancy of preachers and a multiple set of regional annual conferences

along with a system of quarterly conferences that oversaw local work.

The American Revolution brought into focus a political tension endemic to the Methodist experiment in America. Wesley's leadership of religious institutions that seemed to compete with those of the establishment and his own experience in Georgia might have made him an American patriot, but he was by ancestry and temperament a Tory. Thus, his republication of the Samuel Johnson tract "Taxation No Tyranny" as "A Calm Address to Our American Colonies" (under his own name) raised suspicion that Methodists also stood with Great Britain in the ensuing struggle. Among the original Wesleyan missionaries to North America, all but Asbury returned to Britain or headed to Canada. Asbury himself boarded with a Methodist magistrate, Judge Thomas White of Delaware, for two years during the fighting, hiding briefly in a nearby swamp when White himself was arrested in the spring of 1778. Neither a partisan nor an opponent of the cause of independence, he "lay low," supporting the work of the numerous American-born preachers during the war. Those very preachers, though, were also suspect because of their Methodist identity. Freeborn Garretson, Jesse Lee, and William Watters all claimed some form of conscientious objection from military service. However, their pacifism was interpreted as support for the British cause, and they risked arrest, beating, and being tarred and feathered.

Monarchy and democracy played out in ecclesiastical polity as well as in anticolonial revolution in the same period. Strawbridge, the immigrant farmer and local preacher who began Methodism in Maryland, possessed a streak of Irish independence that even Asbury's disciplinary abilities could not quell. Recognizing the inability of his frontier neighbors to access the "means of grace," he took it upon himself, unordained and forbidden by Wesley (and later by Asbury), to provide the Lord's Supper and Baptism for those under his care. In 1773 at the first American Conference, the issue was raised and resolved in the following manner, according to Asbury's July 14 journal entry: "That no preacher in our Connection shall be permitted to administer the ordinances, except Mr. Strawbridge, and he under the particular direction of the Assistant." In other words, neither the Conference nor Wesley, nor Wesley's American assistant at the time, Thomas Rankin, was able to keep Strawbridge from behaving like an ordained clergyman. The issue flared a half dozen years later in 1779 to include other preachers. It became more acute as many Anglican priests, the English Methodist

“solution” to the sacramental problem, drifted away with their church and king under attack by the American patriots. The war also kept Asbury and a number of northern preachers from traveling south to Fluvanna County, Virginia, where the regular conference was scheduled in the picturesquely named “Broken Back Church.” So they organized a pre-meeting session in Delaware at which they affirmed Wesleyan discipline and Asburian leadership and postponed any decision on the sacraments for another year. However, three weeks later the regular conference convened as scheduled in Virginia, and the southern preachers determined to form a presbytery of four who would ordain themselves and then as many others who wanted to provide a sacramental ministry among the Methodists. This schismatic decision was minimized through negotiations, by the distance and time it took to get a judgment from Wesley, by Asbury’s fence-mending foray into the south, and by the sense that a colonial victory in the war might lead to an ecclesiastical as well as a political change. The split was more or less healed by 1781, but scholars have noted similar struggles over authority in the establishment of Methodism as a full-fledged church in 1784; the O’Kelly schism of 1792; the various withdrawals of African American congregations in the same decade and beyond; and the political breakaways of the Methodist Protestants, the Wesleyan Methodists, and the Free Methodists in the nineteenth century.

A New Church in a New Nation

The Treaty of Paris concluded the Revolutionary War in September 1783, thus presenting Wesley and his American followers with a new set of circumstances. A year later his letter to them credited a “very uncommon train of providences” with the freeing of the American colonies, cutting them loose from any political and spiritual connection with the mother country. It also provided him the cover to choose consciously what his “logic of practice” was already indicating: the “people called Methodists” (already a “connection” with many ecclesiastical trappings) were about to become a full-fledged independent church, at least in the new United States of America. He was convinced he had all the authority needed to ordain ministers, and although he did not wish to rend the fabric of the Church of England at home, that church no longer existed in North America. Consequently he felt bound in September 1784 to send “Labourers into the Harvest.” Accordingly he “set apart” the Reverend Thomas Coke (1747–1814) as a superintendent for North America, and sent him, along with two of his

preachers whom he had ordained as elders, to organize an episcopally governed Methodist Church in the new country. John’s younger brother, ever the zealous churchman, was incensed and wrote memorable doggerel (see Frank Baker’s *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley*, 367) to mark the occasion: “So easily are bishops made/ By man’s, or woman’s whim./ W[esley] his hands on C[oke] hath laid,/ But who laid hands on him?”

Evangelical necessity had won out. Wesley’s three emissaries arrived in New York in early November, and within a fortnight Coke had consulted with Francis Asbury and other American leaders about Wesley’s plan. Coke also brought resources: a doctrinal statement (Wesley’s abridged version of the Anglican Articles of Religion) and a liturgy (his own edited version of the Book of Common Prayer, along with ordination certificates for Coke and his junior partners, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey). The larger statement of church polity was already available, the English Methodist “Large Minutes,” which would evolve into the quintessential American Methodist document, *The Discipline*. A call went out for a conference of the preachers to be held beginning December 24, 1784, in Baltimore.

The so-called Christmas Conference met in the small chapel in Lovely Lane and lasted more than a week. The preachers took all the steps necessary to form what was to be called the Methodist Episcopal Church (“episcopal” here denoting a polity dominated by “superintendents” or bishops, rather than a direct connection with the Church of England, soon to be known in the new country as the Protestant Episcopal Church). They accepted Wesley’s documents and his ordinations and affirmed, at Asbury’s request, another part of the plan: that he also be ordained and made a superintendent of the new church to serve alongside Coke. Accordingly, in the space of three days, Asbury was ordained deacon and elder and consecrated superintendent. Asbury’s was the most prominent of the ordinations that took place there, but a dozen or so additional American preachers were also ordained to take up a sacramental ministry. The affirmation of Asbury and the additional initiative the preachers took to shape the polity of the church served to establish the authority of the Conference in Methodist polity, even as Wesley’s autocratic power lingered over it.

Several other details of the Christmas Conference are worth mentioning as they presage future developments. First, as Thomas Coke Ruckle’s nineteenth-century portrait of the occasion indicates, there was at least one African American preacher in attendance. Harry Hosier (d. 1806),

traveling companion to Asbury and popular preacher in his own right, was indeed present at the beginning, and so perhaps also was Richard Allen (1760–1831), who eventually would found and lead the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Their presence at the conference, together with the strong stand taken there against slavery (however attenuated the witness might become in the first four decades of the nineteenth century), underlines the important relationship that African Americans, both slave and free, had with Methodism. Second, and figuring more prominently in Ruckle's picture, was Asbury's friend Philip William Otterbein (1726–1813), a German Reformed missionary and minister whom he had invited to participate in his consecration as a superintendent. Otterbein's presence is a reminder that "heart" religion and awakenings had German-speaking components left over from the previous century and that Otterbein's own evangelical movement, the United Brethren, would eventually merge with Methodism late in the twentieth century. Third, the assembled preachers decided to found a school, to be built outside Baltimore on the order of Wesley's Kingswood School (and given the combined name of the two new superintendents): Cokesbury College. Although the college burned down within a couple of years and Methodist preachers were not formally educated in seminaries until well into the nineteenth century, this venture stands as the first of hundreds of Methodist-founded educational institutions, many still extant, across the country.

The church was now founded, but it had miles to go before achieving the numerical, spiritual, and cultural clout for which it would become famous in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America and beyond. Its evangelical heritage, optimistic theology, and warmhearted practicality ensured a growing popularity. Despite the initial issues that needed addressing, the Methodist Episcopal Church grew rapidly from the time of its birth: 18,000 members were reported in 1785, and by 1790 there were upwards of 57,000, of whom 20 percent were African Americans.

Growing pains led to the continual shaping of new features. Asbury and Coke took a symbolic editorial step in 1787, changing their designation in that year's edition of the *Discipline* from "superintendent" (Wesley's original term) to "bishop" (its simple biblical equivalent). Wesley was annoyed at their putting on airs, but his objections were increasingly irrelevant. More to the point was the increasing suspicion of a bishop's power, by whatever name, especially in a geographically expansive movement. Regional conferences

would continue, but they could not speak for the entire denomination. Tried and discarded, because it gave too much power to a hierarchy, was a "Council" made up of bishops and "presiding elders" (regional assistants to the bishops, another American emendation). Instead a compromise was reached: a policy-making "General" Conference that has met every four years since the first one in 1792. In that same year, a year after Wesley's death in London, the young church faced its first major schism. James O'Kelly (1735–1826), like Strawbridge an "Irish Maverick," proposed that the Conference might override the bishop's power to appoint a preacher to a particular circuit. He did not prevail, and he left with a number of his supporters, largely from Virginia, to form the "Republican Methodist Church," which faded into the Christian and Disciples of Christ movements in the South. The membership loss was quickly recouped, but the struggle (and the splinter group's name) pointed to the friction between the monarchical power of a bishop and the aspirations of preachers and laity in a country with an increasingly democratic ethos.

The popular appeal of a flexible, theologically optimistic, episcopal-style church for ordinary poor and middle-class individuals—anyone wishing to "flee the wrath to come"—guaranteed not just membership growth on the frontier but continuing struggle for democratic reform within the institution. The same theme of popular movement versus church hierarchy played out liturgically; Wesley's version of the Prayer Book was no match for the extempore praying and preaching Methodists were accustomed to. For all the contention over the Lord's Supper, it was not frequently celebrated. However, as in England, Charles Wesley's hymns and less formal services such as love feasts and watch nights continued to engage Methodists. This "low church" version of episcopalianism, however, was very much in keeping with a movement that grew out of the Atlantic Revival and Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s and that would help usher in the Second Great Awakening, with its exuberant camp meetings, in the early 1800s and beyond.

The story of Methodist regionalism also begins in this early era. Not only did the "Chesapeake refraction of Wesleyanism" work to color national Methodism, but a southern populism became visible in the crisis over the ordinances in 1779 in Virginia, in the O'Kelly schism in 1792, and in the impending friction over slavery from 1784 on through to 1844. New England was always somewhat foreign territory for the Methodists, certainly in the time of a Calvinist Congregational establishment and its Unitarian liberal

opposition, as well as later during the influx of Catholic immigrants, but some inroads were achieved. The West, influenced by all three areas, was beginning to lend its own distinctive coloration to Methodism on the frontier. These stories, along with the important features of race and gender, indicate that the Methodist tradition had become a central component of American religious life.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *American Revolution*; *Anglican Tradition and Heritage*; *Camp Meetings*; *Education: Sunday Schools*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Holiness Movement*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Methodists* entries; *Ministry, Professional*; *Missions* entries; *Moravians*; *Music: Hymnody*; *Preaching*; *Revivalism* entries.

Charles Wallace Jr.

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Mexico: Colonial Era

Catholic religion in colonial Mexico was a complex mosaic of beliefs and practices that hardly resembled the orthodox ideals of the colonial church and state in New Spain. In the 1930s, French historian Robert Ricard famously posited the idea of a “spiritual conquest” based on the self-congratulatory reports written by the missionaries in New Spain. Recent research has shown that the evangelization process was neither rapid nor complete, but it is hard to underestimate the disruptive impact of Christianization on native peoples. Missionaries introduced new ways of marking time, altered patterns of settlement and solidarity, disrupted kinship and family ties, and introduced new naming patterns, among other changes. Far from accepting the demands for religious exclusivity from the missionaries, however, native peoples tended to supplement and combine their own religious traditions with those of the colonizers. This was also the case of Africans, who were able to retain many of their old beliefs and rituals even as they embraced Christianity. To the dismay of colonial authorities, African and pre-Columbian traditions would also gain acceptance among the Spaniards and other groups over time. Such religious flexibility, combined with the transferal to the New World of heterodox practices and beliefs that ranged from divination to astrology and mystic illuminism, would be decisive to the creation of the intricate religious tapestry that characterized the colonial era.

Establishment of the Church in New Spain

Since early days of colonial conquest, Christian evangelization was deemed the most important reason for the Spanish presence in the New World. Accordingly, Mercedarian priest Bartolomé de Olmedo and secular

priest Juan Díaz accompanied Hernán Cortés in 1519. Both of them performed sacramental duties for the soldiers and were in charge of explaining the Christian doctrine to the natives. It was not until the arrival of three Franciscans in 1523 and twelve more in 1524, however, that the task of evangelization was carried out in a systematic manner. The second group of Franciscans, among which was Fray Toribio de Benavente (Motolinía), walked barefoot from Veracruz to Mexico City. Upon their entrance to Tenochtitlan, Cortés kneeled before the friars and kissed their hands, to the great amazement of the Native Americans. The Franciscans were convinced that the end of the world was coming and that they could play an important role in hastening the second coming of Christ by converting the natives. Although this apocalyptic vision was not shared by other religious orders, they also participated with enthusiasm in the task of evangelization. The Dominicans arrived in 1525 and were later followed by the Augustinians (1533) and the Jesuits (1571). While the Franciscans tended to concentrate in Mexico City, Tlaxcala, Michoacán, and Yucatán, the Dominicans occupied Oaxaca and Chiapas. Having arrived later than the other orders, the Augustinians worked on “peripheral” areas such as Michoacán, Acolmán, and Hidalgo, while the Jesuits founded missions along the coasts of Sinaloa and Sonora and the east of the Sierra Madre. After the Jesuits’ expulsion in 1768, the Franciscans, who had already ventured as far as New Mexico by the end of the sixteenth century, would take over their missions and expand the evangelization efforts up the California coast.

Because convents were deemed symbols of female piety, urban pride, and status, they also proliferated in colonial Mexico from the beginning of the Spanish occupation. At a time in which charity and religious patronage enhanced the status of donors, people of means were glad to provide the resources for their foundation. Although the first convent founded in 1550, Our Lady of the Conception, accepted elite indigenous women, the vast majority were reserved to Spanish and Creole women. In fact, the first convents for full-blooded indigenous women would not appear until 1724. Nunneries served not only religious functions in society but also economic ones. They employed an enormous number of servants, masons, and craftsmen and became important sources of credit. Inside their walls, highly gifted women found rare opportunities for spiritual and intellectual growth. Many of them wrote and became famous in life, but none would reach the celebrity of Sor Juana Inés de

la Cruz (ca. 1648–1695). A poet, philosopher, and playwright, Sor Juana wrote for the court and the church with the support of viceroys and other important patrons. Her intelligence, independence, and autonomy rendered her an object of both praise and envy. After an unfortunate clash with Bishop Francisco de Aguiar y Seijas, a notorious misogynist, she would be forced to stop reading and writing and give away her impressive library. Pressed to show her religious obedience, Sor Juana would embrace a life of fasting and mortification until her untimely death during an epidemic.

Conflicts among and between the Regular and Secular Orders

The early decades of evangelization were characterized by heated disputes between the members of the secular clergy (diocesan priests) and the regular clergy (mendicant orders), as well as by multiple conflicts among the religious orders themselves. With the blessing of Pope Adrian VI’s bull *Omnimoda* (1522), Charles V entrusted the missionaries to perform all sacraments in the New World, a task normally restricted to the seculars in Europe. The friars were also appointed as bishops because of the lack of qualified secular clergymen. In 1527, Dominican Julián Garcés became bishop of Tlaxcala. Three years later, Franciscan Juan de Zumárraga became the first bishop of Mexico City. He would die an archbishop in 1548, only to be replaced by Dominican Alonso de Montúfar, who ruled the archdiocese from 1554 to 1569. Placed under the direct authority of the pope, the mendicants operated with relative autonomy in the colony. In 1574, however, Philip II issued a series of decrees known as *Ordenanza del Patronazgo* that effectively shifted crown support from the regular to the secular clergy. Among other things, the royal decrees ordered the replacement of missionaries by diocesan priests in native parishes (*doctrinas*). As the numbers of seculars increased in the late sixteenth century, they gained control of the bishoprics and fought the mendicants over diocesan limits, access to indigenous tithes, and control of other resources.

The regular clergy also competed with the *encomenderos* for the control of the Native Americans. The crown granted deserving Spaniards the right to exact tribute and labor from the indigenous people, who would be cared for materially and spiritually in exchange. The idea was to accelerate the process of indigenous acculturation while guaranteeing the protection of the natives. In practice, the *encomienda* became a system of capital accumulation predicated upon the brutal

exploitation of unpaid indigenous labor. In his unpublished *Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1542), Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas presented the king with horrifying details of Spanish cruelty and urged him to abolish the *encomienda* system. Las Casas's denunciations apparently led Charles V to issue the New Laws (1542), which contained an article prohibiting *encomienda* inheritance. Unfortunately, the article proved unenforceable because of strong resistance by the colonizers and was later repealed. Although the Franciscans did not oppose the *encomienda* system *per se*, they also denounced Spanish violence and its effects on the tasks of evangelization. The mendicants saw the natives as children and were convinced that only segregation could save them from moral corruption and physical extinction at the hands of Spaniards. Partly responding to the Franciscans' concerns, the crown enacted a system of physical and racial separation that kept the indigenous peoples and the Spaniards in two different administrative and fiscal orders known as *repúblicas* (commonwealths). The system was soon undermined, however, by the constant demands of tribute of labor by the Spaniards. Furthermore, vagrancy, miscegenation, and even illegal settlement of Spaniards in indigenous towns contributed to the already significant intermingling.

Indigenous Catholicism

The conversion of indigenous peoples to Catholicism was the result of a long and complicated process of cultural adaptation and negotiation, which involved the active participation of the natives. Based on their conviction that the conversion of nobles and caciques would bring their followers to the Church, Franciscan missionaries founded schools for the sons of the privileged such as the Colegio de Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco, while Vasco de Quiroga created in Michoacán mission communities inspired by Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516). The missionaries also founded ten schools for the daughters of the Mexican elite in the 1520s, where they would be taught the ideals of Christian femininity as well as practical skills such as embroidery. Besides learning Latin, Spanish, logic, and philosophy, the male young nobles became conversant in the basic rudiments of Catholicism. Although the initial idea was to train natives to become Catholic priests, many non-Franciscans opposed it. By the late 1550s, indigenous people were formally prohibited from receiving ordination. The young nobles would be instrumental, however, in the task of evangelization by helping the friars to compile dictionaries, and grammars, as well as to translate confessional manuals, sermons, and moral treatises

from Zapotec, Purépecha, Maya, Náhuatl, and other languages. The challenges faced by translators, however, were enormous. Among the Nahuas, for example, there were three different concepts of the soul; they neither had a concept for an entity that personified pure evil, like Satan, nor an equivalent term for the European concept of sin; finally, in a world in which order and chaos were seen as both essential to life, the idea of a cosmic battle of good against evil was short of preposterous.

Looking for ways to make Christianity comprehensible to the neophytes, the missionaries adopted elements of pre-Columbian religion, thus paving the way for a problematic mixture of religious practices and beliefs of colonizers and colonized. To be sure, the mixing of native and Christian devotional patterns and beliefs dated back to the early days of conquest. On his way to Tenochtitlan, Cortés and his companions used to place images of the Virgin and holy crosses on indigenous altars after casting down the "idols" of native temples. Later, friars would try to capture indigenous devotional patterns by building churches and chapels on pre-Columbian sacred sites of worship and pilgrimage. Four years after the fall of the Aztec Empire, construction started for a massive cathedral upon the ruins of the great double pyramid temple known as Temple Mayor. In Tlaxcala, Franciscans replaced the site of worship to goddess Toci with a church dedicated to St. Anne and built a church in honor of John the Baptist in Tinanquizmanalco, where Tepuchtlí was honored. Most famously, the missionaries erected a chapel to Our Lady of Guadalupe after she appeared miraculously on Tepeyac Hill, where the goddess Tonantzin used to be venerated. As years went by, local churches became the new symbols of community pride and identity, and people started to spend sizeable sums in the adornment and maintenance of their parishes. Parish priests were often abusive and their moral behavior was questionable, but this did not prevent indigenous people from helping in the church as sacristans, singers, or *fiscales* (administrators and religious policemen). The indigenous people also embraced old Christian institutions like the sodalities, whose main missions were to organize and fund the patron saint celebration and guarantee a Christian burial for their members.

Indigenous Resistance and Rebellion

In spite of the missionaries' enthusiasm, indigenous conversion to Christianity proved to be ephemeral. As the euphoria of the early years of evangelization waned, the disappointed missionaries resorted to coercion and corporal punishment

to bring the indigenous people back to the Church. Acting as inquisitors, the friars chastised Native American “heretics” with brutality in Acolhuacan (1522), Tlaxcala (1527), and other regions in Oaxaca and Yucatan. In 1539, Bishop Juan de Zumárraga famously sentenced Don Carlos Ometochtzin, the cacique of Texcoco, to be burned at the stake on charges of heresy. Few years later, in 1562, Zumárraga’s fellow Franciscan Bishop Diego de Landa conducted a violent three-month campaign against idolatry in Mani, Yucatán, in which more than 4,000 Mayans were savagely tortured. Hundreds lost their lives as a result of the interrogations, while many others took their own lives in despair. Although native neophytes would be removed from inquisitorial jurisdiction in 1571, episcopal authorities of Mexico and Oaxaca would carry out fierce campaigns against native idolatry and sorcery up until the mid-eighteenth century.

Sometimes indigenous rejection of Christianity took violent forms. In 1541, in Nueva Galicia, the Caxcanes rebelled against Spanish rule in response to the brutal wars waged against them by Nuño de Guzmán. Priests announced the return of their god Tlatol, who would destroy the Spaniards and bring forth a new era of abundance. The uprising was only quelled after indigenous allies joined Spanish forces to regain control of the area. In 1680, a medicine man named Papé told the Pueblo Indians that the Spaniards were to blame for the horrible drought, famine, pestilence, and death they had endured for years. Only by killing the colonizers would the *katsina* (the ancient gods) return, bringing about a golden age of prosperity. On August 10, 1680, an army of 8,000 indigenous warriors razed churches and pillaged Spanish settlements, killing more than four hundred settlers within hours. It was not until 1692 that the Spaniards finally succeeded in routing the rebels.

In 1712, a pan-Mayan coalition known as the Cancuc Rebellion inaugurated a new era of indigenous revolts. In contrast to its predecessors, the uprising in Cancuc, Chiapas, did not aim at revitalizing ancient religious mores but rather at defying Spanish control of Catholicism. This movement occurred during the era of the Bourbon reforms, a period of crucial changes for colonial Mexico. Implemented to rationalize colonial exploitation, strengthen the colonies’ links to the metropolis, improve tax collection, and revamp the entire colonial administration, the Bourbon reforms also discouraged popular expressions of piety and collective devotion as unnecessary and extravagant. The combined impact of all these socioeconomic, political, and religious reforms was resented by indigenous groups, who asked

recognition for their religious cults from the Catholic Church as well as for a solution to economic grievances stemming from the new Bourbon policies. It was in this context that around May, a thirteen-year-old indigenous girl, María de la Candelaria, claimed to have seen the Virgin Mary in the outskirts of the town. Although the priest of Cancuc dismissed the apparition, María’s father and other inhabitants built a chapel on the spot where the miracle occurred. Followers of the cult refused to pay tribute and rejected the authority of the king and the bishop. A rebel confederation of thirty-two Tzotzil, Tzeltal, and Chol villages attacked Chilán, Ocosingo, and other towns. Internal differences and increasing attacks by the Spaniards weakened the movement, which was finally crushed around November of the same year.

The African Presence

The religious tapestry of colonial Mexico was complicated even more by the presence of African people. Forcibly brought from West and Central Africa after a series of horrid epidemics decimated the indigenous population, African slaves brought with them a complex set of religious beliefs and practices. Although slaves belonged to different ethnic groups and spoke different languages, they shared cultural and religious traits such as a strong emphasis on ancestor veneration and the possibility of communication between the worlds of the living and the dead. In an effort to turn slaves into a docile labor force, colonial authorities emphasized Christianizing them from the early decades of the slave trade. To the dismay of the colonizers, however, Africans tended to combine their own beliefs with those of their masters and the larger society. Catholic authorities objected to these forms of syncretism, but they found even more distressing the widespread use of African arts of divination, healing, and witchcraft, practices generally deemed diabolic and superstitious, among Spaniards and other ethnic groups.

Like the indigenous peoples, Africans embraced confraternities and sponsored religious celebrations that were often mixed with African customs. More troubling for colonial authorities, however, was the fact that confraternities allowed African slaves to organize their uprisings. In 1611 an angry crowd of fifteen hundred blacks belonging to the confraternity of Nuestra Señora in Mexico City carried the body of a slave woman who had been flogged to death and marched towards the palaces of the Inquisition and the viceroyalty. The outraged mob threw stones at the home of the master, Luis Moreno de Monroy, obliging him to ask protection

from a guard of Spaniards. Afterwards, the Afro-Mexicans named an Angolan couple, Pablo and María, as king and queen, and disbanded after deciding to rebel on April 19, 1612. Eventually the Audiencia of Mexico (the colony's high court) learned of this conspiracy and ordered the main leaders to be tortured. On May 2, 1612, thirty-five blacks, seven women included, were publicly hanged in the city's main square. Authorities quartered their bodies and placed them on the roads, while their heads remained at the gallows until the unbearable stench forced their removal.

Black and white relations were not always abrasive, however. In fact, Spaniards and members of other racial groups frequently resorted to African practitioners of sorcery and mantic arts for different purposes. Clients resorted to diviners and sorcerers to locate lost or stolen objects, secure the sexual favors of the opposite sex, and learn about the future. Using bones, feathers, and earth from graveyards and mountains, Afro-Mexican practitioners created talismans and amulets and offered their clients means to contact or control supernatural forces. By linking elements of African and religious traditions in rituals and devices, conjurers and healers paved the way for the creation of forms of folk Catholicism with strong African content. A similar process resulted from the tendency of indigenous healers and diviners to cater to the needs of their multiethnic clientele by mixing herbal remedies with Christian prayers and pre-Columbian rituals. Facing such an unorthodox religious landscape, the Spanish crown deemed it necessary to establish the Spanish Inquisition across the Atlantic.

The Inquisition

In January 1569, Philip II decreed the establishment of the Tribunal of the Inquisition, appointing Pedro Moya de Contreras as inquisitor of Mexico. In the early years of Spanish colonization, investigation of heresy was a duty of the bishops and, in their absence, of friars. Because of the scarcity of bishops, the pope also granted inquisitorial powers to missionaries in a 1522 bull known as *Omnimoda*. Jurisdiction reverted to the bishops upon their appointment in the colonies, but their powers were officially ended with the arrival of Pedro Moya as inquisitor. The Mexican Holy Office was entrusted with the impossible task of supervising a territory of nearly two million square kilometers, including Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, northern Panama, the Caribbean islands, and the Philippines. Permanently understaffed, riddled with financial difficulties and conflicts of all sorts, the Inquisition ended up concentrating on the major

towns. In fact, most of the colony's population was out of its jurisdiction, for jurisdiction over the natives had been reverted back to the bishops and their ecclesiastical judges or *provisores*.

The repressive activity of the Mexican tribunal followed the procedures and forms of punishment also in force in Spain. Every three years, on a Sunday in Lent or a feast day, inquisitors were expected to promulgate the Edict of Faith in an impressive ceremony to be held in cities that were the seat of a tribunal. The lengthy document contained a detailed description of Jewish and Muslim practices and asked the faithful to denounce within six days, under penalty of excommunication, anyone who practiced such rites or customs or was a follower of Mohammedanism, Protestantism, and Mystic Illuminism; or who had committed crimes such as blasphemy, witchcraft, bigamy, perjury, solicitation of women in confession, divination, astrology, or possession of heretical books. In the smaller towns, the commissioners (representatives of the Inquisition) were to read copies of this proclamation to the faithful, while confessors were instructed to refuse absolution to penitents who did not denounce offences to the Christian faith.

Upon receiving a denunciation, the Inquisition undertook a detailed investigation of the charges involved. A number of theologians determined whether the case warranted prosecution, and if the evidence gathered was deemed sufficient, an order of arrest was issued. Prisoners were allowed to have a lawyer, but this minor officer of the court could do no more than advise the culprits to confess and ask for mercy. After spending months (sometimes years) in prison, the culprits were sentenced. Although arbitrariness was very common, inquisitors tended to take into consideration the importance of the crime committed, the culprits' social standing, and the prisoners' willingness to repent. They thus condemned the offenders to abjure of their crimes *de levi* (for minor offenses) or *de vehementi* and to punishment that ranged from spiritual penances (such as reciting a number of Paternosters) to scourging, public disgrace by being paraded naked to the waist with insignia of their offences, forced labor in presidios and textile workshops, work as an oarsman in the king's galleys, and exile from certain cities. The ultimate punishment was death at the stake, a sentence carried out by state authorities on behalf of the Holy Office and normally reserved for unrepentant or relapsing heretics.

Many of these sentences were announced in an *auto da fé*, an elaborate ceremonial of punishment held either in private

or in public in which the culprits were paraded wearing penitential garments (*sambenitos*), cone-shaped hats (*corozas*), and gags. Both secular and religious authorities attended the *autos* held in public, which soon became a very popular way of edifying the faithful and promoting the tribunals' achievements. The early *autos da fé* featured English seamen charged with Lutheranism, but Crypto-Jewish immigrants would be increasingly targeted in the late sixteenth century. In 1649 Mexico celebrated an *auto da fé* in which all of the 109 penitents but one were Judaizers. This notwithstanding, punishment for heresy represented a very small percentage of the total offenses. The vast majority of the Inquisition's repressive activity involved crimes such as illuminism, blasphemy, heretical propositions, superstition and witchcraft (involving love magic, divination, or diabolism), and bigamy, all of which deserved a milder punishment.

With the advent of the Bourbon dynasty and its absolutist policies, there was a new royal drive to restrict the Inquisition's political privileges and even to reduce significantly its jurisdiction. In an effort to create a more efficient and productive society, the Bourbon reformers not only attacked old institutions such as the tribunal but also promoted an individual path to salvation through personal merit. This implied the abandonment of corporate Catholicism and its ritualistic, collective, and expensive forms of worship. While members of the elite embraced these repressive ideals and controlled forms of piety, plebeians continued to practice forms of religiosity that emphasized collective salvation and were markedly sensual, lavish, and occasionally heterodox. As the Holy Tribunal concentrated its energies of the last decades on the prosecution of liberals, Freemasons, and even insurgents, the prosecution of religious deviation and heterodoxy declined sharply in comparison to previous centuries. In these circumstances, popular Catholicism—an unorthodox mixture of multiple religious traditions, beliefs, and styles of worship—continued to thrive. Similarly, in spite of the Bourbons' best efforts, salvation would remain a collective, ritualistic, and lavish enterprise among the popular classes for many years to come.

See also *African Traditional Religions*; *Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence*; *Latino American Religion* entries; *Mexico* entries.

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Mexico: Independence to the Mexican Revolution

Religion in the Mexican nineteenth century presents a paradoxical picture: it was a century when irreligion, anti-clericalism, and the practice of faiths besides Catholicism all increased, but at the same time, it was a century of Catholic revival. It was a period during which the Catholic Church was politically marginalized and yet became more politically savvy, more adept at carving out space for itself in the modern world. Finally, it was a century during which the Church was moved by the faithful as much as the faithful were moved by the Church.

The Impact of Independence

Religion was an important factor in both popular and elite support for independence from Spain, and not just because the most visible leaders of the wars for independence in 1810—Father Miguel Hidalgo and Father José María Morelos—were priests. From the beginning, the popular insurgency identified itself with important Christian symbols, especially the Virgin of Guadalupe, the “Mexican” Virgin (because she had appeared to a poor Indian near

Mexico City in 1531), whose image was carried into battle against Spain. Later, insurgent leaders at the Congress of Chilpancingo (1813) unhesitatingly linked citizenship in the future nation with Catholicism. Although there were other ideological touchstones in insurgent rhetoric, a significant element was the framing of the insurrection as a defense of religion against the “impious” French and the Spanish liberals. This defense of religion blended with a defense of community, since in most Mexican villages religious practices were intertwined with local identity. But religion was deemed worthy of defense not only by subalterns. The power and potential of Catholicism as a force capable of unifying Mexicans across lines of class and ethnicity was underlined when a very different independence movement—the conservative, elite-oriented movement led by Agustín Iturbide in 1821—also put the protection of the Catholic faith and Church at the center of its promises to the nation. From the early days of the independence movement, then, the Church was seen, across a broad political spectrum, as a vital part of Mexico’s future as a nation.

But the long armed struggles for independence proved costly for the Church. In a narrow financial sense, the Church suffered significant losses of income with the collapse of agricultural production and land values in many parts of the country. People did not tithe when they did not produce, and often they did not pay interest on funds they had borrowed from the Church, either. These losses negatively affected not only the functioning of the Church’s quasi-banking operations, its charitable and welfare institutions, its courts, its seminaries, and its convents, but also basic parish institutions such as confraternities, the majority of which depended on rents, interest, and income from herds—all down steeply. The parishes’ ability to sponsor familiar and meaningful rituals was greatly reduced: funerary processions, fiestas with music and fireworks, organized events such as the Forty Hours devotion, and special masses all diminished in number and lavishness in the decades after 1810, while non-parish-related (and generally unsanctioned) practices like pilgrimages to shrines seem to have increased. There was community pressure on parish priests to lower sacramental fees, which some priests did, cementing the devotion of their poorer parishioners. Others did not, feeding antipriest sentiment that had perhaps always simmered below the surface of village and neighborhood life. Shrinking income and increased tensions between priests and parishioners transformed the priesthood into a less desirable career than it had been during the colonial period.

Another factor affecting the way Catholicism was experienced at both the parish and diocesan levels was the patronage issue. With independence, the Mexican government claimed the right of patronage, a right the Spanish crown had been granted by the papacy in the sixteenth century. But Rome resisted turning over this right to appoint new church personnel to the new nation. The impasse meant that new bishops could not be appointed; new priests could not be ordained; and the circulation of priests within the ecclesiastical bureaucracy, an important mechanism of upward mobility for talented priests and a time-tested way to fill parish vacancies quickly, ground to a halt. A great many parishes remained without priests for years, both because of the bottleneck in ordination and because of the diminished prestige of a clerical career. The number of priests declined from more than 4,200 in 1810 to 1,240 active priests in 1825; important positions within the cathedral chapters went unfilled; and by 1829, all ten bishoprics were vacant.

Church, State, and Laity in the 1830s and 1840s

In 1830, however, President Anastacio Bustamante renounced the right of patronage, allowing the appointment of bishops to proceed, and by the mid-1830s a majority of bishoprics were filled. Also by 1830, the Church had reached agreements with most of its debtors and its economic losses were largely halted, with some hope of an eventual return to past levels of tithe and interest income. Thus, while priests as individuals had been active in politics for two decades, and almost every writer and politician had weighed in on what the Church’s role in the new nation should be, the hierarchy was finally in a position to speak for the Church as an institution and to figure out how to survive in a new political world.

One strategy was to embrace a cooperative relationship with the state. Some leaders within the Church (for example, the bishop of Michoacán, Juan Cayetano Gómez de Portugal) were liberal constitutionalists who believed that strong constitutional guarantees were the best way to protect the Church. Increasingly, however, especially after the radically anticlerical laws proposed by President Valentín Gómez Farías (1833–1834)—which included secularizing education, ending government enforcement of the tithe, and making monastic vows voluntary—even liberal Catholics began to embrace intransigence as a political strategy. In other words, they would oppose any government that failed to defend ecclesiastical privilege. Meanwhile, prominent

priests began to articulate a discourse of providentialism, the idea that Mexico had, in the words of Brian Connaughton, “a divine calling” as a Catholic nation in a world of impiety. This discourse was the positive face of intransigence. If the Church had a providential mission, then it could never accept compromise with any government without going against the will of God. Though this was a message that could be construed as nationalist, since it was Mexico as a Catholic “nation” that clerics praised, the concept also lent itself to an antinationalist reading: if the Church had a mission from God, then it must listen to God alone, and the earthly authority on God’s will was the pope. The message, then, was intransigent, but it could also be read as ultramontane (recognizing the supremacy of the pope’s authority).

It is important to emphasize that this clerical discourse was aimed at the laity, primarily via the sermon. The Church was taking its case to the public. At the same time, it is also important to recognize that the laity were not passive receivers of clerical discourses (or anticlerical discourses, for that matter). In light of the continued scarcity of both priests and parish financial resources, the faithful—sometimes in concert with their priests, sometimes out ahead of them—began to develop new religious practices that were suited to the times. Women appear to have been key actors in this process. Numerically dominant in urban and small-town confraternities since the eighteenth century, women now took the lead in forming vibrant new devotional associations that did not depend on rents from property or loans. Many of these created sites of popular religiosity distinct from—and to a certain extent in replacement of—male-dominated public performances like processions. An early example was the *Vela Perpetua*, formed by a group of women in San Miguel de Allende in 1840 and devoted to organized vigils in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The *Vela*, which spread rapidly throughout the dioceses of Michoacán and Guadalajara, was notable for the fact that its constitutionally mandated female officers governed members of both sexes, an upending of the gender hierarchies usually enshrined in church organizations. Another early organization that linked women, charity, and the Church was the Conference of St. Vincent de Paul, which women joined in large numbers beginning in the late 1840s. These reshaped practices and associations invigorated religious enthusiasm at the parish level, even as the hierarchy focused on defending church institutions at the national level. The result of all this was something of a resurgence of the Church as a national force in the late 1830s, 1840s, and early

1850s—the result of a clearer political message, the success of the laity and priests in rebuilding parish organizations, and the substantial recovery of the Church’s economic position.

The Liberal Reform and the Church: Wars over Religion

The disastrous war with the United States (1846–1848) raised profound questions about the causes of Mexico’s political instability and its economic failures, and the answers to these agonized questions returned again and again to the proper role of the Church in the political and economic life of the nation. How could they not, given the Church’s importance as a lender, creditor, property owner, and self-proclaimed force for social stability and cultural unity? These roles had been debated before the war, of course. Opinions had ranged from the radically anti-Church position that church and state should be separated and that religious tolerance (that is, the decoupling of religion and citizenship) should be made law, to the radically pro-Church position that Catholicism must remain Mexico’s official religion and that the government must guarantee the Church’s rights and privileges. But most people had fallen somewhere in between. Relatively few liberals went so far as to advocate religious tolerance. There was also considerable ambivalence toward ultramontanism on the part of many conservatives. The war, however, had a polarizing effect on these ambivalences. Liberals castigated the Church for dragging its heels when it came to financial support of the war effort and fulminated that the Church was not only unpatriotic but an obstacle to modernization (political, cultural, economic). The Church defended itself by arguing vehemently that the nation was threatened not by Catholicism, but by any weakening of it.

These debates came to a head during the unpopular final dictatorship of Antonio López de Santa Anna (1853–1854), which was supported (albeit with some distaste) by the Church. In 1854, one of the more predictable rebellions in Mexican history sent Santa Anna into his final exile. What was not quite so predictable was what came next: a series of radical laws known as the laws of the Reform, which targeted the Church’s ownership of income-producing property, its ability to collect fees and tithes, and its special courts and privileges. In 1857, these intolerable laws, from the Church’s point of view, were followed by an equally repugnant new constitution, notable for its implied separation of church and state and its implied religious tolerance (implied

because the usual protections for the Church were conspicuously absent).

In 1858 a bitter civil war broke out over these anticlerical laws. This war between the “liberals,” the centerpiece of whose program was the disempowerment of the Church, and the “conservatives,” whose main goal was preservation of the Church’s power, lasted for three years. Peasants and indigenous peoples again went to war, many on the side of the conservatives, especially where the Church had historically been present and central to village life, and a smaller but not insignificant number on the side of the liberals, especially where the Church was a weak historical presence. In the middle of the war, in 1859, the liberal government went even further than it had before: it nationalized Church wealth (as opposed to merely forcing the Church to sell its property); it closed convents and monasteries; it abolished confraternities; it created a civil register to replace the Church’s control over who was legally married or legitimately born; and it established freedom of religious worship.

When the victorious liberal armies finally entered Mexico City in 1861, the battle was not yet over. Conservatives sought another way to overturn the liberal laws and the 1857 constitution, this time by bringing in a foreign monarch, Maximilian of Austria, to serve as emperor of Mexico. The period of the French Intervention, so called because Maximilian was supported by the French army, lasted five years before the French pulled out of Mexico in 1867, leaving an inadequate Mexican force to defend the emperor against the liberal army.

The wars of the Reform and French Intervention had lasted a decade. It is true that there were other issues at stake besides the role of the Church in Mexican society, especially after 1862, when the war against the conservatives morphed into a war against a foreign occupier, but arguably the fundamental issue throughout was the liberal view that a modern Mexico required an end to the Church’s public roles and influence. Church property did not circulate, and this blocked the creation of free markets, a requirement for a modern economy. Church capital was invested unproductively, and productive investment was another key to a modern economy. Church dominance of education prevented the creation of a free citizenry whose primary loyalty was to the nation. The priest had a moral influence, especially in the rural areas, that squelched independent thought, another requirement of a free and modern nation. Finally, clerical culture tolerated backward and antimodern (time-wasting, money-wasting, superstition-laden, wishful-thinking) practices

like fiestas, cargo systems, pilgrimages, processions, apparitions, and miracle cures. Liberals were not necessarily irreligious, but those who were believers wanted religion to be dignified, restrained, individual, and private. Many liberals embraced the Catholic concepts of good works and humility but vigorously condemned the other “trappings” of popular Catholicism. In short, the wars were in large part about the Church.

The Church Marginalized

The liberal victory did not mean the defeat of the Church, but it did mean that the Church took the struggle to remain politically, socially, and culturally relevant out of the direct line of liberal fire. The first focus was internal reforms: improved training of priests, achieved by increasing the number of seminaries and by sending especially promising young priests to Rome to the Colegio Pio Latinoamericano, established in 1858 to train Latin American priests; and a strengthened administrative structure, achieved by creating smaller and more tightly controlled bishoprics and smaller and more efficient parishes. These reforms allowed the Church to begin rebuilding its base among the laity during a period when more aggressive, public moves would not have been tolerated.

Indeed, official and popular anticlericalism was still alive and well into the 1870s. The gentle portrait of a humble country priest in the great liberal Ignacio Altamirano’s story *Christmas in the Mountains* (1871) can be read as evidence of liberal affection for a certain kind of primitive Christianity, but the priest in this story, by refusing to accept fees for his services and working for his living as a farmer, stood as an indictment of priestly rapaciousness, an anticlerical message liberals had been sending for years. In the villages and barrios, popular participation on the side of the liberals had provided a language of anticlericalism that associated priests with greed and sexual perversion and the Church with selling out the nation, first to the Americans, and then to the French. In the legislative sphere, liberal anticlericalism peaked in 1874, when President Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada elevated the laws of the Reform to constitutional status; shut down the Sisters of Charity, who, as an active order with a socially useful role (they worked in the Mexico City asylums), had been exempted from the earlier ex-claustration; made it illegal for religious insignia or clothing to be worn outside of churches; and re-expelled the Jesuits.

The establishment of religious tolerance and the liberal military victory had also led to an increase in the number of Protestant missionaries and churches in the 1870s, welcomed by many liberals. Spiritualism, what Terry Rugeley calls “a form of Protestantism in a society not ready or willing to be Protestant,” also spread. It is tempting to see the advance of Protestantism and spiritualism, as well as the rise of widely followed—seemingly more widely than in the prenewspaper, prerailroad past—emotionally powerful popular religious movements around visionaries (such as those studied by Edward Wright-Rios in Oaxaca), and local saints such as Santa Teresa de Cabora in Chihuahua (memorably drawn by historian Paul Vanderwood and novelist Luis Alberto Urrea), as emblematic of the Church’s loss of control over popular belief.

The Church Empowered: Reconciliation with the State and Lay Activism during the Díaz Dictatorship

But while noteworthy, these ongoing challenges to the established Church are not the whole story. In both the political arena and the arena of popular devotion, the fortunes of the Church changed with the rise of Porfirio Díaz, who took over the presidency of Mexico in 1876 and ruled thirty-five years. Díaz was a Freemason and not a religious man, but he recognized that the Church retained considerable loyalty among the populace. Díaz’s first priority was social order, and if the Church’s claim that it promoted order was untested, it was certainly clear from the history of the previous decades that challenges to the Church could produce disorder. And so Díaz made a virtue of necessity by reconciling with the Church. He cultivated good relations with many of the bishops (who also cultivated him), and he went out of the way to make it known that the anticlerical laws on the books would be enforced only in the case of blatant disobedience.

The most striking symbol of the policy of reconciliation was the 1895 coronation of the Virgin of Guadalupe in her basilica in Mexico City. The coronation, long planned and elaborate, involved pilgrimages by train to Mexico City from across the republic, as well as visits from foreign bishops and other dignitaries. The government not only tolerated the disruptions caused by this event but worked with the Church to make it happen smoothly. The concept of the modern pilgrimage by rail was much emulated throughout the country; in the archbishopric of Michoacán, for example, the entire month of June was devoted annually to

organized pilgrimages to the capital city of Morelia to honor the Sacred Heart of Jesus, with different schools, organizations, and parishes from all over the archbishopric assigned a day in which to process through the city. Thus, instead of trying to reform or disempower the Church, as earlier generations of liberals had done, the Díaz government left it alone, even when, as with the coronation, it carried out its activities in exceedingly public terms.

The Church slowly reentered the public sphere in other ways that were more subtle than the coronation and the pilgrimages but more significant, perhaps, for being more in tune with the cultural and political emphasis on Mexico’s attempt to become more modern. Bishops and archbishops like Eugenio Gillow of Oaxaca began to position the Church to shape Catholic modernity rather than to rail against the modern world. Gillow and others worked closely with Díaz to promote the social stability that was at the heart of Díaz’s plans for Mexico but also at the heart of the Church’s resurgence. One of the key moments in the rebuilding of Church power (and a key moment in the government’s policy of reconciliation) was its reacquisition of property and lending power, which it accomplished by pressuring purchasers of Church properties earlier in the century to return them to the Church and by accepting/soliciting donations (carefully made to individual priests, not to the Church as a corporate body).

The Church also moved vigorously back into another “forbidden” arena: education. In addition to the new seminaries mentioned above, there were a number of normal schools established to train women teachers of girls and young boys. Bishops exhorted priests to establish parochial schools, in language that suggested the Church saw itself in active competition with the municipal schools. (At the local level, however, the principle of reconciliation sometimes rendered the competition between the parochial school and the municipal school a friendly one. Schoolteachers in the municipal schools often invited the priest to come into their classrooms to carry out religious instruction, and priests defended the schoolteachers against the bishops’ blanket criticisms.) The laity were deeply involved in promoting these efforts: *campesinos* demanded that their priest found parochial schools; women clamored for the opportunity and the training to become teachers in these schools. Linked to the renewed emphasis on Catholic education, the Church cautiously allowed old convents to reconstitute themselves (though not in their highly visible convent buildings, which in any event had mainly been repurposed by now) and new

religious orders of women to be founded, as the energies of a rapidly increasing number of Mexican nuns were focused on the educational mission.

Another cooperative venture between the active laity and the Church was the formation of pious associations, the new name for lay groups that replaced the banned confraternities in organizing community religious life. The purely devotional associations still thrived (the Vela Perpetua, for example, was nearly ubiquitous in Mexican parishes by 1910), but other kinds of new associations were more “modern,” in the sense that they more explicitly promoted some sort of social or political end. Some were dedicated to religious education and inculcation of Catholic values (for example, the Sociedad Católica and the Hijas de María), others to charity (the Damas Católicas and many others), and still others to the apostolic mission in defense of Catholicism worldwide (for example, the Apostolado de la Oración). Many of these new lay associations dwarfed the old confraternities in membership and ambition; some boasted memberships into the several thousands, even in small towns. These associations were joined by both women and men, but there is little doubt that women continued to dominate numerically, as they did in the organized pilgrimages, where it was not unusual to see 80 to 90 percent of the seats on pilgrim trains sold to women.

One area where the male laity were deeply involved was in the burgeoning Catholic press. This press was not always tightly controlled and sometimes went beyond what the hierarchy was comfortable with (publicizing Church events, lamenting the persecution of Catholics in France—a common theme—and promoting Catholic values and morals), getting involved in political discussions and criticism of the president that the hierarchy generally tried to avoid. Several lay associations were formed with the explicit purpose of raising funds to support the Catholic press—the power of the press was well recognized by the Church and by the middle-class Catholics who were the primary consumers of these newspapers and magazines. We have seen that many of the Church’s strategies for surviving in the aftermath of the liberal reforms involved shedding the label of “antimodern,” which the liberals had used to defeat it, and no strategy was more “modern” than the use of the Catholic press.

The concept of an active laity working in concert with an activist priesthood was taken to yet another level of seriousness after the turn of the twentieth century, when the Church began to put into effect a program of social action, following the dictums of *Rerum Novarum*, the papal call for

“social Catholicism.” Four church councils beginning in 1903 and five “Social Weeks” (*semanas sociales*) brought together clerics and lay leaders to discuss ways to make Catholicism more relevant in peoples’ daily lives. Social Catholicism in Porfirian Mexico revolved around a number of new institutions: Catholic night schools; Catholic vocational schools; Catholic sports teams and recreation centers; Catholic women’s groups, mothers’ groups, fathers’ groups, youth groups, and family groups; and Catholic worker organizations that were part mutual help society, part social club, and part union.

In sum, the Church during the Díaz dictatorship understood the importance of popular mobilization in the modern world well before the Mexican state did. While the Church certainly did not welcome the separation of church and state, during the Porfiriato it turned its own disestablishment into a way to strengthen its base and its organization. Freedom of religion and relative freedom of the press meant that the laity could practice religion without fear of the state’s interference, especially when the particular government that constituted the state was as tolerant as the Díaz government was. Protestantism, spiritualism, and popular Catholic movements that were unsanctioned by the Church were the beneficiaries, but so was the institutional Church, which adapted to a modern world in which it had to compete for the allegiance of the faithful and in which it had to allow the faithful to play a major role in how the Church functioned in their lives. The success of these adaptations may have given rise to the new wave of anticlericalism that accompanied the Mexican Revolution, but they may also have been what allowed the Church to survive these new storms.

See also *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Latino American Religion* entries; *Mexico* entries.

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Mexico: Indigenous Religions

Indigenous religions in precolonial Mexico were extremely diverse, and this diversity continued to evolve after Spanish contact. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify several common religious features throughout the region. In particular, the major civilizations of Mesoamerica—the sociocultural region extending from the central Mexican highlands, in the north, to Central America in the south—left a profound mark upon the religious landscape of the country as a whole. Beginning with the Olmec culture and continuing through the Maya and Aztec civilizations, Mesoamerica was characterized by the presence of large ceremonial centers that fused religion with political power. By constructing sacred pyramids and marking the movements of the heavenly bodies through a complex calendar system, ancient Mesoamericans sought to align themselves with the cosmos and to engage the gods in the proper relations of reciprocity that would ensure continued life on earth. Trade and pilgrimage facilitated significant cross-cultural interaction, and several important deities—such as the rain god, Tlaloc, and the feathered serpent deity, Quetzalcóatl—appear in diverse cultures, albeit by different names. The arrival of Europeans initiated a centuries-long process of religious change, as indigenous Mexicans alternately rejected, embraced, and selectively adapted aspects of Christianity to their own needs.

Historical Overview

The Olmecs

The earliest archaeological evidence of large sacred structures in Mesoamerica comes from the Olmec culture, which rose to prominence between about 1200 and 400 BCE. Perhaps the best known of these Olmec structures are the

stone carvings of enormous human heads. Up to ten feet tall and weighing twenty tons, these statues likely represented the faces of rulers, indicating the practice of divine kingship. The Olmec settlement of San Lorenzo, located in the south-east of the present-day state of Veracruz and once home to about 1,000 people, contained pyramids and rectangular courts and was arranged on a north-south axis, in line with the movements of the heavenly bodies. The nearby settlement of La Venta contained a ceremonial center with plazas, stone altars, and rows of columns, tombs, and sacred mounds. Built to align with the four directions, these mounds were quite likely precursors to the stone pyramids that would become a central feature of Mesoamerican religious architecture.

The archaeological evidence suggests that the Olmecs worshiped a jaguar god, as well as a feathered serpent deity and a rain god, both of which would remain prominent figures in the Mesoamerican religious landscape. The first traces of a calendar and a writing system were found among Olmec settlements, and Olmec practices of autosacrifice, through which humans drew blood offerings from their own bodies, lay the foundations for later human sacrifice.

Teotihuacán

Cities arose in Mesoamerica between 300 BCE and 250 CE. In addition to serving as nuclei of trade and intercultural contact, they also served as pilgrimage centers. The city of Teotihuacán, today a world-renowned archaeological site, reached a population of more than 100,000 people at its height from 300 to 500 CE. Located about twenty-five miles northeast of present-day Mexico City, Teotihuacán was a cosmopolitan center with a culturally diverse population. The city was founded upon a traditional sacred site and was part of a vast trade network that extended to areas as far as the Guatemalan highlands.

Teotihuacán is famous for an extensive temple complex, which includes the 216-foot Pyramid of the Sun and the 140-foot Pyramid of the Moon. This temple complex was built to correspond with a naturally occurring system of caves and tunnels, which were enlarged to produce underground ritual chambers. Residents of Teotihuacán worshiped the rain god, Tlaloc, and his counterpart, Chalchiuhtlicue, or “she of the jade skirt,” the goddess of lakes, rivers, and other earthly waters. The city’s residents also revered Xiuhtecuhtli, Lord of Fire, and the feathered serpent deity, Quetzalcóatl. With its vast architectural and cultural achievements, Teotihuacán served as an inspiration

for the Aztecs, who in fact gave it the name Teotihuacán, or “birthplace of the gods.”

The Maya

With roots in Olmec culture, the next major appearance upon the Mesoamerican scene was the Mayan civilization. The Maya rose to prominence between 600 and 900 CE. For more than a dozen centuries, the area covered by the present-day Mexican states of Chiapas, Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo, as well as present-day Guatemala, Belize, and parts of Honduras, was home to a network of Maya kingdoms linked by trade, military alliance, and kinship.

In the Maya cosmos, mountains and caves served as portals to other realms, and temples served as a point of contact between human beings, ancestors, and the divine. The Maya practiced ancestor veneration and elevated deceased rulers as the ancestors of the royal line. The archaeological record suggests that Mayan settlements—with their temples, tombs, palaces, and ball courts—were centers of power that used theatrical pageantry to exercise control over surrounding peoples.

The Maya placed considerable emphasis on the cyclical nature of time, seeking to understand the past to divine the future. This central concern with time and divination drove the Maya to develop calendrical and astronomical systems that rivaled those of their European contemporaries, a mathematical system that included the notion of zero. The Maya also developed an elaborate system of hieroglyphic writing, many examples of which were destroyed during the early colonial period.

The Toltecs

By 900 CE overpopulation and natural resource collapse led the Maya civilization to decline. Shortly afterward, the Toltec civilization, centering around the city of Tula or Tollán, rose to prominence. Located about fifty miles north of Mexico City, the city reached a population of 60,000 at its height between 950 and 1150 CE. Although the origin and identity of Tollán’s residents are under debate, what is known is that the city’s people developed a special devotion to Quetzalcóatl, engaged in heightened military activity, increased the practice of human sacrifice, and were part of a religious and cultural cross-fertilization that influenced postclassic Mayan cities such as Chichén Itzá and Mayapán.

History and myth are closely intertwined in the available sources on the Toltec empire. The present-day archaeological site of Tollán contains a temple pyramid in honor of the god

Quetzalcóatl. The existence of this feathered serpent deity can be traced back to Teotihuacán, but Quetzalcóatl was also the name of a legendary Toltec ruler and priest, Tolpiltzin Quetzalcóatl, who led his people into a golden age of military and cultural achievement. Massive stone warrior figures at Tollán are evidence of the Toltecs’ heightened military activity, and reclining stone Chac Mool figures, holding bowls or trays to receive human hearts, are evidence of the practice of human sacrifice. Legend holds that Tollán was undone by the god Tezcatlipoca, or “Smoking Mirror,” who forced the ruler Quetzalcóatl to flee the city. In fact, invaders from the north—including the Mexica, who would eventually forge the Aztec empire—are responsible for the fall of Tollán in the middle of the twelfth century CE.

The Aztecs

As the last dominant civilization in Mexico before the arrival of Europeans, the Aztec empire reached, at its height, an area of 80,000 square miles. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries various Chichimec tribes migrated to the Valley of Mexico, gradually displacing the Toltecs. Among these were the Mexica, who established the city of Tenochtitlán in the middle of Lake Texcoco in 1325. The Mexica later joined with the residents of nearby Tlalcoapan and Texcoco to forge a “Triple Alliance” that came, ultimately, to rule a population of up to 6 million. For purposes of clarity, the term “Aztec” will be used here to refer to the Mexica and other Náhuatl-speaking members of this empire.

Aztec religion was both deeply syncretic and deeply intertwined with warfare. The Aztecs drew upon the sacred symbols of past civilizations, striving to establish authority by taking the gods of others as their own. They adopted the Mayan cosmos with its thirteen heavens and nine underworlds, claimed direct descent from Toltec nobles, and embraced the god Quetzalcóatl.

If the Aztecs sought to establish their authority by incorporating the gods of previous civilizations, they also did so by elevating their own patron deity, the war god Huitzilpochtli, to universal status. Another important deity in the Aztec pantheon was the sun god Tonantíuh. As the “People of the Sun,” the Aztecs understood themselves as compelled to provide the sun with sacrificial victims. This sacrificial logic found symbolic expression in the story of Tenochtitlán’s founding. Legend held that the city’s location was divinely revealed through a vision of an eagle resting upon a prickly pear cactus. In Aztec thought the eagle is associated with the sun, and the bright red cactus fruit represents the

human heart. Aztec religion was thus deeply tied to warfare, as the need for sacrificial victims provided a legitimation for expansion. Nevertheless, there is evidence of a separate movement within Aztec religion that had begun to question and resist warfare by the time of European contact.

General Features of Mesoamerican Religions

Precolonial Mexicans did not separate the universe into sacred and profane realms; rather, they saw the earth as a living entity infused with religious significance. Caves, mountains, and bodies of water connected people with the gods and ancestors, and Mesoamericans expanded upon these natural features by building temple pyramids and underground ritual chambers that provided portals of communication with the divine. Mesoamericans revered a wide range of earth-based deities whose dual-gendered nature and relationship to humanity present a challenge to European categories. The gods were enmeshed with human beings in mutually dependent relationships of sacrifice and nourishment, and at times even entered into the bodies of rulers through a tradition of divine kingship.

Mesoamerican religious thought challenges European understandings not only of the divine but also of human nature. The Mesoamerican person was not divided into categories of “body” and “soul,” but instead consisted of multiple vital forces that extended into the natural world. The religious task was not to achieve salvation, but to strive for balance in the world, in part by understanding one’s destiny. Mesoamerican religions placed great emphasis on time as people sought, through careful astronomical and calendrical calculations, to divine the course of future events. Because they understood the present as but one within a vast, cataclysmic cycle of world ages, they did their best to keep the universe in motion by providing the gods with proper nourishment and support. As cities developed throughout Mesoamerica, they served as ceremonial centers, and religion became a principal means through which empires established authority and exercised control over peripheral populations.

The Earth

Mesoamericans understood the earth as a living being. As early as the Olmec culture, the earth was understood as an alligator-like creature resting upon the ocean. Centuries later, the Aztecs conceived of the earth as a giant male-female alligator with snapping jaws. The sky was an inverted bowl with its edges resting upon the sea, and the ridges of the primal monster’s back formed the valleys and mountains

of the world. The many-layered cosmos contained thirteen heavens and nine underworlds, but these layers were not directly charged with moral significance like the Christian heaven and hell. Rather, precolonial Mexicans placed great emphasis on the four directions. The Aztecs understood their city of Tenochtitlán as located at the center of the world’s four quadrants, and Mayan gods were frequently associated with the four directions.

If the earth was a living being, then caves were its wombs, and earthquakes its uterine contractions. The dual-gendered Aztec earth deities were often portrayed as squatting figures, sometimes in the midst of birth. Gazing upward through grinning masks, their faces represented the face of the earth turned toward the sky. The father-mothers of humanity, these deities donned skirts of skulls and cross-bones, for they also devoured the living through the inevitable processes of death and decay. Other earth-related deities included the Aztec maize deities Xilonen, Chicomecoatl, and Cinteotl, and the god of rain, Tlaloc. Known by the Maya as Chaak, this rain deity was one of the most widespread in precolonial Mexico and appears, with his characteristic goggle-eyed mask, in sites as early as Teotihuacán.

Mesoamerican ritual activities centered heavily on the cycles of the natural world, as humans sought to induce the rain and agricultural fertility necessary for survival. Mountaintops, caves, and bodies of water served as sites of communication with ancestors and the divine, and ritual structures acted as an extension of the sacred landscape. For the Aztecs, mountain temples were the “wombs” through which ruler-priests symbolically fertilized the earth; for the Maya, hills were the dwelling-places of the ancestors, and caves the entrance to the underworld, Xibalba.

The Gods

There is no direct English translation for the precolonial Mexican notion of the divine. Mesoamerican gods were complex beings, often containing both male and female characteristics. At times, they entered into the bodies of human beings, giving rise to a widespread tradition of sacred kingship. The Náhuatl word “teotl,” used for the type of beings that Europeans would classify as gods, also encompassed ceremonial items, water, lightening, and the sun. Among the Maya, ancestors, deceased rulers, and even numbers could be classified as gods, and they also recognized a class of beings that resembled animals but had human and divine attributes. The term *other-than-human persons* may offer a more accurate translation for these beings than the

European notion of “god” or “spirit.” For precolonial Mexicans, the world was inhabited by many types of persons, which included but were not limited to humans.

Mesoamerican deities frequently existed as male–female pairs or divine twins. The feminine counterpart to Quetzalcóatl was Cihuacóatl, or “serpent woman,” and the feminine counterpart to Tlaloc was Chalchiuhtlicue, or “she of the jade skirt.” Rather than distinct entities, however, it is quite likely that these divine pairs were understood as separate expressions of a common essence. The Aztec supreme creator god, Ometeotl, was literally the “double god.” At once male and female, Ometeotl was revered as the father–mother of human beings. Although a single being, Ometeotl contained within his and her person the Lord and Lady of Duality, Ometecutli and Omecihuatl. The Maya, similarly, referred to certain gods as father–mother, and Mayan philosophy suggests that numbers, time, and the counting of time derived from the original conceptual divide between male and female.

Humans

The Mesoamerican self was not clearly divided into a material body and an immaterial soul. Mesoamericans instead understood humans as animated by multiple vital sources that extended into the outside world. A common notion was that each human being had a supernatural counterpart, or *nahual*, residing within the body of an animal. Certain powerful people, it was believed, could transform themselves into a *nahual* for malevolent purposes. Aztecs and other Náhuatl speakers also understood the self to contain three vital forces. The *tonalli* represented the individual’s destiny. Located in the head, this force served to connect the individual to his or her divine source. Also translated as “day sign,” a person’s *tonalli* linked her to other entities, both human and nonhuman, that shared the same sign. The *tonalli* could leave the body and travel through dreams at night; it could also escape the body through a process that is still recognized as “soul loss” within Mexican popular religion today. Seated in the heart, the *teyolia* was associated intelligence, knowledge, reason, and memory. Unlike the *tonalli*, the *teyolia* could not leave the body except in death. Finally, a person’s *ihiyotl*, seated in the liver, represented breath. Associated with envy and harmful emanations, the *ihiyotl* was the life force most associated with witchcraft and shamanistic healing.

Mesoamerican shamanism and healing were grounded in the understanding that a person’s vital forces extended beyond the individual body and corresponded to features of

the cosmos. A person’s *tonalli* corresponded with the heavens, the *teyolia* with the earth’s vital center, and the *ihiyotl* with the underworld. The body was permeable to the actions or intentions of other beings, both human and nonhuman. Among the many types of healers in precolonial Mexico, some specialized in herbal knowledge. Other specialists were shamans capable of entering into trance, often with the aid of psychoactive substances, in order to identify and deflect the malevolent forces acting upon the sick person.

If there was no direct equivalent within Mesoamerican thought to the Western categories of “body” and “soul,” neither was there a direct equivalent to the Christian notion of the afterlife. Because the self was understood to consist of multiple vital sources, some of which a person shared with other beings, the Christian system of rewards and punishments based on individual moral behavior would have held little meaning. Rather, among the Aztecs, the circumstances of death determined to which realm the deceased traveled. Women who died in childbirth, for example, became Cihuateteo, goddesses who accompanied the sun on its journey across the sky. Among the Maya, immortality was understood as a collective enterprise, achieved through the continuation of family lines. This collective, kin-based immortality was often represented by the sacred ceiba tree, a cosmic tree whose roots reached into the underworld and whose branches reached into heaven. The religious task facing the individual was not to strive for salvation, but to be aware of one’s own destiny and to strive for harmony in the present life. Mesoamericans had a strong sense of collective responsibility and practiced intense self-discipline to protect themselves and others from harmful forces. Indeed, it was believed that individuals alone could bring about cosmic catastrophe through improper behavior. Sacred texts describe the task of maintaining balance through the metaphor of walking along a narrow ridge, with chaotic depths on either side.

Time

Given their concern with destiny, Mesoamericans placed tremendous importance on the understanding and measurement of time. The Aztecs and Maya alike understood the present age as but one within a cycle of world ages, each of which had ended cataclysmically. People strove to act properly in the present by understanding the past and keeping track of the days, each of which had special religious significance. As the vital source known as the *tonalli* was, quite literally, a person’s destiny, Aztecs consulted the *tonal-amatl*, or books of destiny, to ascertain the proper time and place

for action. They also strove to understand destiny by consulting a complex ritual calendar. With roots in Olmec culture, the Mesoamerican calendar was based on both a 260-day cycle and a 365-day solar cycle. For the Aztecs, the 260-day cycle, or *tonalpohualli*, functioned as an almanac, and the solar cycle, or *xiuhpohualli*, was used to calculate seasonal festivals. For the Aztecs and Maya alike, these two calendrical cycles aligned every fifty-two years. The alignment was marked by special ritual activity, including the Aztec new fire ceremony, described in more detail below.

Sacrifice and the Divine-Human Relationship

Mesoamerican creation accounts describe a deep-seated interdependence between gods and human beings. The gods, as creators, were the mother-fathers of humanity, but humans were also the mother-fathers of the gods, for they provided the deities with the prayers and sacrifices necessary for their continued strength and survival. The Quiché Mayan creation account known as the *Popol Vuh* offers insight onto this human-divine relationship. At the start of creation, the gods of sea and sky created the earth, filled it with plant life, and forged the heavenly bodies. But creation was not yet complete. The deities strove to bring into existence a class of intelligent, speaking beings who would serve them through prayer and sacrifice, and who would mark the passage of time. The first attempt failed, and the beings became today's animals. The gods tried making humans out of mud and then of wood, but these attempts failed yet again. Finally, the gods fashioned human bodies from corn dough, using water for blood. These beings, at last, could speak, pray, and count the days.

As this creation account makes clear, the gods of pre-colonial Mexico needed humans as much as humans needed gods. Humanity upheld its end of the relationship through prayer and offerings. Yet humans and gods were also related at an even more profound level, for they were understood to exist in a dynamic, cyclical relationship of nourishment and consumption. The *Popol Vuh* tells that humans are made of corn, a divine substance. As humans consume corn and thus receive nourishment from the gods, they in turn feed the gods by offering the blood of their own bodies in sacrificial and autosacrificial rites. People knew that as beings who lived by eating, they too must at some time be consumed. Although the Maya did not engage in human sacrifice to nearly the same degree as the Aztecs, they did practice animal sacrifice and ritual bloodletting. Men pierced the skin of their genitals, and women pierced the

skin of their cheeks and tongues to induce visions that facilitated contact with the ancestors.

Sacrifice was central not only to human-divine relationships in Mesoamerica but also to the movement of the heavenly bodies and therefore to life itself. Like the *Popol Vuh*, the Aztec creation account suggests that creation is an active, ongoing process subject to imperfection and failure. The present era or "sun" is but the fifth in a series of previous eras, each of which has ended in violent destruction. At the start of the fifth era, the gods assembled before a giant fire, knowing that one among them must throw himself into the flames in order to create the sun. Tecuciztecatl, originally chosen for the task, backed away in fear. It was finally the poor Nanauatzin, his body covered in sores and scabs, who succeeded. Nanauatzin became the sun, and Tecuciztecatl, who followed, became the moon. Yet creation was not yet complete. To put the sun and moon into motion and make possible life on earth, the remaining gods cast themselves into the flames. Finally, to bring human beings into existence, Quetzalcóatl descended into the underworld to retrieve the bones of people from past eras, and sprinkled them with his own blood.

Central to the Aztec creation account is the notion that all good things come through sacrifice. The Náhuatl word for human beings, *macehualtin*, literally means "those who are worthy." The gods performed penitence and sacrifice to be worthy of humans' existence, and humans, in turn, provided sacrifice to deserve land, sustenance, and military success. Perhaps the most striking sacrificial rite of the Aztec ceremonial cycle was the new fire ceremony, held at the end of the fifty-two-year solar cycle. At this time the sun must be regenerated, lest it should die and the world come to ruin. In mid-December, all fires in Tenochtitlán and the surrounding valley were extinguished. People held fasts and kept silent, in a ritual death that anticipated the sun's rebirth. So dangerous was this time that pregnant women were shut inside granaries, and children's faces covered by blue masks for protection. As darkness fell, fire-priests proceeded to a temple platform on a hill in sight of the entire valley. The multitudes watched from their rooftops as the priest kindled a fire on the chest of a sacrificial victim. Torch-bearing runners then carried the flames of the new sacred fire to the temple-hearths of the towns and cities throughout the valley. Finally, the new sun would rise, demonstrating to all that it had indeed been nourished with new life. Those watching from their rooftops contributed to the sacrifice by piercing the skin of their earlobes to make small blood offerings.

Religion, Empires, and Power

Although Mesoamericans and their gods depended on one another for their survival, this relationship was not a simple, straightforward exchange between the divine, on the one hand, and universal humanity, on the other. Rather, particular groups of people shared special relationships of loyalty and patronage with particular gods. The *Popol Vuh* tells that the first four Quiché humans sought sacrificial victims among other tribes. When these tribes pleaded for mercy, the Quiché people agreed to accept tribute as a substitute for sacrifice. The gods' appetite for flesh and tribute payments served to justify the Quiché people's domination over others.

The Aztecs also used religion in their efforts to gain control over neighboring populations. By identifying their own patron deity, Huitzilpochtli, with the power of the sun, the Aztecs implied that to resist their authority was to resist the order of the cosmos itself. The thousands of human sacrifices carried out at the Great Pyramid of Tenochtitlán served not only to feed and strengthen the gods but also to demonstrate the extent of Aztec power to peripheral groups.

Mesoamerican cities were simultaneously imperial bases and ceremonial centers, and their rulers played overlapping roles as kings, shamans, and priests. Rulers stood at the axis of the earth, the heavens, and the underworld, and at times even embodied the gods through the tradition of divine kingship. Because the body, in Mesoamerican thought, was highly permeable to spiritual forces, gods were deemed capable of entering into leaders' bodies, rendering them simultaneously human and divine. Many important rulers within central Mexico were "man-gods" of this sort. Among the Maya, rulers were also central to the practice of ancestor worship, for deceased kings were the ancestors of the royal line and therefore, in effect, the ancestors of the people as a whole. Mayan kings also had a shamanic function, for they could transcend time and space to communicate with the gods and predict the future, often through the practice of royal bloodletting. Rulers' blood was understood to be a sacred essence; by burning paper that had been soaked in that essence, the Maya produced visions that facilitated communication with other realms.

Religious Developments after the Conquest

Hernán Cortés (1485–1547) entered the Valley of Mexico in 1519, and two years later the Aztec empire fell to Spanish control. As the invaders spread throughout central Mexico

and beyond, they were met with gifts and lavish entertainment by residents eager to secure the newcomers' good graces. The Spaniards responded with blatant violence that grossly disregarded Mesoamerican diplomatic norms. Like the Aztecs before them, the Spaniards used religion as a means to exercise totalizing control. Rather than appropriating old gods within the general framework of Mesoamerican religious logic, however, the newcomers smashed Mesoamerican "idols," replaced them with a god from across the ocean, and introduced a notion of the soul that was dramatically foreign to Mesoamerican thought. A complex and multifaceted process of religious change ensued, as the indigenous population of Mexico—or New Spain, as it was then called—responded not only to forced Christianization, but also to massive violence, disease, and enslavement at the hands of Europeans.

The encounter between European Catholicism and indigenous Mexican religions was an encounter between two diverse and dynamic forms of religiosity, complicated by the interests and needs of particular individuals and factions. As the conquistadors sought gold and slaves, they frequently used religion as a means of deceit. One Spanish expedition leader, for example, captured people's "idols" and held them as ransom for slaves. Some religious leaders were complicit in the violence and oppression inflicted on the people of Mexico, but others resisted. A famous voice of protest is that of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas (1484–1566), a Dominican priest whose *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1542) offers an eye-witness account and condemnation of the genocide and torture inflicted on indigenous Mexicans. Another crucial voice is that of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (1499 or 1500–1590), a Franciscan priest who, with the help of Aztec informants, compiled an account of Aztec life and culture that describes religious practices in tremendous detail. Although the motive of these works was, ultimately, to facilitate Christianization, the depth of detail also demonstrates a genuine respect for the complexity and sophistication of indigenous religious practices.

At the time of the conquest of Mexico the Aztecs were not the only players on the scene. The Tarascans, located in the present-day states of Guerrero and Michoacán, had long resisted Aztec domination and willingly allied themselves with the Spaniards. Other prominent populations at the time of the conquest included the Huastecs in the highlands northeast of the Valley of Mexico, the Totonacs in the present-day state of Veracruz, and the Mixtec and Zapotec cultures of present-day Oaxaca. Although the height of their

empire was long past, the Maya remained a significant presence in the south. Northern Mexico, outside of the region generally identified as Mesoamerica, was home to multiple populations including the Huichol, the Cora, and the Tarahumara. Religious responses to Christianization within this diverse human landscape ranged from withdrawal, to selective accommodation, to violent resistance.

Christianity and Religious Change

Although the majority of the archaeological evidence about religion in precolonial Mexico comes to us from large ceremonial centers, most people at the time of the conquest lived in small, agricultural villages. Religions were collective affairs centered on local deities, and song, dance, and public festivals played a central role. To the extent that indigenous people did convert to Christianity, they did so largely through the logic of these ritual forms and largely in answer to the needs of a village-based agricultural lifestyle. A process of selective adaptation ensued, by which indigenous people drew upon Christianity in ways that resonated with their own cosmologies. Rather than depicting the body of Jesus upon the cross, for example, native artisans trained by European friars often embedded the face of Jesus directly in the middle of the cross, implying that his body was part of the sacred World Tree.

One widespread indigenous adaptation to Christianity was devotion to Catholic patron saints. Among Náhuatl-speakers, towns and villages tended to center around the relics of mythical hero-founders, who connected people to the powers of the universe and protected the town. As the Spaniards built churches over the destroyed remains of temples, Catholic patron saints replaced these indigenous hero-founders as the new community protectors. For people deeply dependent on agricultural fertility and rainfall, these patron saints served, and continue to serve, a crucial role as mediators in matters of pragmatic concern. This process of religious change eventually gave rise to popular Catholicism, a primarily agrarian-based form of religiosity that emphasizes the festival cycle, devotion to the saints, and practices of curing that are often deemed “magical” by the official religious establishment.

Perhaps the best-known indigenous response to Christianity within Mexico is devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe. Legend holds that the Virgin appeared to a man named Juan Diego in 1531. Her skin was dark, and she spoke to him in his native Náhuatl. This “dark virgin” provided a crucial bridge to Catholicism that facilitated the conversion of

thousands of indigenous Mexicans. Although the actual origins of devotion to the Virgin are more complex, for centuries she has remained a central figure in the religious lives of indigenous Mexicans and Mexican Catholics as a whole. Náhuatl speakers often refer to the Virgin with the Náhuatl term *Tonantzin*, or “our revered mother.” For some, the Virgin may well have served as a veneer under which indigenous people continued to carry out devotion to earth-based mother goddesses. Others, although not looking to her as an indigenous goddess per se, may still have come to her with the needs and concerns that were intrinsic to Mesoamerican religiosity.

Resistance and Rebellion

Although Christianization occurred within colonial Mexico, it did so under conditions of repression and coercion, and an undercurrent of social and religious resistance continued throughout the colonial era. Indigenous religious leaders frequently called upon the people to reject the god of the colonizers and to return to their own true deities. At times, traditional religious practices continued in secret, hidden away in caves and forests. At times, indigenous people inverted Christian symbols, appointing indigenous “popes,” replacing the images of Christian saints with native deities, and conducting “mass” in the form of traditional sacrificial rites. From the moment of conquest, throughout the colonial period, and well into the nineteenth century, dozens of indigenous rebellions throughout Mexico sought to throw off European domination and restore the former social and religious order.

One means of native resistance to colonial rule occurred through the creative adaptation of the central Mexican “man-god” tradition, in which gods were believed to embody the “skin” of particular human beings. After colonization, certain individuals drew upon the man-god tradition to lead religious resistance movements in ways that baffled their conquerors. Resistance movements often had both millenarian and utopian dimensions. As millenarian movements, they anticipated imminent, total, collective, and catastrophic change. As utopian movements, they envisioned new futures that would transcend the oppressive conditions of colonization. Although the vast majority of religious uprisings were quickly suppressed by Spanish powers, an undercurrent of resistance reemerged over the centuries as indigenous people responded to forced relocation, loss of land, and harsh labor conditions in mines and plantations.

Religious resistance was especially prevalent among the Maya, whose relatively decentralized organization allowed them to maintain a degree of religious autonomy. The Mayan books of Chilam Balam, transcribed after European contact, instilled resistance efforts with prophetic motivation, for the books were interpreted to claim that Christianity and Spanish domination would soon vanish from the land. As late as the nineteenth century, Yucatec Mayans mobilized around a miraculous “speaking cross” that combined elements of Catholicism with an indigenous tradition of prophecy. As both oracle and military commander, the cross served as a source of strength and collective mobilization throughout the decades-long Caste War of Yucatán. Religious rebellions were also widespread among the Tarahumara, Huichols, and other indigenous groups in northern Mexico throughout the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

At present, indigenous religions remain a vital part of the Mexican religious landscape. Many features of precolonial religiosity—including the sanctity of mountains and caves, the importance of healing, and the logic of divine-human reciprocity—are still central to the religious experience of members of the more than sixty indigenous language groups in Mexico. Contemporary indigenous religions retain vital connections to the past, but they are not mere “survivors” of an ancient era. Rather, indigenous religions today are flexible systems through which people engage with one another and the natural world in local, national, and international contexts.

See also *Canada: Aboriginal Traditions; Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures; Frontier and Borderlands; Latino American Religion* entries; *Mexico: Colonial Era; Native American Religions* entries; *Nature and Nature Religion*.

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Mexico: Protestants

Protestantism has expanded in Mexico even though the nation remains strongly Roman Catholic. The growth of Protestantism, specifically Pentecostalism, in Mexico in recent years has not been on the same scale as the expansion of Protestantism elsewhere in Latin America in places such as Brazil and Guatemala. Even so, religious pluralism has come to form an important part of the modern Mexican religious landscape.

History

Under the royal agreement signed by Pope Alexander VI (1431–1503) and the Iberian monarchs in 1501, the only religion permitted in the New World was Roman Catholicism, thus beginning a colonial legacy of unity of church and state and of a Catholic culture that is integral to Mexican identity even today. Throughout the colonial period in Mexico, then called New Spain, Protestantism—associated in the Spanish world with both heterodoxy and English aggression—was considered a heresy, and its propagation was punishable by both the Inquisition and by civil government. Although the Vatican declined to recognize Mexico’s independence from Spain in 1821, Catholicism remained the official religion of the new republic of Mexico for the first half of the nineteenth century. While

Protestantism was outlawed during Mexico's first decades of nationhood, Liberal intellectuals and leaders were often familiar with Protestant literature and sometimes approved privately of Protestant institutions and values, believing that the religion carried with it elements of modernity and progress that complemented the Liberals' political goals of promoting education and divesting the Catholic Church of its secular authority. With these goals in mind, the Liberal, nationalist government of Benito Juárez (1806–1872)—who once famously stated that he wanted Protestant missionaries to come into the country to “teach Mexicans to read instead of light candles”—established freedom of religion in Mexico in 1856 (known as the Reforma), thus allowing for the entry of Mexico's first legal Protestant missionaries.

U.S. missionary boards were quick to respond. Presbyterians arrived in northern Mexico the following year, establishing churches in the cities of Zacatecas and Monterrey. Baptists arrived in 1862 and Methodists in 1872, also founding churches in the northern half of the country.

Monterrey was the first urban center where Protestantism took root, thanks to the efforts of two men, an Englishman and an American southerner, and a single-minded woman from New England. Englishman Thomas Westrupp came to this northern Mexican city in 1860, working as a bookseller. There he met James Hickey, a Texan abolitionist, who arrived there in 1864 as a representative of the Bible Society of New York. With the support of local Masons, they established a Bible study group that became the foundation for the first congregation of the Mexican Baptist Church. In 1867 a Presbyterian schoolteacher from New England, Melinda Rankin (1811–1888), arrived in Monterrey. Rankin had previously established a primary school for Hispanic girls, one of the first of its kind, in Brownsville, Texas, a town on the Mexican border, and the success of this project inspired Rankin to expand her efforts into Mexico proper. Although she never fully conquered the Spanish language, Rankin became a powerful advocate of women's education. She founded several educational institutions for women in northern Mexico, including an important normal school that became nationally renowned for its training of a generation of women educators.

Another important center for the diffusion of Protestantism were the mining areas. British companies took over the Mexican mining industry in the decades immediately following independence, and their influence expanded far beyond the economic sphere of the mines themselves. Many

British mine owners were devout Methodists, and they tried to introduce Methodism into the camps to their Catholic employees, although such efforts were officially illegal in the years prior to the Reforma. After the Reforma, however, Mexican law permitted mine owners to proselytize openly, and they established small Protestant congregations in mining centers such as Pachuca, Hidalgo, and Real del Monte in the Estado de México.

Following geographic lines that connected them directly to U.S. missionaries, the majority of Mexico's Protestant churches were located in the northern part of the country, near train stations or mining communities accessible by rail. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, most denominations also had at least one congregation in Mexico City. The Iglesia Metodista established its first church in Mexico City in 1873, while the Iglesia Presbiteriana de Mexico initiated its work in Mexico City's Federal District (D.F.) the following year, in 1874. Baptist missionaries arrived in the capital in 1883. In each case, however, churches were small, although the congregations included Mexicans and foreigners as members.

As Juarez had predicted, Protestant missions tended to engage in institution-building; in particular, mission hospitals and, above all, schools gave the missions a profile and influence that far exceeded their actual numbers in Mexico. For example, the Episcopal-run Hooker School for girls in Mexico City, established in 1894, became one of the city's premier institutions for the education of young women during the Porfiriato, the long rule (1876–1880 and 1884–1911) of Positivist leader Porfirio Díaz (1830–1915). Elsewhere, a Protestant education influenced a generation of young minds who would come of age during and after the Mexican Revolution. Most missionary groups at one time or another also made efforts to evangelize in rural areas among Mexico's large and impoverished indigenous population, but here they met with less success than they did among the urban middle class.

As the trajectory of missionary work tended to follow the geographic lines of foreign political and economic influence, so too did the message of the Protestant missionaries reflect a worldview that conveyed Victorian social values and mores as much as it did Protestant theology. The first missionaries, for example, sought to establish in Mexico an ethical way of life based on the prohibition of alcohol, support for monogamy, and an emphasis on education and the merits of hard work. Missionaries emphasized the betterment of the individual, rather than the community. As this Protestant

worldview, broadly speaking, seemed to advance Liberal political goals of promoting “modernization and progress,” missionaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries enjoyed the support of international institutions, Liberal leaders, and influential Masonic groups within Mexico.

Church and State Issues in Mexico

The struggle between the Catholic Church and Liberal, and then the revolutionary, governments continued through the turn of the century. At the end of the military phase of the Mexican Revolution, the radical 1917 Constitutional Assembly at Querétaro issued a series of anticlerical legislation that struck hard at the secular and religious power of the Catholic Church but that did not, in general, affect the small Protestant population as adversely. The 1917 Mexican Constitution placed serious limits on religious participation in politics, education, and public expression. The constitution itself codified such strong anticlerical provisions as seizing Church property, prohibiting parochial education, restricting clergy from wearing clerical garb, outlawing religious processions, and forbidding clergy from voting or preaching about the government. It was not, however, until Plutarco Elías Calles (1877–1945) assumed the office of the presidency in 1924 that the government began to enforce these provisions, along with even more strident anticlerical rulings broadly known as the Calles Law.

The Mexican Catholic Church suffered greatly as an institution during this period. In July 1926 the Mexican Catholic bishops declared a religious “strike” to protest the Calles law. This suspension of religious activities became the first volley in a struggle between conservative Catholic activists and the Liberal Mexican state that eventually took the name of the Cristero Rebellion, so named for the cry of the Catholic rebels, “Viva Cristo rey!” The rebellion, which took place mainly in the central Mexican states of Jalisco, Aguascalientes, Guadalajara, and Zacatecas, was violent and bloody, claiming as many as 90,000 lives over the course of the three-year struggle. After the Cristero Rebellion, the Catholic Church was forced to retreat to the sidelines of Mexican political life and, officially, to the margins of Mexican society. During the height of anticlerical feeling, Protestant churches too fell under the scrutiny of the revolutionary government and their clergy were subject to most of the same restrictions as were Catholic priests. Yet, Protestant followers found a space for growth amidst the anti-Catholic regulations. Notable Protestant public leaders such as the brothers Aaron and Moisés Sáenz, Andrés Sáenz, and Alfonso

Herrera emerged, holding key government positions and becoming renowned educators.

Protestant Expansion after the Revolution

On a smaller scale, another event took place during the early decades of the twentieth century that would shape the future of religion in Mexico. In 1912 Romana Valenzuela, a miner’s widow, attended services at the Azusa Street mission in Los Angeles, California, the Pentecostal church led by the great African American preacher William Seymour (1870–1922). Valenzuela converted to Pentecostalism and returned to her community of Villa Aldama, Chihuahua, to found the first Pentecostal church in Mexico, the Apostolic Church in Christ, in 1914. Valenzuela would found several more churches before her premature death in 1918. Another female preacher, Maria de los Angeles Riviera, after converting to Pentecostalism in Tucson, Arizona, founded the Church of God, in Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, in 1926.

While the majority of U.S.-supported Protestant missions were located in the north and central regions of the country, a few missionaries—including a few local Guatemalan pastors—entered Mexico from its southern border to work in the states of Chiapas and Tabasco. Foremost among these was Cameron Townsend (1896–1982), a missionary who had worked among the Maya in Guatemala for a number of years and who founded the Wycliffe Bible Translators/Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), a group primarily concerned with translating the Bible into local languages, in 1934. Although Townsend shared few of the political goals of the Mexican revolution, he was invited to work in Mexico by the highly nationalist Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas (1895–1970) in 1935. Though the two might have seemed to have been strange bedfellows (Townsend had written a scathingly anticommunist novel about El Salvador, while Cárdenas was arguably Mexico’s most socialist president to date), the president supported SIL for its work among the indigenous, particularly in transcribing and translating indigenous languages, and he requested that SIL initiate a project to translate the Bible into every indigenous language in the country. Despite Cárdenas’s patronage, Townsend and his fellow SIL missionaries fell under heavy criticism from members of the Mexican left, who disdained them for their conservative political positions and support of the United States. Although the Mexican government did not end its support of the SIL until 1979, foreign missionaries, SIL included, were generally unsuccessful in converting indigenous peoples to Protestantism. Indeed, generally

speaking, Protestantism remained quite marginal in Mexico for much of the twentieth century, as the vast majority of Mexicans, who were Catholic either by faith or custom, found Protestantism to be simply too alien to their world-views and culture.

While Protestant growth among historic (missionary) churches in general has remained fairly stagnant in Mexico to this day (Mexico, in fact, has one of the smallest percentages of Protestants of any country in Latin America, including Cuba, which until recently was officially atheist), one strand of Protestantism, Pentecostalism, has grown extensively in Mexico in recent years, particularly in the southern states. Pentecostalism is the branch of Christianity that places great emphasis on the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. Believers are “baptized in the Spirit,” an experience that is expressed through miraculous and somatic experiences such as speaking in tongues, healing of illness, and other ecstatic behavior. The history of Pentecostalism differs from other Protestantism in Mexico because of its native, as opposed to missionary, origins. As we have seen, Mexican converts established the nation’s first Pentecostal churches back in the early years of the twentieth century, but Mexico’s Pentecostal “boom” began in the 1970s and continues to the present day. It was during the 1970s that persistent economic crisis in the countryside and sustained migration from country to city pushed people to consider new social, political, and even spiritual alternatives. During that time, Mexican-born preachers and pastors began to travel around the country to evangelize and spread the Gospel. In this changing social climate, Pentecostal beliefs—channeled through local pastors and theological understanding—found great acceptance among the indigenous peoples in rural areas. Many migrants also found conversion in the border cities (both in the north with the United States and in the south with Guatemala) and returned to their original localities with new religions. As a result, Pentecostalism has become the main expression of Protestantism in Mexico, with a membership more oriented to the popular classes of Mexican society, and aided by the formation of Mexican religious leaders, including indigenous pastors, who understand their native cultures and the needs of their people.

In 1990 President Carlos Salinas de Gortari annulled many of the anticlerical laws of the revolutionary period and sought to normalize relations with the churches as part of a larger package of substantial political transformation. In 1992 the Mexican legislature, seeking to expand the ruling party’s faltering political base by recognizing the role that religion

played in Mexican society, passed a series of laws that reversed decades of restrictions on religious activities. Among the most important of these was the enactment of the Law of Religious Associations. This new law opened up the legal recognition and enfranchisement of all religions in Mexico. It established a public registry of all religious associations (*asociaciones religiosas* or ARs) in Mexico, creating a new legal status for churches and groups of belief and allowing for the kind of free public expression of religion that the 1917 constitution had strictly prohibited.

It is interesting to note that more than 4,000 ARs are Protestant or evangelical (including Pentecostal) institutions. Among the largest and most influential of these are Iglesia Nacional Bautista, Iglesia Nacional Metodista, Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de México, Iglesia Congregacional, Iglesia Luterana, Asambleas de Dios, Iglesia de Dios, Iglesia Apostólica de la Fe, Movimiento de Iglesias Pentecostales Independientes, La Luz del Mundo, Amistad Cristiana, and Fraternidad Pentecostal Independiente. Beyond these, there are literally thousands of smaller Protestant religious groups.

Current Situation

According to the 2000 census, Mexico had a population of 97,483,412 persons above the age of five. Of this population, 87 percent were Catholic.

Protestants, evangelicals, and Pentecostals (grouped together for census purposes) make up 5.2 percent of the population, or 4,400,000 persons. The census classifies Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, and Seventh-day Adventists as “nonevangelical biblical”; this group constitutes 2.1 percent of the overall population. Persons who claim no religion account for 3.6 percent. The remaining respondents either did not indicate a religion on the census; are members of other religions such as Jews, Muslims, or Buddhists; or belong to marginal systems of belief.

It is important to note that religious preferences in Mexico show strong regional variations. The most singular case is that of the southern state of Chiapas, which has the lowest percentage of Catholic believers in the entire country. Catholics make up 63 percent of Chiapas’s population, while Protestants–evangelicals–Pentecostals account for 13.5 percent. “Biblical nonevangelicals” are 8.5 percent, and nonbelievers (a term that for census purposes includes people who practice native traditions exclusively) also make up 13.5 percent of the state’s population. Chiapas presents many similarities to the religious situation of neighboring

Central American countries, particularly Guatemala. Although Chiapas is the “most Protestant” state in Mexico, several other southern states, including Tabasco, Quintana Roo, and Campeche, all have more than a fourth of their population registered as non-Catholic; in each case, the Protestant-evangelical-Pentecostal population is between 12 and 13 percent of the state’s overall population. Specifically, Protestants–evangelicals–Pentecostals make up 13 percent of the population of Tabasco. They make up 13.1 percent of the population in Campeche and 11.2 percent in Quintana Roo.

This Protestant expansion is not, however, completely limited to southern Mexico. Significant figures for Protestants–evangelicals–Pentecostals appeared in some northern border states such as Baja California (7.9 percent), Chihuahua (7.1 percent), and Tamaulipas (8.6 percent). On the other hand, in the central western region of the country—home to a strong and conservative Iberian tradition and the heartland of the Cristero Rebellion of the 1920s—Catholicism remains strong and Protestants are very few. Protestants make up only 2 percent of the population of Aguascalientes, 1.3 percent of Guanajuato, and 2 percent of the overall population of Jalisco. Not surprisingly, these are also the states that produce the majority of Mexico’s Catholic priests. By contrast, the capital of Mexico, Mexico City, mirrors virtually the same percentages for religion affiliation as the national averages.

According to the 2000 census, the indigenous population of Mexico clearly demonstrates a greater acceptance of Protestantism than does the Mexican population at large. Of Mexicans who speak indigenous languages, 80 percent consider themselves to be Catholics, while 10 percent self-identify as Protestants—almost double the national average. Mayan, Nahuatl, Totonac, Zapotec, and Mixtec ethnic groups all have relatively high Protestants percentages. It is worth noting that of the fifty-one municipalities in Mexico that have a clear Catholic minority, all are rural and (except for one case) are communities of indigenous language speakers.

Religious Problems

Protestant believers still face discrimination in some parts of Mexico. During the 1980s and 1990s, Catholic traditionalists expelled 25,000 to 30,000 persons from the indigenous municipality of San Juan Chamula, Chiapas, because of their refusal to take part in traditional Catholic rituals or to serve in *cofradías* (brotherhoods). Tensions between traditionalists

and Protestants sometimes erupted into violence, resulting in the forced expulsion of many Maya Protestants (mostly Pentecostals) to nearby cities such as San Cristobal de las Casas, where they established their own colonies in the slums that ring the city. On December 22, 1997, religious conflict reached its nadir in Acteal, a small Tzotzil Maya community in Chiapas, when a group of forty-five Catholic pacifists sympathetic to the Zapatista guerrillas, including women and children, were murdered by unidentified assailants while praying in a local chapel. Although the assassins were eventually proven to be part of a paramilitary group likely associated with an established political party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), religious tensions in Chiapas were so high at the time that many feared that the perpetrators of the crime might have been displaced Protestants. Fortunately, the administration of the first elected Protestant governor in the history of Mexico, Pablo Salazar Mendicuchia, halted this terrible situation. During this administration (2000–2006) state and municipal offices of religious affairs worked to settle religious disputes throughout Chiapas, and they allowed exiles to return to their original communities if they so desired.

Unfortunately, religious disputes continue to flare in various states of Mexico, even though federal law officially prohibits religious discrimination. Other states have established regional offices of religious affairs to resolve religious disputes, although neglect remains in many areas. Protestant leaders and human rights organizations today continue to press for complete religious tolerance within the country.

Conclusion

Despite a pervasive history of anticlericalism, Mexico continues to be one of the “most Christian” nations in the world, as measured not only by custom and traditional affiliation but also by actual church attendance. Reflecting trends found elsewhere in Latin America, Protestantism—specifically Pentecostalism—is on the rise in certain areas of Mexico, especially in predominantly indigenous states such as Chiapas and in the border regions. Nevertheless, Mexico today retains a strong Catholic character, as both the institutional Church and popular Catholicism continue to dominate the spiritual landscape of the country.

See also *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Latino American Religion: Pentecostals*; *Mexico* entries.

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Mexico: Twentieth Century

During the early twentieth century, Mexico experienced a violent Church-state conflict that culminated in the Catholic Cristero Rebellion. The outcome of this conflict was an uneasy *modus vivendi* between the Roman Catholic Church and the revolutionary regime, which endured for the rest of the century. As the regime declined, and since its collapse in 2000, the Church has begun to reclaim its influential position in Mexican society. However, it is doing so against the backdrop of a dramatic rise of religious pluralism.

Historical Background

On the eve of the Revolution of 1910–1920, liberal reforms in Church-state relations enacted during the second half of the nineteenth century had considerably weakened the once hegemonic position of the Roman Catholic Church. For much of the colonial era, from the conquest until the late eighteenth century, the Spanish Crown had granted the Church a central role in the religious, political, and economic affairs of New Spain. However, gradually escalating state attempts to undermine the power and influence of the Church began during the last decades of colonial rule, strengthened under Liberal leadership after Mexican independence in 1821 and culminated in the great Liberal reform movement of the 1850s and 1860s. By the end of the nineteenth century, Church and state had been separated, and religious tolerance prevailed.

The Liberal constitution of 1857 had stopped short of religious tolerance and Church-state separation. Catholicism remained the state religion. However, the constitution, which incorporated earlier Liberal laws, abolished the clerical *fueros* (legal immunity from civil prosecution); denied the Church the right to own or acquire property, including land, other than that required directly for worship and administration; regulated sacramental fees; deprived the clergy of its political rights; excluded the clergy from education; and granted the state authority to regulate matters of worship. The Church's rejection of these reforms sparked the Three Years' War or War of the Reform (1858–1861) between Liberals and Conservatives. The conflict radicalized both sides. In 1861 Mexico and the Vatican broke off formal diplomatic relations. In 1859 Liberal leader Benito Juárez (1806–1872) issued a series of new decrees that completely separated Church and state; established religious tolerance; nationalized Church wealth and property; introduced a civil registry and declared birth and marriage civil ceremonies; secularized cemeteries; abolished monastic orders and new novitiates; limited the number of religious holidays; prohibited expressions of "external cult," such as public ceremonies, bell ringing, and the wearing of clerical garb; and prohibited members of government from attending acts of worship. President Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada (served 1872–1876) incorporated these laws into the constitution in 1873 and provided enabling legislation in 1874, sparking the *religionero* revolt.

Resurgence of the Roman Catholic Church under the Díaz Regime

Despite these setbacks, the Church proved remarkably resilient. During the tolerant Liberal dictatorship of General Porfirio

Díaz (served 1876–1911), the Reform Laws were not uniformly applied, and Church–state conflict died down temporarily. The authorities allowed the Church to reestablish itself in the realm of private education and generally tolerated outward manifestations of worship. An increasingly ultramontane Church, which sought to reassert control by the papacy, was captained by a new generation of prelates trained at the Pontificio Colegio Pío Latino Americano in Rome. It managed to recoup much of its losses and reestablished an informal working relationship with the state. One of the most prominent members of this new generation, Monsignor Eulogio Gillow y Zavalza (1841–1922), archbishop of Oaxaca, maintained a personal friendship with President Díaz. The Church expanded its institutional reach by increasing the number of clergy; establishing a series of new dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces; developing seminaries, novel religious orders, and lay associations; and resuming its role in education. The Church stimulated new devotions, often of a Marian nature, that combined popular beliefs and ultramontane orthodoxy.

This so-called “reconquest” was not merely institutional and devotional. Pope Leo XIII’s (papacy, 1878–1903) encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) urged clergy and laypeople to address the “social question” in the face of the advance of socialism. Social Catholicism, an important intellectual current that sought to bolster Catholicism across the globe by offering reformist solutions to the problems of the emergent working class in an increasingly capitalist world, became influential in Mexican Catholic circles. Between 1903 and 1909 the Church sponsored several congresses that focused on the plight of the industrial working class and the peasantry and called for the establishment of Catholic workers’ circles, mutualist societies, and schools. Catholics founded a national labor confederation, the Confederación Católica Obrera, to address workers’ needs. This resurgence galvanized lay society. In 1911 Catholics organized the Partido Católico Nacional, a confessional party that made impressive headway in the first postrevolutionary elections, especially in central Mexico, until it was banned in 1913.

Mexican Religiosity on the Eve of the Revolution

At the turn of the century, Mexico remained an overwhelmingly Catholic nation. The admittedly questionable census data available indicate that as late as 1910 more than 99 percent of the population retained the Catholic faith. True, Protestantism had emerged in the mid–nineteenth century with the arrival of foreigners and their ministers, and commercial treaties granted foreigners the right to practice their

faith. During the 1860s Liberal politicians, dissident clergymen, and military officers founded a series of small schismatic religious associations. The spread of Protestantism received a boost when President Lerdo de Tejada (served 1872–1876) permitted U.S. Protestant missionaries into the country in an effort to weaken the hold of the Catholic Church. Mainstream Protestant churches, notably the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopal, and Congregational, incorporated Mexico’s schismatic associations, which had made considerable headway among Liberal politicians, the ascendant middle class, and sectors of the industrial working class. Across the country, Protestants developed a network of small congregations, schools, and colleges, especially in urban environments but also in dynamic rural areas touched by the expansion of railroads or colonization. Historian Jean–Pierre Bastian (1989) estimated that by 1892 the number of Protestants in Mexico may have risen to as many as 100,000.

The expansion of Freemasonry, which had become an influential vehicle for innovation in circles of liberal elite and middle-class males, reflected the spread of spiritual dissonance. The fashionable practice of Spiritism, which aimed at establishing contact between the living and the dead through séances, automatic writing, and other means, also exerted a strong influence, counting among its adherents influential revolutionary leaders, notably Francisco I. Madero (1873–1913). Masonic lodges, Liberal clubs, mutualist societies, and Spiritist associations established important new forms of sociability that inculcated the modern ideals of individualism, egalitarianism, and democracy in a society still characterized by traditional loyalties.

However, for the vast majority of Mexicans, Catholicism remained intricately intertwined with daily life. Local forms of Catholicism still centered on the devotion to village patron saints and their images; the celebration of yearly saint’s festivals; and the *mayordomías* (also known as cargo systems or civil–religious hierarchies), lay associations closely linked to local power structures that sponsored the devotion to certain saints and promoted personal piety and charitable works. Orthodoxy and popular beliefs conjoined in the ever expanding devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of Mexico, at her ancient sanctuary at Tepeyac on the outskirts of Mexico City. During the nineteenth century la Guadalupeana had become not only the focal point of a deeply held personal devotion but also a powerful symbol of Mexican national identity. The clergy’s effort to develop this national cult reached its culmination in 1895, when the

Virgin's image was crowned during a lavish public ceremony. Today the enduring strength of this increasingly transnational devotion is reflected in its rapid spread throughout the United States on the coattails of immigration and in the canonization in 2002 of Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, the humble Indian peasant to whom, according to legend, the Virgin appeared in 1531.

Hybrid forms of folk Catholicism continued to flourish. In the isolated south, indigenous cults with deep roots in the colonial era retained significant elements of Mesoamerican cosmology. Elsewhere, beliefs in folk saints and miraculous apparitions, such as the cult of the living Santa Teresa de Cabora in northern Mexico, inspired peasant and indigenous revolts in the latter years of the Díaz dictatorship.

However, it should be stressed that the Church had been quite successful in disseminating an orthodox, sacramentalized form of Catholic worship in most dioceses, notably in the Catholic heartland or "rosary belt" of central-western Mexico, centered on the Bajío region, but also in areas previously neglected by the Church, such as the indigenous highlands of Oaxaca. Heterodoxy notwithstanding, more Mexicans practiced orthodox forms of Catholicism than ever. The Church's "reconquest" had proven a remarkable success.

From a Liberal Critique of Catholicism to Revolutionary Anticlericalism

The resurgence of the ultramontane Church sparked strong criticism from radical Liberals and anarchists, who denounced Díaz's betrayal of the Liberal anticlerical agenda. Bastian (1989) has argued that during the waning years of the dictatorship, the anticlericalism of religious dissidents inspired a shift towards revolution. While most Liberals, including progressive Catholics, merely sought to enforce the Reform Laws and limit the influence of the Church, some Jacobins, inspired by deism or atheism, attacked the concept of organized religion itself as an obscurantist drag on national development. Radicals began to advocate the "defanaticization" of Mexico's peasantry, and a few even envisioned a Mexico in which all religions would be replaced by a revolutionary cult of humanity. Once the revolution broke out, Church-state relations and religion assumed a prominent place in revolutionary discourse, though no clear, unified agenda emerged.

During the early years of the revolution, under President Madero (served 1911–1913), events still focused on political

change, not church and religion. This changed dramatically in 1913, when General Victoriano Huerta (1850–1916) deposed and assassinated Madero. The Constitutionalist movement that arose to challenge this act of usurpation accused the Church and prominent Catholics of having supported the coup and allowed pent up hostility towards Church and religion to explode during the military offensive of 1914–1915. Constitutionalist military leaders unleashed a series of anticlerical and iconoclastic actions that infuriated Catholics.

Revolutionaries attacked Church and religion from a range of ideological positions. Some viewed the Church as a rival of the state in the realms of social policy, education, and politics. Others considered the Mexican Church an anti-national "state within the state" controlled by a foreign leader, the pope. Radicals denounced traditional religion as "fanaticism" and superstition, an obstacle in the path of modernity. Once the Constitutionalist faction had established military supremacy, anticlerical radicals in the Constitutional Congress at Querétaro in central Mexico incorporated strongly anticlerical and antireligious articles in the revolutionary constitution of 1917. Article 3 prohibited religiously sponsored primary education; Article 5 outlawed religious vows and monastic orders as inimical to human freedom; Article 27 denied the Church the right to own or administer property, including churches and administrative buildings, which now fell to the nation; Article 130 granted the federal government the right to intervene in matters of religion, denied legal personality to the churches, forbade clerical participation in politics including the vote, prohibited confessional political associations, declared marriage a civil contract, granted individual states the authority to regulate the number of priests and other ministers, and stipulated that ministers had to be Mexican born. The Mexican Catholic Church and the Vatican denounced these articles as an assault on religious freedom and mobilized the faithful. The State interpreted the establishment of a new sanctuary for Christ King on the Cerro del Cubilete, a hill in Guanajuato, central Mexico, as a direct challenge to its authority, and the site was bombed in 1928.

While Presidents Venustiano Carranza (served 1917–1920) and Álvaro Obregón (served 1920–1924) demonstrated ambivalence towards the religious question and avoided an escalation of the conflict, President Plutarco Elías Calles (served 1924–1928), a virulent anticlerical, moved to enforce the constitutional articles. The Calles Law of July 2, 1926, provided for enabling legislation and required local

enforcement. States began dramatically to reduce the numbers of priests allowed to officiate in their jurisdictions, and they shut down and confiscated church buildings and schools. Private worship came under close police scrutiny. Federal education demonstrated a profoundly anticlerical bias. The Calles government also sponsored the foundation of a schismatic Mexican Catholic Apostolic Church, an act that inflamed Catholic passions.

The Cristero Rebellion and Its Aftermath

On July 31, 1926, the Mexican episcopate closed the churches and suspended all services, thus forcing laypeople to confront the revolutionary state. This “church strike,” which deprived Catholics of the sacraments, was sustained for three years. The Liga Nacional Defensora de la Libertad Religiosa (LNDR), a lay association, mobilized Catholics to protest against state anticlericalism with a commercial and tax boycott. However, civil disobedience failed to resolve the conflict.

A Catholic guerrilla movement arose in 1926 in many regions, especially central-western Mexico. While the LNDR provided leadership, much of the fighting was the work of peasant communities, which took up arms in defense of local religion, culture, and political autonomy and in opposition to increasing state intrusion, especially in the form of agrarian reform, rationalist education, and state regulation of worship. By 1927 guerrilla activity had evolved into large-scale military operations led by Generals Enrique Gorostieta and Jesús Degollado y Guízar, which posed a serious threat to the federal army and auxiliary forces consisting of peasant *agraristas*, the beneficiaries of revolutionary land reform. The war came to be known as the Cristero Rebellion or Cristiada. According to estimates, the Cristiada mobilized some 40,000 rebels. Though rank-and-file *cristeros* were generally peasants and smallholders, a few priests also participated in the struggle. The Mexican hierarchy and the Vatican did not condone Catholic violence, though individual bishops expressed support for armed resistance. The government responded with brutal reprisals, including the execution of priests, some of whom were canonized as martyrs in 2000.

The war attracted attention in the United States, where prominent Catholic laypeople and clergy pressured President Calvin Coolidge to intervene. In 1929 U.S. ambassador Dwight W. Morrow and influential Catholic negotiators reached an agreement with President Emilio Portes Gil (served 1928–1930), known as the *arreglos* (the deal), that

led to the immediate reopening of the churches and the restoration of the clergy to their parishes. In return for a Church pledge not to intervene in politics and to register the clergy on an officially approved list, the Mexican government promised that the constitutional articles would not be enforced and declared a general amnesty. The agreement did not, however, imply any changes to the constitution or address the issue of religious freedom.

While the *arreglos* led to the end of the Cristiada, anticlerical sentiments remained strong among the political elite, some of whom considered the deal a betrayal of revolutionary ideals. Within a few years tensions resurfaced, as states once again began drastically to limit the numbers of priests or entirely prohibit their activities. The authorities closed down seminaries and religious schools, confiscated Church property, and cracked down on “external,” or public, worship. Federal education assumed a marked anticlerical and often antireligious tone. Tensions culminated during the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (served 1934–1940), a member of Calles’s anticlerical inner circle. Cárdenas’s religious policy, symbolized by a highly anticlerical “socialist education,” targeted the beliefs of Catholics. Radical leaders in Tabasco, Sonora, Veracruz, and elsewhere embarked on violent “defanaticization” and iconoclastic campaigns supported by teachers, local officials, Freemasons, and the military. The Church and lay Catholics responded with an effective school boycott, while Catholic guerrillas brutally attacked rural teachers and schools. In urban areas Catholic riots met with state repression, while in the countryside a second Cristero rebellion again threatened social peace and the revolutionary agenda. Though not the primary target of anticlerical measures, Protestant churches were affected as well. By the 1940s they had lost much of the influence gained during the revolution.

Cárdenas decided gradually to abandon anticlerical and antireligious actions and urged the Education Ministry to modify its curriculum. By 1937 most churches closed after the *arreglos* had reopened their doors. In 1938, in an effort to extend an olive branch to the Cárdenas administration, a cautious Church hierarchy decided to support the president’s controversial expropriation of foreign petroleum companies. The rapprochement was completed by Cárdenas’s successor, General Manuel Ávila Camacho, who during the presidential campaign of 1940 famously declared “*Soy creyente*” (“I’m a believer”) or according to a less well known but probably more reliable version, “*Soy Católico.*”

The Postrevolutionary Era: From Modus Vivendi to the Reassertion of Catholic Influence

What emerged by the 1940s was an effective though occasionally uncomfortable modus vivendi between Church and state. While the political elite remained anticlerical, it tolerated another round of Catholic revitalization in which the Church relied on a rapidly expanding Catholic Action network; private schools; and the influential Secretariado Social Mexicano, a Church-supervised social welfare agency. However, chastened and cautious, it avoided politics and union organization, thus abandoning, at least for the moment, its old integralist dreams of establishing an organic Catholic society based on orthodoxy and Papal authority. It instead focused on morality and family values. Some disagreed with the new arrangement. Disgruntled lay Catholics organized a mass movement, the virulently antirevolutionary Unión Nacional Sinarquista, which despite rapid growth after its foundation in 1937 rapidly lost appeal during the 1940s. A year later, middle-class Catholics founded a political party, the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN). PAN would remain a negligible challenge to the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional until the 1980s except in circumscribed Catholic strongholds in central Mexico. PAN ultimately managed to reinvent itself during the waning days of the postrevolutionary one-party system and won the presidency in 2000.

The modus vivendi held up well for decades. Change came to the Mexican Church in the form of the progressive Vatican Council II (1962–1965) and the radical liberation theology movement, which sought to address the problems facing Latin America's poor and indigenous population from a radical perspective. Progressive Catholicism exerted a strong influence on some members of the Mexican hierarchy, notably Bishop Sergio Méndez Arceo of Cuernavaca (served 1952–1982), who sought to establish a purified form of Christianity. Liberation theology also influenced members of the Society of Jesus and individual rural clergy. However, the conservative Mexican hierarchy generally resisted innovative trends, while the Vatican, which from 1978 to 2005 was headed by Pope John Paul II, promoted conservatism. Meanwhile, tensions between Church and state arose over controversial issues such as birth control, abortion, and sex education. John Paul II made highly publicized unofficial visits to Mexico in 1979 and 1990, galvanizing Catholics. Conservative lay associations flourished, notably Opus Dei and the Legionarios de Cristo.

Church-state became tense during the 1980s, as Mexico's ruling party faced serious democratic challenges to its authority. The Church, which retained its reputation as the most respected institution in Mexican society at a time when cynicism permeated popular attitudes towards the state, became more assertive. The Church spoke out boldly against the proposed legalization of abortion in 1983 and electoral fraud in the 1986 Chihuahua state elections, thus breaking its longstanding agreement with the state not to engage in politics. In the heavily indigenous state of Chiapas, Bishop Samuel Ruiz García (served 1959–1999), one of the last progressives among Mexico's prelates, denounced the social and political conditions that maintained the indigenous majority in a state of poverty and dependence. Tensions reached a high point after the still unsolved assassination of Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo in 1993. The pope visited Mexico again in 1993, now as an official guest of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (served 1988–1994).

The 1991 Reform of Church-State Relations and the Rise of Religious Pluralism

As part of a wider neoliberal agenda, President Salinas pledged to "modernize" Church-state relations and grant Catholics religious freedom. In 1991 the congress passed constitutional reforms that recognized the legal personality of "religious associations" but maintained limited government control over worship and the churches. The reformed Article 3 allowed for religious instruction in private schools; Article 5 authorized religious orders; Article 24 permitted worship outside the churches; Article 27 allowed religious associations to own property; Article 130 recognized the legal personality of religious associations and granted the clergy the right to vote, though not to be elected for public office. In 1992 Mexico restored diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The reforms satisfied neither liberals, who felt that they had gone too far, nor the Catholic hierarchy and laity, who considered the enabling laws of 1992 too restrictive and continued to lobby for more far-reaching constitutional reform.

Meanwhile, Mexico had undergone a dramatic shift towards religious pluralism, as more and more Mexicans converted to non-Catholic faiths. However, these were no longer exclusively the established Protestant denominations, though Presbyterian and Baptist churches remained numerous. Instead, from the 1920s on, evangelical and Pentecostal churches gradually spread, generally as small, home-grown congregations led by charismatic Mexican pastors. According

to census data, which must of course be taken with a grain of salt, in 1900 Protestants constituted a mere 0.38 percent of the total population and remained below the 1 percent threshold until the 1950s. Only during the 1980s and 1990s did growth accelerate, topping 5 percent in 2000. Small, idiosyncratic, often unstable evangelical churches with weak international ties proliferated, especially in the southern, heavily indigenous states; along the U.S.-Mexican border; and in major urban areas. Other important denominations, especially Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, and Mormons, which combined represent 2 percent of the population, have retained ties to the United States. The new churches generally attract poor individuals, often women, facing serious life challenges, such as health problems, alcoholism, and family conflict. Early research linking conversion with individualist, egalitarian, democratic, capitalist, and even feminist values should be viewed with caution. Other traditional religions have maintained a limited presence in Mexico. In a country where anti-Semitism has a long history dating back to the colonial-era persecution of Jews, a small Jewish population of 45,000 can be found in urban centers. Census figures fail to identify clearly those who practice indigenous forms of religion, either in combination with other faiths or independently.

Despite a significant drop in its membership, the Catholic Church remains the religion of 88 percent of the population. Conversion may well have slowed, as the Church has recently borrowed innovative charismatic practices from its rivals. The main exception is southern Mexico, especially Chiapas State, where today adherents of the new religions constitute the majority in many municipalities, especially those with large indigenous populations.

The Persistence of Old Tensions

Since the end of the twentieth century, divine justifications have served to make intelligible and heal the deep wounds of the Cristero Rebellion. In 2000, Pope John Paul II canonized 25 martyrs of the Cristiada, and a Sanctuary of the Martyrs is under construction in Guadalajara in west-central Mexico. Equally important was the canonization in 2002 of Saint Juan Diego, which reaffirmed Mexico's special role in sacred history. The motto associated with Our Lady of Guadalupe, "*Non fecit taliter omni nationi*" ("God has not done this for any other nation"), reflects her essential connection with Mexican identity and history, a connection that continues to offer Mexicans an alternative source of nationalism to that forged by the revolutionary state.

In the wake of the collapse of the postrevolutionary regime in the democratic presidential elections of 2000, the renewed involvement of the Catholic Church and conservative lay organizations in national politics, social debates, and moral questions (notably the abortion debate championed by the Catholic association Pro-Vida) and their continued drive for constitutional reform and religious freedom, especially in the realm of education, have led to acrimonious public debates. Opponents have declared the constitutional reforms of 1991 a serious mistake and advocate complete secularism (*laicidad*) and a total separation of church and state. Meanwhile, the conservative PAN governments that came to power in 2000 and 2006 supported the Church, especially on abortion and education issues, leading to social polarization and court challenges to the government. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Mexico's religious conflict remained unresolved.

See also *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Latino American Religion* entries; *Mexico* entries; *Roman Catholicism: The Cold War and Vatican II*.

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Ministry, Professional

The professional practices of ministry in America have undergone a sea change far more extensive than the earliest practitioners could have imagined when they crossed the Atlantic hundreds of years ago. Some came to North America seeking to establish the secure religious communities they had been unable to create in their native lands or elsewhere. Some came as missionaries determined to convert the natives to Christianity. And some came in chains, treated as enslaved property for the enrichment of those who owned or controlled them. Out of all emerged a broad array of professional practices that have formed a peculiarly American approach to ministry.

Historical Background

The earliest forms of this professional ministry were the missionary efforts by Roman Catholics who sought to bring Native Americans into the body of Christ. Their missions began in the middle of the sixteenth century and found their first enduring success with the mission in St. Augustine (Florida) in 1565. By the late 1590s, a network of Roman Catholic missions had been established along the southeastern coast and in the southwestern territory of what is now New Mexico. These efforts were the most basic forms of ministry, seeking to preach the Christian gospel, to teach the faith, and to demonstrate Christian life by creating community as well as by serving others.

It was a ministry that took great courage. It was also a ministry that touched every aspect of religious and everyday life, not only preaching, teaching, and baptizing, but also farming the land, providing health care, settling disputes, and otherwise administering the affairs of the community. At the same time, it was also a ministry very closely connected to the economic, military, and imperialistic interests of the European empires that sent the missionaries.

Professional ministry in other parts of North America, notably New England and the middle colonies, also drew from European roots. But in those regions the picture was far more diverse and complex. Some religious establishments, such as the Catholics in Maryland and the Anglicans in Virginia, took hold. In these colonies the professional ministry was inseparable from the social and political order; and ministers' compensation was dependent on civil government allotments from tobacco crops or tax revenues. At the other end of the spectrum were forms of the professional ministry that were entirely separate from the political

system. In Pennsylvania and Rhode Island the clergy depended upon their congregants to compensate them and their own skills as farmers or tradesmen to sustain them. In short, there was no single kind of professional ministry at the founding stages of the Christian movement in North America.

Two keys to understanding the development of professional ministry in America are internal (the politics of churches) and external (the politics of church-state relations). Of the two, the latter may be more important.

In the European background of America's religious experience was the pattern that existed since the age of Constantine in the fourth century. Christianity had become Christendom, and it was the established religion of the state. That basic pattern prevailed through the Middle Ages.

The structure of church-state relations in Europe was basically that of an established religion with one or more dissenting religions. The dissenting churches would operate in a counter-cultural pattern, without public financial support, and with varying degrees of freedom to function. Some dissenters were suppressed, some were oppressed, and some were tolerated. They had to generate their own revenues and maintain their own lands or properties—assuming they were permitted to own land and properties—and they had to find resources to support a professional ministry. This was the background Europeans brought to North America.

A number of the American colonies established religions. Much of New England had a religious establishment run by Puritans, who had been dissenters in Britain. Georgia was founded in 1732 by an Englishman as a place of refuge for imprisoned debtors and other disenfranchised persons. Its professional ministries came with a chaplain from the Church of England. Roman Catholics were the main religious force in colonial Maryland.

Pennsylvania, however, was created as a colony with broad tolerance for all religious groups. As a result, its professional ministries were diversified, ranging from Roman Catholics, who held a highly sacramental view of ordination and an ontological nature of the priesthood, to Quakers, who eschew professional ministry altogether.

Financial support for a professional ministry came from public revenues in some places, from the voluntary gifts in others, and from the creative labors of ministers themselves in still others. This diversity led to some curious problems in the operations of the churches' ministries. Within Methodism, which eventually became known for its aversion to beverage alcohol, some of the preachers supplemented their

meager incomes by selling homemade whiskey. Churches that had taken a moral stance against slavery accepted voluntary contributions that came from adherents who owned slaves. Catholic priests, who were sent by their bishops or their orders to places of service after taking vows of poverty, lived on the largesse of their patrons or their parishioners. Professional ministers who were called to and compensated by congregations found themselves subject to the willful attitudes of their church members. Jonathan Edwards, one of the greatest religious leaders in American history, faced resistance from some members of his Northampton congregation, who did not want to increase his salary because they believed his wife spent too much money on her clothing.

What eventually became the prevailing American pattern of professional ministry was drawn from the conviction embedded in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution that church and state were to be entirely and utterly separate. The country had determined that there would be no religious establishment, that religious groups would be free to form, that religious practices would be protected, and that religious exercises would not be put under the control of the government.

This constitutional guarantee meant, among other things, that each church's internal polity would be responsible for its professional ministry. The state could hold individuals in the professional ministry accountable for any violations of the criminal laws or civil codes. But churches in the United States were understood to be voluntary associations, and their polities would control their professional ministries.

As historian E. Brooks Holifield makes clear in his magisterial study of ministry, *God's Ambassadors: A History of the Christian Clergy in America* (2007), the preparations for and the practices of professional ministry varied by region and ecclesiastical tradition. Calvinists, among the New England Puritans and the Dutch Reformed in New York, emphasized preaching as the most important aspect of a minister's work. They placed such a high value on education for the ministry that 90 percent of the Congregational ministers in colonial New England had a college degree. Anglicans also stressed formal education for ministry, initially bringing priests from England with degrees from Oxford and Cambridge and then establishing the College of William and Mary in 1693 where Virginia Anglicans could study for the priesthood. A minister in these contexts was expected to know the theological traditions; be conversant in matters of literature, philosophy, and science; and be well-versed in

languages. These skills were considered necessary to prepare and preach learned sermons.

But other factors and other forces were also at work. As Holifield notes, demand for clergy outweighed supply in every region except for New England. Finding enough ministers to meet the need may have required lowering the expectations for an educated ministry. Further, some religious traditions in America considered higher education a detriment to effective ministry. Many Methodist circles valued a "converted" ministry more than an educated ministry. Passionate preaching was considered more meritorious than erudite preaching. Moreover, the patterns of compensation for professional ministers were generally unreliable and usually low. So the sense of satisfaction that ministerial professionals found in their work came from vocational fulfillment through their tasks—preaching, pastoral care, and sacramental administration—as their traditions emphasized them.

The Practices of Professional Ministries

A classic theological way to discuss the work of professional ministry is to identify three roles of ministry: the priestly, prophetic, and royal. In America's religious life, all three are practiced. But the degree to which one church body emphasizes one role for its professional ministers, and the degree to which another church body emphasizes a different role is part of the voluntary character of religion in America.

In the priestly role, a professional minister lifts the prayers of the people to God and conducts sacred rituals such as baptism and Holy Communion that convey the promises and presence of God to the people. Hence, the professional minister as priest represents the people to God and represents God to the people.

In the prophetic role, a professional minister conveys God's word to the people. That word is derived from the sources that each church body has determined to be authoritative. For most Protestants, that source is the Bible. For Roman Catholics, it is the Bible and the tradition of the Church expressed through its creeds and doctrines. For Anglicans, there are three authorities: the Bible, doctrines and practices conveyed through the church tradition, and reason. For others, the range of authorities may include reason (Unitarians), emotion (ecstatic groups), or practices that are primarily cultural or ethnic.

In the royal role, a professional minister directs, manages, leads, or controls the life and activities of the community of faith. Professional ministers have responsibility

for maintaining the disciplines of the religious community, for holding people accountable to its standards of conduct. At the same time, professional ministers are accountable for providing a vision than can see far beyond what the followers can see.

In America's religious life, all three of these roles have been present. But various bodies and traditions have affirmed them and have balanced them differently. Along the way, these responsibilities have been carried out with varying levels of success and failure.

The priestly role has been fulfilled in ways that have had an interesting impact on other religious traditions beyond Christianity. Major public events ranging from banquets to political rallies to rodeos are often thought to need some professional minister to "bless" the event. For a Roman Catholic priest, this fits nicely with a sacramental understanding of the priesthood. For a Protestant minister, it feels comfortable to thank God in public. But a rabbi, whose traditional role has been teaching the Law, may find it an odd assignment for one who is not a priest.

The Americanization of the professional ministry has been especially significant in the interpretation and application of the prophetic role. Church and state are separate. The role of the professional ministry is to convey God's word to people. The debate is whether that role is to be exercised only within the religious community or in the public arena as well.

In the 1950s and 1960s, a Baptist preacher, Martin Luther King Jr., fulfilled the prophetic role both internally (within the life of the church) and externally (within the larger American society). His "Letter from Birmingham Jail" was specifically addressed to leading figures in predominantly white churches. His "I Have a Dream" speech was delivered from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to the institutions of the United States government and to the nation as a whole. Every one of his prophetic acts, spoken from a pulpit or demonstrated in a march across a bridge, was an effort to bring the word of God to bear upon the private feelings and public systems that nurtured racial bigotry, social injustice, or forms of violence.

From the 1950s through the early years of the twenty-first century, another Baptist preacher, Billy Graham, held evangelistic rallies in scores of cities across the country and in many places around the world. He met personally with every president of the United States during those years and was long considered the nation's chief pastor. Yet his exercise of the prophetic role was focused entirely upon individual

behaviors and personal morality. He spoke with people of power, but did not confront them with the prophetic word of God—at least not publicly.

Denominational Jurisdiction over Professional Ministry

In the process of developing and defining professional ministry in America, the primary institution that emerged was the denomination. As the country adopted and implemented a plan for open tolerance of all religions and establishment of none, denominations became the nineteenth and twentieth centuries' major forces in creating standards for professional ministry. Combining doctrinal traditions and liturgical patterns with organizational systems and financial infrastructures, these entities offered mechanisms for providing a professional ministry.

Denominations assumed responsibility for the professionalization of ministry. They established rules for determining how, and by whom, persons could be licensed or ordained or otherwise credentialed for professional ministry. They crafted codes of conduct to establish the boundaries within which a professional minister had to function. They created institutions of higher learning so that the educational standards could be met and the professional criteria could be taught. They instituted mechanisms for outlining how their professional ministers could find places to exercise professional ministry, and to move into new places of service at a future time. They developed support systems for professional ministers, including compensation patterns, health care coverage, retirement planning, and income tax advantages. They excluded women. And they put in place the procedures to be followed should any one of their professional ministers be accused of an offense that could lead to a reprimand or to the loss of professional credentials. All of these denominational efforts granted to those in ministry a social status and security that, in other systems, could have been enjoyed only by those who had the privileges available in an established church.

In addition, the construction of a professional ministry created connections with other parts of society and with other professional associations. Care of the sick included not only a minister's visiting them and praying with or for them, but also the possibility of peer-to-peer conversations with nurses, physicians, psychologists, and social workers. Combating injustice included not only listening to those who have suffered at the hands of an individual's or system's mistreatment, but also the possibility of professional access to

attorneys, courts, elected public officials, police, and the news media.

Expanding horizons for the ministry included specialized nonchurch ministries. Chaplaincies in the military, in hospitals, in long-term health care institutions, in prisons, and elsewhere typically require a credential in the professional ministry from a church to be considered for a position of service. The rise of denominations helped the ministry to become a profession.

Variations from the Denominational Pattern

A professional ministry that was controlled by church bodies, rather than by the government, also opened doors for those who had not been admitted into the profession to function as if they were. In the nineteenth century, a Methodist woman named Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874) was arguably the most compelling preacher of her era. She was especially effective at delivering remarkable sermons—perhaps three hundred of them—for camp meeting associations, one of the most important institutions in that era. In addition, she was the leader of a Bible study program that did more than inform participants about the scriptures. It formed persons for leadership in the church. In addition, she was an insightful theologian who articulated a doctrine of holiness that has been studied for something approaching two hundred years. Yet she did not have an ecclesiastical credential, a church license, or an ordination certificate, because Methodism in her day did not affirm women in ministry.

The denominational pattern was also expanded by many who, though licensed or ordained or credentialed by their respective ecclesiastical bodies, stretched the church and its ministry in unusual ways. Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875) was a Presbyterian who devised, in the first half of the nineteenth century, a uniquely American contribution to the profession of ministry. First, he conducted “revivals” that were separate from church venues and church auspices. Second, he delivered extemporaneous sermons that were characterized by their emotional ardor rather than by their meticulous preparation. Third, he created a system of “new measures” that included a device that became known as “the anxious bench”—a seat directly in front of the preacher for persons who might be on the verge of conversion from a life of sin to a state of grace. The techniques that he established have become the standard operating procedures for countless numbers of revivalists in the nearly two centuries since he invented them. Any evangelist who invites people to

come forward and accept Christ as Savior owes a debt to Finney, who created the technique.

Finney was widely criticized by those in the church who thought that an emotionally driven conversion was manipulative and, ultimately, inconsequential for it did not include any nurturing in the faith. On the other hand, there is no doubt that Finney made lasting contributions to the professional ministry by creating a process whereby persons who have been unreached by the church might begin a spiritual journey. His revivalist techniques may have attracted significant numbers of people who joined other denominations to continue their religious encounter.

Education for the Profession of Ministry

Within American religious life, especially within American Christianity, two competing and perhaps irreconcilable forces have vied for control of the professional ministry. One is the conviction that notwithstanding all other significant elements that help prepare one for effective ministry, the *sine qua non* is a vital and personal religious experience of depth and power. The other is the conviction that intellectual preparation of the highest order is needed to equip professional ministers for addressing the questions that challenge the essential core of religious faith—theodicy, evil, suffering, and the painful sense of the absence of God. For every person who has been encouraged to heed the call of God and begin the intellectual work of preparing for the ordained ministry, there are several who have been warned about the danger that education will drain away one’s faith.

The educational process of preparing persons for ministry in America was at first a rather informal matter. People would listen to experienced preachers and after a while would be offered an opportunity to proclaim the word as well. Mentoring and tutoring were handled on an individual basis. If the mentee could read—not something that could be taken for granted—the mentor might provide a list of books to study. Indeed, this was not only the nineteenth-century method for preparing to enter the professional ministry; it was the method for entering other professions as well. Finney had apprenticed himself to a lawyer, intending to pursue a career as an attorney before his religious conversion led him toward ministry. He never attended college, yet for fifteen years he was the president of Oberlin.

Denominations made efforts to regularize this informal system of study. They developed comprehensive

reading lists that were intended to be applied across their churches, regardless of the region or the idiosyncrasies of the mentor.

Formal higher education for ministry, although common in New England, was rare in other areas. Harvard was founded early in the seventeenth century to prepare men for a learned ministry. But the urgency of spiritual needs on the expanding frontier, the lack of educational institutions to prepare men for ministry, the low level of literacy that was perceived to be the pattern among laity, and the immediacy of emotionally powerful sermons were reasons enough not to demand high levels of measurable intellectual attainment to qualify for the professional ministry.

Yet church bodies had long been committed to education as an important dimension of their mission and ministry. The first universities in Europe were opened under church auspices. Theology was known as “the queen of the sciences.” The intellectual giants who were formed by the church and to whom subsequent generations turned were religious humanists (like Erasmus) and ecclesiastical architects of doctrine (like Augustine and Aquinas). Catholics, Methodists, and others established schools, colleges, and universities as essential elements of their work. With an increasing amount of energy, laity—not the professionals in ministry—began not only to insist that the intellectual preparation of persons for ministry must improve but also to offer financial assistance to make it happen.

Theological schools began to appear in greater numbers on the American landscape. One of Finney’s strongest critics, John Williamson Nevin, joined forces with Philip Schaaf to provide a vigorous theological faculty in Pennsylvania. They established a movement—the Mercersburg theology—as an antidote to Finney’s new measures. Some schools of theology were established as original academic units of universities. Some were founded and then became the basis of more comprehensive universities. Others began as free-standing institutions. Boston University, Union Theological Seminary, and the University of Chicago’s Divinity School were just a few of the immensely important educational centers to be founded in the nineteenth century by the churches with the financial support of their laity.

Finding able faculty members for those institutions was a challenge. Some gifted persons were sent to European universities to pursue degrees and return to the United States to teach. Others were recruited directly from European universities. Slowly but surely, the churches established the notion that the true educational standard for entry into the

professional ministry was a baccalaureate degree followed by an advanced degree in theological studies. These developments were primarily Protestant.

Roman Catholic Ministry

The Roman Catholic understanding of professional ministry is profoundly different from most Protestant views in a number of ways. First, it is essentially a sacramental ministry. Each priest is ordained not to an office but to a different order of life. The professional duties of a priest are driven by the sacramental responsibilities through which he delivers his arts of ministry. Second, although preaching is an aspect of professional ministry, it is certainly not highly valued in the way that most Protestant churches believe. In the Catholic approach to professional ministry, a homily is one way to convey and sustain the tradition, but skillful oratory is not one of the leading expectations for the priesthood. As ecumenical influences have grown, so has the impetus to pay more attention to preaching in the training of men for the priesthood. That is one way the American experience has affected the professional ministry in Roman Catholic life, especially in modern times.

But Roman Catholics helped shape the religious landscape in America, too. They had an impact on professional ministry not only with the missions they founded in the second half of the sixteenth century, but also through the waves of migration in subsequent periods. The immense tide of Roman Catholic immigration swept into the United States in the late nineteenth century, and the impact of these forces on professional ministry was immense as well as complex. At least three aspects of it merit attention.

The first is the connection between ethnicity and Catholicity. When Irish, Italian, Polish, and other cultural constituencies arrived in North America, a professional cadre of priests was needed to exercise ministries in the manner that each group was accustomed to receiving them. Finding a sufficient number of priests among the immigrant communities was a challenge, as was finding the resources to call, train, and ordain American-born priests for those ethnic and cultural groups.

Second, as the size of the Roman Catholic population grew, in certain places Catholics (including ethnically and culturally identifiable groups of Catholics) came to dominate political affairs in that region. Candidates seeking

election as mayor or as a member of Congress had to show respect for, and be seen with, the appropriate priest, bishop, or cardinal in the right setting.

Third, one aspect of the professional ministry in Roman Catholicism was barely understandable in a Protestant context. Professional ministry in the Catholic context operated with two parallel systems. One was diocesan, under the jurisdiction of a bishop; the other involved religious orders, whose members were not accountable to a diocesan bishop, but to the principal figure in the order.

All of these factors were in addition to the differences in professional ministry that were driven by Roman Catholic doctrine. Having a professional ministry that was accountable not to a congregation or a denominational association but (ultimately) to a pope in Rome or to the leader of an order in some distant setting meant that educational standards, compensation patterns, ecclesiastical disciplines, and ministerial assignments were directed in ways that the prevailing Protestant systems for a professional ministry could not easily grasp.

Eventually the size of the Roman Catholic population in the country dwarfed any of the individual Protestant denominations. Systems of Catholic education, including theological education for those entering the priesthood, quickly appeared.

For religious groups outside of the Christian context, there were other issues in professional ministry. Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and others who adhered to their beliefs and practices did not typically modify their approaches to ministerial leadership when they settled in North America. On rare occasions, an imam might appear at an interfaith event. But such brief encounters did not alter the approach of these non-Christian bodies to the recruitment, training, credentialing, or assigning of spiritual leaders.

For Jews, the most visible and socially engaged group of non-Christians, the effect was somewhat different. Traditionally, a rabbi served two major functions in the Jewish community. One was to act as teacher of the Law; the other was to render judgments that were in accordance with the Law. But in the North American context, where priestly or pastoral expectations applied to the understanding of professional ministry, rabbis increasingly sensed that they were to adapt to American patterns. At Sabbath services, they were expected to teach in the engaging manner of a Protestant preacher. During the week, they were expected to visit the sick and otherwise provide pastoral care for those who were troubled. And in public events, they were expected to

occupy places alongside priests and pastors where they might deliver remarks or offer prayers.

Professional Ministry in the Postdenominational Era

In the middle of the twentieth century, the large American denominations were at their peak. New theological schools were being created to prepare growing numbers of individuals for the professional ministry. Colleges and universities that had been created by the denominations in the mainstream of the church were beginning to separate themselves from their parent churches. Yet attendance at local churches in the leading denominations was still growing. Membership statistics were rising. The decade following World War II looked bright and promising for American society and for the American religious establishment.

Moreover, the old animosities between Protestants and Catholics were showing signs of ecumenical cooperation. By the time of the Second Vatican Council in Rome during the early 1960s, local experiments in worship that drew Catholics and mainstream Protestants together were increasingly common. It was not unknown for such events to include a rabbi who read a biblical passage or offered prayer. The mainline denominations were the keys to those efforts. Professional ministry groups and clergy associations expanded their efforts. Preliminary conversations were occurring about possible interdenominational mergers, along with the Consultation on Church Union (now Churches Uniting in Christ) that drew together most of the mainline church bodies and predominantly African American churches that had been formed in the days of slavery and of the institutionalized segregation that followed the Civil War.

By every measure, the churches were strong and the professional ministry was vibrant. New influences were promising even greater things for the church and its professional ministry. Efforts at liturgical renewal, linked in part to the ecumenical spirit, were enhancing worship options and were even influencing the architecture of sanctuaries. Protestants were imagining the recovery of more frequent celebrations of Holy Communion. Music of different genres, such as folk and jazz, found its way into worship, and along with that came experimentation again with instruments that included guitars and percussion. Some people were even starting to dance in services on Sunday morning—an activity that an earlier generation of professional ministers would have frowned upon if their parishioners had tried it in a secular venue on Saturday night!

It was only in the period immediately following those heady mid-century years that the people in professional ministry began to realize that their institutions were beginning to decline. Serious divisions among those in professional ministry arose during the war in Vietnam. Although encouraging developments in racial relations had given some Americans reason to hope that justice would soon prevail, too many violent incidents and too much hateful talk had exposed the depth of racism in American life. And part of what was exposed was the racism in the church. Professional ministers in mainline denominations actually discussed whether to allow African Americans to take Communion in white churches. The professional ministry could not find the wherewithal to be sufficiently priestly, prophetic, or royal in its clarity about the importance of overcoming racism.

Odd alignments developed among religious groups on social, political, and moral issues. One leader of the Southern Baptist Convention asserted that he had more in common with Roman Catholics on abortion—absolute opposition to it—than he did with most Protestants. Jimmy Carter, an evangelical Baptist, could not get political support from the evangelical political action committees when he ran for reelection in the 1980 presidential campaign. These groups favored Ronald Reagan's social and political positions.

At the time, although it was not readily apparent, the professional ministry as a proprietary privilege of the mainline denominations was also in decline. Other alignments were forming along intellectual lines. Academic disciplines besides theology had, from time to time, been extremely influential in the ministry. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, historical-critical theories of biblical interpretation had challenged the ways scriptures were read. In the 1950s and 1960s the disciplines of psychology came to dominate the field of pastoral care. In the 1960s and 1970s political theology built upon ideological analysis led to the view that history was holding the ministry hostage and that the ministry had to break free. The definition of "religious experience" expanded from the individual phenomenon of a personal, emotional conversion to include the phenomenon of "social location." To understand religion in America, one had to understand not only a person's profession of faith but also where one was raised, whether one was poor, and from what racial or ethnic group one had come.

Meanwhile, guilt over great sin was not going away easily among the growing ranks of professional ministers—the

injustice to persons and the harm to the church that had been created by centuries of denying full ordination rights to women, the practices of racial segregation built upon the prejudice of racial hatred, the awareness that the church had sold its soul to the culture in order to thrive as a social institution. Professional ministers in the premier denominations were no longer the prevailing voices in America's religious life.

An array of different ecclesiastical forms was arising in a clearly postdenominational age. Independent congregations were being founded upon the premise that churches had to be ready to market their products to an increasingly skeptical populace. Brand-name loyalty had disappeared from the landscape of the American economy, and it was disappearing from religious life as well. Perhaps the last car purchased was a Ford, but that hardly had any positive influence on the next purchase. Just because one was raised a Methodist did not mean one would look for a Methodist church in a new community—or any church at all.

There had long been a scattered few churches that de-emphasized their denominational ties. When Ralph W. Sockman (1889–1970) led the merger of two Methodist churches in Manhattan to become a single new congregation in the 1910s, his church was called "Christ Church, Methodist." Placing the denominational affiliation after the comma, where it could easily be dropped or ignored, diminished that connection.

But by the final quarter of the twentieth century, professional ministry was showing many signs—not just a scattered few—that brand-name denominational loyalty was gone. Increasingly, candidates for ordained ministry enrolled in theological schools that had some programs or some faculty members who seemed personally appealing, or in schools that were geographically close, or in classes they could take online. Denomination meant something more than nothing, but not much more.

Mentors as models for ministry were chosen not on the basis of denominational relations but on the basis of personal appeal or ecclesiastical achievement. The Willow Creek Association defines itself not as a denomination but as a gathering of churches that benefit from the organization's programs of continuing education and institutional growth. Doctrinal distinctions and priorities of polity disappear from the list of criteria that matter in professional ministry. Theological education for ministry could soon be viewed as a nonessential qualification for service in a church that will train specialists to do what these churches

want done—rather than what the priestly, prophetic, and royal responsibilities of professional ministry require.

In the midst of this, another crisis for professional ministry became a huge concern. It involved sexual misconduct by a number of persons in professional ministry, particularly the misconduct by Roman Catholic priests who had molested young men and boys in their care. The suffering endured by victims of this abuse is unfathomable and almost impossible to calculate. But the damages to the church are calculable—both in the declining prestige that public opinion polls can measure, and in the billions of dollars that the church has had to spend in resolving legal claims. Professional ministry suffered as a result.

In the early part of the twenty-first century, these trends deepened. The loss of denominational loyalty became the loss of denominational identity. The prevailing image of success in ministry favored very large growth in membership of a congregation that is operating multiple campuses and that functions as an independent entity under the leadership of a strong entrepreneurial pastor. The rising image of effectiveness in professional ministry is that of one who preaches interactive messages with ample use of video and graphic technology while appearing not to need the priestly, prophetic, or royal roles of ministry in which to function.

What may be overlooked in this situation is that we have seen such styles of professional ministry before. George Whitefield (1714–1770) was an eighteenth-century itinerant evangelist who delivered strongly interactive and emotionally engaging sermons to thousands of people at a time. But no institutional form of his church life or his professional ministry endured after his death. Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887) was as big a celebrity as the nineteenth century ever produced in America, holding forth at the preaching platform of Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn. During his lifetime, he drew thousands to hear his sermons, held auctions to free slaves, and was entrepreneurially successful at building a church around his forceful personality, but little or nothing of it endured in professional ministry. In the ensuing decades of the twenty-first century, the professional ministry will continue to evolve in its entrepreneurial, uniquely American, way.

See also *Congregations; Denominationalism; Ecumenism; Education: Seminaries and Theological Education; Emerging Church Movement; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Faith-Based Initiatives; Mainline Protestants; Megachurches; Philanthropy; Polity; Unaffiliated; Women: Religious; Women: Ordination of.*

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Missions: Domestic

Although the American history of domestic missions proper starts in the nineteenth century, some of the roots of that later work are evident in the centuries before the respective foundings of the United States and Canada. Spanish, French, and English efforts took on the North American territory as a foreign mission field populated with “heathen” populations. One strong impulse that drove these early missions to North American natives was the European desire to “civilize” those populations, testing their mettle as human beings and encouraging them to adopt European styles of dress, decorum, and devotion. Explorers either working as or accompanied by Catholic missionaries in territories claimed by Spain in the South and West or by France in the Northeast tried as early as the 1520s to transform indigenous communities, engaging them spiritually, culturally, and economically. In response to sometimes brutal treatment of Native Americans by the Spanish, Pope Paul III’s bull *Sublimis Deus* (1537) declared indigenous peoples “truly men,” able to embrace the gospel and therefore entitled to humane methods of missionary engagement. Spanish Franciscans missionized those populations in the Southwest during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; French Jesuit and Franciscan brothers and Ursuline sisters labored in the area of present-day Quebec and southward from the early seventeenth century; French Franciscans, then Jesuits, worked in the Saint Lawrence River Valley during the seventeenth

century; and English Puritans and Quakers, in New England down into present-day Pennsylvania and Delaware, also during the seventeenth century.

Nineteenth Century: Missionary Societies Flourish

During the Revolutionary War and early national period in the United States, religious and political leaders of the new nation acted on understandings of the land, its native inhabitants, and the nation's destiny as a trust from God. Soon bolstered by Protestant revival spirit, growing in the latter years of the eighteenth century and exploding in the first decades of the nineteenth, Christian missionaries commissioned by Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and Baptists in the Northeast promoted their religion as a civilizing force in towns and on the expanding frontier, among natives and white settlers alike. Missionary societies in this early period included the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among Indians and Others, founded in Boston in 1787 and comprised of the broadest spectrum of Boston Protestantism, from the orthodox Congregationalist to the proto-Unitarian. A welter of late eighteenth-century foundations of mostly "union" or interdenominational missionary societies in the Northeast—Philadelphia, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts—continued through the first decade of the nineteenth century. The founding of the Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes in 1800 prompted an upsurge of regional imitators, too, including societies within particular denominations, until by 1818 there were ninety-seven female societies that had been devoted primarily before 1810 to financial support of frontier missions. Such societies kept up vigorous correspondence from localities around New England with the original Boston organization, sharing news and collecting and disbursing monetary support for mission work.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), from its founding in 1810 through its first decade, contributed half of its funds to missionizing North American natives and settlers in western territories. ABCFM-sponsored schools propounded white Protestant standards of piety, cleanliness, propriety, education, and industriousness. In the West, both Catholic Jesuits and ABCFM-sponsored laymen worked among Plains Indians. While Catholics tended to emphasize the sacraments, Catholic teaching, and ritual practice—often making use of correspondences between native practice and Christian traditions—Protestants typically emphasized the "civilizing"

work of schooling and literacy, alongside religious work, including the translation of the Bible and Christian classics into native tongues.

"New School" or revivalist Presbyterians and their theological kin the Congregationalists coordinated their respective early nineteenth-century missionary work, formalizing their relationship from 1801 until 1837 with the Plan of Union, wherein they agreed not to compete with one another for frontier mission converts. They also engaged in reform activity, translating the message of the gospel into advocacy for temperance and against slavery and making common cause with other Protestant groups in opposing the importation and spread of Catholicism. In the view of northern Protestants, all of these phenomena threatened not only the purity of individual souls but also the virtue of the fledgling republic. Tyrannies of alcohol, slavery, and (in their view) "Popish" religion had to be dismantled. They addressed these social ills on an individual rather than a systemic basis. The 1852 abolitionist blockbuster *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, written by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–1896), for instance, sought to end what she and others saw as the national sin of slavery by appealing to individual readers' feelings of common humanity with the book's enslaved black characters.

Nineteenth Century: An "Evangelical United Front"

The fervor of the Second Great Awakening—a series of early nineteenth-century revivals that took place variously on the frontier, in the Northeast, and in the South—produced a new wave of interest in and organization of home mission projects. Several new endeavors institutionalized that spirit and constituted what historians refer to as an "evangelical united front" against not only irreligion but also illiteracy, poverty, and sexual immorality. This "Benevolent Empire" of voluntary reform groups shared resources and a common concern to promote Protestant Christian culture.

The American Education Society (founded in 1815) united Presbyterians and Congregationalists in an effort to fund the education of much-needed new clergy. The ecumenical American Bible Society (founded in 1816) distributed and eventually offered its own translations of the Christian scriptures. The American Colonization Society (founded in 1817), albeit paternalistically, initiated a campaign to resolve the nation's racial tensions by purchasing and freeing black slaves, then settling them in Africa. The

American Sunday School Union (founded in 1824), based in Philadelphia, devoted its energies to providing materials to Sunday school teachers and didactic reading material to children. The American Tract Society (founded in 1825), another interdenominational Protestant effort, produced and disseminated thousands of pithy expositions and sentimental appeals aimed at converting readers to Christ. The American Home Mission Society (founded in 1826), another Presbyterian–Congregationalist collaboration, provided desperately needed clergy primarily to the western frontier. The American Temperance Union, founded originally in Massachusetts in 1826 and reorganized in 1835, worked to eliminate the bane of alcohol from homes and communities. Later, in midcentury, the Mount Vernon Association of Young Men set out to improve the lives of Boston area youth; this organization developed after the war into the Young Men’s Christian Association and sought to impress upon its members a model of manly middle-class devotion.

These organizations reflected the direct or indirect influence of Lyman Beecher (1775–1863), who was both an orthodox Congregationalist and a supporter of moderate revivalism, especially as a weapon against frontier impiety and Catholic encroachment on American Protestant culture.

These groups reflect an upsurge in religious interest and enthusiasm that relied on new levels of lay involvement, creativity, and leadership, especially on the part of churchwomen. Lay workers engaged in the mission of the church at a level of activity rivaling that of the clergy—leading revivals; conducting home visitations; organizing, funding, and engaging in urban work. Moreover, such organizations testify to a renewed spirit of cooperation among Protestant denominations that took root as creedal differences lessened in importance. What prevailed instead, among denominations that were inclined to deemphasize doctrine and emphasize cooperation, were concerns to express the Holy Spirit’s empowerment of all believers to show Christian love in practical ways and promote social justice. Protestant laypeople felt newly empowered, given the evidence of revival conversions that “democratized” traditional understandings of predestinarian theology and promoted a more robust account of human free will.

This transformation owes much to the work of New York Methodist laywoman Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874). Her Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness, her work in New York prison and urban missions—including the institutional Five Points Mission, which she founded in 1850—and her writings on spirituality, lay leadership, and reform

work inspired many and helped legitimate the spread of spiritual regeneration into the social field. The transformation also drew on the theology of Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875), revivalist and chief popularizer of Christian perfectionist social reform. For Finney, one’s own sanctification necessarily entailed the eradication of such societal evils as poverty—no longer, in the early nineteenth century, seen as the intransigent result of God’s providential design. Greed, ignorance, drunkenness, prostitution, and even gender inequality and (most controversially) slavery came under perfectionist Protestant critique, especially after 1850.

The motives and methods driving domestic missions among Protestants and Catholics in Canada during the nineteenth century resemble those in the United States. Methodists, Presbyterians, and Anglicans—the largest Canadian Protestant groups—as well as French-speaking Quebecois Catholics wanted to ensure that Christianity spread west as settlers did, bringing the Christian religion and “civilized” standards of conduct to the wild frontier. Protestant mission efforts also focused on social reform in Canada’s urban areas, particularly in Ontario, the country’s most populous province by the mid-nineteenth century and the province with the smallest Catholic population. Ontario experienced enormous growth in churches and church membership during the nineteenth century, and its mostly Protestant population turned its considerable energies toward promoting education, temperance, and a generally moral society.

Distinctive historical and cultural conditions in Canada did produce some differences from U.S. mission efforts. Canadians did not join American colonists’ rebellion in 1776 and rebuffed the United States’ hopes that Canada would join the conflict with Britain in 1812; a deep loyalist streak colored Canadian Protestantism in the nineteenth century. A respect for tradition and stability tempered its populist, enthusiastic tendencies, and for the most part squelched the millennialism that powered social reform in the United States. The centuries-long Roman Catholic presence in Quebec—and the conservative quality of that Catholicism—also tempered Protestant fervor. Small Protestant efforts to missionize Quebec’s Catholics and French Catholic work among English-speaking Protestants had limited success. Canada’s public life was therefore much less vexed by Protestant–Catholic tensions that fueled debates about, for instance, public schools and educational reform in the antebellum United States. Canadian provinces, therefore, funded public school systems, and the churches—Protestant and Catholic—organized and ran them.

Post–Civil War: Differences between North and South

After the Civil War, attention in the northern U.S. cities fell to addressing the social crises confronting the reunited nation—problems such as urban poverty, substandard housing, abuse of workers' rights, and alcoholism. Influenced by Phoebe Palmer, Frances Willard (1839–1898) took over the temperance cause in 1874. Her Woman's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.), led by evangelical middle-class women, took the motto "For God and Home and Native Land," reconceiving Christian womanhood as "organized mother-love" for the sake of society. Reflecting similar concerns, Letitia Youmans (1827–1896) founded the Canadian W.C.T.U. in Ontario that same year.

North and South, religious communities in the United States also grappled with the large population of newly freed southern blacks, hampered by the history of enslavement and by the ever-present threat of racial violence. Purely evangelistic efforts to convert Native Americans, blacks, and non-Protestant Christians—urban Catholic immigrants and Mormons out west—continued as well. Northern Baptists in particular but also Presbyterians and Methodists strove to convert, educate, and "Americanize" these populations.

Domestic missions developed differently among southern Protestants than among those in the North. In the antebellum period, supporters of missions initially engaged in the foreign field and came only later to reformist domestic missions, which carried problematic freight for southern society. Domestic evangelistic and reform work might involve white women outside their own homes and therefore threaten the carefully interwoven racially and sexually repressive southern social, economic, and religious structures. Christian missions to black slaves before the war, such as the work of Presbyterian Charles Colcock Jones (1805–1863) through his Liberty County (Georgia) Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negroes, begun in 1831, propounded a careful gospel that reinforced the control of white master over black slave rather than challenging it. Not till after the Civil War did more autonomous southern missions by white and black Protestant denominations take on religious, educational, and social reform more vigorously.

1880 to World War I: Christianizing and Civilizing

Mission societies of the major white Protestant denominations flourished from 1880 through World War I and

continued their efforts to address the spiritual, material, and educational needs of freed blacks in the South, even as new restrictions began to close off blacks' access to social, legal, and economic advancement. Denominational efforts such as the Congregationalists' American Missionary Association, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Presbyterians' Board of Missions to the Freedmen excelled in creating and supporting African American schools. Each of these societies received reinforcement (and sometimes competition for resources) from women's auxiliary societies that flourished until the male-led organizations took them over in the early twentieth century. Unlike the men's associations, the white women's societies cooperated with their black female counterparts in fund-raising, organizing, and engaging in the hands-on work of "uplifting" throngs of southern blacks by preaching Protestant Christianity and propounding "civilized," middle-class mores. Black and white women made common cause especially over the black family, which all sought to mold according to middle-class white standards. Working with white American Baptist women, black National Baptist women, led by Nannie Helen Burroughs (1879–1961), started the National Training School for Women and Girls in Washington, D.C., in 1909. The school promoted a program of "Bible, bath, and broom"—Protestant Christian devotion, personal purity, and domestic skill. In the early twentieth century, such projects and the coordination necessary to run them spurred black women and men to act autonomously, promoting their own evangelical, educational, and economic projects apart from white denominations and mission organizations.

In 1907, the Woman's Home Mission Society (WHMS) of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, organized a Committee on Social and Industrial Conditions to work for more just working conditions in growing southern industries. A year later, the society initiated a Committee on Sociology and Philanthropy, focused on issues affecting women and children. The WHMS merged into the Woman's Missionary Council (WMC) in 1910, and its Committee on Social Service and Local Work took over domestic missions, teaching, visiting, and working against the influence of gambling, drinking, and prostitution. The WMC continued to ally with other women's groups even as male denominational leaders grew more hostile to the women's support of social reforms such as worker, wage, and voter protection.

Mission activity in cities gave rise to religious creativity, including the formation of new denominations. Perhaps

the most well-known newcomer from this period is the Salvation Army, organized as the Christian Mission in England in 1865 by William (1829–1912) and Catherine (1829–1890) Booth and given its current name in 1878. The Army deployed to the United States in 1879 with its particular blend of Holiness Christianity and lively worship, aimed at and attracting a primarily working-class audience that had not responded to the earnest but sometimes staid middle-class paternalism of mainstream Protestant mission Christianity. The Army took aim at the insouciance of a social order that—in its habits and formal structures—allowed people to descend ever further into spiritual and material degradation. By such methods as the “city colony,” a total mission experience, Salvationists promoted the physical well-being of their mission targets by providing adequate food, shelter, and work opportunities alongside their efforts at Christian conversion. By 1904, when the Booths’ daughter Evangeline arrived in the United States to expand the Salvation Army work, the group ran a panoply of institutions: children’s homes, “slum brigades” that paraded and preached in the most deflated parts of American cities, housing projects for workingmen and the unemployed, programs selling affordable fuel and ice, employment offices, “farm colonies,” and secondhand stores (for which they are most widely known today). In Canada, too, the Army had great success during this period in urban mission work.

1880 to World War I: “Women’s Work” in Missions

Religious creativity rooted in missions has also stirred women’s activism. The history of religion in the United States abounds with debates about women’s fitness for religious work. Supporters of so-called women’s work—mission activity performed by women with a domestic focus and aimed particularly at women and children—have used scripture and a liberating understanding of the gospel to justify women’s special potential for mission work. In the antebellum era, the conservative author and teacher Catharine Beecher (1800–1878), Lyman’s oldest daughter, understood women as naturally fit for the work of religious instructor and pure spiritual exemplar, yet she castigated women—the famous example is Presbyterian-turned-Quaker abolitionist Angelina Grimké (1805–1879)—who sought to expand the impact of their gifts beyond the confines of their own private homes. Only as a teacher, Beecher thought—that is, as someone who sacrificed her own domestic future for the sake of the next generation of

citizens—could a woman justify working away from her own family hearth.

As noted, women participated in the funding and, in some cases, the implementation of antebellum mission and reform projects. During and after the Civil War, however, women’s organizing intensified and expanded, driven by new possibilities in the postwar moment. Promoters of mission, male and female, relied increasingly on a rationale for women’s involvement that saw them specially suited for reaching women and children, rousing new openness to women’s mission autonomy. New and more efficient modes of community and transportation, as well as increasing affluence, allowed mission sponsors, their missionaries, and their targeted populations to be connected as never before. In 1860, New Yorker Sarah Doremus (1802–1877) organized the interdenominational Women’s Union Missionary Society and deployed its members to serve in prisons, hospitals, elder homes, schools, and orphanages. Her work inspired the creation of national women’s mission societies within the major American denominations. As Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist women formed their foreign mission societies in the late 1860s and early 1870s, domestic mission advocates worried that the special cachet of “women’s work for heathen women” overseas would pull money, attention, and workers away from the domestic work for women and children and worked to counter that eventuality.

In addition to societies that organized, funded, and disseminated information about particular fields of work, mission training schools taught lay students (mostly female and with widely varied academic preparation) how to conduct effective Bible instruction and other functions of mission work. Between 1880 and 1915, around sixty of these mission training schools came into being in response to the growing need for missionaries to teach the Bible to urban, often Catholic, immigrants and address their material needs. Training schools therefore offered a panoply of Bible classes as well as courses on social work and nursing.

Training school students gained practical experience by ministering to folks in need. The first women’s training school was the Baptist Missionary Training School, started in Chicago in 1881. In 1889, entrepreneurial evangelist Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899) opened his Institute for Home and Foreign Missions, which required all students, male and female, to work in city missions as part of their training, even if they were destined for the foreign field. Among southern Methodists, Belle Harris Bennett (1852–1922) led the charge to train women for missionary service. Christening her

school with the name of its first donor, she started the Scarritt Bible and Training School in St. Louis in 1892 and began preparing women for foreign and domestic service as missionaries, nurses, and pastors' wives, eventually focusing on domestic missions. The school moved to Nashville in 1923 and broadened its student body to include men. Ruth Barker Scarritt, whose husband was the namesake and primary donor to Scarritt Training School, started the Woman's Parsonage and Home Mission Society in 1894, declaring strong home missions the root of strong foreign missions.

Deaconess work—nursing, social work, pastoral assistance, and education—was recognized officially in the 1880s as an avenue for women's work in Methodist, Episcopal, and Lutheran denominations. It gave early expression to the Social Gospel, which would flower in U.S. and Canadian cities in the early twentieth century. Oberlin graduate, author, lecturer, teacher, and Methodist physician Lucy Rider Meyer (1849–1922) opened her Chicago Training School in 1885 to prepare women for home mission work. The program of study featured academic and practical preparation, including courses in medicine and required visitations to the poor and the sick. In 1887, the Chicago Deaconess School opened as an adjunct to Meyer's institution, and in 1888 the Methodist General Conference gave sanction to both the school and the position of deaconess; eventually an adjacent hospital was built. The Boston-based New England Deaconess Home and Training School opened its doors in 1889 and, as in Chicago, paved the way for the construction of an adjacent hospital, built in 1896. These training schools endured until after World War I, when changes in higher education and the broader culture moved their programs into either seminaries or schools of social work.

The desire to reach U.S. populations with the gospel and material assistance also moved Catholics—especially Catholic women religious—to enter the domestic field in the immigrant-rich cities, on the western frontier, and in parts of the South. Catholic women could join one of the European orders that had come to the United States and engage in work directed at poor or ethnic Catholics. Anti-Catholic opposition, forceful and often violent before the Civil War, abated somewhat in the later nineteenth century but still posed obstacles to Catholics determined to pastor to needy Americans. Working in the face of such suspicion, Katharine Drexel (1858–1955) founded a homegrown Catholic home mission organization in 1891. The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Negroes aimed to convert those

populations to the Catholic faith. Her interest in this area had grown out of her involvement in urban mission efforts in her native Philadelphia and growing familiarity with the poverty of western Native Americans. Her order provided teachers for Native American schools in the West. Mother Katharine and her two sisters also each organized educational efforts aimed at Philadelphia-area African Americans.

Not only did she and her sisters initiate African American Catholic schools across the country, but Drexel founded the first Catholic institution of higher education for African Americans, Xavier University in New Orleans. Her work helped normalize domestic and foreign missions as part of American Catholic life, especially for American Catholic women, who had, along with the church hierarchy, heretofore understood their primary mission to be the spiritual formation of their own children. By 1920 and the founding of the Maryknoll Sisters, Catholic women in the United States could participate not only in domestic missions focused on education, health care, and social services but also on foreign evangelization efforts.

Conclusion

Recent scholarship on missions—both domestic and foreign—has succeeded in presenting a more nuanced picture of the missionary project. While some contemporary narratives of U.S. religion and history either completely ignore missionizers or write them off as unsophisticated puppets of ethnocentric colonial projects, a growing body of scholarship has begun to inquire into the productive tensions at work in the mission enterprise and at the very least has recognized the domestic cultural effects of marginalized, missionized cultures on the mainstream. Nineteenth-century Presbyterian missionaries to the West, for instance, did target “exceptional peoples”—blacks, Mormons, Native Americans, Chinese immigrants, and Catholics—for conversion as part of a larger Americanization project. Liberal Protestant missionaries to Asian immigrants in the early twentieth century, however, argued against laws restricting the entry of Asians into the United States and against racial theories that defined Asians as irremediable and essentially immoral anathema to the survival of white American culture. At least some white missionaries to southern blacks after the Civil War argued for the legitimacy of their work by assailing theories about blacks' essential debility. Continuing investigations into the exchanges brought about as a result of domestic mission will prove a fruitful source of information about religion's place in the formation of U.S. religious, national, and cultural identity.

See also *Benevolent Empire*; *City Missions*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Ministry, Professional*; *Missions* entries; *Native American Religions*; *Post-Contact*; *Preaching*; *Social Gospel*; *Social Reform*; *Women* entries.

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Missions: Foreign

The history of America's foreign missions is complex and multilayered. It deals with different historical periods, mission boards, relations with other religions, and mission theories. Several important factors and movements are germane to the foreign missions carried out by Christians at different periods in American history, especially from the Protestant perspective. It is important to note from the outset that America's foreign missions grew out of a dominant evangelical tradition. This tradition relied heavily on the intellectual legacy of Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) and Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803). These two writers also provided the

intellectual foundation for the Puritan scholars of early New England. Samuel Hopkins's principle of universal disinterested benevolence served as a compelling impetus for American missionary enthusiasts. They were driven by a desire to do the will of God without any consideration for a reward on earth or in heaven and with a willingness to provide assistance for people all over the world. The emphasis on *diakonia* (service) was an integral part of the missionary agenda from the beginning.

The word *mission* evokes several meanings, feelings, and dispositions. Some of these include outreach, overseas assignment, dialogue, altruism, conversion, colonialism, cultural arrogance, imperialism, and dependency syndrome. All these facets have been manifested during different periods in the history of America's foreign missions. The missionary enterprise entails a deep understanding of the cultural, social, economic, political, and religious context that has shaped the reception of and response to the gospel.

The First Stage in Foreign Missions

Many scholars consider the nineteenth century "the Great Century" of Protestant and Catholic foreign missions. During this period, Europe was able to impose its hegemonic control on a large section of the world. The economic and political power of Europe, coupled with an unprecedented Christian pietistic revival, affected many churches and denominations. Until this time, America had been a mission field rather than a sender of foreign missionaries. But robust nineteenth-century religious revivals and awakenings, the energy and zeal of a "Christian America," and the nation's increasing international acclaim created an image of America as a global savior. The motivation, rationale, and understanding of mission for members of the missionary societies that emerged from the nineteenth century were complex and varied. No theological consideration dominated the agenda of these societies except that all steadfastly believed that people who did not believe in Jesus Christ were living precariously and were at risk of eternal damnation.

Rufus Anderson, one of the pioneering thinkers of America's foreign missions, basking in the glory of America's splendor and power, said in an 1837 sermon entitled "The Time for the World's Conversion Come" that America was poised for the world's spiritual conquest. He further talked about the need to discern the signs of the times that called for the evangelization of the world. It was a time to claim the divine mandate to proclaim the gospel to all people

without regard to race or religion. The missionary impulse in the North American context is motivated by a vision for spiritual and moral transformation. Its essential message is universal in nature; it is meant for the whole world. This universalism is an integral part of the commission that summoned the disciples of Christ to proclaim the gospel. In the Gospels Jesus Christ commands his disciples go forth and proclaim the good news to all nations (Matthew 28:19); foreign missions are the response to this injunction.

The first stage of American missionary work started in 1810 with the organization of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) after a number of students at Andover Theological Seminary in Newton, Massachusetts, committed themselves to foreign missionary service. Just like its British equivalent (the London Missionary Society), which preceded it by almost twenty years, ABCFM was a nondenominational, voluntary organization. For almost half a century, the ABCFM coordinated the bulk of Americans' foreign missions. A sermon by Francis Wayland (1796–1865), the energetic Baptist preacher from Boston who later became the president of Brown University, called “The Moral Dignity of the Missionary Enterprise,” was widely used as a theological justification for missionary work. Another prominent voice was that of Rev. John Scudder (1793–1855) of the Reformed Church. He was a medical missionary to India, and in his book *The Redeemer's Last Command*, he enjoined all American Christians to pursue foreign missions with zeal, diligence, and passion. This period in America's foreign missions emphasized emotionalism and altruism. It was a call to do God's work and to give it all the energy and commitment it deserved. The divine task had to be carried out without any expectation of material benefit or even an eschatological hope. The emphasis was on reaching out to help all God's children all over the world. William Warren's work *These for Those, our Indebtedness to Foreign Missions; or What We Get for What We Give*, published in 1870, however, presented a different perspective on the motives and aspirations of foreign missionaries. He affirmed that certain economic and political gains accrued to those who sent out foreign missionaries and maintained that these benefits were part and parcel of the missionary enterprise.

The early history of America's foreign missions was characterized by a sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority and the perception of a divine mission of Americans to Christianize the world. Congregationalist Lyman Abbott (1835–1922) claimed that “it is the function of the Anglo-Saxon race to

confer the gifts of civilization, through law, commerce, and education of the uncivilized people of the world” (Cracknell, 2005, p. 114). Evoking similar sensibilities, Samuel Harris, an Episcopal bishop (1814–1899), said that “the consistency of the divine purpose in establishing our evangelical civilization is signally illustrated by the fact that it was primarily confided in the keeping of the Anglo-Saxon race” (Cracknell, p. 114.). One New York Methodist minister of the same period claimed that it was the responsibility of American Christians “to conquer the world for Christ by dispossessing feeble races, and assimilating and molding others” (Cracknell, p. 114).

Nineteenth-century missionaries depicted the nations they visited as permanently caught in a cesspool of darkness and misery. Their missionary accounts were replete with blatant denigrations of non-Western peoples and cultures. Indigenous religious traditions and the religions of the East were regarded as evil, delusive, and full of lies and fiction. A classic example of this attitude can be found in Presbyterian minister William Sprague's conclusion in 1837 that the study of Christianity and other religions was analogous to a study of light and darkness. He argued that adherents of other religious traditions were the miserable children of darkness who must be shown the indelible light of Christianity.

The grandiose plan of altruism was eventually subverted by the demons of cultural superiority and racist policies and programs. Brazen arrogance on the part of missionaries contributed to their abysmal failure in many regions. The racist ideologies of empire put an indelible stain on the good intentions and humanitarian gestures of foreign missionaries during this era.

The Second Stage in America's Foreign Missions

Between 1890 and 1918 missions became increasingly popular in both churches and society. The Student Volunteer Movement contributed significantly to the recruitment of missionaries and eliciting support for their work. One of the significant dimensions of this period was the establishment of special lectureships that were connected to missions. These included The Cole Lectures at Vanderbilt University; the Fondren Lectures on Christian Missions at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University; and The Student Lectureship on Christian Missions at Princeton Theological Seminary. These lectures contributed to a new awareness of foreign missions and gave institutional support to intellectual ferment on global missions.

Two towering figures in the missionary community were John R. Mott (1865–1955) and Robert E. Speer (1867–1947). Both were products of the Student Volunteer Movement, and both contributed immensely to the theological understanding of foreign missions. Mott was the leader of the World Student Christian Federation and several international ecumenical organizations. He wrote about the new opportunities, possibilities, and challenges of global missions. He proclaimed that foreign missions were intimately connected to the providential power of God in the world. Speer was very prolific and has been regarded as the greatest leader of American missions after Rufus Anderson. He was a systematic thinker who saw the need for foreign missions and also the necessity of building the indigenous church. He was actively engaged in debate with the various critics of foreign missions. He saw missions as an unequivocal response to the activities of God in the universe. He felt that they were a divine tide that could not be stopped by human forces. He was a practical man who was sensitive to the wider social framework in which Christian missions functioned and wrote about the imperative to connect the gospel with human solidarities and aspirations.

Later Years in America's Foreign Missions

The era after 1918 witnessed a new critical awareness in America of the role of world missions. The *raison d'être* of the missionary enterprise was criticized and reappraised with new intellectual and theological arguments. Various new justifications and theories of missions or criticisms of missions were proposed. In the early twentieth century, it was common to see books with defensive titles such as *Foreign Missions under Fire: Are Foreign Missions Done For?* and *The Foreign Mission Enterprise and Its Sincere Critics*. These books were creative responses to the strident criticisms of missions that were published in magazines such as *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Current History*, and the *Christian Century*. In the twentieth century prominent figures, such as Henry Pitney Van Dusen (1897–1975) at Union Theological Seminary in New York and John A. Mackay (1889–1983) at Princeton Theological Seminary, made important contributions to the understanding of world missions. Van Dusen's writings rendered a descriptive analysis of the gains brought about by world missions. Mackay's work contributed deep analytical and theological insight into the understanding of the Protestant mission in Latin America. Also, Kenneth Scott Latourette (1884–1968), professor of missions at Yale, provided enduring contributions in the field of mission studies.

His works on mission history, theory, and theology were well received by conservative evangelical thinkers and a large number of liberal thinkers. He advocated for the need to indigenize Christianity in mission lands and became a stabilizing influence in mission studies.

The Roman Catholic Dimension

While Protestant organizations in America produced many missionaries in the later part of the nineteenth century, the United States itself was seen by the Roman Catholic Church as a primary field for European Roman Catholic missionary societies. These Roman Catholic societies sent priests, nuns, and other church workers to help Roman Catholic congregations serve the growing surge of immigrants. But by 1900 there were also about eighty American Catholic foreign missionaries working overseas, mostly in the Caribbean and Mexico. In 1907 Propaganda Fide (the Vatican department responsible for missionary activity, now called the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples) removed the United States from the list of mission fields.

The number of U.S. Catholic overseas missionaries experienced unprecedented growth with the establishment of the first missionary society founded in the United States, the Maryknoll (Catholic Foreign Mission Society) Fathers in 1911 and Sisters in 1912. The Catholic Foreign Mission Society was established to recruit, send, and support U.S. missionaries all over the world. Established by James Anthony Walsh of Boston and Thomas Frederick Price of North Carolina, Maryknoll sent the first missionaries to China in 1918. By 1966 the number of U.S. Catholic missionaries had grown to over 9,300. This Catholic missionary society continues to play an active role in many countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Throughout their history, Maryknoll missionaries have been committed to social, political, and economic justice and freedom.

Foreign Missions: Methods and Strategy

The nineteenth century witnessed a new orientation in mission methods and strategy. Christian missions experienced new trends of development, and the burgeoning of mission fields coincided with the growth of a modern consciousness that valorized rationality and the application of scientific methodology in all spheres of life.

The early period of America's foreign mission efforts was significantly shaped by the work and involvement of voluntary societies. Rufus Anderson in the early nineteenth century said that the only viable way that the Great Commission

(Jesus' call to spread Christian teachings around the world) could come to full fruition was by what he described as the Protestant form of association; that is, the voluntary societies. In the absence of government help, Protestant missions depended completely on voluntary support. Catholic societies also solicited for lay giving. The principles of voluntary society were carefully laid out: identify the work to be done, find the best way to carry it out, and organize the people to pursue the task. These principles were eventually applied to the work of Christian congregations and to missions. In fact, effective overseas missions started not with the established ecclesiastical bodies but with voluntary societies. By the American Civil War, most denominations had organized their own mission boards, but these boards were energized by the spirit and principles of the voluntary societies already pervasive in American society. The phenomenon of voluntary societies driving missionary initiatives was already popular in Europe; Americans adopted this principle to further missionary work abroad.

American churches made their mission societies or boards integral to the church. By doing this, they made their foreign missions internal and churchwide. Americans saw themselves as missionary communities. This fact was affirmed by Baptists, Methodists, and others. Presbyterians concluded that the church was itself a missionary agency with responsibility for its own outreach. In 1835 the Episcopal Church established a voluntary society and maintained that all Episcopalians belonged to it.

Foreign Missions: The Response to Criticism

In his writings, Professor Lamin Sanneh challenges the normative notion among Christian theologians and secular historians that foreign mission is cultural imperialism. In his work on missions and translatable gospel, he argues against the theory that mission was the surrogate of Western colonialism and that both movements destroyed indigenous cultures. In this view, the emphasis on translation in mission assumes that religion is expressed through culture but also transcends and transforms culture.

Sanneh argues that when first-century Christians translated their sacred texts into Greek, they initiated a process by which the Christian message was continuously restated in new linguistic and cultural forms. This process was an unalloyed affirmation of each language and other cultural parameters utilized in this process. No matter how culturally skewed or politically imperialistic foreign mission has been, because its agents and agencies recognized and utilized the

built-in Christian legacy of translation, they in fact affirmed indigenous cultures and values. Eventually, foreign missionaries recognized the validity of indigenous culture for mission and evangelism. In Africa for instance, foreign missionaries became convinced that Africans had heard of God and that the God enshrined in their sacred canons had to be spoken of in an African context, where God was conceived as a compassionate deity who was approached through the lesser deities. This was a radical departure from the nature of foreign mission as a form of Western cultural authority and an affirmation of *missio Dei*; that is, mission belongs to God, and God preceded the missionaries in Africa.

A theological appropriation of *missio Dei* adds weight to this notion that God's initiative has preceded foreign missionaries. The message of divine love, grace, and reconciliation was embedded in the indigenous religious traditions long before Western missionaries arrived. This a priori divine credential gives validity to the African religious experience and at the same time adds credence to the missionary enterprise. In other words, foreign missionaries were responding to an initiative that was already taking shape within the African religio-cultural landscape.

Sanneh further proposes two alternative mission strategies. One is mission by diffusion, making the missionary culture the inseparable carrier of the message. Religion inexorably moves from its initial cultural base and is implanted in other societies primarily as a matter of cultural identity. He offers Islam as the perfect example of this process.

The other is mission by translation, which makes the recipient culture the true and final locus of the proclamation so that the religion arrives without the presumption of cultural hubris or rejection. The emphasis on translating the Bible into different languages took primary agency away from the missionary and gave it to local churches, which could boldly proclaim their own languages and cultures. This is the genius of translatability, which is contrary to the efforts of Western missionaries to superimpose their moral and theological authority. Translation provides a new interpretative model for understanding the motives and intentions of the missionary movement.

The Tide of Reverse Mission

The twentieth century witnessed an unprecedented dismantling of the hegemonic control Western colonial powers had held in many countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The collapse of that system and its replacement with nationalistic fervor and territorial integrity of nation-states had

far-reaching implications for mission studies. The resurgence of indigenous agencies and an affirmation of a post-Western Christian upswelling led to new and creative strategies in missions.

For generations Christian missionaries from America had journeyed to different parts of the world to propagate their religion. Today, amid a burgeoning of Christianity in the developing world, churches in these countries are sending thousands of missionaries to the United States to preach the gospel in their own way. Reverse mission is essentially this sending of missionaries to North America by churches from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where countries were at the receiving end of Catholic and Protestant “civilizing mission” from the sixteenth to the late twentieth century. The modus operandi of this new dimension in mission entails an exhaustive process of reeducating the West on the message of the Christian faith and a compelling challenge to the paternalistic assumptions of the West. This new process in mission also underscores the fact that non-Western churches are determined to remain a visible part of world Christianity in the twenty-first century.

Likewise, immigrant religious communities bring a new vitality to the institutional expressions of Christianity, which are in decline in the United States. They also engender a new awareness of “missions from the periphery” by the people of the West.

The Future of Missions

From the 1980s to the present there has been a resurgence in foreign missions. For instance, in 1900 there were about 5,000 Americans involved in foreign missions; today the number has risen to about 40,000. Whereas in the nineteenth century the field of foreign missions was dominated by Protestant denominations, now there are large numbers of Roman Catholic missionaries, as well as Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, Seventh-day Adventists, Pentecostals, and others.

In contemporary times the notion of foreign missions has been replaced by a new paradigm that emphasizes world Christian involvement and engagement. The old model of the West sending missionaries to the far corners of the world is being replaced by a construct that all people are participating in the reconciling mission of God. One of the main challenges facing foreign missions today is how to move beyond the toxic memories associated with the missionary enterprise in many parts of the world and develop new paradigms for mutuality and partnership. One critical

concern that scholars have raised about the missionary enterprise emanating from the North American context is that many Christians from this region have the penchant for assuming that their own brand of Christianity is normative and consequently must be the correct one for Christians all over the globe. Nonetheless, the demographic composition of world Christianity today is a telling testimony to the fact that, in terms of numbers, the modern missionary movement has had success. In many parts of the world, men and women have claimed Christianity as their own, and they continue to shape the religion as they deem fit.

See also *Benevolent Empire*; *Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century*; *Immigration* entries; *Missions* entries; *Philanthropy*; *Preaching*; *Women* entries.

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Missions: Native American

The impulse to conduct missions among the unconverted is as old as Christianity itself. But by the time this new religious movement had begun to gain momentum, human beings had been living in the Western Hemisphere for approximately 40,000 years. During successive ice ages they

had traveled on foot across the Bering Land Bridge and spread throughout two continents, developing an immense variety of cultural orientations in the process. But we usually date the “discovery” of the “New World” by Christopher Columbus as the beginning of true history regarding Native Americans because Euro-American observers are generally tied to written sources as the most reliable form of historical evidence. This biased preference for written documents looked askance at cultures that defined themselves by means of oral traditions. More recently, sophisticated techniques in archeology, linguistics, and anthropology have shed additional light on native peoples who first heard of Christianity in the early 1500s.

Early Spanish Missions

The sixteenth century was largely a time of exploration, conquest, and exploitation, activities conducted particularly by the Spanish in Mexico and Central and South America. Roman Catholic missionaries, consisting mostly of Franciscans and a few Jesuits, considered themselves to be an integral part of Hispanic culture and so dealt with natives in ways that would incorporate them into European military, economic, and political patterns. Primarily because of witnessing cannibalism among the Aztecs, Spanish missions were driven by an objective of destroying pagan ways and replacing them with their own form of Christianity. This experience in the Americas gave their evangelical work a harsh, repressive edge. Christianizing natives meant destroying the paganism of precontact ways and filling the resultant vacuum with the proper creed and ethics transported from across the Atlantic.

By the seventeenth century Spanish Franciscans had spread north into the Rio Grande drainage area where various agricultural groups, known collectively as Pueblos, lived in diverse self-sufficient villages. Soon the clergy, as part of an official colonizing venture, claimed that numerous missions were so successful that the king’s viceroy defined New Mexico as primarily a mission outpost dedicated to spreading Spanish Catholicism. Radiating out from the principal city of Santa Fe, missionaries visited most Pueblo towns and reported usually friendly receptions. But convinced that their beliefs and behaviors were the only forms pleasing to God, the missionaries took vigorous measures against natives to “reduce them to Christianity.”

Missionaries in New Mexico never bothered to learn native languages; they rarely lived at any particular pueblo for more than a year; they encouraged converts to oppose

tribal conformity that enhanced social harmony; they directed secular authorities to confiscate and burn ritual paraphernalia, such as masks and dance costumes; and they ordered the traditional kivas, local sacred structures, to be destroyed as well.

In less than a century the Franciscans’ repressive program had accumulated enough local resentment to produce an armed rebellion. Pueblos revolted in 1680 in a markedly anticlerical show of force. With priests killed and churches burned, Pueblo forces simply expelled the bulk of Hispanic settlers back into northern Mexico. After several efforts Spanish forces returned to power in 1696. Many Pueblos died in battle; some migrated west to live among the Hopi; and those who remained learned to accommodate themselves to the unwanted overlords. Catholic clergy returned too, but in the 1700s they turned increasingly to pastoral care within the Hispanic population. Natives retained their languages, community leadership patterns, and sacred art. Over succeeding generations there has been some blending of native spiritualism with Catholic practices, but it remains to be seen how distinctive or powerful these forms may become.

Early French Missions

During the seventeenth century the French also undertook evangelical activity in the New World, still Roman Catholic in content but conducted primarily by Jesuits. One of the best known of these efforts took place among the Hurons, an Iroquoian-speaking people who lived in the Great Lakes region. Unlike the Franciscans, the Jesuits approached the unconverted with a significantly different viewpoint. They did not see natives categorically as Satan-worshipping savages whose ideas were utterly depraved. Jesuit theology acknowledged sinfulness in everyone, but it held that there was still a spark of God-given rationality in all people, no matter how depraved they seemed to be. So missionary work began with a common denominator, an understanding of spirit power, human propriety, and proper worship on which discussion could build bridges to increased agreement.

An exemplary missionary of this cadre was Jean de Brébeuf (1593–1649), who inspired other emissaries in Huronia. Brébeuf lived permanently with his charges in their palisaded towns. He learned to preach and conduct daily prayers in the native language. He shared their food and sought to endure cheerfully what he must have often regarded as hardships. He identified elements in Huron culture and used them as avenues toward a more Christian

lifestyle, winning hearts through a gentle, patient, cooperative manner. Then he proceeded to recommend what he thought to be more accurate beliefs about God and more admirable standards of conduct. Conversions occurred first among individuals and then extended families; Christian enclaves grew in many Huron towns, particularly at Ossosane where Brébeuf resided. Successful activities of this sort flourished for two decades, but came to an abrupt end in 1648 when warriors from the Iroquois Confederacy invaded Huronia and began a war of attrition. By the early months of the following year, Brébeuf and several colleagues had been killed, and the diminished group of Hurons fled into Canada where their descendants remain today.

Early English (Puritan) Missions

English Puritans in Massachusetts undertook some minor evangelical efforts with their native hosts. Clerics and their parishioners in the new colony were Calvinist in theology and Congregational in polity. Laws regarding church and state were derived from and made suitable to biblical standards as understood by the Puritan ruling minority. Ethics and worship were stringently regulated by those who wished to embody a “Holy Commonwealth” in the setting that emigration had afforded. Congregationalist ministers who reached out beyond local duties to contact Indians included these same rigorous demands as they sought to Christianize them. The most notable of these was John Eliot (1604–1690), whose work epitomized the strength and weakness, the success and failure of the English Puritan version of missions.

In Calvinist thought salvation begins with grace. This gift comes from God alone and cannot be acquired. Eliot and others easily granted that God chose those whom he would save, and recipients could include Native Americans as well as Cambridge graduates. But it was crucial to show gratitude for grace by living a godly life, and all such proper behavior was quite thoroughly and uncritically identified with a select set of English cultural norms. Settlers from the old country found such urgings familiar, but to native converts most of them were alien in their content and wrenching in their effect. In 1646 Eliot learned to speak the local dialect and delivered his first sermon to natives in their own language, eventually translating the whole Bible into Algonkian in 1663. Examples of the expectations that Eliot included as parts of Christian living were private ownership of land, permanent housing, farms for prosperity and profit, monogamy with no divorce, literacy, theological knowledge and rectitude, and settlement in Christian Indian townships.

None of these demands about religious propriety corresponded to any precontact habits or precepts. But despite this combination of divine influence and English acculturation, converts emerged in southeastern New England, especially among the Algonkian-speaking tribes known as Massachusetts and Wampanoags. Called “Praying Indians” by natives and whites alike, converts settled in at least a dozen independent towns, many of them formed with Eliot’s advice and leadership. Growth continued for more than three decades until the hostilities known as “King Philip’s War” broke out in 1675 in Rhode Island. Most belligerents were Wampanoag, but a few individuals from all surrounding tribes joined as well. White reaction in Massachusetts was to suspect every Indian as siding with the enemy. Natives from the Christian towns were put into what amounted to concentration camps, and many died from exposure and neglect. War ended in 1676, but by then Eliot’s native flock had dwindled to mere vestiges of what they had been. There was hardly any recovery or expansion after that, and Puritan missions foundered because of racism exacerbated by war, as rebellion and invasion had crippled Spanish Franciscan and French Jesuit efforts in other areas.

Missions in the Eighteenth Century

In the eighteenth century Spanish missions flourished especially along the California coast where Junípero Serra (1713–1784) established nine stations from San Diego to San Buenaventura in his lifetime; eventually twenty-one missions were built. On the eastern seaboard English missions received better financial backing with the formation of the New England Company and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which focused on African slaves in America as well as Indians. But as was often the case, men who began as emissaries to these minority groups soon abandoned the rigors of such work and settled down as pastors of white congregants. Financing continued, but missions languished.

One exception to that generalization was Eleazar Wheelock (1711–1779), a Congregationalist minister in Connecticut and founder of Dartmouth College. Wheelock established a school to train Indian youths in the ways of civilization and evangelical outreach. The school accepted both male and female applicants from any tribe in New England and New York and made some strides in encouraging literacy, piety, and domestic industry. The most outstanding product of this school was Samson Occom (1723–1792), who served as an ordained Presbyterian minister for more

than three decades. After the American Revolution he assumed the role of Moses by leading remnants of threatened tribes into upstate New York refuges. There he served both white and native churches as a spiritual and temporal patriarch.

Also worth mentioning are the Brainerd brothers, David (1718–1747) and John (1720–1781), who evangelized principally among the Delaware peoples in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. After the Revolution John guided his charges from their war-torn homes to the safety of Brotherton, Occom's home for refugees in New York. Work among Pennsylvania Delawares became part of Moravian outreach in the person of David Zeisberger (1721–1808). Stressing the principle of pacifism as part of his definition of Christianity, Zeisberger stayed with his converts and suffered the hardships imposed on them during Pontiac's rebellion and the Revolution. He moved with them into Ohio and then Upper Canada to avoid warfare, but circumstances intervened, especially at Gnadenhütten in 1782 where ninety native Moravians were murdered by American irregulars. After Zeisberger's death most Delawares remained in Canada, and several Moravian missions moved south into Appalachia.

Missions in the Nineteenth Century

Missions in the nineteenth century consisted primarily of an amalgam of Christian behavioral patterns that were uncritically equated with American standards forged in the new Republic. One notable example of such missionaries was Samuel A. Worcester (1798–1859), who worked among the Cherokees in northern Georgia where he combined trinitarian beliefs with literacy and agriculture as pathways to American citizenship. Working alongside him much of the time was a full-blood Cherokee known as Galagina or by his adoptive name Elias Boudinot (1802?–1839). Together they worked to stimulate interest in the benefits of schooling, trade, republican government, and Protestant morality. After a native named Sequoia created a syllabary for the language, Worcester and Boudinot began publishing the *Cherokee Phoenix* in 1828, the first native language newspaper in American history. Christianization and Americanization made forward strides, enough for the Cherokees to be considered one of the “civilized tribes” of the southeastern region. But national policy developed by President Andrew Jackson decreed that all Indians be removed to territories west of the Mississippi River. After much resistance from missionaries and negotiations in Washington by tribal leaders,

this policy eventually led to the 1838–1839 “Trail of Tears” when most Cherokees were forced to leave their homeland and move to Oklahoma Territory. Worcester went with his people and continued to minister to them in churches that still exist today.

Another important missionary of the century was Stephen R. Riggs (1812–1883), who lived and worked among the Sioux peoples of Minnesota. Continuing the emphasis on white living standards as the key to Christian civilization, he once remarked that the gospel of soap was a necessary part of the gospel of salvation. He made some headway with local natives during his first twenty-five years among them, enough to have converts bind together into a Christian enclave which they called the Hazelwood Republic. But in 1862 untoward circumstances threatened to end the mission. In a complex set of events, including impatient native warriors and inefficient and corrupt government officials, hostilities broke out in August of that year. The uprising known as “Little Crow's War” sparked widespread raids and reprisals and caught Riggs and his native Christians in a hopeless dilemma. They refused to side with native belligerents and yet were reviled by whites as untrustworthy savages. In the end, Christian Sioux were lumped together with defeated hostiles, expelled from Minnesota, and made to resettle in Dakota Territory. Riggs kept in contact with his former charges for the rest of his life, producing in 1880, after many translations of other tracts and hymns, the entire Bible in the Dakota dialect. The removal of the Sioux peoples to the Dakotas signaled the beginning of a new era, when all American tribes were deprived of independence and placed, often involuntarily, on reservations in geographical isolation with meager government services.

Missions in the Twentieth Century

Assimilationist pressures continued well into the twentieth century. The great majority of missionaries distrusted Indian spirituality and rituals, repressing such vitality and trying to incorporate detribalized individuals into national homogeneity. But in 1934 Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), which provided for restoration of tribal lands, greater home rule on reservations, and permission for natives once again to observe long-banned traditional worship services. The law provoked serious missionary opposition because most still regarded native religious expressions to be almost entirely incompatible with Christianity. The choices for natives, as the missionaries saw them, were to remain pagan at heart or to abandon those patterns and

accept complete transformation. Missionaries approached Indians with the conviction that they offered an improved way of life, saving souls and enhancing social behavior. But evidence stretching over half a millennium shows that such versions of Christianity did not attract many natives. Considering the whites' alien cultural demands and confusing ideas such as trinitarian monotheism, human depravity, and vicarious sacrifice, perhaps the remarkable thing about missionary efforts is not that they failed in most cases but that any succeeded at all. In historical perspective, it seems likely that if a Native American ever became Christian, that process entailed a form of cultural suicide wherein the individual ceased to be Indian and is transformed into another entity altogether.

Some studies of missions reveal that many view the results negatively, following some version of this reasoning: if natives resisted conversion, then errands by clerical whites into the wilderness were hopeless from the start. If people converted to Christianity, then natives burned their bridges behind them, selling out their precontact traditions and never finding a new, full-fledged identity in white settings because of racial discrimination. One can acknowledge that missionaries often approached their work with high ideals, but it is also true that they acted in ways that violated native social values and denied the legitimacy of ingrained character traits. Ethical standards that extended to the obviously acculturated extremes regarding dress codes, capitalist economy, patriarchal family arrangements, and fairly rigidly defined gender roles were often perceived by natives as too oppressive. Gospel messengers—together with other whites—produced more negative than positive effects among Indians from beginning to end. If natives accepted the benefits of what was offered to them, they sold their birthright and, neither fish nor fowl, forfeited their Indian identity.

Resurgence of Christian Native Identity

In recent times new perspectives have moved away from this rather despairing interpretation to suggest that Christian Indians did not turn their backs on traditional cultural values and self-identity. Instead, Christian affirmations have helped to strengthen their tribal orientations and ethnic self-awareness. One aspect of this vigorous new perspective begins with the resurgence of various traditional religious orientations with the IRA in the 1930s, and careful observers explain how such revived practices have grown to new popularity by absorbing and synthesizing Christian references. It may have been true all along, but observers are now

discerning how native Christians, despite hardships and disappointments, have been able to affirm vital truths to be found in the Bible and also in their personal experiences as native peoples.

One example of this new syncretism is to be found in the revived Sun Dance among tribes of the High Plains. Earlier practices of piercing and mutilation are still rejected, and Christian meanings are read into categories such as sacrifice, devotion, and community solidarity, renewing traditional commitments with fresh ideological vigor. In addition, the calumet or sacred pipe, which has always evoked great reverence among people of the Plains, now embodies more significance because many treat it as a symbol of the incarnate Christ. In many Catholic churches the calumet and peyote are present on altars alongside elements of the Mass. Harking back to the 1918 legal incorporation of the Native American Church in the state of Oklahoma, that church blends the use of peyote as a sacrament along with Christian prayers and ethics. Its members regard themselves as constituting as much a legitimate form of organized Christianity as Presbyterians, Baptists, Catholics, or Mormons. These expanding and reintegrating versions of Indian and pan-Indian perspectives are producing broader and stronger expressions of ethnic identity in modern times. Indians are not disappearing through either sellout or suppression. They are gaining new strength, and Christian affirmations are helping in the process. Indian Christians have not had their Indianness leached out of them through acculturation. Although much native spontaneity was repressed over centuries of European theological dogmatism and religious colonialism, today's representatives of Christian life lend new fervor to native proclamations about faith and cultural stability, exhibiting outstanding examples of complex and sophisticated religious creativity.

Most outsiders have been slow to recognize the changes occurring among native populations, but that situation may be improving. The quality of health and educational services offered to Native Americans rose slowly during the twentieth century, and native populations began to recover from the threat of extinction. The growth of literacy was a crucial factor in enabling Indian viewpoints to reach a more widespread American audience, laymen and scholars alike. Debates have continued for many years over whether natives should learn to read and write in their traditional languages or in English. In the nineteenth century the standard missionary attitude was based on eradicating native dialects, even to the point of punishing recalcitrant students who persisted in

retaining traditional expressions. In the twentieth century forms of compromise appeared, accepting some degree of competence in the formal use of English while preserving native idioms in family life and private conversation.

During the Second World War natives from many different reservations joined branches of America's armed forces. Others moved to major urban areas to work in wartime facilities such as aircraft plants and munitions factories. Uprooted from the comforts of tribal affiliation, many began to associate with other similarly isolated Native Americans instead of seeking companionship with whites. This circumstance was an important element in the modern phenomenon known as the "pan-Indian movement." Tribalism has persisted as a delimiting factor in native achievements. Whenever several tribes cooperated with each other to reach a common objective, most often armed resistance to white aggression, the coalition would usually produce impressive results. But recidivist tribalism would almost immediately assert itself, and groups would once again revert to narrow viewpoints and restricted concerns. By the end of the twentieth century many natives began to recognize the importance of sharing experiences with natives of other traditions. Pooling resources for socioeconomic goals as well as for ethnic awareness has been making greater headway, and Christian churches have played a major role in facilitating this enlarged and more inclusive perspective.

Another important sequence of events that turned Christianity into affirmations rather than denials of Indianness began with the life of a single native girl named Kateri Tekawitha (1656?–1680). Daughter of a Mohawk father and an Algonkian mother, her eyesight was impaired by smallpox, which also left her an orphan. She converted to Christianity in 1676 and was baptized on Easter Day of that year. Less than a year later she escaped the hostile environment of her native village and went to live in a Christian Indian town named Caughnawaga in Upper Canada. During her brief but remarkable life, Kateri attracted wide admiration for her notable austerities and chastity. Permitted to establish a convent patterned after the Hospital Sisters in Montreal, she inspired white and Indian neighbors who revered her as the epitome of a holy woman. In 1932 she was nominated for sainthood as one who embodied Catholic piety in New France. She was pronounced blessed on June 22, 1980.

Perhaps the more remarkable aspect of Kateri's life is that her significance has expanded over succeeding generations. Christians in many tribes across the country have embraced her as "one of our own," esteeming her pious example that

stands for all humanity but especially because she was Native American. Shrines in her honor have been established in New Mexico and New York where she is portrayed in respectively local dress. For the past twenty-five years, conferences in her name have been held, meetings where Christian leaders from all tribes and denominations consult with each other. Kateri's precedent provides a basis for sharing problems and insights for affirming Christian worship within a specifically Indian ethnicity. At times such conferences have provided a setting for creative combinations of traditional music and dance alongside standard sacraments such as baptism and Holy Communion. At other times the clergy and religious who attend these meetings inspire each other with similar ideas and create confessions of faith that bear the marks of a distinctively native perspective. Now that Indian Christians are able to speak for themselves, and are being taken seriously by other church members in their denominations, ethnic stability and Christian identity stand together on an unshakable foundation.

See also *Canada: Aboriginal Traditions; Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures; Frontier and Borderlands; Latino American Religion: Catholics, Colonial Origins; Mexico: Indigenous Religions; Missions* entries; *Moravians; Native American Religions* entries; *Puritans; Roman Catholicism: French Influence.*

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Moravians

The Moravians in America claim a heritage that reaches back before the Reformation of the sixteenth century. The history of the Moravian Church (officially named the *Unitas Fratrum*) falls into three distinct periods. The first period covers the years from 1457 to 1722 when the church was concentrated in Slavic lands and was known as the Unity of the Brethren (*Jednota Bratrska*). The second period began with the renewal of the church in Germany under the leadership of Count Zinzendorf in the 1720s. The *Brüdergemeine*, as the church is called in Germany, established several utopian communities in Europe and America, and it had one of the most ambitious mission programs in the history of Christianity. The third phase of the church's history covers the period since 1850 when the church abandoned many aspects of the Zinzendorffian era and redefined itself as a typical Protestant denomination.

It is only in English-speaking lands that the *Unitas Fratrum* is known as the Moravian Church. "Moravian" is a misnomer since it implies that the church was primarily an ethnical Czech community of faith. The Czech Republic today is comprised of three regions: Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. Since the renewal in 1727, the Moravian Church has been a multiethnic, multilingual body. In fact, it was the only Protestant Church in colonial America that was not a national or ethnic church (Anglican, Dutch Reformed, Scottish Presbyterian). From the beginning, the church in America included Dutch, English, Irish, Czech, Polish, Danish, African, and American "brothers" and "sisters." Currently, the worldwide *Unitas Fratrum* is divided into seventeen relatively independent provinces bound together by a Unity Synod and a common confession of faith known as the Ground of the Unity. The church has about one million members, with about 65,000 members in North America. The church has four provinces in North America:

Northern, Southern, Alaskan, and Labrador. Though most American Moravians are of European descent, many congregations are comprised primarily of people of African descent who emigrated from the Caribbean.

The Unity of the Brethren

The history of the Moravian Church begins with the Hussite or Czech Reformation of the fifteenth century in Bohemia and Moravia. The most prominent preacher of reform in Bohemia was Jan Hus (ca. 1372–1415), the rector of the University of Prague. Though modern scholars have demonstrated that Hus's theology was technically within the bounds of medieval orthodoxy, his call for reform was so threatening to the stability of the Roman Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire that he was condemned to death by the Council of Constance (1414–1417). His burning at the stake in 1415 caused the people of Bohemia and Moravia to rise up in protest. Hussite priests allowed the laity to drink from the chalice during the Mass, a practice condemned by the Council of Constance. Quickly, the lay chalice or "communion in both kinds" ("*utraquism*" in Latin) became the unifying practice of the Hussites (and the Protestants a century later).

The most radical Hussites, called Taborites, attempted a more fundamental reform of church and society along lines similar to those later adopted by the Calvinists. Taborite warriors formed the backbone of the anti-imperial Czech army until they were decisively defeated in 1437. The fortified city of Tabor capitulated in 1454 to King George Podebrady, the first Protestant monarch. Shortly after this, a group of young men led by a tailor named Gregory tried to reclaim the idealism of Tabor while rejecting violence. Gregory drew heavily on the writings of the most radical theorist of the Czech Reformation, Peter Chelcicky (d. 1458). In critiques of the medieval social order, Peter argued that true Christianity is based solely on the Law of Christ. The state church, particularly the Catholic Church, was the false church of the "antichrist" because of its reliance on violence and coercion. Chelcicky used the Waldensian argument that the Roman emperor Constantine had corrupted the institutional church by granting it political status. (The Waldensians were a medieval reform movement that saw the New Testament as normative for the church.) The true church was the church of the martyrs, not the church of Christendom. Sometime in 1457 or 1458 near the village of Kunwald in eastern Bohemia, Gregory formed a covenant community separate from the state church that tried to live according to the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount.

Chelcicky's writings provided the doctrine for the original Unity of the Brethren, which was both the first "peace church" and the first voluntary church in Europe. In 1467, the Brethren decisively and illegally separated from the state church when they ordained their own priests and a bishop. Over the next two decades, the Unity developed a distinctive form of church order that included different levels of membership: beginners, those progressing, and the perfect (or moving toward perfection). The church also had lay leaders, called congregational judges, who assisted in pastoral care. The judges included women as well as men. The Brethren considered themselves a voluntary society within the greater body of Christ. The first generation of the Unity was marked by sectarianism as well as pacifism. Members were forbidden to swear oaths or participate in the legal system, since by doing so, they might contribute to the death of a convicted person. The second generation of Brethren moderated this sectarianism and liberalized the rules of the community, which provoked a schism in the 1490s.

The "New Brethren" were led by Luke of Prague, who had studied theology at the University of Prague. Luke was the author of the first Protestant manual of pastoral care, and he was responsible for the printing of the first Protestant hymnal and the first Protestant catechism. When word reached the Unity that Martin Luther was reforming the church in Germany and had adopted some Hussite doctrines, the Brethren were pleased. But they chose not to join the Lutherans completely. Luke and Luther disagreed over many points of doctrine. The Unity taught that Christ was truly, spiritually present in the Eucharist rather than physically present. Luke also objected to Luther's formula of justification by faith alone, insisting that faith must be completed in works of love.

After the death of Luke in 1528, the Unity established close ties with both the Lutheran and Reformed branches of the Reformation. The Brethren accepted the Protestant understanding that there are only two sacraments, but they retained the other five Catholic sacraments as sacred rites. Their 1535 Confession was the first Protestant confession to begin with a statement on scripture as the foundation of doctrine, and by the end of the sixteenth century, the Unity's confession was often printed in collections of Reformed doctrinal statements. Many of the Brethren's hymns, in German translation, became part of the Protestant musical canon. Despite its close ties to the Reformed churches, the Unity maintained its separate ecclesial status for two main reasons. One, they felt that the other Protestant communions lacked

discipline and a commitment to social justice. Two, the Brethren insisted on a strict separation of church and state. They asserted that coercion has no place in matters of faith.

The Brethren were pioneers in universal education for men and women, and the church produced the first complete translation of the Bible into Czech (completed about 1588). Because it was printed on the Brethren's press in Kralice, it is often called the Kralice Bible. Perhaps the greatest contribution of the Unity to Western culture was John Amos Comenius (1592–1670), who served as the last bishop of the Moravian and Bohemian branch of the church. Comenius drew upon the doctrine and practice of the Unity in his proposals for the reform of Christianity and Western society. He is most famous for his innovative teaching methods that were designed to make schools gardens of delight rather than "slaughterhouses of the mind," but his vision was much broader than the classroom. He proposed a universal reform of human affairs in which justice, mercy, and wisdom would rule rather than violence, oppression, and ignorance. Cotton Mather reported that Comenius was recruited to be the president of Harvard College in the 1640s but accepted an offer from the Queen of Sweden instead to establish a national school system.

Despite periods of severe persecution, the Unity thrived in Czech lands, Poland, and parts of Hungary until the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). The severity of the Counter-Reformation in Habsburg lands after the Protestant defeat at White Mountain drove the surviving members of the Unity into permanent exile in 1627. The Unity of the Brethren was excluded in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, and many Brethren simply joined Reformed congregations. By 1700, the Unity was extinct except for a few congregations in Poland/Prussia and secret adherents in the homeland. However, its witness was valued by Lutheran and Reformed church leaders in the Pietist movement. The Pietist center of Halle preserved many of Comenius's unpublished papers. Moravian historians often refer to the period between the exile in 1627 and the renewal in the 1720s as the time of "the Hidden Seed," an allusion to a prayer offered by Comenius as he led the Brethren into exile.

The Zinzendorf Era

In the 1720s, Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf offered refuge to over a hundred Czech Protestants who had been inspired by the evangelistic efforts of a Czech émigré named Christian David, who had experienced conversion during a revival in Silesia. Christian David encouraged secret

Protestants to leave their homes in Moravia so they could worship as their ancestors in the Unity had. Their original goal was to connect with the remnants of the Unity of the Brethren in Poland, but instead they found refuge on Zinzendorf's estate. There they built a village they named Herrnhut. Eventually the Hapsburg authorities stopped the exodus from Moravia.

Under Zinzendorf's leadership, the Moravian refugees were able to resurrect the Unity of the Brethren in a new form known as the Brüdergemeine. In May 1727, the residents of Herrnhut signed a "Brotherly Agreement" that defined their village as a religious community dedicated to the teachings of Christ. On August 13 of that year, the residents experienced a revival during a celebration of Holy Communion, which they interpreted as an experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This was seen as the date of the renewal of the *Unitas Fratrum*. In November of 1741, the leaders of the church officially appointed Jesus Christ as the "Chief Elder" of the church. One of the most controversial practices during the Zinzendorffian era was the use of the Lot by elders to make major decisions, including marriage decisions. The elders would pray and ask a specific question and then draw a slip of paper that would indicate the affirmative or negative. The Lot was based on the divination stones of the Israelite priests in the Old Testament, and Moravians believed this was a way to discern the will of Christ in the community. The last official use of the Lot was to elect a bishop in the late nineteenth century.

Like the original Unity of the Brethren, the Brotherly Agreement defined true Christianity in terms of behavior rather than professed beliefs. Members of the church agreed to let the church's elders have authority over economic as well as spiritual matters, including choice of spouse and vocation. Over a thirty-year period, the church founded several "congregational towns," most notably Bethlehem in Pennsylvania and Salem in North Carolina. From 1742 to 1762, Bethlehem operated under a communal economy with common housing. It was one of the most successful communes in American history.

In an attempt to reclaim the church of the New Testament and the practices of the Unity of the Brethren, the Moravians in Herrnhut experimented with a number of "apostolic" offices for both men and women. People were ordained as deacons, deaconesses, elders, and eldersses regardless of their social status or educational achievements. The criteria were spiritual wisdom and apostolic lifestyle. For a brief period of time in the 1750s, women were even

ordained to the priesthood. Throughout the eighteenth century, women played important roles in the life of the church, serving as missionaries, pastors, teachers, and even administrators. That declined in the nineteenth century as the church modeled itself increasingly on other American denominations.

By 1735, the main structures of the renewed Moravian Church were in place, and the grandson of Comenius, Bishop Daniel Ernst Jablonski, consecrated a carpenter named David Nitschmann as the first bishop of the resurrected *Unitas Fratrum*. Nitschmann was part of the original group that fled their home in Suchdol, Moravia. As a bishop, he helped establish Moravian work in the Caribbean, Greenland, and North America. The first official episcopal act by a bishop of any church in North America was performed by Bishop August Spangenberg in Bethlehem, when he ordained a deacon in the 1740s. In 1749, the British Parliament officially recognized the Moravian Church as an "Episcopal church," with full rights of a church rather than classifying it as a dissenter group or sect.

Soon after the August 13 experience, the Moravians began sending evangelists and teachers throughout Northern and Eastern Europe in support of the Pietist revival. Moravians called this work the diaspora, and it was most effective in the Baltic region. Tens of thousands of Protestants began using Moravian hymns and reading Zinzendorf's sermons. Many of the Lutherans who immigrated to the United States in the nineteenth century were connected to this diaspora. The most famous figure nurtured in a diaspora community in Denmark was Søren Kierkegaard.

The Moravian Church also established boarding schools, the most famous of which was in Niesky, Germany, where Friedrich Schleiermacher was enrolled. Zinzendorf's daughter Benigna founded the first school for girls in Pennsylvania in 1742; it later developed into Moravian College. The school for girls in North Carolina became Salem Academy and College. Moravian schools were noted for their ability to combine warm-hearted piety with serious education in languages and science. In 1807, the Moravians in America decided that it was no longer practical to send men to Germany to prepare for the ministry, so they established a theological seminary in Pennsylvania. Most Moravian pastors today were educated at Moravian Theological Seminary, but it is increasingly an ecumenical seminary serving the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania.

Zinzendorf had been educated in the Pietist center of Halle, Germany, and was familiar with Halle's pioneering

efforts in missions to non-Christian peoples. After the August 13 experience, he inspired the Moravian refugees in Herrnhut to view their exile as an opportunity to serve the Lord anywhere in the world. In 1732, the first Moravian missionaries went to the slaves on the Danish colony of St. Thomas. The slaveholders were hostile to the Moravian missionaries' message of God's love for slaves, and they could be brutal in their opposition. Disease and climate took its toll as well, and ten of the first twelve missionaries died within months of arriving on the island, but the church kept sending workers into the fields.

The success of the Moravian mission depended on a freed woman named Rebecca who recognized that the Moravian version of the gospel was different from that preached by most white imperialists. She became the most effective evangelist and soon married Matthias Freundlich, one of the missionaries. Both were imprisoned by the authorities on St. Thomas, and it took a personal visit by Count Zinzendorf to secure their release. Rebecca was one of the first African women to be ordained by any church, and she ended her career as missionary back in her African homeland. Some distinctive practices of the black church in America may be traced to the Moravian mission, particularly the Watchnight Service on New Year's Eve and the practice of waiting until all are served before partaking of Communion. Methodist and Baptist missionaries in the early nineteenth century learned from the Moravians.

By 1760, Moravian work was established in South Africa, Surinam, Guyana, Greenland, India, and North America. The artist Valentin Haidt depicted the scope of Moravian missions in the mid-eighteenth century in his painting *First Fruits*, in which individual converts are depicted in their native dress. Moravian missions to native tribes in America are particularly noteworthy because of the church's respectful treatment of native culture and attempts to protect natives from abuse by European settlers. Unlike other missionaries, Moravians learned native languages and their communal understanding of Christianity was congenial to tribal peoples. David Zeisberger was particularly effective because he worked well with native "helpers" (pastors). Tragically, nearly a hundred Moravian Indians were massacred by an American militia in their village of Gnadenhütten in Ohio in 1782. Moravian missionaries among the Cherokee were unable to prevent the Trail of Tears, but they did reestablish their work with the Cherokee in Oklahoma.

The Moravians participated in General Oglethorpe's philanthropic experiment in Georgia in the 1730s. This was

the church's first attempt to establish a communal society outside of Germany, and it did not go well. The English were suspicious of the theology of the German Pietists and their efforts to minister to slaves and natives. It was the Moravians' refusal to bear arms that caused the most conflict in Georgia, and eventually the Moravians abandoned Georgia. Many of them relocated to the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania with the help of George Whitefield. Despite the failure in Georgia, the Moravians there had a lasting impact on American Christianity through the impression they made on John Wesley. After his own failure in the colonies, Wesley joined the Moravians in London where he had his experience of grace. He adopted many practices from the Moravians, including his famous "bands."

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, became the headquarters of the Moravian work in America. Under Bishop Spangenberg, the Moravians built an efficient communal economy, trained and sent out dozens of missionaries to the Indians, and established a network of congregations from New England to North Carolina. Zinzendorf visited Pennsylvania in 1742 and attempted to bring together all German-speaking Protestants into an ecumenical church body, marking the first truly ecumenical venture in American history. It failed, and the final result was that the German Lutherans and German Reformed sped up their efforts at ecclesiastical organization.

The Modern Era

Unlike all other churches in America, the Moravians did not break their formal ties to Europe following the American Revolution. It was not until the 1850s that the Northern and Southern Provinces were established as semiautonomous entities. Today, the *Unitas Fratrum* remains a single global church. The Revolution, however, did profoundly affect the Moravians in North America. The communal system went into an irreversible decline and was finally abolished in the middle of the nineteenth century. The mission to Native Americans likewise declined and was eventually abandoned.

Slowly, Moravians in America adopted the attitudes and practices of other American Christians, including the ownership of slaves. The Moravians had been deeply involved in the Great Awakening of the 1740s, but they were largely absent from the Second Great Awakening in the nineteenth century. At a time when other churches were expanding rapidly toward the West or energetically addressing the social problems of the industrial age in the East, the Moravians turned inward. Moravians never fully adjusted to the

competitive nature of American religion. Gradually, the church gave up its traditional pacifism as it assimilated to American culture, and in 1861, Moravians enlisted in both the American and Confederate armies.

In 1857, the Moravian Church was reorganized, and the American and British provinces were made autonomous. The American Northern Province was headquartered in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and the Southern Province in Salem, North Carolina. The Northern Province grew in the late nineteenth century, primarily because of German and Scandinavian immigration to the Midwest. Green Bay, Wisconsin, was one of the last attempts to found a Herrnhut-style community in America, but instead it quickly became a secular industrial center. The Moravian congregation of Sturgeon Bay in Wisconsin produced more Moravian ministers than any other congregation in the twentieth century. The Southern Province experienced its greatest period of growth after the ending of Reconstruction, as preachers adopted revival methods from the Methodists. Many of the new congregations in the Southern Province were connected to textile mills.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Moravians in America began a long process of redefinition that is not yet complete. Efforts were made to preserve some of the distinctive practices of the Zinzendorffian era, such as the love feast and use of the Daily Texts in personal devotions, but much of the provocative and progressive theology and praxis of the earlier era was repudiated. For instance, only recently have scholars rediscovered the importance of the doctrine of the Mother Office of the Holy Spirit in the eighteenth-century Moravian Church. It is perhaps ironic that during this period of searching for an identity, Moravians in America actively promoted its roots in the Czech Unity of the Brethren but rejected many of the most distinctive aspects of that church.

During the formative period in Herrnhut, the Moravians developed many of the rituals that continue to be used in the modern era, such as the famous Easter Dawn service. This ritual includes a visit to the church's cemetery (called God's Acre) before sunrise on Easter in commemoration of the original visit of the women to Jesus' tomb. There, among the remains of those who await resurrection, the church professes its faith using a liturgy based on Luther's Small Catechism. Perhaps the most distinctive ritual of the Moravians today is the practice of love feast, which is based on the Early Church's agape meal. The Moravian love feast continues to be observed in most provinces around the world. In

its simplest form, the ritual is simply a sharing of food and drink in the context of worship. Typically, the congregation sings for much of the service. Often there is choir music during the eating of the meal, and a sermon may follow. Normally, the food and beverage are sweet and festive, even during a solemn occasion such as Holy Sabbath.

Several rituals that were vital to the Moravians in the eighteenth century fell into disuse in the nineteenth century. Among these were foot washing, prostrate prayer, and the Kiss of Peace. They were more suited to a communal setting and are now considered sectarian. Other Moravian rituals have been preserved primarily among clergy and in some traditional Moravian families, most notably the Cup of Covenant and the singing of blessings at meals, birthdays, and special events. The Eucharist in the Moravian Church was understood as a foretaste of the "marriage banquet of the Lamb" and a joyful testament to salvation in Christ. The most distinctive aspect of Moravian practice in Communion is that the pastor goes out into the congregation to serve the gifts of bread and wine (or grape juice) in imitation of Jesus who came to serve, not to be served. True to their commitment to community rather than individualism, Moravians tend to eat the Communion bread in unison. The "right hand of fellowship" has replaced the Kiss of Peace.

In the twentieth century, the Moravian Church was most noteworthy for its active involvement in the ecumenical movement and global missions. Two presidents of the National Council of Churches of Christ have been Moravians: Gordon Sommers (1994–1995) and Peggy Chamberlen (2010–2011). With the end of European colonialism after World War II, the worldwide *Unitas Fratrum* was restructured and former mission fields became semiautonomous provinces equal to those in Europe and America. In 1957, the Unity Synod adopted a new statement of faith called the *Ground of the Unity*, which was one of the first confessional statements to incorporate insights from the ecumenical movement.

Like most denominations, the Moravian Church in America experienced a brief boom in membership in the 1950s, followed by years of steady decline. During the 1960s, congregations were established in rapidly growing areas of California, Florida, and the Midwest, but many of those newer congregations failed to thrive and were eventually closed. During the post-World War II period, the church expanded rapidly in Africa and Central America, as former mission fields took responsibility for their own affairs. Today, the Moravian Church continues to struggle with its global

characters, questions of identity, and radical past. Moravians still tend to define Christianity in terms of behavior rather than doctrine, and their guiding principles are presented in the Moravian Covenant for Christian Living, which has its roots in the original Brotherly Agreement.

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family; Anabaptists; Holidays; Missions: Native American; Pietism; Worship: Protestant.*

Craig D. Atwood

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Mountain West and Prairie Region

The Mountain West is uniquely diverse in its landscape, population, and faith traditions. This vast geographical space—here defined as the area between the Continental Divide and the Pacific coastal states, excluding the Southwest (New Mexico and Arizona), but including Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Nevada, Montana, and Idaho—is characterized by high plains and mountain ranges, open vistas

and big skies, forests and deserts. Between Denver and Salt Lake City lie 500 miles of Rocky Mountains, which stretch longitudinally from Canada southward to New Mexico, thus defining the entire region. The natural beauty of the area has drawn people for centuries, and its various population groups—Native Americans, Hispanics, Europeans of various ethnicities and religious affiliations, and Mormons, among others—make for a culturally and religiously complicated scene.

Jacques Maritain, the twentieth-century French philosopher, observed in America both a spiritual and a practical “sense of becoming.” This has been truest in the West. From its beginnings, the American West was an environment of both threat and promise. Those who braved its distant empty spaces and rugged terrain brought their faith traditions with them, along with great optimism about what the region and the future might hold. Because no religion was ever legally established in the U.S. West, the pioneers did much building and adapting of religious institutions. The West was therefore characterized by religious pluralism even while the rest of America still thought of itself as a (mostly) Protestant empire. As Edwin Gaustad has noted, by the early nineteenth century, the U.S. West was Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish; the West was experimental in ways that went far beyond historic Christianity or Judaism; the West was more secular than the East; and the West (mostly along the Pacific coast) “discovered” Asia—and with it, Buddhism, Shinto, Confucianism, and Taoism.

The Mountain West had historically, and has still, a lower population density than anywhere else in the United States. In the early twenty-first century, there are only slightly more than 22 people per square mile in this region, compared with 54 in Washington and Oregon, 223 in New England, and 80 in the nation as a whole. The popular image of the West as a wild, mostly uninhabited expanse of land—and its people as hardy and isolated—is thus somewhat accurate, especially in rural areas. Eighty percent of people in the U.S. West, however, now live in urban and suburban areas. And, with the Southwest, the Mountain West region of the United States (excluding Montana, Wyoming, and northern Idaho) in 2009 ranked as the fastest growing region in the country. These demographics have contributed to the diversity, openness, and flexibility in religious matters that have long been characteristic of the West.

The major religious traditions represented in this region include a variety of Native American religions, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons), Roman

Catholicism, and Protestantism of various stripes, along with pockets of Eastern religions and centers of New Age spirituality. Outside of heavily-Mormon Utah and southern Idaho, however, people who are religiously nonaffiliated outnumber everyone else. They are thus the majority—almost 50 percent of people who live in this region, as opposed to 41 percent nationally. In short, the Mountain West has an unusually high proportion (compared to the United States as a whole) of Catholics, especially Hispanic Catholics; Latter-day Saints; and those who check the “none” box when asked for their religious affiliation.

The U.S. western frontier, like every frontier, has been a zone of cultural encounters—a place in which civilization and savagery have met on both sides, along with a mixture of good intentions and misunderstandings, cooperation and conflict, freedom and danger. The story of religion in the American West is one in which Mormons met Native Americans, Spanish Catholics met Swedish Baptists, learned clergy met rough miners and homesteaders, and Methodists competed with all of them. In the American West, unlike Europe or the eastern seaboard of the United States, European settlers had no religious roots in the region. The religious traditions, institutions, and leaders they brought with them, therefore, played an important role in settling, cultivating, and organizing the region. But long before they arrived, American religious pluralism was well underway.

Native American Religions

The religious history of the Mountain West begins, of course, with the Native Americans and their great variety of spiritual beliefs and practices. The concentration of Native Americans in the U.S. West resulted from an often-tragic process by which European Americans pushed the Indians as far west as they could go, sequestering them on reservations. American Indians—or images thereof—have since become emblematic of the region. Because Native American religions are inseparable from the particular land and people from which they grow, western tribes—including the Navajo, Apache, Pueblo, Blackfeet, Crow, Shoshoni, and Utes, among many others—have drawn spiritual value from the mountains, deserts, oases, valleys, and plains of the Mountain West.

European Christianity, beginning in the fifteenth century, tended both to exacerbate conflict with Native Americans and to moderate it. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries to the Mountain West, for instance, while zealous to convert the Natives, were often just as keen to understand

and report accurately on tribal traditions, thus serving as collectors of Indian languages, artifacts, and folklore later so valuable to anthropologists and historians. And they often made efforts to stop the worst abuses of Europeans. Although many Native Americans remained suspicious of Christianity, conversion was often seen as the most expedient path to respectability, access to white power, and a good education. But conversion was not the only option. Native responses to Christianity in its various forms also included competing prophecies; rebellion; syncretism with, or borrowing from, certain elements of Christianity; and new Native religious forms. In the decades following the Civil War, six major revitalization movements occurred among western American Indians, including the Ghost Dance and the peyote religion.

The Ghost Dance originated in the Mason Valley of Nevada, where the Paiute Wovoka (ca. 1858–1932), the Ghost Dance prophet, lived. Performing the ritual circle dance that Wovoka had seen in a vision in 1889, the Indians believed, would bring renewal and peace—indeed, a new creation. Wovoka had been informally educated in Protestant theology, and he integrated some elements of Christianity into his new religion—with emphasis on one god, rebirth, and the afterlife. But the Ghost Dance was uniquely Indian. Its practice spread all over the Great Basin region between the Rockies and the Sierras, and into the Great Plains, where it was adapted by different tribes. The Ghost Dance peaked around 1894 and had essentially died out by 1910, but it caught the imaginations of many Native Americans, serving for nearly twenty years as an alternative to European Christianity and as a source of hope.

If the Ghost Dance focused on a renewed world, the peyote religion gave greater emphasis to personal redemption. Revived in the late nineteenth century by the Comanche Quanah Parker, the peyote ritual had diverse expressions, with varying amounts of Christianity mixed in. But it gained notoriety for its use of the hallucinogenic substance taken from the peyote cactus. The Native American Church (NAC), which advocates the use of peyote, identified itself in its founding documents as “the Christian religion with the practice of the peyote sacrament.” Formed in 1918, the NAC began in Oklahoma and spread westward, incorporating members of many tribes, especially the Navajo. In the early twenty-first century, there are NAC chapters on most western reservations.

But such revitalization movements among Native Americans invariably met with challenges. In 1871, President

Ulysses S. Grant's Indian "Peace Policy," spearheaded by Protestant groups, adopted the goal of Christianizing and civilizing rather than fighting the remaining "savages" in the West. "Indianness" would thus totally disappear via acculturation and assimilation. Efforts by both Protestant and Catholic missionaries increased at this time. As opposed to earlier mission work among Hispanics, Mormons, and white settlers, these missions were unique in that denominational agents relied on a partnership with the federal government to solve the "Indian problem." The Native Americans often proved a great challenge to Christian missionaries, not only because of language and cultural chasms but also because of the Indians' resistance to assimilation.

Although the Peace Policy faded by 1890, the churches retained (even into the twenty-first century) an interest in the tribes to which they had been assigned. After World War I, many Christian church bodies began to rethink the goal of Indian missions, turning their focus away from saving souls—and the cultural imperialism that often went with it—and toward ministries of social, political, and economic justice. Many modern religious groups, for instance, have been active in helping Native Americans preserve and restore their traditional sacred sites, like Devil's Tower and Medicine Wheel in Wyoming. Although many Native American groups struggle with poverty, suicide, alcoholism, unemployment, and domestic violence, there is also an ongoing creative retrieval of ancient arts, rituals, and customs that prove, once again, the dynamism and resilience of Native American spirituality.

Denominational Expansion in the Mountain West

Although the Spanish maintained a strong presence in the American Southwest since the sixteenth century, New Spain did not reach as far as the Mountain West region (as here defined), which remained largely uninhabited by Europeans until the early nineteenth century, when the United States began its westward expansion in earnest. Thomas Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory in 1803 virtually doubled the size of the nation; the land base was augmented again in 1846 by territory won in the Mexican-American War (the Pacific Southwest) and by a treaty with Great Britain (the Pacific Northwest). Thus, by 1850 the United States and its territories reached from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Such rapid westward expansion presented a near-overwhelming task for Christian church bodies in the East—for now the vast West had to be "won for Christ." Moreover,

westerners had already acquired a reputation (deserved or not) for wild living. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Yale president Timothy Dwight remarked that the West lacked "regular society" that would keep people from idleness and trouble. Without religion and morality, he feared, the West would "sink into barbarism." But there was also at this time much optimism about opportunity to Christianize the region. With religion, said Congregationalist Lyman Beecher in the mid-nineteenth century, the West will become "glorious." All the people scattered throughout the western terrain needed was Bibles, Sunday schools, Christian colleges, social services, and clergy to order their lives and lead them in the way they should go.

Apart from a few fur-trappers and traders, Mormons (discussed below) were the first white settlers west of the Rockies, arriving in the Great Salt Lake Basin in 1847. At the same time, Presbyterians and Congregationalists—followed by Methodists and Baptists—began establishing home mission societies in the East to send pastors and missionaries to the West. These Protestants scorned both Mormonism and the Spanish and French Catholicism already present (however sporadically) in the region. They wrote back to their superiors with dismay, denouncing the drinking, gambling, prostitution, religious indifference, and Sabbath-breaking they encountered among many other pioneers beyond the Mississippi. But having witnessed the enormous success of the Second Great Awakening in the East at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Protestants who wished to proselytize beyond the former colonies had the tools they needed for the religious conversion and moral education of others—preachers, Christian literature, revival meetings, spiritual zeal, and plenty of outdoor space.

In reporting to denominational headquarters on the state of the region and its people, western missionaries often included information about the Indians, their culture, and the negative aspects of their contact with European (that is, Spanish, French, British, and American) conquistadors, explorers, traders, and settlers. Missionaries sometimes took on the role of "cultural broker" as they worked with both newly arriving settlers and the Native Americans. Far from home, many suffered from loneliness and depression; they also often faced failure in their efforts, as many Native Americans misunderstood or rejected their evangelistic efforts, and white settlers often failed to congeal into viable congregations. Circuit-riding Methodists and local farmer-preacher Baptists proved most successful. Without the constraints yet of higher education or church hierarchy, these

preachers were free to gather people wherever they could be found.

Denominational Competition and Cooperation

By 1850, Catholics were most numerous among Christians in the West, followed by Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians. Lutherans held seventh place. While prominent in the Great Plains and (later) the Pacific Northwest, the Lutheran focus on seeking out other Lutherans and organizing according to nationality put a damper on their growth. The other mainline Protestant denominations, while not as “rough and ready” as the Baptists and Methodists, were nonetheless keen to send representatives from the East who brought organized denominational life and institutions. Presbyterian Sheldon Jackson (1834–1909), for example—self-appointed “Rocky Mountain Superintendent”—embodied Protestant zeal and optimism, devoting his life to establishing churches and schools and working with Native Americans in several states across the Mountain West.

The Gold Rush began in the Denver area, just east of the Rockies, in 1859. The first transcontinental railroad in the late 1860s further opened up the West as it crossed Wyoming and Utah, bringing settlements with it. Once the Civil War had ended, the United States could focus its attention once again on westward expansion and religious groups on westward evangelization. From the late nineteenth century through the early twentieth, both Catholic and Protestant homesteaders poured in to take advantage of mining, farming, and ranching opportunities. Although it took time for churches to catch up with population growth in the Mountain West, and congregations were often small and short-lived, the mainline denominations were eventually established in this region through the combined effects of circuit riding, transportation corridors, and Indian missions.

Throughout the nineteenth century, there were strong denominational rivalries (“shouting wars”) among the American churches and, consequently, a race westward to establish a strong denominational presence. By the end of the Civil War, 86 percent of all colleges in the United States were church-related; and in the West, almost all institutions (schools, hospitals, and orphanages) had denominational ties. Given the lack of established institutions and customs among early western settlers, the spread of religion depended on adequate funding, speed, confidence, and persuasion, especially in the forms of revival, itinerant evangelists, and tenacious denominational missionaries. The organization of

schools took high priority for many Protestant denominations, for these would supply pastors and teachers for the whole region, thus mitigating the influence of Catholics, Mormons, and secularists.

Roman Catholicism, however, remained the largest denomination both in the West and in the United States as a whole, mainly due to massive immigration from Ireland and, later, Italy and Eastern Europe. Because Catholics outside of Maryland experienced discrimination among the majority Protestant Anglo-Saxons, the more welcoming West beckoned for many. Unlike Protestants, Catholics did not have to start from scratch in the West, as the pioneering work of the Spanish had left its mark in the form of mission churches and scattered congregations. But in the eyes of Eastern Catholics, Catholicism in the West suffered from neglect and backwardness and was therefore in need of renewal. Catholics had to deal with Protestant competition and hostility in the region, as well as ethnic differences among themselves. Furthermore, Eastern Church authorities were not able or willing to devote resources to church-building in the West, as they had their hands full with the great numbers of Catholic immigrants thronging the major East Coast cities.

Catholics and Protestants took different approaches to missionizing. Jesuits, for example, known for their accommodation of Native American culture and patience with the conversion process, were much more successful on the whole than Protestants, who were often seen by Native Americans as verbose, cold, and distant. Catholic visual and material culture, plus its ritual and sensory approach to spirituality, resonated better with Indian tradition than did Protestants’ more bookish approach. Notable Jesuit missionaries to the West in the nineteenth century included Pierre Jean DeSmet, Joseph Cataldo (who went to Idaho), Anthony Rivalli (who served in Montana), and many nameless nuns who staffed church schools and hospitals. DeSmet (1801–1873) served as an effective intermediary between Indians, for whom he had much admiration, and the white settlers from Iowa to Oregon.

In the period immediately following the Civil War, between 1860 and 1890, newly arrived immigrants to the United States as a whole numbered around 10 million; and from 1890 to 1915, another 15 million came. Of these, many Germans, Scandinavians, Irish, and other Europeans found their way to the open expanses and opportunities of the Mountain West. This incredible movement of people was augmented by migrations north from Mexico and by an influx of Chinese and Japanese along the Pacific Coast—not

to mention emancipated slaves, farmers, and homesteaders from New England and the Midwest, and gold seekers from everywhere. There were now in the nation as a whole, including the West, a great variety of Catholics; and Jews became, for the first time, a large and visible presence. By 1920, Muslims, Buddhists, and adherents of other Eastern religions, while still small in number, were more prominent in the West than elsewhere.

The men and women who went to the West as religious workers played a vital role in their growing communities, not only as spiritual guides but also—because they were usually the most educated and cultured people in town—as teachers, reformers, social workers, librarians, and organizers of recitals, lectures, and spelling bees. Western communities matured and became more settled in the early twentieth century, and churches, clergy, and denominational schools played a major role in this development. As urban areas grew, the denominations erected many new schools, hospitals, and houses of worship. Since the western populations remained relatively sparse and transient, and denominations were diverse and often fractious, not all such ventures succeeded. But denominational competition spurred each group on, and cooperation among denominations helped bring resources, stability, and cohesion to the western religious landscape. No one religious body could do it alone. In addition, Protestants and Catholics in the West shared hostility toward Mormons and hoped to bring them closer to the traditional Christian fold.

Latter-day Saints

Mormons rank as one of the fastest-growing religions in U.S. history. They began in 1830 with six members in upstate New York, and in the early twenty-first century there are five million Mormons in the United States and thirteen million worldwide, with headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah. The early history of the Latter-day Saints (LDS), like that of America itself, is of movement from east to west. Because of persecution in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, about sixteen-thousand Mormons made the long trek from the Midwest to the Salt Lake Valley in the 1840s. Brigham Young (1801–1877), Smith's successor as LDS prophet and leader, declared in 1845: "The exodus of the nation of the only true Israel from these United States to a far distant region of the west, where bigotry, intolerance, and insatiable oppression lose their power over them, forms a new epoch, not only in the history of the church, but of this nation" (Gaustad and Noll 2003, 348).

The first Mormon arrival in the Salt Lake Basin in 1847 led to settlement elsewhere in Utah, Idaho, and adjacent fringes of neighboring states. The second generation of Mormons spread out even further to southern Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and California. Converts came not just from the eastern United States but, by 1850, also from England, Scotland, Wales, Germany, and Scandinavia. Hard work and a strong community ethic, plus a powerful sense of being the new Chosen People in a new promised land, helped the growing body of LDS succeed and prosper. Life in the West let them escape the intolerance and oppression of which Young had spoken, and for two generations they were largely left alone.

But violent confrontation with "Gentiles" (non-Mormons) proved inevitable. In 1857, a group of Mormon militiamen and their Indian allies attacked a caravan of immigrants from Arkansas and Missouri who were on their way to California, killing 120 of them. This event, which came to be known as the Mountain Meadows Massacre, still ranks as the worst act of religious violence in U.S. history; and it gave opponents much grist for their anti-Mormon rhetoric. In denying the legitimacy of all other Christian denominations, the Mormons developed such a strong sense of identity that they considered themselves a separate nation. In 1857, they spoke seriously of seceding from the Union; but Abraham Lincoln's wise "hands-off policy" toward Mormons during the Civil War helped prevent such an action. In the meantime, LDS remained strong, as persecution, hardship, and the shared journey to the West bound them together. Songs, stories, reenactments of the arduous trek, and anniversaries of signal events—like their entrance into the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847—still serve as foundations for LDS identity.

When the first Protestant ministers arrived in Utah in the mid-1860s, the LDS had been there for almost twenty years and were 40,000 strong. At the same time, there were only about 500 non-Mormons in the area, including a few Jews. The newcomers were met mostly with hostility from Mormons; but the contempt was mutual, leading to open (verbal) warfare, cold disregard, or, at best, polite coexistence. Gentiles proceeded to build churches, hospitals, and schools, optimistic that Mormonism would collapse in the face of what they believed to be true Christianity. Mormons countered with their own institution building. In the 1890s, the Mormons completed their Temple in Salt Lake City. Soon, other Mormon temples appeared in Utah and elsewhere. Their exteriors modeled on English cathedrals, these

temples were arguably the most impressive religious architecture in the nineteenth-century United States.

Schools were the Mormons' weak point in the nineteenth century. Mormon schools were few and unsatisfactory, and books other than Mormon scriptures were rare. Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians were first in the Protestant rush to fill this void, and they eventually set up dozens of schools in the Mountain West. As Protestant missionaries had done in the Southwest among Hispanic Catholics, they turned in Utah primarily to schools, and later to itinerant evangelists, to undermine the Mormon hierarchy. In 1890, about 67 percent of Mormon children were enrolled in Protestant mission schools, which were generally of higher caliber than the Mormon schools. Converts were few, but the mainline denominations' emphasis on Bible reading and "Americanization" helped nudge the Mormons into the mainstream. Women teachers, often more committed than men to long-term mission work, were key to the schools' success. By the second decade of the twentieth century, Mormons had their own schools and colleges in place, building on the skills they had learned from non-Mormons; and with this the Protestant institutions waned.

Utah joined the United States in 1896, the Mormons having officially abolished polygamy—a sticking-point in their quest for statehood—by 1890 (though fundamentalist LDS groups in Utah and northern Arizona still practice plural marriage). Despite their efforts to become mainstream Americans and good citizens, Mormons continued to receive bad press and ridicule well into the twentieth century due to their unorthodox belief system, their extrabiblical scripture, their political and economic clout, and rumors of continued polygamy. Mormons were misunderstood and demonized in the popular media as well as in politics; they were always the villains in nineteenth-century Western novels, for instance, and never the heroes. Something of a breakthrough occurred for the Mormons' public image, however, when LDS apostle Reed Smoot was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1902.

A century after the Mormons' arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, they dominated all of Utah and much of the surrounding area. The Mountain West, with its untapped potential, freedom, and isolation, turned out to be the ideal setting for LDS religious entrepreneurship. Other reasons for their success include their community solidarity; the value they place on family and ancestry; a distinctive theology that gives America, and the American West in particular, a special place; their ability to resolve current religious questions with ongoing

revelation; a balance of the spiritual and the practical; high expectations of members; and strong leadership from the church hierarchy. Walking the line between being mainstream and distinctive remains their challenge.

As Jan Shipps has noted, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is, for all practical purposes, the established church in Utah. Although other faiths are never harassed, the institutional form of Mormonism still dominates the state. To a lesser but still considerable degree, the same is true in Idaho, as the bulk of Idaho's population lives in the heavily Mormon southern part of the state. After World War I, most other Christians reduced their open attacks on the LDS, and interdenominational cooperation improved somewhat. Many LDS, in turn, have tried to reach out by sharing their considerable wealth with non-Mormons and through ecumenical efforts. Mormons have also taken strong stands on issues of national import. In the early 1980s, for instance, the LDS Church officially opposed a federal proposal to place an intercontinental missile system in Beaver County, Utah; and their opposition essentially killed the project. Yet, even in the twenty-first century, tensions between Mormons and non-Mormons continue in the region on issues ranging from beverage service to gay marriage.

Jewish Immigration to the U.S. West

Jewish immigrants to the United States, many from European ghettos, saw America in general, and the West in particular, as a place where religious freedom could find fuller expression. Most Jews didn't initially plan to settle in the West; rather, their idea was to set up shop temporarily, make some money, and come back east. But after a while they settled permanently in the region, and synagogues—though few and far between—emerged by the late nineteenth century. Because Jews were such a small minority in the West, their greatest danger lay in the possible loss of their sense of religious identity and community. Institution building, however modest at first, helped them cohere as a community and keep their traditions intact.

Jews came to the West in larger numbers after the Civil War, finding greater social mobility and equality on the frontier than in the East. In the nineteenth-century West, all groups except for the Native Americans were immigrants. There was a virtual absence of overt anti-Semitism, and Jews had an influential role in economic development well beyond their numbers. On the whole, gentiles viewed the Jews as good contributors to society—stable, industrious, and socially conscious. Many Jews participated in gold and

silver mining, especially as suppliers; and many also were peddlers, bankers, business owners, farmers, and ranchers. But most were merchants.

As the Jewish communities became larger in the West, they began to build Hebrew Benevolent Societies and B'nai B'rith lodges. They also tried, with mixed success, to establish worshipping communities with regular observance, libraries, kosher butchers, cemeteries, and schools. In places that lacked a critical mass, Judaism was maintained in homes, in absence of permanent synagogues. By 1912, Jews in the West enjoyed a religious equality that their East Coast coreligionists often lacked. Many western cities boasted Jewish mayors; and several of the larger cities, like San Francisco, had both a Jewish and a Catholic elite.

New Thought in the Mountain West

Intellectual debates of the type that roiled the East Coast churches in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—including those over evolution, biblical criticism, and comparative religion—were less important in the West, where practical and personal concerns tended to take precedence over intellectual ones. Still, given its vast open spaces, the West became home to many new spiritual ideas and practitioners. By the mid-nineteenth century, rationalism, atheism, “mesmerism,” and other departures from traditional Christianity were evident in the region. A variety of ideas and practices that came to be categorized as New Thought took hold in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century, though the term was not coined until 1887, spawning movements that flourished in the twentieth century.

New Thought's emphasis on health, happiness, and prosperity; access to, and alignment with, the supernatural; and positive or “possibility” thinking attracted many followers. Such emphases infiltrated the vocabulary of mainline religious denominations as well, and they inspired various “New Age” ideas and holistic healing movements in the latter half of the twentieth century. New Thought was an amalgam of Arminian theology, with its emphasis on personal choice and self-determination, theological liberalism, transcendentalism, and Eastern religions. It arose in tandem, as well, with new ideas about science and medicine. These emerging movements promoted a spiritual optimism about the unity and divinity (or perfectibility) of all things, including human beings; the belief that evil has no independent existence; and a thorough renunciation of the doctrine of original sin.

The International New Thought Alliance was organized in 1915, and the West was the birthplace of several New Thought movements—including the Church of Divine Science, founded in Denver, Colorado, in the late nineteenth century by Malinda Cramer and Nona Brooks. As with Divine Science, many New Thought movements had women leaders, while most Christian denominations would not ordain women to ministry for decades. Ultimately, New Thought was successful in the West, not only because of the region's inspiring natural beauty, remoteness, and short religious memory, but also because of its embrace of a wide variety of people. Many, for instance, had come to the mountains and high deserts of the West for healing, especially of tuberculosis. New Thought embraced them. In the last 150 years, the Mountain West has become a mecca for New Age seekers and adherents of Eastern religions, or hybrids thereof, many of which took hold in the spiritually fertile soil prepared for them by earlier New Thought movements.

Western Religion in the Twentieth Century

By the onset of the twentieth century, America's “manifest destiny” was essentially complete. In regions like the Mountain West, sparsely populated by people on isolated ranches and farmsteads and in small towns and villages, cities began to emerge—notably Denver, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, and Phoenix—albeit several hundred miles apart. At the same time, Protestant Christianity was badly divided, as controversies over slavery, evolutionary theory, and biblical interpretation fractured Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. Catholics, too, were driven by ideological and ethnic differences. Newly forged fundamentalist, evangelical, and Pentecostal sects, and the growing appeal of “none of the above,” added to the fray. Many religious bodies during the Progressive Era (1890–1913), however, made efforts to work together to ameliorate the loneliness, boredom, crime, filth, and poor working conditions that came with urbanization.

The Social Gospel, as Christians called it, was rooted in the theology of Walter Rauschenbusch, who said that Jesus came to save the social order as well as individual souls. The Social Gospel in the West was focused on emerging cities and their immigrant slums, especially in Denver (the only big city as yet in the Mountain West); but it also reached medium-sized cities like Salt Lake City, Boise, and Missoula, all of which had experienced rapid growth after the Civil War and which already had a substantial number of poor and disenfranchised residents. Religious bodies committed

to social outreach developed institutional churches—that is, churches that were open seven days a week and offered social services to the community. These included medical dispensaries, second-hand clothing stores, employment bureaus, English classes, kindergartens, shelters for homeless people and orphans, soup kitchens, libraries and reading rooms, gymnasiums, and youth clubs. Such churches also aimed to improve their communities by attempting to close down “vice districts” with their saloons, brothels, and opium dens; to curb gambling; and to improve working conditions in mines, mills, and factories.

In the West, the Social Gospel extended also to schools for Chinese railroad workers and miners, who were social outcasts in their own communities; and aid for immigrant health seekers, in the form of hospitals, sanitariums, and pastoral care. One response to the Great Depression (1929–1941) was the rise of religious welfare systems. In this, the Mormons were most innovative, creating farms and hiring people (Mormon and non-Mormon alike) to work on them. People fleeing the dust bowl included a significant number of African Americans hoping to start a new life in the West; and churches reached out to them, too. Since western clergy had often emphasized the practical nature of faith, the Social Gospel in the West was not a big departure from the usual modes of operation. Religious social and political activism continues to be lively in the Mountain West. In the early twenty-first century, for instance, many such activists have protested nuclear testing, especially at the Nevada test site.

In the 1950s and 1960s, civil rights movements and liberation theologies had applications in the West as well. Because of white hegemony in the Catholic Church, Hispanic Catholics in the West did not have an ethnic bishop until 1970. The lack of representation they experienced in the preceding centuries colored both their civic and religious views, and in two National Pastoral Hispanic Conferences in the 1970s, Hispanic Catholics came together to discuss human rights, education, political responsibility, and the nature of existing Roman Catholic leadership. Native Americans, too, in the second half of the twentieth century, agitated for expanded civic and religious rights. In 1978, the U.S. Congress passed the American Indian Religious Freedom Act that gave Native Americans more room to define and act upon their own religious traditions; even so, debates surrounding peyote and various Native sacred sites continue to the present day.

The 1965 federal immigration law had an enormous impact on American religious diversity as well. After a

forty-year hiatus in immigration, from 1925 to 1965, people began to immigrate to the United States once again in great numbers. Immigrants to the Mountain West came especially from Mexico, Central America, and Asia, raising the number of Hispanic Catholics, Muslims, and adherents of Eastern religions by considerable numbers.

Early Twenty-First Century Trends

The contemporary Mountain West continues to be known for its religious diversity, characterized by openness and syncretism, and with a complex mixture of organized religious communities, loose collectives, and individual seekers. These include various charismatics, Buddhists, and New Age adherents alongside Catholics, Protestants, Native Americans, and those who are “spiritual but not religious.” The Latino influx has made the region more Catholic in recent decades, and in fact, Catholics remain the largest religious group in the area, as they have been since the mid-nineteenth century. The Mountain West has also experienced an upsurge in Protestant evangelicalism, along with a downturn in traditional mainline churches. Colorado’s western slope and eastern plains counties have emerged as the most conservative Protestant religious areas in the region. Mormon proselytizing continues, and their numbers continue to grow as well. No institutionalized faith dominates the West today, however, except in Utah and Idaho, which remain overwhelmingly Mormon. In sum, the West, with all its colorful religious variegation, is doing its part to make good on America’s historic promise of religious freedom.

See also *California and the Pacific Rim Region; Frontier and Borderlands; Great Plains Region; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Latino American Religion: Catholics* entries; *Latter-day Saints; Missions: Native American; Native American Religions* entries; *Pacific Northwest Region; Roman Catholicism: The Impact of Immigration in the Nineteenth Century; Social Gospel; Southwest as Region; Unaffiliated.*

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Music: African American

Music, combinations of sound and silence emerging from sociocultural, religious, aesthetic, communal, and individual experiences, is part of the lived experience of persons with African roots in the United States. Many African diasporan persons of faith, those first enslaved and contemporary individuals and communities, experience God through music: engaged participation through performance or listening to recordings (from 45s or LPs, if over age fifty, to CDs, the Internet, MP3s, and iPods (if under thirty). Music bolsters W. E. B. Du Bois's "souls of Black folk," from slavery through reconstruction, two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, the 1960s civil rights movement, and two Gulf wars amid the twenty-first century. Rooted in African traditions and cultural practices, African American religious music is diverse, vast, and dynamic, involving congregational, choral, and solo singing. African Americans have engaged West African and white Protestant denominational traditions, black secular idioms, and original black compositions.

African Musical and Philosophical Context

African scholars define African-based philosophy as the comprehension, mental attitude, acuity, and logic that frame how African persons think, speak, or act. African-based philosophies do not distinguish between sacred and secular; all life exists together in synergistic harmony, or fluid combination. The African self embodies the unity and identity of self and ancestry, concerned for self, humanity, and environment.

The African individual typifies, and always carries, her or his religion and societal relations: a person is a religious, communal being. Self-esteem, the crux of African religious manner, leads to personal dignity and values humanity. The traditional, dynamic African religious worldview consists of a creator God, ruling powers, spirits, and people. The knowledge of and relationship with God is paradoxical, beyond understanding. Africans see the world as space for activity and life as practical reality. They know God through ritual and usually overlook philosophical or theological distinctions; those rituals include music.

Thus, Africans have a religious, social ontology expressed in human culture. Enslaved Africans of the diaspora embraced tenets of traditional African life in their communal sense of being. Communal life involved an immediate sense of God and was daily integrated with music. Enslaved Africans, dispersed across the Atlantic, expressed themselves in their music. Traditional African musical practices do not separate performer(s) and audience, as music making involves the entire community. African thought, which supports the ethical, toward self-knowledge, self-mastery, and empowerment, undergirds the sense of justice in the spirituals. Spirituals, more communal music productions, involve the entire a cappella community, with rhythms created by their bodies and improvised instruments. African diasporan spiritual and cultural tradition includes call-response structure, extensive melodic ornamentation and improvisation, complex rhythmic structures, song and dance.

A poster chart by ethnomusicologist and anthropologist Portia Maultsby graphically represents the evolution of African American music (1992). From African musical roots, there are three trajectories: African American sacred traditions, African American nonjazz secular traditions, and African American jazz secular traditions. With direct influences and cross influences, the lines between so-called sacred and secular traditions are blurred. The sacred tradition trajectory includes folk spirituals; arranged spirituals; folk jubilee quartets; folk-gospel; gospel-hymn; traditional gospels; gospel quartets; gospel groups; gospel choirs; and contemporary gospels. This lineage influences and is influenced by the various iterations of blues; ragtime; jazz; boogie-woogie; rhythm & blues; civil rights songs; rock 'n' roll; soul; brass bands; swing; bebop; disco; funk; new jack swing; and rap.

The Spirituals

Spirituals, songs of hope and justice, are "chants of collective exorcism" that helped an oppressed people grapple with the

social evils of racism. Musically, spirituals involved stanzas or verses and choruses built on strong, syncopated rhythmic patterns in a quadruple or duple meter: beats of four or two per measure. Melodically, spirituals had three general performance formats: (1) leader/soloist calls out and the community/congregation reacts or responds in answer; (2) musical line consists of short syncopated rhythmic patterns; and (3) phrases are long and sustained, and tempo is slow. This preliterate antebellum church music, of the invisible institution, would later sustain a healing reality during the 1960s civil rights era. Sociohistorically, slaves affirmed God in the spirituals as they coped with existential angst and ontological fatigue and sought healing and wholeness. The spirituals evolved during legalized slavery, between the seventeenth and the nineteenth century, as African Americans stolen against their will—sometimes sold off by their own tribal chieftains—were then legally objectified by state and church in the United States. With “signifying,” a rhetorical device where one uses secret or double meanings of words either to communicate multiple meanings to different audiences or to trick them, black folk could creatively cloak their identity politics in an apparently mundane song while plotting to escape, or use it to bolster morale or to warn others of danger through the power of song. Spirituals embody survival and hope, energetic power and quintessence, of African American spirituality, creativity, and sacrality. They express a collective African American folk aesthetic.

According to John Lovell Jr., peoples of the African diaspora created 6,000 extant spirituals (for example, “This Little Light of Mine”; “Go Tell It on the Mountain”; “Sweet, Little Jesus Boy;” “Deep River”; “Roll, Jordan Roll”; “Let Us Break Bread Together”; “Mary Had a Baby”), which employ many traditional African musical elements and a distinct blending of voices to create a polyphonic sound. Slave bards composed their own tunes and appropriated tunes they heard as they improvised songs, creating totally new communal versions. Diasporan Africans easily connected their traditional philosophy with many liberationist tenets of Christianity in the spirituals. With Muntu and Jesus as “Logos,” or Word, and the Incarnation, divine-human qualities emerge in Jesus. Muntu means human, and Nommo means divine. Muntu and Nommo together create life. Closely connected with the spirituals is the ring shout: dancers would usually sing a shout song or “running spiritual” as they moved through steps of a cadenced, syncopated dragging or shuffling manner, with body slapping or hand clapping performed by those watching from outside the

circle. Early on, spirituals emerged spontaneously during the preaching event. Probably from the preacher’s sung or chanted proclamation and interspersed responses by the congregation, this musical call and response evolved in song: in camp meetings and other religious services, according to C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya. Composed anonymously, spirituals today appear in a variety of arrangements, from a cappella, solos, and four-part chorus performed by trained choirs to instrumental and orchestral works, within classical, church, and academic music repertoire.

Gospel Music (1890s to the Twenty-First Century)

Folk-gospel (1890s) and the gospel-hymn (1900s), like the spirituals, concerned congregational singing. In the folk tradition gospel songwriters compose music and words and perform. They disseminated their songs orally, through sheet music and recordings, engaging the melody and message, using personal experiences and scriptural verses. Gospel songs focus on Christianity, the church, and Jesus’ life, teaching and ministry, particularly salvation by grace. These songs bear the name *gospel* because many lyrics come from the first four New Testament books. Having great value for the poor, gospel music emerged and developed in the northern United States. The spirituals that arose in rural settings could not help African Americans cope satisfactorily in urban settings, where so many had migrated. Some mistakenly call all black religious music spirituals or gospels. While both emerge out of the African diasporan context in the United States, shaped by the lived experience of a people often oppressed, their musical styles, use of texts, and performance practices differ. Theologically, spirituals tend to be more communally oriented, even if the text focuses on the individual, who becomes the collective voice. With much gospel music, whether a solo with verses, a song set for solo and chorus, or a choral number, the language indicates a deeply personal experience with Jesus Christ. Sharing this witness as evangelism and discipleship affords others an opportunity to have a personal relationship with Christ. Influenced by and growing along with 1880s secular, rural music, gospel music singing comes into its own with the Pentecostal movement expansion of the Azusa Street revival (Los Angeles), with William Seymour. Not everyone readily accepted this music. While northern storefront churches had an open reception to gospel music, initially mainstream southern Protestant churches often rejected the music as too aligned with the blues. The popularity of gospel music grew with the works of those such as Thomas Dorsey, Charles

Tindley, and Charles Price Jones, beginning in the 1890s and 1900s, and the artistry of Mahalia Jackson, through the 1930s. In the 1940s–1970s, gospel music expanded with the touring of gospel singing groups, the production of sheet music, recording industry growth, and the development of the Gospel Workshop of America, meeting each August, where musicians study, train, and record. Some of the most influential gospel composers, directors, and performers, many of whom are ordained, are Doris Akers, Shirley Caesar, Lucie Campbell, James Cleveland, Aretha Franklin, Theodore Frye, Dorothy Love, Sallie Martin, Kenneth Morris, Rosetta Tharpe, and Albertina Walker. Contemporary gospel music burst on the national scene, riveting the larger music industry with the popularity of Walter Hawkins’s version of “Oh, Happy Day.” Hundreds of gospel-singing groups, including the Dixie Hummingbirds, Fairfield Four, Five Blind Boys of Alabama, Hawkins Family, Martin & Morris Singers, Pilgrim Travelers, Roberta Martin Singers, and, most recently, Take 6, across the country sing in churches, record in studios, and perform in places from Carnegie Hall and storefront churches to night clubs. Contemporary gospel composers and singers since the 1970s include Yolanda Adams, the Clark sisters, Andraé Crouch, Sandra Crouch, Kirk Franklin, Fred Hammond, Edwin Hawkins, Walter Hawkins, Dr. Bobby Jones, Mary Mary, Donnie McClurkin, Richard Smallwood, Hezekiah Walker, and Bebe and CeCe Winans.

Anthems, Contemporary Hymns, Praise Songs

Many African American churches have Senior, Chancel, or Sanctuary choirs, terms often used synonymously referring to groups of young to older adults that primarily sing arranged spirituals, hymns, classical sacred music, and anthems. James Abbingon observes differences between how anthems function in liturgical and so-called nonliturgical African American churches. In liturgical churches (Lutheran, Episcopal, Catholic), anthems support, complement, and reinforce the theme, time, or season of the liturgical Christian year. Some scholars would include Methodist and Presbyterian in the liturgical group, but others would not. Abbingon suggests that the nonliturgical churches (Baptist, Disciples of Christ, United Church of Christ, Seventh-day Adventist, Church of God in Christ, some Methodist and Presbyterian churches, and so forth) use anthems to observe Christmas, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, and Pentecost. Many such churches in the African American context use anthems with nonliturgical days that

are standard days of worship in their calendar year, for example, Women’s Day, Men’s Day, Black History Month, Martin Luther King Sunday, Children’s Day, Pastor’s Appreciation, and Installation of Officers Sunday. The following defining factors determine the anthems sung most frequently: First, texts have meaning, significance, and consistency and support theological, biblical, sociocultural, and justice issues essential for their mission to be faithful, liberating, hopeful, and eschatological in praise and worship toward outreach, revival, and evangelism. Second, aesthetic musical characteristics from grandeur and power to splendor and transcendence must touch, move, and please performers and listeners. Third, because of their longevity and generational use, these anthems are not in the standard repertoire or musical canon of most African American churches.

Contemporary hymns and praise songs often have a gospel feel to them; repetitive choruses, sometimes with verses, used to help people prepare themselves for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and for devotion prior to worship. Repetition and simple tunes make it easy for congregations to join in, reading the music projected on screens or blank walls. Praise and worship music has greatly affected how people connect with, and experience, God. The focus of this music includes confession, a desire for intimacy with God, love of God and neighbor, experiences of healing, staying the course, and being open to Grace. Some praise songs adapt older hymn texts with new tunes. Some place contemporary or urban praise songs under the umbrella of gospel music. Sometimes praise songs originate within the African American community; other times, African American musicians include praise songs originating from white evangelical churches in their repertoire. The instrumentation usually includes electronic keyboard, percussion, guitars, tambourines, and sometimes winds or horns.

Christian Hip-Hop and Rap

Hip-hop surfaced as disenfranchised young people created other identities, using music, language, fashion, and distinctive physical performance styles. Rap, hip-hop’s vocal representation, is a revolutionary, emotional galvanizing performance practice. Hip-hop, a cultural movement originating in the 1970s from urban African Americans in New York City, has gone global. Hip-hop, the cultural and attitudinal context that nurtured rap music, has these characteristics: attitude, dress, dance, language, and distinctive graffiti. This cultural experience includes political activism, fashion, slang, double Dutch moves (complicated styles of jumping rope), and

beatboxing (the vocal percussion facet of hip-hop culture and music). It can involve vocal scratching (the imitation of turntable skills), singing, and simulating numerous musical instruments. The thematic and stylistic roots come from signifying, toasting, and the dozens traditions—various rhetorical devices used to communicate multiple meanings; a style of communicating, by chanting over a rhythm or beat; and oral tradition, where two competitors challenge each other through good-natured, often ironic, poetic talk, respectively—from the United States and Jamaica; double-Dutch chants, children's singsong games; black colloquial speech-preaching styles; jazz vocalism; the on-the-air black DJs verbal talent; scat singing; romantic raps; the politicized storytelling of Gil Scott-Heron and the Last Poets; and preacherly vocal utterances of many R&B and soul singers. Some use hip-hop synonymously with rap music. A source of motivating pride and identity, hip-hop culture provided rap as a vehicle for poor blacks in the United States in the 1980s, mimicking the 1970s witness of reggae for Jamaicans. Rap music, an African American genre or type of music, unfolds as performers rhyme lyrics as they sing, do speak-singing, or chant in time to a musical accompaniment of prerecorded sounds. Rap and hip-hop culture are both indigenous art and highly capitalistic, commercialized, corporate venture. Hip-hop navigates between conflict and contradiction and often appeals to suburban white youth, a pattern that follows many other discourses invented by black folk.

The hybrid nature of hip-hop and contemporary black gospel music follows the tradition of other black music before it. Similar tensions existed earlier when gospel music was first introduced in church, and blues and honky-tonk were popular in society. Thomas Dorsey, the father of gospel music, played nightclubs during the week to pay rent and played in church on Sunday. The clash between tradition/convention and innovation/expression has sourced much musical creativity in churches. With the commercial status of gospel and hip-hop, some question whether the latter can uplift the gospel message. Further, methods of presentation, and language use and multiple meanings of texts, machismo, textual violence, and strong sexual presence in "standard" hip-hop call into question how this style affects holy hip-hop. In Christian hip-hop as in other African diasporan genres of music, musical performance (for the music must be heard or performed to come alive) shapes our perceptions of society and nihilism, mixes musical genres, and moves us to critique our understandings of sacred and secular, and commercialism. With Christian hip-hop, performers trope;

signify; and use minimal instrumentation, lots of repetition, and patterlike, fast-paced spoken word to praise God, using biblical and theological themes in rhythmic banter. In so doing, many of them continue to rhyme in secular arenas, with prayer and careful planning, and prominently in urban church settings; there is increasing use of hip-hop music for Christ in the United States and other places throughout the world where ministry to youth and young adults seeks to be innovative and relevant to the needs of young adults. Selected Christian hip-hop artists include Flexx, Lyryst, Toby Mac, Manafest, John Reuben, and Soul Survivors.

Conclusion

African American religious music is dynamic, transformative, and synergistic. The music, poets, composers, instrumentation, and styles emerge from traditional African philosophy and cultural practices. As communal and individual reflection, this music focuses on praise, protest, and justice; wholeness and transformation; and the human quest for ultimate relationships with God. Strands of so-called sacred and secular commingle. This religious music reflects a rich tradition, reveres a powerful sense of overcoming tenacity, and honors the God-given creativity that undergirds a people's commitment to live and worship God.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *African Traditional Religions*; *Baptists: African American*; *Holidays*; *Literature: African American*; *Methodists: African American*; *Music: African American Gospel*; *Music: African American Spirituals*; *Pentecostals: African American*; *Religious Thought: African American*; *Religious Thought: Womanist*; *Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics*.

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Music: African American Gospel

Traditionally, the word *gospel* referred to the first four New Testament books. Gospel music, connected to these texts, is both African American music genre and style that focuses on the Christian life and engages Jesus' teaching and ministry, especially salvation by grace. As genre, music emerges from the spirituals and secular music proclaiming good news. As performance style, gospel music ranges from free improvisation to simple lines with slow rhythms to complex harmonies and instrumentation. African American gospel music emerges as folk-gospel (1890s) and gospel-hymn (1900s), involving congregational singing. Isaac Watts's lyrics and Charles Wesley's hymns were foundational. In the folk music tradition, gospel songwriters create words, compose music, and sing their music as a group's soloist/leader. The public met this music through concerts, revivals, radio and television broadcasts, workshops, sheet music, recordings, and, today, via the Internet.

Introduction: A Theology of Experience

Gospel musicians, performers, and composers attend to the song's message and melody, which incorporate personal experiences, scripture, and daily life observations. As personal testimony, gospel music inspires others, since they may know similar struggles. Gospel developed in northern states as poor people migrated from the rural, agrarian South and were confronted with urban difficulties. Spirituals had value but could not help these transplants adequately adapt.

William McClain argues that amid gospel song's sacred basis, God creates and sustains God's people. Gospel music

engages hopeful imagination, where one's God-focused perspective creates songs of faith, celebration, and transformation. Gospel songs include a theology of grace nurturing one's intimate relationship with God, toward liberation and survival, despite societal and personal oppression (such as classism, sexism, racism, homophobia) that may result in spiritual, physical, emotional, psychological, and financial distress. For Melva Costen, African American gospel music is performance style and musical genre: one can "gospelize" spirituals, hymns, and anthems to suit musical tastes within worship's liturgical drama.

Traditional gospel (1930s) and gospel quartets (1930s) grew along with and were influenced by so-called secular counterparts of rural (1880s) and vaudeville blues (1900s), boogie woogie (1900s), syncopated (1890s), and New Orleans-style jazz (1900s), as the transition into the big bands (1920s) led to swing bands (1930s). Between the 1890s and 1920s the Azusa Street revival (Los Angeles) boosted gospel music singing, which led to a nationwide expansion of Pentecostalism (1906–1909). Concurrently, singing Pentecostal preachers developed ministries amid congregational gospel music singing in Pentecostal churches. Initially, many elite African American Protestant churches distanced themselves from gospel music because it was too close to secular blues music; it became more prevalent nationwide as southern, rural African Americans migrated to the West Coast and the urban North during World War II. When the National Baptist Convention publicly sanctioned it, gospel music's popularity increased.

The shift began in Chicago in 1930. Many call Thomas A. Dorsey (1899–1993) the "father of black gospel music"; he shifted from vaudeville and blues to performing and writing gospel music. Dorsey, a prolific composer, pianist, and choral conductor, reshaped impoverished life experiences into elegant, moving songs, such as "Precious Lord Take My Hand" and "The Lord Will Make a Way Somehow." He understood the human voice and was a genius lyricist and composer. Dorsey and his friends advanced gospel by strategizing, publishing, and establishing the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses.

Dorsey championed Charles A. Tindley (1865–1933), known for "We'll Understand It Better By and By" and "Stand by Me" and creator, with C. P. Jones, of the 1900–1930s gospel-hymns. Tindley, a songwriter with a significant outreach ministry, wrote songs regarding worldly misery, joys, and blessings, sculpting imagery and symbolism into an endearing story line. William H. Sherwood and Lucie Eddie

Campbell also join this pantheon of gospel greats. Sherwood, composer of uplifting, encouraging, self-assured songs, was the first African American publisher of songs (1891, 1893), the precursor of what would become gospel thirty years later.

William H. Brewster Sr. (1897/1899–1987), a poetic storyteller, composer, innovator, and arranger, popularized the gospel blues tradition, gospel ballad style, and lyrics steeped in biblical language (“How I Got Over”). A major architect of the modern gospel sound, Brewster pioneered the sacred pageant, or plays set to gospel music, and his music helped launch national careers of many singers, including Marion Williams, Clara Ward, and Mahalia Jackson.

Female Pioneers in Gospel Music

Lucie Eddie Campbell (Williams) (1885–1963), the first female gospel composer, helped select music for the classic 1921 volume *The Gospel Pearls*. Campbell shaped the music of the National Baptist Convention, Inc. (USA), the largest body of African American Christians (1919–1962). She created the gospel waltz and perfected the lined hymn style, where the song leader first “calls out” words and then the congregation responds.

Clara Ward (1924–1973) sang in a family trio that performed at the National Baptist Convention annual meetings (1940s), including the song “How I Got Over.” The group expanded, drew large crowds (1950s), recorded extensively, toured widely, and made controversial moves; for example, they were the first to wear sequined gowns and large ornate wigs during performances, to sing at jazz festivals, and to appear in gospel musicals and films. For some, the Ward Singers are the earliest progenitors and innovators of pop-gospel style.

Roberta Martin (1907–1969), composer, singer, pianist, arranger, and group and choral organizer, introduced and developed the classical, paradigmatic gospel choral sound (“God Is Still on the Throne”). Martin, the first to add female voices to her all-male group, operated her gospel music publishing house in Chicago. She combined the “moan” from her Arkansas Baptist childhood, the Dorsey bounce (a distinctive rhythmic movement), and the sanctified churches’ syncopation toward the classic gospel music sound. The Martin sound continues and may be heard in many other genres, including rock music and symphonies, and even commercials for soap detergent.

Several female composers/musicians—notably, Doris Akers (1923–1995), Dorothy Simmons (1910–1996), and

Sallie Martin (1895–1988)—transformed the congregational gospel hymn of the transitional period (1900–1930) into the gospel music song of the golden age (1930–1969). Martin is especially significant. As an orator and singer, she turned Dorsey’s gospel texts into powerful sermon-like presentations. Proclaimed the “mother of gospel,” she traveled to organize gospel choruses. Martin and Dorsey organized the yearly National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses, and Martin cofounded the first and ultimately the largest national black gospel music publishing company, located in Chicago (1940–1980s) with Clarence Cobb and Kenneth Morris (an arranger, composer, innovator, organist, and publisher who wrote “Yes, God Is Real” and also introduced the Hammond organ to gospel music sound). She also formed the Sallie Martin Singers, the first female gospel group. Mahalia Jackson (1911–1972), a world-renowned gospel singer, radio/TV personality, recording artist, entrepreneur/producer, and businesswoman, sang a fusion of ragtime, blues, jazz, and gospel, notably “In the Upper Room.” With her Pentecostal flair and Southern temperament, Jackson sang songs of life and death, faith and comfort, of one’s relationship with God. Though her music sometimes became more commercialized with popularity, her heart always returned to Dr. Watts’s hymns.

Gospel Music, 1940s–1970s

During the mid-twentieth century, African American gospel music maintained its energetic, deeply emotional character and heightened in sophistication. Changes amid performers, performance practices, and keyboard accompaniment style expanded. In the 1940s, triggered by Rosetta Tharpe’s performance practices and her debut at Harlem’s Apollo Theater, many gospel singers moved into the secular realm. Was gospel for religion or entertainment? Tharpe (1915–1973), a child prodigy, combined spirituals, blues, and swing, stretching gospel music and rousing acclamation and controversy. A singing, guitar-playing sensation, influenced by secular music and the Church of God in Christ, Tharpe often upset her denomination because she mixed blues and jazz with gospel and because she sang gospel music in nightclubs. Radio gospel programs, gospel recordings, and the work of Mahalia Jackson and Theodore Frye, organizers of the National Baptist Music Convention, legitimated gospel as genre and style.

In the 1950s, gospel music debuted at Carnegie Hall, Madison Square Garden, jazz festivals, and coffeehouses; on

television; and in nightclubs. Gospel ensemble accompaniment included electric organ—particularly the Hammond B3 organ—and amplified guitars. In the 1960s the demanding piano style involved complex chords and harmonies. By 1963, *TV Gospel Time* was broadcast nationally every Sunday morning. Much of the development of gospel music occurs through the creativity of gospel music industry giants.

Gospel singer, arranger, composer, choir director, and pianist extraordinaire, the Rev. James Cleveland (1932–1991) helped design contemporary gospel music. Cleveland merged traditional gospel, gospel quartets, and twenty-first-century gospel music. He became a minister and founded the Cornerstone Institutional Baptist Church (Los Angeles), a venue for nurturing gospel musicians and gospel music. In 1968, Cleveland and friends such as Helen Stephens organized the Gospel Music Workshop of America (GMWA), which paralleled Dorsey's 1933 organization. This group now has over 30,000 members and 150 worldwide chapters.

Two of the most notable gospel male quartets that toured the country are the Mighty Clouds of Joy and the Five Blind Boys of Alabama. Since the 1950s the Mighty Clouds broke new ground with instrumental combo accompaniment, hot choreography, colorful suits, and a variety of musical styles. With their Off-Broadway comeback performance in *The Gospel at Colonus* (1983), the Blind Boys offered dynamic, energetic, innovative performances.

Walter L. Hawkins Sr. (1949–), bishop of Love Center Ministries, Inc. and a celebrated gospel musician, songwriter, singer, producer, preacher, and teacher, has many hit gospel recordings. He has preached and performed globally with the Edwin Hawkins Singers and the Hawkins Family. “Oh Happy Day” became a pop hit in 1969 and made gospel more mainstream Americana. Hawkins collaborated with many other artists in his 1997 concert and album titled the *Live Alive V—25th Anniversary Reunion*.

Aretha Franklin (1942–), the queen of soul, sang gospel as she traveled with her father, at age six. Her gospel heritage of fiery, fervent vocals and powerful piano accompaniment is foundational for her entrancing style with major hits in gospel (“Precious Memories”), soul, rhythm and blues (R&B), pop, jazz, and rock 'n' roll. Franklin inherited her father's dramatic delivery and her mother's vocal ability. Luminaries, from Clara Ward and James Cleveland to Art Tatum, Marion Williams, and Lionel Hampton, shaped her life, visiting the Franklin home. The true Franklin emerged when she and her sister, Carolyn, recorded “Respect” in 1967.

Reverend Shirley Caesar (1938–), a gospel singer-composer who emerged during the 1950s–1970s, is an evangelist, a pastor, a civic leader, a businesswoman, and a soulful spirit who is known for singing “No Charge” and “You Can Make It.” A former city councilor, Caesar spends numerous hours in outreach ministry, focusing on emergency support for the destitute and needy—to give a hand, not a handout. Her “House-Rocking” songs involve a fast or medium tempo, her top range, ornamentation, and improvisations as she runs and shouts for Jesus: over 150 concerts a year and The Caravans reunion concerts. Known as both the first lady and queen of gospel, she has countless honors, has toured Broadway, has been involved with motion picture sound tracks, and uses her music to serve God and build up God's people.

Contemporary Gospel (1970s–)

Since 1969, with the debut of Edwin Hawkins's version of “Oh Happy Day,” Pentecostal artists of the Church of God in Christ have dominated the modern gospel era or contemporary period. Many new gospel singers have emerged, and gospel music has gone mainstream and across cultures, received Grammy Awards, become a multimillion-dollar business through the sale of CDs and movie sound tracks. The Anointed Pace Sisters, from a family of musicians, singers, and preachers, became a part of the Action Revival Team in the mid- to late 1970s. In 1992 these nine vivacious sisters made their debut album on Savoy Records entitled *U-Know*, which stayed on the Billboard Charts for over a year.

Andraé Crouch (1942–), a child composer and pianist, experienced his call to ministry, formed the singing group The Disciples, and has performed to sold-out audiences throughout the world, with such songs as “Soon and Very Soon” and “Take Me Back.” As an international, Grammy-winning producer, performer, vocalist, and songwriter, Crouch has accrued numerous awards and credits for film writing, producing, and arranging movie scores. His music explores myriad experiences of life, offers hope and affirmation, and combines rock, country music, popular music, and soul with traditional gospel, amid electronic and acoustical instruments

CeCe (Priscilla Marie) Winans (1964–) singer, author, philanthropist, businesswoman, actor, and television personality sang duo with her brother BeBe, leaping into the musical mainstream (late 1980s) with smash R&B singles and performing well with Christian radio singles such as “Meantime” and “Count It All Joy.”

Urban Gospel and Holy Hip Hop

Professor Robert Darden suggests several critical award-winning, popular, and representative voices for urban gospel music. Grammy-winner Tramaine Hawkins, featured on *Love Alive* with Walter Hawkins, engages traditional, contemporary, and orchestral styles as inspirational music. Child prodigy and former drug addict John P. Kee, a pastor, songwriter, musician, and producer, uses a variety of music, from ballads to hip-hop, to inspire and worship. Vickie Winans, singer, comedian, designer, and producer, sings a variety of music amid the urban gospel market.

Three of Darden's award-winning, popular voices in urban gospel (Donnie McClurkin, Kirk Franklin, and Yolanda Adams) include hip-hop in their repertoire. Hip-hop, a cultural movement originating in the 1970s from urban African diasporan peoples in New York City and Jamaica, is now a global phenomenon that includes political activism, fashion, slang, double Dutch moves (complicated jump rope), and beatboxing. Beatboxing, using a machine that generates an electronic beat, the vocal percussion facet of hip-hop culture and music, creates beats, rhythms, and melodies using the human mouth. Vocal scratching (imitating turntable skills) involves singing, simulating various musical instruments, and it replicates sound effects. Though some use the term *hip-hop* synonymously with *rap* music, many understand hip-hop in the cosmology or cultural context and rap as a musical by-product of hip-hop.

Donnie McClurkin (1961–), up from a life of violence and abuse, founded a church and sings messages of hope in albums *Tis So Sweet* and *Valley of God*. Yolanda Adams (1961–), shattered by her dad's premature death, combines traditional song, jazz, soul, hip-hop, and funk as accompaniments, to know the joy of the Lord, in such albums as *Through the Storm* and *Day by Day*. Pianist, composer, producer, and cultural icon Kirk Franklin is a crossover artist, from so-called secular to sacred or holy hip-hop, with overtly Christian gospel message albums such as *God's Property* and *Fight of My Life*.

Gospel performer Tye Tribbett (1977–) with his choir, Greater Anointing (G.A.), delivers energetic, passionate, hip-hop-influenced messages honoring God's kingdom. Launched in the mainstream by the group's performances on the sound track for *The Prince of Egypt* (inspirational) album, Tribbett recognized his divine calling when the secular and sacred music worlds clashed. Pastor Mason Betha (1975–) transformed from Ma\$e, a multimillion-dollar rapper, to a minister of the gospel in 1991. Betha left his life of



Urban gospel singer Donnie McClurkin at the Recording Academy New York Chapter Tribute to Bon Jovi, Alicia Keys, Donnie McClurkin, and the creators of "West Side Story" in 2007. McClurkin's musical style combines hip-hop and gospel.

record labels and groupies, experienced the anointing of the Holy Spirit, gave up rap for God's kingdom, and founded S.A.N.E. ministries: *Saving a Nation Endangered Ministries*. With his comeback, he performs rap but avoids profanity.

Conclusion

Gospel music, from its inception, is about inspiration, transformation, and connecting the folk with their God. Vocal and musical style, performance practices, texts and contexts emerge as testimony, shaped by real lived experiences and informed by sacred and secular musical traditions. Gospel music in its various twenty-first-century iterations continues the twentieth-century legacies of gospel blues and

ballads through hip-hop urban gospel and can be heard on the airways and found in the music of many churches, transcending race and class to bring the good news of Christ, to be a balm that can heal the wounded soul.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Baptists: African American*; *Literature: African American*; *Methodists: African American*; *Music: African American Spirituals*; *Pentecostals: African American*; *Religious Thought: African American*; *Religious Thought: Womanist*; *Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics*.

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Music: African American Spirituals

Spirituals, the antebellum and redacted 1960s songs that emerged from communal experience, function as liturgical songs of reformation that unmask, portray, and oust the collective sins of slavery and racism. These dynamic melodies celebrate healing and wholeness and allow human empowerment as they reflect God-infused experiences of reflection, critical thinking, music, and justice. The spirituals nurtured and delivered souls of black folk from total despair during the pre-Civil War era in the United States and were revived and revised for use during the 1960s civil rights movement. These chants of collective exorcism gave enslaved Africans a way to communicate their experiences. Spirituals, songs born as a cappella, or unaccompanied musical numbers, emerged in the fields of plantations from the folk in community; over hot stoves in kitchens of the master's, or big, house; on caravans of the underground railroad; and in hush arbors wherever slave bards gathered in a community cloaked in faith, as these weary souls commiserated about a particular circumstance or event, from the seventeenth through the nineteenth century. These chants delivered souls of black folk as they merged African and particular Christian traditions in their powerful self-expressions. Spirituals were communal offerings, in that they were not composed per se by an individual at a desk. These songs came out of their lived experience together as they had to daily face inhumanity and degradation.

As enslaved bards cried out in praise, grief, and hope, they desired to communicate with their God and to send messages of protest within their own community without being detected by the dominant culture. Musically, the spirituals had verses or stanzas and choruses constructed on powerful, syncopated rhythmic patterns, usually in meters of two or four. Most of the songs are in a major key, though a few are in minor keys. Melodically, spirituals had three basic performance formats: (1) leader/soloist calls out and the congregation/community responds/answers, alternating a solo verse line with a choral response of a word or short phrase. The words of the call change, while the choral response usually stays the same, for example, "Go Down, Moses" and "Walk Together Children"; (2) the musical line involves short syncopated rhythmic patterns, for example, "Little David, Play on Your Harp" and "Ezekiel Saw the Wheel"; and (3) long, sustained phrases involve a slow tempo, for example, "Deep River" and "There Is a Balm in Gilead to Heal the Sin-Sick Soul."

The spirituals named multiple oppressions within the diasporic reality of Africans kidnapped and sent to the Americas, particularly the United States. These chants emerged as the African American community gathered together to improve its fragile existence in an apartheid-driven world where it had little or no control. Enslaved Africans survived a violent, heinous, humiliating system by using the spirituals to communicate, to live, and to withstand such evil. These songs involved coded, symbolic language, which allowed the enslaved to critique their dreadful treatment: they could be beaten or murdered for running away, talking back, being uppity, reading and writing, and not knowing their place. These chants, numbering some 6,000, according to James Lovell Jr., incorporated their African heritage to triumph over their bondage, to honor their lives where important relationships grew within close-knit communities, as persons of faith. The music sustained them, despite the lies and ideologies of their captors, naming them barbaric heathens and infidels and valuing them as three-fifths a person—mainly to assuage Southern, aristocratic political sensibilities.

Spirituals from the Nineteenth Century Onward

The spirituals became more widely known with William Allen's publication *Slave Songs of the United States* (1867), accredited as being the first collection of U.S. African American (Negro) folk songs. Composers began arranging the spirituals, from the early twentieth century, and they continue to metamorphose. Of note were the arrangements and history-making concert tours of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, of Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee (1871–1878). The Jubilee singers are the first internationally acclaimed group of African American musicians to attain recognition, fame, and financial success. Made up of young ex-enslaved persons, the group toured in international concerts in an effort to help move their financially troubled school to solvency. The Jubilee Singers, the first group to publicly perform the songs of the enslaved, introduced audiences to the power of spirituals, helping to preserve this music from extinction. The Fisk director, as others would follow, wrote down the melodies and then arranged them with classical harmony for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass, transforming the spirituals from performance practices of the plantation and rural church to that of the formal concert hall. This complex music framed the pathos, pain, poignancy, and passion of the texts.

This music of the formerly invisible institution, the often unschooled antebellum church, later sustained wholeness, encouragement, and healing during the 1960s civil rights era. Antebellum spirituals are in the family of African American music and are a different genre from gospels and blues. The blues, composed mostly after slavery, champion secular matters and are authored by an individual or group of individuals; they can have words or be an instrumental number. Gospel music, the youngest of these song genres, is composed music that usually reflects scripture, personal life, and one's relationship with God. All these genres reflect one's lived reality in a world fraught with institutional, systemic oppression, spanning from sorrow and lament to hope and transformation. In their structure and meaning, spirituals engaged ironic tension between enslaved persons' spiritual reality and their physical appearance, contrasting the real strength and dignity of African Americans with society's need to force them into poverty and believe they were inferior.

Sources and Power of Spirituals

Spirituals epitomize the powerful energy and personification of African American spirituality, creativity, and sacrality. They express a collective African American folk aesthetic that involves the formal and folk aspects of life experiences. One sees motivation, the freedom and literacy of African American life shaped by sociopolitical realities, their spirituality, and embodied beauty. The spirituals signify poetry, metaphorical language, stories, and songs as shared communal knowledge toward justice, often framed by humor or irony, naming good and evil in an imperfect world. Use of repetition, as signification, helped to empower inner strength and teach those forbidden to read and write so they could remember their history, culture, and theology and orally share these experiences with others.

African American folk spirituals dating from the seventeenth century emerge from particular sources: West African musical traditions, original black secular idioms, and Euro-American Protestant hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs. The music incubated in autonomous black congregations, notably spirituals and gospels, involved aesthetic concepts and social norms from West African cultures. The influence of Euro-American Protestant hymnody on other black congregations would combine the ethos of Western European performance traditions in concert with African American aesthetics. These cultural habits emerged

when the enslaved began to be converted to Christianity, between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. The evolution of slavery in the North and South diverged, for those in the North lived in closer proximity to whites and had to comply with Western song traditions and thus were unable to develop a singular song tradition until the advent of independent African American churches. Slaves in the South lived a distance away from the master's house, and thus he and his family had little to no influence on musical practices and religious education of the enslaved.

Through the spirituals one can view personal and communal dynamics amid the music—aesthetic patterns of sounds and silence—to uncover a vocabulary of how life was for enslaved, for antebellum persons, and, later, for oppressed twentieth-century black folk. Amid the complex human action of sound, words, and behavior patterns, the spirituals identify and reinforce cultural structures, practices, and values. Spirituals, chants of hope, protest, and justice, helped an oppressed people grapple with the social evils of oppression, including racism, sexism, and classism. Performed spirituals celebrate a rich African sociocultural legacy, reveal harmonies of captivity, and blend African, American, and African American music, creating a new music quilted as a vital black aesthetic of justice and freedom. The texts of spirituals in and of themselves cannot invoke human response as can performed spirituals, for it is in the performance itself that myriad messages occur, that transformation can happen. The spirituals reflect a collective black folk aesthetic that reflects the double veil, which signifies W. E. B. Du Bois's understanding of double-consciousness, the divided self. Part of the genius of the spirituals is that while white slave owners regarded them as nice ditties that their happy slaves were singing, in actuality, to insiders there were multiple layers of meaning, not only communicating their faith but also signaling coded messages about issues, from their hopes and dreams they desired to realize in this life to news about an underground railroad connection. The spirituals, as living, transformative art, involve beautiful, active engagement, have depth, and have an enduring impact. Black music, particularly the spirituals, reconstructs reality and reflects art as life duplicating life. Spirituals indict the two evils that helped induce their birth: slavery and racism. Racism is the United States' original sin against the Holy Spirit, an expulsion from the grounding and "garden of love." Spirituals combine characters and texts from the secular and sacred realms to tell a story of protest toward liberation, justice, and celebration.

The impact of spirituals has been foundational for other musical genres. Portia K. Maultsby, ethnomusicologist and anthropologist, notes that there are three pathways of music emerging from African musical roots: sacred traditions, non-jazz secular traditions, and jazz secular traditions. There are direct influences and cross influences, between the sacred tradition of the spirituals to various gospel genres and iterations of blues and jazz, connecting the lineage of all African American music. The power of this music to appeal to universal audiences, a gift to global culture, may be its tenacity of expressing lived realities of struggle and triumph over systemic oppression, evoking truth to power.

Biblical Themes and Political Power of Spirituals

The spirituals make a compilation of biblical heroes and tales, from Creation in Genesis to John at Patmos naming names in Revelations. Many stories are omitted; many other characters and themes get repeated, or fused. Some characters are portrayed in unusual ways, where their biblical lives are reinterpreted to suit the story and transformative needs of the community. Noah, Moses, Joshua, Samson, Jonah, Lazarus, and Mary all serve as symbols. Jesus appears in numerous spirituals, in roles spanning from that of infant, savior, brother, and friend to a composite of God, Lord, and Holy Spirit all in one. Jesus' Passion is the subject of many spirituals. These chants of collective exorcism forge together belief and experience out of their desire for freedom, love, compassion, and relationship with God and community.

The spirituals challenged the colonial American conscience to reconsider its understanding of God, humanity, evil, and freedom. The enslaved poets affirmed freedom in linguistic fervor, rhythm, and movement. Connecting black liberation with divine revelation, amid communal encounter where grace heals brokenness, the spirituals deal with injustice and hope. For Howard Thurman (1899–1981), a deeply spiritual, intellectual pastor and educator who helped found the first racially integrated, multicultural church in the United States, these songs record human suffering and Jesus' gift of liberation. For martyr, preacher, author, civil rights activist, and Southern Christian Leadership Conference cofounder Martin Luther King Jr., the spirituals impart symbols of personal vision, belief, and a dialectical nature of the spiritual, physical, and ethical life. For black theologian-scholar James H. Cone, these songs afford documents of confession, resistance, and theology to address human salvation as power. In practice, these three thinkers used the spirituals to study the place of God, the oppressed, and the

oppressor regarding societal responsibility for evil and suffering, toward complete liberation, where their use of the spirituals and their messages of theodicy parallel the theodicy uncovered in the 1960s redacted (edited) spirituals.

Theodicy and the Philosophy of Spirituals

Philosophers and theologians explore the contradiction that both an all good, all loving, all powerful, all knowing *God* exists together with the exact opposite or absence of good—*evil*—when they argue the question of theodicy: “Does God exist, given the historically identifiable reality of evil?” “Does evil exist, given the historically identifiable reality of God/good?” “Is there a contradiction between a good God and evil, if one argues a dual system of good and evil, for one needs the reality of one to recognize the other?” The Christian theodicy articulated in the spirituals presumes God’s existence and that some questions remained unanswered; and it views the nature of evil as a problem related to the relationships and responsibilities between God and humanity. Racist evil is a product of distorted freedom. The spirituals challenge evil, anticipating imminent salvation as liberation for all. Theodicy requires and refers to divine and human work for justice that overcomes the societal evils of slavery and racism. The basis of spirituality and theology in the spirituals arises from traditional African philosophy.

For many African scholars African-based philosophy is the mental attitude, understanding, perception, and logic that frame the way African persons think, speak, or act. African philosophical and religious materials do not separate sacred from secular; thus the spirituals coexist in synergistic harmony. Within African spirituality, the African self embodies unity and identity of self and ancestry, with a concern for self and surrounding environment. Africans exist communally, as part of religion; thus an African individual carries her religion wherever she goes: a person is a religious being. For Africans, religion is within their entire cosmos of being. The traditional African religious worldview is a dynamic one that consists of a creator God, ruling powers, spirits, and human beings. Africans know God through ritual and have a certainty that by conforming to a universal order they are close to God. Proverbs, prayers, brief statements, songs, names, myths, religious rituals, and stories express African knowledge of God. African peoples’ religious beliefs vary in the number and nature of those beliefs. Africans have a religious, social sense of being expressed in human culture, the ethos out of which the spirituals arose.

A thorough embracing of the spirituals—studying the history, spirituality, sociopolitical realities, and psychological underpinnings—along with singing them and hearing others perform them provide a wealth of information: context, story, creative spirit, and faith/thought. The context reflects the environment or milieu that birthed the spirituals, and the tensions within, symbolized well by French historian and philosopher René Girard’s notion of double bind, where one person (subject) teaches another (disciple) and the relationships break down when the object (knowledge) disappears in their struggles around identity, need, and power. The story unfolds the narratives or life and times of black folk in the United States where they never accepted enforced societal subjugation, epitomized by Du Bois’s notion of the veil and double consciousness, pressing one to deal with being African and American. The creative spirit, where both lyrics or words and melody are two texts together, celebrates a connection between God and the souls of black folk, represented in Henry L. Gates’s notion of signifying, producing double voicing, that is, the voices of both words and music. The arena of faith/thought creates an understanding of relationships, of double-relatedness, amid the thought of Martin Buber’s notions of I-Thou and I-It. The former produces respect and intimacy; the latter objectifies. Such information ultimately informs those who have helped transmit the power of these songs.

Famous Singers and Spirituals

Singers who have popularized the spirituals and a key spiritual in their repertoire include: Marian Anderson (1897–1993), internationally renown mezzo-soprano who sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on Easter Sunday in 1939 after being denied access to Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution (“My Soul Is Anchored in the Lord”); Paul Robeson (1898–1976), renaissance man, scholar, athlete, concert artist, lawyer, actor, bass-baritone who was denied access to performance engagements for his communist leanings (“Deep River”); Two Kennedy Center awardees, Leontyne Price (1927–) and Jessye Norman (1945–), both incredible sopranos with international operatic and concert singing careers, who are noted for singing the spirituals “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands” and “Give Me Jesus,” respectively; and Kathleen Battle (1948–), lyric soprano and award winner (“Fix Me, Jesus”).

Selected arrangers of spirituals include a noted baritone and accomplished editor, Harry T. Burleigh (1866–1949),

who was a major player in developing the American art song as composer of over two hundred songs and for his arrangements of spirituals. James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938), educator, activist, anthropologist, diplomat, poet, songwriter, and civil rights activist, collaborated with his brother J. Rosamond Johnson (1873–1954), pianist, songwriter, producer, soldier, singer, and actor, in musical theater and in *The Book of American Negro Spirituals* (1925) and *The Second Book of Negro Spirituals* (1926). Edward Boatner (1898–1981), a concert singer, educator, and conductor-director of studio, community, and church choirs, was a composer with many popular concert arrangements of the spirituals. William Dawson (1899–1990), trombonist, composer, professor, and choir director also arranged spirituals. Jester Hairston (1901–2000), a composer, songwriter, arranger, choral conductor, and actor who conducted choirs and traveled worldwide with groups singing spirituals, also wrote “Amen” for the film *Lilies of the Field* (1963).

Undine Moore (1904–1989), the “dean of black women composers,” wrote vocal, piano, chamber, and choral music, including sacred works, and completed many arrangements of spirituals. Margaret Bonds (1913–1972), arranger of spirituals, composer, pianist, teacher, and winner of the 1932 Wanamaker Prize in composition, was the first African American soloist with the Chicago Symphony at the Chicago World’s Fair in 1933. Rachel Eubanks (1923–), the founder and director of the Eubanks Conservatory of Music, Los Angeles, composes for chorus and orchestra, for multiple instruments and solo voice, chamber works and many songs, including arrangements of spirituals. Lena Johnson McLin (1928–) has written cantatas, masses, solo and choral arrangements of spirituals, anthems, art songs, rock operas, soul songs, works for piano and orchestra, and electronic music. Wendell Whalum (1931–1987), composer, author, and educator, created classically arranged spirituals. Moses Hogan (1957–2003), celebrated pianist, conductor, and arranger of spirituals, founded Moses Hogan Chorale and Moses Hogan Singers and edited *The Oxford Book of Spirituals*. One person who sings, arranges, and uses spirituals in her life’s work is Bernice Johnson Reagon, a MacArthur Genius Award recipient, composer, musician, song talker, scholar, performer, historian, teacher, producer, director, author, and activist in the 1960s civil rights movement. She founded and led (until 2004) Sweet Honey in the Rock, an a cappella women’s singing group that embodies one of its most popular spirituals: “We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest.”

Conclusion

The spirituals then and now are powerful arbiters of justice, hope, faith, community, life, love, and solidarity. These chants come alive when they are performed by folk in the fields, in church congregations, or in choruses by trained voices and professional artists. During the antebellum era, these “chants of collective exorcism” subverted, empowered, and transformed the lives of the enslaved. We will never know how many people’s lives were changed by hearing a spiritual. We do know that these chants have inspired revolutions and celebrate gifts of freedom.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *African Traditional Religions*; *Baptists: African American*; *Invisible Institution*; *Literature: African American*; *Methodists: African American*; *Music: African American*; *Music: African American Gospel*; *Pentecostals: African American*; *Religious Thought: African American*; *Religious Thought: Womanist*; *Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics*.

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Music: Appalachian Religious

Some of America’s most distinctive sacred music traditions thrive in the southern Appalachians. In this region where

traditional ballads and folk songs, old-time string band music, bluegrass, fiddle and banjo tunes, and dance are often highlighted, religious music has flourished in churches, homes, and communities, less noticed by outsiders. Although the music of Appalachian mainstream denominations is similar to that of their sister churches across the United States, the hymns, spirituals, and religious songs of other churches and sectarian groups are notably different. Among the most distinctive are hymns and rituals in communities of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in western North Carolina; the hymn singing among Old Baptists and others in Alabama, Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia; shape-note singing in mountain communities in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia; and various traditions of gospel singing throughout the region. Ethnicity, doctrine, family and regional history, and regional differences all have contributed to the distinctive performance styles and repertoires for religious song in the churches and communities of Appalachia.

Cherokee Traditional Music

Members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, a federally recognized tribe of more than 12,500 enrolled members in western North Carolina in 2008, live on their ancestral lands where a distinctive Cherokee culture emerged at least 3,500 years ago. A storied mountain landscape is part of the Cherokee religious heritage. An origin myth, still told by the Cherokee in several versions, tells of the creation of the first man and woman (Kanati and Selu) at Shining Rock in the Shining Rock Wilderness near the southern end of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Another sacred place, Kituhwa, which legends say was the first Cherokee village, is near the present town of Cherokee. At the center of the village of Kituhwa, a mound once stood fifteen to twenty feet high, and Cherokee priests kept a sacred fire burning on it symbolizing the presence of the Creator. In 1996 the Eastern Band bought land that includes the site of the Kituhwa mound, which had been out of Cherokee possession since 1820. The mound, about six feet high now after years of being plowed, is once again a ceremonial site.

Cherokee ceremonial music and dance associated with the older native religion suffered during a period of Christianization that began in the early 1800s. The disruption and trauma of their expulsion from Appalachia in 1838 further weakened the older ceremonial practices. Still, some, such as the stomp dance, survived. Accompanied by a drum and rattles, it has undergone a revival in some of the most

traditional Cherokee communities. Cherokee elder and spiritual leader Walker Calhoun of the Big Cove community near the town of Cherokee helped revive the stomp-dance practice in western North Carolina around 1990, a tradition carried on by his family members on grounds cleared especially for ceremonial purposes.

Cherokee Christian Music

Missionaries began to introduce Christianity in Cherokee communities in 1799. By 1824 the Moravians, Baptists, and Presbyterians, funded in part by the federal government as part of a “civilization” plan, established mission schools to teach the English language, religion, farming, and domestic arts. By 1824 Methodists had begun sending circuit-riding preachers, and some Cherokee men were becoming preachers themselves. Publication of a hymn book in the Cherokee language, using a phonetic writing system or syllabary attributed to Sequoyah, suggests that hymn singing was part of these efforts and was well established among the Cherokee by 1829. Like many hymn books of that period, this one contained no musical notation. Singers would know tunes that could be used with the texts and choose appropriate tunes, as needed. Historical accounts of the Trail of Tears, which began in 1838, reveal that Cherokee people sang hymns such as “Amazing Grace” and “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah” during the removal less than ten years later.

By 2008 most members of the Eastern Band were Christian, and churches such as Methodists, Baptists, Pentecostals, and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints retain a strong institutional presence in Cherokee communities. Congregational singing is more often in English than in Cherokee, but both languages are used, and the sound is distinctive. The vocal quality of Cherokee congregational singing, somewhat nasal and tense, reflects the sounds of the Cherokee language, which is being taught once again in Cherokee schools.

A few singers have formed groups to perform gospel songs in both Cherokee and English in their church services, for community festivals and other special occasions, and as a community service in assisted living and other facilities. Some of the texts and tunes of Cherokee hymns and gospel songs are the same as those in other Protestant churches, and others are not. For example, one hymn traditionally used by the Welch Family gospel singers to end their performances is sung unaccompanied in the Cherokee language. Set to a minor-sounding tune with an irregular rhythm reminiscent

of nineteenth-century Old Baptist tunes, it is unlike any other song in their program. At the singers' request, the audience stands while the song is sung in memory of the Cherokee people who suffered on the Trail of Tears.

Old Baptist Hymnody

English, Scots-Irish, and German settlers who moved into southern Appalachia in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries brought with them religious song traditions that continue to varying degrees among Primitive Baptists (sometimes called "hard-shell" Baptists), Old Regular Baptists, and Churches of the Brethren (once called German Baptist Brethren and sometimes referred to as "Dunkards"). The churches that preserve the oldest and most distinctive hymn singing practices tend to be those Old Baptist churches that hold to Calvinistic doctrines of predestination and election. Insisting on congregational autonomy, these churches developed a style of hymnody that was an outgrowth of seventeenth-century psalmody of the British Isles and of early eighteenth-century hymnody. Their hymn texts reflect their predestinarian doctrines; their singing is unaccompanied and congregational, slow, mostly unison, sometimes ornamented with vocal twists and turns, and marked by irregular rhythms. Once common in the American colonies, this old way of singing is still practiced in some Old Baptist churches in the mountains of Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia; it can also be found in Alabama, among the Creek Indians in Oklahoma, and small groups of Amish and Old Order Mennonites.

The rejection of musical instruments in these churches is a practice that was once embraced by Presbyterians, Methodists, Campbellites, and Mennonites, as well as Baptists. The churches found no authorization in the New Testament for the use of musical instruments in worship, and some thought that instruments were too closely associated with worldly things. The voice was believed to be the only appropriate instrument in the church. Many Old Baptists still insist that all of the singing be congregational as well as unaccompanied, although some congregations will accept solo singing under special circumstances. This attitude sharpens the contrast between music in the church and music outside the church, but it does not dictate whether they participate in music outside of church, where virtuoso musicians are greatly admired. It is not uncommon to hear widely recognized performing musicians acknowledge ties to the Old Baptists.

Hymn books that consist largely of texts by English and American eighteenth- and nineteenth-century hymn

writers fostered the old way of singing throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Two of the oldest Primitive Baptist hymn books are still in use today: Benjamin Lloyd's *The Primitive Hymns* (1841) and D. H. Goble's *The Primitive Baptist Hymn Book* (1887). Both of these contain only hymn texts without tunes. The same is true of favorite songbooks among Old Regular Baptists: E. W. Billups's *The Sweet Songster* (1854) and E. D. Thomas's *A Choice Selection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1877). Song leaders rely on memory to pair an appropriate tune with any given text. Other later publications offer harmonized tunes with the hymn texts. Even there, however, the books do not govern how the song will be sung. Congregations may simply ignore the published tune and harmony and substitute something else. They may also alter the text with additions, omissions, and substitutions. In a 1982 Primitive Baptist service in Alleghany County, North Carolina, one song leader led the congregation in adding the following chorus after each of the six stanzas of "Amazing Grace" printed in their hymn book:

I want to live a Christian here,
I want to die rejoicing,
I want to feel my Savior's near,
When soul and body's parting.

Among Old Baptists, congregations often devote a full half hour to singing hymns before the service begins. The hymn texts are reflective of Primitive Baptist belief. They rarely express assurance of salvation because uncertainty and doubt are part of the Primitive Baptist theology and experience. Instead, they claim a hope of salvation, as expressed by an unknown author in these lines:

Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through;
Sometimes I'm in a valley, And sinking down with
woe,
Sometimes I am exalted, On eagles' wings I fly;
I rise above my troubles, And hope to reach the sky.

Song leaders sometimes line out the hymn text for the congregation, which then sings that text with the hymn tune. The practice, in which a song leader chants one or two lines of text at a time, was meant to be an aid to singing for congregations that had no hymn books or could not read. Lining out has its origins in an antiphonal style initiated by the Westminster Assembly of Divines in England in

1644. Once widespread in American churches, lining out survived among Baptists in the southern mountains long after it was abandoned elsewhere. Lining-out chants vary from one song leader to another. Some chants are quite plain and repetitious. Others, especially among the Old Regular Baptists in southeastern Kentucky, are more ornamented and wide-ranging.

Black Primitive Baptist Music

Lining out has flourished among black Primitive Baptists in Virginia and Alabama, where individual congregations have developed their own ways of combining lined hymn singing with the ceremonial practice of taking the hand of fellowship. In the Virginia mountains, African Americans established their own autonomous churches and associations after the Civil War. Although neighboring black and white congregations continued to sing the same tunes and use the same hymn books, stylistic differences began to emerge that continue today. Typically, when a black song leader lines out the hymn, members of the congregation will not hold a hymn book while they sing. With both hands, they greet each other in ceremonial and rhythmic handshakes.

Brett Sutton describes a practice in Virginia in which each member joins hands with two others and “during the singing of a line, everyone shakes hands in rhythm to the music.” Joyce Cauthen describes the practice in an Alabama church in the Sipsy River Primitive Baptist Association. “In clusters and lines that reach across pews and aisles, they rotate their joined hands in time with the music. As they sing each syllable, they make three rotations and close the syllable with a strong pulse on the fourth beat. They shake hands with two people throughout a four-line verse then move to another place in the hall and fellowship with two others. During the last verse they make their way back to their seats, only to rise from them again when other hymns are sung during the service.”

Shape-Note Singing

Unlike lined-out hymn singing, which has British roots, shape-note singing is an American tradition that grew out of eighteenth-century New England singing schools and efforts to improve congregational singing. It has historical and social as well as religious significance, and it remains especially strong in some Appalachian areas of Alabama, Georgia, and North Carolina, long outliving the singing school movement in New England. Shape-note singing takes its name from music notation that gives each syllable

of the musical scale a distinctive shape. Such notation, first introduced in *The Easy Instructor or A New Method of Teaching Sacred Harmony* by William Little and William Smith in 1801, gave instructors an effective way to teach singers to read tunes and harmony parts without having to learn the complicated system of key signatures.

Shape-note singing, however, represents more than a type of notation. Historically, shape-note tune books document an important repertory of American religious song and an American way of harmonizing the tunes that broke free from the conventions of harmony of the time. Even before 1816, when Ananias Davisson published *Kentucky Harmony, or A Choice Collection of Psalm Tunes, Hymns, and Anthems in Three Parts*, tunes from the oral folk tradition had begun to appear in shape-note tune books. For more than fifty years, tune book compilers produced publications that drew on folk hymnody, or religious texts sung to traditional tunes. Along with newly composed anthems by American composers and harmonized settings of old psalm and hymn tunes, which had been part of the singing school repertory, the shape-note tune book compilers included many spiritual songs with repeated lines and choruses and familiar melodies derived from traditional ballad tunes and fiddle tunes. Such songs were easy to remember and easy to sing; they expressed strong religious feelings reminiscent of the early nineteenth-century Methodist camp meetings and revivals in the southern mountains where many of them originated.

Nineteenth-century publication dates and various editions of those shape-note tune books still in use, combined with extensive contemporary calendars listing hundreds of annual singings, indicate that long-standing traditions are associated with shape-note tune books. The *Harmonia Sacra*, first published in Virginia as *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* by Joseph Funk in 1832, was in its twenty-third edition in 1972 and remains popular among Mennonites. In 2008 *Harmonia Sacra* singings were held almost every month in Mennonite churches in and near Harrisonburg, Virginia, including one in Old Hamburg church, a 165-year-old meeting house in the village of Hamburg, west of Luray. Two tune books compiled by William Walker, *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (1835) and *The Christian Harmony* (1867) are still popular in the region. The Big Singing from *The Southern Harmony* has been an annual event in Benton, Kentucky, since 1884, and numerous singings from *The Christian Harmony* continue in the western Carolinas, Alabama, Georgia, and East Tennessee. In East

Tennessee, singers also continue to sing from *The New Harp of Columbia* by M. L. Swan (1867). One of the oldest shape-note books in continuous use, and the one most widely used now, especially in Alabama and Georgia, is B. F. White's *The Sacred Harp* (1844). For the Wooten family of Sand Mountain, Alabama, *Sacred Harp* singing has become a long-standing family tradition.

Shape-note singings have their own protocols that foster strong musical and social bonds among the singers. The singings are nondenominational, and all are welcome. Often those meetings are held in local churches. The sound is quite distinct with its unconventional open harmonies above and below the lead or melody in the tenor line and male and female voices singing the melody. The style of singing also affects the sound. The nasal qualities of some voices, the addition of unwritten melodic and rhythmic embellishments, and pitch levels and tempos can all serve to heighten the singers' experience. Trebles, altos, tenors, and basses seat themselves according to their respective parts, each part occupying one side of a hollow square. Singers face the center of the square. Given their pitch and cue by the song leader, singers launch into tunes at full voice, syllables first and then words. It is customary for singers to take turns leading one or two tunes from the center of the square where all voices converge.

Gospel Songs

Gospel songs evolved as a new kind of shape-note tradition after the Civil War, and the southern Appalachian region played a significant role in publishing and promoting early gospel shape-note song books that helped start a major music industry. Aldine Kieffer and Ephraim Ruebush, grandsons of Joseph Funk, founded the Ruebush-Kieffer publishing house in Virginia in 1873 for gospel song books. By 1902 James D. Vaughan, often called the father of southern gospel, had started the James D. Vaughan Company in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. Vaughan was the first to hire professional singers to market gospel song books. V. O. Stamps sang with one of Vaughan's quartets before starting his own influential publishing company, Stamps Baxter, in Texas in 1924. He continued the emphasis on professional performances to sell song books.

Gospel song books reflect the development of a new type of religious song and changing musical sensibilities that differ in important ways from the older shape-note tune books. The older books use a notation system of four shapes, a separate staff for each vocal part, and an older distinctive

harmonic style. They include many hymns and draw heavily on oral tradition for other repertoires of religious texts and tunes. The gospel song books use a notation system of seven shapes in a standard hymnal format with treble and alto parts printed on one staff and tenor and bass parts on the staff below. Most gospel songs were newly composed with simple major-sounding tunes, often in the highest voice, accompanied by close conventional harmonies. Unlike hymns, which had biblical themes and were expressive of doctrine and religious emotion, gospel song themes ranged widely from optimism about heaven and assurance of personal salvation to interactions with Jesus and sentimental songs about home and family. While shape-note singing always emphasizes participation, gospel singing often emphasizes performance for an audience. Hundreds of local and family groups and individual gospel singers perform in festivals, concerts, churches, and tent revivals throughout the southern Appalachian region, making gospel one of the most popular and diverse religious song traditions in the area, as it is elsewhere.

Bluegrass Gospel

Bluegrass gospel is a style associated with the string band music that originated around 1944 in the southern mountains with Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys. Typically played in concert performances, it combines instrumental accompaniments that may include fiddle, banjo, mandolin, guitar, dobro, and bass, with lively tempos and traditional gospel harmonies and texts. Bluegrass gospel groups perform only gospel music, but other bluegrass groups often include one or more gospel songs in their programs. Ralph Stanley introduced the practice of performing at least one gospel song sung unaccompanied in his public concerts, and that has been widely adopted by bluegrass musicians. Singers draw on a wide range of religious song materials, including original compositions, gospel songbooks, the hymn and spiritual song traditions of Primitive and Old Regular Baptists, and traditional hymns from rural America. Pentecostal and other evangelical churches often incorporate gospel songs as special music by one or more persons during a worship service and sometimes offer gospel concerts in the church itself as a special feature of evening services.

Black Gospel Quartets

African Americans developed a distinctly different gospel song tradition in the southern Appalachians, namely, the unaccompanied gospel quartet, which had its heyday in the

early and middle twentieth century. Jefferson County, Alabama, and surrounding areas became the center of development for this music. Black laborers from rural Alabama and Georgia, where shape-note and quartet singing were vibrant, came to the Birmingham area to work in mining camps and other segregated black industrial settlements. Oppressive work environments and industrial-residential communities formed the backdrop for the emergence of the a cappella black gospel quartets that became popular in Birmingham during the 1920s. Among the workers and residents were gifted singers who had learned a style of quartet singing taught by the Tuskegee Institute that stressed attack, release, time, harmony, and articulation. Singers were also open to innovation and other influences, including jazz. By 1930 the number of exceptional African American male and female gospel quartets that had developed around Birmingham gave Jefferson County a reputation as America's capital of gospel quartet singing.

Quartets blended the Tuskegee-style training with close harmonies and old traditions of responsorial song and improvisation. They developed a new style in which each voice carried a separate part, but they blended their voices and harmonies so smoothly that parts were often hard to distinguish. Quartets such as the Famous Blue Jay Singers of Birmingham and the Mighty Kings of Harmony spread this music through numerous recordings and tours across much of the United States. By the 1950s, however, unaccompanied black gospel quartets began losing popularity. Although sound recordings remain and echoes can still be heard in some black gospel performances, the style had all but disappeared by the end of the twentieth century, as younger singers began using instrumental accompaniments and electronically amplified sound systems in the newer hard-driving gospel styles.

Conclusion

The southern Appalachian region continues to enrich the musical landscape of America with traditional distinctive religious songs and singing styles. Conservatism, insistence on congregational and cultural autonomy, history, ethnicity, diverse sectarian and denominational groups, and social changes all contributed to what is now recognized as an important heritage of American religious music. Documentarians, scholars, filmmakers, and other interested people have helped raise awareness of these traditions in and outside the region. Smithsonian Folkways, for example, carries documentary recordings of the singing of Old Regular

Baptists in Kentucky, and the Web site www.folkstreams.org offers documentary films with background notes, transcripts, and other accompanying materials. The singers themselves, however, are their strongest representatives and spokespersons. Shape-note singers from Alabama and Georgia have conducted *Sacred Harp* singing schools across the United States and in England. Some were recorded for the sound track of the 2003 film *Cold Mountain*. Numerous churches and sectarian groups, communities, and performing groups now carry this heritage of traditional southern Appalachian religious song proudly alongside their neighboring churches whose religious music traditions are fully in the mainstream.

See also *Appalachian Mountain Religion*; *Baptists: Southern*; *Film*; *Music: White Gospel*; *Native American Religions: Post-Contact*; *South as Region*.

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Music: Christian

Since Europeans first set foot on North America, music has been a critical aspect of the spread and development of Christianity. Just as the Christian experience has been marked by an extraordinary diversity of faith traditions representing the full range of national, ethnic, and racial groups that populate North America, so its musical expressions have been marked by striking variations in musical and textual repertoires. American Christianity has been energized by the competitive innovations unleashed by an open spiritual marketplace, in which no established church holds a monopoly on faith and multiple denominations and sects therefore compete for adherents. This energetic social economy has also produced exceptional diversity in sacred music, which has itself functioned as a tool of competitive advantage for worship communities.

Major Themes

Amid all these variations two major themes stand out. First, psalms drawn from the Hebrew Bible and the hymns that succeed them have exerted a formidable gravitational pull beyond the realm of Christian worship. Not only have they affected the sacred music of other world religions present in North America (Judaism, Buddhism, native spirituality), but they have influenced the development of America's popular music as well, helping produce perhaps the most globally influential form of American culture. Second, although Christianity has easily been the dominant influence on American society over the centuries, the Hebrew Bible has provided a fund of stories, heroes, images, and themes that has shaped not just Christian music but also American music more generally.

That a region so strongly shaped by Christianity would have its sacred music strongly shaped by the language of Judaism is one irony. Another is that though the repertoire and performance conventions of Christian music have helped generate such distinctive popular genres as rock and roll, country, and soul music, Christian institutions, leaders, and laypeople have often rejected these musical products as antithetical to proper religion—as devil's music. The vitality of America's popular music can be traced to this seminal ambivalence about the proper sphere of Christian music and its power to provide pleasure to those who participate in making music as worshippers, performers, or audiences.

The concept of crossover helps illuminate the social vitality of Christian music. In the music industry, crossover refers to songs or artists identified with one genre that find their way to new audiences associated with another genre. Frequently crossover has a racial dimension, as when an artist moves from a genre associated with one ethnicity to one of another (usually a white audience, which offers the greatest market rewards). We see variations of this kind of crossover among Christian communities, because adherents borrow musical styles from other denominations or faith traditions. Contemporary Catholic worship, for example, often borrows from traditionally Protestant hymns or performance practices; mainline Protestant churches may intersperse black gospel songs or tambourines pioneered in Pentecostal worship.

Another form of crossover traverses the porous boundary separating sacred and secular music. The history of American popular music is one of artists adapting songs and styles they learned in church to nonreligious themes, settings, and audiences, often to the chagrin of Christian gatekeepers. But churches have been equally ardent in seeking innovations from the world of popular music, thereby sacralizing worldly tunes and previously stigmatized musical instruments. Crossover also challenges the implicit distinction between ritual and art, music for participation and music for performance: between singing in the pews and listening to others singing in the choir stall. Viewing the range of Christian music, we see a two-way migration of songs and people across the implicit boundary separating participants from performers. Boundaries of community, genre, or convention are not always permeable, however. Over the centuries, American Christian music has shown itself full of creative ruptures, borrowing, and cross-fertilizations. But assessed on the ground in lived time, Christian music has usually resisted change. Celebrated examples of musical crossover are exceptions that prove the rule.

Historical Developments

It is useful to consider the historical development of American Christian music in six major provisional periods: first, the music that sounded during initial encounters between Europeans and Amerindians, beginning around 1500; second, the introduction of English psalmody around 1620; third, the development of English hymnody around 1740; fourth, the new camp meeting revival songs that came into use after 1800, whose development and spread was assisted by shape note notation in the 1840s; fifth, the proliferation of white gospel and concert spirituals beginning in the 1870s; and, finally, the rise of Christian rock and its variants around 1970. These traditions are not consecutive, with one supplanted by the next. Rather, successive repertoires overlap each other: continuing for some worshippers, challenged and replaced for others, sometimes within a single worship community.

Denominational hymnals have been critical in allowing less popular texts and genres to pass into obsolescence and in legitimizing additions. The 1990 edition of *The Presbyterian Hymnal*, for example, includes tunes and texts from China, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Argentina, Brazil, Ghana, Israel, and nearly every European country over the history of Christendom, ranging from high church to vernacular. From America, the collection features many black spirituals, shape note songs, and Amerindian hymns. But it also contains a section of all 150 psalms in consecutive order, a throwback to Puritan psalters of the seventeenth century, even if translations and tunes are drawn from various eras and countries.

It is important to remember, though, that hymnals provide only an approximate guide to what songs are actually used in worship. Many, perhaps most, selections are never chosen, and may be supplemented by other song collections or bulletin inserts. Many churches also don't use bound song volumes at all, but rely instead on call-and-response leading or on projection screens on which texts drawn from nearly any source can be projected.

Early Colonial Encounters

Spain was the first European empire to impact the American spiritual soundscape. Admiral Christopher Columbus is said to have led daily devotions on board, including sunset public prayers and hymns such as *Pater Noster* and *Salve Regina*. Following the conquest of Mexico in 1521, Dominican and Franciscan priests fanned

out to establish missions among Native Americans, finding music to be a useful tool for generating interest in their message and training numbers of native musicians. A flexible and equivocal cultural form, music could be used by Christian missionaries to promote their belief system in an appealing form, and by Amerindians to disguise native beliefs and practices in a form acceptable to Christian authorities. Musical production centered in Mexico City, where masses, responsories, and other liturgical pieces composed for the cathedral by chapel master Fernando Franco are the first polyphonic music produced in America.

The Jesuits who followed closely on French explorers in New France also considered music a useful tool for conversion, spurring efforts that continued sporadically over succeeding centuries among Episcopal and Methodist missionaries in the Great Lakes region. The first Protestant psalms in America came from French Huguenots in the mid-1500s, and English explorers brought sacred music to both California and Jamestown. On the California coast in 1579, Francis Drake recorded that native people "took such pleasure in our singing of Psalms, that whensoever they resorted to us, their first request was commonly this, 'Gnaah,' by which they entreated that we would sing" (*Francis Drake, Privateer: Contemporary Narratives and Documents*, 1972).

Introduction of English Hymnody

More lasting impact came with the Puritan settlement of Massachusetts, first the Pilgrims in 1620 and the Great Migration to Boston a decade later. Puritans accepted Calvinist strictures on the use of *set forms* in worship, limiting their congregational singing to metered psalms, sung in unison without accompaniment. Harmonized versions were acceptable in private and family circles. The sophisticated Ainsworth psalter brought by the Pilgrims, with multiple tunes and meters, proved too challenging for conditions in America, so a new collection of biblical psalms was commissioned and published at newly founded Harvard College; the *Bay Psalm Book* (1640) went through dozens of editions and remained in use for well over a century. As musical skills declined, worshippers adopted the expedience of lining out: a leader would sing a line at a time and the congregation would sing back.

By the end of the seventeenth century, musical standards had deteriorated to a degree that cultured observers found appalling. One minister complained of psalms being "miserably tortured, and twisted, and quavered, in some Churches,

into an horrid Medley of confused and disorderly Noises.” (*Cambridge History of American Music*, 1998) Local singing schools sprang up to teach the rudiments of choral singing, often organized by ministers of church members and staffed by itinerant singing masters. These schools led to the composition of new tunebooks, the earliest original music published in America; the introduction of simple instruments to set the pitch; an inevitable raising of expectations to move beyond familiar hymns to more complex choral music, and the subsequent segregation of skilled singers sitting together in one section. These choirs challenged the traditional Calvinist notion of singing as collective and participatory, not as art to be enjoyed in splendid contemplation. A New Hampshire parishioner complained sarcastically of “a set of Geniuses, who stick themselves up in a Gallery,” monopolizing church music by setting an exclusive standard of musical competence.

Another challenge to traditional psalm singing came from the emergence of hymns. Though the Lutheran tradition welcomed congregational songs that were not metrical translations of Hebrew Psalms, it took the genius of Isaac Watts to win acceptance for hymns in the cultural hearth of Calvinist New England over the course of the eighteenth century. His first collection, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707), was read as devotional literature, praised by Cotton Mather, and published in American editions in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Watts explained that most of the psalms were too far removed from Christian theology to be suitably inspirational for contemporary believers. Despite heated opposition from traditionalists, his devotional poems began to be adopted for worship during the Great Awakening revivals of the 1740s and within a generation or two had been embraced by congregations along the East Coast. Watts and the writers he inspired created a new genre of personal, emotionally charged texts that enabled those singing them to enact the experience of conversion and salvation.

Development of English Hymnody and Spirituals

Also critical in the acceptance of hymns were John and Charles Wesley, who came to Georgia as missionaries in 1735 and were deeply moved by the devotional hymn singing of Moravian families traveling on their ship. John was inspired to learn German and began translating and writing his own hymns. After the brothers returned to England, Charles became an inveterate composer of hymns, ultimately producing at least 6,500 texts. Another Moravian practice the Wesleys absorbed was the tradition of the

Liebesmahl, or love feast, a communal service of music, food, and drink. Along with the powerful evangelical hymns favored by Moravians, these rituals helped Methodists create a powerful evangelical technique that would make them the most effective American denomination over the next century. Although Moravian settlements in Pennsylvania and North Carolina remained secluded from larger currents of Anglo-American culture, their tight-knit communities were outposts of musical sophistication, including an acceptance of instrumental music, often composed in Europe, that won the admiration of Benjamin Franklin, among others.

African Americans were an important constituency for the ideas and musical practices unleashed during the mid-1700s and shaped by the hymn texts of Watts and Wesley. Whether enslaved or free, African Americans created rituals that drew on West African traditional religions and European Christian language, all performed in a context of social exclusion. The distinctive style of black Christianity developed around areas of overlap between these belief systems. African customs of spiritual possession appeared compatible with ecstatic displays of evangelical conversion; water initiation ceremonies paralleled Christian baptism; in Catholic Maryland and Louisiana, West African beliefs coexisted with elements of Catholic liturgy and saints. Especially in the South, African American Christians created both official—acceptable to whites—and covert worship traditions and musical practices. As with Amerindians, music’s intrinsic ambiguity could serve the interests of both Europeans and non-Europeans.

The term *spiritual* refers to a broad range of black vernacular music with spiritual overtones, from ring shouts and work songs to lined-out hymns based on European hymn texts. As a folklorist put it, “A spiritual is nothing but a tune—never twice the same—accompanied by not over two standard verses—not the same—followed by as many other verses from different songs as the singer happens at the time to remember.” Sorrow songs dealt with oppression and struggle, jubilees celebrated God’s power and expectations for a better life to come. Worship settings ranged from authorized services under the supervision of slave owners to covert what were called hush harbors, where worship took place out of earshot of whites.

Typically the only book slaves were allowed to have, the Bible supplied a critical set of tropes, characters, and stories, which often took on covert coded meanings relevant to conditions of social oppression. Whether or not European influences were apparent, African American spirituals

featured fluid, variable structures that allowed nearly unbounded individual expression in the elaboration of both music and words. Rhythmic propulsion was emphasized and bodily movement encouraged; ornamented vocal lines featured a range of effects like slides and hums and were punctuated by interjections.

These performance stylings shaped black communities' uses of European hymns. Texts by Isaac Watts were such particular favorites that the moniker "Dr. Watts" came to stand for any European hymn text. The relatively inclusive spirit of the Methodists, coupled with their fervent worship and enthusiastic singing, held particular appeal. "The Negroes, above all of the human species I ever knew, have the nicest ear from music," wrote a Virginia clergyman. "They have a kind of ecstatic delight in psalmody; nor are there any books they so soon learn, or take so much pleasure in, as those used in that heavenly part of divine worship" (*Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, vol. 2, 1826). Yet blacks faced discrimination in northern churches. In response, Richard Allen founded the first African Methodist Episcopal church in Philadelphia in 1794. Allen's pioneering hymn collection of 1801 featured texts by Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, and John Newton along with innovative *wandering refrains* that could be attached to different hymns as well as hymns from the oral tradition of camp meetings. At the end of the nineteenth century, another Methodist minister in Philadelphia, Charles Albert Tindley, extended Allen's project by blending the sense of Protestant hymns and spiritual-like refrains, creating early gospel favorites like "We'll Understand It Better By and By."

Camp Meeting Revival Music

With Anglo-American hymns firmly entrenched in Protestant churches by 1800 (and zeal and membership dropping), worshippers began to respond to new evangelical currents manifesting themselves in unprecedented outdoor revivals. The earliest revivals took place in urban areas such as New Haven, Connecticut, where Yale's president Timothy Dwight sought to revitalize student worship, and published his own collection of Watts's hymns in 1800. The most celebrated gatherings took place in the backwoods of Kentucky, where many thousands gathered at camp meetings that dwarfed the state's largest permanent settlement. For several days participants spent their waking hours in praying, singing, listening to preachers, moaning, jumping, and going into trance. Observers were astonished by bizarre practices like the "singing exercise," in which worshippers "would

sing most melodiously, not from the mouth or nose, but entirely in the breast. . . . Such music silenced every thing, and attracted the attention of all." (*Biography of Eld. Barton Warren Stone*, 1847)

This emotional tone of camp meetings and revivals called for simple, direct emotional texts and tunes that did not require hymnbooks or musical literacy. These needs were met by new vernacular songs that drew on popular melodies of secular music: ballads, fiddle tunes, and dance songs often imported from the British isles, usually featuring wandering refrains that could be easily learned and attached to a number of primary texts. Where hymns fitted naturally in formal worship, directed their focus to God, and complemented prayer, the new sacred songs often focused attention on the hearer and complemented evangelical exhortation. This functional tension has characterized varieties of Christian music through the present.

Revival worship also contributed to the development of a new musical technology, shape-note notation. Responding to concerns about declining musical literacy that inspired the singing-school movement, simplified systems of musical notation were refined over the eighteenth century, reaching their final form in the system of four shapes (triangle, circle, square, and diamond) that corresponded to the notes *fa*, *so*, *la*, and *mi* (the eight-note diatonic scale being denoted by *fa so la fa so la mi fa*). This system allowed participants to sing four-part harmony by reading notes whose relation to each other was determined by shape of the note's *head* rather than its placement on the five-line musical staff. The system was devised by two Philadelphia musicians, William Little and William Smith, and published in a volume called *The Easy Instructor* in 1801. Benefitting both revival worshippers and itinerant singing school instructors, the new tunebooks spread south and west, where the styles flourished and took root even after a reaction developed in metropolitan areas against the supposedly unrefined musical practice of *dunce notes*. Lyrics often came from venerable poets like Watts or Wesley, but new texts also emerged. Shape note (also called sacred harp) singing stabilized certain formal and social practices; it also enabled a particular regional sound, sometimes referred to as white spirituals, that continues to this day.

Although revival camp meetings were not fully integrated, they did generally provide space for African American worshippers and enable a certain amount of musical cross-pollination. The same antebellum decades that saw the proliferation of shape note tunebooks also witnessed increasing public recognition of formerly covert Negro

spirituals. Frederick Douglass famously emphasized the poignant power of spirituals as both an expression of human experience and a survival strategy for enslaved people. “Every tone was a testimony against slavery, and a prayer to God for deliverances from chains,” he wrote in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845). “To those songs I trace my first glimmering conception of the dehumanizing character of slavery.” By transcribing and publishing black spirituals heard during the Civil War, abolitionists like Thomas Wentworth Higginson helped develop a national recognition of the spirituals as a distinctive, powerful mode of Christian music. Decades later, W. E. B. Du Bois offered his own profound interpretation of “sorrow songs” in his 1903 masterwork *The Souls of Black Folk*.

Alongside the expansion of Methodists, Baptists, and other denominations, Christian offshoot communities were creating worship music. Like the Moravian communalists who preceded them, sects like the Mormons, Shakers, Oneida Perfectionists, and others created voluntary associations bound by a mutual sense of religious calling, separated from the world, committed to each other and the law, and animated by the expectation of a coming kingdom. Music helped forge community and elevate spiritual awareness. Shakers wrote and adapted thousands of songs, often granted in visions, that accompanied precise, structured dances that ritually enacted the sacred story of community based on their theology of Christ’s dual sexuality. Mormons likewise placed a strong emphasis on music, beginning with Joseph Smith’s 1830 revelation directing his wife “to make a collection of sacred hymns,” many of which were borrowed from Watts, Wesley, and Newton. Following the establishment of Salt Lake City in 1849, the Tabernacle Choir began its rise to national prominence.

Gospel and Concert Spirituals

Within a decade of the Civil War, a new era of evangelical revival prompted innovations in worship that has shaped Christian music to the present. A former shoe salesman turned evangelist named Dwight Moody (1837–1899) teamed up with Ira Sankey (1840–1908) to create one of the most influential worship teams in American history. Moody’s homey, accessible sermons stressed the ease and immediate rewards of accepting Christ, a message that appealed to the first wave of urban dwellers experiencing the anomie of modern industrial cities. As music director and soloist, Sankey composed catchy gospel songs that helped build a receptive atmosphere, prepare and elevate the crowds, and reinforce

Moody’s message. He recruited large volunteer choirs from local churches, taught them his new gospel songs, and deployed their voices dramatically to build anticipation. As the service progressed, Moody’s prayers and exhortations became interspersed with ensemble sings and vocal solos.

Some of Sankey’s influences came from the antebellum revival hymns, others from songs intended for children as part of the Sunday School movement. The lyrics emphasized a gentle, compassionate Jesus, more personal friend than powerful king and judge, upon whom the passive human subject can depend for sustenance and salvation. With simple, but memorable melodies and affecting harmonies, animated by dotted rhythms and easy-to-remember refrains, the songs appealed to many adult worshippers. In 1875 Sankey brought out the first edition of *Gospel Hymns*, which quickly set the standard for the new genre of white gospel music. The impetus for the Sunday School movement came from women like Ann Warner, who made a powerful mark on the themes of the new white gospel music. Most prolific was Fanny Crosby (1820–1915), who was converted at a Methodist revival in New York City while hearing an Isaac Watts hymn and began writing devotional texts at age forty-four. Using more than two hundred pen names Crosby ultimately produced nearly 9,000 gospel songs, many of which were published by Bigelow and Main, the company that published Sankey’s collections.

Concurrent with the rise of the new gospel songs was the emergence of African American concert spirituals as a distinctive genre. Both gospel and spirituals participated in the transatlantic flow of people and culture that accelerated during the final decades of the nineteenth century. Moody’s and Sankey’s careers in the United States were boosted by the rapturous enthusiasm they generated in their tour through the British Isles in 1873, where they nearly crossed paths with a coterie of African American singers performing highly polished ensemble renditions of slave spirituals. The Fisk Jubilee Singers were organized to raise funds for their struggling Nashville school but won ecstatic praise among European aristocrats for sophisticated and affecting renditions of sorrow songs. Taken together, the enthusiastic reception among European audiences for both the Sankey gospel songs and concert spirituals marked the beginning of international acclaim for American music, nearly half a century before early jazz crossed the Atlantic on the heels of World War I.

These theological and musical impulses contributed to the rise of Pentecostalism at the beginning of the twentieth century. Growing out of the Holiness movement of the late

nineteenth century, the new practices of *fire baptism* stressed ecstatic speech, faith healing, trances, and a deep conviction of a glorious millennial future. It quickly spread south and west from its origin on the Great Plains, reaching Los Angeles in 1906, where a revival on Azusa Street featured unprecedented racial mixing in membership and musical style. Pentecostals lifted restrictions on the use of most instruments in worship, opening sanctuaries to tambourines and drums, barrelhouse piano playing, even trumpets and saxophones, all embedded in a communal din of ebullient singing, hand clapping and foot stomping. The sound of early black Pentecostal worship is preserved on 78 rpm commercial recordings made by pastors such as F. W. McGee, D. C. Rice, and most famously J. M. Gates, who began their ministries in the South but gravitated to Chicago, where by the 1930s Pentecostal churches were entrenched in black communities alongside more staid and established Methodist and Baptist churches. With its recent influx of fervent fire-baptized worshippers and their storefront churches, Chicago became the laboratory for the development of modern black gospel music, the gospel blues.

This new musical hybrid was pioneered by Thomas A. Dorsey (1899–1993), a Georgia-raised blues musician of some standing (he had backed singer Ma Rainey). After a series of personal and spiritual crises, Dorsey decided to leave secular music and, with the lifelong collaboration of Sallie Martin, devote his attention to composing and publishing gospel songs, leading choirs, and organizing a national convention to provide institutional support for the new music. The new gospel music grew out of communal worship but lent itself to performance by choirs, quartets, and great soloists. Mahalia Jackson, who migrated from New Orleans to Chicago, absorbed the influence of great blues singers like Bessie Smith and teamed up with Dorsey before building a national career that by the 1940s had made her the most recognizable figure in gospel music.

Independent of these developments, new institutions and associations were restructuring the Protestant musical mainstream. The mainline churches—Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Lutheran, and others—developed in the context of increased calls for ecumenicity and pluralism, tendencies that loosened the hold of traditional music within denominations. Ecumenical new hymnals brought out after World War II offered a cross section of hymns from the entire history of Christianity, and increasingly songs from nonwhite ethnic traditions and Christians outside North America. The founding of interdenominational

schools of sacred music underscored the ecumenical impulse, as did the formation of associations such as the Hymn Society of America and American Guild of Organists. Responding to the liturgical renewal movement, hymn writers created new texts for old tunes, or composed completely new hymns in a classic, highbrow vein. As a result, millions of American churchgoers found themselves exposed to worship music that was both technically more refined and more varied, in which musical traditions and denominational identity seemed to matter less. To be sure, numerous pockets of tradition remained untouched by these larger impulses toward musical cosmopolitanism. Again, pastors, music directors, and church organists had ultimate sway over what music members of any particular worship sang on a Sunday morning or Wednesday evening.

Changes in Catholic Music

The social and cultural disruptions of the 1960s shook whatever tentative consensus around Christian music was achieved during the middle third of the twentieth century. Within Catholic worship, the liturgical forms promoted by Vatican II expanded the role of congregational singing and scaled back priestly chanting. Musical practices in Catholic parishes had varied widely according to region, size, ethnicity, and occasion (high Mass, low Mass, Liturgy of the Hours, and so on). The repertoire centered on Gregorian chant, Renaissance-era polyphonic music performed by choirs, and congregational hymns generally set to Victorian-era sentimental ballad tunes. Attempts by Pope Pius X and his successors to regulate sacred music through a 1903 directive and a 1955 encyclical were only partially successful. In general, musical standards were low and lay participation spotty.

The new Mass phased in during 1965 extended beyond Gregorian chant and Renaissance-era polyphonic music to include Protestant-style hymns that congregations were encouraged but not always prepared to sing. These reforms weakened the Irish American cultural domination of Spanish, French, and especially German Catholics since the middle of the nineteenth century, a tradition that had emphasized personal piety and literal observance of church law but jettisoned most of the rich musical traditions that had shaped the Catholic Church in Europe. Publishers quickly brought out new hymnals that were virtually interchangeable with Protestant texts and contained few traditional chants. Worship was opened up to a range of instruments, the possibility of female cantors, and a more physically embodied sense of worship. New texts were less

doctrinal and hierarchical, often imagining Christian experience in the language of nature and personal relationships. These trends affected mainline Protestant music as well, but the contrast and speed of implementation made them seem more dramatic in the Catholic context.

By encouraging the use of vernacular music (and language) in worship, Vatican II reforms made possible such diverse musical innovations as the guitar-centered folk mass that drew on the traditions of roots music then being popularized through the Folk Revival of the 1950s and 1960s by Pete Seeger and others, and Mariachi masses that brought the distinctive trumpet sounds of the Mexican-American borderlands into the Mass. Veteran jazz artist Mary Lou Williams, a Catholic convert, began writing compositions on Catholic themes in 1963 and after years of effort was allowed in 1975 to perform a sophisticated jazz mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. The proliferation of vernacular music in Catholic music was reinforced by the rise of the charismatic movement among young Catholics. The new, more mystical and emotional patterns of charismatic worship served as a bridge to the Protestant world, whose baby boomers were themselves casting about for new models of worship music.

Christian Musicals and Contemporary Christian Music

One possibility was peppy, youth-oriented Christian musicals like *Good News* and *Tell It Like It Is*, composed in the 1960s by veteran Christian music arranger Ralph Carmichael. But the attraction of unvarnished pop and rock music was irresistible, overwhelming the appeal of worship music made-to-order for young Christians by their elders. Young Christians, often survivors of the hippie counterculture and devotees of conservative Protestant theology, were quickly inspired to create their own sounds. Larry Norman's song "Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music?" captured the spirit of the insurgence. This new music was integral to the revival of young seekers dubbed the Jesus Movement in 1971, which advanced most conspicuously in Southern California, where Calvary Chapel became ground zero of the new youth evangelicals and their music. The first music had a gentle folksy quality not unlike guitar masses and was oriented toward worship services, but other musicians were quick to explore the potential of a harder-edged rock sound. Often encountering resistance from more traditional pastors and music directors, the new music spread nationally through church networks, itinerant musicians, and Christian music festivals.

By the 1980s so-called contemporary Christian music—CCM—had developed into a profitable market niche, spawning its own records labels as well as investment by major record companies. Its worship-oriented counterpart, dubbed praise music, challenged the popularity of traditional hymnals especially in the burgeoning megachurches tailored to the tastes of baby boomer and Generation X Christians. Electric praise bands replaced organs and pianos, and worshippers read texts from overhead projectors rather than hymnals. A new vocation was born: the worship leader, typically a layperson, often a working musician, who could both direct the praise band and lead the congregation while playing electric guitar or keyboard. In the latest rerun of hymn schisms that date back to the eighteenth century, some churches found difficulty accommodating the different musical tastes of their congregants, sometimes creating different services marketed to different generations. Continuing the pattern by which musical tastes are broadened and replenished by large revivals, stadium events organized by parachurch groups such as Promise Keepers have brought black Pentecostal music to a broader than ever swath of American Christians.

Psalm 137: American Christian Music Tradition

For centuries, Christian music has unfolded in America amid an ongoing challenge to the traditional and the familiar by the new and untried, a dynamic accentuated by the volatility of the innovation-driven American religious marketplace. We can appreciate this dynamic by tracing the evolution of a particular biblical text over nearly four centuries of American history. Psalm 137 presents a clear example of the exceptional mutability of Christian song in America. Its opening lines are among the best known from the Hebrew Bible:

By the rivers of Babylon,
there we sat down, yea, we wept,
when we remembered Zion.
We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst
thereof.
For there they that carried us away captive required
of us a song;
and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying,
sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange
land?

The remaining five verses pledge faithfulness to Jerusalem and, notoriously, vow vengeance against the enemies of

Israel, whose “little ones” will ultimately be dashed “against the stones.”

Whether this psalm was sung by Spanish and French missionaries is unknown, but in 1620 the Pilgrims carried a recent metric version to New England aboard the *Mayflower*. A decade later a larger group of Puritans arrived in Massachusetts, publishing the first English-language book in North America, a new translation of the Psalms. The so-called *Bay Psalm Book* supplanted the more sophisticated Old World collection and went on to dominate worship in New England for generations. Its authority was finally challenged by Isaac Watts’s psalm book of 1719, which pointedly did not include Psalm 137; Watts judged its final verses, like many other psalms, “almost opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel . . . widely different from the present circumstances of Christians.”

Following Watts’s successful innovations in psalm paraphrasing, American hymn-writers like Joel Barlow began to nationalize psalms, placing the newly independent nation in the role traditionally occupied by Israel. A striking example is the anthem composed in 1778 by William Billings, considered America’s first significant composer, under the title “Lamentation Over Boston,” which begins, “By the Rivers of Watertown we sat down & wept/When we remember’d thee o Boston.” With his patriotic fervor, Billings extends the America/Israel-Britain/Babylon analogy, interspersing a trope from Matthew 2:18 (“A voice was heard in Roxbury . . . weeping for Boston because of their Danger”) before vowing that if his loyalty to his native Boston wavers his musical muse should be overcome by discord and dissonance. Decades later, Psalm 137 made its way into the shape note repertoire that would flow south and west from New England: “Babel’s Streams,” a common meter hymn first published in 1811 by Stephen Jenks, a Connecticut-based successor to Billings who composed several tunebooks:

By Babel’s streams we sat and wept, While Zion we
thought on;
Amidst thereof we hung our harps, The willow trees
upon.
With all the pow’r and skill I have, I’ll gently touch
each string;
If I can reach the charming sound, I’ll tune my harp
again.

Psalm 137 was eminently adaptable to the dominant political cause of the nineteenth century: the abolition of slavery. We can’t know if passages from the psalm were

adopted by African Americans in their covert worship, though the Exodus story anchored a number of spirituals. Frederick Douglass made Psalm 137 central to his famous 1852 address, “What to the slave is the Fourth of July?” Drawing his own analogy between the fallen Israel and the slavery-corrupted United States, Douglass cites verbatim the opening verses of Psalm 137, “the plaintive lament of a peeled and woe-smitten people.” The practice of making slaves perform ostensibly merry songs to disguise the appearance of sorrow gave the psalm particular poignancy.

These social and political accents shaped musical adaptations of Psalm 137 over the next century. The great Detroit preacher Rev. C. L. Franklin, whose New Bethel Baptist Church during the middle decades of the twentieth century hosted and sponsored many of the great gospel stars (thereby inspiring his daughter Aretha), based a famous sermon on the psalm. He argued that the Hebrews were wrong not to sing; likewise, African Americans should sing their sacred songs in the face of oppression. In 1969 a Jamaican group created a hit version that switched in Rastafarian language (“How can we sing King Alpha’s song in a strange land?”) and a strong exhortation to “Shout the song of freedom now.” The Melodians’ “Rivers of Babylon” has been covered dozens of times in multiple genres by groups ranging from Sweet Honey and the Rock to Steve Earle. The hit Christian musical *Godspell*’s “On the Willows” paraphrased Psalm 137, impressing it on the ears of a large baby boom audience. A version of the psalm set to a Latvian melody was published in 1964 and made its way into mainline hymnals; some churches sang it in 1980 to remember the American hostages held at the U.S. embassy in Iran.

As the history of Psalm 137 suggests, Christian music in America holds a final irony. Whereas music and religion are often regarded as distinctively national expressions of the unique historical and demographic conditions of America, both music and Christianity reflect centuries of transnational exchange. North America has served as a contact zone for a panoply of religious ideas and musical practices originating in Europe, Africa, and more recently Asia. In assessing the historical development of Christian music, we must consider the cultural flows through North America over the centuries as different groups migrated in and around the continent, bringing with them spiritual beliefs and musical practices.

See also *Bible: As Sacred Text, Translations, Cultural Role; Camp Meetings; Celebrity Culture; Congregations; Judaism; Jewish Culture; Liturgical Arts; Music entries; Pentecostals entries;*

Pluralism; Popular Religion and Popular Culture entries; *Radio; Revivalism* entries; *Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact; Shakers; Worship* entries.

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Music: Contemporary Christian

Contemporary Christian music (CCM) links Christian messages and worldview with contemporary forms of music that range from pop to hip hop, country to hardcore, and acoustic folk rock to death metal. While pop singer Amy

Grant was for decades the CCM standard bearer, since the 1990s an increasing number of CCM artists with diverse musical styles, including Flyleaf, Sixpence None the Richer, Switchfoot, Underoath, Relient K, and DC Talk, have experienced success in the mainstream music arena. Today, CCM generates over \$500 million in sales annually. According to the Gospel Music Association (GMA), Christian/Gospel music accounted for 6.6 percent of all album sales in 2008—exceeding the sales of Latin, Soundtracks, Classical, Jazz, and New Age music. Despite its commercial success, CCM fans and artists continue to debate exactly what makes authentic contemporary Christian music.

History of CCM

Larry Norman (1947–2008) is most often credited with being the father of Christian rock, which eventually became known as CCM. The story, as told by Norman, now holds near legendary status in CCM circles. Norman was a member of the group People, which had a top twenty hit on the pop charts in 1968 with "I Love You (But the Words Won't Come)." Norman and his bandmates wanted to name their album *We Need a Whole Lot More of Jesus (And a Lot Less Rock and Roll)* and include a picture of Jesus on the cover. Capital Records had other ideas and titled the release *I Love You* (1968) and placed a photo of the band on the cover. Norman left the band in protest and went on to record a solo project, *Upon This Rock* (1969), which is generally regarded to be the first Christian rock record. Norman followed this effort with a trilogy of groundbreaking albums, *Only Visiting This Planet* (1972), *So Long Ago the Garden* (1973), and *In Another Land* (1976), that established him as the founder of the genre. Norman also went on to establish his own music label, *Solid Rock Records*, which launched the careers of several notable artists, including Randy Stonehill, Mark Heard, Tom Howard, and Daniel Amos. However, in the ensuing years, Norman's relations with each became strained and they parted ways. Nonetheless, Norman's contributions to the founding of the genre are unquestioned.

CCM was born in the U.S. social, political, and spiritual turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Some southern California evangelical churches, particularly Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, sought to reach out to the crowds of youth descending upon the West Coast at the time. Calvary Chapel became an early focal point for the rise of CCM. Disenchanted hippies turned to Christianity, but they felt that the mainstream church had turned from the historical roots of Christianity. These young, spiritual seekers who became

known as Jesus People married their Christian faith with the rock music of their generation. Love Song, which included Chuck Girard, who previously had some success as a member of the Hondells and the Castells (a band that also included Brian Wilson of Beach Boys fame as well as Glen Campbell), was one of the earliest and most influential CCM bands of the era. With their folk rock harmonies akin to those of Crosby, Stills, and Nash, Love Song introduced Christian rock to the church. One band member, Tommy Coomes, would become an executive at Maranatha! Music, Calvary Chapel's early CCM label, and that would help to usher in the contemporary worship music movement within CCM. Other significant early contributors to the development of CCM include Barry McGuire, Randy Matthews, the Second Chapter of Acts, Phil Keaggy, Resurrection Band, and Petra.

As more rock oriented artists were forging their version of Christian rock, some southern gospel and black gospel artists also were gently pushing the boundaries of what were considered acceptable styles of music in the church. While the Bill Gaither Trio and composer Ralph Carmichael were by no means rock artists, their experimentation with pop styles in their music helped pave the way for the more rock oriented acts to follow. Early pioneers included The Imperials, a gospel quartet with frequently changing membership anchored by founding member Armond Morales. The Imperials, who had once served as Elvis Presley's backup vocal group, began to incorporate more pop-rock styles in their music while continuing to emphasize vocal harmonies. Likewise, Andraé Crouch and the Disciples began to infuse their gospel music with R & B and rock influences, thereby changing the face of gospel music. As these groups, defined by the church as "safe," began to edge toward rock influences, it helped open the door for those Christian rock artists who came from outside the church and were further out on the edge stylistically.

Early Opposition to CCM

But the road was not always an easy one, as early CCM met with strong opposition from within the church. There were two key objections, one moralist and one aesthetic. The moralist objection argued that rock and roll was the devil's music. In this view, rock music and Christian lyrics were like oil and water—the two could not be mixed. Authors and ministers like Bob Larson, David Noebel, David Wilkerson, and Jimmy Swaggart were among those who accused CCM of such things as being "heathen, jungle boogie"—apparently oblivious to the racist undertones of such claims. Urban legends

were circulated about how natives in Africa heard the Christian rock records of missionaries' children and reported that this was the music they used to summon demons prior to their conversion to Christianity. There was also the threat of "backward masked" messages encouraging drug use or devil worship. These backward masked messages supposedly could be heard only when playing records backwards and purportedly could somehow be subconsciously processed by the brain. Others suggested CCM was a Satanic, and sometimes a communist, plot to destroy the youth and the future of the church. While such arguments have fallen out of vogue as baby boomers who grew up listening to rock have become church pastors, elders, and music ministers, a little bit of Internet surfing will turn up Web sites that continue to repeat the moralist objection to CCM. This pattern reflects one commonly found in the last few hundred years. New forms of music that accompany revivals are borrowed from the popular culture of the day. These musical styles are first denounced by traditionalists. Then they are grudgingly tolerated before eventually becoming an accepted part of the church (see, for example, Cusic 1990 and Miller 1993). Despite these initial objections, the revivalists march on. It was William Booth, founder of The Salvation Army, who is credited with the statement, "Why should the devil have all the best tunes?"—which Larry Norman paraphrased into one of the earliest Christian rock anthems, "Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music?"

A less common, but perhaps longer lasting, objection to early CCM was the argument that rock music is an inherently inferior form of music, as compared to classical music, for example, and is therefore unworthy of carrying a gospel message. Authorities on church music contended that rock and pop music is by its nature entertainment and therefore promotes a shallow, distorted version of the gospel. Given CCM's propensity for self-criticism, it is easy to find artists like Michael Card and Steve Camp, who have taken similar positions arguing that CCM has become shallow and commercial, falling away from a romanticized earlier era in the genre's history. While not rejecting rock as a medium for Christian lyrics, they call for serious reflection and self-assessment by those who make and produce CCM. Despite the frequently repeated concerns of a shallow gospel and entertainment instead of sound theology, Mark Allan Powell, author of the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music* (2002), has insisted that this music rarely advanced heretical ideas, but it often has a deeper content than might come through at first hearing.

Rock music fans and critics also were quick to condemn CCM as a pale imitation of rock music. A commonly heard joke in the early days of CCM was, “What’s the difference between gospel music and CCM?” The answer, “Gospel music is good music about God sung by black people. CCM is bad music about God sung by white people.” The joke is indicative of the pressure many CCM labels, fans, and artists felt to justify their genre as worthy. One way the industry tried to deal with charges that CCM was simply an inferior form of rock music with lyrics about God was to latch on to pop music “stars” who became Christians and hold them up as “proof” that CCM was good music. Noel Paul Stookey (of Peter, Paul, and Mary), Barry McGuire (“Eve of Destruction”), B.J. Thomas (“Raindrops Keep Fallin’ on My Head”), Richie Furay (of Buffalo Springfield and Poco), and Dan Peek (of America) are examples of pop and rock stars who later recorded CCM albums. This grasping at legitimacy, along with CCM’s tendency to bill new artists as the “Christian” version of whatever mainstream artists were currently in vogue, contributed to the long-held perception of CCM as a derivative form of music.

Maturation of the Genre

The growth of the genre and the success of artists and bands with unique sounds have made this criticism less valid today, even if it is still frequently heard. DC Talk, the 77s, Daniel Amos, and The Choir, which originated in the 1970s and the 1980s, helped usher in a new era of bands with original sounds and creative lyrics that could not be easily categorized as the “Christian” copycat of secular bands nor as religious tracts set to music. Following the trails blazed by these artists, multiple CCM bands have successfully crossed over to mainstream sales and airplay chart success. Flyleaf, Casting Crowns, Switchfoot, Skillet, TobyMac and Relient K CDs are as likely to be purchased in mainstream retail outlets as they are in Christian bookstores.

However, Amy Grant was CCM’s breakthrough artist who put the genre on the map. Grant, who in the 1980s won five Grammy awards for Best Gospel Performance, is CCM’s most successful artist. Signed to Word Records at age 15, her first album sold an unheard of (for CCM) 50,000 copies in its first year. Her *Age to Age* (1982) became the first CCM album to go platinum and marked Grant’s transition to a mature, serious vocalist. In yet another CCM first, Grant’s duet with Peter Cetera, “The Next Time I Fall in Love (It Will Be With You),” from 1985’s *Unguarded*, was the first song recorded by a Christian artist on a Christian label

(Myrrh) to reach number one on the pop charts since CCM became an identifiable genre. *Heart in Motion* (1991) included a number one song, “Baby, Baby,” written for her six-week-old daughter, and a number two song, “Every Heartbeat,” with sales totaling close to \$6 million. Grant’s success so far has been unmatched in CCM. A divorce in 1999 from husband/guitar player Gary Chapman followed by a second marriage to country singer Vince Gill took some of the shine off of Grant’s star, but she managed to remain a favorite, unlike numerous other CCM artists who were rejected by fans for long periods following a divorce or other public moral “failure.”

The Splintered World of CCM: Separational CCM

As CCM has grown and found sales success, it has continued to struggle with debates regarding what constitutes authentically Christian music. This question was raised in the very first issue of *Contemporary Christian Music* magazine and continues today. Howard and Streck (1999) argue that CCM is a splintered genre wherein artists, fans, music companies, and critics make differing assumptions about the appropriate relationship between Christians and their surrounding culture. These assumptions shape the lyrical content of the music produced. The music produced is a reflection of these often implicit and unarticulated assumptions. The result is that CCM has at least three identifiable subgenres.

Many early CCM musicians took a separational approach to CCM, seeing the world as evil and corrupt, that Christians must separate themselves from it, and call others to separate themselves as well. Ironically, while trying to separate themselves from the world, these bands often went to great lengths to look and sound “like the world,” in order to be able to deliver their call for conversion and separation from the world. In separational CCM, musicians see their role as that of minister, evangelist, or musical missionary to the lost, and the music is often viewed as a tool to be used in ministry. In addition to seeking to evangelize with their music, separational bands frequently seek to edify believers and to facilitate a worship experience. They argue that musical styles are neutral in and of themselves. What matters are the purposes for which the music is used.

Thus many early separational CCM bands (for example, Carman, Petra, Degarmo & Key, and so on) were accused of using music in a utilitarian fashion and merely copying whatever musical styles were popular at the moment. The music has little value in and of itself. Its value is derived from

the ways in which it is used to serve a higher purpose—evangelism, edification, and worship. In separational CCM, the “Christian” content of the lyrics is obvious as bands seek to proselytize the nonbelievers, to encourage the faithful, or to facilitate a worship experience. Fans of separational CCM often criticize the other subgenres for their lack of overtly religious messages in their lyrics. Fans are known to ask, “How often does the band mention Jesus or God in its lyrics?” Adult contemporary CCM artists like Steven Curtis Chapman and the modern worship group The David Crowder Band are examples of separational CCM.

The Splintered World of CCM: Integrational CCM

Rather than seeing the world as evil and corrupt, in CCM’s second subgenre, integrational, at least the highest ideals of the surrounding culture are considered to be consistent with the ideals of Christianity. Thus instead of rejecting the world and seeking to be separate, these performers define themselves as entertainers who happen to be Christians. They see their role not so much as to evangelize nonbelievers, encourage the faithful, and facilitate worship, but to offer a wholesome, positive, pop entertainment alternative to the excesses of popular music.

Amy Grant epitomizes this subgenre. She was frequently criticized by separational CCM fans for failing to be overtly Christian in her song lyrics. The lyrics of integrational CCM are not necessarily religious in nature. Instead, they present reflections on life (for example, falling in love, heartache, and so on) from a Christian perspective, but they may not sound very different from standard pop fare to the uninitiated. For example, the band Flyleaf records for a mainstream label and tours with other mainstream bands. While the members of the band self-identify as Christians, they don’t define themselves as a Christian band but rather a band that happens to be made up of people who are Christians. While Flyleaf song lyrics reflect a Christian-influenced worldview, they are not overtly religious in nature.

The Splintered World of CCM: Transformational CCM

In transformational CCM, the third subgenre, the surrounding culture is neither inherently evil and corrupt nor is it viewed as consistent with Christian ideals. Instead, the world was created good, but it is currently broken or fallen and in need of restoration to God’s original intentions for it. In contrast to the separational CCM “ministers” and the

integrational CCM “entertainers,” transformational CCM performers tend to define themselves as “artists.” They explore the brokenness and pain of living in a fallen world and the resulting music is much darker than either separational or integrational CCM. Transformational artists recognize their own brokenness and that of the church, as well as the fallen state of the culture, more generally. While music critics tend to applaud their efforts, these are the “starving artists” of CCM. Their music tends not to sell as well as integrational and separational CCM. Like the music of integrational performers, the lyrics of transformational artists tend not to be laden with overtly religious language. The bands are also more likely to develop distinct musical styles and cannot legitimately be accused of merely copying whatever styles are popular at the moment. Daniel Amos, the Seventy Sevens, and the Choir are examples of bands that defined this subgenre beginning in the 1980s.

These diverse approaches lead to frequent, often vociferous, debates within the genre about what is and is not authentic contemporary Christian music. Separational fans argue only their bands with overtly Christian lyrics directly mentioning God and Jesus should qualify. Integrational and transformational fans cast a much wider net in their definitions of CCM. Compounding the difficulty is that performers in any of the subgenres face the constraints of the marketplace just as Larry Norman did in the late 1960s. One must sell enough music in order to be signed by record companies and have the opportunity to earn a living as a musician. But record companies have a long history of seeking to make artists’ works more commercially viable—which may create demands for both musical and lyrical compromises.

Debates over Authenticity

CCM cannot be defined by a signature sound musically, perhaps surprisingly, nor can it be easily defined by its lyrical content. The nature of this splintered genre means CCM resists easy definition and is prone to these ongoing arguments regarding authenticity. These debates are epitomized by the furor surrounding the band Sixpence None the Richer’s 1998 mainstream success with the single “Kiss Me”—a good example of integrational CCM. Apparently fearing that “Kiss Me” might be voted the Gospel Music Association’s Song of the Year, the GMA scrambled to create a new definition of gospel music. It settled upon “Gospel music is music in any style whose lyric is substantially based upon historically orthodox Christian truth contained in or derived from the Holy Bible; and/or an expression of

worship of God or praise for His works; and/or testimony of relationship with God through Christ; and/or obviously prompted and informed by a Christian worldview” (see Rabey 1999, 54). Based on this definition, “Kiss Me” was passed over for a Song of the Year nomination. While this incident illustrated the influence of those holding the separatist perspective in CCM, in the end, this definition pleased almost no one.

In his *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music*, Mark Allan Powell (2002) takes what may be a much more workable approach with this definition: “Contemporary Christian music is music that appeals to self-identified fans of contemporary Christian music on account of a perceived connection to what they regard as Christianity” (p. 13). Powell argues this audience-driven definition of CCM is consistent with the way all other musical genres are defined—a music genre is whatever its fans say it is. In any case, the sometimes vociferous debates regarding which subgenres and which performers make truly “authentic” Christian music will continue for the foreseeable future.

CCM, Gospel Music, and Contemporary Worship Music

Martin Luther King Jr. once called 11 o’clock on Sunday mornings the most segregated hour in America. And just as churches have continued to be largely segregated along racial lines, so has CCM. Despite the early popularity of André Crouch and the Disciples and the significant sales of artists like Kirk Franklin, black gospel and CCM have remained largely separate genres. This is despite the efforts of some within the genre, such as Toby Mac of DC Talk, to promote more rap and R & B artists within CCM. While Toby Mac’s R & B influenced music sells well, most African American artists find limited audiences among white CCM fans.

Perhaps the most significant impact of CCM has been in the area of contemporary worship music—praise and worship choruses set to contemporary pop/folk music. *Your Church* magazine has surveyed churches regarding their style of worship music every three years since 1993 (LaRue 2004). The results indicate that in 1993 nearly half of all churches used traditional worship music while only 13 percent used contemporary worship music exclusively. The remaining churches used a blend of traditional and contemporary music in worship. By 2004, only 31 percent of churches were using traditional music exclusively. Blended formats were utilized in 37 percent of the churches surveyed, and exclusive use of contemporary worship music

was the format in 32 percent of the churches. Churches that utilize contemporary worship also reported more attendance growth than churches that utilized traditional music exclusively. Churches using contemporary worship music exclusively had a mean Sunday morning attendance that was more than 50 percent ahead of traditional churches. It may well be that CCM’s most significant impact has been changing the style of worship music employed in evangelical congregations.

Conclusion

Just as religion is alive and well in the United States, so is contemporary Christian music. While the strict boundaries that have separated CCM from mainstream popular music have begun to blur, the genre is likely to continue to grow. As baby boomers who grew up listening to rock music have become the pastors, deacons, elders, and ministers of music, the arguments against a blending of Christian message and worldview with popular music styles ring hollow today. The challenge for CCM will be to break out of a segregated musical ghetto without losing the identity that distinguishes it.

See also *Emerging Church Movement; Emotion; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Fundamentalism: Contemporary; Megachurches; Music: Christian; Seeker Churches; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends; Worship: Contemporary Currents.*

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Music: Coritos/ Spanish-Language

Music reveals the multiple ways U.S. Latino/a Christian faith communities practice everyday religious beliefs within informal and formal situations. Through specialized articulations of music, cultural, generational, denominational, and contextual differences merge with transnational concepts of celebration, varieties of song, and the cross-cultural dimensions of Hispanic/Latino/a worship. This multifaceted creative, artistic, and emotional musical expression characterizes Latino/a popular religion.

The agency of celebration as fiesta or, as some have characterized it, sacred fiesta infuses the music of Latino/a popular religion in individual expressions and corporate settings. Worship as fiesta occurs almost universally in Latino/a Christian faith communities. The breadth of these religious practices is seen in that they appear across a wide religious continuum. Hispanic Roman Catholics and Protestants revel in this communal celebration, a type of neighborhood party to which everyone receives a welcome and an opportunity to contribute to its joyful development. This celebratory expression diametrically opposes a remote, formalized religious production that requires a nonparticipatory audience cordoned from the performance as remote observers. Certainly, Hispanic worship music may comprise elements of a planned ritual, just as one plans a party, but always in an environment where persons are invited to participate as members of the family of God in a particular place. The contextually ritualized music of Latino/a worship simultaneously embraces improvisation as the acts of God are celebrated collaboratively within a communal framework.

Many musical categories infuse these contexts of communal worship and sacred celebration, including those from

popular music. Popular-folk religious music transmits a culturally rich faith whether sung in Spanish, English, Spanglish or an indigenous language of Latin America. The great variety of Latino/a religious music utilizes a rhythmic tapestry, woven from African, indigenous, or European origins, a fusion of many strands again with the context determining the nature of the mix. The spirituality expressed in this folk sacred music may draw on a range of styles such as Tejano, Andean, *nortño*, mariachi, *cumbia*, salsa, Latin rock, *boleros*, *baladas*, *música religiosa* (religious music), *música evangélica* (evangelical music), *cantos espirituales* (spiritual songs), Latino/a contemporary Christian music, updated covers of old hymns (originally in English or Spanish), or the still exceedingly popular genre of *coros*, also known as *coritos*.

The Nature of Coritos

The Spanish word for a chorus is *coro*. Simply defined, a *corito* is a short, popular chorus sung widely in Latina/Latino Christian communal worship. *Coritos* also enable private devotional piety. In some settings the term *estribillo* is used as an alternative designation, although *corito* seems to be more pervasive. Etymologically, the term *corito* becomes instructive in that as the diminutive of the word *coro*, *corito* encompasses concepts of affection toward something and closeness and thereby indicates its high regard by those who regularly utilize them. Within the many faith communities that regularly incorporate such songs in their worship, *coritos* function as vehicles for culturally rooted faith expressions, theological and contextual interpretations of received doctrines. Moreover, *coritos* provide a pathway for the creation of new tenets of belief and folk teachings of the faith that may have immediate contextual applications.

While worshippers may share numerous *coritos*, the corpus of *coritos* is not limited to any one universally recognized hymnal, book, or record. *Coritos* appear in photocopied collections, pamphlets, overhead transparencies, or computer slide presentations, usually without musical notation. The structurally simple songs easily pass from one age group to another as living oral traditions. Conceptually, however, *coritos* possess a profound transformational power within the marginalized communities that celebrate them.

It appears that *coritos* first emerged from the life situations within specific communities of faith. Hispanic/Latino/a *coritos* reflect their homegrown origins as opposed to the liturgical or ritual music that more directly derives from ecclesiastical hierarchies or external missionary activity. In one sense *coritos* become more homegrown through the

rhythms and musical instruments used. Even when the instruments used and the tempo employed vary in specific contexts, the same *corito* is easily recognized from one setting to another. Sometimes a well-known *corito* receives a new verse that reflects the definite life-situation of a specific congregation at a particular time. In this way the core content remains the same across different situations but a continual contextual renewal of meaning emerges.

Coritos express the perceptions of felt concrete manifestations of the supernatural in daily life in Roman Catholic and Protestant settings, with some of the same *coritos* appearing in both contexts. Although the exact source of specific songs remains a mystery, there is clear indication that some *coritos* originate in Latin American and U.S. Latino/a Pentecostal contexts. This testifies to the liturgical, cultural, and counter-hegemonic appeal of these folk religious songs. Often the popularity of *coritos* directly defies the desires of formal ecclesiastical authorities, thereby emphasizing how much people value *coritos* and willingly risk pastoral disapproval to retain something precious to them.

Examples of *Coritos*

Certainly one of the most widely recognized *coritos* is “Alabaré” (“I Will Praise”), a song heard in Baptist churches, Roman Catholic gatherings, Pentecostal prayer services, and other denominational and nondenominational settings. The nearly omnipresent singing of “Alabaré” in a wide assortment of Latino/a worship contexts may be a unique unifying religious practice across the spectrum of the various expressions of Latino/a Christianity in the United States. Indeed, the use of *coritos*, particularly “Alabaré,” appears as a grassroots demonstration of musical and liturgical ecumenism in worship even among groups that formally disagree on doctrines or reject one another outright. “Alabaré” exemplifies the phenomenon that something about *coritos* transcends ethnic, geographic, regional, and doctrinal borders, making them transnational as well as transdenominational. Like other *coritos*, “Alabaré” adapts to its immediate environment and new lyrics may be created for a given setting. However, even with situational sacred improvisation, there does appear to be a core text as shown here:

ALABARÉ

Alabaré, (alabaré), alabaré, (alabaré).

Alabaré a mi Señor. (2x)

Juan vio el número de los redimidos
y todos alababan al Señor:

unos cantaban, otros oraban OR otros oraban, unos
cantaban

y todos alababan al Señor.

[Refrain]

Todos unidos, alegres cantamos

glorias y alabanzas al Señor.

Gloria al Padre, Gloria al Hijo

y gloria al Espíritu de Amor.

[Refrain]

I will praise, (I will praise), I will praise, (I will praise)

I will praise my Lord.

I will praise, I will praise,

I will praise my Lord. (2x)

John saw the number

of the redeemed

And all praise the Lord

Some sing, some pray OR Some pray, some sing

But all praise the Lord.

[Refrain]

All united, happily we sing,

Glory and praises to the Lord

Glory to the Father, glory to the Son

and glory to the Spirit of Love.

[Refrain]

Both the simplicity and sophistication in this unpretentious song draw the contemporary worshipper in the midst of everyday challenges and trials into a wider eschatological community, and thereby there is the potential for a new perspective no matter what is happening in the immediate situation. In only a few lines this *corito* brings the New Testament book of Revelation (probably Revelation chapter five) to life for the worshipper and joins individuals together into the great fiesta at the end of time. In addition to a contextualized biblical reference, this *corito* affirms a corporate trinitarian faith and Christian unity in the form of grassroots doxology. So one short song musically conveys knowledge of the biblical text, teaches Christian doctrine, and makes both immediate and accessible to contemporary communities. This sort of multilayer functionality is typical of *coritos* in general.

“No Hay Dios Tan Grande Como Tú” (“There Is No God Greater than You”), another common *corito*, expresses the singers’ appreciation of the divine’s magnitude as well as the singers’ confidence in a personal God who is directly addressed in a grammatically familiar way. Again, while there

are many versions of “No Hay Dios Tan Grande Como Tú,” the following are commonly found lyrics:

No hay Dios tan grande como Tú, no lo hay, no lo
hay (2x)
No hay Dios que puede hacer las obras como las que
haces Tú (2x)
No es con espada ni con ejército más con tu Santo
Espíritu (2x)
Y esos montes se moverán (3x)
[Common Variant]
Y esas almas se salvarán (3x)
Con tu Santo Espíritu
Con tu Santo Espíritu

There is no god greater than You, there is none, there
is none (2x)
There is no god who can do the works like the ones
You do (2x)

It is not with a sword nor with an army, but with
your Holy Spirit (2x)

And these mountains will be moved (3x)
[Common Variant]
And these souls will be saved (3x)
With your Holy Spirit
With your Holy Spirit

This *corito* alludes to the gospel of Matthew 17:20, “For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you” (NRSV). Here two common variants appear in the lines about mountains moving or souls being saved, but both testify to the Latino/a Christian belief about the active visible power of God at work.

These two examples of *coritos* (“I Will Praise” and “There Is No God Greater than You”) affirm a belief in the transformative power of the Spirit of God and refer to biblical texts, a common feature of *coritos* that demonstrates their function to promote biblical literacy through popular worship. *Coritos* also shape cultural identity and religious and spiritual practices.

Conclusion

Coritos function in Latino/a faith communities as verbal expressions of popular religion and spirituality, flexible

liturgical tools, conduits through which folk rhythms and instruments appear in religious settings and thereby transform religious communities. The flexibility of *coritos* is such that sometimes they are used in counter-hegemonic ways and at other times they may support a status quo. *Coritos* are shapers of religious and cultural identities and traditions and function as dynamic Christian symbols within Latino/a religious communities in the United States. Even as younger generations of Latinas and Latinos embrace new forms of religious worship music, *coritos* continue to enjoy wide acceptance within Latino/a contexts. Whether in church settings or home-made videos on YouTube, sung by members of a small storefront church in the United States with their own instruments, a formal choir, or an internationally renowned religious pop singer in a highly orchestrated way, Latino/a popular Christianity finds unity and self-expression in these beloved *coritos*, seeking to extend to all listeners an invitation to the sacred fiesta.

See also *Emotion; Frontier and Borderlands; Hispanic Influence; Latino American Religion* entries; *Latino/a Religious Practice; Music* entries; *Religious Thought: Latino/a; Women; Worship; Contemporary Currents*.

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Music: Hymnody

Hymnody is a generic name for ritual song employed in religious traditions. In its broadest sense, it simply means sacred texts performed by singing. In English usage, however, the term is usually restricted to indicate sacred poems of specific metrical construction composed since the

sixteenth century and set to one or more musical parts for congregational singing. Such a constraint, however, cannot begin to do justice to the many disparate languages, religious traditions, textual and musical forms, and ritual settings in which hymnody has flourished in the territorial United States since pre-Columbian times. The rich Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist hymnodic traditions of today's multicultural America, aside from English translation and occasional new musical settings, have not yet taken a specifically American form.

Hymnody is a complex form of religious culture combining language, music, and ritual performance. Hymnodies are part of dynamic religious traditions and broad cultural change. In formal terms hymnody has been textually conservative and consensual yet musically diverse and contested, while developmentally it has played a crucial role in the formation of American religious identity since colonization.

Indigenous and Mission Hymnodies

There were hymns in America long before Christopher Columbus explored the Caribbean and Hernán Cortés conquered Aztec Mexico. Spanish explorers and conquistadores encountered Aztec and Mayan civilizations with rich religious cultures. The early Franciscan missionary and scholar Bernardino de Sahagún preserved many of the Aztec hymns in his *General History of New Spain* (1569). Mythic narrative hymns called *teotlatolli* or *teocuicatl*, "divine words," or "divine songs," gave accounts of the five eras or epochs, called "suns," that comprised cosmic time for the Aztecs. They understood themselves as living in the Fifth Sun, an age of movement and sudden change, which their hymns describe with characteristic anxiety about its catastrophic ending. The Aztecs also composed sacred hymns that importuned their high gods to counsel and protect them. Hymns to their culture hero Quetzalcoatl celebrated his wisdom; those to Huitzilopochtli asked their war god to accompany the empire's warrior clans in battle. These few examples indicate the central role of hymns in articulating the religious world of the Aztecs at their elaborate festivals and ritual sacrifices.

Elements of this Mesoamerican worldview extended to Native American tribal peoples at least as far as the Pueblo tribes of the Upper Rio Grande and the Cahokia of the mid-Mississippi Valley. For example, the worldview of the Hopi, one of the most ancient Native American peoples, includes peace with all beings; their rituals maintain a finely tuned balance among the people, the natural world, and the spirit world, mediated by *kat'sinas*, or "life-bearers," spirit

beings who travel from one cosmic realm to another. The ceremonials of the Navajo in Arizona, neighbors of the Hopi, entail extraordinarily long and arduous chant performances by holy men. The Night Chant ceremony, for example, is a nine-night rite for healing the head and mind that requires sand painting, fire making, and other exacting preparations. Such elaborate ceremonies require highly trained ritual specialists and can sometimes involve the entire local community in their performance.

Western Coastal, Plains, and Eastern Woodland peoples also inhabit a sacred cosmos that finds its most powerful manifestation in hymnodic chant. These nations maintain their primal religious understanding of the world as a place inhabited by spirit beings both natural and supernatural, including themselves, their land and crops, the animals and birds, the four directions. Eastern Woodland nations also make songs to culture heroes like Hiawatha and Moshup, or to the Trickster, a polymorphous antihero who frustrates human ambitions and rival gods. All of these spirit beings have their particular songs and associated dances through which the people communicate with them and access their powers.

Over the centuries, Catholic and Protestant Christians have sought to missionize Native American peoples and have used hymns prominently in that effort. First to do so successfully was the Dominican friar and bishop Bartolomé de Las Casas. Las Casas argued in *The Only Method of Attracting All People to the True Faith* (1536) that Christianity should be spread to New Spain by hymns and preaching and not by the sword. A year later he used indigenous melodies and original Christian lyrics to help convert the Tuzulutlan people of central Guatemala, for which he named the region Vera Paz, "True Peace."

Christian missionaries have followed Las Casas's strategy over the past five centuries, producing countless hymn collections designed to convert and maintain Native American congregations. The earliest Protestant experiments in North America were promising. As part of his 1663 Algonkian translation of the Bible, New England Puritan minister John Eliot translated the psalms for use by fourteen "praying towns" of Native American converts. The towns were destroyed in King Philip's War (1675–1676), however, and since then Protestant missions to Native Americans have had only very modest success. Indigenous Protestants, moreover, have used mission hymns as vehicles for blending Christianity with their own sacred traditions. The Ojibwe community at Red Earth, Minnesota, for example, has supported a group of itinerant singers who convene traditional mourning rites

by singing translated Episcopal mission hymns with a distinctive intonation and rhythmic pulse that transforms them into an indigenous utterance of comfort and grief. It is likely that this hybridized appropriation of hymns has been a common feature of both Protestant and Catholic missions to Native Americans from the very beginning.

African American slaves encountered mission hymnody quite differently in colonial Catholic Latin America and British North America. In New Spain, the Caribbean, and Brazil, vernacular hymn settings called *negritos* draw heavily from the sacred music and dance heritage of West Africa. In the colonies of the American South, by contrast, preachers and plantation masters taught Christianized slaves Protestant psalms and hymns. They also restricted the public performance of religious song by African Americans to these forms, relegating original slave appropriations of Christianity in music to secretive meetings in the fields and slave quarters. There, African Americans began to sing their own versions of the Christian message, grounded in the Hebrew Bible's stories of Israel's liberation from Egypt and its perilous journey to the promised land of Canaan. Some of these "slave spirituals" may have been formulated as early as the eighteenth century, but they were not documented or widely shared outside the African American community until after the Civil War.

Colonial Hymnodies

The primary function of hymnody for Spanish and English colonizers was to preserve and maintain their respective Catholic and Protestant religious traditions. The greatest exemplar of this process in New Spain has been the devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, a 1531 apparition of the Virgin Mary near Mexico City whose miraculous image attracted throngs of pilgrims seeking her aid, singing hymns and pilgrimage songs in her honor. Guadalupe is now the largest pilgrimage site in the Western Hemisphere. By far the most famous of its songs over the centuries has been "Las Mañanitas a la Virgen de Guadalupe," a "wake-up song" for the youthful Virgin as she reappears in ritual time.

Around 1600, Spanish explorers and Franciscan missionaries brought simple two-line hymns called *alabados* from Mexico to Santa Fe and other new settlements in the Upper Rio Grande Valley. With the secularization of the state after the Mexican Revolution of 1815, however, the missions were abandoned and lay brotherhoods stepped in to preserve these traditional sacred songs. These societies came to be known as *Penitentes*, the penitent ones, for their practice of self-flagellation and their vivid reenactments of Christ's

crucifixion on Good Friday. As part of their religious discipline, the Penitentes compiled handmade hymnbooks they called *Hymnos sagrados dedicados a nuestro Padre Jesus de Nazareno* (Sacred Hymns dedicated to our Father Jesus of Nazareth). For nearly two centuries, the Penitentes have continued to preserve the colonial hymnody of New Spain in what was its remotest province.

In British North America, the singing of psalms was an important element in the established religions of the Anglican South and Puritan New England. Daily Anglican worship revolved around the recitation or singing of the psalms at morning and evening prayer as well as during Sunday worship and the Communion service. To supply metrical psalms for the new national liturgy, Elizabeth I authorized a version begun during the 1540s, completed in Geneva in the 1550s, and published in 1561 as *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* by Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins. Also known as the English Psalter, it became the standard source for Anglican praise for the next century and a half.

The Pilgrims and the Puritans shared with Anglicans the Calvinist limitation of congregational praise to the biblical psalms. While the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony used *The Psalmes of David Englished* (1612) by the Separatist Henry Ainsworth, Massachusetts Bay Puritans prepared their own translation, published in 1640 as *The Whole Booke of Psalmes faithfully translated into English Metre*. Popularly known as the Bay Psalm Book, it was the first book printed in British North America. Its awkward rhymes and rough-hewn meters, however, did not fully meet Puritan expectations on either side of the Atlantic. The Puritan practice of "lining-out"—reading out one or two lines of the psalm before the congregation sang them back—also constrained the performance of the Bay Psalm Book. In 1651 Harvard president Henry Dunster and his assistant Richard Lyon published a major revision as *The Psalmes, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs of the Old and New Testament faithfully translated into English Metre* (1651). Called the New England Psalm Book to distinguish it from the earlier version, this collection sustained Congregational worship through the eighteenth century.

It did not lack for serious competition, however. In 1696 the crown authorized *A New Version of the Psalmes of David*, a second Anglican metrical psalter by Poet Laureate Nahum Tate and Royal Chaplain Nicholas Brady. The Puritans responded in 1698 by publishing the first music in America, a small tune supplement to the ninth edition of the New England Psalm Book, but the Anglicans countered with the *Supplement to the New Version of the Psalmes* (1702) that

included a rival tune collection as well as hugely popular festival hymns like “While Shepherds Watch’d Their Flocks,” perhaps the most widely sung sacred lyric in colonial America. The 1708 edition of the *Supplement* also introduced a new musical style, known as the English Parish Style, that profoundly shaped American hymnody in the eighteenth century. After the Glorious Revolution, English composers began to compose psalm tunes and anthems for country parishes using simplified Baroque forms and harmonies. Their Parish Style tunes also proved ideally suited for the musical resources and sensibilities of the American colonies.

Cotton Mather tried to regain the textual upper hand for Congregationalism with his blank-verse *Psalterium Americanum* (1718), but the most popular poetic voice of colonial popular religion would be that of the English Independent minister Isaac Watts. Already famous for his controversial volume of *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707), in which he advocated and wrote “hymns of human composure” for use in worship, Watts published *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament* in 1719. The new work was a true psalter, yet Watts had also aggressively paraphrased the imagery of David’s psalms into highly emotional Christian expressions of salvific religious experience and unshakeable faith.

Around 1720 the unsettled textual and musical situation in New England erupted in the Regular Singing Controversy, the most important hymnodic episode in colonial America. Massachusetts Bay ministers decided to reform Congregational praise by teaching “regular singing”—a combination of musical literacy, vocal training, and new tune repertory—but many rural parishes resisted these challenges to their traditional or “usual” singing. The ministers unleashed a furious pamphlet campaign extolling the spiritual and aesthetic virtues of “regular” singing and denouncing the effrontery of “usual” singers for their disorderly denial of ministerial authority. Most important, they advocated singing schools as a practical remedy for “usual” singing. In 1721, John Tuft’s *Introduction to the Art of Singing Psalm-Tunes* and Thomas Walter’s *Grounds and Rules of Musick Explained* became the staple texts for the singing school movement, which spread slowly but steadily in New England for the next fifty years.

The Great Awakening, Ethnic Hymnodies, and the English Parish Style

During the 1730s and 1740s the singing school movement encountered the Great Awakening (1726–1744), America’s

first mass religious revival. The Awakening embraced the teachings of Congregationalist Jonathan Edwards of Northampton, Massachusetts, whose theology gave hymnody a crucial new role as a prime vehicle for stimulating what he called “the holy affections” requisite for regeneration and sanctification. Edwards himself sponsored a singing school for his congregation in 1736 and embraced Watts’s psalms and hymns for use outside the Sunday service.

During the Awakening, evangelicals began publishing hymn collections specially designed for revivals, family devotions, and prayer meetings or “social worship.” The earliest of these was John Wesley’s *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, published at Charleston in 1737. It presented texts from the *New Version* and Watts, as well as his brother Charles Wesley’s first published sacred poems and John’s own translations from German Pietist sources. Of greater immediate impact was the 1753 *Collection of Hymns for Social Worship* compiled by George Whitefield, the leading itinerant preacher of the Awakening. Whitefield’s *Collection* employed the same type of ecumenical text mixture that Wesley had done, and with far more success in the American market. The greatest hymnodic beneficiary of the Awakening, however, was Watts, who in effect became the liturgical voice of colonial evangelicalism. So widely accepted were Watts’s psalms and hymns that most colonial evangelical denominations felt no need to publish hymnals of their own. The Anglophone exception was the tiny Seventh-day Baptist communion in New England, who published *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, the first American denominational hymnal, in 1766.

German-speaking communions in Pennsylvania were far more active in publishing psalters and hymnals. In 1752–1753 the German Reformed reprinted the *Neu-vermehrte-und vollstaendiges Gesang-Buch* (Newly amplified and complete Song Book), containing the metrical psalms of Ambrosius Lobwasser and hymns of Joachim Neander. Lutherans responded in 1757 with an edition of the *Marburger Gesangbuch* (Marburg Song Book), their canonical collection of psalms and hymns by Martin Luther and “other God-blessed teachers.” Pennsylvania also welcomed numerous radical and Pietist German sects—Mennonites, Schwenkfelders, and Moravians—who promptly published their own identifying hymnals. The most original and musically prolific Pennsylvania German sect, however, was the Ephrata community gathered in 1732 by the Seventh-day Baptist Conrad Beissel, a mystic who taught his celibate followers an esoteric musical theology and trained them to sing his hymns in a uniquely delicate and unearthly head tone. Beissel published a

remarkable series of Ephratan hymn collections over more than thirty years, the most notable of which was the *Zionistischer Weyrauchs-Hügel* (Incense-Hill of Zion, 1739).

The colonial Dutch Reformed and Presbyterian churches experienced tensions over hymnody. The former struggled with the challenges of revivalism and English-language worship. In 1766 the Collegiate Church of New York City hired Francis Hopkinson to edit Tate and Brady's *New Version* for their use with traditional Dutch psalm tunes. Hopkinson, a noted Philadelphia poet and composer, produced *The Psalms of David . . . in Metre* (1767) and soon a four-part Parish Style *Collection of the psalm and hymn tunes* (1774) that propelled the Dutch Reformed into fully Anglicized psalmody. In Philadelphia, James Lyon worked toward musical modernization among Presbyterians and Baptists. His tune book *Urania, or A Choice Collection of Psalm-Tunes, Anthems, and Hymns* (1761) provided many popular standard psalm tunes, but also added highly elaborate set pieces and anthems of the Parish Style and eleven new American tunes, including a few of his own. With his treatise *The lawfulness, excellency, and advantage of instrumentall musick in the publick worship of God urg'd and enforc'd* (1763), however, Lyon plunged Presbyterians into a prolonged controversy over texts, tunes, and performance practice that continued into the nineteenth century.

The modernizing psalmody advocated by Lyon and Hopkinson also found support in New England. In Boston, Josiah Flagg published a *Collection of the Best Psalm Tunes* in 1764, among whose 119 tunes were no less than 60 Parish Style compositions printed in America for the first time. During the late 1760s Daniel Bayley of Newburyport, an Anglican printer, potter, and chorister, published new editions of Tans'ur's *Royal Melody Complete* (1735) and Aaron Williams's *Universal Psalmist* (1761), introducing the Parish Style to New England in full detail, including "fuging tunes," a form developed around 1740 featuring a chorus in which the different parts entered separately on the same musical figure and line of text, then combined in a powerful final cadence. The growing demand for these Boston and Philadelphia imprints documented the development of sophisticated singing schools and sacred music ensembles taught by skilled singing masters in America's port cities and market towns on the eve of the Revolution.

Singing Schools, Tune Books, and Hymnals

These colonial patterns of American praise were shattered even before the political revolution by the powerful new musical voice of William Billings of Boston. Billings burst on

the psalmody scene in 1770 with *The New-England Psalm-Singer*, a collection of 118 original compositions in every genre of the Parish Style—plain tunes, fugging tunes, set pieces, and anthems. He was aggressively independent in his approach to composing. Billings claimed to have followed no standard of compositional rules and laid down none of his own for others to follow. The experimental character of his melodies, harmonies, and forms bore out that conviction. Billings's musical declaration of independence bore much fruit. At singing schools he spotted young talent that he trained in music teaching and composition. His followers fanned out across eastern New England, creating an effective itinerant network that brought the singing school to rural communities and spread Billings's music, especially his popular fugging tunes. Billings also set the textual pattern for American tune books by marrying his original tunes to the immensely popular sacred lyrics of Watts. By the end of the eighteenth century, the New England singing school had produced thousands of new psalm and hymn tunes by composers like Daniel Read, Andrew Law, Timothy Swan, Jacob French, and Stephen Jenks.

Adding to the singing school's effectiveness was the introduction of shape notes, a form of musical notation that assigned a different shape to each of the four syllables of the traditional Lancashire Solfa scale—*fa, so, la, and mi*—that Americans used to sound out their parts. The four shapes could be printed on ledger lines, graphically connecting the written score to the oral/aural scale in the singer's ear. *The Easy Instructor* (1801) by William Little and William Smith was the first tune book to use the four-shape system. Its title proved prophetic, as shape notes greatly facilitated the singing master's task of guiding ear-trained singers to music literacy.

The Second Great Awakening, another great national surge of evangelical revivalism from 1799 to 1812 and again from 1826 to 1845, created a hymnodic synthesis that dominated American sacred song through the Civil War. As singing masters spread south and west, they absorbed new musical forms and textual influences—southern spiritual ballads and camp meeting songs, the hymns of Charles Wesley and American evangelical poets. They projected these on to their base of New England texts and tunes, generating dozens of tune books, including classics like William Walker's *Southern Harmony* (1835) and Benjamin Franklin White and Elijah J. King's *Sacred Harp* (1844).

Text-only "worded" hymnals also began to appear in greater numbers. Two of these hymnals also hold great multicultural interest. *A Choice Collection of Hymns and Spiritual*

Songs, published in 1774 by Samson Occom, was the first hymnal compiled by a Native American. Occom, a Mohegan convert, enjoyed success as a Presbyterian missionary to Native American peoples in the Northeast. His *Choice Collection*, however, made no reference to his identity. An early minority hymnal of greater influence was *A Collection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs from Various Authors* (1801) by Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Allen designed the *Collection* for the Bethel Church of Philadelphia, which he founded in 1794 as the first African American congregation in the North. Surprisingly, his small selection contained more lyrics by Watts than by Wesley; Allen's *Collection* exerted great influence on the African American community through the antebellum period and beyond. Dozens more of these interdenominational evangelical worded hymnals were compiled by editors and theologians during and after the Second Awakening, many of them as supplements to Watts's *Psalms of David Imitated*.

Hymn collections also served as important vehicles for evangelism by the many sectarian movements spawned in or strengthened by the Second Awakening. Armed with the Wesleys' hymn collections, American Methodist editors added occasional new lyrics and concentrated on innovative new formats. As early as the 1780s the Methodists printed their *Pocket Hymn Book Designed as a Constant Companion for the Pious* in a cheap mass-market octavo size that could be distributed free to potential converts. Smaller sects including the Christians, Shakers, Unitarians, Freewill Baptists, Mormons, Adventists, and Disciples of Christ relied heavily on hymnals written by their own members to project their distinctive identities into the fierce religious competition of the Second Awakening.

By mid-century if not before, this frenzied competition among tune book compilers and hymnal editors had produced an American Protestant hymnody of distinctive structure. The constant reiteration of English evangelical psalms and hymns during the Second Awakening created a core textual canon focused on key episodes of creation and fall, penitence and conviction of sin, Christ's atonement and saving grace, providence and perseverance, and longing for heaven. Lyrics like Watts's "Alas, and did my Saviour Bleed" and Samuel Stennett's "On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand" appeared in more than half of the American hymnals published before the Civil War. These consensus texts in turn received dozens of different musical settings composed by singing masters eager to capitalize on their popularity. This synergy created an American hybrid of evangelical hymnody

that was thematically narrow and interdenominationally sourced yet musically diverse, continually refreshed by a flow of new vernacular tunes and settings.

"Better Music" and Gospel Hymns

There had always been resistance to the singing school in the new nation's urban centers, where European performers and teachers in America's cities advocated Baroque and classical sacred works. During the 1820s this "better music" alternative found its greatest advocate in Lowell Mason of Medfield, Massachusetts, a Congregational organist, choir director, educator, banker, and sacred music theorist. Mason's *Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music*, an 1822 collection of sacred works by Mozart, Haydn, and other classical masters, sold 50,000 copies, making it the most popular American music imprint of the antebellum period. His *Oration on Church Music* (1826) interpreted sacred music as oratory in two senses—theologically as prayer, following the Latin sense of the term, and performatively as sung language, to which the setting and accompaniment should always be subordinate. Mason's 1,600 hymn tunes, including his famed setting for Ray Palmer's lyric "My Faith looks up to Thee" (1830), embodied his theology of praise.

As Mason's music and theory took firm hold in elite urban congregations on the East Coast and in the Ohio Valley, a new generation of English Victorian hymn writers brought more sentimental hymn texts to evangelical America. Lyrics like Charlotte Elliott's "Just as I am, without one Plea" (1835), Sarah Flower Adams's "Nearer my God to Thee," and Henry F. Lyte's "Abide with Me" (1847) became hugely popular before the Civil War. After the war, catchy Sunday school songs, marches, the Victorian parlor ballad, and popular dances like the waltz and the gallop combined with the new lyrical sensibilities of intimacy and vulnerability to foster the emergence of the gospel hymn. One of the earliest examples of the genre was Robert Lowry's "Shall We Gather at the River" (1864), a lyric of heaven with a gently rocking chorus that defied the dictates of Mason's "better music."

The greatest American lyricist of the new genre was the blind evangelical poet Fanny J. Crosby, author of more than 9,000 hymns. Mason's student William B. Bradbury encountered Crosby's prolific talent while collaborating with her on a Sunday school hymnal in 1864. In just a few years she was working with the best evangelical composers, including Bradbury, composer for "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross" (1869); William Howard Doane, with whom she wrote "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior" (1868/1870) and "I Am Thine,

O Lord" (1875); and Phoebe Palmer Knapp, who provided the tune for "Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine" (1873), the most popular hymn in America over the next century. The new hymn style found a name and its definitive expression in *Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs*, an 1875 anthology edited by Ira D. Sankey and Philip P. Bliss. Sankey was the soloist for the great urban revivalist Dwight L. Moody. Their spectacular 1872–1874 evangelistic tour of Britain catapulted Sankey's music to international popularity. The success of the 1875 collection generated five more under the same running title. By the time the complete "diamond edition" appeared in 1894, *Gospel Hymns* had sold more than one million copies, making it by far the most popular hymn collection yet published in America.

Not all evangelicals embraced the new style. For example, the National Baptist Convention, an African American denomination that grew explosively from its organization in 1895, pointedly excluded gospel hymns from its 1903 *Hymnal*, opting instead for "Dr. Watts hymns." Not until 1921 did the National Baptists officially sanction the genre in a separate collection called *Gospel Pearls*, edited by Willa A. Townsend. Nor, of course, were evangelicals the only American Protestants. The old mainline denominations—Episcopalian, Congregational, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Unitarian—also resisted gospel hymns. They produced collections of their own that highlighted themes of justice, brotherhood, and social reform. The most notable of these liberal collections was the Congregationalists' *Pilgrim Hymnal* (1912), edited by the Social Gospel theologian Washington Gladden, which included earnest lyrics like Frank Mason North's 1903 hymn "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life."

By the time the twin evangelical renewal movements of fundamentalism and Pentecostalism arose at the turn of the twentieth century, however, gospel hymns had become essential articulations of "that old-time religion." Hymn editors from these two movements published dozens of paperback gospel hymn collections. And when they went into eclipse in the late 1920s, evangelicals of all stripes rallied around gospel hymns as a badge of their religious identity. Southern white and urban black evangelicals also extended the musical range of the gospel hymn. In the South, singing school men's quartets placed the melody in the baritone or second tenor and reconceived first tenor as a harmony part. By the 1930s and 1940s this sound had become hugely popular through performances by groups like the Chuck Wagon Gang and the Blackwood Brothers and their recordings of new "gospel songs" such as Albert E. Brumley's 1929 classic "I'll Fly Away."

After World War II groups such as the Happy Goodmans and the Lewis Family carried this "white gospel" style into radio and television venues throughout the South.

An even more dramatic musical transformation took place among African American evangelicals. William Seymour's Azusa Street revival of 1906 in Los Angeles, credited as the beginning of the Pentecostal movement in America, featured singing in the spirit and sustained congregational chant over simple piano chord progressions. As Pentecostalism grew, this mode of "sanctified" gospel music acquired guitar, bass, drums, and, later, electric organ. Another innovation began in 1932 when a Chicago Baptist jazz pianist named Thomas A. Dorsey wrote "Take My Hand, Precious Lord," the first "gospel blues" composition. It became the signature song of Dorsey's student, the great gospel singer Mahalia Jackson, whose recordings established gospel blues as a commercial genre. Sanctified music and gospel blues penetrated even the most conservative African American communions after World War II, producing a new generation of soloists and quartets, many of whom crossed over into successful careers in the early years of rock, pop, and rhythm and blues.

Worship and Praise Music and Inclusive Hymnody

As America's youth began dancing to rock and pop in the 1950s, most white Protestants were still singing Watts and Wesley or gospel hymns. Catholics sang very little at all, constrained as they were by the Latin Mass. These patterns changed suddenly and permanently. In 1962, newly elected Pope John XXIII called a general council to assess the direction the Catholic Church should take in the late twentieth century. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the first constitution of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), addressed the liturgy. It took the dramatic steps of endorsing the Mass in vernacular languages and calling for new sacred music in popular musical styles to accompany the new liturgies. In America the new directive produced an initial outpouring of hymns and Mass settings in the folk revival style of the 1960s, most of them written by priests or members of religious orders.

In 1971, students at Duquesne University began to pray for gifts or charisms of the Holy Spirit, launching what would grow through the 1970s and 1980s to become a worldwide spiritual movement known as the Charismatic Renewal.

The Renewal brought Catholics into the front rank of American hymnody for the first time, building on the earlier folk mass style to develop its own distinctive worship music. Songs like John Foley, S.J.'s "One Bread, One Body" (1978)

featured unison melodies, guitar accompaniment, and scripture texts or lyrics expressing intimacy with the divine. The most important musical expression of the Charismatic Revival was *Glory and Praise*, a 1979 hymnal that attained extensive use in the American Church and broke all sales records for a Catholic hymnal.

The Renewal was also very powerful in the Hispanic community, where its characteristic music soon found a Spanish-language form in the *corito*, or little song. Renewal musicians referenced traditional *alabados* as a lyrical basis for their *coritos*, but their musical compositions were virtually indistinguishable from the folk/pop ballad style of their English-language counterparts. *Coritos* enjoyed immense popularity, and in recent years they have migrated to the Internet, where thousands of sing-along videos have been posted. While *Glory and Praise* and *coritos* clearly possess Catholic distinctiveness, their christocentric and Spirit-oriented lyrics also reflect their larger American Protestant environment, as does their entry into the world of media innovation and marketing that was once almost exclusively an evangelical domain.

The evangelicals themselves were not slow to capitalize on the spiritual stirring that the Charismatic Renewal indicated. By 1974 a new group of fundamentalist and Pentecostal “televangelists” had begun to develop evangelical programming that was widely syndicated on new private “Christian” cable television networks. By the late 1970s the great Bicentennial Revival was underway, and, as before, it found a distinctive musical style in Christian Contemporary Music and Worship and Praise Music. Christian Contemporary Music’s emotional “love songs to Jesus,” set to pop melodies and arrangements, made gospel megastars out of young singers like Stephen Curtis Chapman, Kirk Franklin, Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, and BeBe and CeCe Winans. From Nashville, center of a multibillion-dollar gospel music industry, the new style spread to local congregations in the form of Worship and Praise Music. Local congregations developed their own worship bands or played popular Christian Contemporary tracks suitable for worship services. They projected the lyrics on to the unadorned walls of their evangelical churches so that everyone could sing and pray at the same time. Gradually an informal canon of Worship and Praise Music emerged that bore close stylistic affinities to the hymns and spiritual songs of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Musically, Worship and Praise was more mainstream pop than folk, but its lyrics featured the same formula of scripture passages and first-person accounts

of religious experience, with easily remembered choruses. A prime early example of the style is Leonard E. Smith Jr.’s vastly popular “Our God Reigns” (1974).

In an effort to regain liturgical currency, the liberal “mainline” denominations—Episcopalian, United Methodist, Evangelical Lutheran, Presbyterian Church USA, United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, American Baptist—published new hymnals during the 1980s and 1990s. Their efforts have been greatly aided by a blossoming of liberal hymn writing unsurpassed since the early twentieth century. Under the theological imperative of “inclusive language,” liberal denominations have revised and even rewritten their liturgies and hymns in language carefully designed to exclude no one. Hymns like Brian Wren’s “When Love Is Found” are fired by a vision of Christian community free from all cultural distinctions. Many of these new lyrics have been paired with traditional tunes, but some have also found new contemporary musical settings. More controversially, some liberal lyricists have removed male gender from God the Father and even from Jesus the Son, replacing it with more androgynous language or nonsexual imagery drawn from the Bible. Some of the new hymnals have also banned all references to warfare, in keeping with the peace testimonies of their communions. Not surprisingly, these new hymnals have met some significant opposition, especially when they have revised traditional hymns according to inclusive language principles. Of these new collections, the United Church of Christ’s *New Century Hymnal* (1995) has generated by far the most acrimony.

The beginning of the twenty-first century marks one of the most dynamic moments in the history of American hymnody. Over just the past few decades, both evangelical and liberal Protestants have dramatically changed the style and substance of their worship music, and Catholics have burst upon the scene with an unprecedented outpouring of English and Spanish texts and tunes. More than 200 million Americans are now singing new kinds of praise that articulate their spirituality in the postmodern world. The scale of this change may well be unprecedented, but the very fact of it also underlines the persistent role hymnody has played as a bearer of religious change and musical innovation in America since colonial times.

See also *Dutch Reformed*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Mexico: Indigenous Religions*; *Music* entries; *Native American Religions: Pre-Contact*; *Pilgrims*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Puritans*; *Radio*; *Revivalism* entries; *Worship* entries.

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Music: Jewish

The music of Jews in America is complex and diverse. Jews have been in America and have continued to relocate from other parts of the world since the mid-seventeenth century. For more than three hundred years Jews have brought the music of their countries of origin and adapted their music to the new environment of America in several contexts: the synagogue, life-cycle events, folk and popular expressions, and classical. Although the definition of “Jewish music” is debatable—it has no universal descriptive musical features

such as recognizable rhythms or musical phrases—specific genres of Jewish music are identifiable and are part of American culture.

History

During the second millennium BCE two major regions roughly define Jewish culture: Ashkenazi and Sephardic. Ashkenazi Jews are from western and eastern Europe, and Sephardic Jewry grew out of the golden age of Jewish life in Spain (tenth to twelfth centuries) and communities around the Mediterranean. By the 1500s there were sizable Ashkenazi communities in Germany and eastern Europe. In centuries following, communities grew in western Europe. After the expulsions of Jews from Spain in the fifteenth century, Sephardic Jewish life took hold in the Ottoman Empire, with important centers in Salonika, Istanbul, and Safed (a city in Israel north of Jerusalem). Jewish life prior to modernity was subject to varying degrees of external influence, and although Jews spoke a variety of languages, their prayers and religious texts were predominantly in Hebrew.

In 1654 the first Jews arrived in the North American colonies from South America. These Jews were Sephardic; their families had fled Spain and Portugal because of religious persecution. From 1820 to 1880 Jews emigrated from Germany. During the nineteenth century, although few in number, Jews in America were spread out along the East Coast and in the South and Midwest. In 1880 the landscape of American Jewry changed significantly with arrival of Jews from eastern Europe. From 1880 to 1920 close to 2 million Jews immigrated, changing Jewish culture in America and its music. Jews from Germany brought their nineteenth-century liturgical traditions, including new forms of liturgical expression, influenced by German Protestant worship. The developing American Reform Jewish worship style included the singing of hymns and the inclusion of choirs and organs. The Jews from eastern Europe were largely Orthodox and did not include the use of musical instruments in the synagogue. Their style of Jewish music was based on traditional melodies and musical modes with the innovation of an unaccompanied male choir. As Jews adjusted to America, German and eastern European Jewish liturgical traditions developed into a combined stylistic tradition known as *Minhag America* [the custom or rite of America]. Twentieth-century innovations have followed a range of musical styles from classical to a range of popular styles (jazz, rock, folk), and by the end of the century a

diverse range of musical styles was heard in American synagogue music.

Outside of the synagogue, the music of Jewish immigrants included Yiddish songs, *klezmer* [instrumental] music and songs from Sephardic Jews, including *Judeo-Spanish*, the combined language of Hebrew and Spanish from Spain, and the *piyyutim* [religious poetry] of Jews from North Africa and the Middle East. As Jews assimilated and became successful in America, a growing number flourished in musical theatre (George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Stephen Sondheim) and as popular artists and composers (Barbra Streisand, Neil Diamond, Billy Joel) and classical composers (Leonard Bernstein, Steven Reich, Sam Adler).

Liturgical Ashkenazi

American synagogue music of the twentieth century combined liturgical musical styles from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of central and eastern Europe. The general accepted dichotomy is that German Jews were more modern and the eastern European Jews were more traditional. Musical styles followed a similar dichotomy. Central European liturgical music of the nineteenth century was shaped by classical music idioms with composed metrically driven music. The singing of hymns was an important communal experience modeled after the Protestant church. On the other hand, eastern European music was more ornate melodically and made use of vocal improvisation developing into the art of *hazzanut*. The term *hazzan* refers to the one responsible to lead the prayers with musical intonation. This Hebrew term was first used in the sixth century CE. The traditional chants of synagogue music were in one of three musical modes known as *nusach*. The American style of the first part of the twentieth century combined these styles.

Three musical modes are the foundation for prayer modes of *nusach* in the Ashkenazi Jewish liturgical tradition: (1) the *Hashem Malach* mode is similar intervallically to the western major scale with a lowered seventh (C-D-E-F-G-A-Bb-C); (2) *Magen Avot* is equivalent to a western natural minor scale (C-D-Eb-F-G-Ab-Bb-C); (3) *Ahavah Rabbah* has often been called the most “Jewish” of these modes because it is quite distinctive (C-Db-E-F-G-Ab-Bb-C) and without an equivalent in western music. The essential feature is the augmented second interval between the second and third notes of the mode (D-flat to E-natural). *Ahavah Rabbah* means “great love”; this designation aptly reflects the affective association of this mode, which expresses great love for God through a unique musical sound. The melancholy

nature of the mode enhances its rich musical expression. *Hashem Malach* (“the Lord reigns”) expresses God’s majesty. *Magen Avot* (“shield of our fathers”) does not have an affect and is used as a didactic mode to recite the text. Sabbath prayer makes use of these musical modes.

Central European Influences

European precedents provide the foundation of American synagogue music. The music of Salomon Sulzer (1804–1890) for the synagogue had a lasting permanence. From 1826 he officiated at the New Synagogue in Vienna. He elevated the office of cantor (until then cantors were itinerant and not considered full clergy) with his fine musicianship, respect, and dignity; his singing was admired by Schubert and Liszt. Sulzer published *Shir Zion*, a collection of his compositions and those by other composers he commissioned, in two volumes, the first in 1840, and the second in 1866. Sulzer’s goal was to take the traditional Jewish melodies and “purify” them, as he felt the ornate Baroque musical elaborations were not fitting for the dignity of the service. Sulzer preferred a straightforward lyrical melodic setting of the text as can be seen in the symmetrical phrases in his melodic settings. He created a refinement of the traditional melody. In addition, Sulzer sought to harmonize this melody within the rules of musical art current in his time. He wrote out the music for the cantor and choir. He sought to establish the office of the cantor as a musician drawing from the past but firmly rooted in the present. Sulzer gained wide respect throughout central Europe, and many cantors came to study with him. His impact on synagogue music was unprecedented and long lasting. Shortly after the publication of his *Shir Zion* first volume in 1840, the music quickly spread throughout Europe and America.

Another significant figure in central European synagogue music was Louis Lewandowski (1821–1894). A choral director and composer, Lewandowski served as the music director in Berlin at the Old Synagogue in the Heidereutergasse, and after 1866 at the New Synagogue. His musical compositions appear in two well-known publications: *Kol Rinah U’T’fillah* [*Voice of Song and Prayer*] (1871), for one and two voices; *Todah W’simrah* [*Thanks and Song*] (1876–1882), for four voices and soli, optional organ accompaniment. His contributions to synagogue music can be seen as further refinements of Sulzer’s efforts. Lewandowski provided settings of traditional melodies and wrote unique compositions that both used and did not use *nusach*. His music had a major impact on both Reform and traditional synagogues

throughout Europe and America from the nineteenth century to well into the twentieth century.

Eastern European Styles

The eastern European cantorial style remained traditional in focus. Few eastern European synagogues incorporated the reforms commonly found in central Europe. Adherence to traditional melodies and the Jewish prayer modes dominated practice in the region. Some cantors came to Vienna to study with Sulzer and incorporated his musical innovations in a style appropriate for eastern Europe. Nissan Blumenthal (1805–1903) was born in the Ukraine and introduced German style music at the Brody Synagogue in Odessa. He founded a choir school in 1841 and developed choral singing in four voices. Eliezer Gerovich (1844–1913), a student of Blumenthal, began as a *hazzan* at the Choral Synagogue in Berdichev. After 1887 he was chief *hazzan* in Rostov-on-Don. His setting of traditional melodies make use of extremely ornate cantorial phrases, which are juxtaposed with the choir; at climatic moments in the music the cantor sings above the choir. Gerovich does not make use of symmetrical phrases—nor do other synagogue composers of his period—as melodic freedom is desired.

The hallmark of the eastern European style is the use of recurring melodic fragments intent on conveying a deep emotional feeling to the congregation. Ornate musical embellishments were used to transport the listener into a spiritual realm. Word repetition was not uncommon. The nicely patterned phrases of central Europe came to be known as *hazzanut ha-seder*, which means orderly *hazzanut*, while the free and ornate eastern European style was known as *hazzanut ha-regesh* or emotional *hazzanut*. This latter style became the foundation for the golden age of the cantorate, which proliferated in America in the early twentieth century. However distinct *hazzanut ha-seder* and *hazzanut ha-regesh*, these styles were also intermingled in the compositions of cantors who were immersed in the eastern European musical world but studied with cantors such as Sulzer. David Nowakowsky (1848–1921) was appointed choirmaster and associate cantor in 1870 of the Odessa Synagogue, known as the Broder-Schul. He worked with Cantors Nissan Blumenthal and Pinchos Minkowsky. He is known for choral compositions that show a balanced style, synthesizing central and eastern European musical elements. These two styles were brought to America. A synthesized approach named *Minhag America* developed and refers to the combined aesthetic approach found in the United States in the twentieth century.

American Reform synagogues used the music that was current in Europe, predominantly that of Sulzer and Lewandowski, as well as the music of American composers, such as Sigmund Schlesinger (1835–1906) and Edward Stark (1863–1918). Their music was devoid of traditional prayer modes. Schlesinger was an organist at a synagogue in Mobile, Alabama; he used operatic excerpts from Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini in synagogue services but changed the words. Stark, a cantor at Temple Emanuel in San Francisco, used some traditional melodies, but his compositions were naïve. Alois Kaiser (1840–1908), born in Hungary, was an apprentice to Sulzer and, after serving communities in Vienna (1859–1863) and Prague (1863–1866), immigrated to America in 1866 and served Congregation Ohab Shalom in Baltimore. His collections of synagogue music include hymnal compositions, melodies with four-part chorale settings, following the Lutheran model of J. S. Bach.

New Music for Synagogues of America

Isaac Mayer Wise, the progenitor of American Reform Judaism, in the mid-nineteenth century coined the term *Minhag America* to refer to a new form of Jewish traditions. Originally the title of a prayer book in 1856, the term has been adopted more generally as the Americanization of European Jewish traditions. Wise and other rabbis of his era felt hymn singing was the quintessential religious expression, producing a spiritual experience through communal singing. In 1892 the Central Conference of American Rabbis resolved to adopt Wise's hymnbook as the official hymnbook of American Jewish Reform congregations. In a discussion of this resolution rabbis commented that they sang a good deal of non-Jewish music out of necessity because few Jewish composers value hymns. One rabbi at the 1892 conference stated that he fully recognized the power of Christian worship to be the communal singing of hymns. The *Union Prayer Book* of 1892 was followed by the *Union Hymnal* in 1897. By 1912 this first edition of the hymnal was deemed a failure, and rabbis of the time encouraged cantors to devote their efforts at creating a more effective version. The third edition in 1932 was widely used by many Reform congregations through the 1950s, but eventually hymn singing fell out of fashion. By this time the use of organs was well established in American Reform synagogues as well as mixed choirs. Women were ordained as cantors beginning in the Reform movement in the mid-1970s.

The American Reform movement spread throughout the country. Although Reform had its roots in western Europe, by the 1930s the large wave of eastern European Jews had contributed their cultural traditions. By the 1940s composers sought to adapt the music of the synagogue to twentieth-century musical style. Composers such as Abraham Binder (1895–1966), Isadore Freed (1900–1960), and Lazare Weiner (1897–1982) sought to take the traditional European tunes and harmonize these melodies in accordance with the Jewish prayer modes to produce harmonies not typically found in western music. Binder and Freed were motivated by the same desires as Sulzer and Lewandowski to innovate known melodies for cantor, choir, and organ in a dignified and tasteful manner according to the music of the surrounding culture.

Binder was a leader who encouraged many synagogue music composers (Fromm, Schalit, and Pikett). *Nusach* was certainly his credo. He championed the incorporation of *nusach* into Reform synagogue music as a composer, music director, writer, and teacher. For him the modality of Israeli/Palestinian music contained a freshness not found in western music. Sometimes these Israeli/Palestinian modes were similar to the Jewish prayer modes, *nusach*, and other times they were different. The developing Mediterranean school of newly arrived European composers in Israel (Ben-Haim and Lavry) used modal and metrically free melodic passages to distinguish their new Israeli music from European music. Likewise the Russian composers of the Society for Jewish Folk Music (Engel, Achron, and Milner) developed an artistry using similar musical techniques as an expression of their Jewish past and creativity. At the same time, Binder sought to bring artistic creativity and integrity to the synagogue based on tradition in an effort to create a religious experience and make Jewish prayer relevant in his new homeland, America.

Binder encouraged noted and aspiring Jewish composers of the day to devote their energies to the synagogue in addition to the concert hall and Broadway. David Putterman, cantor and music director of Park Avenue Synagogue, had successfully commissioned leading composers of the day to write for the synagogue (Bernstein, Castelnuevo Tedesco, Diamond, Milhaud).

Synagogue composers, cantors, and scholars chose to devote a considerable part of their efforts to new compositions for the synagogue. Over many years considerable effort was devoted not only to composing music but also to teaching and writing about Jewish music. The Jewish Music

Forum (1939–1962), modeled in part on the St. Petersburg Folk Music Society, discussed many musical and liturgical issues and gave impetus to a range of musical activity from the gathering of composers for discussion to conferences, concerts, and compositions. This organization fueled the impetus of American cantorial schools such as the School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion in 1948, the Cantor's Institute at the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1950, and Yeshiva University's program in 1954. In 1963 the Jewish Music Forum became the Jewish Liturgical Music Society of America; its goal was to find strategies to create a new form of Jewish liturgical music that was distinct from the prior century.

Artistry in synagogue music developed in new ways. Ernest Bloch (1880–1959), a well-known American composer, premiered his *Avodath ha-Kodesh* [Sacred Service] in 1933 for cantor, choir, orchestra, and narrator, which received much acclaim and elevated this work of Jewish liturgy to the status of an oratorio. Towards the middle of the twentieth century two composers, Max Helfman (1901–1963) and Max Janowski (1912–1991), wrote compositions that have become standards for the high holidays: Helfman's *Sh'ma Koleinu* and Janowski's *Avinu Malkeinu*. During the second half of the twentieth century, musical tastes preferred more accessible music. Composers such as Michael Isaacson draw from a variety of musical styles, both classical and contemporary, for their synagogue compositions. He and others also draw from folk, popular, and Israeli style songs. Cantors in Reform synagogues today use the diverse musical compositions of the last 150 years to bring musical variety to their congregations.

Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox Synagogues

The three major denominations of American Judaism, Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox, deal with similar concerns with respect to new music in the synagogue. At issue are the role of the cantor as prayer facilitator and congregational involvement. The European history of the rhythmically precise central European and the rhythmically free eastern European traditions have been combined in varying practices in American congregations. Where Reform synagogues were once the source of artistic innovations, the trend has diminished in favor of participatory services. Trained cantors and some congregants prefer to use music that draws from the rich musical history of the Jewish tradition. Other congregants want a more accessible musical service that facilitates their participation in an idiom they

prefer. Music within this sphere may draw from the Jewish tradition including the use of Hasidic and Israeli melodies, but folk and popular styles are predominant. Debbie Friedman is representative. As an American baby boomer she created new music for synagogues in summer camps in the 1970s; the music caught on quickly and has become a staple of repertoire in Reform synagogues.

The dynamics of the use of music in Conservative synagogues is similar. Traditional melodies may be more commonly heard in Conservative synagogues, but these melodies are less than one hundred years old. Abraham Goldfarb (1879–1956) arrived in the United States in 1893 from Poland and studied at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He produced many books and pamphlets of synagogue melodies that are regularly sung today in synagogues and at home rituals. The *havurah* movement began in the 1970s and sought to empower laity to participate in services and further their education. The result has been an increase in congregational involvement throughout a service. The cantor often functions as an educator and facilitator for congregational participation. But, particularly on the high holidays and for special events, the rich legacy of liturgical music can be heard combining the artistry of cantorial recitatives, taken from or inspired by the golden age of the cantorate, compositions based on the traditional use of prayer modes, and liturgical chants. Volunteer and professional choirs also participate.

Within Orthodox synagogues music serves a more functional purpose. A paid professional cantor is rare in these synagogues, but much more common in Reform and Conservative synagogues. The role of the prayer leader in an Orthodox synagogue is that of *baal tefilah* [prayer leader without melodic embellishment] and vocal embellishments are kept to a minimum. Congregational involvement is interspersed throughout the service. Like the other movements, traditional melodies are more commonly heard on the high holidays. In many Orthodox synagogues a *hazzan* may be employed only during the holidays, and on the other days of the year a congregant serves in this role. Orthodox congregations differ in their use of *nusach*. Some prefer the use of Israeli melodies or tunes from songs popular in the community for the highlighted portions of the prayer such as the *kedusha* in the Sabbath morning service.

Folk and Popular

In the modern period, folk and popular music overlap in interesting ways. Both Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews have

venerable folk traditions. Major categories within Ashkenazi folk music include Yiddish songs, *klezmer* music, and Hasidic *niggunim* [wordless songs]. In the Sephardic tradition, Judeo-Spanish (Ladino) songs and *piyyutim* [religious poems] are important categories. In the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, performers have collected, studied, and taken these Jewish folk traditions into new performance arenas.

Ashkenazi folk songs of central and eastern Europe were part of Jewish life-cycle events and joyous holiday celebrations in the home. Many songs were in Yiddish, the spoken language of most Ashkenazi Jews. Their topics range from religious to secular themes, and many Yiddish songs originated in the Yiddish theater. In America, Jews who maintained an allegiance to a secular Yiddish culture particularly emphasized the preservation of this musical tradition. *Klezmer* (the Yiddish word derives from the Hebrew term for a musical instrument) refers to the instrumental music including accompaniments to Yiddish songs in the theater; *klezmer* music was also heard at Jewish weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, and other life-cycle events. Many *klezmer* styles derive from eastern European folk traditions. Significant innovation developed with the *klezmer* revival in America, which began in the 1970s and continued in the following decades to combine a variety of musical styles.

The traditions of Sephardic Jews have retained many aspects of medieval Spanish and Portuguese culture. This synthesis of Jewish and Spanish cultures has continued since the 1492 expulsion of Spanish Jews, although the amount of preservation versus new influence has varied in different times and places. The Spanish tradition has been ongoing for Jews in Morocco, and Jews in Turkey and Greece have adopted some local Middle Eastern influences. Some historians hold that the venerable musical forms of these Sephardic Jews, namely the *ballad* and *romancero*, were time-honored traditions, untouched by new cultural influence and thus faithfully transmitted. Modern scholars, however, have been unable to validate this claim. Nevertheless, Judeo-Spanish music has deep historic roots and, like other forms of Jewish music, is both perpetuated and innovatively revitalized by modern performers. Although Sephardic Jews make up less than 10 percent of the Jewish population in America, Judeo-Spanish songs are common in Jewish musical performances.

The practice of singing *piyyutim* is an important part of religious life. This practice started in the sixth century and has continued. In the past two hundred years Sephardic and

Mizrachi (Middle Eastern) communities have renewed this tradition in North Africa, Turkey, Syria, and Iraq. These texts are sung, some with elaborate melodies, on the Sabbath in the synagogue between the reading of Torah portions or at home as part of the festive Sabbath meal. They are also sung at life-cycle events such as bar and bas mitzvahs, weddings, and other celebrations. Mizrachi communities in America actively sing *piyyutim*.

Another Jewish folk music genre during the twentieth century was connected to Zionism and building a Jewish homeland in the land of Israel. These songs were sung in a variety of languages including Yiddish, Judeo-Spanish, Russian, Polish, English, Arabic, and Hebrew. Shortly after the founding of the state of Israel in 1948, traditional Zionist songs and new Israeli compositions became popular in North American Jewish life in synagogues, classrooms, and at social events and camps for youngsters. Popular music has grown significantly in Israel with rock and the incorporation of Mizrachi as well as a variety of Middle Eastern styles; Israeli music had less impact on American Jewish culture toward the end of the twentieth century compared to its more influential period in the 1950s through 1970s.

Music in Jewish life has grown in diversity. Responding and reacting to hope and challenges of life in America Jewish music is an apt expression of this experience. Jewish Americans, whether born in America or immigrants, have made a lasting impact in classical and popular music. They are all accepted into the American mainstream and have, at times, drawn from their Jewish heritage.

See also *Architecture: Jewish; Chabad Lubavitch; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism: Jewish Culture; Music entries; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Music: Roman Catholic

Roman Catholic music usually refers to liturgical music, strictly speaking. Roman Catholic music is understood as the ritual music that is employed in the Roman Catholic liturgy, sometimes referred to as *sacred music*, *church music*, or *worship music*.

The official documents of the Roman Catholic Church on liturgical music have established certain norms to guide the practice of music in the liturgy. The purpose of liturgical music is to enhance the liturgical celebration: to aid in the proclamation of the Word of God, to help form the worshipping community, and to be one of the main vehicles whereby the active and full participation of the people is brought about. Liturgical music should also possess a humanly attractive aesthetic character.

The practice of liturgical music in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in the United States can be described as the attempt by the ecclesiastical and musical leadership to implement the norms put forth in the official documents. This is equally true for Canada but less so for Mexico. Americans and Canadians sing many of same hymns and service music. The most common hymnals, such as *Worship, Gather, Glory and Praise*, and *Journey Songs*, can be found on both sides of the U.S.-Canadian border. Mexico more recently has been developing its own repertoire of liturgical music but with differences that result from language and the rate of implementation of the liturgical reforms.

Liturgical Music in North America before the Second Vatican Council

Liturgical music at the beginning of the twentieth century did not look very different from that of the previous century.

The texts of the music were in Latin, and they continued to act as a layer over the prayers of the Mass that were recited silently by the priest. The distinction between High Mass (*missa cantata*) and Low Mass (*missa recitata*) was still in place. In the case of the High Mass, both the Mass Ordinary (unchanging texts) and the Propers (changing texts) were sung by a choir or soloist. Usually, there was no singing in a Low Mass, although later, under the growing influence of the liturgical movement, the practice of singing hymns in the vernacular was allowed. This developed into what became known as the four-hymn Low Mass in which it was permitted to sing vernacular hymns at those times when the music would have not covered the words of the priest, that is, the entrance, preparation of gifts, Communion, and recessional.

For the most part, the direction of music during the early part of the twentieth century was looking to the past. The concern of the professional church musician was not matters of enculturation (that is, the embedding of the liturgy in the local culture so that eventually it grows from this culture itself), active participation of the assembly, or creativity but, rather, the maintaining of the musical treasury of the Church, which was the chant and polyphonic repertoire of the music of the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Nevertheless, the beginning of the twentieth century was a defining moment in the liturgical and musical life of Catholics especially in Europe and North America (United States and Canada). Real change began with the election of Giuseppe Sarto as Pope Pius X, often called the father of the modern liturgical movement. Pius X had a great interest in church music, and he embraced the renewal of Gregorian chant promoted by the monks and scholars of the monastery of Solesmes. The Solesmes method of singing chant is based on the idea that there is one chant tradition that was lost and can now be recovered through the study of manuscripts. The monks made corrections to what they found in the manuscripts, and believed they did so in the spirit of the tradition. Because Pius X embraced this method, it became almost universally accepted as the way to sing Gregorian chant. Music schools, choir directors, and elementary schools attempted to promote this style of singing of liturgical chant.

Pius X's *Tra le sollecitudini* (1903) (TLS) is the foundational document of the twentieth-century liturgical movement. In it, he promoted the singing of chant and stressed the importance of the active participation of the assembly in the liturgy with the hope that more people would receive Holy Communion. With TLS, the highest authority in the Church had embraced the importance of the liturgical

community, the role of music in the ritual, and liturgy as the primary source of true Christian spirituality.

The document set in motion other documents issued by his successors in the papacy. Pius XI issued *Divini Cultus Sanctitatem* (1928), which basically affirmed what Pius X had begun and reiterated what was widely accepted, namely, that the way to promote active participation in the liturgy is to teach the congregations to sing Gregorian chant. This remained the ideal of participation in the liturgy for most of the first half of the twentieth century. Even in parishes where the chant was poorly rendered, the hope was to learn to sing the chant well. Hymnals began to appear during this period. *St. Gregory's Hymnal* was especially popular and had considerable influence on the music of Catholic liturgy and devotion.

Much of the interest in the liturgy in the first half of the twentieth century logically led to what is truly the Magna Carta of the liturgical movement, the encyclical of Pius XII, *Mediator Dei* (1947) (MD). This was followed by his *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina* (1955) (MSD).

MD's importance lies in the acceptance of the liturgical movement as a legitimate and worthy part of the mission of the Church. It affirmed the value of liturgical music as understood by previous documents and was more favorable to modern music and vernacular singing.

MSD is the most complete statement on church music before the Second Vatican Council. The norms set forth by MSD remained the goals of both the parish musician and music publishers until *The Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy* (1963).

In the years immediately before Pope John XXIII called the council, there was an increased awareness of the importance of music in the liturgy, that the music must be integrated into the ritual itself, and that the Church should be open to different styles of music both choral and instrumental. At the same time, there was a growing discontent between musicians and liturgists. Some of the conflict developed because it was becoming more obvious that the three criteria for liturgical music that Pius X had put forth (holiness, goodness of form, and universality) were only appropriate when applied to Gregorian chant. These three criteria were seen as less helpful in judging what piece of music is acceptable for Christian worship when applied to vernacular hymnody and culturally specific compositions. This conflict was present in the council in that some forces aimed at maintaining the primacy of the Church's treasury of sacred music—that is, chant and polyphony.

Closer to the time of the Second Vatican Council, the four-hymn Mass increasingly became the experience of the Sunday liturgy. Even in larger parishes and cathedrals, there was a combination of the High Mass and the Low Mass with hymns. Many of these hymns were taken from the Protestant traditions. These often were a type of German chorale that employed English texts. Hymns such as “Now thank We All Our God” and “Praise to the Lord” became well known. Vernacular hymnody also found its home in devotional rituals, especially the various Marian devotions with such hymns as “Hail, Holy Queen,” and “Immaculate Mary.” The Stations of the Cross were usually accompanied with the English chant version of “Stabat Mater.” Most congregations at the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament would combine the Latin “O Salutaris Hostia” and “Tantum Ergo” with “Holy God, We Praise Thy Name.”

The Second Vatican Council and After

In 1963, the council approved the document on the liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC), which became the Church’s act of approval of the highest hopes of the liturgical pioneers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By mandating recovery, restoration, and reform of the Church’s liturgy both in text and ceremony, the SC became the act that summarized all that went before. It called for a complete renewal of the church worship life theologically, spiritually, and ritually.

Chapter 6 of SC deals with music under the title of “Musica Sacra” and reaffirms the desire from Pius X to the time of the council that music be more fully integrated into the liturgy and that music be one of the primary ways in which full and active participation in the liturgy is possible. While giving preference to the use of Latin, SC also allowed for the development of liturgical music in the vernacular.

When the *Constitution* says that sacred music has a ministerial function in the liturgy, it goes a long way to resolving what had been a neuralgic issue throughout the twentieth century, namely, what is the primary end of the liturgy: the glorification of God or the sanctification of humanity? For those who maintained that the primary purpose of worship is the glorification of God, the use of the Latin repertoire and of sophisticated forms of music is justified and mandated. The council clarified the matter when it stated that the full and actual participation of all the worshippers is also of primary importance. Intelligibility and respect for local cultures are necessary for such participation.

The post-Second Vatican Council practice of liturgical music has been the object of much criticism, especially the

repertory of music itself. There is also criticism about the use of instruments such as the guitar as well as of the competence of some of the church musicians. These criticisms must be understood in context. In embracing the council’s liturgical reforms, the Church created a musical vacuum on the pastoral level as parishes moved from a Latin repertory to a vernacular one. There was an immediate need for music for the new liturgy, but, unlike the Anglican Church, the Roman Catholic Church had no tradition of service music in the vernacular. Immediately after the council a few composers created music for the Ordinary of the Mass so that it was possible to have a sung mass in the vernacular. Since there was no vernacular music for the Propers of the Mass, parishes continued the practice of singing English hymns such as Martin Luther’s “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” “Praise to the Lord,” or “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” in place of the designated introit and communion antiphons.

The hymnody of the Methodist Charles Wesley was particularly attractive because his Eucharistic theology has a strong Catholic flavor. Wesley wrote some of the best-known Advent, Christmas, and Easter hymns. The compositions of certain music groups such as the Dameans and the St. Louis Jesuits were very popular. The latter group especially maintained a very close contact to the biblical texts themselves. The psalms settings by Joseph Gelineau, S.J., became very well known and could be rendered by most congregations. Richard Proulx offered worthy settings of the texts of the Mass in the early years after the council. Another major composer of this period after the council was Lucien Deiss. His acclamations and his modern type of chanting that often has a processional quality fit the new liturgy well.

The document that has had the most influence on Catholic Church music after the council was *Musicam Sacram* (1967) (MS). MS makes the significant point that the holiness of liturgical music comes from the degree of integration with the liturgical rites and texts. Music is sacred not simply because of its style but because it facilitates a particular part of the ritual and is integrated into the text. This is true whatever the style of music may be. The theology, norms, and pastoral observations of MS set the agenda for Catholic Church music and musicians for the next several years.

The documents referred to thus far were directed to all the churches of the Roman rite. Two documents from the U.S. Bishops’ Conference were published to deal with some of the issues of liturgical music in United States: *Music in Catholic Worship* (1972) and *Liturgical Music Today* (1982).

Music in Catholic Worship was revised and reissued in 1982. The purpose of these documents was to adapt the more general norms of the Church to the U.S. scene. For instance, the first edition of *The General Instruction on the Roman Missal* (GIRM) had appeared in 1969, and these documents were written in the light of this *General Instruction*. Both documents have a strong pastoral tone because the issues involved were more practical than theoretical in nature. These documents indicate those liturgical texts that because of their importance should be taken by the congregation and begin with the fundamental theological principle that the Roman liturgy is assembly based. The rest flows from that. By this time the notion that there are texts that are ordinary and others that belong to the Propers no longer has much meaning. Each sung text must be understood in terms of its function in the whole liturgical celebration.

These two documents have had an enormous influence on the practice of the liturgical music in the United States and Canada. Influenced by these documents, parishes rebuilt their choirs if they had disbanded them after the Vatican Council. Such documents make it clear that the choir's purpose is to lead the congregation because it is part of the congregation. The choir can enhance the aesthetic quality of the liturgy by singing at those times appropriate to the liturgy. This may be before and after the liturgy, during the procession of gifts and after Communion. Certain composers such as Alexander Peloquin provided music for both choir and congregation. Often that meant that the refrains were composed in an accessible style so the congregations could sing them but the verses were in more complicated forms more engaging for the members of the choirs. Most parishes strove to follow the principles laid down in *Music in Catholic Worship*.

In the aftermath of the council Fr. Virgil Funk founded the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM), which is an organization of musicians, choir directors, composers, and publishers. NPM is the chief instrument in the United States for promoting liturgical and musical education through conferences and publications and has enormous influence in bringing about communication among pastoral music ministers, showcasing liturgical compositions, and bringing about greater musical literacy. NPM continues to be the primary instrument for the enrichment of the ordinary parish music minister.

The main liturgical music publishers since the council are GIA Publications located in Chicago; Oregon Catholic Press (OCP) located in Portland, Oregon; and World Library

Publications located in Franklin Park, Illinois. These publishers provide a great deal of music education through their seminars, workshops, special reading sessions, and training programs.

Roman Catholic Church Music at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century

The state of Roman Catholic music forty-five years after the Vatican Council's publication of SC is marked by the great achievement in restoring to the congregation its proper role in the liturgy as the primary liturgical symbol. Most Roman Catholics in the United States accept that full and active participation is to be the characteristic of the assembly at prayer. The training of music ministers, the activity of composers, the expanded repertoire of contemporary church music, the greater intelligibility in the liturgy, the admittance of cultural plurality especially in song are all positive signs that the movement furthered by Vatican II continues.

There are still issues to be resolved, and there are challenges ahead, including the following: (1) There are still differences of opinion between those who find in the council documents trajectories for enculturation, creativity, and flexibility and those who interpret the same documents as justifying their desire for greater liturgical uniformity, the preservation of the treasury of sacred music, and the greater emphasis on interior participation. The main problem is that the Mass settings of the past, especially those that could only be rendered by a trained choir, do not fit well into the structure of the reformed liturgy. The choice to sing or not to sing Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony is not simply a matter of taste. The reformed liturgy demands new music that will facilitate the participation of the assembly and that will integrate the liturgical texts themselves into the ritual. Most church composers have responded to this demand and are conscious that they are composing for a contemporary liturgical structure. Also, there is now general agreement that there are some places in the liturgy where it is possible to sing pieces from the previous repertoire. Those who will not reconcile themselves to the use of contemporary music in the liturgy are pleased that Pope Benedict XVI has allowed a greater access to the pre-Vatican II Latin liturgy. This has created a parallel rite with its Latin chants for a group of Catholics who want to follow it.

(2) A challenge has arisen because of the new translation of most of the liturgical texts. The praying of liturgical texts in the vernacular is one of the ways in which the liturgy

finds a home in the local culture (enculturation). An important element in any form of enculturation is communication. Vernacular language is the tool for communication in different cultural contexts. Those who translated the present liturgical texts made an effort to speak in the language of the people. Their efforts were judged to be a mixed success. For English-speaking countries the task of translation—that is, rendering the texts communicable—was entrusted to a group called the International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL). ICEL was fully occupied with a revision of the original English translation when the Vatican intervened and changed the direction of the translation process. Previous translators had followed the rule of translation called dynamic equivalence—that is, to translate according to the meaning of the Latin text. The Vatican opted for a direct form of translation from the Latin texts—that is, one that is more literal. This latter program of translation was set forth in the document *Liturgiam Authenticam* (LA) (2001). Some of these newly translated texts have appeared, but there is no date for implementation yet. Composers who want to keep their works available for use in the liturgy will have to rework them according to the principles of LA. Composers such as Dan Schutte, Michael Joncas, and Marty Haugen have already revised their more popular compositions. This is especially true of the texts of the Mass Ordinary, which are frequently used, such as the widely popular “Mass of Creation” by Marty Haugen.

(3) Related to the issue of liturgical texts and translations is what is called “multicultural liturgy.” In pluralistic and mobile countries such as the United States and Canada, various ethnic groups with their cultural differences and languages make up the worshipping assemblies. The ideal of a Catholic liturgy is that all groups can worship together. Multicultural liturgies have developed from this conviction. This usually means using various languages throughout the liturgy, such as English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. For the occasional liturgy this seems to be a successful solution. But the various groups often prefer to have the liturgy in their own language as the regular Sunday fare. Perforce, the larger assembly of the parish is broken into several communities. Composers such as Bob Hurd; Rufino Zaragoza, O.F.M.; Jaime Cortez; and Peter Rubalcava use several languages in a single composition. Roman Catholic congregations are becoming accustomed to singing bilingual texts even in a liturgy that may be in one language such as Spanish or English.

As the U.S. Catholic Church becomes increasingly Hispanic, the composers are being called on to provide music

for the celebrations of Hispanic popular religion. Some Hispanic customs such as the Quinceañera (blessing for the girl when she reaches the age of fifteen) and certain marriage customs are already accepted as part of the liturgy. Presently, the immigrants are familiar with the music that is used. Some of these customs need to be further integrated into the liturgy and made more accessible to second-generation immigrants. Contemporary composers will need to provide music suitable for these customs.

In the 1960s and 1970s when the presence of Hispanics in the mainline churches of the United States became increasingly significant, the immigrants brought with them much of the music used in the liturgy, especially that in Spanish. One heard and can still hear such traditional hymns as “Adiós, Reina del Cielo, Madre de Salvador” (Farewell, O Queen of Heaven), “Bendigamos al Señor, que nos une en Caridad” (Let Us Bless the Lord), and “Perdona a Tu Pueblo, Señor, Perdona Tu Pueblo, Perdonale, Señor” (Forgive Us, Your People). Some music came from Mexico. With the publication and revision of the hymnal *Flor y Canto*, the Spanish hymn repertory was broadened. Both Hispanic and non-Hispanic composers began to write bilingual service music for the liturgy. Hurd was an initiator of this type of composition, and many have followed his example. Now there is very little of borrowing of music from Latin American countries, and the emphasis is on U.S. Hispanics creating their own repertory of liturgical music. Most English hymnals and disposable monthly missals/hymnals contain a selection of songs in Spanish as well as bilingual ones.

(4) The direction and agenda of Roman Catholic music in the United States in the future has been recently set by the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference with the publication of *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship* (STL), which appeared in November 2007. STL is a revision of the previous document put forward by the bishops, *Music in Catholic Worship*. STL does not really add anything special to the previous document but does define more clearly the criteria for good liturgical music: the three judgments (liturgical, musical, and pastoral). It is more a summary of previous legislation and pastoral suggestions than projections for the future. It can serve as a program of review for the music ministry in any parish. So although there is little new here, STL provides more detail about the Eucharistic liturgy and about specific celebrations of the sacraments, especially marriage. There are several calls in the document for pastoral ministers and religious leaders to exercise prudence, pastoral sensitivity, sound judgment, and flexibility. Even when STL

asks congregations to learn simple Latin chants, it asks that the teaching be done with sensitivity and patience. In general the document has a feel of openness, and even when it calls for the observance of the rubrics and norms, it asks that pastoral concern be a priority.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Architecture: Roman Catholic*; *Canada: Catholics*; *Latino American Religion: Catholics* entries; *Music* entries; *Religious Thought: Roman Catholic*; *Roman Catholicism: The Cold War and Vatican II*; *Roman Catholicism: Tradition and Heritage*; *Women: Roman Catholic*; *Worship: Roman Catholic*.

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Music: White Gospel

Gospel music is one of the few American phenomena for which African American identity is widely regarded as normative. For many in the twenty-first century, *black gospel* is redundant; *gospel* signals a distinctly African American form of music.

Although no twentieth- or twenty-first-century varieties of gospel music would have arisen without the contributions of African Americans, gospel music is a wide river, feeding and fed by numerous tributaries of localized innovation. To speak of “white gospel” is to follow one of many possible routes in the stream, paying particular attention to the contributions and tastes of white European Americans. The task is not easy; white Protestants, like all dominant groups, have had the privilege of not attending to their whiteness, nor have they cared on most occasions to acknowledge their debt to nonwhite cultures. However, in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, scholars of sacred music—and a growing number of gospel

artists—forthrightly have attended to the “white” characteristics of many gospel subcultures.

Colonial Precursors

When European Protestants established their first settlements along North America’s eastern seaboard, they brought their musical practices with them. Most of these groups practiced congregational singing—most commonly the singing of the psalms. A cappella psalm-singing provided some convenient parameters for Christians who fretted over the potentially deleterious effects of music: lyrics were strictly biblical, and the only instruments were human voices. Furthermore, the “lining out” of psalms—the song leaders recited or sang a few lines, congregants repeated the lines in song—helped leaders maintain control and order.

Although printed psalters were in relative abundance in the early colonial period (the first book printed in America was the Bay Psalm Book, in 1640), lining out psalms became more popular as settlers moved deeper into the continent in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries—away from the European population centers and easy access to print culture. This shift created a crisis in church music. While at one time church leaders could assume that their congregants possessed either a modicum of musical literacy or familiarity with the handful of tunes employed in the psalm-singing, ministers of the early eighteenth century lamented the dearth of musical know-how among churchgoers. The cacophony produced by ill-trained congregations (often led by ill-trained song leaders) precipitated a spate of pedagogical activity among ministers intent on refining psalm-singing.

One innovation was the singing school. Typically employing one of the instructional texts published at the time—such as Rev. Thomas Walter’s *The Grounds and Rules of Music* (1721)—the singing schools taught congregants the rudiments of musical notation. Singing schools appeared all over the colonies throughout the eighteenth century’s middle decades. Occurring as they did in societies that rarely made hard distinctions between religious and secular life, the schools, meeting in taverns and meeting houses alike, popularized singing generally, not simply sacred singing. The schools also coincided with the widespread mid-eighteenth-century revivals, which often employed the innovative work of British songwriters Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley. In the early decades of the century, Watts’s variations on the psalms and self-authored hymns of “human composure” undermined the exclusive biblicism and stylistic rigidity of conventional psalmody. Wesley—influenced like his brother

John by the music-loving Moravians of central Europe—further challenged this tradition, incorporating secular melodies and self-penned lyrics that expressed an intensely personal pietism. Through the endorsement of revivalists like George Whitefield, works such as Watts’s “When I Survey The Wondrous Cross” and Wesley’s “Jesus, Lover of My Soul” gained popularity in an evangelical American religious milieu—one that valued personal conversion and expressiveness. If the singing schools helped to improve the musical skills and literacy of European Americans, the changes in colonial life—particularly Protestant life—ensured that the lessons would not simply be applied to traditional sacred music.

Frontier Revivals and Shape-Notes

By the end of the eighteenth century, the hymns of Wesley and Watts had become standards for many evangelicals. Their work remained popular as another wave of revivals spread across the nation during the early nineteenth century—this one crashing deep into trans-Appalachia and similarly remote areas due to the efforts of Baptist preachers, perambulating Methodists ministers, and self-appointed “lay preachers” who organized frontier camp meetings. However, still-prevalent musical illiteracy, limited access to songbooks, and the relatively broad demographic of camp meetings yielded alterations in sacred music. Joint singing was only possible on the basis of a common knowledge base among singers. Widely recognized folk melodies thus became the foundation of revival music. Moreover, easily memorized lyrics—be they repetitive choruses written in the “common tongue” or truncated versions of Wesley and Watts hymns—made it possible for singers to possess (or to learn quickly) a shared storehouse of songs.

“Great Revival” music was largely an oral/aural affair; no official revival hymnbook existed. However, as revivalistic religion moved from transitory camp meetings to more permanent denominations and churches, and as the nineteenth-century expansion of public education made basic literacy more common, the time was right for the publication of revival songs. But publishers faced a challenge: How could one render the music in an intelligible manner for a people with little or no knowledge of traditional musical notation?

The answer had been provided at the end of the eighteenth century by publishers William Smith and William Little. In their booklet *The Easy Instructor* (1798), Smith and Little introduced what became known as the shape-note

system of musical notation. The system retained the traditional scale and staff (thus the musically literate could read it), but the notes had different shapes according to their position on the scale. Each shape also corresponded with a syllable that marked the note’s position (for example, triangles equaled *fa*, which occurred at the first and fourth interval). Readers of shape-note music needed to know only the four shapes, syllables, and their place on the scale.

Acclaim for the shape-note system began about two decades after *The Easy Instructor* first appeared. The system achieved widespread popularity, mainly in the rural South, during the middle decades of the century—despite protests from devotees of traditional notation, who regarded shape-notes as a capitulation to the masses’ musical ignorance. Of the many popular shape-note collections of the period, Benjamin Franklin White’s *Sacred Harp* (1844) stood the test of time like no other. Although *Sacred Harp*’s continued (if limited) usage in the twenty-first-century South makes Smith’s and Little’s four-shape system the most well known, a seven-shape variation of the system—introduced in Jesse Aikin’s *The Christian Minstrel* (1846)—also garnered many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century users.

The proliferation of shape-note collections occurred alongside the growth of commercial singing schools—schools usually run by the songbooks’ publishers. While communities often had fixed singing schools, many publishers took to the roads like circuit-riding preachers (or traveling salesmen)—establishing ten-day schools throughout the countryside, teaching from and peddling their publications. The tripartite, mutually reinforcing connection among a publisher, his songbook, and his singing school would be a key characteristic of the postbellum gospel music industry. Singers’ reputability became increasingly attached to the attendance of particular singing schools, and concomitantly to the affiliated publishers and songbooks.

Postbellum Gospel Music

While the nineteenth-century rural South was a significant incubator for evangelical Protestant music, it was not the exclusive locus of evangelical activity and innovation. Especially in the decades preceding the Civil War, when industrial expansion and inter- and intranational migration produced urban population booms, evangelical activity in the urban North helped define gospel music.

The best-known postbellum urban ministry was that of Dwight Moody (1837–1899), who worked closely with Chicago’s YMCA (Young Men’s Christian Association) and

whose concerns included social reform and the conversion of the urban masses. While Moody was attending an Indianapolis YMCA convention, he met musician Ira Sankey (1840–1908). Sankey impressed Moody with his ability to rouse a convention audience through song. Having sensed the inspirational power of quality music (and having despaired over the lack of quality music in his gatherings), Moody asked Sankey to join his ministry. The pair's evangelistic journey to England in 1873 marked a new phase in urban revivalism. British minister A. A. Rees's quip during the Moody-Sankey trip to England that Sankey was "singing the gospel" is often cited as the first attachment of the term *gospel* to religious music. While it is impossible to trace exactly the origin of the term *gospel music*, Sankey certainly played a crucial role in proliferating what he termed "gospel songs"—compositions such as "The Ninety and Nine" (Clephane and Sankey, 1868) and "O Christ, What Burdens Bow Thy Head" (Cousin, 1876, and Sankey, ca. 1886) that highlighted the salvific act of Christ's death and resurrection and the need for personal conversion.

Among Sankey's most important contributions to gospel music were his compilations. His numerous music volumes—particularly the six-volume *Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs* (1875–1891)—exposed millions to the work of many lyricists and tunesmiths. Largely due to Sankey's efforts, interest in gospel songs and the number of gospel songwriters exploded during the century's final decades. Philip Bliss (1838–1876) and Fanny Crosby (1820–1915), who published 6,000 songs and likely wrote 2,000 more, were among the era's most prolific authors.

The preacher-musician partnership that Moody and Sankey modeled had a lasting impact. Preachers desirous of reaching the masses recognized the importance of music to a thriving ministry. Almost without exception, popular evangelists near the turn of the century worked closely with music ministers. The temperament of individuals and the nature of specific ministries dictated the contribution of each musician. But a musician of some variety was regarded as a necessary ingredient for successful evangelism.

Interracial Exchanges and Encounters

While whites dominated the publication of sacred Protestant songs from 1620 to the end of the nineteenth century, they were certainly not the only producers and consumers of sacred music. People of numerous racial identities often shared a soundscape in America, despite efforts to limit interracial contact. While the course of crossracial influence

is impossible to chart precisely, scholars agree that sacred musics were not simply mutually exclusive developments of the white or the black community.

The late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century revivals were particularly significant sites of interracial encounter. Many of the camp meetings were relatively integrated affairs, though many partitioned blacks and whites by conducting separate services on the same campground. Especially in the former case—and to some extent in the latter—whites, blacks, and occasionally Native Americans heard the musical stylings of racial others. The rhythmic play of African American singing contrasted with the even-metered songs of Wesley and Watts, though many African Americans were moved by the English songwriters' words and adapted versions of them in African American worship. The white fascination with African American singing—though it birthed stereotypical conceptions of blacks as innately musical and especially prone to melodious revivalistic enthusiasm—helped white American Protestant songwriters develop their craft in a direction other than European hymnody. Along with the Celtic-tinged folk music developing in southern Appalachia, African American music gave white evangelicals resources from which they could develop a music consonant with revival energy.

Especially in the South, restrictions on black worship and black-white contact tightened as the Civil War approached. However, the postbellum years witnessed a resurgence of interracial exchange throughout the nation and a growing appreciation for the contributions of African Americans. By century's end, an all-black singing group from Fisk University in Nashville was performing before packed houses everywhere. With unparalleled success, the Fisk Jubilee Singers exposed the world to "Negro spirituals" that had been cultivated on southern plantations. At the same time, the ensemble's tight harmonies and formal stage presentation demonstrated the influence of—and necessary capitulations to—Euro-American norms.

Perhaps the most interesting testament to the cross-pollination of black and white sacred music is the trajectory of the many songs penned near the turn of the century. For example, "Leaning On the Everlasting Arms" (Hoffman and Showalter, 1887) and "His Eye Is On the Sparrow" (Gabriel and Martin, 1905), both penned by white duos and under the arrangement of African American musicians, would assume canonical status in black churches. Although whites still dominated the world of music publishing, African American songwriters slowly began to break into the market. Black minister Charles Albert Tindley's "We'll

Understand It Better By and By” (1905) would become a gospel classic in black and white gospel circles.

Institutional and culturally embedded racism did and would ever circumscribe the possibility of black-white musical cooperation. However, evangelical Protestant music in America entered the twentieth century as the product of numerous influences—a fact that would become more evident with the early twentieth-century birth and spread of Pentecostalism among whites and blacks. Even more demonstrative in their religious expression than their Holiness predecessors, Pentecostals also harbored fewer reservations about highly rhythmic, emotional music. Seeing music as a means by which believers might express the infusion of the Holy Spirit in their lives and by which churches might attract potential believers, Pentecostals less apologetically incorporated modern instrumentation and jazzy arrangements in worship. While internecine quarrels would arise in Pentecostal circles over how much accommodation to popular tastes was too much, Pentecostals would become significant producers and consumers of gospel music.

The Gospel Music Industry

At the turn of the century, James Vaughan (1864–1941) began laying much of the groundwork for the modern gospel music industry in Cumberland, Tennessee—a region that became hot with Pentecostal fire as the twentieth century progressed. Inspired as a young man by attending singing schools sponsored by nineteenth-century music companies, Vaughan published his first compositions and led his first singing schools in the 1890s. His reputation as an excellent teacher coupled with the modest success of his self-published shape-note collection *Gospel Chimes* (1900) led to the creation of the James D. Vaughan Music Company in 1902.

Vaughan was a relentless publisher. For many decades, his company produced at least one new songbook per year, which Vaughan marketed to, and through, singing schools. Vaughan’s greatest legacy, though, was his clever advertising. In 1910, Vaughan sponsored a traveling male singing quartet. Songbooks in tow, the Vaughan Quartet traveled to churches and singing conventions (annual community gatherings in which people sang in unison, typically from a specific company’s songbooks), advertising through performance. The tactic paid off well for Vaughan, who later hired several traveling quartets.

All-male quartets became standard personnel for many early twentieth-century music companies. Most notably, the Stamps-Baxter Music Company (est. 1927), which had

grown out of Vaughan’s company, copied the practice with immense success. Recognizing the advantage of hiring groups who had little incentive to break up, companies also hired family ensembles, whose lifelong careers performing with one another produced seemingly instinctive musical coherence. Vaughan and others tapped the burgeoning radio market in the 1920s, purchasing airspace for their quartets—a maneuver that greatly expanded groups’ listenership. During this time, the companies also established record labels and funded a handful of phonograph recordings of their groups.

They started as singing advertisements, but gospel musicians themselves became marketable objects due to their extensive in-person, radio, and recorded performances. As early as the Great Depression, the popularity of musical groups effected a gradual detachment between performers and publishers. Still requiring financial backing and access to business-owned airwaves, many groups entered into deals with extramusical companies. The foundational country-gospel family group the Carter Quartet joined and eventually became the Chuck Wagon Gang, whose sponsorship by Bewley Flour Mills earned them regular airtime—and sometimes required them to sing while a cook baked biscuits from Bewley flour to distribute to live audiences.

The Industry at Mid-Century

Not until after the Second World War did gospel musicians achieve nearly complete independence from music publishing companies. The growing tendency of musicians to write their own music or to contract directly with specific songwriters, and an expanding radio and television market, helped usher in the virtual end of publishing companies’ sponsorship of musicians.

Gospel musicians had several performance avenues available to them. Continuing the Moody-Sankey legacy, many entered into agreements with evangelists—some of whom traveled from town to town, but many of whom developed successful radio and television ministries. From the West Coast, evangelist Charles Fuller broadcast his *Old Fashioned Revival Hour*—complete with his popular Goose Creek Quartet—across the globe. Billy Graham hired a number of longtime regulars—the most long-lasting a baritone named George Beverly Shea—for his *Crusades*. Under secular sponsorship, a few artists had their own regional radio and television shows, such as the Statesmen Quartet’s Nabisco-sponsored television program (1953–1957). A clever group of entrepreneurs became successful organizers and promoters of massive, multiact concerts, primarily occurring in the South.

For example, the industrious bass singer J. D. Sumner (1924–1998) was instrumental in developing the National Quartet Convention. Premiering in Memphis in 1957, this annual showcase of gospel acts continues to gather in Louisville, Kentucky, in the twenty-first century.

While by no means sites of racial diversity, gospel stages (and more rarely, audiences) of the 1940s and early '50s were occasionally integrated; a few African American groups, such as the Golden Gate Quartet, toured with both the Statesmen and the equally popular Blackwood Brothers Quartet. However, the tumult over *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) caused white gospel artists, fans, and promoters to draw increasingly impermeable racial boundaries around concerts.

At the same time, the boundaries separating white gospel music from other popular musical forms grew more fluid during these years. At a period when white gospel competed successfully with other genres—especially in the South and rural Midwest—gospel music informed and was shaped by broader musical trends. J. D. Sumner's 1955 purchase and remodeling of a Trailways coach for his Blackwood Brothers' concert travel marked the beginning of the music industry's "tour bus" era. Sumner, whose group later sang backup for Elvis Presley's Las Vegas act, significantly influenced the young Presley, as did the Statesmen's kinetic tenor Jake Hess. Presley and other secular acts regularly scored hits with gospel songs of African American and white composition.

Even more intimate was white gospel's relationship to country music. The two genres shared a primary fan demographic as well as a pool of musicians and songwriters. Familiarity sometimes bred tension. In the 1970s, the Oak Ridge Boys (formerly the gospel act the Oak Ridge Quartet) deliberately dove into the country market—a move that seemed like a betrayal of the genre to many in the gospel community, despite the Oaks' continued performance of gospel songs. Because the gospel genre was so defined by religious identity, such a move was tantamount to apostasy. Although not a new concern, the perception that a crossover act abandoned the gospel message for financial gain and popularity would haunt crossover artists, from J. D. Sumner to contemporary Christian sensation Amy Grant, for the rest of the century.

Christian Rock and "Southern Gospel"

Charges of selling out were not just aimed at musicians who transgressed the ostensible sacred/secular divide. In the late 1960s and early '70s, many Christian artists appropriated the sounds of rock and roll for sacred ends. Riffing off of a quip severally attributed to Martin Luther, the Wesleys, and

Salvation Army founder William Booth, Christian rocker Larry Norman's 1972 song "Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music?" captured the spirit of the new style.

Although some white gospellers of the old order—among them J. D. Sumner, who spent the 1970s answering critics of his involvement in Presley's Las Vegas act—tentatively embraced Christian rock's experimentation, many were offended. In the minds of conservative evangelicals, Christian rock—or the more broad "Contemporary Christian Music" (CCM)—sacrificed too much for relevance; the music was raucous, its artists worrisomely unkempt. For a white gospel community that for some time had gotten away with implicit negative identity formation (particularly vis-à-vis black gospel), it took the similarly white, similarly evangelical, but stylistically divergent CCM to make white gospellers recognize and reflect upon their genre's makeup. During the 1970s, many CCM groups styled themselves as traditional acts. The term *southern gospel*, long a loose descriptor of predominantly white quartet music, became a more formal name for a Christian music subgenre. With the formation of the Southern Gospel Music Association in 1982—a deliberate break from the supposedly CCM-biased Gospel Music Association, which had been started by members of the gospel quartet industry in 1964—southern gospellers set themselves apart from other Christian musicians.

Despite the growingly nostalgic language, traditionalists were not immune to the changes illustrated and perpetuated by CCM. Quartets and family bands of the 1970s such as the Imperials and the Hinsons updated their wardrobes and experimented with fuller, more electronic instrumentation. Some artists seemed ill suited for either CCM or southern gospel. Husband and wife singer-songwriters Bill and Gloria Gaither (1936–, 1942–) proved a particularly difficult fit. Their Bill Gaither Trio had become popular on Billy Graham's stage, with performances that were at once mellow and grandiose. Even more popular were Gaither songs, which were malleable enough for adoption by groups of all varieties. The Gaither Vocal Band, formed in 1980, was a traditional all-male quartet, but one that self-consciously updated its image and electrified its sound. Sometimes called "inspirational" musicians, groups like the Hinsons and the Gaither ensembles illustrated the spectrum of possibility between tradition and innovation.

White Gospel into the Twenty-First Century

Traditional white gospel survived the 1980s, largely because of the proactivity of the Christian Right, a conservative

movement in which many gospel musicians and fans were involved directly and with which many more identified ideologically. But the rise of the CCM industry meant traditional gospellers had to share space in the evangelical marketplace as they previously had not done. Many traditional quartets and family groups remained popular attractions, but none could compete in album and ticket sales with big-name CCM stars.

In 1990, Bill Gaither reinvigorated southern gospel music almost single-handedly. At a time when many Americans' mainstream musical tastes leaned toward the raw (evidenced in Seattle's grunge movement) and also toward "old-timey" rural life (country music of the Garth Brooks rock-and-roll variety was exploding), Gaither's *Homecoming* concerts, videos, and albums outsold everything in the evangelical music market. Originating as a filmed tribute to aging southern gospel artists—the Gaither Vocal Band recorded an old gospel song with several still-living members of the groups from the 1950s—the *Homecomings* recreated the collective convention singing of the early century, at the same time featuring the music and musicians popular in white gospel's postwar days. Ninety-nine *Homecoming* videos and albums achieved at least gold-level sales; *Homecoming* concerts regularly outsold the concerts of popular secular acts.

The *Homecomings'* success in northern urban environs recalled the Moody-Sankey revivals of the nineteenth century. However, the twenty-first-century surge in interest in bluegrass and folk suggested that many Americans continued to be drawn to ostensibly rural, southern white music. Producer T-Bone Burnett's Grammy-winning *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtrack (2000) was both the cause and effect of a twenty-first-century American return to rural culture. Burnett's album also (re)placed white and black rural musical forms in close proximity with one another. Gaither's projects occasionally made similarly integrative maneuvers, sharing performance space with black artists and ministers such as Jessy Dixon and T. D. Jakes. While black and white gospel were still working out their relationship to

one another in the first years of the twenty-first century, it became impossible for any open-eyed artist, fan, or scholar to pretend that race did not matter in every rendering of gospel music and its history.

See also *Appalachian Mountain Religion*; *Baptists: Southern*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Film*; *Megachurches*; *Music: African American Gospel*; *Music: Appalachian Religious*; *Music: Contemporary Christian*; *Pentecostals* entries; *Radio*; *Revivalism* entries; *South as Region*; *Television*.

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Muslim Architecture

See *Architecture: Muslim*

Muslim Women

See *Women: Muslim*

Muslim Worship

See *Worship: Muslim*

N



Nation(s) of Islam

Throughout its history since emerging in the 1930s, the sectarian African American Muslim movement called the Nation of Islam has had a remarkable continuity in its major teachings. However, it has also produced a number of schisms led by charismatic leaders who had different ideas about the best path towards the future for African Americans. Some of the paths led toward orthodox Sunni Islam, while others led to different versions of the Nation of Islam or to some form of religious black nationalism.

Master Fard and the Origins of the Nation of Islam

The original Nation of Islam was established on July 4, 1930, in the Detroit ghetto called “Paradise Valley” by a peddler of sundry goods. While he sold his goods to the poor black migrants of Paradise Valley, often inquiring about their health and spiritual development, he also began telling them about the true religion of the “Asiatic black man” that would liberate black people from white oppression by enabling them to attain “true knowledge of self.” He used both the Christian Bible and the Holy Qur’an in his teaching at meetings, first in individual homes and then later in a rented hall called Temple No. 1.

This mysterious stranger, who referred to himself as Mr. Farrad Muhammad or sometimes as Mr. Wali Fard, W. D. Fard, Wallace D. Fard, and Mr. Fard, was considered to be a prophet by some of his followers. He later came to be recognized as the “Great Mahdi,” or “Savior,” who had come to bring a special message to the suffering blacks in the ghettos

of America. Although some believe that W. D. Fard was associated with Noble Drew Ali and the Moorish Science Temple and may have incorporated some ideas from that movement into his own teaching, the Nation of Islam generally denies any relationship between the two.

In the midst of the Great Depression, when recent black migrants from the South experienced considerable unemployment, Fard taught his followers about the deceptive character and temporary domination of “blue-eyed devils,” or white overlords. He also stressed the importance of attaining “knowledge of self” and “doing for self” as prerequisites for achieving black liberation. He instructed his followers that they were not Americans and therefore owed no allegiance to the American flag, which led many members of the Nation to refuse being drafted into the American military. Fard explained that he might look “white” or Caucasian but that he was actually an “Asiatic black man” who had come to bring a message of liberation to the “Lost-Found Nation in the Wilderness of North America.” He told the story of Yakub, a black mad scientist who had rebelled against Allah by creating the white race, a weak hybrid people who were permitted temporary dominance of the world for a period of 6,000 years. Whites had achieved their power and position through devious means and “tricknology.” They had perpetuated “devilish acts” against black people through slavery, brutality, and lynching and by using alcohol and drugs to weaken them. However, the original black people, he said, had a divine nature.

Several hundred years of slavery followed by continued racial discrimination and economic deprivation in America gave a powerful emotional resonance to Fard’s message. He

wrote two manuals for the movement: *The Secret Ritual of the Nation of Islam* is transmitted orally to members, and *Teaching for the Lost-Found Nation of Islam in a Mathematical Way* is written in symbolic language and requires special interpretation. Within three years, Fard had founded an effective organization with a temple that had its own worship style and rituals, as well as a University of Islam with a special curriculum made up largely of Fard's teaching. The "university" was essentially a combined elementary and secondary school, but for many followers, it was the first step toward cultural and psychological freedom. He also established the Muslim Girls' Training Class (MGT) to teach young women the principles of home economics and their proper role in the Nation of Islam. In 1933 he created the Fruit of Islam, a quasi-military organization of male Muslims who served as honor guards, ushers, and enforcers of internal discipline within the temples, as well as security agents for the Minister of Islam and other leaders. Members of the Fruit and the MGT learned how to frisk and search everyone entering a temple. Under Fard, members of the Fruit also learned to use firearms and techniques of self-defense. Later with Elijah Muhammad's ascension to leadership, the use of weapons was forbidden and the men had to learn martial arts, largely for self-defense. The change was due in part to increased scrutiny by the police and FBI.

The Rise of Elijah Muhammad

One of the earliest officers of the movement, Elijah Poole (later Elijah Karriem and then Elijah Muhammad) became Master Fard's most trusted lieutenant. Born on October 7, 1897, Elijah was the son of a rural Baptist minister and sharecropper and his wife from Sandersville, Georgia. When he was six, his family moved to Cordele, Georgia, where he attended school up to the third grade. At that point he had to stop his education in order to work in the fields and help the family's finances. At the age of fourteen, Elijah witnessed the public lynching of his good friend Albert Hamilton. Hamilton had been accused of raping a white girl, but before he could be tried in a court, he was taken from the local jail by an angry mob and hung from a tree. Then his body was shot 300 times. This lynching, and another just before he headed north, had a great impact on Elijah; he ordered a picture of a lynched black man in a tree to be placed in the front of every Nation of Islam temple when he became the head of the movement. The lynching also made him open to the racial doctrines of Fard's teaching when he encountered them in Detroit.

Elijah married Clara Evans of Cordele in 1919 and migrated to Detroit with other family members in 1923. At a dinner arranged by his wife, Elijah met Fard, and he converted to the Nation of Islam in 1931. Despite his third-grade education, Elijah's intelligence and devotion to Fard enabled him to rise rapidly through the ranks, and in 1933 Fard chose him to preside over the organization as Chief Minister of Islam. Fard began the practice of changing the surnames of his members, dropping their "slave" names and giving them Muslim ones. Hence, Elijah was called Karriem and then Muhammad. In a short period of time, Fard's Temple of Islam had attracted more than 8,000 members.

Master Fard Is Allah and Elijah Muhammad Is His Messenger

The first schism in the Nation's history was spawned over Elijah Muhammad's assumption of leadership when Fard mysteriously disappeared in 1934. Rivalries and factions broke into open hostilities in the struggle for the power to command the organization. Part of the controversy involved Elijah Muhammad's bold proclamation that Fard was Allah and that he himself was Allah's prophet or messenger. It was also during this period that Elijah published the Nation's first newspaper, *The Final Call to Islam*.

As a result of the factional rivalries and death threats, Elijah Muhammad fled Detroit, moving constantly back and forth by himself between Washington, D.C., and Chicago, while Clara Muhammad and their children stayed in the family's southside Chicago residence. Elijah was arrested on May 8, 1942, for failure to register for the draft and sentenced to serve three years at the Federal Correctional Institute in Milan, Michigan. Clara kept the fledgling movement together as Supreme Secretary of the Nation. Elijah was released from Milan on August 24, 1946.

Minister Malcolm X

In the same year that Elijah Muhammad was released from prison, Malcolm Little, a small-time petty thief, pimp, alcohol and drug addict, and street hustler known as "Detroit Red" and "Satan," entered the prison system in Massachusetts to serve a seven-year term for armed robbery. After his conversion to the Nation in prison and the total transformation of his character, Malcolm emerged as one of the most significant leaders of the movement. Through his indefatigable efforts and charismatic personality, he greatly expanded the empire of the Nation of Islam by adding twenty-seven

temples across the country to the seven that were in existence when he was released from prison in 1952.

Malcolm underwent the first of two conversion experiences when he converted to the Nation of Islam. At the Norfolk Prison Colony in Massachusetts in 1948, Malcolm described the powerful, jarring impact that the revelation of religious truth had upon him when his brother Reginald, a member of the Nation, told him that the white man was the devil. The chaos behind prison bars suddenly became a cosmos, an ordered reality that provided a rationale for the extreme poverty and tragedies his family had suffered and for all the years he had spent hustling and pimping. He began to straighten out his life and conform to Islam; he quit smoking and gambling, refused to eat pork in prison, and started the process of self-education. He spent long hours in the prison library, reading all of the books available and memorizing the dictionary. He sharpened his forensic skills by participating in debate classes. The total transformation of Malcolm Little into Malcolm X in prison is a story of the effectiveness of Elijah Muhammad's message to the black man. Following the tradition in the Nation, he replaced his slave surname Little with an X, which symbolized what he had been and had become: "Ex-Negro. Ex-Christian. Ex-slave."

The years between Malcolm's release from prison and his assassination, 1952 to 1965, mark the period of the greatest growth and influence of the Nation of Islam. After meeting Elijah Muhammad in 1952, he began organizing temples of the Nation of Islam in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Hartford in the Northeast, and in the South and on the West Coast as well. He founded the Nation's second newspaper, *Muhammad Speaks*, in the basement of his home and initiated the practice of requiring every male Muslim to sell an assigned quota of newspapers on the street as a recruiting and fund-raising device. He articulated the Nation of Islam's beliefs in racial separation. He rose rapidly through the ranks to become the minister of Boston Temple No. 11, which he had organized, and he was later rewarded with the post of minister of Temple No. 7 in Harlem, the largest and most prestigious temple in the Nation after the Chicago headquarters. Recognizing his talents and abilities, Elijah Muhammad also named him the National Representative of the Nation of Islam, second in rank to himself. Elijah had a special affection for Malcolm and considered him his "seventh son." Malcolm effectively carried the Nation's central message to black people to "know yourself" (have self-knowledge) and "do for self" (economic independence). Hundreds of grocery stores, bakeries, and other independent

businesses were set up to create a fledgling internal economic system. Under his lieutenancy, the Nation of Islam achieved a membership estimated at 500,000. But like other movements of this kind, the numbers involved were quite fluid, and the influence of the Nation of Islam refracted through the public charisma of Malcolm X greatly exceeded its actual numbers.

As an articulate public speaker, charismatic personality, and indefatigable organizer, Malcolm X expressed the pent-up anger, the frustration, the bitterness, and the rage of black people during the major phase of the civil rights period from 1955 to 1965. Malcolm's keen intellect, incisive wit, and ardent radicalism made him a formidable critic of American society, including of the civil rights movement. As a favorite media personality, he challenged Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s central notions of integration and nonviolence. Malcolm felt that what was at stake, more than the right to sit in a restaurant or even to vote, was the independence and integrity of black selfhood. His biting critique of the "so-called Negro" and his emphasis on the recovery of black identity and independence provided the intellectual foundations for the Black Power and black consciousness movements of the late 1960s and 1970s. In contrast to King's nonviolence, Malcolm urged his followers to defend themselves "by any means possible."

After leaving the Nation of Islam in 1964, Malcolm made the pilgrimage to Mecca, converting to Sunni Islam and taking the name El Hajj Malik El Shabazz. He established the Muslim Mosque Inc. and the Organization for Afro-American Unity. Malcolm was assassinated on February 21, 1965, at the Audubon Ballroom in upper Manhattan.

Transformation of Minds and Bodies in the Nation

The Nation of Islam is known for raising the consciousness of its followers through its emphasis upon self-knowledge and an affirmation of blackness. In addition, author Edward Curtis has used postmodern theory to emphasize the changes in the image and ethics of the body that members went through. Throughout U.S. history, the black body has been enslaved, lynched, beaten, mutilated, imprisoned, raped, and denigrated in numerous ways. This severe oppression has had an enormous impact upon black people, many of whom have had great difficulty in accepting their black skin and African features.

The outward physical appearance of men and women in the Nation changed, with men dressing in dark suits and bow

ties and women wearing long white dresses and covering their heads. Both genders also took part in military drills and precision marching. Members of the Nation incorporated martial arts into their disciplinary training. Elijah Muhammad also tried to influence the diet of members of the Nation through his 1972 book *How to Eat to Live*, instructing members about recommended and prohibited food. Above all, he pointed out that members should eat one meal per day to control their weight and to stay healthy. For Elijah and members of the Nation, the outward changes in physical appearance and acceptance of the black body were symbolic of the inward changes in their religious consciousness.

The Death of Elijah Muhammad and Schism in the Nation

After Malcolm X's death in 1965, his protégé Minister Louis X, renamed Farrakhan, took his place as the Minister of Temple No. 7 and as National Representative of the Nation of Islam, becoming second in command of the organization. Through his charismatic speaking ability, Minister Farrakhan rebuilt the membership of the Nation of Islam.

When Elijah Muhammad died on February 25, 1975, his fifth son, Minister Wallace Deen Muhammad, was chosen to replace him as the supreme leader of the Nation of Islam. Minister Farrakhan had expected to succeed Elijah, but he overcame his disappointment and submitted to Wallace's leadership. Within months of his ascension to leadership, Wallace shocked the country and his members by declaring that the Nation would no longer distinguish between white and black Muslims but rather consider all Muslims to be children of God. He moved rapidly to lead the Nation of Islam towards universal Sunni Islam. He disbanded the key organizations Fruit of Islam and MGT; criticized the separatist teachings and Yakub mythology; and called his new movement the World Community of Al-Islam in the West, later changing the name to the American Muslim Mission. He criticized his father's teachings and denied that he was the Messenger of Allah. Wallace also changed his name to Imam Warith Deen Mohammed.

After two years of silence, in October 1977 Minister Louis Farrakhan started to organize a new Nation of Islam group that preserved the teachings of Fard and Elijah Muhammad. Although Farrakhan's movement eventually emerged as the largest and most successful Nation of Islam, other splinter Nation of Islam groups also arose as a result of dissatisfaction with Wallace's leadership and a reluctance to follow Farrakhan. In 1978 Elijah Muhammad's younger

brother, John Muhammad, started a Nation of Islam group with two mosques in Detroit and Highland, Michigan. In the same year Caliph Emmanuel Abdullah Muhammad of Baltimore also established two mosques, in Baltimore and Chicago. However, the most serious rival to Reverend Farrakhan was Minister Silis Muhammad, a lawyer by profession. Silis Muhammad started his Lost Found Nation of Islam in Atlanta in the summer of 1977, a few months before Farrakhan started his new Nation. Silis's Nation consisted of several thousand members and about eight mosques. The movements led by John Muhammad, Caliph Emmanuel Muhammad, and Silis Muhammad were active in the 1980s and 1990s.

John Muhammad died in 2005, and his movement is sustained by a Web site maintained by his followers. His major disagreement with Farrakhan revolved around the issue of Elijah Muhammad's death. Farrakhan and his movement's theologian Bernard Cushmeer have implied that Elijah Muhammad is still alive and will return one day. John Muhammad also claimed that he was more faithful to Elijah Muhammad's teachings, especially regarding the ban on politics in the Nation, than Farrakhan. In the 1984 presidential primaries, Farrakhan voted for the first time and supported Jesse Jackson.

Caliph Emmanuel Muhammad contended that with the death of the Messenger Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam should establish a caliphate just as the Sunnis did when the Prophet Muhammad Ibn Abdullah died. Thus, he saw himself as the first caliph or successor to Elijah Muhammad.

Silis Muhammad has claimed to be the Savior. His movement declined, especially after Farrakhan's Million Man March in 1995, which drew the largest number of African American men ever assembled in Washington, D.C. Silis claimed that he was willing to join forces with Farrakhan if Farrakhan made the issue of reparations for slavery the major theme of the gathering. However, Farrakhan chose to focus on the spiritual themes of atonement and reconciliation for black men. Although Silis still speaks at his own Savior's Day rallies and his following of several hundred members in Atlanta occasionally publishes *Muhammad Speaks* newspapers, much of the dynamism of his earlier movement has been lost.

Analysis of the Schism in the Nation of Islam

One explanation for the split between Farrakhan's Nation of Islam and Warith Deen Mohammed's American Muslim Mission uses a Weberian analysis that focuses on class shifts within the movement. C. Eric Lincoln described members

of the Nation as “black Puritans” who worked hard and saved their earnings. They were encouraged to seek economic independence, get jobs, and not be on welfare. The Nation also did not allow members to play sports (though an exception was made when professional boxer Muhammad Ali converted) or spend money frivolously. Even professional musician Louis Farrakhan had to give up his musical career on orders from Elijah Muhammad. Membership in the Nation of Islam required a disciplined life without much humor or recreational diversion.

After one or two generations of following these strict economic rules, many members became middle class. One of the unintended consequences of this class mobility was that a large segment of the Nation was ready for the changes that Imam Mohammed introduced. In analyzing religious movements, Max Weber pointed out that while the charisma of the leader may be a major factor in attracting members, the members’ “elective affinity” causes them to choose which parts of the message they will internalize in their lives. For members of the Nation, this included which leader to follow. Thus, about two-thirds of the members of the Nation of Islam were ready for Imam Mohammed’s move towards Sunni Islam and a more relaxed code of conduct.

While Imam Warith Deen Mohammed’s changes appealed to the middle-class or upwardly mobile members of the Nation, Minister Farrakhan began rebuilding his Nation of Islam by returning to Elijah Muhammad’s message to the black man, focusing on the Nation’s traditional target of the black underclass who suffered from America’s racial and economic oppression.

The Nations of Islam Today

The movements of both Imam Mohammed and Minister Farrakhan have produced newspapers: *The Muslim Journal* for Wallace Mohammed and *The Final Call* for Farrakhan. While Wallace Mohammed had the larger following, estimated at 100,000 members compared to Farrakhan’s 50,000, Farrakhan has been far more of a controversial media personality and a more charismatic speaker. Farrakhan’s major rallies in Washington, D.C., the Million Man March in 1995, and the Millions More March in 2005, drew four to five times the numbers of attendees at Martin Luther King Jr.’s March on Washington in 1963. At the 2000 Savior’s Day convention, Imam Mohammed and Minister Farrakhan held a reconciliation meeting, agreeing to cordial relations but not a merger of their movements. In 2006 Farrakhan took a leave of absence from the leadership of the Nation of

Islam due to complications from prostate cancer treatment. A leadership council now runs the daily affairs of the Nation, with Farrakhan making occasional speeches. Imam Mohammed died of cardiac arrest in 2009. Leadership of his movement has been assumed by a council of imams.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Islam in North America*; *Islam: Tradition and Heritage*; *Liberation Theology*; *New Religious Movements: Black Nationalist Movements*; *Qur’an*; *Race and Racism*.

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Native American Cultures, Environment, And Ecology

See *Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures*

Native American Missions

See *Missions: Native American*

Native American Religions

There is no word that translates to “religion” in any of the hundreds of Native American languages. This is because for those who engage in traditional Native American practices,

religion is not regarded as an activity in any way separable from daily life. The study of religion itself was first attempted by Europeans of Christian background who lived in a time and place where the separation of religious activity from secular activity was not only a lived reality, but appeared to be a natural distinction. Since traditional Native American practices do not reflect this division between sacred and secular, they have challenged received notions regarding religion itself. While some current-day practitioners of traditional Native American religions do choose to refer to their own “religion” or “belief,” others point to the words in their languages that have been inaccurately translated as “religion” and observe that they might better be translated as “the way we do things,” or even simply as “doings.”

Native American traditional practices center on recognition of and relationships with a multiplicity of sites of sacred power. These sacred powers are known by differing names in various languages. Perhaps the terms for sacred power most familiar to non-Native people are *orenda*, or *oki* (in Iroquoian languages); *manitou* (in Algonkian languages); and *wakan*, or *wakonda* (in Siouan languages). In addition, like other religions of the world, Native American traditional practices describe and live out these relationships with sacred powers through the recitation of myths, through the performance of rituals, and through the knowledge and use of objects or symbols that carry and represent sacred power and convey religious meaning.

Native American traditional practices are not easily summarized or described, given their great variety. Native American religions vary precisely because of the differing traditional geographies, languages, and material cultures of each nation or tribe. Scholars often classify Native American cultures by linguistic group or by traditional geographic area. The present overview, however, provides examples from a wide representation of tribes or nations in order to illustrate the diversity of Native American religions, as well as the commonalities that can be found both within and across linguistic and regional boundaries.

Myths, rituals, and symbolic objects are tied to specific locations. Myths of origin will often detail the creation of cosmos out of chaos with clear reference to particular features of the landscape found within a tribe or nation’s traditional geography. Rituals of all kinds often establish and enact relationships with sacred powers that are themselves identified with the flora or fauna indigenous to a certain region. Symbolic objects are usually fashioned from or created with explicit reference to natural elements found

(perhaps exclusively) in a culture’s specific location. Throughout Native American religions, sacred powers are present and perceptible in the natural world and its elements. Bodies of water, rocks, trees, plants, animals, winds, clouds, sky, sun, moon, and stars all may contain or embody various sacred powers with which it is critical to establish and maintain a relationship. The land, the water, the flora, the fauna, and the sky and its resident celestial bodies sustain the Native nation, and the people of the nation acknowledge and attend to these powers in order to remain in balance (or redress imbalance) with the sacred.

Myths

Myths and other stories that deal with the sacred have multiple functions in Native American religions. Myths transmit tribal and family histories, narrate and reinforce the importance of sacred spaces, explain the relationships between human beings and sacred powers, clarify central cultural concepts, and validate cultural claims. They serve as both repositories of history and sources of instruction. Myths typically define the elements and delineate the structures of ritual practices.

The recitation of a myth can confer prestige on the skilled teller, and should orient the listener to the cosmic order. In some cultures the recitation of myths is limited to qualified persons; for the Anishinaabe, this is the duty of the *kanawencikewinini*, who is both tribal historian and religious specialist. In many Native cultures there are special times that are set aside for the recitation of myths. For the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy), the time is midwinter. In many Native cultures some myths must be shared only with other members of the cultural group, or with fellow members of a smaller, qualified subgroup, such as a medicine society.

Etiological Myths

Etiologies, or stories of origin, are a particularly important mythological type in Native American religions. They often place a nation or tribe in the center of a specific landscape. Because of the deep cultural resonances and meanings of many Native American etiological myths, traditionalists often discount scientific theories of Native migration to the Americas, such as the older Bering Land Bridge theory (in which Native peoples are thought to have migrated to the Americas over land from Asia, beginning in the far north and spreading further south and east over successive millennia) and the more recent pre-Clovis

Pacific coastal migration models (in which Native peoples are thought to have migrated to the Americas in watercraft, establishing settlements along the Pacific coast in both North and South America, and moving inland over time). Myths of emergence from specific landscapes, either ascents from underneath or descents from above, are sometimes invoked by Native groups as evidence of their primordial establishment within a particular geographic area. Etiological myths often circumscribe the boundaries of traditional landscapes and name and describe the location of a people's definitive sacred center.

In the Diné (Navajo) story of the emergence of First Man and First Woman (Altsé Hastiin and Altsé Asdzáá), the Four Sacred Mountains of the Diné are identified and named. In the east is Sis Naajini (Blanca Peak), in the south is Tsoodzil (Mount Taylor), in the west is Dook'o'oolid (San Francisco Peak), and in the north is Dibé Nitsaa (Hesperus Peak). Each mountain is clothed in its own sacred color, with white corresponding to the east, blue to the south, yellow to the west, and black to the north. In the sacred center of this geography, the Insect People (ancestors of the Diné) emerged from their underground origins into the upper Fourth World, where they met their neighbors the Keresans. There, First Man and First Woman came into being. First Man is identified with white corn and First Woman with yellow corn. This conveys something of the central importance of the cultivation of maize for the Diné. The Diné believe they are responsible for maintaining relationships with the sacred powers that both abide in and comprise this sacred landscape.

In the Tsalagi (Cherokee) story of the creation of the world, the animals originally lived above in Galunati, the vault of the sky. It became crowded, so when they looked down and saw the primordial waters they wondered what else might be below. The water beetle, Dayunisi, dove below the waters and came up with some mud, which grew into the earth. The earth was suspended from Galunati by four cords fastened at each of the four directions. Birds then scouted out appropriate places for everyone to live, and the Buzzard sculpted Kituwah, the mountainous Tsalagi homeland, with his wings.

The Klamath and Modoc have similar creation myths. The chief of the powers of the upper world, Gmok'am'c, tired of the cold in his world, carved a hole in the bottom of the sky. The snow and ice that fell through landed on earth and became Mlaiksi (Mount Shasta). He then dug out Euksi (Lake Klamath) with his hands. Giiwas (Crater Lake)

came into being when he defeated Monadalkni, the chief of the below-world, and destroyed Moy-Yaina (Big Mountain). Gmok'am'c created the Klamath and Modoc people from bones and placed them in their traditional homelands near Lake Klamath and Modokni Lake (Tule Lake), respectively.

Mythic Twins

Many Iroquoian-speaking peoples tell an etiological myth in which Grandmother is described as falling (or being pushed) from her home in the sky. She would have drowned in the primordial waters if a succession of animals had not prepared a soft landing by diving into the waters, bringing mud and earth up to the surface, and placing it on the back of Big Turtle to receive her. The mud and earth expanded to become all of Turtle Island, which for some is North America and for others the whole world. The myth continues with the birth of a daughter to Grandmother, who bears twin sons. The twins' names differ depending on the Iroquoian language in which the story is told. Iouskeha and Hahgwehdiyu are two of the names of the brother associated with Order, and Tawiskaron and Hahgwehdaetgan are two of the names of the brother associated with Chaos. The twins set about creating the features of the land, with the twin of Order creating a natural feature (a river) and the twin of Chaos modifying that feature (making the water flow only downstream).

Some southwestern nations also feature twin brothers in their creation narratives. According to the Hopi, Kótyang-wúti (Spider Woman) created twin brothers named Pöqáng-hoya and Palöngahoya. The brothers sculpted the landscape and created the Grand Canyon, the Colorado River, the mesas, and the salt flats. Pöqáng-hoya is associated with youth and solidity, while Palöngahoya is associated with vibration. The Diné and the Apache tell of the brothers called Monster Slayer (Nayé nazgháné) and Born For Water (Túbaadeschine), who were born to Changing Woman/White Painted Woman. According to the Diné, the boys are twins and sons of the same father. In the Apache stories they are not twins and have different fathers (Sun and Rain, respectively). In both cases the boys are culture heroes, sometimes represented symbolically by two bows or two shields.

Culture Heroes, Tricksters

As they are in all cultures, Native American culture heroes are legendary or mythological figures who discover or invent important elements of culture, vanquish destructive forces, or otherwise make the world a safer or better place

for human beings to live. They sometimes create particular familial, social, or political structures. These figures may be of clear historical origin or completely ahistorical in nature. They may work in collaboration with greater sacred powers, or in opposition to them. In some Native American contexts, culture heroes are also tricksters. A trickster is a figure whose wisdom is regularly expressed by means of cleverness, deceit, hyperbole, or irony. Tricksters are sometimes amoral, or at least exemplars of impropriety; in this respect they can serve as humorous illustrations or satires of human foibles. The physical form of the culture hero might be a human being, an animal, or some combination of the two. Culture heroes, particularly tricksters, sometimes demonstrate the ability to shape-shift or to otherwise disguise their form.

Deganawidah, the culture hero of the Haudenosaunee, may have been an actual historical personage. He is credited with condoling the grieving Ayonwatha; bringing the tyrannical Onondaga chief, Tadadaho, to reason; and, most significantly, establishing the Great Law of Peace (*Gawyeh-nehshehgowa*) among the warring five nations of the Haudenosaunee. Deganawidah the Peacemaker united the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk nations as the League of Peace and Power.

White Buffalo Calf Woman is the central culture hero of the Lakota people. She is said to have given the Lakota the gifts of the pipe and the stone; inscribed on the stone were the symbols of the Seven Sacred Rites (*Wicoh'an Wakan Sakowin*), the central rituals of the Lakota. The Seven Sacred Rites include the Sweat Lodge (*Inipi*), Crying for a Vision (*Hanbleceyapi*), The Keeping of the Spirit (*Wanagi Wicagluha*), The Sun Dance (*Wiwanyang Waapi*), Making Relatives (*Hunkapi*), The Girls Puberty Rite (*Isnati Awicalowanpi*), and Throwing the Ball (*Tapa Wankayeyapi*). These seven rituals represent essential knowledge. When performed properly these rituals keep the Lakota in harmony with sacred power.

A shared type of creator and culture hero is found among Algonkian speakers. The Wabanaki Confederacy's Gluscap, the Anishinaabe's Nanabozho, and the Cree's Wisakedjak are all benevolent figures who create and transform elements of the cosmos in ways beneficial to their people. All three are credited with bringing the knowledge of the rituals of the *Midewiwin* (Grand Medicine Society) to their people. They make the seasons milder, they tame winds, they defeat threatening monsters, and they bring important knowledge to the people. They are sometimes shape-shifters. Nanabozho most often appears as a rabbit, and Wisakedjak is often described as a crane. They also bring

features of landscape into being or are known to inhabit or prefer certain locations. For example, the Mi'qmaq tell of the time when Gluscap defeated a band of giant beavers who had blocked the Restigouche River with their dams. Gluscap hurled their leader far away, and it was the impact of the beaver leader's body that created Sugarloaf Mountain in New Brunswick. For the Maliseet and Passamaquoddy of Maine, Gluscap's home is Kahtadin.

In the Pacific Northwest, Raven is the most common trickster figure, although Blue Jay also appears in Chinook stories. Like the Algonkian tricksters, Raven is a world-transformer. Many stories about Raven are ribald, and he is both irreverent and cunning. In Tsimshian, Tlingit, and Salish myths Raven is credited with bringing light into the world. He did so through trickery and deceit, by transforming himself into the grandchild of the Sky Grandfather and stealing the box in which the sun was kept. There is a Tlingit myth in which Raven, through a ruse involving defecation and humiliation, stole the source of all of the world's waters from Petrel. While flying away, water dripped from Raven's beak onto the earth, forming the Nass, Stikine, Taku, Chilkat, and Alsek rivers.

The Hočąk (Winnebago) nation's trickster, Wakdjunkaga, is also a bawdy figure. He once dressed as a woman and seduced Fox, Blue Jay, Nit, and even a chief's son. Wakdjunkaga's other adventures, sexual and otherwise, are likewise scatological, including an unsuspecting encounter with a laxative and an unfortunate misunderstanding wherein Wakdjunkaga fails to realize that his anus is part of his own body. One myth relates how, in an exchange with Chipmunk, Wakdjunkaga is shown how to assemble the various parts of his extraordinarily long penis, which he usually carries in a box on his back. This story ends with Chipmunk consuming portions of the penis and the rest being transformed into vegetation that benefits the Hočąk, including turnips, artichokes, and beans.

The Lakota's Iktomi is a trickster who usually manifests in spider form. Iktomi is always hungry but often fails to achieve his goal of acquiring a meal. When he does secure food, he fails to demonstrate proper reciprocity by sharing with others, and thus loses his meal. There is also a sexual aspect to Iktomi. Some stories tell of the lengths to which he goes in order to deceive women into having coitus with him. In some stories he is satisfied; in others he is discovered and rejected.

Coyote is perhaps the most widespread of trickster figures in Native American culture. In the stories told by many

Plateau nations, Coyote is both creator and trickster. He is often associated with the critical resource of salmon, determining where they will live in abundance and where they will not. In California Coyote is often a creator as well as trickster. According to the Miwok, Coyote created both the earth and the people, sometimes with water and seeds and at other times by singing and dancing them into being. In the Great Basin, Coyote is simultaneously hero and trickster. The Shoshone tale of Coyote's theft of fire illustrates his complementary roles. The Nimípuu (Nez Percé) myth of Coyote and the shadow people is particularly illustrative of an ironic aspect of Coyote: his ability to serve as a "false shaman" who fails in establishing a reciprocal relationship with the sacred but whose actions nevertheless result in the transformation of the world. In the Nimípuu story Coyote's wife dies, and Coyote is determined to bring her back from the land of the dead. The sacred power associated with the dead takes him to the land of the shadow people and reunites him with his wife. However, once there he is prohibited from embracing her. Predictably Coyote cannot restrain himself and touches her, thereby transforming death into a permanent and final state for all beings.

Trickster tales are not simply stories that detail events in a legendary past. Coyote, for example, has been deployed in Native American critiques of Euro-American colonists, Indian agents, and non-Native people of all kinds, illustrating the continuing vitality of the trickster figure.

Rituals

Rituals symbolize and actualize relationships with the sacred. Rituals may be dedicated to renewing the cosmos, marking seasonal events, giving thanks to sacred powers, celebrating individual or communal rites of passage, establishing and demonstrating continuing attention to relationships with particular sacred powers, or simply the giving of self for the collective welfare of family, clan, tribe, or nation. Rituals may be enacted individually or in groups. Some rituals may only be performed by certain religious specialists; others require direction by a group of specialists. Some ritual knowledge is confined to members of a religious society, and this knowledge may be secretive in nature. Ritual performances may be strictly calendrical, or they may occur at particular times in the life of a person or of a community. The health of individuals and of groups is dependent upon the correct and regular performance of ritual. Without properly performed ritual actions, a dangerous state of imbalance with sacred power is either courted or permitted

to continue. Every ritual is medicinal in that it heals and restores balance in some significant way.

World Renewal

In the Pacific Northwest, many Native nations perform a cycle of rituals directed toward the renewal of the cosmos. Traditionally, the Wiyot, Chilula, Tolowa, Karuk, Hupa, and Yurok nations reenacted the creation of the world by rebuilding sacred structures, such as sweat houses and dance grounds. The Karuk call this ritual *Pikiavish*, which means "the ritual specialist is going to fix the world." Moving from one sacred place to another, ritual specialists recite sacred narratives and kindle sacred fires. Certain dances must be performed at these times, including the Jump Dance and the White Deerskin Dance. The fineness of the regalia worn and the marked display of wealth, including presentation of dentalium shell wampum, reflect the richness of the cosmos as well as its ripeness for restoration. The reestablishment and strengthening of community ties is a critical part of the ritual. The entire community must cooperate in order for a ritual to be done properly and effectively.

Seasonal Rituals

Rituals are also seasonal. Most seasonal rituals are devoted to the fruits of a particular season and may encourage and mark the growth cycle of vegetation or celebrate the harvest. The Haudenosaunee conduct the Maple Festival (*Hadichisto'ndas*) each March and the Strawberry Festival (*Wainodayo*) each June. The Maple Festival celebrates the running of the sap. Tobacco is offered to the sacred powers so that the gift of the maple might be perpetuated. The Feather Dance is performed, and Chants for the Dead are sung. The Strawberry Festival is a first fruits ritual that celebrates new life and offers thanks for the healing medicine of strawberries. Sacred powers are invoked to ask that growth of all things might continue and full fruition be achieved. The Strawberry Festival is also a time for reflection on personal behavior and proper growth.

The Green Corn Ceremony is the major seasonal festival of the Muskogee (Creek). It also serves as one of the central rituals of many other southeastern nations, including the Tsalagi. This highly elaborate ritual celebrates the ripening corn and the beginning of the new year. People fast in preparation for this lengthy ceremony. Held in the "square ground," or ceremonial center, of each community, the ritual includes the lighting of a new fire, a series of sacred dances, ritual purification by water, a ceremony of healing

(Scratching Ceremony), and the performance of the sacred stickball game.

Thanksgiving Rituals

While all seasonal rituals might be described as rituals of thanksgiving, thanksgiving rituals are not exclusively seasonal. The Haudenosaunee conduct seasonal rituals, but they also have a repository of thanksgiving addresses of varying lengths that must be recited upon the opening and closing of every ritual action, with the exception of rituals associated with the dead. These prayers have a specific structure, one in which elements of the cosmos are invoked and thanked: for example, the people, the earth, the waters, the fish, the plants, the animals, the trees, the birds, the winds, the thunder beings, the sun, the moon, the stars, the wise teachers, the creator, and any being inadvertently omitted.

Hunting rituals often include rituals of thanksgiving. In Inuit cultures all beings are understood to have *inua*, or an animating breath or “selfhood” that persists after death and that must be diligently cared for. A properly conducted bear, seal, or whale hunt must attend to the animal’s *inua*. This means giving thanks to the animal for allowing itself to be hunted and eaten. If this ritual is neglected and proper thanks not given, the animal will tell its relatives that it was treated poorly, and future hunts will suffer.

Medicine People and Medicine Societies

Much of Native American religion involves the restoration or maintenance of health and balance in individual persons and in the general cosmos. The various names of religious specialists from many nations are often translated into English as “medicine man” or “medicine woman.” In some cultures religious specialists are individual practitioners; in others there are societies devoted to the sacred practice of healing and restoration of balance. Religious specialists can be trained by their elders or be accepted as religious specialists by virtue of a demonstrated relationship they have forged with a sacred power. Membership in a medicine society can also be restricted. Some medicine societies are comprised of people who have been successfully healed of an illness. Others are comprised of those who were not successfully healed. Still other medicine societies only admit members through a specialized system of education and initiation.

In traditional Diné culture religious specialists are in charge of performing complex curing ceremonies. As in other Native American contexts, curing relates not only to physical illness but also to disharmony or imbalance. Two

central Diné concepts are *hózhó* (harmony, balance) and *hóchó* (disharmony, disorder). Religious specialists perform ritual chants to restore the imbalanced person to the desired state of harmony. Among the most widely known is the *Hózhóójí* (Blessingway), which preserves a state of harmony and balance. Other chant complexes include the *Hóchó’ojí* (Evilway), which removes *hóchó* from someone who is ill, and the *Lináájí k’ehgo* (Lifeway), which treats physical injuries.

Among the Lakota, *yuwipi* is a relatively recent addition to the traditional Seven Sacred Rites. In the *yuwipi* ceremony, the *yuwipi wicaša*, or medicine man, is tied up with ropes and wrapped in a blanket. He may be placed in a sacred tent or a darkened room. While there, he communicates with sacred powers on behalf of persons in his community who are in need of help or healing.

Yuwipi is analogous to (and may be derived from) the Shaking Tent ceremonies performed by religious specialists (called in Ojibwe *tcisaki*, in Menomini *tcisakos*, and in Potawatomi *tcisakked*) in many Inuit, Algonkian, and Salishan cultures. In these ceremonies a religious specialist constructs and enters a structure called a Shaking Tent, in order to consult with sacred powers and determine the whereabouts of lost objects or the cause of an illness. The specialist is then able to find the missing object or cure the illness.

In some Algonkian cultures, most notably the Anishinaabe, a secretive medicine society known as *Midewiwin* is the sole healing association. Initiation is complex and progressive, and either four or eight ranks are achievable. Both men and women may join. Ritual cleansing of initiates is done through the power of the *Miigis*, a white shell. Under the guidance of more advanced *Midé* (religious specialists), the initiates may progress through specific stages of education and practice. They assemble and carry personal medicine bundles, and the knowledge they gain and the relationships with sacred powers that they establish empower them to heal others through the recitation of ritual songs and the administration of sacred medicine.

A kind of sacred personage, sometimes called a sacred clown or contrary, is also found in some Native American cultures. The Lakota *Heyóklhá* may flagrantly break boundaries of proper behavior or satirize the manners of others. In so doing the *Heyóklhá* sparks reflection on social norms. The *Heyóklhá* is also a powerful healer. By bringing laughter into solemn situations, by being open and frank about despair or shame, he enables others to see what is concealed in every person. By embodying the backwards, the opposite, and the

unconventional, the *Heyókñha* provides sufficient stability for conventional mores to remain in balance within the wider cosmos, which must, by definition, incorporate chaos. In Tewa, Hopi, and Zuñi religious contexts, sacred clowns are also boundary figures. They appear at the beginnings, endings, and interstices of ritual, often violating social and behavioral expectations in extreme ways. These clowns, while humorous, also serve larger cosmic and social functions.

In all Native contexts the medicines themselves were comprised of local trees, flowers, herbs, or products derived from the region's animal population. For example, in the northeastern woodlands, pine needle teas were used to prevent scurvy, and willow bark was chewed for pain relief. In contemporary practices many nations use sage and tobacco for purposes of purification. Traditional healing remedies comprised of local flora and fauna vary widely by geographic location. While knowledge of sacred medicines is still held by traditionalists of many nations, such religious expertise is often closely guarded. The proper ritual practices integral to effective usage are transmitted by these religious specialists only to their apprentices. Because many Native peoples have been removed from their traditional geographies, ethnobotanists are now assisting tribal members in identifying and investigating the ingredients used in traditional medicines.

Sacrificial Rituals

The Sun Dance, practiced by many peoples of the Plains—for example, the A'aninin (Gros Ventre), Arapaho, Arikara, Cheyenne, Hohe Nakota (Assiniboine), Kiowa, Niitsítapi (Blackfoot Confederacy), Omaha, Plains Cree, Ponca, Shoshone, Ute—but claimed by the Lakota as one of their Seven Sacred Rites, is perhaps the paradigmatic Native American sacrificial ritual. The Sun Dance is likely derived from the Mandan *okipa*, for which young men selected sponsors and fasted for several days in preparation. In the central *okipa* ritual, wooden skewers and rawhide thongs were threaded through slits in the young men's backs and chests. These thongs were thrown over the rafters of the ceremonial lodge. The men were then repeatedly raised and lowered from the rafters. These bodily sacrifices were performed in order to achieve visions and to bring balance and prosperity to the nation, but also to demonstrate commitment to the sacred powers, to the young men's families, and to the entire Mandan community. The Sun Dances of other Plains nations recapitulate many of the elements of the Mandan *okipa* but are held outdoors around a central pole.

The sacrifices made by the young men (and in certain contexts today, sometimes young women) are understood to be for the benefit of their families and communities.

Potlatches, discussed below, are held by Native peoples in the Pacific Northwest and may also be understood to be sacrificial in nature.

Rites of Passage and Rituals of Relationship

Depending upon the culture, individual life events can be marked by distinctive rites of passage. Births can be marked by naming or welcoming ceremonies, and young men and women may be initiated into adulthood. In some traditional cultures couples can be joined together through rituals involving the exchange of goods. Death is often marked in ritual fashion, and additional rituals intended to comfort the bereaved may be performed. However, all of these rites of passage are also intimately tied to the establishment of relationships with the sacred, with the larger community, and with all beings. Hence, they are also rituals of relationship. One illustration of this awareness of interrelationship is found in the Lakota phrase *mitakuye oyasin*, or "all my relations," that ends all prayers and can also stand on its own as a sacred utterance.

In traditional Hopi practice when a child was born, he or she was kept in the darkness for twenty days. During this time a perfect ear of corn was kept beside the baby. Each day of this liminal period the infant was bathed and rubbed with cornmeal. At the end of the twenty days the child's mother and aunts bestowed several clan names upon the infant. The village would then hold a feast in the baby's honor.

Among the Kumeyaay (Digueño), boys were initiated into adulthood through a ritual called the Kusi (*toloache* in Spanish). In this rite of passage boys drank a concoction made from jimsonweed steeped or boiled in water. They then danced with their adult male sponsors until they were too tired to continue. The visionary experiences they had while sleeping brought them into relationship with a particular sacred power, which often manifested itself in the form of an animal. This relationship would be maintained for the rest of their lives. After a six-day period, three of which were spent fasting, special songs of power were taught to the young men.

Apache girls are initiated into womanhood by means of the *Na'ii'ees*, or Sunrise Ceremony. Similar to the Diné *Kinaalda*, the ritual demarcates the onset of menstruation and the beginning of womanly responsibilities. The *Na'ii'ees* ritual is suffused with symbolism that balances male and

female, stability and change. Its elements consciously re-enact the creation myth, with particular attention to the journey of Changing Woman (Esdzanadehe). The ritual actions include purification, ornamentation, and “molding” of the body; the preparation of a round corn cake; dancing; running in the four directions; and singing special songs. All of these rituals are designed to bring the young woman into balance with the cosmos and into adult status within her community. The elaborate rites require the participation of extended family, as well as the support of the entire community.

In many Native cultures an exclusive relationship was often established by a couple. This relationship was recognized by their families and the larger community by means of an exchange of gifts. In Haida culture it was necessary for a courting man to negotiate with his beloved’s father in order to determine what gifts to the young woman’s family would be appropriate and sufficient. In Haudenosaunee culture a young man would offer gifts to the young woman directly. She could then decide for herself whether to keep them and thereby encourage the young man or to return them and signal her disinterest.

The most clearly initiatory of the Seven Sacred Rites of the Lakota people is *Hanbleceyapi*, or “crying for a vision.” This ritual is intended to establish a life-long relationship between an individual person and a particular sacred power. Young men were traditionally the primary participants, and it also demarcated their passage into full adulthood. The ritual must be performed under the supervision of a *wicaša wakan* (holy person). This individual guides the youth through the necessary preparations for the quest and assists in interpreting any received visions after the ritual has been completed. Seeking and receiving visions as a marker of adulthood is also practiced by other cultures in other geographic regions. In some Algonkian/Algonkian Great Lakes nations, including the Miami and Shawnee, persons with relationships with the same sacred power join together in vision societies.

The Wendat (Huron) Confederacy’s Feast of the Dead is probably the most famous of Native American mourning rites, and it too was a ritual of relationship. Every decade or so, when a Wendat village had depleted the nutrients in its soil and was preparing to relocate, a Feast of the Dead would be called. Surrounding villages would bring the bodies of their deceased to be interred in a large circular pit. In this way the interrelatedness of all members of the confederated nations was reaffirmed. The Feast of the Dead served as a site of redistribution of wealth, as those families and clans who were bereaved were consoled with gifts from members of

their opposite clans. Those who held the feast gained in status. Just as the dead would now restore the depleted soil, relationships across villages, clans, and nations were renewed and balance was restored.

The highly elaborate potlatch ceremonies of the Pacific Northwest, practiced by the Haida, Kwakwaka’wakw (Kwakiutl), Nuuchahnulth (Nootka), Salish, Tlingit, and Tsimshian people, are held to mark changes in status. The term *potlatch* is derived from the Nuuchahnulth word *pachitle*, which means “to give,” but many contemporary Pacific Northwest people simply call them “doings.” Rites of passage, including birth, name-giving, coming of age, marriage, death, and memorials, are all suitable occasions for a potlatch. The potlatch is a ritual of redistribution of wealth, with those who give away the most accruing higher social status. Potlatches, which can last from one day to several weeks, include feasting and calls for specific performative acts. The songs and dances most important to the occasion are those that narrate the history of the relationship between the host and a particular sacred power. A potlatch ceremony is a fulfillment of responsibility to this relationship.

Religious Structures, Objects, and Symbols

The structures, objects, and symbols used in various Native American religions are dependent on geographic location, reflective of particular mythologies, suited to use in specific ritual, and congruent with the larger material culture. Religious structures are designed to reflect and reinforce the sacred centers and religious symbols described in myths, as well as to accommodate the sizes and needs of kinship groupings (clans, bands). The objects necessary for performance of ritual also refer to mythic themes and narratives. The constitutive materials and particular shapes of sacred objects, as well as any inscriptions upon ritual instruments, are meant to invoke the sacred powers with which these materials, shapes, or inscriptions are associated.

Sacred Centers

Sacred centers are identified and described in a culture’s myths but are also constructed in a culture’s lived reality. They may be large landscapes, as in the case of the Hopi, who identify Black Mesa as *Tuuwanasave’e*, the Earth Center, where sacred power is concentrated, but who also regard their homes on the three mesas to the south as part of the Hopi sacred center. Sacred centers may be small, circumscribed areas or multiple and variable in location. For example, the primary sacred architectural form of many

Southwestern nations is that of the kiva. In the etiological myths of the Hopi, for example, the ancestors emerged from the underworld through a hole called the *sipapu*. A replication of the original sacred center in the form of a *sipapu* is found in every Hopi kiva no matter its location. A kiva may be round, square, or keyhole-shaped, underground or above ground, depending upon the historical era in which it was constructed. But in every case the *sipapu* is the people's place of origin. Each gathering in a kiva reminds the Hopi people of who they are and whence they came.

Sacred centers are often understood to be the only proper locations for ritual, even when the ritual is mobile. For each performance of the Lakota Sun Dance, a center pole must be erected. There is great ritual surrounding the selection of the cottonwood tree that will serve as the pole, as well as the spot in which it will be placed. This spot is the center of the world, or *axis mundi*, for the duration of that Sun Dance. The next dance may be held in a different spot, but a qualified religious specialist must still determine that the spot chosen is in fact the center of the world at that time.

Sacred Structures

Several ancient Native American cultures constructed mounds and earthworks as sacred structures. In the Archaic Period (8000–1000 BCE) and the Woodland Period (1000 BCE–1000 CE), and also during the time of the Mississippian cultures (800–1500 CE), various peoples in the Great Lakes region, Ohio River region, and Mississippi River region built large earthworks that served as funerary and ceremonial structures. Some are flattened or rounded pyramids or cones; others, called effigy mounds, are representational in nature. At 1,330 feet in length and 3 feet in height, Serpent Mound in Adams County, Ohio, likely built by the Fort Ancient culture, is one of the largest effigy mounds in the United States. Some mounds may have had astronomical significance, but all appear to have served religious functions.

Native American dwellings were also reflective of myth and in harmony with religious values. The traditional dwelling and ritual structure of the Diné is the *hooghan*, which is constructed in a circular shape, echoing the horizon and the cosmos. Movement during a ritual inside the *hooghan* is always clockwise or, as the Diné say, “in the direction of the sun.” The south side of the *hooghan* is where men are seated; women sit on the north side of the building. The door faces the east, the direction of sunrise.

In the Southeast the ancestors of the Muskogee built their homes in the shape of a circle. The number of

saplings sunk in the ground and used to support the walls and roof was always a multiple of four, which, among other things, stood for the four cardinal directions. The Muskogee themselves lived in complexes of four square structures surrounding a central courtyard. This domestic arrangement was echoed on a larger scale, as the public space, or square ground, was also built in this way. Rituals were held in the square ground, and the men, who supervised ritual action, were seated in the four corner houses in synchronization with the one of the four directions that symbolically corresponded to their status. For example, old men might be seated in the house facing west, since their stage of life was symbolically articulated in the setting sun.

On the southern Great Plains, the Wichita built grass houses in a domed, beehive shape. These dwellings were eighteen to thirty feet in diameter. The Wichita maintained that the instructions for building them came from sacred powers. The floor of each dwelling was round like the sun, and the structure was supported by four cedar poles gathered from each of the four directions. Builders were divided into four groups: those who gathered swamp grass for the inner layer, those who gathered prairie grass for the outer thatch, those who cut osiers to hold the thatch, and those who acquired the elm bark to tie everything together. Each structure had a door at the east, a door at the west, and a hole at the top facing the south so the sun would shine on the center hearth at midday.

On the northern Great Plains, the Niitsítapi (Blackfoot Confederacy) lived in tipis, dwellings designed for maximum portability as the bands followed the bison migrations. Some Niitsítapi had painted figures on their tipis that were given to the tipi's owner by a sacred power through dreams or visions. These religious symbols were not transferrable, except through specific arrangement and accompanying ritual. Features of landscape and sky (mountains, stars) were sometimes depicted, and animals were a common motif. Figures were not haphazardly placed; larger animals (bison, elk) were generally portrayed in pairs, with the male on the south side and the female on the north. Smaller animals and insects (otters, butterflies) were conventionally painted in several pairs, sometimes winding around the tipi's circumference.

In the northeastern woodlands, Haudenosaunee longhouses were built in the shape of the Confederacy itself—long and narrow, with doors on both ends and a series of center hearths down its length. Traditionally, longhouses

held up to sixty people, all of whom were members of (or married into) the same clan. While contemporary Haudenosaunee people live in many different types of homes, longhouses remain in use as ceremonial structures.

Sacred Objects and Symbols

Nations of the Pacific Northwest are noted for their distinctive totem poles. The term *totem* is derived from the Anishinaabe word *odoodem*, which means “his kin group” or “his clan.” Totem poles are elaborately carved cedar logs containing representations of clan symbols, ancestral lineages, mythic narratives, or historical events. Designs and images may be proprietary, and the creation and erection of a totem pole is done with appropriate ritual observance. Poles are not refurbished or repainted; they are expected, like all things, to eventually decay.

Many Southwestern, Arctic, and Subarctic peoples traditionally carved local minerals, shells, bones, and antlers into the shapes of animals. These so-called fetishes were sacred images and carried sacred power. Today, as they are often produced for the art market or as consumer goods, they are not religious in nature.

Nations of the northern Great Plains were especially noted for the creation of pipes or calumets from local pipestone (catlinite), a very soft mineral. Pipes were ritual instruments used in offerings of tobacco to sacred powers; they were also used in the establishment of alliances. Northeastern nations often carved pipes from other types of stone, and some southeastern nations, such as the Chickasaw and Tsalagi, baked clay for their pipes.

Medicine bundles are small bags containing sacred objects that connect the wearer to one or many sacred powers. These objects may include rocks, herbs, seeds, grasses, leaves, animal parts (teeth, claws, bone), or any item that both symbolizes and incarnates a sacred power with whom the wearer has a relationship. Some medicine bundles are hereditary; others are personal. Some Native groups, like the nations of the Blackfoot Confederacy, focus a great deal of their religious life upon rituals associated with certain special medicine bundles.

In the Southwest some nations practice the sacred art of sandpainting. Among the Diné only religious specialists may create sandpaintings, and they are used exclusively within ritual contexts for purposes of healing. Sacred songs are sung as a painting is created, and the painting itself embodies the balance and harmony that is brought into being by the religious specialist.

Four and six are common sacred numbers in many Native American cultures. Four is the number of the cardinal directions (east, south, west, north), and six is the number of directions when the directions “above” and “below” are included. Five as a sacred number occurs less frequently, but when it does occur it usually reflects the four cardinal directions plus the center. The recurrence of these numbers is testament to the religious significance of place in Native American religions.

Change and Religious Innovation

Native American religions underwent tremendous upheaval and change as a result of encounters with Europeans in the colonial period, and in successive centuries as Americans expanded westward. European colonization was closely associated with Christian missionary activity, and Native peoples engaged with Christianity in various ways. While many Native people rejected Christianity outright, the most widely practiced method of engagement was selective appropriation, which resulted in the lasting transformation of traditional Native religions. Beginning in the eighteenth century, some Native religious specialists brought about significant religious innovations in response to the cultural and religious pressures their people faced. Whether they advocated resistance or accommodation or a mixture of the two, many of these innovators became celebrated as possessors of strong relationships with sacred power. Many of these so-called prophets were especially critical of the practice of witchcraft, which in a Native American religious context refers to the use of one’s relationship with sacred power for individual gain or other selfish reasons. This recurring critique of witchcraft can be interpreted as a desire for the restoration of communal values and a rejection of burgeoning individualism.

Responses to Christian Missions: Tekakwitha, Apess

The experience of the Mohawk woman Catherine Tekakwitha (1656–1680) is remarkable in itself, yet still representative of the ways in which many Native people engaged with Christian missions. The Mohawk, as well as the other nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, suffered greatly during the colonial period. Wars between French, English, and Dutch mercantile interests exacerbated tensions between the Confederacy and surrounding nations. An increase in warfare, along with the ravages of European diseases to which Native folk had no immunities, resulted in serious depopulation. Survival was the paramount concern

of the Mohawk people. The stability of traditional Mohawk culture depended on two things: strong kinship relationships and strong relationships with sacred power (*orenda*). When people died their relatives went into deep mourning, and other clans were charged with the task of consoling them—giving them gifts, making sure they had all the necessities of life, and surrounding them with assurance that they were still part of a larger, functioning culture. With so much death and devastation, many families found themselves in positions where they were unable to adequately condole one another, and formerly sustaining relationships with sacred power became precarious.

After having conversed with Jesuit missionaries and Native converts in her home village of Gandaouagué, Tekakwitha sought baptism from a Jesuit priest and took advantage of the opportunity to establish strong relationships with these new sources of *orenda*. She left her home to live near the French missionaries at Kahnawake, learned about their ascetic practices, and discovered nearby communities of French women who lived ascetic lives and called each other sister. She attempted to establish a community like theirs for displaced and bereaved Native women like herself. They consoled one another, established a new form of kinship relationship, and practiced bodily mortification in an effort to establish strong relationships with *orenda*.

Because of the ways Catholic priests interpreted her actions, Catherine Tekakwitha was extolled by the Jesuits for her virginity, purity, and piety. In 1679 she became the first Native American woman permitted to take a vow of chastity. She assembled other native women in a small religious community at the mission of St. Francis Xavier du Sault near Kahnawake. After her death, the Jesuit priests Cholenec and Chauchetière memorialized her in their writings, attributing revivals in piety, healings, and miracles to her intervention. Her Jesuit biographers, in attempting to illustrate her exceptional nature by emphasizing her virginity and her desire to become a nun, de-emphasized her kinship relationships and her Mohawk cultural and religious orientation. They elevated her above other Native women and removed her from her own culture by composing a hagiography that placed her firmly within the European tradition of saintly ascetic virgins.

William Apess (1798–1839) of the Pequot nation was born during an era in which his people were suffering the aftereffects of colonial onslaught. A century before his birth English colonists had launched repeated military attacks on Pequot villages, and just as devastatingly had introduced

alcohol into the system of trade between Europeans and Native peoples. Abandoned by his parents and abused by his grandparents, Apess was taken from his home and indentured to a succession of Euro-American Christian families. After a stint in the militia during the War of 1812, Apess took up an interest in religion and converted to Methodism in 1818. He married in 1821 and was ordained a Methodist minister in 1829. He was at first an itinerant preacher, but he eventually moved to Mashpee, one of the last extant Native “praying towns” in Massachusetts. While there he became an outspoken advocate for Native rights. Apess was a leader of the Woodland Revolt, which was actually a peaceful protest demanding the right to self-government for the Native residents of Mashpee. Famously, Apess also eulogized the Wampanoag sachem Metacom (King Philip), the chief strategist of the famous but ultimately unsuccessful 1675 revolt against the oppressive policies of the leaders of Plymouth Colony. Although Apess died in obscurity several years later, his autobiography, *A Son of the Forest* (1828), remains an eloquent testament to his belief in a Christian’s responsibility to work for justice and to his tireless advocacy for Native peoples.

Religious Movements of Resistance and Accommodation

Neolin, a name signifying “The Enlightened One,” was bestowed upon a Lenni Lenape man who rose to prominence in the 1750s for preaching a message of reform in the Muskingum Valley of Ohio, to which the Lenni Lenape people had been relocated when their coastal homeland was colonized by Europeans. Also known as the Delaware Prophet, Neolin had experienced a vision in which he was given a message from a sacred power he called the Master of Life. His instructions were to tell Native peoples to reject the trappings of European culture, including alcohol, and to return to hunting with bows and arrows. The people were also to cease warring amongst themselves, to refrain from witchcraft (selfish use of sacred power), and to purify themselves by fasting, sexual continence, and the use of emetics. These actions would restore their relationships with sacred power and enable them to drive out English colonists from their midst. Neolin inscribed a particular prayer on a stick and used a map that illustrated the current dilemmas of Native peoples. According to this map, the land of the Great Spirit, an unspoiled forest where people went after death, had been made inaccessible to Native peoples by the European colonists. In order to regain access to this afterlife,

and to life as it existed prior to colonization, said Neolin, these reforms must be observed. When the Ottawa warrior Pontiac learned of Neolin's message, he used this sacred teaching to convince others to join his program of resistance to the British. When Pontiac's rebellion failed in 1766, Neolin's message of reform receded in currency.

To the north and east another religious reformer came to the fore. In the wake of the American Revolution, the lands of the Haudenosaunee were despoiled. Because of the Haudenosaunee alliance with the British, the newly formed American government was seizing the traditional lands of the Confederacy. The 1783 Treaty of Fort Stanwix and the 1797 Treaty of Big Tree forced the cession of millions of acres, and by 1799 the Haudenosaunee were suffering from factionalism and internal dissension as well as hunger, widespread alcohol abuse, and disease. In 1800 a Seneca man named Ganioda'yo (Handsome Lake) had a vision in which he was given a Good Message (*Gaiwi'io*) from the Creator. This message included strict prohibitions against alcohol, the practice of witchcraft, the performing of abortions, and the use of certain individually oriented medicines such as love charms. The *Gaiwi'io* recommended some appropriations of Euro-American cultural practices, such as a nuclear family structure, monogamy, and education, and the message also contained some elements that were clearly Christian in origin (angels, heaven and hell, Jesus). However, the message also contained a call to return to regular performance of traditional agricultural rituals and to retain traditional Haudenosaunee values. In effect Ganioda'yo provided the Haudenosaunee with an alternative to wholesale conversion to Christianity and to the complete adoption of Euro-American cultural practices. His reforms were lasting. The Good Message is still followed, and the *Gaiwi'io* is ritually recited in longhouses according to a strict sacred calendar. Ganioda'yo's religious reforms enabled the Haudenosaunee to retain what was left of their traditional lands, since their practices were deemed by Americans to be sufficiently civilized.

The Shawnee visionary Tenskwatawa (1775–1863) had his first religious experience in 1805. His religious reforms rejected Euro-American cultural practices, including hunting with rifles, and strongly opposed witchcraft. Like Neolin, Tenskwatawa starkly opposed the sale of land rights and promised that if people followed his vision, their dead relatives would return to life. In addition wild game would again become abundant. If his vision was rejected, however, people would be condemned to suffer in a fiery hell. He and

his charismatic brother, Tecumseh, established villages of their followers in Greenville, Ohio, and later in Prophetstown, Indiana. Tecumseh transformed Tenskwatawa's visionary message into a political alliance by traveling to Michigan, Illinois, Georgia, and Alabama, and convincing other nations of the urgent need to oppose further Euro-American encroachment and retain rights to traditional lands. While Tecumseh was away establishing the first truly pan-Indian religious movement of resistance, Tenskwatawa told his followers to attack a group of soldiers then advancing on his camp under the command of William Henry Harrison. In the resulting battle of Tippecanoe, the Shawnees and their allies were routed. As a result, Tenskwatawa's influence waned. Tecumseh's star, however, continued to rise. He assisted the British against the Americans in the War of 1812, but was killed the following year. Tenskwatawa eventually assisted in the forcible relocation of the Shawnee. He put his influence to work to secure the survival of his people as they made the long trek to Kansas Territory. Tenskwatawa lived a long life and was able to reclaim the respect of his people before he died.

In the Pacific Northwest in the 1850s, a Wanapum visionary called Smohalla (c. 1815–1895) flourished. He had been exiled from his village when he refused to cede land to Euro-American settlers, but also refused to join an armed resistance. Over time he gathered thousands of followers. His Washani religion, which he received in a vision, demanded that lands be treated as sacred, which meant that plowing, mining, and even agriculture were forbidden. Lands could not be transferred to individual ownership, since the people and the land were one. Smohalla and his followers fished, hunted, and gathered; through these methods of subsistence the gifts provided by the land were acquired without harm. Dreaming and visions were encouraged, and a ritual known as the Washat Dance was revived. Smohalla promised that following the Washani religion would bring about the disappearance of Euro-Americans and the resuscitation of the dead. His son and nephew perpetuated this religion after his death, and its influence spread throughout the region.

Wodziwob was the Northern Paiute innovator whose vision led to the Ghost Dance movement of 1870, which spread through the Great Basin and further west into central and northern California. After surviving a wave of disease that wracked the Northern Paiute, Wodziwob had a vision in which he learned that a certain dance must be performed in order to bring about the restoration of the land and the



The late-nineteenth-century Ghost Dance movement encouraged Native Americans to visualize the restoration of the land and the return of abundant game, as well as the resuscitation of their ancestors and their wisdom. As the movement spread, many believed the performance of the dance could bring about the removal of Euro-Americans from the Great Plains.

return of abundant game. Performance of this dance would resuscitate the ancestors—and their much-needed wisdom. Interestingly, Wodziwob’s vision predicted that the ancestors would return by railway. This dance became known among some nations as the Ghost Dance, since it sought to bring the departed back to life.

Wovoka, also known as Jack Wilson and Kwohitsuq, was a practicing religious specialist (“weather doctor”) who became the source of the 1889 vision that resulted in the intertribal Ghost Dance movement that swept eastward across the Great Plains in 1890. His father, Tävibo, had been a follower of Wodziwob. Wovoka’s vision was much like that of his predecessor, but Wovoka seems to have been influenced by Mormons in the Nevada area as well as the Presbyterian practices of his employers. The decimation of the bison, the encroachment of American settlers in search of gold, repeated land seizures by the American government justified by the new policies of allotment, the growing enforcement of government schooling for Native children, and the subsequent epidemics of disease and starvation made many Plains nations ripe for a message of renewal and restoration. Wovoka’s vision promoted peaceful interaction between Native peoples and Euro-Americans, but as the movement spread it accrued a new dimension that

emphasized the potential for the ritual to bring about the removal of Euro-Americans from the Great Plains. The dance took its form from the ancient Round Dance, but this time participants were expected to receive their own visions during the ritual performance. (This is but one of the elements of the ritual that reflect the influence of Christian individualism.) The Arapaho, Sutai and Tsitsistas (Cheyenne tribes), Kiowa, Caddo, and Lakota embraced the movement. The Ghost Dance movement lost its momentum, however, in the wake of the massacre at Wounded Knee. There, in 1890, U.S. Army soldiers murdered many practitioners of the ritual.

There is no individual visionary of the Peyote Religion movement, which sprang up in the wake of the Ghost Dance. Quanah Parker (c.1845–1911), a respected Comanche chief and a vocal fighter in Native resistance to the U.S. Army, was certainly a popularizer of Peyote Religion, but the religious movement had already established itself with the removal of the Apache to Oklahoma territory. The Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache reservations in southwestern Oklahoma were the nourishing grounds of Peyote Religion, which was an accommodationist movement that drew heavily from Christianity but that also allowed Native peoples to maintain their own distinctive religious practices. In Peyote

Religion both God and Jesus are often sacred powers. Jesus is sometimes regarded as a culture hero; in other cases peyote is itself personified as the primary sacred power. Peyote Religion spread as intertribal contact became more common in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century contexts of boarding schools and railroad travel. Like Protestant Christianity and vision quests, Peyote Religion provided a means of individual experience of the sacred; at the same time it offered healing. The central sacrament, the ingestion of peyote, was understood to bring Native people back into a right relationship with sacred power and to heal many from various illnesses, including dependence upon alcohol. Today Peyote Religion enables Native people to maintain a connection with traditional religious practices. Songs, often with biblical references, are sung in Native languages, and traditional ritual objects such as the drum, rattle, stick, and feather fan have been adopted and modified for contemporary use. There is variation in the practice of Peyote Religion. For example, in the Big Moon Ceremony a Bible is placed on the altar, and in the Half Moon Ceremony a peyote button is placed on the altar. Peyote Religion was institutionalized in 1918 as the Native American Church in order to secure religious freedom for its practitioners. It has since become intertribal in nature and is practiced by many Native Americans across the United States and Canada. Although the right to peyote harvesting, possession, and use is guaranteed to members of the Native American Church under U.S. law, difficulties in maintaining religious freedom persist in light of peyote's status as a controversial substance. Practitioners of Peyote Religion currently face the challenge of dwindling peyote grounds as well. While some grounds are no longer available for harvesting because they are privately owned or leased, other grounds have been overharvested, despite the fact that only qualified and licensed *peyoteros* are allowed to harvest the peyote cactus.

See also *Canada: Aboriginal Traditions; Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures; Geographical Approaches; Great Plains Region; Latino/a Religious Practice; Mexico: Indigenous Religions; Missions: Native American; Native American Religions* entries; *Southwest as Region*.

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Native American Religions: Pre-Contact

Scholars have classified Native American societies by linguistic group and/or by traditional geographic area to identify religious patterns and to point to shared or unique elements within general cultural and religious practices. These taxonomies can be helpful in examining Native American religions as they existed during the thousands of years prior to colonial incursion, because peoples within a language group often share religious orientations and cultural practices and because geographically contiguous nations often spread their religious orientations and cultural practices through participation in trade networks, diplomatic missions, and political alliances, as well as in warfare-captivity-adoption complexes.

While these taxonomies court the danger of generalization, the fundamental importance of landscape to traditional Native American cultures seems to recommend an approach to Native American religions in the period prior to European colonization that is particularly sensitive to geography.

Describing the history of Native American settlement of the Americas presents another challenge. While there are many archaeologically based theories about demographic patterns of settlement and population distribution throughout the Americas, Native American traditionalists usually point to their own myths of descent onto or emergence into a particular landscape, or to oral traditions describing movement from one area to another, thus often making scholarly theories less than resonant with Native peoples themselves.

Both scholars and Native American peoples agree, however, that historically, Native American cultural and religious orientations have placed primary importance upon webs of relationship with all beings and on sacred powers that manifest themselves in the world. The health and vibrancy of any of these relationships is crucial to the well-being of each member of these networks of relation. Each subsection below will thus attend to the networks of relation that are manifested in the physical and religious landscapes of the peoples native to the varied geographic areas that comprise the North American continent.

Demographic Patterns of Settlement

For decades, the predominant scholarly explanation for the peopling of the Americas was the Beringia hypothesis. About 13,500 years ago, a land bridge connecting northeastern Asia to northwestern North America formed across what is now the Bering Strait. Called Beringia, this land bridge was thought to have been the primary route of migration for Asian peoples to the Americas. About 11,000 years ago, the hypothesis continues, a corridor in the glaciation in what is now Canada melted sufficiently for these peoples to migrate further to the south, moving through what is now the Mackenzie Valley and Alberta and eventually into the Plains. Hunters of game, they were equipped with *atlatls* (spear-throwing tools) and spears tipped with carved, fluted points (known as Clovis points).

New discoveries of artifacts in both North and South America dating to before 13,500 years ago are now posing questions the Beringia hypothesis does not answer. These pre-Clovis artifacts, including those found in Arlington Springs, California; in Meadowcroft, Pennsylvania; in Cactus

Hill, Virginia; outside of Mexico City; and in Monte Verde, Chile, may be evidence that the the Clovis people found inhabitants who had arrived earlier than they did. (Other sites also claim pre-Clovis evidence, including the Schaefer and Hebior sites in Wisconsin, Page-Ladson in Florida, Paisley Cave in Oregon, La Sena in Nebraska, Lovewell in Kansas, and Topper in South Carolina). Pre-Clovis artifacts may be evidence of earlier methods of migration to the Americas. The Coastal Entry hypothesis, in which the Americas were populated by migrants coming in waves from both seacoasts, is becoming increasingly popular. Some scholars subscribe to a hypothesis of South American Reentry; that is, South America was populated by migrants who arrived by sea as early as 35,000 years ago, moved northward as the ice receded, and encountered the newly arrived Clovis people. Scholars are also at work combining archaeological evidence with DNA and linguistic evidence in order to arrive at more definitive notions of the population of the Americas. Many contemporary Native American traditionalists, however, see little point in such theorizing, and for some, it has become a point of religious principle to oppose research by refusing to contribute DNA samples for scientific analysis.

Ancient Mound-Building Cultures

A succession of mound-building cultures have provided interesting archaeological evidence of their religious practices. Watson Brake (c. 3400 BCE) in northern Louisiana, the oldest discovered mound complex, has not yielded any human or ceremonial artifacts, but Poverty Point (1650–700 BCE), also in northern Louisiana, comprised of six concentric semicircular ridges and five mounds, appears to have been a ceremonial site at which people gathered at various times of the year. The mounds constructed by the Adena culture (1000 BCE–200 CE), concentrated in the Ohio Valley but also found in Indiana, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky, were sites of funerary rites and possibly other religious activities. The Hopewell tradition (200 BCE–500 CE), comprised of a number of cultures stretching from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico that were interlinked by trade, created earthworks that served as ceremonial centers. These mounds, some of which are effigy mounds, contain a great deal of pottery and body ornaments, indicating their ceremonial nature. It has been theorized that some Hopewell sites also functioned as astronomical observatories, since their features appear to encode solstices and equinoxes, as

well as other solar and lunar events. The Fort Ancient (1000–1650 CE) and other Mississippian (800–1500 CE) cultures also built earthworks that appear to have had ceremonial and astronomical significance.

Arctic and Subarctic

Although dozens of cultures are native to the Arctic and Subarctic regions of North America, each belongs to one of three linguistic families: Eskimo–Aleut, Athabaskan, and Algonkian. The Inuit, Yupik, and Aleut of the far north practice religions that acknowledge the importance of relationship with the *inua* (animating sacred power) possessed by all residents of that landscape. The ocean, the air, the moon, and the animals all have *inua* that must be ritually acknowledged and respected. Traditionally, hunting and fishing were suffused with ritual to maintain reciprocal relationships with the *inua* of the animals.

Among the dozens of Athabaskan-speaking groups of central and southern Alaska and northwestern Canada are the Gwich'in, Kokuyon, Chilcotin, Dene Suline (Chipewyan), and Dogrib. These Arctic and Subarctic cultures share a mythological emphasis on culture heroes, such as Raven or Crow. In the case of the Dunne-za (Beaver), a human figure known as Swan dominates these stories. The storytelling traditions of these groups reflect the experiences of cultures whose members spent long winters indoors around a fire; outdoor communal rituals are not the center of life for peoples of this climate.

The Algonkian-speaking groups of the Subarctic, like their compatriots in the Eastern Woodlands, also have culture-hero mythologies traditionally recited during long winters, and their rituals also tend toward the individual rather than communal. Religious specialists among the Montagnais, Naskapi, and Cree performed Shaking Tent ceremonies in order to heal, and they drew upon their relationships with sacred powers to moderate inclement weather or to ensure a more profitable hunt.

Eastern Woodlands

Eastern Woodlands nations include both Algonkian-speaking groups and Iroquoian-speaking groups; the only Siouan-speaking group native to this area is the Hocak (Winnebago). Like the Subarctic Algonkian nations, many of the Eastern Woodlands cultures, including groups as geographically widespread as the Wabanaki Confederacy, the Wampanoag, the Shinnecock, the Munsee, the Lenape

(Delaware), the Shawnee, and the Miami, placed medicine societies at the center of their religious lives. The etiological tales told by many Algonkian-speaking peoples mention origins on the Atlantic; the Lenape are called “the grandfathers” by several other Algonkian-speaking groups. Their extensive trade networks, coupled with seasonal mobility for agricultural, fishing, and hunting purposes, made consultations with religious specialists important but also made the portability of one’s individual relationship with sacred power (medicine) a practical necessity. The Anishinaabe, among other Algonkian-speaking peoples, elaborated individual relationships with sacred power into the communitarian Midewiwin society, which served as a powerful transmitter of sacred knowledge and, in many ways, enabled cultural survival through the colonial pressures to come.

The more sedentary Iroquoian cultures of the Northeastern Woodlands were sophisticated agriculturalists. Their clan-based agricultural practices and religious observances of seasonal cycles produced surpluses that led to the expansion and exploitation of trade networks, the creation of strong and reliable yet flexible alliances, and the refinement of the art of diplomacy. Confederacies such as those of the Wendat and Haudenosaunee were of a fundamentally religious nature, modeled on kinship relationships, and ritually established and maintained.

Southeast

The Native American populations of the Southeast were predominantly comprised of nations from the Iroquoian and Algonkian linguistic groups. The indigenous Floridian peoples, including the Timucua, Calusa, and Tequesta, were decimated by disease, killed, and/or enslaved by the Spanish during the colonial period; thus, most of their languages have been lost to history. It has been theorized that many of these groups may have spoken Arawakan languages.

Southeastern Algonkian speakers included the Powhatan, Chickahominy, and Pamunkey (all Virginia Algonkians) and Pamlico (Carolina Algonkians). Like the peoples of the Northeastern Woodlands, these groups fished, hunted, trapped, and farmed. Some lived in longhouse-like homes; others built dwellings by placing bark or woven mats over frames made from saplings.

The Seminole, who are today most closely associated with Florida, are not indigenous to that area but are rather a collection of refugees from varied Muskogean-speaking

groups along the Southeastern seaboard, most notably the Lower Creek of Georgia, who migrated there beginning in the colonial period.

Muskogean-speaking nations of the southeast include the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Apalachee, Alabama, Koasati (Coushatta), Muskogee (Creek), and the Florida Miccosukee. The Muskogee “square ground” is representative of later Muskogean habitation and religious structure; their ancestors arranged their homes in circular fashion but still used the number four as the foundational symbol upon which to pattern the construction of dwellings.

The Iroquoian-speaking Tsalagi may have migrated to the Southeast from the Northeastern Woodlands, or it may have been the Northeastern Iroquoians who migrated from the Southeast. Either way, the Tsalagi have much in common with the Iroquois, including sophisticated agriculture (the Tsalagi developed eastern flint corn), a clan system, and an agricultural ceremonial cycle capped by the Green Corn ceremony. Cherokee oral history maintains that there once were hereditary religious specialists called the Ani-Kutani who were overthrown by mass revolt. Thereafter, one could not inherit a position as religious specialist but could only become one by virtue of demonstrable relationship to sacred power.

Plains

Nations of the Plains are linguistically diverse, speaking Siouan, Caddoan, Kiowa-Tanoan, Algonkian, and even Athabaskan and Uto-Aztecan languages. This diversity resulted from a series of historical migrations, perhaps the most notable being the westward movement of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Lakota and the eastward movement of the Comanche and Kiowa when horses arrived in the early colonial period. The religio-cultural complex surrounding the hunting of bison, which served as the basis for what is sometimes seen as a shared “Plains culture,” did not emerge until well after the colonization of North America.

Prior to the coming of the horse and the subsequent rise in the dominance of the bison hunt on the plains, some nations followed bison using sledlike structures pulled by dogs. Mobility was often a necessity, fostering an environment wherein rituals could be performed by small groups or alone. Yet some nations, often more recent arrivals on the plains, maintained a sedentary village life centered around maize agriculture while still partaking in seasonal bison hunting. The Caddoan-speaking Wichita of the Southern Plains lived in conical grass homes and focused on village

life. The Central Plains Pawnee and the Northern Plains Mandan (originally from the Ohio River area) lived in earthen lodges and maintained traditional maize cultures, and their religious practices centered on clan possession of sacred bundles. The Mandan *okipa*, a ritual created to call the bison, was the basis for the Sun Dances later practiced by many Plains nations.

The Siouan-speaking nations perhaps most closely associated with the Plains, the Mdewakantowan (Mdewakanton), Wahpetowan (Wahpeton), Wahpekute, Sissetowan (Sisseton), Ihantowan (Yankton), Ihanktowana (Yanktonai), and Tetonwan (Lakota), were originally Southeastern Woodlands peoples. Their ancestors migrated from the Carolina seaboard through Ohio to the western Great Lakes. Colonial pressures and the introduction of the horse resulted in movement more deeply into the Plains, and these groups contributed greatly to the development of Plains bison culture.

Southwest

The Southwest is the location of ancient civilizations: Ancient Puebloans (Anasazi), the Mogollón, the Hohokam, and the Patayan. The Ancient Puebloans were responsible for the construction of the buildings (including religious structures of many types, such as kivas) that are still found in Chaco Canyon National Park, New Mexico; Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado; and Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona. Some of the structures created by these ancient cultures were clearly religious in nature. Some are astronomically oriented; many are aligned cardinally; and others evidently served as solar calendars.

A great number of linguistic groups were historically located in the Southwest, including Athabaskan, Uto-Aztecan, Hokan, Keresan, and Kiowa-Tanoan, as well as apparent isolates, such as Keres and Zuni. Some Uto-Aztecan, Kiowa-Tanoan, and Keresan peoples, such as the Hopi, the Tanoan Pueblos (Tewa, Tiwa, and Towa), and the Keresan Pueblos were agriculturalists who lived in permanent, densely populated villages in homes of stone or adobe construction. Other Uto-Aztecan, such as the Tohono O’odham (Papago) and Akimel O’odham (Pima), as well as some Hokans, such as the Havasupai, are also agriculturalists but live in more scattered settlements with some seasonal migration. Athabaskan speakers who migrated from the Northwest to the Southwest, such as the Diné and Apache, tended to associate in bands rather than in villages. However, over time they selected aspects of the agricultural and religious repertoires of their neighbors to add to their traditional hunting

and gathering economies and religious practices. These Athabaskan groups were quickest to incorporate sheep and horses into their cultures during the colonial period, while the village agriculturalists tended to be more conservative in maintaining their traditional economies.

The village agriculturalists generally emphasized collective ritual and community and understandably placed great importance upon sacred powers associated with water. The Hopi, for example, conducted rituals in which their ancestors visited them from their homes in the clouds and were associated with rain. The expectation placed on each person to contribute to the religious life of the community by joining a religious society was historically quite strong in these groups, particularly among the Keresan and Tanoan Pueblo peoples. Calendrical agricultural rituals predominated. Band-based societies, on the other hand, tended to emphasize curative rituals performed by individual religious specialists. This is not to say that band culture religious practices were less elaborate; Diné ceremonialism, for example, with its curative Blessingway and Evilway rites, is clearly complex and rich with meaning.

Northwest Coast

Northwest Coast peoples spoke languages of Penutian, Wakashan, Salishan, and Athabaskan stock with at least one apparent isolate present (Quileute). In this culture area, relationships with sacred power were crucial to survival, but these relationships were inheritable; thus, the most powerful men in these strictly hierarchical societies were those who had inherited strong relationships with sacred power from their ancestors. Rituals invoking sacred powers were conducted by the elites for the benefit of all.

While first fruits rituals, most commonly related to the salmon, were performed in spring, the most elaborate rituals were wintertime events, which were supervised by dance societies. Membership in the dance societies was also inherited, but initiation was nonetheless complex and lengthy. Certain rituals were considered to be so powerful that they could only be performed in the presence of persons whose relationships with sacred power were just as strong. Hence, many religious actions were not public but were limited to elite audiences. Ancestral tales were interwoven into the larger mythological corpus so that when tales of sacred powers were told during winter ceremonies, links between the elites and the sacred powers were clarified and elaborated. Totem poles, which represented mythic and ancestral relationships with sacred power, were commissioned and displayed by the elites.

Huge communal dwellings, constructed of cedar logs and planks, were also hierarchical in structure and use. The elites lived in the rooms at the rear, either in front of or within rooms dedicated to their collections of sacred objects. Commoners lived along the sides of the house, and slaves lived by the front entrance.

The famed potlatch rituals took place in these houses; partitions were removed in order to transform the house into one vast room. Potlatches could be held to demarcate rites of passage for members of elite families, to hold funerals and memorials, and to mark the ascent of an elite person to a particular position. Goods were redistributed, and thus others demonstrated their acquiescence to the shift celebrated by the potlatch. Most importantly relationships with sacred powers were reaffirmed and strengthened.

California Intermountain Region

The California Intermountain area comprises California, the Plateau (now within British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho), and the Great Basin (now within Nevada and Utah); these three cultural areas comprise vastly different landscapes and even more linguistic diversity. Peoples of the Great Basin all spoke languages in the Numic subgroup of Uto-Aztecan, with the exception of the Washo, which is a Hokan language. On the Plateau, Salishan and Penutian linguistic groups dominated, although the Cayuse and Kutenai isolates were also present. In California, Uto-Aztecan, Hokan, Athabaskan, and Penutian linguistic groups were most common, with a small number of Alaic/Algonkian languages and some few evident isolates present.

Great Basin peoples, such as the Shoshone, Ute, Paiute, and Comanche (who migrated to the southern Plains with the arrival of horses), were hunting and gathering band cultures and lived in small, semipermanent settlements, moving with the seasons. Religion was mostly based in individual relationships with sacred power and in healing, although first fruits rituals and some winter dance rituals were celebrated in community.

On the Plateau, personal relationship with sacred power was even more highly elaborated. Communal rituals, such as winter dances, were comprised of individual enactments of these relationships with specific sacred powers, expressed through dance and song and often involving an impersonation of the animal or bird in which the sacred power resided.

In what is now southern and central California, the ingestion of western jimsonweed (*Datura wrightii*), a hallucinogen, was a common route to establishing a relationship

with sacred power; for some groups, such as the Chumash, this ritual was limited to those who wished to become religious specialists. The Payomkowishum (Luiseño), on the other hand, initiated all young men into adulthood through ritual administration of jimsonweed decoctions.

In northern California, the more common religious society was that of the Kuksu (named after the Pomo culture hero-creator) into which the young men and sometimes the young women were initiated. The Kuksu combined elements of initiation into this religious society, marked by ritual dance and song, with first fruits celebrations and world renewal rituals.

World renewal rituals were celebrated by many Californian nations, including the Hupa, Karok, Yurok, and Tolowa. These ceremonies involved enacting the death and rebirth of the world by constructing or renovating sacred structures, the lighting of sacred fires, the recitation of sacred narratives, and the paying of respects to the sacred powers who had just brought the first fruits into being. Ceremonial dress, feasting, and the ritual consumption of acorns and/or salmon was generally associated with world renewal.

See also *California and the Pacific Rim Region; Canada: Aboriginal Traditions; Demographics; Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures; Frontier and Borderlands; Great Plains Region; Mexico: Indigenous Religions; Missions: Native American; Native American Religions entries; Pacific Northwest Region; South as Region; Southwest as Region*

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Native American Religions: Post-Contact

Christopher Columbus (c. 1451–1506) returned from his voyages with tales of a “discovery” saturated in language that inspired romantic images of pure waters, a pristine land, and noble savages. This myth’s enduring life represents the post-contact project of imaging and re-creating the past.

Two themes demonstrate evolution in Native American religions since European contact. The first theme, kinship, centers around the importance of family ties both among the living and with ancestral spirits. Often outsiders could be incorporated into kinship networks through methods of reciprocity or ritual ceremony, but these networks were small and localized. The second theme, restoration (also called revitalization), resulted as kinship cosmologies expanded and intertwined with Euro-American cosmologies. Restoration movements are the culmination of a buildup of adjustments and adaptations that effected a tremendous change. At this tipping point of enormous upheaval, Native Americans often responded by attempting to return to past forms of religion. Native American revitalization movements, as seen across regions and in individual prophets like Neolin (the Delaware Prophet; mid-eighteenth century), Tenskwatawa (Shawnee; early nineteenth century), Wovoka (Northern Paiute; c. 1856–1932), and Black Elk (Oglala Lakota; c. 1863–1950), demonstrate a restorationist impulse as Native American cosmologies of kinship have moved toward a pan-Indian cosmology of restorationism.

Europeans did not encounter a static people with pristine religious forms. Despite a repeated tendency to romanticize the American past as a time of spiritual harmony in tune with nature, indigenous peoples did not abide in utopia. Archaeologists have uncovered evidence of drought, malnutrition, fortified dwellings, war accoutrements, overhunting, and depletion of land. European contact, however, brought with it dramatic changes to native ways of life. Colonists, missionaries, traders, surveyors, and explorers spread diseases, intensified intertribal aggression, waged war, and swindled natives out of their land. They recorded interpretations in

government documents, missionary journals, and other interest-invested communications that cast Native American religions and cultures as “primitive.” For the Native Americans who survived, change was cataclysmic.

All attempts to recover Native American religious practices are post-contact enterprises. When Native Americans came into contact with European colonizers, each held pre-existing religious cosmologies, which were dramatically affected by cultural exchange. Many aspects of the two cultures became intertwined, making efforts to recover or restore a time of “pure” religion mere projections on a remote past. As frontier evangelization crashed into their own religious cosmologies, which centered on kinship, Native Americans resisted and adjusted. As the cultures interacted with and borrowed from each other, their religious conceptions also became interconnected. Cosmologies were forever altered, and in that process restorationist interpretations of the past also took on new colorings and emphases.

Southwest

When Spaniards arrived in southwestern North America, they encountered people who had adapted and readapted to alternating times of plenty or scarcity over thousands of years. In 1540 Spanish conquistador Francisco Vázquez de Coronado’s (1510–1554) search for the legendary Seven Cities of Gold led him up from the south to the present-day Four Corners region of the United States, where the Pueblo had begun to farm and build small village clusters about 700 CE. When Coronado arrived, he recited the *requerimiento*. The Pueblo watched as he read, in Spanish, the history of the true religion: the pope had established the king and queen of Spain as the rulers of all people. Coronado then claimed Spanish sovereignty, in the name of that religion, over the Pueblo and their territory. If indigenous peoples chose not to obey, the stipulated penalties ranged from enslavement to being “disposed of.”

At the time of Coronado’s arrival, Pueblo cosmology centered on an intricate web of reciprocity-based kinship. The Pueblo valued kinship bonds among relatives and also extended them to animals, plants, and spirits. Their rituals maintained a proper balance with the cosmos and ingrained children’s relationships to adults; intergender relationships; and humans’ relationships to animals, spirits, and the earth. In addition, outsiders could be incorporated into the kinship framework through the exchange of food or services.

The origin myth handed down to present-day Acoma Pueblo describes this kinship relationship through the story

of Thought Woman, who raises two sisters in the underworld. Thought Woman teaches the sisters an understanding of Mother Earth through processes of germination and fertilization, which parallel human sexual relationships and perpetuated the kinship cosmology. One sister would become Mother of the Corn clan and the other Mother of the Sun clan. Elements such as the deceptive serpent Pishuni, who is at the center of original disobedience and subsequent turmoil, provide parallels between the Pueblo origin myth and the Judeo-Christian creation story.

By the turn of the seventeenth century, Spanish missionaries had followed Coronado’s inland path in their effort to replace Pueblo prayer sticks with the cross. The role of sex in Pueblo kinship bonds shocked celibate Franciscan friars, who worked to implement Christian codes of conduct. Spanish missionaries subverted traditional Pueblo kinship bonds by emphasizing God as Father at the expense of the paternal father. Friars themselves took on the role of spiritual father, accentuating their “fatherly love” to the Native Americans while providing dramatic displays of emasculation of their paternal fathers. The subversion of reciprocal kinship cosmology was compounded by prohibitions placed on Pueblo religious ceremonies and rituals that incorporated performances to entice the conditions necessary for reproduction from the earth. Friars shaved off the hair of those who seemed in their *cosmovisión* to be fornicators.

The Puebloan kinship cosmology did not become extinct; it adapted. By the 1670s drought and famine diminished the potency of the Franciscans’ self-portrayal as rain chiefs with their elaborate prayer rituals. Concern developed that children had broken cosmological bonds by ceasing to respect their seniors in traditional ways. Puebloan medicine men explained that the people suffered because they had abandoned the old ways of gaining the favor of the gods of fertility. One medicine man, Popé, called for the rejection of Spanish innovations and a return to the traditional ways of their ancestors. The groundwork for the Pueblo Revolt had been laid, and the tipping point emerged.

On August 10, 1680, Popé led a band that captured horses, blocked roads, slaughtered Spanish settlers, tortured friars, burned villages, and desecrated Christian relics. They razed churches and restored the kivas, religious ceremonial structures that offered access to ancestral spirits in the underworld, earlier destroyed by the Spanish.

Meanwhile, the Spanish interpreted the Pueblo’s actions as immature. At the outset of the revolt, Fray Juan Pío

arrived outside Santa Fé to say Mass for the Pueblo, and his reaction to the armed revolt—he called the Pueblos “children”—reveals the subverted kinship framework. Santa Fé Governor Antonio de Otermín (served 1678–1682) later attributed the Pueblo Revolt to the Native Americans’ stupidity, ignorance, and vice. The depiction of the Pueblo as innocent and childlike perpetuated the myth of European superiority.

Just as Acoma Pueblo appropriated elements of the Franciscan missionaries’ creation story in reconciling the two cosmologies, interaction with the Christian cosmology likely amplified the restorationist impulse as seen in Thought Woman’s emphasis on the proper forms of prayer and ritual. Transcribed in the twentieth century, the Pueblo origin myth also includes a narrative about the cause of their struggle—the people neglected their traditional kinship bonds, angering the godly *katsina* (deceased Pueblo) and causing a contagion of calamities. The solution to seventeenth-century disturbances was a programmatic return to the traditional ways of kinship respect and reciprocity, as interpreted nearly one century after contact. The Puebloan origin myth called a people who had abandoned traditional ways to ritual restoration, even as it intertwined with decidedly post-contact elements.

Eastern Woodlands

The disembarkation of French and English on the Atlantic Coast brought disease, wars, treaties for land, and a chaotic world that began to reshape Native Americans’ kinship cosmology. Kinship networks among Eastern Woodlands peoples were often fluid and flexible, and new kin were adopted into their networks through religious ceremonies.

As the nations within the Iroquois Confederacy encountered accelerated loss of life through disease and battle, adoption increased as well. Iroquois women held the final say in their society’s matriarchal structure, in which captives could be either adopted into the kinship network or brutally sacrificed. As European contact expedited intertribal combative and diplomatic activity among the Algonkian language family, intertribal kinship relationships formed. The Shawnee, for example, denoted the Iroquois as older brothers and the Delaware as grandfathers.

Historian Gregory Evans Dowd (1992) called the period starting about 1745 and continuing until the eve of the Revolutionary War, the “Indians’ Great Awakening.” It was an era of travel and migration in the Eastern Woodlands. The Delawares, Shawnees, Cherokees, and Creeks met at trade

centers, exchanged ideas, and formed networks of commerce. Missionary reports, such as a missive by Presbyterian David Brainerd in 1744, revealed the development of a strong pan-Indian movement among Native Americans in the Eastern Woodlands.

Previously antagonistic groups began to find commonalities in the face of great obstacles. Terms of kinship began to broaden beyond ancestral ties. Prophets appeared in this atmosphere with a common message: the right behavior could restore Native Americans to their pre-contact status. For example, Brainerd described a reformer among the Delaware who wished to address cultural and moral corruption by restoring the ancient rituals and ceremonies. As with the Pueblo, even creation stories made room for the Europeans.

Neolin, the Delaware Prophet, received his first vision in 1761, in which the Master of Life instructed him to send his people’s enemies back to their land. For them to keep the land, the Master of Life instructed him to avoid liquor, sexual promiscuity, medicine songs, fighting among Native Americans, and placing any other gods before the Master of Life. The emerging understanding of tradition was that of a conservation-minded people who had once lived in an pristine past. Despite Neolin’s emphasis on restoring traditional Native American ways, he was preaching the same tenets introduced by the white man at the expense of native customs, enabling a post-contact reconstruction. Emerging in Neolin’s message was an identification of all Native Americans as sharing inherent characteristics and natural wisdom.

Neolin represents a move from a localized, although fluid, familial kinship network toward one that included all Native Americans. His prophetic visions directly influenced Pontiac (c. 1720–1769), the Ottawa war chief, and his style of prophetic movements can be traced to nineteenth-century prophets such as Handsome Lake of the Seneca. As reservation life limited the traditional male role within Iroquois culture—duties that consisted of extended war and hunting excursions—the traditional matriarchal kinship network revolving around a mother-daughter dynamic shifted to a husband-wife relationship. The Seneca Prophet’s call for restoration to the primitive form of religion, therefore, has been interpreted by Anthony F. C. Wallace (1972) as “a sentence of doom” upon traditional kinship relationships. However, Handsome Lake’s prophetic revelations in the early 1800s called for a particular restoration of the past. His revelations also demonstrate the degree to which

Euro-American religion intertwined in the imagination of the ancient past. In one vision, Jesus told Handsome Lake that his people should not follow the ways of the white people. While the Seneca Prophet employed Jesus in the service of a pan-Indian effort to resist Christians, his application demonstrates the deep influence of biblical themes.

Tenskwatawa and the Pan-Indian Movement

The pan-Indian movement, fueled by prophetic visions, which sought to unite Native Americans in an effort to push the white man off their lands and reclaim proper rituals, continued along the Ohio River Valley, home of the Shawnee. In 1805 Tenskwatawa, the Shawnee Prophet, received his first vision of the afterlife. His visions were similar to those of Neolin, and he described a land rich in game and corn where Shawnee who abided by uncorrupted traditions continued to live in eternal bliss. He also envisioned a realm of fire where Native Americans received punishment for adopting the white man's innovations. Like Neolin, Tenskwatawa advocated a return to traditional and pre-contact Indian ways of life and recast the past in terms of traditional qualities.

Tenskwatawa not only adapted Christian teaching about the afterlife, he also adopted the Euro-American myth of America as a Garden of Eden, spoiled by the arrival of white people. Tenskwatawa's older brother, Tecumseh (1768–1813), spread the revitalization message of eternal reward in a pristine land north to the Great Lakes and south to the Gulf of Mexico and developed a significant confederacy.

Tenskwatawa suffered a major defeat during the War of 1812 at the Battle of Tippecanoe, and Tecumseh died soon after at the Battle of the Thames. Native Americans' last genuine opportunity for the militant relocation of Euro-Americans was also laid to rest. President Andrew Jackson's subsequent Indian Removal reached its climax with the Trail of Tears. The 1838 to 1839 march pushed the Cherokees west of the Mississippi River to the Oklahoma Territory and enhanced American dominance by limiting large-scale militant resistance. However, the pan-Indian vision of the restoration of a pristine faith continued despite the severing of Natives from their land. Nearly a century later, Winnebago practitioners of peyote religion explained that their ceremony was the fulfillment of the Shawnee Prophet's prophecy.

Peyote, a cactus native to present-day northeast Mexico and southwest Texas with hallucinogenic qualities, is used for medicinal and sacramental purposes. Spanish

friars sought to eliminate the use of the divine plant, which had been transported to the Southwest, as part of their declaration of sovereignty over the indigenous people. In the 1880s peyote proselytizers Comanche chief Quanah Parker and Caddo medicine man John Wilson spread the Half Moon and Big Moon (also known as Cross Fire) peyote ceremonies, respectively, from reservation to reservation. Both ceremonies combined native notions of the Great Spirit and Mother Earth with elements of Christianity. Later practitioners of the Ghost Dance and Sun Dance would also practice peyote religion. The legal status of the use of the psychedelic drug evolved toward pan-Indianism as peyote religion was institutionalized in the North American Church, established in 1918 in Oklahoma. The articles of incorporation combined the sacrament of peyote with the objective of teaching Christianity, while cultivating unity among Native Americans. Further legislation defined *Indians* for purposes of legal peyote use as those with one-quarter native blood.

Great Plains and Great Basin

The effects of colonialism spread west ahead of Europeans and their descendants. Horses, firearms, and disease arrived in the Great Plains and Great Basin (now in Utah and Nevada) before those native to the area had ever seen a white man. These changes began to affect kinship networks. Kin-based groups comprised primarily along ancestral ties began to broaden. During the winter these kin groups often joined other families in camps. Horses were traded across "chains of communication," arriving in the Great Basin from the south after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 accelerated trade. Their arrival expanded migration capabilities and created more contact with enemies. Conflict erupted more frequently and, with the introduction of guns, more devastatingly. New and more permanent alliances were needed with other kinship groups who spoke different languages and practiced different forms of ritual. While traditional kinship cosmologies and religious practices would continue to inform Native Americans' worldview, they were reciprocally affected.

The Lewis and Clark expedition moved through the region in 1805. Thereafter, settlers drove the Oregon Trail with some branching off into California, especially midcentury during the California Gold Rush, while others planted roots in the Great Basin. They settled and imposed their concept of individually owned and enclosed property. As the

U.S. government enforced treaties that confined Native Americans to reservations, concepts of a once pristine land flourished, and the language of kinship extended to civil authorities.

Such was the case with Idaho Territorial Governor Caleb Lyon's insistence that Shoshone Biting Bear and his followers make their new home on the reservation. In 1866 Lyon obliged the kinship ritual of reciprocity as he appropriated the language of kinship in blessing the treaty, referring to the president as the "Great Father" and invoking the Great Spirit.

As treaties proliferated, Native Americans of various kin groups, practicing different religious ceremonies and rituals and speaking various languages and dialects, found themselves occupying the same reservations. Another tipping point arrived. The first Ghost Dance movement in 1870 provided a common language in the midst of great upheaval.

The proximity of another American restorationist movement created a venue for the exchange of ideas. According to Mormon founder Joseph Smith's prophetic visions, the Native Americans were one of the lost tribes of Israel descended from Lamanites. Similarities exist between Smith's subsequent prophecies about the millennium and salvation and the Ghost Dance prophets' expressed anticipation of the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead. Previously, shamanism had provided a method to combat illness among individuals in the Great Basin. Shamans fell into trances to receive a prescription for combating the sickness. Prophets, who also fell into trances and came out of them with messages for healing, offered prescriptions for a broader audience.

A message of pan-Indian unity spread throughout the Great Basin principally through the prophetic visions of Wodziwob, who first performed the Ghost Dance in 1869. Frank Campbell, a reservation employee who witnessed one of Wodziwob's trances, reported that the resulting prophecy called for a restoration of paradise on Earth; all peoples would be destroyed, but three days later Native Americans (later he stipulated Native American believers) would be resurrected to enjoy a land of plenty. The return of the land to a Garden of Eden condition was contingent upon the rejection of European ways and the restoration of proper behavior by Native Americans.

Second Ghost Dance, Sun Dance, and YMCA

The second Ghost Dance movement began in 1890, this one initiated by the Northern Paiute prophet Wovoka.

Bannocks and Shoshone on the Fort Hall Reservation, positioned in a region with a heavy flow of traffic, spread the message of pan-Indian identity and resistance to white encroachment and served as Ghost Dance missionaries. In 1890 Fort Hall Reservation agent Stanton Fisher explained the Ghost Dance as a doctrine that white people would die and Native Americans would enjoy a land with bountiful game, but only if the native peoples adhered to traditional customs.

The prophetic movement that emerged out of cultural upheaval also can be seen in the person of the Lakota prophet Black Elk, who experienced the Wounded Knee Massacre and later became a Catholic catechist. He preached against materialism and in favor of a return among the Lakota to a harmonious relationship with nature. In an effort to resist Americanization and revitalize traditional Lakota religion, Black Elk conflated the Ghost Dance with Catholicism to create the Sun Dance. Author John G. Neihardt represented Black Elk as a tragic hero in *Black Elk Speaks* (1932). The popular and Native embrace of Neihardt's idealistic version of Black Elk can be understood, as Amanda Porterfield (2000) noted, "as an extension of the image of Indians as noble savages that has often functioned as a symbol of resistance to civilization and affinity with nature" (p. 50). The Sun Dance remains vibrant in its celebration by the American Indian Movement (AIM). Since the late 1960s, AIM has attracted native and nonnative involvement alike in advocating the spiritual connectedness of all Native Americans.

Historically Protestant-affiliated groups such as the Camp Fire Girls and the YMCA incorporated Native American themes in what has been termed "Indianized Christianity." The groups dressed in Native American attire, took on Native American names, and incorporated "Native American core values" in their effort to develop greater harmony with nature and tighter bonds with family. The Y-Indian Guides were established in 1926 to strengthen father-son kinship bonds and instill the romanticized virtues of a "green" culture. They and their later mother-daughter, father-daughter, and mother-son instantiations combined the Judeo-Christian teaching "to love thy neighbor as thyself" with language projected upon Native Americans that invoked the Great Spirit and nature. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the YMCA was starting to reject stereotypical applications of Native American culture and transition to the similarly inspired but racially sensitive Y-Adventure Guides. Yet the deeply intertwined influence

between a pristine pan-Indianism and Euro-American religions continues to thrive in American culture.

See also *America: Religious Interpretations of; Atlantic World; California and the Pacific Rim Region; Canada: Aboriginal Traditions; Demographics; Environment and Ecology: Native American Cultures; Freedom, Religious; Frontier and Borderlands; Great Awakening(s); Great Plains Region; Hispanic Influence; Mexico: Indigenous Religions; Missions: Native American; Native American Religions entries; Pacific Northwest Region; South as Region; Southwest as Region.*

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Native American Religions: Contemporary

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, North America remains home to thousands of indigenous communities and hundreds of tribal nations whose members sustain a wide diversity of religious ideas, visions, and practices. Five hundred years of oppression have taken their toll. Entire societies have been erased, and among those that survive many languages and ceremonies are extinct or endangered. Yet strong currents of indigenous identity remain. Ancient traditions have been guarded and updated; new ideas have been adapted and incorporated, though not all of these

adjustments have been smooth or free of conflict. American Indian religious practices continue to challenge the legal, economic, social, and political norms of surrounding societies, even as Native communities themselves cope with internal tensions. In the United States a handful of Native communities have experienced the rapid influx of wealth from gaming or resource development; others continue to struggle with a deep, persistent poverty that fosters misery and addiction. Both extremes corrode the religious foundations of American Indian societies that are based in respect—for the natural world, for kin and community, and for the enduring legacy of the ancestors.

Resilience of Traditions

Ceremonies provide the clearest evidence to outsiders that Native American religious traditions have survived. In the American Southwest, the elaborate public ceremonies of the Hopi, Zuni, and Pueblo peoples were a major factor in the growth of regional tourism beginning in the 1930s. Many of these ceremonies are still performed today, yet in some cases the presence of tourists and anthropologists is more tightly controlled or has been eliminated altogether. The well-known Northern Plains Sun Dance, which is thought to have originated with the Lakota people, is now performed across the country, from the Navajo Nation in the Southwest to the Onondaga communities in the Northeast. Participants come from many tribal nations and sometimes even include non-Natives as well.

Other ceremonies are locally or privately known, such as the Cherokee Stomp Dance, the seasonal Longhouse dances of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) people, or the elaborate dance dramas of the Tlingit, Kwakiutl, and other Pacific Northwest peoples. Few if any outsiders are in attendance. Most Diné (Navajo) ceremonies are performed for the benefit of individuals, though this benefit extends out among relatives and other participants. The ceremony may be one of healing from disease or from some other kind of unrest, or one seeking help and success in an upcoming endeavor. *Kinaaldá* is a demanding ceremony that brings Diné girls into womanhood.

Ceremonial performance is intended to strengthen daily life. For Native Americans, traditional life is built on close observation of the natural world and respectful relations with human as well as other-than-human kin. Daily life is enriched with traditions of planting, hunting, gathering, preparing, and sharing of food and medicine; of storytelling, singing, and dance; and of healing, sport, and artistic

decoration. These traditions can remain strong, even where once common ceremonies have faded and even when a community has adopted an entirely new religious identity, such as Christianity. The most important daily dimension of Native religious practice might well consist of maintaining the social ties of family and clan and the traditions of visiting and mutual care and assistance. Today, Native American communities are reviving those practices of daily life with religious underpinnings. For example, the Chumash people of the central California coast are reviving the practice of building and using oceangoing canoes, while the Makah people of northwestern Washington have asserted their right to resume traditional whaling on religious as well as cultural and legal grounds. Across the continent Native farmers, hunters, artists, dancers, filmmakers, storytellers, and athletes are working with old as well as new media to extend their traditions into the future.

Adaptation

Much scholarship has been devoted to distinguishing “authentic” American Indian culture, including religious practice, from modern innovations and syncretism. Yet even the most conservative practices must sometimes be adapted to changing circumstances. A community undergoing even the most radical change usually retains some connection to the past. For American Indians the past five hundred years have included traumatic dislocations of homeland, livelihood, identity, and culture. The fight for physical survival gave way to the fight for cultural survival. In Canada as well as the United States the practice of traditional ceremonies were outlawed and severely punished, and children were forcibly removed to boarding schools dedicated to destroying Native identity, language, and culture. The results of this determined experiment in forced assimilation were dismal: generations of lost youth, never fully trusted or respected by whites, yet no longer competent in their original cultures. Absolute resistance usually resulted in extermination. Survival required both deep devotion to what was most important in Native identity and culture, and the ability to adapt. Sometimes this called for imaginative ways to hide or disguise Native practices from the watchful eyes of missionary agents, schoolmasters, and police.

Native interpretations of Christianity have only recently gained the attention of scholars, but American Indians have been making Christianity their own for five hundred years. Among the Pueblos of the American Southwest as well as in parts of Mexico, Christian worship and devotions continue

to be layered onto indigenous practice. Mexican communities are experiencing rapid growth in evangelical and pentecostal Christianity even as many indigenous healing practices, rekindled as *curandismo*, continue to thrive. In other places, for example in Choctaw country, in what was once Indian Territory and is now Oklahoma, conversion to Protestant Christianity appeared complete. Yet many Choctaw congregations insisted on controlling their own churches, and within them traditional patterns of kinship reciprocity have resurfaced and thrived. The same is true of Catholic practice in many Native congregations in the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes regions, as well as further north in uppermost Canada and the Canadian Arctic, where most residents in Native communities attend Christian churches.

The Native American Church, organized around the sacramental gift of peyote, has taken a very old tradition and recast it into an intertribal form accessible to Native people from many backgrounds, living contemporary lives. Participation offers physical and emotional healing and enables individuals to achieve and maintain sobriety. Membership continues to grow among all age groups across the United States and Canada.

Threats and Challenges

Misunderstanding and conflict still largely characterize the relationship between indigenous communities and nations in North America and the complex, multicultural societies that surround them. Among other issues of contention, Native American religious practices pose significant legal and moral challenges to U.S. and Canadian societies, based as they are on fundamentally different premises. These challenges have been taken up forcefully by Native peoples from their first contact with outsiders. These efforts gained a wider, more receptive audience during the late 1960s and early 1970s as the Red Power movement emerged alongside the Civil Rights movement to demand redress of grievances and equality of opportunity. Vine Deloria Jr., who exemplified a new kind of scholar-activist—one versed in both traditional knowledge and the processes of legal and social advocacy—developed powerful, critical arguments from Native perspectives and presented them to mainstream society with significant success. As a result Native voices and perspectives have become impossible to ignore.

Two court cases illustrate these conflicts and the disparity of premises that drive them. In the 1988 *Lyng* case the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that on public land the federal government need not be concerned if its actions

infringe on indigenous religious practice. In the 1990 *Smith* case the Court ruled that states can outlaw a religious practice—in this case the use of peyote as a sacrament within the Native American Church—without having to prove the practice is harmful enough to warrant prohibition. The American legal establishment has consistently favored non-Native property and law enforcement interests over Native cultural premises with regard to the nature and meaning of religious experience, or the relationship of human individuals and communities to land, plants, or animals.

The Supreme Court of Canada in its 1997 *Delgamuukw* ruling established the principle that indigenous traditional knowledge must be heard and admitted as evidence in Native rights cases. While this might seem to signal a breakthrough in legitimizing Native experience and perspectives, many First Nations remain skeptical about their prospects. In some cases they feel more may be lost than gained in exposing traditional knowledge to outside scrutiny and evaluation. One of many concerns is that such exposure will open sacred sites to disruption and desecration by New Age seekers and other non-Native enthusiasts who feel that they are spiritually entitled to visit places of Native religious significance and make them their own.

At the same time the survival of traditional ways of life face unprecedented threats at home, some old and some very new. These include threats to sacred places, language erosion, and the weakening of social webs. Relationships to places of religious significance are being damaged by disruption to the places themselves, or by denial of access to Native caretakers and practitioners. Fluency in indigenous languages is rapidly eroding in most Native American communities. Strong efforts to slow or reverse this trend are under way, but irreplaceable traditional knowledge is being lost every day as elders, often the last fluent speakers of these languages, pass away. Finally, social webs of kinship and community are falling apart in many communities. In some cases this is due to alcoholism, the use of methamphetamines and other drugs, sexual and domestic violence, and other social and physical ills that can usually be traced back to historical trauma. In other cases it is due to economic dislocation brought on when community members must move away in order to earn a living. In a handful of communities it is the sudden influx of wealth from tribal gaming operations that breaks down traditional relationships.

Efforts are under way in Native communities to treat these disorders by reinvigorating traditional knowledge. Programs using traditional values to restore healthy relationships and

healthy personal habits abound. Efforts are also under way to restore traditional economies. For example, the Intertribal Bison Cooperative is working to restore healthy buffalo herds in many Native communities. Such efforts, it is contended, will provide benefits both economic and spiritual.

Looking Ahead

In the face of all these threats, the future of Native American religious traditions can appear tenuous. Yet Native Americans themselves remain undeterred in their determination to survive as a distinct people. Even as Native peoples joke and laugh about their predicaments—it would be difficult indeed to find a ceremonial gathering where nobody jokes, nobody laughs, nobody comments on the countless varieties of human weakness and confusion—they endure. Native American peoples diligently plant and tend the seeds of culture, language, and tradition, working to protect and cultivate identity and meaning—not just for themselves, but for the benefit of generations to come, “those faces looking up to us from the ground.”

Along the way the survival of these traditions has something to teach scholars of religion, posing important questions about the definition of religion, what it is and where to look for it; about the dynamics of religious change and persistence; about the relationship between religion, economic life, and ecology; about the importance of jokes, joking, and sexuality in religion. Native responses to academic scrutiny may also pose important questions about motivation in the study of religion, and how it is culturally and politically embedded.

The Native individuals and communities that maintain and grow these religious traditions likely have a more important contribution to make. They have something essential to say about how human societies might better relate to the places, plants, and animals with which they share space and time. The work of Native American writers and artists, newly recognized and growing robustly since the late 1960s, draws from indigenous sources of history, culture, and religion and opens up new possibilities for individuals and societies to understand themselves and their relationships with the natural world, with other species, and with history. Far from being backward-looking, the keepers of these traditions understand them as sources of knowledge and inspiration vital to a sustainable human future.

See also *America: Religious Interpretations of; California and the Pacific Rim Region; Canada: Aboriginal Traditions; Environment*

and Ecology: Native American Cultures; Food and Diet; Freedom, Religious; Great Plains Region; Healing; Latino/a Religious Practice; Literature: Contemporary; Mexico: Indigenous Religions; Missions: Native American; Native American Religions entries; Nature and Nature Religion; New Religious Movements: Twentieth Century; Pacific Northwest Region; South as Region; Southwest as Region; Violence and Terror.

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Nature and Nature Religion

The term *Nature Religion* in the United States and elsewhere in the European-influenced world first calls to mind contemporary New Age and Neopagan practitioners and the remnants of indigenous cultures who still adhere, to a lesser or greater extent, to their nature-based traditional aboriginal religions, having resisted imposed conversion to Christianity during the modern period of European and American colonization. However, using new models for analyzing what constitutes nature religion, the term is increasingly used by anthropologists, sociologists, and religious studies scholars to denote cultural manifestations that stress the strong importance of *nature* in some way or another, either by declaring nature to be imbued with the sacred, holy, or divine, or to be in some manner inherently or intrinsically valuable for its own sake apart from any practical or utilitarian value to humans. Thus, political movements for increased environmental protection that are usually grouped under the heading *secular environmentalism* can be understood as a form of *nature religion*. Further, while the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are often understood as the very antithesis of nature religion, these broader definitions

of what constitutes nature religion allow various widespread movements within these major world religions to be understood as new nature religions as well. Thus, some of the most widespread forms of nature religion are, in essence, hiding in plain sight, within conventional churches, synagogues, and mosques. This entry explores these newer understandings of nature religion, along with more conventional manifestations such as New Age and Neopaganism.

Nature-Venerating Religions: Defined

In most though not all situations where the term “nature religion” is used, it is understood as a cultural manifestation of a belief system that “venerates” nature. Thus, “nature religion” is usually shorthand for *nature venerating religion*. Defining each of these words is important to understanding the concept. In common parlance, the term *religion* is often thought to relate to rituals and beliefs related to supernatural deities. However, the term is often used much more broadly by religion scholars. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz’s definition is by far the most commonly cited, if only as a starting place for some other scholarly definition. He defined religion as “(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in [people] by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic” (1973, 90). Thus, religion for Geertz and many religion scholars is any system of thought that satisfies the central human need to “explain phenomena” encountered in daily human experience or that otherwise renders human life “comprehensible” (Geertz, 100–101). Following Geertz’s broad definition, anthropologist Carolyn Moxley Rouse declares that “any strongly held belief and orientation to the world,” even “atheism, secular humanism, [and] Marxism, are all properly understood as *religion*” (2004, 139; emphasis supplied). This broad definition of religion has been utilized by state and federal courts who have ruled that atheism is a religion under the federal civil rights statutes and thus protected from discrimination.

As noted above, nature religion in most uses involves the veneration of nature or otherwise deeming nature to be sacred. However, this veneration can but need not involve any supernatural divine beings. For understanding nature religion, it is sufficient to understand *sacred* and *venerating* as indicating a very strong human perception of importance and value, without any necessary connection to a deity or other concept of god.

Finally, *nature*, among a variety of definitions in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), can mean either the “phenomena of the physical world collectively; especially plants, animals, and other features and products of the earth itself, as opposed to humans and human creations,” or “the whole natural world, including human beings; the cosmos.” Traditionally and historically, the Abrahamic religions have understood nature in the first sense, while most nature religions understand nature in the second sense. Thus, nature religions venerate all that is (this cosmos and any others that may one day be discovered) and understand humanity as just one small part of this venerable whole.

Sacredness as an Order within Reality

It is further helpful for comprehending nature religions to understand where various religions fit within three possible metaphysical categories regarding sacredness as an order within reality. While agnostics take no stand in these determinations, other religions can be understood as fitting within one of these three categories: 1) pure pantheism (all of reality is God or, if the term God is rejected, is sacred, holy, and/or in some way intrinsically valuable or venerable); 2) nihilistic atheism (absolutely nothing in the entirety of reality is in any way sacred, holy, and/or in any way intrinsically meaningful, venerable, or valuable); and 3) dualistic theism (some parts of reality are sacred; other parts are profane or ordinary). The environmental philosopher Edward Abbey, who declared “either everything is divine, or nothing is” (Loeffler 2005, 2), is an example of a pure pantheist. The anthropologist Roy Rappaport provided a good example of nihilistic atheism when he declared that humanity “lives, and can only live, in terms of meanings it must construct in a world devoid of intrinsic meaning but subject to physical law” (Rappaport 1999, 1, 451). Most belief systems fall between these two poles and are forms of *dualistic theism*, seeing reality as a mix of “the sacred” and “the profane,” a distinction used by both the historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, and founding sociologist, Emile Durkheim. While the pure pantheist sees everything as sacred and the nihilistic atheist sees everything as profane, the dualistic theist sees reality as a mix of the two. Most, perhaps all, nature religions share in common their tendency toward the pantheistic end of this spectrum.

Finally, one last term is critical to understanding contemporary nature religion: *panentheism*. The OED defines it as the “theory or belief that God encompasses and interpenetrates the universe but at the same time is greater than and independent of it; frequently contrasted with *pantheism*.” This

is a new definition for the OED as of December 2007. Most dictionaries still do not contain this term. It is an important term, because it is in fairly common use within liberal Christian theology. While pantheism is still deemed in many if not most Christian circles as “a ‘heresy’ label of the worst kind” (Tillich 1951, 233), a growing number of liberal or progressive Christians are willing to understand the divine as penetrating and residing in all existence, even if the divine or sacred is not, in the Abbey sense, exactly the same or coequal with all existence. Similar liberal panentheistic strands are also present in the other Abrahamic religions, in Islam within its Sufi traditions and in the Kabbalistic strands of Judaism. These panentheistic forms of religion, though forms of dualistic theism, are nevertheless examples of nature-venerating religions. To further complicate the matter, some people who use the panentheistic label mean that everything in this universe is part of God, but God in some mysterious unknowable way transcends this universe. Technically, this is just another form of pantheism, that asserts there is more to reality than just our known universe, but assumes that whatever exists is sacred, divine, or God. Regardless, either use of panentheism is an example of nature religion because all of reality has been imbued to at least some extent with sacredness and/or intrinsic worth.

One more scholarly model for analyzing nature religion is Bron Taylor’s heuristic of Dark Green Religion, wherein nature religion is loosely divided into four types. There are two broad categories—Animism and Gaian Earth Religion—with each of these categories divided into naturalistic and supernaturalistic subcategories. Thus the four types are Spiritual Animism, Naturalistic Animism, Gaian Spirituality, and Gaian Naturalism. Both forms of animism accept that there are nonhuman intelligences with their own integrity and value that are entitled to some measure of respect from humanity. Jane Goodall’s passionate concern for her primate research subjects and primates in general is an example of this Naturalistic Animism. Those who also believe in unseen spirits, faeries, and so on, would be examples of Spiritual Animism. Most neopagans and new agers would be in this category.

As to Gaian Earth Religion, this category derives the term *Gaian* from James Lovelock’s Gaia Hypothesis, a scientific model that understands planet Earth as a single physiological system that in many ways behaves as a self-regulating organism. Lovelock took the name for his model from the ancient Greek earth goddess, Gaia. While the hypothesis remains scientifically controversial, the model has been embraced

within many contemporary nature religions, both in America and globally, such that *Gaia* is now an alternative name for our planet among those, both naturalistic and supernaturalistic, who see our planet as an organismic, holistic whole.

The boundaries within Taylor's Dark Green Religion model are not hard and fast. While one is either open to supernatural existences or not, one can be both animistic and Gaian in one's outlook. Many, probably most, manifestations of nature religion would embrace both understandings. Thus, both the supernaturalistic neopagan or new agers and the naturalistic research scientists can and do voice understandings of nature that are both animistic and Gaian within the meanings of this model.

Context for Emerging Nature Religion in the United States

As of 2008, seventy-six percent of Americans self-identify as Christian (a ten percent decline since 1990). Christianity has traditionally been understood as the mirror opposite of nature religion, and it is likely that most American Christians would still agree that one of the most essential tenets of Christianity is that God is the creator of the universe and exists in a realm that is apart from this creation, even if that deity is understood to be aware of and in some sense involved in the physical cosmos revealed by science. As noted above, to be called a pantheist is to be branded with "a 'heresy' label of the worst kind" (Tillich 1951, 233). This animosity toward even partially pantheistic understandings of reality flows out of traditional interpretations of the Hebrew Bible, an ancient collection of writings that is held sacred by Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The ancient pagan religions that the ancient Israelites sought to supplant were notable for the way in which they understood the physical forces of nature as personified gods. The gods were part of nature, not outside of it. Ancient Israel initially shared in the polytheism of the ancient Near East, even while exalting its tribal god as the best and most powerful of these gods. Over time, the ancient Israelites slowly shed their polytheism, and probably by the time of Israel's return from Babylonian captivity in the fifth century BCE, Judaism became known for a rigid monotheism that understood its God not only as singular but also as radically separate from and transcendent over nature, an innovation in human metaphysical understandings up to that point in human history. This led to a newly exalted understanding of the place of humanity within the created order. In this Jewish understanding, only humanity was made in the image of God, and God ranked humanity in a hierarchical

order just below the divine beings known as angels. Because of this professed spiritual superiority over the rest of creation, ancient Judaists believed that their God had given humanity dominion over the rest of creation and had commanded that humanity subdue the earth and extract from it all that was necessary for human support. Ancient Judaism then passed on this diminished concept of nature to the later emerging religions of Christianity and Islam. Upon the emergence of Christianity, one of its earliest proponents, Paul of Tarsus, restated the prohibition on nature worship in his New Testament letter to the Romans, emphasizing that only the transcendent God of the universe, not God's creation, was to be worshiped. This prohibition was then taken up by Islam in the seventh century CE. As the historian Clarence Glacken (1967) noted, the "theme that [hu]man[s], sinful though [t]he[y] be, occup[y] a position on earth comparable to that of God in the universe, as a personal possession, a realm of stewardship, has been one of the key ideas in the religious and philosophical thought of Western civilization regarding [humanity's] place in nature" (p. 155).

This subordinate role for nature as conceived by Christianity—and for the inferior status of aboriginal peoples in the Americas that were understood as being improperly engaged in nature worship—was a central justification for European conquest of the Americas, and it provided support for American ideas of Manifest Destiny that fueled westward expansion and genocidal policies toward Amerindians. When William Bradford stepped off the *Mayflower*, he perceived a "hideous and desolate wilderness." Environmental historian Roderick Nash (2001) interprets this harsh reaction as having two components. First, the natural environment they encountered was unfamiliar and was a formidable threat to the new immigrants' very survival. Second, in large measure as a result of their Christian ideology, they imagined wild country as a moral vacuum fit only for nature-worshipping pagan rites that they were mandated to civilize for the glory of "nation, race, and God" (33). The more the settlers conquered the wilderness by civilizing it, the greater their sense of achievement (38). Nash notes that Tocqueville, that early observer of the American experience, observed that living in the wilds "produced a bias against them" (43).

It is against this Abrahamic backdrop that nature religion eventually emerged in the United States. For all their various differences, American nature religions share in common a rejection of every aspect of the foregoing Abrahamic ideology about nature. With the exception of the emerging strands within the Abrahamic religions described below,

which are developing new theories for overcoming their nature-denigrating past, many nature religions in the United States share a common self-identity as “not Christian.” This shared self-identity was strongly reinforced by the publication in 1967 of Lynn White’s still hugely influential essay, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis.” There, White declared that “in its Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen,” (1205) and opined that much if not most environmental degradation is directly traceable to Christianity’s radical anthropocentrism. White’s essay was seized upon by the then still nascent emerging nature religions and is still widely cited by nature religion advocates, and it continues to reinforce the above-described self identity. While the accuracy of White’s thesis is still debated in academic circles, it is accepted as self-evident within many strands of nature religion.

The Beginnings of Nature Religion in America

A decisive influence on American nature religion was the eighteenth-century Swedish scientist and religious ecstatic Emanuel Swedenborg. Largely forgotten now, Swedenborg was one of the most widely read authors in antebellum nineteenth-century America who believed God had given him the power, through visions, to travel in spirit to other planes of existence. To Swedenborg, while God might transcend the cosmos and exist apart from it, God also existed within and interpenetrated the natural order. Because of this, the natural world was divine and God communicated to humans through nature. Thus, Swedenborg was an early pantheist before the term had even been coined and was a strong influence on the American literary giant, Ralph Waldo Emerson. Swedenborg’s ideas are very evident in Emerson’s seminal pantheistic essay, *Nature*, published in 1836. Emerson thus serves as an important divergent fork in the development of American nature religion. One stream descends from Emerson, through Thoreau, John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Abbey, and current manifestations of religious naturalism—such as deep ecology and naturalistic pantheism—that deny the supernatural but ecstatically embrace the physical reality in which humans find themselves. However, Emerson also influenced Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, an early American spiritualist. Quimby’s student, Mary Baker Eddy, founded the new American religion of Christian Science, which, along with Theosophy and New Thought imported from Britain, descended into their current manifestations in New Age religious ideas that

radically deny physical reality or any ultimate importance to physical matter.

Neopaganism and New Age

Some dictionaries define *paganism* as any non-Abrahamic religion. This definition is waning. If surviving Amerindian spiritualities are thought of as shamanistic religions, neopaganism is a fairly recently minted nature religion that has shamanistic elements but which claims descent out of the pre-Christian aboriginal religions of Northern Europe. Wicca, one of the most widespread and well-known forms of neopaganism in both Europe and North America, initially claimed to be the revived modern continuation of an unbroken line of witch covens that survived underground during nearly two millennia of oppression and persecution. Wicca was founded by Gerald B. Gardner, a retired British civil servant. He claimed to have been initiated by a surviving secret order of witches in 1939, which he then wrote about fictionally. It is now realized that Gardner borrowed from magician Aleister Crowley, writer D.H. Lawrence, Freemasonry, spiritualism, archeology, and many other sources, to synthesize Wicca. Most Wiccans now acknowledge they are not carrying forward an ancient line of unbroken practices from the past, but most will claim they are revitalizing and reinventing ancient practices from pre-Christian Britain.

Wiccans, as well as other neopagans, see the divine as immanent in nature; its goddesses and gods live in the moon, the stars, the earth, and the bodies of humans. The gods, humans, and the rest of nature are all sacred and interconnected. Thus, the divine is in the world, not outside it. Wiccans and other neopagans often are involved in environmental activism, both radical and conventional. Graham Harvey, scholar of contemporary paganism, describes it as a “label for a diversity of spiritual movements and practices focused, in a variety of ways, on the celebration of nature,” movements which are “world-affirming even, or especially, when it confronts what it perceives as threats to ecological diversity or the sanctity of natural life. Its engagement with physicality re-enchants the world not as resource or environment but as a community” (2005, 1250). Neopagans can be both pure pantheists or dualists, with a strong tilt to the far end of the pantheist scale.

While New Agers are often lumped together with neopaganism by many in the dominant Christian culture, New Age religion is, in a number of ways, the opposite of neopaganism. Neopaganism embraces matter and physicality.

New Age practitioners often deny the reality of matter and extol the primacy of spirit. As one New Age practitioner puts it, “We’re not physical beings who have spiritual experiences; we are spirit having physical experiences.” New Agers nevertheless fit well within the category of pure pantheism. The physical may be an illusion, but it’s a divine illusion, a manifestation of the divine, perfect spirit.

However, despite their differences concerning the reality and/or importance of matter, there are commonalities within the two groups as well. Sarah Pike, in her investigations of both “New Agers and Neopagans,” notes that they believe in a highly diverse group of “gods and spirit helpers” that “they contact . . . in ritualized settings. Some of the entities they honor exist on a separate plane of reality, while others are extraterrestrials with special messages intended to improve life on this planet.” Further, in terms of practices, New Agers and Neopagans “consult astrologers and tarot cards, the *I Ching* and other divinatory techniques for guidance in life choices and to further self knowledge. They appropriate the spiritual riches of other cultures, including Tibetan Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, Egyptian, American Indian, and even some Christian beliefs and practices. They put statues of the Buddha or Hindu or Egyptian deities on their home altars alongside objects such as pentacles, candles, crystals, and goddess figurines” (Pike, 2004, 14–15).

Where the two groups often diverge is in the realm of political activism. Neopagans in general are more likely to be involved with active political engagement on environmental issues, and they indeed view political activism as a form of ritual earth veneration. New agers as a group tend to be more focused on self-improvement through deepened spiritual awareness, and they often recoil from active political engagements because of the negativity they associate with the messiness of direct engagement with what New Agers often see as corrupt political institutions. New Agers as a group see their efforts toward greater spiritual enlightenment as a purer form of activism, the benefits of which will then seep out into the larger culture, thereby improving it. These are, however, broad generalizations, as many neopagans avoid political activism and many New Agers are very committed environmental activists involved in politics and lobbying.

Nature Veneration within Mainstream Christianity

Two schools of Christian thought that emphasize divine immanence in nature rather than divine transcendence over nature have emerged and acquired increasing influence over

the last half century within mainstream Christianity. They are *process theology* (as being derived from the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead) and *creation spirituality*. Of course, these new theologies are usually regarded as heretical or at least suspect by conservative Christians, being viewed as against Paul’s prohibition of pantheistic understandings of the divine. To refute this critique, proponents of these immanent theologies often rely on the relatively new metaphysical label discussed above, *panentheism*. This term was popularized in the United States during the 1950s by philosopher and theologian Charles Hartshorne. Contemporary Christian thinkers who use this label are careful to distinguish it from *pantheism*. The OED defines pantheism as “a belief or philosophical theory that God is immanent in or identical with the universe,” while defining panentheism as the “theory or belief that God encompasses and interpenetrates the universe but at the same time is greater than and independent of it.” Conservative branches of Christianity still hold to a completely dualistic understanding of God and maintain that the divine realm is entirely separate from the mundane universe in which humanity resides, even if that God is aware of events in the physical realm and may miraculously intervene on occasion. In mainline to liberal streams of Christianity, panentheistic interpretations of divinity are frequently advanced, often citing the account of Paul’s sermon to the Athenians for scriptural support. There, Paul, quoting with approval an unspecified Greek poet, declared that God “is not far from each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said” (Acts 17:28 NRSV). This verse imagines a much more immanent, less transcendent God. This passage is one of the most quoted passages by liberal Christian theologians who seek to articulate a more earth-friendly Christianity reconciled with contemporary ecological and evolutionary science. These branches of Christianity usually embrace ecological science as demonstrating the interdependence of things, and they frequently draw on ecology as an exhortation to return humanity to an Arcadian garden of harmony with nature.

These theorists usually claim to accept evolutionary science. However, as Lisa Sideris has noted, liberal Christian theorists often de-emphasize or outright deny that natural selection operates solely in a manner that is blind, random, and purposeless. Instead, even the most liberal Christian thinkers still affirm belief in some form of conscious, supernatural deity that controls or at least influences events within earthly existence, including the manner in which evolution

occurs, even if this deity interpenetrates the whole cosmos. However, there are small movements within Christianity that understand the processes of evolution and their physical manifestations as the primary divine reality and accept its random nature, such as the Christian deep ecology and Christian pantheism.

Deep Ecology and Christian Pantheism

The term *deep ecology* was coined by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess in 1972 to name and thereafter identify a branch of environmental philosophy that declares nature has intrinsic value independent from its utility to humans, and nature should be allowed to flourish and continue its evolutionary unfolding. Naess distinguished deep ecology from what he termed “shallow” ecology or that type of environmental concern that worried only about adverse effects upon humans. Also very influential as a founding text of deep ecology is Edward Abbey’s *Desert Solitaire*, where Abbey extolled the virtue of America’s desert southwest as a sacred place where people could discover the nonanthropocentric value of nature, a sacred realm with its own value apart from its instrumental value to humans.

As a belief system that venerates nature, it is properly understood as a form of nature religion, one that has been especially influential in various segments of American environmentalism, both conventional and radical. Within the radical environmentalist movement known as *Earth First!* (a movement known for its use of civil disobedience), deep ecology and various types of neopaganism are often melded together to create new forms of American nature-venerating religion.

More surprising perhaps, deep ecology has also influenced branches of progressive Christian thought. These streams of Christian deep ecology and Christian pantheism move decisively in the direction of a naturalistic worldview that embraces the idea that new scientific understandings of the cosmos may necessarily overturn earlier understandings of the divine. For this new form of Christianity, securing a place in an afterlife is no longer a primary goal. Instead, finding the sacred in this cosmos in which humanity is embedded is understood as the truth that sets humanity free, not continued devotion to traditional Christian doctrines that are seen as no longer credible in light of contemporary science. Instead, the central command of the sage of Nazareth to love God and love your neighbor is understood to include both a humanistic and ecological ethic that extends the circle of moral concern beyond humanity to the whole

of creation, which in turn is understood as the primary, perhaps only, sacred entity.

In fully embracing evolutionary and ecological science and the model of nature provided by it, these Christians often reject all elements of supernaturalism and reject or are at least agnostic about claims of an afterlife. Individuals in such movements see themselves as still Christian in that they still believe in God, even though their God is merely physical reality and its attendant natural laws; they still revere Jesus as an important teacher of ethics while rejecting that his execution had any particular cosmic redeeming significance; and they still appreciate the Christian Bible as their common inspirational text, while rejecting it as in any sense magically inspired by some external deity. Fully accepting reality as revealed by contemporary science is central to these Christians and thus is a Christian manifestation of the new religious movement of religious naturalism.

Religious Naturalism

Religious Naturalism, described as such by its adherents, is another new movement that consciously embraces naturalistic assumptions about the cosmos as revealed by ecological, evolutionary, and all branches of science and yet still insists on using the term “religious.” The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science in 2003 developed a statement of religious naturalism that declared in part that “Our religious quest is informed and guided by the deepening and evolving understandings fostered by scientific inquiry We may describe our religious sensibilities using various words that have various connotations—like the sacred, or the source, or god—but it is our common naturalistic orientation that generates our shared sense of place, gratitude, and joy.” These religious naturalists self-consciously describe their project as constructing systems of human meaning based on what is scientifically revealed about the cosmos.

Religious naturalism appears in unexpected ways. For instance, two well-known advocates of atheism, Daniel Dennett and Sam Harris, nevertheless use traditional religious language to promote their brands of atheism. Dennett (2006, 245) declares that “the world is sacred,” and Harris says, “there is clearly a sacred dimension to our existence and coming to terms with it could well be the highest purpose of human life” (2004, 16). Even Richard Dawkins, another zealous advocate of atheism, makes clear in his book *The God Delusion* (2006, 14) that he is not attacking “the pantheistic reverence [for the cosmos] which many of us share with its most distinguished exponent, Albert Einstein.”

Conclusion

Recent surveys of forms of American religiosity show that nature religions are growing as an overall proportion within American religions. If the current scientific predictions for climate-related environmental stress over the coming decades prove accurate, environmental issues will likely take on a greater sense of urgency, suggesting that nature religions will play an increasing role in American culture.

See also *Bioethics*; *Christian Science*; *Environment and Ecology: Since the Mid-Nineteenth Century*; *Health, Disease, and Medicine*; *Neo-Paganism*; *New Age Religion(s)*; *Philosophical Theology*; *Science*; *Systematic Theology*; *Wicca and Witchcraft*.

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Neo-Orthodoxy

Neo-orthodoxy usually refers to a constellation of twentieth-century Protestant theological movements that shared a critique of theological liberalism and called for a return to classical Reformation themes. Forged in the crucible of World War I, neo-orthodoxy registered the disillusionment of religious thinkers who traced Western civilization's moral failure to the shortcomings of theological liberalism. Neo-orthodox critics blamed liberals for marrying Christianity to the corrupt culture of the modern West, a culture vitiated by nationalism, capitalism, scientism, and secularism. This unholy union, they believed, had stripped Protestantism of its prophetic witness and transformed it into a mere "culture-religion." Seeking to free Christianity from its servitude to bourgeois culture, neo-orthodox thinkers counseled a return to the wellspring of Protestant theology: the Reformation, with its emphasis on God's sovereignty, human sinfulness, and the primacy of faith. What began as a reaction against theological liberalism soon flowered into a host of constructive theological projects, each inspired in some way by the "dialectical theology" or "theology of crisis" of the Swiss Reformed pastor and theologian Karl Barth (1886–1968). First taking root in Switzerland and Germany, neo-orthodoxy soon spread, especially to Sweden, Scotland, England, and the United States, where the brothers Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971) and H. Richard Niebuhr (1894–1962) and the German émigré Paul Tillich (1886–1965) became its most prominent representatives.

However, the term *neo-orthodoxy* is something of a misnomer. No neo-orthodox thinker sought either to return to

an unadulterated Reformation theology or to create a new orthodoxy for a new age. Doing so would have entailed rejecting theological liberalism outright, when in fact neo-orthodox thinkers shared much in common with liberals. Despite believing that historicism had been taken too far, they accepted the higher criticism and rejected biblical literalism. While harboring misgivings about the social sciences, they embraced the findings of the natural sciences, including evolutionary theory. And, like their liberal counterparts, they drew on distinctly modern resources, including existentialism and dialectical method, to analyze the meaning of the Reformation in their day. While neo-orthodoxy captures the movement's retreat from liberalism, it obscures the fact that neo-orthodox thinkers proceeded selectively, jettisoning only certain elements of liberalism and embracing only certain aspects of orthodoxy.

Indeed, these figures' almost universal rejection of the "neo-orthodox" label has led scholars to question the term's accuracy and legitimacy. The historian Sydney Ahlstrom noted in 1957 that detractors coined the label, which helps to explain Barth's preference for "theology of the Word" and Niebuhr's for "Christian realism." Although most scholars of American religion have labeled the Niebuhr brothers and Tillich neo-orthodox thinkers, they have disagreed about other figures. In recent years, even such a narrow reading has come under fire from the historian Gary Dorrien, who terms the Niebuhr brothers and Tillich "neo-liberal" and holds that even Barth owed much to liberalism. According to Dorrien, the term *neo-orthodoxy* downplays the continuities between neo-orthodox thinkers and their liberal foils and reifies neo-orthodox critics' historically inaccurate accounts of liberalism. H. Richard Niebuhr's oft-quoted satirical sketch—"A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross" (1937, 131)—exemplifies the caricature of liberalism common in neo-orthodox writings. Dorrien argues that the Niebuhr brothers "unfairly equated the entire liberal tradition with its most idealistic and immanentist versions," a charge given credence by their later admissions to that effect (2003, 522–523). His decision to jettison "neo-orthodoxy" in favor of "neo-liberalism" raises a crucial question: Has "neo-orthodoxy" outlived its usefulness, or does it still possess explanatory power?

Neo-Orthodoxy as a Set of Sensibilities

One way to mitigate the danger of making a straw man of liberalism while simultaneously underscoring the strong link

between neo-orthodoxy's critical and constructive dimensions is to view it not as a rigid set of tenets but rather as a flexible set of sensibilities, shared to varying degrees and with differing points of emphasis by a range of thinkers and theological schools. Each of these sensibilities addressed a perceived fault of liberalism:

- Believing that liberals overemphasized God's immanence in human cultures, and even conflated his purposes with theirs, neo-orthodox thinkers emphasized God's transcendence and sovereignty, describing him as "wholly other" and declaring that "God is God" and "man is man."
- Believing that liberals had embraced the Enlightenment's naively optimistic view of human nature, neo-orthodox thinkers articulated a biblical view of human nature as inherently sinful.
- Believing that liberals overestimated man's self-sufficiency, neo-orthodox thinkers emphasized redemption through Christ and the saving role of God's grace for a fallen humanity.
- Believing that liberals placed too much emphasis on Jesus' ethical example, neo-orthodox thinkers described the Word of God and the Christ of faith as the centerpieces of the Christian tradition.
- Believing that liberals viewed history as the progressive march of morality and rationality, neo-orthodox thinkers gravitated toward paradox, irony, and dialectic.
- Believing that liberals equated Western bourgeois culture with the kingdom of God and took their views of both God and man from that culture, neo-orthodox thinkers urged Christians to serve as prophetic witnesses to a decadent civilization.

Neo-orthodox thinkers combined and developed these sensibilities in myriad ways, thereby constituting a loose but self-conscious discursive family.

Neo-Orthodoxy's European Origins

Neo-orthodoxy originated in European theological circles, where Karl Barth led the revolt against the regnant liberalism of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889), and Barth's teacher Adolf von Harnack (1851–1930). Disillusioned by von Harnack and other German theologians' uncritical support for World War I, Barth skewered liberalism in a commentary on Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* (1918, rev. 1921). He discovered a "strange

new world within the Bible,” one that suggested an entirely new theological approach to modernity. Barth sharply separated God’s realm from that known to man, insisting that only God could bridge the gulf. Liberals, he charged, regarded religious experience as the criterion of truth and saw in God simply “man writ large.”

Other theologians, including the Swiss pastors Eduard Thurneysen (1888–1974) and Emil Brunner (1889–1966), the German pastor Friedrich Gogarten (1887–1967), and the German New Testament professor Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976), joined Barth in elaborating neo-orthodoxy in the 1920s, especially in the journal *Zwischen den Zeiten* (*Between the Times*). By the early 1930s, rifts had opened up between these figures (most famously between Barth and Brunner over the status of natural theology), but such divisions merely facilitated the elaboration of multiple streams of neo-orthodox thought. Barth toiled from 1932 until his death in 1968 on the landmark thirteen-volume *Church Dogmatics*, while other German and Swiss thinkers took neo-orthodoxy in different directions. Meanwhile, new clusters of neo-orthodox thinkers emerged in Scandinavia, Great Britain, and, most influentially, the United States.

The Niebuhr Brothers

Although it is difficult to measure Barth’s impact precisely, the rise of European neo-orthodoxy added impetus and focus, during the late 1920s and early 1930s, to an emerging critique of theological liberalism among young American theologians. Whereas Barth and his followers witnessed the horrors of World War I up close, few Americans experienced its devastation firsthand. American neo-orthodox thinkers responded to different crises, most notably the moral challenges generated by the rise of consumer capitalism, the spiral downward into the Great Depression, and the spread of totalitarianism. These crises weighed heavily on Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr, the primary architects of an American brand of neo-orthodoxy known as “Christian realism” or “realistic theology.” The Niebuhr brothers grew up in the tightly knit, German-speaking community of Wright City, Missouri, where their father, a recent immigrant, was a pastor in the German Evangelical Synod of North America. Following in his footsteps, both Reinhold and H. Richard decided to join the ministry, studying first at Elmhurst College in Illinois, then at St. Louis’ Eden Theological Seminary, and finally at Yale Divinity School, where Reinhold earned an M.A. in 1915 and H. Richard a Ph.D. in 1924.

Despite parallels in their career choices and early educational paths, Reinhold and H. Richard possessed strikingly different temperaments. The disparity in their graduate educations both reflected and reinforced this divergence. Prevented by his father’s death in 1913 from considering a Ph.D., Reinhold, a talented but restless student, accepted a pastorate at Bethel Evangelical Church in Detroit upon the completion of his master’s thesis in 1915. Over the next thirteen years, Reinhold transformed Bethel from a small German American congregation into a flourishing interdenominational church. A gifted orator and a prolific writer, he joined the college speaking circuit and penned frequent contributions to the *Christian Century* and other liberal journals. Wearing many hats suited Reinhold, whose tremendous charisma and boundless energy demanded a range of outlets. Serving a middle-class congregation on the outskirts of a booming industrial center exposed him to the strategic dilemmas that consumer capitalism posed to advocates of social justice. The success of Reinhold’s first book, a compilation of occasional pieces provocatively titled *Does Civilization Need Religion?* (1927), earned him both the editorship of the *World Tomorrow* and a position at New York’s Union Theological Seminary in 1928.

H. Richard, the more cautious and studious of the two, took the long route through his graduate studies. Wide-ranging interests in theology, philosophy, history, psychology, and sociology led him to take courses at half a dozen universities before earning a PhD from Yale. H. Richard taught at Eden from 1919 until 1931, excepting a brief stint from 1924 to 1927 as Elmhurst’s president. Under the direction of his Yale mentor, D. C. Macintosh (1877–1948), an advocate of “empirical theology” and an admirer of the pragmatist William James (1842–1910), H. Richard wrote a dissertation on the German theologian and historian Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923), whose work had not yet appeared in English. H. Richard’s first book, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929), featured a modified version of Troeltsch’s claim that the dialectical interplay of church, sect, and mysticism had fueled Western historical development. His exploration of the church-sect dynamic in American history established him as a pioneering sociologist of religion and brought an appointment at Yale Divinity School in 1931.

American Discontents and European Influences

Despite being the leading voices of American neo-orthodoxy, the Niebuhr brothers did not create the movement out of whole cloth. Nor did it emerge solely in response to the

importation of European ideas. Although Barth's work became an important point of reference after the late 1920s, American neo-orthodoxy originated earlier in the decade as an indigenous revolt within liberal Protestantism. For instance, Reinhold Niebuhr's writings of the mid-1920s already display a growing frustration with the stale progressivism and cloying optimism he detected in American liberal theology. In 1926, similar frustrations characterized Francis P. Miller's edited volume *The Church and the World*, refuting the liberal theory of missions, and Henry P. Van Dusen's *In Quest of Life's Meaning*, challenging the liberal view of Jesus as a moral paragon. Analogous misgivings surfaced among secular thinkers, as in Joseph Wood Krutch's *The Modern Temper* and Walter Lippmann's *A Preface to Morals*, both published in 1929.

Not until the late 1920s and early 1930s did Barth's thought become a focal point of American theological discussion. A few articles appeared in 1926, but Barth's decisive entrance into the American conversation awaited Douglas Horton's translation of his essays, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, in 1928, and the later publication of two largely sympathetic accounts of his thought: Wilhelm Pauck's *Karl Barth: Prophet of a New Christianity?* (1931) and Walter Lowrie's *Our Concern with the Theology of Crisis* (1932). An English translation of Barth's *Epistle to the Romans* in 1933 further raised the profile of his ideas. Yet despite these developments, American neo-orthodox thinkers continued to voice serious objections to Barth's theology even as they embraced the broad contours of his diagnosis of the modern condition and his critique of liberalism. Taking issue with Barth's radical separation of God from human history, his use of dialectical method, and his antihistoricist recourse to the letter of biblical texts, American neo-orthodox thinkers crafted their own distinctive responses to the spiritual crisis.

The Niebuhr brothers' engagement with European neo-orthodoxy deepened considerably after a continental sojourn in 1930. Except for two weeks in the USSR, they spent most of their time in Germany. There, Reinhold noted "a general feeling that liberalism runs into the sand of relativism," a fate the Barthians sought to avoid through "a new dogmatism" (quoted in Fox, 1985, 123). Two years later, Reinhold penned the book that garnered him—over his protests—the designation "neo-orthodox." *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) targeted not only theological liberals, whom Niebuhr insisted should use force to promote political justice, but also liberalism's secular avatar, the philosopher John Dewey (1859–1952). Criticizing Dewey's emphasis on scientific

method as a means of reform alongside the theologians' call for the social application of love, Niebuhr argued that only a Christian realism emphasizing the pervasiveness of sin could impel individuals to join in the social struggle.

The Niebuhr brothers found valuable resources for such a realistic faith in the work of Paul Tillich, whom they had met in Germany. H. Richard's 1932 translation of Tillich's *The Religious Situation* signaled a new direction for American neo-orthodoxy. Tillich himself relocated to Union Theological Seminary in the fall of 1933, having lost his post in Frankfurt upon Hitler's rise. Steeped in both Barthianism and Marxism, Tillich became a highly valued conversation partner to the Niebuhr brothers, with whom he could speak in his native German. Tillich profoundly influenced the thought of both Niebuhrs by encouraging them to reframe their critique of Barth's emphasis on God's transcendence. Like most other American thinkers, the Niebuhrs initially called Barth a "neo-fundamentalist" or "neo-supernaturalist." Tillich proposed that they couch this charge in Barth's own terms by describing his view of the relationship between God and man as insufficiently dialectical.

In other areas, Reinhold and H. Richard took very different lessons from their respective engagements with Tillich. For his part, Reinhold adopted Tillich's validation of mythical knowledge in his writings of the mid-1930s. Tillich had argued that, though God escaped the grasp of rational thought, he could be known indirectly but intimately through mythical knowledge: symbolic representations of profound truths that could not be captured as scientific propositions. H. Richard, meanwhile, fused Tillich's conception of God as "the ground of being" with the doctrine of original sin, defining God as "the center of value" and sin as the worship of any entity of human construction, such as the nation or the self. In the words of Jon Diefenthaler, Tillich convinced H. Richard that "the infinite appeared as the self-transcending element in everything finite. To bring a religion like Christianity to bear on any human endeavor, therefore, one had only to analyze that endeavor in terms of the 'faith' that motivated it" (Diefenthaler, 1986, 39). These divergent responses to Tillich's critique of Barth appear in the Niebuhr brothers' publications of 1935: H. Richard's contribution to *The Church against the World* and Reinhold's *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*.

The Theological Discussion Group and Beyond

Tillich's arrival in America coincided with the birth of an influential center of neo-orthodox ferment, the Theological

Discussion Group. Founded by Union's Henry P. Van Dusen (1897–1975) in the fall of 1933, the group brought together the Niebuhrs, Tillich, and a cadre of other young theologians and philosophers of religion for twice-yearly discussions. Neo-orthodox critics and those friendlier to liberalism fervently debated issues such as the nature of man, the role of revelation, and the position of the church in the world. According to Richard Wightman Fox, the group ushered Reinhold more fully into the neo-orthodox fold; it had a similar effect on H. Richard, who coauthored *The Church against the World* with two fellow members.

From the early 1930s onward, American neo-orthodoxy differed most clearly from its continental counterpart in its preoccupation with questions of human nature and social ethics, concerns that figured centrally in Reinhold Niebuhr's work. Even Niebuhr's two-volume *Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941/1943), the most systematic formulation of his mature theology, dwelt at length on the history of human social forms and their corresponding conceptions of the person. Niebuhr's activist orientation stood out more clearly still in his most popular books, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (1944) and *The Irony of American History* (1952), which held up Christian realism as the proper response to contemporary political challenges—first Hitler's fascism, then Soviet communism. Indeed, critics have charged that Niebuhr ultimately cared less about theology than politics and thus tended to reason back from a politically derived conception of human nature to a view of God.

Perhaps the most searching critique, although offered cautiously and mostly in private, came from Reinhold's own brother, whom many contemporary interpreters deem the more sophisticated theologian of the two. H. Richard insisted on the primacy of God, not only in human affairs but also in systems of thought. Stressing the inability of sinful human beings to grasp the logic of God's workings in the world, he called for contemplative faith in the face of all political uses of religion. In his only published dispute with his brother, in 1932, H. Richard advanced the seemingly paradoxical claim that withdrawal from the affairs of the world constituted an effective form of religious action. A few years later, with *The Kingdom of God in America* (1937), he helped to launch the "Edwards revival" by arguing that Jonathan Edwards' unswerving belief in God's absolute sovereignty furnished powerful resources for social engagement, lost to subsequent liberals. In *The Meaning of Revelation* (1941), H. Richard addressed the relationship between Christian revelation and human experience by distinguishing

between external and internal views of history: the views, respectively, of subsequent interpreters concerned with questions of causation and of participants in the stream of history itself. During World War II, H. Richard denounced "utilitarian Christianity," a nationalistic tendency to identify Christianity with democratic institutions. H. Richard's postwar writings cinched his theological legacy. He dubbed Christ "the transformer of culture" in *Christ and Culture* (1951) and distinguished, in *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* (1960), between a truly God-centered, monotheistic perspective and the polytheistic and henotheistic perversions of Christianity found in nationalism and humanism.

During the same years, Paul Tillich established himself as a theologian to reckon with. Freed by his increasing facility in English from the linguistic isolation he had experienced during the interwar years, Tillich garnered a wider American audience with a collection of essays, *The Protestant Era* (1948), and a volume of sermons, *The Shaking of the Foundations* (1948). However, it was the first volume of his *Systematic Theology* (1951) and *The Courage to Be* (1952) that put Tillich decisively on the theological map. These two contributions brought an appointment at Harvard Divinity School in 1955, after Tillich's retirement from Union. There, he published the second volume of *Systematic Theology*; the third and final installment appeared after a move to the University of Chicago in 1962. By the time of his death in 1965, Tillich was widely recognized as one of America's greatest theologians.

The Impact of Neo-Orthodoxy

More than any other figure, Reinhold Niebuhr made American neo-orthodoxy resonate in the wider culture. Within the walls of seminaries and divinity schools, the writings of Emil Brunner, more than those of Barth or the American thinkers, defined neo-orthodoxy for postwar religious thinkers. Beyond them, however, Reinhold Niebuhr symbolized neo-orthodoxy. Known today as a central figure in the history of American liberalism, Niebuhr was one of the most important public intellectuals of the mid-twentieth century. At the height of his influence, from the 1930s through the 1950s, Niebuhr's version of neo-orthodoxy influenced a generation of religious activists, most famously Martin Luther King Jr., and scores of secular intellectuals and political leaders, the so-called atheists for Niebuhr. The historians Perry Miller (1905–1963) and Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (1917–2007), the literary critic Lionel Trilling (1905–1975), and the international relations

expert Hans Morgenthau (1904–1980), to name just a few, found in Niebuhr's writings a realistic sense of the limits of human reason that both challenged and facilitated America's newfound sense of itself as a world leader. The continued invocations of Niebuhr by contemporary politicians and public intellectuals attest to his legacy's durability.

Niebuhr's thought contributed much to the cultural tenor of American life, influencing Americans' ethical sensibilities and national self-concept during World War II and the early Cold War years. Reinhold Niebuhr and Tillich also prepared the ground for Americans' brief but intense postwar engagement with existentialism. Neo-orthodoxy's preoccupation with personal, ethical commitment in the absence of a rationally knowable good mapped easily onto the existentialist concern for authentic action in a world devoid of meaning.

During the 1960s, neo-orthodoxy's fortunes waned as a new generation of theologians and public intellectuals questioned the "realism" of those who had mired America in the Vietnam War. Grappling with the implications of religious difference in an increasingly pluralistic and secular age, some heralded a post-Protestant era, while others spoke of the death of God. Liberation theologians issued the most thoroughgoing challenge to neo-orthodoxy, trading the emphasis on a judging God for a vision of Jesus as a social radical. Members of historically marginalized groups, including women, argued that neo-orthodoxy's emphasis on human sinfulness offered a perfect corrective for the powerful but affected those with an entrenched sense of powerlessness very differently. Some even charged that neo-orthodoxy facilitated American imperialism and a sense of national self-righteousness. Yet for better or worse, neo-orthodoxy made its mark. Just as liberal theology served as both neo-orthodoxy's blueprint and its foil, so too did the movement influence the theologies that emerged in tandem with it (biblical theology) and in its wake (postliberal theology, liberation theology, secular theology, and radical orthodoxy, among others). Beyond the realm of theology, meanwhile, neo-orthodox sensibilities continue to captivate those who seek to understand what our beliefs about God and human nature have to do with the theory and practice of democracy.

See also *Bible: Interpretation of*; *Death of God Theology*; *History of Religions, Approaches*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Pragmatism*; *Protestant Liberalism*; *Religious Studies*; *Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*; *Social Ethics*; *Social Gospel*; *Systematic Theology*; *World War I*; *World War II*.

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Neo-Paganism

Neo-paganism, or contemporary Paganism as many of its practitioners prefer to call it, is a loosely affiliated group of religions or spiritual paths that share a notion of divinity within nature, typically celebrate both a male and female element to the divine, and in most instances practice forms of divination and magic. The term Paganism, like the term Christianity, covers a number of different sects or denominations. Just as Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Evangelicals, and Calvinists would all be considered Christian, so too Wiccans, Witches, Druids, and Asatru, to name a few groups, would all be considered Pagan. The term pagan comes from the Latin for country dwellers. When Christianity was a new religion spreading through Europe, the term was applied to nonbelievers because of the lag in conversion between urban and rural dwellers. Most contemporary Pagans believe they are worshipping the old deities, reviving older sensibilities, and returning to the ritual practices of the religions that were practiced before the spread of Christianity. Most contemporary Pagans see what they are doing as a recreation or re-imagining of pre-Christian religions. Although a few

groups and individuals still claim an unbroken link to the pre-Christian European religions, this is now rare. No evidence has been found to support claims of continuous practice since antiquity of any contemporary Pagan group.

The largest sect or denomination within Paganism is Wicca; however, two other forms of Paganism are currently increasing in popularity: eclectic Paganism and ethnic Paganism. The former involves individuals who combine beliefs and practices of a number of different traditions and at times poetry, mythology, or science fiction with their own innovation. Ethnic Pagans revive or recreate the pre-Christian religious practices of one part of the world. For example, Druids focus on the Celtic tradition, Asatru worship the northern gods and goddesses, and still others are oriented toward the Greek or Egyptian religions of antiquity. These groups largely rely on mythological, archeological, and anthropological records of these distinct areas to create their rituals and mythology.

The best estimate of the number of Contemporary Pagans in the United States is provided by the American Religious Identity survey (ARIS), which was conducted in 2001. This survey found that there were 307,000 Pagans in the United States. Most scholars of Paganism believe that the ARIS method of phone interviews may have resulted in some Pagans not stating their true religious identity, fearing discrimination for their practice of a nontraditional religion. Internet usage of Pagan Web sites, book purchases, and other indicators also suggest that ARIS's numbers are probably low. Given continued rapid growth in the religion, it would be safe to estimate that there are at least twice as many Pagans as indicated by ARIS.

Surveys of contemporary Pagans consistently paint a picture of a group that is well-educated, middle-class, mostly white, with more women as members than men. Women are drawn to the religion because it includes a female aspect of the divine. Some women, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, came to Paganism as an extension of, and conforming to their commitment to feminism. Women's spirituality groups and feminist witches typically venerate the goddess or goddesses to the exclusion of the god(s). The Asatru, who worship the northern warrior god and goddess of fertility, tend to have a larger proportion of men than women as do the Druids.

Beliefs

There is no single set of beliefs that all Pagans adhere to, nor is there any central bureaucracy that has the authority to

determine who is or is not a Pagan. Similarly to Eastern religions, beliefs on the whole are less important in most branches of Paganism than experience of the divine, the otherworld, or the spiritual. Nonetheless, there tend to be some beliefs and practices that are common among the different forms of Paganism. Michael York suggests that Pagans tend to share "an essential this-worldliness," as well as a belief in the "earth as sacred source or mother of existence." Additionally York notes that Paganism includes a belief in pantheism, animism, polytheism, humanism, and naturalism, although not all Pagans would adhere to all of these beliefs. For some Pagans the deities are real beings that exist in another plane and who regularly influence human events; for others the deities are Jungian archetypes; and for still others the deities exist within each of us, or are thought forms. As York notes, most Pagans are polytheists but certainly not all. Some believe that the divine is so complex that the only way humans can interact with and understand it is to put names to aspects of the divine. Others worship only the goddess or a dual divinity, the goddess and the god.

Most contemporary Pagans believe in reincarnation, typically after a period of reflection in the Other World. But this is not a religion that focuses on the hereafter; it is a this-worldly religion. As York describes it, Paganism "rejoices in the cyclical round of nature, of birth, death and rebirth, as an open-ended plethora of possibility. . . . Earth is . . . the divine womb of unlimited challenge, discovery. . . . It is to be honored . . . cherished as a gift." Part of the Pagan celebration of nature is celebrating the human body and human sexuality in all of its varieties.

Practices

Paganism is normally called an earth-based spirituality. The emphasis on nature has resulted in some environmental activists finding a home within this religion. There is a debate within Pagan studies about whether or not the religion results in a romanticizing of nature with no actual change of behavior or activism among the participants who have not entered the religion through either environmentalism or feminism. Helen A. Berger and Douglas Ezzy, in their study of teenagers who are primarily Wiccans or Witches, found that while the religion did not result in the teenagers becoming either activists for feminism or environmentalism, and few took either label, it did influence some aspects of their behavior and attitude.

Pagan rituals celebrate the cycle of the year. Typically Pagans follow the Wiccan Wheel of the Year, which divides

the year into eight major Sabbats celebrating the beginning and height of each season, with the corresponding changes in nature for that season and its implications for people's lives (see also *Wicca and Witchcraft*). For example, Beltane on May first celebrates fertility in nature and in human beings—fertility of creativity and of productivity as well as or instead of reproduction. Some forms of Paganism have a different calendar with fewer or more holidays a year. Most Pagans prefer when possible to do their rituals out of doors, availability of a site and weather permitting. Wiccans normally have their rituals at night, while some other forms of Paganism, for example, Druids, prefer to do their rituals in the daytime. Rituals differ somewhat depending on the form of Paganism practiced but normally involve the creation of sacred space, the calling in the four directions (east, south, west, and north) and the divinities associated with those directions, and a “working” that celebrates the holiday. This working normally entails the reading of poetry, an enactment or a description of the meaning of the holiday, meditation, dancing, singing, and raising of magical energy.

Magic is practiced by most Pagans. Within the religion there is an ethic against using magic to harm or manipulate others. How-to guides often present magic in its most mechanical guise—as a series of steps to get a better job, find love, or secure a parking place. Although most Pagans believe magic works, many object to this mechanistic portrayal of magic. For many Pagans magic is part of a spiritual and religious activity that provides one way in which they contact and open themselves to the divine. Different theories exist among Pagans about how magic works. The two most common theories are (1) there are forces in nature that the magician taps into to have his/her will done, and (2) it is a psychological tool that helps the person focus and believe in themselves so they are able to more efficaciously reach their goals. For example, doing magic to find a job would be said to work because it will make the applicant more diligent while searching for work and more confident when going for an interview. Some groups and individuals believe it is a gift from the deities, although this is a less common belief. Magic is in some ways similar to prayer, but differs in that it is believed the magician has more control of the outcome.

Paganism and Contemporary Society

The growth of contemporary Paganism at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries is part of the increased interest in spirituality throughout the

developed world. Spirituality is a turn to the subjective, in which individuals seek a direct experience of the divine as an element of their own self-growth and development. The world is viewed holistically—that is humans are not seen as separate or superior to other elements of nature, but as part of a web of life. Animals, plants, and even rocks are part of this interconnected web. Within this worldview, holistic medical treatments are frequently sought out and more generally science is seen as only one possible discourse or framework for understanding the world.

Alternative spirituality was part of the larger movement in the 1960s and 1970s of questioning all authority, including that of science, medicine, and religion. This combined with the growth of interest in magical realism, interest in environmentalism, gender equity, and support of diversity all serve as a backdrop in which Paganism has grown as a religion. Initially the religion was learned in small groups. Books, particularly how-to-books, and journals helped to spread the religion, particularly in areas where there might not be a group already formed. The Internet further has helped to spread the religion, as it makes it cheap and easy for people to find information about the religion. It also makes it possible for individuals to participate in online communities. While initially the religion was composed of converts, there is now a second and third generation of Pagans for whom this is their family religion. Although Paganism remains a minority religion, aspects of Pagan beliefs, such as the belief in reincarnation or the use of alternative medicine, are becoming more commonplace throughout Western societies.

See also *Esoteric Movements; Feminism; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Healing; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Internet; Nature and Nature Religion; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements* entries; *Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Spiritualism; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends; Wicca and Witchcraft*.

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Neo-Thomism

Neo-Thomism refers to the nineteenth- and twentieth-century revival of the study of the philosophical and theological thought of Thomas Aquinas. The term is frequently used interchangeably with neo-scholasticism. The identification of Aquinas's work as the pinnacle of scholasticism provides a partial explanation for the equating of the two terms. The transnational character of Catholicism must be considered to understand how Neo-Thomism pervaded American Catholic life and thought in the twentieth century.

Roots in European Catholic Antimodernism

Neo-Thomism represents more than an intellectual movement. It reflects Catholicism's ongoing attempts to orchestrate a unified response to the threat posed by the rise of the modern European state, with its political and social unrest and the concomitant cultural upheaval. The 1848 Italian Revolution crystallized the extent of the threat in the person of Pius IX and the office of the papacy. Neo-Thomism

emerged at this same time. Leading figures included Jesuits, Joseph Kleutgen and Matteo Liberatore, who assisted Pius IX in identifying and condemning modern movements that threatened to undermine not only the papacy but the Catholic faith. Liberalism with its disruptive effects on the social order was viewed as the political and cultural expression of philosophical modernism, exemplified in Kant's turn to the subject. Neo-Thomism lent philosophical credence to ultramontanist—that is, the centralization of ecclesial authority in the papacy—and it justified Pius IX's antimodern stance.

Giocchino Pecci (Leo XIII) learned the merits of Thomism in his seminary education, and, as bishop of Perugia, Italy, he established a Thomist-based seminary curriculum. As Leo XIII, he extended the reach of the Thomist revival beyond his native Italy. In his encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (4 August 1879), he called for a restoration of Christian philosophy through the study of the Angelic Doctor, Thomas Aquinas. Thomism's preeminence among Catholics was further solidified with Pius X's condemnation of modernism in *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907) and reaffirmation of Thomism as the philosophical counter to modernism's evils. The 1917 new Code of Canon Law ensured Thomism's ubiquity in Catholic intellectual life by mandating its use in every Catholic seminary. Pius XI explicitly reaffirmed the centrality of Thomas's philosophy, most notably in his 1923 encyclical *Studiorum Ducem*. Reliance on Thomas Aquinas thus became the standard resource for twentieth-century Catholic philosophy and theology.

Thomist Manuals and Catholic Revival

The majority of Catholics with direct exposure to neo-Thomism were seminarians who studied theological manuals. The manuals organized church teaching in a series of thesis statements, defended deductively through a selective use of scripture and tradition. The deductive approach mirrored a post-Cartesian philosophical rationalism, with its emphasis on the deductive exposition of clear and distinct ideas rather than the thirteenth-century scholasticism of Thomas, where disputed questions provided an organizing hermeneutic.

Neo-Thomism served twentieth-century Catholicism in several ways that the manuals only dimly reflect, and reducing the Thomist revival to its rejection of modern philosophy masks its thoroughly modern character as a totalizing philosophical system. The historian of U.S. Catholicism, Philip Gleason, rightly describes neo-scholasticism as an

“ideology.” It provided a philosophical rationale for a unified Catholic worldview, in which knowledge of the supernatural was possible and thus truth discernible and faith defensible. The cultural historian, Warren Susman, notes the University of Chicago’s interest in Neo-Thomism in the thirties as part of an even broader American movement that aspired to inform society with certain transcendent values. Neo-Thomism, in other words, articulated the philosophical basis for a faith commitment that had implications for every aspect of personal and communal life, including the social, political, economic, and cultural. It is this vision of a world ordered to a supernatural end that that gave rise to the Catholic Revival, a movement that peaked in mid-twentieth century.

The complexities of the Thomist-informed Catholic revival are clearly evident in the works of Etienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain. Gilson’s historical studies of thirteenth-century scholasticism highlighted the varieties of thirteenth-century scholastic thought and thus relativized Thomas’s work. Maritain’s Thomist-inspired engagement with avant-garde artists suggested that Catholicism shared a certain affinity with a world beyond modernity. To further complicate the Neo-Thomist reception and critical to the Catholic Revival was Pius XI’s 1922 call for the laity to engage in Catholic action, which he defined as the laity’s participation in the apostolate of the hierarchy, with a special focus on the restoration of the Christian social order. This restoration of the social order relied upon the Neo-Thomism of *Aeterni Patris*—that is, the restoration of Christian philosophy—or its intellectual impetus.

The Catholic University of America

The Catholic University of America, founded in 1887, played a distinctive role in the American reception of neo-Thomism. Two examples must suffice to illustrate the broad spectrum in reception even at this single institution. Joseph C. Fenton, Massachusetts diocesan priest, and Francis J. Connell, CSsR, heralded scholastic philosophy as a distinct alternative to contemporary philosophy. From their perspective, engagement with modern thought was at best unnecessary and at worst dangerous. Their significant influence came as faculty members in Catholic University of America’s (CUA) Graduate School of Sacred Theology—Fenton, 1938 to 1964, and Connell, 1940 to 1967. Fenton also served as editor of *American Ecclesiastical Review* (1944–1963). Connell contributed over six hundred articles to the same journal and played a key role in the 1942 revision of

the *Baltimore Catechism*, the principal catechetical guide for American Catholics prior to the Second Vatican Council. These two priests’ well-known opposition to John C. Murray’s position on religious liberty has contributed to neo-Thomism’s identification with a rigid, ahistorical, anti-modern Catholic apologetics.

Edward A. Pace, a CUA professor of philosophy and founder of the university’s department of psychology, exemplifies the other end of the Neo-Thomist spectrum. This diocesan priest received a Rome-based education in Thomistic philosophy (Doctor of Sacred Theology [STD], 1886) as well as a Leipzig doctorate (1891) in experimental psychology, studying under Wilhelm Wundt. He maintained active engagement in both Thomistic philosophy and modern psychology until his retirement from CUA in 1935. Founder and first president of the American Catholic Philosophical Society, he served as an editor for the journal *New Scholasticism*. He worked with and influenced another prominent Catholic educator, Thomas Edward Shields. Shields, another CUA faculty member, played a critical role in promoting higher education for women, especially religious; developed a series of Catholic textbooks with Pace; and founded the *Catholic Educational Review*. The appearance of other new journals gives further evidence of Thomism’s growing influence among U.S. Catholic scholars beyond CUA. The Saint Louis Jesuits founded *Modern Schoolman* in 1925, and the *Thomist* first appeared in 1939, published at the behest of the Dominicans of St. Joseph Province, founders of Providence College, as well as faculty members at the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D.C.

Catholic Action and Social Justice

Papally endorsed Catholic action provided an incentive for educating the laity in Thomism. Undergraduates at most Catholic colleges and universities encountered Thomism in their philosophy requirements, and some began to study Thomas as part of a theology for the laity. Evidence of efforts to increase access to Thomas includes the 1947 Benziger publication in three volumes of the *Summa Theologica*, the “First Complete American Edition in Three Volumes, literally translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province.” Benziger had previously published the fourth volume, *A Companion to the Summa* (1938–1942), by Walter A. Farrell, OP. Interest in the theological education of Catholic college students prompted Sister Madeleva Wolff, CSC, president of Saint Mary’s women’s college, to establish Saint Mary’s Graduate School of Sacred Theology

in 1944, where women, lay and religious, engaged in formal study of Thomas Aquinas and received master's and doctoral degrees. Evidence of a wider interest in Thomism can be seen in various popular media, from F. J. Sheed's *Theology and Sanity* (1946) to Fulton Sheen's television show, *Life is Worth Living* (1952–1957).

Neo-Thomism's influence also appears in American Catholic advocacy of social justice in the emerging industrial-capitalist economy. Leo XIII had promulgated *Rerum Novarum*, *On the Conditions of the Working Classes* in 1891. Inspired by the encyclical, John Ryan, a Minnesota diocesan priest and protégé of the Americanist bishop, John Ireland, had used an historically informed approach to natural law, particularly concerning the right to private property, to defend a worker's right to a living wage. Ryan had in effect followed Leo XIII's instruction in *Aeterni Patris* by bringing contemporary economics into dialogue with Thomistic-based natural law. Ryan also helped shape the U.S. bishops' public role in defending social justice. He was the principal architect of the 1919 U.S. bishops' "Program of Social Reconstruction." He remained a leading advocate for a Catholic-informed social justice as CUA professor and director of the Social Action department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

John Ryan was not alone in bringing a historical sensibility to Thomist natural law philosophy. As Patrick Carey has noted, John Courtney Murray developed a historically informed natural law defense of religious liberty based upon the American experience of religious pluralism. Murray's complex argument relies upon an analysis of the human person, the state, and society that allows for a defense of religious liberty based on the limits of the modern state to interfere in religion, thus upholding the church's freedom to teach the faith and defending an individual's right to worship as conscience dictates. As noted earlier, opposition came from Fenton and Connell, who found Murray's historicizing of natural law to be a threat to the transcendent truth of the Catholic faith.

A few American Catholics also displayed an affinity with Maritain's complex cultural engagement in a Thomist-inspired Catholic revival. Admittedly, the Catholic Worker and the liturgical movements shared little in common with the scholastic logic of the manuals, but both sought a basis for the creation of a Catholic culture. Each movement embraced an understanding of grace as restoring and ultimately elevating the good found in all of creation, a view that echoes a certain version of a Thomistic-inspired

integralist Catholic vision. Dorothy Day, cofounder of the Catholic Worker movement, insisted that all aspects of this life—economic, social, cultural, and political—were to be ordered toward their supernatural end and found in this ordering a justification for a socially conscious, radical Catholicism that has continued especially through the peace movement into the twenty-first century. Virgil Michel, OSB, father of the liturgical movement, sought the integration of liturgy and social justice. Thomas Merton, convert and Trappist monk, offers yet another example of a Thomist-inspired engagement in modern culture.

Legacy

Gerald McCool has traced the evolution of Neo-Thomism from its brief existence as a unified philosophical and theological vision to a plurality of perspectives and approaches by the mid-twentieth century. Few have contributed to this plurality more than the transcendental Thomists, Bernard Lonergan, SJ, and Karl Rahner, SJ. Evidence of each man's influence is found in U.S. Catholic theology as it has developed since the Second Vatican Council through the beginning of the twenty-first century. Their influence is most evident in postconciliar theologians' preoccupation with epistemology and methodology. Reactions against these preoccupations have given rise to renewed interest in scholasticism, particularly Thomism, among U.S. Catholic and Protestant theologians in the first decade of the twenty-first century. In light of these developments, one can expect to find evidence of the continuing influence of neo-Thomism on American religious thought for several more decades in the twenty-first century.

See also *Education: Colleges and Universities; Ethics; Philosophical Theology; Philosophy; Religious Thought* entries; *Roman Catholicism: The Age of the Catholic Ghetto; Social Ethics; Systematic Theology.*

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New Age Religion(s)

The New Age movement arose during the 1960s and 1970s as both a pioneering social movement and a discourse community. It was a social movement in the sense that it was a large but amorphous network of people who rejected many of the values and assumptions of the dominant Judeo-Christian culture of twentieth-century America. This alternative community adopted an experiential and experimental approach to the body, nature, gender roles, consumption patterns, social activism, health care, and personal spirituality. The New Age movement was a discourse community because its adherents adopted a coherent yet diverse set of spiritual and social values and used a common language to communicate with each other. Put another way, New Agers knew they were in the company of fellow travelers when they heard certain key terms and concepts—for example, *energies*, *auras*, *channeling*, *transformation*, and *empowerment*. Many New Agers were mistrustful of institutions and preferred biodegradable organizational forms that emerged and disappeared as needed. The weekend seminar, the weeklong retreat, workshops, lectures, newsletters, and magazines were the preferred modes of interaction and communication for New Agers. There were, nevertheless, formal organizations whose teachings and practices were congruent with New Age beliefs.

Historical Roots

Historians of religion have observed that the New Age movement has deep roots in the Western Esoteric tradition—including Neoplatonism and Hermeticism—and in the secularized esotericism of nineteenth-century American movements such as Swedenborgianism, spiritualism, mesmerism, Theosophy, new thought, and Rosicrucianism.

Additionally, two metaphysical groups that appeared on the American scene during the 1930s and 1940s can be viewed as forerunners of New Age groups. The first of these, the Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE), was founded to publicize the psychic teachings of Edgar

Cayce (1877–1945). While in a trance state, Cayce gave “readings” that touched on reincarnation, the lost continent of Atlantis, alternative healing methods, and predictions of future natural catastrophes. Among these “Earth changes” was a repositioning of the earth’s magnetic poles—the so-called pole shift—that would lead to massive flooding of coastal areas in the United States. The ARE was important to the development of the New Age movement in that it popularized notions of coming physical changes on the planet that would coincide with a transformation of cultures and societies, and provided—through the Atlantis allegory—a way for New Agers to address the promises and perils of scientific advances in fields such as genetic engineering and atomic energy.

The Arcane School, another significant New Age forerunner group, emerged in the 1920s to publish spiritual teachings from a disembodied master called “the Tibetan.” These messages were transmitted by spiritual means to a former Theosophist, Alice Bailey. The Arcane School promoted the idea of a coming “World Teacher” who would help inaugurate a New Age of spiritual enlightenment on Earth. The school also began the practice of invoking the world teacher’s appearance through a prayer known as the “Great Invocation.” The idea of receiving advanced instruction from invisible spiritual teachers—known as “channeling” in New Age circles—and the notion of a coming world avatar would become staple elements of New Age teaching.

The UFO (unidentified flying object) craze of the late 1940s and 1950s popularized the idea of advanced civilizations that took an interest in the evolution of life on Earth. Some UFO enthusiasts believed that alien beings had come to bring vital technological and spiritual knowledge to humanity at a critical time in its history. They predicted that wide-scale human resistance to these “space brethren” would bring about great social and political upheavals that would ultimately usher in a millennial era of spiritual enlightenment. Some UFO groups embraced the notion of a coming Aquarian Age whose principle themes included international cooperation, universal brother- and sisterhood, enlightened scientific advance, freedom from oppressive institutions, and transformed human consciousness. The idea of the Aquarian Age comes from an astronomical phenomenon called the “precession of the equinoxes.” In its essentials, the phenomenon divides human history into twelve eras or “ages,” each ruled for 2,160 years by a specific astrological sign. Many UFO religionists believed that the Aquarian Age would begin to dawn in the latter half of the

twentieth century. The ARE, the Arcane School, and the UFO movement were part of a spiritual subculture that by the 1960s had prepared the ground for the New Age movement to emerge in full bloom.

The beginning of the New Age movement can be traced to small communal experiments that emerged during the counterculture era of the 1960s. Probably the most important of these was the Findhorn Community begun in northern Scotland by Peter and Eileen Caddy and Dorothy Maclean. These three pioneers were tied to a fellowship of spiritual visionaries known as the Universal Link. Established by Richard Grave, the Link promoted alternative spiritual communities around the world where innovative experiments with social and spiritual life could take place. These linked communities were seen as “light centers,” exemplary nodes in an emerging network of Aquarian Age communities.

The most important American light centers were the Lorian Association, founded by David Spangler in Wisconsin; the Abode of the Message, founded in upstate New York by Pir Vilayat Khan of the Sufi Order of the West; the Ananda Community, founded in the Sierra Nevada of California by Swami Kriyananda; and Sunrise Ranch, headquarters of the Emissaries of Divine Light, an esoteric community in Colorado. Each of these communities promoted the ideas of planetary transformation, cooperation across spiritual traditions, enlightened human relationships, communication with beings from higher planes of awareness, and the wise use of science.

The New Age movement entered its self-conscious stage in 1971 with the publication of *East West Journal* (later *New Age Journal*). This magazine, along with similar periodicals such as *Yoga Journal*, *New Directions*, and *New Realities*, published an assortment of articles on New Age themes and provided a clearinghouse for the visions of prominent New Age teachers such as Caddy, Spangler, Ram Dass, and Pir Vilayat. *The Year One Catalogue* and *Spiritual Community Guide*, both inaugurated in 1972, listed the vast array of therapies, seminars, communities, and events that would fall under the larger New Age umbrella. Like another publication, *The Seeker's Guide: A New Age Resource Book*, they included information on topics such as biofeedback, Celtic Christianity, acupuncture, sacred dance, yoga, rebirthing, aura readings, and past life regressions, and on groups ranging from Church Universal and Triumphant to ARE, the Holy Order of MANS, Mark Age, the Aetherius Society, and the Lorian Association.

The New Age movement was in full bloom by the late 1970s and, though diverse and amorphous, could be distinguished by five features. The first of these was the belief that humankind was on the verge of a great spiritual transformation—an evolutionary leap that would affect how people viewed themselves, the world, and their place in it. Although the details differed depending on the teacher, most New Agers accepted that this transformation included a profound realization of the oneness of the human family, the innate divinity of the individual, and the intimate relationship between human beings and all other life forms. New Age teacher Jose Arguelles, for example, forecast a great transformation of human consciousness, which he called the “harmonic convergence,” commencing on August 16, 1987. The convergence, he believed, was an epic moment in history when the human race would begin to transcend tribal consciousness and affirm a universal humanity based on unity, love, cooperation, and altruism. He forecast ecological healing, awakened spiritual capacities, the end of militarization, and the widespread harnessing and use of solar energy. Most New Agers saw the coming transformation as gradual, peaceful, and progressive and saw themselves as the vanguard of change. New Age writer Marilyn Ferguson called this leaderless network the “Aquarian Conspiracy.” A minority of New Agers emphasized cataclysmic Earth changes, upheaval, global suffering, and war as the prelude to the millennial age.

The second feature of the New Age movement was an ethic of self-empowerment that included both physical and spiritual dimensions. By raising one's own awareness and changing oneself in the way one desired for the planet, one could effect larger societal transformation. This self-spirituality recognized that ordinary life was mired in unnatural and unhealthy routines, that the ego-centered consciousness must give way to a deeper realm of authentic being, and that powerful spiritual disciplines or technologies were needed to break through the ego's conditioning and uncover the true self. The New Age was almost synonymous with innovative techniques designed to release one's hidden spiritual capacities. These techniques were drawn both from spiritual traditions around the world and from new research into human consciousness and psychology.

A third feature of the New Age movement was the vision of science and religion working in tandem rather than in opposition to each other. New Agers embraced scientific progress and believed that if science were informed with spiritual values and awareness it could be a powerful tool to

enhance humanity's material and spiritual conditions. Many New Age visionaries employed the language of quantum physics, astronomy, and environmental biology to advance their vision of the earth as a single conscious organism alive with subtle spiritual energies and in congruence with macrocosmic processes, a claim sometimes expressed as the "Gaia hypothesis." They argued that science and religion were complementary spheres, which, if properly understood, should work together for the common good.

Fourth, New Agers accepted the idea of a universal spirituality that finds expression at the core of the world's authentic religious traditions. This perennial spirituality meant that competition and warfare between religious communities was wrongheaded and that an ethic of tolerance and pluralism was the way forward in the coming millennium. Accepting that each religious tradition had a right to exist and wisdom to contribute to the human dilemma, New Agers took an eclectic approach to their own spiritual journeys, studying both Western and Eastern traditions and experimenting with a wide variety of spiritual practices. The important thing was to find a spirituality that was personally authentic and meaningful. Conventional dogmas and authorities could be jettisoned, since truth was believed to be within the individual, and enlightened persons could become their own authority in matters of the spirit.

Finally, New Agers adopted an ethic of healing that had both physical and spiritual dimensions and that embraced a wide array of healing therapies and methods. New Agers were apt to experiment with many forms of alternative health practice, including, for example, Reiki, crystal healing, tantra, macrobiotics, meditation, Chinese herbs, acupuncture, labyrinth walking, Bach flower remedies, homeopathy, kung fu, tai chi, rebirthing, creative visualization, Rolfing, and polarity therapy. For New Agers, the healing of the individual was a necessary prelude to the healing of the planet.

Representative Teachers

David Spangler

David Spangler (1945–) was perhaps most influential in defining, interpreting, and critiquing the New Age movement during the late twentieth century. While still in his early twenties, he gained a reputation for delivering profound messages from higher planes of awareness to audiences of spiritual seekers around the United States. He moved to Findhorn in 1970 and became the community's

codirector for three years. During this period he received spiritual messages that were published in 1976 as *Revelation: The Birth of a New Age*. This book became highly influential in New Age circles because of the depth of its vision and clarity of its concepts. Spangler returned to the United States in 1973 and founded the Lorian Association, with Dorothy Maclean, as a vehicle for educational and spiritual outreach related to New Age themes. He also cofounded, with his friend William Irwin Thompson, the Lindisfarne Association in 1974. This association brought together prominent futurists, scholars, scientists, artists, and political visionaries, all of whose writings became popular in New Age circles. Their ranks included, among others, the musician Paul Winter, the social scientist Gregory Bateson, the *Whole Earth Catalogue* publisher Stewart Brand, the scholar of Gnosticism Elaine Pagels, Thompson, Spangler, and the economist E.F. Schumacher. Spangler continued to teach and publish on New Age themes in the 1980s and 1990s and was unique in his willingness to critique the more commercial and narcissistic excesses of New Age activity.

In *Revelation*, Spangler's main theme was bringing to birth the forms of a new planetary civilization. He saw this birth as an organic process working through individuals and communities who had prepared themselves by letting go of outmoded ideas and practices and by opening themselves to inner guidance from spiritual realms. New Age pioneers related to levels of awareness beyond the human and were aware of the higher synergy at work in the creation. By attuning themselves with spiritual energies and beings, New Agers could co-create a world in harmony with the larger rhythms of the universe. They could also become aware of the essential oneness of the world and empowered to bring about a new world based on this vision of oneness.

Spangler emphasized the notion of "light centers" in his writings. He saw Findhorn as the exemplary New Age community, whose spiritual vision radiated out to the many intentional communities around the planet that were attempting to bring forth New Age civilization. He believed that the global network of intentional New Age communities constituted the means through which the Cosmic Christ would pour itself into the earth with its powerful new currents of universal energies. This raising of the earth's vibratory field did not require aggression against the fading world order. Rather, by attuning themselves to the cosmic process, New Agers would witness in their own lives the organic dropping away of the old order. What was still of

value from the old order would survive to assist in the building of the new world society. In Spangler's view, humans must take an active stance and choose to follow the inner guidance being offered them so that the inevitable societal upheaval and suffering that lay ahead could be reduced to a minimum. Spangler's vision of a transformed world was optimistic, in that it believed human beings could access powerful spiritual resources and co-create the new order through conscious group effort.

In his teachings during the 1980s and 1990s, Spangler remained optimistic about the efficacy of human effort to bring about the New Age and critical of more deterministic and apocalyptic scenarios. He also criticized proponents of a sudden New Age transformation, observing that this belief potentially disempowered seekers who might simply sit back and await the inevitable coming global shift. For Spangler, the New Age would occur gradually as individuals became more deeply aware of their connection to larger wholes of social and planetary organization and experienced a liberation from conditioned attitudes and modes of action. Spangler's teachings on synergy, attunement, education, holistic awareness, co-creation, and creative manifestation influenced other progressive New Age thinkers such as Marilyn Ferguson, Jose Arguelles, Barbara Marx Hubbard, and James Redfield.

J. Z. Knight

Perhaps the best-known channeler in New Age circles is J. Z. Knight (1946–), a former Tacoma, Washington, housewife who in 1978 began channeling a spiritual entity calling itself Ramtha. Channeling was one of the characteristic ritual practices of New Agers and entailed a human person entering a special trance state, wherein the mind disengaged itself from the world of time and space. While in this altered state of awareness, spiritual entities from other planes of being fully took over the channeler's physical and mental functions in order to counsel and teach audiences of spiritual seekers. Knight's Ramtha claimed to be a living entity that incarnated 35,000 years ago as a warrior in the fabled lost continent of Lemuria. After a lifetime of spiritual contemplation and inquiry, he purportedly achieved enlightenment and physical immortality. He was able to take his physical body into the spiritual realms and was free to experience all facets of creation at will. From the spiritual realm he could project his consciousness and energy into various physical forms and had chosen Knight to be the channel through which to teach his unique system of spiritual realization.

At first, Knight held what she termed "Dialogues," weekend sessions during which she channeled Ramtha. These sessions occurred around the world and were later transcribed and distributed in various media. Knight terminated the Dialogues in 1988 and created a New Age school of initiation, Ramtha's School of Enlightenment, at her ranch in Yelm, Washington. The school taught a specialized spiritual system designed to awaken students to their divine nature. Knight claimed that Ramtha's system of thought was not a new religion or a philosophical interpretation of reality. Rather, it was the truth as experienced by Ramtha and offered to humankind in a way that could be verified by the individual student.

Ramtha's teaching began by making students aware of their present concepts of God and self. These concepts were then contrasted with Ramtha's own teaching on God and self, which included four basic propositions. The first of these was the idea that "You are God." This teaching resonates with various forms of Gnosticism and the monism of Hindu Advaita Vedanta. It amplifies upon the New Age theme of the discovery of the true self and the empowerment that this discovery entails. The second proposition was that humans had the task of making known the unknown, of embodying, in other words, hidden spiritual potentials. The third proposition was that consciousness and energy created the nature of reality, and that humans could learn to do miraculous things with their minds. The fourth proposition was that humans could learn to overcome the false concepts and conditioning that kept them in a state of ignorance and weakness.

Knight saw Ramtha's teaching as a form of ancient wisdom that had found expression in the spiritual teachings of such historical figures as Plato, Akhnaton, the Buddha, Jesus, Apollonius of Tyana, and John of the Cross. Students of Ramtha thus learned a set of traditional esoteric practices designed to open their awareness to spiritual realms and to move spiritual energies throughout their psycho-physical bodies. As they reawakened to their spiritual origin and nature, students could allegedly navigate the levels of spiritual reality and function as teachers in their own right. The curriculum of Ramtha's school read like a smorgasbord of New Age subjects and themes. It included the nature of consciousness and energy, the redefinition of God as the observer in quantum physics, the story of involution and evolution, the mystery of the soul and the afterlife, the neurobiology of the brain in the creation of reality, telepathy and remote viewing, universal healing, and visualization during sleep.

There was some controversy in the early 1990s concerning the secretive nature of the Ramtha School. In response, Knight invited a panel of distinguished scholars from the fields of science, psychology, sociology, and religion to study her channeling sessions and to decide whether or not they were fraudulent. In 1996, these scholars conducted research on Knight before, during, and after she underwent her channeling trance. Following these tests, the panel concluded that the measured changes in Knight's autonomic nervous system were so dramatic that they could rule out fraud or mental illness as their cause. The publication of these results dampened the criticisms of Knight, although the attacks did not cease altogether.

Representative Groups

Mark Age

Mark Age was a prototypical New Age group created in 1960 by Charles Grentzel and Pauline Sharpe. Influenced by both the UFO subculture and the Arcane School, the organization alleged that its activities were guided by the Hierarchical Board on Earth, an elite spiritual brotherhood led by the Archangel Michael, Lord Maitreya (the future Buddha), and Sananada (a.k.a. Jesus of Nazareth). Mark Age members believed that the late twentieth century was a transition cycle between the fading age of materialism and the dawning New Age of Aquarius. The group's mission was to prepare humanity for the Second Coming of Christ, which they interpreted as both the awakened awareness within individuals of their spiritual essence and the actual manifestation of Jesus the Christ in his resurrected body of light around the year 2000. They accomplished this mission by publishing revelations from the Hierarchical Board relating to proper spiritual living and by cooperating with other New Age groups. Sharpe (a.k.a. Nada-Yolanda) was the vessel for these interdimensional communiqués.

The group had a complex millennial vision that began with its announcement of the Mark Age era (1960–2000). In this era, humankind would begin to transcend the vibratory frequencies of past eras and graduate to fourth dimensional consciousness, the “Christ consciousness.” If humans rejected this new vibratory reality and the evolutionary leap it entailed, they would be removed to another solar system. Even if the earth accepted this higher awareness, it would still experience the birth pangs of a New Age: economic, political, social, and scientific upheavals on a scale unimaginable to past societies. These upheavals would not result in

total destruction, however, but rather a gentle cleansing away of outmoded structures and recalcitrant souls. Echoing the Arcane School's prophecy of the return of the Christ, Mark Age taught that Sananda would return around the year 2000 to organize a spiritual governing body for the earth and to demonstrate the reality of eternal life. He would establish spiritual harmony on the planet and lead humanity to its next stage of evolution. Human life in the New Age would be characterized by loving action emanating from the deeper spiritual self of each person. Armageddon, for Mark Age students, was the battle between good and evil within the heart of human beings, not a physical battle in the land of Israel.

Mark Age continues to promote its millennial vision and has recently laid out seventy-two prophecies for the coming Aquarian Age. For example, it believes that individual nations will be replaced by an enlightened one-world government. In addition, cities such as New York will be destroyed by earthquakes and the world economic system will be completely revolutionized. Mark Age can be viewed as a pioneer of progressive New Age millennialism that promoted themes eventually picked up by later New Age teachers such as Elizabeth Clare Prophet (Church Universal and Triumphant), Earl Blighton (founder of the Holy Order of MANS), and Benjamin Crème. These themes include (1) the need for light bearers to actively bring about the new world; (2) the idea that a hierarchy of advanced spiritual teachers was guiding New Age groups; (3) a Gnostic version of salvation that entails the transcendence of egocentrism and the realization of a higher Self; and (4) gradual and noncatastrophic transformation of the world order.

Holy Order of MANS (HOOM)

The Holy Order of MANS (HOOM) was a California-based New Age community established in 1968 by a retired engineer and esotericist, Earl W. Blighton (1904–1974). Blighton, like other New Age visionaries, was influenced by Eastern mysticism, spiritualism, UFO study groups, Theosophy, and Rosicrucianism. He proclaimed that the order's mission was to reawaken the esoteric path of cosmic initiation that had been lost to conventional Christianity. This path would resuscitate a moribund Christian community in the United States and prepare the nation for the coming New Age of spiritual enlightenment. Organized as a nonsectarian monastic community that some observers dubbed as “New Age Jesuits,” the order set up teaching centers, communities, “brotherhouses,” and “sisterhouses” in

more than sixty American cities between 1968 and 1978. At its height, the group had more than three thousand members in its vowed and lay communities. The order was best known for its creation of shelters for victims of domestic violence and for its attempts to organize Jewish and Christian religious organizations to address the global ecological crisis.

Following Blighton's death in 1974, the order struggled to maintain a coherent leadership structure and sense of mission. Following the mass suicides at the Peoples Temple in Jonestown, Guyana, in 1978, the community adopted a more mainstream public face, dabbling in evangelical Christian, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox teachings and practices. By the mid-1980s, the group had moved away from its esoteric and New Age teachings and embraced a rigidly sectarian variety of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Though various splinter groups loyal to Blighton's original vision continued to exist, the main body of the group slowly dissolved into various American Eastern Orthodox jurisdictions.

In its early years, HOOM promoted an optimistic vision of planetary spiritual transformation. Spiritual messages channeled by Blighton claimed that the physical and spiritual bodies of the earth were being supercharged with the solar energies of the great Christos and that all humans were being given the opportunity to experience alchemical regeneration at the molecular level. HOOM was to be the vanguard of this New Age transformation of humanity, but not the only light center on the earth. Like Mark Age, HOOM saw itself as working in tandem with kindred spirits around the globe to bring about the Aquarian dispensation. Also like Mark Age, there was the expectation that those souls who remained resistant to the coming transformation would experience great suffering and ultimate removal to another planetary system. In the New Age, Blighton asserted, women would regain their place of spiritual and earthly equality with men, exclusivist and intolerant religions would disappear, and a world savior from the East would appear to teach a universal path of salvation that transcended sectarian and political divisions and that led to world harmony.

Blighton organized an esoteric priesthood whose mission was to transform the priesthoods of the earth, so they were able to serve as handmaids of the emerging New Age. Order priests were empowered to administer esoteric initiations designed to raise the frequencies of the human form, so it might function productively in the raised vibratory

field that was engulfing the planet. Those who had received the signature order initiations of "Illumination" and "Self-Realization" were seen as "Christed" beings within whom the Second Coming was already manifest. Order missionaries were tasked with creating nodal points in a planetary grid of light. This grid was a spiritual rewiring of the earth's circuits, so it could receive the higher cosmic frequencies being released into the solar system in the late twentieth century.

The order's optimistic millennial vision was replaced in the 1980s by a darkly apocalyptic view that had its roots in Russian Orthodox monasticism. In this view, the New Age itself was seen as a dangerous delusion that could bring about the appearance of the Antichrist. This mythic figure would organize a one-world government and promise an era of peace and prosperity but would in reality lead humanity to eternal perdition. New Ageism, in the Orthodox order perspective, promoted a pseudo-spirituality based on individualism, pluralism, relativism, scientism, and humanism, all poisonous intellectual supports for the godless secularism of modernity. The order's history demonstrated that New Age millennial visions were fluid and subject to distortion and radical alteration as outer social conditions changed. During the optimistic cultural conditions of the 1960s and early 1970s, the order promoted a progressive millennial doctrine that saw impending spiritual regeneration and world harmony. During the more conservative and pessimistic 1980s, this New Age vision changed into a gloomy vision of spiritual jeopardy and apocalyptic catastrophe.

Heaven's Gate

Heaven's Gate is best known as the UFO group that committed mass suicide in the San Diego suburb of Rancho Santa Fe in March 1997. But the group should be viewed in the context of the UFO subculture that emerged during the late 1940s and 1950s and of the New Age subculture that followed in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. These subcultures shared various forms of millennial dismay with the conditions of modern America and created alternative lifestyles, spiritual paths, and social systems in an attempt to transform the world. Heaven's Gate took this unease with modernity and desire for a transformative spiritual life to an extreme end.

Founded by Marshall Herff Applewhite (1931–1997) and Bonnie Lu Nettles (1927–1985), the group began in the mid-1970s as a neo-Gnostic community committed to self-transformation. Applewhite was the son of a Presbyterian

pastor who had found success in the fields of choral performance and academics. Following accusations of an improper relationship with a student at St. Thomas University in Houston, he left the academy and was in treatment for a mental breakdown. He met Nettles, a registered nurse, and the two soon discovered that they shared similar perspectives on religious and spiritual matters. They concluded that they had been sent as emissaries from what they called the “Kingdom Level beyond Human,” with the mission to call and organize an elite group of humans who were ready for the next stage of planetary spiritual evolution. They saw this work as a continuation of the mission of Jesus of Nazareth, who had similarly called humanity to a higher spiritual level during his lifetime two thousand years earlier.

Applewhite and Nettles left their friends and families in Houston and soon appeared in California preaching their new spiritual philosophy, which was influenced by Christian apocalypticism, Theosophy, and UFO religions. After speaking to skeptical audiences in the Los Angeles area, they moved to southern Oregon and began recruiting a small but loyal band of followers. Calling themselves the Human Individual Metamorphosis, they gained brief notoriety in the mid-1970s as a “UFO cult” before embarking on a twenty-year journey throughout the western United States. Sleeping in remote campsites and keeping a safe distance from mainstream society, the group evolved into a disciplined, tightly knit cohort with a distinctive lifestyle and a vocabulary filled with New Age metaphors and biblical imagery.

A distinctive feature of the group was their conscious rejection of modern American life—the “mammalian ways” that included sexual relationships, drug use, family ties, careers, and personal friendships. By overcoming their desire for these relationships and lifestyles, they believed they could break free from the control of the “Luciferians,” the evil space invaders who ruled the world. Long fasts, strange diets, vision quests, orchestrated ordeals, and revelations from on high received by Nettles (now known as Peep) constituted the group’s months and years in the western wilderness. Applewhite (now called Bo) and Nettles identified themselves to their followers as the two godly prophets referred to in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Revelation. Their destiny was to suffer murder at the hands of their enemies and then to miraculously resurrect three days later before a national television audience. Vindicated to all but their most virulent detractors, the heavenly couple would then rendezvous with a spacecraft from the world beyond and spirit their loyal followers away to a higher world. Those who had

rejected their teachings would be “spaded under” when the earth was destroyed by natural and human catastrophes.

The group, now known as Heaven’s Gate, appeared in Rancho Santa Fe in the early 1990s. They ran a successful computer business that created Web sites and purchased an elegant mansion where most members lived. Applewhite (now known as Do) lived in a separate residence with some close followers but maintained a strict control over the community’s members. By this time, members dressed in unisex clothing, shaved their heads, eschewed sex, and were fascinated by popular movies and television series such as *Star Trek*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and *Star Wars*. They were taught to defer all decision making to Applewhite and to question any of their own opinions or impulses. The group set up a sophisticated Web site called *Heaven’s Gate* that introduced the world to Applewhite’s teachings.

Applewhite began encountering painful health problems in the mid-1990s and also began proclaiming the imminent “recycling” of the earth and its people. Only highly advanced humans who had heard the group’s call and joined could hope to avoid the coming apocalypse. After proper preparation they would be among the few who would enter an alien spacecraft that was soon to arrive. Applewhite believed the craft was hidden in the tail of the comet Hale-Bopp, which appeared in early 1997 and was taken by the group as a final sign of the end. On March 27, following a shopping spree that included Nike training shoes and purple costumes, the community had a final meal, drank a concoction of alcohol, pudding, and barbiturates, lay down in their beds, and allowed plastic bags to be tied around their heads. The testimony of group survivors indicates that members willingly undertook these preparations and were fully expecting a rendezvous with a spacecraft and a spiritual ascension to the Level beyond Human.

Several Heaven’s Gate survivors lived to tell the group’s story and to publicize Applewhite’s teachings to an international audience. They also maintained the group’s Web presence before taking their own lives in the ensuing two years. The shocking end of Heaven’s Gate created a flurry of new warnings about the dangers of apocalyptic beliefs and authoritarian religious communities. In the case of Heaven’s Gate, the New Age arrived in an act of self-destruction.

Conclusion

The New Age movement had its critics, including, most notably, movement insider David Spangler. Spangler and others admonished New Agers to avoid narcissistic tendencies

and spiritual attitudes that were shallow and lacking a deep integration with the patterns of everyday existence. Although also critical of indiscriminate New Age appropriation of sacred traditions from around the world, he commended the movement for its efforts to bring back a sacred dimension into humanity's view of nature. Other critics, including theologian Matthew Fox (1940–), faulted the New Age tendency to overlook the human capacity for evil action. They also complained that New Agers suffered from a class-based elitism that could steer their focus onto self-empowerment projects, rather than practical activity to relieve social injustice and oppression. Fox applauded New Agers' quest for a mystically centered cosmology and anthropology that transcended conventional Christianity's preoccupation with guilt and sin.

While the movement certainly flirted with a loose spiritual ethos based on personal preferences and self-seeking, it also advanced innovative ideas for a spiritual practice in tune with the emerging global order of the twenty-first century. In its higher iterations, the new spirituality affirmed human potential, valorized feeling and experience in human relationships, helped people discover a personally responsible approach to social activism, fostered a spiritually informed ethic of ecology, pioneered research into alternative healing methods, and pushed society to recognize a universal human kinship that transcended rivalries based on tribal, ethnic, and religious differences. Many New Age themes, including "green" activism, alternative healing practices, religious tolerance, and political reconciliation, have become mainstream in many parts of the world in the twenty-first century.

See also *Canada: Pluralism; Eastern Orthodoxy; Environment and Ecology* entries; *Esoteric Movements; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Krishna Consciousness; Nature and Nature Religion; New Religious Movements* entries; *Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Pluralism; Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends; Wicca and Witchcraft.*

Phillip Charles Lucas

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New England Region

For more than four centuries, New England has been a study in contrasting religious cultures despite persistent myths regarding its homogeneity, rigidity, and conservatism. Even during the so-called Puritan century, the region comprised several communities, each with distinctive religious cultures and practices. Ironically, these included the most religiously homogeneous and restrictive as well as the most diverse and open communities of their time (Massachusetts Bay and Rhode Island, respectively). In the early twenty-first century, the overall religious environment of New England is radically different from its colonial beginnings. Yet in some respects little has changed: the vexing questions regarding public morality, personal behavior, and proper obedience to God that caused conflict among New England's founders still trouble the faithful, and their responses reveal similar polarities and extremes—albeit with vastly different issues, alignments and protagonists. Socially conservative Roman Catholics, for example, dominant throughout the six-state region since the late 1800s, strongly oppose the ordination of homosexuals as well as same-sex marriage. Nevertheless in 2004 New Hampshire Episcopalians elected the nation's first openly gay bishop, and both the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ, contemporary heirs of Puritan Congregationalism, officially support marriage equality. Over four centuries, tradition and

innovation, transition, continuity, and conflict all have characterized the history of religion in New England.

Religion in the First Communities

New England's first worshipers were aboriginal peoples who preceded Europeans in the region by nine or ten thousand years. By the time of initial English settlement, 75,000 men and women in dozens of tribal groups were already practicing their faiths. Reliable detail is scarce, but it is likely that New England's natives shared an integrated view of nature and humankind, believing in the sacredness and powers suffusing all things, as well as the need to thank and appease these powers ceremonially. Contemporary accounts describe colorful—and to most European Christians of the time, unholy—dancing, drumming, and chanting led by *powwows*, native priest-healers specially versed in medical lore and tribal ritual.

Although seventeenth-century entrepreneurs cite conversion of these “heathen” as a primary reason for colonization, the earliest European settlers were motivated by profit, not religion. In August 1607, a fishing settlement of forty-five men was established at the mouth of the Kennebec River. Here, Anglican Richard Seymour preached New England's first recorded sermon. “Sagadahoc” collapsed after its first Maine winter, but a few small commercial settlements antedated the better-known settlements of Plymouth Plantation and Massachusetts Bay, and in northern New England commercial interests continued to vie with religious ones as towns and settlements developed. In the southern communities, economic, social, and patriotic motivations were not absent among Pilgrim and Puritan settlers, but religion played a far more dominant and determinative role in the latter colonies.

That religion was Congregationalism, a movement of protest that had emerged in late sixteenth-century England as a response to perceived corruptions in the Anglican Church. The term *Congregational* describes ecclesiastical structure rather than doctrine. Congregationalists believe Christ's church is most perfectly manifested in a local body of believers to whom God gives all things necessary for faith and practice. Subject to no external control, Congregational churches emphasize mutual responsibility and accountability among members.

All early Congregationalists, however, were not alike. As their name suggests, Puritans (“nonseparating” Congregationalists) believed that, though corrupt, the Anglican Church was capable of reformation. “Separatist” Pilgrims,

on the other hand, denied both the legitimacy and the authority of the Anglican Church and advocated separation from it. Persecuted for this radical view, congregations of Separatists migrated to Holland around 1608, but dissatisfaction with Dutch culture led a group at Leyden to contemplate a second move, to America. Thus 102 men and women (only about 35 of whom were church members) landed in Massachusetts during November 1620 and established New England's first permanent settlement. Lacking at first both a legal charter, and—more troubling—an ordained minister until 1629, the colonists nevertheless gathered a church, built dwellings, planted, and expanded. With royal consolidation of several territories into the Dominion of New England in the mid-1680s, Plymouth was absorbed into Massachusetts. Its contributions to a developing “New England Way” are therefore minimal; its residents, working-class farmers and artisans, had little formal theological training and, with the exception of Governor William Bradford's journal *Of Plimoth Plantation* (1620–1647), left no significant theological work. Yet they achieved both what they intended and what they did not: provision for their own religious needs, and a mythic legacy of strenuous, pioneering faith that remains an enduring part of New England's regional identity.

By contrast, the nonseparating Congregationalists of Massachusetts Bay had more grandiose designs. Governor John Winthrop, referencing the Book of Matthew in 1629, said it most famously in a phrase that continues to be used by politicians today: “We shall be as a City upon a Hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.” Winthrop and others hoped that the eyes of English church leaders would see in their new commonwealth both social and ecclesiastical reforms worthy of emulation; equally, they hoped God would cause their endeavors to flourish. Beginning with a single church gathered in Salem in 1629, a steady stream of middle-class English men and women—more than twenty thousand of them over the next two decades—started Congregational churches and established patterns of civil governance based on their belief that God had established a special covenant with the people of New England, just as he had much earlier with Israel.

Being a chosen people with covenantal obligations entailed collective responsibilities. In the earliest Puritan communities of eastern Massachusetts, homogeneity of both theology and practice was strictly enforced. Sabbath attendance was required for both church members and nonmembers (although only about 10 percent of the population

were full members); personal behavior was scrutinized and breaches punished; deviations from Congregational orthodoxy were prohibited. Education was essential. To ensure a steady supply of trained ministers, Harvard, the nation's first college, was founded in 1636 when "Newtowne" (now Cambridge) was still scarcely more than wilderness. Provisions for public schooling were also quickly instituted. Although Massachusetts was not a theocracy—church and state had separate areas of jurisdiction and separate punishments that were maintained carefully—civil and ecclesiastical realms were partnered. Only church members (the presumed "elect" or saved) had full civil privileges, and magistrates routinely involved themselves in matters that today would be considered spiritual. The Puritans expected that such careful attention to God's requirements would ensure a permanent supply of saints, as well as divine blessing on their enterprise, into the foreseeable future.

From the beginning, however, enforcing Congregational orthodoxy proved difficult. Roger Williams, a Cambridge-educated minister with a penchant for challenging prevailing orthodoxies about everything from biblical interpretation to the "coercion" of people's consciences, fled south from Massachusetts before he could be transported back to England. Founding Providence in the winter of 1636, he established an alternative colony whose religious openness was an affront to orthodox Puritan sensibilities for the remainder of the century. Rhode Island and Providence Plantations (the formal name of both colony and state) was a "livelie experiment," the first of its kind in the new world. Its residents were permitted "full liberty in religious concernments," and its civil government was prohibited from interfering with religion except to maintain good order. Although Roger Williams shortly left the Baptist church he helped found in 1638, his colony remained a haven for Baptists as well as for Quakers, who migrated there in significant numbers at mid-century. By 1700 this tiny but influential colony, called the "sewer of New England" by its opponents, included Anglicans and Jews, among others.

Williams's controversies with the magistrates coincided with developments both north and south of the Bay. In 1636, eight hundred men and women, having received grudging permission from the General Court, left to found the colony of Connecticut. Like Massachusetts, the new colony was Puritan, albeit of a somewhat more tolerant sort. Two years later a second group purchased land from the Native Americans and settled in what is now New Haven, eventually establishing a separate colony; its conservative

Puritan zeal would help define Connecticut for two centuries.

If southern dispersals presented no real threat, settlements in northern New England were a different matter. During the previous decade fishermen and traders had established small communities along the Piscataqua River in both Maine and New Hampshire. Although religious indifference and rowdy worldliness characterized these communities, some residents had Anglican sympathies; moreover, lack of legal restrictions or agencies of enforcement made these settlements attractive to a handful of Baptists and Quakers who had been unwelcome at the Bay. A few miles inland John Wheelwright, another dissident from Massachusetts, had founded the town of Exeter, New Hampshire, and gathered a church of his sympathizers. And still further north in the Maine wilderness, Roman Catholic missionaries were resuming mission work begun earlier. Faced with these multiple threats to security, Massachusetts took steps to annex the northern territories.

The absorption of New Hampshire and Maine, effected by 1658, did to some degree impose Puritan ways upon the scattered people and ensure the eventual dominance of Congregationalism. Yet neither the vast size of the new territory nor its heterogeneous, worldly citizenry meshed cleanly into the existing structures of church and society at the Bay. Northerners, from the beginning a more religiously diverse and tolerant lot, never did practice their faiths nor structure their communities with the fervent, idealistic piety of their southern neighbors.

Decline of the "New England Way"

Whether or not the Puritan era was over by the close of the century is a matter of scholarly dispute. Certainly many aspects of New England's religious life remained relatively unchanged in 1700. Except in Rhode Island, Congregationalism was still overwhelmingly dominant. Although nascent differences in theology and practice were evident, these were not yet widespread or especially troublesome. Congregationalists were thoroughly Calvinistic; they still championed the need for an "established" ministry in each community—that is, an educated Congregational pastor supported by public taxation. They continued to believe that faith is both experiential (a matter of the heart, or "affections") and rational (a matter of learning and properly directed study), and to hold these essentials in careful tension. Throughout the century, of course, non-Congregationalists had challenged the prevailing system, and religious leaders routinely decried the threats

to stability posed by a variety of heretical groups. For the most part, however, such challenges were limited and successfully rebuffed; the so-called Standing Order remained intact. Nevertheless, the religious landscape of New England *was* changing.

One reason was the inevitable difference between founding and inheriting generations. By the 1660s and 1670s, many of the original leaders were dead. Their children, distant from the homeland and knowing nothing of Anglicanism, had no desire either to reform or to offer an alternative to the Church of England. Neither did they share the earlier zeal for a godly commonwealth; many were successful entrepreneurs whose commercial interests were stronger than their religious ones. As idealistic zeal declined, so also did the number of conversions and church members. From the beginning, the Puritan system had been dependent on an ongoing supply of “visible saints,” men and women who could relate a personal experience of God’s converting power and thus give credible evidence of their own salvation or “election.” Conversion was required for church membership; membership, in turn, was required for civil privileges (such as the franchise), as well as for the privilege of participating in the Lord’s Supper or having one’s children baptized. Now compromises and alternative practices regarding these matters promoted heated debate among clergy and undercut the general unity that had earlier prevailed.

Political events in England also contributed to change. In 1660 the Puritan revolution ended and Anglican dominance was restored. Even those American Puritans who still hoped to purify the mother church saw little hope of the reforms their parents had envisioned; increasingly they focused on the struggles of their own churches in the New World. Both natural and human events intensified these struggles. In 1675, King Philip’s War pitted Native Americans against colonists (and the few Christianized or “praying Indians” against their non-Christian colleagues) in a bloody, three-year conflict that affected fully one-third of New England’s towns. War was followed by natural and human-made disasters: the decades of the 1680s and 1690s saw unusually cold weather, and in 1676 downtown Boston was devastated by fire.

Finally, English colonial policies played a critical role. Between 1679 and 1689, Britain sought aggressively to subordinate the several colonies, revoking charters and unifying the region from Maine to the Delaware River under a royally governed “Dominion of New England.” Although the Dominion was chaotic and short-lived (1685–1689), it was a harbinger of permanent religious as well as political

change. In 1691, a new charter affirmed New Hampshire’s status as a separate royal colony, but combined Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Maine. Although some powers were restored to citizens of the Bay, the colony was now firmly under royal control. Meanwhile Britain’s Toleration Act (1689) had transformed these territories into a single colony where—in theory—many of the exclusive religious practices of the “Bible Commonwealth” were outlawed and greater toleration, except for Roman Catholics, had become law. Only Rhode Island and Connecticut remained self-governing charter colonies. Many towns, however, continued to enforce privileges for Congregationalists. In the midst of all these tumultuous events, the Salem witchcraft hysteria of 1692–1693—itself both a product and a precursor of change—caused at least some participants to reflect self-critically and apologetically on their own religious responses to the crisis.

These developments were troubling to religious leaders who were watching closely for evidence of divine approbation or disapproval. Like other seventeenth century Christians, New England Congregationalists believed in a God who was intimately involved in day-to-day matters, routinely communicating with his people through natural and human events. Disasters and successes were not random occurrences, but God’s unique way of admonishing, rewarding, or punishing individuals and communities. From the 1690s until the 1720s, clergy repeatedly exhorted the people to reflect on those “evils that have provoked the Lord to bring his judgments on New England.” Discerning clear indications of God’s displeasure in the recent past, they called for repentance, reform, and return to holier ways.

The ministers’ exhortations or “jeremiads,” however, were not especially successful, and meanwhile other developments continued to effect changes in New England’s religious environment. These included the movement of settlers into the more religiously diverse hinterlands; commercial expansion, with the social and religious diversity that typically accompanies it; and immigration, particularly among Scots-Irish Presbyterians in southeastern New Hampshire and central Massachusetts. Anglicanism, too, had been on the rise since the founding of Boston’s King’s Chapel in 1689. Now Anglican missionaries, sponsored by a new Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1701), were working among Congregationalists; and in 1722 three Yale College men scandalized Connecticut by abandoning Congregationalism and seeking ordination in the Church of England. By mid-century, more than forty Anglican churches were scattered

throughout the Congregational heartland and Rhode Island. The most profound religious changes, however, occurred in the aftermath of the Great Awakening.

Periodic “harvests”—localized episodes of intense religious concern and clustered conversions—were recorded in New England as early as the 1660s. In 1727, however, a massive earthquake, felt all the way from Maine to Boston, arguably produced the region’s first “revival”: in several towns across the affected region, churches recorded new conversions and spikes in membership. Less than a decade later, an outbreak of “throat distemper” (probably diphtheria) similarly affected a number of congregations. Although the effects of these natural phenomena were short-lived, they prepared the region psychologically for a new, “great and general” religious experience.

The Great Awakening, often described as America’s first intercolonial movement, was a period of religious excitement spanning roughly four decades, from the 1720s to the 1760s. In New England, the Awakening began locally in the late 1730s as a response to the preaching of Northampton, Massachusetts, pastor and theologian Jonathan Edwards; it expanded in 1740 with the arrival of British evangelist George Whitefield (1740–1770), who preached in an impassioned, extemporaneous style that bore little resemblance to the formal, scholarly sermons with which New Englanders were familiar. A majority of Congregational (as well as Baptist and Presbyterian) clergy were early supporters of the revival, believing that God was bringing about the return to piety for which they had long hoped. But the revival also encouraged notorious “excesses,” emotional outbursts that included “bodily manifestations” as well as “shriekings and screamings.” Some supporters even claimed that without a powerful emotional experience, a person was not truly converted. “Unconverted” ministers, they asserted, endangered the very souls of their flocks. By 1743, many former supporters had become harsh critics of the revival.

The Great Awakening had a profound effect on the region’s religious ethos, shaking the very foundations of the New England Way. By authenticating even an uneducated convert’s relationship with God, it effectively undercut the domination of New England’s learned clergy, diminishing the prestige of ministers and of education itself. For the same reason it elevated converts in New England’s underclasses, raising them to new positions of religious and social prominence. And by encouraging itinerant preaching, the revival undercut the rigidity of the Congregational parish system, in which only a settled pastor had the privilege to preach.

Congregationalists, who for years had remained relatively cordial in their differences, splintered into Old Lights and New Lights, respectively condemning and supporting the revival; disputes arose over issues of itinerancy, emotionalism, and conversion. In southern New England especially, the revival’s renewed emphasis on conversion created a more hospitable environment for other groups, particularly Baptists, who had long argued for church membership that emphasized believers’ rather than infant baptism. In New Hampshire and Maine, Baptist growth was delayed for a decade or more. Nevertheless by mid-century Baptist churches were expanding throughout the region, and many “Separates”—New Light Congregationalists who split from their churches over the issue of conversion—eventually found their way into the Baptist fold. The founding of what would become Brown University in 1764 was occasioned, in part, to meet the needs of an increased number of Baptist societies. But despite this numerical growth, in both Massachusetts and Connecticut, Separates and Baptists—along with Episcopalians and other dissenters—continued to struggle until the eve of the Revolution to avoid paying taxes for support of the local Congregational minister.

War and Its Aftermath

On the eve of Revolution, Christians throughout the colonies feared that England would impose bishops in America. In New England, where suspicion of Anglicanism was long-standing, these fears were acute and widely discussed. Scholars today no longer argue that the representative form of church government practiced by New England Congregationalists is the primary source for American democratic thought. Nevertheless the Congregational principles of mutual accountability and governance by the governed undoubtedly contributed to political conversations that bore fruit after the Revolution. While Baptists debated whether or not to support the war, and Quaker pacifists and Anglican loyalists opposed it, Congregationalists unambiguously called for separation from England. Adapting familiar religious rhetoric for revolutionary purposes, they articulated both a religious and political mandate: “Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty.”

During the revolutionary period itself New England saw minimal religious change. War nor independence nor national principles of religious liberty eliminated the Congregational establishment, although some groups did see signs of progress. Baptists in particular continued to gain in number and legitimacy; in 1779 a Baptist was selected for the first time to

preach an election sermon to the Massachusetts General Court. But with more than four hundred churches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, Congregationalists retained a regional dominance that was unequalled by any other religious group in the new nation; indeed, New England was its most religiously and ethnically homogeneous region. Furthermore, because the legal separation of church and state codified in the Bill of Rights (1791) applied only to the national government, the alliance between New England's civil and ecclesiastical systems also remained—for the time being—largely intact. Nevertheless, this religious landscape was on the brink of a seismic shift. Growing divisions within the Congregational fold, a new spirit of religious populism and innovation, increasing political pressure from Baptists and others, and the movement of masses into the back country: all these had a transformative effect during the fifty years after the Revolution.

By the turn of the century, Congregationalism comprised an increasingly diverse range of beliefs. Calvinism, reworked and revived by Jonathan Edwards and his followers after the Great Awakening, was known as *the* New England theology until the mid-nineteenth century. But this nomenclature is deceptive. From 1620 on, the Congregational principle of local autonomy had encouraged a wide range of differences, emphases, and innovations in both theology and practice; the same principle had permitted such differences to coexist without open warfare. Many clergy, both Baptists and Congregationalists, remained Calvinists. Others, however, influenced by Enlightenment ideas, had long held beliefs that were both Arminian (humanity is capable of moral choice) and Arian (Christ is subordinate to God the creator). Now the Unitarian controversy, precipitated by the 1805 election of “liberal Christian” Henry Ware to Harvard's prestigious Hollis Professorship of Divinity, brought these and other unspoken differences into sharp relief. Orthodox critics took the first step toward separation by founding their own seminary at Andover, Massachusetts—the first free-standing seminary in the country—and there instituting a mandatory Calvinist creed. Ongoing theological disputes led eventually to schism, formalized by the creation of the American Unitarian Association in 1825 and perpetuated in numerous battles locally. Although Unitarianism had little denominational impact beyond the Congregational churches from which it emerged, its influence on the world of ideas was profound. Ironically, it soon spawned its own protest, Transcendentalism, led by Ralph Waldo Emerson and others who were critical of the “corpse cold”

rationalism they found in Unitarian circles. Their movement, like their short-lived experiment in communal living, Brook Farm, had little or no impact on New England's collective religious life but did have an enormous and enduring influence on American literature.

Unitarianism in New England was—and remains—largely an urban phenomenon, concentrated among the well-educated and economically advantaged. But radical new religious expressions also appeared even before the turn of the century in rural towns and villages. The men and women who flooded into the hill country of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and western Massachusetts after the war settled in land that was largely untouched by the traditional civic and religious institutions of New England. New Light and revivalistic by temperament, populist and egalitarian socially and politically, they quickly developed new religious forms and structures that bore little resemblance to received institutions. Three groups—Shakers, Free Will Baptists, and Universalists—were most numerous. By 1820 they constituted a third of churches in the postwar settlements, and in various ways directly challenged not only Calvinistic ideas but Congregational dominance. The Shakers, most eccentric and controversial of the newcomers, advocated universal celibacy, personal perfection, and the formation of “spiritual communities,” eight of which they established in New England. (The last surviving community of Shakers—as revered today for their distinctive piety and spirituality as they were earlier denounced and feared—is in Sabbathday Lake, Maine.) Free Will Baptists date their New England origins from a church (1780) gathered in New Durham, New Hampshire, by former Congregationalist Benjamin Randel (or Randall). This group combined New Light revivalism with Old Light rationalism, arguing that salvation is not (as Calvinists insisted) predestined, but determined by the free choice of those who seek to be godly. Universalists, with complex roots in late eighteenth-century England and Massachusetts, shared a general antipathy for Calvinism. With the writings of Vermont itinerant Hosea Ballou in the early 1800s, they embraced a comprehensive theology that emphasized God's benevolence toward all humanity and rejected traditional doctrines such as miracles and the Trinity.

Emphasizing heartfelt personal religious experience, these sectarians carried their gospels into the hinterland with charismatic itinerant preaching. They were joined by a host of independent exhorters as well as evangelists from more familiar groups, including Calvinistic Baptists and a few Congregationalists. A Second Great Awakening, which

“quicken” both rural and urban New England at the turn of the century, fostered the levelism of the earlier Awakening by emphasizing the ability of anyone to lay hold of grace. The new revival encouraged the growth of Methodism, an English import (1784), as well as indigenous groups. The largest and most influential of these was the Christian Connection, founded by Elias Smith and Abner Jones of New Hampshire and Vermont, respectively. Broadly accepting of theological differences, at once revivalistic and rationalistic, the Connection confused and troubled outsiders but appealed to many who liked its Bible-based message of denominational unity, moral probity, and private conscience in theological matters. The Christians were among the nation’s first—and strongest—supporters of women’s public religious leadership; as early as 1812 “female laborers in the gospel” were itinerating throughout rural New England alongside their male colleagues.

All these groups were able to develop rapidly, in part because Congregationalism itself lacked a comprehensive system to address the new religious milieu. With no connectional structure to raise funds, no bishops or presbyteries to organize mission efforts beyond town boundaries, and no useful tradition of self-motivated itinerant evangelists, Congregationalists were ill prepared to gather or support churches in the backcountry. That many Congregational churches were planted in rural New England was the result of an explosion of indigenous mission agencies that operated with moderate success across New England from the 1780s until the mid-nineteenth century. By 1807, there were more than five hundred in Massachusetts and New Hampshire alone. Formed primarily to ensure the presence of religion in rural areas, an equally important goal of Congregational churches was to see that the *right* religion was present, specifically, orthodox Congregationalism rather than enthusiasm (sectarian revivalism) or infidelity (Unitarianism or deism).

Challenged numerically by these new groups and pressured politically by older ones, Congregationalists gradually and grudgingly abandoned the system of tax-supported churches they had kept in place for two hundred years. In the end, even staunch opponents such as Lyman Beecher of Connecticut admitted that disestablishment was “the best thing that ever happened” to the churches; without special privileges, the Congregational faithful now had to place their trust in God rather than the political system. New Hampshire (1817) and Connecticut (1819) were followed by Massachusetts, which finally disestablished its Standing

Order in 1833. This did not mean that all faiths were now treated equally. In New England as elsewhere, Christians (typically Protestant Christians) continued to enjoy special political and other privileges for decades. With the end of Congregational dominance, however, a new era in the region’s religious history began.

Change and Challenge in the Nineteenth Century

New England’s faithful were not only reforming their own political systems; like Protestants elsewhere during the early 1800s, they were also engaged in reforming society generally. They proceeded with brash confidence and the conviction—translated directly from the Puritan past and encouraged by the optimism of the Second Great Awakening—that Americans were partnering with God in developing a new nation. Evangelical reformers now put in place a massive “Benevolent Empire” to deal with a host of familiar social issues, as well as new ones that a growing manufacturing environment was making visible. Voluntary societies, founded by individuals rather than by denominational action, addressed concerns that ranged from aid to the poor, literacy, evangelism, and women’s rights to the dangers of gambling, dueling, and drinking. Congregationalists, sometimes partnering with Baptists and Presbyterians, were responsible for initiating a disproportionate number of these, including the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810), the American Bible Society, (1816), the American Home Missionary Society (1826), and the American Education Society (1826). Often leaders deliberately reached across denominational lines to welcome participation and shared governance from the wider Protestant community. Although many social agencies eventually reverted to single-denomination sponsorship, the shared character of the enterprise united New Englanders with members of denominations not widely represented in the Northeast, encouraging a spirit of “interdenominational comity” that helped to produce formal ecumenical conversations in the 1880s and after.

If New Englanders believed reforming the East was important, they knew that redeeming the West was equally so. The territory gained from the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 was vastly larger than New England itself, open, and without stabilizing social or religious institutions; it was both frightening and compelling. To meet the needs of this new American wilderness, New England Congregationalists joined with Presbyterians in a “Plan of Union” (1801) to promote the cooperative founding of churches on the

frontier. Although for a variety of reasons the Plan was only marginally successful, it was the nation's first formal ecumenical venture, lasting for half a century. Meanwhile, virtually all evangelical Protestants in New England were concerned about a development they believed threatened both East and West: the spread of Roman Catholicism.

Protestant fears about the Catholic Church—from papal conspiracies to sexual deviance—date from New England's first settlers. Legal restraints effectively kept all but a few Roman Catholics out of New England until the end of the Revolution, when new state constitutions granted them religious freedom. Nevertheless, at the turn of the century only about 1,000 of perhaps 50,000 Catholics resided in the region. Between 1815 and 1860, however, massive waves of immigration changed the landscape irrevocably. Not only Congregational but Protestant dominance began to give way to a new Catholic majority. At first most Catholic immigrants were from Ireland, driven west by economic pressures and, after 1840, by the famous potato famine that caused widespread starvation in the homeland. Additional waves of immigration—in the 1870s from French Canada, and later from Hungary, Portugal, Poland, and Italy—augmented the numbers and radically increased the region's ethnic diversity. Many of these newcomers migrated to towns and cities in southern New England; an influx of Quebecois in the 1920s peopled the northern mill towns of Maine and New Hampshire.

From the 1820s on, virulent anti-Catholic sentiment in New England cut across lines of class and culture. Working-class people feared for their jobs; the wealthier elite feared the loss of social stability and traditional institutions. The fact that many Roman Catholics were illiterate, poor, and spoke languages other than English linked the politics of anti-Catholicism with those of anti-immigration. Nativist groups such as the Know-Nothing Party found strong support in the Boston area, where many of the first immigrants had settled; there, in 1834, an angry mob set fire to the Ursuline convent in what is now Somerville. The following year Boston evangelicals published the best seller *Six Months in a Convent*, one of the most notorious in a new genre of anti-Catholic conspiracy literature and “captivity narratives.” An avalanche of similar publications followed, some of them written by prominent leaders such as Lyman Beecher and Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph and son of Andover Seminary founder Jedidiah Morse.

Despite this opposition, Roman Catholics quickly established new parishes and dioceses, convents and seminaries;

they set about becoming active American citizens and adopting American ways, including enthusiastic participation in local politics. If Protestants looked upon this growing Catholic power and assimilation with dread, church officials looked on it with pastoral concern, worried that excessive Americanization could result in an independent, schismatic church at odds with the Vatican. Ironically their attempts in the latter half of the century to ensure that the faithful did not depart too far from orthodoxy—by establishing parochial schools, Catholic hospitals, fraternal organizations, and other institutions—increased Protestants' anxiety about Catholic separatism and contributed to their suspicions about the church's ultimate intent to undermine American democracy. Not until the election of John Fitzgerald Kennedy as president of the United States in 1960 were such fears laid to rest.

If urban New Englanders in the 1820s and 1830s perceived a growing religious crisis in their own region, many throughout the area were becoming aware of a larger crisis in the nation as a whole. Slave trade had begun in New England less than twenty years after the Pilgrims landed. Yet the “peculiar institution” was never widespread in the region, nor did it have the profound economic impact it had in the South. Most slaveholders lived in southern New England towns and kept only a few slaves; in the north country, small subsistence farms, diversified agriculture, and an independent citizenry made slaveholding impractical. In part for this reason, and in part because of moral and social convictions that dated to the Puritan century, opposition to slavery among New England churchgoers was both earlier and easier than in the South. In 1701 Congregational layman and Massachusetts judge Samuel Sewall had published America's first antislavery tract, *The Selling of Joseph*. But more than one hundred years would pass before his solitary protest became a regional chorus.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century many Christians in New England and elsewhere opposed slavery. Few, however, were prepared to support “abolitionism”—that is, immediate emancipation. By the 1830s, however, this reluctance to act was giving way to a greater sense of urgency. A major catalyst was William Lloyd Garrison's publication *The Liberator*, begun in 1831. Garrison, a New Englander influenced by Quaker antislavery sentiments, became the primary spokesperson—honored and vilified—for abolitionism; in protest of slavery he famously burned the U.S. Constitution on Boston Common. Soon New England Baptists, Congregationalists, Unitarians, Quakers, Universalists, and others—both black and white—began to speak

out more forcefully. (Baptist David Walker of Boston and Congregationalist minister Lemuel Haynes, both African Americans, were articulate spokespersons for the antislavery cause. Haynes, a Revolutionary War veteran and pastor in Vermont, was the first African American to minister to a white congregation and probably the first to be ordained in the United States.)

The rescue of the Spanish ship *Amistad* in 1839 brought the reality of slavery home to New England churchgoers, many of whom had never even seen a black person. In that year, fifty-three captive Africans from Sierra Leone forcibly took the vessel on which they were being transported to Cuba, killed the ship's captain and several crew members, and attempted unsuccessfully to return home. The *Amistad* was seized off the coast of Connecticut by the American Navy; its captives were jailed and brought to trial for murder. An impressive group of advocates, including students at nearby Yale Divinity School and former President John Quincy Adams, a Massachusetts Congregationalist, argued in Washington on their behalf. Two years later the freed captives were returned to Africa, accompanied by missionaries who took the opportunity to begin evangelistic work there. Throughout New England, even in the rural north, the *Amistad* episode galvanized ordinary men and women who sent donations, wrote letters, and held church meetings to discuss both this situation and slavery more generally. Abolitionists seized the moment to generate new support for immediate action. Over the next two decades antislavery sentiment in New England grew, particularly with publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's best-selling novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852. The daughter of influential clergyman Lyman Beecher, Stowe believed that her book was divinely written; its moral fervor and dramatic portrayal of the evils of slavery had a profound effect on New England and on the nation's collective conscience.

Change and Continuity in the Twentieth Century and Beyond

Like other states along the Atlantic seaboard, New England was touched by pre-Civil War schisms among Methodists (1844), Baptists (1845), and Presbyterians (1857), all of whom split into northern and southern bodies. Yet because the region's founding tradition, Congregationalism, and its Unitarian offspring were structurally unaffected by the war, New England did not at the time experience significant religious destabilization. Roman Catholicism, with its international governance, also remained intact.

Nevertheless, statistics reveal both change and continuity in the period since the Civil War. By 1890 the regional dominance of Roman Catholicism was complete. In the early twenty-first century—by significant but rapidly declining percentages—Catholics remained the largest religious body in every New England state. Among Protestant and other religious groups, both new and old patterns of religiosity presently prevail. Except in Rhode Island, the United Church of Christ, primary denominational heir of Congregationalism, continues to be a major presence, followed by Baptists and Methodists. In Massachusetts, Jews trail Catholics as the second most numerous group, and they are well represented in both Rhode Island and Connecticut. Religion in general, however, has lost some of its former influence: by 2008 the northern states (Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire) had replaced the Pacific Northwest as the least religious region in the nation.

The twentieth century saw major changes among New England's Congregational and Roman Catholic communities. In a series of national meetings before and after 1900, Congregationalists established new, more connectional national structures and formally rejected all remaining vestiges of Calvinism. In 1931 they united with members of the Christian Connection and a majority merged again in 1957, this time with the Evangelical and Reformed Church, a body of German heritage. Headquarters of the new United Church of Christ shifted from Boston to New York after the merger, and in 1990 to Cleveland, Ohio.

Roman Catholics, despite their upward social mobility in the region, struggled throughout the twentieth century to deal with the tensions of both ethnic diversity and class distinctions in New England. At the end of the twentieth century, new Hispanic, Asian, and other immigrants recapitulated the ethnic challenges of earlier decades. Conflict between working-class and "elite" Catholics notoriously erupted in the early 1970s, when leaders attempted to address racial segregation in Boston by busing white and black children to different communities. Priestly sexual abuse, widely reported in the national media after 2001, had a profound effect on New England Catholics. The American Religious Identification Survey, conducted by Trinity College of Hartford and released in March 2009, showed plummeting Roman Catholic membership in New England, with an overall shift from 50 percent of residents in 1990 to 36 percent in 2008. During this same period, churches were closed throughout the region and parishes consolidated.

Some regional changes, of course, have been shared with the nation as a whole. The shift from urban to suburban centers of influence, ongoing throughout the twentieth century, has left many venerable New England church buildings nearly empty on Sunday mornings. At the same time the vibrant urban presence of African American, and more recently Hispanic, Christians in old and new denominations is revitalizing urban worship. The growth of global faiths, largely as a result of immigration, has everywhere changed the ethos of formerly Christian communities and affected local behavior in everything from holiday concerts to patriotic observances. Since the mid-1900s, New England's historic "mainline" churches have experienced declines in membership, and as with the American population in general, New Englanders overall are less religious today than formerly.

As it has since the Puritans' "city on a hill" in the 1630s, New England continues to host a variety of nontraditional and experimental religious communities that regularly challenge the religious status quo. Unitarians, still centered in Boston but united with Universalists since 1961, no longer consider themselves Christian; instead they embrace humanistic principles and honor ideas from many religious traditions. Their progressive social positions on matters ranging from economics to human rights are influential beyond their numbers. Since the end of exclusionary immigration restrictions in 1965, Asian and Near Eastern faiths have proliferated, including Islam and Baha'i. Neo-pagan, New Age, "high demand" Christian and communal groups, such as the International (formerly Boston) Church of Christ and the Twelve Tribes (of Island Pond, Vermont, and Hyannis, Massachusetts) continue the tradition of countercultural—and controversial—religion initiated four centuries ago by dissenter Roger Williams. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church (the "Moonies") has a significant presence in both Gloucester, Massachusetts, where it purchased a fishing fleet in the late 1970s, and in Connecticut, where in 1992 it acquired a controlling interest in the struggling University of Bridgeport.

Historical ironies abound. Andover Newton Theological School, the successor institution to conservative Andover Seminary—founded two hundred years ago to maintain Congregational orthodoxy and combat Harvard's Unitarian liberalism—today enrolls the largest number of Unitarian Universalist students in the country and shares its campus with Hebrew College, a multid denominational Jewish rabbinical school. In 2007, liberal Harvard Divinity School

instituted a chair of evangelical theological studies. Today Massachusetts, where a single Christian group was dominant longer than in any other region of the country, boasts what may be America's oldest Council of Churches in continuous existence, dating from 1902; the council includes cooperating communions that range from Orthodox to Unitarian Universalist. Across this formerly homogeneous region—and not only in urban centers—radical religious diversity continues to grow apace at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Diana Eck, Harvard scholar of world religions and director of the Pluralism Project there, writes that her university's Puritan founders would be astonished at the diversity in New England today; not only Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and Hindus, but Sikhs, Jains, and a host of lesser-known groups have a lively presence even north of Boston. And here, where the First Great Awakening effectively began, evangelical churches remain a relatively minor presence, with fewer self-identified evangelicals than in any other region of the country.

Predictions are notoriously inaccurate. Whatever the future of New England's religions may be—and the plural of "religion" here is not insignificant—it is likely the region will continue to be characterized by awareness of tradition, embrace of change, conflict, and a lively and sometimes contentious dialogue about matters of the spirit.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; American Revolution; Anti-Catholicism; Antinomian Controversy; Atlantic World; Benevolent Empire; Congregationalists; Education: Boarding Schools; Freedom, Religious; Geographical Approaches; Great Awakening(s); Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Pietism; Pilgrims; Presbyterians, Colonial; Puritans; Shakers; South as Region; Theocracy; Unitarians; Unitarian-Universalist Association.*

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New Religious Movements

New religious movements (NRMs) is the category that scholars use today to describe new, alternative, or nonmainstream religious groups. Earlier generations of scholars used other categories to understand new religions, beginning with the church-sect typology proposed by the German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) and expanded by Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923) and others. The typologies that these intellectuals developed plotted religious groups on a continuum from established or mainstream “churches” to

denominations, sects, and cults. Churches were mainstream religions allied with and supported by the state. They claimed universality and tried to establish religious monopolies. Denominations were churchlike groups that, while remaining on good terms with the state, were not officially supported by it. Denominations competed against each other for converts in societies that lacked officially established religions. Sects were reform groups that emerged within and were often critical of churches or denominations. Finally, cults existed in the greatest tension with the mainstream, were the most radical and innovative, and often were led by authoritarian leaders who attracted adherents from alienated or marginal classes. Both cults and sects could (but did not always) develop into denominations as they attracted followers. As they did so, they often muted criticisms of the mainstream; gave up strategies of separation; suppressed esoteric theological ideas; and developed more routinized, bureaucratic modes of organization.

This older typology was useful in helping intellectuals think about relationships between religious groups and social structures and norms. A number of sociologists in the second half of the twentieth century, however, have criticized this typology and suggested other ways of thinking about religious groups. The category *cult* in particular lost its appeal, in part because lay Americans were using it to categorize certain religions as illegitimate or dangerous. Because the term had these pejorative connotations, scholars in the 1960s replaced it with *new religious movements*. But this term also had its problems. Though scholars had for decades assembled lists of features shared by new religious movements, such as millennial beliefs, authoritarian leaders, and withdrawal from the mainstream, it was no longer clear that new religions shared these characteristics. Many so-called NRMs did not have charismatic leaders or unusual beliefs and social practices; some included under the moniker were not even “new.” (In any case, it is difficult to define *newness*.) The category often used today is “new and alternative religions,” and the focus for sociologists and historians increasingly is how each group is related to its particular historical and cultural context. In a recent article, Gordon Melton (2004) made the case for this turn to particular contexts by insisting that understanding these groups was possible only by understanding how each new religion is linked to its parent religion and to the social and cultural forces that shape it. Perhaps, he wrote, new religions share more with their parent religions than with other so-called new religions. Using this definition, we are drawn to how each new or

alternative religion represents a departure from (and sometimes a critique of) mainstream culture and the ways that it develops out of mainstream culture.

Early Nineteenth-Century Apocalyptic Groups

Though there were innovative Christian groups in early America, the nineteenth century brought with it new discourses on freedom and egalitarianism and a resulting religious creativity that was unprecedented. Innumerable religious groups formed in this period, especially on the rough-and-tumble western frontier, where Americans forged a new spirit of individualism and independence from clergy in their distance from established religious institutions on the East Coast. Areas in central and western New York State were particularly well known for religious experimentation. The area was covered by intense evangelical revivals that sometimes led earnest religious seekers to more radical interpretations of God's will or his punishing wrath. Many new groups were apocalyptic, believing that the end of the world, or its radical re-creation, was imminent. Revival excitements and several personal misfortunes appear to have transformed Robert Matthews (1778–1841), for example, into the messiah Matthias, a lonesome voice crying out against all the devils and delusions that dominated American Christianity. The real church had been lost. His attempt to return America to a biblical, patriarchal society ended when he was convicted for committing violence against family members and women and when the press, making the trial into a national scandal, made widely known rumors about his eccentricities, sexual improprieties, and violent behavior. His household did not, it turned out, look like the Kingdom of God on earth.

Other prophets felt similarly called to cry out to American believers, and one, the Baptist William Miller, predicted that the world would end in 1843. Miller had more success than Matthias, convincing a large number of American Christians in the 1830s and 1840s that Christ's Second Advent was fast approaching. By the early 1840s there was an entire movement, with Adventist lectures, newspapers, revival meetings, hymnals, and conferences. As the 1843 date approached, the movement continued its astonishing growth (abetted by widespread newspaper coverage), and thousands gathered at camp meetings and tabernacles built to accommodate large audiences. Many watched for providential signs. A remarkable and unexpected comet on February 28, 1843, just before Miller's anticipated March 21 deadline, was another sign for those who had eyes to see such things. The

Adventists were disappointed when March 21 came and went, and the popular press issued an onslaught of ridicule, but Miller and others recalculated the numbers and set new dates for 1844. Those dates also came and passed. Many left the movement, but others, convinced that Christ would come again and buttressed in this belief by confirming visions and dreams, soldiered on.

One was Ellen White, who with several associates came to believe that Christ had returned in 1844—though his return, White said, was not to earth but to heaven. White had several other visions that filled out a distinctive Christian set of doctrines concerning health and healing practices, ritual life, and Sabbath observance. This was the beginning of Seventh-day Adventism. Another modern American denomination that emerged out of nineteenth-century Adventism was the Jehovah's Witnesses, a group that continued to set dates for the second coming on into the early twentieth century. The Jehovah's Witnesses also have a set of distinctive doctrines and practices. These include a robust belief in the power of the devil; a sense that the devil controls all humanly created governments; a refusal to salute flags or sing nationalistic songs; an avoidance of holidays such as Christmas and Easter (which they regard as pagan in origin); and active, often door-to-door, missionary activities.

A final apocalyptic group was the Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, a group that also developed out of the evangelical ferment in frontier New York. The founder Joseph Smith (1805–1844) was raised in upstate New York, and like others who lived among the fissiparous evangelical sects of this period, he could not figure out which confession, creed, or practice was the right one. A set of visions and revelations made it clear that none of them were true, that the authentic Christian church had been wholly lost, and that his providential mission involved restoring the church in anticipation of the Second Coming of Christ. He had a number of radical ideas: that God had a body and resided in a physical location somewhere in the universe, that spiritually advanced human beings could become gods, that a patriarchal society should be restored, that the Israelite priesthood and temple rituals should be restored, and that secular and sacred orders should be collapsed into a theocracy. To advance the cause of creating this theocracy (or "theodemocracy," as Smith called it), he announced in 1844 his candidacy for the American presidency. Though Mormon ideas were unusual, it is not usually ideas that get new American religions into trouble. It is practices. In Smith's case, the practices that offended the most were his antidemocratic political philosophy and, probably

more important, his endorsement of polygamy. Smith was killed by an angry mob in 1844. U.S. government officials pursued the Mormons west, and finally the group capitulated to legal and military pressures by renouncing polygamy in 1890. Since that time they have traveled a path similar to other new religions, becoming less prophetic and radical, modifying some of their offensive teachings, and developing a powerful public relations arm that stresses similarities with mainstream America.

Nineteenth-Century Communitarians

In addition to the apocalyptic groups, other radical religions were born in the early nineteenth century, including communitarian groups, groups that lived communally and experimented with ways of organizing society and especially the family. Many of them, like the Shakers, incorporated apocalyptic ideas, though the focus often was less on the end of time and more on achieving perfection here on earth. One of the most successful of these groups was the Shakers, a communally organized celibate group that reconstituted the Christian community into a family. Elders and elderss were like parents to the community; all others were brothers and sisters. Everyone renounced sexual activity, and men and women were separated. All believers gave up private property. In the 1830s and 1840s Shakers experienced a time of spiritual visions and dreams, and they reported other charismatic gifts as well, such as speaking in tongues. Their worship practices incorporated marching, dancing, singing, and shouting, though in time these spontaneous forms of worship were routinized into more structured and orderly dances. This group appealed to many earnest evangelicals seeking more complete ways of consecrating their lives to Christianity. Shakers gained adherents by converting adults and adopting orphaned children.

A number of other communitarians responded to God's call to perfect their lives in every way. One of them, John Humphrey Noyes (1811–1886), an iconoclastic minister trained at Andover Seminary and Yale Divinity School, became preoccupied with the idea of total perfection and started a community of seven or eight families in Putney, Vermont. Gradually his ideas became more radical. In 1846 he and his followers initiated something they called "complex marriage," an arrangement by which members of the community swapped sexual partners in order to overcome the selfishness of monogamous marriage. Noyes fled Putney when charged with adultery in 1847 and relocated to Oneida, in central New York, where he continued his pursuit

of personal and social perfection, and where he came to believe that he had been divinely appointed to establish the kingdom of God on earth. He continued to hone his ideas about perfection in marriage, requiring for instance that during sex men abstain from ejaculation. In theory at least, the point of complex marriage was to increase love, not sexual pleasure (or number of children). In the late 1860s and 1870s new paths to evolutionary perfection were charted, and Noyes selected certain community members to reproduce. The children born of these unions, called stirps, were educated by a special committee. In 1879 local religious leaders stepped up their campaign against these practices, and amidst rumors of arrest for unorthodox sexual arrangements, Noyes fled to Canada, never to return to Oneida. Again, Americans are a tolerant people when it comes to ideas, but practices are another matter altogether.

There were other fervent communitarians, liberal and evangelical, in this period, and many of them had high hopes that their new kingdoms might usher in a more just millennium. These hopes had religious dimensions, as we have seen; they also had socialist ones, for many drew deeply from socialist ideas in this period, especially those of the French utopian philosopher Charles Fourier (1772–1837). The result was a powerful communitarian impulse destructive of older social hierarchies, and many groups, religious and nonreligious, set out to subvert traditional American notions about sex, gender, and marriage. Besides Noyes's groups, others included the communities inspired by Welsh social reformer Robert Owen (1771–1858). Many of them expanded the range of things women could do, say, and preach in public.

Nineteenth-Century Healing Movements

The nineteenth century also saw the rise of an astonishing variety of dietary and body reform movements that linked body control, bodily health, and personal holiness. Starting in the 1830s, religious physiologists and reformers such as William Alcott (1798–1859) and Sylvester Graham (1794–1851) promoted dietary and health reform as a part of a comprehensive plan for physical and spiritual regeneration. These programs of reforming body and spirit had different aspects, including general dietary restraint, the use of whole foods, a vegetarian diet, routine exercise, and moderation in sexual relations. Graham, for one, drew on medical and neurological notions about the problems of overstimulating the self, and he recommended abstaining from anything that would irritate the body and the nervous system, including meat, alcohol, tea, coffee, and sex. Sexual relations—had to

be carefully monitored; indulging once a month was acceptable, though for older couples it could be less frequent. Excessive sex, animal products, spicy foods, or stimulating drinks caused unnatural fevers and excitations, leading naturally to malaise or debility. Tight-laced dresses for women also were unnatural. Always, bodily conditions had spiritual repercussions. For instance, in 1835 and 1836, Alcott insisted that eating too much on the Sabbath led to sleepiness in church and obliviousness to the divine truths preached there.

Even Christians who didn't consider themselves physiologists picked up these emphases. For example, the great revivalist Charles Finney felt sorry for those who indulged in an overstimulating diet, one that turned their bodies into a fierce source of temptation. Many linked diet to salvation: in the 1830s and 1940s temperance hotels and boarding houses emerged offering Graham's diet; colleges instituted dietary requirements; perfectionist communes with vegetarian menus were organized; new religions, including the Mormons and the Seventh-day Adventists, sprang up with strict rules about eating and drinking. Ellen Gould White (1827–1915), the already-mentioned prophetess of Seventh-day Adventism, believed vegetarianism was a key way to overcome original sin and usher in the millennium.

It was not far from these reflections on diet to an emerging discourse on religion, health, and healing, one that became quite pervasive by the second half of the nineteenth century among both evangelicals and more liberal Christians. On the liberal side, an influential stream of new mental-healing movements grouped together under the category "New Thought" argued that spirit shaped matter and that, therefore, the wrong ways of thinking or believing caused physiological imbalance or sickness. Health could be achieved by right thinking. New Thought practitioners spanned a range, from those who ignored the body because they believed it was epiphenomenal to those who recognized its power to shape in reciprocal ways the spiritual self.

In the former category was the founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), who thought that matter was an illusion best ignored. Hygienists, Grahamists, and other body reformers, Eddy thought, were starting at the wrong end of the process: they should pay attention not to the body's states but to the mind's. That was the source of all healing and illness. But Eddy was more certain than others that matter was unreal. Though many agreed that spirit/thought determined bodily conditions, they also pointed

out that certain bodily practices helped spiritual processes along, including diet restrictions such as those advocated by earlier health reformers such as Graham and Alcott. The body had at least a shadow reality—and what we did with it influenced the spiritual self within. For these reasons, many New Thought reformers were interested in what and how to eat, how to exercise, and, for some, how (and when) to have sex. Of course, in the twentieth century, slim female bodies and strong male ones continued to be associated with vitality, intelligence, morality, and even advanced spiritual states (Griffith, 2004), so the impulse continues today.

Foreign Religions in America

Another source for innovative religious movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was religious notions coming from other countries. Buddhist and Hindu ideas undergirded transcendentalist ideas earlier in the century. Later as Eastern religious notions were popularized in English translations, books, and the periodical literature, new movements, such as the Theosophical Society, which was organized in New York in 1875, emerged to promote the study of world religions and, more importantly, the development of the mystical potentials that were latent in all human beings. Theosophists believed that all religions contained important wisdom. Their syncretic belief system incorporated key Eastern concepts such as karma and reincarnation to understand how the immortal human consciousness progressed through eternity.

A key event that stimulated East-West interchange and new American religious possibilities was the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, a meeting that brought to America several important Hindu and Buddhist teachers. One of them was Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), who impressed many Americans at the Parliament and in subsequent lectures at different locations in the United States. Vivekananda introduced many Americans to yoga and Hinduism and, through the Vedanta Society that he founded in 1896, attracted the attention of a large number of liberal Protestants and religious seekers, some of whom were eager to support him financially. Vivekananda espoused a Hindu theology that each person could attain a realization of God through meditation and other worship practices, and he insisted that the different world religions were different paths to the same goal. He directed much of his attention to teaching Americans meditative techniques—focusing the mind, controlling the breath, performing certain bodily postures. But it was an Indian spiritual leader who became

famous several decades later, Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), who made the Hindu religion an appealing option the world over and especially in America and other Christian countries. The power of Gandhi’s spiritual disciplines was evident to many.

Also at the 1893 World’s Parliament was the Buddhist monk Anagarika Dharmapala (1864–1933), who, like Vivekananda, toured America and offered instruction on breathing, the postures and practices of meditation, and cultivating attitudes of tolerance and peace. Dharmapala was a pioneer in the Indian revival of Buddhism and a powerful Buddhist missionary to America and Europe. Of course he was not the only person bringing Buddhism to America. It had come much earlier in the century with Chinese and Japanese immigrants to the West Coast starting in the 1840s, and a number of other monks and teachers brought it to the 1893 Parliament and promoted it in different forms in twentieth-century America. With Vivekananda and other Eastern teachers, Dharmapala gave lectures at the cosmopolitan Maine religious retreat center, Greenacre, at the turn of the twentieth century, where Buddhist, Jain, Hindu, Bahá’í, and American religious figures meditated together, exchanged ideas, and celebrated the divinity in everyone.

The Bahá’í faith, born in nineteenth-century Iran, also had its American origins in this period, specifically at the Greenacre retreat center in Eliot, Maine, where its founder, Sarah Farmer, included Bahá’í teachers in the curriculum and converted to the religion herself in 1900. The faith began when Mirza Husayn Ali (1817–1892) assumed the title Bahá’u’lláh (Arabic: “Glory of God”) and claimed to be the divine messenger—a claim that in nineteenth-century Iran was viewed quite seriously and could result in imprisonment or death to the person making the claim. Bahá’u’lláh, though incarcerated and tortured, was exiled rather than killed. He traveled from Iran to Iraq, Turkey, and finally Ottoman Palestine in 1868, where he resided until he died in 1892. Starting in 1892 several Middle Eastern Bahá’í missionaries and teachers came to America, converting about 1,500 Americans of evangelical and liberal Protestant background before 1899. Many saw this faith as the fulfillment of biblical prophecies about the end-times; some could conjure memories of great millennial disappointments at mid-century and see Bahá’u’lláh’s mission as a sign that they had been right all along. For these believers, there was no disappointment after all.

Some Americans, learning from Eastern teachers about this great new day of God, wished to journey themselves to

the Holy Land, to Ottoman Palestine, and those with means did so, including Sarah Farmer in 1900. When Farmer came back, she was convinced that she had found a new divine message of ecumenism that might unite all the different believers of the world, and she tilted her Greenacre retreat center towards an explicitly Bahá’í identity. In twentieth-century America, the Bahá’í community continued to attract religious liberals, though its appeal expanded to more conservative Christians, especially in the South, and other kinds of Americans.

How did mainstream—that is, Protestant—Americans respond to the new religious diversity coming in the wake of the 1893 Parliament? It is worth saying first of all that in 1900 Protestants still were by far the majority faith, representing a full 70 percent of the American population (an additional 20 percent were Catholic). Basically there were three kinds of Protestant responses to religious diversity: conservative, moderate, and liberal. Conservatives then, like conservatives now, believed that Christianity was the only way to salvation; they either boycotted the 1893 Parliament or were on the scene to win others for Christ. Liberal Protestants, a small but highly articulate minority, on the whole accepted as true and even beautiful non-Christian religions. Many liberals believed that all the great religions helped develop the human soul. Moderate Protestants, by far the majority (then and now), believed that Christianity was the best faith but not the only one; other religions contained truth. Arguments among Christians about these questions had practical implications for interreligious attitudes at home and missionary ideology abroad. There was an active twentieth-century debate among Christians, one that is ongoing, about how to understand non-Christian religions and teach their followers about Christ.

Early Twentieth-Century Developments

By the early twentieth century America had industrialized and urbanized, and both older, established religions and new movements emerged to help Americans make sense of these changes. American Christians developed new, social forms of Christianity and new forms of activism intended to bring Christ’s message to immigrants and the urban poor. There were Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish forms of social religion. The African American community, in the midst of a “great migration” from the rural South to the urban North in the period 1890–1930, also developed innovative new religions that combined elements of more traditional religions (African religions and Christianity, for instance) with newer emphases

on economic independence, identity, and peoplehood. Strong black nationalist movements emerged, many of them drawing on Jewish or Muslim religious images, which they used to reject vociferously American Christianity and its legacy of oppression. Beginning in the 1890s, several groups of black Jews emerged that had Jewish ideas and practices and linked the African American community to the lost tribes of Israel. Some of these groups had very specific racial eschatologies: the temporary rule of white people would end in an imminent catastrophe, and the true Israelites, Africans, would emerge as powerful and wealthy.

Black Muslim groups also emerged in this period. A number of reformers, including Noble Drew Ali (1886–1929), initiated black Muslim movements in the early decades of the century. Ali insisted that Africans in America were descended from the Moors who had settled in the northern and western shores of Africa. He also believed that the king of Morocco had commissioned him to teach Islam to black Americans. An early book, *The Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America*, combined Christian, Muslim, and nationalist emphases. Ali drew on some of the ideas of Marcus Garvey's nationalist movement, which Garvey began in 1914 and which had a more Christian-oriented set of symbols and practices.

When Garvey was imprisoned for mail fraud in 1925, Ali's group, the Moorish Science Temple, successfully recruited many of his followers. Some scholars maintain that one of Ali's associates was W. D. Fard, an itinerant preacher of black nationalism and Islam and a peddler of silks and other products in Detroit early in the 1930s. When Fard disappeared in 1934, Elijah Muhammad led the burgeoning group and moved the headquarters to Chicago, where he helped organize new Nation of Islam temples, schools, housing projects, and businesses. Elijah Muhammad's theology was distinctive. He elevated Fard to Allah (God) incarnate and spoke of himself as a new messenger of Allah. He developed the racial theology created by earlier groups into a way of explaining American racism and justifying racial separation. In his theology blacks were the original human beings, and whites were a cosmogonic mistake, a weaker, paler human type created by an evil scientist named Yakub. Whites were given a specific period of time to rule, and blacks, while waiting for the world to be turned upside down, should prepare for an eventual takeover. They did so by following a strict regimen: avoiding worldly pleasures, alcohol, tobacco, dancing, gambling, and premarital sex. The Nation of Islam called for the separation of the races and for some kind of official redress because of centuries of slavery. This new religion was a

powerful and appealing alternative to many African Americans seeking a more satisfactory way of understanding identity, purpose, and the meaning of being African in America.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the Nation of Islam edged closer to orthodox Islam. One crucial lieutenant of Elijah Muhammad whose story is well known, Malcolm X (1925–1965), made famous this journey from the Nation of Islam to orthodox Islam. Though he was assassinated by Nation of Islam gunmen in 1965, the move towards Islamic orthodoxy was unstoppable, and gradually Nation of Islam officials, including the son of Elijah Muhammad, Wallace Muhammad, dropped antiwhite rhetoric and embraced more orthodox Muslim positions. This took place in the 1970s and 1980s. By 1985, some of the old guard regretted the move away from older Nation beliefs, and a group of men under the leadership of Louis Farrakhan reconstituted the older group.

Other movements also spoke powerfully to the problems of race and city living. Father Divine's Peace Mission, a very successful and wealthy movement from the 1920s to the 1940s, began when George Baker (1882–1965) claimed to be God and opened his Long Island home in the 1920s for worship services and extravagant banquets. Father Divine's racially integrated banquets demonstrated his power to feed people spiritually and physically. At first the gatherings were entirely African American, though it was only a matter of time before Divine's interracial message attracted mixed audiences. When the stock market crashed in 1929 and the Great Depression set in, Divine's generous free meals and worship services gained in popularity. In 1933 he moved his Peace Mission to Harlem, where his disciples lived communally in "heavens" separated by sex, pooling their income in a cooperative economic enterprise, which at its height incorporated three apartment houses, nine private houses, and fifteen to twenty flats. At its peak in the 1930s, the Peace Mission was the largest single real estate owner in Harlem. It also included twenty-five restaurants and many grocery stores, barber shops, and other businesses. As Americans focused on war and then contentment and prosperity in the 1950s, Father Divine's movement declined. The community's diminishing numbers were not helped by Divine's encouragements to practice celibacy.

The Religious Powers of the Mind

The rise of psychological explanations for human behavior in the late nineteenth century led to another development: the mind became a powerful religious metaphor.

New religions and older ones discovered that the mind had a host of previously unknown powers, human and divine, that led to greater happiness, moments of transcendence, and general religious fulfillment. The first group of believers seeing in the mind the power to save and cure is a group that has already been mentioned, New Thought, a group that includes Christian Science, Divine Science, innumerable independent metaphysical churches, and the Unity School of Christianity. All of these groups espouse a kind of radical idealism that holds that the mind's beliefs and ideas are the only real things in the universe. The mind produces all other phenomena. In this formulation sin, sickness and other difficulties are produced by wrong ways of thinking, and salvation comes by holding in your mind the right thoughts and beliefs.

A good example of this religious style is illustrated by Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), the founder of Christian Science, who in 1866 cured what was apparently a crippling illness by realizing that, like the paralyzed man in the Bible healed by courage and faith (Matthew 9:2), she too could stand up and walk. What she realized in that moment and taught for the rest of her life was that the material world, a world with sickness and death, was an illusion produced by wrong thinking. Healing comes when believers learn to think correctly about reality, when they understand in particular God's complete goodness and realize that all reality, including human beings, are perfect reflections of this goodness.

A large number of other religious reformers agreed that the mind could heal or resolve sicknesses and personal difficulties. The best known of these New Thought teachers were Warren Felt Evans (1817–1889), Emma Curtis Hopkins (1849–1925), Ralph Waldo Trine (1866–1958), and Charles (1854–1948) and Myrtle (1845–1931) Fillmore, the founders of the Unity School of Christianity. Trine was probably the most popular, and his many books are still available at New Age and Christian bookstores. Trine insisted that coming to a deep realization of our oneness with God and opening ourselves to his in-flowing grace were the crucial religious tasks. His writings, like those of Eddy and other New Thought practitioners, borrowed Christian and psychological motifs. He talked at length about psychosomatic effects, and about how distorted mental and emotional conditions (such as, fear) produced illness. He insisted that meditations and affirmations and other ways of holding correct thoughts in mind healed mental and physical sicknesses. Many in this New Thought tradition believed that the mind had many layers, dimensions,

and mysteries, and that somehow the unconscious was connected to a transcendent being or energy. This powerful and widespread notion in Christian and new religions beginning early in the twentieth century was popularized principally by the philosopher and psychologist William James (1842–1910), who believed he glimpsed evidence of a transcendent “More” in people's religious and psychological experiences, including trances, ecstatic worship experiences, sudden moments of ecstasy, and communications with the dead. James's influence penetrated almost every American religious group and culture.

Though their lineage is considerably more eclectic, incorporating ideas from Buddhism and Hinduism, Scientologists too believed in the explosive power of the mind, and they too shifted the religious emphasis from salvation to therapy and self-realization. (Of course, in an atmosphere in which the transcendent is located in the self, self-realization signals not the loss of salvation but its reformulation.) Scientology's founder, L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986), was more freewheeling than other believers in borrowing from psychological truths, for he did not merely harmonize psychological notions and Christian ones. Rather, he reworked the entire religious vocabulary with new categories that seemed one part psychology and one part science fiction: the eternal essence of each person became a Thetan, painful unconscious memories besetting individual Thetans were engrams, the therapeutic process of destroying engrams was auditing, and the biofeedback device used in these auditing sessions was a piece of equipment called an E-Meter. Scientology claimed to be both a science of mind and a religion, the Thetan was both soul and mind, and auditing was both worship and therapy—all examples of the powerful twentieth-century move towards psychologizing religion in America. The goal of Scientology's therapeutic process was ridding the self of engrams and the painful emotions and unhealthy, unconscious reactions they triggered, thus achieving a less inhibited, consciously chosen way of life.

Scientologists also have an elaborate cosmology with different spiritual levels that Thetans attempt to traverse with ongoing forms of auditing, training, and initiation. At the higher spiritual levels, esoteric elements of Hubbard's cosmology are revealed to initiates, including what are called “space opera” elements, essentially cosmological myths that detail how nefarious aliens intervened during crucial moments on ancient Earth. Scientology is a small group but has received disproportionate media attention because of several high-profile adherents and because it has

been at the center of lawsuits challenging its status as a tax-exempt organization.

The “New Age”

Americans speak of “New Age” religion as if they know what it is, but in fact the category holds an incredibly diverse set of religious practices, including energy balancing, yoga, channeling, and Native American vision quests. Supplying a basic definition has not been easy for scholars, but in general New Age seems to incorporate (1) a millennial hope that this is a new age of spiritual possibilities, (2) a belief in immanent metaphysical energies and corresponding practices that attempt to harmonize the self with these energies, (3) a belief that harmonizing the self with these energies brings healing and spiritual development, and (4) a religious eclecticism in which believers borrow religious insights and practices from a range of traditions.

Central to New Age religions is a belief in an immanent, divine energy in all things. New Agers draw selectively from science to attempt to prove this point. The New Age celebrity Shirley MacLaine, for one, drew on a particular reading of quantum physics to show that the universe is comprised not of matter but of energies, fields, and information. In *Out on a Limb* she noted that all of us were therefore “God energy”—powerful, intelligent, creative, and in charge of our identities and destinies. Drawing on quantum physics, neuroscience, and Vedanta Hinduism, Deepak Chopra, an earnest former endocrinologist and best-selling New Age writer, has even offered instructions for navigating the “quantum” worlds of fluxing spiritual energies. He argues that the world was divided into three zones: material (matter), quantum (in-between), and virtual (pure spirit). Traveling in the quantum zone is spiritually unstable; most of us are able to glimpse it in intuitions and fleeting moments of bliss. But mystics and other expert “quantum navigators” have the skill to anchor themselves in this zone and feel its signs—sensations of weightlessness, heightened senses, a perception of energy in the body, seeing the “light.” Chopra’s books, like those of other New Age gurus such as Wayne Dyer, draw eclectically on devotional practices, including Eastern forms of meditation and yoga, to create the kinds of focused intentions and imaginativeness that might keep aspirants always in this light. It is striking how often Chopra cites work and key figures in physics, psychology, and consciousness studies to create his religious vision.

The New Age tradition, like the New Thought tradition that preceded it, emphasizes that the mind’s states determine

all spiritual and material realities. It is the source of inner contentment and outer healing—and its effects can even go beyond the self. New Age believers insist that states of mind have even been shown to influence the properties of water and biological matter, such as DNA, even when it is held at a distance from meditators. New Agers are keenly interested in showing this to be true—that psychological forces reach outside of the self. If all matter really is mental energy, why not? Psychokinetic effects can be traced in different forms—precognition, telepathy, clairvoyance, healing, levitation, and homeopathy. All of these phenomena point to the elusive effects of subtle energies and the ways that the mind can move them in the world.

Communicating with departed spirits also is an important practice for some New Agers. The belief that the living can communicate with the dead is not a New Age invention, of course; in different forms it is present in many world religions, and in America it was notably present after the catastrophe of the Civil War, which killed an astonishing 620,000 Americans (out of a total population of 31 million), as well as after World War I. Many yearned for the dead, and a religious movement that offered rituals of communicating with them, Spiritualism, flourished. Modern-day mediums in the New Age network often practice their craft in the context of small Spiritualist churches or informal groups, and worship often can seem quite “Protestant,” with services that include prayer, singing, and a sermon. The distinctive part, however, is the séance, in which a pastor or medium will channel messages from the spirit world. It is hard to know how many Americans believe or participate in this kind of practice, though it is worth noting that in surveys in the 1990s, 69 percent of the U.S. population said they believed in “angels” and 25 percent said they believed in the possibility of talking with the dead (Brown, 1997). Books written by prominent mediums sell well. A number of television shows have featured mediums and psychics, such as the primetime drama *Medium*, as well as daytime talk shows such as *Crossing Over with John Edward*.

The 1960’s Counterculture

The 1960s was a period of growth and diversification for new and alternative religions in America. This was so for several reasons. First, the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 put an end to the restrictive immigration quotas initiated in the 1920s. An especially large number of immigrants from Asia and Southeast Asia came, bringing with them Buddhism, Taoism, and Asian varieties of

Christianity. Second, the 1960s brought a decisive turn away from the celebratory mood of the post-War 1950s and a questioning of America's role in the world, especially its role in Vietnam. One result was an expanding uncertainty about American traditions that led some to revise older theologies and others to seek wholly new faiths. Third and finally, the civil rights movement, which drew strength from uncertainties about America's role in the world, forced American believers to rethink issues related to religion, race, and justice. In many cases painful adjustments had to be made. New liberation and black theologies emerged, and faiths that offered alternative visions of race, peace, and justice, such as the Bahá'í and Quaker faiths, had wide appeal. In general, it was an age of restatements, reformulations, and personal seeking, and in some ways this culture of seeking continues today, especially in the aging baby boomer generation and their children. Growth rates for new and alternative religions in the 1960s were remarkable. The Bahá'í faith, which claimed just 7,000 adherents in 1956, had approximately 60,000 by 1974. The Buddhist organization Soka Gakkai, which had about 300 American members in 1960, ballooned to approximately 200,000 members by 1976. Many other new and alternative religions, including groups such as the Nation of Islam and American Hindu sects, also experienced dramatic growth in this period. (The 1970s and 1980s brought an inevitable contraction in some groups; Soka Gakkai, for instance, shrank to 50,000 by 1992).

The religious counterculture in the 1960s also opened up new possibilities for women in American society. Some of these possibilities became available within traditional confessions. In 1972 the Hebrew Union College ordained the first woman rabbi. Most of the mainline Protestant denominations ordained women by the 1970s. Those who were unable or unwilling to agitate for change within older denominations embarked on a variety of spiritual journeys in some cases producing critiques of Christianity and Judaism and devising new ways of believing. Mary Daly's evolving critique of Christianity propelled her from Catholicism to new forms of feminist spirituality. Her critique of Christianity—that the Church is anchored in irredeemably antiwoman language—is read in introductory theology courses across the globe. Daly's journey into a less patriarchal and more environmentally conscious spirituality has been repeated by many others, men and women, in the feminist spirituality movement, a diffuse but powerful impulse in American culture that attempts to recover pre-Christian religious beliefs, worship of female divinities, and practices that manipulate

the spiritual energies in nature. The movement has always been eclectic, with individual participants drawing from goddess traditions of ancient Greece, pre-Christian Europe, and Native American religion. Feminist spirituality offers both a critique of and a new alternative to American Christianity.

Anti-Cult Agitation and Other Controversies

The radical impulses of the 1960s triggered a set of conservative reactions that opposed feminism, multiculturalism, the sexual revolution, gay rights, and other causes in the liberal cultural agenda. One part of this reaction was the anti-cult movement, which drew strength from this diffuse conservative movement and from several shocking tragedies associated with new religions, including most notably the mass suicide in 1978 in Jim Jones's Peoples Temple. Were new religions dangerous? Should the American people be protected from them? The anti-cult movement had developed before the Peoples Temple tragedy, begun early in the 1970s by concerned relatives of Americans who had joined controversial religious groups in the 1960s. The key problems identified by the anti-cult movement were religious coercion and "brainwashing." For anti-cult operators, rescuing cult members involved abducting, restraining, and deprogramming them. This was usually done by people without mental health credentials. By the late 1970s, however, the anti-cult movement was professionalized, and mental health practitioners assumed a higher profile in the movement. The movement developed professional journals and conferences, and coercive deprogramming was abandoned in favor of counseling. The anti-cult movement had some success in convincing the broader mental health profession (and the public) that conversion to new religions created psychological problems and illnesses.

Nevertheless, by the mid-1980s the anti-cult movement lost momentum for several reasons. First, after the 1960s and 1970s membership in new religions declined, and there were fewer angry parents and aggrieved ex-members. Second, very controversial groups, such as the Peoples Temple, either failed to grow, declined precipitously, or disappeared. Third, many other new religious movements, such as the Mormons, grew and became more mainstream, joining the list of accepted (or almost accepted) American churches (although many people from a variety of faiths still regard Mormons and other distinctive groups as dangerous "cults"). Fourth and finally, a number of sociologists of new religions, concerned that the anti-cult crusade was endangering

cherished religious liberties, condemned the anti-cult movement and demonstrated convincingly that many of its claims—such as the notion that NRMs brainwashed converts—were without scientific basis.

It is perhaps on this final issue, the issue of brainwashing and coercion, that NRM commentators have disagreed most passionately. Those hoping to protect NRMs and religious liberties—that is, the majority of scholars—have insisted that brainwashing does not exist. They insist that medicalizing adherence to new religions—that talking of conversion processes only in terms of physical and mental pathologies—unfairly targets believers of the new religions and adds to the stigmatization of their groups. On the other hand, some insist that new religions manipulate their members, coercing them into joining or remaining members. Arguments on both sides have been acrimonious, in part because they play out not just in conferences and university classrooms but in courtrooms, where scholarly “experts” are paid to instruct judges and juries about the dangers, real or imagined, of new religions. These are crucial arguments, with a lot at stake. Should American citizens be protected from new religions? Should child members of new religions be forcibly removed? What is the role of the state in protecting personal autonomy? What is the role of the state in protecting the children of unconventional believers? How do we balance the potentially harmful effects of religious adherence with our national commitment to religious freedom? While these questions remain difficult to answer, it is certainly the case that asking and debating all of them has led to a remarkably developed literature on conversion and religious choice, with contributions from psychologists, sociologists, and historians.

Many Americans continue to look at new and alternative religions with skepticism, especially when these religions violate cultural norms or engage in unusual practices. Sources of tension between new religions and the mainstream are varied. Many groups, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, or Hare Krishna, are chary of American popular culture and pursue various strategies of critique and separation. This can create tension. Other groups violate American norms concerning health and healing by refusing to treat illnesses with Western biomedicine. This has been the case, for example, with Christian Scientists, who have been sued repeatedly for refusing to treat children with deadly illnesses. This also has been an issue for immigrant groups such as the Hmong from Southeast Asia, a people whose beliefs about spirit, body, and health neither agree with Western

biomedicine's underlying assumptions nor understand its healing practices. Some new religions may also seem inappropriately authoritarian to people in the American mainstream. New religions have charismatic leaders who may seem tyrannical. Their demands on adherents may leave believers without freedom and autonomy. This is a problematic argument, of course, for all religions demand obedience and sacrificial service and giving. What exactly, then, is the difference between a new and illegitimate religion and an older, established, legitimate one?

Though skepticism about new religions continues, a countertrend is also taking place, as religions and religious practices (such as yoga) that once seemed new or exotic are becoming mainstream. Rising interest in new religions and religious practices has been abetted by an emerging culture of religious openness, a culture not just of increased religious seeking but also of increasing interreligious curiosity among believers in established religious communities. It is no longer difficult to find committed Christians, Jews, or Muslims practicing yoga, learning something about Buddhist meditation, or reading the latest New Age self-help book. In many ways, as we have seen, America's particular history and culture, its ongoing preoccupation with liberty, individualism, and iconoclasm, made this twentieth-century religious openness possible. We have seen signs and hints of a burgeoning religious diversity and innovative spirit in earlier centuries, when new evangelical sects, idiosyncratic communes, and prophetic movements were born. There can be little doubt that these groups will continue to multiply and that American scholars and other observers will continue to wrestle with ways of evaluating and interpreting them appropriately.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Architecture: New Religious Movements; Bahá'í; Canada: Pluralism; Christian Science; Esoteric Movements; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Jehovah's Witnesses; Liberation Theology; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements* entries; *Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Pluralism; Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult; Scientology; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends; Wicca and Witchcraft.*

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New Religious Movements: Architecture

See *Architecture: New Religious Movements*

New Religious Movements: Black Nationalist Movements

Throughout black history, there have been both individual and collective forms of resistance against the experiences of oppression that black people have endured from slavery to

the present, but collective black nationalist movements did not begin to emerge until the twentieth century. At stake in the black nationalist movements were two fundamental concepts or values: freedom and identity. These two cardinal virtues were lost to slavery and its aftermath, so the movements sought creative ways to overcome the inequality, injustice, and negative stereotypes that society had imposed on black people. Sometimes this meant aggressive moves to demand greater equality and justice, but at other times it meant taking on imaginative identities and recreating historical pasts. The great migrations to the urban north from southern rural areas provided the freedom and anonymity for experimentation with religious allegiances and identity.

Back to Africa: Marcus Garvey and the United Negro Improvement Association

"Malcus" Mosiah Garvey Jr., as his birth certificate reads, was born August 17, 1887, in St. Anne's Bay on the northern coast of Jamaica. When he was fourteen years old, he became a printer's apprentice and learned some journalism. He also made it a habit to visit churches to observe the preaching and oratorical techniques of Kingston's leading preachers. Garvey was fascinated by the power of both the written and spoken word, which he used in organizing his movement.

In 1912 Garvey had a powerful consciousness-raising experience. He was working in London with Duse Mohammad Ali, a Sudanese-Egyptian scholar and nationalist who influenced Garvey's ideas about African redemption, when he came across a copy of Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery* (1901), which ignited his imagination. An excerpt from Garvey's papers reads as follows:

I read "Up From Slavery," by Booker T. Washington, and then my doom—if I may so call it—of being a race leader dawned on me . . . I asked, "Where is the black man's Government?" "Where is his King and his kingdom?" "Where is his President, his country, and his ambassador, his army, his navy, his men of big affairs?" I could not find them, and then I declared, "I will help to make them."

Excited by his newfound direction and purpose, Garvey returned to Jamaica to establish a program for the redemption of the black race. On August 1, 1914, he founded the Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association and African Communities League, later shortened to UNIA. The purpose was to unite all people of African

descent in a social crusade to rehabilitate the race. The UNIA motto was “One God! One Aim! One Destiny!”

Although he made some headway in organizing in Jamaica, his movement did not flourish until he arrived in Harlem on March 24, 1916. After a year of travel to assess the mood of this new country, Garvey established the New York division of UNIA, which quickly became and remained the largest chapter. His message of racial pride, uplift, and redemption found a receptive audience. This short, stocky, dark-skinned Jamaican was a gifted and charismatic orator who thundered, “Up you mighty race, you can accomplish what you will.” Garvey believed that a black skin was a symbol of greatness rather than a badge of shame.

By 1919 Garvey claimed more than 2 million members in thirty chapters and an estimated 6 million members worldwide. The *Negro World*, UNIA’s New York newspaper, rapidly became the largest black newspaper in the country, with a circulation of 200,000.

A master politician and an astute organizer, Garvey paid careful attention to the influence of religion among black people. His own experiences in Jamaica and his observations in black communities in the United States had taught him that material and spiritual needs are often blended together and that the successful organization must be able to satisfy both dimensions.

UNIA also fulfilled the need for group sharing through common rites and rituals in weekly meetings, which resembled church meetings, and in massive, colorful parades. In 1920 UNIA held its first international convention in Harlem with invited delegates from twenty-five countries. The convention began with a massive parade by thousands of men dressed in the dark blue uniforms of UNIA’s African Legion and of women who wore the distinctive insignia of Garvey’s Black Cross Nurses. Colorfully robed choirs and children dressed in their Sunday clothes followed. The Madison Square Garden arena overflowed with more than 25,000 people. The crowd sang the new UNIA anthem, “Ethiopia, Thou Land of Our Fathers,” and the official colors of that movement became emblematic of black nationalism worldwide: “Red for the blood of the race, nobly shed in the past and dedicated to the future; Black to symbolize pride in the color of its skin; Green for the promise of a new and better life in Africa” (Cronon, 1974). At the convention Garvey was named provisional president of the African Republic, whose members pledged to organize the 400 million people of African descent around the world.



Marcus Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association and African Communities League to unite people of African descent in a social crusade. He advocated racial pride, individual uplift, and African nationalism, ideas that influenced black mass movements that followed.

Garveyism provided a “common faith” based on the doctrines of African redemption and “race first,” which some scholars have interpreted as a surrogate religion. It certainly possessed all the characteristics of a religion, and UNIA often competed with and in some instances was supported by traditional black Christian churches. Garvey remained UNIA’s official statesman and its most perceptive theologian. The idea that “God is Black” is partly rooted in Garvey’s theology. Although whites have always seen God through white spectacles, he said, Negroes must now “see God through our own spectacles.” “We Negroes,” he wrote in the *Negro World*, “believe in the God of Ethiopia. . . . That is the God in whom we believe, but we shall worship Him through the spectacles of Ethiopia” (Garvey, 1924).

The plans to redeem “Africa for Africans” and to lay the foundations for a black independent economic system of

international trade began with the creation of the Black Star Line. From 1919 to 1921 Garvey and his advisers bought several old steamships at exorbitant prices, refitted and renamed them, and sent them into service. Although the Black Star Line was a tangible means of fulfilling dreams of liberation and reaching Africa, it also marked the beginning of Garvey's financial problems and his eventual demise. He used the steamships as symbols of prestige, to encourage people to join UNIA, and to sell stock in the company to them. However, the old steamships also became an enormous financial drain on UNIA's resources, and eventually they involved him in legal difficulties.

In early January 1922 Garvey was arrested on a charge of using the mail to defraud in the sale of stock for another ship. Garvey dismissed his lawyer and defended himself. Although the evidence against him was meager and weak, his lack of legal experience and his courtroom demeanor resulted in his losing the case. He was fined \$1,000 and sentenced to five years in the federal prison at Atlanta. He was released in 1927 and deported to Jamaica, where he tried to revive his organization.

Eventually, the UNIA movement split when Garvey attempted to move the headquarters of UNIA from Harlem to Kingston in 1929. He suffered a stroke in London and died on June 10, 1940, at the age of 53. He was buried in Kingston, Jamaica. Although Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois had been very critical of Garvey, he also recognized his significance. "Garvey made thousands think," wrote Du Bois in the *Spokesman*, "who had never thought before. Thousands who merely dreamed dreams now see visions." Garvey left an enormous legacy. His ideas of racial pride, individual uplift, and African nationalism influenced all subsequent black mass movements. He was a visionary who kept his feet on the ground. Besides the Black Star Line, he also organized black factories, some of which mass-produced the first black dolls in the United States.

The Moorish Holy Temple of Science

Among the black migrants to the north was Timothy Drew, who was born in North Carolina in 1866. Not much is known about his early life before he appeared in Newark, New Jersey, as a street-corner preacher. A magnetic and charming personality, Drew had little formal education, but he had an inquiring mind, always searching for new information. In 1913 when he was 47 years old, he founded the Canaanite Temple. Not much is known about this phase of

his life or the Canaanite Temple, except that Drew reversed the usual valence of biblical teaching; according to Edward Curtis, rather than just being depicted as the enemies of Israel, the Canaanites, like the Moabites and the Hamathites, were "Moslems of the northwest and southwest Africa," all of whom were driven out of Canaan by Joshua (p. 73). Thus, Drew saw the Canaanites as a great people and the progenitors of African Muslims. His teachings about the Canaanites were preserved in the later lessons of the Moorish Holy Temple of Science.

Although Arthur Fauset, who did the original study of the Moorish Holy Temple of Science, indicated that the movement was established in Newark in 1913, later scholarship suggests that the founding date might be as late as 1925 in Chicago. This later founding date also means that Noble Drew Ali's movement and his newly assumed identity were probably influenced by Marcus Garvey's black nationalism. But Drew Ali did not merely repeat Garvey's teachings; rather, he gave it his own interpretation. Thus, he refused to call himself *Negro*, *colored*, or *black*, but he believed that all human beings separate themselves according to national groupings. According to his complex genealogy, African Americans were Moorish descendants of an "ancient Asiatic race," and their creed was Islam. Drew rapidly established temples in Detroit, Harlem, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and numerous cities across the South. Active membership in the Moorish Holy Temple of Science movement reached between 20,000 to 30,000 members during his lifetime.

Confusion about names, national origins, and identity struck deeply into the psyche of many black people, who were the primary victims of racial discrimination at this point. To confirm this ethnic transformation and inward change of identity, Prophet Ali issued "Nationality and Identification Cards" to his followers. Each card was validated by the subscription "NOBLE DREW ALI, THE PROPHET" (Lincoln, 1961).

In Chicago the movement became a problem for law enforcement officials. Drew Ali's followers would accost whites on the sidewalks by surreptitiously bumping them out of the way, a practice that reversed the slavery and Jim Crow custom of southern whites forcing blacks off the sidewalks. The members would proudly flash their ID cards or show their lapel buttons and sing praises of their new prophet, who had freed them, psychologically at least, from white domination. Noble Drew Ali finally issued a halt to the disorders and urged his followers to exercise restraint. Drew Ali was probably a member of the Masons

and Shriners or was influenced by them because he and his male followers wore red fezzes.

The circumstances surrounding Noble Drew Ali's death in 1927 and the responsibility for it remain unclear and unsolved. During an internal struggle among leaders of the movement in 1927, one leader was killed. Although Drew Ali was not in Chicago at the time, he was arrested upon his return and charged with murder by police officials. No trial ever took place, however, and he was released on bond. A few weeks later he died mysteriously. The cause of his death is attributed either to a beating he received from the police while he was in their custody or a subsequent beating from dissident members during the internal strife that haunted the movement.

After Drew Ali's death the movement split into numerous smaller factions, diluting its former strength and influence. Some temples still remain active, especially in Chicago. Some Moors believe in the spirit of Noble Drew Ali, whereas others feel that he is reincarnated in their present members and speaks through the Circle 7 *Holy Koran of the Moorish Holy Temple of Science*, which should not be confused with the Qur'an of orthodox Islam. The Circle 7 Koran, so named because of an encircled number "7," which was viewed as a sacred number, on its cover, was published in 1927. It contained Drew Ali's complex genealogy and the view that Jesus was the Moors' genealogical ancestor.

As mentioned, Drew Ali had an inquisitive mind open to influences from esoteric and theosophical groups that were popular in the 1920s. Aside from his genealogical speculations, scholars have shown that Chapters 1 through 19 of the Circle 7 *Koran* were drawn in exact form from Levi H. Dowling's *Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ* that was written in 1908. Chapters 20 to 44 of the Circle 7 *Koran* were derived from the 1925 publication of Rosicrucian Order, *Unto Thee I Grant* (originally *The Infinite Wisdom*). In present-day Moorish temples, membership is restricted to "Asiatics" or non-Caucasians who have renounced their former identities as "colored" or "Negro." The terms "el" or "bey" are attached to the name of each male member as a sign of his Asiatic status, an inward transformation (for example, Smith-el or Carter-bey). This practice was derived from the Turkish custom of adding "el" or "bey" as signifiers of the status of nobility.

Friday is the Sabbath for the Moors, but meetings were also held on Wednesday and Sunday. Facing Mecca, they pray three times a day (sunrise, noon, and sunset) and enforce a strict code of personal morality. Although they

view themselves as an Islamic sect, Jesus figures prominently in the worship, as do other aspects of Christian ritual, including hymns such as "This Little Light of Mine," which is sung at the beginning of a worship service. Members greet each other with the word, *Islam*, which means peace.

Movements Influenced by Ethiopianism

As St. Clair Drake has pointed out, the theme and myth of Ethiopianism has been consistently influential throughout African American history, both by individuals and movements that desired either a return to Africa, a redemption of Africa, or saw Africa as symbolic of racial pride. Slave preachers referred to the Bible, especially Psalm 68:31 (KJV): "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God"), to "prove" that "a black people, Ethiopians, were powerful and respected when white men in Europe were barbarians; Ethiopia came to symbolize all of Africa" (Drake, 1970). The first mass movement in the twentieth century to take up the theme of Ethiopianism was Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association. Garvey and UNIA often quoted Psalm 68:31. UNIA's anthem was "Ethiopia, thou land of our fathers."

Among the many black Hebrew groups in the United States, the Commandment Keepers of Harlem were led by Rabbis Wentworth Arthur Matthew and Arnold Josiah Ford in 1919. Both Matthews and Ford were influenced by Garvey's movement and sought deeper identification with Africa, and Ethiopia in particular. Ford composed the Garvey hymn, "One God, One Aim, One Destiny," in which he predicted that Africa would rise again and her children would be freed. Both men identified with a group of Ethiopian Jews, called Beta Israel (House of Israel) or more pejoratively, "falashas" (wanders, sojourners), who claimed descent from the union of King Solomon of Israel and the Queen of Sheba of Ethiopia. After Haile Selassie I became the king of Ethiopia, Rabbi Ford took thirty followers to Ethiopia to establish a colony for black Israelites. Jacob S. Dorman, in *The New Black Gods*, notes that although the colony failed, the influence of Ethiopianism continued among the Commandment Keepers (Curtis and Sigler, p. 121).

When Wallace D. Muhammad took over the Nation of Islam in 1975, one of the changes he introduced was to call his African American followers "Bilalians," after the Ethiopian slave Bilal who had been freed by Abu Bakr. Bilal was an important figure in the first Muslim community because he was the first to use his melodic voice to call Muslims to prayer.

The religious movement that embodied the Ethiopian theme most deeply was the Rastafarians movement in Jamaica. Although the group was established there in the 1930s, members have become firmly entrenched in the U.S. religious scene, and the movement has been popularized by Bob Marley and reggae music. Its name is taken from the family name of the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, which was Tafari Makonen. Ras was his title, which literally meant “head” but also “duke” or “prince,” before he became emperor. Leaders of the movement such as Leonard Howell responded to Garvey’s prophesy, “Behold a black God is coming.” When Haile Selassie was coronated as the emperor of Ethiopia, he was immediately identified as the God incarnate or Jah (from Jehovah), fulfilling Garvey’s prophecy. Selassie became the messianic figure who eventually led people of African descent in the diaspora back to Africa, especially Ethiopia. The Rastafari, as members prefer to call themselves, mix African traditions with biblical teachings. Wearing dreadlocks and smoking ganja were sacred elements of the religion. The Rastafari also invented their own language. On April 21, 1966, Selassie visited Jamaica, where he was greatly celebrated by thousands of Rastafari. Although he did not personally believe that he was Jah, Selassie did grant a parcel of his personal land (500 acres) in Ethiopia to his black Ethiopian followers and to the Rastafari movement. Rastafarians have made pilgrimages to the land called “Shashamane,” and a number of members have lived on the land since the 1960s (Barrett, 1977). In the United States, Abuna Ammanuel Foxe, president of the Imperial Ethiopian World Federation, founded the Church of Haile Selassie I in Brooklyn in 1987. Branch churches have since been established throughout Rastafari communities in the United States, the Caribbean, and the United Kingdom. Foxe was later appointed a chaplain in the New York State prison system.

Nation of Gods and Earths: The Five Percenters

The Nation of Gods and Earths, more colloquially known as the “Five Percenters,” was a splinter group from the Nation of Islam that was led by Elijah Muhammad. In 1963 Clarence 13X Smith, who was a member of Malcolm X’s advanced ministry class at Temple No. 7 in Harlem, left the Nation of Islam following a dispute. He asked Malcolm, “Why is this particular black man, Master Fard Muhammad, Allah? Why aren’t all black men Allah (that is, divine)?” The Nation of Islam had taught that the black man is the original man and is of divine origins. Smith also had some doubts

that Fard was black because the only extant photo of him in the Nation of Islam shows him as a white man. When Smith began teaching his views to new members, he was asked to leave. He left and took nine followers with him. These first nine were called “the Nine First Born,” so named because each male member of the Nation of Gods and Earths adds the phrase “Born Allah” to the attribute of God given to him (for example, Knowledge Born Allah, Positive Born Allah, Divine Born Allah). In other words, each black man who subscribes to the group’s beliefs is divine or a god. Women are called “earths” because they are to be productive like the planet Earth and produce and nurture members for the future nation.

The media term “the Five Percenters” stems from the nation’s teaching that 85 percent of black people are in a state of ignorance about their true knowledge of self, 10 percent or the “talented tenth” of the black middle class (preachers, teachers, and black professionals) have some knowledge of self but have sold out to the white man, and the remaining 5 percent are the poor righteous teachers who have achieved true knowledge of self and have the task of awakening the black masses. Smith built on the 120 lessons or degrees that were taught by Elijah Muhammad’s Nation of Islam. He also added two books called *The Supreme Alphabet* and *The Supreme Mathematics*. The alphabet and numbers are correlated with each other to produce new knowledge or insights similar to the esoteric system of Kabbalah.

Smith, who called himself Allah, is regarded as the “Father” of the nation, and he focused on the dispossessed youth of Harlem that the Nation of Islam could not reach. In 1966 through the National Urban League Street Academy program, Mayor John Lindsey’s administration established a street academy with Smith, which he called the Allah Academy in Mecca (Harlem). Another street academy was established in Brooklyn, called the Allah Academy in Medina. After surviving one assassination attempt in 1964 in disputes with members of the Nation of Islam, Smith was killed in an unsolved murder in 1969. The First Nine Born took over the leadership of the movement. Although members of the Nation of Gods and Earths use the trappings of Islam, they do not consider themselves Muslims. They also do not consider their movement a “religion” but, like the Rastafarians, call it a “way of life.”

This fairly decentralized movement has attracted thousands of members, largely poor black youth, spreading from the East Coast throughout the country, and it is found in

most predominantly black middle and high school districts and in prisons. Members meet in parliaments for group discussions once a month on late Sunday afternoons in schools, parks, and also in prisons. The main parliament meets in the Harriet Tubman School in central Harlem. Although it is still a largely black movement, there are now some Latino members and a few whites. A number of hip-hop artists such as Rakim, Wu-Tang Clan, Poor Righteous Teachers, and Nas were members and spread the theology through hip-hop music.

Conclusion

The black nationalist movements depicted in this article, from Marcus Garvey's UNIA to the Nation of Gods and Earths, can be viewed as religions of the oppressed. Many poor black men and women have rejected the Christianity of black churches and have sought new religious paths and identities for themselves. Despite promises by the major political parties, many of the black poor have been frustrated in their search for freedom, justice, and equality in U.S. society. These religions of the oppressed have given them a means to transform and affirm themselves and hope for future redemption.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; Baptists: African American; Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence; Islam: Tradition and Heritage; Literature: African American; Nation(s) of Islam; New Religious Movements* entries; *Race and Racism; Religious Thought: African American.*

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New Religious Movements: Nineteenth Century

New religious movement is a term used to describe religious groups that introduced innovative beliefs, practices, or forms of organization that caused them to be in tension with the surrounding culture. While the term implies an original creation, almost all nineteenth-century new religious movements had precedents in older, established religious traditions. American religious leaders crafted innovative beliefs and practices and founded new religious movements that both stirred controversy with the larger public and inspired people to join the new faiths. Religious groups in the nineteenth century such as the Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Perfectionists also presaged many developments in contemporary America. The now common "cult" stereotypes of a charismatic leader interested only in manipulating adherents and the deluded follower who is tricked into joining a deceptive religious group were present in many accounts of new religious movements in the nineteenth century. In addition, the groups that this article will consider tended to engage in cultural critiques and deviations that contributed to their marginal status. For example, Mormons created tension with the surrounding culture both because of their belief in the scriptural status of the Book of Mormon and because of the critiques of the mainstream culture implicit in the restorationist and separatist elements in the developing Mormon tradition.

Because nineteenth-century new religious movements frequently represented religious responses to larger social and cultural trends, the study of such movements can bring light to important issues in the American culture at that time. For example, nineteenth-century new religious movements confronted the larger issues of women's roles in a changing society and the responses of oppressed groups to their situations. Other important themes in nineteenth-century new religious movements include reimagining the

social order, the revitalization or restoration of the true faith, self-empowerment through religious practice, the combining of beliefs from different religions in a new synthesis, and the increasing diversity of religions in America throughout the century.

Communal Movements

Among the most important nineteenth-century dissenters were various communal and utopian movements. Communal movements were groups of people who banded together in a common area, shared resources, and worked toward some common goal. Because communal movements saw radical change in social organization as necessary to meet their goals, they were, by their very nature, countercultural. Communal new religious movements in the nineteenth century are among the most controversial of the new religious movements both because of their beliefs and practices and their new forms of organization, many of which were total rejections of mainstream society's values and principles.

Reformers from many different traditions and contexts established communal movements in nineteenth-century America. The transcendentalist movement had Fruitlands. The German pietist tradition contributed the Amana Colonies and the Harmony Society. One of the first, and perhaps still the best known, actually arrived in 1774 when the United States was still a British colony. The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, more commonly known as the Shakers because of their vigorous dance rituals, was a communal movement with ties to the English Quaker tradition that had come to America when Ann Lee (1736–1784) and a few followers migrated and settled near Albany, New York.

The first Shakers in America understood themselves to be restoring the early Christian faith through disciplined communal living under the personal leadership of Lee. Shaker theology claimed that God had a dual male and female nature; that perfection was possible through proper living; and that divine revelation, exemplified by Lee's prophetic mission, continued. Converts gained access to this perfected, restored kingdom by living in the communal group and avoiding the sin of Adam and Eve, which Lee understood to be sexual intercourse itself, rather than disobedience to God. Thus, the Shakers required celibacy of all members. Shaker houses not only had separate sleeping areas for men and women but separate entrances, staircases, tables in the dining rooms, and spaces in the worship halls. Shakers also required converts who were married when they joined

to give up their traditional married life. While the Shakers did segregate men and women into traditional, gender-defined work roles, they were unique among American religious groups of the nineteenth century in granting equal authority to men and women. The formal leadership structure of Shaker villages required both a male and a female leader, who had equal authority. This radical rejection of traditional gender hierarchies and married life led to their detractors accusing them of breaking apart and undermining families. However, the Shakers' neat, well-planned, and successful villages, along with their famously crafted furniture, also gained many admirers, especially as the actual number of Shakers declined over the course of the nineteenth century. The Shakers were also among the first American religious movements to face sustained public attacks by ex-members based on accusations that the Shakers broke up families, a common cult stereotype in contemporary culture.

If the Shakers' tensions with society had to do with rejecting sexual activity, the second most famous nineteenth-century communal new religious movement had the opposite issue. John Humphrey Noyes (1811–1886) was a Dartmouth College graduate who studied for the ministry at both Andover and Yale. He developed the belief that Jesus' Second Coming had occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem's Second Temple in 70 CE. For Noyes, that meant that a "perfected holiness" was possible in this life. Noyes began preaching these views, lost his ministerial license, then founded a communal group in Putney, Vermont, to live by the principles he understood to encompass right attitude and right works.

Among those principles was a reconceptualization of the relationship between men and women. Noyes developed the practice of "complex marriage," a system for sexual relations in which each adult member of the community essentially had total sexual access to any other adult member. This system faced the charges of "free love" from outsiders, but it was not an orgiastic free-for-all. Among other regulations, complex marriage required the practice of "male continence," in which men engaged in intercourse without ejaculating. Complex marriage was also linked to Noyes's system of "ascending and descending fellowship," in which more spiritually adept, and usually older, members of the community held more authority. In practice this meant that older men and women introduced younger men and women to sexual activity in the community. This highly controversial practice got the fledgling group into enough

trouble in Vermont to necessitate a move to New York, where they settled near Oneida.

At Oneida, the full communal form developed. Members held daily group business and religious meetings. The practice of “mutual criticism,” where problems among individuals were aired out, developed. The community also began several commercial enterprises to support themselves, culminating in flatware manufacturing. Oneida silverware is still popular today. Later in the community’s history, Noyes also developed “stirpiculture,” a eugenics system, in which certain adult members were chosen to have children. The stirpiculture controversy was exacerbated by the fact that Noyes himself was approved to father more children than any other male member of the community. However, the controversial sexual practices at Oneida did in some respects grant women greater autonomy than they had in mainstream society. The practice of male continence meant that unwanted pregnancies were largely avoided at Oneida. The community also had far less gender stereotyping than the general society. Women were freer to work at traditionally “male” jobs, and vice versa, and because of ascending and descending fellowship, many women held positions of spiritual authority over men. All members were under Noyes’s ultimate authority, however.

Restoration and Revitalization Movements

Many new religious movements begin from the premise that other religions have somehow fallen away from the original, and therefore true, faith. Founders and leaders of religious groups throughout the nineteenth century believed that they were going back to the foundations of their traditions, not introducing new beliefs and practices. Leaders made use of the themes of restoration and revitalization of a tradition, rather than the introduction of a whole new religion, to legitimate their innovations, as well as to provide religious strategies for responding to cultural pressures and tensions.

Certainly the most prominent of the nineteenth-century restoration movements was the Latter-day Saints tradition. When Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–1844) began praying in a grove outside his Palmyra, New York, home in the early 1800s, he was looking for an answer to the religious confusion he saw all around him. The “Father and the Son” responded to Smith’s prayers, telling him that all of the religions were wrong and that he would be shown the true religion. Smith subsequently discovered the Golden Plates, a book made of gold leaves with the story of the migration of

ancient Israelite tribes to the Americas and those tribes’ history on the continents inscribed upon them. Smith’s reading and translation of the Plates led him to claim that his mission was to reestablish the one true faith by creating a community based upon the stories in the two testaments, the Bible and the Book of Mormon, as the translated and published version of the Golden Plates came to be known. Early Latter-day Saints thus understood themselves to be going back to the true faith, as revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, when they banded together in communal settlements modeled after theocratic states and began practicing “plural marriage.” Such practices clearly led to the tensions the early Mormon communities faced and played a major role in the both the splintering of the tradition after Joseph Smith’s murder in 1844 and the migration west by Brigham Young and his followers. Also, like many contemporary new religious movements, the early Mormon community was vehemently attacked because of Smith’s claim to prophecy and his claim to be adding to the scriptural canon with the Book of Mormon.

New religious movements also applied the themes of restoration and revitalization to respond to particular pressures that their communities felt at certain times and places. That idea is clearly illustrated by the Ghost Dance, a revitalization movement that took place among Native Americans in two related waves, the first in 1870 and the second in 1890–1891. The movement centered on the ritual round dance, common among many Native American groups, that was performed in a dance arena with a pole or tree in the center. Native Americans performed the Ghost Dance to reconnect with the world of the dead and to facilitate the revival of traditional tribal lifestyles, many of which were under severe threat due to the encroachment of Christian missionaries bent on converting Native Americans and of emigrants from the eastern United States who wanted Native lands.

The first occurrence of the Ghost Dance was in 1870 after a Northern Paiute named Wodziwub (d. 1872?) had a vision in which he saw that traditional tribal life could be restored if the dance were done at night with no fires. That version of the dance caught on for a time among the Paiutes and several other tribes in Oregon and California. However, as it became clear that Wodziwub’s prophecies were not being fulfilled, the movement faded. The 1890–1891 version of the Ghost Dance began when another Paiute, Wovoka (1856?–1932), whose family had connections with Wodziwub, had a visionary experience during an 1889 eclipse of

the sun. Wovoka fell into a trance and was transported to the supreme being in the sky, who showed him the land of the dead and the happy life there. That supreme being promised that the living would have a happy life if a series of rules were followed. Wovoka taught that the round dance, conducted on consecutive nights, with men and women dancing together in a circle with interlaced fingers and shuffling side steps, would promote the return of that happy, traditional Native life.

The 1890–1891 Ghost Dance coincided with the military attacks on the Plains tribes by the U.S. Army. Several of those tribes, notably the Lakota Sioux, adopted the Ghost Dance in the hopes of regaining their freedom and restoring their traditional ways of life. The Plains tribes, again especially the Lakota, also added several new visionary and military traits, including the concept of the “ghost shirt,” a ritual garment that participants believed would lend them military prowess and protection from bullets. The Ghost Dance activity in the Dakotas resulted in a severe backlash by the U.S. Army, culminating in the assassination of Sitting Bull and the massacre at Wounded Knee. Enthusiasm for the dance ebbed after those events, but the dance persisted until at least the 1950s.

In addition to illustrating revitalization themes in a new religious movement, the Ghost Dance, which clearly depended on Christian millenarian themes, ethical precepts, and concepts about one supreme God, as well as on traditional Native American concepts and practices, illustrates the blending of disparate religious beliefs and practices, or “creolization,” that characterized many new religious movements in nineteenth-century America.

The end of the nineteenth century saw the first example of a group of new religious movements that expressed African American religious responses to oppression and discrimination using themes of restoration and revitalization. Many of those movements started from the premise that Christianity, as the religion of the slave holders, should be rejected in favor of Islam or Judaism. The founders of those new religious movements took the themes of freedom, justice, and equality found in all three of the major monotheistic traditions and crafted religious responses to racial injustice, oppression, and economic inequality. Subsequent twentieth-century movements such as the Moorish Science Temple and the Nation of Islam were clearly following in the footsteps of these movements.

One of the first movements in this vein was a black Jewish group, the Church of God and Saints of Christ, founded by

William Saunders Crowdy (1847–1908) in Lawrence, Kansas, on November 8, 1896. Crowdy was the son of slaves and worked as a cook for the Santa Fe Railroad in the Kansas City area when he began having visionary experiences in the early 1890s. He preached about those visions, which he claimed showed him that Africans were the true descendants of the lost tribes of Israel and so should actually be Jews, on the streets of Lawrence. Crowdy and his successors developed the movement by incorporating Jewish and Christian themes. The movement embraced the Jewish Sabbath and generally used Jewish terminology, as well as celebrating Passover as its major holiday. Jesus was primarily seen as a prophet who advocated racial equality. Like many other groups in this general family of African American freedom movements, the Church of God and Saints of Christ made extensive use of the Exodus story and its themes.

Adventist and Millennial Movements

Among the most important of the various nineteenth-century new religious movements are those that were primarily concerned with the date of the Second Advent, when Jesus would return to the earth and inaugurate the final judgment and culmination of history. The speculation about the exact date of the Second Advent and preparations for the event surged beginning in the 1830s, as a result of the activities of a Baptist lay preacher and farmer from Low Hampton, New York, named William Miller (1782–1849). Based upon his reading of the biblical verse Daniel 8:14 and after one false prediction, Miller predicted that Jesus’ return would take place on October 22, 1844. Miller’s preaching convinced many thousands. Stories of Millerites, as believers in Miller’s message came to be known, selling their homes, farms, and businesses and donning white “ascension robes” to await the expected world transformation sparked charges of manipulation and lunacy against Miller and his followers. Nevertheless, Miller, and especially those who followed in his footsteps, established one of the most important themes in the American religious world.

Despite the failure of Jesus to return to earth, the Great Disappointment, as that event came to be known, did not spell the end of Adventism in the United States. The most significant of the groups to come out of the Great Disappointment were the Seventh-day Adventists. This group reinterpreted Miller’s message to indicate that Jesus had entered the heavenly sanctuary to conduct its cleansing on October 22, 1844, and that he would return to earth at an unspecified time in the future when that task was complete.

The Seventh-day Adventists thus managed to keep the Adventist message alive by reinterpreting it to refer to an event that would occur at an unspecified time in the future. Under the prophetic leadership of Ellen G. White (1827–1915), the Adventist reputation as a new religious movement was solidified. White, a follower of Miller's, began having visions soon after the Great Disappointment that appeared to confirm many of the theological reinterpretations of Miller's message others had introduced to explain Miller's failure. White's visions also became sources for the health and diet reforms that the Adventists undertook as part of their preparations for the Second Coming. White taught that abstention from alcohol and tobacco, as well as a vegetarian diet, were part of the biblically mandated life that was required of all believers before Jesus could return to earth. Practices such as vegetarianism, which went against common dietary practices of the nineteenth century, served to set Adventists apart from the larger society and thus contributed to their reputation as deviant.

Other religious leaders interested in the date of the Second Advent established movements throughout the nineteenth century. The most significant of these was the Jehovah's Witnesses, founded by Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916) in 1879, when the first issue of *Zion's Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence* was published. The group took off when several small congregations were established as a result of house-to-house proselytizing and the establishment of Bible study groups. As the Witnesses developed, their distinctive beliefs—including such notions as the unified nature of God, who should be known by the name Jehovah; the lesser, created nature of Jesus; and the idea that all who believe their message will be saved—have, in combination with their active proselytizing, made them among the more disdained of the American new religious movements. Yet the Witnesses' active defense of their religious rights has also played a key role in establishing and defending the religious freedoms that so many Americans take for granted today.

New Visions of the Divine

New religious movements frequently include altered visions of the divine forces of the world, as well as new visions of the human link to those divine forces. Many new religious movements also reflect and respond to tensions in the society about fundamental social and cultural issues such as gender roles. Spiritualism, Christian Science, and New Thought all reflect those issues. Those three movements are also prime examples of “metaphysical

religion,” a style of religiosity pervasive throughout American history that is premised on a theory of correspondence, the idea that this world is a reflection of a larger, more perfect universe and that through the proper practices it is possible to access and make use of the larger order to influence this world for the better.

An amorphous religious movement that might best be described as a style or way of being religious, rather than a specific religious movement, Spiritualism posited the existence of an afterlife populated with departed human spirits that could be contacted through either a human medium or specialized equipment such as a planchette, sometimes with a Ouija board. Spiritualism was controversial for several reasons, including the prominence of women as mediums and séance leaders, the frequent linkage of Spiritualist practitioners and believers to social movements such as women's rights, abolition, and marriage reform, and the widespread notion that the movement was populated with frauds and charlatans more concerned with the profit motive than with prophecy.

Spiritualism emerged in the wake of two phenomena. First was Andrew Jackson Davis's (1826–1910) publication of his book about “harmonial philosophy,” *The Principles of Nature, Her Divine Revelations, and Voice to Mankind* in 1847, and the subsequent founding of a journal, *Univercoelum*, to promote Davis's philosophy. The second was a series of events at the home of two teenage girls, Margaret (1836–1893) and Kate Fox (1838–1892), in upstate New York in 1848. The Fox sisters claimed that a series of rappings and knocks that occurred in their house were in fact attempts by deceased spirits to communicate with the world of the living. Just before its demise in 1849, the editors of *Univercoelum* published an account of the Fox sisters' rappings, prompting Davis to explain the events in terms of his harmonial philosophy and simultaneously lending a degree of publicity to the goings-on. The ground was thus laid for the formation of Spiritualism as a religious movement.

As the movement developed, themes that clearly put it at odds with the surrounding religious culture emerged. Spirit mediums, mostly women who claimed to be able to contact the world of the deceased, claimed a religious authority that was outside the traditional hierarchical structures of the male-led Protestant churches dominating most of nineteenth-century America. The notion that mediums could “scientifically” demonstrate the truth of their claims by putting on séances at which people could verify the claims for themselves also undermined traditional authority structures.

The séance, with its implicit “see for yourself” claim to its truth, also presaged methods of legitimation that would be adopted by several later new religious movements. The fact that many of the messages from beyond seemed to support reform efforts such as temperance, women’s rights, and abolition of slavery meant that for many outside the movement, Spiritualism represented a countercultural movement critical of society. Several Spiritualists also believed that the importance of the message and the underlying truths they contained justified any type of theatrics necessary to convince people of the reality of the mediumship. Thus, deceit and fraud were certainly not unknown in the Spiritualist world and contributed to its reputation as a vehicle for emptying people’s pockets more than for communicating with their departed loved ones.

Spiritualists also practiced healing. Using mediumship, Spiritualists believed they could contact the world beyond for information on treatment of illness and injury. Healing was a concern they shared with two other important new religious movements that reconceived the divine-human link, Christian Science and New Thought. Although they have important differences, both Christian Science and New Thought took as a key premise the notion that the divine was a principle pervading the entire universe and that through proper prayer and methods of understanding this principle, humans could eliminate disease, injury, poverty, depression, and even death.

Both movements began in the middle of the nineteenth century with the work of the healer Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802–1866). Originally a clockmaker in Maine, Quimby saw a mesmerist demonstration that sparked his interest in the possibility of healing using hypnotic techniques. He refined his healing techniques on the lecture circuit, eventually concluding that disease was caused by false beliefs and thinking; therefore, healing meant ridding one’s self of false beliefs. Quimby ran his own healing practice for several years, and while he was not very interested in the theological implications of his healing techniques, many of his patients were, including a woman with a lifelong history of illness and injury, Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910).

Eddy had visited Quimby and benefited from his healing techniques prior to an injury she sustained from a fall on the ice in 1866, which her doctor apparently considered very severe, possibly even fatal. Eddy prayed and consulted her Bible as she convalesced and made a full recovery. To understand that experience better, she commenced a lengthy and detailed Bible study that led her to the belief that God was

the principle of love and that the true nature of the world and human beings was entirely spiritual. That being the case, the material world was illusory, and therefore the ills associated with the material world, like disease and injury, had no ontological reality. Healing was a process of discovering, understanding, and putting into practice that truth. Over the next several years, Eddy composed her masterwork explaining those ideas, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. She also established the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, along with a formal church structure for the Church of Christ, Scientist, and founded a newspaper, the *Christian Science Monitor*.

One of Eddy’s early students was Emma Curtis Hopkins (1849–1925). After a falling out with Eddy, Hopkins left Boston for Chicago, where she founded her own metaphysical college and trained so many early New Thought leaders that she has become known as the “teacher of teachers” among New Thought proponents. Her students included Annie Rix Miltz, founder of the California-based Home of Truth; Myrtle and Charles Fillmore, cofounders of the Kansas City-based Unity School of Christianity; and the author and syndicated columnist Ella Wheeler Wilcox, among many others. The principle difference between Christian Science and New Thought was that New Thought did not deny the reality of the material world. Rather, for most New Thought groups, material conditions were the result of the activity of the mind, which because it had an intimate and innate connection to the divine, it had the power to create real change in the material world. Thus, by understanding the divine and the human link to the divine differently, one could be free from the maladies of the material world.

Neither Christian Science nor the various New Thought groups have ever been particularly large, yet their influence has gone far beyond numbers of adherents. The various modes of religious healing in the United States owe much to these idealistic conceptions of the divine-human link. Moreover, the ideas that inform both Christian Science and New Thought have made their way into popular culture through the work of authors such as Norman Vincent Peale and his *The Power of Positive Thinking* and, more recently, the pop-culture phenomenon of *The Secret*. Christian Science and New Thought also represented an important religious response to the changing social conditions of the late nineteenth century. Especially New Thought, with its focus on the well-being of the self, its empowerment of women, and its sophisticated use of the media to spread its message,

represented a precursor to the way religion would change in the twentieth century, in America. Christian Science and New Thought leaders and practitioners reconceived the divine for people in a changing world with changing needs.

Increasing Diversity

By the end of the century, the American religious scene was clearly on its way to becoming more like what contemporary Americans would recognize as the American religious world. Asian immigrants had begun to bring their traditions to America, and leaders of new religious movements were blending these ideas and practices into their own movements. One nineteenth-century example was Theosophy. Theosophy began with the activities of Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907), a lawyer and journalist, and a Russian immigrant with an exotic and somewhat mysterious past, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891). The two met on a farm in Vermont where a series of Spiritualist events was taking place and quickly formed a friendship based on mutual interests in spirits, occult practices, and Eastern religions. Olcott and Blavatsky formed the Theosophical Society in New York City in 1875 to examine such phenomena, and for a time Blavatsky's apartment in New York was the site of numerous meetings of the incipient society. Blavatsky also wrote the first major Theosophical book during this period, *Isis Unveiled* (1877). Blavatsky, a prolific author, was the creative force behind the group, eventually publishing her other major book, *The Secret Doctrine*, in 1888, while Olcott was its organizer and public face.

Originally intended as a group to study ancient wisdom, comparative religion, science, and “latent” human powers, as it developed Theosophy took on a number of other influences. Blavatsky and Olcott's interest in Asian religions manifested in the incorporation of concepts such as karma and reincarnation into Theosophical teachings, as well as a move of the headquarters of the movement to Adyar, India, in 1878. The Spiritualism strain soon manifested in the form the messages from the “ascended masters,” or “mahatmas,” spirits living beyond this world who communicated with those of the right training or gifts, such as Blavatsky. The ascended masters were common religious figures such as Jesus and Buddha, as well as more obscure masters such as Saint Germain.

The possibility of communication from beyond this world, as in Spiritualism, meant that authority could be claimed by any number of adherents, and this certainly happened with Theosophy. A number of splinter groups emerged throughout the next several decades, many of

which incorporated elements from their founders' religious interests and traditions. Systems of thought and religious practices such as Neoplatonism, Gnosticism, medieval mysticism, Renaissance philosophy, Buddhism, Kabbalah, and Sufism joined the ascended masters and mahatmas, along with religious influences such as Hinduism and Anglican Christianity in the emerging Theosophical groups. The movement splintered into several subgroups over the course of the 1890s and 1900s. Subsequent leaders such as Annie Besant (1847–1933), Katherine Tingley (1847–1929), and Guy (1878–1939) and Edna Ballard (1886–1971) established branches of the movement that incorporated such disparate elements as Besant's proclamation that a young Hindu, Jid-dhu Krishnamurti, was the incarnation of the coming world teacher; Tingley's establishment of a communal, utopian settlement at Point Loma near San Diego; and the Ballards' I AM movement, which introduced New Thought-style teachings on the power of the mind to Theosophical ideas.

Although Theosophical movements have generally been small and for the most part nonproselytizing, their combinative nature has meant that Theosophy contributed to the introduction of several new streams of religious thought and practice in twentieth-century America. New Age groups in particular can be understood as following in the footsteps of Theosophy. American interest in Buddhist and Hindu ideas owes something to Theosophy. Theosophy also helped to popularize such concepts as reincarnation, karma, and the aura, as well as practices such as yoga.

Probably the most significant religious event at the end of the century was the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions, held from September 11 to September 27, in conjunction with the World's Fair and Columbian Exposition in Chicago that year. The event was organized by several liberal Protestant groups and brought together representatives of many major religions from around the world to give presentations and discuss religious issues. Although the organizers of the event had intended it to be a showcase for liberal Protestantism, the actual effect of the Parliament was to expose many Americans for the first time to charismatic and eloquent representatives of religious traditions from around the world. Several of those representatives went on to found important religious groups in America. Thus, the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions must be understood as one of the first major steps in the introduction to America of several new religious movements with connections to Asia.

The most successful of the Asian representatives to address the Parliament were those who came from places that had

been part of the British colonial empire and who, as a result, spoke English well and understood something of both the cultural and the religious context they were entering. Perhaps the best example was Swami Vivekananda (1862–1902), a disciple of the Hindu teacher Ramakrishna Paramahansa and the founder of the Ramakrishna Mission, the organization that established the Vedanta Society in the West. One of the first important Hindu-based religious movements in America, the Vedanta Society, stressed a monistic Hindu philosophy that posited one reality underlying all the manifestations in the world. Vivekananda's eloquence and charm made him something of a celebrity in late nineteenth-century America, and those characteristics no doubt aided him in the subsequent tours he took around the United States, giving lectures to middle- and upper-class whites and helping to found outposts of the Vedanta Society.

Another central figure in the establishment of Asian religions in the United States to emerge from the World's Parliament of Religions was Shaku Soen (1859–1919), a Japanese Zen Buddhist priest whose influence came largely through his students. These included some of the first Zen monks to settle in America, as well as the layman D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966), whose books helped establish Zen in America. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, American Zen practitioners focused on seated meditation and the use of *koans*, short riddles, to clear the mind of conscious thought. Using Zen methods, practitioners believed they could facilitate *satori* experiences: glimpses of the state of nirvana, the blissful end of the cycle of reincarnation in which all sentient beings are trapped. Zen not only became the dominant form of Buddhist practice for European Americans for most of the twentieth century, but it also became ingrained in the American popular imagination through the work of writers such as Alan Watts and the appropriation of the Zen master image by movies such as *Star Wars* and *The Karate Kid*.

The World's Parliament of Religions was instrumental in establishing Asian religions in the United States. It also prompted interest in religious pluralism and the study of religion, and as a result American colleges and universities began offering classes in comparative religion. The World's Parliament of Religions pointed the way to the pluralistic religious society Americans live in today.

Conclusion

New religious movements in the nineteenth century illustrated the religious creativity, the resistance to oppression, the cultural innovation, the social experimentation, and the

general diversification that came out of life in a rapidly changing American world. Nineteenth-century new religious movements also frequently demonstrated culturally and socially relevant religious solutions to issues that their members confronted. Thus, it is helpful to conceive of them as attempts to keep religion relevant to the lives of adherents. Furthermore, it is helpful for understanding new religious movements to think of the tension created by being a part of an outsider group as helping members of new religious movements bond and so to create stronger, more vital communities.

The nineteenth century is pivotal to understanding the processes that created contemporary religious America. In the year 1800 the American nation was mostly Protestant and was just beginning a major westward expansion. By the year 1899 the country stretched to the West Coast of the continent and was home to representatives of all the major world religions, as well as several new religious movements that were to become important, permanent members of American religious culture. Nineteenth-century new religious movements may have been in tension with the surrounding culture, but they nonetheless played an important role in the formation of American religious culture.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism*; *African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War*; *Book of Mormon*; *Christian Science*; *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion*; *Hinduism in North America*; *Jehovah's Witnesses*; *Latter-day Saints*; *Native American Religions: Post-Contact*; *New Religious Movements* entries; *Oneida Community*; *Pluralism*; *Shakers*; *Spiritualism*; *Zen Buddhism*.

Jeremy Rapport

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New Religious Movements: Twentieth Century

The term *new religious movements* (NRMs) emerged in the 1970s as a way of delineating sect and cult movements from churches. A *church*, in the U.S. context, is an established religious denomination that traces its origins to one of the historic European confessions. A *sect movement*, on the other hand, is usually formed when members of a church become disillusioned and leave (or are forced to leave) their church and set up a new religious community. A *cult movement* has a great deal in common with a sect movement, in that it tends to have a dense social structure, exists in a significant degree of tension with the surrounding culture, and favors

charismatic leadership. The major difference is that cult movements are not offshoots of conventional churches but, rather, are independent creations of their founders. The adoption of the term *new religious movements* was also a way of moving beyond the word *cult*, which had become the term used by the anti-cult or countercult movements to describe any controversial, nontraditional religious organization. This use of *cult* became particularly pronounced following the November 1978 Jonestown mass suicides. Although scholars recognize that the term *new* is problematic—for example, when discussing the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which was founded in 1830—the designation remains the standard for scholars of sect and cult movements.

The mid-to-late twentieth century saw two trends that appeared to accelerate the formation and reach of NRMs in U.S. society. First, the 1965 Immigration Act opened the United States to an influx of Asian religious teachers, who brought varieties of Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Taoism, Jainism, and Islam to U.S. spiritual seekers. Christianity, though still dominant, began sharing the religious landscape with rapidly growing communities (both immigrant and native) of each of these traditions. Second, the 1960s counterculture coincided with a widespread disillusionment with conventional Christian churches. These churches came to be viewed as overly accommodated to the U.S. consumerist, militarist, and secularist mainstream culture. The counterculture promoted a more experiential and experimental approach to religion and provided a steady stream of potential recruits to the emerging NRMs of the late 1960s and 1970s.

Representative New Religious Movements

Several NRMs have gained a high degree of public notoriety during the past forty years and deserve special attention. The first of these, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), was brought to the United States in 1965 by the Indian teacher, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896–1977). Prabhupada taught a traditional form of Hindu devotional religion focused on the figure of Krishna. In Prabhupada's view, Krishna is the Supreme Lord of all creation, superior to the traditional triad of Hindu supreme gods, including Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. By worshipping Krishna in special *pujas*, or worship rites, and by chanting his principle mantra, "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Hare, Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama, Rama, Hare, Hare," devotees believe that they

will achieve salvation. ISKCON members revere the Bhagavad Gita, one of Krishna's special scriptures, and distribute Prabhupada's special translation and commentary on this work.

In the early years of the movement, members dressed in traditional Hindu garb, shaved their heads (except for a shock of hair on the rear of the head), and marked their foreheads with two stripes of sacred clay signifying the lotus feet of Krishna. They lived as celibate monks, ate vegetarian food, and chanted daily rounds of the group's mantra. Prabhupada opened centers in major U.S. cities and financed this expansion largely through the sale of books and incense. One successful ISKCON outreach was the offering of free vegetarian lunches at their worship centers or on university campuses. Members took the opportunity to share their beliefs and distribute literature while students enjoyed the free food.

Swami Prabhupada died in 1977, having appointing eleven successor gurus who had regional authority. This provision for his succession was crucial because the group believed that devotees must work under a spiritual master of impeccable lineage. There was also a governing body council (GBC), whose thirty members met annually to elect secretaries to govern administrative zones. In time the successor gurus began to clash with the GBC and each other, leading to charges of exploitation, criminal enterprises, and even murder. One guru, Kirtanananda Swami Bhaktipada, the head of the New Vrindaban community in rural West Virginia, was convicted of racketeering and conspiracy to murder.

Following these developments, many members moved out of the group's communal institutions and set up life as "householders," with jobs in the world and traditional family duties. More scandals rocked the group in the late 1990s, with the disclosure that many children who were sent to the group's boarding schools in the 1970s and 1980s suffered sexual, physical, and psychological abuse. ISKCON has taken significant steps to reach out to these children and offer them counseling and cash settlements.

Church Universal and Triumphant

A second controversial group is Church Universal and Triumphant, founded by Mark L. Prophet in 1958 in Washington, D.C., as the Summit Lighthouse. Prophet believed he had been granted the mantle of "messenger" from the Ascended Masters, the advanced adepts who govern the spiritual evolution of Earth in the theosophical tradition. He began to publish "dictations" from the masters and to build a small following across North America.

The Summit's teachings included the practice of *decreeing*, a form of verbal affirmation that connected the I AM Presence—the divine inner nature of the disciple—with the outer personality and its needs. Followers believed they could overcome negative conditions in the world and in their own lives through this practice.

Members also believed in the path of "ascension," which stipulated that the goal of life was the union of the human soul with the Divine Being in heaven. Each human being was seen to possess a tripartite nature consisting of the I AM presence, the Christ Consciousness (a mediator between the human and divine planes of existence), and a human soul. By following Prophet's graded path of initiation, students hoped to gain freedom from negative karmic predispositions, merge with the Christ Consciousness, and achieve final ascension at death.

Prophet and his wife, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, also taught that the United States was destined to become the world's exemplar of spiritual enlightenment. First, however, evils such as socialism, rock and jazz music, abortion, and pacifism must be overcome. The Prophets adopted a nationalistic and virulently anticommunist political outlook that advocated a build-up of strategic nuclear weapons and the creation of a missile defense system. Following Mark Prophet's death in 1973, Elizabeth Prophet took over the movement and renamed it Church Universal and Triumphant (CUT). She proclaimed her movement the true church of Gautama Buddha and Jesus Christ in the Aquarian age, moved its headquarters from Colorado to Southern California, and successfully established teaching centers and study groups across the United States.

After a bitter lawsuit initiated by an ex-member that exposed the church to a rash of negative publicity in the mid 1980s, the movement transferred its headquarters again to the Royal Teton Ranch in Paradise Valley, Montana. Following a series of dictations predicting the likelihood of nuclear war with the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991, members began moving to Paradise Valley from around the world and constructing fallout shelters high in the Grand Tetons. In March 1990 members entered the shelters, believing nuclear war was imminent. When this and other prophesied events failed to transpire, membership dropped precipitously, and the church was forced to retrench and reinvent itself. It was labeled a "doomsday cult" by the media, and Prophet appeared on national television programs such as *Oprah Winfrey* and *Nightline* to defend the church's teachings.

CUT was downsized in the mid-1990s and began to sell parcels of its ranch to meet operational expenses. Under new leadership, CUT has jettisoned its apocalyptic teachings and focused on spreading the Prophets' New Age teachings via print and electronic media worldwide. The church has also built international communities where members practice the Prophets' teachings on esoteric spirituality, alternative healing, and children's education. Another crisis occurred in 1999 when Prophet admitted she had Alzheimer's disease. Following Prophet's resignation from her positions of spiritual and temporal authority, the church was turned over to a new president, board of directors, and council of elders. The church is a case study in the hazards of charismatic leadership and apocalyptic ideology.

Peoples Temple

Peoples Temple is practically synonymous with the U.S. public's view of NRMs as "dangerous cults," whose members are "brainwashed" by unscrupulous charismatic leaders. The Temple was founded as the Community Unity Church in 1954 by a white preacher, Jim Jones (1931–1978), in Indianapolis, Indiana. This multiracial, Pentecostal-flavored church was renamed the Peoples Temple Full Gospel Church in 1955 and became known in Indiana for its faith-healing services and controversial teachings on racial justice and "apostolic socialism." Jones visited the Peace Mission movement of Father Divine in 1956 and soon adopted local versions of the Philadelphia mission's social outreach programs, such as soup kitchens and the distribution of food and clothing.

Following his 1961 vision of nuclear holocaust in the U.S. Midwest, Jones took his community to Ukiah, California, believing the Redwood Valley north of San Francisco was an area that would escape this apocalyptic destruction. From humble beginnings, the church grew into a large community of twenty thousand members that included centers in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Ukiah. Jones' headquarters, Happy Acres, included a senior citizen home, child-care facilities, residences, and meeting halls. Jones hosted a radio program on KFAX and led dramatic services that included faith healing and purported resurrections of deceased members. By the early 1970s Jones was telling selected followers that he was God in the flesh and that his mission was to establish justice, peace, and prosperity in the world. He was awarded various humanitarian awards, gained a seat on the San Francisco Housing Authority, and was courted by local, state, and national politicians.

A negative newspaper article led to the defection of several key aides beginning in 1973, and Jones inaugurated plans to relocate his community to the socialist country of British Guyana in South America. In 1974, the temple leased three thousand acres of jungle and began the construction of the Peoples Temple Agricultural Project. Jones spoke of the project as the "promised land" that was to be a refuge for his people from the injustices and persecutions of the U.S. government. Advance notice of a scathing magazine exposé of the Temple's financial misdeeds and abuse of its members led Jones to take one thousand of his followers to Guyana in August 1977. African Americans constituted most of the community's membership in Guyana, and women outnumbered men by approximately 66 percent to 33 percent.

At first the Temple's Guyana experiment seemed to thrive. It billed itself as a socialist utopia where persecuted minorities could live in dignity free from ageism, sexism, and racism. A group of ex-members called the Committee of Concerned Relatives told a different story, however, claiming that members at the project were subjected to mandatory labor, physical abuse, and extreme isolation from the outside world. The charges prompted California congressman Leo Ryan to lead a delegation of investigators to Jonestown in November 1978. As Ryan was about to return to the United States, several members asked to leave with his entourage, causing upheaval in the tightly knit community. Shortly after Ryan's departure, Jones ordered the temple's security guards to assassinate Ryan and several others as they boarded a small plane on a secluded runway near the project. When news of these events reached Jones, he instigated an act of "revolutionary suicide," in which members and their children drank Kool-Aid mixed with cyanide. When law enforcement officials arrived at the camp, 914 members lay dead on the ground. Jones himself was found shot in the head.

News of the Jonestown mass deaths immediately changed the climate for NRMs in the United States. The anticult movement used the national shock and revulsion at the event to advocate governmental regulation of "dangerous cults," and the media began to cast a suspicious eye on other NRMs such as the Unification Church and Church Universal and Triumphant. Jonestown became a kind of lens through which the U.S. public viewed all new and alternative religious communities. This negative public view of new religions has been reinforced by other sensational episodes of violence in NRMs, such as the 1993 Branch Davidian siege and the 1997 mass suicides of the Heaven's Gate community near San Diego, California. There is still

some controversy about whether the Jonestown event should be considered a mass suicide or a mass murder.

Divine Light Mission

Another significant NRM of the twentieth century is the Divine Light Mission (DLM). This group is rooted in the Sikh-based Sant Mat tradition of North India, which teaches the existence of a universal current of sacred sound that preserves the cosmos. The mission's founder, Shri Hans Ji Maharaj (1900–1966), was a Sant Mat master who taught secret meditation techniques that enabled his students to hear and commune with this current. Following Shri Hans' death, his mission spread throughout the world under the guidance of his wife, Mata Ji, and his four sons. Eventually the youngest of Shri Hans' sons, Maharaji (1959–), was chosen as his father's successor. Maharaji sent missionaries to the United Kingdom in late 1969 and to the United States and Canada in the early 1970s. The “boy guru” first visited the West in 1971, and the Divine Light Mission spread rapidly as he traveled from city to city in the United States. Maharaji often traveled with his mother and three brothers, who collectively were referred to as the “divine family” by devotees. Maharaji himself was called the “Lord of the Universe.”

The basic teachings of the DLM were fairly simple. Followers (called “premies”) embraced ideals of universal love, peace, and devotion to their “Satguru” Maharaji, whom they believed to be the avatar of a new millennium. They practiced four meditation techniques designed to open their spiritual senses, so they could taste the nectar of immortality, hear the universal sound of creation, and see the divine light. The techniques (called “knowledge”) were revealed in a secret initiation ceremony and were never to be divulged to nonmembers. As ashrams appeared in major U.S. cities, a new international headquarters was established in Denver, Colorado, in 1972. Premies (including former student activist Rennie Davis) sponsored huge festivals around the country, including one at the Houston Astrodome in 1973. They took traditional monastic vows of celibacy, poverty, and obedience; sang devotional songs before large photos of Maharaji mornings and evenings; and practiced the “knowledge” meditations.

The first signs of trouble occurred in 1974 following Maharaji's marriage to a California airline stewardess and his mother's subsequent attempt to depose him as head of the mission in favor of her eldest son, Bal Bhagwan Ji. These troubles did not prevent Maharaji from amassing a small fortune that included luxurious mansions in Miami Beach

and Malibu, and a fleet of luxury cars and private jets. As Maharaji entered adulthood in the early 1980s, he decided to close the mission's ashrams and to rename his movement, Elan Vital. He assumed all initiatory powers (formerly his lieutenants or “mahatmas” could initiate followers into the “knowledge”), embarked on a series of teaching tours around the world, and began a distribution company to market his videos, audiotapes, and publications.

During the past twenty-five years, Maharaji has brought his teachings to millions of people in more than fifty countries. Satellite broadcasts of Maharaji's discourses reach eighty-eight countries and are translated into more than sixty languages. The basic thrust of his teaching has remained remarkably consistent throughout his long career: finding inner peace through devotion to Maharaji is the necessary first step to bringing about world peace. Like other NRMs of the twentieth century, Elan Vital has found a way to survive through sophisticated marketing of a charismatic teacher in video, audio, and printed formats.

Unification Movement

One of the more controversial NRMs of the twentieth-century United States is the Unification movement (UM). Its founder, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon (1920–), gained national notoriety during the 1980s when he was convicted of tax evasion and sentenced to prison. Moon made a dramatic comeback in the late 1980s, and today he heads a worldwide empire that includes industrial, commercial, media, and educational enterprises. UM can be described as a messianic movement because its leader, Moon, is believed by his followers to be the messiah who has come to complete the unfinished work of the first messiah, Jesus Christ. UM can also be considered a social movement, in that Moon has created myriad organizations that promote a unified world through conferences, mass meetings, and social activism.

Moon founded his church in 1954 in South Korea and sent his first emissaries to the United States in the late 1950s. Growth was slow during the 1960s but picked up during the early 1970s, when Moon embarked on an evangelistic tour of the United States. His followers increased to about three thousand and soon garnered unfavorable press for their public recruitment drives at bus stations, airports, and university campuses. The church was labeled as a “brainwashing cult” that recruited naïve youth with techniques known as “heavenly deception.” Members of the Unification Church (UC) were among the first to experience coercive deprogramming, a method employed by concerned parents and

cult deprogrammers that included kidnapping, removal to an isolated location, and the aggressive breaking down of a member's belief system.

High points of Moon's missionary efforts during the 1970s included his speech "The New Future of Christianity," at the Madison Square Garden arena in 1974, and his addresses at Yankee Stadium in 1975 and the Washington Monument in 1976. One of his more successful outreaches was the inauguration of the International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS), which annually gathered respected scientists from around the world to discuss how science and religion might work together for the good of humankind. The church taught that Western science and the UC's own religious views were wholly compatible. Moon's goal was to help scientists to focus their work on improving the physical life of humanity.

The UC's major theological statement is *Divine Principle*, a treatise that combines both philosophical inquiry and Christian biblical exegesis. The book focuses on the fall and subsequent atonement of humanity and interprets the Genesis narrative in ways that depart from conventional Christian teaching. For example, Moon teaches that Adam and Eve fell in paradise because of an unrighteous spiritual-sexual relationship between Satan and Eve, and then an unlawful physical-sexual act between Eve and Adam. From this act, the stain of sinfulness accrued to the couple's descendants. The redemption of humanity began with God's election of the perfect man, Jesus, to restore humankind to their Edenic state of spiritual innocence. By entering into a Trinity with God and the Holy Spirit, Jesus renewed the divine-human relationship and provided an example for humanity to follow. However, Moon taught that Jesus did not complete the final phase of his mission, which was to marry and produce a family of sinless children. He was thus only able to fulfill the spiritual phase of his mission, leaving the physical part of humanity under the dominion of Satan. Moon believes that it is his task as the messiah of the present age to complete the process begun by Jesus and to establish divine families in an earthly Kingdom of Heaven.

Moon founded the Professors World Peace Academy in 1973. This educational institution acquired a controlling interest in the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut, in 1992. He also created the Unification Theological Seminary in 1975 and established *The Washington Times*, a conservative daily newspaper, in 1983. The *Times* became the darling of many conservatives during the Reagan era and continues to be read by many members of the conservative movement

in Washington, D.C. The UC maintained a fervently anti-communist stance during the Cold War but was able to cultivate high-level contacts within communist countries. For example, Moon was granted audiences with both North Korean Premier Kim Il Sung and former Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev during the early 1990s. With the fall of the former Soviet Union, Moon established federations for world peace around the world and held "sisterhood" ceremonies to promote harmonious relations between women from countries that had at one time been adversaries.

One of the more controversial initiatives by Moon was his sponsorship of International Holy Weddings, mass ceremonies that blessed both members and nonmembers who wished to rededicate their marriages and families to a godly life. Moon's interest in these rituals is rooted in his claim that he and his wife are the "True Parents" of all humanity and that his mission is to reestablish divine families on earth. Although Moon continues to spread his messianic message of world peace and holy families throughout the world, his church has never had broad appeal for U.S. citizens.

Main Issues of Scholarly Research

The study of NRMs became an established academic sub-field between 1960 and 2008. Scholars of NRMs have their own academic journals, such as *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*, and the *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. Annual meetings of the American Academy of Religion and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion feature regular paper sessions on NRMs, and academic organizations such as the Communal Studies Association, Center for the Study of New Religions, and American Family Foundation hold annual meetings that examine the many facets of scholarly research on NRMs. The bibliography of NRM studies continues to grow, and respected academic publishers have created series focused on the study of new religious phenomena across cultures.

Three main issues have stood out as the focus of attention for NRM scholars during the past half-century. These include research into (1) recruitment—who joins a NRM and why, and how NRMs recruit new members and foster their commitment and loyalty; (2) factors that allow for long-term movement success; and (3) NRMs as indicators of larger cultural trends.

Recruitment Issues

Influenced by negative media reports and the anticult movement, the U.S. public has accepted a stereotyped profile of

the people who join NRMs. Converts are viewed as young, gullible, and idealistic—making them susceptible to the charismatic persuasions of cult leaders—or they are seen as maladjusted adults who have failed at conventional life and are seeking a utopian escape from personal responsibility. Academic research during the past forty years suggests that the actual profile of NRM recruits is far more complex and nuanced than this stereotype. This research can be summed up in six generalizations:

1. Members of NRMs are usually recruited by people they already know and trust—family members, friends, coworkers, and neighbors. The anticult movement had claimed that NRM recruits made their initial contact with cult members in public places such as airports, bus stations, and parks. Scholarly research indicates that most recruits were only willing to attend a NRM class or service because they were invited to do so by someone they already trusted.

2. Recruits to NRMs are often more interested in the emotional closeness that a group offers than in the group's ideology or formal teachings. This does not mean that the new religious vision of the group is unimportant, just that the real indicator of member loyalty is the emotional fulfillment recruits experience in the community. In the Holy Order of MANS (a prominent New Age group founded in the 1960s in San Francisco), for example, many members remained loyal to the group even when the teachings of the deceased founder were jettisoned and the community embraced the rituals and beliefs of Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

3. The age profile of recruits depends on the group being considered; many recruits to the NRMs of the 1960s and 1970s were in their late teens and early twenties. But groups such as Scientology, Eckankar, Wicca, the Rajneeshees, and Soka Gakkai attracted members in their thirties and forties, and other groups whose members joined when they were young now have a large proportion of members between forty and sixty.

4. Recruits to NRMs tend to have a higher educational profile than a random sample of the general public. In some instances, such as Buddhist meditation groups and Soka Gakkai, surveys indicated that between 60 and 80 percent of the members had completed at least some college, and many held baccalaureate or advanced degrees. One explanation for this finding is that the teachings of many NRMs are sophisticated and complex. To grasp the teachings a person

needs the abilities that make for success in higher education—the ability to read in depth, to persevere when confronted with new concepts and ideas, and a generally literate intelligence.

5. Although some NRMs seem to recruit a higher percentage of women than men—examples include Christian Science in the 1920s, Soka Gakkai, the Rajneesh movement, and Wicca—on the whole the evidence suggests that women are no more likely to join a NRM than are men, and some groups, including Scientology and the Raelians, have a higher percentage of male members. Moreover, a group's gender profile can change over time. For example, ISKCON recruited far more men than women in its early years in the United States, but over time began to attract a larger number of women devotees.

6. Research indicates that the claims of the anti-cult movement—that people are drawn into NRMs using subliminal “brainwashing” techniques—are inaccurate. Rather, recruits make conscious, rational decisions to join a movement based on their perception of tangible rewards. Among these perceived rewards are (a) a heightened self-esteem and sense of purpose; (b) a new spiritual family that in many cases offers more love and support than the recruit's natural family; (c) esoteric knowledge that promises spiritual enlightenment, self-empowerment, and the secret of the future; (d) new career opportunities; (e) the provision of basic material needs for food, shelter, and health care; and (f) compelling spiritual experiences not available to nonmembers. To the extent that potential recruits find these rewards desirable and have difficulty finding them in conventional society, they may be drawn to NRMs that offer them.

Factors Necessary to Long-Term Success in NRMs

Sociologist Rodney Stark has studied the factors that are necessary to long-term success for NRMs. He has postulated certain conditions that must be met for a movement to grow and achieve a significant degree of cultural influence. The first of these conditions he terms *cultural continuity*. NRMs must not diverge too far from the conventional faiths in the surrounding culture, or they risk being labeled as deviant or dangerous. To cite one example of a group that successfully navigated this challenge, the Mormons accepted the Bible while adding new scripture, the Book of Mormon. The Bible was approved by the people and

religious institutions of the surrounding culture and thus provided a bridge for potential converts to Mormonism.

The second of Stark's conditions is that a NRM must maintain a *medium level of tension* with the surrounding culture. Put another way, the NRM must have elements of familiarity (so as not to appear too deviant), but it must also provide a counterbalancing number of unique features to ensure its competitiveness in the larger religious marketplace.

Stark's third condition stipulates that successful NRMs create strong organizations that clearly specify each member's role and contribution to the community. Part of a strong organization is a leadership hierarchy that is justified in the eyes of members on doctrinal or revelatory grounds and that lays out clear lines of authority.

Stark's fourth condition for movement success is the ability to attract and maintain a representative cross-section of ages and genders. Without young families, for example, religious communities are unable to ensure their continued growth through succeeding generations of children. Having members from the ranks of teens, young adults, middle-aged adults, and seniors makes the new community more appealing to potential recruits from these diverse age groups—many of whom are looking for age peers with whom to share interests and concerns.

Stark's fifth condition for movement success is the requirement that a group create a *dense but open social network*. In other words, successful movements foster a powerful sense of communal belonging while maintaining a sufficient degree of openness to the surrounding society, so the robust recruitment of new members can continue.

A final condition for movement success is the existence of a relatively unregulated religious economy, within which the group can freely pursue new members and create its own institutions. To a certain extent, the conventional religious communities in this economy must be weak, diffuse, and tolerant of diversity. This allows new competitors to emerge and flourish, to the degree that they fulfill the first five of Stark's conditions. When the religious ecology of a society shifts, however, as occurred in the late 1970s in the United States following the Peoples Temple events, the openness and tolerance for NRMs can be severely curtailed, making the survival of new groups much more problematic. The importance of Stark's factors for movement success can be seen in the rather small number of NRMs that ever attain any cultural influence or prominence over time. It is extremely challenging for a movement to achieve success in each of the areas indicated in Stark's model. Moreover, the

final factor, a favorable ecology and relatively unregulated religious economy, is largely out of any individual group's control.

NRMs as Barometers of Societal Change and Forces of Innovation

The study of NRMs has provided evidence that these groups can serve as barometers of socio-religious change in U.S. culture. Put another way, the study of NRMs uncovers the major tensions and problems that are currently at work in the wider society. The specific teachings and practices of a NRM are often designed to address these problem areas in the lives of its members. The founders of NRMs are not simply shifty charlatans out for material gain and self-aggrandizement. Many are highly sensitive and sincere men and women who are looking to advance serious solutions to societal ills. To take a few examples, when a new religious community such as Church Universal and Triumphant creates a private school based on Montessori and other alternative educational philosophies, it is responding to a very real need for educational reform in the U.S. public school system. When a group such as the Peoples Temple provides retirement facilities for the elderly, it is responding to the difficulties low-income seniors have in finding affordable housing and medical care. Whether one agrees with such practices or not, observers of U.S. religion can gain a greater understanding of the problem areas in the larger culture from a study of these groups.

NRMs can also be significant forces of innovation in the larger U.S. cultural milieu. In a sense, they can be viewed as subcultural petri dishes, where experiments with creative solutions to larger social and religious problems can be tried. When the experiments prove successful, the larger culture can adopt these solutions, and the processes of societal transformation and renewal can be sustained. The solutions proffered by these groups range from innovative ways to structure communities and neighborhoods, to new ways to educate children, live in ecologically sustainable environments, grow and process foods, heal the sick, and integrate spiritual practices into everyday life.

An example of this is the Holy Order of MANS, which sought to address the crisis of homeless women and children on the streets of San Francisco during the late 1960s. With the establishment of Raphael Houses in such cities as San Francisco, St. Louis, and Portland, Oregon, the order pioneered some of the first U.S. confidential shelters for victims of domestic abuse. This innovative solution to the problem

of domestic violence has been adopted by the wider culture, with the result that today most medium-to-large-size cities in the United States have confidential shelters for victims of domestic violence.

Conclusion

The study of NRMs is essential to understanding the complex U.S. religious history. Along with the establishment of the Protestant hegemony in the 1800s and the rise of evangelicalism and fundamentalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the stories of U.S. NRMs constitute the very marrow of the U.S. religious saga. Whereas earlier generations of U.S. religious historians (with the notable exceptions of Sidney E. Mead and Sydney E. Ahlstrom) had largely ignored (or dismissed) sect and cult movements in favor of narratives of Protestant exceptionalism, religion scholars since the 1960s, influenced by post-modern and postcolonial studies, began to pay more attention to the contentions for recognition and status by the diverse U.S. religious communities. In this context, a new generation of both historians and sociologists has produced more focused studies of new U.S. religious communities and has crafted surveys of U.S. religion that include prominent sections on NRMs and other forms of alternative religious activity. The works of Catherine L. Albanese, Robert Ellwood, R. Laurence Moore, and Peter Williams have been exemplary in this retelling of the rich religious history in the United States. When the stories of NRMs are erased from U.S. religious history, a distorted picture emerges that glosses over the long history of religious innovation that has occurred in the United States. With the assistance of a new generation of sociologists, anthropologists, and historians, a more accurate account is emerging that does justice to the pluralism that has been the dominant trait of U.S. religion since its founding as a nation. Innovative religious communities will continue to seek creative solutions to pressing U.S. social and religious challenges, even as they sometimes initiate tragic episodes of collective extremism and violence.

See also *African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights*; *Economics*; *Esoteric Movements*; *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion*; *Hinduism in North America*; *Jehovah's Witnesses*; *Krishna Consciousness*; *Latter-day Saints*; *Native American Religions: Contemporary*; *Neo-Paganism*; *New Age Religion(s)*; *New*

Religious Movements entries; *Occult and Metaphysical Religion*; *Pluralism*; *Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult*; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends*; *Unification Church*; *Wicca and Witchcraft*.

Phillip Charles Lucas

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Occult and Metaphysical Religion

Occultism has been an enduring theme in American beliefs about the supernatural. Hovering at the periphery of Jewish and Christian institutions, occult beliefs have rivaled biblical religion as sources of personal religiosity. The term *occult* can take on a variety of meanings, making it difficult to define precisely. The word comes from the Latin verb *oculere*, meaning to hide from view. Narrowly interpreted, occultism refers to secretive societies that carefully guard teachings meant to be hidden from anyone except those who have undergone special initiatory training. This is often mistakenly thought to be a defining characteristic of occult systems. In the context of American history, however, few occult systems have been secretive in this sense. What is hidden is not their teachings, but instead the reality to which these teachings attest. What has defined occultism in America has been an enduring interest in dimensions of reality that lie just beyond what is recognized by either our physical senses or our biblical heritage.

Interest in the occult is often characterized as esotericism or as metaphysical religion. What connects these terms is fascination with more-than-physical dimensions of the universe. We sometimes think of interest in practices we label occult as arising from immediate needs that motivate interest in obtaining either supernatural wisdom or supernatural powers. To this extent, the word *occult* would indicate a more or less ad hoc set of beliefs or practices related to more-than-physical realities. In contrast, both the terms *esotericism* and *metaphysical religion* would indicate more developed spiritual philosophies. In practice, however, all three terms

tend to be used interchangeably. What unifies their use is that, at least over the course of American religious history, they refer to beliefs and practices that have occupied a unique cultural territory. Occult or metaphysical systems have appealed to those Americans eager to explore the supernatural reaches of the universe, but willing to do so outside both the nation's established scientific institutions and its established religious institutions.

A wide variety of supernatural beliefs and practices can be identified as occult. For example, divination practices are occult, including such systems as astrology, tarot cards, crystal balls, palm reading, feng shui, Ouija boards, and numerology. Occult practices also encompass various forms of magic (or magick), the use of ritual techniques to control supernatural powers. Examples of magical systems would include sorcery, witchcraft (including Wicca), conjuring, and supernatural healing arts such as powwow or exorcism. Spiritualism (or trance channeling) is also part of the occult, as are interests in parapsychological phenomena such as clairvoyance or telepathy. Although the terms occult, esoteric, and metaphysical are really synonyms, we often use esoteric and metaphysical religion to refer to those forms of occult belief and practice that include sustained study of intricate textual and philosophical traditions. Thus esoteric movements such as ancient gnosticism, Hermeticism, Swedenborgianism, Transcendentalism, mesmerism, spiritualism, Rosicrucianism, Neo-Paganism, and Theosophy are all associated with the American occult tradition. So, too, are heterodox strands of major world religions that veer into supernatural mysteries. Tantric Buddhism, Hindu mysticism, Christian esotericism, and Jewish Kabbalah are examples of the kinds of connections that frequently arise between occult spirituality and major religious traditions.

Finally, the most frankly supernatural practices of American Christians (such as intercessory prayer, veneration of the saints to obtain worldly blessings, Pentecostal healing, speaking in tongues) reveal the difficulty of making rigid distinctions between supposedly mainstream religious supernaturalism and supposedly heterodox occult supernaturalism.

The vast range of interests commonly categorized as occult cautions against facile generalizations about the nature or historical function of American occultism. After all, adherence to any one of these systems by no means indicates acceptance of the others. Yet certain fundamental attitudes have characterized Americans' enduring fascination with the occult. Attraction to the occult is first and foremost a sign of dissatisfaction with both an era's mainstream science and its mainstream religion. Interest in the occult thus expresses a "seeker" sentiment rooted in the conviction that neither science nor institutional religion has a monopoly on explaining life's deepest mysteries. Occultism also has a tendency to understand God as an impersonal, monistic absolute rather than in traditional theistic terms. It is true that some occult systems believe that the relationship between human beings and the absolute is mediated by such supernatural entities as ascended masters, neo-pagan gods or goddesses, spirit guides, or even master beings in UFOs. Yet, for the most part, occultism suggests that the universe consists of many interpenetrating dimensions that exist in a lawful correspondence with one another. Occult systems thereby imply that each of us can learn to establish inner harmony or rapport with "higher" spiritual dimensions. To this extent, occult systems teach a spiritual message at considerable variance with conventional biblical religion. They encourage people to initiate their own connection with the higher powers of the universe and to do so with the explicit intention of enhancing their personal lives. Through disciplined study and by cultivating the mind's hidden powers, adherents of occult systems try to align themselves with potent spiritual powers. And, in so doing, most hope to create a spiritually significant worldview that restores humanity to its rightful role in the ongoing creation of the universe.

Colonial Era

Occult practices were transplanted to North America from Europe, Africa, and the West Indies. European migrants brought a host of beliefs about the supernatural. Interest in astrology, for example, was common among European settlers of all social classes. Almanacs contained considerable astrological information that could be used to identify propitious dates for farming, commerce, and even romance.

Astrology also focuses on principles of healing and maintaining physical health. Colonial almanacs consequently included anatomical charts explaining how various parts of the body are influenced by corresponding astrological signs. Equally prevalent in the colonial era were forms of divination used to obtain otherwise unavailable information about such matters as the location of lost objects or the presence of underground water (for example, using a divining rod for "dowsing" or "water witching"). And, too, almost every European migrant held beliefs about witches and witchcraft. Although only a few colonists actually practiced witchcraft, nearly everyone believed that some people have an especially strong connection with supernatural power and can use curses or hexes to direct this power for good or ill.

Occult practices were particularly implicated in colonial folk medicine. Because disease was so poorly understood, most European settlers thought it at least possible that their ailments were the result of evil spells or the presence of malevolent supernatural power. For this reason even upper-class colonists often used some form of conjuring (that is, the use of magical rituals or incantations to control supernatural power) to cure diseases. Folk healers, most of whom were either slaves or lower-class whites, often used herbal medicines they had ritually infused with magical powers. One eighteenth-century witchcraft book explained how sympathetic magic can transform such elements as animal feces, urine, and plants for curing sickness in both humans and animals.

Black Americans, both slave and free, engaged in a wide range of occult practices during the colonial era. Religious beliefs indigenous to Africa, the Caribbean, and the West Indies emphasized the close connection between the natural and supernatural worlds. Conjurers were therefore ubiquitous in black culture: they cured the sick, comforted the grieving, interpreted the unknown, created amulets to ward off evil influence, and cast spells to help the aggrieved gain justice. Caribbean Voodoo linked African supernaturalism with European Christianity in ways that enabled blacks to negotiate between competing cultural influences. African occultism therefore usually reinforced rather than undermined Christianity in the eyes of slave populations, enabling occult practices to survive long after the Christianization of most black Americans.

Nineteenth-Century Movements: Joseph Smith and Emanuel Swedenborg

Some scholars have defended a fundamental difference between magic and religion. In this view, magic consists of

techniques to bend supernatural forces to the service of human will, and religion stems from the human desire to bend or conform to a supernatural order of things. Such a distinction, however, is of almost no value in explaining American religious life. People in every era of American history have sought relationships with higher powers in ways that defy any attempt to draw a line between magic and religion. Consider, for example, the early life of Joseph Smith (1805–1844) whose family moved to western New York State in 1816. Records indicate that by 1820 Joseph was intensely curious about divination, prophecy, and obtaining magical powers. He possessed what he called peep stones, natural crystals thought to have divining powers. It seems, however, that his efforts to charge local residents for his divining services got him into trouble with the law, resulting in his conviction for conniving and fraudulence. Just three years later, what he described as an angel led Smith to uncover strange golden plates that had been engraved in an ancient language. Using two so-called ancient seer stones, Smith translated these plates and realized that his special connection with the spirit world had led him into possession of the Book of Mormon—an ancient text describing the otherwise lost teaching of Jesus during his ministry in North America. Joseph Smith would have mystical visions for years to come, prompting his followers to revere him as “a translator, a revelator, a seer, and a prophet.” The early history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was thus a creative hybrid of occult and Christian traditions. For Mormons, as for members of every American denomination, religion and the occult combine to form an avenue to the supernatural.

Joseph Smith was typical of most early American occult practitioners in that he was from the lower end of the social and economic spectrum. Persons of all social classes held beliefs that lent credence to occult practices, but practitioners (such as witches, conjurers, astrologers, and folk healers) tended to come from the lower classes. This began to change, however, as a variety of occult or esoteric movements gained large middle- and upper-class followings throughout the nineteenth century.

Occult ideas and practices made deeper inroads into the middle and upper classes with the promulgation of a series of metaphysical philosophies beginning with Swedenborgianism and continuing through transcendentalism, mesmerism, Spiritualism, and Theosophy. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) began his career in Sweden as a scientist before numerous mystical visions awakened his interest in the

metaphysical dimensions of the universe. Foremost among Swedenborg’s doctrines was his conception of correspondence, the idea that the universe consists of seven interconnected dimensions (the physical, mental, spiritual, angelic, and so on). This vision of metaphysical correspondence led directly to another of his doctrines, that of spiritual influx. Swedenborg taught that causal power is constantly emanating from God downward through successively lower dimensions of existence. Causation comes from above. Under the right conditions, lower dimensions can receive an influx of causal spiritual energies from higher levels of existence. Through diligent study and by cultivating mystical states of awareness, anyone might obtain the requisite gnosis to make contact with higher spiritual planes. The benefits are thought to be numerous: spontaneous insight into cosmological secrets, conversations with angelic beings, intuitive understanding of scriptural verse, and the instantaneous healing of both physical and emotional disorders.

Nineteenth-Century Movements: Transcendentalism and Mesmerism

The core teachings of metaphysical correspondence and spiritual influx found their way into a second nineteenth-century metaphysical movement, transcendentalism. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, Theodore Parker, and William Henry Channing were among those who proclaimed that true spirituality had nothing to do with church membership, but consisted instead of cultivating mental states receptive to the inflow of higher spiritual energies. For all their literary eloquence, however, it was the spokesmen for a new metaphysical healing system known as mesmerism that translated the concepts of correspondence and influx into a form that could be readily adopted by middle-class audiences. An Austrian doctor by the name of Franz Mesmer (1734–1815) had earlier “discovered” a subtle healing energy he called animal magnetism. Illness, he believed, resulted whenever a person’s supply of this life energy had been thrown out of balance. Mesmer developed the science of animal magnetism, whereby he would induce a hypnotic-like trance in patients so that they might become inwardly receptive to the inflow of this vital healing energy—an energy as yet unrecognized by either the religious or scientific institutions of his day. Mesmer further proclaimed that this *mesmeric* trance awakens our latent spiritual powers, activating paranormal mental abilities and giving us immediate access to cosmic wisdom. American audiences seized on this new spiritual science. Mesmerism was, to them, providing

demonstrable proof that every person possesses an inner portal to transcendent knowledge and power.

Metaphysical beliefs reached even further into popular thought when, in 1843, Andrew Jackson Davis (1826–1910) entered a mesmeric trance and began receiving communications from the spirit world. Davis perfected the art of serving as a spirit medium or trance channeler through whom the spirits of deceased humans would deliver lengthy messages on various metaphysical topics. In more than thirty books, with titles such as *The Great Harmonia* and *The Principles of Nature*, Davis expanded his spirit guides' teachings into the core principles of the Spiritualist movement. Although Spiritualism is often remembered for its gaudy séances, the movement helped occult ideas make their way into the vernacular of the middle class.

Nineteenth-Century Movements: The Theosophical Society

Less known, but even more influential in terms of promulgating occultism to American audiences, was the Theosophical Society, organized in 1875. Madame Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891) immigrated to the United States from her native Russia, bringing with her an eclectic background in mesmerism, Spiritualism, and other occult philosophies. In New York she earned a reputation as a trance medium, channeling messages from advanced spiritual teachers she referred to as the mahatmas. The Theosophical Society she organized became a clearinghouse for all things occult, including Americans' first real introduction to the occult philosophies found in Tantric Buddhism, kundalini yoga, and Vedanta mysticism.

Even at the height of its popularity, Theosophy never had more than ten thousand members in the United States. Yet despite these relatively small numbers, Theosophy has exerted more long-term influence on American knowledge of the occult than any other metaphysical movement. Its literature reached a far wider audience than its actual membership numbers might indicate. One of Blavatsky's books, *Isis Unveiled*, had sold more than 500,000 copies by the end of the twentieth century. Once in circulation, Theosophy's ideas resonated clearly with both church and unchurched spiritual seekers. Theosophy taught, for example, that a few core spiritual concepts make up the inner truth of every world religion. This enabled seekers to believe that they were not so much abandoning Christianity or Judaism as they were recovering the pristine truths that have somehow become obscured by present-day institutions. Even more

important was Theosophy's integration of Eastern religious concepts into Americans' metaphysical vocabularies. It is from Theosophy-inspired writers that most Americans have first learned about such things as yoga meditation, Zen *satori*, the Atman-Brahman unity, astral bodies, *chakras*, or subtle energies such as *kundalini*, *chi*, or *prana*. Theosophy presented Americans with a romanticized, mystical East. Blavatsky and subsequent generations of the movement's writers thus forged an occult synthesis that would shape the spiritual outlook of a few million Americans who have never even heard the term Theosophy.

Contemporary Scene: Varieties of Metaphysical Interests

Estimating the percentage of Americans who hold occult beliefs or engage in occult practices is always difficult. A recent compendium of religious organizations in America, for example, listed one hundred under the rubric Ancient Wisdom Family, a category including Rosicrucians, Theosophy, and Astarta. The same volume listed 153 organizations in the Magick Family, a category including ritual magick, neo-paganism, and Voodoo. Many of these groups have only a few dozen members. Even though Theosophy and the Rosicrucians have been in the United States for well over a century, others organize and dissipate within a decade. The number of viable occult organizations is therefore a poor guide to understanding the extent to which occult belief or practice factors into Americans' everyday lives.

Unlike conventional religion, interest in the occult rarely leads to affiliation with an organization. Occult interests are transmitted in very different ways than the beliefs and practices of mainstream religious organizations. Books, lectures, workshops, and Web pages are the principal routes along which occult ideas travel and become a part of the belief systems of the church and the unchurched. It is interesting in this regard that a sociological survey showed that as many as 55 percent of all church members in the United States privately subscribe to some belief pertaining to the occult. A full 22 percent were found to believe in astrology, 12 percent had consulted a fortune teller, and 11 percent believed in trance channeling. The percentage of those at least curious about occult beliefs would undoubtedly be higher, as indicated by the money spent on advertisements for astrology or psychic readings in popular magazines. Indeed, major booksellers devote considerable shelf space to books on such varied subjects as feng shui, tarot cards, ESP, and various forms of energy healing. It therefore seems safe

to estimate that at least half of the American population at least occasionally contemplates supernatural beliefs and practices emanating from sources other than the nation's Christian or Jewish institutions.

Contemporary Scene: Neo-Paganism

A fascinating example of contemporary occult interest has been the renewal of interest in pagan beliefs that began in the late 1950s. The emergence of neo-paganism is attributable in part to the writings of Margaret Murray (1863–1963) and Gerald Gardner (1884–1964). Murray and Gardner described pagan and witchcraft traditions that they claimed had been faithfully transmitted from ancient, pre-Christian times. This was largely a fabrication. Although it is common for occult movements to believe they are part of an ancient tradition, in most cases they are fairly modern inventions based only loosely on fragments of historical information. Combining information from historical pagan texts with various strands of Western occultism, Murray and Gardner offered modern seekers beliefs suited to contemporary religious unrest. Gardner's publication of *Witchcraft Today* (1954) stimulated a great deal of interest in nature-based religions, the most popular of which came to be known as Wicca. About half of those who claim to adhere to pagan beliefs identify themselves as witches (that is, Wiccan). Others describe themselves as shamanic, Druidic, Gaian, or practitioners of ceremonial magic.

Neo-paganism is self-consciously eclectic. It is probably fair to say, however, that four themes run through the varied expressions of these occult interests: (1) belief that the divine, though both immanent and unified, is best symbolized by polytheistic images, most of them female; (2) belief in the efficacy of mind or consciousness to influence events in non-ordinary ways, a process commonly referred to as magic; (3) affirmation of the interconnectedness of all life and hence the need for both ecological sensitivity and commitment to social justice issues; and, (4) opposition to traditional Western religious institutions whose beliefs and structures are seen to be implicated in the social, ecological, gender, and economic oppression that violates the inherent sacredness of our universe. The most overtly occult of these themes is neo-paganism's interest in the magical powers of the mind. The premise of neo-pagan magic is that our minds can make connection with divine energy and then, through visual imagery and the recitation of ritual formulas, consciously direct this energy to produce desired results in the physical world. The vast majority of neo-pagan magical

rituals focus on healing the self and activating our full potentials—making them fairly similar to Christian or Jewish petitionary prayer, even though they invoke terminology and conceptions of divinity drawn from outside the Western biblical tradition.

Recent studies suggest there may be as many as two hundred thousand neo-pagans in the United States. One study found them to be mainly young to middle-aged adults, urbanites, mostly white, and by slight majority (57 percent) female. Pagans are, in other words, ordinary Americans. They have, however, rejected institutional religion, preferring an alternative spirituality that espouses greater reverence for the sacredness of nature. Those who embrace neo-pagan beliefs typically say they were motivated by a quest for intellectual satisfaction, pursuit of spiritual growth, concern for the environment, or a growing commitment to feminism.

Enduring Attraction of the Occult

The demographic profile of Americans attracted to neo-paganism cannot automatically be assumed to apply to other occult beliefs or practices. It is true that persons who describe themselves as seekers are more likely to have a college education, belong to a white-collar profession, be liberal in their political views, have parents who attended church less frequently, and be more independent in the sense of having weaker social relationships. These characteristics might help us understand who is more likely to be attracted to Eastern mysticism, Theosophy, or alternative healing systems that have occult dimensions, but they would be wholly off base when it comes to other occult interests. Astrology, for example, seems to appeal across all social classes, ages, and ethnicities. Americans of Asian ancestry might well be expected to be more inclined to subscribe to feng shui, acupuncture, or tai chi, whereas Americans of Hispanic ancestry might be expected to be more interested in the power obtainable through Catholic saints or from an Afro-Caribbean tradition such as Santería. Generalizations about who is most likely to be drawn to occultism are thus difficult to make because of the wide range of occult systems and because every conceivable demographic group (including any distinction between church and unchurched) contains persons drawn to occult ideas.

The continued appeal of occult ideas and practices owes less to social or cultural conditions than to their intrinsic appeal. Occult systems picture the universe in exciting ways. They explain how otherwise hidden laws or supernatural agents invisibly exert causal power in our world. They further

explain how various ritual actions, meditation techniques, or initiatory ceremonies attune us to these higher powers, thereby guiding us toward the acquisition of truth and personal prosperity. Occultism, moreover, presents itself as an attractive alternative to either traditional science or traditional religion. Though dealing with the supernatural, occult beliefs and practices do not require the confession of personal sin or acceptance of the literal truth of ancient scriptures. Although describing the lawful mechanisms of the universe that can be harnessed for procuring human satisfaction, occult systems invoke belief in spiritual powers not yet discovered by mainstream science. Occult beliefs thus respond not only to the fundamental human desire for mystery, but also to the fundamental human desire to achieve harmony with the invisible powers that affect our well-being.

See also *Architecture: New Religious Movements; Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Christian Science; Esoteric Movements; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Latter-day Saints; Neo-Paganism; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements* entries; *Positive Thinking; Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult; Santería; Scientology; Spiritualism; Transcendentalism; Wicca and Witchcraft.*

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Oneida Community

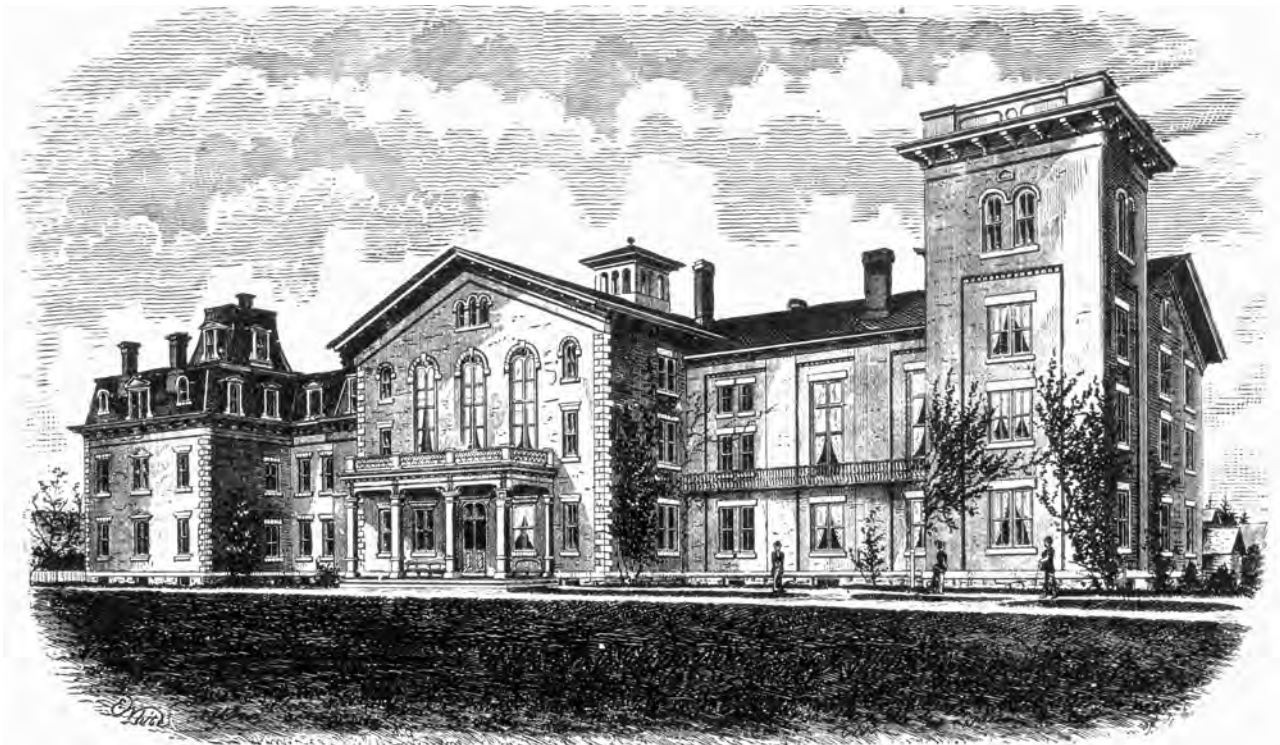
The Oneida community (1848–1880) was one of the most controversial and successful utopian societies in the United

States. It was the product of the theories of its leader, John Humphrey Noyes (1811–1886), the radical political reform movements of the 1830s and 1840s, and an emphasis on the possibility of complete salvation from sin derived from Perfectionist impulses deeply embedded in the Wesleyan Protestant tradition. Noyes was born in Brattleboro, Vermont, to a New England family that had deep roots in America (an early ancestor had arrived in 1634). His father was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and his mother a member of the influential Larkin family of Vermont. Noyes attended Dartmouth College and in 1831 entered the Andover Theological Seminary at Harvard, later transferring to Yale. He was quickly caught up in the religious revivals that swept the Northeast in 1831 and later became involved in radical theological circles, falling under the influence of Nathaniel Taylor, a Yale theologian who was one of his professors. He was also an active member of the New Haven Anti-Slavery Society.

1830s to 1840s: The Perfectionist and Bible Communism

From 1834 to 1837 Noyes edited a journal, *The Perfectionist*, and became increasingly identified as an advocate of free love, based on his reading of biblical scriptures. A semi-communal group was organized under his leadership in 1841 at Putney, Vermont, and Noyes introduced the notion of *complex marriage* (marriage involving multiple unions and multiple partners) in 1846. Although he was married to Harriet Holton, Noyes took as a “marriage partner” a young female convert. Because he was already legally married, Noyes faced charges of adultery and “lewd and lascivious behavior.” To avoid prosecution Noyes fled the state and moved to central New York, where he had supporters in the Syracuse/Utica area, a center of radical perfectionist belief and reform movements known as the burned-over district, where he had supporters.

From 1848 onward Noyes advocated what was known as Bible communism, wherein individuals chose partners on the basis of mutual attraction. The community closely monitored who was having sexual relations with whom, and over the course of its history some consanguineous relationships did develop between both nieces and uncles and aunts and nephews within the religious system of ascending and descending fellowship. According to this doctrine, individuals were supposed to associate with those who could help them improve spiritually. A distinctive feature of Oneida was the use of a birth control technique (*coitus reservatus*) that Noyes developed as the result, he said, of the stillbirths his wife experienced. During the sexual act, the men of Oneida focused on



The main building of the Oneida community in New York. One of the United States' most successful communal utopian societies, the Oneida community controversially practiced a distinctive form of free love.

the amative (foreplay) aspects and used a self-control technique known within both the Christian and Taoists traditions to avoid having orgasms and going on to the propagative (child-producing) stage. Despite “mistakes” and several planned pregnancies, the community had a low birth rate and both men and women spoke positively about their experiences. Noyes introduced the young women to the technique and young men were tutored by older women, though women avoided men who had not fully mastered the practice.

Bible communism also included abandoning private property, living in common quarters, and sharing all necessary work. In return, the community provided its members with all essential goods and services. Even if work assignments within the community reflected conventional gender roles of the time, a system of rotation from one task to another served not only to train members in a variety of duties but also to prevent boredom and discontent with a fixed routine.

1854 to 1860s: Communal Growth and Eugenic Reproduction

Although the early years were hard, the community was able after 1854 to achieve economic success by producing and

selling animal traps and a variety of agricultural and industrial products. During the early 1850s, Noyes moved between Oneida and Brooklyn, established a communal family in Brooklyn, and was both an active participant in the intellectual debates of the day (taking positions against slavery and for marriage reform, temperance, and women's rights) and an aggressive proponent of Bible communism, though he was careful in the advocacy of the community's controversial sexual practices.

Potential community members were carefully screened about their religious beliefs and had to sign a confession of faith on entry. The community also developed a unique system of internal discipline, called mutual criticism, which allowed members to be chastised for what the community perceived as their faults, by small committees and by Noyes. Such a system had been used in seminaries in the 1830s to “toughen” young missionaries before they entered the field. (The system was later adopted by the 1960s counterculture group Synanon to force drug addicts who joined the group to face their addiction.) Although the group advocated non-violence, several members volunteered to serve in the Civil War on the Union side. By the late 1860s, the community

was a thriving economic and social enterprise visited by thousands of tourists and well-known public figures, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a leader in the woman suffrage movement, and Tom Thumb, a popular member of P. T. Barnum's circus.

In 1868 Noyes introduced another radical experiment: stirpiculture. Stirpiculture involved pairing off members of the community to produce children along specific eugenic lines. Just before the new system was inaugurated, Noyes issued a pamphlet explaining the reasoning behind the birth control technique that they were momentarily abandoning. In *Male Continence* (1867), he likened the amative phase to chivalric and courtly love and condemned procreative love because it led to exhaustion and unwanted children; he also condemned abortion as a system of birth control. Influenced by the writings of Plato, Charles Darwin, and Francis Galton (the founder of eugenics), and following the practices of animal husbandry, the community produced fifty-eight children under this new system. Noyes (and later a scientific committee) took both religious and physical characteristics into consideration in making these pairings, but the dominant leadership had more children than any other group. Noyes fathered nine of the children in the experiment. Most of the children born under the stirpiculture plan remained in the area after the breakup.

Noyes used the central metaphor of the heart to suggest how the political and social revivals of the nineteenth century had changed "the heart of the nation," and that a yearning toward social reconstruction had become a part of the core experience of the Americans as a people. He believed that socialism and revivalism were working toward the same end and that the forces of religious enthusiasm moved along the same path as the "infidels and liberals," with the secularists gaining the upper hand for a time, and then the spirit filled moving ahead of them for a time. Noyes believed that these European (socialism) and American (revivalism) elements must come together in the next phase of national history, working together for the "Kingdom of Heaven." Clearly he believed that the Oneida community had brought the two together in a "unitary home" that emphasized work and faith. Over forty years, the colony had amassed considerable economic success through agriculture and the manufacture of traps that made this expansion of "family life" possible.

1870s to 1880: Breakup and Reorganization

During the 1870s Noyes turned over the leadership of the group to his son Theodore Noyes, a Yale-educated physician

and agnostic who did not have his father's charisma. At its height the community had three hundred members and hired both local laborers and Oneida Indians to harvest crops. It even started a boarding house for the workers run along strict lines. Oneida sent its young male members to school at Columbia and Yale and young women to music training in New York City, where the community established a commercial agency to sell its products in the 1860s. Oneida's salesmen traveled all over the United States selling their famed traps (from mouse traps to bear traps), and the society prospered. However, the conflicts engendered by the stirpiculture plan and opposition by Syracuse clergymen (with considerable support from the followers of the puritanical Anthony Comstock) caused the community to break up in the late 1870s. Noyes fled to Canada to avoid prosecution.

In 1880 the community reorganized, and after a difficult period emerged as a joint stock company and major producer of domestic flatware under the name Oneida Community Ltd. The descendants of the community played major roles in the success of the corporation, and its headquarters are today across the road from the Oneida Community Mansion House, a historic site and museum in Sherrill, New York.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Amana Communities; Methodists: Tradition and Heritage; Shakers; Utopian and Communitarian Experiments.*

Robert S. Fogarty

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Ordination of Women

See *Women: Ordination of*

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Pacific Northwest Region

Oregon, Washington, and Idaho constitute the commonly recognized geopolitical Pacific Northwest, but Oregon, Washington, and Alaska make up a more coherent religious region given their shared religious demographics, practices, and sensibility. The religious profile of northern Idaho resembles that found in these states, whereas southern Idaho, dominated by the Latter-day Saints, is identified more closely, in terms of religion, with the Mountain West.

This other Pacific Northwest of Oregon, Washington, and Alaska is known for having the lowest levels of institutional religious affiliation, and the largest percentage of population not identifying with a religious heritage, of any region in the United States. This historic, long-standing pattern has shaped the region's distinctive religious configuration and dynamic. Every group that has entered has had to contend with and been affected by them.

Individual and institutional religiousness are diffuse and fluid in the Pacific Northwest. Successive waves of immigrants have attempted, often simultaneously, to rebuild religious communities left behind elsewhere, to find refuge from persecution, to create religiously inspired utopian communities, and to be free of religious constraints entirely. The zealous have viewed the region as a field of souls awaiting harvest. Seekers have embraced its array of options. Nature mystics and biocentric visionaries find that the geography and natural beauty have proved an endless source of inspiration. The Pacific Northwest is equally conducive to religious innovation, aberration, and indifference.

Contact, Exchange, and Conquest

Indigenous peoples have lived in Alaska, Oregon, and Washington for more than twelve thousand years and by 2010 constituted nearly 2.5 percent of the population. Their creation stories, cosmologies, religious rituals, and forms of organization reflect the distinct cultures of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic, Pacific Coast, Columbia Plateau, and Great Basin peoples. Spiritual powers in nature, shamanism, and healing are dominant religious features.

Regional Native Americans' encounter with Christianity came first through the fur trade of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the Oregon Country, as it was then known, trappers brought Christian—primarily Catholic—devotional practices from Mexico, Ireland, and Quebec. In Alaska, Aleuts and other bands encountered the Orthodox practices of eighteenth-century Russian trappers. Indian-to-Indian transmission of Christianity preceded encounter with missionaries and continued afterwards.

Native Americans approached Christianity as a form of spiritual power, continuing the tradition of openness to other kinds of spiritual power than their own. Their relationships with both Protestant and Catholic missionaries were more complex than the missionaries realized.

The 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s were decades of especially rapid change for native peoples in Oregon. The fur-trade economy ended. The United States took sole possession through treaty with Great Britain in 1846. A steady stream of settlers encroached on tribal lands as did bands from east of the Rockies. The Cayuse (1848) and Yakima (1855) wars and the forced treaties that came in the wake of the latter led to

massive deaths, forced relocation, and significant disruption of native ways. In the post–Civil War years, Christian denominations collaborated with the government in using boarding schools to “civilize” Indians in Oregon and Washington. In Alaska after 1877, the famous Presbyterian missionary of the West, Sheldon Jackson (1834–1909), established missions and training schools and developed a plan to allot regions and tribes to particular denominations that would staff schools. Jackson wanted to minimize denominational missionary conflict, contribute to the Americanization of indigenous peoples, and convert them from their foreign, Orthodox, or indigenous ways. Indigenous peoples continued to negotiate Christianity through these changing circumstances guided by their own interests.

Two major Indian prophets emerged in the Pacific Northwest. The teachings of the Wanapum Smohalla (1815–1895) fueled a revitalization movement among the northern Columbia Plateau Indians in the decades after the Yakima War. Combining traditional beliefs with Christian ideas and symbols, Smohalla’s Washani (spirit-dream prophecy) narrative included whites leaving the land. Among his adherents was the Nez Perce Chief Joseph, who attempted a daring but unsuccessful escape into Canada with his band in the winter of 1877. The movement faded after Smohalla’s death.

John Slocum (1841–?) of the Squaxin Island band of Coast Salish is credited with founding the most successful religious revitalization movement among Pacific Northwest Indians, the Indian Shaker Church. This church, unrelated to Ann Lee and the Shakers, gained its name from the practice of shaking or twitching during prayer, movement Slocum interpreted as brushing off sin and sickness. In Slocum’s 1882 vision, the Christian god promised powerful medicine to natives who renounced gambling, drinking, smoking, and the practices of traditional shamans. Despite opposition from Christian missionaries, who attempted to outlaw it, the movement spread. The Shaker Church was legally incorporated in Washington State in 1892. By the 1930s it had spread into northern California and lower British Columbia, where it remains active, primarily on reservations.

Indigenous religions and forms of Christianity have continued to be key elements in cultural and political interactions within Indian communities, as well as between them and the U.S. government. This has become more visible since the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, which resolved long-standing land disputes and spurred economic development among tribes, and the 1974 U.S. District Court decision by Justice George Boldt (1903–1983) that reaffirmed

the treaty fishing rights of Amerindians in Washington State. Both actions were considered victories by most indigenous peoples, strengthened their political and economic power, and contributed to an emboldened assertion of indigenous cultural practices.

Pacific Northwest Indian religious practices continue to face legal challenges. The Supreme Court’s 1990 decision in *Smith vs. Oregon*, a case that involved the use of peyote in the Native American Church, spurred Congress to pass the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993. Legal contest has also characterized the disposition of the remains of Kennewick Man, a skeleton discovered on the Columbia River near Hanford, Washington, in 1996. Scientists claimed it for study and the Federated Tribes of the Umatilla claimed it as an ancestor and sought possession for burial. Another political conflict was the 1999 resumption of whaling by the Makah. Environmental activists argued against Makah exercise of this treaty right in court, and Greenpeace protested early hunts.

Entrepreneurs, Settlers, and Missionaries

Christianity, Judaism, and other nonindigenous forms of religion followed the fur trade into the Pacific Northwest. The English-controlled Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) provided the main economic and social infrastructure in the Oregon Country from 1821 to 1846, and religion’s fortunes rose and fell with the interest of HBC employees. Trappers and clerks carried on religious services and practices, not clergy. The HBC provided a separate cemetery for its Roman Catholic employees and did not interfere with Polynesian employees’ practice of their religion.

Clergy arrived first in Alaska, where Russian Orthodox priests followed fur traders in 1794. The priests arrived to an established Orthodox community, because Russian trappers had recognized the spirituality of the Aleuts and baptized hostages and escaped slaves. Priests did not actively proselytize but lived as exemplars of Orthodox Christianity and responded to questions. The rich liturgy and images of Orthodoxy appealed to the indigenous peoples, who appropriated the tradition to their cultures. Indigenous peoples drew on Orthodoxy in maintaining their own cultural integrity while resisting later U.S. colonization.

The arrival of Protestant and Catholic clergy in the Oregon Country signaled intensified international conflict. The Yankee Methodist Jason Lee and his companions arrived in 1834. Then came the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM)—sponsored missionaries, Dr. Marcus Whitman and his wife, Narcissa

Prentice Whitman, along with the Rev. Henry Spalding and his wife, Eliza Spalding, in 1836. That same year, the HBC assigned an Anglican chaplain to Fort Vancouver, the Reverend Herbert Beaver. Beaver and his wife, Jane, were uneasy with the intermarriage of Indians and Euro-Americans. Beaver spent his two-year tenure in barely disguised conflict with Chief Factor John McLoughlin, whose wife was métis.

The HBC then authorized Catholic clergy to enter the Oregon Country. In 1838, the French Canadian Catholic priests Francis Norbert Blanchet and Modeste Demers arrived, coming in response to multiple petitions from HBC voyageurs who had mustered out of the company and settled in the Willamette Valley. The Jesuit Peter DeSmet and companions arrived in 1840. The Roman Catholic nuns came first in 1844.

Both Protestant and Catholic missionaries' presence, work with native peoples, and political interaction with Euro-American settlers were intimately intertwined with international politics, economic ambitions, and religious and cultural conflict. The Methodist and ABCFM missionaries saw their work as part of a divinely ordained project: establishing a Protestant Christian civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Hence the heavy participation in the Oregon Provisional Government (formed in 1843) of Methodists, who had come as part of the great reinforcement in 1840, seemed a normal part of the missionary enterprise.

Catholic missionaries' status as both Catholic and foreign-born, and their greater success among native peoples, made them doubly suspect to Protestant missionaries and Yankee settlers. Competition between Protestant and Catholic missionaries grew from the beginning and was aggravated when in 1843 the Catholic missionary enterprise was elevated to an apostolic vicariate. In 1846 it was made an ecclesiastical province, only the second in today's United States, incorporating all of what is now Oregon, Washington, Idaho, western Montana, and British Columbia. Father Francis Norbert Blanchet was appointed archbishop.

Expanded Catholic presence coincided with intensifying tension between the Cayuse and the Whitmans at their Waiilatpu mission near today's Walla Walla, Washington. Waiilatpu's growing significance as a stopping point on the Oregon Trail alarmed the Cayuse. Dr. Whitman's inability to cure Cayuse children during the 1847 measles epidemic further aggravated the situation and led to the killing of the Whitmans and twelve others on November 29. John-Baptiste Abraham Brouillet, vicar-general of the new Catholic bishop of Walla Walla, and Augustin Magliore Alexander

Blanchet, who had arrived in September of 1847 with priests from Montreal and Oblates of Mary Immaculate from France, found and buried the dead at the Waiilatpu mission.

After the Whitman massacre, most Protestant missions to Indians were abandoned until Grant administration Indian policy made government-supported positions on reservations viable. Catholic missions continued longer but also experienced strain with regard to resources and personnel. Conflict between Protestants and Catholics over access to Indian tribes and land claims continued into the twentieth century.

As noted earlier, within a decade of the U.S. purchase of Alaska in 1867, Protestant missionaries, most notably Sheldon Jackson, were at work. After 1885 Jackson became the federal agent of education in Alaska under the Department of the Interior, charged with establishing schools throughout Alaska. He continued to recruit teachers from Protestant denominations for this project, to resist Roman Catholic efforts, and to view Russian Orthodoxy as foreign and destructive to the long-term future of the indigenous peoples there.

Immigrants, Opportunity, and Religion in the West

Oregon became a federal territory in 1849 and a state in 1859. Washington became a separate territory in 1853 and a state in 1889. Alaska became a federal territory in 1912 and a state in 1958. The Pacific Northwest's space and sparse population made it attractive to immigrants with varied motivations and aspirations. The population's transient nature and general preoccupation with economic goals often worked against the building of robust religious institutions. Most immigrants viewed institutional religion pragmatically and supported schools, hospitals, and orphanages—social services, regardless of denominational sponsorship.

Ashkenazic Jewish traders and small businessmen were present early in the Pacific Northwest. In 1849 Jacob Goldsmith and Lewis May established a general goods store in Portland, Oregon. Congregation Beth Israel was established there in 1858, the first in the Pacific Northwest. Jewish presence in Washington, Idaho, and Alaska grew with commercial, financial, and extractive industry opportunities arising first from the California Gold Rush and later strikes in Washington, Idaho, and Alaska. In the early 1900s Sephardic Jewish immigrants arrived, adding to German, Polish, and Russian Jewish presence.

Religious enthusiasts set their sights on the Oregon Country. In 1856, under the direction of their leader,

Dr. William Keil, the communitarian Christian colony in Bethel, Missouri, began a move to Aurora, Oregon, in quest of better land and separation from the world. By 1867 the entire colony had been relocated. Intracommunity conflict after Keil's death in 1877 led to the dissolution of the colony in 1883, when its enterprises became privately owned. Puget Sound also attracted communitarian experiments in the post-Civil War period through World War I.

The completion of the railroad in 1883 aided institutional religion in the Pacific Northwest. Railroad companies donated land for church buildings in settlements along their routes. Easier transportation made the region a first destination for immigrants from Europe instead of a second or third move. European ethnic populations grew, strengthening religious communities closely linked with ethnic identity and reducing interethnic marriages.

Asian presence in the Pacific Northwest became most visible with the construction of the railroads in the 1870s and 1880s, though Asians participated in the region's life earlier in the fur trade, mining, and as agricultural workers. Chinese workers brought Confucian and Buddhist practices. In 1885 the fewer than 3,400 Chinese in Seattle and Tacoma were driven out as part of the anti-Chinese agitations in the West. Some went to Portland, Oregon, which had a population of about 9,500 Chinese at that time. Japanese farmers—of Shinto, Buddhist, and Christian traditions—arrived in western Washington in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1910 about 8,000 Japanese were at work in Oregon and Washington. They engaged primarily in vegetable farming and service industries, until internment during World War II. After the war, few returned to Washington or Oregon. Filipinos came in numbers through the shipping industry, especially after the United States took possession of the Philippines in 1898. They have continued to maintain distinctive ethnic practices in their Catholicism.

At the turn into the twentieth century, Euro-American Catholic numbers outstripped Native American Catholic numbers for the first time. Following streams of immigrants, Sister Frances Xavier Cabrini brought her Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart from Italy to the United States. They established an orphanage in Seattle in 1903, where she became a U.S. citizen in 1909. She was the first U.S. citizen canonized by the Roman Catholic Church.

As was the case throughout the United States, the presence of churches in cities and towns of the Pacific Northwest during the nineteenth century signified achievement of a

degree of civilization. Clergy competed with the economic aspirations of immigrants and, except in farming communities that often contained a high degree of ethnic and religious homogeneity, failed more often than they succeeded in gathering a stable group committed to establishing and maintaining a congregation.

Progressive Era to 1960

At the turn to the twentieth century, Christianity in the Pacific Northwest shared a wider progressive impulse. Protestant religious communities expanded social services and engaged in social reform campaigns, notably temperance, anti-gambling, and efforts to end political corruption. The Reverend Mark Matthews, pastor of Seattle's First Presbyterian Church from 1902 to 1939, boasted the largest congregation in the entire denomination in 1911. First Presbyterian had multiple sites around the city of Seattle and offered the types of social services representative of the institutional church movement. Catholics also embraced progressive ideas. In Oregon, Father, and later bishop, Edwin Vincent O'Hara and Caroline J. Gleason, later Sister Miriam Theresa, SNJM (Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary), played major leadership roles in the campaign that led to the passage of Oregon's minimum wage law in 1913.

Religion continued to mirror political sentiments. Catholicism remained a "foreign religion," a sentiment on which the Ku Klux Klan, strong in Oregon in the early twentieth century, was able to draw. In the 1924 case of *Pierce vs. Holy Names*, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the measure that had outlawed parochial schools in Oregon, a measure explicitly aimed at undermining Catholicism in the region.

Although African Americans were in the Pacific Northwest from the early 1800s as trappers and later cavalry soldiers, and though the mulatto George Bush co-led the first wagon train that turned north of the Columbia in 1844, only after the 1880s were African American numbers large enough to organize congregations. The American Methodist Episcopal Church, the American Methodist Episcopal Church Zion, and Black Baptist congregations developed in metropolitan centers in Oregon and Washington, and in Idaho and Alaska in the early twentieth century. A second burst of migration from the southern and eastern states came with the need for workers at Boeing and in the shipyards in Portland, for both World War I and, more so, World War II. Many who came to the region as part of the U.S. military chose to remain after their deployment and continue to do so, especially in Washington and Alaska.

From the origins of the movement at the turn into the twentieth century, Pentecostals have been present in the region in numbers proportionately larger than anywhere else in the country outside of the Old Southwest. In-migrants who worked in extractive industries carried Pentecostalism with them. Until the 1970s, concerted Pentecostal evangelization efforts in the region overwhelmingly saw success with recent in-migrants. Since then, Pacific Northwest Pentecostals have benefited from the national widening popularity of charismatic and Pentecostal forms of religiousness.

Other newer and less conventional religious groups found the Pacific Northwest a congenial home. Seventh-day Adventists settled in Washington and Oregon in the late nineteenth century, attracted to the healthy air and space. Astrological and metaphysical movements were active from the late nineteenth century on, and Oregon quickly became one of the top states for Christian Science after its emergence in the 1880s. In 1905 a former Adventist preacher brought Baha'i to the United States through Puget Sound. The Vedanta Society also was established regionally in the early twentieth century. Sikhs and Muslim laborers worked in the timber industry at the turn of the twentieth century. Agitation among Euro-American workers led to mob action that drove them over the border into British Columbia in 1907, not to begin returning to Puget Sound in any numbers until after 1960.

In the two decades following World War II, population growth and the desire to return to normalcy contributed to the growth of traditional Protestant denominations, Roman Catholicism, and Reform and Conservative Judaism. These built congregations that, for the first time, resembled in size and resources those in other regions. The region's religious leaders were active in movements addressing nuclear issues, promoting world peace, and seeking to lessen racial tensions.

Forms of evangelical Protestantism, including the newer neo-evangelicalism, a less culturally hostile form of evangelicalism seeking to engage the culture more directly, grew steadily in the post-war Pacific Northwest. Billy Graham began regular appearances in Portland in 1950. In 1952 the Southern Baptist Convention voted to expand into the western states, including Oregon and Washington, ending an informal division of mission territory that had left the region to the American Baptists. During the second half of the twentieth century, the Conservative Baptists outstripped American Baptists in Oregon.

Refugees from Hungary settled in the Pacific Northwest in the 1950s, as did Koreans. Later, Vietnamese, Thai, and Cambodian communities developed, bringing their indigenous traditions and Asian expressions of Christianity. The region developed a significant and diverse Buddhist presence.

1960 to 2000

During the 1960s Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish cooperation reached unprecedented levels in the region—one that had an established tradition of cooperation, born of a pragmatic need for collaboration in the light of small numbers, more than a century before it became the practice in other regions.

One of the innovative outcomes of regional ecumenism was “Challenge” on KOMO TV in Seattle. From 1960 to 1975, this widely viewed weekly half-hour telecast featured Father William Treacy of the Archdiocese of Seattle, Rabbi Raphael Levine of Temple de Hirsch, and a rotating set of Protestant pastors, beginning with Rev. Dr. Martin L. Goslin, of Plymouth Congregational Church, conversing about issues from faith perspectives. Discussion topics included celebrating Christmas in public schools, open housing laws, and the question of responsibility for the killing of Jesus.

“Challenge” exemplified a long-standing religious dynamic of the region—openness to exploration of religious ideas and mutual religious identities, albeit through mechanisms more ecumenical, civic, and movement-oriented than denominational. This dynamic contributed to ongoing innovation across boundaries. Pierce County, Washington, has long claimed the largest prayer breakfast in the nation. The Lutheran pastor, John Nelson, and former Roman Catholic archbishop of Seattle, Raymond E. Hunthausen, gained national recognition in antinuclear and peace movements. Seattle churches were early leaders in the Sanctuary movement in the 1980s, helping refugees from the wars in Central America. An ecumenical coalition issued an apology to Native Americans in 1987, and other faith communities embraced the Roman Catholic Bishops' 2001 pastoral letter on the Columbia River.

Ecumenical cooperation and entrepreneurial innovation yielded new ministerial and educational ventures in the Pacific Northwest. Two nationally known organizations, World Vision (Federal Way, Washington) and Mercy Corps (Portland, Oregon) are headquartered in the region. Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Church Council of Greater Seattle, Associated Ministries of Pierce County, and the Interfaith Council of Thurston County stand out as continuing vital ecumenical ventures focused on mutual understanding and advocacy for social welfare. Earth Ministries promotes

congregational environmental education. Northwest Leadership Foundation and comparable organizations build community capital. Emerging from a collaboration begun in 1987, the School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle University, a Jesuit institution, created an Institute of Ecumenical Studies that prepares ministers for more than ten Protestant denominations. The Bakke Graduate School of Ministry, a freestanding Christian institution originally founded in 1990, focuses on urban and global issues of ministry.

Newer forms of evangelicalism and Pentecostalism continue to thrive in the Pacific Northwest. The Reverend Casey Treat has one of the longest running entrepreneurial ministries in the region, with a two-site congregation in Federal Way and Everett, Washington. Mark Driscoll, with his Mars Hill Church, has garnered the attention of other evangelicals and the general public for his earthy, often offensive preaching style, authoritarian organizational structure, and capacity to attract large attendance in Seattle. Large congregations of neo-evangelical and Pentecostal persuasion ring Portland, Oregon. The presence Sarah Palin, then governor of Alaska, on the 2008 Republican presidential ticket brought attention to Alaska's largely homegrown community church movement. The region's global, high-tech, knowledge economy centers are fertile ground for such groups, even as the same locations are home to organized, activist atheists.

The region continues to serve as a refuge. The space of the West, the allure of pristine nature, the impulse to find a place where an original Eden can be replanted still draws many to the region. One of the most infamous experiments in communal living over the past thirty-five years was the settlement of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who in 1981 brought his followers to the 64,000-acre Big Muddy Ranch near the town of Antelope, Oregon, a venture that ended in criminal charges and his conviction and deportation.

The Pacific Northwest, especially the Ashland, Oregon, region and Puget Sound, are centers for New Age and nature religions. Ashland, located near the ancient forests of the Siskiyou, is the home of Neale Donald Walsh and Jean Houston. J. Z. Knight, who gained fame for channeling the three-thousand-year-old warrior Ramtha, resides in Yelm, Washington, where she runs the School of Enlightenment, frequented in the 1990s by followers including actress and activist Shirley MacLaine and actress Linda Evans.

Nature in the Pacific Northwest inspires religious responses in writers. David James Duncan, who was raised as a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and later moved to Montana in protest of logging in Oregon, functions

in many ways as the theologian of the region. The Buddhist poet and nature writer Gary Snyder is a product of the region. David Whyte, an English/Irish poet, scientist, and life-guide lives on Whidbey Island.

Evangelicalism has its own Northwest writers. David Miller, the author of *Blue Like Jazz* and *Searching for God Knows What*, is a Portland resident crafting a less institutionally bound evangelical theology. Fascination with the region as a place of revelation is evident in the setting for *The Shack* by William P. Young. Miller and Young capitalize on the region's attraction to nature, embrace of the notion of infinitely new possibilities for culture, and trust in self-reliant individualism to convey a fresher evangelical vision.

Less congenial religious and political visions also thrive in the region. Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Idaho are home to active Christian Identity and Neo-Nazi movements that recruit from among those who are often not part of the new global, knowledge economy and culture that characterize Seattle, Portland, or Boise. Coalitions of historic mainline faith groups have worked to oppose these organizations, exemplified in the work of William Wassmuth, a former Roman Catholic priest who led the movement against the Aryan Nation in Hayden Lake, Idaho, and founded the Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment, now the Northwest Coalition for Human Dignity.

The protests in Seattle during the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings exemplified regional religion's tradition of cooperation and networking. A coalition of union workers, congregations, and students organized to make their statement against the WTO and the impact of its policies. Although the "battle for Seattle" provided a venue for anarchists to gain publicity, a coalition of religious, environmental, and community groups behind the scenes played a larger role in mounting a peaceful protest.

Yet another glimpse of Pacific Northwest religion took place in the wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks. Buddhist communities in Pierce County held a public memorial for the dead. During the same period, interfaith and ecumenical coalitions organized to protect mosques from attack.

Religious Configuration and Characteristics

Religion and Public Life in the Pacific Northwest: The None Zone provided a sustained analysis of the religious demographics and characteristics of the Pacific Northwest, best known religiously at the turn of the twenty-first century for being "unchurched." Most residents negotiate their religious impulses outside the doors of church, synagogue, temple, or

mosque, and have done so since earliest Euro-American settlement, as mentioned earlier. This distinguishes the region from those where institutional religion took stronger hold.

In 1970 the percentage of the Pacific Northwest population affiliated with religious bodies reached the level of the nation at 1890—34.4 percent. Over the next thirty years, the percentage of the region's population affiliated with religious bodies remained in the mid-30 percent range, reaching a high of 37.2 percent, despite a regional population increase of 70 percent. In 2000 the region lagged further behind the nation in institutional religious adherence than it had in 1970.

The minority of the population participating in organized religious bodies, the religious adherents, are more dispersed among different groups in the Pacific Northwest than is the case in other regions. Elsewhere the top five groups capture from 75 to 85 percent of religious adherents, but in the Pacific Northwest it is only 65 percent.

The region's pattern of denominational predominance is strikingly different from the nation's and has become more so since 1970. Catholics make up the largest single denomination, 11.3 percent of the population and 30 percent of all adherents in 2000, only half their percentage of the population nationally (22 percent). Over the course of the twentieth century, the Latter-day Saints grew to be the second largest regional denomination, with 3 percent of the population and 8.1 percent of adherents in 2000. No other single religious body claims as much as 2 percent of the population. A cluster of Holiness, Wesleyan, Pentecostal, nondenominational, and neo-evangelical Christian groups rivals historic mainline, liberal, and confessional Protestants in size. The Orthodox Church is stronger in the region than elsewhere, because of its more than two-hundred-year presence in Alaska and its stability among many indigenous peoples there. The region has a larger presence of adherents to Eastern religions than any other in the country.

The low levels of institutional religious participation and the dispersed distribution of the minority of religious adherents contribute to the most distinguishing feature of the Pacific Northwest: it lacks a dominant religious reference group. No religious body to date has captured and retained a large enough segment of the population to provide the reference group alongside or against which individuals develop their religious identity. This has significantly influenced the development of religious bodies, including the ways they operate in private and public life. Demographic thinness has both fed ecumenical and interfaith ventures and generated a

preoccupation with boundaries and clarity of identity that propels sectarian impulses. It fuels continuing contestation over which religious family can claim legitimately to be the public religious voice and so stamp regional culture and politics. It has guaranteed that to be a public force, religious groups in the region must work through alliances of interest.

This situation weakens religion as a social control in the region. As a result, religion is voluntary in the fullest sense, leaving individuals with the life-long project of negotiating religious identity and participation, one carried out with the freedom to seek, to join, to innovate, or to abandon religious ideas, practices, or communities, largely at will. The connection between participation in religious organizations and other inherited factors such as kinship, ethnicity, education, and social class was eroded, even severed, in the Pacific Northwest well over a century before it weakened in other regions. Further, absent substantial social reinforcement, what is voluntarily chosen must be repeatedly reaffirmed. Making religion real, meaningful, and relevant preoccupies the religious in the Pacific Northwest, feeding spiritual searching and religious innovation.

As a region, the Pacific Northwest leads the nation in the proportion of the adult population who, when asked to identify religious tradition, responded none: 25 percent in 2000 and 2008. The state making that same claim in 2008 was Vermont. The number not identifying with any religious tradition is twice that of the Roman Catholics, and nearly three times that of the combined mainline Protestant bodies. Few who claim no religious tradition identify as atheistic or agnostic. They are, however, disconnected from both active institutional involvement and vestigial emotional bonds with identifiable faith traditions.

The single largest segment of the population regionally consists of those who identify with a religious tradition but do not participate in a local religious body of that tradition often enough to be claimed as adherents. Half of those who identify with historic Protestant denominations fit into this category. The nature and strength of these people's identification with a religious tradition is unclear. Possible interpretations include a vestige of family or ethnic self-understanding, a step on the path to private religion or fully secular identity, dissatisfaction with known available religious communities, and the result of preoccupation with economic or other interests.

For all three populations (adherents, no tradition, and identifiers), geographic scale and the grandeur of nature in the Pacific Northwest affect religiousness. For many people,

nature provides spiritual sustenance, even as it dislocates individuals in ways that lead to new interpretations of the place of humans in the universe. The Siskiyou in California and Oregon, a continuous mountain forest ecosystem since before the last Ice Age; the Tongas in Alaska, a temperate rain forest that is home to old growth; the Ho Rain Forest and active volcanoes in Washington, exemplified in the eruption and three decades of renewal of Mount Saint Helens; and the fate of salmon and orcas reframe understandings of human being and the human project. The fate of nature is imbued with metaphysical significance in the Pacific Northwest, and both attitudes and denominational policy stances toward nature are a litmus test of right belief in contests among Christian bodies. If the Pacific Northwest has a regional religious question, it is about the tensions involved in people being truly free and in a community with other humans, and the more than human, in this place.

Interpreting Pacific Northwest Religion

Despite the low rates of affiliation and participation, religion thrives in the Pacific Northwest, even as it remains fluid, diffuse, and elusive. This open environment continues to spur innovations in organization, leadership, theology, and practice across religious communities of various kinds. Religious activity spills outside the boundaries of conventional religious institutions, and religious inspiration motivates new forms of organization and communication. The conditions of Pacific Northwest religion, which always depend on lay initiative and creativity, has propelled it to incubate religious forms for a postmodern global reality.

In many ways the Pacific Northwest has been a religious bellwether, exhibiting the tensions, trends, and shifts in religious life at play across the United States, but less visible in places where a much larger portion of the population is involved in historic religious institutions. Alternative explanations pose it as a religious backwater, slow to mature religiously because of the pace at which Euro-American settlement proceeded, with major population growth only after World War II, and many denominational bodies finally achieving fiscal independence only in the 1960s. It remains to be seen whether the growth of evangelical groups over the past two decades and their increasingly frequent claim to be the regional religious voice confirms the second interpretation.

Attention to religion beyond easily recognizable institutional forms is therefore critical to understanding the Pacific Northwest. Nature religion and popular or folk religion are

helpful constructs for exploring religion in the region. So too are theories of the emergence of new religious movements, revitalization, place, and modernization. Interpretations that emphasize lay activism and initiative, and individual spiritual quests capture basic features. All offer insights into the configuration of individual and institutional religious sensibility that contributed to the region having the first states in the nation to enact voter-approved assisted suicide laws, Oregon in 1994 and Washington in 2009.

See also *Bahá'í, Buddhism in North America; California and the Pacific Rim Region; Eastern Orthodoxy; Ecumenism; Emerging Church Movement; Frontier and Borderlands; Geographical Approaches; Missions: Domestic; Mountain West and Prairie Region; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; Nature and Nature Religion; Pentecostals; Pluralism; Seventh-day Adventists; Unaffiliated.*

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Pacifism and Conscientious Objection

At its core, pacifism seeks a just and peaceful resolution to conflict. Beneath this rather simple description rests a fundamental dialogue about whether pacifism requires renunciation of war in every instance (strict or absolute pacifism) or commits to the eradication of war but recognizes occasions when the use of force might be necessary (pragmatic or conditional pacifism).

Historic Peace Churches

Quakers

The earliest organized opposition to war among European settlers in North America came from the so-called historic peace churches, predominantly the Quakers, Mennonites, Brethren, and Moravians. Among the most numerous and influential of these groups, the Quakers migrated from England to North America beginning in the 1650s. They scattered throughout the Atlantic coast, though by the late

seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries their highest concentration was in William Penn's Holy Experiment of Pennsylvania. Spurred by his optimism in the possibility of a godly government that would propel the conversion of the world, Penn (1644–1718) attempted to incorporate into his colony, at least initially, a strict commitment to passive principles against war. In his "Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe" (1693–1694), Penn internationalized his vision for peace by calling for an international body to promote peace among the collective nations of Europe and, by extension, Europe's colonies.

Penn's attempt to construct a colony along pacifist lines and his call for European collaboration met with several obstacles that offer insight into pacifism's history in America. In Pennsylvania the need to provide police support to maintain order, a willingness to accept the use of force for defensive purposes, and the decline in support for pacifist principles among many leading Quakers undermined the peace movement. The French and Indian War presented many Quaker political leaders in Pennsylvania with what seemed to them to be an intractable dilemma of government service requiring Quakers to violate their peace commitments. As a result, several Quaker members of the state's assembly resigned their posts in 1756, a move that signaled a shift in Quaker peace activity away from direct participation in civil government to extragovernmental activity.

Among those calling for Quaker removal from political office, though not necessarily political activity, John Woolman (1720–1772) urged Quakers to consider their pacifism as part of a larger challenge to political and social injustice. Woolman traced slavery, materialism, racial intolerance, and war to the same cause—the love of power—and called his listeners to the love and defense of all creation. In so doing, Woolman stands as a central figure in North American pacifism's attempt to link a commitment to peace with a broader concern to actively work for social justice.

Mennonites

The growing sentiment among Quakers that pacifist principles and government service existed in tension, if not opposition to one another, brought them closer to the long-standing sentiments of the Mennonites. Emerging out of the Anabaptist tradition and tracing their lineage to a Dutchman, Menno Simons, Mennonites began settling in North America in the late seventeenth century. The group's earliest adherents renounced Christian political involvement as incompatible with the religious faith and

practice that they traced to Jesus and the early Christian community. Mennonites did not go so far as to vilify human government. In fact, they saw government playing a critical role in promoting order, punishing the wicked, and protecting the innocent. But these very functions appeared to Mennonites as contradictions for the Christian who, they argued, must follow Jesus' model of love of all humankind, even to the length of suffering for Christ's sake. As a result, Mennonites insisted that Christians separate themselves from sinful institutions such as civil government and seek to live in peace with friend and foe, a move they predicted would inevitably lead to their persecution. Mennonites attempted to take this suffering and transform it into a spiritual good that they argued chastened them from the love of the world and prepared them for an eternity in God's kingdom. Mennonites argued that their struggles to achieve this salvation, itself cast in terms of warfare, made the military conflicts of nations pale in comparison.

Moravians

The Moravians, who trace their origins back to the Czech *Unitas Fratrum* of the fifteenth century, offer another perspective on sectarian peace commitments in colonial America. Though nearly wiped out by centuries of persecution in Europe, a small remnant made their way in the 1720s to a refuge on the Saxon estate of Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf. The Moravians adopted Zinzendorf's version of Lutheran pietism, including a deep commitment to missions that led some within the group to immigrate to Georgia in 1735. The immigrants quickly found cause to express their pacifist principles when they steadfastly refused to bear arms for the colony, even in self-defense, or hired substitutes to meet their military responsibilities. Under assault from the colony's leadership, the group abandoned Georgia in 1740 for Pennsylvania, where they hoped their pacifist beliefs would find support among like-minded Quakers.

As it did for the Quakers, the onset of the French and Indian War in 1755 proved a tremendous challenge to Moravian nonresistant pacifism. In response to attacks on their villages and the perception of many Moravians that Quaker political leaders had abandoned the divinely appointed role of the state to protect its citizens, Moravians settled on the propriety of defensive action to protect settlers from attack. They did so with the caution from one of their leaders, August Gottlieb Spangenberg (1704–1792), to use all effort to avoid killing their attackers and to care for those they wounded. In addition, Spangenberg declared the

Quaker vision of erecting a pacifist state untenable on the grounds that such aims confused Christ's command to his disciples to love with the responsibility of the ruling authority to bear arms for the defense of the nation. The former simply could never be placed on the latter, nor had God ever intended such a conflation of responsibilities. In situations when Christians exercised political authority, Spangenberg argued, they needed to take action to protect the innocent. Spangenberg's arguments positioned the Moravians in interesting ways in relation to other pacifist religious sects. Like both the Quakers and Mennonites, Spangenberg vigorously denounced Christian participation in war, but he also recognized the regrettable necessity of violent community action when the civil rulers failed to provide adequate defense. Further, like the early Quakers, Spangenberg believed that Christians had the right to engage in political service, but not that such service could or should strive to implement pacifism.

The conclusion of the French and Indian War brought a return to a stricter pacifism among Moravians. In the Revolutionary War era, the Moravians and members of the other peace churches largely refused conscription into military service, resulting in a mix of hostility, overt persecution, and on rare occasions tepid indulgence. The Pennsylvania Assembly was the only colony to exempt Quakers, Mennonites, and Moravians from militia service, but it did require that objectors pay an assessment to the colony. Everywhere else conscientious objectors experienced fines, loss of property, and imprisonment.

Conscientious Objection and the Constitution

Most of the political leaders who assembled to draft the U.S. Constitution continued to resist calls to accommodate the religious convictions of those who questioned Christian participation in war. James Madison recommended a clause that exempted religiously motivated conscientious objectors from military service, a plea that had the support of three state ratifying conventions. The ratified version of the Constitution, however, did not retain the clause. Opposition to even a small national army, however, remained strong in the United States well into the 1790s. Fear of military rule violating the new-found individual liberties of U.S. citizens provided enough fuel to suppress efforts at a national conscription and preserve the presence of local and state militias. Once the nation finally created a federalized militia, it remained voluntary and far smaller than the traditional European standing force.

At the same time, the close of the Revolutionary War allowed many Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren to make their way to Canada. As they did in the English colonies to Canada's south, these groups struggled to gain recognition for their resistance to military service. The Militia Act of 1793 formally granted Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren exemption from militia duties in exchange for the payment of a fine. In part the act arose out of a desire to attract to Canada immigrant groups that would support a stable British presence in North America. But many within the pacifist sects opposed paying the tax because it supported the military. The government's response ranged from confiscation of property to imprisonment. The peace sects responded by petitioning the legislature for the removal of fines. In 1849 the government finally granted the sects' appeals. Thereafter, Canadian law exempted from military service all Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren age sixteen to sixty who could produce certificates verifying membership in these groups.

This brief history reflects several fundamental issues in the history of North American pacifism. First, although some within these churches actively worked to change social structures, others argued that they could realize their peace principles only by withdrawing from active civic participation. Further, those who attempted to continue to participate in the larger society often differed from those who sought change through participation in political structures and those who focused solely on nongovernmental efforts. Finally, members of the historic peace churches differed in the nature and extent of their responses to conscription laws and war taxes, their willingness to intersect pacifism with other social justice efforts, and the possibility of using coercion to accomplish pacifist goals.

Emergence of Nonsectarian Peace Activity

North American peace supporters began to enjoy a broader nonsectarian popularity after the War of 1812. Caught in the rush of religious revivals, Protestants sought to reform their souls and societies. In the process, thousands of middle-class Protestants in the northeast United States organized nonsectarian voluntary societies. The first one devoted to peace efforts was the New York Peace Society (1815), whose founder, David Low Dodge (1774–1852), sought to abolish war as a violation of Christian principles and an enemy to social health. In 1828 William Ladd incorporated several organizations, including the New York Peace Society, into the American Peace Society. The group's commitments

symbolized two critical components of nineteenth-century peace efforts: an emphasis on the arbitration of disputes between nations and a broad international focus. Ladd called for Christian representatives of “civilized” nations to gather to establish international laws and for creation of an international court to mediate disputes. This international perspective would undergo significant revision over the years, but remained a hallmark within much of the peace activity thereafter.

Signaling a divide essential to understanding pacifism in North America, the American Peace Society’s openness to those who supported military operations in limited, particularly defensive, cases embroiled the organization in controversy that ultimately split the group in two. Led by the radical reformer William Lloyd Garrison, strict pacifists in the organization argued that Christian faith required believers not only to renounce defensive wars, but also to oppose all forms of coercive behavior, including participation in lawsuits, government, and self-defense. Garrison and his followers established the New England Nonresistance Society in 1838 to advocate for nonresistance and a radically democratized “government of God” that refused all distinctions of nationhood, race, gender, and class. Garrison’s “Christian anarchism” eagerly anticipated the erection of God’s millennial kingdom, which he believed would safeguard the rights of all people and impose a radical equality.

Divisions within both the American Peace Society and New England Nonresistance Society over abolition and the possibility of the use of violence shifted followers’ peace activity as the United States crept toward civil war. The recalcitrance and even expansion of slavery ultimately led many within the peace movements to accept the use of violence in the service of emancipation. Even Garrison came to support the Union war effort. With the nonsectarian peace advocates supporting war in 1861, strict pacifism once again remained largely the domain of members of sectarian religious movements, particularly the Quakers and Mennonites, along with newer groups such as the Seventh-day Adventists. Members of these groups in the North and South faced conscription requirements. However, both the Union and Confederacy made allowance for conscientious objectors who held membership in one of the religious groups with historic peace articles that prohibited bearing arms. In such cases, objectors could pay a substitute or accept noncombatant duties.

The post-Civil War era gave birth to a stronger emphasis on practical peace efforts, particularly those to create binding international law and a world court. Very few among the

nonsectarian reformers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries advocated the more radical nonresistant pacifism of the earlier Garrisonians. Rather, the new peace advocates often considered military preparedness as necessary to preserve order and prevent war.

Pacifism and the Challenges of the Twentieth Century

World War I shifted the focus of peace efforts in new directions, even as it posed new challenges for those who refused military service. In addition to emphasizing international law, advocates of peace took greater aim at eliminating the social conditions they saw giving rise to war: imperialism, economic inequality, and racial injustice. Those whose conscience prohibited them from participating in war faced the Selective Service Act of 1917, which required all males in the United States between the ages of twenty-one and thirty to register for military service. In 1918 the U.S. Congress expanded the act to include all males age eighteen to forty-five. Unlike its Civil War predecessor, the act did not permit objectors to pay for a substitute. It exempted only ministers, theological students, and members of a religious group with historic documents of faith and practice that forbid participation in any form of war. Even more, the government forced those receiving an exemption into confinement under military supervision and only later offered the option of service in a noncombatant role. Similarly, in Canada, the Military Service Act of August 1917 required military service for all males age eighteen to sixty, though in general Canada provided broader grounds for claiming conscientious objection outside of membership in historic peace churches and more favorable alternative forms of service for those who objected during World War I and World War II than the United States. The United States did not offer provisions for nonreligious based conscientious objection until 1970.

The early twentieth century also brought significant diversification to the number of participants and forms of peace activity. With female suffrage nearly in hand in the United States in 1919, women, always an important presence in peace activity, undertook new efforts for peace. In that year, Jane Addams helped form the U.S. section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, a pacifist organization committed to social justice. Fanny Garrison Villard carried on the work of her father, William Lloyd Garrison, when she formed a nonresistant group called the Women’s Peace Society in 1921. Both organizations affiliated with the larger War Resisters International, established in

1924, a group committed to the abolition of war and the eradication of the causes of war.

American Catholics

American Catholics also began to lend themselves to peace activity in the late 1920s. The Catholic Association for International Peace emerged in 1927. Perhaps the most active opposition to war came from Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement. Day and her followers dismissed the just war doctrine that dominated Catholic teaching from as far back as Augustine. They also rejected the main currents of early twentieth-century liberalism's optimism regarding human progress through a preeminent state and the expansion of capitalism. Instead, Day's Catholic Workers sought a vibrant activism in the form of personal acts of self-sacrifice and love for humanity. As fascism gripped Europe, the question of war became central to Day's thought. The violence and national aggrandizement of war seemed to Day to embody all that was contrary to her personalist movement of individual responsibility for others. In the late 1930s and beyond, Day used her newspaper, the *Catholic Worker*, as a vehicle for what she called Catholic pacifism, or a complete rejection of war in favor of a commitment to Christ's kingdom of peace.

Day's efforts received support from her Worker colleagues, who established PAX in 1937 as a group of Catholic conscientious objectors. The group was later renamed the Association of Catholic Conscientious Objectors (ACCO). The organization primarily sought to gain public support for conscientious objectors and provide materials that encouraged men to consider refusing to register for the draft. Bucking Day's principles, some PAX supporters turned to the just war tradition to denounce conscription. If the government forced men to enlist against their will, they reasoned, Christians could not consider the war a just struggle.

Christian Realism and Reinhold Niebuhr

Just as some American Catholics began to engage in peace activity, many Protestants who had once laid claim to pacifist positions renounced those beliefs in the face of the devastation of World War I and the military expansion of Japan, Germany, and Italy in the years leading up to World War II. Among the most prolific was Reinhold Niebuhr, who in the 1920s claimed pacifist principles and used his interpretation of Christian realism to justify war in cases he thought might result in deterring or challenging greater violence. Although Niebuhr adamantly criticized those who sought to defend war as a specifically Christian value, he challenged what he

considered Christian pacifism's naïve assumptions about human perfectibility, the inevitability of the peaceful entrance of God's kingdom, the depths of human sinfulness, and the limitation of human moral agency to acts of love. Justice, along with love, remained incumbent on Christians. For Niebuhr, this responsibility to work for justice in a world deeply scarred by individual and social sin made violence a regrettable, but ideally only occasional, necessity.

The post-World War II era ushered some of the most substantial challenges to pacifism, as well as some of the most profound accomplishments for peace. The popularity of the Allied war effort, the Holocaust's challenge to traditional pacifist optimism about human nature, the growth of the national security state, the dominance of deterrence in United States foreign policy, and the retreat of mainline Protestantism from pacifism all signaled the waning of popular, institutional, and political support for pacifism. Despite such tremendous challenges, two mid-twentieth-century movements brought unparalleled attention and success to North American peace efforts. Civil rights activity and opposition to atomic weapons and atmospheric testing brought peace activity both new supporters and new traction.

Pacifism and the Civil Rights Movement

In December 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, African Americans organized a boycott of the public bus system in response to the city's segregation policies. The long simmering dispute finally erupted when police arrested Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her seat in the front of a bus to a white man. Martin Luther King Jr., as president of the Montgomery Improvement Association, successfully implemented nonviolent direct action through the boycott and peaceful protests. Deeply influenced by the ideas of Gandhi and representatives of similar action in the United States, including Bayard Rustin, who helped establish the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in 1942, King insisted that nonviolence was not a passive alternative for those who lacked the courage to use violence, but was direct, even coercive, action to challenge social injustice without violating moral and religious values committed to love. King firmly believed that resort to violence and hate not only violated the Christian ethic of love to all humans, but also perpetuated the very systems of oppression that resisters sought to overcome.

In 1956 the Supreme Court upheld a lower court's ruling that the Montgomery bus segregation was unconstitutional. The decision helped launch nonviolent direct action as the central mechanism for the civil rights movement in the

United States. It also thrust King into the antiwar movement in the 1960s. As the Johnson administration escalated the U.S. military presence in Vietnam, King and other African American leaders took an active role in opposing the war. King assumed the chair of the interfaith organization Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam. One of the more highly publicized and controversial points of intersection between opposition to Vietnam and civil rights occurred in 1967 when boxer Muhammad Ali, then a member of the Nation of Islam, refused conscription to the army on racial and religious grounds. Ali's selective opposition to war found little support among American lawmakers or members of his draft board, who refused to allow military exemptions to religious or nonreligious adherents on selective grounds. In 1971 the United States Supreme Court overturned Ali's draft violation on a technicality, but in the same year made clear that selective opposition to war did not qualify one for an exemption from military duty.

Nonviolent social action in North America was by no means limited to the United States. Inspired by the 1968 Conference of Latin American Bishops in Medellin, Columbia, many Central American leaders, for instance, incorporated nonviolent social action to challenge social, economic, and political oppression in their nations. Called *firmeza permanente* (relentless persistence), proponents viewed their action as grasping forcefully for truth in ways that implied a constant action to overcome oppression.

Nuclear Disarmament

The second major peace effort in North America that emerged during the mid-twentieth century sought nuclear disarmament. If the Holocaust offered one of the most powerful arguments for the necessity of military action against inconceivable violence, the catastrophic destruction caused by the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki compelled many to mobilize to seek alternatives to war that, in a nuclear age, clearly held the potential for the annihilation of life on earth. Ironically, the very scientists who helped develop the atomic bomb were also the first to mobilize against its proliferation. The Federation of American Scientists, which as early as 1946 claimed 90 percent of those who developed the first atomic bomb, worked intensely for international control of atomic energy. Although their calls met with steep resistance from the U.S. government and many within the population at large, the scientists' efforts received important support in the 1950s and 1960s from those opposed to atmospheric nuclear testing and the health risks

due to the accompanying fallout. Beginning in 1957, several clergy joined with nonreligious leaders to found and support SANE, an organization committed to ending nuclear testing and realizing nuclear disarmament. The organization achieved one of its earliest successes in 1963 when the United States and the Soviet Union signed the first nuclear test ban treaty. Other organizations, such as the Catholic movement PAX Christi-USA and the National Council of Churches, joined with more secular organizations in seeking to significantly reduce or ban nuclear weapons.

These attempts continued throughout the 1970s, taking shape in the early 1980s, when prominent religious leaders such as William Sloan Coffin Jr. and Jim Wallis called for a nuclear freeze. In 1983 the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops issued *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*. The wide-ranging document demanded a halt to all phases of nuclear weapons production and testing. It also identified pacifism as a legitimate position for Catholics. Although the bishops allowed for a limited policy of nuclear deterrence, other Christian groups, particularly the United Methodist Church and its critical document, *In Defense of Creation*, challenged the doctrine of deterrence and the very existence of nuclear weapons.

Many within the North American Jewish community joined in the challenge to nuclear arms. Jewish reflection on war, like much of that within Christianity, has generally resisted a strict pacifism. However, some Jews, most notably Rabbi Everett Gendler, have argued that Jewish tradition not only offers examples of Jewish rejection of violence, it provides the grounds for opposition to war in the nuclear age. Among the formal groups committed to the opposition to war, the Jewish Peace Fellowship, founded in 1941, has sought to expand conscientious objection rights beyond Christian denominations and to advocate for Jewish perspectives on nonviolence. In the early 1980s the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Rabbinical Assembly of America, and the Synagogue Council of America all issued statements calling for a halt to nuclear weapons production and deployment.

More recently, some within the rapidly growing Muslim community in North America have also participated in public peace efforts, including forming the Mohammed Said Farsi Chair of Islamic Peace at American University.

Iraq War

The 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq shifted North American peace efforts more squarely on antiwar activity than at any

time since the close of the Vietnam War. Opponents of the Iraq War organized in various ways, including gathering as many as ten million people from around the world in 2003 to protest the war. Reflecting the deep concerns among public and political leaders in North America, Mexico joined with eight other permanent and nonpermanent members of the United Nations Security Council in refusing to approve the U.S. proposal.

The Iraq War, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the increase of state sponsored terrorism, and repeated instances of ethnic war continue to capture the attention of strict and pragmatic pacifists in North America in the early twenty-first century. These challenges are compounded by significant political and legal concerns among those whose conscience does not allow them to participate in the armed forces or, in the United States, register for Selective Service. Conscientious objectors do not have the opportunity for exemption from military service in Mexico or registration with Selective Service in the United States. The historic and philosophical differences between pragmatic and strict pacifists suggest that their responses to these challenges may well be quite different. Their shared aim, however, will remain the eradication of conditions that have brought so much bloodshed to human history.

See also *African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; American Revolution; Civil War; Constitution; Freedom, Religious; Jains; Methodists: Since the Nineteenth Century; New England Region; Neo-Orthodoxy; Quakers; Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century; Social Ethics; World War I; World War II.*

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Pentecostal Denominational Family

Pentecostal denominations emerged around the beginning of the twentieth century. Often called *classical Pentecostals* as distinct from the charismatic renewal, Pentecostal denominations emphasize the immediate work of the Holy Spirit, with particular attention to speaking in tongues, and signs and wonders, including divine healing. This experience and theology brought already existing denominations into the movement and facilitated the birth of new denominations. Although many are ethnically diverse, this entry discusses primarily those that are predominately Caucasian.

Numerous denominations that became Pentecostal were already part of the U.S. Holiness movement. They taught the doctrine of sanctification, highlighting John Wesley's theology of "going on to perfection," as a work of grace following justification that replaces original sin with God's perfect love. Consequently the sanctified Christian no longer has a propensity to sin. By the end of the nineteenth century, many Holiness adherents used language from the Acts of the Apostles describing the Holy Spirit given to the church on the feast day of Pentecost. They viewed the Holy Spirit baptism described in Acts 2 as their sanctification. The Pentecostal movement emerged when some taught that Spirit baptism was an experience following sanctification and accompanied by speaking in tongues. This distinction divided the Holiness movement and created Pentecostal denominations. An initial common core of the Pentecostal movement was the fivefold gospel—salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism with the evidence of speaking in tongues, divine healing, and the premillennial second coming of Jesus.

Restoring the Apostolic Church

A foundational drive of the Pentecostal revival was the belief that God was restoring New Testament Christianity, including ministerial offices, spiritual gifts, charismatic worship, and church polity. Many believed the New Testament church had been lost but was being recovered. Numerous insider histories anchor their denomination's roots in the New Testament and claim preeminence or exclusivity as the restored church. This restorationist impulse led to a preference for names based on biblical texts such as "Church of God," "Assemblies of God," or "Apostolic."

Charles Fox Parham (1873–1929) adopted the name Apostolic Faith Movement. He taught that God was

restoring apostolic ministry and gifts, and that Spirit baptism with accompanying tongues speech was a “last days” supernatural means of world evangelism. As self-appointed “Projector of the Apostolic Faith,” Parham chose state directors and published *The Apostolic Faith*, later called *The Apostolic Faith Report*. Although other leaders soon eclipsed Parham, he continued to lead a network of Apostolic Faith congregations and a Bible school in Baxter Springs, Kansas. This denomination divided in 1951 when some organized the Full Gospel Evangelistic Association. The latter denomination publishes *Full Gospel News* with headquarters in Houston, Texas.

Following Parham’s example, African American William Joseph Seymour (1870–1922) used the name the Apostolic Faith Mission for his multiracial congregation in Los Angeles, which is commonly known as the Azusa Street Mission. Their revival (1906 to 1909) influenced countless evangelists, pastors, editors, missionaries, and denominational leaders. Florence Louis Crawford (1872–1936) experienced sanctification, Spirit baptism, and divine healing at Seymour’s mission. Following several evangelistic trips she settled in Portland, Oregon, and founded the Apostolic Faith Mission, later known as the Apostolic Faith Church, in 1906. “Mother” Crawford served as general overseer of the denomination for thirty years. She began publishing *The Apostolic Faith*, later called *Higher Way*, in 1908. Crawford taught a strict Holiness lifestyle code and followed Parham and Seymour’s practice of living by “faith.” Rather than soliciting offerings, a collection box located at the entrance of each church provided an opportunity for financial support. Her son Raymond Robert Crawford (1891–1965) succeeded her as general overseer, highlighting the reality that although women have been instrumental in establishing Pentecostal congregations and denominations, succeeding generations often limited their roles.

Evangelism has always been a priority for Pentecostal denominations. In 1910 the Apostolic Faith Church acquired a horse-drawn wagon as a means of evangelism, followed by a car in 1912 and an airplane in 1919. The church holds an annual international camp meeting in Portland, Oregon, where members also built an extensive printing ministry and print literature in multiple languages. Although the church does not have a membership process, in 1994 members reported 4,500 adherents and 54 churches in the United States. The church also has extensive international ministries claiming 600 congregations in Nigeria alone. In some countries, the church uses the name Trinity Apostolic Faith Church.

Ethnic Diversity

From its beginning the Pentecostal movement has included Latino/a and African American denominations. The earliest African American denomination was the United Holy Church of America, and the largest is the Church of God in Christ. The United Holy Church of America dates to May 2, 1886, when Isaac Cheshier led a meeting of Holiness adherents in Method, North Carolina. Seeing the call to holiness as the center of the Christian life, members referred to themselves as “Holy People,” eschewed “worldly” pleasures including alcohol, tobacco, and opium, and avoided associations such as secret lodges. This intentional separation from U.S. culture characterized Pentecostal denominations until the last decades of the twentieth century.

The Holy People held their first convocation in Durham, North Carolina, on October 13, 1894, and adopted a discipline in 1900. First known as the Holy Church of North Carolina, they chose the name United Holy Church of America in 1916. They hold an annual convocation, as well as district convocations for business and fellowship. Although they value speaking in tongues, they do not view tongues as necessary or “initial” evidence of Spirit baptism, unlike most Pentecostal denominations. They are primarily located along the eastern United States with some international ministries. Separations include the formation of the Mt. Sinai Holy Church of America in 1924, which was founded by Ida Robinson (1891–1946) in Philadelphia and ordains women as bishops.

The Church of God in Christ is the largest predominately black Pentecostal denomination. Its roots go back to 1896, when Charles Harrison Mason (1866–1961) and Charles Price Jones (1865–1949) organized a Holiness fellowship among black Baptists. They adopted the name Church of God in Christ from the biblical text 1 Thessalonians 2:14 (KJV), “For ye, brethren, became followers of the Churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus. . . .”

In 1907 Mason visited the Azusa Street Mission and was baptized in the Spirit. His experience divided Mason and Jones as it did countless others in the Holiness movement. Mason and ten other congregations formed the Pentecostal Assembly of the Church of God in Christ. The courts eventually granted Mason the right to use the name Church of God in Christ, with Jones’s group adopting the name Church of Christ Holiness USA. Under the leadership of Mother Lizzie Woods Robinson (1911–1945), an influential women’s department developed in Church of God in Christ.

Although women serve as evangelists and missionaries, the denomination excludes them from preaching or ordination. The denomination practices an episcopal form of church government and publishes *The Whole Truth*. In 2007 the denomination reported an estimated six million members in fifty-nine countries.

Latino/a Americans have participated in the Pentecostal movement from its earliest days. About one third of Latino/a Pentecostals belong to predominately Latino/a denominations. Many Latino/a congregants are not full members because of stringent membership requirements, making statistics difficult to establish. Latino/a denominations in the United States also face serious challenges with children transitioning from Spanish to English, as well as the mobility of the Latino/a population.

The Apostolic Assembly of Faith in Jesus Christ is likely the largest Latino/a denomination originating in the United States and began with the ministries of Luis López and Juan Navarro, who attended the Azusa Street revival in 1909. Converts preached and organized congregations among Mexican migrant workers, holding their first general convention in 1925. Francisco Llorente became their first president. Adopting Oneness theology (discussed below), members view speaking in tongues as a necessary sign of salvation. The denomination's strict Holiness code requires women to wear head coverings during worship and does not ordain women as ministers. The denomination's earliest growth was in the Southwest, but it has expanded to include missions to Mexico and Latin America. The denomination emphasizes ministry to immigrants and their descendents and remains a bilingual denomination. With headquarters in Rancho Cucamonga, California, the denomination practices an episcopal polity with a president and board of directors. District bishops make up an "Episcopal Body." Smaller U.S. Latina/o denominations include the Spanish Christian Church on the East Coast and Latin American Council of Christian Churches in Texas.

The Church of God Movement

The oldest predominately white Pentecostal denomination is the Church of God with offices in Cleveland, Tennessee. It is often denoted "Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee)" to distinguish it from the non-Pentecostal Holiness denomination by the same name in Anderson, Indiana. The first Pentecostal Church of God congregation was established on August 19, 1886, in Monroe County, Tennessee, as the Christian Union. Baptist ministers Richard Green Spurling

(1857–1935) and his father Richard Spurling (1810–1891) rejected the exclusivity of the Landmark Baptist movement that dominated life in their region. Seeing themselves as a reformation of Protestantism, they desired a church based on the New Testament rather than "man-made creeds and traditions," in which individuals had "equal rights and privilege" to interpret the New Testament.

The younger Spurling planted several congregations and fellowshipped with a Holiness band led by William Franklin Bryant (1863–1949) in nearby Camp Creek, North Carolina. Bryant's group had been expelled from its Baptist churches following an 1896 Holiness revival. Speaking in tongues and healings were among their spiritual experiences, although they did not yet have a Pentecostal doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Spurling and Robert Frank Porter (1879–1944) organized Bryant's band in 1902 using the name Holiness Church. When the Quaker home missionary Ambrose Jessup Tomlinson (1865–1943) joined in 1903, they gained an extraordinary administrator who led them to international expansion. The Church of God fully embraced a Pentecostal theology in 1908.

Although the denomination's earliest structure was congregational, an assembly in 1906 led to the development of "centralized government," in which ministers and members of local congregations meet in a biennial international general assembly to set doctrine and practice. Tomlinson became the first general overseer in 1909 and promoted theocratic government, by which he meant God governed through the general assembly and the office of general overseer. Eventually the General Assembly established an international executive committee to oversee ministry departments that are advised by an international executive council. In the United States the denomination is divided into state or regional territories with administrative bishops. The Church of God authorizes women to preach and pastor, but excludes them from the office of bishop. The denomination's magazine, *Church of God Evangel*, began in 1910. Lee University opened as Bible Training School in 1919; the Pentecostal Theological Seminary began in 1975; and Patten University, established in 1944 by evangelist Bebe Patten, became an affiliate university in 1997.

The international memberships of many Pentecostal denominations eclipse their numbers in the United States. The first international ministry of the Church of God occurred in 1909, when Edmond and Rebecca Barr returned to their native Bahamas from Florida. By 2009 the Church of God reported 1.1 million members in almost 7,000

churches in the United States and Canada and a global total of 6.8 million members in 181 countries and territories. Strategic amalgamations with established denominations in nations such as South Africa, Romania, and Indonesia contributed to this growth. By the end of the twentieth century congregations outside North America had become a mission force sending missionaries to the United States, especially to immigrant populations.

The Church of God is strongest in the Southeast. Expansion among African Americans became especially difficult with the passage of Jim Crow laws in the early twentieth century, so black leaders requested a parallel structure in 1926. This resulted in the Church of God Colored Work until reintegration in 1966.

From its beginning the Church of God considered creeds divisive and inferior statements of biblical truth. Distinct from a creed, the denomination adopted a simple list of “Teachings” with biblical references in 1911. Along with classical Protestant beliefs these included sanctification, holiness, baptism with the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues, spiritual gifts, signs following believers, washing the saint’s feet, and common Holiness lifestyle commitments, such as abstinence from alcohol and tobacco as well a prohibition of jewelry and ornate decoration. Like many Pentecostals, a large number of the church’s early members were pacifists.

Over the years the church’s stance on some issues has shifted as the denomination matured. For example, the denomination adopted a literal reading of Mark 16:16–17 regarding “signs following believers.” When ministers preached from the Markan text about speaking in tongues and healing, detractors tested them by bringing snakes to worship services. In many cases ministers and members handled the snakes rather than shrinking from the challenge. By the late 1920s leadership had discouraged this practice, however. Contemporary groups that collect and handle snakes are not related to the Church of God. By 1948 controversy over the nature of sanctification led to the adoption of a creedal Declaration of Faith, and in 1988 the general assembly revised the teachings to focus on positive commitments, such as to the sanctity of life. Although the Church of God will support an individual’s rights as a conscientious objector, the denomination has an active ministry to military personnel.

Disputes about the nature of the church and church government have led to divisions in the Church of God and the resulting splinter denominations. The most significant division came in 1923 when the denomination excluded

General Overseer Tomlinson amid charges and counter-charges about church government and financial management. Tomlinson insisted that the general assembly had abandoned theocratic government, and he went on to establish what later became known as the Church of God of Prophecy. The new denomination taught an accentuated view of their movement as the bride of Christ. This view was constructed into the development of the biblical park, Fields of the Wood near Murphy, North Carolina. Other developments included the adoption of a church flag in 1933 and an emphasis on the airplane as a tool for spreading the gospel. Tomlinson stressed being a racially inclusive church with both Latino/a and black leadership in North America. His son Milton (1906–1995) succeeded him at his death in 1943 and served as general overseer until 1990. A succession of nonfamily members as general overseers has brought about a decline in the isolationism and exclusivity of the denomination.

By the early twenty-first century there was considerable cooperation between the Church of God and Church of God of Prophecy. Yet the theological yearning to restore God’s church has led to further divisions when some stress particular persons or doctrines. In 1917 Joseph L. Scott organized the (Original) Church of God in Chattanooga, Tennessee, arguing that the larger body had abandoned earlier doctrines and practices, especially when teaching tithing. In 1943 A. J. Tomlinson’s son Homer (1892–1968) claimed to be his father’s rightful successor. When his claim was rejected, he established the Church of God, with initial offices in Queens, New York. Homer was one of the most colorful leaders of a Pentecostal denomination and on four occasions ran for president of the United States on the Theocratic Party ticket. Grady Kent promoted the office of general overseer over the general assembly and separated from the Church of God of Prophecy in 1957 to found the Church of God (Jerusalem Acres), which embraced Jewish customs including feast days and Saturday worship. Robert Pruitt led the Church of God (Charleston, Tennessee) schism in 1993, claiming the Church of God of Prophecy had abandoned theocratic government. Wade H. Phillips left the Church of God of Prophecy in 2004 and organized Zion Assembly Church of God with an emphasis on the church representing God’s government on earth.

Other Holiness Pentecostal Denominations

A parallel denomination to the Church of God is the Church of God Mountain Assembly, with headquarters in

Jellico, Tennessee. This group also began among Baptists who had accepted the Holiness doctrine of sanctification. In 1902 the South Union Association of the United Baptist Church in southern Kentucky called for the exclusion of ministers who preached sanctification and the possibility of backsliding. On August 24, 1907, excluded ministers met together to form a new association and held their first annual assembly that October. They called themselves Church of God but added Mountain Assembly to their name in 1911 to distinguish themselves from the Cleveland, Tennessee, group. The Mountain Assembly built a tabernacle in Jellico for its annual general assemblies.

The International Pentecostal Holiness Church is the result of a merger of three denominations. Benjamin Hardin Irwin (1854–?) founded the Iowa Fire-Baptized Holiness Association in Olmitz, Iowa, in 1895. A lawyer turned Baptist minister, Irwin had joined the Iowa Holiness Association and eventually the Wesleyan Methodist Church. He also began seeking what Wesley's associate John Fletcher had called a "baptism of burning love." Irwin believed this baptism would follow sanctification, and he called this "third blessing" a "baptism of fire." Irwin's third blessing, along with a strict Holiness code that included a ban on pork and neckties, set him apart. In August 1898 he organized a national Fire-Baptized Holiness Association in Anderson, South Carolina. This organization included followers in eight states and two provinces of Canada and published *Live Coals of Fire*. Irwin resigned as general overseer in 1900 after a confession of sin, and Joseph Hillery King (1869–1946) became general overseer.

Methodist Minister Ambrose Blackman Crumpler (1863–1952) organized the North Carolina Holiness Association in 1897. He established local congregations including one in Goldsboro, North Carolina, which was the first congregation to use the name Pentecostal Holiness Church. Crumpler also published *The Holiness Advocate*. Attempting to silence Holiness preachers, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, brought Crumpler to trial in 1899 for preaching without the permission of the local pastor. Crumpler left the Methodist Church and organized the Pentecostal Holiness Church of North Carolina.

Presbyterian Nickles John Holmes (1847–1919) organized the Tabernacle Pentecostal Church in South Carolina. Holmes had left the Presbyterian Church in 1898 after adopting the Holiness view of sanctification. He formed a network of congregations and the Holmes Bible and Missionary Institute in Greenville, South Carolina. Later known as Holmes

School of the Bible, the college is reported to be the oldest Pentecostal educational institution.

These three denominations radically changed when Gaston Barnabas Cashwell (1862–1916), a minister in the Pentecostal Holiness Church of North Carolina, returned from Los Angeles preaching the Pentecostal message. Beginning in January 1907 with a month-long meeting in Dunn, North Carolina, Cashwell quickly spread the Pentecostal message throughout the southern United States.

In 1911 the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church and the Pentecostal Holiness Church of North Carolina merged to become the Pentecostal Holiness Church. The Tabernacle Presbyterian Church joined them in 1915. The denomination changed its name to the International Pentecostal Holiness Church in 1975. Although heavily influenced by Methodist roots, they adopted a modified congregational form of government.

Among their most important early leaders was George Floyd Taylor (1881–1934), who was elected general superintendent in 1913. Taylor founded the Franklin Springs Institute, which became Emmanuel University, published the *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*, and established Advocate Press (later LifeSprings Resources). The *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* was discontinued in 1996, with the denomination publishing *IssacharFile* from 1997 to 2003 and initiating *IPHC Experience* in 2004.

Along with Emmanuel University, educational institutions include Southwestern Christian University (1946) and Advantage College (founded in 1974 as Pacific Coast Bible College), which features nontraditional education. Holmes School of the Bible never became an official Pentecostal Holiness Church institution but continues to attract members as students, faculty, and staff. One of the best-known favorite sons of the Pentecostal Holiness Church was Oral Roberts (1918–2009). Roberts became an internationally known healing evangelist following World War II and established Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1965. But Roberts left the denomination in 1968 to join the United Methodist Church, remaining a Methodist until 1987.

In 2007 the International Pentecostal Holiness Church reported almost 258,000 members in 2,010 churches in the United States. Outside the United States the denomination participates in the World Pentecostal Holiness Fellowship and has international ties with more than three million members. The Pentecostal Holiness Church of Canada remained part of the U.S. denomination until 1971 when it gained its own charter. Other affiliate groups include the

Methodist Pentecostal Church of Chili, the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Brazil, and the Togo Pentecostal Church. Within North America the International Pentecostal Holiness Church has an affiliate relationship with the United Holy Church, the Congregational Holiness Church, and the Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church.

The Congregational Holiness Church was founded in 1921, when Watson Sorrow and Hugh Bowling rejected the International Pentecostal Holiness Church's prohibition of medicine. Most early Pentecostals opposed doctors and medicine. They suspected the medical profession as a whole, they believed in divine healing, and few could afford the luxury of doctors and medicines. Sorrow and Bowling were open to the use of medicine along with prayer, however. In 2005 the Congregational Holiness Church reported 25,000 members in 225 churches, with headquarters in Griffin, Georgia.

The Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church formed out of the Cape Fear Conference of the Free Will Baptist Church in North Carolina. Toward the end of the nineteenth century the Cape Fear Conference of Free Will Baptists accepted the Holiness movement's doctrine of sanctification. They came into the Pentecostal movement in 1907, when Cashwell brought the Pentecostal message to Dunn, North Carolina. The Wilmington, New River, and South Carolina conferences of Free Will Baptists also became Pentecostal. In 1943 all but the New River conference united into a general conference. These conferences completely merged in 1959 using the name Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church. With headquarters in Dunn, they publish *The Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Messenger* and operate Heritage Bible College.

Concerns about growing segregation led to division among the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church members in 1908, before merger with the Pentecostal Holiness Church of North Carolina. Irwin ordained African American William E. Fuller Sr. at the 1898 organizational meeting in Anderson, South Carolina. Fuller established Fire-Baptized Holiness churches in South Carolina and Georgia and served as assistant general overseer from 1900 to 1905. He withdrew from the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church in 1908 and organized the Colored Fire-Baptized Holiness Church in Greer, South Carolina. The new denomination began publishing *The True Witness* in 1909, and changed its name to Fire-Baptized Holiness Church of God of the Americas in 1926. This denomination has an episcopal polity with a quadrennial council and annual conventions. The school and offices are located in Greenville, South Carolina.

The Assemblies of God

The Assemblies of God is the largest predominately white Pentecostal denomination in the United States. Each local church is an assembly, and the governmental structure is known as the General Council of the Assemblies of God. The denomination developed when about 300 "workers" and ministers came together in Hot Springs, Arkansas, April 2 to April 12, 1914. In 2007 the denomination reported 1.7 million members with 2.8 million adherents in more than 12,000 churches in the United States. The Assemblies of God (USA) is a member of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, which reported more than 60 million constituents in 212 countries and territories. These global statistics include the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada received its charter in 1919, publishes *Testimony*, and reported 232,000 adherents in just over 1,100 congregations in 2007. The Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland and Labrador began in 1911 and was incorporated in 1925. In 2004 it reported 26,400 adherents in 128 churches.

Many of those who met in Hot Springs were independent ministers wary of denominations. Some had been excluded from other denominations because of their Pentecostal experience, so they distrusted denominational authority—fearful that a denomination might attempt to control ministries or impede the Holy Spirit. Yet they saw a need for limited organization to guard against false doctrine, credential ministers, facilitate legal benefits, enable fellowship, and promote ministries such as education and world evangelism. Networks had already begun to form among these ministers, including the Church of God in Christ and in unity with the Apostolic Faith Movement.

Many of the Hot Springs delegates were from Reformed traditions that differed theologically from the Holiness movement. Their understanding of sanctification was influenced by the Higher Christian Life teachings of the English Keswick conferences. Although they held to a Holiness lifestyle code, they rejected the doctrine of sanctification as a second work of grace. Most followed the theology of William H. Durham (1873–1912), a prominent Chicago pastor who argued that the sanctifying work of Christ was finished with Jesus' death on the cross. Durham's "Finished Work" theology created a significant chasm in the Pentecostal theological landscape.

Despite misgivings about becoming a denomination, the Hot Springs General Council elected officers, recognized

publications and schools, established a headquarters, and incorporated. The council elected Eudorus Neander Bell (1866–1923) as chairman (later called general superintendent) and Joseph Roswell Flower (1888–1970) as secretary-treasurer. They also selected an executive presbytery to act between meetings of the general council. The delegates recognized Bell's *Word and Witness* as their official periodical, along with Flower's *Christian Evangel* as an approved weekly. Rueben Benjamin Chisolm's Neshoba Holiness School near Union, Mississippi, and Thomas King Leonard's Gospel School in Findlay, Ohio, garnered their approval as educational institutions. The Findlay school also served as headquarters and publishing plant. Over time the governmental structure added a general presbytery and district councils. National offices and printing moved first to St. Louis and finally relocated to Springfield, Missouri. The two periodicals evolved into the *Pentecostal Evangel*. By 2007 the Assemblies of God reported nineteen educational institutions in the United States. Among these, Evangel University was established as an arts and sciences college in 1955, and the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary began in 1973. Both are located in Springfield along with Global University, which provides distance education. Also in Springfield is the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, which is the world's largest Pentecostal archives.

The Assemblies of God's combination of congregationalism with Presbyterianism has fostered the development of creative and entrepreneurial ministries resulting in rapid growth and diversity. These factors also provide challenges in maintaining ministerial accountability and theological unity. Defections of those seeking independence have been common, as in many denominations in the twenty-first century. Ministers such as Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart have been involved in public scandals. In the 1940s the denomination was deeply divided by a movement opponents labeled "New Order of the Latter Rain," which emphasized the impartation of gifts by the laying on of hands along with the contemporary ministry of prophets and apostles. Ongoing conversations about the role of tongues speech abound.

Oneness Pentecostalism

One of their earliest examples of theological conflict was the emergence of Oneness Pentecostalism. Shortly after the formation of the Assemblies of God, the denomination's reticence to speak authoritatively about doctrine was severely tested and quickly abandoned. Pentecostal denominations are part of the Protestant theological tradition, and most view

water baptism and the Lord's Supper as ordinances commanded by Jesus. Many also practice foot washing after Jesus' example in John 13. Central to Pentecostal theology is the conviction that Spirit baptism leads to an emphasis on the person and work of Jesus.

Some denominations radically stress the name of Jesus, however. These frequently name themselves "Apostolic" to bolster their claim that they are restoring a New Testament doctrine. Often called Oneness Pentecostalism, this theological minority developed out of a 1913 revival near Los Angeles, when R. E. McAlister suggested that the apostles were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as directed by Peter in Acts 2:38. Soon some Pentecostals were re-baptizing each other in the name of Jesus. Sometimes referred to as "Jesus Only," they stress that the one God's name is Jesus, and that God works in the modes of Father, Son, and Spirit. This "New Issue" quickly divided Assemblies of God ministers. Their fourth general council in 1916 drafted a trinitarian seventeen-point "Statement of Fundamental Truths" to which all ministers had to consent.

Barred from the Assemblies of God, Oneness ministers met in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, in December 1916 and organized the General Assembly of Apostolic Assemblies. When they discovered they lacked legal standing to claim exemption from military service, they merged with the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World in 1918. The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World had begun in Los Angeles in 1907. Under the later influence of the black Indianapolis pastor and songwriter Garfield Thomas Haywood (1880–1931), the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World grew quickly, especially in northern states among black Pentecostals. In 1925 the denomination reorganized with an episcopal polity, and Haywood was elected as presiding bishop. The denomination publishes *The Christian Outlook* and in 2006 reported 1,500,000 members (likely a global total).

Despite efforts to be racially inclusive, in 1924 the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World divided under the pressures of racial and regional challenges. Most white ministers withdrew and organized into three primarily regional bodies. The two largest denominations merged in 1941, eventually adopting the name United Pentecostal Church International. With headquarters in Hazelwood, Missouri, this organization publishes the *Pentecostal Herald*, operates several regional bible schools, and sponsors Urshan Graduate School of Theology. Although its position on sanctification is finished work, members remain heavily influenced by the U.S. Holiness movement and adhere to a strict lifestyle code. Officially

the denomination does not allow female members to cut their hair or ministers to own televisions. The denomination reported 646,000 members in 2006.

Younger Denominations

When the Assemblies of God adopted its Statement of Fundamental Truths, some who had been wary of denominational control left and established the Pentecostal Assemblies of the USA in 1919. After several name changes it became the Pentecostal Church of God. John Chalmers Sinclair (1863–1936), an original member of the Assemblies of God's executive presbytery, served as the general bishop. Over time the denomination has acknowledged the need for cooperative ministries and developed a structure with a general council and ministry departments. With headquarters in Joplin, Missouri, the denomination publishes the *Pentecostal Messenger* and operates Messenger College. In 2007 the denomination reported 88,000 constituents in the United States.

The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel grew out of the ministry of Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944), a former Assemblies of God minister. Affectionately known as “Sister,” McPherson was born in Igersoll, Ontario, Canada. Her parents were Methodist and Salvation Army, but she became Pentecostal under the evangelistic ministry of Robert Semple. She soon married Robert, and they ministered in Chicago with William H. Durham, father of the finished work doctrine. While they were serving as missionaries in China in 1910, Robert died, and Aimee returned home with an infant daughter.

A vibrant and flamboyant preacher, McPherson began an evangelistic career in 1915 that included meetings in tents and major auditoriums across the United States. Her ministry expanded with the publication of *The Bridal Call* (later renamed *The Foursquare Advance*) in 1917. An emphasis on the Foursquare Gospel emerged out of her preaching from Ezekiel 1:4–10, where she related Ezekiel's four-faced cherubim to Jesus' ministry as “Savior,” “Baptizer with the Holy Spirit,” “Physician and Healer,” and “Coming King.”

McPherson relocated to Los Angeles, established the Echo Park Evangelistic Association, and built the 5,300 seat Angeles Temple. Dedicated on January 1, 1924, the worship center was often filled three times a day, seven days a week, with McPherson preaching many of the sermons. The Lighthouse of International Foursquare Evangelism (LIFE) Bible College sent out students who planted branch congregations. McPherson preached her first sermon on radio in 1922 and is said to be the first woman to preach on the medium and

the first woman to operate a radio station. Convinced of radio's potential she applied for a broadcast license and opened KFSG (Kall Four Square Gospel) in 1924. The radio broadened her national appeal. Locally her ministry stressed care for the poor, and during the Great Depression the Angeles Temple commissary distributed 1.5 million meals.

The ministry incorporated in 1927 with McPherson serving as president until her death in 1944. The ministry's national government includes a president assisted by a team of vice presidents, board of directors, and district supervisors. The movement is particularly strong in the western states. In 2006 the denomination reported 255,000 members in the United States in 1,875 churches. By 2009 the denomination reported 8.4 million members in 144 countries and territories. In compliance with Canadian law, congregations in Canada are registered as the Foursquare Gospel Church of Canada with their own constitutions. The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel actively promotes women in ministry, and husband and wife co-pastors serve many congregations.

Also strong in the west, Open Bible Churches are the result of the merger of two denominations. Fred Hornshuh organized the Bible Standard Conference in 1919 with ministers concerned about the exclusivity and rigid control of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Portland, Oregon. These ministers established Eugene Bible College in Eugene, Oregon, and published *Bible Standard*. In the Midwest several International Church of the Foursquare Gospel ministers withdrew after the divorced McPherson remarried in 1931. They were also unhappy that the denomination held all church properties and formed the Open Bible Evangelistic Association in 1932. These two denominations came together as the Open Bible Standard Evangelistic Association in 1935, later shortened to Open Bible Churches. With headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa, the denomination publishes *Message of the Open Bible*, reported 45,000 members in 2007, practices congregational government with a biennial national convention, and is divided into five regions.

Conclusion

In the early twenty-first century, Pentecostal denominations continued to grow, although much more slowly than in the twentieth century. Much of their growth has been among immigrants, particularly Latino/a populations where commitment to Spirit empowered and enthusiastic forms of worship remain. Pentecostal styles of worship continually influence non-Pentecostal denominations especially regarding music. At the same time some Pentecostal denominations

seem to be minimizing their distinctive and traditional practices. They are less characterized by a strict Holiness lifestyle, more inclusive theologically, and less concerned with denominational labels.

Pentecostal denominations also face the challenge of an increasingly urban and diverse United States. Although denominations previously developed by planting congregations in numerous small towns, today's constituents often prefer the range of ministries provided in the megachurch or the intimacy of the house church.

See also *Camp Meetings*; *Canada: Pluralism*; *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements*; *Education: Colleges and Universities*; *Glossolalia*; *Healing*; *Holiness Denominational Family*; *Holiness Movement*; *House Church Movement*; *Latino American Religion: Pentecostals*; *Music: Coritos/Spanish-Language*; *Pentecostals*; *Pentecostals: African American*; *Serpent Handlers*.

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Pentecostals

Pentecostalism is a movement of spiritual renewal emerging in early twentieth-century America from the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Wesleyan and Holiness revivals. Although the catalyst for the movement was undoubtedly the 1906 Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, California, similar revivals were emerging in other parts of the world (Wales, India, Chile, and Korea) nearly simultaneously. The Pentecostal movement became global from 1906 onward and within one hundred years was, along with the related Charismatic and neo-Pentecostal groups, widely acknowledged as the fastest-growing movement in Christendom. By the first decade of the twenty-first century, it had an estimated 500 million adherents worldwide, 25 percent of all Christians. In the United States, as in other parts of the world, Pentecostals are noted for their vibrant worship services, marked by lively music and preaching, charismatic manifestations, such as speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) and prophetic speech, and for their belief in miracles, including healing.

Key Concepts

Pentecostals are Christians who believe that the infilling or baptism in or with the Holy Spirit (Spirit baptism, Holy Ghost baptism) is an experience subsequent to regeneration. Wesleyan-Pentecostals believe that Spirit baptism is subsequent to *sanctification*, a second work of grace in the life of the believer. Finished Work Pentecostals believe that regeneration and sanctification are a part of the initial conversion experience and are followed by the experience of Spirit baptism. Oneness Pentecostals or Jesus' Name Pentecostals have a non-trinitarian theology, maintaining that the Father, Son, and Spirit are all modes of the one God whose name is Jesus and that baptism is salvific and must be performed in the name of Jesus. Oneness Pentecostals also use the term *apostolic*, maintaining that their theology and practice is congruent with that of the apostles. Classical Pentecostals (including Wesleyan-Pentecostals, Finished Work Pentecostals, and Oneness Pentecostals) are those who can trace their origins, doctrine, or spirituality to the Pentecostal revival of the beginning of the twentieth century. Most classical Pentecostals believe that speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence of Spirit baptism.

Biblical Foundations

Pentecostalism understands its scriptural warrant to be found in the life of the apostolic church as evidenced in the book

of Acts. The experiences of Spirit-empowerment as described in Acts are understood to be normative of the Christian life. To be filled with the Spirit is understood as a command of Jesus and a promise of the Father. Like those who tarried in prayer awaiting the descent of the Spirit, Pentecostals understand that each believer is to likewise tarry, or wait, for empowerment by the Spirit. Every church should be a Spirit-empowered community of believers replicating the experience of the church in Acts. The miracles that marked the ministries of the apostles are to mark the ministries of those filled by the Spirit.

Following the interpretation of Peter in Acts 2, this outpouring on the church is understood to be a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2: the Spirit will be poured out on all flesh, male and female, young and old, slave and free. Again, following Peter's interpretation, Pentecostals believe this is a promise in perpetuity, for all generations to come. Continuing with this appropriation of the Joel prophecy, Pentecostals adopted his references to the former and latter rains (Joel 2:23) as descriptive of this new outpouring of the Spirit. The latter rain has now been poured out in the Pentecostal movement itself.

Pentecostals interpreted the New Testament Day of Pentecost event in light of the Old Testament feast of Pentecost or Feast of Tabernacles. This feast, as discussed in Deuteronomy 16, was a celebration of the first fruits of the harvest. The significance of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was that it signified a beginning of the full harvest, when they would experience all of the fullness of God. Until that day, they would continue to bring in the harvest.

Pentecostals built a doctrine of tongues as the "Bible sign," later "initial evidence," built on the instances described in Acts 2:4, 10:45–46, and 19:6. In each of these instances, it is said that those who are filled with the Spirit, or on whom the Spirit was poured out, spoke in other tongues.

As important as the Acts narrative were the words of Jesus to his followers as recorded in the so-called longer ending of Mark, found in Mark 16:9–20. Of particular importance in early (and later) Pentecostalism is the commission of verses 15–18. Pentecostals seized on the language of "signs following believers," specifically speaking in tongues, laying hands on the sick, and casting out demons. More debated was the meaning of the other signs, such as drinking deadly poison and taking up serpents.

American Roots

Donald Dayton has shown that Pentecostal terminology, such as *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* and *Pentecost* had already

been used by the British Methodist John Fletcher (1729–1785) in the Wesleyan revival of the eighteenth century to describe the experience of sanctification. This hermeneutic was adopted by Holiness preachers in America, who were readers of Fletcher's works. More recently, Laurence W. Wood has shown the use of such language may be traced back to Wesley. More specifically, D. William Faupel has shown that the Pentecostal revival was anticipated in the revivals of the nineteenth century and particularly in the period of optimism just before the American Civil War, when Holiness revivalists began emphasizing not only Wesley's concepts of entire sanctification but also a postmillennial vision in which the whole church would be sanctified. This revival, it was believed, would result in a moral change in society. In 1856 William Arthur (1819–1901) published *The Tongue of Fire*, calling for an infusion of Pentecostal power so that a worldwide revival could occur, ushering in the millennium. The beginnings of what promised to be such a revival came in 1857 and 1858, when Holiness advocate Phoebe Worall Palmer (1807–1874) began conducting meetings, first in Hamilton, Ontario, which contributed to an ethos of revival known as The Third Great Awakening or the Layman's Prayer Revival. Palmer, wife of Dr. Walter C. Palmer (1804–1883), and her sister Sarah Worall Lankford (1806–1896) had been promoting the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification and the "Higher Life," through their "Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness" and publications such as her *Guide to Holiness*. This revival ethos spread throughout North America, especially in the urban north of the United States. What marked these meetings, in addition to a high level of millennial expectation, was a unity transcending denominational lines. The revival wave quickly spread to the British Isles and to Sweden and Australia.

The despair of the post-Civil War period in America, however, caused Holiness adherents to rethink their eschatology, shifting from a postmillennial optimism to a more pessimistic premillennialism anticipating the soon return of Christ. This shift was informed by both the claims of William Miller's (1782–1849) millenarianism, whose predictions of Christ's return in 1844 were proven false, and the subsequent reinterpretation by John Nelson Darby (1801–1882). This new form of premillennialism, dispensationalism, took its name from its view that the Bible revealed a scheme that divides history into a series of distinct chronological dispensations, associated with various covenants making a careful demarcation between Israel and the church. Dispensationalism became a dominant eschatological view in American evangelicalism.

The late nineteenth century also saw the birth of the divine healing movement and the articulation of a belief in healing provided in the atonement. Beginning with the work of Dr. Charles E. Cullis (1833–1892) in Boston, the theology of divine healing and the practice of prayer for the sick, especially in accordance with James 5:14, became a major component of the Holiness movement in America. By the end of the century, prominent evangelical and Holiness preachers, such as A. B. Simpson (1843–1919), A. J. Gordon (1836–1895), and Carrie Judd Montgomery (1858–1946), were advocating anointing with oil and prayer for the sick in churches, conferences, and camp meetings. In addition, these advocates established healing homes, modeled after similar homes in Europe, nationwide. It is estimated that by 1887 there were thirty such homes in the United States.

In addition to Simpson's Fourfold Gospel (Jesus is Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King), other Holiness evangelists began preaching that there could be further transformative crisis-experiences in the Spirit beyond that of entire sanctification or Spirit baptism. One such preacher was Benjamin H. Irwin (1854–?), founder of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Association, a group that began in the Midwest but quickly spread throughout the Southeast. Irwin's teachings had some influence during the formative years of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee). Tracing its roots to the formation of the Christian Union in Barney Creek, North Carolina, in 1886, and the 1896 Holiness revival in Cherokee County, North Carolina, those leaders—who later formed the Holiness Church at Camp Creek (Cherokee County, North Carolina) in 1902 (later the Church of God)—undoubtedly came under the influence of Irwin's school in Beniah, Tennessee. The Pentecostal Holiness Church, organized in 1898 during the Holiness Revival in Goldsboro, North Carolina, later merged with the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church in 1911, no longer under the leadership of Irwin, retaining the name Pentecostal Holiness Church.

At this time, another Midwestern evangelist, Charles F. Parham (1873–1929), under the influence of Frank W. Sandford (1862–1948) of Durham, Maine, began reexamining the book of Acts with a worldwide missionary movement and accompanying revival in view. This reading led Parham to begin advocating a Pentecostal outpouring marked by the phenomena described in Acts, especially speaking in tongues. It was this particular phenomenon that Parham understood to be the Bible sign of being baptized in the Spirit. Though many revival movements had witnessed these and similar phenomena, Parham interpreted the tongues of Acts as *xenolalia*

(missionary tongues), the ability to speak languages of the nations previously unknown to the speaker. It was this ability that would allow for a great missionary movement. On January 1, 1901, Agnes Ozman (1870–1937), a student at Parham's Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, reportedly spoke in tongues according to Acts 2:4. In 1905 Parham moved his Apostolic Faith headquarters and opened a similar school in Houston, Texas. Members of the African American community in Houston apparently came in contact with Parham's teaching.

Lucy Farrow (1851–1911), a former slave, pastor of a Holiness church in Houston and employee of the Parham family, introduced William J. Seymour (1870–1922) to Parham and his teaching. Seymour, a son of former slaves, was a native of Centerville, Louisiana, and had been raised in a Baptist church but, through his travels in Indiana and Ohio, had been converted to Holiness doctrine. Farrow, while traveling with the Parham family as Parham expanded his evangelistic ministry, experienced Spirit baptism with the Bible sign. Following his appointment as pastor of Farrow's church in her absence, Seymour, too, became convinced of Parham's interpretation of the book of Acts. Because of Jim Crow laws in the South and because of Parham's adherence to British-Israel theory (the belief that western Europeans are the descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel), Seymour was not allowed to sit in the classroom of Parham's school or with white worshipers in Parham's evangelistic meetings but was allowed to listen in through the window. Despite this obvious discrimination, Seymour became a disciple of Parham's doctrine of Spirit baptism with the Bible sign or Bible evidence.

Azusa Street Revival as a Catalyst

Early in 1906 Seymour accepted an invitation by Julia Hutchins (1860–?), a pastor in Los Angeles, to move to California and become pastor of the mission she had founded there. Hutchins had a desire to go to Liberia as a missionary. Seymour began preaching in Los Angeles on February 24, 1906. In the first few sermons he apparently preached on regeneration, sanctification, divine healing, and Spirit baptism with the accompanying manifestation of tongues. In short time Hutchins rejected Seymour's preaching of a third blessing, specifically baptism in the Spirit with Bible evidence of tongues, though apparently she later embraced it. This was followed by a rejection by the Holiness Church Association in Los Angeles.

Seemingly undeterred, Seymour moved in with a couple from Hutchins' congregation, Mattie (no dates) and Edward S. (1859–?) Lee. The Lees, along with Seymour and others

from Hutchins' church as well as Frank J. Bartleman (1871–1936), a white evangelist, began praying together regularly. Outgrowing the home of the Lees, in March, the group moved to the home of Richard (1859–1936) and Ruth (c. 1856–1934) Asberry on 241 North Bonnie Brae. The meeting grew with other African American friends and acquaintances joining, as well as Bartleman and other local white Holiness adherents and leaders regularly attending the prayer meetings. On April 9, at the Lee home, Seymour and the recently arrived Lucy Farrow, laid hands on Edward Lee to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Lee immediately spoke in tongues, falling to the floor. They walked to the Asberry home, began the prayer meeting with a song and Seymour's exposition of Acts 2:4, and several others were baptized in the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. News quickly spread throughout the Los Angeles Holiness community and the Asberry home became crowded with seekers. On April 12, Seymour himself was baptized in the Spirit.

As a result of the revival, the Asberry home soon became too small for the dozens who were crowding it. The meeting moved outside and then to a large building at 312 Azusa Street, a former African Methodist Episcopal church, but more recently a livery stable. The racially mixed group began to clean up the old building so that services could be held on Easter Sunday, April 14. By April 17, news of the revival at 312 Azusa Street, now called the Apostolic Faith Mission, was reported in the *Los Angeles Daily Times*. The report covered a Tuesday evening service and appeared under the headline "Weird Babel of Tongues." Lampooned in the papers were not only the manifestations of tongues but also the interracial nature of the meeting.

The Azusa Street revival lasted for approximately three years and by the end of that period similar Pentecostal meetings were being held in Europe, Asia, South America and Africa, as well as all over the rest of North America. Through its monthly periodical, *The Apostolic Faith*, with a circulation of up to forty thousand by 1907, testimonies, news of the revival, and missionary reports, as well as doctrinal discourses and sermons were disseminated throughout the world. In addition, scores of those who attended the revival over the years left to carry the message and experience to other parts of the United States and the rest of the world. From Azusa, missionaries—some trained in Holiness missionary schools, others untrained—traveled to China, India, Japan, Egypt, Liberia, Angola, and South Africa. This model, which included revival meetings, publishing, and sending, was replicated in other parts of the United States and Canada. Centers of

Pentecostalism would soon be founded in Chicago, Illinois; Portland, Oregon; Oakland, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Memphis and Cleveland, Tennessee; Indianapolis, Indiana; Falcon, North Carolina; Rochester, New York; Dallas, Texas; Providence, Rhode Island; and Toronto, Ontario. Bible schools were established as well as benevolence endeavors such as orphanages, feeding and clothing ministries, homes for indigents, and even rehabilitation programs for alcoholics. In some places, camp meetings, schools and orphanages, and even entire denominations established during the Holiness revivals were swept into the Pentecostal movement; in other places, entirely new organizations emerged. Within a decade, denominations with a decidedly Pentecostal doctrinal commitment were forming, though other churches chose to remain independent or only loosely associated with other similar bodies.

Theological Shifts

As the movement spread, the doctrine was quickly codified. Although many of the earliest adherents would have considered themselves anticeedal, statements of faith did in fact emerge. The earliest Pentecostal adherents sat firmly in the Wesleyan–Holiness camp, advocating an experience of sanctification subsequent to conversion. Some Pentecostal centers, Azusa being the prominent example, published doctrinal statements from the beginning. In the inaugural September 1906 issue of *The Apostolic Faith*, a statement of faith is found that includes statements about justification, sanctification, healing, and Spirit baptism accompanied by evidentiary tongues. Similarly, the Pentecostal Holiness Church, then primarily in the Southeastern United States, produced a statement that included the three-stage view—justification/regeneration, sanctification, Spirit baptism. It, too, advocated speaking in tongues as evidentiary, using the term *initial evidence*.

Other groups and emerging denominations began to develop what amounted to rules of faith, whether written or unwritten, as issues and crises emerged. These issues sometimes involved controversy but at other times were simply answers to questions raised about training members or ministers in the faith. Some of the earliest of these statements, or lists, were developed as a way of testing orthodoxy. The earliest statement that may be called a doctrinal statement in the Church of God was published in the August 15, 1910 edition of the *Evangel*, a list of "the teaching that is made prominent." A committee had been appointed at the 1909 Church of God General Assembly with the purpose of composing a list

of beliefs. These teachings were to be used in qualifying ministerial candidates. Included in the extensive list are tenets clearly distinguishing the group as Wesleyan-Pentecostal. A similar list is found in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, a Pentecostal periodical published in Atlanta, Georgia. In June 1908, M. M. Pinson (1873–1953) warns that only those ministers who subscribed to the doctrines of repentance, faith, regeneration, sanctification, Spirit baptism (with Bible evidence), and premillennialism should be endorsed by Pentecostals.

Early Pentecostals tended to view initial conversion (regeneration and justification) and the second experience (sanctification) as works of grace. To distinguish the second work from the subsequent experience of Spirit baptism, they often articulated an explanation that included a claim that sanctification was the last work of grace, implying that Spirit baptism was not such a work. This polemic was meant to distinguish the newly developed doctrine of Spirit baptism from that of their Holiness predecessors who used the terms *sanctification* and *Spirit baptism* interchangeably. Pentecostals carefully defended Spirit baptism as “power for witness upon a sanctified life” (*The Apostolic Faith*) or “subsequent to” the experience of sanctification.

The first notable reworking of Pentecostal doctrine clearly came as a result of experience. Those following Parham had taught that *glossolalia* would be missionary tongues (*xenolalia*). Though some evidence in the testimonies of those in the early movement indicates a belief that they had been given a particular language to serve a particular people group, this view was rarely articulated in doctrinal formulation. There were apparently those who followed their inclination and traveled to a foreign land in anticipation of being able to communicate the gospel in the dialect of the people, only to find that they would have to learn the language through study. The vast majority, however, did not attempt this kind of foreign missionary activity. It is clear that the majority in the United States who were a part of the movement understood that speaking in unknown tongues was a “sign” or “evidence” of their infilling by the Holy Spirit. An insistence on *xenolalia* as a part of the “power for witness” quickly gave way to an insistence on *glossolalia* as a sign.

In 1911, as the various revival centers became centers of major networks or organized as denominations, the first major internal theological challenge to the Wesleyan-Pentecostal three-stage formulation was made. William Durham (1873–1912), a prominent Pentecostal pastor in Chicago, began to rethink his theology. Although he had testified to and preached an experience of entire sanctification from

about 1901, and testified to an experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1907, Durham modified his theology in 1910, accommodating it to his Baptist roots. This new Pentecostal soteriology disclaimed sanctification as a second definite work of grace, seeing justification and sanctification as occurring at the moment of conversion. Durham based his theology on what he termed the *Finished Work* of Christ on the cross. This move, in effect, collapsed the three stages into two by combining initial conversion and sanctification into one work.

Durham's new soteriology was zealously evangelized from his Chicago headquarters to Los Angeles. The message was received as a new revelation and gained wide acceptance but brought major division in the movement. It was denounced by Charles Parham, William Seymour, Florence Crawford (1871–1936), Elmer Fisher (1866–1919) and the Southeastern United States Pentecostal groups—the Church of God, the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the Church of God in Christ—but nonetheless became the dominant message of Pentecostalism. When the Assemblies of God General Council convened in 1914 in Hot Springs, Arkansas, the opening sermon, preached by Pinson, was titled “The Finished Work of Calvary.” The resulting formation of a denomination, by 2009 the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world, clearly fell in the Finished Work, and therefore non-Wesleyan, camp.

Although the doctrinal shift has been primarily understood as affecting one's understanding of sanctification only, a Baptist-Reformed view as opposed to a Wesleyan view, this was in actuality a major paradigm shift, significantly altering Pentecostal theology and resulting in two distinct models of Pentecostal soteriology. The Finished Work Pentecostal focus on looking backward, claiming what was already accomplished on the cross, inevitably began to include all that was provided in the atonement, including healing of the body. In contrast, the Wesleyan-Pentecostal model proposed an ongoing life in the Spirit in which one moves from one experience in grace to the next in a soteriological trajectory that is teleological and forward-looking. Healing, then, is a sign both of the time when all will be healed and of the resurrection of the body.

This shift led to the next major division, also a doctrinal one. Known as the New Issue, this turn was even more divisive and led to an irreconcilable schism. It came to fruition in 1914 as a new revelation about the name of Jesus during a sermon at the World Wide Pentecostal Camp Meeting in Los Angeles, in April 1913. Canadian Robert E. McAlister

(1880–1953) commented that according to the book of Acts, the early church baptized believers in the name of Jesus rather than of the Trinity, as indicated in the book of Matthew. One listener, John G. Schaepe (1870–1939), intrigued by McAlister's suggestion, reportedly received a new revelation that true believers should be rebaptized in the name of Jesus, having been given a glimpse of the power of that name. Frank J. Ewart (1876–1947), Durham's successor, preached his first "Jesus Name sermon" outside Los Angeles in 1914.

Faupel suggests that this New Issue began as a consideration of a new baptismal formula, evolved into contemplation on the name of Jesus, and emerged into a reformulating of the understanding of the godhead. The orthodox understanding of the Trinity was rejected in favor of a *unipersonal* understanding of God, with the person of Jesus as the expression of the entire godhead. A new soteriology using Acts 2:38 as the paradigm for salvation experience quickly emerged. This paradigm saw repentance, baptism in the name of Jesus, and reception of the Holy Spirit as programmatic. The Jesus Name or Oneness Pentecostal movement adopted the designation *Apostolic*, previously used as a description of the whole Pentecostal movement, seeing themselves as those who were true to apostolic Christianity. Ewart understood the terms *Father* and *Holy Spirit* as designations of the various modes of Jesus' person. Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was a pseudobaptism and believers must be baptized in the name of Jesus. He further collapsed the experiences of the *ordo salutis* (order of salvation) by seeing regeneration, sanctification, and Spirit baptism as one event, and that being received in water baptism by immersion in Jesus' name. Further, speaking in tongues was understood as essential to the experience.

By 1915 some leaders in the newly formed Assemblies of God had been rebaptized, including Eudorus N. Bell (1866–1923), then head of the group. The schism reached a climax in October 1916 when a General Council of the Assemblies of God was convened to settle the issue. Pinson, J. Roswell Flower (1888–1970), and Stanley Frodsham (1882–1965) argued persuasively for the trinitarian position as orthodoxy, appealing to the Council of Nicea. Bell was won back but those convinced of the Oneness position were unmoved by appeals to the history of the church that had fallen into apostasy after the apostolic period. The result was that more than one hundred congregations and 156 of 585 ministers left the Assemblies of God and Trinitarian Pentecostalism. Following this schism, many of these ministers and congregations followed the trajectory of the earlier movement, forming

denominations or associations of ministers and congregations. The short-lived General Assembly of the Apostolic Assemblies (GAAA) formed in early 1917; the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW), chartered in 1907, was transitioned into an association for Oneness ministers through the organizational efforts of Garfield T. Haywood (1880–1931) in January 1918. In Canada, Franklin Small (1873–1961) organized the Apostolic Church of Pentecost (ACPC). Others were to follow.

Pentecostal Spirituality and Distinctiveness

Like all religious movements coming of age, Pentecostalism in North America can no longer be described in stereotypical ways. As Pentecostal groups and churches have become both more organized and aligned and amalgamated with other religious groups, and therefore influenced by them, they have taken on different forms and structures to both the benefit and the detriment of the movement. On the one hand, this is no surprise, given that at the heart of the Pentecostal ethos is a belief that the Spirit is continually moving and doing new things. On the other hand, some would say that what has been called a rush to respectability has blurred the lines of distinction and stifled the creativity of the movement.

If one tries to identify what is distinctive about Pentecostalism and its spirituality, many scholars would conclude that the most appropriate way to describe it is to look at the earliest incarnation of the movement. Walter Hollenweger has identified the first ten years as the heart of it (as opposed to its infancy). In this view, in examining this well-documented era one may discern what is distinctive about the spirituality.

There has been little argument from the onset of the Pentecostal revival that the experience of Spirit baptism, with its accompanying manifestation of speaking in tongues, has been the most notable of the distinguishing characteristics of the movement. This is not to suggest that Spirit baptism and *glossolalia* are the only distinguishing features; neither is it meant to suggest that this experience can or should be isolated from other experiences and doctrines central to the spirituality of the movement. The Pentecostal doctrine of Spirit baptism is not an add-on to evangelical theology, nor is the experience simply an ecstatic episode. Pentecostal theologian Steven J. Land maintains that the point of Pentecostal spirituality should not be to have one experience or several but to experience life in the Spirit as a part of the larger Christian story. This suggests that a new understanding of baptism in the Spirit, and the accompanying manifestation, distinguished these believers from their contemporaries and from the

churches from which they came. Although many viewed this distinction as divisive and sectarian, for those who had experienced Spirit baptism it served as a marker signaling that they were now a part of a Last Days move of God. It was this belief that they were a part of the Last Days Latter Rain outpouring of Spirit onto “all flesh” of its followers that gave Pentecostals the passion to preach the full gospel everywhere.

Hollenweger’s groundbreaking research established that Pentecostalism was generated from an African root, identifying several characteristics of this root system: the oral nature of the movement’s liturgy, its use of narrative (including dependence on narrative sections of biblical text as well as the narrative testimony of believers in evangelization), significance given to visions and dreams (in both public and private worship), communal participation in worship and decision making, and an integrated view of the body-mind relationship (most notable in prayer for the sick).

Over and against fundamentalism, a movement contemporary with Pentecostalism, and in keeping with its Holiness roots, Pentecostals opted for a hermeneutic, or interpretation of scripture, that was more sacramental than literalist. Although believing in the veracity and historicity of the biblical text, Pentecostals’ interaction with it was more dynamic than defensive. Pentecostals believe that what is possible for the characters in the biblical narrative is possible for them as well. In fact, they are actors sharing the biblical drama and experience. In this way, there is an expectation that on the one hand, God will intervene and save, or that, on the other, God will judge and discipline. More than “claiming promises,” scripture becomes the word of God for an individual believer or a Pentecostal community. The interpretation of the biblical text may be confirmed by inspired speech or by signs and wonders.

The process of discerning the will and work of God belongs to the community. The relationship between the text, the Spirit, and the Pentecostal community is dynamic. John Christopher Thomas, a Pentecostal biblical scholar, cites the story of the deliberations of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 as a model of this type of interpretive process. Like Wesley, Pentecostals give place to the role of experience in biblical interpretation. An experience may force the individual or the community to reexamine what was formerly believed about a text and make new conclusions in its regard.

Pentecostal Practices

It is this ongoing dynamic process that gives structure and sets boundaries. Grant Wacker has pointed out that though

to the outsider it may look as if there are no limits to what a Pentecostal leader or preacher may declare or proclaim, it is clear that Pentecostals are able to discern when one has moved outside the boundaries. This discerning is a part of the distinctive practice of Pentecostal community. Interpretation of messages in tongues, prophetic or other inspired speech, or actions always falls within the purview of the community, under the direction of the Spirit and Spirit-anointed leaders.

In a Pentecostal community it is understood that other members are brothers and sisters and as such one is accountable to them, all sharing responsibility for one another. Although it is clearly understood that the Pentecostal ministerial vocation includes pastoral care, it is equally understood that all Pentecostals are to care for one another. This care includes care for the sick, the bereaved, the destitute, the orphaned, and the abused.

Pentecostal communities emphasize the importance of fellowship, often taking the form of meals together. But fellowship is also understood to be a meeting together of Pentecostals for one of the most notable of Pentecostal practices, worship.

What may prove to be Pentecostalism’s most significant contribution, or at least the most obvious one, to the Christian church as a whole is its characteristic worship. From the beginning, Pentecostals were noted for demonstrative worship. This distinction, however, was apparently taken to new levels in the Pentecostal revivals. Pentecostal worship expressions were denounced not only by the secular press and nominal churches but as well by the leaders of Holiness churches out of which it had been birthed. The combination of the ecstatic nature of Spirit movements and the influence of African American culture resulted in exuberant and often noisy demonstrations of worship. Pentecostal worship services were marked by physical manifestations such as dancing in the Spirit, shouting, the jerks, and of course ecstatic speech. Prayer was most often “in concert,” with the entire community praying out loud at the same time. Believers anointed each other with oil, most often in praying for the sick. They used the laying on of hands in praying for those who were sick, troubled, or seeking further experiences. They lifted their hands as they sang and prayed. As in African American worship, they shouted back at the preacher in affirmation.

In addition, Pentecostals were noted for their loud and joyful music and singing. The singing was often spontaneous. At Azusa Street and in other centers of the revival, groups of believers were documented as singing together “in the Spirit,” a phenomenon that was called the Heavenly Choir.

Though that particular phenomenon has not had longevity within most Pentecostal circles, the concept of Spirit-anointed singing has. Musicians, singers, or groups of singers expect that the Holy Spirit will anoint them as they lead in worship. Gospel songs, songs that give testimony to the work of God, are used as a way to give witness.

By the end of the twentieth century, the Praise and Worship Music movement, generating from the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions, had influenced the music of the evangelical, fundamentalist, mainline, and Roman Catholic churches. Accompanying these worship choruses, even in non-Pentecostal settings, are guitars, digital keyboards, drums, and other percussion. Using the latest technology, worship leaders project visual images, including words to the songs, as a part of the worship experience. The worship leaders and congregation alike may be seen to lift their hands, clap, and even sway or move to the music. It is this influence that has led some to talk about the Pentecostalization of the church in the later twentieth century.

Pentecostal worship has as its goal an encounter with God. With this goal in view, the worship service is structured so the congregants are led into this encounter. The encounter may occur at any point: as scripture is read, during prayer, as songs are sung, as the sermon is preached, or at a time of corporate prayer at a space designated as the altar. As the songs are sung or as the sermon is preached, it is expected that one will hear from God or come in contact with God through the Spirit. Pentecostal preaching, though biblically driven, is more than didactic. It is a proclamation of the Word, in a way congruent with neo-orthodoxy and the theology of Karl Barth (1886–1968). Beyond that, however, this proclamation is led by the Spirit and is understood to be prophetic. It may be interrupted by prophetic or inspired speech on the part of the preacher or a congregant. It is anticipated that transformation will take place while a message is preached, not just in reflection on it.

It is believed that this transformation will result in witness. As explained in Acts 1:8, being empowered by the Spirit culminates in transforming the believer into a witness. As the Pentecostals are filled and continue to be filled with the Spirit of God, they bear witness to Jesus. This empowerment and the eschatological fervor characteristic of Pentecostalism have resulted in a major force for evangelism and missions in the world. The Protestant tenet of the priesthood of all believers infused with the transformative reality of the prophethood of all believers has energized the movement, so it has grown exponentially around the world.

Pentecostalism has given voice to both men and women, the rich and poor, the young and old, the educated and uneducated, and those of every race. Its message of transformation, full salvation, healing, and blessing has seemingly connected with the needs of some people everywhere. Observers of global Christianity have sometimes suggested that Pentecostalism's experiential nature, as well as its emphasis on community, position it to gain new ground in the twenty-first century.

Cultural Shifts

The leading scholar on the Azusa Street revival, Cecil M. Robeck, has shown that one of the most distinctive characteristics of the early movement was its multiracial and, most would argue, intercultural nature. Robeck contends that the Apostolic Faith Mission at Azusa Street was primarily an African American congregation, with an African American, Seymour, clearly acknowledged as pastor. It is notable, however, that Seymour was assisted by a group of leaders both black and white and male and female. Robeck has documented membership including not only blacks and whites but also Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans.

Gaston Barnabas Cashwell's story is illustrative. A Holiness preacher from eastern North Carolina, Cashwell (1862–1916) traveled to Azusa in 1906 after hearing of the revival. When he arrived and saw the interracial congregation, he realized he would have to be prayed for by African Americans. Unable to move beyond this at the first service, he returned to his hotel and prayed about his prejudice. He returned to the mission the next night, asking Seymour and others to lay hands on him and pray that he might be baptized in the Holy Spirit. By his account, he immediately received the experience. In an age of Jim Crow segregation, the influence of British-Israel theory in populist politics and religion, and in both the academy and society, the Pentecostal outpouring “on all flesh” was scandalous to the outsider, but a sign of authenticity to those on the inside. Bartleman, eye-witness and participant, famously remarked, “The color line has been washed away by the blood.”

Other lines of distinction also faded at Azusa and in other expressions of early Pentecostalism. Although often characterized as a movement of the poor or disenfranchised of society only, careful examination of the records of these early Pentecostal groups by Robeck, Wacker, and others reveals that Pentecostal adherents were from among the rich, the middle class, the poor, the educated, and the uneducated. Whereas Seymour, Farrow, and others were former slaves or the sons of former slaves, others, such as Joseph H. King (1869–1946), a

leader in the Fire-Baptized Holiness Association and then the Pentecostal Holiness Church, were seminary trained. Florence Crawford apparently came from a privileged family. Nickels J. Holmes (1847–1919) was a Presbyterian minister, trained in law at the University of Edinburgh, and from a wealthy family in South Carolina. He became a committed Wesleyan and founded a school called Altamont Bible and Missionary Institute, now Holmes Bible College, near Greenville, South Carolina. Holmes and the student body experienced a Pentecostal outpouring under the ministry of Cashwell in 1907.

Racial Division and Reunion

The divisions occurring in the first ten years are obviously doctrinal. Not as clearly seen are the racial divisions that occurred at the same time. Parham, at Seymour's invitation, had visited the revival early on and was outraged by what he saw as fanaticism, more to the point, interracial worship, and immediately set up a rival mission across town. This blatant act of racial prejudice did not dampen the fires of the revival; however, by 1909, some fragmenting was evident. Bartleman records that Seymour acted in an uncharitable way toward a group of Mexicans worshipping at Azusa in 1909. Others had begun organizing new works in other parts of the city along racial lines. In 1911, when Durham attempted to take control of the mission, the attempt was put down by Seymour and his board. Durham claimed that this rejection was by the blacks in leadership only, rather than on the basis of what Seymour believed to be an erroneous doctrine. Durham's two-stage soteriology did eventually become dominant in Pentecostalism, but significant white leaders rejected it. Across town, Durham's meetings were attended for the most part by whites. Apparently Durham's rejection of Seymour and the work at 312 Azusa played into these latent prejudices and led to more division. Two years later, the call to convene the council organizing the Assemblies of God, issued by Bell and H. A. Goss (1883–1964), was issued only to the white ministers who had been issued ministerial credentials by Charles H. Mason (1866–1961) and the predominantly black Church of God in Christ.

Unfortunately, most Pentecostals, like other Protestant Christian groups in the United States, began to accommodate to segregation, the dominant cultural norm. Most worship services were dominated by one race, and leadership structures in Pentecostal organizations fell along racial lines.

In 1948, twenty-four Pentecostal groups organized as the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA). The goal of this group was to foster fellowship and unity among

Trinitarian Pentecostals. The group was dominated, however, by white leadership from the predominantly white Pentecostal denominations: Assemblies of God, Open Bible Standard, Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and International Pentecostal Holiness Church. By 1992, the group realized that they had failed to attract minorities and initiated a series of meetings with African American Pentecostal leadership. The result was a vote to disband the group in 1994 and to reorganize as a multiracial organization, the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA). This was symbolized at a historic meeting in Memphis at which white leaders washed the feet of black leaders, an occasion dubbed the Memphis Miracle.

Following this lead, other organizations as well as some denominations began to take seriously the issues of racial and ethnic inclusion, correcting inequalities with regard to representation through appointments or elections of African Americans and other minorities to leadership positions. Although many individual congregations have also taken this issue seriously, most remain dominated by one racial or ethnic identity.

By the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, the majority of new Pentecostal churches in the United States were being planted by Hispanic Pentecostals.

As the Pentecostal movement has grown in Latin America, and as Hispanic immigration to the United States has increased significantly, it stands to reason that there would be a significant influx of Hispanic Pentecostals. Many Pentecostal leaders and pastors in the United States, as with their counterparts in other Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, found themselves in a difficult position on the issue of illegal immigration. This circumstance was especially tenuous given the generally conservative political stance of most white U.S. Pentecostals.

Another salient feature of the early Pentecostal movement was a relative egalitarianism with regard to gender. As in most Spirit and revival movements in history, women were empowered to lead and to preach. As these Pentecostal centers and denominations began to struggle with organizational issues, a shift began. Relatively early on, restrictions or limitations began to be articulated. Although most groups allowed women to preach, in some expressions and Pentecostal centers, women could not serve as pastors; in some they could not be ordained; in some they were barred from administering the sacraments. In response, some women

organized their own denominations in which they and other women could lead. Most prominent of these was Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944), founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

Evangelical and Pentecostal Alliance

As the U.S. groups grew, most began to mirror the evangelical churches. Classical Pentecostal denominations joined forces with these evangelicals in the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1942. Following World War II, when women were returning to the home as their primary place of carrying out their vocation, both evangelicals and Pentecostals seemed to take their cue from the postwar white culture in America, even giving biblical grounding for this model as the biblically mandated one.

The alliance with evangelicals is reflected in the nomenclature used for ministerial ranks in some groups and accompanying qualifications for eligibility. In 1948 in the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), for instance, the nomenclature for male ministers who had achieved the middle level of the credentialing process changed from evangelist to licensed minister. The nomenclature for female ministers remained unchanged, however. Female ministers at that level were still designated lady evangelists. Although this middle level was later changed for both genders to ordained minister, it remains the highest level female ministers can achieve. Evidence has shown that this alliance with evangelicals corresponded to a decline in numbers of women being credentialed in both the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) and the Assemblies of God. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, there was some evidence that this trend was reversing. In most U.S. Pentecostal groups, however, the positions of power were still predominately male.

By the end of their first hundred years in the United States, Pentecostals had become more educated, gained economic standing, and grown more vocal. Like evangelicals, they had begun moving into positions of political and economic power. The movement, initially dominated by the powerless in society, gained power in the marketplace as well as the political arena as it grew in size. Prominent Pentecostal or Charismatic television evangelists, such as Pat Robertson and John Hagee, began joining forces with fundamentalist or evangelical ones in the latter years of the twentieth century, helping shape the right-wing base of the Republican Party. Meanwhile, the growth of black Pentecostal churches and the prominence of their leaders and pastors in both local and national politics played a major role in influencing the

Democratic platform. T. D. Jakes, an African American Pentecostal preacher, was recognized as one of the most influential in America, leading the Inauguration Day prayer service for the Obamas and Bidens in 2009. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, Pentecostals were major players as party leaders, candidates, and presidential cabinet members. Bush-era Attorney General John Ashcroft, 2008 vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin, Democratic party executive Leah Daughtry, and Josh Dubois, head of the Obama Administration's Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Office, were all noted for their involvement in Pentecostal churches.

Ironically, it is this rise to power that may prove the greatest challenge that U.S. Pentecostals face in their second hundred years. Following the trajectory of many religious renewal movements throughout church history, some see Pentecostalism in the United States as nearly fully institutionalized, losing in the process some of its vibrant spirituality. The rise of the Health and Wealth or Prosperity Gospel, a theology equating spiritual well-being with physical health and financial prosperity, parallels the rise of Pentecostalism as a political and economic force and is seen by many as a threat to the integrity of the movement. This form of Pentecostal/Charismatic spirituality and theology, in many ways, is a mirror of the American dream and perhaps a product of America's self-proclaimed manifest destiny.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Canada: Pluralism; Charismatics/Charismatic Movements; Education: Colleges and Universities; Evangelicals: Twentieth Century; Fundamentalism; Glossolalia; Healing; Holiness Movement; Holiness Denominational Family; House Church Movement; Latino American Religion: Pentecostals; Music: Coritos/Spanish Language; Pentecostal Denominational Family; Pentecostals: African American; Serpent Handlers.*

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Pentecostals: African American

African American Pentecostalism began in Los Angeles during 1906. The Azusa Street revival (1906–1909, 1911), a product of the African American Holiness movement of the late nineteenth century, served as the center for the emergence of black Pentecostalism, in particular, and Pentecostalism, in general, as a national and international movement. Within 100 years, African American Pentecostalism had grown into more than 125 denominations within the United States, with most of these denominations consisting of fewer than 50 congregations and the largest denominations being the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) with approximately 10,000 congregations, the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship with approximately 2,000 congregations, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World with approximately

1,800 congregations. At the Azusa Street revival, African American Pentecostalism began on the margins of the black church, and over the subsequent decades it has moved towards the center of black church and community.

The Azusa Street revival began in a small African American Holiness congregation that was headed by Julia Hutchins. The revival, or series of nightly religious meetings, was led by William J. Seymour (1870–1922), who preached the Pentecostal doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Seymour's Pentecostal doctrine has been interpreted in terms of pneumatology as a movement of the Holy Spirit; in terms of eschatology as having an end-time message; in terms of its missions work as using missionary tongues, or supernaturally learned languages; and in terms of its ecclesiology as encouraging an interracial and egalitarian community of faith that challenged segregation and the racial hierarchy of the early twentieth century.

The revival relocated to a small house church located on 214 Bonnie Brae after a theological disagreement between Seymour and Hutchins about the Holy Spirit. When the audience outgrew this site, Seymour secured facilities at 312 Azusa Street, the former makeshift sanctuary of St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal Church (later renamed First AME Church), to accommodate the larger audience. Seymour named the congregation the Apostolic Faith Mission and attracted the attention of local whites, African Americans, and Latinos, especially those involved in the Holiness community. Within twelve months, the revival became a national sensation, known as the Azusa Street revival, and spawned an international movement and a monthly newspaper, *The Apostolic Faith*. From 1906 to 1908, Seymour, the Apostolic Faith Mission, and *The Apostolic Faith*, gave the movement a center and early leadership.

African American Holiness congregations were sites where the emerging black Pentecostalism was nested across the United States from cities ranging from Portland, Oregon, to Memphis, Tennessee, to New York City. The African American Holiness movement served as fertile ground for the birth of black Pentecostalism. As the context for black Pentecostalism, the thirty-year plus African American Holiness movement emerged within historic African American denominations such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the National Baptist Convention, focusing on sanctification as did its white counterparts, but also emphasizing African American leadership, racial equality, and African missions. By 1906 the African American Holiness movement demographically had encompassed an ever-increasing proportion of the black church. With a group of approximately

300-plus assemblies, the African American Holiness movement surpassed the number of black Episcopal, Congregationalist, and Union American Methodist congregations, each group having between 200 to 230 congregations, and almost equaling the African American congregations within Cumberland Presbyterians and the Presbyterian Church (northern stream).

The demographic growth of African American Pentecostalism would basically be sparked by denominational families who had roots in the African American Holiness movement. Seven major denominational families within black Pentecostalism, who have their origins within African American Holiness fellowships of the late nineteenth century, intersected with the Azusa Street revival directly or indirectly: the United Holy Church of America family (1886); the Church of the Living God family (1889); the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) family (1895); the Church of God (Apostolic) family (1897); Fire-Baptized Holiness Church of the Americas family (1897); Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ family (1903); and Christ Holy Sanctified Church family (1903). These denominational families formed the organizational structure of African American Pentecostalism, along with the denominational families that emerged during and after the Azusa Street Revival, such as the Apostolic Faith Mission (1906), the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (1907), and the All Nations Pentecostal Church (1924). From these denominational families can be traced the majority of African American Pentecostal groups. While black Pentecostal congregations existed within predominately white denominations such as the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), most African American Pentecostals belonged to black Pentecostal denominations throughout the twentieth century.

By 1909 a conservative estimate would place the number of African American congregations associated with Pentecostalism to be more than 100. By 1926 the religious census conducted by the U.S. government reported more than 875 black Pentecostal congregations out of a total of 42,585 black congregations in the United States. Some argued that the numbers should have been much higher, perhaps more than 1,000 congregations, since the religious census did not include at least ten African American Pentecostal denominations that existed during the 1920s.

Theologically, African American Pentecostalism can be clustered into a Wesleyan wing that emphasized conversion, immediate sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and a Reformed wing that stressed conversion and progressive sanctification as one religious experience followed by

the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Wesleyan wing embraced the COGIC and the United Holy Church; the Reformed wing included the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World. Additionally, there were theology differences regarding the doctrine of God: a classical trinitarian perspective that focused on the divine unity in three persons as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; a Oneness perspective that accented divine unity in three manifestations rather than personhood. Regarding church governance, some leaders espoused congregational independence, while others argued for minimal structures of accountability between congregations by forming associations of congregations. Basically, common practices among black Pentecostalism included baptism, the Lord's Supper (or Communion), evangelism, singing, testimonies, prayer meetings, healing, and preaching, along with revivals and camp meetings. Undergirding many of these practices was an emphasis on prayer and fasting, ranging from all-night prayer vigils called "shut-ins" and consecrations, to three-to-four-hour prayer meetings, and weekly, or twice a week fasting, along with periodic forty-day fasts.

The Post–Azusa Street Revival Era

A vital feature of early African American Pentecostalism was the impulse toward interracial engagement and cooperation. Prominent black and white Pentecostal leaders promoted the interracial vision of the Azusa Street revival across the country during this era of legal racial segregation. The COGIC, an association led by African Americans and predominately black in its membership, admitted two white fellowships into its organization: Howard Goss, a white clergyman, led one group of white Pentecostals, and Leonard P. Adams, a white clergyman, led a smaller group. In 1914 the Goss faction left the COGIC to participate in the formation of the predominately white Assemblies of God; afterward, two other white groups joined the COGIC: William Hoyt, a white clergyman, led a small white group out of the newly formed Assemblies of God in 1917, and in 1924 August Feick, a white clergyman, likewise led a small white group out of the Assemblies of God. The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World would incorporate a large influx of whites who withdrew from the Assemblies of God over doctrinal differences related to the Oneness teachings. Most whites eventually left over the next decade but, by the 1920s, the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World embraced a group of Latino congregations. The African American leadership of both the COGIC and Pentecostal Assemblies of the World struggled to foster the interracial impulse within their respective

denominations through various institutional arrangements for more than twenty-five years.

Women occupied various ecclesial positions within the nascent African American Pentecostal movement: evangelist, ordained minister, and bishop. While the majority of the Pentecostal denominations restricted ordination to males, most offered women at least ministerial positions such as evangelist. There did emerge, though, a host of denominations that granted women full gender equality among the ordained ranks. These denominations fall into two types: full access to the pastorate and full access both to the pastorate and bishopric. The vast majority of African American Pentecostal denominations, which embrace full gender equality within the pastorate and bishopric, are denominations founded by African American women. The pioneer of female-led black Pentecostal denominations was Magdalena Tate of the Church of the Living God, Pillar and Ground of the Truth. Subsequent denominational heads included Ida Robinson of Mt. Sinai Holy Church, organized in 1924, and Lucy Smith of All Nations Pentecostal Church.

Other features marking the formative era of African American Pentecostalism were educational schools, religious media, missions, and Christian activism. The early educational institutions were often literary and industrial schools with Bible departments such as Saints in Lexington, Mississippi, along with its counterparts in Geridge, Arkansas, and Hearne and Memphis, Texas—all sponsored by the COGIC. African American Pentecostals occasionally had control of former Holiness schools, such as the Boynton Institute in Virginia that the United Holy Church of America managed for a few years, as well as opening Bible institutes such as Christ Bible Institute in New York City, sponsored by the Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith. Religious media included periodicals such the *Holiness Union*, *Whole Truth*, *True Witness*, *Voice in the Wilderness*, *Christian Outlook*, and *Contender for the Faith*.

Missions were also an emphasis of African American Pentecostalism. Liberia was the mission site for a number of missionaries from Seymour's Apostolic Faith Mission. The Reverend and Mrs. J. R. Ledbetters represented the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World in Liberia from 1914 to 1924. Around 1918 the United Holy Church raised funds to sponsor its first foreign missionaries, Isaac and Annie Williams, who were assigned to Liberia. In 1919 a group of African Americans organized the United Pentecostal Council of the Assemblies of God to support missionaries to Liberia; their first missionaries, Reverend Alexander Howard and

Margaret Howard, a husband-wife team, arrived in Liberia in 1920. In 1919 the COGIC began sending as missionaries to predominately black countries: Jamaica in 1919 and Trinidad in 1924.

Pacifism during World War I characterized the Christian activism of many African American Pentecostals, who condemned war and discouraged draft-age men from enlisting. For a sector of African American Pentecostals, black religious nationalism was an additional characteristic of their Christian activism. Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) and his Universal Negro Improvement Association went so far as to promote the emigration of African Americans to Africa. In 1919 Elias Dempsey Smith hosted Garvey at the national meeting of his denomination, Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ.

The 1920s as the First Major Turning Point

The 1920s marked the first major turning point for African American Pentecostalism. In cities such as Chicago, Houston, Memphis, and Philadelphia, black Pentecostalism emerged as the second largest category of congregations, only surpassed by the Baptist. By the 1930s, African American Pentecostal congregations, denominations, and leaders began to participate in black ecumenical organizations as well as civic organizations. Black Pentecostal denominations were represented in the National Fraternal Council of Negro Churches, a Protestant ecumenical organization of congregations and denominations that represented liberal, moderate, and conservative theological views. Later, during the 1960s, African American Pentecostals joined other theologically conservative black Protestants in founding the National Black Evangelical Association. African American Pentecostal women participated in the establishment of the National Council of Negro Women, a civic federation of women's organizations. The COGIC was among the religious observers at the founding of the United Nations in 1945 and tenth anniversary celebration in 1955.

During the early 1950s, African American Pentecostal leaders were involved in the civil rights movement on the grassroots level. Medgar Evers, who had been raised in the COGIC, became a community organizer with Mississippi's Regional Council of Negro Leadership, a civil rights organization. Smallwood Williams led a legal battle against segregated public schools in Washington, D.C. Jasper Roby in Birmingham, Alabama, and J. O. Patterson Sr., in Memphis, along with other African American Pentecostal leaders, participated in the local civil rights campaign in the 1950s. During

the 1960s, more African American Pentecostal leaders had become active in civil rights efforts across the United States, albeit most African American Pentecostals withheld their support of the movement. Mason Temple, the COGIC headquarters, served as the site of Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1959 and 1968 speeches in Memphis.

Between the mid-1920s and the late 1960s, the public face of African American Pentecostalism would be associated most with the emerging African American gospel music movement. According to music scholars such as Horace Boyer, the black gospel music movement emerged through the combined efforts of Baptists such as Thomas Dorsey and Pentecostals such as Arizona Dranes. In the African American Pentecostal Church, black gospel music served as the primary carrier of the religious folk music associated with enslaved and west African musical culture, which was noted for its call-and-response style, percussive sound, improvisational techniques, polyrhythmic qualities, and diatonic harmonies. Established black Pentecostal recording artists of the 1920s, such as Dranes, Sallie Sanders, and Ford Washington McGee, introduced the broader Protestant community to the black Pentecostal sound, a sound that nearly erased the distinctions between sacred and secular music, echoing the cultural fount tapped by sanctified church music, jazz, and blues.

The popular enthusiasm for African American gospel music led to the invitation of black Pentecostal singers and musicians, along with their Baptist counterparts, to perform in venues ranging from nightclubs and auditoriums to concert halls. The famous black Pentecostal musical artist during the mid-twentieth year was singer-guitarist Rosetta Tharpe. As early as the 1940s, singer-guitarist Rev. Utah Smith performed at a concert series sponsored by the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. The impact of this group of musicians on popular music, ranging from jazz, blues, soul, rhythm and blues, and country-western, has been noted by popular artists who grew up in African American Pentecostal churches such as Fats Waller and B. B. King, as well as by outsiders to the tradition such as Johnny Cash and Elvis Presley.

A lesser known trajectory within African American Pentecostal music is sacred steel guitar music. Introduced to the Church of the Living God family of denominations in the 1930s, the pedal-steel guitar had gained popularity earlier through its association with Hawaiian music during the early twentieth century. According to Robert L. Stone, Troman and Willie Eason, two brothers, created the African American

Pentecostal trajectory of sacred steel guitar, and Willie toured with the Bishop J. R. Lockley's Gospel Feast Party.

The late 1960s marked another turning point within black Pentecostalism, with the American cultural context shifting from hesitancy to more acceptance of black Pentecostal culture, especially music, by various sectors in the black and wider society. The music chart cross-over popular hit, *O Happy Day*, by Edwin Hawkins signaled the cultural acceptance of black Pentecostalism by these sectors. Hawkins wrote gospel choral music that borrowed from a variety of jazz and calypso sounds, while Andrae Crouch composed ballads and incorporated the melodies of soul and pop music. Impervious to distinctions between sacred and secular music held by their Pentecostal predecessors, Hawkins and Crouch ushered in a new phase within black religious music and the black church.

The 1970s as the Second Major Turning Point

During the late twentieth century, African American Pentecostalism would be recognized as the third major stream within black Protestantism, and the COGIC would be deemed a historic black denomination alongside the African Methodist Church and two other Methodist and three Baptist denominations. African American Pentecostals would distinguish themselves among Pentecostals by establishing the first fully accredited Pentecostal seminary in the United States: the Charles Harrison Mason Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. Sponsored by the COGIC, the seminary opened in 1970 as a member of the Interdenominational Theological Center, an ecumenical consortium of African American Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Pentecostal seminaries. Mason Theological Seminary would serve as the postcollege level institution whereas Saints College, headed by Arenia C. Mallory, provided the baccalaureate. Saints College during the mid-twentieth century would be among the few colleges headed by a black woman. In 1978 the COGIC joined six other African American denominations in organizing the Congress of National Black Churches, an ecumenical group.

In the 1970s a number of African American Pentecostal theologians began conversations concerning the modern black theology. Different writers began to engage black theology from a Pentecostal perspective. William Bentley and Bennie Goodwin Jr., leaders in the United Council of the Assemblies of God and the COGIC, respectively, sought to incorporate the social critique of black theology within black Pentecostalism and infuse black theology with

Pentecostal spirituality and evangelical themes. James Forbes of the United Holy Church of America along with others sought to interject the liberationist agenda of black theology in black Pentecostalism. Within these quarters, African American Pentecostals participated in a serious dialogue with liberation theology.

Social activist organizations founded by leaders of some African American Pentecostal denominations during the late twentieth century include the Black United Front, led by Herbert Daughtry of the House of the Lord Church, among others; the Pentecostal Coalition for Human Rights, led by James Tinney of the COGIC; the African Christian People's Organization, also led by Herbert Daughtry and others; and the Pan-African Charismatic Evangelical Congress (PACEC), led by Charles E. Blake and Eugene Rivers, both of the COGIC. The Black United Front, founded during the late 1960s, was created as an avenue to address the plight of African Americans and promote a black nationalist agenda. The Pentecostal Coalition for Human Rights was founded in 1980 to promote human rights as a topic among Pentecostals. The African Christian People's Organization, established in 1983, advanced the black nationalist agenda under Christian leadership. The Pan-African Charismatic Evangelical Congress (PACEC) defined itself as a new advocacy group that was committed to a multifaceted strategy of political action. The formation of these activist organizations and the election of African American Pentecostals to public office demonstrated the political prowess of this movement.

During the late twentieth century, the protest orientation within the African American Pentecostal movements found clear expression. According to the study by C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Maimiya during the 1990s on the political attitudes in the COGIC, the majority of the respondents supported civil rights protest with a 78 percent positive response. Similarly, the results of the ITC/Faith Factor Project 2000 study of black churches revealed that a majority of clergy in the COGIC approved of civil rights protest. In both studies, however, the rate of approval within the COGIC samples were less than that of the black church samples overall.

Accompanying the acceptance of African American Pentecostal culture is the rise of black neo-Pentecostalism. During the late twentieth century, Pentecostalism attracted clergy and members within the historic black denominations, especially the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Baptist Church. Neo-Pentecostal ministers began occupying pastorates of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The

focal point for the movement during the early 1970s was St. Paul AME Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, under the pastorate of John Bryant. By the 1980s, neo-Pentecostal AME Church congregations were among the largest in the denomination: St. Paul in Cambridge, Bethel in Baltimore, Allen Temple in Queens (New York), and Ward Temple in Los Angeles. Two neo-Pentecostals, Vernon Byrd and John Bryant, were elected bishops of that denomination. Within the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church during the 1980s and 1990s, the center was John A. Cherry and his congregation, the Full Gospel AME Zion Church in Temple Hills, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C. In 1999 Cherry withdrew from AME Zion and established a new denomination, Macedonia Ministries. Among United Methodist Churches, Kirbyjon Caldwell and his pastorate, Windsor Village United Methodist Church, would promote neo-Pentecostalism. The focal points for neo-Pentecostalism among African American Baptists were Roy Brown and his Pilgrim Baptist Cathedral in Brooklyn, along with Paul Morton and the St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church in New Orleans. During the 1980s, Brown organized a denomination, the Pilgrim Assemblies, and Morton spearheaded a neo-Pentecostal Baptist fellowship, the Full Gospel Baptist Fellowship.

African American Pentecostalism participated in the rise of black televangelism. During the 1970s, the "Word of Faith" movement intersected with African American Pentecostalism. Frederick K. C. Price emerged in 1973 as the Word of Faith pioneer among black Christians after establishing Crenshaw Christian Center in Los Angeles. This movement rejected the antimaterialism of earlier black Pentecostalism and interpreted financial prosperity as a Christian birthright, along with salvation and healing. These leaders introduced a new preaching style that countered the homiletic practices of the black Pentecostalism stressing instruction rather than inspiration. While African American Pentecostals often emphasized Christian instruction in Bible studies during an average week, the sermon had embraced a different aim. The Word of Faith preachers specialized in introducing their audiences to the ways of accessing God's promises of health and wealth. Black televangelism promoted by African American Pentecostals included the broadcast ministries of Gilbert Earl Patterson, Juanita Bynum, and T. D. Jakes. Jakes created a new movement within black Pentecostalism with his multifaceted ministry of conferences, books, tapes, music, film, and plays.

By 2000 it was estimated that there were more than six million African American Pentecostals across the nation. More than 75 percent of the members belonged to two

black Pentecostal denominations: the COGIC, with approximately three million members, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, with approximately one million members. Through its global ministry, U.S.-based African American Pentecostal denominations have congregations in nearly sixty countries in Africa, South America, Europe, and Asia. Consequently, they have spread its religious and cultural influence around the world. From the margins of the black church in 1906, African American Pentecostalism has joined the black Baptist and Methodist traditions in constituting the religious center of the black church and the black community. Ranking among the major religious movements in the United States, African American Pentecostalism affects American culture, the civic arena, and the country's religious tenor.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Charismatics/Charismatic Movements*; *Glossolalia*; *Holiness Denominational Family*; *Holiness Movement*; *Music: African American*; *Music: African American Gospel*; *Pentecostal Denominational Family*; *Pentecostals*; *Religious Thought: African American*.

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Philanthropy

Philanthropy, as a descriptive term, has evolved over time. In its U.S. usage, it has designated a literal and general "love of humanity"; a rational and systematic approach to the elimination of social ills; the process of distribution of money and goods by the wealthy; and, most recently, voluntary action (gifts of time, commitment, and the like) for the public good.

Religious Philanthropy and Colonial America—A City Set upon a Hill

Religious philanthropy, like philanthropy itself, designates a changing set of ideals throughout the centuries in America. In the religious context, one must discern the relationship of philanthropy to religious concepts of giving, sharing, and community. Though some argue that philanthropy is a secular and scientific alternative to religious "charity" and other acts of giving, many assume that the two are closely related. Philanthropy motivated by religious impulse combined with traditional notions of religious charity can together be termed *religious benevolence*.

American history predates the European conquest. The worldview of many Native American groups valued gift giving as sacred—not just in terms of one individual giving to another, but in the way sharing resources reflected divine reality. As one gave (and received) in appropriate ways, the world itself remained in harmony. A sense of reciprocity saturated Native American cultures—supernatural powers, the fertility of the earth, and the proper working of society were all woven together in a worldview that gave fundamental recognition to the give-and-take nature of reality.

The Europeans who came to the continent brought a different set of assumptions and worldviews. As well, within the various European settlements in the New World, there were disparate points of view about the purpose and function of the New World. Some were almost entirely commercial; others, less so.

An especially enduring perspective, at least in terms of the history of American self-understanding, was articulated by John Winthrop, the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, in his lay sermon, "A Model of Christian Charity" (1630). It presented a vision of a godly society, where members were knit together into one body. It concluded with a reminder to the colonists that "we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us." The sermon advocated a Christian society wherein men and women would

work and provide one for another in such a way to reflect the ideals of the Kingdom of God. There is every indication that those early settlers indeed tried to establish such a commonwealth wherein all, at least in theory, would be cared for. The spirit of such an endeavor carried through the seventeenth century, from the time of Winthrop's tenure as governor, into the early eighteenth, where that spirit was celebrated in the work of the famous New England clergyman Cotton Mather in his *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702).

Of course, the dream of a New Israel, as some of these early religious settlers understood their mission, was not shared by all. The communal aspect of society came under pressure from the growing development of market economies. Indeed, the waning of communal living coincided with the rise of individualism that the growing capitalist system of economics inevitably fostered, and over the course of the eighteenth century into the early nineteenth, the lifeways of New England Puritans eroded in a manner that protests against such an economy were reduced primarily to a nostalgic yearning (by some) for a way of life long past.

One important development of the eighteenth century that played into the philanthropic work of societal moral reform derived from the revivalist New England minister Jonathan Edwards. In his work, interacting with Enlightenment figures on the question of ethics and virtue, he developed the notion of disinterested benevolence. Much of Edwards's emphasis lay in his belief that the heart of virtue lay in a disinterested benevolence toward God. By this, he meant a love of God that was selfless—a love of God for God's sake, apart from any good one derives from God. His work was modified in the writings of some of his followers, especially Samuel Hopkins. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, Hopkins began to think of disinterested benevolence as an applicable concept for how one acted toward humanity, teaching that God is glorified through disinterested benevolence toward those made in God's image. Here, Hopkins believed a human being should be loved in and of himself or herself, apart from any benefit such love would bring to the one who loves. In fact, according to Hopkins, to some extent the true measure of disinterestedness could be gauged by the amount of self-denial necessary to enact benevolence. From his pulpit in the port city of Newport, Rhode Island, he began to apply the notion of disinterested benevolence to social problems such as the slave trade, preaching from his pulpit against the subjugation of Africans in the dehumanizing system of chattel slavery. Such a system violated the good order of the world as God had

created it. In the work of Hopkins resides a proleptic look into the wider abolitionist movements of the nineteenth century, where many people, motivated in part by religious sentiment, joined together to work toward ending slavery in the United States.

From the Revolution to the Civil War: The Flowering of Voluntaryism

After the Revolutionary War and the adoption of the U.S. Constitution, one sees the disestablishment of churches at the state level, just as the Constitution banned the establishment of religion at the federal level. The final disestablishments occurred in Connecticut and Massachusetts in the early 1830s. Thus, churches came to exist as voluntary associations. As such, they exhibited tremendous potential for growth as various Christian groups competed for members. If there were going to be a Christian society, it would have to be shaped by those willing to give time, commitment, and money to the cause.

In addition, other religious voluntary associations arose, drawing support from a large number of individuals to support causes oftentimes beyond the ability of a single congregation, or even a group of congregations, to undertake. For example, the American Bible Society was founded in 1816, with one of its goals being the translation of the Bible into different languages, both for use at home (especially among Native Americans) and abroad. There were missionary societies that supported missionaries and the institutions needed to train them, an endeavor in which Christian women took great interest. One sees in Mary Lyon and the founding of Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (later Mount Holyoke College) a combination of philanthropic efforts on behalf of education and missions. And there was a concern, as the nineteenth century progressed, to see Protestant Christianity move westward.

Much of this latter concern is best summed up in the work of Lyman Beecher's *A Plea for the West* (1835). Therein, Beecher combined a number of different interests, including the need for churches, schools, and colleges; the necessity of seminaries for the training of clergy; and the need to stop the progress of Catholicism across the West. He strongly advocated the role of religion in public life and promoted the value of voluntary associations. Beecher meant to inspire those with the means to contribute to the salvation of the West, through prayers and monetary donations, and through action. He encouraged people to move to the West to help build the institutions necessary for the progress of, in his terms, religion and freedom.

Of course, the religious uplift of Beecher's essay was only uplifting to those who held Beecher's Protestant views—it carried within it all the hallmarks of nativist anti-Catholicism, and it was dismissive of other religions as well. Beecher's call to philanthropy was also a call to defend Protestant America.

And so-called Protestant America was changing. The nineteenth century witnessed a great influx of non-Protestant people into the United States. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, there were only about thirty thousand Catholics in the country, but that would change during the next century. In addition to immigration, the numbers increased as the young United States added territory through the Louisiana Purchase in the early nineteenth century, a territory in which large numbers of Catholics lived. Indeed, in New Orleans, one sees the establishment of the first home for orphans in 1729, maintained by Ursuline nuns.

Back in the area of the original thirteen colonies, however, Catholics encountered great suspicion. Moreover, Catholics understood the public school system to be so thoroughly Protestant that they realized they would need to found their own educational system. Thus one sees, in addition to the building of parish churches, the establishment of Catholic schools. Foundational to the work of these schools was the service of nuns, whose efforts on behalf of the Catholic Church through educational work represented a vast commitment of human resources, without which monetary contributions would have achieved little. Elizabeth Seton worked to establish the first American religious order. The Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph was recognized in 1809. By 1810, Seton had created the first free Catholic school in the United States, which would serve as the model for Catholic education in America.

Judaism as well had come to American shores early in the history of European colonization. Jews had settled in New Amsterdam (later New York) in the mid-1650s, and the first synagogue appeared in 1730. As with other religious groups, one sees the impact of the voluntary spirit as a variety of congregations and associations sprang up. The first Reform congregation was established in 1824. B'nai B'rith, a fraternal organization, formed in 1843. The first national organization of Jewish congregations, the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, appeared in 1859.

But perhaps one of the best representatives for understanding not just Jewish philanthropy but philanthropy in general is Rebecca Gratz. Born to a wealthy Philadelphia merchant family, Gratz epitomized a number of trends in

nineteenth-century philanthropy—her concern for religious work, education, and the poor; and the role that she, as a woman, would take in organizing associations for the advancement of these causes. She founded the Female Hebrew Benevolent Association in 1819 to provide relief for poor women and children. As Jonathan Sarna pointed out in *American Judaism: A History*, this event epitomizes two important nineteenth-century developments: the increasing role of women in Jewish philanthropy and the establishment of community-wide Jewish organizations outside the confines of the synagogue.

All the religious cases, causes, and efforts detailed above invite questions about the definition of philanthropy. How does one (and to what extent must one) distinguish between self-interest and the interests of others in assessing the philanthropic? Can self-help be considered philanthropy? Two replies can be made. The first is that there is no need to assume that self-help and other-help are necessarily mutually exclusive. If one's view of the good society includes greater diversity and inclusivity under the law, then one may argue that efforts that benefit a particular group can be seen to benefit the larger society. The second point is that it is naïve to assume, as some have done, that nonsectarian, secular philanthropy is not self-interested—it has been argued that all philanthropists seek to impose their own particular vision of society on others. Philanthropic activity, just as religious activity, is multifaceted in its purpose and effects and complex in its power relationships.

Indeed, perhaps nowhere is this point better understood than in relation to the African American community. Religious institutions have served, from very early on, as community support centers. Though often not wealthy, the African American churches became economic systems that supported a variety of needs within the African American community—as a bank, in some cases, or a traditional source of charity, in others. From within the African American religious community and its organizations, leaders were developed, social networks grew, and the betterment of the community—sometimes a matter simply of self-survival, sometimes more—certainly served, in the long run, to establish an African American presence that contributed to the betterment of the larger society. From supporting the work of the Underground Railroad, whereby slaves moved into free states, to the establishment of African American schools after the Civil War, through Reconstruction, and into the Jim Crow era, African American churches worked for the establishment of a more just and perfect society, oftentimes against

the greatest of odds. It is within the example of the African American churches that one finds support for several important lessons: that a small amount of capital can sometimes make a great amount of difference; that the work of a people can be restricted but not bound by economic disparity; and that a society's improvement can work hand-in-hand with an oppressed segment's self-help, self-interest, and self-improvement. (If one were to jump forward in a full story of African American religious philanthropy, one sees this to be the case especially in the civil rights movement, where religious leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and other pastors formed voluntary associations such as the Montgomery Improvement Association, organized in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, to fight segregation in the public transit system.)

Finally, the Civil War itself saw the development of voluntary associations that addressed the pressing needs of the time. Associations such as the Freedmen's Aid Society (1862) and its various branches sought to help with the education of African Americans in the South. During the war, the Christian Commission was established to minister to soldiers. And it was during the Civil War that an older tradition of fund-raising, the charity fair, reached new heights. These fairs were held to support the work of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, set up to support soldiers. The sanitary fairs, run by women, helped provide a large portion of the twenty-five million dollars raised during the four years of the commission's existence (1861–1865). Based on the experience of running these fairs, religious women continued to manage charity fairs for the rest of the century, running out of steam when the nature of American philanthropy, at least among the wealthy, began to change under the sway of financial magnates.

Changing Approaches to Philanthropy

A number of reform movements predated the Civil War period. During the course of the war, abolition overshadowed other concerns. With the cessation of hostilities, however, the remainder of the nineteenth century and then the early twentieth witnessed a burgeoning of reform movements, many influenced especially by religion. If philanthropy can be defined in such a way as to include the contribution of a person's time and effort as well as monetary largesse to further the public good, as many in philanthropic studies now assert, then these movements—including the temperance movement, the social gospel, and the Catholic Worker movement—can be viewed as philanthropic concerns.

Although the goals especially of both the social gospel movement and the Catholic Worker movement tied the improvement of society to a particular theological vision, other forces worked in a very different manner. The age of the social gospel had seen the rise of tremendous wealth in the hands of a few, a situation to which the Catholic Worker was, in part, a response. Such names as Rockefeller and Carnegie became associated with philanthropy. During the early twentieth century and well into midcentury (and later), the monied class developed a view of philanthropy that emphasized the nonsectarian, scientific, and professional nature of philanthropic work. Though religious philanthropy continued apart from the work of the extremely wealthy, one finds that the concerns of those philanthropists did, in fact, take hold in the larger culture. Thus, one finds that some religious philanthropy came to mirror those new emphases.

Though many of the wealthy philanthropists supported their own religious institutions, they emphasized nonsectarian giving. The use of money for philanthropic ends should not, they thought, be restricted by denominational loyalties. Thus, much of the emphasis in the new philanthropy centered on education, medical research, and the scientific elimination of social problems, all undertaken from a nonsectarian perspective.

While the social gospel and later the Catholic Worker trumpeted their theological orientation, it is interesting to note that the religious group that has long maintained a presence in philanthropic work is one that during this very time sought to downplay its original sectarian nature. The Salvation Army, founded in England by William and Catherine Booth, came to the United States in 1880, bringing a very distinctive approach to urban mission. Known for its boisterous services and evangelical religious outlook at first, the movement transformed itself in the early twentieth century by downplaying its particular religious appearance and focusing instead on disaster relief and help for the poor. Through a conscious decision to appear nonsectarian, especially under the leadership of Evangeline Booth starting in 1904, the Salvation Army became one of the largest religious philanthropic organizations in the United States.

While the Salvation Army is a representative embodiment of the push toward nonsectarian appearance in religious philanthropy, giving based on social scientific methods and data has also played a large role in the reimagining of religious philanthropy. Here one can see the way that the social sciences became authoritative in determining social needs, possible solutions, and consequences of action. Again, as one sees

a turn toward social scientific data among the elite philanthropists of the early to mid-twentieth century, this same turn occurred in religious philanthropy.

It has been argued that although sociology as a discipline certainly has nineteenth-century European origins, the earliest implementation of sociological study in the United States was connected to the work of religiously minded people. Albion Small, generally seen as a founding figure in American sociology, established in 1895 the longest-running sociology journal in the United States, the *American Journal of Sociology*, and chaired the first U.S. department of sociology at the University of Chicago. He studied theology at Andover Newton Theological Seminary, and though he was never ordained as a minister, he forever maintained a focus on ethical principles in the study of sociology; for him, sociology was to be a tool for social reform.

One sees this trajectory as well in Graham Taylor, a professor at the Chicago Theological Seminary, adjacent to the University of Chicago, who attempted to solve social problems both through cogent social scientific analysis and personal engagement. He established at his school a department of Christian sociology, the first of its kind. He worked closely with Jane Addams, founder of Hull House, helping to establish and then living in Chicago Commons, a settlement house, whence he could observe firsthand and work on problems related to urban poverty.

Finally, following the third of the emphases coming out of the new philanthropic elite of the first half of the twentieth century, there developed an emphasis on the professional nature of philanthropic work. Schools of social work came into being. This is another contribution of Graham Taylor: he helped create a graduate school of social work that later became the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration. Though much religious philanthropic work maintained its volunteer nature, a new class of managers emerged. Philanthropic endeavors were run like businesses. This became especially important as the scope of religious philanthropic work increased. Both within religious institutions and across institutions and denominations, there was the sense that as the social corpus required an approach that moved beyond focus on simply the individual, so the method for analyzing, collecting, distributing, and accounting for gifts, especially of money, must move to something like the corporate model, with appropriately trained professionals to implement policy.

With these new emphases in philanthropy, however, one still had problems that arose due to the power dynamics

embedded in philanthropic endeavors, religious or secular. The vision held by philanthropic givers does not always square with the vision that the recipients of aid have for themselves. Funding for African American education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries captures this dilemma.

Many organizations, especially religious ones, devoted money, resources, and time to develop educational institutions for African Americans after the Civil War. The question arose: what sort of education would be appropriate? Some educators and religious leaders held to the view that African Americans should have full educational opportunities, including college with a curriculum in the liberal arts. One finds, for example, at the 1895 Congress on Africa, held in Atlanta, a call by several African American leaders for a system of education that moved beyond industrial training, so African Americans could explore the full range of academic subjects. Many of the major philanthropists and philanthropic organizations, including those run by white religious philanthropic boards, discouraged the study of the liberal arts for African Americans. In many cases, funding for African American schools was directly affected by a school's decision about diverging from the industrial school model. Recipients of philanthropy were forced to choose between pursuing their own community's vision of proper education without the necessary resources or acquiescing to pressure to pursue less than desirable goals, but with greater funding. With the change to a philanthropy that so valued the "professional" manager and the growing corporate atmosphere of philanthropic work came concerns and allegations about heavy-handedness and solutions being imposed from the top down.

Giving Goes Global

The twentieth century saw a turn toward the global among both secular philanthropies and religious philanthropies. As knowledge of the world, its problems, and its suffering increased, American religions moved toward organizing to alleviate some of that suffering.

Going abroad was not new with the twentieth century. Especially among Christian groups engaged in missionary work abroad, it became more and more common to see educational, medical, and agricultural aid as part of the evangelistic impulse. Still, one can say that as the twentieth century progressed, more and more of the concern—as religious concern—lay with organized efforts to make the world a better place through such things as hunger and disaster relief,

creating self-sustaining agricultural practices, and providing basic shelter.

Though many groups sprang up to deal with these issues, some became quite large organizations. From the American Catholic Church came Catholic Charities, USA, originally founded in 1910. It serves as an umbrella organization for more than seventeen hundred local agencies devoted to religious philanthropic work. Though it serves constituencies in the United States, it works with Caritas International, an international network of Catholic charities. Among its several goals is to work toward social justice based on its understanding of Catholic social teaching; thus, it is very much concerned with a vision of a better society.

Founded somewhat later (1946), Church World Service (CWS) is the relief arm of the National Council of Churches, which represents thirty-five American denominations, including Protestant, Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox communions. It is engaged as well in international relief efforts, long-term development, and refugee work. CWS's most successful fundraising event each year is its CROP Hunger Walks, which is promoted as an interfaith, multicultural event. Each year, more than two thousand communities participate. The money that is raised is shared with the local community for its hunger projects, while the part that goes to CWS is used to support its grassroots hunger-fighting development programs, undertaken with its international partners.

Though reliant overwhelmingly on religious congregations and their members to support their work, it is the corporate nature of these organizations, each of which helps to redistribute funds from millions of individual religious givers, that characterizes them as international players in modern philanthropic circles. In many ways, they act as any other philanthropic organization, and they are subjected to scrutiny and grading, especially in regard to the amount of money they spend on administrative costs versus the amount that goes out to those in need.

In addition to these institutionally based religious philanthropies, others have taken shape outside traditional religious structures. For example, Habitat for Humanity International was founded to provide affordable housing in the United States, but it has moved on to the international field, operating in ninety countries. Founded in 1976 by Millard and Linda Fillmore, it is an ecumenical Christian organization. Through a combination of no-interest loans, "sweat equity" (or volunteer labor), and community involvement, more than 300,000 homes have been built by Habitat. Another organization, World Vision International, started work in 1950.

Originally an organization that used sponsorships to provide for children (in 1953 the first sponsorships were created to address the problem of the hundreds of thousands of orphans in Korea), it is now an agency that works for hunger relief, community building, and social justice.

It is important to note that often these groups, while providing subsistence, also share with nonreligious philanthropic groups an emphasis on education and self-help, both of which are seen as necessary for groups of people to be able to develop into self-sustaining communities that in the best of outcomes would eventually move away from the need to be philanthropic recipients and toward becoming enablers of others.

Though the focus in this essay has been on Western religious traditions, non-Western religious traditions have certainly made important contributions to philanthropic outlooks. As one example, one could point to concerns about the global environment, including such issues as global warming, sustainable lifestyles, and eco-friendly governmental policies. Many of the leaders in this area have drawn upon the religious traditions of American Indians; Eastern religious traditions; and spiritualist, new age, and neopagan strands of spirituality to form communities of concern and voluntarism to address pressing environmental issues.

Government and Religious Giving

From Winthrop's Massachusetts Bay Colony to Barack Obama's presidency, government and religion in the United States have always had favorable associations. Though the First Amendment banned the establishment of religion by the federal government, it also has served to protect religion. The fact that religion figures into the First Amendment at all is perhaps a sign of how intertwined government and religion have always been.

Though the Christian commonwealth idea eventually passed away even among the states (albeit only after a two-hundred-year period in parts of New England), governments at the state and at the federal level still had to deal with religious questions, whether in the form of immigration policies in the nineteenth century (this particularly in regard to anti-Catholicism among some mainline Protestants); or in terms of how to come to grips with the growing Mormon presence, especially once its stronghold in Utah was established; or how to treat religious organizations in terms of taxation.

This latter issue has had a tremendous effect on the proliferation of philanthropic organizations registered with the IRS, both with religious and nonreligious groups. The tax

code gives the government a great deal of power to encourage religion, in that it gives indirect subsidies to religious groups registered with the IRS by providing them a very desirable tax-exempt status. Though the Revenue Act of 1913 provided a way for charitable contributions to be tax-deductible, the income tax was so low that few institutions took advantage of this part of the law. This changed greatly in 1942. Congress revamped personal income tax law, with much steeper and progressive rates than had been in force before. This provided a great incentive to give money to those groups registered as tax-exempt and eligible to receive tax-exempt donations.

The philanthropic enterprise reached even greater heights when, in the revision of the tax law in 1954, Congress created the 501(c)(3) category, whereby favorable tax-exempt status and tax-exempt donation status was given to approved scientific, religious, and charitable organizations. The effect this has had is staggering. According to Peter D. Hall in “The Welfare State and the Careers of Public and Private Institutions since 1945,” the number of charitable tax-exempt organizations registered with the IRS has grown from about twelve thousand in 1940, to fifty thousand in 1950, to three hundred thousand in the 1960s, to the current estimate of one and a half million entities. This situation obviously involves the federal government in deciding what group is or is not a legitimate religious or charitable organization, which has also pulled in the federal legal system.

In addition to simply determining tax status, however, the government has partnered with specific religious congregations and other religious philanthropic bodies to meet the needs of the poor in the United States. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (pertaining to welfare reform), enacted during President Bill Clinton’s term of office and containing the so-called Charitable Choice provision, evolved during George W. Bush’s presidency into the Faith-Based Initiative of 2000. Under this legislation, religious congregations and other religious groups obtain government aid to dispense in social service ministries. Some have viewed this state of affairs as simply a continuation of government’s historical support (though not establishment) for religion. Others see it as a dangerous line that has been crossed and understand it very much as a type of establishment of religion. This program has also been subject to review by the courts.

A third area in which one can examine the government’s interaction with and oversight of religious philanthropy is its approach to Islam. Though present in the United States since

the introduction of slavery (a small percentage of the slave population was Muslim, though because of the conditions imposed on slaves, no institutions that would sustain Islam were allowed to be created), and despite a period of migration in the latter part of the nineteenth century (many of the immigrants returned to their countries of origin after a period of time), the real increase in the Muslim population did not come until the second half of the twentieth century. Initially many of the early immigrants came as students in the 1960s, and immigration policies changed somewhat in the 1960s as well. With the increase in the Muslim population came an increase in institutions—especially mosques and schools.

Philanthropic work began to flourish in Muslim communities during the 1990s. In addition to mosques and schools, foundations were created. These foundations saw to the needs of the poor and needy, helped with disaster relief, and furthered educational efforts.

Then came 9/11. As the government scoured bank records of charitable Islamic organizations, and as the mood of some in the country became suspicious toward Muslims, the work of the 1990s suffered. It has been estimated that three-fourths of the charitable organizations have folded—donors have become uneasy having their contributions viewed through the lens of terrorism. Though groups such as the Islamic Society of North America and the Council on American-Islamic Relations have worked tirelessly to restore Islam’s image in the United States, it has been suggested that it will take years to rebuild philanthropic structures to be equal to the pre-9/11 levels of giving and aid assistance.

Conclusion: The Future of Religious Philanthropy

Religion has and continues to play a large part in America’s philanthropic activities. In terms of money alone, the figures are compelling. One-third of all monetary donations went to religious organizations (one hundred of approximately three hundred billion dollars given in 2007), and more people give to religious causes than any other. And this is just one telling statistic to add to a very long history of monetary and volunteer support for social causes and cures. From alleviating hunger, to founding orphanages and hospitals, to supporting educational institutions, American religion has been intimately involved in the public arena, putting forth various visions of the good society and pursuing the means necessary to produce results.

Of course, not all money given to religious causes is used for philanthropic purposes; indeed, much of the money stays

in-house, so to speak, to pay for the maintenance especially of houses of worship. Still, some of the gifts do make their way out of the religious institutions into the larger world. Also, there are many religiously inspired and motivated agencies that are institutionally separate from denominations and congregations, and they devote themselves to the eradication of social ills. What is more, oftentimes even houses of worship serve as centers for voluntary activities that have a social outreach—from hosting CROP Walks to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings to food pantries and clothes closets. The power of religion to motivate will continue to make an impact on the varieties of philanthropic activity undertaken by many Americans.

This being said, it must be noted that philanthropy itself, apart from a religious context, invokes great commitment on principle. Indeed, it is interesting to note that Jewish people, who, as a group, tend to give a higher percentage of household income to philanthropic causes, have more and more moved toward secular rather than religious giving. Questions of identity frequently find their way into investigations into Jewish philanthropy. It has been noted that for some Jewish activists, philanthropy has become a way to express Jewishness. Indeed, at one point and time, a rift seemed to have developed between the synagogue and the federations that joined Jewish people together in common philanthropic enterprises (from food relief, to help for Jewish immigrants, to support for Zionism and Israel, to the array of cultural institutions supported by Jewish philanthropies—schools, hospitals, orphanages, and so forth). Work continues to bridge the gap between federation and synagogue—for example, the United Jewish Communities/Jewish Federations of North America, an umbrella organization that is a merger of older and long-standing Jewish philanthropic groups and one of the largest charitable organizations in North America, has as one of its goals to enrich Jewish life, which includes drawing on the resources of Judaic wisdom to help form identity. Still, there lies within this case evidence that philanthropy can itself become an expression of personhood and peoplehood and that such a commitment to an identity based on philanthropic work can transcend traditional religious outlooks to become, in a religious studies sense, religious-like. Thus, our cultural context is, and has been for some time, one in which we may give religiously, so to speak, of money, time, and self, without participating in religious giving, strictly understood.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Benevolent Empire; City Missions; Establishment, Religious; Faith-Based Community Organizations;*

Faith-Based Initiatives; Islam: Tradition and Heritage; Judaism: Jewish Culture; Missions entries; Religion, Regulation of; Social Gospel; Social Reform.

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Philosophical Theology

American philosophical theology is broadly characterized by its orientation toward theological interpretation anchored primarily in reason, rather than being guided by the constraints of confessions and creeds. It reprises the role of “Athens” in Tertullian’s query, “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” A distinctive feature of American philosophical theology is its openness to and valuing of human experience. Jonathan Edwards (1704–1758) is its most original and important figure. Following Calvin, Edwards emphasized in novel ways the absolute sovereignty of God and the beauty of God’s holiness. Yet these themes do not sufficiently encompass the contours of American philosophical theology. A broader context is necessary both to situate Edwards’s thought and to trace the development of three principal trajectories of American philosophical theological thought: (1) the balancing of confessional stances with philosophical language and methods; (2) the skeptical rejection of confessional stances and the commitment to the primacy of philosophical methods oriented toward human experience; and (3) the rejection of the tradition of theological thinking on the grounds of its implicit biases, both epistemological and sociocultural.

Greek and European Roots

Understanding the context within which American philosophical theology emerged requires a cursory historical overview. Philosophical theology has its origins, putatively in Greek pre-Socratic thinking, and developed through Platonic, Aristotelian, and Stoic lines. Its preoccupation with the soul’s relation to God was appropriated by the Alexandrian school (Origen and Clement) of Christianity, which, in turn, achieved its formative expression in the work of Augustine. Thomas Aquinas recast the Augustinian perspective in Aristotelian terms; for much of the history of Christian philosophical theology through the Middle Ages, Augustinian and Thomistic formulations predominated. With the emergence of humanist study in the northern Italian city-states, a more pronounced valuing of human experience began to inform the thinking of humanist reformers (Erasmus, Calvin, Zwingli, Karlstadt). This emphasis, in turn, colored their efforts in the translation of the Bible into the vernacular. By joining learning with faith, their efforts helped extract the Bible from its iconic Catholic framework. Moreover, the vernacular translations enjoyed popular reception, ensuring a new vitality for the Bible.

The response of Orthodox Confessionalism, however, in its attempt to establish uniform belief, eschewed biblical translation in favor of scholarship that would not disturb the stability of religious practice—thereby the joining of faith with learning was effectively sequestered. The intensity of the response of Pietism (a seventeenth-century movement associated initially with Philipp Jakob Spener and August Hermann Francke within the German Lutheran church that aimed at reviving devotion and practical Christianity), with its intent to rehabilitate biblical translations from the rigid encroachments of Lutheran orthodoxy, achieved a renewed iconoclasm. By reinvigorating study of biblical sources and new translations, the Pietist aim of revitalizing of the Bible was not, however, the only outcome. A resurgence of interest in sources deemed apocryphal by the Western church posed a new dilemma that John Locke noted in 1685: what of the Bible reflected divine authority and what merely human artifice? The arguments of the deists (a group of seventeenth-century thinkers, primarily English, whose critical principles of religion substituted the values of natural reason for revealed truth) exploited this dilemma, seeking to undermine the idea of the authority of the Bible, on the grounds that it was a human invention that was constantly reinventing itself, and to promote instead the authority of reason. English (Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume) and Continental (Rene Descartes, Benedictus Spinoza, Gottfried Leibniz) thinkers alike offered interpretations of the biblical literature that varied from the deists but nonetheless were not dependent on confessional theology. Christian Wolff (1679–1754) even attempted to develop an interpretation of the entirety of Protestant Christianity driven entirely by the (adapted) principles of Leibnizian philosophy.

The (politically dominant) Pietists who succeeded in sacking Wolff from his University of Halle professoriate effectively recast the contours of the issue: the lines were drawn between confessional theology and philosophical theology as rightful interpreters of the significance of scripture. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) later reinforced these lines through his critical philosophy, in which he denied theoretical knowledge of God and subordinated practical knowledge of God to the reality of freedom: only that of scripture conforming to the contours of moral freedom could be reckoned intelligible.

From this brief review, it becomes evident that the tension between a (confessional) theologically informed reading of the Bible and a (nonconfessional) critical philosophical theological interpretation of the Bible was the crucible in which

American philosophical theology was forged. It also becomes possible to appreciate the genius and originality of Jonathan Edwards in holding together both parties. His emphasis on beauty, proportion, and the affections was infused into his confessional stance in a fashion that resonates with the zeal of the earliest Pietists.

Transcendentalism

The transcendentalists (Emerson, Thoreau, Channing, and Fuller), however, emphasized a nonconfessional approach to the Bible, pursuing lines of inquiry that were influenced by Locke, Hume, and Kant. For them, the canons of reasonableness (consonance) of biblical themes with human experience predominated. A less strident approach to biblical interpretation, which followed the influence of Kant and the post-Kantians (especially S. T. Coleridge), appeared in Horace Bushnell's (1802–1876) "Preliminary Discourse on Language" and "Our Gospel: A Gift to the Imagination," and in James Marsh's (1794–1842) "Preliminary Essay" to Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*. For both, the role of biblical language as metaphor that shaped and formed human religious self-understanding permitted a reading of biblical literature and its relation to human confessional stances that was more permeable than had been the transcendentalists. Bushnell's figurative linguistic sensibilities, in particular, encountered conflict with the biblical literalism of the confessional Princeton theology (Hodge), whose (Calvinist) perspective stood as one legacy of the Edwardsian inheritance. What was emerging in American philosophical theology, nevertheless, especially as it distanced itself from the protocols of confessional theology, was thus an increasing openness to, and marked valuing of, human experience. This emphasis remained consistent with the experiential pole of Edwards's thinking.

Pragmatism and Culture Protestantism

The privileging of human experience inchoate in the early American proponents of philosophical theology crystallized in the thought of the pragmatists (Charles Peirce, William James, George Mead, and John Dewey, who taught that the truth of propositions was to be found in the effects or consequences of actions guided by them). For them, the significance of religious themes lay not so much in their "intrinsic" value as in the fruits that they bore. The truth of religious themes, in other words, was to be measured in their effects in action; what mattered about biblical themes—indeed, their truth—was the way they played out in human behavior. This experiential emphasis of the pragmatists stood in paradoxical

relation to the idealists (William Harris, Henry Brokmeyer, Josiah Royce)—inasmuch as many of the pragmatists had Hegelian leanings—for whom the working out of the idea of Christianity provided a guide for the interpretation of human experience. The spirit of the American Hegelians resonated, as well, with the followers of the post-Kantian Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1899), who claimed a link between scriptural teachings (independent value judgments) and moral progress in culture that could appeal to both the idealists and pragmatists. Faculties at the Divinity School at Chicago, Union Theological Seminary, and Yale Divinity School were drawn to variants of the Ritschlian program as a way to emphasize biblically inspired social transformation while simultaneously thwarting the advance of biblical orthodoxy.

For a brief period, American theologies of "Culture Protestantism" (the identification of obedience to Christ with loyalty to the highest ideals, institutions, and practices of a society) and philosophical theology (in its pragmatic guise) achieved a rapprochement, if not an alliance, in the face of a common adversary: a renewed effort to establish the primacy of the Bible and the inerrancy of scripture. This new orthodoxy sought to unmask the pretensions of delusions of Culture Protestantism: Locke's dilemma of the divine or human status of biblical materials reappeared, along with the conviction that only as the Bible was emancipated from its Enlightenment interpretation could its truth represent itself. Despite the resurgence of the experiential orientation in Paul Tillich's (1886–1965) philosophical theology, turning upon the problem of human anxiety and the promise of a new sense of being (grounded in the courage to reject theism), and its concomitant introduction of themes from post-Kantian idealism and Heideggerian "existentialism," the new wave of biblical orthodoxy (along with variant forms of neo-orthodoxy) extended its reach.

Death of God Theology and Responses (A-Theology)

The "Death of God" themes of Thomas J. J. Altizer (1927–), William Hamilton (1924–), Paul van Buren (1924–1998), and (from a slightly different perspective) Richard Rubenstein (1924–) carried the claims of the new orthodoxy to their logical conclusion: if God alone was the truth of the biblical materials, and nothing of human cultural artifice was to be entertained, then there existed no point of contact between the divine and human spheres to which either confessing theologies or philosophical theologies could attach. Accordingly, the Bible's reinvention of itself abruptly had

come to an end in the apocalyptic moment of the self-realization of God *as wholly other*. Confessing evangelical theologians found this conclusion abhorrent; philosophical theologians tended to embrace it.

Some philosophical theologians found in this conclusion the warrant for continued exploration of the human imaginative processes (Julian Hart, Ray Hartt, Robert Scharlemann, Langdon Gilkey, Edward Farley, Gordon Kaufman, Peter Hodgson, David Tracy) or for alternative interpretive structures, such as “Process” philosophical theology (Henry Nielson Wieman, Daniel Day Williams, Charles Hartshorne, Bernard Meland, Schubert Ogden, Marjorie Suchocki, John Cobb, David R. Griffin). Others saw in this conclusion the requirement to develop critiques of modernity (Leszek Kolakowski, Alasdair MacIntyre, Judith Butler, David Kolb). Alongside these explorations of human imaginative processes and modernity critiques, far-reaching assaults upon the unstated assumptions of philosophical-theological interpretations of human faithfulness emerged. These assumed the form of liberation advocacy and incorporated emphases on race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and ecology; eventually they began to inform the philosophical-theological endeavor (Cornel West, John Cobb, Ellen Armour, Catherine Keller).

But the most aggressive response to the “Death of God” themes came from those who saw in them profound ties with Continental philosophers’ calls for the end of “onto-theology” (Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida). The preoccupation of the late Heidegger (1889–1976) with problems of language and writing were pushed to new frontiers in both Levinas (1906–1995) and Derrida (1930–2004). A new generation of American philosophical theology appeared; pursuing the irreducibility of any writing to a single, definable meaning (John Caputo, Mark C. Taylor, Carl Raschke, Charles Winquist), these philosophical theologians announced the “end of theology” (confessional theology), and the triumph of “a-theology.”

In effect, this group of “deconstructionist” philosophical theologians repeats the skepticism of the deists. It was the deists, after all, who were early persuaded that it was theology, and not the Bible, wherein the fundamental problem lay. And in a fashion that inversely mirrors the desire of eighteenth-century metaphysicians to develop the contours of an underlying rationality that can incorporate biblical themes independent of a confessing theological stance, these deconstructionists have attempted to mount an a-rational, post-modern, a-theology that negates the founding principles of American philosophical theology: as Mark C. Taylor (1945–)

expresses it, the antagonism between confessing and philosophical theology proves itself chimerical in the space that appears “after God.”

See also *Bible* entries; *Common Sense Realism*; *Death of God Theology*; *Deism*; *Enlightenment*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Idealist Philosophy*; *Neo-Orthodoxy*; *Neo-Thomism*; *Philosophy*; *Pietism*; *Post-modernism*; *Practical Theology*; *Pragmatism*; *Religious Thought* entries; *Social Ethics*; *Systematic Theology*; *Transcendentalism*.

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Philosophy

This entry makes no presumptions concerning a firm definition of *philosophy* in the context of religion in the United States because *philosophy* can refer to any number of intellectual trajectories. Instead, this entry focuses on prototypical philosophy in colonial North America, deism and religion in the context of the American Revolution, America's native transcendentalism, classical U.S. philosophy (pragmatism), and the combined impact of these historical movements on contemporary philosophical schools and traditions. Philosophy can and should be connected with liberal and political theology as expressed in U.S. Catholicism, other forms of Christianity, or, for that matter, other forms of religious traditions that also contribute to a rich understanding of the philosophical climate of religion in the United States. In the present context, early philosophical thought in the United States is the domain of the philosophical amateur; the first "American" philosophers were preachers, theologians, intellectuals, and, only vaguely, philosophers.

Philosophy and Religion in Colonial North America

Some of the earliest philosophical thinking in North America came from the Puritans and Congregationalists, represented by individuals such as John Winthrop (1588–1649) and Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). Philosophy in the United States therefore developed in a theological, cultural framework. *Theology* can mean the systematic study of theoretical religious problems, and in Calvinism, the default Protestant view of many colonial groups such as the Congregationalists, theology can include the philosophical articulation and clarification of doctrines such as original sin and the covenant that extends from each individual to the entire Congregational community.

Early religious attitudes toward nature view scientific knowledge and discovery as religious activity insofar as the

observation of nature is simultaneously the activity of discerning the will of God, and hence of benefit morally, spiritually, and philosophically. Edwards's desire to boldly seek firsthand accounts of nature and God expresses his appreciation of John Locke's (1632–1704) invitation in his Epistle to the Reader in *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) to be dissatisfied with secondhand opinions and to follow truth wherever the trail leads in an air of free inquiry.

Edwards's focus on a "religious empiricism" is an early form of naturalism in U.S. religion. Finding its roots in philosophers such as Locke and represented by thinkers such as Thomas Reid (1710–1796), Scottish common-sense realism was formative for early U.S. articulations of the empirical, natural, and religious. Demonstrated by way of analogy with a mirror, Edwards suggests that whatever is reflected in the world is a result of God, an expression of God, and remains present only as long as its image is retained in God's mind. Our being ultimately and absolutely depends on the moment-to-moment display of images before the mirror: images or ideas for God, but empirical realities for human beings. Edwards understands God not as a super being but as the activity of being itself. God continuously participates in worldly events; therefore, we relate with God in our existence, in our very being. What Edwards calls "God's Excellency," his creation and participation in relations in the world, is revealed within nature. God is the perfection of relations—relating all with all.

Events of religious historical significance in the United States such as the Great Awakening (religious revivals starting roughly around 1740 to 1742 and continuing into the nineteenth century) raised issues about the limits of religious enthusiasm, and a major concern in early Congregational communities was the establishment and maintenance of a rational foundation for the faith. Contrary to some caricatures Calvinism has a clear rational component, the default theological perspective of most Protestants in Colonial America, and in Congregationalism in particular. On a more popular level, revivals provide a return to a more emotional and radical expression of Protestantism. The conversion experiences brought on by the Great Awakenings were either accepted in communities as momentary irruptions of the Holy Spirit that could be tempered by reason or were rejected as irrational and enthusiastic distortions of true religious feeling. Such decisions influenced the formation and degradation of religious communities, as people's experiences were accepted or rejected and as authority was reinforced or challenged.

The possible conflict between the emotional and intellectual components of U.S. Protestantism foreshadowed later tensions between scientific and religious knowledge, but early U.S. thinkers were predominantly interested in the *lines of relation* between science and religion; only since the beginning of the twentieth century have many U.S. philosophers and scientists opted to sever such ties.

Congregationalists enlist the arguments of French logician Pierre de la Ramée (1515–1572, also known as Peter Ramus) for self-regulated religious congregations. Congregationalism possesses a community covenant that requires each member to adhere to the authority of the community because God's covenant is binding on the community as a whole, as well as on the individual. One's life in general, and one's religious experiences in particular, must run the gauntlet of congregational acceptance. The role of the religious community extends from a collective form of the covenantal relationship with God to an understanding of how knowledge is shaped by communal experience. Sources for knowledge could be deemed acceptable by the community or denied, leaving the individual somewhat determined by the wider social community.

Communal epistemological consent would either come to a close (in the restricted Congregationalist sense) or expand to become a pluralized principle where one's experiences meet the challenges of a much more eclectic gauntlet; the narrowness or wideness of permissibility of this gauntlet is a precise way of speaking to the emerging liberal and conservative trends in philosophy and religion in the United States. The resemblance to the forum of public opinion today is striking.

Edwards may be the best representative of the period: He believed that religion in general was first and foremost evangelical—namely, it should effect spiritual and psychological transformations at the most basic levels of human experience. Edwards avoided both excessive emotionalism and intellectualism in *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746) and viewed the practical results of acting in the world as one positive indication of the religious state of being of an individual. Edwards's psychology of affections included the whole range of human faculties, but one particular positive outcome of religious affections was the practical turn to action as proof of a saintly character. The benefits of experiences such as conversion would be revealed in due time through the righteous action of the converted, and in this context Edwards began a long tradition in U.S. philosophy and religion of referring to the biblical pragmatic dictum "You will

know them by their fruits" (ESV: Matthew 7:16). Right ethical action and behavior corroborate claims to relations with the divine. Edwards's religious philosophy treats conversion as a radical transformation whereby one sees God's excellent relations established in the world of nature. This "new sense of the heart" established lines of relation between individual believers and all other creation, emphasizing a connection between a religious, transformative experience and relations as a felt experience of connection in the world. To be religious was to feel related to God and all creation. He therefore believed conversion was a controlled ecstasy that did not provide any new knowledge about scripture or about revelation per se but enabled the right orientation toward revealed knowledge.

Despite Edwards's heavy involvement in the Great Awakening and his qualified acceptance of revival experiences in his religious community, he nevertheless insisted on the connection between religious experience and rationality. Religion is a matter of the affections, having feelings and thoughts at its core, but it needs to mesh with the expected repertoire of empirical knowledge, scriptural knowledge, and communal expectations.

The strategic use of powerful language in these prototypical stages of both philosophy and religion in the United States cannot be underestimated. The Great Awakening was successful partly because figures such as George Whitefield (1714–1770) and Edwards were masters at using language to create emotional, religious responses. Oratory is acknowledged as being of paramount importance for affecting the U.S. public, whether in eighteenth-century revivals or twenty-first century presidential elections.

The idea of a communal covenant in New England only works insofar as there is cultural homogeneity. With religious and political pluralism rapidly emerging, a widespread covenant necessarily became untenable. Nevertheless such a theological context provided sources for the first birth pangs of philosophy in North America. The focus on feelings, affections, and nature were all themes that resurfaced in future expressions.

Following Edwards's trail, later U.S. intellectuals attempted to identify as either philosophers or theologians. Theologians were trained to be aware of the predominant trends in natural philosophy (what would later become natural science) and were the front line for conveying philosophical ideas on a public and popular level. Other figures loomed large during revolutionary times when religion still played an active role in intellectual culture, even if the architects of the new nation

viewed their desire for liberty in more rational terms than in religious ones.

Deism, Liberty, and Revolutionary Religion

Philosophy never takes the place of faith in the United States, even when that faith appears to be more philosophical than religious. Deism focuses on God's majesty and perfection as Creator, with God famously likened to a watchmaker and reason our tool for accessing the divine machinery. The Deists—in this context including Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), James Madison (1751–1836), Thomas Paine (1737–1809), and George Washington (1732–1799)—formed a new nation as a combined result of Enlightenment ideas, a desire for a republican form of government, and a naturalistic appreciation of the creative genius of God.

Paine, while critiquing Christianity, nevertheless was a religious individual who saw nature as an expression of God. Nature is the Deists' Bible. The Deists assume a universal belief in God and argue for an interpretation of religion that rejects and avoids superstition or the authority of revelation. The Deists were also early empiricists in the U.S. tradition following Locke's lead. Nature's rationality was suggestive of divine rationality—not just suggestive, but derivative of God's rationality.

Paine's *The Age of Reason*, commenced in 1794 and completed in 1795, expresses the Deists' rejection of all explanations of religion that involve recourse to supernaturalism. Deists therefore criticize the shortcomings of human superstition and celebrate the "perfection of the Deity" as witnessed throughout creation. The cue taken from Paine's critique of Christianity as revealed religion is sometimes exaggerated into the mistaken belief that he was not religious, which is inaccurate. In *Common Sense* (1776) he argued the biblical foundations of republican liberty, suggesting that the emergence of a king in the Old Testament was an unfortunate result of a mass delusion. Before the anointment of the king, the Hebrew people were a roughly shaped republic. The reasons for rejecting a king are related back to the sin of holding anyone or anything up to an equal level with God. The idea of not bowing before any king besides God is attractive to Deists and other Protestants alike because it reinforces a rational principle of autonomy for some and an emotional covenant for others.

The persistent existence of war, hatred, and intolerance, attributed to superstition and blind allegiance to revelation, were part of the justification for such a revision of traditional

Christian notions of God. However, the revolutionaries in colonial America fostered a religious attitude that made the situation there quite different from the atheistic revolution in France. The Deists were intellectually responsible for the creation of the nation but Protestants saw divine providence written all over it.

The political anti-imperialism of the revolution bears an affinity to the antiestablishment attitude of many Christian communities in the United States, and ultimately this shows itself in the nineteenth-century example of the liberal avoidance of traditional, institutionalized religion.

Transcendentalism

Bold reactions against traditional constraints on philosophy and religion continued in U.S. intellectual culture into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The most cited example of a distinctively U.S. style of philosophical and religious thought is New England transcendentalism. This heterogeneous group, unified more by geography than by philosophy, included figures such as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) and Margaret Fuller (1810–1850), and later influenced such individuals as Francis Ellingwood Abbot (1836–1903). The right of free inquiry was a key component of their principles. With Emerson's support, Abbot went on to form the Free Religious Association in 1867 that declared free inquiry a necessary element of its understanding of "free religion."

Emerson was influenced by the Enlightenment and German idealism, but access to this philosophy was acquired through romantics such as Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), and William Wordsworth (1770–1850), rather than Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831). Transcendentalism may be the first truly U.S. philosophy partly because it revamped transplanted philosophical ideas—for better or for worse. Some scholars prefer to call transcendentalism a literary movement rather than a school of philosophy.

A few elements from the European Romantics played out in transcendentalism: the interconnected nature of all beings, intuitive powers of humans, repugnance to metaphysical dualisms, and rejection of positivism. Nature is an organism rather than a machine. The creative artist becomes the ideal type, the ultimate person. Romanticism was most certainly not a Christian intellectual development, but the Romantic focus on intuition fits nicely with the basic transcendentalist emphasis on naturally uncovering the secrets of the world by being in it and experiencing it through intuitions that

transcend the ordinary. This represents a new U.S. philosophical *and* religious perspective.

As a representative philosophical perspective, transcendentalism is a reaction against both pietism (emotionalism) and rationalism (intellectualism) for being too constraining on religious freedom. Emerson thought transcendentalism to be groundbreaking enough to suggest that it was a cutting-edge U.S. form of German idealism. The transcendentalists also expressed some of the quintessential preferences of U.S. religion and culture. Imagination, creativity, and action all supersede reason, theory, and contemplation. The traces of such a hierarchy extended to the later-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century suspicion of religious institutions (theology among them) as the social sedimentation of vicious intellectualism—an intellectualism that is dogmatic and absolute. Transcendentalism was religious, secular, and humanist. Transcendentalism is pivotal for understanding religious trajectories within U.S. culture that do not conveniently fit in the category of “Christianity,” or other standard religious, denominational distinctions. Emerson’s lamentations about the individual’s reliance on the wisdom of other saints and sages, rather than reliance on one’s own intuitions, suggests a clear distinction between secondhand experience and firsthand experience. He also interestingly enough laments not having enough indigenous, U.S. wisdom and U.S. religious literature. Emerson extended Kant’s dictum *Sapere Aude!* (dare to think) into the religious and spiritual realm. It might be helpful to think of transcendentalism as a religious extension of some of Kant’s ideas—for example, scholars suggest that Emerson’s Over Soul or Universal Mind is a religious result of Kant’s transcendental unity of apperception, a technical, unifying feature of experiencing the world, made into an absolute Spirit by Hegel, and eventually spiritualized and made immanent by the transcendentalists. Emerson was a universalist in the sense of believing in a higher being to which we are all intimately connected.

In *Nature* (1836) Emerson asks why his generation is doomed to an indirect relation with the world, and he laments that we no longer see nature face to face, but only through the eyes of previous generations. He simultaneously outlines the basic idea of the contextualization of all encounters of experience—the epistemologically important idea of how our previous experiences radically shape what we will see in the future—and reacts against mental petrification, admonishing the reader to find the new and novel in experience. Such insights suggest a desire for directness and immediacy when it comes to talking about and experiencing God,

but also speak to the spiritual need for a uniquely U.S. religious vision. An essential component of Emerson’s transcendentalism is the uniquely U.S. flavor of such a trailblazing spirituality.

The theology latent in liberalism seeks to erase the remoteness of God and replace it with an intimacy resulting from an immanent idea of God. The traditional Christian response was to make immanence problematic because it suggested no need for the sacrifice of Jesus if God has always been of one “substance” with the world. Liberals typically humanized Jesus with the corollary that critics of liberalism suggested that sin went unacknowledged. The converse was also true: Transcendentalism partly affirmed the divinity of human beings rather than one particular being. In this vein we might conclude that the humanization of Jesus is synonymous with the divinization of humanity. This is what John Dewey (1859–1952) formulated in the following century.

Under the cultural guise of transcendentalism we also have an early intellectual analysis of gender in Fuller’s *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845), and many of the Promethean themes in Emerson are reflected in Fuller’s avoidance of mediocrity. Fuller set the stage for a much more sophisticated feminist understanding of society with the social work and thought of such exemplars as Jane Addams (1860–1935). Addams echoed Dewey’s belief that religion is more bound up with our possibilities as human beings within this world.

With Charles Darwin’s (1809–1882) evolutionary theory, religious orthodoxy required new philosophical foundations. Nature did not operate like clockwork; it was ambiguous, brutal, inefficient, arbitrary, and random. Speaking about the world as the “perfection of the deity” would fall on many deaf ears. So the Darwinian controversy became a cultural issue because the arbiter of culture shifts from the minister to the scientist, but the scientists turn away from the public and establish technical journals. Thus philosophy, in its quest to merge or become synonymous with science, loses its comprehensive, “synoptic” function. But before we lament the end of a special era in U.S. philosophy, let us more adequately grasp this new way of looking at traditional philosophical problems.

Classical U.S. Philosophy

“Classical American philosophy” is a currently accepted term for U.S. pragmatism; the term emphasizes that some thinkers who belong to the era of classical U.S. philosophy were not explicitly pragmatists, and, perhaps more importantly, classical

U.S. philosophers were discussing issues that include but go beyond today's understanding of pragmatism. Nineteenth-century philosophers were wrestling with personal religious crises, but philosophy was already becoming a professor-bound endeavor by the end of the nineteenth century. U.S. philosophical culture bore traces of the religious before the twentieth century, but *philosophy* eventually emerged as a distinct intellectual discipline outside of theology. This came at the cost of philosophy losing its intimate affiliations with U.S. religious ideas.

Speaking in 1852 in Rochester as an abolitionist and free-man, Frederick Douglass (c. 1817–1895) encouraged free and critical debate surrounding slavery because he was convinced that through philosophical debate issues such as slavery are brought out into the open, into the public forum. In this forum Douglass rightly predicted a short life for the philosophy of the slave master. Slavery was abolished, and philosophy in the United States developed out of the religious and political aftermath; the clear pragmatic differences between the two sides in the Civil War would reiterate the U.S. need for direct and immediate fruits for religiously motivated action.

U.S. transcendentalism may be the first bona fide U.S. amateur philosophy. The foundations laid by intellectual figures such as Emerson helped engender associations such as the Metaphysical Club, a gathering of individuals including William James (1842–1910) and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) who discussed a variety of topics, religion among them. The Metaphysical Club was a philosophical and intellectual cultural circle and suggests the best of the U.S. culture of amateur or popular philosophy.

Philosopher and Harvard professor James's Gifford Lectures were published as *The Varieties of Religious Experience* in 1902. *Varieties* is a philosophical and psychological description of religious and mystical experience. Foreseeing Dewey's later refusal to admit the existence of any essence called "religion," James settled on a sequence of self-defeating definitions, but only after much struggle, and ended up delimiting religion as a feeling of continuity with something seemingly divine in our solitary life: a vague definition supporting James's own vague sense of being religious. *Varieties* serves as an excellent historical timepiece for how U.S. culture publicly and popularly referred to religious experiences, most of which in *Varieties* are Protestant conversion experiences. James focused on individuals who claim experiences, manifest the benefits of religious experience through their actions, and show the fruits of their labor in a social setting—hence

James's preference for the saintly, "this-worldly" religious hero, a Promethean prototype based partly on the "heroic mysticism" of James's godfather, Emerson.

James, before Dewey, did not think that there was any essential thing that the word "religion" referred to. Dewey explicitly rejects any essential element of religion, but opts to talk about the quality that makes any experience potentially "religious." Dewey's idea of religion takes away the need for institutions and religious authority to maintain a corporate hold on "religion." The turn away from institutions has been criticized as shortsightedness by James because his focus on the individual implies a demotion of the social, but his and Dewey's intentions were more than an exaggerated focus on the individual self; if there is no essential "religion" lying at the core of all of these various human practices, it being rather the immediate social context of experiences that determines the "religiousness" of the moment, then no institution should claim any sort of exclusive or special access to such a "phenomenon."

With some classical U.S. philosophers, such as James and Dewey, perspectives on religion underwent a radical paradigm shift because religion no longer necessarily involved the supernatural. Dewey suggested that both atheists and religious people make the mistake of claiming that religion must deal with the supernatural. In Dewey's day the *Oxford English Dictionary* defined God as an unseen power, and Dewey rejected the definition and one kind of idea about religion, which James never clearly did. The divine and the natural are connected and not dualistically separated in this scheme. For the pragmatists nature is "God's great poem," but the implication is that the poet stands inside rather than outside of his work. The turn toward nature effected by Edwards and Emerson continued radically with the pragmatists, but such naturalism was not pressed in the service of arguments from design for the existence of the classic supernatural God. Dewey relocates religious concerns by taking them away from a supernatural context and placing them into a natural world of human social experiences.

The pragmatists are naturalists not because they choose to focus on what can be seen versus the unseen, but because there is no necessary supernaturalism; what is seen and what is unseen all takes place within the natural world and not in a transnatural reality. James affirmed the idea of amateur philosopher Benjamin Paul Blood, expressed in the 1874 pamphlet *The Anaesthetic Revelation*, that the secret of Being was hidden and overlooked, while remaining right beneath our feet, not off in another world, dimension, or heaven. The

really real (God, that which most truly “is”) is temporal, in the world, intimately embedded in human experience, and not absolute. Although immanent and intimate, the real is elusive and vague because it is hidden by being embedded within nature. Because of such embeddedness, Dewey talks about the humanization of divinity and the divinization of humanity in *A Common Faith* as a way for nonreligious thinkers to still see the religious within their own philosophical, social, and ethical experiences. Dewey produced a religious philosophy for the scientist who does not have a capacity to be traditionally religious, but we should also bear in mind Dewey’s emphasis on the idea of education as itself being an essentially religious enterprise.

Edwards, James, and Dewey all call on the already-mentioned biblical idea of knowing the truth of something “by its fruits, not its roots.” The fruits of action outweigh concerns about the origins or roots of one’s actions; the significance of the actions comes from the context of the actions themselves rather than from any metaphysical shell or architectonic structure that purports to contain and determine all possible interpretations and contexts of an action. Such a focus on the community as arbiter of experience resonates with later concerns for the need for our ideas to run the pragmatic gauntlet within the collective social world of experience. James and Dewey express a tolerance of religion based on its verifiability within social practice.

James’s notion of relations within the world as bearing religious fruit is best expressed in *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909), which concludes with an unexpected picture of a pluralistic universe as hyper-intimate, closely connected through myriad relations within the world, and having a clear sense of the divine as embedded in such a world. The emphasis on relations is historically connected with Edwards’s celebration of the excellency of God reflected in God’s ability to establish relations and be the relations between all things. Within the world of relations and experience, the world of vague betweenness was a religious mystery that James believed substitutes for other traditional religious objects (supernatural Gods and experiences), primarily because the pluralistic, mystical universe was also ineffable.

The importance of the role of the power of language as seen in the Great Awakening was not lost in the classical phase of U.S. philosophy. We see the manifestation of a passion for the power of words in James’s discussion in *Varieties* of the effects of mystical language on the sympathetic listener or reader: Such words affect one like music by mixing or integrating aspects of religious feeling and philosophical

thinking. The United States is swayed by and sways by way of the right use of effective forms of language that trigger more than purely intellectual or philosophical responses.

Not all classical U.S. philosophers were purely identified with the pragmatist tradition. Josiah Royce (1855–1916) holds a unique position in the history of philosophy and religion in the United States, being considered one of America’s representative philosophers while expressing the philosophical position of absolute idealism, a position traced back to Hegel that ultimately distanced Royce from the general tenor of U.S. philosophy, even while Royce developed an interest in the mechanics of Peirce’s philosophical system. James and Royce were both public philosophers in the sense that they believed that a discussion of philosophy was suitable for the general public and necessary for social edification; at the same time, however, the discipline became increasingly internally bureaucratized. When philosophy loses its “synoptic” role in the university, it has also lost its synoptic role culturally, and such a loss cuts to the heart of the proactive, dynamic, and religious aspects of classical U.S. philosophy. “Uniquely American” religion is the result of a combination of factors: a sense of personal initiative about what is good or bad theology; a sense of a personal relationship with God, the world, or other individuals; the divinity of humankind as stressed by transcendentalism; and the emancipation of the religious from the supernatural.

The Legacy of U.S. Philosophy and Religion

As U.S. philosophy became increasingly professionalized, its cultural ties with U.S. religion became weaker. Hyper-specialization, the emergence of logical positivism, and the analytic, philosophical approach downgraded the importance of the philosophy of the pragmatists as being, at best, formative but pre-professional. Although the early U.S. tradition did inform a functional and “use-oriented” approach in the mainstream professional understanding of philosophy and language, nevertheless some figures continued in the U.S. style along similar lines as James and Dewey to maintain a connection between philosophical and religious discussions.

The Chicago School of Theology was a classic manifestation of the enormous influence of James, Dewey, and George Herbert Mead (1863–1931). In the early twentieth century numerous professors of religion and theology claimed allegiances with pragmatism—for example, Edward Scribner Ames (1870–1958), George Burman Foster (1858–1919), Shirley Jackson Case (1872–1947), Gerald Birney Smith (1868–1829), and Shailer Mathews (1863–1941). By

mid-century the Chicago School came under fire from Karl Barth (1886–1968) for being too liberal. Currently connected with the Chicago School is the Highlands Institute for American Religious and Philosophical Thought, publishers of *The American Journal of Philosophy and Theology*. Members of the institute focus on naturalism in both theology and philosophy and promote the connections between U.S. traditions of philosophy and liberal religion.

General themes of process, relation, and creativity in contemporary theological and philosophical work indicate the legacy of classical U.S. philosophy. The empirical tradition in U.S. religious thought is connected with process theology, where God is envisioned as intimately connected with the world and affected by the relations and experiences of novelty within the world of process and experience. Such trends are best represented in the U.S. context with the thought of Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) and Charles Hartshorne (1897–2000), but they also owe a debt to the creative philosophy of Henri Bergson (1859–1941). We see the influence of Bergson most succinctly in James's *A Pluralistic Universe*. Jerome Stone and other religious naturalists see a religious response in the world as possible “naturally,” without an overarching supreme being or foundation of all being. Stone traces this historically in U.S. intellectual culture back to George Santayana (1863–1952), a student of James and Dewey and a philosopher not easily lumped in with the pragmatists, and Henry Nelson Wieman (1884–1975). Wieman was influenced by James when Wieman articulated religious ideas about relating to a higher power continuous with our own lives, recalling James's vague definition in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Wieman's empirical theology analyzes how to actualize such an experience. The creative process within nature is suggestive of God, but Wieman is not a supernaturalist, and in this vein it is best to describe Wieman's thought as radically empirical along the lines of James's emphasis on the reality of experience as starting point for an empirical perspective.

A sophisticated understanding of pluralism is essential to properly situate the U.S. religious visions of James and individuals such as Addams and Mary Parker Follett (1868–1933), both of whom used pluralistic attitudes at the heart of their social work and writings. Perhaps we can see the social work that Addams and Follett accomplished is a creative and social expression of the early pluralistic perspective of “interactional pluralism,” where, for example, Follett presents reality as the most dynamic precisely in the “activity-between”—the interactions between things create new possibilities within society.

The educational emphasis of Addams and Follett make their work intimately connected to Dewey's sense of the educational as “religious” or emancipatory.

The connections between first-wave feminists such as Addams and the classical U.S. philosophical tradition are clear. Key themes in exclusively male philosophy from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were also part of the intellectual armament of women philosophers and intellectuals. After documenting the misogynistic aspects of classical U.S. philosophy, some feminist philosophers (such as Charlene Haddock Seigfried) suggest that there are lines of overlap between the basic epistemological models of a general theory of feminism and the organic logic behind pragmatism. Feminist theologians have both critiqued the classical U.S. philosophical perspective and applauded the various advantages of a nonhegemonic, epistemological starting point (see, for example, the recent work of Grace Jantzen). Future trajectories may draw a more intimate genealogical connection between classical U.S. philosophy and the basic philosophical questions and approaches in U.S. feminist philosophy and theology.

Black theology of liberation attempts to theologize the social plight of those discriminated against and oppressed. The second wave of black theology of liberation can be represented by the popular and ecumenical Cornel West, who crafted a response to African Americans in a broader Marxist socialist critique that does not reject the religious and Christian components of the U.S. cultural situation. West intends to show the way out by a return to earlier U.S. traditions of philosophy such as pragmatism to build a uniquely U.S. vocabulary of liberation.

West's discussion in *The American Evasion of Philosophy* of the Niebuhr brothers, Reinhold and H. Richard, demonstrates a range of possible philosophical and religious attitudes in the United States. West believes Reinhold Niebuhr continues the evasion of “epistemology-centered philosophy” that was cultivated by Emerson and later classical U.S. philosophy by focusing on the moral life. H. Richard Niebuhr criticizes his brother for reading religion through the lens of mystics and ascetics, instead of through St. Paul, St. Augustine, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. Such a difference reiterates the U.S. propensity for philosophical and intellectual culture that is either more liberal, emotive, and experiential, or more rationally rigid but still, nevertheless, connected to the religious.

When Winthrop wrote the sermon “A Model of Christian Charity” aboard the *Arbella* in 1630, he could not have

foreseen the long-lasting footprint of his metaphorical vision of the future. Even though Winthrop's admonitions were part of a sermon warning Puritans in the New World that they were on display, nevertheless he contributes to the basic philosophical vision latent in the United States that sees its destiny to be both unique and emblematic of the best qualities of an active, rational, and spiritual soul. Winthrop's vision of creating a city on a hill, a spiritual beacon for the world to see, is philosophical in the sense that religious intellectuals in the United States quickly appropriated "nation-building" metaphors for their new experiences and used this magnetic symbol to yield new U.S. philosophies. For example, "trailblazing" could indicate territorial as well as spiritual and intellectual expansion, and it is precisely in that sense that in one of his first articulations of pragmatism, "Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results" (1898), James refers to philosophy's primary function of trailblazing, of making the strange familiar and the familiar strange, ideas taken up repeatedly by later philosophers such as Richard Rorty.

Rorty provides a renewed Deweyan interpretation of religion toward the end of his life in his dialogue with Gianni Vattimo published as *The Future of Religion* in 2005. Here religion is viewed positively as a key part of the lives and experiences of human beings. Rorty repeats the ultimately "anticlerical" stance in the U.S. tradition, viewing institutions of religion as static and hurdles to the divinization of humanity and a focus on "this world." Rorty's anticlericalism could be integrated with Dewey's methodology of placing all objects of inquiry in their rich context, suggesting a future philosophy that continues the naturalized perspective while continuing to acknowledge, study, and critically evaluate the cultural influences of religious institutions.

See also *Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Common Sense Realism; Death of God Theology; Deism; Emotion; Enlightenment; Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Great Awakening(s); Idealist Philosophy; Liberation Theology; Nature and Nature Religion; Neo-Orthodoxy; Neo-Thomism; Philosophical Theology; Postmodernism; Pragmatism; Psychology of Religion; Puritans; Religious Studies; Religious Thought: Feminist; Romanticism; Science; Systematic Theology; Transcendentalism; Unitarians.*

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Pietism

Pietism, a Protestant movement of renewal that began in Europe in the seventeenth century, has had a long influence in America. Two strands of Protestantism intertwined in pietism. Those in the first strand, known as churchly pietism, remained loyal to the established Protestant churches. The second strand was radical pietism, the separatist wing, which often generated new groups. The two strands cannot be easily separated. Pietism in general has had an impact on Christian theology and ethics, education, devotional life and practices, benevolent work, and mission impulses.

Definitions

The deeper roots of pietism are in English Puritanism with its desire for godly living and evidence of lively faith, and

especially in those Puritan influences in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century. In the Netherlands a renewal movement emerged known as the “further reformation” (*nadere reformatie*). Its leaders stressed Sabbath observance, disciplined Christian living, and worthy reception of Communion, and sometimes small group meetings for devotion. This movement spread to Germany in the 1660s through the German Reformed pastors who studied in the Netherlands. Thus reformed pietism preceded Lutheran pietism. In addition to these roots, a native German spiritual tradition, including Johann Arndt’s *True Christianity*, as well as more esoteric influences such as Jacob Boehme and Christianized Kabbalah, contributed to pietism. Christian Kabbalists were a small network of people in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who sought deeper spiritual insights into the Bible by exploring Jewish mystical texts such as the Zohar and adding Christian interpolations. Many pietists were interested in Roman Catholic quietist writings translated into German. Quietists such as Antoinette Bourignon, Miguel Molinos, and Madame Guyon sought deeper spiritual experience, which they believed was accessible through total spiritual passivity, sometimes implying that the sacraments were not paramount for awareness of God’s grace. Thus, pietism was a movement emerging from many roots with heterogeneous emphases.

Defining pietism is problematic; it depends on how widely or narrowly it is defined. More narrowly defined, pietism refers to the renewal movement within German Protestantism, especially Lutheranism, as well as the various separatist individuals and groups that came from radical pietism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, pietism from Germany, both within and outside the established churches, spread well beyond Germany and continued to generate movements well after the eighteenth century. W. R. Ward places pietism inside a larger movement of Protestant renewal that he calls evangelicalism in his book *Early Evangelicalism: A Global Intellectual History, 1670–1789* (2006). Although the exact boundaries of pietism are still debated, it is clear that many interests and people from both pietism and evangelicalism influenced each other in America, Europe, and beyond.

Narrowly speaking, pietism began in European Protestantism in the seventeenth century. Pietism in the Reformed tradition developed from Puritan and Dutch sources around the mid-seventeenth century. Pietism in the Lutheran tradition began when a minister, Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705), introduced small group meetings for edification in his

congregation in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1670. Johann Jakob Schütz (1640–1690), a wealthy lawyer, helped to instigate the groups. Schütz prized Christian mystical literature as well as Christianized Kabbalah that developed in the seventeenth century. The small groups (*collegia pietatis*), along with Spener’s moderate anticipation of the “last days,” have been viewed by some scholars such as Johannes Wahlmann as the defining characteristics of pietism.

By the 1650s small groups had already been used in pietism in the Netherlands by the pastor Jadocus van Lodesteyn. The German Reformed minister Theodor Undereyck (1635–1693) introduced them in his congregation in Mühlheim just ahead of Spener in Frankfurt. Spener knew that Jean de Labadie (1610–1674) had used small groups in the 1660s, which eventually led to the latter’s dismissal from the Reformed Church in the Netherlands. Labadie, a Jesuit turned Reformed minister, who later separated from organized churches completely to form his own group, had met Spener in Geneva. One of Labadie’s followers, Anna Maria van Schurman, corresponded with Schütz in Frankfurt. Thus, the use of small groups was neither original nor unique to Spener; however, he anchored them within pietism, despite later reservations. Spener, who had read Puritan writers as a youth, also promoted more extensive use of the Bible, a practical faith rather than theological propositions, and pastors as moral examples of reform.

Spener’s younger associate, August Hermann Francke (1663–1727), was appointed minister at Glaucha on the edge of Halle, Germany, in 1692. Francke preached more explicitly about spiritual rebirth and the struggle for repentance that precedes it. He transformed the academy at Halle into a university. He also launched charitable institutions, including an orphanage, publishing house, pharmaceutical enterprise, and schools for boys and girls. Halle trained ministers to serve parishes in Germany and around the world, illustrating the transnational and transconfessional characteristics of pietism.

Radical pietism’s beginnings were intertwined with churchly pietism, beginning in Frankfurt. Johann Jakob Schütz, who criticized the church more harshly and had a more radical view of the end times, adored mystical and esoteric literature. Schütz, well acquainted with the followers of Jean de Labadie, withdrew from church attendance and gathered some friends to form the Saalhof Circle, which included Eleanora von Merlau (1644–1724). Later she married Johann Wilhelm Petersen (1649–1726), and they spread their radical expectations of Christ’s return through their connections with the Philadelphian Society in England led by Jane Leade.

This network of so-called Philadelphians drew on the concepts of Jacob Boehme. More broadly, the network of pietists both outside and within the organized churches helped many immigrants to America.

Reformed Pietists, Radical Pietists, and the Brethren

The first traces of pietism in America were introduced by Dutch colonists through reformed pietism. After Dutch settlers in the Delaware Valley failed in 1682 to acquire a pietistic pastor, a congregation in New Jersey called Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen as pastor in 1719. He preached against gambling, dancing, alcohol, and tobacco use as contrary to spiritual living, and he tried to admit only the spiritually awakened to receive Communion.

Other pietists in America were more radical. Although the followers of Jean de Labadie were technically prior to pietism, two of them came to America in 1683. Jasper Daenkerts and Pieter Sluyter purchased land on the eastern shore of Maryland at the head of the Chesapeake Bay. Ultimately about 100 Labadists came to work the land, living communally. But by 1723 they had disbanded. In 1694 a group of German radical pietists arrived in Germantown, Pennsylvania. They had gathered around Johann Jacob Zimmermann (1634–1694) in Germany. Zimmermann, a Boehmist, had predicted Christ's impending return. When Zimmermann died in Rotterdam they chose the youthful Johannes Kelpius (1670–1708) as their leader. Upon arrival in North America much of the group dispersed. A few men lived as celibate hermits along the Wissahickon Creek near Kelpius. The group was sometimes known as the Society of the Woman in the Wilderness. They wrote hymns, devotional material, and corresponded with Boehmists in England and Germany.

Among other radical pietists coming to America was a small group known as the Reborn. They followed their prophet, Matthias Baumann, who arrived in Pennsylvania from Lamsheim, Germany, in 1714. He taught the possibility of sinless perfection. The group disbanded after Baumann's death around 1727.

In 1719 a group known as the Brethren (*Schwarzenau Neu-Täufer*, or New Anabaptists from Schwarzenau) came from Krefeld to Germantown with one of their ministers, Peter Becker. They resumed worship in 1723. The group originated in Schwarzenau in 1708 under the leadership of Alexander Mack Sr. They adopted some Anabaptist practices, such as adult baptism, which they administered by threefold immersion. They practiced foot washing at their love feast,

which included a shared meal and Communion. The Brethren were pacifists and practiced church discipline, a feature of both reformed pietism and Anabaptism. Their attempt to recover ancient Christianity had its roots in the Bible and Gottfried Arnold's historical writings during his radical pietist phase. Most of the group made their way to Pennsylvania by 1750.

Another radical pietist, Conrad Beissel (1691–1768), came to Pennsylvania in 1720, reportedly to join Kelpius's group. Beissel had attended meetings of the Community of True Inspiration in Germany. In 1724 Beissel was baptized into the Brethren group in the Conestoga region of Pennsylvania. In 1728 he convinced a breakaway group to observe the seventh day (Saturday) as the Sabbath and preached the superiority of celibacy. Four years later, in 1732, he founded a community called Ephrata in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, made up of male and female celibates and married families. Beissel taught Boehme's views of an androgynous God whose female aspect was personified as Sophia. Through celibacy, believers could overcome sexual desire and find spiritual gender balance. The Ephrata community created over two thousand hymns for which Beissel developed a unique style of composition. By 1814 the celibate orders had died out at Ephrata, but celibates continued at their daughter congregation, Snow Hill, until 1895. The Ephrata Cloister is now a historic site preserved by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Christopher Sauer I (1695–1758), a radical pietist whose wife, Maria Christina, left him for Beissel's group, returned to Germantown with their son and became a printer in 1738. Sauer printed the first Bibles in a European language in America, along with much pietist literature. By 1745 the celibate brothers at Ephrata had also established a press. They translated and printed the Mennonites' *Martyrs Mirror* for the first time in German, the largest book produced in colonial America. Ephrata and Sauer also published popular works by Gerhard Tersteegen, a reformed pietist mystic with friends at Ephrata.

The Moravians and the Great Awakening

Another pietist group that greatly influenced America formed in Germany in 1727 on the estate of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760). The renewed Moravian Church, as it is known in English, combined elements of Zinzendorf's piety with remnants of the old Czech Unity of Brethren (*Unitas Fratrum*, who had no connection to the Schwarzenau Brethren) from the fifteenth century. Refugees from the Unity had come to Zinzendorf's estate a few years

earlier. Zinzendorf had a unique mystical devotion to Christ and his wounds and stressed Christ's grace and his role as savior. Indeed, Zinzendorf developed a bridal mysticism of the soul's marriage to Christ. In his new town, Herrnhut (which means "The Lord keeps watch," or "The Lord protects"), created in 1722, Zinzendorf organized the Moravian Church into subgroups known as choirs, divided by gender and age for devotional meetings. He introduced a devotional service ending with coffee and rolls, known as the love feast. The Moravians evangelized energetically across Europe and the world, including to indigenous tribes in America. The group developed a rich tradition of hymnody and instrumental music.

One group of Moravians settled near Savannah, Georgia, in 1735 under the leadership of August Gottlieb Spangenberg, building on their settlement in St. Thomas in 1732. Although the Moravians left Georgia in 1740 because of internal problems, they made a lasting impression on a young Anglican minister, John Wesley (1703–1791), during his unsuccessful ministry in Savannah in 1736. Wesley attended Moravian devotional meetings when he returned to London, and there he had a conversion experience in 1738. He parted ways with Zinzendorf in 1741 over the question of perfection. However, Wesley adapted Zinzendorf's organizational pattern by creating Methodist classes and bands and introducing the love feast.

The Moravians from Georgia went to Pennsylvania, where George Whitefield (1714–1770), the English evangelical preacher, invited them to settle on land he owned in the forks of the Delaware River in 1740. Whitefield hoped to build an orphanage on the pattern of Halle. However, theological differences ultimately arose between Whitefield and the Moravians, and they created their own town nearby, Bethlehem, in 1742. The Moravians formed other settlements in America, including Salem and Bethabara in North Carolina in 1753, but Bethlehem remained the most important in America. In 1742 Zinzendorf was present at the dedication of Bethlehem. That same year he attempted to bring the German religious groups of Pennsylvania into an ecumenical unity, but this effort failed over theological disagreements and personality issues.

At this time the Great Awakening was under way (1740–1742) in New England. There, Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) preached and wrote about religious affections and spiritual rebirth. His campaign grew out of the long interest in Puritanism in moral conduct as providing signs of response to faith. This interest sparked a mutual curiosity between

New England and Halle pietism, depicted in the correspondence between Cotton Mather and August Hermann Francke from 1711 to 1726. George Whitefield preached rebirth on both sides of the Atlantic, thereby demonstrating the interfaces between New England and British evangelicalism and pietism. In recent research, W. R. Ward, Hartmut Lehmann, and Bernard Bailyn have pointed to these developments to illustrate how pietism, more narrowly understood, is part of a wave of renewal impulses throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century spanning the Atlantic.

The Halle pietists were slow to gain a foothold in America because German Lutherans lacked sufficient ministers and connections to territorial jurisdictions in Germany. Halle supplied two ministers after 1734 to Savannah, Georgia, for about two hundred Lutherans expelled from Salzburg, Austria, by the archbishop. Zinzendorf's arrival in America in 1741 and his bid to be recognized as a Lutheran clergyman hastened Halle's involvement. In 1742 Gotthilf August Francke, son of August Hermann Francke, sent Henry Melchior Muhlenberg to Pennsylvania to organize Lutheran church life. In doing so, he put a pietist imprint on early Lutheranism in America. Muhlenberg strove valiantly against the Moravians and the dissenting groups in Pennsylvania.

When Gotthilf August Francke died in 1769, rationalism had the upper hand among the professors at Halle. Rationalist philosophy, which already had a long career in England and France, prevailed in Germany. Although institutional pietism passed from the scene with the death of the younger Francke, pietism continued to generate religious developments in the nineteenth century.

Methodists, the Second Great Awakening, Harmonists, and the Amana Community

In the last decades of the eighteenth century new movements emerged in America from pietist influences. John Wesley's ordination of Thomas Coke to be superintendent (or bishop) of Methodists in America and Coke's ordination of Francis Asbury allowed the Methodists to develop leadership in America at the cost of unity with the Church of England. Philipp Wilhelm Otterbein, a German Reformed minister who lived in Pennsylvania and Maryland, cultivated experiential faith and moral living, along with friendly relationships with Methodists and Mennonites. Otterbein and Mennonite minister Martin Boehm organized the Church of the United Brethren in Christ in 1800. Around the same time, Jacob Albright (1759–1808), a Lutheran minister in Pennsylvania, adopted Methodist principles and founded a

separate group in 1803, known after 1816 as the Evangelical Association. The United Brethren and the larger part of the Albright group, later known as the Evangelical Church, joined in 1946 to form the Evangelical United Brethren. This German counterpart to the Methodists joined them to form the United Methodist Church in 1964.

The Second Great Awakening at the end of the eighteenth century into the nineteenth century spread from New England to the Ohio Valley. It prompted the Stone-Campbell movement or Restoration movement, a quest for ancient Christianity led by Alexander Campbell (1788–1866) and Barton Stone (1772–1844). The Disciples of Christ and the Christian Church movements in America are rooted in this revival. Although this and subsequent revivalism are in some respects outside of pietism, their interests in the laity reading the Bible, an experience of salvation or spiritual rebirth, and concerns for godly living overlap with pietism. The similar emphases in American evangelicalism and pietism illustrate their relatedness and the difficulties of overly narrow definitions.

Pietism continued to generate new groups in America and Europe. In western Lancaster County, Wesleyan piety and concern for holiness prompted a group of mainly disaffected Mennonites to organize in the 1780s. The Brethren and Martin Boehm influenced the group, who were known as the River Brethren and later as the Brethren in Christ. They combined Anabaptist commitments to discipleship with a livelier, experiential faith.

In 1787 Georg Rapp (1757–1847) started a separate fellowship in Germany molded by radical pietism, including Boehme, interests in Kabbalah and alchemy, along with the unique amalgam of Württemberg Pietism from Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752) and Friedrich Christoph Oetinger (1702–1782). But Rapp had to flee repression by the duchy and the advance of Napoleon. In 1803 he arrived in America from Württemberg. His followers, the Harmonists, came in 1804. From 1814 to 1824 the Harmonists sojourned in western Indiana and then returned to western Pennsylvania. Late in life Rapp returned to more conventional Lutheran views.

A few settlements spun off of Harmonist divisions in the 1820s and 1830s, locating in Pennsylvania and Louisiana. Some defectors joined a new immigrant, Wilhelm Keil, in a communal settlement at Bethel, Missouri, in 1844, and Aurora, Oregon, in 1856. A completely unrelated small group from Württemberg formed a communal settlement, Zoar, in eastern Ohio in the 1820s.

Pietist groups continued to arrive in America in the mid-nineteenth century. The Community of True Inspiration arrived in the Buffalo, New York, area in 1844. Founded by Eberhard Ludwig Gruber (1665–1728) and Friedrich Rock (1678–1749) in 1714 near Frankfurt, the Inspirationists believed in direct revelations from the Holy Spirit to women and men prophets. They developed a system of elders' leadership. Rejecting water baptism, they held love feasts similar to those held by the Schwarzenau Brethren. The prophet Christian Metz (1794–1867) directed them to America to escape compulsory public schooling for their children and military conscription in Germany. In 1855 they moved to Iowa and established six communal villages, now known collectively as the Amana colony. They abandoned communal living in 1932, but the Amana Church Society continues.

Scandinavians, Readers, and Mennonites

Scandinavian pietism provided new immigrants in the 1840s. Pietism infiltrated Denmark, Sweden, and Norway through contacts between some government officials and Spener and through students who went to Halle at the end of the seventeenth century. Later, Zinzendorf and Moravian missionaries went to Scandinavia.

In Sweden pietism was initially friendly to the government, despite measures as early as 1726 to prohibit small group meetings. Those who participated in small groups were called "Readers" (*läsare*), for reading the Bible. Some Readers wanted to stay within the Lutheran Church, whereas the more radical Readers criticized it and left. In 1840 Erik Janson (1808–1850), a self-proclaimed prophet, had a conversion experience and began to preach publicly in Hälsingland province north of Uppsala. He tapped into the century-long presence of the Readers here. He prophesied judgment, elevated himself as prophet, and preached perfectionism. After imprisonment, Janson left Sweden in 1845 for America, creating a communal settlement in northern Illinois called Bishop Hill, named for Biskopskulla, Janson's birthplace. Internal conflicts and disease disrupted the community, and Janson himself was murdered in 1850. Subsequent internal divisions led to the abandonment of communal life in 1862. Most of the members joined a nearby Methodist church made up of Swedish settlers.

Meanwhile, other Readers came to America from Sweden among the Scandinavian immigrants of the second half of the nineteenth century. Many settled in northern Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and even Kansas. The crossover

influence of Methodists and Baptists among the Swedes and other Scandinavians created a fertile setting for new religious developments. Some Swedish Lutherans formed groups to support mission activity, sometimes questioning the role of the Lutheran confessional writings. Eventually a group separated from the Lutherans completely to form the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church in 1886. They founded North Park College and Theological Seminary and Covenant Hospital, all in Chicago.

The Mennonites in Europe felt the aftereffects of pietism in the nineteenth century. A Swiss Reformed minister in Leutwil, Samuel Heinrich Froehlich (1803–1857), rejected a new catechism in 1830 that he felt was too rationalist. He was dismissed from office the following year and began to preach throughout Switzerland, arriving in 1832 at Emmental, home to Mennonites. He attracted some of them, and they influenced him to adopt pacifism. He organized new congregations, but he was expelled from Switzerland in 1843. He then went to Strasbourg, where he died in 1857. His congregations were called New Anabaptists (*Neu-Täufer*, with no connection to the Schwarzenau group of that name from 1708). In America they were known as the Apostolic Christian Church. Their first congregation in America was formally organized in 1852 in Croghan, New York, among Mennonites. Members from Europe emigrated to the Midwest. Members of this church practice adult baptism by immersion, are pacifists, and hold many beliefs similar to Mennonites and Brethren.

Mennonites in Russia experienced a pietistic renewal in the 1840s in their Molotschna settlement. New settlers in the area had had contact with Moravians and a nearby German Lutheran who preached about conversion and godly living. Some of those influenced by these ideas held small group meetings in the 1850s. And some of them criticized their church's internal discipline. They held a separate communion service in December 1859. In January 1860 these Mennonites formally organized into the Mennonite Brethren (they had no connection to any other group named Brethren). The Mennonite Brethren faced opposition from some Mennonite ministers and neighbors, but the movement spread. When Russian Mennonites began to immigrate to America in 1874–1880 to escape military service, the Mennonite Brethren also came. They settled primarily in the Great Plains, spreading to Canada in 1888. More immigration followed World War I and the Russian Revolution. The Mennonite Brethren have spread around the world, earlier as refugees and also through missions.

Many pietist groups joined in the broader Protestant movement of international missions in the nineteenth century. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries many churches from pietist and evangelical origins engaged in social benevolence, part of the broader Social Gospel movement. During this era orphanages, homes for the elderly, clinics or hospitals, and centers to aid the urban poor were opened. Some of these pietist-related groups opened institutions of higher education and seminaries. These developments reflected broader trends in Protestantism in the nineteenth century, as well as echoes of earlier concerns in pietism.

Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

Albrecht Ritschl's *History of Pietism* (1880–1886) was the most famous and most critical work on pietism in the late nineteenth century. Ritschl judged that pietism was un-Protestant, was unfriendly to culture, and was a sentimental flight from the world. His verdict became the stereotype of pietism that endured until the mid-twentieth century.

Serious scholarship on pietism in America emerged only after World War II. Among the scholars leading this development were Ernest Stoeffler, Donald F. Durnbaugh, Dale Brown, and James Stein. Pietism studies in America lag behind the work in Europe of the International Commission for Pietism Research, founded in 1965. Still, new work continues. In 1988 Elizabethtown College (related to the Church of the Brethren) launched the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies. North Park Theological Seminary and its *Covenant Quarterly* promote research on pietism. And in 2000 the Pietism Studies Group formed as a subgroup of the American Society of Church History.

The earlier neglect of research on pietism in America is regrettable in view of the importance of the international role of pietism in settlement and communication patterns between Europe and America. Pietists published prolifically in America, and pietism supported interests in education prior to free public education. From pietism came a rich hymnody tradition, including Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen's *Spiritual Hymnal* (*Geistreiches Gesangbuch*, 1704, 1714) from Halle and *Das Kleine Davidische Psalterspiel* (Small Davidic Psalter) published by Sauer in America in 1744 and used by many of the sectarian groups. Many pietist groups created their own collections of hymns, although the hymns of the Wesleys became the most popular in America.

Some radical pietists created alternative understandings of gender in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Kelpius,

Beissel, and Rapp had a concept of an androgynous God with a female aspect personified as Sophia. Ephrata and the Moravians offered opportunities for women to live together with some internal leadership by women, although never far from male supervision. Some groups embraced alternative views of sexuality, such as adopting celibacy. However, most pietist groups accommodated the traditional patriarchal constructions of women's roles and sexuality.

Although the boundaries of pietism are still difficult to define precisely, knowledge of and serious scholarship about pietism in America is growing as the twenty-first century opens. Pietism as a movement has been long gone institutionally, but some of its offspring are alive and well as critical research on pietism's legacy enters a new era.

See also *Amana Communities*; *Anabaptist Denominational Family*; *Anabaptists*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Methodists: Through the Nineteenth Century*; *Moravians*; *Music: Hymnody*; *New England Region*; *Puritans*.

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Pilgrims

Pilgrims is the modern term used to denote the group of separatist Puritans who emigrated from England to Plymouth colony via Leyden in 1620.

English and Dutch Backgrounds

The English Reformation of the sixteenth century resulted in a centuries-long debate over the proper course and

characteristics of the newly formed Church of England. A diverse group of radicals known generally as Puritans advocated a return to a primitive Christianity modeled on Christian relations as described in the New Testament of the Bible. Although those labeled—by their opponents—Puritans varied greatly, most advocated a repudiation of the episcopal form of church government (governance by bishops) and sought a presbyterian or congregational system in its place. Although most of these Puritan groups sought to reform the Church of England from within, a few, known as Separatists, believed the Church of England to be hopelessly corrupted by Catholic and pagan influences. These separating Puritans were convinced that ecclesiastical purity could be obtained only by leaving the Church of England. Many reformers hoped that James I, who ascended the English throne in 1603, would be more sympathetic to their ideals than previous monarchs, because James, as king of Scotland, had ruled over a primarily Presbyterian country. But they were to be disappointed. James recognized the important intersections between English religion and politics, summing up his position with the succinct phrase, “No bishop, no king.” Through the Archbishop of Canterbury Richard Bancroft, James I attempted to reduce the Anglican clergy to orthodoxy, often removing nonconforming clergy from their livings and excommunicating and even jailing them.

John Robinson (d. 1625), a popular preacher with Puritan leanings in the parish of St. Andrews in Norwich, was one such minister who suffered from the church's displeasure. After being removed from his curacy, Robinson became the pastor of a group with separatist leanings in the Scrooby congregation in Nottinghamshire. Persecution followed there as well. As William Bradford, later governor of the Plymouth colony, remembered it, members of the congregation were “hunted & persecuted on every side. . . . For some were taken & clapt up in prison, others had their houses besett & watcht day and night, & hardly had escaped their hands: and the most were faine to flie & leave their howses & habitations, and the means of their livelihood” (William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*).

Aware of the more religiously tolerant environment in the Netherlands, the 125 members of the Scrooby group decided to emigrate in order to escape the persecution of the Church of England and to raise their children according to their own version of Christianity. After a brief sojourn in Amsterdam in 1608, the group settled in Leyden where they remained for over a decade. Although the group was able to

worship without fear of reprisal, most found it difficult to find lucrative jobs and so were mired in poverty. Many members of the congregation also became uneasy under the more permissive culture of the Netherlands. As Bradford recalled, “many of their children, by these occasions, and the great licentiousness of youth in that countrie, and the manifold temptations of the place, were drawn away by evil examples into extravagante & dangerous courses, getting the reins off their neks, & departing from their parents” (Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*). A portion of the congregation then decided to emigrate to North America, where, they hoped, they might worship as they pleased and exercise greater control over their children.

Nomenclature

Modern Americans refer to the settlers who decided to immigrate to Plymouth as the “Pilgrims,” although the group did not refer to themselves in this way except in the sense that any group who traveled for religious reasons might be termed pilgrims. Indeed, modern usage of the term *Pilgrim* is often remarkably imprecise. Some authors restrict the use of the term to mean the group of Separatist Puritans who emigrated from Leyden to Plymouth in 1620. Others use the term to refer to all Separatist Puritans who immigrated to the Plymouth colony, and still others refer to all residents of the Plymouth colony as Pilgrims. The settlers from Leyden sometimes identified themselves as “saints” to distinguish themselves from the “strangers” who came to Plymouth for primarily economic reasons, but they did not identify themselves as “Pilgrims” per se. The term appears to have been widely adopted only in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as Americans (and particularly New Englanders) searched for an origin myth to legitimize the new nation.

Voyage to Plymouth

The Leyden Pilgrims were not in a position to fund their proposed voyage to the New World nor to negotiate particularly favorable terms with merchants who might sponsor them. Ultimately, they obtained permission from the Virginia Company to settle in the northern part of its jurisdiction to the south of what was then New Netherlands. They then bargained with the Merchant Adventurers of London to finance their passage to North America. The terms of their agreement, which were not entirely settled until after the first wave of Pilgrims had left for North America, required them

to travel with non-Pilgrim “strangers,” who made up the majority of the colony in its early years. Ultimately, the group was forced to agree that they would work communally for the first seven years of the venture and return all of the profits of the colony to the Adventurers as repayment for the cost of their passage and initial supplies. The agreement, however, would prove to be short-lived. English men and women, used to laboring for the good of their own households, resented working for a common store. Indeed, the arrangement proved to be so unproductive that it was abandoned within the first three years of settlement. Shortly thereafter, twelve “undertakers” agreed to assume private responsibility for the colony’s debt to the Adventurers.

On August 5, 1620, the group of “saints” and “strangers” attempted to leave Southampton, England, on board the *Speedwell* and the *Mayflower*. But the master of the *Speedwell* quickly determined that the ship was not seaworthy and refused to pilot it across the Atlantic. On September 6 the group set sail from Plymouth, England, packed tightly into only the *Mayflower* and leaving some of their company behind. The two-month voyage was reasonably uneventful until the group reached the east coast of North America just off of Cape Cod. The ship had been blown off course, and because of strong currents it was unable to make its way south to its original destination within the jurisdiction of the Virginia Company. According to Bradford, when it became clear that the group would have to land outside of the jurisdiction of its patent, a number of the “strangers” on board with “discontented & mutinous speeches . . . [declared] that when they came a shore they would use their own libertie; for none had the power to comand them, the patente they had being for Virginia, and not for New-england” (Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*). To provide a legitimate basis for government in the new colony, the group drew upon ideas about voluntary compacts, which the Pilgrims had used in gathering their churches, to devise what later became known as the Mayflower Compact. The terms of the Compact, signed on November 11, 1620, which was meant to be temporary but which endured until Plymouth was incorporated in to the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1692, provided that the group would form a civil body politic, enact just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, and meet from time to time.

Although many have interpreted the Mayflower Compact as an intentional precursor to later forms of republican government or even as a Lockean contract (that is, one intended to build up a new society out of a state of nature), its

intention was significantly less radical. Faced with potential anarchy, leaders of the expedition intended the compact to be a stop-gap measure until the Plymouth colony could obtain a legal charter. The compact remained in force until the end of the seventeenth century only because the colony never did obtain an independent charter.

After scouting parties spent about a month surveying the land around Cape Cod, the party decided to settle in an area they named Plymouth. They disembarked from the ship piecemeal, and if they stepped onto any particular rock contemporary sources fail to document it. The group had landed far too late in the year to plant crops. Nor were the provisions they carried with them sufficient to see them through until the following harvest, and so the colonists supplemented their meager stores by hunting. Nevertheless, the first winter proved devastating for the colonists. By spring more than half of them had died of cold, illness, and malnutrition. Fortunately for the Plymouth colonists, but unfortunately for the Native Americans living there, the English settlers of 1620 were not the first Europeans to make contact with those living in the area around Cape Cod. In fact, "Plymouth" had once been the Indian village of Pawtuxet. By the time the Plymouth colonists arrived, European diseases had wreaked havoc among the indigenous population, killing entire villages but providing cleared land on which the English colonists could build their town and plant their crops.

In March 1621 the Plymouth colonists made contact with an Abenaki man named Samoset, who, to their surprise, spoke basic English. Samoset introduced the colonists to Squanto, whose English was fluent because he had lived for some time in England. Squanto had been captured in 1614 and taken to Spain where he was sold as a slave. He had then made his way to London, traveled back to North America, and jumped ship near his home only to find that his entire village had been wiped out by disease. Squanto not only instructed the Plymouth colonists in New England agriculture but also introduced them to Massasoit, a friendly local Indian chief. The meeting between the Plymouth colonists and Massasoit ushered in a period of peace and alliance nearly unique in the history of American settlement. The period of amenity would continue, largely unbroken, until the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675.

The "First Thanksgiving"

In the fall of 1621 the Plymouth settlers celebrated what later Americans would describe as the "First Thanksgiving."

Only two sources document this event: a passage from William Bradford's diary and a letter from settler Edward Winslow. The sources suggest that this was not a day of thanksgiving in the usual seventeenth-century sense of the word. Many colonial governments (Puritan and Anglican alike) proclaimed days of thanksgiving that were set aside to give thanks to God for a particular blessing, to attend divine worship, and to eat a special meal. Neither source documenting the 1621 celebration uses the word *thanksgiving*, and there is no indication that church services were held. Rather the 1621 event appears to have been a traditional English harvest home festival in which the colonists rejoiced in a bountiful harvest. Such celebrations usually occurred annually in England.

The some fifty colonists who had survived the previous winter gathered for three days of feasting and games. They were outnumbered almost two to one by about ninety Indians, including Massasoit, who joined in the celebration. The meal was significantly different from what modern Americans consider to be a "traditional Thanksgiving" meal. Although cranberries were abundantly available in the Plymouth region, the sugar that would have made them palatable was prohibitively expensive, and there is no evidence that any English settler ate cranberries in the seventeenth century. Likewise, it is very unlikely that the celebrants feasted on pumpkin pie, a dish unknown to them and one that would have required milled wheat flour, sugar, an oven, and other things the colonists were unlikely to have in 1621. The Indians brought venison to the feast. Although wild turkeys were indigenous to the area around Plymouth, it is more likely the colonists contributed ducks and geese to the celebration. Fish, shellfish, salad greens, corn, and some other type of grain probably made up the complement of the meal. The games most likely consisted of shooting contests and other seventeenth-century English sports.

Relations with Massachusetts Bay

In 1630 a large group of non-separating Puritans settled the Massachusetts Bay colony in the area around Boston, triggering the Great Migration that would eventually bring about twenty thousand colonists to New England before immigration dried up during the English Civil Wars. Although Pilgrims from Leyden and other settlers continued to augment the population of Plymouth, the Pilgrim settlement was quickly dwarfed by the Massachusetts Bay colony to the north. The two colonies maintained reasonably friendly relations, and Plymouth survived in large measure by selling

Massachusetts Bay settlers the cattle and foodstuffs they needed to get their colony off the ground.

Religious Beliefs and Ecclesiastical Practices

The Pilgrims suffered from a chronic lack of ordained clergy from their settlement until the 1660s, when John Cotton Jr., son of the famous John Cotton of Massachusetts Bay, accepted a call to the Plymouth church. John Robinson, the congregation's minister in Leyden, had planned to emigrate to Plymouth and assume leadership of the church there, but he died in 1625 before he could make the journey himself (Robinson had remained in Leyden to help facilitate the emigration of the rest of his congregation to North America). Although the Plymouth church managed to obtain the services of a few ministers in the period before Cotton's arrival, most stayed for only brief periods and appear to have provided indifferent leadership. Consequently, the Plymouth church remained in the hands of its lay leadership, most notably of the church's elder, William Brewster.

Like the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay, the Pilgrims were Calvinists. They espoused the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, along with the related doctrines of election and predestination. In other words, they taught that God alone had power over the salvation or damnation of individual souls and that people themselves were powerless to effect their own salvation through prayer or good works. Following the teachings of John Calvin and later theologians, they believed that God had chosen or "predestined" some people to be saved and some to be damned. Those destined for a heavenly afterlife were God's "elect."

Like the Puritans, the Pilgrims attempted to base their church on the early Christian church as described in the New Testament. Accordingly, they rejected most of the offices of the Church of England, including that of the bishop. They recognized only ministers, teachers, elders, and deacons as leaders of the church. Their churches followed a congregational system in which individual churches were formed by the covenant of their members and operated free from the governance of any outside human agency. Prospective members were required to provide evidence of saving grace before being admitted to the covenant and the sacraments. Although the Pilgrims recognized it was not possible to know conclusively who was among the elect and who among the damned, they strove to make their earthly "visible" churches mirror the invisible church of God as closely as possible. These "gathered" churches were to be separate from the profane world. Limited evidence suggests, however,

that most of the colonists who applied for membership in the Plymouth colony churches were admitted. The Pilgrims, like the Puritans, also rejected the Anglican liturgical calendar. Their only holiday or holy day was the Sabbath. The Pilgrims did not celebrate Christmas, Easter, or any of the many saint's days that were typically observed in England.

In accordance with their desire to mimic the New Testament churches, the Pilgrims partook only of the two sacraments for which they saw biblical justification (and then only when they had clergy to administer them): baptism and the Lord's Supper. Although both sacraments were visible signs of adherence to the church, neither was believed to have any innate efficacy. The Pilgrims, like most seventeenth-century Protestants, practiced infant baptism. They rejected the requirement by the Church of England that all infants born within the borders of a parish be baptized. In Plymouth only those children who had at least one parent who was a church member were eligible for baptism. Despite dwindling church membership after the first generation at Plymouth, the Pilgrims continued to require that all candidates for baptism have at least one covenanted parent. When faced with a similar predicament, many of the Puritan churches in the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1662 embraced the Halfway Covenant, which allowed the children of those who had been baptized but had not joined the church to have their children baptized. The Pilgrims, even though aware of the Halfway Covenant, chose not to enact a similar policy.

The Pilgrims rejected most of the sacraments of the Anglican Church. Individual churches ordained ministers by the laying on of hands. Although they limited the power to administer the sacraments to the clergy, they did not treat the ordination of ministers as a sacrament. Because parents did not take vows for their children at baptism, there was no need for the sacrament of confirmation. Evidence of conversion and participation in the Lord's Supper brought one into full communion with the church. Likewise, the Pilgrims rejected sacramental marriage; they considered marriage to be a holy but civil contract. Magistrates, not ministers, performed marriage ceremonies in Plymouth until 1692. That year, Plymouth was incorporated into the Massachusetts Bay colony, and its new charter specified that ministers should be empowered to conduct weddings. And like the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay, but, unlike the English, the Pilgrims occasionally allowed marriage contracts to be dissolved in cases of adultery or desertion. Because they rejected the doctrine of purgatory and the related practice of praying for the dead,

the Pilgrims also rejected elaborate funerals. Although a minister might accompany the deceased and his or her family and friends to the churchyard, neither prayers nor sermons were common at burials.

The Pilgrims differed from most people in the Western world in the seventeenth century in that they did not, at least initially, attempt to compel church attendance or to provide support for the ministry via taxation. Nor did they limit the franchise to church members as the authorities in Massachusetts Bay did. Admittedly, in 1620, surrounded by non-Pilgrim “strangers” and financed by a group in England unsympathetic with their religious motives, the Pilgrims were not in a position to compel religious conformity. Later, however, in response to a perceived degeneration among the inhabitants of the colony, the General Court ordered that those who neglected public worship be fined or whipped. In 1657 the General Court also ordered that all members of the colony be compelled to support the church financially. The decision displeased at least one colonist who complained that “now we must have a State-Religion . . . a State-Minister and a stateway of Maintenance; And we must worship and serve the Lord Jesus as the World shall appoint” (quoted in Robert M. Bartlett, *The Faith of the Pilgrims*).

Although the Pilgrim churches of Plymouth and the Puritan churches of Massachusetts Bay were quite similar in both theology and church governance, they differed in their relationship to the Church of England. The churches of Massachusetts Bay considered themselves to be within the fold of the Anglican Church even though they rejected those aspects of the English church they believed smacked of Catholicism or paganism. In the minds of Massachusetts Bay colonists, their churches were purified Anglican churches that they hoped would serve as an example to English churches, as well as sustaining their own spiritual needs. The Pilgrims, by contrast, considered the Church of England too corrupted with practices lacking a scriptural basis to be reformed. The Pilgrims were separatists who left the Church of England in order to form their own primitive churches. That said, it is possible to make too much of the distinction between the separating churches of Plymouth and the nonseparating churches of Massachusetts Bay. Both colonies, after all, were an ocean away from Old England, outside of the bounds of any Anglican parish, and beyond the power of the Anglican hierarchy. On a practical level, the Anglican Church’s relationship with the church of Plymouth and that with the church of Massachusetts Bay were not entirely dissimilar.

Historical Sources

Historical sources for understanding the Pilgrims are surprisingly limited. Court records, including probate inventories and wills, survive in good numbers, as do some travelers’ accounts, and letters to and from the settlers. By far the most comprehensive primary source for the history of Plymouth is the journal of the colony’s second governor, William Bradford, which is now in print in several editions under the title *Of Plymouth Plantation*. The journal was not written for publication, was not published until the late nineteenth century, and was generally unavailable to scholars before its publication. Because it was not published until all who were immediately concerned with the events it chronicled were long dead, it did not inspire the refutations that might have allowed historians to balance Bradford’s account. Bradford’s journal is supplemented by *Mourt’s Relation*, probably authored by William Bradford and Edward Winslow, which was published as a promotional tract in England in 1622. A somewhat different account of Plymouth’s early years can be found in *The New English Canaan*, written by Thomas Morton, a much more hostile observer. The many sermons and narratives published in and about seventeenth-century Massachusetts Bay have few corollaries in Plymouth. Plymouth lacked a printing press throughout its independent existence. Perhaps as important, Plymouth suffered from a chronic shortage of clergymen before John Cotton Jr.’s arrival in 1667. Although the Pilgrims themselves doubtlessly discussed both theology and practical godliness, they lacked a strong ministry to develop and, more important from a historian’s perspective, to publish their developing theology. To some extent the extensive publications of John Robinson, the Pilgrim’s mentor in Leyden, can fill in these gaps, but Plymouth never had the equivalent of the Massachusetts Bay’s Increase Mather or Cotton Mather to set down their sermons or their stories.

Modern Conceptions

Much of what passes as common knowledge about the Pilgrims of Plymouth is based as much on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century legends as it is on historical documentation. Indeed, much of the recent scholarship on the Pilgrims concerns the development and vitality of various Pilgrim myths rather than the band of colonists themselves. It is neither surprising nor particularly interesting that Americans should have gotten their history wrong. What is interesting is the ways in which Americans have used icons such as

Plymouth Rock, events such as the “First Thanksgiving,” and documents such as the Mayflower Compact to provide themselves with a congenial history, a set of precedents for later historical developments, and a justification for their actions in the present.

See also *Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage; Congregationalists; Dutch Reformed; Freedom, Religious; Holidays; Music: Hymnody; New England Region; Puritans; Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant; Tourism and Pilgrimage.*

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Pledge of Allegiance

“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Standing at their desks with right hands over hearts, most American schoolchildren begin the day by reciting these familiar thirty-one words. Newly minted Americans also conclude their citizenship ceremonies with the same patriotic ritual.

While often perceived as a timeless summation of the nation’s common values, this loyalty oath has had a fascinating and occasionally checkered history since first spoken in 1892.

Origins

As the four hundredth anniversary of Columbus’s arrival in America neared, editors of *Youth’s Companion*—the nation’s most popular weekly—began a campaign to raise “the U.S. Flag over every Public School from the Atlantic to the Pacific.” Looking for a way to promote the upcoming World’s Columbian Exposition—the world’s fair to be held in Chicago, Illinois, in 1893—organizers asked *Youth’s Companion* to spearhead a day of celebration for schoolchildren. This comfortably meshed with the magazine’s patriotic mission, and the editors immediately agreed. President Benjamin Harrison added his official imprimatur by proclaiming that all public schools should mark the groundbreaking for the Chicago World’s Fair on October 12, 1892.

As the *Youth’s Companion* staff designed the program for what soon was known as the National Columbian Public School Celebration, newly hired staffer Francis Bellamy (1855–1943) sought to craft an oath that would reaffirm America’s historic values. To articulate the meaning of national loyalty, Bellamy landed upon these words: “I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands: one Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.”

First recited by schoolchildren on Columbus Day in 1892, the Pledge of Allegiance was born not just of patriotic pride but also of economic and nativist anxieties. Bellamy had been a Baptist clergyman until his increasingly radical religious views conflicted with those of his congregation. In late-nineteenth-century America, growing socioeconomic inequalities led to innumerable labor strikes, leading many to believe that the gap between rich and poor, between industrialists and their workers, threatened to undo the social comity upon which a flourishing republic depended. Bellamy believed that free-market capitalism, with its rapacious appetite for wealth and its survival-of-the-fittest ethos, departed from Jesus Christ’s vision of humans living in loving cooperation. Given his worldview, Bellamy’s invocation of indivisibility may be read as a Christian socialist’s urgent plea for recovering American egalitarianism.

Ironically, Bellamy’s socialist vision of universal equality masked a very particularist sense of who should be allowed to fully participate in American democracy—and on what terms. The Pledge’s author deeply feared that new immigrants risked diluting the “authentic” Anglo-Saxon heart of American identity. He hoped that the loyalty oath would serve as an engine for assimilation, articulating the principles by which aliens must live if they were to be welcomed as full members of the American family. Regardless of his personal

ideology, however, Bellamy had given birth to an oath that captured the imaginations of all kinds of fellow patriots.

Changes and Challenges

Thanks in large part to energetic efforts by civic organizations such as the Grand Army of the Republic (a Union Army veterans group founded in 1866) and the Woman's Relief Corps (an auxiliary to the GAR created seventeen years later), flag-salute exercises—often, but not always, including the Pledge—grew increasingly common as the twentieth century unfolded. The oath became more ubiquitous between the two world wars: by cementing Americans together through common patriotic rituals, public leaders hoped that the Pledge of Allegiance could serve as a bulwark against radicalism.

As the Pledge grew in importance, a small debate ensued when the descendants of *Youth's Companion's* editor, James B. Upham, claimed that it was in fact he—and not Bellamy—who had authored the Pledge. But in 1939, the U.S. Flag Association officially proclaimed Bellamy as the oath's sole author.

Generally speaking, however, since its inception the Pledge of Allegiance has engendered two kinds of controversies. The first: can schoolchildren refuse to say the Pledge, or can the state compel them to recite it? Before the Second World War, more than thirty states made the ritual mandatory, sometimes conditioning the ability to attend public school upon a student's compliance with that law. The most culturally consequential objections came from religious families, who found the compulsory flag salute to be an unwelcome intrusion of militarism into public education, or as an idolatrous act that wrongly sought to raise loyalty to country over loyalty to God. Dissenters often met with tragic consequences. For example, in 1925, in a particularly harsh enforcement of a state law mandating the flag salute, a Washington State judge arrested the father of a nine-year-old who, for religious reasons, refused to take part in the Pledge. The parents belonged to the Elijah Voice Society, which rejected such patriotic exercises as too militaristic. They remained steadfast in their noncompliance, and the judge removed the boy from his home and placed him in state custody. (The boy and his parents finally reunited—a full two years later.)

In the 1930s, members of the Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe it is forbidden to swear fealty to anyone but God, began to run afoul of similar state laws compelling recitation of the Pledge and the accompanying flag salute. The movement's leader, Joseph Rutherford (1869–1942), publicly

called for all Witnesses to dissent and noted that Germany's "Heil Hitler" salute mirrored the same stiff-arm motion many schoolchildren raised to the American flag. After his two children were expelled from their Minersville, Pennsylvania, public school for refusing to say the Pledge, Walter Gobitas—a Jehovah's Witness—sued. In 1940, the United States Supreme Court upheld by an 8–1 vote the state's right to compel children to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. In his majority opinion, Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote that "the ultimate foundation of a free society is the binding tie of cohesive sentiment." Because the preservation of American freedoms rests upon a shared identity, he reasoned, public schools have the right to promote national cohesion by compelling the Pledge.

The Court's decision met with immediate criticism and an unprecedented outbreak of religious intolerance. School expulsions increased, and Jehovah's Witnesses in many places found themselves, their personal property, and their worship centers attacked. In a West Virginia town, a sheriff's deputy rounded up Witnesses and roped them like cattle—he and American Legion members forced those who resisted to drink castor oil. In Nebraska, hoodlums castrated one Witness; a mob in Wyoming tarred and feathered another.

This ongoing persecution, and a rising tide of public criticism, led the Supreme Court to change its mind. In a remarkably swift about-face, three years later the Court reversed its earlier opinion. A group of Jehovah's Witnesses had challenged a West Virginia law that expelled noncompliant children from school and threatened fines and imprisonment for their parents. Announced—intentionally—on Flag Day in 1943, *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* ruled unconstitutional laws compelling students to say the Pledge of Allegiance. Writing for a 6–3 majority, Justice Robert Jackson wrote, "to believe that patriotism will not flourish if patriotic ceremonies are voluntary and spontaneous instead of a compulsory routine is to make an unflattering estimate of the appeal of our institutions to free minds."

A second set of controversies arose from changes in the Pledge's wording. In 1924, on Flag Day, the words "my flag" were altered to read "the flag of the United States of America." This unremarkable change was followed thirty years later by another augmentation—this time with long-lasting cultural and legal ramifications. In the midst of a cold war contest between American and communist ideals, religious and political leaders sought to more clearly distinguish the United States from the avowedly atheist Soviet Union by reaffirming that God belonged firmly on the American side.

To reify the civic consensus that the country's institutions rested upon a divine foundation, the Knights of Columbus (a Catholic fraternal organization) in 1952 called upon Congress to add "under God" to the Pledge. The Reverend George Macpherson Docherty enthusiastically endorsed this idea in a sermon at Washington, D.C.'s New York Avenue Presbyterian Church on February 7, 1954—and won the hearty agreement of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, seated in the front pew. With public momentum building, eighteen different members of Congress introduced bills to add new words to the Pledge. By late spring 1954, Congress finally agreed upon one bill that added the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance. As he signed this linguistic change into law on Flag Day (June 14), President Dwight D. Eisenhower pronounced, "From this day forward, the millions of our school children will daily proclaim . . . the dedication of our nation and our people to the Almighty." In so doing, citizens would be fortifying "those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource."

This conspicuous addition catalyzed later disputes regarding the Pledge and the nature of American identity embodied in its ritual recitation. Earlier Pledge controversies had concerned the free exercise of religion: could the state penalize those citizens who objected, for religious reasons, to reciting the Pledge? After 1954, objections to the Pledge more often raised a different issue. Does having the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance violate the First Amendment's establishment clause by unconstitutionally endorsing religion?

More concretely, if public school teachers—as government employees—lead the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, is it legal? Atheist Michael Newdow believed the practice was not legal, and in the early twenty-first century, he sued for exactly that reason on behalf of his daughter, who attended a public school in California where teachers began the day by leading the Pledge. Though students were not forced to say the oath, Newdow argued the state was nevertheless unconstitutionally establishing religion because its employee (the schoolteacher) invoked God in reciting the Pledge.

Deciding against Newdow, the United States Supreme Court allowed the voluntary practice of reciting the Pledge. Five justices ruled that, because his wife had sole custody of their daughter, Newdow had no legal standing to sue in the first place. But in agreeing with the case's outcome, three other justices wrote concurring opinions that affirmed their position that it *was* constitutional for public school teachers

to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. (Justice Antonin Scalia agreed with this reasoning but recused himself from the case because he had already said so publicly.)

In oral arguments before the Supreme Court, Justice David Souter had asked whether the invocation of God during a civic exercise "is so tepid, so diluted, so far from a compulsory prayer that it should in effect be beneath the constitutional radar." (Having "In God We Trust" on American money, using public funds to pay for congressional chaplains, opening Supreme Court sessions with "God save this honorable Court"—each has engendered similar reflections.) As a constitutional matter, most Supreme Court justices have so far answered Souter's question with an unequivocal "yes."

More legal challenges may await, but the Court's current view reflects public opinion. A poll by the Associated Press in 2004 found that 87 percent of Americans agreed that the phrase "under God" should remain in the Pledge. And as of 2006, forty-three of fifty-three states and U.S. territories require the public school day to begin with the Pledge. Despite pockets of dissent, the voices of most of the nation's schoolchildren affirm loyalty to God and country each morning by reciting the same thirty-one words.

Significance

A perennial American question: what to make of those citizens who refuse to say the Pledge of Allegiance? Though the Supreme Court in *Barnette* had ensured that students could choose not to recite the oath, those who opt out of the Pledge have commonly been ostracized. And viewing the Pledge as a test of someone's national loyalty has hardly been confined to schoolchildren. For example, in the 1988 presidential campaign, Republican George H. W. Bush attacked as unpatriotic his Democratic opponent, Governor Michael Dukakis, for vetoing a law that would have required all public school teachers in Massachusetts to recite the Pledge. "What is it about the Pledge of Allegiance that upsets him so much?" Bush asked. "It is very hard for me to imagine that the Founding Fathers—Samuel Adams and John Hancock and John Adams—would have objected to teachers leading students in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States." By implication, someone "against the Pledge" does not fully support American ideals.

Many Americans remain mystified by just how much controversy sometimes surrounds the Pledge of Allegiance. For them, the Pledge is a harmless, inoffensive, but nevertheless important reaffirmation of national loyalty. On par with singing the national anthem at public events, or celebrating

the Fourth of July with parades and fireworks, saying the Pledge is an act of public piety that reminds citizens of their common identity. Such acts of patriotic faith, or civil religion, stand unthreateningly alongside—rather than in conflict or competition with—an individual’s particular religious commitments.

For Americans to view the Pledge of Allegiance in this way—as a generic invocation of eternal, broadminded civic values—is likely as common as it is historically simplistic. Born in an era when white Protestants worried that America’s character might be threatened by a rising tide of immigration, the Pledge’s public profile has been an important harbinger of underlying social, religious, and political anxieties. The Pledge’s cultural salience has usually increased in times of national crisis, when public leaders have worried that enemies—whether real or imagined, whether foreign or domestic—threaten the nation’s (perceived) ideals or (perceived) social cohesion. Ironically, this oath that serves to bind Americans together often enters the public spotlight at exactly those cultural moments when those national bonds seem most at risk of fraying.

See also *Civil Religion in the United States; Constitution; Education: Court Cases; Establishment, Religious; Freedom, Religious; Jehovah’s Witnesses; Politics* entries; *Religion, Regulation of; Supreme Court*.

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Pluralism

E pluribus unum. These Latin words familiar to those who have looked at U.S. currency translate simply as “out of many, one.” Although the reference was to the multiple colonies

that came together to form one nation, the phrase also indicates something of the character of U.S. religious life. In this one nation, many religions and even many variations of the same religion flourish. The two words most frequently used to describe this multiplicity of religions in one nation are *pluralism* and *diversity*. For some, the two terms are nearly synonymous. Both suggest that no single religion or form of religion captures the whole story. *Diversity* also highlights variety, indicating that even among religious beliefs, practices, and institutions that appear remarkably similar, considerable variation prevails when one looks beneath the surface.

Others distinguish between *pluralism* and *diversity*, believing that *diversity* historically accents the domination of strains of Christianity in U.S. religious life, with other religions sometimes only reluctantly tolerated and often marginalized. But in toleration one finds diversity in the simple recognition of various alternatives. *Pluralism* assumes that variety is a positive good and that no single form of religion has or should have the dominant influence.

Yet others insist that pluralism and diversity have changed meaning since the arrival of the first Europeans on U.S. soil. Early in the U.S. experience, pluralism highlighted the variety of Protestant groups that took root in the British colonies. Often that pluralism had an ethnic component, a feature of diversity that remains vital to many traditions. Prejudice against groups perceived as “other” makes achieving pluralism a struggle. By the mid-twentieth century, most strains of Christianity—whether Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox—and the various branches of Judaism function in similar ways in the United States, especially in providing a moral framework for supporting responsible citizenship. Even so, an undercoating of ethnic diversity enriched virtually every discrete tradition. By the twenty-first century, greater elasticity prevailed, with a host of other religions—from Hinduism to Islam—growing rapidly, and a more complicated diversity within existing groups in style and ethos increasingly important. This last understanding informs the discussion that follows.

Diversity is not limited to the United States but describes religious life throughout North America, in different degrees and dimensions. It marks Canadian religious life, for example, in the complex history that intertwines French Catholicism, Anglicanism, the United Church of Canada, and a host of other groups. Pluralism also is evident in Mexico, although there strains of Hispanic Catholicism fused into indigenous practice are more obvious. However, the United States stands out as a nation where diversity and pluralism have been

central to the story of national religious life. Diversity and pluralism as they have shaped United States religious culture will be the primary focus here.

Early Signs of Diversity

More than 500 indigenous tribal cultures had made a home for themselves in North America before Christopher Columbus sailed into the Caribbean in 1492. None had a written language; none had a word for *religion* in the way that Europeans understood the term. And no two tribal societies operated in exactly the same way, although there were some common patterns depending on whether cultures were oriented toward cultivation of crops or relied on hunting and gathering for sustenance. Patterns also varied depending on region. This range of tribal approaches indicates that diversity was a feature of North American religious life long before the arrival of European invaders and colonists. That diversity expanded as early Spanish and French colonial missions added an overlay of Christianity to tribal traditions in areas under their control. This interaction that fused indigenous and Christian ways together continued to add diversity to Native American religious life after the arrival of other European colonists and particularly after the United States expanded its geographic reach from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Numerous revitalization movements, from that associated with Handsome Lake in the early nineteenth century to the Ghost Dance among the Lakota Sioux that led to the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890, demonstrate that ongoing blend of native and Christian dimensions, for they drew on millennialist hopes common to Euro-American religions to give fresh meaning to native tradition.

Most analysts of pluralism in the United States note that few Europeans who came to the English colonies embraced ideas of diversity. Most believed that they alone possessed absolute truth, and few were willing to tolerate alternatives. In areas where the Church of England enjoyed legal establishment, other religious options were allowed, though not supported by the government, but only after policy in Britain required it. In New England, dominated by various groups of Puritans, alternatives were gradually and reluctantly tolerated; in the early decades, those who represented minority viewpoints—individuals such as Roger Williams or groups such as the Quakers—were either banished or punished. In places such as New York, once a Dutch colonial outpost, other strains of European Protestantism dominated for a time. With the Dutch, one sees an early example of the ethnic component of diversity.

Pennsylvania unwittingly became the model for later developments, although designed as a haven for Quakers, a dissenting group in England subject once to much persecution. William Penn, the colony's founder, opened the area to any wishing to come, provided they did not upset public order. His move was pragmatic; the colony needed to recruit settlers to survive. But German Protestant sectarian groups found Pennsylvania particularly attractive, as did other Protestant bodies that were marginalized minorities elsewhere. By the time of U.S. independence, Pennsylvania had the most diverse religious complexion of any of the new states, including a Catholic presence that may have surpassed that even of Maryland, founded as a haven for Catholics.

In areas of the South where the Church of England enjoyed legal establishment, diversity also became evident in the colonial period. For example, South Carolina, although ultimately granting the Church of England special privilege, opened settlement to all who believed in God. One result was that by the time of independence, South Carolina had welcomed scores of French Huguenot dissenters and nurtured a substantial Jewish community. Then, from the early eighteenth century on, Scots-Irish migrants and others whose settlements stretched southward along the eastern slopes of the Appalachian colonies planted a more evangelical style. Pluralism, in the sense of having a multiplicity of religious groups, prevailed everywhere at the time of U.S. independence.

The Constitution's Pluralistic Marketplace

The extent of prevailing diversity, as well as reservations about the kinds of ties between religion and government existing in Britain, led delegates to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 to omit all reference to religion, save for a provision that there be no religious test for federal public office. Simply put, no particular religious group claimed the allegiance of a majority of the new nation's citizens. Some, fearing that later establishment could follow, urged framers of the Bill of Rights to include in the First Amendment to the Constitution the words, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Later widely touted as fixing the U.S. principle of church and state, the amendment ensured that pluralism and diversity would continue. With no national religion, Americans were free to choose what religion if any they would practice; nor would government dictate what religious beliefs were acceptable or even what practices, providing they did not

undermine the general welfare of the people. When religion became voluntary and the religious world a marketplace, pluralism was certain to grow. Yet interpreting what the wording of that amendment means has caused ongoing controversy. Countless court cases, many at the level of the Supreme Court, emerged. In one sense, regardless of the specifics of the case, all are signs of the pervasiveness of pluralism and a grappling with its implications. Some, for example, have concerned the rights of minority groups such as serpent handlers, those who refuse certain medical protocols on religious grounds, or newer immigrant practices associated with Santería. Cases concerning public schools and public property have stirred more controversy, because “public” embraces all Americans in theory.

Generally the courts have refused to define religion or rule on matters of doctrine. Since the middle of the twentieth century, the trend has been to restrict or prohibit any religious exercise or expression that is required of everyone, such as prayer and Bible reading for devotional purposes in the public schools. The trend has also been to affirm rights of individual adults in matters of practice; hence courts might intervene to mandate a medical protocol for a minor that an adult could reject on religious grounds. Critics insist that the courts have jettisoned the popular democratic notion of majority rule and become overzealous of minority rights. Yet even framing the problem in terms of *majority* and *minority* highlights the prevalence of pluralism. The main consequence of the amendment, though, remains the theoretical placing of all religious forms on an equal footing before the law, with all perspectives protected.

Nineteenth-Century Diversity Brings New Challenges

The constitutional ideal of a free religious marketplace did not mean, however, that religious prejudices ended. If all religions were equal before the law, translating that equality into tolerance and acceptance, two hallmarks of a thoroughgoing pluralism, was a difficult process. For most Americans, at least in the first half of the nineteenth century, pluralism meant the multiplicity of Protestant denominations, all seen as variants of the same truth. Consequently it also meant only reluctant toleration of others, such as Roman Catholics and Jews. Sometimes it meant outright hostility toward those groups and others. Hence some historians have insisted that a broad evangelical Protestantism that took many different denominational forms was akin to an unofficial religious establishment in the United States.

At the same time, though, the number of alternative religious options exploded. Many individuals started their own religions or sought to attract followers. Some succeeded more than others. One of the most successful is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, based on teachings the American Joseph Smith received presumably by direct revelation. Numerous communitarian groups such as the Shakers and the Oneida Community found a home in the United States. So, too, following a burst of millennial interest in the 1840s did a number of Adventists. Others claimed to reconstitute the Christianity of the apostolic era. When regional divisions over slavery divided the nation, so, too, many religious groups split along sectional lines, adding another dimension of diversity. Even today, region plays a signal role in shaping religious styles. Later in the nineteenth century, movements such as Christian Science and New Thought added another layer to pluralism in their efforts to harmonize religion and science by drawing on the power of mind.

Ethnicity added its own features to expanding pluralism, particularly within existing traditions rather than creating new religious forms, thanks to the rapid rise in immigration between the Civil War and World War I. The millions who came from southern, central, and eastern Europe, for example, brought an ethnic diversity within U.S. Catholicism, as parishes serving Slovak, Italian, and Hungarian constituencies flourished alongside those with Irish, English, and German adherents. A similar ethnic richness pervaded U.S. Judaism, giving it an internal diversity in Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox expressions. This wave of immigration also swelled the ranks of Russian and Greek Orthodox Christians in the United States. When World War I erupted most U.S. citizens may have identified with one of the standard Protestant denominations, but hosts of other alternatives were available. Undercurrents of bias flowed, but diversity was wearing more faces. Some Protestants, fearing that the old unofficial establishment was eroding, hoped that by converting immigrants to Protestant ways Protestants could “Americanize” the immigrants to become better citizens. Even these fears indicate how the scope of pluralism was expanding.

Within U.S. Protestant Christianity, the opening decade of the twentieth century witnessed the eruption of Pentecostalism, adding yet another dimension to pluralism. Emphasizing direct experience of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostalism gave ecstatic religion fresh credibility, resulting in formation of a cluster of denominations.

Pluralism and Diversity at Mid-Century

Patterns in place by the 1920s remained relatively stable for a generation. World War I slowed immigration, and legislation in the 1920s severely restricted immigration, both in the total number of immigrants who could enter the United States in any given year and the number who could come from any particular country. The complex formula put in place strongly favored religious and ethnic communities with roots in northern and western Europe. That is, it was a mechanism to sustain Anglo-Saxon Protestant Christian influence in U.S. culture. The Great Depression also muted new forces of pluralism because economic issues took precedence over religious ones. Not until after World War II did the ways pluralism had developed over the preceding half century come into focus, thanks to the emergence in the Cold War era of a new enemy, “godless communism.”

Evidence for a revamped pluralism comes in a widely cited sociological study called *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, first published in 1955. Its author, Will Herberg, demonstrated that the many Protestant denominations, Roman Catholicism, and the various branches of Judaism all had plausibility in the United States; that persons tended to view all of them as valid ways of being religious and therefore of training adherents to be moral and responsible citizens; and that their common features—which other commentators began to lump together as “the Judeo-Christian tradition”—had greater significance in the public square than did their differences. Herberg also identified a parallel “religion of the American way of life” centered on increasing conspicuous consumption rather than on rigorous commitment to the ideals of faith. One consequence seemed to be a muting of religious intolerance; many pundits pointed to the 1960 election of the Roman Catholic John F. Kennedy as president of the United States, a symbol that religious bigotry was eroding. It had not dwindled in matters of race. Religious groups still organized along racial lines. Those calling for affirmation of the civil rights of African Americans and those calling for legally maintaining racially segregated social institutions all drew on religion to advance their positions. If lip service to the Protestant-Catholic-Jewish triad suggested that one sort of religious pluralism had gained social acceptability, divisions regarding race reminded Americans that pluralism bred its own intolerance.

Vital in pushing pluralism in a new direction were changes that followed congressional passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Hart-Celler Act) in 1965. Removal

of quotas in place since the 1920s allowed stunning increases in immigration from Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Near East. Consequently, the numbers of Americans identifying with the Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, and Muslim traditions began to grow rapidly; ethnic connections influenced how Asian immigrants in particular sought to plant their indigenous religious ways on U.S. soil. So, too, the numbers of Latino/a immigrants, most identified with the Christian tradition, skyrocketed. Diana Eck has insisted that this new immigration transformed the United States from a Christian nation into one of the most religiously pluralistic nations in the world. Although scholars debate whether the country was ever Christian in any narrow sense, Eck’s argument is that recent immigration has pushed pluralism in a fresh direction because much of it lies outside the orbit of the Judeo-Christian or even the Abrahamic traditions. As well, this “new” immigration brought significant differences in how these religious approaches responded to the U.S. context. William Hutchison found that the newer immigrants resisted mere toleration as minority groups amid a cluster of dominant traditions. Instead, they insisted on full equality and recognition of legitimacy. They took the guarantees of the First Amendment seriously.

Other trends added to the diversity within U.S. religion. By the middle of the 1970s, evangelical Protestants started experiencing significant growth; long dominant denominations with roots in the colonial era—Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and others—continued to decline. Many evangelicals identified with megachurches and other congregations that eschewed denominational affiliation. By the end of the twentieth century, Pentecostals were mushrooming. Some of that increase resulted from immigration, especially from Latin America. The surge spanned more than Pentecostal denominations, however, to encompass charismatically inclined congregations across the spectrum of denominations. By the early twenty-first century, trends also indicated that for the first time since U.S. independence, the proportion of the U.S. population identifying as Protestants was about to dip below 50 percent of the population. Pluralism was thus not only a historical feature of U.S. religious life, it had become one of its defining characteristics.

From the time of European conquest of North America to the present, diversity and pluralism have marked religious life. If at one time pluralism denoted a multiplicity of Protestant groups whose combined influence stamped the culture with a particular style and marginalized other bodies, the

understanding shifted. By the end of the nineteenth century, Roman Catholicism could claim to have been the largest religious body in the United States for half a century. Then, by the middle of the twentieth century, especially to contrast the United States as a righteous nation with “godless communism” of the Cold War era, analysts spoke of the mutual influence of the Protestant-Catholic-Jewish triad. New immigration, as well as switching among religious groups, brought an explosion of pluralism. Religion in the United States had become so diverse that the choices seemed infinite, although a small but growing number claimed no religious identification at all. Pluralism thus remains a key to understanding religion in U.S. life. The marketplace sanctioned by the First Amendment continues to flourish.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Anti-Semitism*; *Canada: Pluralism*; *Civil Religion in the United States*; *Constitution*; *Ethnicity*; *Immigration* entries; *New Religious Movements* entries; *Religious Prejudice*; *Supreme Court*.

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Pluralism in Canada

See *Canada: Pluralism*

Politics: Colonial Era

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, religion and politics constantly intertwined for residents of the British North American colonies. Several colonies had distinctively religious foundings, while others were strongly informed by

religious ideals. Whereas the politics of New France to the north and New Spain to the south were colored by their identification with Roman Catholicism, Protestant Christianity supported the British colonial endeavor. Religion shaped political practices (political sermons, church establishments) and political decisions (during the Glorious Revolution or in debates over religious toleration). Religion colored the practice of international relations, as Protestant forces clashed with Roman Catholic imperial enemies. At the end of the period, religion also contributed to the growing tensions that would produce independence from Great Britain.

Religion and Politics in New France and New Spain

The interaction of religion and politics in British North America occurred against the backdrop of contrasting arrangements throughout the Atlantic world, the zone within which Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans interacted and formed new societies. European involvement throughout the Atlantic world was connected to religious identity and sense of mission. Settlers adopted colonial strategies to further the goals of their home societies, hoping for societal replication. Religiously, this meant the continuation of Reformation-era divisions. As Catholic nations settled New Spain and New France, it is no surprise that their Catholicism shaped their political lives.

From the time Christopher Columbus claimed the Indies for the “most Catholic” majesties Ferdinand and Isabella, religion played an important role in the Spanish colonial endeavor. The advancing Spanish often used the *requerimiento*, a legal proclamation read in Spanish to uncomprehending natives, which demanded that native populations simultaneously convert to Christianity and pledge their fealty to the Spanish crown or be considered at war with Spain. Religious legalism thus helped justify Spanish conquest. Both Franciscans and Dominicans conducted missionary endeavors. They usually travelled with Spanish *conquistadores* and made sure that conquered natives were baptized and brought into the officially Catholic realm of New Spain. An important part of the “reduction” of the colonies was the destruction of native religions—even though the attempts usually led to syncretism, rather than a total reorientation of religious belief and practice. As the Spanish developed their colonial institutions, religion was inseparable from their political societies. On the *encomienda* land grants, proprietors built multiple Spanish institutions, especially chapels for Catholic worship. Despite the abuses produced by linking

religion to the colonial endeavor, it was also Catholic missionaries—led by the Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas (1474–1566)—who called for improved treatment of the Indians under Spanish rule.

For French settlers, Catholicism was also the default belief—especially as Louis XIV limited the rights of Huguenots in France as well as French colonies. Many public institutions such as schools and hospitals in New France were run by religious orders, thus providing many of the early sinews of colonial public life. French colonial strategy was unique in the shape of the missionary endeavors the French sponsored. In contrast to the more rigid orders in New Spain, the French commissioned the Jesuits as their religious representatives to the Indians—primarily the Hurons. The Jesuits used a more culturally sensitive and contextualized approach to evangelism. The *Jesuit Relations* recount efforts to learn native languages, understand the cultures, and present the Catholic faith. Although many natives declined to believe, many others did, and the Jesuits subsequently gathered them into Indian communities near French settlements. The practice of French godparents, Catholic worship, intermarriage, and trade brought these Native American converts into French communal and political life. Many of these natives consequently joined the French in imperial wars, and religion played an important role in inspiring their involvement. French settlers were united in their Catholic identity and their acknowledgment of the Catholic nature of the colony.

Religion and the Founding Ideals of British North American Settlements

The Chesapeake: Virginia and Maryland

Religious motivation lay behind many of Britain's various colonial endeavors. As early as Richard Hakluyt, religious reasons had mixed with economic and imperial justifications for colonial expansion. Such mixed motivations are apparent even in Virginia, the first successful settlement. From the beginning, the chaplain Robert Hunt had ministered to the Jamestown settlers, and after his death in 1608 other priests followed. After the initial faltering years, a new governor, Sir Thomas Gates, put into place a rigorous legal system of *Lawes Divine, Morall, and Martiall*. The *Lawes* required twice-daily attendance at divine service and additional instruction on Sundays. They punished both blasphemy and the questioning of the Trinity with death. The *Lawes* were quickly abandoned, but the Anglican element endured. Governor

William Berkeley (governor 1642–1676) worked to strengthen the Anglican character of the colony as part of his larger policy of making Virginia a royalist reproduction of England. The result was a colony where Anglicanism supported the patriarchal rule of white men over their wives, children, indentured servants, and slaves.

Maryland's religious purposes differed from many of the other colonies. The Lords Baltimore—George Calvert and his son Cecilius—founded Maryland as a refuge for English Roman Catholics, at a time of Protestant ascendancy in England, establishing St. Mary's in 1634. Tension soon developed as Catholics held positions of power in the colony, even though they were outnumbered from the beginning by Protestant settlers. The "Act concerning Religion" (1649)—granted under pressure during the English Civil War—guaranteed toleration, allowing both Protestants and Catholics to practice their religion without abuse, but this failed to satisfy the ever-increasing numbers of Anglican immigrants. Disagreements on religious grounds would grow until the Glorious Revolution.

New England: Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, and Rhode Island

In New England, the first permanent settlement of Plymouth Plantation also came about for religious purposes. The group of separatists who would become known as Pilgrims began their wanderings in 1608 when they fled English laws demanding religious conformity and traveled to Leiden, the Netherlands, in search of greater religious freedom. Dissatisfied with Leiden, they decided to resettle in the New World, boarding the *Mayflower* in 1620. Blown off course, they found themselves off the coast of Massachusetts, rather than the region of Virginia for which they had aimed. Lacking an enforceable charter, they required that every male—both Pilgrim "saints" and non-Pilgrim "strangers"—sign the Mayflower Compact. This document officially "founded" their settlement. In it, they declared their intents: "Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of Virginia. . . ." To fulfill these religious motivations, they reconstituted a government, agreeing to "covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick . . ." (quoted in *The Federal and State Constitutions, Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories, and Colonies Now or Heretofore Forming the United States of America*, edited by Francis Newton Thorpe). From its founding, then, Plymouth

affirmed the religious character of its settlement. Gaining some stability under William Bradford's leadership (1590–1657; governor 1621–1657), the colonists established laws they believed to be biblical. Even the Pilgrims required colonial support of their own church, now able to conduct worship as they deemed appropriate. Despite their experience of persecution, the Pilgrims did not abandon the ideal of political support of the church, nor of religious sanction of the governing bodies.

The Puritans of Massachusetts Bay migrated to establish a political and ecclesiastical order that was more fully purified from Catholic accretions according to biblical standards. With the Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud restricting their opportunities and the growing threat of Catholic activism on the European continent, Puritans undertook the “Great Migration” in the 1630s under the leadership of John Winthrop (1588–1649). Puritans aimed to reshape society according to their own Reformed lights. They were not interested in religious freedom or even the toleration of those who differed from them—as Quakers would discover.

The Puritan model for the establishment of their societies centered on their understanding of *covenant*, as a formal agreement between contracting parties in the sight of God. Individuals obtained salvation through joining, by faith, the “Covenant of Grace.” In the absence of Anglican churches in Massachusetts, Puritan communities created new churches through covenants that set forth both the doctrine and the discipline of the churches. Those who agreed to form towns also entered into covenants regarding land use. The forms of these covenants mirrored one another, revealing how covenantal thinking structured Puritan thinking about all levels of society.

The writings of both John Winthrop and John Cotton (1584–1652) clearly articulated Puritan ideals of governance. In his famous lay sermon “A Modell of Christian Charity” (1630), Winthrop revealed how he believed the colonists ought to relate to one another through love. Only this Christian virtue would sustain the settlers and harmonize their naturally unequal social conditions into one society. With love, the colonists could fulfill their special divine mission. As Winthrop stated it, “We are entered into covenant with Him for this work. We have taken out a commission.” Successful planting in the New World was proof that God had ratified the covenant, and he would expect it to be scrupulously honored. This high standard was necessary because the combined religious and civic institutions would be “*as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.*” Similarly, in his 1645

“Little Speech on Liberty,” Winthrop described a Puritan theory of magistracy. The type of “civil” freedom that he hoped for Massachusetts to maintain was connected to obedience to law and to elected governors, God’s appointed rulers. From the ministerial side, John Cotton contributed to the distinctive shape of Puritan New England, particularly in three 1636 works. In *Moses His Judicials*, he gave a defense of the use of Old Testament law as the basis for New England society—a strategy evident in the “General Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts.” Finally, in “Letter to Lord Saye and Seale,” he defended the Puritan commonwealth from attacks in England, arguing that the state should be shaped for the benefit of the Church, rather than vice versa.

This close connection of church and political institutions proved difficult for Puritans to maintain, since it depended on the conversion of each generation by the time they reached adulthood and began having children. Although this arrangement worked in the first generation, its limitations soon became apparent. In the second generation, ministers noted what they believed was spiritual declension, symbolized by the decline in professed conversions. To remedy this, Puritan ministers fashioned the Half-Way Covenant (1662), which allowed those parents who had themselves been baptized but not converted to bring their children to be baptized. Baptism thus carried not only religious but also political meanings for inducting members into the Puritan commonwealth.

Rhode Island took its approach to church and state matters from its founder, Roger Williams (1603–1683). Williams came to Massachusetts Bay as a Puritan with a zeal for higher levels of purity in the church, which he hoped to accomplish through the extrication of the churches from political matters. After being ejected from Massachusetts Bay and sparring in print with Rev. John Cotton, Williams wrote *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience* (1644). Williams offered a strong defense of the liberty of conscience, which translated for him into full religious liberty in the colony. Although Puritans sniffed at the odd collection of religionists who gathered in Rhode Island, the colony proved to be free of religious violence, although not religious dispute.

Pennsylvania

In Pennsylvania, the Quaker convert William Penn (1644–1718) directly shaped the colony’s religious character. Penn hoped to use the land he received from Charles II as a refuge for other Quakers. This ideal confronted seeming difficulties from Quakers’ opposition to English society. Their principle

of the “inner light” that illumined every person made for an egalitarian outlook on society, which cut against the social hierarchies of England. Moreover, their refusal to take oaths (based on Matthew 5) undermined their reliability in a court of law. Finally, their pacifist stance would seem to make them unable to support a colony’s defense. Penn set out to offer a contrasting grounding for Quaker politics in his 1682 “Frame of Government.” He drew on both biblical and classical sources to sketch a government functioning for the good of its citizens. He hoped a moral citizenry would undergird a just legal system, where government would both be respected by the citizens and would protect the people from the abuse of power. Although the “Frame” itself proved unworkable, Penn soon replaced it with a “Charter of Privileges” in 1701.

The actual functioning of Quakerism in Pennsylvania political life made for a tolerant and welcoming colony. Penn worked to maintain positive relations with the Indians, signing treaties and compensating them for land the English wanted. Many Quakers immigrated, with Philadelphia the center of settlement. Their quiet, industrious manner helped turn Pennsylvania into a “peaceable kingdom.” The colony also proved religiously tolerant, and it attracted other religious groups, including many German settlers.

Religious issues colored the disputes within Pennsylvania politics. One early battle was between Penn’s heirs as proprietors and the elected Assembly. The Assembly originally had little power, and to gain it they had to challenge the standing of the Penn family. The ascendant Assembly was at first primarily Quaker. With the increasing assault of Indians involved in the French and Indian War, however, conscientious Quakers refused to support the raising of a colonial militia. Pacifist Quakers thus surrendered political power to Quakers and non-Quakers who would use military force and govern Pennsylvania as any other British colony.

The Low Country: The Carolinas and Georgia

In the low country of the Carolinas and Georgia, other religious attitudes took root. The Carolinas were founded by eight proprietors, who received grants from Charles II: to pursue commercial colonies along the lines of England’s Caribbean sugar plantations. The proprietor most responsible for religious matters was Anthony Ashley Cooper, the first Earl of Shaftesbury (1621–1783). A great believer in religious toleration, he worked with the philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) to draft the Fundamental Constitution in 1669. The Fundamental Constitution granted outright religious

liberty to all religious groups except atheists. A subsequent revision of the constitution allowed for a future Anglican establishment, which the Anglican elites near Charles Town (called the Goose Creek Men) pushed through in 1704 with the Exclusion Act, meant to remove all but Anglicans from colonial offices. When the Crown rejected the act, the colonists created the Church Act in 1706 to establish the Anglican Church but avoid offending other groups. This hearty toleration made the Carolinas hospitable to a wide variety of immigrant groups, including French Calvinists (Huguenots), German Reformed, Presbyterians, and Jews.

North Carolina separated from South Carolina in 1729, but it was always a very different environment. It had a large Quaker population, as well as Baptists and others. Subsequently, Anglicanism never established a firm public place in North Carolina. Religious benevolence helped drive the founding of the last colony of Georgia. General James Oglethorpe (1696–1785) viewed the colony not only as a buffer colony against Spanish Florida and hostile Indians, but as a place for reform for debtors and prisoners. Oglethorpe’s religiously informed vision hoped for the reformation of its settlers and the establishment of stable families, and it aimed to do so by outlawing liquor and slaves. This vision failed to attract settlers, however, and Georgia became a royal colony with established Anglicanism but practical toleration in 1751.

Religious Establishments

Given these religious backgrounds, the various forms religious establishment took in the colonies make sense. Established churches created a powerful link between the church and the political instruments of the colony and the larger British Empire. Not only did established churches receive financial support from colonial taxes, but they also helped define the limits of acceptable religious discourse within the colony. The southern colonies of Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia all sponsored Anglican establishments, but those establishments varied widely in practice. Virginia possessed the strongest, most well-supported, and most uniformly practiced establishment. Early in its existence, Maryland officially established Anglicanism, but its Catholic proprietors limited their support of the Anglican Church. With the Glorious Revolution the Crown ordered a strengthened Anglican establishment that mirrored neighboring Virginia’s. North Carolina’s establishment was exceptionally weak, existing more on paper than in reality. Even with their establishments, South Carolina and Georgia still hosted many dissenting (non-established

Protestant) groups. In New England, the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth (later merged with Massachusetts), Connecticut, and New Hampshire all had Congregational establishments. New York presented an interesting case, with Anglicanism the established church in the city of New York and the counties of Richmond, Queens, and Westchester. Outside of that, local areas could disburse monies to whatever church the majority favored, including Dutch Reformed churches in many areas. When governors tried to expand the Anglican establishment they met resistance. For a variety of reasons, no establishment existed in Pennsylvania (Quaker toleration), New Jersey (ethnic and religious diversity), Delaware, or Rhode Island.

Underneath the colonial establishments, however, religious diversity increased in the colonies, and the attitudes toward establishment shifted. Establishments could not prevent the growth of many nonestablished religious groups. Immigration from England and intercolonial movement brought dissenting groups to all of the colonies. German, Dutch, and Swedish immigrants brought their distinctive Protestantism to the New World as well, including Dutch Reformed churches, Swedish and German Lutherans, Moravians seeking new missions, and some Sephardic Jews in Rhode Island and South Carolina. The Great Awakening also helped spur the growth of dissenting groups. These groups grew and were largely unmolested, especially after the Glorious Revolution enshrined a principle of religious toleration. The Toleration Act of 1689 legislated ongoing limits for Roman Catholics but made arrangements for protecting the liberty of conscience for all Protestant groups. Although the Church of England still received preferential treatment, the act helped establish a “religious free market” for Protestants. Groups such as Baptists and Quakers still complained about having their tax monies support established denomination, but they were allowed to worship freely. The toleration the colonies practiced was not full religious liberty, but it allowed for greater diversity than had been possible in Europe a century before. The presence of establishments thus created a structural presence of religion in colonial political life, setting the ground rules under which all members of society would have to act, while not determining which Protestant group its citizens would join.

Religion and Social Order: Metaphor and Practice

Religion contributed a vital aspect to colonial society and politics, demonstrated both in the language colonists used to describe their society and in their actual practice. First,

Protestantism formed an important element of British patriotism. As Carla Pestana and Linda Colley have demonstrated, Protestantism formed a key component for defining and holding the empire together. Although the Church of England was favored by the imperial government, many Protestant groups found shelter under the Anglican umbrella provided by the empire. As the colonists increasingly asserted their British identity, they simultaneously stressed their Protestant character, believing that English liberties and Protestantism were intimately connected. The other side of this claim was a strong anti-Catholicism that stressed the politically and religiously oppressive nature of Roman Catholicism (demonstrated in the Spanish Black Legend).

In describing how the political order ought to relate to the churches, the majority of colonists (Quakers and Baptists excepted) favored the “nursing father” metaphor. Drawn from Isaiah 49.23—“kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers”—this idea appropriated a prophecy made to the ancient Hebrews and transferred it to the Christian churches. Popular since the Middle Ages, this outlook posited that since Christianity was true and the source of salvation, the monarch had a duty to encourage it and to protect it from error and harm, suggesting a close relationship between the powers of the state and the established church.

Other political language also contained within it a powerful religious element. The image of the “body politic,” for instance, traditionally made room for the operation of faith. Just as a body needed a soul to animate it, so the body politic needed the spiritual life provided by the churches. Similarly, many colonists especially in New England described the family as a “little commonwealth.” The principles of order, rule, and hierarchy that pertained to the kingdom also applied in the family. Just as a king was responsible for the religious condition of his subjects, so a father was responsible for the spiritual lives of his wife, children, and servants. Thus, religious oversight as part of the government’s domain stretched from the highest to the lowest in society.

These ideals received powerful public enactment. In New England, laws required weekly church attendance, and deacons would investigate absences and recommend fines for offenders. Similarly, officials with public and religious roles collected tithes and other monies to support the churches. Beyond Sunday worship, many political gatherings also possessed a religious component. A sermon would precede the responsibilities of election days, and those mustered for militia training would also hear preaching. Other

sermons commented on public issues, whether the character of a “good ruler” or the providential and political implications of wars or natural events like earthquakes and droughts. These sermons would often be printed, leading to increased circulation of their content. Governors would also call for both fast and thanksgiving days. As official events, these would also be marked by divine services and observed in every community.

In the Chesapeake, the practices differed, but religious life was still a public matter. Due to the increased distances served by churches, worship was less frequent; however, that invested each service, with greater import. As a public event, church services were a time to gather, to see and be seen—and often as a prelude to other forms of sociability, including horse racing and courting. Religious services were also connected with the legislatures—such as the Virginia House of Burgesses. Public figures made a point to be present and visible for the appropriate Anglican worship. By contrast, further south in the Carolinas, there was very little tradition of public expressions of religion. Piety was present, but this rarely led to political implications.

Religion and the Glorious Revolution

The Glorious Revolution proved to be significant not only in England but also in America, where the political upheaval carried with it a number of religious overtones. The ascent to the throne of Catholic James II in 1685 troubled many Protestant colonists—just as it did their coreligionists in England. Colonists grew even more concerned as it became apparent that James was dedicated to using the colonies to generate revenue, the better to allow him to rule independently of Parliament. In America, this meant the presence of Sir Edmund Andros (1637–1714), who was charged with governing the newly reorganized Dominion of New England (the New England colonies plus New York and the Jerseys). Not only did Andros increase taxes, but he limited New England town meetings and replaced local officials. He stopped the financial support of Congregational clergy and set up an Anglican congregation in Boston as a prelude to creating an official Anglican establishment. Such abuses seemed calculated to disrupt the Puritan commonwealth. Throughout New England, ministers provided leadership to resist these changes.

News of the arrival of William and Mary in England and their reception by Parliament traveled slowly across the Atlantic, and the lag between the first news of the event and official confirmation produced instability and dramatic

change in several colonies, particularly Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland. In Massachusetts, colonial leaders organized a quick, popular uprising against Andros’s authority. In April 1689, colonial leaders filled Boston with two thousand militiamen. They quickly arrested Andros and imprisoned him until they could receive royal instruction. They immediately declared their loyalty to the new, Protestant monarchs, making clear that they did not intend to revolt against the proper British authority. Even though Massachusetts’s actions received royal approval, they still produced some instability. While Massachusetts was waiting for its new charter, the Salem witch trials occurred (1692), partially as a result of the breakdown of governance.

In New York, the response to the revolution—Leisler’s Rebellion—produced much more division. When news of events in England arrived, Jacob Leisler (1640–1691) took command and quickly captured the fort at Manhattan. Leisler’s support primarily lay with the older Dutch Reformed population, and he himself was a zealous Calvinist and deacon in the Reformed Church. With no direct instructions from London, Leisler remained in power. He proved to be authoritarian himself and isolated a number of people, especially the newer British settlers. When direct instructions from the Crown arrived, Leisler refused to submit. As a result, he was caught and convicted of treason. Leisler’s Rebellion revealed the continuing ethnic and religious divisions within New York society. Many of Leisler’s supporters were the ethnic Dutch who were refusing to assimilate with British culture, and many of them subsequently migrated into New Jersey.

Maryland would witness the most successful colonial uprising. The Protestant majority under the Anglican planter and malcontent John Coode used a delay in recognizing William and Mary as a pretence to form the Protestant Associates and arrest the Catholic governor, William Joseph. The Crown endorsed these actions, and William revoked the Calvert family’s charter, making it another royal colony. Here, too, resistance grew out of the close connection of Protestantism and British patriotism.

Religion and Foreign Affairs

Because of the close identification of Protestantism with British patriotism and empire, religion also energized the colonists’ participation in imperial wars. British Protestantism fed a strong anti-Catholicism that inflamed passions against the colonists’ two major imperial rivals, France and Spain. This element was present in all of the major conflicts the

colonists engaged in from the late seventeenth century onward. The support the colonists had given to Protestants William and Mary echoed in their involvement in King William's War (1689–1697). Their (largely ineffectual) attacks against New France supported William's strategy in Europe to check the moves made by Louis XIV. War renewed with Queen Anne's War (1702–1713), fought as part of the larger War of the Spanish Succession in Europe. Colonial expeditions attacked both St. Augustine in Florida and Acadia in Canada. Later, in the War of Jenkins's Ear (1739–1742), colonists again directed their attacks against Catholic Spain, with some colonists even fighting in the Caribbean at Cartagena.

The interconnected concerns about the French, their Indian allies, and Catholicism were apparent in several conflicts primarily involving New England. During Queen Anne's War in 1704, a combined Catholic and Indian force raided Deerfield, Massachusetts, slaughtering some of the residents and taking many others as captives. Taken to New France, they came into close contact with both French Catholicism and their Indian captors. Although many, like the town's minister John Williams, resisted the religious pressures put on them, others wavered and converted to Catholicism. Some, such as Williams's daughter Eunice, even maintained their conversion when they were free to return home. The Deerfield Raid was still fresh in the minds of colonists when news came that a Jesuit named Sebastien Rale in Maine was stirring up his Wabanaki converts to attack New England. The resulting frontier fighting earned the title "Father Rale's War" (also called Dummer's War, 1721–1725). When an armed expedition reached Rale's base, he died fighting rather than surrender.

As the eighteenth century continued, the ongoing conflict with France called forth increasingly strong religious language. During King George's War (1744–1748), New Englanders again rallied to attack Canada. Massachusetts Governor William Shirley organized an expedition under the command of William Pepperell to capture the well-defended fort at Louisbourg. Pepperell convinced the famous itinerant preacher and awakener George Whitefield (1715–1770) to help generate enlistments, and fasts called by Governor Shirley helped unify the colony. When Louisbourg surrendered, colonists celebrated it as a providential victory and interpreted it as part of a divine millennial plan. The religious significance of the capture of Louisbourg helps explain the shock and disaffection that resulted from Britain's returning the fort to the French in the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle.

With the traditions forged during the Louisbourg campaign, colonial support—especially in New England—for the French and Indian War came naturally. Local ministers and itinerants both supported the cause. Many clergy signed up as chaplains. Again, soldiers marched north to confront the "antichrist" of papist France. Both the great Congregationalist theologian Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) and evangelist George Whitefield encouraged New Englanders during the war, even when things looked bleak early on. With the victories at Québec and Montreal (1759, 1760), the colonies rejoiced. Finally, the French menace had been removed, and many hoped for even greater signs of a coming Protestant millennium.

Religion and the Coming of the American Revolution

The interaction of religion and politics in the colonial period formed part of the cultural matrix within which the contests of the Revolutionary era transpired. Scholars, however, continue to debate the exact significance. One still-contested question centers on the relationship of the Great Awakening and the American Revolution. Ever since Alan Heimert in *Religion and the American Mind* (1966) provocatively posited a close connection, historians have attempted to understand how the two events related. Most have come to agree that the Awakening was important but not centrally causal for the American Revolution.

Even so, several events in the late colonial period caused colonists to question the power of the British government and the Anglican establishment, including controversies over the Parsons' Cause and a resident Anglican bishop. In Virginia, Anglican clergy received payment in tobacco or its cash equivalent. When drought struck in 1758, the Virginia House of Burgesses set the cash equivalent of a pound of tobacco at two pennies—much below market valuation. When the clergy protested to London, the imperial government disallowed the act. Several priests in Virginia then sued for damages—the Parson's Cause. In opposition to them, the young frontier lawyer Patrick Henry (1736–1799) convinced the jury that the act had been for the common good and had been popularly supported, so the suit should be dismissed. This struggle over the social and economic standing of the established clergy contributed to discontent with imperial rule and a greater sense of shared interest between dissenters and Anglican laity.

In the North, many also feared the ongoing calls for settling an Anglican bishop in the Colonies. Anglicans,

especially in the South, wanted a bishop to ordain priests for the colonies. Anglicans believed they were losing out to other religious groups because all of their clergy had to be ordained in England before coming to America. Undoubtedly, an Anglican bishop would strengthen both the church and Anglican establishments in the colonies. This was exactly what many dissenting groups feared. A resident bishop represented the combined power of the English church and state. Groups as diverse as Congregationalists, Quakers, and Baptists all had memories of religious persecution, and the very suggestion of a resident bishop forced them to question the intents of the imperial government.

Socially dissenting groups—those most influenced by the Awakening—challenged the social order of Anglican and Anglicized elites. As Rhys Isaac has demonstrated for Virginia, social elites strongly supported a hierarchical society and a decorous Anglicanism. By contrast, the dissenters—many of whom lived on the frontier along the Appalachian Mountains—undermined such ideals. Their worship services were more lively and egalitarian. This religious vision reinforced a more democratic social outlook. This contrast was most dramatic in the South. In the Middle Colonies, Presbyterians especially organized against Anglican dominance in public life. In New York, political alliances often reflected religious differences. In New England, the distinctions were more muddled since some Congregationalist elites would still side with England, but even here, the ethos of the Awakening challenged elite sentiments.

Simultaneously, preaching and religious language dealt with the political matters of the day. In New England, ministers such as Jonathan Mayhew articulated a language of religious resistance to political tyranny as early as 1750. Interestingly, Mayhew and his allies were not strong supporters of the Great Awakening but were rationalist Old Lights, skeptical of the emotionalism and social implications of the Awakening, who were influenced by British Whig principles. However, in the 1760s, many pro-Awakening New Lights adopted very similar language. As conflict grew, ministers often turned to a potent combination of republican, millennial, and providential language to fuel increasingly firm resistance to the British government. Using republican phrases, ministers could portray the defense of liberty as a “sacred cause.” As J. C. D. Clark has demonstrated, this “language of liberty” was particularly appealing to the dissenters who formed a majority in the American colonies. A vision of God’s millennial (end times; apocalyptic) plan helped energize opposition to both French Catholicism (during the

French and Indian War) and the British (after 1763). The antichrist (a symbol of concentrated evil from the Book of Revelation) who opposed American liberties increasingly became the British. Finally, believing that they could clearly understand God’s providential plan, the colonists portrayed themselves as a separate nation with a divine mission and divine sanction. Put together, these languages—which all had previous uses in the colonial era—helped drive a wedge between Britain and her American colonies.

Assessment

The interaction of religion and colonial politics thus shows a strong pattern of diversity. The colonies represented a diversity of origins, with religious motivations directing some but not all of the colonial settlements. Varying religious motives led to differences in practice and in the shape of church establishments within colonies. Furthermore, as the colonial process continued, it produced a greater diversity of groups within each colony. This multiplicity of groups made the domination of any single group within a given colony more and more difficult.

Still, across this diversity some commonalities existed, and these shared characteristics increased after the Glorious Revolution through the process of Anglicization. As James Hutson has demonstrated, one ideal was the growing concern for religious toleration. Although not yet a conception of full religious liberty, the colonial period saw a marked increase in both *de jure* and *de facto* toleration of many Protestant sects. With some exceptions, the animus between the groups largely subsided, as they together forged a shared colonial existence. Furthermore, colonists generally accepted the principle that religion and politics were closely connected. They saw the laws as reflecting a Protestant Christian ethic and the government as supportive of the church’s concerns. The churches reciprocated by instilling habits of obedience and deference in their congregants. Finally, many colonists saw it as their duty to be involved in political activity—whether passing laws or supporting a military campaign—as an outgrowth of their faith. They thus practiced politics as a type of lived religion, engaging in political matters as a concomitant responsibility to their faith.

These colonial conditions suggest that the Revolutionary era exhibited both continuities and discontinuities with the period that went before it. Some elements continued in the new American republic. The Continental Congress continued to issue fast and thanksgiving day sermons. Some states held on to their religious establishments into the nineteenth

century. Many colonists transferred the providential hopes they once held for Britain onto the United States. By contrast, the Revolutionary era would also see a flowering of full religious liberty, expressed both in the First Amendment to the Constitution and in the push for disestablishment. The arguments made by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison supporting disestablishment in Virginia would prefigure claims made in many other states. The end result was to place religion and politics in the new nation on a course different from that of the colonial period. Nonetheless, without the religious diversity of the colonial period or the growth of the practice of religious toleration, it is unlikely the American republic would have been able to develop the religious traditions it did.

See also *American Revolution; Atlantic World; Canada: Catholics; Establishment, Religious; Great Awakening(s); Mexico: Colonial Era; Pilgrims; Quakers through the Nineteenth Century.*

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Politics: Nineteenth Century

American politics in the nineteenth century was shaped in part by multiple engagements with religions. Extending beyond the formal limitations of law and government, the relationship of American religion and politics can best be understood by focusing on enduring areas of concern and engagement by which different groups and individuals have defined themselves over time.

Tumult in Politics and Religion

No period of American history can be described as completely tranquil, but the nineteenth century was especially tumultuous. It began with a newly constituted nation not yet certain of its identity. Was it a democracy, and, if so, to what degree? Was it a republic, and, if so, how much state power would it require? Was it a rough federation of sectional alliances or a nascent centralizing power with an identity of its own? Amidst disagreements about such questions, American

political culture and religions developed sometimes with clear direction and sometimes haphazardly, but consistently with mutual influence.

American politics took shape through successive phases of state-building following the founding era, which established the institutions of government and constitutional rules in an effort to situate democracy in various forms of public administration. The Jacksonian era sought to establish a “people’s bureaucracy,” forming the cornerstone of the party political system. Major sectional conflicts developed, leading eventually to the Civil War and continuing with the populist campaigns in the decades thereafter. In the background was the continued expansion of the United States beyond the original thirteen colonies until the closing of the frontier, as well as numerous wars, including not only the Mexican-American War, the War of 1812, and the Civil War, but also continued military engagements with Indians. By the conclusion of the century, the Progressive era had begun, and populist reformers abandoned the Jacksonian party state in favor of rationally administered policies designed to undo disparities of wealth and power. Finally, the country’s population grew steadily, in waves of immigration that yielded lasting religious diversity, as both a response to and contribution to the nation’s growing urbanization and industrialization.

American patriotism ebbed and flowed considerably during these decades, often turning on tensions between allegiance and dissent, individualism and communitarianism, and resistance and accommodation to changes. Amidst the considerations of political unity and pluralism, there were analogous religious speculations of what religion scholar Catherine L. Albanese refers to as the relation between “the One and the Many.” The religious creativity of the nineteenth century was spurred on by manifold social changes and contributed directly to them. As American demographics changed generally, American religions multiplied and broadened their range of influences, ideas, practices, and communities. One significant change was the increase in the number of immigrants’ faiths, such as the varieties of Catholicism between the 1830s and 1880s; the Judaism of refugees from European ghettos and pogroms, particularly the influx of Ashkenazic immigrants in the 1880s and 1890s; and the beginning of significant immigration of South Asian and East Asian Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims toward the end of the century. Another central factor in religious creativity was the revivalism of the Second Great Awakening (c. 1790–1840), whose injunction to save individual souls and to regenerate the social order was central to many nineteenth-century reform movements.

Following the Civil War, the alignment of liberal and conservative Protestant factions represented a major reorientation with regard to new developments in intellectual and social life. An under-regarded factor in American public life in the nineteenth century, the immense proliferation of new religious movements, from communitarian experiments such as Brook Farm to Christian Science, Mormonism, and multiple apocalyptic expressions of Christianity, was of considerable influence because many movements were rooted in criticism of the social order. The growing power of African American religions, particularly the liberationist Christianity nurtured in the “invisible institution” and emergent pan-Africanism, further transformed nineteenth-century politics. And the creation of new Native American rituals and modes of identity, most obviously in the form of the Ghost Dance and the prophecies of Wovoka Jack Wilson, constituted a further reminder of how inextricably linked were religious and political matters in this century.

Methodological Considerations

Such examples reveal how nineteenth-century religions both provoked and responded to larger sociopolitical changes in ways that raised questions about the integrity of pluralism, the validity of the founders’ visions, and the achievement of unity amidst diversity. These questions seemed especially acute when measured against the deep religious obligations of many Americans. In other words, nineteenth-century American religions were in many ways ineluctably political, just as nineteenth-century American political culture was defined by religions. These intersections can be understood in multiple ways, depending on how terms are defined. Political histories may downplay the importance of “religion,” however this slippery term is defined, but if we focus on the influence of religions in public life, we may learn a great deal about political matters. To do so, however, it is helpful to avoid conventional orientations toward such matters, which can be limiting. The study of political cultures often looks simply to institutions or social movements alone, and the study of religion has often held a narrow conception of politics, hewing either to concepts such as “prophetic” social criticism or concentrating on law and public policy.

The complex interplay between American religion and politics is lost when any one orientation is emphasized, for religion and politics are not simply discrete and easily distinguishable phenomena. Throughout American history, they have met, merged, and clashed in public life, sometimes seeking to limit or criticize each other, and sometimes merging

into powerful expressions of passion, concern, or identity. Debates about the mix of religion and politics predate the country's founding, and American religions have always been objects of political scrutiny and vehicles of political advocacy. Particularly in the nineteenth century, the controversy surrounding the politicization of religions and the insistent engagement of religions with matters of public concern meant that these two phenomena were only analytically distinct; on the ground, they remained mutually entangled and at times inseparable.

Conventional orientations are not misguided, nor do they fail to provide helpful ways of thinking about religion and politics. But an exploration of their limits will help us to approach nineteenth-century religion and politics with a sufficiently broad field of vision, so that its complexities and main issue emerge more fully. First, a long-standing presumption holds that religious expressions relating to politics are best understood by thinking through the framework of "church and state." This orientation emphasized institutional life, equating politics with the sphere of the government, and religions with spaces of worship. Yet religions are expressed and enacted in spaces far more plural than those of temples, churches, or mosques, just as politics exceeds the boundaries established by the administrative expression of political power in the state.

Second, many studies examine the dynamics of allegiance and dissent through reference to the languages of civil religion (those affinities that unite citizens in spite of their differences) and the jeremiad (a "prophetic" form of criticism directed against social immorality or complacency). Although useful in pointing to modes of democratic faith or civic piety, these ideas do not always resonate outside their original contexts in the colonial and revolutionary periods. Further, although these themes—defined differently by various interpreters—focus on the important relationship between religious convictions and the obligations of citizenship, their apparent attention to beliefs and convictions, rather than a wider range of situated or embodied practices, fails to capture the extent of often agonistic, fractious expressions of religious dissent.

Third, still other interpretations of religion and politics have focused on how public figures have articulated their viewpoints on matters of the day. Although examining the effects of religious speech and arguments in the public sphere is instructive, this too is a limiting orientation. Texts and criticism—as well as religious support for elected officials or policies—are fascinating windows into religio-political life,

but their engagement with discourse, symbolism, narrative, and rhetoric can only partially capture the messiness of religion and politics in lived history.

In taking stock of the incredible changes of the nineteenth century, then, what pathways might help us make sense not simply of religion and of politics but of the shifting, combinative experiences in which the boundaries between them blur? The range of ideas, actions, and movements defining religion and politics during this period took shape not only in government, with its legal, administrative, and institutional connotations, First Amendment jurisprudence, or debates about religion in the public square. Rather, politics in the nineteenth century was also defined by matters related to autonomy and self-determination, as these are experienced in shared social spaces and in relation to shared social goods or matters of common concern.

The religions of nineteenth-century America were political not just in their concern with governance but in their concern with power, with identity and not just the public square. These concerns do not mean that all aspects of social life are political, but this expanded view helps us to see the inescapably political power of religions in nineteenth-century matters of conflict, debate, dissent, separatism, and contests over resources.

Instead of organizing traditions chronologically, a rich understanding of their articulation in the nineteenth century can be achieved with a thematic organization. Several abiding themes and modes of concern defined American religion and politics during this period. These were the issues and passions around which religions became politicized, understood themselves as political actors, and were called on to seek change or resistance in their own lives and in the lives of their fellow citizens. These enduring concerns are (1) the authority of the Constitution and its implications for the relation of religions to public life; (2) the dynamics of dissent and allegiance, seen especially in conflicts between political and religious obligations under the rule of law; (3) debates surrounding economic and distributive issues, ranging from wealth and poverty to social goods more broadly considered; (4) issues related to religion and the body, including well-known concerns about race and gender as well as impulses requiring temperance or censorship; (5) religious concepts of the nation itself, ranging from a commitment to its providential history to Jeffersonian dreams of a republic or Tocquevillean civil religion; and (6) issues relating to religious community and pluralism, especially separatism and new religious movements.

American religious traditions have lined up on all sides of these issues and debates, which have continued from the constitutional era to the present. They have shaped arguments, motivated practitioners, and ultimately transformed American culture, revealing the cyclical nature of American debates about religion and political life. Although the themes overlap regularly, and certain events or individuals move between them, they enable us to make our way through this complex field of study using both conventional narrative and thematic comparison.

Constitutional Legacies

The pluralism and public religiosity that regularly provoke reflection on constitutional fundamentals became unavoidable over the course of the nineteenth century. The context was shaped by well-known disputes about the role of religion in public life, which focused initially on the Constitution's minimal reference to religion, prompting partisan debates between those who favored a secular document and those who demanded some acknowledgment of a deity therein. The First Amendment sought to generate a conceptual framework for considering presumptions against a religious establishment by governments and for measuring the scope of religious liberty. Despite the republican context of its inception, this framework favors liberal political principles such as individual liberties and rights of immunity, seeking thereby to establish a clear demarcation between a public life guided by rational inquiry and a private sphere wherein personal beliefs may flourish, sometimes supplemented by the associational life making up civil society.

With religious disestablishment complete by 1833, when Massachusetts ended government support of churches, the Constitution was left presumably to settle not only debate about religion and politics but also to clarify the duties owed to the state, the state's proper orientation to and role in religions, and the permissible expressions of religions in political life. Yet throughout the nineteenth century, contests over these topics persisted. The fractiousness surrounding the relation between religion and politics, and between public and private life, was manifest as early as the 1800 presidential campaign. With its attacks on the "infidel" Thomas Jefferson, this campaign was widely seen as a referendum not only on the First Amendment and the possible consequences of disestablishment but also on positions, articulated earlier in Jefferson's "Notes on the State of Virginia" and James Madison's "Memorial and Remonstrance," that endorsed religious pluralism and a complete disentanglement of religion

from political matters. Here we see the inklings of long-standing debates positioning religious virtue against a "naked public square."

There was broad agreement among the framers of American government that religion was best kept out of government affairs, but many of these figures also saw merit in public religions, whether directed toward the cultivation of good character or toward the reform of social customs. Opinions on the structure of the state, as either the source or opponent of liberties, were not as central to political life or to policy as they would become in the twentieth century. Still, two issues provided occasions for considering the reach of state power and the meanings of establishment.

First, disagreements about the character of public life surfaced in 1810 in the form of a federal law mandating Sunday mail delivery. The law seemed to critics the apotheosis of constitutional secularism, apparently undermining a fundamental obligation of those who insisted on the Christian character of public life. Alternative versions of this legislation were proposed between 1810 and 1817. These proposals led some to believe that the constitutional system, which stressed individual liberties, pluralism, and protection from coercion by external authority, was in danger. If that system had promised to promote unity by settling divisive religious issues, it now seemed to create divisions by asking citizens to choose one set of obligations over another. Although the state initially prevailed by insisting that economic vitality, not religious observance, was at stake, hundreds of petitions to Congress—backed by the General Union for the Promotion of the Christian Sabbath, co-led by Lyman Beecher—kept the issue alive. Congress, during the Jackson administration did not rescind the law, even under such pressures, but the practice slowly faded away, owing in part to the growth of the railroad and telegraph industries that made Sunday delivery moot.

Second, questions about religious establishment led to changes in public schools. Even though the state would not begin to rigorously enforce its power to eliminate religious establishments in schools for decades, in mid-nineteenth century questions began to emerge about the power of the state to dictate the content of education and thereby the socialization of the youth. During the 1830s and 1840s, as sectional change, political conflict, and immigration transformed the culture broadly, reformers and humanitarians such as Horace Mann and Catharine Beecher believed that government should sponsor a system of "common schools" that would provide students not only a shared body of

knowledge but also civic identification with the basic features of American public life and patriotism. Civic-minded reformers in general and specific parties such as the Whigs, who promoted righteousness as a kind of social glue, saw education as a means for generating social harmony, political stability, and economic prosperity.

Yet even if this common school system was deemed necessary in an increasingly pluralistic society, in their first decades these schools continued to teach some version of Protestant nationalism. Over time, disagreements developed over the possible effects of the school system. Some worried that public schooling would reduce the role of family, community, or church in education, and many raised serious questions about curricula. Because most Protestant schools were integrated into the new system, some Protestants worried that religious subjects or even religious language would eventually be censored by state religious authorities. Religious critics complained that common schools were too expensive and that they undermined “traditional” morality and religious values, which, if openly expressed in schools, would violate the First Amendment. Constitutional concerns deepened with regard to issues of taxation: Which schools could the government support without violating the First Amendment? These issues were not resolved in the nineteenth century, but they pointed to lingering instability in the very notion of what constituted an American identity, of what meaningful preparation for citizenship was like, and of the power of constitutional principles to shape public life.

Courts did not begin to adjudicate on the religion clauses until the twentieth century, but several cases were heard during the nineteenth century that touched on religion in public life. Several cases were particularly significant. In *Vidal v. Girard's Executors* (1844) the Supreme Court assessed challenges to the will of Stephen Girard, who founded a school for orphan boys, but stipulated that no religious instruction would be offered. The Court upheld the will as it stood and warned of public conflicts that might issue from affairs “connected with religious polity.” Even in the context of affirming the role of Christianity in common law, the Court’s acknowledgment of the legitimacy of individual liberties shaped its later emphasis on neutrality. In *Minor v. Board of Education of Cincinnati* (1870), a superior court initially defended a ban on Bible reading in public schools, emphasizing neutrality in a way that later became normative. In *Reynolds v. United States* (1878), plaintiff George Reynolds—a practicing Mormon—sought to

overturn his bigamy conviction on the grounds of free exercise. The Court ruled against Reynolds, stating that freedom of conscience could not be regulated, but actions could be if they were in clear violation of the rule of law. And in *Church of Holy Trinity v. United States* (1892), the Court considered the legality of hiring a foreign preacher to serve an American church, which the circuit court had found in violation of the Contract Labor Act of the period. The Supreme Court found no violation, citing as historic rationale that the courts (and by extension the state) should not regulate religious affairs that were clearly distinct from those of government.

The logic of the opinions in *Reynolds* and *Holy Trinity* was the Fourteenth Amendment, which sought to restrict the power of states to abridge individual freedoms. The amendment’s guarantee of due process and equal protection indicated that the government would intervene in local affairs (possibly even practices supported by religions) if deemed necessary. Although the language of the courts seemed to support neutrality with respect to conscience, there was a frank acknowledgment both of the admixture of religion and politics in American life, and of the possibility of regulation. As the federal government grew larger and its reach longer, as pluralism became unavoidable in public life, many religious practitioners sensed less overlap between religious and political obligations, a sentiment held not just by those belonging to a divided Protestant majority, but by other religious populations who did not experience a concordant fit between their religiosity and the demands of American citizenship. Such questions about the boundary between confessionalism and civic obligation, public and private, and the limits of state power shaded naturally into considerations of dissent and allegiance.

Dissent and Allegiance

The dynamics of allegiance and dissent are integral to nineteenth-century religion and politics. The shifting understandings of religious liberty and legal authority often yielded ambivalences about allegiance to political order. Nineteenth-century American life was at times characterized by reverence for order, as illustrated by the veneration of George Washington and the Constitution in the early part of the century and efforts by the National Reform Association to ratify a “Christian amendment” to the Constitution in the late years of the century. It was also marked by religiously inspired dissent.

One source of unity was “civil religion,” a common set of public rites, articles of political faith, and self-understandings that created a shared loyalty to and belief in the United States. During this period the phrase “In God We Trust” was added to U.S. currency. The Pledge of Allegiance, without “under God,” was written in 1892 by Christian socialist Francis Bellamy. Even Horace Bushnell’s broad-based gradualism, a theory of the development of Christian character, was linked intimately to the growth of the person in the spheres of education, church, and the nation. It was French author Alexis de Tocqueville, however, who most famously described the ways in which American laws and customs were undergirded by religion: no “habits of the heart” or political opinions were devoid of religious support, in Tocqueville’s estimation, even as they were not overly constrained by such support.

Each of these formulations point the way to the convergence of religious ideals with political ideals. Yet no history can avoid attention to those occasions where division with regard to first principles leads to religious citizens expressing dissent from political order. When the sovereign is understood to be making demands that are at odds with religious norms and practices, religious dissenters have often marked their difference from what might otherwise be a deeply grounded patriotism. Some of these expressions have been directed against “big government,” as with the populist campaigns of the 1880s and 1890s, which denounced the intrusions and moral waywardness of the state. Elsewhere, the weight of religious obligations has been understood by practitioners as necessitating direct forms of public protest, as with William Lloyd Garrison’s 1854 burning of a copy of the Constitution as a protest against slavery and Shawnee leader Tecumseh’s protest against the religious “impurities” risked by wearing clothing or food produced by European-Americans.

These sensibilities emerge in the context of debates over specific issues and challenges in nineteenth-century American life and reflect the shifting understandings of religious and political authority. The issue of warfare and militarism provides one of the most enduring tests of religious allegiance. Prior to the twentieth century and the introduction of conscientious objector status, religious pacifism was not as central an issue as it later became. The groups that did profess radical pacifism—the Amish, Quakers, and small numbers of Buddhists—were usually not sizable enough to constitute a notable public resistance to militarism, even if they were occasionally singled out and attacked for their alleged lack of patriotism. Yet theological laments, such as President

Lincoln’s suggestion that God was on no side in the Civil War, and religiously inspired or influenced denunciations of warfare, such as Walt Whitman’s “The Wound Dresser” and Mark Twain’s “War Prayer,” served to highlight tensions between religious presumptions against doing harm and those enjoining service to the nation.

The Nation and Religiopolitical Space

Religious interpretations of national destiny are bound up in these tensions, constituting an enduring expression of religion and public debate in the nineteenth century. The archetypal representation of America as a “city on a hill,” whose providential course is a beacon to others, guided not only understandings of national legitimacy but also relationships to the land itself. John Winthrop’s “A Model of Christian Charity”—the source for many of these foundational images—echoed throughout nineteenth-century proclamations that America is a “Christian nation,” from well-known public addresses, such as those delivered by Timothy Dwight in 1812 and Ezra Stiles Ely in 1827, to a more generalized sensibility evident in evangelists ranging from Charles Finney to Dwight Moody, whose reform campaigns and mass evangelism facilitated new engagements with urban American and its challenges, all buoyed by the notion that American society leaned toward redemption and a godly destiny.

Aside from contentions that God’s plan was unfolding in American history—something also embodied in the sacred history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS)—many Americans during this period understood the obligation to establish a religio-political example somewhat differently. One tendency was to establish an aggressive, militaristic orientation to land and nationalism. This sensibility is present in attempts to tame and domesticate the land: in Lyman Beecher’s “Plea for the West,” with its quasi-missionary zeal in transforming the polity’s religion; in government coercion of native culture and religions during the drive to close the frontier; and in religious expressions of manifest destiny such as Josiah Strong’s “Our Country.” An alternate tendency suggested that political life—expansionist, materialist, competitive—was contrary to religious expression and improvement. Exemplars of this orientation—from the transcendentalists to a clutch of separatist new religions, including the Oneida perfectionists and Bronson Alcott’s Fruitlands—rejected dominant conceptions of political society in favor of a nature-oriented or communitarian spirituality that was to ground a new social and religious order.

Economy and Social Justice

Other visions of a religiously reformed society were crafted in and around distributive issues, especially matters related to poverty and industrial capitalism. Robert Baird, author of *Religion in America*, observed that American religions were clearly distinct from government, but their reformism and voluntarism could serve the causes of social betterment. While reformers were conducting anti-dueling campaigns, domestic missions, and multiple humanitarian efforts, American religions also were responding to changing economic realities. Concerns about such matters became especially pronounced following the Civil War, owing to the challenges of Reconstruction, urbanization and industrialization, and centralized economic power. The disruption of agrarian life, workplace safety and fairness, and disparities of wealth all produced religious responses.

One response was manifested in the anger of populist campaigns. Stretching from Texas to North Carolina and elsewhere, populists decried the centralization of power, the reach of the state, and the tyranny of “elites” over the common interests of “the people.” Various expressions of populist discontent were fueled by evangelical ideals of egalitarianism and justice, positioned against state “bigness” and unchecked capitalism. Elsewhere, socialist-influenced Christians such as Adin Ballou, Bellamy, and “Mother” Jones sought to address social conditions by fusing Marxist social analysis with Christian ethics on economic justice and care for the downtrodden. Related organizations included the Knights of Labor and the Christian Labor Union, whose advocates saw the Bible as an anticapitalist reformer’s text to be consulted when arguing against economic inequities. The Progressive Movement occasionally sponsored specific initiatives—most famously in Jane Addams’ Hull House, both safe haven and reformers’ base—that attempted to fuse Christian charity with practical engagement in the works of mercy.

Although countervailing impulses existed in the late nineteenth century—exemplified by Russell Conwell’s claim, in *Aces of Diamonds* (1890), that amassing wealth was a spiritual duty whose benefits would trickle down to the needy—the majority of responses were located in concerns about prizing wealth over justice. The emergence of the Social Gospel movement in the late nineteenth century focused on replacing the “sinful” structures of capitalism with the “sharing” cultures of Christianity, a moral emphasis on justice and equality replicated in Isaac Meyer Wise’s insistence—during and following the establishment of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1889—that the moral law needed to

be reimagined for America, specifically in relation to issues of justice and poverty. Catholics, too, declared the need to reform the market so as to align more clearly with principles of economic justice and human dignity. In addition to charitable organizations to help the poor, such as the Society of St. Vincent DePaul, Catholics supported workplace reform, living wages, and defended labor unions. Much of this activism benefited from the support of Pope Leo XIII, whose encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) was an official declaration of Catholic commitment to social and economic reform.

The Body

If the language of rights figured occasionally in religious efforts to reform the economy, it was central to religious action dealing identity and the body. Self-improvement campaigns, such as the temperance movement, or religious arguments in support of censorship of “lewd” materials, most famously in the 1873 Comstock laws, exemplified reformers’ influence. But the two most powerful intersections of religion, politics, and the body focused on race and gender.

Black Christians began to strengthen liberationist tendencies in the early nineteenth century, emphasizing themes of justice and deliverance from suffering in the context of slavery. Support for abolition also came from outside these communities, from Quaker condemnations of slavery, relief stations for escaped slaves, and the Underground Railroad. Against the backdrop of slave rebellions led by Denmark Vesey, Gabriel Prosser, and Nat Turner, the abolitionist cause gained momentum not only through such collective actions, but also through figures such as Frederick Douglass, whose July 4, 1852, address condemned the “unholy license” of racism, David Walker, and Garrison, as well as the Liberty Party. Disputes over the issue split many mainline denominations, with supporters of the institution represented publicly by Charles Colcock Jones, who claimed that scripture supported slavery. Following the Emancipation Proclamation and the end of the Civil War, the Reconstruction era was characterized by continued discrimination and by increased activity from groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. Some freedmen drew on extant arguments, initially articulated by Martin Delany and Henry Highland Garnet, about the desirability of repatriation to Africa. Among them, Henry McNeal Turner and later W. E. B. DuBois grew skeptical that the United States would ever be hospitable to African Americans. As part of their pan-Africanist leanings, they also began to criticize Christianity’s historic concept of the deity as white; indeed, Turner encouraged the worship of a black God.

Many participants in the abolitionist movement were women, who also used religious arguments about equality and rights to articulate a religious feminism. Early Christian advocates of women's rights included Sarah and Angelina Grimké; Sojourner Truth, whose speech "Ain't I a Woman?" was central to this movement; and Lydia Sexton. Perhaps the most important single event was the 1848 International Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, among others, argued for women's suffrage and property rights, claiming that patriarchy had long been supported by both scripture and custom. (Convinced that the Bible consistently degraded women, Stanton published the *Women's Bible* in 1895.) Such arguments facilitated increased women's roles in alternative religious communities—for example, Phoebe Palmer in the Holiness movement, and, in activism, Frances Willard in temperance campaigns. Later in the nineteenth century, reassertions of masculine power and privilege surfaced in American religious life, most notably in the "muscular Christianity" supported by organizations such as the YMCA and prominent evangelists like Moody.

Pluralism

Pluralism and community—malleable and beloved categories of American self-understanding—were registers in which religion and politics defined themselves in the nineteenth century, either because they self-consciously fashioned themselves as political or were marked as political by others. Public celebrations of religious pluralism—specifically the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions—occurred at century's end, but earlier decades had witnessed targeting of particular religious minorities and thereby rejections of this very pluralism. An especially virulent anti-Catholicism circulated in the mid-nineteenth century, exemplified by the 1834 burning of an Ursuline convent in Charlestown, Massachusetts, Beecher's warnings about the church's political aspirations to political parties such as the Know-Nothings or the American Party, and the salacious text, *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*. Warnings about Catholicism were crafted in the idiom of social concern for the good order. Similar panics arose with regard to various new religions accused of sedition or of undermining American sacred history, which resulted in the jailhouse murder of Mormon founder Joseph Smith and the federal ban on the Ghost Dance, with its apocalypticism and aspirations of Indian unity. Indeed, Native American culture and religion were at the center of attempts

to constrain pluralism, from President Jackson's Indian Removal Act to resistance efforts such as those led by Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce.

Although many continued to celebrate pluralism as one of America's most vital signs, others sought to separate themselves to maintain their identity. The LDS migration to Utah was the fullest expression of that group's explicitly theocratic, and separatist, ambitions. Other separatist experiments, such as Ballou's Hopedale Community or New Harmony, pursued separatism as a critical impulse, insofar as they rejected dominant social understandings of property and social organization. Separatism was not always geographic. Indeed, the growing impulse of Christian apocalypticism, which resurfaced vigorously among the Millerites, the Seventh-day Adventists, and the Jehovah's Witnesses, articulated their critique of American culture by advocating separate customs, not only in terms of their suspicion of state power but also in terms of health and religious observance, all of which served to mark them off from their peers.

The changing shapes of nineteenth-century religion and politics reveal these abiding areas of concern and argumentation, which also serve as ways for interested readers to think about and group together the issues by which religious practitioners defined their identities. Appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, even Protestant unity on sociopolitical issues could not be assumed by the early nineteenth century, as all groups were found on all sides of all issues. The influx of immigrants combined with larger changes to provoke new questions about the integrity of pluralism, the validity of federalism and the Jeffersonian romance, and the appropriate balance between political order and religious observance. Answers to these questions were crafted in a context of religious liberty, teeming pluralism, and sometimes antagonistic conceptions of politics and its demands. Any appreciation for these varied questions and answers must consider multiple perspectives and issues, if one is to take stock of the many ways Americans have contemplated the relation between religions and politics.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War; Anti-Catholicism; Civil Religion in the United States; Civil War; Constitution; Cult of Domesticity; Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Freedom, Religious; Great Awakening(s); Latter-day Saints; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; New Religious Movements: Nineteenth Century; Pluralism; Politics* entries; *Race and Racism; Settlement Houses; Sunday and the Sabbath; Supreme Court; Theocracy.*

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Politics: Twentieth Century

Americans have long cherished the idea that a strict wall of separation divides church and state. In the twentieth century, as in previous centuries, this was more myth than reality. Religion and politics have always been closely entwined. From the social gospel movement of the 1900s and 1910s, to the antievolution crusades of the 1920s, to the populist critiques of injustice in the 1930s, to the baptism of the Cold War in Christian rhetoric in the 1950s, to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, to the culture wars of the last decades of the twentieth century, religion has shaped political debate in the United States and politics have influenced the agendas of the faithful. In the early twenty-first century, the

tight interrelationship between religion and politics shows no signs of waning.

The Progressive Era

Americans at the beginning of the twentieth century faced a host of dramatic challenges. Mammoth corporations were consolidating small, independent businesses; the population was shifting from rural areas to cities; record numbers of immigrants were arriving from eastern and southern Europe, Mexico, Asia, and just about everywhere in between; and the United States was expanding its influence around the globe in pursuit of new markets and additional military bases. At the same time, U.S. Protestant leaders, who for centuries had dominated religious life in the nation, faced a crisis. As the nation urbanized and diversified, they found their influence declining. In response, they built the Social Gospel movement in an effort to make faith relevant to the nation.

Broad in scope and diverse in tactics, the Social Gospel movement grew out of liberal Protestants' efforts to integrate faith with social issues. Among the movement's early pioneers was Washington Gladden (1836–1918), a journalist-turned minister, who witnessed brutal labor conflicts in Ohio. Committed to the Golden Rule ("Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"), he sided against wealthier members of the community—including those in his own congregation—and instead advocated for the rights of labor. From his pulpit and in dozens of books, Gladden demonstrated that the Christian faith had tremendous significance for modern problems.

Other Social Gospel leaders, such as Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918), lived among the poor. A minister in New York's "Hell's Kitchen," he witnessed the many problems of urban life on a daily basis. Rather than separate issues of faith from the problems of the city, he worked to clean up the community around him. Women also played significant roles in the Social Gospel movement. Jane Addams (1860–1935), an educated, upper-middle-class woman moved to Chicago and opened a settlement house to serve the needs of the local immigrant community. She wrote of the renaissance in Christian humanitarianism taking shape throughout the broader progressive movement. Her life illustrated some of the new ways in which women blended religious faith and humanitarian activism to carve out social and political space for their gender. Finally, many African Americans also contributed to the Social Gospel movement. Facing brutal Jim Crow laws in the South and increasing segregation everywhere, African Americans—especially black church

women—built playgrounds, opened kindergartens, and provided day cares all in the name of their faiths.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Catholics in the United States also discovered new ways to make their religion relevant to the problems of U.S. society. Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, "On the Conditions of the Working Classes," made explicit Catholic social thought. U.S. Catholics saw alleviating poverty, fighting corruption, and supporting organized labor as legitimate applications of their theology. Because immigrants composed such a large percentage of the U.S. church, looking after the needs of poorer parishioners became fundamental to Catholic ministry in the United States. Church leaders did, however, struggle to reconcile workers' efforts to build broad labor unions with the church's hope that Catholics would maintain their own independent religious organizations. Eventually, U.S. Catholics joined secular unions and became essential players in the U.S. labor movement.

As the number of Catholics grew in the United States, new issues arose that forced all Americans to reconsider what the establishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment meant for minority faiths. This became explicit for Catholics in debates about public school curriculum and funding. Catholics did not want the government to use their tax dollars to support schools that emphasized a normative Protestantism in their curriculum, and ecclesiastical leaders took advantage of government funding opportunities that could be used to support parochial schools. Debates about the proper role of government in education often led to court battles, the most significant of which was *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947). In a five-to-four decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the state (in this case, New Jersey) could use publicly financed school buses to transport students to parochial schools. In the decision, Justice Hugo Black famously invoked Thomas Jefferson's statement that the First Amendment created "a wall of separation" between church and state, which became the standard used by the courts in many subsequent cases.

The issues that had the broadest appeal, however, among religious activists in the first decades of the twentieth century were temperance and Prohibition. Church leaders throughout the 1800s had worked to "temper" the amount of alcohol consumed in the United States. By the late nineteenth century the cause was most powerfully championed by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Under the energetic leadership of Frances Willard (1839–1898), the WCTU broadened its focus to include a variety of reform

issues including women's suffrage, labor rights, and curbing the influence of alcohol. In the twentieth century, the Anti-Saloon League, which claimed to be the political arm of the Christian faith, joined the WCTU in its crusade. Together they built alliances with numerous groups and a handful of dedicated Christian lobbyists located in Washington, D.C. As World War I began ravaging Europe, these lobbyists helped bring the issue of Prohibition to the attention of Congress. The timing could not have been better. As Americans grew comfortable with a more intrusive wartime government, worried about grain shortages and the production costs of making alcohol, and sought to root out all German influences from their culture (including German beer), most came to see banning alcohol as a means of helping win the war. Ultimately, the efforts of Christian reform organizations and their lobbyist allies, in conjunction with the impact of the war, secured the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment.

The Interwar Era

Americans of all faiths in the first couple of decades of the twentieth century wrestled with the relationship between religion and their culture. Many were hopeful, believing that the long-sought millennium was just around the corner. They believed that the world was getting better and humans were evolving in positive ways. The war, however, shattered this idealism, forcing many Americans to begin reconsidering the ways that faith issues spoke to contemporary problems.

Immigration emerged as one of the most controversial issues in the 1920s. During the war, many Americans questioned the loyalty of immigrants, especially those from non-Allied nations. After the war, a series of nativist organizations arose to defend what they called the "traditional" U.S. way of life. The most notorious was the second Ku Klux Klan (organized in 1915). The Klan defended "Nordic" civilization and Protestant Christianity. Klansmen from Atlanta, to Indiana, to California warned their fellow citizens that, along with African Americans, Jews and Catholics threatened the nation's foundations. Klansmen further believed that immigrants were disloyal. To combat this perceived menace, the Klan worked with some success at local and state levels to influence politics. Although the Klan attracted members from across the Protestant spectrum, leaders framed their campaign as a fight for old-fashioned Christian values. Their work came to fruition when Congress—lobbied by many different groups for many different reasons—passed the Immigration Act of 1924, severely limiting immigration from non-Protestant nations. The United States already had

sizable Catholic and Jewish populations, but the act curtailed the modest immigration of Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims to the United States.

Perhaps the most famous event of the interwar era was the Scopes evolution trial. During the previous few decades U.S. Protestantism had fractured. A liberal, or modernist wing arose, which affiliated with the social gospel movement, and a conservative, or “fundamentalist” wing developed. Fundamentalists felt anxious about the changes they saw around them—the impact of immigration on Protestant authority, the application of literary criticism to the Bible, theories of Darwinian evolution that undermined their understanding of the Genesis creation account, and the systematic study of world religions that seemingly negated Christian distinctiveness. To counter these trends, fundamentalists worked through a variety of organizations inside and outside of churches to try to protect what they viewed as the “fundamentals” of the faith. Along with other like-minded conservatives, they began lobbying school boards and then state legislatures to outlaw the teaching of evolution in public schools. Their most dramatic success, which led to their most embarrassing public debacle, was convincing the Tennessee state legislature to ban the teaching of evolution from the schools. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) decided to use the Tennessee law to test the constitutional validity of the ban. The ACLU hired famed attorney Clarence Darrow (1857–1938) to defend Dayton High School biology teacher John Scopes (1900–1970), and the prosecution recruited popular politician and crusader William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925). The trial was broadcast over the radio and covered by all of the major newspapers. Although the judge initially upheld the statute and the jury convicted Scopes, over time much of the nation came to see the antievolution movement in a negative light. Nevertheless, the Scopes trial was just the beginning of an antievolution crusade that has continued unabated.

Working alongside antievolution crusaders in the 1920s was a new crop of celebrity preachers who blended religion and politics. During World War I and in the immediate aftermath, Billy Sunday (1862–1935) mixed nationalism, anti-immigrant sentiments, conservative economics, and fundamentalism to dazzle the nation. Then in the mid 1920s, Pentecostal preacher Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) garnered national attention from just outside Hollywood. She used her mastery of mass media, especially the new technology of radio, to preach Americanism, the virtues

of Prohibition, social activism, and antievolution. She spiced it all with a little sexuality and a lot of scandal. Sunday and McPherson believed that the United States had been a Protestant Christian nation, specially blessed by God, and that it needed to return to its religious roots.

Their fears about the decline of Protestant power in the United States seemed to be confirmed when New York governor Al Smith (1873–1944), a Catholic, won the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1928. Religious activists from across the Protestant spectrum threw themselves explicitly into national partisan politics. For the first time, a Catholic had a legitimate shot at the highest office in the land. But coming at the tail end of a decade characterized by nativism and the reemergence of the Klan, he faced significant religious prejudice. Protestants alleged that Smith’s nomination represented a broad Catholic conspiracy to win control of the nation and to ultimately undermine the separation of church and state. Challenged by a strong opponent in the person of Herbert Hoover (1874–1964), and an inability to get much of the “solid” Democratic south excited about his campaign, Smith ultimately lost.

This did not, however, mean that Roman Catholics were politically weak. In the 1930s record numbers of immigrants—especially Catholics but also Jews—began voting in national elections. Most pulled the lever for the Democratic Party during Franklin Roosevelt’s (1882–1945) four campaigns for the presidency. The president rewarded Catholics for their loyalty with positions in his administration. Meanwhile, during the Depression, Father Charles Coughlin (1891–1979), the most famous Catholic priest of the first half of the twentieth century, took the nation by storm. Pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower in the Detroit suburb of Royal Oak, Coughlin began preaching over the airwaves in 1926. In 1930, the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) started broadcasting his sermons nationwide. During the 1932 presidential campaign, he called for “Roosevelt or ruin” and brought his substantial audience of Catholics, as well as some Protestants, into the Roosevelt camp. Unfortunately for Roosevelt, the priest quickly soured on the president. In 1934 Coughlin founded the National Union for Social Justice, which emphasized workers’ rights, state ownership of certain industries, and economic reform. But by the end of the decade his criticism of economists, policymakers, and bankers turned into vile anti-Semitism. The church hierarchy eventually forced him off the air. Nevertheless, Smith and Coughlin demonstrate the growing influence of U.S. Catholics in national political life.

In contrast to Coughlin's boisterous, screeching radio sermons, a Catholic layperson, Dorothy Day (1897–1980), began quietly distributing copies of a new magazine in 1933. The *Catholic Worker* presented a radical vision of Catholic teaching regarding poverty, unemployment, and a host of other issues. The paper called for a return to the values of the Sermon on the Mount, including pacifism and identifying with the poor. Although Day did not represent the official church, she did become one of the most popular and well-known Catholics in the United States. Over the next few decades, her popularity grew to the extent that by the Vietnam War, she was regarded by younger generations of social activists as the "grand old lady of pacifism."

While McPherson and Coughlin were dominating the airwaves in the interwar era, religious leaders began increasingly turning their attention to film. In the 1920s, film had become one of the leading forms of entertainment in the United States. However, many Americans worried that the messages conveyed by Hollywood undermined supposed traditional U.S. values. While fundamentalists fumed about the movies and usually refused to attend, Catholics organized a ratings system to advise parishioners what to and not to see. Ultimately the studios themselves realized that if they did not practice self-censorship, religious activists might succeed in getting the government to begin censoring them. The studios hired Presbyterian layman Will Hays (1879–1954), who drew up a code for the studios. Although the code changed over time, in the 1930s it forbade negative portrayals of religion, as well as the portrayal of sexual promiscuity, violence, and coarse language. Throughout the rest of the century, religious activists of all traditions continued to influence the ways the studios represented issues of faith and morality.

The World War II Era

As the world once again moved closer to the brink of war in the late 1930s, religious leaders in the United States began reassessing the relevance of their faiths to the culture. Many liberal Protestants called for disarmament and worked for peace, fundamentalists felt sure that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent, and U.S. Jews grew increasingly anxious about growing anti-Semitism. Quietly, however, another group was bracing for trouble. A small Christian sect called Jehovah's Witnesses had been applying its faith in radical ways since the sect's founding in the late nineteenth century. Members believed that their citizenship in heaven negated their citizenship on earth and therefore

they did not participate in the political process. Furthermore, they did not pledge their allegiance to the U.S. flag and they refused to bear arms. Although taking such positions is controversial in any era, it was especially so during the patriotic frenzy of the late 1930s and early 1940s. Ultimately, the Witnesses' refusal to salute the flag most directly affected their children. Some public school districts required students to say the pledge each day, and when two young Witnesses in Pennsylvania refused, the school expelled them. The Witnesses challenged the school policy, and the case eventually made it to the Supreme Court. In *Minersville School District v. Gobitis* (1940), the Court ruled that First Amendment protections for religion did not supersede the state's interest in creating "national cohesion."

During the next few years, Jehovah's Witnesses experienced discrimination and sometimes brutal persecution for their lack of patriotism and their refusal to serve in combat. Then the Court decided to hear a similar flag salute case. Sensitized to minority rights by the tragic events occurring in Europe, this time the Court sided with the Witnesses. Justice Robert Jackson (1892–1954) argued, "If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein." Through these cases and dozens of others, the Jehovah's Witnesses probably did more than any other religious group to ensure that the rights of minority faiths were protected in the United States. The Witnesses demonstrated that practicing faith in the United States did not always require one to have faith in the United States.

World War II also transformed the thinking of Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971), the most influential liberal Protestant theologian of the mid-twentieth century. While most of his mainline Protestant colleagues spent the 1930s advocating international cooperation and de-militarization, Niebuhr began developing a position he labeled "Christian realism." He called on Christians to get their hands dirty in the real world of politics, even if doing so meant supporting "lesser" evils for the ultimate good. The utopian optimism of the Social Gospel, he believed, had failed in the face of totalitarianism and the growing power of the Nazis. When the liberal Protestant magazine *Christian Century* refused to abandon its pacifist position during the outbreak of war in Europe, Niebuhr organized an alternative periodical, *Christianity and Crisis*. It soon became the leading voice of "Christian realism" during World War II and throughout the Cold War,

demonstrating how the optimism of Protestant liberalism was fading in some circles.

The Cold War

The end of World War II brought a tenuous peace. Within just a few years, the United States was locked in a “cold” war with the Soviet Union, which looked more like a religious war than any other conflagration in the twentieth century. President Harry Truman (1884–1972) believed that the United States had a divine calling to oppose the Soviet Union and other U.S. leaders and policymakers felt sure that the USSR’s explicit atheism made the battle about more than competing economic systems. U.S. leaders drew on religion as a source of inspiration in their struggle because they believed that communists hoped to destroy religious faith throughout the world. In addition to saturating their speeches with biblical rhetoric, political leaders sought to unify Americans of all faiths in the struggle against communism. They sent money to ministers behind the Iron Curtain, they broadcast sermons into communist nations, and they called for worldwide days of prayer. Most important, political leaders also sought to unify the world’s Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, and Jews together in the struggle. Their efforts worked to some extent, although when Truman and then Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969) asked all Protestants—liberals and conservatives—to put aside their historic differences with Catholics for the sake of the crusade against communism, this effort proved unsuccessful. The state department eventually bypassed U.S. Protestant leaders in crafting an international religious coalition against communism.

In 1954, Eisenhower is said to have declared, “Our government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deeply felt religious faith—and I don’t care what it is.” By the mid-1950s, God-talk had saturated the culture. Social and political leaders drew on “civil religion” to frame the important issues of the decade, which developed out of Americans’ yearning to assign religious significance to their own nation in the context of the fight against communism. Civil religion encouraged Americans to see the United States like ancient Israel, as playing a central role in God’s unfolding plan of salvation for the world. Many believed that God had destined the United States to bring his message (economic, political, and religious) to the rest of the world. Such an ideology melded perfectly with the Cold War. This was further demonstrated by Congress’s addition of the phrase “under God” to the pledge of allegiance in 1954 (to distinguish it from the

“atheist” pledges of communist countries) and by Congress’s 1956 elevation of “in God we trust” to the national motto.

During the 1950s, attendance at the nation’s churches and synagogues skyrocketed, enrollment at seminaries exploded, and construction of new houses of worship boomed. Sociologist Will Herberg (1901–1977) famously published *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, arguing that the United States was no longer a religiously monolithic nation, but a pluralistic country composed primarily of the three major faiths constituting his title. The postwar era also set the stage for the rise of the most influential minister of the twentieth century, Billy Graham.

Born in 1918 in North Carolina, Graham spent the late 1940s working as an evangelist for the evangelical parachurch ministry Youth for Christ. By the end of the decade he was holding revivals in the nation’s biggest cities. During the 1950s he perfected his folksy, down-home style and preached to some of the largest audiences ever assembled for religious meetings. His message was simple—all people are separated from God because of their sins but if they accept Jesus into their hearts he will forgive them and reconcile them to God, ensuring that they spend eternity in heaven. Behind this simple message, however, was an extremely sophisticated mass media empire. Graham used radio, television, film, magazines, and best-selling books to build an evangelical empire. Meanwhile, his strident anti-communism and his influence over millions of Americans in the hyper-religious Cold War context gave him entrée into the world of elite politics. Beginning with Truman, he advised every president up to and including Barack Obama. Although he claimed his work was nonpartisan, he nudged conservative Christians to the political right, helping establish the context from which the religious right would later emerge.

Americans’ increased attention to matters of faith in the postwar period expressed itself in new ways at the political level during the 1960 presidential campaign of Republican Richard Nixon (1913–1994) and Democrat and Catholic John F. Kennedy (1917–1963). Numerous influential Protestants made an issue of Kennedy’s faith. The candidate initially ignored critics who claimed that as president he would be little more than a tool of the Vatican. Eventually, however, he decided to take on the religion issue directly. “I believe,” Kennedy told a convention of Texas ministers, “in an America that is officially neither Catholic, Protestant nor Jewish” and “where no religious body seeks to impose its will directly or indirectly upon the general populace or the public acts of its officials and where religious liberty is so

indivisible that an act against one church is treated as an act against all." For Kennedy, religion was a private matter that should be put aside by leaders of a diverse nation. The speech was a success, and Kennedy ultimately won the election by a small margin.

The Cold War consensus that linked the United States with God began to unravel during the Vietnam War. Although many conservatives of all faith traditions supported U.S. policy, those on the left increasingly viewed the war as unjust. Dozens of ministers, rabbis, priests, and theologians organized against the draft and against the war itself. Perhaps the most well-known critics were Daniel (1921–) and Philip Berrigan (1923–2002). Ordained Catholic priests and teachers, the Berrigan brothers in the 1960s grew enamored of the peace movement. As the war developed, they put their pacifist beliefs into action. Their most famous protests included breaking into government offices and destroying draft cards with napalm; they also doused official government records with animal blood and red paint. Over the next few decades, they protested U.S. nuclear policy as well. Although many Americans felt nervous about U.S. efforts abroad, the Berrigan brothers effectively used their Catholic faith to critique U.S. arrogance.

Communism and the Cold War, however, were certainly not the primary preoccupation of all Americans in the 1950s. When Rosa Parks (1913–2005) refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, for a white rider, the civil rights movement burst into the national consciousness. The movement had much deeper and older roots than Americans at the time realized. The struggles of black labor activists, the efforts of the Communist Party to organize poor Southern sharecroppers, A. Philip Randolph's (1889–1979) March on Washington movement, and many other events helped lay the foundation for the events that galvanized the movement in the 1950s. Nevertheless, once the movement shifted from the margins to the mainstream of U.S. culture, black ministers and churches took the lead. Like the prophets of old, civil rights organizers felt called to speak truth to power, and they were ready to lay down their lives for the cause. Despite years of turmoil and hardship, they felt sure that right would triumph over might and that God was on their side. Such sentiments inspired the work of Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968) and the thousands of foot soldiers in the cause. Religion and politics blended seamlessly as African Americans fought for justice.

Although most civil rights activists found strength in Protestant churches, others recognized that Christianity had

long been a tool of oppression in the hands of white racists. Among the most influential critics of U.S. Christianity was Malcolm X (1925–1965). Malcolm X matured in the Nation of Islam, a black nationalist movement in the United States that drew loosely from more traditional Muslim ideas. The Nation preached the Qur'an, black superiority, and African American self-sufficiency. It also leveled heavy critiques at white society and values. Such ideas resonated with thousands of African Americans, especially in the urban north. Malcolm X helped bring converts into Nation of Islam temples in Harlem, Detroit, Chicago, and across the country. His life demonstrated that civil rights and the Christian faith were never the same thing.

The African American rights movement inspired many other groups to challenge inequalities. Mexican American labor organizer César Chávez (1927–1993) blended his Catholic faith with his struggle to protect the rights of workers. Chávez and the United Farm Workers drew on symbols such as the Virgin of Guadalupe, the most popular Mexican saint, for inspiration in their fight for justice. In the 1960s Native Americans also began to reclaim their traditions and to practice their religion more openly. Their actions pushed Congress to pass the American Indian Religious Freedom Act in 1978, which extended First Amendment protections to Native Americans. They used the act to reclaim sacred sites and other cultural symbols and artifacts.

President Lyndon Johnson's (1908–1973) signing of the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1965 also had a significant impact on American religious life. Since 1924 immigration had been severely limited, and quotas favored white Europeans. But the 1965 act opened the borders to hundreds of thousands of people from Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. As a result, the Protestant-Catholic-Jew nation described in the 1950s became much more religiously diverse, as record numbers of Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and many others claimed constitutional protections for themselves.

Modern America and the Culture Wars

Like the civil rights movement, historians looking for the origins of the modern religious right and the culture wars it sparked find many roots. Among the early events that galvanized some fundamentalists and evangelicals, especially in the South, was the Internal Revenue Service's effort to take away the tax-exempt status of fundamentalist institution Bob Jones University. Various federal agencies worked in the late 1960s to enforce the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In 1971, the Supreme Court ruled that institutions



The Cold War assumption that linked the United States with God began to unravel during the Vietnam War, when religious critics organized against both the draft and the war itself. The ordained Catholic priests and brothers Daniel and Philip Berrigan protested by breaking into government offices and destroying draft cards with napalm.

practicing segregation were by definition not charitable and therefore not tax exempt. The IRS then sought to apply this ruling to Bob Jones University, which had denied admission to African Americans until 1971 and in 1975 still prohibited interracial dating. Bob Jones challenged the IRS practice to no avail. That the IRS had the power through its tax codes to shape Christian university policies provoked a significant backlash. Fundamentalist and evangelical supporters of

southern segregation, as well as those who simply believed that the government should not be dictating policies to private religious institutions, prepared for battle. Large numbers of conservatives had long viewed the federal government with suspicion; now they had a specific reason to act.

A second set of issues that helped mobilize the religious right centered on changing conceptions of the family. Many in the country had invested heavily in the suburban Cold War model of the nuclear family with a breadwinning husband/father and a supportive homemaker wife/mother. They grew nervous when in the late 1960s and early 1970s the growing feminist movement challenged prevailing models of family. Then when Congress passed an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and sent it to the states for ratification in 1972, conservatives—many of them women—organized a powerful grassroots opposition. Linking their model of the family with God and country, leaders such as Catholic Phyllis Schlafly (1924–) turned the tide against the ERA. The amendment was never ratified.

Related to the ERA controversy was the Supreme Court's decision to legalize abortion in *Roe v. Wade* (1973). Throughout U.S. history, abortion had been a fairly common but also somewhat controversial practice. Many religious leaders in the pre-*Roe* era did not make a clear distinction between terminating a pregnancy and preventing one through other forms of birth control. Ministers who were anti-birth control were antiabortion; those who believed that contraception was appropriate often had few qualms about abortion when the procedure was performed before “quickening” (the time when a woman begins to feel her fetus move). But beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth, doctors working through the American Medical Association (AMA) lobbied state governments to regulate the practice. Essentially, they felt that they (the doctors) should be the ones determining who had an abortion rather than midwives or the pregnant women themselves. During the 1950s and into the 1960s, however, the AMA reversed course and began to lobby Congress and the courts to loosen restrictions. The AMA found an important ally in the burgeoning feminist movement, which believed that women should be able to

determine for themselves if or when they would reproduce. The courts agreed.

Once the Supreme Court issued its decision in *Roe*, opinion in U.S. religious communities divided. Catholics who accepted the church's teaching on birth control felt troubled, whereas Protestants and Jews had mixed responses. Within a few years, however, the abortion controversy moved to the center of cultural debate helping to spark the so-called culture wars. Conservative Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and members of other faith traditions or no traditions at all began to rally around the issue of abortion, making it a litmus test for candidates seeking election to office. Some adopted the rhetoric of the antislavery abolitionists of the 1830s, and practiced civil disobedience in an effort to prevent abortions.

As debates about abortion, family, feminism, and the rights of Christian universities unfolded during the 1970s, Republican strategists sensed a growing opportunity. Although fundamentalists and evangelicals had been dabbling in politics for generations, they had not organized explicitly along partisan lines. That soon changed. Catholic Paul Weyrich (1942–2008), a Republican politico, approached popular fundamentalist minister Jerry Falwell (1933–2007) in 1979 about creating a new political organization to represent religious conservatives across the nation. Falwell loved the idea, and the modern religious right was born. Over the next few years, Falwell brought millions of conservative Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and Mormons together into the Moral Majority. It had its greatest impact, however, shortly after it was organized. Falwell and his followers took the nation by storm, helping Ronald Reagan (1911–2004) be elected. Many contemporary observers noted the irony of religious activists led by evangelicals pushing Jimmy Carter (1924–), the most evangelical leader the nation had ever had, out of the White House.

The primary spokespeople for the religious right, like Falwell, have usually been technologically savvy, well-known ministers. They have drawn on the strengths of various parachurch ministries and organizations, such as the National Association of Evangelicals, James Dobson's (1936–) Focus on the Family, and Schlafly's Eagle Forum for support. In contrast to the ministers who organized the civil rights movement around issues of race, economics, and social justice, the religious right has promoted a moralistic agenda, focusing on such issues as abortion, homosexuality, and sex education. Leaders succeeded in making discussions of faith a central part of political campaigns and a criterion for election.

A decade after the Moral Majority's founding, it imploded. But conservative activists were not ready to give up. Out of the ashes came a new political organization, the Christian Coalition. Organized by broadcaster Pat Robertson (1930–) and Republican activist Ralph Reed (1961–), Christian Coalition members focused less on national campaigns and more on mobilizing Americans at the grassroots level. They worked to win seats on school boards, city councils, and state legislatures, sure that if they began at the bottom of the political hierarchy they would slowly begin to have an influence at the national level. Reed promised, "We think the Lord is going to give us this nation back one precinct at a time, one neighborhood at a time, and one state at a time. We're not going to win it all at once with some kind of millennial rush at the White House." In many ways the election of George W. Bush (1946–) in 2000 was a testament to the strength of their strategy. After years of frustration, the religious right had a person who to some degree shared their values in the White House.

The complicated and contested relationships between religion and politics don't show any sign of ebbing in the twenty-first century. Barack Obama's (1961–) 2008 presidential campaign drew on multiple twentieth-century traditions. On the one hand, Obama played up his Christian faith and his commitment to the traditional faith, while the controversial sermons of his minister Jeremiah Wright (1941–) echoed the social justice themes of the civil rights movement. Early Republican contender Mitt Romney (1947–), a Mormon, turned Kennedy's religion speech on its head by arguing that he *should* be judged for his faith, asserting that religion would make him a better candidate than a less devout politician would be. Meanwhile, 2008 Republican vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin (1964–) reinvigorated the religious right with her folksy speeches about family values and simple faith. In recent years, Republicans have masterfully linked faith and values to their campaigns, but Democrats have also grown more comfortable talking about religion. Whether this is good for the nation, or for the nation's religious communities, is hotly debated.

In 1835, Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) wrote about his impressions of the United States, which he viewed as one of the most religious nations in the world. He praised U.S. separation of church from state, warning that if religion "be mixed up with the bitter passions of the world, it may be constrained to defend allies whom its interests, and not the principle of love, have given to it; or to repel as antagonists men who are still attached to it, however opposed they may be to the powers with which it is allied. The

church,” he cautioned, “cannot share the temporal power of the state without being the object of a portion of that animosity which the latter excites.” Americans have never heeded this warning. Although the United States does not have an established national religion, religion and politics have always been closely entwined.

See also *Abortion; African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; Canada: Church and State; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Civil Religion in the United States; Education: Court Cases; Establishment, Religious; Feminism; Freedom, Religious; Holocaust; Latino American Religion: Struggles for Justice; Mexico: Twentieth Century; Neo-Orthodoxy; Neo-Thomism; Politics* entries; *Progressivism; Prohibition; Religious Right; Revivalism: Twentieth Century to the Present; Social Gospel; Supreme Court; World War I; World War II.*

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Polity

Polity, the form of authority and governance of a community or corporate body, derives from the same Greek term *politeia* that is the root of the English word *politics*. Just as the Greeks understood *politeia* both as the governing structures of the *polis*—city or town—and the process by which those in authority sought the common good of the community, so polity must be understood both as formal structure and as political practice by which a corporate body seeks to fulfill its purposes.

The term “polity” can be used to describe the governance of any collective group, and the fact that it is regularly used to describe the offices, governing bodies, and political processes of communities of faith in the United States is itself an indication of a uniquely American understanding of the place of religion in civil society. Religious freedom and the religious diversity that flourishes because of it is a norm originally embedded in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which advocates the “free exercise of religion” and prevents the public “establishment” of any one religion. Thus American religious groups must be constructed, not ascriptive or inherited, entities, and participation in them a voluntary act by believers. Of course, many participants join in a religious tradition for reasons profoundly shaped by family or cultural patterns. But in terms of polity, the voluntary principle determines the organizational expression of religion.

The Self-Constitution of American Religious Groups

Many American communities of faith trace their lineage to Europe (inclusive of Great Britain) and were founded in the United States by immigrants who brought with them the assumed polity and practice of their homelands. Yet unlike Europe, in the United States religious polity and practice could not simply be received from tradition, and membership not simply ascribed by reason of birth. With the exception of a few early colonial churches, no religious group was ever so closely identified with civil government as to enjoy state support. The effect was that whatever their tradition, communities of faith had to constitute themselves as independent bodies. Even within an organically unified tradition such as Roman Catholicism, the American church manifested a distinctly independent spirit.

American Protestant churches are self-constituted bodies. American Anglicans, for example, a branch of a communion

that understood itself in organic continuity with the apostolic church and extending its Catholic heritage of sacrament, have a published constitution establishing them as the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. The Methodists, offspring of a renewal movement within the Church of England whose founder John Wesley sent missionaries to the colonies, constituted themselves as a separate church in 1784, just three years after the end of the Revolutionary War. Likewise other traditions—Lutheran, Presbyterian, and many others—ensconced themselves as American entities by issuing constitutions, so many, in fact, that they came to be called “denominations,” literally, bodies “denominated” with a proper name as a distinct collective group.

The self-constitution of American Protestant churches is emblematic of their polities. Their constitutions are constructed on principles of democratic, representative government, shaped by the assumption of voluntarism that the properties and ministries through which the churches express and extend their missions must be supported solely through the donated time and money of members. The constitutions typically announce the church’s existence, provide its name, and describe the powers and duties of its governing bodies and offices together with the limits of their authority. From colonial days, Americans were suspicious of authority derived from European principles of monarchical polity that might introduce too much centralized or hierarchical power. The same leaders who advocated a new civil government based on human rights and power invested in “the people” were creating the polities of new American churches. Consequently, American churches from the beginning have been typified by strong lay participation in governance. Notably, by far the largest number of Protestant congregations in America are self-constituted as independent bodies, with constitutions and bylaws placing control of ministry, money, and property firmly in the hands of local lay authority.

These formative characteristics of polity—lay governance, local control, and a democratic form of decision making—have had abiding influence in Christian traditions such as Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy as well. Although Catholic teaching in the organic canon law of the church places authority in the bishops and priests of the church to maintain continuity with the apostolic church, in fact American lay Catholics have exerted considerable power over local churches. The canon law principle of subsidiarity—that every decision should be made closest to the people affected by it—has been practiced nowhere more vigorously than in the United States. While the basic

Catholic organization by geographic parish has continued, nonetheless many Catholics attend the parish of their choosing and expect to have an influential voice in matters of church property and personnel.

Religious groups other than Christians—Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Bahá’í, and many new religions—have followed suit with self-constituting principles as well, organizing themselves as independent corporate entities nationally, regionally, or locally. Synagogue associations provide model constitutions as well as management policies for local congregations; even Hindu temples—normally understood as places of devotion rather than as congregations—are incorporated under civil law with bylaws and committees to guide their work and manage their property. The voluntary principle means that each group, whatever its teachings and practices, understands itself as a constructed entity to which people choose to belong, with its members in a kind of covenant of participation and collective endeavor. It is not uncommon to hear leaders of any religious tradition in the United States referred to as “clergy” and their assemblies or gathering places as “churches” in their adaptation of the dominant and thoroughly American Protestant polity of congregations and denominations.

Five Primary Questions of Polity

Christian communions and denominations are arrayed along a spectrum of polities. Those sustaining organic forms continuous with the broad catholic church tradition in all times and places follow the guidance of canon law as it has been elaborated over the centuries (such as Roman Catholics and Anglicans). These churches locate significant authority over ecclesiastical matters in the priestly hierarchy, particularly an episcopacy that traces its origins in succession to Christ’s apostles. Other denominations establish connectional forms of governance by granting broad authority to denominational governing bodies such as conferences, presbyteries, and synods comprised of clergy and lay members from constituent local church congregations. These churches record their polity through books of order or discipline adopted and amended in general or national delegate assemblies (such as Presbyterians and United Methodists). Still other churches locate authority within the congregation or local community itself, adopting their own local constitutions and bylaws. These churches join in associations (if at all) mainly for the purpose of shared funding for education or missions (such as Baptists and Pentecostals). Of course, all American communions and denominations are an amalgam of ecclesial and

cultural traditions of governance, and varied elements of hierarchical, connectional, and congregational polities may appear in all.

Wherever they may fall on the spectrum from organic to connectional to congregational, the polity of religious groups must address four central questions that derive from their voluntary nature. That is, since each denomination or congregation is self-constituted and self-perpetuating, it must make clear both to active and prospective members its identity and practice.

What do we believe and practice? Polity documents such as constitutions or books of order normally state clearly the shared creed and common practices of the particular community of faith, as well as its affiliations with larger religious traditions. The confessions, creeds, articles of religion, mission statements, or other statements of purpose usually also specify the rites, rituals, and sacraments central to religious practice.

What are the requirements for membership in this church? Being self-constituted organizations, communities of faith must also state how one becomes and remains a member. Normally entry into membership is marked by the public taking of vows, a visible act of covenant. Congregations vary in what they then expect of persons who have become members. Most declare that regular, active participation in worship services is essential, and most admonish continued formation in the faith through study and prayer, exhorting members to greater commitment of time and money. Polity also provides for what has been known through Christian history as church discipline—that is, the sanctions for members who violate standards of belief and practice and the process for adjudicating their cases.

What are the offices and requirements of ministerial leadership? All congregations must face the question of who the next minister, rabbi, or other religious leader will be and how he or she will be certified as legitimate. In some religious traditions, the evident charisma or power of the Spirit, personally manifested, sufficiently designates persons for leadership whatever their other qualifications may be. In others, the professional standards typical of American institutions also shape ministry. Polity must provide in any case for discipline of clergy with sanctions for unbecoming behavior.

Polity defines the authority, powers, and duties of the offices of ministerial leadership. For centuries Christians have searched their scriptures for definitive word on the offices, producing an astonishing diversity of understandings. Although the terms bishop, elder, and deacon all appear in the New Testament, denominations and congregations use

them in manifold ways. For churches toward the Catholic end of the polity spectrum, elders (or priests) and deacons are clergy offices, with the bishop having oversight of the whole communion. For churches toward the Protestant independent end of the spectrum, elders and deacons are mainly offices of lay leadership, with the preaching and teaching elder set apart from them. In some independent churches the bishop is the presiding minister of the local congregation.

How do congregations govern their affairs and oversee their property? Connectional bodies generally mandate a certain basic form of organization for each congregation, while independent congregations are self-constituted and govern their own life. All normally follow the management necessities of any organization or association under civil law. Thus they have a church council, session, vestry, executive committee, or similar governing body with oversight of all matters and (in most polities) to which all other bodies are amenable; a committee to administer church finances; a committee to manage personnel matters with clergy leadership foremost among them; and a board of trustees to handle property and execute legal instruments. They also create nominating committees to assemble rosters to be elected by the chief governing body or the congregation as a whole. Parishes of organic communions such as Roman Catholicism may have active organizations for ministry and mission led by laity, while authority over administration of the mass and ownership of the buildings lies with the diocese and its bishop. In recent years bishops have exercised this authority to discontinue mass in designated parishes and to close and merge parishes, often over the protests of local lay participants.

Connectional bodies and associations for cooperative work also must address a fifth question: *How is our denomination or association organized and governed to advance its mission?* Constitutions name and delineate the powers and duties of all governing bodies beyond the local congregation. Denominations with longer histories in the United States have built up a large number of affiliated institutions—schools, community centers, hospitals—as well as agencies to oversee standards for ordination, educational materials, and support of work in other nations. Since funding for these institutions and agencies is set by denominational governing bodies but donated largely by congregations, polity mandates representative boards of directors and standards of transparency in matters of money and personnel.

The impulse toward innovation and renewal has always stirred across the American religious spectrum. Protestantism originated in forms of “protest” against established

ecclesiastical authority in Europe, with an accompanying passion to re-create the original or “primitive” polity of the first Christian churches. The drive to reconstitute and renew the church continues unabated as independent congregations and new associations and denominations proliferate. This infectious spirit has sparked the founding of many religious groups in the United States (such as Mormons, Christian Scientists, and Adventists), and religions new in either practice or place in America appear continually (such as Wicca, Zen Buddhism, and Scientology). Each must constitute itself to attract followers, legitimize leaders, make corporate decisions, raise and hold funds, and obtain property. Thus, polity promises to retain and even expand its role as religions work out their practices of authority and governance in a free society.

See also *Canada: Anglicans; Congregations; Denominationalism; Ecumenism; Emerging Church Movement; Faith-Based Community Organizations; House Church Movement; Independent Bible and Community Churches; Megachurches; Ministry, Professional; Seeker Churches; Women.*

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Popular Religion and Popular Culture

Trying to define *popular religion* recalls Justice Potter Stewart’s approach to a definition of pornography: “I know it when I see it.” Both words that make up the term are famously ambiguous, yet the term itself is, if ultimately indigestible, nevertheless of considerable intuitive use in trying to understand aspects of the U.S. religious experience that would otherwise fall through the proverbial cracks. Popular religion may be said to be “extra-ecclesiastical religion,” that is, religious activity that takes place outside of, on the fringes of, or in direct opposition to religion that is established—supported by the state—or otherwise institutionalized and accepted

within the dominant social order. Popular religion is often characterized by a preoccupation with the supernatural in everyday life and personal charisma as a sign of spiritual authority, and frequently exhibits “elective affinities” with populist politics and popular culture.

Folk Religion and Popular Religion

Folk religion is an imprecise and possibly somewhat dated term but, like *popular religion*, serves a certain heuristic purpose in highlighting religious activity that may be regarded as a type of, or at least a first cousin to, popular religion. Folk religion designates the sort of religious activity that arises in the interaction—asymmetrical with regard to power—between a colonizing people and those colonized by them. The result is frequently a synthesis, often flexible and responsive to rapidly changing circumstances, in which the colonized adapt traditional patterns of religious behavior to respond to the irrevocably changed circumstances of their lives. This process has been described by a variety of terms. *Syncretism*, once a common usage among ethnologists, has fallen into disfavor in some circles because of its alleged connotation of bastardization—that is, the implication that the new religious configuration resulting from intercultural contact and clash is somehow inferior to the “pure” religions from which the new hybrid form has emerged. *Creolization* and *hybridity* are now widely preferred as more neutral in describing a cultural process that is creative, widespread, and never-ending. (*Creole* is frequently used to describe the culture of New Orleans, characterized by the intermixing of European, native, and African elements, in cuisine and otherwise.)

In North America, creole or hybrid religions have arisen through a variety of cultural contacts that resulted from the African slave trade, as well as from European colonization and immigration. Among slaves in the antebellum South, the practice of the traditional religions of Africa that had been part of their native culture was completely disrupted by the experience of capture, crossing the Atlantic during the Middle Passage, then being dispersed upon arrival in the New World through sale and deliberate separation of those from the same cultural origins by their new owners. As these slaves became Christianized, often at the insistence of their masters, the religion that emerged among them was a hybrid of Christianity, remembered African patterns and practices, and new themes such as the longing for deliverance from oppression. Folk practices detached from more comprehensive religious configurations, such as rootwork and hoodoo, focused on this-worldly issues such as healing and escape

from the evil eye, and became diffused among white as well as black southerners. The distinctive music that emerged as a hallmark of southern evangelicalism was similarly a fusion of cultural elements that characterized both white and black practice alike. Vodun and Santería, as well as the “spiritual churches” of New Orleans, were similarly hybrids of African and Roman Catholic elements, reflecting that church’s dominance in Haiti, Cuba, and southern Louisiana, and later transplanted to newer areas of immigrant settlement such as Miami and New York City.

Immigration from Latin America, especially the borderlands of northern Mexico and the U.S. Southwest (originally all part of colonial New Spain), has been another fertile source of religious hybridity in what is now the United States. Although Roman Catholicism was imposed on the indigenous peoples of Mexico by its Spanish conquerors and colonizers, the failure of the Spanish to cultivate an indigenous clergy rendered the emergent *mestizo* (native-European mixed race) populace ambivalent about the church dominated by *gachupines* (those of European birth) and *criollos* (those of European ancestry born in the New World). The result was the proliferation of Catholic cathedrals, churches, and missions, and the simultaneous development of a folk Catholicism that freely and creatively mixed European and indigenous practices to form a hybrid sometimes tolerated and at other times persecuted by the established church powers. *Curanderos* and *curanderas*, for example, are folk-healers whose powers derive partly from a knowledge of herbal remedies and from their purported ability to harness supernatural forces to combat maladies brought about by the malicious manipulation of such forces. In some cases, such as the well-known shrine of El Santo Niño de Atocha at Chimayó in the Sangre de Cristo mountains of New Mexico, the “official” Catholic Church authenticates folk piety by maintaining a church to which many come for healing through prayer and the acquisition of the “holy dirt” on which the *santuario* is built. (The dirt is replenished daily by the staff.) However, the cult of *Santo Muerte*—“Saint Death”—the patron of drug dealers is firmly repudiated by church officials as well as law-enforcement personnel.

Another example of folk religion in the U.S. context is that practiced by Italian immigrants and their descendents in Manhattan’s Italian Harlem, memorably described by Robert Orsi in his *Madonna of 115th Street*. The roots of this practice lay in the small towns of the Mezzogiorno of southern Italy where, as in much of Latin America, official Catholicism, based far to the north in Rome, was subject to local

appropriation and modification. The cult of local patron saints, such as the Virgin of Mount Carmel, turned Catholic religious figures into symbols of local identity, celebrated annually in the village’s *fiesta* (cognate with the Spanish *fiesta*, a similar ritual occasion). In the context of New York City, the practices of these Italian immigrant country folk clashed with the official practices of the local church, dominated by Americanized Irish who looked down on the ways of the newcomers as vulgar and superstitious. The annual *fiesta* celebrated at Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish thus became an affair of multi-tiered meaning, celebrating the distinctive identity of the community through feasting on ethnic food, while engaging in ritual behavior, such as women being carried dragging their tongues along the floor of the church, that was frowned upon by the church hierarchy and interpreted by Orsi as a means of symbolically working through the emotional tensions that simmered within the community.

Similar examples can be easily adduced from other parts of North America, such as the shrine of the Oratory of St. Joseph in Montreal, whose chapel walls are laden with the crutches of those who claim to have been healed through making a pilgrimage to the site where Brother André Besette (1845–1937) became famous for his power to bring about cures. (His heart is still displayed there in a monstrosity venerated by the faithful.) What these various manifestations of folk religion share is a focus on the bringing to bear of supernatural power—often in conjunction with the use of earthly means such as herbal remedies—for healing, whether of physical ailments, emotional distress, financial or interpersonal problems, or maladies of supernatural origin such as witchcraft. Their relationship to “official” organized religion lies along a spectrum, from cautiously endorsed, to tacitly tolerated, to vehemently repudiated. Some systems, such as Vodun or Santería, are better viewed as distinctive religions that have arisen through the hybridization of two or more distinctive cultural systems thrown together through intercultural contact and developed within the margins of rapidly changing social situations.

Is *folk religion* a form of *popular religion*? Neither phrase has any “official” definition, so there is no definitive answer. On the one hand, folk religion is certainly religion that arises from “the people” rather than from duly constituted religious authorities. (Religious authority is certainly embodied by practitioners such as *curanderas* and Vodun priests, but is not formally institutionalized or accorded legitimacy by social elites.) On the other hand, it might be argued that the term *popular religion* may better be reserved to describe religious

activity in a modernized, literate society that enjoys an often positive, symbiotic relationship with the broader culture in which it arises, whereas folk religion is transmitted orally at the margins of a dominant religious culture that views it with considerable suspicion, at best.

Official versus Popular Religion: Establishment and Pluralism

The related phenomena of religious freedom and religious pluralism as a normative state are rather new in the context of the longer run of human history. During the European Middle Ages, religious activity other than that under papal aegis was regarded as heretical, illegal, and potentially treasonable. Practices that had survived from pre-Christian times continued to flourish, especially on the margins of society, but were frowned upon and periodically suppressed by religious authorities, and semi-organized movements such as the Albigensians (southern France, twelfth century) and, later, Anabaptists (Rhine Valley, sixteenth century) were subject to violent persecution by both civil and religious authorities. (Sociologists call such dissenting groups, which usually have rigorous membership standards, *sects*, as opposed to *churches*, which designate religious organizations that are inclusive, enjoy established status, and generally take a dim view of open dissent.)

After the Protestant Reformation, the principle of *cuius regio eius religio*—the religion of a nation is dictated by the nation's ruler—prevailed through much of Europe. Another name for this principle is *establishment*: the vesting of complete authority in one religious group by mandate of the civil government, thereby establishing that group as the official and, usually, only permissible religion in that political unit. In Britain, where the king or queen is even now the nominal head of the Church of England, new religious movements had a difficult time until dissenting groups, including Roman Catholics, began to receive civil rights during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Supernaturalism and Popular Religion

Many of the examples taken from the realm of folk religion point toward a distinguishing characteristic that folk and popular religion share, namely, an emphasis on what might be called *supernaturalism*. One paradigm for interpreting the past half-millennium is the notion that the rise of science and technology has proceeded apace since the Renaissance and has been accompanied by a corresponding decline in belief in magic and the supernatural. There seems to be a causal

linkage especially between this phenomenon and the emergence of Protestant Christianity, which began partly in Martin Luther's protest against what he saw as residues of superstition within the Catholic Church, particularly in how its teachings were interpreted by ordinary people.

The impact of this train of thought, even within the Protestant traditions, has been uneven. As historians David Hall and Jon Butler have demonstrated, even highly educated colonial leaders such as Cotton Mather believed in "special providences"—that is, direct divine interference in the course of earthly events in the colonial era and even into the nineteenth century. Elite theology, as practiced in "mainline" theological schools has, especially since the Enlightenment, moved away from any acknowledgement of the supernatural in everyday life. Although controversies continue to this day about the factuality of miracles attributed to Jesus in the Gospels—an issue that tore liberal Unitarians apart in the mid-nineteenth century—there has emerged a general consensus among mainline Protestants that the age of miracles ended with the apostles. Emphasis has instead been placed in such circles on applying the message of the Gospels to daily life through the cultivation of a focused spiritual life and a concern for right-doing toward others.

Among Roman Catholics, this picture is more complicated. Many contemporary Catholic thinkers, especially since Vatican II, have followed the general trend of Protestant thought in accepting the results of modern biblical criticism with regard to supernatural elements in the scripture, as well as toward a skeptical view of such elements in modern life. Papal leadership, however, has pushed that church in the opposite direction by, for example, John Paul II's canonization of an extraordinary number of new saints—that is, humans who led lives of heroic piety and to whose intervention miracles have been claimed to take place when sought by pious petitioners.

Supernaturalism can take a number of forms. One perennially popular theme is prophecy, not so much in the Hebrew tradition of warning God's chosen people of what will happen if they stray from the covenant, but rather in literal predictions of future events. Catholic fascination with apparitions of the Virgin Mary, particularly that said to have taken place to a group of children in Fatima, Portugal, in 1917, has some of this character, in this case as a chapter in the conflict between communism and Christianity. More widespread, however, has been an inclination toward prophecy based on the New Testament Book of Revelation in fundamentalist Protestant circles.

Probably the most widespread interest in the supernatural in modern times has been in the realm of religious healing. An elite theological perspective would most likely focus on viewing illness as an occasion for spiritual reflection and growth, in the hope that the personal strength thus acquired would promote physical healing as well. A supernaturalist approach would focus instead on the direct acquisition of supernatural power to bring about an instantaneous, miraculous cure that contravened the natural processes of disease. Both traditionalist Catholicism, with its emphasis on the working of such cures through prayer to saints, and evangelical Protestantism, especially its Pentecostal wing, with its notion of divine healing as a gift of the Holy Spirit, can be characterized as supernaturalist in this regard.

A preoccupation with the supernatural is a major theme of popular religion, but is not per se foreign to institutionalized religion. A main difference is in the issue of *control*. An institutionalized church such as the Roman Catholic is very careful, not to say bureaucratic, in its process of authenticating the miraculous and regulating control of access to its benefits. Popular religion, on the other hand, whether on the fringes of Catholicism or in the midst of the far less rationalized realm of evangelical Protestantism, is a domain in which individuals seek access to and power from the supernatural on a “freelance” basis, often seeking aid from uncertified practitioners, whether local rural *curanderas* or faith-healers with television programs.

Elite versus Popular Religion: Authority and Control

In a nation with an established church—“church” here generically meaning any religious organization—elites are almost certainly part of that society’s social makeup. The governing elite and the religious elite often work hand in glove although, as medieval history continually demonstrates, with ongoing tensions about issues of power. Similarly, in Puritan New England, the Congregationalist clergy constituted an elite by virtue of education (Cambridge or, later, Harvard), formal ordination, and the centrality that religion played in the colonists’ self-understanding. After religion had been disestablished in all of the states (Massachusetts being the last, in 1833), clergy still enjoyed elite status in many communities, particularly in those denominations (Congregational, Episcopal, Presbyterian) that insisted upon a learned clergy. Such denominations almost always favored a style of worship that was decorous—that is, formulaic, predictable, traditional, and not open to spontaneity. The control exercised in

worship mirrored the control of personal emotion that characterized social elites, as well as the control those elites exercised in society and attempted to impose on the “lower orders.” With the founding of the United States and the adoption of the First Amendment in 1791, a wholly unprecedented situation presented itself, one highly propitious for the emergence and flourishing of religious activity that did not enjoy governmental approbation. The colonial period had been characterized by considerable religious diversity, but establishment remained the dominant principle in most of the colonies—Puritan Congregationalism in much of New England, the Church of England in most of the South. The religious revivals of the 1740s known collectively as the Great Awakening, galvanized by the peripatetic evangelist George Whitefield (1714–1770), brought an early challenge to both formal and informal religious establishment by attacking it at its heart, namely, the deeply rooted idea that residents of a political unit were obliged by law and custom to attend the house of worship designated by the authorities as that unit’s official church. This might be called the “parochial principle,” that is, that the *parish*—an area and corresponding house of worship officially recognized as a fundamental unit of settlement—had a monopoly on the religious life of all those who lived within its boundaries. By attacking the legitimacy of clergy who did not meet his criterion of having experienced a “new birth”—an emotional experience of conversion—Whitefield encouraged his followers to forsake their parishes and attend worship wherever they might find a minister whose authority was based not on formal ordination or official recognition but rather on personal charisma. In doing so, Whitefield—one of the most charismatic figures in U.S. religious history—might well be regarded as the father of U.S. popular religion.

After independence, the reality of de jure pluralism—freedom of religious belief and practice guaranteed by fundamental law—legitimated the work of dissenters such as Whitefield and his numerous successors, and opened the new nation to what the historian Alice Felt Tyler once dubbed “Freedom’s Ferment.” Although informal social constraints continued to influence religious choice in many places, Euro-Americans nevertheless were formally free to practice whatever religion they chose from the panoply that had been imported from Europe, or to invent new ones, which many did. In the midst of both legal freedom and a corresponding pluralism, Americans were free to improvise in religious matters without regard for established authority, whether governmental or ecclesiastical. The result was often what might

be dubbed *popular religion*—religion that flourished without benefit of or hindrance from the “establishments of religion” that the First Amendment prohibited.

Popular Christianity was represented in the early republic particularly by the Baptist and Methodist movements, which generally attracted their followings primarily from the less educated and prosperous classes. Although John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, had been an Oxford graduate and an ordained Church of England priest, his U.S. disciples rapidly broke away from the control he habitually exercised on his movement and promoted an approach to religion sharply at odds with that of U.S. regional elites. The typical Methodist preacher on the U.S. frontier lacked much formal education, rode on horseback along an appointed circuit without any parish boundaries, and promoted a highly emotional style of worship that lacked the decorum of the churches favored by his social betters. Baptists, who lacked the tight Methodist organizational structure, often found leaders among uneducated farmers and artisans who felt called to preach. Although both of these movements eventually succumbed to what sociologist Max Weber dubbed the “routinization of charisma”—the tendency of new social movements to develop a bureaucratic means of self-perpetuation as the cost of longer-term survival—both in their earlier years were clearly “popular” movements in their appeal to nonelite followers through a highly emotional style of worship, a clergy that depended on personal charisma rather than on education, and a pragmatic, nontraditional approach to evangelization.

One of the major elements of popular religion is the distinctive nature of the way in which *charisma*—religious authority—is exercised. In churches that enjoy established or less formal elite status, clergy exercise their authority not so much by virtue of individual qualities but through the formal process of *ordination*, in which already recognized clergy confer the power they possess upon newcomers. This process is usually based on a combination of tradition—the idea that charisma can be formally transferred from generation to generation through an orderly, time-sanctioned process—and education, a formal curriculum based on traditional lore that the candidate is supposed to have mastered through tutelage by elders. Challengers to these presuppositions, who are often leaders of popular religious movements, frequently argue that these requirements are merely formal and external, and argue instead that charisma is exercised as a personal quality—in the U.S. context, demonstrably being “born again” and thus inwardly empowered through an infusion of divine grace to exercise spiritual authority. This challenge

might originally come from someone such as Whitefield—like his friend Wesley, an Oxford-educated Anglican clergyman—but often is emulated by grassroots preachers who lack these traditional markers of authority. Lay leadership—preaching and other activities ordinarily performed by formally ordained clergy now carried out by those lacking such ordination—thus becomes a marker of popular religiosity.

The history of U.S. evangelicalism is partly the story of this ongoing tension between “routinized charisma”—authority conferred by education, ordination, and office—and charisma as a unique personal gift that empowers religious leaders with no regard for formal qualifications. Charles G. Finney (1792–1875), the premier revival preacher of the antebellum era, had been trained as a lawyer, and wangled Presbyterian ordination on the basis of claims of personal charisma—a sense of divine calling backed up by extraordinary preaching ability—rather than formal training. Subsequent popular evangelists, such as Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899), Billy Sunday (1862–1935), and Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944), similarly rose to prominence in later decades through the exercise of personal qualities, including the ability to innovate without denominational constraints. Bible colleges began to arise by the 1920s as alternatives to traditional theological seminaries to equip would-be evangelists with basic biblical knowledge rather than German-infused modern theological training on the premise that the Bible was transparent to ordinary people and needed no scholarly gloss. By the later twentieth century, megachurch preachers similarly operated without benefit of either denominational support (and control) or formal theological education, but often came instead from backgrounds in business or communication. These preachers also have arisen from a variety of social backgrounds—Pat Robertson (1930–) from an elite family, Jerry Falwell (1933–2007) from hardscrabble origins—and their appeal is to a diverse, often middle-class constituency. Across the broad spectrum, however, the evangelical movement has presented a challenge to traditional notions of the clergy as a formally, traditionally educated elite who exercise power by virtue of denominational ordination and formal education.

Evangelicalism as Popular Religion

Thus far, many of our examples of popular religion in what is now the United States have been taken from the strain of Protestant Christianity known as *evangelicalism*. Randall Balmer has called evangelicalism *America’s folk religion*, using the latter term loosely but evocatively. One reason

that evangelicalism has been such a fertile seedbed for popular religiosity is that although it can take institutional form, it is not itself an institution but rather a broad climate of opinion within Protestantism that is protean in the forms it may assume. Many evangelicals can be found within the often liberal-leaning “mainline” Protestant denominations. Some stay put, even though they may feel themselves a minority. Others form caucuses to lobby against innovations, such as gay ordination, and sometimes coalesce, as have some Episcopalians in the early twenty-first century, to form new, schismatic organizations. Many new evangelical denominations arose in the early twentieth century as a result of the upsurge of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements, as well as the fundamentalist-modernist controversy that tore apart northern Baptists and Presbyterians.

The early phases of some of these movements, particularly among Pentecostals, could be described in Durkheimian terms as *effervescent*—that is, filled with a spirit of enthusiasm and spontaneity that worked against reliance on tradition and structures and stressed instead personal openness to the unpredictable workings of the Holy Spirit. Immediate experience of such supernatural gifts as speaking in tongues, prophesying, and healing through faith led to many following unaccredited but apparently Spirit-filled leaders in movements that rejected old social markers of division, such as race and gender. This was U.S. popular religion of a very intense form: unsanctioned, unbureaucratized, spontaneous, and supernaturally focused. This phase, which manifested itself with particular intensity at the Azusa Street revivals in Los Angeles in the early 1900s, did not last more than a decade or two, but eventually yielded to new denominational structures in which lines of race and gender reasserted themselves.

The subsequent development of U.S. evangelicalism has taken a number of forms but has been characterized by continual innovation. At one end, institutions such as the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena and *Christianity Today* magazine are similar to their mainline counterparts in many ways, though remaining more theologically conservative. Denominations such as the Assemblies of God have developed national bureaucratic structures similar to those of the Protestant mainline as well. Some evangelical institutions, such as the ultra-conservative Dallas Theological Seminary, may be said to constitute part of a deeply entrenched counterculture that defines itself as being at war with mainline institutions. Weber’s “routinization of charisma” has certainly been at work in the evangelical world, especially in its fundamentalist wing that is deeply anchored

in the Calvinist-Reform tradition of emphasis on divine law and rationalist thought.

The possibility of innovation in U.S. evangelicalism is a direct function of the loosely defined tradition and movement rather than a single institution. A deep-rooted (and perhaps very American) bias within the movement toward religious individualism focuses on direct access of the individual to divine power that brings about freedom from sin as well as disease. Lacking a pope, a hierarchy, or an overarching bureaucracy, there is little to prevent new preachers, prophets, and healers from springing up and attracting a following, as long as they do not stray too far from broad lines of Bible-based orthodox belief. Conformity is enforced to a degree through institutions and media that shape public opinion, but these have no formal authority. Some institutions, such as the Southern Baptist Convention, do formally sever ties on occasion with congregations that stray from their teachings, but there is no lack of other Baptist organizations with which these congregations may affiliate, assuming that they want to affiliate with anyone.

One seeming paradox within evangelicalism is that although the movement emphasizes the centrality of individual conversion and the old Reformation axiom that individuals have to encounter and interpret scripture for themselves, the movement seems readily to generate charismatic leaders whose words are authoritative for their followers. Revivalists since Whitefield’s time have been preeminent among these leaders, whose rhetoric is based on the premise that individuals, institutions, and even nations have an inherent tendency to fall away from divine teaching and need periodic recommitment and reprimand. Evangelical denominations tend to follow congregational polity and lack influential hierarchies—although the Southern Baptists have tried to develop such an authority structure *de facto*—so revivalists and local ministers have often developed large local followings, which have been translated into national communities of influence through the mass media. Beginning in the 1970s, “televangelists” such as Falwell and Robertson, both with large local followings in their native Virginia, attempted to develop a nationally coordinated evangelical-based political network that became known as the “religious right,” but its influence began to decline with political and generational change in the early twenty-first century.

Local churches, denominations or quasi-denominations (megachurch-based franchise-like movements such as Saddleback and Vineyard), charismatic preachers and revivalists, television and radio programs, seminaries and Bible schools,

and political lobbying organizations are all ways through which evangelicalism has become a loosely defined yet distinctive culture that is national or even international in scope. This culture is produced and disseminated through other, very material means as well. “Christian” bookstores, for example, are independent operations that offer for sale a wide variety of books, videos, CDs, refrigerator magnets, and other pious artifacts that are intended to promote religious knowledge and to transform homes, offices, cars, and other spaces into sacralized zones (much as did similar Catholic enterprises in the pre-Vatican II era). “Christian Yellow Pages” were published with the intention of enabling evangelicals to do business primarily with co-religionists. As both Randall Balmer and Colleen McDannell have pointed out, Bibles, available in a vast variety of formats and targeted toward a spectrum of niche audiences, persist as an icon of evangelical identity, in form as well as in content.

A twenty-first-century manifestation of evangelical culture is the Creation Museum (2007), located near the Cincinnati airport in northern Kentucky. The brainchild of an Australian biology teacher, this technically sophisticated institution attempts to provide a verbal and material counter-narrative to the dominant scientific account of genetic evolution through natural selection, with its implicit challenges to the literal accuracy of the Genesis creation account. This museum—like the Bible colleges that were its spiritual forerunners—is a vivid example of the attempt by evangelicals to promote a worldview and create a community around it that provides an alternative to the dominant secular culture—a culture shaped by financial and intellectual elites that has allegedly extended its influence over “mainline” Christianity.

Evangelicalism, or at least many of its segments, certainly qualifies as a U.S. popular religion in its diffuseness, its lack of hierarchical control (the ambitions of Southern Baptist leaders to exert something very like it notwithstanding), its preoccupation with the access of individuals to divine power in unmediated form, its exaltation of personal charisma over educational or bureaucratic credentials among its leadership, and its resentment of mainstream credentialing institutions. Although evangelicalism’s roots can be traced to British Protestantism—it has always enjoyed considerable popularity in Britain and Canada—evangelicalism has become more pervasive and influential in the United States, where religion is much more widespread and competitive. Its individualism and its freedom from the trammels of tradition, it has been argued, have both conduced to its success in the United States and its profound influence on U.S. culture and society.

Populist Religion as Popular Religion

Populism is a deep current in U.S. political culture that has had profound implications for and affinities with U.S. popular religion. Although the term has been used in many ways, historian Michael Kazin has usefully defined it as an ideology that emerged from the U.S. “producer classes”—farmers, laborers, artisans—to highlight their moral virtue, especially in distinction from the “parasitic” upper and lower classes, which feed off the labor of others. Nineteenth-century populism, which culminated in the career of William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925), was closely associated with the evangelical Protestant ethos that was widespread especially in rural and small-town southern and midwestern United States, but was increasingly challenged by the forces of urbanization, industrialization, immigration (especially Roman Catholic and Jewish), and secularism. Bryan, who was the presidential candidate of both the Democratic and the People’s parties (populism’s short-lived distinctive political institution), gained national notoriety as a protagonist in the Scopes trial of 1925, but his broader career was founded on a commitment not so much to religious fundamentalism as to the virtue and rights of ordinary citizens, who were being victimized by capitalist and immigrant alike. Bryan’s stake in the Scopes trial was not simply based on hostility to evolution on religious grounds, but more profoundly on his sense that the curriculum of local schools should not be dictated by outside urban elites who were out of touch with the values of local communities.

This conception that wisdom resides in the common people rather than in experts resonates with many themes in popular religion, particularly of the evangelical sort. That political and religious populism converged in the Scopes trial is indicative of the impact that the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the early twentieth century had on U.S. Protestant life, as well as the similarly profound cultural chasm that was thus revealed between the still largely agricultural south, where the movement to ban the teaching of evolution in public schools was popular, and the more urbanized and pluralistic north. An urban Catholic populism surfaced briefly in the career of Charles Coughlin (1891–1979), the “radio priest” of Royal Oak, Michigan, but Coughlin’s attacks on the popular Franklin Roosevelt and his overt anti-Semitism soon ended his once enormous popularity in the Depression-era United States. Similar right-wing Protestant voices such as Gerald L. K. Smith (1898–1976), a one-time Coughlin ally, were vocal but limited in appeal.

The emergence of the religious right as a serious player in U.S. politics in the 1970s was characterized by a new convergence of popular religion and political populism in the American scene. Many of the themes of the religious right had been anticipated by Alabama governor and presidential candidate George Wallace (1919–1998), whose rhetoric was pitched to white working-class Americans who felt that they had been victimized by the civil rights movement and its elite liberal backers. Wallace's attack on "pointy-headed intellectuals" was soon echoed by Richard Nixon, whose "southern strategy" helped propel him to the White House in 1968 and again in 1972. Lingering regional, social class, and racial resentments formed a major part of the cultural foundation for the religious right, whose most visible spokespeople were frequently southerners such as Falwell and Robertson, and whose movement, as Balmer has demonstrated, was sparked by the denial of tax-exempt status by the federal government to racially segregated Bob Jones University in South Carolina. The movement's disdain for the expertise of "establishment" scientists, theologians, and political theorists was expressed in a distinctively populist style of rhetoric, which implicitly appealed to the traditional evangelical notion of the "perspicuity of scripture"—that is, the idea that the meaning of the Bible is transparent and accessible to ordinary literate believers, who had no need of scholarly expertise to understand God's word.

As the subsequent emergence in the early twenty-first century of a new cadre of evangelicals committed to causes such as social justice and environmentalism and the decline of the political impact of the religious right have indicated, populism and evangelicalism are by no means synonymous. (Conversely, the religious right openly appealed to conservative Catholics and Jews, a significant number of whom embraced their cause.) Nevertheless, there has long existed what Max Weber called an "elective affinity" between the two movements, rooted in the sense of many evangelicals that theirs is a faith of and for ordinary folk, as well as a nativistic belief that the "real" United States is a nation elected by God for a special destiny, whose ability to fulfill that destiny has been placed in the hands of evangelical Protestants, the bearers of authentic faith and morality.

Harmonialism or Metaphysical Religion

If evangelicalism is the "yang" of U.S. popular religion, what historian Sydney Ahlstrom has called *harmonialism* is its "yin." (Religion scholar Catherine Albanese has more recently coined the term *metaphysical religion* to identify the

same spectrum of phenomena.) That scholars do not agree on exactly what name best suits this topic is emblematic of its diffuseness. Evangelicalism, to be sure, is institutionally decentered, but most evangelicals, as well as scholars of the movement, agree substantially on its defining characteristics, such as the centrality of the Bible, the need for a transformative personal experience of conversion, and the imperative to witness on behalf of the faith to others. Since practitioners of harmonial religion are even more averse to institutionalization and centralized authority than most evangelicals, definitions of the movement—which may be too diverse and diffuse even to be called a movement—are more difficult to pin down.

Harmonialism may be described as any of a wide variety of beliefs and practices—and occasional institutional embodiments of the same—that are based on the premise that human health and well-being can be attained through the attainment of true knowledge of the unseen forces that permeate the cosmos and subsequent personal alignment with those forces. The sources and manifestations of what has sometimes been called the "perennial philosophy" are many, and include Swedenborgianism, Freemasonry, popular occultism, a variety of nineteenth-century healing movements, mesmerism, New England transcendentalism, Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Native American myth and ritual, and Vedanta, as well as other Asian religious traditions popularized in North America. Hall and Butler have demonstrated that harmonial beliefs and practices were widespread in colonial America and the early Republic, even among Puritan leaders.

Harmonial strains manifested themselves in a number of new religious movements in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Joseph Smith (1805–1844), the founder and prophet of Mormonism, had been a practitioner of popular magic activity in his early years, and later incorporated much of the symbolism of Freemasonry into the iconography of the Latter-day Saints. Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) was strongly influenced by the teaching and practice of the itinerant healer Phineas P. Quimby (1802–1866), whose ideas about the influence of mental processes on the physical body also influenced many of the founders of the New Thought movement. Eddy went on to found the movement known as Christian Science, based on the notion that our physical bodies are ultimately illusory and that healing can be attained through a profound personal appropriation of the belief that mind is all that is ultimately real. Christian Science, which Eddy institutionalized and turned into a denomination, is atypical of harmonialism in its firm linkage to its founder and to a monopolistic institution. Despite their profound

differences and their claims to have discovered (mutually) exclusive truth, Smith and Eddy shared an autodidacticism—that is, they lacked extensive formal education and, from an outsider's viewpoint, appear to have devised complex religious systems through the eclectic appropriation of diverse elements from the popular religious cultures of their day, both Christian and harmonial.

The New Thought movement of the twentieth century was a primary bearer of metaphysical currents. It generally manifested itself in a diffuse and individualistic culture held together by a common inspirational literature generated by leaders such as Warren Felt Evans (1817–1889) and Emma Curtis Hopkins (1849–1925) and movements such as the Unity School of Christianity, headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri. Followers usually do not constitute any sort of formal community nor engage in common worship, and sometimes participate in other religious organizations. Movements such as Rosicrucianism and Theosophy were parallel vehicles for the dissemination of “esoteric” metaphysical knowledge that would enable its possessors to lead more spiritually and materially enriched existences.

Even more diffuse than New Thought has been the *New Age* movement, an omnium-gatherum term for a wide variety of beliefs, activities, phenomena, and organizations that is organizationally unfocused and whose practitioners are extremely individualistic and eclectic. Information is diffused through books, periodicals, and other publications—sometimes available through New Age bookstores—the Internet, word-of-mouth, various organizations of the like-minded, and astrologers and similar freelance consultants and authors who make careers of promoting New Age concerns. During the 1960s and early 1970s—the proverbial “Age of Aquarius” and the youthful counterculture—communes based on New Age principles such as “harmonic convergence” briefly flourished. It is easier to catalogue than to synthesize New Age beliefs and practices, which might include the “channeling” of early human spirits by present-day individuals, pilgrimages to sacred places associated with indigenous cultures such as Stonehenge in England or U.S. mountains deemed sacred by native peoples, alternative medicine, Buddhist or Hindu meditation practices, astrology, crystal healing, and any number of spiritual practices derived from a whole gamut of sources, ancient and modern.

The term *spirituality* itself, in its contemporary sense of eclectic personal beliefs detached from a traditional religious community, is a later-twentieth-century usage that reflects the New Age ethos accurately. (The sociologist Robert Bellah and

associates adopted the eponym “Sheilism,” coined by one of their interviewees, to describe this “spiritual not religious” sort of sensibility.) The notion that there is a spiritual dimension to everyday life apart from any formal religious formulations can also be found in Alcoholics Anonymous and other twelve-step programs. In addition, the term *neo-paganism* collectively refers to a number of organizations, beliefs, and practices that are distinctly harmonial in flavor and that overlap considerably with the New Age.

New Religious Movements

New religious movements (hereafter NRMs, in what has become standard academic usage) were in older days generally known as “cults,” an implicitly pejorative term designating religious groups that deviated seriously from mainstream practice through their espousal of new revelation or other teachings that departed significantly from trinitarian Christian orthodoxy. We have already mentioned Mormonism and Christian Science, two indigenous nineteenth-century U.S. movements that meet this definition. That century abounded in such movements, some of brief duration, but others, such as Seventh-day Adventism, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the still-but-barely-extant Shakers, and Native American Peyote religion, that have endured over several generations and significantly affected U.S. religious pluralism. In the 1960s and 1970s, a proliferation of “cults,” in the wake of that era's “counterculture,” alarmed a generation of middle-class parents who feared that their children would be “brainwashed” into exotic groups, often of Asian origin, and forever alienated from their families. The panic over the “Hare Krishnas,” “Moonies,” and similar groups eventually subsided as they faded from the national scene in the midst of scandals, legal difficulties, and, perhaps most fatally, loss of novelty in a changing cultural environment characterized by increasingly short attention spans by the general public.

Many NRMs can be viewed as manifestations of popular religion on several counts. As noted earlier, both Mormonism and Christian Science—together with any number of other NRMs—were founded by autodidacts—that is, self-taught prophetic figures whose claim to authority was based on an original insight into the ultimate nature of things rather than on formal training or ordination. Among Native Americans, shamanic figures such as Tenskwata (1775–1836) and Wovoka (c. 1856–1932) provided new prophetic leadership. The early adherents of these movements were presumably attracted by this charisma, which promised the ability to live either in what Victor Turner has called spontaneous

communitas—a community in which all members enjoy a primary relationship with one another, unfettered by traditional social distinctions—or access to divine power, usually immanent—that brings reassurance and healing. This immediacy of experience is often a key to the popularity of such newly founded religions and may erode over generations as charisma becomes routinized.

Popular Religion and Popular Culture

Although *popular culture* has no precise definition, it is usually understood as synonymous with *mass culture*, that is, cultural production that is easily replicated through modern technology—beginning with movable type printing in the later fifteenth century—and distributed through an infrastructure of long-distance transportation and mass marketing. Early religious popular culture coincided with the spread of Protestantism, which relied heavily on print technology and, later, on inexpensive graphics, such as chromolithography, introduced in the nineteenth century. The advent of film, radio, television, and the Internet in the twentieth century multiplied the possibility for the production of popular religious material exponentially.

The relationship between religious popular culture—books, videos, films, artifacts, Web sites—and organized religious groups is complicated. In the twentieth-century United States, Roman Catholics and evangelical and mainline Protestants have all railed against the baleful influence of, for example, lurid comic books and films. However, many of these same groups have been skillful in adapting these media for their own purposes. The vast popularity of Warner Sallman's painting "Head of Christ" (1941), Roman Catholic Bishop Fulton Sheen's television series *Life Is Worth Living* (1951–1957), and the "electronic church" of the 1980s televangelists are all ample testimonies to the power of mass media to mold religious sentiment through the provision of accessible graphic images.

The realm of film has been particularly susceptible to the conveyance of religious themes. Evangelicals, who seem to enjoy an elective affinity with the mass media, have created, as they have in other cultural realms, a system of production and distribution parallel to that of Hollywood, often featuring films with apocalyptic themes (for example, *The Omega Code* [1999], and *Left Behind* [2000], based on the best-selling series of sixteen novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins). The Roman Catholic Paulist order, which has historically focused on communication with the broader culture, has helped produce films with a more subtle Christian

message—for example, *The Spitfire Grill* (1996). Hollywood films, some of them enormously popular, have often presented biblical themes in a positive if uncritical light, especially Cecil B. DeMille's extravagant renderings of *The Ten Commandments* (1923, 1956) and William Wyler's *Ben Hur* (1959), and went through a phase in which Bing Crosby, Barry Fitzgerald, and Frank Sinatra appeared as winsome Catholic priests (for example, *Going My Way*, 1944). Jewish themes have also been frequent, including *Exodus* (1960), *The Pawnbroker* (1964), and *Goodbye, Columbus* (1969). More recently, Mormon-themed films have also begun to break into the national market, notably *Napoleon Dynamite* in 2004.

Conversely, commercial films since the decline of the motion picture production code in the 1950s have at times looked at religion in a skeptical or satiric manner (*Elmer Gantry* [1960], *Ghost Busters* [1984]) or with bizarre themes (*The Exorcist* [1973], *The Da Vinci Code* [2006]). (Television cartoon series such as *The Simpsons* and *South Park* have also taken potshots at religion.) Other films have drawn ambivalent response from evangelicals, in particular. The Anglican scholar and Christian apologist C. S. Lewis (1898–1963) has been greatly admired by many evangelicals, and a telling episode in his life story was recounted in the 1993 feature film *Shadowlands: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (2005), the first of a series of films based on his "Narnia" series, which contained elaborate Christian symbolism in the form of fantasy, was also well received by Christians across the theological spectrum. However, the enormous popularity of novelist J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series and the films based on them (beginning with *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in 2001) have frequently been criticized by evangelicals for their focus on witchcraft and the occult, even though the stories have been praised by others as carrying an essentially Christian message of the triumph of good over evil. Still another direction was taken by George Lucas's six-episode *Star Wars* series (1977–2005), in which the Jedi knights profess a rather New Age adaptation of Zen Buddhism ("use the force, Luke!").

Religion has also manifested itself in other ways in popular culture. During the 1930s and 1940s, for example, Yiddish radio programming was widespread, especially in the New York City area. More recently, the fascination with Jewish occultism in the form of Kabbalah—popularized by celebrities such as Madonna—has penetrated far beyond the Jewish community, some of whom may well be perplexed by the phenomenon. Similarly, Hinduism has entered the broader culture through yoga classes and transcendental

meditation, both of which can be taken up by Americans of any or no religious affiliation without apparent contradiction. Buddhism, especially in its Zen and Tibetan forms, has also attracted a non-Asian fan base, ranging from serious convert-practitioners to those who sympathize with the Dalai Lama's ethnic and political messages.

Reflections

The United States, with its ethos of religious liberty and heritage of cultural complexity, has over the centuries proven a markedly hospitable environment for the proliferation of new religious strategies and movements that have, at least in their early phases, existed at the margins and in the interstices of the dominant society. The nation's role at the cutting edge of technological development and capitalist production has also provided a fertile matrix for the creation of a popular culture, with which popular religion has enjoyed both an ongoing tension and an elective affinity. Popular religion has always been, and doubtless will continue to be, a major feature of U.S. religious life.

See also *Celebrity Culture*; *Death and Burial Practices*; *Devotionalism*; *Electronic Church*; *Establishment, Religious*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Film*; *Folklore*; *Food and Diet*; *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion*; *Immigration* entries; *Internet*; *Journalism*; *Latino/a Religious Practice*; *Literature* entries; *Lived Religion*; *Material Culture, Approaches*; *New Age Religion(s)*; *New Religious Movements* entries; *Pluralism*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Populism*; *Radio*; *Religious Press*; *Religious Right*; *Spirituality* entries; *Sport(s)*; *Television*; *Tourism and Pilgrimage*; *Violence and Terror*; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Popular Religion and Popular Culture: From the Colonial Era to the Civil War

Popular religion refers, most broadly, to the lived religious experience of all laity. It tends to emphasize the social rather than institutional and to focus on practice rather than theology. But beyond that stricture, popular religion encompasses a variety of groups and movements. Some historians employ the term in reference to the religious practice of groups that command broad, thus popular, appeal. Others limit the definition to religious activity as practiced by non-elites, whether social, ethnic, or gender minorities, or those with unique or heterodox theological positions. This entry adopts a broad definition of popular religion to consider all lay activity, but particularly focuses on practices outside church norms, and by groups considered outside elite or majority positions in U.S. life.

Colonial Popular Sentiment

The British founded most of their colonies on the principle of religious establishment—nine of the thirteen original colonies contained some support for a state church at the time of the American Revolution, and in Pennsylvania Quakers operated an informal establishment that eschewed coercion but kept de facto control over the government. Popular sentiment, however, often created a more vibrant religious life than what the state churches offered.

Established Puritan churches in New England operated on a decentralized congregational model and encouraged

individual Bible study and prayer that ultimately strained religious uniformity or central authority. Individual New Englanders seamlessly incorporated miraculous signs, miracles, and curses into their religious experience of the everyday world. Even elite Puritan leaders found such tendencies attractive: Alchemy, the merging of science and magic to uncover the hidden properties of the material world, fascinated many educated New Englanders.

Farther south, other challenges existed to established religion. The middle colonies were religiously pluralistic. A range of dissenting and pietist sects filled those colonies, supplemented by large numbers of nonreligious and indifferent subjects. Quakers and pacifistic Moravians shared a respect for individual spiritual authority and drew close to charismatic practitioners of spiritual and magical cures and signs. In the southern colonies, the established Anglican Church faced indifference among its parishioners and vitality from outside sects, not to mention various African beliefs among its not-yet acculturated slave population. Frustrated clergy had few allies, and many opponents.

In all cases, established religion and religious authority remained tenuous, subject to the approval of its congregants. The colonial world's religious pluralism and dissenting strength allowed a range of popular and folk beliefs. Popular prejudices, not elite manipulation, drove witch trials, culminating in the Salem tragedy of 1692. After Salem, rationalizing elite ministers and authorities refused to prosecute witches, but widespread belief in witchcraft remained. Colonists sometimes turned to cunning folk, individuals versed in magical and occult charms and remedies. Midwifery especially retained its magical heritage, as the province of women unlettered in rationalist medical texts. Midwives represented a strong base of alternative medicine in colonial America—indeed, often an alternative that a majority sought. Although astrology declined during the eighteenth century, U.S. almanacs retained symbols of magic and occult practice, ranging from signs of the zodiac to predict events, to depictions of the human anatomy that coincided with folk remedies. Southern farmers carved runes into their barns to bring abundant crops and ward off curses; western farmers adhered to a strict schedule in killing hogs and baptizing children to account for lunar phases.

Revivalists, Rationalists, and Anti-Catholicism

In the eighteenth century some clergy harnessed popular energies to promote religious revival. Itinerant revivalist George Whitefield operated outside the authority of local

churches. He authorized the printing of thousands of handbills and pamphlets, creating a popular religious community around new media—print publications—and new forms—outdoor revivals. Revivals provoked enthusiastic displays: Many converts cried, others barked, and a few rolled, thunderstruck, on the floor. These displays challenged the rational disputations heard in sermons within organized churches.

Although prominent revivalists such as Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards promoted strict discipline and attempted to channel revival energies into orthodox theology and regular church attendance, their followers were not as discriminating. Taking upon themselves the mantle of the Holy Spirit, illiterate farmers, women, and slaves took to the fields to preach. In a generally Protestant environment, many colonists strayed to listen, willing to be persuaded (even if, in numbers, few were).

Many anti-revival clergy attempted to harmonize Enlightenment rationalism with orthodox faith, or at least downplayed enthusiastic responses for more philosophical reflections. Some laity attempted their own syntheses, as when Thomas Jefferson's deism accepted Christ as moral teacher. Jefferson's Bible expunged all references to miracles but kept the teachings of Jesus. Many elites interested in Enlightenment thought joined the society of the Freemasons. Claiming ancient heritage yet promoting a rational deity, the Masons attracted large numbers of colonial elites. After the American Revolution, larger numbers of laity embraced the synthesis of Enlightenment and religion (or, alternatively, belief in magic and the occult) in what might be deemed metaphysical religion.

The generally Protestant heritage of the colonies tinged the political strivings in the era of the American Revolution. Although Enlightenment-influenced elites such as Jefferson and John Adams remained theologically heterodox, their political fortunes benefited from an anti-Roman Catholic, anti-establishment ethos, often millenarian, that came to be expressed in religio-political terms. Otherwise apathetic religiously, many colonists saw papal influence and creeping religious establishment in imperial actions. They mixed fears of bishops coming to the United States with demonstrations against the Stamp Act and saw in the Québec Act not a case of administrative reorganization, but the expansion of an unfree Roman Catholicism into their daily lives. For many colonists, political enemies of freedom coincided with religious enemies of truth, the Antichrists of the apocalypse.

Colonial Catholics and Jews

Despite popular anti-Catholicism, Roman Catholics in the United States charted a course independent of the church hierarchy in Rome. Prominent aristocratic Catholics had initially settled Maryland and provided the base of the church's early efforts. They often encountered opposition from ethnic varieties of Catholicism, ranging from Germans in Pennsylvania, to Highland Scots in backcountry New York and the Carolinas, to frontier French clergy, to Irish clergy in the larger cities. Catholic loyalties during the American Revolution varied tremendously. In general, two forms of popular Catholicism emerged. A rationalist and native-born elite strained at Rome's control and attempted to steer the church down a modified republican path with prominent lay involvement. In contrast, ethnic Catholics accepted church hierarchy, especially when wielded by their co-nationalists, but also more willingly experienced the mysteries, and mysticism, of the faith. Mass immigration in the new nation eventually allowed this latter group to dominate both church polity and religious experience.

The Jewish community in the British colonies remained small and was limited to four communities of any significant size: New York, Philadelphia, Newport (Rhode Island), and Charleston. Although Protestant Americans accepted a reflexive cultural anti-Semitism, U.S. Jews suffered little overt discrimination. But the size of their communities forced changes to popular Jewish practice. Elite Jews worked with and sometimes intermarried into elite gentile families. Sephardic Jews of Iberian heritage and Ashkenazi Jews from eastern Europe often disagreed about worship and control over resources, but their small size meant that they could little afford deep disagreements. When Ashkenazi newcomers from eastern Europe increased in number in the late colonial era, long-standing elite Sephardim and Ashkenazim allied to block demands from these lower-classed invaders. Although individual Jewish leaders bemoaned the lax religious practices of many of their co-religionists and feared increased intermarriage outside their faith, they had no effective way to discipline their members and often accepted the return of dissidents to bolster their small numbers.

Second Great Awakening

The disestablishment of colonial churches in the years following the revolution made all religious activity popular, in the sense that none received official state approval. All churches competed for members and thus had to articulate

popular appeals. Disestablishment unleashed a wave of religious energy that turned previously dissenting and popular churches into the majority. A series of revivals known as the Second Great Awakening were, unlike the first Awakening, explicitly populist.

Charismatic preachers often invoked the common sense of the common person to appeal to their audiences, ironically gaining authoritative positions among their followers. Revival ministers typically criticized older and less experimental churches. Calvinist theology was an especially effective bogeyman, symbolizing to Arminian revivalists the domination of an elite and educated clergy prone to abstractions. Revivalists offered instead a simple message of free-willed conversion. Denominations as different as Free Will Baptists, Methodists, Disciples, and Christians each adopted this strategy. Once drawn to revival churches, however, laity often submitted to the authority of a clergy whose popular appeals were combined with rigorous discipline.

Even so, individual revival experience never completely conformed to clerical teachings. Evangelical Protestants harnessed individual spiritual energy in their conversions and subsequent lives. Contrary to Enlightenment doctrine, evangelicals heard the voices of God and angels. They claimed that faith, with the Holy Spirit's aid, healed their degenerative conditions and diseases. Some saw visions of heaven, or of judgment. These displays strengthened revival churches and became the basis for new religious movements that claimed similar displays of word and vision, but attributed them to new authorities.

Slave Religious Experience

The Second Great Awakening made great inroads among the enslaved African American community of the South. Indeed, church membership for slaves grew proportionately higher than that for whites. Enslaved blacks often embraced the revivalism of the Methodists or Baptists, but combined it with the magical traditions of their homelands. Black worship retained African forms. The call and response format between preacher and congregation was prominent in black worship. The cadence of the sermon, often sung or chanted, was as important as the content of the words. In secret worship gatherings, blacks practiced the ring shout, a dance that required precise steps in counterclockwise motion and that employed joyful messages. Slave communities also used conjurers and magicians for folk healing remedies, and feared curses and witchcraft when sickness or bad luck struck.

The content of African Christianity also reflected differences with elite forms. Slave religion embraced messages that secretly challenged whites' social values. Blacks stressed the Old Testament, finding their own situation in the stories of God's chosen people, the Hebrews. Slaves championed Moses, a Jew who led his people out of slavery. Black religion was intensely moralistic, in part retained from Africa, where some polygynous societies and Islamic influence demanded rigid behavioral codes regarding sex and property. This moralism coincided well with the demands of evangelical Christianity. White masters who attended church with their slaves wholeheartedly approved of the demands for slaves to obey their masters. But while publicly acknowledging obedience, slaves also recognized the sin of slavery and fully expected their masters to be subject to divine punishment, and the fires of hell, for that sin. When Nat Turner led a slave rebellion in Southampton County, Virginia, in 1831, his men spared poor religious white families but killed all slaveholders, religious or not, believing Turner poured out God's judgment.

Music and Publishing

Revival denominations harnessed new media forms to gain in popularity. Hymnody exploded in the early Republic. Most U.S. religious folk texts originated in the early years of the new nation. Composers set them to popular love ballads or melodramatic tunes that previously narrated wars, sexual affairs, and murder. Many derived from folk melodies of the British Isles, where many revivalists had ancestral roots. This sacralization of formerly profane materials doubtless aided the intense emotionalism that accompanied conversion and subsequent church attendance.

Lyrical, the new hymns reflected a popular religion that dissolved theological categories that the clergy carefully guarded. The most successful hymns and hymnals articulated an intensely personal experience of both salvation and sanctification. Neither Calvinist nor Methodist in precise theological terms, individual believers worked out their salvations in terms of their individual experiences, finding more rigid theological categories—whether of perseverance of the saints or absolute perfectionism—to be of little use as they steadily plotted their lives in the mundane world.

Growing churches also exploited new technologies in printing. The invention of the steam press made mass production printing efficient and inexpensive. Wealthy laity channeled this development into evangelization efforts. Parachurch organizations such as the American Bible Society, established in 1816, strove to place Bibles in the hands of every U.S.

resident. The American Tract Society pursued more sectarian ends by publishing explicitly evangelical materials, but remained ostensibly nondenominational. Church publishing houses contributed to the growth of their respective denominations—the Methodist Book Concern became the largest publisher in the world by 1860, paralleling the rise of its parent denomination, which became the largest religious body in the United States in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Popular churches were publishing churches.

In a generally Protestant country, however, individuals chose their own religious reading materials. The Harper brothers of New York, devout Methodists, dominated the market for inexpensive reprints, a lucrative field in an era of hazy international copyright laws. Much of their catalogue consisted of religious and devotional material, ranging from highbrow copies of Seneca's *Morals* to Methodist youth catechisms and Episcopalian prayer books. Ministers such as Henry Ward Beecher moonlighted as advice manual writers and promoted an ethic of self-discipline to combat the decline of influence churches had over city-dwelling youth.

Among the Harpers' religious best sellers was the salacious material of the *Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*, which the Harpers published under a pseudonym to avoid Catholic boycotts. Its best-selling status lay in the juxtaposition of sex, death, and religion, and its anti-Catholic imagery reached large numbers of nominal Protestants who otherwise had little connection to church. As in the revolutionary era, religious anti-Catholicism emerged with a political agenda. When Catholic immigration from Ireland and German states increased in the 1840s, anti-Catholicism emerged as a powerful political presence. This impulse culminated in the creation of the nativist and anti-Catholic American Party (or Know-Nothings), which swept elections in Massachusetts in the mid-1850s and ran a national presidential candidate in 1856. U.S. nativists linked anti-republican fears with anti-immigrant prejudices. Religion, politics, and ethnicity came together in popular experience.

Antebellum Catholics and Jews

U.S. Catholics countered this prejudice with their own reform efforts. Local laity and clergy bonded to educate Catholic youth, spearheading an ambitious parochial school movement at mid century. Religious women were a cornerstone of the effort, claiming a prominence in practice that did not match their official status. U.S. Catholics were often indifferent to evangelical reforms, seeing suffering as part of the human condition. But in contrast to evangelicals' abstract

millennial plans, they built orphanages and asylums and established lay confraternities devoted to aiding the poor within their communities.

The native-born Anglo Catholic elite, who stressed the rationality of the church, often achieved prominent places in U.S. society. They even gained notable converts, from Elizabeth Ann Seton to Orestes Brownson. But waves of Catholic immigrants from German states and Ireland, starting in the 1820s and exploding in the decades thereafter, overwhelmed this native Catholicism. Institutionally, the Catholic Church in the United States increasingly limited lay influence and embraced episcopal and papal forms of governance. Popular Catholicism paradoxically embraced hierarchy in the church.

The popular religious practice of immigrant Catholics cultivated a piety centered in individual experience. Whether Irish or German, ideally Catholics heard the Mass each Sunday and on feast days, and took Communion and confessed their sins at least once a year. The sacraments of baptism and confirmation marked important stages in the raising of youth and in the passage of time for families, and the catechism explained the significance of these events. Yet many immigrants imperfectly realized this ideal. Often coming from places where religious practice was dormant, many immigrants remained ignorant of church teachings or only selectively embraced the easiest requirements to maintain their faith.

Catholic leadership organized parishes ethnically, which strengthened immigrant ethnic identity but strained church authority. Irish Catholics often supported the church hierarchy, partly because the Irish dominated higher positions. But Irish parishioners celebrated wakes, ignoring priests who stressed that funerals be held in the church. Irish clergy who supported the temperance movement found mixed support among Irish laity and indifference among their German congregants, who generally rejected temperance entirely. Many German and Irish Catholics remained on the margins of the church, accepting nominal Catholicism in the community but spurning the larger church that nurtured it.

In contrast to Catholics, the anglicized Jewish community faced no large influx of immigrants until shortly before the Civil War. Consequently, popular Judaism in the United States tended to embrace Enlightenment rationality and republican politics. When the Charleston congregation Beth Elohim attempted to replace its democratic constitution with a European model of control by elders in 1820, elite Charleston Jews balked, forming the first branch of Reform Judaism in the United States. Promoting a religion based on

rationality, this movement explicitly drew parallels with the American Revolution, calling for Jews to free themselves from bigotry and despotism of the past and to purify religion to find its true essence. In the following decades most U.S. Jews moved in this rational direction, which Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise codified beginning in the 1840s. Most Jewish immigrants before 1860 came from the German states, acculturated to U.S. Judaism, and embraced this rationalist faith. By the time of the Civil War most U.S. Jewish congregations appeared like elite Protestant congregations, with robed preachers, mixed-sex seating, and organs, choirs, and hymnals. The content of their worship was considerably more rational than that of most of their Christian neighbors, however. Not until the 1880s, with the arrival of eastern European Jews, did mysticism and strict ritual reenter U.S. Jewish practice.

Joseph Smith and Popular Mormonism

Many native-born Americans accepted neither revival piety nor the immigrants' faith. New religious movements emerged from the shadows of evangelicalism to promote populist religions different in tone and emphasis. Among the most successful was Joseph Smith, Jr., whose Church of Christ (established in Palmyra, New York, in 1830) grew to become the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, one of the largest religious bodies in the United States.

Smith's authority originally rested in popular religious assumptions. Claiming to have discovered golden plates of ancient origin, Smith used magical seerstones to translate them, resulting in the *Book of Mormon*. This Bible for the New World argued that Native Americans were part of a larger migration of Old World civilizations that had included among them the Lost Tribe of Israel. Smith's reliance on folk magic touched a cultural nerve among his followers. Indian burial mounds and artifacts took on sacred meaning, thanks to the *Book of Mormon*, and coincided with folk beliefs in the power of the natural landscape and the spirits that often inhabited it.

Smith's discovery of ancient wisdom paralleled the efforts of other religious movements. Indeed, some scholars have noted parallels between early Mormon ritual and Masonic ceremonies. But Smith had little interest in decentralized mysticism, instead preferring centralized control that modeled some evangelical revivalist denominations. Smith's church organized hierarchically, with all men ordained to the priesthood, but each subservient to a leader above them. A dizzying variety of church offices formed and re-formed in the group's

early years. At the top, the church prophet or president, Smith himself, was the final arbiter of heavenly voices. As a record of continual revelations sent from God to Joseph Smith, the *Doctrine and Covenants* became sacred scripture as important as the *Book of Mormon*. With Mormons, as with evangelicals, popular religion could be authoritative religion.

Antebellum Metaphysical Religion

Smith's religion borrowed from the colonial heritage of metaphysical religion. Metaphysical religions often claimed an ancient heritage, through Egyptian and Greek mystical writings, that rivaled the Protestant reliance on biblical texts. Metaphysicians sought to align the macrocosm of the universe with the microcosm of the individual. By rediscovering this ancient knowledge, practitioners could achieve harmony between the two worlds and bring healing to the individual. Although gaining few followers in the eighteenth century, Emanuel Swedenborg's teachings influenced numerous popular religious groups in the nineteenth century. His belief in the correspondence between the mineral, vegetable, animal, spiritual, and celestial orders of being in nature suggested that humans could access the powers of God. This doctrine of correspondences formed the cornerstone of many metaphysical undertakings. And Swedenborg's specific teachings on the possibility of communicating with the dead or on the delights of sex in the heavenly realms prefigured other popular religious movements in the century to come.

These metaphysical movements included attempts at physical healing, such as mesmerism or homeopathy, which used ideas of correspondence to tap spiritual forces. More philosophical and abstract, Ralph Waldo Emerson formulated a metaphysical philosophy in transcendentalism that attracted a cadre of poets, writers, and numerous interested listeners. Other metaphysically inclined followers embraced the prospect of utopian communal living at the Brook Farm or the Oneida Community.

Spiritualism also gained a following in the 1850s in the United States. Claiming scientific communication with the souls of the dead, Spiritualists often attracted the ire of Protestant ministers, but insisted that they offered a service that was compatible with, and even fulfilled, Christianity's basic tenets. Women constituted a majority of Spiritualist rappers, mediums who made contact with the deceased.

Elite Accommodation

Elite religious groups and clergy adapted to the antebellum explosion in popular religious preference. Elite churches in

general had to be mindful of presentation to persuade their adherents to stay. Some, such as the Episcopal Church, differentiated themselves with High Church forms and rituals. Episcopalians and other Protestant churches that adopted stained glass windows, Gothic arches, and robed choirs presented drama no less than did a Methodist revivalist, but to a different audience. In so doing they popularized religion for a different segment of society. Other elite groups, now marginalized, modified their theologies to more closely resemble popular teachings. Calvinist Presbyterians embraced revivalism's common sense theology to different ends. Some formally rationalized the tenets of Calvinism, sowing the seeds of modern fundamentalism. Others accepted a modified Arminian model of conversion, keeping Calvinist roots by insisting on universal moral laws and behavioral standards.

The Civil War reflected both the decentralization and passion of popular religion in the early United States. Soldiers, citizens, and ministers on both sides invoked God's favor. Freed blacks saw in Abraham Lincoln a new Moses. Julia Ward Howe sacralized civil religion by combining Christian and political themes in her "Battle Hymn of the Republic," a religion that Abraham Lincoln increasingly used in his later speeches. Civil War soldiers were intensely religious, as revivals broke out in Northern and Southern camps. Civil War Americans employed a variety of theologies and offered differing rationales for their beliefs. They paralleled the experience of many Americans in the previous two centuries, when popular religion increased and influenced the culture as a whole.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Death and Burial Practices; Deism; Devotionalism; Enlightenment; Establishment, Religious; Evangelicals; Nineteenth Century; Folklore; Food and Diet; Frontier and Borderlands; Great Awakening(s); Invisible Institution; Latino/a Religious Practice; Latter-day Saints; Literature: Early Republic and the "American Renaissance"; Lived Religion; Music: Hymnody; Pluralism; Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Sport(s); Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts from the Revolution to the Civil War.*

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Popular Religion and Popular Culture: From the Civil War to the Mid-Twentieth Century

Popular culture of the post-Civil War era often represented what clergy and laity found most sinful about modern industrial life. But the faithful of many traditions also embraced its techniques and themes to convey beliefs and maintain communities. For some, this involved efforts to lure the wayward away from dangers posed by popular culture, but for others, modern communication forms helped strengthen the bonds of the remaining faithful.

Prominent U.S. Revivalists and Popular Culture

Protestant revivalism represented only one vein of religious engagement with popular culture, but aptly illustrates wider themes and genres this engagement involved. Four of the era's best-known revivalists can help to introduce more general connections between religion and popular culture from the Civil War to World War II.

Like that of his father Lyman Beecher and of revivalist Charles Grandison Finney, Lyman Beecher's fitful ally, the preaching of Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887) offered an emotionally engaging style that invited individual worshippers to commit themselves to God, righteousness, and human perfectability through dedication both to Christian faith and to worldly self-improvements. The program of an emerging middle-class that challenged New England's Unitarian elite earlier in the century, these ideals had become the habits of

an institutionalized bourgeoisie that focused on sobriety, sexual morality, and domesticity by the time of Henry Ward Beecher's career during and after the Civil War. Beecher carried them to wide audiences through lyceum lectures that conveyed his intuitive approach to preaching. He preached a morality of the heart in accessible, emotionally resonant terms familiar to increasingly numerous readers of sentimental fiction. Beecher's manipulation of personal charisma made him vulnerable to the fascination with personal scandal that increasingly linked popular morality to popular culture. When his own intensely personal style led to accusations of adultery with one of his converts, Elizabeth Tilton, Beecher weathered the crisis by virtue of the popularity he had achieved, ironically, through this personal approach. Critics assailed this style as a "religion of Gush" that eviscerated God-fearing piety with sentimentality.

From the 1860s to 1890s, former shoe-salesman Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899) pioneered a modern revivalism characterized by innovative links to a variety of popular cultural forms. Theologically, he took revivalism toward twentieth-century fundamentalism through his premillennialist convictions and belief in biblical infallibility. He leavened these stern views with a sentimental kindness less focused on his own personality, as Beecher's had been, than on the love of God that he regarded as the most crucial experience of conversion. His musical partner in evangelism, Ira Sankey (1840–1908), popularized these messages in engaging hymns focusing on Christ's sacrificial love for sinners ("The Ninety and the Nine"), its kinship to a mother's persistent love for a straying child ("Where Is My Boy Tonight"), and occasionally more martial motifs predicting Christ's triumph. The package as a whole was successfully marketed by virtue of businesslike associations with leading titans of commerce such as John Wanamaker and Cyrus McCormick, and through showman-like devices advertising Moody's urban mass revivals, including "tickets" resembling those used at circus or theater performances and newspaper publicity carefully engineered by Moody's increasingly vast organization. Through such devices Moody drew mass audiences in many urban venues and, perhaps more lastingly, established para-church institutions such as his Bible institute and summer conferences that provided models for the more separatist fundamentalist evangelicalism to come.

In the early twentieth century, Billy Sunday (1862–1935) reinvigorated Beecher-like charisma, but in a vernacular that mixed respectable piety with more robust content once considered "lowbrow." A former baseball player, Sunday sported

a vigorous masculine style forged in the sports arena. This background both rendered sports more acceptable to revival-minded audiences and appealed to Protestants concerned that their religious observances were overly “feminized.” His packed performances focused on the dangers of drink and sexual debauchery, but did so through urban slang and gusto far removed from Moody’s kind dignity or Beecher’s ego-centric sentimentalism. Though Sunday borrowed sermon narratives from some of the same popular melodramatic scripts earlier revivalists used, he mixed them with dramatics associated with the questionable venues he warned against. As one follower put it: “His ethics may not suit some prudes / But, in his preaching, ‘Bill’ includes / The stuff that reaches plebes and dudes” (Bendroth, 2004, 262).

In addition to the “dudes,” Sunday’s evangelism fascinated female audiences. His “women only meetings” warned against popular cultural perils to feminine virtue such as scanty clothing and dancing. But like the popular cultural sphere from which he borrowed, his cross-gender appeal only superficially held to the moral “refinement” he exhorted women to uphold. It also attested to the growing popularity of a coarser vernacular once deemed the province of men but increasingly considered acceptable for women in public. Sunday borrowed liberally from this sphere in order, ultimately, to gain an audience for hellfire warnings against its excesses, paving the way for the more personable mass marketing of revivalism represented in the work of Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944).

Schooled by her Salvation Army–connected mother in street-corner evangelical theatricality, McPherson went on to embrace flamboyantly many of the technologies that became central to efforts to sustain U.S. evangelicalism amid what many of its followers found an unfriendly mid-century social context. Converted to Pentecostalism in the early twentieth century, McPherson used stagey sermons and radio broadcasts to maintain Pentecostalism’s ecumenical Holiness traditions in an age of increasingly separatist fundamentalist institutions. At her Angelus Temple in Los Angeles, California, the center of a wider Church of the Four-Square Gospel, McPherson used stagey props—such as a giant gorilla signifying the Darwinian teachings she fought against—to dramatize conservative Christianity to what she hoped would be a multid denominational audience. Such antics illuminated the appeal of “modern” media among conservative Protestants and among other seemingly “anti-modernist” movements, such as the Ku Klux Klan, which maintained an uneasy affiliation with her church. McPherson’s choice of Los Angeles as

an evangelical home because of its growing tourist appeal, along with her savvy ownership of one of the first religious radio stations (KFSG) provided models of the institution-building that would eventually produce far-flung networks of belief. But especially in the wake of her 1926 alleged kidnapping and abduction, which many believed covered up a clandestine tryst, McPherson was also troubled with scandals that were even more salaciously broadcast than Beecher’s excesses had been.

Basing their charismatic success on the power of the received Word, but harnessing that power to changing popular genres and modes of dissemination, Beecher, Moody, Sunday, and McPherson helped outline an arc of wider changes in the ways a variety of religious traditions in the United States engaged with popular culture.

Novels, Newspapers, and Religion

Beecher’s religion of the heart reflected a crucial symbiosis between print culture and religion. Though nineteenth-century Protestant clergy inveighed against worldly fantasies encouraged by novel reading, their era’s growing flood of sentimental fiction complicated this advice. Plying narrative techniques attractive to women who not only accepted but actively constructed their domestic duties as Christian moral teachers, sentimental writers both augmented the authority of their pastors and competed with it. Some critics of their work complain that it paved the way for neatly packaged sentiments that watered down more complex religious indictments of U.S. commerce. Like other media that provided new directions for religious messages, however, the sentimental novel provided access for new audiences and authors. Indeed, though the authors of sentimental fiction were overwhelmingly white, African American women, such as Amelia E. Johnson (1858–1922), the wife of the prominent Baptist minister Rev. Harvey Johnson, also authored novels celebrating feminine religious agency. Unlike white sentimental fictions, which tended to depict the home as a refuge from interracial public spaces, Amelia Johnson’s novels depicted scenes more akin to the burgeoning genre of urban realism and featured characters whose faith helped them weather the difficulties posed by harsh domestic employers. In an era of growing activism among African American women in churches, her narratives reflected an emerging taste for Christian practice outside the home and church among her female protagonists.

The popular cultural model of the True Woman, which focused Christian feminine identity on home and piety, was

not reserved for Protestant writers. By the mid- to late-nineteenth century, U.S. Catholics had their own growing ranks of “scribbling women” who devised an alternate vision of the ideal. Often serialized in *Ave Maria*, a magazine that offered a Catholic alternative to secular or Protestant family periodicals from 1865 to 1970, these Catholic women’s novels of the late-nineteenth century focused primarily on ways that Catholic women could create a distinctive Catholic True Womanhood based on domestic piety that glorified the church, and, occasionally, the activities of women religious or even professional women who found ways to enact humility, piety, and purity in the world. Though such novels occasionally featured working-class characters, particularly as domestic servants, they did not generally feature the concerns of working-class women. Nor did they address the concerns of an increasingly ethnically divided church but, rather, focused on the delineation of a peculiarly Catholic feminine piety counterpoised to Protestant models. Francis J. Finn, S.J. (1859–1928), a Jesuit educator convinced that young people needed attractive alternatives to pulp literature emphasizing romance, fantasy, and crime, developed a series of tales about Catholic boarding school life that emphasized Catholic values and their compatibility with U.S. identity.

Literature intended for Jews in the United States also expressed complicated relations between religion, identity, and popular culture. Both earlier German-Jewish immigrants and the eastern European Jews who arrived at the beginning of the twentieth century were familiar with the sensationalist “mysteries of the city” literature pioneered in France by Eugene Sue (1804–1857) but soon copied and translated by cheap, installment presses throughout Europe and North America. Yiddish writers inspired by the Jewish Enlightenment sought to use this genre’s tales of secrets, crimes, and romance to popularize ideals of rationalism and education but, according to critics, only furthered readers’ addiction to sensation and fantasy. The quarrel accompanied Yiddish writers to the United States, where they fell afoul of both traditionalist rabbis, who joined many Protestant and Catholic clerics in branding popular literature immoral, and secular, radical intelligentsia, who tried to provoke the masses to revolution using realist literary styles. However, the Yiddish press, the main venue for popular novels by the early twentieth century, also combined values of Jewish faith, Yiddish popular culture, and Jewish radicalism in an uneasy mix, most famously in *Die Forverts* (*The Jewish Daily Forward*). Its editor Abraham Cahan (1860–1951) was a

politically radical secularist who embraced realist literature in criticism and his novels, such as *The Rise of David Levinsky*, a work acclaimed by the “dean” of American realism, William Dean Howells. But for the purposes of selling newspapers popularizing his views, Cahan published serialized Yiddish stories. Combining romance with lessons in assimilation, these novels could stray beyond his own favorite acculturating, secularizing themes, as when his paper published Sholem Asch’s (1880–1957) historical *Af kiddish HaShem* (*The Sanctification of God’s Name*), which addressed issues of nationalism and spiritual leadership.

If Cahan and his newspaper staff found a course between orthodox religion and popular culture that led their readers in the direction of acculturation, splintering Protestant groups who looked to the Zionist ambitions of Asch and others as part of a new Christian dispensation produced writers who used the popular novel instead to protect their faithful from the dangers of the profane world. Such protection was the focus of several fundamentalist writers aiming at youthful audiences whom they tried to protect in the 1920s from the multiple dangers of popular entertainment, liberal theology, and evolutionary science. Crafting narratives that drew on popular literary genres posing manly heroes against the temptations and dangers of the city, fundamentalist novelists such as Elizabeth Knauss, Caroline Mason, and, most famously, Grace Livingston Hill (1865–1947) cast such temptations as the road to spiritual rootlessness and featured romances that centered more on the shared trials of loyalty to fundamentalist beliefs than on the attractions of the flesh or other fleeting worldly pleasures.

Moody’s successful mobilization of newspaper publicity represented a fresh direction in Protestant approaches to the daily and periodical press, but was only one direction that such innovation went. Often considering themselves in competition with newspapers, especially with the large Sunday editions that seemed to distract from churchgoing, Protestant ministers and writers divided over whether to try to use this resource to their own benefit or compete with alternate publications. As Moody discovered, papers eager for news of a crowd-drawing sensation helped build those crowds but also tended to focus more on the personalities of pastors than on the work of Christ. This dilemma had diverse variations. Socialist preacher Alexander Irvine (1863–1941) discovered in his pastorates and missions throughout the United States that the daily press won him wider congregations but also controversial notoriety that cost him jobs with the more politically conventional church bodies. In the 1920s Irvine

found a brief opportunity to turn the popular press to his own purposes when William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* published his column featuring autobiographical anecdotes, "Psalms of the Times," but his own effort to use this success to enter broader markets through a contract with the Vanderbilt family newspapers led instead to his abandonment by all the tabloids. He was not ready to embrace the more explicit marriage of triumphant Christianity and commercial advertising represented in adman Bruce Barton's famous 1926 book *The Man Nobody Knows*, depicting Christ as an expert publicist.

Beyond the commercial daily press, a number of immigrant, working-class, and religious papers provided alternate venues for popular religious expression. In the Yiddish press, despite its generally radical and assimilationist bent, Jewish religion provided an important idiom for communication with recent immigrants. For example, *Di Arbiter Tsaytung* ("The Daily Worker"), a socialist weekly Cahan edited in the 1890s, regularly featured a column under Cahan's pen name "Proletarishker magedi" (proletarian preacher) that took the Torah as a starting point for folksy socialist parables. Fellow *Forverts* writer Leon Gotlib also recommended respect for traditional Jewish parents in his "Bindl Brief" (A Bundle of Letters), which solicited and answered letters from second-generation immigrants negotiating between U.S. popular culture and parental culture. Though mid-nineteenth century Irish American newspapers had championed their readers' Catholic faith more unambiguously, by the 1870s this too was complicated: In the widely read *Irish World*, editor Patrick Ford (1835–1913) fought anti-Catholic bigotry but also castigated the Catholic church for economic elitism. In the broader union and radical press aimed at both immigrant and U.S.-born workers, including papers aimed at locals of the Knights of Labor or socialist papers such as *The Appeal to Reason*, Christianity was regularly read as a message of economic social justice, even for audiences who later connected with an increasingly conservative and unworldly fundamentalism.

Performances and Movies, Sacred and Profane

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, popular religion engaged various forms of performance, whether musical, theatrical, or on screen. Though sometimes regarded as anathema to the sacred, performance was also intrinsic to religious experience, especially among groups whose language skills rendered the spoken, sung, or pictured Word more accessible than was the written. Hymnody, ritual,

and imagery tended to render hazy the lines between entertainment and worship that religious censors wanted to draw sharply.

As the popular reception of Sankey's hymns indicated during Moody's revivals, gospel hymns rendered the line between revival and recreation indistinct for many participants. Even fitfully observant Catholics such as Michael Campbell, a New Haven, Connecticut, factory worker, might be drawn to the revival tent's sentimental songs as he sampled local leisure opportunities. As revivalism turned to radio and a more defensive stance toward popular culture, evangelistic hymnody turned somewhat more martial in the early twentieth century, but partook no less of popular culture, drawing on both Christian and wartime themes to refresh religion.

As Robert Orsi has demonstrated regarding the public rituals celebrating the Madonna of Mount Carmel in Harlem, rituals surrounding locally meaningful saints provided powerful community meanings for new Italian immigrants of the late-nineteenth century. Disdained as an inferior by dominant white Protestants as well as by the dominant Irish American Catholic hierarchy, these immigrants invested local saints with the values and loyalties that gave their own lives dignity. These rituals also became the vehicles for new lines of demarcation between Italian Americans and other Catholic immigrants, such as Puerto Ricans, from whom they, in turn, wished to distinguish themselves.

A broad anti-Catholicism also limited U.S. stage productions of the Passion of Christ, a story famously enacted in other countries. Theatrical managers and Catholic parish groups tried unsuccessfully to dramatize this story for late-nineteenth-century U.S. audiences, only to be rebuffed by Protestant elites who objected to the dramatic depiction of Christ as both too Catholic and too sacrilegious, as well as by Jewish leaders concerned that the play would encourage anti-Semitism. But screen presentations of famous foreign dramatizations of the story, such as the Passion Play at Oberammergau, managed to combine the "educational" tone associated with stereopticon travel subjects and the distancing effects of photography. By the 1890s a cinematic version of this spectacle, filmed in the German town of Horitz, was successfully exhibited in the United States, accompanied by a lecturer who vouchsafed its educational credentials. A few years later the Eden Musee, a combination wax museum and popular theater, capitalized on this victory with a film of a formerly banned theatrical version of the play. It was eventually screened in respectable vaudeville houses and endorsed by ministers and the press.

The Passion Play was an entering wedge for many film aficionados, clergy, and audiences eager to mix film and faith. Some moving picture theater impresarios objected to the alacrity with which “high class” moving pictures such as those screened by Lyman Howe (a traveling film exhibiter who showed films of travel subjects and newsworthy events to middle-class audiences at the beginning of the twentieth century) were adopted by church audiences in buildings that did not have to follow the same codes as their theaters did. But others in the industry were eager to use the connection to improve cinema and spirituality. Many of these, such as Connecticut Congregationalist ministers Herbert Jump of New Britain and Alexander Irvine of New Haven, saw a role for slides and films within the church as a bridge to popular working-class audiences whose immigrant languages and familiarity with popular culture rendered the techniques of modern popular culture essential to any popular religious mission. Tellingly, both were rather rapidly dismissed by the staid, middle-class New England congregations that had hired them, only to find a broader range for their popular ministries in California. Irvine went on to make some of his own experiences as a missionary on New York’s bowery into religious films in the 1920s, carrying on a vision of the sanctity of working-class life that he shared with many labor-oriented filmmakers of the time.

Such experiments paved the way for a growing number of Hollywood costume dramas on biblical subjects in the 1920s, though many clergy and faithful continued to see these more salacious representations of biblical figures in some of the same censorious perspectives that gave rise to the Motion Picture Production Code that guided the industry’s self-censorship from the 1930s to the 1960s. But even these famous examples of the power of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish ideas of “decency” over the freedom of popular culture derived as much from an appreciation of the cinema’s religious possibilities as from a rejection of its dangers. Indeed, Joseph I. Breen (c. 1890–1965), the head of the Production Code from the late 1930s until 1954, loved movies—so much so that he helped engineer 20th Century Fox’s filming of the 1926 Eucharistic Congress in Chicago, an event that U.S. Catholics hoped would demonstrate their legitimate place in U.S. and Catholic culture.

Radio, Religion, and Modernity

As soon as it became available in the 1920s, radio recommended itself as a mode of preaching and evangelism congenial to a number of religious communities. Among Protestants,

religious broadcasting expressed broader shifts. McPherson was just one of the many conservative evangelists to take her message to the air in this decade. This trend was initiated by Daniel Paul Rader (1878?–1938), who began his career as an evangelist with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, became pastor of the Moody Memorial Church in Chicago from 1914 to 1921, and founded the huge, popular Chicago Gospel Tabernacle. Invited by the mayor to air his folksy yet forceful preaching on Chicago’s municipal station in 1922, Rader and his radio audiences warmed quickly to each other. In 1925 he purchased the entire vacant block of Sunday time on Chicago station WHT and filled it with sermons, sacred music, mission news, and special features for children, teenagers, and single working women, among other groups. Eventually Rader bought Sunday time on a CBS-network affiliated station, WBBM, which expanded his geographic reach by connecting his message to CBS affiliates throughout the country. Many other fundamentalist preachers followed this model throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Raising money from listeners to buy broadcast time, radio evangelists (supplemented by institutions such as the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, or McPherson’s church, which owned its own stations) made the airwaves a crucial meeting place where fundamentalists could regroup at a time when mainline Protestants largely viewed radio as a troublesome competitor.

Most of these “old-time religion” shows used the same financing scheme employed by Father Charles Coughlin (1891–1979), the famous “radio priest” of Detroit. From his headquarters in the inauspicious suburb of Royal Oak, Michigan, a working-class stronghold of the KKK, Coughlin initiated a Catholic radio ministry in the mid-1920s that went national over CBS in 1930. Drawing on *Reseruationum*, the 1891 papal encyclical on capital and labor, Coughlin spoke frequently on the plight of exploited workers and initially supported President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal as “Christ’s Deal.” However, after 1934 Coughlin turned against the New Deal, and his broadcasts began to feature anti-Semitic attacks on a sinister financial elite, eventually turning to outright attacks on Jews and sympathy for Hitler. Embarrassed CBS stations dropped his show, new communications restrictions combined with new codes adopted by the National Association of Broadcasters to force him off the air, and eventually the Catholic hierarchy restricted him to parish preaching. His example of mixing a populist style with controversial political perspectives was seen as an object lesson for other successful religious broadcasters, such as the widely heard Rev. Walter Maier

(1893–1950) of the *Lutheran Hour*, to stick to religion and stay out of politics.

By the late 1930s new policies on religious airtime shifted the cultural controversies that had often divided U.S. Christians on questions of radio and religion—and popular culture more generally. New regulations limited paid programming and restricted religious broadcasting to predictable spokespersons. These regulations were motivated by Coughlin's excesses along with the disgruntlement of religious liberals who had long benefited from gratis airtime awarded to mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish religious federations but had not enjoyed the audiences of a Rader, Coughlin, or Maier. By this point, however, more controversial religious programs produced by revivalists had created an indispensable market, and local stations continued to sell them time, allowing them to syndicate ad hoc national networks, or use the new Mutual Broadcasting System. By these means, the weekly *Old-Fashioned Revival Hour* put out by Charles E. Fuller (1887–1968) became the most popular religious radio program in the country, broadcast to 456 stations coast to coast and even more around the globe by the early 1940s. Through this success Fuller and others provided a springboard to the neo-evangelical movement of the postwar era, which redrew the politics of religious popular culture.

For seventy-five years before this watershed, various forms of popular culture had offered modes of communication to and engagement with important audiences within and outside the institutions that diverse religious traditions had built in the United States. Though many popular cultural forms featured content or venues inimical to the morals upheld in religious teachings, they also provided methods of exhortation and representation that lent themselves well to a variety of religious projects, from saving souls to harmonizing family relations among traditional immigrant parents and their less pious children, to maintaining the courage of those faithful to beliefs that felt at odds with “modern” civilization and teachings. Thus, although some voices within popular culture might ridicule religious leaders and their followers as pious prudes out of touch with up-to-date cultural fashions, many religious spokespeople found the methods of popular print, theater, and screen congenial to their purposes, and publishers, filmmakers, and broadcasters found religious tradition and spectacle important means of appealing to their audiences. As broadcast media rose to dominance among the vehicles for distribution of popular cultural fare, their growing audiences themselves became the battleground of

competing religious cultures, paving the way for religion to shape the culture wars of the later twentieth century.

See also *Camp Meetings*; *Celebrity Culture*; *Cult of Domesticity*; *Film*; *History of Religions*, *Approaches*; *Internet*; *Judaism: Jewish Culture*; *Latino American Religion: Struggles for Justice*; *Literature: From the Civil War to World War II*; *Lived Religion*; *Material Culture*, *Approaches*; *Pentecostals* entries; *Pluralism*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Preaching*; *Radio*; *Religious Press*; *Revivalism* entries; *Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact*; *Spirituality*; *Sport(s)*; *Television*; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Popular Religion and Popular Culture: Since the Mid-Twentieth Century

Popular religion and popular culture in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries can be understood by the way in which individuals and groups belonging to the mainstream religion engage their faith. Expressions of popular religion can often be at considerable variance from what is officially supposed to be deemed as sacred. In this respect, popular religion absorbs many attributes of human experience that might be looked down on by purveyors of traditional religion. Among various aspects of U.S. life, contemporary popular religion can be best identified through Hollywood films, pop music, popular literature, comic books, and the Internet.

Popular Religion and Hollywood Films

The evolution of Hollywood films involving religious themes has been rooted largely in the biblical epic. As a popular genre during the 1950s and 1960s, key examples of these epic religious films include *The Robe* (1953), *The Ten Commandments* (1956), *Ben-Hur* (1959), *King of Kings* (1961),

and *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (1965). These films usually had huge cinematic scale, massive production budgets, and box-office celebrities such as Richard Burton, Jean Simmons, Max Von Sydow, Charlton Heston, Deborah Kerr, and Yul Brynner.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, there were numerous horror films with religious themes, most notably *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), *The Exorcist* (1973), and *The Omen* (1976). Coinciding with mounting anxieties in the U.S. about women's reproductive rights connected to debates about birth control pills and abortion rights, the notion that these movies literally demonized the entire concept of children and childbirth had a notable albeit subliminal impact on the consciousness of U.S. moviegoers. In *Rosemary's Baby*, a young, innocent Manhattan housewife is deceived by a coven of witches into giving birth to a child who is actually the son of Satan. The *Exorcist* was a horror film that dealt with a young girl's demonic possession and her wealthy mother's desperate attempts to rescue her daughter through an exorcism by two Catholic priests. Serving as the pinnacle of the "demon child" movies of the era, *The Omen* is the story of a wealthy diplomat's family unknowingly adopting a child who is actually the Antichrist foretold in the Book of Revelation. Representing an interesting blend of story elements from both *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist*, *The Omen* became the most commercially successful of them all, ultimately spawning several sequels as well as a remake in 2006. A great variety of Jesus movies have made their way to the silver screen. In 1961, MGM's release of *King of Kings* (a remake of Cecil B. DeMille's 1927 film of the same title) was the first attempt by a major film studio to produce a religious epic in which the story of Jesus' life and death was the focus. That movie was followed years later by other cinematic renditions of Jesus such as *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (1965), the musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1973), *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988), *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), and recently, *The Color of the Cross* (2006). As an illustration, Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* portrays the last days of Jesus Christ as he is tempted by Satan by glimpses of what life might have been like had Jesus not been crucified, including marrying and making love with Mary Magdalene. Based on Nikos Kazantzakis' 1960 novel of the same name, the movie's main point is that Jesus, although free from human sin, might have still been vulnerable to all manner of temptation that humans face, including doubt, fearful reluctance, lustful yearning, and regret. By confronting and ultimately conquering all of humanity's weaknesses, Jesus struggled to do God's will while

never surrendering to earthly temptations. Jesus finally rejects all temptations, and the film concludes with the Crucifixion. This film generated a considerable amount of controversy because of its subject matter.

Much like previous renditions of Jesus on film, the primary source material for Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (2004) is largely derived from the passion narratives found in three of the synoptic Gospels (relying most heavily on the Gospel of John). Despite the claims that the film was a pure distillation of the biblical account untainted by Hollywood, the filmmakers took some creative liberties of incorporating dialogue (spoken entirely either in Aramaic, Latin, or Hebrew, with English subtitles) and imagery taken from both the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. While painstakingly re-creating traditional representations of the Passion prevalent in Western visual art, the film recounts the last twelve hours in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, particularly the arrest, trial, torture, and Crucifixion of Jesus, in extremely graphic detail. Despite criticism regarding the extreme violence, historical inaccuracy, and perceived anti-Semitic references, the considerable success of the studio's marketing campaign among Catholics and evangelical Christians helped the film set numerous box-office records simultaneously. By 2010, having earned roughly \$400 million, *The Passion of the Christ*, as it was cowritten, coproduced and directed by Gibson, proved to be an immensely profitable though controversial creative venture.

Although many religious films since the 1950s were typically based on Christian stories, other films have been based in other religious traditions. For instance, *The Message (Mohammed: The Messenger of God)* (1976) was based on Islamic history and stirred great controversy upon its release. The film depicts the moment when the prophet Mohammed receives the Word from Allah, during the seventh century CE, in the Middle East still dominated by polytheism. After this fateful event, Mohammed begins sending his messengers to proclaim the basic teachings and tenets of Islam throughout the Middle East. The film's production was complicated because, according to the teachings of the Qur'an, no likenesses can be shown of the prophet Mohammed and his extended family, nor can the image and voice of God ever be depicted in any medium. To overcome this challenge, the lead role of Mohammed was an absent protagonist, and the character of Mohammed's uncle served as a replacement for Mohammed, and alternately uttered lines and listened off-screen to a voice the audience never heard, to avoid depicting images of either Allah or Mohammed.

Filmmakers Joel Coen and Ethan Coen have wrestled with issues of Jewish film representations. Two of the Coen brothers' films, *Barton Fink* (1991) and *The Big Lebowski* (1998), are noteworthy for their diverse abundance of overtly, albeit offbeat, Jewish characters. Yet the Coen brothers also have been accused of depicting anti-Jewish ethnic stereotypes, such as Bernie the Shmatte, a cravenly duplicitous hustler, in their Depression-era gangster film, *Miller's Crossing* (1990). However, their film *A Serious Man* (2009) is a provocative and poignant portrayal of Jewish American experience during the 1960s culled from their own childhood memories of growing up in St. Louis Park, a suburban Jewish community south of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Drawing heavily from the cultural tradition of Ashkenazic Judaism, the film centers on the Job-like professional and private plights of Larry Gopnik, a physics professor undergoing a crisis of faith. Struggling to make sense of his ruined life, Gopnik desperately seeks metaphysical advice and spiritual guidance from three rabbis to become a person of substance. Ultimately the film grapples with theological issues pertaining to human suffering in ways that strive to reconcile the spiritual and the absurd.

Popular Religion and Popular Music

Since the mid-twentieth century, the lives and recordings in the music industry of several inspired practitioners helped energize U.S. society by defining a new outlook where the sacred and the secular can coexist within the mainstream. For example, Aretha Franklin was born in Memphis, Tennessee, as one of five children of Rev. C. L. Franklin, a legendary Baptist minister and renowned recording artist, and Barbara Siggers Franklin, a gospel singer and church pianist. During Aretha Franklin's childhood, the home was regularly visited by many of her father's famous friends, including Clara Ward, Sam Cooke, and Mahalia Jackson. In the presence of these gospel music legends, Franklin's talents both as a self-taught piano prodigy and a singer with an extraordinary vocal range became apparent by the time she entered her teens. Franklin stated in her autobiography that her early gospel singing was patterned after the great gospel singer Albertina Walker. Although early motherhood nearly derailed Franklin's musical career, she eventually decided to return to singing as a pop musician rather than as a gospel artist. When she signed a contract with Atlantic Records and began working with rhythm and blues (R&B) producer Jerry Wexler, she began to incorporate a gospel element into her evolving musical sound. By the end of the 1960s,

Franklin's designation as the reigning "Queen of Soul" was established. Although most of her albums were best sellers during this era, *Amazing Grace* (1972) eventually sold more than two million copies in the United States and has been hailed as "the best-selling gospel album of all time." Marking a return to her gospel roots, the songs on *Amazing Grace* were recorded live at New Temple Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles, California, alongside her father and gospel legend and family friend Rev. James Cleveland, with background vocals by the Southern California Community Choir, in January 1972.

In the late 1970s, Bob Dylan became a born-again Christian and released two albums of Christian gospel music: *Slow Train Coming* (1979) and *Saved* (1980). When working on *Slow Train Coming* with Wexler, Dylan started to evangelize to Wexler during the recording. Wexler replied, "Bob, you're dealing with a sixty-two-year old Jewish atheist. Let's just make an album." The album won Dylan a Grammy Award as best male vocalist for the song "Gotta Serve Somebody." When touring from fall 1979 through spring 1980, Dylan did not play his older, secular works. Realizing that there was considerable backlash to his embrace of Christianity by some of his fans and fellow musicians, Dylan frequently delivered declarations of his faith from the stage, though in later years he proclaimed an amalgam of beliefs.

Another iconic figure in the realm of popular music who underwent religious conversion was the country music singer Johnny Cash. Rediscovering his Christian faith in the early 1970s, Cash recalled taking an "altar call" at Rev. Jimmy Rodgers Snow's Evangel Temple, a small church in Nashville, Tennessee, because, unlike many larger churches, Cash said that the pastor and congregation treated him like just a regular parishioner rather than as a celebrity. Cash's friendship with Christian minister Billy Graham led to the production of *The Gospel Road*, a film about the life of Jesus that Cash both cowrote and narrated. The decade saw his religious conviction deepening, and he made many evangelical appearances on Billy Graham's crusades around the world. In 1986, Cash published his only novel, *Man in White*, a book about Saul's conversion into the Apostle Paul. In 1990, Cash also recorded *Johnny Cash Reads the Complete New Testament*. From the 1990s until his death in 2003, Cash collaborated with hip-hop/hard rock producer Rick Rubin on a series of six albums entitled *American Recordings*. On these albums, Cash performed his original compositions and renditions of contemporary alongside traditional sacred music in a format that was now being packaged and presented to a whole new generation of music lovers.

Best known for his albums *Live at Stubbs* (2005) and *Youth* (2006), Matisyahu is a U.S. Hasidic Jewish musician specializing in dancehall reggae. Matisyahu was born Matthew Paul Miller on June 30, 1979, in West Chester, Pennsylvania. His family eventually relocated to White Plains, New York, where he was raised as a Reconstructionist Jew, and he attended Hebrew school at Bet Am Shalom, a synagogue located in White Plains. At age sixteen, Matisyahu participated in a semester-long immersion program at the Alexander Muss High School in Hod Hasharon, Israel, that allowed him deeper exploration of his Jewish heritage. He eventually adopted an Orthodox Jewish lifestyle in 2001. Shortly after his embrace of Hasidism, Matisyahu began studying the Torah at Hadar Hatorah, a yeshiva for returnees to Judaism. From 2001 until 2007, Matisyahu was affiliated with the Chabad-Lubavitch Hasidic community in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, New York, while also pursuing his musical career. His religious life did pose some challenges for him professionally. For instance, in accordance with strict Hasidic practices, he would not perform in concert on Friday nights in observance of the Jewish Sabbath. Having originally attributed his seemingly divergent musical sensibilities to his ardent love of such eclectic influences as Phish, Bob Marley and the Wailers, God Street Wine, and Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, Matisyahu expanded his musical palette beyond reggae, blending traditional Jewish themes with alternative rock, electronica, and hip-hop sounds.

A proliferation of musical genres represent a variety of religious backgrounds from Stryper (a Christian heavy metal band), to Creed (a Christian alternative/hard rock band), to the Kominas (a Punjabi *taqwacore*—Islamic hard-core punk rock—group), to A Tribe Called Quest (an African American hip-hop group predominantly composed of Sunni Muslim converts). In the 1980s, Stryper was a Christian heavy metal band from Orange County, California. The group derived its name *Stryper* from an allusion to the biblical image of the suffering servant described in Isaiah 53:5 of the Hebrew Bible. The band later explained the meaning of their name as an acronym for "Salvation Through Redemption, Yielding Peace, Encouragement, and Righteousness." During the latter half of the 1980s, Stryper enjoyed great mainstream success and the band briefly served as the vanguard for the mainstream popularization of Christian heavy metal music, even achieving a Grammy Award nomination. Stryper eventually broke up in 1992, which also marked the overall waning popularity of heavy metal as a musical genre.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Creed was a popular, multi-platinum selling U.S. alternative/post-grunge rock band from Tallahassee, Florida, often identified as a Christian rock band. Even though the band was never signed to a contemporary Christian music label, did not perform in Christian music venues, and never got any widespread regular play on Christian radio, their reputation among a more overtly religious fan base grew rapidly because several songs on Creed's first three albums echoed themes of Christian faith and spirituality. Many of the group's song titles—such as “Higher,” “My Sacrifice,” “What's This Life For,” “My Own Prison,” “With Arms Wide Open,” and “One Last Breath”—alluded to Christian theology although band members frequently refuted the Christian label.

Similar to the Christian rock movement, the Taqwacore movement is a recent development. The name of the Islamic punk music movement is based on a 2003 novel *The Taqwacore*, written by Michael Muhammad Knight, a white U.S. author who converted to Islam. Combining *Taqwa* (the Arabic term for piety) with the word “hard-core,” Knight created a phrase he used to describe a fictional music scene inhabited by a diverse array of Muslim youth whose lifestyles were devoted to a punk ethos and aesthetic. Eventually, Knight's book helped inspire an actual musical movement. As probably the best-known U.S. representatives of the Islamic punk music scene, the Kominas (which means “bastards” in Punjabi) are a pioneering Taqwacore punk band from the outskirts of Boston, Massachusetts. In their anthem, “Sharia Law in the USA,” the Muslim punk trio consisting of Basim Usmani, Shahjehan Khan, and Adam Briery demonstrate the members' ability to merge their Muslim heritage and their love of hard-core punk by reworking the first line of the classic song “Anarchy in the UK,” by the seminal punk band the Sex Pistols, to say: “I am an Islamist!/I am the Anti-Christ!” Another of the Kominas' most popular songs is entitled “Rumi Was a Homo,” a protest song about homophobia within the U.S. Muslim community. Written mainly by Usmani, the band's lyrics are clever, sometimes thought-provoking commentaries on racial profiling, foreign policy, and religious faith. The Kominas' critically acclaimed debut album, *Wild Nights in Guantanamo Bay*, was released in March 2008. As a fusion of punk, metal, and Bhangra folk music, the band uses the term “Bollywood Muslim punk” to describe its sound. The music and imagery typically draws from anticolonial movements, Moghul art, African American Islamic movements such as Moorish Science Temple and the Five Percenters (an offshoot of the Nation of Islam), as well

as Desi culture, Punjabi folklore, Sufi saints from Punjab, Hinduism, and Bollywood cinema.

Formed in the late 1980s, A Tribe Called Quest was an African American hip-hop group consisting of rapper/producer Q-Tip (Kamaal Ibn John Fareed, formerly Jonathan Davis), rapper Phife Dawg (Malik Taylor), and DJ/producer Ali Shaheed Muhammad that was influenced by Sunni Islam. They released five albums in ten years that merged their sophisticated musical tastes with street credibility in ways that allowed them to enjoy a recording career that was both critically acclaimed and commercially successful. By 1996, lead rapper Q-Tip underwent a deeply religious awakening and, upon spiritual guidance from his friend, Ali Shaheed Muhammad, soon converted to Islam. While on tour, Muhammad introduced Q-Tip to a young producer from Detroit named Jay Dee (also known as J Dilla). Immediately taking the newcomer under his wing, Q-Tip and the rest of Tribe agreed to form a production unit with Jay Dee. The group named its production company the Ummah (meaning “community,” “nation,” or “brotherhood” in Arabic) to acknowledge that many members of the outfit were devout Muslims. In addition to producing A Tribe Called Quest's final two studio albums, the Ummah also served as a music production collective that provided backing tracks for a wide array of R&B and hip-hop artists. Although the group officially disbanded in 1998 and Jay Dee died in 2006 of a blood disease, the band's innovative blend of hip-hop and jazz has left an imprint upon hip-hop music.

Popular Religion and Popular Literature

In 1995, Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins' novel *Left Behind: A Novel of the Earth's Last Days* launched a best-selling fictional series of eighteen Christian-themed thrillers. The core premise of the novel was a fictionalized narrative form of a specifically apocalyptic reading of the Bible, particularly the Book of Revelation. The novel received largely favorable reactions from the late Jerry Falwell and other leading figures in the evangelical Christian community, who generally approved of how the authors represented the millennial and apocalyptic themes within Christian theology in worldly language that was also commercially viable. The interpretation of Revelation, as presented in the *Left Behind* series, also encourages a largely individualistic approach to eschatology and salvation and was criticized by some for eschewing any responsibility for performing good deeds or evangelizing. Regardless of such criticism, the overall sales for *Left Behind* series has surpassed sixty-five million copies and has also

inspired several movies, graphic novels, CDs, a video game and a *Left Behind* series for teenagers.

Similarly, author Dan Brown's best-selling novels also include historical themes and Christianity as recurring motifs and, as a result, have generated controversy. Brown's first novel, *Angels & Demons* (2000), is a best-selling mystery-thriller novel focused on fictional Harvard University symbologist Robert Langdon's quest to uncover the mysteries of the Illuminati and to unravel a plot to destroy Vatican City by detonating antimatter. The book portrays an historical conflict between the Illuminati and the Roman Catholic Church as a contest between science and religion. Brown's subsequent novel, *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), also examines church history, conspiracy theories of secret societies, religious symbolism, and classic architecture. Combining the detective, thriller, and conspiracy fiction genres, *The Da Vinci Code* provoked popular interest in speculation concerning the historic roots of Christianity. Despite being flatly denounced by many Christian denominations as a dishonest attack on the Roman Catholic Church rife with historical and scientific inaccuracies, *The Da Vinci Code* is a worldwide best seller that has sold more than eighty million copies and has been translated into forty-four languages.

Popular Religion and Comic Books

There are numerous examples of popular religion being used in comic books and graphic novels. For instance, the DC Vertigo Comic book series *Preacher* chronicled the fictional exploits of Jesse Custer, a small town pastor in Annville, Texas, who is experiencing an extraordinary crisis of faith. After Genesis, a creature described as the supernatural spawn of the inexplicable coupling between an angel and a demon, accidentally takes possession of him, Custer becomes a hybrid human-divine being imbued with the combined forces of divine goodness and devilish evil. Within the overarching narrative of the series, Custer's power makes him a potential threat to the primacy of God. Tragically, this results in a disaster that turns Custer's church to rubble and kills his entire congregation. The comic book illustrates Custer's paranormal adventures as he treks across the United States in a quest to find God for himself, both figuratively and literally. Following a trend within U.S. comic books during the 1960s and 1970s akin to the "Death of God" theological movement, *Preacher* alludes to a God that has abandoned creation and thus has left humanity to its own devices for better or worse. During its publication from 1995 to 2000, *Preacher* was a controversial comic book series praised by some and

reviled by others for its dark and frequently violent humor, as well as for its unabashed treatment of religious and supernatural themes.

Since the 1970s, several characters have accentuated various dimensions of spiritual practices prevalent throughout the African diaspora. A particularly notable example of an African American supernatural superhero is Brother Voodoo, who appeared in a variety of comic books published by Marvel Comics during the 1970s. Returning to his native Port-au-Prince, Haiti, after more than a decade of education and practice as a psychologist in the United States, Jericho Drumm assumes the alter ego of Brother Voodoo. He possesses numerous superhuman and mystical powers, such as easily entering into a trance-like state in which his skin becomes impervious to burning and other forms of pain, as well as being able to control flame and lower life forms. The comic book creators attribute these powers to the character's mastery of mystical rituals derived from the *loa*, the spirit-gods of Haitian Vodou. Brother Voodoo was later followed by other figures in the Marvel pantheon of characters such as the female Captain Marvel, whose alter ego, Monica Rambeau, hailed from the Creole religiosity of contemporary New Orleans, or the character of Storm (aka Ororo Monroe) from the X-Men series, whose backstory harkens to being an East African hailed as a demi-goddess because of her mutant ability to control the weather. Although these are not the first or only comic book characters of African descent to be introduced, these creations were attempts to merge issues of race and religion in interesting ways.

Moving into a considerably different vein, the central figure in DC Vertigo Comics series *Hellblazer* is a character named John Constantine, who pursues a mysterious life as a streetwise detective and frequently crosses the supernatural boundaries between heaven and hell to confront various dangers of an occult nature in the ordinary world. As a crass hedonistic cynic who is fond of smoking cigarettes and profanity, while arguably working for the greater good of humanity, Constantine usually triumphs through guile, deceit, and misdirection. He typically makes more enemies while resolving a particular conflict than the number of opponents he originally intends to defeat. Even though depicted as a duplicitous individual, Constantine is shown to be a well-connected person who is supremely adept at making friends and has a wide array of otherworldly contacts and nefarious allies at his disposal. Consequently, the overarching narrative reveals Constantine to be a compassionate and occasionally heroic figure struggling to overcome the

influence of heaven and hell on an otherwise unsuspecting humanity. In other words, the protagonist of *Hellblazer* serves as a fictional incarnation of the humanist antihero, a trickster of sorts. As such, this book represents a trend that has been quite popular among mainstream comic book creators and fans alike, wherein the mortal characters such as Constantine are imbued with an agnostic spiritual worldview beyond a sense of moral ambiguity as they unapologetically grapple with seemingly insurmountable hazards both mundane and arcane. Although there is no dearth of evidence of popular religion at work in comic books and graphic novels, there is presently a shortage of academic research and discussion on the matter.

Popular Religion and the Internet

One of the most exceptional transformations in the emergence of popular religion in the latter half of the twentieth century was the burgeoning presence of religion appearing on the Internet. Since the mid-1990s numerous churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples have gained a firm foothold within cyberspace. Numerous Web sites such as Streaming Faith.com and Beliefnet.com connect innumerable Christian communities nationally and internationally via the Internet, with the increasing ability to connect with other religious groups in a virtual fashion. With the inception and widespread use of the Internet in the 1990s, online Christian resources tended to dominate religious themed content. This was particularly important given the initial presumption that most Internet users hailed from North America or Western Europe, regions deemed predominantly Christian. This assumed dominance has shifted because of the increasing level of Internet access and literacy by populations in the developing nations of the global South, most notably in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Even though it is unlikely that the world's religions will be fully and equally represented in cyberspace, the democratic impulse of the World Wide Web will cause the demographics to begin reflecting the religious diversity among a growing array of Internet users worldwide. Moreover, for those members of faith communities that are relatively small and geographically isolated from a traditional house of worship, the World Wide Web provides an alternate means of interaction and connection. By virtue of having Internet access, adherents of such faith traditions can receive updated information about their religion, obtain the latest spiritual resources, and communicate with other faithful believers. The variety of religious Web sites—such as Torah Net

(www.torah.net), Allaahuakbar Net (www.allaahuakbar.net), Gospel Communications Network (www.gospel.com), Gateways to Buddhism (www.dharmenet.org), and The Witches' Voice (www.witchvox.org)—are religiously oriented news and networking Web resources that serve as lively examples of popular religion.

See also *Celebrity Culture*; *Electronic Church*; *Internet*; *Literature: Contemporary*; *Lived Religion*; *Pluralism*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Radio*; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends*; *Television*; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Populism

Understanding the relationship of religion in America to Populism requires first understanding the two ways historians have used this term. The first use of the term, “Populism” in the uppercase, refers to the People's Party, the third-party movement that emerged at the state level in 1890, the national level in 1892, and last ran a presidential candidate in 1908. This uppercase Populism can refer specifically to the People's Party (or Populist Party) or to the precursory labor, third-party, or agricultural reform movements (especially the most important of these—the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union or Farmers' Alliance) that forged the political party itself. In the second case, “populism” (lowercase) refers to an attitude, outlook, or rhetorical strategy that as Michael Kazin describes in *The Populist Persuasion*, conveys the conviction that “certain ordinary Americans” were “more virtuous or, at least, more significant than” elite

intellectuals, “‘bureaucrats,’ ‘fat cats,’ and ‘Big Men’” (p. 1). While Kazin and others stress the importance of this outlook in the nineteenth century, the term “populism” is also used to describe similar political movements in the twentieth century, including McCarthyism, Prohibition, non-Marxist labor unionism, and the Religious Right. We will first examine the relationship of religion in America to Populism (uppercase) and then afterwards to populism (lowercase).

Populism has connected to religion in American in at least four ways: (1) Protestant evangelicalism provided a structural and intellectual framework for Populism’s rise, dissemination, and strength; (2) Populism often had a tenuous relationship to Roman Catholicism and Judaism, prompting some historians, notably Richard Hofstadter, to claim the movement was anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, or nativist; (3) Populism, especially in the West and Pacific Coast, was populated by a wide variety of nontraditional religious sectarians; and (4) in the aftermath of Populism, Protestantism, whether evangelical or more liberal, sustained pockets of socialism primarily in Oklahoma, Texas, California, and Illinois.

Rise and Fall of the People’s Party

The emergence of the People’s Party, first in Kansas in 1890 and then as a national party in 1892, marked the presumption among a number of reform groups that the Democratic and Republican Parties were deaf to the demands for economic and political reform that would benefit farmers and wage earners, together taken to be “the masses” or “the people.” These reform groups included the members of third parties such as the Greenback and Labor-Union Parties that had fought for currency reform and fair labor laws; labor unions—most importantly broad industrial unions such as the Knights of Labor and the United Mine Workers rather than trade unions; and more radical reformers ranging from the Single Taxers of Henry George to socialist-leaning groups such as Edward Bellamy’s Nationalist clubs. The most important impetus for Populism came, however, from farmers and specifically from the Farmers’ Alliance; for this reason, Populism remained an overwhelmingly rural movement.

The roots of the Farmers’ Alliance go back to attempts in Texas to form a secret society of farmers and ranchers that pushed for political and economic reform. By the mid-1880s, the Alliance spread across Texas, pushing antideflationary monetary reform (greenbacks and silver), antimonopolism, opposition to alien land ownership, labor reform, government control of transportation and communication, and opposition to protective tariffs and the federal banking

system. To push these specifically political reforms, the Alliance often worked with reform-minded members of the Democratic Party. In addition to these political aims, the Alliance also established local, state, and national marketing and supply cooperatives. By 1890, the Alliance spread throughout the Southeast, Plains, and Southwest, absorbing numerous smaller farmers’ organizations in the process and boasting a membership of more than two million. Although blacks had been excluded from membership in the Alliance since 1882, in 1886 African Americans established the Colored Farmers’ National Alliance and Co-operative Union that worked, often tenuously, with its white counterpart.

The primary social cause behind the Alliance’s rise was economic—farmers were suffering under crop lien in the South, mortgages in Kansas, and lack of control over markets. For its outlook, the movement drew on the Bible, classic economic liberalism, the producerism heralded by the Knights of Labor, and Jeffersonian equalitarian republicanism and agrarian idealism. Although the Alliance generally opposed federal intervention in the economy—believing that the political economy operated by divine or natural laws and was therefore best left untouched—it also believed that since a genuine republican government represented the people, government control of transportation and communication would wrest such enterprises from the grip of the “plutocrats” (a coalition of wealthy and corrupt government officials and robber barons) and place them back in the hands of the people. This meant that although Alliancefolk (and later the People’s Party) drew on traditional republican ideals of small government (fearing concentrations of power), free enterprise, and private property, they supported policies that had the effect of centralizing marketing and distribution structures and government intervention.

As it increasingly demanded national political reforms—the Alliance was an explicitly nonpartisan organization—by 1890 in the Midwest and 1892 in the South, Alliance influence in the two older parties faltered. In 1890, Kansas Alliance members, with other labor reformers, established a statewide People’s Party and won significant victories. In 1892 the national People’s Party emerged and ran James B. Weaver for president but met with little success except on state and local tickets, especially where it cooperated with one of the major parties. In 1894, the People’s Party, however, achieved solid state-level success, again, through cooperation or “fusion” with one of the other parties. Often in the South, in 1892 and through fusion agreements with the Republican Party, numerous blacks supported the People’s Party (where

they had not already been disfranchised). Although the vast majority of Populists supported white supremacist “reforms” such as segregation laws, they generally opposed restrictions on franchise (for practical or principled reasons) and sought African Americans’ votes.

In 1896, the national Democratic Party endorsed a number of Populist demands, including free silver, and nominated William Jennings Bryan, a Nebraskan who, though not a Populist, was a reformer in harmony with the People’s Party. The People’s Party then also nominated Bryan (with a different running mate), but Bryan lost to McKinley; and afterwards enthusiasm for the People’s Party waned as the economic forecast brightened, divisions within the party took their toll, and in the South a virulent Democratic counterattack of white supremacy and disfranchisement quashed the movement. In 1908, the party’s last year of existence, presidential candidate Tom Watson received only twenty-eight thousand votes.

Since as early as the 1890s, historians have attempted to understand what Populism meant. Progressive historians have cast the Populists as heroes of Jeffersonian democracy standing firm against the machinations of the robber barons and, at the same time, as proto-progressives in their push for increased government intervention. In the 1950s, Richard Hofstadter in *The Age of Reform* (1955) demonized the Populists as part of the “anti-intellectual” or “paranoid” style in American politics. For Hofstadter, Populists were worked up over their declining social status in a modernizing America and thus were anti-intellectual, backward-looking, localist reactionaries and nativists. Work on Populism since the 1970s has been influenced by Lawrence Goodwyn’s *Democratic Promise* (1976), which rendered Populism as a “movement culture” representing a cooperative outlook that opposed American individualism and the growing incorporation of late-nineteenth-century American capitalism. Most recently, Charles Postel has argued that all of these writers wrongly assume Populists were traditionalists longing for a long-past pastoral America. He argues to the contrary that Populists, too, were attempting to achieve a fair share of the fruits of modern, rationalized economic systems and progressive governmental intervention. Although certainly Populist policies pointed to the reforms of progressive presidents such as Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and even Franklin Roosevelt, it is significant that both Theodore Roosevelt and Wilson despised the Populists, indicating that, though Populists’ policies were progressive, their frame of mind—their worldview and ethos—was decidedly different from

progressives such as Wilson. To understand this worldview that led Populists to see themselves as “progressive,” “agitators,” and “reformers,” but at the same time beholden to traditional American political and economic views, we must look to Populism’s religious dynamics.

Populism and Protestant Evangelicalism

How, then, did religion connect to Populism? First, and especially in the South, Protestant evangelicalism provided a structural and intellectual framework for Populism and in doing so both legitimated the movement among more conservative farmers and energized the movement with prophetic, even millennial, certainty and enthusiasm. Although certainly not all Populists were evangelicals, as a central discourse of meaning in America, evangelicalism deeply influenced Populism’s ethos and worldview. Populists were therefore traditionalist in outlook—most were theologically orthodox (even if of a liberal slant—especially in the Midwest), most adhered to the creeds of republicanism and classical economic liberalism, but at the same time most saw themselves as standing against similar forces that threatened not only these ideals but America itself. As restorationists, they boldly fought for reform, but reform meant recovering time-honored truths from which society was moving.

Protestant evangelicalism, briefly, is that branch of Protestantism that emerged in the eighteenth century from the antecedents of English Puritanism and Continental Pietism. Like other low-church Protestants, evangelicals uphold the primacy of scripture and wholly embrace the priesthood of all believers while generally promoting a low-church ecclesiology. What sets evangelicals apart from other Protestants is their insistence on the necessity of a singular, experiential conversion experience—or being “born again.”

In America, evangelicalism came to the fore in a series of “awakenings” in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and it became the predominant form of Protestantism by the late nineteenth century. Along the way, it wholly embraced American political and economic ideals, particularly the verity of participatory democracy, the dangers of centralized authority (tyranny), the rule of law, and vigorous free market capitalism. Evangelicals’ theological, political, and economic ideals merged to the degree that they defended their voluntary ecclesiologies using republican political ideas and defended American political, economic, and social norms as “Christian.” American evangelicals believed by the late nineteenth century that America was God’s chosen nation that exemplified divine principles.

Significant for its relationship to the People's Party is that in terms of ethos, Protestant evangelicalism evinced both countercultural and conservative tendencies. On the countercultural side, again, evangelicals in the nineteenth century were liberal in their advocacy for economic freedom, the protection of basic human rights and liberties, freedom of conscience, and theological innovation; this side of evangelicalism empowered the more radical reforming tendencies in Populism. On the conservative side, Protestant evangelicals also believed that free minds arrived at the same conclusions—namely, the verity of democracy, capitalism, Christianity (usually of a particular variety), and so forth. Hence, while being champions of freedom in the broad sense, evangelicals were also inclined to enforce through church or state (if necessary) the truth to which free souls ought to ascend; this gave evangelicalism its conservative ethos. Furthermore, since it was entrenched in mainstream America, Populism—unlike socialism, communism, nationalism, or anarchism—retained a mainstream appeal. In this sense, as Robert McMath has argued, evangelicalism legitimated Populism.

In addition, evangelicals typically embraced anti-elitism. A knee-jerk reaction rather than an ideology, anti-elitism fueled both Populism and populism. As anti-elitists, evangelicals, drawing on the idea that God could guide anyone through common sense, trusted individuals to understand the Bible themselves without formal training and often favored bivocational ministers lacking formal education to urbane pastors with college degrees. Adopting many of the producerist ideals of the Jacksonian era (that farmers and laborers, as producers of wealth, were more virtuous than nonproducing lawyers, bankers, or “middlemen”), evangelicals typically viewed the “common man”—a product of the country—as superior to urban dandies.

As historians such as McMath, Creech, and others have pointed out, evangelicalism affected the emergence of the movement structurally and intellectually. In terms of structure, even though the Alliance drew on other voluntary societies as models, the movement from top to bottom maintained a structure based on the voluntary ecclesiology of evangelical churches. This is not surprising, since from sub-Alliance leaders to lecturers to those at the top of the organization, Protestant evangelicals, and ministers and lay leaders in particular (who had roughly the same status), were at the fore in organizing and maintaining the Alliance. As a result, Alliance organizers used churches, denominational networks, and the format of camp meetings to rally support.

With such structural affinity, on the intellectual side, it is not surprising that the Alliance regarded as sacred the democratic and economic ideals of American evangelical civil religion. As evangelicals, they merged theological, economic, and political ideas in such a way that again energized the movement with religious certainty and millennial enthusiasm. Indeed, many evangelicals in the late nineteenth century were afraid that forces hostile to Christianity and to America were mounting, variously identifying these forces as “corporatism,” “Romanism,” or “tyranny”—diabolical enemies that sought to snuff out religious, economic, and political liberty. On the religious side were denominational “papists” who wanted to professionalize the church; in the economic sphere were trusts, national banks, and “Wall Street,” which aimed to strip economic freedom from farmers and laborers through the manipulation of commodity and financial markets; and in the political realm were boss politicians, lobbyists, “town hall rings,” and “courthouse gangs,” who stifled political freedom by stealing votes and through inordinate influence on elected officials. To combat such threats, Populists entered the fray on all three fronts to reform America, sensing they were its final hope. Reform meant embodying—personally and as an organization—the eternal principles of American civil religion: that mixture of republican, classic economic, and theological ideals. This connection helps explain the Populist devotion to its “principles.”

Again, evangelical Populists drew especially on the more liberal components of evangelical thought: the republican and economic ideals associated by evangelicals, farmers, and laborers with “Jeffersonianism” and moral imperatives regarding the accumulation of wealth. Moreover, in the Midwest, Populists went further by adopting the Social Gospel ideas of George Herron, Richard Ely, Washington Gladden, and others, which suggested the church must redeem the entire social order from a corporate evil involving the captains of business and political leaders who threatened to rob farmers and laborers of political and economic freedom through “class legislation.” In the South, the theological liberalism of the Social Gospel was suspect, but Populists nevertheless embraced the same general tenets of “social Christianity,” which criticized the accumulation of wealth and embraced the general idea that Jesus favored the common folk.

Even though Populists drew on other intellectual sources, because these theological ideas bore with them eternal consequences both for God's chosen nation and for individuals, they propelled the movement forward. Seeing the trusts, the robber barons, and the leaders of the two old parties not just

as political combatants but as representations of Satan, as threats not just to the political voice of farmers and laborers but to the voice of God itself (“the voice of the people is the voice of God”), Populists thought of themselves as doing battle in an eschatological field. To lose meant not only economic hard times but political tyranny, economic slavery, and religious “Romanism”; in short, an end to America as God’s city on a hill.

Populism and Religious Tolerance

In addition to this most important connection between Protestant evangelicalism and Populism, religion also connected to Populism—actually and in the historiography—to anti-Catholicism, anti-Semitism, and, more generally, to nativism. In the historiography, Hofstadter understood Populism as an expression of the “paranoid style” and “anti-intellectual” tendencies among certain types of American reformers who hoped to impose their will on others. In this telling, Populists were one group in a long line of reformers going back to the anti-Catholic and nativist parties and rioters of the antebellum period, to the nativism of the turn of the century and 1920s, down to the McCarthyism of the period in which he was writing. In this telling, Populists were anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic nativists.

While there is a grain of truth in Hofstadter, historians, starting with Walter Nugent in *The Tolerant Populists* (1963), demonstrated that this was not the case. For while there were episodes of nativism, such as support for Chinese exclusion and antipathy towards Bohemians in Texas, throughout the South, Alliance leaders tried to attract European immigrants; in New Mexico, Mexicans joined the Alliance; and especially in the Midwest, the Alliance and People’s Party were populated with the full range of Willa Catheresque immigrants. As for anti-Catholicism, evangelical Populists did oppose Catholicism, not so much for theological reasons, but because papal initiative was seen as a threat to democracy; so, from time to time, “papists” received diatribes along with robber barons and congressional “hirelings” as forces of centralized tyranny threatening American democracy. But these tropes were never central to the movement; moreover, in the Midwest, Populists actively courted Roman Catholics. Finally, even though Populists generally denounced “shylocks” and “Rothschilds,” these denunciations had little to do with Jewish religious identity and more to do with stereotypes of wealth. Such diatribes, although crude, were, like anti-Catholicism, not central to the ethos of the movement. In short, Hofstadter overstated his case; as Nugent has

written, Populists were more tolerant certainly than Republicans and typically more so than Democrats.

Such tolerance is evident in the third way Populism connected to religion: the presence of religious nonconformists in the movement outside the South. Especially in the Midwest and West, but also in Texas, numerous religious nonconformists populated the highest ranks of the movement. Many prominent leaders were Swedenborgians, free thinkers, theosophists, Spiritualists, and assorted do-it-yourselfers. As Charles Postel points out, religious nonconformity did not necessarily affect the worldview of the movement but rather points to its liberal, progressive ethos. Such radical religious beliefs, although not cheered by the majority evangelicals in the movement, were nevertheless tolerated because of evangelicals’ commitments to freedom of conscience and this broad-minded ethos. Such tolerance also indicates how they embraced more radical characters such as socialist Eugene Debs, the followers of Edward Bellamy, or the members of Coxey’s Army. That both Clarence Darrow (a Populist stump speaker) and William Jennings Bryan (a Populist in spirit) were part of the same general movement marks the diversity such openness could contain.

After the People’s Party’s demise, most Populists left politics or allied themselves with one of the older parties. In California, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Texas, however, Populists provided grassroots support for the Socialist Party, which, under the charismatic Eugene Debs, peaked in strength during the first two decades of the twentieth century. As Jim Bisset has pointed out, socialists, especially in Oklahoma and Texas, drew on the more radical aforementioned Social Gospel to advocate Christian socialism.

Religion and Lowercase Populism

Moving on to lowercase “populism,” the term is itself controversial. In popular usage, it has come to be almost meaningless, as it is applied to any person or movement that is generally conservative in a grassroots way. The term is used, for example, in reference to the political savvy of Ronald Reagan, Rush Limbaugh’s appeal, or the paranoia of gun-toting survivalists.

In the academy, usage is more restricted to the definition offered by Kazin—a rhetorical strategy or pattern of thought (not a worldview, ethos, or ideology) expressing contempt for intellectual, political, or economic authorities or “experts” and celebrating the practical wisdom of “the people” or, later, “middle America.” Faced with economic disaster, the threat of communism, or moral decline,

populists have galvanized support by blaming urbane effete elites, “pointy-headed intellectuals,” nonproducers, or “fat cats” for these problems while calling on the toughness, moral fortitude, common sense, and piety of “the people” to right these wrongs. Even in the academy, however, use of the term is controversial, with many scholars arguing that the term is confusing and anachronistic, or that the phenomenon does not actually exist.

Assuming, however, that populism conveys an actual pattern of rhetoric in American life, how does religion connect to it? Influence would seem to go in a reciprocal fashion, so without trying to determine which caused which, there are at least three connections of Protestant evangelicalism and Catholicism to populism: the evangelical roots of populism as it emerged as a rhetorical style in the Jacksonian era and in the People’s Party, the Catholic appropriation of populism in the 1930s through the 1950s to fight for social justice and oppose communism, and finally populism’s use by the Religious Right from the late 1960s through the Reagan years and beyond.

As already mentioned, liberal evangelical ideals stressing the priesthood of all believers, freedom of conscience, low-church ecclesiology, and common sense, along with anti-elitism, merged with republican ideals in the early nineteenth century. Evangelical and republican ideals combined furthermore with producerist ideals in the Jacksonian era to produce the first uses of “populist” rhetoric—Jackson’s war against the Second Bank—but also to fuel crusades in the nineteenth century against trusts, robber barons, “czars,” “empires,” and “octopi” of various sorts, as well as against the use or distribution of alcohol in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such language was also, as we have seen, central to the People’s Party. Although it might be tempting to find this rhetoric at work in nativism, the Ku Klux Klan, and other reactionary groups, this was not the case, for until the late 1940s, populist rhetoric was employed by people seeking progressive or liberal economic and social agendas. In other words, the language of populism was inclusive and broad, appealing to the “mass” of people regardless of creed or belief.

With the decline of evangelicalism as the central voice of public virtue in American civic discourse, and with the economic and political changes of the 1930s, populist rhetoric was appropriated most often in the 1920s through the 1950s by Roman Catholics, whether by the large Irish Catholic representation in non-Marxist labor groups like the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), by priests and laity active

in assuaging poverty, or by a figure like Charles Coughlin. Drawing on the calls for social justice and warnings about Marxism in the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadregesimo Anno* (1931), Catholics attacked the twin enemies of corporate greed and communism (the new centralized evil) and warned against centralized assaults on Catholic teachings regarding divorce, birth control, and sexual deviance (especially in movies).

After World War II, populism itself went through a radical transformation. Before the war it always attached itself to broad, progressive, or liberal economic or social agendas (again, before the 1920s, the Prohibition movement should be seen in this light); but to crusade against the hardening communist threat of the Cold War era, conservatives ranging from intellectuals such as William F. Buckley Jr. to figures such as Joseph McCarthy appropriated the populist rhetoric, pitting a patriotic “middle America” against an intellectual, centralized, bureaucratic elite diseased with red fever. In this reworking, a conservative, patriotic “middle America” squared off against concentrations of powerful liberals in education, the media, and government.

While Buckley and McCarthy connected their Catholicism to their populism, Protestant evangelicals, resurging in the 1950s under the likes of Billy Graham, carried the banner of populism into the 1970s and 1980s, as they combined their fight against “atheistic” communism with concern about America’s moral decline. Although people ranging from Tom Hayden to George Wallace also appropriated populist rhetoric in the 1960s, Protestant evangelicals involved in the New Right or Religious Right emerged by the 1970s as the primary populist voice in America, as they increasingly blamed liberal intellectuals and government bureaucrats, teachers unions, the media, and other points of centralized authority for moral and political evils ranging from the ban against school prayer, to the teaching of evolution and sex education in schools, abortion, and the Equal Rights Amendment. Not since the Prohibition movement had populism attached to such an explicitly religious agenda that attracted not only Protestant evangelicals but conservative Catholics and Jews as well. Starting with President Richard Nixon and culminating in the string of Republican campaigns in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, the Republican Party shed its “big business” image and adopted not only the agenda of the Religious Right but the populist style as well.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Anti-Semitism; California and the Pacific Rim Region; Civil Religion in the United States; Evangelicals;*

Nineteenth Century; Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Pacific Northwest Region; Popular Religion and Popular Culture entries; *Radio; Religious Right; Social Gospel; Social Reform.*

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Positive Thinking

The core of positive thinking is the belief in the power of the mind over matter. Mistaken simply for optimism, positive thinking intuitively leans on monism and philosophical idealism to define how life rewards those with right thinking. Positive thinking is inherently synthetic, mixing the categories of religion, psychology, medicine, and self-help; its prophets are not typically systematizers or intellectuals but popularizers and doers.

Metaphysical Heritage

Positive thinking’s origins can be traced to the late nineteenth century, when confidence about the progress and potential perfectibility of the human race surged. Ideas about the power of the mind ripened in this climate, the fruit of at least a half century of metaphysical speculation. Ralph Waldo Emerson’s (1803–1882) philosophical idealism, Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg’s (1688–1772) Neoplatonic theory of correspondence, and Theosophy’s quest for uniform spiritual laws seeded the ground. But it

took Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802–1866), inventor and healer, to bring ideas about mind power to fruition.

Quimby inspired a generation of positive thinkers—including Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy and New Thought author Warren Felt Evans—with his conclusions about the connection between thought and healing. Personal experience led Quimby part of the way. His attempt to cure his tuberculosis with a carriage ride went awry when his horse balked. He was forced to run beside the horse. The run offered some relief of his symptoms and signaled to Quimby that the mind could overcome disease. Quimby’s suspicions solidified as he shared his generation’s obsession with mesmerism, a hybrid of healing practices and metaphysical thought based on Franz Antoine Mesmer’s (1733–1815) discovery of hypnosis. As Quimby followed in Mesmer’s footsteps as a touring mesmerist and, later, successful physician, he stumbled into discoveries about the human subconscious, including the effectiveness of placebos and a “talking cure,” a forerunner of modern psychotherapy. Quimby eventually concluded that healing occurred because of mental and spiritual alignment. He speculated that the unconscious was divine, a nature shared with God. Thought, specifically positive thought, would soon become a major force in American religion.

Originating in the 1880s, New Thought, a cluster of thinkers and metaphysical ideas, emerged as the most powerful religious vehicle of positive thinking. Three aspects of New Thought became foundational. First, it assumed fundamental unity between God and humanity: humanity’s separation from the divine became a matter of degrees. In Christian terms, this would mean that “salvation” would not be an act imposed from on high but one of drawing out humanity’s potential. Second, New Thought taught that the world must be reimagined as thought, rather than substance. The spiritual world formed absolute reality, while the material world was the mind’s projection. Right standing with the divine focused on sacred alignment, a mystical interconnection that merited historian Sydney Ahlstrom’s famous label of “harmonial religion.” Third, New Thought argued that people shared in God’s power to create using thought. People shaped their own worlds by their thinking, just as God had created the world using thought. Positive thoughts yielded positive circumstances, as negative thoughts brought into being negative situations.

New Thought’s influence did not weigh heavily on American culture in its institutional form but endured because of its confluence with like-minded ideas. With Horatio Dresser writing for *Good Housekeeping*, Ralph Waldo

Trine for *Woman's Home Companion*, and New Thought themes enacted through popular plays, New Thought's sectarian differences softened into palatable generalities. Its broad appeal lay in its articulation and spiritualization of American self-perceptions. New Thought uncovered the hidden truth that Americans longed to hear—that divinity was lodged somewhere in their beings and that their secret powers demanded expression.

Between its inception and World War II, positive thinking emerged as the staple feature of an emerging genre of success literature—equal parts psychology, business, self-help, and metaphysics—which brought the positive thinking movement to wide audiences. In 1905, Orison Swett Marden's New Thought-inspired *Success Magazine* boasted a circulation of 300,000. Frank Haddock's *The Power of the Will* (1907) and William Walker Atkinson's many works, including *The Secret of Success* (1908) and *The Secret of Mental Magic* (1912), fed increasing interest in the power of the mind and its instrumental value. Through radio, print media, and his "Dale Carnegie Course," Dale Carnegie popularized the relationship between thought itself—accessible to everyone—and wealth acquisition with his best-selling *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (1936). Positive thinking crossed racial divides. Father Divine's (1877–1965) Peace Mission Movement and Sweet Daddy Grace's (1881–1960) United House of Prayer infused African American uplift movements with positive thinking.

Post–World War II Positive Thinking

Positive thinking abounded in the years following WWII as Americans' optimism rose with the country's burgeoning consumer culture. Norman Vincent Peale (1898–1993), Methodist minister and self-help writer, became the prophet of this generation. His early successes as a pastor in Brooklyn and Syracuse sealed his reputation as a cheery and anecdotal preacher with a knack for advertising and church growth. In the early 1950s, New Thought ideas began to figure prominently in his preaching. As his preaching drew larger audiences, Peale accepted a position at Marble Collegiate Church in New York City, a venerable Reformed Church in America pulpit, from which he would bring his message to a national audience.

The breadth of Peale's appeal lay in the fact that he was, at heart, a popularizer. Peale made countless appearances around the country and, from the early 1950s onward, preached weekly to audiences of 4,000 at Marble Collegiate Church. He reached out to television audiences with his syndicated television program, *What's Your Trouble*, which

he cohosted with his wife, Ruth. Radio listeners tuned in to his syndicated program called *The Art of Living*, which was broadcast for forty years. In 1945, he founded his own magazine, *Guideposts*, which gained 4 million readers over the next half century. At Peale's peak his published sermons garnered 150,000 readers and his syndicated newspaper column claimed an audience of 10 million.

Peale's message was timely in two ways. First, his use of psychological categories caught the rising tide of therapeutic culture in the United States. By the close of the 1930s the new science of the mind had found mainline Protestant acceptance. In 1934, Peale sought the assistance of Dr. Smiley Blanton, professor of psychiatry at Cornell University Medical School, to help him counsel his parishioners. By 1937 the two paired up to form the Marble Collegiate Church Clinic, a therapeutic center that integrated psychology and religion. Their clinical models for pastoral counseling joined the first waves of mainstream psychological services. By the end of the Second World War, Peale's psychological idioms and impulses blended into a culture already saturated with them.

Second, Peale's theological synthesis of upward mobility with religious buoyancy matched the postwar mood, making a man into a movement. His blend of Methodist evangelism, Dutch Reformed Calvinism, and a New Thought focus on mind power could be seen clearly in earlier works, *The Art of Living* (1937) and *You Can Win* (1938). But as Peale's writing progressed, New Thought themes took precedence. In 1952, Peale authored *The Power of Positive Thinking*, which became a *New York Times* best seller for a record-breaking three years, with a total of 1 million copies sold. In it he folded Christian and psychological categories into a New Thought prescription: God's power could be harnessed by "a spirit and method by which we can control and even determine" life's circumstances (vii). As Peale taught, any person could access God's own power through positive thinking, which directed spiritual energy toward the attainment of health, self-esteem, or business acumen, to name a few. Much like his New Thought predecessors, Peale promised formulas, patterns of right thought, and the release of power through effective words. But true to Peale's unique style, the book was not a systematic treatise of thought power, but traded precision for anecdotal evidence and warm reassurances. This articulation of middle-class aspirations, set on a pedestal by one of America's most popular mainstream preachers, blurred popular and elite religion. While Peale's teachings provoked heated opposition, his critics hated him all the more for having made self-interest theologically respectable.

When Peale's star faded, another rose to take its place. A young minister named Robert H. Schuller (1926–) took up the legacy of positive thinking, doggedly following Peale's example and theological focus. Ordained in the Reformed Church in America, Schuller, like Peale, exhibited an early flair for advertising and church growth. For example, when he could not find property for his church plant in Garden Grove, California, he rented a drive-in theater and preached to the fifty assembled cars while perched on the roof of the refreshment stand. The congregation grew steadily as Schuller's expansive vision won the day. His vastly expensive building project, a church of glass that housed a river, formed the auspicious beginnings of the Crystal Cathedral. His church ministry sprawled, with a school, a retirement home, a call center, and local outreach programs. Schuller also joined Peale at the top of the *New York Times* best-seller list with a reconfiguration of "positive thinking" into "possibility thinking." His books, which included *Move Ahead with Possibility Thinking* (1967), *Self-Esteem: The New Reformation* (1982), *Tough Times Never Last but Tough People Do* (1983), and *The Be Happy Attitudes* (1985) established him as the self-help guru of his generation.

Schuller's success as a televangelist outshone all his other efforts. His television program, *The Hour of Power*, repackaged the church's worship services for mass viewing, an idea that by 1983 had garnered 2.5 million viewers. The numbers swelled with the televangelism of the 1980s, rising to 3.5 million. Although the televangelism scandals of the late 1980s slowed viewership, Schuller's sunny message rode out the storm. His ministry continued to thrive well into the 1990s and the early years of the new millennium. In 2009 the Crystal Cathedral stumbled from financial hardships wrought by economic recession and the resignation of Schuller's son and ministerial successor, Robert A. Schuller. Regardless, Schuller's legacy lay in his theology of self-esteem, a belief that optimism, rather than talk of sin, restored Christians to wholeness and right standing before God.

Conclusion

Over the last century positive thinking has become inextricably entwined with American conceptions of the self. It constructed an image of the individual as autonomous, governed by will, and only as powerful as its mind. In 2007, Rhonda Byrne's breakaway hit *The Secret* became the latest articulation of the idealized American self. Endorsed by a host of successful inventors, authors, and metaphysical leaders, the book encouraged people to direct their thoughts

toward achieving their desires. Fans such as Oprah Winfrey, along with the ever-increasing ranks of those claiming to be "spiritual but not religious," found that *The Secret* ritualized two American sentiments: people rise to the level of their own ambition, and there's no such thing as luck.

Its influence on American Christianity, however, has been most pronounced. The prosperity movement, known alternatively as the word of faith or health and wealth gospel, garnered millions of American devotees with its articulation of Christian positive thinking. Such celebrities as Joel Osteen and Joyce Meyer promised Christians the power to claim financial and physical well-being through right thought and speech. Though planted in Pentecostalism, the prosperity movement attracted believers from diverse ethnic, denominational, racial, and economic backgrounds.

For generations of religious thinkers, positive thinking made the mind a spiritual playground. Common sense realism, the bread and butter of American evangelicalism, was replaced by religious knowledge that was elusive. Truth was ferreted out, not apparent, as it emerged from the mind's hidden recesses. It earned a lasting place in the New Age movement as popular American audiences eagerly sought to apply this secret knowledge to their advantage. Louise Hay's best seller *You Can Heal Your Life* (1984) and Deepak Chopra's *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success* (1994) stood out. Indeed, its emphasis on practice was irrepressible. Truths were techniques, waiting to be applied. Indeed, as a therapeutic tool, positive thinking became a mainstay of popular psychology and "self-help." Whether through hypnotism, the use of placebos, or the power of suggestion, positive thinkers cultivated religious practices and techniques to subdue, focus, or activate the mind's hidden powers.

See also *African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights*; *Christian Science*; *Electronic Church*; *Esoteric Movements*; *Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements*; *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion*; *Health, Disease, and Medicine*; *Megachurches*; *Occult and Metaphysical Religion*; *Psychology of Religion*; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends*; *Television*.

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Postmodernism

The word *postmodernism* covers a multitude of sins; a malleable, chameleon-like term, it is invoked to name a number of different movements and phenomena. It is important to distinguish between postmodernism and postmodernity, both of which emerged in the 1960s. *Postmodernism* refers to a constellation of philosophical and theoretical movements, often associated with French thought, that are critical of philosophical tenets associated with modernism, movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that consciously attempted to break away from former ways of thinking. *Postmodernity* is often used as shorthand for a constellation of cultural phenomena (such as technological and communication developments, globalization, and so forth) that represent what sociologist Anthony Giddens describes, more correctly, as “high modernity” or “late modernity.” To add to the confusion, theorist Frederic Jameson describes such cultural phenomena under the rubric of “postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism.” In this respect, postmodernity does not indicate any radical rupture or break with modernity but perhaps an intensification of it. In this sense, postmodernity does not name anything particularly or radically new. Postmodernism is usually considered a philosophical critique of the foundations of modernity that produce such cultural phenomena.

Both postmodernism as a theoretical movement and postmodernity as a set of cultural phenomena are relevant to religion and the study of religion. On the one hand, the “postmodern turn” has had an impact on theorizing about religion, particularly sociological and philosophical accounts. On the other hand, many developments and shifts in lived religion are often seen as the evidence or outworking of a cultural shift in late modernity.

Postmodernity and Religious Phenomena

If modernity is associated with homogeneity, universality, sameness, and subjectivity, then postmodernity is considered to be loosely associated with alterity or “otherness,” singularity,

diversity, and difference. How, then, do such themes and emphases manifest themselves in the shape of lived religion in postmodern or late modern American culture? What might be signs of a postmodern turn in American religious life?

One aspect of postmodernity is thought to be increased cultural traffic and migration, along with other aspects of globalization; many read the increased religious diversity of the United States as itself a harbinger of postmodernity. The general fragmentation of cultural dominance of the Protestant mainline has been accompanied by both the growth of other religious traditions within the American context (including Buddhism and Islam), as well as the emergence of new religious movements. Many read this phenomenon of increased religious diversity as a factor of postmodernity—though, once again, it might be better described as an aspect of high or late modernity, and indeed an aspect of the cultural logic of late capitalism that encourages a marketplace of religious movements and ideas. In that respect, increased religious diversity is simply the logical working out of deeply modern aspects that are part of the fabric of the American ethos.

If modernity often privileged the center, postmodernity turns to the margin. If modernity privileged the majority, postmodernity emphasizes the minority. Thus, many suggest that the flourishing of “marginal” spiritualities is another indicator of postmodern American religion. Perhaps a paradigmatic example of this is the exponential growth of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity, not only in the United States but also elsewhere in the world. Pentecostal spirituality represents its own “enacted” critique of a modern conception of the human persons, which emphasizes the rational and cognitive, with an emphasis on the affective and embodied. Thus British sociologist David Martin and Harvard theologian Harvey Cox have seen Pentecostalism as something of a quintessential postmodern spirituality (though Duke historian Grant Wacker cautions that Pentecostal pragmatism remains thoroughly modernist).

Finally, one might describe reconfigurations of established religions as another instance of postmodern religion. The “emerging church” phenomenon in American Christianity, for instance, self-identifies as a postmodern rendition of Christianity, eschewing traditional institutional forms in order to establish communities that are fluid and malleable, connected by virtual, Web-based networks.

Postmodernism and Sociology of Religion

While some religious phenomena might be associated with postmodernity (in other words, late modernity), the impact

of postmodernism is felt most significantly in theories and explanations of religion. Perhaps most important, the postmodern critique of modernist epistemologies (or theories of knowledge) targets the modernist conceit regarding secular science. At the heart of the modern ideal—the ideal that informed science as we know it—is a pretension to a neutral, unbiased, unprejudiced standpoint that would be described as “objective.” Knowledge is scientific just to the extent that it is neutral, unbiased, and therefore objective. This requires jettisoning presuppositions, beliefs, and commitments that would “taint” such pure rationality. While this model was quickly tethered to the natural sciences, the emerging social sciences advocated the same ideal—indeed, advocated it even more strenuously precisely because their objectivity seemed to be so easily questioned. And anxieties about objectivity seemed to be especially heightened when social scientists were describing or explaining religion. Because this modern paradigm viewed religious belief as a particularly potent corruptor of objectivity, scholars of religion sought to establish their objectivity all the more tenaciously.

Some say that a rejection of this model of objectivity is close to the heart of postmodernism. Such a critique emerged on many fronts, from different traditions. In Europe, German philosopher Martin Heidegger pointed out that our perception and observation of the world is always already informed by a “pre-understanding”—an ineluctable set of commitments that we bring to our experience and observation. This insight was extended and radicalized in the work of his student Hans Georg Gadamer, who criticized the “Enlightenment prejudice against prejudice.” French theorists such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, in a different way, emphasized the way that cultural location conditions or influences our knowledge and perception. Sociologists of knowledge such as Peter Winch, Peter Berger, and Thomas Luckmann noted that reality was not so much a pristine thing “out there,” neatly delivered by objective observation, but rather was a constitution of the world informed by background narratives and communities. Anthropologists such as Clifford Geertz articulated a hermeneutic anthropology that conceded and recognized the inescapable role of prior interpretive frameworks in how we describe and explain culture. And philosophers of science such as Thomas Kuhn pointed out—empirically and historically—how the pretheoretical commitments of scientists (what Kuhn called “paradigms”) shaped and influenced their purportedly neutral and objective description of the world.

The cumulative effect of this postmodern critique of objectivity called into question the working ideal of scientific knowledge as secular. Science, including social science, was taken to be secular just to the extent that it was neutral, unbiased, and objective. Thus religious studies and the sociology of religion, in asserting their objectivity, were also bent on asserting their secularity. But the postmodern critique of the objective conceit also constituted a critique of just such a notion of secularity. British theologian John Milbank, in his account of modern social theory, pointed out that the implications of the postmodern critique of modern epistemology, issuing in a “postfoundationalist” account of knowledge, should also entail a “postsecular” social science. On the one hand, this would include giving up on the “secularization thesis,” which construed religious belief and participation as somehow primitive and irrational (or, at least, inconsistent with modernity). Recent developments indicate that indeed, the secularization thesis is being abandoned as an explanatory paradigm in the sociology of religion. On the other hand, the implosion of the epistemology that undergirded the secular ideal requires sociologists and anthropologists to own up to their theoretical (and pretheoretical) commitments: that what has paraded as a neutral, secular account of religion own up to the fact that it operated on the basis of pretheoretical assumptions that are accepted on the basis of faith. In short, there is no secular account of religion.

Sociologist of religion Christian Smith demonstrates an astute understanding of this. In something of a methodological manifesto, Smith argues that the narrow, reductionist paradigms for explaining religion in the social sciences (economic models or evolutionary psychology, for example) are both insufficiently warranted and reductionistic, unable to account for the complexity of religious phenomena. Rather than explaining religion, they explain much of it away. In contrast, Smith shows that a thicker, more nuanced theoretical paradigm that honors humans as “moral, believing animals”—even “liturgical animals”—does a better job of accounting for the data. While Smith makes no claim to offering a postmodern theory, his project represents the end result of the postmodern critique of modern ideals of secularity and objectivity.

Postmodernism and Philosophy of Religion

Finally, postmodernism has had a significant impact in philosophy of religion and philosophical theology, stemming largely from the influence of French philosopher Jacques Derrida—particularly as mediated, in an American context,

in the work of Mark C. Taylor and John D. Caputo. Derrida's notion of "deconstruction" was taken to be a radicalization of the hermeneutical turn effected by Heidegger and Gadamer. If the hermeneutic tradition emphasized the role that presuppositions play in our perception and understanding of the world, deconstruction further emphasized that meaning could not be stabilized. Words and texts can be recontextualized and thus mean something quite different in different contexts—and such plurality of meaning is possible in any context. Thus, Derrida emphasized a play of meaning—the fact that meaning could not be controlled by authors (sometimes described as the structural "death of the author"). This not only has an impact on the interpretation of sacred texts, it also fuels a general suspicion about the perceived stability of institutions, generating a certain suspicion about traditional institutions, including religious hierarchies and denominational structures. In particular, Derrida suggested that particular determinations of religious practice—that is, identifiable, institutional religions—would be inherently violent and exclusionary *because of* their particularity. Thus, Derrida extolled a "messianicity" that would be distinct from any particular "messianism" (whether Christianity, Judaism, or Islam). He also described this messianicity as a "religion without religion" that was embodied in the universal call to justice but was compromised and even rendered unjust by particular determinations or configurations of the determinate religions.

The result is a significant aversion to institutional forms of religion, perhaps not unlike broader cultural interest in spirituality rather than the particularities of religious traditions and disciplines. Thus, the emerging church often looks to this deconstructive philosophy of religion as the theoretical framework needed to support their suspicion of institutional religion and authority. But again, such a stance could be seen as the ultimate flowering of modern concerns with autonomy. Thus, these movements may also be considered "late modern" rather than properly postmodern.

Other postmodern theologies, however, have been primarily interested in utilizing the resources of the postmodern critique, in order to point out how religious traditions and communities have unwittingly been influenced by modernist habits of thought that are antithetical to the heart of the tradition. The work of theologian John Milbank and the movement of "Radical Orthodoxy"—an Anglican postmodern movement—represents another stream of postmodern philosophy of religion that, in contrast to the deconstructive stream of philosophy of religion, takes on board the postmodern critique of modernity in order to

point out how religious traditions have become complicit with forms of life that are inconsistent with their confession. This is then a catalyst and occasion to return to the sources of the tradition. On this account, the postmodern is an occasion for creative reappropriation of the ancient sources of the tradition. In this way, postmodernism sets the stage for a renewal movement within the tradition.

See also *Death of God Theology*; *Emerging Church Movement*; *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Gender*; *Internet*; *Literature: Contemporary*; *Pentecostals* entries; *Philosophical Theology*; *Philosophy*; *Pluralism*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture*; *Religious Studies*; *Religious Thought: Gay Theology*; *Same-Gender Marriage*; *Seeker Churches*; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends*; *Systematic Theology*; *Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts since World War II*.

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Practical Theology

Practical theology is a term commonly used in Christian theology for a general way of doing theology concerned with the embodiment of religious belief in the day-to-day lives of individuals and communities. Its subject matter is

often described through generic words that suggest movement in time and space, such as *action*, *practice*, *praxis*, *experience*, *situation*, *event*, and *performance*. Its subject is also associated with action-oriented religious words, such as *formation*, *transformation*, *discipleship*, *witness*, *ministry*, and *public mission*. In its focus on concrete instances of religious life, its objective is both to understand and to influence religious wisdom or faith in action. Ultimately, practical theology is normatively and eschatologically oriented. That is, it not only describes how people live as people of faith in communities and society, but it also considers how they might do so more fully both in and beyond this life and world.

In its focus on the tangible and local, practical theology joins efforts in the United States to recover the sensate, material side of religion obscured by modern interest in the scientific and philosophical study of beliefs. Where historians and sociologists of religion have begun to examine *lived religion*, those who engage in practical theology investigate *lived theology*, extending interest in rituals and practices to questions about how theology or knowing and loving the divine takes shape in everyday life and how everyday life influences theology. Some practical theologians, particularly in Europe, limit practical theology to a discipline involving the empirical study of religion. But most people value its wider normative aims to enrich the life of faith for the sake of the world.

Catholics in general and many Protestants outside the United States use pastoral and practical theology interchangeably. This is less true for Protestants in the United States, where pastoral theology primarily refers to reflection on pastoral care and counseling. Pastoral and practical theology share historical roots but have diverged considerably. Figures such as Seward Hiltner (1909–1984) and Anton Boisen (1876–1965), often cited by Europeans as forerunners of modern practical theology, are seen by most scholars in the United States as dedicated to care and counseling. Although *pastoral* also refers to ministry in general, it is associated largely with the special activity of care and shepherding. The Protestant use of “practical theology” has more affinity with what some Catholics have called “contextual” or “local” theology.

Practical theology has also been contrasted with systematic or doctrinal theology, which traditionally centered on proclaimed beliefs. Although this contrast reinforces a problematic split between theory and practice, it does highlight a difference in emphasis. Practical theology as a discipline has a longer history of attention to faith in the midst of daily life. This difference has come under increasing pressure as practical theologians attend to theory, systematic theologians

attend to practice, and people in other disciplines and settings also seek to understand faith in action. Although such nuances in definition have evolved largely within Christianity, analogous interest in lived faith or practiced theology exists in other religions.

History and Context

Practical theology shares with biblical, historical, and doctrinal theology a common academic trajectory in the German Protestant university of the 1800s that fostered the development of theology as a *Wissenschaft* (science) and field of study increasingly removed from ecclesial and creedal interests. Christian theology in general has never been solely a matter of abstract truths. It has always included guidance for faithful living and attention to obtaining salvation. But with the dawning of the modern era, people such as the “father of liberal theology” Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) sought to justify theology as a scientific discipline deserving of a place within the modern university. In an effort to keep pace with the spirit of the age, theology in Europe and North America became increasingly focused on a descriptive history and philosophy of ideas, distancing itself from religious practice and seeking a systematic coherence and rigor on par with the sciences.

On U.S. soil, this view of theology as objective, critical, and academic rather than evangelistic, experiential, confessional, ecclesial, and practical became institutionalized in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century structures of graduate seminary education. Other traditions besides Protestantism and some religious denominations, such as Reform Judaism, have felt the impact of this development and have adopted similar educational divisions between practical and classical disciplines. Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Anglicanism sustained greater appreciation for practice through rich liturgical traditions, development of mystical and spiritual theology, and convictions about worship as the heart of theology. Nonetheless, these traditions have struggled to find a place for practical theology. Ambivalence about practice has deeper roots in twelfth-century scholasticism, the Aristotelian model of theology as a theoretical science that attempted to reconcile Christianity with secular philosophy, and the development of cathedral universities. As the center of theological study shifted from households and small religious communities to large monasteries and then universities, debates over whether theology was a practical orientation to lived faith or a speculative contemplation of divinity aimed at knowledge for its own sake were decided largely in favor of the latter. In Catholicism, practical theology has sometimes been limited to

a pastoral and moral theology devoted to ministerial oversight and training priests for the office of confessor.

Since the middle of the twentieth century, however, several developments fostered a climate of unrest and a rebirth of national and international interest in enriched understandings. Key among the influences was the rapid growth in the social sciences, psychology in particular, and their usefulness in understanding experience. With the insights of psychology and case study methods, early pastoral theologians Boisen and Hiltner argued for the “living human document” as a subject of study comparable to written texts and for “operation-centered” theology as deserving a place alongside “logic-centered” theology. Theology emerges out of experience, and practical theology has content not derived solely from historical and philosophical theology. Correlation, understood as a fluid dialectic between human situation and religious message, emerged as an influential method in support of this claim and became a staple in the growth of practical theology. Critical social theory in Europe in the 1930s and, three decades later, Latin American liberation theology and related developments, such as black and feminist theology, demanded that theology begin with grassroots encounters, address the needs of the oppressed, and work for social change. During the last decades of the twentieth century, philosophy itself took a turn toward the practical among divergent intellectuals such as Jürgen Habermas, Alasdair MacIntyre, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michel de Certeau, giving scholars dependent on European continental philosophy the language and methods to validate practice as a worthy object of study.

Practical theology has attracted wide attention since the 1980s through fresh publications, renewed academic societies, new graduate programs, and interest in lived theology among those outside the academy. Its boundaries and horizons are being stretched further by developments in the study of practice, empirical methods, the analysis of power and social location, religious pluralism, and globalization. Practical theology is recognized, like cultural anthropology, “for the delicacy of its distinctions not the sweep of its abstractions,” to borrow Clifford Geertz’s words (1973, p. 25). But its definition quickly moves beyond thick description. Practical theology is ultimately a normative project guided by the desire to make a difference in the world.

Practical Theology in the Twenty-First Century

As a result of its history, the term *practical theology* gets used today in at least four different ways. It refers to (1) an activity of believers seeking to sustain a life of reflective

faith in the everyday, (2) a curricular area in theological education focused on ministerial practice, (3) an approach to theology used by religious leaders and by teachers and students across the curriculum, and (4) an academic discipline pursued by a smaller subset of scholars to sustain these first three enterprises.

An Activity of Believers

At its most basic level, practical theology is performed by those who thoughtfully seek to embody deep convictions about life and its ultimate meaning in the midst of ordinary and extraordinary circumstances. Few laypersons actually use the word *theology* to describe this activity. Professing Christians, for example, might talk about this more belief based or “confessional” practical theology as following Jesus or living out the gospel of love and justice. Professing Jews might say faith requires *tikkun olam*, repair of the world. Practical theologians in more secular contexts, such as Britain, have argued that this dialogical and largely Christian understanding of practical theology as reflective enactment of faith is useful to all people, Christian or not, who wish to connect beliefs and values to practice and life. It is particularly relevant in public service and educational institutions in which religious practices and convictions play a significant role.

A Curricular Area

Seminary deans, students, and graduates of programs in theological study usually have a more specific meaning in mind when they speak of practical theology. They use the term to refer to a distinct area of the curriculum aimed at enhancing religious life through congregational and public ministry. Practical theology is concerned with religious leadership broadly construed to include not only local congregations but also other forms of social service and public influence. Several subspecialties, such as pastoral care, homiletics, worship, mission, evangelism, leadership, and education, are conventionally grouped under the rubric of “ministerial practical theology.” Common commitments to teaching a practice for the sake of ministry unite these specialties. But in many cases, the claims and methods of practical theology as an academic discipline operate implicitly, and faculty may not recognize the broader practical theological assumptions that organize their teaching and research. Even when practical theology does constitute the larger domain within which faculty understand their work, academics are more likely to identify themselves by their specialty as scholars in homiletics or pastoral care, for example, than as practical theologians.

An Approach to Theology and Religious Faith

Since its re-emergence in the 1980s, practical theology designates more than the theology of the pastorate or the methods and objectives that unite the ministerial subdisciplines. Building on its three-century history in university and seminary education, scholars have expanded its meaning and mission. Practical theology seeks religious knowledge in the service of a larger *telos* (end or aim) of enriching the life of faith in the world. It is not only a branch of study but a way of doing theology attentive to lived faith. This definition, aimed at reorienting theological education toward its ultimate end, challenges conventional divisions between classical and practical disciplines, academy and congregation, and theory and practice. Despite the organizational and structural usefulness of such divisions, they have led to a misperception of theological education as either merely about acquiring technical pastoral skills (the clerical paradigm) or merely about acquiring cognitive knowledge of history and doctrine (the academic paradigm). In reality, all theology is practical at heart and practical theology, redefined more expansively, has the good of the larger whole in mind. It involves the study of faith toward the end of divine flourishing in human life and the world.

Questions of the usefulness of scripture, history, and doctrine arise here not in a narrow utilitarian sense but with this larger purpose in mind. This goal-oriented or teleological practical theology is an endeavor intentionally oriented toward particular goods and ends in which many different people—believers, clergy, and faculty across the curriculum—have some investment. In fact, all theological disciplines have or should have, as the influential twentieth-century Catholic theologian Karl Rahner argued, an element of practical theology contained within them. Some recent systematic and historical theologians with convictions about liberation or interest in studying theology through new means, such as ethnography, have understood the boundaries of their work as falling within this wider realm, if not the discipline, of practical theology. In turn, believers and religious leaders are also significant partners in a theology whose aim in the study of scripture, doctrine, and life is faithful practice. Their efforts to embody faith are not lower-level versions of a more sophisticated academic theology, simplified for the masses. Rather they possess a theological intelligence and imagination unique to the concrete demands of practice and they thereby contribute to the general construction of religious tradition and community. This definition obviously extends the boundaries of the term to include

faculty, religious leaders, and believers who may not consider themselves practical theologians and are not practical theologians in the strict sense of the term as a curricular area or discipline.

An Academic Discipline

Although relatively few people identify themselves foremost as practical theologians, a subset of people have undertaken the critical task of clarifying the divergent aims of practical theology. Scholars who call themselves practical theologians, often in addition to another primary disciplinary identity, are invested in sustaining the three other modes of practical theology. They see themselves as responsible for the maintenance and enrichment of practical theology as a multifaceted confessional, ministerial, teleological, and academic enterprise. Supported by new national and international guilds, such as the Association of Practical Theology and the International Academy of Practical Theology, these scholars understand the value of research and teaching in practical theology as a discipline and a field that contains these four aspects, even if they also recognize that the ultimate aim is not disciplinary knowledge for its own sake but the equipping of religious leaders and believers in fostering life abundant.

Toward this end, practical theologians assume a number of tasks. They explore the activity of believers through descriptive study and normative assessment of local theologies. They seek to discern common objectives among the ministerial subdisciplines and in the study of theology more generally. They study patterns of integration, formation, and transformation in theological education and vocational development. They seek methods by which students, faculty, and ministers might bridge practice and belief, such as ethnography, narrative theory, case study, or the hermeneutical circle of description, interpretation, and response. They develop theologies of discipleship, ministry, and faith, using secular sources, such as the social sciences and literature, in addition to scripture, history, and doctrine. In each instance, the development of theory aims to enhance the connective web of theological formation, bridging specific disciplines and ecclesial and educational institutions toward the aim of ministry and the life of faith.

Scholars in practical theology come from a number of areas, predominately pastoral theology and religious education in the United States, for example, or social and political theology and ethics in Britain. They often devote more attention to concrete topics (important to teleological practical theology) such as mental illness, children, poverty, and

social policy than to disciplinary issues in practical theology. However, their approach to these topics is guided by methods and objectives of the discipline.

Distinguishing these four separate but related uses is an important advance. Practical theology has expansive boundaries. The term gets used in many academic and plain sense ways as an activity in religious contexts, an overarching rubric for a collection of subdisciplines, a type of theology, and a discipline within the study of religion in North America. Its subject matter intentionally extends beyond a disciplinary department in the university and seminary to the broader *telos* of faith that guides religious communities. Its participants are equally wide-ranging. Nearly everyone in theological education and religious life has a role to play.

See also *Judaism: Reform; Liberation Theology; Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Ministry, Professional; Philosophical Theology; Postmodernism; Pragmatism; Protestant Liberalism; Psychology of Religion; Religious Studies; Religious Thought* entries; *Social Ethics; Systematic Theology.*

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Pragmatism

The philosophical branch known as Pragmatism came into existence as a product of the minds of a core group of outstanding thinkers, among them Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), William James (1842–1910), and Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841–1935). Pragmatism's founding brothers were primarily located, at least initially, in the northeastern United States. Despite the doctrine's definite beginnings in a particular time among a particular group, the tenets and

associated theories behind the philosophy are deeply embedded in the broader intellectual history of humanity. In nearly every ancient culture, the concern for practical application of concepts, which constitutes the single most uniting aspect of Pragmatism, has been present, if not central to, its theoretical discourse. Examples extend from the Hebrew tradition of wisdom literature, which distinguished between practical and abstract wisdom millennia ago, to the Eastern Taoist and Confucianist wisdom traditions that include both practical sayings for a better life and deeper metaphysical ponderings.

Adherents of Pragmatism, however, had never succinctly outlined or coherently organized its principles until the end of the nineteenth century, when the movement effectively articulated a set of tenets and core standards that were in some sense already in existence. Ultimately, the outcome of the Pragmatic movement in America would have significant effects on the shape of modern culture in general, and on religion in particular, both in the United States and around the world.

Philosophical Analysis

Goals of Pragmatism

At its core, Pragmatism is concerned with the practical outcome of theoretical concepts and beliefs and examines structures of thought primarily in terms of their influence on behavior and action. This denies the age-old dichotomy between mind and body that fueled the debate between Rationalists and Empiricists and instead seeks a middle road between these two polarized groups. Pragmatism allows for the subjective significance of thought, which theoretically satisfies the Rationalist's claims. At the same time, Pragmatism maintains that thought causes a practical difference and it measures the subjective significance of thought up to an objective standard, thereby logically satisfying the Empiricist's claims. Did this formulation conclude the debate between Rationalism and Empiricism? Hardly, but it did provide a uniquely alternative stance that sought to subvert the entire discussion by moving its frame of reference away from the abstract and toward the tangible.

Truth in Pragmatism

Quite possibly the most controversial of the tenets of Pragmatism is its conceptualization of truth. Pragmatism holds that truth is a value derived from the significance given to it by the person(s) judging the value. In contrast to philosophical systems that hold truth to be both objective and eternal, Pragmatism asserts that ideas are made true or

become true. Pragmatists understand truth to be the coalescence of ideas, not as an abstract value assigned to a static fact, but rather as a value taken as true. Pragmatism affirms that ideas are not absolute truths—it holds that the truth of an idea is relative to its present value—and therefore it allows for further deliberation over the significance of that truth value.

Simply put, Pragmatism wants to talk about truth, not Truth. Yet does this negate the possibility that Truth exists? No, but neither does it confirm it. Instead, Pragmatism moves the debate away from theoretical definitions of Truth in the absolute toward the practical question of, “If we assume X is true, then how does that affect Y?”

Conceptual Tools of Pragmatism

Because Pragmatism lacks any single defining dogmatic concept but instead is composed of many relational concepts, it can be difficult to define. Certain philosophical tools are central to the movement. These associated principles are not concretized, and many thinkers who would identify themselves as Pragmatists would not adhere to all of its tenets, which taken individually are inconclusive. Rather, they serve to provide a broad conceptual framework that exemplifies the Pragmatic movement in the United States.

Radical Empiricism

William James, the most influential founder of Pragmatism, considered his early philosophical arguments to fit into the category of Radical Empiricism. He maintained, however, that Radical Empiricism was neither necessary nor sufficient for Pragmatism (1907, ix). Radical Empiricism seeks to take the arguments of Classical Empiricism (the movement that gave total theoretical value to those concepts distinguishable through empirical verification) to its eventual, ultimate (radical) conclusions. More specifically, Radical Empiricism expands and extends the boundaries of what counts as empirical data in order to include subjective experience—that which is experienced by an individual or group of persons. This notion conflicts with the approach of Classical Empiricists who hold the idea that the value of subjective experience as empirical data leaves the door open to *any* experience whatsoever to qualify as empirical data. Furthermore, they argue that Pragmatism gives no standard of judgment to establish the validity of one experience or to rank it over another. In answer to this challenge, Pragmatism provided the needed standard of judgment—that is, the ability of any given experience, no matter how individual or subjective, to have real-world effects.

Pluralism

Another associated philosophical principle that helped define the Pragmatic movement in America is Pluralism. Drawing theoretical support from foundational thinkers such as John Locke (1632–1704) and Thomas Paine (1737–1809), this concept most fundamentally denies the application of *a priori* judgments to systems of belief. Whether a belief is part of a larger religious tradition or unique to an individual, Pluralists are unwilling to deny its validity until they have afforded its adherents the opportunity to express it. As with Radical Empiricism, Pluralism looks to Pragmatism to give it a standard of judgment with which to examine the validity of a given belief or theological system.

Consequentialism

A closely associated philosophical principle to pluralism is Consequentialism, which states that the consequences of an action form the basis for any moral evaluation of that action. Consequentialism considers thought and belief to be discernable only through action, and it contributes to the formulation of Pragmatism in its affirmation that the effects of thought and belief should be subject to moral judgment. Because Pragmatism maintains no claim to any particular moral hierarchy but rather is interested in providing a theoretical framework through which these sorts of claims can be made and judged, what exactly those morals *are* is entirely up to the conjecture of the individual.

Instrumentalism

Instrumentalism is the fundamental notion that ideas are not Platonic abstractions nor absolute truths. Rather, ideas are conceptual tools which have ascribed value that varies according to their ability to help persons understand and interact with the world. Through this view, ideas themselves lack any moral quality until they are applied by the individual; thus, concepts and beliefs are considered neutral until they are applied in a particular context by a particular subject. Instrumentalism, and therefore Pragmatism, claims that the context of a situation in which an individual or group acts on an idea determines that idea's value (for example, the act of cutting flesh is neutral until it is either applied by a thief to a victim or by a surgeon to a tumor). Thus, “true” ideas are tools that work; they are instrumental, but their usefulness as instruments is inescapably conditional. A concept that works well for some tasks, and therefore is true from a Pragmatic perspective, might not work well or be true for other tasks.

Fallibilism

Another important aspect of Pragmatism is its notion that any idea, no matter how seemingly correct, may in fact be false. This view effectively dislodges any notions toward absolutism, thereby allowing more open judgments that a more absolutist view would have quelled outright. Consequently, all ideas are constructions of human beings, and as such, are inherently fallible. However, Pragmatism would also remind us that we can assume the truth of beliefs that have been communally verified insofar as they are beneficial for us in our interactions with the world around us, so long as we remember that our belief is not authoritative for those who do not subscribe to it.

Religious Pragmatism's Rational Grounds for Belief in God

One of the great intellectual challenges to belief, Evidentialism, rose in the late eighteenth century. This perspective fundamentally questioned any belief or concept that did not provide rational evidence for its claim. Problems with this theory quickly became apparent as arguments over definitions for evidence and rationality proved inconclusive. Pragmatism challenged Evidentialism.

Pragmatism sought to reestablish a theoretical framework whereby belief in God, or a higher power, could be rationally postulated. At its most basic, Pragmatism achieved this by claiming the right to believe through communal subjectivism, which places the individual belief in a larger sphere of communal acceptance or denial. Therefore, religious constructs maintain their own systems of reason and logic, which provide a truth framework that allows individual adherents to test or validate their beliefs. Thus, a framework that judged belief in God to be rational would permit such a belief, while an atheistic system of thought would deem this belief to be irrational according to its own contrasting standards.

The first step for persons of conflicting belief patterns to enter into meaningful conversation with one another would be to allow for the reasonableness of one another's beliefs. Ultimately, Pragmatism allows for discussions of belief to occur between otherwise contrasting religious systems because it accepts and even encourages coherent disagreement.

Notable Adherents

Proto-Pragmatists

A number of thinkers have exemplified certain principles that later became foundational to the Pragmatic movement in

America, although these thinkers were active generally before Pragmatism became a distinct movement. Notable Proto-Pragmatists include Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), as well as Alexander Bain (1818–1904) of Scotland. Emerson, the intellectual founder of the movement that came to be known as transcendentalism, was known for his belief that it is not necessary for God to reveal truth directly, but rather that one could intuit truth from nature. This argument provided some of the necessary rational underpinnings for Pragmatism's notion of truth. Bain aided Pragmatism by claiming that the best method for evaluating belief is to examine the actions that it precipitates. Furthermore, he held that a primary role of the religious institution is in formulating and systematically educating people about higher moral ideals.

Classical Pragmatists

Classical Pragmatists had the greatest impact upon the foundations of Pragmatism and established the philosophical movement as a distinct entity. Charles Sanders Peirce coined the term "Pragmatism" sometime during the 1870s. Yet James became the most influential figure in the movement's creation, and scholars generally consider him to be the founder of Pragmatism. In his work entitled *Pragmatism* (1907), James outlined the primary tenets of the philosophical movement, provided examples of its application and practice, and brought the term to popular usage. The book was received by a highly polarized audience; some accepted his views wholeheartedly while others vigorously rejected them. This reaction caused James to publish another work, *The Meaning of Truth* (1909), a series of essays and lectures that more fully defined his use of the concept of truth, particularly in its Pragmatic application.

In particular for religion, James's seminal work, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), examined religious experience as a deeply embedded aspect of human nature, which served to provide an entirely new system for evaluation of religious expression by focusing on the experiences of individual adherents rather than on doctrinal and liturgical systems. At the very least, the methodological claims of the work have shaped the advanced study of religion, focusing on the practical outcome of religious faith and experience rather than dogmatic assertions. This was particularly true in America in the twentieth century, but it has only continued to grow in prominence in the twenty-first.

A generation after Peirce and James, two other thinkers helped carry the torch of Pragmatism into the twentieth century: Ferdinand C. S. Schiller (1864–1937) and John

Dewey (1859–1952). Schiller voiced the concerns of the growing Pragmatic movement for European audiences by arguing for a middle ground between abject materialism and absolute metaphysics. Dewey contributed to the cultural formation of the United States in a variety of ways, among them the continuation of James's discussion of religion in a more resolute manner, arguing in *A Common Faith* (1934) for a formulation of religion that maximized moral and experiential potential while accepting the reality of cultural relativity in its expression.

Neo-Pragmatists

Faced with the new concerns of a “new” world, the Pragmatists of the latter half of the twentieth century needed to address new problems unimagined by the previous generations of the movement. This era also represents a fracturing of the movement as its concepts began to influence many other fields and to intermingle with different philosophies, some new and some old. Due to the nature of Pragmatism and its lack of dogmatic declarations, the philosophy proved to be most unusual in its ability to infiltrate other seemingly competing schools of thought. The Neo-Pragmatists represented a much wider viewpoint than did the previous generation of Pragmatists, and they found themselves applying Pragmatism's principles to a more varied set of issues than ever before.

Because of the popularity of the movement, and its ability to influence thinkers from an infinitely broad spectrum of disciplines, it is not possible to provide an inclusive registry of such thinkers. A few of the most notable, especially those that have influenced religious philosophy, are mentioned.

Richard Rorty (1931–2007) is considered a postanalytical Neo-Pragmatist because he argued that many apparent dilemmas in philosophy are actually analytical language games. He argued that truth is a communal conceptualization, one which benefits the community by providing theoretical foundations upon which to work. From this starting point, he applied Pragmatism to liberal ideologies and used it methodically to dissolve moral arguments based upon a we/they dichotomy, which tends to validate the “we” at the expense of objectifying the “they.”

Jürgen Habermas (1929–) is a German philosopher and sociologist who applied the tenets and theories of Pragmatism to social theory and epistemology. His work, characterized by his training in sociology, tends to focus on the ability of the institution to establish theoretical frameworks for those participating in the institution. Regarding religion, the church

institution is afforded a status commensurate with the sociological context that it is in, and thus its status is a function of the church's positive social utility within a given culture.

Hilary Putnam (1926–) is an American philosopher who has been instrumental in the philosophical landscape of the United States during the latter half of the twentieth century, particularly in the 1960s. His critical method, which he applied even to his own theories, is a signature characteristic of his work. As a result, he sometimes has later taken a radically different stance from his initial response to an issue. For example, he formulated metaphysical realism only to later become one of its most prominent critics. In this sense, Putnam has proven to exemplify the Pragmatic idea of Fallibilism by wholeheartedly applying a principle, only to eventually denounce it upon more thorough inspection and, more importantly, application of the idea.

Neo-Classical Pragmatists

Although some Pragmatists of the latter half of the twentieth century took Pragmatism in new and often different directions, others maintained a more classical approach and believed, for varying reasons, that the older formulations of Pragmatism were still valid, even in the light of new and unforeseen challenges. Although the Neo-Classical Pragmatists did not deny outright the views of the Neo-Pragmatists, they were sometimes critical of the Neo-Pragmatists' use of Pragmatism in radically alternative ways. Instead of starting from an alternative philosophical basis and then applying Pragmatism to that foundation, the Neo-Classical Pragmatists believed it necessary to start from Pragmatism and then apply other disciplines to it. In this way, they remained distinct from the Neo-Pragmatists but were not ignorant of the challenges of the new epoch, and they are therefore referred to by scholars as Neo-Classical. As before, a few of the most notable are described below.

Sidney Hook (1902–1989) is the author of more than twenty works, many of which were devoted to the Pragmatist movement, yet Hook is most notable for exemplifying and living out the Pragmatist ideals. Although his intellectual development was influenced by the popular notions of Dewey and Schiller, his early adulthood was spent as an avid Communist, believing that philosophical principles must be carried out in the form of positive social change for all classes of person. Although he later split with the Communist party after it failed to achieve the results he desired, he remained an articulate activist in the United States the rest of his life. He was especially distinguished for his work with

the American Workers Party and the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and he was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Ronald Reagan. Through his life, Hook was able to exemplify Pragmatic ideals by applying theoretical principles directly to the social ills of modern society in the form of social activism.

Susan Haack (1945–) is most notable for her development of Foundherentism, which seeks a middle road between conflicting philosophies of Foundationalism and Coherentism. Foundationalists claim that certain beliefs are basic and all others are derived from these “foundations.” Coherentists claim that beliefs are valid according to how they mutually function, or cohere, with other held beliefs. Haack navigated the divide between the two competing philosophies through an analogy of a crossword puzzle, which requires both the foundations of the clues and the coherency of the solutions to fit into an organized and coherent structure. The clues (foundations) of the crossword remain static, but our answers must cohere with one another in order to function properly. Similarly, Foundherentism accepts the reality that foundational principles guide our thoughts and actions but also requires interpretation to assume any level of coherency with reality.

Objections and Impact

Objections

Although opponents have raised a variety of theoretical objections to Pragmatism, three of the most fundamental are examined.

The first, and most common, objection is that Pragmatism’s conceptualization of truth is merely disguised Utilitarianism, which reduces truth to an agreement on the utility of a concept and, in the end, has nothing to do with truth. While this is a powerful challenge to Pragmatism, it is also principally a semantic argument. Ultimately, the decision must be left up to individuals to decide whether the definition of truth offered by Pragmatism makes sense and works for them. Of course, even those who disagree with Pragmatism’s notion of truth must admit that beneath all of its intellectual claims, the fact remains that they disagree with it because it does not make sense to them, and thus, in an implicit way, still confirm it even by their choice to reject it.

Another common objection to Pragmatism is that it ultimately devolves into relativism. While this objection is powerful to some, absolutists have historically leveled it at nearly every philosophy or creed that denies absolutism. Essentially

the debate comes down to two key points of contention, namely, whether there is (a) objective truth, and, if so, whether (b) we can have any (absolute) claim to it. Pragmatism makes no claim to a but retorts that even if there is such a thing as objective truth, all claims upon it are contingent and never absolute.

Finally, a closely associated argument against Pragmatism is that it lacks any real standard of judgment and instead merely upholds an entirely subjective theoretical framework that is fundamentally devoid of any real moral claim. This critique can be countered by the notion that Pragmatism has never made a claim toward specific moral criteria; rather, it proposes a system of appropriating moral hierarchies. Thus, two Pragmatists may reach entirely opposite conclusions concerning a moral judgment, and this has been seen by proponents of the movement as a strength, not a weakness.

Impact

Despite the veracity of the polemical attacks waged by the many and varied opponents of Pragmatism, the movement has endured and continues to evolve in the twenty-first century. However, unlike other philosophical movements that are unified by some fundamental theoretical claim, Pragmatism has rarely inspired such zealous devotion. This is not to say that Pragmatism and its followers have a lesser belief in the discipline and its principles, but rather that quite often, Pragmatists do not identify themselves as such and do not consider Pragmatism as the defining characteristic of their intellectual and moral identity.

Yet rather than acting as a hindrance, its peculiar nature among philosophies has enabled Pragmatism to thrive. Unlike some other philosophies that demand a sort of absolute allegiance to a monistic and encompassing core concept from which the rest is built, Pragmatism is not nearly so exclusionary in its scope. Rather than provide the content of belief and practice, it provides a stable framework with which one can apprehend and adopt worldviews without significantly altering the theoretical framework into which it is conjoined. Because of this, leading Pragmatists, each of whom can admirably articulate regarding his or her adherence to Pragmatism, can, ultimately, represent a broad range of beliefs and theories.

This nonexclusionary characteristic of Pragmatism explains why such a philosophy would thrive in the United States. Since the country gained independence from England, the United States has been a place of refuge for innumerable nationalities and creeds and continues to be so even

into the twenty-first century. It should then be understandable why such a philosophy was not only born here but has been embedded in the intellectual undercurrent of the nation for more than a century.

The tenets of Pragmatism strike a deep chord in a nation known for its industrious nature, most clearly defined in the social belief that hard work and determination are fundamental to the fabric of good society. At times Pragmatic truth is looked down upon and labeled “common” by the elite, but the core ethos of the nation is structured around the notion that truth is what is built, what works, what leads us to moral action and better lives. This is one of the most powerful aspects of Pragmatism, that one need not even know its title for the ideology to make sense, to hold sway, and to significantly alter our lives.

It is precisely because Pragmatism is so deeply embedded in the lifeblood of the United States that religions have been forced to answer its challenge, namely, “What difference does any of this make?” As is evidenced by the seeming dissolution of the lives of faith for many in the new millennium, it is a challenge that has not been adequately answered for many persons. In the context of the twenty-first century, a church, regardless of its creed, must prove its worth, both intrinsically and extrinsically, to its adherents. It is telling that many of the “megachurches” of the new century have shed many of the trappings of the older, ritualized religions. How do they decide what to leave behind? It is by whether or not such practices make a tangible, positive difference in the lives of their adherents; this constitutes the core of Pragmatism.

See also *Deism; Idealist Philosophy; Megachurches; Pluralism; Post-modernism; Practical Theology; Psychology of Religion; Religious Studies; Transcendentalism.*

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Preaching

The history of preaching in America stretches back to the opening decades of the seventeenth century, when some colonists who had set their eyes toward New England heard a sermon even before they had arrived to establish a settlement. In 1630, John Winthrop issued a document known as “A Model of Christian Charity” before his ship *Arbella* left England for North America. Though it was a letter to the Church of England, it was actually homiletical in character—infused with Biblical imagery, fashioned with the conviction that the journey to New England was a continuation of the scriptural legacy of God’s people, marked by an affirmation that the colonists were “members of Christ,” filled with the conviction that their journey was blessed with a special providence of God, and summoned by a sense of mission that they were to create “a city upon a hill,” which the eyes of everyone in the world would see.

From this time, preaching has been a dynamic force, a dramatic feature, and a formative voice in American culture.

A Definition of Preaching in America

Religious practices in America developed rather randomly without a single, coherent, religious establishment. Though the roots and the reality of American religious life were largely the expressions of European Christianity, they were marked by diversities of doctrine and practice. Calvinists and Catholics, Moravians and Methodists, Baptists and Brethren, and more cast their image on the American religious landscape. Almost all of them embraced preaching as a primary type of religious performance and practice. But there was no unanimity about defining what constitutes preaching, let alone what constitutes good preaching.

As a result, preaching in America took on a variety of forms, and it acquired a variety of definitions. One classical way to define preaching, affirmed by John Wesley, was “to take a text and apply it.” A more nuanced way to define it, according to the Anglican historian of preaching O. C. Edwards, is that preaching applies a point of doctrine that is usually but not always drawn from a Biblical text. Still another, expressed in some Roman Catholic studies of homiletics, is that preaching is engaging in theological articulation and argument. But these are not the only approaches to religious oratory on the American scene. Preaching in America might be textually based in the scriptures. But it might be topically based in themes, doctrinally based in teachings, morally based in judgments, or contentiously

based in efforts to distinguish one's own religious community from all others.

Preaching has always been an oral/aural activity, primarily intended to be spoken and heard. Yet that has not limited the form to a particular manner or structure. Some preachers delivered their sermons in a style of speech intended for instruction of the included. Other preachers operated in a style of speech intended to motivate the uninitiated to join the included. Preachers in America might speak in steady patterns that deliver a linear logic. They might speak in freely associated patterns that weave nonlinear images. Some preachers might use forms of speech that are more akin to poetry than prose, more akin to the rhythms of music than to the rhetoric of argument. And some have used various forms of choreography along with spoken and sung words. Preachers in America have been known to dance, to hop, to whoop, to sit, to lie down, to stand still, to walk around, to use multiple visual images, to flash electronic images, to use no images at all except the ones they could create verbally, to use props such as sports equipment, and to wave a Bible as if it were a prop that they occasionally read.

The verbal content of preaching in America has taken many different forms. There are some preachers and congregations who place a high value on having carefully written in advance the manuscript of a sermon to be recited aloud. There are other preachers and congregations who place a high value on having written nothing in advance, relying upon the Holy Spirit to give the words that will be uttered extemporaneously. Some American religious traditions have used only authorized homilies that were produced by ecclesiastical authorities and then read by priests or practitioners in their communities. Some traditions expect that well-crafted, thoughtful addresses would be compiled regularly by their spiritual leaders in congregations and uniquely for those congregations. And still others insist the only kind of preaching worth hearing is that in which the proclaimed word is preached without notes, extemporaneously, in a manner that is passionate, emotional, driven by the divine mystery, and deliberately provocative.

This assortment of patterns can sometimes clearly show the prevailing commitments that define certain communities.

For example, in the nineteenth century, certain Jewish congregations left no doubt that they expected their rabbis to prepare and deliver learned sermons, which could teach and instruct, though not necessarily inspire. Moreover, some insisted on exercising quality control over the sermons and

required that a manuscript be prepared in advance and read by a committee of the congregation before it could be delivered on the Sabbath.

In a Pentecostal Christian church, anyone who attempted to deliver a sermon by reading from a prepared manuscript would be judged not to be filled with the Holy Spirit and, hence, not to be gifted for the work of preaching. In Protestant congregations that want learned preachers to deliver thoughtful sermons, a carefully prepared manuscript is expected. In liturgically driven churches, including Anglican and Lutheran to name two, the sermon is typically expected to be associated with one or more of the assigned texts in the lectionary. But even then, different standards will have to be met by the preachers. A Lutheran will more likely be held accountable for adherence to the text, accurate exegesis and exposition of the text, as well as direct application of the text. An Anglican will more likely be held accountable for the reasoned argument that draws out the meaning and application of a text. A Roman Catholic priest will be expected in his preaching to prepare and deliver a homily that fits into the liturgical cycle that connects to the continuing traditions of the church.

There is no single, operative definition of preaching to distinguish it from other forms of public, ecclesiastical discourse. Some have equated or aligned preaching with teaching. Others considered preaching to be akin to exhortation. Still others considered preaching to be a matter of moral guidance. America's *laissez-faire* approach to religious life allows a generous imprecision in the use of the term.

At various times through American history, the term "preaching" has been treated as a synonym for long and bombastic orations, for excessively moralistic lectures, for emotionally feverish incantations, for carefully reasoned speeches, for spontaneous remarks that invoke the name of God, for prophetic appeals that challenge the social order, for patriotic pleadings that blend church and state, for encouraging pep talks that summon individuals to self-actualization, for excoriating critiques that generate shame, for comforting talks that soothe personal hurts, for shameless pleadings to raise funds, for demands that listeners adhere to certain codes of conduct or face expulsion from the community of believers, for promises of heaven, and for damnations to hell. To impose a single definition on preaching in America is to miss the diversity, creativity, and inconsistency of the practice.

Complicating the matter is that there are two basic venues in which American preaching has occurred. One is parochial. The other is public.

Parochial Preaching

“Parochial preaching” is a phrase for referring to what happens homiletically within the structures of an ecclesial organization. This includes the homilies and sermons that are offered as part of worship experiences or liturgies. They may be delivered in congregations, local churches, parishes, or ecclesiastical assemblies such as synods, diocesan conventions, annual conferences, district meetings, and the like. Depending on the ecclesial tradition in which someone preaches, one may have absolute freedom to choose a topic, text, tirade, or theme on which to preach. Or one may be accountable to lectionary texts, which provide a governing rubric for preaching.

In any case, there are always constraints on preaching. Congregations accustomed to intellectual rigor in their preachers’ sermons will not tolerate superficial sentimentality for very long. And congregations that value simple, memorable sentiments will not have patience for intellectually demanding addresses from their preachers. And Roman Catholic parishes, under their supervision of bishops, value a close adherence to official church doctrine.

Cultural expectations matter, also. A Catholic homily, offered in the context of a Mass, has always been secondary to the sacramental rite, both in its liturgical importance and in the amount of time it is likely to consume. In eighteenth century New England, the European colonists and their descendants would assume that their Protestant preacher could deliver a thoughtful, well-structured sermon lasting an hour or more each Sunday. By the middle of the twentieth century, most typical middle-class, white, Protestant congregations—regardless of denomination or doctrine—would expect a preacher to conclude whatever is being said within twenty minutes or so. Well into the twenty-first century, many nonwhite ethnic constituencies still expect a long, thoughtful, emotional form of proclamation, and they would not consider it to be real preaching if it concludes in twenty minutes or so.

Form and length are not the only constraints that exist in various patterns among the preachers in America. Social constraints apply as well.

Those denominations and churches that follow an official calendar may specify the four Sundays before Christmas as the season of Advent and the two Sundays following Christmas as the season of Christmastide. But preachers all understand that they will have to deliver their Christmas messages before December twenty-fifth, because American society has decided that what constitutes the Christmas season are the

months leading up to the eve of Christmas. Similarly, the society has embraced such secular observances as Mother’s Day to the degree that any preacher who ignores that theme on the second Sunday of May will probably be judged harshly by the parish or parochial community for its absence.

The national calendar matters, too. Some preachers will be expected to deliver stirring affirmations of America’s freedom around the fourth of July. A preacher in an African American church setting will have to witness to the ministry of Martin Luther King, Jr., on the weekend in the middle of January that marks his birthday. But it will be acceptable for a preacher in some white churches to overlook Dr. King’s work on that same Sunday.

In local churches and congregations, in Catholic parishes and Protestant churches, and in denominational gatherings, theological, political, social, ideological, economic, and ethnic factors are among the many elements that shape parochial preaching.

Public Preaching

“Public preaching” has a different character. In part, that is because it occurs in different venues that may include campgrounds, theaters, gymnasias, basketball arenas, racetracks, parks, stadiums, lakeside retreats, and itinerant circuits, along with other settings. There is an extensive history of this public preaching in America. Early Methodist and Baptist preachers traveled in every direction toward which the expanding frontier moved, preaching in barns and forest clearings and along streams. George Whitefield (1714–1770), an Englishman who was the most widely known preacher in America in the eighteenth century, made several visits to the North American continent for itinerant preaching missions from New England to the southern colonies. Paul Quinn was an African American who preached in the nineteenth century from such sites as a boat in the middle of the Mississippi to slaves who gathered on the Missouri side of the river. Francis Asbury (1745–1816), who dominated American Methodism from the time of the revolutionary war until his death, was tirelessly on the move to preach and to administer the growing denomination. He often traveled with Harry Hosier (1750–1806), an illiterate but spellbinding black preacher who was not welcome in white circles. Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874) was not permitted by the Methodists to be ordained, nor was she authorized officially to preach, because of her gender. But she was one of the most widely heard and most widely traveled preachers of the nineteenth century, in campgrounds and other public settings for preaching.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, a particular type of preaching was perfected for these public venues and evangelical revivals. Developed by Charles G. Finney (1792–1875) as part of what he called “new measures,” this was a style of preaching that used reason and emotion to provoke listeners into the posture of making a decision to embrace faith. It was this kind of preaching that became a staple in public revivals.

Public preaching also was more ecumenical, long before that word was usable let alone fashionable. The phenomenon of Finney’s “new measures” traveled well beyond his own denomination and well beyond the Calvinist traditions of his own church. Indeed, he did not meet the educational criteria to be ordained by the Presbyterians, but he was ordained anyway because of his public achievements. Neither did Billy Sunday (1862–1935) meet the criteria to be ordained in his church, but his remarkable achievements in the evangelical revivals of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had influences that spanned multiple traditions.

Most prominent among the traveling evangelists, and probably the most widely heard preacher in human history, was Billy Graham (1918–). He had technical advantages that itinerants in earlier eras did not have. Airplanes could take him to many places in the United States and to far flung sections of the world. Rapid means of communication and sophisticated systems of organization brought immense crowds of people to hear him. Despite the huge numbers who listened to him and despite the countless numbers of those who responded to his invitation to come forward and accept Jesus as their personal savior, he focused his messages on individuals’ commitments to the Christian faith. He did not seek to engage social systems or systemic ills in society through his preaching.

The degree to which public preaching had an impact on public institutions and social reform is exceedingly difficult to quantify. Yet it is true that preaching which addressed itself to public issues raised the profile of issues that might have been less clearly noticed or might have gone unnoticed by the larger society altogether.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, the emergence of the Social Gospel movement through the preaching of such figures as Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918) and Washington Gladden (1836–1918) made poverty a systemic aspect of society that Christians had to address. In that same era, Russell Conwell (1843–1925) traveled the country delivering a message that was partly a social commentary, partly a sermon, partly a sop to be

satisfied with one’s own situation. His talk was called “Acres of Diamonds.” Delivered more than 6,000 times in all sorts of public places, it was essentially a summons to find the resources for a fulfilling life right where one is located.

Such public preaching turned many different kinds of people into preachers. William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925) was an incomparable orator, a member of Congress, a cabinet secretary, a frequent nominee for the presidency of the United States, an outspoken critic of the Darwinian principles concerning evolution, a Christian socialist, an advocate of social reform, and an irrepressible public speaker who said he would rather speak on religion than politics. That the two could be blended in one layperson’s public preaching did not seem unnatural.

This kind of public preaching was also demonstrated a half-century after Bryan was at his peak. When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to address a crowd of roughly 300,000 persons, he delivered what has become known as his “I Have a Dream” speech. That title became attached to his address because of its closing portion. But the address in its full form offers a remarkable example of the character of public preaching that is intended to—and has the impact to—force the larger society to face major social and political, as well as spiritual and ethical, issues. In portions of his great speech, Dr. King was the public intellectual who thoughtfully framed major questions; he was the identifiably African American preacher in his phrases and cadences; and he was the social prophet who challenged the entire society to pursue its own vision of itself, in the process of which the entire nation would be transformed.

Public preaching in America could involve speaking with small clusters of people, or it could involve delivering orations to massive crowds of people. But it always involved a preacher speaking personally to some group, until the technology for preaching changed.

Until the early part of the twentieth century, public preaching was limited in its reach to the crowd that might assemble in a specific location to hear a person speak. Thomas Edison’s recording devices allowed the human voice to be captured, but there were not enough machines widely available for large numbers of persons to replay preachers’ voices. However, with the emergence of electronic media, public preaching that reached massive audiences became possible without the preacher being personally present.

The media became many. Radio, television, wire recorders, tape recorders, digital data recorders, and live streaming

on the Internet allowed the venues for public preaching to reach beyond boundaries of place and time.

Initially, much of the early radio preaching was considered simply to be an extension of a parochial preacher. Leading preachers with prominent pulpits in major media centers—notably, but not exclusively, New York—arranged time on the air and delivered revised versions of their parish sermons to listeners through local and network distributors. Some simply had their church services broadcast live.

The most successful forms of public preaching on the air, however, were those by people who mastered the new medium by discovering that radio is an intimate means for making contact and communicating with individuals. In aggregate numbers, a preacher could reach millions of listeners. But public preaching by means of radio was actually a conversation between a lone speaker and a lone listener. Radio was not simply an opportunity to increase the number of people whom public preaching could reach. It was a very different method for communication, reaching large numbers of people by talking to them one at a time.

It was also value neutral. Unconstrained by the contexts that affected parochial preaching, public preaching on the radio could allow individual listeners to paint in their own imaginations the persona of the preacher and the purpose of the preacher's message. Public preaching, then, could soothe an individual's hurts, sanction an individual's hopes, or stoke an individual's fears. It offered an opportunity for a renegade Roman Catholic priest named Father Charles Coughlin (1891–1979). Coughlin was an anti-Semite, a fascist, and an isolationist. But his radio audience in the 1930s was estimated to be as large as forty million Americans who heard him every week. Radio also offered an effective public preacher an opportunity to seek financial support from individuals for the radio ministry—without ever developing any accountability for what the preacher did with funds that were collected. Radio allowed public preaching to be both intimate and anonymous.

Television offered a completely different medium for public preaching. Although akin to radio in its electronic availability across vast distances, television is neither intimate nor anonymous. It reaches not the one but the many. Aside from a very few, very early practitioners of public preaching on television—such as the Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, Fulton J. Sheen (1895–1979)—those who succeeded in taking their ministries to the small screen were the ones who understood the dimensions of a big production, commanding big budgets. The disembodied voice on radio

that spoke to an individual sitting in a room at home required no attention to appearance and modest amounts of money. The embodied scene on television required attention to details of appearance and consumed vast amounts of money. Unlike radio, television does not permit a viewer to create a picture from his or her own imagination. The public preacher on television has to create one. Public preaching had to learn to use facial makeup, false backgrounds, and finagled camera angles. Moreover, the content of the public preaching is affected by the medium. Television can only use what is visually appealing, so the content of sermons has to defer to the appearance on the screen.

For some decades in the twentieth century, one of the most successful entrepreneurs in television preaching was Robert Schuller (1926–), who moved into the public arena first as the proprietor of a drive-in movie theater and later at his Crystal Cathedral. To some, that building in Garden Grove, California, is actually a television stage more than a church structure. It gathers a Sunday morning congregation under its roof, but its primary use is to serve effectively as a setting for a television production.

Schuller's successors in the mastery of this medium include the next generation of public preachers, such as Joel Osteen (1963–). As a young man with an incomplete university education and no theological education, he was hired to run the television operations of his father's ministry. It soon became clear that beyond any technical skills for working behind the scenes, the younger Osteen was a telegenic communicator with an appealing smile and an easy manner who belonged in front of the camera. Buoyed by growing audience numbers and helped by some significant financial support, Osteen reportedly spent most of a hundred million dollars to buy and renovate an arena formerly used for professional basketball, turning it into a television studio with massive appeal.

One lingering question is whether this form of public preaching is actually more “public” than it is “preaching.” The content of public preaching has always been, by its very nature, a function of the public that it could reach. Whereas the content of parochial preaching is limited and constrained by its context—denominational, doctrinal, or cultural—the content of public preaching creates its own context. It can be Biblically prophetic or ideological hateful. It can be socially progressive or financially self-serving. It can seek to use public preaching as a means for social transformation or it can seek to use public preaching for no social purpose at all.

Emerging Issues in Preaching

In the ongoing and inconclusive effort to define preaching in America, one of the most enduring formulations was offered by Phillips Brooks (1835–1893), an Episcopal priest and bishop from Massachusetts. Brooks said that preaching was the proclamation of truth through personality. In his view, preaching is incarnational. There is no such thing as the pure content of the gospel. It is contained in human means of memory, and it is conveyed through human means of communication. The rich diversity of preaching in America illustrates the merits of Brooks's definition.

When Charles G. Finney devised his new measures for revival preaching, he drew upon a doctrinal point of view that permitted a sizable role for human agency in the pursuit of spiritual conversion. He implemented a variety of manipulative devices such as an “anxious bench” and a summons to take personal responsibility for personal salvation. It was an odd theological blend of Finney's own heritage of Calvinism with the historic approach of Arminianism. Early in the twentieth century, as a Pentecostal revival appeared, openness to and dependence upon the work of the Holy Spirit became more prominent in American preaching. And Pentecostal revivalists resisted the role of human agency or influence in religious conversions.

In the twenty-first century, other forms of preaching are emerging and will emerge. What appears to be the denouement of denominationalism will give rise to other forms of church life and, as a result, to other forms of parochial preaching. The increasingly rapid rise of new media will offer increased numbers of options for public preaching. The forces that drive the content of preaching in America will continue to evolve. But it may be that Phillips Brooks's definition will endure, even if the blend of truth and personality is repeatedly rebalanced.

See also *Congregations*; *Education: Seminaries and Theological Education*; *Electronic Church*; *Emerging Church Movement*; *Holidays*; *Megachurches*; *Missions* entries; *Radio*; *Revivalism* entries; *Television*; *Women: Ordination of*; *Worship* entries.

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Presbyterians: Colonial

North American Christianity, in all its variety, adapted distinct European ethnic and religious identities to the realities and needs of the New World. In the sixteenth century, Roman Catholic settlers and military expeditions spread out across North America, establishing military and commercial sites in alliance with or in opposition to indigenous peoples. These forces successfully repelled French Huguenot settlements in Florida, the Carolinas, and Virginia, but by the early seventeenth century, Dutch, French, and English Protestant settlers had returned to establish permanent colonies along the Atlantic coastline. The story of the arrival and growth of these varied Protestant colonial groups in the seventeenth century provided a compelling founding narrative for future generations, admittedly told from the perspective of the Protestant groups themselves, and for their consumption. It is important to note Roman Catholics preceded Protestants into the New World and competed with Protestants throughout the colonial period, and that Roman Catholic and Protestant engagement with indigenous peoples included alliances, evangelization, intermarriage, and enculturation. While Roman Catholic settlements were most often expressions/extensions of ecclesial and political authority, Protestant settlements in North America were often in uneasy relation to ecclesial and political power, or in outright dissent. North American settlements originated as joint-stock, proprietary, charter, or direct rule royal colonies, but all invoked and employed religious language, traditions, and practice.

Reformed Protestant theology provided the predominant values and vocabulary of religion in colonial North America. As a specific subgroup of the Reformation movements, Reformed Protestantism is commonly reduced to “Calvinism” but is better understood as a broader theological tradition compatible with Episcopal, Presbyterian, and

Congregationalist forms of church governance. Sixteenth-century Reformed Protestants who shaped this tradition included Ulrich Zwingli, Heinrich Bullinger, Martin Bucer, John Calvin, Caspar Olivianus, and Theodore Beza; English and Scots reformers John Knox and Thomas Cartwright; and William Ames, Richard Sibbes, and Thomas Goodwin of the richly varied Puritan movement. While serving national causes effectively, Reformed Protestants understood themselves as part of a transnational movement of renewal, seeking the reformation of self, congregation, and community through preaching within a rightly formed community, and providing structures and encouragements for the pursuit of a godly life. Some Reformed Protestant groups pursued intentional (covenanted) groups within congregations, while others, such as the Pilgrims, organized separatist congregations. After failed efforts along the Atlantic coastline, Anglicans in Jamestown, Virginia, Pilgrim separatists in Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts, and Puritan dissenters in Massachusetts Bay led the way among the English in the opening decades of the seventeenth century.

Early Congregations

Although the exact percentage of Presbyterians among the settlers of the New World is unknown, Cotton Mather (1663–1728) considered perhaps a fourth of the Puritans to be Presbyterian. Among the Pilgrims came Presbyterian Elder William Brewster (c. 1566–1644), and Presbyterian Puritans arrived aboard the *Talbot*, landing in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1629, joined in 1631 by Presbyterian John Eliot. In 1634 Presbyterian pastors John Noyes and Thomas Parker arrived in Newbury, Massachusetts, with other Presbyterians who joined with their Congregationalist brothers and sisters in New World settlements. New Englanders paid close attention to events in England, with some hoping for return to the home country. The leaders of the “New England Way” of Congregationalism, John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, and John Davenport, resisted Presbyterians in New England and declined to join the Westminster Assembly in the 1640s because they believed Presbyterian interests were in control of that assembly. The careful adaptation of the Westminster Confession by New England congregations in the Cambridge Platform (1648) and by English congregations in the Savoy Declaration (1658) illustrate basic theological agreement and basic polity disagreements among English-speaking Reformed groups. Congregationalists and Presbyterians found common cause as dissenters after the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660 and enacted

cooperative agreements such as the Heads of Agreement (1691) in England. In New England, the Saybrook Platform (1708) imitated some aspects of Presbyterian polity and indicated the degree to which Congregationalists were ready to work on joint efforts and to establish enduring associations. In the right circumstances, shared Reformed theology enticed Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Anglicans to occasional cooperation in missions, education, and church planting in some areas, and also to cooperate in resistance to Baptist and Anabaptist groups. Presbyterians and Congregationalists invariably united (with Baptist support) in opposition to Anglican efforts to establish resident bishops for North America.

Colonial religious discourse engaged competing commitments and values within a predominantly Reformed worldview, negotiating differences among the wide diversity of national and ethnic origins, political experience and preference, religious experience norms, and comfort with creedal subscription. Majority religious discourse exhibited Reformed values: ever critical of superstition, idolatry, and ostentation; wary of unchecked power and imposed (mandatory) norms/standards; expecting extensive teaching and expository preaching from trained clergy; comfortable with Bible-based aesthetics, literature, and ethics; and expectant of experiencing God’s grace in the midst of an effortful and disciplined life. Reformed ecclesiology rejected Roman Catholic views of the integration of church and society but also rejected Anabaptist denials of any correlation of church and society. Reformed ecclesiology inevitably brought all broad social issues into the consideration of the church community. Colonial congregations reflected the struggle over difficult social issues. Even in separatist and sectarian expressions, Reformed Christian congregations engaged social questions since society was seen as the arena of God’s redemptive work, and the church, whatever its polity, was placed in the world for the purpose of reformation of society, not as a refuge or cloistered escape from society.

Disputes regarding the nature and forms of the church occupied the second and third generation of the Reformation traditions and help identify the traditions that flourished in the New World, as individuals and groups challenged the established parish system of New England Congregationalism, and the established parish system of Carolina Anglicanism. The emergence of denominations proved well suited to the context of the colonial era and early years of the Republic and the need for expressing the diversity of the various religious groups in the New World. Reformed theological

identity was faithfully expressed in Congregational, Presbyterian, and Episcopal forms, whether established or free, including many Baptist groups, individuals, and small sectarian communities. Colonial congregations organized themselves (whether cooperating or independent), disciplined themselves, and cultivated leadership attentive to the challenges of achieving and maintaining the right balance of doctrinal clarity, along with enacting biblical mandates and maintaining proper organization. For isolated communities, congregationalist polity was a necessity. For congregations near one another, cooperation was early and expected, so that forms of “presbyterianized congregationalism,” or “congregationalized presbyterianism” emerged among many congregations throughout New England in the seventeenth century. Some overtly Presbyterian forms emerged, since some early settlers were clearly Presbyterian in sentiment, formation, and conviction. Others responded flexibly by joining with the existing religious group in their area. Dutch Reformed Christians, French Calvinists (Huguenot), and English Puritan Presbyterians were among the first settlers, with English Independency (Congregationalism) predominating. Dutch Reformed colonists under Jonas Michaelius (1577–c. 1638) are credited with the first explicitly Presbyterian polity organized in 1628 in New Amsterdam (now New York City). Dutch (and later German Reformed) congregations were under the jurisdiction of the Classis of Amsterdam until the early 1790s. French Huguenots organized recognizably Presbyterian congregations in Carolina colonies in the 1680s, though the majority of these congregations conformed to Anglican establishment by the early eighteenth century.

Diversity is observable among Protestant North American religious groups from the first, with New England predominantly Congregationalist, the southern colonies predominantly Anglican and Roman Catholic, and the middle colonies a great mix. Though the Reformed tradition has set the terms for much of the discourse, other traditions were clearly beginning in the early eighteenth century. In Pennsylvania, for example, Mennonite, Moravian, and Lutheran pietists sought quiet places and avoided political involvement. Early Quakers were firebrands who sought to provoke New England by confrontation and public spectacle in the 1650s. In the next generations, no less faithful but somewhat calmer Quakers exercised political and social leadership in Pennsylvania.

Presbyterians organized congregations on Long Island by the 1640s and then expanded into New Jersey, to Newark (1667), Elizabeth (1668), Woodbridge (1680), and Fairfield

(1680), before crossing the Delaware River into Philadelphia (1692), with additional foundations in the Carolinas. While founded by Presbyterians, these early congregations resemble Congregationalist groups in the same era. Boston’s Benjamin Colman (1673–1747) obtained Presbyterian ordination when in England in 1699, in part because he knew Congregationalist pastors of Boston would not allow his ordination, especially in service to the innovations of Boston’s Brattle Street Church. With a Reformed ecclesiology that viewed congregations as mixed assemblies, neither as pure nor as sure as the gathered congregations of New England Congregationalism, Presbyterian congregations were comparatively easier to join, as they did not require the public narrative of conversion. Presbyterians were noted for earnest preparation for the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper and lengthy catechesis. The authority of local assemblies was lodged with the *presbyteroi* (presbyters or elders), including pastors. While Congregationalists considered cooperative agreements and arrangements to be ad hoc and intentionally temporary, Presbyterians considered the continuing work of a presbytery to be desirable and legitimate.

Francis Makemie and American Presbyterianism

By gathering ministers into a presbytery in 1706, Francis Makemie (c. 1658–1708) is rightly considered a founder of what became American Presbyterianism’s largest and most prominent denomination. Other Presbyterian and Reformed groups would join this denomination, and from it several groups split. Some Scots Seceder and Covenanter groups, clearly Presbyterian and Reformed, have continued with little regard or relation to this larger Presbyterian group. Makemie was born in County Donegal, Scotland. He was trained at the University of Glasgow and was licensed by the Presbytery of Laggan, Ulster, by 1682. After preaching in Ireland, Makemie began his commissioned work in 1683, for service as an evangelist or as a settled pastor in the British colonies, including Barbados. During the next twenty-five years, Makemie founded congregations, encouraged evangelists, and secured funds for preachers and exhorters, and he participated in several significant conflicts. His efforts to resist Anglican establishment motivated him to organize this first presbytery, in Philadelphia. It is uncertain whether elders were part of that first meeting, but by the second meeting, elders sent by local congregations joined the seven ministers in attendance. In 1706 Makemie and John Hampton were arrested in New York, charged by Governor Cornbury of preaching without license. Makemie successfully defended

his rights against the broad claims of Anglican authority, and the specific colony claims by Cornbury. Makemie claimed the same rights and protections for religious dissenters throughout the colonies as were enjoyed in Britain.

In 1716 the presbytery reorganized into a larger regional structure, establishing the synod of Philadelphia with four proposed presbyteries serving its twenty-five clergy members. Though one presbytery (Snow Hill) did not organize, the synod's three working presbyteries of Philadelphia, New Castle, and Long Island received new clergy members and organized new congregations. In these years, the respective role and functions of the synod and presbyteries were not defined by a constitution or a confessional standard. All agreed to resist Anglicans, sectarians, and anti-trinitarians, but the affirmations of American Presbyterians were quite diverse, a mixture of compromise and resistance in imitation of Presbyterians in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Significant differences are traceable along ethnic lines. American Presbyterians of Scots-Irish and Scottish origin tended to advocate closer adherence, or "strict subscription" to the Westminster confessional standards in accord with the Scottish example. American Presbyterians of English and of Puritan stock tended to imitate the antisubscriptionist views among the English Presbyterians. Still other American Presbyterians of Scots and Irish origin looked to the compromise of the 1720 "Pacific Articles" of the Irish Presbyterians, who sought subscription to standards while providing some room for disagreement over nonessential articles of faith. Additionally, the synod's slow and slight response to the scandalous behavior of minister Robert Cross offended some and prompted others to support minister George Gillespie in his request for a discussion of process and behavior norms for the synod members. Some pressed for subscription to Westminster, while others organized to resist such a requirement.

Jonathan Dickinson (1688–1747) offered a sermon before the synod in 1722 that pressed the antisubscriptionist case, arguing that Presbyterians must not follow the example of Roman Catholics and Anglicans in requiring subscription to an oath or creed beyond the scriptures. Dickinson noted creedal subscription solved the wrong problem, since anyone could sign a document while still living a scandalous life and believing a heterodox creed. By 1724 the Presbytery of New Castle required ministerial candidates to subscribe to Westminster, but synod minutes noted ministers had been accepted into presbyteries without even being asked about confessional standards. While in 1726 Puritan Mather in Boston proclaimed that all New England "adhered" to the

Westminster Confession, American Presbyterians' arguments over subscription were the same as had divided Presbyterians in Ireland, Scotland, and England in these years. In 1727 John Thompson pressed for full subscription to the Westminster standards. The synod's meeting in September 1729 appointed a committee whose work and subsequent Adopting Act effectively met the requirements and concerns of each group present. The Adopting Act contains the key components of American Presbyterian identity, specifying an adherence to the doctrinal standards of Westminster, distinguishing (without defining) between essentials and nonessentials, and requiring agreement on essentials of the faith. The Adopting Act also provided for examination and discernment to determine whether disagreements touched on essentials of the faith. Candidates for ordination or transfer membership would be examined by presbyteries, and while "God alone is the Lord of conscience," the synod or presbytery would examine and evaluate candidates to maintain standards of doctrine and behavior. The Adopting Act sought a way to combine several distinct commitments and perspectives. After those present discussed and resolved objections regarding the Westminster standards, the synod subscribed to the Westminster standards as authoritative

The Adopting Act and Presbyterian Identity

The Adopting Act of September 19, 1729, is rightly considered a significant expression of the central aspects of identity for this largest group in American Presbyterians. The act was more than a compromise among diverse groups that comprised the synod, since it accommodated competing values held among Presbyterians. Opposing interpretations of the Adopting Act continued the very contentions the act was designed to contain. Subsequent interpretations of the act, especially in the years surrounding the new school/old school divisions of the 1830s, served the distinct parties/perspectives within American Presbyterianism. Each extreme position could find its forebears in a partial reading of the events of that day. Those supporting a close adherence and subscription have focused on the afternoon session of that September meeting of the synod, with its wholesale adoption of the Westminster standards, while antisubscriptionists have focused on the morning session of that same meeting, with its generous provision of room for disagreement and objection through scruple. Both views are correct since both are found in the Adopting Act resulting from the full day of the synod meeting. Charles Hodge (1797–1878) well represented the old school interpretation of the Adopting Act,

while later the writings of Charles Briggs (1841–1913) represented a new school reading of the Adopting Act and the diversity of colonial Presbyterianism. In the colonial and early Republic periods, partisans continued in parsing the Adopting Act, and the center of this Presbyterian Church grew through evangelism, education, and church planting.

Subscription issues were sharpened during the 1730s, with subscriptionists gaining control through majority voting in the presbyteries. When Philadelphia minister Samuel Hemphill's plagiarism and heresy led to his suspension from the ministry in 1735, everyone seemed to have an opinion, including the meddling Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790). Though Hemphill had registered no scruples about the Westminster standards, the exposure of his plagiarism of Unitarian sermons strengthened the cause of the subscriptionists, who claimed a strict application of Westminster confessional orthodoxy would be a bulwark against heresy. By 1736 a subscriptionist interpretation of the Adopting Act carried the synod and helped precipitate the first schism among these Presbyterians. Between 1741 and 1758 the Old Side (subscriptionists) successfully excluded the New Side (antiprescriptionists). While the New Side and Old Side organized competing synods, the Great Awakening would change American Presbyterianism.

American Presbyterians were committed participants in the renewals and revivals of the Great Awakening, whether in support or opposition. American Presbyterians drew from their traditions in contributions of Ulster revivalism, Welsh itinerancy, Scots sacramental seasons, and English Puritan conversionism, led by preachers who attained almost celebrity status in colonial society. George Whitefield (1714–1770) (Anglican) and Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) (Congregationalist/Presbyterian) were the most prominent preachers of the Awakening, preceded by Dutch Reformed preachers such as Theodore Frelinghuysen (1691–1747). Soon these preachers were joined by a new generation of robust and effective preacher/pastors trained in any of the dozens of “log college” or private academies, rather than in Scottish Colleges or Harvard, Yale, King's (Columbia), or the College of William and Mary. The most notable log college was founded by William Tennent (1673–1746) in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. What later became the College of New Jersey, and then Princeton College, has roots in this rude log college.

The Great Awakening

The Great Awakening brought opportunities and crises to local congregations and changed the agenda and orientation

of American Presbyterianism. The New Side, those supportive of revival, flourished and expanded in new congregations and presbyteries, while those who opposed revival receded during the schism years of 1741–1758. The revival advanced in waves, though sometimes in excess and often with censoriousness. Gilbert Tennent's 1740 sermon, “The Dangers of an Unconverted Ministry,” left little middle ground and even encouraged all “who live under the Ministry of dead Men,” to “repair to the Living, where they may be edified.” When Dickinson's centrist group allied with the revivalists in 1745, the look and feel of American Presbyterianism would come to resemble the New Side in private piety and in public worship. By the mid-1740s, Tennent apologized for his intemperate language and pursued a more irenic course. The causes of the schism included conflicts over subscription and ministerial behavior, magnified by disputes over itinerancy and worship styles. Most Presbyterians accepted new forms of worship, often employing the affective hymnody of Isaac Watts (1674–1748), displacing the traditions of psalm singing. Other Presbyterian groups retreated into ethnic enclaves. Some Presbyterian groups were not impressed but rather were offended: the Scots Covenanter, or Reformed Presbyterian Church, organized in the mid-1740s in protest of the “almost boundless terms of Church Communion” sanctioned by the “pretended Presbyterian Ministers” who had composed the Adopting Act of 1729.

By the time of the reunion of the Old Side and New Side in 1758, most American Presbyterians had adopted the dynamism of the Great Awakening within a flexible but durable voluntary organization, structured loosely, and led by trained clergy and elders. The Presbyterians expanded rapidly, evangelizing and organizing Scots-Irish immigrants and others, especially in Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Kentucky. The compromises necessary in the reunion of 1758 did not resolve the continuing disagreements among Presbyterians but contained and channeled these disagreements until, joined with new issues, the Presbyterians would split again in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The appointment of John Witherspoon (1723–1794) as president of Princeton University in 1768 brought important changes. While the theological emphases of Edwards remained influential in New England for an additional century, college-trained Presbyterians learned to follow the Scottish Enlightenment that Edwards had opposed. While Edwards was often invoked, he was rarely read by the new generation of Princeton graduates. Witherspoon led the way in his required lectures in moral philosophy. Students found

Witherspoon flexible in response to his new context, reversing himself on several fronts to fight New World foes. Witherspoon opposed the metaphysical idealism and conversionism of Edwards and directed his students and faculty in realist virtue ethics, naturalistic in its orientation and language, and no longer needful of the conversion experience that had provided what Edwards described as a “new sense.” Witherspoon embraced Scottish moral philosophy and encouraged his coreligionists to full participation in the great political struggle for independence. Indeed, Witherspoon was the only clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence and served in the Continental Congress. James Madison (1751–1836) was trained under Witherspoon, and Madison’s federalist structure of the U.S. Constitution showed his Princeton training with its theological/political insights favoring separation of powers, representative deliberative assemblies, and expressed limits placed on individual offices.

Presbyterians and the Forming of America

Throughout the colonies, Presbyterian and Reformed Protestants participated broadly in escalating resistance to the power of the British Crown. Presbyterians in Pennsylvania found a surprising ally in Franklin, whose mid-1750s leadership of the “Quaker Party” in the Pennsylvania Assembly supported financial and military responses that challenged pacifism as state policy. The continuing migration of Scots and Scots-Irish (mostly Presbyterians) into Pennsylvania led to city/country conflicts but also led to armed conflict with indigenous peoples, whose alliances with the French sharpened divisions between Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions in the New World. By the mid-eighteenth century, Pennsylvania pacifists, Lutherans, and Anabaptists were governed by Anglicans and Presbyterians ready to take up arms. In the decades leading up to armed conflict, Presbyterians divided over issues of strategy and allegiance, but the majority of American Presbyterians found their independence compatible with Reformed theological politics and culture. While there are sterling examples of public agitation and contention regarding slavery, the majority of the emerging denomination was captive to majority culture social values and accepted compromise as the cost of unity.

By the 1770s the synod design had proven inadequate to the growing denomination. By the meeting of the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), in May 1789, a form of government had been crafted indebted to several sources. This delegate assembly borrowed much from Scottish practice, though in America the presbytery had

greater power than the national assembly. This denomination, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, comprised four synods, sixteen presbyteries, with a little more than four hundred congregations and one hundred seventy-seven ministers, and more than one hundred licensed ministers in training.

Reformed and Presbyterian governance had helped inform the federalism of the U.S. Constitution, while the consciousness of a new national identity was reflected in the denominations that emerged. Present at the creation of the new nation, the Presbyterian Church (USA) was similarly complicit in the ethical compromises of the new nation. Presbyterians exhibited the values of the majority culture of the new nation, yielding purity to maintain unity and peace across regional boundaries. American Presbyterians encouraged women (privately) and men (publicly) to evangelize westward and among immigrants, indigenous peoples, and the enslaved, but Presbyterians acquiesced to the slave power. Samuel Davies (1723–1761) had pioneered evangelizing among Virginia slaves in the 1740s and 1750s but was himself a slaveholder. David Rice, converted under Davies in Virginia, was an ardent opponent of slavery and led the cause in Kentucky from 1783. In 1787 the synod of New York and Philadelphia had called for the end of slavery, and the General Assembly of 1792 made a similar declaration, but most Presbyterians endorsed a gradualism that enabled the growth of the slave power. Benjamin Rush (1745–1813), prominent Presbyterian and patriot, cited antislavery as one element of his departure from the Presbyterians. Other Presbyterian and Reformed groups were more regional/sectional than national and engaged the slave issue in different ways. The descendants of Scots Seceders and Covenanters, German Reformed, and Huguenots troubled the conscience of the new nation in agitation for social reform.

Presbyterians were well suited to expand westward, first into Tennessee and Kentucky in competition with Methodists and Baptists, then into the Northwest Territories, in cooperation with Congregationalists in the Plan of Union of 1801. Presbyterians proved effective in the tasks of evangelization and institution building, cooperating within the denomination and with other Reformed groups (especially Congregationalists) in the western territories and states. Disagreements and splits were ahead, and though Baptist and Methodist growth would outstrip Presbyterian growth in the early national period, Presbyterians had provided a vital voice to the central values of identity, confidence, and anxieties that formed the new nation.

See also *Antinomian Controversy*; *Bible* entries; *Congregationalists*; *Dutch Reformed*; *Education: Colleges and Universities*; *Evangelicals: Colonial America*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Mainline Protestants*; *New England Region*; *Pilgrims*; *Politics: Colonial Era*; *Presbyterians* entries; *Puritans*; *Reformed Denominational Family*; *Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*.

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Presbyterians: Nineteenth Century

Traditionally Presbyterianism, a branch of Calvinism and the Reformed tradition, has emphasized two ideals: the sovereignty of God and the guiding authority of the Bible, which reveals the doctrine of grace mediated through Jesus Christ that is applicable to faith and life. To this end, preaching and an evolving church governing polity were the hallmarks of Presbyterianism in the new republic of the United States.

Through war and revival, through mission and divisive debate, the social, political, and scientific struggles of nineteenth-century America would test the meaning and application of this traditional view and would cause it to adapt to fit the ever-forming and reforming Presbyterian ideology and its identity in America.

Presbyterians, like most Americans of the nineteenth century, were profoundly influenced by four major and connected movements in American history: abolitionism, immigration, urbanization/industrialization (and related scientific advancements), and revivalism. Withstanding the waves of change that these influences brought, American Presbyterianism would emerge by the late nineteenth century having birthed several theologically related denominations well suited to serve its various Reformed constituencies. There were several waves of immigration from Scotland that brought with them established Presbyterian ideologies. At times they sought unification with other Reformed and Presbyterian Church denominations in the United States. At other times they found themselves politically, socially, or theologically estranged from members of their own theological family. In each of these times, divisive or unifying historical figures would emerge from these movements to attend to the Presbyterians' struggle for identity amid a backdrop of America's continued expansion and definition.

Presbyterian Polity and Mission

Presbyterian polity became a guiding principle for all of the church's struggles throughout the nineteenth century. Presbyterian polity values a representative form of government, similar to that which guided the founders of the United States of America. This polity grants power to a more broadly based constituency of both clergy and laity (the laypersons elected to serve in leadership positions are called "elders" and are ordained to that position). Key committees at all levels of governance are made up of one-half clergy and one-half elders. This "constitutional" model is essentially different from the Congregationalist model of local church autonomy in matters of theology and ordination, and the Episcopal model, which grants power to a hierarchical system of bishops and archbishops.

The Presbyterian political system evolved throughout the nineteenth century. It eventually took shape granting significant power to the local geographic area (such as a city), which included many Presbyterian churches, and is called a "presbytery." As the system evolved much later, several presbyteries would form the next level of governance, called a

“synod.” The semi-annual meeting of the entire body came to be known as the “General Assembly” and was constituted by the same ratio of elders and clergy elected by the presbyteries. Policy for the entire church, including ordination standards, was determined at the General Assembly, but the actual ordination to elected office took place for elders in the local church and for clergy at the presbytery level.

Presbyterians during the nineteenth century were involved in far more than issues of polity. American Presbyterianism vastly expanded its mission work and gave birth to scores of colleges and seminaries that served to reinforce its historical emphasis on education and on preaching. Presbyterians wanted to feed the spiritual needs of people as they explored and settled the frontier. Yet during all of this activity and expansion, like other denominations in America, Presbyterians struggled with questions surrounding the abolition of slavery. That struggle would take a toll on Presbyterian unity. Yet throughout the nineteenth century there would be other both divisive and unifying movements. These included debates over worship and revivals, Presbyterian orthodoxy, foreign and domestic missions, and the establishment of educational institutions.

A Plan of Union and the Second Great Awakening

The century began with a dream of cooperation with a fellow Reformed denomination. Although the attempt at collaboration resulted in a Plan of Union between the main body of the Presbyterians, called the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (PCUSA), and the New England Congregationalists in 1801, it would dissolve by 1837 amid the tumult of abolitionism. There were many reasons that Presbyterians wanted to cooperate with other descendants of the Reformed tradition, such as the Congregationalists. The Presbyterians suffered from a shortage of clergy at the beginning of the century. The church’s most stable and well-known early seminary in the United States was not founded until 1812, when the Presbytery of Philadelphia established Princeton Theological Seminary. The establishment of this seminary represented an effort by Presbyterians to establish professional schools (similar to the disciplines of law and medicine) that would give specialized theological training beyond and after students completed a more generalized four-year undergraduate curriculum. The seminary split from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University). Its establishment was not in order to withdraw from the secular life of the “modern” university but was rather an attempt to establish a professional school uniquely situated

to further a theological student’s education and provide ministers for the expanding American Presbyterian presence. Princeton’s first professor was Archibald Alexander (1772–1851), followed in 1813 by Samuel Miller (1769–1860) from New York’s Wall Street Presbyterian Church.

At the time of the first general meeting of the General Assembly, in 1789, there were 419 congregations bearing the name Presbyterian and only 111 clergy. By 1803 there were 511 congregations and only a few more clergy. With the Plan of Union, many colleges and seminaries would be open to training more clergy until more specifically Presbyterian seminaries could be established. As many people from New England were settling the wilderness of western New York and Ohio, the Plan helped to determine how the clergy of each denomination could serve in the other’s churches if necessary. Several historians have called the clergy who cooperated with the Plan of Union, such as Horace Bushnell (1802–1876), “Presbygationalists.” But as with many ecumenical projects, the Plan did not last.

The dissolving of the Plan was due to doctrinal disputes put forward in the “New Haven Theology” from Yale Divinity School promoted by Nathaniel W. Taylor (1786–1858), a close friend of Congregationalist-turned-Presbyterian Lyman Beecher (1775–1863). Taylor’s method for mass evangelism was later adopted by Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875) in his revivals. Under Finney these new techniques for evangelism were called “new measures.” The disputes over New Haven Theology centered on the doctrine of original sin and the nature of Christ’s atonement. The long-standing Reformation and Presbyterian principle of predestination (that some are “elected” or predestined to salvation, and some are not) was also given very little attention by Taylor, Beecher, and Finney, much to the indignation of Princeton Seminary. Presbyterians influenced by Taylor and his students entered the debate through the Plan of Union. This led many, including Finney, Taylor, and their students, to begin to take sides questioning orthodox Calvinism and the tenets of the Westminster Confession of Faith (a statement dating to 1646 during the time of Calvinist rule in England) taught by the church.

New enthusiasms, including Finney’s new measures, captured the hearts and minds of many who began to settle the frontier. The Second Great Awakening would take hold of many Protestant denominations, including Presbyterians, through its essential communicative vehicle: the revival. Presbyterian minister Rev. James McGready (1757–1817) from North Carolina took leadership in the new movement by

leading revivals on the frontier. The first was at Cane Ridge, Kentucky. Beginning on August 6, 1801, thousands of worshipers gathered from southern Ohio, northern Tennessee, and all over Kentucky with their families, tents, wagons, and horses for what was billed as a large “sacramental communion event.” These events had occurred before, drawing ever-larger crowds, but never to this extent. Over the next few weeks, the population of the revival would top ten thousand by the most conservative estimates. The services conducted at Cane Ridge were led by ministers from several different Protestant denominations. The believers attending the revival reflected the same diversity.

Among Presbyterians throughout the nation, there was no unanimity of support for the revivals. Many Presbyterians felt that the revivals moved away from Calvinist orthodoxy; they dismissed the enthusiasms and extreme passions connected with the Gaspar River and Cane Ridge revivals as chaotic displays of emotion and not pious, humble, serious religious worship practice. The revival seemed to move away from the traditional emphasis on preaching by an educated clergy and toward the inspiration of the Holy Spirit given directly to the believer accompanied by an ecstatic experience. Some feared that the preaching of the Word had been replaced or at least subjugated by the personal encounter with the Spirit. So divided were members of the Synod of Kentucky that many members of the Cumberland Presbytery separated from the main body of the Presbyterian Church in 1810. In forming the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, still in existence in the twenty-first century, the founders of this new denomination especially contended with the Presbyterian Church’s insistence on seminary education begun following a college or university degree. Under this system it would take seven years or so to train clergy for the active ordained ministry. For the Cumberlands this seven-year period was far too long and the need for clergymen was too immediate on the frontier.

From the seed planted at Cane Ridge, the phenomenon of revivalism spread throughout America and would press the boundaries of religious authority. The revivals allowed for the free movement of the Holy Spirit to be authoritative for the individual believer. Yet the Presbyterian tradition stood for biblical authority, informed preaching, and an educated clergy. Where then was the authority vested in denominational leadership?

By this time, many Presbyterians were questioning the need for strong central denominational power. This was due in part to the influence of the revival. But it was also due to

the free expression and exploration of faith, or religious freedom, allowed for in the U.S. Constitution. The significance of the individual in the emerging American identity would play well into the hand of the increasing strength of the revival as a phenomenon in American religious history. This led Presbyterians under the influence of the revival movement to understand authority emanating in three ways: from the Bible, from personal interaction with the Holy Spirit, and from charismatic leadership. But trust in that new trinity of authority would continue to test denominationalism for the rest of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth.

Revivals and Abolitionism

Charles Finney had been ordained by the Saint Lawrence Presbytery in New York State in July 1824. The next year the Erie Canal opened, and commerce exploded between western New York and New York City. Along with new access to agricultural markets, Finney and other revivalists had access to the burgeoning population of western New York. Cities along the canal included Rome, Auburn, Utica, and Rochester. All of these cities had growing Presbyterian populations that came under Finney’s influence. Because of the enthusiasm in the hearts of the newly converted in western New York (which many likened to a fire), and the sheer number of revivals that occurred during this time period, the area along the canal became known as the “burned over district.” Finney’s most significant writings on the subject were published as *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* in 1835.

Some of the families and individuals involved in the revival movement became the leading advocates for abolitionism. Congregationalist clergyman Lyman Beecher moved his family from Boston, Massachusetts, to Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1832 to become a Presbyterian and the founding president of Lane Theological Seminary and pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati. Beecher had contended with some of what he felt were the extreme views of fellow abolitionist Charles Finney and desired to set a more moderating course for the Presbyterian Church in his new post. Lane had been established in 1830 as an outpost for the western territories, producing Presbyterian clergy for the frontier. Beecher would be president of Lane until 1850.

A debate was held at Lane in February 1834 that demonstrated the depth of the religious conflict with abolitionism and the institution of slavery. Professor Theodore Dwight Weld (1803–1895) emerged as the leader of the debate and led students of Lane to become abolitionists. Against the abolitionists, the trustees issued a policy effectively banning Lane’s

Antislavery Society by not allowing them to meet. This proved a provocative move, as many of the students had adopted Finney's revival methodology and abolitionist enthusiasms. The trustees thought such a society was divisive and distracted from the essential purpose of the institution, which was to study the scriptures and produce preachers for the American frontier. They also reprimanded Lane students for meeting with local black community members. Beecher, feeling pressure from the board of trustees, accepted the request of fifty-three students called the "Lane Rebels" for dismissal from the seminary. The rebels moved to Oberlin College in the same year. Oberlin was appealing to Weld and the Lane Rebels as it was about to install Beecher's adversary, Charles Finney, as their second president and first professor of theology. Weld remained a major architect of American abolitionism and would later coauthor the significant abolitionist volume *American Slavery As It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses* (1839) with his spouse Angelica and her sister Sarah Grimké. This book would notably influence Harriet Beecher Stowe in the development of her *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851).

The Beechers

In the story of a Presbyterian family's struggle to identify with their calling to evangelical ministry, to abolitionism, and to their Reformed theological roots, some see the larger struggle through which the largely Protestant religious nation was moving. How does a worshiper follow his religious calling faithfully and at the same time remain loyal to a denominational hierarchy of which he is suspicious? The struggle this produces helps to define what it is to be Presbyterian in the nineteenth century.

Abolitionist Henry Ward Beecher, ninth of twelve children born to Lyman Beecher, had enrolled at Lane during the 1830s and studied under his father and Calvin Stowe, who would later marry his sister Harriet. Henry eventually eschewed theology and the destructive divisions it brought about, as did much of his family, following the heresy trial of his father Lyman. The indictment on heresy of Lyman Beecher was both a catalyst and a microcosm of the larger issues of theological diversity that the Presbyterian Church faced in its emerging division between the "Old School" and "New School."

Lyman Beecher was brought to trial in 1835 by Joshua Wilson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati, and other Old Schoolers from that region. The accusation centered on Wilson's claim that Beecher taught a doctrine of original sin that was counter to orthodoxy and

of Christian perfection that was closer to Methodism than traditional Presbyterian theology. Beecher was in his professorial element and presented confident, sound theological arguments for his position. The Cincinnati Presbytery found him innocent. Undaunted, Wilson appealed to the next highest judicatory, the Synod in Dayton. The tone of this second trial was quite unsympathetic. Henry stood by his father during this difficult time, but his faith was shaken. The same held true for his elder brother Charles, who soon left Lane Seminary and moved to New Orleans. After this episode, Henry began to preach sermons more sympathetic of grace and personal faith, which was more akin to the theology of the revival. He rarely touched on abstract Calvinist themes (election, predestination, and the total depravity of humankind) for the rest of his career, and he certainly had no great love for denominationalism or for the larger Presbyterian Church in general. The church in Lawrenceburgh, Indiana, to which he was called was Presbyterian, but it soon became disaffected with the Old School's insistence that all new ordinands be allied with them or not ordained at all. The Lawrenceburgh church then decided to ordain Beecher without the consent of the denomination so controlled by the Old School. In 1838, instead of the presbytery, Henry's father, Lyman, presided at the ordination of his son Henry, aided by Calvin Stowe.

New School and Old School: Heresy and Division

The Old and New Schools were the names given to the factions that divided the main body of the Presbyterian Church (the PCUSA) in 1837 into two separate churches. These churches would not reunite again for quite some time. The Old School faction was conservative and suspicious of pietism in any form. It reasserted the seventeenth-century Westminster Confession of Faith. It renounced the enthusiasms brought on by Finney (who had left the Presbyterian Church in 1835) and the revivalists. It would ally itself with the orthodoxy of Princeton Seminary and its professors, who included the great Westminster defender Charles Hodge (1797–1878). Hodge had supported the institution of slavery during the 1830s, which endeared him to conservatives and raised the ire of the abolitionist New Schoolers.

In opposition, the New School was evangelical in orientation and had great support for the revival movement. The New School embraced a more personal form of pietism and the work of the Holy Spirit in personal conversion. They were decidedly abolitionist and found their theological home base at both the Presbyterian Auburn Theological

Seminary (founded in 1818 in Auburn, New York) and at the newly formed Union Theological Seminary (founded in 1836 in New York City). Union Seminary allied itself initially with the Presbyterian Church but quickly became a bastion of progressive religious thought and ecumenicism; it remains so in the twenty-first century. For the New School, the old Calvinist notions of the total and innate depravity of humankind (which relates to original sin) and unconditional election were never effective under the revival tent.

The Old School tried to force conformity to orthodox Calvinist views on the rest of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as early as the General Assembly of 1831. They had often been vocal opponents of the 1801 Plan of Union with the New England Congregationalists, believing it to cause theological leniency. Their concern was that the Congregationalists did not insist that its clergy formally subscribe to the Westminster standards. They also asserted that it lacked the rigor of Presbyterian polity, which distributed power more broadly, whereas the Congregationalists entrusted the local congregation with much more power, including ordination standards.

The results of the 1835 Albert Barnes (1798–1870) heresy trial indicated the depth of the division of the Presbyterian Church and eventually led to its formal split. Barnes was the Princeton-educated pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. The charge was related to his 1835 book *Notes on Romans*, in which he denied the doctrine of original sin as well as the orthodox Calvinist notion of the atonement. The result of the first trial was that he was suspended from the ministry for one year. He appealed the decision to the General Assembly in 1836 and in a two-week trial, in which mostly New Schoolers were in attendance, he was acquitted. Angered by this acquittal, the Old School representatives formed a “Committee of Correspondence.”

This committee insisted on a separation of the Presbyterian Church from the Plan of Union that they felt had brought on this theological laxity. They brought this petition to the 1837 General Assembly. At that meeting, not only did the Old School representatives advocate for the abrogation of the Plan of Union, they were also able to amass the votes to declare that the synods organized under the Plan were illegal. The assembly eventually declared that due to their “New School sympathies,” the Synods of Genesee, Geneva, Utica, and Western Reserve were now independent of the Presbyterian Church.

Surprised by the virulence of the Old Schoolers, the New School representatives left the assembly and reconvened at

Auburn, New York, and resolved to remain Presbyterian. This meeting came to be referred to as the “Auburn Convention.” At the convention, the New Schoolers resolved that the actions to separate the synods from the rest of the Presbyterian Church were null and void. In the “Auburn Declaration” of 1837, New School representatives affirmed their commitment to the Presbyterian Church’s doctrine, worship, and government. At the 1838 General Assembly, which was held at the Seventh Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, the New Schoolers sought recognition. The Old School moderator refused them recognition, and bedlam quickly arose. Over the shouts and pandemonium, the New School representatives voted and resolved that they were indeed a “Constitutional Assembly” and walked out to reconvene in another location in Philadelphia.

As the relationship was formally dissolving, both factions retained the name Presbyterian Church USA. Soon after this assembly sympathizers from the synods of Michigan and Eastern Tennessee declared their allegiance to the New School Presbyterians. Abolitionist Presbyterian churches from Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, and Ohio in substantial numbers joined them. But the division was acrimonious and bitter, splitting congregations throughout the nation. The Old School/New School division even led abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879) to the affirmation that it portended the division of the nation. A similar division would occur among the Methodists and Baptists in the 1840s.

New Presbyterian Divisions and the Civil War

A number of Scottish Presbyterians had immigrated to the New World before the American Revolution and settled in places such as western Pennsylvania, the Carolinas, and New York. In Scotland many of these immigrants were known as “Covenanters and Seceders,” as they had historically reaffirmed covenants with the Scottish Presbyterian Church during times of persecution from the English. These Presbyterians, a separate branch, had not been a part of the Old School/New School debate. In America, many of these settlers were pious and were angered that there was no explicit declaration that Christ was the head of the new nation written in to any of the founding documents. Just before the Civil War, two of these groups, the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church and the Synod of the Associate Presbyterian Church, in 1858 came together in Pittsburgh to establish a new church: the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA). This new denomination was committed to the Larger and Shorter Catechism

and the Westminster Confession of Faith. As the UPCNA, they also made a strong stand against secret oath societies and against slavery. They had been influenced by the religious fervor of 1857–1858 and by the increasingly powerful nativist movements, including the secretive Know-Nothing Party. They excluded anyone from Communion who did not claim the values of their new denomination. In a short period of time, they had more than 400 ministers, 600 congregations, and 55,000 members, and developed missions in Egypt and throughout the Middle East. Due primarily to the slavery question, the southern branch of these Presbyterians, called “The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in the South,” opted not to join the larger UPCNA.

In the North, the New School Presbyterians had formed to support both the revival and abolitionist movements. However there were many churches, mostly in the South, that supported the revivals but not the abolition of slavery. Therefore, in 1857 the southern branch seceded from the New School and formed the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The impending national division hit the Old School as well, and they would succumb to a similar fate. Just after the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter near Charleston, South Carolina, on April 12–13, 1861, the Old Schoolers adopted resolutions supporting the Union. But on December 4, delegates from forty-seven presbyteries in the South broke away from the Presbyterian Church USA and formed the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. These divisions would not be repaired for more than a century.

The Civil War took its toll on the church. As the nation divided, so had many Presbyterian churches into various Presbyterian denominations. Before the war, Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) had attended a Presbyterian church in Springfield, Illinois. During the war he regularly attended (and rented a pew) at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, in Washington, D.C., but never formally joined any particular church.

Reunion and Reconstruction

Clear and focused enemies ironically had both a unifying and divisive effect on the various denominations of Presbyterians in America at this time. In 1864 the New and Old Schools in the South reunited. In 1865 the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) was organized in the South. A motivation for this unity was a loyalty oath to the Union that the northern Unionist churches had insisted upon. The Old School northern church insisted that the southern church

repent of their secessionist error. This angered churches, especially in the border states of Kentucky, Missouri, and Maryland. Churches withdrew from the PCUSA, Old School, and joined the new PCUS. By 1866 the PCUS had 65,588 members, 1,290 churches, and 829 ministers.

In the North, the divisions that created the Old School and New School, in light of the devastating effects of the war, seemed to necessitate a new perspective and a new covenant. The northern New School and Old School reunited in 1869 in Pittsburgh. They preserved the name, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, which both the Old and New Schools had retained after the 1838 division. Theologically these branches of the church reunited around the precept that the Bible was “the only infallible rule of faith and practice” and the Westminster Confession of Faith was a systematization of biblical principles. So as to maintain the new unity, they did not define those precepts further. The reunion occurred under the leadership of Henry Boynton Smith (1815–1877), Roosevelt Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York. The reunited church had 446,561 members, 4,526 churches, and 4,238 ministers.

Even with all of the uniting of Presbyterian denominational families, race continued to be a factor in keeping blacks and whites separated. In 1874, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (CPC) established the Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which would later change its name to the Second Cumberland Presbyterian Church. In 1898, the PCUS established the Afro-American Presbyterian Church, which later became the Snedecor Memorial Synod, with four presbyteries. The northern branch, the PCUSA, established the Afro-American Presbyterian Council in 1894 led by Rev. Francis Grimké (1850–1937) of Washington, D.C., and Philadelphian Matthew Anderson. But the PCUSA established and maintained segregated synods for black Presbyterians called Atlantic, Blue Ridge, Canadian, and Catawbe until the southern PCUS and northern PCUSA did away with these racial and ethnic synods in the 1950s.

The ecumenical spirit that arose as a result of the end of the war brought Presbyterians together with other Reformed bodies throughout the nation and the world. Under the leadership of Swiss-born Philip Schaff (1819–1893), now a Presbyterian and a professor at Union Theological Seminary (New York), and Presbyterian minister Samuel I. Prime, the PCUSA met with and became a member of the newly formed Evangelical Alliance at its international meeting in New York in 1873. In 1876 the Presbyterian Church became

involved with another new international organization. The Alliance of the Reformed Churches throughout the World Holding the Presbyterian System was established with significant contributions by Schaff and James McCosh (1811–1894), president of the Presbyterian College of New Jersey. The southern PCUS also joined this ecumenical alliance. Healing continued that same year when federal troops finally left the South, bringing an end to a vastly difficult era in both church and nation.

Presbyterian Expansion in Missions and Education

Amid all the divisions, there were voices that affirmed the significance of the Presbyterian Church during those contentious times. Professor Philip Schaff at mid-century was a professor at Mercersburg Seminary in Pennsylvania; he wrote that the Presbyterian Church “is one of the most numerous, respectable, worthy, intelligent, and influential denominations, and has a particularly strong hold on the solid middle class” (1961, p. 118). Its hold was largely due to its influence at the founding of the United States and due to its historical emphasis on education. Schaff’s early education included studying the law and classical languages, including Latin and Greek, from which he could better understand and comment on the New Testament. The 2.3 million-member Presbyterian Church (USA) even in the twenty-first century continues to insist on reading fluency in both Hebrew and Greek as a requirement for ordination for all of its pastors.

One particular nineteenth-century Presbyterian seemed to embody this emphasis on education. Professor, college president, and Presbyterian minister William Holmes McGuffey (1800–1873) would influence not merely Presbyterians but all Americans with his grassroots efforts at literacy and conservative moral/spiritual education through his *McGuffey Readers*. These publications sold more than 120 million copies between 1836 and 1960. Through these books, especially in the early years of their publication, he tried to instill Calvinist values as they related to salvation, righteousness, and piety. Later the *Readers* became more secular and middle-class oriented and emphasized a civil religion and patriotism and less an endorsement of any particular religious denomination.

From the earliest part of the nineteenth century, pioneers set out to found colleges that reflected the Presbyterian Church in both name and values. By the end of the century, scores of colleges traced their foundational roots specifically to the Presbyterian Church. Some of the most significant colleges in the United States tie themselves historically to the

influence of the Presbyterians. Princeton University was established in the eighteenth century; most Presbyterian-related colleges and universities were established in the nineteenth. These include Davidson College (1837, North Carolina), The College of Wooster (1866, Ohio), Macalaster College (1874, Minnesota), Illinois College (1829, Illinois); women’s colleges such as Mary Baldwin College (1842, Virginia), and Agnes Scott College (1889, Georgia); and historically black colleges including Knoxville College (1875, Tennessee) and Barber-Scotia College for African American women (1867, North Carolina).

Establishing seminaries was also a priority of nineteenth-century Presbyterians. The first pre-dated Princeton Seminary by eighteen years. It was called Service Seminary and was established near Pittsburgh by the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania in 1794. The Reverend John Anderson was its first teacher of divinity and it opened with six students. Service Seminary moved to Ohio, where it became the Xenia Theological Seminary. It then moved to Missouri and eventually merged in 1825 with a seminary in Pittsburgh and became the Pittsburgh–Xenia Theological Seminary. Another seminary, called Western Seminary, had been established by the Presbyterian Church (USA) in Pittsburgh in 1827. After reconciliation with the other Northern Presbyterian Church denominations, it became the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1959.

Other seminaries were established, demonstrating the Presbyterian Church’s desire to provide more educated ordained clergy for the nation’s increasing population. Union Theological Seminary in Virginia was founded in 1812. Columbia Theological Seminary in South Carolina was established in 1828 (now in Decatur, Georgia). Lane Theological Seminary is now a part of McCormick Theological Seminary. Van Vliet Seminary, established in 1852, became in 1864 the German Theological School of the Northwest. In 1870 the General Assembly accepted the seminary’s request to join the denomination and be recognized as a theological institution of the Presbyterian Church; it was renamed The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in 1920.

Also receiving great attention by the Presbyterian Church were home and foreign missions throughout the century. In 1810 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) had been established in Boston as an ecumenical board overseeing missions to Native Americans and to Africa, China, India, and the Middle East. This was a cooperative venture of the Congregationalists, the Dutch Reformed Church, and the Presbyterians. This ecumenical

project recognized the demand that many evangelically minded Americans felt during and after the Second Great Awakening. In its own denomination the Presbyterians had established in 1802 the Standing Committee of Missions, which worked with the Congregationalists. But after abrogation of the Plan of Union, the Presbyterians established the Board of Foreign Missions and went about its missionary purpose alone.

Great demands had been placed on these boards right after their founding due to the strength of the revival movement. But the missions' committees had other interests as well. They were interested in helping to create a presence in the vast American West, and for decades busily set about establishing churches in western New York, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana. In 1836 Marcus and Narcissa Whitman traveled on the Oregon Trail with Presbyterian Rev. Henry S. Spalding (1803–1874) and established churches and mission stations among the Cayuse Indians. The Whitmans, along with twelve others, were martyred on the trail, as they were believed to have brought a measles outbreak among the Indians. The Spaldings, however, continued their work among the new churches and the Native Americans for many years thereafter.

The larger the various Presbyterian Church denominations became, the more ideologically diverse were their constituencies. Enthusiastic Presbyterians could be found on different sides of contentious issues that developed through the nineteenth century. Resettlement of Native Americans was just one such contentious concern. Working with Congregationalists, Presbyterian missionaries, for example, contended with the State of Georgia over their appropriation of Cherokee lands after gold was discovered on Indian Territory in 1828. Attorney William Wirt, a Presbyterian, won the case for the Cherokee nation in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. But Presbyterian President Andrew Jackson refused to enforce the decision throughout the 1830s and forced the Cherokees, along with other earlier Native Americans, to move on a "Trail of Tears" to the Oklahoma Territory in 1838. Jailed "Presbygationalist" missionary Samuel Worcester, who had been arrested for defending the Cherokee people, was eventually freed from his Georgia prison and accompanied the Cherokee on the Trail of Tears.

Sue McBeth (1830–1893) and her sister Kate worked with the Nez Perce Indians in Idaho training ministers for work among native peoples, even though they themselves were not ordained. The PCUSA Board of Missions appointed physician and Native American Susan LaFlesche Picotte

(1865–1915) as its first American woman missionary. She completed her training at the Philadelphia Women's Medical College in 1889. Her father, Iron Eye, was chief of the Omaha people. She returned right after medical school to work with the Omaha in Nebraska and did so until her death.

In 1858, just before the Civil War, Sheldon Jackson (1834–1909) graduated from Princeton Seminary. Jackson enjoyed a career founding churches throughout the West and in Alaska. Jackson was a peripatetic, brilliant, and colorful personality. He indefatigably established churches in the Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, and Arizona territories. He founded the *Rocky Mountain Presbyterian* to report on his progress. Jackson worked very well with Alaskan native peoples trying to preserve native culture in light of white expansion in the territory. He eventually served as Alaska's first superintendent of public instruction. He was honored in Alaska by the founding of a college in 1878 for the Tlingit people that bore his name. It had been historically associated with the Presbyterian Church but closed due to financial troubles in 2008.

New Perspectives and Broader Horizons

This ecumenical orientation brought a cooperative spirit to the Presbyterian Church. With this spirit came new scholarship and ways of looking at scripture. This broadening perspective also brought a new appreciation for emerging scientific discoveries. Charles Augustus Briggs (1841–1913) became the first test case of an emerging perspective on scripture in the late nineteenth century. In 1874 Briggs became a professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He had been inspired by a trip to Germany in 1866 that moved him away from his biblical conservatism. He, like many scholars of his time and since, began to challenge the authorship and translations of the Bible. In response to the challenges of modern scholarship, faculty at Princeton Theological Seminary began to promote the idea of biblical inerrancy. Briggs believed this made an idol of the Bible and asserted that a critical method for biblical studies would reveal the divine message even more accurately and inspirationally. He carried on debates with his coeditors and colleagues at the Princeton Theological Seminary in the *Presbyterian Review* for nearly a decade. He also stated his views clearly in an address in 1891 at Union. A student of Briggs fed his "subversive" lecture materials to Briggs's enemies and soon he was brought up on heresy charges. This case was the subject of much acrimony in the Presbyterian Church as it encapsulated the larger conflict between traditional biblical concepts and modern

scholarship. The process took more than a year. While the New York Presbytery voted to acquit him, the General Assembly of the larger church on appeal found him guilty by a vote of 383 to 116 in 1893. After his suspension from ministry in the Presbyterian Church, Briggs found a home in the Episcopal Church, where he was eventually ordained a priest.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Presbyterians could be found on many sides of significant scholarly, social, and political issues. Besides advancements in biblical critical studies, the findings of nineteenth-century scientist and naturalist Charles Darwin were hotly debated in the United States, and the Presbyterians found themselves deeply involved. Darwin's *The Origin of Species* was published in 1859. His theories would be challenged by Charles Hodge of Princeton in his 1874 volume *What Is Darwinism?* in which he argued that Darwin's was a mere theory that contradicted the Book of Genesis, which had already significantly stood the test of time.

Seeking to understand the impact on the Christian faith of such scientific advancements, Columbia Theological Seminary established a faculty position in 1860 to study the phenomenon. It was called the Perkins Professorship of Natural Science in Connection with Revelation, and its first professor was scientist, theologian, and banker James Woodrow (1827–1907). His significant work in support of natural science was condemned by four General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church. Woodrow would later have considerable influence over his nephew, president of Princeton University and of the United States Woodrow Wilson.

The nineteenth century would find Presbyterians on all sides of many debates. This is anecdotally demonstrated by Presbyterian and Democratic President Grover Cleveland's (1837–1908) two terms in office being interrupted by rival Presbyterian and Republican President Benjamin Harrison (1833–1901). But the impact of Presbyterians in the nineteenth century is without debate. Presbyterian industrialists including William Dodge of New York, Thomas Mellon of Pittsburgh, Cyrus McCormick of Chicago, Louis Severance of Cleveland, John Wanamaker of Philadelphia, Henry Flagler of Florida, and Robert Dollar of California left substantial legacies in the form of endowments for educational institutions. They also left vast corporations, the impacts of which are still felt in the twenty-first century. The nineteenth-century Presbyterian legacy would be a history of debate, division, and reunification; of missions both foreign and domestic; and of the establishment of educational institutions.

The events that shaped America in the nineteenth century moved Presbyterians to adapt their theology to

accommodate the different ideological constituencies that made up the various Presbyterian Church denominations. On the one hand, the desire to establish ideological or theological purity seemed to lead to many divisions. Behind these were attempts at adapting the Westminster Standards and its theology to an ever-expanding and diverse American landscape. This landscape was contending with slavery, revivalism, immigration, the frontier, and urbanization/industrialization. On the other hand, the desire to establish connection with fellow Reformed and Presbyterian believers in America amid the political and social tumult of the nineteenth century created occasional opportunities for unity. In all, much of the division and reunification were a result of the prevailing desire of the moment: the connectional nature of the Presbyterian Church through its polity; or the theological ties to the Calvinist and Reformed principles that had brought the Presbyterian Church from Geneva to Scotland, to Philadelphia, and then to the rest of the nation.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery*; *Bible* entries; *Civil War*; *Congregationalists*; *Dutch Reformed*; *Education: Colleges and Universities*; *Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Main-line Protestants*; *Missions* entries; *New England Region*; *Pilgrims*; *Politics: Nineteenth Century*; *Polity*; *Presbyterians* entries; *Puritans*; *Reformed Denominational Family*; *Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*; *Revivalism: Nineteenth Century*.

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Presbyterians: Since the Nineteenth Century

Mainline Presbyterian denominations entered the twentieth century as powerful “quasi-established” institutions in the nation, despite the challenges of urbanization and disputes over the nature of biblical authority that arose after the Civil War. By the century’s end, Presbyterianism had undergone deep changes and suffered a severe decline in membership. Evidence of Presbyterians’ status could be found in the leadership they had in society—Andrew Carnegie, Andrew Mellon, Woodrow Wilson, Dwight Eisenhower, and John Foster Dulles were Presbyterians. Theological change and the social turmoil that arose after World War II led to denominational struggle, contributed to loss of membership, and made the denomination more pluralistic and inclusive than it had been in 1900. The story comes into sharpest focus by looking at the two largest Presbyterian denominations during the century, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (PCUSA) and the (southern) Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS).

Theological Issues

In the early twentieth-century PCUSA, debates over biblical authority and theology contributed to the rise among Protestants of fundamentalism, a commitment to uncompromised traditional theology. The General Assembly (GA) of 1910 approved a set of five essential doctrines that all Presbyterians had to affirm. The beliefs were the inerrancy of scripture, the virginal conception of Jesus, the death of Jesus as substitutionary atonement (that is, that in dying Jesus accepted the punishment of God for human sin collectively and individually), the bodily resurrection of Jesus, and the veracity of miracles in the Bible. The General Assemblies of 1916 and 1923 reaffirmed the five points.

The Modernists (those who would allow some modification of the faith in response to the changing world) responded. In 1922 the Baptist minister Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878–1969), serving as associate pastor in the First Presbyterian Church in New York City, preached a sermon

titled “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” That led to Fosdick’s departure from the church following GA action against his modernist theology. A group of ministers then issued, in 1924, the Auburn Affirmation, in which they accepted the five essentials. However, they also declared that others might have a different understanding of the doctrines and suggested that the denomination allow some latitude in theological belief.

The key event in the PCUSA’s debate involved Princeton Theological Seminary, the citadel of fundamentalism in the denomination. By 1925 the leading proponent of traditionalism was J. Gresham Machen, but the faculty and members of the boards of directors and trustees had adherents in both camps. Machen’s treatise on the dispute was *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923), in which he argued that the two could not be reconciled; therefore, liberal or modernist Christianity could not exist. When a vote to approve Machen for the chair in apologetics passed the boards with a significant number of negative votes in 1926, the boards asked the GA to study conditions at the seminary. Machen’s appointment was suspended, and not until 1929 did the appointed GA committee make its recommendations about the seminary. The seminary structure was reorganized with Machen still not in the apologetics chair. In the meantime, another GA “Commission of Fifteen” studying the controversy in the PCUSA recommended the denomination adopt a measure of toleration in theology, effectively overturning the authority of the five points.

Thinking the Modernists had won, Machen and his followers left Princeton to found Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in 1929 and subsequently, in 1933, the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. The latter competed with the PCUSA’s mission board, which Machen believed was under the influence of modernism. Machen’s ordination was suspended in 1935, and the following year he founded the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Those events, coupled with the famous Scopes Monkey Trial in 1925, marked the passing of fundamentalism and the triumph of a broader theological interpretation in the PCUSA.

As a more conservative southern denomination, the PCUS experienced less turmoil than the PCUSA over theological matters. By the 1930s a growing number of clergy publicly held a modified Calvinism that challenged some long-held doctrines. Walter Lingle and Kenneth Foreman of Davidson College denied the absolute inerrancy of scripture, and a few pastors such as Henry Edmonds in Birmingham,

Alabama, stirred controversy with their theology that did not conform to rigid Calvinism. Generally speaking, however, the PCUS maintained its traditional Calvinist theology until after World War II.

The Emergence of Social Ministries

Given the privileged status of many Presbyterians, concern for the problems attendant to the urbanization and industrialization of the nation came slowly to Presbyterianism as a whole. Andrew Carnegie's paean to unrestricted capitalism, "Wealth" (*North American Review*, 1889), was perhaps the most widely read essay on the relation of faith and economics. As the centers of cities became industrialized and tenement slums grew, middle- and upper-class Presbyterians moved to the suburbs, and often their churches moved with them. However, the Social Gospel began to make inroads with some Presbyterians as they responded to the needs of the city.

In 1903, at the instigation of Charles Stelzle, the PCUSA established its Workingmen's Department, which subsequently became the Department of Church and Labor. The department sought to promote ministries to the laboring poor. Churches created mission stations to offer education and worship to the poor. Some churches became "institutional" churches, offering a variety of classes and recreational activities for the betterment of those living nearby. Settlement houses were founded. The swelling numbers of immigrants prompted a movement of foreign-language ministries that attempted to provide religious aid to new residents of the cities (and, not coincidentally, make Presbyterians of Catholics). Some even began to favor collective bargaining for laborers.

The PCUSA borrowed, in 1910, the Social Creed of the recently founded Federal Council of Churches (FCC) for its own use. It emphasized the concept of Christian stewardship and the need for a just distribution of resources in society. The creed declared the need for fair wages and a fair work day and work week for laborers, as well as a safe working environment and a form of social security for people in their elder years. In short, the creed promoted the treatment of the laborer in a humane and just way.

The PCUS came more slowly to social ministry. Its approach to society was dominated by the doctrine of the spirituality of the church, which taught that the church should have no involvement in social or political matters but only evangelize individuals. Individual Christians, but not the church, could and should work to change the world. Even so,

the PCUS worked fervently for the greatest social cause of the day: Prohibition. It also sought to protect Sunday as a day of worship. In southern cities, mission Sunday schools and churches sprang up; one of the most successful was the John Little Mission in African American neighborhoods in Louisville, Kentucky. Eventually, two black churches were founded out of that work.

In the 1930s the spirituality of the church began to wane in the PCUS. Following the leadership of people like Ernest Trice Thompson at Union Seminary in Virginia, first the Synod of Virginia and then the PCUS created a Committee on Social and Moral Welfare. The first tentative steps toward racial justice in the PCUS took place through the work of this committee, but much remained to be done. In addition to matters of race, the denomination spoke to economic concerns such as child labor and sharecropping, and churches offered vocational training to the urban poor, fed people in the heart of the Depression, and addressed the question of war.

President Woodrow Wilson, son and nephew of prominent PCUS pastors, believed strongly in the horror of war and tried to keep the United States out of World War I. When he called for a declaration of war in 1917, however, he set the tone to make the war a righteous cause to "make the world safe for democracy." Presbyterians joined their fellow citizens in supporting the war wholeheartedly. James I. Vance said that the cross and flag must be kept together, since they worked for the same goals. Others were more cautious and warned of making Christianity a form of nationalism.

When the armistice was signed, Wilson's platform for peace, called the Fourteen Points, included the League of Nations. Presbyterians approved of the idea, and many joined in the call for the end of war that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s. General Assemblies of both the PCUSA and PCUS approved resolutions calling for the church never again to bless a war. Sentiments would shift with the rise of fascism in Europe and Japan's imperial ambitions in Asia.

One area of justice remained largely, although by no means completely, absent in Presbyterian social concern: racism. The end of World War II would bring that issue to the fore, and Presbyterians would join in the civil rights movement.

Mission and Early Ecumenical Involvements

Presbyterians participated fully in the late nineteenth-century drive in global missions. Both major denominations placed missionaries around the world and built growing

indigenous churches. Elements of cultural imperialism marked that work, but some denominations wanted to create independent churches that were self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting.

The milestone in mission thought prior to World War II was the report of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, issued in the early 1930s. The report called for a radical rethinking of mission endeavors. Noting that modern Christianity relied less on the fear of hell to lead people to conversion and more on the enticing love of God, the report urged global mission work to eschew direct evangelization, with its inherent attitude of superiority, and witness through acts of service such as education and medical work. The goal was the acceptance of indigenous culture and people as equals. The exclusive claim of salvation in Jesus Christ should be replaced with openness to the truth claims of the world's religions. The report stirred no small debate within Presbyterianism, but following World War II the mission enterprise of Presbyterianism reflected the conclusions and suggestions of the inquiry.

Home mission work continued, although it changed emphases with the closing of the western frontier. The churches maintained work among First Nation and Hispanic peoples, especially educational work. In the growing cities a variety of mission endeavors were undertaken with immigrants and the laboring poor. Both the PCUSA and PCUS developed a focus on rural ministry, with the PCUS building a special emphasis on Appalachia. Vestiges of that work continue into the twenty-first century.

Presbyterians often sought to work with other denominations in ministry. The impetus for ecumenism, seen earlier in such bodies as the Evangelical Alliance, eventually resulted in the Federal Council of Churches in 1908. The goal of the FCC was not church union but cooperation in ministry and response to the needs of the nation's urban and industrial problems. It was from the FCC that the PCUSA borrowed its social creed. The PCUSA and PCUS both participated in the founding of the FCC. The PCUSA provided strong leadership for the FCC in the persons of Samuel McCrea Cavert, John Foster Dulles, and others. The PCUS, suspicious of the FCC because of its social ministry and the liberal theology of the northern denominations, maintained its membership intermittently over the years.

The ecumenical spirit did lead to reunion within the Presbyterian family. The PCUSA and Cumberland Presbyterian Church (CPC), which had separated from the PCUSA in 1810 over theological and institutional differences, began talks

aimed toward reunion early in the century. Changes to the Westminster Confession of Faith (a statement dating to the time of Calvinist rule in England), approved by the PCUSA in 1903, moderated some of the most stringent aspects of the doctrine of predestination, which had been one cause of the 1810 division. The CPC saw this as a movement toward its theological stance, and discussions for reunion opened in 1904. Two primary obstacles remained. The first was the perceived liberalism of the PCUSA by the CPC; the second was the pattern of segregated presbyteries and synods in the CPC, which many in the PCUSA did not want to accept (the CPC's strength was in the border states, especially Tennessee and Kentucky). The PCUSA had engaged in mission work in the South following the Civil War and had scattered African American congregations that were not segregated into their own presbyteries. Eventually the PCUSA accepted the possibility of segregation in its southern presbyteries, later seen as a tragic compromise, and the reunion came to fruition in 1906. A minority of the CPC, troubled by the theological latitude of the PCUSA, chose to maintain a separate existence and keep the name CPC.

Postwar Presbyterianism

The years following World War II were marked by the Cold War. The sharp division between the United States and the communist powers fostered a sense of good versus evil. The belief that the United States served the cause of righteousness in the world against the evil of imperialist communism generally found support among Presbyterians. The U.S. program of strong national defense, alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), military intervention when required to stop communism, and the maintenance of a nuclear arsenal all were favored by Presbyterians. Even so, Presbyterians were not absolute or unthinking in their anti-communism. They realized that communism often took root in injustice and believed that military prowess provided only a secondary security to that of creating just economic and social structures in developing nations. The PCUS gave evidence to that awareness in its 1951 report "National Security and the Christian Message" and 1954's "The Christian Faith and Communism." Nonetheless, Presbyterians supported their nation.

Fear of communism led some to believe that the nation was in danger of subversion from within. The House Un-American Activities Committee held hearings to probe the extent of communist influence, people charged that members of the State Department who were soft on communism

had let China “fall” to the communists, and then the nation experienced the work of Senator Joseph McCarthy as he leveled charges of communist infiltration inside the government and the military. Presbyterians believed it was important to maintain diligence against communism but also spoke against the excesses of McCarthyism as violating the basic rights of citizens whose reputations were injured without evidence. When claims of communist affiliation rose against prominent church leaders, especially Methodist bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, the PCUSA General Council, led by Princeton Seminary president John Mackay, issued a pastoral letter to the denomination and released it to the press. The letter denounced the tactics of character assassination that too often accompanied the search for communists and upheld the importance of due process of the law if the United States were not to lower itself to the tactics of communism. The GA of 1954 voted its approval of the letter, which stood as a voice of reason in troubled times.

Religion in the United States experienced a widespread revival following the war. No doubt fed in part by the Cold War identification of the United States as a religious nation, people who had suffered through the deprivations of the Depression and the worst war in history filled the pews and coffers of churches and synagogues. The baby boom generation further added to the revival and membership growth, which reached its peak in the mid-1960s. Presbyterian churches followed the burgeoning populations to the suburbs, built new churches or added to existing ones, and saw budgets grow exponentially. Some analysts question the depth of the revival in retrospect, reflecting a national “faith in faith itself,” but it marked a notable phenomenon.

Theological and Later Ecumenical Developments

The theological changes that had begun prior to World War II expanded in the postwar period. The “neo-orthodox” renewal of classical Calvinist theological themes, found in the United States most prominently in the work of brothers H. Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr, provided a new excitement in theology. Emphasis on the sovereignty of God, the Bible as the Word of God (understood in terms of higher biblical criticism), and sin, coupled with a strong social conscience, resonated with Presbyterians. The school of thought became influential in Presbyterian seminaries and pulpits. Reemphasizing traditional Reformed doctrines, neo-orthodoxy was by no means fundamentalist or evangelical in its stance and allowed for the broader theological approaches that Presbyterians had begun to embrace in the 1930s. Even the

more traditional PCUS seminaries manifested latitude in Calvinist understanding.

One element of theological change in Presbyterianism was the growing professionalization of seminary faculty members. Professors had routinely, into the 1930s, been accomplished pastor-theologians called from prominent pulpits to teach in seminary and did not always possess earned doctorates. That had changed by the early 1950s, as accreditation agencies and the growing sophistication of each area of theological study required doctoral degrees, if faculty were to give students the best preparation for congregations steeped in the latest scientific and social scientific knowledge. The thought of professors increasingly reflected the influence of the academy alongside that of the church’s confessions.

Those church confessions underwent change. The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechism, written in seventeenth-century England, had provided the confessional basis for Presbyterians in the United States. Many desired a new statement of belief in contemporary English that reflected theological approaches from the modern era. Not surprisingly, some opposed that proposal, thinking that the Calvinism of Westminster should not be amended or moderated. Following the merger of the PCUSA and the United Presbyterian Church in North America (UPCNA) in 1958 to form the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A (UPCUSA), a committee was appointed to write a new confession for the denomination.

Approved by the church in 1967, the new statement bore the simple name “The Confession of 1967,” partly to symbolize the idea that statements of belief always bear the marks of the age and context in which they are written. Composed in the midst of national discord over the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War, “C ’67,” as it came to be called, took reconciliation as its central theme. Affirming first the reconciliation of the world to God in Christ Jesus, C ’67 called for the reconciliation of people to one another in response to God’s loving work. The confession bore a trinitarian form, although it began with the Christ as God’s reconciler, followed by the creating and sustaining work of God the Parent and Holy Spirit. There were those who did not like the treatment of some doctrines—for instance, C ’67 interpreted the work and death of Jesus not only as substitutionary atonement but also as ransom, reconciliation, and moral exemplar, reflecting the wide tradition of Christian thought on the subject.

The committee also provoked debate by proposing the UPCUSA adopt not just one confession, but a “book of confessions” to guide its theology. More traditionalist

Presbyterians held to the Westminster Confession, arguing that it contained the most faithful exposition of Christian belief. The committee, again thinking that confessions were limited by the context in which they were written and that each had unique emphases and value for the church, proposed a collection of confessions from throughout church history. The collection included the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Scots Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Second Helvetic Confession, the Westminster Confession and Shorter Catechism, the Theological Declaration of Barmen, and C '67. Despite fervent opposition from traditionalists who found the committee's work too far afield of proper Calvinism, both the Book of Confessions and C '67 passed.

The PCUS engaged in a similar process in the 1970s. Albert Curry Winn chaired the committee appointed to write a new statement of faith for the denomination. This committee also proposed a book of confessions as the new doctrinal standard for the church to replace the Westminster Confession as the sole confessional basis for the church. The committee also presented "A Declaration of Faith" to the denomination. This statement was longer than C '67 but shared its presentation of Christian beliefs in terms that alienated traditionalists. The format of the declaration proved its most distinctive feature. It was written in a versified format designed for liturgical use. It could be read responsively or in unison and adapted easily for use within worship. Although both the book of confessions and Declaration of Faith were narrowly defeated in the PCUS, the declaration became popular and was widely used in the denomination.

Ecumenical involvement and church unions marked the postwar years. In 1951 the FCC reorganized as the National Council of Churches (NCC). Both the PCUSA and PCUS joined the new ecumenical group and participated fully in its ministries. More dramatically, in a 1960 sermon preached at the Episcopal Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, the stated clerk of the new UPCUSA, Eugene Carson Blake, called for a union of major denominations in the United States. This would mean the union of churches that had bishops and those that did not—a major stumbling block in union discussions. The sermon led to the formation of the Consultation on Church Union, which involved a number of denominations in theological and union talks. The organization, still in existence in a different form and name, has achieved deeper understanding between the Protestant participants since its inception.

Perhaps the most far-reaching event was the Roman Catholic Second Vatican Council, which met in Rome in

the 1960s. Vatican II, as it was called, brought great change to Catholicism but also opened the church to ecumenical discussions and cooperation with Protestants. In the United States, much of the suspicion that each group felt for the other was alleviated as people worked with each other across the division that reached back to the sixteenth century. One of the most interesting impacts of Protestant-Catholic interaction has been a liturgical renewal from which Presbyterians have benefitted. A fuller appreciation for the theology of worship (for example, the use of the common lectionary and a deeper sacramentalism) and the practice of spiritual disciplines by clergy and laity has enhanced Presbyterianism through this conversation.

The years following World War II brought two important unions to Presbyterianism and one key schism. People in the PCUSA, PCUS, and UPCNA harbored the hope of uniting the three denominations. (The UPCNA was a comparatively small denomination with strength in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and the remainder of the Midwest. It grew out of the dissenting church tradition of the Church of Scotland.) In the 1950s talks began in earnest among the three denominations. The 1954 PCUS General Assembly voted not to pursue the discussion any further; the perceived theological liberalism of the PCUSA and its involvement in social issues led many in the PCUS to reject any deeper cooperation with the PCUSA than already existed. The PCUSA and UPCNA continued their efforts, and in 1958 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the two churches came together to create the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. (UPCUSA).

The rejection of union talks by the PCUS demonstrated the ongoing strength of traditionalists in the denomination. Convinced that liberals increasingly held sway in the seminaries and pulpits of the PCUS, the Continuing Church Movement formed to counteract them and to hold the denomination within the bounds of orthodoxy. The traditionalists believed the PCUS had strayed from a proper understanding of the inerrant authority of the Bible, had grown lax in many theological tenets such as the divinity of Christ and the bodily resurrection, and had forsaken proper forms of church government. There was also deep distress regarding the church's growing involvement in social issues, which in the South meant, first and foremost, racism and the civil rights movement. When the PCUS voted to ordain women to lay church office, and then to preaching ministry, in defiance of what the Continuing Church people saw as the biblical prohibition of women's ordination, contentions rose even further.

To present their point of view, the traditionalists established the *Southern Presbyterian Journal* during World War II. Then, a series of important groups were founded in 1964: the Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship; Concerned Presbyterians; Presbyterian Churchmen United; and the Reformed Theological Institute, for the education of ministers apart from PCUS seminaries, all came into existence to make the traditionalists' case in the denomination. Skirmishes took place throughout the denomination as people of differing beliefs sought to neutralize the others. Finally, believing that they could not turn the PCUS from its false teaching and liberal leadership, many in the Continuing Church Movement met in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1973 to form a new denomination, the Presbyterian Church in America. A new Presbyterian denomination was born through yet another division of the church in the United States.

Ten years after the formation of the Presbyterian Church in America, the Civil War finally ended for the PCUS and UPCUSA. Although the PCUS had not joined the 1958 union, people had continued to work toward that goal. When the General Assemblies of both the UPCUSA and PCUS determined that presbyteries (regional bodies of the church) could have membership in both denominations, many presbyteries chose to do so, especially along the border between South and North where contact was closest. Then, in the 1970s, the decision was made that the denominations would hold their General Assemblies in the same city in alternate years. Misconceptions of each denomination regarding the other were overcome and, in 1983 in Atlanta, Georgia, the PCUS and UPCUSA cemented their reunion. The reunited denomination took the name Presbyterian Church (USA). It remains the largest Presbyterian body in the nation, with approximately 2.3 million members in 2009.

Confronting a Changing World

Presbyterians addressed questions of racism even before World War II, but the emergence of the civil rights movement accelerated their involvement. Following the Civil War, African American Presbyterians, reacting against discrimination in the PCUS, formed the Afro-American Presbyterian Church. The PCUS provided support for the struggling denomination. By 1915 that denomination disbanded and black Presbyterians were absorbed into the PCUS, forming into segregated presbyteries and the segregated Snedecor Synod in 1917. Attempts to overcome discrimination took place among women's groups and youth programs in the denomination, and in 1951 the Snedecor Synod was

abolished and African Americans were integrated into regular presbyteries. The PCUSA, which also had segregated presbyteries from its union with the CPC, disbanded them in the 1950s in favor of integration.

The onset of the civil rights movement made questions of race and racism more urgent. Many white people in the PCUS opposed the causes of integration and voting rights for black citizens, and there were white churches that barred African Americans from attending worship. On the other hand, some pastors spoke out for equal rights and were forced to leave their congregations. Members of the PCUS, both black and white, participated in the great marches for civil rights, and the general assemblies consistently expressed support for the civil rights movement. James McBride Dabbs, a layman, had a high profile from his North Carolina home in the struggle for integration, and Martin Luther King Jr. spoke at the denomination's Montreat Conference Center, the site for summer youth meetings, women's conferences, and many general assemblies. Denominational support for civil rights served as one cause of the later formation of the Presbyterian Church in America. There were some in the PCUSA/UPCUSA who disliked the push for civil rights, but generally speaking that denomination moved ahead of the PCUS in its support. Eugene Carson Blake was photographed marching alongside King.

Black Presbyterians organized caucuses to push for greater recognition in the denominations and for fuller representation in decision making. They promoted black theology, which looked anew at Christian doctrines from the African American experience of racism. In the UPCUSA, Gayraud Wilmore and J. Oscar McCloud were among African American leaders; in 1964 the minister Edler Hawkins became the first black moderator of the GA. Ten years later the PCUS followed suit when Lawrence Bottoms was elected moderator for that denomination. Change came slowly, and integrated local congregations were few, but the institutional weight of both denominations and the reunited PC(USA) had been thrown behind integration and ending discrimination in church and society.

Presbyterians also concerned themselves with a variety of foreign policy issues, the general result of which was to make them hesitant to approve U.S. military ventures overseas. Most Presbyterians approved of the use of atomic weapons to end the war with Japan in 1945. In the context of the Cold War, there was general silence in the face of the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), which justified the proliferation of nuclear arms by the United States and Soviet

Union. People favored some form of international control of nuclear weapons, and Presbyterians joined others in calling for a ban on the atmospheric testing of nuclear arms. In the 1970s the push for limitations on nuclear weapons intensified, and both the UPCUSA and PCUS lent strong support not only to proposals to control the increase of nuclear arms, but their actual reduction. The eventual collapse of the Soviet Union eased tensions on the issue, but nuclear weapons continue to pose problems for global politics.

If the civil rights movement was the premier domestic issue dividing Presbyterians, the foremost global event was the Vietnam War. Few Presbyterians raised their voices against the war in the beginning; it seemed a clear case of the United States acting to stop the spread of communism. As the war continued, people increasingly argued that the conflict was a war of anticolonial national liberation into which the United States had interjected itself. Consequently, many Presbyterians contended that the nation had entered an immoral war and the church should be opposed. General assemblies of both the UPCUSA and PCUS took stands against the war. Leadership in the antiwar movement included Robert McAfee Brown of Stanford University; William Sloane Coffin, chaplain at Yale University; and Robert Bilheimer, director of the NCC's Department of International Affairs. In the PCUS, Albert Winn vigorously denounced the war in a speech to the 1972 GA. Presbyterians rejoiced at the peace treaty of 1973. Following the war, Presbyterians often criticized the government for its foreign policy in Latin America (especially Nicaragua and El Salvador) and the Middle East, especially during the Iraq War begun in 2003. No longer could the U.S. government expect automatic support from Presbyterians for its actions in global affairs.

The feminist movement of the second half of the twentieth century had a significant impact on Presbyterianism. Women had long played a central role in the work of the church, but discrimination kept them from filling positions of public leadership. PCUSA approved ordination for women as deacons in 1915 and then as elders (lay officers) in 1930. It was not until the 1950s that the PCUS approved ordination for women as deacons and elders. In 1956 the PCUSA removed the bar against women's ordination to the ministry, and that same year Margaret Towner became the first woman so ordained. In 1964 the PCUS took the same step, and the next year Rachel Henderlite was ordained in that denomination. The first women to serve as moderators of general assemblies were Lois Stair, an elder in the UPCUSA (1972), and Sarah Moseley, an elder in the PCUS (1978).

Achieving full right to ordination marked an important milestone for women. Other issues remained, however. The church's tradition of exclusively male language to refer to God and to the human family was challenged as women urged the church to enrich its vocabulary with more inclusive language. Feminist and womanist theologies reexamined the doctrines of Christianity from the perspective of women's experience of discrimination. Women also worked for representation on church boards and agencies. As with African Americans, full acceptance of women as church officers and pastors came slowly, but changes were made. By the turn of the twenty-first century, approximately 50 percent of students in Presbyterian seminaries were women.

Presbyterians also confronted myriad issues related to sexuality. The biggest debate centered on the question of homosexuality. In 1978 the UPCUSA General Assembly declared homosexuality a sin and denied ordination to any "practicing" (noncelibate) gay or lesbian. Observing that the Bible's statements regarding same-sex intercourse had nothing to do with homosexual orientation itself but spoke specifically only against the act itself, the denomination opened the door to ordination for homosexuals who remained celibate. Homosexuals and their supporters argued that same-sex attraction was a natural condition of their birth and, therefore, not a sin at all. They pushed to remove the ban on ordination. In 1997 the PC(USA) added an amendment to its constitution that said those seeking ordination in the denomination should "live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness." Attempts to reverse the amendment and its application have failed, and the barrier to ordination for homosexuals living in relationships persisted into the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

Clearly, Presbyterianism underwent deep and broad-reaching change through the twentieth century. Those changes were accompanied by a shift in status and demographics. Between 1966 and 1988, the two denominations that formed the PC(USA) declined nearly a third in membership, a trend that continues into the twenty-first century. A number of factors may account for that decline. Some left the denomination because they believed it was too liberal. Some, especially baby boomers, simply found the church insufficiently relevant to their lives and drifted away. As aging members died, there were too few young people to replace them. As the church embraced theology through social action in the 1960s and

1970s, it failed to educate its members on the importance of the faith. With the decline in membership came a loss of social influence in the nation and government.

The church had grown in other ways. The rise in diversity through fuller participation of African American, women, Korean (a rapidly growing group of Presbyterians as a result of mission work there), and Hispanic Presbyterians brought new gifts and perspectives to the church. Liturgical renewal and the practice of spiritual disciplines revitalized the life of faith for many. The commitment of many local congregations to mission in their neighborhoods made a difference in the cities where they existed. Presbyterianism had changed over the course of the century, and it remains an important force in the religious landscape of the nation.

See also *Bible entries; Civil War; Congregationalists; Dutch Reformed; Ecumenism; Education: Colleges and Universities; Feminism; Fundamentalism; Mainline Protestants; Missions entries; Neo-Orthodoxy; Politics: Twentieth Century; Presbyterians entries; Protestant Liberalism; Puritans; Race and Racism; Reformed Denominational Family; Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant; Same-Gender Marriage; Social Gospel; World War II.*

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Progressivism

The term “progressivism” was first used in the late nineteenth century and nearly always referred to reform, change, innovation, or radicalism. Characterized by unprecedented economic, demographic, and social changes, for some the Progressive Era was a period of unbounded promise and limitless opportunities; for others, it was an era of ambivalence and uncertainty about the world emerging before them. Industrialization, urbanization, and immigration challenged the agrarian, rural, and Protestant culture that had shaped America since the seventeenth century. Progressives genuinely believed in their ability to improve the lives of all Americans by creating a more democratic, efficient, and just society, but they often disagreed about the specific methods and intended outcomes of their efforts. Some of the leading reformers were ministers and other religious leaders, who believed that their efforts would pave the way for the Second Coming of Christ and that churches would maintain their position as the guardians of society. Their reform measures, many of which began in the late nineteenth century, found expression in the early twentieth century, but these religious reformers ultimately lost their cultural authority as social scientists, politicians, and government bureaucrats came to dominate the reform movements. Intellectual changes, which also had their roots in the previous century, led to new ways of viewing the world and to sharp disagreements that resulted in denominational division and the formation of new religious movements. These changes left an indelible mark on the country, and, as some historians have argued, led to the emergence of modern America.

Industrialization—Urbanization—Immigration

The shift from an agricultural to an industrial society in many ways forced Americans to become less dependent on nature and more dependent on their fellow citizens, the whims of the market, and technological systems that were both physical and social. This shift also caused great concern for some people because they believed America was moving away from the familiar ethos of individualism, agrarianism, and Protestant evangelicalism toward a world of corporate dominance, ruthless robber barons, and godless factory workers.

Some Americans believed that the nation was losing its moral bearings while others believed that all of this progress and wealth was the result of God's favor—of being a city on a hill that would set an example for other nations to follow.

The changes brought by the Industrial Revolution resulted in two paradoxes. First, Americans became more transient and bound together by the telegraph and telephone wires and railroad lines that crisscrossed the country. People were able to move farther away from home without severing familiar social ties, but they also moved farther away from familiar social institutions, such as churches. Sometimes they abandoned those institutions and belief systems or integrated them into other systems; at other times their religious moorings provided stability and comfort in a changing world. Second, the greater productivity and increased consumer spending that accompanied the Industrial Revolution offered the prospect of a better life for native-born Americans and the millions of immigrants who were crossing the nation's borders. Most of the wealth and attendant power, however, were placed into the hands of a few financiers and captains of industry. By 1900, many politicians, social reformers, and religious leaders were calling for social, economic, and political reforms to correct some of the ills they saw in American society.

Most of these ills existed in the burgeoning American cities. In 1890, the U.S. Census noted that 22,106,000 people lived in urban areas—about 35 percent of the total population. Thirty years later, the 1920 census revealed that 54,158,000 people lived in cities, and, for the first time in American history, a majority of the population—51.2 percent—lived in urban areas. The growth rate of the urban population was nearly double that of the total population. As farming became more mechanized and it became harder for small farmers to make a living, rural Americans flocked to the cities for jobs. A huge influx of immigrants chasing the American Dream also contributed to the dramatic growth of the cities. The New Immigrants, as they were called, came mainly from Southern and Eastern Europe, and they brought with them languages and cultures that differed greatly from earlier European immigrants. Religion was often the glue that held immigrant enclaves together in their new environment, but they faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles that Progressive reformers addressed through political, social, and religious contexts.

American Catholicism

American Catholics in the early twentieth century embarked on new intellectual ventures and became involved with

Progressive reform efforts to promote social justice and political and economic reform. They espoused a theologically conservative but socially progressive tradition that influenced the church's response to continued settlement and development of Catholic immigrants in America. John A. Ryan was one of the most influential Catholics who contributed to progressive social reforms. He favored the use of state and federal legislation to promote economic equality in America, and he developed a system of political economy shaped by Roman Catholic theology. Progressive-Era Catholics also adopted the popular trend of organizing fraternal and professional societies, such as the American Federation of Catholic Societies (1901) and the National Catholic War Council (1917), which sought to address many of the social, professional, and political problems of the day and to lobby for Catholic interests in public life.

Some of the most pressing issues for Catholics included education, labor, and suffrage—especially as they applied to women. Catholics started summer schools, evening schools, and reading circles to promote female education. They also founded four-year colleges for women, including Notre Dame of Maryland and Trinity College in Washington, D.C. The Catholic Women's Association of Brooklyn was formed to provide vocational training to help young Catholic women become self-reliant and self-supporting, and in 1900 it became a University Extension Center for the state of New York. Despite their initial reluctance to support labor unions, Catholic women joined the Women's Trade Union League and an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor, and they were led by Catholic activists such as Mary B. O'Sullivan, who championed a woman's right to work. Many of these labor reform efforts also focused on women's suffrage. An early Catholic suffragist was Jane Campbell, who founded the Philadelphia County Woman Suffrage Association and served on the executive committee of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. As the Progressive Era came to a close in 1920, American Catholics had developed a sense of national unity and were confident that they could help shape American society in the twentieth century. In many ways, the Catholic Church emerged from the Progressive Era as a distinctly American church with its own domestic social agenda and a religious mission to the rest of the world.

American Judaism

The American Jewish population before the Civil War had its roots in Germany, but Eastern European—especially

Russian—Jews flooded into America between 1880 and 1920. These immigrants faced the same hardships that other immigrants faced, which led some Jewish leaders to embrace Progressive reform efforts. Reformer Hannah G. Solomon formed the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) in 1893, which promoted religion, philanthropy, and education. The organization initially had a strong emphasis on religious education for Jewish women, but it quickly came to focus on social reform for immigrant women and their families. Its leaders helped pioneer the settlement house movement, championed civil rights for women and children, and organized vocational, educational, and social programs for Jewish women and children. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the NCJW formed a port and dock department to help find housing and employment for new immigrants. It lobbied Congress to pass laws that addressed pressing social needs, such as low-income housing, child labor and welfare, public health, food and drug regulations, and civil rights, for Jewish immigrants. It also worked with the Red Cross to raise money for humanitarian efforts during World War I. The Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Associations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis also championed social reform and developed educational programs for Jewish immigrants.

Social Gospel

Despite growing diversity, American religious life in the United States during the Progressive Era was still predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant, but one can also find the roots of modern religious pluralism in this period. There were an estimated 26 million Protestant Americans in 1916, many of whom were Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, or Disciples of Christ. Although other groups challenged the authority of these denominations, mainline Protestants entered the twentieth century with unbridled optimism about the future of their nation and their religion. They believed that their brand of Christianity was “right” and that their form of Protestantism should continue to hold sway in American culture. Throughout America's history, mainline Protestants had exerted tremendous influence on religion, business, government, and society. With all of the changes taking place at the turn of the century, they saw an opportunity—even a responsibility—to continue to expand their cultural influence.

The Progressive movement was rooted in the Social Gospel that gained notoriety in the late nineteenth century. Proponents of the Social Gospel rejected the emphasis that

Protestants had traditionally placed on individual salvation and personal responsibility, arguing instead that Christians needed to focus on solving the larger social problems caused by industrialization, immigration, and urbanization. They believed that churches, businesses, and the government should apply a Christian ethic to correcting those ills. They also believed that Christians and religious institutions should get involved with the political, economic, and social issues that had often fallen outside the purview of nineteenth-century evangelical churches. Baptist seminarian Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918) provided the theological foundation for the Social Gospel. His decade-long pastorate of a German-American church located in Hell's Kitchen—one of New York City's most impoverished neighborhoods—profoundly shaped his views about the relationship between Christians and modern industrial society. He saw firsthand the hardships these tenement-dwellers faced as a result of economic deprivation. Through books such as *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907), *Christianizing the Social Order* (1912), and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917), he tied social justice to advancing the kingdom of God on earth. He argued that the disparity between the rich and the poor in America was the result of an unfair capitalist system and that Christians' lack of concern for the working classes correlated to a lack of social justice in the nation. He promoted programs and institutions that met both the physical and spiritual needs of urban residents, he supported the use of labor unions to achieve economic justice, and he was one of the leading spokesmen for social justice at the height of Progressivism's popularity.

Gender and Race

Women, who had been important leaders in reform movements throughout the nineteenth century, also promoted the Social Gospel and Progressive reform. Although she worked in the shadow of the famous reformer Jane Addams in Chicago, Mary McDowell became an influential leader in the settlement house movement during the Progressive Era. McDowell directed the University of Chicago Settlement located in Back of the Yards, the setting for Upton Sinclair's muckraking novel *The Jungle* (1906). She readily acknowledged the religious roots of her social activism, contending that her settlement house work brought meaning to her religious life. She worked to improve sanitation and health conditions in the area, she took the unpopular position of supporting a meatpackers' strike in 1904, and she supported politicians whom she believed shared her concerns for social

justice. As historian Susan Curtis noted, McDowell's religious values provided the basis for her support of progressivism in the early twentieth century. By her own admission, she sought to blend her political and religious views through her work in the Social Gospel movement.

Progressives also addressed race relations in the South. Unlike the urban Social Gospel movement that emerged in response to changing social and economic conditions, this stream of the movement was part of a continuous theme of religious reform in the nineteenth century. Voluntary associations, such as home missionary societies, formed in the 1800s to bring salvation to all Americans and to address a variety of social ills. By the end of the nineteenth century, lynching had become the primary issue that religious reformers faced in the South. As historian Ralph E. Luker noted, Progressives began to focus on the basic humanity of black people, arguing that their natural rights should be protected by the Constitution just like those of white people. Reformers organized the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909, which promoted African American civil rights throughout the twentieth century and beyond. Although these reformers maintained a wide array of positions on race relations, they all agreed that African Americans should be treated humanely and given the same basic civil rights that other American citizens enjoyed.

Liberal Protestantism

In addition to race and gender, Progressives continued to focus on the changing demographic makeup of the nation. In 1908, over two dozen denominations formed the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (FCC) to promote ecumenism among Protestant churches and to address the social and economic problems caused by immigration, industrialization, and urbanization. At their first meeting, Methodist minister Frank Mason North presented a report titled "The Church and Modern Industry," which called for churches across the nation to improve working conditions for the working-class poor. The FCC adopted these recommendations and codified them into the Social Creed of 1908. Member churches lobbied for workers' rights and FCC leaders became the contact points between the churches and government officials. The FCC also established the Social Service Commission to develop programs that would aid urban residents, to mediate disputes between workers and management, and to encourage workers to become active in their local churches. The FCC gained influence as the "normative" religious viewpoint and often

spoke on behalf of all American Protestants. These churches and religious leaders, however, were often more liberal than some of their coreligionists, and not all Americans agreed with the FCC's philosophy.

Many conservative Christians believed that the church should focus on individual salvation rather than on collective reform measures. The rural and urban poor often left mainline denominations to establish their own religious movements, sects, and denominations because they did not fit well socially or theologically into mainline Protestantism. Pentecostals, for example, seldom participated in the Progressives' social reform initiatives, choosing instead to focus on meeting the spiritual and physical needs of individuals. They assumed that *people* could improve, but they were not convinced that *society* could improve until the Second Coming of Christ. Despite their rejection of Progressivism, Pentecostals advanced some of the Progressives' social agenda by promoting racial and sexual equality and by providing for the physical needs of the poor and destitute souls that joined the Pentecostal ranks.

Fundamentalism

Progressivism must also be understood in the context of the debate between modernists and fundamentalists. Despite a long history of social concern among religious conservatives throughout the nineteenth century, fundamentalists staunchly opposed the "social Christianity" of Progressives and Social Gospelers between 1900 and 1920. Historian George Marsden argues that this "Great Reversal" occurred because, according to fundamentalists, the Social Gospel emphasized social action at the expense of an emphasis on personal salvation. Fundamentalists believed that good works and social action were a response to the regenerating work of God's grace in a Christian's life after he repented of his sins and became totally dependent on God for his salvation. Although proponents of the Social Gospel and Progressivism did not reject the importance of faith and personal beliefs, they implied that doctrine and faith were only evident through social action. Fundamentalists believed that faith was just as important—if not more so—than one's actions and that the two were inseparable.

As Progressivism gained acceptance in the first quarter of the twentieth century, the fundamentalists' attacks became more strident. They were afraid that their emphasis on personal salvation would be overshadowed by the pragmatism of social action. They also opposed the Social Gospel's emphasis on ushering in the kingdom of God on earth

through human progress, which contrasted sharply with their premillennialist view that society would only get worse before the Second Coming. Fundamentalists attacked these liberals on theological, political, and social grounds, and as Progressivism gained acceptance among Americans, the conservatives felt increasingly isolated. By the 1920s, the fundamentalists stopped trying to defend revivalism and social action altogether, and they placed themselves squarely in the conservatives' camp, directing their criticism toward the liberal proponents of the Social Gospel and the Progressive movement.

Conclusion

The Progressive Era was a period of growth, transformation, and reform, which witnessed the birth of modern America. The huge influx of new immigrants into the United States laid the foundation for a truly diverse and pluralistic religious culture in the twentieth century, and urbanization and industrialization set the stage for massive reform efforts that shaped the way religious groups, government, and businesses interacted with the American people. The intellectual changes forced many Americans to reevaluate their basic worldviews and their religious beliefs. The conflicts and divisions that occurred in the Progressive Era led to the establishment of new religious movements and the rise of new cultural authorities, and they helped shape the religious landscape for the rest of the century.

In *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (1991), Susan Curtis argues that the Social Gospel provided a bridge between the Protestant Victorianism of the nineteenth century and the secular consumer culture of the twentieth century, thereby easing the transition during the Progressive Era. Proponents of the Social Gospel were disturbed by the rapid changes taking place as a result of industrialization, urbanization, and immigration, and they became critics of the ethos that produced those changes. Furthermore, they supported the progressive reforms taking shape in modern political culture, and their ideology provided a religious and philosophical basis for those reforms. They sought not only to shore up the Christian foundations of American society but also to Christianize the rest of the world. They wanted government and business to respond to their calls for social justice and to provide the institutional resources needed to correct the vast array of social ills in the United States. These women and men thought that they—the religious leaders—would shape progressive reform in the twentieth century. By the end of World War I, however,

their ideal of a just and socially responsible society based on their interpretation of the Christian message had been replaced by a secular vision of Progressivism that strengthened the relationship between business and government and emphasized national security and prosperity. These reformers used the language and promotional tactics of the modern consumer culture to “sell” their ideas to the public and to government and business leaders. By the 1920s, the Social Gospel had been subsumed into the secular culture, and the religious leaders had surrendered much of their cultural authority to politicians and businessmen.

In the end, the Progressive movement did not produce any radical changes in the American system. The nation's political and economic systems remained essentially intact, and the basic structures of society were not radically altered to produce visionary changes. Progressivism did, however, produce pragmatic changes that resulted in modifications of the American governmental system, and these lasted for the remainder of the twentieth century. Government regulation to protect the public from corporate abuse, the seeds of the modern welfare state, and modern notions of public charity were firmly established during this period, due in large part to the efforts of women and men such as Mary McDowell, Walter Rauschenbusch, and Hannah G. Solomon. Whether or not it was the world they intended to create, Progressives introduced modern America to the rest of the world and laid the foundation for America's role in a global society.

See also *African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights*; *Benevolent Empire*; *Episcopalians: The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era*; *Feminism*; *Fundamentalism*; *Judaism* entries; *Philanthropy*; *Populism*; *Prohibition*; *Roman Catholicism: The Age of the Catholic Ghetto*; *Settlement Houses*; *Social Gospel*; *Social Reform*; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Prohibition

In 1920, the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution went into effect, making the "manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors" in the United States illegal. That constitutional amendment capped a nearly century-long effort by a variety of groups and individuals to restrict or prohibit the use of alcohol in the country. This occurred as part of a religious drama in which reformers sought to mitigate what they perceived as the nation's moral decline and to instruct Americans on how they should live. Prohibition was not exclusively a religious movement, and it points to the sometimes complicated position of religious people in public life. First, it was a movement of religious people trying to harness the power of a secular government to achieve a desired moral end. As such, it brought into sharp focus the tension between a particular religious vision for the country and preserving individual civil liberties. Second, as the country grew and underwent economic and demographic changes, reformers' moral vision looked to some like social control of unruly immigrants and lower classes. But it would be a mistake solely to ascribe social and political explanations to what was, for its advocates, primarily a religious movement. Third, controlling alcohol and liquor use brought into sharp relief tensions between states' rights and federal authority.

Origins of Temperance Movement

Temperance ideology in America originated with Benjamin Rush in 1784. Rush drew a distinction between distilled spirits and fermented beverages. The former were dangerous, leading to poverty, crime, and disease, among other maladies. The latter were beneficial, even healthful. The problem Rush

confronted was not small. Indeed, alcohol consumption in the colonial era was scandalously high—it was considered safer and more nutritious than water. By 1820, Americans consumed an average of 4 gallons of alcohol per capita. Rush's efforts to restrict alcohol consumption amounted to attempts at moral suasion. That is, Rush attempted to use reason and moral argument to convince others that to stop drinking was the right thing to do. Moral suasion encouraged self-reliance and the individual's desire for self-improvement. A physician himself, Rush devoted much of his attention to convincing other physicians and ministers of the benefits of limiting strong drink.

According to historian Jack S. Blocker Jr., Rush's temperance campaign proved to be the beginning of a cycle of reform that would be repeated through the twentieth century. Failure of moral suasion led to calls for legal coercion. Parallel to this development was a change in beliefs about the effect of liquor on society. Originally, overindulgence was seen as an individual issue; a person's actions led to such evils as crime, poverty, and broken families. These individual sins were made worse by the spread of the market economy, which created exciting—and frightening—new opportunities for labor and entrepreneurs alike. Most significant, the market economy helped to remove drinking from family and community control. Rather than drinking at home or in a carefully controlled environment with employers, workers now drank in taverns, away from oversight of their social "betters." What originated as an individual sin, then, eventually became a social problem.

Antiliquor reform proved to be a cauldron of racial, ethnic, and class tensions, with religious activism often stoking the fire beneath. In response to the spread of the market economy, reform groups such as the American Temperance Society (ATS) were founded. Formed by evangelical Protestant clergymen in 1826, the ATS adjusted its message to push for total abstinence from liquor rather than moderation. Some historians have argued that this was social control: evangelical factory owners and merchants' attempts to use Christianity to exercise moral influence over the working class. After all, recent German and Irish immigrants filled up saloons and had little patience for arguments about the evils of strong drink. These Catholic newcomers seemed to ignore Protestant American mores and drank on Sunday. They were easy targets for reformers.

Other scholars, however, have demonstrated that Christian reformers' goals and influence were broader than simple social control. In fact, workers themselves willingly attended

revival meetings and took up the antiliquor cause. Formed in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1840, the Washington Temperance Society, for example, consisted of working-class former drunkards who shared their own struggles with alcohol and preached the virtues of self-control. And evangelical reformers took up other causes besides temperance, including protecting Sunday as the Christian Sabbath and abolishing slavery. Moral reform, then, demonstrated the continuing relevance of Protestant Christianity in the public sphere and Christianity's ability to adapt to modern circumstances.

Late Nineteenth Century: Cycle of Prohibition, Relaxation, and Political Organization

The turn from moral suasion to legal coercion demonstrated Protestant Christian reformers' ability to harness the power of modern interest group politics to achieve their vision for American society. In the face of what they believed was obvious and growing immorality, reformers realized that moral suasion would not be enough. Instead, they would need to use the power of government. Early efforts at legal coercion were state level. In 1851, Maine became the first state to ban liquor sales statewide. Within four years, twelve other states followed suit. It was no coincidence that these first attempts at legal coercion occurred at the same time as the political success of the nativist Know Nothing party, which made restricting liquor an integral part of its political agenda. Although the pattern would be repeated in the late nineteenth century, this reform cycle could not last. One side effect of the Civil War was the return of a drinking culture, and by the 1870s, most states had reversed their earlier prohibition.

The cycle began again in the 1870s. This time women's political activism and prohibition went hand in hand. Founded in Ohio in 1874, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) ushered in the country's first national women's movement. For leader Frances Willard (1839–1898) and other WCTU reformers, antiliquor activism marked true social reform. As part of the Social Gospel movement, it represented their attempt to make society more Christian. If the market revolution and presence of German and Irish immigrants in the mid-nineteenth century had posed a problem, then the growth of industry and the expansion of European immigration after the Civil War were particularly troublesome for someone trying to establish the kingdom of God on Earth.

Nevertheless, the WCTU was extraordinarily successful, with politically minded women filling local chapters all over the country. From the 1870s until the early twentieth

century, state-level prohibition was most successful where women earned the right to vote. Despite its name, however, the WCTU had a broader agenda than just liquor. In addition to its antiliquor program, the WCTU also pressed for women's suffrage, equal pay for women, day care for children, and workers' safety.

In 1893, organizers from Ohio and Washington, D.C., formed the Anti-Saloon League (ASL). Led by men, the ASL focused on one issue, prohibition, and it blamed liquor for all moral and social problems. "[B]egun by Almighty God," the ASL enjoyed enormous political success, primarily because it fashioned successful lobbying efforts at the state level. Unlike its mid-nineteenth century temperance counterparts, the ASL avoided aligning with any one political party. "Omnipartisan" in its approach, the ASL studied voting records, identified sympathetic candidates, and then endorsed those men for public office. Drawing its energy and support from Protestant clergy and laity, the ASL was strongest in the South, West, and rural North. Between 1907 and 1915, ten southern states outlawed liquor, with most states outside the urban northeast quickly following suit.

Extending Temperance Laws to the Federal Level

By 1917, most states had some form of temperance law. Twenty-seven banned liquor statewide, and others gave local municipalities and counties the option of being wet or dry. Piecemeal, local efforts often ran into obstacles, however. The most bothersome was that state level prohibitions had no influence over interstate commerce. That was the constitutional domain of the federal government. Attempts to convince the federal government to use its authority over interstate commerce ran into protests rooted in state sovereignty and personal liberty. In 1890, Congress passed the Wilson Act, which made liquor shipped into one state from another subject to the receiving state's laws. The United States Supreme Court objected to the major provisions of the Wilson Act, thereby opening up opportunities for interstate liquor sellers to ship directly to individual customers in otherwise dry states. In 1911, Christian lobbyists in Washington, D.C., brought together a variety of temperance workers from across the nation. They proposed what became the Webb-Kenyon bill, which gave the federal government the authority to end the interstate shipment of alcohol.

Passage of the Webb-Kenyon Act revealed several shifts in federal policy and attitudes toward moral reform. First, considerations of states' rights and personal liberty diminished; the dangers of alcohol were real and, in order to maintain a

proper moral order and keep otherwise decent people from the temptations of sin, Congress must act. Second, Christian lobbyists represented a well-organized group of politically motivated Protestant laypeople. They successfully mobilized like-minded Christians and demonstrated their voting power to politicians. This was interest group politics that later observers of the Christian Coalition and Religious Right would recognize and appreciate. Third, the center of Christian religio-political power shifted from New England and the Mid-Atlantic States to the South and West.

With the assistance of southern congressmen and lobbyists, then, the ASL and the WCTU pressed for national prohibition. A changing national climate prepared the way. New individual Christian voices such as evangelist Billy Sunday and Democratic politician William Jennings Bryan joined efforts to convince Americans of the need for prohibition. Beyond those efforts at persuasion, ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment provided for an income tax, the revenue from which could replace the revenue generated from liquor taxes. More importantly, World War I made protecting American soldiers from vice especially important. What was more, resources that normally went for brewing needed to be diverted to the war cause, and brewers who dominated shipping interfered with the transport of necessary wartime materiel. Prohibition, then, became a patriotic necessity. The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution passed Congress in 1917. Ratification occurred in January 1919, and it took effect the following year.

The new amendment needed to be enforced, and “intoxicating liquors” needed to be defined. Sponsored by a Republican congressman from Minnesota, the Volstead Act was written under the influence of the ASL. The Act set a legal limit of 0.5 percent alcohol, but it allowed private use of alcohol in one’s home. Christian lobbyists had hoped to end all use—private and public—so this personal exemption did not go as far as the antiliquor lobby had hoped. Nevertheless, the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act promised a larger role for the federal government in enforcing moral regulations. Even with certain exemptions for religious use, this meant an expanded federal bureaucracy and the active presence of the government in people’s private lives.

Critical Assessment

Historians have disagreed over how to interpret Prohibition. Was it a failed social experiment or legitimate social reform? Initially, many progressive historians concluded that it was a failed experiment, a reactionary movement that gave rise to

organized crime and violations of civil liberties. Organized crime did flourish, and many ordinary Americans flouted the law. More recently, some historians have placed Prohibition into its larger reform context. It was the logical outcome of the nineteenth-century movement to properly anchor the country in the Christianity of its founders and to help to usher in a new millennium and the kingdom of God. At least through the early 1920s, alcohol use declined, and incidences of the diseases and social problems often associated with alcohol also went down. In this interpretation, Prohibition actually worked.

In the 1920s, groups such as the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment actively worked for repeal or at least modification of the Eighteenth Amendment. Little changed legally, however, until the onset of the Great Depression. In 1928, the “dry” Republican Herbert Hoover had defeated the “wet” Democrat Al Smith for President. But the Depression opened a door for Democrats, and the Twenty-First Amendment to the Constitution repealed the Eighteenth and returned the authority over controlling liquor to the states. One reform cycle ended, and a new one would begin.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Politics: Twentieth Century; Populism; Progressivism; Social Gospel; Social Reform; Sunday and the Sabbath.*

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Protestant Architecture

See *Architecture: Protestant*

Protestant Liberalism

Depending on the context, the word *liberal* can take on a variety of meanings. What is considered liberal in one

historical period may be conservative or radical in another time or place.

In religion, *liberalism* refers not to a political paradigm but to philosophical and religious positions with social, economic, and political implications. The use of “liberal” to distinguish different types of Protestants does not refer to denomination but to a spectrum of Protestant religious groups falling between conservative Protestantism and secular humanism. Unlike conservative Protestants, liberal Protestants display an interest in adapting Protestant thought and practice to modern challenges. Unlike secular humanists, liberal Protestants prefer to work within existing social, economic, and political structures.

European Roots

Protestant liberalism in America fully emerged in the nineteenth century. Its roots, however, began in Europe much earlier with several philosophical movements. First, Arminianism influenced American liberals. Based on the ideas of Reformation-era figure Jacob Arminius (1559/60–1609), Arminian theology rejected the Calvinist notion of predestination and stressed individualism and free will. Arminians believed that individuals played a role in obtaining their salvation. As many American Protestants moved toward liberalism, they used Arminianism to critique predominant Calvinist ideas. Second, the European Enlightenment set the stage for Protestant liberalism as philosophers such as John Locke (1632–1704) challenged the authority of Catholic and Protestant churches. Locke argued that humans received knowledge through their ability to reason rather than from God. Likewise, scholars such as Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727) challenged dominant Christian conceptions of the universe by explaining nature through physical laws rather than revelation. Enlightenment scholars opened the door for new sources of authority by utilizing empirical evidence as a basis of truth. Enlightenment values of intellectual inquiry, religious toleration, and the use of reason and empiricism appeared in a third European movement that influenced liberalism in America.

Scottish Common Sense philosophy, the notion that God created all individuals with the ability to make proper moral judgments based on their senses, changed the way Protestants interpreted the Bible. Developed during the Scottish Renaissance of the mid-eighteenth century, Scottish Common Sense philosophy relied on both God and reason for discernment. Americans encountered these European movements through a transatlantic exchange of ideas. These European

movements shaped religion in America in a variety of ways, including through the establishment of institutionalized Protestant liberalism in America.

Early American Liberal Thought

Protestant liberalism began as a distinctive movement in America with the emergence of Unitarianism in the early nineteenth century. Unitarians distinguished themselves from other Protestant groups primarily through their denial of the Trinity, the notion that God exists in the three forms: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Preceding the Unitarians, Protestant Reformation figure Michael Servetus (1511–1553) had denied that the Trinity was a biblically sound doctrine. Servetus’s claim reemerged in the seventeenth century among a small group of English Christians who asserted the oneness, or “unitarian” character of God. Unitarian impulses had been brewing in America following the First Great Awakening in the early eighteenth century. Emergent Unitarians challenged the idea that God existed in trinitarian form and, using Arminian ideas, questioned the notion that all humanity was depraved through original sin. The most pivotal figure in nascent American Unitarianism was William Ellery Channing (1780–1842), who was the first person to outline an explicitly liberal Protestant theology.

Rooted in New England culture, Channing, like other religious liberals of his time, grew to distrust orthodox Calvinism and to display the hallmarks of liberal Protestantism. Channing departed from Calvinism by viewing God not as a wrathful being but an Arminian-inspired benevolent being who acted as a parental figure. He also thought that salvation depended on human free will rather than on God’s sovereignty and predestination. Channing considered the encouragement of ethical behavior to be the true purpose of Christianity. By emulating Jesus, Christians achieved holiness and virtue. Channing remained optimistic about humanity’s capacity for good because he thought that the likeness of God was present in every person. He was active in a variety of liberal causes, including abolition, women’s rights, temperance, pacifism, and abolition of capital punishment.

In 1819, Channing outlined the features of Unitarianism in particular and religious liberalism in general during an ordination sermon in Boston. First, Channing rejected the Trinity, challenging critics to find trinitarian references in scripture. Second, Channing stressed the fatherhood and benevolence of God. Channing described individuals’ relationships to God as loving, intimate parent-child relationships. Third, Channing asserted the humanity (rather than

divinity) of Jesus and the moral imperative of Christianity found in Jesus' example. Finally, Channing insisted on the need to use reason when reading the Bible. This shift in authority dramatically affected liberals' relationships to Christianity's sacred text. Liberal Protestants considered scripture divinely authoritative only when it could be corroborated through reason, conscience, or experience. Following Channing's lead, in 1825 liberal clergy members in Boston established the American Unitarian Association, the first formal liberal Protestant institution in America.

This adjustment to a liberal conception of Christianity challenged New England Protestant traditions that were based in Calvinism. Unitarians offered a dissenting voice. Theodore Parker (1810–1860) entered the Unitarian controversy when in 1841 he gave a sermon at Hawes Place Church of South Boston on “The Transient and Permanent in Christianity.” In his sermon, Parker revealed a firm commitment to a historical-critical method of studying Christian theology. Parker, influenced by German scholars like David Strauss (1808–1874), insisted that Jesus was a historical figure whom early Christians described as supernatural according to myths and not fact. Parker's views alienated him from Unitarians not only because he stressed the importance of viewing Jesus historically but also because he contended that the essence of Christianity did not rely on Jesus as a supernatural figure at all. The Civil War ended much of the debate between Parkerites and Unitarians. Following the war, however, Unitarians no longer considered Parker as controversial as they did prior to the war. Much like Protestant liberalism as a whole, Parker revised his theology to accommodate for changes to Christian truths uncovered through historical investigation.

By the 1830s, Unitarians had reached the mainstream in Boston. Harvard and its Divinity School came to fully represent and espouse Unitarian thought in America. The Unitarian community was shocked when one of its own offered a striking liberal critique. In his Divinity School Address at the 1838 graduation ceremony, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) challenged the historicity of Jesus' miracles. Most Unitarians maintained that Jesus was a divine being who could perform miracles. Religious truth for Unitarians relied on Jesus as a supernatural figure. Emerson considered such a position contradictory to the Unitarian assertion of Jesus' humanity. Emerson turned away from the need for religious truth to be rooted in such supernatural acts as miracles. Emerson further insisted that supernatural beings were not necessary for revelation because humans could pursue and

find religious truth. Such convictions led Emerson to found a loosely knit intellectual and literary movement known as transcendentalism.

Transcendentalists avoided religious institutions and preferred informal fellowship through intellectual and literary pursuits. Emerson, like other transcendentalists, feared that miracles undermined the credibility of Christianity, especially in light of growing interest in science and empirical study. Miracles, for transcendentalists, were a false foundation for Christianity precisely because they could not be proven. Rather than counter orthodoxy with a progressive alternative such as Unitarianism, transcendentalists wanted to avoid these appeals altogether and use the human soul as the foundation of and starting point for Christianity. Their primary religious focus was on the immanence of God, the notion that God's presence pervaded all things. Transcendentalists believed that individuals could experience the divine anywhere, particularly in nature, because religious truth was immanent.

Consequently, transcendentalists encouraged individuals to pursue spiritual truth on their own. This pursuit affirmed both individual religious practice and the immanence of God. Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862), for example, purposefully isolated himself from civilization in order to find religious truth in nature. Through *Walden* (1854), readers could follow Thoreau on his journey and find inspiration for their own spiritual quests. In addition to Thoreau's asceticism, transcendentalists also practiced forms of communal living at places such as Brook Farm, founded by George and Sophie Ripley in 1844. Most notably, transcendentalism centered on the literary-minded Transcendental Club in Concord, Massachusetts, which included, among others, Emerson, Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller (1810–1850). This group created a literary journal, known as the *Dial*, that provided an outlet for their intellectual and spiritual pursuits. With Fuller as editor from 1840 to 1844, the *Dial* proved influential despite its small circulation. From nature walks to reading, transcendentalists expanded acceptable forms of religious practice for liberal Protestants.

Evangelical Liberals

While nineteenth-century Protestant liberalism developed its institutional and more radical ends among Unitarians and transcendentalists, liberalism also had a presence among evangelicals. These figures, collectively known as the “Princes of the Pulpit,” included Episcopalian Phillips Brooks (1835–1893) as well as Congregationalists Horace

Bushnell (1802–1876), Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887), and Lyman Abbott (1835–1922). These ministers, like other liberals, rejected orthodox Calvinism and its strict adherence to the doctrine of original sin and determinism. Meanwhile they embraced biblical criticism, science, and scholarship. Despite changes, these ministers remained committed to the evangelical cause and its long-held principles, primarily a continued interest in mission work, the existence of sin, and the need for individual transformations. Their dual interest in evangelicalism and liberalism earned them the title “evangelical liberal.”

Horace Bushnell served as the epitome of evangelical liberalism. Bushnell shared the transcendentalists’ emphasis on the immanence of God and on the role of intuition as a way to connect to God. Bushnell also acknowledged that language was imprecise and fluid rather than static, like scientific facts. This challenged Protestants’ assumptions that theology could be expressed through formal creeds, doctrines, and statements of faith. Bushnell further distanced himself from other evangelicals by deemphasizing the need for an emotional conversion experience that resulted in a dramatic “new birth.” Instead Bushnell affirmed the liberal idea of continuity between the supernatural and the natural. In his most famous work, *A Discourse on Christian Nurture* (1847), Bushnell explained that individuals gradually developed their Christian character in their everyday lives. Firmly planting himself within liberalism, Bushnell insisted that “Christian nurture” took place in locations other than the church, such as at home, in school, and in public life. Bushnell served as a mediator between orthodox and radical views on science. Like all liberal Protestants, he considered science and religion to be complementary.

Henry Ward Beecher also served as a representative figure for evangelical liberals. As the pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn, New York, from 1847 to 1887, Beecher asserted the need for Christians to “feel” God in their lives. Beecher discouraged his congregants from pursuing their intellectual impulses only. Abstract concepts were less important to Beecher than religious feeling. In the process, Beecher emphasized the immanence and benevolence of God by encouraging Protestants to view the Bible as an account of God’s interaction with humanity over time. Like other liberals, Beecher was optimistic about humanity’s ability to make the world a better place. He insisted that Jesus was best understood as an ethical and moral example whose life provided insight on how to conduct oneself. Beecher’s evangelical liberal message proved

popular as Americans experienced rapid change during the mid-nineteenth century. Beecher gained a wide following, including Abraham Lincoln, Walt Whitman, and Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain).

Slavery proved to be a wedge issue that gradually separated liberals from their conservative counterparts. Antislavery debates altered the basis of authority in Protestantism, pushing many Protestants toward liberalism. In order to maintain their stance against slavery, Protestants shifted the locus of authority from the infallibility of a sacred text to the reason and conscience of the individual believer. While conservative Protestants maintained that the Bible was a timeless text revealed by God, liberals increasingly viewed the Bible as a historical document shaped by the context in which it was written. As a result, liberals displayed a willingness to disregard or reinterpret scriptures that could not be confirmed through reason, experience, or empirical study. This shift set the stage for an intensified division after the Civil War. Liberal Protestants revised dogma in such a way that Protestantism could continually adapt to its context rather than remain rooted in static doctrines.

Liberalism Moves toward Maturity

Following the Civil War, American culture experienced rapid industrialization and urbanization. With the nation divided ideologically and in economic decline, Protestants experienced major changes. First, large denominations that divided over the issue of slavery widened the distance between their liberal and conservative ends. Second, voluntary organizations unaffiliated with particular churches proliferated in number and causes. Third, divisive doctrinal questions proliferated as Americans coped with rapid changes to economic, political, and social order. Fourth, denominations and churches altered their evangelism to cater to an urban rather than frontier audience. Many liberal Protestants became self-conscious of Christianity’s moral and intellectual progress.

A greater shift occurred within the nation’s leading seminaries and universities. American scholars followed trends among European intellectuals who dramatically departed from traditional approaches to Christian thought and history. For example, throughout the 1850s German Protestant theologian Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889) concentrated on creating a systematic Christian theology that focused on individual sin and reforming society. Ritschl asserted that Christianity emphasized both redemption from sin and regeneration of society as necessary for the kingdom of God. A prolific writer, Ritschl systematized his ideas in *Instruction in the*

Christian Religion (1875). Adolf Von Harnack (1851–1930), Ritschl's student, extended his advisor's work by explaining the history of Christianity through a critical examination of historical texts. Liberals did not consider Christian ideas static but subject to social, political, and economic contexts. Historical circumstance, according to Harnack, played a pivotal role in explaining religion. One of Harnack's most influential works was *History of Dogma*, published in seven volumes in German from 1885 to 1890 and in English from 1894 to 1899. Harnack traced the history of Christian doctrines, such as the Trinity, to church councils of the fourth and fifth centuries. He concluded that Christian dogma increasingly adopted metaphysics and Greek influences over time. He also explained that Christianity possessed a fixed "essence" through Jesus. The Gospels, for Harnack, represented an unchanging and timeless quality within Christianity that did not require metaphysics, dogma, or even institutions.

In addition to these changes in higher education, comparative religion as a field of study also developed in the mid-nineteenth century. German scholar Max Müller (1823–1900) led the turn toward the "scientific" study of religion with *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (1873). Müller compared religions by studying philology, the structure and development of language and language families. Müller and others advocated learning about other religions by reading sacred texts, finding patterns or similarities among different religions, and striving for scientific objectivity in the assessment of religious beliefs. The realization of similarities among world religions affirmed and encouraged ecumenism and pluralism, two hallmarks of religious liberalism. Books such as Unitarian James Freeman Clarke's *Ten Great Religions: An Essay in Comparative Theology* (1871) appealed to many liberal Protestant clergy. Interest in comparative religion reached a popular level after the World's Parliament of Religions at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Representatives of major world religions assembled to demonstrate ecumenism and progress. As a result of comparative religious study, liberal Protestants no longer defended Christianity as an exclusive bearer of religious truth. The development of comparative religious study and historical-critical method in Europe expanded liberal thought on both sides of the Atlantic.

As a result of these European impulses, formerly orthodox institutions in America, such as Congregationalist Andover Theological Seminary, incorporated these methods into their curricula. While the movement may have begun in the

Northeast, Chicago quickly became the geographical and intellectual center for liberalism. As institutions shifted their curricula, the purpose of religious education shifted more generally. Education became an opportunity to instill proper Christian character into the minds and spirits of young people. Psychology and progressive worldviews became just as, if not more, important than religious doctrine. Liberal professors such as Charles A. Briggs (1841–1913) of Union Theological Seminary in New York City committed themselves to academic freedom, a concept pioneered at German universities. Academic freedom proponents explained that intellectuals must have the liberty to teach, study, and research without restriction by others in order to seek knowledge and truth. Briggs and others claimed academic freedom as justification for pursuing new forms of religious truth in biblical criticism, comparative religion, physical sciences, and social sciences.

Research universities and academic freedom shaped the way liberal religious groups engaged in public life. The field of social science emerged in the early twentieth century as an empirical study of formally "moral" topics such as economics, politics, and society. Scholars, especially liberal Protestants, brought their own philosophical worldviews to their scientific studies. For instance, economist Richard Ely (1854–1943) developed a critique of laissez-faire capitalism through ethical and empirical claims. Social science and theology merged explicitly with the academic study of Christian ethics. Harvard professor Francis Peabody pioneered this field with his book *Jesus Christ and the Social Question* (1900). University courses that addressed Christianity's approach to public issues such as poverty, capitalism, and unionization became commonplace as another form of Protestant liberalism, the Social Gospel movement, emerged. Liberal Protestants embraced education in all its forms because they considered knowledge to bolster inner spiritual authority and religious practice.

The Social Gospel applied Christianity to social issues in contemporary society. Proponents such as Washington Gladden (1836–1918) and Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918) built on the antebellum evangelical liberal foundation by applying the moral precepts found in Jesus' life to a broader array of social issues relating to industrialization, urbanization, and capitalism. Whereas the evangelical Princes of the Pulpit focused primarily on the individual and their inward transformation, Social Gospel leaders gave equal or greater weight to transforming society as a whole. As the pastor of the Second German Baptist Church of New York City,

Rauschenbusch immersed himself in social science research in order to make Protestantism relevant to the problems associated with the urban working class. Rauschenbusch emphasized the need for “social salvation” in addition to individual piety because he thought humanity experienced individual and social sins. *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917) and *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) best captured Rauschenbusch’s liberal construction of sin, salvation, and Christian ethics. Rauschenbusch argued that Protestants should no longer neglect the social order but save the world from the sins created through class stratification. Christians, according to Rauschenbusch, had a duty to sacrifice for the sake of others. Consequently, Social Gospel activists engaged in civic action as an extension of individual religious practice. Protestant liberalism more broadly encouraged participation in the temporal world rather than as simply preparation for the afterlife. Christians, in the minds of many liberals, should be expected to perform good works for the sake of others. Eternity and salvation were less important than moral action, proper behavior, and social and political progress. This blurred the lines between sacred and secular behavior as liberals initiated public reforms through voluntarism, legislation, and professional careers.

Twentieth-Century Protestant Liberals

While Social Gospelers such as Rauschenbusch connected church life to public life, another liberal group focused primarily on individual religious experience. This portion of liberal Protestants moved away from a religion centered on revelation to a religion centering on religious experiences. Harvard philosopher and psychologist William James (1842–1910) paved the way for liberal Protestant mystical experiences in his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902). Through this work, James established a branch of philosophy known as Pragmatism. Pragmatists believed that truth was found not in the logic of an idea but in the degree to which individuals could use it in their everyday lives. Since religious experiences were not necessarily logical, James contended they could not be rendered empirically true or false.

Not all modernists remained as tolerant of other forms of religious thought and practice. For instance, Baptist minister Harry Emerson Fosdick drew battle lines between liberal Protestantism and conservative Protestantism during the interwar years. On May 21, 1922, Fosdick delivered the sermon “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” while an interim pastor at First Presbyterian Church in New York City. By 1922, conservative Protestants had outlined their theology in the

Fundamentals, a twelve-volume exposition published from 1910 to 1915. This collection of essays rejected biblical criticism, evolution, and other aspects of liberalism while affirming traditional doctrines like biblical inerrancy, the notion that the Bible is free of errors. Fosdick portrayed self-designated fundamentalists as not only opposed to modernity but also on the brink of taking over American Protestantism. Liberals emerged from the 1920s as the apparent victors of a liberal-conservative culture war. The so-called Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925 left fundamentalists reluctant to remain in the public eye while liberals dominated the public sphere. Conservatives withdrew from mainline denominations and liberals filled pews, church rosters, and seminaries. Major centers of liberal thought included Union Theological Seminary in New York City, the University of Chicago Divinity School, and Boston University School of Theology. Protestant liberalism, by the 1930s, firmly established itself as the mainstream of Protestant thought. Composed of mostly white, middle-class Americans, liberal Protestants proved to be the religious standard against which “outsiders” would be compared.

Theological Critiques of Liberalism

The widespread disillusionment following World War I caused many Americans to challenge liberal assumptions about human nature and religion’s role in society. Prior to the war, liberalism fostered optimism about humanity’s capacity for ethical behavior and improving conditions in society. Liberals considered Christianity the mechanism through which individuals could improve their lives. Since Protestant liberalism based its identity on the goodness found in each individual, the hope of social progress, and a benevolent parental relationship with God, it no longer appeared realistic to many Protestants. Following World War I and especially following World War II, humanity appeared less likely to be altruistic and more likely to act in self-interest. Sin appeared to be a more accurate measurement for human behavior as Christians considered their role in a world evidently deprived.

Following World War I, liberalism’s sharpest critique came from a new movement within Protestantism called “neo-orthodoxy.” Neo-orthodox scholars returned to the works of Protestant Reformation figures, primarily Martin Luther and John Calvin, and the medieval-Christian figure Augustine of Hippo. In addition to these Christian figures, neo-orthodoxy relied on the work of Søren Kierkegaard (1813–55) and his emphasis on encounters with God. Kierkegaard’s major

works, such as *Fear and Trembling* (1843), were translated into English in the 1940s. Swiss theologian Karl Barth (1886–1968), however, spurred the neo-orthodox movement with the publication of *The Epistle to the Romans* (1918; translated into English 1932). Barth affirmed the Calvinist conceptions of human sin, the need for God’s revelation, and the certainty of judgment from God. Meanwhile he maintained the liberal rejection of predestination.

In America, the two most influential neo-orthodox thinkers were brothers Reinhold (1892–1971) and H. Richard Niebuhr (1894–1962), who expanded on Barth’s ideas. With *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932), Reinhold Niebuhr devastated the Social Gospel movement by asserting the inherent differences between the behavior of individuals and of social groups. He accentuated the lack of correlation between improving individuals’ moral lives and the morality of society as a whole. This distinction exposed the Social Gospel’s assumption that individual transformations could reform society and that improving social conditions could change individual character. H. Richard Niebuhr examined the Christian Church through sociological methods in *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929). Niebuhr offered a dramatically different perspective of the Christian Church. He illustrated how Christianity was divided according to class, race, ethnicity, and region. The Niebuhrs’ critiques highlighted the perhaps naïve focus on social solidarity, equilibrium, and moral character found in liberal Protestantism. By contrast, the Niebuhrs emphasized “realistic” views of the world and of Christianity, in which responsibilities and conflicts prevail over individual moral character and social unity.

Neo-orthodox critiques reverberated with many Protestants after World War I and the Great Depression. The “War to End All Wars” left Americans pessimistic about human nature and the moral progress of humanity. Many returned their focus to original sin, depravity, and atonement. However, this did not necessarily correspond to a return to orthodox beliefs about predestination or biblical inerrancy. Neo-orthodox critiques may have proved fitting and consequently slowed liberal growth, yet liberalism pervaded American culture in the early twentieth century. Liberals’ emphasis on God’s immanence, individualized spiritual experience, ecumenism, and social reform proved to be mainstays of popular American ideas about religion despite neo-orthodox critiques.

The combination of critiques and uncertainty following World War II left many liberals questioning the need for religion at all. Despite these challenges, Protestant liberalism

persisted through mainline Protestant institutions. In the latter half of the twentieth century, the legacy of earlier forms of Protestant liberalism continued in social reform efforts, higher education institutions, and ecumenical organizations. In each era, from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first century, liberal Protestants can be recognized primarily through their willingness to adapt Christianity to the modern world and their subsequent insistence on the flexibility of Christianity to individuals and historical contexts.

Major Themes and Motifs

As a religious designation, “Protestant liberalism” connotes an overwhelming interest in adapting Protestant thought to modern scientific, philosophical, and political ideas. These adaptations occurred through an assortment of overlapping issues.

First, liberal Protestants shifted the locus of religious authority. Reason, empiricism, and conscience played a larger role in liberal Protestants’ confirmation of religious truth than the Bible or clergy members. Influenced by Enlightenment thought, German historicism, and science, liberals transferred religious authority from external sources to the inner world of the individual. Consequently, this shift dramatically altered liberal Protestants’ relationship to Christianity’s sacred text and encouraged new forms of religious practice. Transcendentalists, for instance, sought religious truth in nature and expressed those truths through literature. Similarly, twentieth-century modernists relied on physical and social sciences to confirm scientific and religious truth.

Second, liberal Protestants changed previous methods of interpreting biblical texts. As scholars such as David Strauss, Albrecht Ritschl, and Adolf Von Harnack encouraged historical and critical analysis of the Bible, liberals adapted the way they understood scripture. Rather than view the Bible as a timeless, coherent, and divinely revealed text, liberals considered the Bible as a set of texts written and compiled over time and subject to varying influences based on different authors, locations, and time periods. Liberal Protestants recognized the potential for errors, inconsistencies, and contradictions within scripture. Evangelical liberals, who cherished the Bible as a bearer of revelation, even applied reason, conscience, and historical methods to reading scripture.

Third, liberals reconsidered the nature of God. Protestant liberalism contended that God was immanent and a benevolent being. In contrast with Calvinist conceptions of God as a wrathful and distant sovereign, liberals considered God to be a compassionate parent-figure with whom one could

interact regularly. In addition, Protestant liberalism supported the notion that revelation continually unfolded throughout history. Since God was immanent, religion could be revealed in all of creation within one's current context and beyond. With roots in German historicism, liberals recognized that religion itself belonged to a historical context. More important, religious truth could be revealed and applied in ways that were relevant to each context.

Fourth, Protestant liberalism altered the purpose of religion. Religion centered on ethics and morals for liberal Protestants. According to most liberals, Christianity should improve society by bolstering ethical standards and improving social conditions. Formal creeds and doctrinal debate received less attention as liberals concentrated on religious experience and social action. Liberals considered Christianity the mechanism through which individuals could improve themselves and society. Social Gospel proponents in particular and liberals in general cultivated an optimism about humanity's capacity for good. In addition to such evangelical liberals as Henry Ward Beecher or Walter Rauschenbusch, the spectrum of liberal Protestants turned to the figure of Jesus as a moral example to imitate.

Fifth, Protestant liberalism overwhelmingly supported religious tolerance, pluralism, and ecumenism. New information about other religions through the field of comparative religion and events like the World's Parliament of Religions affirmed the similarities between the Bible and other sacred texts. Liberals such as William James, for instance, began to acknowledge the legitimacy of all forms of religious practice. Broad interpretations of sacred texts, avoiding doctrinal debate, and optimism about humanity contributed to a proliferation of ecumenical organizations. In this respect, religious liberalism fostered a commitment to religious toleration and pluralism.

Contributions to Religious and Public Life

Protestant liberalism influenced as much as it was influenced by a variety of social, cultural, political, and religious movements. Liberals not only injected religious innovation into American Protestantism but also stimulated cultural development. Protestant liberalism heavily influenced and was influenced by literature and philosophy. For instance, transcendentalists transformed their relationship to texts and to nature through reading and their literary club. In addition, liberals such as Harriet Beecher Stowe transformed the way Americans related to one another through empathetic relationships with the fictional characters in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

(1852). This trajectory continued as liberal Protestants in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries wrote novels aimed at inspiring social reform. Congregationalist minister Charles M. Sheldon's most famous Social Gospel work, *In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do* (1897), gained best-seller status in the early twentieth century and continues to be read in the twenty-first. In many ways, inspirational writing like that of Stowe and Sheldon confirms Protestant liberalism's hold on American culture in the nineteenth century and beyond.

In the late nineteenth century, Protestant liberalism fused with reform and progressive politics, creating a host of voluntary reform organizations. Liberal Protestants were at the forefront of controversial issues, including women's rights, racial equality, labor reform, prison reform, public education, public health issues, and expanding municipal, state, and federal responsibilities to citizens. In their support of these issues, liberal Protestants revolutionized the professional fields of nursing, counseling, and social work, among many others. These reforms often led to an overlapping consensus with socialism and progressivism.

Protestant liberalism drastically changed higher education in the United States. Following the Civil War, there was an increased interest in both Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and German biblical criticism. Seminaries, churches, and individuals devoted time, money, and scholarship to understanding the roles of and relationship between religion and science. Not only did liberalism alter the core beliefs of the nation's most renowned universities, including Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, but it also radically changed the core curriculum in seminaries like Harvard Divinity School, Andover Theological Seminary, and Rochester Theological Seminary. At the same time, the force of liberal Protestantism created the reputation of other seminaries such as the University of Chicago Divinity School, Union Theological Seminary, and Boston University. The role of biblical criticism and science in these changes cannot be overstated in either of these cases.

From the nineteenth century to the present, liberal Protestants remained committed to ecumenism. First, liberal Protestants stood at the forefront of interdenominational cooperation. As a result of the Social Gospel, liberal-leaning denominations around the United States joined the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, beginning in 1908. Ecumenism reached the global level in 1910 when delegates from various Protestant missionary organizations met in Edinburgh, Scotland, for the World

Missionary Conference. Mainline denominations in America participated strongly in these efforts. This participation continued when the World Council of Churches formed in 1948. In addition to interdenominational action, mainline denominations attempted to reconcile intradenominational divisions. Methodists in 1939 and Presbyterians in 1983 reunited the factions that had been created as a result of slavery debates. Finally, liberal Protestants participated in ecumenism to advocate for specific causes such as pacifism and human rights. Protestant liberalism's strong association with ecumenical organizations reflects their interest in minimizing theological battles, maximizing shared religious truth, and participating in humanitarian efforts.

Critical Assessment

Because of Protestant liberalism's multivalent character, scholars often concentrate on certain figures or particular time periods rather than write about liberalism as a whole. When viewing the trajectory of liberal Protestants' history, it is important to keep their protean character in mind. Liberals vacillated among "religious," "secular," and "progressive" influences over time.

Liberal Protestants sought to enhance their spiritual life through innovation and adaptation. Dissatisfied with orthodoxy generally, liberals shifted the locus of religious practice from a pulpit located inside a church to the people located outside of it. Rather than adopting any formal creeds, liberal Protestantism, especially in the nineteenth century, encompassed a set of characteristics, interests, and principles. Even though changes to Christian thought and practice occurred, liberals understood their role as improving, perfecting, or refining Protestantism. For instance, liberals did not think they were undermining Christianity when they emphasized the need for biblical criticism; instead, liberals considered biblical criticism as a method of advancing Christianity because it reaffirmed progressive revelation. While liberal Protestants accommodated to modern American life, they did so willingly and unapologetically in an effort to enhance individuals' spiritual experiences. Authenticity and sincerity based on commitments to Christianity were at the heart of liberal turns.

Just as liberal Protestants adapted religion to their context, so too has the definition of "liberal Protestant" adapted to changes in context. Assumptions about the term itself influence how theological boundaries are drawn, as much as the creation of boundaries affected the groups themselves. While many liberal ideas became mainstream in

the twentieth century, liberalism moved further left in thought and practice. The adoption of liberal Protestant ideas, causes, and reforms into the mainstream makes it difficult to correlate a decline in adherents to a decline in Protestant liberalism as a whole. Liberalism did not disappear because its impulses of reflection and revision remained. Institutional forms may have diminished but the ideas and moods underlying organized forms of liberal Protestantism remain, if not prevail, in American culture in the early twenty-first century.

See also *Abolitionism and Anti-Slavery; African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; Baptists: Tradition and Heritage; Bible entries; City Missions; Ecumenism; Education: Bible Schools and Colleges; Education: Seminaries and Theological Education; Episcopalians: Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries; Evangelicals entries; Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Fundamentalism; Mainline Protestants; Methodists entries; Neo-Orthodoxy; Pluralism; Popular Religion and Popular Culture entries; Progressivism; Psychology of Religion; Social Ethics; Social Gospel; Social Reform; Spirituality entries; Transcendental Meditation; Unitarians; Unitarian-Universalist Association; Universalists.*

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Protestant Women

See *Women: Protestant*

Protestant Worship

See *Worship: Protestant*

Protestants, Mexico

See *Mexico: Protestantism*

Protestants, Canada

See *Canada: Protestants and the United Church of Canada*

Psychology of Religion

The psychology of religion is a subset of the social sciences that studies the interaction between religion and people. More specifically, it explores the patterns of meaning individuals create in their interactions with religion. Some psychologists of religion explore the social networks that exist among believers, while others seek to understand how thought or cognition affects personal religious experience. Other subsets of psychology of religion seek to explain religious experience in the context of psychiatry. The psychology of religion focuses on people and their interactions with belief, religious practice, and an alternative reality that religion provides them.

These explorations of religion are conducted in a number of ways. Some psychologists of religion use surveys to collect data and generate statistical models in description and prediction of religious behavior. Others use naturalistic observation to understand religious behavior. Others use interview strategies to generate theories about personal expressions of faith and belief. While religion warrants study, psychology of religion has not been limited to the study of religion alone; the term *spirituality* has become a descriptive term as well an individual experience.

In more recent research on religious expression, spirituality has become synonymous with individual faith outside the bounds of religious and institutional dogma. In this case, spirituality is meaningful and confirmatory through one's own experience. While those individuals who self-identify as spiritual may loosely affiliate with a religious tradition, they are not totally bound to the theology, values, beliefs, and rules of that tradition. The field of psychology of religion has existed for more than one hundred years, but research on spirituality is a much newer conversation.

William James and the Origins of the Psychology of Religion

William James (1842–1910), a prolific psychologist and philosopher, provided contextual evidence between institutional and individual religion by focusing solely on the dynamics that constitute personal belief. In the Gifford Lectures on the natural sciences delivered at the University of Edinburgh in 1901 and 1902, James provided a template for religiosity as personal experience. Through a variety of themes that would later be published as the *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), James examined the context of individual religiosity. James noted that a variety of personal experiences, complex in their very nature, link the individual to religion.

Within the lectures, James presented the classification of “religious geniuses,” or those who find their belief confirmed in their experience and have the ability to share it with others. James was interested in the connection between the self and God, when God is considered the ultimate reality. James was intrigued by the transition some individuals underwent when moving from one set of beliefs to another. He argued that there is a much deeper reality beyond that of the sensory world that some seek to explore. James recommended that society should welcome a range of individual beliefs, as they provide depth to human experience. For example, mystical experience resonates with some people, and its integrity should be respected. James concluded the *Varieties* by noting the powerful nature of religious experience and the challenges faced by those who choose to study it.

James advanced several themes related to the study of religion. First, study of religion is valuable outside of its theological or social contexts. James viewed the individual experience as valuable, seeking to show that some religious institutional beginnings were asserted through religious genius and socially deviant behavior. James cites George Fox, the seventeenth-century founder of Quakerism, who by his own account found himself behaving erratically when he felt God working through him. These experiences, while closely knit to psychological abnormality, are in and of themselves real and legitimate for those who experience them and are therefore worthy of study. In James's lectures, the early formation of the field of psychology of religion takes shape.

Alternative Understandings

Unlike James, Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) saw the study of religion as part of the study of the unconscious. Freud, an atheist himself, held that belief in the existence of God was

simply a superstition used by the weak minded to provide security for unseen troubles. Religion was an illusion. Religious ritual was an expression of neurotic practice with ancient origins and reinforced through tradition. More specifically, Freud insisted that God is an illusionary substitute for the missing father figure in one's life. Religion simply provides a coping mechanism to help individuals deal with the unfriendly world around them. Freud grew in recognition throughout the United States following a series of lectures he gave in 1909 at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, regarding psychoanalysis; through promotion by Freud's nephew Edward Bernays (1891–1995)—considered to be the father of public relations—Freud's theories grew more popular following World War I and led many psychoanalysts in America to treat religious belief as a form of neuroses.

Carl Jung (1875–1961), a colleague of Freud and travel companion to Clark University, moved in yet another direction. Jung was drawn to religious symbols and believed that connections between beliefs and a similarity among cultural symbols across traditions did not result from socially neurotic behavior. Rather, they were a product of the social unconscious. These were confirmed in what Jung called “similar archetypes” that represented aspects of the psyche. These archetypes or mythic figures were indicative of a kind of shared unconscious, what Jung designated the “collective unconscious” within humanity. Jung recognized that the commonality of symbol and archetype could point to something greater than this world. Jung also tied personality theory, dream analysis, and psychotherapy to the field of psychology of religion. While many found the eccentric nature of Jung's ideas fascinating, others had difficulty applying his principles to clinical or scientific practice. As a result of the disconnect between Jung's theory and practice, Jungian psychoanalysts and theorists in America were divided as to the future of Jungian psychology. With research psychology gaining momentum as an accepted science, Jung's mystical and existential theories lost favor within research psychology. Academic schools used his discourse to inform other academic discussions such as in religious studies and anthropology. There is little empirical research in psychology of religion from the perspective of Jung.

One attempt to use the methods of empirical science and yet appreciate religious claims came in the work of Gordon Allport (1897–1967). Allport was a man of empirical science and theory but was also deeply religious. His main focus was people as religious individuals who internalized religion in different ways. Allport believed that individuals possessed

traits that were denotative of how individuals interact with their environment. Allport theorized that some used religion for “mature” means, which included the acceptance of inconsistencies in theology and acceptance of others regardless of differences. Allport believed that “immature” individuals used religion for self-serving purposes, such as gaining social status or controlling others against their will. His research in this area related in many ways to his work discussing intrinsic (inward motivation) versus extrinsic (immature) religiosity as a predictor of prejudice.

Faith Development Theory and Transformation

James Fowler (1940–), a developmental psychologist and theologian, has offered a more operationally defined developmental theory about how individuals progress through stages of faith. This model is broken into stages, and benchmarks indicate how faith changes over an individual's life span. Based on qualitative semi-structured interviews with a variety of research participants ranging in age and background, Fowler was able to delineate six stages of faith development.

Stage 1, or Intuitive-Projective faith, develops when an individual is between the ages of three and seven, a time when the egocentric child has difficulty distinguishing between imagination and reality. Adults reinforce social rules to promote culturally acceptable behavior. Fowler identifies stage 2 as Mythic Literal faith, wherein children identify through a sense of belonging within their communities and families. They see relationships among stories, beliefs, and observances in their life that are reinforced within their communities. Stage 3 is Synthetic-Conventional faith, in which individuals extend their networks above and beyond their families to include larger social circles that become more complex and diverse. Religion provides an orientation to the variety of networks among which the individual shifts. In stage 4, Individuative-Reflective faith, individuals seek to position their identities within their own egos. The individual recognizes differences between the self and the worldview as compared to others. Stage 4 individuals have the ability to critically reflect on themselves and explore the inner conflicts of the persona they have in adulthood. In stage 5, Conjunctive Faith, individuals begin to connect with their inner selves. They begin to value the larger implications of symbolism. Few persons attain stage 6, or Universalizing Faith. Only religious sages, those who recognize all humanity as a community without discrimination, experience universalizing faith. Among them, Fowler claims, are persons such as Mother Teresa and Gandhi.

Fowler's formulation is controversial, as some find the stages too longitudinal, functioning as a graduated development model that does not allow for regression to a previous stage. Those who might be considered religious fundamentalists may appear developmentally limited. For example, a fundamentalist may have characteristics of stage 3 or early stage 4 but clearly be able to function within society. These criticisms have caused some in the social scientific community to seek alternative theories in human progression related to faith, but many within theological circles still find Fowler's work useful.

The Status of the Psychology of Religion

As an academic discipline, the psychology of religion has many manifestations. There are a variety of schools within psychology of religion, such as cognitive (the focus on the function of mind), psychoanalytic (exploration of the unconscious), and social-psychology (exploration of social networks as they relate to the individual). Some researchers focus on theory to provide an explanation for religious phenomena. Some psychologists of religion use research methodologies such as survey research, experimentation, naturalistic observation, interviews, textual studies, and ethnography. To define psychology of religion as a single discipline is difficult, as it intersects with other disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, religious studies, and theology. What is clear is that unlike other academic disciplines, the psychology of religion centers on the individual in its exploration of experientially based religious phenomena. It is a small academic field with a variety of connections and networks. It remains a discipline that seeks methodologies to adequately and accurately bring together science and religion.

See also *Healing; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Historical Approaches; Positive Thinking; Practical Theology; Pragmatism; Science; Sociological Approaches; Spirituality* entries.

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Puritans

Puritanism was a broad-based religious movement in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England that achieved its one great institutional success when immigrants transplanted it to New England. The role of the movement in the religious and political history of Scotland, although not described in this entry, was substantial. From its beginnings in mid-sixteenth-century England, the movement aspired to align the Church of England with the principles and practices of the Reformed (Calvinist) tradition. This ambition gave the movement a political edge, for no English monarch would agree to such a program. In New England, however, the political leadership and most lay people were generally sympathetic. Always internally divided between moderates and radicals, the English phase of the movement developed serious divisions in the 1640s and 1650s during the period of Civil War and Commonwealth (1642–1659), ironically the one moment when control of the Church seemed within reach. In the 1660s, and extending into the eighteenth century, serious disagreements also arose among the New England colonists about church membership and toleration.

Initially the name "puritan" was one of several words—"precisionist" was another—applied to the movement by its critics, who borrowed the term from a group that emerged in the early centuries of Christianity, the Novations or Donatists, who used a Greek word for themselves that in English meant "the pure." Early on, but especially in the 1620s and 1630s, polemicists also gave it the meaning of seditious, as though anyone deemed a Puritan wanted to overthrow the authority of king and bishops. In stage plays, ballads, and popular satires, the Puritan was someone overly moralistic and a kill-joy, a stereotype that persists to this day.

The people on the other end of this invective liked to call themselves "the godly" or similar names. By the early seventeenth century, however, some people appropriated the word despite its adverse connotations. Another word in play in the seventeenth century was "Nonconformist," which denoted someone who refused out of conscience to observe

all the rules of the Church. As the British historian Patrick Collinson has pointed out, this invective occludes the moderate or mainstream aspects of the movement in pre-1640 England. A generous definition of the kind Collinson has advocated makes room for bishops in the Church and a segment of the landed aristocracy, both of whom shared the hope of reforming an institution that to them seemed ineffective and far too Catholic.

The English Reformation

That the Church of England was something of a muddle was due to the nature of the English Reformation. At first, as Lutheranism was gaining ground in Europe, Henry VIII, who ruled between 1509 and 1547, acted to protect Catholicism. Only after Pope Clement VII refused to grant Henry a divorce from Catherine of Aragon did the King secure from Parliament a declaration that he, not the Pope, was the supreme head of the Church of England. This measure, although momentous in its consequences, had little immediate effect on doctrine, church structure, and liturgical practice. Gradually, however, a party in favor of reforming these emerged within civil government and the hierarchy of the Church. When Henry was succeeded in 1547 by his young son Edward VI, the reformers came into power and the pace of change accelerated. Thomas Cranmer, named Archbishop of Canterbury in 1532, initiated a rewriting of worship that became the Book of Common Prayer (1549); a revised edition (1552) sharply curtailed the elements of liturgy carried over from Catholicism.

Reform under Elizabeth I

Reform was checked and Catholicism restored when Mary Tudor came to the throne in 1553. Cranmer died at the stake in 1556, but dozens of other clergy escaped to the Continent. When they returned after Mary's death and the crowning of Elizabeth I in 1558, they returned to a Protestant church and a Protestant ruler, though Elizabeth proved to be a moderate like her father. What mattered most to her was securing the stability of her government, a goal more easily accomplished if she refrained from crushing all expressions of difference or disagreement, including the English who persisted in their Catholicism. Yet the reforming wing of the Church would not give up. From their point of view, most of the clergy in the Church were barely able to function, with ineffective preaching their greatest weakness. The Church was weakened, too, by allowing priests to live elsewhere than in their

parishes (nonresidency). Much remained to be done, as well, in eliminating the "relics" of Catholicism.

Some but not all of the reformers regarded the Reformed churches on the Continent as models for what the Church of England should become. Five aspects of the Reformed tradition were appealing: (1) a determination to impose higher standards for lay people's participation in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper; (2) a similar determination to use the processes of church discipline, especially excommunication, for purifying the church of the morally and theologically corrupt, including clergy; (3) rules requiring clerical residency; (4) assertion of the authority of the church to act independently of the civil state (magistrates, monarch) in policing itself and in declaring proper doctrine; and (5) the assumption that the scripture or the Word was the final authority on matters of church polity. Other aspects of the Reformed tradition were also widely admired, like the insistence that parishes or congregations "elect" their own ministers and the assertion that all ministers were of equal rank—for example, no Episcopal hierarchy, or at best an office of bishop defined by function. The progress of the Reformation in Scotland was exciting to some English reformers as indicating what could be accomplished, although English Puritans shied away from *iure divino* Presbyterianism as affirmed by some Scottish theologians.

Puritan Objections to the Church of England

The English reformers grounded their critique of the Church on an interpretation of Christian history. All sixteenth-century Protestants affirmed the authority of the "Word" against Roman Catholicism's insistence on tradition (history) and the Papacy. So, too, Protestants criticized Catholicism for introducing "human inventions" not sanctioned by the Word. From this perspective, the purpose of the Reformation was to clear away those inventions and reclaim the authentic Christianity of the gospels and apostolic letters. The reforming party in England, and especially its more radical members, insisted that the scripture, when properly interpreted, had the force of law for how the church should be organized. The goal was thus to restore what they termed the "primitive" (meaning prime or first) perfection of the church and to eliminate all "inventions" or innovations, most of which had arisen within Catholicism.

The political stalemate, with monarch, most bishops, and many others determined to thwart any radical change, provoked a small number of reformers to turn "Separatist" and leave the Church. The first such acts of "separation" date

from the mid-1560s. At the beginning of the 1580s, Separatism acquired its first printed manifestos via the pen of Robert Browne, a minister in the Church who in 1580 and 1581 formed an independent congregation in the city of Norwich. “Brownism” quickly became another polemical epithet, even though Browne made his peace with the Church in the late 1580s. The yeast of Separatism continued to ferment as others took the daring step of declaring the Church unlawful and of organizing congregations on the basis of a covenant, a practice the Separatists seem to have originated.

Radicals and Moderates

Earlier, in 1572, radicals who did not go the way of Separatism had issued a far-reaching manifesto, “Admonition to Parliament.” The two young men who wrote it, John Field and Thomas Wilcox, insisted that in order to have “right religion,” one must have “right ministry” to God and a “right movement” of his church. Field and Wilcox turned their invective against the prayer book (“picked out of that popishe dunghill, the Masse booke”), the bishops of the Church, the indiscriminate baptizing of children without regard to the parents’ qualifications, and the absence of effective local discipline to exclude the immoral. “Admonition to Parliament” accomplished nothing in the 1570s except to anger moderates in the Church, but its agenda would be revived in the 1630s in New England and during the period of Civil War and Commonwealth in England.

Radicalism spurred moderates and conservatives to assert themselves. The first major crackdown on dissidence and nonconformity occurred in the 1580s when a nascent “Presbyterian” movement was suppressed and its leaders imprisoned or exiled. Another phase of repression followed in the early 1590s when Elizabeth sanctioned the execution of three Separatists and, for their own safety, others fled to the Netherlands. But as radicalism waned, other versions of reform persisted. The Mildmay family founded Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1584, expressly for the purpose of training a preaching ministry for the Church, and for many years Emmanuel would turn out ministers dedicated to transforming the social and religious practice of lay people. Ministers of this kind found models for themselves in manuals such as Richard Bernard’s *The Faithful Shepherd* (1607) and a genre that emerged in the early seventeenth century, spiritual biographies of exemplary leaders. It is noteworthy that some thirty-five persons connected with the college participated in the immigration to New England. In the

southeastern counties of Suffolk and Essex, aristocratic families and town corporations sympathetic to reform used their privileges to appoint ministers committed to the “practical divinity” to church livings or, increasingly, to lectureships that spared these men from having to perform the Eucharist and other ceremonies. Thomas Hooker, who crossed the Atlantic in 1633, held this kind of post, as did Thomas Shepard before he was forced to give it up.

The Practical Divinity

From the mid-sixteenth century onward, reformers in the Church had few complaints about how doctrine was articulated by the Church of England, for the Thirty-Nine Articles (1563) affirmed the fundamental Reformed principle that election to salvation did not depend on personal faith but was solely God’s doing. In 1618–1619, an official English delegation to the Synod of Dort agreed with the decision to condemn “Arminian” deviations from high Calvinism. Broadly speaking, therefore, the English church was aligned with the international Reformed tradition, though some in the Church preferred the sublapsarian understanding of election (in other words, decisions about who to save were made *after* the fall of Adam, not at the moment of creation).

Where the reformers broke new ground was in their analysis of the “actual” process of becoming a Christian, a process associated with the Pauline insistence that believers become a “new creature” (2 Corinthians 5:17). In the 1590s, William Perkins, a lecturer at Cambridge, was publishing treatises and tracts on how to undergo this transformation; for him as for other like-minded ministers, a form of experience centered on the inward “heart,” as its valence was reversed from sinful pride and self-conceit to humility, repentance, and faith. The practical divinity resembled a road map indicating a sequence of stages that led from “a true sight of sin” (to quote Thomas Hooker) and sorrowing “compunction” or repentance (to quote Thomas Shepard) to hearing the gospel promise of salvation and rejoicing in oneness with Christ. Using another set of terms, it began with the “effectual call” or “vocation” (the gospel message, directed at sinners who inwardly heard that call), followed by “justification” and “sanctification,” the lifelong process, enabled by grace, of resisting sin and practicing righteousness. Less poetically, sanctification was associated with the “duties” spelled out in divine law, duties that only a true believer could heartily perform.

Preaching in this mode was evangelical in proposing that Christ came to save everyone who responded in faith,

affective in defining true religion as a matter of the “heart,” rational in declaring that the entire process depended on a knowledge of divine truth, and moralistic (or as radicals within the movement would complain, legalistic) in emphasizing the importance of observing certain rules. The books in which the spiritual brotherhood articulated a demanding process of self-scrutiny and devotional routines sold astonishingly well in early seventeenth-century England, especially Arthur Dent’s *The Plain Mans Pathway to Salvation* (1601 and many more printings thereafter). Sermon by sermon, book by book, a way of being religious or, better, of imagining what it was like to be saved, took hold among a broad swath of English people.

It is questionable whether the Puritan movement produced a distinctive political philosophy. Criticism of James I and Charles I for exaggerating the powers of the monarchy had widespread support in parliaments of the 1620s. When people we identify as Puritans extolled the family as the primary unit of a good society, a “little commonwealth,” as it were, they were repeating a classical commonplace. On the other hand, protecting the Sunday Sabbath by insisting that no one work or engage in popular sports mattered much more to Puritans than to their opponents. In this as in other ways, the movement turned away from a traditional popular culture and its forms of sociability. Where town governments were controlled by the godly, efforts were sometimes made to overcome “idleness,” to enhance the possibilities for education, and to improve the condition of the poor. As a matter of degree not kind, the godly may have been more vigorous in enforcing the rules against vagrancy, street fights, and excessive drinking. Certainly they relished sermons that warned of God’s judgments on such people and delighted in “wonder” stories of this kind. On some of these matters there was a broad consensus at the local level. Yet the movement may have been foremost in promoting a “reformation of manners” or social discipline that gradually permeated the middling ranks of English society. A program of this kind presumed that the civil magistrate (ideally, a Christian prince) would collaborate with the church in implementing a fully Christianized society that approximated the kingdom of God. Whenever anyone in England or New England used the term “theocracy,” they were referring to this ideal of a Christian society unified in its allegiance to Christ. The frustrations experienced by the movement, frustrations also widely felt within the Reformed tradition as it contended with recalcitrant regimes in Europe, encouraged Separatists and others to imagine an alternative scenario in which a

suffering people shed the authority of the civil state and acted on their own to achieve the kingdom.

English Tensions and the Founding of Massachusetts

By the mid-1620s, fresh tensions were emerging between “godly” Protestantism and affairs of state. One source of tension was foreign policy: was the English government doing enough to defend Protestants on the Continent as the Thirty Years War got underway? Another was anti-Catholicism, the meat and drink of popular politics at this time for domestic reasons—local Catholics continuing to practice their form of Christianity, albeit in their homes, not in churches—and the resurgence of Catholicism overseas. Plenty of anti-Catholic laws were on the books, though they were never uniformly enforced. The fact that Charles I had married a French Catholic who maintained her own chapel was one of several circumstances prompting paranoia about a possible Catholic takeover. The most important of these circumstances was the emergence of an “Arminian” party within the Church, a party increasingly favored by Charles I, who appointed one of its members, William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633. No Catholic, Laud was nonetheless intent on renewing aspects of liturgy and church architecture that Puritans had always opposed. By the late 1620s, two versions of “conspiracy” were circulating in England, one of these the doing of royalists and Churchmen who viewed the Puritan movement as subversive of monarchy, the other the doing of gentry and Parliamentarians, some of them sympathetic to Puritanism, who assumed that Laudians were colluding with Charles I to replace the customary “liberties” of the English people with unchecked royal authority.

As these opinions were hardening, a handful of London merchants joined forces with gentry and aristocrats long noted for their Puritan sympathies to form a joint-stock company for the purpose of establishing a colony in New England. In early 1629, after naming itself the Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, the group was granted a charter by the Crown. That summer a member of the gentry in Suffolk, John Winthrop, accepted the office of governor on the condition of immigrating to Massachusetts himself. The following year (1630), some nine hundred persons crossed the Atlantic, and although in the next year or two others were discouraged from coming by reports that reached England of the many difficulties, the number of immigrants began to climb by the middle of the decade,

partly in response to an ever more active campaign to eliminate nonconformity in the Church.

Pilgrims and Others

A tiny number of settlements already existed as of 1628, when the forerunner of the Massachusetts Bay Company set out its first party, which founded the town of Salem. The most significant of these was the community of “Separatists” at Plymouth, where in 1620 the men, women, and children who sailed on the *Mayflower* decided to settle. The name “pilgrims” was applied to these people in the nineteenth century as though they were different from “Puritans.” The only real difference was that the Plymouth community had experienced two unusual circumstances: first in England when in 1606 some of them had withdrawn from the state church and formed a Separatist congregation; and second by fleeing to the Netherlands, where these people eventually settled in the city of Leiden. Deciding after much debate that they could preserve their group identity only by immigrating to somewhere along the Atlantic coast, the pilgrims overcame immense hardship during their early years in New England and, by the mid-1630s, were founding other towns in the vicinity of their initial settlement. But Plymouth Colony would never have the wealth or population of Massachusetts to the north.

Once the ships that sailed in 1630 reached the New England shore, the people they carried dispersed themselves into several communities. Winthrop started out elsewhere but quickly decided to live in Boston, which became the seat of government. By decade’s end, as many as 20,000 people had joined him. Unlike the colonization of Virginia that began in 1607, most of these people came as families; most were also from the southeastern counties of England. When Winthrop and other members of the Massachusetts Bay Company were deciding to take the bold step of immigrating, they drew up a list of “Reasons to be Considered for Justifying the . . . Intended Plantation in New England.” In it they reflected on how “All other Churches of Europe are brought to desolation” (an allusion to the early successes of Catholic powers in the Thirty Years War) and interpreted such adverse providences as a sign that God was angry at the English for refusing to reform. Predicting that England might be next to experience a “general calamity,” the organizers entertained the possibility that the new colony would become a “refuge” for the people God “means to save.” Neither in this statement of reasons nor in any other contemporary document did Winthrop and his fellow organizers assume that the end of

time was fast approaching: judgment yes, but judgment on an erring people pledged in covenant with God was a theme taken straight from the Old Testament. Secular factors also figured in the decision to immigrate, like the ever rising cost of living in England.

By the close of the 1630s, five different political communities had come into being in New England. The oldest of these was Plymouth. The largest in population and economic resources was Massachusetts Bay, which extended its authority to the few settlements in present-day Maine and New Hampshire. Religious dissidents from Massachusetts had moved southward and created four towns that joined together informally as the colony of Rhode Island (chartered by the Crown in 1663). Connecticut and New Haven colonies (1636, 1639) were created by immigrants, some of whom came directly from England and others from Massachusetts.

Creating the Congregational Way

The immediate advantage of crossing the Atlantic was that the colonists removed themselves from the direct authority of the Church of England and the Crown. The colonists used their newfound freedom to jettison bishops, the Book of Common Prayer, and virtually every other feature of the Church of England. The “Congregational Way,” their name for the new polity they created, reorganized ministry into a collective of equals (pastor and teacher, and the lay offices of elder and deacon), in keeping with the example of most Reformed churches in Europe. Other features were more unusual: (1) Each local congregation was equal in authority to all other congregations; none were supervised by a higher body, as in Presbyterianism; (2) church members (the men only) elected ministers to office and (3) participated in all other decisions about church discipline; (4) membership in each congregation was voluntary or “gathered,” not inclusive as in parishes in the Church of England and for that matter, most Reformed churches; and (5) in most Massachusetts and New Haven congregations, but less certainly so in Plymouth and Connecticut, people who wanted to become members were expected to describe publicly the “work of grace” they had experienced.

The Congregational Way was a daring experiment in transferring authority to the local congregation and, within those congregations, to the laity. It was even more daring in making church membership voluntary and setting the bar for admission so high. Why did the ministers, civil leaders, and most lay people prefer these features when it was just

as authentically Puritan to favor a Presbyterian structure? No thoroughly convincing answer exists to this question. At the time, critics reasoned from the similarities between the Congregational Way and Separatist practice that prominent leaders such as John Cotton had quietly turned Separatist in their sympathies. Denying this charge, Cotton and several of his fellow clergy cited the influence on them of a small group of radical Puritans who in the early seventeenth century had described something very similar to the Congregational Way. A longer historical view would suggest that elements of “voluntary religion” had been practiced at the local level in England for many years. Some combination of local experience and book and Bible-driven principles, together with the strong sense of urgency about reform that Winthrop had articulated in 1630, may bring us close to an explanation. Given the long-lasting tension between reform as a collaborative project of church and state and reform as something undertaken by the godly, another advantage of the new polity was how this tension was eased within the highly decentralized structure of the Congregational Way.

Putting this polity into practice in a dozen or more towns was no simple matter. A few ministers preferred something different, as did some lay people. The greater challenge was to bring as many of the immigrants as possible under the authority and influence of the church. In the late 1630s and early 1640s, this seems to have happened with ease in most towns. A substantial majority (approximately seventy percent) of adults in Dedham, Massachusetts, entered into membership, a level that seems to have been reached in the majority of congregations. Once a congregation was up and running, women seem to have joined earlier, and in slightly greater numbers, than men. English critics were wrong, therefore, in declaring that half or more of the adults were left out. One mitigating circumstance was the willingness of congregations and ministers to rely on evidence of moral constancy and, in cases where the evidence for a “work of grace” or inward transformation was unclear or incomplete, to rely on the “judgment of charity.” This phrase was written into the chapters on church membership in the first official description of the Congregational Way, *A Platfome of Church Discipline Gathered out of the Word of God*, finalized by a synod that met in Cambridge off and on between 1646 and 1648 (for this reason, the document is commonly known as the Cambridge Platform), printed in 1649 in Massachusetts and again in London, and endorsed in a general way by the Massachusetts General Court. For the rest of the century and on

into the eighteenth, the Cambridge Platform remained something of an official document.

Church and State

One of the challenges facing the designers of the Platform was to specify the relationship between the authority of congregations and the authority of the civil state. In doing so, the ministers drew on the “two-kingdom” theory Calvin had articulated in the mid-sixteenth century as a means of freeing churches from the authority of the civil state. According to this theory, churches exercised “spiritual” powers and the civil state, the powers of the “sword” over the “outward” man. As spelled out in the Massachusetts “Body of Liberties” (1641), in practice this theory prevented any minister from holding elective office in civil society and the civil state from dictating doctrine, discipline, membership, or a congregation’s choice of minister. Although the two-kingdom theory differentiated church from state, it also called for them to cooperate in protecting the visible kingdom of Christ against blasphemers and heretics and in sustaining the moral laws laid down in the Ten Commandments and elsewhere. Moreover, the magistrates were charged with serving as “nursing fathers” of the church, making sure ministers were adequately paid and good order preserved. This line of reasoning was spelled out in responses to Roger Williams and in chapter 17 of the Cambridge Platform, “Of the Civil Magistrates’ Power in Matters Ecclesiastical.” Situations of debate and uncertainty persisted, however, especially around the calling of “synods” (collective meetings of the clergy that quickly emerged as a necessary counterweight to local autonomy) and how the ministers should be paid. A strong preference for “voluntary” support gave way by the end of the 1630s to state-mandated support in most communities.

Liberty of Conscience and Roger Williams

Many of the immigrants came to New England to gain “liberty of conscience,” meaning the chance to be religious according to the will of God. Nowhere did any of the founders of Massachusetts imagine liberty of conscience as permitting everyone to go his or her own way. Among their midst, however, was the young minister Roger Williams (c. 1604–1683), who quickly became a thorn in the side of the authorities, religious and civil, by questioning the claims to Native American lands and arguing for a much stricter separation from the Church of England. By the mid-1630s, he was also beginning to argue that the civil magistrates

should stop imposing uniformity of belief. He did so having reasoned that the Old Testament kings should not be invoked as models for the Christian magistrate. More daringly, he asserted that all of Christianity was in a state of apostasy, a “wilderness” condition that deprived magistrates and ministers of the authority to assert what was true and right. The only way out of this situation was a new dispensation from the living Christ. Summing up Williams’s rapid evolution, the more orthodox John Cotton recalled how Williams first refused association with other colonists as a sign of his rigid Separatism and then gradually withdrew from his ministerial duties and even fellowship with other church members. But to Cotton, the most obvious sign of Williams’s presumed apostasy came when Williams denied the validity of his baptism and was rebaptized. When Williams fled Massachusetts in January 1636 and founded the town of Providence in the future Rhode Island, the magistrates who wanted to punish him had mainly his views on land and church communion in mind. In the mid-1640s, Williams made his way to England, where he published the first major critique of state-imposed uniformity, *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience* (1644). As he demonstrated three decades later in disputing the theology of Quaker missionaries, Williams was contentiously Puritan on some points. Baptists continued to remember him as one of their own and as an advocate for liberty of conscience, but it was not until the nineteenth century that he gained a wider reputation in American culture.

Political Crisis in England

In point of fact, few colonists were punished for their religious views in the early years, and Presbyterians in their midst were allowed to do their own thing at the local level. But new and unexpected circumstances provoked a stronger response. To tell this story we must return to England, where the religious and political situation had changed rapidly beginning in 1641. When Charles I attempted to impose Episcopacy on the Church of Scotland, the unpopularity of his orders enabled the radical wing of that Church to call for rebellion. War ensued, a war the English forces lost, at which point a penniless king had to summon a Parliament for the first time since 1629. What became known as the “Long” Parliament (from sitting so many years) seized this moment to pass a law requiring it to meet at least every three years. It also impeached the King’s chief minister (executed in 1641) and ordered the imprisoning of Archbishop Laud (executed in 1645). By 1642, Parliament was asserting its power to raise

money and mobilize troops without the King’s consent. Midyear, Charles I issued what amounted to a declaration of war on Parliament. The civil war that ensued, though initially inconclusive, ended in 1645 with the defeat of the King. Four years later, in January 1649, he was executed and England became a commonwealth presided over for much of the 1650s by Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658).

Of most pertinence to the history of Puritanism, this period of Civil War and Commonwealth saw the convening of the Westminster Assembly and the emergence of an unanticipated freedom for people to reimagine what it meant to be a Protestant. In 1643, Parliament authorized an “assembly of divines” to prepare a plan for refashioning the Church of England. Like the Parliament that called it into being, the Assembly was dominated by Presbyterians who wanted a form of church government that imposed the higher authority of presbytery and synod on each local congregation. Much more conservative or mainstream than Congregationalists, Presbyterians also wanted to preserve the inclusive parish structure of the Church of England, and in their theory of local governance they tilted the balance of authority toward the ministry. The presence of a significant delegation of Scottish ministers in the Assembly helps to explain these preferences.

Religious Radicalism

But the pace of change outran the deliberations of the Assembly. Censorship of the printing press collapsed in the early 1640s and, for the first time, anyone with something to say could publish or preach his ideas. As lay men and women did so, long-suppressed viewpoints and daring ideas began to circulate, some doctrinal, others social or political: anti-clericalism (as in criticism of state-enforced taxes to support the ministry and assertions that unlearned men and women could preach), Holy Spirit-centered affirmations of the Spirit as readily available and immediately empowering, a tendency branded as “Antinomianism”; rejections of original sin and its corollary, that Christians must defer to “the law”; and assertions of absolute liberty of conscience against any policy of state-enforced uniformity. This astonishing confusion fractured the Puritan movement for good, alienating Presbyterians from English Congregationalists and both of them from groups such as Baptists and Quakers, the latter a group that emerged for the first time in the 1650s. When Quaker missionaries reached New England, they were hastily sent elsewhere. Four who persisted on returning were executed in Boston in 1659 to 1660. Baptists, who

labored under a misleading association with sixteenth-century European Anabaptists, were fined and occasionally whipped. But in Providence, a Baptist church was set up in 1640 and another, the doing of English immigrants, on the southern edge of Plymouth in 1663. Not until 1665, however, was such a congregation founded in Charlestown, Massachusetts. Intermittently harassed by the government, it benefited from the policy of limited toleration enacted after 1691. All told, however, Baptists and Quakers attracted less than three percent of the colonists by the close of the century.

Theological Doctrine among the Colonists

In matters of theological doctrine, the clergy had no intention of being original or innovative. Valuing continuity with the Reformed tradition, the Cambridge synod of 1646 to 1648 voted to acknowledge the Westminster Confession (1646) as authoritative, an action repeated by another synod in 1680 and a third in Connecticut in 1708. Broadly speaking, the colonial clergy relied on the language of covenants, the first of “works” between God and Adam, the second of “grace” made necessary by the fall and embodied in the gospel offer of free grace. This language was fully compatible with the classic Protestant argument for the priority of grace and the inability of humans to respond. But as the historian W. G. B. Stoever has shown, the framework of covenant was complemented by the principle that God accommodated himself to humankind in the order of salvation, doing so through the ministry and sacraments as means of grace and thereby making room for “second causes” and an element of human response or initiative. From the perspective of human striving for repentance and faith, the covenant of grace was “conditional,” though from the perspective of divine sovereignty it was “absolute,” that is, everything accomplished by divine initiative. Without fuss or strain, everyday preaching for the next several decades focused on the imperative to repent and acknowledge one’s worthlessness in the sight of God, to accept in faith the “promise” of free grace, to practice moral righteousness not for the purpose of earning grace but in obedience to the divine will, and to seek assurance of salvation—for many, an elusive goal. As people were told again and again, to live as a visible saint in this religious culture was to live as a “pilgrim,” someone “in but not of” the world.

Thomas Hooker (1586–1647) had proved himself a master of this mode of preaching during his English years. Hooker’s *The Poor Doubting Christian Drawn to Christ* (1636) would become a steady seller in England, reprinted many

times over during the seventeenth century. Thomas Shepard (1605–1649) was not far behind in the sales of his London-printed sermons. Both men were physicians of the soul in the sense of exploring the fuller reaches of experience and in advising readers on the difference between hypocrisy, that is, going through the motions, and the real thing, which for them as for their predecessors in the spiritual brotherhood had to engage the “heart.”

“Calvinism” in New England

Can the dominant theology in New England be described as Calvinist—that is, in continuity with the teachings of the sixteenth-century theologian John Calvin and his principal allies and successors in the Reformed tradition? Unfortunately, this question can easily distort how the preaching of the ministers in New England is understood. From any historical perspective, the colonists were emphatically loyal to the Reformed tradition as it was consolidated in various creedal statements of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in particular the five canons of the Synod of Dort and the provisions of the Westminster Confession. But the colonists were not contending against Roman Catholicism as was Calvin. For them, the everyday questions that mattered were those that arose within the “practical divinity”: what the experience of “new birth” is like, how assurance of salvation is gained, how inward zeal and repentance can be renewed. In some respects, the answers they gave to these questions varied from Calvin’s, as in their emphasis on “preparatory” stages along the way to grace.

It is unfair to suggest, however, that the colonists were weakening divine sovereignty, just as it is unfair to reduce Calvinism to the doctrine of predestination—that out of his own good will for humankind God “elected” (chose) some persons to be saved and others to be condemned to eternal punishment. Direct references to Calvin’s writings were infrequent in sermons by the colonists, who relied instead on handbooks of theology, such as William Ames’s *Marrow of Sacred Divinity* (1622 in Latin; 1642 in English). Thematically, the Calvinism of the New England ministers was voiced especially in their rejection of Christian perfectionism (as long as we remain in this world we are tainted with sin), in their emphasis on aligning moral action in the world with God’s law and providence. Puritan preaching was, first and foremost, “practical” in laying out what one should do to become a person of faith and righteousness. In keeping with this emphasis, the ministers specified devotional practices that all Christians should employ: prayer, fasting, the repeating of

sermons in the home, the routine reading of pious books and especially the Bible.

The Antinomian Controversy

Unexpectedly, the ministers who had reached New England by the mid-1630s were confronted with the question of what was orthodox preaching and what was not. The “Antinomian Controversy” of 1636 to 1637 concerned a key aspect of the practical divinity: how best to help “weak” Christians overcome their self-doubt and gain assurance of salvation. The role of the Holy Spirit was also disputed, as was the situating of faith in the order of salvation: was it “active” or “passive”? In the back and forth between the ministers in late 1636 and early 1637, John Cotton (1585–1652), one of the ministers in Boston, suggested that allowing weak Christians to rely on their “sanctification” might replace grace with works, an implication the other ministers denied. Cotton argued for an “immediate witness” of the Holy Spirit and the passivity of faith. Most of his colleagues argued otherwise, that faith was an “active” instrument.

Meanwhile, a woman member of Boston church, Anne Hutchinson (c. 1591–1643), was suggesting that most of the ministers were “legal” (or emphasizing works) in their preaching. Hutchinson, the daughter of a minister in the Church of England and wife of a well-to-do merchant in Boston, extolled the Holy Spirit and urged those around her to spurn sanctification as evidence of justification, declaring it a “sandy foundation.” Advice of this kind may have mirrored Cotton’s preaching. The other ministers did not take kindly to being criticized. When more daring opinions began to circulate among lay people about grace, works, and faith, his colleagues persuaded Cotton to renounce Hutchinson and her followers, a rupture she facilitated by claiming to have received counsel and insights directly from God. A church trial in March 1638 ended with her being excommunicated from the Boston congregation. Hutchinson and her family moved to Rhode Island and, a few years later, to the area of present-day Rye, New York, where she was killed by Indians in 1643. Free grace and Spirit-centered “Antinomianism” had already emerged within the Puritan movement in early seventeenth-century England and had its advocates during the period of Civil War and Commonwealth. But in orthodox New England, it virtually disappeared after 1637. Hutchinson was remembered as a martyr by the early Quakers, who in some respects she prefigured, and gradually became a heroine to feminists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in large part because she

exploited contradictions in the scripture and Puritan culture to assert a more public role for women.

Social Practice and the Civil Courts

The founders of the several orthodox colonies had social or civil objectives in mind as well as those relating to worship, piety, and church order. The stereotype of the Puritan as joyless crusader against the pleasures of everyday life must be set aside if we are to understand social policy and social behavior. The colonists relished their beer and hard cider, wore colorful clothes, and sometimes danced at weddings. It fell to the civil courts to enforce rules about behavior, although churches (as in the example of Anne Hutchinson) could also discipline their members. The law codes enacted in each of the orthodox colonies were remarkably modern in abandoning the harsh penalties for matters such as theft (a capital crime in England, if the value exceeded a certain amount) and in simplifying legal procedures.

The scripture was of minor importance, drawn upon mainly as the Massachusetts government was enumerating a short list of offenses (adultery, disobedience to parents, and so on) for which death was the penalty. In point of fact, this sentence was infrequently imposed, and for some offenses, never. Within this culture women were acknowledged for their distinctive role in transmitting religion to the next generation. Ministers celebrated this role and its exemplars in funeral sermons. In keeping with European social practice and with the instructions of St. Paul, however, women were unable to speak in churches or any public setting. Only during the turmoil of Civil War England did some women become public preachers, a possibility sustained for a while within Quakerism.

Apart from resolving creditor-debtor relations and handling the estates of the deceased, the principal business of the civil courts arose from the same problems that all English towns and villages in the seventeenth century were facing: premarital sex and drunkenness. Sex outside of marriage was troublesome because it could result in illegitimate children, whose needs had to be met by the town. Compared with England, however, out-of-wedlock births were few, in large measure because the unmarried men and women who were exposed and shamed for having their intimacy exposed by the woman’s pregnancy usually married. For several decades, the civil courts employed a process that was less adversarial (no lawyers were allowed to practice) than cultural and religious. Those who fell afoul of the law and/or communal customs were asked to confess and repent their misdeeds, as

many did, a step that became the threshold to reconciliation with the wider community. Far from being cruel or unusually disciplining, the courts pursued the twin goals of righteousness and social peace.

A handful of the first-generation immigrants hoped to attain “godly rule” by aligning the structure and practices of civil government with divine law and entrusting political power (office holding, the right to vote) only to those men who were church members. Others, including John Winthrop, backed off from using divine law as the guide for statecraft. Only in New Haven Colony was godly rule briefly implemented, and only in Massachusetts and New Haven was the franchise (being able to vote) connected with church membership, a rule that was relatively generous, given the extent of church membership in the early decades. One other social policy had roots in the Puritan movement, an emphasis on every person becoming literate. Laws requiring that every person learn to read were enacted in Massachusetts beginning in the 1640s, and in other colonies as well. The burden of making children literate was placed on the family and local schools, which children attended at an early age and sometimes only for a year or so. The next level up, the grammar schools where boys learned Latin, were too expensive for more than a few towns to maintain. Only after 1690 did a more fully effective system of local schools finally come into being. The capstone of this dispersed and imperfect network of schools was Harvard College, which admitted its first class in 1638. Presided over by graduates of the English universities until late in the seventeenth century, Harvard had a traditional curriculum. In the same town (Cambridge) where Harvard was installed, a printing press was set up in 1639. Not until the 1660s, when a second printer and press arrived, were much other than almanacs, catechisms, and government-related texts actually published.

Puritans out of Power

In New England as in England and Scotland, the forces of change were constantly modifying the particularities of Puritanism. Some of those forces were extrinsic to Puritanism, others intrinsic. In 1630s England, the policies of Charles I and William Laud had pushed the immigrants in a more radical direction; in 1640s and 1650s England, the shattering of consensus and the emergence of so many sectarian groups had the opposite effect of encouraging a conservative reaction in both old and New England, a reaction visible in efforts by the ministers to reclaim some of the authority of their “office.” After the monarchy was restored in 1660 and

English Puritans were thrown out of power, the colonists had to relinquish their hope that the “Congregational Way” would someday be adopted in their former homeland. Other adjustments followed, most acutely when Massachusetts became a royal colony in the aftermath of the revocation of its original charter in 1685. For a few years (until early 1689), all the New England colonies were joined together in a broader framework of royal governance, the Dominion of New England. Well before this time, the colony of Connecticut had secured a charter (1662) that empowered it to incorporate New Haven, and in 1691 the new charter granted to Massachusetts brought Plymouth into its fold.

Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and Church Membership

The more painful change, and certainly the most contested, was forced upon the colonists by the rules of the Congregational Way. According to those rules, every adult who became a church member was entitled to have his or her children baptized. Thus a large group of church members came into being. The framers of the Congregational Way assumed that once most of these people became adults, they would advance to “full” membership in their local congregations by offering a relation of the work of grace. Nothing of this kind happened; some did, but many others did not. As these “adult children” of the church had children of their own, the question inevitably arose of whether their children were church members. Although the Cambridge Platform (chapter 12, paragraph 7) seemed to say no, the pressure on ministers and lay people to say yes was palpable. In 1657, the Connecticut General Assembly forwarded a list of questions to a group of clergy, with this issue at its core. A meeting of ministers that year sanctioned the practice of extending baptism to the next generation even if no parent was in full membership, and in 1662, a larger group reiterated this recommendation, insisting in the same breath that the Lord’s Supper remain restricted to full members. Underlying the debate about expanding the possibilities for baptism was a theological conundrum, the significance of the sacrament as a means of grace. Denying that it was truly efficacious (the Catholic position), the ministers in New England nonetheless stressed its benefits on the basis of Genesis 17:7 and the concept of an “external” covenant that incorporated all who were baptized.

Broadening the scope of baptism became immensely difficult in congregations where older members cherished the hard-won purity they had gained by immigrating to New

England. Suddenly, towns such as Hartford had to make room for two congregations, one favorable, the other opposed. In 1669, an important group of lay men and women withdrew from Boston's First Church, which was opposed to the new practice, to found Third or Old South Church, which was favorable to the practice. In town after town, meanwhile, the process of selecting a new minister became entangled with an often bitter politics of church membership. By the end of the century, much of this noise had died down and ministers in some towns were practicing a policy of near-inclusive baptism. So meaningful was infant baptism that parents brought newborn children to the church within a week or ten days of birth. Baptism and, for that matter, an event known as "renewal of covenant," became associated with family formation and, in particular, the importance of mothers in transmitting religious values and commitments to children.

The Lord's Supper was another matter. The ratio of "full" members who participated in this sacrament and members admitted only on the basis of baptism began to expand. One contemporary witness estimated the ratio as 4:1 in favor of the merely baptized. By the early eighteenth century, statements abounded that lay people were too frightened by the high demands of the sacrament to participate. Efforts to overcome this "scrupulosity" (as some historians have termed it) included the minister Solomon Stoddard's attempt in Northampton, Massachusetts, to sever the connections between the sacrament and church membership, a step his congregation hesitated to adopt and that few other churches emulated. Others, like the Boston-based minister Cotton Mather, tried to reverse popular anxiety by insisting that staying away had worse consequences than participating.

Declension and the Coming of Royal Government

As these policies suggest, the religious and political institutions inaugurated in the 1630s were coming under considerable pressure by the 1660s. The ministers had a name for these pressures and their consequences: "declension," or decline, and in sermon after sermon they pointed to adverse "providences" (fires, droughts, war, people sleeping through sermons, the slackening of participation in the Lord's Supper, but especially social conflict, as in disputes within towns about the distribution of land) as evidence that God was beginning to rebuke the colonists. A special synod that met in 1679 and 1680 drew up a list of collective sins and laid out a list of remedies, but the Massachusetts civil government, itself divided into factions, was wary of taking strong steps to

enforce moral legislation. The theme of declension also animated writers such as the minister-poet Michael Wigglesworth and Mary Rowlandson. In *The Day of Doom* (1662), Wigglesworth dramatized the day of judgment when Christ returns to earth and separates the worthy, who are heaven-bound, from hypocrites and evildoers. The poem sold extremely well, as did Rowlandson's narrative (1682) of the suffering she endured as a captive of local Native Americans during King Philip's War, an experience she framed as a God-designed "affliction" to reawaken her piety.

After royal government was overthrown in 1689, an event made possible by the Glorious Revolution in England that removed James II from power, Massachusetts acquired a new charter (1691) that combined local representation in a General Court with a Crown-appointed governor. The consequences of the new charter included a policy of limited toleration under which towns continued to levy taxes to pay their Congregational ministers, but Baptists and Anglicans (who founded King's Chapel, Boston, in the 1680s) were given limited rights and a shift to property as the basis for the franchise. The structural changes were fewer in Connecticut and Rhode Island, neither of which ever had royal governors, but in every colony, the civil courts gradually turned away from moral righteousness and reconciliation as their goals and resorted to fines and similar penalties.

Witch-Hunting

Another striking shift was the abrupt cessation of witch-hunting, a ritual process the colonists brought with them from Europe, where it was widely practiced in both Catholic and Protestant regions. The premise of witch-hunting was that the devil or his surrogates was ever active in the world—indeed, that a titanic struggle between good and evil framed human existence, a struggle made dramatically visible in the event known as "diabolical possession," when the devil took control of a person's body. In folklore more than in ministerial thinking, the devil asked the tempted to sign a compact that committed them to being his servants. Thereafter, such people gained the power to cause havoc in others' lives, which some delighted in doing.

Exposing the servants of Satan was the purpose of a witch hunt, with execution as the ultimate punishment in keeping with Exodus 22:18: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." In each of the orthodox colonies, the government enacted a law to this effect by the 1640s. But witch-hunting was never this simple. Few if any of the colonists accused of being witches (some eighty percent of them women) had ever

thought of themselves as such. Instead, accusations of witchcraft fed on social and psychological anxieties about adverse events. Why did someone's sheep sicken and his or her child die unexpectedly? Instead of resorting to a theology of God's providence, some of the colonists preferred to explain such events as acts of malice on the part of local people who had allied themselves with Satan. Sometimes, the women singled out as witches were contentious figures in a village or lacked the protection that a husband could provide. Others were known as healers, a role sufficiently ambiguous to make them vulnerable to accusations of doing harm. Before 1692, some fifteen persons had been executed as witches, though many others were not found guilty and still others who were accused won suits for defamation. Only in the vicinity of Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692, did accusations flow freely—abetted by the phenomenon of “confessing witches” who named others—and executions spike. Almost immediately, it was realized that innocent people had died, and the outcome of a smaller witch hunt in Fairfield, Connecticut, from 1692 to 1693, was the government's decision to release a woman who had been convicted by a jury. Thereafter, no one in New England was executed for being a witch, though popular lore persisted for much longer.

Theology at the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century

In preaching, theology, and education, change was also occurring, though the continuities were many well past 1700. Protestant scholasticism found its major spokesman among the colonists in the person of Samuel Willard (1640–1708), minister of Third Church, Boston, and the author of the only systematic explication of doctrine to be published in early New England, *A Compleat Body of Divinity* (Boston, 1726), a collection of lecture sermons explicating the Westminster Catechism. In Willard's thinking, Aristotelian rationalism meshed with Reformed doctrine in ways that would have been familiar to Reformed academics on the European continent. Willard's anthropology, with its insistence on free will (God had so arranged things that persuasion—the preaching of his instrument, the ministry—was the sole means of moving humans to act), and reason as an innate faculty, was in no sense innovative. Nor did he break fresh ground with his treatment of the covenant of grace as a matter of mutual obligation freely entered into by God and humankind. This was not a covert doctrine of works righteousness, for Willard insisted that divine action made it possible for someone to fulfill the conditions of the covenant.

The advent of the “new science” associated with William Haley and Isaac Newton did little to disrupt the ministers' thinking—Puritanism was never anti-intellectual—though it put a serious crimp in the lore of portents and wonders once phenomena such as comets were recognized as entirely natural in their causes. Of more importance was a general disenchantment with biblical prophecy and Holy Spirit centered raptures, a disenchantment made explicit in England by figures such as John Locke. Gradually, a group of ministers and lay intellectuals less keen on the Congregational Way and, as they said of themselves, more “Catholick” in sympathies (in other words, less enamored of the practical divinity), took charge of Harvard College and some town churches in the vicinity of Boston. Cotton Mather (1663–1728) was an exception to this tendency. Publishing far more than any other minister of his day (or since), Mather incorporated the new science and the Continental currents of religious awakening known as Pietism into an emphasis—utterly traditional from one perspective—on distinctive forms of “experience” as markers of authentic Christianity. By doing so, and by encouraging a younger generation of ministers to pursue the same themes, Mather became a bridge to the freshening currents of fervor known as the Great Awakening.

Writing and Literature

From the moment the Puritan movement arose in England, it favored particular aesthetics of writing, music, and church architecture that became known as the “plain style.” The model for writing was the simple speech of Jesus, who, it was asserted, spoke so that everyone could understand him. In point of fact, the Oxbridge-trained members of the spiritual brotherhood were humanists as well as Puritans and used various literary devices. But they stood apart from Court culture and its favored genres such as masques and epics. The genres most practiced within the Puritan world were histories of God's action in the world, spiritual biographies, sermons on the new birth and sanctification, and elegies honoring the saints or verse describing the spiritual warfare between body and soul. The Hebrew psalms were deeply influential, as was John Foxe's 1565 *Acts and Monuments* (better known as *The Book of Martyrs*), with its apocalyptic framework of saints ever at war with the forces of the Antichrist. Loyal to the plain style, New England writers also helped create the genre of captivity narrative, famously so with Rowlandson's *The Sovereignty & Goodness of God*.

Read closely, texts such as hers reveal ongoing tensions within the lived world of seventeenth-century Puritanism, for Rowlandson was at one and the same time exceedingly devout and remarkably casual in her religious observance. Any reckoning with lay practice must take account of intermittencies (as in holding children back from being baptized, as well as hurrying them to receive the rite) that no portrait based solely on formal doctrine can capture.

Missions to the Native Americans

Bringing Christianity to the Native Americans was a stated purpose of the Massachusetts Bay Company, flaunted in a seal designed in London that showed a Native American uttering the “Macedonian plea”: “come over and help us” (Acts 16:9). Beginning with Virginia, assertions that evangelizing local people was a core purpose of colony-founding was boilerplate in the charters or other authorizing documents of English colonies before and after the founding of Massachusetts. Boilerplate or no, the colonists were quickly criticized for doing nothing of this kind until two men began to make a difference: John Eliot in Massachusetts and Thomas Mayhew on the island of Martha’s Vineyard. Eliot’s endeavors, which began in 1646 and were promptly publicized in a series of London-printed pamphlets, led to the founding in 1649 of a charitable corporation, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England, commonly known as the New England Company. In ten years’ time, the Company raised some £16,500, funding that enabled Eliot to embark on a translation of the Bible into Algonquian, printed in Cambridge in 1663.

The missionary enterprise existed amid debate on who the Indians were. Lacking the anthropological and archeological evidence on which modern theories are based, the colonists and their European contemporaries started from the assumption that all peoples in the New World were children of Adam and therefore as fully human as the colonizers. But the Native Americans were different in being “degenerated”—most specifically in knowing nothing of Christianity—and in how they lived, or as the colonists put it succinctly, their “Barbarism.” As for who they were in relation to Adam, some of the colonists, including, for a while, John Eliot, speculated that they were a branch of the Ten Lost Tribes who somehow found their way to America. Others proposed that they were an Asian people, probably the “Tartars or Scythians.” From another vantage, the Native Americans were seen as servants of the devil, drawn to the outer regions of the earth (in effect, regions of

darkness) to serve him. This scenario helps to explain the references to Indians as devil-worshippers and their shamans as witches.

John Eliot as Missionary and Translator

Until the mid-1640s, any efforts to bring Christianity to the Native Americans took second place to what might be termed foreign policy—that is, ensuring that Native American tribes or communities yielded land to the colonists and acknowledged the superior authority of their governments. Some Native American groups did so reluctantly, if at all, but the colonists responded to the resistance of the Pequot in coastal Connecticut by mounting a series of assaults—later known as the Pequot War—in 1636 and 1637 that destroyed the group’s power over trade and intertribal relations in southern New England. No such conflict arose with the groups that inhabited the coast and immediate interior of Massachusetts/Plymouth, mainly because a series of epidemics in 1616–1618 and 1633 had reduced the Native American population by as much as four fifths.

In 1646, John Eliot preached in the local dialect of Algonquian to an audience of Indians gathered in what is present-day Newton, Massachusetts. Eliot continued these efforts and, in 1652, attempted to form the first Native church out of a handful of converts who described their new ways of being religious to a skeptical audience of lay people and ministers. Not until 1659 were eight Indians actually admitted to a church, Eliot’s own in Roxbury, Massachusetts, but the following year an independent congregation was set up in Natick, where, with the support of the government, Eliot had secured a land grant on which to create a “praying town,” where Indians could farm and otherwise behave like Europeans. By 1674, fourteen such towns had come into being, most of them quite modest in size. Separately, Thomas Mayhew was converting some of the Indians on Martha’s Vineyard to Christianity. More effectively there than on the mainland, native teachers took over the task of conversion and church building.

Some tribal groups rejected the missionaries, among them the largest group in southeastern New England, the Narragansett. As grievances with the English accumulated after 1660, a threshold was crossed in 1675 and, for the first time in the history of New England, a collation of tribes rose up against the colonists in what became known as King Philip’s War (1675–1676). By its end, most of the praying towns had been shut down and the Native population severely diminished. Eliot persevered amidst difficult conditions, but several

decades would pass before there was any substantial renewing of efforts to convert the Native peoples to Christianity.

Conclusion

The religious motifs of the Puritan movement became an important source of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century evangelicalism, in particular the emphasis on an inward experience of grace and on moral righteousness. Even as some of the strictures of high Calvinism waned, the thaumaturgy of contending against sin and experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit persisted. Another element of continuity between Puritanism and evangelicalism was the recurrent hope that an entire society would subordinate itself to the will of God and accept the moral rules spelled out in the scripture.

See also *Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Anti-Catholicism; Antinomian Controversy; Bible entries; Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage; Congregationalists; Dutch Reformed; Establishment, Religious; Literature: Colonial; Mainline Protestants; Missions: Native American; New England Region; Pilgrims; Politics: Colonial Era; Presbyterians: Colonial; Reformed Denominational Family; Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant; Sunday and the Sabbath; Theocracy.*

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Quakers: Through the Nineteenth Century

Like many other American faiths, Quakerism rose in the British Isles and came to North America with missionaries and immigrants. In 1700, Quakers were perhaps the third largest religious denomination in what would later become the United States. Since that time, they have steadily declined as a proportion of the U.S. population, but they have had an influence out of proportion to their numbers.

Beginnings

Quakerism emerged from the English Revolution of the 1640s and 1650s. Civil war between King and Parliament, with supporters of the established Anglican Church on the side of the former and Puritans aligned with the latter, led to a religious upheaval as old religious and social controls broke down. Many new religious groups appeared, among them a group that originally called themselves Children of the Light, or Friends of the Light, nicknamed “Quakers” by their enemies, and ultimately the Society of Friends.

At the heart of this movement was a young man from Leicestershire County, England, named George Fox (1624–1691). Fox grew up in a family with strong Puritan sympathies and was troubled by the competing and irreconcilable claims of the religious groups around him. At age nineteen, he embarked on a spiritual pilgrimage, traveling around southern England, seeking out both ministers and laypeople with reputations for godliness. But as Fox said in his journal (*A Journal or Historical Account of the Life, Travels, Sufferings, Christian*

Experiences, and Labours of Love in the Work of the Ministry of that Ancient Eminent and Faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, George Fox, published 1694), none “spoke to my condition.” So he went north, and on the moors of Yorkshire and Lancashire he had a series of experiences in which he was convinced that God had spoken directly to him. He called them “openings”; today we would understand them as revelations. They began when Fox heard a voice say, “There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition.”

These “openings” led Fox to several conclusions. Perhaps most central to his ministry was his experience of the Light of Christ. He wrote in his journal that “every man was enlightened by the divine light of Christ, and I saw it shine through all, and they that believed in it came out of condemnation and came to the light of life, and became the children of it, but they that hated it, and did not believe in it, were condemned by it.” Fox and other early Friends concluded that all people had within them a certain measure of the Light of Christ, even if they lived in places where no one had ever heard of Jesus or Christianity. This Light would lead them to see their sinful condition, their need of salvation. But if they failed to heed it, then they ultimately would be damned.

Logically following from Fox’s experience was the possibility of immediate revelation: God could and did speak to human beings directly, without priestly intermediaries. This led to charges that Quakers discarded the Bible. Friends denied such accusations, but they were clear that the authority of the Bible lay in the fact that it was inspired by the Holy Spirit. That same spirit, they argued, was still speaking to people. The error of other Protestants was to exalt the written letter of the Bible above the spirit that had given it.

Flowing from these conclusions were equally radical ones about worship and ministry. For Fox and his early followers, worship lay in providing a setting in which the Holy Spirit could move unimpeded by preset rituals and arrangements. Thus Friends gathered and waited in silence, confident that if God had a message for them at that place and time, he would inspire someone to speak. And that inspiration might come to anyone. Fox argued vociferously that godly power, not academic training, made ministers. Women as well as men might experience this power. Thus, women would play leading roles as Quaker ministers and preachers. On the other hand, silence was the exception rather than the norm in early Quaker worship. Preachers, both male and female, were central to the movement's rapid growth.

One of Fox's most radical challenges to religious orthodoxy lay in his advocacy of the possibility of human holiness or perfection. In his journal, he wrote of an experience that occurred in 1648 when he was "come up in spirit through the flaming sword into the paradise of God. . . . I knew nothing but pureness, and innocency, and righteousness, being renewed up into the image of God by Christ Jesus, so that I was come up into the state of Adam which he was in before he fell." This was at odds with the belief of contemporaries that original sin made such a complete spiritual rebirth impossible. Fox responded, however, that such teachings amounted to a denial of the power of God to cleanse believers from all sin.

Finally, Fox and early Friends embraced a number of peculiarities, based on their understanding of the Bible. Committed to the spiritual equality of all, and suspicious of anything that might puff up sinful vanity, they refused to use the titles and honorifics, such as "mister" or "my lady" or "your honor" that were the marks of deference and politeness in status-conscious seventeenth-century England. Closely connected was a commitment to simplicity, what Friends later came to speak of as "plainness," a repudiation of elaborate forms of dress. They insisted that all sacraments were spiritual and inward, thus repudiating water baptism and physical communion. They also eschewed anything pagan in origin, even the traditional names of the days of the week, which honored pagan deities. Thus Sunday became for Friends "First Day." More gradual in development was Quaker pacifism, what Friends came to refer to as the "Peace Testimony." Fox repudiated all forms of physical violence from the beginning of his ministry, but other Friends served in the army in the 1650s, and some Friends continued to bear arms into the 1670s.

Friends attracted thousands of followers in England in the 1650s—it was unquestionably the fastest-growing religious movement in the country. Yet the radical departure of Friends from many traditional beliefs, and some eccentric practices, such as interrupting the worship of other groups, made them controversial. The very name "Quaker" was originally an insulting label, referring to the popular belief that Friends physically shook and "quaked" in their worship. As early as 1653, Puritan ministers were warning against what they saw as Quaker blasphemy, and in 1656, Quaker leader James Nayler was convicted by Parliament on just such a charge. With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, new laws criminalized religious dissent. Until the passage of the Act of Toleration in 1689, Friends faced periods of persecution that brought fines and imprisonment that sometimes resulted in death.

To North America

The first Quaker to arrive in what is now the United States was Elizabeth Harris, who visited Maryland and Virginia in 1655 or 1656. By 1660, small Quaker congregations had formed in both colonies, and in the 1670s, some Virginia Friends moved into North Carolina.

Two Quaker women, Ann Austin and Mary Fisher, also arrived in Massachusetts in 1656. Puritan officials quickly apprehended and banished them. Yet over the next four years, dozens more English Friends would come, invariably facing imprisonment, whipping, and banishment. Finally, in 1659 and 1660, Massachusetts authorities took the final step and hanged four Quakers, including a woman, Mary Dyer, for returning after having been banished. A royal edict halted hangings in 1661, but Friends still faced persecution in most of New England. The exception was Rhode Island, which was committed to religious toleration and where Friends flourished. Quakers also found followers among English colonists on Long Island. Dutch governor Peter Stuyvesant tried to halt the growth of the sect, bringing a formal protest, the Flushing Remonstrance, in 1657, from Quakers and sympathizers. It was a pioneering statement of religious liberty. After New York became an English colony in 1664, the number of Friends on Long Island and around New York City grew.

The Delaware Valley became the great Quaker center of North America. In 1675, a group of well-to-do English Friends purchased the proprietorship of West Jersey, the western portion of what is now New Jersey, with the idea of making it a refuge for persecuted Friends. Several

hundred settled there. More ambitious was Pennsylvania, the project of William Penn (1644–1718). The son of an admiral, Penn moved at the highest levels of English society and politics. Nevertheless, he converted to Quakerism in 1667 and quickly emerged as a leading minister, author, and polemicist. Penn struck a deal with King Charles II, forgiving a substantial debt in return for the grant of land of what would become Pennsylvania, named for Penn's admiral-father. As proprietor of the colony, Penn theoretically could have been an absolute ruler, and in many ways did envision himself as a benevolent autocrat. But his framework of government for the colony was the most liberal in colonial America. It offered complete religious liberty (although office holding was restricted to Christians) and did not establish any church, a break with the practice in England and most of the other colonies. The legal code was enlightened, and Penn took pains to try to establish good relations with the Lenni Lenape or Delaware Indians and other neighboring tribes. As a result, Europeans and Native Americans would remain at peace in Pennsylvania for seventy-five years. The colony's capital, Philadelphia, "city of brotherly love," was groundbreaking for its regular street plan and provision of green spaces.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Quakers were well established in North America. They had followed the organizational model of English Friends in establishing monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings for church business. The Monthly Meeting, usually made up of more than one congregation or meeting, as Friends referred to them, was the basic unit, receiving and disowning members, recording births and deaths, and solemnizing marriages. Quarterly Meetings, consisting of two or more Monthly Meetings, handled broader matters. The Yearly Meeting was the highest authority. By 1698, six existed in North America: New England or Rhode Island; New York; Philadelphia, which embraced Friends in the Delaware Valley; Maryland (later called Baltimore); Virginia; and North Carolina.

The Eighteenth Century

Historians usually refer to the eighteenth century as the quietist period of Quaker history. Previously aggressive evangelists, by 1700, Friends had become more passive and inward looking. Increasingly, Friends saw themselves as a "peculiar people," called by God to exemplify certain beliefs and practices in the world, rather than actively seeking to convert others to the Quaker faith. Central was the gradual adoption of the practice of birthright membership. Children born to

Quaker parents automatically became members at birth, and no further affirmation was required at any point in a Quaker life. As long as one followed the rules, one remained a Friend without any further confirmation.

One of the central features of quietism was an intense desire always to be obedient to the will of God and a consequent dread of doing anything that was contrary to it. Eighteenth-century Quaker writings are filled with statements of desire to be completely passive in the hands of the Lord, to fear anything that smacked of "creaturely activity" that was in human desire rather than according to the divine will.

This tendency was strengthened by a reform movement that began among American Friends in the 1740s and 1750s. It found its leaders in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, the largest in North America, in Friends such as John Churchman, Anthony Benezet, Daniel Stanton, John and James Pemberton, and John Woolman. They argued that material prosperity and participation in politics had led many Friends to compromise Quaker peculiarities. They saw the solution in a new commitment to plainness and peculiarity: withdrawing from politics, eschewing fancy dress and furnishings. They especially advocated more consistent and thorough enforcement of the Discipline, the set of rules and regulations on proper conduct that was supposed to shape the life of every Friend.

This reformation, as some historians label it, had a paradoxical impact on Friends. On one hand, it led Friends to emphasize greater separation from the world. A good example is the Quaker response to the crisis on the Pennsylvania frontier in 1756. Friends had dominated the Pennsylvania legislature since the founding of the colony. With the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, settlers came under Indian attacks. In order not to violate the Peace Testimony, a number of Quaker legislators simply resigned their seats, allowing non-Quakers to take control and respond militarily. Similarly, more aggressive enforcement of the Discipline meant the disownment of thousands of Friends, usually young members, between 1750 and 1800, most often for marrying non-Quakers.

On the other hand, this half-century also saw Friends make determined efforts to have an impact on the larger world. One example is in Indian relations. While giving up governmental power, Friends responded to Indian war in the 1750s by forming the Friendly Association for Regaining and Preserving Peace with Indians by Pacific Measures. Its negotiations did persuade the Delaware Indians to stop their attacks. Following the lead of English Friends, American Quakers took up the

cause of mentally ill people. The Pennsylvania Hospital, the first hospital designed to treat mental illness, opened in 1751.

Of most lasting consequence was growing Quaker opposition to human slavery. Quakers in North America and the Caribbean had owned slaves since the 1650s. One historian has concluded that Quakers in the Delaware Valley in the eighteenth century were more likely than their non-Quaker neighbors to hold slaves, and Quaker merchants in New England and Philadelphia were active in the slave trade. A few Friends had raised questions. As early as 1688, some Friends in Germantown, Pennsylvania, had written a memorial to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting denouncing slavery. More forceful was Benjamin Lay, who, in 1737, wrote and published a pamphlet with the provocative title *All Slave-Keepers Apostates* and kidnapped Quaker children so that their parents would understand how slave parents felt. Lay, and a few other Quaker writers, however, had little impact.

The Quaker reformers after 1750 saw slavery differently, as one of the evils God was calling them to purge from the society. Most influential were John Woolman (1720–1772) of New Jersey and Anthony Benezet (1713–1784) of Philadelphia. Woolman's *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (1754) and a series of pamphlets by Benezet argued forcefully that slavery and Christianity were irreconcilable. The influence of both went beyond Quakers, heightening other antislavery intellectual trends. Among Friends, their impact was profound. Between 1772 and 1784, all of the Yearly Meetings in the world ruled that members could no longer be slaveholders. Friends who owned slaves were given the choice of liberating them or losing their membership. Some Friends chose the latter. Friends also became active in safeguarding the rights of former slaves and attempting to increase antislavery attitudes among non-Quakers. One of the first heated debates in the new United States Congress in 1790 involved Quaker antislavery petitions.

The Great Migration

The American Revolution was a difficult time for Friends. Many, perhaps most, had loyalist sympathies, and Yearly Meetings exhorted their members to refrain from bearing arms or taking oaths to newly established governments. Patriots accordingly regarded Friends with deep suspicion. In Newport and Philadelphia, a small group of supporters of independence split away to form a body that called itself Free Quakers. Betsy Ross was probably its best-known member.

After the American Revolution, Quakers joined in the general American westward movement. By 1730, as

population grew in the Delaware Valley, many Friends looked elsewhere for land. Some moved across the Susquehanna River. Other Friends looked south. By 1775, thousands of Friends with roots in Pennsylvania and New Jersey were living in the North Carolina Piedmont, in what would remain an important Quaker center. Some moved farther south, into South Carolina and Georgia.

When new lands opened west of the Appalachian Mountains, Friends generally avoided settling in slave territories. No Quaker communities formed in Kentucky, Alabama, or Mississippi, and by 1820, almost no Friends were left in South Carolina and Georgia. So many Friends left Virginia that in 1843 that Yearly Meeting was laid down or dissolved. Quakerism survived in North Carolina, but almost half of the Monthly Meetings there had been laid down by 1850.

The destinations for Friends moving west between 1800 and 1830 were Ohio and Indiana. Large groups of Quakers from the Delaware Valley and Virginia settled in eastern Ohio, so many that in 1813 a new Yearly Meeting, Ohio, was formed. Hundreds of Friends from the Carolinas, Virginia, and Georgia settled in southwestern Ohio before 1810. In 1806, they began moving west into the Indiana Territory. After the War of 1812, they spread into other parts of the new state, and in 1821, Indiana Yearly Meeting was established. By 1850, almost as many Friends lived within a fifty-mile radius of Richmond, Indiana, as within fifty miles of Philadelphia. By the 1830s, Friends were crossing the Mississippi River into Iowa, which became a major Quaker center by 1860. After 1860, large numbers of Friends moved farther west into Kansas, Nebraska, Oregon, and California, founding five new Yearly Meetings. While Quaker migration was almost always by individual families, Friends usually clustered together. In Ohio, for example, in 1850, most of the Quaker population was concentrated in just seven counties.

The Era of Separation

American Friends began the nineteenth century a united people who had experienced only minor schisms. A century later, however, they would be divided into three major groups, reflecting differences still present in American Quakerism.

The first, and most serious, of these splits was the Hicksite Separation of 1827–1828. At its center was Elias Hicks (1748–1830), a Long Island Quaker minister. Hicks saw himself continuing the reforming tradition of eighteenth-century Friends. In his view, wealth and ties to non-Quaker evangelicals, especially in reform and humanitarian groups,

had corrupted Quakerism. Hicks especially objected to the emphasis that many Friends placed on the authority of the Bible and salvation through faith in the blood of Christ as shed on the cross. Although Hicks revered the Bible, he felt that dwelling on its authority derogated the importance of direct revelation and the guidance of the Inward Light. Hicks, in common with other nineteenth-century Protestant liberals, adamantly rejected the idea that God would have required the death of his innocent son as a ransom for sin. In Hicks's Christology, Jesus was not born the Christ, but he became the Christ because he was the only human being who ever lived who was perfectly obedient to the Divine Will. Those who sympathized with Hicks became known as Hicksite Friends.

Other Friends, however, saw Hicks not as a reformer or advocate of traditional Quakerism but as a Unitarian or even an infidel. They perceived Hicks's views on the authority of the Bible and his Christology as verging on blasphemy. Hicks, who was not a systematic theologian, contributed to the controversy with sometimes-unguarded comments, such as a statement to a Long Island neighbor that he thought that Jesus was probably the son of Joseph, rather than of divine birth. Those who objected to Hicks's ministry became known as Orthodox Friends. Historians have identified other factors in the growing differences. Robert W. Doherty found that in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Orthodox Friends were more prosperous, apparently those who were successfully adjusting to the emerging market economy. Questions of power were also involved. Orthodox Friends included a disproportionate number of Friends who held positions of authority.

By 1822, Hicks had become the center of controversy. He traveled extensively among Friends and was a frequent visitor to Philadelphia. Orthodox elders there tried to silence him by sending complaints to Hicks's home meeting, by meeting privately to admonish him, and by issuing public condemnations of some of his statements. The result was growing polarization. Hicksites responded angrily, and by 1827, both sides were in a pamphlet war. The issue came to a head at the sessions of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in April 1827. The Hicksites attempted, and failed, to replace the clerk, or presiding officer, with a Hicks supporter. The Hicksites withdrew to hold what they called a "reorganized yearly meeting," apparently in the hope that a temporary separation would calm the tensions. Most members of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting sided with the Hicksites.

The Philadelphia separation forced other Yearly Meetings to take sides, deciding which group would be recognized as

the legitimate one. This decision produced separations in New York, Baltimore, Ohio, and Indiana Yearly Meetings. Hicksites were a majority in the first two, close to half in Ohio, but less than 20 percent in Indiana Yearly Meeting. Three other Yearly Meetings—New England, Virginia, and North Carolina—remained almost wholly Orthodox. The Orthodox also claimed legitimacy from the decision of the oldest Yearly Meeting, London, to recognize them. In all, Hicksites constituted about 40 percent of all American Friends.

After the Separation of 1827–1828: The Hicksites

Contention did not cease after 1830, as both groups experienced new divisions. Hicksites were a diverse group, ranging from ultraconservatives who feared what they saw as Orthodox innovation to incipient liberals who felt spiritual kinship with Unitarians and religious radicals. Almost immediately, when some Hicksites in Wilmington, Delaware, voiced sympathy for the religious skeptic Robert Owen and his communitarian reforms, they found themselves the target of attack and ultimately disowned. Even more divisive was the Hicksite response to the rise of abolition and other radical reforms in the 1830s.

When the movement for the immediate abolition of slavery rose in the 1820s and 1830s, it found significant Quaker support. About a third of those who attended the organizational meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia in December 1833 were Hicksite Friends. The Philadelphia Hicksite minister, Lucretia (Coffin) Mott (1793–1880), was the only woman who addressed the delegates. And as abolition gave rise to other reform movements, such as women's rights and nonresistance—repudiation of all coercive forms of government—some Hicksites were sympathetic. More conservative Hicksites, however, became increasingly critical. They saw in such reform activism a repetition of the dangerous ties to evangelical reformers in other denominations that had helped precipitate the Orthodox attack on Elias Hicks in the 1820s. Such Friends warned that joining with non-Quakers, even in good causes, risked the loss of the peculiarity and distinctiveness that were vital to true Quakerism. One Friend preached that they must dwell alone as the Israel of God. Another fear was that abolitionists and reformers, instead of awaiting divine guidance, acted according to their own will and wisdom, which was contrary to the will of God. A Long Island Quaker woman said that by being forever patient, they would do more for slaves than if they were to speak volumes about the cause.

These differences brought another round of separations. New York Hicksites provided impetus when they disowned three leading abolitionist Friends, which outraged sympathizers as far west as Indiana. By 1852, separations had taken place in all of the Hicksite Yearly Meetings except Baltimore. The reformers formed what they called Congregational, or later, Progressive Yearly Meetings of Friends. In some places, such as Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, the radicals were a minority. In others, such as upstate New York, eastern Ohio, and Michigan, their departure left but a shell of Hicksite Quakerism. Their vision was radical. They abolished most leadership positions and opened their meetings for worship to any who wished to participate, no matter what their religious beliefs. They stopped enforcing the Discipline and retained only the loosest conception of membership. They also took advanced positions on political and social issues, sending memorials to state legislatures and Congress to end slavery, repeal segregation laws, and abolish the military academies. Perhaps of most lasting consequence was their commitment to legal equality for women. Of the five women who issued the call for the first women's rights convention in United States history, at Seneca Falls, New York, in July 1848, four had ties with Congregational Friends. Congregational Friends were leaders in the movement for the next generation. Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906), who identified with Congregational Friends in New York before returning to the Hicksites, was a central figure in the movement from 1860 until her death.

Most of the Congregational/Progressive Yearly Meetings proved short-lived. Some sympathizers, like Lucretia Mott, kept their membership in the older Hicksite Yearly Meetings. After 1850, many others were drawn toward Spiritualism; two Congregational Friends from Rochester, New York, Isaac and Amy (Kirby) Post, were central to the early Spiritualist movement. By 1880, the Progressive Friends movement had lost its force.

Nevertheless, despite the loss of many of the most radical members, Hicksite Friends, after 1860, moved steadily toward identification with Unitarians and other liberal Protestants. They tolerated members who questioned the divinity of Christ and the historicity of much of the Bible. By 1880, Hicksites were debating whether it was acceptable to refer to Jesus as “Our Lord and Savior.” While they retained many Quaker distinctives, such as worship on the basis of silence, by 1900, most had given up the traditional Quaker plain dress and plain language of “thee” and “thou.” Their numbers west of the Appalachians had dwindled. In 1900, half of the

roughly 22,000 Hicksites in the United States were in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and in every Yearly Meeting their numbers were fewer than in 1828. Yet they had found a confident identity as religious liberals and social reformers.

After the Separation of 1827–1828: The Orthodox

The experience of Orthodox Friends after 1830 was even more complex than that of the Hicksites. By the 1840s, they were also involved in bitter controversies concerning their relationships with other denominations and the larger world. By 1860, two more divisions had appeared: Gurneyites and Wilburites.

At the heart of these controversies was the ministry of a gifted English Friend, Joseph John Gurney (1788–1847). Wealthy and charismatic, Gurney was a gifted preacher who had studied in Oxford, although as a dissenter he could not take a university degree. His sister, Elizabeth Fry, was one of the world's best-known prison reformers, and Gurney was active in educational, antislavery, and other reform groups. By 1830, he was the most influential minister among British Friends.

Gurney was also a prolific writer, and he sought to recast Quakerism in important ways. He argued that Friends should be more open to ties with other evangelical Christians in advancing good causes, that they should emphasize commonalities rather than differences. He also at least implied that earlier Quaker writers had erred on certain theological points. He argued that the Inward Light was inferior to the light that Christians could find in the Bible—comparing the two, he said, was like comparing moonlight with the noonday sun. Gurney also argued that justification, or acceptance by God, salvation, was separate from sanctification, the achievement of holiness. The former came first, instantaneously, through faith in the efficacy of the blood of Christ. Sanctification was a second, gradual experience. Gurney affirmed Quaker peculiarities such as unprogrammed worship, the ministry of women, plainness, and pacifism, but he asserted that they should not separate Friends from other believers.

In 1837, Gurney began a three-year visit to the United States. In most respects, it was a triumph. He visited most Orthodox Quaker communities and tried to reach out to Hicksites, although with the avowed aim of making them see their errors. President Martin Van Buren received Gurney, and many non-Quakers acclaimed him. But many Orthodox Friends, especially in New England, Philadelphia, and Ohio Yearly Meetings, found Gurney's doctrines troubling. They

found their leader, and martyr, in a Rhode Island minister, John Wilbur (1774–1856). Wilbur had first encountered Gurney on a visit to England a decade earlier, and when Gurney arrived in the United States, Wilbur felt compelled to warn Friends against his doctrines. Wilbur saw Gurney's views of holiness and relations with other denominations as threatening Quaker distinctiveness. But most New England Friends embraced Gurney, and their response to Wilbur was to disown him. Wilbur's supporters responded by separating from the larger New England Yearly Meeting in 1845.

As in 1827, separation meant that other Yearly Meetings had to decide which was the legitimate New England Yearly Meeting. Most sided with the larger Gurneyite group, but in Ohio and Philadelphia, where Wilbur's sympathizers probably were the majority, a new separation threatened. Ohio split in 1854, and Philadelphia avoided separation only by cutting off official contact with all Yearly Meetings, thus avoiding the necessity of recognizing either group. It would remain divided between a Wilburite majority and an articulate Gurneyite minority for the rest of the century.

Friends and the Civil War

The Quaker historian Rufus Jones speculated that every adult male Friend in the North in 1860 voted for Abraham Lincoln. This is an exaggeration, but not by much. Friends North and South were firmly opposed to the extension of slavery. When war did break out in 1861, Friends faced a dilemma. Those in the South were confronted with suspicious neighbors and conscription laws that drafted Friends into the Confederate army. Many fled north to avoid such service. Yearly Meetings in the North urged Friends to uphold the Peace Testimony, but observers agreed that thousands of young Friends went into the Union army. Many Monthly Meetings tacitly endorsed their decision by not taking disciplinary action against them.

More in keeping with traditional Quakerism was the work of Friends among the freed people in the South. Hundreds of Friends worked in refugee camps and established schools and orphanages. Some of these institutions survived until the twentieth century, like Southland College in Arkansas, the first black college west of the Mississippi River.

Gurneyite Friends, 1860–1900

By 1860, Gurneyites were the majority of American Quakers, and they were beginning to experience a renewal movement. A new generation of ministers and elders was coming into leadership positions, such as Charles and Rhoda

Coffin in Indiana Yearly Meeting, Eli and Sybil Jones in New England, Nereus Mendenhall in North Carolina, and Francis T. King in Baltimore. Inspired by Gurney, they advocated a Quakerism that was evangelical in doctrine and open to ties with other Christians, yet it retained Quaker distinctives such as the ministry of women, pacifism, and silent worship.

Education was central to the vision of these Friends. Quakers had founded boarding schools and academies since the late eighteenth century, but these Friends oversaw the opening of the first Quaker colleges, Haverford, outside Philadelphia, in 1856, and Earlham, in Richmond, Indiana, in 1859. (Swarthmore, founded in 1864 near Philadelphia, was the lone Hicksite college.) By 1900, Gurneyites had opened at least eight other colleges or institutions that would become colleges.

Gurneyites also advocated reform of the Discipline, relaxing or abolishing rules that they considered outdated. Their chief target was the rule against marriage outside of meeting. By 1870, most of the Gurneyite Yearly Meetings allowed members who married non-Quakers to retain their membership with a simple request.

The Civil War, however, created a crisis of confidence, as Gurneyites watched many of their younger members enlist in the Union army, raising questions about how well they understood Quaker faith. The response of Indiana Yearly Meeting, by 1860 the largest in the world, was to hold general meetings. These brought together leading ministers and elders in a Quaker neighborhood for several days of preaching and teaching. They proved so successful that other Yearly Meetings adopted them—even Hicksite Yearly Meetings created a variant that they called “circular meetings.”

In the 1870s, however, the general meetings took an unexpected direction. Here is a description from David B. Updegraff, an influential minister from Mount Pleasant, Ohio:

Many could not see that the blessing of God rested upon an attempt to convey to perishing sinners “accurate *information*” about our “distinctive *tenets*.” I was one of that number and joined with others in imploring that the “the dead” might be left to “bury the dead,” and that we might unite in preaching the gospel and getting converts to *Jesus*. In the providence of God such counsel prevailed, and then it was that our General Meetings became “Revival Meetings.”

Updegraff, along with ministers like John Henry Douglas, Luke Woodard, and Esther Frame in Indiana Yearly Meeting,

and likeminded Friends in all of the other Gurneyite Yearly Meetings except Baltimore, created a revival movement.

What these revivalists shared was a commitment to the interdenominational, second-experience Holiness movement that made a powerful impression on American Protestantism between 1850 and 1900. Believers argued that all Christians should undergo two separate, instantaneous experiences, both based on faith in the efficacy of the blood of Christ: first, conversion, or justification, being saved; and second, sanctification, or holiness, in which believers, through the baptism of the Holy Ghost, were redeemed from all inclination to sin. They used this message to revolutionize Quaker worship. Scenes not different from the revival meetings of other Protestants became common: singing, the use of mourner's benches, and outbreaks of extreme emotionalism. The revivalists regarded most traditional Quaker peculiarities as, at best, distractions from real faith, and at worst, "dead works."

By 1890, the revolution was almost complete. Most Gurneyite Friends, about three quarters of all American Friends, gave up nearly everything that had traditionally distinguished them. The plain dress and plain language were confined to the elderly. Singing and musical instruments were introduced into meetinghouses. Meetings called and hired pastors, who came to dominate worship and perform marriages. In many places, the local congregation became a "Friends Church."

Such radical change inevitably produced reaction. More conservative Friends in Indiana, western New York, Iowa, Kansas, and North Carolina Yearly Meetings separated and eventually joined the older Wilburite groups. A more moderate group of leaders, many with ties to the Quaker colleges, did not separate, but they remained within the larger Gurneyite bodies to try to moderate the revival. They were leaders in the conference in Richmond, Indiana, in 1887, that produced the declaration of faith that many Friends regard as normative. By 1895, some Gurneyites, most notably Rufus Jones (1863–1948) of Philadelphia, were becoming interested in Protestant modernism, melding it with an interest in Quaker history and tradition to lay a new foundation for liberal Quakerism in the twentieth century. This, in turn, would produce conflicts over modernism and fundamentalism similar to those in other Protestant denominations.

Conclusion

By 1900, American Friends had divided into three main streams. Hicksite Friends, now almost uniformly liberal in doctrine, would unite their Yearly Meetings by forming

Friends General Conference in 1900. Wilburites, now known as Conservative Friends, were tied together through traveling ministers and official correspondence. The largest body, Gurneyites, after a series of quinquennial conferences, would form the Five Years Meeting of Friends (now Friends United Meeting) under a Uniform Discipline in 1902.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Anglican Tradition and Heritage; Architecture: Early America; Civil War; Establishment, Religious; Feminism; Holiness Movement; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Puritans; Quakers Since the Nineteenth Century; Revivalism: Nineteenth Century.*

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Quakers: Since the Nineteenth Century

As Friends in America entered the twentieth century, the world, including the Quaker one, was vastly different from even the mid-nineteenth century. Quakers in 1850, while already divided into Orthodox/Gurneyite, Wilburite, and Hicksite camps, still shared common distinctives: plain dress, plain speech, silent “unprogrammed” worship, no “hireling” ministry, a sectarian form of polity, and a variety of “hedged” that helped guard against assimilation into “the world.”

The impact of modern scientific and critical thought, mass communication, improved transportation, and increased urbanization contributed to the development of Quakerisms that looked more and more like the cultures formerly shunned. Post-Civil War revivals among Gurneyite Friends led to an increasingly Protestant form of worship and rapid loss of outward distinctives. Modernism, scientific advances, and the German “higher” biblical criticism contributed to a more liberal Quakerism among some Orthodox Friends and many Hicksites. Other Friends sought a “Middle Way” between a Quakerism nearly indistinguishable from dogmatic revivalism or dogmatic modernism and one that was an irrelevant museum piece of outmoded forms.

Denominational Structures Coalesce amidst Fundamentalist/Modernist Debate

A conference held by the more mainstream Christian Gurneyite Friends at Richmond, Indiana, in 1887, led eventually to the establishment in 1902 of Five Years Meeting of Friends (FYM) and a denominational structure. FYM continued to hold gatherings for the constituent Yearly Meetings every five years until meeting every three years by the mid-twentieth century and changing its name in 1965 to Friends United Meeting (FUM).

Hicksite Friends, more suspicious of authority and more focused on the Inward Light, had been holding their own conferences since the 1860s on various topics of mutual interest, culminating in 1900 in a General Conference held at Chautauqua, New York. From this emerged Friends General Conference (FGC), an organization with less of a denominational structure than FYM but with a general secretary and standing committees. Biennial gatherings were held until 1962 and annually after that.

Preceding the formation of FGC, an important conference held in 1895 in Manchester, England, brought Friends

from both sides of the Atlantic together to consider ways of assuring Quakerism’s continued relevance in the light of advances in science, the study of religion, and psychology. Key to the planning and outcomes of the Manchester Conference was American Friend Rufus Jones (1863–1948), raised in the Gurneyite tradition in Maine but exposed to a broader world through Quaker education and later work at Harvard. Jones embraced a mystical view of Quakerism and collaborated with other Friends in producing a multivolume series on the history of Quakers that made mysticism more central in interpreting Quakerism.

Modernism was embraced by the Manchester Conference and popularized by such Friends in America as Jones; especially in the East and in many of the Quaker colleges, both Orthodox and Hicksite Friends accepted modern science and the new scholarship regarding the Bible. FGC, especially, gradually assumed a more and more modernist culture.

Meanwhile, other Friends, especially in the various Orthodox branches in the South and Midwest—and in the communities to which Friends had spread in the Great Plains, Pacific Northwest, and Southern California—were assimilating into evangelical and fundamentalist Protestantism. Life on the frontier, in closer proximity to other denominations, and farther away from “institutional” Quakerism back East, contributed to this blending. Some Friends felt that even the FYM was too liberal; a few Yearly Meetings abandoned FYM, finding common cause with a broader evangelical Christian community. Beginning in 1947, these and other Yearly Meetings that had developed as Quakers moved west began meeting as an Association of Evangelical Friends, forming in 1963–1965, the Evangelical Friends Alliance—later Evangelical Friends International (EFI).

The other major grouping of Friends to emerge from the schisms of the nineteenth century, Wilburite/Conservative Friends, developed no overarching organizational structure and sought to “conserve” both the outward trappings of Quaker culture and the inward focus on the Light of Christ. Becoming generally known as Conservative Friends, Yearly Meetings survived through the twentieth century in Ohio, Iowa, and North Carolina. As FGC and other unprogrammed Friends moved into these areas, they joined Conservative meetings, often transforming the meetings into ones more in line with FGC thinking.

One additional grouping of Friends that bears mentioning developed out of the controversies of the revivalist period. Iowa Friends Joel (1825–1914) and Hannah (1830–1909) Bean, Gurneyite in sympathies but opposed to some

of the excesses of revivalism, moved to California in 1882 rather than continue in controversy. The debates followed them, however, resulting in their new community of Friends forming the College Park Association of Friends as an independent body. Today, “Beanite” Friends on the West Coast are not affiliated with any of the major branches of Friends, but, nearly uniformly, they have adopted traditions consistent with those of FGC Friends.

Suspicion of the contagion of modernism in some of the Orthodox/Gurneyite institutions led to attempts to “purge” faculty of heterodoxy in the early part of the twentieth century as the modernist/fundamentalist debates impacted the Society of Friends. At Earlham College in Indiana, for example, Elbert Russell (1871–1951) resigned his faculty position in the Bible Department in 1915 after several stormy years during which his modernist views came under attack and his vision for Earlham as a beacon for a nonfundamentalist, non-isolated Quakerism was rebuffed. Various theological pressures and other opportunities led Earlham religion faculty Clarence Pickett (1884–1964) and Alexander Purdy (1890–1976) to leave as well around this time. Eventually, Russell became dean of the Duke Divinity School; Pickett became the executive secretary of the American Friends Service Committee; Purdy became a noted professor at Hartford Theological Seminary.

Meanwhile, at Haverford College near Philadelphia, Henry Cadbury (1883–1974) was dropped from the faculty for his conscientious objection during World War I; despite the historic Quaker Peace Testimony, some of the College leadership feared the impact of his controversial views when even prominent Hicksites in Philadelphia had publicly supported the war. Like his colleagues at Earlham, Cadbury did not see his career end. He went on to Harvard as a biblical scholar and was on the committee that produced the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Formation of Organizations for Service and Study

While Friends in the twentieth century coalesced into FUM, FGC, EFI, Conservative, and independent branches, major organizations and institutions were formed that helped give traditional Quaker concerns an outlet and, in some cases, provide channels for cooperation among the branches.

American Friends Service Committee

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was founded in 1917 to provide alternative service for Quaker conscientious objectors (COs) during World War I, units

going to help with rebuilding efforts in war-ravaged Europe. Following the war, the AFSC supervised a feeding program in Germany that saved more than a million children from starvation, a staple of which program was chocolate soup—cocoa provisions being readily obtainable from the Quaker chocolate companies of Fry, Cadbury, and Rowntree in England.

The AFSC continued to follow a motto of “trying what love will do” in responding to human need around the world—and attempting through social justice work to “remove the occasions for war and violence.” Programs were instituted to address unemployment among coal miners during the 1930s, Jews and others seeking refuge from Hitler’s Germany were helped to emigrate, and another massive feeding program was instituted at the close of World War II. In 1947, along with the British Friends Service Council, AFSC accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of Friends everywhere for their humanitarian work.

Controversy has sometimes dogged AFSC. The AFSC’s work in support of organized labor, opposition to war, involvement with civil rights, and support for liberation movements around the world has led to accusations of communism and anti-Americanism by opponents. Work against the Vietnam War in the 1960s brought in a new wave of AFSC staff who were less connected with traditional Quaker culture than to the counterculture of the time, and the organization grew more and more irrelevant to evangelical branches of Friends. Affirmative action programs for gay and lesbian staff in the 1970s further alienated many Friends, as did the AFSC’s controversial book, *Search for Peace in the Middle East*, among other constituencies.

Friends Disaster Service

The Friends Disaster Service (FDS) began in 1973 in response to tornadoes in the Midwest and now has branches in several FUM and EFI Yearly Meetings. The AFSC began to be viewed negatively by many evangelical Friends for liberal approaches to social and political issues, as FDS and other evangelical relief organizations are often the channel for their social concern.

FDS has had its own share of controversy. The organization reflected a nearly exclusive evangelical bent from the beginning and refused any connection with the more liberal AFSC. Following Hurricane Andrew in South Florida in 1992, FDS rebuffed overtures from AFSC for cooperative work. After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the AFSC made funds available for any Friends doing relief work in the

devastated region, and FDS informed branch programs such as the North Carolina FDS that they would be dropped from membership if they accepted AFSC money. The controversy led to a change in the national leadership of FDS, however, and to some units of FDS quietly accepting the AFSC funds.

Other Organizations: Friends World Committee for Consultation and Colleges

The Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) was formed in 1937 as a consultative body, connecting Friends with each other and encouraging intervisitation and support for common Quaker concerns. The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) was organized in 1943 as a Quaker lobby in Washington, D.C., determining legislative priorities for each Congress through a Quaker process of gathering unity around issues reflecting traditional Quaker testimonies. FCNL, FWCC, and AFSC have cooperated in opening the Quaker United Nations (UN) Office in New York, where diplomats from various UN delegations can meet informally “off the record” to forge better understanding of each other.

Pendle Hill, a Quaker center for study and contemplation, was formed in Wallingford, Pennsylvania, in 1930, and Quakerism’s first seminary, the Earlham School of Religion, was established in 1960 in Richmond, Indiana. Since then, evangelical Quaker groups have formed the George Fox Evangelical Seminary (Oregon), the Houston Graduate School of Theology (Texas), Friends Center at Azusa-Pacific (California), and the Carolina Evangelical Divinity School (North Carolina). Quakers in education formed the Friends Council on Education (FCE) and the Friends Association for Higher Education to provide support for those serving in the nearly one hundred Quaker elementary and secondary schools and fifteen Quaker-founded colleges, as well as those Quaker educators serving in other settings.

Assimilation of Quakers into Mainstream Culture

Friends across the spectrum gradually entered the mainstream of American culture in the twentieth century. Two Quaker presidents, Herbert Hoover (1874–1964) and Richard Nixon (1913–1994), were elected, and many other Friends served in the Senate, the House of Representatives, and state legislatures. Abandoning traditional opposition to the arts and popular media, Friends produced many notable artists (Maxfield Parrish [1870–1966] and James Turrell [1943–]), novelists (Jessamyn West [1902–1984] and Philip Gulley [1961–]), musicians (Bonnie Raitt [1949–] and Dave

Matthews [1967–]), TV and movie actors (Bradley Whitford [1959–] and James Dean [1931–1955]), and media personalities (Scott Simon [1952–] and Drew Pearson [1897–1969]). Quakers also continued to make significant contributions in the sciences; the colleges of Friends rate highly in the number of graduates who go on to receive PhDs in science, and in 1993, Joseph Taylor (1941–) received the Nobel Prize in physics for his work on binary pulsars. Rufus Jones, Thomas Kelly (1893–1941), D. Elton Trueblood (1900–1994), Richard Foster (1942–), Elise Boulding (1920–), Douglas Steere (1901–1995), and other Quaker writers provided popular expression for Quaker principles. Bayard Rustin (1912–1987) was a major figure in the civil rights movement. Emily Greene Balch (1867–1961) was a cofounder of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

The degree to which Quakers assimilated during the twentieth century is evident in the area of the traditional Quaker peace testimony. Some historians estimate that nearly 75 percent of military-age Quakers served in some capacity with the military during the century, this being especially true during World War II and even the Vietnam War. With the Gulf War of 1991 and the attacks of September 11, 2001, a new wave of patriotism, including flag displays in worship rooms and veteran celebrations, was evident in many congregations of evangelical/pastoral Friends.

Persisting Divisions among Friends

While many Yearly Meetings that had divided in the schisms of the nineteenth century reunited in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s (New England, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York, Canadian/Genesee), separations continued over theological differences. Individual meetings and churches left Yearly Meetings over issues of homosexuality, New Age spirituality, support for the AFSC, and other issues raised in the “culture wars” of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Some became independent Friends congregations or community churches; others joined with Yearly Meetings more in line with their thinking. Southwest Yearly Meeting of Friends Church (the former California Yearly Meeting) left FUM in 1993 and eventually joined EFI. Lively debates in New England, Baltimore, New York, and Southeastern Yearly Meetings continued about their dual affiliation with FUM and FGC, as some in those Yearly Meetings perceived FUM negatively, owing to a personnel policy discriminating against homosexuals and continued reaffirmation of the Richmond Declaration of Faith, seen in those circles as creedal and fundamentalist.

The periodicals that have served Friends in the twentieth century provide a glimpse of the divisions in Quaker faith and practice. *Friends Journal*, an independent monthly, reflected the culture of the more liberal end of the American Quaker spectrum. *Quaker Life* was a bimonthly magazine reflecting the policies of Friends United Meeting. *The Evangelical Friend*, which served the community of evangelical Quakers, ceased publication in the 1990s. Journals such as *Quaker Religious Thought*, *Quaker Theology*, and *Quaker History* transcended particular branches of Friends and provided space for the expression of differing views of Quaker theology and history. Chuck Fager's (1942–) muckraking *A Friendly Letter* informed Friends in the 1970s and 1980s of Quaker controversies, a task taken over by numerous blogs and Quaker Web sites in the Internet age.

Friends General Conference

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Friends in America remained a divided community, declining in number (in the low thirty thousands in each of FUM, FGC, and EFI; fewer than two thousand among Conservatives) and assimilated into either evangelical Protestant or liberal religious cultures. Sometimes bitter debates over theological and social issues continue to divide Friends at the various levels of the Society.

Among FGC Friends, battles over homosexuality, the acceptance of “New Age” spiritualities, and feminist critiques of language and decision making are largely past, with a general acceptance of same gender commitments, non-Christian Quakers, and feminist concerns. In their place have come debates over the appropriation of other spiritual traditions such as Native American sweat lodges; direction and emphases within the AFSC; embedded racism, sexism, ageism, and heterosexism; and concern over the loss of biblical and Christian literacy among liberal Friends. Workshops at FGC's annual summer gathering typically address many of these issues, as do articles in *Friends Journal*. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Quaker Studies Program and School of the Spirit, FGC's Quaker Quest program, and offerings of Pendle Hill—have made a significant contribution since the 1980s in addressing the need some have perceived for more awareness of the Bible, Christian theology, and Quaker history.

Evangelical Friends International

Evangelical Friends International, a loosely-knit community of historically evangelical Friends, provides few organized programs in comparison with FGC, but its constituent Yearly

Meetings and affiliated organizations support active missionary work in Alaska, Central and South America, Africa, and Asia. Vital peace work through evangelical Friends' response to the genocide in Rwanda in the 1990s has emerged under the leadership of David Niyonzima (1959–), a Rwandan Friends pastor and graduate of the George Fox Evangelical Seminary in Oregon, and Lon Fendall (1941–), a professor at George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon. Outreach to Bolivia has led to a burgeoning of evangelical Quaker schools among the Aymara population. Barclay Press, a publishing house resulting from the 2001 merger of George Fox Press of EFI and Barclay Press of Northwest Yearly Meeting (formerly Oregon Yearly Meeting), produces a daily devotional, *Fruit of the Vine*, and publishes books by evangelical authors.

Among EFI Yearly Meetings there is a basic consensus around issues of orthodox Christianity, but varying stances are taken regarding the normative Quaker testimonies of peace, simplicity, integrity, and equality. Many EFI members support military service and display strong patriotic sympathies, while the New Call to Peacemaking movement arose in the 1970s out of a concern by evangelical pastor Norval Hadley (1928–) for reclaiming the biblical emphasis on peacemaking. Support for the Quaker initiative of Right Sharing of World Resources and for the voluntary simplicity movement is not uncommon among EFI Friends, but the National Friends Insurance Trust, a Ponzi scheme discredited in 1998, was organized by noted evangelical Friends in the Northwest. While there are female pastoral ministers in EFI, there is also some opposition to women's authority over men. Homosexuality is commonly regarded as a sin; Where Grace Abounds (WGA) is a ministry to transform gays, founded in Colorado by evangelical Friends “. . . to inspire all people to know and personally appropriate God's plan for their sexuality and relationships” (from the WGA mission statement).

Friends United Meeting

Friends United Meeting, historically the “Middle Path” of American Quakerism, has experienced the most Quaker turbulence in the latter part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. The largest and most active body of Friends at mid-twentieth century, its membership began a drastic decline in the 1960s that has not abated. Yearly Meetings such as Indiana and Western in the Midwest enjoyed memberships around fifteen thousand before the slide and now are hovering around four thousand. Iowa and Wilmington Yearly Meetings are far below even that. North

Carolina Yearly Meeting dropped below ten thousand for the first time in nearly half a century in the early 2000s. New York and Canadian “united” Yearly Meetings (both FGC and FUM) have also declined, while New England, Baltimore, and Southeastern Yearly Meetings, also united Yearly Meetings, have stabilized or grown slightly—but each of these is primarily FGC in outlook.

Factors in the near disastrous decline in FUM are many, with changing demographics and theological controversy primary. The agricultural economy in the Midwest, the seat of FUM strength, changed dramatically in the 1970s, with large-scale farming replacing the small, general family farms that guaranteed a steady flow of members into Quaker meetings. Debates over the Vietnam War, homosexuality, New Age spirituality, and perceived heterodoxy further eroded the vitality of Yearly Meetings in the 1970s and 1980s, with most unprogrammed meetings leaving Western and Indiana during that time—joining FGC-affiliated associations instead.

Controversy over accepting gay ministers, tolerating universalist theologies, and allowing the outward sacraments of baptism and communion have also led to individuals’ and meetings’ leaving Yearly Meetings on both ends of the theological spectrum. A general trend in FUM’s pastoral meetings and churches to copy the patterns of mainstream Protestant culture and worship led to a loss of distinctives and an erosion of loyalty to the Quaker way. Discussions about “realigning” Quakerism in the United States into two basic groupings—evangelical and liberal—emanated from FUM leadership in the early 1990s, further alienating many.

By 2009, the once-bustling Central Offices of Friends United Meeting in Richmond, Indiana, had been reduced to a skeletal staff, elimination of many of its services, and a focus primarily on supporting the remaining overseas missions in Belize, Africa, Jamaica, and Palestine. The United Yearly Meetings continued to discern whether they could financially support FUM, given its reaffirmation of the Richmond Declaration of Faith and its personnel policy—or even remain affiliated with the organization. Other constituent Yearly Meetings, also faced with declining membership and revenues, reduced their financial support of FUM.

Beanite and Conservative Friends

Beanite and Conservative Friends make up a very small slice of the Quaker pie in the United States but have fostered important institutions. Scattergood Friends School in Iowa and Carolina Friends School in North Carolina are connected in various ways with Iowa Conservative and North

Carolina Conservative Yearly Meetings. Olney Friends School in Barnesville, Ohio, became independent of Ohio (Conservative) Yearly Meeting in the 1990s and is under the care of an alumni board. Ben Lomond Quaker Center and the John Woolman Semester are active programs of Pacific Yearly Meeting (Beanite Friends) in California. Still unprogrammed and reflective of an attempt to retain some measure of Quaker distinctives, these Yearly Meetings are small, with Pacific and North Carolina showing the most recent vitality.

Education: Friends Colleges and Schools

Other institutions founded by Friends continue to make vital contributions, but fewer and fewer Quakers lead or teach at their colleges and schools. In the Philadelphia area, Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges have not considered themselves to be Quaker colleges since early in the twentieth century. Haverford College has sought to retain an active Quaker presence, with some measure of success. Of the scores of Friends elementary and secondary schools in the Northeast, the joke is often made that they are where “Episcopal faculty teach Jewish children how to be Quakers.” While all Friends schools that are members of the FCE have weekly meetings for worship, have at least one-third Quakers on their governing boards, and address the normative Quaker testimonies in their curricula, Quaker enrollment in these northeastern schools often hovers around 5 percent or less, and it is increasingly difficult to find Quakers who will lead the schools or serve as members of boards.

Meanwhile, there has been steady growth in the number of Friends schools outside the Northeast, with FCE providing important support to these new institutions. Some have developed in response to more recently diagnosed developmental issues such as dyslexia and attention deficit disorder. Others have opened as alternatives to declining quality in public schools, racial segregation, or religious and social attitudes. In North Carolina, for example, five new Quaker schools have opened since the 1960s, during which time the membership of Friends in the state was gradually declining. These schools, typically under the sponsorship of a local meeting or located among healthy Quaker populations, have had, in contrast to the northeastern schools, better luck in finding Quaker staff and students.

There is more of a mixed record among the historically Quaker-founded colleges and universities outside the Northeast. Those within the confines of EFI—Malone, Friends University, Barclay College, and George Fox—have retained a strong Christian focus while Quaker distinctives and

enrollment have not been maintained as consistently. The pattern is even more diverse among those colleges traditionally affiliated with FUM: Wilmington (Ohio), Earlham, William Penn, Guilford, and Whittier. Whittier has become a secular liberal arts college with only a historical tie to Friends. Wilmington and William Penn have become regional colleges with small Quaker enrollments but with Wilmington attempting through a Quaker cultural center and a Quaker Leaders Program to maintain a Quaker flavor. Earlham and Guilford have continued to enroll a critical mass of Quaker students along with a significant number of Quakers in their faculties. Earlham maintains a Quaker school of religion and the Newlin Center for Quaker Thought. Guilford hosts a Friends Center and a Quaker Leadership Scholars Program that has influenced similar programs at other colleges and secondary schools.

Conclusion

Overall, the picture of North American Quakerism in the early twenty-first century is not rosy. Membership has declined precipitously since 1900; economic and demographic forces have buffeted once-mighty institutions such as FUM and AFSC; Quaker distinctives in all the branches have eroded such that one public Friend has quipped that “Friends are a bit like tofu; they have some substance to them, but they tend to pick up their flavor from whatever they’re stewing in at the time!”

But there are positive signs, too. Summer camp programs of both liberal and evangelical Yearly Meetings are active and crowded; Quaker schools continue to be a primary source of “convinced” Friends. Some meetings and churches continue to attract attenders who value Quaker social witness and theological emphases; nearly 80 percent of contemporary Friends are “convinced” rather than born into Quaker families. New styles of reaching out to those who might be attracted to Friends are being developed among both evangelical and liberal Friends. Many young adult Friends are using the new technology of the Internet to reach out across traditional divides to form “virtual” communities and periodically gather at conferences that explore their differences and seek to forge a “new Quakerism” dubbed by some as “Convergent”—combining elements of the Conservative tradition and the postmodern “Emergent” Christian movement.

See also *Denominationalism; Education: Colleges and Universities; Emerging Church Movement; Evangelicals: Twentieth Century;*

Fundamentalism; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Quakers through the Nineteenth Century; Religious Press; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Spirituality entries.

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Qur'an

The Qur'an is the primary sacred text for Muslims. According to Muslim sources, the word *Qur'an* comes from the Arabic root *q-r-'*, meaning “to read [out loud]” or “to recite.” When the term “Qur'an” is translated into English, therefore, it is rendered as “the Recitation.” This fact says something important about this sacred text, namely, that it is first and foremost a text to be recited out loud, not one to be read silently to one's self. Rather than a book to be read from cover to cover, then, the Qur'an should be thought of as a collection of oral recitations that serve as sacred verses that observant Muslims typically recite out loud in the course of their daily ritual prayers and other ceremonies.

Qur'anic Origins: Revelation

Muslim tradition teaches that the Qur'an is a collection of oral Arabic recitations that are nothing less than the uncreated speech of God, transmitted by the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad (ca. 570–632). These revelations began when Muhammad was around the age of forty. In a cave near the Arabian town of Mecca, the angel commanded Muhammad to “recite!” (*iqra*), and what he was taught to recite were passages from the Qur'an. From this moment in the year 610 until the end of his life, Muhammad continued to receive periodic revelations and thus was called to serve as a messenger and prophet of God (“Allah” is Arabic for “God” or “the God”). In this fashion, he followed the line of figures

familiar from the Jewish and Christian traditions whom Muslims also revere, and whom they consider to be prophets: figures such as Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. The Qur'an is thought to be the continuation and culmination of the scriptures sent to earlier prophets, the revelation that perfects and places a final seal on God's words to humanity. Muslims respect the Hebrew Bible and New Testament as earlier examples of God's revelations to his prophets, but many Muslims contend that these earlier revelations were distorted over time by the human beings who recorded and transmitted them. For that reason, they tend to regard the Qur'an as the best and most complete revelation, the one to which all of humanity has been called.

Muhammad's first revelations were in and around the town of Mecca, as mentioned earlier, and according to Muslim tradition the Prophet's audience was composed mainly of idol-worshipping polytheists who did not believe in the concepts of resurrection or final judgment. During the thirteen years of what come to be known as the "Meccan period," the Qur'anic revelations repeatedly touch upon the themes of the oneness of God; the coming judgment; the folly of greed, cruelty, and ingratitude; and the importance of remembering and giving thanks to God who created and continues to sustain all things. Muslim historical sources portray the Meccan period as one of intense persecution, during which the small, fledgling Muslim community endured both economic boycott and physical abuse at the hands of the largely hostile Meccan populace.

Faced with growing hardships and physical threats in Mecca, in 622 the Muslim community moved from Mecca to the oasis town of Yathrib, some 350 kilometers (210 miles) to the north. This move came to be known as the "emigration" (*hijra*), and the year came to be marked as year 1 of the Muslim calendar. Muhammad arrived in that new location as the head of the entire town, the one called upon to arbitrate between the disputes that divided the various factions in Yathrib, which included feuding Arab tribes as well as some Jews. With Muhammad as the leader of this diverse community, the town henceforth became known as "the city of the Prophet" (*Madinat al-Nabi*), or "Medina" for short. In the "Medinan period" of the Qur'anic revelation, the recitations came to address not only the themes raised in the Meccan period but also the running and maintenance of a just religious government and society. Although the Qur'an is not itself a book of laws, a small but significant number of Medinan verses made statements that would later be interpreted as having a bearing on Islamic law, such as the proper

punishment for crimes, or the proper performance of religious obligations. This Medinan period spanned the years between the emigration to Medina in 622 and the year traditionally associated with Muhammad's death, 632. With Muhammad's death came the end of all new direct revelations from God to the Muslim community, as well as the completion of the series of recitations that eventually were assembled in a written codex.

The Qur'an and Other Muslim Texts

Next to the Qur'an, Muhammad's example or *sunna* came to serve for most Muslims as a second major source of authoritative Muslim teachings. After the death of Muhammad and his companions, the prophet's *sunna* came to be transmitted through the reports of his words and deeds, known as the *hadith* reports. *Hadith* reports deal with a variety of topics ranging from the proper performance of the pilgrimage to Mecca, to the correct process for drawing up business contracts, to the method one should use to clean one's teeth after a meal. Some *hadith* reports comment on the meaning of verses in the Qur'an, and others discuss stories or rules that have no parallel in the Qur'an.

From the formative period of Islamic history to the present, Muslims have seen the need to interpret the text of the Qur'an, both to properly understand its meaning and to apply its teachings to the changing contexts in which Muslims live. The genre of Qur'an commentary and exegesis (*tafsir*) became a rich and complex literature beginning in the ninth century, and some of its major works extend for dozens of volumes in their contemporary editions. One way modern Muslim religious scholars prove their competence is by writing their own commentary on the Qur'an, so the text is continuously being interpreted and reinterpreted.

Qur'anic Origins: Compilation

According to Muslim historians, the text of the Qur'an was preserved and collected by Muhammad's early companions. The Qur'an was memorized orally during the Prophet's lifetime, and scraps of oral recitations were also recorded in a written fashion on materials such as palm leaves, camel bones, and parchment. Written Arabic script at this time, and for at least a century or two following the time of the Prophet, was a "*scripta defectiva*" with no short vowels indicated and no diacritic dots to distinguish certain groups of consonants (such as *b*, *t*, *th*, *n*, and *y*). This situation was not seen as a major issue for believing Muslims, however, since in the early period this oral text was said to have been memorized by many of

Muhammad's companions, and thus the written version served merely as a mnemonic device. That is, although the text of the Qur'an was written in such a way that would be ambiguous and unclear to someone outside the tradition, if one already knew how the Qur'an was supposed to sound orally, then the "bare-bones" form of the written text would be sufficient as a visual prompt to aid the memory of a literate person as he recited from it. Variations in the way the text was recited in the decades after the Prophet's death, however, together with the deaths of some of the early companions who had preserved the oral text of the Qur'an, led to the effort some two decades later under the Caliph Uthman to assemble and codify an authoritative standard written text of the Qur'an. Even though a limited number of variant readings were tolerated, the unified "Uthmani Codex" ensured that the basic contour of the Qur'an, its division into 114 chapters or *suras* together with its foundational *scripta defectiva*, became remarkably consistent throughout the expanding Muslim empire. Some Western scholars of the Qur'an have called into question this traditional account of the collection of the Qur'an in the time of Uthman, contending that the process of formulating a unified codex likely took decades if not centuries longer to complete. Nevertheless, even such "revisionist" scholars agree that the written Qur'an as we have it today was likely assembled without major editing on the part of subsequent transmitters.

Organization and Contents of the Qur'an

The written text of the Qur'an contains 114 *suras* that vary in length from a few short hymnic verses to several hundred long and complex verses. The written text is not organized chronologically. That is, one cannot "read" the Qur'an from start to finish, expecting to find the Meccan revelations at the beginning and the Medinan revelations at the end. With the exception of the opening chapter or *Fatiha*, which is a *sura* of 7 verses that is recited by Muslims more than any other because of its invocation in each stage of ritual prayer, the written text of the Qur'an is organized not so much by chronology but by descending chapter length. The longest *sura* of the Qur'an is its second chapter (286 verses), a Medinan *sura* that came to be known as "The Cow" because of a reference (beginning around Q 2:67) to the sacrificial heifer offered by the Israelites. Stories about Moses, the prophet who is mentioned more times by name in the Qur'an than any other, appear scattered throughout the text of the Qur'an, not just in *sura* 2. For instance, descriptions of God's revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai do not appear in

sura 2, but appear rather in both *sura* 7:142–143 and *sura* 20:9–14. Much of *sura* 2 is highly technical and full of rules and regulations, verses thought to be among the latest passages to be revealed to Muhammad. The next longest *sura* is the third chapter (200 verses), known as "The Family of Imran" after the references in this chapter to stories about John the Baptist and Jesus. As with Moses, references to Jesus are scattered throughout the Qur'an, and they appear prominently in a shorter *sura* named after Jesus' mother, Mary (*sura* 19, 98 verses). The Qur'an describes Jesus as "messiah," as God's "word," and as a prophet capable of miracles. But the Qur'an emphatically rejects the idea that Jesus was God's son—which would go against the Qur'an's doctrine of God's oneness—and insists that he was merely a man who was able to perform miracles "by God's leave." Such theological issues are touched upon in the longer Medinan *suras*, but it would be wrong to imagine that they play a central role in these chapters. The Qur'an returns time and again to emphasize how the stories of earlier prophets illustrate the importance of repentance and submission to God's command, and of the participation in the righteous community that God and his prophet Muhammad inaugurate in Medina.

The comparatively brief *suras* appearing near the end of the written text of the Qur'an (for example, *suras* 81 to 114, ranging from a few to a few dozen verses) are those chapters often said to have been the earliest to be revealed. These Meccan revelations contain a series of allusions to things in the heaven and earth that serve as signs that human beings should ponder. The Meccan *suras* contain hymnic evocations of the day of judgment, when all human beings will be brought to account for even their smallest actions on earth (for example, see Q 99, "The Earthquake"). The results of judgment are variously described through a series of metaphors alluding to the torment of hellfire or the comforts of paradise. The Meccan passages do not solely dwell on the events of the last days, however. They also insist on the paramount importance of generosity and caring for the dispossessed in this world, and for remembering God's generosity toward humanity. Thus, the Meccan passages, and indeed the later Medinan passages as well, describe the giving of regular charity (*zakat*) and performing ritual prayer (*salat*) as being enjoined on the faithful as ways to put such beliefs into righteous action.

Except for the story of Joseph appearing in the *sura* named "Joseph" (*sura* 12, thought to be Meccan and containing many parallels to the Genesis story of Joseph), the Qur'an does not give entire stories or biographies of any biblical or postbiblical figure in a single narrative section. Muhammad's

name appears only a few times in the Qur'an, and explicit references to historical events in Muhammad's life are rare. Unlike much of the Hebrew Bible or New Testament, therefore, the Qur'an cannot be approached as a chronological book. A good concordance, index, or secondary study organized by theme needs to be consulted for those who wish to trace a particular figure or idea as it develops across the Qur'anic text. Rather than a linear text, the Qur'an could be profitably compared to a "metatext," jumping from one topic to the next as it suits the particular moral or point being discussed in any given section. The way that the written text of the Qur'an is organized, beginning with the longest chapters and proceeding to the shortest chapters, responds to the needs of a religious community and its practical concerns with oral recitation rather than the narrative expectations of many contemporary readers.

The Qur'an should be heard in its original Arabic to be authentically transmitted and fully appreciated. Only one in five Muslims in the world today is a native speaker of Arabic, but most Muslims learn to say at least a few phrases of the Qur'an in Arabic so that they may recite these phrases during ritual prayers. For non-Muslims who do not know Arabic, this oral dimension of the sacred text can be heard when the Arabic Qur'an is recited (live or from a recording), but appreciating its meaning and significance becomes much more difficult. There now are resources that can help make the oral text more accessible to non-Arabic speakers. Those with access to the Internet can make use of Web sites that combine Arabic transliteration, English translation, and recitation. Another great resource for an appreciation of the oral dimension of the Qur'an is the work by Michael Sells entitled *Approaching the Qur'an*, a book that translates a series of short chapters or *suras* thought to be some of the earliest in the collection. In addition, some studies include audiovisual presentations, helping students get a glimpse of the beauty, richness, and subtlety of the Qur'an in oral Arabic recitation.

Study of the Qur'an in America

The Qur'an has been a part of the American religious landscape for as long as Muslims have been living in America. It does not have the public presence in the United States the way that it does in some Muslim-majority countries, where the Qur'an can be heard projected from neighborhood loudspeakers, especially during important religious festivals. Nevertheless, the Qur'an can be heard throughout the United States. Passages from the Qur'an resound anywhere Muslims observe their ritual prayers, and recordings play in homes,

offices, cars, and headsets. As for the text in its written form, popular translations of the Qur'an into English include those by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, A. J. Arberry, Ahmed Ali, and Muhammad Asad. Since traditional Muslims insist that any translation is inherently an interpretation of the text, and most non-Muslim scholars agree that crucial interpretive choices are inevitably made in every translation, when studying the text in English it is best to compare multiple translations.

The study of the Qur'an in the United States since the 9/11 attacks has taken place in a charged political environment. When Sells's *Approaching the Qur'an* was assigned as summer reading for incoming first-year students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2002, a conservative organization based in Virginia filed a lawsuit in protest. In his preface, Sells describes the nationwide controversy that ensued. The controversy speaks volumes about how throughout much of the West, Islamophobia informs contemporary popular discourse about the Qur'an. A series of newspaper articles, magazine articles, and films since 9/11 continue to perpetuate the view that the Qur'an inherently promotes violence, ignoring the contexts in which Muslims have interpreted and continue to interpret the text of the Qur'an in diverse ways. Claims about the Qur'an and its allegedly essential meaning made by both supporters and detractors need to be understood in their particular historical, cultural, and political contexts.

A number of resources have become available in recent years to those interested in the academic study of the Qur'an. Those seeking the perspectives of insiders whose views are informed by Western scholarship might do well to begin with Farid Esack's *The Qur'an: A User's Guide* or Ingrid Mattson's *The Story of the Qur'an: Its History and Place in Muslim Life*. Bruce Lawrence's *The Qur'an: A Biography* offers a good survey of how the text has affected the lives of diverse Muslims at different moments in history. Michael Cook's *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction* presents an essay from the perspective of a skeptic, and its short chapter on "Doubts and Puzzles" offers a concise introduction to issues confronting critical scholars. In addition, collections of scholarly essays such as the *Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an* and the *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an* provide valuable resources for those who are interested in the state of early twenty-first-century academic study of the Qur'an in the West.

See also *Angels; Architecture: Muslim; Bible entries; Book of Mormon; Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools; Islam in North America; Islam Tradition and Heritage; Nation(s) of Islam;*

Scriptures, American Texts; Theocracy; Torah; Women: Muslim; Worship: Muslim.

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R



Race and Racism

Race is the idea that the world is made up of distinct groups of people who are distinguished by innate physical differences that are socially significant. Racism is the use of race to create hierarchical relationships that enables one group to dominate others. The persistence of racial ideology and the practice of religion form two of the most enduring themes in American history. From colonial encounters with Native Americans, through the rise of African slavery, Emancipation, the civil rights movement, and modern religious pluralism, religion and race have had a long and intertwined history. Although religion was not the cause of either race or racism, religion, and especially Christianity, has played a central role in the emergence, perpetuation, and criticism of the idea of race and the expression of racism in the United States. Likewise, race and racism have shaped American religious institutions from their colonial foundations into the present.

Racial Ideology

Race is an idea, not a biological reality. As an idea, race claims people can be sorted into distinct and exclusive groups that are marked by unalterable, physical characteristics that are a result of ancestry and genetics (ethnicity, in contrast, describes characteristics attributed to culture rather than biology). Race and racism suggest biology is destiny by linking behavior and ability to racial identity. But ideas are not reality. Neither assumptions about distinct biological groupings nor efforts to correlate genetics to behaviors, characteristics, or aptitudes have withstood scientific investigation. Variations in human appearance are gradual rather than discrete and are better

explained by geography than the innate characteristics implied in the idea of race. Moreover, studies reveal that nearly all genetic diversity occurs within a particular local community and not between populations that racial ideology would identify as different. Nor is there a correlation between genetic makeup or physical traits and differences in ability or behavior. Race, therefore, is not the difference itself, but rather a theory of difference that takes actual distinctions in appearance (skin color, hair, facial features, and so forth) and grants those differences a significance and explanatory power they do not hold.

Racism is the expression and manifestation of racial ideas. In racism the idea of race has real consequences, even though it is not a biological reality. Race has never been just a theory of difference; it has always been an assertion of inequality. Intrinsic to the classifications of race are rankings, which assign to each group a value relative to other groups. Racism makes a person's and a group's economic, social, legal, political, and even human rights a function of the racial categories to which the dominant group assigns them. Racial ideology likewise insists that the resulting inequality between racial categories is natural, inherited, and unalterable. Religiously informed racism suggests such differences are divinely ordained. The idea of race and the practice of racism is the expression of power of one group over another to advance political, economic, social—or even religious—ends.

Race is therefore a socially constructed category whose meaning is an ever-changing product of contingent historical circumstances rather than an immutable expression of biology. A brief comparison of racial classifications both beyond and within the United States reveals the culturally constructed

character of racial classification. The American racial binary of black and white was unique. Brazilians, for example, developed multiple racial categories and accepted mixing between them. Even in the United States, well into the middle of the nineteenth century, southern Louisiana and other communities across the coast of the Gulf of Mexico acknowledged Creoles of color, whose Caribbean heritage included both European and African ancestry, as a racial category distinct from both black and white. Another distinctive American racial idea is the “one-drop rule,” which means a single drop of African blood makes a person black rather than white. As a result, in the United States a white woman can give birth to a black child, but a black woman cannot give birth to a white child. The absurdities compounded during the age of segregation when states quantified black identity by a variety of formulas. Alabama retained the language of one drop, while Virginia quantified the necessary African ancestry at one-sixteenth and Florida at one-eighth. As a consequence, a person could change his or her race simply by crossing state lines.

Despite the prevailing black-white paradigm, at times American racial discourse has moved beyond the categories of black and white to identify other racial groups as well. Asian and Native American are among the most common additional racial categories. In addition, at various times Irish, Italians, and Poles have been categorized as groups racially distinct from whites, only highlighting the ways that the idea of race, including whiteness, is a shifting and culturally constructed category. Federal census forms are another example. With each decennial census the racial categories change, which is hardly an argument for race as a biologically determined and unalterable identity. Nonetheless, popular discourse in the United States has remained focused on the black-white binary such that additional racial divisions can still typically be categorized as either white or nonwhite, even as the definition of whiteness has changed over time. What has remained constant is the role of religion as an important, though not exclusive, force in the construction, and to a lesser extent, deconstruction, of the idea of race and the practice of racism.

Religion and the Formation of Race in Colonial America

Race is a modern idea. The concept of race emerged from the confluence of numerous developments, including the age of exploration and colonization, the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the emergence of African slavery. The earliest European contacts with people of different continents

did not invoke any system of uniform or universal racial categories. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, the scientific and Enlightenment propensity for classification led to the creation of a widely accepted division of the world's population into four peoples, derived from the four regions of inhabitation: Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The peoples of each continent were soon identified by skin color: white, black, yellow, and red. Religion joined such descriptions to confirm and explain the emerging racial ideology.

As Europeans began settling in the New World, religion was one of the primary ways that Europeans classified others: people were different first and foremost because they did not belong to the same religion. Over and against Christians were Jews, Turks, and pagans or heathens, which was everybody else. To early American colonists, Africans and Native Americans were different and inferior because they were heathens, not because of physical or inherited differences. Before long, however, came the link between heathen religion and blackness, so that the inferiority of religion became evidence of the permanent inferiority of black skin.

Similar processes of racialization characterized encounters with Native Americans. American settlers interpreted their initial encounters with native peoples primarily through the lens of religious differences rather than comparisons of physical appearance. These religious differences, such as the racial comparisons that would replace them, were inherently hierarchical. Colonists and missionaries assumed that Native Americans would quickly convert to Christianity. When Europeans encountered native resistance to conversion, they engaged in a process of racialization that transformed the root of native inferiority from religious beliefs to innate and inherited physical characteristics. Native behaviors became linked to bodies, not belief, so that skin color more than religious practice became the definition of savagery. Race obliterated all other considerations of native peoples and their internal differences to become the sole basis for classification and for asserting natives' irreversible and unredeemable inferiority.

Particularly for people of African descent, the rise of slavery formed another important context for the developing idea of race. Although slavery had existed throughout human history, American slavery was the first racially based system, and even that did not happen immediately. At first, the largest number of slaves were Irish, who planters considered less civilized than their African workers. There were even black landowners and slaveholders in seventeenth-century America, revealing a fluidity in assumptions about race and status.

Plantation owners came to rely solely on African slaves because Native Americans were susceptible to imported diseases and had a propensity to escape. Irish slaves and English indentured servants proved similarly unreliable. Planters also grew concerned that a mixed slave community fostered class-based alliances that stretched across racial categories, most evident in Bacon's Rebellion (1676), when an alliance of black and white laborers nearly toppled the elite in Jamestown, Virginia. Soon after, colonial legislatures defined slavery as a hereditary status based solely on African ancestry, consolidating the association of whiteness with freedom and slavery with blackness.

The turn to religious justifications for race-based slavery was logical, since the slave trade emerged in the wake of the Protestant Reformation that shaped American colonial worldviews. Still, the scriptural conclusions American colonists reached were not as obvious as subsequent generations assumed them to be. They were correct in noting frequent biblical references to slavery, none of which condemned the institution, but they ignored the fact that biblical slavery was not racially based and that slave status was neither perpetual nor inherited. Nor were the racial categories of black and white familiar divisions in the Bible. But in the prevailing providential view, colonists and religious authorities argued that since African slavery existed, God must have a reason for it. Thus, a powerful reinterpretation took place, especially around the story of the curse of Canaan in Genesis 9:18–27. Canaan was the grandson of Noah and the son of Ham, who saw his father Noah in a state of naked drunkenness. For this, Canaan was consigned to serve his father's brothers. Slave owners insisted on a racial gloss that made Ham and Canaan progenitors of the African race, thereby justifying the enslavement of people of African descent as the fulfillment of God's commands.

By the end of the seventeenth century the ideas of race, religion, and slavery had coalesced into a set of triads that defined one's status. Whiteness was essential to Christianity and freedom over and against blackness, which was linked to heathenness and slavery. Race had become a category that joined ancestry, religion, and status into one. It was a seemingly fixed and providentially appointed status by which American colonists ordered their new civilization. In an age in which Enlightenment ideals of equality would soon burst forth, religion and race cooperated to explain why freedom and equality did not, in fact, extend to everyone. But the legs on which that construction stood were never as secure as white Americans hoped.

The links securing freedom to one set of religious and racial categories and slavery to another set crumbled when slaves began converting to Christianity. Christianity was no longer the exclusive domain of white Europeans, bringing into question the ideology that linked Christianity with whiteness and freedom. Although the earliest American colonists had made Christianity and slavery compatible, by the eighteenth century they also needed to make slavery compatible with Christian captives. They had to abandon the links that connected Christianity to both whiteness and freedom. Colonial legislatures complied, passing laws ensuring that slavery was rooted in a fixed and inherited racial category rather than any current or future religious identity. While whiteness still implied both Christianity and freedom, the inverse did not hold true. For black slaves, conversion to Christianity did not make one free, nor entitle one to the privileges of whiteness. The freedom of Christianity, as both preachers and plantation owners proclaimed, was a heavenly reward. It was not a change in earthly status. The religious differences that originally justified enslaving Africans had become irrelevant to one's status. With this step, slavery had become fully racialized.

With slavery firmly rooted in racial rather than religious categories, religion became all the more important in reinforcing and justifying American slavery. Eighteenth-century slave owners, many of whom had themselves experienced Christian conversion in the revivals known as the first Great Awakening (c. 1730–1750), came to embrace missionary arguments that slave conversions were not only possible, but would also make for better slaves. Plantation owners often forced their slaves to attend church, whether or not the slaves themselves were Christian. In church, slaves saw and heard about a divinely ordained social order. Forced to sit in the back or in the balcony, slaves witnessed a progression of free whites, from laborers to landowners, who paraded into the sanctuary and were seated in front of them according to rank. Sermons reiterated the hierarchy as divinely sanctioned. Ministers called upon each group to remain faithful to the station in life for which God had created them, since rebellion against one's status was rebellion against God. The Anglican catechism, for instance, included language in which people seeking confirmation promised to do their duty to the station in life to which God had called them. Preachers similarly pointed to New Testament passages calling on slaves to obey their masters, an obedience that would be rewarded in heaven.

Church leaders and slave owners attempted to foster not only obedience but also gratefulness among slaves. They

argued slavery was a positive good, for it lifted African heathens out of the depths of ignorance and sin and into the civilizing and salvific realm of Christianity. Such arguments, which intensified and multiplied in the nineteenth century, fit slavery into a Christian worldview, even as they insisted on an inherent African inferiority. But by the end of the eighteenth century few slaves were convinced and hardly any had converted to Christianity.

Religion and Race in Antebellum America

The period between the American Revolution and the Civil War marked the first widespread conversion of African Americans, and to a lesser degree Native Americans, to Christianity. The evangelical revivals in the first decades of the nineteenth century, known as the Second Great Awakening, fueled much of this growth. Especially in Methodist and Baptist circles, the early years of the awakening spread a message of Christian equality that transcended racial lines, though most churches soon retreated from this radical claim to assuage the concerns of white southerners. Nonetheless, the growing population of nonwhite Christians further complicated the complex relationship between religion and race in the United States. As Christianity expanded across racial lines it did very little to erase those boundaries, often reinforcing the foundations for racially rooted religious divisions that would persist long after slavery. While whites saw in religion the explanation for fixed notions of both race and freedom, victims of racism recognized that race was what separated the ideal from the reality in American religion no less than in politics.

One consequence of the expanding African American Christian population, among both slaves in the South and free blacks in the North, was a growing critique of the prevailing white assumptions about the relationship between religion and race. The Bible proved far bigger than the few verses white preachers and slave owners invoked to defend slavery. Black abolitionists emphasized the egalitarian and liberating claims of Christianity, from the God who created all people in God's image and who liberated his people enslaved in Egypt, to the Christ who redeemed all people and in whom, the Apostle Paul argued, "there is neither slave nor free" (Galatians 3:28). In the South, slave preachers emphasized narratives of Exodus and deliverance. Recognizing the themes of liberation, equality, and concern for the marginal that pervaded the Old Testament and New Testament alike, slaves sang of God's leading the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, knowing that the promises of liberation

were for them as well. Slave owners missed the subversive this-worldly message of the slave spirituals, believing instead they had converted their chattel to a belief limited to other-worldly rewards.

Separate religious institutions were another way that racially marginalized peoples challenged white efforts to subordinate them. The independent black denominations begun by free persons in the North were a lasting innovation of the antebellum period. Frustrated with their treatment in predominantly white congregations, African Americans withdrew and created their own churches and denominations, embracing and affirming their African heritage even as they understood themselves to be a truer expression of Christian universality than the white congregations they abandoned. The African Methodist Episcopal Church began in 1787 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, when Richard Allen (1760–1831), a free black Methodist preacher, along with several of his colleagues, was forcibly removed during services in the church to which they belonged. The white ushers refused even to wait until the prayer was finished, as Allen and his colleagues requested. The black members withdrew and founded a separate church that was the beginning of the African Methodist Episcopal denomination (incorporated in 1816), of which Allen would become the first bishop. Elsewhere, free blacks made similar moves to practice Christianity free from the racism of white Christians, resulting in the formation of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion denomination in New York City in 1821, as well as numerous independent Baptist congregations. These racially separate denominations experienced explosive growth in the South following Emancipation.

Whereas African Americans increasingly found in Christianity an affirmation of their African identity and human equality, Native Americans often looked outside Christianity altogether in their resistance to the racism of white Christian settlers. Some missionaries to natives balanced cultural respect for with their evangelizing aims, and some, especially among the Cherokee, became strong advocates of native rights against federal imperialism. For the most part, however, white Christianity and white encroachment on native lands and native rights went hand in hand. The same system of racial ordering that rationalized enslaving Africans led to a racially informed notion of Manifest Destiny to spread America's Christian-inflected civilization across the continent that resulted in the reservation system to clear natives from the land. While some native peoples did accommodate varying degrees of Christianity, it never became an effective framework for native

resistance as it did for African Americans. Instead, dismayed by Christians claiming racial and cultural superiority, natives often turned to their own customs. Native prophetic traditions fostered religious, cultural, and occasionally even armed resistance to the expanding American nation and its Christian but not always benevolent empire.

Alongside these Native American and African American constructions of the relationship between religion and race, religion remained central to white efforts to ensure clear racial lines, especially those protecting whiteness and the privileges that racism granted. In works such as Baptist Thornton Stringfellow's "A Brief Examination of Scripture Testimony on the Institution of Slavery" (1841) and Presbyterian George D. Armstrong's *The Christian Defense of Slavery* (1857), proslavery theologians developed elaborate biblical defenses of slavery that emphasized the absence of any biblical condemnation of slavery. The "spirituality of the church" was another proslavery argument, most notably articulated by Presbyterian James Henly Thornwell (1812–1862). This doctrine held that slavery was a social concern that was the purview of the state. In contrast, churches should avoid social issues and concern themselves only with questions of individual salvation. Many of these defenses, such as the Bible they invoked, avoided explicit references to race. But since American slavery was based solely on race, religious defenses of slavery were de facto defenses of the reality of racial differences. Because slave owners often embraced and even advocated Christianity for their slaves, racial ideology emphasized the differences that persisted between black and white despite a common religion. One of those differences turned out to be religious, as attributes such as simplistic and emotional preceded descriptions of slave Christianity. Slavery's defenders likewise denigrated African American character more generally, suggesting the necessity of white paternalism and implicating all people of African status, whether or not they were enslaved. The racism was not consistent, sometimes depicting Africans as docile and childlike in need of protection and other times, in themes that would be further developed after Emancipation, casting them as savage, subhuman beasts in need of control. Either way, slavery and Christianity together provided the necessary protection and restraint to maintain the racial constructions upon which such assumptions rested.

Religion and Race in the Age of Emancipation

The end of slavery severed the correlations that linked whiteness with freedom and blackness with bondage. But

Emancipation did not mark the end of race. Of the colonial triads that linked whiteness, Christianity, and freedom on one side and blackness, heathenness and slavery on the other, only race remained as a marker of difference among black and white citizens. As a result, the idea of race became even more significant as the basis for asserting hierarchy and justifying inequality. Religion remained an important voice in these ongoing constructions and deconstructions of race in the age of freedom, just as it had been in the age of slavery.

In the absence of slavery, white Americans constructed a system of racial segregation to maintain a racial hierarchy. The racial project was a national undertaking, not just a southern one. By the turn of the twentieth century the segregation practices known as Jim Crow were formalized in laws mandating racial separation in nearly every public space. White churches and denominations rarely objected since most practiced segregation within their own institutions. Southern Methodists, for example, created the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in 1870 as a new separate denomination for their black members. In the few churches where black and white members worshipped together, whether Protestant or Catholic, white members nearly always maintained separate and inferior seats for black worshippers. Racial separation became the norm as Protestant denominations that had divided over slavery pursued reconciliation. In religion as in every other dimension of national life, unity trumped equality as northerners proved far more willing to join with formerly rebellious whites southerners than consistently loyal black citizens. Whether it was leading revivalists such as Dwight Moody (1837–1899) and Sam Jones (1847–1906) capitulating to demands for segregated congregations, or Frances Willard (1839–1898) accepting segregation within the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (founded 1874), religious organizations both reinforced and contributed to the patterns of racial segregation that prevailed by the early twentieth century.

The most horrific expressions of racism at the turn of the twentieth century were not church acts, though religious sentiments were never far below the surface. Thousands of black men were lynched, all in the name of protecting the purity of white women from the supposed wanton sexuality of black men. Sexual anxieties and antimiscegenation rhetoric stood at the core of postbellum racism. Lynching was an extra-legal way to enforce and to teach the lessons of sexual anxiety that white supremacy fostered. Although not explicitly religious functions, lynchings were public spectacles that occurred primarily in the highly religious culture of the

South. Proponents of such vigilante justice linked the religious and sexual purity of white women and posited black men as a threat to both. Many whites understood lynching, brutal as it was, as a defense of the purity of the Christian home. The events themselves were evocative of religious rituals, interpreted as acts of purification, and it was not unusual for clergy or religious leaders to offer invocations. Although black citizens knew that white men raping black women were the most common form of miscegenation and sexual assault, these transgressions remained unacknowledged and unpunished in the white communities so obsessed with purity.

The fascination with racial purity and separation fostered the emergence of scientific racism. These inconsistent pseudoscientific theories to prove the biological basis of race and to challenge the common humanity of black and white had a complicated relationship with religion. One strain adapted theories of evolution and natural selection as evidence for white racial superiority and the need to avoid race mixing to ensure the survival of the fittest. While some whites invoked this idea to depict African Americans as dangerous creatures who threatened to upset the natural order, others considered natural selection reassuring evidence of the impending extinction of nonwhites. Another popular theory to justify separation was polygenesis, which posited that each race was the product of a distinct act of creation rather than the more traditional interpretation of Genesis in which all humans descended from a single, first man. Polygenesis relied on a range of pseudoscientific claims such as phrenology to prove Africans were a different and subhuman creation. Polygenesis did not fit with the biblical account of creation without some creative biblical exegesis, which white supremacists in search of a theory were happy to provide. Some suggested that Africans were among the animals over whom God gave dominion to Adam, while others returned to the curse of Ham to argue the flood was judgment for racial mixing and the descendants of Ham bore the consequences of such mixing. Regardless of the theory, the theological consequence was a foregone conclusion: those whom God had created as unequal should be treated as such. Though directed primarily at African Americans, the arguments were adapted to categorize Native Americans who were being gathered onto reservations or Asian immigrants who were beginning to arrive in the American West.

Black Americans rejected these racial assertions, even as they continued to embrace religion. But the ways they used religion to challenge the racism of racial ideology was hardly monolithic. The integrationist perspective emphasized

religion as the key to overcoming racial segregation and moving toward both religious and political equality in the United States. Within Methodism, for example, some joined the predominantly white Northern Methodist denomination rather than one of the independent African Methodist traditions. Like those who remained in other predominantly white denominations despite ongoing racial discrimination, these Methodists insisted that only racially inclusive denominations reflected the ideals of Christian unity. Christian integrationists also emphasized the practical example that religious institutions set, warning that racial separation in the religious realm would fuel white supremacist arguments for segregation in every other dimension of life. But these black church members found few white supporters, and most racially mixed denominations capitulated to national pressures to segregate their institutions along racial lines.

Many African American Christians favored a nationalist approach, which advocated separate institutions as the best way to achieve racial equality. The ranks of independent black Baptist and Methodist churches in the South swelled in the decades after Emancipation, not because former slaves were kicked out of white churches but because they believed their new churches more fully expressed the truths of Christianity. In separate black churches African Americans could freely celebrate a God who delivered the slaves from captivity and worship a God whose justice was tempered by grace in this world no less than in the next. Independent black churches affirmed rather than degraded African identity, privileging biblical narratives of God liberating the captive and punishing the captors. At the same time black churches were cultivating distinctive black religious voices, they were also centers for education and political development not otherwise available in a segregated society. The goal was not racial separation, but rather evidence of equality that would, by force of example, overturn white arguments about racial inferiority and the need for segregation.

Still other African Americans turned toward innovative combinations of religion and race that provided a spiritual escape from the nation's racial hierarchy. Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Jamaica in 1914, and after moving it to New York in 1918 it became the largest black movement in American history. The UNIA fostered race pride and solidarity by reconceiving Christian doctrine and iconography through an African lens, depicting both God and Jesus as black and emphasizing biblical passages that suggested the special place of Africa in divine providence. Others looked

beyond Christianity altogether to embrace new constructs that fused religious and racial identity. Several forms of black Judaism emerged between 1895 and 1920, claiming that Africans descended from the original tribes of Israel that God led out of slavery in Egypt. This provided a new racial and religious identity that neither depended upon nor was derived from white Christianity. By locating Africans among God's original chosen people, black Judaism rejected white claims to be a new chosen people whose religion and race had placed them uniquely in God's favor. Instead, it consigned white Christians to an inferior and apostate religion. Black Muslims, such as the Moorish Science Temple (founded 1913) and, most famously, the Nation of Islam, which began in Detroit in the 1930s, similarly posited a new racial and religious identity. Negroes became Africans whose true religion was Islam, which placed them altogether outside white Christian biblical narratives. In their formative decades, these new religions often inverted rather than rejected racial hierarchies, offering black Americans a way to escape the racism of white Christianity.

From Civil Rights to Twenty-First-Century Pluralism

The civil rights movement generally stands as the high point of how racial communities have leveraged religion for social and political transformation. But the movement that resulted from this fusion of religion and race was neither inevitable nor universally supported within African American communities and churches. The relationship between religion and race was hardly monolithic. Beginning with W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963), many black historians and sociologists expressed doubt that black churches could bring about the necessary social and political transformation to end segregation and racism. Some were critical of all religious institutions while others argued for churches constituted from a different social or theological basis. Nonetheless, all agreed black churches were the central and unrivaled institution in African American life. Even churches and denominations themselves were divided on whether they should engage social and political issues. Martin Luther King Jr.'s National Baptist Convention was reluctant to become involved in the civil rights movement, leading King and others to break away and form a new denomination.

The civil rights movement is therefore all the more remarkable given the complex and conflicted constructions of religion and race from which it emerged. A variety of impulses, including legal and political advocacy, grassroots

organizing, and new conceptions of federal and judicial authority, all played important roles in the movement. But regardless of the explanation and interpretation, the religious ideas and experiences nurtured in over a century of black church life were critical to the success of the movement. White supremacist arguments of black inferiority rooted in biblical and theological claims had not disappeared. But three centuries of religiously constructed racism increasingly paled in the face of arguments for Christian unity and political liberty that were rooted in the sacred texts of the faith and the nation. Unprecedented numbers of white religious leaders, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish, also lent their support. The result was a unique moment in the construction of religion and race in the United States: the voices of a racially subjected people arguing for religious and civil equality became the nation's dominant perspective.

The civil rights movement highlighted the constructed and changing character of religion and race in America by challenging the ideas of race and racism with the same religion that had helped create them in the first place. Those who brought about the change, whether leaders such as the Baptist clergyman King or the tens of thousands of church members whose names remain largely unknown, drew on deep traditions of theology and practice in black churches. From the first slave preachers onward, themes of liberation had been central to black preaching. Biblical stories of providential deliverance from slavery to freedom had sustained hope that America might be transformed from Egypt to the promised land. While promises of heavenly reward were always part of the church tradition, an equally important strand had stressed this-worldly salvation. God's presence was literal and real, sustaining and encouraging an active though often subtle resistance to racism that finally erupted in full force during the civil rights movement. Religious practices such as praying and singing hymns were crucial to building solidarity and sustaining a nonviolent approach. Churches provided logistical support including meeting space, sleeping accommodations for visitors, and an incalculable number of meals to sustain protestors. From church pews came the troops that enabled more famous leaders to go forth and who amplified the resonances of the leaders' soaring religious rhetoric that called millions to take up the cause. In all this work, the women who had always been the backbone of black churches played an indispensable role.

Despite the achievements of the civil rights movement, the complex relationship between religion and race did not

subside in its wake. Some considered religion, especially Christianity, to have completed its usefulness. Besides the continuing popularity of the Nation of Islam, many black leaders rejected religion altogether as part of a racist legacy, turning instead to race-conscious secular movements such as Black Power and the Black Panthers (1966). Even within Christianity, many worked within an increasingly nationalist framework, especially given the apparent unwillingness of many white Christians to work toward widespread integration within religious institutions. Theologian James Cone exemplified the contours of the new black theology in works such as *Black Theology and Black Power* (1969) and *A Black Theology of Liberation* (1970), which drew on the traditions of liberation long central to black religious thought and emphasized the blackness (nonwhiteness) of Jesus and even God. Christianity, Cone claimed, spoke directly to the experience of being black in a society in which racism prevailed. Native Americans made similar moves that both affirmed racial identities and used religion to subvert white characterizations of them. Paralleling Cone's claim that God is black, native scholar Vine Deloria published *God Is Red* (1973), which called native peoples away from the Christianity whites had used to "civilize" them and back to the tribal practices that affirmed traditional native spirituality and worldviews. Yet not even native categories were free from white colonization. In the late 1970s, a burgeoning New Age movement exemplified the constantly changing relationships between religion and race as it appropriated native sacred practices and transformed them from examples of degradation to the evidence of spiritual enlightenment.

The entanglements of race and religion have transformed, though hardly vanished, in the decades since the civil rights movement. The most explicitly racist uses of religion persist primarily at the margins, in small fringe Christian identity groups that invoke religious defenses of white supremacy. Nonetheless, throughout American society, religion remains a basis of both creating and maintaining the categories of difference and otherness that are at the heart of racialization. The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act opened the doors to immigrants from around the world and has created a religious diversity that continues to expand. As has been the case throughout the history of religion and race in America, the resulting impulses have been mixed and at times even contradictory. On the one hand, the growing religious diversity has vastly expanded notions of American religious freedom as more people invoke their first amendment right of religious expression. On the other hand, that freedom has

not come without resistance from the still Christian and white majority who, through latent assumptions or active agitation, often insist on assimilation to the majority Christian perspective as a prerequisite to full participation in American society. Many immigrant communities have faced resistance to their religious practices. This opposition often invokes racialist stereotypes that root assumptions about character and behavior in ancestry and that degrade non-Christian religions as inferior or less worthy of protection on the American religious landscape.

The identities that Americans have long constructed as racial remain especially visible within religious congregations, despite substantial improvements in most every other dimension of American society. While this is certainly true for the religious and ethnic diversity that has characterized the recent decades of immigration, it also remains visible along the traditional black-white color line that has marked the American landscape since the first Europeans and Africans arrived in the early seventeenth century. The ideologies linking racial hierarchies to religious justification have faded, but the religious divisions that racism produced persist into the present. Religious organizations reveal far more racial homogeneity than diversity, whether it is intentional or not. Even the 2008 election of the nation's first African American president, Barack Obama, was marked by controversy, misunderstandings, and accusations not only about race but also the role that religion might play in both perpetuating and erasing racial lines in America. The particular constructions that the interaction of religion and race produces are ever changing, but the complex and complicated relationship between them shows no signs of subsiding.

See also *Abolitionism and Anti-Slavery; African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; Anti-Semitism; Ethnicity; Immigration: Since the 1965 Immigration Act; Nation(s) of Islam; Religious Prejudice; Religious Thought: African American; Violence and Terror.*

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Radio

Radio, as the nation's first and most long-lived electronic medium has been an important force in American popular religion as a missionary tool and a source of devotional material for people of faith throughout much of the twentieth century. In addition, some religious groups built institutional strength by founding organizations to advocate for religious broadcasting, first on radio and later on television and digital media. Religious radio has contributed significantly to major developments in the radio industry, including early broadcasting, the rise of network and format radio, radio regulation, and the proliferation of niche radio channels on AM, FM, satellite, and the Internet by the early twenty-first century.

The first words transmitted electronically—Samuel Morse's 1837 telegraphed question, "what hath God wrought?"—may be considered the first religious broadcast. The first radio transmission of the human voice was also a religious broadcast of sorts, on Christmas Eve 1906, sent out by the Canadian inventor Reginald Fessenden (1866–1932) from a transmitter in Brant Rock, Massachusetts. Fessenden's concert included religious readings and a violin rendition of the Christmas carol "O Holy Night." The first church to broadcast its weekly Sunday services regularly was Calvary Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh, which arranged for special remote hookup to one of the earliest radio stations, KDKA, in January 1922. From the days of experimentation in the 1920s with scattered audiences of crystal-set enthusiasts, religious

radio was present even from the medium's earliest beginnings. Radio and religious broadcasting were born together.

Early Religious Radio

Churches and religious organizations such as Bible schools were among the first applicants for broadcasting licenses in the mid-1920s. Some forward-looking revivalists set up all-religion stations, including the Pentecostal leader Aimee Semple McPherson in Los Angeles (KFSG, 1924) and Paul Maier of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (KFUO, 1924). Others, such as Paul Rader in Chicago, purchased the Sunday airtime of existing stations. Rader's programming on WHT from 1925 to 1927 featured fourteen hours of preaching, sacred music, messages for children and shut-ins, and even a call-in request show for hymns. From 1927 to 1930, Rader's Chicago Gospel Tabernacle produced a once-a-week station named WJBT ("Where Jesus Blesses Thousands") that shared a transmitter and studio with the Chicago CBS affiliate station WBBM. Still others took advantage of public service time slots or purchased time on commercial stations for programs that quickly became long-running staples of the American airwaves, including R. R. Brown's "Radio Chapel Service" from Omaha, Nebraska, starting in 1923; Donald Gray Barnhouse's "Bible Study Hour" from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, beginning in 1928; and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir program "Music and the Spoken Word" from Salt Lake City, Utah, starting in 1929.

While there were those who worried that sending church services into the ether violated the dignity of religious occasions, and others who objected to using what some people considered the "devil's province" of the airwaves, in fact religious objections to the use of radio technology were surprisingly few. As soon as the popularity of radio began to grow in the mid-1920s, religious groups almost universally acknowledged that the radio was another useful forum for spreading their messages, and that it was in fact particularly well suited to religious programming. This was because speech and song characterized so many kinds of religious services, and also because radio broadcast the speaker's words directly into American homes, conveying emotion that printed material could not. By 1924, a church or religious organization held one out of every fourteen licenses; just a year later there were seventy-one religious stations in the United States, which represented more than 10 percent of the stations broadcasting in 1925.

Radio broadcasting and station licensing were initially under the regulatory control of the Department of

Commerce. One of the early decisions by Herbert Hoover (1874–1964), the secretary of commerce from 1921 to 1928, confined all religious and public-service stations to a single radio wavelength of 360 meters (83.3 kilocycles). In 1927 the Radio Act created a Federal Radio Commission (FRC)—which later would be folded into the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The new commission opened up additional wavelengths for religious broadcasting stations, but only if they could demonstrate a commitment to the new legislative standard to operate in the “public interest, convenience and necessity.”

The rise of radio broadcasting coincided with the struggle within American Protestantism for control of certain denominations, between modernists and fundamentalists, and this ongoing controversy raised the stakes on religious broadcasting. When the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) was organized by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) as the first radio network in 1927, its executives chose not to sell airtime for religion and instead awarded public service time slots (also called “sustaining time”) to representatives of the three major faith groups in the United States at that time—Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant.

The National Council of Catholic Men developed the “Catholic Hour” broadcast for NBC; from 1930 to 1952 its principal speaker was Bishop Fulton J. Sheen (1895–1979), who later successfully hosted the popular 1950s television program “Life is Worth Living.” NBC also had little trouble identifying a Jewish group for its religious radio slot: the New York Board of Rabbis produced “Message of Israel” for NBC from 1934 to 1956, hosted by Rabbi Jonah B. Wise (1881–1959).

When it came to Protestants, who were riven over the modernist/fundamentalist controversy, NBC selected the Federal Council of Churches to receive its sustaining time. The Federal Council represented twenty-five mainline Protestant denominations, tending toward the doctrinally liberal end of the spectrum. New religious movements of the early twentieth century, such as Pentecostalism, were not in fellowship with the Federal Council in those years, and thus were not privy to NBC sustaining time. The Federal Council’s radio offering, the “National Radio Pulpit,” sought to deliver nonsectarian Christian messages and served as a forum for some of the modernist movement’s most notable preachers, including Harry Emerson Fosdick, S. Parkes Cadman, and Ralph W. Sockman, all from New York City. Similarly, the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) produced its nondenominational weekly radio sermon starting in 1931,

“The CBS Church of the Air,” emphasizing general Christian doctrines. Thus when it came to American Protestantism, which was notably contentious during the 1920s, the emerging radio networks chose to downplay controversy and instead favored programming that promoted the idea of religion in general, such as a 1928 broadcast by President Calvin Coolidge (1872–1933) vaguely referencing religion as the foundation of national life.

Network policies prohibited paid-time religious programming, which many fundamentalists and other religious conservatives viewed as patently discriminatory and damaging to their version of the Christian witness. Added to NBC’s exclusive dealings with the Federal Council for all Protestant programming, the shuffling of stations and frequencies under the new federal regulation had the net effect of limiting the access of fundamentalists and other “controversial” speakers to nationally heard airtime on network radio.

Coughlin and the “Radio Church”

Yet determined religious broadcasters developed inventive strategies to broadcast their messages. Father Charles Coughlin (1891–1979), of Royal Oaks, Michigan, for example, created a popular radio program that even developed into a political party, the National Union for Social Justice. Coughlin, a Catholic priest, began with a radio program for children in 1926 from his parish, then formed the Radio League of the Little Flower to support his paid-time broadcasting as his weekly program became more popular and was soon picked up by more stations. Coughlin was even briefly a paid-time broadcaster on CBS until 1930.

Coughlin set up what was essentially his own network by buying simultaneous time on dozens of stations. He pioneered the use of prerecorded transcription disks, which were mailed to independent stations in advance so that his program could be heard at the same time across a wide geographic region. For the first half of the 1930s, Coughlin was one of the most-heard voices on American radio, with an estimated weekly audience of ten million listeners. Coughlin’s distinctive rhetorical style, which critics called “vituperative” and admirers called “passionate,” together with his increasingly right-leaning political views, made him a formidable media opponent to President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945) in the 1930s.

Coughlin’s radio demagoguery was a particular target of the 1939 National Association of Broadcasters Code of Ethics, which stated that religious broadcasts should “promote spiritual harmony and understanding of mankind” and not

“convey attacks” on racial or religious groups. He was finally forced to withdraw from broadcasting during World War II. While some have called Coughlin the rock on which the radio church was built, it may be more accurate to think of Coughlin as the rock on which the radio church was very nearly shipwrecked. By the late 1930s, all radio networks had begun to associate religious broadcasting with controversy and to consider it less of a “public interest” to be fostered than a danger to be contained and bounded.

Religious broadcasters after Coughlin had to consider public opinion and good taste, or risk being marginalized or blacklisted. Yet as they learned to make paid-time radio ministry profitable, many religious conservatives blended commercial strategies with uncompromising Protestant doctrine, thus shaping the media landscape of both radio evangelism and televangelism. One radio network founded in 1934, the Mutual Broadcasting System, found religious radio to be a reliable source of profits; by 1943, 25 percent of Mutual’s airtime was bought by religious broadcasters. One of Mutual’s most successful programs was the “Old Fashioned Revival Hour,” hosted by Charles and Grace Fuller in Southern California from 1936 until his death in 1968. Fuller was highly influential as a broadcaster; his on-air formula of a nostalgic gospel quartet, solid fundamentalist (“old-time gospel”) preaching, and a chatty segment of excerpts from listener letters proved irresistible to millions of Americans. Fuller is also notable as one of the key founders of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1942 and a religious broadcasting trade association, the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), in 1944, as well as the founder of the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

Religious Broadcasting Advocacy Organizations

In 1941 the FCC’s “Mayflower Decision” had prohibited editorializing by all radio broadcasters. Although difficult to enforce (and, indeed, largely ignored during World War II when broadcast journalists openly aired their opinions), the policy nevertheless stated that broadcasters should not be



Father Charles Coughlin effectively created his own radio network by purchasing simultaneous time on dozens of stations and mailing prerecorded transcription disks in advance so that his program could be heard at the same time across a wide geographic region. Coughlin had a weekly estimated audience of ten million listeners in the early 1930s. He stopped broadcasting during World War II after his pro-fascist political views came under fire.

“advocates,” which potentially affected anyone using radio airwaves for proselytizing and evangelism. Religious broadcasters formed the NRB partly in response to the Mayflower decision. The NRB has been a key religious broadcasting advocacy group and has been very successful in securing commercial radio airtime for conservative Christians and setting financial accountability standards for paid-time broadcasters who must fund-raise to stay on the air. Other religious radio broadcasters also consolidated radio efforts during the 1940s. The Federal Council of Churches brought mainline Protestant media production under the roof of the Protestant Radio Commission. In 1946 the interfaith Religious Radio Association was formed under the auspices of the Institute for Education by Radio, with representatives from mainline Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and American Judaism. By the mid-1940s, religious radio was a \$200 million dollar per year industry, and it got a further boost when the young revivalist Billy Graham (1918–) used radio as an important part of his ministry starting with “Hour of Decision” on ABC radio in 1950. The long-running Jewish program “Eternal Light” got its start in 1947, featuring high-quality radio drama based on Jewish history and ethics.

Religious radio benefited from a generalized revival of religion in the 1950s, despite the introduction of broadcast television and of televangelism. Religious broadcasting obtained a foothold on the emerging technology of FM radio and continued to be a steady source of income for low-powered daytime AM stations. Postwar religious broadcasters also used shortwave radio facilities that had been developed during World War II as propaganda stations. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's secretary of state, John Foster Dulles (1888–1959), approved of these international religious radio broadcasts to Europe and Asia as a cold war tool against international communism.

Religious Radio as Controversial Speech

During the 1950s, American denominations continued to disagree over whether paid-time religious broadcasting was appropriate. Those in the National Council of Churches (NCC), the successor to the Federal Council of Churches, believed that churches should offer free programming and that stations should provide sustaining time for them. Those who had been historically shut out from sustaining time usually included evangelical, fundamentalist, and other doctrinally conservative organizations; such groups had embraced paid programming as an important mode of Christian witness to the modern world.

Yet it was still important for radio stations to demonstrate their commitment to public service broadcasting for FCC license renewal. Free time given to religious broadcasting could be counted toward a station's public service time until 1960. In that year, the FCC relaxed its policy to permit radio and television stations to also count paid-time religious broadcasting as public service time. Program-length fundraising was still prohibited (until the 1980s) under the new policy. Furthermore, religious programs were now declared to be exempt from the FCC's Fairness Doctrine, which had permitted groups on opposite sides of controversial issues equal access to airtime for their views, and which had been a gray area for religious broadcasters up until that time.

In fact, the Fairness Doctrine policy had been successfully used in the mid-1940s by atheist Robert Scott to challenge the religious programming of three San Francisco-area stations. When the stations refused to sell him airtime, Scott claimed that the stations had violated the Fairness Doctrine by not allowing him to present both sides of the controversial issue of the existence of God. Scott was eventually granted some airtime for his views. The Fairness Doctrine was not widely used to challenge religious programming, although it

remained a threat in the minds of many religious broadcasters until the 1960 ruling.

Religious broadcasting drove other notable policy changes in the radio industry. Historically, the FCC had been loath to become involved in religious squabbles, or to appear to restrict religious freedom on the air. But the regulatory agency stepped in on certain occasions; for example, in 1964 conservative preacher Billy James Hargis (1925–2004) railed against the book *Goldwater—Extremist on the Right*, which criticized presidential candidate Barry Goldwater. Hargis called the book's author, Fred S. Cook, an atheistic communist sympathizer. Cook demanded equal time for rebuttal from Hargis's station, WGCB in Red Lion, Pennsylvania. The station at first offered to sell Cook equal time, whereupon the FCC ruled that WGCB had to provide Cook airtime for free. The FCC's decision was upheld by the Supreme Court, and the *Red Lion* case further emphasized that religious broadcasting could be treated as political speech (and, in fact, by the mid-1960s was often indistinguishable from it).

Some religious broadcasters circumvented FCC oversight by using international shortwave stations or the high-wattage "border blaster" stations just south of the U.S.–Mexico border (among them XEG, XERF, and XELO located in Monterrey and Baja, Mexico). From the 1920s until the early 1980s, border radio featured highly entrepreneurial religious broadcasters such as J. Harold Smith, A. A. Allen, "Cowboy Evangelist" Dallas Turner, Brother J. C. Bishop, and Frederick "Reverend Ike" Eikerenkoetter II, the self-proclaimed "Divine Sweetheart of the Universe" who hawked blessed prayer cloths on XERF in the 1970s.

Toward Corporate Radio

Beginning in the 1980s, the FCC altered the rules governing broadcast station ownership. This permitted the rise of large corporations owning many stations in the same markets. The move toward corporate consolidation occurred in religious broadcasting also; in 2004 the fifth-largest owner of U.S. radio stations was the American Family Association, owner of the Christian radio group American Family Radio. When the FCC permitted religious groups to hold licenses as noncommercial broadcasters, American Family relicensed some of its stations as noncommercial and also built new ones. Its strategy was adopted by other religious organizations looking for ways to expand on the FM and the AM radio dials in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Salem Communications is another of the largest players in the religious radio industry, with a

Christian station in twenty-three of the nation's top twenty-five radio markets in 2007.

In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a strong surge in religious publishing, music, and the Internet, offering new and profitable ways to bring religious messages (typically, but not exclusively, evangelical Christian) to popular audiences. Numbers of radio stations grew in formats such as gospel, Christian rhythm and blues, contemporary Christian music (CCM), and megachurch praise and worship music. The ratings service Arbitron defines the "religious" category of radio programming as including not only religious talk shows (such as inspirational, magazine-format, and Bible study) but also stations with contemporary Christian music (CCM) and gospel music formats. Taken as a whole, the religious segment of the radio market in the first decade of the twenty-first century is on par with country music broadcasting in listener popularity, and very close behind news/talk format stations.

Religious radio continues to be a growing market. The number of radio stations in America has been increasing each year (even while corporate consolidation reduces the number of station owners annually). Nearly all Americans use radio regularly if not daily in their homes and offices or while driving in their cars, and audiences remain large. Between 2000 and 2005, the number of stations in the United States increased by 4 percent to more than 13,000, while in the same years the percentage of religious-format radio stations grew 14 percent. A Barna Group study reported in 2005 that 46 percent of all U.S. adults listened to a Christian radio broadcast monthly, a number that included 28 percent of the non-Christians in their survey. Audiences for religious radio have grown 38 percent since 1998.

By 2010 James Dobson's daily advice program, "Focus on the Family," had become the highest-rated national religious program, with an audience of perhaps 1.5 million listeners on more than 3,000 stations in the United States. However, international audiences have been just as important to many religious broadcasters: in 2010 "Focus on the Family" was broadcast in 160 countries, with an estimated listening audience worldwide of 200 million, according to Dobson's organization. Other big-time Protestant radio broadcasters in the early twenty-first century included Charles Swindoll, Charles Stanley, and Beverly LaHaye. Radio has remained a safe place for conservative Christian viewpoints. "When conservatives talk about [liberal] media bias, they are not talking about radio. It is a conservative bastion," concluded a 2007 conference session of the MIT Communications Forum on evangelicals and the media.

Radio broadcasting is no longer limited to AM and FM radio antenna stations. Low-powered FM, Internet, high-definition digital, and satellite radio offer new opportunities for niche narrowcasters to develop a media presence for religious groups seldom heard on the FM and AM radio dials. The growth of non-Christian religious media voices (Radio Islam, Dharma Radio, Jewish World Radio, and Bhajan Kiirtan, to name just a few) and the global reach of digital and satellite broadcasting illustrate America's vibrant religious pluralism and its diversifying media universe in the twenty-first century, providing ample opportunities for further study of religious radio and its audiences.

Interpretive Theories

The earliest religious broadcasters were thrilled with the mathematical possibilities of reaching vast audiences far larger than could be assembled to hear a traditional evangelist. Many believed that radio was an essential missionary tool for reaching the unchurched. The first studies of religious radio in the 1930s and 1940s noted that listeners often crossed denominational boundaries in their listening habits. Yet for the most part, religious broadcasting provided emotional and spiritual reinforcement for believers, who proved to be the most reliable contributors to paid radio ministries. Sociologists and statisticians who studied early religious radio feared that unscrupulous or hatemongering radio demagogues could dupe a credulous audience or victimize listeners with pleas for donations. These media scholars were concerned with ideology, cultural authority, and power (frequently mentioning, for example, the panic that ensued after the 1938 Mercury Theater "War of the Worlds" broadcast as a cautionary tale about the potential for radio to lead the public astray).

Often an undercurrent of disdain ran through such early studies for the lower-class, less-educated, and female listeners who made up religious radio's largest audience. Religious radio is a highly gendered cultural space—the great majority of its listeners are and have been female, yet few women found themselves on the other side of the microphone. Religious radio has been seen as part of "lowbrow" culture and along with soap operas and romance novels was often dismissed or overlooked as unworthy of serious academic study—or was assumed to be on its way out, given the prevailing academic theories about the supposedly inevitable secularization of modern culture.

That began to change after the 1980s, when televangelism's impact on American culture made the study of religious broadcasting more urgent, and the rise of the religious right

cast doubt on secularization theories. Media scholars often refer back to the influential ideas of Marshall McLuhan (1911–1980), who noted that media broadcasting radically reoriented the way that people perceive and make meaning, including religious meaning. When media and cultural historians applied audience-reception theories and ideas about postmodern identity construction to the study of religious broadcasting, they often found that listeners do not simply “receive” religious messages by radio, they “negotiate” meanings and craft “mediated selves” in ways that defy simple explanation. Many religious fundamentalists, for example, resist and oppose modernism, yet seem utterly at ease in using modern mass media in sophisticated ways.

Contemporary scholars of religious broadcasting, many influenced by cultural studies and historians of “lived religion,” note that the media age has conditioned the practice and meaning of religion in modern times, and that it makes little sense to try to separate “media” and “religion” into separate realms. Media’s ubiquity and pervasiveness have created a modern commercialized mass culture in which religious broadcasters participate but in which they also offer countercultural messages that seek to transcend the material and the mundane. Mediated religious messages offer meaning and narrative structure for believers and potential believers, as well as construct cultural boundaries between believers and “the world.” Scholars continue to debate whether the practice of religious media consumption is deliberative and rational, or playful and fluid. They also debate the degree to which media destabilizes fixed linguistic truths, and the role of religion in the process of fixing, or reassigning, meaning through religious discourse. Radio remains an important part of the ever-widening media landscape in which religious messages can be communicated, reinterpreted, and experienced in the modern world.

See also *Celebrity Culture*; *The Electronic Church*; *Evangelicals: Twentieth Century*; *Fundamentalism*; *Internet*; *Journalism*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Music: Contemporary Christian*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture*; *Populism*; *Preaching*; *Religious Press*; *Religious Right*; *Revivalism: Twentieth Century to the Present*; *Television*.

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Reform Judaism

See *Judaism: Reform*

Reformed Denominational Family

The Reformed wing of the Protestant Reformation yielded two main branches. The first branch, Presbyterianism, together with Congregationalism, the English-speaking expressions of Reformed Protestantism, have dominated the heirs of John Calvin in the United States thanks to language, the success of English colonial developments in North America, and Britain’s emergence as an empire—and all despite American independence during the last half of the eighteenth century. The other branch of denominational Calvinism, the Reformed churches—reformed being synonymous with presbyterian—designated the Calvinist churches on the European continent. Although Reformed Protestants, on the heels of French or Dutch colonial ambitions, came to North America before Presbyterians, Britain’s success as a colonial power ensured that the United States would be friendlier toward English-speaking churches than toward other European expressions. The Presbyterian churches of the United States would then be the Calvinist representatives in the American Protestant mainstream, and the so-called ethnic Reformed communions would have to

adapt to that Anglo-American mainstream. Presbyterians did not develop formal church structures until the first presbytery was founded in Philadelphia in 1706.

Presbyterians had a later start than the Dutch Reformed churches, which were part of the ecclesiastical establishment in the colony of New Holland (New York and New Jersey). In fact, after the Presbyterian churches, the Dutch Reformed would be the second-most influential branch of Calvinism in the United States because of their age and location. The first Dutch Reformed congregation was established in 1628 in New York City, and the surrounding areas of New York along the Hudson River and northern New Jersey towns were the centers of Dutch Calvinist strength throughout the colonial period. These churches remained generally uniform in their Dutch identity and piety, even after the English gained control of New York. Part of the explanation for this uniformity was a dependence on the mother church in the Old World. Unlike American Presbyterianism, which emerged in 1706 with no formal ties or dependence on the Church of Scotland, the Dutch Reformed would not gain independence from the Netherlands Reformed Church until 1792 with the founding of the Reformed Church in America.

Because British Presbyterianism and Dutch Reformed were the oldest and most influential Reformed bodies in the British colonies, other Reformed groups migrating to North America would have to reckon with the oldest Reformed Protestants. Like other immigrants, these “ethnic” Reformed churches would endeavor to retain their own ways and traditions. But also like other immigrants, their experience of assimilation would involve adjusting to the cultural and religious institutions that preceded them. What made this adjustment particularly tricky, especially after the formation of the United States, was a triangulated process of accommodation between not simply the host culture (of largely English laws, customs, and language) but also a voluntary pattern of church life markedly different from the state-church system that prevailed in Europe. The new cultural, political, and religious environments would often make the ethnic Reformed churches dependent on the older Presbyterian and Dutch churches for leadership and encouragement.

The Huguenots and Colonial Migration before English Hegemony

The Huguenots, or French Reformed, were actually the first Reformed expression to arrive in the New World. Among the

most vigorous and oldest of Reformed churches outside Switzerland, the French Reformed grew rapidly between 1540 and 1560 despite political opposition. John Calvin and Theodore Beza offered pastoral and theological advice to French church leaders. Because of efforts to stamp out the Protestant churches in France between 1562 and 1598, the Huguenots went into exile—but slowly at first. The Edict of Nantes (1598) granted Protestants civil liberties in France, but over the course of the seventeenth century French officials gradually took these freedoms away, prompting many Huguenots to migrate to places such as Prussia, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the British Isles, and North America. With the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, some 20 percent of the two million Huguenots left France in search of another home.

As early as 1562 during one of the first relocations by the French Reformed, Jean de Ribault led a group of thirty families to settle in Port Royal (near present-day Beaufort, South Carolina). After Ribault was pressed to return to France to assist the Protestant cause, the New World colony dissolved. Two years later another French Reformed migration, led by René de Laudonnière, arrived in the same locale, where it founded Fort Caroline. But within a year Spanish colonists had destroyed the Huguenot colony. Only thirty survived to return to France.

After these colonizing efforts the French Reformed migrated to North America mainly as families or in small groups. Many were drawn to South Carolina, but large numbers also settled through the rest of the British colonies. They typically assimilated quickly and found church homes among the Presbyterians, Dutch Reformed, and Anglican parishes. Their assimilation into colonial British society and other Protestant communions continues to baffle historians, but undoubtedly the rivalry throughout the eighteenth century between England and France in the New World, as well as the association in many British Protestants’ minds of France with Roman Catholicism—Québec being the French Catholics’ own “city on a hill”—encouraged the Huguenots to hold onto their ethnic identity loosely. Although by 1706 the Huguenots in America had become Anglican, one congregation in Charleston, South Carolina, continued the French Reformed heritage, and even into the early twenty-first century it maintained an eighteenth-century French liturgy.

The German Reformed and Reckoning with British Protestantism

The German Reformed churches took root in Nassau, Bremen, and Hesse, but the city of Heidelberg in the

Palatinate was the center of this branch of Reformed Protestantism. Unlike the Huguenots, the German Reformed found a sympathetic and successful political patron, Frederick III, who made possible the establishment of Reformed churches among Germans. He hired two young Reformed theologians, Zacharias Ursinus and Casper Olevianus, for his university in Heidelberg, and they set down the Heidelberg Catechism, which would become the creedal standard for the German Reformed in America (and the catechism of the Dutch Reformed). After Frederick's death in 1576 his successor, Ludwig VI, expelled the Reformed pastors and professors in his territory and replaced them with Lutherans. But seven years later Ludwig's brother, Johann Casimir, restored the Reformed churches in Heidelberg, where they would remain until the Thirty Years' War.

Arrival in the British Colonies

The German Reformed began to migrate to the British colonies in North America in the seventeenth century, and that migration peaked in the mid-eighteenth century. The reasons ranged from economic to political, with the obvious implications for faith and practice in a state-church system. Although they could be found in other colonies, the German Reformed clustered in the middle colonies such as Maryland and Pennsylvania, where the policies of religious toleration made room for most Protestants. Religious freedom did not, however, include religious leadership. Initially the German Reformed depended on lay leaders for pastoral oversight. John Philip Boehm, a schoolmaster in Maryland, almost single-handedly organized the first German Reformed congregations. When he began to administer the sacraments, some objected to his nonordained status. The German Reformed then appealed to the Dutch Reformed churches to ordain Boehm, a request that received a favorable response and prompted Dutch ministers in New York in 1729 to ordain the German Reformed leader.

This cordial relationship between the Dutch and the Germans received additional encouragement through the determination of the Dutch Reformed churches to provide oversight to the German Reformed. At the time, the Dutch Reformed churches in North America were still part of the Classis of Amsterdam, which also gave the churches in the Netherlands authority over the New World German Reformed. As part of this relationship, in 1746 the Dutch sent an energetic Swiss-born and Netherlands-trained pastor, Michael Schlatter, to assist the German Reformed in Pennsylvania. Within a year he had toured all the churches,

distributed Bibles and literature, determined the procedures for membership, and organized several congregations. By 1747 Schlatter had organized the first German Reformed coetus (convention), which consisted of four pastors. Schlatter's own charge in Germantown, Pennsylvania, was the center of German Reformed church life.

Schlatter would remain in North America until 1751, when he returned to Europe. From his homeland he recruited and sent additional pastors to work among the German Reformed in the British colonies. Even so, these churches continued to lack adequate pastoral oversight and lost some of the pastors they did call to pietistic Protestant groups such as the Moravians and the United Brethren. The German Reformed tried to hold out for Reformed teaching and church polity against the broad-church movements of British and American revivalism sweeping the colonial scene during the first Great Awakening. By 1793 the German Reformed were strong enough to form their own synod and adopt a constitution, thereby establishing independence from the Dutch Reformed. But the lack of pastors and transient nature of colonial church life meant that the German Reformed communion lacked institutional, theological, and liturgical coherence. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was a dispersed group of congregations and pastors often bound more by language than the norms of Reformed Protestantism. Linguistic ties explain the German Reformed's cooperation with Lutherans in 1787 to establish Franklin College (later Franklin and Marshall College) in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

German Reformed Synod and Mercersburg Theology

Even so, over the course of the first half of the nineteenth century the German Reformed began to formalize and institutionalize as a separate expression of Reformed Protestantism. In 1819 the synod organized regional classes to oversee the growth of the church in the Northwest Territory. One of these, the Classis of Ohio, evolved into a second synod that would oversee the training and ordination of ministers in the West. In 1825 the German Reformed also established in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, their first seminary to help with the training of pastors. But anti-seminary sentiments within the church revealed again the lack of cohesion within the communion at large. Some German Reformed followed the lead of John Winebrenner in Harrisburg, who established his own school and trained pastors in tune with the "new measures" of Charles Finney and the Second Great

Awakening. Others formed a separate body, the Free Synod, to harness ministers trained by L. F. Herman but who were unacceptable to the German Reformed Synod. Despite these fissiparous tendencies among the German Reformed, the denomination persisted with the building blocks of a distinct communion. In 1827, for example, the German Reformed started a denominational magazine, *The Weekly Messenger*, which became a source of information, devotional inspiration, and even denominational identity.

The call of two gifted, prolific, and also controversial professors to the German Reformed seminary, which had moved in 1835 from the original site in Carlisle to Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, added to the growing stability of the church, whether intentionally by creating a consensus among those trained at the seminary or unintentionally by giving unity to those who opposed the seminary and the teaching of its faculty. In 1840 John Williamson Nevin assumed the primary responsibilities for instruction and administration at the seminary. Four years later the seminary's trustees approved the call of Philip Schaff from Germany to assist Nevin at Mercersburg. Together, the Mercersburg theologians offered an interpretation of Reformed Protestantism that was distinct from both the revivalism of the mainstream evangelical world and the low-church orientation of mainstream Calvinists in the Presbyterian and Congregationalist churches. Along the way, they attempted to establish a churchly, sacramental, and ecumenical version of Protestantism that was deeply informed by theological and philosophical developments in nineteenth-century Germany.

For the better part of two decades the Mercersburg theology sustained controversy among the German Reformed. But critics railed from the seminary's geographical flanks, both in Philadelphia among the oldest congregations and in Ohio. The chief criticism was that Mercersburg represented a Romanizing tendency that blurred the difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. But Schaff and particularly Nevin were attempting to recognize another difference—one between an older churchly Protestantism and its modern-day successor, which freed the converted individual believer for a life of striving more or less independent of the church and its sacramental ministry. These differences became especially apparent during the 1850s and 1860s while the German Reformed were attempting to create a common liturgy. Not even the celebration of the tercentenary of the Heidelberg Catechism or the formation in 1863 of a general synod designed to unite the regional synods of Pennsylvania and Ohio could quell the controversy. Not until the General

Synod of 1878 established a peace commission did antagonisms begin to subside. In 1881 the commission's recommendations received hearty approval, and the German Reformed Church entered a period of institutional unity and common purpose that this wing of Reformed Protestantism had seldom experienced in North America.

The Reformed Church in the United States

The advent of internal consensus was propitious for the German Reformed, who over the course of the nineteenth century had adopted the formal name the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS). The dominant trend after the Civil War among American Protestant denominations of British descent was toward interdenominational cooperation and ecumenism. The culmination of this development was the founding in 1908 of the Federal Council of Churches, the first major institutional endeavor to give shape to a growing sense of the need for American Protestants to cooperate both for the sake of Christian unity and to preserve a Christian society in the United States. The liturgical sensibility of the Mercersburg Theology, combined with the influence of Philip Schaff, who moved later in his career to New York City to teach at Union Seminary, at the time a Presbyterian institution, well positioned the RCUS to participate in the wider ecumenical world of American Protestantism. Not only did the German Reformed send delegates to the Federal Council from the beginning of the ecumenical endeavor, but the denomination also sought to align with like-minded denominations by establishing organic ties.

In 1934 the RCUS merged with the Evangelical Synod of North America to become the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The Evangelical Synod was another denomination of German heritage, transplanted to America in 1840, that embodied in the New World the merger of Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia. The synod was famous among American Protestants for nurturing the Niebuhr brothers, Reinhold and H. Richard. The assimilation of the German Reformed heritage to the ways of American Protestantism became complete in 1957 when the United Church of Christ, the denomination of New England's Congregationalist tradition, absorbed the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Ironically, the German Reformed, the tradition that had sustained the most vigorous critique of Puritanism and its revivalist descendants through Nevin's arguments, was now part of the very Protestant tradition it had critiqued thanks to the overriding sense of Protestant

cooperation supporting the American way of life during the Cold War.

Part of the RCUS, however, decided not to enter the American Protestant mainstream. In 1911 the RCUS had organized a new jurisdiction in the Dakotas and Iowa called the Eureka Classis. This development was part of an effort to retain within the denomination conservative congregations who were not entirely satisfied with the theological trends among the German Reformed. The congregations that belonged to the Eureka Classis had drawn heavily on the theology of Hermann F. Kohlbruegge, a Dutch Reformed theologian in the Netherlands who had stressed divine sovereignty and downplayed the human element in salvation. By the 1930s the conservatism of Eureka had not subsided. It refused to join the RCUS in merging with the Evangelical Synod of North America, and four years later, in 1938, Eureka asserted its right to be the legitimate successor to the RCUS and to retain the name. In 1939 the Eureka Classis renounced all efforts by their former church members to discipline their independence. Since then, this part of the old German Reformed church has kept the name, RCUS, though "Eureka Classis" has often been added to avoid confusion.

Although those who refused to enter the Evangelical and Reformed Church did so as part of the conservative reaction (sometimes called fundamentalism) against liberal theology in American Protestantism, the persistence of groups such as the RCUS also revealed tensions within the Protestant ecumenical project. Nevin, for example, had asserted a high view of the church and its sacramental ministry that allowed him to see affinities among Reformed Protestantism, Lutheranism, and even Roman Catholicism. And yet the outlook of most of the Anglo-American denominations that cooperated within the American ecumenical circles was not high-church; it was decidedly pragmatic and provided one of the chief motives for the social reform and political activism known as the Social Gospel. For those Protestants who wanted to take seriously either the sacredness of the Christian ministry or the integrity of particular Christian traditions, the American Protestant ecumenical project left much to be desired.

The Hungarian Reformed and Twentieth-Century Protestantism

The Reformation in Hungary is part of the story of the birth of Protestantism that is rarely known, but reveals the breadth and diversity of the influence of Reformed Protestantism. The rise of the Reformed churches in

Hungary followed the pattern elsewhere in Europe—a combination of new ideas and literature to explain them, gifted pastors, and political intrigue. After the initial success during the 1540s and 1550s, political circumstances contributed to the persecution and exile of the Hungarian Reformed. Those who remained in the country did so as a remnant and subject to various forms of repression—sometimes facing prison and being sold into slavery. Only in the eighteenth century with the spread of Enlightenment ideals did a policy of toleration arise that permitted the Hungarian Reformed to assume a legitimate presence.

Religious toleration did not mean, however, that Protestants in Hungary faced no other obstacles. Although Hungarians did not migrate to North America during the colonial or early national eras, they did come to the United States in significant numbers between 1850 and 1920 because of the political disruptions that affected all parts of Europe, from democratic revolutions to world war. During this wave of migration the first Hungarian Reformed churches were planted in America. Until the early twentieth century the Hungarian Reformed presence was local and sporadic. In 1890 the congregations established in Pittsburgh and Cleveland initially sought the assistance and supervision of the German Reformed (RCUS). But other congregations of Hungarian Reformed descent affiliated with the mainline Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA). In 1904 many of the Hungarian Reformed congregations in America established a separate identity from both the Presbyterians and the German Reformed by forming an American classis under the supervision of the Hungarian Reformed Church in the Old World. But World War I upended this relationship and prompted the Hungarian Reformed in America to relinquish ties to Hungary and seek a partnership with an American church. The PCUSA drew the most sustained attention, but efforts to work out an association failed because of the Hungarians' desire to retain their ethnic Reformed identity.

The upshot of these efforts to establish a Hungarian Reformed church in America led to the Tiffin Agreement of 1921. This plan brought the eastern and western classes of the Hungarian Reformed Church into the RCUS as separate jurisdictions within existing German Reformed synods. The Tiffin Agreement also gave the Hungarian Reformed the rights, privileges, and sanctions of the RCUS, while allowing property to remain in possession of the existing Hungarian congregations and allowing the Hungarian Reformed churches to retain their native tongue in worship

and education. Meanwhile, the RCUS generously assumed responsibility for ministerial salaries that were in arrears at the time of the agreement. The hope was that over time the Hungarians would assimilate to America and to the RCUS, thereby giving up their language and Old World attachments. Although this plan gave the Hungarian Reformed a home and an American Protestant patron, it also was the source of frustration on both sides. For example, the board of home missions of the RCUS, which continued to support some of the Hungarian Reformed congregations financially, increasingly found the commitment to be a burden, especially during the Great Depression. Assimilation to the German Reformed patterns and ethos also was not as thoroughgoing as the designers of the Tiffin Agreement had hoped.

By the time of the 1934 merger that created the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the Hungarian churches within the RCUS had requested the formation of a nongeographical synod to preserve Hungarian language, customs, and church heritage. After five years of negotiation, in 1939 the Magyar Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church came into existence. Over the next twenty years the Hungarian presence in the Evangelical and Reformed Church considered other denominational options to achieve an entirely Hungarian church. But these efforts failed, and the Hungarian Reformed were still part of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1957 when it became part of the United Church of Christ (UCC). Polity differences between Reformed and Congregationalists led to the creation of the Calvin Synod as an acting nongeographically defined (formerly Hungarian Reformed) conference within the UCC.

The desire to preserve Hungarian identity and church practices also was evident outside of the Hungarian Reformed congregations that became part of the RCUS. As many as six congregations refused to sign the Tiffin Agreement of 1921, and by 1924 these churches had formed the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America. Endre Sebestyan, pastor of the church in Duquesne, Pennsylvania, was the leader of this effort to preserve a separate Hungarian Reformed denomination in America. This denomination's congregations extended from New Jersey and New York to western Pennsylvania and Ohio. In 1958 the church dropped the word *Free* from its name and adopted the cause of uniting all Hungarian Reformed into a separate denomination. This effort failed to attract those Hungarians who had first joined the RCUS and remained to merge with the United Church of Christ. But the aim of preserving a separate Hungarian Reformed Church did not.

Conclusion

The experience of the French, German, and Hungarian Reformed in the United States illustrates one of the central ironies of American Protestantism. As propitious as religious freedom was for a variety of Protestant traditions in a nation dedicated to political liberty, maintaining a particular religious expression proved to be remarkably difficult without the patronage of the state. Unless an Old World Protestant tradition possessed a significant number of adherents or its leaders decided to huddle in a particular locale, the size of the United States, the influence of English customs and norms, and the ability to affiliate with another church (or no church at all) meant that immigrants from one tradition could easily wind up in another communion. The effort to perpetuate one of the European Reformed churches in a manner that resembled its Old World order and practice was therefore extremely difficult. Consequently, the Reformed churches, as distinct from either the Anglo-American Presbyterians or the Dutch-American Reformed, would have to reckon with both the norms of American civil society and invariably the assistance of one of the older American Presbyterian or Reformed communions. The lesson learned was that although religious freedom in the United States promised the possibility of Protestant diversity that encompassed the vitality of older European churches, the American experiment was capable of sustaining only those Presbyterian and Reformed communions that possessed the resources to cope with the demands of a voluntary church.

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family; Antinomian Controversy; Architecture: Protestant, from the Nineteenth Century to the Present; Bible: Interpretation of; Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage; Congregationalists; Dutch Reformed; Education: Colleges and Universities; Ethnicity; Great Awakening(s); Neo-Orthodoxy; Pilgrims; Preaching; Presbyterians* entries; *Puritans; Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant; Worship: Protestant.*

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Reformed Protestant Religious Thought

See *Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*

Religion, Regulation of

The United States prides itself in separating church and state. This basic principle is intended, at least in part, to free religious institutions from government regulation, but the nation nevertheless regulates religion in many different ways, even though regulation runs counter to Americans' abiding penchant for freedom.

Separating church and state was a noble experiment in the founding era and remains so today. The experiment was undertaken in the hope that America would escape the religious wars that had characterized the Christian West since the emperor Theodosius made Christianity the Roman Empire's official religion in 380 CE. The American idea that all human beings are entitled to religious liberty was a by-product of the founders' belief in human dignity. For most of history, political orders had tended to be monarchical, even totalitarian, believing a common religion to be the foundation of a stable society. Enforcement of religious uniformity became commonplace, but it often led to religious intolerance, persecution, inquisitions, and religious wars. The founders sought to alter the course of history by ushering in a new era of religious freedom. Moreover, the American experiment with achieving religious freedom by separating church and state was intended to end the scrupulous regulation of religion that had seemed to suffocate religion everywhere. If America was to be anything, it was to be free in the sense of granting its people unregulated religious belief and activity.

That said, the goal of fully realizing this noble aim of unregulated religion has proven to be elusive. Even though the United States enjoys an unprecedented amount of religious freedom, it has learned through experience that some degree of regulation is not only prudent but also necessary. Indeed, for several reasons the regulation of religion in America is on the rise. First, the phenomenal growth of religious diversity has led to increased regulation. In 1800 fewer than forty identifiable religious groups were in America. By contrast, by the beginning of the twenty-first century more than fifteen hundred identifiable religious groups were claiming to possess the truth on religious matters. If the constitutionally mandated framework of religious freedom can make any claim whatsoever, it is that it gave official sanction to a phenomenal growth in religious diversity. Even Benjamin Franklin, who at the Constitutional Convention remarked, "Finally, we're going to turn religion loose," could never have anticipated the growth of religion in so many directions.

A second reason for the growth of the regulation of religion is the growth of America as a liberal state. As the population expands, the government finds it increasingly necessary to regulate various sectors of American society, including business organizations, banking institutions, the health care industry, energy companies, nonprofit organizations, and many more. In turn, as government interests envelop more and more areas of life, it is inevitable that religious institutions experience increased regulation. As New Religious Movements (NRMs) scholar Jim Richardson has noted, the tendency toward expansion of the liberal state is exacerbated by the willingness of many religious groups to accept state benefits, thereby subjecting themselves to invasive monitoring by the state.

A third reason for the increased regulation of religion is the felt need of government to protect its citizens from dangerous, unwarranted, or abusive practices. Religious belief affects marriage practice, illness and disease, child care, education, taxation, dietary practices, sexual practices, worship activities, political beliefs, and a host of other sectors of life. Because government has a duty to protect its citizens from practices that threaten life and health, controversial religious practices are subjected to greater scrutiny.

Finally, religion is being increasingly regulated because of the shifting role and expressions, and perhaps even the decline, of religion in America. Although the United States remains the most religious of the Western industrialized nations, the forces of secularization and modernization are

taking a toll on the nation's religious foundations. In such a climate, religion loses respect, and many people are inclined to develop critical, even hostile, attitudes toward religious people and institutions. As religion becomes less sacrosanct and less a part of the nation's superstructure, many government officials are more willing to control, monitor, and regulate religion.

The Reality of Regulation

Is increased regulation of religion healthy for society and for those religious interests that are affected? The U.S. Constitution protects the free exercise of religion, but unlimited unregulated religious belief and practice are impossible. It is not feasible, for example, for the state to protect child sacrifice and body immolation in the name of religion, and the Supreme Court so held in *Reynolds v. United States* (1878). It is a matter of drawing a line between those practices that will remain free and those that must be controlled or proscribed. In 1970 in *Walz v. Tax Commission*, the Supreme Court noted that the relationship between religion and government must be one of "benevolent neutrality." In other words, the U.S. government, though secular in purpose, cannot be hostile to religion, but must be generally sympathetic to religious faith. Determination of the precise parameters of government regulation of religion has not been easy. Therefore, this task has usually been left to the courts.

Judicial Regulation of Religious Practice

Religious practice was first regulated by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1878 case of *Reynolds v. United States*. In the face of the Grant administration's efforts to stamp out Mormon polygamy, the Court considered the argument of George Reynolds, a personal secretary to Mormon leader Brigham Young, that his practice of polygamy was a religious duty sanctioned by the Bible. Reynolds argued further that polygamy was supportive of mainstream American values and did not threaten the nation's social fabric. The Court held that the government could use the federal anti-bigamy statute at issue to punish criminal activity regardless of religious belief. In essence, then, the Court held that although religious *beliefs* are not subject to government regulation, religious *practices* that impair the public interest are not constitutionally protected.

Other religious practices have been proscribed under the same kind of protected belief-unprotected action dichotomy. For example, an Oklahoma court convicted a spiritualist fortune-teller in 1922 for her commercial activities, even

though she believed in God and claimed to be merely practicing her religion. Likewise, an air force officer's right to wear a yarmulke (Jewish ritual head covering) while on duty was proscribed in *Goldman v. Weinberger* (1986), although Congress subsequently passed legislation to permit the practice. In *United States v. Bauer* (1966), Rastafarians challenged convictions for conspiracy to manufacture and distribute marijuana, arguing that such activity was a central tenet of their religious faith. The Ninth Circuit affirmed the convictions, holding that "the religious freedom of the defendants was not invaded" because "nothing . . . suggests that Rastafarianism would require this conduct." Again, the defendants' beliefs were protected, but their activities were not.

In *Sherbert v. Verner* (1963) the Supreme Court, held that South Carolina's denial of unemployment benefits to Sherbert, who had lost her job because of her refusal to work on Saturday, her day of worship, was an unconstitutional restriction on her free exercise rights. This case is notable for broadening free exercise claims (beyond the obscure belief-action test) and establishing the precedent that a state must show a *compelling state interest* to justify infringing on religious rights, and that its method of enforcement of that interest must be the *least restrictive means* available. But then in 1990 Supreme Court jurisprudence underwent a major shift. In *Employment Division v. Smith* the Court abandoned the *compelling state interest test* for a rule of *neutral applicability*. In doing so, it upheld a law prohibiting the granting of unemployment benefits to employees fired for drug use, even when associated with religious worship, because the legislature had intended to apply the statute neutrally to all citizens, religious or not. Many were critical of the *Smith* decision because it seemed to require one to choose between following the law or following one's deeply held religious convictions. Congress responded by reinstating the *compelling state interest test* in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993, but that act was later found unconstitutional in *Boerne v. Flores* (1997), thereby leaving in place the *neutral applicability test*.

Challenges to religious exemptions from labor laws have resulted in several cases that have defined the relationship between labor laws and religion. In *National Labor Relations Board v. Catholic Bishop of Chicago* (1979) the Court ruled that a religious school was not subject to the National Labor Relations Act. In 1972 Congress amended Section 702 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to allow religious organizations to discriminate in employment on the basis of religion. Subsequent decisions in *Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission* (1980) and

Alamo Foundation v. Secretary of Labor (1985) determined that religious exemptions from labor laws do not apply to non-ministerial employees or employees engaged in commercial employment. In *Church of Latter-Day Saints v. Amos* (1987) the Court upheld the dismissal of a non-Mormon employee working in a Mormon-owned gym. The employee argued that his faith was irrelevant to his service as a building engineer, but the Court held that the gym could discriminate on religious grounds.

Do tax exemptions for churches represent an unconstitutional establishment of religion? In *Walz v. Tax Commission* (1970) the Supreme Court upheld New York City's policy of allowing property tax exemptions for churches, finding that the policy was not an unlawful establishment of religion because it applied broadly to charitable institutions. Nevertheless, tax policy has occasionally clashed with religious liberty claims. In *Murdock v. Pennsylvania*, decided in 1943, the Court held that states could not condition the distribution of religious literature on the payment of a licensing fee. In *Bob Jones University v. United States* (1983) the Court upheld an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) policy disallowing tax exemptions for any religious organization that practiced racial discrimination. And then in *Jimmy Swaggart Ministries v. Board of Equalization of California* (1990) the Court ruled that requiring religious organizations to collect sales tax on the sale of religious literature did not violate free exercise because the tax was of *general applicability* and only an incidental burden on religion.

Disputes between competing Christian sects or congregations were at issue in *Watson v. Jones* (1872), and the Court declared that the federal government has no power to intervene. Justice Samuel F. Miller, writing for the Court, stated emphatically, "The law knows no heresy, and is committed to the support of no dogma, the establishment of no sect." Subsequent cases, however, qualified this rule by holding that courts can intervene if religious doctrine is not involved and the dispute can be settled by the application of neutral principles of law.

Government-supported religious traditions have given rise to numerous legal challenges. In *Marsh v. Chambers* (1983) the Court approved state funding of legislative chaplains on the basis of a long-established American tradition. In *Lynch v. Donnelly* (1984) the Court allowed a city to sponsor a nativity scene, accompanied by secular symbols of Christmas. Patently religious symbols, however, standing alone or not muted by secular symbols, have been held to violate the establishment clause of the Constitution, such as in *Allegheny*

v. Pittsburgh ACLU (1989), in which a stand-alone Christian crèche scene was prohibited.

Regulation of Serpent Handling

Serpent handling has also come under government regulation in many parts of America. Those who favor this practice are in a relatively small number of fundamentalist Pentecostal churches in the southeastern United States. Practitioners usually cite the Bible's Gospel of Mark to justify the practice: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17–18). Those who practice serpent handling typically believe in a strict and literal interpretation of the Bible. And many of the leaders of practicing churches have been bitten numerous times. George Hensley, by many accounts the founder of modern serpent handling, died from a snakebite in 1955. In 1998 serpent-handling evangelist John Wayne "Punkin" Brown died after being bitten by a rattlesnake in rural Alabama, as did his wife three years earlier in Kentucky. Another serpent-handling pastor died in 2006 at a church in Kentucky.

In the 1940s six southern states—Kentucky, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, and Alabama—banned snake handling. Lawmakers justified the legislation on the theory that the First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion was superseded by the state's right to legislate in the interest of the general welfare and public safety. Because juries in Georgia were reluctant to convict snake handlers, its law was repealed in 1968. The practice also remains legal in the state of West Virginia. Despite these prohibitions, law enforcement officials typically ignore snake-handling activity until someone dies. Astonishingly, thousands of snake-handling believers have survived the bites of deadly snakes at church ceremonies. Indeed, fewer than one hundred deaths have been recorded in U.S. history. The deaths that have occurred have usually been ascribed to lack of faith on the part of the person who died. Snake handling in the United States, while always controversial, remains an active but mostly ignored practice because of the nation's historic commitment to religious freedom.

Regulation of Education

The regulation of religion frequently arises in the context of education. In *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943) the Supreme Court upheld the right of Jehovah's

Witnesses to abstain from a flag pledge, and it warned against the use of governmental means to coerce religious and ideological unanimity. In *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, decided in 1972, the high court upheld the right of an Amish family to withdraw their child from school after the eighth grade to avoid worldly influences. In *Widmar v. Vincent* (1981) the Court ruled that a public university could not bar religious groups from meeting in buildings where the school allowed nonreligious groups to meet. And in *Rosenberger v. University of Virginia* (1995) the justices determined that a public university could not withhold funding from a Christian-oriented student newspaper when the school also funded similar religious publications.

In 1968 the Supreme Court considered how it might regulate the funding of religious education. In *Board of Education v. Allen*, the Court ruled that the loan of secular texts to private religious schools did not establish religion. More direct aid to private religious schools was first rejected in 1971, in *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, in which it was held that state funding of secular instruction in private religious schools was an unconstitutional establishment of religion. In 1973 in *Committee for Public Education and Religious Liberty v. Nyquist*, the Court struck down, as unconstitutionally advancing religion, New York's program that provided grants to religious schools that served low-income families, tuition reimbursement to low-income parents with children in nonpublic schools, and tax deductions to middle-income parents with children in nonpublic schools. In *Mueller v. Allen* (1983) the Court upheld Minnesota's policy of providing a tax deduction to parents with children attending any school, private or public. In *Tilton v. Richardson* (1971) the justices allowed funding under Title I of the Higher Education and Facilities Act of 1963 for financing buildings on the campuses of church-related colleges and universities, but only if the buildings were used for nonreligious purposes.

Several disputes over religious exercises in public education have ended up in federal courts. In *McCollum v. Board of Education* (1948) the Court ruled that public schools could not allow religious instruction during the school day, even though participation was voluntary and the instruction was given by local religious leaders who were not paid from public funds. The ruling in *Zorach v. Clauson* (1952), however, clarified the limits of *McCollum*, holding that public schools could release students early to attend religious instruction off-campus. In a controversial ruling in 1962, *Engel v. Vitale*, the high court held that student recitation of a government-written prayer was unconstitutional, noting that a showing of

compulsion to participate in a practice was not required to reach an establishment prohibition. The Court's ruling in *Abington v. Schempp* (1963) prohibited both the daily recitation of the Lord's Prayer and the reading of ten Bible verses, allowing, however, the study of religious documents in an academic, nondevotional manner as literature or comparative religious history. In 1984 Congress approved the Equal Access Act, requiring that schools that provided a *limited open forum* in which student organizations could meet also allow student-initiated and student-led religious organizations to meet. The Supreme Court upheld the Equal Access Act in *Board of Education of the Westside Community Schools v. Mergens* (1990).

Regulation of Churches and Other Houses of Worship

Churches and other religious organizations operate in the United States with a great deal of autonomy. Unlike in many countries across the world, churches, temples, mosques, synagogues, and other houses of worship need not register with any government agency to have the right to operate, nor are they required to file regular reports detailing their operations. As religious bodies, they need not pay income or property taxes, and they need not apply for certification to obtain their tax-exempt status. They are required, however, to obey laws prohibiting fraud, theft, child abuse, negligence, and the like, just as other persons and entities are required to do. They even have the right to be full participants in the political process, a fundamental right that was affirmed by the Supreme Court in *Walz v. Tax Commission* (1970): "Adherents of particular faiths and individual churches frequently take strong positions on public issues, including, as this case reveals in several briefs amici, vigorous advocacy of legal and constitutional positions. Of course, churches as much as secular bodies and private citizens have that right."

Nevertheless, the right of religious bodies to engage in the political process as tax-exempt organizations has some basic qualifications. Exemption for organizations (including religious organizations) under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) is conditioned upon the following four factors: (1) the organization is organized and operated "exclusively" for nonprofit purposes; (2) no net earnings inure to the benefit of private parties; (3) no "substantial" part of the organization's activities are devoted to attempts to influence legislation; and (4) "participation" or "intervention" in political campaigns on behalf of candidates is prohibited. Failure to meet any of these requirements may result in the loss of an organization's tax exemption.

Although the first two of these requirements are frequently invoked by the Internal Revenue Service to deny an organization's exemption, they are not generally considered to be controversial as matters of federal tax policy. It is the last two requirements, commonly called the "lobbying" clause (enacted in 1934) and the "electioneering" clause (enacted in 1954), that limit the political activity of churches and other religious organizations. The lobbying clause is problematic. Although there is little clarity as to when an organization has jeopardized its tax exemption by engaging in "substantial" lobbying, the acceptable percentage of an organization's total expenditures spent on lobbying seems to fall somewhere between 5 percent and 20 percent. The electioneering clause, although it clearly means that religious organizations cannot endorse specific candidates, is vague and uncertain about when an organization has otherwise "participated" or "intervened" in a political campaign, an event that also triggers the loss of an organization's tax exemption. It is significant that the restriction on electioneering is absolute. Whereas some lobbying is permitted, no electioneering is permitted. The electioneering clause is, therefore, more sweeping and poses a greater risk to churches and other religious organizations.

Christian Echoes National Ministry, Inc. v. United States (1973) remains the principal litigated case in which a religious organization lost its tax-exempt status for engaging in political activity. Christian Echoes was the corporate structure for the radio, television, and publishing ministry of Oklahoma fundamentalist preacher Billy James Hargis. The stated mission of the organization was "a battle against communism, socialism and political liberalism, all of which are considered enemies of the Christian faith." Its activities included appeals to its listeners and readers to write their members of Congress to stop federal aid to education, socialized medicine, and public housing; withdraw from the United Nations; and abolish the federal income tax. In 1964 the Internal Revenue Service revoked the tax exemption of Christian Echoes alleging that (1) a "substantial" part of its activities consisted of producing propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation; and (2) it participated or intervened in political campaigns in behalf of candidates for public office. The federal circuit court held that the organization had in fact engaged in substantial and ongoing activities to influence legislation and that it had intervened in political campaigns. The Supreme Court declined to review the circuit court's ruling.

A total exclusion of entanglement between government and religion is impossible in the modern world. Under a

policy of granting tax exemptions to churches and other houses of worship, some oversight to determine entitlement to the exemption is required. For example, in *United States v. Dykema* (1981) the IRS sought to obtain certain records to determine the tax-exempt status of a church and the personal tax liability of its pastor. The pastor challenged the right of the government to examine *any* of the church's records. On appeal to the Seventh Circuit Court, it held that as an essential aspect of the government's duty to determine whether the church was entitled to a tax exemption, the government could freely examine minutes, memoranda, church bulletins, programs, publications, and financial books and records. The ruling does not seem unreasonable. If churches and other houses of worship are to be entitled to a tax exemption, the government should be entitled to reasonable access to their records to determine compliance with the requirements of exemption.

Congress's policy alternative to granting tax exemptions to churches is to tax churches. As the Supreme Court so clearly observed in *Walz*, however, eliminating tax exemptions (in *Walz* property tax exemptions were at issue) would only tend to expand the degree of involvement by government in religion "by giving rise to tax valuation of church property, tax liens, tax foreclosures, and the direct confrontations and conflicts that follow in the train of those legal processes." Because church-state separation is one of the aims of the Constitution, taxation of churches and other religious organizations seems illogical.

Clergy Malpractice

An area of increasing concern to clergy is the rise in the number of lawsuits filed by people who are dissatisfied with counseling received from clergy. Does the state have the right to mandate that counselors be licensed as counselors, as is required of secular counselors, or are clergy exempt under the First Amendment? *Nally v. Grace Community Church of the Valley* (1988) was among the first cases to allege "clergy malpractice." After a church counselee committed suicide, his parents alleged that the church counselors were incompetent and that their counsel contributed to their son's death. After numerous lengthy court battles, the case was finally dismissed on religious freedom grounds.

The Sanctuary Movement

Close monitoring of religious organizations is relatively rare in the United States. However, one event in the 1980s

seemed to defy this tradition. “Operation Sojourner” was the name given to surveillance efforts developed in the 1980s by the federal government to deal with the Sanctuary Movement, a religiously inspired effort among churchgoers in the southwestern United States, especially Arizona, to help refugees from political violence in Central America. Two undercover government agents, posing as devoted Christians interested in the movement, attended worship services in two Tucson churches. They also tape recorded conversations with churchgoers, tracked down the automobile license numbers of those they believed were involved in harboring refugees, and linked certain churchgoers with the refugees they were assisting. The government subsequently indicted sixteen church leaders and members on several felony charges, including smuggling, transporting, and harboring undocumented refugees. Several of those indicted were convicted, the court holding that there was no infringement of religious beliefs or moral dictates that outweighed the government’s compelling interest in enforcing criminal laws.

Regulation of Nonconventional Religions

The growing tendency of the government to monitor certain religious groups was clearly a consequence of the Jonestown, Guyana, mass murder-suicide event in November 1978. More than nine hundred members of Jim Jones’s Peoples’ Temple voluntarily poisoned themselves to fulfill a group suicide compact. In response to considerable political pressure, in 1979 the U.S. Congress conducted a special hearing on religious “cults.” Later, many states conducted similar hearings, and in New York a bill was introduced, though never enacted into law, to amend the state’s penal code to make “promoting a pseudo-religious cult” a felony. The United States has learned that periodic episodes like Jonestown are perhaps a major part of the price that it pays for religious freedom. To give to people the right to search out religious truths and to live in accordance with the conclusions they reach is to also give them the right to make mistakes—even serious ones that imperil other people’s lives. The price of freedom, as Supreme Court justice Robert H. Jackson put it in *United States v. Ballard* (1944), is that “we must put up with, and even pay for, a good deal of rubbish.”

A similar tragedy involved the Branch Davidians, whose compound outside of Waco, Texas, was raided by Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) forces in 1993. About 150 members of this fundamentalist Christian group, many of whose members had earlier ties to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, were living at the Waco compound. The group had

been under surveillance for several months before the raid, a fact known to the Davidians. Texas officials had been investigating the Davidians following complaints of child abuse, the marriage of underage girls to the group’s leader, David Koresh, and the stockpiling of illegal weapons. But evidence of these crimes was difficult to gather, which led federal officials to open an investigation. In a sixty-day siege initiated by at least one hundred armed ATF officers, some eighty-three Branch Davidians, including children, and at least four ATF officials, lost their lives. Local, state, and federal law enforcement officials were later criticized for waiting so long to take actions against the Waco Branch Davidians. Although some of this criticism was appropriate, these officials, acting in deference to the nation’s long-standing tradition of religious liberty, had attempted for years to be as accommodating as possible to a group whose lives they knew to be, above all else, centered around religious values.

More familiar religious groups such as the Christian Scientists have been subjected to numerous claims of child abuse, the result of spiritual healing beliefs and practices that usually call for the refusal of medical attention for sick children. Many children have died, followed by state charges of murder and manslaughter. Jehovah’s Witnesses, who believe the Bible proscribes blood transfusions, have also faced similar charges when blood transfusions were denied to their children and the result was death. Some states, in deference to religious freedom, have enacted statutes to protect parents from prosecution if their children die from lack of professional medical care, but these enactments typically do not lessen the public outrage when a defenseless child dies. When believing adults choose to refuse conventional medical attention, the courts have been inclined to protect such choices in the name of religious freedom.

The Bush Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

One of President George W. Bush’s (2001–2009) most controversial initiatives was his plan to provide government money for churches and other houses of worship that offer social services for needy Americans. Early in his administration the president said he knew religion could change lives because it had changed his. He thus wanted to harness the forces of faith to meet the social needs of others.

President Bush’s first step was to issue an executive order—thereby skirting congressional approval—to establish the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to coordinate the program. By executive order he also established

faith-based and community offices at eleven federal agencies. The president's plan earmarked between \$8 billion and \$10 billion to be spent on faith-based initiatives during his first year in office. Apparently, that much money was never spent in any single year of the Bush administration, but the more than 1,300 grants made to faith-based charities during the Bush years averaged more than \$2 billion a year—unprecedented government spending on religion in a nation that traditionally had avoided funding religious institutions in order to keep them free of government control.

Critics of the Bush plan often noted the way it was touted as a plan to end discrimination against religion generally and various religious groups specifically. Indeed, when the Bush plan was first announced in 2000, well-known evangelical leaders such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson voiced objections to the plan because it threatened “Christian America” by raising the possibility that groups such as Scientology, the Unification Church, and Wicca might receive government money. But this concern never materialized, because, according to one study in November 2006 reported by the *Boston Globe*, 98.3 percent of all Bush administration grants to faith-based agencies from the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives were awarded to Christian groups. The practice of excluding non-Christian groups was later confirmed by a former staffer in the office. David Kuo, in *Tempting Faith: An Inside Story of Political Seduction*, asserted that applications for federal faith-based funds were often rejected by reviewers solely because they came from non-Christian applicants.

Eventually, Bush's faith-based initiative spread to a host of state and local government agencies. By the end of the Bush term at least thirty-five governors and seventy mayors, both Democratic and Republican, had established programs modeled after the federal program. However, Congress had yet to pass legislation sanctioning or in any way adopting the Bush plan. Meanwhile, the Bush administration allowed faith-based groups to discriminate in their hiring practices, thereby violating the law that prohibited recipients of government money to discriminate on the basis of religion.

The Bush plan to embrace faith-based agencies in the network of government funding engendered considerable discussion, both positive and negative. Although many people were helped by the plan, it raised many questions. Would evasion of the principles of church-state separation come back to haunt the nation? Were there actually good reasons to deny government funding to faith-based groups? Would the Bush plan weaken the structure of the American

democratic order? These questions would be the subject of debate long after George W. Bush left the White House.

Conclusion

The United States, which has undertaken a bold experiment with the separation of church and state, has a broad tradition of autonomy for religious persons and institutions. But government regulation and monitoring of religion are on the rise, and it is not hard to anticipate an ever-growing pervasiveness of government in the religious life of Americans. Future generations of Americans will have to make difficult judgments about how much regulation of religion is good for the nation.

See also *America, Religious Interpretations of; American Revolution; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Constitution; Education: Court Cases; Establishment, Religious; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Faith-Based Initiatives; Freedom, Religious; Holidays; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; New Religious Movements; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Politics entries; Same-Gender Marriage; Serpent Handlers; Sunday and the Sabbath; Supreme Court; Theocracy.*

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Religious Prejudice

Religious prejudice is the belief that an individual's religion is superior to the religions of others; this belief frequently combines with the conviction that adherents of "inferior" religions constitute a threat. Enacted as speech or behavioral patterns, religious prejudice is manifest in legal codes, organizational policies, the management of social networks, legislative agendas, the enforcement of manners, and in other ways, including some Americans' attitudes toward non-Americans. In many cases it has led to violence. Broadly and profoundly in evidence throughout American religious history, religious prejudice has decreased, but not ceased, as a national dysfunction since the mid-twentieth century.

The Roots of American Religious Prejudice

The immediate roots of American religious prejudices are in the religious cultures of early modern Europe. Prejudice against Jews and Muslims was already deeply ingrained in Europeans by the early sixteenth century, and the consolidation of power in Rome during the Middle Ages had resulted in rhetorical and military campaigns against a great many religious movements that strayed from orthodoxy. Always present in the currents of European history, religious prejudice during the Reformation became ever more blatant with a burgeoning print culture, the urgent refashioning of politics, and the alteration of public worship and increasingly affected the everyday relations of one town with another. Europeans read religious affiliation as if it were a code for strong character, trustworthiness, integrity, loyalty, and a number of other desirable traits—or, conversely, as an indicator of corruption, impurity, and collaboration with evil. Religious prejudice among the English, on the eve of the colonization of North America, was threaded through all thinking about self and community. It was as much a part of the English experience of the world as the air one breathed.

The English Protestants who established colonies in New England and the Chesapeake Bay area carried to North America a habit of conceptually joining politics to religion. The men and women who built the towns of New England were fleeing harsh treatment in England for their religious views and took North America to be a refuge provided them by God for the advancement of a purified ("Puritan") Christianity. They also brought with them their own prejudices, especially against Catholics. English Catholics long had been the targets of abuse by Protestant writers in England, who identified Roman political interest with Catholic religious

practice. Anti-Catholic political screeds and sermons cast Catholics as deceitful, conspiratorial, treasonous, and morally crippled. Puritans moreover extended the range of such rhetoric by relating it to other Protestant organizations. The Church of England, in the eyes of Puritans, had lost its religious bearings and succumbed to the temptations of power, trading righteousness and uprightness for political machinations, abuse of authority, and poisonous collaborations with the secular aristocracy. Other groups, such as the Quakers, were considered dangerous not only for their drift from traditions of preaching and liturgy but for their boldness in spreading their own vision of religious community. Puritans, who were intensely purity-conscious and diligently guarded the boundaries of their communities of "elect" members (those who had experienced a conversion), resisted the efforts of non-Puritan groups to establish their own footholds in New England. For Puritans, religious impurity and political corruption were intertwined. Religious difference was also political difference. Accordingly, Puritans made the protection of religious homogeneity a high priority and brutally punished heterodoxy.

In the Virginia plantation areas, where settlement occurred largely to advance the exploration of natural resources and the development of commercial enterprises, there was less anxiety about communal purity. Nevertheless, anti-Catholic feelings were strong, obedience to Anglican authority was expected, and enforcement of laws regarding moral behavior (Sabbath rest, no blaspheming) was a priority of leaders such as Deputy Governor and Marshall Thomas Dale (1611–1616). Enacted in 1611, the "Lawes Divine, Morall, and Martial," otherwise known as "Dale's Code," was grounded in a presumption of the intertwining of religion with other aspects of life. As was the case in New England, religious prejudice emerged not only in cases of religious difference but in instances where political, commercial, and community behaviors deviated from the normative, as encoded in local statutes or expressed in local custom.

Religious Prejudice and Native Americans

Religious prejudice in its initial and most profound forms occurred in European encounters with Native Americans. Europeans engaged Indians first and foremost as non-Christians, often referring to them as "heathens." Spanish explorers strode onto beaches in the Americas together with Catholic clergy and planted there a flag and a cross. The religions of Native Americans were not recognized as such: Europeans literally did not see religion in the ideas and

practices of Indians. The political domination of Indians unfolded accordingly, on the presumption that a religionless people were uncivilized, and that the progress of global Christianity and the civilizing gift of disseminated Spanish culture should proceed apace. The papal bull *Inter Caetera* (1493) advocated a concerted Catholic campaign to depose the cultures of indigenes and to impose Christianity. It pressed on explorers, missionaries, and colonists a view that Indian rites and ideas were simply a part of a barbarian way of life that suffered as well for its ignorance, inhumanness, and overall immorality. It made religious conversion of indigenes a Christian responsibility coequal with the overthrow of all other aspects of the corrupt, profane, and inferior ways of Indian life. The application of such a view took many forms and was carried forward in the wake of numerous other official pronouncements from both religious leaders and secular authorities. One such pronouncement was the *Requerimiento* of 1510, a document that illustrated the far-reaching religious prejudice of Europeans. Read to Indians in a language they did not understand, it demanded that they accept the authority of the Pope, and promised them that they would be enslaved and punished if they did not. The French proceeded similarly in relations with Native Americans. Their religious prejudices were interwoven with contempt for Indian social behaviors, and they sought both the religious conversion of Indians and the wholesale reform of Indian cultures.

Like the Spanish and French, the English linked Native American religious inferiority to a broader cultural decrepitude among Indians. With westward expansion across the continent, EuroAmerican religious prejudice remained a critical aspect of encounter with Indians, and it was rarely dissociated from other elements of Indian cultures. Typically, Indian religious “superstitions” were blamed for keeping Indians culturally backward. In 1882, when Richard Henry Pratt, a military officer who articulated the position that the Indian must be made Christian in order to take up a place in American society, addressed an audience in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, he urged his audience to “[k]ill the Indian in him, and save the man.” It was Pratt’s widely shared belief that only by fully alienating Indians from their tribal “superstitions,” and immersing them in a Christian educational and social environment through forced acculturation, could they be transformed from savage to civilized.

Official Prejudice

Religious prejudice was embedded in early American legal culture through language employed in colonial charters and

local statutes. Codification was not merely a manifestation of religious prejudice. It set the tone for subsequent American thinking about religious difference. Official prejudice, set down in legal documents, was culturally powerful enough to shape attitudes about religious difference that continued well after ratification of the First Amendment guarantee of religious freedom. In the 1640s the Virginia Colony and the Massachusetts Bay Colony enacted laws excluding Catholic settlers. The colonial charter of Georgia (1732) officially withheld religious freedom from Catholics. “Dale’s Code” in colonial Virginia stipulated that the public pronouncement of religious ideas contrary to Anglican theology be punishable by death. Catholics in Maryland, having lost control of their colony to Protestants, suffered religious prejudice under statutes that forbade them from holding office, voting, or worshipping publicly. The end of the colonial period and the establishment of the United States of America saw no diminishment of religious prejudice, which remains evident to this day in states’ legal codes. The state constitution of New York (1770) prohibited clergy from holding civil or military office, and it did so seemingly in the interest of religious freedom. The constitution’s framers argued that priests and ministers historically had been leaders in fomenting prejudice, and so were to be denied positions of power from which they might incite further mischief. Generations later, the state constitutions of Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, Mississippi, Texas, and Tennessee still prohibited persons who did not believe in God from holding public offices and from participating in some other public activities (in spite of a 1961 federal ruling declaring such statutes unconstitutional). The Arkansas constitution of 1874 stated (in its 2008 form), “atheists [are] disqualified from holding office or testifying as witness,” while in North Carolina “any person who shall deny the being of Almighty God” is prohibited from holding public office. A bill to repeal the prohibition in Arkansas died in House committee on May 1, 2009. Such laws, which emerged originally as official prejudice, stood as a reference for public opinion over many generations, supporting the continuation of religious prejudice, and not only in cases of believers versus nonbelievers. Christian monotheism, as the basis for all forms of official prejudice in the United States, remained for many the only acceptable religion for Americans.

Organized Prejudice

Religious prejudice, reinforced by law, developed a wide range of organizational forms in the United States. The most visible of these was the Ku Klux Klan, an organization that

was reestablished in the early twentieth century after having floundered in the original form it took just after the Civil War. Best known for terrorizing African Americans, the Klan was primarily a religious movement with strong racial and ethnic dimensions, and at its height in the 1920s numbered as many as four million members. Its membership believed that Protestantism was threatened by the religious diversity, political liberalism, and growing secularity of the early twentieth century. Klan prejudice against non-Protestants led to campaigns against Catholics, Jews, and others in many states. It intimidated opponents and modeled religious prejudice as the defense of religion (a common theme in the history of religious prejudice) through its dramatic public performances, costumery, and publications.

Another organization, the American Protective Association (APA), was founded in Iowa in 1887, and although it was short-lived, it vividly represented the degree to which religious prejudice—in this case against Roman Catholics—animated the worldviews of Americans. It advocated the removal of Catholics from public office and from teaching positions in public schools. At its height it claimed 2.5 million members who were expected to pledge their allegiance to the organization by swearing to “wage continuous warfare” against the “ignorance and fanaticism” of the Catholic Church and to “place the political positions of this government in the hands of Protestants, to the entire exclusion of the Roman Catholic church.” The APA, as a nativist organization (that is, opposed to immigration) was a continuation of movements such as the American Republican Party of the 1840s and the secretive Know-Nothing movement (whose members supposedly responded “I know nothing” when asked about their political activities) that won victories in the 1855 elections.

Religious prejudice deeply informed these movements of the American past, and many others like them. The present, too, has seen the power of organizations fashioned on prejudice. For example, religious prejudice posed a serious challenge to the 1960 presidential candidacy of the Catholic John F. Kennedy. More recently it contributed to the defeat of the Mormon Mitt Romney as a Republican party candidate for president in 2008.

Religious Prejudice as an Incentive to Violence

Religious prejudice sometimes remains confined to words. Words, however, can inspire. Religious prejudice, especially when stated in stark terms, for example, condemnation of a religion as “satanic” or “evil,” can be a powerful incentive to

violence, prompting attacks on groups that are perceived as threats. In America it has fueled centuries of religious violence. Newspaper stories, speeches, books, sermons, and other means of disseminating religious prejudice likewise serve to foment religious violence. Such public airing of prejudice has preceded most instances of violent confrontation between religious groups, as in the burning of the Charlestown convent in Massachusetts in 1834; the murder of Mormon leader Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1844; the widespread violence against Jehovah’s Witnesses in the 1940s; and arson and vandalism perpetrated against Jewish and Muslim houses of worship today. Fanned by the rhetoric of extremist groups, religious prejudice is not merely an abstracted dislike for other religions (or the non-religious). In many cases, it is violence in the making.

Religious Prejudice via Community Legal Action

Community initiatives to translate religious prejudice into legal action are another way in which the destructive potential of prejudice is realized. While religious prejudice only sporadically leads to violence, it finds expression in officially sanctioned activities aimed at undercutting the authority or power of religious groups. In addition to such instruments as colonial charters and state constitutions, local ordinances and codes have reflected religious prejudice within particular communities.

Criminal investigations of groups such as the Amish (who do not send their children to secondary school), Mennonites, and Jehovah’s Witnesses that have taken place since the nineteenth century are manifestations of religious prejudice. A recent example of the explicit connection between religious prejudice and community legal action occurred in Hialeah, Florida, with the passage of a law regarding the treatment of animals. In the late 1980s officials enacted a prohibition of animal sacrifice that, while not announcing itself as an anti-Santería ordinance, clearly was conceived as such. Santería, an Afro-Caribbean blend of Catholic, Yoruba, and Native American traditions, counts animal sacrifice as an important component of religious practice. Considered by its detractors to be a “demonic” religion built on devilish curses and spells, the Santería Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye threatened its critics because it represented a radically different religious view of the world. The church resisted the ordinance and was successful in court in 1993. Anxieties about animal sacrifice in Santería surfaced again in Euless, Texas, in 2007, when a Santería priest defended his right to sacrifice goats in religious services in opposition to a town law prohibiting it.

Unofficial Prejudice

Religious prejudice, sometimes visible in official actions, is most commonly manifest informally and unofficially, informing a great many unspoken codes regarding organizational and community belonging, and guiding decisions about such issues as suitable marriage partners and trustworthy employees. Religious prejudice flourished below the surface of the kind of exclusion that was apparent in the “Catholics Need Not Apply” line added to job advertisements or displayed in store windows well into the twentieth century, or in the signs posted at the Baltimore Country Club as late as the 1970s that read: “No Dogs, No Coloreds, No Jews.” Religious prejudice was translated into codes of exclusion largely through “gentlemen’s agreements” that brought together persons of similar backgrounds in the interest of limiting outsiders’ access to country clubs, social clubs, community organizations, lines of work, executive suites, neighborhoods, and other collectives. Religious prejudice, in the end, is often only barely visible, but its effects can be profound.

Fear and Paranoia

Fear is an emotion commonly associated with religious prejudice. Persons and groups fear that which they cannot understand or do not wish to understand. The refusal of persons to directly and openly engage the religious ideas of those who are different from them contributes substantially to the misreading of others’ intentions and increases the likelihood that suspicion and fear will structure the relationship. Religious prejudice, which develops through ignorance and suspicion, is a symptom of a dysfunctional attachment between persons or groups. It is an attachment because at least one party cannot ignore the other and feels compelled to remain engaged with it. It is dysfunctional because at least one of the parties wishes that the other did not exist. Religious prejudice is at the same time a platform on which can be built a highly elaborate emotional program geared to respond instinctively and uncritically to perceived religious difference. Within this complex framework of ideas and feelings, religious prejudice typically coalesces as an amalgam of theories about the inferiority of one’s opponents, the threat they pose, and the means necessary to oppose them. In American religious history the coalescence of religious prejudice has taken place with particular regard to paranoia about one’s opponents.

Historians long have noted the centrality of paranoia to American politics, class interactions, ethnic and racial relations, and religious affairs. There has been, as historian Richard Hofstadter once wrote, a “paranoid style” to American efforts to

come to terms with difference. That paranoia has taken a variety of forms and led to rhetoric inflamed by fearfulness alongside actions guided by an impulse to limit or eliminate groups perceived as dangerous. Campaigns against religious opponents often have developed as projects aimed at countering the imagined “subversive” activities of those opponents. Religious prejudice typically has taken the form of accusations that a certain group or groups refuse to accept dominant cultural standards of behavior, that they espouse principles antithetical to American democracy, that they organize their family life and social networks in unacceptable ways, that they do not accept the fair trade rules of the marketplace, and that they cloak their activities in such secrecy that they must be engaged in some form or another of subversive planning or action. The perception of secrecy, of covert agendas, has been especially important, and is linked to the paranoid style evident in accusers.

After about 1830 Protestant religious prejudice was displayed most dramatically in paranoia about Catholics and Mormons. Protestants specifically feared that Catholics could embrace neither democracy nor the principle of separation of church and state, and they viewed Catholics as foot soldiers in a Roman campaign to subvert the Constitution and as the shock troops who would prepare the continent for a Roman Catholic theocratic government. Protestants and Catholics both believed that the Latter-day Saints were duped by founder Joseph Smith into believing a preposterous story about the history of North America, and the tight-knit and separatist social world of Mormons struck its critics as a refusal to participate in the broader world of an American democracy grounded in the practice of Republican virtue. The emergence of plural marriage among Mormons in the years before the murder of Joseph Smith was proof, for Mormonism’s opponents, that it was a false religion, a fake that had drawn in the gullible and, having established centers of power, was bent on subverting not only the political order but the family order of the nation. Where Mormons and Catholics, Jehovah’s Witnesses and Shakers, Hmong and Muslims were viewed as secretive, subversive, and militant, their critics viewed themselves as opposites—as open, law-abiding, peaceful, generous, and collaborative. Religious prejudice, which has manifested in American history largely as fear of groups perceived as subversive, constructs the critic as well as the criticized.

Religious prejudice frequently has been joined with other kinds of prejudice, especially racial or ethnic prejudice. Prejudice against Jews is a case in point. Race and religion also

have been linked in prejudice against African American churches. Churches in black communities traditionally have been places of affirmation and organization and so have long been targeted by racists as sites of corruption, ignorance, conspiracy, and betrayal of a certain national vision. Prejudice against African American churches often has denigrated the training and authority of black clergy, the style of worship of black congregations—which in some instances can be highly emotional and consequently mocked stereotypically as religious “heat without light”—and the theological substrata as simplistic and misleading. Demonstrations of religious prejudice against African American religious groups accordingly have taken a wide range of forms, from attempted jokes about black spirituality to the burning of black churches.

Prejudice among Religions

Alongside secular organizations, churches themselves have displayed and encouraged religious prejudice throughout American history. Colonial ministers condemned the religious worldviews of Native Americans. Protestant sermons in the nineteenth century demonized Catholics, Mormons, Jews, Muslims, and practitioners of Asian religions. Catholics joined Protestants in complaining about Mormons and Jews, while Mormons voiced their own prejudices. In the mid-twentieth century the ecumenical movement softened much of the criticism that churches had leveled against each other, but religious prejudice remained alive in certain pockets of the ecclesiastical world, particularly among conservative Protestant churches. The celebrity Southern Baptist minister Billy Graham voiced a strong prejudice against Jews in recorded conversations with President Richard Nixon in 1972. When the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) took a hard turn to the right in the 1980s, many within that organization took the opportunity to speak publicly, and more loudly, about their distrust of other religious groups. Those comments reached a peak in the aftermath of the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, when SBC leaders condemned Islam in strikingly confrontational terms. The Rev. Jerry Vines, a former president of the SBC, in an address to the conference, described Mohammed as a “demon-possessed pedophile.”

While Protestant denominations in America historically have had much in common, they have never collectively constituted an unbroken front of opposition to other religions, nor have they always agreed with each other. For much of the nation’s history, Protestantism existed as a kind of informal established religion, meaning that it was culturally dominant and positioned to shape morals, manners, and

ideas in profound ways. Protestants nevertheless sometimes disagreed—as was the case in early modern Europe when Lutherans, Calvinists, and Radical reformers found plenty to criticize in each others’ religions. Such criticisms were more than just theological debates. They reached beyond differences about doctrines of salvation or the Trinity, or opinion about the arrangement of rituals in religious services. Protestant remarks about other Protestant groups were often prejudicial. Methodists, Shakers, Quakers, Holiness groups, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, and others experienced strong prejudice from Protestants, alongside the prejudice of Catholics, Mormons, Jews, and from other religious groups.

The New Religious Movements (NRMs) of the twentieth century brought religious innovations that many Americans perceived as threatening. Prejudice against groups such as the Moonies (Unification Church), Hare Krishnas, Children of God, Branch Davidians, and the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints developed in concert with fears that such groups were attracting younger persons (especially those of college age) to seemingly casual events and then drawing them in by degrees until they were “brainwashed.” Children raised in such religions likewise were thought to be victims of brainwashing. Religious prejudice in these cases often arose where families feared the recruitment of children or siblings rather than worried that such groups might undermine democracy or other dearly held American traditions. In fact, this focus on children became a key aspect in the formation of religious prejudice over the next thirty years. Once it coalesced in cases involving Moonies, Hare Krishnas, Children of God, and similar groups, it was abstracted and made an issue in the observation of other NRMs. At Waco, Texas, in 1993 government authorities initially reported that they were investigating a firearms cache at the group’s compound. The central issue in the conflict between law enforcement agencies and the Branch Davidians, however, soon shifted to the rumored abuse of children. The same issue emerged in government intervention in the communal life of fundamentalist Mormons in Eldorado, Texas, in 2008. Prejudice in both cases was a mixture of several concerns, including skepticism about the doctrines espoused by the groups. But what provoked authorities to action was their claimed commitment to the principle of protection of children.

Asian religions have drawn a large share of religious prejudice since Chinese and Japanese settlement in the United States in the nineteenth century. As was the case with Jews,

some of that prejudice emerged in connection with ethnic and racial attitudes. Religious difference supplied an equally important base, however. Religious Americans are overwhelmingly monotheistic and Christian, and live their lives according to habits of thought about morality, character, virtue, community, and ultimacy that are framed largely in Christian terms. The religions of Asian immigrants were neither monotheistic nor were their religious practices—the periodic and everyday rituals of devotion, from prayer and diet to work and learning—obviously analogous to Christian forms. Incapable of or unwilling to make sense of Buddhist, Confucian, and Zen religious ideas and rituals, Americans drew their conclusions about the religions of Asian immigrants by evaluating behavior, and they judged that behavior—shaped by millennia of Chinese and Japanese civilizations—immoral. In this case, then, religious prejudice had less to do with a sense of the inferiority of the religious doctrines and rituals of, for example, Buddhism, and more to do with what Americans called “character.” When a mob destroyed a Chinese mining hamlet in Rock Springs, Wyoming, in 1885, leaving twenty-eight dead and hundreds homeless, they were translating into action a prejudice that Chinese were “heathen” and “immoral,” and incapable of assimilation as a result. In short, religious prejudice against Asian Americans practicing Asian religions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries included elements previously visible in attitudes towards Jews and Native Americans, namely, racial inferiority, the perception of inability to assimilate, and, as in the case of Native Americans, a religious system that was inscrutable.

More recently, prejudice against groups like Laotian Hmong has been infused with frustration in the belief of some that such groups are not only unwilling to assimilate but are exploiting the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom in the interests of imposing their own religious beliefs upon society. The case of Muslim convert Sultaana Freeman is another example of recent prejudice against one seen as imposing her own beliefs upon society. Freeman sued the state of Florida in 2002 for revoking her driver’s license on the ground that she appeared veiled in her license photo. In her defense she claimed that her religion required her to remain veiled even for an official identification photo.

Prejudice towards nonbelievers and towards behaviors considered antithetical to religion has existed since colonial times. It took the form originally of enforcement of legal provisions regarding Sabbath-breaking (including failure to attend services), blaspheming, and other offenses. A seventeenth-century statute in Virginia was aimed against

“horrid and atheistical principles.” Pennsylvania, a colony founded on a platform of religious freedom (as it was then conceptualized), likewise legislated against unbelief. Colonists convicted of religious offenses were placed in stocks, whipped, fined, tortured, and imprisoned. Massachusetts executed Quakers for blasphemy and punished many other persons for behaviors that seemed unreligious. In the period 1780–1815 the rising tide of criticism of religion, coupled with the Enlightenment notion that humans could know the world through reason, apart from revelation, led to concerns that America was being taken over by “infidels.” Vigorous preaching and community campaigns against nonbelief followed. An evangelical Protestant publishing initiative, which has remained strong since, sounded the alarm against nonbelievers. The durability and success of that campaign in presenting unbelief as a danger to the nation is reflected in the fact that no American president has identified as an unbeliever, and in the early twenty-first century candidates for public office hasten to present themselves as religious persons.

Conclusion

Americans have policed religion in North America for centuries. Religious prejudice, however, often overflows national boundaries. The same kinds of fears that informed the prejudice of Americans against Catholics, Mormons, Jews, Quakers, and others also has informed American views of religion as it exists in other parts of the world. That process is most visible in twenty-first century American views of Islam. In the immediate wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, American views of Islam improved slightly, but in the years since then a highly energetic and decidedly negative rhetoric regarding Islam has emerged. The persons who create, as well as those who seek out, such prejudicial portrayals of Islam do so in an international political context in which Islam is intertwined with the nation’s wartime enemies. The right-wing campaign to paint President Barack Obama as a secret Muslim, however, illustrates how the cultivation of religious prejudice against those outside of the national borders can easily be redirected to domestic targets. It also demonstrates how religious prejudice is often connected to other kinds of prejudices, including racial prejudice.

There have been many attempts in American history to combat religious prejudice. Even among the earliest settlers, who carried with them into their encounters with Native Americans a host of preconceptions about the inferiority of all religions to Christianity, there were moments of

appreciation and a willingness to see other religions positively. English missionaries at times wrote about the deep spirituality of Indians, and many observers commented on the emotional depth of Native American piety as demonstrated in rituals or expressed in indigenous religious narratives. The religious diversity of the nation, which was obvious in late colonial America and grew more profound with immigration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has been both a cause for some to cultivate prejudice and a prompt to others to work against it. The efforts of Catholics and Jews to defend themselves against religious attack forced their critics to become more accommodating, and the more active role of the courts in enforcing religious freedom in the twentieth century likewise led to disincentives for religious prejudice. Organizations such as Human Rights First, the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and the Southern Poverty Law Center, among others, have been active in fighting religious prejudice.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Anti-Semitism; Ethnicity; Islam in North America; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; Prohibition; Race and Racism; Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult; Theocracy; Violence and Terror.*

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Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult

As new religious movements (NRMs) form, they often evoke resistance and criticism. Even the designation “new,” applied to a religious movement, can be seen as a mark of

resistance. Many “new” religious movements see themselves as continuations and inheritors of long-standing traditions and therefore reject the idea that they teach something hitherto unknown. Indeed, for thousands of years the accusation of innovation was one of the most powerful criticisms that could be laid upon a so-called tradition. The older a tradition was, the more trustworthy were its claims, so the thinking went. Only in the modern period did novelty take on a positive valuation.

Even within an American historical context that, in terms of documented religious prejudice, lies within the modern era, resistance to religious movements largely pursued this critique of innovation. Catholics accused Protestants of rebellion against a line of apostolic succession stretching back to Christ himself, while Protestants accused Catholics of departing from the original sources of the Christian tradition as found in the scriptures. As a form of religious prejudice, then, the anti-cult movement (ACM) stands as a particularly remarkable phenomenon, for accusations of innovation and deviation from theological rectitude had little to do with its motivation. Rather, for the ACM certain movements were threatening in their very being as “religious,” in the way they infused their adherents with an overwhelming sense of purpose and mission that caused spectacular and radical changes in behavior, belief, and overall lifestyle. In other words, if previous manifestations of religious prejudice questioned the *kind* of religiosity that informed a particular movement, the ACM questioned the *degree*. Regardless of the tenets of belief or the rituals performed, it was the perceived intensity, fervor, and scope of the religiosity—its immoderate character—that inspired the ACM to its particular form of prejudice and resistance.

Resistance to the degree rather than the kind of religiosity marks the particularly secular nature of the ACM. In contrast to the (largely evangelical Protestant) countercult movement that treated NRMs as heresies, the ACM objected to the purported absolutism of NRMs that effectively denied the separation of the spheres of family, economy, religion, and others. The ACM accused these groups of a totalitarian worldview, one in which no part of an adherent's being could be free from religious regulation. The adherent's family members (the core membership of the ACM) perceived the subsuming of career plans, family relationships, and personal finances to a religious worldview as “brainwashing,” borrowing a term from anticommunist mythology stemming from the apparent conversions of American prisoners-of-war in North Korea.

From the perspective of the ACM, NRMs denied the entire way of thinking that underlies the modern secular order, an order that, in its separation of spheres, guarantees freedom. It is thus fitting that the decline of the ACM can be linked to the secularization of the movements it opposed. Over time many of the movements targeted by the ACM diversified their social structures and allowed for a variety of living arrangements, accommodation to various career paths, and the development of more or less free-standing economic enterprises to support their organizations. In short, as these movements moderated their engagement with the outside world, the rationale and motivation for resistance from the ACM declined proportionately.

History: 1960s–1970s

The beginnings of the North American ACM can be traced to the spiritual ferment of the 1960s that saw the rise of NRMs such as The Children of God, the Unification Church (“Moonies”), and the Hare Krishnas, among others. As these groups attracted converts and turned them toward radically new lifestyles—a process that often included a severing of ties to the social worlds in which they had been raised—aggrieved family members sought to retrieve their “lost” children and siblings. These family members formed organizations such as the Parents Committee to Free Our Sons and Daughters from the Children of God Organization (FREECOG, established 1972) for the purposes of mutual support, information sharing, strategizing, and public advocacy. While initially these organizations targeted the specific NRMs to which their members’ children and siblings belonged, as time passed they coalesced into umbrella groups bound together by a common ideology. Organizations such as the Citizen’s Freedom Foundation (CFF, established 1974) promoted the view that a number of different NRMs constituted a single type of religion, a “cult,” that was particularly dangerous to the workings of a free society. Cults, the CFF and other organizations proclaimed, used techniques of mind control, or brainwashing, in order to attract and retain converts who would, under the unfettered workings of their own reason and will, pursue a lifestyle independent of these groups.

The claim of brainwashing gave the ACM a rationale for pursuing legal and political sanctions against the NRMs it targeted. The ACM achieved some success, particularly at the local level, in gaining support for its efforts to restrict the activities of NRMs and to extract adherents from them. On the grounds of mental incapacity, courts sometimes granted parents a temporary conservatorship over their children

within NRMs and thereby justified their forcible extraction and detention. Whether with the aid of the law or acting simply through unsanctioned and private initiative, family members who detained adherents would then subject them to “deprogramming,” the ACM’s counter-tactic to brainwashing. Under conditions of strict confinement, extracted adherents would endure sessions of intense and prolonged pressure, including argument, appeal, harangue and castigation, to convince them that they had been manipulated and deceived into joining the NRM. These sessions were sometimes successful and produced apostates who then militated against the NRMs to which they had belonged.

History: 1980s–Twenty-first Century

Moving into the 1980s the ACM achieved a relatively stable and nationwide organizational presence with the formation of the American Family Foundation (AFF, established 1979) and the Cult Awareness Network (CAN, established 1986). These organizations achieved their greatest success in controlling the terms of public debate about NRMs, particularly in the promotion of the cult/brainwashing ideology within the media. But while they were successful in guiding public discourse, the ACM never achieved the degree of political and legal backing it sought, even after the mass murder/suicides at Jonestown, Guyana, in 1979. This was a major disappointment to the ACM and a decisive signal of the limitations to its ambitions. Furthermore, a legal consensus had developed that deprogramming was undeserving of support, and conservatorships had been overturned and supporting legislation stymied on the grounds of constitutionally protected religious freedom. Indeed, these constitutional guarantees ultimately led to the downfall of one of the ACM’s most prominent organizations. CAN’s refusal to grant membership and allow conference attendance to a number of Scientologists, as well as CAN’s role in providing referrals for the now legally suspect services provided by professional but uncredentialed “deprogrammers,” led to a slew of lawsuits that forced the organization into bankruptcy in 1996.

By the beginning of the twenty-first century the ACM was pursuing a more moderate path. While political and legal roadblocks played an important role in this transformation, changes in the targeted NRMs were also influential. After the “boom” years of the 1960s, these NRMs experienced a variety of difficulties in maintaining their memberships and organizational cohesion. Indeed, most of these movements have historically suffered from high rates of voluntary defection. As, over time, more and more of the people who had joined these

NRMs left them of their own free will, the ideology that bound the ACM together, and that drove what legal and political leverage it had, was undercut. If the NRMs retained their adherents through psychological coercion, how could one explain why so many of their members had left on their own terms (that is, without the aid of deprogramming)?

Furthermore, the changing nature of NRM involvement affected the resistance of the ACM. The stereotypical cult lifestyle—living in a commune cut off from the outside world—was in decline. Those who identified with the Hare Krishnas, for example, might marry a nonmember, live in a separate home, and wear conventional western clothing all while remaining vegetarian, worshipping Krishna, and attending the organization's festivals and events. Rather than relying on donations and speaking exclusively to current or potential members, the Unification Church invested in conventional commercial enterprises and outlets of mainstream public opinion such as the *Washington Times*. As different modes of NRM involvement and activity arose, specifically, as these organizations moderated their engagement with their own members and with society at large, the ACM moderated its resistance accordingly. Rather than engaging in deprogramming, the ACM has moved toward voluntary "exit counseling." And rather than pushing for legal sanctions, the ACM now tends to focus on raising awareness of the potential dangers of NRM involvement.

Critical Assessment

Evaluating the claims of the ACM requires an engagement with two central concepts: "cult" and "brainwashing." Central to most definitions of "cult" is a picture of a small group living communally, bound together by strict obedience to a charismatic leader, and active and aggressive in recruiting new members. The religious ideology of a cult can take virtually any form, and for the ACM such ideology is of little consequence in itself. The key issue is authority and the level of commitment demanded by the movement. Submission to such authority in all areas of life, so the argument implies, leads to the potential acceptance of sexual deviance, willingness to commit violence, gullibility to fall prey to fraud, and so forth.

A further and vital element of the ACM's definition of a cult is the use of brainwashing to attract and retain members. Through a variety of methods that could include sensory deprivation, sensory overload, undernourishment, sleep deprivation, repetitive exercises, emotional manipulation, cults are said to systematically break down the individual will

of their members and replace it with a collective will stemming from the movement's leader or ideology. Convinced that their truest identity rests outside of their individual selves, adherents purportedly lose the freedom and ability to make independent decisions.

These concepts suffer from two central problems. One is applicability. Almost any definition broad enough to encompass all the groups targeted by the ACM also applies to groups that are not targeted. For example, the marines and monasteries also aim to break down individual will and create a sense of collective identity and use intense indoctrination processes of rigorous and repetitive disciplines to do so. Conversely, narrower definitions fail to capture the diverse nature of the groups targeted by the ACM. The Branch Davidians may have lived communally and placed authority in a charismatic leader, but the Church of Scientology, also a target of the ACM, allows its members to live in their own homes and pursue independent career paths. The ACM's inability to create a definition that conforms to the myriad of groups that attract its attention has led scholars to propose that the definition of "cult" is similar to that of "weed"—the term may simply designate a religious group that is socially unpopular.

A second difficulty posed by these concepts concerns the definition of "freedom." Secular conceptions of freedom grounded in self-critical rationality may not be compatible with religious conceptions of freedom that involve the recognition of a fundamental and collective being that governs all aspects of life. From the perspective of the latter, the dissolution of a separate and self-grounding individuality may be necessary for spiritual liberation. The question of whether NRM adherents embrace their commitments willingly therefore depends largely on how one defines "freedom" itself.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Anti-Semitism; Ethnicity; Islam in North America; Krishna Consciousness; Native American Religions: Post-Contact; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements entries; Prohibition; Psychology of Religion; Race and Racism; Religious Prejudice; Scientology; Theocracy; Unification Church; Violence and Terror.*

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Religious Press

America has had a religious press and a press deeply interested in religion for nearly as long as it has had English-speaking settlements. In 1939, the U.S. Postal Service issued a three cent stamp to mark the 300-year anniversary of printing in Colonial America. The Stephen Daye Press looked a little like an Old World stocks with an opening for the head and hands of primitive printers who pushed the powers of the press too far. Charles I (1600–1649), king of England, Scotland, and Ireland, had, in fact, used the powers of the Star Chamber, a secret high court, to terrorize and maim oppositional printers. The Rev. Joseph Glover, a dissenting rector from Surrey, resigned his pulpit after eight years, and with his own savings and £49 contributed by seven donors, purchased a font of type and hired on June 7, 1638, Stephen Daye (1594–1668), a 44-year-old locksmith, to accompany him to Massachusetts Bay. Glover and Daye, their families, and Daye's printing press, boarded the *John of London*. All arrived safely, except for Glover, his press later reported, who "fell sick of a fever and dyed" on the way. Glover's widow, Elizabeth, married Henry Dunster, the first president of Harvard, and the "Cambridge Press" was the first offspring of that union, publishing a Freeman's Oath, a Bay Psalm Book, a New England almanac, a platform on church discipline, an Indian Bible, and a New England catechism, advertised as "spiritual milk for Boston babes in either England."

The Colonial Period

Colonial newspapers reflected the spiritual sensibilities of their readers with Puritan papers portraying a teleological

view of the news. Shipwreck, sickness, crop failure, and Indian attacks were all seen as God's sovereign judgment on God's people. Benjamin Harris (1647–1726), who published the colonies' first newspaper, *Publick Occurrences, Both Forreign and Domestick*, in Boston on September 25, 1690, said he did not want people to forget memorable occurrences of Divine Providence, as they were likely to do. Reporting in John Campbell's (1653–1728) *Boston News-Letter* in July 1704 indicated a fire that was successfully put out was a sign of "God's good and signal Providence."

By August 1721, the population of Massachusetts Bay was diverse enough that competing opinions of what God might mean appeared in the press. James Franklin (1697–1735), a member of Boston's Hell-Fire Club, was sponsored by Anglicans in establishing the *New-England Courant*, which argued that Puritan authorities were making a mistake in inoculating the population during a smallpox epidemic that claimed nine hundred of the settlement's ten thousand citizens. Franklin was arrested for "printing without authority." His younger brother Benjamin (1706–1790), who had labored as his typesetter, made his escape to Philadelphia, where Quakers were more tolerant of opposing opinions. His *Pennsylvania Gazette*, which was first published on October 2, 1729, became the pattern for colonial papers that followed. Religious interpretation was muted, reflecting the increasing heterogeneity of colonial communities. Franklin gave front page play to George Whitefield's (1714–1770) open air preaching and throngs who attended. News of the Great Awakening stimulated the intercolonial syndication of shared information. Some publishers, however, were not so smitten by the great exhorter. Thomas Fleet (1685–1758) of the *Boston Evening Post* was an Anglican opponent of the civic excitement. Fleet charged in 1740 that those who stayed away from Whitefield's wildly popular work should not be regarded as hostile to religion, although he also believed that a sense of good order would return to Boston after Whitefield departed.

The Revolutionary Period

For more than a century and a half, English settlers in America had considered themselves loyal British subjects. On the eve of revolution, however, dissident Protestantism and Enlightenment rationalism, communicated in the colonial press, set the stage for separation. The Stamp Act of 1765 was advertised as a means to recover the crown's cost of prosecuting the French and Indian War that established British dominance in the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys. The tax

was also intended to muzzle colonial printers who challenged Parliament's right to levy the tax. Those printers relied on the writings of John Milton (1608–1674), Matthew Tindal (1657–1733), John Locke (1632–1704), John Trenchard (1662–1723), and Thomas Gordon (1692–1750) in arguing that men had the God-given right to liberty and freedom, natural rights that could not be usurped by any king or court. Tindal's reprinted work argued that any restraint on the press was in conflict with the Protestant religion and threatened the liberties of the nation. In "Two Treatises of Government," Locke reasoned that men have the right to a perfect freedom that no monarch can annul. "Cato's Letters," first printed in the *London Journal*, were reprinted by Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* and widely circulated in the decade that led up to the Revolution. Trenchard and Gordon wrote 144 essays over three years, making the case that humankind is entitled to general liberty because it is a gift from God, and that arbitrary government is incompatible with true religion.

On the eve of the Revolution, it was the analysis of John Adams that American public opinion was divided in thirds—one-third favored the Revolution, one-third opposed it—and each had a press designed to rally an undecided middle third. The Protestant roots of radical republicanism proved a justification for revolution for some. Patriot publisher John Holt (1721–1784), on January 5, 1775, called his paper, the *New York Journal*, sacred. What if freedom of conscience, however, persuaded printers to oppose the fighting? A mob hanged James Rivington (1724–1802) in effigy for taking that point of view. Rivington published an engraving of the scene in the March 18, 1775, edition of his *New York Gazetteer*, claiming he would not be intimidated and defending the God-given right to be a free printer.

The first great historian of the American press, Isaiah Thomas (1749–1831), patriot publisher of the *Massachusetts Spy*, saw the spiritual certainty of many revolutionaries sustaining them during six years of difficult fighting. On June 28, 1776, Thomas called the confrontation with Great Britain a struggle in support of Americans' rights and freedom. The language of evangelicalism was so well-established that even a writer with an allergy to Protestantism, like Thomas Paine (1737–1809), used its vocabulary to rally the troops: "These are the times that try men's souls," began Paine's "American Crisis," read to America's beleaguered soldiers in December 1776 by order of General George Washington (1732–1799). "Tyranny, like hell, is not so easily conquered. . . . Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would

be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be so highly rated" (Conway 1894–1896, 170).

The Early Republican Period

The United States eventually won its independence and after the Northwest Ordinance, the government began administering 260,000 square miles of land west of Pennsylvania and north of the Ohio River. The religious press accompanied some of the first white settlers to the region. Presbyterian pastor John Andrews first issued his eight-page *Weekly Recorder* from Chillicothe, Ohio, on July 5, 1814, under the masthead "Righteousness exalteth a Nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Andrews devoted his efforts to theology, literature, and matters of interest to the American people. That included support for the Chillicothe Association and its efforts to remind local citizens that they were bound by social responsibility and the law of God to be of service to their community.

Andrews was quick to communicate his happiness at signs of God's grace: "the value and duty of rejoicing" at every sign of "divine grace." (February 8, 1815). This sentiment stirred the missionary zeal of the American Bible and Tract Societies, launched between 1816 and 1825. They saw the quickening pace of Western settlement as an opportunity to redeem the day by placing religious instruction in the hands of every American. Elias Boudinot (1740–1821), Jedidiah Morse (1761–1826), and other former Federalists urged more than one hundred local societies to pool their resources to perfect stereotype printing. It used a papier-mâché or plaster mold that was cheaper, faster, and more durable than hand presses that used movable type. Partly financed through the generosity of evangelical businessman Arthur Tappan (1786–1865), the Tract Society had, by 1829, organized into 713 branches, annually producing eighty-eight million pages of tracts. The Bible Society had 645 branches in the same year that it distributed more than half a million Bibles annually, with a commitment to continue at that pace until every family in the new nation was reached. The press they developed would be embraced by sacred and secular interests alike.

Nathaniel Willis (1755–1831) had made his money as a political partisan, like a lot of other editors during the early republican period. By the spring of 1808, however, he became so distressed that he could not work. Recently released from a prison in Portland, Maine, for failing to pay a fine of \$2,000 for libeling a political opponent, the twenty-eight-year-old Willis converted to Christianity in a revival led by Congregational preacher Edward Payson (1783–1827). Increasingly

disenchanted with party politics, he finally decided that he could no longer serve two masters. So he sold the *Eastern Argus* for \$4,000, and together with Sidney Morse (1794–1871), brother to the man who developed the telegraph, launched, on January 3, 1816, one of the first religious newspapers in the nation. The creation of a “civil society” was the purpose of every “Christian patriot,” the *Boston Recorder* announced in its inaugural edition. Willis searched for spiritual significance in all events deemed important by the American public. A missionary’s report on a Syrian earthquake was characteristic of the paper’s coverage. Benjamin Barker reported that “Christians, Jews, and Turks were imploring the Almighty’s mercy in their respective tongues, who a minute before did not perhaps acknowledge him” (*Boston Recorder*, March 29, 1822).

The nondenominational *Recorder* built a nationwide readership during Willis’s twenty-eight years of leadership. Boston’s Baptists launched *Christian Watchman* under the leadership of Deacon James Loring in 1819. In 1848, it merged with *Christian Reflector*, begun in Worcester, and soon secured a circulation of 21,000. The *New York Observer*, begun by Sidney and Richard Morse (1796–1868) in 1823, saw a circulation of 60,000 on the eve of the Civil War, becoming the country’s most widely read Protestant newspaper. “In no part of the world does the newspaper produce so extensive an influence as in our own country,” Sidney Morse wrote on May 17, 1823. That was why he hoped to shape public opinion against what he perceived as the growing threats of Catholicism, revivalism, and the Southern slave economy. The *Independent*, begun in 1851 by Congregationalists, eventually became a leading voice against slavery under the stewardship of Henry Ward Beecher, popular minister of Brooklyn’s Plymouth Church.

The Abolitionist Press

Abolitionism never became a majority opinion in the North but it did reflect the certainty of abolitionist editors that slavery was sinful because it denied the basic God-given dignity of man. Methodist laymen in New England launched *Zion’s Herald* in 1823, promising it would be outspoken. Initially neutral on slavery, the paper rallied public opinion to support William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879) after the abolitionist editor was attacked by a Boston mob in 1835. On March 18, 1857, it admitted astonishment at the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the Dred Scott case denying a slave his freedom, calling the decision wicked. A range of religious periodicals found common cause in opposing slavery. David

Reed (1790–1870), son of a Congregational clergyman, began the *Christian Register* on April 20, 1821, hoping to lead people to Unitarianism. The American Unitarian Association took over the publication four years later, making its case against trinitarianism from the writings of William Ellery Channing (1780–1842), Henry Ware, Jr. (1794–1843), and Andrews Norton (1786–1853). Reed joined other abolitionist editors in 1833 by forming the Anti-Slavery Society. The organization grew in five years to 1,350 chapters and more than 250,000 members. Garrison, who had founded *The Liberator* in 1831, was a leader in the movement. So were Frederick Douglass (1818–1895), editor of *The North Star*; Theodore Dwight Weld (1803–1895), editor of *The Emancipator*; James G. Birney (1792–1857), publisher of *The Philanthropist*; and Samuel Cornish (1795–1858) and John Russwurm (1799–1851), cofounders of *Freedom’s Journal*, the nation’s first African American newspaper.

Cornish was the African American pastor of New York City’s Demeter Street Presbyterian Church. In his paper’s first edition on March 16, 1827, he echoed *The Weekly Recorder* masthead by declaring “righteousness exalteth a nation” while arguing the scourge of slavery was a repudiation of what the nation said it stood for. The paper’s purpose was to educate free blacks on the promise of democracy and to speak out against inequality and injustice. Garrison launched the *Liberator* on January 1, 1831, in the certainty that slavery was sin and he had an obligation to proclaim God’s truth. Birney had freed his slaves and become an abolitionist editor after attending a revival led by Charles Finney (1792–1875). A mob stormed the Cincinnati office of *The Philanthropist*, destroyed his press, and threatened his life. Finally, on the evening of November 7, 1837, a Congregational minister named Elijah Lovejoy (1802–1837) was shot and killed in Alton, Illinois, for protecting his antislavery press. He was the first white man killed in the North for his views on slavery and would become a martyr for the cause.

The Missionary Press

Not only African Americans but Native Americans were targets of spiritually minded editors. Gallegina Watie, a Cherokee who was educated in missionary schools, took the name Elias Boudinot (1802–1839) from the man who paid for his education. In February 1828, Boudinot founded and edited in New Echota (now Calhoun, Georgia) *The Cherokee Phoenix, and Indians’ Advocate*, the first Indian newspaper in the nation. The bilingual tribal paper aimed at documenting the manners and customs of the Cherokees and their

progress in education and religion. Boudinot wrote that it was in the self-interest of Cherokees to embrace Christianity. He translated the New Testament and a book of sacred hymns into Sequoyah and was assassinated in 1839 at the height of the crisis over the removal of the Cherokee Nation to Oklahoma. In 1870, the slain leader's son, William Penn Boudinot, became editor of the *Cherokee Advocate*.

Baptists established the *Shawnee Sun* or *Siwinowe Kesibwi* in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, on February 24, 1835. Missionary Jotham Meeker (1804–1855) developed a Shawnee writing system and published a four-page, two-column monthly. It appears to have been the first newspaper published entirely in a Native American language. One copy was sent to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions in Boston. Christian activists in Massachusetts launched in 1838 the Oregon Provisional Emigration Society, soon expanding their work through societies in six states. Their thirty-two-page monthly, *The Oregonian, and Indian's Advocate*, described as its object the elevation of the Indian Race and as its means a Christian settlement in Oregon, a territory that was west of the Rockies, north of California, and south of the 49th Parallel. Other territorial papers targeting the Indian were published during this period. Jonathon Edwards Dwight, an educated Choctaw, and white minister John P. Kingsbury (1821–1867) started the bilingual *Choctaw Intelligencer* in 1850. *The Indian's Friend*, first published in Philadelphia in 1888, expressed a widely held missionary sentiment that providing religious instruction to the Indians would greatly aid civilization itself.

The 1870s initiated a particularly rich period of foreign missions. Alexander Wylie (1815–1887) of the London Missionary Society had published the *Shanghai Serial* as early as 1857. By 1867, thirty-one missionary societies, mostly from the United States and Britain, were operating in China. Dr. Young John Allen (1836–1907), an American Methodist missionary, developed *Young Allen's Globe Magazine*. Early publications focused on Bible lessons, sermons, and inspirational stories of transformed lives. Subsequent periodicals expanded their pages to draw in Chinese intellectuals. Characteristic was the *Globe's* September 5, 1871, edition, which promised information related to geography, history, civilization, politics, religion, science, art, industry, and so on. The *Globe's* weekly circulation soon doubled to 1,800.

In 1878, American Presbyterian missionary John Farnham established the Religious Tract Society, based in Shanghai. Farnham's monthly, *The Child's Paper* (*Xiaohai Yuehao*), reached a circulation of 3,500. By 1887, Allen, joined by

Alexander Williamson (1824–1904), Timothy Richard (1845–1919), and W. A. P. Martin (1827–1916), established the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge in Shanghai. At least 3,700 Christian missionaries were active in China by 1907. They were contributing to fifty-seven Protestant periodicals in the country by 1921. There were four times as many periodicals produced by 1933. Much of the coordination of these efforts was done by the nonsectarian China Inland Mission. By the end of the nineteenth century, the American missionary press had extended its sphere of influence to Japan, India, Burma, and throughout the Mediterranean from Malta to the Levant.

The Gilded Age and Progressive Period

When Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899) died on the eve of the twentieth century, it was noted that no one had spoken to more people in the nineteenth century than had Moody. It was estimated that “God’s layman for the Gilded Age” had preached to 100 million on both sides of the Atlantic over four decades and reduced the population of hell by more than a million souls in doing so. As head of Chicago’s Young Men’s Christian Association, he annually published 200,000 copies of *Everybody’s Paper*, focusing on religious news often missed by the secular press. As president of the organization, he annually oversaw the production of five million pages of tracts and papers, including *Heavenly Tidings* and the *Watchman*. During the Civil War, as a member of the U.S. Christian Commission, he helped distribute 1.5 million Bibles to Union soldiers in addition to 1.3 million hymnals and 40 million pages of tracts.

On the eve of America’s centennial celebration, he told a group of ministers that the press helped create a spirit of excitement. He urged a robust religious press to generate keen excitement about evangelizing the nation and world for Christianity. With his brother-in-law Fleming Hewitt Revell (1849–1931) he launched a massive book and pamphlet publishing business and a colportage library that distributed 1.5 million Christian pocketbooks across two decades. *Zion’s Herald* raved in January 1877 that Moody had shown the power of the press to help secure the success of God’s work. The *Congregationalist* in the same month similarly noted the practical and symbolic significance of Moody’s efforts. The Baptist *Standard* was less enthusiastic. In September 1876, it warned that Moody’s mere instrumentality wouldn’t bring revival, unless it was blessed by God. The *Catholic World* wrote in December 1875 that every trace of revival would disappear when Moody did. Moody lived on, however, through

the mass media he helped to create. More than a century after his death, *Moody Monthly* continued to instruct readers on the good news of the gospel.

Many Progressive Era writers and publishers fought for reform in mass circulation magazines guided by deeply held religious convictions. Samuel Sidney McClure (1857–1949), inspired by the possibilities of devotional life he learned at Knox College, launched *McClure's Magazine* in May 1894 by focusing on Moody and the difference one man can make. Within a year, circulation reached 300,000. McClure writer Ida Tarbell (1857–1944), who had served as a preceptress at an Ohio seminary, exposed the corrupt business practices of Standard Oil, leading to a court-ordered breakup of the nation's largest trust. Another McClure writer, Ray Stannard Baker (1870–1946), had been trained to expose vice through the reform work of British evangelist and journalist William T. Stead (1849–1912). Baker exposed the torture of Southern chain gangs as well as the venality of New York City's biggest slum landlord, Trinity Church. Lincoln Steffens (1866–1936), also a McClure writer, advocated the "Golden Rule" in his exposure of municipal graft. Edwin Markham (1852–1940) at *Scribner's*, Will Irwin (1873–1948) at *Collier's*, Samuel Hopkins Adams (1871–1958) at *Ladies' Home Journal*, and dozens of other muckraking writers in newspapers and magazines large and small, national and local, worked to end child labor and win woman suffrage, preached temperance, advocated environmental policies, secured the safety of American food and medicine, and led a whole host of meaningful reforms that sprang from their determination to remoralize public life by holding government responsible for the welfare of its citizens.

The Jewish Press

Solomon Henry Jackson published the New World's first Jewish newspaper, *The Jew*, from New York in March 1823, in an effort to counter the work of the American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jew, and its house publication, *Israel's Advocate*. It was followed by Rabbi Isaac Leeser's (1806–1868) *The Occident and American Jewish Advocate*, beginning life in 1843 when the Jewish population had grown to forty thousand in a nation of nine million. Leeser's efforts by 1859 helped create the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, representing the nation's twenty-nine synagogues in thirteen cities. Robert Lyon, editor of New York City's *Asmonean*, helped organize the Hebrew Benevolent Society. *The Israelite* in Cincinnati, launched by Reform leader Isaac Meyer Wise (1819–1900), and the

Weekly Gleaner in San Francisco reflected the growing diversity of Jewish readers.

Between 1880 and 1925, 2.5 million Jews arrived in the United States from Eastern Europe, bringing their hopes and aspirations to what many described as a "promised land" free from the deprivations and pogroms they had suffered from Odessa and Warsaw to Kiev and Istanbul. They would remake America through literature and the arts, and they would create a Yiddish-language press that combined German vernacular with a bit of Hebrew, Slavic, and a touch of American thrown in. The most famous of these newspapers and the most useful was the *Jewish Daily Forward* (*Forverts*).

Abraham Cahan (1860–1951) advised his readers to send their children to college in his first edition as publisher of the *Jewish Daily Forward* on March 16, 1902, but he warned of the danger of disloyalty to the family. For fifty years, Cahan dispensed wisdom and fatherly advice through his "bintel briefs" to a nationwide readership that soared to more than a quarter million. The Yiddish-language daily was a major socializer of the more than one million Jews who settled on New York City's Lower East Side in the three decades leading to World War I, a period that saw seventeen million immigrants settle in the United States. The *Forward* facilitated the often uncomfortable adjustment to urban living for Jewish immigrants, while seeking to strengthen the community's political, cultural, and religious institutions. When a fire at the Triangle factory killed 146 garment workers on March 25, 1911, the paper posted a picture of Becky Kessler, a nineteen-year-old who perished in the flames a week before her wedding. The edition captured the mourning throughout New York's Jewish Quarter.

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, America's Jewish press was riveted on the fate of the Jewish remnant in Europe who had survived Hitler's ovens. Two years after the fighting was finished, 800,000 displaced Jews still had no home to return to. By the spring of 1947, more than one hundred Jewish periodicals were showing solidarity with the Jewish state movement. This was not by accident. The American Zionist Emergency Council, led by Cleveland Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver (1893–1963), culminated years of agitation through an "Action for Palestine" week involving publicity and protest in fifty-seven cities across America, demanding the Truman administration support the creation of a homeland for the Jewish remnant left in displaced person camps throughout Europe. Aply aided by the Jewish Telegraph Agency, which had been launched by Boris Smolar (1897–1986) in 1917, Nathan Ziprin's Seven Arts Feature Service, begun in 1922,

and J. L. Teller's (1912–1972) Palcor News Service, which had served the Jewish English language press since 1932, Zionists organized many of the nation's 4,500 Jewish congregations, network radio commentators and newspaper columnists, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews to support a United Nations–brokered partition of Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish states. “The United States has the power to command,” Boston's *Jewish Advocate* argued, but “she hesitates to do so.” A year's worth of intense lobbying would lead to the creation of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948. “Two thousand years of statelessness ends!” proclaimed *The American Hebrew*. “Greetings to you!” cried the *B'nai Brith Messenger* of Los Angeles. The “dream of a people,” the *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* reported, had at last been realized.

The Catholic Press

Father Gabriel Richard (1767–1832), a Catholic missionary, began publishing *The Michigan Essay, or Impartial Observer*, a civic and spiritual sentinel, in frontier Detroit in 1809. This early epistle appeared sixteen years before the Erie Canal opened the Great Lakes to shipping and twenty-eight years before Michigan became a state. Charleston launched its Catholic newspaper in 1822. On November 30 of that year, Philadelphia's first Catholic newspaper appeared, *The Catholic Herald and Weekly Register*. New York City's Catholics brought out *Truth Teller*, beginning on April 2, 1825. *The Pilot*, the official newspaper of Boston's archdiocese, first saw light in 1829 under the name *The Jesuit, or Catholic Sentinel*. Its purpose, described on January 2, 1836, was to articulate Catholic Church doctrine so that it can be explained and defended. During the colonial period, there were fewer than thirty thousand Catholics living in America. By the time of the Louisiana Purchase, there were fewer than fifty thousand. The number, however, was ten times that by 1830. Industrialization and urbanization pushed the Catholic population in the United States to 3.5 million by 1870 and more than twice that a decade later. Anti-immigrant nativists and Know-Nothings favored a curb on immigration based on their fear that the nation was becoming too Catholic. The Catholic press, in its many voices, was quick to take up that challenge.

In the first hundred years of its existence, the Catholic press in the United States grew to include 550 periodicals—a combination of dailies, weeklies, and monthlies. Two thirds of these were printed in English, 51 in German, 24 in French, and 24 in Polish. Early leading papers included Cincinnati's *Catholic Telegraph*, first appearing in 1831; *The Shepherd of the*

Valley, started in St. Louis in 1832; Louisville's *Catholic Advocate*, initiated in 1835; *The Catholic Mirror*, begun in Baltimore in 1849; the *New Orleans Morning Star*, started in 1867; and Chicago's *New World* in 1892. By 1911, the Catholic Press Association was formed to nationally syndicate news and opinion of interest to the nation's expanding Catholic readership.

Early Catholic magazines included Baltimore's *Metropolitan, or Catholic Monthly Magazine*, first appearing in January 1830. *The Religious Cabinet* was a popular monthly edited by Rev. Charles I. White (1807–1878) and Rev. James Dolan, starting in January 1842. *Catholic World* has been published by Isaac Thomas Hecker (1819–1888) and successive Paulist Fathers since 1865. American Jesuits began publishing *America* in New York City in 1909, advertising itself as the magazine for “thinking Catholics.” It has focused on political and cultural life in America, eventually disagreeing with church teaching on priestly celibacy, homosexual rights, and the role of women in the church. Lay Catholics launched *Commonweal* in 1924 as a nondogmatic review of religion, politics, and culture. Edward Rice (1918–2001), Robert Lax (1915–2000), and Thomas Merton (1915–1968), friends since their days at Columbia University, founded *Jubilee* magazine in 1953 in an effort to provide a forum for addressing issues confronting the Church. Perhaps no one in the history of the Catholic press addressed those issues more boldly than Dorothy Day.

On May Day 1933, Dorothy Day (1897–1980), a thirty-five-year-old unwed mother who had recently converted to Catholicism, could be seen in New York City's Union Square hawking the first issue of the eight-page, one penny *Catholic Worker*. By the end of the year, the circulation for the paper that had first been produced in Day's kitchen, soared to 100,000. By then, the Depression-era paper had become a movement, offering soup kitchens and shelters to the down and out. Three years later, thirty-three Catholic Worker homes were operating. On the eve of World War II, circulation stood at 190,000. The paper's pacifism, however, led many Catholic bishops to ban it. Three quarters of its readership was lost. Day remained adamant that the paper's manifesto was the Sermon on the Mount. Day lived to see the day when those same bishops would praise her peace advocacy and commitment to social justice for the despised and poor, comparing her to Gandhi and King. Day edited the *Catholic Worker* for forty-seven years.

By 1960, the combined circulation of the Catholic press—its 130 newspapers and 370 magazines—had risen to 27 million. In the twenty-first century, Hispanics would

enlarge America's Catholic population to 65 million of the nation's 300 million citizens, creating a Spanish-language press aimed at strengthening the spiritual and secular interests of increasingly diverse communities. Many of the nation's Catholics were served by a Catholic Press Association and its six hundred member organizations that sought to understand and represent the diversity of communities.

Protestant Periodicals

Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) was eighty-six when Joseph Pulitzer's (1847–1911) *New York World* in 1907 claimed only "hysterical women and weak-minded men" took Christian Science seriously. On November 25, 1908, Eddy wrote the lead editorial in the first issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*, affirming the paper's purpose to bless mankind and not harm anyone. One hundred years later, the newspaper she started had won the Pulitzer Prize seven times for journalistic excellence.

Christian Century first appeared in 1884 as a Disciples of Christ denominational magazine in Des Moines, Iowa. *The Christian Oracle* was moved to Chicago in 1900 and was rechristened rather optimistically by Rev. George A. Campbell, who insisted the twentieth century be made a Christian century. Under Charles Clayton Morrison's (1874–1966) editorial leadership, the magazine became a leading voice for liberal Christianity, articulating a vision of a Social Gospel that applied Christian ethics to social problems through the writing of Washington Gladden (1836–1918), Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918), and Jane Addams (1860–1935).

Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971), a highly regarded professor at Union Theological Seminary, was alarmed by what he considered liberal Christianity's inability to counter the dark forces of fascism. Supported by Henry Sloane Coffin (1877–1954), Henry Luce (1898–1967), Paul Tillich (1886–1965), Francis Pickens Miller (1895–1978), and John Foster Dulles (1888–1959), he made the Christian case against Hitler through the pages of *Christianity and Crisis*, commenced on the eve of U.S. entrance into World War II. Ceasing publication in 1993 when its thirteen thousand readers were not enough to cover costs, critics claimed it hadn't outgrown the predictable protests of the 1960s. After the war, Niebuhr and other Christian "realists" developed the case for "just wars," largely supporting the American military buildup during the Cold War and the theoretical use of nuclear weapons to deter the forcible spread of communism.

Christianity Today, begun by evangelist Billy Graham (1918–) in 1956, was another Christian counterpoint to

Christian Century. Under the editorial leadership of Carl F. H. Henry (1913–2003) and Kenneth Kantzer (1917–2002), the magazine won a circulation of 150,000 by being evangelical in its theology and progressive in matters of social policy. It developed a wide readership in the nation's growing evangelical communities. *Sojourners* magazine, originally titled *The Post-American* when it premiered in 1971, saw a biblical call to social justice as transcending purely parochial politics. Jim Wallis (1948–), the magazine's founder, has emphasized evangelical obligations to protect the planet and care for its poor. In July 1983, Dr. James Dobson (1936–) brought out the first issue of *Focus on the Family* magazine, a publication that supplemented Dobson's popular daily radio broadcast. It soared to a circulation of more than one million in five years with its emphasis on the permanence of marriage, the value of children, and the sanctity of human life. *First Things*, a monthly journal of religion, culture, and public life, first appeared in 1990, the child of founding editor Richard John Neuhaus (1936–2009), a Lutheran pastor who became a Catholic priest, after being mentored by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972). The publication's mission statement aimed at a "religiously informed public philosophy for the ordering of society." Neuhaus promoted ecumenical dialog but not at the loss of his strong stand against abortion and for the dignity of the individual. He became an advisor to President George W. Bush (1946–) on faith-based policy initiatives and stem cell research.

Old-Time Religion and Online Religion

In the analog days, old-time religion was good enough for many Americans. They went to the church and sang the hymns of their parents and their parents' parents. In the digital days of the twenty-first century, all this has changed. Pew researchers found that barely one in ten churches had gone online in 1998, while nearly half had four years later. In the decade that followed, a cottage industry of companies emerged to help churches go digital. And not only churches, but the "Emergent Church" found the Web a perfect place to push its postmodern egalitarian ecclesiology. Its members often met and worshipped virtually.

A wide range of religions could also be found amping up their Web presence. Hare Krishna has its own site, along with an expanding Hindu series of sites that include commentaries on Vedic Sanskrit hymns and the laws of Manu. Islamic followers can download daily prayers or get an Imam to answer a question or issue a fatwa. Ummah.com's chat room organizes Muslims worldwide. The Haredi

or Ultra-Orthodox Jew has found his way to the Web. The J-blog unites the Jewish blogging community. The Church of Scientology site encourages users to take a personality test. *Killing the Buddha* is an online literary magazine about religion. Interfaith coalitions are forged through Odyssey Networks and its various online offspring. Religion News Service rolled out a Religion News Blog to facilitate conversation on religion and ethics.

Hyperreal religion became, by the first decade of the twenty-first century, a way to presumably experience spirituality at a distance, down to White Metal Music and biblically based video games for kids. God.com sought to help visitors to make sense of their lives. Adherents.com aggregated information on nearly five thousand faith groups. Beliefnet became a multifaith belief community owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, offering interactive boards designed to promote interfaith dialog. Its "Soulmatch" sought to bring together men and women of like-minded faith.

Americans have long taken their faith very seriously, and the religious press has been an indispensable part of that inquiry. We may not have the faith of our fathers, but we have faith. More than nine in ten Americans believed in the existence of God a decade into the twenty-first century, roughly the same number as those professing faith in the first decade of the twentieth. What has changed is that Americans are less sure of their faith. The digital landscape surrounds Americans with a wide range of virtual choices, as the press has since the settlement's beginning. Throughout this time, the religious press has encouraged a devotional life dedicated to a higher purpose than mere existence.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Benevolent Empire; Celebrity Culture; Christian Science; The Electronic Church; Emerging Church Movement; Freedom, Religious; Fundamentalism; Internet; Journalism; Literature* entries; *Mainline Protestants; Missions: Native American; Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Preaching; Radio; Revivalism: Twentieth Century to the Present; Social Reform; Television; Zionism.*

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Religious Right

The religious right in the United States is a social movement among theological conservatives who advocate moral reform through political action. It emerged in the 1970s and became a powerful force affecting elections, party politics, public rhetoric, legislation, policies, and practices at all levels of government and society. It draws adherents from a wide range of religious backgrounds, including Catholics, Mormons, and Jews, but its base as an organized movement and mobilized constituency is overwhelmingly composed of white evangelical Protestants.

In the 1980s a parallel religious right movement emerged in Canada, but it was, and remains, relatively weak, in part because evangelicals compose less than a tenth of the population of Canada, while they are about a quarter of the U.S. population. Organizations in Canada that mobilized religiously conservative support for traditional gender roles, marriage, and family and against abortion and same-sex marriage are predominantly Catholic. They include REAL Women of Canada, Campaign Life Coalition, and LifeCanada. The most

visible venue of Protestant political activism, the Christian Heritage Party of Canada (CHP), fields political candidates and advocates policies based on biblical ethics. A CHP candidate has never been elected a member of parliament, and the majority of Canadians continue to support laws guaranteeing reproductive rights and legalizing same-sex marriage despite efforts to persuade them otherwise.

The religious right is sometimes called the Christian Right in both the United States and Canada. In the United States, not all evangelical Protestants identify with the religious right. Over time its evangelical critics have increased in number and visibility, as have its other critics, both religious and secular. As of 2009 the religious right remained a significant political and social force in the United States, especially within the Republican Party and during national elections, and on the local and state level in certain parts of the country. Overall, however, its power and influence as a movement appear to be waning. While its legislative gains and policy effects fell short of movement goals, the religious right has sufficiently institutionalized itself to endure for some time as a lobby on behalf of socially and morally conservative reform. It also permanently altered the definition of America as a secular nation.

For much of American history public activism among Protestants, including theological conservatives, was normative, so understanding the emergence of the religious right requires an account of how it came to be seen as problematic as well as an account of its immediate historical antecedents.

Historical Background

In nineteenth-century America theologically conservative Protestants were not a distinct subset of Protestants, nor were there clear denominational lines between evangelicals and other kinds of Protestants. The colonial division between established and dissenting churches receded after 1800; most Protestants were theologically conservative and considered the Bible authoritative, and many partook of the revivalistic ethos that characterized the nineteenth century. Protestants in general appealed to the doctrine of the separation of church and state to restrict Catholic participation in politics, but not their own.

As individuals, ministers, churches, denominations, and interdenominational organizations, Protestants engaged in a wide range of social and political reform activities during the nineteenth century. Northern Protestants fought for the abolition of slavery and women's rights, and everywhere they engaged in countless public battles on state and local levels

over temperance and Prohibition, Sunday laws, lotteries, gambling, prostitution, blasphemy, dueling, freemasonry, religious and public education, and immigration. Protestants generally saw themselves as model citizens, as free, independent, and morally upright individuals with a mandate to reform American society in God's image.

Significant divisions among Protestants regarding public activism gradually emerged during this period, first over slavery and later over the issue of biblical hermeneutics. Before the Civil War, southern preachers who defended slavery developed a polemic against the activist preaching of abolitionist preachers, most of whom were northern. After the Civil War, a different network of mostly northern preachers took it upon themselves to defend the literal truth of the Bible against modernist interpretations. Their literalistic interpretation of Revelations, called dispensationalism, increasingly led them to urge their church people to withdraw from efforts to reform "the world." The disagreements over slavery became so acute that major denominations split in the decades before the Civil War; in the 1920s and 1930s the denominations split and splintered anew over the infallibility of the Bible. The splits institutionalized the slowly growing sense of division among American Protestants, a sense that there were two Protestant camps on the issue of the church's public role: one, a generally progressive camp in favor of it; the other, a generally conservative camp that viewed social concerns of any kind with suspicion or disdain. Most Protestants did not identify strongly with one camp or the other, but those who did dominated public discussions whenever religious concerns were raised.

Before the emergence of the religious right, the last major campaign by those Protestants in retreat from public life was an effort to prohibit the teaching of evolution in public schools in a number of states during the 1920s. The campaign, which they saw as a defense of the truth of the Bible, culminated in the Scopes trial, which challenged the law against teaching evolution in Tennessee in 1925. John T. Scopes, a high school biology teacher, was convicted and fined for teaching evolution, but the trial—the first trial to be broadcast live nationally over radio—was a spectacular public relations debacle for the defenders of the infallibility of the Bible, who were by then known as fundamentalists. In its wake, fundamentalist factions formed their own networks and denominations and developed a powerful "separatist" polemic against worldly engagement of any kind, including politics and social reform. From 1925 to 1975 Pentecostals and many Bible-believing

Protestants who were more moderate regarding the issue of biblical infallibility became de facto allies of the fundamentalists in that they too largely abstained from the kind of public activism that had routinely characterized Protestantism during the nineteenth century.

Other Protestants, including those open to, or at least not actively hostile to, modern biblical hermeneutics, carried on and rearticulated the nineteenth-century tradition of Protestant political and social activism, most notably as “the Social gospel.” These Protestant activists, most of them northerners, were particularly concerned about the social problems created by industrialization and urbanization and joined with others—Catholics, Jews, and the Progressive movement—to address them. They promoted unionization, better working conditions, public health measures, access to schooling for the poor, and low-cost housing. They also opposed racial segregation, established settlement houses, and inspired many community-based organizations and charities such as the YMCA and the Salvation Army. Such efforts waned after 1930, but the power of Social Gospel ideas waxed as they were folded into the civil religion of the federal government by successive administrations between the 1930s and the 1960s, so much so that one scholar dubbed the period “the Social Gospel at high tide.”

The Social Gospel may have been a source of inspiration for some of the reform efforts between the 1930s and the 1960s, but many Americans experienced the period as one of increasing secularization, not Protestant activism. The prominent liberal theologian Harvey Cox argued in 1965 that secularization, which he defined as the decline in the public power of religious institutions, meant that the church needed to learn to speak of God in secular ways and to shift its focus from its own institutions and rituals to the social concerns of “the secular city.” Academics and journalists wrote about secularization in similar terms, as if it were a natural by-product of modernity. Religious communities that survived would be those that accommodated. Those that did not accommodate, that held firm instead to traditional notions of piety and belief, would wither away or be marginalized and were certainly unfit for public life.

Antecedents: 1948 to 1979

In retrospect it is clear that conservative Protestantism, far from withering away, gathered strength in the decades following the Scopes trial. Fundamentalist, Pentecostal, and other conservative Protestants developed a powerful infrastructure of local, regional, and national institutions and networks that sustained and elaborated the world in their

terms. Nor were they completely inert politically. The religious right did not emerge as a self-conscious, organized, national movement until the late 1970s, but especially in the decades after World War II, a great deal of groundwork was laid and experience accumulated that eventually coalesced into the national movement.

Before World War II fundamentalist Protestants engaged in scattered local public battles “to constrain evils” such as gambling, liquor, and pornography. A few preachers, most notably Gerald B. Winrod (1900–1957) and Gerald L. K. Smith (1898–1976), earned national reputations as politically active, anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi demagogues. After World War II another raft of politically outspoken fundamentalist leaders emerged, including Carl McIntire (1906–2002), Fred Schwarz (1913–2009), and Billy James Hargis (1925–2004). Reaching large audiences via crusades, radio, and the written word, they preached against communism abroad and at home, and they updated, intensified, and expanded a Bible-based critique of liberalism. At the same time, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, moderate fundamentalists crafted a more accommodating public presence and voice in the form of institutions like the National Association of Evangelicals, the magazine *Christianity Today*, and the Fellowship Foundation, which started the National Prayer Breakfast in 1953. The crusade evangelist Billy Graham came to stand for this more world-accommodating presence as he befriended presidents and resisted racial segregation and his fundamentalist brethren’s hyper-separatism, even as he also preached against communism, immorality, and unbelief. To mark their difference, these fundamentalists began to call themselves “evangelicals.”

In addition, conservative Protestants mobilized against the liberal social movements of the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s when they struck close to home. Prominent fundamentalist preachers spoke out against civil rights and the desegregation of local schools, and many of the Christian day schools and colleges started during the 1960s were intended to be alternative schools for whites only. These efforts led to skirmishes with the government at various levels into the 1970s and 1980s as regulations barring racial discrimination proliferated and impinged upon the densely textured and sheltered social worlds conservative Protestants had crafted for themselves and their children.

Conservative Protestants’ sense of being under siege escalated as the modern women’s movement unfolded, the anti-war movement built up, homosexuals organized to gain respect and rights, and many countercultural fashions, attitudes, and practices mainstreamed. In 1972 conservative

activist Phyllis Schlafly (1924–) formed the national grassroots organization Eagle Forum to turn back the nearly successful effort in the 1970s to pass the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which would have prohibited discrimination based on sex. With roots in the anticommunist activism of the 1960s and still active today, Eagle Forum was a forerunner of religious right organizations founded by mostly male preachers a few years later and was particularly successful in allying conservative Catholics and Protestants. The first religiously motivated campaign against gay rights was also organized by a woman, Anita Bryant, in Dade County, Florida, in 1977, and she went on to lead campaigns to repeal ordinances barring discrimination based on sexual orientation in cities, counties, and states around the country. Conservative Protestants did not organize a coherent campaign in support of the Vietnam War, but during the late 1960s and into the 1970s their revivals and rallies took on an increasingly patriotic aspect. The fundamentalist Baptist preacher who would eventually lead the Moral Majority, Jerry Falwell (1933–2007), got his start as a political preacher leading “I Love America” and “America, You’re Too Young to Die” rallies festooned in red, white, and blue all over the country in the mid-1970s.

Another front was the public school textbook and curriculum reform movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Texas grassroots activists Mel and Norma Gabler campaigned so effectively against textbooks that they perceived to be anti-Christian, anti-family, and anti-American that many publishers sent them drafts of textbooks for review before they were published. Conservative Protestants helped to organize local campaigns to resist new curricula in history, biology, the social sciences, and health, some of them attracting considerable national attention. Two anticommunist organizations that formed in the 1950s, the John Birch Society and the Reverend Billy James Hargis’s Christian Crusade, helped to organize a fight against the sex education curriculum in Anaheim, California, in 1968, which allied conservative Catholics and Protestants against liberal educators and the “sexual revolution.” In 1974 the wife of a fundamentalist preacher in Kanawha County, West Virginia, charged that the literature textbooks selected by the Board of Education for elementary school students were “filthy, disgusting trash, unpatriotic and unduly favoring blacks.” With the help of the Gablers, the conservative Heritage Foundation, the John Birch Society, and other organizations, she and other outraged parents organized a year-long campaign of widely publicized, sometimes violent, religiously motivated protests

and boycotts that led most county schools to revert to textbooks used in the 1940s. New science curricula and textbooks created in the wake of the Soviet Union’s launching of the first satellite, *Sputnik*, in 1957 placed evolution at the center of biology education, and they sparked protests, legal battles, and, beginning in Tennessee in 1973, campaigns to require the teaching of creation science. In the early 1970s the National Science Foundation (NSF)–funded effort to reform the teaching of social studies in the fifth and sixth grades, “Man: A Course of Study,” drew escalating protests from religious conservatives, culminating in Arizona Republican representative John B. Conlan’s denunciation of the program before Congress and an end to NSF funding of public school curricular reform.

U. S. Supreme Court decisions, certain federal government regulations, and presidential elections were also venues for growing activism among conservative Protestants during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1962 the Supreme Court banned prayer in public schools and then banned devotional Bible reading in 1963. Well-known conservative Protestant and Catholic leaders denounced the Court rulings, and Carl McIntire, among others, organized prayer rallies, petition drives, and letter-writing campaigns in support of efforts to restore prayer and Bible reading in the schools. The Supreme Court decision in 1973 that decriminalized abortion led conservative Catholics to form in that year the National Right to Life Committee, which lobbied, litigated, and spoke out against abortion rights, but most evangelicals, including their leaders, were not politicized about abortion until Francis Schaeffer, his son Franky, and C. Everett Koop toured in churches around the country in 1979–1980 promoting their film and book, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*

“Government intervention” during the 1960s and 1970s, in particular regulations by the Federal Communications Commission restricting religious broadcasting and threats by the Justice Department and Internal Revenue Service to revoke the tax-exempt status of Christian day schools and colleges, motivated fundamentalist preachers to ally and act politically in unprecedented ways. Some conservative Protestant preachers and leaders who still harbored anti-Catholic sentiments were politicized when John F. Kennedy became the first Catholic president in 1960. Others, along with many of their church people, became involved in the campaign to elect Barry Goldwater in 1964, and they were further energized by the steady shift of southern states into the Republican Party. When Richard Nixon ran for president in 1968, and again in 1972, increasingly open but still

informal support of evangelicals for the Republican Party led a number of religious and political leaders to begin talking about formalizing that alliance. The 1976 presidential campaign of Jimmy Carter, a born-again Christian Democrat, temporarily distracted these schemes at the same time it raised high the profile of evangelicals nationally.

These and many other such campaigns and politicizing experiences between the 1950s and the late 1970s were the crucibles in which diverse kinds of theologically conservative Protestants forged a sense of themselves as cultural and political allies, not only with each other, but also with other like-minded religious and secular conservatives.

Movement Years: Organizations and Leaders

Most observers date the origin of the religious right to the formation of the Moral Majority in 1979. The Moral Majority assumed the position of—and was anointed by the media as—the vanguard organization that politically mobilized conservative Christians. However, in the years immediately preceding and following its formation a growing network of conservative Christian leaders established over a dozen other national organizations that were aimed more and less explicitly at intervening in the political process. Together they generated the religious right as a self-conscious, organized national movement.

Phyllis Schlafly formed Stop ERA (renamed Eagle Forum) in 1972. The evangelist Bill Bright and Representative John B. Conlan created The Christian Embassy in 1974, and they ran a series of workshops to politicize evangelical leaders in 1974–1975. Other important conservative Christian political organizations formed during the late 1970s and early 1980s included the Christian School Action (renamed National Christian Action Coalition), the American Family Association, Christian Voice, the Religious Roundtable, Concerned Women of America, One Nation Under God, Inc., the Freedom Council, the Family Research Council, the Council for National Policy, and the American Coalition for Traditional Values.

During the mid- and late 1970s a number of the leaders of these organizations, namely, Bright, the evangelist James Robison, and lay Christian activists Ed McAteer, Robert Billings, and Robert Grant, explicitly worked on mobilizing the electoral potential of religious conservatives on a national scale. These leaders were joined by a number of other conservative activists in this effort, most notably Howard Phillips, Paul Weyrich, Richard Viguerie, Morton Blackwell, and Terry Dolan. After several organizational

false starts, McAteer, Billings, Phillips, and Weyrich met with Jerry Falwell in 1979 to discuss the leadership of a new national effort to mobilize religious conservatives as political actors. Falwell was already moving towards more political engagement, as were his fellow Baptist pastors Robison, Tim LaHaye, Charles Stanley, and James Kennedy. Behind the scenes, Billy Graham was urging his brethren in the same direction; more openly, so was the theologian Francis Schaeffer. Formation of the Moral Majority as a pastor-led and religiously motivated political organization was thus not considered a big step at the time. The reaction to its formation, on the other hand, was huge. The organization, in part through its audacious name, announced a sea change in the American political scene to conservatives and liberals alike.

Falwell said the Moral Majority was “pro-life, pro-family, pro-moral, and pro-American.” More specifically, it and its kindred organizations opposed homosexuality and gay rights, abortion and other reproductive rights, pornography, sex outside of marriage, the ERA, women’s liberation, new legal rights for children, government regulation of private schools and religious broadcasting, sex education, evolution, secular humanism, and postwar legal reforms guaranteeing the separation of church and state. They organized conferences, workshops, rallies, demonstrations; published and broadcast their messages far and wide; registered voters and got them out to vote; lobbied elected officials at all levels; filed court cases; and participated in party politics. They also expanded and fashioned alternatives to what they opposed, such as crisis pregnancy centers, “save-a-baby” homes for unwed mothers, ex-gay ministries, Christian schools, and creation science curricula.

While the political advocacy organizations were crucial to the mobilization of the religious right, the movement relied on a wide-ranging network of other organizations to produce its effects: on churches, ministries, denominations, pastoral networks, schools, colleges, universities, legal organizations, foundations, think tanks, authors, publishers, and media organizations. The growing network of Christian colleges and universities was especially important as it trained and prepared a whole generation of conservative religious activists who would enter politics and the professions determined to defend and promote their moral values. Most of this infrastructure, like the political organizations, was in the hands of conservative white Protestants, at first, predominantly fundamentalists, with growing support from more moderate evangelicals. More Charismatic and Pentecostal

Protestants were drawn in as Pat Robertson became increasingly visible as a religious right leader during the course of the 1980s. The Moral Majority claimed to have sizable numbers of Catholics, Mormons, and Jews among its members—that is, on its mailing list—but the growing political convergence of diverse religious conservatives after the 1980s was more rhetorical than organizational. That is, it took the form of shared political and moral rhetoric, and it is this rhetoric, as well as the actions infused with it, that generated the effect of a generic religious right.

In its peak years during the 1980s and 1990s there were tens of thousands of religious right activists, or people actively mobilizing others on behalf of religious right agendas. Millions of Americans were adherents of the movement, people who broadly identified with the religious right and its causes. And during national elections many more millions of Americans were influenced to vote on behalf of particular issues or candidates, at least in part, by the religious right.

Movement Years: Campaigns and Activities

A great deal of religious right activism took place at the local and state level. Partisans of the movement ran for school boards, local government offices, and state legislatures. They lobbied local and state school boards regarding curricula, textbooks, and school policies. They gained power and control of many local and state Republican Party organizations and campaigned in local and state elections. Town councils and courts argued over religious displays on public property. State legislatures debated constitutional amendments and laws liberalizing and restricting abortion and gay rights and were lobbied on a long list of issues. There were numberless jeremiads, speeches, rallies, petitions, public debates, protests, and direct actions.

Most of the efforts of religious right organizations, however, focused on the federal government and national elections. The campaigns and agendas of national religious right organizations reshaped public life at the local and state level, especially with respect to the Republican Party, but most of their efforts focused on the federal government and national elections. One early example was Jimmy Carter's White House Conference on the Family in the summer of 1980. That gathering provided religiously conservative women from all over the country the opportunity to unite and mobilize around virtually all the issues on the pro-family agenda. Their mobilization started in 1978 as they worked to become state delegates. Connie Marshner, a conservative

lobbyist who monitored federal family policies, took the lead in mobilizing members of Eagle Forum, Concerned Women of America, the League of Catholic Women, and Right to Life. At the regional and national conferences, pro-family delegates lobbied for conservative, and against liberal and moderate, resolutions on the ERA, reproductive rights, pornography, gay rights, sex education, and the meaning of "family" itself. The resolutions gathered in the final report only marginally reflected their positions, but their resounding presence and voice during the regional and national conferences established pro-family women as a serious political force bent on turning back the gains of feminists, gay rights activists, and the social liberals allied with them.

The other major national platform for the religious right early on was the 1980 election of Ronald Reagan as president. Reagan's statements on abortion and the family had earned the support of some conservative Protestant leaders already, and he won others over in a private meeting in the summer of 1979 when he referred to "what Jesus Christ did for me at Calvary." The religious right was not instrumental in his winning the nomination at the Republican Party Convention in July 1980, but its views helped push the GOP platform to the right. In August Reagan ignited religious right leaders behind him when he told the National Affairs Briefing organized by the Religious Roundtable that he knew that "you can't endorse me, but I want you to know that I endorse you." religious right leaders and their organizations could not actively campaign for him, but they did as much as they could indirectly, and they registered voters—millions of new voters, they claimed—and motivated them to go to the polls and vote for pro-family candidates. Reagan won by a solid margin, and Republicans won a majority in the Senate for the first time since 1954. Reagan probably would have won the presidency without the support of the religious right, but no one had any doubt that it had contributed substantially to his victory.

While the religious right continued to influence public debate, it accomplished relatively little of its legislative agenda during the Reagan years. Bills on abortion, school prayer, tuition tax credits, and "family protection" were eventually proposed, sometimes with President Reagan's initial support, but none of them became law. Religious conservatives were disillusioned by Reagan's appointment of Sandra Day O'Connor to the Supreme Court, given her support for the ERA and abortion rights. The religious right's vision of changing America from the center was further deflated when Dr. C. Everett Koop, Reagan's surgeon general and an

evangelical spokesman with strong pro-life credentials, agreed not to use his post to campaign against abortion and later, in response to the AIDS crisis, recommended the use of condoms by people having sex outside marriage and sex education for children.

Many of the national organizations formed around 1980, including the Moral Majority, Christian Voice, Freedom Council, Religious Roundtable, and the American Coalition of Traditional Values, were dissolved or dormant by the end of 1987. Attention and leadership shifted from the fundamentalist to the charismatic wing of the movement as Pat Robertson gradually emerged as a potential Republican candidate for president in 1988. His stated goal when he founded the Freedom Council in 1981 was to train activists in the 175,000 political precincts in the country. That organization, already producing effects in local and state elections, became Americans for Robertson in 1986–1988 when he ran in the presidential primaries. In 1989 Robertson morphed his network of activists and chapters once again when he created the Christian Coalition and appointed conservative activist Ralph Reed to lead it. The Christian Coalition became the national flagship organization of the religious right during the 1990s. Robertson and Reed's aim was to produce a powerful grassroots organization—not a mailing list of donors and pastors—that could win elections, have an impact at every level of government, and gain lasting power in the Republican Party.

The power and effectiveness of the Christian Coalition grew steadily during the 1990s and then began to wane after the departure of Reed in 1997. Titular leadership of the national movement gradually shifted to James Dobson. Dobson's radio and publishing ministry, Focus on the Family, and national political lobby, Family Research Council, which was run by Gary Bauer and, later, Tony Perkins, became more confrontational during the 1990s, particularly on the issue of gay rights. Two very different organizations, Randall Terry's Operation Rescue, which organized sometimes violent mass protests at abortion clinics, and Bill McCartney's Promise Keepers, which organized peaceful mass rallies of men on behalf of Christian family values, were also important and nationally prominent vehicles of religious right activism and rhetoric during the 1990s.

In 2000 and 2004 white religious conservatives campaigned vigorously in many states for George W. Bush. His electoral victories have been attributed to the support of conservative evangelicals, who voted overwhelmingly for Bush in both elections. During Bush's tenure as president, his language

was often inflected with religious right values, as were his policies and appointments. Among gains registered by his religiously conservative supporters were Bush's appointments to the Supreme Court, federal judgeships, and a wide array of administrative posts; his domestic and international faith-based initiatives; his resistance to scientific expertise and environmental goals; his views and policies toward the Middle East and Islam; the erosion of reproductive and sexual rights and the promotion of traditional marriage and family policies; and several hundred special protections and exemptions for religious groups provided by Congress.

At the same time that the religious right reached its zenith of political influence in the United States, splits among white evangelicals over its activist stance became evident. Some of the original leaders withdrew from or disavowed political activism. No sooner was Bush reelected than new evangelical leaders began to emerge, such as Gregory Boyd, Joel Hunter, Richard Cizik, and Brian McLaren, who actively demurred from partisan politics or wanted to redirect evangelical activism away from "single issue politics" and towards environmental and social justice issues. The latter found themselves sometimes in alliance with older politically moderate and liberal evangelical leaders, such as Jim Wallis, Ronald Sider, and Tony Campolo, and sometimes at odds with Republicans and the Republican Party.

Surveys show that younger evangelicals are disaffected from both the religious right and party politics. Outsiders have subjected the religious right to many critiques since its inception, but during the Bush years their number and influence grew markedly. Even the Democratic Party began making inroads among evangelical voters in 2006 and 2008 in some local and state elections.

Observers of the American religious right declared its demise prematurely on several occasions in the 1980s and 1990s. It may also now be premature to declare the movement over, as have some observers in the wake of Barack Obama's election as president. The national movement's influence over public opinion is in check for the time being, but it will surely continue to have force in elections and ballot initiatives and to affect governmental actions at all levels. Perhaps it is safe to say that, by 2010, the religious right had become, or was becoming, more of an enduring public lobby than a vibrant social movement.

Interpretations and Assessment

Most participants in the religious right explain the movement in terms of the motivations of the individuals who

were mobilized. So do many of the movement's opponents and its observers. They say that religious conservatives mobilized because they felt their values, lifestyles, and worldviews were in danger as a result of social, cultural, and political trends and reforms between the 1950s and 1970s. They became politically active in order to resist those trends and reforms and to bring about new ones that would reflect their values. There are many variations on this elementary way of accounting for the movement, especially in the literatures produced by critics and scholars.

Some observers emphasize the century-long history of conflict between modern/liberal and fundamentalist/conservative Protestants; the role of strong church growth among conservative Protestant, alongside the decline of liberal, and some moderate, churches and denominations; or the waning importance of denominations and the increasing salience of parachurch organizations in defining difference among Protestants. Other observers argue that American society and culture have long been structured by two opposing worldviews, conservative and liberal, and that they broke out in open and protracted "culture wars" during the last half of the twentieth century.

While some see the religious right as a grassroots upwelling of anxiety, fear, anger, or resentment, others emphasize the role of church leaders as persuaders or manipulators and focus on rhetoric and preaching, the role of media technology and the televangelical empires, authoritarian social and personality structures, or particular theologies or ideologies such as biblical literalism, dispensationalism, Christian nationalism, and theocracy. The role of theocracy theologies, such as reconstructionism and dominionism, which call for a Christian state, were particularly prominent themes in the popular critiques of the religious right that proliferated during the presidency of George W. Bush.

Public opinion polls that place people in religious or political/religious categories and assess their voting and opinion patterns abounded during the religious right movement. While some polls were quite sophisticated and pollsters generally modest in their interpretive claims, their journalistic distillations, especially on issues such as abortion and homosexuality, helped foster the popular impression that America was in the grip of a culture war and that voting behavior and opinions on social issues were a simple reflex of religious identity.

Some scholars have concluded that government regulation that impinged on what preachers and grassroots activists

perceived to be strictly religious domains motivated them to become politically active. Other observers see the religious right as a side effect of a broader takeover by conservatives of the Republican Party and the ongoing efforts by the GOP to mobilize evangelicals as an electoral base.

Interpretations such as these have been criticized for dividing all Protestants and the American public into two opposing camps, a mistaken view that contributes to the conflict rather than interprets it. Prevailing interpretations of the American religious right are also remarkably insular and fail to examine the movement in the context of parallel movements in other countries or in relation to broader changes in the political economy and geopolitics. Intellectual grappling with the religious right has succeeded in debilitating a dominant academic paradigm, "the secularization thesis," that equated secularity with modernity and progress. In the long run it may also lead to more scholarly work on American religion in global perspective and contribute to more sophisticated theoretical work on religion, secularity, and the relation of both to other social, cultural, political, and economic practices.

The central accomplishment of the religious right during its movement years was its mobilization of religious conservatives into a relatively coherent and effective political constituency. This was a signal achievement, given five decades of political withdrawal on the part of the majority faction, conservative Protestants, and a much longer history of no contact or hostilities between theologically conservative Protestants and Catholics and Jews. Religious right activists and organizations helped to elect conservatives at all levels of government; to slow or stop a wide array of liberal and moderate reform efforts in government, society, and culture; and to bring about conservative reforms in government policies and programs, the judiciary, education, the economy, foreign policy, political language, and popular culture. The religious right was a, if not the, major force in the political and rhetorical conflicts between conservatives and liberals that dominated much of public life in the United States for three decades. The religious right helped to realign national party politics and generate Republican majorities in many state governments and congressional sessions, and in five presidential elections. Finally, the religious right broke a web of mostly informal restrictions on religious speech in the public arena, in some ways lowered "the wall" of separation between church and state, and broke the spell of America as a strictly "secular nation." At the same time, in spite of all its rhetorical and practical efforts, the

religious right failed to make America into its image of a “Christian nation.”

See also *Benevolent Empire*; *Education: Christian School Movement*; *Emerging Church Movement*; *Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements*; *Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design*; *Feminism*; *Fundamentalism: Contemporary*; *Politics: Twentieth Century*; *Radio*; *Same-Gender Marriage*; *Seeker Churches*; *Sexuality and Sexual Identity*; *Social Reform*; *Supreme Court*.

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Religious Studies

Religious Studies is a shorthand term for the academic study of religions (ASR), most often in autonomous departments in secular colleges or universities. ASR has three core characteristics: it addresses a range of traditions (especially so-called world religions) using multiple disciplinary approaches (typically including some attention to sacred texts and exposure to sociology or anthropology); it is distinguished from indoctrination into any single tradition or training for roles such as priest, rabbi, or missionary; and its current institutional form—organized in the American Academy of Religion (AAR)—is relatively young, having crystallized and established its key institutions in the 1960s.

These characteristics are more like a framework for debate than a foundation for consensus. Those in ASR disagree about its boundaries and priorities, including whether it is a discipline of its own (and if it is, who polices its boundaries) as opposed to a cross-disciplinary field (and if it is, whether it has the coherence required to thrive). They debate how to balance general concepts of religion and comprehensive coverage with grounded particularity and priority-setting. They disagree about the value of claiming objectivity (given that a commitment to any scholarly priorities presupposes a hierarchy of values), how radically to purge Christian agendas, and how much to discourage students from using ASR as a vehicle to explore issues of personal meaning and commitment, insofar as this is consistent with ASR’s standards of evidence. Finally, they propose diverse genealogies—which of ASR’s precursors should be disregarded, acknowledged primarily as dead ends, or built upon for the future.

When exploring how ASR came into being and functions in the early twenty-first century, it’s important to bear in mind that most ASR scholars focus on subjects and modes of analysis that lead them to float between ASR and at least one other discipline (notwithstanding those who consider ASR a self-sufficient discipline within which they can plant both feet). Particular attention is paid here to the way in which the study of religion in U.S. history relates to ASR.

What Does Religious Studies Study?

It is not self-evident what constitutes a “range of traditions” studied in a “multidisciplinary” way. In practice ASR’s subject matter centers on the dominant teachings, rituals, and institutions of so-called world religions—a group that usually starts with Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism before expanding in diverse ways depending on who makes

the list. Expansions might include Chinese and Japanese religions, what used to be called “primitive” or non-literate traditions from outside Europe and Asia (and contemporary forms of these traditions), Sikhs and Zoroastrians, Santería and similar traditions, relatively young religions such as Mormonism and Christian Science, and sometimes abstractions such as “the religion of consumerism” or nationalism.

How does one devise a satisfying account of the “dominant teachings, rituals, and institutions” of even one major tradition? It is difficult to convey the differences within U.S. Protestantism alone over an entire semester—to say nothing of condensing two millennia of global Christianity into a unit in a survey course. Yet ASR often aspires not merely to do so, but to mount as well comparisons between capsule accounts of “Christianity” and other religions. Especially in the nineteenth century, ASR scholars ranked religions within comprehensive evolutionary schemes, usually culminating in liberal Protestantism or traditions with overlapping themes such as Vedānta philosophy within Hinduism. Although most people in ASR repudiate this approach today, traces of it still linger in the underlying logic in survey texts and in background assumptions about what counts as exemplary behavior in global religious dialogues.

In his 1973 book *Interpretation of Cultures*, anthropologist Clifford Geertz made the point that “nothing has done more . . . to discredit cultural analysis than the construction of impeccable depictions of formal order in whose actual existence nobody can quite believe” (p. 18). For all of ASR’s commendable efforts to expand the knowledge of global religions with accurate information, the field has often risked this danger. Do scholars demonstrate minimal competence or disreputable arrogance if they teach about trends in the evolution of human civilization? ASR is unsure. Nevertheless, the trend in ASR, as in anthropology and many other fields, has been to turn from sweeping evolutionary models and abstract taxonomies towards grounded and focused analysis of particular cases—whether using the ethnographic methods stressed by Geertz, other kinds of anthropology that place greater stress on conflict and hybridity, or other modes of analysis.

Diverse Disciplinary Frameworks

The distinction between studying religions as abstract capsules of tradition within evolutionary taxonomies as opposed to thick descriptions of particular groups is only the tip of an iceberg of complexities. ASR unpacks multiple layers of religious experience—psychological, philosophical, ritual, mythic, sociological, ethical, institutional, historical, relations

to the economic and/or ecological modes of production, relations to modes of communication, and so on. This is its major procedural safeguard against treating its subjects in monolithic or excessively abstract ways.

Bradley Herling, in his 2007 book *Beginner’s Guide to Religious Studies*, offered a representative list of theories used to tackle this problem. The book, which began as a Web site of the American Academy of Religion, presents in a single chapter two anthropologists (Geertz and the theorist of ritual, Victor Turner), two psychologists (William James and Rudolf Otto, both with interests in mystical or numinous experience), and two sociologists (Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, who explore how religion relates to social identity and cohesion). Another chapter slices the same pie in a different way: on a continuum between debunkers versus scholars who are critically appreciative of insiders. Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx speak for the debunkers, presenting religious claims as illusory projections rooted in the unconscious and/or material mode of production. At the other pole, theologian Paul Tillich defines religion as “ultimate concern” and Wilfred Cantwell Smith stresses the importance of individual faith. Between these poles lie Carl Jung (a psychologist impressed by the collective and constructive aspects of the unconscious), Ninian Smart (a comparative philosopher known for his analyses of multiple religious dimensions), and Mircea Eliade (an eclectic scholar who pursued cross-cultural comparisons of religious themes, especially “heirophanies,” or manifestations of sacred presences).

Herling also noted emerging interests such as gender and sexuality, war and peace, fundamentalisms, globalization, ecology, race and ethnicity, emerging media, and science. These extend both ASR’s subjects and analytical lenses—for example, they call attention to how each of the theorists listed above is a white male.

Seeking a Workable Umbrella Category

Does ASR have the minimal common language it needs for coherence? The simple fact that many religions appeal to gods, revelations, ancestors, and mysterious presences—phenomena that are often unverifiable through Enlightenment methods—raises complications by itself. Suppose we define “religious data” as ideas and rituals appealing to supernatural presences. Clearly such appeals exist and have consequences in the world; clearly there have been attempts to defend such appeals philosophically. Still, can we study this “scientifically”?

Also, is this definition adequate? Is it inclusive enough to be a neutral frame for comparing at least all “world religions,”

including, for example, atheistic forms of Buddhism and possibly even U.S. nationalism? ASR stresses how ideas and practices directed toward gods are only two dimensions of religious life, and not always the most significant dimensions when we get down to cases. But how can we be sure when we do get down to cases that we are dealing with “religious” ones? Depending on background definitions, ASR may define religion so broadly—for example, as anything that a culture values deeply—that it becomes difficult to find anyone who is less religious than anyone else. Conversely, scholars may define it so narrowly (in an effort to find useful definitions for focused study) that huge territories of what ordinary people call religion (or could fruitfully approach as religious but do not) become invisible within their scholarly frames. Beyond this is a major complication: many languages and societies have no native category corresponding to the term “religion” as it is commonly understood in the United States.

Thus there is ample room for slippage between scholars who define “religious data” in incommensurate ways and scholars who propose to tidy up and police the definitions. The closest thing to consensus is the idea that scholars must use the term “religion” self-consciously, as a second-order definition stipulated by them to organize specific ranges of data for scholarly purposes. There are no self-evident data of “religion” sitting there waiting to be analyzed—or rather there are data of so many kinds, perceptible (or not) under various definitions, that trying to analyze them all guarantees paralysis. Sometimes ASR’s debates about method proceed at off-putting levels of abstraction. Still, we must not underestimate their importance as a language in which to clarify what diverse scholars hope to accomplish and how they relate to each other. Methodological debates are like a train station at the center of a network connecting different parts of the field; being able to navigate around this network is as important as the ability to choose the appropriate track—the one that leads to where the traveler wishes to go.

No one in ASR undertakes to navigate all of the tracks—the point is that the field depends upon interlocking shunts that together cover all of the network, and more. To be effective, ASR scholars must constantly converse. There is a presumption in the field that most people will give reasonable attention to at least two or three layers of at least one or two subjects, with some awareness of how these foci fit within the larger picture.

Mushrooms on a Fallen Tree

As noted above ASR crystallized in the 1960s and 1970s. Sometimes ASR chroniclers speak as if the field was created

almost *ex nihilo*, catalyzed by a U.S. Supreme Court decision dealing with Bible readings in public schools. In 1963, in *Abington v. Schempp*, the Court declared it unconstitutional to teach any single religion (in the sense of indoctrination) but commendable to teach *about* religions. In this creation narrative the Court’s ruling spurred the formation of ASR’s paradigmatic departments in public universities that had had little or no previous religion curricula. These departments quickly displaced and marginalized programs in older church colleges and divinity schools or served as the model for their internal transformation. In this telling ASR is like a mushroom rapidly growing on the trunk of a great fallen tree—or, at least, the sudden flourishing of a plant that has long struggled in the shadow of a now-diminished tree.

But what of this tree, fallen on hard times? Suppose it is not dying at all but in fact its roots are now sending up new offshoots. What is a gardener to do? Prune them? *Abington v. Schempp* seemed to imply that many college Bible courses were of dubious constitutionality. In fact—and not coincidentally—such courses changed overnight into courses *about* the Bible (however much this represented change). The American Academy of Religion came into being in 1963 when the National Association of Bible Instructors (NABI), a more pedagogically minded cousin of the Society of Biblical Literature (which held joint meetings with the AAR until 2008), changed its name. The *Journal of Bible and Religion* was renamed *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* in 1966.

NABI is just one example of the kinds of organizations dominating the discourse on religion—a discourse that was overwhelmingly Protestant and frequently normative—in universities prior to the 1960s. Many schools had Bible chairs that allowed clergy to teach classes for credit. While clergy were rarely on faculty, they retained staunch connections to the universities in a multifaceted network centered on campus ministries and pre-seminary training.

Many scholars have stressed the decline of this network. Often they write in a nostalgic voice, mingled with a touch of defiance in a nod to existing pockets of resistance. Their story begins from the baseline of broad Protestant influence and charts the undoing of this influence through secularization, beginning with the rise of research universities in the late 1800s and increasing with the growth of public education after World War II. It cannot be overstated how thoroughly theology pervaded earlier curricula, which centered on broad liberal knowledge and classics. Prior to the rise of research universities, religious groups founded most U.S. colleges. Often these schools originated as seminaries. Their

presidents were typically clergy, and they featured a capstone class on moral philosophy that was conceived as an integrative matrix of the curriculum. Mandatory chapel was common well into the twentieth century. Measuring from such a baseline, change towards the specialization of knowledge, the rise of science, the stress on professionalism, and the reduced centrality of Protestant values is readily apparent.

Partially overlapping with the nostalgic narrative, but less critical towards secularism and more oriented toward constructive overlaps with ASR, are scholars who chart the internal responses to these changes by established divinity schools. After 1960 divinity schools picked up competition from ASR programs, which were sometimes units in the same universities. The older institutions continued to wield influence, however, either on their own terms or as part of ASR. Indeed, one track within the University of Chicago Divinity School emerged as a flagship ASR program. In this spin, there is no dead tree rotting, but rather an aging tree with both broken limbs and new offshoots all within a garden that is being redesigned. Most people today take the new garden for granted, cultivating their own roots and fruits.

Building a New House on Wider Foundations

While ASR genealogies are prone to trumpet new growth even as they dig up and burn older roots, they too trace histories reaching back to 1960. Imagine a broad-minded dreamer in a musty cabin—a dreamer who envisions a house built on a much wider and far stronger foundation. As the cabin slowly rots around him, our dreamer prepares—and then, in the 1960s, when intellectual opportunity spurred mushrooming growth, the cabin is swallowed whole within a larger structure. The dreamer within, using what had been a marginal subset of theological education, will now set the rules in a new, much bigger, much stronger house.

The dreamer of this story is in fact the Oxford-based scholar of Hindu scriptures, Friedrich Max Müller, who popularized a slogan often repeated in ASR: “He who knows one, knows none.” Max Müller worried that prior to the nineteenth century, the study of religion in Europe and the United States focused almost entirely on Christianity. Although scholars did acknowledge Islam and Judaism, they did not study either carefully, sympathetically, or even accurately. And as for all other religions, they were lumped together into a catchall category dubbed “paganism,” with partial exceptions made for Greek and Roman mythology and the natural religion of “noble savages.” Knowledge of

so-called pagans, in fact, was often little more than ignorance and fantasy projected onto a blank screen.

The career of Max Müller highlighted the importance of language skills for the effective study and translation of ancient Asian religious texts previously unknown to Westerners. The study of ancient texts was integral to the emerging proto-ASR: scholars assumed that canonical texts unlocked the traditions’ core meanings, making study of contemporary practice unnecessary. In spite of his depth of knowledge of Hinduism, Max Müller never visited India. His career illustrates the centrality of British colonialism (and by extension other Western colonialisms) in explaining how such texts became available in the West, why Westerners suddenly cared about them, and how their study was financed—explanations that remain relevant today in an era of corporate globalization.

In the late 1800s Max Müller and kindred philologists (including many who were transforming biblical studies) built a loose alliance with the pioneers of sociology and anthropology of religion, with whom they shared the same evolutionary mindset. These scholars distinguished their work from narrow theological study and unreliable missionary reports. They saw themselves, in the words of Eric Sharpe (1975), not only as scholars of “a Science which compares the origin, structure, and characteristics” of world religions, but also as judges of “their relative superiority and inferiority when regarded as types” (xxi). As such approaches came under attack, there occurred a shift towards the somewhat more focused and less normative “phenomenology” of scholars such as Eliade—what became known as the “history of religions” even though it was often quite abstract and ahistorical compared to work by historians. This approach was roughly equivalent to what Europeans more often called “comparative religion,” with the word “history” signaling its breadth of interests and distinction from self-consciously theological study.

This cohort remained fairly marginal amid those treating religion in U.S. universities, especially during the middle third of the twentieth century. But by the 1960s a variety of factors had converged to force change. This was an era of expansion in higher education, fueled by the GI Bill, the baby boom, and economic prosperity. A pluralist approach to U.S. religion was gaining momentum: the mainstream expanded to become “Protestant/Catholic/Jewish”; Cold War propaganda stressed religious freedom; and a combination of evangelical growth, the civil rights movement, Asian immigration (a factor ASR overwhelmingly stresses),

and a huge influx of Latino/a immigrants combined to de-center liberal Protestants. In this context ASR built a coalition between old-style philologists, social scientists who chafed under their fields' relative inattention to religion, and components of the liberal Protestant curriculum. Together they staked a claim to a solid share of resources.

Concerns about Pre-Columbian America and Questions of Value

Everyone involved with ASR wants to criticize and then move beyond one or another aspect of the past: anti-pluralist Christian propaganda, unpersuasive generalizations, intersections with colonialism, racist forms of evolutionary theory, and so on. However, there is limited consensus about which parts to purge and which to revise and upgrade.

For those with a special interest in studying American religions within ASR, one particular concern—consider it either an alarming deficit or an unmatched opportunity for an aspiring Americanist—is ASR's frequent neglect and distortion of pre-Columbian America, especially the largest and most literate traditions of Meso-America. Often these traditions are absent in surveys, and departments give such specialization low priority when hiring faculty. When they are treated, they often are not considered “world” traditions at all, but rather lumped in with small-scale (“less evolved”) societies and non-literate traditions. Moreover, ASR treatments of living Native religions—both Meso-American and North American—downplay blends with Christianity, such as Mayan popular Catholicism. Native religions are commonly represented as either noble but extinct aspects of non-literate cultures or as minor footnotes within studies of Christianity. On the brighter side, compared to kindred disciplines ASR is in a strong position to rethink the place of Meso-America within its larger vision.

A second concern is ASR's enduring polemics between theology and science. Beyond two basic points that both sides have long presupposed—that ASR rejects indoctrination and that it attempts an analytical standpoint that is “outside” any one tradition—the discourse is notably stale, and perhaps best ignored in the hope that it will go away. This is true not least because many of ASR's scholars who beat the drums most loudly against “theology” consider it a point of pride not to read contemporary academic theologians (or, more precisely, to define “theology” in a way that declares the most interesting theologians irrelevant). Meanwhile their polemics against norms lead to paralysis when discussing their own priorities.

Nevertheless, as long as ASR includes Christianity in its curriculum, treats ethics as a dimension of religion, or wishes to discuss its values and priorities openly—why it is better to study ASR or one of its subfields over anything else—questions about normative issues are unlikely to disappear. There seems to be little choice other than to tackle them, despite their historical baggage.

ASR's Priorities and Studying American Religions

A further concern is how ASR's drive toward balance, both among a range of global traditions and between ancient and contemporary issues, impacts the study of American religions. In 1965 a seven-person ASR faculty would likely have approximated the chapters in *Religion*, Paul Ramsey's famous study of the field: Old Testament, Christian Origins, History of Christianity, Ethics, Theology, Philosophy of Religion, and Comparative Religion. Today the same department might include two scholars from among Hebrew Scripture, Early Christianity, or the Ancient Near East; two from among Religious Thought, Ethics, or History of Western Religions (including specialists on the United States); plus three from all other areas, including Islam, religions of South and East Asia, and religions of the Southern Hemisphere. Large departments have room to maneuver; smaller ones might find it necessary to shrink this scenario to just one professor each for Bible, Western Religion, and everything else.

What will happen as those original seven faculty members gradually retire? Along with external pressure to economize and downsize, there would likely be internal pressure to rebalance. How can Western Religions command four of seven positions, while forcing choices like Africa versus China or Hinduism versus Islam? One argument that might make sense is that such a balance would be appropriate for a department in the contemporary United States that teaches predominantly Christian students. However, within ASR's dominant logic, it is easier to imagine that this department would be left with a single scholar charged with “covering” all Western religion since the Roman Empire and all American religions. Related pressures apply to course offerings in ASR majors. Even in a large department with ample courses, a curriculum is likely to require a methods course, balance between ancient and modern studies, and broad coverage of global traditions. How much time is left, then, to concentrate on the wide range of American material?

The prospects for focusing on U.S. religion are not necessarily brighter in History or American Studies. History is often narrower in disciplinary range; American Studies is

often more diffuse. Both tend to be standoffish toward religion and weak on global issues. In a small department a single professor again might be the sole specialist in U.S. religions. Nevertheless, she or he is less likely to be the only scholar offering courses on the United States, and a U.S. history survey would almost certainly be a prerequisite to such coursework. While ASR scholars who specialize in the United States (all of it!) may be viewed by their ASR colleagues as fairly narrow in their scope, historians would likely perceive them as dangerously so. And while an undergraduate ASR major concentrating on U.S. materials might hit a ceiling after just three or four courses (and likely rouse suspicions of excessive focus on Christianity in the process), a history major might consider four courses the bare minimum upon which to build his or her degree. In American Studies four courses would not even constitute a minor. Thus it may be difficult for ASR to make good on its claim to be a framework for studying U.S. materials in reasonable depth in an interdisciplinary manner—at least at the undergraduate level or outside of a double major.

There are pros and cons all around. ASR pairs well as a double major with a number of other fields. Its treatments of U.S. religious diversity and the religious dimensions of global issues are often ahead of the curve compared to other disciplines, its methodological discussions often richer. Still, students and scholars in ASR may be disadvantaged when it comes to basing their subjects within a broader context.

The Promise of ASR

ASR is impressive when judged both by its efforts to promote accurate knowledge of global religions and by its development of a strong genealogy derived from its component parts. As a framework for studying American religions—and by extension other topics—ASR has great potential. Its range of subjects and analytical approaches can complement each other in an appealing combination of structure and flexibility.

Nevertheless, some aspects of ASR are more helpful than others. ASR's threefold legacy—stressing foundational texts, building claims to legitimacy in its drive towards comprehensive coverage, and its de-centering of Christianity—compels students of American religions to sometimes maneuver within uncomfortable limits. How ASR responds to these issues will strongly impact the quality of its future contributions to the field. Much hinges on the specific priorities and modes of analysis from department to department and scholar to scholar.

See also *Economics; Education: Colleges and Universities; Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches; Feminist Studies; Geographical Approaches; Historical Approaches; History of Religions, Approaches; Philosophy; Sociological Approaches.*

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Religious Thought

Religious thought encompasses many forms of reflection on ultimate reality and humans' relationship to it. It is expressed in theological treatises as well as in popular discourse including songs, sermons, and novels. It is shaped not only by trained theologians but also by clergy, untrained laity, and those outside organized religion. Among America's many religious traditions, the importance of intellectual discourse varies widely. In some, such as Reformed Christianity, theology is of central importance. In others, including Judaism and Native American religions, practice is more important than intellectual reflection, and ideas are often conveyed through stories.

Although religious thought encompasses myriad issues, three topics stand out. The first concerns the proper relationship between humans and ultimate reality. In Christianity, this is the question of salvation: What must humans do to

attain fellowship with God? What is Jesus' role in this salvation? Although some other religions are less concerned with life after death, they address analogous questions about the goal of human life.

The second topic concerns the ordering of society. For American Christianity, this is best understood in terms of two categories. First, what is the church? How are individuals related to it? What is its proper relationship to government and social institutions? Second, how can the reign of God be made more present on earth? Other religions consider similar issues. Jews, for example, reflect on the nature of the Jewish people, the covenant community. All religions reflect on ethical issues and the place of their community amid America's religious diversity.

The third major topic concerns the authority of scripture and religious tradition. Reason, scientific discoveries, historical research, and the experience of individuals in America have all challenged traditional ideas. At its simplest this created divisions between conservatives who defended traditional ideas and liberals who revised them. On closer inspection, however, the situation is considerably more complex. Reason, science, and history were used both to defend and to revise tradition.

The history of religious thought is shaped by America's many religious traditions and their various reflections on these topics as they encountered one another and major cultural, religious, and intellectual movements including evangelicalism, the Enlightenment, romanticism, modernism, and postmodernism. The extent to which beliefs changed over time varied among traditions. The focus here is on major movements and trends in religious thought throughout American history. Other entries provide details on traditions and movements mentioned here.

Colonial Theology

American religious thought began with Native Americans. Native American thought in the colonial era was by no means monolithic, but typically it did not emphasize a sharp distinction between the natural and supernatural worlds. North American Indians expressed their religious ideas not in exhortations or sermons but in sacred stories. These emphasized the interaction between humans, nature, and spiritual beings. Their telling of sacred stories continued to develop as they responded to the new world Europeans had brought them. In the nineteenth century, the experience of colonization gave rise to several revitalization movements that emphasized a common identity.

Some viewed them as a return to a newly presented account of traditional ways. Others such as the Ghost Dance in the late nineteenth century incorporated images and ideas from Anglo-American culture and religion in presenting a future in which American Indians were free from the afflictions of colonialism.

Africans also brought to America religious reflection expressed in narrative. Many believed in a high god who had created all things, along with many secondary deities or spirits more intimately involved with daily lives of humans. Despite the brutality of slavery, distinctively African religious ideas survived and were incorporated into forms of Christianity. They also developed into a number of religions shaped by the colonial experience that blended African and Roman Catholic practices to form distinctive African American religions, including Cuban Santería and Haitian vodun.

Early American Christian thought was shaped to some degree by the encounter with Native Americans and the challenges of transplanting European civilization, but it was primarily shaped by the legacy of the reformations of the sixteenth century. In the Catholic decrees of the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the Lutheran Formula of Concord (1577), and the Calvinist Westminster Confession (1648), the various traditions systematically presented their teachings. This emphasis on confessional boundaries discouraged innovation in religious thought. The emphasis was on the catechesis of church members and missions to non-Christians. Among Catholics the most significant development was the critique of the enslavement of Native Americans presented by Bartolomé de las Casas (1484–1566) in *The Only Way* (1537) and other works based on his experience in the Caribbean and Mexico.

Among Protestants, the most significant thought took place in Puritan New England. This highly educated community immigrated to establish churches and civil government that conformed to their understanding of biblical principles. Like others in the Reformed tradition, they taught that God's sovereign grace determined who would be saved. This teaching minimized the role of humans in salvation. Some pastor-theologians including Thomas Shepard (1604–1649) worried that this would become a license for sin and instructed people to prepare for salvation using the means of grace. Others, including John Cotton (1584–1652), believed this emphasis on preparation undercut the doctrine of free grace. Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643), a member of Cotton's Boston congregation, sided with him and became a

major voice in this debate. Tried for challenging the authority of clergy in 1637, she insisted that God revealed to her who was elect. For this claim, along with teaching gatherings of men and women, she was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Hutchinson's claim of inner spiritual illumination was similar to the doctrine of "inner light" advanced a little over a decade later by George Fox (1624–1691) and the Society of Friends, or Quakers. Beginning in England, Quakers quickly spread to America, where they were persecuted in Massachusetts but found refuge in Pennsylvania, established by Quaker William Penn (1644–1718). The conflict between personal experience and external authority became an enduring theme.

Puritans also divided over their doctrine of the church. The majority sought to combine congregational church government with a civil government that enforced religious teachings. Roger Williams (1603–1683) rejected this awkward combination, insisting that churches could only baptize professing believers, not infants, and that the civil government did not have the right to enforce religious obligations. Williams founded Rhode Island on this principle of religious freedom. He also started America's first Baptist church. His *Bloudy Tenent of Persecution* (1644) resulted from his decade-long debate with John Cotton.

Puritan thought was shaped by the Bible, reason, and a lively interest in miraculous "wonders." All three were displayed in the writings of Cotton Mather (1663–1728), a Boston clergyman who served as president of Harvard College. His *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702) followed biblical examples in its attempt to trace the hand of God in the history of New England. In *The Christian Philosopher* (1721), he sought to demonstrate the harmony between science and religion. He also made one of the first American contributions to ethics in *Bonifacius* (1710). Other New England theologians in the early eighteenth century, such as Boston pastor Benjamin Colman (1673–1747), moderated their Calvinism through an increased emphasis on theology based on reason, logic, and observation of the natural world.

Among early American voices critical of Calvinism, Samuel Johnson (1696–1772) was most prominent. Persuaded by his reading of the need for apostolic ordination, he journeyed to England, where he was ordained an Anglican priest in 1723. In his subsequent career in Connecticut, he defended an Arminian view of salvation, that is, one that emphasized humans' role in achieving salvation. He also insisted on an ecclesiology that saw the church as a

hierarchical society founded upon apostolic order, inaugurating a high church tradition in American theology.

The Enlightenment and Evangelicalism

In the eighteenth century, two movements emphasizing the authority of human experience began to shape religious thought. Evangelicalism emphasized the importance of an inner experience of God's grace. The Enlightenment emphasized reasonable reflection on humans' experience of history, the natural world, and human nature. Appeals to reason and to religious experience shaped rival movements, but just as important were the many movements that united them. Indeed, while liberals and conservatives were often divided over the authority of revelation and religious experience, they were often united in their appeal to reason. Particularly widespread was the philosophy of common sense realism. From the late eighteenth century to the 1840s almost all Americans accepted its tenets, including the method of logical induction from observed facts associated with Francis Bacon (1561–1626), the propositional character of revelation, the ability of humans to observe the world as it is, to reason accurately from these observations, and that a common moral sense was shared by all. In sum, an ordinary person provided with evidence will conclude the truth. This was often allied with a republican theory of government that taught that the best government was representative and that its virtue rested on the virtue of the people.

Foremost among the early critics of evangelicals' emphasis on inward experience was Boston clergyman Charles Chauncy (1705–1787). In *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (1743), he denounced evangelicals' belief in an immediate experience of the Spirit testifying to their salvation. He charged that it threatened to destroy society by depreciating the importance of virtuous behavior. This concern for virtue shaped liberal Congregationalism. Its theologians embraced an Arminian view of salvation, and their rational reading of scripture led them to reject the doctrine of the Trinity. William Ellery Channing (1780–1842) provided these Unitarians' major theological statement in an 1819 sermon: God's primary trait was fatherly love. Jesus was an exemplary figure whose role was not to satisfy God's wrath but to turn humans toward God. Universalism, a liberal Christian movement popular among the lower classes, came to articulate many of the same positions.

Reason led other Americans beyond Christianity. Deists affirmed only propositions about God as creator and the

rewards for a moral life that could be derived from reason and nature. Some, like President Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), while arguing privately for a purified theology, valued the Bible and churches as teachers of morals. Others, such as Thomas Paine (1737–1809), author of *Age of Reason* (1794), and Elihu Palmer (1764–1806), an itinerant lecturer, openly ridiculed the Bible.

Just as reason led some beyond the Bible, so did inner experience. After a religious experience in 1774, Elias Hicks (1748–1830) became an itinerant preacher of the Quaker doctrine of inner light. Arguing that true religion was internal, he criticized evangelical Quakers who affirmed the authority of scripture. His teaching produced long-lasting divisions among American Friends.

Most who appealed to inner experience did not move beyond traditional teachings. Among evangelical theologians, none was more significant than Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) of Northampton, Massachusetts. By speaking of three sources of religious knowledge—reason; the Bible; and an affective sense of God’s sovereignty and glory, or “excellency”—Edwards reconciled Calvinism, evangelicalism, and rationalism. In *A Treatise concerning Religious Affections* (1746), he maintained that a sense of God’s excellency was necessary for salvation but reassured critics that the chief sign of authentic affection was a holy life. Edwards’s evangelicalism led him to restrict both the Lord’s Supper and baptism of children to those who had an experience of saving faith. Many others went a step further and rejected infant baptism, swelling Baptist ranks.

Edwards’s *Freedom of the Will* (1754) was particularly important for later theology. He argued that humans had the natural ability to do what they chose, thus teaching that the will was free. Yet he also taught that the will was corrupted by sin and therefore morally unwilling to repent without God’s grace. This enabled revivalists to maintain their Calvinism while preaching that humans were responsible for their lack of repentance.

Methodists, followers of the English cleric John Wesley (1703–1791), offered an alternative evangelical theology. They affirmed that prevenient, or enabling, grace was given to all, making it possible for everyone to accept justifying grace. They also taught that the work of salvation was completed by sanctification, wherein they were freed from the power of sin over their willful actions and thus made perfect in love. Early Methodists, such as Bishop Francis Asbury (1745–1816), developed their theology through sermons and hymns. Later, Methodist theology received more systematic

treatment by Daniel D. Whedon (1808–1885), who in 1856 became editor of the *Methodist Quarterly Review*.

Methodists’ and Baptists’ emphasis on religions experience made them particularly attractive for African Americans. Drawing on their own traditions of spiritual life, white evangelical theology, and a lively engagement with biblical story, African Americans fashioned a liberating theology expressed in song and sermon. By the nineteenth century, several theologians with formal education, including New England Congregationalist Lemuel Haynes (1753–1833) and African Methodist Episcopal bishop Daniel Alexander Payne (1811–1893), provided more systematic theologies.

Partially in response to Methodism and to Enlightenment sensibilities, Edwards’s many successors, including Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803) and Nathaniel W. Taylor (1786–1858), made various adjustments to his theology, creating several rival schools of theology. New York revivalist Charles G. Finney (1792–1875) gave the fullest play of any to human freedom and to reason. He affirmed humans’ full moral ability to repent and accept the gospel. Most distinctively the Oberlin theology, so called because he became president of Oberlin College in 1835, taught perfectionism. Finney taught that everyone had the natural ability to be perfect. Unlike Wesleyans, he did not describe perfection as work of grace. The Oberlin perfectionist teachings influenced social reform movements by catalyzing “ultraist” positions, such as abolition as opposed to mere antislavery and total abstinence as opposed to temperance. It would also catalyze a number of later holiness movements such as the “higher Christian life” promoted by Presbyterian William E. Broadman (1810–1868).

Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874) of New York City reshaped the Wesleyan doctrine of holiness in a related fashion. In *The Way of Holiness* (1843), she maintained that an act of surrender to God and faith in the Bible’s promises were sufficient for sanctification. Christians did not need to search their inner experience for confirmation; nor did they need to wait to see evidence of their sanctification in their lives.

Christians’ embrace of reason was demonstrated in many works in a long-standing evidentialist tradition that presented rational evidence to confirm the truth and uniqueness of biblical revelation. Important works included *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1732) by evangelical Presbyterian Jonathan Dickinson (1688–1747) and *Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion* (1815) by Samuel Stanhope Smith (1751–1819) of Princeton. *Evidences for the Genuineness of the Gospels* (1837) by Unitarian Harvard professor Andrews Norton

(1786–1853) demonstrated that the authorship of such works was not limited to evangelicals.

Millennialism, a focus on the consummation of history in the return of Christ, was frequently an important theme in evangelical theology. Some, including Baptist preacher William Miller (1782–1849), sought to rationally schematize the apocalyptic books of Daniel and Revelation to determine the year of Christ's return. Miller initially determined Christ would return around 1843. When his expectations were not fulfilled, he abandoned eschatological prediction. Others, however, including Ellen Gould White (1827–1915), offered alternative interpretations, developing an Adventist tradition of theology. Similar eschatological calculations in the late nineteenth century by Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916) and subsequent reinterpretations yielded Jehovah's Witnesses' distinctive theology.

Rational readings of scripture also shaped the Restorationist tradition that sought to achieve Christian unity by restoring the true church. Alexander Campbell (1788–1866) of western Pennsylvania became its most prominent theologian. Rejecting the complexities of his native Calvinism, he taught that the Bible was a simple book and that the New Testament provided the constitution for the church. Because his reading of scripture yielded a number of distinctive teachings such as a weekly Lord's Supper and baptism upon profession of faith for remission of sins, his emphasis on primitivism conflicted with his goal of Christian unity, a tension that eventually divided the movement.

Of all of the common sense theologies, perhaps none was more important for later developments than the conservative Calvinist tradition developed at Princeton Theological Seminary. Its major statement, Charles Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, was published near the end of his career in 1871–1873. Hodge (1797–1878) presented a thoroughly Baconian approach to theology, defining the Bible as "a book of facts" and theology as the systemization of these facts and inductions based upon them. The Princeton theology provided an important source for twentieth-century fundamentalism.

Southern Calvinists such as James Henley Thornwell (1812–1862) shared many of Hodge's teachings but also taught that the church was a supernatural institution that had to insulate itself from the state. This doctrine of the spirituality of the church emerged in opposition to antislavery and became a staple of southern Christianity.

Roman Catholic leaders in the early United States also embraced Enlightenment rationalism. Much of their writing was apologetic, making the case for Catholicism in the

American republic. Bishops John Carroll (1735–1815) and John England (1786–1842) taught that an individual should be persuaded of his or her beliefs by rational conviction. They also argued that the church should function in a way that was suitable to the republican government of the nation and argued for a larger role for the laity in the church.

Romanticism

In the 1830s, varieties of Romanticism began to reshape religious thought. Romantic thinkers frequently had a historical orientation. They were aware that all things were organically connected and developed through time. Often they sought to maintain continuity with this developing tradition, not to transcend it through reform. The organic theme also manifested in an emphasis on the continuity between humans and the divine, sometimes through pantheistic mysticism and other times through the Christian doctrine of the incarnation. Romantic theologians also emphasized the authority of emotion and subjective experience over logical reason. Appealing to subjective experience, many emphasized the authority of the individual, but others, focusing on organic connection, appealed to the bonds of community.

Perhaps the most famous school of romantic religious thought was transcendentalism. In his *Divinity School Address* (1838), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) advised that the proof of religious truth could not be received through biblical evidence or logic but must proceed from a firsthand intuition. Appropriating many sources, including Hindu and Buddhist texts, Emerson abandoned Christianity's personal God. He advised his audience not to worship Jesus but to seek to be like him through communion with nature and following intuition. While Emerson had left his Unitarian pulpit in 1832, Theodore Parker (1810–1860) remained a preacher in Boston. In his 1841 "Discourse of the Transient and the Permanent in Christianity," he argued that almost all the forms and doctrines of historical Christianity had proved transient. The permanent essence of Christianity was simply the experience of the love of God and neighbor. For Emerson, Parker, and other transcendentalists, religious truth was beyond all form. The transcendentalist movement's emphasis on the testimony of the inner spirit also enabled women such as Margaret Fuller (1810–1850) to become leaders in American religious thought.

While romanticism led transcendentalists beyond Unitarianism, it saved Horace Bushnell (1802–1876) from becoming one. In *Christian Nurture* (1847, 1861), Bushnell, a

Congregationalist in Hartford, Connecticut, reflected an organic emphasis in arguing that children could and should be nurtured in the home to be Christians instead of being dramatically converted in a revival. In his "Preliminary Dissertation on Language" (1848), he argued that the function of religious language was not to present propositions but to motivate and empower. This understanding of language enabled him to remain a trinitarian despite his rational doubts about the doctrine. It also undergirded his essay on "Christian Comprehensiveness" (1848), which maintained that theologians should recognize the partial truths articulated in opposing theologies and synthesize them. These ideas made Bushnell the founder of liberal Protestant theology in America.

Like Bushnell, John Williamson Nevin (1803–1886) in *The Anxious Bench* (1843) provided a critique of revivalism, but whereas Bushnell emphasized nurture within the family, Nevin focused on the church. Philip Schaff (1819–1893) joined Nevin on the faculty of the German Reformed seminary at Mercersburg the following year. His *The Principle of Protestantism* (1845) argued that Protestantism had become too rationalist and sectarian; it needed to be corrected by Catholicism's historic foundations. Nevin's *The Mystical Presence* (1846) further developed the theme by appealing to John Calvin in arguing for a high theology of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper. Nevin also presented the church as the continuation of God's incarnation in Christ. Nevin and Schaff's Mercersburg theology resonated with some, but generated much opposition. Nevin retired from theological debate, and Schaff moved to Union Theological Seminary in New York, where he would found the study of church history in the United States and become a major proponent of ecumenism.

Among Lutherans and Episcopalians, critiques of evangelicalism and rationalism held more sway. When Samuel S. Schmucker (1799–1873) proposed altering historical Lutheran confessions to advance Protestant unity in 1855, Charles P. Krauth (1823–1883) led a substantial counter-movement. He presented the Reformation not as a radical movement but as a dialectic between conservatism and progressivism. He also stressed Lutheranism's continuity with Catholicism. Many Episcopalians also articulated an identity between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. Their denomination was defined not by theological confession but instead by a common liturgy and polity. The Anglo-Catholic or Tractarian movement that took root in America in the 1840s articulated a Catholic theology and ritual. While this did not dominate the denomination, it spread the romantic

themes of sacramental reality and historical continuity more widely within the denomination. Novelist Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–1896) was among the many whose romanticism led them from Calvinism to the Episcopal Church. In *The Minister's Wooing* (1859) and other works, she presented an incarnational theology that emphasized the importance of aesthetic aids to the religious life.

Among Roman Catholics, romanticism shaped the historically oriented apologetics offered by bishops John Hughes (1797–1864) and Martin John Spalding (1810–1872) in the 1840s. It also shaped the career of Orestes Brownson (1803–1876) and Isaac Hecker (1819–1888), Protestants whose journey in romantic thought led them from transcendentalism to Roman Catholicism. For Brownson, the theme of life by communion became central. He came to regard the Catholic Church as the continuation of the incarnation of Christ and thus the means by which one entered into communion with Jesus' mediatorial life.

The distinctive theology that developed from Joseph Smith (1805–1844), the Mormon prophet, resonated with many movements, including the romantic emphasis on the church and organic continuity. Smith's first revelation in 1820 informed him that the true church would be restored through him. In the Book of Mormon (published 1830), many found clear teachings on disputed questions including baptism and salvation. Smith's subsequent revelations led the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to restore not only New Testament practices but also Old Testament institutions such as the priesthood. The romantic emphasis on the continuity between God and humans also resonated with Smith's teachings about the postmortem progress of humans to greater degrees of glory.

Harmonialism or Metaphysical Religion

Romantic emphasis on the correspondence of the visible and invisible worlds shaped various forms of harmonialism or metaphysical religion. Among the many influenced by the eighteenth-century mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) was Andrew Jackson Davis (1826–1910), a leading proponent of spiritualism and author of *The Principles of Nature* (1847). Spiritualists contacted the dead and other spirits in séances, but more fundamentally, they affirmed that the phenomenal world was a manifestation of a unified spiritual reality in which individuals could achieve a more advanced state.

Theosophy articulated similar themes. Led by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891), author of *Isis Unveiled*

(1877), this movement drew on the teachings of many religions to affirm that each person is a part of God and that through wisdom and various disciplines, he or she can progress through multiple rebirths to perfection. Many Americans first encountered Hindu, Buddhist, and Daoist thought through theosophy, but its influence faded as these religions became more widely known.

Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) expressed harmonial ideas in what she termed Christian Science. In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, first published in 1875 and revised until 1906, she taught that the essence of Christ's teachings was that only mind really existed and that physical ailments could be healed through a proper state of faith and mind. Similar ideas, known as New Thought, shaped other movements, including Divine Science, Jewish Science, and the Unity School of Christianity. Begun in 1886 by Charles (1854–1948) and Myrtle Filmore (1845–1931), Unity affirmed that many different religious traditions taught that meditation and affirmative prayer developed receptivity of divine mind, or Christ consciousness, leading to health, peace, and union with Christ.

New Thought's emphasis on positive thinking was reconciled with mainstream Protestantism through the work of Norman Vincent Peale (1898–1993), especially *Power of Positive Thinking* (1952). This tradition was carried into the twenty-first century by Robert H. Schuller (1926–) and other popular television preachers. Peale's and Schuller's transformation of New Thought lacked an articulated metaphysics and an emphasis on physical healing. Instead it presented a pragmatic argument that positive thinking yielded worldly success, harmonious relationships, and peace of mind.

Modernism

In the mid-nineteenth century, developments in science and historical consciousness reshaped religious thought. Because they often ended in stalemate, with both sides making historical arguments about ancient slavery, debates over slavery demonstrated to many the inadequacy of applying a Baconian hermeneutic to scripture. Some evangelicals argued that some parts of the New Testament, such as those presenting a law of universal love, were more authoritative than others. Others stated that progressive revelation caused Christians to know that the Bible now condemned as sin what formerly it had not. This development of historical consciousness was further enhanced as German techniques of criticism revealed the history of the biblical text itself. Geological discoveries and the theory of evolution raised

further challenges to conventional religious thought and encouraged modernist perspectives.

The modernist religious thought that developed in the late nineteenth century was shaped by three themes: the accommodation of religious thought to modern culture, the conviction that God is immanent in and revealed through human culture, and the conviction that human culture is developing toward the Kingdom of God. These three characteristics were shared both by theologians who retained traditional beliefs such as Congregationalist theologian Theodore Thornton Munger (1830–1910), author of *The Freedom of Faith* (1883), and those whose abandonment of traditional beliefs put them on the margin of Christianity and Judaism, such as philosopher John Dewey (1859–1952).

In the *Pittsburgh Platform* (1885), drafted by Kaufmann Kohler (1843–1926), Reform Judaism adopted a concise statement of modernism. It affirmed the indwelling of God in humans and the continual spiritual and ethical progress of humanity toward the messianic age. For Kohler, the ethical monotheism of the Hebrew prophets was the heart of Judaism. Belief in biblical miracles and observance of ritual law was no longer meaningful and should be abandoned. Conservative Jews, led after 1902 by Solomon Schechter (1847–1915), found the abandonment of traditional law too radical and formed a rival movement. Informed by romanticism, they accepted the reality and necessity of historical adaptation but, like high-church Christian theologians, insisted continuity in practice was important to retain and that the authority to interpret scripture rested with the Jewish people as a whole.

Protestant modernism can be understood as consisting of four major schools. The most influential stemmed from German theologian Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889). Many Americans studied with Ritschlians in Germany, including Presbyterian William Adams Brown (1865–1943), author of the popular textbook *Christian Theology in Outline* (1906). In Ritschlian thought, the essence of Christianity was ethical values. The school emphasized historical research into the person of Jesus and the values of his early followers. The central message of Christianity was the building up of society toward the Kingdom of God through sacrificial love. This theology strongly resonated with the activist character of American evangelicalism and was closely allied with movements for social reform, known as the Social Gospel. Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918), a Baptist historian and theologian, gave the Social Gospel its most important theological treatment, presenting the Kingdom of God as the central

theme in Jesus' preaching in *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) and offering a social interpretation of Christian theology in *A Theology of the Social Gospel* (1917).

Others sought to supplement this emphasis on values with attention to religious experience and the spiritual life. In *Social Law in the Spiritual World* (1904) and other works, Quaker theologian Rufus Jones (1863–1948) emphasized the importance of mystical experience, the cultivation of the indwelling presence of God through prayer and meditation. Jones's popular works helped foster a renewed emphasis on worship and the spiritual and devotional life in many liberal Protestant churches and was echoed by others, including Congregationalist Willard Sperry (1882–1954) and Baptist Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878–1969).

A third variety of modernism was the personalism articulated by the Methodist faculty at Boston University. Borden Parker Browne (1847–1910), a philosopher, combined elements of the Methodist tradition with idealism, neo-Kantianism, biblical criticism, and romanticism to fashion a metaphysic that conceived of personality as ultimate. True and full personhood was found in God, revealed in Christ. Human fulfillment came from partaking of and realizing the potential of personhood made possible through Christ. Browne's tradition was continued by others at Boston including Albert Knudson (1873–1953), author of *The Doctrine of God* (1930) and *The Doctrine of Redemption* (1933). Knudson argued that only personality is ultimately real; all being is rooted in the activity of God, the divine personality. The core characteristic of human personality was freedom, which brought with it the potential for both virtue and sin. The most famous theologian in this tradition was Baptist civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968).

Protestant modernism's fourth stream sought to make theology an empirical science. Less influential in churches than the others, it extended beyond them to affect many prominent intellectuals. The radical empiricism and pragmatism of Harvard psychologist and philosopher William James (1842–1910) undergirded the approach. Radical empiricism rejected idealism, insisting that ideas be grounded in human experience. This included not only the senses but internal experiences, such as those James examined in *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902). Pragmatism maintained that the meaning of ideas was determined by their practical consequences.

Although D. C. Macintosh (1877–1948) of Yale crafted an empirical theology that adhered closely to traditional evangelical doctrine, the effort to make theology an empirical

science usually departed farther from traditional Christian claims. This approach flourished among theologians at the University of Chicago. At the beginning of the twentieth century, their dominant method was sociohistorical. Rather than investing traditional Christian terminology with new meaning, Shailer Mathews (1863–1941) in *Faith of Modernism* (1924), for example, sought to express Christian affirmations in terms compatible with evolutionary theory, sociological analysis, and historical approaches to the Bible. Henry Nelson Weiman (1884–1975) went further in *Religious Experience and the Scientific Method* (1926) and later works in locating theological beliefs within a naturalistic view of reality and a scientific method. A similar approach stood beyond philosopher John Dewey's *A Common Faith* (1934), though Dewey departed from Christian theology in arguing that what was called God was the sum of social and natural forces advancing a unifying moral ideal.

Mordecai Kaplan (1881–1983) of Jewish Theological Seminary advanced a theology that partially paralleled Dewey's in his *Judaism as a Civilization* (1934). Kaplan, however, rejected naturalism and humanism as terms for his religious thought, speaking instead of transnaturalism. He also gave much more attention to the role of traditional texts and rituals but insisted that these should be understood in terms of how they functioned, not in terms of any unchanging meaning. Many of Kaplan's ideas, including his definition of Judaism as a civilization, not merely a nationality or a religion, had extensive influence throughout Judaism.

Americanism in Roman Catholic theology also reflected the modernist impulse. In a practical and nonsystematic way, Americanists, such as Bishop John Ireland (1838–1918), accepted an optimistic evolutionary view of history and affirmed the immanence of God in human culture. They also shared with Protestant modernists an interest in ecumenism and economic problems. Because God was at work both in the world and in the church, they taught that the church could not separate itself too much from society and affirmed American democracy as a product of the progress of Christian civilization. Conservatives such as Bishop Michael Corrigan (1839–1900) of New York criticized Americanists for being minimalistic in theology and chauvinistic in their view of culture and nation. Responding to a French edition of a biography of Isaac Hecker, Pope Leo XIII issued the encyclical *Testem Benevolentiae* in 1899 condemning propositions he associated with Americanism. Some Catholics espoused a more thoroughgoing modernism, embracing a historical critical approach to scripture and a teleological approach to

history that found the meaning of religious events in their results, not their origins. In 1907, the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* condemned modernism, suppressing these tendencies in Catholic thought for several decades.

Fundamentalism

Protestant opposition to modernism consolidated in the 1910s as demonstrated by *The Fundamentals* (1911–1912), a widely distributed twelve-volume collection of essays. Central to fundamentalism was a commonsense hermeneutic. Many fundamentalists denounced evolutionary biology as a false science because it was theoretical, not based on induction from observed facts. Fundamentalists' conflict with modernists was most acute in denominations where both were numerous and where theology held a central place, such as northern Baptists and northern Presbyterians in the 1920s. Here fundamentalists insisted on four tenets that affirmed supernaturalism and were commonly denied by modernists. Two, the inerrancy of scripture and the miracles of Christ, including his birth and resurrection, stemmed directly from the propositional approach to scripture. The other two, Christ's substitutionary atonement and premillennial return, rejected the optimistic view of human nature inherent in modernists' focus on divine immanence. Many fundamentalists' premillennialism took the form of dispensationalism, which was expressed in Congregationalist C. I. Scofield's 1909 reference Bible. Among dispensationalism's central teachings was that true Christians would experience "the Rapture" and be suddenly removed from the earth before the onset of a period of tribulation that would precede Christ's return. This view was further popularized at the end of the century in the *Left Behind* novels by Tim LaHaye (1926–) and Jerry Jenkins (1949–).

Fundamentalists lost their battle for control of major denominations because conservatives who held similar views were unwilling to purge modernists from the denominations. They continued, however, to be a powerful force in small denominations and through nondenominational ministries. In the 1940s a number of fundamentalist leaders led a reconsideration of the movement's theology and its engagement with the wider culture. They shed the fundamentalist label, simply calling themselves evangelicals. Carl Henry's *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1947) made him the major theologian of the movement. Henry (1913–2003) critiqued both fundamentalists and liberals for their anti-intellectualism and insisted that scripture was propositional, verbally inspired, and inerrant. He developed a

strongly rationalistic theology on this basis in the seven volumes of *God, Revelation, and Authority* (1976–1984).

Articulating a workable doctrine of biblical inerrancy was a major concern of evangelical theologians. Henry insisted on a strong doctrine of inerrancy: that scripture was without error and that it provided propositional truth. Others such as Bernard Ramm (1916–1992) and Donald Bloesch (1928–) argued that the facts of scripture required modifications to this claim. They either redefined inerrancy or embraced terms such as "infallibility," distinguishing between the letter of scripture and the truths that it intended to teach.

While theologians rooted in the broad Reformed tradition held commanding positions in the most visible institutions of evangelical academic theology, they by no means represented all evangelicals. Large numbers were shaped by Wesleyan theologies that placed more emphasis on the experience of the Holy Spirit and on the practice of holiness through personal behavior and social reform. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, a steadily growing number were Pentecostals or Charismatics who emphasized the importance of gifts of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues and healing. These gifts generated a number of theological controversies among both liberal and conservative Protestants.

Neo-Orthodoxy and Tradition

The movement best known as neo-orthodoxy offered an internal criticism of liberal Protestantism. Also termed "Christian realism" or "dialectical theology," it was defined by its criticism of liberalism's focus upon the immanence of God, high estimation of human morality, and faith in historical progress. Without affirming biblical inerrancy, neo-orthodoxy placed a new emphasis upon the Bible, the transcendence of God, the nature of the church, and theology *per se* (as opposed to yielding religious authority to social sciences).

The brothers Reinhold (1892–1971) and H. Richard Niebuhr (1894–1962) and the German émigré Paul Tillich (1886–1965) led the movement in the United States. *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) was Reinhold's manifesto, *Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941–1943) his most systematic statement. Niebuhr's estimation of the human condition was that even the best human endeavors were limited by their historical situation and therefore by self-interest. Because of this pervasive lack of perfection, he associated his position with Augustine's doctrine of original sin. Similarly, Richard's works, including *The Meaning of Revelation* (1941) and *Christ*

and Culture (1951), contrasted the absoluteness of God with the culturally conditioned character of all theology. In various works including *Systematic Theology* (1951–1963), Tillich advanced a method of correlation where the message of the Bible was placed in conversation with elements of depth in human culture; theology emerged from this dialectical process. While neo-orthodox theologians saw the Bible as conveying religious truth in poetic language, they emphasized the importance of the study of scripture and historic Christian theology. They strongly supported the growing ecumenical movement and the view that progress in church unity would come not from ignoring historic disputes but by learning from contrasting views.

Mid-twentieth-century Jewish theology also reflected a reaffirmation of God's transcendence and the importance of tradition. Reform Jewish theologian Samuel S. Cohon (1888–1959) argued that all religion stemmed from the experience of the holy but that this was expressed in forms and symbols distinctive to each religion. As the primary author of the *Columbus Platform* (1937), Cohon led the reaffirmation of tradition in Reform Judaism. Theologian Will Herberg (1901–1977) self-consciously echoed Reinhold Niebuhr's themes. With Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972) and Orthodox leader Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903–1993), he began his theology with questions about the meaning of human life and Jewish existence. Writing primarily after World War II, these existentialists acknowledged the selfishness and disorder that characterized human life and focused on humans' relationship with God. Like neo-orthodox theologians, they drew on the resources of their own religious tradition including scripture, Hasidic wisdom, and Jewish law.

In Catholic theology, Neo-Thomism and the *nouvelle théologie* shared neo-orthodoxy's orientation toward tradition. Unlike neo-orthodoxy, however, the retrieval of the thought of Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) was optimistic about human nature. It provided a distinctly Catholic intellectual tradition as Catholics became increasingly assimilated into American society. Some of its most significant developments came in social thought, including John Ryan's (1892–1945) arguments in *A Living Wage* (1906) and John Courtney Murray's (1904–1967) ideas expressed in the Second Vatican Council's affirmation of religious liberty in 1965. While Neo-Thomists tended to emphasize unchanging principles, the *nouvelle théologie* focused on *ressourcement*, research in historical theology, particularly on the early church, that yielded principles that were then adapted to current historical situations.

Strongest in Europe, this theology's primary manifestation in the United States was the liturgical movement begun in the 1920s under Benedictine Virgil Michel (1890–1938), but the *nouvelle théologie* paved the way for many of the changes in Catholicism that stemmed from Vatican II.

Postmodern Diversity

While the meaning of its documents is debated, the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) substantially redirected Catholic thought and with it other traditions as well, especially regarding the church, worship, and scripture. It opened Catholic theology to engagement with science, historical research, culture, and other religious communities. Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox began to do theology together. Important advances in ecumenical theology included *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (1982) and the *Joint Decree on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999). In American religious thought, Catholics soon exercised a leading role in ecclesiology, liturgy, and ethics.

The council also articulated a new posture toward other religions, especially Judaism, stating that Jews should not be viewed as rejected by God. As the Holocaust became a major subject of reflection in the 1970s, many Christians have sought to articulate a theology that eliminates the teaching that Christianity superseded Judaism, affirming instead God's eternal covenant with Jews. For its part, Jewish thought has generated a wide spectrum of responses to the Holocaust ranging from Richard Rubenstein's (1924–) affirmation that God died at Auschwitz to Emil Fackenheim's (1916–2003) contrary affirmation that God is still present in human history. Perhaps the most prominent reaction has been an increased emphasis on Hebrew language and traditional practices in worship.

Globalization, and the change of immigration laws in 1965, has also led to a larger place for Asian religions in America. Buddhism has had the broadest impact, in part because of the focus on meditation and absence of theological claims in many of its interpretations. Many Jewish and Christian thinkers have sought to integrate Buddhist ideas into their own thought, including perhaps most famously the Trappist monk Thomas Merton (1915–1968). Many Buddhist writers have developed large audiences, including, in the mid-twentieth century, Japanese layman D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966) and, in more recent years, the fourteenth Dalai Lama (1935–) and Thich Nhat Hanh (1926–), a Vietnamese Zen monk. Hindu and Daoist thought have also had popular resonance in America. In addition to their traditional

expressions, Asian thought has influenced many varieties of New Age religion that emphasize the importance of a personal quest for authentic religious experience; healing; and a holistic, often monistic approach to understanding human existence.

Earlier in the twentieth century, the Noble Drew Ali (1886–1929) and Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975) offered heterodox forms of Islam that spoke to African Americans' experience of poverty and discrimination in the urban North. They drew on various esoteric traditions as well as the history of Islam in presenting a redemptive black nationalism. Since the 1979 Iranian revolution, the prominent role of Islam in international affairs has made the nature of Islam and its relationship to American democracy a major subject of debate among both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Since the 1960s, awareness that all religious ideas are historically conditioned frequently has been wed to an awareness of how ideas are used to oppress. This is the basis of a variety of liberation theologies that emphasize the importance of the unique perspectives of oppressed or marginal groups and of crafting theologies that empower them. These have predecessors in American history such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton's (1815–1902) *Women's Bible* (1895) and Henry McNeal Turner's (1834–1915) 1898 claim that "God is a Negro," but amid America's increasing diversity and the civil rights movement, such theologies became especially prominent. In *Black Theology and Black Power* (1969), James Cone (1938–) drew largely on white neo-orthodox theologians to make the case for a theology that would empower African Americans. In later books, such as *The Spiritual and the Blues* (1972), he turned to the African American community as a source for his theology, an approach that has been followed by many others. Since the 1970s, North American theology has been substantially shaped by Latin American liberation theology and has attended to many different cultural perspectives ranging from Celtic to Native American to Asian.

Several of the leading voices in feminist theology came from the Roman Catholic tradition, including Mary Daly (1928–), who moved beyond the Christian tradition, and Rosemary Radford Ruether (1936–), author of *Sexism and God-Talk* (1984), who stayed within it. Feminist theology identified patriarchy as a principal problem with previous theological reflection. It insisted that male images for God entailed a hierarchical oppression of women and that female language for God yielded a more authentic, empowering, and egalitarian view of the relationship between the human and the divine. By the 1980s, the feminist critique of

religious language was reflected in the use of inclusive language in many hymnals, liturgies, and Bible translations. Female African American theologians such as Jacquelyn Grant (1948–) found the need to claim their own distinct voice in religious thought, separating themselves from white feminists, advancing instead what they called Womanist theology. Women from other ethnic backgrounds have followed the Womanist example, yielding *mujerista* theology and Asian women's liberation theology, among others.

Because of their emphasis on the particular context of theological reflection, all these forms of theology may be considered postmodern. A similar emphasis on the contextual character of language also shapes postliberal theology. It stems from the work of Yale professors Hans Frei (1922–1988), author of *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* (1974), and George Lindbeck (1923–), author of *The Nature of Doctrine* (1984). Shaped in part by cultural anthropology, the movement emphasizes the role of narrative in conveying theological truth and the importance of culture in providing the context for theological expression. Some evangelical theologians such as Gabriel Fackre (1926–) have welcomed the postliberal approach as a means past liberal and evangelical debates over the nature of biblical revelation. An implication of this theology as developed by ethicists such as Stanley Hauerwas (1940–) is that religious thought must be grounded in a particular community that is defined by practices. This led Hauerwas to the polemical claim that Christian theologians cannot formulate ethics for a secular society, as for example the Niebuhrs did. The postliberal approach has been extended into Jewish theology in the work of Peter Ochs (1950–).

A postmodern historical consciousness also informs other approaches. David Tracy (1939–), a Catholic theologian at the University of Chicago, was among those who emphasize that the task of the theologian was to engage in "critical correlation" between the classic texts of the Christian tradition and the ordinary experience of the secular world. His theology attended to the importance of hermeneutics, arguing that a text could have multiple meanings and that theologians must be prepared to live with plurality and ambiguity. Another postmodern development in theology is represented by the work of Canadian Catholic Charles Taylor (1931–), who has described his project as deconstructionist a/theology that acknowledges the inability of theology rooted in philosophy to describe God and instead follows Tillich in turning to the diverse experiences of God in culture as means to describe God.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, many evangelical theologians argued for a postconservative evangelical theology, one open to revising theology to more accurately express biblical teachings in the postmodern intellectual world. Among the leaders in this effort were theologians Stanley Grenz (1950–2005) and Clark Pinnock (1937–) and popular preacher and author Brian McLaren (1956–). Pinnock broke with the Reformed approach that dominated much of evangelical theology and embraced a more Arminian theology and the “open view of God,” which argued that the Bible did not support the classic view of God’s omniscience. Instead the exact shape of the future was open, shaped by the interaction of God and humans.

One of the most influential forms of liberal Protestant theology had reached a similar conclusion decades earlier. Process theology was developed in the mid-twentieth century by Charles Hartshorne (1897–2000) of the University of Chicago from the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947). Understanding the fundamental metaphysical reality as becoming, rather than being, Hartshorne argued against classical theism that God was the prime example not of being but of becoming. Accordingly he rejected the classical doctrine of omniscience, maintaining instead that at any given time God knows all actualities and potentialities, but also that humans participate in shaping the future. God sets the conditions for finite existence and freedom and accepts the results of that freedom. In the 1960s, John Cobb (1925–) became the most influential process theologian. He engaged with a wide variety of contemporary issues, particularly ecology. Here he emphasized that God, humans, and all entities are interconnected and criticized a narrow focus on the human condition, instead of on the whole environment, as narcissistic anthropomorphism.

As the frequency of the prefix *post-* in the description of contemporary religious thought suggests, many new developments defined themselves in part in opposition to the various religious responses to the rationalism of the Enlightenment. A new era in religious thought began in the 1960s. In this era, however, practically every tradition and school of thought present in American history has maintained its voice. In the twenty-first century, this diversity will probably only increase as ecology, sexuality, various postmodern philosophies, and the interchange between religions play an increasingly important role in religious thought.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Apocalypticism; Bible entries; Bioethics; Common Sense Realism; Death of God Theology; Deism; Enlightenment; Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical*

Issues; Fundamentalism; Idealist Philosophy; Liberation Theology; Neo-Orthodoxy; Neo-Thomism; Philosophical Theology; Philosophy; Practical Theology; Pragmatism; Protestant Liberalism; Religious Thought entries; Romanticism; Science; Social Ethics; Social Gospel; Systematic Theology; Transcendentalism.

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Religious Thought: African American

African American religious thought pertains not only to what scholars have written about black religion but also the phenomenon of black religion itself. Therefore it can be thought of as situated at three different sites: (1) the actuality or phenomenon of African American religion, (2) African American cultural expressions that contain religious signification, and (3) the reflection upon these aforementioned sites by black scholars. The first site is amenable to a history of religions approach and refers to African Americans engaging in whatever activity draws upon their relation to the divine to resist dehumanization. The second site is amenable to the disciplines of black literature and African American art and refers to all the art, poetry, literature, music, and dance genres African Americans improvised and created to articulate the meaning they gleaned from the oppressive quality of their lives. The third site is amenable to the work of black theologians and refers to, among other things, both descriptions and interpretations of the African American religious history and texts. J. Deotis Roberts advocated for black theologians to operate at all three sites in *Black Theology in Dialogue* (1987); and recently Matthew V. Johnson, in *The Tragic Vision of African American Religion* (2010), observed that black theologians often confuse prescription or description of the black religious experience in their writings. Howard Thurman is one of the best examples of writings that model a way of allowing interpretation to arise organically from one's description of religious experience (*Jesus and the Disinherited*, 1949; and *The Negro Spiritual Speaks of Life and Death*, 1947). African American religious thought is presently framed by Charles H. Long at one end of the spectrum and James Cone at the other, with Womanist scholarship somewhere in between the two. One problem in African American religious thought is that of appropriately connecting description and interpretation with prescription, which Long and Cone respectively represent.

Conceptual Overview

Charles H. Long, the author of *Significations: Signs, Symbols and Images in the Interpretation of Religion*, is a religious historian

who regards "religion" chiefly as a mode of orientation for people and societies. Long insists upon raising the question of the fundamental relationship between what we term "thought" and what we term "religious." For Long, African American religious thought entails not only historical description but hermeneutics wherein we must be conscious of "the problem of the constitution of the subject in the process of knowing." Under what conditions can "the interpreting subject . . . be pushed back to a level of consciousness commensurate with the forms that the subject wishes to understand" (p. 54). Unless we interrogate our topic at this fundamental level, we will lack clarity regarding the way we should approach our topic. This is particularly the case when religious thought is qualified by the term "African American." Due to his emphasis on human "exchange" as a part of religion, he also posits the temporal and geographical space of the Atlantic world as context of African American religious thought along with W. E. B. Du Bois, *Suppression of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (1896); and Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944). African American religious thought arose in a situation wherein black bodies were thinking as they were being thought about. This thinking while being thought about was not mere cognition but one component of the religious experience blacks were undergoing during their journey and subsequent arrival to the Americas. The shock of Africans' enslavement evoked and necessitated new understandings of their relationship to one another, the gods, their newly encountered captors, and the space of their captivity (Olaudah Equiano, *Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, 1813).

Africans and their religion were simultaneously configured within the framework of European and Euro-Americans' self-understanding that derived, among other things, from travel narratives, missionary accounts, and such new disciplines as anthropology and the history of religions (Noel, 2009). All this contributed to the "primitive" conception of peoples of African descent and underscores the epistemological issue Long raises of how African American religious thought can be made accessible to description and analysis when it remains "opaque" due to how it has been constituted in modernity. What Long means by "opaque" is that the categories of European Enlightenment reasoning have been unable to penetrate the veil of black religious experience to elucidate it according to the meaning it had for African Americans. Long therefore cautions black religious scholars against uncritically employing the categories of European Enlightenment discourse to describe themselves without realizing how they are already negatively signified in

those categories and the disciplines from which they arise. This in no way precludes the use of white sources in the study of black religion but pertains to the manner of their appropriation. African American religion and its thought can be understood as functioning to assert a black humanity that white categorizations attempt to negate.

The Nineteenth Century as the Temporal Site of American Religious Thought

Nineteenth-century African American texts are essential in the documentation of African American religion and its thought. In the Negro spirituals, slave narratives, abolitionist speeches, and sermons we can see two things operating simultaneously: one is a perception and voluntary participation in a transcendent reality, and the other is a perception and involuntary participation in the social reality of white oppression. We can see this in Nat Turner's Confession, wherein his visionary experiences led him inevitably to lead a slave rebellion. We can see this also operating, for example, in the Negro spiritual where the slaves sang, "O freedom over me, and before I'll be a slave I'll be buried in my grave and go home to my Lord and be free." This is not a doctrinal statement but an expression and invocation of the transcendent reality the slaves experienced as providing them the wherewithal to endure and resist the harsh realities of their bondage.

Religion functions to provide a people or society with a sense of orientation, and African American religious thought provides this for African Americans who, through the mechanisms of the slave trade, were completely disoriented upon their arrival in the Americas. Euro-Americans were also orienting themselves in the Americas through religion, but the form it took was one that equated Christianity with whiteness and legitimated the conquest of America's indigenous peoples and the enslavement of Africans. Hence, the Africans brought to the Americas had to discern in the religious discourse and symbols of their oppressors something that would help them resist dehumanization and, at minimum, survive (Albert Raboteau, *Slave Religion*, 1978). Various types of psychic response to their oppression gave rise to patterns of improvisation to meet the challenges of the present by drawing upon collective community resources from the past with an orientation toward an imagined future. In "Black Theology," Matthew V. Johnson analyzes black religious consciousness through the lens of "trauma" and the "tragic."

Their religious thought was excreted like perspiration—from their enslaved bodies and operated sometimes in terms

of admonition, sometimes as hope, and sometimes as the palpable sense of being sustained by unknown and unseen forces. This pertains to the "mystical" dimension of African American thought represented in figures like Sojourner Truth, Harriett Tubman, Rebecca Jackson, and Howard Thurman among others. American Americans' experience of the divine assisted in their orienting themselves in the new and unknown spatial and temporal realm of their captivity. In one slave narrative, an escaped slave wrote his former master from Canada and explained to him that his escape was instigated when "a kind but unseen spirit whispered to me to take up my pallet and walk." The depth of biblical theological insight in this indirect interpretation of Jesus' curing of the paralytic either in John's Gospel or the Synoptic Gospels is quite astounding and demonstrates an epistemological mode that is simultaneously mystical, theological, and political. It was an insight that oriented that slave toward freedom and inspired him to board the Underground Railroad.

Black existence was challenged to produce thought that did not conform to their enslavement and helped them overcome that condition; therefore, thought itself under the conditions of slavery was a form of resistance. The theologian Paul Tillich has argued in his *History of Christian Thought* (1968) that reason is instigated rather than opposed by mystical or religious experience. Thus, the slave's apprehension of the divine operated as a critique of the religious pretensions of their oppressors and social reality they, in most instances, could not escape. This is expressed in lyrics of the spiritual, "everybody talking about heaven ain't going there." Critical thinking is more implicit in the spirituals that use coded language to cloak the multiple meanings of their symbolism. But in the speeches and sermons of free blacks, the critical function of African American religious thought is much more explicit. Just to cite a few examples: David C. Walker's *Appeal* (1829), Frederick Douglass's "July Fourth Address" (1852), and Henry Highland Garnet's "Address to the Slaves of the United States of America" (1843) make a scathing analysis and attack on the hypocrisy of white American Protestantism and what Robert Bellah would later term as American "civil religion." Hence, although some texts exemplifying African American religious thought are devoid of social/political references, they still must be situated in a social/political context for their interpretation. Other texts almost devoid of explicit religious references can still be regarded as informed by African American religious sensibilities and aspirations.

Scholars have debated whether the black church and its thinking are conservative or progressive; tools of white oppression or instruments of black liberation. In many instances this simple dichotomization obfuscates the “religious” nature of the black church and its thought through the superimposition of political criteria upon data whose symbolism, as stated, is complex and multilayered. In *Black Religion and Black Radicalism* (1972), Gayraud Wilmore pointed out that the black church is simultaneously the most conservative and the most revolutionary institution in the African American community. Wilmore characterized the period after Reconstruction as one when the black church underwent “de-radicalization.” The general acceptance of this characterization has caused black religious scholars not to give sufficient attention to the period after slavery and through World War II. Thus, we witness much scholarship being confined to the mining of nineteenth-century texts for exemplars of agency and religious experience that can serve the needs of African Americans.

Some earlier historical/sociological and anthropological treatments of black religion are represented in Du Bois’s *Souls of Black Folk* and *The Negro Church* (both 1903). Later came Benjamin E. Mays and Joseph Nicholson’s *The Negro Church* (1933) and Carter G. Woodson’s *The History of the Negro Church* (1921); *Negro Orators and Their Orations* (1925); *The Mind of the Negro as Revealed in His Letters during the Crisis* (1927); *The Africa Background Outlined: Or Handbook for the Study of the Negro* (1939), which anticipates Herskovits’s work; and *The Works of Francis J. Grimke* (1942). These works are indispensable in the study of African American religious thought. Woodson’s works model a methodology that includes the study of black religious institutions, the sermons preached during the worship experience, and speeches delivered on nonreligious occasions that reveal the aspirations or hope of black people. Through the studies of these early scholars, African American religion appears as a phenomenon that encompasses the gamut of cultural elements from African traditional religion, African American folk religion, and the intellectual elements of political protest. Accounting for and determining the amount of weight to assign the above varied elements has been the main preoccupation of contemporary black religious scholars.

Black Theology

During the late 1960s, the black church was confronted with the challenge of reorienting itself in the face of black militancy and growing dissatisfaction, primarily among northern

and urban blacks, with the perceived pacifist and gradualist stance of Martin Luther King’s integrationist movement. The black consciousness movement had no consciously articulated program but drew upon nationalist and separatist themes that questioned the civil rights movement’s agenda of assimilation. James Cone’s work represents the Black Power impulse within the discipline of theology. His *Black Religion and Black Power* (1969) and *A Black Theology of Liberation* (1970) addressed the issue of whether African American Christians could legitimately embrace the Black Power movement without violating their Christian principles. It also addressed the criticism coming from some quarters in the black community that Christianity was “the white man’s religion” and a tool used in the colonization of black consciousness. For Cone, Jesus was black, and God’s Spirit was present in the black liberation struggle because God always identifies with and sides with the oppressed. Cone wrote in *A Black Theology of Liberation*, “The black theologian must reject any conception of God which stifles black self-determination by picturing God as a God of all peoples. Either God is identified with the oppressed to the point that their experience becomes God’s experience, or God is a God of racism. . . . The blackness of God means that God has made the oppressed condition God’s own condition” (pp. 63–64). In that work, Cone also clarified the method of black theology as one that used black history, culture, religious experience, as well as scripture and the Christian tradition as its sources. Cone did not, however, privilege any of these sources, and we see second-generation black theologians struggling to negotiate between the black experience and Christian scripture and tradition or between the method bequeathed by Schleiermacher and that of Karl Barth.

According to William R. Jones in *Is God a White Racist: A Preamble to Black Theology* (1998), Cone’s formulation placed black people in the unenviable position of having to be oppressed to be guaranteed God’s favor. Gayraud Wilmore addressed the issue of Christianity being detrimental to black liberation in his *Black Religion and Black Radicalism* (1972), which drew upon historical sources to document the role black religion played in the black liberation struggle from slavery to the present. In Wilmore’s text, Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, and Gabriel Prosser were exemplary figures in African American Christianity before it became de-radicalized after Reconstruction. In a later edition of the same book, Wilmore included a chapter on traditional African religions to establish greater continuity between Africa and African American religion. The strength of Wilmore’s text is

that it provided a sense of historical continuity between the Black Power movement and the black church. The weakness of Wilmore's text is that its periodization of African American Christianity into a radical period during slavery and a nonradical period after slavery is historically incorrect and overly simplistic. Furthermore, it does not account for the role that religion played among the vast majority of blacks who did not rebel. However, notwithstanding this criticism, Wilmore's enduring legacy to African American religious scholarship was his turning black religious scholars' attention to the importance of grounding and verifying their insights and conclusions in historical sources.

Cone's enduring contribution to second- and third-generation black theology scholars was his enumeration of a methodology that made explicit the inclusion of black history, culture, and religious experience as legitimate sources for theological reflection and raising the issue of race to the forefront as the primary sin requiring an ethical and theological response from the church. All theologies not addressing the issue of race were dismissed by Cone as inherently racist and "white." In his *Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology* (1971), *A Black Political Theology* (1975), and *Black Theology in Dialogue* (1987), J. Deotis Roberts emphasized the principle of reconciliation and adopted a much less strident stance than Cone's. However, there is much more to Roberts's opposition to Cone than this difference. Roberts saw the need for scholars of black theology to employ multidisciplinary approaches—particularly, phenomenology—to their discipline in order to not be trapped within the narrowness of Cone's method and construction. Roberts also makes room for black interreligious dialogue through an inclusive Christology that presumed God's presence in all creation and cultures. In so doing he was providing a bridge between the Christology of African Americans and the spiritualities of traditional African religions. Roberts criticizes Cone's theology for lacking a phenomenological component and Long's thought for lacking a prescriptive dimension. Therefore, a reappraisal of Roberts's work is definitely called for. In *The Identity Crisis in Black Theology* (1975), Cecil Cone made the observation that James Cone's black theology was in danger of not being able to articulate the "religious" nature of the black experience due to its privileging of the political over everything else. Cornel West admonished black theology for its lack of class analysis and advocated real change by combining black prophetic Christianity with Marxist social analysis to address the macro structural and class issues ignored by Cone's and others' race analysis. What

is exciting in West's writings is the way he brilliantly relates the black intellectual tradition to the broader tradition of Western intellectual history and the problem of modernity (as in *Prophecy and Deliverance*, 1988). Womanist theology critiqued black theology for not including an analysis of sexism in its critique. Black theology was in its own way experiencing the split between "cultural nationalists" and "revolutionary nationalists" that was occurring in the black studies departments of certain universities and between "integrationist" and "black separatist" thinking and strategies in the black community, and it continues in the twenty-first century to oscillate back and forth between these positions.

In *Practical Theology for Black Churches: Bridging Black Theology and African American Folk Religion* (2002), Dale P. Andrews pointed out that black theology has very little application to the pastoral issues confronting most black pastors, which require more from the pastor than attributing all the community's ills to white racism. What do we do when we are not rebelling or protesting in relation to problems that are invulnerable to these interventions? For example, Archie Smith Jr.'s *Navigating the Deep River: Spirituality in African American Families* (1997) draws upon metaphors from the spirituals and other resources from African American culture to model a mode of pastoral care and counseling that treats individuals and families without ignoring the oppressive structures that exacerbate and cause psychic dysfunction. It posits a therapeutic modality that draws upon the root metaphors of African American consciousness instead of imposing external and alienating categories from the psychotherapeutic profession. It is interesting that the title of Vincent Harding's book—*There Is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (1981)—is similar. Harding uses the metaphor of "river" as a way to hold together the disparate elements of African American history both individual and collective, which allows the reader to discern African American religious thought as something connected to numerous events experienced uniquely as an African American "stream of consciousness" (to borrow from William James). Harding achieved the difficult task of rendering African American religious thought not as an abstraction but as a mode of African American reflection upon its own "temporality." This entailed entering deeply into the structure of African American historical experience so as to overcome the subject-object split constituting its opacity.

The above criticisms of black theology have caused its second generation to look more closely at slave narratives, Negro spirituals, and other aspects of African American

culture. For example, Dwight N. Hopkins and George C. L. Cummings edited *Cut Loose Your Stammering Tongue: Black Theology in the Slave Narratives* (1991), which grew out of conversations among the Black Theology Forum that met at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, of which Will Coleman and James Noel were participants. Hopkins subsequently wrote *Shoes to Fit Our Feet: Sources for a Constructive Black Theology* (1993). Will Coleman broke ground in applying hermeneutics and literary theory to black speech in *Tribal Talk: Hermeneutics and African/American Ways of "Telling the Story"* (1999). Coleman demonstrated a method for accessing African American religious thought's depths by focusing on the seeming ordinariness of black speech—"reading between the lines," so to speak. This might be what Long would term the "signification of silence," which refers to the shared meanings that are a part of community's awareness that it does not articulate in speech but operates, nevertheless, as a reservoir and resource to be drawn upon for corporate survival. This notion also has implications for Womanist thought, which will be discussed later.

In his Introduction to *Conversations with God*, James Melvin Washington discussed the dangers and pitfalls of making black speech intelligible to the public. He harbored grave misgivings about compiling a collection of black prayers because he knew how embarrassing they would be to some readers. Moreover, Washington was opposed to those who, in observing certain expressions of black religion, would "subject African American's genuine spiritual struggles to ridicule, dismissing them as superstitious and escapist, or reducing them to various doctrinaire theories of group frustration" (p. xxiii). This comment should operate as a caution to those who deprecate the difficulty involved in interpreting African American religious texts and also those who deprecate their content for not conforming to the conventions of Enlightenment rationality. In *Why Lord? The Problem of Suffering and Evil in Black Theology* (1995), Anthony Pinn critiques Cone's position on the redemptive nature of black suffering as reinforcing black oppression. He advocates black humanism as more appropriate to the problem of black suffering. It "involves an increase in humanity's importance which makes impossible the location of a space for God" (p. 42).

African American Biblical Scholarship

Another exciting development in African American religious thought is occurring within the discipline of biblical studies, wherein a significant number of African American scholars have earned their doctorate degrees and begun to publish

exegetical works and biblical commentaries from an African American perspective. Because these scholars have been so prolific, space does not allow for my mentioning all the major figures in this field, and thus I must confine my discussion primarily to texts that represent collaborative efforts. Cain Hope Felder was the trailblazer in this regard with the publication of his *Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class & Family* (1989). He then edited *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation* (1991). One of the purposes of the first text was to refute the notion that black Africans had no relation to the Bible prior to the modern period. We should note that at the time of this writing, Gay L. Byron is engaged in groundbreaking research on Ethiopic biblical commentaries heretofore ignored by the biblical establishment. Another of the purposes of *Troubling Biblical Waters* was recovery and uplift. Felder pointed out that although African Americans have a rich tradition of biblical interpretation as evidenced in spirituals, slave narratives, and the authentic black preaching tradition, that tradition is now in danger of being eclipsed by black imitations of white evangelicals. Although Felder is critical of certain abuses of biblical interpretation in the black church, he affirms that "what is less known or acknowledged is the apparent correlation between aspects of the Black Church's experience and biblical usage and those of first-century Christians" (p. 80). In this acknowledgement, we can observe the tension among African American biblical scholars between, on one hand, their recognition of the genius of black folk religion and its preaching/biblical interpretation, which is closer to "orality" underlying the biblical text; and, on the other hand, the need to correct or upgrade that tradition with historical-critical exegetical methods. Whereas the former is particularistic, the latter is universalistic and is related to the debate among African American biblical scholars about whether the primary audience of their scholarship should be the black church or the academy or both. Allan Dwight Callahan deserves special mention due to the impact his groundbreaking *The Embassy of Onesimus: The Letter of Paul to Philemon* (1997) has had on all subsequent Philemon scholarship in the academy.

In *Stony the Road*, a host of African American biblical scholars addressed a wide range of practical, hermeneutical, and methodological issues, as in the chapters by Thomas Hoyt Jr., "Interpreting Biblical Scholarship for the Black Church"; William H. Meyers, "The Hermeneutical Dilemma of the African American Biblical Student"; Vincent L. Wimbury, "The Bible and African Americans: An Outline of an Interpretative Journey"; and Clarice J. Martin,

“The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: ‘Free Slaves’ and ‘Subordinate Women.’” Vincent Wimbush, who has moved away from the kind of historical-critical methodology valorized in theological institutions to head the Signifying Scriptures Institute at Claremont Graduate School, edited *Theorizing Scriptures: New Critical Orientations to a Cultural Phenomenon (Signifying (on) Scriptures)* (2008). The name of the institute Wimbush heads is inspired directly from Long’s *Significations*. On the other end of the spectrum are African American biblical scholars who have made a commitment to write for black pastors and laypersons. *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary* (2008), edited by Brian Blount, represents one such effort. In this text, different African American biblical scholars have written commentaries on each book in the New Testament and also introduction articles on things like “Slavery in the Early Church,” by Mitzi Smith. Other African American women contributors were Gay L. Byron, “James”; Stephanie Buchanan Crowder, “Luke”; Raquel St. Clair, “Womanist Biblical Interpretation”; and Monya A. Stubbs, “Philippians.” Raquel St. Clair’s *Call and Consequences: A Womanist Reading of Mark* (2008) is a scholarly work that is accessible to pastors and laypersons and will certainly become indispensable for Markan studies. Renita Weems’s *Just a Sister Away* (2005) represents a text that is accessible and widely read by laypeople as well as pastors. Demetrius K. Williams is an African American male whose book, *An End to This Strife: The Politics of Gender in African American Churches* (2004), lends full support to the Womanist agenda of inclusion.

Womanist Religious Thought

From the above, we can see that Womanist thought is not confined just to those doing theology. It can inform the perspective of any discipline: biblical studies, theology, ethics, pastoral psychology, spirituality, and so forth. Like their black theology counterparts, Womanist scholars draw upon sources from slave narratives, spirituals, the blues, black poetry, and literature to pursue their project. The uniqueness to this approach is that these sources are interpreted from the perspective of African American women for the purpose of their liberation and that of the black community. It should also be said, however, that not all African American women designate themselves as Womanist. Cheryl Sanders, for example, does not describe herself as a Womanist because Alice Walker’s definition of the term lacks Christian distinctiveness. The term “Womanist” stems from Alice Walker’s

novel *In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens* (1983). Some of the key figures doing Womanist theology are Katie Cannon, Emilie Townes, Jacqueline Grant, Delores Williams, Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, Kelly Brown Douglas, Renita Weems, Shawn Copeland, Clarice Martin, Francis Wood, Karen Baker-Fletcher, Jamie Phelps, Marcia Riggs, Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, and Linda Thomas, to name a few. It was instigated by African American women scholars’ frustration at being marginalized in both feminist theology and black theology due respectively to racism and sexism. White women have tended to universalize their experience to represent those of all women and have often shown little knowledge or interest in the perspectives and experiences of women of color. African American men doing black theology have written as if the concerns of black men automatically addressed those of black women. “Womanist” became the term that distinguished their project from both white females and black males. Only black women could interpret the neglected data of black women’s experience. In *White Women’s Christ, Black Women’s Jesus* (1989), Jacquelyn Grant defines Womanist theology, among other things, as involving black women reading and interpreting the Bible from their own experience. In *Sisters in the Wilderness* (1993), Dolores Williams did likewise. Much diversity exists within this common understanding. In *Power in the Blood? The Cross in the African American Religious Experience* (1998), Joanne Terrill describes how traditional Christian images function as potent and efficacious symbols of healing and transformation for black women and men. The epistemological and hermeneutical problems of doing any theology are addressed by Linda Thomas, who sees Womanist theology as the assertion of a unique epistemological modality entailing black women’s experience. Echoing Patricia Hill Collins’s *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment* (2000), Thomas raised the question of how knowledge is organized and by whom. In “Womanist Theology” she wrote, “Inclusive construction of knowledge denotes exploring sources that culturally may be vastly different from our own epistemological points of departure.” She advocates that Womanist scholars do “fieldwork” and include interviews of black women in different situations among their sources. There is a sense of meaning and mode of healing that occurs in numerous situations where black women gather without black males or white females being present. Although African American women enjoy a mode of knowing distinct from white women and African American males, the problematic of Womanist scholarship is—as in the case of black

theology—how it can be appropriately expressed through the conventions of scholarly discourse.

New Epistemologies

Barbara A. Holmes's work—*Race and the Cosmos* (2002), *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practices of the Black Church* (2004), and *Liberation and the Cosmos: Conversations with the Elders* (2008)—represents one of several new epistemological orientations in African American religious thought. The epistemological issue Thomas raised in the above quote underscores the importance of the scholarship being done—mostly by black women—on non-Christian religions of the African diaspora that require not only an explication of different beliefs and ritual practices but possible different modes for apprehending the divine in its relationship with both humans and nature. Thomas is an anthropologist by discipline and is the author of *Under the Canopy: Ritual Process and Spiritual Resilience in South Africa* (1999). Such work promises huge dividends in helping black religious scholars working in other areas reappraise such things as healing, trance, revelation, spirit possession, and the whole concept of religion as exchange, to name just a few items. Zora Neal Hurston anticipated this project with her investigation of the trance phenomenon in *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Jamaica and Haiti* (1938). Pioneering work on dance and ritual was undertaken by Katherine Dunham in *Journey to Accompany* (1946), *The Dances of Haiti* (1947), and *Island Possessed* (1969). Other scholars building upon this foundation include Ericka Bourguignon (*Trance Dance*, 1968; and *Possession*, 1976), Sheila Walker (*Ceremonial Spirit Possession in Africa and Afro-America: Forms, Meanings and Functional Significance for Individual and Social Groups*, 1972), Karen McCarthy Brown (*Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn*, 1991), George Brandon (*Santeria from Africa to the New World; The Dead Sell Memories*, 1993), Joseph Murphy (*Working the Spirit: Ceremonies of the African Diaspora*, 1994), Rachael Harding (*A Refuge in Thunder: Candomble and Alternative Spaces of Blackness*, 2000), Jacob Olupona (*African Spirituality: Forms, Meanings, and Expressions*, 2000), Yvonne Chireau (*Black Magic: Religion and the African American Conjuring Tradition*, 2003), Dianne Stewart (*Three Eyes for the Journey: African Dimensions of the Jamaican Religious Experience*, 2004), Tracy Hucks (*Approaching the African God; History Textuality, and the Re-Ownership of Africa in the African American Yoruba Movement*, 2005), Jualynne Dodson (*Sacred Spaces: Religious Traditions in Oriente Cuba*, 2005), and Judy Rosenthal (*Possession, Ecstasy, & Law in Ewe Voodoo*, 1998).

Because many black religious scholars were trained as theologians, they suffer from the same limitation as their white counterparts in not being able to account for nature in their religious reflection as something that is revelatory and in which humans also participate through modes of interaction that are outside the Enlightenment scheme. The works of the scholars mentioned in this section are opening up new avenues for African American religious thought and putting it into a more global conversation that is not just ecumenical but also interreligious.

Conclusion

W. E. B. Du Bois's notion of "double-consciousness" is clearly evident in African American religious scholars' struggle to determine African American religious thought's site, audience, and proper mode of expression. Hopefully African American religious thought will help to overcome what Carter G. Woodson termed *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933) and the anti-intellectualism described by E. Franklin Frazier in *Black Bourgeoisie* (1997). The connection between the interpretative and constructive work of black theologians and the descriptive work of historians and sociologists will continue to be debated. African American religious scholars will also debate the connection between their writing and what most black religious folks actually think.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *African Traditional Religions*; *Baptists: African American*; *Ethnicity*; *Invisible Institution*; *Liberation Theology*; *Literature: African American*; *Methodists: African American*; *Music: African American* entries; *New Religious Movements: Black Nationalist Movements*; *Pentecostals: African American*; *Race and Racism*; *Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics*.

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Religious Thought: Feminist

Feminist thought can broadly be defined as any thinking about the way in which a woman is situated in regard to her environment. This includes examination of what constitutes female/feminine identity, roles, thought, sexuality, behavior, and psychology with regard to theoretical, political, social,

and personal experience. Many definitions of feminist thought include examining inequalities as they exist between men and women and, more recently, along lines of class, race, and social orientation as they exist among women.

Though broken into various schools and genres, particularly in the wake of third wave feminism following the political, suffrage-based efforts associated with the first wave and the more unified sentiments of the second wave's sexual revolution, feminist thought in its entirety emerges forcefully in the domain of American religious life, largely because women in America have functioned in the religious sphere. The term *wave* has been incorporated into feminist vocabulary to define the historic phases of the feminist movement. Deemed as the appropriate descriptor of these phases, *wave* digresses from the traditional linear, often patriarchal means of approaching history and demonstrates the way in which these movements take a cumulative shift from one another, building on characteristics of the prior phase.

Thus the structure of feminist thought is intended to embody the spirit of its content, as feminine/female ways of knowing are sometimes articulated as circular, weblike, or concentric waves, distinct from what is generally recognized as the archetypal male/masculine way of knowing/thinking, as represented by patterns of linear progression or even a more phallogocentric model of rising action, climax, and denouement. The notion of the wave is often invoked as a means of speaking to the embodied and particularly fluid experiences of women, such as menstruation and childbirth. The metaphor of the wave as a measuring device of feminist thought is a key political symbol whose meaning and use were and are intentionally crafted to help deploy a feminist grammar through a central image. The importance of this foundational visual tool is critical to understanding how feminist thought reclaims rhetorical space and language with which to express its content in religious life.

Although early American feminist thought has been traced well before the suffragist movement of the late nineteenth century, it was this movement (1848–1920) that was seen as the pinnacle for first wave feminism and began the nationally recognized movement of women into the political and economic front. Building on this movement was second wave feminism, which emerged in the 1960s. While first wave feminism is characterized by its *de jure* approach to advocating for women's rights to citizenship and space in the political arena, the second wave of feminism is known to have seen more of a *de facto* approach, addressing both official and unofficial inequalities. Second wave feminists revised

the way in which women approached the political world with the hallmark phrase “the personal is the political.” Brandishing this phrase brought about an investigation of the ways in which the domestic, quieted lives of women should be examined and reinvented legally and socially. This wave mixed with the Vietnam War protests and the strides of the civil rights movement sweeping America, each of these bringing about a call to examine feminism as related to black women and the emergence of womanism, as critiques of feminism as a white woman’s operation took root.

By the last two decades of the twentieth century, these criticisms were melding into third wave feminism, which has seen a more amorphous pattern than first and second wave feminism, adopting an ethos of inclusion and diversity as integral to the definition of feminism. Third wave feminism has in many ways reacted against the “hardened feminist” ideals that are stereotypical of second wave feminism and has come to embrace several varieties of feminisms. Questions of female sexuality have taken the forefront in third wave feminist discussions, particularly as queer rights have become a feminist platform. The occupations of sex workers have been embraced by some third wave feminists as viable professions for females; simultaneously, conservative feminism has arisen, critiquing the second wave push for women to enter the workforce. Conservative feminism argues for the importance of family and home life for women and feminists. Additionally, out of third wave feminism, and particularly building on womanism, mestiza and postcolonial feminism have taken hold in the fluidity of this third wave, whose crest became distinct from the second wave generations especially during the last two decades of the twentieth century.

Finally, in the early years of the twenty-first century, the third wave of feminism began to meld loosely into postfeminism, a term generally adopted by people who identify with parts, or all, of the feminist movement but reject the term *feminist* as a viable label. Additionally, and perhaps of more interest in this context, some thinkers have identified the emergence of a nascent fourth wave both coinciding with and articulating distinct forms of thought from third wave feminism. Fourth wave feminism, whose birth is generally associated with the national trend following the events of September 11, 2001, of reexamining the role of religion and spirituality in both the personal and political lives of Americans, continues to evolve and gain momentum on the approach of the second decade of the twenty-first century. In keeping with the wave metaphor of feminist thought, it seems that the full swell of the fourth wave’s crest has yet to

be seen, just as its true impact and influence have yet to be felt and examined by American culture at large and feminist thinkers alike. Whereas previous periods of feminist thought, particularly during the second wave, saw calls for the wholesale rejection and abandonment of any religious traditions and ways of life at all based on or sympathetic toward patriarchal histories and practices, fourth wave thought recognizes the complex range of meanings available to women through religion, both old and new. Indeed, some analysts have argued that the only way that American women will be able to combine their religious experience/expression with their experiences as women is to abandon any allegiance to traditions associated with Christianity (whether Protestant, Roman Catholic, or Eastern Orthodox) and Judaism and to identify with a religious group or style that does not have a history on American soil for oppressing women. This fourth wave certainly acknowledges the detriments religion has caused to women historically, but it also understands that it is dismissive and reductive to ignore the spiritual/religious impulse that may be a significant part of women’s personhood and to condemn the vast majority of historically patriarchal religious traditions in which generations of women have participated and found great value and voice.

The interactions of each of these movements with various strands of religious thought shape, meld, and define types of religious feminisms, as well as challenge and, in some cases, reinforce religious doctrine. Religious thought has fallen in stride with each of these social movements, complicating and facilitating the emergence of a religious feminist thought, concurrent with shifting roles for women within the religious field. As the first and second wave of feminism saw the emergence of women into the public sphere, so some American denominations have seen women shift from their roles as leaders among small church groups to ordained clergy of denominations. Backlash from each of these feminist movements has also not left religious fields untouched as women in various religious communities may struggle for recognition in their congregations or even adopt more conservative roles in order to avoid the progressive strides of women’s leadership. Just as feminism has carved new and various roles for women in society, so women and men must negotiate the position of women and the feminine/divine within religious traditions.

From Early Feminist Religious Thought to First Wave Feminism

Although “feminism” as a political and social label was not formally adopted until the large-scale mobilization of the

women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s, its predecessors and foremothers began paving the way for later, more galvanized efforts even during the colonial period. Because religious settings were one of women's few public arenas before industrialization and the women's rights movement in the late nineteenth century, most of what could be known as "feminist religious thought" in the time before a more codified women's movement can be found in the halls of churches, charity work, and mission work. A major divide between the domestic and public spheres, as well as social, economic, and religious pressure for women to remain within the domestic sphere, led women to find social and political expression primarily in religious settings.

During the seventeenth century, when the Puritan Good Wife served as the dominant social and religious model for women, figures such as Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643) frequently upset the traditional gender roles and politics, often through public expressions of religious devotion rather than committed displays and articulations of gender injustice. In the Puritan colony of Massachusetts Bay, Hutchinson, daughter of an Anglican minister, began holding weekly religious meetings in her home to study the Bible and discuss the Sunday sermons at length. What began as a small meeting of women soon morphed into a coeducational teaching opportunity for Hutchinson, who felt she was gifted by God to distinguish between true and false preachers and to expound on the sermon messages of her Puritan community. Community and church members became deeply embroiled over dissenting opinions about her actions, although the disagreements often regarded political and social arguments as much as theological differences.

The controversy extended over a lengthy period of time in which Hutchinson was often publicly summoned and criticized for her behavior and beliefs. She based her work on the centrality of experience in belief, which is how she justified her calling to teach in her home, as well as the more universal test of faith through conversion. The people who sided with Hutchinson articulated their views based more on faith and experience, while she charged the opposing members of the Bay community with focusing on works and legalistic regulations as expressions of faith. Because she based her arguments in scripture, it was difficult for her opponents to argue with her outside of her sowing dissension and surpassing her authority and roles as a woman.

The charges leveled at her took on an increasingly civil tone because although her detractors did not agree with her theologically, they found it difficult to articulate such

differences without also criticizing the scriptures as the source of her own arguments. Anne and the Hutchinson family were eventually banished from the Bay community and relocated to Rhode Island. As Susan Hill Lindley notes in *"You have Stept out of your Place,"* "Anne Hutchinson was not condemned solely because she was a woman, but her gender made her actions even more offensive, and the Puritan leadership drew far-reaching conclusions from the incident about women and their place" (p. 5). Hutchinson never identified herself as working explicitly or solely for women's rights, although she certainly raised this issue within her Puritan community. She probably would not have identified as a feminist in the modern sense, but she did pursue her theological arguments from a distinctly female perspective, and for this reason it is important to consider her impact on the development of feminist thought in America from within the colonial context.

The Great Awakening, with roots in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, saw a new generation of women's religious leadership amid the spirit of fervor and revival that brought colonial America to a new era of religious life. Most commonly associated with the itinerant and revolutionary preaching career of George Whitefield (1714–1770), the Great Awakening engendered a climate of religious zeal and emotional frenzy, one that quickly outgrew the traditional limits of ecclesiastical hierarchies and dogmatic orthodoxy. The spiritual emphasis of this period was on the personal religious experiences of individuals that served to define their socioreligious identities, which frequently ran counter to patterns of social and religious organization. The conversion of one's heart and inner transformation of the soul, rather than one's ecclesiastical affiliation, was paramount during the Great Awakening; human elements such as feelings and emotions were given priority over more legalistic religious considerations regarding a person's church membership. For these reasons women especially were able to push the boundaries of public participation and leadership in worship services and to establish a new tradition of religious witness.

Sarah Osborn (1714–1796) of Newport, Rhode Island, embodied well the energy and vitality of the Great Awakening and serves as a primary example of women's religious leadership of the time. Having largely rejected the sweeping Enlightenment emphasis on human reason and will, Osborn was a Calvinist who led a young women's religious society that met at her home for over fifty years. This Female Society provided women with a space and community for mutual

support and spiritual development and influenced the greater developments of her church's growth and response to the revivals of the Great Awakening. When the 1760s brought yet another wave of religious revivals to Osborn's community and region, she began teaching a group of African Americans during weekly Sunday meetings, although she was consistently careful not to lead male-only groups or appear more generally to assume leadership positions traditionally occupied by men. Not only did her meetings afford some African Americans the opportunity for more formal religious instruction and spiritual development than they may have had otherwise, but Osborn also fulfilled a role and needs from within her community to which no male leaders were attending. When met with criticism over her public leadership, she offered precisely this argument in her defense. Osborn and her Female Society also proved their worth to the Newport community when they helped facilitate the calling of Samuel Hopkins, protégé to the renowned Jonathan Edwards, to the pastorate of her congregation, the First Church of Newport.

A female religious leader of a succeeding generation, Frances Willard (1839–1898) made comparable strides in founding the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in 1873, using her religious standing as a platform for political and social reform. Founded in Evanston, Illinois, the WCTU was established as part of the prohibition movement. As the movement grew, WCTU members also focused on suffrage and the WCTU organized woman suffrage leaders, allowing women to become involved in American politics. Willard even went so far as to lobby for the "Home Protection" ballot, which claimed that women's moral superiority to men should afford these "citizen-mothers" a vote over their male counterparts. In a time period in which suffragists were viewed as radicals, the WCTU gave women a more accepted place for political expression and organization.

Despite these various feminist voices recognized in early religious traditions, feminist religious criticism did not gain popularity until the nineteenth century, with Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *The Women's Bible*. This scriptural commentary, a landmark publication in feminist biblical criticism (first published in 1895), focused on passages of the Christian Bible that were most harmful to women's social positions and realigned these texts to serve feminist interests. Stanton (1815–1902), for example, "interpreted the first creation story in Genesis, where God creates human beings in 'his' own image, male and female, as an indication that God was 'himself' both male and female" (*The Woman's Bible*). Drawing

from the strategies of her female predecessors, Stanton also utilized her religious position to advocate various social and political convictions.

Stanton is first and foremost a well-known forerunner of the American women's movement in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. One of her most notable female colleagues was Lucretia Coffin Mott (1793–1880), an American Quaker minister who is credited as one of the first American feminists. Mott and Stanton met at the International Anti-Slavery Convention in London and then organized the seminal Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. The religious views of each of these women, including Mott's Quaker antislavery and anti-war doctrine and Stanton's challenge of conventional Christianity, influenced the tenor of the feminist movement in terms of political values and social platforms, platforms that carry into the second wave of the American feminist movement.

The Rise of Second and Third Wave Feminism

As second wave feminism has been marked by the phrase "the personal is the political," one can trace the ways in which personal religion becomes a matter of political discourse for feminist thinkers. Prominent feminist thinkers and activists of the second wave, such as Betty Friedan (1921–2006), Coretta Scott King (1927–2006), and Gloria Steinem (1934–), challenged the power structures of both society and religion and how political and religious leaders addressed the issues women confronted in their daily lives. While first wave feminism saw the Eighteenth Amendment grant women the right to vote, the second wave of feminism saw various legal actions, including *Roe v. Wade* and Title IX, but second wave feminism also saw a rise of spreading feminist ideals into the homes of America. Consciousness-raising groups became popular conduits of feminist thought during the second wave of the feminist movement. Reflective of earlier house church groups, consciousness-raising groups included gatherings of women discussing their personal lives and examining ways in which their lives behind closed doors, amid the privacy of family life, could be recast in light of emerging feminist values.

The sentiment of these consciousness-raising groups brought about a new consciousness as to the role of the feminine in conceptions of the divine. Although Elizabeth Cady Stanton had composed *The Woman's Bible* and raised questions as to the interactions of women with the divine,

the second wave of feminism saw thinkers such as Rosemary Radford Ruether (1936–), Mary Daly (1928–), and Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza (1938–) raise issues of the identity of the divine as feminine. In seminal texts such as Daly's *God the Father: Towards a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* and Schussler Fiorenza's *In Memory of Her*, which reread the Bible and other religious texts, these women proposed alternative interpretations of traditional texts to look for the "lost" voices and presences of women; moreover, they questioned the nature of the divine and recataloged God, not as Father or as male, but rather as a genderless entity or, in some cases, as a feminine or androgynous entity. These scholars found support in various ancient spiritual traditions, some of which focus on the "goddess" or the divine as unsexed, as well as in other traditions that recognize a female divine.

In a similar vein, the second wave of feminism also encountered significant activism around the issue of inclusive language. Liturgical tools were modified in an effort to include women as equal congregant members, and androcentric language, such as *mankind*, has been altered to a more inclusive form, such as *humanity*. Several feminist scholars and thinkers have drawn on ancient goddess traditions to validate a linguistic shift toward inclusive language of the female within the divine. Some works, for example, Cynthia Eller's *The Myth of a Patriarchal Prehistory: Why an Invented Past Will Not Give Women a Future* (2000), argue that feminist scholars have belatedly placed a feminist reading on ancient, patriarchal traditions. Various other lines of thought and traditions, including Wicca, with the worship of the Triple Goddess, have been drawn on in feminist discussions as a means to validate the importance of the feminine to the divine. The duotheistic nature of Wicca in revering a complementary Goddess and God, similar to the Taoist philosophy of the yin and yang, allows for an example of the way in which the divine can be envisioned, and spoken of, as both masculine and feminine, or, in some cases, as feminine.

This idea of the female divine has extended into revisionist histories within the third wave with the exploration of various extracanonical biblical texts, including the "Gnostic gospels" and the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, analyzed by notable scholars such as Elaine Pagels (1943–) and Karen King (1954–). The gospel of Mary of Magdala has taken hold in pop culture as well as in academia. This gospel, as presented in the volume from Karen King and in other media, indicates a close relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene, as his "most-loved" disciple, and, in some cases, indicating a marital relationship between Jesus and Mary

Magdalene. While not formally adopted as sacred texts or revered on a similar level as canonical texts, these works do provide credence to some feminist claims by providing perspective to the historical and spiritual importance of women within a religious context. Women are now able to relate to sacred texts, such as the gospels, by understanding a historical context for women during the life of Jesus. Despite the widespread rejection of these texts by orthodox Christianity, these revisionist histories and scholarship seeking the presence of women in religious history have spread into other religious traditions.

Emergent Strands of Feminist Thought in the Second and Third Waves

As the second and third waves of feminism saw a greater awareness of class, race, and sexual orientation, there has been room for the establishment of various strands of feminist thought within American political, social, and religious life. These strands developed in both a reactionary and conciliatory capacity to mainstream American feminism. Various economic political and social factors, including the civil rights movement, globalization, and changes in mass media, have facilitated the timely emergence of these different types of feminist thought and, in turn, shaped the feminist movement itself.

Womanist Theology

Perhaps the first and loudest critique of mainstream American feminism, as a white woman's enterprise, arose from the civil rights movement and the emergence of black women into the political front. The term *womanism* came from the Pulitzer Prize-winning Alice Walker, author of *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (1983). Although Walker coined the term in relation to the experience of black women, several other nonwhite theorists identify with *womanist*.

Womanist theology reflects on the position of black women in relation to the divine, much in the same way that other second wave feminists, including Mary Daly, reflect on the experience of women relating to a masculine deity. Notable figure Delores Williams writes about the way in which black women, beginning with slavery in the United States, related to the image of the suffering Christ. She claims that the way in which black women relate to this figure can both constrain and enable them in terms of becoming empowered individuals. While on one hand the women relate directly to the divine, on the other the women are

identifying with a suffering figure and so more willingly bear social injustice for the sake of family and other people.

American Muslim Feminist Thought

Muslim women's movements—generally aligned with post-colonial feminism, beginning with scholars such as Leila Ahmed (1940–), author of *Women and Gender in Islam* (1992)—set a trajectory of Muslim feminist thought, and have seen similar rereadings of the Qur'an and consideration of the place of women within Islam. Such scholars as Fatima Mernissi (1940–) have offered various interpretations of the Qur'an, Shari'a, and various hadith, with particular focus on issues such as child marriage, spousal relationships, and the meaning of the *hijab* in a feminist context. Several Muslim American feminist scholars have begun writing memoirs about their experiences as Muslim American women and finding their identity within American society. They have particularly begun to explore the position of Muslim women within America following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, as a renewed interest in Muslim Americans emerged. In 2005 in the United States, Imam Amina Wadud (1952–) became one of the first Muslim women to publicly lead prayer at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. She also delivered a Friday *khutbah* (sermon) in 1994 in Virginia, an action that has been largely unheard of for Muslim women to perform. These actions represent the complicated interface between the traditional roles of women in society and in religious communities and the emerging roles and access women have gained in America in the past century.

Third Wave Reclamation and Historical Revisionism

Catholic Feminist Thought

Alongside several mainstream Protestant denominations, the Catholic Church has been challenged with the question of female ordination. Owing to a traditionally male-dominated clerical hierarchy, various parties, including feminist theologians, clergy, and laypeople, have called the issue of female ordination into question before the papacy. In recent decades one of the initial statements against female ordination was issued in 1975 by Pope Paul VI (1897–1978), who expressed concern that the Church of England was considering ordaining women. He argued that women could not be ordained on the basis that Christ chose his apostles from among men. This argument of the nonadmissibility of female ordination

based on biblical standards has withheld in the dominant Catholic decision on the ordination of women. A number of priests, including Swiss priest Hans Küng (1928–), American priests Charles Curran (1934–) and Matthew Fox (1940–), and Sri Lankan priest Tissa Balasuriya (1924–), have argued against the papal stance of the Catholic Church and women.

In addition to these male advocates for female ordination, the Catholic Church has seen a large number of feminist scholars emerging from within the tradition. These scholars generally tend to sharply examine the male-dominant papal structure, the noninclusive language, and the more conservative politics of the Catholic Church, including its stance on gay marriage and family planning. Feminist theologians, among them Mary Daly, Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, Rosemary Radford Ruether (1936–), and Margaret Farley (1936–), have called into question the dominant idea of a male deity. Daly's *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (1973) and Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza's *In Memory of Her* (1984) examine the way in which envisioning the divine as female, or genderless, can be empowering to women and spark a new line of thought within the Catholic Church. Schussler Fiorenza has proposed the term *kyriarchy* in her *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation* (1993) to indicate the complex pyramid structure of hierarchy feeding from the structure of the Catholic Church into daily lives of practitioners.

The debates surrounding the Catholic stance on women within the church and domestic life have led to an increase in the common phenomena of women opting to remain within the Catholic Church and of those opting to leave the Catholic Church. Some Catholic women, as well as other women of more conservative traditions, choose not to leave their religious backgrounds or traditions but rather to work from within these traditions to attempt to spark reform.

American Jewish Feminist Thought

As evidence of a more third and fourth wave feminist approach to religion, and specifically Judaism, the editors of *In Our Own Voices* included a piece of writing from American rabbi Elyse Goldstein entitled "Taking Back the Waters: A Feminist Re-appropriation of Mikva," in which she seeks to reclaim a practice once oppressively imposed on women as a joyful celebration of her Jewish womanhood. Goldstein considers *mikvah*, the ritual bath in which women fulfill the purification requirement expected of them following menstruation, one of the most challenging traditions for Jewish feminists to respond to, both as scholars and faith

practitioners. Goldstein herself offers a feminist reinterpretation of this ritual that is intended to remove or replace the elements many Jewish women find degrading.

Goldstein cites Leviticus 25 as prohibiting a woman who is menstruating from touching her husband or his possessions for seven days. Moreover, this prohibition is extended such that the woman's husband is strongly discouraged from sitting in the same places where she herself has rested. She discusses at length the far-reaching implications of this passage for Jewish women, including some local examples of women being severely limited from participating in religious rituals during menses. Some of Goldstein's most poignant and powerful statements, however, come when she exhorts fellow Jewish women to reclaim the ritual of *mikvah*.

Even though *mikvah* did not traditionally belong to women but was instead imposed on them, Goldstein asserts that Jewish women have a sort of divine right, and even responsibility, to reclaim the practice for their own. These women and others like them, she argues, have so little to their name in their own traditions that it would do no good for them to branch outside of a tradition that at least affords them a sense of purpose and identity in their lives. As she suggests, reclaiming the tradition of *mikvah* allows Jewish women to rewrite their history and even to create a new rhetorical, historical space for themselves. If they were to abandon their tradition entirely, they would have neither history nor heritage to reclaim and would have to begin from scratch and abdicate a religious legacy that undeniably played such an intimate role in their lives. Goldstein speaks of rebirth and new wisdom as concepts concerning *mikvah* that symbolize Jewish women's rebirth and new identity as both Jews and *as women*. Stripping the power of men from *mikvah* and reappropriating the practice allows Jewish women to pull the pendulum of power, confidence, autonomy, and identity back in their favor. Searching elsewhere for such validation would at best leave them somewhere in the middle, neither lost nor found in a non-Jewish/Christian tradition that would inevitably offer its own challenges to them as adherents.

Although such practices as *mikvah* are often not inherently oppressive but rather are utilized and manipulated by those adhering to oppressive religious and social ideologies, women such as Goldstein can urge reclamation and even revolutionize their traditionally oppressive religions by using that which they serve as the foundation for progression. In other words, though practices such as *mikvah* are not demeaning themselves and therefore do not necessarily need

to be abolished completely and abandoned, but rather the systems of thought behind such practices, Goldstein and those like her can effectively redefine *mikvah*, not as a tool for oppression and control but as a tool for women's expression and freedom.

Evangelical Feminism

Along with third and fourth wave feminist thought, the emergence of evangelical feminism as a particularly Christian form of feminist thought continues to expand its presence in evangelical communities today. As with many major third and fourth wave thinkers, articulation of critical theologies and ideologies emphasizes a more radical break with traditional religious/Christian thought. Such revisions of everything from basic religious grammars to major theological concepts about gender and the divine are intended to be as such, but they often leave little room for feminist thought to be developed under the auspices of traditional religion and traditional gender roles. In this way evangelical feminism encompasses efforts to identify with evangelical Christianity in such a way that the foundational theologies and doctrines are respected while the social constructions and organizations of evangelical culture are subject to critical inquiry.

Evangelical feminists nevertheless maintain an often tenuous relationship with the dominant evangelical culture, with large numbers of evangelical Christians rejecting any such revisionist thought simply because of its nominal and political association with historical feminism. Many evangelicals, however, are more willing to engage such feminist thought, with the frequent result of a polarization between two major theological views of women's roles and participation in the church: complementarianism and egalitarianism. Complementarianism holds to a more traditional, gendered division of the family unit and church body in which men are thought to be the natural and divinely ordained heads of households and of churches, whereas women are to graciously submit themselves to the authority and headship of their husbands and especially male church leaders. The abuse of such a power dynamic, both domestic and ecclesiastical, is a subject taken up more seriously and publicly by evangelicals today, although there exists a range of opinions on why and how this complementarian relationship fails or is subverted by both Christian men and women. Complementarians frequently declare that men and women are equal in personhood but different in role and function. Thus the office of head pastor, especially, and frequently the supporting clerical offices are limited to men as qualified by scripture.

Egalitarianism more often pronounces that men and women are equally suited to fulfill leadership roles and that both should submit to each other in a more mutual, equitable exchange of roles and purpose in both family and church, such as division of household labor, appointing both male and women clergy and laypeople, and equitable leadership roles among men and women.

The Evangelical & Ecumenical Women's Caucus (EEWC) was established as a branch of a group first known as the Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA). Founded in 1973, the ESA caucused annually with a specific list of concerns, including racism, sexism, peace, and simpler lifestyles. Out of this group the EEWC developed as a social and religious motivator among evangelical and other Christian traditions to combat church sexism, including noninclusive language, ordination rights, and inequitable family structure dynamics.

The EEWC was originally the Evangelical Women's Caucus (EWC), which first met in Washington D.C., in 1975 with an attendance of more than 360 women from the United States and Canada. In 1990 the name was changed to Evangelical & Ecumenical Women's Caucus in order to reflect the increasingly more inclusive nature of the organization. The EEWC produces the newsletter *Christian Feminist Today*, which has included contributions from Letha Dawson Scanzoni (1935–), an independent scholar and author who specializes in gay marriage and the Christian church, and Anne Eggebroten (1948–), an author and feminist scholar who focuses on pro-choice politics within the Christian church.

Conclusion: Postfeminism and Religious Thought

Although the work of Judith Butler (1956–) has little if any direct relationship with religion in America, her presence in feminist thought is central to current feminist discourse and certainly has much potential when applied to feminist religious thought. Butler's work on performativity and gender has become the critical lens through which to reexamine the traditional structures of power, agency, and gender identity and politics. Although her dense prose and complex style often invoke the criticism of the very feminists and other thinkers to whom she writes, her pivotal work *Gender Trouble* has revolutionized how sociologists and feminists think about the construction of identity and gender roles. An introductory paraphrase of one of her major premises is that there is no a priori gender identity behind social and personal expressions of gender; rather, gender is performatively by the very expressions that are often claimed to be the secondary results of a natural, preexisting gender identity.

This theory of performativity is one espoused by many postmodern social scientists, and not just feminist thinkers, to explain how people are culturally conditioned to internalize and then "perform" characteristics, such as gender or age, by behaving in ways deemed socially acceptable for a given gender, age range, or other social grouping. It is intended in part to counter theories suggesting that human beings behave in certain ways due exclusively or primarily to the natural predispositions that are allegedly "hard-wired" in people and, therefore, are naturally exhibited as the common behaviors of different social groupings. Similarly, this theory is also intended to challenge the notion that human beings are born with a predetermined condition or characteristic, such as sexual orientation or gender, which then naturally promotes or produces certain behaviors ascribed to that condition or characteristic; rather, performativity theory argues that there is not necessarily a causal condition behind gender or sexual orientation but that cultural conditioning prescribes conventional behaviors that are then linked to designated social groupings and taught, internalized, and reproduced over generations and time so that conditions such as gender and sexuality are quite literally the products of social performance.

To performance theorists it is this culturally demanded performance that creates certain identities and conditions, rather than a preexisting identity or condition that naturally results in the secondary performance of its defining behaviors. In examining gender dynamics and politics in religion and in feminist critiques and approaches to religion in America, Butler's theoretical framework is incredibly helpful in destabilizing and exploring the gender roles and norms often taken for granted in centuries-old religious traditions and often framed in terms of divine ordinance based in discourses frequently revealed to be patriarchal and androcentric and therefore inherently conducive to structuring religious and social organizations in which men and masculine ways of knowing and being are favored or valued more highly and in which women are secondary and subordinate.

The path of American religious feminist thought has begun with the emergence of female voices within the religious sector of Puritanism and traced its way through British colonialism to the mid-nineteenth century, with women taking up causes of prohibition and abolitionism and emerging as suffragist leaders at the turn of the nineteenth century. This time period features women using religious venues to promote not only religious ideals but also political and social platforms. The first wave feminists saw a birth of their

political rights from these efforts, and religious thought began curving toward more of a voiced critique of the female position within major religious discourse. Second and third wave feminism, born of this first wave, continue with the expansion of women on the political front and an exploration of religious thought. The civil rights movement allowed for a critique of first wave feminism as a white woman's enterprise and began a string of new feminisms that venture away from traditional feminism.

As the definition of *feminism* becomes more amorphous and capacious, so more room for postfeminism and critiques within feminism is available. Feminist thought has grown to include self-reflexive critiques to understand antifeminist voices as having an equal stake as a valid school of thought. Within this emphasis on diversity, religious thought among women has followed a similar vein, beginning with strict adherence to Puritan gender ideals and moving to a more pluralistic approach in which even taken-for-granted categories and frameworks, such as women, are reexamined and recast in a framework of reclamation and reconciliation. Owing to these dual imperatives, there has been an exponential outpouring of feminisms, many of which overlap and articulate distinctive subjectivities, such as feminist theories within various religious communities, for example, the Roman Catholic Church and New Age Spiritualists, as well as within ethnic and racial communities, such as the Native Americans and Asian Americans. This list is by no means all-encompassing, as the spirit of third wave feminism seeks to be ever inclusive.

The interaction of religious tradition and feminist thought is one that is always evolving and changes in accordance with the political and social climate of each respective time period. Their evolution is not mutually exclusive or inclusive but rather comes about in a dynamic, dialectical pattern.

See also *Abortion; Antinomian Controversy; Cult of Domesticity; Education: Colleges and Universities; Feminism; Feminist Studies; Gender; Marriage and Family; New Age Religion(s); Politics: Twentieth Century; Postmodernism; Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology; Religious Thought: Mujerista; Religious Thought: Womanist; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Sociological Approaches; Women* entries.

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Religious Thought: Gay Theology

The concept of “gay theology” is an elusive one, representing what may yet prove a short-lived phenomenon that emerged during the last decade of the twentieth century and then lost its clarity to an ever-broadening range of religious studies projects undertaken by openly gay men during the early twenty-first century. Importantly, the term “gay” refers exclusively to gay men, although occasionally “gay people” and “queer” appear in the literature, intending to include both gay men and lesbians. Lesbian writers have long argued that, due to popular misconceptions in the media and elsewhere, such well-intentioned, seemingly inclusive terms actually make lesbians invisible. Moreover, numerous differences in the separate gay and lesbian subcultures have produced significantly different cultural products—including theology—resulting in the need to consider gay theology and lesbian theology as distinct bodies of work. That said, the brief history and evolution of so-called gay theology—or, more broadly, religious studies shaped by an openly gay male perspective—may best be examined through a review of the extant literature and its writers and their themes, discussed herein and detailed in the ensuing bibliography.

Gay theology, or, specifically, *unapologetic gay liberation* theology, emerged during the late 1980s in reaction to the welcome but nonetheless apologetic tone of earlier, gay-affirming pastoral theology and biblical studies. Previously, some writers (for example, John Fortunato, John McNeill) crafted pastorally therapeutic, in-house apologia to reassure those gay men (and lesbians) who were experiencing institutional rejection that they had a rightful place within the Christian tradition and its churches and to encourage them in their pursuits of greater inclusivity and ordination. Other writers (George Edwards, Robin Scroggs) crafted exegetical apologia to insist to those same institutions that excluding gay men (and lesbians) from the full life of the church—including ordination—had no sound biblical basis. Emerging gay theologians insisted, instead, that such apologetic work constituted dead ends—avenues unlikely to convince entrenched boards of ministry or homophobic denominations and congregations—alternatively contending that gay men must assume the appropriateness of their own situated knowledge and authority to speak as resources for theology. Among the most distinctive features of the resulting work was placing personal experience (or confessional theology)

and often detailed gay male sexuality front and center in theological discourse.

Methodological Beginnings

As early as 1989, when the first systematic theology written from a gay male perspective appeared, gay theologians drew upon (and ultimately combined) three existing methodological perspectives: post-Holocaust explorations of the problem of suffering (theodicy) to respond to the tragedy of HIV/AIDS within the gay male community nationwide, Latin American liberation theology to empower gay men toward greater self-acceptance and activism within their own lives and communities, and feminist theology to reclaim and affirm gender and sexuality within an immanently erotic and bodily theology. Here, gay theology relied heavily upon the groundwork of others—especially feminist theologians—and found itself squarely within the evolution of American religious studies, as evidenced by the growing proliferation of ongoing program units within the American Academy of Religion (AAR) (parenthetical dates indicate first AAR appearance): Just as feminist theologians and women’s studies within religion first nurtured a specifically lesbian-feminist approach to theology and ethics (1986), so did lesbians nurture their gay male colleagues (1988), who in turn nurtured men’s studies in religion (1990).

This evolving intellectual lineage situated gay theology within the ever enlarging commitment of Christian theology and the academic study of religion to attend to gender and sexuality as proper theological issues, locations, or perspectives. As such, gay theology extended feminist efforts to establish the erotic as foundational for relational justice and to resacramentalize the body and sexuality. Initially, gay theology set out to celebrate difference and diversity across *all* lines of separation (gender, sexual orientation, race) and ultimately to embrace nonhuman lives as well (ecotheology), while also addressing antigay/antilesbian violence and HIV/AIDS. A few clearly identified profeminist gay theologians even joined men’s studies scholars in exploring the social construction of gender and the implications of male embodiment—of phallocentrism and entitlement—for religion and culture.

Early Publications and Problems

The evolution of openly gay male religious studies publications further reflected this development. Whereas those earlier apologetic writers all found mainstream publishers for their work, the emerging unapologetic gay male writers were

initially not so fortunate and were compelled to rely upon marginal or “*sub rosa*” presses, the loose network of gay/lesbian bookstores, and word of mouth to advance their work. Even the groundbreaking systematic theology of 1989 was published by such a small press after two years of mainstream rejection—in spite of consistently affirmative outside reviewer appraisals (see Clark, *A Place to Start*). To compensate for this dearth of mainstream publishing opportunities and to ensure a wider audience than just AAR attendees—especially among gay men themselves—the gay men’s program unit of the AAR undertook publication of their own best work in a seven-volume “Gay Men’s Issues in Religious Studies” book series, also published outside the mainstream religious studies presses. The series, published from 1990 to 1996 and now out of print, included developing gay theology, ethics, and religious studies from the annual meetings of 1988 to 1995.

This bleak publication situation changed briefly during the mid-1990s when a small cluster of gay theological writers achieved mainstream publication; 1993 proved an especially noteworthy year for their work (Clark, *Beyond Our Ghettos*; Comstock, *Gay Theology without Apology*; Goss, *Jesus Acted Up*), whose themes respectively included gay ecotheology, biblical theology, and Christology. Around the turn of the century, another three volumes that built upon these previous successes also achieved mainstream publication (chronologically: Spencer, *Gay and Gaia*; Clark, *Defying the Darkness*; Goss, *Queering Christ*), again respectively treating gay ecotheology, theodicy and sexual ethics, and Christology. Although the United Church of Christ and its academic publishing arm, Pilgrim Press, afforded gay theologians the greatest number of opportunities (including all but one of these six texts), by early in the new century, economic pressures affecting all book publishing, along with the continuing evolution and broadening of openly gay men’s work in religious studies, would alter this scenario.

Identity Confusion and Divergence

Throughout the 1990s, gay theology never developed any clear, monolithic identity. Reflecting both in-house diversity and in-house disagreements, gay men’s work in the academy soon branched out from theology per se into a more divergent range of projects undertaken with fewer efforts to reach any larger audience beyond the AAR. Whereas lesbians nurtured gay men’s early efforts, for example, the gender divide continued to haunt their few collaborative endeavors, and no joint “gay and lesbian” theology ever developed. Ultimately, lesbian-feminist theologians remained strongly connected to

feminism, while gay men pursued their own paths. Nor did gay male scholars themselves achieve any consensus. Although some remained deeply invested in feminism, latent gay misogyny led others to antithetical positions. The most visible debate appeared across several issues of the *Journal of Men’s Studies* as one side (represented by J. Michael Clark) insisted on the value of long-term, monogamous relationships for gay men—including access to same-sex marriage—while the other side (represented by Ronald E. Long) just as adamantly insisted that monogamous pairings are oppressive and that gay identity somehow hinges on multipartnered, even anonymous sexuality. Shortly thereafter, the developing political and cultural debate outside the academy surrounding same-sex marriage demanded the attention of a couple of gay theologians who, to differing degrees, supported both gay male couples and same-sex marriage (Clark, *Doing the Work of Love*; Ellison, *Same-Sex Marriage?*).

Further defying monolithic definition, gay men’s work in religious studies began to address a wider variety of issues, ranging from environmental ethics to comparative religions and beyond. Gay men also attempted to bring theological analysis to sometimes unexpected areas, examining such diverse phenomena as the “ex-gay” movement and gay men in Islam and other world religions; Internet erotica, sexual voyeurism, and body piercing; and southern evangelicalism and transvestism, among others. Ironically, on the rare occasion that a book did appear in any of these areas, it was once again brought out by a publisher not typically associated with mainstream religious studies publishing (for example, Long, *Men, Homosexuality, and the Gods*).

Future Prospects

For some two decades gay theology and religious studies have remained marginalized, shaped by harsh academic realities and limited publishing opportunities. In an article for the journal *Theology and Sexuality*, Bjorn Krondorfer bemoaned the fact that even within the academic study of religion and theology, nongay scholars (especially male scholars) have given little, if any, attention to the work of their gay male colleagues—due in no small part to continuing homophobia both within and without academia. Such intentional avoidance of gay theology by nongay scholars further suggests that progay-oriented religious studies materials are probably seldom included in college or seminary classrooms led by nongay faculty members (although no data are yet available to confirm this suspicion). Since unapologetically gay-affirming work does not have (nor does it necessarily desire) denominational or other

institutional endorsements, it is also virtually impossible to assess the degree to which, if at all, gay theology and religious studies shape the lives of gay men *outside* academia and/or the churches. As a result, such gay-affirming work risks remaining that of only a small group of gay male academics preaching to a very small choir.

Meanwhile, promising graduate students and junior faculty often still find it necessary to avoid speaking from their own gay perspectives because of continuing exclusionary practices among search and tenure and promotion committees. Very few self-identified, openly gay theologians or religious studies scholars who focus on gay issues in their primary research and publications have full-time or tenured positions. At the same time, publishers continue to wrestle with the small market for gay academic work. Beginning with that single 1989 small press volume, gay theologians did briefly break through publishers' fears in the 1990s with the several significant texts described here; however, by century's end, unapologetically gay theology had again taken a back seat to texts that safely focused on either the churches or the scriptures, including gay-affirming biblical commentaries, the most recent and most thorough of which—bringing a gay perspective to every single text in the canon—appeared as late as 2006 (*The Queer Bible Commentary*). Importantly, this more recent work is no longer apologetic, instead describing the positive contributions of gay men and lesbians to the churches or providing openly gay readings of the biblical texts.

In spite of continuing exclusion—whether from ordination or academic security—gay men engaged in religious studies, theology, and ethics will not go back in the closet. New voices are even now emerging to de-center the earlier leaders in the field noted herein. If these newer voices can access a larger audience both within and without the academy in the new century, gay theology and religious studies promise to remain multivocal and multifaceted; to continue to defy easy, monolithic definition; and to continue to push the boundaries of privilege—ecologically, economically, sexually, and racially. In short, gay theology will continue to embody one of its own most important values—nurturing and celebrating diversity—in both embodied sexual life and theological endeavor.

See also *Angels; Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues; Feminist Studies; Gender; Liberation Theology; Marriage and Family; Masculinity; Postmodernism; Religious Studies; Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity.*

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Religious Thought: Jewish

A relatively new phenomenon, Jewish religious thought in America encompasses a wide variety of strategies for grappling with a dilemma: how to lay the theoretical groundwork for complete acceptance of Jews and Judaism in the United States without eroding Judaism's enduring relevance as a distinct tradition worthy of preservation. Constructing such a harmonious synthesis between Americanism and Judaism demanded innovative approaches to reconciling competing claims of tradition and modernity, particularism and patriotism, and peoplehood and religious creed. Several streams of Jewish thought emerged from theoretical efforts to negotiate these competing tensions. All portrayed themselves as the most authentic interpretation of Judaism's central theological narrative: God's covenant with the Jewish people, the revelation of the Torah at Mount Sinai, and the promise of future

redemption. However, divergent understandings of this shared account, and its implications for American Jews, resulted in conflicting expectations regarding the specifics of Jewish belief and practice.

Intellectual and Historical Context

American Jewish religious thought developed against the backdrop of two dominant historical forces—one sociopolitical and one intellectual. The corporate status of Jewish communal life, which characterized most of European Jewry until the nineteenth century, never existed in North America. Jewish immigrants found themselves in a country that welcomed them as full citizens (with some early restrictions on Jews serving as elected officials), provided unprecedented opportunities for acculturation, and viewed religious association as completely voluntary. The state would not be willing, and rabbinic authorities not able, to enforce Jewish belief and practice. Moreover, the process of Americanization promoted grassroots interest in changing Jewish law and customs to reflect local norms and socioeconomic pressures.

At the same time, modern currents emphasizing reason, progress, and critical historical study introduced a new set of intellectual challenges that further eroded the theological, hermeneutic, and legal pillars of premodern Judaism. The twofold challenge of freedom of religion and Enlightenment assumptions ensured a tension between forces of tradition and modernity that characterizes American Jewish thought. However, the dearth of trained religious leaders in the United States deferred widespread, theoretical engagement with competing claims of tradition and modernity until the middle of the nineteenth century. Then three dominant paths emerged that would serve as the ideological basis for the Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox movements, respectively: ethical monotheism, positive historical Judaism, and traditionalist rehabilitation of Jewish law. Additional streams of thought—including neo-Hasidism, feminism, and post-Holocaust thought—developed during the twentieth century and transcended specific movement ideologies.

Ethical Monotheism and Positive Historical Judaism

The first major ideological school to emerge during the second half of the nineteenth century, led by figures such as Rabbi Kaufman Kohler (1843–1926) and others associated with what would become the Reform movement, attempted to neutralize the tension between Judaism and modernity by equating the two concepts. Judaism, they argued (largely

influenced by the architects of German reform thought), is a religion of reason based on the belief in ethical monotheism. The essential meaning of God's covenant and revelation can be found in the principles of humanity and righteousness outlined by the prophets in the Hebrew Bible. Moreover, they concluded that the Jewish legal tradition, specifically the ritual observances and restrictions mandated by the rabbinic interpretation of the Torah, is merely historical with no binding authority.

Underscoring Judaism's mission as the spread of universal ethical ideals, rather than observance of ritual commandments, created an ideological justification for supporting religious reforms and cultural integration. In addition, biblical criticism and historical scholarship were more compatible with reading scripture as a record of the revelation of reason, rather than as a historical fact or record of divine commandments. Yet calibrating Jewish belief and practice to maximize Judaism's symbiotic relationship with the ideals of American democracy raised a key question: what distinguishes Jews and Judaism from other religious groups? The answer: Judaism was unique precisely because of its universal mission. The enduring power of this logic is evident today in the prevalence of the term "*tikkun olam*" (repairing the world) in American Jewish life. Originally a phrase linked with early modern mystical theology, this term has been adapted to emphasize Judaism's particular value of addressing pressing global concerns for social justice.

An alternate approach to reconciling tradition and modernity crystallized as a response to ethical monotheism's dismissal of Jewish law. Figures associated with the Conservative movement, such as historian Solomon Schechter (1847–1915), theorized a framework called positive historical Judaism. Unlike ethical monotheism, the positive historical approach affirmed the divinely inspired nature of rabbinic interpretation of the Hebrew Bible and Jewish law's obligatory status. Yet historical scholarship demonstrated that Jewish law was not immutable because its development reflected a human process of interpretation. Thus, the most legitimate way of preserving the continuity of the rabbinic tradition was to leave room for some degree of latitude to recognize contemporary realities in adjudicating Jewish law. Even if this scholarly assessment of the development of rabbinic thought was accurate, a key difference between the premodern process and the tools developed by the positive historical school remained unresolved: Proponents of the former viewed themselves as recipients of an oral tradition that could be directly traced to the Sinaitic revelation, whereas proponents

of the latter consciously acknowledged the process of historical change.

Neotraditionalism and the Rehabilitation of Revelation

The rationale behind both Judaism as a religion of reason and positive historical Judaism affirmed the validity (and in fact necessity) of applying modern assumptions to interpreting traditional sources and adjusting Jewish practice accordingly. A neotraditionalist stream in American Jewish thought upheld the immutability of Jewish law in the face of intellectual challenges. The main nineteenth-century advocate of the return to traditional beliefs and practices based on God's commandments was Bible translator and publisher Isaac Leeser (1806–1868). In the twentieth century, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik (1903–1993) stands out as one of the most sophisticated and influential defenders of Jewish law. Soloveitchik praised the role of Jewish law in creating a blueprint for religious life and clearly accepted the incompatibility of the world of modernity and faith.

Leeser and Soloveitchik exhorted readers to live their lives according to the Jewish law and acknowledged a fundamental clash between revelation and reason. Yet their thought demonstrates the central role that acculturation and Americanization played in the conceptualization of traditionalist streams of thought. For instance, Leeser advocated for changes in Jewish worship that would render Judaism more similar to Protestant worship, and Soloveitchik built his theory of Jewish law in dialogue with Western philosophical thought, specifically, Kantian epistemology. More recent trends in neotraditionalism, fueled partially by a tremendous growth in Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox communities in the United States, have shifted away from the emphasis on openness and dialogue with modernity that characterized prewar Orthodoxy. Thinkers committed to the unchanging nature of Jewish law grounded in an uninterrupted line of divinely revealed and flawless precedent claim continuity with Jewish tradition. Yet this very belief—that revelation and tradition resist outside forces—itself reflects a rupture with historical conventions. The rejection of modernity is as much an innovation of modern Jewish thought as streams openly dedicated to the evolution of Jewish belief and practice.

Twentieth-Century Trends

A greater appreciation for the limits of reason and science sparked a more mystical approach in Jewish thought

following the Second World War. Activist and teacher Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972) had a significant role in popularizing a neo-Hasidic tradition in American Jewish thought. In books such as *God in Search of Man* (1976), Heschel poetically exhorted his readers to recognize the ineffable that existed beyond the realm of empirical knowledge. Jewish law, which Heschel referred to as “deeds of wonder,” had the potential to reorient American Jews’ spiritual lives, thereby revealing God’s presence in the world. By focusing on describing the religious experience, Heschel (following the phenomenological school of modern philosophy) found a way to affirm God’s ongoing relationship with man without making truth claims about the content of revelation that might conflict with scientific or historical scholarship. The legacy of Heschel’s rehabilitation of Hasidism in American Jewish life continues in the writings of more recent American Jewish thinkers, such as Rabbi Arthur Green and Zalman Schachter-Shalomi.

Debates about feminism and the role of women in Judaism created one of the most significant flashpoints of late twentieth-century American Jewish thought. According to Jewish law, women are not equally obligated with men to perform commandments and therefore are not qualified for a variety of roles, including leading prayer services and counting in a prayer quorum. As a result of these historical restrictions, Jewish women did not serve as rabbis and had distinct responsibilities in Jewish communal life. The spread of the feminist movement in America sparked rich innovations in American Jewish thought dedicated to addressing claims for gender equality. Feminist thinkers challenged religious ideologies from across the spectrum of American Jewish thought, from theologian Judith Plaskow’s call in *Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism from a Feminist Perspective* (1990) to thoroughly reassess the tradition to reflect women’s experiences, to Orthodox writer Blu Greenberg’s demands for concessions within the parameters of the distinct gender roles proscribed by Jewish law in books such as *On Women and Judaism: A View from Tradition* (1981).

The Holocaust presented another set of pressing issues for postwar American Jewish thought: how to believe in God, and the covenant, after the genocide of millions of Jews. Rabbi Richard Rubenstein articulated his loss of faith in a personal God after Auschwitz in his 1966 book *After Auschwitz: Radical Theology and Contemporary Judaism*. Philosopher Emil Fackenheim outlined a different response in *To Mend the World: Foundations of Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought* (1982), which claimed that God’s presence during the

Holocaust revealed an additional commandment—Jews must remain committed to survival to prevent granting Hitler a posthumous victory.

Zionism and Jewish Peoplehood

Jewish nationalism, in general, and Zionism, in particular, did not thrive in American Jewish thought (especially in comparison to the centrality of these political movements in the European context). Indeed, many American Jewish thinkers in the early decades of the twentieth century actively opposed Zionism and explicitly rejected ethno-national components of Jewish identity. These political expressions of Jewish collectivity and national solidarity threatened the establishment of an American-Jewish synthesis by potentially fueling questions about Jewish patriotism and dual national loyalties. Defining Judaism as a religion, on the other hand, paved the way for aligning Judaism with an American discourse of difference built on a framework of religious diversity.

Nevertheless, the Americanization of Zionism and variations of Jewish nationalism constitute important intellectual dimensions of American Jewish thought. Louis Brandeis (1856–1941), a famous lawyer and American Zionist leader, reconciled Jewish settlement in Palestine with Americanism by (1) distinguishing Jews' connection to the homeland with a desire to leave the United States and (2) emphasizing Zionism's commitment to American ideals of progress and democracy. A number of other early twentieth-century American Jewish thinkers influenced by European Zionism, most notably Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan (1881–1983), adopted Jewish nationalism's sensitivity to the ethno-national components of Judaism as a basis for expanding the definition of American Judaism. Kaplan's notion of Judaism as a "religious civilization" echoed expressions of Jewish nationalism by focusing on social organizations, customs, language, literature, connection to a homeland, and art as the primary expressions of Judaism. Yet unlike dominant currents of political Zionism, Kaplan believed that these bonds could exist in a diaspora context. Indeed, the ability to live simultaneously in two civilizations (American and Jewish) modeled what it meant to be an American and prefigured notions of America as a nation of multiple ethnicities and cultures. Kaplan's sociological conception of Judaism as an evolving tradition, along with his rejection of a supernatural God, created the intellectual groundwork for the Reconstructionist movement, the most recent and smallest denomination in American Jewish life.

Jewish thought in the twenty-first century has already begun to recalibrate the equilibrium between Judaism and

Americanism in response to new social and intellectual trends, including the dominance of multiculturalism, the increasingly permeable boundaries between minority groups, the decline of movement affiliation, and the resurgence of interest in traditional sources and practices among liberal Jews. These processes promise to nourish the ongoing creation of novel expressions of American Jewish thought.

See also *Architecture: Jewish; Canada: Pluralism; Chabad-Lubavitch; Holocaust; Judaism* entries; *Religious Thought* entries; *Torah; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism*.

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Religious Thought: Latino/a

Often considered the younger sibling of Latin American liberation theology, Latino/a theology has reached a historical moment where its identity and direction are at a crossroads. As a theology that remains critically engaged and informed by the struggles, commitments, and concerns of the Hispanic population, Latino/a theology offers an essential contribution to both the contemporary theological academy and worldwide Christian churches. This contribution is rooted in the methodological starting point and commitment of Hispanic theologians. From its inception, Latino/a theology has sought to speak both *for* and *from* the history, spirituality, and contemporary situation of Latino/a communities. In the past decade, there has been a surge of scholarship by Hispanics, offering various distinct contributions to Latino/a theology. The more recent work in the areas of aesthetics, epistemology and metaphysics, rooted in the liberation paradigm, both challenges and expands the scope and method of Latino/a theology. Today, Latino/as struggle to articulate a theology that incorporates the insights of their

sociocultural location as they confront and connect with a larger theological conversation.

Development

Various factors have shaped the growth and development of Latino/a theology. Both the climate of a post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Church and the theological milieu of the larger academy have been contributing factors. There are various key historical events that directly influenced Latino/a theology. The 1971 formation of the Mexican American Cultural Center, along with the first meeting of the clerical organization Padres (literally translated “priests”) in 1969 and Las Hermanas (an organization of women both lay and religious) in 1971, was a significant factor in the role of Latino/as in church life. Also of importance is the *Encuentro* movement, a Roman Catholic pastoral plan for ministry amongst Latino/as. These pastoral events directly fed into the academic discipline of Latino/a theology. Another event that occurred in the 1970s was the 1975 Theology in the Americas meeting in Detroit, Michigan. There, Latino/as met with Latin American, African, African American, Native American, and white Anglo North American theologians and scholars. At this conference Latino/as were asked to reflect theologically on their concrete situations in the United States. This also served to open a dialogue between different marginalized communities.

In 1980 the journal *Apuntes (Notes)* was founded, the first theological journal to focus on Latino/a theology. The late eighties saw the formation of the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians in the United States; its first annual meeting took place in 1989. As noted by Jesuit scholar Allan Figueroa Deck, 1992 was a significant year for academic Latino/a theology, for during that year three major edited volumes were published. The following year a second journal devoted to Latino/a theology was founded, the *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology*. The establishment of journals and professional organizations dedicated to Latino/a theology cemented the academic presence of this theological discourse.

Foundations and Sources

The developments noted above, both pastoral and academic, contributed to the birth and growth of Latino/a theology. Coupled with the theological climate of the late sixties and early seventies, the ground was fertile for Latino/a theologians. Like all theologies that are grouped or labeled under a heading, Latino/a theologians share various foundational

insights. However, there are also vast differences in the approaches, norms, and sources of the individual thinkers. In other words, in speaking of Latino/a theology it is necessary to be mindful of the plurality of theological voices within this broader category. Nonetheless, there are several principles and sources common to a significant number of Latino/a theologians.

In an excellent introductory essay to the theological approach of Latino/a theology, María Pilar Aquino (2002) lists three fundamental principles and three sources and loci that frame the methodological coherence of Latino/a theology. The three principles refer to the manner in which Latino/a theologians approach knowledge and interpretation and must be understood jointly to create the methodological coherence of Latino/a theology. The first principle focuses on the faith of the people, primarily through the study of popular Catholicism; the second highlights an option for the poor and oppressed; the third emphasizes a liberating praxis (or action). The first of these principles is perhaps the most distinctive in that it has typically offered Latino/a theologians groundbreaking approaches to popular religion, daily life, and culture. The other two principles reflect the legacy and influence of Latin American liberation theology on its northern neighbors.

Fundamental Terms: Sociocultural Context, Mestizaje/Mulatez

There are five key terms fundamental to understanding the nature and scope of Latino/a theology. They are (1) sociocultural context, (2) *mestizaje/mulatez*, (3) popular religion, (4) *lo cotidiano*, and (5) praxis. While these five themes do not cover the entirety and diversity of Latino/a theological reflection, they do represent central features of Latino/a theology.

Central to Latino/a theology is the prominence of context and culture. This emphasis manifests itself on two levels. First, a fundamental starting point in Latino/a theology is the elaboration of the context and history of Latino/a peoples. A significant portion of monographs and essays by Latino/a theologians begin with a section or chapter naming the sociocultural situation of historical and contemporary Latino/a peoples. Because the Latino/a cultural and contextual realities depicted have been historically marginalized and silenced, their rendering is a subversive act of empowerment. Second, Hispanic theology’s emphasis on context and culture undergirds the claim that not only is Latino/a theology a contextual theology but *all* theologies are contextually based.

Logically, then, any theology that claims to be above its social location is simply a dominative discourse.

Today's scholar of Latino/a theology is fully acquainted with *mestizaje* as a theological category emerging from Virgilio Elizondo's prophetic vision and perseverance as a scholar. What are *mestizaje* and *mulatez*? In its simplest definition, *mestizaje* refers to the biological and cultural mixing of indigenous and Spanish peoples that took place as a result of the conquest of the Americas; *mulatez* refers to a similar process amongst Spanish and Africans. However, the significance of these concepts in Latino/a theology is much more complex than this simple descriptive dimension implies. The terms *mestizaje* and *mulatez* also identify the Latino/a worldview, which is one of a hybrid people who emerged from the violent and unequal encounter of various social groups. This hybridity not only describes who Latino/as are, but also names their epistemic horizon.

Mujerista theologian Ada María Isasi-Díaz understands *mestizaje* as a foundation for Latino/a ways of viewing the world. *Mujerista* theology is a feminist Latina voice that places poor, grassroots Latinas at the center of theological reflection. This racial and cultural mixture—this sense of people living between two worlds—reflects the context from which Hispanic theology emerges. Hybridity not only marks Latino/a race, culture, and religion, it is also the hallmark of the Latino/a worldview. *Mestizaje* and *mulatez* portray the Latino/a context; these terms also reflect the epistemological standpoint from which Latino/as view their world. In addition, Isasi-Díaz sees *mestizaje* and *mulatez* as ethical options for Latino/as. In other words, in embracing *mestizaje* and *mulatez*, Latino/a theologians are claiming solidarity with people of color globally.

Fundamental Terms: Popular Religion, lo cotidiano, and Praxis

Latino/a scholarship on popular religion contributes to the broader theological academy. Popular religion is difficult to define; in fact, it is more often *described* by theologians. Latino/a scholars use the term to designate local, contextual, and everyday religious practices that are not in tension with institutionalized religion but that function outside of it. Popular religion does not just refer to religious practices, but also to an accompanying worldview. The emphasis on popular religion within Latino/a theology is linked to its commitment to elaborate the faith of Latino/a peoples. Popular religion is a privileged locus and a source of theological reflection. For Latino/a theologians, these lived religious

practices are the primary access point to the everyday faith of Latino/a peoples. Popular religion is integral to the Hispanic experience; its practices are a way of maintaining Latino/a identity. Popular religious practices include processions, dramatic reenactments, devotion to Mary and the saints, and maintenance of home altars, among others.

The term *lo cotidiano* refers to everyday life. To emphasize *lo cotidiano* in theological reflection is to mark it as a locus where God's grace and love is experienced and responded to by Latino/as. The inclusion of *lo cotidiano* in theological discourse contests the more usual, dichotomous understanding of public and private spheres, an understanding that typically seeks to segregate *lo cotidiano* and thereby mark it as irrelevant. In Latino/a theology daily life is noted both as an analytic category and a point of departure. Liberation cannot solely be limited to the public, societal sphere, but must instead incorporate an understanding of the interrelation between the public and private. An emphasis on the everyday and its connection to the structural is Latino/a theology's way of undermining the dualism of public and private. This emphasis on daily life is intimately linked to the significance of popular religion.

Finally, praxis, or the emphasis on action, is rooted in part on the influence of Latin American liberation theology upon Latino/a theologians. Isasi-Díaz's *mujerista* theology emerged from an ethical context that emphasized the praxiological dimension of the theological task. In *mujerista* theology praxis is defined as reflective, liberative action. *Mujerista* theology does not separate action and reflection, for it holds theology to be liberative action in itself. In other words, action and reflection are inseparable moments. *Mujerista* theology is not reduced to academic, intellectual exercise. Theology is not merely written and spoken, it is acted out. Critical of Western philosophy's understanding of the human as individualistic, Roberto S. Goizueta has questioned the reduction of praxis solely to the realm of ethical action and social justice. Instead, Goizueta offers an understanding of praxis as an aesthetic. The emphasis on the aesthetic, however, should not result in the sacrifice of the ethical and political. All action is mediated by the political and the economic. Only when human action is valued as an end in itself can authentic liberation take place.

Recent Developments: Theological Aesthetics and a Turn from Sociology

Five recent developments within Latino/a theology are essential to its future direction. These areas represent expansions

within the field and are loci for building on Latino/a theology's relationship with the broader academy. They are (1) theological aesthetics, (2) a turn from sociology, (3) bridges with European theology, (4) conversation with other U.S. minority theologies, and (5) inter-cultural theology.

Theological aesthetics is a growing area in contemporary theology. Though not a theological "school" per se, scholars working in the field of theological aesthetics add to the conversation a theological concern for beauty. An emphasis on the aesthetic is grounded in the belief that within the realm of symbol, imagination, emotion, and art can be found a privileged expression of the encounter with the divine and its articulation. Within Latino/a theology, the increasing importance of aesthetics is found in the works of Alejandro García-Rivera, Roberto S. Goizueta, Michelle A. Gonzalez, and Peter Casarella. These theologians have transformed the methodology of Latino/a theology and broadened its dialogue. Combining Hans Urs von Balthasar, North American philosophy, and semiotics, García-Rivera understands the True, the Good, and the Beautiful in terms of communities. Charles Sanders Peirce and Josiah Royce provide the philosophical framework for this task. The aesthetic principle that emerges from this interweaving of voices is the lifting of the lowly, a subversive aesthetic norm with ethical implications. García-Rivera's publications on a theology of art further his aesthetics and expand his sources to include the visual arts.

From its inception, the work of Latino/a theologians has embraced a heavy sociological emphasis. Without downplaying the significance of this methodological feature, the more recent move beyond sociology represents an exciting new direction for Latino/a theologians. Increasingly, Latino/a theologians are opening up dialogues with scholars in the disciplines of philosophy, literature, and critical theory. The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of Latino/a theology is a welcome development that will serve to advance and expand Hispanic theological projects.

Recent Developments: Conversations with European, Minority, Intercultural Theology

Explicit conversation between the scholars of Latino/a theology and those of European theologies is a new development in theological discourse. The desire to name and concretize the marginalized contributions of Latino/as led earlier writers to focus primarily on Latino/a and Latin American resources. Though a necessary and very important step, it nevertheless had the effect of marginalizing Latino/a theological discourse. The theologies of Goizueta and

García-Rivera are examples of efforts to engage non-Latino/a North American and European resources. This broadening of sources is a natural and significant development—natural, as many Latino/a scholars were trained in North American and European institutions, and significant because it creates avenues for Latino/a theologians to engage and be engaged by non-Latino/a voices. Of special note is the recent study by Miguel Díaz exploring the theological anthropologies of Latino/a theologians and Karl Rahner.

Increased collaboration between Latino/a theologians, African American theologians, and Asian American theologians is a notable development as well. Recent work by Anthony Pinn and Benjamin Valentín highlights the mutual benefits to be gained when conversation between African American and Latino/a scholars of religion occurs. However, further work is needed. Latino/a theologians must directly engage the writings and concerns of other U.S. minorities in order to explore the complexity of the U.S. context for people of color. In addition, Latino/a theologians must explore the dimension of privilege that operates within our own communities, with special attention to race. In framing *mestizaje/mulatez* as a choice, for example, Isasi-Díaz highlights the necessity for Latino/a theologians to examine how some benefit from white privilege here in the United States.

A final recent development is found in the work of María Pilar Aquino and Orlando Espín in the area of inter-cultural theology. Building on the work of Cuban-born philosopher Raul Fornet-Betancourt, Aquino and Espín explore a philosophical foundation for the articulation of Latino/a theology that takes culture and context seriously. Their work strives to find the categories to describe current Latino/a theological projects while informing future trajectories. Espín's work, with its emphasis on the development of tradition, engages a long-established theological locus through an inter-cultural lens.

The Ambiguity of Latino/a Identity

Latino/a theology, although fairly new to the broader theological arena, has in a brief time established itself as a fundamental voice within the theological academy. More important, Hispanics and Latin Americans represent the future of Christianity in the Americas, and any theology or church that does not take their contributions to the academic and pastoral realms seriously is remiss. The question of identity has been and will remain a central concern for Latino/a theologians. Providing a more nuanced understanding of *Latinidad* (Latino/a identity) will be a vital point both

of debate and discussion in future Latino/a theological projects. Since its inception Latino/a theology has identified Latino/as, and consequently Latin Americans, as *mestizo* and *mulato* peoples. This mixture of Spanish, African, and indigenous cultures has been a clear marker of Latino/a racial, ethnic, and cultural identity. Anthropologically, *mestizaje/mulatez* functions to name the ambiguity and in-betweenness of Latino/a identity. Latino/a theology, at least within theological and religious studies, presents a notion of Latino/a identity where the indigenous, African, and Spanish are not oppositional but coexist as constitutive of Latino/a identity. This is seen directly in the sources of Latina theologians. Whether it is Jeanette Rodríguez's use of *flor y canto* as a starting point for her Latina feminist theology or Ana María Pineda drawing from Nahuatl oral tradition and aesthetics for her theological voice, Latina theologians do not reduce Latino/a identity to non-indigenous, non-African, and exclusively Western.

Latino/a scholars use the cultural and religious production of indigenous and African peoples as sources for theological reflection while simultaneously maintaining a dominant paradigm within the construction of Latino/a identity and religiosity. They do so without acknowledging the function of power within academic appropriation of non-Christian and non-European sources. This is seen most sharply in the Christian starting point of Latino/a theologies and the ways in which non-Christian sources and cultures are appropriated into the theological discourse. Latino/a theologians approach Latino/a religion from a Christian foundation, adding the flavors of African and indigenous America as they see fit. This is also evident in the uncritical and ad hoc manner in which Latino/a theologians appropriate indigenous and African cultures. These sources are central in Latino/a theology only in the manner in which they affirm and expand Christian categories. Latino/a theologians must take care in their use of these sources and the methodology that accompanies inclusion of non-Christian sources.

Canonization of the Dominant, Neglect of the Subaltern

Linked to identity is the notion of *mestizaje* and *mulatez* as a manner of diluting indigenous and African histories and cultures, as well as a neglect of the function of power within Latino/a identity-making, where the Spanish is always dominant. Justo González (1990) coined the phrase "reading the Bible in Spanish." This term became canonized into the rhetoric and ideology of Latino/a theologians. However,

what about reading the Bible in Yoruba, or in Kaqchikel? By affirming the Spanish as their starting point, Latino/a theologians are affirming a *criollo* (Spaniards that are American-born) legacy, knowingly or otherwise, that negates the true subalterns of Latin American culture and society. Latino/a theologians have become too comfortable with this hybridity and have not striven to address the function of power within mixed identity construction. There is a growing body of literature in Latin America as well as the United States on this precise theme. The image of *mestizaje* and *mulatez* is not as rosy as Latino/a theologians depict. There are in fact massive tensions between white, black, *mulato*, *mestizo*, and indigenous Latin American and Latino/a peoples, both historical and contemporary. To be a Latino/a in the United States is not a monolithic experience, and it is often race and culture that dictate experience.

Latino/a theologians place the context and culture of Latino/a peoples at the center and as the starting point of their theologies. Whether it is an emphasis on *lo cotidiano*, *mestizaje*, or popular religion, the particular contours of Latino/a religious expressions are the core of Latino/a theological writings. Latino/a theologians frame the prominence of their particularity in light of the contextual nature of all theological expressions. In their retrieval of Latino/a culture and context, Latino/a theologians have recovered a vital dimension of historical and contemporary Christian religious expressions. In this process, Latino/a theologians have constructed a Latino/a religious identity. Whether it is Our Lady of Guadalupe, *mestizaje*, or the Conquest of the Americas, there are certain key themes that have become "canonized" in the corpus of Latino/a theology as fundamental dimensions of Latino/a religiosity and history. Whether intentionally or not, this has resulted in a construction of Latino/a identity that foregrounds particular elements of Latino/a culture and history at the expense of the fullness and diversity of Latino/a peoples. Most notably, the presence of African peoples and their participation in Latino/a history and identity have been downplayed. Latino/a theologians write about Mexico, Guadalupe, *mestizaje*, and the Southwest. The black Latino/a experience is strikingly insignificant within the narrative and construction of Latino/a historical identity. This has led to a depiction of Latino/a history, religious experience, and culture that privileges certain elements and erases others.

Whether in the symbols of religiosity recovered by Latino/a theology, or the history constructed by Latino/a theologians, or the categories used to describe Latino/a

identity, hermeneutics, and epistemology, normative preference is given to Mexican and Mexican American experience. Latino/a theologians of all backgrounds, not just those of Mexican American heritage, perpetuate this preference. In many ways this is understandable, given that Mexican Americans constitute the majority of Latino/a peoples in the United States. However, as “minority” peoples Latino/as have struggled to make their voices and stories heard within the dominant discourse. It is therefore all the more important that within their own theologies Latino/as not allow the majority to rule and thereby erase the complexity of Latino/a identity.

The Future of Latino/a Theology

Latino/a theologians are becoming much more precise in their elaboration of identity. They cannot, however, afford to erase and marginalize portions of the Latino/a population in favor of a more generalized description of Latino/a identity. To do so is to do violence to those communities that are ignored and forgotten. This emphasis on particularity within community is both theological and ethical. Latino/a theologians must embrace a principle of unity amidst diversity as a central theological feature. There are also ethical dimensions to the construction of identity. The inheritors of a rich legacy of Latin American liberation theology, these dimensions are well known to Latino/a theologians. Writing history is a moral (as well as political, social, and economic) act that must be placed in an ethical framework. The ethics of Latino/a identity must be placed at the forefront. While it is important to maintain the coalitions that exist between different Latino/a groups, it is equally important not to subsume certain sectors of the Latino/a population at the expense of others.

Latino/a theology will face various challenges as it continues to grow and expand. One such challenge is its ecclesio-centric nature, that is, the tendency of Latino/a theology to remain wedded to ecclesial concerns. While attention to the Church, exemplified by Latino/a theologians' contention that the pastoral and academic are intimately united, is fundamental, exclusive attention to the Church limits Latino/a theology's nature and scope. Indeed, this attention to the pastoral is a hallmark of Latino/a theology. Benjamín Valentín has put forth an excellent critique (2002) precisely on this point, calling on Latino/a theologians to become more attuned as public intellectuals. Latino/a theology would also benefit from an increased interest in inter-disciplinary work, particularly work with those scholars publishing in the fields

of Religious Studies. Finally, while the question of identity is fundamental, albeit still unresolved, Latino/a theology scholars must ensure that the theological discourse does not become reduced to identity politics.

See also *Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence; Frontier and Borderlands; Idealist Philosophy; Latino American Religion* entries; *Latino/a Religious Practice; Liberation Theology; Lived Religion; Mexico* entries; *Practical Theology; Religious Studies; Religious Thought; Mujerista; Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century; Systematic Theology.*

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Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology

Lesbian theology is a growing field of inquiry based on the experience and insights of women loving women in a variety of religious traditions. It began in Christianity and Judaism and now includes Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist resources as well as those from native groups. Bisexual women also contribute to the literature and practice with their work, reflecting a slightly different but overlapping perspective. Lesbian theology arose from both feminist/Womanist work in religion and from gay theology. It is a way to bring lesbian

women's experiences of the divine as well as of human community into the larger theological conversation.

History: Christianity

Lesbian work in religion is a combination of theoretical work and practical or pastoral work. Feminist theologies emerged in the middle of the twentieth century as scholars realized that most theological work was done by, and therefore reflected the experiences of, men. Women began to correct the record by expressing their own theological insights from the margins, such as Mary Daly's (1928–2010) transformative idea of moving “beyond God the Father.”

Likewise, gay theology was born of the fact that most male theologians were heterosexual, with same-sex experience missing from the data of theological reflection. So gay men began to correct the record and amass a new body of theological thinking that included their particular experiences. For instance, Jesuit priest John McNeill (1925–) took a pioneering look at the Christian churches and homosexuals; and Protestant pastor Troy Perry (1940–) responded to homophobia by creating the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC), now a thriving denomination of mostly lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. Lesbian theology arose from the realization that lesbian experience was invisible in both feminist and gay theologies and needed to be articulated on its own terms.

Sally Miller Gearhart (1931–) wrote the first contemporary Christian lesbian theological reflection in 1972, “A Lesbian Looks at God the Father.” She made explicit reference to women loving women and the ways in which that experience conditioned one's view of the holy. Her work was considered so challenging that it could not be published in a Protestant denominational women's newsletter. She later collaborated with William Johnson, the first openly gay man to be ordained by the United Church of Christ, on a book that laid out the contours of same-sex love in a religious setting.

Carter Heyward (1945–), an Episcopal priest, authored a number of books and articles articulating Christian theology in the Anglican tradition in light of the experience of lesbian



Reverend Jane Spahr, left, and Reverend Annie Steinberg-Behrmann, center, sing in support of same-sex marriages outside the California State Supreme Court building on May 26, 2009. Spahr's call in 1991 to pastor the Downtown Presbyterian Church in Rochester, New York, was overridden by the regional church body because of her lesbian sexual identity. In response, she founded the nonprofit organization That All May Freely Serve, which focuses on issues of sexuality and religion. The California Supreme Court later ruled in favor of upholding Proposition 8, the same-sex marriage ban approved by voters in November 2008.

women in the 1980s. She wove explicit connections between women loving women and issues of racism, class exploitation, and colonialism. She and many other early lesbian feminist writers were quick to see how the dynamics of oppression and privilege were present and interwoven into each instance.

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott (1932–) did similar work from an evangelical perspective, raising eyebrows in the Plymouth Brethren tradition by claiming that lesbian love was consistent with biblical teaching. She and Letha Scanzoni explored biblical texts on neighbors, arguing that in Christian scripture there is no injunction against women loving women or men loving men, only the exhortation to love all neighbors.

Mary E. Hunt (1951–) wrote early Catholic treatments of lesbian experience through the lens of friendship. Her model of “fierce tenderness” made no distinctions between same-sex or opposite-sex love. Several collections of essays by Catholic lesbians, including some by lesbian nuns, revealed the many ways that lesbian women make peace with their sexuality even in a religious tradition that considers same-sex love “intrinsically morally disordered.”

Bernadette Brooten (1951–) studied lesbian women in the early Christian period. She concluded that they

challenged the status quo not so much by the sex involved as by their attempts to subvert the top-down power model that was normative in male-male and male-female relationships in early Christianity. Living out a love relationship of equals is a novel notion in cultures where men dominated women and some men dominated other men.

Groups of Christian lesbians began to emerge in the 1980s. The Conference of Catholic Lesbians arose out of the first gathering of Catholic lesbians (1982), who realized how many such women exist and how great their needs are in a church that rejects them. The group developed chapters around the country, a newsletter, and later a Web site to keep members connected. CLOUT (Christian Lesbians Out Together; 1990) was started by Protestant women, both ordained and lay. Both groups sponsor conferences, act as support communities, and provide a public profile for lesbian women of Christian faith whose lives and issues are still often subsumed under those of gay men. Many lesbian women are ignored or vilified by those in their own denominations, so such cross-denominational support is welcome.

Lesbian women have been ordained in many Protestant churches. Some were open about their sexuality. For example, the Reverend Ellen Barrett was the first Episcopal priest to be ordained as an out lesbian in 1977. Others, like the Reverend Jeanne Audrey Powers of the United Methodist Church, came out publicly later in life, sometimes risking their licenses and/or livelihoods. Lesbian theologians are common, as are lesbian nuns. The women of the MCC, including the first woman moderator, the Reverend Nancy Wilson, enjoy unqualified support for their ministry.

History: Other Religions

Jewish scholars showed the way beyond the seeming incompatibility of same-sex love and Judaism. Rabbi Rebecca Alpert (1950–) introduced lesbian rabbis to the larger religious world, chronicling their stories and struggles. Theologian Judith Plaskow (1947–) tackled theological and ethical concerns within Judaism, emphasizing the need to rethink foundational issues including authority and community in addition to looking critically at sexual customs and mores. Her pioneering work on sexual ethics is a model of reasoned analytic thought that incorporates homosexuality with a range of Jewish justice concerns.

Lesbian women's leadership in synagogues and rabbinical schools is found among Reform and Reconstructionist Jews. Even Orthodox feminists grapple with what was previously unimagined, namely, women bonding with other women in

deep, long-lasting relationships that form the foundation for families. In a tradition that emphasizes procreation as a way to build up a community decimated by oppression, many Jewish lesbians have children. These practices challenge Jewish communities to be inclusive. Some congregations are made up primarily of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, such as Congregation Beth Simchat Torah in New York City, led in the early twenty-first century by out lesbian Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum.

Muslim lesbians have had a harder time. Medieval Islamic texts include discussion of "*tribadism*" (female-female sexual expression). Islamic law, on the other hand, refers mainly to the regulation of female-male and male-male behavior, leaving aside any discussion of women's passions for one another. Contemporary Muslim lesbians live and write under great scrutiny. Some have received death threats, and others have been expelled from their families of origin.

As Buddhism comes into deeper conversation with Western culture, women's empowerment and lesbian life are new parts of the path. Sandy Boucher (1936–) expressed the many facets of the encounter in her writings. A lesbian Buddhist sangha (an association or community) in Berkeley, California, is one example of that tradition lived out. The major challenge is to make a case for sexual expression, in particular sexual expression between two women with no necessary reproductive consequence, in a tradition that urges adherents to leave aside the things of the body for things of the spirit.

Hindu women have recently begun their own conversations. They explore whether and how they are part of the so-called "third sex" of Vedic literature. Attempted marriages between Hindu women have raised deep questions for their communities about the nature of family life and the legitimacy of such partnerships. The conversation is still nascent in Hinduism, but the courage of Hindu lesbians in embracing their love and their faith promises new insights.

Native American lesbians, sometimes called "two-spirit women," struggle to find their place in their tribes. Some have engaged in dance and sweat lodge practices typically reserved for men, causing consternation among more traditional members. Others have formed family units that have raised questions among their peers. Confusion over and even manipulation of gender categories by nonnative people has made the struggles for identity and belonging very difficult for native lesbian women.

Bisexual women, those who are sexually and emotionally attracted to both women and men, began their own spiritual

explorations. They could not relate to a lot of the lesbian religious thought because their experiences were not as clearly delineated. Loving both men *and* women opened them to unique spiritual insights. Few resources exist, but Deborah Kolodny (1960–) edited an anthology that includes writings from a wide range of bisexual women’s experiences. Like lesbians, religious bisexual women have come under scrutiny for departing from the heterosexual norm and making claims about their unique perspectives on the holy.

Issues, Controversy, and Future Scope

The issues raised by religious lesbians challenge a number of common assumptions. What constitutes a healthy, good, natural, holy human relationship is made new when heterosexism, or the normative character of opposite sex bonding, is overcome. This has not been easy work, but lesbian women have attempted it through struggles about membership, ordination, ministry, and marriage in their respective traditions. Sexual ethics are changing, and same-sex love is increasingly seen as acceptable despite virulent opposition in some groups. Lesbians adopting children has raised religious concerns about the shape and future of families. New theological looks at body, the performance of gender, and the challenge of transgender people to any essential notions of sex or gender are all on the lesbian religious agenda for future work.

Major controversies have arisen when lesbian women have claimed their places in religious traditions, both as members and as religious leaders. One example is the case of the Reverend Jane Spahr (1942–), who became the center of controversy when she was called (1991) to pastor the Downtown Presbyterian Church in Rochester, New York. Her call was overridden (1992) by the regional church body because of her lesbian sexual identity. In response, she founded the non-profit organization (1993) That All May Freely Serve, an educational and advocacy group that works on issues of sexuality and religion. She later came under attack for allegedly officiating at same-sex marriages, only to be found innocent (2008) according to Presbyterian law when the national church had to admit that she did not conduct marriages but services of blessing for same-sex partners.

Lesbians have long been a part of religious groups and presumably will be for the foreseeable future. What is changing is the degree to which their presence is increasingly tolerated, even celebrated in some instances. Scholarship continues to emerge that shows both the historical importance of religious lesbians and the contemporary impact of being out. It points toward a day when sexual orientation

will fade in importance. In the meantime, the contribution of lesbian women to theology and community life in many traditions expands religious parameters.

See also *Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues; Feminism; Feminist Studies; Gender; Liberation Theology; Marriage and Family; Postmodernism; Religious Thought: Feminist; Religious Thought: Gay Theology; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity.*

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Religious Thought: Mujerista

Mujerista theology is an explanation of Latinas’ religious understandings and practices. Based on St. Anselm of Canterbury’s dictum that theology is “faith seeking understanding” (*fides quaerens intellectum*), it challenges other theologies to recognize that all theological enterprise is not about God but about what different human beings think about God. The publication in 1988 of *Hispanic Women: Prophetic Voice in the Church*, coauthored by Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Yolanda Tarango, was the first publication in the United States

focused on the religious thought of Latinas—women from Latin American and Caribbean background living in the United States. *Mujerista* theology is based on these religious understandings and practices, particularly those of grassroot Latinas, mostly poor and working-class women. The religious understandings and practices of Latinas sustain them and encourage them in their daily struggles, as members of an oppressed group living in the United States that is exploited, suffers systemic violence, is discriminated against, and is powerless. Religion is a positive force for Latinas as they struggle for the right to speak with their own voice and to point out the particularity and significance of their own understandings—religious and otherwise.

Mujerista theology considers itself different from other theologies only in that it has as its source and highlights Latinas' religious understandings and practices. *Mujerista* theology insists on the subjectivity of all theology and on the importance of recognizing that all theology is human-talk and has to be, therefore, open-ended. *Mujerista* theology has a three-fold goal: to contribute to the development of Latinas' moral agency by providing them with opportunities to contemplate and discuss their religious beliefs and their meaning in one's daily life. Second, *mujerista* theology seeks to provide Latinas with opportunities to be self-defining subjects instead of objects of theology. Third, it works to enable them to become conscious of and to struggle against internalized oppressions and to work to transform oppressive societal structures. To do this, *mujerista* theology uses an ethnographic method to enable the voices of grassroot Latinas to emerge and be heard, and it uses them as the basis for its elaborations. *Mujerista* theology is an attempt to bring to the attention of the intellectual world and the churches voices usually not heard, if heard not recognized, and if recognized not considered important.

Lo Cotidiano—Daily Life as Source of Religious Thought

Central to *mujerista* religious thought is Latinas' daily experience, *lo cotidiano*, the horizon of daily life—of Latinas' common, ordinary lives. *Lo cotidiano* is the space or main arena of Latinas' struggles, the place and time where they come to understand reality and to deal with it. *Lo cotidiano* is enmeshed in the materiality of life, materiality that Latinas consider part of God's creation, which God embraces in a most unique way in becoming incarnate in Jesus.

The epistemological consideration that knowledge emerges from experience is behind *mujerista* theology's insistence on Latinas' religious experiences as its source. Claiming

this source is also based on the epistemological and hermeneutical privilege of the poor and oppressed espoused by liberation theologies. As women of a marginalized community, as women in the Latino patriarchal culture embedded in a likewise patriarchal U.S. dominant culture, Latinas are indeed oppressed and often saddled not only with their own survival but also with the survival of the children and the elderly. Latinas are part of the oppressed of the world with whom God walks in a special way, not because they are morally better but because, from their marginalized position, they can see a radically different future society from which no one is to be excluded.

The Kingdom or Family of God

An important element of Latina culture is that of family. This has led to a reevaluation of the concept "kingdom of God." *Mujerista* theology speaks of the "kin-dom" of God, of *la familia de Dios* (the family of God). The image of "kingdom" has little relevance in the twenty-first century and in the lives of Latinas and it is a sexist and elitist understanding. *Mujerista* theology claims as more relevant for Latinas to speak about the "kin-dom" of God, God's kin, from which no one is excluded, in which relations are mutual, and in which priority is given to the most vulnerable and the neediest. In *mujerista* theology, the family of God is a historical reality; the kin-dom of God is part of this world's reality, and Latinas struggle to make it tangible in their personal lives and in their communities. This perspective, while not claiming that human beings accomplish their own salvation, affirms that, as God's creatures, everyone is responsible for establishing justice and peace as realities in this world. In *mujerista* theology, the resolve regarding the centrality of the struggle for justice does not negate the need for faith in God or human dependence on God's grace.

Sin and Justice

Sin, in *mujerista* theology, is always understood to be social sin, that is, as having social connotations. For Latinas, sin involves not caring for their families and their communities as well as not being responsible to family and community. Sin involves opposing, postponing, or not facilitating the inclusion of all in the family of God, where all are loved and where everyone's rights and responsibilities are recognized. Sin for Latinas is linked to prejudice and to the practices and institutions that do not recognize each and every one as a moral subject capable of contributing to the good of the community. In *mujerista* theology,

sin is the antiliberation force that sustains the well-being and privileges of some at the expense of the majority of the people in the world.

Another central theological theme in *mujerista* theology is that of justice, which is understood as a process of inclusion that emphasizes solidarity and reconciliation. *Mujerista* theology understands justice as a constitutive element of the Gospel message, best explained in Matthew 25:31–46, where God is identified with the poor and the marginalized. The process of justice starts with Latinas' present experience of injustice—an experience of divisions and strife. Justice is, therefore, a reconciliatory praxis that promotes and seeks to facilitate just relationships—personal and social—that affirm the concrete reality of all as embodied beings with the capacity to be self-defining, essentially relational, involved in social, political, economic and cultural contexts made operative by systems and institutions. Just relationships insist on the right of all persons to develop and flourish, affirming their individuality while recognizing their sociality, acknowledging the need for mutuality and accountability.

Jesus Christ and Liberation in Mujerista Thought

Based on the perspective of *lo cotidiano*, the kin-dom of God, social sin, and justice, *mujerista* theology elaborates a Christology—an understanding of Christ—rooted in ethics. Beliefs about Christ have to contribute effectively to bringing justice and peace to the world. For Latinas, Christ is real and present, walking with them, accompanying them in their daily struggles. Christology in *mujerista* theology is not about a Christ who was, but one who is, and one who is engaged in historical reality—open to change. This emphasizes the traditional belief that Christians are *alter Christus*, another Christ. Christ today has to do not only with Jesus of Nazareth but also with Oscar Romero of El Salvador (Roman Catholic bishop of El Salvador, murdered in 1980 because of his commitment to the poor), with Mamá Leo and Juan Lugo of Puerto Rico and New York City (Leoncía Rosado, known as Mamá Leo, was a Pentecostal Puerto Rican leader who came to New York City in 1935, birthed the Damascus Christian Churches, and ministered to drug addicts; Lugo is called the Pentecostal apostle to Puerto Rico. He worked in New York City starting in the 1930s.), Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta of California (Roman Catholic farm workers, labor leaders, and civil right activists, practitioners of nonviolence, and cofounders of United Farm Workers), and with the multitude of Latinas and Latinos who relentlessly struggle for liberation day after day.

Mujerista theology clearly links salvation for Latinas to historical liberation—the flourishing of life. This is why liberation for Latinas is not about equality within oppressive structures but about struggling to change such structures and why their well-being is tied to the liberation of other oppressed and marginalized people the world over.

Mujerista theology interprets Latinas' religious thought using the triple lens of culture, liberation, and *mujerista* thought. As a marginalized culture, Latino/a culture in the United States has not been allowed to make significant contributions to what is normative. *Mujerista* theology works to bring to the fore the religious perspectives of Latina culture, which include not only Christian elements but also understandings and practices emerging from African religions brought to Latin America and the Caribbean by African slaves, and from different Amerindian cultures suppressed but not completely eradicated by the Spanish conquistadores. The emphasis on praxis and experience, the focus on economic poverty, and the linking of salvation to liberation are concepts that emerged in the 1960s in Latin American liberation theology. *Mujerista* analysis and understandings, which focus on the oppression of women, provide the third lens for the elaboration of Latina religious thought. *Mujerista* theology has been elaborated in conversation with womanist, Asian American, Native American, Asian, and African women-centered theologies, and Euro-American feminist theology.

Mujerista theology elaborates the religious thought of Latinas' conscious that religion is something alive, that all theology is contextual, and that new challenges are always emerging from the historical reality of Latina communities. *Mujerista* theology is an integral part of Latino/a U.S. theology. It considers all women-centered theologies—Latin American ecofeminist theology, U.S.-based womanist theology, Euro-American feminist theology, and others—conversation partners. *Mujerista* theology is included in many of the feminist theology courses taught in the United States and abroad. It is often also studied in courses that deal with liberation theologies.

See also *Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence; Frontier and Borderlands; Latino American Religion* entries; *Latino/a Religious Practice; Liberation Theology; Lived Religion; Mexico* entries; *Practical Theology; Religious Studies; Religious Thought: Feminist; Religious Thought: Latino/a; Religious Thought: Womanist; Roman Catholicism: Early Twenty-First Century Issues; Social Ethics; Systematic Theology.*

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Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant

Reformed Protestant religious thought has been a distinctive and important dimension of North American religious thought. It has been present since the early days of colonization in New England. It became prominent during the period of the American Revolution as a form of Christian faith accepted by a number of prominent leaders and thousands of people. It settled into being an influential force in the development of the American nation both religiously and in the social and cultural ethos. Although it continues to be vigorous in its theological expressions in the early twenty-first century, it does not have the national prominence it once had as an identifiable force in mainstream churches and American life as a whole. While it is still possible to trace important contemporary attitudes to Reformed Protestant roots, Reformed thought as a whole is not so much a major voice but more of a “background music” in American culture today.

Reformed Emphases

Reformed religious thought, or Reformed theology, emerged in sixteenth-century Europe as an alternative stream to the initial stream of the Protestant Reformation, the Lutheran, as well as to a third, the Anabaptist.

Zwingli

Reformed thought in its earliest stage is associated with the Zurich reformer Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531). His series of sermons, begun on January 1, 1519, on the Gospel of Matthew, began the Zurich Reformation and pointed the way to the centrality of biblical exposition and preaching as hallmarks of Reformed thought. Zwingli introduced a basic

simplicity to worship that continued through the centuries—certainly with modifications—as features of a Reformed approach to understanding who God is and what God desires of the people of God. Zwingli’s removal of the vestiges of Roman Catholicism from Zurich churches, including stained-glass windows, pictures, statues, and organs, produced a stark simplicity in worship for the purpose of focusing attention on God’s lordship and sovereignty, with no “distractions” from an encounter with the Word of God read in scripture and proclaimed through preaching.

Zwingli also had strong views of God’s sovereignty in salvation, leading to an emphasis and development on the doctrines of election and predestination, which had been characteristic of Augustine in the early church period. In its simplest form, election meant that God had predestined the salvation of certain people (the “elect”), before the “foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4). Salvation is an action of God’s pure grace and is not in any way dependent on the works or righteousness or activities of humans. Zwingli did not speculate on the ultimate fate of those not included in God’s election. Later Reformed thinkers did. So Zwingli was not a “double predestinarian,” in proposing two “decrees” of God: one for salvation and the other for damnation. Who and how many people will be saved is unknown and a matter left totally up to God to decide.

God’s Word is proclaimed in the midst of the church, the people of God assembled for worship. In preaching, based on the Holy Scriptures, the living Word of God is proclaimed and heard. The Holy Spirit enables this “hearing” and application of the preached Word to the lives of those who hear.

Zwingli acknowledged two sacraments that he believed were biblical: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Baptism was a sign of membership in the church. In sixteenth-century Zurich, this meant membership in both the civil community and the church, a coterminus view of church and state. The theological issue of excommunication was also a civil matter, under the jurisdiction of the magistracy, as well as a “church matter.”

Zwingli’s view of the Lord’s Supper was to have long-lasting effects on Reformed thought. He spoke of a “spiritual eating” of Jesus Christ in the Lord’s Supper, which featured the elements of bread and wine. But Zwingli denied there was a physical presence of Jesus Christ in the Supper. The Supper was to be a joyful celebration, a remembering of who Jesus Christ is and what he has done. It is a memorial to Christ, a symbolic expression of Christ’s offering of himself for the work of salvation. Zwingli’s view is sometimes called

“memorialism.” The “presence” of Christ is the presence of Christ’s Spirit in uniting the church into one body.

This view ran counter to Luther’s understanding of a real presence of Jesus Christ in the Lord’s Supper. The Lutheran tradition developed a view known as “consubstantiation” in which the presence of Jesus Christ is related to the elements in the Supper, as around, with, and under the elements—such as how heat is found in relation to a poker that is thrust into the fire. Luther’s view differed from Roman Catholic “transubstantiation” in which the church taught that with the words of institution, intoned by the priest in the Mass, the substance of the elements in the Eucharist “became” the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Both the Roman Catholics and Luther affirmed a “real presence” of Christ in the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper, a view Zwingli denied. Zwingli’s basic interpretation of the phrase “This is my body” was: “This *means* my body” or “This *represents* my body.” The phrase is to be interpreted symbolically (as when Jesus said, “I am the true vine”; John 15:1). As a humanist, Zwingli recognized the rhetorical use of such representative language.

Calvin

Zwingli’s theology helped set directions for a theological trajectory that differed from Luther’s. The main architect of Reformed theological thought, however, was John Calvin (1509–1564), whose position in Geneva over a number of years gave him the opportunity to develop theological understandings that became formative for centuries of Reformed theology.

Calvin was trained as a humanist and, through a “sudden conversion” (with no details given), became attracted to the evangelical reform movement. His major theological work, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536–1560 in various Latin and French editions), presented a more systematic approach to Christian faith than Luther had done and a wider consideration and reflection on theological topics than Zwingli had provided.

Calvin was an international figure. His writings, which ranged from commentaries on nearly every biblical book, to letters, polemical tracts, sermons, theological treatises, and finally the *Institutes*, spread his ideas and influence throughout Europe in his lifetime and even further in the centuries after his death.

As a theologian, Calvin was most indebted to Augustine. This was particularly so in regard to the issues of election and predestination. Calvin’s view was developed in a pastoral context, as he himself served as a pastor for decades in

Geneva. Why is it that some people respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ with faith and others do not? Why do some people participate in the visible church, as the “communion of saints,” and others do not?

For Calvin, the answer did not rest on any inherent virtue or goodness in a person or in that person’s intelligence, wealth, or any other outward feature. Salvation or election was entirely the work of God.

This conviction rested on Calvin’s (and Augustine’s) view of human sinfulness (depravity). Calvin believed the Bible taught that humans are totally captive to the power of sin—that humans are “turned in upon themselves,” seeking to live according to their own desires, instead of according to God’s will for their lives. Sin breaks the relationship of trust and love God intends to have with God’s creatures. This sin affects all areas of human life and existence. This means the human mind (intellect), will, and emotions are all affected by the power of sin to the degree that humans are sinful by nature. This is what the Christian church historically called “original sin.” “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23); and the result of this sin is that humans are cut off from God, leading ultimately to death (Romans 6:23). Given their sinful natures, humans have no ability or desire on their own to turn away from the love of themselves to love God. They have no “freedom of the will” in these matters, no human power to break the power of sin in their lives. They have no power to change or get rid of their sinful human nature.

So if any change is to be made, it must come from the power of God. Calvin believed the scriptures taught that God chose or “elected” persons to come to salvation or a new relationship with God. God, through the Holy Spirit, gives the gift of faith in Jesus Christ to the elect. The result is that they are justified in God’s sight (justification) on the basis of the work of Christ, have their sin forgiven, and are given a new nature by the work of the Holy Spirit (regeneration). They are reconciled to God and are called into the body of Christ, the church.

The visible church, for Calvin, was the outward body or institution with which people become affiliated. There are some in the visible church who do not genuinely have the gift of faith in Jesus Christ. For whatever reasons, they choose to join the church, even though they do not truly love God or believe in Jesus Christ as their lord and savior. But the visible church is not the same as the “invisible church.” This is the company of the elect—those whom God has chosen to receive the gift of salvation. Their identity is known only

to God. The invisible church is the “communion of saints” (Apostles’ Creed) and extends from the beginning of time until the end of the world.

For Calvin, election or predestination—which means God’s choosing of what the ultimate destiny of persons is: heaven or hell—is the work of God carried out by God’s initiative in the world. The Holy Spirit is the agent or one who gives the gift of faith, as an expression of God’s pure grace and pure mercy. No person has the “right” to be saved—sin has made that impossible. That God saves any person is a cause for wonder and praise. But sinful persons themselves do not “want” to be saved, because of their sin. Thus, when salvation does occur, in Calvin’s view, it is purely and totally the work of God.

Although election and predestination are the terms most often associated with Calvin, they are only one dimension of the many aspects of his theological views. Calvin had a robust doctrine of creation, which stresses God’s sovereignty as the lord of all who brought all things into existence. Calvin believed in divine providence whereby God preserves the creation, cooperates with persons in carrying out the divine will, and guides and directs the world’s history as well as the lives of individuals toward the final reign of God and establishment of God’s kingdom. These doctrines point to the supreme freedom of God to act in accord with God’s own will in creation, providence, and salvation.

Calvin based these viewpoints on his reading of scripture, which he regarded as the Word of God. God inspired biblical writers to convey the divine message God intended to communicate to humanity. Calvin used his humanist training in the service of biblical interpretation and recognized this divine message came through the human biblical writers and was God’s way of communication. God used the “human” to convey the “divine.”

A further example of this derives from Calvin’s belief that the church exists where the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are rightly administered. These two aspects are central for Calvin and for later Reformed thought. Preaching for Calvin, as for Zwingli, was a primary means by which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is expressed. The sacraments, likewise, were used by God to be signs and seals of God’s grace in the lives of believers.

Both Calvin and Zwingli believed in infant baptism, a view rejected by the Anabaptists. But they did not agree on the issue of the presence of Jesus Christ in the Lord’s Supper. Calvin was closer to Luther than to Zwingli in affirming that Jesus Christ is “spiritually present” in the Lord’s Supper. But

Calvin did not tie this spiritual presence to the elements in the Supper, the bread and the wine. Calvin believed the Supper conveyed grace to those who received it in faith. The “benefits” (“virtues”) of Christ’s work of salvation are received by those who eat and drink in the Lord’s Supper by faith. So the Supper does not simply “represent” Christ (Zwingli); the Supper also “presents” Christ by truly conveying his presence and the power of his work to those who eat and drink in faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes Calvin’s view is called “virtualism,” to indicate Christ’s virtues or benefits are conveyed. The differences between Zwingli and Calvin were to have long-lasting effects in Reformed thought as it developed.

After Calvin

Calvin’s theological views spread throughout Europe, into England and Scotland and to the New World. The clearest development and codification of Calvin’s thought occurred at the Synod of Dort, held in the Netherlands in 1618 and 1619. Here the Reformed—called also “Calvinists”—pronounced their views in light of the critiques of the Arminians, followers of James Arminius (1560–1609), who rejected Calvin’s views on a number of points, including election and predestination.

The Canons of the Synod of Dort were a seventeenth-century expression of the development of Calvin’s thought, crystallized in the famous “Five Points of Calvinism.” These five points were acrostically rendered in English as TULIP. They were as follows:

Total Depravity. Human sinfulness pervades all dimensions of life and all parts of the human person, leaving humanity totally “dead” in sin, unable—and not desiring—to establish a relationship of trust and love with God. This sin leads to eternal death.

Unconditional Election. God chooses whom God will save and who will be eternally lost (damned) by God’s eternal decree. This is God’s free decision and does not depend on human merit or worthiness. Salvation is purely by God’s grace; damnation is a matter of God’s justice.

Limited Atonement. The death of Jesus Christ is the means sufficient to bring salvation to God’s elect. Christ’s death has the power to save all people; but since all people are not saved (according to scripture), it has efficacy only for the elect whom God has chosen.

Irresistible Grace. God’s election by grace will be carried out in the lives of the elect without fail. It is not able to be “resisted.” The Holy Spirit regenerates or gives a new heart,

mind, and will to the elect so that in salvation, their will is now freed to serve and love God.

Perseverance of the Saints. Once the elect receive the gift of faith, God also grants the grace of perseverance, which means they will continue in their faith throughout life. The Holy Spirit enables this perseverance, not the person by his or her own power or abilities. The salvation of the elect is secure in God's grace and by God's power.

By the time of Dort, the Reformed tradition also had a number of important confessional documents that expressed the emerging Reformed theology. These included the Scots Confession (1560), the Belgic Confessions (1561), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), and the Second Helvetic Confession (1566). These, along with the later Westminster Standards (Confession; Larger and Shorter Catechism; 1647), expressed the faith of Reformed churches as supplements to the work of other Reformed theologians such as Martin Bucer (1491–1551), Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575), and John Knox (1514–1572).

American Expressions

Protestant Reformed thought came to the New World through a variety of groups of immigrants. New England Puritans, both Presbyterians and Congregationalists, were Reformed. Some Baptist groups were Reformed in outlook, as were some Episcopalians. The theological emphases of the European traditions were adopted and amplified through the North American experience.

Main Currents of Reformed Thought

The American Puritan tradition, while emphasizing the main points of Dort along with other teachings of Calvin and the Reformed, was particularly instrumental in developing the theological concept of the covenant.

Covenant Theology

The theology of the covenant takes up the biblical theme of God entering into relationships with individuals (such as, Abraham; David) or the nation of Israel (at Sinai). Continental theologians such as Johannes Cocceius (1603–1669) developed “Covenant theology” (Latin: *foedus*, from which also comes “federal theology”), which wanted to avoid the speculative language of God's “eternal decrees” (Westminster Confession) to describe God's relating to humanity and replace it by “covenant,” interpreting God's dealings with humans and the creation in a dynamic form.

New England Reformed theologians saw God's church as the elect and also the new land as an opportunity to have a whole people live in a covenant relationship with God in a way analogous to God and the people of Israel in the Old Testament. The covenant theology of Reformed thought was extended to the present day as New England preachers preached the need for righteousness, repentance, and holiness so the “people of God” would walk worthily of the God who had now established a new covenant with the people who were called to live in a “holy commonwealth” and be “lights in the world” to the Christian Gospel—“visible saints.” Ultimately, the hope was to establish the “elect nation,” to be a “city upon a hill” (as stated by John Winthrop, 1588–1649) and live out the responsibilities God imposed on the covenant people who receive God's blessings.

Sin and salvation were continually important in Reformed Protestant religious thought. One example is the Great Awakening, which was begun by the Calvinist George Whitefield (1714–1770) and featured various church splits over practices of evangelicalism and revivalism.

Edwards

No American Reformed figure embodied the issues involved in sin and salvation more than Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), pastor in Northampton, Massachusetts. Edwards was encouraged by the intense conversions of many persons, seeing them as a potential sign of the coming of the millennium and reign of Christ on earth. Yet Edwards was also disheartened by what he saw as the consequences of the revivals, which were often anticlericalism, unregulated preaching, separation from established churches, and behavior that was irrational and not in his view a true expression of the mind and beauty of God.

These experiences led Edwards to reflect deeply on Christian conversion in the penetrating work *A Treatise concerning Religious Affections* (1746). Here he described ways of discerning the true work of God's grace from selfish works, or the works of Satan. Edwards cautiously supported the revivals.

But Edwards's great theological thought is also found in his analysis in *Freedom of the Will* (1754), where he argued the will was determined in its inclinations either by the power of “sin”—which is the human condition of all persons—or by “grace”—which occurs through “conversion” by the divine and supernatural power of God's Holy Spirit. In *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended* (1758), Edwards supported the traditional Christian and Calvinist doctrine of original sin that taught that the natural actions of humans to

sin arise from the “constitutional unity” of the human race in Adam.

New England Theology

In the background of all this for Edwards were seventeenth- and eighteenth-century controversies over “preparationism.” Can humans, who are sinners, “prepare” themselves for salvation? This raised the theological issue of what role humans play in conversion. In light of the Great Awakening, later followers of Edwards, Joseph Bellamy (1719–1790) and Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803), adjusted their Reformed thinking to accommodate Awakening emphases. They fashioned the “New England theology” or “new divinity,” which sought to reconcile traditional Reformed views of election, predestination, and human depravity with evangelism and moral reform. This emerged into giving the human will an active volitional role in “conversion,” a place it did not have in traditional Reformed thought.

New Haven Theology

The issue persisted later with the revivals of Charles G. Finney (1792–1875), a Presbyterian pastor who emphasized human ability to respond to God’s grace and to “cast out sin.” Sin could be replaced with holiness, a concept totally rejected by traditional Reformed thought. Similarly, Nathaniel W. Taylor (1786–1858), a Connecticut Congregational theologian at Yale, abandoned traditional Reformed emphases on original sin and regeneration, teaching that humans became sinful with their first moral act and that regeneration is within human powers to effect (in conjunction with God’s Spirit). A number of Congregationalists and some Presbyterians accepted Taylor’s “New Haven theology.”

Old Princeton Theology

The most dominant bastion of Reformed thought in the nineteenth century was at Princeton Theological Seminary. Princeton’s main theologians from its founding in 1812 were Archibald Alexander (1772–1851), Charles Hodge (1797–1878), Archibald Alexander Hodge (1823–1886), and Benjamin B. Warfield (1851–1921). They maintained the Calvinism of Dort and seventeenth-century scholastic Calvinists in light of all controversies. Until the publication of Charles Hodge’s three-volume *Systematic Theology* (1872), the theology textbook used at Princeton Seminary was the *Institutes*—not of John Calvin, but of Francis Turretin (1623–1687), a Reformed scholastic theologian whose meticulous theology represented the most technical form of Calvinism.

This fact about the use of Turretin’s work highlights an important feature of the Old Princeton theology, its view of scripture. The theologians of the tradition emphasized scripture as the inspired Word of God. As attacks on the credibility of the Bible grew throughout the nineteenth-century, A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield published a famous article on inspiration (1881) in which they argued that scripture’s inspiration also entailed its inerrancy, that the Bible could not err on all things it taught, whether in theology or ethics, history or the natural world. Scripture is inerrant in its original “autographs”; and to disprove this, one would have to establish that the error existed in the Bible’s original (lost) *autographa*. The Old Princeton view was that inerrancy was absolutely crucial to Christian faith because it provided the only solid foundation on which to ground the truth of biblical revelation.

In this, the Old Princeton position was developing the view of Turretin, who in the seventeenth century predicated the authority of the Bible on the claim that the biblical text was verbally inerrant. The assumption of Old Princeton was that Turretin’s position was that of the Westminster Confession and Calvin, a claim denied by Union Seminary (New York) professor Charles Augustus Briggs (1841–1913) and by British evangelicals such as Thomas M. Lindsay (1843–1914) and James Orr (1844–1913). The Old Princeton inerrancy view became the theory of the Bible adopted by American fundamentalists in the fundamentalist/modernist controversy, even though fundamentalists could not adopt the strict Calvinism of Old Princeton on matters such as election and predestination.

Mercersburg Theology

Equally committed to Reformed theology in less “scholastic” forms were two theologians who taught at the Theological Seminary at Mercersburg, Pennsylvania (now Lancaster Theological Seminary): John W. Nevin (1803–1886), a Presbyterian and student of Charles Hodge; and the great Philip Schaff (1819–1893), the Swiss church historian. The Mercersburg theology emerged in part as a reaction to revivalism, though some of its themes can also be found in the theology of Horace Bushnell (1802–1876). Nevin and Schaff stressed the centrality of Christ and his presence in the Lord’s Supper as well as the catholic creedal affirmations of the early church in broader terms than counterparts at Princeton. In this way, they sought to reintroduce the strong views of Calvin on the importance of the Supper and to see the sacraments as forms of the Word

of God to accompany preaching in the context of Reformed worship. This anticipated twentieth-century emphases in liturgical renewal.

Neo-Orthodoxy

The development of nineteenth-century liberal theology is connected to Friedrich D. E. Schleiermacher (1768–1834) and Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889). It became dominant in America at the beginning of the twentieth century along with the rise of the Social Gospel movement.

In Europe, the developing theology of Karl Barth (1886–1968) and the movement known as neo-orthodoxy countered liberal thought in a return and reinterpretation of the themes of the Protestant Reformation and of the Reformed tradition. Barth's theology gained notice after World War I, which (in the view of Barth and others in the neo-orthodoxy movement) represented the shallowness of liberal theology's concept of human nature and societal "progress." Barth emphasized the transcendence of God and human sinfulness, which has led to the great gulf between God and humanity. This distance and this sin can be overcome only by Jesus Christ, who is "fully God and fully human." Barth's reinterpretation of the Reformed doctrine of election to say Jesus Christ is the elect and the rejected "man" gave a new perspective on Reformed thought and became a leading feature of his theology. Later, Barth's views of the sacraments became closer to Zwingli's than to Calvin's, a marked change from his earlier views.

Neo-orthodoxy became prominent in America after World War II. During the 1940s and 1950s, mainline denominations saw in it an alternative both to liberalism and fundamentalism. By focusing the locus of God's revelation in Jesus Christ, neo-orthodoxy offered a fresh way of hearing the Christian gospel through the witness of God's Word in the witness of Scripture.

Barth's early comrade in the rejection of liberal theology was H. Emil Brunner (1889–1966), with whom he later split and violently disagreed over the issue of "natural theology." Barth's thirteen-volume *Church Dogmatics* was a collection of huge tomes, translated slowly into English. Brunner wrote smaller books, so he initially became better known than Barth in the United States. Among the early advocates of neo-orthodoxy in North America were Walter Lowrie, H. Richard Niebuhr, Wilhelm Pauck, Edwin Lewis, and Elmer Homrighausen. These scholars did not necessarily follow Barth's theological method. But they resonated with Barth's critique of liberalism and its theological assumptions.

Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971) of Union Theological Seminary in New York City was also a significant critic of liberal theology and, in his *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932), was an early voice who stressed the neo-orthodox (and Reformed) view of the radical sinfulness of humanity while also seeing the unrealistic optimism of Protestant liberalism.

Neo-orthodoxy was a major movement in American theology until the 1960s, when social and cultural forces moved theology into a series of issue-oriented approaches. Princeton Theological Seminary was a leading center of neo-orthodox thought during the post-World War II period, under President John A. Mackay (1889–1983). In 1929, in the wake of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, Princeton Seminary was reorganized, and devout adherents to the Old Princeton Calvinism left to form Westminster Theological Seminary, near Philadelphia, which has continued to promote this form of Reformed thought. But the largest Presbyterian denomination in the post-World War II era was highly influenced by neo-orthodoxy, with many of its emphases being found in the Confession of 1967, one of the eleven confessional statements that now form the doctrinal standards of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The Confession sees God's reconciliation of the world in Jesus Christ as the central Gospel message, echoing Barth's emphases in the fourth volume of his *Church Dogmatics*.

Reformed Thought in the Early Twenty-First Century

Reformed theological thought has continued to develop. It has done so through scholars who do historical and theological work, churches in the Reformed tradition that continue to draw on the Reformed heritage, and theological seminaries where Reformed thought is taught.

Early-twenty-first-century Reformed historians who have continued to mine the past for historical insights and provide resources for contemporary scholars and students include Elsie Anne McKee (Princeton Theological Seminary), Lyle D. Bierma and Richard A. Muller (Calvin Theological Seminary), and Brian A. Gerrish (University of Chicago).

Reformed theologians who have contributed to the development of Reformed thought from their different perspectives include I. John Hesselink (Western Theological Seminary); Jack B. Rogers (Fuller Theological Seminary); Daniel L. Migliore, Bruce L. McCormack, and George Hunsinger (Princeton Theological Seminary); Amy Plantinga

Pauw (Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary); and Serene Jones (Union Theological Seminary, New York).

Theological institutions such as Westminster Theological Seminary and Reformed Theological Seminary are committed to continuing Reformed thought, particularly as it was understood and expressed in the Old Princeton tradition. Other institutions in the Reformed tradition, such as Western Theological Seminary (Reformed Church in America), Calvin Theological Seminary (Christian Reformed Church), and the seminaries of the Presbyterian Church (USA), present varied approaches to Reformed thought ranging through a spectrum of Reformed perspectives.

See also *Antinomian Controversy*; *Baptists* entries; *Bible: Interpretation of*; *Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage*; *Congregationalists*; *Dutch Reformed*; *Education: Colleges and Universities*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Neo-Orthodoxy*; *Pilgrims*; *Preaching*; *Presbyterians* entries; *Puritans*; *Reformed Denominational Family*; *Systematic Theology*.

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Religious Thought: Roman Catholic

The study of American Catholicism has both benefited from and contributed to important advances in cultural and social history over the past decades. Yet scholars have often marginalized Catholic religious thought—understood as formal and informal reflection upon the nature of Christian revelation, divine grace, and human response to both in relationship with the church and the larger world—within an American intellectual history dominated by Protestantism. A recent

flourishing of scholarship has nonetheless revealed the important interactions of Catholic thought with American social and cultural history. American ideals of democracy, individualism, capitalism, and religious freedom have significantly influenced American Catholics' understanding of their faith and the place of the Roman Church in the modern world. At the same time, Catholics have set distinct communal, sacramental, and hierarchical visions of society, the church, and the political order against these ideals, rendering them, at varying moments, as insiders and outsiders in the American experiment. An understanding of the major figures, ideas, and theological and philosophical divisions reflecting and shaping the larger Catholic experience in America offers a crucial perspective on the development of religion in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America.

Enlightenment Catholicism

Historians' designation of early nineteenth-century "Republican" or "Enlightenment" Catholicism reveals two interrelated questions facing Catholics in the early republic. The first concerned the form and function of a hierarchical church with historical ties to European monarchism in a society founded on religious liberty, church-state separation, and democracy. The second addressed the influence of Enlightenment rationalism on Catholic understandings of the self in relation to church, society, and the divine. Both questions shaped the development of American Catholic thought well into the twentieth century. But the identification of this early Enlightenment "moment" suggests a unique departure from the anti-Protestant apologetic of the post-Reformation period. Speaking for a minority community in a diverse religious climate, the first bishop of the United States, John Carroll (1735–1815), and later Bishop John England of Charleston (1786–1842), adopted an Enlightenment anthropology and political philosophy responsive to the rationalism and voluntarism of early American religion. Arguing for a contractual vision of limited government and church, both endorsed church-state separation and exhorted the faithful to participate in American political life without distinguishing themselves "from their other brethren of the commonwealth." Against Protestant skeptics, England located the roots of republicanism in Catholic thought dating back to Thomas Aquinas. Catholics, both men insisted, were free to develop and live within any political system that upheld the natural laws governing humanity. As a public theology, Enlightenment Catholicism established common ground with the common sense realism of early American Protestants.

For both, rational inquiry could attain to the truth of God's revelation without contradiction. Inductive investigation into historical sources, Carroll and England further insisted, would invariably bring the individual to the church as the divinely ordained custodian of that law.

For Carroll and England, the American experiment in religious freedom and democracy offered fertile ground for Catholic institutional reform. Eager to promote the faith among a diverse population, they encouraged lay leadership over the temporal affairs of local parish parishes. Yet facing tensions between laity and clergy and between Catholics and non-Catholics, the later careers of both men saw a retreat from Enlightenment ideals. As bishop, Carroll reaffirmed the limits of popular sovereignty and underscored the primacy of church teaching over individual reason and "private judgment" as a path to truth. England chided Protestant claims to "common sense" and "universal reason." The Enlightenment faith in human perfectibility failed to grasp "the immensity of him who alone is perfection." By the 1830s, New York bishop John Hughes (1797–1864) would exhort Catholics to uphold the teaching authority of the church over a cold rationalism "not competent to decide anything." Along with Bishop Martin John Spalding (1810–1872) of Louisville and later Baltimore, Hughes represented a new apologetic that drew upon the church's historic roots to construct a defiantly Catholic identity within the Protestant nation.

Nineteenth-Century Polemics of Tradition

If Carroll and England had touted the possibilities of American society, the church of Hughes and Spalding cast a critical eye that reflected the rising social and cultural tensions of the era. The massive influx of Catholic immigrants by the 1840s sparked waves of nativist discrimination and placed new demands upon the clergy. To preserve and develop the faith among the Catholic masses, Hughes abandoned the democratic experiments of Republican Catholicism for centralized hierarchical structure. Against American Protestant claims to intellectual and moral progress, Hughes pointed to the historic wisdom of the ancient faith. His understanding of history, shaped by the doctrine of the incarnation, placed the Catholic Church at the center of Western achievement. The church became the living and visible vessel of God's "word" through which divine grace directed the renewal of society. If Protestants abandoned the ancient wisdom and mysteries of the church, Catholic discipline preserved the unity and integrity of Christian revelation.

Hughes and Spalding brought a larger nineteenth-century Catholic revival to American shores. Prompted by the rise of liberal nationalism and anticlericalism in Europe, the ultramontanist movement reasserted the central authority of the pope over the church and sought to bring Catholic ritual and devotion throughout the world into conformity with Rome. The movement gained traction in the papacy of Pius IX, whose 1864 "Syllabus of Errors" and the First Vatican Council's declaration of papal infallibility (1870) offered a platform for church-state unity and papal sovereignty against the anarchic forces of revolutionary Europe. Clergymen forged in the anticlerical fires of the continent joined a new generation of Irish clerics in bringing a devotional revolution to American shores. In reasserting the hierarchical authority of the church as the indispensable guide for humanity, they sought to curb an excess of spiritual and moral individualism and emphasize a communal understanding of Christian living, suffering, and redemption.

Mid-nineteenth-century Catholic visions of human freedom challenged major currents in secular and Protestant thought. Although philosophers from John Stuart Mill to Ralph Waldo Emerson idealized the autonomous self as the goal of modern liberal society, ultramontanist anthropology refused to distinguish the self from the larger community: one composed of interwoven hierarchies of families, parishes, and the larger church. Such "organicism" affirmed the place and dignity of the individual who expressed freedom as obligation to the community in accordance with the moral law. The subordination of individual rights to a larger communal identity also reinforced a distinct understanding of human suffering. Moving away from a Calvinist notion of inevitable and sacrificial suffering, many Protestants took a more worldly view of suffering as a marker of human failing that demanded positive social reform. They decried a Catholic piety fixed on the suffering Christ and the penitential nature of physical hardship.

Orestes Brownson

The tensions between Catholic communalism and individual autonomy, human limitation, and social progress were central concerns of the century's most prominent Catholic intellectual, Orestes Brownson (1803–1876). In the years following his 1844 conversion, Brownson embraced Catholic authority against the romantic individualism of an age that "sympathizes with every rebel." But his defense of the faith also challenged ultramontanist perspectives. Brownson rejected Henry David Thoreau's image of Catholicism as a "degrading

intellectual bondage” by upholding a sacramental vision of grace and nature. As the “reconciler of all opposites,” he argued, “Catholicity” did not deny the commitment of individuals or societies to advance science and language or develop new schemes for social and political reform. To the contrary, by infusing human action with supernatural grace, Catholic sacrament and authority affirmed human freedom and obligation to achieve true moral and social progress.

Among such obligations for Brownson was the cause of abolitionism. The convert’s antislavery views distinguished him from many churchmen who read the anti-Catholicism and social radicalism of abolitionists as an extension of liberal anticlericalism besieging Catholic Europe. The revolutionary climate hardened a Catholic ultramontanist anthropology that subordinated individual freedom to the larger social order. Viewing the plantation system as simply one among several social hierarchies to which humans were inevitably bound, American ultramontanists could reinforce the pro-slavery ranks of immigrant Catholics by justifying slavery as a necessary evil. In taking a classical approach to slavery as an inherited institution, the leading moral theologian and later archbishop of Baltimore Francis Kenrick (1797–1863) reflected the dominant trends of Catholic confessional practice in the mid-nineteenth century. Kenrick offered a narrow measure of sin that isolated the individual from larger political, economic, and social structures shaping human action. Within the slave system, he argued, slaveholders could act justly or unjustly. Kenrick’s failure to address the intrinsic evils of slavery itself reflected Catholic perspectives not only on the primacy of social order over personal liberty but also on the nature of human suffering.

Brownson’s belief that spiritual, scholarly, and artistic endeavors must seek connection and meaning within—rather than escape from—society not only put him at odds with Catholic perspectives on slavery but also with Ralph Waldo Emerson’s ideal of absolute freedom. Brownson rejected Emersonian individualism as an imprisonment of the self that, in its quest for fulfillment, too often lapsed into a crass materialism plaguing American society. Yet Brownson never fully abandoned his sensitivity to the “inner light” within man. Such Protestant language irritated ultramontanists fixed on maintaining Catholic discipline as the true path to salvation. Efforts to tune the personal experience of grace with the rhythms of Catholic sacramental life nonetheless resonated among Catholics seeking a more active engagement with the intellectual and cultural currents of the age. Fellow convert Isaac Hecker (1819–1888), founder of

the order of Paulist Fathers, argued that the workings of the Holy Spirit connected the individual’s subjective experience with the objective truths found in Catholicism. Articulating a romantic and providential view of American society, he believed that the Holy Spirit would eventually lead the nation and the world back to the one true church.

“Americanism” and Ultramontanism

Several clergymen adopted Hecker’s providential view of American society. James Cardinal Gibbons (1834–1921) of Baltimore championed American constitutionalism as a model of church–state cooperation for the advancement of human welfare. Archbishop John Ireland (1838–1918) of St. Paul and other “Americanist” and modernist voices challenged the church to forge new paths in political, social, and scientific thought. In the process, they echoed his larger call to look beyond the church walls for evidence of God’s grace. In their “immanentist” understanding of the sacred, God spoke through human experience. The historical process raised new questions to which church teaching must respond in innovative ways. Adopting this position in varying degrees, Gibbons and Ireland called Catholics out of their intellectual and cultural ghetto. Only in acquiring the modern world’s knowledge, research, and scientific tools could the church “Christianize its aspirations, and guide its forward march.” John Lancaster Spalding (1840–1916) campaigned for a modern Catholic research university that nurtured intellectual engagement with modern science and social thought. Both Spalding and John Zahm, C.S.C. (1851–1921) agreed that intellectual life would fortify, not contradict, Catholic truth against materialism and relativism. Zahm, a Holy Cross priest and scientist at the University of Notre Dame, argued that any examination of evolutionary theories would demonstrate Catholic perspectives on the ultimate unity and purpose of the universe.

But the church’s censuring of Zahm and suppression of his controversial *Evolution and Dogma* (1895) signaled a larger shift away from Catholic rapprochement with the modern world. Conservatives protested Americanist reverence for modern political and intellectual systems. Archbishop Michael Corrigan (1839–1902) of New York, Bernard McQuaid (1823–1909) of Rochester, and a number of German and Jesuit clergy advanced the religious and cultural protectionism of Hughes, infusing a more systematic rejection of modern political and social thought found in the papal mandates of Pius IX and Leo XIII. Against the immanentism of liberal theologians, conservatives defended

an ahistorical and extrinsic view of Christian revelation that remained independent of subjective human experience. Against evolutionary and developmentalist theories of revelation and history, they argued, the church safeguarded the “deposit of faith” set down by Christ and the apostles. Preserving the right relationship between God and humanity, only the external authority of the church made revelation available to human souls.

Social and political upheavals at the end of the nineteenth century in Europe hardened critical divisions within the church and placed Americanists in the crosshairs of Rome’s larger war on modernism. Facing political crises throughout the continent, the Vatican pitted the ideal “thesis” of church-state unity against the American “hypothesis” of separation. The church’s 1899 rejection of “Americanism” followed by its 1907 condemnation of modernism halted clerical forays into modern political and scientific thought, inaugurating a half-century-long restriction on Catholic theology and biblical studies. Scorning modern skepticism, irrationalism, and historical criticism, Catholic intellectuals were to turn to the method of St. Thomas Aquinas. Neo-Scholasticism’s focus upon the certainty of truth, the unity of faith and reason, and a universal law ordering nature and human society placed Catholics out of touch with mainstream intellectual currents. Embracing the scientific and experimental spirit of the age, pragmatists John Dewey, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and William James among others eschewed abstract principles as a universal guide for legal and social systems. Societies, they argued, must discover their values as they functioned and changed in the world.

Social Thought

Yet as liberals interrogated the social abuses of the industrial age, their conclusions struck similar chords with Catholic social reformers who likewise condemned laissez-faire capitalism. Leo XIII’s “On the Condition of Labor” (1891) grounded the church’s critique of economic injustice in the natural law. Invoking the natural and fundamental rights of all individuals, including the right to property and a just wage consistent with human dignity, the encyclical placed the church firmly on the side of the working classes and inaugurated a larger Catholic social tradition that significantly shaped American social thought through the twentieth century. In the United States, the Jesuit John Ryan (1869–1945) bridged Catholic social criticism and mainstream progressivism. Calling for a living wage “consistent with the dignity of a human being” and state regulation of

working hours for women and children Ryan demanded that Catholic moralists turn abstract ethical principles into positive social reform. His effort to bring questions of economic justice into the realm of Catholic moral theology gained admiration from Social Gospel reformers, particularly Richard T. Ely (1854–1943). Ryan articulated his views on social solidarity and cooperation most dramatically in the 1919 “Bishop’s Program for Social Reconstruction.” Calling for mutual cooperation between labor, industry, and commerce, the statement helped frame the reformist vision of the early New Deal era.

American Catholic social theology drew from several strands of European thought, including the nineteenth- and twentieth-century revival of the “mythic Middle Ages.” Although modern medievalism informed a variety of Catholic apologetics and literary works, the organic unity of the medieval feudal systems preserved in the “perfect society” of Catholic ecclesiology and liturgical structure offered an antidote to the destructive individualism of American culture. In practice, medievalism loosely framed Catholic efforts to develop traditional labor guilds and other forms of social and economic organization. The principle of “subsidiarity” argued for the primacy of local community groups over the state as the agent of social change. For Catholic Worker founder Dorothy Day (1897–1980) and liturgical reformer Virgil Michel (1890–1938), Catholic sacramentalism and communalism buttressed human society against the social alienation at the core of modern injustice and conflict. Day’s Christian personalism and distributism challenged the dehumanizing forces of both laissez-faire capitalism and the larger welfare state. Michel sought to reassert the church’s “essential nature” as a spiritual and communal society. As the central expression of human solidarity and unity with the divine, the Catholic liturgy charged the laity with a desire to meet the world’s economic and social needs.

Advancing “Catholic Civilization”

The most pervasive aspect of twentieth-century Catholic medievalism was, of course, the Neo-Scholastic revival. Although its roots lay in mid-nineteenth-century Europe, it did not take hold in American Catholic colleges until the 1920s, when a flourishing of associations established it as the foundational system for Catholic intellectual life. On one level, Neo-Scholasticism reflected the survival of “common sense” that Protestants seemed to relinquish by the 1920s. While Dwight L. Moody and Christian fundamentalists abandoned the “wrecked vessel” of the world and modernists

cast about in a sea of relativism and skepticism, Catholics upheld the unity of faith and reason and looked comfortably, if unimaginatively, upon the world. Yet for all of its quaint appeals to “common sense,” twentieth-century Neo-Scholasticism sprouted a complex array of social, intellectual, and cultural movements. European critics Christopher Dawson and G. K. Chesterton, philosophers Etienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain, as well as novelists Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh all became part of a larger “renaissance” of Catholic civilization that reflected upon modern problems through a return “to the sources.” Maritain exhorted the faithful to seek evidences of good and truth “immanent in new temporal forms” without being swayed by “current fashions of thought which would cause us to lose our grasp of the eternal principles.”

The revival promoted a new self-understanding among American Catholics who sought to bring a distinctive Catholic social and moral perspective into society. In unprecedented ways, the laity, as part of the Catholic Action movement, participated in the church’s apostolic work as part of the “mystical body of Christ” in the world. By the 1950s, with the institution at its peak of growth, Catholics enjoyed new recognition in popular and political culture. Southerners Flannery O’Connor (1925–1964) and convert Allen Tate (1899–1979) demonstrated the reach of a literary revival shaping twentieth-century American literature. For O’Connor, Catholic orthodoxy, a belief in the absolute value and order of existence, liberated the writer to be who she or he truly is: “an observer, first, last, and always” who resists the relativist tendency to “create dogma” of personal perspective. The most provocative literary contributions brought a Catholic “sacramental” imagination that found sacred presence and order in even the most profane or grotesque. Thomas Merton’s (1915–1968) memoir of spiritual and intellectual conversion, inspired by his understanding of the Thomistic synthesis of human reason and divine order, reached audiences across confessional boundaries. Despite the author’s own intentions, the *Seven Storey Mountain* (1948) became for many a manual of spiritual self-help that spoke to the alienation of the postwar age.

A “New Theology” through a “Return to the Sources”

Just as Catholics in general enjoyed new recognition in popular and political culture, this new self-understanding also prompted self-criticism among many Catholic intellectuals. By the 1950s, John Tracy Ellis (1905–1992), Walter Ong

(1912–2003), Thomas McAvoy (1895–1900), Gustave Weigel (1906–1964), and Thomas F. O’Dea (1915–1974) joined a chorus of non-Catholics in denouncing the church’s self-isolation from the main currents of scientific and social thought. As non-Catholic universities forged new paths in scientific and cultural theory, they lamented, Catholic education insisted upon “contemplation and not research” in the mind’s path to God. Catholic scholars urged a new engagement with modern thought grounded in a fresh application of Catholic sources. French theologian Henri de Lubac (1896–1991) sought to rescue the mystical traditions of the early church from Enlightenment rationalism. Three Jesuits, the German Karl Rahner (1904–1984), the Canadian Bernard Lonergan (1904–1984), and the American John Courtney Murray (1904–1967), all joined the international effort to return church thinking “to the sources” even as it looked outward for new ways of reshaping the social order.

The “new theology” resembled mid-twentieth-century Protestant neo-orthodoxy in its efforts to blend social reform and religious revival through a return to traditional Christianity. However, John Courtney Murray’s emphasis upon the natural law roots of American political institutions cast a more optimistic light upon society than his counterpart Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971). Similar to Niebuhr, Murray refused to relegate religious authority to the private sphere of individual conscience. He developed a public theology that reached across confessional boundaries and challenged the economic and political violations of a natural and unifying social order. Yet Niebuhr’s emphasis upon human sinfulness and ignorance at the root of modern injustice contrasted sharply with Murray’s belief in the natural inclination of human institutions toward a fulfillment of that order. In this way, Murray had more in common with mainstream American liberals at midcentury who invoked a singular “American creed” as a natural solvent to racial and class tensions underlying midcentury society.

Vatican II

Murray and the *Nouvelle Theologie* significantly shaped the dramatic transformations of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). The council’s defining “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,” *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), broke from the separatism of the past and renewed an immanentist understanding of God present in historical forces and different cultures. Catholics could look to the world for sources and signs of Christian renewal. The document affirmed the freedom of scientific inquiry and

identified the church with the social, political, and economic struggles of people throughout the world. Murray's advancement of the American model of church and state produced important statements on religious freedom in seeking God without coercion. While affirming the importance of Catholic teaching and authority in the modern world, the council also drew lay leadership into pastoral and intellectual life and renewed the place of scripture as a source of revelation in dialogue with tradition. Jesuit theologian Avery Dulles (1918–2008) noted the council's destruction of the singular "perfect society" of the church unified institutionally by ultramontanist and philosophically by the Thomistic synthesis. In its place, postconciliar religious thought drew upon a "tradition of Catholic pluralism" that brought a variety of social and cultural perspectives into dialogue with Catholic teaching.

American efforts to implement the council drew sharp divisions within the church that reflected the larger social and political upheavals by the 1960s. Identification of the church with the poor and marginalized generated new theological voices that drew upon global social struggles in putting new questions to biblical revelation. Black and Latino liberation theologies sought evidences of divine grace and teaching in the experiences of poverty and social struggle. Feminist perspectives seen in the writings of Mary Daly and Elizabeth Johnson among others challenged the "hierarchical dualism" of Western theology that lay at the root of ecological and social crises. At the same time, although encouraged by a new theological and intellectual freedom, progressives lamented their failure to reform male-dominated ecclesiastical structures. They likewise failed to replace the traditional "act-centered" moral theology that focused confessional practice upon personal sin with what sociologist Paul Furfey termed an "actor-centered" approach that interrogated the character, attitudes, and habits of people in relation to the larger social injustices. After the 1968 issuing of *Humanae Vitae*, maintaining the ban on artificial birth control, theologian Charles Curran of the Catholic University of America denounced the church's retrenchment into natural law perspectives that placed abstract principle over experience. The encyclical provoked an unprecedented break of the majority of Catholics with the religious authority of the church.

Such transformations have inflamed conservatives, who attack the culture of dissent rising within the church under the guise of "pluralism." For many conservatives, the abandonment of Aristotelian and Thomistic unity of the church lay at the root of the current crises of authority facing the

church and widening the chasm between "liberal" and "conservative" elements. The historian James Hitchcock, like many who protested the church's dramatic changes, did not reject the letter of Vatican II but, rather, the liberal abuses of its "spirit" in their reckless accommodation to modernity. Others, ranging from the late journalist William F. Buckley and convert Richard John Neuhaus to Michael Novak and George Weigel, have formed a nucleus of conservative leadership. Grounded in natural law teaching, they have taken up the mantle of Americanism in charting a new political role for the church in opposition to abortion and in other socially conservative issues. Since the 1960s, theological conflicts have created intra-Catholic rifts that reflect the larger so-called "culture war" in America. Questions over the church's proper social and political voice have divided Catholics along political lines once unthinkable in the immigrant period. But whether or not liberals and conservatives agree on the priorities of Catholic moral authority, the faithful nonetheless accept Gibbons's "Americanist" premise that Catholicism not only belongs in the religiously and culturally plural United States but also finds its most authentic social and political expression there.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Abortion; Anti-Catholicism; Canada: Catholics; Common Sense Realism; Enlightenment; Fundamentalism; Neo-Orthodoxy; Neo-Thomism; Pragmatism; Religious Thought* entries; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *Social Ethics; Systematic Theology; Women: Roman Catholic; Worship: Roman Catholic.*

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Religious Thought: Womanist

A relatively recent development in theological education and religious studies, womanist religious thought highlights the empowering assertion of black women's ways of knowing that which facilitates the linking of divine justice to social

justice and thereby interrogating religious and social phenomena at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Originating in the writings of black female religious scholars who adopted Pulitzer Prize-winning African American novelist Alice Walker's (1944-) term "womanist," this discourse is rooted in a four-fold academic paradigm for demystifying and dismantling race, class, and gender oppression.

Definition of Key Concepts

Firmly rooted within the traditions of African American women, womanist approaches to religion and society incorporate four tenets that represent the virtues and values of the African American community and examine the ways in which these tenets relate to the unique role and moral wisdom of black women within this community. Distilled from Walker's original definition of the term, the tenets of womanist religious thought are (1) radical subjectivity, (2) traditional communalism, (3) redemptive self-love, and (4) critical engagement. These core concepts serve as the foundation for the theoretical orientation, methodological approaches, and practical application of womanist religious thought.

Radical subjectivity is a process wherein the identity development and consciousness of black women foster an ability to understand and claim personal agency, influence life choices, and incite resistance to marginality. It incorporates the lived experiences of black women and the act of naming and claiming a personal voice and the validating of worldviews.

Traditional communalism is an affirmation of the loving connections and relational bonds (familial, maternal, platonic, religious, sexual, and spiritual) formed by black women. It celebrates the ability of black women to create, nurture, protect, sustain, and liberate communities through acts of inclusivity, mutuality, reciprocity, and self-care.

Redemptive self-love is the assertion of the humanity, customs, and aesthetic value of black women in contradistinction to the commonly held stereotypes of the dominant society. The admiration and celebration of the distinctive and identifiable aesthetic and beauty of black women, embodiment and culture, is essential.

Critical engagement is the prioritizing of black women's wisdom that stems from totalistic experience with the forces of interlocking systems of oppression and the strategic options devised to undermine them. It is founded on the unequivocal belief that black women hold the standard and normative measure for the liberation of oppressed peoples from social injustices.

Historical, Cultural, and Intellectual Parameters

Responding to the overall failure of feminist and black liberation theologies to address the lived experiences of black women, womanist thought developed as a new way of understanding the world through the framework of an academic discourse that privileges African American women's moral wisdom and experience. Due to the "tripartite oppression" of black women on the basis of race, gender, and class—alternately referred to by womanists as "triple jeopardy"—womanist thought considers the experience of black women to be a source of critical insight into the struggles of marginalized individuals and communities. Womanist thought gives priority to the everyday realities of black women, thereby challenging the racist, sexist, and classist mentalities that dominate social, political, and religious systems. Through an ethical principle of praxis (theory linked with action) that combines thinking, being, and doing, womanism seeks to illuminate truth from the cultural and ideological frameworks that perpetuate the marginalization of black women.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, proto-feminist women's movements (suffragists and clubwomen, for example) challenged many of the traditional patriarchal social and religious structures that privileged men and oppressed women. The challenge of these proto-feminist movements would eventually lead to increased inclusion of women in social, religious, and academic discourses; however, this marginal inclusion was by no means equal. Alongside the establishment of the academic field of Women's Studies, the decades of the 1960s and 1970s also ushered in the field of black Studies (now often referred to as African American/Africana Studies), which included black liberation theology and the challenges it presented to racist structures in both society and the academy.

Although black women were essential proponents in the grassroots development of both the feminist and black freedom movements since their inception, they were largely overlooked during the development of the social, political, and religious agendas within the black community as a whole and within its academic discourses in particular. Ironically, as the development of these two areas of discourse increased exposure to and validity of the perspectives of blacks and women, both fields of study concurrently ignored and alienated black women. On the one hand, feminist studies and feminist approaches to religion tended to ignore the racial and class elements of their gendered critiques while, on

the other hand, black studies—and black liberation theologies in particular—tended to ignore the sexist components of their ideologies. In both its scholarship and politics, feminism reflected the bourgeois principles and sensibilities of white upper- and middle-class women. As a result, it was largely irrelevant to or unconcerned with the wisdom or plight of black women. At the same time, black studies largely ignored black women in light of the predominant assumption that racial progress would occur primarily by means of the empowerment of black men and the masculinization of black thought.

By the 1970s black women began to recognize the need to develop ideological modes of empowerment for themselves that took into account the racist elements of feminism and the sexist elements of black studies. This led to the emergence of black feminism. With the writings of Angela Davis (1944–), bell hooks (1952–), the Combahee River Collective (a black, lesbian, feminist group meeting from 1974 to 1980), and, later, Patricia Hill Collins (1948–), black feminism appeared on the academic scene as an ever-present corrective and counterpoint to the identity politics implicit within the fields of black studies and women's studies. The canon of work that emerged was diligent in its strident critique of the omission of the legacy of black women's work and worth in the struggles for the civil and human rights of all women and people of color.

The black feminist standpoint, however, continued to be regarded by the leading scholars of both fields as peripheral or anecdotal to their larger agendas. In the words of black feminist Gloria Hull, "all the blacks were men and all the women were white." This was particularly the experience of black women within theological education and religious studies, who were invisible to the general field and regarded as inferior or irrelevant by much of black and feminist theological discourse. This problem prompted black female theologians and religious scholars to search for an emerging consciousness capable of initiating a new academic discourse and ideology based upon a theological perspective of race and gender that was inclusive of *all* blacks as well as *all* women and that would foster a movement of self-determination and empowerment for black women within the church, academy, and society at large.

With the introduction of the term "womanist" in her seminal text, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* (1983), Walker's singular enterprise of creative self-naming served as the preferred moniker for a particular cadre of black graduate students who were to become the pioneers of womanist

approaches to the study of religion within the religion academy. In her 1985 essay "The Emergence of black Feminist Consciousness" Katie Cannon (1950–) transformed Walker's confessional term "womanist" into an academic movement situated within theological discourse—"womanism"—which she described as a consciousness or interpretive principle inherent to black women that provides the motivation to challenge oppressive structures while holding on to life regardless of constant oppression. Soon thereafter, Cannon, Jacquelyn Grant (1948–), Delores Williams (1943–), and others produced numerous essays and books, all designed to shape the inchoate concept into a formidable field. By naming the various systems of oppression that affected black women, these path-breaking womanist scholars initiated new modes of critical analysis that incorporated their own experiences of religiosity, womanhood, consciousness, racial pride, and community development. As a result of their efforts, womanist scholars such as Emilie Townes (1955–), Kelly Brown Douglas (1957–), and Renita Weems (1954–), among many others, began to break the centuries-old strongholds of racism and sexism and to create new opportunities of exploration for black women within the church, academy, and society.

Outlining Contemporary Relevance: Its Application to Theory, Policy, and Debate

Womanist scholars utilize both the theoretical and theological reflections of black women to change the manner in which knowledge is constructed and utilized for the purpose of social transformation. As such, womanism is based upon the conviction that the wisdom and insights of black women stand to benefit all of society, as opposed to only black women or the black community.

A leading voice in the womanist movement, Williams demonstrated in her 1987 essay "Womanist Theology: Black Women's Voices" how womanist thought is well on its way to defining the categories and methods needed to develop along lines consistent with a thoroughgoing liberation theological discourse. According to Williams, womanist theological methodology presently needs to be informed by at least four elements: (1) a multidialogical (incorporating numerous perspectives at once) intent, (2) a liturgical intent, (3) a didactic intent, and (4) a commitment to both reason *and* the validity of female imagery and metaphorical language in the construction of theological statements.

Multidialogical intent allows womanist theologians to advocate in praxis and discourse with a wide array of

sociopolitical, cultural, and religious communities focused on the survival and empowerment of the oppressed. *Liturgical intent* within womanist theology ensures that the fruit of womanist labor will be a relevant reflection of the action, thought, and worship of the black religious traditions. *Didactic intent* in the womanist theological perspective asserts a pedagogical dimension to theology. Finally, *theological language and imagery* generated by womanist theology reflect the amalgam of black women's history, culture, moral wisdom, and religious experience that is instrumental to transforming academy, church, and society. Following Williams's schema, the womanist theological project is indicative of its intentionality: black women asserting themselves in the fullness of their historical reality, with social conditions and religious experience as the core of their theological interpretation.

The distillation of black women's wisdom and experience from a historical narrative and academic record that has both ignored and excluded black women is the ongoing challenge and major objective of the womanist project. Traditionally, the academy has not considered the perspective of black women worthy of documentation or consideration. As such, one of the primary tasks of womanist scholarship is to search black women's literature—poetry, songs, fiction, and prose—for the silenced voices and perspectives of black women. For example, in order both to access and assess black women's experience, womanist scholars frequently appeal to the literary tradition of African American women authors. This often includes sociological and historiographical research and documentation of the oral traditions of black women in their communities (“mother wit”) that has been passed on from generation to generation by matriarchal leaders. Womanist scholarship is two-fold in its agenda. First, through attention to interdisciplinary approaches, it aims to deconstruct and dismantle the narrative histories and oppressive structures of racism, sexism, and classism that have exploited black women for centuries. Womanists seek to expose the untold histories of black women that include their physical, sexual, psychological, and economic exploitation. Second, it includes a constructive and empowering element that aims to create new realities and modes of understanding self and community that fully incorporate the perspectives of black women.

Within the religious and theological disciplines, womanism takes full account of scholarship and practices that tend to ignore and compartmentalize race, gender, sexuality, and class oppression. Womanist thought critiques the dominant

philosophical, theological, and canonical assumptions of Christianity that enable social oppression and limit human agency. Womanist research methodologies often incorporate critical engagement of biblical passages of scripture that have been used to oppress women—and black women in particular. This reinvestigation of scripture often includes a re-interpretation from the perspective of black women that provides new and variant insights from the normative interpretations. As such, womanist theology challenges the Christian tradition and its complicity in the perpetuation of oppression.

Most recent developments in womanism further portray the discourse as an epistemology that more effectively addresses the exigencies and interests of black women. Working alongside other marginalized discourses, such as *mujerista* thought and developing country feminisms, womanism has broadened its scope by constructing new, more inclusive and thoroughgoing understandings of liberation theology. Emerging fields of study within womanism include theology, biblical studies, ethics, and sociology of religion. Womanist thought now contributes to the larger academy by introducing new approaches and methodologies for the understanding of black religious life, women's liberation, and scholarly activism. Expanding the range of its scholarly thought and vision in this manner ultimately will enable womanism to avoid becoming a periphery discourse and allow it to function as a viable source of knowledge, insight, and understanding for all peoples suffering from multiple forms of oppression.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Baptists: African American*; *Feminism*; *Liberation Theology*; *Literature: African American*; *Methodists: African American*; *Pentecostals: African American*; *Religious Thought: Feminist*; *Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology*; *Religious Thought: Mujerista*; *Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics*; *Systematic Theology*.

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Revivalism: Nineteenth Century

The evangelical surge that swept through North America and Britain in the middle of the eighteenth century not only gave life to groups such as the Methodists but also made the phenomenon of the revival a vital component of American religious culture. If that Great Awakening, as it is popularly known, finally ebbed in part because of the increasing political strain leading to the American Revolution, the conviction that there would be times when folk would exhibit intense interest in things of the soul did not disappear. By the opening of the nineteenth century, another evangelical wave moved through the new republic, leaving its mark from the southern and western frontiers of Kentucky and Tennessee to the emerging urban areas of New York and other northern cities. In many ways, these expressions of nineteenth-century revivalism, while bearing the marks of their time and place, have continued to shape both the evangelical style within American Protestantism and the tradition of revivalism into the twenty-first century.

The Great Revival

As early as 1797, religious stirrings came to several New England towns and villages, particularly in Connecticut and New Hampshire, and by 1801, religious revival swept through Yale College, where the grandson of Awakening scion Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), Timothy Dwight (1752–1817), was president. Periodic revivals at Yale over the next two decades, with corresponding efforts to improve the moral life of both students and the larger society, have led interpreters to mark this endeavor as the beginning of the “second” Great Awakening. Revival interest, as in the eighteenth century Awakening, was by no means confined to New England. Around the same time these revival activities invigorated New England religious life, a different sort of revival phenomenon was taking shape in what was then the western frontier region of the South. The frontier camp meeting that emerged in that area was destined to have extraordinary impact on American religious life. However, the evangelical upsurge in the early nineteenth century differed from the Great Awakening of the previous century in at least two ways. There was no “grand itinerant” like George Whitefield (1714–1770), whose ministry gave an overarching common identity to the earlier awakening, and the later revivals moved rather quickly, even if sometimes unwittingly, to jettison the Calvinistic theological foundation that had undergirded the preaching of folks like Whitefield and Edwards.

When and where the first frontier camp meeting occurred cannot be identified with certainty. But by 1799–1800, there were religious meetings along the Gasper River in Kentucky, and in 1801, a major camp meeting occurred at Cane Ridge, just a few miles from present-day Lexington. The New England revivals, as their predecessors, took place in churches, space already identified as religious. Those on the frontier did not. With population widely dispersed and towns still rather distant from one other, most of the Euro-American population living west of the Appalachian Mountains did not have access to church buildings or regular, scheduled religious activities overseen by clergy. So some energetic preachers began to announce religious gatherings held in the summer, after crops were planted but well before harvest time, at places where folk could come from miles around, stay for perhaps up to two weeks or more, hear vibrant preaching, receive spiritual nurture, mix and mingle with others, sometimes conduct business, and perhaps have an intense experience of conversion. With trees cleared and crude preaching stands erected, forest areas became sacred space for the time of the camp meeting, and those attending stood on holy ground.

Rather quickly, the camp meeting became a staple of frontier religious life. It crossed denominational lines, for preachers from a variety of groups and theological persuasions would attend, often exhorting simultaneously from different stands. Sometimes they engaged in theological debates, providing additional entertainment for those attending. At least as early as the Cane Ridge camp meeting, a special area near the preaching stand was set apart for those seized by spiritual fervor and the wrenching soul searching that might result in conversion. Preachers sometimes called for those seeking spiritual peace to enter the pen, as this area was called. Emotional expression also ran high. What analysts of religion call ecstatic experiences were frequent. A spiritual force, presumably the Holy Spirit, would seize control of the body of one undergoing conversion with the result that some would thrash around as if having a seizure or perhaps utter strange sounds. Camp meeting revivalist Peter Cartwright (1785–1872) provided classic descriptions of such phenomena in his autobiography, calling them the jerking exercise and the barking exercise. So powerful were some of these occurrences that occasionally tree saplings would not be removed when space was cleared for preaching so that women could hold onto them when in the throes of spiritual ecstasy and not risk immodest exposure.

The conversion experience, whether or not dramatic and emotional, became a rite of passage, marking the transition of

those converted from a life without eternal meaning to one where one's future destiny was assured. Over the decades, it became almost a matter of course that at some point, one would undergo such an experience and claim an identity with the community of faith. At the same time, given the rigors and sometimes the rawness of frontier life, conversion was also a civilizing process. It marked the newly converted not only as a Christian but as one who abandoned behavior regarded as uncouth or even untrustworthy by those knit by bonds of faith. As both rite of passage and civilizing process, camp meeting conversion helped create a sense of community among those who shared a similar experience, a tie often hard to come by on the frontier given the distances that separated families.

The camp meetings had other important dimensions. Many were biracial, although often Euro-Americans and African Americans gathered in different parts of the revival site. At least for the first few decades of the nineteenth century, the southern slave culture had not taken firm root in the frontier areas where camp meetings initially flourished. The frontier revivals also had a sacramental character, with many ending the week or two of exuberant preaching and socializing with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The shared sacrament became another symbol of how the exigencies of frontier life could allow the faithful to transcend denominational boundaries and affirm a common identity. Related to both of these dimensions was the way in which the camp meeting stirred an interest in restoring the style of what some thought was authentic New Testament Christianity. Some early camp meeting leaders, such as Barton W. Stone (1772–1844), whose work led to the Cane Ridge revival, thought that they were witnessing afresh the church of the apostolic age with its ecstatic character confirmed in the New Testament story of Pentecost that also spoke of the muting of ethnic divisions and the unity that prevailed among believers.

As a form of both worship and entertainment, the camp meeting had an impact on the musical heritage of American Protestantism. Some of the older, familiar hymns lost their staid quality and simple meter when sung informally in the context of the camp meeting, sometimes after preaching had ended for the day. Syncopation gave the emerging gospel song a livelier quality, as did the addition of a familiar refrain. All could join in a lively refrain even if they did not know all the words to every stanza. The frontier revival helped join lively music to evangelistic efforts, just as it foreshadowed later events by taking ordinary space and transforming it into

sacred space (as, for example, when twentieth-century evangelist Billy Graham would preach nightly in sports arenas or other secular venues, temporarily altering them into holy ground). It also introduced techniques that became staples of later revivals. Calling those undergoing conversion to specially earmarked areas of the campground led to the emotion-laden altar call, with those making a religious decision symbolically leaving behind a former identity as they moved into liminal space around the altar or preaching stand.

Although the camp meeting emerged first on the southern and western frontier, it was by no means confined to that region. In one sense, the camp meeting also stands as the precursor of the later religious summer camp. But the strategies associated with it also proved adaptable, for by the 1830s, the methods of the camp meeting were transforming revivalism even in the developing urban areas of the industrializing north.

New Measures Revivalism

The impact of the camp meeting on revivalism elsewhere in North America became particularly obvious in the revivals associated with Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875). A law clerk when he had a stunning ecstatic experience of the divine presence in his life in 1821, Finney adapted techniques of the camp meeting for his revivals in emerging factory towns and cities, many in the central New York areas, that were growing rapidly with the coming of the Erie Canal. In the days of Edwards and Whitefield, revivals tended to occur within local congregations during regular worship times, often led by their pastors, and extended over several months. Finney took the camp meeting notion of two weeks or so of daily meetings and developed what he called the protracted meeting. Sometimes he held his preaching services in structures erected for the occasion, bypassing regularly scheduled services in already existing congregations. Finney transformed the pen area of the camp meeting into the anxious bench, calling on men and women by name to come forward and seek conversion. His wife organized prayer meetings in homes where women gathered to pray for the success of the revival. More radical for the time was allowing women to pray in public, usually when in the throes of conversion or ministering to another woman who was anxious for her soul. In Finney's hands, these adaptations and others became known as "new measures" that could guarantee the success of a revival. When he drafted a handbook that others could use in planning and executing revivals, Finney insisted that revivals were not surprising works of divine

intervention that Edwards and those of his ilk had imagined, but simply the right use of the right means by ordinary men and women.

Even before the end of the 1820s, Finney's brand of revivalism garnered controversy. Lyman Beecher (1775–1863), then a Latter-day Calvinist pastor in New England, was among those who attempted to stop Finney from launching a revival campaign in Boston. Like critics of the eighteenth-century revival, Beecher saw new measures revivalism as disruptive of orderly ministry and an indirect challenge to the ability of clergy to carry out their pastoral duties. But there was more at stake. Ordained as a Presbyterian in 1824, Finney admitted he had little understanding of the Westminster Confession that summarized the Calvinist doctrine informing Presbyterian belief; later he became associated with the Congregationalists, another group with Calvinist roots, while serving as a professor and then president at Ohio's Oberlin College and as pastor of First Church there. Beecher also had ties to both Presbyterians and Congregationalists, but he struggled more to retain some of the Calvinist heritage. At stake especially was the role of human will in the conversion process. Calvinists such as Edwards and Whitefield in the eighteenth century used the language of conversion, but they believed that God predestined the elect to salvation; for them, conversion was akin to a recognition of the work of grace in their lives. Others in the eighteenth century, most notably Church of England priest and Methodist founder John Wesley (1703–1791), jettisoned that idea. They saw conversion as a conscious move of the human will to accept God's offer of salvation. But if one could accept salvation, one could also reject it. The choice was not predestined or predetermined. Finney and new measures revivalism, despite ties to Calvinistic denominations, effectively demolished the Calvinist hold on the understanding of the conversion process in American Protestantism.

Regardless, the fruits of conversion came in changed behavior. Historians still debate the extent to which new measures revivalism buttressed efforts at social transformation and moral reform in the larger culture, particularly in fueling the antislavery movement. Those committed to promoting this expanding evangelical revivalism supported agencies such as the American Bible Society and American Tract Society, both of which sought to enhance the religious presence in newly settled areas of the United States. Finney was intimately involved in the founding of Oberlin College, the nation's first coeducational and multiracial institution, yet neither he nor other Oberlin leaders espoused equal rights

for women or full equality for African Americans, though most thought the slave system of the day morally reprehensible. The complicated ties between revivalism and social reform reflect the individualistic nature of the conversion experience. Women and men had to decide as individuals whether to accept the gift of salvation. Highlighting individual experience in conversion, those propelled nineteenth-century revivalists to see social issues through an individualized prism. Regenerate men and women would in turn create a regenerate society—but one at a time.

Other religious currents became intertwined with antebellum revivalism. Several of them represented different strands of perfectionism. Early Methodists, for example, had talked about entire sanctification or the sense that growth in faith could ultimately mean one had become holy, that one's will had become perfectly joined with God's will. That idea had receded somewhat before gaining fresh life in the nineteenth century, thanks largely to two laywomen who were sisters—Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874) and Sarah Lankford (1806–1896), who later married Phoebe's widowed husband. The two organized what became known as the Tuesday Afternoon Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness, persuaded that through earnest prayer, Bible study, and devotion they could pursue the “second blessing” of sanctification in an experience as intense as conversion (the first blessing). Phoebe especially became a noted revivalist in her own right, speaking at camp meetings, revivals, and gatherings on both sides of the Atlantic. The expansiveness of revivalism in nineteenth-century Protestantism offered opportunities for other women to become itinerant evangelists as well. Although social custom of the time generally excluded women from the ranks of ordained ministry and serving as pastors, scores of women traveled around the country and abroad proclaiming the evangelical message of conversion and sanctification.

Finney and some of his Oberlin associates, particularly Asa Mahan (1799–1889), also talked about Christian perfection, but from a different vantage point even though they, like Palmer, Lankford, and other Methodist perfectionists, based their thinking on an evangelical revivalistic theology. A Methodist style of sanctification, like conversion, tended to center on individual personal experience. Oberlin perfectionism layered onto that how one became engaged with the moral dimensions of social issues. Yet a third had roots in the utopian and eschatological thinking of John Humphrey Noyes (1811–1886), one-time divinity student at Yale. Noyes concluded that the promised Second Coming of Christ had

occurred in 70 CE, with the result that contemporary believers were called here and now to live as if they were already in the heavenly realm where perfection and sinlessness prevailed. Noyes gathered his followers into a utopian community in Oneida, New York, in an area where Finney had once conducted revival meetings.

Much of the enthusiasm generated by antebellum evangelical revivalism had ties to upstate, central New York—so much so that the area became known as the “burned-over district,” in recognition that there the fires of revival burned brightly and more steadily than elsewhere. Many religious seekers besides the young Finney and then later John Humphrey Noyes found themselves captivated by the religious excitement of the region. Echoing some of the restorationist impulses of earlier frontier camp meetings, Joseph Smith (1805–1844) had his visions that led to the emergence of the Latter-day Saints or Mormons while living near Palmyra, New York, in the heart of the “burned-over district.” The sisters Margaret or Maggie (1836–1893) and Kate (1838–1892) Fox claimed extrasensory experiences that led many to see them as mediums who could communicate with the spirits of the dead. Their first such endeavors came while they lived in Hydesville, New York, in the “burned-over district.” William Miller (1782–1849) gained a wide following as an Adventist preacher whose biblical interpretation claimed to pinpoint when Christ would return to earth; Miller was also a farmer for many years in the “burned-over district” in Low Hampton, New York.

Antebellum revivalism did not necessarily cause any of these other phenomena. But from the frontier camp meeting to Miller’s speculations, they all suggest that a contagious excitement produced by revivalism fed into many other religious and cultural currents. Some of that excitement came from the rapid growth of the new nation, with its energetic appreciation of republican democracy. Some came from the social dislocation felt by folk as they left behind what was familiar and moved to frontier regions in search of a better life. Some had to do with the exploding myth of individualism that characterized much of the popular self-understanding of what was new and different about the American people. Regardless, antebellum revivalism stamped American Protestantism with an evangelical style, made intense personal experience the standard mode of entry into the life of faith for millions of Protestant Americans, and enabled those denominations that exploited revivals to grow at an astounding rate. Methodists especially benefitted from the atmosphere where revivalism was dominant.

Even as sectional conflict mounted, fresh revival currents were appearing. Most well-known is a movement that peaked in 1857 and 1858 and that attracted primarily businessmen in northern cities. This revival took a different form from the preaching campaigns of Finney or the frontier camp meetings. Starting in New York City, businessmen from a variety of different denominational backgrounds gathered in designated churches at noontime for a period of prayer. Individuals might request prayer for themselves or for other men; in many cases, women attended, and although they would not pray audibly, they might recount situations regarding husbands or sons who they believed needed prayer and divine guidance. The movement spread quickly and drew thousands of men into its orbit. This spiritual renewal dovetailed with a major economic crisis. In 1857, the United States experienced a significant economic depression. Most severely affected were business enterprises that had flourished over the preceding quarter to half a century, many of them centered in northern urban areas. If life on the western frontier had seemed so harsh that the frontier camp meeting provided social and psychological relief along with religious nurture, so, too, the businessmen’s awakening of 1857–1858 offered respite for those who found their well-being jeopardized by the economic depression or who perhaps had left the relative security of agrarian pursuits for greater gain in new industries but now were suddenly unemployed. Seeking divine intervention was for many preferable to despair and defeat. When spiritual—and sometimes financial—renewal came, men would also offer prayers of thanksgiving at these noontime meetings, as would wives and mothers who testified to ways they believed God had intervened to provide employment for a husband or son or had empowered them to abandon profligate ways that always loomed as threats in the nation’s cities, especially for men with time on their hands.

Like the evangelical interest in sanctification and perfection, the noontime prayer meetings ebbed as the nation drew closer to Civil War. Yet even after military hostilities erupted in April 1861, revivalism did not disappear as a major component of American Protestant life. For a time, though, the focus of revivalism shifted from the churches and the frontier camp meeting, from prayer meetings and urban preaching campaigns. The new focus centered on the men who were serving in the Confederate army and the federal forces. Among the leaders from both North and South were men whose spirituality received nurture from the evangelical Protestantism that looked to revivals as ways both to bring new converts into the fold and to revitalize the commitment

of the faithful. Among Confederates, for example, both Robert E. Lee (1807–1870) and Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson (1824–1863) were men of deep evangelical faith who promoted revivals among their troops during the war; from a different vantage, Episcopal bishop Leonidas K. Polk (1806–64) integrated faith with military engagement while serving as a Confederate general. For the Union, none was more eloquent than Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) in pointing out the moral ambiguities of the war, but also in urging in the military and civilians alike to look to a providential God for strength. At different times, under the guidance of military chaplains, revivals broke out amidst the battles among soldiers both Northern and Southern, stoking the fires of evangelical fervor even as churches and society experienced unsettled times.

A New Urban Revivalism

The Civil War ended in 1865, but national division in the United States did not. As both North and South sought to recover—a process that took much longer for the South, thanks to formal Reconstruction—evangelically inclined Protestants again adapted revivalism for a new age and new social setting. The preeminent northern revivalist of the later nineteenth century was Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899), a Massachusetts native who wound up as a shoe salesman in Chicago just before the Civil War. During the war years, Moody worked for the Christian Commission that oversaw evangelical ministry among the Union forces, and in 1865, he became an officer and fundraiser for the Chicago YMCA and also the Chicago Sunday School Union. At that time, the YMCA had as one of its main aims providing morally sound housing and programs for young unmarried men, many originally from rural areas, who flocked to urban areas to seek jobs in the growing factories and businesses there. Soon, however, Moody’s gift for preaching transformed him into an itinerant evangelist. He gained international renown after a preaching excursion to Britain (1873–1875) garnered much publicity because of the large number of conversions reported.

Although Moody returned to Britain on two other occasions, he devoted much of the rest of his life to leading urban evangelistic campaigns in the United States. Never formally trained in theology or ordained by any denomination, Moody cemented the place of revivals in late nineteenth-century urban America. He also assured that revivalism would not be tied to any single denomination. Moody’s ministry thus fed into a growing interest in ecumenical endeavors, enterprises that were not denomination-specific

but promoted interests shared by many Protestant bodies. His influence, though, ran deeper. Song had been integral to the frontier camp meetings. Moody took music one step further by adding Ira D. Sankey (1840–1908) to his staff as a full-time music director. The tie between an exuberant style of gospel music and revivalism associated with Moody and Sankey endures into the twenty-first century. There was nothing Calvinistic in Moody’s message; he energetically proclaimed that salvation was open to all who of their own free will accepted God’s gracious offer of redemption. Moody aggressively sought to reach men, perhaps because women outnumbered men among Protestant church members by at least a two-to-one margin, but also because he believed that the Christian message had too long been seen as unmasculine and faith as appropriate only for women. At the same time, Moody’s message shied away from emotional excess. In this way, he also sought to make Christianity more “muscular,” for Moody found some of the approach of what was dubbed *muscular Christianity* particularly attractive.

As Finney before him, Moody had a passion for social issues, but he tended to see them in individualistic terms. That is, he believed that conversion would rescue individuals from the clutches of a society where evil prevailed; social transformation would come only as these rescued individuals impressed their behavior on the world around them. In a sense, then, Moody’s brand of revivalism saved folk both from personal sin and from an evil world. The motif that conversion could rescue the faltering from the immorality rampant in society informed other agencies such as the Salvation Army, which grew rapidly in the United States after 1880. Other city missions, such as Chicago’s famed Pacific Garden Mission that Moody supported, likewise fused a commitment to revival-style conversion with individual moral reform.

Also like Finney, Moody set up institutions to perpetuate his vision. In his native Massachusetts, he founded schools for both young women and young men that combined standard education with nurture in evangelical Protestant belief and practice. In time, these schools became centers for summer conferences that drew hundreds of younger persons into careers in foreign missions and in ministry to students on the nation’s college and university campuses. They also promoted some of the Bible conferences that planted the ideas of pre-millennial dispensationalism in American Protestantism. This particular theological approach, emerging from a conviction that a literal reading of the scripture revealed different stages or dispensations in God’s dealing with humanity leading up

to the expected Second Coming of Christ, became central to fundamentalism as it developed in the early twentieth century. Then in 1889, Moody organized the Bible Institute for Home and Foreign Missions (later known as the Moody Bible Institute). This school had as its primary aim the advanced training of lay workers who would not only serve in Christian work around the globe but also provide professional staff for local churches in North America. Many who organized and directed Sunday schools and other religious education ventures in larger urban churches received training at Moody's school. Premillennial dispensationalist thinking also took hold at the school; another way that fundamentalism infiltrated northern urban Protestant congregations was through graduates of the institute who served on their staffs. Also, in the early twentieth century, the Moody Bible Institute established one of the first radio stations devoted to religious broadcasting, using this new communications medium as a tool to spread the evangelical message.

Moody's evangelistic campaigns in the United States centered largely on northern urban areas. Those of Sam P. Jones (1847–1906), a native of Alabama, made their mark in major cities both north and south. Once a heavy drinker, Jones gave up alcohol in response to his father's deathbed request. At the time, he was a lawyer, but by 1872 he had received ordination in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, gaining renown for his down-to-earth but captivating sermons that kept audiences spellbound. After leading a revival in Brooklyn, New York, he gave up working as an agent for a Methodist orphanage in Georgia to become a traveling evangelist. As other revivalists of the day, Jones insisted that religious conversion resulted in changed moral behavior; given his own history, he stridently emphasized total abstinence from alcohol as the key aspect of personal behavior where transformation manifested itself. Popularly called the "Moody of the South," Jones never abandoned his conviction that changed behavior was the only proof of valid personal religious experience. Like Moody, Jones believed that rescuing individuals from the grip of immorality was paramount. Like Moody, too, he summoned the converted in cities where he preached to become cadres of righteousness that would crusade to eliminate tempting social evils, from alcohol to gambling. So, as with many other itinerant evangelists, the fine points of doctrine and creed were of little significance to Jones. Sometimes the cities where he accepted invitations to preach lacked adequate facilities to accommodate the crowds anticipated. For example, Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, later for many years the home of

the Grand Ole Opry, provided the venue for one of Jones's evangelistic campaigns. But Jones did not establish the same sort of network of ancillary organizations that Moody did; there were no training schools or camps that bore his name and imprint. Rather, he looked to local congregations and new converts to carry on his mission after he wrapped up a revival campaign.

Moody and Jones both created a space for revivalism in a nation that was becoming increasingly urban and industrial. In the northern cities where Moody's efforts were concentrated, new immigration swelled the population, bringing large numbers for whom the evangelical Protestant style that informed revivalism was totally alien. Most of the new immigrants entering the nation between Civil War and World War I were Roman Catholic, Jewish, or Eastern Orthodox. Although fewer of them came to the smaller southern urban areas where Jones focused much of his efforts, they represented a challenge to the Protestant hegemony in American religious life. Later nineteenth-century urban revivalism thus had a mission that went beyond revitalizing stagnant Protestant congregations and stirring dormant faith. It often sought to make the evangelical Protestant message plausible to non-Protestants because of an assumption that conversion to evangelical Protestant ways was part of the process of Americanizing immigrants and inculcating in them the moral values that made for good citizens.

Catholic Revivalism

Within American Catholic circles, though, a style of revivalism emerged that was also quite removed from the calls for conversion of camp meeting preachers or evangelists such as Finney, Moody, and Jones. As early as the 1830s, when Irish and German immigration began to swell the ranks of the American Catholic population, church leaders recognized that growth in the numbers of Catholics frequently outpaced the ability of the church to establish and staff parishes. Protestant evangelicals seemed intent on trying to convert Catholics. Recent historians have demonstrated that many Catholic immigrants themselves were not firmly tied to their faith, despite coming from cultures where Catholic presence dominated. Such folk were ready targets for conversion. Particularly in smaller communities where Catholics were a distinct minority, there were fears that Catholic commitment could easily falter. Catholic revivalism, by encouraging nominal Catholics to understand their own faith better, hoped to render them less likely to fall under the sway of Protestant revivalists and other detractors. Hence the primary aim of

Catholic revivalism was to strengthen the commitment of Catholics to their own faith. More so than evangelical Protestant revivalism, it had a catechetical function. That is, those conducting parish revivals tried to instruct those who came in the meaning of Catholic belief and practice.

Even the format of Catholic revivalism, while similar to Protestant campaigns in spanning a week or two in a particular parish, was nevertheless distinctive. It often was more of an extended preaching mission in which visiting priests would speak in local congregations, offering their expositions of Catholicism. Some were in areas where the regular ministrations of priests had to be shared among several parishes; others were in areas where Catholic growth was extraordinarily rapid. Redemptorists and Jesuits supplied many of the preachers for revivals in parishes during the antebellum period; after the Civil War, Paulist fathers and others joined their ranks. Many of the missions had a sacramental character; that is, they tried to instill in those attending an appreciation for the sacramental life at the heart of Catholic practice, perhaps suggesting that baptismal vows should lead to an abiding commitment and that the crucified Christ whose presence was evoked in the Mass remained the model of devotion for men and women of faith. Often doctrines that Protestants attacked became the focus for instruction; confession, for example, was one that many detractors spurned. Mission preachers in turn stressed the psychological and spiritual benefits of confession. Also vital were calls to high standards of morality. Again, part of the rationale was to dispel Protestant criticisms of Catholics. Many immigrants came from European areas where religious celebration and other social activity included dancing and enjoyment of alcoholic beverages. To evangelical Protestants, especially urban revivalists who equated drinking of anything alcoholic with moral degradation, such practices were not only misunderstood but taken as evidence that Catholic Americans would never be good citizens. By urging high standards of moral conduct, despite differences in social custom, those preaching parish missions provided an effective counter to much of the popular criticism.

Historian Jay Dolan demonstrated the appropriateness of using the label “evangelical” to describe Catholic revivalism and parish missions. The word suggests a stimulus to piety and devotion, a call to the faithful to deepen their spirituality. Catholic revivalism clearly sought to bring lay folk within the orbit of Catholic institutions and religious practice. Yet the parish mission revivals did on occasion lead to the same sort of evangelical response that Protestant preachers sought,

namely the conversion of others to this expression of the Christian tradition. Their experiences were not necessarily of the emotional sort associated with Protestant revivalism. Protestant converts responded more to the explication of Catholic doctrine, becoming convinced of the truth of the faith, and they often sought further instruction before actually formally identifying with the Roman church. Even so, the numbers of Protestant converts to Catholicism remained relatively small, but not insignificant. Hence the parish missions represent an evangelical revivalism in several senses of that term.

The Enduring Impact of Revivalism

By the dawn of the twentieth century, revivalism of many sorts flourished in American life. Yet there were signs of change. Increasingly the frontier camp meeting, even when retooled into the summer Bible conference, was undergoing transition. In one sense, the evangelical style had been too successful among Protestants; there were fewer children born to Protestant families who were without any nurture in the faith. More and more, dramatic conversion experiences seemed less likely. So from camp meetings to revivals, the number of reported conversions waned, though records suggest that powerful preaching remained vital. Among Protestants, camp meetings and revivals were becoming mechanisms to strengthen identification with Christianity more than they were tools to bring the notoriously irreligious within the fold. Urban revivals, though, still sought converts among the downtrodden and sinful. Billy Sunday (1862–1935), whose career peaked around the era of World War I, in some ways illustrates that transition. Although condemning sin and calling for conversion, Sunday attracted the vast majority of his audiences from among those who were already self-identified as Christian.

Revivals endured, then, but more in the classic sense of revitalizing faith, although they still provided occasions to share a religious world view with those outside the fold. Some camp meetings still exist, but most are now summer camps or institutions that offer opportunities for study and reflection. Many are modeled after the first Chautauqua Institute that opened in 1874 on a lakeside camp ground in the old “burned-over district” of New York. Inspired by John Heyl Vincent (1832–1920), later a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, Chautauqua set out to train Sunday school teachers and church workers as well as to provide educational programs for lay men and women who were already believers. The nature of the institution presumes that

nurture, not conversion, is paramount. However, when social conditions suggest that vital piety is declining or endangered, calls for revival echo throughout evangelical Protestant circles even in the twenty-first century.

Catholic revivalism also ebbed somewhat as the advent of World War I made other issues top priorities throughout the culture, though parish missions continued at least through the time of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). In 1884, Catholic bishops held a plenary council in Baltimore to celebrate the centennial of the naming of the first American bishop. That gathering urged every parish to include a school to provide for the education of children not only in traditional subjects but also in the Catholic faith. Parochial schools would in part supplant parish missions as a means to tie a new generation to the church and its teaching. By 1908, Catholic leaders in Rome ended the mission status of the church in the United States, signaling that Catholic identity was secure.

Nonetheless, the ways revivalism cascaded across Christianity in America in the nineteenth century ensured that it would remain a vital means to rouse the faithful, to heighten commitment, and to share with others what believers regard as truth. Understanding the role of revivalism in the nineteenth century is one key to understanding the ongoing dynamics of American religion.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Benevolent Empire; Camp Meetings; Civil War; Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Frontier and Borderlands; Great Awakening(s); Holiness Movement; Latter-day Saints; Music: Christian; Preaching; Revivalism: Twentieth Century to the Present; Roman Catholicism: The Impact of Immigration in the Nineteenth Century.*

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Revivalism: Twentieth Century to the Present

Revivalism has been a characteristic feature of the American religious landscape from the Great Awakening of the eighteenth century to the present. Its appeal has varied with place and time, but it has been most popular and pervasive at moments of greatest dissonance between traditional values and norms and the experiences of those struggling with the exigencies of social and cultural change. Few countries have witnessed greater transformation in the lives of their people than did the United States in the twentieth century. Industrialization, immigration, urbanization, technological innovation, shifting intellectual paradigms, evolving personal and social relationships, and the assumption of the role of major power in an increasingly insecure world engendered in the American people optimism and pride on the one hand and doubt and anxiety on the other. The ambivalence of the age was conducive both to the growth of grassroots evangelism and to the emergence of a number of extraordinarily talented and highly successful revivalists. Throughout the century, creative and sometimes controversial preachers across the theological spectrum, from Pentecostal to Neo-evangelical, refined the techniques of mass evangelism and espoused an interpretation of the current state of the world and of Christianity's place in it that millions of their contemporaries found meaningful. Their message was usually more personal palliative than social prescription, and the impact of revivalism on the times was less than that of the times on revivalism,

but evangelism and its principal practitioners were integral features of twentieth-century American popular culture.

Evangelical Protestantism was at its zenith in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. Despite sectarian rivalries, doctrinal differences, and schisms over slavery, its core beliefs provided a measure of cultural cohesion that would soon be undermined by the legacy of civil war, an increasingly diverse population, and the economic and social changes that accompanied the rise of industrial capitalism. Protestant clergy and laity alike wrestled with how best to cope with the change swirling about them, and their responses ranged from tenacious resistance to creative accommodation. Mass evangelism manifested characteristics of both responses.

Revivalism in the twentieth century was fundamentally conservative in substance but often innovative in form. It stressed some variation of Protestant doctrine and practice originating in the Reformation and informed by a three-hundred-year sojourn in North America. Yet, while generally antithetical toward theological and social liberalism, evangelists often proved remarkably pragmatic as they sought the most effective way to spread the gospel. Increasingly, mass evangelism exhibited a tendency toward organization, specialization, and institutionalization. By the early 1900s, the most successful revival preachers, building on the foundations laid by their nineteenth-century predecessors, were already bringing to their tasks not only an increasingly sophisticated understanding of worshipers' psychology but also the organizational, marketing, and financial skills typical of the business ethos of the day.

Billy Sunday's Entrepreneurial Evangelism

William Ashley "Billy" Sunday (1862–1935), the foremost mainstream evangelist in America in the first half of the twentieth century, exemplified both the ideological conservatism and the methodological sophistication of the most successful revivalists of his era. Born in Iowa during the Civil War, Sunday played major league baseball for several years in the 1880s and early 1890s before becoming an evangelist. By the 1910s, he had emerged onto the national scene, preaching to millions in most of the nation's major metropolitan centers.

Sunday's success came at a time when conservative Protestants were mounting a relatively coherent offensive against textual and historical biblical analysis, the Social Gospel, Darwinism, political radicalism, evolving social mores, and a host of other changes that seemed to threaten their view of the world and their place in it. Between 1910 and 1915, a series

of doctrinal publications, known as the "Fundamentals," appeared, which gave to this movement the name fundamentalism. Sunday's theology resonated with the spirit and tenets of fundamentalism, but his message was not doctrinaire. Indeed, he demanded little of converts beyond an acceptance of Jesus as savior and a pledge to live decently, which essentially meant in accord with the religious and social values of the rural and small-town Midwest of his youth. Like all effective revivalists, he understood that the essence of successful evangelism was the reduction of complex ideas to their least common denominator and the presentation of those ideas in a comprehensible and appealing manner. He described his style as putting "the cookies and jam on the lowest shelf." His preaching was simple and animated and his sermons were dramatic. He railed against liquor, modernism, effeminacy, and both domestic and foreign foes of God and country. He enacted stories from the Bible, drew upon sentimental anecdotes, and engaged in feats of masculine acrobatic agility that held worshipers spellbound.

Although Sunday's message resonated with the beliefs and values of an earlier era, he argued that clergy should adopt the most up-to-date methods in their efforts to win souls for Christ, by which he meant the application of modern business principles to evangelization. He believed that in the religious marketplace, he who offered the best product had a competitive edge. However, he also understood that product alone was insufficient for success. Specialization, efficiency, and productivity were essential too. He developed a multifaceted and sophisticated staff that managed every aspect of the campaigns. Sunday appreciated the importance of marketing, and he and his staff worked closely with the press to secure extensive and positive coverage. In an age in which efforts to reduce competition were routine, he took steps to ensure that he could minimize competition from local pastors and other revivalists. He refused to preach in cities in which another major evangelist had recently held a meeting and expected that most local religious activity would be suspended at times when his services were scheduled.

Sunday was proud of the businesslike methods with which his revivalistic campaigns were planned and executed. He boasted that his revivals produced converts at approximately "\$2.00 per soul," which he believed made him the most cost-effective evangelist in the business. Critics attacked Sunday for uncouth methods, transformation of evangelism into a business, shameless self-promotion, and accumulation of a personal fortune. However, he felt justified in doing whatever was necessary to most effectively preach the gospel,

and he considered his financial success and popularity signs of God's favor.

Sunday's revivalism provided worshipers with a familiar social vision and comfortable version of the gospel delivered in a dramatic and sometimes unconventional manner. The businesslike aura of his ministry, along with his ties to the nation's most popular sport, lent to his message an air of modernity that added credibility and relevance to the beliefs and values he espoused. His message and methods mediated between tradition and modernity in a way that facilitated his audiences' transition from rural-agricultural to urban-industrial America. After World War I, as the nation turned the corner toward modernity and the Roaring Twenties, Sunday's message seemed less interesting and relevant and his ministry declined in popularity.

Holiness-Pentecostal Revival

As Sunday was preaching his way out of the Midwest, a revival of another sort was breaking out among a growing number of Americans plagued by a sense of alienation and marginalization. Rooted in American and British evangelicalism, this phenomenon, soon to be known as Pentecostalism, provided a matrix for the emergence of a host of impassioned evangelists whose controversial message and methods eventually transformed a peripheral movement centered largely, though not exclusively, among the nation's rural and urban working classes into a revival of national and international significance.

The immediate progenitor of Pentecostalism was the Holiness movement that steadily gained momentum in the United States throughout the last two thirds of the nineteenth century. This phenomenon originated with John Wesley's doctrine of a lifelong process of purification or sanctification following conversion and was influenced in North America by Oberlin Perfectionist and English Keswick Holiness notions of Holy Spirit empowerment for witness and service as well as by Plymouth Brethren dispensationalist premillennialism. The Holiness revival in the post-Civil War era generated tension within Methodism and other Protestant groups that precipitated schisms along economic, geographic, and doctrinal lines and led to the proliferation of independent congregations and nascent sects. Out of the left wing of this Holiness revival emerged a doctrinal thread stressing, in addition to salvation and sanctification, another work of God's grace, baptism in the Holy Spirit, provided to empower Christians to evangelize the world in preparation for the return of Christ. Some adherents of this

notion believed that "speaking in tongues," as described in the Acts account of Pentecost, was authentication of this additional blessing, an idea that was to become the distinguishing doctrine of Pentecostalism.

The movement had precursors in the Midwest and South, but African American preacher William Joseph Seymour's (1870–1922) Azusa Street revival that began in Los Angeles in April 1906 is generally regarded as the birthplace of the Pentecostal revival that spread throughout the United States and world over the next century. From Azusa Pentecostal, believers carried the message across the country. They frequently tapped the existing network of Holiness congregations and sects for converts. Although many Holiness believers regarded their message as heretical, others, especially among newer Holiness congregations and those on the fringes of the movement, accepted the Pentecostal gospel as yet another manifestation of God's work among the faithful.

Pentecostals, who were often voiceless and powerless, were among those who, at the turn of the century, believed that something was radically wrong with the world in which they lived. They were not passive, but unlike those drawn to populism or progressivism, they were generally apolitical, with little hope that the nation or the world could be saved by other than the return of Christ, which would usher in the millennium. Their dispensationalist premillennial understanding of the Bible convinced them that the troubles of the contemporary world were indicative of the imminent return of their savior, and they felt it their responsibility not to reform society but to win souls for Christ before it was too late. They crafted from their experience and their understanding of the Bible an apocalyptic cosmology that explained the state of the world in terms of a dramatically unfolding divine plan and defined their place in that plan. They sought order in chaos and meaning in order and found both in Pentecostalism.

Aimee Semple McPherson and the Pentecostal Revival

Most of the revivalists of the early years of the Charismatic awakening remained obscure figures, unknown except within the Pentecostal subculture, and their contributions have been largely forgotten today, except by some within that subculture and by a small cadre of scholars. Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) is a notable exception. Within less than twenty years of the Azusa Street revival, McPherson was a well-known, albeit controversial, Charismatic preacher.

The daughter of a farmer and a Salvation Army worker, religion was an integral part of McPherson's daily life, and despite a period of adolescent doubt, she was drawn to religious work by experience and by her marriage in 1907 to Robert Semple, a young Pentecostal revivalist. Like many young Charismatics of their day, the couple felt a call to mission work and soon found themselves in China, where Robert died and their daughter Roberta was born. McPherson and the baby returned to the United States, and after a period of doubt and depression, she married Harold McPherson, but she soon abandoned the traditional life of wife and mother for that of peripatetic evangelist. She crisscrossed the country for several years in the latter 1910s and then settled in Southern California. Soon she focused her ministry on the establishment of Angelus Temple in Los Angeles. Thereafter, although she continued to preach in other parts of the nation, much of her travel was related to fundraising for the temple.

Sister Aimee's success as an evangelist and as pastor of Angelus Temple stemmed from her charisma, subtle air of sexuality, flare for the dramatic, reputation as a healer, and tendency to blur the boundaries between the sacred and profane. She dramatized her sermons in ways unimagined by Sunday, produced a magazine called *The Bridal Call*, operated a powerful radio station to disseminate her message, and was actively engaged with the business and civic leadership of her community. Like Sunday, McPherson preached an essentially conservative fundamentalist gospel that validated the Old Time Religion in a changing world but did so in a way that resonated with many aspects of the business-oriented, media-captivated, sensation-loving consumer society of the 1920s. Her message was conventional, but unlike some fundamentalists of her day, she did not emphasize the torments of hell but the rewards of heaven. As one contemporary journalist put it, "Aimee believed in hell—but not for advertising purposes." She was typically fundamentalist in her attacks on modernism, evolution, communism, and other signs of what she perceived as religious and moral deterioration. Like many Christians before and since, McPherson believed that the United States had a covenant with God and that it risked disaster by failing to keep its commitment to that covenant. In the 1920s and early 1930s, although remaining committed to the tenets of Pentecostalism, she de-emphasized the more exclusive and controversial features of the movement in favor of a somewhat more ecumenical approach in hopes that her essentially conservative message would appeal to those of many denominations who would return to their home

churches with a renewed commitment to the gospel as she understood it.

In a manner atypical of most Pentecostals of her generation, McPherson reached out from Angelus Temple to engage the community and serve its citizens. Although consorting with movie stars and business leaders and relishing celebrity and the success of her temple, which, by the late 1920s and early 1930s was evolving into a fledgling denomination that would become the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, she did not forget those in need, including unwed mothers, abused women, and the poor of all races. In the depths of the Great Depression, her church commissary provided food, clothing, shelter, and even cash to the down-and-out. She became involved in politics to a degree rare among early Pentecostals, and even many fundamentalists, supporting Herbert Hoover for the presidency in 1928 and Franklin Roosevelt in 1932 and opposing Upton Sinclair for governor of California in 1936. In the later 1930s, she returned more overtly to her Pentecostal roots and espoused traditional Charismatic tenets but continued to market them in a way that would make them as widely appealing as possible.

McPherson was complex and controversial. Her ministry was marred by divorce, allegations of a sham kidnapping and sexual impropriety, bitter and public discord within her family and church, and criticism from both the religious left and right. Flawed though she may have been, she is among the most significant women in the history of American Protestantism. In an age craving entertainment, she entertained. In an age captivated by radio, she made extensive use of the new medium. In an era steeped in the mystique of business, she understood how to market the gospel. Through her itinerant revivalism, establishment of Angelus Temple, and founding of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, she helped to publicize Pentecostalism and to interject into it at least a small measure of social and political engagement, largely lacking prior to her ministry.

Billy Graham and Neo-Evangelicalism

McPherson died in 1944, just prior to what has been described as a "bull market for American evangelists." The United States emerged from the second great war of the century as the single most militarily powerful nation on Earth, but the psychological aftermath of war, dawn of the nuclear age, and spread of communism left Americans anxious about the future. This anxiety expressed itself in such phenomena as the Cold War and McCarthyism, but nowhere

was it more apparent than in the wave of religious fervor that swept the nation. Church membership, the popularity of religious publications, and the tempo of revivalistic activity surged in the 1940s and 1950s.

One of the earliest expressions of this religious awakening originated during the war. As early as 1940, clergy and laity, concerned to meet the religious needs of the country's soldiers in particular and of its youth in general, began holding youth rallies in various parts of the nation. In the summer of 1945, leaders of this movement formally organized Youth for Christ International (YFC) and invited a young Illinois pastor, William Franklin "Billy" Graham (1918–), to serve as YFC national field representative. For the next several years, Graham and other YFC evangelists conducted rallies that were a blend of patriotism, entertainment, and worship service. These YFC events not only reached millions of young people in the United States and abroad, but they also provided Graham with experience and name recognition that would set the stage for his own ministry in the second half of the century.

In his midteens, Graham had a life-transforming experience at a revival conducted by fundamentalist evangelist Mordecai Ham that oriented him toward religious work. After attending Bob Jones College, Florida Bible Institute, and Wheaton College, he pastored a small church, worked for YFC, and served as titular president of Northwestern College in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Meanwhile, in the late 1940s, he launched his own evangelistic career, and within a few years, the tall, amiable Carolinian, with the rapid-fire delivery and earnest demeanor, had become a national sensation.

Graham's early evangelism was characterized by sermons filled with denunciations of sin in general and communism in particular that were not radically different in content from those of a myriad of fundamentalists of the day. His success, however, rested not on his espousal of doctrine, which he did not emphasize, but on the earnestness with which he conveyed his simple faith in the redemptive love of God. Over the years his preaching style became more relaxed and the substance of his message reflected maturation, greater appreciation of religious and cultural diversity, and recognition that moderation and adaptation were essential to reach the widest possible audience. Like that of Sunday, Graham's message was essentially a simple call to accept Christ as savior and to live a clean and responsible life. Like McPherson, he emphasized God's love rather than dwelling on the torments of hell. President George W. Bush observed that Graham did not make you feel guilty but made you feel loved.

Graham's drift toward a more moderate expression of conservative Protestantism and his willingness to collaborate with Catholics and liberal Christians and to engage in dialogues with those of other faiths brought down upon him the wrath of doctrinaire fundamentalists who believed that he had betrayed the faith. The simplicity of his message and his caution in dealing with social issues, such as the Vietnam War and segregation, earned him the condemnation of sophisticated Christians like the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, who scorned Graham's failure to address the complexities and ambiguities of the human condition in the modern world. If his message was simple, the scope and structure of his evangelistic organization was not. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association elevated evangelism to new levels of sophistication. Graham's organization was responsible not only for large and complex crusades at home and abroad but also for a weekly radio program, periodic television specials, a magazine, a newspaper column, a film production company, and a Web site. Aware of the problems that had beset earlier evangelists, Graham and his evangelistic team in the late 1940s developed a systematic plan to minimize the opportunity for financial mismanagement, sexual misconduct, misinformation about revivals, and hostility from local churches. Consequently, the Graham organization was remarkably free of scandal.

Graham, more than any other religious figure in American history, transcended the role of evangelist and became a nationally and internationally known symbol of Protestant Christianity and American culture. He visited every major nation and preached in most, often meeting with the political leadership of those countries. His friendship with several American presidents and other national political and business leaders lent an aura of credibility and prestige to evangelical religion which it had not previously enjoyed. However, his unofficial role as spiritual advisor to presidents, most notably his cordial relationship with Richard Nixon prior to Watergate, was occasionally a source of controversy and embarrassment.

Graham's appearance on the American religious scene occurred at a fortuitous moment for many Protestants. The battle between conservatives and liberals that had been joined in the late nineteenth century had continued with increased ferocity into the 1920s. Fundamentalists like J. Gresham Machen labeled liberal Christianity not Christianity at all but a new religion, while liberals like Harry Emerson Fosdick considered fundamentalists wedded to an antiquated understanding of the faith that had little to offer

the modern world. The clashes over evolution in the 1920s, as well as resistance to other intellectual and social trends in American society in the decades between the wars, caused the fundamentalists to adopt an increasingly defensive and separatist position in their struggle with the modernists. Fundamentalist Bible colleges and seminaries, such as the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Northwestern Bible and Missionary School, and Bob Jones College, flourished, and fundamentalist leaders became more strident and disputatious, which further alienated them from the mainstream. As the gap between fundamentalism and liberalism widened, many moderately conservative Christians sought an alternative middle ground.

In the 1940s, some of the moderates began forging a theological and social position that Harold John Ockenga, one of their leaders, dubbed neoevangelicalism. These Christians accepted a number of the basic tenets of fundamentalism. They were, however, less doctrinaire and more ecumenical, and they believed that conservative Christians should not eschew some measure of social responsibility. Graham's emergence as the nation's premier revivalist in the last half of the century provided neoevangelicals with a respected leader and articulate voice around which the movement could coalesce and grow.

Healing Revivalism

Although Graham was, without question, the preeminent figure in American evangelism in the last half of the twentieth century, other revivalists were engaged in work that contributed to shaping the future of American Christianity. Speaking in tongues was the most visible and controversial of the gifts of the spirit espoused by early Pentecostals, but another of those gifts, that of healing, had a significant impact on twentieth-century revivalism. John Alexander Dowie (1847–1907), a Scotch-born Australian immigrant to the United States, drew widespread attention and opprobrium to divine healing just before and after the turn of the twentieth century. Dowie founded the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church based in Zion, Illinois, and conducted Healing revivals in the United States and abroad, including one in Madison Square Garden in 1903. Although his work antedated Pentecostalism, his notion that the atonement provided for healing as well as salvation influenced the theology of some early Charismatic revivalists. In the 1910s and 1920s, a number of Healing evangelists were active on the American scene, including Smith Wigglesworth, Fred Bosworth, John G. Lake, Thomas Wyatt, Maria Beulah "M. B." Woodworth-Etter, and Aimee

McPherson. The work of these early Healing evangelists prepared the way for a more widespread and dramatic Healing revival that swept Pentecostalism and beyond from the late 1940s to the late 1950s.

The Pentecostal movement had grown steadily since the early years of the century and had, by the postwar era, given rise to several relatively stable denominations and begun to slowly emerge from its peripheral socioeconomic and religious status. Although flourishing, it continued to experience schisms and sectarian rivalry. In addition, a certain complacency and lack of fervor had appeared in some quarters. There were many among the faithful who longed for unity and renewal and the Healing revival briefly seemed to provide a catalyst for both.

Initially concentrated primarily in the Pentecostal subculture, the appeal of the Healing phenomenon eventually attracted some from the religious mainstream and the unchurched before its energy waned by the end of the 1950s. Among the best known and most successful of the postwar Healing revivalists were William Branham, William Freeman, Gayle Jackson, Jack Coe, T. L. Osborn, A. A. Allen, and Oral Roberts. The two most important revivalists in this mid-century movement were William Marrion Branham (1909–1965) and Granville Oral Roberts (1918–). Branham's role in the revival was curious since he lacked most of the attributes often associated with evangelistic success. Meek and unassuming, with little business acumen, he was at best a mediocre preacher with some rather heterodox ideas, but there was about him an aura of sincerity and the mystical that captured the imagination of audiences. News of his Healing revivals in parts of the South and West in the winter of 1946 and 1947 swept Pentecostalism, heartening believers in search of a sign of the Holy Spirit's continued work in their midst.

Although Branham's ministry helped to launch the Healing revival, Roberts did more than anyone else to popularize and sustain it into the mid- and late 1950s. In his late teens he felt himself called to preach, and in 1947, after almost a decade of evangelistic and pastoral service to the Pentecostal Holiness Church, he abandoned the parish ministry for full-time Healing evangelism. Attractive, personable, and hard working, he soon enjoyed success as a tent revivalist, radio evangelist, and in the 1950s as a pioneer televangelist who brought his tent revivals to network television, thus introducing millions of Americans to Pentecostal worship for the first time.

By the mid- and late 1950s, the Healing revival had begun to wane. Friction developed between the evangelists and the

Pentecostal sects from which they had emerged. Too many aspiring healers, often with little or no talent, joined the ranks of revivalists. Evidence mounted that many of the alleged healings were undocumented or fraudulent. Consequently, by the end of the decade, the revival had become largely enervated, although Healing ministries did not disappear, as is evident in the work of Charismatics like Kathryn Johanna Kuhlman (1907–1976). Controversial and problematic though it may have been, the Healing revival provided at least some Pentecostals with assurance of the continued work of the Holy Spirit and also served as one of the links between the classical Pentecostalism of the first half of the century and the Neo-Pentecostal or Charismatic revival of the second.

Oral Roberts and the Charismatic Revival

Roberts's ministry transcended the decline of the Healing revivals and helped to bring Charismatic Christianity to the nation's religious mainstream in the 1960s and 1970s. With regularly scheduled television coverage of his revivals on the ABC network in the 1950s, he had become the best known of the Healing evangelists. That visibility had not only earned for him considerable admiration in some quarters but had also brought down upon him widespread criticism for exaggerated claims of successful healings and for encouraging what some believed to be an unorthodox and simplistic interpretation of Christianity. Critics charged that his message conveyed an understanding of the gospel that suggested that divine power could be manipulated by the faithful to produce healing, prosperity, and a generally comfortable existence and that allowed little room for the suffering and disappointment that are part of the human condition. Despite criticism, Roberts's work flourished and the expanding Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association coordinated revivals, administered an extensive radio and television ministry, published a magazine, communicated regularly with "faith partner" and "blessing pact" contributors, and answered the voluminous mail that poured into the Tulsa headquarters each week.

Roberts, who believed himself to have been divinely healed as an adolescent, was committed to healing as an integral part of his ministry, but by the mid-1950s he understood that the Healing evangelism of the late 1940s and early 1950s had become problematic. He also recognized that an ever larger number of those attracted to his revivals were neither Pentecostals nor church members. Furthermore, he became convinced that there were in mainstream churches many who would be receptive to the kind of experiential Christianity characteristic of Pentecostalism. Consequently, the

emphasis and tenor of his ministry began to change. By the early 1960s, Roberts had shortened both his sermons and evangelistic campaigns, placed greater emphasis on God's saving grace, dressed in more fashionable attire, and behaved in a less flamboyant manner, all of which were indicative of his drift toward mainstream evangelicalism. In the 1960s, he stepped up the tempo of his international evangelism, conducting crusades in a number of overseas venues, including some in communist countries. Although his work abroad never rivaled that of Graham in terms of numbers of attendees at crusades, nor did he enjoy the same level of official acceptance, his revivals did help to draw attention to the global spread of Charismatic Christianity. Meanwhile, at home, he took steps to institutionalize his work through the founding of Oral Roberts University, designed to provide a sound undergraduate and graduate education in a Christian environment. By the end of the 1960s, Roberts had largely abandoned traditional evangelism to concentrate his energy on serving as president of Oral Roberts University and on reaching the masses through a new weekly television ministry that was accompanied by occasional primetime specials that combined music, entertainment, celebrity appearances, and short sermons.

The Charismatic revivals that developed in the Episcopal and Catholic churches in the turbulent 1960s and subsequently spread into other Protestant denominations, confirmed Roberts in his conviction that American Christianity was ready for an outpouring of the Spirit. With that in mind, he spoke more frequently of baptism in the Holy Spirit and of speaking in tongues. He also sponsored several conferences designed to bring Charismatics and other evangelicals together to foster greater understanding among them. Roberts himself stepped into the evangelical mainstream in 1968 when he abandoned the Pentecostal Holiness Church for ordination in the United Methodist Church. This denominational realignment was gratifying to Roberts who interpreted it as an affirmation of his life's work and who believed it indicative of American Christianity's acceptance of a Charismatic dimension to the faith. It was, however, a controversial action that was met with skepticism by some evangelical and liberal Protestants and with disappointment and anger by some classical Pentecostals who felt abandoned and betrayed. Although his ministry suffered financially for a time as the result of the loss of some Pentecostal support, during the 1970s Roberts in particular and Charismatic Christianity in general enjoyed a degree of acceptance that neither had known before.

The success of Roberts's evangelism was the result not only of his own restless, creative, energetic personality but also of post-World War II religious fervor and of the mid-century maturation of American Pentecostalism. The evolution of his career from that of itinerant revivalist to that of popular televangelist and university president with a multi-million-dollar religious organization lent credibility to his unabashed espousal of Charismatic Christianity and of an abundant life for the faithful. Though more complex and controversial than that of Graham, his ministry was to some Charismatic believers what Graham's was to many neoevangelicals, a visible symbol and an articulate voice that gave expression to that which they believed.

Televangelism

Although Graham and Roberts were traditional evangelists whose ministries expanded into additional venues, other twentieth-century apostles capitalized primarily on emerging technologies to preach the gospel. Christians of almost every doctrinal and practical persuasion recognized the potential of radio as soon as it appeared on the American scene. The first religious broadcast was probably on KDKA in Pittsburgh in 1921. Throughout the 1920s, evangelists like Aimee McPherson in Los Angeles and Paul Rader in Chicago pioneered in the use of the new medium to reach a wider audience, but it was Charles Edward Fuller (1887–1968) who developed a truly national radio ministry. From the 1930s until his death, Fuller's "Old Fashion Revival Hour" reached millions weekly by syndication or over the Mutual and later the ABC Radio networks. By midcentury, while radio remained in wide use, television quickly became the medium of choice for religious broadcasters. The electronic expression of Christianity tended to grow more conservative as the nation entered the age of televangelism. Thanks to television, a host of local, regional, and national preachers became famous and sometimes infamous. Among the pioneers were Alpha Rex Emmanuel Humbar (1919–2007), who in the 1950s began weekly broadcasts from his Cathedral of Tomorrow, a media-equipped precursor of today's mega-churches, near Akron, Ohio, and Robert Harold Schuller (1926–), who, in the same era, began preaching his gospel of Christian success in Garden Grove, California, a ministry that eventually became the weekly "Hour of Power" broadcast from the Crystal Cathedral. Late in the same decade, a youthful Jimmy Lee Swaggart (1935–) began evangelistic work in the South as a gospel musician and Assemblies of God revivalist. Within a few years, he had taken his very conservative

brand of Pentecostalism first to radio and then to television, becoming one of the electronic church's most widely viewed Charismatic preachers. Meanwhile, Jerry Lamon Falwell (1933–2007) used the media to espouse an essentially fundamentalist message that provided the basis for the religiously and politically conservative Moral Majority in the 1980s.

Without question the most successful and best-known religious broadcaster of the last third of the twentieth century was Marion Gordon "Pat" Robertson (1930–). Never a televangelist in the same sense as were many of his contemporaries, this Southern Baptist, with a Charismatic bent, launched his career in Christian broadcasting in the early 1960s, and by the 1980s he was an extraordinarily successful entrepreneur. He hosted the popular 700 Club, operated the Christian Broadcasting Network, oversaw the development of Regent University, wrote books, and coordinated charitable and relief efforts. Ultimately, he became politically active as a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination in 1988, founder of the Christian Coalition, and champion of a variety of conservative moral causes. In the 1960s, Robertson's ministry, which was receptive to a range of evangelical and Charismatic perspectives, provided Assemblies of God minister James Orson "Jim" Bakker (1940–) and his wife, Tamara "Tammy" Faye (1942–2007), with an entree into the world of televangelism, an opportunity which, by the 1980s, the couple had parleyed into the PTL Club, PTL Television Network, and Heritage USA theme park, all of which were generating millions annually for their ministry.

Critics charged that televangelism tended to amplify certain problems inherent within evangelism. It made celebrities of preachers and preachers of celebrities. It siphoned much needed support from local congregations and concentrated enormous amounts of money in the hands of relatively few individuals with little accountability for the expenditure of those funds. It provided a leisurely and comfortable individualistic alternative to traditional worship that was good neither for the church nor the believer. It did little to promote biblical and theological literacy. It emphasized issues of personal morality at the expense of the more subtle and complicated social ones. It created a dangerous potential for esteemed and wealthy evangelists to develop inflated egos that could set the stage for serious errors in judgment. All of these charges have been leveled at traditional evangelism at one time or another, but the pervasiveness of satellite and cable Christianity and the scandals that rocked televangelism in the 1980s and 1990s, especially those that swirled about the Bakker and Swaggart ministries, seemed to give the criticisms a new immediacy.

As the twenty-first century dawned, Sunday and McPherson were long dead, Graham and Roberts were octogenarians near the end of their careers, and no one of comparable stature had yet arisen to take their place. As Sunday's ministry declined in the 1920s and 1930s, some savants predicted that mass evangelism like that of Sunday would be replaced with newer, more sophisticated and effective approaches to the spread of the gospel. They were, of course, only partially correct, since post-World War II America witnessed the emergence of Graham, the most successful revivalist in American history. It was true, however, that Graham's ministry was amplified by his effective use of electronic media. Whether the availability of increasingly sophisticated technology that enables religious broadcasters to both target specific markets and also to reach wider audiences now signals the end of evangelism as we have known it remains an open question. However, given the regular recurrence of religious awakenings in our history and the centrality of dynamic personalities in those awakenings, it is unlikely that we have seen the last of either traditional popular evangelism or the preachers around whom revivals coalesce.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Camp Meetings; Celebrity Culture; Charismatics/Charismatic Movements; Education: Colleges and Universities; The Electronic Church; Evangelicals: Twentieth Century; Fundamentalism; Great Awakening(s); Healing; Holiness Movement; Missions: Domestic; Music: Contemporary Christian; Pentecostals* entries; *Preaching; Radio; Sport(s)*.

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Roman Catholic Architecture

See *Architecture Roman Catholic*

Roman Catholic Music

See *Music: Roman Catholic*

Roman Catholic Religious Thought

See *Religious Thought: Roman Catholic*

Roman Catholic Women

See: *Women: Roman Catholic*

Roman Catholic Worship

See *Worship: Roman Catholic*

Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics

Africans were among the first New World Catholics, but the difference between them and the sixteenth-century Spanish and French Catholics with whom they arrived was the Africans' status as slaves. They helped survey, explore, and settle Spanish and French colonies along the Gulf Coast, in the Southwest, California, and the Great Lakes region. However,

by the time the British came to dominate the American colonies in the seventeenth century, Catholicism was a minority religion with significant communities only in parts of the upper Midwest, the Gulf Coast, Florida, and the Southwest. After the American Revolution many of the regions where Catholics dominated were not yet part of the United States and thus Catholicism became even of more a minority religion. Only when German and Irish immigration picked up toward the end of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century did Catholicism begin to grow in earnest in the Northeast and Midwest, places with small African American populations. Among the Catholic strongholds in the South, Louisiana, coastal Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, central Kentucky, and Maryland, significant communities of African American Catholics, enslaved like their forebears, endured. Historian Emily Clark's work reveals that before the Louisiana Purchase African American Catholics, free and enslaved, were the foundation of Catholic life and practice in that city and continued to be very significant in the development of Catholicism in the area afterward. Father John Carroll (1725–1815), later the first archbishop of the United States, confirmed this significance in his first report to the Holy See on the status of Catholicism in the United States in 1784. The state with the largest Catholic population, Maryland, had a population of 3,000 enslaved black Catholics in a Catholic population of 15,800. The Catholic population in Pennsylvania, the next largest, included a few African Americans. The total Catholic population in the United States in 1784 was 24,500, nearly 20 percent of whom were enslaved.

The Haitian revolution of 1790 brought a wave of Catholic émigrés to the United States and the French colony of Louisiana, increasing the black Catholic population in America. Free Catholics of African descent, sometimes called people of color, settled in significant numbers in Baltimore, New Orleans, and other cities and locales along the Gulf Coast. These communities combined with the enslaved Catholic population made these three regions the historical and cultural capitals of black Catholicism in the United States. Out of these communities emerged two orders of African American women religious, the Oblate Sisters of Providence, founded in Baltimore in 1828, and the Sisters of the Holy Family, founded in New Orleans in 1842.

Nineteenth Century: Impact of black Women Religious

Historians Diane Batts Morrow and Cyprian Davis have documented how both the Oblate Sisters of Providence,

whose ministry was the education of African American girls, and the Sisters of the Holy Family, whose original ministry was to care for abandoned slaves, were orders of African American sisters who made significant contributions to the creation of an enduring black Catholic community in the nineteenth century. Both orders dealt with racism within the Roman Catholic Church and fought for institutional support for their ministries. Yet despite these challenges, Mother Mary Lange (1782–1882), who founded the Oblate Sisters of Providence, and Mother Henriette Delille (1813–1862), who founded the Sisters of the Holy Family, led their sisters in meeting the educational, religious, health care, and material needs of African Americans when the church and the U.S. government and society failed to provide them. In the twentieth century a third religious sisterhood of black women, the Franciscan Handmaids of the Most Pure Heart of Mary, joined the work of the Oblate Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of the Holy Family in ministering to African Americans.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Oblates and the Holy Family sisters represented Catholicism in both the African American community and the wider U.S. culture. Their unmistakable physical representation of Catholicism, their spirituality, and their service made it clear that indeed there were such things as African American Catholics. Historian Cyprian Davis has noted that the power of their witness as Catholics did much to strengthen the African American laity, which in turn did much to support the missions and ministries of their sisters. The sisters also made favorable impressions on non-Catholic African Americans, who acknowledged the sisters' work and benefited from the care and services they provided.

For most of the nineteenth century, the ministries of the Oblates and the Holy Family sisters were conducted primarily in Baltimore and New Orleans, but the Catholic community grew most quickly in the Northeast and in the Midwest because of Irish and German Catholic immigration. Bishops in these areas focused their attention and resources on providing for the religious, educational, and social needs of European immigrants, often to the detriment of both enslaved and free black Catholics. Unfortunately, African American Catholics in the Northeast and Midwest did not have African American sisters or African American priests. This meant that the African American laity had to take matters into their own hands.

One of the most dramatic cases of the African American laity challenging episcopal neglect occurred in 1853 in New

York City. Writing on behalf of black Catholics in New York City, Harriet Thompson penned a missive to Pope Pius IX asking him to directly provide for the spiritual needs of African American Catholics in America. Not wishing to show disrespect for the clerical leaders of New York City but also very aware of the mistreatment African American Catholics faced, Thompson informed the pope of the extent of this spiritual neglect in hopes that he might intervene.

Thompson identified the Irish heritage of the majority of bishops and priests in the United States as directly related to their neglect of African Americans. She asserted that because there were no blacks in Ireland, New York City's Irish American bishop, Archbishop John Hughes, could not and would not relate to the situation of black Catholics. The African American Catholic community of New York found this to be particularly true for Catholic parochial schools in New York City. Although black Catholics supported the schools, they were not permitted to send their children to them. Black Catholic children therefore had to go to public schools where their faith was in jeopardy because of the dominant Protestant ethos and the consequent anti-Catholicism. Thompson lamented that the effect was that one could find many African American families in America whose parents were Catholics and children were Protestants. This she believed was the direct result of the denial of spiritual care to black Catholics by church leaders. Thompson, representing twenty-six black Catholics, wanted Pope Pius IX to know these things so that he could bypass the American bishops and do something to help save the black Catholic community in the United States. Thompson's protest underscored the dearth of Catholic episcopal efforts to support black Catholics before the Civil War and the tradition of appeal to the Holy See that would mark the African American Catholic experience in the United States.

Late Nineteenth Century: Black Missions after the Civil War

Not long after the Civil War, in 1866, Archbishop Martin J. Spalding (1810–1872) called the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore. Top on the agenda was what the American church needed to do for the newly freed blacks. A former slaveholder himself and apologist for slavery, Spalding was determined that Catholics establish a strong mission to African Americans. Conscious of the work that black and white Protestants were doing to help the freedmen build schools and churches and of the slippage of African American Catholics from the Roman Catholic Church in the wake of

the Civil War, Spalding was anxious to get a plan of evangelization of blacks into place. He proposed separate black parishes, black priests, preaching missions to blacks (the Catholic equivalent of revivals), religious orders dedicated to serving blacks, singing in the vernacular rather than ecclesiastical Latin, and an apostolic prefect (a cleric appointed by the Holy See who would have charge of ministering to blacks throughout the United States). Spalding believed that to keep blacks in the Catholic Church and to stimulate their conversion to Catholicism, it would be especially necessary to ordain African American priests. He was convinced that these strategies would help bring a "golden harvest" of African American souls to the Roman Catholic Church.

With this confidence, Spalding presented this blueprint to the American bishops gathered in 1866. He highlighted the idea of what he called an ecclesial man, the apostolic prefect to be appointed by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, the office of the Holy See with charge over missionary endeavors of the Roman Catholic Church, to have national responsibility for organizing and implementing all missions and ministries to African Americans. In other words, Spalding proposed a bishop to have charge over all African Americans regardless of episcopal boundaries. Most of the bishops roundly rejected the idea, seeing it as a threat and an insult to their own episcopal authority. They asserted they would take care of the African Americans in their dioceses in the ways they deemed most prudent, thus putting an abrupt halt to Spalding's plan and to Propaganda Fide's desire for the American Church to put forth a serious evangelical appeal to newly freed slaves. At the close of the plenary council, the bishops published a pastoral letter addressing the emancipation of African Americans and asserting their dedication to do what they could, given their own limited resources.

Although most bishops rejected a national program of evangelization, some expressed interest in engaging religious communities for missionary work among African Americans in their dioceses. Such interest prompted Spalding to negotiate with the Society of St. Joseph, the Mill Hill Fathers of England, to send a group of missionary priests to the United States to work exclusively with African Americans. Favorably impressed with this request, the English order sent a delegation of priests to the United States. The Mill Hill priests, more commonly known as the Josephites, arrived in Baltimore in 1871 and took charge of St. Francis Xavier Church, the oldest African American parish in the country. Eventually the American Josephites would become independent of the English Mill Hill priests, but their mission in the United

States would always remain the African American apostolate. The Josephites established missions and parishes throughout the South and the mid-Atlantic states. In some places they established schools and catechetical institutes, and for a time they led the way in establishing a native clergy among African Americans, ordaining the first black priests in the United States in the 1890s.

In 1891 another religious community dedicated to the African American apostolate emerged. The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People, founded by Sister Katherine Drexel (1858–1955), established schools, private and parochial, throughout the deep South, Virginia, the Northeast, the Midwest, and the Southwest. In addition to establishing elementary, middle, and secondary schools, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament established the first and only Catholic college dedicated to the education of African Americans. The sisters founded Xavier University of Louisiana in 1925 in New Orleans. Initially serving the local Catholic community, Xavier University of Louisiana soon became a national institute of higher learning, attracting black Catholics from around the country and abroad as well as non-Catholic African Americans. It gained a reputation for its exceptional science, pharmacy, and visual arts departments as well as for being an outpost for nascent African American Catholic leadership.

Late Nineteenth to Early Twentieth Century: Lay Leadership

From the end of the nineteenth century through the first third of the twentieth century, African American Catholic leadership was squarely in the hands of the laity. The locus of control and power in the African American community has been its religious bodies and institutions. In these institutions African Americans had the power to assert authority, to practice agency without question, to make decisions, to advance religious, social, and political agendas, and to define what it meant to be black and Christian in a culture that held them in contempt. So too did black Catholics, but they had different channels to accomplish their goals. African American Catholics recognized the boundaries of their tradition and respected the hierarchy, forging new paths to undermine racial boundaries they believed kept them from being full members of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

One of the most important African American Catholic lay leaders at the end of the nineteenth century was Daniel Rudd. Rudd, born a slave in Kentucky, was a cradle Catholic.

Following the Civil War he ventured north to Ohio to take advantage of educational opportunities available to African Americans there. By the 1880s he was the creator, owner, and publisher of the first African American Catholic newspaper, *The American Catholic Tribune*. African Americans, Catholic and non-Catholic, were his primary audience. He used his newspaper to give the Catholic Church a hearing in the African American community and to give African American Catholics a voice in the Catholic Church. Convinced that Roman Catholicism was the true church as well as the one institution in the United States, or anywhere, that blacks could expect to be treated as equals, Rudd was intent on evangelizing the African American community.

That is, African American Catholics had to unite to discuss issues in the Catholic Church and the United States that concerned them the most and to plan strategies to effect positive change in both the Catholic Church and American society. Thus he organized the first Colored Catholic Congress in 1889 in Baltimore, Maryland, which brought together for the first time in U.S. history African American Catholic lay leaders from all over the country. Four more times the following decade, they gathered to address the concerns related to evangelization, education, theology, labor unions, employment discrimination, civil rights, and racial prejudice in American society and the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

The congresses of the late nineteenth century set the stage for continuing African American lay leadership in the twentieth century. Led by Dr. Thomas Wyatt Turner (1877–1978), the Federated Colored Catholics was established in 1924 to address three primary concerns. It wished to initiate a national conversation in the United States Catholic Church on racism in the church, to make American Catholics more conscious of racism in the church, and to change racist policies and practices in the church.

To this end the Federated Colored Catholics established a national organ titled *The Chronicle* and began actively lobbying American bishops to address racism in the American church. One of its greatest accomplishments was to create a Catholic industrial and agricultural high school in southern Maryland in 1924, the Cardinal Gibbons Institute. Administered by an African American Catholic lay couple, Victor and Constance Daniel, the institute realized a dream of African American Catholics to have a national vocational school that would also provide a solid academic education to its youth, Catholic and non-Catholic. The Federated Colored Catholics advanced its agenda until its leader,

Dr. Thomas Wyatt Turner, and two Jesuit priests active in the African American apostolate wrangled for the leadership of the organization. Although Turner supported the involvement of whites in the organization, he staunchly believed that it needed to be led by black Catholics. Father John LaFarge, SJ, and Father William Markoe, SJ, disagreed and charged that Turner was seeking to lead a “race” organization and not a Catholic one.

At the annual meeting in 1932 Markoe challenged Turner for the leadership of the group and won the support of many African American members. Although this did not spell the end of the Federated Colored Catholics, which Turner would continue to lead until the 1950s, it did fracture the group badly and instigated the creation of a new organization, the Catholic Interracial Council, that would become the premier Catholic group working on the question of racial justice in the United States through the 1960s. The makeup of the group, as its name indicates, was interracial, but it was led not by laypeople but by clerics. As the dominant Catholic racial justice body, the Catholic Interracial Council had to take on many of the issues that African American lay Catholics had been working on without much clerical support since the early nineteenth century, such as the failure of the American Catholic Church to honor the religious vocations of African American men.

Struggle and Rise of African American Priests

Father Augustus Tolton (1854–1897) was the first recognized African American priest. He was ordained in Rome and was intended to serve as a missionary priest in Africa because no American bishop would agree to accept him as priest in his diocese. However, following his ordination, a Roman official reversed this decision and determined that Father Tolton would in fact return to the United States to serve in the Diocese of Alton (now the Diocese of Springfield, Illinois). During his short priesthood, the African American Catholic community in the United States embraced Father Tolton and celebrated him as its priest, even though few black Catholics lived where he served. Father Tolton experienced loneliness, isolation, and disdain from his fellow American priests, as well as their envy as black and white Catholics flocked to his church. Essentially forced to leave the Diocese of Alton because of the jealousy of a white priest, Father Tolton struck out for the Archdiocese of Chicago, where he had great plans to build a new parish for African Americans. Unfortunately, poor health from intense stress took his life in 1897.

Not until the twentieth century would there finally be a significant number of African American priests serving in the United States. This was not because of any dearth of African American priestly vocations but because of the refusal of most dioceses and religious orders to even give these men consideration. Among the arguments against the ordination of African American men were claims that they lacked the moral character and intellectual ability needed for the priesthood. Many bishops and religious orders also feared if they accepted black men to the seminaries they would surrender white vocations. These arguments made it difficult for the Josephites to place the few African Americans they ordained in dioceses and for other religious communities such as the Society of the Divine Word and the Congregation of the Holy Ghost who served in the African American apostolate and wanted to accept African American men to move forward in their own work of evangelization.

Mid-Twentieth Century: The “Negro Apostolate” and Black Convert Authors

Despite these difficulties Catholic efforts to evangelize African Americans increased in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Between 1937 and 1939 the *Interracial Review* reported a fifty-thousand-member increase in the number of African American Catholics to 300,000. It attributed most of this growth to evangelization efforts that fell under an umbrella term, the *Negro Apostolate*, that included all kinds of efforts to introduce and draw African Americans to Catholicism. Spurred on by the Great Migration, the Depression, and concerns about communism taking root in African American communities, Catholics dedicated religious orders and teams of diocesan priests to work in African American neighborhoods and engage in direct efforts to bring African Americans into the Catholic Church. Black Catholic laity were also enlisted in these efforts, which included educational endeavors in elementary through college level, social services like medical clinics, day care centers, and orphanages, and interracial justice activism to show that Catholicism was not in fact “a white man’s religion” but one that welcomed all. Movements like Friendship House, founded by the Baroness Catherine De Hueck in Harlem, and efforts to integrate Catholic institutions of higher education, such as the Manhattanville Resolutions that led to the integration of Manhattanville College in the 1930s, resulted in more African Americans giving Catholicism more consideration. The Harlem Negro Apostolate was one of the most successful convert-makers of the day. The Church of St. Charles

Borromeo in Harlem alone brought in nearly six thousand new African American Catholics in twelve years. It came to be known as the Negro convert center of the United States.

Not only were African Americans converting to Catholicism, they were also writing about their conversions. Elizabeth Adams, Helen Caldwell Day Lewis, and Ellen Tarry published memoirs about their conversions, and other black Catholic converts found Catholic publications such as *The Interracial Reviews*, *Commonweal*, and *America* very interested in publishing their conversion narratives. These books and articles were meant to encourage African Americans to give Catholicism a try and to show white Catholics how African American culture and experience was in tune with the Catholic faith. These efforts were successful. Between 1940 and 1965 the number of African American Catholics more than doubled, from an estimated 300,000 to nearly 723,000. Although some the growth was attributable to natural increase in the population, the greatest source was conversion.

Mid- to Late Twentieth Century: Civil Rights and the Black Catholic Movement

The civil rights movement leadership included no nationally recognized African American Catholics. On the local level, African American Catholics were certainly involved. New Orleans black and white Catholic college students were on the cutting edge of civil rights activism in the 1940s and 1950s, working together to challenge racial segregation in Catholic parishes, schools, colleges, and universities in the city. Catholic lawyer A. P. Tureaud (1899–1972) supported these activists and used his position as one the very few African American lawyers in Louisiana to challenge Jim Crow laws in the South. Young black Catholic priests, brothers, and sisters, with the permission of their religious communities, participated in public demonstrations for civil rights like the March on Washington in 1963 and the Selma campaigns in 1965. Beginning in the 1940s Archbishop Joseph Ritter of St. Louis led the way to desegregating Catholic institutions in his diocese and was followed by others elsewhere, such as Bishop Vincent S. Waters of Raleigh, North Carolina, and Archbishop Joseph Rummel of New Orleans.

The civil rights movement and later the Black Power movement served as consciousness raisers for African American Catholic religious, many of whom were the first or only black members of their religious community or priests in their diocese, about the racial injustices they and other blacks faced in their churches. This effort reached a peak in the spring of

1968, when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, and violence broke out in urban areas, where most African American priests, brothers, and sisters served. Shortly after Dr. King's assassination, African American priests gathered for the first time as a national body to address the violence being perpetrated in cities like Chicago by police against black youth. Gathered for the annual meeting of the Catholic Clergy Conference on the Interracial Apostolate, angry African American priests frankly discussed the racism they personally faced in the church and determined to publish a manifesto asserting that "the Catholic Church in the United States, primarily a white racist institution" was not concerning itself with the problems of African Americans but instead with those of white Americans only.

They called for greater leadership roles for black Catholics in the church, improved formation of white clergy and religious who served in black communities, and more educational opportunities for black Catholic laypersons involved in leadership in the church. At the end of this 1968 meeting, the African American clergy formed the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, which included priests, seminarians, religious brothers, and eventually members of the permanent diaconate. Later in the summer a similar gathering of black Catholic women religious convened at Carlow College in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. They took up concerns very similar to those of the clergy but focused on how African American women religious could meet the needs of the African American community. They organized themselves into the National Black Catholic Sisters' Conference and pledged to never cease working for the total liberation of black people.

The results of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus and the National Black Catholic Sisters' Conference were numerous and tangible, including the establishment of the National Office for Black Catholics to support the creation of offices of African American Catholics throughout the United States; the foundation of the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University of Louisiana where lay and religious part of or serving in black Catholic communities could work for master's degrees in theology with a focus on the black Catholic experience and certificates in catechesis, leadership; and youth ministries, and ultimately the revival of the tradition of the Colored Catholic Congresses with the calling of the first National Black Catholic Congress in 1987. A strong belief that African American culture and spirituality was necessary for Catholicism to flourish in the African American community was at the heart of all of these endeavors. Often referred to as the Black Catholic movement, over

the period between 1968 and 1988, black Catholics were intent on witnessing what they meant when they claimed to be “authentically black and truly Catholic.” The Second Vatican Council’s encouragement for the inculturation of the liturgy, meaning the inclusion of cultural traditions, symbols, and practices in worship, and the recognition that the future of the Roman Catholic Church was unfolding in Africa, Asia, South America, and North America all galvanized the successful efforts of the black Catholic movement.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, nearly 25 percent of the one billion Roman Catholics in the world are of African descent and three million of them live in the United States. African immigrants to the United States are growing the black Catholic community in much the same way that African American Catholic converts did in the middle of the twentieth century. African immigrants, laity, clerics, and religious brothers and sisters are filling pews and leadership roles across the United States in parishes originally created for native-born African Americans. Today native-born African American Catholics and African Catholics are working together to blend their cultures, traditions, and histories with those of other Catholics in creating parishes, schools, and other Catholic institutions that may best be understood as multicultural. The African American Catholic experience continues as a work in progress.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion* entries; *Anti-Catholicism; Architecture: Roman Catholic; Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence; Canada: Catholics; Literature: African American; Music: Roman Catholic; Religious Thought: Roman Catholic; Roman Catholicism* entries; *Women Religious; Women: Roman Catholic; Worship: Roman Catholic.*

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Roman Catholicism: Catholics in the Atlantic Colonies

Catholics made up only a tiny part of the population in most of Britain’s Atlantic colonies. Few settled in British North America for the simple reason that Britain itself, the origin of most immigrants, was overwhelmingly Protestant. Nor did the colonies welcome those Catholics who did attempt to emigrate. In almost every colony the colonial period was difficult for Catholics. Protestant European settlers brought anti-Catholicism to the New World as part of their cultural heritage. Over time politics added other anti-Catholic strains. Wars with France and Spain in the 1690s intensified anti-Catholic sentiment. South Carolinians engaged in brutal warfare against the Spanish and their Indian allies in Florida for much of the early eighteenth century, and New Englanders battled the French and their allies along the Canadian frontier. These conflicts produced numerous atrocities and stoked the flames of religious antipathy. Although loyalty to Britain and religious sentiments could reinforce each other, anti-Catholicism also heightened support for independence. Many saw the Québec Act of 1774, by which Britain extended tolerance to Catholics in Québec and incorporated French settlers in Ohio, as an unforgivable betrayal.

Anti-Catholicism in Law and Practice

Anti-Catholic sentiments permeated colonial laws. By 1700 only Rhode Island offered Catholics full civil and religious rights. Most colonies established one or another Protestant church, usually Congregationalist or Anglican, and over the course of the eighteenth century proscriptions against Catholics tightened almost everywhere. Many colonies required those seeking public office to swear test oaths that specifically excluded Catholics by including clauses about the truth of Protestantism. Other colonies required anyone wishing to preach to obtain a license.

Anti-Catholicism spilled over the boundaries of law books. Each year colonists celebrated Pope Day, devised by the Puritans as the equivalent of Guy Fawkes Day—the celebration of a failed attempt by a small group of English Catholics to blow up the houses of parliament. Crowds paraded effigies of the pope and the devil through the streets. Initially confined to New England, Pope Day spread throughout the colonies in the wake of the Québec Act. Such hatred could easily encourage spontaneous violence. In several instances mobs attacked Catholics, anticipating the far more organized and extensive violence of later decades.

Especially in the South, Protestant distrust of Catholics often focused on the Catholic Church's perceived eagerness to conspire with blacks. In Maryland, rumors that priests plotted with slaves and Indians to overthrow the government dated back to 1689. South Carolinians and Georgians were no doubt aware that Spanish authorities in Florida offered freedom to slaves who escaped from the English colonies, provided they converted to Catholicism. This policy ended with Spain's cession of Florida to Britain in 1763, but distrust lingered. Throughout the colonial period, rumors that Catholics were inciting slave revolts swept British America. In 1775 a mob attacked two Irish Catholics in Charleston on the grounds that they had conspired with slaves.

Catholic Settlement

Despite such animosity, some Catholics did settle in the colonies. The Catholic population of Maryland steadily grew and soon spilled over into Pennsylvania. Another large group, exiles from Acadia, settled for several years in South Carolina. Doubtlessly many others quietly entered the colonies, either keeping their faith a secret or gradually drifting into Protestant churches. A few Catholics even rose to prominence. The Carrolls of Maryland produced several important leaders, including Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the only Catholic to sign the Declaration of Independence. In New York two Catholics, Anthony Brockholles and Thomas Dongan, served as governors of the colony. The growth of the Catholic population and the possibility of Catholics attaining positions of importance demonstrated that penal laws against them were not always enforced. As a result, though they still faced various hurdles, Catholics enjoyed more liberty in the colonies than in any other Protestant-dominated society of the time.

Maryland

In 1632 King Charles I bestowed a charter for a colony on Cecil Calvert, the son of George Calvert, who had been the first Lord Baltimore and a favorite of the king despite his conversion to Catholicism. Maryland's settlement began in 1634 with the arrival of two ships, the *Ark* and the *Dove*. The gentlemen who arrived were primarily Catholic and the laborers primarily Protestant. The wealthy Catholic ruling class soon established a plantation system as well as a system of churches, chapels, and missions run by Jesuits. The first and most prominent of these early Jesuits was their superior, Father Andrew White, who arrived in Maryland with the first settlers in 1634. White had studied and received

ordination on the continent but had repeatedly returned to England for mission work, flouting laws that made it treasonous for priests to enter the country. His daring nature encouraged the Calverts to entrust him with spiritual guardianship of their new Maryland colony.

The Jesuits ministered to the Catholic population and sought to convert Protestants, Indians, and slaves. They were among the first large-scale Catholic slaveholders in America. Like later clerical slave owners, the Jesuits received slaves as gifts from lay patrons. By 1765 they owned 192 slaves. The Jesuits used slave ownership to stake their claim to full civil rights as English subjects and used slave labor to recreate the self-sufficient English manors. Like most Catholic clergy, the Jesuits insisted on their slaves' right to worship as Catholics and to receive the sacraments, and stressed a responsibility to take care of the slaves, often at great expense. As in other mission fields, the Jesuits' successes in Maryland caused resentment and anxiety, both among the Protestant majority and on the part of Calvert, who resisted Jesuit demands for tax exemption and other privileges.

Toleration Act

Although Maryland's charter said nothing about religious liberty, the second Lord Baltimore instructed the colony's governors to allow all Christians to practice as they pleased. Calvert's Maryland Design introduced a form of toleration that both ensured the rights of Catholics and conceded that Protestants would always compose the majority of the population. The Maryland Assembly enshrined Calvert's intentions in law in 1639 and ten years later in the Act Concerning Religion, or Toleration Act, one of the earliest official expressions of religious liberty in America. The act, passed by the Maryland Assembly on April 21, 1649, was less an innovation than a codification of the attitudes and policies of Maryland's rulers. The act emerged from a turbulent context. In the mid-1640s Maryland had endured a series of attacks by Virginia Protestants as political turmoil in England threatened the Calverts' authority. In the late 1640s, with some degree of order restored, the proprietor appointed a Protestant by the name of William Stone as governor. As part of his instructions to Stone, Calvert ordered him not to bother any Christians, especially Catholics. The Toleration Act of 1649 codified these instructions.

Catholics composed a minority of the population in 1649 as they had throughout Maryland's history. Despite their demographic disadvantage, they exercised considerable power in the colonial assembly. This power, coupled with

pressure from the proprietor, ensured the act's passage. But the act was not purely the work of Catholics. In all likelihood, many moderate Protestants also supported it, recognizing the importance of peace and stability in the colony. Pragmatism on the issue of religious diversity had long contributed to Maryland's relative tolerance and played at least as large a role in the passage of the Toleration Act as any ideal of religious liberty. The act asserted that intolerance had proven dangerous to commonwealths, and it required that no one "professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall from henceforth bee any waies troubled . . . in respect of his or her religion nor in the free exercise thereof . . . nor in any way compelled to the beliefe of exercise of any other Religion." It also prohibited reproachful language about the Virgin Mary, the apostles, or evangelists, forbade derogatory names for religious groups, and mandated respect for the Sabbath.

Although a bold statement for its time, the act protected only those "professing to believe in Jesus Christ," and stipulated the death penalty for deniers of the Trinity. Hard-line Puritans insisted on this clause, pointing to a precedent in English statutes. Neither these limitations nor the fact that the act remained in force for only five years should diminish its significance. The act went further than any other law of its time and represented an important step in the direction of religious liberty. For American Catholics, it remained a source of pride and a way to rebuke later Protestant criticism that Catholicism was antithetical to religious liberty.

Conflict in Maryland

Despite an auspicious beginning, Maryland enjoyed little peace. From the granting of the charter, Catholic control of the colony depended on royal support, and the turbulence of English politics led to instability. The spread of Puritanism in the colony and a decline in royal authority in England helped pave the way for a series of attacks in the mid-1640s by Richard Ingle, the captain of a Chesapeake tobacco ship, and a gang of Virginia Protestants. In 1654, with Puritans in control of Parliament in England, Maryland Protestants repudiated the proprietor and the Toleration Act. Joining with Protestant forces from Virginia, they defeated Governor Stone in battle, outlawed Catholicism, plundered Catholics' property, and killed or exiled the colony's priests. Lord Baltimore regained his privileges in 1657, but only under the condition that he name a different governor.

Even following the restoration of royal authority in England in 1660, Catholics in Maryland had a precarious status. Four revolts, reflecting both economic and religious tensions,

disrupted the colony in the seventeenth century, and after the Glorious Revolution in England in 1689 Protestants took control of the colony. In 1691 William III made Maryland a royal province but allowed the Calverts to keep their property. The following year Maryland's fragile history of religious liberty came to an end with the establishment of the Church of England. Over time, anti-Catholic legislation grew so onerous that Catholics dispatched Charles Carroll to French Louisiana in an unsuccessful search for a refuge.

By the early 1700s Maryland resembled every other southern colony but continued to serve as a symbol for Catholics. Baltimore was the see of the first American Catholic bishop, making the city the Catholic Church's ecclesiastical center. The Catholic families of Maryland continued to provide the Catholic Church with leaders, and even decades later, when dioceses had cropped up across the country and the Catholic planter families had either died out or moved to other states, Maryland symbolized for American Catholics the first fulfillment of the promise of religious liberty.

American Revolution

The Revolution marked a transition for Catholics in America. Although antipathy toward them lingered, patriot leaders recognized the importance of unity in attempting to throw off the British yoke. George Washington forbade his soldiers to celebrate Pope Day and soon the practice disappeared. With the French alliance in 1778, patriot sentiment shifted in favor of Catholics, and revolutionary rhetoric made talk about the dangers of popery seem paranoid.

Catholics helped shape public opinion. Most of them sided with the cause of independence and many fought in the revolutionary army. The few prominent Catholic leaders were outspoken patriots. Charles Carroll signed the Declaration of Independence as a delegate for Maryland and two years later traveled with the priest John Carroll, Benjamin Franklin, and others to Canada to win support for the war. Two Catholic laymen, Daniel Carroll and Thomas Fitzsimons, served on the Constitutional Convention. Their selection demonstrated respect for Catholics, and their service further promoted Protestant acceptance.

See also *American Revolution; Anti-Catholicism; Architecture: Roman Catholic; Atlantic World; Canada: Catholics; Freedom, Religious; Hispanic Influence; Latino American Religion: Catholics, Colonial Origins; Mexico: Colonial Era; Politics: Colonial Era; Women: Roman Catholic; Worship: Roman Catholic.*

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Roman Catholicism: Catholics in the New Nation and the Early Republic

After the Constitution was adopted in 1788, Catholics in the early republic found themselves in a new and potentially positive situation. They, as it turned out, were between a long era of discrimination and anti-Catholicism that marked the colonial period and a marked revival of such sentiments in the 1830s, in a different form, as Catholic immigration from Europe began to increase noticeably. Before the Revolution the Catholic Church was prohibited by law from establishing itself in many of the colonies, including New York and Massachusetts. The inheritance of the intense religious rivalry with Protestantism that carried over to the colonization of America, and the presence of the largely Catholic and French-speaking colony to the North, made Catholics in British North America decidedly unwelcome in the midst of otherwise diverse but overwhelmingly Protestant societies. Individual Catholics in colonial America faced a range of civil and political disabilities that kept them from enjoying the freedoms that many other Christians of European birth and ancestry took as their birthright. The logic of the American Revolution, however, resulted in the shattering of the primacy of loyalty to the Protestant monarch in London, which had made Catholics suspect. In places that had an identifiable Catholic population before 1775, namely Maryland and Pennsylvania, Catholics had joined the patriot cause in significant numbers. Catholic politicians, most notably Charles Carroll of Maryland and Thomas Fitzsimons of Pennsylvania, supported the Revolution, as did Father John Carroll of Maryland, who was part of an American diplomatic mission to Canada in the early years of the conflict.

For Catholics, the writing and ratification of the Constitution in 1787 and 1788 were important. The Constitution

included no religious test for office, which was a reason that anti-Federalists opposed it. Prominent Catholics, however, including Carroll and Fitzsimons, supported and indeed signed it. The evidence indicates that those Catholics who were politically active favored ratification as well. The end of the old colonial system promised a new day for Catholics after a long season of outright discrimination and hostility. After the Revolution, even in New England, a traditional site of anti-Catholicism in the colonies, the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island all granted religious toleration to the Catholic Church, as did New York. This allowed Catholics to establish the first Catholic churches in those states, including St. Peter's in Manhattan, founded in 1786. In Boston Catholics worshiped publicly for the first time beginning in 1788, as Mass was said in a former Huguenot chapel remade into the Church of the Holy Cross.

By no means, however, did suspicion of Catholics disappear everywhere and all at once. As residents of rural Massachusetts made clear, toleration was not the same thing as equality. In voting on the Massachusetts constitution in 1780, records indicate that people in remote parts of New England were more likely to favor retaining laws that discriminated against Catholics, whereas people in the eastern parts of New England, in Boston and Rhode Island, for example, who had been exposed to Catholic soldiers from France, were more likely to favor some degree of toleration. In general, the period immediately after the Revolution was marked by higher tolerance, and relations between Catholics and Protestants improved. Cases were recorded of Protestants giving financial aid in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia to build Catholic churches, and Protestants on occasion would even send their children to Catholic schools. Catholics, for their part, would seek to tone down the aspects of their religion that might make it seem excessively foreign or European; Catholic priests in the early republic, for example, were often called Mister by their parishioners, and new Catholic churches were often built in a style that was unobtrusive to American Protestants.

Despite these mutual efforts at understanding, the new republic was not entirely free of overt acts of discrimination aimed at Catholics. In the early years of the nineteenth century, Catholics in New York City held Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve but eschewed the traditional outdoors process so as not to draw the attention of the wider community. Members of a local gang, however, banged on the doors of St. Peter's Church during Mass, demanding to be admitted to

see what was transpiring inside. At that same time, Elizabeth Ann Seton, a New York convert to Catholicism, had founded a new religious order, the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph, the first to be established in the United States. She and her sisters left New York to find a religious climate more hospitable to Catholicism, and did so in Maryland. In general, the impact of the Revolution tended to be positive for Catholics. And though it has rarely been noted in revolutionary studies, an argument can be made that in terms of achieving religious freedom and at least the potential for political equality Catholics benefited as much as any religious group in American society from the break with Great Britain.

Building a Church

Catholics in the 1780s turned to the work of creating a sound administrative structure of the church as it broke free from the prohibitions of the colonial period. In 1784 Father John Carroll of Baltimore (1735–1815) was named the superior of the American mission, with the understanding that this appointment might serve as a prelude to his being named the bishop of a new diocese centered in the United States. Carroll was a member of a wealthy Maryland Catholic family with roots well back into the seventeenth century. Educated in Europe, he later joined the Jesuits. When that order was suppressed in 1773, he returned to Maryland. After the war and his diplomatic venture to Canada, Carroll and others set out to construct an administrative structure that might govern the Catholic Church in the new nation. Carroll was supported in his ascendancy within the Catholic community by Benjamin Franklin, who knew and respected Carroll from their work together on the Canada mission during the Revolution. Now effectively the head of the Catholic Church in the United States, Carroll deliberately set out to develop a brand of Catholicism that was suitable for the emerging republican society of which it hoped to become a part.

A product of broad education and travels, Carroll had been influenced by Enlightenment principles as well as something of the ecumenical spirit of the Revolution. His understanding was that the church in the United States would certainly recognize the papacy as the center of Christian unity and the pope as the spiritual head of the church, but that American Catholics would be in practice largely free of direct administrative control from Rome. As things were in the 1780s, however, the Catholic Church in the United States, as a mission without its own bishop, were under the purview of the vicar apostolic in London, and also under the

part of the Vatican that administered fledgling churches. Carroll and other priests concluded that it was in the best interests of the new U.S. church to have its own bishop, one who would administer his diocese largely independent of Rome. That is what eventually happened, and the first diocese in the United States was created in 1789, with its cathedral and episcopal seat situated in Baltimore, Maryland. Father Carroll had been elevated to this place of primacy by his fellow American priests, with the permission of Rome. Carroll was ordained a bishop the following year, at a ceremony in London. The Catholic Church in the United States was termed a mission church, a status it would not lose until the early twentieth century.

Despite the major accomplishment of securing a bishop, and an American at that, the new church faced many challenges. Because the institutional church had been so weak in the colonial period, given various anti-Catholic laws in the colonies, there were far too few priests to serve the faithful in the sprawling new diocese of Baltimore. Many parishes were forced to recruit priests from Europe, sometimes acting without the knowledge or approval of Bishop Carroll, an ad hoc arrangement that met with mixed success. Some of the immigrant clergy were Jesuits, and this caused a problem because the Society of Jesus had been suppressed by the Pope in 1773. And despite the efforts of Bishop Carroll and others to reconcile the Catholic Church and American republicanism, one important area of controversy and discord did emerge in the early republic that illustrated the distinct differences between Catholic tradition and culture, at least those since medieval times, and the democratic ethos of the American Revolution and new republic.

Lay Trustee Boards

Under the laws of most of the new states, each religious body was required to elect a lay board of trustees, in whom legal ownership of the institution would reside. For Protestant churches this was for the most part a fairly easy transition. In the Catholic Church, with its tradition of hierarchy, this proved to be a major area of tension between the clergy and the laity. Connected to this question of legal ownership was a battle over who had the proper authority to appoint priests and pastors, the parish congregations or the bishops. The Catholic community in the United States had a very small cadre of priests and little in the way of institutions such as seminaries to meet the needs of the laity.

As early as the 1780s Catholics in New York City and Philadelphia and on the western frontier of the new nation

began to organize themselves as religious communities before securing the services of a regular parish priest. The idea of lay control of Catholic congregations did have some precedence in European history, but it was not the norm and by no means was it desirable in the eyes of the clergy. Before the Revolution lay Catholics had to take responsibility for their own affairs in many cases, especially in provinces such as New York, where priests under pain of death were barred. Bishop John Carroll, although open to innovations such as priests using English instead of the traditional liturgical Latin during Mass, recoiled at the idea of the laity wielding the power to appoint priests.

In 1791, at a church synod meeting of priests in the United States, the new bishop expressed concern that his sprawling new diocese was “badly regulated.” Lay Catholics in several parts of the country however, including Philadelphia, Boston, Norfolk, Virginia, and New York City, moved to control the affairs of their parishes in accordance with the laws of their states. Sharp divisions arose in Catholic parishes in the early years of the early republic, often between laity who wanted to continue to control the property and others who generally were less educated and preferred influence to not lie with their social betters among the laity, but rather with the clergy. Bishop Carroll, although adamant that it was his decision to appoint priests, one that some congregations openly sparred with him on, did in fact support the lay trustee system as a practical compromise with American republicanism.

Churches in Norfolk, Virginia, Buffalo, New York, and Charleston, South Carolina, remained bitterly divided on this point for decades. In 1829 the bishops meeting at the first provincial council in Baltimore moved to resolve the dispute, declaring that they possessed the true authority to hold property on behalf of the church and to appoint and dismiss priests within their own dioceses. It was this aspect of Catholicism in the United States that the French political philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville in his travels in the nation in 1831 and 1832 found so interesting. For Tocqueville, American Catholics, that is, the laity, unlike their Protestant counterparts, were all equal before the power of the clergy; the irony was, in his view, that within the churches of republican America, it was the Catholic parishes that had the most genuinely democratic ethos.

The number of Catholics grew in the first decades of the new republic, in part because of a steady stream of immigrants to the United States, particularly from Ireland. This growth and expansions was recognized officially in 1808,

when Pope Pius VII approved the formation of four new dioceses in the United States. They were established in New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, and Bardstown, Kentucky, where a sizeable group of Maryland Catholics had emigrated after the Revolution and established an important western frontier outpost of Catholicism. Rome approved Bishop Carroll’s suggestions for bishops for the new dioceses in most cases, though over Carroll’s objections the pope named an Irish clergyman, Richard Concanen, who was wholly unfamiliar with the United States, as bishop of New York. Concanen died before he could assume his duties, however, and the New York diocese was without a bishop for several years.

Struggle for Political Equality

In addition to securing their religious liberties, American Catholics were also determined to be on equal civil and political grounds with citizens of other faiths. The early republic was an intensely political period, and citizens and groups struggled to define the meaning of what they had created in the 1770s and 1780s.

At the start of American politics in the 1790s, prominent Americans such as Thomas Fitzsimons of Pennsylvania and the Carrolls of Maryland, namely Charles and his cousin the bishop John Carroll, supported the new government and the party associated most closely with it, the Federalists. The leaders of that party, President George Washington and Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, had in their own ways expressed support for the political aspirations of Catholics to civic and political equality. In 1787, as a member of the New York legislature, Hamilton had taken the lead in blocking legislation championed by anti-Federalist politicians that would have effectively disenfranchised Catholic voters in the state by forcing them to renounce “all foreign and ecclesiastical authority.” Hamilton openly denounced this measure as a none-too-subtle attempt to keep Catholics in New York from political participation, as they had been since the late seventeenth century, arguing that the United States as a new nation had to transform the old religious rivalries of Europe and make national loyalty a purely civic matter. The following year, however, the New York legislature did enact a law requiring all elected officials in New York to take just such an oath on taking office.

Washington responded to an entreaty by American Catholics, both clergy and laity, who asked him as president to do what he could to ensure political equality for Catholics. Washington acknowledged that Catholics had indeed

supported the Revolution and expressed regret that in a number of states religious barriers to office were in effect against Catholics. He offered the hope that as the nation matured politically such barriers would be removed. In any event, Federalists clearly would have had the first allegiances of Catholics as Americans began the republican experiment in the 1790s. A central event with the real potential to tie Catholics to Federalists was the intense reactions of both the Federalists and their emerging political opposition, the Republicans, to the French Revolution. Virtually all Americans, including Catholics, supported the French uprising in its earliest phases because the monarchy was being replaced by a republic that would presumably be constructed along American lines.

However, as the upheaval took an increasingly radical and secular turn, embarking on a de-Christianization campaign aimed primarily at the Catholic Church, American Catholics, especially the clergy, began to have grave doubts. In addition, Federalists were uneasy with immigrants from Europe, some of whom were Catholic, and Republican political organizers, such as those in New York state, began to organize urban immigrants against Federalist policies such as the Jay Treaty, which they claimed had a pro-British bias.

Republicans led by Thomas Jefferson, whose own religious views were not always easily defined, began to appeal to Catholics based not so much on a shared religiosity but on what would eventually become a politics of cultural tolerance and plurality, as well as on a platform of equal political rights for all white men. With the exception of a few African Americans, the vast majority of Catholic men in the United States were European by birth or ancestry, and Catholics began to gravitate toward the Republicans. That party also portrayed itself as the party of ordinary workers in the nation's cities, where many immigrant Catholics lived. In 1806 it was the Republicans who led the effort to change the oath of office for state officials, allowing the first Catholic to serve in the New York State legislature. Federalists opposed this measure, ostensibly on legal and constitutional grounds, but it was also true that they had become uneasy with the increasing democratic tendencies of national politics.

In part because of the growing number of white men of all religious backgrounds who owned no property, states in the 1820s began to liberalize their voting requirements. As a result virtually all white men could vote even if they did not own property. Early Jacksonian Democrats were especially interested in garnering the votes of Catholic men. By 1830

the last of the old colonial laws aimed at disenfranchising Catholics had effectively been removed.

Expansion and Growth of the Catholic Community

The Catholic Church expanded as the nation's geographic reach grew. After the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, New Orleans, a city with a rich Catholic history and a strong French flavor, became part of the nation. When Louisiana entered the Union as a state in 1812, it became the fifth diocese of the United States. In January 1815 Catholic Ursuline nuns prayed for an American victory before the Battle of New Orleans, a smashing victory by the United States in the final conflict of the War of 1812. In addition to claiming their new identity as citizens of the United States, the Ursulines, whose order had been founded in France, played a key role in the development of Catholicism in the lower Mississippi Valley. Although they did own slaves, they also educated young women, both black and white, in integrated schools in New Orleans. African Americans, both free and enslaved, were a critical part of the Catholic community in the new state of Louisiana. Most members of the Cathedral parish of St. Louis, for example, were African Americans and were able to establish a sacramental community outside the bounds of the otherwise predominantly white and Protestant South. Despite making some progress on the difficult matter of race, the diocese was troubled, as were many others, by a shortage of priests, ethnic feuding, and great distances between parishes. The sprawling New Orleans diocese was divided twice before 1830; in 1826 the diocese of St. Louis was created in the new state of Missouri, and three years later, in 1829, the Diocese of Mobile, Alabama, was established.

As the church grew with its new dioceses, Bishop John Carroll remained in effect the leader of Catholics in the United States until his death in 1815. One figure who championed the cause of establishing good relations with Protestants that Carroll espoused was John England, a native of Ireland and the bishop of the Diocese of Charleston, South Carolina. England's sprawling diocese included the whole of three states, North and South Carolina and Georgia. In 1826 he became the first member of the Catholic clergy to address the U.S. House of Representatives. England supervised the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Charleston, founding the first society in the United States for Catholic workingmen, and even establishing a society for African American Catholics later in his ministry, a project that white leaders of Charleston forced him to abandon as southern whites began

to defend slavery and white supremacy in the face of mounting criticism of slavery.

Beginnings of a New Nativism

Despite the efforts of bishops Carroll and England to establish relations with the Protestant majority based on mutual respect and cordiality, a renewed hostility toward Catholics began to emerge, especially among some evangelical Christians as the revivals of the Second Great Awakening began in the 1830s. These revivals made the United States more overtly Christian and Protestant than it had been. Evangelicals grew concerned about what they saw as a popish threat to the republican character of the nation they were trying to reform along Protestant lines. Catholics, for their part, did not experience these religious revivals. Instead, they in some important sense became a target of them. In the eyes of many evangelical Christians, the Catholic Church was a threat to true religion and Christianity. Catholics had also begun to arrive in the United States in ever increasing numbers, especially after 1815. Most of these immigrants arrived from Ireland and Germany and settled in the cities along the eastern seaboard, especially the Irish; some of the Germans headed west, especially to cities such as Cincinnati and to the farmlands of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. They helped fill a huge need for unskilled labor. Irish workers helped dig and build the Erie Canal in New York from 1817 to 1825 and worked in textile mills in New England. The growing Catholic presence produced a backlash, especially as the clergy began to supplant lay influence. The Catholic Church began to resemble something foreign and European once again, as priests and bishops who answered to Rome now controlled decision making.

The growth of the Catholic Church in the early nineteenth century in the United States was impressive; in 1807 there were seventy priests, eighty churches, and about seventy thousand members; by 1830 in New England alone there were about fourteen thousand Catholics and sixteen churches. By 1830 there were also ten dioceses in the country, six seminaries, nine colleges, thirty-three monasteries, and countless schools and hospitals. Catholics, however, did not always help their cause in terms of establishing cordial relations with their fellow citizens. A meeting of all the American bishops in 1829, the First Provincial Council, held in Baltimore, called on Catholics to avoid “corrupt” translations of the Bible, urged them to build parish schools to save their children from “perversion,” and encouraged them to baptize children who were not Catholics if there were any

chance at all of their being baptized Catholics. Evangelical Protestants reacted strongly against this, as they fanned out across the country to try to convert Catholics on the basis of giving them direct access to the Bible. This resurgence of anti-Catholicism was marked by a flurry of salacious and provocative literature published, purportedly by those who had escaped the clutches of Catholic convents and monasteries and had tale of horror and sexual deviance and debauchery to report. “Ten Days in a Nunnery” by Maria Monk was one such tale; another was “Six Months in a Convent” or “pornography for the puritan,” as one scholar once called it. This turned out to be a fraudulent story, but that it was did not keep many Americans from believing in it, confirming their worst fears about Catholicism as marked by an unnatural denial of human sexuality. Publications such as this were a clear and unmistakable sign that the general period of toleration and acceptance that Catholics had largely enjoyed since the 1780s was now coming to an end. What followed was a period in the mid-nineteenth century of even more dramatic growth in the American Catholic population, one that was to be accompanied by a new period of prejudice and nativism.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Atlantic World; Canada: Catholics; Constitution; Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools; Hispanic Influence; Latino American Religion: Catholics, in the Nineteenth Century; Mexico: Independence to the Mexican Revolution; Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics; Women Religious.*

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Roman Catholicism: The Impact of Immigration in the Nineteenth Century

Roman Catholics made up a relatively small percentage of the U.S. population throughout the early national period. In 1820 the approximately 195,000 Catholics in the United States not only were outnumbered by Methodists and Baptists but also had fewer churches (124) than any other denomination. Catholics were concentrated in the middle to upper classes, predominately of French or English ancestry, and clustered in the middle Atlantic region. The “Century of Immigration” that opened in 1820 substantially altered the size and ethnic composition of the U.S. Roman Catholic population. Above all, it was the arrival of thousands of Irish and German Catholic immigrants that caused Catholicism to become the largest denomination in the country by 1850, with a total population of 1.6 million. This figure would almost double in the next decade. By 1860, the nation’s 3.1 million Catholics worshipped in 2,385 churches and were served by 2,235 clergy, up from a mere 150 forty years earlier.

Irish and German immigration also transformed worship styles and religious practices within the American Catholic community. Throughout the colonial period Catholics operated in what amounted to a “priestless church.” Dependent on the travel schedules of itinerant clergy, lay Catholics often went months without access to Mass or the sacraments. Consequently religious practices were centered in private homes, where multiple Catholic families would gather for worship or prayer. In the nineteenth century, Catholic religious life would become progressively more parish oriented. In part this was due to the efforts of church leaders such as John Carroll, first bishop of the United States and head of the diocese of Baltimore from 1789 to 1815, to expand Catholicism’s institutional base. But it was primarily the arrival of the Irish and the Germans that prompted American Catholic life to revolve so decisively around the parish. Immigration also changed the typical organizational structure of the American parish. Throughout the early national period most parishes had been organized territorially, meaning that all people within a designated geographical area belonged to the same parish, regardless of ethnic distinctions. But the onset of massive European migration led to the establishment of more “national parishes” organized on the basis of ethnicity or, more specifically, language. In these parishes immigrant

Catholics were able to hear sermons preached in their native tongue, preserve the religious customs of the Old World, and educate their children according to ethnic customs and traditions.

Irish Immigrants and Their Parishes

The Irish were by far the largest immigrant group and would place a distinctive stamp on Catholicism in the United States. Irish immigrants had been present in American society since the colonial period, though their numbers were fairly small when compared with their counterparts in the nineteenth century. Moreover, of the 400,000 people of Irish birth or descent in the United States at the time of the census of 1790, the vast majority were Protestants from Ulster. It was not until the nineteenth century that Catholics would come to dominate Irish migration to the United States. Although the potato famine in Ireland (1845–1850) is rightly regarded as a major push factor in Irish Catholic migration, significant numbers of Irish (260,000) had immigrated to the United States in the two decades that preceded it. Another 1 million Irish arrived in the United States during the famine years. Largely unskilled, famine immigrants settled for the most part in urban areas. By 1860 one out of every four residents of New York City had been born in Ireland. Factoring in the second generation, the city’s Irish population approached 50 percent of the total. Other cities on the eastern seaboard, such as Philadelphia and Boston, had only slightly lower proportions of Irish Americans.

Irish migration continued at a rapid pace even after the end of the famine. Between 1851 and 1921 over 3.7 million Irish would arrive in the United States, bringing with them a brand of Catholicism that had been decisively shaped by events in their homeland. Ireland’s ongoing struggle with Protestant England for political and religious freedom in the nineteenth century, as well as the passing away of Gaelic language and culture in the late eighteenth century, had given rise to an intensified Catholicism and accelerated the fusion of religion and patriotism. From Catholic emancipation in 1829 throughout the postfamine period, Catholicism in Ireland underwent what historian Emmet Larkin has described as a “devotional revolution.” Distinctive features of this included a rise in the number of Catholic churches, a dramatic increase in the numbers of priests and women religious, considerable institutional growth, and a strengthening of the bonds between religion and ethnicity. The devotional revolution also tightened Ireland’s ties to Rome. Paul Cullen, Ireland’s first cardinal and a key figure behind the devotional

revolution, helped move the country more decisively into the ultramontanist camp. Significantly, it was Cullen who drafted the statement on papal infallibility, which would be adopted at the Vatican Council in 1870. Irish Catholics thus arrived in the United States with a strong loyalty to clergy and hierarchy, a firm commitment to parish life, a desire to build educational and charitable institutions, and in sympathy with the consolidating trends of the national and universal church.

In addition to Mass and the sacraments, the principal acts of worship among Catholics, Irish Catholics in Ireland participated in a wide range of special devotions. Irish parishes were tailored to the rich devotional life of their members, sponsoring a variety of rituals attached to liturgical seasons, confraternities that honored Mary or one of the saints, and other organizations designed to foster piety among the people. Although the ratio of priests to people was relatively high compared with what it would later become (in New York City between 1850 and 1865 there was approximately one priest for every 4,500 Catholics), it was clear that among the Irish the priest not only was the key spiritual leader but also wielded a great deal of authority over all parish operations.

The Irish brand of Catholicism was so distinctive that the Irish parish became a recognizable institution in the United States by the middle of the nineteenth century. It is significant that while an Irish parish in antebellum New York City might easily be confused with an Irish parish in Dublin, the distinctions between an Irish American parish and a German American one were readily apparent. As historian Jay P. Dolan observed, these two institutions were as dissimilar as those in Dublin and Munich.

German Immigrants and Their Parishes

Approximately 1.7 million German Catholics migrated to the United States between 1820 and 1920 (representing about one-third of the total German immigration during this period). From 1820 until the 1880s, Germans were outnumbered only by the Irish among Catholic immigrant groups. While the vast majority of the Irish were impoverished, German Catholic migrants tended to come from more prosperous backgrounds and were more likely to engage in skilled labor. Although they also would become a significant presence in the urban North, German immigrants were far more likely than the Irish to gravitate toward the fertile and inexpensive farmland in the Midwest. The region between St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Cincinnati is known as the "German triangle" because of the large number of Germans present there.

The first German parish in the United States was founded in Philadelphia in 1787; a century later there were 2,250 German-speaking parishes in the country. Three-fourths of these were located in the five midwestern dioceses of Cincinnati, St. Louis, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Chicago, but German parishes also appeared in New York and Philadelphia (where there were, respectively, 37 and 11 German parishes). As mandated by Catholic theology, Masses celebrated in Irish and German parishes were identical in format and structure. But the worship styles differed dramatically, as German parishes invariably featured more elaborate liturgies, incorporated more music, and overall displayed more pomp and ceremony. Devotional life also bore a distinctive German stamp. The key difference between Irish and German parishes, however, was language. Unlike the Irish, the Germans spoke a foreign language, and believing that "language saves faith," they were far more committed to establishing parishes in which they could hear sermons and practice devotions in their native tongues.

The impetus for founding German parishes often came from the laity. A group of leaders in the immigrant community would purchase land, raise funds, and petition the bishop for a priest. Once established, German parishes were characterized by significant lay involvement. Irish immigrants generally collaborated more closely with clergy in establishing and governing parishes. One study of three hundred Catholic parishes in the mid-nineteenth century showed that 62 percent of German parishes operated according to a lay trustee system, in which elected members of the laity shared nonsacramental responsibilities with a clergy member. Irish parishes, whose members characteristically exhibited more deference to clergy, were far less likely to have lay trustees.

Several factors explain German Catholics' relatively weaker attachment to clergy. First of all there was the religious experience imported from Germany, where there was a strong tradition of lay involvement in parish affairs. But conditions in the new country also had an impact. Compared with the English-speaking Irish, they had far fewer German-speaking priests available to them. Moreover, Catholicism was not the dominant religion in the German American community in the way it was for Irish American Catholics; German American Catholics, therefore, had to contend with anticlericalism and anti-Catholicism within the secular and Protestant German-speaking ethnic community. As a result the German parish was more self-contained than its Irish counterpart and played a more comprehensive role in sustaining ethnic identity among new arrivals and

their descendants. This greater group consciousness among German Catholic immigrants ensured that German parishes played a definitive role in the social as well as religious life of the people, and compared with their Irish counterparts, German parishes featured a much more elaborate organizational network. In addition to devotional societies, the typical German parish sponsored life insurance organizations, music societies, military groups, and a host of other organizations. Among the most popular parish associations, or *Vereine*, was the *Unterstützungsverein*, which had as its main purpose the raising of money for the relief of the poor, the sick, and families of deceased members.

Another common society in the German parish was the *Jägercompagnie*, which was initially organized as a parish militia to protect church property from anti-Catholic antagonists. For if the massive influx of immigrants in the first half of the nineteenth century transformed the demographics and worship styles of the Roman Catholics in the United States, it also changed how they were perceived by their non-Catholic fellow citizens. The rapid growth of the Catholic population, its association with lower economic classes, and its “foreign” religious practices were a major contributing factor to the rise of anti-Catholicism in the 1830s and 1840s.

Immigration and the Rise of Anti-Catholicism

In the early national period the Catholic community was too small and too ethnically indistinct from the Protestant majority to make anti-Catholicism a major force in American culture. After 1830, though, the rapid increase in the pace of Catholic migration to the United States, combined with the persistence of ethnic traditions among Catholic immigrants, raised new doubts about whether Catholics could be completely loyal to the United States when their spiritual leader was also a temporal prince in Italy. In 1835 inventor Samuel Morse published “The Imminent Dangers to the Free Institutions of the United States through Foreign Immigration,” in which he argued that Jesuits were in control of the transatlantic movement of Catholics and were directing the newcomers to strategic points in the nation in preparation for an attempt to overthrow the government. Rev. Lyman Beecher, one of the most popular preachers of the antebellum era, was another American leader who perceived the sharp increase in the Catholic population as a threat to the republic. In his “Plea for the West,” also published in 1835, Beecher observed that “no government is more complex and difficult of preservation than a Republic . . . a tenth part of the suffrage of the

nation, thus condensed and wielded by the Catholic powers of Europe, might decide our elections, perplex our policy, inflame and divide our nation, break the bond of our union, and throw down our free institutions.”

Beecher’s sermons contributed to one of the most violent anti-Catholic episodes in American history, the burning of the Charleston convent in 1834. Also contributing to that incident was a lurid fascination with the inner lives of priests and nuns. As women who lived and worked in all-female environments, who ran institutions in the public domain, who wore mysterious clothes, and who took vows of chastity, nuns’ “secret” lives figured prominently in Protestant fantasies. By far the best-selling version of this was Maria Monk’s *Aufful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery in Montreal*, first published in 1836. Monk described how she had been kidnapped, taken to a convent, and impregnated by a priest. Her sordid tale went on to recount how the nuns baptized her baby before killing it and burying the body under a convent. The fact that Monk’s story was quickly proved a sham did not diminish its popularity. *Aufful Disclosures* sold 300,000 copies between 1836 and 1860 and was outsold in antebellum America only by Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

Another decisive factor contributing to the rise of anti-Catholicism was the fact that the beginning of massive Catholic immigration to the United States coincided precisely with the period in which Americans were attempting to provide a universal education to its citizens. The “common schools” incorporated in the antebellum period claimed to be nonsectarian, but in reality their leaders and curriculum often replicated the anti-Catholic bias of the dominant culture. In particular, church leaders and Catholic parents routinely objected to the use of textbooks that disparaged the Church of Rome and to the compulsory reading of the King James Bible. Until the early 1840s, though, most bishops and Catholic leaders would have settled for a public school system that was truly nonsectarian rather than devote already scarce resources to building and funding parish schools. But a series of events in major Catholic centers of New York and Philadelphia would change their minds. John Hughes, the Irish-born bishop of New York between 1833 and 1863, played a pivotal role in this development.

Immigration and the Development of a Catholic Parochial School System

In 1840 John Hughes (1797–1864) confronted New York’s Public School Society, an organization of leading Protestants

who dictated the curriculum of the city's schools. Over the course of a two-year battle, Hughes grew convinced that Catholic children would never get an unbiased education in public schools. Unsuccessful in his bid to secure public funds for private schools, Hughes exhorted U.S. Catholics and new arrivals to establish and finance separate schools; his dictum, "Build the school house first, and the church after," suggests the high level of priority he assigned to this task. Hughes's crusade for Catholic schools received added impetus in 1844, when Catholics in Philadelphia petitioned the local school board to permit their children to read the Douay (English language) translation of the Bible. Protestant outcry resulted in a series of "Save the Bible" rallies throughout the city. When violence erupted at one of these rallies, a two-week period of rioting ensued that led to the burning of two Catholic churches and thirty Catholic homes and ended only with the declaration of martial law. In the aftermath of the conflicts in New York and Philadelphia, the American hierarchy would become progressively more attached to the idea that Catholic children belonged in church-sponsored schools.

But if church leaders had created parish schools primarily in response to anti-Catholic sentiment, they committed to them—and organized them into a comprehensive, diocesan-based system—for an assortment of other reasons. Foremost among these was the increasing secularization of the public school system throughout the nineteenth century. By the early 1880s, it was evident that Catholics' objection to public schools rested less on those schools' antipathy toward Catholics and more on their apathy with regard to religion. In 1883 the editors of Philadelphia's *Catholic Standard* ranted against "godless" public schools, declaring that "Catholics should avoid the terrible danger of entrusting our children's salvation to teachers . . . who have no religion of any kind." Catholic criticism of public schools would increase in direct proportion to their secularization.

Continuing immigration also explains Catholics' escalating commitment to a separate, church-sponsored school system. German immigrants in the 1840s had been the first Catholic ethnic group to become emphatic supporters of parochial education; given their fervent belief that "language saves faith," it made sense that they would insist that their children be instructed in the language of the homeland. Tellingly, two-thirds of midwestern German parishes established schools within two years of their founding, compared with only one-fourth of Irish parishes. Immigrant groups who arrived later in the nineteenth century, most notably Polish Catholics, would buttress the ethnic argument for Catholic schools. The

Catholic Church's institutional commitment to a parallel school system was solidified by 1884, when, at the Third Plenary Council in Baltimore, American bishops decreed that every Catholic parish in the nation have a school attached within two years. This unreasonable goal was never reached, but the American parochial school system nevertheless grew into the largest nonpublic system in the world.

Catholics, of course, were not the only American religious group who objected to the secularization of the public school system. Neither were they the only denomination for whom ethnicity provided a rationale for separate schools. But no other group had the resources or the population to build such a large school system. This reality points to a third reason why Catholic hierarchy and clergy were able to muster such strong support for separate schools: the exponential growth of women's religious communities, both in size and number, provided a viable population of teachers willing to staff them. In 1840, when there were fewer than 200 Catholic schools in the United States, there were approximately 900 sisters in the country, disbursed among fifteen orders. Sixty years later, with the commitment complete, the American population of nuns had multiplied to 46,583 sisters among 170 congregations. Of these, the vast majority were teaching.

Immigration and Religious Life

Immigration was a major contributing factor to the rapid growth of Catholic women's religious life in America. Of the sixteen women's religious communities that were established in the United States between 1830 and 1850, eleven were European congregations who sent missionaries to the United States, usually at the behest of bishops or priests. In 1843 Rev. Edward Sorin, C.S.C., the founder of the University of Notre Dame, summoned four Sisters of the Holy Cross from LeMans, France. Within a few years these women opened the institution that would eventually become Saint Mary's College. Also in 1843, Rev. Michael O'Connor, the newly appointed bishop of Pittsburgh, asked the superior of the Sisters of Mercy in Ireland to send several nuns to assist him. Having seen the work of Catherine McAuley's "walking nuns" in Dublin, O'Connor knew how well they would serve Pittsburgh's population. Within days of their arrival, Mother Frances Warde and seven companions began visiting the poor and sick, and before long they established permanent educational, health care, and social service institutions. As they spread to other American cities and small towns, the Sisters of Mercy developed a variety of creative responses to

the needs of the local church, founding and staffing schools, hospitals, homes for working women, homes for the aged, orphanages, employment agencies, and home health care organizations.

Ethnicity was often a consideration when the bishops requested American foundations of European communities. In 1847 a group of School Sisters of Notre Dame, based in Munich, arrived in St. Mary's, Pennsylvania, to undertake the education of children in the local German Catholic community. By 1892, the congregation had over two thousand members who were educating seventy thousand Catholic children across twenty dioceses in seventeen states. Like their Irish counterparts, German immigrant nuns engaged in other ministries besides teaching. The Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, a congregation from Dernbach, Germany, arrived in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1868, and by the end of the century members from the American foundation staffed orphan asylums, hospitals, and infirmaries throughout the Midwest.

Over time the Sisters of Mercy, Poor Handmaids, and other European congregations began to attract new members from among native-born Catholics in the ethnic communities in which they ministered. Irish immigrant daughters, in particular, joined convents in large numbers. The "greening" of American religious life is evident in the Sisters of St. Joseph of Philadelphia, a community derived from a French congregation of nuns who had established an American foothold at Carondolet, Missouri, in 1836. From there four sisters traveled to Philadelphia in 1847 to establish an orphanage. Ten years later, the Philadelphia community totaled fifty-four members. Thirty-five of these had been born in Ireland, three hailed from Germany, and the remaining sixteen were native-born with Irish surnames.

Men's religious life followed a similar pattern. The Redemptorists, an order originally established in Italy that had established a significant presence in German-speaking countries, sent their first missionaries to the United States to minister to German-born clergy in 1832 and would spread to other major American cities by the end of the Civil War. Priests and brothers who staffed Most Holy Redeemer Church in New York, the city's most prominent German parish in the mid-nineteenth century, were all Redemptorists who had been born in German states. The congregation opened an American seminary in 1851 to prepare more priests to minister at German American parishes. Benedictines from Bavaria and Switzerland also contributed a significant number of German-speaking clergy,

opening monasteries in western Pennsylvania, Indiana, Minnesota, and Missouri.

Missionary priests contributed to the importation and spread of European devotions, many of which fostered ethnic identity. Among the Germans, the Redemptorists encouraged new arrivals to replicate devotional practices of the fatherland, including Marian devotions focused on the Assumption and Immaculate Conception. Redemptorists also encouraged the spread of societies such as the Archconfraternity of the Holy Family, as well as devotions to particular saints. St. Joseph was among those especially beloved among German Americans; the Joseph Verein, founded in New York in 1843, was the oldest relief society in Most Holy Redeemer parish in New York City.

Other Marian devotions were embraced by Catholics of different ethnic groups. By far the most popular expression of Marian piety involved Our Lady of Lourdes, a devotion that grew out of an apparition of the Blessed Virgin to a French peasant girl in 1858. The aforementioned Edward Sorin (1814–1893) of the French Congregation of the Holy Cross played a central role in popularizing American devotion to Lourdes by making Notre Dame the epicenter of Catholic devotion to Lourdes. In 1865 he founded the journal *Ave Maria*, which quickly became one of the most widely read Catholic publications in America. In 1877 a replica of the grotto at Lourdes was constructed on Notre Dame's campus. European promotion of Lourdes and other devotions was one manifestation of the "Romanization" of Catholicism, the effort to unify a diverse church under and consolidate power in the Vatican. As mentioned previously, Irish Catholics in Ireland and the United States were in full support of this trend.

Despite the presence of missionaries from other European countries, it was Irish Americans who would dominate the ranks of both the American clergy and hierarchy. By 1900 two-thirds of all Catholic bishops in the United States were of Irish descent, and in regions such as New England this ratio approached three-fourths. The presence of so many Irish in positions of authority ensured that the Irish tradition of lay deference to clergy and hierarchy would become the prevailing model in the American church. This is not to say that Irish hegemony went uncontested. On the contrary, non-Irish Catholic immigrant groups repeatedly clamored for more non-English-speaking priests and bishops, for the right to worship in their native languages, and for the retention of ethnic customs and traditions in parish and devotional life.

Ethnic Conflict in the American Catholic Church

Throughout the nineteenth century conflict erupted on the parish and diocesan level between different Catholic ethnic groups. In territorial parishes with a mixed ethnic population, parishioners argued about a host of issues, ranging from the proper pastoral response to new arrivals to the kind of hymns sung at Mass. In dioceses, battles raged between parishioners of German-speaking parishes and members of the Irish-dominated episcopacy over the appointment of pastors, finances, and governance. Animosity between German and Irish Catholics reached a fever pitch in the late nineteenth century, when Peter Paul Cahensly, a German politician, visited the United States on behalf of the St. Rafael Society for the protection of German immigrants. Cahensly claimed that Catholic immigrant communities in the United States had suffered a loss of “ten million souls” as a result of the Irish American hierarchy’s insensitivity to the ethnic traditions of non-Irish Catholics and the dearth of non-English-speaking bishops. In his Lucerne Memorial, a document he presented to Pope Leo XIII in 1891, Cahensly called for more Roman involvement in establishing and funding national parishes and schools in the United States and greater immigrant representation among the American hierarchy. “Cahenslyism” inspired outrage among key church leaders. James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore, the most influential member among the American hierarchy, argued that it would confirm anti-Catholics’ worst fears about Vatican intervention in American affairs. Also decrying Cahenslyism was Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, Minnesota, whose “Americanist” agenda included rapid assimilation of immigrants and cooperation between public and parochial schools. In part because of the vehement reaction it evoked in the United States, Cahensly’s proposal was tabled by the Vatican, though German Americans were partially vindicated, in 1899, when an apostolic letter curbed the Americanizing impulses of Ireland and his supporters.

Although Irish clergy and laity would continue to exert a powerful influence over the U.S. Catholic Church well into the twentieth century, increasing numbers of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, as well as migrants from the Western Hemisphere, would again transform the ethnic composition and religious practices of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

Roman Catholic Immigration after 1880

Whereas German and Irish arrivals dominated Catholic migration to the United States before the Civil War, in the

postbellum period it would be far more diverse. In 1820 the Catholic Church in America included no more than three foreign-language groups; a century later it was a cosmopolitan church whose members spoke at least twenty-eight different languages. Irish and Germans remained the two largest groups, followed by Italians, Poles, French Canadians, and Mexicans. According to the religious census of 1916, these six ethnic groups accounted for at least three-quarters of the Catholic population.

Italian American Catholics

The first permanent Italian American parish, St. Mary Magdalen de’ Pazzi, was established in Philadelphia in 1857. Major Italian immigration to the United States, however, did not begin until 1880. By 1900 close to one million Italians arrived in the United States, almost all of whom were Catholics, and twenty years later the Italian American population had risen to over four million. Less fervently invested in either the priesthood or the parish than their Irish and German counterparts, Italian immigrants practiced a style of Catholicism that was oriented toward family devotion and firmly rooted in the religious traditions of the peasant villages of their native lands. Unlike in Ireland, where Catholicism was the religion of the beleaguered minority, the church in Italy was associated with the landowning upper class and the status quo. Many immigrants from southern Italy thus exhibited a pronounced anticlericalism and a disassociation from the institutional church. Whereas Irish Catholicism revolved around attending Mass and receiving the sacraments, Italian practices centered on devotions in the home and in communal religious celebrations. Beginning in the 1880s, for example, Italian Catholic immigrants in East Harlem devoted an entire week each July to a celebration in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The devotion, like the statue of Our Lady itself, had traveled to Harlem from Salerno. The highlight of the annual *fiesta* involved a procession, in which thousands of devotees marched behind *la Madonna* through the streets of Harlem, carrying their intentions with them to lay at her feet. Robert Orsi’s study of this celebration demonstrates the intimate connection between Italian American homes and the devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The shrines to Our Lady of Mount Carmel that were set up in the bedrooms of Italian Harlem underscored the sacredness of the home and family.

Italian Americans’ relative detachment from parish life sparked criticism from an Irish-dominated clergy and hierarchy. In turn, Italian immigrants felt like second-class citizens

in the institutional church; those who settled in territorial parishes were often relegated to attending separate masses in church basements. The chronic shortage of Italian-speaking priests, and the lack of sympathy it evoked from the Irish, also rankled. It was in partial response to this problem that Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, the bishop of Piacenza, Italy, established the Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo in 1887, charging them with the ministry of Italian immigrants in the United States. The “Scalabrini Fathers,” as they were known, joined Italian-speaking members of other male religious congregations such as the Servites and the Augustinians in serving Italian immigrants throughout the country, both in parochial and nonparochial institutions. Among the latter was the St. Rafael Society for the Protection of Italian Emigrants, an organization modeled on a German organization of the same name (St. Rafael was the patron saint of travel). Women religious also devoted themselves to the pastoral care of Italian immigrants in America. In 1889 Mother Frances Cabrini, the Italian-born founder of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, arrived in the United States and along with other members of her congregation established hospitals, orphanages, and schools to serve Italian immigrants across the United States. Native-born Italians Blandina and Justina Segale, biological sisters as well as members of the same religious community, founded and operated the Santa Maria Institute in Cincinnati, a settlement house that served the city’s Italian Catholics.

Polish American Catholics

Like Italians, Polish Catholics brought their own religious traditions to the American Catholic Church. The period of greatest migration of Poles occurred between 1870 and 1914, when over two million arrived in the United States. Throughout this period Poland did not exist as a country, its territory having been divided among Germany, Russia, and Austria in 1795. For ethnic Poles religious devotion was interwoven with devotion to their dismembered homeland. Devotion to Our Lady of Czestochowa, who had been proclaimed queen of Poland in 1656, was infused with political as well as religious significance.

The Polish tradition of lay involvement in establishing and governing parishes also affected the church in the United States. Most of the early Polish parishes were founded through the initiative of laypeople rather than clerical authorities. Relying on Old World precedent, Polish American Catholics sought and received control over parish finances, assigned a great deal of authority to parish councils,

and petitioned local ordinaries for Polish-speaking pastors. Polish attachment to ethnic religious customs produced the first major split in the American Catholic Church in 1896, when schismatic parishes in cities with large Polish populations, especially Chicago, Buffalo, and Scranton, Pennsylvania, united under the Polish National Catholic Church, the only American ethnic church to survive a breakaway from the Roman Catholic Church. The vast majority of Polish American Catholics retained allegiance to Rome, though their distinctive styles of Catholicism created other clashes with an Irish-dominated hierarchy. One source of perpetual conflict was the lack of Polish representation in the episcopacy. The first Polish American bishop was not appointed until 1908, and it was not until 1961 that a Polish American was elevated to the head of a major Roman Catholic diocese in America (Archbishop—later Cardinal—John Krol in Philadelphia).

Unlike Italians, Polish American Catholics actively participated in the creation of national parishes. In Chicago, site of the largest Polish population outside of the homeland, Poles established thirty-five national parishes by 1918. Given this strong commitment to the parish and the fusion of religion, language, and nationality, it is not surprising that Polish Catholics rivaled German Catholics in their deep commitment to ethnic parochial schools. Viewing public schools and non-Polish parish schools with equal suspicion, Polish Americans contributed their meager financial resources to send their children to schools where classes were taught in Polish, English was considered a foreign language, and the curriculum emphasized Polish history as well as religion. Here again, it would be women religious from the homeland who would establish and sustain these institutions. One of the largest Polish congregations was the Felician Sisters, originally founded in Warsaw and officially known as the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Felix of Cantalice. The Felicians established an American foundation in rural Wisconsin in 1874 and by 1900 were teaching Polish immigrant children at forty-one parish schools in eleven states. These and other Polish Catholic schools helped preserve both religious values and Polish heritage.

The primary caretakers of religion and ethnic identity, however, were mothers in Polish American homes, where women created and maintained family shrines to Our Lady of Czestochowa. On the feast of the Assumption, which was known in Poland as the Feast of Our Lady of the Herbs, Polish women took bouquets of flowers and herbs to church, had them blessed, and placed them with other holy objects in the home. On Epiphany priests visited the home and

inscribed the initials of the magi in chalk above all of the doors. During these and other religious holidays mothers prepared and served elaborate meals that reinforced ethnic traditions.

French Canadians

French Canadians constituted another sizable Catholic immigrant group in the late nineteenth century. Attracted to the small mill towns of New England by the expansion of the American textile industry, French Canadian settlers were vitally committed to language preservation and ethnic parishes. According to the religious census of 1916, over one million Catholics worshipped in French-speaking parishes. Although French Canadians brought with them a strong tradition of lay involvement and autonomous local churches, they encountered strong resistance to this model among the Irish-dominated hierarchy of New England. While they never approached the scale of those that gripped the Polish American community, skirmishes between French Canadian laity and Irish American hierarchy were not uncommon. In 1886, French Canadians in Fall River, Massachusetts, refused to contribute money to the church and eventually stopped attending Mass when the local bishop did not appoint a French Canadian priest. Facing a similar situation in North Brookfield, Massachusetts, in 1900, French Canadians went so far as to establish a new parish with their own pastor, a situation that eventually led the bishop to excommunicate all those involved.

Mexican Americans

Mexican Americans, another group of Catholic immigrants from the Western Hemisphere, round out the list of the six largest Catholic immigrant groups in the nineteenth century. The approximately eighty thousand Mexicans who became U.S. citizens as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (1848) practiced Catholicism amid a severe shortage of clergy; when the first bishop of Santa Fe was appointed in 1851, there were only twelve priests assigned to serve Catholics scattered across a geographical area as large as France. Consequently, the parish was not the most important religious organization for Mexican Americans. Mixing Catholic devotions and folk traditions, Mexican Americans practiced their religion through festivals in honor of patron saints, religious confraternities, and family-centered rituals. Like Poles and Italians, Mexican Americans blended family and devotional life in elaborate domestic shrines. A typical shrine would honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, patron saint of

Mexico, and would include several candles to symbolize continual devotion, rosaries, novena cards, and special medals.

Compared with what it would become in the twentieth century, Mexican migration to the United States proceeded at a relatively slow pace throughout the nineteenth. An estimated 216,500 Mexicans migrated across the Mexican-American border during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The flow of Mexican migration to the United States would increase dramatically after 1920, and later in the twentieth century Mexican Americans would join other Spanish-speaking Catholic immigrants in effecting yet another demographic transformation in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

Conclusion

In the 1920s it seemed that the era of the immigrant church was coming to a close. Anti-German sentiment and “100 percent Americanism” during the Great War had undermined Catholics’ support for ethnic parishes and schools. Immigration restriction laws in 1921 and 1924 ensured that an ever-larger percentage of U.S. Catholics would be members of the middle classes and the second and third generations. On the whole this group was far less supportive of national parishes, and before long the territorial parish replaced the national parish as the default model. The burgeoning Latino/a Catholic population, as well as increased migration from Asia and Africa, would by the late twentieth century make the Catholic Church in the United States “a communion of immigrants” and prompt it to shift its pastoral response. Until then, however, it would primarily be native-born Catholics who would determine the institutional agenda and popular religious practices of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Canada: Catholics*; *Devotionalism*; *Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools*; *Ethnicity*; *Hispanic Influence*; *Immigration: From the Colonial Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century*; *Latino American Religion: Catholics, in the Nineteenth Century*; *Literature*; *Lived Religion*; *Mexico: Independence to the Mexican Revolution*; *Mountain West and Prairie Region*; *Revivalism: Nineteenth Century*; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *Women Religious*.

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Roman Catholicism: The Age of the Catholic Ghetto

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a rapid increase in the American Catholic population, along with a fear of Protestant proselytizing, resulted in the development of an organizational and institutional structure within the Roman Catholic Church that can best be described as self-contained. Although designed to insulate Catholics from what church leaders believed was a secular and anti-Catholic American culture, this system also offered a variety of programs and opportunities that would provide numerous ways for Catholics to interact with each other and American society.

The Catholic population in 1910 was about 16,363,000; by 1920 it had grown to 19,828,000. This increase is reflected in the number of new dioceses created during the early twentieth century. Between 1903 and 1914 thirteen new dioceses were erected throughout the country, and in 1913 a separate jurisdiction for Byzantine-Slavic Catholics was established in Philadelphia. The number of lay Catholics demonstrated the need for the number of dioceses being created. Pius X acknowledged this dramatic growth in *Sapienter Consilio* (1908), a papal document that noted that the American church was no longer considered a missionary church dependent on the Propaganda Fide, the Vatican Congregation responsible for organizing missionary activity. The pontiff's decision, of course, did not give the American church

the right to act independently of Rome, but simply recognized that the situation had changed; the United States had in fact been sending missionaries to other countries for some time.

In addition to being removed from the list of missionary churches, twentieth-century American Catholicism would be strongly influenced by the papacy of Pius X (1903–1914) in other ways. The pope did not believe that the church should attempt to reconcile either its teachings or its practices with the progressive, industrial era and in 1907 issued the decree *Lamentabili sane exitu* (“Condemning the Errors of the Modernists”) and the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (“On the Doctrines of the Modernists”). These two documents not only condemned doctrinal errors believed to be supported by so-called modernists but also instituted ecclesiastical procedures designed to purge any theological thought believed to deviate from Catholic teaching. The papacy's concern with modern thought (in any form) had a tremendous impact on the intellectual life of American Catholicism; theologians and other academics would produce little if any creative scholarship during the first half on the twentieth century.

Local Catholic Life

The primary manifestation of twentieth-century Catholic institutional life was the local parish. Parishes were primarily territorial, meeting the needs of those living within a particular geographic community. Others, however, were designated as national parishes and ministered to a specific ethnic group. National parishes were staffed by priests able to communicate with an immigrant group in its native language (hearing confessions, preaching, and counseling) in an attempt to prevent them from leaving their ancestral church. The number of national parishes contained within a diocese was dependent upon the ethnic diversity of the area. Thirty-two national parishes involving twenty-two languages, for example, were founded in the Archdiocese of Detroit between 1918 and 1922. In many cities, however, most national parishes were established to provide for the spiritual and sacramental needs of Italian immigrants. By 1941 at least forty-one Italian parishes had been established throughout the Archdiocese of New York.

Many urban parishes, especially in the north, boasted impressive physical plants. It was not unusual for a parish to include a church, school, rectory, and convent, and sometimes even an auditorium or gymnasium. Urban areas with large numbers of Catholics also supported institutions that transcended the boundaries of individual parishes, such as

Catholic high schools, academies, and hospitals. Although Catholics were discouraged from participating in activities sponsored by secular or non-Catholic associations, they did move beyond the confines of the local parish by attending and becoming involved in these institutions.

Critics often charged the early twentieth-century Catholic Church with demonstrating a lack of concern for city dwellers who were poor and oppressed. Church leaders vehemently denied this accusation and pointed to Catholic social settlements, day nurseries, kindergartens, and camps as a manifestation of their concern for the poor. The first Catholic settlement house, the Santa Maria Institute, opened in Cincinnati in 1897 under the leadership of two Sisters of Charity, Blandina and Justina Segale (who were also biological sisters). In 1898 St. Rose's Settlement opened on New York City's East Side with laywoman Marion Gurney as head resident. By 1915 social settlements and other Catholic social service institutions, such as day nurseries, were operating in most major American cities.

Catholic charitable and philanthropic institutions differed from those established by secular reformers and social workers because they were concerned about the spiritual lives of those among whom they lived and worked. Catholic social settlements of the early twentieth century, for instance, usually offered classes in Christian doctrine and sacramental preparation in addition to the traditional educational and social activities found in settlements throughout the country. Catholic reformers, who had been influenced by the Progressive movement, believed the establishment of institutions dedicated to Catholic social service could help Catholics become loyal American citizens, allow them to participate in wholesome social activities, and still remain dedicated to the teachings and practices of Catholicism.

Rural Catholics, who did not enjoy the same access to the complex parish physical plants and supporting institutions as their urban counterparts, required a different response from church leaders. The Catholic Church Extension Society was founded in 1905 by Father (later Bishop) Francis Clement Kelly (1870–1948) to work with Catholics living in rural areas and small towns. Between 1907 and 1930 the society used railroad cars, known as chapels on wheels, to bring priests and temporary chapels to Catholics living in remote areas. By 1908 the American Catholic Missionary Union, which had been founded by Paulist Walter Elliott in the 1890s, was sponsoring approximately thirty mission bands of diocesan priests, who were assigned to work in parishes without access to a resident priest.

Catholics living in rural areas were also able to take advantage of the agencies and programs sponsored by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference (NCRLC), founded in 1923 by Father (later Bishop) Edwin V. O'Hara (1881–1956) of Oregon. During the 1920s the NCRLC was primarily concerned with providing religious education for rural Catholics and evangelizing non-Catholics living in rural areas of the United States. Over the years the conference expanded its work to advocate for agricultural policies, federal aid for farmers, and programs attempting to eradicate world hunger.

Hierarchy

Bishops appointed to American dioceses and archdioceses during this era would contribute to the shaping of the twentieth-century church in the United States. The appointment of William H. O'Connell as bishop of Portland, Maine, in May of 1901 marked the beginning of what has been called the Romanization of the American hierarchy. O'Connell, who was serving as rector of the North American College in Rome at the time, did not appear on the lists of candidates endorsed by either the priests of the diocese or the bishops of the Boston province, but was selected by the Vatican to fill the vacant see. The following year, two major American sees, New York and Chicago, became vacant, following the deaths of Michael Corrigan and Patrick Feehan. Their successors, John Farley in New York and James Quigley in Chicago, were appointed because they were well known to Italian Cardinal Francesco Satolli, first apostolic delegate (1893–1896) to the United States.

Throughout most of the first half of the twentieth century, the appointment of bishops continued to be based on Roman connections and international politics as much as on the rankings provided by priests and bishops. Following the death of Chicago's James Quigley in 1915, George Mundelein (1872–1924) was appointed his successor. Mundelein was originally slated to be named bishop of Buffalo, but the Vatican, acting on a request from the British Foreign Office that a bishop of German descent not be assigned to any American diocese bordering Canada, named him to the Chicago archdiocese. Mundelein's friendship with Apostolic Delegate Giovanni Bonzano ensured that he would soon be the most influential bishop in the American hierarchy. Following the death of Bishop Edmond Prendergast of Philadelphia in 1918, Dennis Dougherty (1865–1951), who had studied and been ordained in Rome, was appointed archbishop. On March 7, 1921, he was named a cardinal.

This generation of American bishops actively discouraged Catholics from participating in Protestant and secular culture. In Philadelphia, Dennis Cardinal Dougherty prohibited the 825,000 Catholics living within the boundaries of his archdiocese from attending any motion picture under pain of serious sin. Hollywood films, the prelate believed, demonstrated an opposition to Christian civilization, including the sacrament of marriage, pure and virtuous women, the sanctity of the home, and lawful authority. Philadelphia Catholics complied with the cardinal's request, as did a number of Protestant congregations whose ministers supported Dougherty's objections to the industry, and the area's movie attendance decreased by about 40 percent.

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, church leaders continued their attempts to discourage Catholics from participating in activities deemed inappropriate from the perspective of church teaching; at the same time, however, they began to play a role in the formation of public policy. In an effort to replicate the work of the Federal Council of Churches, Paulist Father John J. Burke invited representatives from all dioceses and Catholic organizations to a meeting at the Catholic University of America in 1917. Those attending agreed to form the National Catholic War Council, an organization charged with coordinating all Catholic activities related to the war effort, including funding programs conducted by the Knights of Columbus, ensuring that there were enough Catholic chaplains to offer spirituality and solace to troops, and reminding those serving in the military of their responsibility to adhere to Catholic moral teachings. Other Catholic associations composed primarily of laypeople also began to represent their church in the public square. The Knights of Columbus, a fraternal organization, was a strong Catholic presence in military camps throughout the country, and other groups, such as women graduates of the National Catholic School of Social Service, also visibly contributed to the American war effort.

The council was so successful that Burke decided not to disband it after the armistice, but to transform the National Catholic Welfare Council (NCWC) into an organization that would lobby for legislation of special interest to Catholics, and offer advice to bishops about issues being debated in their state legislatures. Dennis Dougherty of Philadelphia and Boston's William Cardinal O'Connell disagreed with Burke's plan and joined forces to prevent the continuance of the NCWC by lobbying both in Rome and among their American colleagues. After a great deal of correspondence and American visits to the Vatican, those in favor of the NCWC

prevailed, and Benedict XV formally approved the National Catholic Welfare Council on April 10, 1919 (the name changed to the National Catholic Welfare Conference in 1922).

The NCWC immediately began to examine problems facing the American economy and social order in the postwar years. In 1918 the bishops asked Father John A. Ryan (1869–1945), a professor of economics at the Catholic University of America, to draft a document addressing the problems of postwar reconstruction. The plan, initially and best known as "The Bishops' Program for Social Reconstruction" but published under the simpler title "Social Reconstruction," recommended that the government continue several agencies that had been created during the war, including the U.S. Employment Service and the National War Labor Board, which supported collective bargaining and the rights of labor to organize, issues important to the immigrant and working-class Catholic population. Ryan's plan also called for vocational training schools, minimum wage laws, and a variety of social insurance programs to be established. Many of his suggestions would be realized in the legislative initiatives of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal.

The Bishops' Program generated a good deal of controversy because some prelates, such as Bismarck's Vincent Wehrle, believed Ryan's proposals were nothing more than socialism; others simply found his ideas more radical and daring than they were willing to support. Included in this group was Boston's William O'Connell, who refused to support the growing reform movement to prohibit child labor on the grounds that parents, not the government, knew what was best for children. The social action program drafted by Ryan, however, would allow the church to ally itself with the New Deal legislation of the 1930s. In return, Roosevelt would seek a closer alliance with American Catholics, who were coming to be perceived—partially as a result of the work of the NCWC—as an influential voting bloc.

Education

American bishops during this era encouraged and supported the development of a Catholic educational, cultural, and intellectual life. One immediate response of the hierarchy to the increased numbers of American Catholics was to establish a nationwide parochial school system. At the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore (November 1884), the bishops issued several decrees related to the development of a network of parochial elementary and secondary schools. The majority of prelates agreed that every parish was to house a

school, and parents were to provide their children with a Catholic education rather than enrolling them in public schools. The 1917 Code of Canon Law reinforced the bishops' mandate by prohibiting Catholic children from attending schools that enrolled non-Catholics, including American public schools. In the years following World War I, the growing number of Catholics moving into the middle classes allowed American church leaders to undertake an extensive expansion of the parochial school system. In 1900, for instance, about 37 percent of American parishes sponsored schools; by 1930 that figure had increased to 40.5 percent.

As the number of parochial schools increased, some non-Catholic and anti-Catholic groups were uncomfortable with such a visible manifestation of a Catholic presence in the United States. In the early 1920s the Ku Klux Klan in Oregon campaigned for a referendum requiring parents to send their children to public schools; the bill's passage would have effectively outlawed parochial schools. When voters approved the Oregon School Law in 1922, the church fought back, challenging the law in the United States Supreme Court. *Pierce v. The Society of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary* declared the state law unconstitutional and granted parents the right to send children to the school of their choice. This decision allowed the American church to continue its efforts to establish a parochial school in every Catholic parish.

In addition to embarking on an ambitious program to increase the number of parochial schools, the bishops supported several proposals intended to improve the quality of these schools, including competency exams for teachers and the establishment of normal schools to provide teacher training. Although Pius XI's (1922–1939) encyclical *Divini Illius Magistri* ("On the Christian Education of Youth," 1929) noted the importance of good teaching, the hierarchy was also influenced by the attempts of state governments to improve public education in the years following World War I. By 1926 many states had implemented programs designed to ensure the proper certification of teachers. These requirements would have a great effect on the women religious primarily responsible for staffing parochial schools, many of whom were often immigrants themselves and lacked the credentials required of public school teachers. In the mid-1920s, for instance, a study in Chicago found that many Polish teaching sisters could communicate only in broken English. For immigrant parents and clerics, who were often adamant that children learn English in addition to academic subjects, the inability of teaching sisters to speak good

English was a major concern. The establishment of a teachers' college at the Catholic University of America (1911) and Americanization programs advocating the exclusive use of English in schools (1920s) would help resolve these issues. Although religious communities supported professionalization, the Great Depression, combined with the need for teacher-sisters, often prevented women religious from receiving the necessary educational training.

By 1900 sixty-three Catholic colleges and universities for men had been established throughout the United States. The largest and most well known was the University of Notre Dame (South Bend, Indiana), staffed by the Congregation of Holy Cross. Most of these colleges were administered by religious orders, including Jesuits, Benedictines, Christian Brothers, Franciscans, and Vincentians. The Catholic University of America was under the direction of the entire American hierarchy; seven other colleges came under the jurisdiction of local dioceses.

Although men's colleges and universities were an important part of the American Catholic educational enterprise, the development of a Catholic culture in the United States mandated comparable institutions for Catholic women. The College of Notre Dame (Baltimore, Maryland), the first Catholic women's college, was established by the School Sisters of Notre Dame in 1896. Four years later, Trinity College (Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur) in Washington, D.C., opened, and New Jersey's St. Elizabeth's Academy (Sisters of Charity) was chartered as a college. By 1930 seventy Catholic women's colleges, all sponsored by communities of women religious, had been established across the United States.

Associations and Publications

Catholic schools and colleges—and their faculty members—operated from the premise that American society was essentially hostile to religion. During the twentieth century Catholic scholars working in higher education began to form Catholic societies that paralleled many secular learned and professional organizations. It was hoped these societies would offer Catholic academics more support than they might receive from a secular association. Catholic historians, scholarly and nonprofessional, were given the opportunity to join the American Catholic Historical Association, founded by Peter Guilday in 1919; the society later adopted the *Catholic Historical Review*, which had begun publishing articles on Catholic history in 1915. The American Catholic Philosophical Association was founded in 1926 to encourage the Catholic

philosophical heritage; one year later the *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* began publication. In 1938 the American Catholic Sociological Society was established to validate the importance of what scholars believed was a distinctive Catholic sociology rooted in the church's social teachings. Still later, in 1948, the American Catholic Psychological Association was founded to incorporate Catholic teachings into the field, as well as to promote the burgeoning discipline of psychology in Catholic higher education.

Other organizations were intended to encourage Catholics interested in the arts and literature. The Catholic Art Association was founded in 1938. Originally established to bring together art teachers in Catholic schools (primarily teaching sisters), its mission was broadened under the leadership of layman Graham Carey. Francis X. Talbot, S.J., who served as editor of *America Magazine* from 1936 to 1944, organized the Catholic Book Club in 1928 to increase interest in Catholic writers such as Francois Mauriac. Talbot also founded the Catholic Poetry Society (1931), and helped to organize the Catholic Theater Conference in the 1930s. In 1924 Michael Williams founded *The Commonweal* (later changed to *Commonweal*) to offer interested lay Catholics news of literature, politics, and art.

Although the liturgical movement, which was dedicated to reforming worship within the Catholic Church, was not limited to Catholic members of academia, it must be included in any discussion of Catholic intellectual culture in the middle decades of the twentieth century. The founder and primary leader of the movement was Virgil Michel (1890–1938), a Benedictine priest from St. John's Abbey, Minnesota, who hoped, along with a number of theologians and liturgists, to promote a liturgical revival within American Catholicism. The movement's central goal was to increase the laity's understanding of the Mass by encouraging more active participation. Congregational singing was emphasized, and the laity were urged to follow the order of the Mass by using an English-language missal. By the 1950s, anticipating the decrees of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), some of the movement's proponents were voicing their belief that Mass should be celebrated in English. Although the liturgical movement never involved more than a small number of American Catholics, by the 1940s it was generating enough interest to hold annual national conferences.

The publication of a comprehensive Catholic encyclopedia, however, was probably the greatest scholarly effort sponsored by the Catholic Church during the first half of the twentieth century. The project developed as a response to a

1902 article titled "Poisoning the Wells" by Jesuit John Wynne, in which he deplored the ways in which Catholicism was being either ignored or misrepresented in other reference works. A total of sixteen volumes containing entries composed by almost fifteen hundred contributors (clergy and laity) was published by the Robert Appleton Company (New York) between 1907 and 1914. Believing it was important to remind readers that Catholics had contributed to all aspects of knowledge, the editors did not limit the almost 350,000 entries exclusively to Catholicism. Although it embraced a variety of perspectives, liberal and conservative, the encyclopedia received generally good reviews from both the Catholic and secular press.

Lay Organizations

American bishops did not agree on the place of lay organizations in the American Catholic world of the first half of the twentieth century. In 1901 the American Federation of Catholic Societies was founded to bring together the many existing groups devoted to education and social and charitable work. By 1912 the federation boasted approximately three million members; but the great majority of bishops preferred to encourage the development of lay organizations that would be supervised by the hierarchy. After World War I two such organizations dedicated to the lay apostolate were placed within the organizational structure of the NCWC. Founded in 1920, the National Council of Catholic Men (NCCM) was an association of Catholic men's groups that served as a clearinghouse for activities related to the laity. The NCCM staffed a radio and television office in New York City and in 1930 began to sponsor the weekly radio show the "Catholic Hour," hosted by Monsignor (later Bishop) Fulton Sheen (1895–1979). In the same year the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) was established to serve as a federation of Catholic women's societies. The NCCW was active in the movement to provide social workers with a professional education and supported the National Catholic School of Service for women in Washington, D.C. In 1947 the school merged with the Catholic University of America's School of Social Work (for men).

Other organizations were based in the local parish. Men were encouraged to join either the Holy Name Society or the St. Vincent de Paul Society. By the 1920s the Holy Name Society, dedicated to eradicating cursing and blasphemy from its members' speech, was the most popular parish organization for lay men. Meetings were held on Sunday mornings

after Mass, and usually included breakfast and a short talk on a subject related to Catholic teaching or values. St. Vincent de Paul societies were devoted to helping the needy of a particular area, not necessarily Catholics. Members were directed to search out those who were struggling, and the society would then attempt to alleviate their distress. Because most church leaders believed wives and mothers were responsible for handing down the faith, devotional societies and sodalities, combining prayer and socialization, were formed to attract the women of a parish.

Members of the laity also found a role in the area of religious education. In 1935 the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine was incorporated into the work of the NCWC by Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara, who believed the laity had an important role to play in passing down the faith. Laypeople involved in the CCD often found themselves assuming leadership positions on either a parish or national level.

Even though the NCWC did not work directly with Catholic youth, children were encouraged to participate in Catholic organizations, rather than becoming involved in activities sponsored by non-Catholic or secular groups. Boys were encouraged to be altar servers, and parishes often organized a junior sodality or altar society for girls. The largest group for Catholic boys and girls, however, was the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO), founded in Chicago in 1930 under the leadership of Bishop Bernard J. Sheil (1888–1969). Athletics, Sheil believed, could protect young Catholic men and women from the dangers of secular American culture. The boxing tournaments, camps, and athletic competitions sponsored by the CYO offered a Catholic alternative to programs offered by the YMCA and YWCA. The CYO later sponsored dances and public-speaking contests as alternative activities for those not interested in athletics.

Priesthood

Priestly ministry took several forms during the first half of the twentieth century. Before the Second Vatican Council, American Catholics viewed priests as men set apart from the laity, made holy by ordination. Seminary education followed a curricular structure that supported this view. Candidates for the priesthood often spent four years in a minor (college) seminary before entering a major seminary, where they received four years of theological education. During their years in the seminary, men studying for the priesthood were isolated from the larger culture because they were expected to fit a certain mold; they were to be obedient to their superiors, maintain a strict adherence to various appropriate

devotions, and enthusiastically and vocally uphold church doctrine.

The specific ministry of American priests differed from one part of the country to another. Priests in rural areas and parts of the South, for instance, often served as religious education teachers and parish administrators in addition to celebrating Mass and administering the sacraments. Sometimes serving two or three parishes at once, many rural priests found it necessary to delegate work and power to the laity before the decrees of Vatican II endorsed collaboration between clergy and laypeople. In urban areas and the Northeast, however, priests were plentiful, and in some areas, such as Boston, there were sometimes more priests than needed to provide an adequate ministry to the area's Catholic population.

John Ryan's work in the Social Action Department of the NCWC, along with his writings on various aspects of Catholic social teaching, inspired a number of American priests to enter the field of social justice during the 1930s. John O'Grady directed the National Conference of Catholic Charities from 1920 to 1961 and supported Social Security and the building of federally funded low-income housing. Luigi G. Ligutti worked with farmers who found themselves ruined by the Great Depression and in 1941 became the head of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Chicagoan George Higgins began working in the Social Action Department of the NCWC in 1944, becoming the director ten years later. These priests, and others who joined them in this work, found themselves involved in a very different ministry than their counterparts involved in parish ministry.

Other priests found themselves traveling a very different path. Charles Coughlin (1891–1979), known as the radio priest, was the pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower in Royal Oak, Michigan. By 1931 Coughlin, who began his radio career on a children's program at a Detroit radio station, was reaching millions of Americans every week. A staunch supporter of Roosevelt in 1932, Coughlin's radio ministry raised questions about whether the church was endorsing a presidential candidate. The American hierarchy adamantly denied they were supporting either Roosevelt or Hoover, but Coughlin continued to vehemently express his opinions about politics and economics during Roosevelt's first term. By the election of 1936 Coughlin had turned on Roosevelt and endorsed William Lemke, the Union Party's candidate. As his broadcasts became increasingly anti-Semitic and anti-democratic, the American hierarchy's concern about Coughlin continued to increase. A number of bishops believed he should be silenced, but such a decision could only be made

by the radio priest's immediate superior, the archbishop of Detroit. In 1942, when Edward Mooney succeeded Michael Gallagher as the leader of Detroit's Catholics, Coughlin was ordered to cease any involvement in politics and limit his work to that of a parish priest.

Catholics and Political Issues

Twentieth-century American Catholics, like their ecclesiastical leaders, sometimes found themselves involved in politics. In 1928 Catholics became embroiled in a heated presidential campaign, when Catholic New York governor Alfred E. Smith ran for president against Iowan Herbert Hoover. Despite the many scholarly debates that have taken place since Hoover defeated the first Catholic candidate for president, it is still not clear how much of a role religion played in the campaign. Several commentators have argued that the fact that Smith was from New York City and anti-Prohibition were at least as important as his faith in the minds of voters; others have noted that Smith's Catholicism, even though it hurt him in the South, may actually have helped his campaign in the North.

Whatever the reasons behind Smith's defeat, it is clear that American Catholics did not expect the intense manifestations of anti-Catholicism that erupted in the months following his nomination. Rumors that Protestants would lose their American citizenship or the pope would reside in the White House, along with cross-burnings engineered by anti-Catholic groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, were not as disturbing, however, as questions concerning the loyalties of American Catholics. A number of Americans were asking the question Catholics had been asked since the eighteenth century: can one be a loyal Catholic and a good American at the same time? Episcopal layman Charles C. Marshall echoed the thoughts of many when he asserted that the dogma and hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church were in opposition to American constitutional ideas. Responding to Marshall, Smith asserted his belief in religious liberty and the separation of church and state, but was unable to persuade the American public that he could be both a faithful Catholic and a loyal American.

During the 1930s Catholics became more involved with national and international political and social issues. The rise and growth of communism in Russia, the battle between communism and fascism in Spain, the persecution of the church in Mexico, and the growth of national socialism in Germany concerned American Catholics, who worried about the effects of these forces upon their country and their

church as well as the fate of co-religionists living in these nations. The greatest single international issue of concern to Catholics was communism because of its totalitarian and atheistic philosophies. Catholic senator Joseph McCarthy (a Democrat from Wisconsin) spearheaded the effort to eradicate communism from American government and culture. Catholics outnumbered Protestants among the senator's supporters, but most commentators agree McCarthy's campaign was focused on the American political tradition, rather than Catholic thought.

End of an Era

The American Catholic population continued to increase during the years following World War II. In 1945 twenty-five million Catholics were worshiping in fifteen thousand American parishes. More Catholics lived in the urban Northeast and Midwest than other parts of the country, however; in 1952, for instance, only one Catholic church served the entire city of Atlanta. Catholics began to move into the middle and upper classes in increasing numbers between 1945 and 1960. Although Catholics of the 1940s and 1950s were much more likely to have non-Catholic neighbors than earlier generations, some of the issues separating Catholics from other Americans remained in place, including controversies over state aid for parochial schools, legalization of birth control, and the appointment of an American ambassador to the Vatican.

During the post-World War II years, the hierarchy became more "Americanized." Rather than depending on Roman sources for recommending potential bishops, Pius XII (1939-1958) turned to several American prelates, including New York's Francis Cardinal Spellman and Cleveland's Edward F. Hoban, when an American see became vacant. Spellman's enthusiasm for his auxiliaries, for instance, led to the naming of James F. McIntyre and John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., as archbishops of Los Angeles (1948) and Philadelphia (1951).

In 1947 two-thirds of American Catholics were defined as lower class, and on average all continued to have fewer years of postsecondary education than their non-Catholic counterparts. By 1966 Catholics were not only earning more than the average American, they had completed more years of education. This meant a greater demand for both parochial schools and teaching sisters to staff them. During the late 1940s and 1950s, the building of parochial schools continued as Catholic veterans and their families joined other Americans in their trek to the suburbs. By 1959 more than four million students were attending parish elementary schools,

and during the 1950s 2,400 new elementary schools were built throughout the United States.

Many communities of women religious grew dramatically during the years following World War II. Their number of American sisters increased by more than 21,000 during the 1950s to 164,922 by 1960. Although this number showed a growth of 15 percent, the student population of Catholic schools increased by 200 percent in the same period. In addition to staffing schools, women religious were a major force in the administration of the many Catholic institutions built during the twentieth century. Despite ministries requiring them to live an active lifestyle, the lives of women religious during this time were both regulated and restricted. Sisters were rarely allowed to return to their homes for a visit, for example, and they were paid a very low salary (an elementary school teacher usually received only about \$300 per year) that was transmitted directly to the community rather than the individual.

This rapid growth of the American Catholic education system took place at a time when state and local governments were requiring more education for teachers. This posed a special dilemma for American nuns, who in the past often entered the classroom before completing a college degree. The National Catholic Education Association (founded in 1904) was the only organization open to women religious and their needs. In 1953 the NCEA agreed to form a Sister-Education and Professional Standards Commission (SPES) to address this problem. The commission's name was changed to Sister Formation Conference (SFC) the following year; its goal was to promote the entire education (including religious and spiritual formation) of women religious.

By the mid-1950s American Catholics began to move away from the world of the Catholic ghetto. The seminal intellectual call for them to enter the larger intellectual culture came from Monsignor John Tracy Ellis (1905–1992), a professor at the Catholic University of America. In a 1955 essay titled “American Catholics and the Intellectual Life,” Ellis decried the lack of serious scholarship among American Catholics. He was particularly concerned about Catholic seminaries, colleges, and universities, claiming they were not as academically challenging as they could or should be because they were afraid to step out of their “self-imposed ghetto mentality.” Some Catholics were profoundly offended by Ellis's charge, but he is credited with beginning a movement that would lead to the promotion of rigorous scholarship in Catholic intellectual life, as well as higher standards in Catholic institutions of higher education.

The elections of Pope John XXIII (1958–1963) in 1958 and President John Fitzgerald Kennedy in 1960 signified the end of an era in American Catholic history. Although some Americans chose not to vote for a Catholic candidate for president, Kennedy's victory in the West Virginia primary demonstrated that the number of voters questioning a Catholic's ability to be a loyal citizen had decreased. In a major speech to the General Houston Ministerial Association, Kennedy clearly stated his firm belief in the separation of church and state and assured those attending that if he were ever forced to choose between performing his duty as president and his conscience, he would resign. Although Catholics voted overwhelmingly for Kennedy, it is equally obvious that Kennedy needed many Protestant votes to claim the presidency. If John Kennedy moved Catholics into the mainstream of American politics and culture, John XXIII would begin the process of moving the church into the modern world through the work and decrees of the Second Vatican Council. As a result of John XXIII's papacy and John Kennedy's election to the presidency, the world of American Catholics would change dramatically, and they began to experience both their church and their culture in a new way.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Architecture: Roman Catholic; Canada: Catholics; City Missions; Education: Seminaries and Theological Education; Film; Immigration: From World War I to the 1965 Immigration Act; Mexico: Twentieth Century; Music: Roman Catholic; Neo-Thomism; Progressivism; Prohibition; Radio; Religious Press; Religious Thought: Roman Catholic; Roman Catholicism entries; Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts from the Civil War to World War II; Women Religious; Women: Roman Catholic; Worship: Roman Catholic.*

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Roman Catholicism: The Cold War and Vatican II

In the middle of the twentieth century Catholics began to emerge from their social and political isolation, often called the Catholic ghetto, to engage American culture and politics as an increasingly important force. The decades of the 1950s and 1960s included growing tensions with communism; greater access to higher education, owing in large part to the post-World War II GI Bill; social revolution; and political unrest. Many Catholics were no longer immigrants but first- and second-generation Americans who more easily appropriated the habits of American society and culture. John F. Kennedy, a Boston Catholic, was elected president; Vatican II opened the church to the world; and Catholics entered the professional ranks in unprecedented numbers. It was a period of rapid change that wedded Catholics more deeply to American culture and saw them form a type of Catholicism that was distinctively American.

From 1940 to 1960, aided by the postwar baby boom, the Catholic population doubled. The 1950s saw the largest expansion of schools and churches since the Council of Baltimore a century earlier. As the population moved to the suburbs, bishops and pastors expanded their land holdings, physical plants, and programs, delving into the pockets of Catholics to pay for them.

At the same time that Catholic culture was so embedded, its foundations were stirring. Catholics were assimilating into American society, becoming wealthier, better educated, and geographically diversified. The majority were no longer immigrants. Opportunities in business, government, entertainment, education, and industry became available to Catholics in increasing numbers. They did not hold sway on the top echelons of the professions, but doors were opening that would change the economic, professional, and social status of the rising generation. Along with Georgetown, Notre Dame, Boston College, and Fordham, Catholics matriculated at Harvard, Princeton, and Yale.

For all of the changes, the Catholic subculture continued to flourish. For decades Catholics had the run of their neighborhoods. Feast days were celebrated publicly, with streets blocked off to accommodate long processions of priests, religious, and parishioners. May processions filled with hundreds of girls in white dresses and boys in school uniforms were annual events that bestowed an identity on the neighborhood. For Corpus Christi processions (parades through the streets on the feast of the body and blood of Christ celebrated in the spring), police and fire departments

cooperated in cordoning off sections of the neighborhood and in setting up temporary wooden structures that served as altars. Parishioners scrubbed porches, steps, curbs, and streets in preparation for the benediction service that would take place. Flowers, ribbons, and banners festooned the area, and people talked about the event all summer. These celebrations made up a part of the rhythm of the neighborhood. The parish school was *the* school. Sports teams, socials, dances, novenas, funerals, missions, weddings, lent, and advent set the calendar and created a place in which people found a common identity. People walked to church. Children walked to the parish school, came home for lunch, went to Mass as a group on First Fridays, and wore uniforms, as had their brothers and sisters before them in the school. There was continuity and cohesion.

There was also xenophobia. Catholics were told from the pulpit and in the classroom that they must not enter a Protestant church or a Jewish synagogue. The church was often unwelcoming to African Americans and only beginning to reach out to Hispanic Catholics. American society continued to be dominated by Protestants, but Catholics were making inroads.

Reactions to Communism

In 1917 in Fátima, Portugal, Mary, the mother of Jesus is said to have appeared to three shepherd children delivering messages about the future of the world. One of those messages from Our Lady of Fátima is reported to have said, "In the end, My Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she will be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world." Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924) had just led a revolution in Russia that overthrew the czar and created the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and a socialist state that suppressed the public expression of religion. The Roman Catholic Church reacted to these events by opposing communism at every turn.

Pope Leo XIII (pontificate 1878–1903) composed a prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel that read:

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle; be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray: and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Popes Pius XI (1922–1939) and Pius XII (1939–1958) instituted the use of this prayer as part of a set of prayers led by a priest at the foot of the altar after Mass in what was commonly called the “Prayers for the Conversion of Russia.” These prayers were used regularly until after Vatican II.

The church reinforced the state in its resistance to, and fight against, communism. In 1937, Pius XI issued an encyclical (a papal letter) titled *Divini Redemptoris* (“Divine Redeemer”) that condemned the Soviets and communism. He described the threat: “This all too imminent danger . . . is bolshevistic and atheistic communism, which aims at upsetting the social order and at undermining the very foundations of Christian civilization. In the face of such a threat, the Catholic Church could not and does not remain silent.”

Soviet communism was more than a threat to the nation; it was a threat to the faith. American Catholics thus had patriotic and religious motivation to fight communism. The country and the church engaged in a battle for the hearts and *souls* of American citizens.

In a speech to the Houston Baptist Association during his campaign for the presidency John F. Kennedy, the only Catholic president in U.S. history, privatized his faith by drawing a clear line between his Catholicism and his obligation to follow the Constitution. Nevertheless, Americans did not forget or ignore his religious identification, and Kennedy continued to practice his faith, which meant exposure to the church’s position against communism.

The 1963 encyclical of Pope John XXIII (1958–1963), *Pacem in Terris* (“Peace on Earth”), written two years after the erection of the Berlin Wall and shortly after the Cuban missile crisis, challenged the idea of just war, because the nuclear age had changed the ground rules for war. A forceful call for diplomacy over swords, it anticipated the negotiations over nuclear weapons that would engage Soviet Russia and the United States. This document addresses human rights and moral duties, the relationship between individuals and the state, the equality of nations, and the relationships between nations. For the first time in the history of papal encyclicals it is addressed not only to Catholics but also to all persons of good will, meaning the entire world.

On October 4, 1965, Pope Paul VI (1963–1978) addressed the United Nations diplomatic corps, the first pope to do so. He made an impassioned plea for peace between nations, saying, “No more war, never again war!”

Vatican II and the Cold War

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) convened in the midst of this political standoff between communism and

democracy, atheism and faith. The council concerned itself largely with internal matters of the church, seeking to reform its practices and update its theology; however, an institution as old and as influential as the Catholic Church cannot operate in social and political isolation. Whatever the church decided, the consequences would be felt by individuals, communities, governments, and nations. Part of the focus of the council was on freedom of religion. Communism had suppressed religion and expunged Christianity or driven it underground in Russia. The church could not stand by passively while religious freedom was trampled. The council took a stand on December 7, 1965, in one of the last of its documents to be promulgated, “Declaration on Religious Freedom” (*Dignitatis Humanae*), when it stated, “All the more is it a violation of the will of God and of the sacred rights of the person and the family of nations when force is brought to bear in any way in order to destroy or repress religion, either in the whole of mankind or in a particular country or in a specific community.” The reference to communism could not be mistaken. The church went on record in opposition to the repression of religion wrought by communism.

John Courtney Murray (1904–1967), an American Jesuit priest, proved to be one of the key theologians who guided the church’s hand in the creation of the Declaration on Religious Freedom. Murray was not a likely candidate for this role, given his struggles with the church in the decade preceding Vatican II and his late entrance into the council chambers. His theological work focused on religious freedom, the question of who might be saved beyond Catholics, and church–state relations. Sensing that he favored equality among Christian denominations and a separation of church and state, the Vatican disapproved of the direction and content of his work and in 1954 forbade him from publishing on the topic of religious freedom. After all, in much of Europe the church enjoyed the favor of governments and benefited financially and otherwise from the relationships. The American notion of separation of church and state included in the U.S. Constitution was little understood by Rome and even less desirable as a model.

Despite Murray’s troubles with the Vatican, his appeal to Americans did not wane, as demonstrated by the fact that his picture appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine in December 1960. Murray also had formidable critics among theologians, such as prominent Protestant thinkers Reinhold Niebuhr, who upheld Christian realism, and his brother Richard Niebuhr, an ethicist on the faculty of Yale. Murray’s ideas were shaped by his experiences as a citizen of the United States, a country in which religious persons of all persuasions

lived side by side and enjoyed the protection of the government. Because of Murray's influence, the Declaration on Religious Freedom is seen by some observers as the "American" document of Vatican II. The document argues that religious freedom is a right granted by God and grounded in the dignity of the human person, in natural law, and in divine revelation. The first line states "that men should act on their own judgment, enjoying and making use of a responsible freedom, not driven by coercion." The document extensively treats the theme of freedom from coercion in society.

The consequences of this thinking can be traced in part by the turn to democracy in heavily Catholic countries such as Chile, Poland, and the Philippines in the decades after Vatican II. The church aligned itself with democracy movements and abandoned its unflinching support for dictators and authoritarian governments. The respect for democracy, however, led to concern on the church's part that all forms of democratic ideas should not be treated as equal, with none able to make a claim to truth. John Paul II (1978–2005) expressed this concern in his 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus* ("The Hundredth Year," commemorating the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* ["Of New Things"]) when he wrote, "Those who are convinced that they know the truth and firmly adhere to it are considered unreliable from a democratic point of view."

Some Effects of Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council coincided with a social revolution in American society that included the women's liberation movement, protests against the Vietnam War, and the loosening, if not unraveling, of many social norms. The council fathers sought to update the church and bring its practices into line with the contemporary world. This was revolutionary for a church that had consciously separated itself from the world for so long, often condemning modernity. The council changed the language of the church's worship, the liturgy, from Latin into the vernacular. It welcomed contemporary forms and instruments of music, with the guitar displacing the pipe organ in many parishes. Many priests and sisters adopted garb that did not distinguish them from those whom they served. The changes initiated by the council, coupled with the tumult in American society, led to an exodus by tens of thousands from the priesthood, sisterhood, and brotherhood. The laity were empowered to take greater responsibility for their parishes and their baptismal commitment to be Christian. A shift from classical culture to modernity occurred, accompanied by a greater appreciation

for the immanence of God instead of the transcendence that pre-Vatican II theology had emphasized.

City neighborhoods, so long the preserve of white Catholic immigrants from Europe, were integrated, usually after much resistance, by increasingly mobile African Americans. Theologians objected openly to Vatican pronouncements on issues such as artificial birth control and sexual ethics. Many who remained in active ministry did so with the expectation of greater change still, such as the abolition of mandatory celibacy.

Accompanying the transition to the vernacular was a dizzying flurry of liturgical changes that altered significantly the face of Catholicism. Prior to Vatican II, the main altar in churches faced the front wall of the church in the sanctuary. Priests "said Mass" by facing the altar with their backs to the congregation. They followed complex rubrics that included bowing and genuflecting at different times during the Mass. The laity either sat or knelt for most of the Mass. After Vatican II, altars were turned around (or new ones were installed in front of the existing altars) so that the priest faced the people. Liturgical colors were adjusted, as, for example, in the case of funerals, for which the priest now wore white (as a sign of the hope of the resurrection of the dead) instead of black vestments. Latin hymns were translated into English, traditionally Protestant hymns were adopted, and a whole new cottage industry grew up around the creation of liturgical music, much of it accompanied by the guitar rather than the traditional church instrument, the organ.

Shortly after Vatican II, Catholics who had been required to fast from solid food from midnight the night before receiving Communion were required to fast only three hours; eventually that was further reduced to one hour. Pre-Vatican II Catholics received the host directly on their tongues and distributed only by priests. Vatican II introduced the practice of receiving the Eucharist (often in the form of ordinary bread instead of the thin wafer) in the palms of their hands from the priests and laity who distributed it. They also drank from the cup of consecrated wine. Many pre-Vatican II Catholics would privately and silently recite the rosary during the Mass. The new rubrics required them to respond to communal prayers offered during the liturgy, greet one another with a handshake of peace, read the scriptures, lead the congregational singing, offer prayers for the needs of the church and world, and stand for much of the celebration.

The American bishops were both inspired by Vatican II and aware of the tensions created by the Cold War, which produced a growing stockpile of nuclear weapons. They did

not hesitate to address a number of sensitive public policy issues, including the nuclear arms race. In doing so, they appealed to the ecclesiastical community and the civil community, using arguments constructed from the scriptures and from natural law. By grounding their documents in the Bible, they appealed to revelation that underpins all Christian theology. By employing a natural law argument, they were being consistent with Catholic theology that has relied on natural law reasoning since at least the time of Thomas Aquinas. Using natural law they attempted to influence public opinion and government policy by explicitly using a philosophical argument that did not require the public (and public officials) to share the faith disposition of the bishops. The 1983 pastoral letter that resulted, "The Challenge of Peace," was not only bold in content but also the product of an extraordinarily consultative process, something new for American bishops and for American Catholics. These pastorals addressed all Americans, not simply Catholics.

The impetus for the pastoral came from Vatican II and particularly from the Pastoral Constitution on the "Church in the Modern World" (*Gaudium et Spes*), which encouraged the bishops to read the "signs of the times" and to respond to them in ways consistent with the gospel. In the area of war and peace, the bishops' reading of the times indicated the need for a quest for peace, emphasized the unique destructive powers of nuclear weapons, and underlined the need to curb the escalating arms race. The peace pastoral attempted to analyze the moral issues involved in nuclear warfare and to suggest ways to peace. The church has traditionally defended a just war theory that allows for warfare under certain conditions. Nuclear war, an ever-present threat in the Cold War period, the pastoral argued, no longer fit under this rubric, since nuclear weaponry cannot compare to conventional weapons. Nuclear weapons are capable of destroying entire countries in a matter of minutes, and they readily violate all principles of proportionality. It is virtually impossible to contain their destructive effect to exclusively military targets. Thus "a limited nuclear war" seems an oxymoron. War, in any form, is no longer morally viable in the modern world, according to the bishops. Citing one of Pope John Paul II's homilies, the document asserts: "Today, the scale and the horror of modern warfare—whether nuclear or not—makes it totally unacceptable as a means of settling differences between nations. War should belong to the tragic past, to history; it should find no place on humanity's agenda for the future."

To some laypeople this sounded like a utopian dream. To others it was the only stance possible in an unstable world in

which the weaker nations were likely to suffer at the hands of the powerful. The document was careful to distinguish those who are Christian (and Catholic) from those who "do not share the same vision of faith," although it is ultimately intended for everyone regardless of religious commitment. For Catholics it was an internal authoritative voice; for other Christians it was a plea for peace based on Christian scripture; for non-Christian America it was an appeal to rationality and sanity in a time when all sense of reason could evaporate in the heat of nuclear conflict brought on by Cold War enemies.

The road to passage was not always a smooth one, however. Some Catholics who were more hawkish disagreed vehemently with the document's position that first-strike nuclear war cannot be justified under any conditions. In general, conservatives inside and outside the church disagreed with the bishops. For example, William F. Buckley Jr., the conservative commentator and founder of *National Review*, decried the pastoral's message, fearing, in part, that it meant abandoning the fight against communism. Those with a more liberal bent agreed with the document, and those within the church were heartened by the support for the document in circles outside the church. Both sides were surprised and encouraged by the consultative process by which the document was conceived.

Despite the widespread consultation in the creation of the pastoral, and the accompanying publicity it received, many Catholics either ignored it or were unwilling to invest themselves in a quest for peace, partly because Catholics invested less authority in their bishops and partly because political realities in a tense Cold War climate trumped the church's teaching.

Thus, Vatican II provided the impetus for Rome to confront the Cold War and for the American bishops to respond as they saw fit. Neither the Vatican nor the American hierarchy thought that any good could come from the political and military tensions between communism and democracy. Each confronted the geopolitical realities in its own ways. But each drew inspiration from the groundbreaking documents produced by Vatican II.

Conclusion

Historians and political scientists do not hold that the activities of the church alone led to the end of the Cold War; however, they do acknowledge that the church played a vital role in the fight against communism. For the church's part the documents of Vatican II undergird much of the reasoning

behind the dispositions and activities of the church during the Cold War. On one front the church fought communism with the power of the pen and the pulpit. On another front the church pursued an agenda of religious freedom around the world that affected how the church itself functioned in various countries and permitted it to press for freedom of conscience and choice of religious affiliation for all peoples. To what degree the Cold War inspired the documents of Vatican II is a matter of judgment, but it is unquestionable that the documents influenced the church's theology, ethics, and political strategy in the fight to end the tensions between nations that threatened the entire world.

Independent of the Cold War, the Catholic Church changed dramatically from 1940s to the 1960s, in part because of what was happening in the world but more due to its own intention to open up to the world. American Catholics felt the effects of those changes in every dimension of their religious lives. Their church was now thoroughly American without sacrificing its ties to Rome. However, many American Catholics distanced themselves from the official teachings of the church, in particular after Pope Paul VI upheld the church's prohibition of birth control in a 1968 encyclical titled *Humanae Vitae* ("Of Human Life"). A commission established by the pope himself advised that birth control should be permitted and not considered sinful, but Paul VI ignored the commission's conclusion and upheld the ban. Many American Catholics disagreed and practiced birth control. While they disobeyed the Vatican, they found sympathetic clergy who downplayed the Vatican's position and tacitly supported the decision of Catholic couples to practice birth control. Thus, American Catholics began to shape their Catholicism according to their personal experience and often weighed that against the official teachings, sometimes siding with the church and sometimes creating their own brand of Catholicism. To many trained eyes this was the end of Catholicism shaped by the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and the beginning of a new era of Catholicism that is still defining its identity today.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Architecture: Roman Catholic*; *Canada: Catholics*; *Ecumenism*; *Film*; *Holocaust*; *Immigration: Since the 1965 Immigration Act*; *Latino American Religion: Struggles for Justice*; *Mexico: Twentieth Century*; *Music: Roman Catholic*; *Neo-Thomism*; *Pacifism and Conscientious Objection*; *Religious Press*; *Religious Thought: Roman Catholic*; *Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century*; *Women Religious*; *Women: Roman Catholic*; *Worship: Roman Catholic*.

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Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century

In the four decades since the Second Vatican Council of 1962–1965, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States underwent significant changes in leadership, liturgy, and cultural cohesion. The resulting situation, characterized by a heightened polarization between traditionalist and progressive factions, reflects internal challenges about governance, trust between clergy and laity, and the church's relationship to the world, as well as the effects of external social, economic, and political forces. Two events have primarily framed the American Catholic Church in this era: the papal condemnation of artificial birth control in 1968 and in 2002 the revelations of sexual abuse of children and adolescents by priests, followed by disclosure of orchestrated cover-ups of those abuses by the hierarchy. Each moment led a wave of American Catholics to leave the church and to lose confidence in its leadership. Additionally, the failure to fully implement Vatican II reforms, declining vocations among male and female religious orders, demographic shifts of an urban core of

Catholic to the suburbs, and new waves of immigrants from developing nations have reshaped institutional life in a different fashion from the European immigrant base of the past.

A New Catholic Establishment?

In contrast to their nineteenth-century social location, Catholics are no longer the “Other” to a Protestant establishment. Whether one regards the Second World War, the GI Bill’s funding of education for veterans, or the election of John F. Kennedy as president in 1960 as the events that smoothed the path of Catholic integration, Catholic Americans are no longer outsiders. In many instances, they have fully assimilated into every sector of American society, from finance to law to multinational corporations to politics. In the political sphere upward and downward mobility of Catholics has fragmented the solidly Catholic voting bloc within the Democratic Party.

Since the nineteenth century, the Democratic Party had welcomed Catholic immigrants (mostly Irish and German), who later formed the nation’s industrial working class, soon joined by Poles, Lithuanians, Slavs, and Italians. The association of Catholics with the Democrats went largely unchallenged until the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984, marking a shift to the right, as the Republican Party played to white ethnic resentments of the lower middle class in dying industrial economies and to the free market sensibilities of newly affluent Catholics in order to secure votes that were crucial to Reagan’s victory.

The presence of Catholics in the United States Congress has increased in the late twentieth century. In 1947, for example, 78 Catholics held seats in Congress, compared with the 111th Congress of 2009–2011, which includes 162 Catholics. During the 1970s Robert Drinan, a Jesuit priest, served as the U.S. representative from Massachusetts until Pope John Paul II demanded the departure of priests from electoral politics in 1980.

The Catholic Church’s expressed unease about explicit involvement in politics by clergy and hierarchy seemed at odds with the American bishops’ subsequent attempts to intervene in the presidential election campaigns of 2004 and 2008 by threatening to deny the Eucharist to (and even to excommunicate) candidates who did not profess opposition to legal abortion. Some Catholics objected to using this one issue as a benchmark for Catholic identity, citing economic inequality and militarism fostered by Republican policies as more deserving of Catholic condemnation; others applauded the stand as a defense of a “culture of life” adumbrated in the

“seamless garment” ethic articulated by Joseph Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago in 1983.

Legacy of Catholic Action

Catholic Action, which provided the model for laypeople to interact with and shape their world, was defined by Pius XI in 1927 as “the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy.” The 1930s initiatives that followed encouraged laypeople to take responsibility for church and society, allowing many Catholic citizens of the United States to recognize and act on the similarities they discovered between a lay apostolate and the nation’s participatory democracy. Through Catholic Action they could become both loyal Catholics and Americans. Despite the limits imposed on lay leadership, Catholic Action’s three-part formula of “see-judge-act” inspired many Catholics of the 1940s and 1950s in Europe and the Americas. Vatican II further affirmed the “modern world” toward which these actions were directed as something to embrace, not fear.

Recently, strategies of action relying on combined efforts of the hierarchy and laity have been revived as attempts to end the polarization within the Catholic community. In 1983 Cardinal Bernardin proposed a “seamless garment” ethic to guide Catholic social action. By this he meant that Catholics should oppose abortion but also fight for the economic support of women and their children, as well as condemning militarism, poverty, racism, and sexism. The phrase became popular shorthand for many forms of Catholic activism that followed. Some pro-life Catholics believed that it diluted their single-issue focus; others praised its translation of moral issues into a broader public agenda.

In 1996, in a further effort to reduce division within the Catholic camp, Bernardin handpicked the initial participants for the Catholic Common Ground Initiative. Despite its best efforts, Common Ground has not succeeded in restoring civility to the public conversation among American Catholics. In part, it has faltered owing to the death of Bernardin from cancer a few months later, the lack of a strongly felt Catholic identity by younger Catholics, and the lack of desire for genuine discussion with the opposition. When the sex abuse crisis broke only a few years after Common Ground began, it only increased acrimony against an untrustworthy hierarchy.

Catholic Social Teaching

The basis for Catholic social action derived from the previous century’s tradition of Catholic social teaching, a resource

little known to Catholics themselves. These ecclesial documents defined an alternate, progressive ethical teaching within Catholicism that addresses the relationship between the individual, the Catholic Church, and society while transcending the hostile reaction to “modernity” expressed by Pope Pius IX in the decree *Lamentabili Sane Exitu* (“Syllabus of Errors”). *Rerum Novarum* (“Of New Things”), the first so-called social encyclical, was issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1891, establishing the lineage for two significant pastoral letters produced by the American bishops in the 1980s. A first letter questioned the morality of nuclear deterrence (“The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response,” 1983), and the next rejected the unchallenged primacy of laissez-faire capitalism (“Economic Justice for All,” 1986) in America. Prompted by the dramatic widening of the income gap between rich and poor during the Reagan administration, the bishops attacked the excesses of capitalism and the lack of concern for those at the lower levels of the economy, especially women, immigrants, children, and working people. Using scripture, Catholic social teaching, and the language of human rights, the bishops condemned the abuses of “trickle-down” economics. Their prophetic repudiations of the unquestioned values held by many Americans, including Catholics, met with cheers from some and resistance from others. Conservative commentators attacked the bishops for condemning these sacred cows and went so far as to defend militarism and capitalism as morally justified by their Catholic faith. Similar controversy followed Pope John Paul II’s 1991 *Centesimus Annus*, on the one-hundredth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, in which Catholics debated whether it condemned or recommended American-style market capitalism.

The Vatican had addressed economic issues in *Populorum Progressio* (1967; “On the Development of Peoples”), the first papal encyclical devoted specifically to international economic development in the context of the Vietnam War and African anticolonial wars. In that spirit “This Land Is Home to Me” was issued in 1975 by twenty-five Appalachian bishops who connected regional and global poverty in a unique poetic form. Historian David O’Brien called it “certainly the most remarkable document of the postconciliar American Church.” The bishops named economic questions as “the first and most basic questions for all people,” calling attention to the presence of multinational corporations in Appalachia as a local and global issue. In its sentiments “This Land” rehearsed themes that John Paul II would address in his 1987 *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (“On Social Concerns”), which singled

out the widening gap between wealth concentrated in the Northern Hemisphere and the impoverished South.

Liberation Theology

In the bipolar world of the Cold War, relations between North and South in the Western Hemisphere took center stage in American foreign policy and in Catholic theological thought and action during the decades of the 1970s and 1980s as communism appeared to make inroads into Latin America. Liberation theology was a progressive movement that emerged in response to social conditions but was forced to retrench by the end of the century under Vatican pressure. Theologian Harvey Cox once spoke confidently of the “de-Northification of the Gospel” as Christianity’s center shifted to the South. Liberation theology claimed that it was the mission of the church to work on behalf of the poor, not in support of the wealthy elites who had governed the Americas since 1492. The interpretation of the gospel as the continuing work of Jesus as liberator of the oppressed, however, was never distinguished by the Vatican from advocacy of Marxist principles in Central and South America, where the theology flourished. Was liberation theology a Marxist “invasion” of the church? It was never clear if that was the case, although the charge was certainly made by the Vatican of numerous liberation theologians, sisters, and priests active in the region’s “ecclesial base communities.” For many Catholics of the developing world, Marxism clearly offered a powerful tool to analyze the historical structures of exploitation of the Indians, the slaves, and the Catholic masses.

The Vatican, far from encouraging the Latin American bishops’ quest to side with the oppressed, instead targeted several leading theologians and priests, notably Leonardo Boff of Brazil, who was silenced in 1984 and 1989 and deprived of his teaching position. In a similar crackdown on public dissent by clergy, the pope removed the Reverend Charles E. Curran from his tenured theology position at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., for his expressed views on sexual morality. In 1984 John Paul II countered liberation theology with a program he called the “New Evangelization,” whose goal was to restore Christianity throughout the world by the year 2000. The candidacy of El Salvador’s assassinated bishop Oscar Romero, a proponent of liberationist views, has not progressed beyond local levels, whereas the pope further made clear his preference for traditionalists by canonizing in 1992 José Maria Escrivà, the founder of the archconservative movement Opus Dei. Because the character of Catholic higher education was at

the heart of many of these debates on politics and evangelization, John Paul II issued an apostolic constitution, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* ("From the Heart of the Church"), in 1990, as a warning to Catholic institutions to maintain and profess their "Catholic" identity. Some Americans perceived the statement as increasing the authority of bishops over colleges and universities by requiring theological faculties to gain an episcopal approval, or a "mandate"; others applauded the pope's bold rebuke to dissenters.

Birth Control and Conscience

When Pope Paul VI issued *Humanae Vitae* ("Of Human Life") in 1968, many Catholics were angered by his renewal of the church's blanket condemnation of artificial contraception that had been articulated in *Casti Connubii* of 1930. Although Pope Paul had expanded an existing commission studying birth control to include three married couples, he overrode its advice in issuing the encyclical, which sixty-five of seventy-two members had opposed. The opposition included the leaders of the Catholic Family Movement in the United States. The couples pointed out their dislike of the "rhythm method," the only method of regulating pregnancy accepted by the church. They reported that the method frustrated the normal cycles of sexual desire, since it mandated abstinence during a woman's fertile period, and did not take into account the realities of lay life, including work, family, illness, separation during travel, and so on. They asked why marriage, the only licit place for sexual intercourse in Catholic teaching, must now rely on periodic abstinence. John Paul II's devotion to the Virgin Mary, which led him to speak favorably of the value of virginity even within marriage, did not improve the mood for spouses and families.

Humanae Vitae led thousands of priests and laypersons to dissent publicly, and many left the church in protest. Among the clergy, obliged to defend the pope's position, the burden often fell on itinerant mission preachers, as pastors feared alienating their parishioners. The pope had seriously misjudged his flock, and his interpretation of "natural law" as the rationale for *Humanae Vitae* hinted at what was to come: the loss of conviction that this medieval ethic provided templates for contemporary moral questions. Vatican opposition to the distribution and use of condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) was one such failed application. Once Catholics began to invoke American individualist norms of "freedom of conscience," as they did in rejecting *Humanae Vitae*, would any leader or doctrine survive the challenge to authority? If nothing else, *Humanae*

Vitae ushered in an era of popular protest against this and subsequent church teachings that no longer seemed sacrosanct, such as an all-male priesthood, priestly celibacy, and condemnations of homosexuality.

The Call to Action initiative was designed to coincide with the nation's bicentennial in 1976. This conference was a first attempt after Vatican II to coordinate national lay activities to achieve a more democratic church. It was not an overwhelming success. Bishops never acceded to the proposal for a "Catholic Bill of Rights" to be appended to the Code of Canon Law, and generally quashed lay desires for a greater role in the church. Nevertheless, three spinoff groups emerging from Call to Action have endured: the Women's Ordination Conference; Catholics for Free Choice, established in 1970 in support of the legalization of abortion; and Dignity, an organization for gay and lesbian Catholics. Not until Voice of the Faithful appeared in 2002 did laypersons again organize in such a bold fashion to address a crisis and voice their preparedness to redress the church's structural failings.

A countertrend toward traditionalism has matched these demands for greater institutional transparency, financial accountability, and lay leadership. Critics of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI have noted a creeping conservatism and an intentional undoing of Vatican II in their pronouncements and policies. There is wider permission for use of the Tridentine liturgy and suggestions that Catholics should kneel to receive communion on the tongue rather than in the hand. Further, since 1989, when the Catholic right wing lost its favorite topic, communism, Restorationists have focused their efforts on the return to pre-Vatican II liturgical practices and antihomosexuality and antiabortion politics.

The opening of a visible split between conservative and progressive Catholics fits the contours of American religion generally since 1945, as charted by several sociologists, notably Robert Wuthnow (in *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 1988). Instead of the American church battling Rome, American Catholics were fighting each other. Traditionalists could only sense moral decay in more permissive attitudes toward sex and sexual expression evinced since the 1960s, and they began to focus militancy around efforts to overturn the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which protected a woman's right to an abortion. In a strange dissolution of ancient hatreds, antiabortion Catholics joined with conservative Protestants in Operation Rescue, a militant antiabortion group founded in 1986 by Randall Terry, a Pentecostal from Binghamton, New York. This group regards abortion as murder and targets abortion clinics with

well-publicized “direct action” protests that blockaded entrances and harassed patients by obliging them to pass a gauntlet of protesters bearing posters with the bloody images of maimed fetuses. Although not linked directly to the murders of several physicians who performed abortions in Florida, Kansas, and Massachusetts, Terry’s radical message contributed to the support of such events. The shooting deaths of several abortion doctors at the hands of activists led other antiabortion groups to disavow Operation Rescue, which renamed itself Operation Save America in 1999. More typical of Catholic participation in the antiabortion movement is the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. The event often draws thousands of marchers, and other cities have begun similar events.

Clergy Sexual Abuse Scandals

Traditionalist and progressive Catholics alike were horrified by the exposure of predatory priests and the American hierarchy’s cover-up of clergy sexual abuse of children and adolescents that has occurred since the 1960s. Beginning in January of 2002, reports about the archdiocese of Boston were heralds of a national and even international problem. Hundreds of priests have been barred from public ministry, and thousands of claims came forward from adults claiming to have been abused. Pastoral and institutional responses have been disunited, however, with no overseer at the national level. As with Call to Action, one lay-inspired institution appeared: Voice of the Faithful was founded out of a national meeting hosted in Boston in 2002. The organization drafted its three goals as support for the victims, support for priests who were wrongly accused, and support for structural change in the Catholic Church, the latter being the hardest to accomplish. Consequences of what may be the greatest scandal in the history of the church were still unfolding at the end of the century’s first decade. The settlements in lawsuits against individual priests have created deficits for numerous dioceses, and by 2009 seven dioceses had filed for bankruptcy protection. By 2010 the American Catholic Church had paid some \$2 billion to abuse victims and the pope himself had become implicated in the scandal as reports of abuses in the German church during his tenure as archbishop of Munich surfaced. The disillusionment of the laity will shape the future of the American church.

Saints, Devotions, Parish Life

As the liturgy of the Mass changed in accordance with Vatican II, devotional practices of the previous decades

declined. It was a painful shift for Catholics who did not want to abandon their devotion to the rosary, Blessed Sacrament, Stations of the Cross, and the many saints. John Paul II energized this segment by canonizing a record number of Catholics, creating 480 saints, totals exceeding those generated by his predecessors for five hundred years. While a significant amount of the total represents group canonizations of martyrs of China, Korea, and Vietnam, some of his choices have stirred controversy, especially the canonization of two of the Fátima visionaries, Juan Diego (the purported visionary of Guadalupe), José Maria Escrivà, Maximilian Kolbe, Padre Pio, and Edith Stein. (Kolbe, for example, has been accused of anti-Semitic writing, while the very existence of Juan Diego has been questioned.)

Vatican II had generated hopes for a more democratic and inclusive parish life after the Council. Many lay ministers took advantage of the newly created position of permanent deacon (open only to men), while others participated at the parish and diocesan levels as lectors and Eucharistic ministers, and via liturgy committees focused on sacred art, music, and dance. Some pastors welcomed lay participation and willingly shared power; others held tight to the preconiliar model of the pastor as autocrat. The continued lack of participation by laity in the choice of pastor, and even of his financial accountability to parishioners, suggests the uneven influence of Vatican II in forming a transparent and more democratic church.

One of the sources of change within the postconciliar church has been the presence of a more educated and diverse laity. Where theology had formerly been the sole province of priests, now women, persons of color, and students from the developing nations have become producers and shapers of theology. Many of these lay professionals serve the church as theologians, liturgists, family counselors, and professors of canon law, while others serve some of the functions of priests in the nation’s many understaffed parishes. At the professional level the Catholic Theological Society of America provides a case in point. In 1946, at the time of its founding, all 104 members were priests. In early 2010, about 33 percent of the 1,418 members were women, who have brought different emphases and issues to the foreground, including dialogue with non-Catholic faiths and the ordination of women.

These added voices in theology, however, have not substantially improved the position of women in the church. While the Vatican’s attempts to address women seem limited to the regulation of sexuality, women have initiated trends that demonstrate their concerns at the global level. Among

Catholic sisterhoods, for example, “green” lifestyles have been adopted, providing sisters with a new vocational focus that links renewal of the planet to renewal in Christ.

Hispanic Catholics have contributed new perspectives as well, although it is too early to discern a definitive pattern. The growing presence of Latino/a theologians and the expanding area of *mujerista* theology point to innovation. One sign of recognition for Hispanic voices in the American church was the appointment of Miguel Díaz, a Cuban-born American theologian, as ambassador to the Vatican by President Barack Obama in May 2009. Survey data on grassroots Latino/a Catholics indicate, however, that many continue to join “spirit-filled” churches, especially Pentecostal, citing greater sociability in parish life and the appeal of emotive, unmediated worship services.

The presence of the young in the church of the future has been a focus of the last two pontificates. John Paul II inaugurated World Youth Day in 1986 and attended its first international gathering in North America in Denver in 1993.

A Priestless Church?

The American Catholic Church faces daunting challenges at the opening of the twenty-first century. The diminishing membership in religious orders of men and women represents an obvious concern. At the local level thousands of parishes lack a residential pastor. These needs are being met by combinations of women religious, permanent deacons, and a few laypersons. Ordaining married men, the ordination of women, and lay-led parishes are all proposed solutions. Given the current pope’s views, it is more likely that married clergy, as converts from other Christian traditions, will be placed in Catholic parishes before the prospect of women priests is seriously considered. Financial security is necessary for any religious institution to survive, yet for the first time in American history, the Catholic Church is facing a declining infrastructure matched by a contraction in giving. Since 1990, weekly tithing by Catholics stands at a paltry 1.1 percent.

Some suggest that the end of American triumphalism parallels the end of Catholic triumphalism: propositions and strategies that once seemed obvious and unassailable now seem obsolete and indefensible. In order to survive, the church will need to become a less dogmatic, more flexible institution. Some have described the pragmatic choices already made by the laity as a kind of “cafeteria Catholicism,” where individuals select among dogmas and teachings to reflect their own consciences. It remains unclear if the tendency toward reform or retrenchment will prevail.

See also *Abortion; Architecture: Roman Catholic; Canada: Catholics; Latino American Religion: Catholics* entries; *Music: Roman Catholic; Neo-Thomism; Religious Right; Religious Thought: Latino/a; Religious Thought: Mujerista; Religious Thought: Roman Catholic; Roman Catholicism* entries; *Women Religious; Women: Ordination of; Women: Roman Catholic; Worship: Roman Catholic.*

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Roman Catholicism: Early Twenty-First-Century Issues

In the decade that marked the fortieth anniversary of Vatican Council II (October 11, 1962–December 8, 1965), American Catholic laypeople expanded their independence and American Catholic bishops vigorously reasserted their hierarchical authority, continuing a thirty-year pattern of disconnection. The bishops defined the boundaries of Catholic belief and practice more narrowly, and Catholic people across the ideological spectrum insisted on being Catholic on their own terms. That insistence reflected the degree to which the American Catholic people have absorbed voluntary religious sensibilities.

Contests over authority, celibacy, gender roles, homosexuality, sexual ethics, liturgy and politics, and reactions to the clergy sexual abuse scandals, exemplified the competing understandings of Catholicity alive within the American Catholic community. Larger social and cultural forces—among them increasing levels of education and economic affluence among Catholics, shifting attitudes and behaviors of age cohorts, ongoing immigration, declining fiscal support for the church, and a priest shortage—also informed the conflicts. Roman Catholicism remains the largest single faith community in the United States, claiming nearly one-quarter of the population, but it is a community under strain.

Clergy Shortage

A set of interlocking challenges altered the institutional shape of Catholicism in the United States in the early twenty-first century. The worsening clergy shortage that began in the 1960s may be the most significant because of the centrality of ordained priesthood to Catholic sacramental life. The number of new priests is not enough to replace retiring clergy or keep pace with the growth in Catholic population. Foreign priests, 25 percent of clergy serving American Catholic parishes in 2009, cannot fill the gap. Priests in the United States are becoming pastors at younger ages, and their shortened periods of mentoring leave them less prepared to negotiate parish leadership.

The priest shortage and demographic shifts have led to the closing and consolidation of parishes in many dioceses. Consolidations disrupt local communities and have sparked anger and activism on the part of affected laity. Some laity adapt, but others leave.

In 2009 more than 50 percent of U.S. Catholic parishes had pastors with responsibility for more than one parish. Deacons, women religious, professional lay ministers, and volunteers assisted these priests in a situation that requires unprecedented levels of collaboration between clergy and laity to maintain pastoral and liturgical life.

Clergy Sexual Abuse

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops began dealing formally with clergy sexual abuse in the early 1980s, but extensive coverage of the 2002 trial and conviction of former Archdiocese of Boston priest John Geoghan for the sexual abuse of a ten-year-old boy permanently altered how clergy sexual abuse was viewed and would be handled in the American Catholic community. The cases of Geoghan and others exposed what had been a widespread practice among

most bishops—moving abusive priests from one ministry setting to another.

The clergy abuse scandal has cost the Catholic Church monetarily and in the credibility of the bishops. Several dioceses have entered bankruptcy over sexual abuse claims. Estimates of the final cost of such claims go as high as \$4 billion.

In June 2002 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The move was a first step to restore credibility by clearly exercising pastoral care of children, a responsibility in which many laity, such as those who founded Voice of the Faithful, which claimed thirty thousand members in 2008, believed the bishops had failed.

Gender Roles and Sexuality

Advocacy for the ordination of women and married persons continued in the early twenty-first century, and 2005 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Women's Ordination Conference. Despite the Vatican's insistence that prohibition of the ordination of women is a matter of faith and not disciplinary practice, the majority of U.S. Catholics favor it. Bishops not in good standing with the Vatican have ordained American Catholic women, with one highly publicized ordination taking place in Pittsburgh in 2006. Polls show Catholics also are open to married clergy. Corpus, an organization of now married Roman Catholic priests, has advocated for married clergy for thirty-five years.

In the wake of the clergy sexual abuse scandal, the Vatican and U.S. bishops have raised the question of whether gay men should be ordained. This had not been a major question previously because Catholic clergy are celibate. Despite research showing that homosexual men are no more likely to be pedophiles than heterosexual men, seminaries are attending more closely to the sexual orientation of candidates for ordination.

Understandings of appropriate gender roles informed the Vatican's investigation of U.S. women's religious communities that began in 2009. The investigation targeted the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, which represents the majority of U.S. women's religious communities, because of LCWR's failure to promote the Church's teachings on male-only priesthood, homosexuality, and the primacy of the Roman Catholic Church as the means to salvation. Although traditionalist communities welcomed the investigation, most saw it as an attempt to curb their independence, curtail their ministries, and constrain their forms of community life.

Catholic sexual minorities found community in local Catholic parishes and support in organizations such as Dignity during the early twenty-first century. They also more vocally rejected official church teaching on homosexuality—that it is a disordered, though not sinful, state but that homosexual acts are sinful. Convinced that all forms of sexual love are manifestations of God's love, members of the Rainbow Sash Movement staged public actions in which gays and lesbians, wearing rainbow colored sashes, made their presence known during Eucharistic celebrations.

Catholic lay women and lay men align along the entire spectrum of positions on gender and religion, from a view shared with evangelicals that women should submit to the male head of household as submission to God, to a feminist understanding of the full equality of all genders in Christ. In Catholicism gender issues are intimately related to questions of ordination and teaching authority.

Authority: Magisterium and Conscience

In a voluntary religious setting, the authority of religious leaders rests on their credibility, the intelligibility and persuasiveness of their teaching, and the plausibility structures that ground a faith community. U.S. Catholic bishops vigorously reasserted their teaching authority based on office, but were frustrated in their attempt to bring laity into line. Catholics increasingly relied on the authority of their experience and their consciences, reading of Scripture, and sense of faith to guide them. Traditionalist and progressive Catholics operate this way. Traditionalists spearheaded a vigorous pro-life movement and embraced the return of the Latin Mass, but also openly challenged bishops whose positions they deemed unorthodox. Progressive laity, sensitive to the historical character of all church teaching, drew on Catholic social teaching to promote causes and criticized bishops for not being faithful to that teaching.

Church authority in public life received considerable attention during the national elections of 2004 and 2008. One issue of contention between the bishops and politicians was whether a Catholic candidate could personally oppose abortion while supporting its legality in a religiously pluralistic nation. Bishops' opposition to this position hampered John Kerry's 2004 presidential campaign. In 2008 Catholics opted for Barack Obama (54 percent to 45 percent overall, 50 percent to 49 percent for weekly Mass attenders), a choice defensible within the terms of the bishops' own document to guide the consciences of Catholics on voting, *Faithful Citizenship*. Tension between Catholic politicians and the bishops

heightened at a moment when Catholics became more powerful politically at state and national levels than ever before.

Role of Laity

For more than three decades the ranks of professional lay ministers have grown, replacing declining populations of clergy and vowed religious in leadership roles in parishes, educational institutions, and social service organizations. At the turn to the twenty-first century, bishops were hiring fewer lay professionals trained in freestanding theological schools or university-based ministry institutes and using more volunteers trained in bishops' diocesan-defined education and formation programs.

Laypeople considering themselves actively Catholic were oriented primarily to their local parish. Catholics of both traditionalist and progressive bent who are active in parishes are more interested in learning about Catholic theology and participating in faith-sharing groups than Catholics who are not. Catholics active in parishes were more likely to take official Catholic teaching seriously and more likely than their inactive counterparts to engage in organizations advocating for and dissenting from positions of the hierarchy on a wide range of topics.

Survey data revealed that the salience of institutional religious membership and participation declined during the early twenty-first century, especially for Catholics under thirty. Young Catholics tended to locate their identity in relation to Catholic social teaching and to church-sponsored volunteer activity in which they had engaged.

Some Catholic laity were oriented primarily to particular organizations or causes, such as Opus Dei, Focolari, the pro-life movement, the women's ordination movement, the Grail, the Catholic Worker, Call to Action, or Voice of the Faithful. Still others, though estranged from the institutional church, connected to their heritage by seeking guidance at spiritual direction and retreat centers run by Roman Catholic religious communities. These last, especially some run by women's communities, were centers for the development of an emerging Catholic ecological theology.

During the early twenty-first century economic and cultural gaps widened between longer established, more affluent and educated Euro-American Catholics and more recent arrivals, primarily Hispanic, but also African and Asian. Cultural conflict within parishes fed dissatisfaction and created pastoral and theological challenges. At the same time, in some parishes the presence of multiple cultures inspired self-conscious reflection on being a global church.

As the bishops sharpened boundaries of belief, behavior, and belonging, more Catholics found such considerations irrelevant to their lives. Ten percent of American adults in 2007 were former Roman Catholics. More than one-half of marriages by Catholics were to people of different Christian denominations, other faiths, or no faith. Catholic laity, like all religiously interested Americans, drew on web-based sources, published resources, independent networks, and voluntary organizations in composing their religious views and communities. Active Catholics valued their parishes, sacramental ritual, and Catholic teaching of care for the poor. They combined Catholic sacramental and communal sensibilities with robust Congregationalist sensibilities in terms of polity. If the early twenty-first century is any indication, the near future of U.S. Catholicism will be marked by more intracommunal pluralism and conflict.

See also *Abortion; Anti-Catholicism; Architecture: Roman Catholic; Canada: Catholics; Ecumenism; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Latino American Religion* entries; *Literature: Contemporary; Ministry, Professional; Music: Roman Catholic; Religious Thought: Roman Catholic; Roman Catholicism* entries; *Same-Gender Marriage; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends; Women Religious; Women: Ordination of; Women: Roman Catholic; Worship: Contemporary Currents; Worship: Roman Catholic.*

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Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact

American culture is different because of the presence of Roman Catholicism, and Roman Catholicism is different because it was brought to America. These differences are apparent in the artistic and intellectual achievements of Catholic Americans (one possible definition of the term *culture*); they are also apparent in the interactions between the entire way of life and the frameworks of meanings of Catholics and those of other Americans (another useful definition). The United States was affected by what we refer to as Catholic culture, and Roman Catholicism was affected by what we refer to as American culture.

Colonial Era and Early Republic

The first sustained European presence on the North American continent was Catholic. Christopher Columbus (1451–1506) undertook his voyages to claim whatever wealth and glory he encountered for a Catholic crown. In his later years, he understood his accomplishments increasingly as signs of God's providence—focused especially on ultimate victory of Christianity over Islam—in history. The Franciscan Bartolomé de las Casas (1474–1566) documented the destruction of indigenous culture, and argued for the humanity of Native Americans and against their enslavement. French explorers and settlers farther north gave way to missionaries such as Jesuits Jean de Brébeuf (1593–1649) and Isaac Jogues (1607–1646), and Ursuline sister Marie de l'Incarnation (1599–1672).

Collectively the lives of these individuals tell a story quite different from the founding myth of the United States. In that myth—meaning not a false story but a means by which a group or a people understands itself—early European settlers to the New World came seeking religious freedom,

defended the growing colonies against unjust strictures placed upon them by England, and eventually established an Enlightenment republic to stand as a beacon of democracy and freedom to the world. The stories told by and about the early Catholic missionaries were very different, involving sacrifice of one's life, whether in exile from home during long and difficult years in the wilderness, or through physical torture and martyrdom at the hands of the people they were trying to convert. Political and economic success was not what mattered—only the eternal.

The point of a myth is not whether it is true, and many people, historians and nonhistorians, would debate the adequacy of either of these accounts of the nation's founding. Nonetheless, to a significant extent, the United States defined itself against the story Catholics told about their presence on the continent. Although the Founders were committed to religious freedom, their vision of how the United States should function explicitly rejected the unified political and religious authority that continued to characterize the Catholic countries of Europe for at least another century. At an even deeper level, they accepted the idea of human personhood developed by philosopher John Locke, in which human beings are born autonomous and unclaimed, and enter into society as free parties to a contract. This idea contrasted dramatically with the medieval Catholic notion of the Great Chain of Being, in which humans have a place given to them in an order created by God, and thus history and community have an inescapable claim on the individual. The ideas of democracy, and separation of church and state, and the primacy of individual autonomy, had a traceable English and Protestant pedigree that influenced the culture of the early republic and stood in significant contrast to the ideas and culture of many Catholic Americans.

Four figures can represent the variety of ways in which Catholics in the early republic found ways to bridge this potential divide, even to reject the notion that there was any conflict between the two cultures. John Carroll (1735–1815) of Maryland was a member of one of the oldest families in the colonies. As the first bishop of Baltimore, the first see (bishop's seat) in America, he helped explain his U.S. compatriots and his Roman superiors to each other. For example, he persuaded Rome to allow priests in the United States to have some say in who their bishops would be, to avoid the impression of complete hierarchical control. This sometimes complicated negotiation between church and culture also characterized the lives of other Catholics in the antebellum period. Mathew Carey (1760–1839), the most important

printer in the early republic, was responsible for printing the first Catholic Bible (known as the Douai version) in the United States. Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774–1821), a convert from Episcopalianism and the first native-born American saint (Italian-born Frances Cabrini was the first U.S. citizen to be canonized), struggled with anti-Catholic prejudice in the United States and with Vatican rules for orders of religious women to establish the Sisters of Charity. Orestes Brownson (1803–1876) went from being a member of the prominent circle of intellectuals who made up the transcendentalist movement to being largely estranged from its members after his conversion to Catholicism in 1844.

Over the course of two or three decades, large-scale Catholic immigration challenged some of the most basic presuppositions about American culture. As immigrants from Germany and Ireland began arriving by the hundreds of thousands in the 1830s, increasing every year throughout the 1840s, presuppositions about U.S. religious identity that had been largely unspoken became explicit, vehement, and sometimes violent. Writers in the press began making public arguments that Catholics, because of their loyalty to a foreign power and their blind obedience to their priests, were not good material for citizenship in a democratic republic that required a freethinking, independent citizenry.

Anti-Catholic stereotypes became ever more a staple of American popular culture, in fiction and nonfiction, and in visual sources as well. One popular genre was the convent narrative, in which an unsuspecting young girl was lured into the dark secrets of the cloister. Two of the most famous of these narratives were *Six Months in a Convent, or, The Narrative of Rebecca Theresa Reed* (1835), and Maria Monk's *Awful Disclosures of the Hôtel-Dieu* (1836). These narratives stoked fears about the supposed control the church exercised over the wills and bodies of its members. Reed's autobiographical story, even before it was published, probably helped contribute to the climate of violence that led to the burning of the Ursuline Convent at Charlestown, Massachusetts, in 1834, the single worst outbreak of nativist violence in the nineteenth century. The lecherous priest and the vulnerable young woman would continue to be a trope in popular culture, including *A Long Fatal Love Chase*, a novel by *Little Women* author Louisa May Alcott, unpublished until well after her death. In a blending of ethnic and religious stereotype, Catholic clergy and Irish and German lay Catholics featured prominently in political cartoons by the most prominent artists in the most prominent periodicals. The most famous example is Thomas Nast's "The American

River Ganges” (1871) in which corrupt New York City politicians of the famous Democratic Party political machine at Tammany Hall drop innocent American children off a cliff into a river full of alligators who, on inspection, turn out to be bishops, whose miters form the alligators’ jaws.

At the same time that anti-Catholicism received such pervasive expression, numerous prominent non-Catholic American authors were drawn to Roman Catholicism, especially to its European past, in an ambiguous mix of attraction and repulsion. Quintessentially American and Protestant writers wrote entire works exploring dimensions of the European Catholic past, such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s *Evangeline*, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Agnes of Sorrento*, Mark Twain’s *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*, and Henry Adams’s *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*.

U.S. Catholics were not just depicted, favorably or unfavorably, in the outpouring of popular culture in the nineteenth century—they also contributed to it. Magazines such as *Ave Maria* and *Catholic World* were founded to provide Catholic versions of periodicals such as *Harper’s* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, aimed at the growing and increasingly self-conscious American middle class. Catholics also produced their own versions of what was called the domestic or sentimental novel, the staple of popular fiction for the majority of readers for much of the century. Domestic fiction, most often written by women but read by both women and men, told stories of women’s lives in which they struggled against circumstances but usually in the end found a way to embrace the roles society prescribed for them. Catholic versions of these stories focused also on the need to protect the faith of immigrants from the temptations of U.S. Protestantism, for example, by featuring a Catholic heroine tempted by what appears to be a true love, but who insists on her conversion or refuses to have his children raised Catholic. The outcome might be heartbreak and renunciation, or tragic death, or the ultimate conversion of the hero by the example of the heroine’s steadfastness, but the moral remained the same: the faith could and must be preserved against the American tide.

These efforts were clearly Catholic, that is, they were undertaken by self-identified Catholics for an explicitly religious purpose. But Catholics participated in American popular culture in many ways, not with clear religious goals in mind, but in such numbers and over such a long time that their presence and influence are worth examining. Because these phenomena were not “officially” Catholic, Catholic participation in them raises interesting questions for historians about whether the Catholicism of those involved was

incidental, or whether it influenced the phenomena in implicit but discernible ways.

The most important nineteenth-century example of this unofficially Catholic culture was minstrelsy. Almost no one is proud today of the role played by the minstrel show in the history of American entertainment, but it was so popular, widespread, and long lasting that leaving it out of historical accounts is not an option. Minstrelsy was a genre of performance in which white performers in blackface (and, later in the century, also blacks in blackface) sang and danced and told stories and jokes in exaggerated imitation of African Americans, especially those who lived enslaved on the plantations of the antebellum South. It had a highly formalized structure and stock character types that drove some of the most corrosively racist stereotypes of African Americans deep into American popular culture until well into the twentieth century. At the same time, it represented a complicated stance almost like envy of the power of the African-inflected musical traditions preserved by blacks in the antebellum South. The music and the performance traditions that characterized minstrelsy gave vitality and distinctiveness to U.S. popular culture for over a century. Minstrelsy was in no sense Catholic, but many of its earliest and most famous performers were in fact native and immigrant Irish Catholics, and it would likely not have emerged in its eventual form without their influence. It would be exaggerating to see something ritualistic, if not liturgical, about the stylized and formulaic performances that characterized the minstrel show tradition. At the least, though, it reflected the contentious relationship between Irish and African Americans, in which these two most-despised groups were often left to compete for the bottom rung of the ladder of American prosperity.

Turn into the Twentieth Century

The great wave of immigration between the end of the Civil War and the onset of World War I changed U.S. Catholicism—and in turn U.S. culture—once again. After about 1880 the sources of European immigration to the United States shifted dramatically, away from the countries of northern and western Europe to the southern and eastern regions. One result was the influx of much larger numbers and percentages of Catholics and Jews, and a renewed concern on the part of so-called native Americans—the term at the end of the nineteenth century referred to white Protestant Americans, especially those whose ancestors predated the American Revolution—that the American-ness of American culture was under threat.

Much of this concern focused on the cities, in which the presence of new immigrants, and their concentration in ethnic enclaves, was most apparent. The cities, not coincidentally, were also where an uproarious, kaleidoscopic popular culture was flourishing. Although minstrelsy did not entirely disappear, it evolved into and ceded popularity to vaudeville, which also involved a dizzying variety of performers and genres, but which drew more widely on ethnic music and humor, and on the high culture of recitation and musical performance that grew along with the U.S. middle class and reflected its desire for respectability and cultural uplift. Catholic and other immigrants supplied large percentages of both the performers and the audiences for vaudeville and the other forms of art and entertainment that proliferated at the turn of the twentieth century.

One underappreciated area in which Catholic images profoundly shaped American culture is Renaissance art. Because of the rapid growth of industrial capitalism, a large number of unprecedentedly wealthy Americans sought to establish cultural institutions in cities across the United States in the first decades of the twentieth century. At the same time, the art of the Italian Renaissance was becoming desirable but time was still within financial reach of many collectors. As a result, art that had been created to assist worship and devotion, most often in an explicitly Roman Catholic context, was dismantled, exported, and reassembled as “culture” in the museums of the United States.

Although the turbulence and exuberance of early twentieth-century popular culture raised anxieties among some of the Progressive reformers seeking to bring middle-class order and reserve to the immigrant enclaves of the cities, it is probably not coincidental that Catholics took to it so immediately and thrived within it so thoroughly. Catholicism was itself theatrical, in ways that gave it more apparent affinity with the theatre or the public pageant than with some of the sparer, more word-centered worship of many of its Protestant compatriots. The Roman Catholic liturgy, the Mass, presented itself as a dramatic reenactment of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and appealed to all the senses through word and music, dramatic use of color and light, fabric, incense, water, bells, and meaningful physical postures on the part of both priest and people. Medieval peasant Catholicism, well represented among the immigrants to the United States at the turn into the twentieth century, was even more so of all of these things, celebrating many festivals and devotions in addition to the official ones, spilling out into and thereby claiming the public streets through parades and processions

that brought their dramatic form of religious presence to the attention of their non-Catholic compatriots.

One of the most spectacular forms of Catholic public presence was the Eucharistic Congress. These large gatherings had originated in Europe in 1881 and became a regular feature of late-nineteenth-century Catholic devotion. They involved processions, liturgies, and talks on the Eucharist to the various groups of clergy and laity in attendance. The Twenty-Eighth International Eucharistic Congress was the first held in the United States, in Chicago in 1926. It included the largest-ever children’s choir, sixty thousand singing the Mass of the Angels for a liturgy at Soldier Field, and attendance by at least a million at the closing Mass in Mundelein, Illinois. The 1937 Congress in Cleveland was the seventh held in the United States, its outstanding feature the Living Monstrance. A monstrance is the cross-shaped vessel used to hold the Host and make it available to public view during the devotion known as the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Some twenty thousand people arrayed by rank (archbishops first, then bishops, priests, religious, and laity) and profession (nurses, police, firemen, and schoolchildren in uniform) processed through the streets of Cleveland and filed into the monstrance outlined by flowers on the field of the stadium usually used by the Cleveland Indians. At the monstrance’s center, where the Host would be, was the altar where the pope’s representative to the Congress, Patrick Cardinal Hayes from New York, celebrated the Benediction.

Catholics and the Movies

Such dramatic, large-scale events both claimed a public presence for Catholics on the landscape of American culture and emphasized Catholic difference from their compatriots. To some, this difference was a mark of pride, but it also evoked anxiety—on the part of U.S. Catholics who saw it as an obstacle to assimilation and success as Americans, and on the part of other Americans, especially when it was accompanied by a clear intent to influence American culture in a direction more compatible with Roman Catholicism. Nowhere is the interplay of prominence and anxiety more evident than in the history of Roman Catholic involvement with the motion picture industry.

Catholics probably had more influence over the history of the movies than any other group, with the possible exception of the immigrant Jews who made up such a high proportion of the studio heads in the movies’ early years. But for sheer scale, scope, and duration, Catholic influence was remarkable. By the early 1930s the industry had been struggling for some



During the 1930s, Catholic bishops in several large cities threatened boycotts if the movie studios did not go to further lengths to ensure that their productions were suitable for all audiences. Chicago's Cardinal Mundelein commissioned a Motion Picture Production Code, which evolved into the Production Code Administration, led for two decades by Catholic layman Joseph I. Breen. Here, Breen inspects the harem costumes of actresses on the set of the 1942 film "Arabian Nights."

years with the question of how to control the content of the movies, which were pushing the boundaries of sex and violence further every year. Movies had no First Amendment protection, pursuant to the 1915 Supreme Court decision in the case of *Mutual v. Ohio*. Studio heads were intent on avoiding federal censorship, and so had agreed to various schemes for self-regulation, none of which had been enforced. In the early 1930s the industry was in a precarious financial situation, having invested heavily in the equipment necessary to take advantage of the new sound technology that had made the pictures into the talkies right before the dramatic decline in moviegoing in the first years of the Great Depression. When Catholic bishops in several large cities threatened boycotts if the movies did not make a greater effort to ensure that they were suitable for all audiences, the producers were more receptive than they had ever been to an enforceable regulatory scheme.

Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago initiated and coordinated the decisive action. He commissioned Daniel A. Lord, a Jesuit with experience in the movie industry (he had served as an

advisor on the set of Cecil B. DeMille's 1927 movie about the life of Christ, "The King of Kings") to write a code for movie content by which studio heads would agree to abide. To avoid the impression that the Catholic hierarchy were engineering a takeover, this Motion Picture Production Code (MPPC) was taken to Hollywood and presented to the assembled producers by Martin Quigley, a Catholic layman whose family just happened to be owners of the *Motion Picture Herald*, one of the most influential Hollywood trade papers. The system for enforcing the code that resulted from the negotiations between Quigley and the studio heads, the Production Code Administration (PCA), was headed for more than two decades by another Catholic layman, Joseph I. Breen. The PCA reviewed movies from preproduction to their finished form, and awarded its seal of approval to those it deemed appropriate for all audiences in conformity with the code; without this seal a movie could not be shown

in the chains of movie theaters owned by the movie studios. The PCA relied informally on movie ratings produced by the Legion of Decency, an organization established by the U.S. bishops in 1934, by which Catholics pledged not to attend unsuitable movies. To determine suitability the legion in turn relied on the services of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, a Catholic women's group that had been publishing reviews of movies as a service to families long before the MPPC was written.

This system remained largely in place until the early 1960s. Although many Catholics over a certain age remember the Legion of Decency, and many U.S. moviegoers are aware that there used to be something called the Production Code, and that the content of movies used to be more restricted, very few know the extent to which the system was designed and sustained by Roman Catholics. Whether, on the whole, it was a good thing or a bad thing is a complicated question. On the one hand, censorship, and especially censorship by a religious minority, is on the face of it incompatible with the First Amendment. But those who designed,

implemented and accepted the existence of this system believed it to be an alternative to censorship, which they defined as control imposed by the federal government. In addition, few would deny that some of the greatest Hollywood movies were produced during this era, often called the Golden Years. On the other hand, the system also stifled artistic creativity and, by attempting to make sure that all movies were suitable for all audiences, had the unintended side effect of treating adults like children. For better and worse, it reflects two key characteristics of the culture of Roman Catholicism: the role of hierarchical authority and the belief that all of life's activities had theological significance and a communal dimension. These characteristics led to the creation of distinctive structures that required the collaboration of both hierarchy and laity in a way distinctive to mid-twentieth-century U.S. Catholicism.

Catholics and Other Forms of Art and Popular Culture

Daniel A. Lord, S.J., (1888–1955) deserves some additional mention in his own right. He probably put more of a mark on Catholic print culture than any other single individual in the twentieth century, yet his name is almost unknown, even among Catholics. His influence over movies through the MPPC was matched by his prolific writing and publication on almost every topic of interest or concern to mid-twentieth-century U.S. Catholics. The Queen's Work Press, which he helped found and run for decades in St. Louis, Missouri, published hundreds of pamphlets on topics ranging from dating for Catholic teens to the sacraments to race relations. In addition, Lord preached popular retreats, wrote a weekly column, wrote and produced several large-scale historical pageants, wrote sheet music, broadcast on the radio, and wrote several musicals based on papal encyclicals. He was, from one angle, one of a kind, but in other ways he exemplified an energy and an entrepreneurial spirit that characterized a generation of Catholics trying to take an ancient message to a crowded and noisy modern world. Catholics often had a deep suspicion of the use to which new technologies could be put, but wherever they could they embraced innovative possibilities for increasing human connection and spreading the gospel.

Catholics also put their mark on radio in transformative ways. Most notorious is Father Charles Coughlin (1891–1979), whose popular weekly radio show in the 1930s began by advocating for Roman Catholic social teaching and descended into anti-Semitic appeals to fascism as the only

cure for the ills of the contemporary world, especially the threat of communism. Also ardent in his anticommunism but more measured and reasoned was Bishop Fulton J. Sheen (1895–1979) who had a well-known if less popular weekly radio show in the 1930s, and then an extremely popular (it held its own against Milton Berle) television show in the 1950s. Sheen continued the American Catholic tradition of presenting a distinctively Catholic face to the world (he broadcast his weekly show, "Life Is Worth Living," dressed in full bishop's regalia) but projecting a steady confidence that his message was for all people, not just Catholics.

Many of the twentieth century's most important American writers were Catholics by some definition—lapsed, angry, indifferent, nominal. Theodore Dreiser (1871–1945) wrote *Sister Carrie* and other novels about the bleak cruelty of American life under industrial capitalism after escaping a dreary childhood as the son of German Catholic immigrants. Eugene O'Neill (1888–1953), despite a tenuous relationship with the church throughout his life, nonetheless sought clerical guidance concerning the end of his 1933 play *Days Without End*, as well as in his plays capturing critical if painful aspects of Irish American family life. F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896–1940) rejected during his undergraduate years at Princeton the Minnesota Catholicism in which he had been raised, but throughout his life and after his death Catholic critics claimed him as one of their own. Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961) converted to Catholicism in order to marry in 1927, found his relationship to the church tested during the Spanish Civil War (when U.S. intellectuals and artists sided overwhelmingly with the Republican government, and most U.S. Catholics supported the Fascists under Francisco Franco because of their support of the Catholic Church), but retained ties to the church throughout his life and was buried as a Catholic. Whether and how any of this biographical detail is relevant to these artists' work was a subject of debate for much of the twentieth century, more among Catholic critics than among others. The debate over what a Catholic author and a Catholic novel were reveal a great deal about the relationships Catholics saw between art and religion, even in a century in which most commentators saw these categories as necessarily and properly separate.

Many of the twentieth century's important American Catholic writers were converts, and a number of important Catholic works were written by non-Catholics—to the point of provoking a crisis of confidence on the part of those known as cradle Catholics. If their tradition had produced such great art in the past, they reasoned, and was provided

such freedom to be fully itself in the context of American religious liberty, as they believed, and was of such great importance to the urgent needs of the present, as they argued, why had it not yet produced great American art? Writers who illustrate this apparent paradox included Catholic Worker founder Dorothy Day, whose autobiography *The Long Loneliness* (1952) described her journey from radical atheist to radical Catholic, and southern physician Walker Percy, whose novels—the first and most famous of which was *The Moviegoer* (1961)—tried to express the oddness of religious belief in the modern world. Especially puzzling to an earlier generation was non-Catholic Willa Cather, whose novels *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927) and *Shadows on the Rock* (1931) gave evocative expression to pieces of the Catholic past in ways no U.S. Catholic writer had yet achieved. African American Catholic converts also gave expression to the relationship between Catholicism and art. Though his conversion predated his death by only three years, the poetry Harlem Renaissance author Claude McKay (1889–1948) wrote after his conversion gave him an honored place among Catholics of his era. Jazz pianist Mary Lou Williams (1910–1981), also a convert, wrote hymns and jazz masses in the 1950s and 1960s.

Three cradle Catholic writers could not in some ways be more different, but exemplify the vitality of the interaction between postwar Catholicism and American culture: J. F. Powers (1917–1999), Jack Kerouac (1922–1969), and Flannery O'Connor (1925–1964). Kerouac's jazz-inflected explorations of the seediness and exaltation of what came to be called beat novels such as *On the Road* (1959) seem far removed from O'Connor's stories of backwoods Georgia fundamentalist prophets. Both are miles apart from Powers's simple and powerful stories of midwestern priests and parishes. But all of them exhibit an intensity that derives in part from their formation in distinctively regional Catholic subcultures (Powers in the Midwest of Illinois and Minnesota and extended stays in Ireland as an adult, O'Connor in Georgia, Kerouac in French-Canadian New England) outside the Catholic mainstream of urban ethnic neighborhoods in the cities of the Northeast and the Midwest.

Catholic critics were as interested in the question of the Catholic novel when the subject was popular literature, as well. One of the most successful novelists of the century was a Catholic, though seldom overtly so in her fiction. Kathleen Thompson Norris (1880–1966) was probably the most successful woman writer in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century. Her first full-length work, a

story-memoir titled *Mother*, was published first as a 1911 magazine article and was so well received that it was issued separately and remained in print until the 1940s. Her success has largely been forgotten, however, because novels such as *The Rich Mrs. Burgoyne* (1912), *Little Ships* (1925), or *The Venables* (1941)—usually stories of the lives of women, often working their way up from the working class to middle-class respectability—were dismissed early on as sentimental and ephemeral. The cultural historian knows, though, that ephemera are particularly valuable as cultural evidence, because ideas and attitudes that change dramatically over time are preserved there for the historian to learn from.

Thus the sustained presence of Catholic themes and stereotypes, some derogatory, some adulatory, in American popular culture is a rich source for understanding the role of Roman Catholicism in American culture. Depictions of Catholics and Catholicism were increasingly prominent in American popular culture during and after World War II. Positive depictions of Roman Catholicism became something close to a prescription for market success in the postwar period. In addition, writers and moviemakers were making a clear play for the Catholic audience (and all those Legion of Decency members) by publishing and producing a string of biblical epics. Popular novels often became motion pictures, a symbiosis in U.S. popular culture that dates back at least as far as the 1915 “Birth of a Nation,” based on the 1905 novel *The Clansman*. An incomplete list would include “Going My Way” (1944) and its sequel, “The Bells of St. Mary’s” (1945); “Song of Bernadette” (1945), based on Franz Werfel’s 1942 novel; Thomas Merton’s best-selling autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain* (1948); “The Miracle of the Bells” (1948), based on Russell Janney’s 1946 novel; *The Foundling* (1951), by Francis Cardinal Spellman; “Quo Vadis?” (1951), based on Henryk Sienkiewicz’s 1896 novel; “The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima” (1952); “The Robe” (1953), based on Lloyd C. Douglas’s 1942 novel; “The Silver Chalice” (1954), based on Thomas B. Costain’s 1952 novel; “The Ten Commandments” (1956); “Ben-Hur” (1959), based on Lew Wallace’s 1880 novel; “The Nun’s Story” (1959), based on Kathryn Hulme’s 1956 memoir; “Lilies of the Field” (1963), based on William E. Barrett’s 1962 novel; “The Cardinal” (1963), based on Henry Morton Robinson’s 1950 novel; “The Trouble with Angels” (1966) and its sequel “Where Angels Go, Trouble Follows” (1969); and “The Shoes of the Fisherman” (1968), based on Morris West’s 1963 novel.

Roman Catholics were also prominent—nearly ubiquitous—in other forms of popular art, though less overt in

their religious identity. In one of those circumstances that may be incidental but may also have a deeper cultural significance, although convert Catholics tended to become the most prominent writers, in television and popular music cradle Catholics thrived, including Bing Crosby, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra, Ed Sullivan, Loretta Young, and, of course, Fulton J. Sheen.

In the postwar era, images of Catholics and Catholicism in popular media were often of something foreign, monarchical, and somewhat feminized. But at the same time these images were for the most part clearly intended to be positive. *Life* magazine, for example, did a cover story in 1958 to commemorate the centenary of the Marian apparitions at Lourdes in France, with photographs by its most famous photographer, Alfred Eisenstadt. These and other similar features struck the same note: Catholics are a little exotic, but they are still Americans. In this way, images of Catholicism in popular culture helped to cement postwar nationalism into a compound that could stand up to the perceived threat of Soviet communism.

The 1960s and After

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), which changed so much about Roman Catholicism, or at least gave formal expression to changes that had been long under way, also altered the relationship between Catholicism and American culture. Many distinctive Catholic institutions, including the Legion of Decency, disappeared as both clergy and laity came to agree that even if they had once been needed they were no longer. Deep and difficult divisions among U.S. Catholics emerged, stemming only in part from the changes brought about by Vatican II—in some ways more difficult and more lasting were the conflicts over the Vatican's 1968 prohibition of artificial birth control in the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, and the deep political and religious divisions made overt by the 1973 Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*. The long-term consequences of these divides are still playing themselves out, as are those of the grave and more recent controversy of sexual abuse by Roman Catholic clergy.

The relationship between Catholicism and popular culture has remained lively but has acquired new dimensions of contentiousness. Clearly, the interdependence of novel and film, though its heyday may have been the late 1940s and 1950s, continues, as we can see in the popularity of Colleen McCullough's 1977 novel *The Thorn Birds* (eight-hour TV miniseries, 1983); Umberto Eco's 1983 novel *The Name of the Rose* (movie version, 1986) and Dan Brown's 2003 *The Da*

Vinci Code (movie version, 2006) and 2000 *Angels and Demons* (movie version, 2009). Add to these virtually the entire genre of movies depicting the mafia and the occult, centering on Mario Puzo's 1969 *The Godfather* and William Peter Blatty's 1971 *The Exorcist*, but also extending as widely in time and tone as the goofy 1984 *Ghostbusters*, the gory 1999 *Stigmata*, and HBO's sprawling, violent mob series *The Sopranos* (1999–2007). All these depicted a more flawed, even sinister Catholic Church than the sunnier movies of the 1950s, and elicited criticism from a new generation of Catholic cultural commentators—most prominently William Donahue of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights—with sensitive antennae for the emergence of what they considered to be new and destructive forms of anti-Catholicism. Other commentators saw in the postconciliar depictions of Catholics and Catholicism a new freedom and maturity that reflected the fuller assimilation of Catholics as Americans.

Despite these and other persistent differences, despite the disappearance of the dense ethnic subcultures that gave mid-twentieth-century U.S. Catholicism much of its identity and distinctiveness, Catholics remain active, identifiable, and influential in many areas of U.S. cultural life. Authors such as Mary Gordon, Andrew Greeley, Ron Hansen, Jon Hassler, Alice McDermott, Anna Quindlen, and Richard Rodriguez make art of the conflicts and heartache, and help explain contemporary Roman Catholics to their compatriots—and to each other. Just as they took up the printing press and industrialized printing and movies and radio and television and made them all media for expression of Catholic life and culture, Catholics are also a notable presence in cable television, most prominently in Mother Angelica's extensive and visible Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), and also on the Internet. One of the most interesting efforts of the Catholic netroots in the past decade has been the transfer to the Internet by volunteer transcribers of the entire text of the 1907 to 1913 *Catholic Encyclopedia*, a massive and comprehensive attempt to give a Catholic account of knowledge in every field of human endeavor. That this reference work, initiated and funded by Catholic scholars and lay business people a century ago, should have such a prominent presence in the signature medium of the early twenty-first century says a great deal about what changes and what endures in the relationship between Roman Catholicism and American culture.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Architecture: Roman Catholic*; *Cult of Domesticity*; *Ethnicity*; *Film*; *Internet*; *Judaism: Jewish Culture*; *Latino American Religion: Catholics* entries; *Literature* entries; *Music*:

Roman Catholic; Popular Religion and Popular Culture entries; *Race and Racism; Radio; Religious Press; Roman Catholicism: African American Catholics; Roman Catholicism: Catholics in the New Nation and the Early Republic; Television; Visual Culture* entries.

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Roman Catholicism: French Influence

The influence of Frenchmen and -women on the development of Roman Catholicism in North America began in sixteenth-century New France and continued through the

nineteenth century in the United States. Over these four hundred years, French priests, women religious, and laypeople introduced Catholic beliefs and practices to Native Americans, European Americans, and African Americans throughout the St. Lawrence River Valley, Great Lakes Region, and Mississippi River Valley, as well as across pockets of French settlement in different regions of the United States. The missionary orientation of French Catholicism proved decisive in the colonial and early national periods of American history, especially because French missionaries often served as the leading edge of the Catholic Church during times of territorial expansion. It also contributed to the diversification of Catholicism in the United States, because so many people from an array of ethnic backgrounds first encountered Catholicism in the persons of Frenchmen and -women.

Early Exploration and Evangelization in New France

Jacques Cartier (1491–1557), the French explorer and “discoverer” of Canada, entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence in 1534, met a contingency of Algonkians, proceeded to raise a cross in the name of his patron King François I (1494–1547), and promptly returned to France with two Indian captives and his crew. He returned to Canada the following year and took more than a hundred Frenchmen up the St. Lawrence River to what would later be called Montreal. It was there that Cartier began the improvised process of introducing Catholic beliefs and practices to native peoples, at one point presenting a crucifix to an Iroquois headman and insisting that he kiss the object and wear it around his neck. Another chief, being paralyzed, asked Cartier to rub his legs to heal them, which then led to a host of other invalids requesting similar treatment. Cartier obliged by reciting traditional Catholic prayers, making the sign of the cross before them, and reading the story of the passion of the Christ, in effect mimicking the rituals that would have otherwise been performed by a priest. Later that winter, with the help of interpreters, Cartier attempted to convince a group of Iroquois to reject what he called their false gods and accept the Christian god or else perish in the fires of hell. In contrast, during a particularly bad outbreak of scurvy, Cartier led what remained of his French crew in a procession in honor of the Virgin Mary for her intercession. Finally, before his departure, Cartier raised a cross thirty-five feet high and adorned with the French king's coat of arms before a crowd of Iroquois onlookers, after which he captured five adults and

five children and forcibly removed them to France. When he returned to Canada in 1541, six years later, Cartier assured the kin of those he captured that they were safely and comfortably living in France, though, in reality, nine of the ten had died.

Although Cartier's third expedition included a royal commission with explicit instructions to convert *les sauvages*, the fact remained that he and his associates were more interested in successfully settling formerly imprisoned Frenchmen and -women. The colony soon failed, followed by a number of other botched ventures during the remainder of the sixteenth century. It was not until Samuel de Champlain (1567–1635) founded Québec in 1608 that French missionaries started to develop a sturdy ecclesiastical infrastructure able to sustain a large European population and an organized program of evangelization meant to convert an even larger native population. A French trading monopoly funded the settlement of Recollets in Québec, a small group of Franciscan missionary priests who dreamed of creating a Christian utopia of aboriginal peoples. Conflict soon arose between the evangelistic interests of Recollets and the economic interests of merchants and traders. Before being replaced by French Jesuits, Recollets effectively alienated a generation of Innu children from their families and systematically transformed their religious and cultural identities to suit Recollet visions of Christian civilization.

Jesuits, Ursulines, and Native Americans in New France

French Jesuits, seeing themselves as the front line in the Catholic counterreformation of the seventeenth century, conceived of the New World as a place full of potential for establishing a pure form of Christianity, a church untainted by the theological errors of Protestants and the uncooperative indifference of Catholics in Europe. Approximately 150 French Jesuits became missionaries during the first hundred years in Canada, establishing about thirty mission stations from Nova Scotia and Maine to the Great Lakes region and Mississippi River Valley. Jean de Brébeuf (1593–1649), Charles Lalemant (1587–1674), Isaac Jogues (1607–1646), and Jacques Marquette (1636–1675), among other Jesuits, concentrated their attention on the evangelization of Native Americans throughout New France. Moreover, Paul Le Jeune (1591–1664) led the construction of a Jesuit-supported Indian village called Sillery on the outskirts of Québec, where he and his ordained associates attempted to Christianize and “civilize” aboriginal residents. Whether based at a settlement

like Sillery or an Indian village far from Québec, the Jesuit missionary program was largely twofold: to teach indigenous peoples the doctrines and rituals of Christianity and discredit native religious beliefs and practices. Sacramentals, devotional objects, and artistic renderings of the afterlife were just some of the materials Jesuit missionaries used to bridge some of the cultural divisions between French Europeans and Native Americans. Jesuits also tried to learn aboriginal languages to begin the conversion process, but many Christian concepts were simply lost in translation. Jesuits made some accommodations to Indian modes of living, such as recognizing the authority of shamans, sorcerers, and healers and then trying to posture themselves as legitimate and powerful alternative sources of religious authority.

Ursuline and Hospitalier nuns arrived in Québec in the late 1630s, quickly incorporating many of the Jesuit methods of familiarizing native peoples with European and Christian ways of living. Marie de l'Incarnation (1599–1672) was one such Ursuline nun who did what she could to introduce aboriginal girls to the “civilized” occupations of playing musical instruments, fixing hair, wearing European-style clothes, and restraining sexual appetite. Many of the girls were the daughters of converts or the orphans of parents who died during epidemics and warfare. It was the intention of both the Ursulines and the Jesuits to turn Native Americans away from nomadic hunting societies to a more settled existence. In the process, French missionaries sometimes resorted to acts of cruelty, in some instances chaining wives who were not subservient to husbands, imprisoning young girls for exhibiting lust for boys, and publicly flogging those who failed to attend Mass. Moreover, not all Indian nations acquiesced to the religious authority of French missionaries and the economic authority of French traders, such as the Iroquois, who systematically destroyed Huron villages, murdered baptized and unbaptized Huron, and made martyrs out of Jean de Brébeuf and Gabriel Lalemant in 1649. Afterwards only a handful of Huron remained under the evangelistic authority of French missionaries, and most incorporated into Ottawa communities and Christian reductions in the vicinity of Québec.

During the second half of the seventeenth century, French Jesuits focused much of their evangelization effort on the Iroquois, a people described by the Jesuits in the *Relations* as brutal pagans. It was also during this period that the Jesuit Jacques Marquette joined the French-Canadian explorer Louis Joliet (1645–1700) in mapping much of the Mississippi Valley. Before his own death at the hands of the Iroquois,

Lalemant recounted how the Iroquois slowly mutilated and killed Jogues in 1646. The publication of the “Manuscript of 1652” also served as a hagiography of deceased Jesuits that codified what it meant to be a martyr in the New World. Moreover, as Jesuits saw some success in the conversion of Iroquoian people in what would become New York, a young aboriginal girl named Kateri Tekakwitha (1656–1680) started to exhibit a uniquely austere level of Christian piety as she lived in a missionary village near Montreal. She joined several other female inhabitants in organizing an ascetic, virginal sodality they called Slavery of the Blessed Virgin. After four years of self-mortification, Kateri Tekakwitha died during the Holy Week of 1680. Jesuits encouraged other Iroquois to emulate the holiness of Kateri Tekakwitha and venerate her portrait and bones. A Jesuit also wrote a hagiographical memoir of her life in the early eighteenth century as a source of spiritual edification for potential and newly converted Native Americans in New France.

Colonial and Ecclesiastical Politics in Canada

Whereas French Jesuits concentrated much of their attention on evangelizing Native Americans during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, dozens of other religious and secular clergy focused on developing a diocesan infrastructure that retained ties to the Gallican Church. Jean-Jacques Olier (1608–1657), the French founder of the Order of St. Sulpice, sent several Sulpicians to Montreal during the late 1650s. At the same time, King Louis XIV (1638–1715) appointed François de Laval (1623–1708) the first vicar apostolic of Québec in 1657, later consecrated bishop in 1674. Laval was followed by five other bishops before the Treaty of Paris ended the Seven Years’ War in 1763. According to a 1666 census, roughly 3,000 French *habitants* lived in New France, more than two-thirds of them men. In 1720 the number was almost 25,000, and by the 1770s more than 70,000. The clergy struggled to reconcile the economic and political interests of the colonial government and French crown with their claims of spiritual authority. Moreover, tension continued between, on the one hand, the Gallican tradition of episcopal autonomy from the pope and the divine right of French kings and on the other, the Holy See’s jurisdiction over foreign missions. It was also during the French régime of the eighteenth century that the majority of priests and women religious came to live in frontier towns, and the majority of Canadian and French populations in rural locales throughout Canada and what was then known as Illinois Country and Lower Louisiana.

The British conquest of New France marked a turning point in the history of French Catholicism in North America. The 1763 Treaty of Paris allowed Catholics of Canada to continue practicing their religion and Jean-Olivier Briand (1715–1794) to be appointed bishop of Québec. The Québec Act of 1774 made permanent these arrangements between Britain and Canada. Under the auspices of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide, the Holy See endorsed the accommodations of the French clergy to British colonial rule, as well as those who fell under the temporal and spiritual authority of the Spanish in Lower Louisiana. Briand’s allegiance to the British crown was tested during the American War of Independence during the 1770s and 1780s, though he insisted that all Catholic Canadians remain loyal to the British regime that had permitted them to practice their religion freely. The 1783 Treaty of Paris, marking the end of the American Revolution, also convinced the Holy See to appoint an American bishop to guide the Catholic Church in the United States and understand the implications for religious freedom as prescribed in the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights.

Early American Church

In 1789 the selection of John Carroll (1735–1815) as the first bishop of the Diocese of Baltimore coincided with the religious tumult of the French Revolution. With the entire United States falling under the new bishop’s jurisdiction and approximately thirty priests serving in the nascent American church, Carroll looked to revolutionary France for new ecclesiastical recruits. Jacques-André Emery (1608–1657), the superior of the Order of St. Sulpice in France, permitted more than twenty Sulpician émigrés to make the United States their home. This core group established two seminaries in Maryland and provided for the education of hundreds of American and Irish priests. Sulpicians introduced aspiring priests to an austere form of spirituality that closely associated the priestly vocation with the perfection of Jesus Christ, effectively guiding generations of ordained churchmen throughout much of the nineteenth century.

Several prominent Frenchmen proved highly influential in the institutional growth of Catholicism in the early American republic. Bishop Benoît Joseph Flaget (1763–1850) of the Diocese of Bardstown and Bishop Louis Guillaume DuBourg (1766–1833) of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas laid the foundation for the expansion of the Catholic Church in the southern and western United States. Bishop Jean-Louis Lefebvre de Cheverus (1768–1836) of the

Diocese of Boston played an essential role in developing positive Protestant–Catholic relations in New England. Archbishop Ambrose Maréchal oversaw the growth of the early American church as a successor to Carroll in the premier see of Baltimore. The Holy See would approve the erection of dozens of new dioceses out of the original Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, and Maryland sees during the nineteenth century, stretching from Detroit and St. Louis in the north to Mobile and Galveston in the south and from St. Augustine and Charleston in the east to Santa Fe and the Oregon Territory in the west. All of the dioceses of the United States fell under the authority of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide—the Vatican organization responsible for the administration of foreign missions—which in turn meant that the French clergy in the United States demonstrated less orientation toward the Gallican principle of episcopal autonomy and more allegiance to the Holy See than many of their confreres remaining in France.

French Catholic communities dotted the map of the United States, especially in frontier areas previously under French colonial rule during the eighteenth century. The overall Catholic population grew exponentially during the nineteenth century as millions of Irish, German, Polish, and Italian immigrants joined French and other ethnic Catholics already living in the United States. Many French Catholics did not attend Mass or receive the sacraments on a regular basis, in large part because few priests lived in the southern and western dioceses. Priests often described lay Frenchmen and -women as indifferent if not antagonistic detractors from their more rigorous understanding of Tridentine orthodoxy and orthopraxy. French Canadians made up a noticeable portion of Catholic populations in New England and along the Canadian–U.S. border. The trade of African slaves also brought French Catholics in contact with indigenous African religions, which in turn created new forms of Catholicism in places like Saint-Domingue (Haiti) and Lower Louisiana. On a larger scale, the popularity of devotions to the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Conception in France, not to mention the international attraction to the cult of Our Lady of Lourdes, greatly influenced the practice of Catholicism for people of all ethnic backgrounds in the United States.

Nineteenth-Century Expansion

French priests continued to become missionaries in the United States throughout the nineteenth century, in large part because of a missionary revival affecting much of the

Catholic Church worldwide. French bishops remained important players in the episcopal politics of the period even as Irish clerics consolidated their power in the American ecclesiastical hierarchy. The French also remained the leading edge in the expansion of Catholicism to the western United States, in effect perpetuating the evangelization of Native Americans and Protestants of European descent. Pierre-Jean de Smet (1801–1873), a Jesuit missionary from Belgium, and François Norbert Blanchet (1795–1883), a French-Canadian missionary, extended the reach of the Catholic Church to the Rocky Mountains and Pacific Coast during the mid-nineteenth century, focusing much of their effort on ministering to American Indians and erecting Catholic institutions among the growing number of American and European migrants in the West. Jean-Baptiste Lamy (1814–1888) and Joseph Projectus Machebeuf (1812–1889), both missionaries from the Auvergne region of France, led a new wave of church representatives into New Mexico and Arizona following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, a region of the United States populated mostly by Catholic Mexicans and American migrants. Antoine Blanc (1792–1860) and Jean-Marie Odin (1800–1870) oversaw the administration of the Archdiocese of New Orleans from the 1840s to the 1860s, in the process demonstrating the willingness of some French missionaries to support the institution of slavery and Confederate secession. There was also a tradition of French women religious serving in Louisiana, two of the most influential being the Ursuline Order, made up of women of European descent, and the Sisters of the Holy Family, composed of women of African descent.

Frenchmen and -women remained important figures in the development of the Catholic Church in the expanding United States for the remainder of the nineteenth century. By the twentieth century, however, five factors contributed to a decline in the direct influence of French Catholicism in the United States: the nearly complete end to the migration of new French missionaries to North America, the legal separation of church and state in France in 1905 known as laicization, the removal of the United States from the jurisdiction of the Propaganda Fide in 1908, the stabilization of French-Canadian migration to America, and the dominance of Irish clergy in the American church. That said, it was also the case that the institutional presence of the Catholic Church in many parts of the United States and among many ethnic communities simply would not have been possible were it not for the actions of French priests, women

religious, and laypeople during the colonial and early national periods of American history.

See also *American Revolution*; *Anti-Catholicism*; *Architecture: Roman Catholic*; *Canada: Catholics*; *Canada: Pluralism*; *Immigration: From the Colonial Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century*; *Missions: Native American*; *Music: Roman Catholic*; *Religious Thought: Roman Catholic*; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *Women Religious*; *Women: Roman Catholic*; *Worship: Roman Catholic*.

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Roman Catholicism: Tradition and Heritage

To understand Roman Catholicism in North America, one must first understand the origins and heritage of this identification. As its name indicates, Roman Catholicism is tied to a place as well as being the religious identity of a worldwide community that at the turn of the twenty-first century numbers more than one billion adherents, 17 percent of the world's population. More than 180 million Roman Catholics live in North America (64 million in the United States, 12 million in Canada, and 106 million in Mexico). Whether in Canada, Mexico, or the United States, all Roman Catholics are part of a worldwide church that has its headquarters and its leader in the Vatican City in Rome. The pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church globally and one of the most powerful religious leaders in the world. Catholics trace the lineage of the papacy back to the beginning of Christianity. They believe that Jesus appointed the apostle Peter to head the church after his resurrection. The Gospel of Matthew

recounts Jesus saying to Peter, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). Catholics believe that the lineage of the papacy remains unbroken from the time of Peter until the present, despite the few times that more than one man claimed to be pope. Benedict XVI, the 265th pope in the succession, was elected in 2005.

History

More important, Catholics, like other Christians, trace their heritage to Jesus of Nazareth, a first-century Jew who lived in ancient Palestine, preached a message of salvation, and attracted followers who carried on his message after the Romans crucified him around the year 30 CE. Thus Catholics are first and foremost Christians. In the early centuries of the church's existence, Christianity was not divided between East and West or Protestant and Roman Catholic. In 1054 the West split from the East in a complex division over theological, liturgical, and administrative issues. In the sixteenth century reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, reacting to what they perceived to be abuses of power and deviance from the gospel by the church, introduced Protestantism. Since that time Christianity has witnessed many more divisions with subgroups forming regularly over time and across the world.

Despite many changes in Christian identity since the time of the first disciples of Jesus, Roman Catholicism has remained remarkably consistent while adjusting to new challenges and periods. It has always sought a balance between maintaining tradition and accommodating the times and has struck that balance as well as any religion. A Catholic in the Middle Ages would likely recognize the marks of the church in the twenty-first century despite the significant changes over the intervening centuries. The church has never allowed itself to change beyond recognition. It has maintained a recognizably consistent doctrine, structure, and practice. As a result, it has spawned a rich culture that includes music, literature, social service, and art as well as a religion.

In its earliest form in the first century, the church operated largely as a Jewish sect. Its members formed house churches where they worshipped and passed on the faith. Some visited Jewish temples as well as practicing nascent Christianity. The apostles played important roles in the spread of Jesus' message. The evangelist Luke who wrote one of the four canonical (officially approved) gospels also wrote an account of the early church contained in the New Testament called the Acts of the Apostles. Saint Paul, who converted from Judaism to

become a follower of Jesus, carried out missionary work in the first century after the death of Jesus. During the middle of the first century, Paul wrote thirteen letters (epistles) to various early Christian communities that are recorded in the New Testament.

Part of the reason for the consistency and longevity of the church has been its hierarchical structure, which began to develop as early as the middle of the first century. By the beginning of the second century, bishops had distinct roles and responsibilities as leaders. The role of bishop was conferred on a candidate when a current bishop ordained him for the role in a ritual that involved laying hands on his head, a ritual that continues to the present. Despite persecution by Rome, which believed Christianity detrimental to the state because Christians refused to worship the emperor, the church perdured and grew. In 325 the Emperor Constantine unified the empire under the banner of Christianity when he convened the Council of Nicea, at which bishops developed the Nicene Creed. The creed defined Christian teachings and refuted heresies, in particular the view of Arius (c. 250–336 CE), a Christian priest who held that Jesus was not the Son of God from the beginning with God the Father, a view determined to be in error by the Council that held that Jesus and God the Father always existed as divine beings. The Nicene Creed, then, defines the fundamentals of Catholic teachings. To this day Catholics around the world recite this creed during the Sunday liturgy (Mass), affirming their unified beliefs. In concise theological language, the creed affirms foundational beliefs about God, Jesus Christ, and the church. The trinitarian formula, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, affirms the church's belief in one God who is three persons. Each of these persons of the Trinity is equally God. Further, it affirms belief in the church and the origin and destiny of humanity. This creed sums up the central beliefs of Christians. The Catholic Church has many additional teachings that bind its adherents, but those articulated in the creed are the fundamental teachings. Similar in content to the Nicene Creed is the Apostles' Creed, which was used at baptism in the early church. It includes most of the claims of the Nicene version with a few additions, such as "he descended into hell," indicating that Jesus' liberation from death applies also to those faithful to God who came before him.

Many councils followed that of Nicea. As important as these were to fight heresy and define orthodoxy, it was the popes who also shaped the church. As the number of Christians increased, so did papal influence. Since the time of the Council of Nicea and the sanctioning of the church by the

state, popes, regardless of their personal piety or lack of it, have played important roles in the social, cultural, and political order. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, they crowned kings. This power underscored both the divine right of kings and the church's authority. Popes also had the power to influence culture. In 1508, for example, Julius II commissioned Michelangelo to repaint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. The artist painted figures from biblical stories that continue to inspire visitors to this day. Despite the fact that Julius mistreated this distinguished artist, enduring art resulted. Popes owned principalities, advised monarchies, established moral codes, governed educational institutions, served as patrons of music and art, and fought wars—all in the name of the church. Their decisions and the directions they took influenced the religious, social, cultural, and political landscape.

Teachings

The church has a set of teachings and regulations that range from the definition and importance of sacraments to laws governing membership, marriage, and the authority of the hierarchy. Its central teachings include belief in revelation and salvation, a defined set of sacraments, a special reverence for Mary the mother of Jesus, the recognition of saints, an importance to symbols and icons, the infallibility of the pope, and ethics. The church's official teaching authority exercised by the bishops in union with the pope is called the *magisterium*.

The church holds that God has been revealed both in the natural order and in particular revelations through persons, events, and texts. Thus the prophets of the Old Testament were privileged by God to receive a message they had the responsibility to spread. They did so by preaching, prophesying, and teaching. Their words and actions were compiled in texts that guide the church to this day. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament testify to the ministry, mission, and divinity of Jesus. The Catholic Church recognizes twelve books (called Apocrypha) in the Old Testament that are not accepted as biblical by Jews and by Protestants. Selections from both testaments continue to be read today daily in the liturgy (worship) of the church. These texts are accounts of God's revelation and God's interaction with humanity. In response to this revelation, Catholics are invited to believe in God and to follow the biblical teachings. During the course of centuries, and in particular in the nineteenth century, the literal interpretation of these texts gave way to a sophisticated reading that discriminated between various literary genres, recognizing some texts as historically accurate, others as

poetry, prayer, and practical advice for the time in which they were written.

Thus, although all of the biblical texts are believed to be meaningful, the ways in which that meaning is conveyed differ. One of the best examples of this is the creation account found in the first book of the Bible, Genesis. A story familiar to Christians and non-Christians alike in North America, Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden disobey God and are punished for their sin. For most of the church's existence, these texts were interpreted literally. In other words, Catholics believed that God created the earth in seven days and that Adam and Eve were the first human beings. With the advent of higher biblical criticism developed in the nineteenth century, largely from Germany and France, the texts began to be read as conveying meaning through metaphor and narrative rather than as a straightforward historical account. So, for example, the Genesis story conveys a truth or a meaning about God's relationship to creation. The point of the story holds that God created the earth and all that is on it, that human beings are the pinnacle of that creation and essentially different from the rest of creation, and that God and humans have a special and abiding relationship. However, the creation event lasted for longer than the seven days described in the Genesis account.

Nineteenth-century Protestant scholars were largely responsible for the developments in biblical criticism. After initially resisting such criticism, in the twentieth century Catholic scholars followed suit and began to contribute. In 1943 Pope Pius XII issued an encyclical (papal letter), *Divino Afflante Spiritu* ("Inspired by the Holy Spirit"), that encouraged Catholic biblical scholars to use the available critical tools, in particular the historical-critical methods long been used by Protestant scholars. Today, the Catholic Church continues to teach that the Bible is God's word, but understands it to be conveyed in the words of human authors who used the available literary genres to convey the message. So, although the message is God's, the messengers were human with all the attendant foibles that pertain to human accounts of events.

This means that Catholics are not literalists in their reading of the Bible. Thus, for example, the Roman Catholic Church does not believe in creationism, its theory that the world is only five thousand years old. Catholic biblical scholarship and theology do not see a conflict between scientific data and religious belief because science informs one dimension of our knowledge and the Bible another dimension. The Bible was not intended to teach science but to disclose that God exists, is personal, and wishes to be in relationship with

the humanity that God created, even if that creation was an evolutionary one.

Some of the roots of the church's teaching originate in Judaism, Christianity's predecessor and—some say—parent religion. The early Jewish biblical texts are not dualistic, separating body and soul. Around the time of Jesus, some Jewish groups had taken over the notion of a soul and related it to the possibility of personal resurrection and continued life of the individual. Christianity's idea of the soul, its identity and durability, was deeply influenced by the hellenization of Christianity and the thought patterns of Greek philosophy. In his work *Phaedo*, Plato argued for a dualism of body and soul and contended that the soul constituted the identity of the person. Catholicism today maintains a distinction between body and soul but holds for a unity of body and soul in the sense that the person is an embodied spirit. Although it is true that Christians believe that they will be raised in a resurrection from the dead, made possible by Jesus' resurrection, the belief in resurrection was present among the first-century CE. Pharisees, a Jewish sect at the time of Jesus. However, this belief was not universal, for it was rejected by the Sadducees, a Jewish religio-political party from the last two centuries BCE and the first century CE.

The New Testament writer Paul was a Pharisee before his conversion to Christianity. The expectation of the earliest, postresurrection Christians was that Jesus would return in glory soon, certainly during their lifetime. As the Christian community grew and time passed, the hope for an imminent return of Jesus faded. With the delay of the Second Coming more evident and more widely accepted among Christians, the idea of a universal judgment on the last day began to fade. Instead of expecting an immediate return of the Messiah, or having the dead await a final day of judgment for all, the idea that each person was judged immediately after death became increasingly accepted. The thought that the soul was held in some state of abeyance began with the Jewish belief in Sheol, the netherworld, the shadowy realm of the dead, and carried over, because of the influence of the Greeks, into early Christianity. The idea of the immortal soul's awaiting the definitive judgment of the Last Day was officially abandoned when the church claimed that the dead are judged immediately after death. Whether the judgment of the dead is immediate or delayed, and whether or not individual theologians hold for an inseparable unity of body and soul or for body and soul dualism, Christianity maintains that the soul has a beginning when God creates it, but no end.

Although individual Catholics often hold diverse beliefs or are unaware of what the church teaches in a specific area, the church's official teachings are carefully laid out in various pronouncements. A doctrine is an official teaching of the church. Doctrines are promulgated by various forms of church authority such as the pope, a synod of bishops, or an ecumenical council, to name a few. The New Testament is the original source for many church teachings. Doctrines articulate the explicit and implicit teachings of the New Testament in language of the period in which they are formulated. Over time, therefore, as insights accumulate and language changes, doctrines are subject to development and can be reformulated without sacrificing their consistent meaning. The cumulative tradition of church teachings and practices informs Catholicism and ensures consistency in its pronouncements. The Catholic Church believes that it is guided by the Holy Spirit, which protects it from error in its doctrine. Thus it looks to tradition to shape it in any era.

Dogmas are doctrines that are promulgated by the pope, usually in conjunction with an ecumenical council. The teachings of the creed—for example, the Trinity—are dogmas. All are considered definitive. It is a heresy to deny church dogmas; historically, however, theologians have sometimes questioned their origin, formulation, and implementation without incurring condemnation.

Encyclicals are formal pastoral letters from the pope addressed to the universal church and, since Pope John XXIII (1958–1963), to all persons of good will. The subjects of these letters vary widely, from social justice to the church's relation with other religions to pastoral practices. Intended to guide and instruct, these are not infallible though their teachings are supposed to be followed by the faithful. Most Catholics are aware that there are such pronouncements, but would be hard pressed to name any (including recent ones) and even less likely to be intimately acquainted with their content.

Most of the fundamental doctrines that the church articulates come from councils, which are gatherings of church leaders. The most important of these are ecumenical councils, in which the pope convenes the bishops of the church to discuss and proclaim church teaching. The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) was the last such gathering. National councils of bishops are also convened, such as the councils of Baltimore (1852, 1866, and 1884) in the United States in the nineteenth century.

Hierarchical Structure

The Catholic Church operates within a hierarchical system centered at the Vatican in Rome. The pope is elected by the

members of the College of Cardinals who are under the age of eighty. The pope exercises authority over the entire church, speaks in the name of the church, and protects the integrity of the church's doctrine. In practice, this means that new bishops are appointed by the pope who does so by consulting current bishops in a national church and his emissary to the country. For example, the Nuncio, who represents the Vatican to the United States and lives in Washington, D.C., enjoys ambassadorial status in his relations with the government. Thus he represents the pope to the government and to the American church. He is consulted on the appointment of bishops and represents the pope at all high-level functions and important liturgical celebrations such as the installation of a bishop in a diocese.

Papal authority has been exercised in different ways by different popes, and has been challenged by internal forces as well as by princes, kings, and warlords. At times the pope was a prisoner in his own castle, and at other times, a ruler with considerable land. The modern Vatican City State is a shrunken version of the papal states that once included parts of what are now Italy and France. Today it is an enclave of about one hundred acres in Rome and was established as an independent political entity in an agreement with Italy in 1929. Although the pope no longer controls significant territory, he remains the head of the Roman Catholic Church, an empire judged less by its land holdings than by its hold over the reins of orthodoxy in the church.

In recent times the College of Cardinals has had a membership of about 120, with all regions of the globe represented. An archbishop oversees a large diocese (called an archdiocese) and, technically, several bishops in surrounding dioceses. In archdioceses and large dioceses, bishops have auxiliary bishops to assist them. In the diocesan structure, bishops oversee the work of priests, deacons, religious sisters, brothers, and laity. Religious orders of men and women have their own internal structures of authority, traditionally with a father or sister general, provincials or superiors, and in more recent nomenclature with presidents and vice presidents. In this hierarchical order, the laity is below all these ranks.

One of the most misunderstood doctrines of the church—by Catholics and non-Catholics alike—is the doctrine of infallibility. Infallibility pertains to particular statements concerning faith and morals. It is a charism of the Holy Spirit that is given to the church and exercised through the bishops and the pope. The extraordinary teaching authority of the church is exercised on occasion

to clarify, define, and preserve a central truth of the faith, often given particular expression to counter heretical ideas. This teaching authority is exercised by the church in the form of a general council that is representative of the entire church in union with the pope. Papal pronouncements are intended to be taken very seriously by the Catholic community but not, as a matter of course, to be considered infallible. Infallible teachings must be stated explicitly to be so, as indicated in canon law: “Nothing is to be understood as dogmatically declared or defined unless this is clearly manifested.”

Infallibility, which was not a formal doctrine until the First Vatican Council in 1869–1870, means that certain statements of the church pronounced by the pope when he speaks *ex cathedra*, from the chair [of Peter], are immune from error. The occasions for this are rare and the topics are related solely to church teachings.

Saints

The church reveres saints, persons who are identified for their holiness and model Christian lives. Saints have a very important role in the spirituality of Catholics. The church celebrates their feast days, commemorates their lives in the liturgical calendar; Catholics pray to them to intercede with God on their behalf; miracles are attributed to their intercession and required by the church during the canonization process; the stories of saints’ lives are known to many Catholics; statues and paintings of them abound in churches, schools, convents, and rectories.

A handful of saints have been North Americans and thus have attained special prominence for Catholics in the region. One of these was the Canadian Isaac Jogues (1607–1646), a Jesuit missionary priest born in Orleans, France, who migrated to Québec and ministered to the Native Americans in the regions in the northeastern United States bordering Canada. He was martyred by the Iroquois, who thought that he was a sorcerer who had cast a spell on them. In 1930 Pope Pius XI canonized him as part of a group known as the North American Martyrs.

Elizabeth Ann Seton (nee Bayley), another North American saint, was born in New York in 1774, married, was widowed in 1803, raised five children, converted to Catholicism at age twenty-nine. Four years later she founded a religious community and opened a school for poor children near Emmitsburg, Maryland. The Sisters of Charity, which she and some companions founded, became the first indigenous religious society in America. She died in 1821 and was

canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1975, becoming the first canonized saint born in the United States.

On December 9, 1531, a Mexican boy named Juan Diego (1474–1548) is believed to have encountered the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, while walking along a road on his way to Mass. She asked him to request that the bishop build a church on the site, but the skeptical bishop required proof of Juan’s encounter. Juan is said to have met her again and been instructed to return to the site of their first encounter, where he found roses not native to Mexico growing in the frozen soil. When he opened his robe to deliver these as proof to the bishop, the interior of the robe was covered with a magnificent painting of Mary, convincing the bishop that Juan had indeed seen her. A church named Our Lady of Guadalupe was built on the site, and despite the assertion by some scholars that he never existed, Juan Diego was canonized as a saint by Pope John Paul II in 2002.

The veneration of the saints, along with the special reverence given to Mary, is another feature that separates Catholics from some Protestant denominations. Certain Protestant denominations, such as Lutherans, name churches after the apostles but do not pay similar homage to anyone who came after the apostles. Other denominations, such as Baptists and Presbyterians, do not have churches honoring eponymous saints. The cult of the saints is thus a manifestation of piety that Roman and Orthodox churches share. The veneration of specific saints is tied to national and ethnic roots. Even today third- and fourth-generation American Catholics identify with saints who represent their ethnic heritage; Saint Patrick for the Irish, Saint Anthony for the Italians, Saint Casimir for the Poles, to name a few.

Not all of those revered by the faithful were historical figures, however. The existence of some is dubious. Christopher, patron saint of travelers, is one; Philomena is another. Roman martyrology notes a man who carried travelers across a river and one time carried a child who was Christ in disguise. When historical investigations could not confirm his existence, the church removed his feast day from the liturgical calendar, although many Catholics and other Christians continue to name children Christopher (the name comes from the Greek meaning Christ bearer). The reverence for Philomena was based on a discovery as recent as the early nineteenth century, when a vial seemingly containing blood was discovered in a catacomb. The Latin inscription was incorrectly translated Philomena; a biography was contrived, and a following quickly developed to support the claim to holiness of the woman buried there. Later more careful

investigation proved the translation wrong and the story unreliable, so the church (to its credit) removed her from the list of saints.

The lives of people considered of heroic virtue are subjected to careful scrutiny by the church before they are recognized as saints. The Vatican oversees the investigation of their conduct of life, justification for their reputation for holiness, and their activities and writings (if any), and ascertains validated miracles occurred directly as a result of their intercession. The 1983 Code of Canon Law, the church's internal governing laws, streamlined the canonization process by combining the cause for beatification (a step on the way to canonization) and canonization, and by empowering the local diocese to conduct initial investigations. The authority to canonize, however, still rests solely in the hands of the pope.

The Arts

The veneration of the saints has given rise to a remarkable range of artistic representation throughout the church's history. From the origins of Christianity through the late Renaissance, the primary subject of Western art had been religious, beginning with elaborate depictions of biblical stories and figures and moving to the portraits and activities of cardinals and popes. Art history books are filled with religious paintings. There are several reasons for this. Art as an activity and record of culture is devoted to sublime topics and nothing in that period counted as more sublime than God's interaction with the world and humanity. Thus statuary, frescoes, and paintings captured the story of God's message in vivid forms meant to honor God and to inspire and instruct the faithful. The church also served as a patron of the arts, commissioning great artists to decorate churches. One of the finest examples of this is the Vatican's Sistine Chapel, the ceiling and walls of which are covered with the magnificent creations of Leonardo da Vinci, including the Creation of Adam, one of the most recognizable works of art, in which God's hand reaches out to Adam's to instill life. Michelangelo's statue the Pietà, depicting the broken body of Jesus after crucifixion in the arms of his mother Mary, is recognized as one of the finest pieces in the history of art.

Many Roman Catholic churches feature painstakingly executed stained glass windows depicting biblical stories or characters, scenes from the life of Christ, sacraments, the evangelists, saints, and Catholic symbols for the Trinity or the Holy Spirit, among others. These are often quite beautiful, creating an aura of sacred space within the confines of the

church. One knows immediately on entering that the building is no ordinary meeting place. Thus they serve to separate the space from ordinary life and to visually draw the observer into the spiritual story that they depict. Some of the Protestant reformers were critical of such ornate displays and built plain churches that focused on the reading and preaching of the Bible as central.

Saint Augustine wrote that singing is praying twice. Some of the greatest pieces of music were written for church occasions such as the Mass. The church reserves the right to approve the music played for its ceremonies. The music is not for its own sake but designed to serve an end, specifically, to offer praise to God and to inspire people to worship and serve God. One of the oldest and best known forms of this music is Gregorian chant, named for Pope Gregory VIII (590–604), who was a monk before he became pope. The plain chant melodies that characterize this genre have been used by monastic communities since and are common in parish worship as well. Many of the world's great composers, such as Mozart, Beethoven, and Bach, whether or not they were Catholic, have fashioned music celebrating Christian religious themes. The composer Leonard Bernstein wrote and first performed in 1971 his "Mass" at the request of former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy based on the Tridentine Mass, a rite celebrated since the fifteenth century.

Catholic art has added beauty to cultures around the world since the earliest days of the church, which has served as both a patron to the arts and an inspiration for artists. From the Ave Maria to Christmas music, from the Pietà to artwork in contemporary churches, from the enduring architecture of the Gothic cathedrals of Europe to the sleek lines of the cathedral of the archdiocese of Los Angeles to the diverse architectural detail of the Mexico City Metropolitan Cathedral, the church has enhanced cities, countries, and cultures with various art forms.

Sacraments

Besides being a visual religion, Roman Catholicism is sacramental; it celebrates God's presence in the world in concrete manifestations such as saints and symbols; the seven sacraments bring this notion to life in the lives of believers. Baptism, the Eucharist, and confirmation are called sacraments of initiation because these are the gateway to the Catholic-Christian community. In the ancient church they were conferred at the same time, as they still are today for adults at the Easter Vigil. But in the ordinary course of events, they are conferred at various chronological intervals of a

Catholic's life, as are the remaining sacraments of reconciliation, matrimony, healing of the sick, and for those who pursue it, holy orders (priesthood).

Baptism is the first of the three sacraments of initiation. Catholics, like other Christians, become Christian by being baptized in water and the Spirit. The church traces this rite back to New Testament times as witnessed by John the Baptist's baptism of repentance (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Matthew 3:11). John himself acknowledged that his baptism would be surpassed by a baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Infant baptism is the norm in Catholicism. In the Middle Ages fear arose that a baby who died before being baptized would not go to heaven but to limbo. Limbo was a place neither of permanent punishment like hell, nor of temporary hardship like purgatory, but a place between purgatory and heaven in which the souls of unbaptized babies would neither suffer punishment nor enjoy eternal bliss, but exist in a neutral territory for eternity. There is no scriptural basis for limbo. It was the invention of medieval theologians trying to balance the necessity for baptism for salvation (to eliminate the effects of original sin) and the innocence of newborns. A 2007 document sanctioned by the Vatican noted "strong grounds for hope that God will save infants when we have not been able to do for them what we would have wished to do, namely, to baptize them into the faith and life of the Church."

Baptism is the initiation into the Catholic community, and most parents have their children baptized even if they do not practice their religion with any regularity. For nonpracticing Catholics it is a social and cultural event as much as it is a religious commitment. Family history and cultural patterns make it an important symbol, even if for some a theologically ambiguous one.

Baptism initiates one into the church, but it is the Eucharist that sustains the church community on a regular basis. Those unfamiliar with Christianity are often puzzled by the Eucharist; non-Catholic Christians have their own form of it but are troubled by Catholic claims that the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Christ. The Catholic doctrine, called transubstantiation, using philosophical language that can be traced back to Aristotle and that was refined by Saint Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century, holds that at the Eucharist the "substance" of the bread and wine is transformed into the body and blood of Christ but that the "accidents" (appearances) remain the same. The Catholic Church teaches that this transformation occurs when the priest who presides at the Eucharist says the words

"This is my body" and "This is my blood" over the bread and wine. The community who then receives the bread and wine is receiving the body and blood of Christ. Catholic theology then also refers to the community of believers as the body of Christ. How the bread and wine becomes the body and blood of Christ cannot be explained scientifically and is regarded as one of the central mysteries of the faith, along with the Trinity. The biblical evidence for this mystery is the record of Jesus' celebration of Passover with his apostles on the night before he died at which he passed the cup and bread and instructed his followers, "Take and eat, this is my body given up for you."

The Eucharistic liturgy is divided into two parts—the liturgy of the Word and the liturgy of the Eucharist. The liturgy of the Word, as the term suggests, focuses on the biblical message with readings from both the Old and New Testaments. It also includes a call to prayer, a penitential rite asking God to forgive the sins of the community, and a homily delivered by the priest or deacon that reflects on the meaning of the biblical readings for the contemporary Catholic community.

The sacrament of confirmation does what its name implies—it confirms the person's choice and commitment to be Catholic. It completes the sacraments of initiation. The sacrament commemorates the Pentecost event in the New Testament marked as the birth of the church when the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples. The church calls that same Holy Spirit to fill the hearts and souls of those being confirmed that they might enter adulthood with a readiness and willingness to live as Christ's disciples in the world.

In the ancient church this sacrament was conferred at the time of baptism (as it remains the custom in Eastern-rite churches today and at the Easter Vigil in the Latin rite for those children and adults who are being received into the church). Normally, however, the church confers this sacrament on young adults from the ages of about thirteen to seventeen. Some flexibility is exercised in different dioceses and parishes as to the age at which it is conferred. The reception of this sacrament is usually preceded by an intense period of preparation of one to two years. This commonly includes education in the Catholic tradition, a theological understanding of the commitment, a community service project, a retreat, and a discernment of whether one wishes publicly and sacramentally to confirm one's commitment to Catholic Christianity. In the past it was an expectation and obligation. Today many religious educators and pastoral staffs view it as a choice—not their choice, or the parents' choice, but the

candidate's choice. Freely making such a commitment requires a certain degree of maturity. At baptism a child's parents speak for him or her making an initial commitment to Christianity. At confirmation the young person elects to continue that commitment in the Catholic tradition.

The sacrament of marriage is one that Catholic couples look forward to with great hope and anticipation. Marriage is also a time when they want all of the pageantry and ceremony that a sacramental celebration affords. As with the other sacraments, the parish is the connection with the larger church. It is in and through the parish that couples are prepared for the sacrament of marriage. Marriage is the only sacrament not conferred by a priest or deacon; a priest or deacon witnesses the marriage but the bride and groom together are the ones to actually complete the sacrament.

The sad underside of marriage is divorce. Catholics divorce at the same rate as others in North America. The church, however, does not recognize divorce. Referring to the marriage bond, Jesus said, "what God has joined together let no one separate" (Matthew 19:6 and Mark 10:9). For Catholics, marriage is not only a contract, it is a sacrament, and sacraments cannot be canceled. Marriages, however, can be annulled, by the church. An annulment signifies that a sacrament was never conferred. The civil dimension of marriage can be nullified by a civil divorce decree issued in the courts. The civil status of the marriage is not affected by the annulment process, and the children from an annulled marriage are legitimate. There are myriad grounds for the church to grant an annulment, from failure to consummate the marriage to the immaturity of one or both of the parties at the time of marriage. The most common reason that the church annuls marriages is psychological incapacity. This is not related to age but to the maturity, understanding, and ability of a party to enter into a permanent bond. If at the time of marriage a person was not mature enough to understand and accept the sacramental bond of marriage, after proper investigation and procedures that marriage can be annulled by the church. Thousands of marriages are annulled each year in church tribunals.

Laypeople encounter canon law most often in marriage cases, in which a person is seeking to marry someone who is not Catholic or not Christian, or is seeking to annul a marriage. Both of these involve matters promulgated in canon law. Although the first situation may be taken care of with the appropriate permissions and documents, annulments often require written and oral testimony to a marriage tribunal within a diocese. The tribunal is composed of judges who

are qualified by their formal study of canon law. The tribunal members may be religious women or other laypersons, though the overwhelming majority are priests. Pontifical Catholic universities (those sanctioned by the Vatican to grant degrees) in various parts of the world offer degrees in canon law. The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., is the principal institution granting these degrees in America. Many priests, however, are trained in canon law at European universities such as the Gregorian University in Rome and the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium.

The one sacrament not widely received by Catholics is holy orders. In fact, only a small number of American Catholics have even been present for the ordination of a priest. In one sense, this is unfortunate, because this ceremony is rich with word and symbolism that moves the heart and captures the imagination. In another sense, the ceremony symbolizes much that contemporary Catholics, in particular but not exclusively women, object to about the church's structure. Priests are taught to approach their position in the church as one of service to the community, not power over it. Countless priests in America live out their daily ministry in just such a fashion. They take seriously the gospel mandate to be a servant to the people of God and do so at great personal sacrifice and without complaint. Their service is a joy, and they do not count the cost. In return they receive the cooperation, respect, and admiration of the Catholic community they serve.

Priests are called to be many things to many people. They baptize the newborn, bury the dead, counsel the confused, comfort the sick, guide the spiritual lives of numerous Catholics, preach the Word, serve as advocates for the voiceless, instruct the ignorant and the well-informed; they live alongside their parishioners, sharing their successes, failures, and struggles. It is a demanding vocation, to say the least. The vast majority of priests in North America live their vocation admirably. They are happy with their work, fulfilled emotionally and professionally. At the same time, studies show that they are increasingly overworked, sometimes underappreciated, and subject to the same self-doubts that are manifest in marriages and in other career paths.

Ordination to the priesthood is not the only form of the sacrament. Deacons also are ordained. Some, as transitional, take this step on their way to the priesthood; others—permanent deacons—dedicate themselves to a specific lifelong ministry in the church. A number of factors distinguish these two groupings. Transitional deacons in training for the priesthood function as deacons for one or

two years immediately before being ordained priests. Their deaconal ministry may be served partially in the seminary where they finish their academic and ministerial training, and partially in a parish setting where they experience the daily routine and challenges of pastoral life. Permanent deacons, married and single men (even though historically there were women deacons in the church, that practice ceased in the early church and has not been revived), prepare within diocesan training programs part-time for a number of years, after which they are ordained by the bishop and assigned work in either parishes or special apostolates. They may not preside at Eucharist or hear confessions, though they may baptize, witness marriages, and preach.

The sacrament of reconciliation (formerly penance), commonly called confession, is one of the distinctive features of Catholic Christianity. The priest acts as an intermediary between God and the community of believers. Catholic theology holds that priests, by virtue of their reception of the sacrament of holy orders, are set apart (not above) for sacred duties. One of those duties is to forgive sins. The authority to do so stems from the New Testament command issued by Jesus to his apostles: “Those whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven. Those whose sins you shall retain, they are retained” (John 20:23).

The intention of this sacrament is to forgive sins and to reconcile the sinner with God and the church community. Priests are instructed to act in an understanding and pastoral manner to reconcile the sinner. Penitents (those confessing their sins) are required to be contrite for their sins and to resolve, with the help of God’s grace, to try not to sin again. Inevitably, the penitent will sin again, but God’s mercy is everlasting and there is no limit to the number of times one may be forgiven in the sacrament of reconciliation.

The ritual and the frequency of reconciliation have changed depending on the historical period. In the ancient church, penance, like baptism, was received only once. There were sometimes harsh penalties associated with it as well. For these reasons most people delayed receiving it until they were dying. In the recent past, before Vatican II, many Catholics would go to confession weekly, usually on Saturday afternoons in a dimly lighted church. Penitents would wait kneeling in pews alongside a confessional box where a priest would sit for hours hearing confessions, forgiving sins, and meting out penances usually requiring the penitent to say a certain number of Hail Marys and Our Fathers. There would be several confessionals in the church, each with a name over the door identifying the priest inside the confessional. On

entering the box, the penitent would begin by saying, “Bless me Father, for I have sinned. It has been one week or one month (or whatever length of time) since my last confession. These are my sins.” After listening to the penitent’s recital, the priest would briefly counsel the penitent to avoid such sins in the future and ask that the penitent recite the Act of Contrition. It is a prayer that every pre-Vatican II Catholic knows by heart:

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

Today some Catholics confess their sins to the priest face to face in a room designated for this ritual, but others continue to prefer the anonymity of the confessional booth.

The age of initial participation in the sacrament has varied somewhat, depending on the rules of the local diocese and the religious education program of the parish. The bishops established national guidelines that children should receive the sacrament of reconciliation before receiving First Communion. The general guideline is that children must have attained the age of reason (usually around seven years old) so that they can distinguish, in moral categories, the difference between right and wrong and assume conscious personal responsibility for moral acts. Catholics are expected to receive the sacrament at least once a year if they have committed a mortal sin (of such a serious nature that it completely ruptures one’s relationship with God).

Even at the turn of the twenty-first century, long after the reforms of Vatican II, some Catholics continue to refer to the sacrament of the sick by its old Latin name, extreme unction, or as the last rites, neither of which term conveys the essence of the sacrament. “I’ll [or Let’s] call the priest” sounded an ominous death-knell, bringing terror to all hearts. However, the anointing of the sick is a sacrament intended to bring spiritual comfort to the sick, not an early death notice. The roots for this sacrament go back to the New Testament book of James (5:14–15), which reads, “Is there anyone sick among you? He should ask for the presbyters of the church. They in turn are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will

be forgiven.” At different times in the church’s history, including the first half of the twentieth century, the sacrament was administered only when death was imminent. Although it continues to be administered to the dying, sometimes accompanied by the final reception of holy communion called Viaticum (“food for the journey”), it is intended not only for those who are mortally ill, but also for all who are sick and who may need an additional sign and source of God’s grace to cope with their illness, to be healed, to endure the suffering associated with illness.

The sacrament of the sick may be administered to a chronically ill patient, a person about to undergo a serious operation, or someone who is suffering emotionally or mentally. Although still administered most regularly in hospitals, parishes conduct liturgical services during which the sick and infirm are anointed in the presence of healthy parishioners. Priests also administer this sacrament in private homes, for those who are unable to attend a communal service, and in nursing homes, either in the context of a service or privately in patients’ rooms. If possible, family members are invited to participate in the sacramental ritual, offering prayers and comforting the sick person with their supporting presence.

The sacrament is a sign of God’s grace and healing power, but it is not magic or medicine. The oil used in the anointing reminds the recipient of his or her baptism as the priest recites the prayer: “Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin, save you and raise you up.” The church’s prayer is for strength, whether to endure an illness, or in severe cases to accept death gracefully. It also reminds the sick person that he or she does not endure these trials alone but is accompanied by the church, which prays with and stands by those who are weakened by illness and cannot participate fully in the life of the community.

Guide to Morality

Alongside its theology, spirituality, and hierarchy, the church provides a moral guide for Catholics with a wide range of teachings that sometimes also attempt to influence public policy on ethical concerns. Best known to contemporary North American Catholics is the church’s unremitting defense of human life, in particular its clear and often articulated stance against abortion. This is but one teaching, however. Rooted in the Ten Commandments, the church’s moral teachings range from opposition to abortion, euthanasia, and stem-cell research to a concern for the poor, justice for the

working class, and a call to personal holiness. One of the most influential institutions in the history of human culture, the church has taken positions on moral issues throughout its history. Although not free of sinfulness itself, the church binds its adherents to a refined moral code. It enforces this code through the sacrament of reconciliation and its public pronouncements on ethical issues that affect individuals and society.

Catholic politicians in North America sometimes face difficult decisions about legislation or public policy because their church has spoken on the issues. Thus, if the church opposes a particular practice and that practice is the subject of legislation, the politician, if he or she is loyal to his or her Catholic identity, should support the church’s position. However, in creating legislation, politicians try to represent the constituency that elected them. If the view of the majority of his or her constituency holds a position that is opposed to church teaching, does the politician vote the view of the majority of the people he or she represents or for legislation that supports the church’s position (when this is different from the majority view)? This question has been thorny for American politics in particular and the subject of some conflict between Catholic politicians and the church. Some of these politicians agree with the church’s teachings personally but do not support legislation that holds such positions as public policy. The most evident conflict involves politicians’ view towards abortion, but this is only one of a number of controversial issues that sometimes divide politicians from the church. Other issues include same-sex marriage, domestic partner benefits, adoption by gay couples, and public health policies on AIDS, sex education, and the like.

The political reach of the church extends far beyond the Vatican. Even a cursory examination of political activity in North America reveals that the church, particularly through its bishops, weighs in on numerous social and political issues. It often assumes the role of moral guardian in society. Making rules and pronouncements designed to bind Catholics, the church also attempts to influence the larger culture by providing moral norms and guidelines, for example, in its marshaling of a well-organized and -funded pro-life effort. In practice, some Catholics ignore some of the norms proposed, and some non-Catholics resent the church for interfering in political policy and personal life as it attempts to set the moral compass for American society. But moral concerns represent a central element of the church’s mission and teaching.

Being Catholic constitutes a social as well as a religious identity. Catholics in North America are joined with Catholics worldwide and identify with a tradition that extends more than two thousand years. They look to Rome and the pope for guidance, they are led by priests and bishops who are approved and appointed by the Vatican, and they are steeped in a tradition they did not create but did inherit. And yet it would be naive and inaccurate to claim that all Catholics in North America are equally attentive to this tradition. For all of its claims to universality, Catholicism is also local. Thus the North American context affects how Catholics appropriate their faith. Indeed, the Catholicism of Canada, the United States, and Mexico differ from each other. Even though gay marriage is opposed by the official church, for example, Canadian Catholics may be more tolerant of it than Mexican Catholics are. And American Catholics may attend church at a greater rate than Canadian Catholics. Each country develops its own appropriation of the tradition, but each can easily be recognized as Catholic.

From the beginning of nationhood in North America, the Catholic Church has played an important role in education. In the United States, for example, the church runs the second largest school system, offering full educational services from kindergarten through university. Historically these institutions were staffed by priests and nuns who devoted their lives to Catholic education. Most were operated by religious orders such as the Sisters of Mercy and the Jesuits. In recent decades, with the decline in vocations in particular to the sisterhood but also to the priesthood and brotherhood, the schools have been staffed mostly by laypersons.

This system of education helped create a Catholic subculture. Millions of boys and girls were exposed daily to Catholic teachings, practices, prayers, liturgies, and discipline. Thus they lived both in their country and in their church on a daily basis. The effects of this extended to the family and the neighborhood, influencing the choice of friends, marriage partners, politicians, and cultural practices. In recent decades in many countries this subculture has declined, resulting in Catholics choosing public or non-Catholic private schools and many Catholic schools educating many non-Catholic students.

The church in North America has made another contribution to society by building a network of hospitals and nursing homes that serve a wide public. Taking its lead from the Jesus who healed the sick and empowered the poor, historically the church has created institutions that serve vulnerable populations. In some eras and places, the church has

been the sole social net to serve the needs of communities. Often these services are rendered to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Other Religions

The church has been described traditionally as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. These characteristics need not be sacrificed in an attempt to acknowledge the value of other religions. Clearly, adherents of many religions live in North America. The Catholic Church, therefore, considers the effects of religions encountering each other on a daily basis within North America and elsewhere. In this regard, the Catholic Church has witnessed periods in its history of both tolerance and intolerance in its understanding of non-Catholics and non-Christians. For much in its history it has denied the value of other religions relying on the assurance of the scriptures that Jesus was the sole way to salvation.

Although a tradition of exclusivity of salvation took shape, it was sometimes softened by more conciliatory stances. The Second General Council of Nicea, for example, in 787 held the tolerant position that Jews who did not wish to convert to Christianity should be allowed to live openly as Jews. Again in 1076 Pope Gregory VII wrote to the Muslim king of Mauritania that Muslims and Christians worship the same God in different ways. However, this tradition of relative tolerance was countered by a number of rigidly intolerant claims. For example, in 1302 Pope Boniface VIII held that “We are required by faith to believe and hold that there is one holy, Catholic and apostolic Church; we firmly believe it and unreservedly profess it; outside it there is neither salvation nor remission of sins.” The Council of Florence in 1442 continued this intolerant approach, claiming that those who were not living within the Catholic Church would be condemned to hell unless they converted before their death. The Council of Trent (1545–1563) dealt with the issue by speaking about a “baptism of desire” for those who, through no fault of their own, were deprived of the formal sacrament of baptism but still may be saved. A mediating tone echoing Trent was struck further in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It excused those who were ignorant of the truth from culpability. Pope Pius IX (1846–1878) again reiterated that invincible ignorance was cause for exoneration. Pope Pius XII (1939–1958), in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (1943), wrote that non-Christians could be saved if they were bonded to the church “by some unconscious yearning or desire.”

Although the *Nostra Aetate* (“Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions”) is the

shortest produced by the participants of the Second Vatican Council, it deals with the question of the relationship between the Catholic Church and the other major world religions. A terse document that recognizes the positive elements in the world religions and thus commenced a new era in ecumenism, it was more a movement to openness than a plan of action. It signaled an openness to dialogue, beyond the world of separated Christian churches, with those who do not recognize Jesus Christ as “the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6) in any exclusive way.

Since Vatican II (1962–1965) the church has engaged in sincere and open dialogue with other religions in the hopes of better understanding, greater tolerance, and relationships that benefit each religion and do not condemn the other.

The church’s Good Friday liturgy provides a useful example of the church’s desire to reach out to all. Four of the general intercessions prayed during that liturgy indicate the church’s intentions and hopes for Christians, Jews, non-Christians, and nonbelievers. These prayers articulate the church’s desire for all people to find their spiritual fulfillment, regardless of whether they profess faith in Christ. These characteristics need not be sacrificed by a theology that includes explicit consciousness of other religions for the other major religions are also loci in which the encounter between the divine and the human takes place. This disposition was first articulated in Vatican II, in which the church declared, “The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these [other] religions.” This positive assessment was reaffirmed by Pope John Paul II, who described other religions as “so many reflections of the one truth” and who detected the spirit of God in non-Christians.

Conclusion

Catholic heritage has touched virtually every aspect of culture and society. It has shaped European history deeply, but also influenced a community of believers in North America that make up a sizeable portion of the population. Long established in Canada alongside Anglicanism and Protestantism, Catholicism, especially in French-speaking regions, has informed the life of the country. Sometimes misunderstood and for much of history outsiders to a Protestant-dominated culture in the United States, Catholics have made significant contributions to the fabric of the country and today make up the largest population of any one religion. The dominant religion in Mexico, it would be difficult to understand the history and culture of the country without an understanding of Catholicism. Claiming a

lengthy and rich heritage, Catholicism will continue to influence North America in the twenty-first century and beyond.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Architecture: Roman Catholic*; *Calvinist/Reformed Tradition and Heritage*; *Canada: Catholics*; *Eastern Orthodox Tradition and Heritage*; *Ecumenism*; *Education* entries; *Judaism Tradition and Heritage*; *Lutheran Tradition and Heritage*; *Mexico* entries; *Ministry, Professional*; *Music: Roman Catholic*; *Neo-Thomism*; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *Religious Thought: Roman Catholic*; *Women Religious*; *Worship: Roman Catholic*.

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Romanticism

The term *Romanticism* is used to encapsulate a variety of trends across several areas including art, literature, philosophy, and religion. An intercontinental movement, romanticism is often seen as a response to the stark rationality of the Enlightenment, an eighteenth-century intellectual movement that emphasized reliance on the mind and reason as the sole source of knowledge and experience. Romanticism, in response, tended to exalt the emotional experience of life, particularly through the individual’s experience of nature (often personified as “Nature”). Those individuals, groups,

and intellectual themes that scholars would label as “romantic,” however, represent an eclectic amalgamation. In the context of religion, “romantics” could be found within traditional religious movements (such as Christianity) and outside of them as well. Although they thought about religion differently, these individuals were united by some themes. Many romantics viewed nature as a divine text that revealed sacred truths. Another theme that united romantics was religious loss and religious ambiguity. Although they responded to loss and ambiguity differently, many romantics were dissatisfied with traditional religious explanations of reality and, especially in the United States, sought new answers in new places. Out of this feeling of loss and ambiguity, however, romantics as a group tended to shift their conceptions of a God that existed externally to the internal, divine qualities of the individual mind. Many U.S. romantics (and European ones as well) also found modern industrialization to be the culprit for religious loss and ambiguity. They substituted the industrialization of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries into a reinterpretation of the Christian mythos of humanity’s fall into sin. Industrialization in the romantic version separated human beings from each other, from nature, and from “God” (as the term was variously defined). Romantic religious impulses, although often downplaying the presence and activity of the supernatural in favor of the natural, were expressions of a longing for God (if only the God to be found within oneself), natural innocence, and communal relationships.

In the United States, although romantics were united by similar intellectual emphases, romanticism was expressed in diverse ways. Often this diversity depended on regional variation. In the national and antebellum United States, there were three main types of romanticism: New England transcendentalism, northern sentimental romanticism, and southern sentimental Christianity. Although these were the predominant expressions of romanticism, other minor expressions (such as the Mercersburg movement) also demonstrated how much romantic ideals infiltrated religious thought in the nineteenth century.

New England Egalitarian Romanticism

Much of New England transcendentalism was an egalitarian romanticism that developed out of a combination of German philosophy, English literature, democratic political thought, and Unitarian Christianity. German philosophy, after Immanuel Kant especially, tended to focus on questions

about the relationship between human subjects and their objects. In addition Humean skepticism about the perception of things added to the Kantian critique of empiricism to produce in romantic thought a skepticism about religious dogma and institutions that did not destroy a desire to find spiritual meaning through one’s own experience of the world. English literature from romantic authors and poets such as William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Thomas Carlyle, provided New Englanders with a foundation for an approach to nature and human society that elevated humanity’s relationship to and within nature over the industrialization of Western society. Because industrialization removed people from nature, human society was falling from a pristine state of living in nature to one in which human beings needed to recognize their sinfulness and work toward a more beautiful, mature society. The democratic political thought of John Milton and John Locke was another stream in the development of New England transcendentalism. Emphasis on the political primacy of the individual found expression in the philosophical tenet of self-reliance championed by these northern romantics. Many of them, however, rejected Locke’s empiricism. Unitarian Christianity was also an important font for New England egalitarian romanticism, but more often, Unitarianism functioned as a foil instead of as a foundation. Many romantics coming out of Unitarianism considered it to be too socially conservative despite its liberal ecclesiology. Unitarianism, for many, was spiritually “cold” and overly rational, although these romantics also balked at the emotionalism of evangelical revivals. Not all of the New England egalitarian romantics, however, left Unitarianism.

Many of the romantics in New England were transcendentalists. Transcendentalists had little organization beyond a few journals (such as *The Dial*), the Transcendentalist Club, and communal living arrangements such as Brook Farm and Fruitlands. Although having disparate beliefs and social outlooks, the transcendentalists emphasized the presence of divinity existing within each human being. This divinity (often still referred to as *God*) powered the self and was best fostered without the external control of religious institutions.

Egalitarian Romanticism and U.S. Culture

The democratic nature of New England egalitarian romanticism led many of the romantics to be involved in the social causes of the day. Some of the transcendentalists were very involved in attempting reforms in government

and education and advocated the importance of temperance. Others were engaged in matters of equality and justice and the abolition of slavery. Unitarian minister and transcendentalist Theodore Parker actively resisted the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law that required federal marshals to seek runaway slaves in the North and return them to their owners in the South. Parker was involved in several cases of attempting to release slaves held by federal marshals. In the case of Anthony Burns, Parker was arrested for the failed attempt to free Burns; the charges against Parker were later dismissed. He was also a member of the “Secret Six” who had provided funding to John Brown for his preparations to attack the federal armory at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia.

Although other romantics were not as actively involved with reforms concerning slavery, some of them were very vocal about the need for abolition, the praise antislavery advocates were due, and the condemnation of those involved in slavery. Their comments on the national struggle over slavery were often couched in religious terms. After the failed raid on Harper’s Ferry, for example, both Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau referred to Brown as an angel and claimed that his actions were divine. Thoreau even likened Brown’s death to Christ’s crucifixion.

The romantic impulse was not just a constructive force when it came to U.S. culture, however. In the works of Herman Melville, for example, romanticism also became the means to challenge the ambiguities of U.S. culture and the inadequacy of evangelical Protestantism to provide a workable vision for U.S. democracy. Melville’s works, such as *Moby Dick*, revealed the violence of U.S. culture and postulated the dangers inherent in a democratic society that did not value self-reliance. In *Moby Dick*, the name of the ship, the *Pequod*, evoked the violence of the Pequot War (1637), but the *Pequod* was also a microcosm of a democratic society made up of various faiths and ethnicities. Despite the promise of this democracy, the ship is a slave to its captain’s maniacal obsession with the great white whale. Melville’s vision of U.S. culture is much darker and more pessimistic than is that of Walt Whitman, but they formed from the same romantic impulse.

Many New England egalitarian romantics moved away from historical Christianity into other forms of religiosity. Not many of them, however, abandoned a worldview that included the spiritual. The importance of the individual, the need for self-reliance, and the hope for U.S. democracy were all part of a romanticism that still sought religious explanations and answers for how to exist in the world.

Northern Sentimental Romanticism

Although many of the New England transcendentalists turned to forms of religious expression different from Christianity, others followed a romantic lead into sentimental expressions of Christian life and piety. This sentimental turn often included a liberalizing of Calvinist theology and an emphasizing of domesticity. These sentimental romantics were often very prolific and included writers of fiction (such as Harriet Beecher Stowe) and ministers (such as Horace Bushnell and Henry Ward Beecher). Because of the decrease in evangelical political power after the American Revolution, ministers and other evangelicals used the trope of nostalgia in the context of the Victorian home to understand this loss of political power and to attempt to recapture some of it. The power of character and the importance of personal influence were the virtues this group of religious authors extolled.

Sentimentalists emphasized the importance of the domestic sphere in the production of good Christians and good U.S. citizens as well. The rise of industrialization and the growth of a market culture in the United States participated in the bifurcation of society into public and private spheres. Specialization of tasks and the decreased time necessary for household work gradually moved many women from the workforce to the home with time to become creators and consumers of culture. With the preponderance of men in the workforce and women in the home, sentimentalists gendered the domestic sphere feminine and the business sphere masculine. Americans partially conceptualized this separation in sentimentalized notions of character. The public sphere was viewed as an arena where character was vitally important for moral relationships in commerce. Ideologues turned to the home and mothers to nurture character in male children especially so that when they matured and entered the public sphere they would act ethically in business dealings. Scholars have referred to this conceptualization as “the cult of true womanhood.” Women were supposedly untainted by the immoral nature of the business world, so it was believed that they would be more pious and more able to pass on the virtues of morality and character.

Sentimental Theologians

The “cult of true womanhood” and the elevation of the moral authority of the domestic sphere were combined with the rise of a domestic piety that sentimentalized children and their importance. Although evangelicals nostalgically looked

back to the familial piety of the Puritans and colonial Americans, they developed a new type of domestic piety that shifted notions of children and conversion. Conversion, which Puritans had viewed as an instantaneous, became a process that one moved through throughout life. Sentimentalized children became spiritual guides. Harriet Beecher Stowe's Little Eva from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is a good example of this type of domestic, sentimentalized spirituality that emphasized the divine nature of children.

Bushnell is perhaps one of the most noted of the sentimentalist theologians. For Bushnell the romantic emphasis on nature was best understood in the domestic sphere. He claimed that women were naturally more religious than men and stressed connections between divine love and motherly love. Furthermore, the family itself was an organic unit meant to produce Christian development. Instead of accepting salvation as an instantaneous process, Bushnell argued that families should develop Christian character in children over time. Drawing on the romantic idea of the innate goodness of children, Bushnell argued that the Calvinist doctrine of depravity could actually work against Christian nurture. Bushnell's reliance on sentiment and the power of Christian nurture gradually moved him away from highlighting doctrinal correctness to propounding the power of Christian influence.

Sentimental romantics used the pulpit, theological writings, and the home to craft a new brand of evangelical religiosity. They also turned to fiction to spread this sentimentality. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was one of the most popular sentimental works in the nineteenth century, but it was not the only sentimental best-seller. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's fiction, especially *Gates Ajar* and (the less popular) *Beyond the Gates* and *Between the Gates*, were also popular novels in the second half of the nineteenth century. The "gates" of Phelps's novels referred to the gates of heaven. Phelps's novels conceptualized heaven in terms of domesticity. She interpreted heaven in terms of familial piety and children. Scholars have noted how consolation literature such as Phelps's novels sentimentalized heaven as a domestic sphere to offer solace in the face of the massive numbers of death in the mid-nineteenth-century United States, many of which occurred in the Civil War. Heaven became the home of the soul after death—a place for women and children, and one's lost loved ones.

The power of one's moral influence was also stressed by sentimental romantics. Without the ability to coerce one's attendance at religious services or outward moral living, evangelicals began to emphasize the importance of having good moral behavior. Drawing on Scottish common sense

philosophers such as Thomas Reid and Dugald Stewart, these romantics believed that behavior started from the moral sentiments. Proper moral feeling expressed itself as proper moral action. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, for example, Stowe closes her narrative with an appeal to the Christians of the North to start the abolition of southern slavery by *feeling* right. "There is one thing every individual can do," wrote Stowe, "they can see to it that *they feel right*."

Historiographical Assessment of Northern Sentimentality

Historians have often been critical of this group of sentimental authors and ministers. Historian Ann Douglas, for example, is very disparaging of the works produced by sentimentalists. Sentimentality, for Douglas, obfuscated the challenges present in the antebellum United States and worked to soothe communities that had no political power. With the finalization of the disestablishment of religion in the United States, ministers found themselves as a marginalized community in shaping the political horizon. Without power, ministers turned to another marginalized group, women. According to Douglas, ministers and women authors used sentimentality as a way to create power through the notion of "influence"—a moral example to shape the men who worked in the masculine sphere of commerce. Influence, however, was actually a red herring that shifted the focus of intellectual thought from a strenuous critique of U.S. culture.

Other historians have challenged Douglas's assessment of New England sentimentality. Jane Tompkins believes that sentimentality was a powerful tool to encourage ethical action. Sentimental literature for these New Englanders was able to evoke the moral sentiment that one's audience would respond. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, for example, Little Eva's death is part of an ethical appeal for action in the cause of abolition (and to varying extent colonization) by merging Little Eva's death (and later Uncle Tom's) with the vicarious sufferings of Christ and Christian mythos about sacrifice. Stowe believed that proper feeling (as motivated by the fictional accounts of Eva and Uncle Tom) would find its expression in proper action. By appealing to the divine status of children and child-like characters, Stowe and others attempted to create a moral order in the United States.

Northern sentimental romantics responded to changes in the political, commercial, and religious situations in the United States by sentimentalizing and domesticating religion.

Their response was a conservative one politically. As evangelicals, they sought to maintain as much of their power as possible within a Protestant context. These romantics did not look outside Christianity for religious understandings of the world, but instead they reshaped their understanding of Christianity to the challenge of the modern age.

Southern Sentimental Christianity

Unlike New England transcendentalism and northern sentimentalism, the romantic impulse led southerners to more conservative interpretations of Christianity that were largely shaped by the experience of southern life and culture—particularly in response to how the reality of slavery shaped that culture. Notions of order (especially in terms of “natural” order) marked southern romanticism in distinction to other egalitarian types. In the southern romantic mold, reverence for nature meant reverence for societal order believed to be established by God and revealed in the Bible. “Nature” supposedly justified the patriarchal, agricultural lifestyle of southerners. Men considered women “the weaker sex.” Natural order, then, meant that women were to be subservient to men and that men were to paternally care for women. Romantic ideals in the South also justified racism. Anglo-Saxons were considered a superior race. This superiority, however, was not primarily meant to degrade other races. Anglo-Saxon enslavement of other races obligated whites to control others to teach them important aspects of Western culture (particularly Christianity) to elevate those races out of their degrading conditions.

Historian Michael O’Brien has argued that romanticism is an essential historiographical tool used to understand southern intellectualism. English Romantics such as Coleridge and Walter Scott influenced southern planters, southern journal editors, and even southern historians just as much, if not more, as they did New England transcendentalists. The way southerners interpreted English romantics, however, distinguished them from their northern, egalitarian counterparts. In Scott’s writings, southerners found the trappings of an imagined southern medieval period. From Scott’s medieval romances came such concepts as chivalry, honor, and societal position that elite southerners mapped onto southern society. The antebellum South of the United States had no medieval period, so one was invented as an intellectual construct to justify a hierarchical social order where rich, white males ruled over a society that existed according to romantic values.

Romantic tropes also influenced the writings of southern intellectuals. According to O’Brien alienation and melancholy are two modes that shaped the way southern intellectuals thought about themselves and their region. Alienation found expression in the notion of the South as an outsider to the larger United States. Southern politicians and intellectuals turned this alienation into a legitimation of southern culture. Southerners used romanticism as a way to self-consciously construct what constituted the South and southern culture. Evangelicalism was extremely important in this romanticization of the South. Romantics and evangelicals (although not mutually exclusive) shared beliefs about human and societal regeneration that resonated between systems and among those who espoused them. The acceptance of evangelicalism, according to O’Brien, was a precondition for accepting romanticism, which in turn was necessary for creating southern nationalism in the antebellum period of U.S. history.

Sentimentality and the Lost Cause

The religious and sentimental conceptions of southern nationalism continued into the post-Civil War period in the development of the myth of the Old South and the religion of the Lost Cause. The myth of the Old South was connected to the sentimental notions of southern identity before the Civil War. In the wake of the changes brought about by Reconstruction, the myth of the Old South reaffirmed the antebellum period as a time of honor, civility, and chivalry. Southerners wistfully conceptualized the South before the Civil War as a period of womanly virtue and gentlemanly dignity, overlooking the violence that permeated southern society, especially in the institution of slavery. The religiosity of the Old South was another trope that became useful in interpreting the South’s relationship to the North. Even before the Civil War the South had asserted its moral superiority over the North partly because of the prevalence of evangelicalism in the South but also because of the belief that the agrarianism of the South was more desirable because it kept southerners closer to nature than were the industrialized northerners. The belief that the South was more righteous in the sight of God than was the North carried into the myth of the Old South in the postbellum period.

The religion of the Lost Cause included many of the motifs of the myth of the Old South but was focused around the activity of the Confederacy’s armies and generals specifically. Despite losing the War between the States, southerners

valorized the activity of the Confederacy and its leaders and enshrined their memories as divine actors in a moral struggle. Southerners honored such important leaders as Robert E. Lee, Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, and Jefferson Davis as saints and regarded fallen soldiers as martyrs. They were enshrined in stained-glass windows and museums; they were memorialized in song, ritual, and monument. The Lost Cause was a romanticized depiction of the past that allowed southerners to cling to the sentimental notions of southern culture and nationalism that developed in the antebellum period.

Persistence of Sentimentality in U.S. Evangelicalism

Both northern and southern sentimentality have continued to be a part of evangelical practice in the United States. Expressions of sentimentality are ubiquitous in various forms of modern evangelical popular culture. Christian romance novels, contemporary Christian music, and Christian inspirational or devotional literature abound with sentimental notions of a social order demarcated by guidelines for gender and the home. Domesticity in notions of the “Christian home,” marriage, and children finds expression in teardrop-eyed Precious Moments figurines, worship songs such as “Draw Me Close to You,” and the writings of popular evangelical authors such as Max Lucado.

Yet there have been changes as well. The boundaries present in the antebellum South between genders and races are much more fluid, and in some evangelical communities, in a state of flux. The notions of Anglo-Saxon superiority, although still present among certain groups, have largely vanished among most mainstream evangelicals. The “proper place” for women is much more open to debate than in the Civil War era, with evangelical women holding prominent positions in business and politics.

The Mercersburg Movement

Although many romantics in the United States evidence the influence of primarily English romanticism, other thinkers have demonstrated the impact of German romanticism. One example of this German–U.S. romanticism is the Mercersburg movement. The Mercersburg movement was the product of the thought of John Williamson Nevin and Philip Schaff, two mid-nineteenth-century professors at a German Reformed seminary in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania.

Nevin and Schaff built their theology from the thought of such German philosophers as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Friedrich Schelling. Nevin and Schaff took from these philosophers the belief that both nature and history were engaged in progression. From this position Nevin and Schaff argued that the history of Christianity also exhibited these qualities and that church doctrine was constantly evolving, although for Nevin and Schaff it evolved according to divine purpose. The Mercersburg theologians believed that both nature and religion were organic, and as the physical body developed and changed through life, the religious body changed and developed as well, striving toward an ideal expression of Christian unity. Neither Nevin nor Schaff accepted Hegel’s naturalist foundation; instead they Christianized some of his thought in developing this new approach to Christian history. Because both Nevin and Schaff believed that church history was a dialectical, organic process and that doctrine was a part of that evolving process, some conservative Protestants charged them as being overly Catholic or promoting heresy.

Nevin and Schaff, however, looked at the revivalism of nineteenth-century Protestantism as heretical. The emphasis on the power of the individual alone to understand religious truth, an important part of revivalism, was an affront to the Mercersburg theologians who saw the individual as participating in the universal truth revealed through the organic life of the church. The church in its specific historical context was a witness to the power and presence of Christ, a project larger than an individual’s private judgment. For Nevin and Schaff the individualism and static approach to doctrine present in revivalist U.S. Christianity represented a loss of the power of their view of Protestantism. Although it did not make much of a contemporary impact in religious thought, later Protestants developed similar ideas. Many people, however, remember Schaff more for his contributions to the development of U.S. church history as a field, rather than for his religious thought.

Religious loss and ambiguity in the face of the challenges of modern life led many Americans toward a romantic or sentimental response. In looking back to the past and questioning the morality of industrialization and the market economy, Americans sought religious answers to what they viewed as a religious problem. Those answers varied greatly from theologically conservative Protestantism to a spirituality that focused on the God within, but they all centered those answers around the individual’s relationship to nature.

See also *Common Sense Realism; Cult of Domesticity; Death and Burial Practices; Denominationalism; Emotion; Enlightenment; Feminism; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Idealist Philosophy; Literature; Liturgical Arts; Music: Contemporary Christian; Neo-Paganism; Philosophy; Religious Thought; South as Region; Spirituality entries; Transcendentalism; Unitarians; Visual Culture; Worship: Anglican.*

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Same-Gender Marriage

Although there is nothing new, historically speaking, about same-sex intimate partnerships, what is striking at the beginning of the twenty-first century is, first, their heightened visibility and increased social acceptability, and, second, the deeply divisive conflict within religious traditions about whether to grant gay and lesbian couples the freedom to marry.

This controversy is further complicated by the fact that when marriage is the topic, it is not always clear whether the topic under discussion is marriage as a personal intimate relationship, marriage as a civil contract accompanied by a wide range of economic, social, and cultural benefits (civil marriage is a heavily state subsidized and state regulated institution), or marriage as a religious activity. In U.S. history, the authority to regulate marriage (and its dissolution through divorce) has shifted decisively from church to state, so much so that most people now recognize that a couple is properly married only when a state license has been issued, signed, and recorded by the state. At the same time, religious traditions are heavily invested in the marital family, and clergy often function as agents of the state in officiating at state-recognized marriage ceremonies and signing marriage licenses. Nevertheless, it seems that “married in the eyes of God” requires further legitimation “by the hand of the state,” and the dynamic interplay, as well as confusion, among personal, civil, and religious meanings of marriage persists as the topic shifts to the eligibility of same-sex couples to marry civilly, religiously, or both.

Tolerance for Sexual Minorities

Since the 1970s, largely in response to a broad-based gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender rights movement, a massive cultural shift has been taking place, away from disdain and persecution of homosexual persons toward tolerance for sexual minorities and, even beyond, to affirmation of their equal moral standing and support for the legal recognition of their full citizenship status, including their right to enter into intimate associations, form families, and parent children. At the same time, because religion has been the primary conveyer of cultural norms regulating sexuality and family, almost every religious tradition is being pressed to revisit conventional assumptions about gender, sexual difference, intimacy, and family patterns, including Christianity, which has long been associated with sex-negative, patriarchal, and anti-gay sentiment.

This renewal effort, although strongly encouraged by some, is strenuously resisted by others. On the one hand, the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (Reform Judaism), the Ecumenical Catholic Church, OHALAH, the Alliance for Jewish Renewal, and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association have endorsed their clergy performing commitment ceremonies for same-sex couples. In addition, the United Church of Christ, the United Church of Canada, the American Baptist Churches, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and various Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) meetings leave it to their clergy, congregations, or local governing bodies to decide whether to perform same-sex unions. The Presbyterian Church

(U.S.A.) and the Episcopal Church in the United States of America allow clergy to bless same-sex unions if these unions are not called marriages. On the other hand, other denominations, such as the Southern Baptist Convention, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Church of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), and parachurch organizations such as Focus on the Family and the National Association of Evangelicals, are opposed to recognizing nonheterosexual families and have supported political and legislative efforts to ban civil marriage for same-sex couples. During the 2008 election season, proponents and opponents of California's Proposition 8 spent in excess of \$75 million to secure or prevent the freedom to marry for same-sex couples, the most expensive ballot measure in this nation's history. Two other restrictive constitutional amendments were passed in Florida and Arizona along with an Arkansas measure that prohibits single adults, as well as same-sex couples, from becoming foster parents or adopting children. By November 4, 2008, in addition to the federal Defense of Marriage Act that Congress passed in 1996 to define marriage as the legal union of one man and one woman as husband and wife and to allow states the right not to recognize same-sex marriages performed in others states, some forty-four states have adopted statutes, constitutional amendments, or both, to ban civil marriage for same-sex couples.

Fundamentalists and Progressives

In religion as well as in politics, gender and sexuality are highly contested matters, so much so that Catholic and Protestant churches are struggling with internal splits between fundamentalists, on the one hand, who defend an absolute worldview of fixed certainties, including the patriarchal marital family as normative, and progressives, on the other hand, who value religious and social diversity, incorporate fresh insights into their religious worldview from the natural and social sciences and from social change movements about the meaning of human sexuality and its varied expressions, and actively promote gender and sexual justice as dimensions of a comprehensive social justice. The prospect of reconciliation between these two poles is unlikely, given the stark contrast in assumptions, values, and loyalties.

Interest in gaining the freedom to marry for same-sex couples has emerged for several reasons, including the ongoing effort to end legal and religious discrimination against sexual minorities. In 1999 the Vermont Supreme Judicial Court ruled that same-sex couples should be afforded marriage and family rights equal to those enjoyed

by heterosexual couples, and in 2000 the Vermont legislature created the legal status of civil unions, thereby granting same-sex couples all the rights and responsibilities of civil marriage except the name. In 2003 the U.S. Supreme Court in *Lawrence and Garner v. Texas* struck down anti-sodomy laws as unconstitutional, declaring that the state has no interest in banning private, consensual sex between persons of the same sex. Lesbians and gay men, like their heterosexual counterparts, have a constitutionally protected right to privacy in intimate relational matters, the Court ruled, and are "entitled to respect for their private lives." "The State cannot demean their existence," the ruling continued, "or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime." Another significant step took place in 2003 when the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in its *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* decision granted same-sex couples the right to marry, redefined state-authorized marriage in a gender-neutral manner, and pointed out that the right to marry does not mean much if it does not include the right to marry the person of one's choice, including a person of one's own gender. Other states have followed suit by providing same-sex couples with options of entering into a domestic partnership, civil union, or civil marriage, depending on the jurisdiction. By November 2009, six states guaranteed same-sex couples the freedom to marry civilly. However, forty-four states had statutes, constitutional amendments, or both that restrict civil marriage exclusively to heterosexual couples.

In addition to these public policy developments, two other factors have sparked the interest of gay and lesbian couples in acquiring marriage eligibility. First, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has underscored the social vulnerability of same-sex couples who, because unmarried, have lacked a wide range of partnership protections, including rights to hospital visitation, medical decision making, making burial arrangements, and claiming spousal inheritance. Second, a baby boom among gay and lesbian couples, aided by access to alternative reproductive technologies, has spurred interest in acquiring legal standing and protections for parents as well as children. Securing the right to marry civilly is regarded as the most commonly recognized cultural means to achieve these ends, thereby promoting greater stability and support for same-sex families.

At the same time, the dominance of the marital family has been waning as other family patterns become more common, including single-parent families, childless couples, cohabitating couples, and blended families. The legal system

is increasingly granting legal standing to diverse intimate and familial relationships, both heterosexual and same-sex, and recognizing them as comparable to the marital family, especially because they share similar purposes in facilitating human bonding, economic and other modes of sharing, and the nurturing of children and other dependent parties. Because same-sex couples already “do the work of marriage” by sustaining intimacy over time, proponents of same-sex marriage argue that it is a modest step to grant these relationships full moral and legal standing. Moreover, in response to the feminist call for egalitarian gender relations, marriage should be viewed as a partnership between co-equal persons. Philosopher Richard Mohr, for example, insists that once gender distinction is no longer part of the content of marriage from a legal perspective, then there is no logical basis for requiring that marriage legally unite persons of different genders.

The religious affirmation by some denominations (United Church of Christ, Unitarian Universalist Association, Reform Judaism, and Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, among others) of same-sex partnerships distresses religious conservatives whose opposition to same-sex marriage is grounded in essentialist claims about marriage and family. Traditionalists regard marriage as a transhistorical institution that by definition is exclusively heterosexual, the joining of one man and one woman for the purpose of procreation, a natural and divine mandate that only heterosexual couples can fulfill. Biblical mandates are cited that encourage procreative heterosexual marriage, forbid divorce, oppose abortion, and condemn same-sex eroticism as willful moral depravity and intrinsically sinful. To redefine marriage as an emotional, committed bond between two persons, including two men or two women, threatens to negate the meaning of marriage and family, traditionalists argue, because marriage equality would erase gender differences. Glenn Stanton, for example, argues that gender would be nothing unless such real differences exist between men and women that would require the other sex for completion, Marriage based on heterosexual gender complementarity requires, therefore, a male and a female participant. This gendered arrangement benefits its practitioners insofar as it especially requires young men and women to discipline their sexuality and become mature, responsible community members. Marriage also benefits society as the basic building block of the social order insofar as couples share their resources and form a private “intimate welfare system.” By encouraging adults to care for each

other and their dependents, a marriage culture means that fewer people will need to turn to the community or state for financial and other kinds of support. The heterosexual family, traditionalists insist, is also the normative context in which to nurture children, who have a spiritual as well as psychological need for nurturing by a father-mother dyad, so that they can be properly socialized and prepared for adult (heterosexual) responsibilities.

For these complex reasons, traditionalists argue that marriage deserves special status and protection as an exclusively heterosexual institution. Some argue even further that no actual legal discrimination exists under U.S. law because gay men and lesbian women can already exercise the freedom to marry as long as gay men marry women and lesbians marry men. Finally, when it comes to sexuality, marriage traditionalists argue, sex is moral only when it is heterosexual, marital, and open to procreation. Homosexuality is sinful and non-biblical and indicates willful gender nonconformity (or at least gender confusion). Neither church nor state should encourage gender deviance or sexual immorality.

In turn, advocates for same-sex marriage respond that a valid marriage does not require gender difference, much less gender inequality. A patriarchal marriage model perpetuates an outdated, morally questionable pattern of a dominant husband, even when benign, who is entitled to rule over “his” dependent wife. Defining marriage as exclusively heterosexual maintains this gendered hierarchy as normative. Moreover, the marriage ban places same-sex couples outside the marital family, but as importantly, it keeps heterosexual couples pinned into an unethical dominant-submissive pattern of social relating that naturalizes power inequities between men and women and runs counter to both democratic values and religious commitments to the dignity and worth of all persons. Marriage advocates also observe that the core religious values associated with marriage (committed love, economic sharing, and nurturing of children and other dependents) are also central for same-sex couples seeking legal recognition for their intimate partnerships or a blessing by their religious tradition.

Conceptual Shifts

Enlarging the marriage paradigm to include same-sex couples requires two conceptual shifts. The first step is to rethink marriage as a covenantal relationship or intimate friendship between two erotically attracted individuals who pledge to live together as life partners. Although children are

often a blessing, a marriage is complete as a committed bond of respect and affection between the two partners, an insight in keeping with the Protestant emphasis that the primary purpose of marriage is unitive, not procreative. The second step is to rethink sexual norms and challenge the exclusivist assumption that there is only one right way to be sexual. On the contrary, diverse human sexualities exist, sexual orientation is morally neutral, and what matters ethically is not identity, but rather character and conduct. From this perspective, same-sex love and intimate bonding, making homosexual love is in essence as right and morally good as heterosexual love. The morally relevant point is the shared human need and capacity for physical, emotional, and spiritual intimacy. The morally irrelevant point is the gender of the persons in relation.

In its 2003 *Goodridge* decision, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ended that state's marriage exclusion by granting same-sex couples the freedom to marry civilly. In 2008, both Connecticut and California instituted civil marriage for gay and lesbian couples (soon followed by New Hampshire, Vermont, Iowa, and Maine), but a November 2008 referendum, under challenge by January 2009, has rescinded the freedom to marry for same-sex couples in California. Meanwhile, New York State and Rhode Island recognize same-sex marriages performed elsewhere, as well as civil unions (Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oregon, and the District of Columbia). Three other states (Hawaii, Maine, and Washington) provide some spousal rights for same-sex couples within the state. Although marriage equality marks a change in the history of marriage law, it maintains the fundamental value of this common cultural practice. In this regard, the movement to recognize same-sex partnerships is a conservative, even traditionalizing move, part of the ongoing effort to promote the basic rights and responsibilities of diverse citizens within a pluralistic society in which some partnerships and families are formed by same-sex couples.

Advocates for this change argue that the freedom to marry is necessary to affirm the full humanity of gay men and lesbians by conceding that they, too, enter into significant human bonds of care and intimacy. The 1999 Vermont Supreme Court *Baker v. Vermont* decision calling for marriage equality noted, "The past provides many instances where the law refused to see a human being when it should have." In acknowledging that gay people also love, form families, and would benefit from the protections and entitlements that civil marriage offers through the state, the court concluded,

"When all is said and done, [this is] a recognition of our common humanity."

Conclusion

Arguments against same-sex marriage pivot on disapproval of homoeroticism and the rejection of same-sex love as morally inferior to heterosexual love, whereas proponents of marriage equality counterargue that viewing heterosexuality and homosexuality as binary opposites reinforces heterosexual supremacy, the contestable presumption that intimate relations and family life can only rest secure on heterosexual pair-bonds alone. In contrast, once the patriarchal cultural construction of gender hierarchy is discredited, and once marriage is valued as a protective, stabilizing context for intimacy and ongoing care between partners with or without dependents, then justifications for excluding same-sex couples melt away. By discarding conventional notions regarding gender complementarity (code language for male superiority and female submission) or assumptions that erotic bonding requires "opposites" to attract, proponents of marriage equality affirm the moral goodness of all social and sexual relations between consenting adults based on mutual respect and care, a fair (and flexible) sharing of power and resources, and commitment to the health and well-being of the intimate partners, and to strengthening of their community. Religious advocates of marriage equality argue that although neither marriage nor sex is necessary for human fulfillment, it is wrong to exclude an entire class of persons from these routes to intimacy and shared commitment. In shifting the focus of attention away from the gender of the partners in relation, progressives seek to refocus attention on the character and moral quality of their relationship and its contribution to the common good.

Advocates of marriage equality highlight that the proper role of faith communities is to educate and equip gay and non-gay people alike for relational authenticity and justice in their intimate and social relating. Such a stance is highly disruptive for traditionalists, but marriage advocates argue that welcoming same-sex partnerships and families stands in continuity with the core religious values of love and justice. At the same time, this stance also lies in discontinuity with much received tradition insofar as ethical sex is no longer considered exclusively procreative, good marriages are not male dominant, and the "right kind" of families do not conform to a single pattern. Postmodern sensibilities about marriage and family affirm diversity and difference as assets that

enrich personal and communal life rather than as problems to be fixed or subjected to religious controls.

See also *Canada: Church and State; Cult of Domesticity; Ecumenism; Feminism; Feminist Studies; Freedom, Religious; Gender; Marriage and Family; Politics: Twentieth Century; Postmodernism; Religion, Regulation of; Religious Right; Religious Thought: Gay Theology; Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Sociological Approaches; Women: Ordination of.*

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Santería

The word "Santería" is derived from the Spanish word *santo*, which literally means "the way of the saints." The term became popular during the 1940s in Cuba as a pejorative word employed by Catholic clerics to signify what they considered to be a syncretism of African traditional spirituality and the veneration of Catholic saints. In reality, Santería is the product of a survival technique by the enslaved Yoruba people, who masked their deities, known as orishas, behind the "faces" of Catholic saints. This allowed them to continue worshipping their Gods while under the constant supervision of their overlords. The clerics may have thought that the simple-minded superstitious slaves were venerating the saints,

but in reality, the slaves knew full well who they were worshipping. In their minds, it was the clerics who lacked knowledge and truth about spiritual matters. Today, some prefer the terms *lucumí* (friendship) or *regal de ocha* (Rule of Ocha), rather than the Christian imposed name *Santería*.

Santería is an earth-centered religion lacking any centralized organization that originated as the faith of the oppressed. Over half of all Africans brought as slaves to the Americas worked on sugar plantations throughout the Caribbean, specifically Cuba. As the faith of the oppressed, Santería is concerned with the everyday trials and tribulation of life, including issues of health, money, or love. The goal is to provide assistance to anyone wishing to find and live in harmony with the destiny they were assigned by ensuring that the proper rituals needed to navigate life are performed. One does not become a devotee of Santería through some profession of faith, but by performing the rituals. Neither orthodoxy (correct doctrine) nor a homogeneous belief system are as important as conducting the correct ritual practices.

Historical Development

The roots of Santería can be traced to when the Yoruba people were brought to Cuba as slaves. The first African slaves arrived on the island in 1511. Each city had its own orisha, but slavery forced them to live together, creating a pantheon of orishas. Different city-states' religious practices began to merge as the different orishas developed familial relationships. These spiritual traditions were preserved because (1) importation of Africans continued until 1886, bringing newer Africans to maintain the original tradition; (2) a system called *cabildos*, or mutual aid societies, maintained ethnic traditions and served as a forerunner to the house-church; and (3) since 1520, runaway slaves formed their own "free" societies in remote mountain areas where they could practice their faith apart from the Spanish overlords.

The African faith of the slaves occurred on an island steeped in an Iberian Christianity shaped by (1) a Spanish folk Catholicism that emphasized holy personages such as the Virgin Mary and the saints rather than holy sacraments, (2) a Counter-Reformation that viewed itself as the sole interpreter of reality, and (3) a faith forged by centuries of struggle against Muslim rule. This form of Catholicism blended with the African orisha worship practices of the Yoruba (forbearers of modern-day Nigeria). Santería was later modified by nineteenth-century Kardecian spiritualism

(named for the pseudonym of the movement's founder, Allan Kardec), which originated in France but was made popular in the Caribbean during the 1850s. Kardecian spiritualism attempted to use observation and experimentation in order to access the spiritual world and benefit from that access. The importance of Kardecian spiritualism is that it revived ancestor worship among African slaves that until then was almost nonexistent. Although there are different historical strands in the establishment of Santería, it would be an error to relegate the faith to the realm of the syncretic. Santería is its own reality with its own worldview, which stands apart from the different strands that originally contributed to its formation.

Followers of Santería have been linked to criminal activities, and thus, persecuted. For example, in 1919, a *brujero* (witch doctor) craze swept Cuba, causing mass lynchings based on rumors that *santeros/as* (priests/priestesses) were kidnapping white children and offering them up as sacrifices. Until 1940, involvement in Santería was a punishable crime. Even after the 1959 Castro revolution, devotees during the 1960s faced arrest, imprisonment, and death. Persecution ceased in Cuba by the 1980s, as the faith was relegated to the folkloric for tourist benefits. As Cuban refugees came to the United States, they brought Santería with them. Many Cubans who did not participate in the faith on the island found Santería as a way of maintaining an identity with their national heritage. In 1961, Mercedes Noble is credited with ordaining the first Cuban *santera* in New York City. Still, the faith somewhat remained underground until June 11, 1992, when the United States Supreme Court ruled that Santería devotees had a constitutional right to engage in animal sacrifices (*Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye v. City of Hialeah*, 508 U.S. 520 [1993]).

The Orishas

Ashé can best be understood as a sacred energy which becomes the power, grace, blood, and life force of all reality, embracing mystery, secret power, and divinity. As a transcendent world force, it is pure power; it is absolute, illimitable, nondefinite, and nondefinable. This energy current, which is amoral, is unable to be seen or personified. It is a neutral cosmic energy undergirding every aspect of existence. All that has life or exhibits power has ashé. The movement of the wind, the elements of plants, fire, and moving water expend ashé. When a candle is lit to an orisha, the act releases power—the power of fire, smoke, burning wax. This ashé is able to feed and empowers the orisha. The most

potent *ashé* can be found in the spilling of sacrificial blood. Through *ashé*, all things came into being, and all things will eventually return to *ashé*. *Ashé* (the impersonal force), the substance of *Olodumare*, is the personified creator of all that is, and all that is, is an expression of *Olodumare*. Originally, whenever anyone needed anything, they would have to come to *Olodumare* for *ashé*. With time, *Olodumare* grew weary of this arrangement and departed. He left intermediates, called *orishas*, in charge. Today, no one worships or sacrifices to *Olodumare*, for he is too high to intermingle with human affairs. Humans instead approach the *orishas*.

The *orishas* are the quasi deities of earthly forces. As secondary gods, they rule certain parts of nature. To worship an *orisha* is to give reverence to the force of nature the *orisha* represents. No one knows how many *orishas* exist. Some claim there are over 1,700, while others list them at four hundred plus one (four hundred is the mystical number signifying a multitude). Only a handful made it to the Western Hemisphere, of which eighteen became the most worshipped within Santería. They are as follows: *Obatalá* (Ruler of the Gods, Lord of the head and King of purity), *Eleggua* (Messenger of the Gods, Lord of the crossroads and trickster), *Orúnla* (God of divination), *Yemayá* (Goddess of the sea and Mother of the fishes), *Chang* (God of thunder), *Oggún* (God of war and Lord of iron), *Oshún* (Goddess of love), *Ochosi* (God of the hunt), *Babalú-Ayó* (God of healings and Lord over illnesses), *Oyá* (Goddess of cemeteries), *Osain* (God of nature and Lord of the forest), *Olocun* (Queen of the ocean's depths), *Aganyú* (God of the volcano and patron of travelers), *Oko* (God of agriculture and Lord of the harvest), *Inle* (God of science and the androgynous healer), *Ósun* (Messenger of *Obatalá*), *Obba* (Goddess of wifely role and patron of neglected wives), and the heavenly twins, *Ibeyi*. Within the United States, special attention is given to the first seven *orishas* named above. They are referred to as *la Siete Potencias Africanas* (the Seven African Powers).

The lives of the *orishas* are recounted as legends known as *patakis*. These *patakis* are not literally interpreted; instead, they are used to provide guidance in the here and now. When they are recited, each *orisha*, person, animal, or earth object signifies a meaning that points to a truth existing beyond the story. *Orishas* and humans exist in a codependent relationship where humans need the *ashé* of the *orishas* in the form of protection and guidance, while the *orishas* need to be fed *ashé* in the form of sacrifices and rituals. Without *ashé*, humans would live aimless lives and the *orishas* would cease to exist. When offering a sacrifice to an *orisha*, the believer is

making an offering to the part of *Olodumare* exemplified by the particular *orisha* for whom the sacrifice was made.

The Rituals and Oracles

Santería can never be understood as a corpus of doctrines, but rather, as a set of rituals. Doctrinal purity is unimportant; what matters is the proper conduct of the rituals. Because Santería is a terrestrial religion, rituals using the earth's elements are central. These rituals rely upon objects like herbs, stones, trees, soils, seashells, water, and so on. It is believed that the earth provides all that is needed to live a full and abundant life. These rituals take place at a *casa de santos* (house of saints), which is also referred to as an *ilú* (home or spiritual community). The *ilú* is usually located in a room or basement within the house church. People come to the house of the *santero/a* seeking a consultation or to perform a ritual. The *santero/a* becomes the *padrino* or *madrina* (godfather or godmother) of the flock who regularly comes to their *ilú*. Those initiated into the faith are called *iyaw* (bride). The high male priests who are able to perform duties (specifically within divination) beyond the ability of *santeros/as* is called the *babalawo* (father of mystery).

There are four basic ways to enter the faith. The first is by obtaining the beaded necklaces called *elekes*. The colors and patterns of the *elekes* correspond to the *orishas*. They protect the wearer for as long as the *elekes* are worn. The second way is by receiving the *Eleggua*. A graven image of *Eleggua*'s head is made and placed close to the front door of the house to protect it from evil spiritual forces. The third way is by receiving the talismans of the warriors called *guerreros*. Four *orishas* (*Eleggua*, *Ochosi*, *Oggún*, and *Oshún*) are the *guerreros*. While the *elekes* protect from dangers, the *guerreros* attack enemies. And finally, one enters the faith by making saint, known as the *asiento* (seat). This is a process by which the individual learns the mystery of the faith and becomes a *santera/o*. The person's mind and body are conditioned to be possessed by supernatural powers and serve as a seat for the *orishas*, who would "mount" them in the form of spiritual possession.

Santería is a dance religion where the festival of playing the drums, called the *bembe*, invites the *orishas* to come and take spiritual possession of some of the participants. In this way, the *orishas* can communicate directly with their devotees. Another way of communicating with the *orishas* is through divination. At the beginning of time, every "ori" (head) prostrated itself before the supreme creator, *Olodumare*, to negotiate its assigned fate on earth. Although fate is

preordained, it is not predetermined. Through Orúnla, who was the only orisha present when fate was handed out, the individual can safeguard against evil spells or spirits designed to wreak havoc upon his or her assigned fate.

The purpose of divination is not to foretell the future, although this may occur. The purpose of divination is to ensure harmony exists with one's destiny. There are three divination systems in existence. The first system is known as the four coconut pieces, or obi (coconut). The dead, known as egun, can serve as spirit guides. These guides can be one's ancestors but need not be a deceased family member. They can be old Congo slaves, gypsies, or Native Americans. Communication with the egun is possible through this yes-and-no divination system known as obi. Anyone who made Elegguá can cast the four coconut pieces, and depending on how they land (curve side up or down), five possible answers can occur. The answer to the yes-or-no question asked can be as follows: (1) tentative yes, but try again; (2) yes, but try again because of error made during the divination procedure; (3) positive yes; (4) no; and (5) no and beware of danger.

The sixteen cowrie shells make up the second form of divination, also known as the regal de ocha. Santeros/as can cast the sixteen shells, and depending on how they land (shell opening facing up or down), they will correspond to a particular odu, which is a specific legend, proverb, verse, or sacrifice. As many as 256 possible combinations can occur, each signifying a complex odu which requires the santera/o to interpret. The most elaborate form of divination is known as the Ifá, and only men who are babalawos can use this system. Through the casting of cowrie shells on a rectangular wooden tray eight times, he creates one of a possible sixteen binary patterns. From these patterns, the babalawo is referred to an odu that can have as many as sixteen verses. It is his job from as many as 4,096 possible interpretations (conservatively estimated) to correctly divine the solution for the problem being asked of Ifá.

Conclusion

Santería attempts to find for the individual harmony with what is seen and unseen. But these ancient goals are in the process of being modernized and mainstreamed. Once the religion of the oppressed, many followers in the United States today are from middle and upper economic classes. Not surprisingly, emphasis on rituals like animal sacrifices is becoming less common. For some devotees, the future of the faith will be its institutionalization. What may presently be occurring is the Americanization of an African spiritual

tradition which took root in a Cuba steeped in Spanish-folk Catholicism that made its way to the United States because of the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *African Traditional Religions*; *Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence*; *Freedom, Religious*; *Invisible Institution*; *Latino American Religion* entries; *Supreme Court*; *Voodoo*.

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Science

Science, or the systematic study of nature, has had a long and complex relationship with religion in general, and with specific religious movements, throughout U.S. history. Some of the most famous events in U.S. history, such as the 1925 Scopes "Monkey" trial in Tennessee, have been substantially concerned with questions about how science and religion relate to one another. Many present-day issues, such as those concerning health, uses of technology, and bioethics, continue to engage the questions of what religion and science have to do with one another.

Answering the question about the relationship between religion and science is not an easy one, partly because there are so many different religions as well as many sciences. Answering a question like this one is also complex because what "science" is has changed throughout history. On one level, science is about a set of rules for understanding how the world works. Scientific theories rely on certain kinds of explanations that can be tested through experimentation and that are thought to explain why things occur the way that

they do. Science discovers the laws that govern how nature works. On another level, science is the set of practices that a community of trained individuals—scientists—is engaged in. This community scrutinizes and regulates the training of new scientists and the publication of their results. Religious practices have also changed in response to new scientific discoveries and inventions, ranging from germ theory, to atomic weapons, to air conditioning.

Talking about a relationship between science and religion is so complex because sciences and religions both make claims about what the world is and how it works, and because religions and sciences are practiced by communities, each with their own criteria for membership and participation and their own sets of values. In some cases, these have been compatible. For example, in 1951, Pope Pius XII delivered an address in which he stated that some scientific theories, such as the Big Bang theory in cosmology (at that time, not yet a universally accepted scientific theory) could be consistent with a Catholic understanding of nature. In other cases, the relationship has not been harmonious. Many fundamentalist Protestant groups in the United States have long rejected the biological theory of evolution.

Defining Science, Religion, and Their Relationship

Many people have tried to characterize the relationship between science and religion. U.S. theologian Ian Barbour has proposed four categories of relationships: (1) *Conflict*, in which science and religion provide directly contradictory answers to the same questions; (2) *independence*, in which science is concerned with certain types of questions (that is, how do atoms split?) and religion with other questions (for instance, is it ethical to use atomic weapons?); (3) *dialogue*, in which science and religion provide different, but not merely contradictory answers to the same questions; and (4) *integration*, in which science and religion work together to come up with a single answer to questions. Examples of each of these four can be found in U.S. history. The U.S. paleontologist and biologist Stephen Jay Gould (1941–2002) argued that religion and science occupied “nonoverlapping magisteria” or NOMA. This is an example of the independence model. Gould claimed that the areas of concern to religion—such as ethics, spirituality, and the human soul—were beyond the examination of science, but that religion’s domain did not extend to the laws of nature or understanding the physical world. Because they are limited to separate spheres, according to Gould, any apparent conflict was the result of one group of people misunderstanding the limitations of

either science or religion. This principle of NOMA has been particularly influential among U.S. scientists and has had an important impact on the U.S. legal system, after Gould testified as an expert witness in trials concerning the teaching of evolution during the 1980s.

From the perspective of historians, the relationship between religion and science is characterized by the groups of people who ask them, as well as by the questions that are addressed. The social character of science and religion recognizes that some groups of people do find conflict between their religious commitments and the findings of science, whereas others do not, and recognizes that most religious groups accept some scientific discoveries and incorporate some new technologies into their practices, though others do not. Rather than see science and religion as an ongoing story of inevitable and inexhaustible conflict, as some have claimed, historians such as John Hedley Brooke and Ronald L. Numbers have argued for understanding the complexity of this history.

Historians have also pointed out that both “science” and “religion” are relatively recent inventions. The notion of religion as a set of beliefs and practices (and that there could be such a thing as “religions”) began to develop in Europe (and its American colonies) in the seventeenth century and came into something like its modern-day understanding in the eighteenth century. Science, as a specialized and systematized study of nature, began to be distinguished from the larger field of “natural philosophy” around the same time, but people did not begin to speak of themselves as “scientists” rather than natural philosophers until the first half of the nineteenth century. Before these developments, people engaged in natural philosophy saw the study of nature as something bound up with the study of divinity, ethics, and other branches of knowledge today considered to be religious.

The historical development of science and religion as two separate and distinct enterprises that can have some kind of relationship is especially important in the United States. This is partly because science and religion came into being in the same time and by some of the same people who were exploring and colonizing the North American continent, and partly because the nascent principles of both science and religion play an important role in the development of the early United States, its government, and culture.

Scientific and Religious Life of the Atlantic World and Colonial America

It would be remiss to neglect those nations and cultures that inhabited the Americas before European colonization. The

lands that eventually constituted the United States contained a diversity of peoples, each with different traditions concerning nature and how it functions, health and how to maintain and improve it, and technologies and how to apply knowledge. Likewise, these cultures each had elements of ritual and spiritual practices. In this respect, there were sciences and religions in the Americas long before European contact. But these populations did not think about their knowledge as separated into kinds that could be classified as science and religion. That particular way of categorizing types of knowledge was brought to the Americas by European cultures.

The migration and eventual colonization of the Americas by Europeans provided immediate opportunities for both scientific and religious expansion. From the point of view of Europeans, the Atlantic Ocean had once seemed an insuperable barrier; it was now a thoroughfare with a destination on the other side. This shift in geographical perspective has been called the Atlantic World by many historians. Rather than think of America and Europe as two separate continents separated by an ocean, the Atlantic World envisages an ocean ringed by land, whose people readily cross it and carry ideas and objects with them. Though most human movement was to the Americas, naturalists in Europe often travelled in search of new specimens, which were then brought to Europe. Attempts to classify and understand new species, make sense of new geological structures, and even to understand the cultures of native populations were just some of the examples of new scientific discovery undertaken.

Often, these explorations went along with the movement of religious ideas and people across the Atlantic. Many of the earliest European settlements in what became the United States were at least partly prompted by religion. Spanish Catholics built missions in much of the territory that later became Mexico, including what is today California, Texas, and the U.S. Southwest. The Jesuit priest Eusebio Francisco Kino's (1645–1711) travel to the Americas served purposes of scientific discovery and the establishment of religious missions. Many of the British colonies established along the eastern coast of North America had religious charters, some granted to groups whose political rights were limited in England.

The discovery of the Atlantic World led directly to philosophical questions that affected science and religion together. It was *not* the case that the discovery of the American continents by Europeans caused them to reject a biblically oriented notion that the earth was flat. Historian Lesley

Cormack has argued that fifteenth-century Europeans were well aware that the earth was round, and that only in later centuries was this ignorance attributed to them. However, discoveries of plants and animals not mentioned in the Bible posed a theological challenge to some Christians.

For some, contact between different races of people, such as Native Americans or Africans (many of whom were forcibly migrated to the Americas and subjected to slavery) posed questions concerning whether these people were all of a single *species* as well as whether they had souls that could be saved. Arguments among Europeans and Americans of European descent continued into the political realm where the questions were to what *rights* these populations were entitled. Answers to these questions were sought using both scientific evidence (concerning anatomical or cultural studies of people, their abilities, and characteristics) and religious evidence (arguments from the Bible, or from understanding the spiritual aspects of these cultures). Despite the presence of human civilizations in the Americas for millennia, the land was often referred to as “natural” in contrast with a settled Europe. The notion that Native American societies represented human nature unaffected by the effects of civilization was evoked by several political philosophers who later influenced the American and French revolutions.

The British colonies in America that later constituted the original United States served as a location in which new discoveries from the American continent were brought into contact with new scientific theories and technologies from across the Atlantic. Though very few American-born British subjects (such as Benjamin Franklin [1706–1790] were admitted into the Royal Society, the prestigious scientific society of the United Kingdom, members of this scientific establishment corresponded with naturalists scattered throughout the colonies. At the same time, new universities were established in the colonies. Institutions such as Harvard and Yale were established as schools of divinity, aimed at training ministers and clergymen in the colonies, but these institutions and others established in the colonial era included instruction in natural history as well.

The particular nature of some religious viewpoints in the late colonial period gave rise to further engagement between religion and science in the eighteenth century. The middle of the century saw a rise in public displays of religion in what has been called the Great Awakening. From the 1730s though 1750s, Protestant revivalists from the Americas and from England traveled around the colonies, encouraging religious practice that focused on more direct and

enthusiastic engagement with divinity. This evangelical movement emphasized that knowledge of God and religion came through direct personal inspiration. Though the movement focused on direct personal contact with God and rooted much of its theology in the Bible, this was not seen as being contrary to science. Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), one of the most influential theologians in colonial America, also wrote on natural philosophy and contributed to early understanding of the natural environment of New England.

The Great Awakening contrasts with trends in religious thought that both preceded and followed it. Deism—a belief in a supreme being that created the world, which then operates following laws of nature—flourished in the late seventeenth century and into the eighteenth century in the English-speaking Atlantic world. This coincided with the passage in 1689 of the English Act of Toleration, which allowed some religious liberties to non-Anglican Protestants, and the 1687 publication of Isaac Newton’s *Principia Mathematica*. The spread of Newtonian physics influenced much religious discussion. That objects behaved according to fixed laws of motion, and that those laws extended to the moon and planets as well as to things on earth, gave rise to philosophical questions about the nature and power of a supreme being. The idea that planets did not move in the sky of their own power, but orbited the sun under the predictable law of gravity, bespoke an orderly universe that required fewer appeals to miracles to explain. Many Deists embraced Newtonian physics, claiming it as justification that a Creator God had fashioned a world that was capable of running on its own.

The Great Awakening might be viewed as a backlash against the first attempts to make sense of a Newtonian world, but the deism that flourished in late colonial America after the Great Awakening had expanded and refined the thought of their precursors. This later deism was characterized by the belief that a creator formed a world that could operate under predictable laws of physics and that the act of discovering the laws of nature was a way to better understand the way the creator worked. Some Deists took this to mean that by studying human and other animal societies, one might discover the natural laws that govern the behavior of individuals and civilizations. Some Deists held that God had established moral laws of behavior that could be deciphered by scientifically studying human nature. Immoral behavior was not punished supernaturally, or after death, but was punished by leading to human failings, or to a corrupt society filled with suffering. In effect, these Deists argued that to act in defiance of the moral law was no different than acting in

defiance of the law of gravity—possible, but with dire consequences. Deism was an example of science and religion being integrated. That human beings were capable of rational thought, and of discovering the world around them, was evidence that the Creator wanted people to do science.

These ideas were held in high regard among many of the leaders of the colonies that declared independence from England in 1776 and later formed the United States. Some of these individuals considered themselves to be Deists, whereas others were Christians, or members of some other religion, but incorporated this integration of science and religion into their worldviews. The founding of the American republic bears many traces of these principles.

Science and Religion in the American Revolution and Early Republic

The relationship between science and religion can be seen as a continuous trend that shapes and is shaped by U.S. history in general, from the very beginnings of the country. Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), author of the American Declaration of Independence, was one of many political leaders of the early United States whose worldview was shaped by deism and science. The Jefferson Bible that he compiled took passages of the New Testament and arranged them to tell the life of Jesus without any reference to miracles or supernatural events. He also made use of mechanical principles to invent new devices, as well as cultivating new varieties of plants. Jefferson’s deistic worldview was also apparent in the Declaration of Independence. In addition to referring to “the Laws of Nature and Nature’s God,” he makes the claim that the equality of all people and the fact of “certain unalienable rights” is “self-evident.” This claim of self-evidence is typical of a deistic perspective on nature that suggests that a moral order to creation can be inferred by observation of human nature.

Several other early leaders of the United States shared Jefferson’s perspective. Others were more expressly Christian, but also held to the concept that an understanding of creation and of a creator could come from the study of nature. The colonies that formed the United States had long been a refuge for religious dissenters from England. This continued after the founding of the American republic. One notable immigrant was the scientist Joseph Priestley (1733–1804). Priestley had been a noted chemist—one of the discoverers of the element oxygen—and experimentalist who discovered properties of air and electricity. His scientific work also related to his sermons and writings on theology, in which he

defended a materialist worldview. Priestley became an intellectual leader of a religious movement that represented a form of Unitarianism. His religious and political views (particularly in support of the French Revolution) had caused such antagonism against him in England that in 1794, he emigrated to Pennsylvania. Priestley was one of the first major scientists of Europe to move to the new United States. Through exchanges with Jefferson (who founded the University of Virginia), Priestley influenced the development of science education in the United States, and, in conversation with others in his new country, helped to shape the scientific enterprises of the new country. The exploration of lands acquired by the United States (during Jefferson's presidency), led by Meriwether Lewis (1774–1809) and William Clark (1770–1838), made many new discoveries of geology, botany, and zoology, as well as obtaining new information about the religion and culture of the human populations west of the Mississippi River.

The Lewis and Clark expedition to the Pacific Ocean has often been seen as a critical moment in U.S. history in its creation of western lands as a “frontier.” This in turn gave strength to the view that the country was destined to expand across the continent. This notion of “Manifest Destiny” put a religious interpretation to the political debates about expanding westward settlement, with some claiming that U.S. political dominion of these lands was divinely ordained. For some, the act of scientific exploration and discovery inaugurated by Lewis and Clark represented the human act of dominion over the earth and its creation, which was outlined in the Bible. The act of naming and classifying newly discovered species in the U.S. West was a religious act in line with divine intentions.

In 1893, the U.S. historian Frederick Jackson Turner put forward a theory that the development of the United States was characterized by the presence of a frontier that represented a kind of “wilderness” that spurred westward migration and settlement. More recently, the environmental historian William Cronon has argued that this notion of “wilderness” as a place of nature untouched by humanity has been idealized and has frequently been misleading. Virtually all of the American continent had been settled and developed in some way by Native Americans long before transatlantic migration and settlement, and the perception of certain spaces as “wild” or “natural” to the exclusion of others was itself a human enterprise. This concept of wilderness also has roots in religion, evoking a biblical conception of an area outside of human society and mores. The idea of vast

expanses of the American continent as a “natural,” unsettled space projected religious interpretations of the American continent as a place untainted by human corruption in either a naturalistic or a moral sense. In this American geography, nature represented both a space without entrenched social practices and a place that was somehow purer for its lack of human influence. This tension between nature as a place where God's word had not yet reached, and the place where God's creation was best preserved and could be best experienced has influenced both the histories of religion and natural exploration in the United States.

In the early nineteenth century, the view of nature as a location for religious insight was exemplified by the transcendentalist movement. Though related to the romantic movements in philosophy, science, art, and literature that took place in Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, transcendentalism has sometimes been described as the first intellectual movement of American origins. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), one of the most noted people affiliated with this movement, wrote that religious discord arose from people's inability to relate to nature. Science's aim is to discover a theory of nature, but its systematic divisions further alienate people. Intellectual abstraction in both organized religion and organized science detract from the individual's experience of truth. Emerson recommended individuals separate themselves from human society and human effects of nature to experience the pure essence of nature. This recommendation became the basis for Henry David Thoreau's (1817–1862) 1845 book *Walden*, written as an experiment of his own retreat and immersion in the “natural” setting of Walden Pond in Massachusetts. Though this movement was critical of both scientific and religious establishments of the day, transcendentalism was rooted in a belief that an individual's scientific and religious experience converged in having a direct perception of nature. This movement has widely influenced U.S. literature, environmentalism, and philosophy, along with science and religion. Transcendentalism's emphasis on individualism and reinforcement of the American continent as a place in which experience of nature could best be achieved contributed to perceptions of the U.S. landscape as a religious space, contributing to what religion scholar Robert Bellah came to call “America's civil religion.”

At roughly the same time as Emerson and Thoreau were writing, a religious movement often referred to as the Second Great Awakening flourished in much of the United States. Like the first Great Awakening, this was a

multidenominational Protestant movement characterized by an emphasis on direct religious experience, and, like transcendentalism, the Second Great Awakening has been viewed as a reaction against organized religious and scientific establishments. It has primarily been characterized as a reaction to deism and other forms of natural religion.

The Second Great Awakening was not an organized movement, but was rather a collection of individual phenomena that historians later considered to be related by a common spirit. This religious movement took the form of public religious revivals and public preaching outside of church settings, and livelier forms of religious expression within churches. Especially in areas further away from the more settled urban centers on the East Coast, the spirit also gave rise to new denominations and to nonaffiliated churches.

Although the religious thought that accompanied the Second Great Awakening did not specifically address science (except insofar as it differed from a science-oriented deism or other forms of naturalistic religion), the rise and spread of religious thought that originated in the period was partly shaped by new science and technology. Scientific discovery and invention contributed to notions of social “progress” that often ran parallel to religious progressivism in this movement. This was an ideology partly grounded in studies of nature and in observations of new technological and medical breakthroughs. This progressivism was also political—in particular giving voice to religious movements against slavery. New publishing and transportation technologies helped these ideas penetrate the South in ways that exacerbated cultural differences during the U.S. Civil War.

Science, Religion, and the U.S. Civil War

In many ways, the U.S. Civil War, lasting from 1861–1865, was the event that has had the greatest impact on national identity and, as such, provides the foundation for many of the beliefs of a U.S. “civil religion.” Religious historian Harry S. Stout has observed that before the war, most U.S. citizens spoke of the “United States” as plural, whereas after 1865, the “United States” was a singular noun. Even though people’s experiences of the war and during the war varied widely, they gave rise to new beliefs that Stout argues were tantamount to a national and collective religious experience. As participants in the war sought to justify the terrible bloodshed and massive loss of lives, the war came to be understood in religious terms, as a kind of “blood sacrifice” out of which a new type of U.S. nation emerged.

The Civil War also led to new developments in science and technology, and acceptance of those developments was incorporated into this religious worldview. Among the important branches of science whose history was shaped by these events were the sciences of human biology—concerning the biology of race and its relation to arguments about equality—and new medical techniques and diagnoses that came in response to the injuries and diseases brought about on the battlefield. In addition, the war led to the development and use of new technologies, some of which were used as weapons. Part of the national understanding of the Civil War that emerged in the immediate aftermath had to explain the role that science and technology played in giving rise to, conducting, and rebuilding the country after the war. The earliest forms of machine guns and ironclad ships were among the military inventions that were developed during the war, and other technologies such as railroads and telegraphs that became more widely used helped promote the growth of U.S. infrastructure during the war. Battlefield surgeons also developed new techniques for amputation and the treatment of wounds, as well as discovering some of the connections between sanitation and infection that led to the first understandings of the germ theory of disease later in the nineteenth century.

At least part of the postwar understanding of why the Union prevailed over the Confederacy in the war was rooted in the more widespread use of industrial technology in the North. A greater use of technology and a greater capacity to transport it to where it was needed conferred a military advantage. To some, this was evidence that the economic model of the Northern states, one tied to industrialism and to growth and expansion, was intrinsically superior to the agricultural economy more tied to sustenance than growth that typified the South. These economic justifications, which invoked a cultural reliance on science and technology as a basis for progress, were connected to moral and religious justifications of the war and its outcome. The idea that industrial progress and scientific development was morally positive was justified by some people in pointing to the outcome of the Civil War.

Some of the most important science–religion discussions in the Civil War era concerned questions of racial equality and the issue of slavery. Samuel George Morton (1799–1851), an anatomist who had studied fossils brought back by the Lewis and Clark expedition, had made studies of human skulls from various parts of the world and had used these to argue for essential mental and physical differences

between races. This research led Harvard natural historian and geologist Louis Agassiz (1807–1873) to conclude that the races were in fact separate species. Other anthropologists and sociologists argued that all races had a single common ancestor.

The question of whether humanity consisted of one or several species was both a scientific and religious one. Many Christian theologians in the United States who supported the abolition of slavery argued that the Bible's account of the creation of humans supported a single species concept, and slavery's supporters also pointed to biblical accounts of slave owning and the claim that the sons of Noah gave rise to the major racial differences of the world, to support their views. In this political debate over slavery, scientific and religious justifications existed on all sides of every issue and were entangled as often as they were used against one another.

For many who lived through the Civil War, the events that took place could only be understood in a religious way. Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887), a prominent clergyman and abolitionist from New England, denounced slavery from the pulpit and was politically engaged well before the Civil War. He saw science and religion as testifying together to the immorality of slavery and, after the war, came to explain it as a religious event indicative of God's benevolence and the natural development of divine creation. For Beecher, the war was evidence of progress and of civilization's improvement, arguing that war itself had evolved from a human endeavor of cruelty and conquest to an act that brought about liberation.

For others, especially in the South, the war was also a religious event, but not one that signified progress. The number of people killed, the destruction of land and property, and the complete upheaval of the social order gave many the impression that the war was an apocalyptic moment, a break from the natural trend of history that could only be compared to biblical catastrophes. At its root were religious beliefs about the nature of history itself, whether the world was inherently becoming a better place over time or whether history was a story of degeneration. At stake were questions concerning whether the end of history—for many Christians, this meant a return of Christ—could be brought about by human civilization's gradual improvement or would be miraculously brought about by God after civilization's collapse. For many on both sides of the conflict, the idea that the world was progressing to a higher moral state and that people were able to bring about a "Kingdom of Heaven" could not be reconciled with a war that had more efficiently and wastefully killed people than previous U.S. wars.

In the later nineteenth century, the religious concept of dispensationalism began to take hold among more evangelical Protestants in the United States. Dispensationalism is a belief that discrete ages in the history of human civilization are characterized by different relationships with God, as outlined in the Bible. Though versions of how many dispensations and what they are differed, they all held to a belief that a final end-times dispensation would involve miraculous intervention to save some people from a fallen civilization. Unlike some religious conceptions of end times that were more compatible with a naturalistic and gradual view of progress, dispensationalism's incorporation of sudden and miraculous change was outside science or nature's range of explanation. The rise in this belief coincided with the spread of a biological theory of gradual and progressive change—Charles Darwin's (1809–1882) theory of evolution. These different religious views about gradualism and about progressivism may partly explain the complex religious reactions to Darwinian theory.

Darwinism in the United States and the Origins of Science-Religion "Conflict"

In 1859, Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was published in England and the United States. As Ronald Numbers has described, the impact on U.S. biology was dramatic. Within twenty years, acceptance of evolutionary principles was nearly unanimous within the scientific community. Though other naturalists before Darwin had proposed that species of plants and animals had changed over time, in some cases becoming completely new species, Darwin proposed that natural selection could be the mechanism by which new species came into being. Rather than posit a sudden creative force, or that plants and animals directed their own changes, competition among species and their ability to cope with their environment determined which would survive and reproduce more successfully. The *Origin of Species* also contained a greater compilation of comparisons among various living species to show evidences of similarities that indicated common ancestors.

Public acceptance of Darwin's theory was not nearly as unanimous or rapid. Partly this was because of objections that could be characterized as religious, but this is not the whole story. Some of the early opposition to evolution was philosophical, or even scientific, and some of the support for evolution was religious in its nature as well. The relationship between Darwinism and religion has never been uncomplicated. This complexity begins with Darwin

himself. Historians Adrian Desmond and James Moore have argued that Darwin's formulation of evolution was an attempt to show the common ancestry of all humanity and thus undermine any basis for slavery. Rather than see Darwin as irreligious, they argue that Darwinian evolution was driven by a moral and religious abhorrence of slavery. At the same time, Darwin was concerned that his theory would be interpreted as atheistic and delayed publishing his theories for that reason.

Some of Darwin's most ardent scientific supporters were also deeply religious. Asa Gray (1810–1888), the botanist who was perhaps most responsible for disseminating Darwin's ideas in the United States, was a devout Presbyterian. Gray held reservations concerning whether a divine act would have been necessary to create humans, as distinct from other animal species, but considered himself an evolutionist and not a creationist—one who held that species were separately created. The implication that human beings were not separately created was one of the primary theological reasons for rejection of evolution. The Presbyterian theologian Charles Hodge's (1797–1878) 1874 *What Is Darwinism?* concluded (drawing from Gray) that Darwinism was atheism because it excludes design in nature.

Other antievolutionists raised questions about the progressive character of Darwinian evolution, whether there was any basis at a chemical or physical level to conclude that nature improves. In the early twentieth century, the discovery that physical traits were determined by discrete genes was seen by some scientists as irreconcilable with Darwin's insistence on slow and gradual change. Religious sermons, pamphlets, and books issued against Darwinism in this period often invoked arguments such as these to argue that evolution was faulty science, not that it conflicted with religion. Many of the religious opponents to evolution claimed explicitly that true science and true religion had to coincide because God had created both nature and the human capacity to understand it.

In this period of the late nineteenth century the idea of science and religion being in "conflict" became popularized. Two books from the period have been seen as most responsible for this. In 1874, the historian and scientist John William Draper (1811–1882) wrote the *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, and in 1896 Cornell President Andrew Dickson White's (1832–1918) *History of the Warfare between Science and Theology in Christendom* was published. Both books argue that since the dawn of human civilization, natural intellectual discovery has been hampered by human superstition

and the authority of organized religion. Draper particularly faults the Catholic Church as oppressive to rational thought and as using religious dogma to maintain its power, even in the face of truths that undermine those doctrines. White's criticisms are applied to Protestantism as well, but the story is also one in which superstition and primitive religious beliefs were unwilling to accept naturalistic explanations for the world and discovery, but that eventually, truth and independent thought prevailed.

As more recent historians have frequently noted, Draper and White had personal reasons for the views they advocated in their books. For Draper, antagonism toward Catholicism came from his own family history. Cornell was established as a nonsectarian university in 1865, which drew opposition from some religious groups and prompted White's reaction against some forms of religion as inhibitors of scientific knowledge.

Although the claim that science and religion had been in conflict since the beginnings of human civilization is both oversimplified (because not all relationships have been hostile) and anachronistic (because "science" and "religion" as independent modes of thought were not aspects of ancient cultures), this historical thesis from Draper and White had a certain self-fulfilling character. Historians have come to call the idea that religion was opposed to science and that science would eventually overcome the primitive thought of religious cultures the "conflict thesis." Particularly among irreligious or "secular" populations, this thesis gave a moral and historical justification to their beliefs.

Science and Religious "Modernism"

The historical narrative underlying the "conflict thesis," also advanced the positions of some religious groups in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly those who called themselves "modernists." This modernism did not reject religion but was a self-conscious attempt by many different religious groups to adapt theology and religious ritual to new scientific understanding. For religious modernists, the relationship between science and this kind of religion was felt to be in harmony. What conflicted were particular forms of religion that they held to be outdated. Modernism became associated with some forms of religious liberalism in its embrace of scientific progress and the belief that through the use of science, human civilization could progress to a higher ethical civilization.

Some of the most important social movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were based in this

religious modernism. The Social Gospel movement was rooted in a belief that a second coming must be brought about by improving human civilization and building a kingdom of heaven on earth. Influencing many denominations and organizations, the theology of the Social Gospel inspired charitable organizations that helped immigrants, workers, urban and rural poor, and many other disaffected groups in the United States. Though its influence in the United States diminished in the mid-twentieth century, among African American churches the Social Gospel movement had a very strong influence on the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. It also influenced the labor movement and led to many public health initiatives.

Religion and medicine have a long and complex history in the United States, ranging from different religious views toward health and the use of technology in intervening in human well-being, to religious forms of healing. Perhaps one of the most important intersections between religion and medicine is in the area of public health. Public health concerns the treatment and well-being of individuals, as well as the actions taken to understand and promote the overall health of a society or large population. This may include regulation of food safety, protection from environmental hazards, or limiting widespread contagion. Because many of these actions don't primarily influence the health of individuals *directly*, public health is often considered separate from practices of medicine. The shift in thinking about people's physical well-being regarding their social environments as well as their individual health that constitutes public health parallels the Social Gospel view that the role of religion is not only to address the spiritual well-being of individuals for their personal salvation but also to address their spiritual environment by improving the moral conditions of society. A society with less poverty and illness provides fewer temptations to sin.

Some religious organizations and individuals were great proponents of public health, but others were taken aback by what they saw to be the immorality of its excesses. In early twentieth-century United States, eugenics was one of the major elements of improving public health. Eugenics was a movement that applied principles of evolutionary science to try to influence the reproduction and makeup of society. As historian Christine Rosen describes, eugenics had both religious and irreligious supporters. Some aspects of eugenics included prevention of venereal diseases and the tracing of family histories as ways of detecting dangerous genetic traits. "Fitter family" contests and beauty pageants were rooted in eugenics.

Another early twentieth century public health reform partly associated with eugenics was advocacy for birth control—including contraception and abortion. This reform was also connected with feminist movements that promoted the greater rights of women to determine their own health and reproductive practices, along with greater political equality. (One of the signal successes of the latter movement was the 1920 ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ensuring women's right to vote.) Some of the positions advocated by these movements, such as the availability of divorce, birth control, and greater autonomy for women were seen as opposing religious viewpoints concerning gender relationships. Birth control and particularly abortion were seen as objectionable according to some religious positions in the early twentieth century, although religious objections to abortion were not primarily concerned with questions of when human life begins until later in the century.

But by far the most notable and morally reprehensible aspect of U.S. eugenics was the involuntary sterilization of people deemed "feeble-minded," who were determined to be a drain to society. Though virtually every religion had a mixed reaction to this practice, many religious individuals and groups found it to be immoral and contrary to religious principles. Most of the opposition to reproduction issues in the early twentieth century concerned its connections with the wider eugenics movement. Historian Edward J. Larson argues that evolution's association with eugenics was one major inspiration for the religious anti-evolution movement.

The Scopes Trial and Religion and Science in the U.S. Courtroom

Part of the religious reaction to the theory of evolution was opposition; however, this did not develop into an antievolution movement until the 1920s, about the time that evolution and other core concepts of biology became part of the school curriculum. Advocates of social reform had developed the new biology curriculum around its public health applications (focusing on issues such as hygiene, eugenics, and food safety that were related to biological concepts). With this new subject coinciding with efforts to expand compulsory public education, religious rhetoric against Darwinism found expression as a school movement. In 1925, Tennessee passed a law prohibiting the teaching of human evolution from nonhuman species. In an attempt to

have the law overturned, John Scopes (1900–1970) stood trial for violating the antievolution act, and the trial quickly turned into a global media spectacle. The highlight of the trial consisted of interrogation by the renowned defense lawyer Clarence Darrow (1857–1938) of the politician and antievolutionist William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925), who had assisted the prosecution. Darrow's questions created a public impression that the key issue at the trial was whether evolution conflicted with a "literal interpretation" of the book of Genesis. Nearly none of the religious arguments against evolution before the 1920s had anything to do with claims that Earth was 6,000 years old, or that the Genesis accounts of creation could be read as literal truth. Bryan himself did not advocate such a position. Despite the trial's origins in the politics of biology education and defense arguments that modernist interpretations of the Bible were compatible with evolution, the public perception of the trial was one that reinforced the conflict thesis of science and religion. By presenting the issue of the trial as one of irreligious evolution versus literally interpreted Genesis (a view that became much more widely held afterward), the Scopes trial helped create real conflict between religion and science.

Court cases concerning the teaching of evolution appeared in different forms in subsequent generations. The Supreme Court decided in the 1968 case *Epperson v. Arkansas* that prohibiting the teaching of evolution violated the first amendment. The 1981 U.S. District Court case *McLean v. Arkansas Board of Education* and the 1987 Supreme Court case *Edwards v. Aguillard* ruled that teaching "creation science," an attempt to prove the Bible account of creation through interpretation of natural evidence, was also unacceptable. The ruling in *McLean* effectively made the conflict thesis part of the legal relationship between religion and science, affirming that creation science was religious partly because it was not scientific. Most recently, the 2005 case *Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School Board* ruled that "intelligent design" was, like creation science, not a scientific study and could not be included in biology classrooms.

Evolution is by no means the only issue that pitted science and religion against one another in a U.S. court. In 1905, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Jacobson v. Massachusetts* that an individual's religious belief could not supersede state compulsory immunizations. Other issues that have brought religious and scientific arguments into legal settings have included determining the beginning and end of life (issues of abortion, euthanasia, life support, and organ donation) and moral concerns about technology and the environment.

New technologies make new moral questions possible and raise a variety of new religious issues.

Technology and Religion

Since the latter half of the twentieth century, the United States has seen a rapid development of new technologies that raise moral as well as philosophical questions about human identity. Perhaps none has been more consequential than the development of atomic power during World War II. The U.S. government organized and financed the Manhattan Project, which brought together hundreds of physicists, chemists, and many other scientists in a collaborative enterprise. Because of the enormity of the project to build an atomic weapon, and because of wartime security concerns, many of the scientists involved focused only on a small aspect of the overall project. The scope and hierarchical organization of this kind of project made the Manhattan Project the first example of what has come to be known as "Big Science." This changed the way much scientific research is conducted, as well as the relationship between science and the state.

The Manhattan Project both influenced and was influenced by religious worldviews. Several of the scientists involved in the U.S. bomb project were of European Jewish ancestry and had escaped the Nazi regime. Many of the scientists involved, regardless of their religious upbringing or beliefs, used religious language to describe the metaphysical implications of changing elements by splitting atoms. Most important, the violent potential of atomic detonation evoked moral and religious questions among the scientists involved. J. Robert Oppenheimer (1904–1967), the physicist who directed the Manhattan Project, was said to have quoted from the Hindu sacred text the *Bhagavad Gita*: "I am become death, the destroyer of worlds" after the first successful test of an atomic bomb in 1945.

During the Cold War, the threat of atomic annihilation posed a strange challenge to theology. For the first time in human history, the concept of the end of the world was not a supernatural one but an element of U.S. foreign policy. This technological development may have contributed to a decline in the United States of progressive theologies that saw the world as gradually improving and the wider profession of belief in religious worldviews in which an apocalypse, or salvation from an apocalypse, was more central.

The Cold War also led to a cultural dynamic in the United States in which religion and science were perceived

as common allies in a struggle against Soviet communism. The association of communism with atheism reinforced a U.S. self-conception as religious and an acceptance that the moral values fostered by U.S. religions (and the religious toleration that was a hallmark of a “free society”) would give the United States a competitive advantage. Many of the direct forms of cultural competition between the two sides of the Cold War were scientific and technological. Most significantly, the space race, culminating in the moon landing in 1969, was a major source of cultural and technological development during the Cold War. After the successes of the Soviet space program in launching the first artificial satellite in 1957 and launching the first person into space in 1961, the United States took substantial measures to promote improved science education and to encourage more students to become scientists. The creation of more scientists was part of the larger cultural competition of the Cold War and contributed to a U.S. identity as a religious and scientific nation. Ironically, the enhancement of science education in this period also gave rise to renewed religious efforts against the teaching of evolution and other objectionable topics.

More recently, technological developments in fields of biology and medicine have also raised religious questions about the human person. The development of neurology and brain imaging technologies have led to changes in the way people think about death. In the 1970s and 1980s some U.S. states changed their legal definition of death from the termination of heart functioning to the cessation of certain brain activity. This conflicts with some religious interpretations of death. Some Jewish and Christian scholars have rejected a definition of death other than “heart death.” These definitions help determine when it is ethically acceptable for the cessation of artificial life support, or the donation of organs to occur. This conflict has also influenced legal definitions of death. The state of New Jersey, for example, states that an end to either brain function or heart function can be used to legally determine death, but not if the definition of death used violates the definition of death according to the patient’s religious tradition. Similar debates about the beginnings of human life connected to the morality and legality of abortion were also brought into public prominence because of the development of the ultrasound and other ways of measuring life signs of an embryo.

In addition to raising metaphysical and ethical questions that may challenge or augment religious beliefs, scientific and technological developments have also led to changes or questions about religious practice. The widespread use of

electricity, for example, has led to diverse Jewish opinions about whether the use of electricity on the Sabbath (during which many kinds of work, including igniting or extinguishing a fire, are traditionally prohibited). Some Jewish groups have prohibited the use of electricity, but others have accepted it. The discovery of germ theory, and technologies concerning the control of bacteria, posed a ritual problem for many churches in which the ritual of Communion involved the entire congregation partaking of the same cup. This led to some churches but not others holding that Communion from a single cup was essential. The development of mass media technologies, such as television and the Internet, have also greatly contributed to changes in religious practice. Televangelism, in which a religious ritual is broadcast, has enabled a single religious leader to directly reach a larger and more geographically diffuse congregation and has enabled people to seek religious communities regardless of the views and options presented in their locality. The Internet has made the availability and diversity of religious expression even more interactive and mainstream.

In less obvious ways, other technological developments have substantially altered religious practices. Megachurches—churches with very large congregations and buildings designed to hold as many as several thousand members—were not possible before the second half of the twentieth century, when developments in air conditioning, transportation, and amplification made such practices viable. In contrast, “tent revivals,” which were a common religious practice for much of U.S. history, have waned as a result of these same technologies.

The influence of science and technology on religious belief and practices has likely increased in recent decades, but has been present since before the founding of the United States. In some cases, religious groups have identified themselves as opposed to some forms of science or technology. Old Order Amish, for example, refuse the use of many forms of technology, most notably cars and most forms of electricity. A variety of fundamentalist churches and denominations include articles of faith that reject certain scientific theories (such as evolution) or the use of some technologies. As both scientific and religious thought continue to develop, the variety of issues in science and religion has multiplied.

Religion and the Environment

Perhaps one of the most significant moral, and political, questions today that concerns the relationship between religions and science concerns human control, use, and influence over

the environment. This issue has roots in the perception and preservation of “nature” or “wilderness” that constituted much of the identity of the early United States. The issue gained renewed focus beginning in the 1960s, with increases in technology that enabled more rapid change and control over the environment. The mind-set of technologically driven progressivism led to widespread efforts to control the spaces used and occupied by humanity. Under the banner of public health, chemical inventions such as dichlorodiphenyl-trichloroethane, or DDT, were used to eradicate insects that spread diseases such as malaria. Increased industrial production that was vital to growth led to a greater need to procure fossil fuels, through coal mining and oil drilling, and to consume these fuels. Though some people throughout U.S. history have expressed concern about the effects of technology on nature, the idea that humanity could have a permanent effect on nature on a global scale was not well appreciated. After the development of atomic science, and the growing understanding that human endeavor could affect the entire globe, a greater number of people began to question whether technology had a deleterious effect on the environment. The extent of environmental damage is still a matter of much political controversy.

Religious movements have had varied responses to the need for environmental protection. In the early era of the modern environmental movement, those who advocated the greatest need to restrict human effects on the environment were thought to be influenced by New Age spiritualist movements, or influences of religious traditions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, the ideas of which were becoming more widely available. This perceived influence conditioned the reactions of “mainstream” religions to environmentalism. Some held it to be irreligious, or un-Christian. In more recent decades public religious attitudes toward environmental protection have diversified. In 1967, historian Lynn White argued that Christianity’s belief in human dominion of the Earth was responsible for ecological problems. White’s argument is an example of a conflict thesis between Christian religions and environmental science. Although some Christian groups explicitly defended this view, many others claim that the Bible passage enjoins humanity’s stewardship and protection of Earth. In recent years, this thought has come to be known as *ecotheology*.

Bioethics

Advances in life sciences have nearly always raised some religious questions. Some of these, such as the discovery by

zoologists and embryologists of how conception occurred, led to tremendous ethical questions about when, exactly, “life” begins. Shortly after the discovery of conception in the late nineteenth century, the Catholic Church officially changed its position on the gravity of performing or inducing abortions. With new developments in life-preserving technologies, end-of-life treatments are a continual struggle for religious groups to address.

But not all ethical debates are about life and death, nor do they specifically concern human persons. The development of genetically modified organisms (GMO), whose genes have been altered through direct technologies such as splicing deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), have raised both ecological and biological concerns. On one level, the safety of these organisms for sources of food has been questioned. On another level, there are issues pertaining to whether the creation of new variations or hybrid species is ethically appropriate. These questions also concern the ethics of a technology once it is developed: If GMO foods are safe, is it ethically problematic to grow, sell, and use them, or would it be morally irresponsible not to if these developments can end poverty and global hunger? These issues also involve the morality of undertaking research whose effects are not yet known: Is it ethical to conduct experiments on GMOs if the ability to constrain artificial genetic variation or the effects on humans of their consumption cannot be known with certainty?

Religion and Scientific Research

The ethics of scientific research is a frequent target of religious criticism. Often it is difficult to forecast what the benefits of research will be until after the research has been conducted. The moral costs of some forms of research are therefore often scrutinized. Some research practices are universally condemned, such as experimentation on human beings without their knowledge or consent. In one of the most egregious examples of this in U.S. history, the U.S. Public Health Service carried out experiments on several hundred African American men infected with syphilis from 1932 to 1972. The outrage from the discovery of this project led to greater regulation of human experimentation. Nonetheless, some religious groups have argued that economic incentives to participate in clinical trials subvert the ethical intentions of these laws. Some religious groups have argued that experimentation on animals, whose consent cannot be obtained, amounts to cruelty. Experiments that are not directly conducted on individuals, such as large-scale

physics experiments carried out at national laboratories, have sometimes drawn concerns that they can create health risks for people living nearby.

The most religiously contentious matters involving scientific research are those experiments that most directly affect human health. Most notable among these are biomedical experiments that use human embryonic stem cells. Embryonic stem cells are cells that have not yet differentiated into use for specific organs or functions; as such, research advocates argue, they have great potential in helping understand the ways in which genes operate and cells differentiate and have led to medical breakthroughs for many different diseases. Embryonic stem cells are derived from human embryos grown to a stage a few days beyond conception (in laboratory conditions). Some religious groups, including some U.S. Catholics and evangelical Protestant groups, have opposed this research because the destruction of the embryo necessary to procure these cells is tantamount to taking a human life. The bioethical question of when life begins is connected to religious positions on the use of stem cells. However, some individuals who are religiously against legal abortion argue that the potential for saving human lives is great enough to warrant the use of stem cells. In 2001, President George W. Bush established a federal policy that restricted research on embryonic stem cells to that which made use of existing stem cell lines, but prohibited the destruction of further embryos. This policy was changed in 2009, when the U.S. government allowed federally funded research on new stem cell lines.

Religion intersects with scientific research in quite a different way when religious belief is the object of scientific study. In recent years, attempts to understand the origins of religious belief have attracted the attention of various scientists. The question of why people are religious is not a new one, and Darwin speculated in his 1871 book *The Descent of Man* that a society that has moral and religious beliefs would be more likely to survive external threats than would an immoral one. In the late twentieth century, evolutionary biologists and psychologists expanded on this study. Philosopher Daniel C. Dennett and others have postulated that human beings have evolved with neurological tendencies to believe in a supernatural power with agency over the world. In the early twenty-first century, U.S. geneticist Dean Hamer argued that he had discovered a “god gene”—a specific genetic combination that makes people inclined to believe in a deity. This research has been highly contentious, not least because the advocates of these kinds of studies of religion often appear to claim that religious belief has nothing to do

with religious truth. By implication (and explicitly in some of their works), proving that religious belief has evolutionary origins would show the fallacy of antievolutionist religion and might show that all religion is a delusion.

Conclusion

There are many different sciences and many different religions in the United States. Given this diversity, it is unsurprising that particular scientific and religious ideas have converged at times over U.S. history. More important, science and religion in the United States has been a history of people and various communities, interacting with one another and invoking religious or scientific ideas as a means to interact. The relationship with religion and science is not a sequence of disconnected events, but an interconnected historical narrative that continues to shape personal and social life, influencing politics, culture, foreign policy, human well-being,

See also *Abortion; Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Atlantic World; Bioethics; Deism; Education: Court Cases; Environment and Ecology* entries; *Evolution, Creation Science, and Intelligent Design; Great Awakening(s); Healing; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Nature and Nature Religion; Progressivism; Transcendentalism.*

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Scientology

The Church of Scientology International (CSI) is a new religious movement born in the United States in the mid-twentieth century. Scientology developed out of the investigations of its founder, L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986), into the nature and workings of the human mind. Hubbard’s system started out as a form of therapy but was quickly transformed into a religion, with its own mythology, doctrines, and rituals. Despite the church’s protestations and efforts to defend itself legally and in the court of public opinion, a varied group of vocal critics continues to challenge its legitimacy in the media and in the courts. From its origins, the Church of Scientology has been enmeshed in controversy, even as it has continued to recruit more members and extend its mission throughout the world.

History

Hubbard first outlined his findings in 1948 in a privately circulated paper, “Dianetics: The Original Thesis.” Literally “through mind” (from the Greek), “Dianetics” for Hubbard referred both to a theory of how the human mind works and a therapeutic program for maximizing its potential. In 1950 he published his reflections in book form as *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. Hubbard believed he had developed the most accurate diagnosis yet of the human condition and that his system of Dianetics offered a therapy that would enable individuals to reach their full potential. *Dianetics* became a best-seller a month after its publication and Hubbard’s teachings gained enthusiastic advocates who worked to put his prescriptions for mental health into practice. But despite Hubbard’s intensive efforts, neither the American Medical Association nor the American Psychiatric Association gave the new therapeutic system its formal stamp of approval. Around the same time as that professional rejection, practitioners of Dianetics began to report unanticipated spiritual experiences, including the

realizations that they had lived past lives. Some of Dianetics’ early partisans rejected such claims as scientifically impossible and drifted away, but Hubbard took such reports seriously and endeavored to incorporate them into his developing system of thought. By 1952, he had formed the Hubbard Association of Scientologists, and by 1954 some of Hubbard’s followers in Los Angeles had formed the first Church of Scientology.

Hubbard remained actively involved in the administration of CSI’s affairs through the early 1960s, but in 1966 he resigned from the offices he held to concentrate on his own research and writing. Over the next decade and a half, he continued to lessen his direct participation in the affairs of the church. By 1980 he had totally withdrawn into isolation. After his death in 1986, the church took a number of steps to preserve the legacy of his teaching unaltered. For example, CSI views Hubbard’s writings as authoritative “scripture” and has taken steps to issue them in official editions; in addition, they have attempted to preserve them for eternity by engraving them on steel plates, which are stored in titanium containers underground in New Mexico.

Some of the current publications of the church, such as *Scientology 0–8: The Book of Basics* and *What Is Scientology?*, combine excerpts from a variety of Hubbard’s works into comprehensive guides to the religion. Another indication of the church’s faithfulness to Hubbard’s teachings is that sermons at Sunday services are read verbatim from a collection of his pronouncements, *The Background, Ministry, Ceremonies, and Sermons of the Scientology Religion*. One organization within the church, the Religious Technology Center, is charged with maintaining the copyrights over Hubbard’s works on Dianetics and Scientology and with maintaining the orthodox interpretation and use of them. For CSI, the canon of authoritative works on Scientology is definitively closed. Hubbard’s teachings are the last word.

The church has an extremely low tolerance for sectarianism or even dissent and vigorously attempts through a variety of formal and informal means to maintain orthodoxy. One of the reasons for that attitude is Hubbard’s unwavering conviction that when Scientology’s principles are properly applied by a person who really wants to change, they will always be successful. Consequently, Scientology’s “tech” is viewed as infallible, and any failure is traced to misunderstanding or misapplication of it. The care with which Scientologists are supposed to treat Hubbard’s teachings is conveyed in an “important note” that prefaces the official editions of his works and urges the reader to make sure to

understand every word of the text as fully as possible before proceeding to the next.

Since its founding, the Church of Scientology has experienced extraordinary growth in membership—so much so that it claims to be the world’s fastest growing religion. The church claims more than 8 million members throughout the world, but critics contend that the actual number may be as low as 50,000. Because Scientology provides services to most participants for a fee, however, “membership” can have a wide range of meanings. But the growth in the number of people who have participated in Scientology since its origins, and the substantial influx of donations that has come with it, has enabled the church to develop, extend, and sustain a complex array of bureaucratic structures that support the church’s mission. The rapid rise and the practices of the Church of Scientology, however, have earned it the enmity of critics and embroiled it in controversies with individuals, families, organized groups of opponents, and even governments across the world. Both internationally and in the United States, the Church of Scientology remains one of the most, if not the most, controversial new religious movements of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Nowhere is that controversy more evident than in the spirited, and often intemperate and questionably grounded, exchanges on many sites on the Internet. For its part, the church has never been reluctant to protect its own interests and has been both vigilant and energetic in responding to what it sees as illegitimate deviation and dissent from within and unfounded criticism from outside. Strenuous efforts to ensure orthodoxy within the church are undertaken by the church’s “Rehabilitation Project Force” (RPF), which addresses theological or ethical lapses by enforcing an extensive daily regimen of study of Scientological principles and work for the church. Some outsiders have sharply criticized the RPF as a coercive attempt at brainwashing, but the church sees it as administering appropriate penitential discipline. CSI has also forcefully engaged with its external opponents, taking on representatives of the secular anti-cult and the religious counter-cult movements in a number of forums. CSI’s greatest success may have been its contribution to the 1996 bankrupting of the old Cult Awareness Network, the flagship organization of the anti-cult movement. CSI continues to respond to what it sees as biased and inaccurate treatments of Scientology and other “new religious movements” through, for example, the publication of essays in its *Freedom* magazine.

Founder

Although critics allege that some of the more colorful elements of Hubbard’s biography cannot be corroborated independently from church publications and CSI has yet to publish an official biography of the founder, the general outline of Hubbard’s life can be sketched. Born in Tilden, Nebraska, in 1911, Lafayette Ron Hubbard moved with his family to Montana, where he claimed to have become a blood brother in the local Blackfoot tribe when he was six. As a teenager, Hubbard embarked on summers of travel that took him to Hawaii, Japan, China, the Philippines, and Guam. He also later traveled to the Caribbean for a scientific expedition. Hubbard enrolled at George Washington University in 1930 but he married in 1933 and never finished his degree. As a young adult Hubbard dedicated himself to writing fiction in a variety of genres, but he was most successful as a writer of science fiction. His stories and novels have continued to find an audience, and in 2000 John Travolta, one of the many prominent celebrity practitioners of Scientology, starred in a film version of Hubbard’s *Battlefield Earth*. Hubbard’s career as an author was interrupted by his service as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy during World War II. During his hospitalization toward the end of the war, he focused his attention on figuring out the nature of the human mind. The publication of *Dianetics* followed soon after. Although he did return to writing science fiction in the early 1980s, after the publication of *Dianetics* Hubbard focused on the elaboration of his system of thought, refining the practices of Scientology, and developing the organizational framework of the church.

Scientists continue to revere Hubbard as the person who discovered the principles by which all human beings could achieve their full potential. The Scientology centers throughout the world memorialize Hubbard’s impact as a thinker by displaying replicas of his office. After Hubbard’s death in 1986, CSI handled the transition from its charismatic founder to a second generation of leadership with dispatch and decisiveness. The church announced that no one would succeed Hubbard as a spiritual teacher and that his works alone, constituting the canonical scripture of the church, would guide Scientologists. David Miscavige became Hubbard’s administrative successor when he was appointed chairman of the board of the Religious Technology Center (RTC) in 1987, a position he held into the early twenty-first century. The church views the RTC as the ultimate authority within Scientology.

Key Concepts

Hubbard asserted that the fundamental goal of human existence was survival, but the drive to survive could become complicated by the actions of the human mind. In addition to the “analytical mind,” Hubbard identified a “reactive” and a “somatic” mind, though he focused on the first two. Hubbard’s writings show an indebtedness to Freud, but he focused his attention on the reactive mind, which he saw as a storehouse of images that when recalled could impair an individual’s ability to function. Hubbard called those potentially inhibitory images “engrams” and argued that they could be reactivated when someone perceived elements of the whole image of which they were a part. Repeated reactivation of the engrams would be psychologically damaging and would hinder the individual’s quest for survival.

To survive, Hubbard argued, humans need to recognize their true nature. The reports of past lives made by many of the early practitioners of Dianetics convinced Hubbard of some fundamental propositions about human nature. He concluded that humans are immortal spiritual beings, whose experiences extend well beyond a single lifetime and whose capabilities are unlimited even when they are not currently realized. Hubbard called the spiritual nature of humans the “thetan,” from the Greek letter “theta,” which he took to mean thought or life. Church literature sums up this idea by asserting that humans have been misled by the notion that they *have* souls, when really they *are* spiritual beings who have minds and bodies.

The goal of Hubbard’s “modern science of mental health” was to free the individual from the negative impact of the engrams stored in the reactive mind. Human life, from that perspective, should be the quest to recover the full potential of the thetan, our true identity. Over time and multiple incarnations, thetans have lost track of who they really are and have come to see themselves as merely human, enmeshed in the universe of matter, energy, space, and time (MEST). By providing a conceptual apparatus for understanding that falls into MEST and by detailing the practices by which individuals can lift themselves out of MEST, Scientology offers practitioners the possibilities of an improved existence and a better world. From his insights into the human condition, Hubbard developed the distinctive vocabulary that is still used by the Church of Scientology. For the individual, the initial goal of Scientological practice is to become “clear” of the negative effects of stored engrams. Once cleared, individuals can proceed

along Scientology’s “Bridge to Total Freedom” through increasing levels of mastery over their own existence. Overall, the process of moving toward liberation and self-realization involves extensive training in Scientology’s concepts and practices and the ritual of auditing.

Key Practices

In Scientology, “training” encompasses everything from the most basic courses in Scientology, to preparations to become an auditor, to investigation of the most advanced levels of Hubbard’s teaching. All of the training emphasizes that Scientology is a practical system for improving one’s life and discovering one’s true identity. Gradual disclosure of the elaborate mythology that recounts how the race of thetans originally fell into the universe of MEST accompanies the individual’s progress along the Bridge to Total Freedom. The church has endeavored to keep the release of information about that mythology restricted to those who have achieved the appropriate level of spiritual progress, but opponents of the church, including disaffected former members, have released some of that material on the Internet, provoking concerted efforts by the church to regain control of its secret teachings.

Although ministers of the Church of Scientology do conduct weekly Sunday services and officiate at major life cycle rituals, the process of auditing is Scientology’s central ritual. Auditing plays a fundamental role in the lives of members, and it shows how Scientology stands at the intersection of therapy and religion. In many ways an auditing session resembles therapeutic counseling, and the church describes it as a form of “spiritual counseling” administered by a Scientology minister to a parishioner. The trained practitioner guides the person being audited toward the recognition of what is inhibiting his or her psychological functioning. During a session, the person being audited holds onto two electrodes connected to a central console that measures changes in the electrical current passing through the electrodes while providing responses to a series of questions posed by the auditor. The “e-meter” or “Hubbard Electrometer” measures galvanic skin response, which the auditor uses as a guide to determine how the individual being audited may be blocked. CSI describes the e-meter as “a religious artifact used in the Church confessional,” a description that was developed at least partly as a response to charges made by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in the 1960s that the church was using the e-meter to practice medicine without a license. Scientology now makes it clear that the e-meter, by itself,

accomplishes nothing and that it serves simply as a guide that enables the trained minister to help the subject discern the stored images or engrams that block psychological health and create spiritual distress.

A simple example of the use of the e-meter is Scientology's "pinch test." When the person holding the e-meter is pinched, the needle on the console registers a change. As the auditor repeatedly directs the person being audited to recall the moment of the pinch, the e-meter registers diminishing responses. The auditor then interprets the changes recorded by the e-meter as the progressive lessening of the psychological impact of the pinch. The negative impact of the experience has been recalled, brought to the surface, and recognized for what it is, and its effects dissipated from the mind of the person being audited.

The auditing process is designed to help individuals reach the status of "clear," in which the effects of the reactive mind are eradicated. Becoming clear is a substantial first step along the way to becoming an "operating thetan" (OT). At the levels beyond clear the individual undertakes "solo auditing," without the guidance of a Scientology minister, in the pursuit of complete spiritual freedom. Over the years, the church has identified and released information about some fifteen OT levels, laying out for individuals an extended path toward self-perfection. The church leaves no doubt that progress across the Bridge to Total Freedom involves prolonged and substantial hard work that requires intense personal dedication and monetary commitment. That the church requires payment for services rendered has led some critics to doubt its status as a religion, even to the point of depicting Scientology's claim to be a religion simply as a cover-up for a money-making scheme. Since 1993, however, the church has enjoyed tax-exempt status in the United States, on the basis of a decree from the Internal Revenue Service that ended a contentious relationship that spanned the decades since the founding of the church. CSI enjoys similar formal recognition in many other countries, although nowhere does that prevent the church's critics from continuing to question its legitimacy and good faith.

Organization

The early practitioners of Dianetics participated in small, ad hoc groups that were not part of any overarching organization. Hubbard quickly realized how little control that gave him over the development of his therapeutic system. His formation of the Hubbard Association of Scientologists in 1952 marked the beginning of his efforts to establish an

institutional structure that would promote uniformity of thought and practice among Scientologists. CSI today consists of an array of interlinked organizations devoted to Scientology's mission of "clearing" the entire planet to usher in "a civilization without insanity, without criminals and without war," in which individuals can rise to their full potential. The CSI, established in 1981, is the institutional structure that brings together all of Scientology's individual churches and other organizations. Within CSI, the RTC endeavors to ensure the uniform expression and application of Hubbard's spiritual technology, or "tech." The Church of Spiritual Technology, founded in 1982, is responsible for the preservation of Hubbard's works. Author Services Inc. is focused on Hubbard's fiction. CSI also sponsors a number of Celebrity Centers that serve both ordinary members and celebrities, such as Tom Cruise, John Travolta, Chick Corea, Kelly Preston, and Kirstie Alley, who are practicing Scientologists. The church also publishes the glossy *Celebrity* magazine, which features testimonials from well-known Scientologists. Their comments directly echo Hubbard's claim that when applied correctly the principles of Scientology simply "work." The celebrity participants in Scientology give CSI prominence in popular news and entertainment media, but they draw both positive and negative coverage. Their contribution to attracting new practitioners to Scientology is difficult to ascertain.

Perhaps the most distinctive organization within CSI is the Sea Organization. The "Sea Org" traces its origins to a time from the late 1960s to the early 1970s when Hubbard and the top officials of Scientology based their operations on a small group of ships. The Sea Org returned to shore in 1975 and set up headquarters in Clearwater, Florida. It now consists of those members of the Church of Scientology who choose to devote their lives completely to the mission of the church. To signal their commitment they sign a billion-year contract that commits them to the church through their future lives. In contrast to lay practitioners of Scientology who may dip into and out of their training and auditing according to their own schedules and desires, the members of the Sea Org most resemble a religious order within the church. Numbering between five and ten thousand in the early twenty-first century, they are the church's most dedicated members.

Also included under the umbrella of CSI, particularly under its Association for Better Living and Education, are various social welfare organizations that apply Hubbard's tech to specific problems. For example, Hubbard's early rejection by the medical and psychiatric establishments led to

Scientology's ongoing hostility toward drug-based therapies for psychological maladies. Narconon employs Hubbard's principles, including a focus on nutrition, detoxification, and a variety of "training routines" aimed at social rehabilitation, in a drug-free effort to treat drug addiction. Similarly, Applied Scholastics derives principles from Hubbard's writings to promote study skills and educational achievement. The Way to Happiness Foundation is dedicated to spreading Hubbard's moral code, distilled into twenty-one precepts, throughout the world. Finally, the Citizens Commission on Human Rights, founded in 1969, continues Hubbard's battle against the psychiatric establishment, especially its uses of mood-altering drugs, electroshock therapy, and abusive relationships between psychiatrists and their clients. CSI is thus active on many fronts throughout the world in pursuing Hubbard's vision of a saner and happier world.

Controversies

Scientology's campaign against psychiatry is just one of the areas in which Scientology has been involved in controversy. Since it first identified itself as a religion in 1954, Scientology has consistently had to respond to accusations that it was only masquerading as a religion to reap the tangible benefits, including tax exemption in the United States and social prestige, that come with recognition as a legitimate religion. In response, the church has sought and published—in *Scientology: The Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*, for example—the opinions of a variety of scholars and religious figures who have asserted that it meets the definition of a religion. CSI also publicizes the many expressions of appreciation for its social betterment efforts by individuals, businesses, and government offices. Conversely, the church has responded forcefully to individual members of the anti-cult movement, other public critics, and especially critical former members. Some—such as Bent Corydon, who wrote the fairly representative exposé *L. Ron Hubbard: Messiah or Madman?* in 1992—allege legal action by the church and other forms of intimidation.

One of the most notorious controversies in which the church has been embroiled followed the death of a thirty-six-year-old Scientologist, Lisa McPherson, on December 5, 1995, in Clearwater, Florida, seventeen days after a minor auto accident. Right after the accident, McPherson was taken to the hospital. Because she appeared disoriented but physically unharmed, she was held over for a psychological evaluation. Local officials of the church quickly removed her from the hospital and moved her into the Fort Harrison

hotel, owned by the church. In the following days her condition deteriorated, and she died before receiving medical help. McPherson's death provoked a tangle of litigation and fueled acrimonious indictments against the church both locally and throughout the country. Charges against the church by the county prosecutor were eventually dropped, and Scientology continues to allege that its opponents seized on the incident as an opportunity to discredit the church. A lawsuit brought by McPherson's estate against the Church was eventually settled for an undisclosed amount. The McPherson case remains a primary example of the incendiary emotions that the Church of Scientology can inspire, both against it and on its behalf.

Early Twenty-First-Century Trends

Despite the persistent criticism that it has received, CSI has increased its membership, developed its organizational structure, and extended its activities throughout the United States and all over the world. The church has successfully weathered the transition from leadership by its charismatic founder to a stable second generation. By exercising tight control over the publication and use of Hubbard's teachings, Scientology has maintained a high degree of orthodoxy in its teachings and practices, albeit at the cost of accusations that it employs intimidating and abusive tactics to ensure conformity. There are no indications that CSI will be threatened with substantial schisms over central issues in the near future. Although growth rates are difficult to determine because of the varying degrees of participation by Scientology's clients, from the outside it appears to be a robust and thriving religious organization. For some of its dedicated opponents, that is cause for concern, but for many Scientologists it is another indication that Hubbard's fundamental insights simply continue to "work" in ways that incontrovertibly improve people's lives. Scientology thus is likely to remain a part of the U.S. religious landscape well into the future.

See also *Celebrity Culture; Christian Science; Film; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Idealist Philosophy; Internet; New Religious Movements* entries; *Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Psychology of Religion; Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult.*

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Scriptures: American Texts

The most avid Bible readers on earth, Americans have long sustained a robust market in updated English translations of the sacred text. A few Americans, however, have taken the quest for new versions to a more radical level by daring to improve on more than simply the diction of scripture. Figures as diverse as the nation's third president, Thomas Jefferson, the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith Jr., the Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy, and the woman suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, among others, sought to improve on the Bible's actual ideas. In some cases, these distinctively American versions of scripture drew on Enlightenment standards of rationality, especially the notion that science and reason were replacing the superstitions that had allegedly corrupted Christianity. Other American versions of scripture stemmed from a belief in ongoing revelation, or the idea that God's supernatural communication with humans did not cease in apostolic times. In every case these new scriptures confirmed, for those who accepted them, the founding myth of the United States as a "new order of the ages"—a nation in which new light dawned or ancient wisdom was revealed.

Jefferson's Bible

Like the other founders of the republic, Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) was steeped in the idiom and assumptions of the

Age of Reason. Although he remained outwardly an Anglican his entire life, he was also deeply influenced by the critiques of traditional religion by Deists such as John Toland, who in *Christianity Not Mysterious* (1696) insisted that true Christianity could not require belief either in mysteries or in things contrary to human reason. For centuries, Toland wrote, priests and theologians had shrouded the plain message of the gospel with "Litigious Disputes and vain Subtilties," enthroning themselves as the sole interpreters of the faith. True religion instead was characterized by simplicity—the "noblest Ornament of the Truth." Similarly, Jefferson maintained that the "incomprehensible jargon" of the theologians, as he put it in an 1821 letter to the former secretary of state Timothy Pickering, had to be swept away before Jesus' straightforward ethical teachings could shine through.

For Jefferson, unlearning doctrinal corruptions meant quite literally cutting them out of the Bible. With scissors in hand, Jefferson went to work on a pair of King James New Testaments (he needed twin copies so he could work with both sides of the printed page), along with editions in Greek, Latin, and French. In addition to excising miracle stories, including the Resurrection and apocalyptic material, he eliminated the letters of Paul, whom he regarded as the "first corrupter of the doctrines of Jesus," as he wrote in an 1820 letter to his former secretary William Short, with his abstruse theology of justification and election. When Jefferson pasted the remaining portions in a notebook, he was left with a bible depicting Jesus not as the divine savior of the elect but as a wise teacher who conveyed moral lessons in parables. Jefferson, like modern-day scholars of the historical Jesus, believed that he had found the gold nugget of reliable material buried in the dross of scripture. His version of Holy Writ was a book of teachings *by* Jesus, not *about* him. Jefferson blamed what he called "priestcraft" for turning Christianity into a supernatural religion focused on the resurrected Christ. The Deist God of Jefferson's bible does not violate his own natural laws: the book ends with Jesus' body being laid in the tomb.

Jefferson apparently did not complete his bible, which he titled "The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth," until his retirement in 1819 or 1820, less than a decade before his death in 1826. He kept the text as a closely guarded secret. In the election of 1800, he had endured vilification as an atheist and a French infidel, owing partly to his five years as U.S. minister to France, and he had no desire to reawaken his critics. Not until 1904 did Jefferson's bible appear in the first of several printed editions. Since then, scholars have come to

recognize it as one of the most intriguing texts of the American Enlightenment.

Joseph Smith's Translation

About the time Jefferson was completing his bible, fourteen-year-old Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–1844) was receiving the first of a series of visions that would eventually lead to the publication of the *Book of Mormon* in 1830. The story of Mormonism's epochal text was described by Joseph Smith. The angel Moroni led Smith to a hillside near his home in Palmyra, New York, where he found a trove of writings engraved on gold plates. With the miraculous help of two seer stones, the Urim and Thummim, the unlettered Smith translated the writings, which became the *Book of Mormon*, an account of the ancient inhabitants of America and of the revelations given to them by Christ himself. Because Mormons believe in ongoing revelation, they do not reject the Bible but regard the *Book of Mormon* as a continuation of the story. As the prophet Nephi reports the word of the Lord in the *Book of Mormon*, "Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written" (2 Nephi 29:10).

Soon after the *Book of Mormon*'s publication, however, the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith that the inherited King James Version of the Bible was incomplete or erroneous at points and that Smith should revise it. The Joseph Smith Translation, or Inspired Version, as it came to be known, was not a translation in the conventional sense. Smith did not work from scripture's original Hebrew and Greek but proceeded instead by direct inspiration from God. Over the next several years, Smith dictated the textual emendations to scribes: approximately thirteen hundred changes in the Old Testament and twenty-one hundred in the New Testament. Many of these were only slight clarifications, some designed to modernize the language (*saith* to *said* in some cases, or *that* and *which* to *who* in reference to persons). Other changes had doctrinal import and even amplified, sometimes substantially, the original text. The most dramatic instance is in Genesis, to which Smith added a major preface describing the temptation of Moses by Satan and revealing God's creation of multiple worlds. Another addition occurs in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7, where Smith's translation has the disciples interrupting Jesus with questions.

Besides such additions, shorter alterations sprinkled throughout the Bible helped reinforce Latter-day Saints' teachings. For example, Mormon tradition taught that Joseph

Smith, like Abraham (Genesis 17:1), Moses (Deuteronomy 34:10), and other prophets of old, had seen the Lord face to face. Yet the Gospel of John declares, "No man hath seen God, at any time" (John 1:18; identical statement in 1 John 4:12). Smith added the words "except he hath borne record of the Son" in John 1 and "except them who believe" in 1 John 4. Similarly, Smith signaled the Mormon doctrine of degrees of glory in the afterlife, for persons of varying degrees of righteousness, by modifying John 5:29. The King James verse presents an all-or-nothing opposition between the "resurrection of life" and the "resurrection of damnation"; Smith's emended version contrasts the "resurrection of the just" with the "resurrection of the unjust." Another doctrinal change occurs in John 6:44, which in the King James Version reads, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." In keeping with the Mormon emphasis on free will, Smith's translation removes the predestinarian implication, declaring instead, "No man can come unto me, except he doeth the will of my Father who hath sent me."

Historian Richard Bushman, himself a faithful Mormon, has noted that it was "a measure of [Smith's] audacity" that though he was ignorant of ancient languages, "he undertook to improve the most honored and holy book in Western civilization." Smith and his followers were especially sensitive to the charge that he was an imposter and charlatan. Consequently, like Jefferson, Smith made no attempt to publish his entire translation in his lifetime, though some of his emendations or amplifications appeared in other canonical Mormon texts. For example, the Genesis additions became the Book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price, and the revised John 5:29 became Doctrine and Covenants 76:17. After Smith was martyred in 1844, the original manuscripts of his translation remained with a group of his family members who did not follow the majority of the Latter-day Saints to Utah. This minority group, which formed the Reorganized Church (today the Community of Christ) in Independence, Missouri, published the first edition of the new translation in 1867. In more recent times, LDS scholars in Utah, especially Robert J. Matthews, have studied the text of the translation and produced a critical edition. In 1979 the LDS church published an official Mormon edition of the King James Bible that integrated the most significant variants from Smith's translation in footnotes and an appendix.

Mary Baker Eddy's Science and Health

Next to Joseph Smith, the most famous nineteenth-century American to appeal to direct revelation in revising scripture

was Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), the founder of Christian Science. Her fundamental religious discovery after suffering a serious health crisis was the idea that the material world is an illusion. Sickness and death do not truly exist because only mind is real, and it is immortal. Mind is God, and humans are “the full and perfect expression” of the deity. Salvation comes when we understand matter’s unreality, a message that Jesus came to impart. “Atonement,” Eddy explained, “is the exemplification of man’s unity with God.” Eddy elaborated her discovery in what became the bible for her followers, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, first published in 1875. Unlike Smith’s or Jefferson’s versions of scripture, *Science and Health* is more of a commentary—a key to the Bible rather than a full-scale revision. Yet the book at points rewords central biblical passages, unlocking their hidden meaning in much the same way ancient Christian Gnostics elaborated the esoteric significance of Holy Writ.

Like Smith, Eddy paid particular attention to Genesis, seizing on the idea that God created humans, male and female, in his image. She cited the Hebrew plural name for God, *Elohim*, as well as the plural pronouns in “let *us* make man in *our* image” (Genesis 1:26), as evidence that God is a “unity of Life, intelligence, Truth, and Love”—qualities she equated with both male and female characteristics. Humans mirrored these qualities; thus, the “ideal man corresponds to creation, to intelligence, and to Truth,” and the “ideal woman corresponds to Life and to Love.” Applying this idea of complementary gender attributes to the New Testament, Eddy revised the Lord’s Prayer in a way that anticipated feminist-inspired, inclusive-language adaptations of scripture a century later. “Our Father–Mother God, all harmonious, Adorable One,” her version of the prayer begins, “Thy kingdom is come; Thou art ever-present.”

For Eddy, the unlocking of the Bible’s true meaning in *Science and Health* was the next stage in the progressive enlightenment of humankind. The biblical motto she chose for her movement’s newspaper, the *Christian Science Monitor*, bespoke this idea of unfolding revelation: “First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear” (Mark 4:28), which rendering she chose from the American Standard Version of 1901. She regarded herself as merely the instrument of this revelation and recounted how the text of *Science and Health* came to her as an “influx of divine interpretation,” without any forethought on her part. This left her in the position of only gradually coming to understand the full significance of her own text. “I have been learning the higher meaning of this book since writing it,” she commented later in life. The

higher meaning of *Science and Health*, she concluded, was nothing less than a revealed system of Divine Science so sublime that no mortal language could fully capture it.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s Woman’s Bible

In a different way, Eddy’s contemporary Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902) also anticipated what she called the “marriage feast of science and religion” and regarded the *Woman’s Bible* as central to this development. Stanton’s upbringing prepared her for the public life she would lead as a social and religious reformer. Her mother came from a prominent New York family and her father was a member of Congress and a state supreme court justice in Johnstown, New York. Early on she showed a precocious interest in history and religion. Unbeknownst to her father, she studied Greek with a local minister and eventually took second place in a language competition at her school, winning a Greek New Testament as the prize. Her father’s response to her award (“Ah, you should have been a boy!”) bespoke the traditional gender expectations against which she eventually rebelled. In the next phase of her school career, at Miss Willard’s Female Seminary in Troy, New York, Stanton shifted the focus of her rebellion from gender roles to her inherited Calvinism. The precipitating factor, as she recalled, was the hellfire revival preaching of Charles Grandison Finney or more likely his local disciple Nathaniel Beman, historian Kathi Kern concluded. “My [former] religious superstition,” Stanton wrote in her autobiography, *Eighty Years and More* (1898), “gave place to rational ideas based on scientific facts.” Some years later, her perusal of Darwin nudged her further toward agnosticism.

In the course of her intellectual odyssey, she married the antislavery activist Henry Stanton and became a leader in the woman suffrage movement. She came to believe that the Bible, as misinterpreted and misused by male clergy, was the chief impediment to women’s progress. When a joint British–American committee published the Revised Version, the first major new English translation since the King James, in 1881 (New Testament) and 1885 (Old Testament), she was disappointed that it preserved the status quo on key passages pertaining to women. In 1886 she attempted unsuccessfully to form a committee of women to undertake their own revision. Undeterred by the reluctance of her colleagues, she resumed her efforts a few years later and finally succeeded in enlisting a number of similarly talented women of elite pedigree. Among them was Clara Bewick Colby, one of the first women to graduate from the University of Wisconsin, who

agreed to publish the first installments of the new bible in her liberal suffrage paper, the *Woman's Tribune*. Other members included Olympia Brown, a radical suffragist and the first woman to be ordained a minister in the Universalist Church, and Eva Parker Ingersoll, wife of the famous agnostic. Lest readers of the time miss the connection, the latter appeared on the committee roster as Mrs. Robert Ingersoll—the only woman listed by her husband's name. Yet for all the prominent names among the revisers, Stanton's closest colleague in the suffrage movement, Susan B. Anthony, declined to lend her weight to the project. As she wrote to Stanton, "I don't want my name on that Bible committee—you fight that battle—and leave me to fight the secular, the political fellows."

Ironically, Stanton's committee never met or worked collaboratively, nor did they actually retranslate the scriptures. The *Woman's Bible* instead interspersed select passages of the Bible, printed in double columns in small type, with commentaries, printed in a single column in larger type, written by individual contributors and signed with their initials. Stanton composed the most commentaries. A few of the committee members contributed none. For Stanton the project was the culmination of a life's worth of reflection: she was eighty years old when the first of the bible's two volumes appeared in 1895. The second was published in 1898, and the whole work subsequently appeared in one volume.

Stanton aimed the book at ordinary women who, in her words, "worship the Bible as a kind of fetish." She devoted the greatest length of commentary to Genesis. Influenced by the documentary hypothesis of the eighteenth-century French critic Jean Astruc, she maintained that Genesis actually contains two independently authored accounts of the world's creation—one in which man and woman are created simultaneously (Genesis 1:1–2:3), and another in which woman is created out of a rib taken from man (Genesis 2:4–3:24). The second story includes the Garden of Eden account, in which the serpent tempts Eve to eat of the fruit forbidden by God, and Eve persuades Adam to join her in this transgression. To Stanton the second story clearly smacked of an attempt to portray women as morally feeble and derivative of men: "It is evident that some wily writer, seeing the perfect equality of man and woman in the first chapter, felt it important for the dignity and dominion of man to effect woman's subordination in some way." The first account, on the other hand, was an unsurpassed expression, as Clara Colby put it, of "the highest aspirations and the deepest longings of the human soul" because it taught that "the image of God is the birthright of man, male and female."



Suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton (seated) believed that the Bible was misinterpreted and misused by male clergy and therefore impeded women's progress. She enlisted a number of prominent women and created the *Woman's Bible*, which featured select passages of the Bible as well as commentary written by Stanton and the contributors.

Like Mary Baker Eddy, Stanton identified the Hebrew plural *Elohim* with a Father-Mother deity because, according to Genesis 1:26, male and female humans were created equally in the image of God. "The masculine and feminine elements, exactly equal and balancing each other, are as essential to the maintenance of the equilibrium of the universe as positive and negative electricity," she wrote. Yet successive layers of patriarchy had obscured this primeval recognition of a balanced gender duality. The apostle Paul exacerbated this patriarchy by reiterating the idea, rooted in the second Genesis creation account, that woman was derived from man. A man "is in the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man," Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:7–8. "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man." An anonymous contributor to the

Woman's Bible scoffed at Paul's words: "And yet this is called 'inspired'! . . . No wonder Paul at last was constrained to say: 'We are fools for Christ's sake.'"

America's New Bibles: Reception and Significance

To question the divine inspiration of even a portion of the Bible has always been a sure recipe for controversy in American culture, and the reception of the *Woman's Bible* is a case in point. Even before the second volume of the work appeared, women in the more traditionally Christian wing of the suffrage movement were calling for a formal censure of the book. When the National American Woman Suffrage Association took up the issue in January 1896, Stanton, the group's president (a largely honorary office), was absent because of declining health. Her friend Susan B. Anthony addressed the assembly with an impassioned plea to embrace freedom of thought rather than censorship. The delegates rebuffed her appeal and censured the *Woman's Bible* by a vote of 53–41. Stanton's alienation of evangelicals, as Kathi Kern has observed, caused her posthumous reputation as a crusader for women's rights to be eclipsed by that of Anthony, who became the subject of a dollar coin issued by the U.S. Mint in 1979. Yet among feminist biblical critics, Stanton has more recently gained honor—not primarily for her scholarship (she herself admitted that no contributors to the *Woman's Bible* were trained biblical specialists) but for blazing a trail for later feminist interpreters and theologians. The collaborative *Women's Bible Commentary* (1992), edited by Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe, pays tribute to Stanton's pioneering attempt to read the Bible self-consciously as a woman.

Other distinctively American bibles fared little better than the *Woman's Bible* in their initial reception. No less of a critic than Mark Twain wrote an entire book skewering Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health*. He ridiculed her claim that God was the real author of the work and poked fun at her tight control over the book's copyright. "She copyrights everything," Twain quipped. "If she should say, 'Good morning; how do you do?' she would copyright it; for she is a careful person, and knows the value of small things." Twain was briefer, but equally merciless, in lampooning the alleged pretensions of Joseph Smith. Twain found particularly comic Smith's use of King James idiom in the *Book of Mormon* (a text he once derided as "chloroform in print"). "'And it came to pass' was his pet," Twain observed in *Roughing It* (1872). "If he had left that out, his Bible would have been only a pamphlet."

Yet in a nation in which the Bible was both the great religious charter and a household talisman, nothing could be more American than scripturalizing anew as a means of reclaiming the Bible's power. Historian Stephen J. Stein has commented on the process of scripturalizing that took place within America's diverse religious contexts. Sometimes this phenomenon took the form of a canon within the canon, as when Jefferson isolated Jesus' parables and moral teachings as the Bible's only authoritative writings. Other times scripturalizing happened by way of translation, including Joseph Smith's translation by direct inspiration, or commentary, as in the writings by Eddy and Stanton. The end product in each case was a new authoritative text that mimicked the Bible in functioning as Holy Writ for particular individuals or communities.

Indeed, the authors of new scriptures often appealed selectively to the King James Bible for legitimation, as when Joseph Smith identified the "book that is sealed" of Isaiah 29:11 as a prophecy of the *Book of Mormon* (2 Nephi 27:7). Similarly, particular biblical verses could be seen as containing the golden kernel of ideas that were later fully developed in new scriptural texts. This accounts for Eddy and Stanton's interest in biblical hints of gender duality in the godhead, a fascination shared by earlier figures, such as the Shaker leader Philemon Stewart. His own American bible, *A Holy, Sacred and Divine Roll and Book; from the Lord God of Heaven, to the Inhabitants of Earth* (1843), never gained the fame of *Science and Health* or the *Woman's Bible*, but at key points relied on similar logic. If God created male and female equally in his image, Stewart reasoned, then the incarnate Christ (the new Adam) must have come in male and female forms: Jesus and Mother Ann Lee, the Shaker founder.

Thus was scripture ever reinvented in the marketplace of American sects. For the apostles of new versions, the disclosure of revised words of divine wisdom heralded the millennium, whether conceived as the coming of God's kingdom or the advent of scientific progress. The biblical Apocalypse foretold as much. "Behold, I make all things new," says the lamb upon the throne (Revelation 21:5). These words aptly describe the scripturalizing tendency that has long animated American religious culture.

See also *Bible: Interpretation of*; *Book of Mormon*; *Christian Science*; *Deism*; *Enlightenment*; *Feminism*; *Latter-day Saints*; *Qur'an*; *Shakers*; *Torah*; *Women: Evangelical*.

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Seeker Churches

Seeker churches focus on people outside the faith who are seeking God. Most are evangelical Protestant churches, and they target what sociologist Wade Clark Roof calls a generation of seekers—unaffiliated individuals of any faith or denominational background who are searching for spiritual fulfillment.

The greatest common value among seeker churches is a desire to remove social barriers that seem confusing or unwelcoming for newcomers. This approach affects everything from greeters to signage, from music to preaching. The intended outcome is an environment that is inviting, physically comfortable, understandable, and approachable by those who have spiritual hunger but hesitancy toward church. A seeker emphasis can involve church architecture, as some facilities are designed to be neutral and familiar rather than to look like churches. They may intentionally avoid crosses, stained glass windows, pews, hymnals, and other Christian symbolism found in traditional churches.

Seeker churches can be any size, but they tend to be larger. Most are tied to a denomination, but they downplay it. Instead they tend to brand themselves with some variation of “not your typical church.” Generally they want first-time worshipers to be pleasantly surprised by an atmosphere of friendliness and joy and by teaching that is practical and relevant to their spiritual needs.

Seeker churches often classify themselves along a spectrum of seeker driven, seeker centered, seeker oriented, seeker sensitive or seeker friendly. Each of these phrases shows the degree to which a church has shaped its format, especially the worship service, with seekers in mind.

According to Scott Thumma and Dave Travis in *Beyond Megachurch Myths*, large seeker churches represent a suburban and exurban baby boomer cultural style. They almost always contain higher percentages of younger people than of older persons. Large seeker churches were founded during, or grew rapidly in, the 1980s and early 1990s. They are less likely to use choirs, organs, or pianos in worship and instead to have a live band, projected song lyrics with multimedia, image magnification, occasional dramatic sketches, and teaching that applies the Bible to everyday issues, told in a style of personal authenticity.

History

Robert H. Schuller, Bill Hybels, and Rick Warren are widely viewed as the originators of the contemporary seeker church model. In 1955, Robert H. Schuller (1926–), age 28 at the time, was sent by his denomination to start a mission church in Orange County, California. Unable to rent a suitable meeting place, he began conducting worship services in the Orange Drive-In Theater. To attract people, he placed newspaper advertisements urging people to “come as you are in the family car” for “an exciting new church.” He also canvassed the local community, ringing doorbells (3,000 in the first year), introducing himself as a new minister in town, and asking those who indicated they were not active in a local church what would attract them to a church. He used their responses to develop various church programs designed to meet these needs. He named his congregation Garden Grove Community Church and later renamed it the Crystal Cathedral. Neither referenced his Reformed Church in America denomination, an unusual decision for that era. He explains in *Your Church Has Real Possibilities* that his mission was to reach the unchurched and that he didn't think the term *Reformed* would appeal to them.

In these ways, Schuller pioneered the use of marketing techniques to reach the unchurched. He was among the first to replace a denominational church name with “community church,” rename his sermons as messages, use nontraditional settings for church worship (in his case, a drive-in theater), conduct door-to-door research that asked, “Why don’t you go to church?,” train other pastors in how to reach unchurched people by launching his Institute for Successful Church Leaders in 1969, and televise a weekly church service, beginning *The Hour of Power* in 1970.

Interestingly, the church does not use the term *seeker* in its Web site and literature. Its mission is “to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.” Weekly attendance has never exceeded 5,000, but the television audience is calculated in hundreds of thousands.

In 1971, Bill Hybels (1951–), a youth pastor in Park Ridge, Illinois, started a youth outreach program called Son City. Attendance grew dramatically to more than 1,000. Hybels and other leaders began to dream of forming a new church designed to reach adults as well. Following Schuller’s model, they surveyed the community to find out why people didn’t go to church. Common answers included “Church is boring,” “They’re always asking for money,” and “I don’t like being preached down to.”

These answers shaped the group’s approach to the new church that began in 1975 when Hybels was age 24. Meeting in a Palatine movie theater named Willow Creek, services featured contemporary music and media, such as short film clips and drama to illustrate the teaching. Within two years Willow Creek Community Church had grown to 2,000 in attendance. In 1981 the church moved to its current location in South Barrington, which now includes a 7,200-seat sanctuary opened in 2004 and four regional campuses opened between 2001 and 2006. Total weekly attendance for all services and all campuses averaged more than 20,000 in 2009. The church is nondenominational, although Hybels grew up in the Christian Reformed Church.

Willow Creek was the first church to popularize the term *seeker* to describe its target audience and *seeker-driven* to describe its methodology. According to Hybels and his wife Lynne, “We describe Willow as being a safe place where seekers can hear the very dangerous, life-changing message of Jesus Christ. It’s safe because we have tried to eliminate the artificial barriers that discourage people from focusing on the central message of the Gospel. We want only one thing to be offensive at Willow Creek: the cross

of Christ” (Hybels and Hybels, 2006). Willow Creek’s mission is “to turn irreligious people into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.”

Willow Creek also followed Schuller’s model of training other church leaders. By 2009 annual conference attendance was more than 100,000, including satellite uplink sites, plus very large sales numbers for sermons and books.

In 1980, California native and recent seminary graduate Rick Warren (1954–), then age 25, relocated to Orange County, California, invited by his Southern Baptist denomination to start a new church there. Following Schuller’s example, he knocked on doors to ask unchurched people what kind of church they would be willing to attend. After a communitywide mailing of 15,000, the church launched with 205 people present. Again following Schuller’s example, Warren avoided a denominational label in the church’s name, first calling it Saddleback Community Church, and then later Saddleback Church.

The church grew year after year, with Warren’s teaching emphasis calling for different levels of commitment, inviting people to move from the community (occasional attenders), to the crowd (regular attenders), to the congregation (actual members), to the committed (those in small groups and personal Bible study), and finally to the core (lay ministers). Warren described this model as being seeker-sensitive. By 2009 the church had a 3,200-seat sanctuary, five off-site campuses—the first of which began in 2006—and a total weekly attendance of more than 20,000 for all services and campuses combined. An estimated one in ten churches in the United States have used Saddleback-related materials and thereby been influenced to some degree by Saddleback’s seeker-sensitive methodology.

Warren credits business leader Peter Drucker, a leading management theory educator and author, as one of his mentors in reaching outsiders. The long-term Drucker-Warren relationship illustrates how seeker churches are strongly influenced by corporate business practices and values.

Current Status

According to a 2009 internal study by Dallas-based Leadership Network, which has closely monitored the growth of the megachurch movement for twenty-five years, only 10 percent of the 1,400 U.S. megachurches describe themselves as seeker churches, a percentage that was higher in previous years. Megachurches are more likely to describe their approach more generally as “contemporary Christian worship.” Many smaller churches with a denominational

label in their name added “seeker services” in the 1990s and 2000s, but toward the latter part of that era many churches’ approach has likewise moved to a more generic contemporary Christian worship.

The seeker approach has modified itself as U.S. culture has changed. In the early days seekers seemed to want total anonymity, so some churches structured their services almost as spectator events. In the mid-1990s and beyond many seeker churches moved to an approach that involved participation from the congregation. Likewise many seeker churches have modified their formats as newer generations showed increasing wariness of anything that felt slick or contained spin. These churches also made changes as seekers have shown a more ready acceptance of spirituality in day-to-day life.

In 2007 Willow Creek made a major shift in its programming approach that resulted from a self-study project called Reveal. The working assumption had been that church activities create participation that in turn produces disciples. The research indicated that seekers were being reached effectively but the church’s activities did not carry them well beyond a certain point of spiritual development. The study indicated that small groups, active service, and in-depth Bible application were the most powerful catalysts for ongoing spiritual growth, and the church has adjusted its assimilation model accordingly.

Critical Assessment

Sociologist Kimon Howland Sargeant hypothesizes that the greatest weakness of the seeker church movement may be that it relies on a consumerist methodology and therapeutic understanding of religious participation rather than on religious purpose to guide the movement. The end result, according to Sargeant, may be that seeker churches gain more followers, but they are less committed to the spiritual content of Christianity. In turn, this may lead to a kind of secularizing cultural production that harms the spiritual trajectory of such churches.

The strongest criticisms of the seeker church approach have been from within Christianity. The predominant critique is that it’s a watered-down faith and a psychological feel-good gospel. Evangelical pastor John MacArthur, also a widely published author, calls it candy-coating the gospel and entertainment-oriented pragmatism. He also says the seeker approach redefines the church in cultural terms, determining its content from marketing studies of what supposed customers want to hear. Other criticisms have surrounded theological issues, such as Schuller’s controversial

books about self-esteem. Many who oppose his approach have associated his unusual doctrines with his model of seeker church.

At seeker churches such as Willow Creek, Bill Hybels insists that their sole authority is the will of God as expressed in the scriptures. Yet outside observers such as Sargeant, noting Marshall McLuhan’s insight that the “medium is the message,” contend that the form of the seeker church as a shopping mall where people go primarily to meet their own needs may have more influence in the long run on church attendees than will the theological intentions of the pastors. The coming years will decide whether the seeker churches’ accommodation to culture leads to a therapeutic emphasis and a religion of consumerism.

See also *Congregations; Emerging Church Movement; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Fundamentalism: Contemporary; House Church Movement; Independent Bible and Community Churches; Megachurches; Ministry, Professional; Polity; Unaffiliated.*

Warren Bird

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Serpent Handlers

Serpent handlers emerged out of the Appalachian Holiness tradition when it joined with the classic Pentecostal tradition that sought biblical justification for evidence of baptism of the Holy Spirit. Their foundational text, Mark 16:17–18, includes not only the imperative to speak in new tongues (glossolalia) but to take up serpents as well. James Kelhoffer (2000) has demonstrated that this longer ending of the gospel of Mark was written to advance the early Christian claim that like other competing religious groups, Christians also had the power to handle serpents. No persuasive evidence exists, however, that early Christians actually practiced taking up serpents. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that newly emerging groups of Pentecostals in the Appalachian region began the practice. Jimmy Morrow, a serpent handling pastor and lay Appalachian historian, argues that serpent handling likely had several independent origins, as different believers began to practice all five signs given in Mark 16:17–18. Scholars agree, however, that if there is a St. Paul of serpent handling it is George Went Hensley.

In the first decade of the nineteenth century Hensley gained notoriety for the practice, modeling the handling of serpents as a Church of God preacher across the southeastern Appalachian states.

Early Support for Serpent Handling

The Church of God and the Church of God of Prophecy were among the strongest Pentecostal groups that supported serpent handling early on. They became identified as sign following believers based on their commitment to the signs specified in Mark 16:17–18. Until as late as 1943 articles that supported serpent handling appeared in the *Evangel*, an official publication of the Church of God; however, as the practice increased, believers began to get bitten and documented cases of maiming and death eventually came to light. In the face of these unpleasant realities, the emerging Pentecostal denominations that had supported the practice reversed course and gradually began to denounce it.

In what scholars call renegade churches of God, the practice continues in the early twenty-first century. These

churches are generally small, often with only fifteen to twenty-five members, and typically have the Church of God as part of their name, such as the pastor Jimmy Morrow's Edwina Church of God in Jesus' Name. They are scattered primarily across Appalachia, have no formal accounting as to their exact number or membership totals, and today likely number fewer than a hundred in all of Appalachia. Other serpent handling churches, however, have been identified as far north as Canada and on both coasts of the United States. Many churches are hard to locate because they protect themselves from laws that ban the practice in most of the states where handlers have been active. West Virginia is the only Appalachian state that has never had a law prohibiting serpent handling.

When the Spirit Maims and Kills

Believers handle a variety of poisonous serpents indigenous to the Appalachian region. Water moccasins and a variety of copperheads and rattlesnakes are most common. Handlers also trade and acquire other exotic poisonous serpents, however, such as cobras and coral snakes.

Until recently scientific knowledge about the probability of serpent bites when individuals voluntarily take up serpents has been scant. The probability of a bite, however, has recently been demonstrated to be a simple function of the frequency of handling. As the ritual became established, more handlers were therefore bitten. Likewise, churches that have more handlers, as well as handlers within churches who handle more frequently, increase the probability of bites. Individuals handle on the basis of faith alone or, more commonly, when they sense an anointing to handle. Depending on the type of serpent and the amount of venom injected, individuals can become maimed or die. Ninety deaths from serpent bites since the first documented fatality of Jim W. Reece in Alabama reported by the Church of God in the *Evangel* in 1922 were documented in a single study. The same study, however, also suggests that deaths before this that went unreported are likely. After surviving many bites, George Went Hensley died from one in Florida in 1955. His death was ruled a suicide.

The renegade Churches of God that continue the practice have developed a variety of religious interpretations for the failure to handle successfully. Most handlers simply accept that bites are God's will and that bites and even death can be an assurance of salvation, as long as one has handled in obedience to God. Handlers who are bitten may seek medical attention if they desire, but typically rely on prayer and trust that God's



Serpent handlers emerged from the Appalachian Holiness tradition when it joined with the classic Pentecostal tradition. The textual foundation for the practice is a contemporary application of a statement near the closing of the Gospel of Mark: [Jesus] said to them, "These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons, they will speak new languages. They will pick up serpents (with their hands), and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not harm them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (Mark 16:17-18. New American Bible).

will shall be done. Many powerful serpent handling families have children or grandchildren who continue the practice that killed their parent or grandparent. Those who continue to handle note that the Gospel of Mark says that they shall take up serpents, not that they shall not be bitten. Most churches have members who have been bitten and maimed. In one study serpent handling families told their own stories, including their reactions to bites that maimed or killed family members.

Early in the tradition, children were allowed to handle serpents. Although no death of a child from a serpent bite has been documented, several children did suffer serious bites and received wide publicity in the press and nationally distributed magazines. Today children are prohibited from handling. Handlers must be at some age of consent, usually eighteen years old. The point is largely moot, however, because one is seeking consent for a practice that is illegal in most states. In several Appalachian states, appeals of convictions to state supreme courts have yielded support of the lower court verdict. In addition, even without specific laws

banning of handling of serpents, states and counties have many laws they can use to punish handlers, from public nuisance to endangerment.

Diversity within the Tradition

Serpent handling churches share the diversity that characterizes mainstream Pentecostalism. What makes them unique is that, along with their Bibles, they bring their serpents to church in homemade boxes and place them beside the altar. Although documentaries of this tradition focus on handling, the believers insist on identifying themselves within the mainstream of classical Pentecostal beliefs and practices. Most members of a church do not handle and simply pray for others who do. Serpents are always brought to church, but handling may not occur. When it does it is likely to be for only a small portion of the service. Handlers are quick to note that they are stereotyped for a single practice and that most Pentecostals otherwise share basic religious beliefs and practices.

Based on their understanding of Mark 16:17-18, some handlers also drink poison. Carbolic acid, strychnine, and carbolic acid are the most common poisons. Fewer believers drink poison than handle serpents. Although all poison drinkers handle serpents, many serpent handlers do not drink poison. The distinction between the two signs is that poison drinking is preceded by the proposition "if" in Mark 16:17-18 and thus is not considered mandatory. Nine deaths from poison drinking have been documented, the last being Buford Pack and Jimmy Ray Williams Sr. at the same church service in Tennessee in 1973.

The two most distinctive branches of the tradition split over the issue of baptism. The Oneness or Jesus name tradition baptizes in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which they say is Jesus. The trinitarians do so in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost without specifying the name Jesus. Both are still likely to baptize new converts in nearby streams or rivers. Both endorse serpent handling, though trinitarians handle less frequently than Jesus name members. Given the difference in baptism, however, these two branches neither worship together nor do they allow preachers who do not support their baptism practice to preach in their churches.

Women have a central role in serpent handling churches. Although not allowed to preach, they have ample opportunity to testify and are free to practice the signs. That more men have died from handling than women is simply a testimony to the fact that more men handle and handle more

frequently than women. Several women have died from serpent bites, however. Some churches in Appalachia are widely known for the major role women play both within the church and in the modeling of serpent handling to other women who might become handlers themselves.

As noted earlier, serpent handling aside, serpent handling churches are characterized by classic Pentecostal beliefs and practices. They accept glossolalia as necessary evidence of baptism of the Holy Ghost. They lay hands on the sick and cast out demons all in accordance with their understanding of Mark 16:17–18. Their preachers are unpaid. They accept only the King James Bible and must “stay within the Word,” or they will quickly be chastised. Services almost always include music, dancing, and testimonies. To an outsider the service may seem chaotic, but to those familiar with the tradition, it is simply evidence of God’s having his way with believers. Services are unscripted and can last several hours. Most meet on Saturday evening and at least one other weekday.

Future of Serpent Handling Churches

Serpent handling churches have a long history of waxing and waning in numbers. Most new churches emerge by breaking away from another but are sometimes also formed when believers move to a new region. Most churches outside Appalachia can trace their roots to a church within Appalachia. Disagreements over the content of preaching, especially identification of sins such as smoking or divorce, most often result in the dissidents forming their own church. Several serpent handling churches might lie within a few miles of one another, each with as few as five members. Fragmentation allows for the survival of the tradition in the face of divergent beliefs.

Although serpent handling churches lack any hierarchical structure, with the exception of differences in baptism noted earlier, churches within one baptismal tradition support one another. Carefully scheduled annual homecomings include three days of services and culminate with a group meal in celebration of their faith. The only essential commonality is that preaching against handling is not permitted and handling is not denied to those who believe. Although many scholars continue to predict the disappearance of these churches, the practice is now in its fourth generation and continues among the more affluent and educated, who simply believe in a ritual that is as central to their faith as the Eucharist is to Catholics. Any obituary for what is arguably America’s only unique form of religious expression is unlikely.

See also *Appalachian Mountain Religion; Charismatics/Charismatic Movements; Glossolalia; Music: Appalachian Religious; Pentecostal Denominational Family; Pentecostals; Religion, Regulation of; South as Region.*

Ralph Wilbur Hood Jr.

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Settlement Houses

Appalled by the social, cultural, and economic conditions of slum districts in cities such as London, Manchester, New York, Boston, and Chicago, small groups of idealistic and reform-minded college-educated men and women of the Gilded Age in the United States and Victorian England, empowered by what Jane Addams in 1892 defined as a religious renaissance, were convinced that they could transform society by the simple act of “settling” or taking up residency in a house (“settlement house”) located in one of these impoverished neighborhoods. They were motivated by the Social Gospel of Christianity, which they perceived needed reassertion to repair the harm done to social relations by economic inequality. In applying Christian social values to the new conditions of industrialism, these urban pioneers offered their education and cultural advantages to the working class and the poor not as traditional missionaries or evangelists, or charity organization agents, but as neighbors.

British Roots: Toynbee Hall

They were following the lead of Toynbee Hall, the first settlement house (established 1884), located in London’s East End slum. Begun by a Church of England minister, Canon Samuel A. Barnett and his wife Henrietta, Toynbee Hall’s residents were Oxford men who had been influenced, as had been the Barnetts, by the ideas of John Ruskin,

Frederick Denison Maurice, Charles Kingsley, Edward Denison, John Richard Green, and Arnold Toynbee.

Settlement Houses Spread: Hull House

The settlement house idea caught on: Oxford House in Bethnal Green was established in 1885. The Women's University Settlement was opened in 1887. Soon the idea was transplanted and adapted for use in the slum districts of U.S. cities. Stanton Coit established the Neighborhood Guild in 1886 in a tenement located on New York City's Lower East Side, the congested, squalid district that was the destination for hundreds of thousands of immigrants. Neighborhood Guild was the first settlement house in the United States.

Smith College graduate Vida Scudder—Scudder and Clara French were the first two U.S. women admitted to Oxford University in 1885, as graduate students in literature—was awakened to the religious and social ferment of the ideas and cross-class efforts of the English Christian socialists. A convert to the Episcopal Church attracted by its wing of Christian socialists, Scudder taught literature at Wellesley College and became one of the founders in 1887 of the College Settlements Association (CSA). Other members also had observed English social reform developments firsthand, especially the activities of settlement houses, and in 1889, the CSA established its first settlement, College Settlement (New York). That same year, Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr founded Hull House in Chicago. Addams considered Hull House an outgrowth of Toynbee Hall, adapted to the U.S. scene. Addams, who had joined the Presbyterian Church in Cedarville after returning from England, was influenced by a revival of interest in early Christianity that emphasized the social teachings of Jesus and a democratic church polity. Starr's involvement with Scudder and other socialists in the Episcopal Church framed much of her early thinking.

Make-Up of "Settlers"

Historian Allen Davis views U.S. settlement houses as the vanguard of a multifaceted reform movement from the late 1880s to the 1920s. Quickly adapted to fit the needs of women social activists (not exclusively college graduates) as well as U.S. university men, the movement spread rapidly during the Progressive Era; Roberts Woods and Albert Kennedy in *Handbook of Settlements* (1911) counted 400 houses in the United States. Settlers—the name settlement residents adopted—overwhelmingly were middle- and upper-middle-class Protestants, generally from old U.S.

stock. They saw themselves as *settlers* who were planting roots in common with the neighborhood people, in contrast to charity workers who worked in the slums but lived elsewhere. This made these settlers' forays into immigrant districts in cities an opportunity to construct cultural and social space that modeled cultural and religious pluralism. Settlement houses also created space that was hospitable to politically dissident voices and, for class politics, offered places for workers to organize trades unions.

Settlers also saw themselves as different from missionaries and such rescue and philanthropic efforts undertaken by the Salvation Army or the YMCA-YWCA movement. Although there were settlements with religious affiliations and settlement workers who were also part of the Social Gospel movement, settlement houses were nonsectarian, providing a kind of neutral territory, and welcoming people of all religious and racial backgrounds.

Instead of being paid to do some kind of professional social work, settlers (residents) paid for their room and board and volunteered their services by participating in the social clubs, activities, and classes that were being offered to the adults and children of the neighborhood. They also began to offer services such as day care for the children of working mothers, clinics for health care, and public baths, a basic necessity in tenement neighborhoods without indoor plumbing. Many residents had jobs, or were graduate students, or artists and writers who found the settlement an interesting and even bohemian environment—much more exciting than a typical bourgeois section of the city.

Settlements Encourage Women's Leadership

Settlement houses in the United States had a strong relationship to the emerging women's political culture. In the United States, women dominated the settlement house movement as they outnumbered men as head residents (the name for the director of the settlement) and as residents, even in the houses that were settled by men and women. Historians have argued that settlements were a new form of gendered space in cities because the houses combined both domestic and public functions. For women the communal eating and housekeeping arrangements (shared dining facilities, maid service), combined with private quarters, allowed them privacy and independence.

The settlement movement in the United States derived its strongest leadership from women head residents such as Jane Addams at Hull House; Helena Dudley and Vida Scudder at Denison House, Boston; Lillian Wald at Henry Street

Settlement, New York; Mary E. McDowell at University of Chicago Settlement, Chicago; Jane E. Robbins and Jean Fine of Neighborhood Guild, New York; and Harriet Vittum at Northwestern University Settlement House, Chicago. Settlement houses provided opportunities for college-educated women to find the mutual support and encouragement they needed to pursue innovative careers as social scientists, public health physicians, and social workers. The network of female settlement residents proved a powerful vehicle for a social agenda that advocated legislation to protect and improve the lives of women and children, who were employed in ever increasing numbers in sweat shops, unsanitary and dangerous factories, and mines.

Florence Kelley used her connections to the settlements to forge alliances among women consumers and women workers in her work as the first factory inspector in Illinois (with her official office at Hull House), and later as the director of the National Consumers' League. Julia Lathrop, also of Hull House, used her female network to mount a national campaign for child welfare and lobby for a federal bureau to coordinate this work; she became the first director of the U.S. Children's Bureau established in 1912, coordinating the efforts of female reformers throughout the nation, in what historian Robyn Muncy has called a female dominion.

Settlement houses were not the domain of single women only: married men and women served as residents and as head residents. A leading figure in the movement, Graham Taylor, a Congregational minister, was head resident of Chicago Commons, where he lived with his wife and children. Head Resident Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch and her husband lived at Greenwich House, New York City.

Settlements Foster Social Scientific Research and Political Activism

Settlements rather than universities became the leading practitioners of social science research in the 1890s. Many settlements had residents who carried out pioneering sociological and public health investigations and used the data that were gathered to advocate appropriate public policy, legislative solutions, or other reforms to remedy existing problems. *Hull-House Maps and Papers*, a collaborative project of the Hull House residents, was the first social survey of its kind when it was published in 1895, and is an example of sociological investigation combined with advocacy that was undertaken at a settlement house rather than at a university. *Americans in Process* (1902), edited by Robert A. Woods, head resident of Boston's South End Settlement,

further developed sociological maps of immigrant neighborhoods. The Pittsburgh Survey (1909–1914) consisted of six volumes documenting life and work in that city with graphs, maps, and Lewis Hine's photography of industrial conditions; it was edited by Paul U. Kellogg and financed by the Russell Sage Foundation.

Settlements were organized to effect change in society. This meant that the residents had political and social ideals and they advocated reform agendas. Here the word *political* is not employed in the narrow partisan sense of being an advocate of a political party and sponsoring a political candidate, although there were times when residents in settlement houses took part in electoral politics. More broadly, settlement houses, particularly during the Progressive Era, were dedicated to social change. To effect social transformations throughout U.S. society, residents created formal networks locally, and in 1911, on the national level. Organized and vocal in campaigns for improved housing, sanitation, parks, and recreation, and advocates of legislation to protect workers and end child labor, settlement leaders had a major influence in shaping the Progressive Party platform in 1912. The Progressive Party nominated Theodore Roosevelt as its presidential candidate when both the Republican and Democratic Party conventions had rejected the social agenda put forward by the settlement house leadership.

In the 1920s most settlements ended up with a combination of programs and activities that included a commitment to reforming society with efforts to provide daily services for people in the neighborhood. These services could include a whole range of vocational, civic, and college-extension classes, health clinics, day care facilities and early childhood programs, recreational opportunities, and programs in the performing and visual arts.

Many settlement houses encouraged different groups in the neighborhood to express their traditional cultural identities in hopes that people of various ethnic backgrounds would come to respect each other's differences. At the same time the settlement houses encouraged and fostered civic engagement, a kind of citizenship that was defined not only by the act of voting for elected officials but also by becoming informed and organizing for social changes, including better working conditions, safety and health measures, adequate and affordable housing, and educational opportunities for all children.

Settlement Houses Lose Social Activism

Conservative political trends after World War I combined with the rise of the Community Chest movement as the

method of funding neighborhood houses and centers ended the social activism of many settlements. In Chicago and New York—cities without Community Chests—social settlements continued to be a force for social change. The 1930s were creative years for settlements such as Chicago Commons, Hull House, Henry Street, and Greenwich House. Invigorated by the federal programs in theater and the arts, these settlements taught education classes, had the funds to initiate art and theater projects that were community-based, and also paid artists, dramatists, dancers, and writers to work with neighborhood groups.

Efforts to create opportunities for interracial and inter-ethnic mixing were controversial, and only a minority of settlements attempted interracial projects in the 1930s and 1940s. The New Deal programs dovetailed with efforts to incorporate African Americans into settlements, as the cities of the North became the destination of the second “great migration” of blacks from the South.

Decline of Settlement Houses

Other changes ultimately recast social settlements. In the 1930s and 1940s most settlement houses no longer required residency for staff and volunteers, thereby foregoing the main ingredient of the original settlement plan. Settlement houses became community centers; workers were paid staff rather than volunteers, and increasingly, directors and staff were trained social workers. Case work and psychiatric social work approaches also are frequently cited as reasons for the transformation of settlement houses into neighborhood social service agencies.

More importantly, the religious and social contexts that produced the settlement houses of the late nineteenth century were no longer the trigger for social reform. In the 1960s, a new generation heard the call for self-sacrifice, and many idealists, with significant leadership from religious groups, were inspired to engage once more in social transformation. College students joined the Peace Corps or became involved in the civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, and the antipoverty campaigns. Community activism revived, but in a different configuration than that identified with the original settlement houses. The crucial combination of higher education and experiential learning in the context of community service—the service-learning movement that emerged in the 1990s—harkens back to the early roots of the social settlements and evokes the ideal of a social ethic that strengthens democracy.

See also *Anglican Tradition and Heritage; City Missions; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Faith-Based Initiatives; Feminism; Philanthropy; Progressivism; Social Gospel; Women: Protestant.*

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Seventh-day Adventists

The Seventh-day Adventist Church grew out of the Millerite movement of the 1840s that predicted Christ would return in 1843 or 1844. When this did not come to pass, several of the disappointed believers in the United States continued their Bible study in an attempt to discover where William Miller (1782–1844) had gone wrong and where they stood in prophetic history.

Foundational Doctrinal Formation

Central to that group of believers were Joseph Bates (1792–1872), a retired sea captain and an active member of the Christian Connexion denomination; James White (1821–1881), a young pastor in the Christian Connexion; and Ellen G. Harmon White (1827–1915), a member of the Methodist Episcopal church until excommunicated with her family in the early 1840s because of their Millerite advocacy. Of those three, Bates was the early leader. He not only was the first of them to accept the seventh-day Sabbath, but also brought it to the young couple who initially rejected it. In addition, he developed the theology of the

three angels messages of Revelation 14:6–12, which stands at the center of Seventh-day Adventist self-understanding.

In line with the Christian Connexion roots of two of its founders, Seventh-day Adventism arose as a restorationist movement, the goal of which was to restore to the church all those New Testament beliefs and practices that had been neglected, changed, or lost throughout the course of church history. Also in line with restorationism is Adventism's position that the Bible is the only source of authority for doctrine and practice. "Our only creed," Adventists repeatedly asserted, "is the Bible and the Bible only."

Bible study led to several theological positions that provided the theological platform that eventually led to the formation of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. The first of those so-called pillar doctrines had been brought from Millerism, namely, the soon-coming, visual return of Christ before the one thousand years period identified in Revelation 20. Their study of prophecy in general was also informed by their Millerite heritage and the general understanding of the early nineteenth century, which viewed prophetic interpretation in historicist terms and set apocalyptic prophetic fulfillment as beginning in the time of the prophet, running throughout history, and climaxing at the Second Advent.

A second doctrinal distinctive was the adoption of the seventh-day Sabbath, which they believed Revelation predicted would be restored near the end of time (12:17 and 14:7, 12). It was the combination of their beliefs in the nearness of the Second Advent and the Sabbath that eventually led them to identify their movement as the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

A third pillar was that Christ had begun his final work in the heavenly sanctuary in 1844 in preparation for his return from heaven. The fourth pillar was conditionalism and annihilationism. Those beliefs hold that people are not born with immortal souls, that death is an unconscious sleep, that immortality will be given to the faithful at the return of Christ, and that the wicked will simply be destroyed. They will not face eternal punishment, as others of the time insisted, because a punishment that was eternal would imply that the wicked would also be made immortal, if only to endure eternal fire.

The fifth pillar became the Adventist belief in the continuing importance of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including the gift of prophecy, until the end of earthly time. Adventists believed that the visions of Ellen White, which began in December 1844, were genuine manifestations of the gift of prophecy. Her gift was not for doctrine, which was to be

determined by Bible study, but for confirmation of that study and application of Bible principles to current issues. The Adventists saw no conflict between the modern gift of prophecy and their acceptance of the Bible and the Bible only, because the Bible taught the importance of all the spiritual gifts until Christ's return.

Organizing for Mission

Like all other groups evolving out of the Millerite Adventism, the early Sabbatarian Adventists were aggressively anti-organizational. Their preference was for no church governance above the local congregation, a position that harmonized in general with their restorationism. They were thus initially held together by their leading periodical (the *Review and Herald*, now the *Adventist Review*) and periodic general conferences of leading clergy and laity.

The lack of structure, however, made it almost impossible for them to focus their mission. As a result, beginning about 1853 the Whites began calling for what they called gospel order. Over the next ten years James White led a vigorous crusade that in 1861 culminated in the Michigan conference, which had administrative authority over the local congregations in that state. The next year brought several more state conferences. In 1863 came the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, a body with administrative authority to coordinate the work of the growing number of state conferences.

That organizational structure was enough for a church of thirty-five hundred members, all in the northern United States. By 1901, however, Adventism had spread throughout the world, and an intermediate level (the union conference) was added, with regional authority over the several conferences in each part of the world. The final piece of Adventism's administrative structure was added in 1918, when the church was divided into divisions of the general conference that would oversee the work of the union conferences in various geographic regions. Thus the mature top-down structure of Adventism moved from the general conference to its divisions, to the union conferences and missions in each division, to the local conferences and missions in each union conference, to local congregations in each local conference or mission.

Although such a structure may appear cumbersome, it has been highly effective in spreading Seventh-day Adventism throughout the world, maintaining doctrinal unity, distributing finances, and administering the denomination's extensive

institutional development in the realms of education, health care, welfare outreach, and publishing and the media.

Missiological, Institutional, and Lifestyle Development

By 1848 mission had become the driving force in the development of Seventh-day Adventism. Although mission vision continually expanded from the modest task of evangelizing ex-Millerites in the 1840s to establishing a presence in every population group in the world in the early twenty-first century, it has remained a constant. Seventh-day Adventist mission has been driven by the end-time commission of Revelation 14:6 to proclaim the “eternal gospel” and the message of verses 6 through 12 “to every nation and tribe and tongue and people” before the return of Christ, as described in verses 14 through 20.

Adventist mission grew very slowly at first. Between 1848 and 1874, it largely aimed at the northern part of the United States. Adventism did not send its first official overseas missionary, John Nevins Andrews (1829–1883), until 1874, and he was sent to Switzerland. The next two decades saw growing initiatives in mission to the rest of Europe and also in Australia and South Africa. The aim in all of these endeavors was to share the Adventist message with those who were already Christian (that is, Protestant) in those regions. It was only in the 1890s that the denomination, at the climax of North American mission outreach, came to see its mission as being to all the world, including the so-called heathen and the Latin American nations. The decade thus witnessed the denomination’s mission being taken to every continent and most island groups throughout the world. Mission thrust continued and accelerated throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.

Adventist mission interests in both the United States and overseas eventually led to the development of an extensive set of institutions to aid the church in its outreach. The first was a publishing work that would enable its members to share the denomination’s insights through periodicals and books. Adventism began to publish its first periodical, *Present Truth*, in 1849, and soon after it established its first publishing house, now incorporated as the Review and Herald Publishing Association.

The next area of institutional development was health care. Adventists were in touch with the health reform movement of their day and in 1866 established the Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek, Michigan. That small

beginning would eventually grow into the expansive Battle Creek Sanitarium under the directorship of J. H. Kellogg (1852–1943) of cold cereal fame, and from there multiply into hundreds of Adventist health-care institutions around the world.

Adventists had an interest in reforming health practices not only on the institutional level, but also on the personal. Through the urging of Ellen White and Kellogg, Adventists became health reformers themselves. Their theology was based on a holistic view of human nature that held that people to be truly healthy must be so in the physical, mental, spiritual, social, and vocational realms. Their interests in education and health reform were thus rooted in their biblical anthropology. In the personal health realm, their practices and public outreach ran all the way from urging a vegetarian diet in the 1860s through pioneering stop-smoking clinics in the early 1960s.

Beyond their health-related concerns, the denomination founded its first educational institution in 1872. Like its health endeavors, the educational thrust was in harmony with the reform ideas of the nineteenth century. The ideal was the education of the whole person rather than merely the mind.

Adventism from its very beginning has emphasized that accepting Christ means living a Christian life that differs from that of the larger culture. Adventists have thus encouraged such items as modesty in dress, discrimination in entertainment, and the importance of the family. They have also recommended the noncombatant option in the armed services and the stewardship of a person’s entire being, of which tithing is one aspect. Their tithing and offering programs have done much to fuel their extensive mission program and widespread institutional presence.

Adventism in the Twenty-First Century

Present day Seventh-day Adventism is orthodox by evangelical Protestant standards. Salvation is entirely based on grace accepted by faith. The Christian life and good works grow out of a saving relationship with Christ. That understanding was not always clear in the denomination’s past. Legalism is always a threat in a group that emphasizes the importance of keeping God’s law. The turning point for the denomination came at its 1888 General Conference session. A clearer view of salvation in Christ also led Adventism away from some of its founders’ antitrinitarianism and semi-arianism and into a full belief in the Trinity. The denomination’s current statement of fundamental beliefs

lists and discusses the twenty-eight points on which its members unite.

Seventh-day Adventism at the beginning of 2007 had evolved into a movement that its founders would not recognize. At that time it reported 15,115,806 members worldwide, 1,041,685 of whom were in North America. Its growth rate is approximately 7 percent per year. It sponsors an educational system of 7,284 schools (106 of them colleges and universities), one thousand (fifteen tertiary) in North America; 782 health-care institutions, 113 in North America; and 63 publishing houses, 2 in North America.

Beyond those institutional systems, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has established media centers around the world to promote its message. Not the least among media endeavors is Adventist World Radio and various television entities that send out round-the-clock programming.

Also important is the denomination's humanitarian arm. Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA) has a presence in 112 nations and functions not only in disaster response but also in long-term rehabilitation in disaster situations. Equally central to its work are developmental programs in such realms as agricultural training, developing clean water and irrigation systems, and educational and maintenance projects to promote health and welfare among mothers and children.

As of the beginning of 2007, Seventh-day Adventists operated in 203 of the 229 nations recognized by the United Nations, offered publications in 361 languages, and used 886 languages in their oral work. World headquarters are in Silver Spring, Maryland. Among its flagship institutions in North America are Loma Linda University and Medical Center in southern California, Andrews University in Michigan, the Florida Hospital and Medical Center system headquartered in Orlando, Florida, and the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Maryland.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; Adventist and Millennialist Denominational Families; Apocalypticism; Dispensationalism; Education: Home Schooling Movement; Food and Diet; Healing; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Jehovah's Witnesses; Pacific Northwest Region; Pentecostals; Pentecostal Denominational Family; Religious Press.*

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Sexuality and Sexual Identity

Because North American sexual mores have been heavily influenced by traditional religious and especially Christian norms regarding women, the body, and sex, human sexuality remains a hotly contested arena, no matter whether the topic is gender roles, nonmarital sex, women's ordination, sexuality education for youth, divorce and remarriage, transgenderism, clergy sexual misconduct, abortion, or same-sex marriage. For many, sex is associated with sin and approached as a danger to be contained or problem to be fixed. Religion is expected to respond with rules and prohibitions. As one social theorist wryly observes, in a Christianized culture, sex is "presumed guilty until proven innocent" (Rubin, 11).

Traditionalist-Progressive Split

At the same time, it would be a mistake to consign religion only to the forces of negation and reaction. Catholic theologian Daniel Maguire argues that there has never been only one Christianity, an insight true also for other religions. Religions should not be viewed as monolithic or fixed, but rather as dynamic, evolving traditions with often deeply conflicting perspectives about a host of issues, including sex, the role of women, and the diversity of family patterns. Consider, for example, the divergent responses to the 2003 election of Gene Robinson as Episcopal bishop of New Hampshire. Bishop Robinson is not only a divorced father of two adult children, but also a self-identified gay man who lives openly with a male partner. In response, Christian traditionalists are agitated that a church body would not call attention to the incompatibility of Christian identity with homosexuality, which they associate with sexual immorality. Religious conservatives contend that homosexuality is intrinsically sinful, that only monogamous heterosexual marriage is biblically authorized, and that the marital family,

the cornerstone of society, is undermined whenever church or state adopts a neutral stance toward non-normative sexualities or sanctions nontraditional families. Religious progressives, on the other hand, welcome homosexuals into the life and leadership of their faith communities, support their full civil, human, and ecclesiastical rights, including the freedom to marry and their eligibility to be ordained as religious leaders, and press for a reformation of theology and sexual ethics in light of the scriptural mandate found in every religion to pursue justice for those marginalized and oppressed.

This split over sexuality, sexual identity, and sexual justice within Christianity and other religious traditions may be characterized in terms of a traditionalist-progressivist dichotomy. In *Christianity and the Making of the Modern Family*, theologian Rosemary Ruether contends that no reconciliation is possible between the two sides of this religious divide because their viewpoints are grounded in irreconcilably different presuppositions. Religious fundamentalists among Christians, Jews, and Muslims, for example, operate within an absolutist worldview that considers gay sex morally objectionable regardless of the nature of the relationship. In contrast, religious progressives show positive regard for a range of healthy and principled human sexualities, place the search for an inclusive, egalitarian justice at the heart of the moral-spiritual life, and welcome the diversity of cultures and religious perspectives as rich assets for community life rather than as threats to religious identity.

Impediments to Discourse about Sexuality

In addition to religious ambivalence, if not outright hostility, toward eroticism, three other factors make discourse about sexuality difficult. First, in a culture in which sex is feared and yet fixated on as both taboo and titillating, related discussion can easily ricochet between the highly clinical, objectifying jargon of medical science and the whispered disclosures of the confessional, often teetering on the voyeuristic.

Furthermore, language about sexuality is seldom exempt from ideological taint, including sexism and heterosexism. For example, the terms *heterosexuality* and *homosexuality* are medicalized categories, but even more telling, they are patriarchal classifications that mystify rather than highlight the qualities of authentic relationship within human intimacy. Moreover, sexual orientation or, more specifically, erotic attraction is widely considered the decisive criterion for ascribing sexual (read, moral) normalcy.

A second difficulty involves identifying an adequate methodological framework for critical inquiry about sex and sexuality. At present, there are two approaches. Essentialism, in defining sex as natural and unchanging, emphasizes “what comes naturally” and the biological imperatives that supposedly determine the so-called normal course of things. Accordingly, both nature and nature’s divinity have been blamed for such oppressive notions as women’s subordination, the presumption that procreative sex alone is healthy and sound, and pathologized same-sex eroticism.

Cultural constructionism, in contrast, contends that sexuality is more complex, more fluid, and more amenable to cultural molding than essentialists admit. This approach emphasizes that humans develop their sexualities and sexual identities only within institutions and systems, never independently of society or history. Sexuality’s purpose and meaning, therefore, cannot be grasped by biology alone. An historical, contextualized method is needed to analyze sexuality within social power relations. This alternative approach argues, first, that sexuality is not a static thing, but rather a dynamic process, constantly being reshaped and reassigned value and meaning in the midst of conflicting social interests. Second, sexuality has a history, some of which is oppressive. Moreover, because sexuality is political and cultural and not solely personal, a social ethic is needed to examine how social structures and belief systems affect sexualities for good or ill. Third, transformations have occurred in social practice and meaning about sex, gender, and social power, but such shifts require social as well as personal struggle and are not accomplished at will.

When it comes to sex and sexuality, an additional reason many religionists find “talking sex” difficult is that their traditions include serious obstacles as well as rich resources. Within Christianity a spiritualistic dualism elevates spirit above body. A related gender dualism elevates males and things associated with men and either disparages or idealizes females and things associated with women. These two dualisms have serious consequences. First, religious sex-negativity or erotophobia, reinforced by a spirit-body dualism, denigrates the body, physicality, and materiality. More simply put, sex is both dirty and dangerous, and should be kept under control and as tightly constrained as possible. Second, sex has also been patriarchal. Because sex must be controlled, patriarchal marriage has been designated as its proper container. As a social control mechanism, marriage has placed a woman’s sexuality for her own good under male authority and

ongoing scrutiny, first by her father, then by her husband, and finally by her son or sons if she is widowed.

Sexual Regulation, But What Kind?

Religionists across traditions share a conviction that sexuality requires regulation, but within and among traditions are conflicts about the kinds of regulation needed and when revision of those regulations is warranted. Although the Christian tradition has had a long-standing bias in favor of celibacy, Judaism, Islam, and most contemporary Christians allow or even encourage sexual intimacy at least within heterosexual marriage, the exclusive site in which sexual expression is granted legitimacy. Typically, marriage is a hierarchically ordered gender-based structure, divinely willed and naturally mandated, that normalizes inequalities of power, status, and role between partners and makes sex respectable only by keeping it under covers, so to speak, controlled and hidden, private and sanitized. Sexual activity that is premarital, extramarital, or nonmarital (as in gay sex or masturbation) is judged abnormal and deviant. Ironically, although deeply invested in maintaining what is called the sanctity of marriage, traditionalists have by and large paid scant attention to domestic abuse, marital rape, and spousal neglect. Only recently, and only because of the efforts of the contemporary feminist movement in religion, has sustained attention been brought to sexualized violence. It is no longer cast as a sexual sin, but rather as ethical, a violation of persons through misuse of power and role, including clergy betrayal of vulnerable persons in their trust. At the same time, traditionalists have given disproportionate attention, almost all negative, to pleasure and its purported dangers. Observers must look long and hard to find a religious case for the moral goodness of erotic pleasure and even longer and harder to find encouragement for women's sexual pleasure or erotic empowerment.

Although sex-negativity and patriarchal bias are currents in every religion, more sex-positive and egalitarian strains challenge conventional wisdom and push for renewal of these traditions as well. Reformists point to the widening gap between traditional moral teachings and how increasing numbers of people live their lives. Although only two options—celibacy and lifelong heterosexual marriage—have been encouraged, that restriction is contested. Many people of faith recognize other options as valid, even if not officially authorized. Countless numbers of single adults, among them older people in retirement, are sexually active and living together “without benefit of clergy.” Many

are active in their religious communities and regard themselves as fully capable of making responsible choices about how to live and love. For their part, many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people maintain healthy, morally responsible intimate relationships, also without ecclesiastical or legal sanction. Finally, awareness has increased—given high rates of domestic abuse, marital rape, and partner abandonment—that not everything within the bounds of heterosexual marriage is morally acceptable.

The conventional sex ethic—celibacy for singles, sex only in marriage—is currently subject to critique for a variety of reasons. First, the traditional marriage ethic has not been discerning enough of the varieties of responsible sexuality, including nonmarital and nonprocreative sexual intimacy between adults. Second, it has not been discriminating enough in naming the ethical violations of persons even within marriage. From diverse quarters, a reframing of religious ethics is being called for, especially a theological ethic of relational intimacy and relational justice that can realistically address the diversity of human sexualities and focus not on the so-called sin of sex, but instead on the use and misuse of power and on ways to enhance the dignity and well-being of persons of diverse sexual identities, both partnered and not.

Progressive religionists are pushing for a radical critique and transformation of every religious tradition, including Christianity, in more sex-positive, women-affirming, and gay-friendly directions. As the United Methodist theologian John Cobb observes, in a post-Freudian era “most Christians acknowledge that humans are sexual beings and that the desire for sexual contact with others is natural and inevitable” (94), but he carefully qualifies his statement by saying most, not all. Issues surrounding sex, sexuality, and difference remain deeply divisive matters in most traditions.

Science and Reshaping the Religious Paradigm

The impetus for reformation in religious sexual norms comes by and large from two sources. First are the social and natural sciences with their fresh insights about human diversity and psycho-sexual development. Second are social justice movements and the moral wisdom emerging especially from the feminist and gay liberation movements, but also the disability rights movement, the antiviolence movement among survivors of sexual and domestic abuse, and the ecological movement with its nondualistic framework and holistic appreciation of relational systems.

In relation to expanding scientific knowledge, religious traditions at their best have encouraged openness to new

empirical knowledge, demonstrated a nondefensive engagement with changing cultural patterns, shown adaptability to new conditions, and emphasized human freedom, creativity, and responsibility for promoting personal and communal well-being and the care of the earth. Scientific and medical developments, such as effective and inexpensive contraceptives, medically safe and legalized abortion, and the emergence of assisted reproductive technologies, have greatly affected sexual practices. So, too, have health concerns around sexually transmitted disease, including HIV/AIDS, the rise in nonmarital births among Euro-American and other women, and greater public awareness of pervasive patterns of domestic abuse and child sexual abuse. Moreover, by the mid-1960s, the marital family of two adults with dependent children, the post-World War II cultural icon, was no longer a statistical norm.

Of particular significance has been the broad scientific study of sexuality. It has had a significant influence on modern discourse about sex and sexual diversity: in part through the exploration of sex differences between men and women; in part through the cataloguing of varieties of sexual orientations and practices, including homosexuality, bisexuality, transsexuality, and intersexuality; and in part through the promotion of sexual research, sexual health, and sexual therapy. In many respects religionists welcome such developments. The natural sciences, by authorizing the body and, in particular, sexuality as legitimate objects for investigation, intervention, and treatment, have encouraged the development of sexology and related disciplines and thereby expanded knowledge about and public awareness of a range of topics that might otherwise be shrouded in moralisms, secrecy, and shame. Science has been particularly helpful in dispelling myths and correcting misinformation that have caused untold grief and suffering. It matters to individual and community health whether syphilis and other sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, are seen primarily as diseases or punishment for sin; whether masturbation is thought to cause insanity; whether women are regarded as insatiable in sexual desire, as merely passive, or as self-directing moral agents; and whether homosexuality is judged a pathological or benign variation. It is also important to recognize the limits of biomedical science as, for example, in its treatment of aggressive sex offenders (only modest results), its inability to redirect sexual orientation (not effective in the long term), and its uncertainty about the causes of sexual desire among humans, including heterosexual erotic attraction.

Science Not Exempt from Ideological Captivity

At the same time, the science of sexuality is not exempt from ideological distortion and therefore must be critically assessed. Scientific explorations of human sexuality are historically situated and, because they are, depend on the intelligibility of reigning scientific paradigms that help organize complex data and create a plausible structure of meaning and interpretation. Even a brief review of the history of sexology indicates that socially constructed paradigms about human sexuality are themselves subject to critique, emendation, and even replacement if a competing paradigm emerges that gains the loyalty of a critical mass of adherents.

With regard to the biology of sex, before the eighteenth century the reigning paradigm about the human body held a one-sex view. Men and women were thought to share a common physique, even as women's bodies were regarded as less developed versions of men's bodies. The vagina was observed to be an inverted penis, the two more similar than dissimilar in form and function. Subsequent to the eighteenth century, this paradigm was replaced by a modernist paradigm of the two-sex body, which emphasizes that men and women have highly differentiated bodies and are therefore to be regarded as more dissimilar than similar to one another. The power of this schema on the social imagination is reflected in popular discourse that speaks of men and women as supposedly complementary opposites.

Modernist and Postmodern Paradigms in Tension

This modernist paradigm is being called into question by biologists and medical researchers as well as by feminist, queer, and other social theorists, for fostering a theory of sexual identity that posits two and only two sexes (male and female) and represents them as opposites. Sexual dimorphism assumes that biological sex, viewed essentially in terms of reproductive function, determines not only psychological identity (that is, a gender identity of femininity or masculinity), but also a person's preferred social role and—significantly—object of sexual desire. This paradigm naturalizes reproductive heterosexuality and presumes that if human sexual development proceeds on track, then a normal adult person will be sexually attracted to an adult of the opposite sex. Paradoxically, this naturalized pattern is also regarded as precarious, especially for males. Because successful development of a functioning heterosexual male cannot be guaranteed (homosexuality is considered sexual deviance resulting from, or at least correlated with, gender confusion

and nonconformity), medical science and psychological theories have sought to account for and provide medical interventions in response to perceived abnormalities, including bisexual and homosexual erotic attraction, transsexuality, and other gender-identity disorders.

In contrast, a postmodern paradigm has emerged that emphasizes human sexuality as polymorphous, both more complex and more diversified than conventional categories allow. This alternative challenges the dichotomous gender assumptions at the core of the reigning paradigm and argues that the biological distinctions between male and female have been overdrawn, are matters of degree, not kind, and are not always clear-cut; that the various indicators (chromosomal, hormonal, anatomical, psychological, social) used to differentiate sexual identity are sometimes ambiguous and even when clear do not necessarily cohere in a single developmental pattern; that social roles and erotic attractions are diverse and not predictable by sex or gender (psychology does not follow biology lock-step); and that the distinctions between normality and deviance (perversion) are cultural and moral judgments, not scientific. Religious traditions, already under pressure to reconsider teachings about gender and sexual orientation, are being further challenged insofar as their foundational stories and moral codes presuppose a strict sexual dimorphism (Genesis 1:27, “So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them”) that can no longer be taken for granted as empirically accurate.

Impact of Social Justice Movements

The second impetus for rethinking sexuality among progressive religionists is the global feminist and gay liberation movements. This advocacy on behalf of gender and sexual justice for persons of all colors has precipitated a shift toward a justice-centered theological approach that seeks not to control, but rather to empower women and men alike to live more freely in their bodies and more compassionately in their relationships and communities. Religious feminists insist on mutuality between coequals as the normative relational expectation, and, in doing so, have sparked a quiet and not-so-quiet revolution in the bedroom and throughout the social order. What is shaking the foundations even more is a power shift as homosexual, bisexual, and transgender people claim their right to be the subjects of their own lives. Fresh insight emerges as homosexual people are no longer positioned as abstract objects of other people’s discourse, but

rather become self-defining subjects with whom to engage in dialogue.

From their vantage point, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender religionists argue that it is sexual injustice rather than sexual diversity that is dividing religious communities and causing enormous personal and societal suffering. One aspect of the challenge launched by survivors of sex and gender oppression is claiming an appropriate sense of pride by securing a positive sense of self-regard as nonheterosexual persons. Members of various faith communities have joined the Open and Affirming, Welcoming Congregation, More Light, and Reconciling Congregation movements to critique sexual exclusivism, challenge discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual difference, and family pattern, and affirm that same-gender loving people can also model a fully human way to live and love as sexual-spiritual individuals.

Progressive religionists seek to actualize three interrelated components of sexual justice: a strong affirmation of the goodness of sensuality and embodiment; a genuine honoring of sexual difference, including respect for sexual minorities; and attentiveness to both pleasure and pain, including the personal and political dimensions of sexual oppression and exploitation. A revised religious code for regulating sexuality and intimate relationships focuses on a number of core values: the goodness of bodies, bodily self-determination, mutual respect and consent, shared pleasure, fidelity (as a commitment to honesty and fairness and an ongoing willingness to renegotiate relationships to serve the needs of each party), taking responsibility to maintain wellness and avoid disease and unintended pregnancy, and willingness to explore the justice implications of sexuality for individuals and their communities.

From this perspective, good sex is ethically principled and insists on freedom from control, manipulation, and exploitation. Each person should be empowered to claim the goodness of his or her own body and equipped to understand and direct its use. At the same time, each person has a responsibility to respect the bodily integrity and self-direction of others. In sum, it is argued that the central norm for intimate relationships is no longer heterosexuality or marriage, but rather justice—love, understood as mutual respect, commitment, and care, and a fair sharing of power, for gay and straight, marital and nonmarital relationships alike.

Signs of Reform and Resistance

In urging the development of a justice-centered moral discourse about sexuality and intimacy, progressives are

wagering that religious traditions are open to renewal and their own transformation. In the past, significant shifts have occurred, for example, in Christian teaching about slavery and war. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, similar shifts are well under way about women's status within family, faith community, and society, about contraception and abortion, and about the status and rights of LGBT people. Theologian John Cobb cites the rethinking of divorce and remarriage to illustrate the dramatic character of such transformations within Protestant Christianity: "Protestants are becoming so accustomed to this acceptance of divorce and remarriage as the best response in many circumstances that they might forget how drastic a change this is from past Christian teaching." Because Protestants often rely on biblical guidance on moral issues, the change regarding divorce is "particularly noteworthy since it is the acceptance of a practice that is rejected explicitly in the Bible." In fact, Cobb underscores, "It is Jesus himself who opposed divorce" (97). That a reversal on divorce has taken place provides strong evidence about how a dynamic religious tradition may remain open to further revision and internal renewal.

Should further transformations about sexuality and sexual identity occur within Christian and other religious traditions, proponents envision that such change is likely to include several components: increased candor about the tradition's complicity in sexual injustice; a readiness to embrace the body as a privileged site for encountering the sacred in the midst of everyday life; deepening respect for women's full moral standing and their empowerment in their families, faith communities, and social and economic institutions; a greater willingness by men to be held accountable for sharing power equitably and engaging with women as allies and partners in leadership; and the lifting up of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons as models of living and loving humanly. No longer would homosexuality be labeled sinful or disordered. The focus would no longer be on fixing the so-called problem of homosexuality. Instead, the ethical issue would be reframed as heterosexism, the institutionalized devaluing of gay people and the privileging of heterosexuality. A final sign would be that religious traditions would no longer fixate on the sin of sex, but instead commit to challenging gender and sexual injustice along with race and class oppression.

For their part, religious conservatives fear that erosion of conventional gender and sexual norms will not only undermine family stability but also weaken the social order, insofar

as a normative moral order depends on compliance with naturally determined and divinely ordained patterns of social relationship and social power. In an increasingly secularized culture, religionists frequently turn to the family and intimate matters to re-exert influence and some measure of control. Both conservatives and progressives argue that the personal is also political and that the family structure is a privileged societal institution in which human psycho-social and psycho-sexual development takes place, and in which people do or do not learn to internalize and abide by prevailing values. Traditional religionists are alarmed because the heterosexual majority, their primary constituents, has increasingly been adopting attitudes and patterns frequently associated with gay men and lesbians, such as the acceptance of contracepted rather than procreative sex as their normative practice, a commitment to equalize gender roles and responsibilities in the family and throughout the social order, and an openness to greater experimentation with ways to organize personal life outside the biological family. What troubles traditionalists is not only that homosexual people may be assimilating into the dominant culture, but also that heterosexual people are apparently engaged in a process of reverse assimilation, or "acting queer." The family values campaign of the religious right therefore seeks not only to keep the LGBT community from joining the mainstream, especially in terms of gaining access to civil marriage rights, but also to push the heterosexual majority back into the conventional sex-gender and marital framework and to warn that sex-gender nonconformity will be subject to stigma and punishment if necessary.

For these reasons, it is evident that the movement toward gender and sexual justice has met with enthusiasm and support in some quarters and with fear and resistance in other quarters. In progressive religious traditions, both women and men are eligible for leadership, including ordination as ministers (mainline Protestantism), priests (Episcopal Church), and rabbis (Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist Judaism). Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered clergy serve in increasing numbers of faith communities that also welcome women's leadership, but not all. The United Church of Christ (Congregationalists) first ordained an openly gay man in the early 1970s. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) permits gay men and lesbian women to serve as pastors, but only if they are celibate or nonpracticing. There is increasing awareness that gay clergy offer leadership in every tradition though not openly. In some traditions, including the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, the Unitarian Universalist Association, the United

Church of Christ, and both Conservative and Reform Judaism, some congregations permit same-sex couples to marry religiously. Other traditions allow the blessing of covenanted same-sex partnerships.

Case Study

In each religious tradition, voices both support and oppose change. The conflict among competing Christianities may be illustrated by comparing church resolutions on same-sex marriage from the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the United Church of Christ (UCC). Opponents of same-sex marriage argue against extending the right to marry to same-sex couples because of their beliefs about marriage and sexuality. A SBC statement on sexuality defines marriage as exclusively heterosexual, the union of “one man, and one woman, for life.” In 1998 the SBC amended its Baptist Faith and Message by adding a section on the family, which notes three purposes for marriage: to provide a framework for intimate companionship between a husband and wife, to channel sexuality “according to biblical standards,” and to provide “the means for procreation of the human race.” The SBC has offered additional reasons for opposing same-sex marriage by declaring that homosexuality is “not a ‘valid alternative lifestyle,’” but rather a sin. According to this viewpoint, for the church to grant religious affirmation or the state to offer legal standing to same-sex unions would be, in its words, to sanction immorality. In a 1996 resolution opposing the legalizing of same-sex unions in Hawaii, the SBC further elaborated its objections by describing homoerotic relationships as “always a gross abomination . . . in all circumstances, without exception,” as “pathological,” and as “always sinful, impure, degrading, shameful, unnatural, indecent, and perverted.” Leaving no doubt about its opposition to marriage equality, the SBC resolution concludes by stating that the movement to legalize same-sex unions “is and must be completely and thoroughly wicked.”

In opposing same-sex marriage, these traditionalists seek to preserve a model of social relations organized in terms of natural hierarchies of unequal status and power. Although affirming that husband and wife are “of equal worth before God,” a SBC statement on the family describes marriage as an unequal power relation in which the two parties have different roles and expectations. The husband must be the leader; he is to “provide for, to protect, and to lead his family.” A wife is expected “to submit herself graciously” to her husband “as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ.”

The heterosexual marriage paradigm espoused by the SBC resonates with, and gains cultural weight from, modernist assumptions about gender, sexuality, and family. As noted earlier, a modern sexological paradigm emphasizes biological factors (“anatomy is destiny”), views sexuality as naturally determined and unchanging, and operates within a binary sex-gender schema, in which biological or anatomical sex is presumed, first, to give rise to “proper” masculine or feminine gender identity and social roles, then to generate “normal” heterosexual desires and interest in the “opposite sex,” and finally to lead steadily to procreation in the context of marriage. Traditionalists accept the notions that there are two and only two naturally complementary sexes, that opposites attract, that sexuality is primarily procreative, and that homosexuality signals deviance from the heterosexual norm. In this framework, marriage is as much about gender hierarchy, gender control, and the regulation of sex and property as it is about love and affection.

In contrast, the United Church of Christ (UCC) became the first mainline Christian denomination to give official support for same-sex marriage by adopting a resolution at its 2005 General Synod that affirms “equal marriage rights for couples regardless of gender.” In recognition of the fact that marriage is a changing, ever evolving institution, the UCC emphasizes its commitment to marriage as a covenant of equals and contends that the biblical call to justice and compassion “provides the mandate for marriage equality.” Justice, a value to be embodied in interpersonal relationships as well as institutional structures, should seek the elimination of “marginalization for reasons of race, gender, sexual orientation or economic status” and work to create the conditions for social equality. From this justice perspective, the mandate to pursue marriage equality expresses two interrelated notions of equality. First, marriage is defined as a covenantal relationship based on the “full humanity of each partner, lived out in mutual care and respect for one another.” The UCC is, therefore, affirming equality of partnership within marriage. Second, equality refers to an affirmation of the full humanity of persons with differing sexual orientations. “We also recognize and affirm that all humans are made in the image and likeness of God,” the marriage pronouncement states, “including people of all sexual orientations.” The key implication is that “as created in God’s image and gifted by God with human sexuality, all people have the right to lead lives that express love, justice, mutuality, commitment, consent, and pleasure.” Equality in this second sense means

equal access to marriage, including the moral freedom of same-sex couples to marry, legally and religiously, as well as the freedom not to marry.

The UCC statement affirms marriage, but also acknowledges that there are other ways that responsible people live and love. In fact, there are “many biblical models for blessed relationships beyond one man and one woman.” Marriage is not the only place in which people “can live fully the gift of love in responsible, faithful, just, committed, covenantal relationships.” To underscore this point, the resolution states that “indeed, scripture neither commends a single marriage model nor commands all to marry, but rather calls for love and justice in all relationships.”

The United Church of Christ resolution does not privilege heterosexual coupling. Same-sex and different-sex partnerships are affirmed as covenantal relationships having comparable worth. Such covenants should be regarded equally within the church and be eligible to receive equal benefits and protection under civil law. At the same time, by calling for full equality between marriage partners, the UCC statement challenges the legacy of patriarchal Christian marriage in which the spiritual equality of spouses has been asserted, but men have remained in charge and enjoyed advantages of unequal power and status. Finally, the UCC position paper makes room for covenantal relationships outside the institution of marriage. In doing so, it encourages a single ethical standard for all intimate (and other) relationships: relationships are ethical only when they are loving, just, and based on mutual respect and care for all persons.

Progressive religionists, including those within the United Church of Christ, increasingly find that they have more in common, in terms of faith and values, with their liberal counterparts in other denominations and traditions than with their conservative co-religionists. Even among the Southern Baptists there are dissenting voices, however, including congregations that have been disaffiliated because of their acceptance of women’s leadership and affirmation of committed same-sex unions. A massive realignment is thus taking place within the religious landscape. It may be described as a new ecumenism, because the progressive wings of various denominations seek ways to link together to pursue justice advocacy in both religions and society. Similar alignments are occurring among religious conservatives who seek to forestall further change by reasserting heterosexual monogamy as the exclusive norm for intimate life. It is therefore likely that dissension and conflict will

continue to characterize intrareligious and interreligious responses to contested matters, including sexuality and sexual identity.

See also *Canada: Church and State; Cult of Domesticity; Ecumenism; Feminism; Feminist Studies; Freedom, Religious; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Marriage and Family; Politics: Twentieth Century; Postmodernism; Religion, Regulation of; Religious Right; Religious Thought: Feminist; Religious Thought: Gay Theology; Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology; Sociological Approaches; Science; Women: Ordination of.*

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Shakers

The Shakers are a Christian communitarian society that took root in America at the end of the eighteenth century. Under the visionary leadership of Mother Ann Lee (1736–1784), their founder, Shakers established eighteen major communities in New England, New York, Kentucky, and Ohio, and four short-lived societies in Indiana, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Florida. Known initially for their practice of celibacy, for the scandal of female leadership, and for their enthusiastic dances in worship, the Shakers came to be appreciated for a distinctive simplicity in their design of architecture, furniture, and artifacts, no less than in their disciplined lives. Only one community in Sabbathday Lake, Maine, remains active.

When nine travelers from the Manchester environs of England landed in New York on August 6, 1774, few others could have expected that a religious tradition devoted to celibacy would both challenge and reflect core American values over the succeeding two and a half centuries. The Shakers, more officially identified as the United Society of Believers, are at once exceptions to and beneficiaries of American religious principles. Although a dissident group of Protestants who practiced celibacy, perfection, and separation, who held all goods in common, and who saw themselves as the millennial fulfillment of biblical promise, the Shakers also reflected the dreams of religious independence, moral purity, and worldly success held by most immigrants to this country. They argued for abolition, pacifism, communal property, and often for women's equality, but by the beginning of the twenty-first century, as their numbers declined to a handful, the initially radical Shakers have been adopted as a nostalgic emblem of America's folk past and as producers of expensive antiques.

Mother Ann Lee and the Early Days

The Shakers were followers of a woman named Ann Lee, later to be venerated in varying ways as Mother Ann. Lee taught that the agonies attending the search for salvation were solved by abandoning a carnal, sexual life and thus practicing celibacy. If, as she believed, the sin of Adam and Eve was an impatient sexual union copying the animals rather than waiting on God's spiritual instruction, then the cure for sin was renunciation of lustful thoughts and behavior, confession of those sins, and union with a like-minded community. The new community would seek to restore the separate, pure, communal life of the early Christian church.

By so doing, and by following the teachings of this second Christ spirit, Shakers would embody the millennium.

Ann Lee lived only ten years in the United States. After seeing the initial community established near Albany, beginning in 1780 she traveled extensively across Massachusetts and into Connecticut and Rhode Island seeking to convert new members. She died on September 8, 1784. Ann Lee's life and teachings, which had been wrapped together in her energetic and charismatic presentations, were developed into an institutional order following her death. The Shakers benefited from three early leaders who succeeded Ann Lee: the devoted James Whittaker, who had come from England with her and who died within three years; the American-born New Light Baptist, Joseph Meacham (1741–1796), a strong leader credited with gathering large numbers of converts into the order; and his colleague and appointed successor, Lucy Wright (1760–1821), who led the Shakers into the nineteenth century and until her death.

Great Awakenings and Shaker Missionary Ventures

Shaker theology developed and changed over time. From the first, rather rudimentary albeit intense teachings of Ann Lee concerning celibacy and a marked enthusiasm of the spirit in worship and dance, the growing community turned to a more systematic presentation of its theological location in Christian history. The first comprehensive book to introduce Shaker ideas grew out of a missionary venture to the then West of Ohio and Kentucky. Responding to reports of the so-called Second Great Awakening in that region, three Shaker brothers set out on foot on January 1, 1805, arriving in late March; they enlisted enthusiastic new converts and ultimately founded seven communities.

Interestingly, the first large group of American converts to Ann Lee's teachings had roots in the enthusiasms of the first Great Awakening. Joseph Meacham was the son of a minister also named Joseph Meacham, who had participated in the revival meetings featuring Jonathan Edwards in 1741 in Enfield, Connecticut. Sixty-four years later, a second son, John Meacham, was one of the western missionaries. In both Awakenings, emotional and physical enthusiasm, along with carefully parsed theological analysis, signaled an anxious search for salvation and its assurances.

The seven western communities joined eleven eastern communities located in New England and New York. Membership varied greatly over time, with a possible high of some four thousand in the 1840s, but incomplete record keeping, constant fluctuation in membership, and changing fortunes

make any absolute number elusive. Ventures to found two outposts in Florida and Georgia in the late 1890s were short-lived. Shaker fortunes shifted over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the nation's religious, social, and economic demands took new forms. Believers sold their lands, consolidated, and then closed their communities. By the first decade of the twenty-first century, only one active community, Sabbathday Lake in Maine, has survived.

Although originally united by ecstatic dancing, whirling, twisting, and jerking, eastern and western Shakers began to choreograph more ritualized dances designed, as they said, to mortify the spirit and bring the body and spirit into control. Similarly, as two groups coordinated teachings across thousands of miles, early Shaker ideas were worked into ecclesiological order. In their first book, *The Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing*, published in 1808, and in the instructive hymnal, *Millennial Praises*, published five years later, Shakers claimed a lineage of heretical, but pure Christian teaching. Although they did not practice baptism or any other traditional religious ritual, they often identified with an Anabaptist history of independent thought that Lutheran and Calvinist traditions rejected as heretical. Shaker historians used the Bible skillfully and knowledgeably, claiming kinship with other religious communities that had practiced celibacy, valued women, actively anticipated the Second Coming of Christ, rejected the Trinity, and defied abusive control by any state or religious power.

Millennial Belief and Christological Questions

Although its biblical and historical roots were subject to various arguments over time, the requirement for celibacy was never seriously contested. Shaker interpretation of the Second Coming, however, has undergone several modifications. The millennial fulfillment of the promised return of Christ has variously been located in the person of Ann Lee, in her teachings, and in the Shaker community itself. The radical demands of celibacy signaled an interruption of traditional religious belief and inaugurated a new era of human life; life on earth could now end and pure, virginal believers could aim for heaven, thus forsaking carnal generation and its multiple sinful problems in favor of spiritual regeneration.

For some believers and in some Shaker works, even in many references to the society as "Believers in the Second Appearing of the Christ," Ann Lee was assigned a status equal to Jesus of Nazareth; the female joined the male as the carrier of the Christ-promise. She brought Jesus' teachings against marriage to fruition; she showed that marriage and the carnal

life of sexuality could, in fact, be overcome. If, as the Shakers sometimes argued, sin had come into the world because of Eve, then it was even more necessary that a woman lead sinners into the final promise. Shaker historians have debated the fervency or the uniformity with which Ann Lee was granted Christological status, and Shakers in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries have claimed only a Spirit Christology that resides in believers and the church, not unlike the call for all believing Christians.

Dual Godhead and Dual Church Order

With a female Mother Ann joining the male Jesus of Nazareth in the Christological sphere that mediates between God and human beings, a certain theological logic fell into place when the Shaker view of the godhead was elaborated. Again in spite of changing arguments, God was generally understood to be both male and female, with the Heavenly Father identified as power and the Holy Mother as wisdom. The earliest written texts celebrate this logic, according to which a heavenly order reflects the earthly order of male and female. That Woman Wisdom has a long history in biblical texts, both canonical and noncanonical, and that she appears as female in many philosophical and theological traditions made sense to early Shaker theorists. They argued variously that she had been ignored or hidden on purpose, or was awaiting the new revelations of the Shaker Believers, but she came to be seen as Holy Mother Wisdom, companion to the Heavenly Father.

Given their new theological framework and arguing that both celibacy and the attendant opportunity to live in the light of the Second Coming obviated the need for private property, Shaker families moved into communal living arrangements. Hostile treatment also made separation into adjoining farms and cooperative family units a safer arrangement. Gender balance in the godhead was reflected, at least during most of the nineteenth century, in paired male and female leadership of Shaker communities; there were two men and two women in each of the ten bishopric ministries. The center of union of these ministries was located at New Lebanon, New York, and this four-square arrangement was repeated in the spiritual and temporal leadership of every Shaker family. The individual communities usually had a central or church family with a number of outlying family farms that were coordinated by the church family. Membership in any community or individual family was likely to vary depending on space or occupation of that particular family, whether farming or milling, or tending to the

children. Each Shaker site also designated one family to serve as a gathering order—that is, as a transitional home for new members.

Holding all goods in common, believers argued, would reduce both crime and war. Shakers were, in fact, always pacifists, as well as abolitionists. Although the number of African American members was never high, and there are indications that Shakers often evinced stereotyped understanding of both black people and Native Americans, Shakers always spoke against injustice. Their strong principles—and mixed performance—can be seen in their welcome of the visionary black minister, Rebecca Jackson (1793–1871), into their fold in 1847; they hesitated to give her the independent authority she sought, but ultimately found an accommodation that allowed Jackson to establish the only urban Shaker outpost and recorded many visits with her when they passed through Philadelphia.

Shaker architecture reflected the believers' austere but sturdy religious beliefs. The central dwelling houses, particularly of the church families, were usually large structures housing more than a hundred people, with separate doorways and stairways for men and women, modern kitchens in the lower levels, and vast storage spaces in the attics. These often had such features as brilliant colors in the built-in cabinetry, wooden peg boards around the walls for brooms, cloaks, hats—and chairs—and easily removable windows for cleaning. Shaker builders designed both attractive and functional domestic and work spaces and filled them with equally distinctive furniture, work benches, and other equipment. The large Round Barn at Hancock Shaker Village with its central hayloft remains a model of efficient planning for servicing animals, storing feeds, and multilevel access by farm equipment.

Commercial Enterprises

Shakers ventured into many commercial enterprises in addition to farming. Their seed business was successful because of the guaranteed quality of their fresh seeds, and Shaker salesmen traveled as far as New Orleans for many years. Credited with inventing such products as the flat broom and an improved washing machine, Shakers had an entrepreneurial spirit that flowed in many directions. They cooperated in an herbal and elixir business, sold postcards and cloaks, and made sewing goods for the tourist trade. Eventually, as their communal practice and simple style became well known, they marketed themselves by selling Shaker chairs, oval boxes, and baskets. Inventive and hard-working, community members adopted new technologies

and brought in electricity, water delivery systems, and useful machinery when possible.

Era of Manifestations and Aftermath

In spite of the charisma identified with Mother Ann Lee's intense proselytizing and with their robust forms of worship, the Shakers themselves seemed to have been surprised by an outburst of spirit manifestations in 1837 when they reported a number of unusual trances by young girls in the community at the Watervliet, New York. Investigations led only to intensified spirit activity, and the curiosity and then acceptance by the ministers encouraged the rapid spread to other communities. Believers of all ages entertained communications with Mother Ann and other early Shaker leaders, which then escalated to include the Deity, and finally, numerous messages from any number of notable figures who were long dead. The Era of Manifestations, as many now call this period, lasted with some intensity for at least ten years. Shakers collected written records of messages, recorded many inspired songs, and compiled new laws. Although the 1845 version of the *Millennial Laws* has been popularly quoted as a standard of constrained Shaker behavior, Believers did not, in truth, conform to its strictures. Out of this era also came several new ritual practices, two new sacred books intended to confer divine blessings on the Shakers, and a number of drawings. Scholars see this as a time when third-generation Shakers were seeking direct communication and inspiration from Mother Ann, the Heavenly Father, and confirmation of the identity—and attention—of Holy Mother Wisdom.

The Era of Manifestations was a tumultuous time when social, leadership, and theological controversies were debated and tested. Many sought to impose a strict cleansing of so-called worldly possessions and to control many forms of behavior, but the distinctive Shaker-based experiences gave way over time to various forms of séance and spiritualism then gaining traction in the world beyond. Although long debated in the society, among the constrictions placed on believers for a time was access to books and newspapers, leaving the community with fewer historical and theological resources at a time critical to the development of new leadership. Reliance on spirit manifestations, in the long run, though a laboratory for testing ideas, social limits, and spiritual imagination, left the community without well-educated leadership or believers.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, membership was already beginning to decline, although it would take another

fifty years of community closings and consolidations to mark the dramatic change in Shaker fortunes. During the Civil War, the Shaker communities in Kentucky were particularly devastated when troops from both sides of the conflict demanded food, shelter, and even horses as the battles ebbed and flowed over their regions. Neither neutrality nor pacifism offered security, and some have said that these communities never fully recovered from their losses. After the war, many veterans, former slaves, or war survivors might have sought communal life but were drawn, rather, by adventure and new land into the new West.

Following the Civil War, Shakers emerged, along with the rest of the nation, as a more Victorian, respectable, and genteel society, a modification reflected in elaborated decorations on a number of public buildings, no less than in some interior refinements such as rugs and upholstered furniture. Although designed as a major missionary enterprise between 1871 and 1899, the publication of a journal, generically called *The Manifesto*, displayed a less evangelical and more temperate style as it told of Shaker values and virtues. Still dedicated to celibacy, pacifism, and the virtuous life, it aimed to attract new members with a gentle and respectable tone. Frederick W. Evans (1808–1893) and Antoinette Doolittle (1818–1886), who were editors during the brief middle period when it was called *The Shaker and Shakeress*, sought dispatches from different communities, published health news, obituaries, poetry, and described Shaker products, as well, thus making them more like the rest of the world.

The twentieth century found the Shakers closing more and more communities. Their buildings, furniture, and objects became collectable and fueled an antiques market at odds with their commitment to simplicity and economy.

Women and Gender Equality

A continuing question, fueled especially by twentieth-century debates, has been the Shaker commitment and success at developing equal status for women and men. The earliest Shaker theologians reveled in the scandal of a woman's millennial revelation—the divine surprise of God's message to sinners. When the balanced gender elements of the Shaker theological system are added to the early leadership of Ann Lee and Lucy Wright (albeit sometimes contested) and the preponderance of women members and leaders from the late nineteenth century on, one might assume a firm Shaker commitment to equality. Scholars have, however, argued about the Shakers' intentions, commitment, and success, and found that men held power in public life and in finances,

and that the division of labor usually fell along traditional gender lines. Some have noted that equality was a by-product of celibacy, rather than the reverse, and thus was not their initial priority. Many others, however, have pointed out that when Shaker writers did address the questions of equality, spurred by outside forces in the mid- to late nineteenth century, they readily argued on its behalf. To be sure, when traditional educational and social assumptions are taken into consideration, it is striking that the Shakers developed a theological and social system that offered such a fair approach to equality.

Religious Liberty and the Shaker Vision

The Shakers believed and incorporated into many of their writings the idea that the new American nation was a land prepared by God for the practice of religious liberty; certainly, their decision to move across the Atlantic confirmed this idea. At first, however, their expectations met with local skepticism, not only about their religious ideas, which provoked a number of mob threats, but about their political motives. In 1780, as revolutionary forces were gathering, Ann Lee and several others were imprisoned over suspicions that, as recent—and pacifist—arrivals to the contested region of the upper Hudson River, they were spies for England. Discharged from prison with the aid of Governor George Clinton, Ann Lee and her companions settled into their home just north of Albany, New York, and from there launched their aggressive missionary endeavor. Thus, having met with both persecution and legal release, their experience confirmed America's distinctive promise of religious toleration.

Like many other dissenting Christians, the Shakers argued that both Martin Luther and John Calvin had fallen into the same persecuting errors as those Christians who had profited from access to political power, beginning with the conversion of Constantine—a development the Shakers identified as the rule of the Antichrist. Seeking freedom to practice their beliefs but eschewing any political power, the Shakers aligned themselves with the new republic and its early leaders, claiming America as a land dedicated to the rights of conscience. They were particularly fond of George Washington, singing of him in their earliest hymnal: "Here we see what God has done,/By his servant Washington,/Who with wisdom was endow'd/By an angel, through the cloud,/And led forth in Wisdom's plan,/To secure the rights of man." Although the earliest Shakers did not vote and struggled over the years to seek exemption from military service as pacifists,

they did pay taxes. They also used local lawyers and the local courts when they found it necessary.

An interesting irony of Shaker history intertwined with American history can be found in the increasingly popular use of their quick-dance tune, "The Gift To Be Simple." Written in 1848 by Elder Joseph Brackett, the tune was appropriated and woven into Aaron Copeland's *Appalachian Spring* suite in 1944. At one point used in an automobile commercial, Copeland's lilting version of the melody found resonance as a meditative tune after media reports on the national trauma of 9/11. Most recently it appeared on the national scene as the musical interlude arranged by John Williams for the inaugural ceremony of President Barack Obama in January of 2009. That the music of a celibate, separatist, millennialist society critical of private property and devoted to communal living has become associated with the long history of this nation may speak to the decline of the fervent and disciplined Shakers but also signifies a shared dream of American liberty.

Museums, Libraries, and Historical Sites

A number of former Shaker sites have been transformed into historic museums and have educational or recreational facilities available for visitors: Hancock Shaker Village in western Massachusetts; Canterbury Shaker Village near Concord, New Hampshire; Pleasant Hill south of Lexington, Kentucky; South Union near Bowling Green, Kentucky; and Sabbathday Lake, north of Portland, Maine. A number of other sites are tended by local historical societies. The Shaker Museum and Library in Old Chatham, New York, long a repository of Shaker documents and artifacts, is planning to relocate to Mount Lebanon, New York.

In addition to Shaker manuscripts and documents that may be located in historic site libraries or academic institutions, such as Winterthur in Delaware or the Berkshire Athenaeum, many manuscript collections are currently available in microfilm and microform, most notably from the Western Reserve Historical Society, the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, and Hancock Shaker Village, New York State Museum and Library, the University of Kentucky, and Fruitlands Museums.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Amana Communities; Feminism; Freedom, Religious; Great Awakening(s); Music: Christian; Oneida Community; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Utopian and Communitarian Experiments; Women: Protestant.*

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Sikhs

With more than two hundred temples located throughout North America, the Sikh tradition is well rooted in both the United States and Canada. The history of the Sikh tradition in North America dates back to the nineteenth century, but the larger history of Sikhism begins in the Indian subcontinent.

The Sikh religious homeland is the Punjab, a lush region of the Indian subcontinent. Historically known for the

productivity of its land and people, the Punjab was also fertile ground for religious and cultural developments. Its northwest location was one of the access points into the subcontinent, making it an important cultural crossroads. Hinduism, Islam, and the development of Sikhism have contributed to the region's long history. Now straddling India and Pakistan, the Punjab was an autonomous Sikh state in the nineteenth century. Annexed by the British in 1849, the region was divided nearly a century later during the 1947 partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan. As a result certain Sikh holy sites, such as the city of Amritsar, are in India, whereas others are in Pakistan.

Guru Nanak

Sikhs trace their religion to the teachings of their ten gurus, the first of whom was Guru Nanak, a religious visionary born in 1469. Raised in a Hindu family, he was invigorated by the religious traditions around him. These included the devotional practices of Hindu *sants* ("truth seekers"), the yogic discipline of Gorakhnath's followers (called Nath Yogis), and the mysticism of Muslim Sufi masters. At the age of thirty Guru Nanak had his own religious vision. He had gone to the river for morning ablutions, whereupon he disappeared. His family gave him up for the dead, but after three days he returned; his first words—"There is no Hindu, there is no Muslim"—decried sectarian divisions.

Devotional meditation on the Ever-True Reality, the Supreme Lord, through the calling out of God's name was, according to Guru Nanak, all that is necessary. Recitation of the many invocations or names of the Wonderful Teacher, Vahiguru (also spelled Waheguru), opens one's receptivity to and awareness of the Wondrous Being behind and also beyond all names, all conceptions, all being. Promoting a strict monotheism and rejecting mindless forms of ritual, idolatry, and caste and gender divisions, Guru Nanak's teachings cut through religious differences in favor of personal and communal practices that inculcate continued awareness of God.

Hymns by Guru Nanak, as well as works of five of the nine gurus who succeeded him, plus some hymns of other poet saints, form the Guru Granth, the Sikh holy scripture of more than 6,000 hymns. The book is also known as the Adi Granth. As these names indicate, the work is recognized as revelation, as expressions of God. *Adi* refers to the first and that which stands before all, and *Guru* to the eternal and living presence of the teachings. *Sikh* comes from the word meaning "disciple" or "learner," identifying those who follow these

teachings. Devout Sikhs begin each day with a recitation of the *Japji*, the opening verses of the text. Composed by Guru Nanak, these verses serve as a morning prayer, recounting duties and the stages of spiritual awakening. The Dasam Granth (compositions of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth guru) and the Janam Sakhis (accounts of Guru Nanak's life) are other important texts.

Community

Guru Nanak's teachings emphasize the obligations of community. Sikhs summarize their practices in three principles: *naam japna* (reciting the Holy Name and thus always remembering God), *kirat karo* (making an honest living), and *va chakko* (sharing with others). The first is a reminder that awareness of God should always be present in one's mind and that all actions be selfless service to God; the other two principles reflect the primacy of community. Integrity, without fraud or exploitation of others, is the basis of action, and one should always remember responsibility to others, especially those in need.

Generosity and sharing are cornerstones of Sikhism. At Sikh *gurdwaras* (places of gathering and worship; literally "doorway to the Guru"), people of all faiths, even those of no religion, are welcome. A place for community service as well as religious devotion, the gurdwara traditionally offered shelter to any weary traveler or pilgrim. The *langar*, the community kitchen where food is served to all, expresses the important ethic of sharing, inclusivity, and oneness. By the partaking of food together, Sikhs affirm Guru Nanak's teachings decrying distinctions of regarding caste, social status, gender, or other social categories. According to Sikh doctrine, all are equal; however, different castes exist within Sikh communities.

For Sikhs, the Ever-True Reality, God, is not conceived in anthropomorphic terms; hence, gurdwaras house no images and have no altars. Instead as gateways to religious awareness, they provide a seat for the Guru Granth. No gurdwara is without the presence of this embodiment of the teachings, just as it would be incomplete without the *sat sangat*, the people whose lives are informed by Sikh teachings. The gurdwara offers a gathering place where by listening to the words of the book, singing its verses, hearing its meaning expounded, discussing concerns, and preparing food for the communal meal, community and identity are solidified. For Sikhs, worship entails commitment to the path revealed in the Guru Granth. This commitment is expressed in attitude and actions, and through *seva*, service to others.

In gurdwaras, *granthis* (readers or reciters of the Granth) serve as custodians of the sacred text. As spiritual leaders they conduct the ceremonial singing of its teachings and offer discourses on its meaning. *Granthis* are not ordained priests; in theory any pious and competent person—man or woman—can perform this role. With some exceptions women, however, have typically not assumed this role. The status of religious leaders and equal gender access are among the issues under discussion by North American Sikhs.

The Ten Gurus

In addition to honoring Guru Nanak, Sikhs revere his nine successors. Sikh teachings hold that each was imbued with a spark of the divine. Commencing with Guru Nanak this spark passed successively through the line of teachers to Guru Gobind Singh (1666–1708), the tenth and for most Sikhs, the last of the gurus.

Each is recognized for contributions to the unfolding tradition. Guru Angad, Guru Nanak's immediate successor, created the Gurmukhi script (the "Guru's letters") to record and disseminate Sikh doctrine, important because it ensured community control over the religion. The close association of Sikh teachings with the Punjabi language has contributed to association of ethnic identity with religious identity. The fifth, Guru Arjan (1553–1606), oversaw the completion of the Harmandir ("the temple of God") in Amritsar, the city founded by his predecessor, Guru Ram Das. With entrances facing each of the cardinal directions to emphasize openness to all, the Harmandir (known to outsiders as the Golden Temple for the gold plating on its walls and dome) is the most holy of Sikh sites. It is now part of a huge complex of buildings, shrines, lakes, and walkways that testify to the history of Sikhism. The Akal Takhat, a seat of Sikh authority, is housed with the temple complex and, since 1925, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), also called the parliament of Sikhs, oversees the management of the Harmandir and other historic gurdwaras.

Among other endeavors, Guru Arjan compiled the Adi Granth and placed it in the Harmandir. The fifth guru's activities, as well as his substantial following, attracted the attention of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir, who perhaps felt threatened by the guru's popularity. As a result, Guru Arjan was eventually martyred because of his refusal to convert to Islam. He was the first of the gurus to face death upholding the faith. The ninth, Guru Tegh Bahadur (c. 1621–1675), was martyred by Aurangzeb, another Mughal emperor.

According to the majority tradition, Guru Gobind Singh is the tenth and last guru. Rather than appoint a successor, he advised the community to turn to the Adi Granth for all counsel, declaring it to be the living word of God and the eternal guru. Under his guidance, a final version was compiled. As well, Guru Gobind Singh gave further definition to Sikhism in his creation of an initiation rite. Under his leadership, the community continued to face persecution. In 1699 at the time of Baisakhi (the spring solstice, a traditional festival day in the Indian subcontinent, now celebrated by Sikhs as their New Year), Guru Gobind Singh summoned his followers. Details vary, but accounts agree that he asked for volunteers willing to sacrifice their lives in a test of faith. Daya Ram eventually came forward and entered the tent of the guru, who then emerged with a bloody sword, asking for another head. Four others followed in similar fashion, but with the last, the men emerged unharmed. In a rite that involved drinking consecrated water, *amrit*, the sweetened nectar of the faith, they became Guru Gobind Singh's first initiates in the Order of the Khalsa. Originally meaning "pure," *Khalsa* now designates the community of the faithful.

The Five K's

The initiation ritual of taking *amrit* (known as Sikh baptism) and the insignia identifying initiated Sikhs are traced to the 1699 rite. Called the *Five K's*, because the Punjabi name of each begins with a K, the emblems express commitment to the religion through their recall of the early challenges of the community. The *kirpan* (a short dagger), the *kara* (a steel bangle protecting the right wrist), and the *kachh* (short breeches allowing for quick movement), have martial connotations. Signifying historic oppression when Sikhs had to fight to defend their faith, these symbols represent the preparedness to face adversity, the willingness to fight for justice and for those in need, strength, self-control and discipline. The circular shape of the steel bangle recalls God as well as eternity. *Kesh*, the uncut hair that Sikh men keep wrapped in the readily identifiable turban, reflects the pristine purity of the body; the *kangha*, a small comb used and worn in the hair, reflects cleanliness. Each of the symbols, as well as the initiation rite itself, is vested with meaning derived from Sikh history and teachings.

Women were not given initiation initially, as the original Khalsa was an order of fighters defending the faith. Over time, the ritual has been extended to women who upon initiation take the surname "Kaur," meaning "princess." Men

take the surname “Singh,” meaning “lion.” Singh remains a common surname identifying Sikhs, but not all Sikhs, even those carrying the name Singh, have undertaken the initiation rite. It is an expression of personal commitment rather than an obligatory rite. In North America, in India, and elsewhere, one encounters Sikhs who adhere to the practice of displaying the five symbols of the faith—hence a turban covering uncut hair—as well as Sikhs who show no visible outward signs of their religious orientation.

The Khalsa represents an assertive community that developed during an oppressive period. Other traditions have emerged over Sikhism’s long history, including the Namdharis, who see the line of gurus extending to the present, and the Nirankaris, a nineteenth-century movement that sought to return Sikhism to its original roots. *Sahajdhari* (“gradualist” or “slow adopter”), a term dating to the eighteenth century, refers to Sikhs who do not maintain the Five K’s. They define themselves as following Guru Nanak’s path or as entering the faith; hence, they have yet to take initiation. They are sometimes contrasted with *kesdharis* (“those with hair”), Sikhs following traditional practices, including binding uncut hair with a turban. Kesdharis are not necessarily members of the Khalsa.

Global Community

Notwithstanding the importance of the Punjab as the Sikh homeland, Sikhs today have a global presence. During the British period Sikh settlements expanded overseas. Deemed to be a martial race by British administration, Sikhs were actively recruited to serve in the Indian Army. The posting of Sikh regiments to other parts of the empire was often the first point of entry into new settlement areas. In 1867 Sikhs were dispatched to Hong Kong to police the colony, a position Sikhs continued to occupy until the 1950s. A sizable community developed as a result, with the first gurdwara built in 1901. World War I saw Sikh regiments serving in East Africa, the Middle East, and Europe.

Sikhs were also sent to Shanghai, Malaya, Fiji, East Africa, and other colonial enclaves. Between 1895 and 1901 more than 3,000 Sikhs were recruited to work on a Ugandan railway, many of whom stayed after its completion. Through the 1960s Sikh communities were well established in Kenya and Uganda, with smaller numbers in Tanzania and Zambia. Kenya’s “Africanization” policies of the 1960s and Idi Amin’s 1972 expulsions changed that demographic. Families with long ties to Africa were forced to leave, many going initially to the United Kingdom. Recent years have seen sizable

populations in the Western Europe and Australia. Historical connections with Britain have resulted in a relatively high concentration of Sikhs in the United Kingdom.

Arrival in North America

Sikh immigration to North America dates to the nineteenth century. Tradition traces it to events surrounding Queen Victoria’s 1897 Golden Jubilee in London. As part of the celebrations, members of Sikh regiments traveled through Canada en route to India and were told that agricultural land in British Columbia, California, and elsewhere was “just like the Punjab.” Once home they spread the word about the economic opportunities in North America, resulting in the first wave of Sikh immigrants. In its claim to date the first Sikh arrival, this story is apocryphal, but it highlights important factors contributing to Sikh immigration. Identifying first contact by members of the queen’s Indian army, the account puts Sikh settlement in North America into a larger history of global migrations.

In other parts of the empire, such as Hong Kong, where Sikhs had settled, travel was facilitated by gurdwaras that served as hostels for co-religionists. Shipping lines connected these ports and cities on the Canadian and U.S. west coasts. Before restrictive immigration legislation enacted in the early twentieth century, Canada, with its connection to the British Empire, offered economic opportunities for Asians in agriculture, the fisheries and forestry, and railroad construction, with cities such as Vancouver serving as access to the United States. As citizens of the British Empire some Sikhs had the advantage of knowing some English, particularly those who had served in the Indian Army. Further, the promise of fertile land in the story points to conditions in the Punjab, where rising land values, matched with population increase and the Sikh custom of dividing property equally among all sons, rendered many land holdings too small for livelihood.

Though 1897 is often cited, nineteenth-century census data show a much earlier Sikh presence. Records show more than thirty East Indians living in the United States each decade from the 1820s to the 1870s; the number jumped to nearly two hundred and then several hundred for the 1880s to 1890s. Identified as “Hindoo,” a term used generically for all non-Muslim South Asians, many were Sikhs. At the beginning of the twentieth century, 90 percent of South Asian immigrants were Jats, members of a farming caste, coming from just two regions, Doab and Malwa, of the Punjab. Most were young males seeking work to send money

home, hoping to return to India in their later years. British Columbia, on the Canadian west coast was a main destination, with other concentrations found in California, Washington, and Oregon.

Organizations such as Vancouver's Khalsa Diwan Society (founded in 1906) and California's Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society (founded in 1912) ministered to their religious as well as social needs. Though faced with prejudice and discrimination, Sikhs were able to prosper in various ventures. By 1908, Vancouver's Khalsa had sufficient capital to build their first gurdwara; within four years another was established in nearby Victoria. The first U.S. gurdwara, dating to 1915, was in Stockton, California, a region that saw highly successful Sikh agricultural ventures. In the traditional model, the Stockton gurdwara provided the community with worship space, a community kitchen, a hostel, and meeting areas where religion, politics, employment, and other concerns could be discussed.

For the next three decades, it remained the only Sikh temple in the United States because these same years saw increasing discrimination directed toward Asian immigrants. Seeing them as competing for jobs, the popular press warned of the "Hindoo invasion." In Washington state, work camps expelled nearly 1,000 laborers. South Asians were refused service in restaurants, were denied the right to purchase property, and faced many other restrictions. In the United States, they were denied citizenship under a 1790 law restricting naturalization to "free whites." A challenge in 1913 restored citizenship rights, but the 1923 Supreme Court decision in the *U.S. v. Bhagat Singh Thind* again denied South Asians the right of naturalization, even stripping U.S. citizenship from those already naturalized. U.S. laws excluding Asian immigration were passed in 1910, 1917, and 1923.

The Komagata Maru Incident

Similar discriminatory policies were in place in Canada. The *Komagata Maru* incident highlights this restrictive period. In 1908 the Canadian government passed a head tax and "continuous passage" legislation that allowed only those overseas immigrants who could travel from their home country to Canada in a single uninterrupted journey. Purportedly aimed at limiting the spread of infectious diseases by eliminating multiple ports of call, the legislation was de facto a blanket ban on immigration from South Asia because no shipping lines operated directly from the Indian subcontinent to Canada.

In 1914, an affluent Sikh businessman in Hong Kong chartered the *Komagata Maru* to challenge the law. Some 376

Indians—and thus British citizens—most of them Sikh, eventually boarded, their destination the Canadian west coast. At Vancouver, authorities prohibited the passengers' disembarkation. While legal negotiations continued, tensions grew, with Vancouver's mayor even organizing a rally opposed to Asian immigration. After a two-month impasse, the Canadian navy forced the ship's departure with 350 passengers still on board. Twenty-six others were permitted entry because they had prior resident status. Although its departure resolved the situation in Vancouver, *Komagata Maru's* story does not end there. Upon arrival in Calcutta, those aboard ran into further problems. Following a dispute with British authorities regarding the terms of disembarkation, troops opened fire, killing nearly two dozen of the would-be immigrants.

Changes in Immigration Policy

In the United States, immigration restrictions remained until 1947 when new laws established a quota system allowing entry to a small number of Indians. These laws also provided for some family reunification, as did the Canadian policy implemented at the same time. Under Canadian immigration law, however, India was not a preferred country. For both Canada and the United States, the number of South Asian immigrants remained low for the next two decades. Only after policy changes—the United States in 1965, Canada in 1967—that opened immigration to any qualified individual, notwithstanding country of origin, did any large-scale immigration from South Asia resume.

With these changes, early Sikh settlements experienced a revitalization with the influx of new immigrants. Highly trained professionals and skilled workers also settled in urban areas throughout North America. In Canada the number of Sikhs more than quadrupled from 1981 to 2001. Economic incentives, family sponsorship, and chain migration—the process by which immigration from certain areas encourages further migration—continue to bring Sikhs to North America.

Demographics

Reliable figures for the numbers of Sikhs living in the United States are difficult to obtain because U.S. census returns do not include data on religion. Estimates in 2009 range from 200,000 to 500,000 people. Some sources suggest that as much as 10 percent of the U.S. Asian American population is Sikh, a significant figure given that Sikhs are just 2 percent of India's population. In Canada, where census

reports do include information on religious affiliation, the proportion of Sikhs immigrating has traditionally been higher than in the United States. In the 2001 Canadian census, 278,415 (or just under 1 percent of the total population) self-identified as Sikh, an increase of more than 130,000 from the 1991 census. Two provinces, British Columbia and Ontario, accounted for nearly 90 percent of the Sikh population in 2001.

Most North American Sikhs are of Punjabi ancestry, with close association between Sikh religious affiliation and Punjabi ethnicity. Recent immigrants account for the largest numbers, but with the presence of Sikh communities early in the twentieth century, and with continued immigration from the late 1940s to the present, Sikhs are also second-, third-, fourth-, and perhaps even fifth-generation North Americans. As with all communities with immigrant history, differences between new arrivals and those long settled occur. Adaptations, such as the use of chairs in gurdwaras, have been challenged by individuals wanting to see a return to uncompromised practices. Leadership disputes, disagreements about community practices, management issues in local gurdwaras, and the negotiation of relations with religious authorities and institutions in the Punjab are all part of community politics. Though tensions sometimes spill over into the news, most disputes are internal to local communities.

Sikhs face the typical challenges of intergenerational transmission of religious and ethnic identity in a diasporic setting. The younger generations whose ancestry is Punjabi, but whose identity is North American as well as Sikh, have to negotiate issues related to dating, marriage, decorum for women, and the public acceptance of visible expressions of Sikhism. Given the contemporary importance given to religious identity, an increasing number of younger Sikhs are expressing their commitment to their tradition by becoming *amritdhari* (baptized) Sikhs. Sikhs of all generations take pride in their tradition, and historically have been willing to take up legal battles to maintain their identity. In some jurisdictions, Sikhs have lobbied successfully for the right to carry *kirpan* (ceremonial daggers) into schools, and in 1990 a highly publicized case won the right of Sikh officers in the Canadian national police force to supplant the Mounties' official headgear with turbans.

Sikhism has also attracted converts. Many *Gora* Sikhs ("white" Sikhs) are followers of the Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization (3HO), a movement founded in 1969 by Harbhajan Singh. Now a transnational organization, 3HO espouses a spiritually reflective lifestyle through meditation,

Kundalini Yoga, and other practices. Conversion to Sikhism is not required, though many 3HO followers embrace Sikh traditions, including the Five K's.

Khalistan

Living in a global community, Sikhs are well aware of international issues. The movement to create Khalistan, a sovereign Sikh state in the Punjab, has affected North American communities. In 1947 the Sikh homeland was split when India and Pakistan were created. Memories of the carnage that accompanied the partition run deep, and though somewhat redressed in subsequent decades, Sikh grievances at the partition of their homeland remained, erupting into more violent agitations in the early 1980s. Coupled with the arrivals of immigrants from that conflict, the situation in the Punjab politicized the diasporic community, particularly in Canada. Rifts developed between more militant Khalistanis and others, with contentions over whose voices were more authoritatively Sikh.

Events culminated in 1984 when the Indian Army launched an assault on the Harmandir to uproot militants sheltered in the temple complex. Known as Operation Blue-star, the military offensive horrified Sikhs across the international community, further politicizing them. A year later, the downing of Air India Flight 182 en route from Canada to India reminded Sikhs as well as other North Americans that no community is isolated from struggles elsewhere. The plane, with 329 people on board, exploded in mid-air just off the coast of Ireland. The bomb aboard was linked to Sikh extremists, though by 2009 only one person had been convicted for constructing the bomb. For the next decade Khalistan dominated Sikh political discussions. Although separatist sentiments remain strong in some circles, most North American Sikhs support more measured positions regarding India and the Punjab.

Sikhism in the Early Twenty-First Century

Sikhs continue to define their traditions in the North American context. In the early twenty-first century gurdwaras remain the focal points of Sikh community life. They are the gathering places where issues are debated and differences expressed, just as they were when the first gurdwaras were established at the beginning of the twentieth century. Welcoming to anyone, many gurdwaras take an active role in making Sikhism better understood by the general public. In the aftermath of 9/11 Sikhs were targets of racist attacks. Recognizing the need for education and advocacy, Sikhs

draw upon the resources offered by current technology to disseminate better knowledge about their religion and its history. Sikh Internet sites offer discussion space for current issues and for the questions Sikh youth face. They offer fora for advocacy and provide linkages with Sikh communities worldwide.

Sikhs are also concerned with larger social issues. In a contemporary expression of *seva*, or service, organizations such as the United Sikhs, founded in 1999, undertake work for the social and economic empowerment of underprivileged groups. With these and other resources in place, and with rich traditions to draw upon, Sikhs have endeavored to lay foundations that will ensure the future growth and stability of their religion in North America.

See also *Architecture: Asian Religions; Baha'i; Buddhism in North America; Buddhist Tradition and Heritage; Canada: Pluralism; Ethnicity; Hindu Tradition and Heritage; Hinduism in North America; Holidays; Immigration: Since the 1965 Immigration Act; Jainism; Zen Buddhism.*

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Social Ethics

Social ethics addresses moral dilemmas that concern society as a whole. Ethical issues, such as racial equality, abortion, and global warming, though they can also be examined from the

standpoint of individuals, are clear examples of social ethics dilemmas. Through much of its history, the field of ethics had emphasized individual morality almost exclusively, yet since the mid-nineteenth century the moral evaluation of social structures and practices has emerged as an important supplement and corrective to this individual orientation. Social ethics has also been a hugely significant phenomenon within religion in America. Indeed, it would be virtually impossible to chart the history of Christianity in America without serious consideration of how various Christian theological camps have expressed their faith in the social ethics arena. Social ethics has thus become a field within both the larger discipline of ethics and the study of religion in North America.

Social Ethics and the Social Gospel

The great nineteenth-century evangelical revivals did much to engender socioethical concern on matters such as consideration for the poor, temperance, women's suffrage, and the abolition of slavery. However, the first self-conscious approach to social ethics arose from the so-called Social Gospel movement. This approach, which dominated social ethics from 1880 to the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 and which was a substantial cause of social ethics courses becoming a staple in seminary curricula during this period, was an outgrowth of liberal Protestant theology. It sought to accommodate the Christian gospel to modern science, which had no place for the supernatural elements of Jesus' ministry, and higher biblical criticism, which held, among other things, that the Bible contained many mistakes in its historical pronouncements. To the social gospelers, the true Jesus of history was first and foremost a social reformer. Jesus' frequent teachings on the kingdom of God and his compassion for the poor and downtrodden of his society revealed a call for his followers to work for a redeemed social order in the here and now. The two luminaries of this view of social ethics were Washington Gladden (1836–1918) and Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918). Among other causes, they advocated tirelessly for the rights of laborers in industrialized society and a progressive Christianization of the American economy—for example, in Gladden's *Working People and Their Employers* (1876) and Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907). Although social gospelers such as Gladden and Rauschenbusch optimistically believed that all of the ills of society could be healed with a socialized version of the Christian message, they tended to focus their work largely on economic issues and paid far less

attention to other socio-ethical problems, such as race and gender-based discrimination, though they did, at times, acknowledge these problems.

Christian Realism

The bleak realities of World War I and the onset of the Great Depression made it difficult to believe that society was becoming or could become redeemed. These realities cast a shadow of implausibility over the Social Gospel approach to social ethics. It was at this juncture that Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971), widely regarded as American social ethics' most significant figure, entered the discussion. His book, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932), set forth a potent critique of social gospel ethics and developed the well-springs of his own social ethic, Christian realism. In stark contrast to the social gospellers, Niebuhr's realism stressed the fallen nature of humanity, particularly the sinfulness of human society. Because of this deep corruption in collective humanity, the Christian ethic of love, depending as it does on the goodness of humans for its application, could not ground social ethics. Only a democratically enforced principle of justice alert to the human propensities to self-interest and self-aggrandizement could do that work. Niebuhr's oft-quoted aphorism from his 1944 *Children of Light and Children of Darkness* was that "Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary" (xiii). With this elevation of the notion of justice, social ethics would then have a basis for fighting social evils, such as poor labor conditions, and a ready justification for governmental use of force to eradicate injustice if necessary. Christian realism dominated American social ethics until the early 1960s and is still a prominent view. Other major proponents of it were Niebuhr's brother, H. Richard Niebuhr (1894–1962), and John C. Bennett (1902–1995). Despite its influence, however, Niebuhr's realism has been criticized for taking an excessively pessimistic view of human nature and too often legitimizing the status quo of American democratic power structures.

Liberation Theology and Social Ethics

The Social Gospel and Christian realist approaches were both largely developed by and applied to white, middle-class, Protestant men. Liberation theology, though it shared the basic liberal theology of these other views, broke strikingly from this trend. Developed in Latin America in the 1960s, liberation theology seeks to expisit the main tenets

of Christianity from the standpoint of the poor and the oppressed. It became a force in American social ethics through the writings of such well-known liberationists as James H. Cone (1938–) and Mary Daly (1928–2010). Cone, in his *Black Theology and Black Power* (1969) and *The Theology of Black Liberation* (1970), applied ideas of liberation theology to the oppressed experience of blacks in the United States. Cone found a biblical basis for freedom and equality for African-Americans in the accounts of the Jews' enslavement in Egypt and their subsequent deliverance, and in the sufferings of Christ. Indeed, so strong was the resonance of these accounts that Cone has controversially maintained that the Bible is essentially a black book and Jesus is a black messiah. Daly, by contrast, focused her writings on the rights of women. These writings, such as *The Church and the Second Sex* (1968) and *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (1973), have established her as the best-known and perhaps most controversial U.S. feminist liberation theologian. She voiced strong opposition to patriarchal structures in the Catholic Church and in the teachings of the Bible, arguing that the rights of women require these to be set aside. Both Cone and Daly have been criticized, however, for being extremists about their respective causes and for the often militant tone of their writings. Both have also been criticized by other liberationists for systematically neglecting the specific oppression of African American women in their work.

Catholic Social Ethics

The Social Gospel, Christian Realist, and Liberationist traditions all approached social ethics with a liberal Protestant theological orientation. The Catholic Church, though, has compiled a rich history of social ethics engagement as well. It has promulgated a number of directives on social ethics issues in the form of papal encyclical letters and Magisterium teachings, and has produced several influential social ethicists. John A. Ryan (1868–1945), who was deeply influenced by Pope Leo XIII's 1891 social ethics encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* ("The Condition of Labor"), brought a distinctly Catholic point of view to labor issues. Ryan advocated, in his 1906 book *A Living Wage*, for decent minimum wages for workers on the grounds that their dignity as persons required it. Although he accepted private ownership of property and the collection by owners of rent and interest, he argued that these should never be pursued at the expense of the non-owners' rights to decent lives and opportunities to gain ownership for themselves. These were central

contentions of his most important work, *Distributive Justice* (1916). John Courtney Murray (1904–1967) is best known for his advocacy of religious freedom, the right to be free from coercion, governmental or otherwise, in the choice of one's religion. Like Ryan's views, Murray's perspective was underwritten by respect for the basic dignity of persons. Coercing someone on choice of religion, a matter as basic to one's life as any could be, is a fundamental affront to the individual worth of that person. Murray, though his views on religious freedom clashed with those of some church officials, was the principal architect of *Dignitatis Humanae* (1965), the Catholic Church's official pronouncement on religious freedom, and one of the most important pronouncements to arise from the Vatican II Council. Some contemporary Catholic theologians and ethicists, such as the now censured Charles Curran (1934–), have controversially appealed to the idea of religious freedom set forth in *Dignitatis Humanae* to justify their dissent from the Catholic Church's ethical teaching on a variety of other matters, including contraception, premarital sex, abortion, and homosexuality.

Evangelical Social Ethics

Evangelical Protestant theologians took deep exception to the liberal theology (particularly its denial of biblical inerrancy) that underwrote the Social Gospel, realist, and liberationist takes on social ethics. Yet from the 1880 inception of the social ethics movement, evangelicalism, because of its separatist tendencies, had been conspicuously disengaged from the discussion. This began to change when Carl F. H. Henry (1913–2003) penned *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1947). Henry argued from the Bible that Christians were called to bring healing to the surrounding social and cultural order and that the separated, anti-intellectual, anticulture attitudes of many evangelicals ran completely contrary to this calling. This social healing, however, was to come by winning individuals to Christ, not by governmental legislation. Henry's increased awareness of society paved the way for other evangelicals to begin engaging specific social ethics issues. For example, John Howard Yoder (1927–1997), a committed Mennonite, argued in his book *The Politics of Jesus* (1972) that for those who would follow the way of suffering exemplified by Christ, the proper moral stance with respect to war was total pacifism. Yoder also forcefully criticized Niebuhr for his general support of the use of force or coercion to bring about justice in society. Yoder also trained a number of future social

ethicists, such as the prominent Stanley Hauerwas (1940–), who became a pacifist under Yoder's influence.

Another twentieth-century evangelical writer who exerted enormous influence on the field of Christian social ethics was Francis A. Schaeffer (1912–1984), an early evangelical proponent of environmental concern in his *Pollution and the Death of Man* (1970). His concern arose from his belief that God had created a good world and had ordained humans as stewards over it. Schaeffer, on the grounds that human life, being created in the image of God, was intrinsically valuable no matter what its quality, also argued strongly against abortion, most forms of euthanasia, and genetic modification of humans. In his books, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race* (1979, co-authored with former U.S. surgeon general C. Everett Koop) and *A Christian Manifesto* (1981), he urged Christians to combat these social ills with political activism, including civil disobedience if necessary. Evangelicals seeking to have such an impact on the social and political sphere, however, have been much maligned for what is often seen as an attempt to force their ethical views on a society in which many do not share their religious outlook.

Contemporary Scene

Although the approaches discussed remain live options today, the contemporary social ethics scene is marked by an ever-increasing list of new perspectives and new issues of concern. Basically, any religion, whether it is Native American, Wiccan, Buddhist, or something else, can apply the tenets of its faith to socio-ethical problems and thereby create an approach to social ethics. This is precisely what occurred in North America toward the close of the twentieth century, thereby broadening social ethics to become more than the Christian phenomenon it had been through much of its history. Further, although classical issues pertaining to labor rights, gender and racial equality, and the economically oppressed continue to be discussed, the contemporary field is also populated by a host of new social dilemmas. The issue of gay marriage, which many would not have taken seriously in the mid-twentieth century, has become a nationwide controversy. Innovations in medicine have given rise to unprecedented ethical quandaries over such matters as the permissibility of cloning humans and embryonic stem cell research, as well as a variety of other issues in medical ethics.

Social ethics, like religion, speaks to the most fundamental aspects of human existence—sex and reproduction, work, health, environment, and the treatment of one's neighbor.

This is why social ethics engagement will continue to entwine itself with the practice of religion in the United States and beyond for generations to come.

See also *Anabaptist Denominational Family*; *Bioethics*; *Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues*; *Feminism*; *Idealist Philosophy*; *Liberation Theology*; *Neo-Orthodoxy*; *Neo-Thomism*; *Pacifism and Conscientious Objection*; *Philosophical Theology*; *Philosophy*; *Practical Theology*; *Religious Thought*; *Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century*; *Social Gospel*; *Social Reform*; *Systematic Theology*.

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Social Gospel

The Social Gospel was a Protestant response to industrialization and urbanization following the Civil War. Social Gospel proponents, who reflected a range of theological convictions, responded to labor strife by creating new church-based programs to address social distress. Many Social Gospelers combined social concern with a new theological emphasis on the social teachings of Jesus and the hope of realizing the eschatological goal within history. Social Gospelers provided important foundations for interdenominational efforts and ecumenism in the founding of the Federal Council of Churches. Other Social Gospelers focused on the government as a trans-denominational instrument of Christian reform. The Social Gospel influenced the development of progressivism by sanctioning the idea of positive state action, and like Progressivists, the majority of white Social Gospelers failed to critique or address racial inequality, the problem of the color line in American society, and lynch mob violence against blacks. On the other hand, black American Christians

appropriated Social Gospel ideas and practices, laying the groundwork for community empowerment and the advance of civil rights. The Social Gospel mediated tradition and change during a time of significant cultural transition and population growth by reframing terms of Protestant cultural leadership in a continued quest for a Christian America.

The Social Gospel as Innovation and Recovery: *Walter Rauschenbusch*

Arguably, theologian Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918) is the best-known representative of the Social Gospel. His life and work vividly represent many Social Gospel themes. His interpretation of the Social Gospel provided the basis for much subsequent reflection and analysis.

Rauschenbusch, son of a German immigrant, had served as pastor of the Second German Baptist church on the edge of the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood of New York City during the 1880s. Educated both in Germany and in the United States, he maintained a double consciousness, mediating German ideas and American experience. His New York ministry exposed him directly to the impact of the new economic and social conditions associated with industrialization and urbanization. The dominant agrarian and rural ethos comprising the American norm was being displaced by a new social reality associated with cities, manufacturing, and the accumulation of concentrated economic power.

Rauschenbusch gave serious consideration to Christian socialist ideas about economics and history in a book draft, provisionally titled *Revolutionary Christianity*, during the 1890s when deafness made it impossible for him to continue in parish ministry. Parish experience forced him to recognize that the work of the church—to Christianize the social order—must engage the social contexts and material conditions in which human beings struggled to find hope. He concluded that the salvation of souls and the salvation of society must be addressed together and that the church must apply the teachings of Jesus to society as a whole, particularly to the fair treatment of workers in the emerging industrial economy of the United States. As a bicultural historian and pastor, Rauschenbusch appropriated the results of an intellectual revolution that had challenged the Bible as a reliable source of historical data by insisting that the prophetic message of Jesus and the early church had profound implications for twentieth-century America.

Christianity and the Social Crisis, published in 1907 as a revised and updated version of the *Revolutionary Christianity* manuscript, made Rauschenbusch a best-selling author. By

1917 Rauschenbusch, then an eminent professor of church history at Rochester Theological Seminary, argued that human beings had the responsibility and the ability to advance God's kingdom on earth through the Social Gospel. His vocational pilgrimage from an urban pastorate to theological seminary modeled a development that was characteristic of the Social Gospel's emphasis on using the results of historical inquiry to ground a new interpretation of the gospel, emphasizing the application of its social principles to American experience. It also exemplifies the mediating character of the Social Gospel as a movement of recovery and innovation.

Rauschenbusch's conceptions of social sin and social salvation represented a culmination of an escalating critique of economic and religious individualism, which had been mutually reinforcing values in the pre-Civil War United States. The journey of Rauschenbusch's career from religious individualism to the Social Gospel commonwealth represents a decisive shift to sustain the influence of Protestant Christianity during a period of economic change, while the United States was becoming more religiously diverse.

A Changing America

As a German-American, Rauschenbusch was acutely conscious of the influences of European and English thought and experience on his interpretation of the Social Gospel. He sought to use German and other European theological traditions to validate insights from his American experience. At the same time the Social Gospel had a distinctive heritage in American Christianity, particularly in the labors of Protestant Christians in the pre-Civil War period known as the Second Great Awakening. Through voluntary societies and home mission initiatives, American Christians sought to create a Christian society through persuasion and conversion without the sanction of state authority. In fact, it can be argued that by the time Rauschenbusch announced the arrival of the Social Gospel, as the United States prepared to enter the first world war, the Social Gospel was already a movement of the Protestant past, a late development in what historian Robert T. Handy characterized as a Protestant quest for a "Christian America."

The Social Gospel, a response to important changes in the American intellectual and social fabric, sought to articulate a new foundation for Protestant cultural leadership. The theory of evolution and biblical criticism drove an intellectual shift; unprecedented patterns of economic development and the

move towards an urban and industrial economy underlay a social revolution. Together these forces buttressed a strong challenge to traditional beliefs and patterns of understanding. Engagement with the early labor movement and the accumulation of great fortunes by a few captains of industry provoked reexamination of whether the "invisible hand" worked for the greatest good of the community as a whole. Experience and data suggested that this axiom had become problematic for the advance of a Christian society. The convictions of classical economics and evangelical religion about individualism and voluntary persuasion were no longer broadly self-evident. To Christianize the community, the divine commonwealth, it might be necessary to move beyond voluntary persuasion to sanction collective and state action and to conceive of public authority as a means to advance the kingdom of God.

In the post-Civil War economic expansion, during what is often referred to as the Gilded Age, conventional wisdom about economic activity confronted new realities of industrial combination, capitalist power, and incipient worker grievance. The relationship between the forces of capital and labor shifted as larger enterprises gained the capacity to set terms of employment and workers lost individual leverage to negotiate. In the still dominant ideology of personal freedom, economic progress and economic inequality were understood as a development or consequence of individual freedom, the workings of a "natural process" of selection and the survival of the fittest.

From 1870 to 1920 the population of the United States increased from 40 million to 106 million. This increase encompassed a profound change in scale and sensibility and had a dramatic impact on the diversity of American Christianity. The force of this population expansion was absorbed predominantly in the cities of the Northeast and the Midwest. New York's population increased fivefold during this period. Chicago expanded even more rapidly from a much smaller base. Territories in the western part of the country were organized as states, boundaries were settled, time zones were organized, and transcontinental communication and transportation linked the United States together. Within less than a century after President Thomas Jefferson commissioned Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the territories of the Louisiana Purchase, a traveler could book rail passage across the country and travel from New York to San Francisco in five days.

Although it had roots in both the Reformation and post-Civil War industrial expansion, the Social Gospel

also had a legacy that proved influential throughout the twentieth century. That legacy can be recognized even in twenty-first-century public policy debates about the role of government in American life—about balancing respect for individual liberty with the promotion of distributive justice. The Social Gospel's early connections with the so-called "new economics" and its critique of classical laissez-faire ideology form an important link to the development of the idea of state action and policy to promote the common good. In this regard the contrast with the earlier effort to promote a Christian society through voluntary individual persuasion is important. The legacy of the Social Gospel, often rendered in secular discourse, is discernible as a regulator of individual conduct and an arbiter of claims of institutional and individual discrimination and inequality. Public policy arguments that seek to balance individual liberty and social fairness reflect the legacy of the Social Gospel.

From Chautauqua to the World's Parliament of Religions: Social Gospel and the Labor Movement

The Chautauqua Institution became an important early gathering station for social Christianity after its 1874 founding by a Methodist layman and farm equipment inventor, Lewis Miller, and a Methodist minister and later bishop, John Heyl Vincent. Located in western New York State on a lake bearing the same name, it was conceived initially as a Methodist summer camp meeting with programming to support Sunday school education. In the Chautauqua venue, Protestant culture confronted an expanding and changing world, and the Institution transformed itself into a year-round innovation in extension education. Lewis Miller wrote that religious education and secular learning were not distinguishable from God's point of view. All of the creation and all the struggles within creation were worthy of the Chautauqua focus.

Within a decade of its founding, Chautauqua became an important center for adult education at a time when only a small portion of the U.S. population had experience in higher education. By the mid-1880s, the Chautauqua educational program included a faculty of theology and a faculty of liberal arts, as well as the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, a book club and pioneering program in what is now known as distance learning. William Rainey Harper, later the first president of the University of Chicago, and George Edgar Vincent, later president of the University of

Minnesota, served as the first and second principals of the Chautauqua education department.

Theological Modernism and New Economics: Washington Gladden and Richard T. Ely

In the 1890s Chautauqua faculty and lecturers included, among others, Washington Gladden, pastor of the First Congregational Church of Columbus, Ohio, and Richard T. Ely, a young professor of economics at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, and an active Episcopal layperson. Gladden and Ely joined the Chautauqua faculty in 1889, by which time Chautauqua had positioned itself to make substantial contributions to the development of Social Gospel.

Other Social Gospel figures at Chautauqua included Lyman Abbott, John Commons, Jane Addams, Francis Peabody, and Theodore Roosevelt, a representative range of leaders and a future U.S. president who would be strongly influenced by Social Gospel ideas. Josiah Strong, the leader of the United States Evangelical Alliance, also lectured at Chautauqua.

Washington Gladden (1836–1918), the senior member of the Chautauqua community, was an 1859 graduate of Williams College, where he had studied under Williams president Mark Hopkins and also John Bascom, a rhetoric professor who later served as president of the University of Wisconsin. Influenced by the English theologian Frederick Robertson (1816–1853) and the American theologian Horace Bushnell (1802–1876), Gladden established a national reputation as a preacher and was a skilled communicator of modernist ideas about theology and biblical interpretation.

Gladden embarked on a career in ministry and journalism, first in North Adams, Massachusetts, and later in Columbus, Ohio, serving along the way as an editor of the *Independent*, a weekly paper initially founded by a group of Congregationalists that later separated from its denominational foundation. Gladden was engaged by theological modernism, biblical criticism, and the imperative of social reform. In his autobiography he described the experience of reading and absorbing the meanings of Bushnell's *God in Christ* as an "emancipation proclamation" that had freed him from "an immoral theology," which stressed divine sovereignty apart from human deeds. Bushnell, who preached Gladden's installation sermon in North Adams in 1867, had by then become a controversial exponent of a view that emphasized restoration to divine fellowship over and against what he perceived as the fatalistic rigidities of Calvinist theology.

While serving as senior minister in the North Congregational Church of Springfield, Massachusetts, Gladden completed *Working People and Their Employers* (1876), one of the first major statements of American social Christianity. Following the depression and financial panic of 1873, Gladden was invited to address a group of unemployed workers in Springfield. He addressed the relationship between labor and capital and argued that workers had a right to organize for their own protection. Over the next twenty years, persistent labor strife—a railroad strike in 1877, the 1886 Haymarket riot, and the 1893 Pullman strike—persuaded many in the religious community that serious structural injustices existed in American economic and social life.

Richard T. Ely (1854–1943) grew up on a farm in Chautauqua County in western New York. After completing undergraduate study at Columbia College in 1876, Ely travelled to Germany to pursue graduate study in political economy. He completed a PhD in just two years at the University of Heidelberg under the supervision of Karl Knies, a leader in the so-called school of new economists. This group distinguished themselves from classical economists in three respects: rejection of the principle of laissez-faire, advocacy of inductive—evidence-driven—methods of research and analysis, and a view that economic principles reflect particular historical and social contexts. Economic principles could not be described a priori in absolute terms. The new economists were cognizant that urbanization and industrialization in Europe and America were generating new economic and social paradigms, and they understood their discipline to be in the service of improving the human condition. For Ely and his colleagues, the goal of economic study was reform and to strengthen social solidarity among competing forces, including labor and capital. In his 1886 *Labor Movement in America*, Ely argued that the organized labor movement was a constructive and Christianizing force in a more complex economy.

The convergence between the modernist movement in theology and the new economics was nicely captured by Gladden and Ely's 1885 collaboration on the development of a four-point statement of principles for the newly established American Economic Association, in which the state was regarded as "an agency whose positive aid is an indispensable condition of human progress" and "the conflict of labor and capital has brought to the front a vast number of social problems whose solution is impossible without the united efforts of Church, state, and science" (pp. 6–7).

Other important Social Gospel organizations came into being in the in the 1880s and 1890s. Within the Episcopal denomination, the Church Association for the Advancement of the Interests of Labor (CAIL), founded in New York in 1887, focused on forging alliances with the representatives of the labor movement, providing social service support in worker neighborhoods, and helping with union organizing. Among the early CAIL leaders was William Dwight Porter Bliss, an Episcopal priest, who a short time later helped to found and served as president of the interdenominational Society of Christian Socialists. In that capacity Bliss served as editor of its periodical, *The Dawn*. Bliss and his colleagues argued that all social, political, and industrial relationships should be based on the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. In 1891 Ely and a group of colleagues, who were drawn to the interrelationship of the English Christian Social movement and the Social Gospel developments in the U.S. Episcopal Church, established the Church Social Union. Dedicated to the scientific analysis of social problems, the Christian Social Union provided a Chautauqua-like forum for study and discussion where clergy and lay leaders could reflect on the application of Christian ideas and principles to social life.

The Brotherhood of the Kingdom and the World's Parliament of Religions

In August 1893, one month before the convening of the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, the first meeting of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom took place at the summer home of New York Baptist pastor, Leighton Williams. It would meet annually to consider social questions until 1915. This group, which initially included Walter Rauschenbusch and another Baptist minister, Samuel Zane Batten, eventually expanded its numbers to include colleagues in other denominations. While this group was never large, it included many leaders of the Social Gospel movement and was influential because of the publications of its members.

The convening of the World's Parliament of Religions, in conjunction with the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago, provided a high-visibility opportunity to assess the status and development of religion in the United States. The Parliament focused on the relationship of Christianity to other world religions. Richard Ely gave an address on religion as a social force in human society and the importance of moving beyond dogmatic concerns to holding service as a common moral imperative. Washington Gladden gave an

address the same day on the topic of religion and wealth. A review of the Parliament's schedule shows that the modernist-oriented Protestantism of the conference organizers was preparing itself to confront and engage with some seriousness a wide range of religious pluralism.

Reverdy Ransom (1861–1959), an 1886 graduate of Wilberforce University in Ohio and a pastor who would become a leader in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, was present at the Parliament. He had come to Chicago with one of his college teachers, sociologist Benjamin Arnett, who later served as an adviser to President William McKinley. Ransom was impressed by the ecumenical emphasis of the Parliament and the hope expressed for Christian unity. During his long career, Ransom lived to see the development and extension of the Social Gospel as it influenced race relations in the twentieth century. His participation, however, is a reminder of the limitations of the early Social Gospel with regard to race, a subject that has received much attention in the years following the civil rights movement in the United States.

Overlap with Progressivism and the Issue of Race

The Social Gospel period in American religious history overlaps with the reformist-oriented Progressive movement. In fact, the Social Gospel has been referred to as the religious phase of the Progressive movement. Whether politics or religion was the starting point, Social Gospel proponents rarely addressed race and, particularly, the question of civil rights for African Americans, though they argued eloquently with respect to the demands of the labor movement about the brotherhood of man. Many Social Gospelers were committed to Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute methods of racial improvement, which were based on industrial education. With respect to then recently freed slaves, there was in the Social Gospel, as in American society, concern about whether blacks could ever be assimilated. Some Social Gospelers, such as Lyman Abbott and Henry Potter, were active leaders in the American Colonization Society, which was dedicated to helping blacks move to Africa.

During the 1890s Ida B. Wells (later Ida Wells Barnett), a young investigative journalist, began a campaign against lynch mob violence in many parts of the southern United States. Social Gospel leaders, on the other hand, took no notice of this scourge, emphasizing when pressed the importance of order in civil society. In the American South, the underpinnings of segregation and the "separate but equal" interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment were

reinforced by sporadic mob violence. During the years of Social Gospel formation, nearly 90 percent of blacks lived in the South, so while there was diversity in the Social Gospel movement, its members' experience with blacks was limited. Race was essentially absent from Social Gospel ideology. The reformist-driven Social Gospel, based on the bond of brotherhood, thus largely failed to address "the color line," which W.E.B. DuBois predicted in 1903 in *Souls of Black Folk* would be the challenge of the twentieth century. Washington Gladden, the senior Social Gospel leader, acknowledged late in his career, after meeting DuBois, that the Tuskegee approach had limitations because it failed to consider directly the relationship of political equality to other reforms. Rauschenbusch did not address the issue. Ely was largely silent as well but did address the question of eugenics in his 1903 *Evolution of Historical Society*.

DuBois, a few years later with Reverdy Ransom and others, would establish a new organization to provide activist institutional leadership for civil rights, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). During the 1912 presidential campaign Reverdy Ransom, by then editor of the *AME Church Review*, publically broke with his former political ally, Theodore Roosevelt, over Roosevelt's treatment of black delegates to the Progressive Party political convention.

Institutionalizing the Social Gospel in the Progressive Era: Divisions and Distinctions

In his 1948 book *Protestant Churches and Industrial America*, Henry May distinguished three broad patterns of social Christian response during the Progressive period of American history. May argued that the development to which Rauschenbusch gave witness was better interpreted as a heterogeneous group of Christian responses to a series of economic and other changes in the United States. May suggested there were conservative, progressive, and radical patterns of engagement with social questions among the Protestant denominations—Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Northern Baptists, and Episcopalians—primarily catalyzed by the need to address what seemed to be new patterns of structural inequality and poverty. May's threefold categorization has been influential, shaping much subsequent analysis of the subject. This framework for understanding the pluralistic cast of social Christianity provides a foundation for distinguishing different patterns of Social Gospel impact following the death of Walter Rauschenbusch in 1918.

Conservative social Christianity, primarily individualist in orientation and based on an evangelical emphasis on individual conversion, focused on providing relief and service to individuals in response to poverty and social disadvantage. May highlighted the work of groups such as the Salvation Army, which carried on important rescue work grounded in an ideology based on changing individual behavior. This pattern, based on the voluntary pattern, was consistent with the methods of the Second Great Awakening before the Civil War. The goal was individual salvation and personal transformation. This approach did not focus on the workings and the relationships among different groups or interests of the social and economic system.

Progressive social Christianity is often associated with the liberal theology that developed following the nineteenth-century theological renaissance, particularly with the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher and Albrecht Ritschl in Germany, Frederick Denison Maurice and Frederick William Robertson in England, and Horace Bushnell in the United States. An important aspect of their work was a renewed attention to experience and historical development as the context for divine revelation. Liberal theology emphasized the immanence of God. In conjunction with the emergence of biblical criticism in late nineteenth-century theological discourse and the development of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution as a new scientific paradigm, an emphasis on social and historical conditions as the arena for divine action developed. Christianity was interpreted incarnationally, as very much a religion of this world. Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887) would famously preach that evolution is God's way of continuing God's creation. Richard T. Ely would argue that the study of economics and the related social sciences provides tools and methodologies for carrying out Jesus's teaching of neighborly love. While the social Christian response was diverse, proponents held a common concern about inequality, poverty, and the material conditions of human life.

Those drawn to the Social Gospel—or social Christianity, as it was called before 1900—were advocates of what became known as the new or liberal theology, a movement seeking to incorporate the insights of historical criticism and nonliteral interpretation of the Bible and that embraced the evolutionary hypothesis about human origins. Washington Gladden exemplified these modernist tendencies. This theology emphasized the immanence of God in human history, signified preeminently in the life and experience of the historical Jesus. An emphasis on divine immanence provided a

foundation for viewing human experience as not only a prelude but as a kingdom in its own right.

The radical Social Gospel proponents believed that a new kind of economic order would be needed in order to meet the requirements of the gospel. Both early CAIL leader William Dwight Porter Bliss and Vida Scudder, a Social Gospel novelist and Wellesley College professor who joined CAIL in the 1890s and who was deeply influenced by the English Christian Socialists, believed in more fundamental reconstruction and were drawn to socialism. Harry Ward, the author of the social creed of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the first leader of the Methodist Federation for Social Service, was an influential proponent of the Social Gospel who moved in this direction; later, his Union Seminary colleague, Reinhold Niebuhr, would criticize Ward's optimistic assessment of human nature.

Diverse Legacies of the Social Gospel

The Social Gospel followed many patterns of development and implementation. During the 1880s it developed within the institutional church under the leadership of clergy such as William S. Rainsford, rector of St. George's Episcopal Church in New York. In Rainsford's view, the fact that all of human experience was under God's care meant churches must focus beyond Sunday worship on programs and activities that uplift people in need and bond together the privileged and the underprivileged in a single community. Thus, St. George's promoted a range of service, recreational, and educational opportunities for its neighborhood extending well beyond its Sunday congregation. Rainsford suggested at one point that the church must take seriously the social attractiveness of the saloon as a community institution compared with dreary city tenements. Similarly, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Reverdy Ransom, as pastor of an African Methodist Episcopal Church in Chicago, provided support to individuals to battle the destructive influences in urban environments. Institutional churches had a "family resemblance" to secularly based social settlements such as Hull House in Chicago. Conservative social Christianity emphasized individual empowerment along the lines later associated with secular and religious self-help ideologies and therapies.

During the Progressive period, Richard T. Ely, who had moved from Johns Hopkins to the University of Wisconsin, became the focal point of a brain trust, a group that drew on Social Gospel backgrounds to articulate views of the state as a positive force. In their view the state was an instrument of Christian social progress. Ely recruited, among others, John

Commons and the sociologist Albion Small. Commons became one of the leaders of the institutional economists and, with Ely, provided intellectual and policy expertise for the progressive administration of Robert La Follette Sr., who served as Wisconsin governor from 1901 to 1906 before becoming a U.S. senator. Ely suggested that education and research in public universities were the means to complete what religious reformers had initiated with the Social Gospel. This argument became the basis for the Wisconsin Idea proposed in an influential 1912 book by Ely protégé Charles McCarthy.

In 1908 the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America—an interdenominational confederation dedicated to cooperative work across a wide range of social ministry—was established. It adopted as its creed a formulation from the Methodists, declaring a deep belief that only the teachings of the New Testament could solve the complex problems of industrial life.

The Social Gospel influenced the development of new models of parish ministry in institutional churches; new formulations of the role of the state and the use of public policy; and new patterns of interdenominational cooperative effort, which formed the basis for the development of the ecumenical movement in the twentieth century.

Social Gospel developments also had an important influence in Canada during a critical period of national formation following the establishment of the Canadian Dominion in 1867. From the beginning the divisions between English and French religion and culture, and between Protestantism and Catholicism, have shaped what it means to be Canadian. The concerns of the Social Gospel, predominantly Protestant in Canada as in the United States, were reflected in the 1891 social encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, which had a substantive impact on the French-Catholic province of Québec.

In English Canada, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Anglican communities found in social Christianity a basis for common cause. Salem Bland of Wesley College in Winnipeg, Manitoba, became an important leader in Canadian social Christianity, and Winnipeg became an important center of Social Gospel activity. Stimulated by the interdenominational dialogue about social concerns, the United Church of Canada was created through a merger of Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists in 1925. This cooperative venture is considered a major landmark in the history of twentieth-century ecumenism and an important legacy of the Social Gospel.

In the 1950s another young Baptist pastor, Martin Luther King Jr., cited both Rauschenbusch and Mahatma Gandhi as shaping influences on the theological foundations for his understanding of ministry, protest, and the pursuit of civil rights for black citizens of the United States. While the early Social Gospel had not addressed race, he appropriated the Social Gospel tradition as a source of moral leverage.

The Social Gospel legacy has been invoked in connection with numerous theologies of liberation and inspires coalitions of religious and civic reformers of different political persuasions. The Social Gospel was an elite movement, but there were parallel developments among women and blacks who found ways, despite its noninclusiveness, to invoke the Social Gospel to advance their concerns. Like American religious history itself, the legacy of the Social Gospel includes multiple narrative streams and many ironies. Also like American religious history, the Social Gospel emerged from an encounter between the experience of a dynamic environment and demands of Christian faith, interpreted principally by the spiritual descendants of the sixteenth-century Protestant reformers.

See also *African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights*; *City Missions*; *Economics*; *Ecumenism*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Neo-Orthodoxy*; *Progressivism*; *Prohibition*; *Protestant Liberalism*; *Settlement Houses*; *Social Reform*.

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Social Reform

Social reform involves acting in the public sphere to bring about change. Reformers in American history have taken up a variety of causes and activist techniques, often informed by religious worldviews. Eighteenth-century America hosted only a handful of societies for the reformation of morals. The nineteenth century witnessed an explosion of popular reform movements, ranging from well-known antislavery societies to more obscure groups dedicated to educating sailors and assisting prostitutes. Although the twentieth century began with a similar reforming spirit brought to bear on new social problems, new sorts of movements emerged. African Americans organized to gain civil rights and conservative Protestants rallied about a variety of social issues. As the twenty-first century dawned, the number of reform voices citing religious inspiration or concern has only grown. In the later twentieth century, for example, many Protestant groups sought to influence school textbook content (particularly the discussion of theories of evolution), just as the Hindu American Foundation has done in the early twenty-first. Social reform has thus come to illustrate both the globalization of society and the extension of social reform efforts outside traditional religious circles. The people who make up reforming groups, the social issues they take up, and the strategies they use have varied widely, but a few impulses persist. As the historian of antebellum movements Steven Mintz has observed, reformers create campaigns aimed at moral suasion, humanitarian outreach, and society's radical transformation.

Scholars of social reform narrate these movements using critical tools to understand them. No matter the reform movement's historical setting or religious grounding, scholars ask whether a movement focuses on changing individuals, providing relief through charity or institutions, or affecting

policy through lobbying or influencing elections. Historians also explore a movement's cultural context, including the religious elements that shape reformers' explicitly stated reform intentions, as well as cultural factors that influence reformers' unspoken expectations and plans for action. Scholars also look at the effects of reforming work, including the way these efforts cement existing structures of power and authority or disrupt the social order. Indeed, they explore how some reforms hearken back to older ideals, and others prove to be innovative forces. In all of this scholarship, historians seek to understand the way religions—as parts of larger cultural and political worldviews—inform reform impulses and actions.

Colonial America

America in the colonial period did not host popular, organized efforts for social reform. Several factors account for the absence. Namely, the colonies were made up of smaller communities of people who did not believe that individuals bore the responsibility to affect social change. Indeed, most colonists did not live in places with enough social and political organization to pursue substantive change, even if they desired it. Places that did have effective political administration, such as Puritan New England and possibly parts of Anglican colonies in the South, had top-down forms of government. In these communities, members expected magistrates and churchmen to handle issues of social welfare and morality. Inhabitants shared the widespread assumption that God's will for the social order would be worked out by careful and wise leaders who advocated for a right social order. They expected these leaders to deal justly, and sometimes forcefully, with those whose actions threatened community life.

Although the colonies did not constitute a setting either politically or theologically hospitable to popular social reform movements, they did have some cultural characteristics that laid the groundwork for later movements. The colonies included their fair share of dissenters, but most inhabitants shared notions of what constituted moral living. Communities instituted social and legal sanctions against myriad crimes, sins, and vices. Religious services among the Puritans, Quakers, and other Protestant groups encouraged moral living, mutual aid, and—eventually—benevolent action toward outsiders. Eighteenth-century Puritans in Boston encouraged right living through groups such as minister Cotton Mather's reforming societies to suppress vice and promote good behavior. Quakers led the way in benevolent

work, beginning organizations to provide relief to the poor, the enslaved, Native Americans, and the imprisoned.

These efforts to promote good behavior and care for the unfortunate reveal that many colonists, or at least their preachers, believed in their community's millennial chosenness. That is, they assumed that God laid a particular claim on the New World. In response, its residents could be expected to establish a society reflecting God's order and justice. The Puritans are famously known for this impulse, most notably in leader John Winthrop's call for the community to be a city on the hill. Members of other Protestant groups also connected their good behavior and society's decent functioning with God's favor.

American colonists not only had religious impulses that predicated the explosion of reforming energies in the nineteenth century, they also had communal practices that would later be taken into the wider public arena. Charity was one of these. Preachers encouraged members to take care of the vulnerable in their midst. People gave money and time, usually through the church, to support the poor and sick, the widowed and orphaned. Colonists also had structures of communal discipline—or ways to deal with transgression—that would later be pushed into the wider sphere. Church members confronted sinners through informal processes of reconciliation and, sometimes, formal church trials. The pattern of identifying bad behavior, confronting it, and calling for change set a precedent for later moral suasion campaigns. Practices of charity portended the massive humanitarian aid movements to come.

Antebellum America

If the colonial period did not feature an environment conducive to mass social reform movements, what changed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that allowed for their founding, spectacular growth, and significant cultural power? Historians have seen in the American Revolution and the period following it new possibilities for envisioning a common national life. They have also identified theological shifts that emphasized the importance of moral behavior in personal life and propelled individuals toward moral action in community and public spheres. Concerns about slavery, liquor, crime, and poverty brought the issues of citizenship and right behavior to the forefront. Americans confronted these matters in the midst of important cultural transitions. Patterns of daily village life were upended as the nation experienced a surge of urban living and frontier exploration. A steady influx of immigrants brought challenges ranging from

city management to the nature of national identity. Some Americans sensed that their religious visions supplied the energy, ideas, and impetus needed to confront these concerns. In response, they created a range of movements that historians have called the Benevolent Empire.

Independence demanded conversations about the new nation's religious, social, and political character. Republican democracy needed an informed and virtuous citizenry. The separation of church and state meant that no religious body had singular influence. Mass social reform movements, which together made up the Benevolent Empire, proved to be places where Americans worked out questions of citizenship and change. To be sure, most citizens of the new republic understood themselves primarily as residents of states, and much early social reform activity focused on the state and local level. Further, many Americans remained committed to particular Christian denominations. Nevertheless, the Revolution provided an opportunity for Americans to consider the kind of country of which they wanted to be a part. Many citizens transferred cherished notions about their community's millennial chosenness onto the new nation. In social reform movements, Americans projected their moral visions for the social order, dreams that encompassed individual behavior, social structures, and political organization.

Theological Shifts toward Social Reform

Two theological shifts helped make this transition possible. The first, which affected Calvinist groups such as Congregationalists and Presbyterians, was the notion of disinterested benevolence. Articulated by the late-eighteenth century New England minister Samuel Hopkins, the idea was a departure from more traditional Calvinism. Calvinists had long affirmed that original sin left all humanity depraved and corrupt, in need of God's grace. Hopkins and his followers argued that corruption manifested itself as selfishness. They disagreed with Enlightenment thinkers, who claimed that self-regard led to virtuous actions. Hopkins posited, instead, the virtue of disinterested benevolence, which demanded the movement away from self-love and toward self-denying service to others. Hopkins and others involved in the Calvinist New Divinity movement used the idea of disinterested benevolence, or charitable action motivated not by self-interest but by sympathy, to inspire a wide variety of social reform activity, including some of the country's earliest protests against slavery.

Protestants outside Calvinist circles also experienced theological developments that generated an unprecedented

interest in social reform activity. The eighteenth-century British religious leader John Wesley garnered a broad following in the colonies. His followers, known as Methodists, espoused his theology of perfectionism. Wesley preached that people could and therefore were morally obligated to live lives of personal and social holiness. Believers could overcome both personal and social sin and strive toward perfection. For those convinced by the perfectionist message, immediate change of personal lifestyle and communal standards was necessary. In the antebellum period, the Second Great Awakening, fueled in various settings by the theologies of disinterested benevolence and perfectionism, energized a veritable army of reform societies. Their strategies ranged from moral suasion messages and humanitarian campaigns to agitation for society's radical transformation.

Reformers concentrating on moral suasion created large organizations to foster religious conversion, and thereby better behavior, in the wider public. These efforts were afoot already in the first decade of the nineteenth century, but took off at the national level in the second decade. In 1816 Protestant reformers founded the American Bible Society (ABS), with chapters around the country dedicated to publishing and distributing Christian scripture. A similar movement and organization swelled around printing religious tracts and culminated in the founding of the American Tract Society (ATS) in 1825. By the mid-1830s, the ABS printed three hundred thousand copies of the Bible and the ATS distributed more than three million tracts annually. The societies particularly targeted urban slums and the nation's western frontier.

Contact with urban families and their difficult conditions prompted many Bible and tract reformers to dispense material aid as a form of moral uplift. The city missions movement offered relief to impoverished residents, particularly the poor, unemployed, and orphaned. Their programs included public baths, schools, and activism for better public housing. Various efforts to educate poor children led to the founding of the American Sunday School Union in 1824. In Sunday schools children learned to read the Bible and received lessons about Protestant theology and morality. Participation in the programs was broad, attested to by an 1832 estimate that more than three hundred thousand children in twenty-four states were enrolled in Sunday school.

Temperance activism represents the biggest arm of the moral suasion movement. Although most Americans drank alcohol, or at least did not stigmatize those who did, medical authorities began to question the healthful use of distilled

liquors in the late eighteenth century. Some Protestants concurred. In revival meetings, preachers made a biblical case for temperance, the controlled imbibing of alcoholic beverages. In 1826 those inspired by this message founded the American Temperance Society. Within ten years the society peaked at a membership of 1.5 million, or as many as one in five free adults in the United States. Temperance reformers initially attempted to change lives through persuasion. Later they directed their efforts toward legal change. Their strategy worked. In the 1850s several states passed prohibition laws. The reformers' ultimate victory came after the turn into the next century with ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment.

Besides campaigns to enact moral reforms, humanitarian aid efforts flourished in the early nineteenth century. Activists were outraged by a variety of social conditions and practices. Specifically, they focused on the treatment of people on society's margins. In their efforts to affect social change, these reformers created a host of new institutions. Activists amended state penal codes and played an influential role in founding the nation's first prisons. They started orphanages and juvenile delinquent homes for unconnected and at-risk children. They created asylums and hospitals for the mentally ill. Their work ushered in both modernization and bureaucratization of humanitarian assistance. In all, they sought to alleviate myriad forms of suffering, ranging from efforts to relieve poverty and hunger to legislation to provide public education and end imprisonment for debt.

Some reformers moved beyond addressing social ills to prescriptions for the nation's radical transformation. Utopian and peace movements made up a small part of this reform impulse. Visionary groups such as the American Peace Society, founded in 1828, along with small religious communities including the Shakers and Ephrata Cloister, offered alternative visions for American life. They imagined, respectively, a nation unsullied by war, structured around spiritual rather than biological notions of family, and untainted by sexual sin. The earliest feminist activists in this period also called for a radical rethinking of public life, including family law, legal rights, and church leadership.

Antislavery Activism

The radical movement with the broadest participation and the most explosive public impact was antislavery. Quakers had long taken a stand against the evils of slave ownership and the slave trade. Eighteenth-century Friends such as Anthony Benezet and John Woolman were among the first

spokesmen against human servitude. Although denominations such as the Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians took abolitionist positions in the eighteenth century, they retracted their strong stances in the face of white opposition. Yet evangelical revivals in the first decades of the nineteenth century, with their theology of human ability and millennial messages, prompted many believers to agitate for slavery's end. Even though most denominations took, at best, moderate stands on abolition, church members made up the rank and file of antislavery organizations. The American Colonization Society, founded in 1816, advanced gradualist strategies, which sometimes included slaveowner compensation and colonization strategies for free blacks. By 1830, however, advocates of immediate abolition found a broader hearing. Leaders such as William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879) connected slavery with sin. Believers influenced by Protestant perfectionism, with its message that all sin ought to be avoided, if not obliterated, responded. Garrison's organizations, especially the American Anti-Slavery Society (AAS) founded in 1833, drew in a huge Protestant membership. Despite being torn apart by conflicts over participation by women and African Americans, the AAS nonetheless had a membership of more than a quarter million by 1838. Its thirteen hundred auxiliaries dotted the country. The most radical among them called for the immediate end of slavery in the United States. The fierce debate led, in some cases, to separation. Thousands of American Protestants left their denominations and joined so-called come-outer groups because they refused to worship any longer with churches that had not made dramatic pronouncements against slavery.

Although Mintz's categories of moral suasion, humanitarian aid, and radical transformation are helpful, it is certainly true that antebellum reform movements overlapped. Antislavery work, for instance, articulated a radical social vision, but depended on moral suasion to populate the movement and advocated a variety of humanitarian institutions to assist freedmen and women. Indeed, the overlaps in antebellum reform stretch beyond strategies to participants' reform careers. Efforts at moral suasion sometimes propelled activists into humanitarian relief. For instance, reformers who started out in temperance work sometimes moved on to feminist activism. The army of workers who made up the Benevolent Empire exercised a profound influence on the determination of who citizens were and how they acted. They also acted to face the challenges of urban transformation, immigration, and sectional conflict that pressed the young nation to its limits.

Victorian and Progressive Era America

Post-Civil War America faced the challenges of a new racial order, industrialization, and dramatic waves of immigration. Later, in the first half of the twentieth century, citizens also encountered the rise of fascism and unprecedented economic depression. Religious people, in their own organizations or in formal religious groups, identified these problems and sought solutions ranging from moral suasion, to humanitarian assistance, to demands for radical change. In this period, mass social reforming activity finally moved beyond Protestantism to include a significant number of Roman Catholics and Jews. Women reformers and African Americans also began to articulate and organize for their reforming goals in new and unprecedented ways. As the chorus of voices grew, calls for reform also became more diverse, ranging from women's temperance and Social Gospel activity to African American organizing for civil rights.

In the early part of this period, Americans needed to rebuild the decimated South and deal with the postemancipation situation of former slaves, both in the South and among those who began to migrate to the North. Northern white Protestants populated the movement to educate southern freed men and women. Almost every northern denomination established associations to assist former slaves, but the nondenominational American Missionary Organization (AMO) provided most of the teachers and resources. At the peak of relief activity in 1869, about five thousand northerners had traveled to the South to teach. Some white southerners contributed to this effort as well. For their part, African Americans sought to help the newly freed while lobbying for the full citizenship that freedom entailed. Both old and new independent black institutions joined the efforts.

Much of African American church life in this period centered on worship and mutual aid and uplift. Black leaders and laypeople also advocated in the public sphere about rights issues, particularly as Reconstruction disintegrated and lynchings terrorized their communities. In 1892 Ida B. Wells published widely against lynching, becoming a spokesperson for the movement after her appearance with Frederick Douglass at Chicago's Columbian Exposition a year later. Churchmen and women also criticized the racist policies of institutions such as the Young Men Christian's Association (YMCA), and joined white Protestants in advocating for temperance laws and Sabbatarian reform. Black churchgoers contributed to new groups such the 1909

founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and other groups dedicated to antilynching activism. Black organizing and rights defense in this period laid the groundwork for the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

Impacts of Industrialization and Immigration

Although African Americans experienced some of their greatest trials around the turn of the century, the Gilded Age ushered in difficult times for many Americans. Rapid industrialization undercut the value of labor and therefore laborers. As industries grew at a frenetic pace, the gap between rich and poor widened. An unprecedented surge of immigrants in the postwar years also presented new challenges. Of course, the antebellum period had witnessed a steady increase in the foreign-born population. The pace, however, increased rapidly after the Civil War. During the first three decades of the twentieth century, annual immigration rates at times surpassed one million, placing extraordinary pressures on eastern seaboard cities. The immigrants' ethnicity and religions also challenged many Americans' notions of national identity. More immigrants arriving from eastern and southern Europe led to a rapid increase in the American population of both Catholics and Jews.

In the wake of industrialization and immigration, many Protestants focused their relief and reform efforts on urban residents. Their strategies generally included humanitarian aid, but also some evangelism and messages of moral suasion. Organizations such as the YMCA and evangelical groups, including the Salvation Army and Volunteers of America, offered a variety of services to city dwellers. Officers in the Salvation Army, for instance, worked in soup kitchens, took care of neglected children, and cleaned tenement apartments. Inspired by a Wesleyan understanding of perfection and holiness, Army workers and other urban-focused evangelical Protestants aimed to improve grim urban conditions at the turn into the twentieth century.

Catholic Humanitarianism

Protestants were hardly alone in their focus on immigrants. Indeed, some Catholics and Jews responded to the immigration challenge out of fears that Protestants would evangelize the Italian Catholics and eastern European Jews who had recently arrived. Both Catholics and Jews had widely practiced forms of charity and mutual aid before the immigrant influx, soon increasing their efforts among their own ranks. These efforts propelled some of their members into more

active outlets for reform beyond the charity they performed among their co-religionists.

Among Catholics, nuns played a critical role in offering humanitarian assistance. They worked with women and children made especially vulnerable by the urban situation. They followed Catholic immigrants across the country, working to support immigrant welfare wherever they settled. By 1920 more than ninety thousand women religious had created five hundred hospitals and six thousand parochial schools across the country. The laity, too, participated in this relief work. Laymen led extensive Catholic welfare networks that were usually bounded by ethnic ties, such as the Irish Catholic Colonization Association. In time, laywomen also participated in these relief efforts, in forms such as Boston's League of Catholic Women and the women's wing of the Central Verein, a German Catholic association. Although these efforts might be classified as relief as opposed to reform, many members used their work in these organizations as a platform to enter the world of broader organizing. For instance, many laywomen involved in relief eventually participated in the settlement house movement, campaigns to oppose birth control, and agitation for temperance.

The work of women religious and laypeople had some support from the church hierarchy in the form of papal encyclicals and the American bishops' statements about social issues. Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* spoke to the responsibilities of governments, business owners, and laborers. It explicitly endorsed the formation of labor unions as one of many ways to overcome the unjust misery and wretchedness experienced by the working class. Other papal statements, sometimes referred to as the social encyclicals, soon followed. Pius XI's 1931 *Quadragesimo Anno* moved beyond the specific issue of labor to a broader consideration of the social order. The document emphasized the need for solidarity in an industrial age that fostered exploitation and threatened fellow feeling.

The backdrop of immigrant need, industrialization's problems, and papal statements influenced some in the American Catholic hierarchy to act. Despite being not necessarily in the Catholic mainstream, Monsignor John A. Ryan pushed hard for social reform. His 1905 book, *A Living Wage*, advocated for worker compensation that provided a decent standard of living, unemployment relief, and insurance. A minority voice in the church, Ryan nonetheless had some followers. To be sure, the hierarchy itself also responded to Ryan's calls. Not all bishops acted to support it, but they did sign on to a reform platform written by the National

Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC). It advocated better child labor laws, public housing, and supported labor rights. Some lay Catholics, most notably Dorothy Day and her Catholic Worker movement, also took up the banner of social action to uplift working class and poor Americans. Day, who became a Catholic in 1927, started houses of hospitality to feed the poor. Her newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*, brought the church's social doctrine to a wider audience and a circulation of more than a hundred thousand by the late 1930s.

Jewish Activism

American Jews also responded to the immigrant surge that vastly increased their population. The nation's Jewish population of two hundred fifty thousand in 1880 grew to more than three and a half million by 1917. Most of these were from eastern Europe, and immigrants often struggled to adapt to life in the new country. Certainly, American Jews had a long tradition of dispensing charity within their communities. Although these networks did not constitute mass social movements, they did serve as a place for reflection on the law and Jewish social welfare. They proved to be the beginnings of a Jewish advocacy for the poor that would later blossom.

The global situation in the early twentieth century prompted the creation of three Jewish activist organizations. The American Jewish Committee, founded in 1906, lobbied, researched, and promoted diplomacy to secure Jewish interests at home and abroad. In 1913 the Anti-Defamation League was established to deal with the public image of American Jews and fight the common practice of open anti-Semitism in the United States. The group targeted prejudice expressed in the press, the motion picture industry, the U.S. Army, and schools. It also denounced the Klu Klux Klan's rising popularity. The American Jewish Congress, founded in 1918, worked on global Jewish concerns, especially Palestine. These groups focused on security of Jews in the United States and abroad, civil rights, promoting tolerance and, in later years, support of Israel.

The Social Gospel

Although many Protestants, Catholics, and Jews responded to the urban immigrant crisis with an outpouring of humanitarian aid and strategies for moral uplift, some believers took their social critique to a new level and connected it to theology. These reformers, who advocated a Social Gospel, argued that sin was not merely a personal problem but primarily a social one. Unlike their antebellum predecessors who focused on individuals' responsibility for

sin, Social Gospel reformers argued that corrupt and fallen social structures caused people to sin. They claimed that Jesus' message was relevant to both individuals and society. People and the culture needed radical change. They promoted an approach often called environmentalism because of its focus on the effect of people's social and physical environment. Participants in the Social Gospel, then, worked toward society's redemption by eliminating poverty, protecting workers, and feeding the hungry. They and their work would usher in the Kingdom of God on earth.

Social Gospel reformers often focused on the plight of urban residents. Walter Rauschenbusch, a Baptist pastor in New York, highlighted the plight of workers and issues of poverty and crime. Washington Gladden, a minister in Columbus, Ohio, expressed sympathy with the labor movement and called for more unions. His vision for the Social Gospel also entailed interracial and interdenominational cooperation. Although their concerns were similar to humanitarian campaigns of the past, the Social Gospel reformers based their structural approach to issues on the new fields within the social sciences. Using insights from disciplines such as sociology, they sought a radical transformation of the social, political, and economic order. To that end, they started day care centers, launched training programs, and shared ideas with the settlement house movement.

The Social Gospel represented a minority liberal voice among Protestants, but more conservative Protestants also established movements for change. Indeed, Protestants organized new groups and lobbying forms to advocate for what they considered traditions under threat. Just before the turn into the twentieth century, activists took their vision to Washington under the banner of the National Reform Association. They established a Christian lobby working for a variety of moral legislation, including laws against birth control and abortion, Sabbath breaking, obscenity, and divorce. They also lobbied Congress to add language about God, Jesus, and the Bible to the Constitution.

Temperance Advocacy and Women's Suffrage

Once again, temperance proved to be the issue that most effectively galvanized conservative Protestant support. Antiliquor activism had strong antebellum roots. After the Civil War, however, the movement took off and achieved spectacular popularity and political victories. Beginning with the 1874 founding of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), temperance groups drew in droves of Protestant women. By the end of the century the

WCTU had more members than other women's organizations, including those aimed at female suffrage. They joined forces with the Prohibition Party and Anti-Saloon League to affect national legislation. The 1919 ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment, which established Prohibition, did not end their work. Indeed, their perfectionist theology inspired radical visions beyond national abstinence. Scholars have observed that the WCTU acted as a political training school for women, and temperance reform made up only one aspect of a broader political platform. They also resisted coverture laws that gave husbands—even drunken ones—rights over their children and property in the case of separation. With their Do Everything policy, WCTU women worked to reform women's prisons, provide day care, support labor activism, and change the legal age of consent. Their most militant organizing, however, involved activism for female suffrage.

If the radical vision for national temperance drew relatively broad support, other equally dramatic reforms did not. Female suffragists were among the most vocal of those seeking to transform the economic and political order. Many participants drew deeply on their religious resources, particularly those involved in the Spiritualist movement. Their activity, though fiercely contested by the general public, met victory when women were extended the franchise in 1920 on ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. In both the temperance and suffrage movements, women activists displayed a considerable religious and political diversity. Some pushed for radical campaigns, and others took the movement in more conservative directions to secure the necessary public support for both prohibition and women's suffrage.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought a host of new challenges. Reformers responded with campaigns in which strategies for moral suasion, humanitarian assistance, and radical transformation continued to overlap. As the women's suffrage episode suggests, many radical reformers relied on messages of moral suasion to garner support for the cause. Moral uplift campaigns easily developed in humanitarian assistance. Throughout the period, a wider array of citizens participated in social reform movements. This trend would continue as the nation became increasingly pluralistic and faced a new constellation of challenges and social concerns.

Reform since the Mid-Twentieth Century

The years immediately following World War II seemed relatively quiet but were merely the calm before the next storm

of social reform activity. The 1950s, and especially the 1960s, brought new challenges and new questions about communal citizenship. Public agitation increased in an effort to gain equal rights for African Americans and women. America's entrance into the Vietnam War provoked a heated resistance. A new wave of immigration, this one bringing people from around the globe, spurred debate about the ethnic and religious composition of the nation. Once again, religions proved a vital resource for citizens attempting to respond to these questions and crises. Indeed, many activists put religious faith at the heart of protest and reform movements. Although many reformers from the 1960s forward have focused on radical transformation, efforts at moral uplift and humanitarian aid have not been entirely eclipsed. Even so, all of these efforts have been bound up in new conversations about the contours of contemporary American society and its engagement with the wider world.

Civil Rights for African Americans

Modern America witnessed its most dramatic social reform movement in the effort to gain civil rights and other freedoms for African Americans. Racial segregation existed across post-World War II America and disenfranchisement characterized the political structure of the American South. Religious bodies—denominations as well as parachurch organizations—participated in the broad practice of segregation. African Americans had a long history of resisting segregation in public institutions, but the first major victories came only in the 1950s and 1960s. The NAACP celebrated its legal strategy to resist segregation with the Supreme Court's 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which declared separate facilities designated for blacks to be unconstitutional. This legal triumph, along with white southerners' resistance to the ruling, served as one of the critical prompts for what has come to be known as the civil rights movement.

In its early years the movement involved leaders and participants engaged in nonviolent campaigns of direct action, including civil disobedience. African Americans staged boycotts, including the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott, which brought the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. to center stage. Bus boycotts followed in cities around the South, including Baton Rouge and Tallahassee. In 1957 boycott leaders formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) as a way of organizing their efforts and planning future protest activity. Although many leaders, especially ministers, occupied the spotlight in protests around the

South, some activists concentrated on broader movement participation. African American women involved with the Highlander Folk School, especially Septima Clark, began campaigns for black literacy in 1959. As the spirit of protest spread, activists participated in sit-ins, which had a history going back to the 1940s. A 1960 sit-in at a lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, sparked similar protests across the South. The movement drew demonstrators to church rallies that spilled out into the streets. Local protests also involved marches through cities and eventually between key centers of the movement, including the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.

Local campaigns peopled by thousands of black protesters were at the heart of the movement. The Birmingham campaign of 1963, built on groundwork established by the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth's Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, focused on mass meetings and direct action. Violent resistance by white segregationists garnered wide media attention and appalled national television audiences. When hundreds of arrests and the deployment of dogs and fire hoses failed to suppress resistance, Birmingham officials came to an agreement with movement leaders. The victorious feeling continued in the August 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, which drew more than two hundred thousand demonstrators to the Lincoln Memorial.

Reform energies continued into 1964 and 1965. Young people, both black and white, participated in Mississippi Freedom Summer projects. Organized by the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), young activists took voter registration campaigns to counties where segregation's hold was strongest and was often enforced with violence. People energized by Freedom Summer and organized by Fannie Lou Hamer founded the Mississippi Freedom Party to bring the push for voting rights into the national spotlight. Their activism met with success in the 1964 civil rights legislation that banned discrimination in public places and in employment and the 1965 Voting Rights Act that protected the franchise. Marches across the South, especially the 1965 route from Selma to Montgomery, sealed these victories.

The connection between civil rights and African American Protestant Christianity may seem obvious. King and other leaders were Christian ministers. The movement's rhetoric abounded with biblical references. Churches often served as sites of communication, training, and solace for movement participants. Songs from the black church, such as "We Shall Overcome," became icons of the movement. Yet scholars have also explored how religion, specifically African

American Protestantism, was mobilized in the movement in both positive and negative ways. They have observed how religion energized black and white protesters, gave them confidence that they were fighting for the right thing, and made them feel confident that they would eventually win. Certainly, religious communities served as sites both for democratic cultivation and resistance to power. Their traditions offered a philosophy that promoted and energized radical activism when political ideologies, such as liberalism, could not. Religion's role in sustaining reformers who faced violence and death cannot be overestimated. At the same time, drawing on the tropes and practices of African American Protestantism also led to a movement with a male-dominated leadership. In areas such as Mississippi, religious leaders often remained neutral, if not sometimes outright resistant to the movement as a way to guarantee their continued social status as some of the only middle-class African Americans. Further, some African Americans involved in the movement found religious inspiration outside Christian theology and traditions. Members of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), who instigated Freedom Rides throughout the South, ascribed to a philosophy of Gandhian nonviolence and social action. King also remarked on the way Gandhi served as inspiration and model. Other movement leaders, especially Malcolm X, looked to the Nation of Islam as a theological and communal resource of protest.

Religious visions that prompted participation in the racial justice struggle were not limited to African Americans. Indeed, the movement for black equality brought out broad social reform impulses that had not been on view so clearly since the Social Gospel. A host of white Christian leaders backed the movement, including representatives of the National Council of Churches, some Catholic priests and nuns, and a handful of Reform Jewish rabbis. On the other hand, some white Americans brought their religious worldviews to bear against desegregation and equal rights. Preachers such as Mississippi's Sam Bowers and Douglas Hutchins worked diligently to campaign against civil rights. Yet on the whole, southern white ministers did not actively take up the segregationist banner. Indeed, scholars debate whether this lack of support affected southerners' inability to put forth a mass movement powerful enough to keep segregation in place.

Rights Struggles among Other Minorities

Although the African American civil rights movement has commanded the greatest amount of scholarly attention,

especially concerning its connection to religion, other rights and protests movements of the 1960s shared in the religiously inspired impulse toward reform. Historians are only beginning to recognize the way Catholic faith and social ethics informed movements for Latino and farm workers' rights. If it is clear that most of the American church hierarchy was hesitant to offer support to César Chávez and his activism for agricultural workers, it is also clear that some Catholic leaders and Protestants involved in the California Migrant Ministry played key roles in supporting the movement. Indeed, more robust Catholic support for Latino rights would eventually come in the 1980s, with the American bishops' pastoral letter "The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment." In the document, the bishops decried injustices faced by Latinos in America, especially in the areas of immigration rights, farm worker treatment, and discrimination.

The broader cultural movement for women's rights presented an especially difficult challenge to religious organizations and their female membership. For many, ideas about women's liberation prompted agonizing and divisive debates about women's roles in religious leadership. In the postwar years, women advocated for, and won, ordination in many mainline Protestant and Jewish groups. At the same time, these internal debates sometimes worked to propel women into activism about broader public causes, including the debate over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The amendment, which ensured women's equal treatment in the workplace, had been presented to Congress in the 1920s and debated for decades. Some women who were energized by victories in the area of women's ordination worked publicly to support the ERA. Most religious women, however, opposed it. Some of them took that dissatisfaction into the public sphere. Anti-ERA sentiment was usually tied to involvement in specific religious cultures, especially those that prized traditional images of women and family and those with substantive networks of connection.

Beyond the ERA debate, it is nearly impossible to generalize religious bodies' responses to feminism and women's rights activism. Some women embraced the goals of feminist organizations. On the whole, however, religious women tended to be less supportive. For instance, many religious women have applauded women's participation in the public sphere and equal pay for equal work. At the same time, they have resisted anything that upsets women's traditional role in the family, such as paternity leave and day care. Activism and debate over women's rights and roles has certainly not ended.

In 1984 the largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), declared that women could not have roles of authority over men. In 1998 the convention declared that women ought to live in "gracious" submission to their husband's leadership of the family.

Since the 1960s, Christians have also taken a stand on the question of gay and lesbian rights. In 1968, the same year as New York's Stonewall uprising that brought sexual identity issues into the public eye, former Protestant minister Troy Perry started a Christian fellowship of gay members in his home. These meetings ultimately resulted in the founding of the Metropolitan Community Churches movement, which welcomes those in same-sex relationships. As with women's rights, the new movement prompted bitter debate in religious circles. Only a few groups articulated a public welcome to openly gay and lesbian leaders and members. Even fewer have taken this acceptance and transformed it into public action. One example is the United Church of Christ's 1973 creation of its Office of Gay Concerns, which published a new sex education curriculum. Most groups have been wary of fully accepting openly gay members and leaders. Indeed, some have taken part in moral suasion campaigns to convert people back to heterosexuality, and others have supported political activity aimed at blocking same-sex marriage and adoption rights.

Vietnam and Antiwar Protests

Along with multiple campaigns to secure rights, many activists struggled against the American involvement in the Vietnam War. Religiously inspired antiwar protest involved many believers outside traditionally pacifist groups, such as the Quakers or Mennonites. Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish clergy, as well as religious organizations began to mobilize against the war. In 1965 a group of Protestants founded Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam. In 1966 the American Catholic bishops warned against the country's continued involvement in the conflict. Individual clergy and laypeople mounted a variety of protests, some quite dramatic. In 1965 Baltimore Quaker Norman Morrison followed the precedent set by some Vietnamese Buddhist monks and immolated himself in front of the Department of Defense. In 1968 Catholic priests Daniel and Philip Berrigan offered a public protest by burning their draft cards. Protest against the war took a variety of inspirations and forms among laypeople. For instance, some Americans turned not only to Jewish and Christian traditions, but also to Gandhian pacifism for inspiration. Some

religious protestors aligned themselves with the counterculture, while others did not. Antiwar young people involved in Baptist Students Concerned, for example, wore traditional clothes and stayed well groomed in order to get a hearing among their more conservative Baptist counterparts.

Although 1960s movements certainly settled down by the 1970s, the rifts they had exposed continued to pose challenges. Indeed, Americans struggled in the aftermath of social reform achievements. A desegregated country with equal rights extended to more of the population, at least in theory, prompted new questions about citizenship. How would the populace adjust to African Americans' newfound electoral influence? How would more women moving into the workplace affect family life? Would a new surge of immigration change the sense of national identity? Once again, people drew on religious resources and mounted reform campaigns, particularly to confront issues such as abortion, sexuality, and globalization.

Conservative Activism

The Supreme Court's 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade* declared that the right to privacy made federal and state restrictions on abortion unconstitutional. Roman Catholics had provided the only consistent religious voice against abortion, but after *Roe* more conservative Protestants joined them in public activism. Indeed, the decision made possible a new coalition of Catholics and Protestants. Citing religious inspiration, reformers began to act, lobbying Congress, proposing constitutional amendments, and mounting demonstrations, often near women's health clinics. The most prominent reform movement working to reverse *Roe*, Operation Rescue, gained a huge membership of Protestants and Catholics in the 1980s. The organization gained national prominence in 1991 during massive demonstrations, which they called a Summer of Mercy, in Wichita, Kansas.

Abortion proved to be one of a constellation of issues that conservative religious leaders used to mobilize their followers into greater and more sophisticated reforming political activity. In 1979 three organizations—the Moral Majority, the Christian Voice, and the Religious Roundtable—began their work aimed at shared concerns over homosexuality, evolution, and school prayer. These groups tapped existing membership resources and pockets of discontent, providing Americans a sense of order and way to make a difference. The ability of leaders such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson to channel their followers' reform energies became clear in events such as the 1980 Washington for Jesus Day. At the

rally, leaders showed strong support for Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan over Democrat and evangelical Christian Jimmy Carter. As alignment with the Republican Party grew closer, these conservative Protestants, often identified as the Religious Right or the New Christian Right, expanded their list of moral concerns to include taxation, national defense, and school vouchers.

Over time, conservative religious leaders moved beyond lobbying and grassroots organizing to a new level of influence in the electoral process. After a failed presidential bid in 1988, conservative minister Pat Robertson founded the Christian Coalition (CC). Along with Ralph Reed, Robertson turned the coalition into a major platform for conservative Christian social concerns. The CC worked primarily in the areas of lobbying and voter education. Scholars in both religious studies and political science debate the impact of conservative religious voters at the ballot box, though the question is not whether they have had influence, but instead how much. Activities to shape voting continue to be a key strategy. For instance, in 2000 the CC claimed to have distributed seventy million voter guides across the country. Other conservative religious groups have been key players in supporting hotly contested ballot initiatives on gay marriage, teaching evolution, and abortion.

Many conservative religious organizations concentrate on family issues. The late 1970s and 1980s saw the beginning of groups such as the American Family Association, Focus on the Family, Family Research Council, and Concerned Women of America. Group members have promoted public activism on issues related to traditional family life and gender roles. They soon moved toward advocacy on other issues. The American Family Association, to take one example, has encouraged members to object to a Hindu offering a prayer before a session of the U.S. Congress. They have also lobbied Congress in opposition to the National Endowment for the Arts. Focus on the Family encourages activism regarding judicial appointments and stem cell research.

Some scholars predict that the Religious Right has already lost or soon will lose its political power, but the movement's fate is unclear. It has lost some key leaders. Falwell died in 2007. Robertson and Reed are no longer at the CC. Nevertheless, conservative Christian activism on social issues continues. Younger evangelicals articulate an even stronger commitment to pro-life issues than did their parents, even as they show more openness to same-sex marriage. Indeed, the mix of religious activists and the issues taken up might simply be changing. One example of this is

the coalition of Mormons, Catholics, Protestant evangelicals, and conservative blacks and Latinos who backed the victorious 2008 California ballot initiative against gay marriage.

Liberal Activism

Although conservative religious activists' participation in reform movements has drawn considerable attention, liberals have also carved out a much smaller niche in the world of religious social reform. Mainline Protestants have maintained a strong lobbying presence in Washington. In some cases, left-leaning groups draw on the same evangelical heritage as their more conservative counterparts to better inspire public activism. Movements such as Sojourners in Washington, D.C. have advocated for a variety of causes, including immigrant rights, assistance for the impoverished, and urban concerns. These activists made a major impact in their work to assist Central American refugees fleeing conflicts in the 1980s. Although liberal groups have struggled to gain traction, their influence may be growing. Christian groups (such as the Red-Letter Christians) and practitioners of other traditions, such as engaged Buddhists, are putting an emphasis on assisting people at society's margins and serving as public voice for religious concern.

Whether conservative or liberal, myriad groups are active in the public sphere hoping to affect change through a variety of methods. Many movements aimed at radical transformations. Civil rights reformers sought to overturn the standing political order. Pro-life activists continue to advocate significant legal change that would affect women nationwide. Although political activity such as lobbying and electoral influence has clearly dominated in recent years, campaigns directed at moral suasion and humanitarian assistance continue.

New Challenges

Several areas of social reform continued to attract attention in the early twenty-first century. As noted earlier, issues of sexuality have been at the heart of social reform activity since the 1960s. As the issue of gay and lesbian rights continues to prompt debate, patterns of religious activism seem to be shifting. Traditional conservative groups continue to draw support from Mormons, evangelicals, and conservative Catholics in their fight against gay marriage. Yet younger members of these religious groups show much more ambivalence toward same-sex marriage than the older generation, suggesting that the issue might possess less relevance in future elections. Moreover, even as religious activists continue

efforts to shape public opinion and exert influence in the political process, other reformers are adopting new means of reform. Studies of the gay movement reveal that some activists work at the ground level, offering residential programs and advocating more traditional lifestyles to those concerned with issues of sexual identity.

Environmentalism and its potential connections to religious communities also garners scholarly attention. Some environmentalists have cited religious inspiration for their activism since the 1960s. Formal groups, such as the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, have advocated for new policies and practices. As the message becomes increasingly popular, scholars seek to understand how the movement is appropriated at the ground level, asking whether people cite religious inspiration and utilize religious networks to support anticonsumerism activism, lobbying for stricter environmental regulations, and participation in a variety of smaller movements, such as Slow Food and localism. Scholars also look for new sorts of alliances that defy older pattern of religious alignment.

Most significantly, issues of pluralism and globalization stand as serious challenges. The 1965 Hart-Cellar Act ended quotas that restricted immigration from several parts of the globe. Over the next few decades, changing immigration trends created a much more diverse American populace. Advances in communications technologies have made connection to the rest of the planet easier, if not necessary. Religious activists have enacted a variety of responses, ranging from anti-immigrant tirades to paeans to the interconnected planet. No matter whether groups were concerned or pleased about these changes, increased diversity and global ties have brought cultural and economic changes to American life.

Religious groups have responded vocally the nation's increased diversity, including the impact it has had on religious life. For some activists, religious pluralism threatens cherished notions of America as a Christian or Judeo-Christian nation. These activists sense that they must respond to polling data that shows Christianity on the decline in the United States. For these reformers, symbolic episodes take on major importance. For instance, many reacted to the 2006 election of a Muslim to the U.S. House of Representatives. Debates over representations of the Ten Commandments in courts of law across the country have attracted considerable attention. At other times, this activism impacts the everyday world, particularly in the vocal opposition to new immigration and the naturalization of legal resident aliens.

For other citizens, religious ideology and practice prompts an open attitude toward pluralism. Others, especially religious minorities, look to the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of religion as a lodestone for claims for tolerance and equality. Activists of this persuasion support legal freedoms to practice a broad array of religions. They also seek to educate the wider public about minority religious faiths. The Jewish Anti-Defamation League has a long tradition of this work. Newer immigrant groups have joined the effort as well. Muslim groups such as the Council on American Islamic Relations and the Muslim Public Affairs Council work on rights protection and against stereotyping. Hindu organizations such as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in America and the Hindu American Foundation also work on issues of public representation of India and Hinduism.

Interpreting Movements

Leaders or approving followers wrote the earliest histories of most social reform movements. Antebellum reformers often wrote detailed memoirs of their work. Their close colleagues eulogized them in print soon after their deaths. Later, scholars sympathetic to these movements relied heavily on these accounts to write the first histories of various social reform movements. These works usually included discussions of participants' religious ideals and reflections on movements' successes and cultural impact. They assumed the connection between religion and social reform, dwelling on theology and ethics, sometimes with references to the Holy Spirit as a reform energizer. Scholarly work that combined a sensitivity to religious impulses that shaped reform and a commitment to the importance to understanding a movement's cultural context was long in coming. However, the evolution of scholarship on social reform reflects increasingly sophisticated attempts to understand movements' historical contexts, the religious and cultural influences that shaped activist campaigns, and the ambiguous legacy left by social reformers. Indeed, scholars have begun to ask why certain situations struck reformers as wrong, why they thought they could amend the problems, and what influences shaped their responses. In the end, they have shown that reformers were both maddening in their often-patronizing zeal for change, but also heroic in their dedication to changing some of the nation's most cruel practices and institutions.

Literature on social reform includes brilliant studies of individual reform movements. Some of the most important studies, however, have attempted to synthesize outbursts of reform in the antebellum and Progressive eras. Alice Felt

Tyler's 1944 study of antebellum reform, *Freedom's Ferment*, emphasized reformers' strong commitment to human freedom and faith in progress. Reform movements, she argued, reflected a strong impulse to spread the social goods of freedom to all, including the unfortunate. A perfected social structure would make freedom's full possibilities more widely available. Timothy Smith's 1957 work, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, extended Tyler's argument about reformers' faith in progress, but tied it to evangelical religion and perfectionist theology advanced in the Second Great Awakening. For Smith, reforms were shaped significantly by debates about sanctification. In short, just how good could you expect people and society to be? Was true holiness and perfection possible? How reformers answered these questions affected their reforming stances and strategies.

The 1960s and 1970s ushered in heated debate about reformers' intentions and goals. The question nagging historians was whether reformers used religious vision and inspiration to obscure their desire for social control. For historians advocating this thesis, reformers participated in moral suasion campaigns, and sometimes humanitarian ministries, to secure their position in society and exert control over the popular masses. Some scholars countered that though reformers certainly exhibited paternalism in some of their activities, their efforts to educate, spread religion, and promote moral living reflected their adjustment to the post-Revolutionary situation and effort to achieve social stability, rather than a sinister plot to control the nation. Debates on this question continue, especially as historians take up poststructuralist critiques made by thinkers such as Michel Foucault, who argued that the reformers' founding institutions, including the school, the prison, and the asylum, shaped subjectivity in a manner that pushed normalization, if not control.

Another important subset of reform historiography concentrates on reform's connection to broad trends in American history, especially the growth of market capitalism and secularization. For instance, Thomas Haskell has argued that the humanitarian sensibility that served as an engine for religious reform activity was profoundly shaped by the way in which market discipline began to permeate life in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Another example is Ronald Walter's 1978 book, *American Reformers*. Walters surveys the variety of antebellum reform movements, arguing that they became increasingly secular over time. He cites the trend toward institutions, bureaucracy, and professionalism as evidence. To be sure, these authors do not discount the

importance of religion to reformers. Walters, especially, details the ideas and practices that informed antebellum activists. Still, they explore the way religion itself changed over the course of reforming movements' developments.

In more recent monographs, scholars have made an effort to show how religion constituted one of many cultural factors that shaped people's understanding of what needed reform and how reform ought to be achieved. Scholars look at religious inspiration and impulse in relationship to politics, race, regional difference, gender constructs, and economic change. The studies of individual movements in this vein have multiplied, offering readers nuanced and complex accounts of how reformers were shaped by their context and how they in turn shaped their environment. One important work of synthesis in this vein is Robert Abzug's 1994 book, *Cosmos Crumbling*. Religion, Abzug argued, is at the heart of American reform. It is not, however, separate from issues such as politics, economics, and race relations. Rather, reformers tried to make religious sense of the world around them, a world that was rapidly changing, if not disintegrating, before them. Abzug emphasized the creativity reformers displayed as they shaped new cosmologies, or religious worldviews, that spoke to the social challenges they faced.

Interestingly, the most recent scholarship has made a turn back to the personal or internal reality, as opposed to cultural study. There is no trace, however, of the older assumption that religions serve as automatic energizers of reform. These readings of religion are much more ambiguous. For instance, scholars have asked why religion sometimes serves to mobilize people to seek change and at other times promotes defensive responses aimed at community protection. David Chappell's work on civil rights is a fine example, or in another new line of inquiry, scholars have finally recognized that activity for social reform is the exception rather than the rule. Most Americans have not participated in movements to change the world. At the same time, the vast majority of Americans describe themselves as religious. What is there about religion and what about particular social situations drives some to look to religion as a source for dealing with the world's problems?

All of these questions have inspired a long record of reflection on reform movements, but more is needed on the unspoken assumption behind it all: the idea that reform is a quintessentially Anglo-American, Protestant activity. Indeed, the nation's revival-minded Protestant ethos and voluntaristic religious context has combined to create what Catherine Albanese has called a public Protestantism marked by

moralism and activism. Some would argue that the increased diversity of religious voices in social reform campaigns undermines Albanese's claim and evidences a kind of post-Protestant reality. The nation now boasts Muslims active in social reform. In Los Angeles, thousands of Muslims feed the homeless as a way to honor the holy month of Ramadan. Other scholars, however, would interpret this example in quite the opposite way. They would retort that religious minorities working to shape the public culture have been assimilated into America's Protestant propensity for bringing religion into debates about public life. Are American Hindus writing policy briefs on school prayer simply participating in the Protestant-informed practice of bringing religion into the arena of what many people consider to be worldly concerns? Or is social reform in the twenty-first century bound to be transformed by the new social questions that will appear and the diverse array of believers who will address them?

See also *Abolition and Antislavery; Abortion; African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; America, Religious Interpretations of; Benevolent Empire; City Missions; Feminism; Latino American Religion: Struggles for Justice; Philanthropy; Populism; Progressivism; Prohibition; Religious Press; Religious Right; Same-Gender Marriage; Settlement Houses; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Social Ethics; Social Gospel; Women.*

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Sociological Approaches

During the twentieth century, sociologists made an enduring contribution to the field of religion in America. From Robert Bellah and Peter Berger to Robert Wuthnow and Nancy Ammerman, sociologists have earned a place in the canon of religious studies. Without their theories, concepts, and findings, scholarship on American culture would look very different than it does in the early twenty-first century.

Standard dictionary definitions of *sociological* usually include words like *social structure*, *institution*, *organization*, and *society*. Such definitions do not convey the richness of sociology as an intellectual tradition. More helpful are the mid-twentieth-century works of sociologists Peter Berger (*Invitation to Sociology*, 1963) and C. Wright Mills (*The Sociological Imagination*, 1959). Such works depict sociology as a

style of thinking that questions taken-for-granted assumptions about the social world. Berger writes that the first truth of sociology is that “things are not what they seem,” warning that people who choose to believe that society is what they were taught in school should beware. This interrogation of taken-for-granted assumptions is at the center of Berger and Thomas Luckmann’s theory of the social construction of reality (1967), which highlights the ways people create their own worlds and promptly forget that they have done so. There and elsewhere, the sociological perspective is shot through with irony, emphasizing the unintended consequences of social action. From Max Weber’s early twentieth-century account of Protestantism as its own gravedigger to David Riesman’s lonely conformists of the 1950s, the work of sociologists has highlighted the ironic character of human social life.

Historians pride themselves on their narrative artistry. Yet as James Spickard reminds us, sociologists are also storytellers, recognizing that “data make sense only when they are embedded in a story that gives them meaning.” Sometimes this storytelling is expressed in grand narratives such as secularization and the decline of community. While many of these stories have fallen into disfavor, they continue to inspire lively debates. More nuanced variants take into account the diversity of national and cultural contexts, as well as the insights of historians. Most of these stories are rooted in the tradition of European sociology. Sociologist Margaret Somers calls them the “metanarratives of modernity.”

The European Inheritance

Sociology began as a response to the changes of modernity. In *The Sociological Tradition* (1966), Robert Nisbet describes how the founders of European sociology attempted to make sense of the twin revolutions of democracy and industrialization. New words like *individualism*, *bureaucracy*, and *ideology* provided the conceptual buildings blocks for such classic sociological narratives as urbanization and modernization. These stories were often told through paired opposites like tradition and modernity, the individual and the community, and the sacred and the profane. According to American sociologist Joseph Gusfield, such dualisms offer dramatic metaphors for sociological storytelling.

Almost all of these grand narratives were created to describe European societies. Though nineteenth-century America had its own sociological thinkers, the Social Darwinism of William Graham Sumner and the pro-slavery writings of southern agrarians have been largely forgotten.

Progressive-era Christian sociology reminds us of the liberal Protestant impulse in early American social science, but it is more focused on Christianizing society than on the study of American religious institutions. Fortunately for the development of American sociology, several European social thinkers incorporated American religion into their most famous works. Such texts have played a key role in adapting a European discipline to the American context.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European travelers such as Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, Harriet Martineau, and Anthony Trollope recorded their impressions of American society. The most famous of these visitors was the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville. Religion figures prominently in *Democracy in America* (1835), de Tocqueville's seminal analysis of American culture. During his 1831–1832 tour, de Tocqueville spoke with an impressive range of Americans, including former president John Quincy Adams, Catholic statesman Charles Carroll, and William Ellery Channing, the same Unitarian thinker who later caught the imagination of the young Max Weber. Impressed by the vitality of American churches and religious voluntary organizations, de Tocqueville did not emphasize the theme of secularization, focusing instead on the progress of democracy.

One of the giants of European sociological theory, Max Weber came to America in 1904, paying a visit to his cousins in North Carolina. There in rural Appalachia, he witnessed an outdoor baptism. Like de Tocqueville, Weber was impressed by American piety. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905), he portrayed America as the most modern of nations, describing the transformation of Puritan asceticism into the iron cage of capitalism. Quoting liberally from Benjamin Franklin, he argued that capitalism had reached its apex in America. Without de Tocqueville, Weber, and the works of Émile Durkheim and Karl Marx, twentieth-century American scholars would have had fewer resources for developing an indigenous approach to the sociology of religion.

Recurring Storylines in the Sociology of American Religion

Sociologists have used multiple stories to describe American religion. Recognizing this diversity of approaches, James Spickard (2006) discusses six storylines that dominate contemporary scholarship: secularization, religious markets, fundamentalism, religious reorganization, individualization, and globalization. In Spickard's analysis, the stories of fundamentalism and religious markets are depicted as challengers

to secularization. Taking a similar approach, sociologist Nancy Ammerman focuses on the rise and fall of the secularization narrative, calling it a central myth for the discipline. The decline of community has also emerged as a key story in the sociology of religion and the social sciences more broadly. Others have identified race, immigration, and gender as fruitful sites for sociological storytelling.

Secularization and Religious Mobilization

More than any other storyline, secularization has dominated sociological analyses of American religion. Beginning with the founders of the discipline, sociologists have highlighted the tensions between religion and modernity, advancing an evolutionary approach to the development of human culture.

Often described as a single theory, secularization is best viewed as a cluster of social processes that are loosely connected to each other. These include such master concepts as *privatization* (the confinement of religion to the private sphere), *differentiation* (the separation of religion from other social institutions), and *rationalization* (the triumph of economic and scientific rationality).

Since its publication in 1969, Peter Berger's *The Sacred Canopy* has defined the secularization narrative in American sociology. Drawing on European classical theory, Berger chronicled the eclipse of the sacred in Judaism and Christianity, repeating Weber's claim that Protestantism contained the seeds of its own destruction. He also focused on pluralism and diversity, seeing competition as a threat to religious faith. In the 1960s, Berger predicted the gradual decline of religious belief and the disappearance of faith from public life.

Ironically, the golden age of secularization theory began immediately following the postwar revival of religion. Though the revival had waned by the mid-1960s, Americans continued to attend church at rates substantially higher than did their European counterparts. Belief in God remained well above 90 percent. As early as 1972, the persistence of these high levels of religiosity led Andrew Greeley to declare secularization a myth, a claim repeated by Jeffrey Hadden in 1987. Though recent scholarship suggests that American church attendance statistics may be inflated, they are higher than those in most of the developed world.

Yet for many secularization theorists, it was never about church attendance. Such scholars focused instead on the decreasing significance of religion in American society. They emphasized the withdrawal of religious symbols and meanings from government, higher education, science, and the

media. Still others have called attention to the secular character of American religiosity. In *The Noise of Solemn Assemblies* (1961), Berger took American churches to task for their conformity to mainstream culture, echoing Will Herberg's indictment of the American way of life. Together with the theologian Martin Marty, he identified a central paradox: the postwar religious revival took place in a society committed to this-worldly values. Influenced by neo-orthodox theology, such scholars viewed the emergence of religion in general as an idolatrous compromise with secular culture.

Well into the 1980s, sociologists and historians continued to affirm the plausibility of the secularization narrative. According to a 1993 Yale University survey, 55 percent of American religion scholars agreed that secularization was a dominant trend. Yet by the twenty-first century, it had fallen on hard times. The rise of the new Christian Right in the 1970s and 1980s made it more difficult to accept secularization theory's emphasis on the declining influence of faith. The same was true of the global resurgence of Islam. As José Casanova documented in *Public Religions in the Modern World* (1994), religion had escaped from the private sphere. Berger acknowledged that his earlier predictions were mistaken.

In 1993 R. Stephen Warner proclaimed the emergence of a "new paradigm" in the sociology of religion. Warner portrayed *mobilization* as the master process of American religion, and *revival* and *routinization* as master narratives. Instead of comparing modern America with medieval Christendom, Warner turned his attention to the Second Great Awakening and subsequent revivals. In *A Church of Our Own* (2005), he identified several new paradigm histories, including Nathan Hatch's *The Democratization of American Christianity* (1989), Jon Butler's *Awash in a Sea of Faith* (1992), and Grant Wacker's *Heaven Below* (2003). Such works stressed the role of pluralism, adaptation, and innovation in American religion.

In *The Churching of America* (1990 and 2005), sociologists Roger Finke and Rodney Stark offered a controversial account of the mobilization storyline. In a novel analysis of existing statistical data (including the various waves of the United States Census of Religious Bodies), they documented a two-hundred-year increase in American church membership, a finding that has been disputed by several historians. Especially contentious was their claim that American religious history should be told as a story of winners and losers in a competitive market.

Influenced by Finke and Stark, some scholars have used economic theories to analyze American religion. According to this market model, religion is most likely to flourish in

situations of vigorous competition and to languish under religious monopolies. While many have embraced the market model, many others have rejected its economic view of human nature. Though empirical evidence for its claims remains inconclusive, works such as *Shopping for Faith* (Cimino and Lattin, 2002) and *Religion in a Free Market* (Kosmin and Keysar, 2006) continue to reflect this approach. Such marketing can be seen in the realm of American popular culture where entrepreneurs use new technologies to promote religious faith. From the nineteenth century to the early twenty-first, religion has influenced the development of the American media.

Ironically, some scholars rejected secularization just as more sophisticated versions of the theory became available. In *The Secular Revolution* (2003), Christian Smith has provided an historically grounded account of the secularization of American institutions, reconceptualizing this transformation as a social movement. In *On Secularization* (2005), David Martin has replaced the grand narrative of secularization with several overlapping stories. Expanding his comparative treatment of European and American societies, he has highlighted the importance of geography and religious tradition, echoing S. N. Eisenstadt's focus on multiple modernities. In the United States, this realization has led to a greater focus on the regional variations in American religion. More globally, it has led scholars such as Grace Davie to speak of European exceptionalism.

Today the secularization concept is largely absent from textbooks in American religious history, though the same is not true in sociology. In spite of its shortcomings, secularization theory remains a dominant storyline. Even its critics acknowledge that modern societies have undergone a process of social differentiation, resulting in the segregation of religious institutions from other parts of social life. What is more, new data from the General Social Surveys and the American Religious Identification Survey suggests that the percentage of Americans with no religious affiliation may be growing. Such findings show that claims of secularization theory's demise may be premature.

Cultural Conflict and Class Differences

Recent scholarship portrays the return of conservative religion as yet another key disciplinary narrative. While the rise of evangelicalism has spawned an enormous literature, it is rooted in two overlapping narratives that have an even longer history in the discipline: the story of cultural conflict and the story of class differences. According to sociologist

Thaddeus Coreno, these storylines represent two ways of mapping American religious groups. While the culture model stresses the beliefs and practices that divide Americans, the class model ties these divisions to differences in social standing. Very often these stories are combined. Though such narratives have taken many forms, their origins lie in a century-long conversation about the ways that religious organizations relate to their social environments.

Beginning with Weber, sociologists have written about the relationship between sectarian groups and the modern world. Impressed by the prosperity of North Carolina Baptists, Weber described how Protestant “sects” bolstered the business reputations of their members by embracing a strict morality. In *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (1912), German theologian Ernst Troeltsch extended Weber’s analysis, contrasting the countercultural attitude of sects with the looser ethics of more established religions (which he and Weber labeled “churches”). Troeltsch’s third category of “mysticism” described more individualistic forms of religion that could be found outside formal religious institutions. This comparison of sects, churches, and mysticism paved the way for future maps of American religion.

Building on Weber and Troeltsch, early twentieth-century neo-orthodox theologian H. Richard Niebuhr applied church and sect theory to the United States. In *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929), Niebuhr linked these organizational categories to social class, producing one of the first socioeconomic rankings of religious groups. At the bottom of the social ladder he put the more countercultural sects, which he dubbed the “churches of the disinherited.” Implicit in Niebuhr’s analysis was the assumption that Protestant sects provided an emotional haven for the poor and oppressed.

Following World War II, scholars developed this insight into deprivation theory, locating the emergence of sectarian religious groups in economic, political, and psychological distress. According to Sean McCloud, deprivation became the dominant framework for making sense of religion and social class, most notably in analyses of Holiness and Pentecostal groups. In recent decades, such scholarship has come under fire for its condescending view of sectarian religion. Despite these limitations, it had a major influence on such postwar classics as Will Herberg’s *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* (1955, 1960). Both Herberg and historian William McLoughlin were influenced by Union Seminary President Henry Van Dusen’s articles on the third force in American Christianity, which relegated Pentecostals and other sectarian movements

to the religious fringe. According to Herberg, the sects would remain on the sidelines of religious life, confined to the lower reaches of American society. Though such scholarship proved spectacularly wrong, its focus on conservative Protestantism anticipated the explosion of scholarship on evangelicalism that emerged in the 1980s.

One of the first scholars to take evangelicalism seriously was Dean Kelley, an executive with the National Council of Churches and the author of *Why Conservative Churches are Growing* (1972). Arguing that strict religious groups were more likely to thrive, Kelley cited earlier scholarship on American sects. According to Kelley, sectarian groups had experienced the most dramatic growth.

In *American Evangelicalism* (1983), James Davison Hunter used the secularization storyline to analyze the accommodation of conservative Protestants to contemporary culture. According to Hunter, evangelicalism’s lower-middle-class location in the rural South and Midwest had insulated it from the process of modernization. Because of this demographic isolation, evangelicals were able to maintain a conservative worldview. As they moved into the college-educated professions, younger evangelicals would adjust their beliefs. Other studies were more hopeful about the capacity of conservative Protestants to thrive in twentieth-century America, including Nancy Ammerman’s *Bible Believers* (1987). Seeing more room for resistance, she documented the unwillingness of fundamentalists to separate faith from life. Similarly, Stephen Warner’s *New Wine in Old Wineskins* (1991) portrayed evangelicalism as a dynamic movement, capable of reviving American congregations from within. Locating his study of a small-town church within the lineage of Weber, Niebuhr, and Troeltsch, Warner argued that evangelicalism was where the action was in American Protestantism. Christian Smith portrayed conservative Protestants as *engaged yet distinctive*. According to Smith, sociologists need not see modern pluralism and evangelical distinctiveness as incompatible. Instead, the conservative Protestant encounter with religious pluralism has made it stronger.

In sharp contrast to the vitality of evangelicalism, liberal Protestantism has experienced a dramatic decrease in power and visibility. This declension story has been told in countless works on the crisis, decline, and disestablishment of the Protestant mainline (a tradition that includes such denominations as the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church USA, the United Church of Christ, and the Disciples of Christ). Explanations for this decline have focused on the ambiguity

of liberal theology, decreases in fertility, the gap between clergy and laity, and the secularization of liberal Protestant colleges. Ironically, the term *mainline* did not become popular until after the movement was already losing its influence. Borrowed from a phrase describing the affluent suburbs west of Philadelphia, it was a shorthand way of describing the Protestant upper class. In *The Protestant Establishment* (1964), sociologist E. Digby Baltzell in 1964 chronicled the rise and fall of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) elite. More recent studies have found that liberal Protestants are still overrepresented at the upper levels of American society and maintain an active presence in American public life. Others have focused on pockets of vitality in mainline denominations, identifying clusters of practices conducive to strengthening religious congregations.

The different trajectories of conservative and liberal denominations have led sociologists to examine the internal divisions within American Protestantism. Following earlier work on American denominations, they have developed more sophisticated maps of the Protestant spectrum. While rejecting church-sect theory as conceptually unworkable, these cartographers have continued to be influenced by Weber and Niebuhr, emphasizing the tensions between religion and American society. In *American Mainline Religion* (1987), sociologists Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney classified Protestant denominations into liberal, moderate, and conservative camps, reporting systematic differences in moral and political attitudes. Updating Niebuhr's ranking of religious groups, they traced the shifting socioeconomic status of American denominations. Though conservative Protestants improved their social standing between 1929 and 1987, they still ranked below adherents of more liberal denominations. In *The Restructuring of American Religion* (1989), Robert Wuthnow described the emergence of liberal/conservative divisions *within* Protestant denominations. Many of these divisions were attributable to differences in education, with college-educated respondents reporting more liberal views.

While political scientists uncovered religious cleavages within the electorate, sociologists analyzed conflicts over morality and culture. In 1991, James Davison Hunter's *Culture's Wars* depicted an America engaged in "culture wars"—divided between orthodox and progressive camps. This interpretation went on to shape American political discourse, including conservative Pat Buchanan's speech to the 1992 Republican Convention. Many scholars have criticized the culture wars storyline for missing the complexity of American religion.

Rejecting liberal/conservative conceptions of religion and politics, they have constructed new maps which incorporate multiple axes of comparison. Still others have attempted to disentangle cultural conflicts from social class, emphasizing the presence of conservative and liberal attitudes at all levels of society. While Smith reports that self-identified evangelicals have achieved socioeconomic parity with other religious groups, Michael Lindsay has chronicled the emergence of an evangelical elite. The growth of the evangelical left has further complicated this debate.

It is an open question how well such maps fit non-Protestant religious groups. Scholars have explored the subcultures of the Catholic right and left. Yet for the most part, students of American Catholicism have focused on the vast middle. While sociologist Andrew Greeley has acknowledged the existence of a Catholic culture war, he has emphasized the support of the laity for a pluralistic church. With the exception of an earlier literature on working-class authoritarianism, scholars have not attributed the conservatism of the Catholic right to class.

Sociologists of American Judaism have frequently used a left-right spectrum to map the continuum of Jewish denominations (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox). Historically, these divisions were correlated with social standing. Focusing on the nineteenth century, scholars have noted the socioeconomic differences between German American Jews (who tended to be Reform) and their Eastern European counterparts (who were frequently identified as Orthodox). Sociological accounts of the rise of the Conservative movement link this twentieth-century development to the growth of the Jewish middle class. More recently, sociologists have used the story of modernization to make sense of the resurgence of Orthodox Judaism. In *Tradition in a Rootless World* (1993), Lynn Davidman compares female converts to Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox Judaism, showing how Jewish women combine aspects of tradition and modernity.

This emphasis on the traditional *and* modern aspects of conservative religion can be found in more recent studies of evangelical women. In *God's Daughters* (2000), R. Marie Griffith writes about the paradox of submission, emphasizing both its liberating and its oppressive dimensions. Noting the emergence of more egalitarian forms of evangelicalism, others stress the fluid character of evangelical family life. While continuing to endorse conservative gender roles, evangelical families defy simple categorization. In *Religion and Family in a Changing Society* (2005), Penny Edgell documents models of family life that transcend left/right dichotomies.

Despite signs of convergence, real ideological cleavages remain in American culture. A 2006 University of Minnesota study documented negative attitudes toward atheism and agnosticism among the general public, despite the growth in the religiously nonaffiliated group. Likewise, social class continues to matter in American religion. Several recent studies show that American denominations remain divided by socioeconomic status. In this sense, little has changed since the days of H. Richard Niebuhr.

What has changed is the way that scholars approach these divisions. While earlier studies focused almost exclusively on the emotionalism of working-class sects, more recent works examine how marginalized groups use religion as a tool of resistance. Research on religion and the civil rights movement reveals the centrality of the black church in the struggle for racial justice. In *Faith in Action* (2002), Richard Wood describes the role of religious community organizers in fostering social change. McCloud's *Divine Hierarchies* (2007) discusses the ways that social class both constrains and enables religious groups. Such studies are a vast improvement over the reductionist approaches of the past.

Community and Individualism

The decline of community narrative has been a part of the sociology of American culture since de Tocqueville's time. To be sure, de Tocqueville was not alone in chronicling the demise of premodern communities. Ferdinand Tönnies wrote of the transition from *gemeinschaft* (community) to *gesellschaft* (society), Émile Durkheim traced the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity. Similarly, Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912) described the connections between ritual and social solidarity, showing the ways that religion unites social groups.

During the postwar era, a cottage industry of works explored what Maurice Stein called the "eclipse of community." Such studies focused on factory towns and rural villages, southern communities and urban neighborhoods. In *Community and Social Change in America* (1982), Thomas Bender described a similar literature in the discipline of history. What these scholars had in common was the view that modernity was eroding the basis for social connection and belonging, including religious institutions.

In *Democracy in America*, de Tocqueville portrayed religion as an antidote to individualism. The same approach can be found in neo-Tocquevillian accounts of American culture. In *Habits of the Heart* (1985), Robert Bellah and his colleagues discuss the role of the biblical and civic republican traditions

in counteracting individualism. Such arguments recapitulate Bellah's earlier work on American civil religion, which portrayed the symbols and rituals of the nation as a source of shared meaning. This approach could also be seen in sociologist W. Lloyd Warner's Neo-Durkheimian treatment of Memorial Day in *The Living and the Dead* (1959).

Catholic communitarianism has long been viewed as a counterweight to the dominance of Protestant individualism, an argument most recently articulated in Greeley's *The Catholic Imagination* (2000). At the same time, many scholars question whether American Catholics continue to hold to a communitarian orientation, highlighting the impact of assimilation. Tracing the journey of American Catholics from the urban, immigrant ghettos to the postwar suburbs, the sociological literature is full of what Robert Orsi calls "from-to narratives." This modernist storyline can be found in scholarship on post-Vatican II Catholics that describes the fluidity of belief in an individualistic society. A similar literature has explored the impact of individualism on American Jews, arguing that Jewish identity is increasingly a private pursuit with little impact on public life. Analyzing the influence of assimilation on the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of European immigrants, others have chronicled the fading of ethnic identity. In *Ethnic Options* (1990), Mary Waters discusses the emergence of *optional ethnicity*, a form of belonging that demands little and offers less. Exploring similar territory, Herbert Gans coined the terms *symbolic ethnicity* and *symbolic religion* to describe the weak forms of community he observed in postwar America.

Though rooted in the linear narrative of assimilation, such changes could also be interpreted as an outgrowth of a wider transformation in American culture from a "spirituality of dwelling" to a "spirituality of seeking" (see Robert Wuthnow's *After Heaven* for a discussion of this shift). Since the 1990s, sociologists have developed a more sympathetic analysis of religious individualism, even as historians have rediscovered the nineteenth-century roots of metaphysical and alternative religions. In *Spiritual Marketplace* (2001), sociologist Wade Clark Roof analyzed the spiritual quest of the baby boom generation, arguing that Americans can remain anchored in tradition while exploring a range of religious options. Taking a similar approach, Michele Dillon and Paul Wink have explored the capacity of Americans to combine religious commitment with personal autonomy. Focusing on the changing locus of religious authority, Spickard groups such scholarship under the heading of the individualization narrative.

Though community has often been considered a societal good, many of the classics of postwar sociology warn of the dangers of excessive conformity. Mourning the loss of Protestant individualism, Riesman described the emergence of other-directed individuals in *The Lonely Crowd* (1953). Similar anxieties can also be found in such books as *The Organization Man* (Whyte, 1956) and *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches* (Winter, 1961). During the 1960s and 1970s, this focus on the dark side of community led many to discount the importance of local congregations. Such sentiments led some to abandon traditional religious institutions in favor of a focus on new religious movements. While new religious movements were sometimes portrayed as a response to the loss of community, other scholarship depicted them as an expression of individualism.

In recent years, there has been a renaissance in congregational studies. Much of this scholarship has focused on the themes of community and civic engagement. In particular, Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2001) has spawned a whole literature on the connections between religion and social capital. There and elsewhere, Putnam portrays outward-looking churches as a boon to civic life. Others have examined the impact of religion on volunteerism and civic engagement. Though many are skeptical about the potential for faith-based social services, others stress the efficacy of congregations in addressing poverty, crime, and other social ills. Some of this research has focused on new immigrant congregations. Because immigrants are often disengaged from the political process, scholars are interested in the ways churches and mosques foster civic participation.

It is unclear whether the stories of individualism and community are helpful for understanding the religious lives of America's new immigrants. In particular, the rhetoric of options and choice seems ill suited for those immigrants constrained by the category of race. Though Warner has emphasized the parallels between post-1965 immigrants and their early twentieth-century predecessors, Antony Alumkal and Russell Jeung have highlighted the discontinuities between white European immigrants and people of color. The literature on Asian American and Latino religion has focused on the relative importance of race and ethnicity in constituting religious communities. While some have noted the capacity of congregations to move beyond ethnic differences (what Gerardo Marti calls "ethnic transcendence"), others have focused on the construction of new forms of racial identity. Research on multiracial churches has documented just how rare such congregations continue to be.

Other scholarship has revealed the struggles of Hindus and Buddhists in a predominantly Christian political and legal environment. Last but not least, recent studies of American public opinion have revealed deep-seated stereotypes of Islam, evidence that it is not easy being Muslim in America.

Conclusion: Balancing Lived Religion and the Big Picture

While the sociology of religion remains dominated by grand narratives, another tradition of sociological inquiry eschews sweeping generalizations in favor of the local and particular. Practitioners of this approach strike a more poetic tone, evoking the look and feel of the social world through ethnographic empathy. Sociologist Andrew Abbott calls this approach "lyrical sociology." In the sociology of religion, this more contextual mode of social scientific inquiry can be seen in feminist scholarship and in recent studies of "lived" and "everyday" religion.

In *Feminist Narratives in the Sociology of Religion* (2001), Mary Jo Neitz argues that focusing on women's experiences has exposed the weaknesses of conventional sociological storylines. The British sociologist Linda Woodhead concurs, noting that the turn to the micro-level of social life coincided with the rise of third wave feminism. Historian Ann Braude critiques the gendered assumptions of secularization theory, arguing that its emphasis on the public/private split ignores the religious lives of women. In its place, she suggests a new metanarrative: the increasing power of women in America's religious institutions. Though some scholars have called for the integration of gender into the metanarratives of sociology, others have emphasized the importance of local stories.

Recent scholarship on lived religion goes beyond sociology's stock narratives, focusing on material culture, the body, and popular spirituality. Critiquing the grand narratives of secularization and rational choice theory, such scholars recognize their inability to capture the subtleties of everyday life. Nancy Ammerman's *Everyday Religion* (2007) and Meredith McGuire's *Lived Religion* (2008) have pioneered this approach. Courtney Bender's *Heaven's Kitchen* (2003) is another example of this turn to practice, exploring the role of religion in a New York City soup kitchen. By freeing themselves from the grip of conventional narratives, such scholars have forged new paths in the sociology of religion. Since the 1990s, historians of American religion have experienced a similar shift, summarized in such volumes as David Hall's *Lived Religion in America* (1997). As sociologists move

in the same direction, the possibilities for convergence become all the more promising.

Increasingly mindful of the role of religion in everyday life, sociologists have not forgotten their discipline's mission to understand the big picture. By using survey research to explore the diffusion of religious practices across American society, quantitative sociologists can complement historical and ethnographic scholarship. Though public opinion surveys often miss the complexity of religion on the ground, they are essential for exploring the national religious map. Articulating the need for quantitative analysis, Robert Wuthnow has criticized the literature on American religious history for giving the "impression that Mesmerists were as widespread as Methodists and serpent handlers as common as Baptists." Today sociologists can use the General Social Surveys, the American Religious Identification Survey, the Baylor Religion Survey, and the various Pew surveys to explore the religious make-up of the country. While sometimes plagued by poor response rates and inadequate question wording, they are some of the best tools we have for understanding America's shifting religious demography.

What does the future hold for the sociology of American religion? As the field enters a new century, the best scholarship will be methodologically and theoretically pluralistic, balancing the local with the global, the little stories with the big stories, and the qualitative with the quantitative. Only then will sociologists make sense of the world of American religion.

See also *Civil Religion in the United States*; *Demographics*; *Denominationalism*; *Ecumenism*; *Emotion*; *Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches*; *Feminist Studies*; *Geographical Approaches*; *Historical Approaches*; *History of Religions, Approaches*; *Lived Religion*; *Mainline Protestants*; *Marriage and Family*; *Material Culture, Approaches*; *Philanthropy*; *Polity*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Psychology of Religion*; *Religious Studies*; *Sexuality and Sexual Identity*; *Sociological Approaches*; *Unaffiliated*; *Visual Culture* entries; *Women* entries.

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The South as Region

The boundaries of the South as a region within America stretch across the continent from the Potomac River to the Rio Grande, from Florida to Oklahoma, from the Ohio River to the Gulf of Mexico, from Maryland to Texas. The religious life of the people in that large area, while diverse, differs from many of those that prevail everywhere else. The most visible quality of the South's distinctiveness is the prominence, often the predominance, of one family of Protestant Christianity—evangelical—that transcends denominational limits.

American Religious Life at Large

Generalizations about the religious life of America are hardly irrelevant to considerations of its regions, but they fail to reveal how distinctive each region is. In the South, diversity exists there but also a measure of homogeneity. The region is not typical of the nation at large. (Perhaps the Middle West comes closest in its dominant groups and membership size.)

Probably the most reliable depiction of the South is based on the make-up of the Confederate States of America (CSA), that independent political entity that prevailed during the Civil War, from 1861 to 1865. Eleven states comprised that separate nation; many citizens and sections within the three "border" states of Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri showed strong sympathy with the rebel cause and thus have continued to have a southern identity. However, two of the original eleven states that made up the CSA, Texas and Florida, are no longer suited to inclusion on such a regional list because of the extent of immigrant population both from other parts of the nation and from Latin America.

That geographical territory is the part of the nation that possesses the most complex character. In the words of the historian C. Vann Woodward, the South stands as the only

national section that has ever experienced defeat (or seceded). While there is no doubt that there is a region called “the South,” scrutiny necessitates differentiation along historical, demographic, internal diversity, and political lines, among others.

Examining Protestant Christian denominational patterns, first, assists us in making sense of the “religious South.” (By the early years of the twenty-first century, denominationalism did not occupy the central role in Americans’ religious thinking and choosing as it did for in the past.) Several studies, especially editions of religious atlases published since the 1980s, present us with a vivid picture of the religious life of the entire American population on a county-by-county basis. The map of the South makes clear the pervasive strength of a single denomination: the Baptist. Inherently evangelical, that body, existing in many forms, has set the pace. No other section of the United States, not even a single state, claims comparable Baptist strength or such a concentration of evangelicals.

More broadly, the areas in the United States that have experienced large-scale immigration from heavily Roman Catholic countries in Europe and Latin America are New England, the industrial economies of the Middle West, and the Southwest and California, especially the portions closest to Latin America. The prominence of Methodists across the horizontal central strip of population from Maryland and Virginia to Kansas tells the story of the early passion of that tradition’s ministers and people to claim the frontier for the Christian faith. There is not a Methodist section of the nation, although if there is a national church, Methodism can claim that honor inasmuch as it is easily the most ubiquitous, with churches almost everywhere.

Mormonism blankets the intermountain area of the West, with Utah and Idaho the representative examples; it also holds great strength along the west coast. The upper midwestern states contain a large and influential company of Lutherans. Here, too, immigration tells the story. Many thousands of Scandinavians and Germans brought their Old World faith with them to the Dakotas, Wisconsin, and proximate areas. Other Protestant bodies are found here and there (and “everywhere” in some cases), including Pentecostals, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, the Stone-Campbell restorationist groups (that call themselves simply Christian or Churches of Christ), Holiness, the various radical traditions such as the Mennonite and Brethren bodies (the “peace churches”), and unnamed evangelical communions.

Southern Denominational Patterns

The story of the Baptists deserves thorough examination because of the formidable number of Protestants who bear that name—their standing places them second only to Roman Catholicism nationally in number of adherents. Many different, unconnected Baptist bodies, quite beyond the huge Southern Baptist Convention, are noticeable. Baptists have representation all across the land, but especially so in the South, where they present impressive numbers in county after county, in all classes of the society, and as powerfully among African Americans as among Euro-Americans. Taken together, the Baptist tradition itself and Baptist-like practices and approaches suffuse much of the religious life of the South. It has been said that “in the South, Baptists are the center of gravity.” Many counties in several states report dominance or predominance of that tradition: Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Arkansas, including both African Americans and whites.

At the same time, there are pockets of strength in other religious groups, among them large Catholic numbers in Louisiana and Texas, as well as in Maryland, Kentucky, and Florida. Lutherans abound in the western sections of the Carolinas and Virginia. Historical knowledge illuminates these data: ethnic and national groups settling in particular places, whether hailing from northern migration into the South, or as immigrants from Latin countries, or from internal migration, such as Catholics moving from Maryland to Kentucky in the late eighteenth century.

Virtually all bodies present in the region are scattered, even those that enjoy concentration in a few restricted places. Traditional denominations such as Presbyterian and Episcopal are present in enough quantity and leadership quality to be prominent, often out of proportion to their size.

Many Pentecostal and Holiness groups—those bodies that used to be referred to as the “sects”—are ubiquitous. The names of several such groups have become quite familiar: Assemblies of God, Church of God (the partial or whole title of several mostly white bodies), various Adventist movements, the Church of the Nazarene, the Church of God in Christ, a huge fellowship serving the African American population, the Pentecostal Holiness Church, and many more, not all of them small and isolated by any means.

Evangelical Protestantism

The numerous Baptist bodies, the several Holiness and Pentecostal groups, many Methodists, and some others

deserve, and desire, to be called evangelical. Protestant Christians of this persuasion hold to a conservative orthodoxy, with intense commitment to the authority of scripture; the meaning of Christ's atoning death; the urgency of a personal experience of salvation, with gaining heaven and escaping the eternal punishment of hell a major motive; and the command to live a virtuous life, both in loving neighbor and in abstaining from ungodly practices. While ranking by priority changes from time to time, abstaining from using alcoholic beverages, faithfulness in marriage, and living righteously—also, recently, opposition to abortion and homosexual behavior—are definitive. Evangelical Protestants must know for certain that they have been saved—if not, they have not. They practice a life of intimate relationship with God and they are forthcoming about their identity as Christians, always being ready to testify to having received that gift and longing to share it with others. No qualities surpass those of knowing who (Whose) they are and what is true.

Fundamentalism is a subset of evangelicalism, comprising perhaps 15 percent of that larger community of conservative Protestants. Fundamentalists are devoted to absolutizing truth and staking out their own singular identity. They shun worldliness and are called to live at odds with people and cultures that compromise the truth by holding to relativist, subjectivist, or heretical ways.

The Restorationist Impulse

The Stone–Campbell tradition came into being on a platform of “restorationism,” their aim—and claim—was to restore churches to precisely what the New Testament church taught and how it was organized. These recoverers of such historical purity wanted to be called simply “Christians.” The most aggressive of them went so far as to insist that they were the only company worthy of bearing that label. Simplicity and authenticity were their hallmarks. In line with their reason for being, they called themselves the New Testament church. Indigenous to the American scene, the movement dates back to the early nineteenth century. Its several institutional manifestations have existed in an identifiable way since 1830 or so.

Three resultant bodies have achieved numerical strength and prominence on the national landscape: the Disciples of Christ (Christian Church); the Churches of Christ; and the middle group, the “independent Christian churches,” properly called “the Christian Church and the Churches of Christ.” The first owes its existence to the Campbells,

Thomas and Alexander, father and son, both Scots-Irish by birth. The Disciples of Christ has evolved as the liberal representative within the tradition. The Churches of Christ have roots in the work of Barton W. Stone, from 1810 or so (formed more identifiably three or so decades later). Its heritage has been aggressively conservative. The third offspring means to stand in the middle; its formal dating is 1927. Within recent years it has given rise to a number of mega-churches and has expanded greatly.

While all three have membership in the South, only the Churches of Christ can point to southern origins. Also this brotherhood (it refers to itself as “undenominational”) is the only one of the three that can call the South its heartland. The others display their greatest strength in the Middle West. A number of other (broadly) Protestant bodies indigenous to America would emerge over the next century. This same goal, that of repristinating the church of any postbiblical time, became a concern of many Baptists in the nineteenth century and still enjoys some currency in the twenty-first century.

British Sources

Nearly all the traditional denominations arose from the broad Protestant movements of the British Isles. The Baptist people have roots in English and Welsh soils. Methodism owes its existence to the leadership of Anglican priest brothers, John and Charles Wesley. The Episcopal Church is the American transplant of the Church of England (Anglican). (This religious–political formation had to cope with being the church of the enemy nation during and after the War of American Independence.) Presbyterians were of Scotland. Notwithstanding having become legally British in 1603, they were spared the “enemy” branding since, in spite of the monarchical uniting of England and Scotland, they safeguarded its identity (Church of Scotland) as separate and distinct. (Lutherans and Roman Catholics, both minority bodies in most of the region, had sprung from other times and places.)

This juxtaposition of de jure and de facto—by law and in practice—would recur in American religious life. That development results in the necessity of examining the contexts wherein the law grants citizens the right to choose and practice religion freely when, in fact, something like an “established church” actually functioned. Such an informal arrangement regularly puts pressure on “dissidents” and grants favored status to one body notwithstanding the provision of equal rights to all.

Religion of African Americans

The significant story of the place of African Americans in the South's common religious life shows up in strength before the emancipation of the slaves but acquires full force immediately after the close of the Civil War. From the early decades of African Negroes' enforced migration to America, some accepted the religion of their owners, but the percentage of these Africans-become-Americans who adopted Christianity to any significant degree remained quite small throughout the colonial period. Recent scholarship has afforded us greater detail in understanding the African traditional religions and sub-Saharan Islam that accompanied the people and cultures making the Middle Passage. Their more organized services and practices followed the new faith for the greater part, but aspects of the tribal import appear in such features as diet and grave adornments.

Episodes of slave Christian conversion with resultant enthusiasm led to the formation of congregations as early as the 1740s in several places, among them low country South Carolina, Georgia, and Petersburg, Virginia. Of more lasting significance is the quantity and quality of the African American attraction to the Christian church toward the end of the eighteenth century. The number of these people who "saw the light" and "caught the spirit" in embracing the religion of Jesus swelled at the same time that greater numbers of the white population were embracing the faith. This concurrence of behavior on the opposite sides of this sharp racial divide—its manifestations were steadily strengthening and expanding, legally and informally—tells a great deal about the shaping of the story of the South as a region, with religion serving a fundamental role alongside the legal, economic, and the political.

The manifestations of these two very different cultures and social sectors were interactive, and increasingly so. That was the case in their shared involvement in the work and business of the society, of course, but it carried over into the felt need on the part of the slave owners to evangelize those persons who were their property.

Why did southern white people dedicate themselves to the conversion and Christian tutelage of their slaves? That is an old question, provender for those disposed to cynicism ("realism") and to compassion ("idealism"). Human motives are always complex (and from the outside, elusive). But we need not doubt that many of the white faithful wanted to save the souls of their black neighbors, who were not

infrequently their friends. The stage was set by the fact that the prevailing Christianity was evangelistic, the identifying feature of which was bringing the lost to salvation through a conversion experience. That theme had caught on in the Great Awakening of the period from the 1740s to the 1760s and the Great Revival that erupted in the first decade of the nineteenth century on the western frontier—Cane Ridge in central Kentucky being the most famous example. Many locales in the South were "on fire" with the preaching of the Gospel. As more and more people responded in their enthusiasm, churches were formed and grew.

Rise of the Popular Denominations

Thus, around 1800, for the first time in regional history, Christian experience became widely shared. This development brought into the churches' fold individuals who had known nothing or a minimum about the religion of Jesus. The denominations that were the most effective in swelling the ranks and influence of the church were those whose polity and style accommodated most effectively the frontier life.

Methodists and Baptists were everywhere and set the pace for the predominance of revivalistic, experiential religion, what turned out to be the South's principal form of evangelical Protestantism. Methodism owed its flexibility to the clergy arrangements provided by its episcopal system (administration by bishops, *episcopoi* in Greek) and the fact that the ministers, commonly referred to as "circuit riders," served multiple churches and preaching stations. With a dearth of clergymen, and great distances often separating local clusters of the faithful, bishops could see to it that a few ordained leaders served multiple places.

Among Baptists, who were devoted to a local church polity, many men, most of them bi-vocational farmers, heard the call to preach. Usually not formally trained, these men provided the frontier population with a generous supply of available leaders from the ranks of the plain folk.

By the 1820s the South was on its way to becoming an evangelical stronghold. In the nation at large (the frontier covered the territory west of the Alleghenies to the north as well as to the south), Methodism became the largest body of Christians by the mid-1840s. In the South, the more traditional Presbyterians and the newcomer, indigenous "Christian" bodies, joined the ranks of the growing groups.

As for the Christianization of the African population, the regularity of interracial interaction once again prevailed as the two large and rapidly expanding Protestant bodies heard

themselves called to preaching the gospel to “their” black people, to save their souls and to train them in Christian ways. Fervor among white Protestants generated mission to those blacks with whom they lived every day. Knowing slaves and caring about them joined the prudential policy of controlling them; the Christian message was viewed as a force to keep slaves obedient and, perhaps, docile.

A Southern Religious Establishment

It is fair to say that a quasi-established religion prevailed across the South from the 1830s forward and would last for more than a century. The net effect of this season of evangelical dominance was to create a religious-cultural norm. Anyone who had not been pressured by some “alien” (even if local) body, such as the Disciples of Christ, or who had long embraced another (more classical) Protestant tradition was likely to be or become Baptist or Methodist. It was much the same among the African American people and those of European stock. The churches and preaching stations were planted and controlled by the largest groups of white people. The Christians who extended their ministry to the slaves, and to free people of color, were the evangelistic churches that seemed to be everywhere. It was their mission to spread the message to the whole population. The few African Americans churches understood Christianity through the agency of white Baptists and Methodists. Much the same obtained whenever and wherever slaves met in secret in what has been called the “invisible church.”

When black people were present in white churches, their presence was registered by several factors. They entered through separate doors and were seated separately. Their musical tradition affected the pace and sounds of hymn singing, resulting in two quite distinctive styles of music being heard, if not exactly blended, each superimposed on the other. Similarly, their vocal responses to preaching were influenced by the manner and content of the sounds heard. The black presence affected the racially mixed congregation. In the black churches, visible and “invisible,” a new brand of Christian music emerged—much of which has been referred to as “spirituals”—that was to achieve a primary place in the national religious and folk music repertory.

In the 1830s and 1840s, the three denominations that comprised the normative strand of southern Protestantism were barometers for the spirit of division going on in American life generally. The denominations struggled with keeping northern and southern bodies together. Methodists formally split in 1844, the Baptists the next year. Among Presbyterians,

there was an internal division in 1837 over theological issues, creating Old School and New School factions. A regional sundering took place in 1861. That the other denominations did not formally go their separate ways may be partially due to their standing apart from the normative patterns in the southern culture. Every religious institution experienced pain and some measure of acrimony, but Episcopalians and Lutherans, having divided along regional lines only briefly during the war, managed to avoid the degree of conflict that embroiled the “big three.” Theology and polity also contributed.

Black Church Denominations

The division among white church people was hardly the only story. The newly emancipated slaves went to work to take advantage of their freedom. Black Methodists formed one new regional *bodya*, the Colored (now Christian) Methodist Episcopal Church, that accompanied the rapidly growing African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Zion. In Baptist ranks, the National Baptist Convention was organized, followed in the 1890s by the formation of a second body, the National Baptist Convention, Inc.

The remarkable story of the rapid formation of separate denominational structures tells much about the power of religion within the African American population. But there was another basic feature, beyond Emancipation, underlying such dramatic activity. Church was the one social institution in which this sector of the population had acquired the experience of leadership. Even if blacks had belonged to white churches, they often had played some part in leadership roles, generally (but not always) to fellow black members. Yet there had been independent black congregations from the 1780s here and there, most often in towns. And in the North, Methodist denominations had long been well organized; these would play a part in the development of like communities in the South. The impact of religion on the lives of the recently freed people proved to be dominant for a couple of centuries, retaining considerable power up to the early twenty-first century.

The disposition in the young nation would lead organized religious bodies to be schismatic. To this factor, of course, is added the generation of indigenous bodies, “American originals,” a development not always directly schismatic. Organizational stability has never been a hallmark of American religious life, irrespective of location or historical conditions. Causes responsible for such flexibility,

or “erratic” behavior, as some might refer to it, have been multiple: dissatisfaction with the status quo; the ascendancy of charismatic leaders spearheading institutional change; race; geographical movement accompanied by cultural change and context; class; and, not to be “bracketed out,” the spiritual element of a yearning for more authentic doctrinal positions, deeper commitment, and the overthrow of old and worn-out forms and practices in favor of genuineness and energetic action. Making this response inviting to the church populace was the national freedom to believe as one saw fit, unrestrained by any official regulations or binding informal culture. If change were desired, change could, on principle, be brought about.

The South had endured the Civil War, the death of separate nationhood, and the revolutionary shift in the roles of black people. Religious life of African Americans was matched by occurrences comparable to those within the region’s white sector. The racial factor remained but under drastically different circumstances. This time black members of white churches could and did exercise their right to go their own ways. Yet white citizens were creating, or discovering that they possessed, issues of their own that would disturb the religious landscape of regional society—with implications for the separated black members of that society.

The Social Class Factor

The big changes in the white denominations had to do with social class. The largest, the “popular” established denominations, the Southern Baptist Convention and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (regional Methodism), had enjoyed an economically and culturally diverse constituency for decades. Now, in the late nineteenth century and spilling over into the twentieth, those bodies confronted the growth of towns and cities with a desire to modernize their buildings, programs, music, and institutional life. Simpler forms were replaced by up-to-date architecture, a better educated, ordained ministry, more planned and formal worship, and centrally organized denominational structures. Studies have recently shown both these shifts and the fact that growth of these sorts were not brand new but had precedents in the decades leading up to the Civil War (the foundation of several colleges and the formal organizing of churches at the corporate, regional level, for example).

Concerted negative responses to this tendency to adopt “high-falutin’ measures” erupted toward the nineteenth century’s end. Results were dramatic. Among many Methodists, Baptists, Disciples, and Presbyterians, church architecture,

styles of worship, musical instruments and hymns, and degree of ministerial training changed notably, all becoming more “modernized,” urban, and sophisticated. Methodism, whose reason for existence had been the creation of an expressive, highly personalized spirit, had become more formal, in the process dampening the spontaneous “witness of the Spirit” in testimony and participation. Many members saw the changes taking place with the lower classes, in particular, and were eager to take matters into their own hands. They did so through the formation of aggressive and vibrant congregations, followed soon by new denominational organizations. Several Church of God bodies soon appeared. Forms of Holiness groups did likewise. Pentecostalism caught on rapidly. These new entities, indigenous and evangelical, attracted to membership many who had previously been unaffiliated.

This proliferation of new church bodies might have occurred without the arrival of a new economic institution, the textile industry. Mill villages cropped up in abundance, especially in the piedmont sections of the states from Virginia to Alabama. People were giving up on subsistence farming and “moving to town,” thereby generating a large employment pool. The owners set up churches in the new villages in such ways as to make the believers beholden to their benefactors. Baptists and Methodists claimed many of them, but so did the spirit-filled new groups. All of them were labeled as “sects” by mainstream churches. Churches grew exponentially. What had begun with the frontier revivals after 1800 expanded rapidly under the new socioeconomic conditions of the late nineteenth century.

Jews and Judaism

By the 1920s, the denominational shape of the southern region was largely formed. Nearly all of it was Christian and at that Protestant Christian, mostly evangelical. No non-Christian traditions enjoyed any size of note, certainly not prominence, with the exception of Judaism, which was neither a newcomer nor a stranger. Jews had come early to Charleston and Savannah, as well as Richmond, Norfolk, and Baltimore, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. All these cities were prominent among the wider American Jewish population—Charleston especially, which had achieved the rank of third in size among Jewish populations nationally by 1800.

Jewish families resided in towns and cities across the region, often only a few Jewish families in any one community. A common outcome of this sparseness was the

necessity for those observing Jewish holy days to make a trip to a town of some size, 50 or 100 miles away, where there was a synagogue and a rabbi. People keeping kosher faced the inconvenience of obtaining foods when and where they could. Enjoying relationships with fellow Jews also presented an obstacle, but many had staked out business interests that kept them where they were. The clothing business became quite successful. As part of the economy's mercantile sector, Jews became known, often prominent, members of overwhelmingly gentile communities.

Southern forms of Judaism were characteristically liberal (Reform), not traditional (Orthodox). One reason for this was the tradition of the early settlers, many of whom were in step with the European liberalization of Jewish life brought on by the Enlightenment after 1800. Another was demographics. Commercial success required that Jews fit in with their neighbors. Jewish patterns in foods and clothing might impede the desire to make a good living. Also the small, even tiny, numbers offered less opportunity to experience a Jewish lifestyle.

Generally, the southern Christian society tolerated, and even welcomed, their fellow citizens. Success in business with often strong ethical standards were central to this. Efforts to convert Jews to Christianity were limited and rarely effective, but the South's Jews were well integrated into the regional culture.

Roman Catholicism

Strong negative reactions were directed to the presence of the other non-Protestant force in the region, namely, Roman Catholic Christians. Numerous only in some cities and sections of states, Catholics might blend into local cultures. But the contours of the Catholic faith upset many Protestants and led to awkward personal relations and considerable fear that the number of Catholics might grow and create havoc in the community. The question recurred: "Do you want your child to marry a Catholic and bring into the world offspring forced to be Catholic?" Fear of Catholic influence in the public schools was also common. That fear was eased somewhat by the appearance of parochial schools, but such institutions were not solicited and were often viewed by Protestants with some suspicion. From the Vatican, it was feared, concealed aggressive crusades were hatched, with the goal of taking over America. The establishment of Catholic hospitals and welfare agencies was, when they first appeared, grudgingly

accepted. This attitude persisted in the region until after World War II.

Recent Developments

The long history of religion in the South had achieved stability by the turn of the twentieth century. The form that stability took was cultural normativity. Protestant groups from Presbyterian on the right (traditional) to the "sects" on the left (upstart groups with limited knowledge of the historical church) were familiar and accepted. Episcopalians seemed representative of a certain class and Lutherans were identified by ethnic membership. Baptist and Baptist-like traits and approaches were common among both African and Euro-Americans.

The new directions of religious affiliations and perspectives were scarcely revolutionary. What they did was to threaten stability and play havoc with normativity. As the twentieth century wore on, more liberal, less restrictive positions came to be an attractive option in an increasingly cosmopolitan society. Biblical scholarship, the introduction of psychological concerns and ministries, expanding numbers of people moving into the region from cultures more urban and diverse, and more widespread acknowledgment of social and ethical matters, especially racial justice, began altering the picture. Church membership grew more slowly, and in some cases, such as the Methodist and Presbyterian, declined. A consequence of that pattern was the formation of new bodies in the same traditions, with dispute and acrimony quite common.

These new conservative forces gave rise to informal companies of Methodists, a tradition not inclined to split, and to a separate institution within Presbyterianism. The Southern Baptist case was unique. This huge denomination, with some 16 million adherents, rearranged the pattern of what existed and what came into being. The Southern Baptist Convention was marshaled into a newly strict, agenda-specific majority, with the much smaller dissident ranks condemned as liberal, indeed heretical. The leadership stood true to "authentic" conservatism, carrying with them the central organization and the loyalty of great numbers. Those thereby excluded formed new Baptist alliances or affiliated elsewhere.

A powerful political force accompanied the new religious conservatism. Commencing in the late 1970s, the "Christian Right," devoted to redirecting (rescuing) the nation's collapsing moral life, emerged on the national scene. Gender and sexual and family issues energized the agenda, with

opposition to abortion and the granting of public respect and legal rights to homosexual people and practices the main targets of public action. Southern evangelicals, especially those leaning toward fundamentalism, provided the bulk of national leadership within the movement. One of these, Pat Robertson, a Virginia Baptist televangelist, was a candidate for the Republican Party's nomination for the office of president of the United States in 1988, running unsuccessfully but amassing a large following. While much of the leadership of the Christian Right movement derived from the South, the movement drew support in many other states and sectors. It is still a significant force in the twenty-first century, but its power has been greatly reduced.

Viewed against the backdrop of the South's religious history, the Christian Right movement was somewhat surprising. Abortion and homosexuality had never been prominent moral causes; rather, temperance (prohibition) had headed the list, along with other personal, far more than social, ethical issues. Also, the Baptists in particular had characteristically sought to steer clear of any compromising of "separation of church and state."

Conclusion

The course of southern Protestantism never has run smoothly. The die of its general direction was cast two or three decades before the Civil War, and the region was Baptist-Methodist-Presbyterian until the mid-twentieth century, with some sects on the scene but relegated to the social and cultural fringes. Cultural normativity prevailed, but momentum was being contested by competition (and in some ways, confusion). Predictability yielded to instability and considerable conflict. The South had become an extension of the larger national scene. While formal membership patterns among African Americans changed less than among white people, there too a new era had dawned. Church and Christian message were now rivaled by the option of secular choices.

This perturbation revealed once again how interrelated were the experiences of the two racial groups in the one South. The civil rights movement in the twentieth century had an enormous impact, but African Americans continued to worship in their traditional ways and Euro-Americans worshiped in their accustomed ways, too. Significantly more interaction, however, was taking place between the two ethnic/religious traditions than had been the case in the past.

By the opening of the twenty-first century, newcomer faiths were appearing in the American South. In cities

especially, Hindu shrines, Islamic mosques, and Buddhist temples began to dot the landscape. New Age individuals and groups were small in number but present. Although the presence of immigrants from Latin America is far from new, Latino culture has taken on greater significance as the influx of Latinos has grown exponentially. Diversity brought on a pluralistic attitude. A deepened awareness of the rights of people to embrace other faith forms took hold. Traditional patterns no longer had the field to themselves, but they persisted in marking the South as a distinctive American religious region.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion entries; Appalachian Mountain Religion; Atlantic World; Baptists: African American; Baptists: Southern; Camp Meetings; Civil War; Frontier and Borderlands; Geographical Approaches; Great Lakes Region; Holiness Movement; Invisible Institution; Judaism: Reform; Methodists: African American; Music: Appalachian Religious; New England Region; Serpent Handlers; Southwest as Region.*

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Southern Baptists

See *Baptists: Southern*

The Southwest as Region

The Southwest region—here defined primarily as Arizona and New Mexico—is characterized by vast stretches of desert, high plains, forests, canyons, mountain ranges, open vistas, near-constant sunshine, and clear blue skies. While its terrain is often difficult, dry, and monotonous, the U.S. Southwest is also known for scenic wonders such as the Grand Canyon and the Painted Desert. Remnants of ancient civilizations—such as the Indian ruins at Canyon de Chelly in Arizona or the cliff dwellings at Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico—stand side by side with the living traditions that grew from those civilizations and the diverse faith communities that arrived in the region more recently. Despite its relatively low population density, the Southwest boasts a great variety of people and a long, variegated religious history.

The Southwest was home to the first European religious “establishment” in what would become the United States—the Spanish Franciscan missions, which began in 1598. When Jamestown, Virginia, was claimed by the English in 1607, European settlement in the U.S. was already well underway. Christian traditions brought to the Southwest were layered onto a range of Native American religions that had long preceded them. Roman Catholicism has dominated the Southwest from the seventeenth to the twenty-first centuries, but Protestants arrived in the region after the Mexican-American War (1846–1847) caused a transfer of the territory to U.S. control. Railroad travel from the 1880s forward opened the region to an even greater diversity of people. A surge of population growth since the 1950s has continued the process, introducing additional Mexican Catholics; more Anglo (white) Catholics and Protestants, especially Baptists, Pentecostals, and other conservative evangelical groups; adherents of Asian religions; those who are “spiritual but not religious”; and those who claim no religious affiliation.

The Southwest’s vast spaces, scattered population groups, and isolation from centers of ecclesiastical authority have created an environment of spiritual openness, independent developments, and innovation. But that isolation also created pockets of poverty and a reluctance of skilled and educated people to serve as leaders, missionaries, and ministers. Until

the mid-twentieth century, religious institutions in the Southwest experienced relatively slow growth. The religious diversity of the region has generated both cooperation and conflict, as Native Americans, Spanish and French Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Mormons, Jews, Sikhs, New Agers, and many other groups have sought to live together. This essay will proceed chronologically, with discussion of both major and minor groups, and it will begin with those who were in the Southwest first—the Native Americans.

Native Americans

More Native Americans live in the Southwest than in any other area in the United States, currently comprising about 10 percent of the population. The first known people in the region, hunter-gatherer nomads, had the region to themselves for thousands of years. From about 700 to 1500 CE the Anasazi people, followed by their Pueblo descendents (including the Taos, Laguna, Acoma, Zuni, and Hopi tribes), established villages, farms, and trade routes in the desert and along rivers in what is now New Mexico and northern Arizona. The Pima and Yuma tribes settled in what is now northern Mexico and southern Arizona. Between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries, Navajo and Apache groups arrived from the north and Comanche, Ute, and others from the Great Plains. The lives of the settled agricultural peoples were disrupted by the migratory and sometimes predatory ways of the newcomers, with whom they fought, traded, and exchanged ideas.

The early encounters among Native American groups produced the first American religious pluralism—a harbinger of things to come. The diverse spiritual practices of the Pueblos, Navajos, Apaches, and other tribes had commonalities, however, as all focused on the community’s well-being, its relationship to the natural world that sustained it, and proper orientation to sacred objects and places—especially the sun, mountains, striking rock formations, and bodies of water. In 1951, a Hopi man expressed succinctly the unity among Native Americans regarding the vital elements of human existence: “Our land, our religion, and our life are one” (Martin, 2001, p. ix). Although the specific beliefs and rituals of the various Native groups were distinct, sometimes they adopted elements from the others. For example, to teach their children, the Navajo took up the Pueblo practice of making dolls that represented deified ancestral figures (*kachinas*). Many Southwestern Indians shared a belief that Sky Father and Earth Mother gave birth to humans, who emerged from the great hole in the ground later known as the Grand Canyon.

The Pueblo Indians were the first to make contact with Europeans, as Spanish missionaries, explorers, and soldiers ventured northward from Mexico beginning in the late sixteenth century. By 1630 Spanish missions were established in almost every village in the region, but these were largely destroyed in the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Although the Franciscans slowly reestablished their missions after 1692, most Native communities continued their ancient religion, sometimes combining it with elements of Catholicism. In some ways, Native religious practice was congruent with Catholicism, as both had calendars for rites, sacred altars, and an established priesthood. The Pima and Yuma tribes believed in an afterlife. The Navajo looked to priests to help them find *hozho*—a sense of wholeness or union with the divine. The Zuni and Hopi were thoughtful ritualists. Planters and craftspeople, they developed traditions that were devoted less to war spirits than to effective daily living. Their priests sponsored something like seminaries to pass on their complicated rituals.

From the beginning of contact with the Spanish, however, the Native Americans were confronted with the *requerimiento*, a document claiming the authority of the pope and the sovereignty of Spain. Indians were told that if they converted to Christianity, they would be granted privileges, protected from their enemies, and helped in times of hardship. If they did not submit, however, the Spanish would enter forcefully, inflicting punishments and deprivations on them until they agreed to obey the Church and the Spanish crown. The indigenous people were thus forced not only into a partial acceptance of Catholicism but also an acceptance of traditional Spanish ways of life.

Native Americans in the Southwest remained under Spanish, and then Mexican, domination until the close of the Mexican-American War in 1848, when they came under U.S. jurisdiction and were forced to adjust to even greater governmental and religious pressures. Both Catholic and Protestant groups made efforts to suppress many Native American practices, such as ceremonies, dances, and chants. Most Europeans regarded the Indian ways as “pagan” or “savage,” and few could see anything positive in the indigenous peoples’ spiritual hopes and religious systems. On the other hand, some Catholic and Protestant missionaries, while zealous to convert Native Americans, were often keen to understand and report on tribal traditions and stop the worst abuses of Europeans. One traditional, although controversial, practice that survived involved the use of peyote, a hallucinogenic plant. The Native American

Church (NAC), established in 1918, advocates the use of peyote as a sacrament. In the early twenty-first century, perhaps as many as half of the Navajo people are members of the NAC, and there are NAC chapters among most other Southwestern tribes as well.

After World War I, many Christian church bodies began to rethink the goal of Indian missions, turning their focus away from saving souls—and the cultural imperialism that often went with it—toward ministries of social, political, and economic justice. This change of focus may be seen in the inclusion of Native American rituals within Christian worship, the appointment of Indian bishops by Catholics and Episcopalians, increased Native American self-determination, and an emphasis on social service and cooperation. Many modern religious groups have also been active in helping Native Americans preserve and restore their traditional sacred sites, such as the Taos Blue Lake in New Mexico, Big Mountain in northern Arizona, and the ancient petroglyphs around Albuquerque. In short, aggressive church-state sponsored Christianization has largely changed over the centuries to an effort at cross-cultural accommodation. There is, in addition, an ongoing creative retrieval among the Native Americans of ancient arts, rituals, and customs—proving, once again, the dynamism and resilience of their spiritual traditions.

Catholicism in New Spain (1535–1821)

Roman Catholicism, which arrived in the Americas from Spain, forms the second oldest continuing religious tradition in the United States. The first Spanish explorers and missionaries left a strong Catholic legacy—most visibly in the form of grand missions and pueblo churches—in New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California. Once Mexico City had been transformed into the major center of Spanish power and population, land expeditions northward penetrated the Southwest, which became part of the Viceroyalty of New Spain from 1535 to 1821. The Catholicism that early-modern Spaniards brought with them was filled with zeal. In a sense their adventures in the New World carried on three earlier traditions: the crusades that had taken place centuries before, claiming land and riches in the name of the Church; the Reconquista of Spain from Moorish Islam; and the Catholic Reformation, currently sweeping across sixteenth-century Europe. Religious agents—especially Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits—always accompanied the agents of state as the Europeans transferred their baroque Christianity to a new desert home. The persistent themes

of poverty, suffering, and passion in Spanish–American Catholicism, as well as tendencies toward physical austerity, all reflect these origins.

Of all the Catholic orders, the Franciscans, who arrived first, carried on the most extensive work in the Southwest. In 1539, a Franciscan monk named Marcos de Niza walked hundreds of miles north from Mexico to present-day New Mexico, erecting a small cross near the Zuni pueblo at Cibola and claiming the entire region in the name of Spain. Upon his return to Mexico City, he told stories of his travels, which led Spanish explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, in the early 1540s, to organize a more formal expedition to the north in search of the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola. De Niza led the expedition, which itself was not a success, but afterwards the Franciscan order began to establish itself in the region via numerous churches, primarily in the pueblos. Significant numbers of settlers, missionaries, soldiers, and explorers began migrating from Mexico to New Mexico's Rio Grande valley in 1595 and later to Arizona, Texas, and California, establishing Spanish culture and religion in the region as they did so.

By 1610 the royal city of Santa Fe stood as a permanent provincial capital for the Spanish government, and it soon developed into the political and religious capital of the surrounding region. Catholic priests—both Franciscan and Jesuit—soon followed to establish missions in the area, baptizing hundreds of thousands of Indians (according to their own records) in both Mexico and the American Southwest and also creating new citizens for the Spanish empire. Women religious came, too, bringing ministries of social service, education, and mystical discipline. But the missionaries—often relegated to the margins of Native communities—were only able to create a unique kind of Catholicism. Although Native Americans learned the Mass and adopted Catholic saints and holy days, they



By 1610 the royal city of Santa Fe stood as a provincial capital for the Spanish government and soon developed into the political and religious capital of the surrounding region. The San Miguel Church in Santa Fe, built circa 1610, is the oldest church structure in the United States.

combined these practices with their own religious traditions. The sixteenth-century legend of the Virgin of Guadalupe illustrates such Native American–Catholic syncretism: In 1531 an image of the Virgin Mary appeared on the cloak of an Indian peasant on Tepeyac Hill, a sacred indigenous site near Mexico City, speaking the local language and asking for a church to be built in her honor. For centuries the Virgin of Guadalupe has served as a point of identity and pride for people of mixed Spanish and Native American heritage, and her image remains a popular religious emblem in the U.S. Southwest.

In Santa Fe the Indians revolted against Spanish domination in 1680. Seeds of the Pueblo Revolt had been planted long before, however, as Spanish cruelties and exploitation had been going on since their arrival. Some friars had tried to protect Indians from the violent behavior of the conquistadors, but the Pueblos lumped all friars together nonetheless. Twenty-one of the forty Franciscan friars in the region were killed in the Pueblo Revolt, and of all the Franciscan missions, only the one at Zuni survived. Twelve years later, in 1692, the Spanish retook the region, rebuilt their missions as far north as Taos, created towns, and continued their efforts to settle and Christianize the region. There was never another successful Indian revolt in New Mexico.

Meanwhile, in what is now Arizona, the Jesuits began their own missions. Here it was Father Eusebio Kino (1645?–1711), an Italian, who above all others left a palpable mark. Kino travelled through northern Mexico and southern Arizona, mapping as he went, learning Indian languages, building chapels, and instructing the Native Americans in techniques of farming. In 1697, Father Kino founded his largest and best-known mission, San Xavier del Bac, near present-day Tucson. The expansion of Spanish missionary activity in this region, home to the Pima, Yuma, and Apache Indians, brought with it not only Catholicism but also disease and conflict and produced (as it had in New Mexico) several Indian revolts. But on the whole, the Jesuits had better success with the Native Americans than had the Franciscans in New Mexico, as they made more effort to learn the native languages and were less coercive in their proselytizing.

After Kino died in 1711, with Spanish resolve and resources fading and Native resistance rising, much of the Christianizing effort in the Southwest withered away. The Jesuits stayed in the Southwest until their removal was ordered by King Carlos III of Spain in 1767, after which some Franciscans arrived in the region to renew missionary efforts. Spanish Catholicism would subsequently make a powerful comeback in California under the direction of the Franciscan Junípero Serra (1713–1784), who founded the first nine of the twenty-one California missions, a chain that would stretch from San Diego to Sonoma.

Mexican Catholicism

In 1821 Mexico and Central America achieved their independence after three centuries of Spanish rule, making the Southwest—including present-day Arizona, New Mexico, southern Colorado, southern Utah, and southern Nevada—part of Mexican territory. Spanish Catholicism thus became

Mexican Catholicism, and control of Indian missions and Hispanic congregations in the region was transferred from Spanish-born Franciscans and Jesuits to local clergy. A Mexican decree in 1826 exiled all Spanish-born clerics; the Franciscans did not return to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe until 1897. At the conclusion of the Mexican–American War in 1848, all of the Southwest passed into American hands. Although the region remained almost exclusively Hispanic and Catholic, after 1848 newcomers began to arrive—including non-Hispanic Catholics, Protestants, and Mormons.

It is important to note that since the seventeenth century, Hispanic Catholicism in the Southwest has, to a large extent, developed its own traditions and institutions. They continue to flourish despite the vagaries of Spanish, French, Irish, and American involvement in the region's religious culture. Often ignored by the friars, whose primary mission it was to convert Native Americans, Hispanic Catholics built several early churches at their own expense. Under Mexican rule, and even under U.S. domination, grassroots Hispanic leadership produced lay societies, which regularly gathered local parishioners when no priest was available. It was these local, largely lay-driven communities that kept alive Hispanic folk traditions such as the Las Posadas play, the Day of the Dead celebrations, the Matachines dance, the making of *santos* and *bultos* (painting and carvings of Catholic saints), traditional festivals, and pilgrimages to holy sites such as the Santuario de Chimayó in New Mexico. These blended Catholic traditions continue to characterize the spirituality, arts, and culture of the U.S. Southwest.

Anglo Catholicism in the U.S. Southwest

Except for the Spanish, European-Americans had come to the Southwest only in small numbers—as trappers, traders, explorers, and soldiers—prior to 1850. But with the opening of the Santa Fe Trail eastward to Missouri, as well as the first major gold discovery in the western United States near Santa Fe, that began to change. These events, along with the advent of railroad travel to the Southwest in 1878, soon brought an influx of new settlers from the East and Midwest. Many were Protestant, but more were Roman Catholics from all over Europe.

In 1851 a French priest, Jean-Baptiste Lamy, became the first bishop of New Mexico and thus established official ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the Southwest. During his long tenure (1850–1885), Lamy built—with the help of other clergymen and several congregations of sisters—churches,

schools, hospitals, orphanages, and other social services throughout the territory. These missionaries brought with them the more formal Catholicism of northern Europe. Lamy was critical of the local Hispanic clergy and their folk traditions and sent out a call for additional French clergy (followed by Irish, Belgian, German, and Italian), who succeeded in reinvigorating Catholicism in the Southwest, sidelining local leadership in the process. (There would be no Hispanic bishop in the region until 1974.)

Catholics in the Southwest had to deal increasingly with Protestant competition and hostility, as well as with problems arising from ethnic differences among themselves. Until the second half of the twentieth century, Roman Catholicism in the West would continue to be directed from the East, which meant that its hierarchy would remain heavily Irish-American. Furthermore, burdened by heavy immigration from Europe in the late nineteenth century, Catholic authorities in the East had few resources or personnel to expend on the immense Southwest. The people of this region, who were still predominantly Hispanic, agricultural, and rural—and marked by a strong anticlerical streak, would largely have to fend for themselves, supervised lightly (if at all) by a hierarchy not yet prepared to elevate priests and bishops from among the local population.

Protestantism and Mormonism in the Nineteenth-Century Southwest

Protestants were late arrivals to the Southwest. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, ethnic schism and lax episcopal oversight among the region's Catholics gave other religious groups an opening. Protestant missionaries—especially Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists—who arrived in the Southwest beginning in the 1850s were shocked by conditions there. The region had few schools or hospitals, poverty and illiteracy were widespread, and poor infrastructure made travel difficult. They blamed these conditions on the “backwardness” of indigenous Catholicism. These Protestant pioneers also had to deal with the fact that they, too, were far from their families and from national denominational centers. Despite the work done by Franciscans, Jesuits, and Christian Brothers to bring religion, education, and order, many Protestants felt it was their responsibility to bring greater structure and a higher standard of living, along with their own brand of Christianity, to the region, and they labored hard to do so.

Progress was slow, and Protestant leaders experienced only modest success until the mining rush after the Civil War and

the railroad in 1880 brought more people and resources into the area—first to New Mexico and then to Arizona. The city of Phoenix began in 1870 as a mining camp; thus, unlike New Mexico, central and northern Arizona had no Spanish colonial origin. So the issues that Protestants faced there were somewhat different. But generally speaking, easterners who came to the Southwest left behind them a culture that was predominantly Anglo-Saxon to enter a culture that was predominantly Mexican or Spanish. Protestant missionaries in northern New Mexico were confronted by late medieval Spanish Catholic practices that included severe whipping and self-mortification (notably among a group of lay brothers known as the Penitentes), which they denounced as barbaric, ignorant, fanatical, and superstitious. But the mostly white miners, traders, and prospectors could be equally trying. Many religious leaders—both Protestant and Catholic—found them rough and greedy. Cowboys as well as Indians could be hard to reach and even harder to convert.

Protestant clergy, many of them part of a strong Home Missions movement, came to the Southwest with two goals: to organize congregations for the newly arriving Anglo population and to convert the Hispanic Catholic and Native American populations to English-speaking Protestantism. Unlike the early Catholic missionaries, who had tolerated some mixing of traditions, Protestant leaders insisted on keeping a separate identity as they attempted, largely unsuccessfully, to create the kind of pan-Protestant cultural dominance that existed in other parts of the country. While initially organizing Spanish-speaking churches, they expected the members eventually to learn to speak English and adopt Anglo cultural norms, but they had a hard time making inroads into both the Hispanic Catholic and Native American communities. Before the Civil War Protestants had only managed to convert between 5 and 10 percent of the region's population. From the 1860s forward, the second wave of Anglo immigration finally established a small but influential Protestant presence in the Southwest—especially in the realm of education, as there was no comprehensive public school system in the region until the early twentieth century. Protestant numbers and influence would continue to grow throughout the twentieth century.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS; the Mormons) represented the other growing religious body in the region, having arrived in Utah in 1847. Second- and third-generation Mormon pioneers began to fan out into the surrounding area in the second half of the nineteenth century. Many settled in the Southwest, especially in the rural

northern parts of Arizona and New Mexico and in the Salt River valley near Mesa and Phoenix. From the late 1870s to early 1880s, when the U.S. government began to crack down on Mormons, especially on the issue of plural marriage, some polygamist church leaders went into hiding in the region. In the early twenty-first century, the Fundamentalist LDS Church, whose members practice plural marriage, continue to have a presence in southern Utah and northern Arizona.

The Mormons established their own missions to convert the Indians beginning in the 1870s—although they had sent a few missionaries to work with the Zuni and the Navajo as early as the 1850s. A considerable proportion of Mormons in the Southwest today are from Native American backgrounds (mostly Navajo, with some Zuni and Hopi) as a result of 150 years of Mormon proselytizing and religious education. Mormon settlers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also worked as railroad workers, farmers, and in community industries. To maintain the spiritual cohesiveness for which Mormons were and are renowned, these settlers created Mormon villages in which everything, from cattle companies to irrigation systems to dances, was done cooperatively.

Although Catholics and Protestants alike disparaged the Mormons because of their distinctive theology and religious practices, after World War I most mainline Christians reduced open attacks on the Mormons, and interdenominational cooperation in the region improved somewhat. Many Latter-day Saints, in turn, have tried to reach out by sharing their considerable wealth with non-Mormons and through various ecumenical efforts, themselves becoming more mainstream in the process. The Mormons' strong presence and strong growth in the region have been—apart from sporadic conflict with polygamous groups that identify as Mormon—mostly noncontroversial.

Judaism in the Southwest

Two distinct groups of Jews have settled in the Southwest—the crypto-Jews (or “secret Jews”) of Iberian Sephardic heritage, who immigrated from Mexico as early as the sixteenth century, and “open” Jews, mostly of Central European Ashkenazi ancestry, who began arriving in the region in the mid- to late nineteenth century. Crypto-Jews from Spain, Portugal, and Mexico began emigrating to the farthest reaches of New Spain as early as the late sixteenth century in order to escape the Inquisition. These were the descendants of Iberian Jewish families who had converted either forcibly or voluntarily to Catholicism—thus called

conversos—between 1390 and 1492, when Jews and Muslims were expelled from Spain. Some Jews pretended publicly to be conversos while keeping up the practice of Judaism in private; these were the crypto-Jews who are now claimed as ancestors by some Hispanics in the Southwest. Annexation of New Mexico by the United States in 1846 led to the assimilation of crypto-Jews into Anglo-American society. This assimilation weakened their Jewish traditions, but vestiges continue into the twenty-first century. These include the traditions of lighting candles on Friday evening, refraining from eating pork, and blending Jewish symbols (especially the Star of David) with Christian ones.

Ashkenazi Jews from Europe and the eastern seaboard of the United States began arriving from the 1840s on, working mostly as merchants, peddlers, and shopkeepers. Many Jews participated in gold and silver mining, especially as suppliers, and some became farmers and ranchers. Some also achieved high status as small-town mayors and financiers. The Jews' success in the region can be credited to their adaptivity to the existing culture—a willingness to learn Spanish, for instance, so as to trade in the desert hinterlands. Moreover, Jews found greater social mobility and equality on the frontier than in the east and a spirit of general cooperation among religious groups. Overt anti-Semitism was virtually absent. Thus, Southwestern Jews had an influential role in economic development well beyond their numbers. On the whole, Southwesterners viewed the Jews as good contributors to society—stable, industrious, mainstream, and socially conscious. The growth of the Jewish community in Albuquerque—numbering about 18 in 1880, 120 in 1900, 450 in 1940, and 6,500 in 1980—is indicative of the growth of the Jewish population throughout the Southwest. As Jewish communities became larger, they were able to establish synagogues and temples with regular observance, libraries, kosher butchers, cemeteries, schools, and social services, many of which continue to thrive.

Religion in the Twentieth-Century Southwest

The U.S. Southwest is often described as being “tricultural”—an amalgam of Native American, Hispanic, and Anglo-American traditions. The region has, indeed, maintained the Indian, Spanish, and mainline Protestant heritages inherited from past centuries. But in the twentieth century the region became far more diverse. In addition to the Jewish pioneers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, African Americans began to move westward in

greater numbers at this time, along with Asians (although they were never as numerous as on the Pacific Coast) and an ever greater variety of Europeans. All brought with them their own religions. As cities and towns in the region grew, religious institutions multiplied. During the Progressive Era (1901–1913), many religious bodies made efforts to work together to improve health, education, infrastructure, and labor conditions in the region. Catholic domination of the public school system, however, brought conflict between Catholics and Protestants after World War II. Protestants enforced the separation of church and state in the region, and Catholics responded by setting up a parochial school system.

The 1920s to the 1940s were a busy period of church expansion and institution building. In the 1930s, the search for economic survival drew migrants who had lost their livelihoods and their homes in the Great Depression. They settled in the growing cities of Arizona and New Mexico and on ranches and farms along the rivers. Many of these migrants, coming from the South and the Great Plains, were Baptist or Pentecostal. In the 1950s, concerted evangelism established the Southern Baptists as the dominant Protestant force in the Southwest, extending the Bible Belt across southern New Mexico, Arizona, and southern California, and creating a more conservative constituency in the region. Institution building during this time included both Catholic and Protestant retreat centers and camps, such as the Benedictine Monastery of Christ in the Desert, the Presbyterian Ghost Ranch, and the Baptist Glorieta Conference Center, all in northern New Mexico.

In the early twenty-first century, evangelical Protestantism in the Southwest is mostly white, but it has attracted a growing number of Hispanic, African American, Asian, and Native American adherents. Old Protestant mainline churches remain in Hispanic communities—a legacy of nineteenth-century missionaries, pastors, and teachers—alongside the newer Pentecostal and evangelical congregations and traditional Catholic parishes, all bolstered by a major resurgence of Hispanic, mostly Mexican, presence since the post-World War II era.

From the mid-twentieth century to the present, the steady wave of Anglo immigration to the “Sunbelt”—especially Arizona—has brought with it a steady influx of Protestants and Jews, bringing somewhat more parity in numbers and influence among religious bodies in the region. Protestants and Catholics were rivals in the region until the mid-twentieth century, when they began working cooperatively on such

social issues as prison reform, health care, and alcoholism. While many rural areas in the Southwest remain mostly Roman Catholic (though eastern New Mexico, like west Texas, is predominantly Baptist), urban areas are increasingly multireligious. On the whole the various religious bodies in the Southwest have been tolerant of each other, with no violent conflicts among them. The Southwest, like the western United States as a whole, has thus earned a reputation for being spiritually flexible, open, and accommodating.

In the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the environment has emerged as the most ecumenical issue for the region. All religious bodies in the Southwest have an interest in protecting the clear air, blue skies, sacred sites, and natural wonders for which the region is known. Environmental issues have become more urgent since 1945, when the world’s first atomic bomb was detonated at Trinity site in southern New Mexico after its development at Los Alamos. New Mexico thus became one of the centers of the Cold War defense economy. Many of the military personnel who came to the state because of scientific work belonged to Protestant churches, with significant numbers of Jews as well. All of the region’s religious bodies have faced painful dilemmas concerning the moral and environmental issues that such developments have presented, and many groups and individuals have worked together to prevent further mass nuclear destruction.

New Thought and New Age Spirituality

The Southwest has long attracted people seeking not only economic opportunity but also sunny weather, better health, and spiritual inspiration. The region’s reputation for healing powers began well before the discovery of antibiotics. The desert climate and high altitude provided a refuge for those with illnesses as varied as malaria and tuberculosis. Once outsiders arrived, they discovered that the Mexicans and Indians had lengthy traditions of healing arts—practiced by *curanderos* and medicine people, respectively—that could serve as an alternative to Western medicine. Given its vast open spaces, the western United States became home to many new spiritual ideas and practitioners. By the mid-nineteenth century, rationalism, atheism, mesmerism, and other departures from traditional Christianity were rooted in the region. A variety of ideas and practices that came to be categorized as New Thought took hold in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century, though the term was not coined until 1887, spawning movements that flourished in the twentieth century.

New Thought's emphasis on health, happiness, and prosperity; access to, and alignment with, the supernatural; and positive or "possibility" thinking attracted many followers. Such emphases infiltrated the vocabulary of mainline religious denominations as well and inspired various New Age ideas and holistic healing movements in the latter half of the twentieth century. The Anglos' discovery of Native American traditions and ancient folk Catholicism coincided with an increased attraction to supernatural phenomena in general and the search for spiritual adventure. Since the 1960s Asian immigrants have brought the full range of Eastern religions to the area, not only to metropolitan Phoenix and Albuquerque but to the countryside as well. In New Mexico a sizable Sikh community exists in Española, and a Muslim center flourished briefly in Abiquiu, both in the northern part of the state. These new arrivals on the religious scene have proved attractive to some Anglos, building on the longstanding regional interest in Native American shamanism, countercultural and utopian movements, and geographical locations associated with spiritual energy—especially Sedona, Arizona, and Santa Fe and Taos in New Mexico.

Religion in the Twenty-First-Century Southwest

Many spiritual communities in the Southwest have been built on centuries-old indigenous traditions, as well as a long-standing Hispanic Catholicism. In the early twenty-first century, New Mexico and Arizona (together with west Texas and southern Colorado) retain a strong Catholic concentration, although New Mexico is more religious than Arizona on the whole, and New Mexico is becoming more Catholic while Arizona is becoming less so. (Together, New Mexico and Arizona are currently about 24 percent Catholic.) The continuing strong Catholic presence in the region derives in part from the area's proximity to Mexico, from which immigration has given nearly all border counties from Texas to California a Catholic coloration, as well as Anglo Catholicism. One also finds all kinds of Protestants (especially since the 1950s) and Latter-day Saints. Yet the largest group is comprised of those who check "none" when asked for religious affiliation. In the early twenty-first century, the religious groups in the region, in order of size, rank as follows: unaffiliated, Catholic, Baptist, and Mormon.

This variety has flowered mostly in the last 100 years: the region was almost 90 percent Catholic at the beginning of the twentieth century, with the rest being mostly Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian. Although its strength appears to be waning somewhat—especially in Arizona and northern New

Mexico—Roman Catholicism is still the predominant church. After 1956, mainline Protestants declined in numbers, while evangelicals and Pentecostals (like the Assemblies of God and Calvary Chapel) have increased; many Hispanics (who comprise about 42 percent of the population of New Mexico and 25 percent of Arizona) have left the traditional Catholic fold in recent decades to join their ranks. Mormons, inhabiting the northern edge of the Southwest since the latter half of the nineteenth century and spreading out from there, grew almost eightfold in the twentieth century. Southern Baptists have been the largest Protestant group since the mid-twentieth century. In sum, the Southwest with all its colorful religious variegation—from the ancient to the new—is doing its part to make good on America's historic promise of religious freedom, as well as to ensure America's status as the most religiously diverse nation in the world.

See also *California and the Pacific Rim Region*; *Environment and Ecology*; *Frontier and Borderlands*; *Geographical Approaches*; *Great Plains Region*; *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion*; *Hispanic Influence*; *Latino American Religion* entries; *Latino/a Religious Practice*; *Latter-day Saints*; *Mexico* entries; *Native American Religions* entries; *New Age Religion(s)*; *Pluralism*.

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Spiritualism

Spiritualism refers to a group of religious movements, more or less organized, whose adherents seek communication with the spirits of deceased human beings. Spiritualists believe that spirits can be contacted in gatherings called “séances” through individuals called “mediums,” that spiritual enlightenment results from the experience, and that séance phenomena scientifically demonstrate human immortality. Originally a response to the religious ferment and theological liberalism of the mid-nineteenth century, Spiritualism has weathered perennial challenges to its legitimacy to remain vital, if limited in appeal, in the early twenty-first century.

Origins

Spiritualism emerged as American political, economic, cultural, and religious life, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest, was being transformed by political and religious democratization, religious revivalism, a spreading market economy, urbanization, industrialization, the rising authority of science, and such technological innovations as the railroad and telegraph. These developments sparked experimental religious, social, and scientific reform movements whose cosmologies and programs for action sought to

order a changing society that seemed to many to be fluid, even chaotic.

Spiritualism originated in western New York’s “burned-over district,” so called because of the intense religious revival and ferment generated there by rapid social change. On March 31, 1848, Kate (c. 1836–1892) and Margaret Fox (c. 1833–1893) claimed to hear knockings that responded intelligibly to their questions. The Fox family and others became convinced that spirits communicated through the girls. Joined by their older sister, Leah Fox Fish (c. 1818–1890), the Fox sisters soon claimed to summon a variety of spirits, attracted attention throughout the region—especially among radical Quakers—and began holding regular gatherings. Many visitors sought entertainment and novelty or the recovery of personal relationships ended by death, but many others sought spiritual instruction and empirical proof of immortality.

Public demonstrations by the Fox sisters in Rochester generated publicity that attracted showman P.T. Barnum, who arranged exhibitions at his New York City hotel. Soon after, *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley endorsed the sisters and publicized the “Rochester rappings” in his newspaper. As the Fox sisters became nationally renowned, others, mostly women, became spirit mediums and held sittings. The “spirit manifestations” assumed new forms as entranced mediums began practicing healing, speaking, writing, and clairvoyance. In the 1860s and 1870s, the phenomena expanded to include spirit photography and visible spirit materializations. The Fox sisters were eclipsed by these phenomena, but they had helped establish a new religious movement.

Spiritualism’s philosophical and theological foundations, meanwhile, were laid by Andrew Jackson Davis (1826–1910), a Poughkeepsie, New York, apprentice who discovered hypnotism through a demonstration by lecturer J. Stanley Grimes. Experimenting with trances, Davis began experiencing clairvoyant visions and prescribing heterodox medical remedies. He became a traveling demonstrator, initiating a lifelong career as a religious seer and healer. Claiming contact with the spirits of eighteenth-century Swedish scientist-mystic Emanuel Swedenborg and the ancient physician Galen, Davis delivered and published a series of trance lectures titled *The Principles of Nature, Her Divine Revelations, and a Voice to Mankind* (1847). The first of Davis’s many books, it was the most influential statement of an ideology he called “harmonialism.” Combined with the practice of spirit communication, harmonialism became the basis of Spiritualism.

Sources and Beliefs

Spiritualism drew on several contemporary religious, scientific, and social ideologies and movements. It drew above all on Swedenborg, who claimed that spirits had revealed to him *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell* (1758). This work, whose matter-of-fact style reflected Swedenborg's scientific background, described a heaven and a hell, each consisting of three hierarchically arranged "spheres," with the pivotal earthly sphere between them. After death, said Swedenborg, the soul entered the sphere most suited to it, remaining there eternally. Swedenborg developed a theology in which God influenced the universe through spirit mediators and devised a new and complex method of scriptural interpretation. In the early nineteenth century, followers of Swedenborg in the United States established the Church of the New Jerusalem (or New Church), several of whose members became Spiritualists. Spiritualism derived from Swedenborg the ideas that physical realities reflect causally prior spiritual ones; that the spirit world consists of seven ascending spheres through which souls assume positions determined by their moral and spiritual states; and that spirits mediate between God and human beings.

Above all, Spiritualists made Swedenborg's practice of spirit communication their religion's central and distinguishing feature, democratizing a practice that Swedenborg had warned should be strictly limited. Spiritualists likewise adapted Swedenborg's theology to American notions of progress and upward mobility, envisioning an afterlife of gradual advancement toward perfection as spirits were guided by higher ministering spirits. Despite and perhaps because of their deviations from Swedenborg, Spiritualists made him a crucial symbolic religious figure.

Another major component of Spiritualism derived from the heterodox medical practices of eighteenth-century Viennese physician Franz Anton Mesmer. Mesmer postulated an invisible, all-pervasive, scientifically demonstrable magnetic fluid that bound the universe into a physical and spiritual whole. He believed that manipulating one's personal portion of the fluid during hypnosis—a practice named "mesmerism"—induced physical and spiritual healing. Mesmerists touring the United States during the 1830s and 1840s made mesmerism a national fad and, for those seeking scientific understanding of the mind and soul, a subject of serious examination. Spiritualists incorporated the magnetic fluid into their cosmology and the hypnotic trance into their practice. They believed the fluid, acting

according to natural law, explained the operations of deity on the universe, the meliorative influence of advanced spirits on lower ones, and mediums' ability to produce healing and other phenomena.

Spiritualist religious ideology derived from other sources as well. It integrated French socialist Charles Fourier's belief that social and spiritual harmony required human relationships based on natural forces of attraction. Spiritualists tapped Scottish Enlightenment discourse to develop a concept of "sympathy," which, similar to mesmeric magnetism and Fourierist attraction, they understood as a force of cosmic unity. They also drew on new liberal and democratic Protestant theologies that emerged during the nineteenth century to challenge orthodox Calvinism. From transcendentalism, an offshoot of Unitarianism, came a view of Jesus as human rather than divine, a belief in the soul's divine potential, and an emphasis on inward spiritual contemplation. From Universalism came a rejection of hell and a conviction that everyone would be saved by a merciful deity. Quakerism contributed the belief in an "inner light" that manifested the divine in every soul. From broader liberal currents and a growing philosophical emphasis on developmentalism came an emphasis on gradual spiritual growth over sudden conversion. Spiritualists adopted the deist conviction that God could be understood in terms of scientifically comprehensible natural law from which miraculous deviation was impossible. From traditional Christian orthodoxy they derived their belief in divine sovereignty, human dependence on the divine, the reality of an eternal afterlife, and the authority of the moral standards represented by Jesus. Spiritualists also claimed scriptural support for the reality of spirit communication, although the movement was divided between those (including Davis) who hoped that "modern revelations" from spirits would supplant Christianity and the Bible, and "Christian" Spiritualists who sought only to supplement Christianity and scriptural authority. During the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Spiritualism incorporated elements of Hinduism and other Asian religious philosophies as these became increasingly appealing to spiritually curious Americans. An often slighted religious influence on Spiritualism is Native American shamanism, familiar to mid-nineteenth-century Americans and now comprehensible in terms of Christian tradition. The appearance of "Indian guides" at Spiritualist gatherings was common in the nineteenth century and remains so in the early twenty-first century.

Appeal

Spiritualism established its appeal by addressing spiritual longings given specific form by the nineteenth-century American environment. It consoled those whose loss of friends and relatives to premature death—then a common occurrence—left them seeking assurance that the soul survived physical death, the certainty of reunion with loved ones in the afterlife, and an opportunity to maintain severed relationships in the meantime. It tapped currents of revivalism and Romantic idealism that emphasized personal religious experience and direct contact with the divine. While science seemed to encourage philosophical materialism by denying the empirical accessibility and often the existence of the human soul, Spiritualism tapped its authority in proposing that spirit was scientifically demonstrable through the phenomena of mediumship. Religious liberalism supplanted the notion of a personal God with an abstract, impersonal deity, but Spiritualism offered believers a comforting hierarchy of personal human spirits. Convinced that a professionalizing clergy prioritized material comfort and social approval over spiritual vitality and moral leadership, and that institutional churches were spiritually dead, Spiritualists found in spirit communication a source of religious power independent of churches and ministers. Finally, Spiritualists, concerned that the nation's emerging economic and political system seemed to elevate self-interest over moral principle and the common good, enjoyed a ritual (the *séance*) that centered on the private home, encouraged close contact among worshipers, and removed participants from the bustle of everyday life. In their gatherings, they heard spirits predict a millennial age of social harmony to be realized through the combined efforts of spirits and mortals.

These concerns resonated most strongly among the white Protestant middle class, which remained Spiritualism's primary constituency and the source of most of its leadership through the twentieth century. Spiritualism was geographically concentrated where that constituency was most pronounced: the Northeast, Midwest, and, following nineteenth-century migration patterns, the West. Because of its early association with abolitionism and other radical reforms, as well as its cultural and theological distance from evangelical Christianity, the movement's appeal has been more limited, though not absent, in the South. The movement also had a pronounced urban focus; New York, Boston, and, later, San Francisco became major centers of Spiritualist

activity, and such smaller cities as Rochester and Buffalo, New York, Providence, Rhode Island, Cleveland and Cincinnati, Ohio, and St. Louis, Missouri, became secondary hubs. But it also reached rural areas from New England and New York State in the Northeast, to Iowa and Wisconsin in the Midwest, to Tennessee and Georgia in the South. The movement crossed lines of class, race, and ethnicity, having a particular appeal among African Americans, perhaps because it shares its emphasis on contact with spirits with the religions of West Africa and the African diaspora. A significant Spiritualist community developed among the African Americans of late nineteenth-century New Orleans; led by Valmour and Henri Louis Rey, they found in Spiritualism a basis for visions of transracial unity and social action. In the twentieth century, following the Great Migration to northern cities, Spiritualism and the *séance* were incorporated by Universal Hagar's Spiritual Church, an African American organization established in Detroit in 1923 and still present in several eastern and midwestern cities.

Spiritualism's appeal became increasingly transnational in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It became an American export, spreading into France, Latin America (especially Brazil, where it remains enormously popular), and several English-speaking countries, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

Reform

Spiritualists found in spirits' millennial promises and the concept of sympathy a rationale for involvement in such nineteenth-century moral and social reform movements as abolitionism, temperance, marriage reform, prison reform, and peace and nonresistance. The notion of spirit assistance was particularly comforting as the antebellum reform impulse waned in the 1850s, and, indeed, constituted an injection of premillennialist disappointment in human efficacy into the postmillennial optimism about human reform capabilities generally characteristic of the period.

Spiritualists, like other American reformers, launched several communitarian experiments. Sometimes existing experimental communities became Spiritualist hubs when their founders embraced the new religion. Prominent examples are Hopedale, created in Massachusetts in 1841 by former Universalist minister, abolitionist, and Christian nonresistant Adin Ballou, and Modern Times, established on Long Island in 1850 by philosophical anarchists Josiah Warren and Stephen Pearl Andrews. Other intentional communities were created by Spiritualists specifically to

enact Spiritualist principles. John Murray Spear, a medium and former Universalist minister, abolitionist, and prison reformer, established Harmonia in western New York in 1852. Like many other communitarian endeavors, it was beset by public disapproval, internal dissension, and financial difficulty, and it dissolved in 1858. Another attempt, the Mountain Cove Community, formed in 1851 in western Virginia by a group from Auburn, New York, similarly collapsed in 1853 due to internal tensions and financial strain. In the latter decades of the century, Spiritualists founded communities in the newly developing states of the West. Thomas Lake Harris established the mystical Fountain Grove community near Santa Rosa, California, in 1875, and in the 1880s John B. Newbrough tried to attract eastern urban religious seekers to the Shalam colony in New Mexico.

Spiritualism was especially important as a vehicle for women's rights. Deriving from Quakerism a concept of individual sovereignty that lodged religious authority in the individual, it assumed spiritual equality among people and implied women's legitimate claim to religious authority. Combined with the idea of social harmony through natural attraction, individual sovereignty prompted Spiritualists to critique the subjugation of women in marriage, urge a more egalitarian model, and propose liberalized divorce laws. Women found empowerment above all in mediumship, which encouraged them to speak publicly, confidently, and influentially on controversial social topics. Healing mediumship likewise propelled women into careers in alternative medicine at a time when male physicians were professionalizing and dominating orthodox medical practice. And while male physicians considered women weak, many medical mediums claimed to overcome disease and experience personal empowerment through spiritual healing and without conventional doctors. In fact, Mary Baker Eddy's route from invalidism to the 1875 founding of Christian Science, a religious movement emphasizing mental healing, involved at least indirect contact with Spiritualism.

Scientific Investigation

Anxious about the nature of religious belief in a scientific age, seeking empirical support, and facing public suspicion of fraud, Spiritualists encouraged scientific investigation of mediumship and complained that the scientific establishment had unnecessarily excluded spirit from its domain. They insisted that spirit was a form of matter that conformed to natural law and was amenable to scientific analysis. Spiritualist

leaders, eager to enlist scientists in their cause, welcomed such conversions as that of chemist Robert Hare. Hare publicized the movement through his *Experimental Investigation of the Spirit Manifestations* (1855), a lecture and demonstration tour, and an unsuccessful attempt to persuade the American Association for the Advancement of Science to address the topic. Spiritualist publisher Samuel Byron Brittan likewise petitioned Congress to launch a scientific investigation. At a time when Americans marveled at the mysteries of electricity and magnetism, postulated invisible fluids to explain them, and were amazed at such new inventions as the electromagnetic telegraph, the notion that science and technology might illuminate the spiritual world seemed feasible to Spiritualists.

Spiritualist claims were investigated several times. A team of professors from the University of Buffalo Medical School investigated the Fox sisters in 1851, and a group of prominent Harvard scientists examined the phenomena in 1857; both groups issued negative and critical conclusions. A damaging wave of well-publicized scientific investigations and debunkings occurred in the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s, culminating in the unfavorable published report issued in 1887 after an investigation conducted under the auspices of the University of Pennsylvania at the bequest of wealthy Philadelphia Spiritualist Henry Seybert. In 1888, the Fox sisters confessed to having produced the rappings with their toes. During the 1880s and 1890s, Harvard psychologist William James examined mediumship through the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR), which he established in 1885, but the ASPR, which conducted scientific investigations well into the twentieth century, proposed nonspiritual explanations for the phenomena. The debunking of mediumship continued through the twentieth century, from Harry Houdini's sensational exposés to the activities of the Amazing Randi, and remains an obstacle to Spiritualism's public acceptance and hopes for scientific verification.

Practices and Institutions: From Séances to Spiritualist Churches

The séance has been the defining element of Spiritualist religious practice. Encouraged by the ideas of Swedenborg, Fourier, and mesmerism to commune with like-minded believers and seeking out mediums they considered highly effective, Spiritualists formed from the outset small, often well-structured circles displaying strongly cohesive qualities, as their members forged bonds of religious community. By 1851, more than 150 regular circles were functioning in

New York City and sixty in Philadelphia, with thousands of others nationwide. These circles, typically composed of about a dozen people, have involved more or less formalized religious rituals combining innovative elements with more conventionally Christian ones. Spiritualists generally meet in mediums' homes rather than churches and look for spiritual authority to mediums rather than ordained clergy. (Women continue to occupy many pastoral positions in Spiritualist religious organizations and communities.) At the same time, séance rituals have often retained such conventional practices as opening and closing benedictions, reverential deportment, prayer, hymn singing, homiletic messages, selective membership, a sense of congregational belonging, and sometimes even readings from authoritative texts. Some early Spiritualists, emphasizing the circle's inspirational functions, compared séances to the revivals that had become fixtures of American religious life.

Organization beyond private circles developed more slowly because most early Spiritualists, deeming organized religion stultifying, resisted it. In this, Spiritualism contrasted with other new religious movements of the nineteenth century, such as Mormonism, the New Church, and Christian Science, that built tightly centralized institutional structures around authoritative texts, creeds, and leaders. The only important attempt by antebellum Spiritualists to organize nationally—the Society for the Diffusion of Spiritual Knowledge, formed in New York City in 1854 by several socially prominent Christian Spiritualists—met with hostility and proved abortive. But an organizational thrust was apparent from the start and accelerated as the nineteenth century progressed. Local, state, and regional associations—for example, the New England Spiritualist Association and the Ohio and Wisconsin State Spiritualist Associations—appeared during the 1850s, though they were never supported by the majority of the Spiritualists in their respective geographic areas. State and regional conventions, too, were held on a fairly regular basis beginning in 1852, though these were often wracked by internal conflict over matters of doctrine and social reform commitment.

Spiritualist churches also emerged. The federal census listed 17 in 1860, 95 in 1870, 334 in 1890, and 455 in 1906; membership in 1890 and 1906 numbered in the tens of thousands. The census suggests that these churches tended to be urban, to spread in tandem with the general westward spread of the movement, and to be evanescent (most 1906 churches had existed for fifteen years or less). Authority rested with individual congregations rather than

an overarching organization. Lacking money, they used rented rooms, halls, and private homes; fewer than one-quarter of the 1870 or 1906 churches had edifices, and almost none of those buildings had been erected by Spiritualists themselves. Their services, like those of conventional Protestant groups, include invocations, prayers, hymns, a sermon or lecture, and, not infrequently, use of the Bible as an authoritative text. Yet Spiritualist services have been unique in their doctrinal content, the often entranced state of the sermonizer or lecturer, and the practice of receiving spirit messages through a medium. These and other regularized practices, including midweek message and healing services and personal development classes, have become standard among most Spiritualist groups. Spiritualists also developed regularized procedures for ordaining mediums as ministers; James H. Powell became the first Spiritualist minister in 1869.

Practices and Institutions: From Summer Camps to the National Spiritualist Association of Churches

The outdoor summer camp, another important Spiritualist institution, likewise appeared on a small scale during the 1850s, followed in the 1870s by large permanent camps with attendance in the thousands and increasingly well-structured religious activities. The largest was Lake Pleasant in Massachusetts; the most famous was the Cassadaga Free Lake Association, established in Chautauqua County, New York, in 1879 and renamed Lily Dale in 1906. Lily Dale became the leading Spiritualist mecca of the early twentieth century. Similar camps in warmer climates—including the Southern Cassadaga Spiritualist Camp Meeting Association, established in Florida in 1894 as a counterpart to the New York site—provided winter havens for northern Spiritualists. Most of the camps eventually disappeared due to poor attendance, natural disaster, or chronic debt, although Lily Dale, Florida's Cassadaga community, Camp Chesterfield in Indiana, and a few others remain active.

State and national organization gained momentum in the 1860s as Spiritualists sought to counteract a decline in enthusiasm caused by the damaging Harvard report of 1857 and the Civil War. Spiritualists in several northeastern and midwestern states (as well as California) created formal associations in the late 1860s, and by the mid-1870s most states in those regions had operating organizations. While these institutions did not (and were not meant to) have effective governing power over their membership, they did circulate information, formulate policy for approval or disapproval by

local churches, and push for fair treatment by the government and the press. Spiritualist conventions established two successive national organizations during the 1860s, each fatally weakened by financial difficulty, lack of authority over local churches, and inability to draw lower-level organizations into affiliation. But national organizational efforts strengthened during the late 1870s and 1880s, as Spiritualists struggled not only with financial weakness and sensational exposés but also two new difficulties: the advent of psychical research and the emergence of Christian Science and Theosophy, religious movements influenced by Spiritualism and able to draw away adherents by capitalizing on Spiritualism's association with fraud. Spiritualists organized, then, to define their religion, solidify their membership, seek federal recognition and legal protection, and enhance their fund-raising ability.

The most important result was the 1893 formation of the National Spiritualist Association of Churches (NSAC) in Chicago. Empowered by its constitution to compile statistics, arrange for the education of lecturers and teachers, and raise revenue, the NSAC won the loyalty of most state and local organizations by 1906. It avoided internal squabbling and garnered influence by focusing on organizational, educational, and advisory activities, leaving divisive questions of theology, politics, and reform to the consciences of individual members (it did adopt a formal though loosely worded creed in 1896). It spearheaded Spiritualism's passage from home circles and stage demonstrations to a relatively ecclesiastical character. Rival organizations soon emerged; Spiritualists emphasizing inner spirituality over séance phenomena and science founded the Progressive Spiritual Church in 1907, while those seeking authoritative centralized structures formed such institutions as the Churches of Spiritual Revelation Association and the Spiritualist Episcopal Church, established in the 1940s. But the NSAC remains the largest of the approximately fifty existing national organizations.

Continuing Interest and Current Debates

Despite declining popularity after the 1850s, periodic revivals of interest kept Spiritualism vital through the twentieth century. A 1920s revival was fueled by desire for communication with World War I casualties, publicity generated by debunker Harry Houdini, and the energetic promotional activity of convert Arthur Conan Doyle. Another began during the 1960s amid a broader fascination with occult and alternative spiritualities and the subsequent emergence of eclectic New Age spirituality, of which spirit channeling remains an appealing component.

Both revivals energized the long-standing division between Christian Spiritualists (including the NSAC), who defend the supreme authority of the Bible, and those, including Florida's Cassadagans, who recognize alternative revelations from the spirit world. Spiritualists also remained divided throughout the twentieth century over reincarnation. Both sources of tension were intensified by new Spiritualist works that departed further from traditional Christian belief than did early Spiritualist texts, were accorded scriptural status by some Spiritualist groups, and added reincarnation to established Spiritualist themes. One, John B. Newbrough's *Oahspe* (1882), traces humanity's origins to a lost Pacific continent and predicts a coming utopian age. Another, Levi H. Dowling's *Aquarian Gospel of Jesus Christ* (1907), contains alleged events in the life of Christ, including a trip to India, not found in the New Testament. The more recent and anonymous *Urantia Book* (1955) examines the spiritual organization of the universe, the religious history of earth, and the life of Jesus. These works remain in print and are still widely read by Spiritualists.

Spiritualism's continuing appeal testifies to the enduring individualistic thrust in American religious life, by which believers cultivate inner spirituality and a personal faith, and the continuing quest for spiritual order and cosmic connection.

See also *African Traditional Religions; Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence; Christian Science; Esoteric Movements; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Krishna Consciousness; Literature: African American; Neo-Paganism; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements: Nineteenth Century; Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Santería; Transcendentalism; Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts from the Revolution to the Civil War; Universalists; Wicca and Witchcraft; Women.*

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Spirituality

Spirituality is often used to describe contemporary American religious practice, but it has a long history of its own. In common speech, it usually refers to the idiosyncratic beliefs of those who are said to be “spiritual but not religious”—that is, not tied to any established denomination or local church. Thus, many people associate spirituality with the diverse array of beliefs and behaviors that have sprung up since the 1960s, in settings far outside the boundaries of traditional Christianity or Judaism, or any other world religion.

Discussion of spirituality, then, often veers into categories hardened under the recent “culture wars” over religion and social morality. Some critics see the current trend as a troubling sign of modern social disengagement. At best, they argue, spirituality is the product of a postmodern culture incapable of taking religion seriously. At worst it implies a full-scale erosion of important historic faith traditions and the civic culture they have long helped sustain.

Other scholars insist that the recent turn toward spirituality is neither new nor all that worrisome; wariness toward institutional forms of faith is almost a default mode in American culture. They also point out that the modern American quest for interiority draws on deep roots in both Christian and non-Christian traditions, and while it has a certain extra-institutional energy, amounts to far more than a modern dislike of organized religion. Prejudice against “odd” forms of belief, they argue, should not obscure their contribution toward the long-term success of religion in the United States. In their view, taking into account this experiential dimension, especially in its complex historical unfolding, is

the only way to fully comprehend the scope and enduring strength of American religiosity.

Undeniably, the study of spirituality opens fascinating scholarly ground. Almost immediately, it requires rethinking of what is considered mainstream in American religious culture and what is considered marginal. Although new forms of spirituality often emerge from unusual or overlooked places, they can also be particularly sensitive indicators of emerging cultural tensions and thus useful to historians looking for sources of change and innovation. Attention to experiential religion also allows a broader, more inclusive view of American religious diversity, requiring historians to investigate a broader cast of characters and a wider variety of places than is usually the case in more institutionally based approaches. Catherine Albanese, for example, suggests that “spiritual knowing” comes in a range of different forms: it can include the body (through physical rituals of worship, dance, and the rhythms of daily life), the heart (through the emotional experience of conversion and transformation), the will (through commitment to prophetic social witness and social action), or the mind (through metaphysical exploration).

By far the biggest challenge in studying spirituality is defining the nature of the enterprise itself. All scholars have struggled with a precise definition of a notoriously “airy” subject with infinitely movable boundaries. Who is to say what is spiritual and what is not? Most people would agree that in a general sense spirituality deals with interior experience, as distinguished from the more public realm of doctrine and ecclesiology, or what we commonly refer to as religion. People offer various descriptions for that experience, including feelings of creativity and connection to the divine, ecstatic joy, or deep-centered stillness. But at bottom, scholars who try to analyze these feelings face a series of personal questions about their own approaches to faith: Is it necessary to assume the reality of the experience being described in order to understand it fully? Is it enough to simply describe the external phenomena and leave the final judgment to the reader? Or do scholars of religious experience inevitably become advocates for their subjects?

The debate is complex and difficult to summarize, as it deals with deep questions about subjectivity and the analytical role of the scholar. Robert Orsi, for example, has argued for an “abundant history” that reaches past the externals of a miraculous healing or a Marian apparition and requires scholars to question their own assumptions about modern objectivity and modes of explanation and perhaps even, in

the end, to reject those categories altogether. But the debate also reflects differences between two scholarly disciplines, religious studies and religious history, with the first aimed more at an analysis of “raw religion”—the experience itself—and the second focused more broadly on the various social contexts framing that experience in space and time.

Most scholars avoid drawing such rigid methodological distinctions, and in this respect they have found the theoretical concept of “lived religion” a useful construct. To begin with, it avoids the pitfalls of older theoretical approaches, mostly based on European state-church models, that assumed an opposition between the formal theology of the pulpit and the popular faith of the pews. Lived religion emphasizes confluence between the daily faith of ordinary people and the denominational or theological givens that give rise to specific practices; its subject matter therefore includes everything from gift giving and food preparation to care for the dead and observance of Christian sacraments. Thus, historian David Hall has described seventeenth-century Puritanism as an amalgam of carefully reasoned pulpit pronouncements and widespread folk beliefs in supernatural signs and wonders, a worldview shared by clergy and laypeople alike. The lived religion of Puritanism, or of any system of piety, is neither wholly spiritual nor entirely secular, “top down” or “bottom up,” but the product of continual renegotiation within the crucible of daily life.

Sources

Strictly speaking, *spirituality* is a new word, not in regular use until the mid- to late nineteenth century. Within western Christianity, it usually appeared in a specific theological context, as a technical term for denoting anything nonmaterial or as a particular attribute of God.

Roots in European Christianity

Its earliest English usage simply denoted the clergy; thus, in 1585, English pamphleteer Philip Stubbs’s *Anatomic of Abuses* described the “corruptions and abuses of the spirituality,” or those who held an ecclesiastical office as opposed to a secular one. According to historian Leigh Eric Schmidt, *spirituality* appeared in print in North America only once before 1800, referring to a collection of hymns published in 1768, “Design’d to Promote the Spirituality of That Part of Christian Worship.”

But the idea was there long before the word itself. The theory and practice of interior religion, usually described in English as piety or devotion, tracked far back beyond the

nineteenth century, to the earliest days of Christianity. There the logical starting point is the ascetic practices of the desert fathers, who sought union with God through solitude and regular practice of self-denial. This early link between asceticism and spiritual growth drew from the church’s early experience of persecution and the Gnostic intellectual currents of the Mediterranean world that envisioned the religious life as an upward progression from material constraints into perfect union with the divine. By the third and fourth centuries, monastic communities pursued this intent through explicit rules for a daily life of prayer and physical labor, carried out in separation from the secular world. As articulated by St. Benedict of Nursia (480–597) and then reformulated by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), the cloistered clergy dedicated themselves to strict personal discipline for the good of the larger church, who received the benefit of their regular supplication to God. From early on, Christian tradition understood the spiritual quest as an ascetic pursuit though not necessarily a solitary one; spiritual growth was also the product of a distinct way of life, forged in human community.

The late Middle Ages and early modern era, often assumed to be a time of rising secularism, witnessed a surge of interest in devotional pursuits. By that time mysticism had emerged as a distinct form of spiritual practice, though part of a tradition going back to the writings of Origen (c. 185–c. 254), the Neoplatonists, and the Cappadocian Fathers. Echoing an ancient Gnostic distrust of the material world, mystics envisioned the spiritual life as an arduous journey upward and inward, bringing the believer into ever closer union with God. Christian mysticism was also influenced by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, a relatively unknown figure who wrote on “mystical theology” in the late fifth or early sixth century. He described the soul’s journey to God as a path of negation: because God is unknowable, he argued, finding God requires the loss of all human certainty.

This kind of spiritual achievement proved beyond the reach of ordinary laypeople, and by the late medieval era, mystics were a renowned and spiritually gifted few. For adepts like Teresa of Avila (1515–1582), who wrote about her experiences in the “Interior Castle” of the heart, and John of the Cross (1542–1591), who described his “dark night of the soul,” the divine mysteries were accessible only through rigorous inner exploration.

But in other ways, the opening centuries of Europe’s modern era witnessed an expanding array of options for

the pursuit of interiority. Baroque art and music told sacred stories with a bold dramatic flourish, mingling biblical texts with soaring architecture and richly emotional orchestral composition. Moreover, by the sixteenth century, medieval mysticism was evolving into a series of contemplative practices accessible to laypeople and noncloistered clergy alike. Ignatius Loyola's (1491–1556) *Spiritual Exercises* offered a rigorous program of introspection and prayer for the Christian willing to participate in the sufferings of Christ, and the *devotio moderna*, or “modern devotion” of Thomas à Kempis (1380–1471) and his Brethren of the Common Life sought to engage laypeople in serious spiritual pursuit through the “imitation of Christ” in daily communal life.

The Protestant Reformation opened more possibilities for spiritual practice. Certainly, questions about interiority were at the heart of the movement's dissatisfaction with the Catholic Church; Protestantism emphasized the believer's state of heart, not participation in sacraments or church ritual, as the real evidence of salvation. The Reformers' emphasis on *sola scriptura* (the Bible alone) placed greater value on the Bible over the ancillary teachings of the church and also put the text itself directly into the hands of the laity. As a result, the Reformation produced a new, much more Bible-centered piety, a trend affecting everything from personal devotional practices to the naming of children—no longer honoring Christian saints but a roster drawn from the heroes and heroines of the biblical text.

The Reformers also sought to strengthen the institutional church's role in promoting personal piety, rejecting the assumption that ordinary people could, or even should, aspire to the asceticism required of saints and mystics. Thus, Martin Luther's reforms maintained much of the liturgy and sacramental orientation of late medieval Catholicism, but they also generated a vigorous new hymnody and emphasized the catechesis of laypeople, especially around the family table. John Calvin's approach to the spiritual life was more austere—Reformed churches were physically bare and allowed only a minimum of liturgy—but only as a means of freeing the community of gathered believers to pursue God with a minimum of distraction. The Puritan movement within the Anglican Church similarly emphasized interiority, following a trail already blazed by devotional writers such as George Herbert and William Law; indeed, both traditions encouraged daily introspection, prayer, and moral inventory, but always with an explicit understanding of the church's guiding and mediating role.

American Spiritual Roots

The seventeenth-century pietist revival, a response to the rising scholasticism of post-Reformation Protestant thought, extended the emphasis on lay spirituality. Emphasizing the primacy of religious experience rather than correct doctrine, the movement produced important devotional works such as Philipp Jacob Spener's (1635–1705) *Pia Desideria* (1675), a new infusion of hymnody, and a surge of interest in foreign missions and care for the poor. Pietism also carved out new space for spiritual practice, as believers gathered in conventicles for prayer and mutual encouragement—what they called an *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, or a church within a church. Nikolaus von Zinzendorf's (1700–1760) Moravian community at Herrnhut, Germany, became the most famous communitarian experiment of its time. Moravian missionaries also influenced the young John Wesley in the course of a sea voyage to Georgia in 1735, prompting him to seek a deeper experience of salvation, which, as he said, left his heart “strangely warmed.” The movement also figured in the early settlement of North America, as many smaller pietist sects emigrated from Germany to Pennsylvania under the urging of the Quaker William Penn (1644–1718).

By the end of the colonial period, a variety of Christian theological traditions—including Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Calvinist, and pietist—provided a basic context for American spirituality. Although the nation itself was not deeply churched, generally lacking much of a denominational infrastructure in scattered frontier settlements and isolated towns, established faiths still shaped the practice of piety among the faithful. Hymnody, devotional literature, liturgies, and the size and shape of church buildings identified individual believers as Lutherans or Catholics or Baptists.

But at the same time, American spirituality was far more than the sum of its European ecclesiastical roots. What some historians refer to as the “Christianization” of the North American continent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries assumed the continuing power of European folk traditions, even in the face of Enlightenment skepticism. In fact, Catherine Albanese identifies this old and constantly evolving patchwork of esoteric or metaphysical faiths as a third branch of American religiosity, as important to take into account as evangelical Protestantism and Catholicism. The common bond behind all esoteric religion is the principle of correspondence, that there exist intrinsic connections between the visible phenomena of the material world and

unseen spiritual realms. The purpose of spiritual practice is to access the power and energy within those higher worlds, whether through magical manipulation of physical objects—rings or amulets or the ingredients of a spell—or by a shift in consciousness, so that one finally understands the unity of all things. One of the most influential intellectual figures in the development of harmonial faiths was the German mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), whose theory of correspondence between the seven dimensions of the universe would exercise a formative role in the later development of New Thought movements. Although they were a distinct minority in a largely Protestant colonial world, metaphysical faiths still played an important role in the evolution of American religious culture. Dowsing rods, protective amulets, signs and portents, spells and curses—all of these occult practices intermingled freely within the established religious cultures of colonial America, from highly churching New England to the more beleaguered Anglican establishment of tidewater Maryland and Virginia.

American spirituality also drew from other sources outside of European Christendom. West African captives brought their own religious traditions across the Atlantic, including Islam and other local tribal faiths. Under the duress of slavery, most of these survived in more vestigial and fugitive forms—naming practices, ring shouts, belief in haunts and spirits, and worship in sacred groves—but exercised a distinct influence on nineteenth-century evangelical Protestantism. European settlers also arrived on land already inhabited by Native Americans, whose religious practices shared relatively little in common with European Catholic or Protestant traditions, including their assumptions about what was sacred and what was secular. Summarizing the faith practices of diverse peoples spanning two continents is neither wise nor even possible, except to note the inherent challenge they posed to Western ways of thinking about God. Native American faiths emphasized the importance of sacred places rather than days or times of the year. As author Vine Deloria Jr. has pointed out, Native languages had no single equivalent word for *religion*, nor did they imagine spirituality in the traditional Christian sense, as an upward line of progress toward God.

American Patterns Forming

American assumptions about experiential religion developed over time, reflecting the expanding diversity of beliefs and practices in the population itself. At the time of independence from Great Britain, the United States was a

Protestant country, with few Catholics or Jews but also having little in the way of state-sanctioned religion. An American religious style was fast emerging, however, shaped by the emotional outpouring of what came to be called the first Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s.

Great Awakenings and an American Religious Style

Revival preachers such as George Whitefield (1714–1770) and Gilbert Tennent (1703–1764) appealed to the sinner's heart, insisting that the radical transformation of the second birth was available to anyone who repented. This new birth was instantaneous and powerful, often manifested by physical signs—trances, shaking, crying, or shivering ecstasy.

By the early nineteenth century, this “evangelical style” began to define American religiosity. One of its most formidable sites of development was Methodism, a movement that by the time of the Civil War had become the nation's largest religious body. Part of Methodism's appeal drew from Wesleyan teachings that emphasized human agency and the possibility of moral perfection. In contrast to Calvinism's more pessimistic set of assumptions about human nature, Methodist preaching resonated with the democratic currents of American society in the Age of Jackson. But its long-term impact and its phenomenal success rested just as deeply on its experiential base, as encounters in class meetings, love feasts, and revivals created powerful emotional bonds between people in search of spiritual transformation. Religious “upstarts,” such as Methodists and early nineteenth-century Baptists, invested relatively little on institutional infrastructure, insisting instead on an immediate emotional response to God's call, regardless of wealth or station; all stood equal at the foot of the cross.

In that sense, early nineteenth-century Methodism also fostered African American spiritual expression, briefly though notably employing slaves as evangelists and preachers. Historians have long debated the extent to which original African faiths survived the brutal passage across the Atlantic during the early days of slavery. Anthropologist Melville Herskovits, for example, argued forcibly for the persistence of African forms, even under the restrictions imposed by slaveowners. Alternatively, historian Jon Butler has described the eighteenth century as a time of “spiritual holocaust,” when the rigors of American chattel slavery erased all memories of the Islamic and tribal faiths that captives brought to North America. Certainly, early Methodism's expansive program and democratic ethos both Christianized a slave population relatively insulated from European faith traditions and

legitimized the emotional expression of African Americans. Yet the opportunity for interracial religious experience, even within Methodism, proved brief; by the 1830s, slavery's apologists refused to admit any kind of equivalence between the spiritual experiences of whites and blacks. Ironically, however, by the time of the Civil War, many Americans shared a general notion that African Americans were naturally more religious than whites, a stereotype that would underline their cultural marginalization in the era of segregation.

But it would be wrong to describe evangelical Protestant spirituality only in terms of revival-style emotionalism; evangelical piety also had a strong rationalist bent. At the height of the eighteenth-century Great Awakening and in the midst of Enlightenment era concern for reasoned faith, Congregational theologian Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) had defended emotional religion as the legitimate expression of rationally appropriated truth; in other words, he argued, ecstatic religious experience might draw from the emotions but it was not fundamentally irrational. By the mid-nineteenth century, the majority of Protestants assumed that religious truth was attainable through “common sense,” echoing the arguments of the so-called Scottish Common Sense philosophers Dugald Stewart (1753–1828) and Thomas Reid (1710–1796). Indeed, in contrast to European Christianity, set all but permanently on the defensive by the intellectual and political force of Enlightenment rationalism, American evangelical Protestantism confidently assumed that reasonable religion was an unquestioned ally of democracy and Christian faith.

Seeker and Liberal Spirituality

The evangelical revival is not the whole story, however. Another product of the early nineteenth century was an alternative form of what might now be called “seeker spirituality” emerging within Protestant liberalism. Historians have tended to view liberalism as an intellectual product of the late nineteenth century, when religion and science began to face off as angry sparring partners. Thus, according to this narrative, while conservatives ignored or hardened in opposition to scholarly criticism of the Bible and secular theories of evolution, liberals sought to harmonize the two, accommodating modernity by emphasizing the ethical and aesthetic dimensions of faith rather than the supernatural. But as Leigh Eric Schmidt has argued, many decades before Charles Darwin or Karl Marx, liberalism was a distinct spiritual tradition in its own right. Its point of origin was

New England transcendentalism, an idiosyncratic but intellectually fertile movement that produced both a literature and a set of practices that would profoundly shape modern American religion.

Metaphysical writer Horatio Dresser (1866–1954) described liberal spirituality in terms of several defining elements. First of all, it had a mystical bent, seeking the divine in silence, solitude, and meditation. Liberals also emphasized the immanence of God in nature and in human personality and the value of all religious faiths. They sought not just personal but social salvation, cultivating an ethical earnestness, especially around issues of social tolerance and care for the weak. But above all, liberalism encouraged creative self-expression and “adventuresome seeking”: God was not so much a destination as an invitation to a journey. Though numerically small, especially alongside the burgeoning of evangelical denominations in the nineteenth century, this more interior and individualistic approach to religious practice would form the substratum of modern spirituality. In the nineteenth century it found expression among Quakers and Unitarians, then gradually disengaged from traditional orthodox Christianity. By the late nineteenth century, seeker spirituality was broadening its boundaries to include mystics and contemplatives from non-Western religions, incorporating the Hindu practice of yoga and the ecstatic poetry of Sufi Islam.

In the early twentieth century, seeker spirituality gathered new strength with the emergence of the New Thought movement. New Thought encompassed a variety of sects and denominations, including Mary Baker Eddy's Christian Science church, all of them assuming an intrinsic tie between mind and matter, a fundamental harmony between the supernatural and the material worlds. In that sense they drew on a very old metaphysical tradition, one that assumed a correspondence between the material and the spiritual worlds. In the nineteenth century, harmonial religions found their most popular expression in Spiritualism, a movement based on the conviction that the living could speak to the dead. It also found a home among the metaphysically inclined who followed the mystical teachings of Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891) or Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907). New Thought borrowed the basic assumptions of harmonial religion but emphasized the transformative power of conscious thought. The believer's active perception of religious truth was key: as members of Boston's Metaphysical Club declared, “as a man thinketh so is he.” Not surprisingly, perhaps, this axiom translated fairly easily into an ethic of

self-help: for example, French psychologist Émile Coué (1857–1926) insisted that the sheer repetition of a statement about oneself (“I am successful” or “I am competent”) could lead to personal transformation. By the mid-twentieth century, even establishment Protestant figures such as the Reformed Church of America’s Norman Vincent Peale (1898–1993) borrowed heavily from New Thought assumptions in asserting the “power of positive thinking.”

The Spirituality of the Home and the Immigrant

Another important site of spiritual formation in nineteenth-century America was the home. Indeed, by the century’s end, the white Protestant middle-class family had become the standard by which all other religions might be judged and found wanting. This primacy came as the result of social changes, as the industrial revolution gave birth to the separate private sphere, a realm apart from the hurly-burly of commerce and politics, and dominated by women. It also had theological roots, most notably Congregational theologian Horace Bushnell’s (1802–1876) influential treatise on “Christian Nurture” (1847). Here Bushnell mounted a key criticism of evangelical revivalism: that it allowed only a limited role for families and did not effectively deal with the spiritual state of young children. Certainly the emotional demands of an evangelical conversion posed difficulties for the very young, and most evangelicals assumed that parents had few options beyond breaking the will in anticipation of a future decision for Christ. Alternatively, Bushnell argued that the daily routine of family life was the true crucible for spiritual growth. An infant might, as he said, “grow up a Christian and never know himself otherwise” through the regular care of godly parents, whose constant love provided the child’s earliest intimations of God.

Bushnell’s sacralization of family life encouraged careful attention to the physical appearance of a “Christian” home, based on the assumption that what family members see around them is reflected in their interior life. Devout families therefore covered parlor walls with scripture verses and pious mottos and purchased large decorative family Bibles for display. Home in this sense became a Protestant sacred space, in many ways more spiritually effective than regular worship in a neighborhood church.

Bushnell’s model of Christian nurture also bolstered the assumption that women were more naturally endowed with spiritual gifts than men: they could simply intuit religious truths that men apprehended by hard-headed reason. Certainly the evidence seemed everywhere on hand: women

formed the vast majority of religious adherents in nearly every sect and denomination. Despite—and perhaps because of—Victorian social conventions, which set the feminine “sphere” securely in the private realm of home and family, middle-class Protestant women busily engaged in moral reform and benevolent organizations. Writers such as Catharine Beecher and her sister Harriet Beecher Stowe sketched out an ambitious agenda of educational reform and social protest around slavery and abolition, without attacking directly the cultural ideal of feminine domesticity. By the late nineteenth century, even the most conservative Protestant churchmen readily agreed that women had a special gift, perhaps even a divinely appointed calling, for causes such as temperance, foreign and home missions, and care for the poor. All of these efforts, however, rarely challenged a fundamental assumption that women’s first calling was to the home and children and that their only legitimate public role expanded on that basic function.

Protestantism’s domestic piety did not, of course, always translate well across theological or social boundaries. Nineteenth-century Roman Catholicism, shaped by a long tradition of clerical celibacy and a devotional revolution that inspired the parish-centered sacramental piety of Irish immigrants, simply could not elevate godly homes into means of grace. That was a function reserved for the Mass. Indeed, Catholic churches stood on ground that a bishop had sacralized for religious use; in a strict sense, therefore, home could never be sacred space for Catholics the way it was becoming for Protestants. And in practical terms, impoverished immigrants making their way through urban New York or Boston could hardly aspire to the genteel conventions of Protestant domesticity.

Still, nineteenth-century Catholics did develop their own distinct practices of regard for feminine spirituality and for nurturing lay devotion. By the 1880s, a growing Catholic middle class embraced its own version of Protestant domesticity, made visible through a small altar in the room of a sick child, a crucifix and font of holy water at the front doorway, or statues of favorite saints. Late nineteenth-century Catholic piety also elevated the role of Mary as a kind friend and intercessor. By the early twentieth century, families were encouraged to “enthroned” the Sacred Heart of Jesus in their homes by having a priest install a picture of Christ pointing to his own broken heart, which was surrounded by a crown of thorns and afire with love. Medals and scapulars, cards with pictures of saints or attestations of miracles served pious Catholics with constant reminders of their particular religious identity.

Throughout the late nineteenth century and on into the twentieth, as Roman Catholics struggled to establish their place within a predominantly Protestant nation, distinctive forms of piety became important markers of difference. Thus in the early nineteenth century, Redemptorist, Paulist, and Jesuit priests led vigorous parish revivals, urging the faithful to deeper consecration to the Catholic Church with stark warnings against sin and the dangers of thoughtless assimilation into American culture. Italian Catholic parishes celebrated feasts of patron saints with boisterous processions through the streets of the city and public rituals of penance and devotion; societies formed to celebrate miraculous healings at Lourdes or visitations by the Virgin Mary. Catholic piety also uplifted the experience of suffering as a purifying gift of God, lending special virtue to invalids and those in pain—and spiritually separating the Catholic faithful from their ostensibly less devout Protestant neighbors.

In many ways, however, the most significant common bond between Catholic and Protestant spirituality was the immigrant experience, the religious longing of people far from home. This is an important underlying theme in many American spiritual traditions, from African American spirituals to the strict catechetical loyalties of Dutch and German settlers in the Midwest. It has even shaped American cultural understandings of sacred space, as something to be discovered and named rather than created by institutions, reflecting the diversity and mobility of the American population.

Issues

One of the most memorable subjects of sociologist Robert Bellah's influential study *Habits of the Heart* was Sheila Larson, who described her personal faith as simply "Sheilaism." Religion, she said, was "just my own little voice," urging her to love and "be gentle" with herself. For a generation of scholars, Sheila's statement became emblematic of American religious individualism, with its disregard for institutions and historical traditions, a trend exacerbated by the spiritual tumult of the 1960s. As mainline Protestant denominations began to tumble, challenged by the rising popularity of evangelical parachurch organizations, many observers assumed that Sheila-ism was just one more sign of religious anarchy in the modern era.

Certainly the 1960s marked a watershed era. By that time, Protestant domestic piety, encapsulated in the popular slogan "The family that prays together stays together," was all but unsustainable in the face of widespread social upheaval over racial and economic injustice. Newer, more

experience-oriented religious currents, most notably the neocharismatic revival in old line Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, challenged old forms and introduced new music, new devotional practices, and entirely new forms of outreach through electronic media. Moreover, new immigration laws that changed the nation's ethnic make-up also changed its religious mix to include ever higher numbers of Hindus and Buddhists from India and Southeast Asia. The so-called turning East of popular religion in the 1960s, typified in the rising popularity of Zen Buddhist meditation and the ecstatic devotion of Hare Krishna followers, fueled the impression that late twentieth-century spirituality had all but lost its moorings with historic American traditions. The rising visibility of esoteric New Age groups, boosted by high-profile celebrity advocates such as Shirley MacLaine, added to another perception that the new religions of the late twentieth century were little more than consumer-driven journeys off the beaten path.

In many ways, however, it is possible to view the entire twentieth century as an "age of the spirit," marked by intense encounter with the third person of the Trinity. The Azusa Street revival of 1906 marked the birth of the modern Pentecostal movement, with gifts of speaking in tongues (glossolalia), healing, and prophecy. Nurtured in the black and white Holiness churches of the South, this desire for a direct, immediate experience of surrender and transformation quickly crossed all the social barriers of race, ethnicity, and gender. Pentecostalism was originally bolstered by the Old Testament prophecy in Joel 2 that in the "latter days" God's spirit would fall on all alike, including both men and women. Though that egalitarian ethic did not survive the pressures of denominational institutionalization, the Pentecostal movement itself was fast becoming the common currency of new Christian outreach in Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. By the end of the twentieth century, the numbers of new converts were nearly impossible to count, with large megachurches in places such as Lagos, Nigeria, and Seoul, Korea, reaching well past the one million-member mark—and sending their own missionaries back to the United States for yet more converts.

Current interest in spirituality also draws from more traditionally religious sources, taking up a long conversation about the "spiritual life" within the Roman Catholic Church. Well before the 1960s, old monastic practices of contemplative prayer, spiritual direction, and personal retreats found new audiences of both Catholic and Protestant laypeople, spurred in part by the eloquence of Trappist monk

Thomas Merton, whose autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, became an influential benchmark after its publication in 1948. In following decades, Catholic publishing houses began to produce a deep and diverse literature on spirituality, ranging from the Paulist Press series “Classics of Western Spirituality” to the neomysticism of Dominican priest Matthew Fox. More recently, devotional writers such as Richard Foster and Kathleen Norris have begun to bridge the old Protestant–Catholic divide, drawing on the best of both traditions.

But in other ways the modern turn to spirituality allows a range of expression and a theological eclecticism that do not always fit comfortably in an institutional religious mold. Indeed, some scholars argue that the term should also include the growing number of Americans (according to some estimates around 20 percent) who identify themselves as both spiritual and secular. Spirituality, argues Robert Fuller, does not require a set of practices to be authentic but is the province of all those who struggle to understand how their lives fit into the larger cosmic order of things.

All of these developments suggest the futility of attempting to summarize contemporary spirituality or to suggest a single narrative for its development. Certainly the old assumption that the forces of secularization would obviate the need for religion has not proved a good descriptive model for the twentieth century. Religion has not died under the pressure of modernization but rather has taken on vigorous new life in a widening array of social locations. Perhaps sociologist Robert Wuthnow’s description of twentieth-century spirituality offers the most helpful roadmap for those hoping to make some sense of the contemporary situation. The major change since the 1960s, Wuthnow argues, one that has cut across every denomination and church tradition, has been a shift from a spirituality of home to a spirituality of the road, from finding God in fixed and stable places to seeking (and perhaps finding) God in the course of life’s journey. The challenges this new understanding has posed to historic institutions are obvious, especially those still oriented to a pre-1950s domestic piety that does not meet the spiritual needs of many single young adults. But Wuthnow’s image also suggests that the modern search for meaning has many destinations—religious, secular, or even a mix of both—and deep roots in the eclecticism of the nation’s spiritual past.

See also *African Traditional Religions; Children and Adolescents; Cult of Domesticity; Devotionalism; Emotion; Environment and Ecology entries; Folklore; Gender; Great Awakening(s); Harmonialism*

and Metaphysical Religion; Krishna Consciousness; Literature; Lived Religion; Music entries; New Age Religion(s); Popular Religion and Popular Culture entries; Positive Thinking; Postmodernism; Psychology of Religion; Religious Studies; Romanticism; Tourism and Pilgrimage; Transcendental Meditation; Transcendentalism; Unaffiliated; Wicca and Witchcraft; Women; Worship entries; Zen Buddhism.

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Spirituality: Contemporary Trends

The term *spirituality* rarely appeared in descriptions of American religion prior to 1950. Since then, and especially since the 1960s, it has become nearly impossible to discuss

American religion without at least some mention of spirituality. And in some cases, as, for example, in the various attempts that have been made to track and analyze the religious identity and practices of those sometimes referred to as the “unchurched” in American society, the language of spirituality has become indispensable. The growing awareness of the complexity and ambiguity of religious identity, especially the recognition that such identity cannot be conceived of solely in terms of formal religious belonging and practice, has changed the way we think about the meaning of religion in American life. In part this is a result of the growing religious diversity in American society. The once widely accepted paradigm of American religion as fundamentally Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish no longer accurately describes the range of American religious identity. Increasing numbers of Americans identify themselves as Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, or as spiritual practitioners influenced by an eclectic amalgam of traditional and nontraditional religious influences. It is not simply this diversity that makes the language of spirituality significant and necessary for understanding American religion. The spiritual lives of Americans can only be partially accounted for by the categories of religious belonging that have been used most often to measure and assess religious identity. A more supple and subtle language is needed to capture the meaning of spiritual life and experience in contemporary America.

To access, describe, and interpret the often hidden and idiosyncratic spiritual lives of Americans, it is necessary to travel far beyond the conventional maps of religious belonging and ask questions that require a new vocabulary. Spiritual identity often exists independently of, even in opposition to, classic forms of religious belonging; this sensibility is reflected in the increasingly recognizable idiom by which a person describes him or herself as being “spiritual but not religious”—that is, spiritually alive but not tied to a traditional religious organization or ideology. Still, much analysis of American spirituality since the 1950s suggests that such a simple juxtaposition of the religious and the spiritual is often inadequate to describe the religious idioms and practices that characterize the spiritual experiences of growing numbers of Americans. Spiritual identity can and often does exist outside of or in opposition to traditional forms of religious belonging. However, deepening spiritual awareness often serves to enliven the more formal dimensions of religious belonging and is in turn given weight and substance when understood in relation to a historical religious tradition. Yet identifying spirituality too closely with the “inner” dimension of

religious identity may neglect its complex dependence upon and influence of social, material dimensions of existence.

In practice, *spirituality* often refers to the felt sense of the transcendent grounded in the deepest part of one’s being; still, it is increasingly understood that such spiritual awareness arises in response to concrete social, political, economic, sexual, or ecological dimensions of existence and in turn informs a person’s capacity to respond to these realities. Understanding the meaning and significance of spirituality within contemporary American society requires language and categories that are adequate to the task of tracing and interpreting what is without question a fluid, changing, and increasingly influential dimension of American religious life.

Conceptualizing American Spirituality

One of the main challenges in assessing the changes and developments in American spirituality since the 1950s has been articulating a conceptual language precise and subtle enough to capture this elusive phenomenon. Historians, sociologists, scholars of religion, and others have grappled with several issues simultaneously: defining spirituality, in particular the qualities that distinguish it from classical definitions of religion; investigating the historical sources of spirituality, especially those that have shaped American spirituality; assessing and interpreting the spiritual experience of ordinary people, often through painstaking ethnographic research; and providing typologies that can illuminate trends, tensions, and characteristic features of spiritual experience within the shifting American cultural landscape. In addition to these challenges, there is the difficulty of making evaluative judgments about the meaning of key changes within American spirituality. With the possible exception of the most objective reports based on survey data, nearly every assessment offered contains a judgment about the value of the trends being observed—that is, whether they represent a development or advancement beyond what existed before (a freedom from stultifying tradition, for example) or represent a deterioration or erosion of what was once highly esteemed (such as a careless eclecticism that reveals no respect for traditional practices and ideas). It is important when evaluating changes in American spirituality to be as honest as possible about the assumptions underlying our judgments.

A final observation has to do with the living, dynamic character of the subject. American spiritual life and practice has unfolded with astonishing speed and diversity since 1950, often reflecting changes in American society as a whole. Any attempt to describe and interpret this phenomenon needs to

acknowledge the provisional character of the analysis being offered and the importance of balancing broad typological analysis with more partial accounts of specific elements of American spiritual experience. Attention to these crucial issues of definition and interpretation is necessary to arrive at an adequate understanding of what American spirituality has come to mean and how that meaning is changing.

How should American spirituality be understood in relation to those aspects of life and practice that have traditionally been located under the category of religion? The distinction between spirituality and religion has become an increasingly prevalent and important way of addressing this question; however, this distinction is widely seen by scholars of religion as highly problematic and not fully adequate for understanding the changes in Americans' attitudes toward spirituality. In common parlance, the statement "I am spiritual but not religious" usually indicates at least two important things: (1) distance or alienation from organized religion and formal, creedal belief systems, and (2) commitment to a personal, subjectively meaningful orientation to God or the transcendent.

Survey data indicates that this phrase, or something like it, accurately reflects trends that have been increasingly observed in American life: the steady decline in the number of persons who identify themselves as belonging to a formally defined religious tradition or organization, and the increasing number of Americans for whom the quest for a personally meaningful spiritual experience now takes place outside the bounds of or on the margins of traditional religious structures. Robert Wuthnow (1998) has described this distinction as a difference between "dwelling" and "seeking," the former referring to the classical expressions of religious belonging that largely described Americans' approach to religion prior to 1950, and the latter referring to an approach that has become more common since the 1960s and involves a style of spiritual seeking that is eclectic, oriented toward personal fulfillment, and not easily located within the confines of classic religious traditions or structures. Wade Clark Roof (1999) argues that this style of seeking, which he describes under the rubric of "reflexive spirituality," has been especially important for the baby boomer generation and has in fact profoundly shaped an entire generation's approach to spirituality.

One of the primary contributions of this work has been to reveal a fluid, diffuse, and complex pattern within American religious life. Uncovering this pattern has created other interpretive challenges. One of these is the question of the value

to be ascribed to the shifts being observed. Do they represent the liberation of religion from its historic attachment to creeds, structure, and authority? Or are they a reflection of a gradual but steady erosion of religion in American public life, an unmooring of personal experience from public engagement? One of the most influential proponents of this latter position has been Robert Bellah, who in his 1985 book *Habits of the Heart* raised questions about the viability of what he saw as an emerging individualistic and therapeutic culture, especially as these qualities came to shape American's attitudes toward religion. What he memorably described as "Sheilaism"—a style of spiritual practice named for a woman who portrayed herself as having created her own personal spirituality, independent and detached from any formal tradition and not involving any noticeable public commitments—came to stand for the worst excesses of American individualism combined with endless choice. Such spirituality was shown to be shallow and isolating, incapable of sustaining a meaningful life of communal engagement.

Bellah's analysis succeeds in laying bare one of the chief difficulties of the emerging spirituality: the lack of a common language and symbol system to enable communal expression of spiritual experience. What Bellah and his colleagues do less well is evoke the pathos of Sheila's search for meaning, something shared to a greater or lesser degree by nearly all those interviewed by Wuthnow and Roof. *Pathos* describes the serious existential and spiritual questions that however imperfectly formed, have driven many seekers to look beyond the walls of church, synagogue, and mosque for spiritual meaning, in many cases leading to new personal syntheses of meaning comprised of traditional and nontraditional forms of wisdom. That such personal systems of spiritual knowledge have not yet been historically tested or in many cases found stable institutional forms raises serious questions about their long-term viability. It is important to acknowledge the troubling consumerist ethos that continues to drive many of these new expressions of spiritual seeking. But to denigrate them for their inability or unwillingness to adapt successfully to traditional forms of religious practice risks underestimating the profundity of the hunger for honest, authentic experience and practice that has come to characterize much of the spiritual climate in contemporary American culture.

One of the most serious impediments to understanding this phenomenon has been the persistence of an unfortunate tendency to dichotomize spirituality and religion. Often spirituality, characterized as the quest for authentic,

free, and personally meaningful spiritual experience, is celebrated at the expense of religion, which is characterized as conservative, dogmatic, and overly dependent on authority. Alternately, religion, characterized as preserving important traditional ideas and practices, as sustaining coherent theological thought, and as supporting communal and civic engagement, is celebrated at the expense of spirituality, which is characterized as being carelessly eclectic, individualistic, and as having little capacity for inspiring sustained public commitment. That this way of characterizing the relationship between religion and spirituality is so clearly a caricature has done little to prevent such generalizations from taking hold in the popular imagination. Nor has the scholarly discussion of spirituality been entirely free of such polarizing characterizations. There appears to be an emerging recognition of the ways in which spirituality draws upon and shapes religious traditions and of how religious traditions require sustained attention to their own spiritual resources in order to remain vital and dynamic.

But if the complex relationship between spirituality and religion in America is to be adequately understood, at least three significant developments will need to take place. First, there is a need for greater critical attention to the kinds of implicit judgments (what counts as adequate or inadequate) that are often made about the relative value of certain religious and spiritual ideas and practices. As long as these judgments remain implicit and unexamined, there will be little opportunity for developing an honest and inclusive understanding of how Americans are pursuing their quest for spiritual and religious meaning. Second, there is need for greater attention to the variety of ways in which spiritual experience is described and conceptualized within the lived experience of ordinary people. Third, there is a need to contextualize and locate expressions of spiritual experience within particular historical genealogies. Much of the confusion and contention relating to the meaning of contemporary American spirituality is rooted in imprecise or ill-conceived contextualization of the phenomenon. Many aspects of contemporary spiritual practice have deep and complex historical roots, but often these historical precedents and influences are not adequately understood, resulting in an understanding of the emerging spirituality movement as unrelated to any particular tradition.

Historical Analysis and Retrieval

There has been significant progress in recent years in situating the contemporary spirituality phenomenon within

the historical genealogies that have given rise to it. While no consensus has emerged, scholars such as Leigh Schmidt, Robert C. Fuller, and Catherine Albanese have contributed to our understanding of the deep and complex historical roots of what has come to be called in recent years “seeker spirituality.” Schmidt, in his book *Restless Souls* (2005), argues for a complex and subtle understanding of the roots of American spirituality, one that acknowledges the influence of certain ideas and practices emerging from early American Protestantism (spirituality embedded within a coherent religious tradition) but also recognizes that there was a significant disentanglement of spirituality from these model Protestant practices (or at least a significant redefinition of them). Only this disentanglement, Schmidt argues, can account for the gradual separation of spirituality from religion that eventually became prominent in the American experience and the growing sense of spirituality as having to do with unmediated mystical experience of the absolute or divine. Understanding the American invention of spirituality in terms of what Schmidt describes as a “search for a religious world larger than the British Protestant inheritance” (p. 5) helps to account for both its relationship to a coherent religious tradition and its creative expansion beyond it. It is the recurring presence of this open-ended, inclusive sensibility within American experience, the hunger for what Schmidt calls a “cosmopolitan spirituality,” that leads him to argue for the centrality of religious liberalism for understanding American spirituality. He does not mean a single, ideological perspective but rather a historically specific but malleable way of thinking that allows a wide array of spiritual movements, within Christianity and beyond, to be considered under the same broad category. This kind of careful historical-cultural analysis can describe more precisely the fluid and diverse spiritual movements unfolding within contemporary American society.

Catherine Albanese presents a distinct but complementary assessment of the roots and flowering of American spirituality in her anthology *American Spiritualities* (2001), which highlights key tendencies and trajectories in the American spiritual tradition that stretch from the earliest moments of the American experiment up to the present moment. She classifies these tendencies in terms of four ways of “knowing”: through the body (the path of ritual); through the heart (the path of feeling and emotion); through the will (the path of prophecy and social action); and through the mind (the path of metaphysics). This perceptive typology demonstrates

that spiritual life and practice in America has always moved among and between these distinct, if not always compatible, expressions.

The attention to ritual helps to show how American spirituality, more than simply a matter of private, personal preference, has always depended for its meaning on certain embodied ritual expressions. This crucial aspect of American spirituality illuminates practices as diverse as public worship in early Puritan life; Mexican American devotional practices surrounding the Virgin of Guadalupe; classic expressions of Jewish ritual life (Shabbat, Channukah, Rosh Hashanah); and the Sioux Sun Dance.

Similarly, the importance of the heart in American spirituality reflects the intense affective dimension of spiritual experience that links phenomena as wide-ranging as Anglo-American evangelicalism and the spirituality of the heart (not merely a private affair but something that also has a public expression); the sanctification traditions in African American spirituality, at the center of which lies an intense experience of the divine presence after conversion; the ecstatic expressions of various forms of Pentecostal spirituality; the spirituality of EST, with its own commitment to knowing of the heart; and the Hare Krishna movement, at the center of which lies an intense devotional practice of chanting.

So too one sees the centrality of the prophetic strain in American spirituality, in which spiritual practice becomes inextricably bound up with the commitment to social justice. Exemplary expressions of this form of spirituality can be found in Henry David Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience*; Joachim Wach's *Sociology of Religion*; Carrie Nation's spiritual-political activism; Emma Goldman's radical anarchism; and the more recent witnesses of spiritually grounded prophetic witness seen in the life and work of Martin Luther King Jr. and Daniel and Philip Berrigan.

Finally, there is what Albanese calls the "path of knowing," or the "way of metaphysics," a rich and varied part of the American spiritual tradition whose various expressions she has mapped and analyzed in *A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion*. Included under this rubric are elements as diverse as American transcendentalism; Ralph Trine's New Thought movement; Thomas Merton's retrieval of ancient Christian traditions of contemplation; Annie Dillard's ecstatic naturalism; the theravada Buddhist Vipassana meditation tradition; and the increasing presence of yoga and tai chi practice in contemporary American culture.

This kind of synthetic historical scholarship has a crucial role to play in the work of interpreting contemporary American spirituality. It enables a view of contemporary expressions of spirituality in relation to their historical predecessors and to assess both the continuities and transformations that have taken place as these traditions have assumed new forms in late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century American culture. The ideas and practices that are shaping contemporary American spirituality have particular genealogies, and attention to these genealogies is crucial to making sense of these phenomena. Such work also serves to check unnecessarily narrow assessments of American spirituality, such as those that would view it only against the backdrop of American individualism and argue for a largely privatized, disengaged view. Careful attention to these historical genealogies can maintain a healthy sense of the irreducible diversity of American spirituality. Finally, careful consideration of the historical sources of contemporary spiritual practice can deepen the work of retrieval.

This latter issue plays an increasingly significant role in American spiritual life, as individuals and communities work to retrieve and reinterpret ancient spiritual practices and ideals for contemporary use. This work entails thoughtful scholarly inquiry, something that is reflected, for example, in the efforts undertaken to publish new critical translations of classic spiritual texts. Moreover, scholarly reflection on spirituality has matured and deepened, so that it is now possible to speak of a field or discipline of spirituality. These texts and works of scholarship contribute to the effort to make ancient spiritual traditions available and accessible for contemporary spiritual practice. An impressive array of retrievals of ancient spiritual traditions, such as the revival of ancient Christian contemplative practice in the centering prayer movement; a renewed interest in the Jewish mystical tradition of the Kabbalah; an effort to articulate the shape of a "new monasticism" that can ground the spiritual aspirations of contemporary evangelical Christians; the growth of interest in embodied spiritual practices such as yoga and tai chi; and a renewed interest in spirituality that is attuned to the natural world—rooted variously in pagan, indigenous, and mainstream Western and Eastern spiritual traditions—are witnessed in the early twenty-first century.

The extent to which practitioners of these ancient spiritual traditions are aware of the historical sources underlying them varies immensely. Such knowledge is not always necessary for a person or community to benefit from exposure to spiritual tradition, but the importance of the work of

historical retrieval should not be underestimated. Most vital spiritual traditions have embedded within them some version of a process the ancient Christian monastic sources refer to as “discernment of spirits” or “testing of spirits.” Part of this work involves making crucial judgments about the value and viability of particular practices and ideals, something that often means testing them against the values and ideals that have long sustained the tradition. Awareness of the ancient sources underlying the tradition can serve as a valuable check against unwanted excesses or abuses.

Late twentieth-century American spirituality has, unfortunately, produced numerous cases of excess, including the mass suicides that occurred in Jonestown, Guyana, in 1978 and Waco, Texas, in 1993. While neither of the abuses in these cases can be attributed to any single source, the kinds of checks provided by adherence to historically sanctioned traditions were not present in either of these cases. There are other cases, less extreme but no less pressing for the participants, in which the question of how to interpret traditional sources bears directly upon the ongoing spiritual viability of the tradition: the ongoing struggle to address the marginal status of women in the Catholic Church and the efforts to establish a more egalitarian vision of Catholicism; the impact of continued ordination of homosexuals in the Episcopal Church and the deepening divisions (even potential schism) this issue is creating in that community; the efforts underway in certain parts of the American evangelical community to reclaim a more inclusive, socially progressive vision of their tradition; the challenges facing American Muslims as they search out a vision of Islam that honors the traditions of that religion while also acknowledging the complexity of adapting to life in post-September 11 America.

At the root of each of these struggles is a challenge to determine how to live deeply and authentically out of a given spiritual tradition, and how to allow that tradition to grow and develop without losing hold of its enduring ancient character. One of the great issues Americans face is how to express their spiritual traditions in ways that remain vital and meaningful in the twenty-first century.

Emerging Trends in American Spirituality

The tensions and challenges described account for only some of what rightly deserves to be placed in the category of American spirituality. Much is still coming into being and is so fluid in both its forms and expressions that it remains difficult to describe or categorize. In the early twenty-first century, four key issues appear central to any

future discussions of American spirituality. The first of these has to do with the growing interest in what has come to be called “lived religion.” A second issue is the increasing awareness of the irreducible particularity and diversity of spirituality, whether this is understood as residing primarily in race, ethnicity, gender, generational differences, or in the distinct character of religious traditions themselves. Third, in keeping with Albanese’s sense of the importance of the prophetic strain in American spirituality, there is a growing attention to what some are calling “engaged spirituality.” Finally, there is the enduring question of how to balance the requirements of tradition and innovation in the expression of spiritual experience.

The category of lived religion has become an increasingly important means of describing and analyzing spiritual experience in American life. Taking its name from a long-standing tradition in the French tradition of sociology (*la religion vécue*), historian David Hall and his colleagues, in the book *Lived Religion in America* (1997), see “lived religion” in the North American context in more expansive terms. While it is still indebted to sociological theory and methods, it depends just as much on cultural and ethnographic approaches to the study of religion to interpret American religious history. The focus is on what Hall describes as “religion as practiced . . . the everyday thinking and doing of lay men and women” (p. vii).

The advantages of this approach to the study of religion are many, not least of which is a greater ability to track what Wade Clark Roof, following Mary Catherine Bateson, has called “the arts of improvisation.” One of the most significant expressions of this improvisation, Roof suggests, is the “creative refocusing of religious resources,” or “recombination of symbols and practices,” often in response to personal or collective crisis. And, in an echo of Albanese’s earlier observation about the importance of ritual in American religious life, Roof notes that ritual is often precisely the means by which this creative recombination of religious symbols often occurs, whether it takes the form of the creative reimagining of ancient rituals or the invention of new rituals (1999).

The importance of improvisation or “blending” of traditions comes through strongly in Meredith McGuire’s study, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* (2008). She calls attention to the importance of what she calls the “logic of lived religion,” the fact that in the lived experience of persons and communities, one does not always observe a logically coherent belief system but rather a creative blending of traditions and practices that requires and calls forth from

both persons and communities a “practical coherence.” This careful attention to what works, to what enables a person or community to make sense of the often disparate elements of the world and culture, is one of the hallmarks of much contemporary spiritual practice.

How this creative blending of practices and traditions is characterized in contemporary culture varies widely. Sometimes it is seen as a new, growing edge of American spiritual life, other times as a disturbing and radical challenge to traditional beliefs and practices. That the reality itself cannot be reduced to such a simple dichotomy does little to prevent such characterizations from permeating contemporary cultural awareness. Still, as the twenty-first century unfolds, one of the main challenges for those seeking to understand, interpret, and deepen American spirituality will be the need to find a conceptual language supple enough to describe the ever-shifting and subtle ways in which spiritual practices and religious traditions shape one another. Works such as Ruth Frankenburg’s detailed ethnographic study, *Living Spirit, Living Practice* (2004), or Nancy Ammerman’s *Everyday Religion* (2007), or Robert Orsi’s *Between Heaven and Earth* (2005) are suggestive of the kind of conceptual subtlety and careful observation of ordinary spiritual practice needed to avoid overly simple dichotomies between religion and spirituality and arrive at a more adequate understanding of American spiritual life.

This same principle applies to the growing awareness of the irreducible diversity and specificity of American spirituality. If one interpretive challenge involves the need to find common features across a broad range of spiritual practices, an equally compelling challenge is the need to recognize and describe the character of the different expressions of spirituality that comprise that range. Attention to this diversity and specificity takes different forms. One of the most important emerging trends is the awareness of the character of the spirituality of young people, whether the adolescents whose spiritual life and practice is studied in Christian Smith’s *Soul Searching* (2005), the college students whose spirituality is being tracked in A. W. Astin’s ongoing UCLA study, or in Donna Freitas’s analysis of the relationship between spirituality and sexuality among college students, *Sex and the Soul* (2008).

Greater attention is being given to the ways that race, class, gender, and ethnicity shape spiritual experience. Emerging work in this area is itself diverse and includes historical-descriptive studies of the spiritual lives and practices of particular communities, as well as critical theological reflections on the nature of a particular community’s spiritual

experience. Analyses of the relationship of gender and spirituality includes both critical, feminist analysis of particular religious traditions and constructive efforts to reimagine spiritual experience itself through careful attention to the specific (albeit diverse) character of women’s experience. And while it once seemed possible to describe the spirituality of Americans within the context of Jewish and Christian symbols and traditions alone, as Diana Eck and others have shown, the growing awareness of religious diversity within American culture means that discussions of spirituality can no longer be framed in such narrow terms.

So, too, the notion of American spirituality as narrowly individualistic and unengaged in civic life is increasingly being challenged by an awareness of the currents within American spirituality that invite direct engagement with social and political concerns. This takes many different forms, including the nonviolent resistance advocated by Martin Luther King Jr. and Thomas Merton in the 1960s to more recent expressions that reflect the need to bring spiritual resources to bear upon a wide range of social and political challenges. This broader pattern of spiritually motivated social engagement or “engaged spirituality” (Stanczak, 2006) has become one of the most significant features of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century American spirituality.

A final word concerns the question of how American spirituality can continue to honor both tradition and innovation. Much of the rhetoric surrounding the shifting landscape of American spirituality since the 1950s has pointed to the novelty of what is emerging, its difference from and perceived superiority to what it has replaced, yet the emerging expressions of spirituality, which are indeed marked by novelty and change, nevertheless often draw on older patterns of spiritual practice. The vitality of what is emerging often depends for its meaning on the richness and depth of earlier traditions. The question of how to maintain this delicate balance as American spirituality continues to grow and develop will no doubt continue well into the twenty-first century.

See also *Devotionalism; Emotion; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Hinduism in North America; Lived Religion; Music: Contemporary Christian; Neo-Paganism; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements; Popular Religion and Popular Culture: Since the Mid-Twentieth Century; Positive Thinking; Postmodernism; Roman Catholicism: Early Twenty-First-Century Issues; Unaffiliated; Wicca and Witchcraft; Worship: Contemporary Currents; Zen Buddhism.*

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Sport(s)

From Puritans puzzling over "lawful sports" to professional triathletes practicing "Zendurance," sports have long influenced America's religious culture. A close examination of this relationship reveals how Americans have practiced religion, practiced sports, and articulated their most cherished values—all at the same time. Traditional religion is not the only lens from which to examine this connection. More generally, fans and athletes sometimes transform their athletic arenas into sacred space. From here heroes emerge, myths take form, symbols convey powerful meaning, and rituals unify scores of devoted followers. Put simply, religion can be at work *in* a sport (a touchdown prayer, for example), but religion can also be at work *as* a sport (such as a distance runner describing a run as a "place to commune with God"). In either case mapping the meeting points of religion and sports reveals a unique set of pathways along America's complicated religious landscape.

Religion and Sports in Colonial and Early America

In 1636, living among the Huron in Ontario, Jesuit missionary Jean de Brébeuf penned an account of an Indian stick-and-ball game that he called "lacrosse." (The sticks reminded him of the crosier carried by bishops in religious processions). A sorcerer, wrote the missionary, prescribed the game to a sick man as a cure, but the tribe also played for communal health. Lacrosse probably originated in the early fifteenth century among the Huron and Iroquois tribes in the St. Lawrence River region. As it spread, both the game's rules and ritual behaviors adapted to local customs. In 1890 anthropologist James Mooney described the religious practices apparent in the Cherokee version of lacrosse. Male players began preparing weeks in advance, undergoing a series of cleansing rites and avoiding certain foods and sexual intercourse. On game day, spectators pounded drums and cheered, while medicine men wandered the sidelines, appealing for divine assistance on behalf of their tribe and hexing opponents. The game was often violent. With severe injuries and even death occurring, the Cherokee tagged lacrosse "the little brother of war." Still, tribal mythology emphasized fair play. One legend tells of a lacrosse player so eager to win that he used his hand rather than the stick to pick up the ball. The defiled ball, itself a sacred object, soared upward into the sky and became the moon. Tribe members recount this myth when the moon wanes, emphasizing both

a requirement to uphold the game's rules and, by inference, their entire tribal value system.

Lacrosse was not the only sacred sport for Native Americans. In other regions and tribes, Indians imbued everything from kickball to relay races with religious significance. In contrast, the Puritans of colonial New England would have likely recoiled in horror if they had witnessed such a seamless merging of faith and athletics. Indeed, Puritans imported to North America an antisport theology born from religious conflicts in Europe. Both before and after the Protestant Reformation, British tradition dictated that Sunday mornings were reserved for church services, after which time people could enjoy "festive games" such as footraces, "skittles and ninepins" (a rudimentary form of bowling), and peasant football. Puritans, who envisioned themselves as Church of England reformers, believed that these Sunday afternoon games carried with them the taint of Catholicism. Accordingly, they endeavored to eliminate this tradition in their homeland but had limited success. In New England, however, Puritans enacted strict Sabbatarian laws and banned all recreations associated with British "festive culture." They also outlawed horseracing, shuffleboard, card games, cockfighting, and any other sport that they believed led to sinful behavior, such as drinking, gambling, and idleness.

Despite their pronounced antisport theology, Puritan limitations on leisure activities were not absolute. Community leaders identified certain "lawful sports," or activities that were considered harmless distractions or able to serve some practical end. For example, children were permitted to swim in summer, skate in winter, and play football and bat-and-ball games if these games did not become overly violent. And men could hunt since this provided sustenance. Moreover, young male colonists were legally required to participate in "militia training days," which one 1704 observer in Connecticut compared to the ancient Greek Olympics. Foot races, wrestling matches, and shooting contests were featured activities. Also, despite the legal prohibitions, merchants sold packs of cards; gardeners groomed bowling greens; and innkeepers provided venues for shuffleboard, wrestling, horse races, and even cockfighting. Put simply, people found a way to play whatever they wanted to play, with or without official sanction.

Unlike Puritans in New England, Anglican ministers in the Southern colonies tended to mirror their European counterparts. Accordingly, people freely played and watched a wide range of recreational activities—until the Great Awakening of the 1730s. Thereafter, Methodist circuit riders repeated the familiar line that sports led to gambling,

drinking, and Sabbath desecration. As the decades passed and the new nation took form, evangelical churches settled in the South, and preachers continued denouncing sports. Not everyone heeded these moralistic prescriptions, however. Cockfighting remained enormously popular for black and white men of all classes. Published in South Carolina, *Grit and Steel*, a widely read cockfighting magazine in the nineteenth century, celebrated cocks with demonstrated courage and tenacity. The sport and others like it fed into a male "code of honor," which was decidedly aggressive and frequently destructive. The honor-driven activities of men directly conflicted with feminine and evangelical ideals of home and church, which placed priority on quiet prayer, harmony, and self-control. Antebellum ministers relied on sermons and church discipline to suppress the male sporting culture. But by the late nineteenth century, evangelicals became more involved in public life and advanced a wave of morality legislation, which included prohibitions on Sunday play and certain sports deemed excessively violent.

Ironically, in antebellum America, as the North and South marched toward war, Protestant ministers of both sections seemingly shared an antisport theology. They also witnessed the disparity between what they said and what people did. This would change after the Civil War. In the North's industrial centers, a movement known as "muscular Christianity" gained momentum, purging old Puritan prohibitions on sport and redefining the relationship between playing and praying. In a short time this ideology spread to nearly every region and every faith community in America.

Muscular Christianity

The phrase "muscular Christianity" first appeared in Englishman T. C. Sandars's 1857 review of Charles Kingsley's novel *Two Years Ago*. Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) elaborated on the muscular Christian ideal, suggesting that a combination of religious commitment and physical strength could fortify a moral sensibility that would shield young men from the supposed sinful pressures of the city. While popular in industrial England, muscular Christianity made little headway in antebellum America. There were exceptions, however, mainly in liberal Protestant circles. In the 1850s Congregational minister Henry Ward Beecher, while initially a stout opponent of sports, discovered that "muscular games" could positively influence one's health and faith, if they did not lead to drinking and gambling. He admired prizefighters in particular for their self-imposed dietary and sexual restrictions.

After the Civil War, northern Social Gospel ministers began sounding more like Beecher. Proponents of the Social Gospel advanced a this-worldly theology aimed at “Christianizing” society. A fit, morally upright body, ministers reasoned, could better transform America and the world. Congregational clergyman Washington Gladden was a leading articulator of this position. An avid baseball fan, he suggested that the game’s reliance on teamwork reflected the Social Gospel’s emphasis on working together for the common good. Moreover, he called sports a “means of grace” that could equal the spiritual edification of a prayer meeting.

Gladden shied away from church-sponsored sports activities, but leaders of “institutional churches” were less reluctant. Under the direction of Rev. William S. Rainsford, St. George’s Episcopal Church in Manhattan was a prototypical institutional church of the 1890s. St. George’s five-story Parish House kept its doors open every day of the week, offering a host of services and programs. The entire third floor was reserved for athletics, with a large gymnasium as the central feature. By the turn of the century, St. George’s sponsored everything from croquet and tennis to basketball and baseball.

Prior to Rainsford’s tenure, St. George’s was a foundering church, but by the late 1890s over 1,000 people regularly attended Sunday services. His enlistment of sports and recreation no doubt contributed to this change, but there is more to the story. For Rainsford and other muscular Christians, the playing fields were a place to teach young men how to be “masculine.” In the nation’s growing cities, women had become increasingly visible in public life and churches, while men worked office jobs that required little physical exertion. An anxious cast of men such as Theodore Roosevelt worried that this signaled the “feminization” of America. Roosevelt would enroll all of his sons at the exclusive Groton School, founded in 1884. At this Episcopal preparatory school, athletics was a core element of the curriculum. School founder and later headmaster Endicott Peabody had become familiar with the muscular Christian movement during his schooling in England and brought to Groton this blend of athletics, piety, and academics.

The Groton School and other preparatory academies became “manliness” training grounds for the sons of elite families. For the white middle class, there was the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). With origins in London in 1844, the YMCA first appeared in New York City in 1852 and then spread across North America. Intended as a

haven for young men and an alternative to saloons and brothels, the YMCA did not originally include physical recreation as part of its mission. In 1865 there were no YMCA gymnasiums, but by 1890 there were approximately 400 gyms, with at least half of the YMCAs employing a physical activity supervisor. At this point most directors agreed with Luther Gulick, head of physical education at the International YMCA Training School, who advised that the gym should always serve as a location for “leading men to Christ.”

The YMCA managed to solicit some of the most prominent Christian athletes of the era, including the noted revivalist Billy Sunday. Sunday was a gifted professional baseball player with the Chicago White Stockings when, in the summer of 1886 after leaving a bar, he and his friends came upon a street preacher. Inspired, Sunday soon converted and became a passionate advocate for the faith. At YMCAs across the nation, Sunday drew enormous crowds who clamored to hear the charismatic baseball player recall his faith journey. In 1891 Sunday quit baseball for a position with the YMCA as an evangelist, teacher, and emissary. Athletic allusions saturated his sermons. He directed crowds to lead a “ninth-inning rally” for Christ and to fling a “fastball at the devil,” and he called Jesus “the greatest scrapper that ever lived.” Moreover, his stage performances were demonstrations of physicality and aggressiveness, as he slid down the center aisle and threw chairs across the stage.

While Billy Sunday blended faith and athletics at revivals, other Christian athletes brought religion to the playing fields. In 1884 Amos Alonzo Stagg attended Yale, where he played baseball and planned to become a minister. But football would have the strongest appeal for Stagg, who spent the majority of his 102 years coaching the sport. He served tenures at Springfield College in Massachusetts (1890–1891), the University of Chicago (1892–1932), the College of the Pacific in California (1933–1946), Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania (1947–1952), and Stockton Junior College in California (1953–1958). An innovator, Stagg introduced the tackling dummy, the Statue of Liberty play, the T-formation, placekicking, and several uniform advances. All the while, the “Grand Old Man” of football forthrightly announced his Christian values, encouraging players to avoid drinking, smoking, and profanity. He was not perfect. The “hidden ball play,” for example, drew criticism from opponents who labeled it “un-Christian.” He reportedly allowed ineligible players into games, and as athletic director at the University of Chicago, Stagg supposedly kept a secret budget for his football team.

One of Stagg's colleagues was James Naismith, a Presbyterian minister who left an enduring mark on muscular Christianity and the sports world. On January 20, 1892, eighteen young men gathered at a YMCA gym in Springfield, Massachusetts, to play his newly invented game called "basketball." Practically, Naismith wanted basketball to meet the physical needs of young men who grew restless during the Northeast's long winter months. More important, he designed the game to be an expression of Christianity, emphasizing grace and beauty rather than brute strength and violence. To accomplish this he placed the basket at ten feet to avoid blocked shots, and he levied "fouls" for rule infractions such as unnecessary contact. But the game was still too intense for the middle-aged businessmen who came to the YMCA on their lunch breaks. In 1895 Naismith's associate William G. Morgan took up the challenge of creating a more genteel game. "Mintonette," as he would call it, was a hybrid of basketball, tennis, and handball. It would soon become known as "volleyball." So alongside new ideas about gender, exercise, and religion, muscular Christians also created new sports that would forever change American athletics.

Women, Sports, and Muscular Christianity

Basketball and volleyball were popular among both men and women in the muscular Christian era. By the 1890s the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) was the center of female physical activity in the urban North. First appearing in Boston in 1866, the YWCA mirrored the evolution of its male counterpart. While neither began with a focus on athletics, the Associations would both make sports central to their respective missions. Motivating this change at the YWCA was a consensus that exercise was a fitting antidote to the deleterious forces of urban life, which included physical laxity. Writing in *Playground* magazine in July 1909, fitness advocate Helen McKinstry posited that a "strong, full-blooded, physically courageous woman" would make a better teacher, mother, and wife than a "delicate" and "anemic" woman would. She did not, however, endorse competitive sports. Instead, she echoed Luther Gulick, who two years earlier had theorized that competition would make women too manly and threaten their reproductive capabilities. He prescribed "recreational sports" for women, such as noncompetitive forms of swimming, basketball, tennis, volleyball, golf, archery, and horseback riding.

The competitive spirit of women could not be denied, however. One year after Naismith introduced basketball to men, Senda Berenson Abbott brought the game to women

at Smith College. Other schools quickly followed suit. By the 1930s the women of Immaculata College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, began playing basketball, and in 1972 the talented "Mighty Macs" won the first of their three college national championships. Through the decades fans and families packed gyms to watch them play. Meanwhile, the players delighted in their newfound status and invented an array of unique religious practices. In addition to the standard series of pregame prayers (the Hail Mary and Our Father), the Catholic cagers gathered to recite their own "O God of Players."

Muscling into the Mainstream

As the account of Immaculata indicates, the story of religion and sports in America is not simply a mainstream Protestant one. In 1914 an obscure Christian millennial group based in southern Michigan called the "House of David" launched a traveling baseball team. Comprised of men who adhered to the group's prescription neither to cut their hair nor shave their beards, the players were both uncommonly good and a curious sight. Enterprising community members capitalized on this, selling souvenirs with depictions of the shaggy baseballers. Crowds at the games began to thin in the 1920s, just around the time that the House of David began recruiting clean-shaven "ringers." Nevertheless, during the muscular Christian era religious groups like the House of David used athletics to introduce themselves to the mainstream, draw in potential converts, and inculcate their own gender ideals and moral values.

In 1903, while Congress deliberated whether to seat a Mormon senator, the "Salt Lake City Mormons" joined the Pacific Northern League. By playing baseball in non-Mormon locales, the team put a human face on Mormonism. The idea of "muscular Mormonism" was not new in the early twentieth century. Since their origins in the 1830s, Mormons had tended to value physical and spiritual health, celebrating the strength of the pioneers who had endured a multitude of hardships as they traveled from New York to Illinois and finally to Utah. As Mormons entered the nation's sporting world, they both familiarized themselves with outsiders and practiced their own values of fortitude, strength, and temperance. When a small band of Mormon men won a basketball tournament in 1910, admirers credited the victory to the team's observance of "Word of Wisdom," a dietary code prohibiting the consumption or use of alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, and large quantities of meat. Their success, in other words, was a direct result of being observant Mormons.

From 1901 to 1938, twenty-seven boxing world champions were Jewish. Benny Leonard was among the most well-known. Learning the trade in the New York City ghettos like many of his fellow Jews, Leonard held the lightweight championship from 1917 to 1925. Novelist Budd Schulberg recalled watching the boxer in his prime, climbing into the ring with the Star of David on his trunks, giving a sense of pride to the beleaguered Jews of the city. While Leonard battled anti-Semitism with his fists, baseball great “Hammerin’” Hank Greenberg used a wooden bat. With a towering 215-pound frame, Greenberg—a New York native and son of Jewish immigrants—wielded a powerful bat for the Detroit Tigers, amassing 331 home runs and 1,276 RBIs (runs batted in), while maintaining a .313 lifetime batting average. In Detroit, anti-Semitism lingered in the air, as the radio demagogue Father Charles Coughlin joined a host of others in blaming Jews for the Depression. At the same time, however, Tigers fans venerated Greenberg’s skill and ability while also becoming familiar with Jewish customs. In the midst of a tight pennant race in 1934, Greenberg announced that he might forgo a key game against the Tigers’ chief rival, the Boston Red Sox, because the game fell on the Jewish High Holiday of Rosh Hashanah. In response, Anglo sportswriters and fans consulted area rabbis who explained that unlike Catholic bishops, a rabbi could not offer dispensation. Torn between his religious and athletic duties, Greenberg played, reasoning that his responsibility to the team and community took precedence. With two home runs, Greenberg led Detroit to a victory and later speculated that his performance validated his decision. Throughout his career, Greenberg was something of a standard-bearer for American Jews, offsetting prejudice in a time when prejudice was in no short supply.

Notre Dame University’s football teams played a similar role for Catholics. In the early decades of the twentieth century, Notre Dame’s storied tradition took shape and grew further after Knute Rockne’s appointment to head coach in 1918. The team’s chaplain, Father John Francis O’Hara, carefully crafted Notre Dame’s religious identity. He sprinkled holy water on the field, held pregame Communion ceremonies, and distributed saint medals to players. The distinctively Catholic Notre Dame teams defeated America’s finest Protestant and secular universities. They also symbolized a powerful response to nativism, an ideology flourishing among some white, native-born Protestants who worried that America’s growing immigrant population would erode the nation’s fundamental qualities. A principal conviction among nativists was that Catholics could never be “true Americans,” since

their primary allegiance was to the pope in Rome. In Indiana—the heart of Northern nativism at this time—Notre Dame’s players unabashedly showcased their athleticism, piety, and patriotism, and in the process they helped American Catholics maneuver past nativist intolerance and into the mainstream.

Muscular Christianity in the South

After the Civil War, muscular Christianity flourished in the North, and the ideals feeding the movement extended into different regions and religions. Southern preachers, however, kept sports at arm’s length. The brutality of nineteenth-century prizefighting raised the hackles of many Southern white Protestants. Prior to the introduction of padded gloves in the 1890s, bare-knuckle fighting was the norm. Matches could last for dozens of rounds, with competitors often left unconscious or even dead in the ring. Clergymen led the charge to criminalize prizefighting, but laws banning the sport were rarely enforced. In 1882 ministers in New Orleans beseeched public officials to stop a heavyweight bout between Paddy Ryan and John L. Sullivan, claiming that the event would attract “disreputable” people who would leave a “moral stain” on the city. Officials ignored both the ministers’ plea and the Louisiana law prohibiting prizefighting. After the fight one journalist mocked the protest, reporting that crowds were perfectly well mannered.

Football drew similar clerical rebukes. Critics bemoaned that Vanderbilt in Tennessee, a Methodist school, had a football program. In response, school officials enforced academic requirements for players and prohibited play and travel on Sundays. Other schools had decidedly less success in keeping dissenters at bay. In 1887 John Franklin Cronwell, a Pennsylvania native, began his tenure as the president of Trinity College in North Carolina (which would later become Duke University). A Yale alumnus, he argued that football would improve the moral character of young men, excite the student body, and enhance the school’s appeal to prospective students. Trinity soon started its program and experienced a measure of success, but rumors of cheating, drinking, parties, and foul language spread among the president’s opponents. Under pressure, Cronwell resigned in 1894. The new president, a Southern Methodist minister, dissolved the football program, deeming the game inherently evil. Wake Forest in North Carolina, Emory in Georgia, and Henry College in Virginia quickly followed Trinity’s lead and abolished their programs as well.

The tide shifted by the 1920s when college administrators could no longer tell war-hardened veterans of the Great War that athletic contests were too dangerous. Moreover, the passing decades brought a new generation of evangelicals who were more tolerant of sports than their predecessors had been.

“Sportsianity”

In 1947 at a Billy Graham Crusade in Charlotte, North Carolina, world-class miler Gil Dodds dazzled the crowd by running an exhibition race and giving his testimony after. The event was symbolic of a new relationship between conservative evangelicals and athletics, not only in the South but also nationwide. After World War II, many from this camp came to recognize that high-profile Christian athletes could effectively promote the faith to a broad audience. Recent decades have seen a proliferation of “born-again” athletes, or “Sportians” as sportswriter Frank Deford labeled them, who endorse Jesus just as ardently as they would a new sports product. Organizations such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes have helped nurture this culture of strident religious advocacy on the field of play by, for example, instituting Bible studies and prayer services in locker rooms.

The generally conservative theology of “locker room religion” has been the subject of controversy. Defensive lineman Esera Tuaolo, a ten-year veteran of the NFL, retired in 2000 and soon after announced that he was gay. A professed Christian, Tuaolo recalled feeling alienated and disparaged while at a locker room Bible study meeting, which happened to be on the presumed sin of homosexuality. In 2005 Ryan Church, an outfielder with the Washington Nationals, asked the team’s volunteer chaplain if his ex-girlfriend, a Jew, was destined for hell. The chaplain indicated that she was. The exchange reached the newspapers, causing outrage from the Jewish community and beyond. Locker room religion has not always been exclusionary, however. Earl Smith, a team chaplain with the San Francisco Giants from 1998 to 2004, suggested that his duty was to minister to the faith needs of all players, no matter if they were Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish, or Christian.

Religious Diversity and Sports in Contemporary America

As Chaplain Smith’s encounters would indicate, in contemporary America many of the world’s religions are represented in America’s athletic arenas. Islam arrived most notably through African American converts, such as boxer

Muhammad Ali. Raised in Baptist and Methodist churches, Ali (formerly Cassius Clay) attended a Nation of Islam (NOI) meeting after the 1960 Rome Olympics where he won a gold medal. The NOI’s message of racial pride and separatism initially appealed to the boxer, and the religion’s prohibitions on alcohol, liquor, drugs, and sex complemented his athletic routine. In 1964 Ali announced his conversion and name change after defeating Sonny Liston for the heavyweight title. Many white journalists and fans were wary. For them black Muslims evoked images of violent revolutionaries, and Ali’s iconoclastic proclamations, sometimes aimed at the U.S. government, only reinforced these negative perceptions. The jeers grew louder when he refused military service in 1967, citing religious reasons. But after serving his sentence, shunning the NOI’s separatist message, and staging epic battles against Joe Frazier and George Foreman, Ali’s heroic stature grew. When Ali lit the flame at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, sportscaster Bob Costas called the event a “distinctively American moment.” Despite the boxer’s rocky past, Costas speculated, Ali’s talent and warm personality had transcended politics and made the boxer “beloved by everyone.”

Arab American Muslims have also made space for themselves in America’s sports world. They have, at times, had to negotiate between the customs of their faith and the customs of American sports. While training for the 2008 U.S. Olympic marathon trials, marathoner Khalid Khannouchi, a native of Morocco and naturalized American citizen, chose to observe the Ramadan fast. To complete 100 miles per week, Khannouchi started his runs at midnight or later so that he could eat and drink proper amounts and still maintain the fast. While he did not make the Olympic team, and the fast might have played a part in this, Khannouchi credited his spiritual and physical health to his Muslim faith.

Other endurance athletes, such as eight-time Ironman winner Paula Newby-Fraser, have drawn upon Eastern religions, such as Zen Buddhism, for insights on training and racing. Writing a foreword for Shane Alton Eversfield’s *Zendurance* (2004), Newby-Fraser speculated that too many elite athletes obsess over results yet ignore their “spiritual fitness.” To correct this imbalance, she advocated “Zendurance,” a religious practice that promises to transform exercise into “moving meditation.” Similarly, a mixture of Zen meditation, New Age spirituality, distance running, and holistic healing are defining features of a Boulder, Colorado, commune named Divine Madness. Mark Tizer started the group in the 1970s and incorporated distance running in 1991, after

watching a six-day race at the University of Colorado. Sometimes covering distances of more than 100 miles at a time, group members believe that running opens doors to heightened spiritual awareness. Tizer is a controversial figure. Some outsiders pejoratively label him a “cult leader,” and former members have filed a lawsuit, charging Tizer with a host of misdeeds including mind control, coerced abortions, sexual impropriety, and emotional abuse.

Alleged indiscretions notwithstanding, *Divine Madness* is part of a broader trend of applying Eastern religions, along with a mix of other faiths, to sports such as golf, tennis, baseball, and—perhaps most notably—basketball. In *Sacred Hoops* (1995), NBA (National Basketball Association) coach Phil Jackson described how he built a successful team with the Chicago Bulls by using the teachings of Zen, Christian, and Native American religions. When he took over the team in 1989, Jackson noticed that players relied almost exclusively on their superstar, Michael Jordan. To be successful, Jackson theorized, the Bulls would need to have a sense of team cohesion and selfless compassion. His unique basketball philosophy resulted in the team’s capture of six NBA titles in the 1990s.

Sports as Religion

According to Phil Jackson, creating a successful basketball team “is essentially a spiritual act” because individuals must “surrender their self-interest for the greater good so that the whole adds up to more than the sum of its parts” (1995, p. 5). Jackson’s words indicated that for him, the game of basketball itself had religious significance, apart from the eclectic religious mix that he brought to it. While touch-down prayers and Notre Dame football are prime examples of religion *in* sports (athletics serving a specific religious end), Jackson’s ruminations call out for another category of consideration: religion *as* sports (athletics as a religious end in itself).

This *in/as* distinction is not perfect, with examples routinely resting along a continuum between these poles. Consider game six of the 1975 World Series between the Boston Red Sox and Cincinnati Reds, which Boston needed to win to force a final game. The game went into extra innings, and in the bottom of the twelfth, Red Sox batter Carlton Fisk hit a ball deep into left field. As it soared down the baseline, the crowd joined Fisk in willing the ball into fair territory. It struck the pole, counted as a home run, the crowd erupted, and the organist began playing Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus.” Soon church bells rang throughout New England, and as journalist John Rosengren observed, Fisk became a

“lower-case messiah.” Admirers praised Fisk and expressed their joy by using overt religious expressions, all the while blurring the line that supposedly separates baseball and religion.

Comparison is an oft-used tool in the study of sports as religion. Within the Christian tradition, for instance, the sacrament of baptism juxtaposes pollution and purity, promising to wash away original sin and sanctify the soul. One might find similar purification exercises in sports. In 2006 former Maine Senator George J. Mitchell launched an investigation into professional baseball’s “steroid era.” He produced a 409-page document, linking 89 players to illegal performance-enhancing drug use. Mitchell demonized the drug users and lamented that the “real victims,” or players who did not use performance enhancers, would thereafter have to endure the suspicious glare of cynical onlookers. Responding to the report, congressional leaders performed a sort of civic cleansing ritual: a hearing that called upon professional baseball to bleach this stain. The proverbial “dirty athlete” became the symbol of impurity, corruption, greed, and disorder. Critics have argued that Congress has better things to do, but the hearing still represented a remarkable effort to purge a perceived sporting sin.

Similarly, in 1999 the Florida state senate took steps toward protecting a favored local symbol, the Florida State University (FSU) “Seminoles.” Various opposition forces, such as the American Indian Movement, had been protesting to have the mascot removed. With a vote of 38–0, however, legislators passed a bill to make the mascot the legal property of FSU. To be clear, FSU officials prefer to think of the Seminoles as a “symbol” rather than a mascot. Prior to all home football games, a costumed, horse-mounted, spear-holding warrior bearing the likeness of the great Seminole leader, Chief Osceola, gallops on to the field. While the symbol is beloved by fans, opposition groups rightly note that the Seminoles neither rode horses nor threw spears. Moreover, they have objected to FSU’s athletic logo, which displays the head of an Indian ostensibly reared back in a “war chant” position. This awakens a memory of Osceola’s inglorious 1838 death during the Second Seminole War, when federal troops captured him under a truce flag, and killed and then decapitated him. A St. Augustine pharmacist soon displayed the jar-encapsulated head in his storefront window. Complaints about the “symbol” generally fall upon deaf ears, as Seminole tribal leaders have consistently and eagerly supported FSU’s use of it. Nevertheless, this conflict has become something of a “holy war” between those who

endeavor to protect the sacred traditions of the Seminole tribe and those devoted FSU fans who want to protect their own quasi-sacred football traditions.

The process of identifying religious themes, expressions, and ideas in athletics has drawn criticism. Sports historian Allen Guttman (2004), for example, has argued that ancient games, such as the Greek Olympics, were religious rituals first and contests second. In the case of modern sports, he concluded that “religion remains on the sidelines” (p. 25). For those sharing Guttman’s perspective, a hard line separates the sacred from the secular. Without a doubt, claims that sports are a religion are often overstated, but very few scholars have gone to this extreme. Instead, they have tended to echo theologian Michael Novak, who in his landmark book *The Joy of Sports* (1976) theorized that sports represent something of a “natural religion,” not to be confused with traditional religions such as Methodism and Catholicism. Athletics, he elaborated, flow from a “radically religious” human impulse to experience freedom, symbolic meaning, and perfection. While utterly inconsequential on the one hand, sports can also become utterly consuming, providing a vicarious thrill of life’s extremes. At the height of a contest, winning and losing can afford brief interludes with life and death, heaven and hell, and good and evil.

Novak’s insights offer a method for understanding someone like George Sheehan (1978), a medical doctor and philosopher of distance running, who called running “a place to commune with God,” rather than a religion itself. For many others their favored sports serve a similar purpose. To relegate sports to the sidelines would divert scholarly attention away from this very real force influencing the American religious landscape. Moreover, understanding the compelling nature of sports might help scholars explain why they have always been part of the nation’s culture, despite occasional efforts to demonize or contain them.

Directions for Future Study

Future studies of religion and sports will need to explore new territories and challenge the established narrative. As it stands, the historical account of religion and sports revolves around muscular Christianity—its rise to prominence, widespread influence, and lasting mark. Meanwhile, the athletic experiences of others—such as women, ethnic minorities, and racial minorities—remains understudied. In 1908 pugilist Jack Johnson knocked out Tommy Burns to become the first black heavyweight champion. Brash, controversial, creative, and talented, Jack Johnson was also a self-described

churchman and member of the Methodist Church. In 1910 after his mother died, Johnson praised her memory from the pulpits of black churches throughout America, imploring audiences to cherish the guidance of their own mothers. His own drinking and smoking aside, Johnson was most likely an influential Christian athlete for American blacks, but his religious history, along with that of many others, awaits attention.

As for the discussion of sports as *religion*, it too is in desperate need of diversity. Scarce is the study that ventures outside the “holy trinity” of sports: baseball, basketball, and football. Also lacking are ethnographic explorations, in-depth and personal studies of the communities of fans and athletes who inhabit the sporting arena. As new voices and approaches enter this area of study, the story of religion and sports will become more intriguing and complicated, challenging old assumptions about the connections between them.

See also *Civil Religion in the United States*; *Evangelicals: Twentieth Century*; *Film*; *Health, Disease, and Medicine*; *Judaism: Jewish Identity*; *Material Culture, Approaches*; *Nation(s) of Islam*; *Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Revivalism: Twentieth Century to the Present*; *Social Gospel*; *Sunday and the Sabbath*; *Tourism and Pilgrimage*; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Stone-Campbell Movement

The Stone-Campbell movement began in the early nineteenth century and was initially centered in the frontier regions of eastern Ohio, western Virginia, and Kentucky. Historians have derived its name from the prominent personalities of Barton W. Stone (1772–1844) and Alexander Campbell (1788–1866). The movement, however, is also known as the “Restoration Movement” because both men sought to restore the ostensible unity and simplicity of the first-century church. In time, the Stone-Campbell movement gave birth to three notable fellowships: the Churches of Christ, the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, and the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ).

Historical Development

The seeds for this movement were undoubtedly sown in the British Isles, where foundational doctrinal statements, especially the Westminster Confession of Faith, had been objects of anticreedal protest throughout the eighteenth century. For instance, John Abernethy (1680–1740), a Belfast Presbyterian, became an early voice of the “New Light” persuasion: for him, creeds and confessions had been derived from the fallible “decisions of men,” and he urged his audiences to trust their own interpretive judgments. Moreover, Anglican and Methodist circles were especially influenced by a growing evangelical fervor, and numerous parachurch organizations (such as missionary societies and antislavery societies) had been formed by the end of the century. These societies were instinctively ecumenical, with little regard for creedal or clerical distinctions.

Amid the populist currents of the fledgling American republic, these inclinations were greatly magnified. The tone

was set by leaders such as James O’Kelly (1735–1826), who in protest against the ecclesiastical authority of Bishop Francis Asbury withdrew in 1792 from the Methodist Episcopal Church. First known as “Republican Methodists,” O’Kelly’s churches later adopted the nondenominational, inclusive label of “Christians,” and during the late 1790s they became influential throughout the regions of North Carolina and Virginia. Meanwhile, in New England Abner Jones (1772–1841) and Elias Smith (1769–1846) disavowed their Baptist identities and became the leaders of yet another generic “Christian” movement. Declaring their independence from the ecclesiastical baggage of clerics and creeds, these preachers urged their audiences to embrace the simple, unvarnished doctrines of the New Testament.

Two Pioneers

These developments created the context for Barton Stone, as he prepared himself for Presbyterian ordination. He, too, was reticent about the Westminster Confession, and he was ultimately unwilling to subscribe without a caveat. He accepted the Confession in 1798 but only to the degree that it seemed “consistent with the word of God.” He became enthralled with the fervor of revivalism and played an important role in the frontier manifestations of the Second Great Awakening. His ministry began at Cane Ridge, Kentucky (near Lexington), and his congregation hosted the landmark Cane Ridge Revival in 1801.

In orthodox Presbyterian circles, the revivals were viewed with suspicion, and Stone, who had already placed conditions on his doctrinal fidelity, was tagged as a New Light. In 1803, under the looming threat of ecclesiastical discipline, he withdrew from the Synod of Kentucky; then, in September of 1803, he joined with five similarly disaffected ministers, and they formed the alternative “Presbytery of Springfield.” The following June, however, these ministers dissolved their corporate existence with the “Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery.” This document was a classic statement of anticlerical and anticreedal sentiment, urging its readers to assert their “native right of internal government” and to find “free course to the Bible.”

Without any illusions of originality, Stone’s followers began to call themselves “Christians,” and the movement grew rapidly throughout the region. Stone’s followers were frequently associated with the O’Kelly and Smith-Jones “Christians,” but there were no ecclesiastical channels to formalize those kinds of relationships. Moreover, there was little opportunity for creedal unanimity: Stone himself

continued to refine his own convictions about significant theological questions. In 1826, however, he began to edit a periodical entitled *The Christian Messenger*, and by 1830 his loose, unofficial, and variegated confederation had approximately 16,000 members.

While Stone's popularity radiated from central Kentucky, a similar movement was forming in the Ohio Valley. It was inspired by Alexander Campbell, an immigrant who settled near the river town of Wellsburg, in western Virginia. Campbell had been raised in the Irish Antiburgher Seceder fellowship, a stridently conservative branch of the Presbyterian Church, and his father, Thomas (1763–1854), had served near Belfast with the Ahorey congregation. Thomas, who had left his family in Ireland and come to western Pennsylvania in 1807, possessed strong misgivings about creedal restrictions, and he was known to fraternize outside the Antiburgher fold. These tendencies had created tensions in his home country, and in Pennsylvania they ultimately provoked his dismissal from the Antiburgher Seceder ministry.

In 1809 Thomas formed a "Christian Association" in Washington, Pennsylvania, to promote "simple evangelical christianity." His principles were outlined in a document called the *Declaration and Address*, where he lamented the fractured condition of the Christian community. He particularly condemned the divisive consequences of creedal orthodoxy, and he urged his readers to be satisfied with the elementary doctrines that are "expressly taught, and enjoined upon them, in the word of God." He subsequently proposed a biblical hermeneutic that would be accessible, without ecclesiastical interference, to every rational mind: it would embrace the straightforward commandments ("express terms") of scripture and would conform to the examples ("approved precedent") of the early Christian churches. Nothing else, insisted Thomas, could be required as a term of communion. It is significant to observe that Thomas did not want the *Declaration and Address* to be treated as a creedal statement, and he declined to identify what would meet his minimal standards.

Upon his arrival in 1809, the younger Campbell became an enthusiastic advocate for the principles of the Christian Association; however, convinced that infant baptism was an unacceptable practice, he soon began to move in Baptist circles. A defining moment came in 1816, when Alexander, addressing the Redstone Association of the Baptist churches in western Pennsylvania, delivered a "Sermon on the Law." In this presentation he affirmed the divine origins of the Old Testament, but he denied the binding authority of its

commandments and examples. His position was controversial, but he developed it further in 1820 during a debate on the subject of infant baptism. His opponent, the Presbyterian John Walker, appealed to the Mosaic example of infant circumcision; Alexander, however, flatly denied the relevance of Old Testament practices. They were, he insisted, the manifestation of an earlier dispensation, and their jurisdiction had been "fulfilled."

Propelled into the limelight by his performance against Walker, Alexander surpassed his father's influence and became an outspoken advocate for anticlerical, anticreedal, New Testament Christianity. He railed against missionary societies, Bible societies, and moral societies, identifying them as centralized bureaucracies for clerical power. In 1823 he began to publish the *Christian Baptist*, an acerbic periodical that elicited both widespread admiration and deep-seated hostility. By that time he was also advocating a sacramental function for baptism, a conviction that served to alienate him from his Baptist connections. Nonetheless, his intellectual, rhetorical, and administrative talents were immense, and his influence spread rapidly throughout the Ohio Valley.

Inspired by the achievements of the early American Republic and the success of his own movement, Campbell attempted to initiate a truly constructive program. He earned widespread Christian support in 1829, when he debated the renowned skeptic Robert Owen. In 1830 he began a new publication called the *Millennial Harbinger*, which eagerly anticipated the improvement of human society. Following his 1837 debate with the Catholic bishop John Purcell, he became a Protestant hero, and with the 1840 establishment of Bethany College, he assumed the mantle of an ecumenical educational reformer.

For many, however, his identity had been formed during the *Christian Baptist* years, and a large percentage of his movement retained the iconoclastic spirit of that earlier publication. Though Campbell held a heroic place in the movement, his early supporters were largely unable to appreciate his later moderation; a crucial point of departure came in 1849, when despite his earlier rhetoric, he sanctioned the formation of the American Christian Missionary Society (ACMS) and became its first president.

Combined Institution

A unified institution, however, had been born in the winter of 1831–1832, when representatives from Campbell's movement gathered with Barton Stone's associates. In that meeting they affirmed their mutual aims and extended fellowship

to each other. Campbell was not directly involved, and many churches declined to ratify the decision; without a centralized structure, this meeting could never produce an actual merger. Nonetheless, it did mark the beginning of a singular fellowship, and Stone's effects gravitated northward while Campbell's influence swept southward. Many of the Stone-Campbell churches were known as "Churches of Christ," but Stone's partisans frequently retained the label of "Christian Churches." Campbell's preference, meanwhile, was frequently retained by those who called themselves the "Disciples of Christ." These names would eventually mark significant lines of division, but they were initially used to identify the disparate elements of a single movement.

The Stone-Campbell churches prospered and had nearly 200,000 adherents by the start of the Civil War. That conflict, however, served to magnify the tensions that had already been provoked by the ACMS. During the war, moreover, some churches, mostly Northern, began to use pianos in their worship assemblies. The controversy surrounding this "innovation" was exacerbated by the North-South divide: throughout the deep south and in Texas, the movement's churches were inclined toward a nonsociety, a cappella position. Under the leadership of editor-preachers such as Nashville's David Lipscomb (1831-1917), who published the *Gospel Advocate*, these congregations were generally known as "Churches of Christ," and by 1906 they were listed as a separate denomination with approximately 160,000 members. Further north (especially in Ohio and northern Kentucky), the movement was known by various names (including "Christian Churches" and "Disciples of Christ"), and it found capable representation in the *Christian Standard* of Isaac Erret (1820-1888). By 1906 these churches had about 920,000 members.

Conservative and iconoclastic, the Churches of Christ were strongly fortified against the encroachments of mainstream Protestant theology. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the Northern churches were becoming agitated by the issue of "higher criticism"—that is, the literary analysis of biblical text informed by its historical context—which challenged traditional doctrines of biblical inspiration. These currents, paralleled in other Protestant fellowships, were strongly resisted by persuasive conservative voices: John W. McGarvey (1829-1911) exerted the strongest opposition, and he issued his judgments through numerous publications and through his 40-year tenure with the College of the Bible in Lexington, Kentucky. In spite of such protests, however, many ministers became sympathetic

toward theologically liberal trends, and by World War I they had gained a significant coalition, increasingly known as "Disciples," among the Northern Stone-Campbell churches.

The Northern movement maintained a tenuous union, but it became increasingly divided throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Committed to liberal principles, the Disciples were logically estranged from the primitivistic ideals of their forebears, and they pursued a broad ecumenism with the larger Protestant world. Under their leadership (but without a broad consensus), the fractured fellowship became a founding member of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ (FCC) in 1908. Moreover, the Disciples began to advocate an "open membership" policy in their churches, and a similar practice became common when the ACMS joined with five other mission-based organizations to create the United Christian Missionary Society (UCMS) in 1919. With open membership, it was possible for persons who had not been baptized (by immersion) to be admitted to full congregational fellowship.

For traditional Stone-Campbell churches, the mandatory character of immersion was a nonnegotiable standard, and de facto division became formalized over time: many churches, typically known as "Christian Churches," refused to cooperate with the FCC, and unhappy with the UCMS, they began to support "independent" missionaries. Conservative interests formed the North American Christian Convention in 1927, an act that was widely interpreted as a decisive step toward separate existence. The long and painful divorce was essentially finalized by 1950, soon after the Disciples had cast their lot with the World Council of Churches and with the National Council of Churches of Christ. Conservative Christian Churches (sometimes called Churches of Christ) now constitute a fellowship that is distinguished from the more liberal Disciples (sometimes called Christian Churches). That distinction, however, was not officially recognized until 1963, when the Disciples officially established themselves as a structured denomination.

Ultimately, then, the Stone-Campbell movement gave birth to three distinct fellowships with separate publications, colleges, and histories. All three streams have experienced additional divisions, and other fractures are presently threatening. Theologically, Churches of Christ stand close to the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, and some efforts have been made toward reunion; those efforts, however, have ironically led to new disputes, especially within the Churches of Christ. Meanwhile, the Christian Churches (Disciples) have been challenged by a conservative "renewal

movement,” a development that has set the stage for additional conflicts.

Distinctive Beliefs and Practices

Stone and Campbell held significantly different positions on various issues, and it is difficult to speak of common, distinctive doctrines before the union of 1831–1832. Most notably, Campbell was strongly committed to the practice of adult baptism by full bodily immersion, and he was convinced that sins were remitted at the time of the baptismal act. Stone was less adamant about these convictions, but when the union was realized, Campbell’s influence became predominant and the movement largely embraced his position. Opponents charged the “Campbellites” with the doctrine of “baptismal regeneration,” but for him the ordinance was always regarded as an “instrumental cause” for God’s grace, without any intrinsic merit. Subsequently, the Stone–Campbell understanding was codified by the evangelist Walter Scott (1796–1861), who described baptism as one of the “steps to salvation.” Scott immersed multitudes of people in the regions of eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania, and his simplistic approach left a lasting impact on the movement.

From its inception, the Stone–Campbell movement has also been marked by its rejection of formal creedal statements and its decentralized congregationalist polity. Even the Baptist “association,” ostensibly lacking any legislative authority, was repudiated as an unscriptural incubator for ecclesiastical power. Hence, the movement operated without ordained clergy and without an official statement of faith. Aside from the periodicals of Stone, Campbell, and their lesser-known associates, their churches had no vehicles to define their collective identity. The anticlerical impulse is best illustrated, perhaps, by the practice of weekly Communion. In the earliest days of the movement, some argued, on the basis of Acts 20:7, that the first-century church met every “first day of the week” to observe the Lord’s Supper. Aside from this justification, however, the practice ensured that the Supper would be given without regard for clerical attendance. In the absence of a centralized polity, the movement’s periodical publications and colleges have played instructional, supervisory roles, but those roles have been limited and unofficial.

The movement has also been characterized by a strong current of rationalism. This might seem surprising in light of Stone’s associations with the Spirit-led revivals of the Second Great Awakening; Campbell, however, disdained emotional

displays and insisted that the Holy Spirit worked solely through the inspired words of scripture. This effect, he believed, was powerful and convincing; thus, his position should not be misconstrued as a rejection of the Spirit’s work. Nonetheless, his emphasis led the movement to place enormous value on the task of exegesis, and the Holy Spirit has never been a theological priority for the churches who followed his line of thought. Ironically, this rationalistic, exegetical emphasis led to the conservative biblicism of the Churches of Christ and the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, but the liberal biblical scholarship of the later Christian Churches (Disciples) was, in a contrasting way, quite consistent with Campbell’s rationalistic legacy.

Internal Issues and Debates

Deep tensions have always existed in the fabric of the movement, and they have been manifested in some of the controversies noted above. For example, the movement has always been torn between the dual principles of unity and restorationism. According to the original restorationist vision, Christian unity could only be achieved by restoring a simple New Testament pattern of faith and practice. However, as Richard Tristano (1988) has noted, the legacies of restorationism and unity have been difficult to reconcile with each other. The first-century “pattern” has been notoriously elusive and reaching unanimous conclusions about the details has proven impossible. Hence, amid strong disagreements about the identity of the first-century church (and the authority of its examples), many have abandoned the restorationist ideal in an effort to salvage a short list of unifying principles. Others, troubled by the uncertainties of pluralism, have taken refuge in the certitude that restorationism has traditionally claimed for itself. To some degree these differing perspectives are reflected in the division between the Disciples and the rest of the movement; in truth, however, they are currently manifested among those who have the strongest historic commitments to a hard-line restorationist vision. In Churches of Christ and Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, the postmodern challenge is making the restorationist vision seem increasingly untenable.

The movement has also struggled, historically, with the differences between Stone and Campbell. Even the churches that accepted the 1831–1832 agreement of union could never completely square the two traditions. Campbell’s rationalism quickly supplanted the Spirit-led approach of Stone; other tensions, however, were never completely

resolved. In particular Campbell's followers were never able to comprehend fully the countercultural, otherworldly orientation of Stone's congregations, a perspective that Richard Hughes (1996) has labeled an "apocalyptic" worldview. Campbell was extremely optimistic about the progress of American society and openly spoke of his millennial expectations for the United States. Stone, by contrast, placed little confidence in the achievements of human wealth or human societies, and his legacy was eventually characterized by a premillennial disposition that eschewed the national stage. To an overwhelming degree, the movement turned away from Stone's "apocalyptic" outlook and adopted a position more congenial to American culture. That choice came slowly, however, especially among the Southern churches.

It is impossible to overlook the sociological dimensions of the divisions in the Stone-Campbell movement. As David Edwin Harrell (1966-1973) has demonstrated, sectional issues proved decisive. For instance, economically disadvantaged congregations tended to reject the use of musical instruments in worship, and they were suspicious of the benevolence of bureaucratic establishments. In the years that preceded their official estrangement from the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in 1906, the Churches of Christ were largely crippled by the devastation of the Civil War and were decisively poorer than their erstwhile associates. At the same time the most conservative churches were also demonstrably rural, and they urged holding onto their doctrinal positions against the refined, sophisticated "innovations" of urban congregations. There were always exceptions to these tendencies, but poverty and rural identity were predominantly Southern realities, and even today the Stone-Campbell movement is largely divided between the North and the South.

Interpretive Theories

In its earliest days, the Stone-Campbell movement was commonly known as a "reformation." Campbell himself, however, considered reform to be inadequate and took a primitivistic position that sought a "restoration" of the "Ancient Order." Accordingly, some of his early, iconoclastic followers claimed that they had, indeed, restored the faith and practice of the first-century church. This interpretation has been central to the self-understanding of many conservative members and is best reflected in the work of Earl West (1950-1986). From a critical perspective, Richard Hughes and C. Leonard Allen (1988) have placed the

Stone-Campbell movement in the larger context of American antebellum primitivism.

More recently many of the Churches of Christ and Christian Churches/Churches of Christ have softened their disputes with one another and have begun to reconcile past divisions. For them, the movement is best described as a unity movement, and the primitivistic perspective has been tempered by increasingly modest expectations. Interestingly, these perceptions are scarcely premised on Campbell's later ecumenism; on the contrary, they place primary emphasis on the early Campbell with special regard for his father's *Declaration and Address* and for the unifying precedent of 1831-1832. This approach is well represented in Leroy Garrett's historical portrait *The Stone-Campbell Movement* (2002) and by the work of Douglas Foster and Gary Holloway (2002).

Another interpretation describes Stone, Campbell, and their colleagues as self-reliant participants in the progress of the antebellum frontier. This was a significant thesis for Winfred Garrison (1931), who found a connection between the movement's anticlerical emphasis and its geographical distribution in frontier regions. More recently Nathan Hatch (1991) has similarly treated the Stone-Campbell movement as a populist effort to wrest ecclesiastical control from the hands of clerical institutions. Clearly, Stone and Campbell were primitivistic, but in Hatch's analysis, they appealed to the first Christian century in order to circumvent the claims of the professional theologians and clergy. Similarly, the movement was authentically committed to Christian unity, but that priority was expressed as the antidote to clerically inspired divisions.

Critical Assessment

The Stone-Campbell movement is a phenomenon that defies conclusive evaluations because its present-day heirs are diverse and have limited contact with each other. It is best, perhaps, to reflect on the movement's original aims, as identified by its leading interpreters. If this heritage is viewed as an attempt to restore first-century Christianity, it can hardly be rated as a successful effort: its churches have been torn by divergent understandings of "first-century Christianity," and many (in all three streams) are frankly doubtful about the value of the primitivistic enterprise. Moreover, if the movement is viewed as an attempt to unify a nondenominational Protestant world, it has little to celebrate and must confess its own legacy of division. Meanwhile, the movement might be viewed as a successful protest

against creeds and clergy, and it has, technically speaking, survived without either. Its periodicals, missionary societies, and colleges, however, have created centralized bureaucracies for ecclesiastical politics, and most Stone-Campbell members will confess to the existence of unwritten creedal requirements.

What, then, has the movement achieved? In spite of its shortcomings and inconsistencies, the Stone-Campbell movement has played a critical role in the development of significant American religious themes. Primitivism, which was such a powerful concept in the days of the early American churches, has had few advocates who could match the fervor and sophistication of the Stone-Campbell churches. Likewise, the nondenominational impulse, so strong in the early twenty-first century, has scarcely improved upon the original pleas of the Stone-Campbell alliance, and the Disciples, in particular, have translated their nondenominational origins into ecumenical, interdenominational overtures. Moreover, the movement has tested, refined, and in some respects validated the anticlerical attitude that was so congenial to the spirit of the new American republic, and it has thoughtfully challenged the application of creedal statements. The Stone-Campbell movement, therefore, was a quintessentially American phenomenon.

All three streams of the movement continue to struggle with a wide variety of internal issues, and their distinctive futures are uncertain. As their identities shift, they are likely to embrace new priorities and to suffer additional fragmentation. Nonetheless, they are engaged in vigorous new ventures, both at home and (quite significantly) abroad. They continue to produce innovative ministers and capable scholars, and they clearly constitute an important and unfinished chapter in American church history.

See also *Apocalypticism; Appalachian Mountain Religion; Baptists: Sectarian; Bible: Interpretation of; Churches of Christ; Denominationalism; Disciples of Christ; Ecumenism; Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Mainline Protestants; Methodists: Through the Nineteenth Century; Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant.*

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Suburbanization

Suburbanization describes American outmigration patterns from the urban core and their subsequent impact on American religious life. Although development outside urban centers occurred as far back as 1820, outmigration intensified during the post-World War II era, when the federal government began subsidizing mortgages for single-family homes and invested in infrastructure that encouraged middle-class families as well as businesses and religious congregations to relocate outside of urban areas. While a shade over 20 percent of Americans lived in the suburbs in 1950, 50 percent lived in the suburbs by 2000. During the same period, the American population shifted from the Northeast to the South and West, or “sunbelt,” a term coined by writer Kevin Phillips in the late 1960s. Moreover, the postwar economic expansion transformed consumer practices and placed the middle-class white family at the center of American life. Suburbanization affected religious denominations, belief systems, worship practices, church architecture, and Americans’ understanding of the relationship between religion and society.

Church Construction in the Postwar Suburbs

Whether measured by increased church membership, religious self-identification, or church construction, evidence points to the institutional growth of religion in the immediate postwar era. Statistics on church membership during the early postwar period show that new affiliations for churches grew faster (30 percent) than the population (19 percent). According to the Bureau of the Census, more than

96 percent of adults identified a religious preference in 1957. The church construction boom followed the growth of residential building: in the wake of the Depression and the war, Americans spent \$4 billion building new churches between 1945 and 1955. This growth occurred across several denominations. As Robert Wuthnow has explained, between 1946 and 1949, the Southern Baptists established 500 new churches; Methodists spent nearly as much on new buildings and improvements as on their operating budget; and Catholics began construction on 125 new hospitals, opened 1,000 new elementary schools, and added 3,000 new parishes.

Denominations embarked on these building programs even as reformers called for increased efforts at ecumenism, or unification efforts, among Protestant denominations in the name of efficiency and the Cold War environment. Protestant reformers such as Paul Tillich called on churches to ensure that church architecture reflected beliefs about fellowship and participation. Reformers argued that a “gathered church” model would foster community by bringing worshipers together inside intimate buildings, where ministers spoke amidst their congregations rather than separated by a dramatic altar. Modern architecture allowed congregations to experiment with different floor plans (circle, ellipse, square), shapes (box, cube, sphere), and building materials (concrete, plate glass) to achieve these concepts. Mainline Protestant congregations in the suburbs such as Lutherans, Episcopalians, and the Disciples of Christ embraced this model.

Early Criticism of Cultural Religion

The suburban environment created concern that churches focused on the social aspects of their congregation to the detriment of doctrine and theology. Suburbanites expected churches to provide a community center environment with child-friendly amenities, extensive programming, and coffee hours. In order to attract and maintain congregants with young families, many churches emphasized popular religion—for example, morals and patriotism—rather than ecclesiastical religion, which adhered to rigorous institution building, traditional rites, and formalized doctrine.

By the 1950s, critics began to suggest that churches had become too comfortable in their suburban environs. Sociologist Will Herberg argued that despite Americans’ increasing secular-mindedness, religion provided Americans with an affiliation around which they could construct an identity: Protestant, Catholic, and Jew. Beyond these identities, each a legacy of the nation’s immigrant past, Herberg located a

common religious orientation in the “American Way of Life” within a Judeo-Christian framework. However, the Americanization of religion had resulted in a loss of each tradition’s sense of “uniqueness and universality,” creating a “culture-religion,” or “civic religion,” that validated, rather than critiqued, American society.

There were also fears that suburban church growth was causing churches to renege on their moral obligation to address social justice issues in the urban core. In describing the role that churches should play in ending segregation, Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. lamented that “the most segregated hour of Christian America is eleven o’clock on Sunday morning.” Many white ministers concurred with King and placed the blame squarely on the exodus of white congregations to the suburbs. Gibson Winter, a Unitarian minister and divinity professor at the University of Chicago, condemned mainline Protestantism’s complicity in residential segregation, raising the question as to how the inclusive message of faith could be mediated through an exclusive group based on social class identity. By dwelling too much on congregational and parochial life at the fringes of metropolitan centers, churches had become refuges for the middle classes. In Winter’s estimation, churches were overconcerned with the private demands and emotional needs of the middle class.

Growth of Conservative Evangelical Churches

Conservative religious traditions, propelled in part by a sense of antagonism toward the suburban environment, grew at faster rates than did mainline denominations during the late twentieth century. Denominations such as the Southern Baptists and the Assemblies of God were particularly successful, especially in California after Dust Bowl migrants established new churches. Sociologist Mark Shibley has argued that the success of southern evangelicalism drove the growth in American Protestantism. Between 1971 and 1990, when the U.S. population grew by almost 20 percent, evangelical churches grew at a rate of 26 percent as mainline churches declined in adherents by 8.5 percent; the percentage change in southern-style evangelical church adherents was particularly impressive, rising 31.3 percent in the South and 88.7 percent in the West. Between 1926 and 1981, the Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) rural membership, once its dominant constituency, declined from 72 percent of members to 25.3 percent. In 1990, SBC membership was nearly 19 million. The Assemblies of God, established in 1914 during the Pentecostal movement, expanded into every state and reached a population of more than 2.1 million in 1990.

Scholars such as Robert Wuthnow have suggested that the growth of conservative evangelicalism reflects a longer-term realignment of American religious beliefs organized around conservative/liberal ideology rather than by denomination. This division had the effect of weakening differences on doctrine but strengthening concerns about personal morality. Postwar evangelical organizations often lacked denominational connections, as with “parachurch” groups such as Youth for Christ, which supported a web of independent ministries including that of popular evangelist Billy Graham, or, later, “special purpose groups”—political activist Jerry Falwell’s organization, the Moral Majority, for example—that were oriented around objectives rather than institutions.

The Rise of the Megachurch

Beginning in the late 1960s, suburban development shifted toward “edge node,” or exurban, construction of retail and office as well as residential spaces accessible by vehicle. In addition, the counterculture, while seemingly antithetical to institutional religion, witnessed a revival of spirituality among many baby boomers. Both historical developments influenced suburban religious beliefs and practices.

Despite the success of parachurch organizations, the megachurch came to reflect conservative evangelicalism’s new approach for recruiting membership and organizing worship in the suburbs and exurbs. These institutions were usually Protestant, often nondenominational or quasi-denominational churches with large congregations (membership usually of more than 2,000 and often over 10,000) and a full calendar of recreational and spiritual programs that brought members to the church each day of the week.

Many churches built large complexes in suburban or exurban areas to facilitate evangelism among suburbanites who had been loosened from their inherited religious traditions. The emphasis on recruitment among nonchurchgoers explains why scholars often referred to these institutions as “seeker” churches. Sociologist Donald Miller, who has written about megachurch-style denominations, has argued that the organizations attracted new members with low-key architecture resembling other structures from suburban life; pastors who wore casual clothes and preached about everyday issues; worship services with contemporary music; and programming that emphasized “well-defined moral values” not available in secular culture. As with earlier suburban churches, these institutions often catered to young families.

Willow Creek Community Church, located outside Chicago, Illinois, and pastored by Bill Hybels, is generally

considered to have been the first megachurch. The church eventually established a network of like-minded churches around the world and across denominations. California-based churches such as Calvary Chapel and Vineyard Ministries were both loosely affiliated organizations of large churches that emerged during the countercultural “Jesus Movement” of the 1960s and 1970s. Other megachurches maintained their official denominational ties. For example, Rick Warren’s Saddleback Community Church in California maintained—but did not advertise—its affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention. Although most frequently associated with suburban and predominantly white congregations, African American megachurches were established, including the Potter’s House, minister T. D. Jakes’ church in Dallas.

Megachurch architecture typified evangelicalism’s comfort with its environs. Church boards looking to build for growth frequently purchased warehouses, supermarkets, or superstores; such spaces offered multiple advantages to church groups. The square footage allowed churches to construct full-service buildings with auditoriums, skate parks, food courts, schools, and ample parking; moreover, the low-key, “unchurchly” architecture facilitated recruitment among believers reluctant to enter a church but at ease with familiar suburban spaces. The transition from retail to religious space did not always proceed smoothly. In places like California, where communities increasingly relied on “cashbox zoning” to provide supplemental funds to local projects and schools, sprawling (and tax-exempt) megachurch complexes ran afoul of zoning boards and homeowners concerned about diminished tax revenues and increased traffic congestion in suburban neighborhoods.

Political and Cultural Activism

The megachurch became an important institution for understanding the nature of community in a culture of sprawl. The work of sociologist Robert Putnam showed that frequent churchgoers were more likely to be engaged in some kind of civic activity, many of which focused on the church itself. As part of an examination of how evangelicals were reshaping community in the suburbs, Putnam focused on Warren’s 15,000-member megachurch in Orange County, California, which bonded the “crowd” of its services into a “congregation” through small groups that met separately, often in churchgoers’ homes.

Suburban evangelicals showed an interest in engaging in both political and cultural reform. As political activists,

evangelicals viewed themselves as the guardians of family values in a society that was increasingly amoral. As early as the 1950s, conservative Christians became key activists in the political culture of Orange County, California, by embracing issues ranging from anti-communism, to abortion, to curriculum reform. Later, national conservative organizations such as the Christian Coalition relied on suburban megachurches to distribute their pre-election voter guides, and Republican political candidates spoke at megachurch-sponsored gatherings.

Evangelicals also engaged with the broader culture by adjusting their beliefs to a landscape in which civic life occurred in commercially owned spaces. In the spaces of suburbia—store, car, school, and home—witnessing, the practice of describing one's born-again experience to a nonbeliever, was the preferred mode of evangelical activism. For this reason, the Christian bookstore became another important suburban institution. In the year 2000, Christian merchandise produced \$4 billion in sales, including \$747 million of music merchandise. With conservative evangelicals emerging as a desirable consumer demographic, Christian music, videos, and literature became widely available at retail outlets.

Suburbanization transformed the nation's built environment, society, and culture as well as its religious institutions and practices, particularly in the period beginning after World War II. In the early postwar years, mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish congregations built new facilities to administer to the spiritual and communal needs of transplanted young families. By the early twenty-first century, however, congregations established religious structures and observed practices that drew heavily from the nation's suburban and exurban landscape and its consumer-oriented culture.

See also *Architecture: Roman Catholic; Civil Religion in the United States; Congregations; Denominationalism; Evangelicals: Twentieth Century; Great Lakes Region; House Church Movement; Immigration: From World War I to the 1965 Immigration Act; Mainline Protestants; Megachurches; Popular Religion and Popular Culture: From the Civil War to the Mid-Twentieth Century; Religious Right; Seeker Churches.*

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Sunday and the Sabbath

Sunday is a special day in the American religious calendar for Christians and adherents of some other religious traditions. One of the reasons why religious institutions flourish in the United States is the capaciousness of Sunday. The long process of decoupling “Sabbath” from “Sunday” laid the foundation for the temporal elasticity fundamental to religious diversity in the United States. Religious and civic battles over the meaning and observance of Sunday contributed to the development of a society in which adherents of different religions are free to observe different weekly, seasonal, and annual holy days and periods.

To be sure, the “official” week and year in the United States are organized around a version of the Christian calendar put forth by reform-minded Protestants in the seventeenth century—that is, a calendar in which Sundays are the only days on which no official business is transacted. (Today, Christmas and Thanksgiving, which each have religious antecedents, are official public holidays.) The cessation of work and business each Sunday complemented the rising emphasis on work in the 1700s: work, not rest or leisure, was at the moral core of the character of colonial Americans and later generations. Biblical law, religious tradition, local custom, and the law mandated six days of work and one of rest.

Since the 1920s the continuing commitment to differentiating Sunday from the other days of the week but

discomfort with proclaiming its particular religious qualities together laid the foundation for the retention of Sunday's status as a special day in the U.S. calendar, although it is regarded as "the Sabbath" by a minority and treated as just another day suitable for shopping or working by many people. However, the fact that for centuries in the United States, Sundays have warranted special privileges, protections, and expectations has prepared the way for contemporary Americans to tolerate the observance of a great variety of religious holy days, the observance of which is essential for religious continuity and diversity.

Sunday and the Sabbath in Colonial Religious Calendars

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Catholics settling in the New World transplanted the religious rhythms that had shaped their lives in Europe. In addition to Sunday worship, French and Spanish Catholics observed saints' days, as well as the liturgical moments associated with Christ's birth, life, and death. In their religious calendar, fixed holy days and moveable feasts together provided innumerable days off from the demands of work. Rather than seeking to eradicate native peoples' religious rhythms, Catholic missionaries merged their version of the Christian calendar with local traditions, giving rise to the syncretism that is at the heart of Catholicism in Latin America as well as the southwestern United States. This calendar meshed well with an agricultural economy focused on tradition, subsistence, and continuity with the past: work was irregular, intermittent, and hard, and thus there was room for expansive and at times disruptive religious observances.

In British North America, on the other hand, fervent discord over the religious calendar differentiated the northern from the southern colonies. In New England and the Chesapeake, a variety of Protestant denominations endeavored to implement a rationalized religious calendar in which the only holy days were Sundays. While disagreeing about many theological issues, they all followed the conviction that when Christ rose on the first day of the week (Sunday), he amended the Decalogue's command to observe the seventh day as a Sabbath. Since in their view Sunday had become the "Lord's Day," due to Christ's resurrection on that day, it was the "true Sabbath" and thus should be observed as such. What is more, they looked to the example of the earliest of Christ's disciples, who rigorously treated Sunday as a Sabbath, in contrast to Catholics who mingled religious with festive observances. Thus, in areas in which Congregational,

Lutheran, and Presbyterian churches presided, civil laws mandated that there would be no work or play on Sundays in order to protect the integrity of the Sabbath.

The theological rationale for observing Sunday as the Sabbath, the regimen it dictated, and the folkways it generated (such as baked beans), were particularly distinctive in New England, where civil and religious law resulted in "the Puritan Sabbath," a cultural formation as much lamented as celebrated by its nineteenth-century heirs. In contrast the established church in the southern colonies, the Anglican Church, shared the conviction that Sunday was the Lord's Day and thus a time requiring worship, but in following the precepts of James I, it did not forbid recreation. Throughout the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth, civil law upheld local practices, rooted in the dominant church of the particular region, about what the Sabbath mandated.

Shoring up these theological convictions and prejudices were economic imperatives that also gave Sunday pride of place as the day of rest. After 1650 or so, an increased work effort on the part of all household members cohered well with a Puritan program of calendar reform. Regular work rhythms and patterns, and more work altogether, were the key to what economic historian Jan de Vries (2008) called "the industrious revolution," which characterized both England and the British North American colonies prior to the first industrial revolution of the mid-eighteenth century. Increased efficiency depended on the implementation of technological and organizational innovations, not the least of which was six days of work, one of rest, week in and week out, throughout the year. Within this rhythm Sunday was not only a holy day but also a day of respite from work and trade.

In the eighteenth century Jews and seventh-day believers introduced competing notions about the temporal location of the Sabbath. Since these religious groups observed Saturday as the Sabbath, they found themselves out of step with the dominant rhythms organizing community life, particularly work. Because the work of getting a living was so time intensive, they could not afford to take two days off a week from their fields, workshops, and stores, yet their own religious law mandated that they cease working on Saturday and civil law prevented them from working on Sunday. Not yet possessing the right to practice religion freely, these groups struggled quietly against the dominance of the Sunday Sabbath. At the same time, their presence challenged the assumption that Sunday was the Sabbath. Ironically, then, their continued preference for the Saturday Sabbath introduced the suggestion that the Sunday Sabbath was "a man-made

institution,” as some referred to it in the nineteenth century. Nearly everyone agreed that there was a Sabbath, mandated by God in the Ten Commandments, yet there was no agreement about its temporal location. Simply introducing the question—Did God or civil society transfer the Sabbath to Sunday?—opened up the possibility that the Sunday Sabbath was man-made, and then, too, the possibility that the meanings of the Sabbath, and the requirements for its observance, were man-made as well.

1800–1850: Sabbatarianism and its Opposition

Thus, the groundwork was laid for contests over the temporal location and meaning of the Sabbath when the writers of the U.S. Constitution disestablished the national church and the writers of state constitutions disestablished state churches—and, therefore, their authority over communal times. Although the vast majority of Americans considered Sunday the Sabbath, the knowledge that prior to Christ’s resurrection the seventh day held this honor made inroads into Sunday’s monopoly over holy time. It was a small wedge to be sure, but nonetheless it opened up the possibility that Sunday was not a holy day and, more importantly, that all days could alike be holy. Religious diversity in the United States rests upon this latter possibility: it is not a huge leap from considering as holy any space of worldly time to considering as holy any religious conviction or practice.

The nineteenth century opened with a controversy over the transportation and delivery of mail on Sundays. After Congress passed legislation in 1810 requiring transportation and distribution of mail on all days of the week, some Presbyterian and Congregational churches petitioned in protest, as did a scattering of “Good Morals” societies. In 1814 Congregationalists formed the first local Sabbatarian society in the United States, taking their inspiration from similar organizations in Britain devoted to maintaining the observance of Sunday as the Sabbath. The petitions and efforts of the first self-identified Sabbatarians were to no avail. But in the 1820s during the height of the Second Great Awakening, evangelicals formed the first national Sabbatarian organization in the United States, named the General Union Promoting the Observance of the Christian Sabbath. In addition to seeking the repeal of the 1810 law, the organization sought to still the steamboats, railroads, wagons, and drays that continued to operate on Sundays.

Opponents of the Sabbatarians took great care to emphasize that they respected the sanctity of the Sunday Sabbath, but they insisted that critical public business must take

precedence. Although the 1810 law was not repealed, the social and cultural shift toward evangelical attitudes and practices ensured that at the local level, laws would multiply in the effort to prevent work or commerce on Sunday and that individuals would embrace Sabbatarian attitudes and practices. As a consequence of this cultural shift, as well as of technological innovations in railroading and telegraphy that allowed for rapid transportation and communications, in the 1850s the postmaster general suspended the Sunday transportation of mail along many routes; however, only in 1912 did the delivery of mail on Sunday cease altogether.

The industrial and market revolutions generated among nearly all Americans a devotion to Sunday, for it was the only time that people could legitimately rest. If it was possible to work—and with technological and organizational innovations it was nearly always possible to work—then it was sinful not to be doing so. Prior to industrialization, there were many periods (such as the winter, a stormy day, or when supplies had run out) in which work was not possible. But with technology shrinking space, increasing productivity, and even turning night into day, endless work was possible. Sunday became a welcome break, but one in which dissipation could be kept at bay.

In the 1840s national as well as numerous regional and local Sabbatarian organizations formed, including the American and Foreign Sabbath Union (1843). They held conventions during which speakers, including the former U.S. president John Quincy Adams, emphasized Sunday’s importance as a day of rest. Sabbatarians defined *rest* as the cessation of work and the devotion to prayer and worship. They sought to persuade listeners to cease all work (even domestic work) and to avoid “idleness,” which included drinking, frivolous reading for news or entertainment, playing, gambling, theatergoing, and so forth. Sunday rest was not leisure: it was purposefully focused respite to the body from work and to the spirit from the mundane. These Sabbatarian attitudes reflected Protestant suspicions about leisure, as well as theological assumptions about the interchangeability of *Sunday* with *Sabbath*. They suffused laws, customs, and beliefs such that still today most Americans have a sense, at the very least, that Sunday deserves slightly different behavior than the other days of the week.

1850–1900: Dislocating the Sabbath and “Opening Up Sunday” to Culture

In the 1840s religious resistance against Sabbatarianism took concrete form, expressed most clearly by Unitarians and the

inheritors of that boldly liberal religious tradition. Resistance tended to cluster around the meaning of *rest*, the temporal location of “the Sabbath,” and the wish to “open up” Sunday to the uplifting work of culture in addition to that of Christianity. Unitarians insisted, as did Frederick Sawyer in 1847, that “recreation or amusement are but other names for rest” and therefore were acceptable Sunday activities. They lauded Sunday as a special day but rooted their sense of how it should be observed in Mark 2:27 (AV), in which Christ says, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

The Unitarians’ expansive view of how people could rest was reinforced by that of immigrant Catholics, who arrived in large numbers in U.S. cities during the 1840s and 1850s. German Catholics in particular cast Sunday as a day for culture—church, music, fine literature, and even beer. Although significant conflict ensued about what constituted “rest,” the irrepressibility of community practices wore down prohibitions against innocent recreations like going to a public park (1850s), the public library (1860s), an amusement park or beer garden (1870s), an art museum (1870s), a fair (1890s), or a concert (1890s). Additionally, activities once characterized as inappropriate for the Sabbath—reading the newspaper or fiction, playing, entertaining visitors, having a big meal—came to constitute the core of Sundays as Americans spent them at home; Americans later added radio and then television to their diversions to make the home more “restful.”

Unitarians’ growing sense that the Old Testament’s precepts about Sabbath observance had no bearing on Christians coincided with a range of religious challenges to the identification of the Sabbath with Sunday. Unitarians argued that there was no biblical law mandating that Sunday be treated as a Sabbath; the conveners of the 1848 Anti-Sabbath Convention (who included abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison, Lucretia Mott, and Theodore Parker) asserted “the Sabbath, according to the Jewish scriptures, was given to *‘the children of Israel,’*—AND TO NO OTHER PEOPLE” (Parkhurst, 1848/1971). Unitarians did not wish to dispense with Sunday as a day of rest; indeed, they argued that the laws of nature confirmed the wisdom of a rhythm of six days of work and one of rest.

Jewish, Seventh-day Adventist, and Seventh Day Baptist doctrines also challenged the assumption that Sunday was the Sabbath: each group insisted that Saturday, the seventh day of the week, was the “true Sabbath.” They did so in pamphlets, in preaching, and in legal challenges to Sunday laws.

While they made few inroads into the long-standing U.S. habit of conflating Sunday with the Sabbath, they did motivate proponents of Sunday as a day of rest to find bases other than biblical text to justify the cessation of work, commerce, and—for some it seemed—life itself on Sundays.

After the Civil War, a range of social reformers and religious liberals began to propose that natural law itself confirmed the necessity of Sunday observance. It is clear that no one wanted to do away with a day of rest altogether, and most thought Sunday was the most convenient choice. After 1900, Sabbatarians and their sympathizers recognized that they would lose the battle for Sunday if they insisted only on a biblical basis for its status as “the Sabbath,” so they joined the quest for “a scientific Sabbath.” Take for instance the eminent psychologist G. Stanley Hall’s characterization of Sunday as “a psychological institution which modern hygiene of the soul and body would have to invent if religion had not already provided it” (Floody, 1901/1906, p. vi).

Early Twentieth Century: Leisure Grows, Sabbatarianism Falters, Sunday Laws Repealed

The battle to protect Sunday from the unceasing grind of market and factory intensified after the turn of the twentieth century, at first largely due to the various movements to shorten the workday and workweek in order to protect the health of women and children but eventually as part of the ongoing effort to protect all Americans from the dangers of ceaseless work. Thus an unlikely partnership of Sabbatarians with union leaders and Progressive reformers resulted in persuasive arguments about the deleterious physical and moral effects of unceasing work. While their definitions of a “day of rest” varied as greatly as did their other views, they were all determined that Americans have the right to at least one day of rest.

Whether to tend to large herds of dairy cows, or harvest acres of wheat or corn, or shovel coal, or tend to a machine, at least some Americans had to work on Sunday, for few owners of farms, factories, or railroads in Gilded Age America could afford to stop operations every seventh day. On the other hand, high per capita productivity eventually meant that many people could stop working on Sunday, since factories and farms produced more than enough to meet most needs. Indeed, by the Great Depression the great economic problem was that of oversupply. As standards of living rose across the board, absorbing some of the great excess of supply, the necessity of working on Sunday to meet subsistence needs diminished. To be sure, Sunday wage-work continued,

though it is impossible to calculate how many people engaged in it at any one time. But the nature of the work shifted: fewer Americans performed manual labor on Sundays, while more worked in the service industry. This shift characterized not just Sunday work but work in the United States as a whole by the end of the 1950s.

Long before the 1930s entrepreneurs realized that they could profit from selling their goods or services on Sunday: after all, it was the day when most people were not working and thus could act as consumers. Commercial leisure more than the retail sector found profit in Sunday business: most amusement parks, baseball fields, excursion lines, and movie theaters had larger audiences on Sundays than on any other day of the week. In 1926, unease with commercialism in general, and with the new culture of mass leisure in particular, led to five days of congressional hearings about Sunday observance as the House and Senate considered whether to pass a bill meant to “secure Sunday as a day of rest” (as the bill’s preamble read) in the District of Columbia (over which Congress had jurisdiction). Congress never did pass the bill, and while many laws against Sunday commerce and labor remained operative, most were repealed over the course of the twentieth century. The pressure on Sunday was lifted, due in part to the gradual shortening of the average workday from ten or twelve hours to eight hours and to the emergence of the two-day weekend. To be sure, many Americans must work on Sundays, but many receive extra compensation for doing so or see the necessity of working for wages on that day as a requirement of their particular industry.

Since the 1950s: Sunday’s Status Affirmed, yet Commercialization Intensifies

In the 1950s and 1960s the courts refereed fights about Sunday commerce. Nearly every state had “Sundays laws” on its books. Some states’ laws were relatively new, such as Georgia’s and South Carolina’s statutes forbidding stock car racing on Sundays; others were centuries old, such as laws banning Sunday liquor sales. Two new legal developments,



Activities characterized as inappropriate for the Sabbath during earlier eras—reading the newspaper or fiction, playing games, entertaining visitors, having a big meal—came to constitute the core of Sundays as Americans spent them at home during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Radio and television were eventually added to the diversions that made the home more “restful.”

one which rendered the other irrelevant, reoriented Americans toward a commercially as well as culturally and religiously open Sunday. First, states succeeded in affirming their right to legislate Sunday activity, largely on the basis of prosecuting Jewish storekeepers who did a Sunday business. In 1961 the Supreme Court decision in *McGowan v. Maryland* affirmed that state legislatures could prohibit the transaction of business on Sunday. This decision found support in the lengthy history of Sunday’s special status as a day of rest; Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote a supporting opinion of several hundred pages that is itself a celebratory history of Sunday observance in the United States.

The successful prosecution of Jewish Americans who considered Sunday neither a Sabbath nor a day of rest might lead one to conclude that little had changed with regard to Sunday since the 1820s, or 1720s, or 1620s; however, the Supreme Court decision was the death knell for a Sunday free of commerce or leisure. The Court affirmed the specialness of Sunday as a traditional day of rest, but it did not define what constituted rest. Further opening of Sunday to nonreligious possibilities and uses, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act mandated that “reasonable

accommodation” should be made for employees’ religious practices, including the observance of holy days. Additionally, some state legislatures, such as those in Texas and California, have mandated that employees receive some form of accommodation for time off for religious observances. To be sure, most employers who ignore these provisions do so in the case of Muslim employees who require time to attend Friday prayer or Seventh-day believers who cannot work Saturdays, but even the Sunday Sabbath faithful are not exempt from demands to work on Sunday, as illustrated by Home Depot’s 2005 firing of an employee for refusing to work on Sunday.

Despite *McGowan v. Maryland* and the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which could have been used as tools to still economic activity on Sundays, more and more Americans engaged in Sunday commerce and commercial activity throughout the 1960s. Retailers of durable household goods, such as furniture, opened their store displays on Sundays, promising potential customers that they could “browse today, buy tomorrow.” The United States was sufficiently oriented toward consumption, self-realization, and individualism that definitions of *works of necessity* and of *necessity* itself had expanded dramatically. Some states entertained procedures through which commercial establishments asked customers to sign certificates of necessity affirming that what they purchased was “necessary,” thereby warranting the violation of Sunday laws against work or commerce. Many states skipped this step and just allowed stores to open on Sunday where there was sufficient demand.

By the mid-1970s few states could sustain the fiction of necessity as sufficient cause for the violation of Sunday laws, and state legislatures repealed laws closing grocery stores, movie theaters, shopping malls, and so forth. To this day some “blue laws” remain on the books, limiting Sunday sales of alcohol, and banks generally (but not always) are closed, but for the most part Sunday is one of the most active days of the week in terms of commercial transactions. The commercialization of Sunday, however, does not seem to have diminished Sunday’s importance in the United States as a day of religious observance and rest. Many megachurches have bookstores that do business before and after services, some have ATM machines to dispense cash for tithing, and some accommodate themselves to professional and commercial calendars in which football games and sales punctuate certain Sundays. Consider “Superbowl Sunday,” for example, an extravaganza of the National Football League introduced in 1967.

Critical Assessment

The widespread tolerance of religious holy days as long as they don’t interfere with the commercial calendar rises in part out of the successful incorporation into Sunday of necessary farm chores since time immemorial; of some work related to the railroads and telegraph since the 1800s; of industrial work in factories since the 1850s; of uplifting leisure associated with books, art, and music since the 1880s; of entertainment rising out of spectator sports and the movies, and the electronic mass media since the 1920s; and of commerce since the 1950s. That Sunday can retain its religious significance while people travel, work, play, and shop is testament to the importance of temporal elasticity, as well as to the religious meanings of spaces of time. It also has set the stage for religious tolerance: the holy times of other religious traditions in addition to Protestantism can find a place in the American calendar if their adherents can tolerate work, play, and shopping on their holy days. Because there are no longer limitations to work on Sunday, adherents of other religious traditions can still go about making their living despite the prevalence of a weekly calendar oriented toward the rhythms of mainstream Christianity. Thus in temporal terms alone, Sunday has become an important institution for all religions in the United States, not just those that consider it the Sabbath, the Lord’s Day, or simply a day of rest.

The sense of pride in the religious diversity of the United States, reluctance to discriminate openly on the basis of religion, and ongoing differentiation of Sunday together have laid the groundwork for treating the calendar as elastic when it comes to religious needs. Thus Sunday—as a common time of rest and as a common source of conflict—laid the foundations for temporal elasticity in relation to religion in the contemporary United States. When the Puritans cleansed the religious calendar of all holy days except Sundays, they fashioned what was nearly a blank slate onto which a multitude of traditions could be transposed, and this is precisely what happened once per capita productivity was high enough that the communal work calendar could accommodate different holy days and holidays.

See also *Death and Burial Practices; Economics; Education: Sunday Schools; Establishment, Religious; Evangelicals: Nineteenth Century; Food and Diet; Freedom, Religious; Holidays; Judaism: Tradition and Heritage; Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Pluralism; Puritans; Theocracy; Visual Culture* entries; *Worship: Eastern Orthodox*.

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Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the only court established by the U.S. Constitution and is the final arbiter of its meaning. Religion cases come to the Court under the First Amendment's prohibition of state "establishment of religion" and its guarantee of religious "free exercise." Claims may also arise under Article VI, which provides that federally elected officials cannot be subjected to religious tests as a prerequisite to office. By virtue of its singular authority to interpret these provisions, the Supreme Court's influence on national and local church-state relations in the United States is unparalleled.

Though the Constitution does not stipulate the size of the Court, since 1869 it has been comprised of a chief justice and eight associate justices. Pursuant to Article II of the Constitution, a vacancy on the Court is filled by nomination of the president "with advice and consent of the Senate." The Senate Judiciary Committee may conduct a hearing into the competency of the candidate and report its recommendation to the entire Senate for a vote. The Constitution does not provide any criteria for appointment to the Court; even those without legal or judicial experience may and have been appointed. A simple majority vote in the affirmative is sufficient to grant consent and is almost always obtained from the Senate. In the 220-year history of the Court, only twelve of the president's nominees have been rejected. Nevertheless,

these provisions give democratic politics some, albeit highly limited, influence on the Court. Once justices are appointed, their independence from interference by either presidential or congressional politics is preserved by the Constitution's requirement that appointment to the Court is for life and a justice's salary cannot be diminished while in office. A justice may be impeached, but the one attempt to do so failed and established the principle that a justice may not be challenged for his or her performance on the bench.

The Supreme Court's Role in Religion Cases

The vast majority of religion cases come before the Court under the First Amendment, and the numbers of these cases has grown exponentially throughout the twentieth century. This is so for several reasons. At midcentury, the Court interpreted the Fourteenth Amendment to apply the guarantees of religious liberty and disestablishment to the states. Moreover, with the rise of the liberal state, federal and state governments extended their regulatory authority over activities that once were nearly exclusively church sponsored, such as health, education, and welfare services. This brought more complex and politically charged cases to the Court.

This growth in cases and their complexity was not only due to more federal and state regulatory activity or the Court's placing itself in the crossroads, however. It was due also to an increasing diversity of America's religions and a decreasing authority of Protestantism's de facto establishment. Americans, for all their religiosity, had always been too religiously diverse for one church to dominate another in law. But a broad coalition of evangelical Protestant groups had dominated America's body politic until the first third of the twentieth century, when this coalition began to collapse, eroding the sense of a religio-moral consensus in society. Mid-century Supreme Court cases dealing with official expressions of religion in public schools illustrate this cultural shift. Consistent with the post-Civil War emphasis on equal treatment under the law and the growth of non-Protestant religions in America, the Court began to reason its way to greater neutrality among America's majority and minority religions and between religion and irreligion. The varying results in these cases have led to a rich and, for some, frustratingly complex history of constitutional interpretation of church-state relations.

For several reasons, the Court's First Amendment decisions are not susceptible to being reduced to static rules about church-state relations. Among the most significant

reasons is the nature of jurisprudence itself. Court opinions are most fundamentally interpretations of historical texts—the Constitution, of course, but also case law and statutes promulgated throughout the nation’s history—applied to contemporary factual situations. As such, the Court’s decisions are subject to all the truisms about interpretation and the negotiation of multiple meanings in literal and social texts.

This alone does not explain the evolutionary nature of the Court’s opinions. In addition, change over time is an inherent aspect of American law as a common law system. In such systems any one decision is based upon a comparison of facts and law to previous decisions. As a fundamentally analogical method, legal reasoning requires the comparison of related cases to deduce the appropriate ruling in any case currently before the Court. Thus, the law evolves with the culture that gives rise to the factual disputes that come before the Court. Indeed, the Supreme Court extends its jurisdiction, with a few statutory exceptions, only to cases where the law is unclear or, in other words, where conflicting opinions by lower courts need reconciling by the Supreme Court.

There are rules that limit the Court’s interpretive range, however. First, it may only decide cases, not hypothetical questions raised by the Court itself that are unrelated to an actual controversy. The Court’s opinion must be anchored in the facts brought to it by real parties who feel themselves aggrieved by the actions others. Moreover, the Supreme Court, as its name implies, is the court of last resort. Only after two other tribunals have rendered judgment does the case come to the Supreme Court, and even then the Court is limited to considering whether the lower court properly applied the law to the case. Finally, there is no right of appeal to the Supreme Court. It has discretion whether or not to accept a case and can do so only upon an affirmative vote by four of the nine justices. Of the average ten thousand requests for a hearing each year, the Court hears fewer than 1 percent.

The Court’s decision in a case is rendered as a single opinion, though it need not be and rarely is unanimous. Therefore, most decisions are comprised of two opinions: one speaking for the majority, the other for the minority of justices. The majority opinion constitutes the law of the case and is called the “holding.” The minority opinion disagrees with this holding and is called “the dissent.” Within each of these two parts of the published decision, individual justices may write separate opinions indicating that they are joining either the majority or dissenting opinion with respect to

certain but not all aspects of its reasoning. A wide disparity of opinions in a single case signals that the law is unsettled. Therefore, notwithstanding the designation of a winner and loser in such a case, it is not possible to generalize with certainty to other cases. A split decision and multiplicity of opinions on a single case virtually guarantees further appeals of similar questions to the Court. In theory greater certainty is achieved as analogizing among cases refines issues to the point that new facts do not present new questions; the lower courts achieve acceptable unity in their treatment of similar cases; and the Supreme Court, therefore, has no need to consider the matter further. In matters of religion, such certainty has proved illusory, not least because of the difficulty in defining religion.

The Supreme Court’s Definition of Religion

One of the enduring questions for the Court has been, What is the phenomenon the First Amendment religion clauses seek to protect? As the Court noted in its first religion case, the Constitution does not define the term *religion*. In 1878, when the question first presented itself in the context of the criminalization of Mormon polygamous marriages, the Court looked for guidance in the historical and cultural context of the Constitution. “Polygamy has always been odious among the northern and western nations of Europe,” the justices concluded, “and, until the establishment of the Mormon Church, was almost exclusively a feature of the life of Asiatic and of African people” (*Reynolds v. U.S.*, 1878). As a consequence the Court found it “impossible to believe” that the framers intended the United States to allow such an “odious” practice. Subsequent polygamy cases made the link more explicit between Christianity and the Court’s notion of protectable religion. In *Davis v. Beason* (1890), the Court opined that polygamy was forbidden “by the laws of all civilized and Christian countries, and to call their advocacy a tenet of religion is to offend the common sense of mankind.”

Thus, in early religion cases the Court’s social context was the basis for defining constitutionally recognizable religion in terms of traditional Christianity and, more specifically, Protestantism’s conception of religion as personal belief, not sacramental practice. Religion in U.S. law was, said the *Davis* court, “one’s views of his relations to his Creator, and to the obligations they impose of reverence for his being and character, and of obedience to his will.”

Though unselfconsciously seen as merely “common sense,” this view of religion endorsed a particular kind of religion and was later understood to place the Court at

odds with the establishment clause. *Reynolds'* belief-action distinction endured, but the Court's definition of religion did not. During the early twentieth century the U.S. government became more conscious of the nation's enduring religious diversity, including among Christians, and became increasingly inclined to see its role as one of ensuring fundamental fairness, not moral sameness. When the Court took up the question of religion in *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947) after a long hiatus, it avoided defining religion and simply observed that however defined, religion was the same thing under two clauses of the First Amendment. "Religion' appears only once in the Amendment, but the word governs two prohibitions and governs them alike. It does not," the Court held, "have two meanings, one narrow to forbid 'an establishment' and another, much broader, for securing 'the free exercise thereof.'" In *Torcaso v. Watkins*, a 1961 test oath case, the Court finally abandoned a content-specific definition and placed on equal and protected footing "those religions based on a belief in the existence of God . . . [and] those religions founded on different beliefs."

Also in the 1960s the Court adopted a functional definition of religion that extended conscientious objector status to persons with nontheistic but sincere beliefs related to matters of "ultimate concern." Though Congress had delimited the statute in question by identifying religion with belief in a "Supreme Being," to the Court this was meant as "merely clarifying the meaning of religious training and belief so as to embrace all religions and to exclude essentially political, sociological, or philosophical views" (*U.S. v. Seeger*, 1965). Therefore, the Court held that the test for conscientious objector status was "whether a given belief that is sincere and meaningful occupies a place in the life of its possessor parallel to that filled by the orthodox belief in God of one who clearly qualifies for the exemption" (*U.S. v. Seeger*). That "place" was defined by the Court with a quotation from Protestant theologian Paul Tillich's *The Shaking of the Foundations* (1948): "And if that word [God] has not much meaning for you, translate it, and speak of . . . your ultimate concern, of what you take seriously without any reservation" (p. 57). For the Court, then, religion became defined as a core conviction to which one subordinates all else: it was one's "ultimate concern." The Court would no longer look at the content of the belief in question, only at whether it was "sincere and meaningful." This was, said the *Seeger* Court, consistent with the "ever-broadening understanding of the modern religious community."

Subsequent cases have sometimes employed other indicators to identify religion, such as the existence of a community of believers and a history of organizationally sustained practices. These factors, however, appear to be only helpful markers, not substitutions for the "ultimate concern" test. In 1988, for example, the Supreme Court reversed a lower court's remand of a case for a factual determination of the religious character or legitimacy of peyote use. It was sufficient, the Court held, that the Native American Church was "a recognized religion"; that "peyote is a sacrament of that church"; and that the "respondents' beliefs were sincerely held" (*Employment Div. v. Smith*, 1988). In a lengthy footnote the Court noted other markers that justified recognizing the Native American Church—namely, the existence of an organization, a demonstrable history of ritual practices, and the existence of others who shared the belief that their peyote ritual facilitated experience of the divine. All of these factors appear merely to contribute to the ease with which religion may be identified. *Seeger* remains the standard for defining religion as a conviction regarding "ultimate concerns" that is sincerely held.

Article VI: Theories and Tests

Article VI's prohibition of a religious test oath for public office has contributed little to the development of jurisprudence regarding religion. This is in part because Article VI is a fairly straightforward proposition: "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." Also, the tendency has been for the Court to read Article VI in concert with the First Amendment: test oaths are deemed to violate proscriptions against religious establishment or limit religious liberty. The controlling opinion was rendered in 1961, when the Court overruled Maryland's requirement that notaries swear a belief in God. Though directly concerned with a test oath, the case was resolved exclusively on First Amendment grounds (*Torcaso v. Watkins*, 1961). In sum neither irreligious nor religious convictions can be a basis for denial of public office, but the Court has not deemed it necessary to look beyond the First Amendment to Article VI for its position.

The First Amendment: Theories and Tests

The First Amendment requires that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Thus, the ratification in 1791 of the Bill of Rights made explicit that the Constitution's silence on religion was intentional. The federal government

was not to give a preference to or establish any religion; neither was it to interfere with personal religious choice. Therefore, the Supreme Court was also largely silent on religion until the 1870s, when Congress undertook to criminalize Mormonism's marriage practices. Not until the twentieth century, however, did the number of First Amendment cases create a need for theorizing about church-state relations. In the 1940s the Court held that the Fourteenth Amendment made the free exercise clause (*Cantwell v. Connecticut*) and the establishment clause (*Everson v. Board of Education*) applicable to the states. From then on the Court's docket of religion cases expanded dramatically, resulting in a variety of tests for adjudicating church-state relations. Though they often present overlapping concerns, the First Amendment's two religion clauses have separate trajectories of interpretation that began late in the Court's own history.

Free Exercise

In the 1870s the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints challenged the constitutionality of federal statutes that forbade its marriage practices. These cases provided the Court with its first opportunity to consider the scope of the protection given religion under the Constitution. The Court's holding remains the starting point for virtually all religion cases to this day. The following words are commonly imported into contemporary religious liberty cases: "Laws are made for the government of actions, and while they cannot interfere with mere religious belief and opinions, they may with practices" (*Reynolds v. U.S.*, 1878). In other words, religious beliefs are absolutely protected by the First Amendment, but actions based on those beliefs are not. The *Reynolds* court asked, "Can a man excuse his practices to the contrary because of his religious belief?" and concluded no: "To permit this would be to make the professed doctrines of religious belief superior to the law of the land, and, in effect, to permit every citizen to become a law unto himself. Government could exist only in name under such circumstances." The *Reynolds* distinction between action and belief is, however, only the beginning of any analysis of religious liberty challenges to state action.

Much depends upon the kind of action at issue. Religious speech, for example, is deemed as protected as belief itself. This is in large part due to the First Amendment's independent guarantee of freedom of speech and the application to religion of the theories that protect speech. Consequently, religious speech may not be restricted unless it poses an

obvious and imminent threat to public safety. The Court strictly scrutinizes any regulations of it and requires the government to bear the burden of demonstrating their constitutionality. The Court has also, held in *Rosenberger v. Rector* (1995), that the state cannot treat religious speech differently from other types of speech by, for example, singling out and refusing to subsidize at a state university a student publication that has a religious point of view. For other forms of embodiment of belief, however, a separate set of standards has evolved.

Exemption of Religion from Generally Applicable Laws

Because the First Amendment clearly forbids laws directly pertaining to religion, most appellants come to the Court seeking a religious exemption to laws applicable to the general population. The traditional test for such cases was established in *Sherbert v. Verner* (1963), which involved the state's refusal to grant unemployment benefits to a fired employee who refused on religious grounds to work on Saturday. The Court imposed a two-tier test to the facts of the case. First, the complainant had to show that the law created a substantial burden on the performance of a religious duty in which she had a sincere belief. Once substantiality was evidenced, the burden shifted to the state to show two things about the law in question. First, it had to be in furtherance of a legitimate, even "compelling state interest." Second, the law had to be narrowly tailored to accomplishing that interest and be the least burdensome means of doing so. The *Sherbert* Court emphasized that "no showing of a rational relationship to some colorable state interest would suffice; in this highly sensitive constitutional area, . . . only the gravest abuses, endangering paramount interests, give occasion for permissible limitation."

In the end, the Court held that the state's interest in protecting itself from spurious unemployment claims was not compelling, especially when weighed against the substantial burden to the complainant. Thus, even laws that are neutral on their face can, under *Sherbert v. Verner*, be found to violate the First Amendment, if the Court deems the burden on religion to be greater than is justified by the state's interests in the legislation.

Exemption of religion from generally applicable statutes can run afoul of the establishment clause insofar as it benefits religion as religion. The Court has seldom entertained that dilemma in free exercise exemptions except to dismiss it, however. In *Sherbert v. Verner*, for example, the Court held

“the extension of unemployment benefits to Sabbatarians in common with Sunday worshippers reflects nothing more than the governmental obligation of neutrality in the face of religious differences, and does not represent that involvement of religious with secular institutions which it is the object of the Establishment Clause to forestall.” During this period, the Court’s tendency appears to have been to allow exemptions where the case involved minority religions and on matters that seemed to have minimal appeal to other citizens. In *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972), for example, the Amish in Wisconsin were granted an exemption from state mandatory school attendance statutes, an exemption not likely to appeal to the broader population.

Ten years later in *U.S. v. Lee*, however, Pennsylvanian Amish were denied an exemption from income tax laws. Other cases in the 1980s sided with the state and implied concern that religious exemptions were threatening to swallow the constitutional rule. These decisions included siding against a Jewish military officer asking to wear a yarmulke while in uniform, against a prisoner wanting to attend a religious ceremony under circumstances deemed by prison authorities to compromise security, and against Native Americans objecting to construction of a federal highway through a worship site (see respectively *Goldman v. Weinberger*, 1986; *O’Lone v. Estate of Shabazz*, 1987; and *Lyng v. Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association*, 1988). After twenty years of finely drawn factual distinctions leading to highly contested opinions among its justices, the Court’s lack of theoretical coherence and cases’ inherent tension with the establishment clause came to a head with *Employment Division v. Smith* (1990).

In *Smith*, the Court turned away from, though it did not explicitly overrule, the *Sherbert* test by holding that governmental regulations did not have to have a compelling interest. It was enough, said the Court, that the law was neutral and generally applicable. The First Amendment only required the state not to regulate religion directly. That the Native American Church’s practices conflicted with the state’s drug statutes did not per se invalidate the statutes under the First Amendment. Echoing *Reynolds’* fear that religious exemption could permit every citizen to become a law unto himself, the *Smith* Court worried that *Sherbert’s* balancing “would open the prospect of constitutionally required exemptions from civic obligations of almost every conceivable kind.”

With *Smith* the standard of review for religious liberty cases became one of strict neutrality for both minority and

majority religious interests. Only if it could be shown that the government was directly burdening religious practice or otherwise targeting religion would the Court require the state to demonstrate a compelling interest in its regulatory initiatives. Otherwise, the free exercise clause would be satisfied by the contested statute being applicable to the population as a whole. However, because the Court left the state with discretion to exempt religion from a generally applicable statute, the wall of separation appeared quite porous. Moreover, granting states the discretion to exempt religion has worried some that *Smith* will lead to unequal treatment of minority or socially unacceptable religions. Both issues could result in challenges that catalyze evolution of *Smith’s* theory of religious liberty and have encouraged parties to rely on state constitutional guarantees of religious liberty that are not limited by the federal test enunciated in *Smith*.

Disestablishment

Absolute separation of church and state is impossible, of course. Religion in the United States receives a variety of governmental benefits common to all social institutions, including fire and police protection and use of roads and other utilities. Like other charitable institutions, churches are tax-exempt. Finally, as we have seen, religion is subject to general laws governing moral conduct. Thus, most basically the term *no law* has been interpreted to mean that state action must not single out religion as an object of legislative attention. There has been, however, much disagreement on this score among the members of the Court. Whether the establishment clause prohibits any specific-to-religion activity by the government or merely forbids discriminating between religions has been the larger interpretive question. Thus, theories of disestablishment that emphasize neutrality towards religion are challenged by countervailing arguments for strict separation of church and state and for accommodation of religion by the state.

All three of these themes—neutrality, strict separation, and accommodation—are found in standards of judicial review under the establishment clause. In general it can be said that the achievement of a majority necessary to render a decision in establishment clause cases is typically grounded today in the notion that the state may aid religion directly and indirectly, as long as it does not discriminate among religions and between religion and other social institutions.

As with the free exercise clause, the Court’s nineteenth-century justices had few opportunities to opine on the establishment clause. Such cases as came to them concerned

disputes over property obtained by churches from colonial governments (*Terrett v. Taylor*, 1815) or property disputes arising from schism in a church (*Watson v. Jones*, 1872). The first direct challenge under the establishment clause involved the constitutionality of federal funding of a Catholic hospital (*Bradfield v. Roberts*, 1899), but it took another fifty years for the Court to articulate a general theory of disestablishment.

Everson v. Board of Education

Everson v. Board of Education (1947) concerned a state program to reimburse parents for the cost of transporting their children to parochial schools. The *Everson* Court used the occasion to set minimal rubrics for disestablishment cases, many of which seemed commonsensical in the twentieth century: “Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions or prefer one religion over another. Neither can force nor influence a person to go to or to remain away from church against his will or force him to profess a belief or disbelief in any religion. No person can be punished for entertaining or professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs, for church attendance or non-attendance. No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion. Neither a state nor the Federal Government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and vice versa.” In this list, one can see the general types of governmental action that are prohibited in the interest of separating church and state: laws that discriminate between religions, promote religion in general, or draw the state into the affairs of religion. But beyond such generalizations the Court did not go.

Given the Court’s long list of negatives, one would have expected it to reject the New Jersey reimbursements as “laws which aid one religion.” But by a majority of one, the Court chose to see the reimbursements as intended to facilitate school attendance, not promote religion, and as neutrally available to all private schools, not merely religious ones. Indeed, for the majority, a refusal to subsidize the transportation of religious students was to discriminate against them. The Constitution, observed the Court, “does not require the state to be [religions’] adversary. State power is no more to be used so as to handicap religions than it is to favor them.”

To some extent *Everson* and subsequent cases’ appeal to a nonadversarial relationship between church and state reflects United States historical practice and social circumstance A

singularly powerful contributor to the number and complexity of Supreme Court establishment cases is the history of de facto integration in the United States of religious themes and ideals with its secular institutions. U.S. presidents take the oath of office on a Bible. The Supreme Court building displays an image of Moses bearing the Ten Commandments, and the Court’s ceremonies include such phrases as “God bless this honorable Court.” Congress has a chaplain and prays routinely. In *Marsh v. Chambers* (1983), the Court deemed these to be historic practices that had lost their specifically religious content and, therefore, were neutral expressions of the nation’s past. This effectively removed some governmental displays of religion from the Court’s docket but by no means all. In fact, deciding under what circumstances displays were acceptable became one of the more vexing and common questions for the Court, especially with respect to nativity scenes and representations of the Ten Commandments, as discussed below.

The Lemon Test

Not until twenty-five years after *Everson* did the Court provide a specific test for identifying permissible aid to religion. In *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (1971), the Court was again asked to review laws providing state reimbursement of expenses associated with attending private schools, most of which were parochial. This time, however, the reimbursement was to the schools directly and for the cost of teachers, texts, and instructional materials for secular subjects. The Court found the assistance to the schools unconstitutional, announcing its decision in what became the “*Lemon* test.” The test was comprised of three elements. To pass muster under the establishment clause, a statute must

- have a secular purpose;
- have a secular effect (measured in terms of not “advancing” religion); and
- not result in “excessive entanglement” between state and church.

“Excessive entanglement” usually is deemed to arise from regulatory oversight of the assistance in question. Though such oversight may be nondiscriminatory in the sense that it subjects all recipients of public funds to the same terms and scrutiny, it could result in the intrusion of the state into the governance of religious organizations.

In theory, failure on any one of these grounds would render government action unconstitutional. In practice,

however, application of the *Lemon* test led to a variety of results whose coherence was imperceptible to the public and increasingly criticized by individual members of the Court in dissenting opinions. For example, one justice concurred in the result of a case but refused to join the majority opinion because it applied the *Lemon* test. In *Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District* (1993), Justice Antonin Scalia castigated his colleagues for their arbitrary use of *Lemon*: "When we wish to strike down a practice it forbids, we invoke it, when we wish to uphold a practice it forbids, we ignore it entirely."

State Display of Religious Symbols

One of the better illustrations of Justice Scalia's complaint is the Court's attempt to adjudicate the propriety of the state's display of religious symbols. Although long-standing custom has been deemed, as indicated above, to have emptied some symbols of their religious content, more recent practices have posed greater difficulty to the Court. In *Lynch v. Donnelly* (1984), a much criticized case involving a city's display of a crèche during the Christmas shopping season, the Court found that to "celebrate the Holiday and to depict the origins of that Holiday" was a legitimate secular interest. Five years later a contrary result was reached. The pivotal difference in the two opinions appears to have been the locale of the displays. While in *Lynch* the crèche had been displayed in the city's shopping district, in *Allegheny v. ACLU* (1989) the crèche had been placed in the stairwell of the county courthouse. The courthouse location implied an endorsement of religion that the shopping district did not. Similar considerations of intent and location have governed a variety of results in Ten Commandment cases. If the state seems to have intended to assert the primacy of religion and especially specific religious content, display of the Ten Commandments has been found unconstitutional. If, on the other hand, the display merely described the historical evolution of U.S. law and society or was placed on public grounds for no religious reason, the display has been found constitutional. (See *McCreary County v. ACLU* and *Van Orden v. Perry*, both decided in 2005.)

The Endorsement Test and Coercion Test

In the course of their struggle for consistency, different majorities of the Court have employed two additional tests. The first test arose from Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's concurring opinion in *Lynch v. Donnelly* and is called the "endorsement test." It elaborates on *Lemon's* concern for the

effect of the government action. Rather than asking generally whether the effect of state action is to advance religion, the Court considers specifically whether the action gives the impression "to non-adherents that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community, and an accompanying message to adherents that they are insiders, favored members of the political community."

The second test is referred to as the "coercion test" and is a more dramatic departure from *Lemon*. Under this theory a state violates the establishment clause only if it provides direct support to religion or coerces participation in religion. Because schools host a captive and impressionable audience, the Court has repeatedly rejected their sponsorship of religious ideas and practices, such as by teaching creationism, reading the Bible devotionally, and praying publicly. Observing in *Lee v. Weisman* (1992) that "prayer exercises in public schools carry a particular risk of indirect coercion," the Court held, "at a minimum, the Constitution guarantees that government may not coerce anyone to support or participate in religion or its exercise." These alternatives to establishment clause interpretation coexist with *Lemon*, which the Court continues to employ.

Consistency and Divergence in the Court's Treatment of the Establishment Clause

Regardless of the test or combination of tests employed, establishment clause cases reveal a consistent set of questions employed by the Court. These remain well summarized by *Lemon's* interest in the intent and effect of the statutory scheme. A second consistency is revealed by the Court's attention to context. Schools are treated differently than the town square. Courthouses raise concerns that shopping districts and parks do not. Contextual distinctions display at least two enduring concerns: the citizen's right not to participate (coercion) and not to be excluded from democratic polity (endorsement). The third way of organizing the Court's establishment decisions is by the ideologies that inform the majority's choice of questions and concerns. Some justices, especially those of the mid-twentieth century, have been committed to a strongly separationist view of the establishment clause. These jurists have been more inclined to see dangers in mixing religion and politics.

Lemon, for example, shows separationist roots in its emphasis on excessive entanglement between church and state and its requirement that the state not further the general interests of religion, much less a specific religion. At the opposite end of the spectrum are those who take the

position that while the state may not give a preference to one religious body over another, it must accommodate religious interests. For this group the unequal treatment of religion causes civil strife. Moreover, they argue, the conflation of political and religious interests both in the past and present ceremonial activities of government legitimize continuing accommodation. As Justice Scalia put it in *Lamb's Chapel* (1993), "What a strange notion, that a Constitution which itself gives 'religion in general' preferential treatment (I refer to the Free Exercise Clause) forbids endorsement of religion in general." This accommodationist position is further informed by the belief that withholding from religious organizations benefits given to other institutions violates constitutionally mandated neutrality.

Predictably a middle position has developed in order to obtain a majority necessary to render a decision. For these members of the Court, state support of religious activity is constitutional if it benefits religion in general without requiring unwilling participation or causing persons to feel less than full citizens. Thus, centrist majorities are characterized by an emphasis on the state's intent and heightened attention to context (in other words, potential for coercion and endorsement) as a way of satisfying obliquely *Lemon's* entanglement concerns.

In sum, although establishment cases have lacked uniformity in their results, the analysis of the process by which the Court reaches a decision shows discernable predictability in its questions, concerns, and ideologies. Though this approach to First Amendment cases falls short of identifying a single theory or test, it does enable one to plot the trajectory of the Court's decisions during a period of dramatic change in direction for it and the nation on issues concerning the relation of church and state.

See also *Abortion; Bioethics; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence; Constitution; Education: Court Cases; Establishment, Religious; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Faith-Based Initiatives; Freedom, Religious; Holidays; Latter-day Saints; Native American Religions: Contemporary; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Pledge of Allegiance; Politics: Twentieth Century; Religion, Regulation of; Santería; Theocracy.*

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Systematic Theology

In the Christian tradition, systematic theology is an attempt to summarize the doctrines of faith and to demonstrate their coherence. The adjective *systematic* can be misleading. Theology is not systematic in the sense that it is the construction of abstract, metaphysical systems, but instead that it is a description of the coherence of Christian faith: first, the coherence of convictions within Christian faith (for example, that Jesus is the Christ as the basis for claims that God is triune); second, the coherence between what Christians believe and how they should live (Christian ethics); and, third, the coherence or intelligibility of Christian faith in relation to a particular historical and cultural context, often described as the task of interpretation or hermeneutics. This third attempt has frequently entailed the use of contemporary forms of philosophy.

One of the earliest instances of systematic theology in the Christian tradition was *On First Principles* by Origen (c. 185–c. 254), which interpreted Christian faith in conversation with the Neoplatonism prevalent in Alexandria. One reason systematic theology became an established genre early in the Christian tradition (it has not done so in Judaism or

Islam) was its concern to make its faith claims intelligible to new cultures and philosophies.

From its inception, American systematic theology has been deeply influenced by European theology and philosophy. A text found in the libraries of many American pastors in colonial New England was *Medulla Theologiae* (1623, translated in 1642 as *The Marrow of Theology*) by the English Puritan William Ames (1576–1633), who had fled persecution in England to Holland and had hoped to emigrate to the American colonies but died in Rotterdam. Four years later his widow did emigrate to the Bay Colony, bringing his book and theology with her. Relying on the dialectics of the French Reformed philosopher Peter Ramus (1515–1572), Ames demonstrated the coherence between faith in God and the convictions that follow from it, and what he called observance, what faith entails in terms of “living to God” (Ames’s description of theology, also borrowed from Ramus).

Ames’s influence on early American theology is significant because it illustrates the derivative character of American systematic theology—that is, its dependence on its European predecessors—and the importance of philosophy in interpreting Christian faith. Much of early American theology was indebted not only to Ramus but also to the works of Francis Bacon (1561–1626), John Locke (1632–1704), George Berkeley (1684–1753), and the Scottish common sense realism of Thomas Reid (1710–1796) and Dugald Stewart (1753–1828). Later examples of American theologians’ use of philosophy are the influence of F. W. J. Schelling (1775–1854), G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831), and German Idealism of the Mercersburg theologians, John Williamson Nevin (1803–1886) and Philip Schaff (1819–1893), as well as that of Schelling, Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), and twentieth century existentialism on the *Systematic Theology* (1951, 1957, 1963) of Paul Tillich (1886–1965).

Ames’s dialectic of faith and observance was a continuing theme in American Puritan theology, in part because most theologians in America before the nineteenth century were ministers in congregations. As it was for many of their Protestant European predecessors, their context for theological reflection was the regular task of reading and interpreting the Bible, writing sermons, and administering the life of a congregation. The various revivals or awakenings that swept across the country, first in the 1730s and later in the early nineteenth century, raised important theological questions about what was called the evidence of faith—that is, the relation between God’s sovereignty and human agency, the nature of sin, and the meaning of the atonement—but for

most American theologians these issues had their origin not primarily in books written by other theologians, but in the daily lives of those to whom they ministered. The professional systematic theologian, whose primary context was the academy and the guild rather than the everyday life of a congregation, did not emerge until divinity schools and denominational seminaries were established in the nineteenth century. The emergence of the academic theologian brought about important changes in systematic theology. The attention given to the practicality, what Ames had referred to as observance, of Christian faith became less important than issues in the guild of American theology.

If systematic theology is understood as the coherence of a particular theological perspective, then one can describe a theological system even if it takes less than a volume to do so and does not discuss every major doctrine of Christian faith. In this larger sense of the term, many of the major theological movements or schools in American theology are systematic. They offer a coherent interpretation of Christian faith even though that coherence is never in written form. That is certainly the case with the most significant figure in American theology, Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), whose theology is clearly coherent. Part of his brilliance was the depth and range of his thought. Like Ames, Edwards was concerned with demonstrating that speculative truth about God is of a piece with the practice of Christian faith. At the center of his theology is the sovereignty, glory, beauty, and what he described as the excellency of God, a beauty reflected in the harmony and proportion of creation, the internal harmony of the Bible, and in the incarnation and atoning work of the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ. Edwards’s theology is inseparable from but not reducible to his role in the first Great Awakening and the theological issues it raised. His distinction between natural and moral necessity enabled him to affirm a Calvinist understanding of the sovereignty of God’s grace and at the same time the importance of moral praise and blame.

The work of Edwards’s disciples came to be known as the new divinity. Its practitioners included Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803), whose *System of Doctrines* (1793) was the first attempt in American theology to demonstrate the systematic coherence of Christian doctrines, and Joseph Bellamy (1719–1790), whose *True Religion Delineated* (1750) addressed the pervasive Arminianism (denial of predestination) of the day by arguing that true virtue, especially loving God, was not to be valued because of its benefits but because God alone was intrinsically worthy of love. The Edwardsean

tradition culminated in the New Haven theology of Nathaniel William Taylor (1786–1858).

The Arminians found a defender in the Boston minister William Ellery Channing (1780–1842), who laid the foundations for Unitarian theology by emphasizing the role of reason and morality in Christian faith and by rejecting original sin, the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and substitutionary theories of the atonement. Channing did not, however, make a systematic statement of Unitarian theology.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, new influences, including German Idealism, Romanticism, and the beginning of historical critical studies of the Bible began to influence American theology. Attempts to conserve classical forms of Protestant theology were evident in the Princeton School, especially in Charles Hodge (1797–1878), and B. B. Warfield (1851–1921). Hodge's *Systematic Theology* (1871–1873) and Charles Porterfield Krauth's (1823–1883) *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology* (1871) were defenses of the classical Reformed and Lutheran confessional traditions. So, too, John Williamson Nevin (1803–1886) in *The Mystical Presence* (1846) and his colleague Philip Schaff (1819–1893) advocated a recovery of both pre-Reformation Christianity and a Calvinism untainted by its Puritan and revivalist traditions. On the other hand, Horace Bushnell (1802–1876)—deeply influenced by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), German Romanticism, and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834)—laid the foundations for theological liberalism in America with his *Christian Nurture* (1861), *God in Christ* (1849), and *Nature and the Supernatural* (1858). He developed an interpretation of sin and atonement that rejected the positions of both orthodox Calvinism and Unitarianism, arguing that Christ's sacrifice on the cross could be better understood in terms of a theory of vicarious sacrifice based on what he described as the principle of love. Just as Bushnell produced no systematic description of Christian faith, neither did Orestes Brownson (1803–1876), perhaps the most significant American Catholic theologian of the nineteenth century. A convert to Catholicism, Brownson argued that one could intuit certain eternal ideas that were the mind of God. Reason, instructed by the authority of the church, could therefore discern the truths of Catholic faith, such as Trinity and incarnation, although Brownson did not write a systematic description of the coherence of these truths of faith.

American theology in the first two-thirds of the twentieth century was dominated by the emergence of the Social Gospel, the impact of what was sometimes referred to ambiguously as European Neo-orthodox theology, and three major

theologians—Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971), his brother H. Richard Niebuhr (1894–1962), and Paul Tillich.

Neither Congregationalist Washington Gladden (1836–1918) nor Baptist Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918), major figures in the development of the Social Gospel, wrote a systematic theology. Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) and *A Theology of the Social Gospel* (1917), however, offered a systematic vision of the implications of the biblical symbol of the Kingdom of God for the mission of churches. Reinhold Niebuhr's *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) and his 1939 Gifford Lectures, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941, 1943), affirmed the importance of the social reality of sin, but also offered a stringent critique of the liberal optimism of the Social Gospel movement. Although Tillich immigrated to the United States from Nazi Germany in 1934, his three-volume *Systematic Theology* (1951, 1957, 1963) was probably the single most influential proposal in American theology during the twentieth century. Using a method of correlation, Tillich reinterpreted the major Christian symbols in a manner that made Christian faith intelligible and compelling to a culture caught up in the existentialism of Heidegger, Sartre, and Camus, as well as the new field of psychoanalysis.

The decade of the 1960s was an important period in American society and in theology. The decade began with Vatican II (1962–1965), which led to a rethinking of the nature of the church and Catholicism's relation to Protestantism, Judaism, and other religious faiths. The impact of Vatican II is reflected in Richard P. McBrien's *Catholicism* (1994), as well as *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives* (1991), co-edited by Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and John P. Galvin.

The year 1968 was particularly important in American society. The assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, the Tet offensive in Vietnam, the riots at the Democratic Convention in Chicago, and the trial of the Black Panthers were several of the large events signaling the unraveling of American society. American theology underwent significant change as well. In December 1968 Karl Barth (1886–1968), the most important Protestant theologian of the twentieth century, died in Switzerland. With his death the neo-orthodox movement in theology, which had become a major force in American Protestant theology, came to a conclusion except at Princeton Seminary and Yale Divinity School. Just as established social institutions in U.S. society lost their authority during the 1960s, so too the established paradigms in Protestant and Catholic theology no longer dominated academic discussion.

Also in 1968, Gordon Kaufman published *Systematic Theology: A Historicist Perspective*. The subtitle is significant. For Kaufman, theology is a continual process of appropriating past revelatory events for the present situation, but the present situation is a matter of perspective, and in the 1960s and 1970s new perspectives and previously unheard voices emerged in American theology. Process theology, derived from the work of Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) and Charles Hartshorne (1897–2000), recast reality in terms of the categories of process and becoming rather than being and reinterpreted Christian faith accordingly. Feminist theology, which emerged first in the work of (originally) Roman Catholic theologian Mary Daly (1928–2010) but soon after appeared in Protestant circles as well, attacked a patriarchy deeply entrenched not only in society but also in Christian theology and the church. Feminist theologians have not yet produced a systematic theology in the narrow sense of the word, but *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective* (1993), edited by Catherine Mowry LaCugna (1952–1997), *Feminist and Womanist Essays in Reformed Dogmatics* (2006), edited by Amy Plantinga Pauw and Serene Jones, and Kathryn Tanner's *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity* (2001) have been first steps in that direction.

Liberation theology emerged in the African American struggle for civil rights and in the theology of James Cone. An early proposal is James H. Evans's *We Have Been Believers: An African American Systematic Theology* (1992). A Hispanic American liberation theology is explored in Justo L. Gonzalez's *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (1990).

Other significant texts in American theology at the end of the twentieth century include Methodist Geoffrey Wainwright's *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life* (1980), *Christian Dogmatics* (1984), and two volumes co-edited by Lutheran theologians Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson; the two-volume *Systematic Theology* (1997, 1999) by Jenson; *Ethics* (1986), *Doctrine* (1994), and *Witness* (2000), three volumes by Baptist James William McClendon Jr.

(1924–2000); the United Church of Canada's Douglas John Hall's attempt to construct a theology in the North American context in *Thinking the Faith* (1989), *Professing the Faith* (1993), and *Confessing the Faith* (1996); and the second edition of Presbyterian Daniel L. Migliore's *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (2004).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, systematic theologians continue to describe the coherence of Christian faith, but they are often more modest in their claims than their predecessors in the first two-thirds of the twentieth century. Many of them recognize that every systematic theology is *perspectival*—that is, that their constructive interpretations of Christian faith reflect their social, cultural, racial, and class contexts—and that they must be wary of universal claims about the meaning of Christian faith.

See also *Bioethics*; *Death of God Theology*; *Eastern Orthodox Tradition and Heritage*; *Education: Seminaries and Theological Education*; *Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues*; *Liberation Theology*; *Lutheran Tradition and Heritage*; *Nature and Nature Religion*; *Neo-Orthodoxy*; *Neo-Thomism*; *Philosophical Theology*; *Philosophy*; *Postmodernism*; *Practical Theology*; *Religious Thought* entries; *Social Ethics*; *Worship: Eastern Orthodox*.

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T



Television

Since the middle of the twentieth century, television has dominated the American cultural landscape as the most popular mass medium and form of entertainment. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2005, 98.2 percent of American households own at least one television set, the average number of television sets per home is 2.5, and individuals view an average of 4.7 hours of television daily. These statistics reflect the centrality and importance of television as an agent of socialization and mediator of culture. Television is an integral part of everyday life, creating and punctuating individuals' routines, informing and shaping their worldviews.

Religious Responses to Television

For most religious communities in America, the pervasive nature of television prompts reflection and negotiation. Two basic sets of questions arise. First is whether community members should or can watch television and under which circumstances. Second is whether communities should produce alternative programming that reflects the specific values of their community. That is to say, should communities use the medium for their own purposes? The answers to these questions vary from tradition to tradition and from community to community, and are constantly being reformulated as new technologies—such as cell phones with screens for viewing live video streams, as well as prerecorded programming—allow for different permutations of television (that is, more mobile, less domestic, and so on.). Through their responses to television, religious communities reshape and redefine themselves, and sometimes in the process reshape television as well.

For a small minority of communities, usually those that define themselves and are seen by others as closed or inward-looking, such as the Amish and ultra-orthodox Jews, television may be perceived as presenting a challenge to the values and lifestyle of the community. In that context religious leaders may advocate complete avoidance of the medium. Not only are the contents considered potentially problematic because they are uncensored, but the act of watching may also be classified as a practice at odds with a devout lifestyle. Avoidance of television therefore provides the community with an important opportunity for self-definition. In rejecting and avoiding the medium, the community defines its values and attitudes: we do not watch television because we will be exposed to immodest images, it is a waste of time, the culture represented is irrelevant or at odds with our beliefs, and the like.

In communities where evangelism or outreach is a high priority, such as evangelical Protestantism and Chabad, television is more likely to be perceived as a neutral medium that can be harnessed for God's will. Here, the determining factor is the contents, which should be devoted to religious promotion or at least be considered morally wholesome, rather than the nature of the medium. Community members often support these missionary programs because they believe in their potential for recruiting new converts. Audience research, however, suggests otherwise. Financial support for religious broadcasting builds community among believers, but only rarely is it the trigger that prompts a nonbeliever to convert. When it does, other contributing factors usually come into play—a family background in the tradition, interpersonal communication with a member of the community, and so on. Often in these same communities,

ensorship is advocated for programming that is deemed either immoral or not family friendly.

Last are the communities, such as Reform Judaism and Liberal Protestantism, that accept television as a part of everyday life of their constituents but view the church or synagogue or mosque as a place that provides a temporary respite from a media-saturated world. Television may enter through the back door—perhaps as a reference in a sermon—but overall the medium is considered secular. In this context, media criticism rather than censorship is thought to be the appropriate way to influence the industry and promote quality programming.

Early Impact

From the earliest television broadcasts in the late 1940s, religious leaders expressed both hope and fear over the impact of this new medium upon American culture. In Protestant communities these hopes centered on evangelism: how could this new medium be used to reach potential converts? In this period both evangelical and liberal Protestant leaders believed that television could be used to bring about the next revival across the country. The National Council of Churches Broadcast Commission sponsored and aided in the production of religious programming for NBC, CBS, and later ABC. The contents of these programs assumed that the audience would be Protestant.

Although Jewish and Catholic leaders were less inclined to speak in missionary terms, they too viewed the medium's potential in positive terms as offering an opportunity to explain their traditions to the broader public. In that vein, Jewish Theological Seminary, in cooperation with NBC, produced *The Eternal Light*, a program that was broadcast on NBC from 1952 to 1989. *The Eternal Light* explained Jewish practices to the wider public and served as an outreach program for geographically or otherwise isolated Jews. In the same period, a commercial show sponsored by Admiral with Catholic bishop Fulton Sheen, received high ratings. Sheen was a charismatic speaker and teacher and appeared on his show in all of his regalia, a strong visual statement, especially in those early years of the medium. His success on television was perceived by some Protestant leaders as threatening, and behind closed doors some wondered whether Protestantism would be able to compete with Catholicism in the visually oriented world of television.

At the same time, however, there were those mainly liberal Protestant voices who expressed fears of television's impact, especially in the home. If the living room had been a center

for family interaction, how would the new medium affect daily life? Would families still say grace before TV dinners? Would church attendance drop because of conflicting sports broadcasts? Would housewives be distracted from their tasks by a visual medium that required a different kind of attention than radio shows? These kinds of questions encapsulated an ambivalence about the medium of television and its potential impact on religion and daily life in America.

The question of content was next. Did the shows merit the time their viewers devoted to them? What kind of culture was being produced for the airwaves? For certain Protestants, mostly liberal and middle to upper class, television remained low on the cultural priority list. Affluence predicted slow, ambivalent adoption. Working and middle-class Catholics and Jews, however, were quicker to bring the new medium into their homes. The quiz show scandals of the 1950s—which revealed that the producers of several popular shows, such as “The \$64,000 Question” and “Twenty-One,” had rigged the outcomes of their competitions—fed this group's initial antipathy of the medium. Not only was television a waste of time, it was also deceptive and even harmful to its audience.

In these early years, religious broadcasting remained the prerogative of the hegemonic religious establishment, mainline Protestantism. Following the arrangement that had originated in radio, mainline churches were offered free sustained broadcast time so that the channels might fulfill part of their obligations to broadcast for the public good. Based on previous experience in radio, the Broadcast and Film Commission of the National Council of Churches lobbied against paid-time religious broadcasting. One of the fears underlying this policy was that marginal religious opinions would get more air time than mainstream religion because the marginal groups had fewer qualms than mainline groups about using revenue from paid advertising or viewer donors to pay for air time. Despite concerted lobbying efforts, the mainline monopoly was broken in 1960. Under a new Federal Communication Commission regulation, free network air time was no longer the qualifier for programs to be considered public service broadcasting, and networks no longer had to provide it.

Heyday of Network Broadcasting

During the heyday of network television, religious broadcasting remained largely relegated to local stations and Sunday morning or late night hours during the week. UHF stations provided an important outlet for smaller groups and local

communities. Although a few nonevangelical, mainline religious broadcasts from the era of sustained-time broadcasting continued, religious television gradually came to be dominated by evangelical broadcasters, or televangelists, many of whom were loosely associated in the National Religious Broadcasters organization, which had been founded in 1944.

Network television in this era touched on religion only lightly if at all. Dramas such as *Dallas* (1978–1991) and police shows such as *Columbo* (1971–1978) didn't explicitly or regularly address religious issues. Nor were characters typically characterized as religious. Sitcoms were likewise almost exclusively secular, with the possible exception of series such as *Little House on the Prairie* (1974–1982), which showed the family going to church; the long-running *M*A*S*H* (1972–1983), which dealt with war, life and death and showed the chaplain Father Mulcahy in a positive light; and Michael Landon's *Highway to Heaven* (1984–1989).

On news shows religion also received relatively little coverage, and this usually in reference to specific events, such as a papal visit or military conflicts. Religious organizations often complained about biased and negative coverage, and that far too much air time was devoted to scandals, hypocrisy, and violence.

Cable Television

Following the deregulation of cable television in 1984, evangelical broadcasters who had developed funding sources for their programming in earlier decades were ready to take advantage of the new conditions. Pat Robertson was a notable pioneer in this area on the Christian Broadcast Network. The 700 Club adopted a secular format: a talk show, but filled with evangelical content. There was also a news component that mimicked the secular broadcasts but focused on issues important to the evangelical world. Hard news stories were interpreted through an evangelical lens, and human interest stories were presented with an evangelical tone (such as born-again Christians in far-away places who had been touched by the 700 Club). By 2001, after many interim variations, Pat Robertson's CBN channel had evolved into the ABC family channel.

Other entrepreneurial figures in televangelism included Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, Jerry Falwell, and Oral Roberts. All these names would become familiar to readers of the mainstream press in the late 1980s because of scandals, but they also deserve mention for their innovative use of television. The Bakkers not only developed religious programming for children and co-hosted the Praise the Lord

Club, but also used their audience base to fund a Christian theme park and hotel complex known as Heritage USA (1978–1989). Although the complex would close and file for bankruptcy after the indictment and later conviction of Jim Bakker for sex and financial scandals exposed in 1987, the Bakkers' activities illustrated the increasing commodification of evangelical Christianity in the 1980s and 1990s. In many ways, the PTL Club was an infomercial to raise funds for a far wider range of activities, from Heritage USA partnerships to time-share properties to books, albums, and the like. The Bakkers' initiatives mirrored the growing evangelical market and foresaw a more fully developed Christian retail market. Oral Roberts is remembered for his focus on healing and televised healing, including the innovative use of camera angles to help the television audience share in the experience. After founding a complex that included a university and medical center, Roberts would be publicly criticized for calling on his audience to donate before God called him to heaven (a notably successful fund raising strategy). Jerry Falwell was tainted only secondhand by the televangelist scandals (he had purportedly come to aid Bakker by taking over Heritage USA), has been noted for his innovative use of the Old-Time Gospel Hour mailing list as the initial base of support for the Moral Majority, a conservative lobbying group he founded in 1979. Jimmy Swaggart's dramatic televised confession has been viewed retrospectively as a bold public relations maneuver that preceded other similar public confessions.

The presentation of the evangelical worldview as normative within the secular format of television allowed audience members to feel both that their faith and practices were legitimate and that they were part of a larger community. In this sense, religious broadcasting contributed to building an evangelical identity and discourse that spanned across particular denominations or churches across the nation. Notably, the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Religious Broadcasters were founded early on, in 1942 and 1946 respectively. Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), the largest religious television network in the United States in the early twenty-first century and known for its prosperity gospel emphasis, was founded in 1973 by Paul and Jan Crouch, who continued the enterprise after cofounders Jim and Tammy Bakker encountered legal difficulties.

Religious Themes

Cable television also provided competition to the networks, which brought changes to the style and content of dramas

and sitcoms. Because specific channels catered to specific markets (the Hallmark channel, the History channel, and so on), there was more room for a wider variety and type of contents. Mirroring what was coming to be described by sociologists of religion as the baby boom search for spirituality in the 1980s and 1990s, religious themes began to enter television programming. These included the Native American spirituality in *Northern Exposure* (1990–1995), the more explicitly religious *Touched by an Angel* (1994–2003), and the family-oriented *Seventh Heaven* (1996–2007). Programs such as *West Wing* (1999–2006), *Law and Order* (1990–), *House* (2004–), and *Lost* (2004–) also began to portray a diversity of religious types and faiths, though often under the rubric of hypocrisy or extremism rather than of tolerance and faithfulness.

Shows such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997–2003) and *Xena Warrior Princess* (1995–2001) were sometimes interpreted in religious terms, and viewers would share their reactions with others in fanzines and later in blogs.

Censorship

From the earliest days of broadcasting disputes arose about the contents of programming and what constitutes suitable entertainment for families. One of the early evangelical organizations, formed in the 1980s, was the American Family Association (1977) headed by Don Wildmon, who spearheaded a boycott against advertisers associated with programming deemed morally problematic, including *Three's Company* (1977–1984), *Charlie's Angels* (1976–1981), and *All in the Family* (1971–1979). Jerry Falwell condemned the BBC production *Teletubbies* (1997–2001) for promoting gay lifestyles with its character Tinky Winky, who dressed in purple with a triangle shaped antenna and carried a magic bag. Although these attempts at censorship have been largely unsuccessful, evangelical media activists have been adept at making provocative comments and staging symbolic boycotts to promote their conservative agenda. Although Falwell's remark about Tinky Winky may not have eliminated *Teletubbies* from the screen, it did provoke a discourse about gay lifestyles that would become increasingly controversial by the end of the 1990s.

Video and DVD

In the 1980s the videotape also became a permanent fixture in households, largely because it allowed for far greater viewer control. Evangelical broadcasters, quickly realizing the value in bypassing the network and reaching their audience

directly, began to produce videos for the home, particularly for children. *VeggieTales*, the Christian-inspired but not explicitly evangelistic animation series for children, began as video and only much later aired on television. Chabad likewise produced videos and DVDs for children. The videotape and its younger technological cousin the DVD allowed parents to supervise media consumption far more than was possible on television. Parents were no longer bound to the time schedule of the networks, but could produce entertainment (babysitting?) on demand.

Convergence Culture

Today, as media become increasingly capable of multiple functions (mobile phone as a telephone, camera, web browser, email client, text messenger, and mp4 player), television content becomes even more accessible. Viewers can watch television from their computers, mobile phones, and i-Pods as either live streaming video or on-demand content. Programming can be watched while commuting to work or traveling on holiday. Favorite shows can be saved and watched when convenient. Although the number of programs and channels has risen exponentially in the twenty years since the Cable Communications Act of 1984, the ability of the viewer to censor and selectively view television contents has risen proportionately. Given the number of television markets, all sorts of religious niches develop and survive. The ubiquity of television screens in everyday life—in airports, the back seat of taxis, public restrooms, university hallways—potentially offers more opportunities for religious contents, but it also means more competition. Although generating content for the screen is easier than ever before (witness the number of videos uploaded to YouTube), the simple abundance of content means that the mass audience is becoming a rarer and more precious commodity. Religious communities have more opportunities to create content specific to their needs, but they are also far more limited in who they can actually reach. Traditional religious communication, such as the church sermon, competes with a far greater range of media possibilities than ever before.

Everyday Life

In his seminal essay “A Cultural Approach to Communication,” James Carey distinguishes between two models of communication: transmission and ritual, both of which are applicable in the case of television and religion in the United

States. Religious broadcasting on television is based on a transmission view. The desire to evangelize on the airwaves, or even to “teach” Americans about different faith traditions is based on this concept. Television is considered a linear medium: the message is sent through the medium to the viewer. Informed by this stance, researchers of religion and media in the 1980s focused on understanding how religious programming affected audiences. They asked a variety of related questions: How many viewers claim to convert or change their religious identity as a result of viewing? How many viewers donate money during the program? Do viewers replace their local church meetings with electronic church meetings? How does the audience interpret the programming? Did it identify as the intended audience of the message? How do different preachers fill different needs for different audiences? How do different audiences understand the same message in different ways?

This ritual view of communication is directed not toward disseminating messages but toward maintaining society in time; not imparting information but expressing shared beliefs. For scholars of religion and media, the ritual view offers an opportunity to think about the ways in which television intersects both with everyday life and lived religion. From this perspective, television is significant not only for the messages it broadcasts and the way in which people understand those messages but also for the way in which viewers build their lives around television: weather reports and news shows first thing in the morning, children’s programming after school, news and sports in the evening, entertainment in the evenings and on weekends. Television may serve as a gathering place, a (post)modern day hearth for families, as much as it may send individuals to their rooms and away from the center of the home. Television shows provide narratives as well as facts about the world outside as much as they also provide ethnocentric or negative myths or misinformation.

Television is likely to continue to be transformed as viewers redefine their relationship with the screen at home in relationship to other screens (computer, cell phone, media players). As a site for mythic and symbolic activity, for ritual and transmission forms of communication, television offers one of the more important challenges and opportunities for religion in America.

See also *The Electronic Church; Evangelicals: Current Trends and Movements; Evangelicals: Twentieth Century; Internet; Journalism; Radio.*

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Theocracy

Theocracy is a term for government by God in which the clergy rule according to his revealed law. The word is thought to have originated with the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, who used it in reference to the government of the Israelites under Moses. Although it is debatable whether an absolute theocracy ever existed in the United States, theocratic-like experiments were tried in Puritan New England and in early Mormonism. Fears of theocratic conspiracies were a recurring feature of Protestant anti-Catholicism from colonial America to the election of John F. Kennedy. In the late twentieth century, the right-wing Protestant movement known as Dominion theology was viewed by many mainstream observers as a renewed threat to the American political order.

Massachusetts Bay

The Massachusetts Bay Colony, particularly under its first governor, John Winthrop (1588–1649), was the most notable colonial example of a society self-consciously ordered according to biblical law. Although church and state technically remained separate, and the clergy were barred from holding civil office, magistrates and ministers were expected to work together in upholding the ordinances of a Bible

commonwealth. Basic to this vision of government was the idea that people were bound by two mutually reinforcing covenants: one with God, whereby they agreed to obey his commands; and one with each other, wherein they agreed to submit to civil and ecclesiastical authorities entrusted with enforcing divine law. This paradigm was not a monarchy, in that the governor was elected and, like the magistrates and ministers, ruled by the mutual consent of the governed, as Winthrop put it in his famous sermon “A Model of Christian Charity” (1630). Yet the theocratic element was unmistakable in that only men who were church members—those judged by the clergy to be “visible saints,” or probable members of God’s elect—could vote or hold office. This not only heightened clerical authority but also guaranteed that all of society’s civil rulers had passed the test of Puritan orthodoxy, which included the belief that innate human depravity required the check of a strong government.

The restriction of the franchise to church members under the first Massachusetts charter provoked controversy when two Puritan aristocrats in England—William Fiennes, Lord Saye and Sele, and Robert Greville, Lord Brooke—proposed to settle in Massachusetts. The noblemen wanted assurances that their social standing alone, not church membership, would qualify them for full civic participation. Theologian John Cotton (1585–1652), the teaching pastor of the Boston congregation, took up his pen to defend the Massachusetts system. In the process, he commented on several forms of government. “Democracy, I do not conceive that ever God did ordain as a fit government either for church or commonwealth,” he declared in a 1636 letter to Lord Saye and Sele. “If the people be governors, who shall be governed?”

God instead ordains monarchy—Massachusetts was still under the king’s ultimate authority—and aristocracy but “setteth up theocracy in both, as the best form of government in the commonwealth, as well as in the church.” Cotton invoked Jethro’s counsel to his son-in-law Moses, in Exodus 18:21, that rulers must be god-fearing. Moreover, Cotton reasoned, just as a godly woman rightly refuses an ungodly man as her husband, the citizens of a Bible commonwealth may refuse an unrighteous man as a ruler, lest they become yoked to him, as in a marriage, without the recourse of divorce. Cotton stressed the voluntary nature of the people’s submission to divine authority and the interdependence of the civil and ecclesiastical realms. “Purity, preserved in the church, will preserve well-ordered liberty in the people, and both of them establish well-balanced authority in the magistrates.”

Like Puritan thought generally, Cotton’s blueprint for a godly society was classic primitivism, emphasizing the restoration of allegedly pure biblical models. For Cotton, the touchstone was Mosaic law, the core of which—the Ten Commandments—had been handed down literally from on high. As part of an effort to delimit the power of the Massachusetts magistrates, Cotton drafted a law code for the colony, titled *Moses His Judicials*, which drew not only on the Decalogue but also on the wider Mosaic legislation governing various aspects of everyday life. The ceremonial, or ritual, laws were excluded. Thus Cotton devised a set of laws pertaining to crime, magistrates, property, inheritance, and other issues, and annotated the whole with copious marginalia containing biblical proof texts. Significantly, his code included the scripturally mandated death penalty for blasphemy, adultery, homosexuality, and murder. His theocratic legal model, first published anonymously in London in 1641, attracted wide notice and influenced, among others, the founders of the New Haven Colony, Theophilus Eaton and John Davenport, who also claimed to have established a Bible commonwealth.

The Mormon West

New England’s earliest legal experiments were short lived. Cotton’s original code was never officially adopted, though it greatly influenced the *Laws and Liberties* issued by the Massachusetts General Court in 1648. In both the Bay Colony and in New Haven, time inexorably eroded the practice of seeking legal precedent in the Bible rather than in natural reason and in the ever-expanding body of common law. Yet two centuries after the New England colonies were established, biblical theocracy enjoyed a revival under the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–1844), founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Like the earliest settlers of his native New England, Smith was deeply influenced by primitivism, as well as by millennial expectation of God’s kingdom. His particular theocratic ideas arose not only from the King James Bible, in which he was steeped, but also from the revelations and visions he received from his boyhood until his murder in 1844. These revelations were codified in the Book of Mormon and later canonical texts such as the Doctrine and Covenants. A revelation in 1831 epitomized the millennial expectation of God’s kingdom on earth. Christ announces, “Ye shall have no laws but my laws when I come, for I am your lawgiver, and what can stay my hand?” (Doctrine and Covenants

38:22). The prophetic words echoed Isaiah 33:22: “For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.”

Such millennial zeal was not uncommon in nineteenth-century America. But to many non-Mormons, who were already suspicious of Smith’s claim to be a prophet, his frequent linkage of the millennium with the establishment of a Latter-day Saint Zion sounded politically subversive. War with Mormon opponents broke out in Missouri in 1838, resulting in the death or arrest of a number of Smith’s followers. After Smith himself was arrested, a judge questioned him about his announcements of a coming kingdom that would subdue all others, a reference to another biblical prophecy (Daniel 2:44). Smith’s attorney answered that if Smith were treasonous, then the Bible also was. The judge imprisoned Smith, who eventually escaped. In 1842 he ignited fresh controversy in Nauvoo, Illinois, when he published an editorial in the newspaper *Times and Seasons*, declaring that the “restitution of all things” depended on instituting divine government on earth. Israel under Moses was the model, according to Smith: “Their government was a theocracy; they had God to make their laws, and men chosen by Him to administer them.” Moses received the laws and the high priest Aaron “taught the people, in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs; they were both one, there was no distinction.”

Two years later, during his campaign for the U.S. presidency, Smith coined the term *theodemocracy* for the government he was instituting among his followers. He formed a Council of Fifty, the members of which were chosen by revelation and included three non-Mormons. Meetings were held in secret, and at the gathering on April 11, 1844, Smith was voted “Prophet, Priest, and King.” He believed that the model of a priestly king, elected by a council of virtuous men, would be embraced by Mormons and non-Mormons alike as other earthly governments failed in the last days. As historian Richard Bushman has shown, Smith reverted to the Puritan, biblical ideal of the righteous ruler at the very time when U.S. presidents were abandoning the idea of government by the virtuous and turning instead to rule by political parties. After Smith’s assassination in June 1844, Brigham Young carried the king-and-counsel model on the trek to Utah. What ultimately doomed theodemocracy, however, was polygamy, which Smith and Young had reinstated in imitation of the Old Testament patriarchs. Pressure from the federal government, including the use of military force in the Utah War of 1857–1858, eventually forced the Mormons to

conform to the constitutional separation of church and state and to the common-law standard of monogamy.

Recurring Fears

Restorationist traditions such as Puritanism and Mormonism were not the only sources of controversy over theocracy. Virtually all Protestants in early America feared that the colonial ambitions of France and Spain were secretly an attempt by the papal Antichrist to set up theocratic tyranny in the New World. Antipapal hysteria periodically flared up, as in the Seven Years’ War (1754–1763), when the French and their Indian allies threatened English Protestant settlements. Hysteria recurred in the nineteenth century as anti-Catholic writers warned of the need to establish Protestant control of the western frontier. Protestant minister Edward Beecher (1803–1895) was representative when he wrote in *The Papal Conspiracy Exposed* (1855) that unchecked papal power “will surely overrule, and subdue, and corrupt all the civil authorities of our country—nay, of the world. The central theocracy will control the people by the fears of hell and the hope of heaven.” Not until 1960 and the election of the nation’s first Catholic president, John F. Kennedy, would widespread fears of a papal theocracy finally be dispelled.

By the 1960s, however, a new twist on theocracy was emerging in the right-wing Protestant movement known variously as Dominion theology or Christian Reconstructionism, which seeks to reconstruct American society by giving Protestant Christians dominion over civil government. The term *Dominionism* derives from Genesis 1:28, in which God grants Adam and Eve dominion over all other creatures. The movement’s most controversial figure was the Calvinist philosopher Rousas John Rushdoony (1916–2001), a son of Armenian immigrants, who founded the Chalcedon Foundation in California in 1965. In his *Institutes of Biblical Law* (1973), he resurrected the Puritans’ endorsement of Mosaic law—including their advocacy of the death penalty for adultery and homosexuality—as the only model of a virtuous society. Rushdoony denounced the antinomianism that led other modern Christians to dismiss the Mosaic legislation as no longer relevant. Christians, he insisted, have a covenantal obligation to God to obey his moral laws and subdue all nations under Christ’s lordship. Although Rushdoony’s theocratic agenda struck many of his would-be allies as too radical, his ideas bore some resemblance to the thought of other prominent figures in the Christian Right. Among them was the late Calvinist philosopher Francis

Schaeffer (1912–1984), author of *A Christian Manifesto* (1981), whose advocacy of civil disobedience by Christians influenced the radical antiabortion activist Randall Terry. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Dominionism remained only a loosely connected movement whose ongoing influence continued to be a subject of debate among sociologists and other scholars.

See also *Antinomian Controversy; Church and State: Revolutionary Period and Early Republic; Constitution; Establishment, Religious; Freedom, Religious; Latter-day Saints; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Pledge of Allegiance; Politics* entries; *Puritans; Religion, Regulation of; Religious Right; Supreme Court.*

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Torah

“Torah,” from the Hebrew word for “instruction” or “teaching,” bears multiple meanings in Judaism. In its most limited meaning, it refers to the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses that comprise the first section of the Hebrew Bible. The handwritten parchment text of the Pentateuch, rolled up into a scroll, is Judaism’s central and most sacred ritual object, and its public reading forms a focal point of Jewish communal worship. More broadly, “Torah,” in different contexts, can refer to the entire Hebrew Bible (Old Testament); to the Bible and Rabbinic literature (the latter known as “Oral

Torah”); and most broadly to the entire corpus of Jewish learning and literature, written and oral, down to the present day. In modern Hebrew, the term also denotes “the teachings of,” as in the “the Torah of Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik” or the “Torah of liberalism.”

The Torah Comes to America

Wherever Jews migrate, the Torah follows them, for Jewish communal life is impossible without it. So late in 1655, perhaps a year after the first Jewish communal settlement in New Amsterdam (today New York), a Sephardic merchant named Abraham de Lucena arrived in town bearing a Torah scroll, borrowed from the Jewish community of Amsterdam. The presence of a Torah scroll served as a defining symbol of Jewish communal life and culture. It created a sense of sacred space. By its sanctity, the Torah scroll elevated the rude parlor where those early Jews most likely worshipped into a cherished place of holiness; it transformed a private home into a hallowed house of prayer. The return of the Torah to Amsterdam, around 1663, signifies that the community had scattered. The *minyan*, the prayer quorum of ten males over the age of thirteen traditionally required for Jewish group worship and the public reading of the Torah, could no longer be maintained. The subsequent reappearance of Torah scrolls in the city, no later than the 1680s, following the British capture of the city from the Dutch, was a sign that the Jewish community had been reestablished and group worship resumed.

Wherever Jews later created communities in North America, they either brought Torah scrolls with them from home (which is what the Jews who emigrated as a group to Savannah did in 1733) or they quickly borrowed Torah scrolls from elsewhere, as the Jews of Newport did in 1760. Some individual Jews are known to have brought privately owned Torah scrolls with them to the New World. Jewish religious life in smaller eighteenth-century colonial Jewish settlements like Lancaster and Reading revolved around these privately owned Torahs. Whenever a *minyan* could be gathered, usually in the owner’s private home, the presence of the Torah scroll defined the worship service as authentic, for the scroll contains the sacred teachings of Jewish religious life.

The acquisition of a new Torah scroll was often a cause for celebration. One such occurred on the eve of the Civil War in Washington, and Senator Judah P. Benjamin of Louisiana reputedly held the scroll. By contrast, the desecration of a

Torah scroll was a cause for mourning. When Torah scrolls in Charleston in 1787 were “wantonly thrown about the floor” during a robbery, the community called for a special day of fasting and prayer.

The Availability and Cost of Torah Scrolls

Since all 245 columns (10,290 lines) of a Torah scroll must be handwritten in letter-perfect Hebrew by a meticulously trained scribe (known in Hebrew as a *sofer*) on specially prepared, hand-manufactured parchment, Torah scrolls are rare and precious. This was especially true in the New World, since well into the nineteenth century all Torah scrolls had to be imported. No handwritten copy of the Torah is known to have been written in the United States until 1849 when the New York *sofer* Nathan Oettinger wrote one for philanthropist Judah Touro in New Orleans. The experience of Adas Israel Congregation in Washington, D.C., founded in 1869, is illustrative. For several years, the congregation depended for its Torah scroll upon the good graces of a congregant who had brought one with him from Europe and was willing to loan it out. Later, it commissioned a scribe in Germany to write a brand-new Torah scroll for the growing congregation and paid him \$165.50 (almost \$3,000 in today’s money). But the scroll proved to be defective, since it contained numerous scribal errors, and was soon shipped back. Finally, in 1874, a New York Hebrew bookseller sold the congregation a used and probably imported (and inferior) Torah scroll for \$100.

As the number of Jews in America swelled into the millions, with the mass migration of eastern European Jews beginning in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the number of trained Jewish scribes in the United States increased. The growing number of Torah scrolls written in the United States signaled communal self-sufficiency. American Jews no longer had to depend upon other communities for their Torah scrolls; they could produce them locally. The cost of producing a Torah scroll, however, steadily rose, owing to the burgeoning costs of hand labor and supplies. By the early twenty-first century, a Torah scroll cost between \$20,000 and \$60,000, depending upon its age and quality.

Although almost all Torah scrolls are written by men, and Jewish law, according to many authorities, bars women from serving as Torah scribes, a small number of women have recently entered the field. In 2000 the Kadimah Reconstructionist community in Seattle commissioned what it described as the “world’s first female-scribed Torah,” a group effort. In

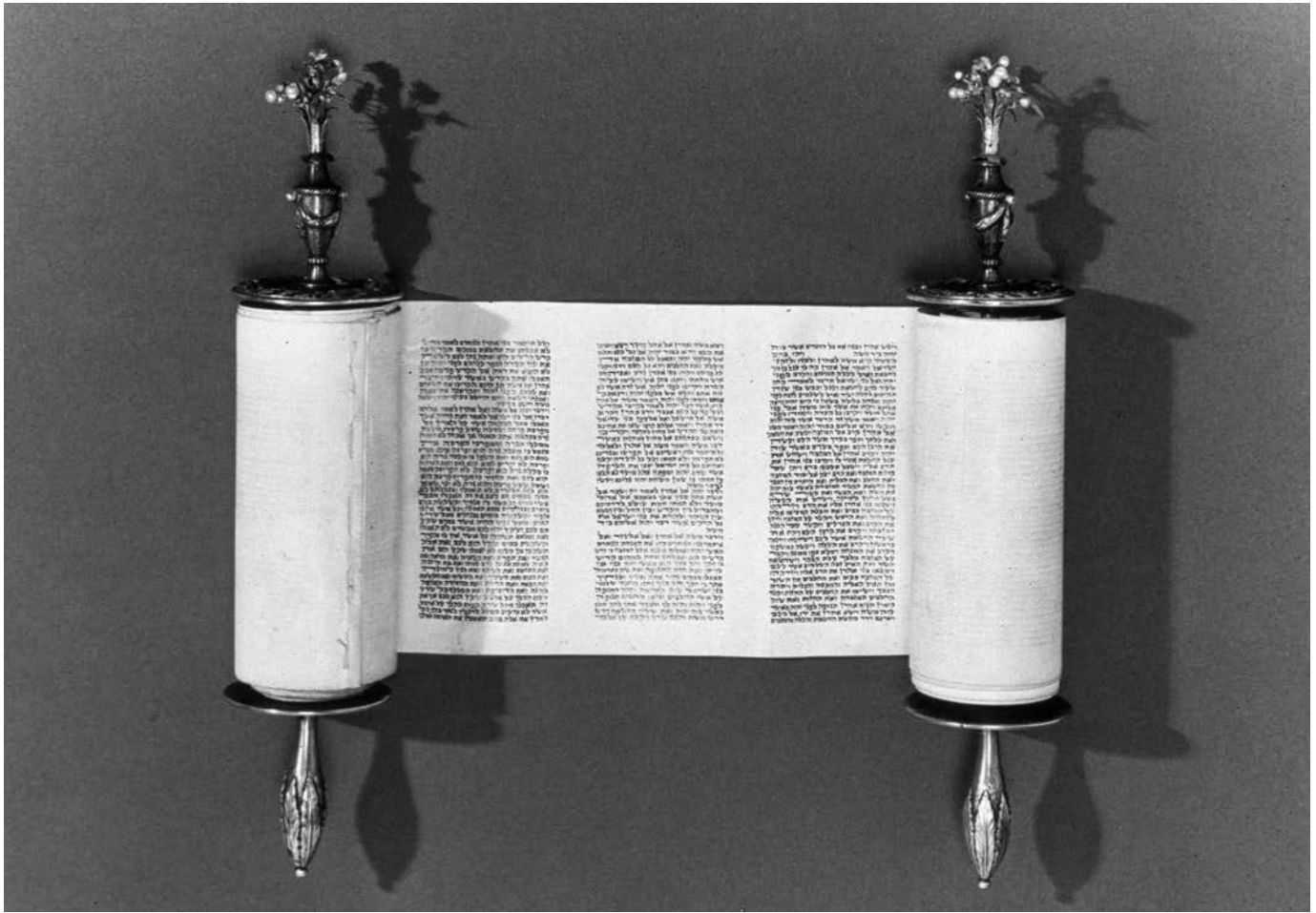
2007 Jen Taylor Friedman became the first woman scribe to write a complete Torah scroll on her own.

The Torah in Jewish Liturgy

The Torah has been read in public since biblical times. Jewish practice, as set forth in the Talmud, is for the Torah to be read aloud on the Sabbath, festivals, fast days, and new moons, as well as each Monday and Thursday at morning prayers and each Sabbath at afternoon prayers. The latter three anticipate the reading for the coming Sabbath morning. Many Reform Jewish congregations read the Torah as part of the Friday evening service for welcoming the Sabbath. Traditionally, the Torah is chanted, using ancient musical cantillations (known as *trop*), by trained “readers.” The Torah reading has been described as a dramatic reenactment of the original theophany at Mount Sinai.

Although in ancient Palestine the Torah was read according to a triennial cycle, Jews today read it according to a fixed annual cycle. For this purpose, the Torah is divided into fifty-four portions (*sedarim*), one for each week, with some weeks necessarily assigned double portions. Sabbaths are known by the portions assigned to them (for example, “the Sabbath when we read the portion of Noah”). Each portion is further subdivided into *aliyot* (singular, *aliyah*), so called because people are “called up” to the reading and intone a blessing beforehand and afterwards. The portion is divided into seven or more *aliyot* on the Sabbath, six on the Day of Atonement, five on festivals, four on new moons and the intermediate days of festivals, and three at other times. The first *aliyah* is specially set aside for descendants of Priests (*kohen*) and the second for descendants of Levites, except in Reform congregations, where these ancient designations have been discarded. Non-Orthodox congregations have opened up *aliyot* to women. On festivals, fast days, and the new moon, special sections appropriate to the occasion are read from the Torah. Whenever it is read, the Torah reading serves as the centerpiece of the liturgy. A procession and special prayers accompany the Torah when it is removed from its housing in the holy ark and when it is returned.

The annual Torah cycle concludes, joyously, on the last day of Sukkot known as *Simhat Torah* with the reading of the concluding lines of the book of Deuteronomy. The day is marked by dancing and parading with the Torah. The final reading from Deuteronomy on that day is followed immediately by the reading of the opening chapter of the Book of Genesis—symbolic of the idea that the Torah cycle and Torah study never end.



The Torah, or Pentateuch, consists of the five books of Moses that comprise the first section of the Hebrew Bible. The handwritten parchment text of the Pentateuch, rolled up into a scroll, is Judaism's central and most sacred ritual object, and its public reading forms a focal point of Jewish communal worship.

Torah Ornaments

The Torah is gendered female in Hebrew and is sometimes analogized to a bride, with the community of Israel being the groom. Throughout the Jewish world, Torah scrolls are “dressed” and ornamented. Jewish artists and craftsmen, men and women alike, have long enjoyed ornamenting the Torah. In the United States, the forms of Torah ornamentation have generally followed European precedent.

The Torah scroll in most synagogues is wound on two staves (*ezei hayyim*), secured together with a ceremonial binder, and garbed in an elegant mantle. Silver crowns or finials may adorn its top, and its body is usually further ornamented with a breastplate and pointer.

Local and regional customs abound. German Jews, for example, traditionally fashion Torah binders from linen

strips ceremonially used to swaddle infant boys at their circumcisions. These binders, known as *wimpels*, are elaborately embroidered to include the infant's name; the father's name; and the date of birth; along with the prayer that the newborn, who has just been bound into the covenant of Abraham (circumcision), will likewise be bound up into a life of Torah, marriage, and good deeds. Jews from the Ottoman Empire and the east traditionally keep their Torah scrolls in ornamental cases (known as a *tik*, from the Greek *theca*) that are used to protect and transport them. The cases, which take the place of the mantle, are elaborately and artistically decorated.

Synagogues in the United States house Torah scrolls that reflect these and many other styles of ornamentation. Together, they bear witness to American Jews' diverse origins, as well as the many different traditions that Jewish

immigrants brought with them to the United States and now perpetuate and renew.

Torah Study

For all of its symbolic significance, the Torah primarily underscores the centrality of study and learning in Jewish life. Study, indeed, is for Jews a form of worship. The status of a Jewish community heavily depends upon its level of learning.

Although America, for many years, was considered a backwater in this regard, from the mid-nineteenth century onward conditions dramatically improved. The two leading American Jewish religious leaders of the nineteenth century, Isaac Leeser (1806–1868) of Philadelphia, a traditionalist; and Isaac Mayer Wise (1819–1900) of Cincinnati, a Reformer, wrote, translated, and edited almost 150 different works, including Leeser's influential Jewish translation of the Bible, published in 1853. Between 1850 and 1900 the number of Jewish books published in America per decade practically quadrupled. The Jewish Publication Society, established in Philadelphia in 1888, consciously aimed to elevate American Jewry to a position of cultural leadership in the Jewish world. By the 1960s, thousands of Jewish books were being published in America annually, in multiple languages, including numerous religious volumes that helped to establish America as a "center of Torah" for world Jewry. The publication in America of the seventy-three-volume Schottenstein Edition of the Babylonian Talmud in 2005, and the joint Israeli-American publication of the twenty-two-volume second edition of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* in 2007, confirmed this status.

America likewise became a center of "Torah learning" through the development of educational institutions. A survey in the late 1990s disclosed that American Jews spent more than \$1.5 billion annually on Jewish education to cover the costs of "nearly three thousand schools and thousands more education programs held in a wide variety of institutional settings." Jewish day care centers, nursery schools, all-day schools, supplementary schools, Sunday Schools, high schools, colleges, university-based Jewish studies programs, Talmudic academies, rabbinical schools, and adult Jewish education programs; as well as a wide range of informal programs, from summer camps, to youth groups, to synagogue retreats, to programs of one-page-a-day of Talmud (*daf yomi*), all worked to ensure that the Torah—in the broadest sense of the word—would be studied, disseminated, and advanced.

See also *Anti-Semitism; Architecture: Jewish; Bible* entries; *Book of Mormon; Chabad-Lubavitch; Education: Sunday Schools;*

Holocaust; Judaism entries; *Ministry, Professional; Qur'an; Religious Thought: Jewish; Scriptures: American Texts; Women: Jewish; Worship: Jewish; Zionism.*

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Tourism and Pilgrimage

Tourist visitations at religious sites in North America and pilgrimage traditions at North American shrines, temples, tombs, and other places of religious significance establish geographies of sacred places and sublime experiences that contribute to religious, personal, and collective identities. Although distinct in their respective historical developments, tourism and pilgrimage converge in travel practices that include modes of travel and their related infrastructures, as well as aesthetic conventions that facilitate meaningful experiences for travelers. In their journeys to such places as the *Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* (Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe) in the Tepeyac neighborhood of Mexico City, Temple Square in Salt Lake City, the Devil's Tower in eastern Wyoming, Civil War battlefields, and even festivals such as Mardi Gras in New Orleans, travelers enter sites and

encounter experiences that hold spiritual significance for them while contributing to their senses of personal and collective identities.

A significant number of North American places of religion attract both tourists and pilgrims into their sacred precincts. Drawn by the aesthetic appeal of divine presence or by the historical importance of these sites, many visitors arrive as much out of touristic curiosity as out of a sense of devotional commitment. Tourists in these sacred places often experience moments of spiritual awareness, and nearly all religious pilgrims indulge in some sort of touristic practices during their devotional journeys. Indeed, tourists become pilgrims while pilgrims act as tourists at religious sites everywhere in North America. At the same time, however, the tourist and the pilgrim occupy distinct worlds of meaning that offer them very different experiences of these sacred places.

Pilgrimage Traditions

Historians of religions have recognized religious travel as a central practice in many cultural traditions throughout the world. Nearly all religious traditions include travel to particular sites of special significance in their canon of religious practices. Many regard such pilgrimage practices as essential to the religious well-being of the community and of individual followers. The hajj, an annual pilgrimage to Mecca, stands as one of the Five Pillars of Islam; Christian shrines attract millions of pilgrims each year to places such as Lourdes in France, Compostela in Spain, and Tepeyac near Mexico City in Mexico; the ancient tales of the Hindu gods come alive for devotees at the places of mythical events that mark the sacred landscape of India; and Buddhists travel to the venerable sites that commemorate the life of Gautama, the historical Buddha. Among these and hundreds of other pilgrim traditions, scholars have recognized at least a few common elements that tend to characterize religious travelers and their sacred journeys. These include the typical structure of the pilgrimage journey: departure from familiar places (“home”), the ordeal of travel (often involving a great distance, but sometimes only a local excursion), arrival at a religiously significant site (the “destination”), and return home. In most traditions of religious pilgrimage, each of these phases has its own significance, usually recognized in specific ritual practices and interpretive conventions.

Yet despite its ubiquity among many diverse traditions throughout the world, pilgrimage does not conform to a single set of experiences that all pilgrims share. Religious travelers pursue itineraries that vary from one to another

across the lines of different religious traditions, between individual pilgrims within the same tradition, and even between journeys by a single devotee. The source of such diverse experiences lies in a number of factors. For instance, different religious traditions emphasize different purposes in their respective pilgrimage practices: Some stipulate the completion of a sacred journey as a religious obligation for followers of the tradition, others offer religious travel as a means of access to divine powers, and still others regard the pilgrim’s experience as an exercise in spiritual contemplation. But the significance of religious travel also relies on the traveler’s personal motives and attitudes. Some go to fulfill a religious obligation, others seek healing in the pilgrimage journey, and some pilgrims wish only for an edifying or spiritually rewarding experience. Each of these different types of motives evokes distinctive experiences. In addition, differing contexts in which pilgrims pursue their destinations determine the nature of their respective experiences: the physical landscape, the socioeconomic class of the traveler, the amount of time available for the journey, and a number of other factors all combine to influence the tone, character, and experience of the pilgrim’s undertaking.

Tourism

Similar to the experiences of pilgrims, tourists also travel with a variety of motives and purposes that determine their experiences of religious places. Some go out of mere curiosity about unfamiliar religious traditions. Others seek the aesthetic attractions of particular sites, including their architecture, gardens, artwork, or cultural performances. Still others visit religious places because of their historical importance. But regardless of their ostensible purposes for visiting a particular place of religion, tourist visitors sometimes find that the touristic experience itself can transform an otherwise ordinary attraction into an extraordinary site of spiritual significance.

In contrast to religious pilgrimage traditions that go back millennia, tourism as a distinctive cultural practice has a much more recent history. In western Europe the emergence of conventional tourist practices began in the Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment movements of the early modern era. With changes that brought greater ease of travel and the need for a broader humanistic education, elite Europeans of the seventeenth century routinely went on a “Grand Tour” of Europe in early adulthood to cap off their years of formal schooling. By the late eighteenth century, this tradition developed into extended journeys for amusement

and enjoyment in addition to, and increasingly instead of, purely educational purposes. By the nineteenth century, rapid advances in travel, especially new modes of transportation introduced with the steam engine, made leisure excursions accessible to many more people wishing to visit destinations in Europe, in North America, and in most other parts of the world. This new global geography of tourism quickly expanded and became all-encompassing in the twentieth century with automobiles, airlines, and even space travel.

The history of tourism in North America exemplifies this greater access to travel by more people over the last two centuries. By the early part of the nineteenth century an elite class of Americans pursued the growing popularity of extended tours both abroad and in the United States. An “American Grand Tour” had become popular by the 1830s and included such destinations as the Hudson River, the Catskills, Lake George, Niagara Falls, the White Mountains, and the Connecticut Valley. Following the Civil War, the astonishing natural wonders of the U.S. West offered new destinations for tourist visitors, and the immense popularity of these destinations relied largely on a rapidly expanding national network of railroads with a variety of accommodations for pleasure travelers. In the twentieth century, the automobile made travel possible for North Americans of even modest means, and state and local governments embarked on promotional campaigns to attract tourist visitors. Meanwhile, airline travel opened the entire world to North American travelers, and falling airfares following deregulation in the 1970s made air travel affordable to middle-class tourists. By the end of the twentieth century, pleasure travel had become a mainstay of North American culture.

Alongside this rapid growth of tourism during the last two centuries, pilgrims from a variety of traditions have maintained their long-standing commitments to devotional travel. Indeed, religious pilgrimage never disappeared from the North American religious experience. Moreover, pilgrims have also benefited from the expansion of travel infrastructure and services. Like tourists, religious travelers of all sorts have easier and more affordable access to their sacred destinations.

Theoretical Perspectives

A variety of theoretical perspectives have been applied to the scholarly study of tourists and of pilgrims. Here we will consider three such perspectives using Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, as an example of how scholarly theories can elucidate both tourism and pilgrimage in the United States.

The first considers religious travel in terms of its implications for sacred space. Second, scholars have focused on experience, specifically the experiences of travelers to sacred destinations. Finally, numerous studies have regarded pilgrimage and tourism for the material and social implications of travel practices.

Sacred Spaces

Millions of visitors travel each year to Salt Lake City to visit Temple Square, the center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On the grounds of the square visitors can view the Mormon Temple, tour the Mormon Tabernacle and Assembly Hall, and learn about Mormon history and religious beliefs in the two visitor centers on the grounds of the square. The site appeals to both Mormon pilgrims and non-Mormon tourists as Utah’s most popular attraction. Many of these visitors recognize Temple Square as a sacred place, highlighting the first of our theoretical perspectives. But in considering the implications of tourism and pilgrimage at such sites as Temple Square, many scholars concede that sacredness is not so much an intrinsic characteristic as it is an attributed feature of a particular place; in other words, a site becomes sacred in the religious experience and imagination of human interaction with space. Travel, or the movement through space, serves as an essential component in this interaction that ascribes meaning to the human experience of places. As people move through space, they attribute meaningfulness to the landscape that differentiates distinct places according to their experience of spatial difference and their respective cultural resources for comprehending and narrating the significance of these differences. Visitors to Salt Lake City recognize Temple Square as sacred in contrast to the surrounding features of the urban landscape, such as the Crossroads Plaza Mall across the street or the state capitol on the hill above the square. As they move through the city, travelers attribute different significances to the spaces they encounter, from the most mundane and forgettable sites to the awe-inspiring places of memorable impressions.

Motivation and Experiences of Travel

This process of attributing meaning to places draws attention to the experiences of travel, the second theoretical perspective for understanding tourism and pilgrimage. The nature of travelers’ experiences relies largely on travel practices that travelers use during their journeys. Scholars of

both tourism and pilgrimage have conceived of these practices quite broadly to include practices that facilitate their travel, those that motivate people to undergo journeys, and those that allow meaningful interpretations of their experiences. Although there is substantial overlap between the practices of various travelers, including tourists and pilgrims, practices that motivate travel and those regarding interpretation tend to differentiate between types of travelers. At Temple Square, for instance, casual tourists arrive with far different motives than do devout Mormon pilgrims, and tourists leave the site with different interpretations of their experiences than the meaningful interpretations that pilgrims typically hold. These differences can be attributed to the distinct practices of travel. Tourists often are motivated by purely aesthetic attractions, including the architecture and musical performances on Temple Square. Motivating practices might include promotional literature and media as well as news reports that portray the aesthetic attractions of the Mormon site. Mormon pilgrims, however, arrive out of devotional concerns. Their motivating practices likely revolve around their association with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which reinforces the importance of Temple Square in Mormon history.

The differences in practices that facilitate travel are less pronounced between tourists and pilgrims. Both use the same modes of transportation, facilities for lodging and food, banking and money exchange services, translators, and all the other support services to make their travels possible. Their practices of interpretation, however, usually differ greatly. Pilgrims tend to understand their journey to a sacred site in religious terms as a conventional practice of their tradition. The interpretation of their experiences, therefore, relies on their narratives of religious meaning. These narratives involve the pilgrim's sense of personal identity and its connection to a larger religious community. At Temple Square, for instance, Mormon pilgrims often regard their journey as a connection to a longer history of the Mormon community, going back to the pioneers who first brought the church to Utah. Their strategies for remembering and commemorating their own trips, which might involve taking photos and buying souvenirs, may not seem much different from those of other visitors to Temple Square, but the significance of the items they acquire and the stories they tell of their experiences in Salt Lake City more often affirm their religious heritage and their sense of belonging to the larger church community. In contrast, non-Mormon visitors to Temple Square are more likely to obtain and interpret

souvenirs of their experience as aesthetic signs of difference rather than affirmations of familiarity.

Material and Social Conditions of Travel

The experiences of visitors to religious destinations and other places regarded as special or auspicious according to religious understandings are closely linked to both the material and social conditions of travel, a third theoretical perspective in the study of tourism and pilgrimage. As noted earlier, the distinctions between the different meanings and purposes of a particular destination depend largely on the motivations of visitors to the site. These motivations are bolstered by travel practices that make the place identifiable, attractive, accessible, and meaningful. In this way, the religious aspects of tourism and pilgrimage are tightly bound to the material and commercial realities of travel. Religious places and events, even the people who make up resident communities at travel destinations, all become commodities in a travel economy that makes the site appealing to visitors and promotes it as an attractive travel destination. The purveyors of such practices always profit in some way or another from the traffic of visitors to the site, whether they be the local religious community that controls the site, commercial providers of travel accommodations and services, or local government agencies touting the benefits of their region. This in turn generates complex relationships among travelers, local residents, and other interested parties that include economic considerations in addition to religious or aesthetic meaning. Travel to Temple Square in Salt Lake City, for instance, may appear to involve primarily religious or aesthetic relationships between travelers, both pilgrims and tourists, and the Mormon hosts who greet them on the premises. In fact, there is no admission charge and nothing at all for sale in the precinct of the square. But a closer look reveals significant economic aspects to the social relationships encompassed in visitation there. The site figures prominently in the church's concern for membership, both as a strategy for acquiring new members and for reinforcing the sense of belonging for Mormon pilgrims. The economic realities of the church rely primarily on contributions of members, so this concern for membership carries significant economic benefits for the church. Moreover, local hotels, restaurants, stores, and tour companies, as well as airlines and bus companies, also benefit in more directly financial ways from visitation to Temple Square. These businesses profit from the religious and aesthetic appeal of the site as a destination for both pilgrims and tourists; in addition to their

religious significance, the Temple, Tabernacle, and other features of the square all serve as valuable commodities in the local economy.

Attention to the implications of religious travel in regard to sacred space, to the experiences of various travelers who visit sacred destinations, and to the material and social dimensions of the travel practices involved in making such visits possible and appealing, contributes to a better understanding of places of religious significance that host considerable numbers of visitors and the social relationships involved in sustaining travel to these sites. The remainder of this article will review a variety of popular destinations in North America that attract large numbers of visitors, each with distinctive characteristics that appeal to pilgrims, tourists, and other visitors.

Religious Destinations

The traditional places of particular religions often attract visitors, including both pilgrims who are members of the religious community and tourists who come as curious outsiders to experience the aesthetic, historical, or spiritual value of such sites. Destinations that witness the largest numbers of visitors usually feature a significance within the religious tradition that extends its appeal beyond the followers of the religion to bring others into its precincts. For example, we have seen already how Temple Square in Salt Lake City serves as a pilgrimage destination for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, while attracting tens of thousands of non-Mormon visitors. A similar circumstance can be found at numerous churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, shrines, and other significant religious places.

St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City

One of the more popular of such sites is St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, the city's landmark Roman Catholic church and seat of the Catholic archbishop of New York. A quick perusal of its guest book reveals the diversity of visitors, both Catholic and non-Catholic, who come for a variety of reasons. Some visit St. Patrick's for purely religious reasons, such as fulfilling a vow or to pray for loved ones who are gravely ill or deceased. But many enter the massive neo-Gothic structure on Madison Avenue in Manhattan to experience the aesthetic appeal of its architecture, the artwork, music, or liturgy. Still others are drawn to St. Patrick's for its history, including its fame as the church of celebrity funerals and memorial services, including those

of baseball greats Babe Ruth and Joe DiMaggio, football coach Vince Lombardi, singer Celia Cruz, and U.S. Senator and presidential hopeful Robert F. Kennedy.

Mother Bethel AME Church, Philadelphia

Another famous church that attracts both religious adherents and curious outsiders is the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Philadelphia, site of the denomination's origin. Established by denominational founder Richard Allen and dedicated in 1794, this church represents the beginning of one of the oldest and largest African American religious denominations, and it stands on the oldest parcel of land continuously owned by African Americans. Inside are the graves of Richard Allen and his wife Sarah Allen, as well as the Richard Allen Museum where visitors can embark on docent-led tours of the church. But it is more than a monument to the beginning of the AME denomination; Mother Bethel continues to serve the local neighborhood as a center of worship.

Baha'i House of Worship, Wilmette, Illinois

Another worship site that attracts substantial visitation is the Baha'i House of Worship near Chicago in Wilmette, Illinois. The spectacular architecture surrounded by exquisite gardens brings visitors of all religious orientations onto the premises of the only Baha'i worship center in North America, one of only seven in the world (with an eighth under construction in Chile). Serving North American followers of the Baha'i tradition, the twenty-story-high, nine-sided domed temple reflects their theology of world unity, inviting all people to prayer and reflection. Besides reflecting on Baha'i theology or simply enjoying the serene gardens outside, both pilgrims and tourists can view displays about the Baha'i faith in the visitor center or shop in the bookstore. Upstairs is a 1,200-seat auditorium for daily devotional programs, where the House of Worship Choir sings on the first three Sundays of every month and on Baha'i high holy days.

Sites with Historical Significance

Other religious sites attract pilgrims and tourists more for their historical significance than for their spiritual importance. Sometimes history overwhelms religious significance, and sites cease to serve as places of worship to become solely historical museums. Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, is one such site. As the home church where Martin Luther King Jr. was baptized, where he was ordained at age

19, where he served as co-pastor with his father, and where his funeral was held in 1968 before he was laid to rest in a tomb adjacent to the church, Ebenezer has a more national religious significance. The congregation eventually moved across the street into a newer, larger church structure, and the church so closely associated with the civil rights leader's life is now under the auspices of the National Park Service as part of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site.

Religious Events: Marian Apparitions

In contrast to historical events that overwhelm the religious gravity of a site, auspicious religious events can initiate devotional practices and attract the faithful. Catholic pilgrims, for instance, journey to Marian apparition sites to benefit from the sacred power of the Virgin Mary's reported visitations. The most famous of these sites in the Western Hemisphere is the *Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* in the Tepeyac neighborhood of Mexico City in Mexico. First established as a site of colonial devotion in the sixteenth century, the story of the Virgin's miraculous appearance to a Native American peasant on a hill long devoted to an indigenous goddess has spread over the centuries and made the Virgin of Guadalupe a widely recognized icon of Latino Catholics everywhere. Millions of visitors, both Catholic pilgrims and non-Catholic tourists, find their way onto the crowded grounds where the Virgin Mary purportedly appeared nearly half a millennium ago.

Other, more recent appearances of the Virgin Mary also establish places of pilgrimage and tourism. One such site that gained widespread attention in the 1990s is in Conyers, Georgia, just east of Atlanta. On a farm outside of Conyers, former nurse Nancy Fowler conveyed messages she received from the Virgin Mary on the thirteenth day of every month beginning in October 1990 through May 1994. Thereafter, the Virgin Mary delivered her messages only once each year, on October 13, the anniversary of the Virgin's appearance to three children in Fátima, Portugal, in 1917. The last of these public communications occurred in 1998, when more than 100,000 visitors descended upon Fowler's farm to hear the final admonitions of the Holy Mother. Since then, the location has served as a pilgrimage destination and retreat center, despite internal conflicts between Fowler and the organization that subsequently gained ownership of the farm.

Native American Religious Sites

Other traditional religious destinations popular with both religious pilgrims and tourists are the many Native American

sites found across the continent. Many of these places, however, have long histories of conflict between Native American religious practitioners who still regard these places as holy and the non-Native visitors who come for either religious or secular purposes. One such site is the Devil's Tower in eastern Wyoming. This remarkable geological feature figures prominently in the religious histories of numerous Native American tribal groups. Native peoples journey to the site each year to perform sacred rites, but crowds of tourists visit the Tower as well, including rock climbers who claim their own sacred attachment to its steep rock walls, inciting accusations of desecration by Native groups. In an effort to mediate the conflicting claims there, the National Park Service, which manages the site as Devil's Tower National Monument, has imposed a voluntary climbing ban during the month of June when Native American groups are most active there. Though not entirely successful, the ban has quelled much of the dispute between Native American pilgrims and non-Native tourists.

Nature

Besides the holy places of particular religious traditions, the North American landscape itself has long served as an object of aesthetic appeal with religious overtones. An early example can be found in Thomas Jefferson's 1787 book *Notes on the State of Virginia*, where he remarks on the aesthetic value of the Virginia landscape and encourages European travelers to cross the Atlantic to view the scenery there. Jefferson's nearly rapturous delight in the wonders of the natural landscape continues for many Americans. The "Grand Tour" of scenic destinations in the first half of the nineteenth century relied on aesthetic notions of the sublime and the popularity of U.S. thinkers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, who proposed new attitudes regarding the human place in the natural world. Their work, along with the paintings and, later, photographs of artists who brought aesthetic attention to the remarkable features of the North American landscape introduced a new appreciation of nature as the work of divine creation rather than as a frightening obstacle to be conquered and tamed.

In the antebellum period of U.S. history, Niagara Falls ranked as the natural wonder that attracted the most attention. A significant number of visitors regarded the falls with religious sensibilities. Early tourists often described their journey to the cataract as a pilgrimage, and by 1861 Pope Pius IX had established a "pilgrim shrine" there. But the allure of its sacred aura soon faded in the commercial

exploitation of its popularity. As early as the 1830s the carnival atmosphere that developed around the falls led to public outcry and calls for international intervention to preserve the falls from neglect.

The atmosphere at Niagara Falls influenced efforts after the Civil War to develop tourism and pilgrimage at other scenic destinations in the western regions of the continent. California's Yosemite Valley in particular garnered national attention. Reports of the sheer granite cliffs of the Valley and the unprecedented height of its falls astounded readers who learned, for instance, that Yosemite Falls was sixteen times higher than Niagara Falls. The magnificence of the U.S. landscape in places such as the Yosemite Valley evoked an atmosphere of sacrality, and with the blight of Niagara Falls as a background, the call for preservation came quickly. In 1864 President Abraham Lincoln signed the Yosemite Act into law, preserving the Yosemite Valley as a park ceded to the state of California. Eight years later Congress established the world's first national park with the preservation of Yellowstone in the Wyoming and Montana territories.

Today Yosemite and Yellowstone are among the most visited scenic wonders in North America. Other scenic destinations include the Grand Canyon and the Painted Desert in Arizona; Oregon's Crater Lake; Mt. Rainier in Washington; Lake Louise in the Canadian Rockies; the seascapes of California's Big Sur coast and Maine's Acadia National Park; the Great Smoky Mountains; the pastoral landscapes of New England, the Midwest, and the Plains; and innumerable other places where pilgrims, tourists, and recreationists find divine inspiration in stunning scenery. But nature offers more than just scenic splendor to the spiritual lives of visitors. In the tradition of Thoreau's contemplations on Walden Pond, adventurers have found divine communion with the natural world in their retreats from civilized life as they seek solitude in nature's domain, turning mountains and woods, seashores and lakeshores, rivers and streams, and glaciers, prairies, and deserts into sanctuaries of religious contemplation and spiritual renewal.

American Civil Religions

Among the most visited destinations in North America are sites that celebrate nationhood. Sociologist Robert Bellah has drawn attention to the religiosity of national culture with his studies of "American civil religion." The ritualized practices of this quasi-religious, and sometimes explicitly religious, nationalism include the building of sacred places and the traditions of pilgrimage travel to these holy sites of

the United States. They also are among the most popular tourist attractions in the nation.

The greatest concentration of such attractions anywhere on the continent is in Washington, D.C. The city's original designer, Pierre Charles L'Enfant, conceived of the new nation's capital as a monument to the principles of democracy. The subsequent development of the Washington landscape has emphasized its monumental character with shrines to national culture that Jeffrey F. Meyer has called "myths in stone." At the center of this mythic landscape is the U.S. Capitol, with its majestic dome looming above the city, the proud center of U.S. democracy. Radiating outward from the Capitol building along the National Mall and throughout the city are sacred places where patriotic pilgrims renew their national fervor. Among the more popular of these are monuments to iconic and legendary figures of the nation: the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Jefferson Memorial. At the National Archives, visitors line up to view the original sacred texts of the nation, the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, on display in shrine-like marble and glass cases inside a neo-Gothic "temple" of U.S. freedom. Nearby, the Smithsonian museums along the mall, as well as other museums throughout the city, celebrate the cultural, artistic, technological, and historical heritages of U.S. citizens and the nation. At the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the World War II Memorial, and the Korean War Veterans Memorial, pilgrims arrive daily to honor the defenders of freedom and democracy, and many cross the Potomac River to visit the Arlington National Cemetery.

Numerous other locations across the country also attract pilgrims of U.S. civil religion and tourist visitors. Chief among these are sacred sites of the nation's founding, most notably Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were created. In Boston the Freedom Trail leads visitors past famous sites of the American Revolution, winding from Boston Common up to the Bunker Hill Monument, site of the first major battle of the revolution. Many battlefields have become pilgrimage destinations that can have powerful emotional affects on visitors. Among the more famous of these are the sites of Civil War battles at Gettysburg in Pennsylvania; Antietam in Maryland; Manassas, also known as Bull Run, in Virginia; and Shiloh in Tennessee. In Texas, the Alamo stands in downtown San Antonio as a monument to sacrifice for the values of liberty. On the sloping hills above the Little Big Horn River in Wyoming, visitors are reminded

of the tragic consequences of U.S. expansion into the traditional lands of Native American peoples. And in Hawaii, the USS *Arizona* Memorial commemorates the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941; the watery grave where nearly 1,200 crew members perished on that day of infamy remains a sobering reminder of the costs of nationhood.

Travel to these and many other places of U.S. civil religion engages visitors' sense of identity at both the personal and collective levels, although not always in necessarily positive ways. Whether visitors celebrate a patriotic sense of self, mourn the tragedies involved in nation building, or abhor the values of nationalism implied in such places, self-understandings can be tested, affirmed, and sometimes transformed when pilgrims and tourists engage with the monuments, memorials, and other spaces of national commemoration.

Critical Analysis of Tourism and Pilgrimage in North America

The presence of travelers at religious sites raises a number of critical issues in the study of religions, religious places, and the experiences of religious people. Foremost among these are the boundaries between the religious and the secular. When does a tourist become a pilgrim, and vice versa? Despite different purposes and contexts of their travel, both tourists and pilgrims share a great deal in the places they visit, the travel practices they use, and the experiences they encounter along the way. Moreover, travelers themselves often understand their motives and experiences differently than do scholarly observers. Denying one's status as a "tourist" has been a part of touring culture nearly from the beginning. Many travelers disdain the tourist label and instead regard themselves as "travelers," "adventurers," "explorers," "pilgrims," or even "scholars," despite their conventionally touristic purposes, practices, and interpretations of their journeys. Likewise, the boundaries of sacred and profane also become less clear at the destinations of such travelers. Traditionally religious places often accommodate visitors with such profane services as souvenir shops, restaurants, and banking machines. Conversely, understandings of religion that emphasize institutional affiliations with church, mosque, synagogue, temple, or other recognized religious community are challenged at places where visitors encounter religious or spiritual experiences outside institutional boundaries. Thus, the travelers' edifying and transformative experiences of nature, or powerfully affective patriotism at sites of civil religion, defy a strict institutionally bounded understanding of religion.

Regardless of how one configures the categories of analysis and draws boundaries between religious and secular, sacred and profane, attention to travelers and their experiences offers valuable insights for the study of North American religions. Three areas in particular yield insightful conclusions from the critical analysis of tourism and pilgrimage: the aestheticization of religion; the commodification of religion; and issues of identity. In creating the desire to travel, in making particular sites appealing to travelers, and in the process of making one's travel experiences meaningful, travel practices constantly aestheticize nearly everything: landscapes, people, cultures, cuisine, architecture, souvenir items, mundane activities of everyday life, and especially religious places, communities, and activities are all made beautiful and appealing to the travelers' tastes and expectations. But this process of aestheticization occurs in the economic context of marketplace capitalism, which consequently commodifies the aesthetic products of the travel industry. Nothing is beyond the reach of the marketplace for travelers, and the economic implications for religious communities and their constituents are central to their participation in (or resistance to) practices that bring visitors to their sites. For travelers, commodified versions of religious experiences are available nearly everywhere they go. Indeed, like most areas of experience in a consumer-oriented culture, religion has become available to the consumer tastes of travelers and even local residents.

But tourists and pilgrims alike are involved in much more than the aesthetic appreciation and consumption of commodified products. Travel involves identity, at both the personal and collective levels. Understandings of the self and of one's affiliations with various communities (ethnic, religious, national, and so forth) accompany travelers and inform their interpretations of what they experience. Travel practices and experiential encounters of foreignness or familiarity can inscribe and reinforce the boundaries between self and other, or they can blur and even erase perceptions of difference. The traveler's journey often affirms or transforms one's sense of self, and sometimes accomplishes both.

See also *America, Religious Interpretations of; Architecture* entries; *Civil Religion in the United States; Death and Burial Practices; Devotionalism; Food and Diet; Holidays; Latter-day Saints; Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Mexico: Colonial Era; Nature and Nature Religion; Pilgrims; Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Spirituality* entries; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Transcendentalism

Originating in nineteenth-century New England, with Boston and nearby Concord (Massachusetts) as its spiritual centers, transcendentalism emerged from U.S. Unitarian Christianity and emphasized the metaphysical transcendence of nature and human intuition. With early rumblings occurring as early as the mid-1820s, the movement took on a wide range of literary, social, and religious manifestations before dissolving in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The movement's most

vibrant years, however, occurred in the decade following 1836, when the speculative discussions and activities of its participants crystallized into a more cohesive movement.

Even in 1836, however, transcendentalists were not single-minded. As late as 1842, in a lecture titled "The Transcendentalist," the well-known poet, writer, and transcendentalist figurehead Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) remarked, "There is no such thing as a Transcendental party." Insisting, "There is no pure Transcendentalist," Emerson described transcendentalism not as a rigid philosophical system but rather as a disposition toward and appreciation for what he termed the "spiritual side" of life. Transcendentalists understood and applied this appreciation in different ways, and those understandings became manifest in pursuits that were not always complementary.

Philosophical Background

Transcendentalists found common ground just as much in the principles that they opposed as in the principles that they championed. In the 1820s, one primary object of collective scorn was the empiricism of John Locke (1632–1704), the seventeenth-century English philosopher. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Locke's notion that humans acquire information only through logical deductions based on the experience of the senses proved appealing to the liberal theologians of New England's Puritan Congregational churches, who used the logic to attack Puritan-style Calvinism.

Although Harvard University's faculty required their students to memorize sections of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) well into the nineteenth century, eighteenth-century challenges and addendums to his approach rehabilitated the idea that innate capacities or ideas preceded experience. Attempting to reconcile a British tradition that privileged experience and a continental tradition that emphasized the role of reason in producing knowledge, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) proposed that such innate principles of human understanding as space, time, right, and wrong shape experience and produce what humans perceive as universal truths. Emerson later traced both the philosophical underpinnings of transcendentalism as well as the term itself to Kant, whom Emerson praised in an 1842 lecture for "showing that there was a very important class of ideas, or imperative forms, which did not come by experience, but through which experience was acquired." Emerson identified those "intuitions of the mind itself" as "Transcendental forms."

Common Upbringings

Intellectual history alone does not account for any movement, but the philosophical background of transcendentalism has particular salience because of the transcendentalists' common intellectual upbringing and self-conscious intellectualism. With few exceptions, they all studied at Harvard College in the 1820s, and they all trained to be Unitarian ministers. They shared a rigid Harvard curriculum, cultivated a common critique of that intellectual culture, and embraced a common set of extracurricular readings and discussions.

Partly because of the Lockean logic that all knowledge comes from acquiring and reflecting on information from outside the individual, Harvard's curriculum centered on rote memorization and recitation of assigned texts. Class ranks and prizes were awarded on the basis of recitation performance. Believing that this system stifled intellectual curiosity and denied individual intuition, a group of young, dissenting Unitarian liberals devoted themselves to extracurricular readings and discussions.

Those readings drew heavily on Kantian epistemology. The proto-transcendentalists read, for example, Anne Louise Germaine de Staël's (1766–1817) influential survey of German life and thought (1813), which portrayed European philosophical history as an upward progression from Locke to Kant. Future transcendentalists also engaged the work of British intellectuals and writers, including Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) and such Cambridge Platonists as Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834).

Coleridge and Carlyle

Channeling Kant, Coleridge drew a sharp distinction between Reason, an innate "spiritual" power, and Understanding, a "natural" product of reason's encounter with experience. For Coleridge, divinity and morality were spiritual, whereas tradition and doctrine were natural. Coleridge saw this distinction as a way of defending an essential Christian faith, for it painted seemingly erroneous or irreconcilable doctrines and scriptures as imperfect human attempts to grasp the spiritual.

This distinction proved popular enough among future transcendentalists that some historians identify the 1829 U.S. publication of Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* as the beginning point of the transcendentalist movement. In a day when German texts were not widely available in the United States, and few students at Harvard could read whatever German texts

they might have acquired, Coleridge became seen as one of Kant's two definitive spokespersons.

In the 1830s, the English intellectual Thomas Carlyle became Kant's other major spokesperson. Beginning in the 1820s, Carlyle had published translations of German literary works and laudatory analyses of German philosophy and literature in such quarterly periodicals as the *Edinburgh Review*, which future transcendentalists such as Emerson, his cousin George Ripley (1802–1880), and James Freeman Clarke (1810–1888) read regularly. Periodicals such as the *Review* kept New Englanders up-to-date on British books, articles, and emerging fields of thought and occasionally exposed them to critical treatments of New England's religious traditions and authorities. The young liberal Unitarians praised Carlyle above all for insisting that literary men could help their societies see transcendent truths increasingly obscured by industrialization and political and economic despair.

Their concern to promote passion in a dry and stultified world has earned Coleridge and Carlyle designation as European romantics, and U.S. transcendentalism sometimes is seen as the U.S. incarnation of romanticism. Such lineages were charted early: A conservative Unitarian critic of transcendentalism attributed the movement in the 1830s to the influence of "the hyper-Germanized Englishman Carlyle."

Boston Unitarianism

In the 1820s, "hyper-Germanized" dissenting Unitarians began articulating a critique of the tradition that their fathers had established only a decade or two earlier through what became known as the "Unitarian Controversy." The young Unitarians came to see their fathers' dogmatic insistence on tolerance and rationality as little more than a defense of Federalist classism and new religious orthodoxies.

The problem for conservative Unitarians was that their tradition's mythology relied heavily on a vision of reason's progressive triumph over outmoded dogmatisms. Moreover, traditional Unitarians had developed approaches to scripture and morality whose logics proved inherently undermining. Unitarians were among the first Americans, for example, to engage with German historical-critical biblical scholarship, and they had used those tools to topple the doctrinal edifices of Trinitarian Congregationalists. In addition, Unitarian efforts to debunk the idea that God vengefully demanded Jesus' death as penance for human sin had led Unitarians to emphasize such notions as the moral perfection of God, God's creation of humans with a capacity for moral

goodness, and Jesus' moral deliverance of humankind through his demonstration of perfect morality.

These emphases eventually came together with such teachings as William Ellery Channing's (1780–1842) claim that human "likeness to God" exists in "man's spiritual nature," all of which helped make it possible to imagine that morality dwelt in human consciousness innately, independent of Jesus' example. These developments spawned transcendentalism, with its conviction that the divine dwells within humans who need only reflect on their divinely inspired intuition to discover mystical truths.

Dissenting Unitarians

Despite their problems with Boston's Unitarian establishment, most of the future transcendentalists became Unitarian ministers after graduating from Harvard. Exceptions include Margaret Fuller (1810–1850), whose gender kept her out of both Harvard and the ministry, and Amos Bronson Alcott (1799–1888), a friend of Emerson whose intellect Emerson admired. Hailing from Connecticut, Alcott did not attend Harvard and worked instead as a teacher and educational theorist.

Emerson and Clarke provide representative examples of the transcendentalist ministers. Emerson received a license to preach from the local association of Unitarian ministers in 1826. Boston's Second Church made him its junior pastor in 1829, and it soon promoted him. Emerson soon tired of the position, however, believing that Christian rituals such as the Eucharist had little to do with the inner divine. He resigned in 1832 and spent most of 1833 in Europe, where he tracked down such heroes as Carlyle and the poet William Wordsworth.

After completing his graduate studies at Harvard in 1833, Clarke set out not east but west. In the 1830s and 1840s, Clarke and other transcendentalist Unitarians flocked to western frontier states. For Clarke, the inexorable expansion of the frontier embodied the progressive unfolding of the divine mind. In new western states, Unitarians such as Clarke hoped to teach people how to listen to and apply the exhortations of conscience to such moral problems as slavery. Working as a minister in Kentucky, Clarke developed a reputation as a transcendentalist leader through his work as editor of the *Western Messenger*, which became a crucial outlet for transcendentalist essays and poems.

Clarke and Emerson are representative transcendentalist ministers in two ways. First, they never fully agreed on the implications of transcendentalism. Seeing transcendentalism

primarily as a dedication to progress and an openness to new ideas, Clarke remained convinced that Unitarian Christianity provided the ideal outlet for transcendentalist convictions. Some transcendentalists agreed with Clarke, and others with Emerson. Second, the two men illustrate how transcendentalists of different stripes found themselves able to cooperate for a time as well as how they eventually began drifting apart.

A Movement Coalesces

Lacking a space within which to discuss transcendentalist ideas, the young transcendentalist ministers created one in 1836. Known initially by such names as "Hedge's Club," for the group tended to meet when Frederic Henry Hedge (1805–1890) took time away from a ministerial assignment in Maine to visit Boston, the club eventually became known as the Transcendental Club. Participants attended by invitation only and participated on the condition that they never stifle discussion of any subject. In approximately thirty meetings over the following four years, members discussed such topics as "What is the essence of religion as distinct from morality?"; "What are the features of the present time as to religion?"; "Is mysticism an element of Christianity?"; "The character and genius of Goethe"; and "Pantheism."

By 1837, the group began to see itself as more than just a collection of disgruntled ministers. They saw themselves as mystic prophets, both in the sense that they were turning public attention toward neglected religious emphases and in the sense that their writings and discussions actually were widening the world's capacity to hear and respond to the divine. Always critical of the state of U.S. intellectual and literary life, they reasoned that uninteresting U.S. literature stemmed mostly from a lack of sensitivity to the divine mind both within and without each individual. As a result, they saw writing as a primary means of cultivating the sort of moral perfection that Unitarians traditionally termed *self-culture* and of renewing the world outside the self.

This emphasis on the power of print was made possible by a rise in literacy and education in the early decades of the nineteenth century, a development that allowed newspapers, journals, and books to become vital parts of many Americans' lives. Religious groups in particular capitalized on print as a means of presenting themselves to their publics.

Publishing

Particularly notable among early transcendentalist writings was Emerson's *Nature*, which appeared about a week before the

Transcendental Club first met in 1836. Originally published anonymously, Emerson's book represents a kind of meditation on the notion of "correspondence," the idea that the divine dwells equally within individuals and in nature. A variation on the eighteenth-century mystic Emanuel Swedenborg's (1688–1772) idea of hidden correspondences between visible and invisible worlds, Emerson's theory suggested that individuals can gain insight into their own souls by reflecting upon the natural world, to which the soul corresponds.

Transcendentalists' commitment to writing and disseminating ideas led them to discuss creating their own journal. In the 1830s, transcendentalists had two main outlets for their work: the *Christian Examiner*, the flagship Unitarian journal for which the conservative Andrews Norton (1786–1853) served as an official sponsor and regular contributor, and Clarke's *Western Messenger*. Each of these publications offered its own limitations. Although open to transcendentalist perspectives, the *Western Messenger* constantly struggled for subscribers, financial support, and even submissions. It suffered both because of distance from Boston and because conservative Boston Unitarians began withdrawing their financial support. It stopped publication in 1841. With no editorial control over the *Examiner*, transcendentalists increasingly were denied access to its pages as the movement's profile rose.

Despite the worry of some transcendentalists that a transcendentalist journal would only foster more divisiveness among Unitarians, *The Dial* began publishing essays and poems in 1840. In the first issue's introduction, Emerson suggested that the journal would "make a new light on the whole world." Emerson became the journal's editor in 1842 after Fuller and Ripley both stepped down as the journal's original editors. In its last years, Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) contributed frequently and helped Emerson with editorial duties while boarding in Emerson's home.

Negotiating Controversies

Apprehensive members of the Transcendental Club were right to worry that *The Dial* would highlight their movement's break from the Unitarian mainline. By 1840, however, the so-called Second Unitarian Controversy already had begun, and party lines had been drawn. Much of the polarization occurred following two infamous addresses. Delivering Harvard Divinity School's 1838 commencement address, Emerson identified his central thesis as "first, soul, and second, soul, and evermore, soul," insisting that the laws of the soul existed outside time and space. Who or what

humans call "God," Emerson explained, merely embodies those laws in their purest form. As a result, if a person followed the laws closely, "the safety of God, the immortality of God, the majesty of God, do enter into that man." For Emerson, Jesus taught above all that each individual is "a newborn bard of the Holy Ghost."

Following the Divinity School address, Emerson's critics took issue primarily with his apparent denial of rational Christian principles. The conservative Unitarian Norton, for instance, insisted that miracles were the "root of faith in Christianity." Ripley subsequently engaged Norton in a vitriolic debate over miracles. A few years later, Theodore Parker (1810–1860) joined Ripley in facing critics who insisted upon the "historical" elements of Christianity.

In an 1841 address titled "A Discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Christianity," Parker lamented that Christians had paid much more attention to the transient "forms and doctrines" of Christianity than to "the divine life of the soul, love to God, and love to man." Noting Christianity's long history of conflicting doctrine, Parker insisted that only one religion or theological system could prove absolutely true and unchanging. "If Christianity were true," Parker asserted, "we should still think it was so, not because its record was written by infallible pens . . . but that it is true, like the axioms of geometry, because it is true, and is to be tried by the oracle God places in the breast."

Summarizing the controversy regarding Emerson's address in the *Western Messenger*, Clarke responded with marked ambivalence. On the one hand, he insisted that the bold spirit of the address had "delighted" him. On the other hand, Clarke appeased the journal's more conservative supporters by claiming that he would find it "quite wrong" if Emerson meant to deny the value of historical Christianity. Clarke displayed similar ambivalence about Parker's address, though he ultimately chose to continue his ministerial relations with Parker and encouraged conservative colleagues to embrace the "dear heretic" after many chose to stop giving Parker the traditional courtesy of exchanging pulpits.

Institutional Manifestations

Partly in an effort to free themselves from the financial support of the very conservatives who hoped to ostracize them, transcendentalists began in the 1840s to create new religious and social structures that embodied their respective understandings of transcendentalism. Many of these institutional manifestations took social reform as a top priority. Although transcendentalists such as Emerson looked inward more

than outward, transcendentalists all valued social reform because of their conviction that economic and social disparities prevented the natural unfolding of humankind's spiritual nature.

For transcendentalists such as Orestes Brownson (1803–1876) and Ripley, humans could not establish the kingdom of God under capitalism's cruel yoke. Brownson attacked capitalism mostly on paper, but Ripley took a more hands-on approach. Disheartened by the growth of urban poverty that followed the financial panic of 1837 and eager to effect greater social reform than his ministry and writing made possible, Ripley resigned in 1841 from a congregation that had tired of hearing his moralistic sermons. The same year, he bought land outside Boston and organized the communal Brook Farm, which required members to purchase shares in the community's corporation to live on its grounds, send children to its schools, and work its farm. The community divided labor equally. The experiment folded in 1847, partly because meager agricultural output strained the finances of the community. Bronson Alcott also helped found a short-lived vegetarian commune known as Fruitlands in 1843, where he lived for six months with his family, including daughter Louisa May Alcott (1832–1888). Louisa Alcott eventually became renowned as a writer and novelist, penning the 1868 novel *Little Women* as well as an 1873 satirical account of her Fruitlands experience titled “Transcendental Wild Oats.”

Clarke took a less experimental approach to social reform. Frustrated by what he perceived as the ossification of church life both in Kentucky and in Boston, he sought a church that would focus on the spiritual perfection and participation of the congregation. Founded in 1841, his Church of the Disciples offered its congregation a range of study groups and pursued diverse social projects among Boston's urban poor.

Engaging Eastern Traditions

In addition to transatlantic romanticism, a variety of other factors both helped shape the transcendentalist agenda and enabled transcendentalists to pursue it. Nineteenth-century developments in literacy and adult education, for example, both nurtured transcendentalists' interest in print culture and fueled a lively lecture circuit. Income from lectures allowed transcendentalists such as Emerson to live in relative intellectual leisure and to challenge the Unitarian establishment that once had supported him financially.

More important to the transcendentalist movement, however, was the growth of Orientalist scholarship about the religious traditions of South and East Asia. All members of

the original generation of transcendentalists engaged this scholarship to some degree, partly because the European romantics whom transcendentalists idolized engaged it themselves. Among the transcendentalists, however, Emerson and Thoreau engaged this scholarship earliest.

After scattered encounters with non-Christian texts in the 1820s, Emerson's engagement picked up considerably in the 1830s, when he read extracts from texts he associated with Confucius, Zoroaster, the “Mahabarat,” Buddha, the Vedas, and the Koran (Qur'an). As editor of *The Dial* he published selections from his readings. As for Thoreau, his 1854 account of the summer he spent alongside Walden Pond in 1845 famously mentions “the stupendous and cosmological philosophy of the Bhagvat-Geeta,” which Thoreau believed made the “modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial.” A number of historians credit Thoreau's 1844 translation of a French Orientalist text as the first U.S. encounter with Buddhism.

Yet Emerson and the other early transcendentalists did not set out to attain comprehensive knowledge of the world's religious traditions. At least initially, they proved far less interested in poaching foreign religious concepts and practices than in using aspects of other traditions that they found conceptually resonant to buttress their conviction that the divine lives in all peoples and things equally. For Emerson, the world's religious texts provided examples of times and places where other peoples had managed to see divinity in ways that westerners generally had not. In addition, foreign texts sometimes modeled new ways of articulating their perspectives.

In subsequent decades, transcendentalists continued to engage with Orientalist literature, with varying results. In the 1850s and 1860s, an explosion in knowledge about traditions such as Buddhism helped liberal transcendentalists see non-Christian traditions as “religions” of the same genus as Christianity, containing both truth and human-made error. Citing Parker as a guide, second-generation transcendentalists such as Lydia Maria Child (1802–1880) and Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1823–1911) eventually began insisting that Christianity obscured “absolute religion” no less than other traditions did. Child, Higginson, and others began attempting to cobble together a kind of universal religion that drew on what they saw as the best of each tradition.

Yet other transcendentalists continued the pattern of using their knowledge of other traditions to buttress their particular transcendentalist positions. Written in criticism of such “radical” transcendentalists as Higginson, for example,

Clarke's *Ten Great Religions* (1871) defended a Christian form of transcendentalism by claiming that Christianity contained all the virtues of other religions, yet avoided their most serious flaws.

Parting Ways

By the time that Higginson and Octavius Brooks Frothingham (1822–1895), a disciple of Parker and minister of an “independent” church in New York City, helped found the Free Religious Association in 1867, the transcendentalist movement was breathing its last breaths. Just ten years later, Frothingham would eulogize the movement in his *Transcendentalism in New England: A History* (1876). Identifying himself as one of the last transcendentalists, Frothingham excoriated critics who dismissed transcendentalism as nothing but once-fashionable “sentimentality.” But he nonetheless insisted that he and others had since moved on from the “speculative world” to a “philosophy of experience.”

To the extent that it ever had cohesion, transcendentalism began unraveling as early as the 1840s. The Transcendental Club held its last meeting in 1840, *The Dial* folded in 1844, and the original generation of transcendentalists began pursuing divergent paths from the 1840s on. Increasingly disillusioned with Emersonian transcendentalism for what he saw as an inattention to social reform, Brownson converted to Roman Catholicism in 1844. Meanwhile, Emerson remained a figurehead for radical transcendentalists, Alcott deepened his exploration of mysticism, and Clarke and Hedge committed themselves fully to a transcendentalism-inflected form of Unitarian Christianity. Clarke and Hedge eventually served as leaders of the American Unitarian Association, edited such journals as the *Christian Examiner*, and assumed Harvard professorships. Convers Francis (1795–1863), brother of Child and eldest member of the Transcendental Club, became a Harvard professor in 1842. Locked out of pulpit exchanges with most Unitarian ministers, Parker founded his own church in 1845. Particularly outspoken critics of slavery, Parker and Higginson became members of the so-called Secret Six that lent John Brown (1800–1859) financial support for his failed revolution.

Transcendentalism unraveled for at least two main reasons. First, Unitarians slowly denied denominational membership to the more radical transcendentalists. In 1865 Unitarian Christians went so far as to form a new Unitarian conference with an explicit Christian confessional stance. Radicals responded by creating the Free Religious Association as a spiritual home for transcendentalists, Spiritualists,

Swedenborgians, and other “come-outers.” But the first reason for transcendentalism’s decline stemmed largely from the second: Transcendentalists’ intense focus on the individual and their attendant mistrust of human social structures made their inherently factious cohort imperfect organizers.

Legacy

The influence of transcendentalism is difficult to quantify, partly because measuring transcendentalism’s legacy requires identifying which sort of influence is in question and what sort of transcendentalism is in mind.

In general, the movement’s historians acknowledge that transcendentalist ministers had little intellectual support from and exerted little intellectual influence on their congregations, who no doubt found it difficult to connect with transcendentalists’ esoteric intellectualism. Transcendentalists influenced congregations mostly by committing them to social reform. In 1876 Frothingham described transcendentalism’s principal legacy as its emphasis on “moral enthusiasm” and its attention to such social issues as the “holy war against slavery.” Transcendentalists also made space for the participation of women and pursued women’s rights through such people as Fuller and Child.

Transcendentalism proved influential in a few other important ways. First, transcendentalist intellectuals ultimately changed Unitarianism by slowly pushing its leaders toward more liberal positions. Francis and Hedge may not have had Emerson’s radicalism, but they retained commitments to more restrained transcendentalist insights as Harvard professors. From those positions, they trained the next generations of Unitarian ministers.

Second, transcendentalists contributed significantly to the development of U.S. forms of mysticism and “spirituality,” lending conceptual support and helping cultivate such practices as solitude, meditation, and spiritual seeking. Although practitioners of New Age religions tend to deny that their tradition has a history, they and other religious liberals sometimes hold up transcendentalists such as Emerson and Thoreau as spiritual ancestors.

Because spirituality and religious liberalism tend to receive dismissive treatments from most observers of U.S. history and religion, however, this area of transcendentalism’s greatest influence ironically has reinforced the tendency for both scholars and the wider public to remember the movement as more literary, intellectual, and reformist than religious. Such a confusion of categories, however, may be precisely what Emerson would have wanted.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Buddhist Tradition and Heritage; Christian Science; Deism; Enlightenment; Environment and Ecology; Environment and Ecology: Colonial Era through the Early Nineteenth Century; Esoteric Movements; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Healing; Idealist Philosophy; Judaism: Jewish Science; Krishna Consciousness; Literature: Early Republic and the "American Renaissance"; Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Spirituality entries; Unitarians.*

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Transcendental Meditation

The transcendental meditation technique (TM) as taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1911?–2008) is a simple, natural, effortless mental technique practiced twice daily for fifteen to twenty minutes sitting comfortably with closed eyes. During the practice the mind experiences thought at subtler and subtler levels of activity until the thinking process is transcended entirely, and the mind arrives at the source of thought, the field of pure transcendental consciousness within.

The technique is easy to learn, but because advocates believe that this practice links them to a deep level of inner consciousness, they claim they must receive personal instruction from a qualified teacher to master it. During instruction the student receives an appropriate mantra as the vehicle for

the inward stroke of meditation. A *mantra* is a word selected not for meaning but rather for its sound quality that attracts the mind toward quieter levels of the thinking process. The student then receives personalized instruction in the correct use of the mantra to allow the process to proceed naturally and spontaneously. Practitioners believe that TM involves no concentration or mind control that would localize the mind on the level of conscious intention. Nor does it involve contemplation or thinking about something that would keep the mind active on the level of meaning. In TM the mind settles down effortlessly motivated by its own natural tendency to move toward fields of greater potential. Although meditators find the experience enjoyable, TM is not practiced for the sake of experiences during the meditation itself. Rather, it is practiced as a preparation for more effective and rewarding daily activity.

Maharishi said that because of the intimate connection between mind and body, as mental activity is reduced during the practice, physiological activity is reduced as well. This leads to the experience of a profound state of restful alertness in which the body is at a deeper state of rest than even the deepest point of a full night's sleep while the mind remains settled but alert. Within this unique fourth major state of consciousness the body's inherent ability to throw off deeply rooted stresses, physiological abnormalities at the structural or material level caused by undue pressure of experience, is enhanced. These stresses inhibit optimal functioning of the nervous system, and when they are dissolved benefits are experienced spontaneously in all areas of life. TM is not a religion, philosophy, or lifestyle, but rather a practical technique of direct experience that can easily be learned and practiced by anyone.

History

Maharishi did not invent the transcendental meditation technique; he revived an ancient Vedic practice that had been lost to all but a few isolated sages who used it contact and draw upon the field of pure transcendental consciousness that underlies all experience. Maharishi graduated with a degree in physics from Allahabad University in India, and he decided to follow his desire for spiritual enlightenment. He was accepted as a disciple by Swami Brahmananda Saraswati. Guru Dev, as Maharishi referred to him, had been selected as Shankaracharya, a custodian of the Vedic tradition, of Jyotirmath in the Himalayas, one of four principal seats established by the Hindu philosopher Shankara many centuries earlier to perpetuate Vedic knowledge. Maharishi

became a reclusive monk and remained with Guru Dev as his secretary until his death in 1953. Maharishi learned the essence of Vedic wisdom and the practical techniques to develop higher states of consciousness.

When Guru Dev died Maharishi retired to a solitary cave in the Himalayas. After two years in silence he found himself moved to return to the world of activity to share his knowledge. In 1957 he left the mountains to travel around India and began what would turn into fifty years of travel around the world teaching the ancient technologies that he learned from Guru Dev; Maharishi first arrived in the United States in 1959. As he traveled he quickly found that he could not cope with the demands for instruction, and in 1961 he began the systematic instruction of TM teachers to help him carry out his work. Maharishi first received widespread popular media attention in 1968 when a group of celebrities including the musical group the Beatles traveled to India to study with him. A huge surge in the number of people learning the TM technique in the U.S. mainstream occurred in 1975 when Maharishi appeared on Merv Griffin's television show along with actor Clint Eastwood, who had encouraged Merv to learn the technique. By 2008, more than 40,000 people had been trained as teachers and more than 6,000,000 people around the world had learned to practice the technique.

In 1971 Maharishi International University, now the fully accredited Maharishi University of Management in Fairfield, Iowa, was founded. All courses emphasize the relationship of the consciousness of the knower to the subject being studied. In 1976 Maharishi introduced the TM-Sidhi program, a set of procedures to train the mind to function and act from within the silent level of bliss consciousness, the self-referral state of pure consciousness that is cultured during the TM technique. Research has shown that the benefits of the TM technique are significantly enhanced with the practice of this advanced technology. Maharishi died in 2008, but his teaching continues through organizations that he founded around the world. In the United States his programs are taught under the auspices of Maharishi Vedic Education Development Corporation.

Modern Science and Vedic Science

Maharishi often spoke about the relationship of the objective methods of modern science to the subjective methods of ancient Vedic science. Modern science looks deeply into the object of study searching for underlying laws of nature, and quantum physics has glimpsed a unified field that underlies all the diversity of the universe. The self-interacting dynamics

of this field are seen as the basis of all phenomenal existence. The Vedic seers used systematic subjective techniques to explore consciousness and believed they had discovered a unified field of pure Being at the level of least excitation.

They found that the self-interacting dynamics of the knower (rishi), the process of knowing (devata), and the known (chandas) within this field give rise to all experience. Vedic rishis' descriptions of this underlying reality are remarkably similar to how physicists today describe the unified field of all the laws of nature, and many agree that an understanding of consciousness is essential for a holistic understanding of the universe. In Maharishi's teaching the two approaches are seen as complementary. Unfortunately, Maharishi said, the teaching of the Vedic techniques became distorted over time and they lost their effectiveness. In India the Vedic texts remained, but the techniques that lead to the experiences that gave rise to them had largely been lost.

Before Maharishi's introduction of the TM technique meditation had been considered primarily as metaphysics, mysticism, and religion. Maharishi, however, insisted that TM was a practical, universal technique, and he actively encouraged the objective scientific study of the results of the practice both during the meditation and in the field of activity. The research on the TM and TM-Sidhi programs is now extensive. More than 600 scientific studies conducted at 200 independent universities and institutions around the world and published in more than 100 leading peer-reviewed scientific journals have demonstrated that Maharishi's programs actually do cause positive changes in mental potential, health, social behavior, and the social environment.

Critics of the TM movement have argued that the research on the programs is pseudoscience rather than real science and that Maharishi used scientific jargon to disguise the fact that he was really teaching religion, noting that Maharishi was a Hindu monk and modern Hinduism looks to its roots in the Vedic texts. Critics also point to a 1979 ruling by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals that barred New Jersey schools from introducing a curriculum that combined TM with the classroom teaching of the science of creative intelligence, a course that relates experiences during the practice to the structure of consciousness and the physical universe, because the ideas in that course advanced religious concepts.

The TM organization notes that hundreds of the studies have been published in peer reviewed scholarly journals and that papers that present new scientific paradigms receive especially close scrutiny when considered for publication.

Furthermore, findings in each area of study have been replicated many times, and rigorous meta-analyses have found a high degree of consistency in the results. TM representatives note that the technique does not involve any religious belief or practice. However, neither does it conflict with religion. Adding the practice of the TM technique does not conflict with meditators' practice of their own religions. Maharishi said that he had no desire to influence people to convert to Hinduism. He said that it would be best for people who wanted to pursue a religious life to remain within the religious and cultural traditions in which they were raised. The technique is universal, and the benefits enjoyed as a result of the regular experience of the state of transcendental consciousness would better enable them to appreciate the truth and value of their own religion.

Research Findings

Research on the TM technique first appeared in the journal *Science* in 1970 and dealt with changes in physiology during the practice. Findings show that the body underwent unique physiological changes that suggested a fourth major state of consciousness, a state of restful alertness, differentiated objectively as well as subjectively from waking, dreaming, and sleeping. During the technique the physiology became deeply rested with significant reductions in respiration, minute ventilation, tidal volume, and blood lactate, and with significant increases in basal skin resistance. Other research findings during the practice include increased orderliness of brain wave activity, increased blood flow to the brain, increased muscle relaxation, and decreased plasma cortisol, a stress hormone.

Findings on physiological variables in activity include increased brain wave coherence, more efficient information transfer in the brain, lower heart and respiration rate baselines, increased autonomic nervous system stability, faster recovery from stress, and faster reactions and reflexes. Subjects averaging fifty years of age who had been meditating at least five years had a biological age twelve years younger than their chronological age. Medical researchers found that cardiovascular risk factors such as high blood pressure and serum cholesterol were reduced. Large health insurance studies found a 50 percent reduction in both inpatient and outpatient medical care utilization compared with controls. Hospitalization was 87 percent lower for heart disease and 55 percent lower for cancer. Meditators older than forty years old had approximately 70 percent fewer medical problems than did others in their age group.

Psychological and sociological findings include enhanced creativity, broader comprehension and improved ability to focus, improved memory, accelerated cognitive development in children, increased cognitive flexibility in the elderly, increased academic achievement and grades, higher levels of moral maturity, increased self-confidence and self-actualization, and healthier family life.

Maharishi had estimated that 1 percent of the population practicing the TM technique, or as few as the square root of 1 percent practicing the TM-Sidhi program, together would create a coherent influence in collective consciousness that was capable of neutralizing the stresses that are the root cause of social problems. Despite considerable skepticism, often replicated research shows that when these conditions are met positive trends in society increase while negative trends decrease significantly. In his final years Maharishi focused his attention on programs to establish world peace from the level of the unified field of consciousness.

See also *Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Healing; Health, Disease, and Medicine; Hindu Tradition and Heritage; Krishna Consciousness; Spirituality* entries; *Zen Buddhism*.

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Unaffiliated

According to the 2008 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 16.1 percent of Americans count themselves as “unaffiliated” with any religious tradition. Sixteen percent, roughly one in six, may seem a relatively small number. It is, in fact, a much lower percentage of religiously unaffiliated than would be found in most other industrialized nations. But 16 percent represents a substantial portion of a nation that thinks of itself as having a deeply religious character.

It is important to remember that this 16 percent represents only those people who very consciously do not affiliate themselves with any group. They answered “no” when asked if they aligned themselves with Protestants, Catholics, Mormons, Orthodox, “other Christians,” Jewish, Muslims, Buddhists, or Hindus. They might be called “staunchly unaffiliated.”

But many others in the remaining 84 percent are unaffiliated as a matter of practice. Among those who describe themselves as mainline Protestants, 12 percent said religion was not important in their lives, and 23 percent attend worship seldom or never. Among Catholics, 9 percent said religion was not important, and 19 percent attend seldom or never. Even among evangelical Protestants, 3 percent said religion was not important, and 13 percent attend seldom or never. So the real percentage of people who are “practically unaffiliated” is considerably larger than one in six. It is worthwhile to distinguish the staunchly unaffiliated from those who are nonattenders of religious services or nonmembers of religious organizations.

According to the Pew survey, 27 percent of Americans attend worship seldom or never, with another 18 percent attending only “a few times a year.” So 45 percent of Americans rarely attend worship, a figure that corresponds to other national studies. How many Americans, then, are truly religiously unaffiliated? The answer is somewhere between one in six and roughly half, depending on the criteria used to decide.

Who Are the Unaffiliated?

Unlike the staunchly unaffiliated, most nonattenders and nonmembers are people who have commitments to faith traditions—at least historical commitments within their families or ethnic groups—but who choose not to participate regularly in religious organizations within those traditions. They may celebrate rites of passage such as christenings, marriages, and funerals in their faith traditions, but they may not be official members or, if they are, they may not attend. Reasons for their nonparticipation vary widely and can be very passive. Many nonattenders do not *intentionally* avoid participation; they simply do not participate. But the staunchly unaffiliated—the 16 percent—are much more likely to distance themselves intentionally from religious organizations or activities.

This is not primarily because they are atheists. It is true that 22 percent of the staunchly unaffiliated do not believe in God, and another 10 percent are uncertain, but fully 60 percent of the staunchly unaffiliated are either absolutely certain or fairly certain of their belief in God. True atheists make up only a small portion, something like 3 to 4 percent of the total U.S. population. Therefore, about

12 to 13 percent of the U.S. population believes in God but remains staunchly unaffiliated. This constitutes some forty million people.

This 12 to 13 percent represents the strongest case of religious individualism. This individualism and its causes are surely related to the causes of nonmembership or nonattendance; but this strong case represents a higher degree of independence, especially in a society where some religious affiliation, whether weak or strong, remains the norm.

Better-off, better-educated nonaffiliates get disproportionate attention in research and in the media, creating the impression that disaffiliation is highest among intellectuals. But, in fact, those with the least education and lowest income are the most likely never to attend or participate in religious organizations, just as they are most likely not to vote, to participate in school activities, or to join other civic groups. Individualism and anti-institutionalism run across the full range of American society and are manifest in religious participation just as they are elsewhere.

Brief Historical and Sociological Background

The most famous account of the relationship between organized religion and religious individualism comes from Ernst Troeltsch's *Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*. Troeltsch establishes the master types of church, sect, and mystic. To summarize very briefly, the church type of religious organization is coextensive with the society in which it is embedded. In the European case, where Troeltsch was writing, the "church" usually meant the state church, such as Catholicism in Italy, Greek Orthodox in Greece, or Anglicanism in England. Salvation is found within the bonds of the church. Membership is by birth or ethnicity. Leadership is by appointed office, often within a hierarchy. Membership rules are sometimes lax because people are presumed to belong by virtue of who they are.

Sects, by contrast, are opposed to, or at least independent from, the government and the ruling elites. Salvation is between the person and God directly. Membership is by choice or by election. Leadership is often charismatic and particular, perhaps limited to someone with a special gift or calling. Membership rules can be very strict because inclusion is not guaranteed.

Troeltsch recognized a third, nonorganizational type, comprising individuals who opt out of the mainstream but also do not affiliate with countergroups. Such individuals feed their spirituality through direct apprehension or revelation. Salvation is through their personal experience. These

he termed mystics. By definition, these individualists are hardest to analyze or categorize. Although the metaphysical composition of mysticism is beyond empirical investigation, certain social conditions clearly favor and sustain religious independence.

From the outset, America offered a mix of church-like and sect-like groups. The Puritans were certainly sectarian back in England, where they protested both to the Anglican Church and to the Crown itself, but in some of the new colonies they became very church-like as their religious beliefs and practices formed the foundation of society's mores. In other American colonies, however, Anglicans and Catholics were the dominant groups. Gradually America became the quintessential case of "denominationalism," a hybrid religious form that mixed church-like and sect-like qualities in organizations spanning the spectrum from very mainstream and integrated to very countercultural and separate.

The variety of denominations and their theological and cultural views is covered elsewhere throughout the present volume. But the very fact of religious pluralism created a context in which religious individualism inevitably flourished. Puritans may have held a de facto religious monopoly for a while in New England, as Catholics did in parts of the middle colonies, but these monopolies were destined to give way as the colonies sought a way to unite politically despite religious and cultural differences. "Disestablishment"—the conscious decision that American government would not recognize or prefer any type of religion as dominant—was written into the U.S. Constitution by the late eighteenth century. The Constitution went further, though, to guarantee liberty of conscience and the right to choose one's religion. Americans were provided by federal law, if not always by local practice, with freedom *from* religious coercion and freedom *to* choose as they wished.

This combination of disestablishment and free exercise created a de facto religious marketplace in which individuals were the consumers. This analogy can be overdrawn; few begin life with a religious blank slate and then choose freely from a menu of options. Socially constructed presuppositions guide and circumscribe our choices. Still, religious communities have always been especially fluid in America. No single group had the official status of "church"; few of the sectarian groups were entirely separatist. Protestant denominations, which developed in America by the dozens, had the seeds of religious individualism built into them because they challenged the ideas that the church was

unitary and that salvation could only be found within it. Once people widely accepted the notion that salvation was between an individual and God, rather than limited within the bounds of any single organization, people were freed both by conscience and by law to affiliate as they saw fit. It is not necessary to overstate the amount of religious switching or changing to establish that switching and changing were possible and routinely practiced.

The majority of Americans have always chosen to affiliate, but this is likely true in part because the social scope of religion contracted to fit their personal preferences, which mirrored other political and economic realities. As Alexis de Tocqueville noted in the early nineteenth century, religion did not directly govern the state or market in America. How could it? Religion focused more on moral character, and on churches and homes as the places this character was formed. These persons of character then acted in the public, political, and economic arenas. The two Great Awakenings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reinforced the idea that salvation was about moral rectitude and a personal commitment to God.

Tocqueville thought religion was indispensable to American life because democracy and capitalism might push people toward lower tastes and passions while religion would lift their values. But the influence of religion is necessarily more diffuse in America than in societies where the church is coextensive with government. Given the personal, even privatized, influence of religion and the proliferation of multiple religious groups, none of which could claim to be the official standard bearer, it is hardly surprising that affiliation gradually became more and more a matter of individual preference.

Seen from the angle of religious organization, then, a number of factors made America fertile ground for religious individualism: constitutional disestablishment of religion and the absence of a national church, constitutional guarantee of free exercise, proliferation of religious organizations having both church-like and sect-like qualities, and individualistic concepts of salvation intrinsic to Protestantism. But other ideas percolating in American society also pushed toward spiritual independence.

“Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist.” “Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.” Ralph Waldo Emerson in the nineteenth century wrote these words in his essay “Self Reliance.” In them, he carries a tradition of independence and suspicion of institutions, including religious institutions, running back to the

founders and beyond. Benjamin Franklin said, “Lighthouses are more helpful than churches” and “The way to see by faith is to shut the eye of reason,” in addition to the widely quoted, “God helps them that help themselves.”

America’s tradition of heroic individualism is self-evident. From the pioneer stories of Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett to the up-by-the-bootstrap millionaire stories of Horatio Alger to the romantic lone cowboy of Louis L’Amour novels and John Wayne movies, America has idolized and idealized those who go it alone. This tradition does not work against spirituality as such—these heroes are likely to believe in God and perhaps also in divine providence—but its anti-institutional sentiment finds room to flourish in a country where religious practice is diffuse and particular. Freedom from religious establishment, freedom of religious choice, and privatization of religious influence link up with suspicion of religious organizations and the ideal of self-sufficiency to create a strong and persistent current of religious individualism. The wonder is not that 16 percent are staunchly unaffiliated but that this number is not much higher.

Contemporary Context

Is religion thus weaker in America than in societies with established national churches where most citizens are presumed to be members from birth? It depends on what one means. In one sense, religion *must* be weaker. There are no religious leaders with official public standing, no leaders who could claim to speak for all believers. Religion, by definition, lacks codified institutional power.

But seen from another angle, the diffusion, particularization, and individualization of religion in America may make religion as a whole a stronger force. The proliferation of religious groups and opinions, plus the legitimacy of independent, self-chosen, spirituality, means that in America there is something for everyone. Perhaps this is why rates of affiliation, membership, and attendance are higher here than in most other industrialized societies and why staunch disaffiliation is relatively low.

Even Americans who are suspicious of religious organizations and their practices tend to profess individual spirituality. Sociologists and survey takers joke about the number of times they have been told, “I’m spiritual but not religious in the traditional sense.” To understand this thinking, in a setting of deeply rooted religious pluralism, is to understand religious individualism in the contemporary context.

Differentiation and Privatization

Changes in religion in general, and American religion in particular, owe much to the differentiation of institutions throughout Western society. Although it is possible to overdraw the distinctions, it is fair to say that religious, economic, and political power were once much more tightly bound together. Kings ruled by hereditary right, with God's presumed consent. Popes and kings shared authority, their relative power varying by situation. Kings controlled enormous economic power, especially the ability to grant or rescind title to property.

Through complicated historical processes these institutions gradually diverged to varying degrees throughout the West. Religious power and authority were no longer intertwined with political authority. This process culminated in the official separations of disestablishment and free exercise written into the U.S. Constitution; however, there was a de facto separation even in European countries that still supported state churches. Markets ran on their own capitalistic logic. States regulated markets and used taxation to achieve social goals; religion exerted ever less influence in the marketplace.

It is hardly surprising, then, that over time religion's direct influence tended to be localized within smaller groups, families, and even individuals. The degree to which religion was truly privatized can be overstated, but there can be no doubt that religion lost public authority relative to both state and market.

Secularization

This loss of public power or social authority is one way to imagine the process of secularization. Secularization is the idea that a culture's ideas and practices are gradually losing their religious, spiritual, or mystical qualities and moving toward rational, empirical, and scientific explanations. In the mid-twentieth century, scholars such as Bryan Wilson, David Martin, and Peter Berger theorized the advance of science and reason would explain away more and more of the questions once only answered by religion, to the point that religion itself would gradually fade.

It is now apparent that religion did not disappear. Americans living in the early twenty-first century appear to be no less personally spiritual than those living in the early twentieth. But this does not necessarily mean secularization theories were baseless. Over that same century, mainline Protestantism lost its status as the religion of the nation's

elites. Most restrictive laws about what could be done on the Sabbath—so-called “Blue Laws”—were repealed nearly everywhere. Public, civic displays of Christianity were replaced by displays that were either patriotic—what some have called “civil religion”—or by very general rituals capable of encompassing many different faith traditions. In a multitude of court cases ranging from religious clothing to the use of hallucinogens, the state's broad interests overrode any religion's particular ones.

In short, belief in God and personal spiritual questing remained strong, while religion as a system of social organizations ceded public authority. Religious affiliation is not a legal requirement for full participation in the market or the state. In very small market segments affiliation still matters in nonlegal ways—think of Hasidic Jews engaged in the diamond trade—and in politics Americans still prefer their leaders to have spiritual qualities. But the days when particular affiliations were prerequisites for the boardroom or elective office are well behind us. Contemporary levels of nonaffiliation, nonmembership, and nonattendance must be viewed in the light of these much larger social changes. Affiliation, membership, and attendance may be personally important, or important within very small groups, but they are continually less important in the public sphere.

Therapy

Because no single religious group has a majority, and no religious organization has priority, American religion is incapable of directly competing with the powerful forces of a large state and all-pervasive market economy. Not surprisingly, then, religion *responds* to those forces. Religion responds by applying political or economic pressure in some instances, but most often it responds by focusing on theology and character development for its members. Put another way, it provides frameworks of meaning, personal and social goals, and coping strategies for individuals and their families. Religious organizations serve as mediating institutions that buffer the impersonal, often harsh, effects of state and market in a society with three hundred million members.

Any evangelical bookstore, like most secular bookstores, will be full of therapeutic books about how to be one's best self, with more happiness, money, and fulfillment of every kind. Televised ministries trumpet the attitudes and practices necessary to overcome life's problems, usually by infusing an impersonal world with personal meaning. The mediating institution of religion supports, and is supported by, the mediating institution of family. Contemporary pastors spend

much of their time providing counseling. Far from dictating or compelling certain kinds of religious behavior, most religious organizations guide and advise. From a Promise Keepers rally aimed at urging men to be better husbands and fathers to an Episcopal support group for parents of gay and lesbian children to a Joel Osteen sermon about wealth and happiness, multitudes of religious programs promote personal balance and fulfillment.

In this therapeutic context, where individuals are the focus, it is inevitable that some individuals will choose self-help or will look to alternative spiritualities. Others will remain loosely affiliated with organized religion while pursuing independent spiritual strategies. Many people count themselves as believers while remaining either staunchly or practically unaffiliated. To the degree therapy—with a focus on the individual—is the model of self-realization, then religious affiliation is but one option among many.

Alternative Spiritualities

Forty-eight million Americans are unaffiliated, but only about eight million are nonbelievers. This leaves some forty million believers of some sort who are staunchly unaffiliated. Some of these unaffiliated believers have turned to alternative spiritualities, many of which are practiced individually rather than in groups or organizations. In recent decades, Indian spiritualities and their offshoots have attracted much interest in America. Transcendental Meditation (TM) maintains a small but steady following. For a while, “New Age Spirituality,” with echoes of spiritualism from the early twentieth century, had a broad, if very loosely attached, following. These New Age philosophies mix science and ecological awareness with some supernatural elements such as channeling reincarnated spirits as a means of leading people toward self-fulfillment.

For the most part, alternatives like TM and New Age spiritualities are also therapeutic, helping individuals or small groups develop frameworks of meaning or coping strategies for living in a complex, sometimes hostile, environment. But the fact that therapeutic approaches are so strong in spirituality both within religion and without reinforces just how individualized the religious impulse has become for a large proportion of the population.

Eastern and New Age spiritualities have received a disproportionate amount of press attention from time to time both because they are novel and because their adherents are literate. But it would be mistaken to assume that most of the forty million spiritual-yet-unaffiliated believers are involved

in alternative spiritualities. The majority likely maintain some personalized version of religion that includes much from the dominant Judeo-Christian tradition, possibly mixed with pieces of Hinduism, Buddhism, alternative spiritualities, and homegrown alternatives. In America, religious boundaries are porous and doctrines generally lax, since individuals are able to choose for themselves and any group, whether traditional or newly syncretistic, can enter the religious marketplace without barrier.

Entrepreneurialism

Because individual choice is possible, and it is relatively simple to join, leave, or switch religious attachment, America is a booming marketplace of religious ideas. Recently, scholars such as Rodney Stark and Roger Finke have used economic theories to suggest that entrepreneurialism is one reason nonaffiliation and nonmembership rates are relatively low in America compared to other industrialized countries. Not only is there something for everyone, but believers of every stripe are actively marketing to target audiences.

Televangelists and their predecessors, radio evangelists, are only the most obvious example of religious marketing. Many American denominations have a research wing that studies demographic trends and searches for ways to attract new potential members. All over America, churches experiment with “contemporary worship” and new locations. Churches appear in storefronts and strip malls. Empty suburban lots see metal, pole-barn structures spring up almost overnight. Counselors and authors fill offices, bookstores, and airwaves with spiritual and religious therapy. Alternative spiritualities lure religious consumers with new forms of diet, meditation, and physical strategies such as yoga.

There are no barriers to entering the religious marketplace in America: no formal, national licensing or credentialing standard for the title of minister; no state monopoly on religious organizations; no limit on what one can think or say. Moreover, religious organizations receive favorable tax treatment. Little surprise, then, that religious entrepreneurs exist to fill every possible market niche.

The most obvious reading of spiritual or religious entrepreneurialism is that it keeps adherence rates high, if one considers adherence in *all* groups. It stands to reason that a society with thousands of organizational alternatives would be able to attract more members than a society with only a few, unless membership in those few were somehow compulsory.

But the very notion of consumer choice likely works against religious adherence in the long run by continually

reinforcing the notion of individual preference. To the degree that religious adherence has become one of many lifestyles and even an elective *leisure* activity, it loses some of its sacred, set-apart qualities. Put another way, if 12 percent of mainline Protestants and 9 percent of Catholics say religion is not important to their lives, and 23 and 19 percent, respectively, say they attend seldom or never, how tightly can a “choice” model hold its adherents?

Likely Future of Individual Spirituality and Nonaffiliation

A number of social trends at work in America suggest religious belief and personal spirituality are strong and steady. The constitutional guarantee of free exercise opens the playing field to all three hundred million of us. Entrepreneurial competition in the marketplace of ideas ensures that the playing field will remain vibrant. The turn toward the therapeutic—toward life strategies, meaning-making, and character development—means religion and spirituality will continue to meet a social need unlikely to be met by either state or marketplace.

But many other trends work against religion’s favored or unique ability to meet these needs. At the very least, religion has long since lost its near-monopoly status in discerning and maintaining ultimate meaning. The differentiation of institutions, with state and market gradually separating from religious influence, pushed religion toward the private sphere. The process of secularization limited the scope of religious authority. Disestablishment guaranteed a monopoly could not be maintained by force.

These trends—whether promoting or enabling spirituality or working against religion as an organizational force—favor the growth of religious individualism, which portends ever lower rates of affiliation. In coming decades we should expect ever weaker ties between religious organizations and their members. People will still belong, or remain nominally affiliated, based on ethnic and familial ties, but the numbers who have rock-solid, long-term commitments will likely decrease. The number of staunchly unaffiliated and the number of nonmembers or nonattenders will correspondingly increase.

See also *Atheism, Agnosticism, and Disbelief; Congregations; Demographics; Denominationalism; Emerging Church Movement; Enlightenment; Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches; House Church Movement; New Age Religion(s); Pacific Northwest Region; Psychology of Religion; Seeker Churches; Sociological Approaches; Spirituality; Contemporary Trends; Sunday and the Sabbath; Transcendentalism.*

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Unification Church

The Unification Church (Tongil Kyohoe in Korean) is one of many new religious movements emerging in post-World War II Korea. It developed around the teaching of Sun Myung Moon, born in 1920 in Sangsa-ri in North Korea, then under Japanese rule. His parents were farmers shaped by the Shamanic, Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist amalgam characterizing traditional Korean culture. The family became Christians (Presbyterians) in 1930. Moon reported having a vision of Jesus while praying on a hillside on Easter in 1935. He believed God called him to continue Jesus’ mission of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. For a decade, Moon wrestled with his visionary experience, searching sacred texts, while studying engineering in Japan. Returning to Korea, he worked as an electrical engineer. He was arrested in 1944 for links to the Korean independence movement, tortured, and released in 1945. In 1946, he went to North Korea to recruit other Christian pastors to cooperate in bringing the Kingdom of God on earth. His overtures were rebuffed. In 1948, he was arrested in North Korea and sentenced to three years of hard labor. He was freed by UN forces after the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. Sun Myung Moon made his way to Pusan in South Korea and there rebuilt his community of followers.

In 1954 in Seoul, Moon and four disciples founded the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (HSA-UWC), popularly known as the Unification Church or the “Moonies.” It grew to more than thirty churches across Korea by 1956, despite opposition. Unlike

other hybrid millennialist religions, the HSA-UWC had a global vision and soon sent missionaries abroad to Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In the early 1970s, Moon moved to the United States

Teachings and Beliefs

Eastern cultures lack a term equivalent to “religion.” There it is common to refer to *chiao*, meaning teachings. The central teachings of the HSA-UWC are found in *Wolli-Kang-ron* (1966), translated into two official English texts, *Divine Principle* (1973) and *Exposition of the Divine Principle* (1996). Written by Hyo Won Eu, it was based on the *Wolli Wonbon* (original text of the *Divine Principle*), written by Moon. Combining Asian and Christian thought, it is divided into two parts: Creation and Restoration through Indemnity. It follows the classic Christian structure of creation, fall, and redemption but refracts it through an Oriental familial lens.

Central to *Divine Principle* is teaching concerning God’s purpose in creation and the three blessings. God’s purpose in creation was to have a world in which humanity returned joy to God. This joy could emerge only if a four-position foundation were fixed and the “three great blessings” fulfilled. The four-position foundation is a husband and wife centered on God and their offspring, the God-centered family. The three blessings are “to be fruitful, to multiply and fill the earth, . . . and have dominion,” understood as growing to personal, marital, and social perfection, or the God-centered person, family, and world. If these are realized, the Kingdom of God would exist on earth.

According to *Divine Principle*, since the fall, God has sought the restoration of humankind in a history found in the biblical story beginning with Adam and Eve and reaching a spiritual turning point in Jesus. That purpose was only fulfilled spiritually but not actually in Jesus’ time. It remains for a future “Lord of the Second Advent” (unnamed in the *Divine Principle* but believed by Unificationists to be Moon) to complete this purpose. This figure would fulfill the second blessing and realize the God-centered family. With the four-position foundation in place, the process of realizing the God-centered world, the Kingdom of God on earth, could begin.

In addition, Unificationists believe that Moon had access to the spirit world and received direction from God. In 1996, when Moon established the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification and announced that the era

centered on world Christianity was over, he underscored the teaching of continuous revelation. Fuller truth would now be found in *Cheon Seong Gyeong* (Heavenly Scripture).

The Unification Church/Movement in America

In 1960, Moon married Hak Ja Han, the seventeen-year-old daughter of a North Korean church member. His followers regarded this marriage, Moon’s second, as a providential event establishing the “position of true parents.” Later that year, the couple presided over a blessing ceremony for thirty-six Unification couples, the first of what outsiders would call “mass weddings.” The ritual extended the second blessing to other couples. Over the years, this practice grew, leading to a 1992 blessing of thirty thousand couples in Seoul’s Olympic stadium.

Moon moved to the United States in 1971, and by 1972, all fifty states had Unification Centers. In 1974 Moon met President Richard Nixon and addressed both houses of Congress. During the Watergate investigations, Moon published ads in American newspapers, urging Americans to forgive Nixon and to unite with Nixon to further America’s destiny. Soon Moon found himself under attack for his political views, his unorthodox Christianity, alleged sexual improprieties and “brainwashing,” his business connections, and his anticommunism.

By 1975, Unification Church missionaries labored in 120 countries and the Unification Theological Seminary was established in Barrytown, New York. The faculty included one Unificationist, Young Oon Kim, formerly a professor of New Testament and comparative religion at Ewha Women’s University in Seoul, a Rabbi who taught Bible, and Christians from varied backgrounds who taught a conventional seminary curriculum. As well, annual international conferences on the Unity of the Sciences, launched in 1968 to combat the alleged conflict of science and religion, continued, even drawing some Nobel Prize winners.

Earlier, Moon had established the Professor’s World Peace Academy in Korea that expanded through international conferences. Ecumenical activities initiated in Korea extended globally through the Unification Theological Seminary, the New Ecumenical Research Association (1980), the Council for the World’s Religions (1982), the International Religious Foundation (1983), the Religious Youth Service, and the Assembly of World Religions (1985). Much interfaith activity was incorporated into the Inter-religious Federation for World Peace in 1993,

renamed the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (IIFWP) in 1999. In 1982, the *Washington Times*, a conservative newspaper, was founded in Washington, D.C.

Investigations and Legal Issues

In the United States, Moon and his activities continued to be the focus of controversy. Rumors and allegations abounded despite some scholarly studies that offered contrasting viewpoints. In 1977 and 1978, a congressional subcommittee investigated activities of the Unification movement, reporting alleged financial misdeeds, but no indictments were forthcoming. In 1984, Sun Myung Moon was indicted for tax evasion, related to interest earned in an account in Moon's name. Lawyers argued that Moon held this account for the church. Moon was found guilty and sentenced to eighteen months in a federal correctional institution. An appeal, arguing that it was a common practice for church funds to be held in the name of leaders, was denied, despite support from other religious groups. Moon served thirteen months.

By the late 1980s, the movement shifted its focus from the unification of world Christianity to interreligious and international efforts for world peace. Conferences brought together global religious leaders, scholars, and heads of government to chart ways to move toward a more peaceful world. In 1996, Moon declared that the mission of the HSA-UWA had been completed; now the movement would be known as the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. Since then peace festivals have been held around the world, especially in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Moon challenged "godless communism" from the beginning of his ministry. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Moon organized a meeting in Moscow. In 1990, he met with Mikhail Gorbachev and then began financial support for several humanitarian and educational projects in the former Soviet Union. Likewise, Moon continued to bring former governmental leaders to develop a consensus on moral principles to govern world affairs. These activities were greatly expanded in the 1990s. In 1991, he met with North Korea's Kim Il Sung to facilitate the reunification of families separated by the Korean War.

Also by the late-1980s, there was more public discourse on Father and Mother Moon as "true parents" and the Moon family as the "true family." Meanwhile, there were public defections from the family. The question of leadership

after the founder's death was resolved in 2008 when Hyung Jin Moon, Moon's youngest son, was named the successor and head of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification.

Critical Assessment

Though a product of American missionary efforts in Korea, Sun Myung Moon came to the United States intent on reviving world Christianity, but he did not repeat the missionary message. He offered a new message, claiming that God was working to establish God-centered families and a God-centered world through his efforts. Moreover, his message reflected a Confucian reading of Christianity centered on the family, not the individual redemption of Protestant Christianity or the collective church of Catholic Christianity. Yet it attracted several thousand willing to join a Korean messiah in his efforts to create a new world. By 2010, North America was home to only a few thousand Unificationists. Estimates of the number worldwide range from three hundred thousand to just over one million.

See also *Canada: Pluralism; Ecumenism; Holidays; Marriage and Family; New Religious Movements; New Religious Movements: Twentieth Century; Religion, Regulation of; Religious Prejudice: Anti-Cult; Violence and Terror.*

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Unitarians

The term "Unitarians" has two distinct but interrelated meanings. Historically, Unitarianism was the Christian doctrine that emphasized the unity or oneness of God. Originally derived from the Latin word *unitas*, meaning unity, "Unitarian" was first used in 1687 to describe someone who

espoused the doctrine of Unitarianism and denounced the doctrine of the Trinity. These Unitarians are known as theological Unitarians. Theological Unitarians maintained that the godhead was only composed of one person. Many Unitarians viewed Jesus and his teachings as an important moral guide but denied the divinity of Jesus. Trinitarians, in contrast to theological Unitarians, maintained that the godhead was composed of three persons, so that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit were each equally divine.

In the contemporary United States, “Unitarians” is also used to refer to people who belong to the Unitarian Universalist Association. These denominational Unitarians may or may not be theological Unitarians, which means that they may or may not believe in the unity of God, and they may or may not self-identify as Christians. The Unitarian Universalist Association is the heir to the American Unitarian Association, which was formed in 1825 to unite churches that espoused the doctrine of the oneness of God. Although Unitarianism did not become a unified denomination until the nineteenth century, the roots of Unitarianism in the United States can be traced back to seventeenth-century Puritanism.

Puritan Roots

Persecuted in England, many Puritans came to North America in the early seventeenth century to establish a “city upon a hill,” as John Winthrop (1587–1649) famously stated. Colonial Puritans such as Winthrop held to the teachings of the French theologian John Calvin (1509–1564). The Calvinism of the Puritans generally stressed the doctrines of predestination, total depravity, and the Trinity. Although the Puritans tended to have a rich emotional component to their Calvinism, they were also very rational and intellectual.

Because of their desire to distance themselves from the Church of England, the Puritans of New England created a system of church governance that became known as Congregationalism. This system allowed each church or congregation to govern itself without the interference of outside bishops. Although congregations were autonomous, they were connected to each other through social events, periodic synods, visits from neighboring pastors, and similar doctrinal beliefs. But by the end of the seventeenth century, it seemed as if the Puritan dominance was waning in New England as membership in churches decreased. Puritan pastors such as Increase Mather (1639–1723) and Cotton Mather (1663–1728) preached jeremiads, or sermons that emphasized a declension narrative and called for repentance.

The Eighteenth Century

In response to the decline of Puritanism and other sociological changes, an eruption of religious revivals took place in the 1730s and 1740s. Known as the (first) Great Awakening, these revivals began in New England, spread to the middle colonies, and then occurred in Europe. Some theologians, such as Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), reinforced the Calvinist doctrines of predestination, total depravity, and the Trinity; while other theologians such as John Wesley (1703–1791), an Anglican priest who started Methodism, denounced Calvinism in favor of Arminianism. Wesley believed that sanctification allowed one to reach a state of holiness or perfection in this life. This became known as the doctrine of perfectionism. Itinerant preachers such as George Whitefield (1714–1770) put great emphasis on emotionalism and the need for a conversion experience. Whitefield and revivalists like him defied convention by preaching in fields and marketplaces rather than in churches. Such preaching was dramatic and encouraged emotional outbursts.

Although the revivals of the first Great Awakening found popular support throughout the colonies, there were many clergy who were in adamant opposition to the evangelical Christianity that the revivals represented. Charles Chauncy (1705–1787) was a Boston clergyman who wrote *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (1743), which was a response to Edwards’s *Some Thoughts concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1742). Chauncy negatively labeled the emotionalism of the revivalists as “enthusiasm” and condemned it as dangerous to religion, which instead should be rational. Because he wanted to combat Calvinism as well as revivalism, Chauncy was viewed as a liberal Arminian. Chauncy’s Arminianism consisted in denouncing the doctrine of original sin and highlighting instead the innate goodness of human nature. While Edwards and his fellow revivalists claimed that everyone needed to experience an emotional conversion, or “new birth,” because everyone had inherited a sinful nature, Chauncy saw no need for such a conversion because he did not believe in this inherited sinful nature. Moreover, Chauncy insisted that no one needed to be converted because everyone would be saved—a position known as Universalism. Chauncy’s Universalism was in keeping with his Unitarianism, which maintained the oneness of the godhead.

Jonathan Mayhew (1720–1766) was also a Boston clergyman and was also considered to be a liberal Arminian. Believing in the doctrine of the unity of God, Mayhew preached that Christ was subordinate in station to God the

Father. Mayhew's theology was intimately intertwined with his politics, and he became famous for criticizing the British from the pulpit. Chauncy and Mayhew may have been two of the first well-known American Unitarians, but they were certainly not the last. After the American Revolution, an increasing number of churches in New England began to espouse a Unitarian theology. In 1785, King's Chapel, an Anglican church in Boston, was the first church in the newly formed United States to have all references to the Trinity removed from its liturgy. Orthodox Congregational churches, especially those that wanted to protect the Calvinism of their Puritan forbearers, were appalled by such liberal theology and practice.

By the late eighteenth century, there was already an emerging Unitarian tradition that developed outside of the New England paradigm, mostly concentrated in Pennsylvania. Leading this movement was British clergyman and scientist Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), who immigrated to the United States after experiencing political turmoil in England. Because he was heavily influenced by Socinianism, Priestley did not believe in the preexistence of Christ or in the doctrine of the Trinity. Priestley found that these views were controversial not only in England but also in America. Despite controversy, Priestley founded several Unitarian churches on both sides of the Atlantic.

Early Nineteenth Century

By 1800, there were a number of churches espousing the doctrine of Unitarianism in the United States, mostly concentrated in Boston. However, for many of these churches, Unitarianism was not the sole doctrine that composed their theology. Influenced by the Enlightenment, Arminianism, deism, and the thought of Chauncy and Mayhew, many liberal churches considered their views on human nature and its relationship to grace to be more important than their rejection of the Trinity and embrace of the doctrine of the unity of God. Yet these liberal churches came to be labeled "Unitarian," as if that one doctrine summed up their whole theology, perhaps because the more orthodox churches thought it to be the most offensive doctrine.

Most of the churches in early-nineteenth-century New England remained Congregational in the tradition that the Puritans had constructed. Each Congregational church was autonomous, with no outside hierarchy as with Anglican churches. However, Congregational pastors still exchanged pulpits and had a great degree of interaction with other churches besides their own. At the turn of the century, some

friendly relationships between orthodox and liberal pastors were beginning to be strained. The widening gap between orthodox and liberal churches finally gave way to controversy in 1805.

Henry Ware Sr. (1764–1845) attended Harvard and became a pastor in Massachusetts. Ware was considered a liberal by orthodox pastors who were uncomfortable with his Unitarian beliefs. It was no surprise that the orthodox pastors were upset when, in 1805, Ware was elected the Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard. His election caused a rift between Ware's liberal supporters and his orthodox opponents. This became known as the "First Unitarian Controversy." Convinced that Harvard had been taken over by the liberals, orthodox pastors like Jedidiah Morse (1761–1826) rallied together and founded Andover Theological Seminary in 1808 as a traditionalist alternative. After the Unitarian Controversy and the founding of Andover, pulpit exchanges between liberal and orthodox pastors ceased. Long-standing relationships between the two sides ended abruptly as the orthodox pastors called for a breach in fellowship.

Opposition to Revivalism

In response to this perceived growth of liberalism, the first half of the nineteenth century ushered in another wave of revivalism known as the Second Great Awakening. Moderate revivalists like Timothy Dwight (1753–1817) and Lyman Beecher (1775–1863) sought to restore Edwardsean Calvinism to New England. Less orthodox revivalists like Charles Finney (1792–1875) stressed Wesleyan perfectionism. Although Finney did not dispute the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, he did rid his theology of the doctrine of original sin, which led him to adopt a very positive view of human nature. Much like the first Great Awakening, the revivalism of Finney and others emphasized passionate emotionalism. Barking, jerking, fainting, laughing, and crying were all appropriate emotional responses at revival meetings.

Also like the first Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening had its detractors. Unitarian James Walker (1794–1874) wrote an article entitled "The Revival under Whitefield" in 1827, which drew on Chauncy's criticisms of the first Great Awakening that Walker used to critique the Second Great Awakening. Walker saw revivalism as too emotional and divisive, while he saw Chauncy's liberal theology as rational and better for society as a whole. For Walker, both the first and Second Great Awakenings were merely reactionary responses to the liberalizing effects of the turn to rational religion. Rather than provide intellectual

arguments against liberal theology, Walker argued, orthodox Calvinists had reverted to emotional enthusiasm.

Agreeing with Walker's distaste for revivalism, William Ellery Channing (1780–1842) complained that such evangelical emphasis on a personal conversion experience led people to be selfish. If people were only focused on their own salvation, then they could not be focused on the greater good of society. Channing thought that the social ethic of Christianity was much more important than the privatized faith that was produced by the emphasis on conversion. Although Channing was willing to respect Edwards's commitment to the greater good, he indicted Whitefield for this turn toward a self-centered faith. Even though Edwards could be respected, Channing noted that he was not able to impede the spread of the negative aspects of revivalism.

The Unitarian Platform

Born in Rhode Island, Channing became a pastor a few years after he graduated from Harvard in 1798 and lived in Boston for the rest of his life. After the "First Unitarian Controversy" in 1805 and Morse's subsequent efforts to alienate Unitarians, Channing became frustrated with orthodox pastors like Morse. Although there were obvious theological differences between liberal and orthodox pastors, Channing did not believe that there should be a breach of fellowship for such differences. This breach of fellowship, Channing argued, would be the downfall of the Congregational system that the Puritans established. Moreover, Channing firmly maintained that religious people should be charitable to everyone, no matter the circumstances. However, by 1819, Channing and his liberal colleagues became resigned to the fact that liberal and orthodox factions would never be united again. It was at this time that the liberals decided that they needed a platform on which to stand. Channing provided that platform and became the mouthpiece for the Unitarian movement when he gave an ordination sermon entitled "Unitarian Christianity" in Baltimore in that year. Channing here maintained the authority of scripture and insisted that human reason should be used to interpret the Bible. In addition to using reason, one could and should employ biblical scholarship to understand scripture. Biblical scholarship here referred to German higher criticism, which greatly influenced Channing and his fellow liberals. Channing went on to argue that the unity of God was a more biblically sound doctrine than the doctrine of the Trinity, despite what trinitarians believed. Not only did Channing believe in the unity of God but also in Christ's

single human nature. Channing rejected the Calvinist doctrines of predestination and total depravity, believing these doctrines to represent an angry, judgmental God and to represent a depressing view of human nature. Instead, Channing favored a God who gives humans free will as well as a more positive Arminian view of the human condition. Humans were able to achieve holiness by simply loving God, loving Christ, and loving one's fellow humans.

Channing's "Unitarian Christianity" sermon was subsequently published as a pamphlet. Some have argued that the only pamphlet that had been more widely circulated in the United States than Channing's sermon was Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" (1776). As evidenced by Channing, early American Unitarianism was not solely focused on the debate about the Trinity, but it was also very concerned with larger social issues, such as the nature of the human condition. Unitarian theologians and moralists were influenced by Scottish common sense philosophers who argued that common sense was available to all human beings as a basis for one's moral life. In 1820, not long after Channing's popular sermon, Leonard Woods (1774–1854), an orthodox Calvinist and the first-hired professor at Andover, wrote *Letters to the Unitarians*, in which he insisted that the doctrine of total depravity was an empirical fact. Although Channing provided a theological platform for Unitarians and would have been the most obvious person to respond to Woods's challenge, Channing was very deliberate about trying to avoid theological debates with those who did not agree with him, orthodox or otherwise. The burden of responding to Woods was therefore left to Henry Ware, mentioned above as the controversial Hollis Professor at Harvard. What followed was labeled the "Woods 'n' Ware Controversy," with Woods speaking for the orthodox Calvinists and Ware speaking for liberal Unitarians. The debate lasted four years and covered the gamut of theological arguments, from free will versus determinism to total depravity versus the innate goodness of human nature.

The Second Unitarian Controversy

To formalize the Unitarian solidarity that existed among Ware, Channing, and other liberal pastors and churches, the American Unitarian Association was formed in 1825. Yet it was not long before the young liberal denomination was challenged by an even more liberalizing force, namely, transcendentalism. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) was born in Boston, the son of a Unitarian minister. After his father died when he was eight years old, Emerson's family

became members of Channing's church, and for years afterward Emerson greatly admired Channing. Emerson attended Harvard Divinity School and became a liberal minister in 1829. Soon after his first wife's death in 1831, however, Emerson became disenchanted with Unitarianism in general and ministry in particular. In the same way that orthodox Calvinism was the hegemony of traditionalism for early Unitarians, Unitarianism became hegemonic for some in Emerson's generation.

Emerson resigned from ministry in 1832 to become an independent lecturer, writer, and editor. His 1838 commencement speech to the graduating class of the Harvard Divinity School—usually known as the “Divinity School Address”—challenged the “orthodox” Unitarian position by attacking the latter's insistence on the historical reality of the miracles attributed to Jesus in the New Testament. This provoked a rebuttal by Andrews Norton (1786–1853)—nicknamed the “pope” of Unitarianism—that launched what came to be known as the “Second Unitarian Controversy.” Emerson and his small group of like-minded allies denied that they constituted an organized movement, but became known as transcendentalists, and asserted that spiritual truths could only be ascertained through one's intuitive faculty rather than through logic, empirical evidence, or revelation. Although they were united only in their independence of mind, they tended to stray beyond the specifically Christian identity that Unitarians like Norton fiercely defended.

Theodore Parker (1810–1860) was a Harvard Divinity School student in the 1830s when he began to attend the Transcendental Club meetings and came into contact with Emerson and other influential transcendentalists. Parker viewed his transcendentalism as genuinely religious, but in the end he was ostracized by Unitarian ministers for not believing in miracles or the final authority of the Bible. Although orthodox Calvinists found Unitarians to be too liberal, transcendentalists like Parker felt that Unitarians were too traditional. As the nineteenth-century Unitarian movement reaffirmed its explicitly Christian identity, the transcendentalist movement was trying to distance itself from conventional Christianity.

Many important nineteenth-century American figures were influenced by both transcendentalism and Unitarianism. The renowned woman's rights activist Margaret Fuller (1810–1850), for instance, grew up in a Unitarian household and in the company of many leaders of the Unitarian movement. Later on in her life Fuller leaned more toward

transcendentalism as she became friends with Emerson and like-minded thinkers, most of them of Unitarian origin. Fuller's strong personality was said to have been the inspiration for the main character in Nathaniel Hawthorne's most famous novel, the *Scarlet Letter* (1850). Hawthorne (1804–1864) himself also was influenced by Unitarians. His family belonged to liberal churches that affiliated themselves with the American Unitarian Association in 1825. Hawthorne drew on the experiences of his family, especially his Puritan ancestors, in his writings. Hawthorne also drew on his experiences at the transcendentalist commune, Brook Farm, to criticize transcendentalism in his novel *The Blithedale Romance*. In addition to Fuller and Hawthorne, famous nineteenth-century reformers like Horace Mann (1796–1859), Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906), and John Quincy Adams (1767–1848) were influenced by Unitarianism.

Late Nineteenth Century

Although there was a reforming impulse present in the Unitarian movement, only a few Unitarian ministers were considered radical abolitionists in antebellum America. Most Unitarian ministers supported antislavery legislation without becoming too excited about the abolitionist cause. These ministers believed that abolition should be achieved gradually over time, so they became known as gradualists. Slavery should be confined to the places where it was already practiced, like in the South. Then southerners should become educated about the evils of slavery so that they supported antislavery policies. This would lead to the gradual extinction of slavery. Only one Unitarian minister, from New Orleans, was known to be a supporter of slavery.

Following the Civil War, tensions again began to emerge within the denomination over the issues of Christian identity. The American Unitarian Association remained firmly based on Beacon Street in Boston, and the joke emerged—playing on a phrase by James Freeman Clarke celebrating human progress—that Unitarians believed in “the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, and the Neighborhood of Boston.” In 1867, Francis Ellingwood Abbot (1836–1903) and others founded the Free Religious Association, which was to be a fellowship for those—including Unitarians, Universalists, liberal Jews, Quakers, and others—who wished to harmonize their beliefs with Darwinism and other contemporary scientific currents outside the trammels of traditional Christianity. This humanistic strain of religiosity would become particularly influential among Unitarians outside the Boston orbit.

Early Twentieth Century

By the turn of the twentieth century, Unitarians were not only partnering with progressives for the pursuit of free inquiry but also for the pursuit of social justice. Unitarians became involved in the Social Gospel, a late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century progressive Protestant movement centered around the idea that Christians are supposed to be actively engaged in trying to reform society by helping those in need. By 1908 the concern for social justice was institutionalized with the creation of a special department dedicated to public service within the American Unitarian Association.

Although the Social Gospel gave Unitarians a positive outlook, World War I and World War II did not. Many Europeans and Americans, Unitarians included, wondered how a loving God could allow such evil and destruction in the world. Much like other denominations, Unitarians sought to combat these negative forces by establishing formal aid societies. During World War II, the Unitarian Service Committee was formed to help those persecuted by the Nazi regime. The Service Committee later expanded its aid to help those around the world. After the end of World War II, Unitarians were among those who called for disarmament and supported the formation of the United Nations.

Greatly influenced by nineteenth-century transcendentalism, Unitarians had long given up their identity as exclusively Christian and instead had sought to incorporate Eastern religions into their faith. By the middle of the twentieth century, Unitarians were not beholden to a strict theism. Humans, not a distant divine figure, were in charge of the fate of the world, Unitarians reasoned. It was the responsibility of humans to protect the rights of other humans. This humanist thought within the Unitarian denomination led many outsiders to be attracted to it. During the 1950s, Unitarianism spread beyond its traditional New England stronghold to create lay-led “fellowships” in other parts of the country that lacked a critical mass to support a formally organized church with a professional minister.

Late Twentieth Century

Although the Unitarian denomination was growing, the Universalist denomination, with close ties to Unitarianism, was dwindling. Within Christianity, Universalism is the doctrine that all human beings will eventually be saved by God and go to heaven. Universalism became popular in Europe and America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Then, in 1833, the Universalist Church of America was formed. These denominational Universalists were not concentrated in urban centers like the Unitarians, but were rather spread out in rural areas. Also, while denominational Unitarians tended to be educated elites, denominational Universalists tended to be less educated and more agrarian. However, it should be noted that there were never any strict doctrinal boundaries between theological Unitarians and theological Universalists. Many denominational Unitarians accepted theological Universalism, and some denominational Universalists accepted theological Unitarianism.

Therefore, it came as no surprise when the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America merged together to form the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations in North America (UUA) in 1961. The UUA does not hold to any doctrinal creeds, so that people who are denominationally Unitarian Universalists may not actually believe in the doctrine of Unitarianism or the doctrine of Universalism. Moreover, the UUA does not identify itself as a strictly Christian denomination, so other religious traditions, such as Buddhism, Judaism, and New Age spirituality, inform the teachings of the UUA. Since both the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America grew out of the Christian tradition in the United States, the UUA can be considered to be post-Christian.

Critical Assessment

Theological Unitarianism, or the belief in the oneness of God, began in seventeenth-century England and was adopted by eighteenth-century American liberal theologians, like Charles Chauncy, who wanted to combat the evangelical excesses of the first Great Awakening. By 1825, the American Unitarian Association was formed by liberal ministers tired of orthodox Calvinism, such as William Ellery Channing and Henry Ware. Around a decade later, the Unitarian denomination birthed an even more liberal movement known as transcendentalism, with Ralph Waldo Emerson as one of its key leaders. In time, transcendentalism encouraged Unitarianism to expand its religious horizons to incorporate other faith traditions besides Christianity. With the creation of the UUA, Unitarian Universalists became even less beholden to traditional Christianity. However, it should be remembered that both theological and denominational Unitarianism in the United States grew out of, and in response to, traditional Christianity.

Unitarianism—along with its “country cousin” Universalism, with which it eventually merged—has endured as a primary form of American institutionalized religious liberalism, although a tension has always existed within the movement between the pulls of liberalism and institutionalization.

See also *American Revolution*; *Deism*; *Enlightenment*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *New Age Religion(s)*; *New England Region*; *Protestant Liberalism*; *Puritans*; *Romanticism*; *Transcendentalism*; *Unitarian Universalist Association*; *Universalists*; *World War I*; *World War II*.

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Unitarian Universalist Association

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) is a liberal religious movement that has approximately 1,050 congregations mostly in the United States and about 220,000 members.

Congregations are self-governing, with a denominational headquarters in Boston that provides services in social action advocacy, religious education, worship, and the credentialing of ministers and religious educators. The denomination was legally created on May 15, 1961, as the final act of consolidation between two separate religious denominations, the American Unitarian Association (AUA) and the Universalist Church of America (UCA). When the initial directory for the consolidated movement was published, the first president of the UUA, Dana McLean Greeley (1908–1986), wrote that it was “the result of many years of sustained effort on the part of the Universalists and Unitarians not only to work together but to be together in one liberal religious denomination.”

Late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

The AUA was formed in 1825, as an organization for individuals, after William Ellery Channing (1780–1842) had provided a theological manifesto with “Unitarian Christianity” (1819). There was no ecclesiastical body of member congregations until 1865, when the National Conference of Unitarian Churches was established. At that organizational meeting in New York, a “Broad Church” group brought relative unity to a disparate theological mix. Some delegates present claimed that “Universalists were waiting to be added to our body,” and a resolution was passed “looking to union with the Universalist body.”

The Universalists organized in 1793, and for many years they differed from the Unitarians stylistically, if not in deeply substantive ways. The Universalists tended to spread their gospel message in a more evangelical style than the Unitarians, especially in rural areas to working people and an aspiring middle class. Many of the New England Unitarians inherited former Puritan and Congregational churches that initially had status and privilege as tax-supported institutions. Even after disestablishment, their members were often the wealthy and educated elites. This was not necessarily the situation in the rest of the country, especially as Unitarianism spread west, where more liberal theologies emerged in new congregations. A central belief in freedom of inquiry caused many congregations to move beyond Christianity, as they organized in the name of “Freedom, Fellowship, and Character.”

Many Universalists followed Hosea Ballou (1771–1852), who proclaimed that all people would be saved immediately upon death; but others, called Restorationists, began to question this deterministic theology, wanting to interject

some component of free will in matters of salvation. They advocated a period of limited punishment and a further development of the soul after death prior to an ultimate universal salvation. This theological rift within Universalism resulted in many cases where Unitarian churches would consider Restorationists as candidates for their pulpits. There were other isolated instances of cooperation as well, such as when the Universalists in Philadelphia permitted the English Unitarian preacher and scientist Joseph Priestley (1733–1804) access to the pulpit of their church, which helped in the establishment of Unitarianism in the mid-Atlantic states in the 1790s. By the end of the nineteenth century, Unitarians and Universalists became more and more alike.

In an 1899 edition of *The Universalist Leader*, Willard Sellack asked, “What is the Difference between Universalism and Unitarianism?” He noted that there had been a convergence with respect to class, scholarship, and theology. Sellack implied that by the turn of the century differences between the two were minimal, except that Universalists were more interested in theology and things spiritual and that a conservative Universalist might be uncomfortable around a radical Unitarian, many of whom were rejecting the confines of Christianity for a more inclusive faith. The following year, both groups passed resolutions favoring greater cooperation. This cooperation also sometimes occurred on the local level, where some Unitarian and Universalist churches merged, especially when it appeared that a community could only support one liberal church.

Early to Mid-Twentieth Century: Consolidation

When the AUA published a comprehensive report on a vision for the future, *Unitarians Face a New Age*, in 1936, the report said it had “long been a dream of our leaders that there should be a closer relationship with avowedly liberal groups . . . especially the Universalists.” Until that time the closer ties were mostly characterized by “the expression of hopes and the pleasant interchange of occasional courtesies.” Both denominations had believed that cooperation might be furthered by the creation of the Free Church Fellowship (1933); and while this never had much grassroots support and performed few tangible cooperative actions, it kept the merger discussion alive. One positive fruit that emerged from the period between the world wars was joint efforts to enhance worship. *The Beacon Song and Service Book*, a hymnal for children, was published under the auspices of a joint committee in 1935; and then Hymnal Commissions from

both groups produced *Hymns of the Spirit* (1937), which included materials that were nonscriptural and targeted the growing humanist membership in both denominations. Ministers who held dual fellowship between the two groups also helped to lead to greater cooperation. When Louis Cornish (1870–1950) left the presidency of the AUA in 1937, his first act was to apply for fellowship as a Universalist minister. He wrote that he had “been heartened by Universalist ministers seeking Unitarian fellowship in testimony to their desire for closer understanding between our two liberal religious bodies. . . . Our two great traditions, each of them precious in the religious history of this country, I believe to be supplementary.”

After World War II, both denominations began taking important steps toward consolidation. This started with the creation in 1953 of the Council of Liberal Churches, a group that fostered administrative efforts to combine various denominational functions in the areas of religious education, publications, and publicity, with the best success in educational programming. The youth movements in the two denominations were the first groups to merge, creating Liberal Religious Youth in 1953. Within three years a Joint Merger Commission was established, and by 1959 it was clear that complete consolidation of the two religious movements was the goal. That year a final report on how consolidation would be accomplished was shared, and a joint meeting of the two groups in Syracuse, New York, approved the new UUA name. The most significant conflict was not over structure, but theology. There was a lack of agreement over what the new denomination stood for. This was described by participant Charles Eddis: “The Unitarians voted to strike God from the principles and purposes. The Universalists voted to add Christianity.” A compromise was reached when both sides agreed to change a reference to “our Judeo-Christian heritage” to “the Judeo Christian heritage,” making it more of a statement of fact rather than personal faith. In May 1960 the two movements celebrated their future together in their historical homes in Boston, when the delegates of the two movements voted in favor of the consolidation while sitting in adjoining rooms. This followed a previous plebiscite, conducted from December 1959 to April 1960, when the congregations voted overwhelmingly for the new plan, even though there was organized opposition on both sides, with more Universalists opposing merger. The following year, 1961, the bylaws and constitution, which affirmed the continuation of congregational polity and a noncreedal faith, were adopted.

In the first election for president of the consolidated denomination, Dana McLean Greeley defeated William Rice (1905–1970), who had been chair of the Joint Merger Commission. While Greeley needed to steer the new movement in a unified direction, there were also larger social issues that threatened it. Growing from a faith that centered more on ethics than theological beliefs, both denominations had a long history of wanting to effect social change through programs that promoted peace and justice. The Unitarian Service Committee had been formed in 1939 to rescue Jews and others who were being persecuted in Nazi-occupied Europe, and it merged its efforts with the Universalists in 1963 in an independent organization, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUUSC). Of special interest to the new administration were issues of war and peace and civil rights. Although not historically a peace church, the Unitarian Universalists were early opponents of the Vietnam War, and this caused much strife within the local congregations. A pacifist, Greeley called the war “America’s greatest moral calamity,” and he began to advocate for a more comprehensive response. The Arlington Street Church in Boston was the site of a draft card burning, and some clergy hid draft dodgers in their attics. There were frequent annual meeting resolutions at the General Assembly throughout the 1970s calling for disarmament. The division in the church over the war had a negative effect on fund-raising and membership, and this became especially apparent in the forthcoming controversies over black empowerment.

Mid- to Late Twentieth Century: Rights for All

On March 8, 1965, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. sent a telegram to the UUA headquarters asking Unitarian Universalists to bear witness to the “disease of racism which seeks to destroy all.” Many UU clergy responded and descended upon Selma, Alabama. The next day, after police had turned marchers back, one of the ministers, James Reeb (1927–1965), was clubbed by a group of white men as he went to eat supper with his friends. He died two days later, becoming a martyr for the movement and a catalyst for the passage of voting rights legislation. More than two years later, the UUA’s Commission on Race and Religion called for an emergency conference on how to respond to the “Black Rebellion.” This culminated in the establishment of a Black Affairs Council (BAC), which advocated for black control of programs funded by \$1 million in UUA money. Concerns about black power coupled with an administrative

financial crisis led to the board’s rescinding its actions, with consequent anger and pain lingering among many. The UUA has continued to promote programs that would contribute to achieving racial justice in the denomination and the world at large. In 1997 the General Assembly resolved to commit itself to be an antiracist UUA.

While the denomination struggled with divisive issues that led to a period of decline in the 1970s, a new era was inaugurated with the passage of the Women and Religion Resolution in 1977. This asked the denomination to examine its assumptions and policies around issues of language, but its effects were ultimately far-reaching. At that time, UUA president Eugene Pickett (1925–) said, “By changing women’s situation within the institution, your impact can be enormous in affecting sexist attitudes, assumptions and behavior.” This built upon a history of advocacy for women’s rights including the 1863 ordination of the first woman with full denominational authority by the Universalists, Olympia Brown (1835–1926). In the 1970s the Principles and Purposes were revised, and groups were formed to examine the language that was used in worship services, especially the words of hymns. Heralding a greater inclusion of women in language, and then in deed, the denomination soon experienced an upsurge in the number of women who trained to be UU clergy, so that by 1999 the majority of UU clergy were women. Many UUs were also active in the pro-choice movement. Ten years before *Roe v. Wade*, in 1963, the denomination affirmed a woman’s right to choose to have an abortion.

Another critical issue that faced Americans in the latter part of the twentieth century was gay rights. Drawing on a long theological tradition that proclaims God’s love for everyone on an equal basis, UUs became early and vocal advocates for the equal and full acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons. This began with a resolution in 1970 against discrimination, but then a more symbolic event occurred when a denominational Office on Gay Affairs was created in 1973. Ultimately this led to support for a UUA Welcoming Congregation program, where congregations explicitly affirm that sexual minorities are welcome as full participants in all church programs and governance. More recently, congregations have had active involvement in the campaigns for marriage equality. These liberation movements have had far-reaching effects upon the UUA, which has achieved some membership gains in an era of mainline denominational decline. New UUA Principles and Purposes were formulated in 1985, emphasizing the denomination’s

current religious pluralism, an eclectic mix of theological perspectives from humanist to Christian to an increasing number of UUs with a Buddhist orientation. The UUA has been active in the International Council of Unitarian Universalists (ICUU) since its formation in 1995. One popular initiative has been the Green Sanctuary movement, where local congregations promote environmental activism. In recent years, under its first African American president, William Sinkford (1946–), there has been an increased emphasis on making this most rational of religions much more spiritual and devotional while maintaining an active social witness. At the 2009 General Assembly, a new president of the UUA, Peter Morales, was elected by the delegates.

With a membership of 221,000 adults and children, the UUA in 2009 returned to nearly the same numbers it recorded at the time of consolidation in 1961. At that time, after a brief period of growth, membership declined to approximately 170,000 members in 1982. Since then there has been a slow but steady increase. Much of this growth has taken place in the West and the South, while the traditional areas of strength in the Northeast have remained stable. Membership in the congregations reflects a median age of more than fifty-five, and two-thirds of the members are women. The congregations are generally very highly educated groups with mostly liberal political persuasions. The 1,752 fellowshipped clergy in 2009 doubled the number of 1961, reflecting an increase in the number of community-based ministers who work outside the parish.

See also *American Revolution; Deism; Enlightenment; Faith-Based Community Organizations; Great Awakening(s); New Age Religion(s); New England Region; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Protestant Liberalism; Puritans; Romanticism; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Transcendentalism; Unitarians; Universalists; Women: Protestant.*

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Universalists

Universalists adhere to the distinctive idea that no humans will reap eternal punishment, regardless of their conduct during life. Rather, all will ultimately receive eternal salvation. Universalists insist that these ideas have roots in the earliest teachings of Christianity, although there is no single thread that connects the Universalist movement that began in the eighteenth century directly with New Testament Christianity. Hints of universal salvation are found, for example, in the teachings of several of the early Greek church fathers, particularly Origen, who was influential in Alexandria in the second century. Hints of Universalism also come in the writings of many of the Gnostic leaders, documents suppressed when fourth-century church councils declared Gnostic teaching heretical.

Pietist and Evangelical Roots

One antecedent of modern Universalism lies in strands of German pietism, a quietist devotional movement with a strong mystical orientation that emerged in the later seventeenth century. Another is found in some expressions of later English Puritanism that rejected the staunch Calvinism that shaped its formative years. Some radical pietists, for example, came to believe that God's intention was to restore all creation to its original goodness in a mystical union of all with the divine. If that were the case, then none would reap eternal damnation.

George DeBenneville (1703–1793), born in London to French Huguenot parents, early on had a similar mystical experience. A physician and preacher both, DeBenneville labored in France and Germany, where he was drawn to the more radical pietist circles where Universalist teaching prevailed. A near-death experience reinforced his conviction that all would reap salvation. In time he identified with the German Baptist Brethren, who advocated ultimate restoration, and with other kindred spirits he migrated to Pennsylvania in 1741. Regarded by some as the father of American Universalism, DeBenneville traveled throughout eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey promoting Universalist ideas until his death in 1793.

Universalist ties to expressions of evangelicalism that rejected key Calvinist teachings gave more solid foundation to this religious movement. By the eighteenth century English Puritanism had spawned several offshoots, including some that advocated universal salvation. Most remained small and on the margins. In the mid-eighteenth century, however, an evangelical associate of Methodist founder John Wesley began to give fresh theological underpinning to Universalist claims. James Rely (ca. 1722–1778), who severed ties with Wesley around 1761, insisted that the death of Christ was devoid of meaning if it did not serve to restore all humanity to a right relationship with God. This radical notion of the atonement (the significance of Christ's Crucifixion) thus became the basis for another manifestation of universal salvation besides DeBenneville's.

Colonial Universalism: John Murray and Charles Chauncy

Although Rely's movement remained numerically small, it did reap some converts. Among them was John Murray (1741–1815), who migrated to the English colonies in North America in 1770, travelling as an itinerant evangelist for the Universalist cause until he settled in Gloucester, Massachusetts, in 1774. Working there with a small group that had imbibed Rely's teaching, Murray helped found what is usually regarded as the first Universalist church in North America in 1779. Murray's thinking reflected an interesting blend of traditional theological notions with more radical ones. For example, he accepted the notion of original sin and claimed that all humans were caught in sin, thanks to the sin of the first Adam. But drawing on Paul's discussion of the first Adam and the second Adam (Christ) in the New Testament book of I Corinthians, Murray argued that if all were sinners because they participated in the sin of the first Adam, so all were restored and freed from the effects of sin because they participated in the triumph of the second Adam.

When Murray arrived in the colonies, the Great Awakening had already stirred many to become itinerant evangelists. But it had also provoked strident opposition, some of it coming from individuals who personally were sympathetic to Universalist theology. Charles Chauncy (1705–1787), formidable pastor of Boston's First Church, was one of those. As early as the 1750s, Chauncy had penned some theological treatises in which he called universal salvation "the mystery hid from ages and generations" described in Colossians 1:26. Chauncy, however, knew that the religious climate was not ripe for such thinking and kept his views

unpublished for several decades. He came to espouse universal salvation in part because he questioned the orthodox interpretation of original sin, which in strict Calvinist understanding decreed that infants who died before they experienced election to salvation were doomed to eternal damnation. In Chauncy's view, a benevolent deity could not punish infants who knew not that they were sinners. It was a short step for Chauncy to declare that a benevolent deity must by nature want the ultimate happiness of all creation and therefore must intend finally to provide salvation for all.

Chauncy had also vigorously opposed the evangelical revivals of the Awakening era in part because of what he saw as their elevation of emotion above rational reflection. Such use of reason would in time become another hallmark of American Universalism. Chauncy also believed the revivals showed disdain for church order in their reliance on itinerant evangelists who challenged the authority of regular pastors. Chauncy attacked Murray in print not because Murray was a Universalist (though the two differed over the doctrine of original sin) but because he was an itinerant evangelist. Chauncy's theological position suggested, however, that a more rationalist approach to religion was finding a home in Puritan New England. Murray's Gloucester congregation soon helped similar churches form elsewhere. Clearly the Universalist approach resonated with many cultural currents. It was the Age of Reason, but also the era of American independence, when challenges to any kind of traditional authority, whether political or religious, echoed throughout American culture.

The Beginnings of an American Movement

After American independence had been achieved, these diverse strands of colonial thought began to move slowly toward the form of denominationalism, that distinctively American form of religious organization. The Universalist message was at first spread mainly through the efforts of free-lance evangelists such as Massachusetts-born Elhanan Winchester (1751–1797). A Baptist who had misgivings about the orthodox understanding of original sin and repentance, Winchester for a time served a Baptist congregation in South Carolina, where his opposition to slavery and his insistence on organizing a congregation for slaves drew much opposition. By 1781, though, Winchester had relocated to Philadelphia, where he was instrumental in starting a Universalist church. A convention of the movement's advocates—including the founding father and all-purpose intellectual Benjamin Rush—met in that city in 1790 and drew up a platform that

included a fundamental belief in universal salvation and also avoided any explicit affirmation of the trinitarian Christianity that their Unitarian counterparts were simultaneously repudiating. A more enduring confessional statement was the Winchester (New Hampshire) Profession of 1803, which affirmed the ultimate restoration of humanity through Jesus Christ to “happiness and holiness.”

Although Universalism would expand throughout the nineteenth century to establish numerous outposts throughout the South and the Midwest, it, like its Unitarian counterpart, always remained primarily a movement rooted in the religious soil of New England. (In 1850, 285 of 529 Universalist churches were located in New England; a century later, the ratio was 200 out of 300.) Although the Philadelphia Convention did not succeed in establishing a firm institutional base in the mid-Atlantic states, a similar New England Convention in 1785 laid the groundwork for an organization that would in 1833 coalesce into the General Convention of Universalists in the United States, eight years after the founding of the American Unitarian Association in Boston. The two movements, which paralleled one another from the beginning and would eventually merge, nevertheless constituted differing religious cultures in their early years.

Unitarianism was firmly rooted from its beginnings in a cosmopolitan urban culture, and by the early nineteenth century it had virtually taken over Harvard as its intellectual center. Though its theology remained explicitly Christian—minus the doctrines of the Trinity and original sin—its emphasis was on the cultivation of the individual and the transformation of the social order through reason, education, and morality.

Universalism was instead the product of the liberal wing of the radical religious culture of the Great Awakening, which combined a popular Enlightenment rationalism with a piety that was deeply rooted in the evangelical ethos. This was a culture that was far more popular on the farms and in the small towns than in the metropolis and tended to appeal more to autodidacts than to Harvard-educated liberals or Yale-trained evangelicals. The difference in ethos between the two liberal communities was waggishly summarized by the Unitarian minister Thomas Starr King, who quipped that the Universalists believed that God was too good to damn them, while Unitarians believed that they were too good to be damned.

Denominational Development in the Nineteenth Century

As it began to take the shape of a denomination, Universalism found a theologian of some stature in Hosea Ballou

(1771–1852), the self-educated, New Hampshire-born son of a Baptist farmer-preacher. Ballou, who accepted the Universalist message in 1789, became the minister of a series of churches in Massachusetts and New Hampshire as well as a prolific author and editor of, among other things, *The Universalist Magazine* (established 1819). Ballou’s most influential work was his *Treatise on the Atonement* of 1805, which has been described by Ann Lee Bresler as “scholasticism for the common man.” Although influenced greatly by the piety of Jonathan Edwards and his followers, Ballou nevertheless rejected their central Calvinist precepts of the vitiating power of original sin on human character and the predestination of only a part of humankind to salvation. Instead, he substituted the central, Universalist belief in universal redemption, believing this to be not only biblical but also a firmer basis for the individual’s conversion from self-centeredness to benevolence than the Calvinist stress on the terrors of damnation.

As Universalism became institutionalized and dispersed in the course of the nineteenth century, it retained a decentralized congregationalist polity and an emphasis on social reform based on its optimistic view of human possibilities, exemplified in the careers of prominent lay adherents such as the journalist Horace Greeley (1811–1872) and the showman P.T. Barnum (1810–1891). Although Universalists were too decentralized to present a united stand on the slavery issue, they were pioneers in the nascent feminist cause: it was a Universalist congregation that in 1863 ordained Olympia Brown (1835–1926) as the first woman to be recognized as a Christian minister by an organized denomination. Brown, who had earlier studied at Mount Holyoke and Antioch Colleges, became the first woman to graduate from the Theological School at St. Lawrence University, founded by Universalists in 1856 as the first coeducational college in New York State. Other Universalist-affiliated institutions included Tufts University (1852) in Medford, Massachusetts, and Lombard College (1853–1930) in Galesburg, Illinois. All three had divinity schools associated with them; the only one to survive, at least in part, is the Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago, the result of a merger with the Unitarian-affiliated Meadville Theological School in the 1930s.

Merger with Unitarians

As the distinctive regional religious cultures that had nurtured both the Universalist and Unitarian impulses during the nineteenth century became eroded in the twentieth, the

two denominations came to the mutual conclusion that their survival as independent entities was a wasteful duplication of resources. The names and legacies of each are preserved in the Unitarian Universalist Association, the result of an institutional merger in 1961.

See also *Baptists* entries; *Enlightenment*; *Evangelicals: Colonial America*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Pietism*; *Puritans*; *Religious Thought: Reformed Protestant*; *Unitarians*; *Unitarian Universalist Association*; *Women: Ordination of*.

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Utopian and Communitarian Experiments

Utopian and communitarian religious experiments in the United States are attempts to implement religious ideals in everyday life—to establish “heavens on earth” in the form of communities devoted to that purpose. Utopian thinking within the context of religion has a long history, most often expressed in literary tracts describing societies centered on religious ideals—*utopia* meaning no place, a place existing only in the imagination. This article discusses the many attempts by members of religious sects to implement their ideals within small, utopian communities in America. When these ideals are implemented within the context of small communities, and these communities are part of a larger social movement, they are said to be communitarian in nature. Because the ideas on which these sects and communities are based are often new and untried, they are often referred to by scholars as “experiments.” Although most intentional communities do not last very long, those that do last tend to be religious rather than secular. Thus, religious commitment

seems to be a frequent motivational factor for starting a community, as well as a factor in its longevity. The fact that this communitarian phenomenon is so widespread in the United States, both before its founding and since, indicates that the cultural, intellectual, and political environment has been generally open to this kind of experimentation.

Because of the newness of this political territory and the relative freedom it provided, the colonies in North America became a destination for groups fleeing religious persecution in Europe. The distance of North America from the European seats of political power made self-determination a possibility. Indeed, the founding of the Plymouth Colony by the first of many groups fleeing religious persecution in Europe provides a model for the study of later religious communities.

Many of the experiments were transient in nature, but others filled a void and blossomed into mainstream religions in time. Since there was never an established religion in the United States, there tended to be a less structured religious dominance, and multiple communities developed side by side. When conflict did arise, as it did in the early New England colonies, individuals and groups relocated and started over. However, many utopian religious communities encountered conflicts both within their own ranks and with the larger society.

The formation of utopian religious communities is part of the larger tendency to form “intentional communities” as one response to cultural and social stresses, especially group oppression and radical changes in the physical and social environments. Anthropologist Anthony F. C. Wallace listed “utopian societies” as one form these revitalization movements take. He also noted the formation of new religions as a part of this phenomenon, a tendency currently recognized in the study of new religious movements (NRMs) within the social sciences. Religious persecution, the rapid shift from an agrarian to an industrial economic base, and population shifts from rural to urban areas in the nineteenth century all served as motivations for the establishment of new religious communities to help cope with these rapid changes. The formation of these utopian religious communities became part of a long communitarian tradition in the United States and helped to contribute to its religious and cultural diversity.

An examination of the creation of utopian religious communities across the centuries reveals patterns: community as political/religious refuge, community as a place of material well-being and equality, community as a place of

sexual experimentation (celibacy and plural marriage), and community as a place to realize social ideals through religious practices. In the beginning, refuge was the primary motivation for forming communities.

The Seventeenth Century

The seventeenth century and the arrival of the Pilgrims in North America mark the beginning both of one of the national founding mythologies and of utopian religious communitarianism in what was to become the first independent (noncolonial) nation in the New World, the United States of America. Unlike the Puritans, who vowed to work within the Church of England to purify its doctrines and turn it away from what they considered the shortcomings of its Catholic legacy, the Puritan separatists, later to become known as Pilgrims, broke altogether from the Church of England and fled to Holland, where they were able to live without oppression from the state religious officials. Eventually, wanting to preserve their culture and language among their children, the 102 men, women, and children sought refuge in the New World of North America, arriving in 1620.

According to Nathaniel Philbrick, although the Pilgrims were relatively secure in Leiden, Holland, the turmoil of European politics and the fear that their religious situation would not continue led them to make the fateful decision to establish a new community in North America. Here they established the most successful colony to date and even maintained a relative peace for a generation with the Native Americans they encountered. The ideals that drove them to leave behind all that they knew, the ordeals they had to face once they encountered the actual reality of their choice, and the resolution of the disparities between the two marked a process that future utopian religious groups would also face.

Only a few religious utopias were tried in the seventeenth century: Horekill, founded by Pieter Cornelius Plockhoy in 1663; Bohemian Manor (1683–1727) in Maryland, founded by Labadist refugees from Holland; the Society of Women in the Wilderness (1694–1708), also known as the Contented of the God-Loving Soul, an all-male, German Pietist community founded by Johannes Kelpius near Philadelphia; and Brethren in America (1697–1699), founded by Bernard Koster in Pennsylvania. These communities heralded the greater influx of immigrants who founded religious utopias in the following years of a new century.

Although North America would be characterized by a strong individualism, private property, and family-based social structure (and this was the case with the Pilgrims), many of

the utopian religious communities experimented with communalism, beginning with monastic communities that would characterize many utopian religious experiments.

The Eighteenth Century

The communitarian impulse picked up in the eighteenth century, which is also characterized by the arrival of dissenting European sects in North America, the establishment of these sects into distinct communities, and the expansion or eventual collapse of these sects. With the establishment of far more stable communities, the nature of communal living—its pros and cons—became more apparent. Besides being intent on implementing material equality among members and living modest lives according to the example of Jesus, communalism (in which all members shared a common purse or common community income) was also a practical way of surviving in an environment in which meager subsistence was not only an ideal but a reality.

In spite of their ideals of communalism and equality, many utopian religious communities relied on centralized leadership, while some others attempted to divide the leadership. The role of charismatic leaders in utopian religious communities is a significant factor in their survival or their eclipse, often determining whether these communities successfully negotiated the usual societal pitfalls of gender, sexuality, subsistence, and relationships to outside groups. For example, celibacy became a central focus in many eighteenth-century communities. Likewise, the ability of these communities to become self-sustaining often created ties to the larger community, bringing the stability necessary to contribute to the cultural life of the nation as a whole or generating conflict.

Whether or not these utopian religious communities saw themselves as threatened by the larger community, they seemed to have contributed to the welfare of the society as a whole by contributing to the cultural and economic life of their communities. For example, the necessity of writing their beliefs also created greater literacy among the populace. Their penchant for producing unique architecture through their dwellings, music through their hymns and entertainments, as well as other arts and crafts led to the general enrichment of their local environments.

The Ephrata Cloister (1732–1814)

The Ephrata Cloister was founded by Conrad Beissel in 1732 as a celibate community of men and women who considered sex, in or out of marriage, to be a sin. The community was set so that members shared a common purse,

practiced full-immersion baptism, and believed that salvation was in the hands of God and there was nothing that individuals could do to affect it. The sexes were separated physically. Women were responsible for the gardens, textile production, canning of foods, and the making of candles and related items. Men engaged in farming barley, corn, and wheat; tended vineyards and orchards; made clothing and shoes; and did the cooking and the baking. The Ephrata Cloister produced religious music, mystical poetry, and illuminated religious manuscripts.

Like other religious communities, Ephrata had its own special rituals: full-immersion baptism, Communion, mutual foot washing, holy kisses, and a belief that God was unknowable. It also ran a Sabbath Bible School for neighboring children and a boarding school, the Academy of Classical Studies. Thus, it provided an important service to the surrounding community while maintaining its own identity. Like many other communities, Ephrata experienced conflicts over child discipline, finances, and the decisions of its charismatic leader, Conrad Beissel. Eventually leadership was taken over by Brother Onesimus, who made the Cloister profitable and became the spiritual leader. Industries expanded under him, but this shift toward greater prosperity bothered some of the members, because it seemed in contradiction to the desire to lead humble lives. Eventually Beissel resumed leadership in 1745, and the Cloister took a downward turn economically. Beissel died in 1768 and was replaced as leader by Brother Agrippa. A typhoid epidemic doomed the Cloister, and it shifted from communalism to personal property ownership in 1786, although the land and buildings remained communally owned. In 1814, the four remaining members became the Seventh-day Adventist Baptist Church.

Ephrata illustrates how the contradiction between ideals and reality can generate dissension within a community. It also illustrates the vulnerability of early communities to disease epidemics and other environmental hazards. The shift from communalism to personal property ownership is one that would be repeated many times in communities across the centuries.

The Shakers (1774–2005?)

In 1774, the “Shaking Quakers” or Shakers arrived on the shores of North America with their leader, Mother Ann Lee, who had founded the Church of Christ’s Second Appearance (or the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Coming). Following their charismatic leader, the members had adopted celibacy as the central tenet of their faith and

communalism as their practice in daily life. Mother Ann Lee prophesied the second coming of Christ in the form of a female and became her symbol incarnate. The removal from the Old World to the New signaled new possibilities, including that of a female messiah. Characterized by pacifism, direct revelations from God, equality between the sexes, and celibacy, the Shakers became one of the longest-lasting of the religious utopian communities. By the early twenty-first century, however, only a handful of elderly folk remained at one community in Maine. With their passing, this experiment may also die out.

The Nineteenth Century

The rise of some of the most impressive religious utopias in the nineteenth century was the product of both European immigration and new American groups. While immigrants continued to flee religious persecutions, new religious communitarian movements began in the United States in reaction to the massive social changes that took place as the growth of industrialism led to the urbanization of the country. In addition, westward expansion and the availability of land made such communities possible and provided a more solid economic basis in agriculture for their development. Although intentional communities continued to come and go during what some have referred to as the Utopian Socialist period of U.S. communitarianism (approximately 1828–1848), the utopian religious communities proved to be the ones with staying power; even though they often changed their organizational structures (for example, from communal to personal property organizations), they seemed to provide belief systems that fostered deep commitment in their members.

The Shaker communities continued to prosper and grow. But new groups of German Separatists (also known as Pietists) arrived. Indeed, the nineteenth century could easily be called the Pietist Century—except that the United States itself was giving rise to new religious communities; and immigrants from Eastern Europe, as well as Asia, also brought new religious communities to North America. Joining the Pietists were the Anabaptists (Mennonites, Amish, Hutterites) and Jewish immigrants from Russia. Add to this the American religious communities of the Oneida Perfectionists and the Mormons, both of which experimented with different forms of marriage. These new groups for the most part moved away from the celibacy of the Shakers and the Harmonists, emphasizing other values, such as communalism, direct contact with God, adult baptism, and even polygamy.

The nineteenth century also witnessed the Civil War from 1861 to 1865, dividing the century into separate halves with shifts in power and influence changing after the war. Before the war, the tremendous changes in the United States from agrarian to industrial means of subsistence and from rural to urban residence accompanied by economic panics and political machinations ushered in the Utopian Socialist period of American communalism and communitarianism, and while many of the communities formed were secular rather than religious, the changes forced many people to find solace in forming communities with others of similar disaffection and belief. This period lasted until roughly the 1850s. After the Civil War, there were great population shifts favoring the move westward into California, Oregon, Washington, and other western states, and with these moves new religious communities arose as well. However, the Midwest remained a vital area for communal experiments in the first half of the century.

The Pietist Separatists

The Lutheran Church represented the established religion in both Germany and Sweden during the eighteenth century. In 1743, groups of Pietists—those who disapproved of the church and wished to separate from it—were denied the right to assemble, and members along with their leaders faced massive persecution. As this persecution increased, more of the Pietists viewed immigration to the United States as a viable alternative. As the eighteenth century in Europe closed, immigration became even more desirable. The Harmonists, the followers of William Kiel, the Zoar Separatists, and the Church of True Inspiration all established religious communities in the Midwest United States. The German religious groups tended to immigrate in large numbers.

The Harmony Society (1803–1916)

Founded by Johann Georg Rapp, later known as Father Rapp, in 1805 in Pennsylvania, the Harmony Society had its origins in Württemberg, Germany, as a separatist movement whose followers sailed to Philadelphia and eventually settled in western Pennsylvania. This was one of the most successful of the Pietist communities in terms of both its longevity and its contributions to American culture.

In 1803, Rapp preceded his congregation to the United States and purchased land in western Pennsylvania. In 1804, about six hundred members followed Rapp to the United States, and in 1805, they formed the Harmony Society in western Pennsylvania, the first of three sites that they would

occupy. At that time there were more than seven hundred Harmonists or Rappites, as they would come to be called. As with many struggling communities, the Harmonists became communal, pooling all of their resources and, in turn, guaranteeing for all the basics of subsistence and care in old age. In 1807, they decided to become a celibate community, but they did so with relatively little fanfare. On the five thousand acres that Rapp had procured for them, they established their church, school, mills, workshops, and homes; they raised sheep and ran a woolen mill; they grew a variety of crops, including flax, hemp, rye, wheat, and others; they planted a vineyard and produced wine.

By 1814, Rapp and community members were ready to relocate the community to Indiana, building the community of New Harmony, Indiana, into a fairly prosperous experiment that benefited even those outside of the community. By 1817, more members from Germany had joined the community. Although the community did well, they sold the property in 1824 (to Robert Owen, to set up his secular utopian Community of Equality), moved back to Pennsylvania, and set up Economy Village in 1825. With each move, the Harmonists had grown more prosperous and industrious and had managed to build a thriving community based on their religious ideals.

The community began to experience trouble when, in 1831, under the leadership of a newcomer, Bernhard Müller (known as Count Maximilian de Leon), factions developed, resulting in the loss of about two hundred members of the community, who either followed their leader to Louisiana or joined another German immigrant community in Bethel. Meanwhile, in spite of this disruption, Economy continued to prosper until the death of Rapp in 1847.

Although some key businesses were sold (silk and cotton mills and the winery), other investments in railroads, coal mines, and oil drilling provided a lucrative income for the community. Community prosperity continued well into the 1890s. While communalism was retained, much of the labor in the community was performed by nonmembers for wages, a considerable transformation over the earlier decades. The Harmony Society in its three locations lasted more than one hundred years, dissolving only in 1916.

The Harmonists contributed to the economy of wherever they were located. Their skills as farmers and laborers, and the successful sale of their properties in each location, provided a good life for them and for others in their vicinity. They also provided generous assistance to their fellow German-speaking communitarians when necessary.

Economy is maintained as a historic site and museum where visitors can learn about the community and its history.

Bethel and Aurora (1844–1883)

William Kiel, a German immigrant and medical doctor, founded the community of Bethel in Missouri in 1845 in the tide of the Second Great Awakening. The 650 members of his community were made up largely of disaffected Rappites and others who heeded Kiel's call, and they also adopted a communal way of life. Basing their subsistence on agriculture, they eventually developed businesses that created some economic stability—mills, textiles, tanneries, and carpentry. The community remained relatively unstructured and informal in its operations.

In 1855, Kiel and his followers left Missouri for Oregon, where they established a colony at Aurora in 1856 with about four hundred members. They turned their four thousand acres of timberland and farmland into economic prosperity once again, diversifying into a number of businesses. Following the Civil War, Aurora grew into a prosperous religious center with more than a thousand members, while Bethel shrank. Although the property—all legally owned by Kiel—was eventually divided among the many families, it was not until Kiel's death in 1876 that both Bethel and Aurora ceased to be communal.

Although founded by German immigrants, Bethel and Aurora differed from separatist communities in their informality and lack of legal status. However, the association of former Harmony members with Kiel and his group points to the importance of common cultural and religious roots.

The Separatist Society of Zoar (1819–1898)

Established in 1817 by three hundred Pietist separatists from Germany led by Joseph Bimeler, Zoar was founded on five thousand acres of land in northeastern Ohio not far from Harmony, the Rappite community. Because of the extreme poverty of the members, the group chose to live communally, signing a charter to this effect and naming their community after the biblical town to which Lot fled.

The members of Zoar practiced celibacy for ten years—a practice that seemed common among many immigrant groups of the day—but the practice collapsed when Bimeler took a wife. Zoarites experimented with children's houses, much like the Israeli *kibbutzim* would later do, but the practice did not last long. Families also lived in their own homes and ate together there, even though food was prepared communally. Families kept their own gardens.

In 1830, Zoar became officially recognized by the state of Ohio. At Zoar there were always more women than men. For example, the 1924 covenant was signed by one hundred women and only sixty men. Because of its proximity to the Erie Canal, Zoar was able to prosper by providing labor, food, and services. The amount of land Zoarites owned increased, as did their membership. Unfortunately, a cholera epidemic and the death of Bimeler in 1853 led to changes. Young people began to leave the community, some to join the Union army during the Civil War. Eventually, the community's economic prosperity declined due to competition from the industrializing society around it and the generational disparity in ideas and a growing criticism of communalism, including that of Bimeler's own grandson, Levi. In January 1898, the members of Zoar divided its property among themselves and dissolved the community, which became a state historic site.

The Community of True Inspiration at Amana (1842–)

The Amana community serves as an excellent example of how a community maintains itself by adapting to changing environmental conditions. Amana did not begin as a communal organization, experienced a long period of communalism, and then retreated to a noncommunal organization. Like the Harmony Society and the Separatist Society of Zoar, the founding members of the Amana colonies were Pietist separatists who fled Germany for the religious freedom of the United States.

In 1817, the group under the leadership of Christian Metz re-formed and in 1842 immigrated to New York to found their first community on land near Buffalo. In 1854, they left Buffalo, and in 1855 they finally settled in Iowa near Cedar Rapids and established the seven Amana villages that remain in that location to this day: Main Amana, Middle Amana, South Amana, West Amana, High Amana, East Amana, and Homestead. Living communally from 1854 until 1932, the members of Amana built a thriving set of colonies.

The Hutterite Brethren (1874–)

Although most Americans are familiar with Mennonites and the Amish, fewer are familiar with what is probably the longest-lasting communal society in North America, the Hutterites, whose name comes from their early leader, Jakob Hutter. Opposed to childhood baptism, state religions, the military draft, and worldly things, the Hutterites immigrated to North America from the Ukraine in 1874, taking up

residence in South Dakota and eventually spreading into Canada. Today, they live in about four hundred communal colonies (or *bruderhofs*) and have managed to maintain their communal way of life in spite of the many trials and tribulations they have faced since coming to the continent.

The Hutterites illustrate human adaptability and persistence. As farmers on the prairies of North America, they have a history that goes back to the sixteenth century—a history that includes alternating periods of communalism and private settlement, persecution and martyrdom. Although there were also Hutterites who lived independently after their immigration to the United States, the 433 who took up communal living would grow into the population that continues to this day. Hutterite colonies divide at 150 people, replicating themselves in these small groups, making the maintenance of communalism possible. They established contact with other German-speaking communities, such as the Harmony Society and Amana.

In 1905, the Hutterites became the Hutterite Society of Brethren and received official recognition by the state. By 1917, there were nineteen Hutterite colonies in the United States, but the coming of World War I and its hostilities to people of German descent in combination with the outrage over their refusal of military service led the Hutterites to sell or abandon their property and move to Manitoba and Alberta, Canada, where they were given exemption from military service. Eventually, in the wake of the onset of the Great Depression, they were invited back to South Dakota to take up their abandoned property and help to stimulate the local economy.

The Hutterite commitment to a specific set of religious beliefs once deemed radical, to a shared community of property, and to isolation from the world has sustained itself for more than one hundred years in the United States and Canada, and this utopian “experiment” has remained viable into its fifth century overall.

Bishop Hill (1846–1861)

Founded in Illinois in 1846 by Eric Jansson, also known as “the prophet,” from neither Lutheran nor Pietist roots, Bishop Hill would represent the perfectionism espoused by Jansson, who saw the Bible as a social gospel and himself as the embodiment of Christ, very much in a millenarian fashion. As a consequence of his radicalism and denouncing of the state church, Jansson suffered persecution by the state, giving him an incentive to leave Sweden and move to the United States to start his own community. In 1846, Jansson

and his followers immigrated to Illinois and began to build their perfect world, facing all of the hardships of others who had to build in the wilderness. Several hundred people followed Jansson to Illinois, many of them dying in short order due to the difficult climatic conditions.

Jansson encouraged his followers to study English, and to sustain themselves they raised barley, corn, wheat, potatoes, and livestock and built flour mills, sawmills, and other buildings. They lived communally, and in the beginning they often practiced fasting to cope with food shortages. Eventually, the community became economically viable, adding to the general prosperity of the area in which it was located; it was officially incorporated in 1853 after the shooting death of Jansson by his brother-in-law in 1850. Overcoming the loss of its charismatic leader, the colony prospered, increasing both its land holdings and its size to about seven hundred individuals. However, internal disputes eventually disrupted this relatively peaceful community—disputes concerning the abolition of marriage and the implementation of celibacy, the arbitrary expelling of members from the community for disagreeing with the trustees, the mismanagement of community finances in the midst of a general economic decline, and the development of opposing factions. In 1861, the community formally dissolved, and a court case ensued that eventually forced members to sell land and property that had been part of their settlement to cover the enormous debt that resulted from the former trustees’ bad investments.

Nonimmigrant American Religious Communities

The nineteenth century also saw a flourishing of nonimmigrant utopian and religious experiments, although these were sometimes influenced by imported ideas. In spite of the relative ebb and flow of religious tolerance in the United States, it generally remained open to new religions and their views, which often deviated from those of mainstream religions, sometimes as a result of seeking solutions to problems that mainstream religions did not undertake. But Americans faced different sets of problems from those of European immigrants, and the solution to these problems often took the form on new religious communities.

One of the biggest factors leading to utopian and religious experimentation in the nineteenth century was the rapid transformation of the American social and economic landscape. As the United States began to industrialize, it also experienced the growth of urban areas and the migration of people from rural areas into the cities. The technological

changes that brought about shifts in traditional ways of life often happened faster than they could be absorbed, leading to reactions against change itself or attempts by individuals to shield themselves from the loss of identity that often accompanied these changes.

At the same time, one of the emerging characteristics of utopian religious communities in the nineteenth century was the willingness to experiment with sexuality. Although many of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century groups were experimental in the sense of focusing on celibacy as a major feature of their traditions (and abstinence could be viewed as radical because of its deviation from focus on marriage and reproduction), the pendulum seemed to have swung in the opposite direction for many of the groups. Although many of the conflicts that arose with earlier groups centered on the contestation of religious doctrine and the hostilities that these invoked, sexual experimentation also generated massive conflict between these groups and the larger American public.

The Oneida Perfectionists (1848–1881)

Founded by John Humphrey Noyes, this community was intended to implement the moral ideals of Noyes, who had trained as a minister and believed that perfection lay in attitude rather than actions. His creed would become known as Perfectionism and his followers as Perfectionists. Noyes and his followers believed that their way of life would lead to a kind of heaven on earth. Theologically, Noyes believed that the second coming of Christ had already occurred, and his brand of millenarianism concluded that heaven on earth would eventually be achieved. The Perfectionists organized themselves communally, eventually living in a huge mansion located in upstate New York and in additional communities. There they practiced plural or complex marriage in which the goal was to erase the egotism and imperfect outcomes of monogamous family groups (and especially the loyalty of spouses to one another) in favor of loyalty to the group.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) (1830–)

Mormonism was founded in 1830 by Joseph Smith Jr., after the publication of the Book of Mormon, and adopted a communal way of life almost immediately, although communalism was never comprehensive. Based on the revelations of Smith, Mormonism (as this religion would come to be known) was a new branch of Christianity that arose in a community context but eventually grew into a mainstream

American religion. Beginning in Palmyra, New York, as the Church of Christ in 1830, the religion had its origins a decade earlier when Smith reportedly discovered gold tablets and dictated the Book of Mormon. Eventually, Smith and his followers changed the name to Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (later known as the LDS) and built the first temple in Kirtland, Ohio, which became the church headquarters in 1831. This was followed by moves to Zion, Missouri (1838), and Nauvoo, Illinois (1839). After the assassination of Joseph Smith Jr. by an angry mob in 1844, Brigham Young assumed leadership and moved the group to Utah territory, formally instituting polygamy as a practice. In Utah, the Mormon settlement for a time continued to echo its earlier communitarian ideals. But by the end of the nineteenth century, with the formal renunciation of polygamy and Utah's movement toward statehood, the utopian ideal receded. However, even in the design of Salt Lake City, with the temple complex forming the center of a grid pattern of streets, that vision of the ideal community, once named Deseret, still endures.

The Woman's Commonwealth (1867–1983)

Also known as the Sanctified Sisters, the Woman's Commonwealth was founded in 1867 in Belton, Texas, by Martha McWhirter. The emergence of this community from the participation of evangelical women in church groups is reminiscent of the experience of Ann Hutchinson in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. At first their enthusiastic participation in their churches was welcomed, but later it was spurned as their criticisms began to challenge church doctrine. The women developed a doctrine of sanctification, receiving revelations through dreams and other communications with God. They supported celibacy and wanted to avoid abuse by husbands. The Commonwealth always had some male members, although a majority were women.

By 1891, the Commonwealth had thirty-two members who lived communally. Outcries against the Women's Commonwealth took many forms, including accusations of insanity and attempts to have some members legally committed to insane asylums. In 1898, the Commonwealth moved to Washington, D.C., finally adopting written rules and regulations in 1902. The community ended in 1983 when its last member, Martha Scheble, died.

The Koreshan Unity (1894–1961)

The name of this group derives from that of its leader, Cyrus Teed, who changed his name to Koresh, a Hebraic form of

his first name. Once again, a new religious community relied heavily on the charismatic personality and ideas of its founder and leader. The community practiced both celibacy and communalism and entertained one of the most original belief systems ever created. Cyrus Teed was a medical doctor with a scientific bent that often strayed into nonscientific areas. It was during a moment of religious ecstasy that Teed was called upon to save the human race.

Eventually, Teed left his home in New York and combined his medical practice with preaching and gathered followers from several states, although his most vigorous following seemed to be in Chicago. Invited to Estero, Florida, in 1894 by Gustav Damkohler, who had read some of Teed's work, Teed visited the state and decided that he would locate his community in Estero. Initially, there were twenty-four members of the community.

Teed combined his belief in communalism with his "Cellular Cosmogony"—a view that proposed that the earth itself was enclosed within a giant sphere. Teed's beliefs became known as Koreshanity or Koreshan Universology. Although at first Teed's belief system seems to be more failed science than religion, he taught that his cosmogony was related to the consciousness of God. If one wanted to know God, one should attempt to do so through an understanding of God's creation, the Earth, and its place.

The original twenty-four members eventually grew to two hundred, living on seven thousand acres. Although they became prosperous, they also constituted a threat to the local politicians, who perceived them as a political voting bloc and who circulated rumors about them and their practices. Since Teed formed his own political party and published his own newspaper, he continued to be a threat. Ultimately, Teed was physically attacked by a local law enforcement officer and remained in poor health until his death in 1908.

The community continued, although internal conflicts following the death of the leader led to a decrease in population. In 1947, steps were taken to turn the community into a state historic site, and this was finally achieved in 1961, forming the basis for the state historic park that exists there today, with many of the original buildings still intact and some restored.

Early-Twentieth-Century Experiments

The diversity of utopian and religious communities that characterized the nineteenth century would continue in the twentieth century, expanding to include communities based

on Eastern religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism or variations on them. The twentieth century would see an explosion of intentional communities in general, many of them religious in orientation. The United States was now producing its own utopian religious experiments rather than importing them from foreign shores, with the exception of Eastern religions, and the West became more engaged in religious experiments in community. These new communities continued to explore the many facets of Christianity. Spiritualism and Eastern religious influences often combined to create new religions that found their stability within a community based on their religious ideals.

At the turn of the twentieth century, a number of religious experiments were undertaken by a variety of groups. The Social Gospel movement—a movement whose members applied Christian doctrines to problems of oppression in society—generated a number of communities, such as the Christian Commonwealth Colony (1896–1900); the Straight Edge Industrial Settlement in New York and New Jersey (1899–1918); the South Co-operative Association (in Florida) of Apalachicola (1900–1904); the Salvation Army farm colonies in California, Colorado, and Ohio (1897–1909); and the Christian Cooperative Colony.

The question of sexuality and unorthodox marriage arrangements remained a bone of contention within some communities and between communities and the larger public, and monasticism within some communities perpetuated the practice of celibacy that had characterized so many of the early religious communities in the United States.

Many communities in the earlier part of the century had to contend with the economic crisis caused by the Great Depression, which lasted well over ten years and sometimes determined which communities continued to exist and which fell on hard times and dissolved. World War I and World War II would also have an effect on communities, sometimes creating the conditions for their formation as a retreat from the losses that war brought and sometimes depriving them of resources. But these wars would also create a focus on peace as the outcome of religions belief systems and the social gospel.

Another factor that would influence early twentieth-century communities was the question of race in American society. Communities would be formed that were reactions against the racism that blacks suffered in the form of racial segregation in the South or racial discrimination and economic oppression in the rest of the country.

Israelite House of David/Mary's City of David (1903–)

Benjamin and Mary Purnell founded the Israelite House of David in Benton Harbor, Michigan, on April 3, 1903. This long-lived utopian religious community was the culmination of a long line of prophets in the Christian Israelite/Jezreelite tradition, which began in London, migrated to Australia, and then came to the United States. In 1895, Benjamin Purnell proclaimed himself as the seventh prophet in the Israelite tradition, but this assertion was not accepted by the followers of the Detroit church with which he and Mary were associated, so there was a parting of the ways. Nevertheless, Benjamin Purnell saw as his mission the gathering together of the lost tribes of Israel in preparation for the Second Coming of Christ. Although actually founded in 1902 in Fostoria, Ohio, in 1903 the Israelite House of David was established on 281 acres of land in Benton Harbor.

The Israelite House of David was organized communally, and its members practiced vegetarianism and celibacy. The community had a huge economic impact on the area. They operated the Eden Springs amusement park and had their own baseball team, basketball team, and zoo. They had a farm, ran a hotel and restaurant, and operated other businesses. At its height, the community had as many as seven hundred members. Women in the community voted in 1903 and held office as well. After Purnell's death in 1930, the community divided into two: Mary's City of David and the House of David.

International Peace Mission Movement of Father Divine (1914–)

George Baker Jr., also known as Reverend Major Jealous Divine and Father Divine, founded a religiously based social movement that ministered to the poor and needy in response to the problems of poverty brought on by the years of the Great Depression and exacerbated by racial segregation and racial discrimination. He was probably the son of freed slaves, although not much is known about his meager beginnings. Starting as the pastor of a small, independent black church in Brooklyn, New York, and later moving to Sayville, Long Island, and then Harlem, Father Divine was revered as a savior of the poor and as a charlatan by those he annoyed. However, his continuing social activism on behalf of the poor won him a huge following.

Father Divine's following, which had been inspired by his ministrations to the poor, began to wane as the United States began to experience a period of affluence in the 1950s. He

died in 1965 in Gladwyne, Pennsylvania, but various members have carried on his work on a much smaller scale.

Holy City (1919–1950s)

Founded by William E. Riker in 1919, Holy City stands as one of the most unusual religious utopias in American history, primarily because of its promotion as a perfect government based on racism and the charismatic leadership of its founder, who was the sole owner of all of its property located near Santa Cruz, California. A blatant racist, economic opportunist, and exploiter of women, Riker nevertheless managed to sustain a community for more than thirty years in California. Centered on Riker's church, the Perfect Christian Divine Way (P.C.D.W.), Holy City was promoted as a heaven on earth. Riker and his followers built a thriving community of shops, services, and industries that attracted and thrived on the patronage of California tourists.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Holy City survived by offering alcoholic beverages during Prohibition, peep shows, and other activities that brought the attention of the larger public to the community. In spite of accusations of larceny and mistreatment of women and children, Riker managed to maintain his community. With a mixture of racial metaphor and sexual mythology at its base, Riker's religion allowed him to indulge himself and his beliefs in any way he wished, and he ran for governor of California four times, promoting paternalism, the total disenfranchisement of minorities, and harebrain economic schemes that he challenged others to prove wrong. He aimed to bring a new religion that he called "Whitemanism" to blacks and Asians. In 1942, Riker was arrested and charged with sedition for corresponding with Adolf Hitler. An unrepentant narcissist who testified on his own behalf, Riker was acquitted due to the effectiveness of his defense attorney, Melvin Belli. Although the place itself continued on into the 1960s, the "community" itself ceased to exist in the 1950s.

Holy City demonstrates that in addition to whatever spiritual sustenance religious communities afford people, they can also be used by those who wish to exploit others for their own purposes. Riker was successful in getting people during America's Great Depression to turn over their resources to him and work on his behalf with the hope of relieving their own suffering. These ploys in combination with the scapegoating of minority groups and exploiting the California tourist industry allowed Holy City to thrive for a while. But once the economic depression affected Holy City, Riker was unable to sustain what vestiges of

community remained. These negative examples are rare among religious intentional communities, and although they are always sensational for their perversity, they illustrate the vulnerability of people in dire circumstances and how susceptible they are to the promise of the end of suffering and the comfort of community.

Self-Realization Fellowship (1920–)

This church and monastic community was founded by Paramahansa Yogananda (1893–1952), who first came to the United States from India in 1920 to attend the Congress of Religious Liberals in Boston and stayed on to lecture and found the Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) that same year. In 1925, he established Los Angeles as the headquarters of SRF. In 1945, *Autobiography of a Yogi* was published and became one of the most influential spiritual books of the twentieth century. Yogananda referred to SRF as the church of all religions and taught direct access to truth and experience of God through the method of kriya yoga. SRF, with branches in Del Mar, California, and San Diego, was headed by Daya Mata, a direct disciple of Yogananda. After Yogananda's death in 1952, a number of his direct disciples founded their own communities or centers for the practice of kriya yoga.

Koinonia Farm (1942–)

This community was founded by Clarence and Florence Jordan and Martin and Mabel England in 1942 in Americus, Georgia. As Baptist ministers, Jordan and England wanted to train poor and rural folk in scientific agriculture and also to train more black ministers. The community operated with a common purse and grew pecans and peanuts and operated a mail-order business. Koinonia was to be an interracial religious community in the segregated South. Although accepted at first by both blacks and whites in the vicinity, some whites became incensed at the equal treatment of blacks, especially during meals, and the community became a target of violence during the civil rights movement. Because of boycotting of the community, death threats, bomb threats, and drive-by shootings, the population of Koinonia became greatly reduced as families fled for safety.

Following the civil rights movement, the violence eventually stopped, and another couple, Millard and Linda Fuller, joined the community. Koinonia embarked upon a program of building low-cost housing for local families and changed its name to Koinonia Partners. The Fullers embarked upon a similar house-building program in Africa before returning

to Georgia to found Habitat for Humanity in 1976. Jordan died in 1969, leaving behind a legacy of Christian charity, his Cotton Patch gospels, and an example of steadfast non-violence in the face of violent threats.

The Late-Twentieth-Century Communitarian Explosion

The rising affluence in the United States following World War II would have a profound effect on the formation of utopian religious communities, as the postwar baby boom generation came of age armed with an idealism that fomented a virtual cultural revolution. The period between 1965 and 1975 was not only the most intense period of community building in the United States, it also witnessed the rise of many new religious movements anchored in community. These movements were rooted in both Christianity and Eastern religions, such as Yoga and Zen Buddhism. Fed by the coming of age of the baby boomers, the retreat from mainstream religion, the changes instigated by the civil rights movement, the Vietnam war, the women's movement, the rise of the human potential movement, and the general pursuit of personhood by many different groups, the radical changes taking place generated these new revitalization movements, which were to have a profound effect on American life well into the twenty-first century.

Although many of these new communities were fleeting, serving as transitional phases for their members in search of identities, stability, and meaning in their lives, others provided a long-term alternative to survival in the rapidly changing cultural, social, and political environments. In addition to the reinvigoration of Christianity through the various Jesus movements that arose, this period of religious communitarianism bolstered and was a part of the rise of New Age spirituality. Such communities as Ananda Village in Nevada City, California, founded by Swami Kriyananda, a direct disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda; and Jesus People USA, an urban commune located in Chicago and founded in 1972, typify the kinds of communities from this period.

Conclusion

Toward the end of the twentieth century, people began returning to mainstream churches, most of which had themselves undergone transformation. Although some held to traditional ways, others changed in the ways society itself had changed—allowing women and minorities into the ministries and integrating advanced technologies into their services.

Utopian and communitarian experiments in religion, which still occur but with lesser frequency, reveal many things about the nature of religion, the nature of communalism, and the nature of community. Their history in America reveals much about American culture as well. For example, no single version or religious ideal is adequate for everyone; religious variety has characterized American culture from the beginning. Religious communities have allowed people to test out a variety of ideas and ideals, such as communalism, celibacy, plural marriage, and new traditions. Most of these communities afford critical minorities the opportunity to adjust to major changes in the larger society, while maintaining connections so necessary for human welfare. They also serve as a refuge and testing ground for women and minorities and members of oppressed groups. Although most of these communities have positive benefit for their members, occasionally they demonstrate what paths do not work and are, in fact, harmful. All of these communities contribute to the life of the nation in which they reside, even if they choose to maintain strong boundaries of separation. Occasionally, they tap into needs not previously fulfilled by the larger society and become transformed into mainstream religions.

See also *Amana Communities*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Latter-day Saints*; *New Religious Movements* entries; *Oneida Community*; *Pietism*; *Pilgrims*; *Sexuality and Sexual Identity*; *Shakers*; *Women Religious*; *Zen Buddhism*.

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V



Violence and Terror

Violence and terror have been associated with religion in America in many ways, in reports of religious experiences as much as through conflicts between groups over religious differences.

Enchantment and Colonialism

Europeans who explored the Americas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were amazed and terrified by the natural wonders of the New World, and in this particular aspect of their worldview they differed little from the indigenous peoples who had a long history of habitation in the Americas. Explorers reported their observation of all manner of wonders, from the beautiful flora, natural features, and climates of the Americas to the equally beautiful and genial indigenous peoples, such as the Tainos, whom the Spanish, in their earliest encounters, thought handsome, charmingly innocent, and childlike. Columbus, near the mouth of the Orinoco River, believed that he had found the passage to Eden, the enchanted land *par excellence*, described in the Bible and sought by explorers virtually throughout the history of Judaism and Christianity. Conquistadors set off for villages made of gold, where precious stones lay thick on the streets and the sunlight reflected off the silver buildings was blindingly brilliant. Others became interested in the Fountain of Youth, a spring whose waters could restore health and virility, and, as its powers were amplified in retellings of its existence in the uncharted interior of the American landmass, restore youth. Rainbows, clouds, and comets, omens for Native Americans, were omens as well for

Europeans. The behavior of animals—a flock of birds startled into flight or the early morning growling of elk—were signs of the workings of invisible powers. The hand of God, God's Providence, was visible in all manner of events, from the sudden appearance of vast schools of fish to timely rainfall and spectacular sunsets.

What was beautiful was also terrifying. Those who sailed to the Americas were well aware of the possibility of being attacked by evil, cunning sea monsters, which sometimes consumed ships full of sailors and sometimes carried them to underwater lairs to imprison, torture, and toy with them. Hurricanes, lightning, and earthquakes were amazing spectacles, striking terror into the pious hearts of sailors and landlubbers alike, for such things were from God and meant as punishment for sin. The alligator, rattlesnake, Gila monster, and other extraordinary creatures were regarded as living embodiments of the power of evil and, like the wolf in Europe, potentially an agent of demonic force. The wolf in the forest was a formidable enemy, as much for its teeth and claws as for its demonic stare, which conveyed its collaboration with the powers of darkness. Euro-Americans and Indians alike experienced a world full of terrible wonders, one that threatened injury, pain, and death through evil agency. The world was enchanted, but in a way that cut in both directions. It was beautiful, and it was horrifying.

Violence and terror of human origin in the early Euro-American communities arose against the background of such an enchanted view of the world. The colonial enterprise is itself inherently violent: militarily superior expeditions seeking resources—raw materials, precious stones, labor—force dominated indigenous communities to yield

them. Victories over indigenes and the acquisition of assets are understood in connection with religion, intertwined with beliefs about divine favor, divine justice, and religious destiny. Colonialism in North America was never merely a foray to bring gold, lumber, fish, and slave-made commodities back to Europe. It was a broader exercise in making a world. Euro-Americans understood their domination of Native Americans as a kind of wonder, a gift from God, as it were, a sign of divine Providence and promise from God to bless their achievements and aspirations for colonialist expansion and further domination. Because of that close interweaving of religion and the violence that came with colonization, and because that interweaving took place under an umbrella of deep investment in the enchantedness of the world, what was thought a gift from God could in fact reveal itself to be a nightmare. The land that was an overflowing bounty of food could lose its fecundity, and famine could follow. The natives who seemed noble or innocent could become fearsome and deadly opponents. Evil was proximate and powerful. Violence and terror were the dark underbelly of the colonial self-understanding. In an enchanted world that was made volatile through the constant back-and-forth power dynamics of colonial domination, much could go wrong. Euro-Americans accepted violence and terror as part of their stake in colonialism, justifying their own acts of violence through recourse to their religious view of the world. Native Americans, for their part, did the same, but as dominated peoples, their experiences differed in important ways from those of the Spanish, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and British.

Purities and Cleansings: The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

A history of conflict between religious groups in Europe translated into conflicts between religious groups in America, where the circumstances of colonialism further inflamed them. Protestants and Catholics had been at war from the early sixteenth century, and in the seventeenth century, the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648—a spectacular episode of religious violence between Protestants and Catholics) ruined a large part of Germany and sharply reduced the European populations of all of the engaged parties. Deep-seated antagonisms and memories of persecutions conditioned the thinking of colonists, so that hatreds between Catholics and Protestants in the Old World survived in the New. Jews, who had suffered for centuries as “Christ-killers” and were hunted periodically because they were thought to

kidnap and murder children—whose blood, according to myth, was required in Jewish ceremonies—remained locked in volatile relationships with Christians. The rhetoric of religious hatred shaped encounters between all of these religious groups, including Protestants versus Protestants, and served as the foundation for violence when it broke out. Hatred, as a kind of dysfunctional attachment between these groups, regularly led to bloodshed.

The extreme nature of religious violence—the preoccupation with purity and the concerted programs of cleansings undertaken to achieve purity—was conceived with an eye to the Old Testament. Among the many accounts of warfare between the ancient Jews and their opponents, one stood out in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as an inspiration to thinking about religious enemies. The story of the Amalekites, which was written in 1 and 2 Samuel, Judges, and the Pentateuch, set the terms for hatred of others and was used to justify harsh treatment of them. The Amalekites were a tribe that was kin to the Jews but turned on them while the Jews were fleeing slavery in Egypt. Setting upon the weak and elderly in the rear of the caravan crossing the desert, the Amalekites assaulted the Jews and stole from them. Moses eventually presided over a victorious battle with them, after which the Lord said to him: “I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Exodus 17:8–16). Later accounts told of God’s promise to “blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Deuteronomy 25:17–19) and recounted God’s command to enact genocidal violence on them for their treachery: “Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass” (1 Samuel 15:2–3). In the hands of English writers, the Amalek imagery was refined for use against Catholics after the sixteenth century and was adapted for deployment against other religious enemies as well. The central logic remained the same: those who are religious kin are the worst of enemies once they conspire to betray, and the appropriate response of the betrayed is hatred and violence approaching genocide in its breadth and intensity. Religious warfare, as manifest in the Thirty Years’ War and elsewhere, was a project undertaken in vengeance against betrayal, and the ruthless cleansings it sought were justified by appeal to the Bible.

Europeans believed that Native Americans were their kin. The exact nature of that kinship remained ambiguous, and the details about how related groups came to live so far apart in the world, and then reengage, were debated and

challenged throughout the colonial period. But many colonists came to understand Native Americans as the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Jews who were scattered from the eastern Mediterranean in ancient times. Spanish writers such as Bartolomé de las Casas (1484–1566), Garcilaso de la Vega, Pedro Cieza de León, and José de Acosta read in Indian rituals and ideas, material culture and language, vestiges of Judaism. Other Spanish and French missionaries saw that background as well, and the Puritan missionary John Eliot, the Jewish rabbi Menasseh ben Israel (in Amsterdam), and the English Presbyterian cleric Thomas Thorowgood, among others, wrote forcefully about the strength of the Indian linkage to the Jews. Some believed that Native Americans, moreover, had been visited by Jesus Christ after his resurrection and had become his followers but had lost the rudiments of their faith over time. All of this meant that Indians were distantly but importantly related to European Christians and that their past was a *praeparatio evangelica*, a preparation to receive the gospel that Christians brought with them to the Americas. Some Europeans, then, and especially missionaries, imagined Indians as religiously attached to them. As religious kin, Native Americans accordingly bore the responsibility of responding to Christian outreach in ways that Europeans imagined were appropriate. When that did not happen, they were viewed not merely as uninterested in Christianity and the Christian cultures of Europeans but as traitors to the imagined bonds by which Europeans had come to conceive an ancient attachment to them. In the worst of situations, they were compared to Amalekites.

Colonists and Indians often collaborated in making cultural worlds in which to live in North America. They also frequently fought each other. The trigger for violence rarely was religion per se. English and Indians ordinarily did not fight over competing interpretations of doctrine or disagreements about the manner of performance of certain religious rituals. Warfare broke out over land claims, trading authority, fair exchange, social and family orders, and a range of practical issues arising from the domination of Indians by colonial powers. The colonial rhetoric of war, however, was often deeply religious, particularly so when disagreements were deep and offenses to colonists were experienced as profound. In such cases the New England clergy cast Indians as Amalekites and called for their extermination. When Indians allied with the French, they were considered doubly traitorous because the French were Catholics and New Englanders were Protestants. The New England Puritan Cotton Mather

urged on colonial forces against Indians who had joined the French in 1689 by exhorting them to get “the Track of those Ravenous howling Wolves and then pursue them vigorously; Turn not back until they are consumed; . . . Tho’ they cry let there be none to save them; But beat them small as the Dust before the Wind. . . . [They] may . . . by their Diabolical Charms, keep our Dogs from hurting of them, but they shall not so keep our Swords from coming at them . . . against the Amalek that is now annoying this Israel in the Wilderness.” Aroused by such rhetoric, Euro-Americans sometimes conceived their troubles with Native Americans as resolvable through genocidal violence. The reduction of the fortified Indian village of Mystic in 1637, in which the entire population of over six hundred persons—mostly women and children—were burned alive, was one such instance. Major John Mason, the leader of the English forces, cast the event in starkly Old Testament terms, noting that God, “laughed his Enemies and the Enemies of his People to scorn making [the Indians] as a fiery Oven. . . . Thus did the Lord judge among the Heathen, filling [the fort] with dead Bodies.”

New Englanders, who were committed to an ideal of religious purity in their towns and villages, defended their brand of Protestantism against competing groups and individuals. Executions for witchcraft began early in the history of Massachusetts and reached their peak in the hanging of nineteen persons in Salem in 1692. Women, such as Margaret Jones, who was executed in Charlestown in 1648, were especially liable to be accused of witchcraft. Violence against witches was largely violence against women in colonial America. In the case of Puritan persecution of Quakers, the victims also were mostly women. Mary Dyer, a Quaker missionary, was tortured and then executed in Massachusetts in 1660. Anne Hutchinson, whose theological views differed from the views of her Puritan neighbors, was banished from the colony in 1638. In the view of some Puritans, the various enemies—witches, Quakers, Indians, and Hutchinson—were cut from the same cloth. New Englander Nathaniel Morton, stressing the duplicity and traitorous behavior of all of them, bemoaned their “great endangering of the whole,” meaning of both church and commonwealth. In Virginia, Thomas Jefferson concluded that Quakers were similarly hated and escaped execution purely by chance during the colonial era. Elsewhere in the South, there was violence against Native Americans, Baptists, Catholics, and others, carried forward by various religious groups.

Some of the most visible religious violence in the South was between Catholics and Protestants. In the shadow of

war in England between Puritans and royalists in the 1640s, Catholics in Maryland came under attack from a largely vigilante force led by the militant Protestant Richard Ingle, who was captain of the ship *Reformation*. Maryland had been founded as a Catholic colony but had accepted persons of other faiths as settlers. Ingle's campaign, known afterward as The Plundering Time, so terrorized the Catholic populace that it chased most of them from the colony, along with the Catholic governor, Leonard Calvert. Ingle was motivated by a belief that British Americans should swear allegiance to the new English Parliament as well as by his hatred of Catholics. Acting accordingly, he plundered Catholic property and arrested Jesuits, bringing them back to England in chains. His eventual allies from Virginia, who disputed land claims made by Maryland, enabled him to roam the countryside freely, harassing and assaulting Catholics or their sympathizers. It was not until the Battle of Severn, which was fought in 1655 between Catholics who had returned to Maryland and a force made up primarily of Puritans who had settled in Virginia, that the dispute and bloodshed diminished. In the aftermath of the battle, which killed nineteen persons and injured many more, the government of Maryland was established firmly enough to discourage further violence.

Catholics suffered elsewhere as well, and in some instances it took place under the umbrella of legal protection. In colonial New York, as was the case in Maryland, English politics overflowed into North America and shaped an environment that put the small Catholic minority at a deepening disadvantage. Following the deposition of James II, the Catholic ruler of England, in the Glorious Revolution (1688), English overseers of the American colonies sought to limit or curtail the influence of Catholics in British North America. They persuaded some colonial governing bodies to create legislation that variously revoked toleration of Catholics, prohibited the preaching of Catholic doctrines, excluded Catholics from public office holding, and other measures. In New York, where a law prohibiting Jesuits in the colony was enacted in 1700, Father John Ury was tried and executed the following year for being a Catholic priest and practicing Catholicism, as well as for sedition, understood in his case as his informing an African American that God would forgive his sins.

The relations between the British colonies and New France likewise were conditioned by events that transpired in Europe, so that religious enmities that flared in Europe were felt in America. Religion and politics had been

intertwined in Europe for centuries, and the case was the same in North America. No act of religious violence was ever purely religious in its origins; but when disputes intensified and armies began their marches toward each other, religious rhetoric served a crucial role in justifying force and shaping the consciousness of participants as defenders of religious values and ways of life. During the French and Indian War (1754–1763), which pitted the British and its American colonies against the French and their Indian allies, the New England military relied on religious exhortation of troops that cast the French as cunning and malignant Catholics. Ministers who preached about the war foretold doom if the French were victorious, calling forth scenarios in which Catholic rule would destroy the world's only hope for a purified Christianity (on the model of New England Puritanism). So certain were Protestant clergy that Catholics were dedicated to destroying their carefully wrought holy commonwealths—the religiously organized towns of New England—that they compared a potential French victory to the end of the world. Apocalyptic thus was blended with other hate speech to create a vision of terror for New Englanders. The fight against the French accordingly was understood as a fight of cosmic dimensions, as good battling evil, and the violence that was required to obtain victory was presented as a desperate struggle for the life of Christianity and therefore justified in whatever ways it might unfold. The political and military engagement thus became a religious battle, framed in terror and enacted in holy violence.

Large-scale religious violence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries took place between rival Protestant groups as well as between Protestants and Catholics. Baptists and some Presbyterians, Quakers, and Moravians joined forces to oppose the Anglicans and their allies who held power in Virginia and North Carolina in the 1770s. As was generally the case, land, politics, trade arrangements, and taxation policy contributed to the frictions, but a central issue was one of religious difference and especially divergence of opinion about individual freedom in religion. In North Carolina the fiercely separatist Baptist side formed as the Regulators, in the Piedmont, or western part of the region, near Sandy Springs, a Baptist community begun by transplanted New Englander Shubal Stearns in the mid-1750s. The backcountry Regulators voiced a number of complaints, including their unwillingness to support through their taxes the Anglican Church, which claimed authority over them. Anglicans (who soon were to be known formally in America as Episcopalians), for their part,

did not wish to see other groups succeed in their evangelizing the local population, because it would undermine the potential base for an expanded state church. At Alamance, which was near Sandy Creek, the Regulators fought a pitched battle with the largely Anglican militia in 1771. They were defeated, and a number of Regulators were hanged and Baptist properties despoiled. Because the Regulators had organized by joining one religious congregation to another, and because they had imagined the colonial government theologically as evil in its attempts to deny them their religious and political individuality, they felt the defeat especially keenly as religious violence.

The complexity of religious hatred and violence was apparent in the constant and boldly stated suspicions that religious groups voiced about competing groups. With the exception of Tories, colonists harbored fears about the agenda of the Anglican Church, which was thought to include plans to make Anglicanism the state church of all of the colonies. The writings of colonial agitators against Anglicanism in the 1760s and 1770s formed an important part of the rhetorical justification for revolution. Suspicions about Native Americans were more profound. Even when Indians converted to Christianity, their religious status was, for many colonists, ambiguous. Some debated whether Indians could ever truly be converted. That ambiguity led to many tragic encounters with Christians, as was the case at Gnadenhütten, Ohio, in 1782, when whites massacred approximately ninety Moravian converts, suspecting them of having caused trouble in the region. Until the last hours the whites praised the Indians for their faith and their diligent practice of Christian virtue. They were treated like Christian kin and then led—men, women, and children, singly or in pairs—to the killing house and murdered.

As the slave trade increased and the African American population grew, slave overseers and owners who endeavored to prevent blacks from practicing African religions terrorized them through physical punishment, family separations, and by other means. While it is true that African Americans converted to Christianity in large numbers, it is also the case that traditional religions were forcibly discouraged, and a great amount of the religious culture of slaves accordingly was lost. Islam, which was the religion of somewhere between four and twelve million Africans who were brought to North America, was almost entirely extinguished. Some elements of traditional religions were incorporated into the Christianity of African Americans, but the distinct local traditions of Africa, alongside Islam, were

largely consumed in what has been referred to as the “African spiritual holocaust” in North America.

The Nineteenth Century

Immigration of Catholics, Jews, and others in the nineteenth century made non-Protestant religious communities more visible, and, being more visible, more of a threat to many Americans. At the same time, new religious movements such as the Mormons challenged the religious views of members of most of the other denominations. During the nineteenth century, moreover, African Americans made major strides in organizing churches and denominations, and the Methodists utilized a form of worship that distinguished them from most other Protestants and accordingly placed them on the margins for a while, a threat to some of the more established Protestant denominations and a provocation to the relative decorum practiced in most houses of worship. The frictions that emerged during this period led to the development of several species of scurrilous literature—from fictional stories of girls forced into Catholic convents to serve the pleasures of priests to fabulous tales of Jewish conspiracies to dominate the world and Mormon plans to subvert democracy. That literature presented a terrifying view of religious others and fueled all manner of violence, in large cities, in small towns, and on the frontier.

The Shakers established a matrix of a dozen villages in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Protestants from more established denominations criticized them for their unorthodox belief in a God who was male and female, their certainty that the Second Coming already had taken place, their loud and seemingly poorly structured worship, and their desire to live in cloistered communities apart from the rest of society, a choice that, in the nineteenth century, easily could mark a group of religious persons as potential conspirators against the social order. Shakers consequently suffered vigilante regulation and were attacked by mobs, as in Enfield, New Hampshire, in 1818, and in Harvard, Massachusetts, during the summer of 1782. In the latter case a mob whipped, beat, and continuously terrorized a group of male and female Shakers for miles after running them out of town. Protestants took issue also with early Methodism, which they disliked for its freeform worship, which could be enthusiastic and loud; its radical theology of rebirth and perfection; and its comparatively informal means of credentialing preachers and ministers. Methodist camp meetings in antebellum America were sometimes visited by individuals or mobs who harassed worshippers by shouting and

laughing or assaulted them with clubs and guns. In some cases persons died in these confrontations, and by the second half of the nineteenth century, even after Methodism had become one of the largest denominations in the United States, some state legislatures deemed the problem so severe that specific statutes were enacted to make the disruption of camp meetings a crime.

The founding of the African Methodist Episcopal (1816) and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (1821) denominations, and the increase in the number of black denominations after 1800, mixed religion and race in a way that brought greater attention to black congregations. Some of that attention was unwanted, for it led to confrontations between whites and blacks, some of which were violent, and, especially, it precipitated a long-running series of black church burnings that continued into the twentieth century. Opponents of black churches argued that African Americans were not fit to wield authority within a Christian church and that their example was an insult and corruption to other Christian churches. Woven into white opposition was the fear that as blacks organized themselves into religious bodies, they would improve their social status, moving beyond the strictures placed on them through slavery and segregation. Black clergy routinely were harassed and assaulted, and arsonists kept busy throughout the year. In the first six months of 1877, fifteen black churches were burned in Texas alone. Churches with schools were especially prone to arson. On a night in May 1866, a mob in Memphis moved through the city methodically burning the black churches and schoolhouses.

The emergence of Mormonism in the 1830s challenged not only Protestant churches but Catholics as well, and, in fact, concerned virtually all persons who were not Mormons. The revelations given to Joseph Smith, the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, appealed to a rapidly growing body of Americans (and Europeans who later immigrated to America), and the missionary zeal of the church ensured that its message would be heard far and wide. That zeal was met by the frenzy of critics and, within a year or so of the church's organization, by mobs who beat and tarred and feathered Smith and his followers, destroyed their property, and drove them from the communities where they had settled. The first anti-Mormon book, *Mormonism Unveiled*, appeared in 1834. It presented Joseph Smith and his family as charlatans who schemed to fleece the gullible of their property by persuading them to believe in outrageous stories about the history of North America, God's

plan for humanity, the true life of Jesus, and the reality of ongoing revelation from God. By the time plural marriage became an accepted part of Mormon life, at midcentury, opponents were able to charge Mormons with a long list of offenses that was anything but superficial: they were immoral, dishonest, stupid, corrupt, antidemocratic, conspiratorial, duplicitous in commerce, unpatriotic, blasphemous, and greedy. Wherever Smith's followers settled, the charges followed them, and their critics found ways in which to confirm these through observation of the evils of Mormonism.

In 1838, Missourians worried that Mormon immigration to the area was being organized with a view to taking over towns, then counties, and eventually the state. As frictions increased, the militia collected Mormon firearms, and harassment and assaults on Mormons increased. Following a Mormon attack on a militia encampment, Governor Lilburn Boggs issued an "order of extermination" against the Mormons. A battle at Haun's Mill consequently left eighteen Mormons dead and chased most others eastward across the Mississippi River, where they made the town of Nauvoo (formerly, Commerce) their core community. Tempers soon flared in Nauvoo as well, and when news of polygamy began to circulate broadly, locals raised the pitch of their opposition. A former Mormon, William Law, established a newspaper, the *Nauvoo Expositor*, in order to air his dissatisfaction with the church and to promote opposition to Mormons, charging them with immorality and anti-Christian agendas. After Mormons destroyed Law's office and press in 1844, Smith was arrested. A few days later he and his brother Hyrum were shot to death by a mob that broke into the jail. In the wake of such violence, Mormons organized a trek to the Utah territory and established there a way of life that included polygamy ("plural marriage"), a theocratic social order, a heightened ambivalence toward the federal government, and a zealous ministry to westerners. Increasingly cast by their opponents as antidemocratic in spirit and anti-American in their tribalism and radical interpretation of Christian history, Mormons in 1857 faced the prospect of battling a force of 25,000 troops sent by President James Buchanan to remove their governor, Brigham Young. That year Mormons massacred a wagon train of 120 Protestant men, women, and children in Mountain Meadows, Utah, an offense that illustrated for all the violence that was imbedded in relations between Mormons and non-Mormons. Young was removed as governor the following year. Tensions between Mormons and non-Mormons remained strong,

and anti-Mormon bias continued to surface in various ways, including in the 2008 Republican presidential primary, when polls indicated that many would not vote for candidate Mitt Romney because he was a Mormon.

Catholic emigration from Ireland surged in the 1840s because blight on the potato crop destroyed the rural Irish food base, leading to over a million deaths by famine. Those who arrived in American ports tended to stay there, building neighborhoods, gaining local power, and drawing attention to themselves because of their rapidly increasing numbers. By that time Catholics had been a part of the nation's religious landscape for two hundred years, however, and immigration basically served to heighten anxieties between Catholics and Protestants rather than generate new kinds of issues. In Boston in the 1830s differences already were breaking into violence. A war of words and the emergence of an incendiary exposé literature that pictured convent life as a species of slavery led to the burning of the Charlestown convent by a Protestant mob in 1834. More serious were the pitched battles that broke out in Philadelphia in the spring and summer of 1844. Protestants feared that Catholics were organizing to take the Bible out of the public school curriculum, and they worried as well that Catholics, who were becoming more engaged in building parochial schools, were part of a conspiracy, headquartered in Rome, to overthrow the American government and with it the informal Protestant establishment. Early in May a mob in the Catholic Kensington neighborhood set fire to St. Michael's and St. Augustine's churches, destroying them, along with many Catholic residences. In July the Native American Party, an organization that resisted immigration, Catholics, Jews, and others, scheduled a parade. Fearing that the parade was a pretense for further mob violence, Catholics persuaded the sheriff and governor to post soldiers to protect the church of St. Philip Neri. A riot involving thousands ensued, and the militia was successful in defending the church with cannon fire. The mob for their part responded by taking a cannon from the wharf and bringing it to the church, and a full-pitched battle—with firearms, cannons, and hand weapons—left many dead. Dozens of Catholics, and some Protestants, died again in 1870, in another instance of massed forces in battle, in the New York City Orange Day riot. Religious violence in the matter of Catholic differences with Protestants—just like the case with Mormons and their opponents—was not merely a matter of isolated instances of assaults on individuals in drinking establishments or altercations between small groups in alleyways.

The violence was performed on a large scale, furnished in regular military weaponry, and deadly in its outcomes. From Governor Boggs's "order of extermination" to the cannon fire traded in Philadelphia, religious violence emerged from hatreds deeply engraved on all the parties involved.

Violence against Catholics was fueled by Protestant paranoia that Catholics in the United States operated on secret orders from Rome to destroy the legacy of the Reformation in America and to establish a theocracy ruled by the pope. The Catholic "secret" confession of sins to a priest was but one illustration offered by Protestant critics of the underhanded and conspiratorial ways of Catholics. Catholics, for their part, were not helped by a Roman leadership that declared democracy to be a modern error—along with separation of church and state—and claimed that the pope was infallible. Such doctrines appeared to non-Catholics as evidence of Catholic antirationalism, fanaticism, and willingness to be led like sheep, manipulated and deceived by a corrupt European priestcraft. The American Protective Association (APA), founded in Iowa in 1887 at a time when Catholic immigration again was surging, advocated the removal of Catholics from public office and from teaching positions in public schools. Members were initiated with a pledge that obliged them to use their influence power to strike the "shackles and chains of blind obedience" to the Roman Catholic Church from the consciences of Catholics in order to "retard and break down the power of the Pope." The APA spread fear of Catholicism in various ways, and especially through circulation of phony Catholic documents, such as a papal letter urging Americans to rise up and exterminate Protestants on the feast of St. Ignatius in December 1893.

Violence against Native Americans remained a problem throughout the nineteenth century. The forced relocation to reservations tore Indians from sacred lands and geographically coded traditions. Once settled onto reservations, Indians were subjected to the judgment of commissioners who often took a dim view of Indian religious rituals. The Sun Dance among the Plains Indians was made an offense in the 1880s and 1890s. Other dances were banned as well. Federal overseers greatly delimited the roles of medicine men and women, including, in some places, prohibiting the office of "medicine man" itself. Indian children were separated from their parents and enrolled in mission schools, which were run by the various denominations, both Catholic and Protestant. The practice of Indian religious traditions and languages—which were the central conveyors and sustaining structures of

tradition—was prohibited, replaced by Christian ritual and catechesis. Richard Henry Pratt, a military officer who took an interest in Indian education, pointedly explained the approach to an audience in 1882: “Kill the Indian in him, and save the man.” Newspapers, magazines, and politicians continued to call for campaigns against Indians, invoking Amalek imagery and declaring the need to “exterminate” the Indian. The motto Civilization or Extermination animated such writing. It was grounded in a view of the requirement that Indians become Christian in order to be civilized and at the same time represented skepticism about the possibility of converting the Indian, an opinion often voiced in the nineteenth century. If it were found, wrote H. C. Cushing in 1880, that it was impossible to “civilize” Indians, logic required that they be “exterminated.” Such statements inflamed hatred and offered rhetorical justification for genocide, and kept observers focused on religious developments with Indian communities. When Indians began performing the Ghost Dance, a religious ritual with political overtones, in the 1880s, many took notice, fearing its potential to revitalize Indian religion and strengthen resistance to federal agendas of containment and control. On the Sioux reservation in South Dakota, Chief Sitting Bull was arrested shortly before Christmas 1890 for failing to curtail the Ghost Dance on the reservation. Two weeks later, in an atmosphere charged with mutual suspicions and fears, United States troops massacred over 150 Sioux, mostly women and children.

The Twentieth Century

The transition to the twentieth century took place in a religious landscape that was rapidly changing. There was more diversity due to immigration, significant geographical rearrangement of religious groups as a result of internal migration, and alterations in gender roles in religious life as in the rest of society. Such changes were met with retrenchments such as fundamentalism, the Men and Religion Forward Movement, and a “muscular” Protestant revivalism, among other developments. Of particular importance was the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan was founded in Tennessee after the Civil War and described by a federal grand jury in 1870 as a terrorist organization. Although it stumbled organizationally in the late nineteenth century, it reemerged in force after 1915. It was revived in Georgia and spread quickly throughout the South and Midwest, in both urban and rural areas, and especially in places where immigration of African Americans had changed traditional demographics. Best known for its campaign of terror against

blacks, it also was anti-Catholic and anti-Jew. The Klan was an expression of Protestantism, not a marginal movement but one, as Kelly J. Baker has written, that was in the mainstream of American religious life. Its membership included bankers, lawyers, doctors, political figures, and business and civic leaders alongside farmers, mechanics, factory workers, and laborers. The preoccupation of the Klan with racial and religious purity, and its far-reaching program of terror carried out in the name of Protestant Christianity, represented the extent to which religiously inspired hate rhetoric could foster violence.

The Klan’s deadly crusade against African Americans led to beatings, kidnappings, torture, and murder, all of which came to be represented in lynching, the “Southern rite of human sacrifice” (according to Donald Mathews), a performance steeped in Christian theological ideas. Not all victims of Klan violence were African Americans. The second coming of the Klan in 1915 in fact took place in Atlanta in the immediate wake of the mob lynching of a Jew, Leo Frank. Some of the members of the mob, who called themselves the Knights of Mary Phagan, after the girl Frank was accused of murdering, met several months later to form the new Klan. Imagined as a vast national organization, which in time it became, the Klan was relaunched under the leadership of Georgian Thomas Edward Watson, who conceived it as a defense of the “common man” and Christianity (that is, Protestantism) against African Americans, Catholics, Jews, and some other groups. The Klan established a reign of terror in many places throughout the United States, not only through lynching but also by burning houses of worship, desecrating cemeteries, assaulting and murdering clergy, and by other means all justified as defenses of the Christian gospel, as it was interpreted in the light of the burning crosses that became the Klan’s trademark. The Klan’s obsession with purity and its record of exterminating opponents embodied the spirit of a deeply ingrained Old Testament view of the world, one that foregrounded the lesson of the Amalekites. The Klan was also infused with a sense of its own victimization, however, in ways that suggested, ironically, parallels to narratives of the suffering of Jews in antiquity. A three-day battle between Klan members and young men from the University of Notre Dame, which took place in South Bend, Indiana, during a provocative Klan rally there in 1924, led to an increased litany of Klan protestations that it was the guardian of national Christian ideals and suffered persecution for its patriotism and active defense of Christianity.

Some Catholics, alongside Protestants, fashioned their own anti-Jewish agendas. Father Coughlin, later dubbed “the Father of Hate Radio,” commanded the radio airwaves during the Depression with his message of hope for the workman blended with strongly anti-Semitic rhetoric. Like the Klan, Coughlin pictured himself not as persecutor but as a victim, and he sought to explain his inflammatory speeches about Jews in language suggesting that large, impersonal historical forces, not human agency, were responsible for religious violence, stating matter-of-factly in 1938 that persecution of Christians “always begets persecution of the Jews.” His weekly sermons were tuned in by an estimated forty million listeners each week, many of whom were prepared to receive his message because of their previous exposure to anti-Jewish literature. Such literature included, most importantly, *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, a spurious Russian account of Jewish conspiracies to dominate the world. Translated into English, it was popularized in the 1920s by Coughlin’s Detroit-area counterpart Henry Ford, an Episcopalian and right-wing extremist who initially published it in his anti-Semitic newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*. Long discredited as propaganda, *Protocols* nevertheless has been republished in the United States periodically since that time, most recently in the Arabic-language newspaper *The Arab Voice*, in New Jersey, which serialized it in 2002. That was three years after the 1999 “Summer of Hate,” as the Jewish Anti-Defamation League termed it, when, owing to a summer of increased anti-Semitic violence, the final annual tally of 1,532 religious hate crimes recorded by the FBI included 1,198 against Jews.

Members of Jehovah’s Witnesses, a religious group that emerged from Adventism in the nineteenth century and grew steadily in the twentieth century, were the object of violence for their doctrine of pacifism and their refusal after the 1930s to salute the flag. Their enemies believed that the Jehovah’s Witnesses conspired to establish a theocratic order in the United States and that they were “fanatics” and morally depraved. Subjected to mass arrests by the government for their refusal to perform military service, members of the church suffered ongoing harassment and assault throughout the country. During the 1940s, large mobs attacked congregations from rural Maine to Klamath Falls, Oregon, burning houses of worship and beating members. In such cases, as with many others involving additional religious groups, the violence was interwoven with a certain understanding of patriotism, and the complaints against the Jehovah’s Witnesses mingled suspicion of the religious practice per se with

disagreements about politics and the role of America as a “Christian” nation.

Suspicion of covert unpatriotic tendencies likewise was a factor in the internment of Japanese Americans in camps during the Second World War. The religious element played a role, however. Americans had been suspicious of Asians who practiced religions other than Christianity, and newspapers, especially on the West Coast, regularly published accounts critical of the religion of the Chinese joss houses; Christian Americans, outside of a small group of intellectuals, were deeply suspicious of Buddhism, many wondering if it was a religion at all. Violence against Chinese, which took place on a large scale throughout the West—California, Wyoming, and Washington being sites of particular importance—often took the form of vandalism against religious property and mob assaults. The state program of terror against Japanese Americans included the incarceration of Buddhist priests in Hawaii for the duration of the war. Some Americans believed that the intermingled Shinto/Buddhist traditions of many Japanese Americans still tied them to obedience to the Japanese emperor, who, in the context of state-sponsored Shinto, was an object of reverence for Japanese. Buddhist priests, as leaders of the religious community, accordingly were deemed a threat to national security.

With the relaxation of immigration restrictions in the 1960s and the subsequent increase of Asian immigrants, religions such as Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism, among others, became more visible. As had been the case throughout American history, such visibility often led to a negative reaction within local communities. The success of the Unification Church, which was a blend of Christianity and the religious ideas of its Korean founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, brought it attention from parents who complained that the church was brainwashing their children who had joined it. A series of court cases in the 1970s revealed the degree to which Americans were opposed to the church, and to other religious groups that were associated with Asian leaders or traditions. They also evidenced the extent to which some would go to “rescue” family members (through kidnapping and forced “deprogramming”) who belonged to such groups. Some Americans came to understand all religions of Asian background as similarly corrupt in their recruitment of members and unpatriotic in their refusal to abide by a patriotism that was interwoven with a traditional Christianity.

The Moonies, as they were called, were among the most visible of twentieth-century new religious movements

(NRMs) that drew extreme criticism and suffered violence. Some other NRMs that have been terrorized, either by the state or other opponents, are known because of their predicaments ending in bloodshed. The Branch Davidians, an offshoot of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination who organized themselves as a community within a protected compound in Waco, Texas, were attacked by agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms in April 1993. The agents, acting on flawed reports of abuse of children in the compound (an accusation routinely leveled against nonmainstream religious groups since the early nineteenth century) and under increasing pressure from the federal government and local officials who misunderstood the Davidian religion, committed to a high-profile raid rather than an arrest of the group's leader, David Koresh. They assaulted the main building with tanks, set it afire, and burned to death over seventy men, women, and children. The American anti-cult movement (ACM), an informal coalition of self-appointed "cult experts," defenders of conservative Christianity, and officials concerned about politically subversive organizations, framed the tragedy as the consequence of religious deviancy and of political recklessness on the part of the Branch Davidians. Emboldened by the decisive action of the government, they gained a louder voice in commenting on other nontraditional religious groups, and in some cases succeeded in precipitating action against them. Such was the case again in Eldorado, Texas, in 2004, when Texas Rangers raided the community of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, acting on reports of a since-discredited informer about abuse but also on solid intelligence about underage marriages. They removed more than four hundred children from their parents and detained them for two months in a makeshift shelter, until the Texas Supreme Court ruled that the removal was unwarranted.

The Twenty-First Century

Violence against Muslims both before and after September 11, 2001, was deeply interwoven with political concerns. Terror against Muslims surged immediately after 9/11, and it has been sustained in the years since. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, alongside ongoing global terrorism by groups claiming Islamic affiliation, led to an increase in the number of Americans who came to associate Islam itself with violence. Complicating the problem is the fact that in the years leading up to 9/11, the radical Christian right began to assert that Christianity in America was under attack internally by

Americans who had drifted from a grand Protestant vision of national destiny and had embraced religious and cultural diversity. Such persons, said conservatives, had lost their moral compass and threatened to lead America from its historic moral foundations. The religious right—who, ironically, were the ideological descendants of the nineteenth-century nativist and religious purity advocates who frequently led the campaigns against other religious groups—complained loudly about their victimization. Confusing separation of church and state with religious persecution, they lamented court orders keeping the Ten Commandments out of an Alabama courthouse and the legal defeat of a creationist curriculum in Pennsylvania. At the same time they pointed to extremist Islamic communities in Asia and elsewhere as examples of what the United States could become if conservative Christianity were not vigorously defended and promoted. Their campaign against 2008 presidential candidate Barack Obama included frequent assertions that he was in fact a Muslim in disguise, part of a dedicated Muslim global machinery that was on the verge of taking over the nation and the world. International concerns about Muslims accordingly were joined with anxieties about cultural processes internal to the United States to fuel a growing fear of Muslims, and to authorize opposition to them, in a global arena and in the domestic one.

Religion thrives on deep feelings and especially volatile ones that can be brought to the surface in religious practice. In monotheistic traditions, as well as some others, fear and terror are central components of religious life, and hatred often emerges in connection with them. Religion in America is emotional religion, and the violence and terror in American religion emerge prominently from that core of feeling.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *Anti-Catholicism*; *Anti-Semitism*; *Bible* entries; *Islam in North America*; *Jehovah's Witnesses*; *Latter-day Saints*; *Native American Religions: Post-Contact*; *Puritans*; *Race and Racism*; *Religious Prejudice* entries; *Religious Right*; *Shakers*; *South as Region*; *Unification Church*.

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Visual Culture

Visual culture categorizes a wide array of objects and their study, including paintings and Web sites, ritual movement and furniture arrangement, architectural motif and graphic design. In the study of religion, visual culture is one species of the genus of material culture, often with an emphasis on the study of images and icons within explicitly religious contexts such as worship sanctuaries or home altars. If the category of *material culture* encompasses religious belief and practice, then visual culture tells us how it looks, and to whom and to what theological, experiential, and cultural effect. Yet increasingly visual cultures of religion incorporate more ordinary locations and less obviously sacred objects, including tourist tchotchkes, outsider art, and billboard advertisements. As the documentary evidence for visual culture expands, so do the strategies of studying it. Whereas once studies in visual arts may have focused solely on

iconological readings of individual paintings or biographical interpretations of an artist's craft, newer work seeks to account for social reception, commercialism, and the effects of pluralism on the construction, distribution, and identification of visual medium. Although many of the examples discussed here focus on the images and objects of visual culture, the study of visual culture is, at its best, an investigation into the political, economic, domestic, and institutional interface between practitioners and visual technology.

Visual Culture's Relationship with Art History

To distinguish visual cultures from other aspects of material culture, the investigator finds materials and impressions acquired through sight. What is visualized produces mental images of forms that may be materially manifest or virtually perceived. When one thinks about the visual, then, one must think simultaneously of the object designated by sight, but also the image constructed from that sight. The images produced by such observance are the optical counterparts of objects produced by an optical device, and include everything from imitations in solid forms (such as a statues), a likeness of an object (as in a photograph), or a picture produced on an electronic display (a television or computer screen). Visual representations vary in their imitative approximations of their object, from those that pursue an exact, a tangible, or an illusory likeness. This is how one comes to interpret visual representations as resemblances, incarnations, or apparitions, all of which correlate to discussions within religious cultures of devotional icons and spirit figures manifesting incremental forms of divine power.

This description of the visual emphasizes the singular image, be it an apparitional appearance or a statue of the Virgin Mary. This imitates practices of art history, in which an image is set apart as the object to be studied, with other graphical objects or sets of objects considered lower forms of scrutiny. Hence, the divide between so-called high art and low art (the latter often described as kitsch) schematizing much scholarship. Martin Berger has called this the study of privileged objects in which each work is enshrined as a "rare and singular artifact" possessing its own form of sacredness by the sheer fact of its rarity (2005, p. 15). To emphasize singularity is to tempt implicit hierarchies of quality, lines that may decide that some works, such as the frescoes of Michelangelo, are worthy of close readings, whereas others, such as the murals of Catholic children, are not. In her study of mid-twentieth-century prescriptions for church décor, Sally Promey shows how religious leaders have reified such

aesthetic dichotomies. During the years following World War II, self-described modern Protestants sought to assign a certain aesthetic discernment to their parishioners. They recommended modernist abstraction over what they described as sentimental images, such as Warner Sallman's *Head of Christ* (1940), because abstraction was understood as an "authentic art" that would remodel the modern church in a more masculine style. Just as the United States battled godless communists abroad, leading churchmen and Protestant artists prescribed certain aesthetic forms that would entice so-called real men to the pews of these churches. Developments in art history intersect here with shifts in religious culture, in that the desire to repopulate the church in a time of national crisis led to idealized notions of singular works of artistic production.

Mimicking art history, early studies of the visual arts within religious studies focused on formalist readings of paintings, printmaking, photography, drawings, and sculpture. This descriptor of visual arts denotes those artifacts that occupied worship spaces. Visual arts also came to include works outside those sanctuaries (hanging instead in ostensibly secular art museums) showing religious content such as John Steuart Curry's *Baptism in Kansas*, a 1928 canvas that depicted a black-clad preacher providing a full immersion baptism to a long-haired woman in white. The latter subset of visual arts provided a profusion of scholarly material, including paintings of evangelical camp meetings to Works Progress Administration (WPA) photographs of rabbis teaching Jewish children.

The study of visual culture incorporates such materials, but acknowledges as well other images and objects not historically included in the canons of art history, objects that include everything from home furnishings to trading cards, advertisements and dollar bills, cemetery tombstones to shirt buttons, maps and astrological charts. Visual culture frames a wider swath, incorporating both broader visual pictures and a more diverse range of objects. Included in the survey of visual culture might be topographical vistas, urban cityscapes, and exhibition halls, as well as furniture, table settings, floral arrangements, costumes, and personal accessories. This is to broaden not only the scope of the visual (from a single mountain to a mountain range, for example) but also its culture, including but not limited to its geographic, ethnic, gender, aesthetic, historical, sociological, and economic settings. Considerations of locality and embodied performance bear weighty consequence in the study of religion, because much of religious ideation focuses on descriptions of proper

mode and method, teaching practitioners what is sacred and what is not, or what are appropriate markings and what are iconoclastic acts. Pulling together the proper elements of a Passover seder in Jewish traditions, or the appropriate layout of a Hindu shrine, or the right decorations for an Islamic mosque all involve elements of religious visual literacy in addition to requiring knowledge of ritual codes, local custom, and theological imperatives.

Every religious culture has a visual culture, some of which is ordered by traditional expectation, some constructed by regional resources, and some mandated by interpretations of scriptural law. For example, the author of Genesis 1:27 wrote that God created man in his own image, a phrasing that has produced dramatically divergent ideas among sects and denominations, both Jewish and Christian, about how humans appear relative to their chosen divinity. Language of the visual contributes to multiple prohibitions of religious representation, including traditions within Islam that prohibit images depicting the Prophet Muhammad. Likewise, the sparse formalism of Shaker dress, home décor, and personal drawings represent their belief in the value of mystical experience, godly labor, economical thrift, and communal living, as well as their rejection of excess ornamentation as a sign of worldliness. To study either Muslims in America or Shakers in America through visual culture would necessitate pursuing the encapsulations of a singular religious decoration or design (such as a head scarf worn by a member of the Nation of Islam or an oblong Shaker box) as well as the longer histories and cultures, aesthetic and theological, that produced them and were informed by them.

Icons of Visual Culture

Even as American religious studies turned toward cultural studies of the visual, the common lexicon continues to apply categories of religion and art history in an undisciplined vernacular. For instance, the word *icon* seems to categorize a wide variety of objects, products, and people within the mediations of modernity. Traditionally, an icon has referred to a conventional religious image painted on a small wooden panel and used in some Christian devotions, especially Eastern traditions. From such a peculiarly Christian context, the category of icon gained comparative utility to define other pictorial representations of figures in indigenous and institutionalized religions. This use of Christian vocabulary as the comparative standard for other religious objects, visual and otherwise, is not unusual for religious studies or the history of art. Because much of Western art rotated around



John Steuart Curry's *Baptism in Kansas* (1928) is an example of visual art with religious subject matter appearing outside of a strictly religious context, hanging instead in ostensibly "secular" art museums.

explicitly religious subjects, studying the visual culture of religion rests on a vocabulary with a predominantly Christian idiom. Yet this initial leap of noncontextual application inaugurates a process by which *icon* becomes a word so variously applied, in so many traditions and locations, that its classification seems potentially bankrupt.

Another way to view the problem, however, is to consider the ways words like *icon*, like other exported visual categories of religion such as *shrine* or *amulet*, as they travel hither and yon carry new definitions and invitations to research religious phenomenology. To continue the example of the icon, then, is to find that it was over the course of the twentieth century used in contexts that were not obviously religious. Such an icon could be an emblem, such as "the

Chrysler Building is an icon of New York City," or an emblematic individual, such as "Judy Garland is a gay icon." This application of the word *icon* suggested that whatever or whoever was labeled iconic had a symbolic potency akin to a religious icon. A Christian may, for example, look on a painted icon that represents St. Mary of Egypt and meditate on the power of repentance, viewing the representation of an unkempt and starving older woman with a sense of her hagiography and the narrative of faith that explains her significance and placed her on that wooden panel. A Christian who possesses that icon might place it prominently in the home and pass by it regularly, might pray before it occasionally, or might keep it out of sight for years on end. But the icon's visual purpose is as ritual reminder and holy

remembrance, meaningful within layers of theology, ritual, and institutional process that put that saint on that wooden board for that believer's witness.

A commercial icon—be it a celebrity or a building or a product—complicates this relationship, begging us to ask what are the practices of visualization that surround, for example, entertainer Judy Garland (1922–1969). A study of the iconicity of Garland would necessarily include simultaneously a study of the content of her productions (albums and films), the consumption practices of her audiences (Broadway, film, and gay), and the multiple histories (Hollywood, vocal, biographical, and queer) in which her story is knit as emblematic. A scholar might then be able to discern what meanings (theological, moral, or gendered) could be discerned from a visual culture of her gingham dress and ruby-slipper costume from *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) or the posters for her live concert *Judy at Carnegie Hall* (1961), both of which have become, within several communities, iconic.

Some historians might argue that this icon represents a plural society seeking unifying emblems. In such a social context, the celebrity stands in as an ecumenical divine, inviting diverse people to listen to their music and dance en masse, to quote their famous film quips like lines from a scripture, or track their personal lives as morality plays. Within the ranks of the visual, the rarified role of the modern artist (such as Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, or Andy Warhol) partially depended on his or her image as such an agnostic icon, liberated from the restrictions of any ties, denominational or institutional. Modern art too contained these conversions of iconicity from strictly religious to something more ambiguous. Thus Marcel Duchamp's installation of a urinal in an art gallery under the title *Fountain* (1917) cannot be understood apart from the kinds of Western sculpture it rebuked. When contemporaneous photographer Alfred Stieglitz remarked that the found-object *Fountain* looked like a Buddha, he was, as James Elkins has observed, naming one way *Fountain* might be reinterpreted into fine-art meanings by making its profane actuality (it is where men urinate) a commentary on sculptural traditions that include pietas. The *Fountain* looked like a Buddha because it was, in its exemplification in a gallery, set apart, treated ritually, and understood universally. Duchamp's urinal was, in this sense of how it was treated and where it appeared, a likeness of a religious icon.

Functions of Visual Culture in Religion

Much of the literature on visual culture emphasizes that even the categorization of visual culture indicates the

profusion of options, of sects, and of the visual itself in the modern period. Although one could, with enough evidence, describe a visual culture of Byzantium, it seems inconceivable to narrate any part of modern history without an emphasis on visualizing in the age of mechanical reproduction. "Visual culture seeks to find ways to work within this new (virtual) reality to find the points of resistance in the crisis of information and visual overload in everyday life," explains Nicholas Mirzoeff (1998, p. 8). Within this overload, Sally Promey and David Morgan have created four subcategories of visual cultures of religion, emphasizing just what those objects *do*. First, they identify images that communicate ritually between human and divine realms, such as intercessory prayer at a shrine, or tools for divination. Second, some artifacts within religious cultures establish a social basis of communion by consolidating allegiances. Illustrations in a nineteenth-century schoolbook might foster a national Protestant identity, or the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., might shape Catholic identity in America. Third, Promey and Morgan turn to those shrines and memorials that commemorate experiences, inspiring not only ritual acts of visual culture, like mementos mori left at the Vietnam War Memorial on the National Mall, but also create and organize memory, as in a genealogical chart maintained in the family Bible. Finally, images within religious visual cultures may personalize spiritual experience, as in the case of Tarot card readings or fortune-telling practices within Vodou (voodoo). These four subcategories of visual culture within religions suggest the manifold ways images and objects function in the ritual and theological imagination of the users, observers, and authorities.

In space remaining, locations of such communicating and commemorating materials are observed. One might subdivide the study of visual culture into the religious work that the visual object does, as Promey and Morgan do, or the genres of object visualized, such as food, clothing, buildings, and art. Emphasizing instead generic locales of production, dissemination, and display of visual culture, however, allows us to consider the concentrated patterns of visual culture. Identifying venues in which religious artifacts are encountered (such as sanctuaries, homes, museums, streets, and stores) tracks the historiography of visual culture in American religion—beginning with the most traditional site of visual cultural study, sanctioned bodies of communal worship, and concluding with the most nontraditional, the store. Such examples will develop a sense of the organizational,

material, and social problems that create visual cultures of religion, not as singular artifacts, but instead as multifaceted sensorial localities. Rather than emphasize visual culture as a certain thing or as an overarching denominational aesthetic, this structure will approach visual culture as a process of religious encounter. In any given practitioner's life, he or she might have visits or spiritual moments within every arena, seeing processions in streets, meditating at a Zen center, and visiting the quiet of a museum.

Such practitioners may move from place to place also carrying their own visual culture, demonstrating that no location is discrete and no object singularly located. Clothing, for instance, moves from place to place. In an article on sumptuary laws in the early American colonies, Leigh Eric Schmidt (1989) explains that clothes could signal religious occupation, as well as indicate gender and family roles often prescribed by churches. From clothes intended for the Sabbath ("Sunday best") to baptismal gowns, mourning dress to wedding garb, items of clothing had assigned ritual purpose. Clothing and accessories also had doctrinal significance. Body coverage, ornamentation, and clothing colors would indicate the wearer's relationship to ideas of modesty, sin, and perfection. Hats and other accoutrements distinguished many religious groups in subsequent centuries, allowing the viewer to know quickly whether someone was a Hindu or an Orthodox Jew. Singular items of clothing, like the Quaker bonnet, might carry the image of an entire denomination in its singular profile. For some, religious wardrobe also maintained symbolic ties to alternative nationalities or identities. The Cherubim and Seraphim Church (C&S), an independent church founded in 1925 in Nigeria, is best known for its white garments, fashioned to resemble angelic beings. No matter where you are, from Owo, Nigeria, to Chicago, Illinois, a member of the C&S church may be discerned by that uniform, which has prescribed coloration, stitching, and draping (Renne 2009). Clothes supersede location, communicating religious identity and sanctifying the wearers wherever they move.

Like clothing, periodicals cannot be cordoned to single site. They travel in circuits supplying messages beyond the author's pen to whoever may find their pages. In the nineteenth century, Bret Harte's *Overland Monthly* translated the practices of new immigrants into recognizable narrative conventions (Maffly-Kipp 2005). Among Harte's correspondents was the Reverend Augustus Ward Loomis, a veteran missionary to China who took over Presbyterian mission work in San Francisco in 1865. Because of Loomis's reports,

more than ten thousand subscribers were introduced to Chinese temples, holidays, proverbs, and ceremonies. Just as Loomis sought to explain the Chinese Other to neighbor merchants, miners, and ranchers, Catholic periodicals such as *The United States Catholic Miscellany* and *Illustrated Catholic American* sought to translate their devotional lives to the nativists who surrounded them. By explaining Catholic rituals through the lens of the Enlightenment, and casting them alongside icons of the American Revolution like the eagle and the Declaration of Independence, Catholic authors tried to prove the inextricable relationship between being a good Catholic and being a good American. In recent years, ArtScroll Publications, an Orthodox Jewish publishing house, has offered an independent source for pamphlets purporting to help Jews recuperate an "authentic" religious tradition (Stolow 2007). These Bible commentaries, cookbooks, and ritual programs attracted the attention of Jewish leaders who worry that the interpretations offered by ArtScroll represent a fundamentalist perspective. The pervasive mobility of print culture can therefore provide incitement to curiosity, translations of peculiarity, and provocation to controversy if for no other reason than they appear more ubiquitous, casually in your mailbox or local store. The appearance of these periodicals, then, is provocative twice over—by their look (graphic design, photos, content) and by their saturating arrival.

Worship Spaces

Worship spaces are those areas designated for communal or individual ritual experience. Within the established scope of that space, the individual believer may feel insignificant or empowered or ensconced by the structures of that space. Different spaces will encourage different reception through their visual conveyances. "What happens in space lends a miraculous quality to thought, which becomes incarnate by means of a *design* in both senses of the word," writes Henri Lefebvre. "The design serves as a mediator—itsself of great fidelity—between mental activity (invention) and social activity (realization); and it is deployed in space" (1991, pp. 27–28). The enormity of a Gothic Catholic cathedral may remind the believers of their relative insignificance in the divine order. The ornate decorations of a Mormon temple may encourage ritual participants to feel the splendor of their faith. The clean lines of a bamboo floor in a meditation center might connect the contemplative to a more ascetic sensibility. Affects are more complex than this, because the adherent is not a blank canvas, nor is the sacred space an

unmitigated construction to which they arrive. Space is never empty, and the task of visual culture has been, in part, to repopulate space with, as Irit Rogoff has written, “all the obstacles and all the unknown images, which the illusion of transparency evacuated from it” (Mirzoeff 1998, p. 22).

One of the ways scholars have done such repopulation has been through the ways spaces are constructed to be sacred not only by their design, but also by the performances of sacralization that occur. One’s participation in deliberate ritual activity is what often occasions the transition from experiencing a place as a *topos*, a mere location, into a *choro*, a place that carries energy and power. A McDonald’s fast food restaurant is just a McDonald’s, explains Belden C. Lane, until you’ve had a life-changing conversation at one (2001, p. 54). Then it becomes more than a space, but instead a site of commemorative significance. In cultural studies of religion, such a description is unsatisfying; a sacred place is better and most readily defined as a site over which conflicting parties disagree about ritual activity. The study of sacred space is in this rendition not a study of its phenomenological recasting into a *choro*, but a study of the construction of that visual landscape by human hands.

Churches and temples supply the most ready visual encapsulations of sacred space, but the natural world too invites response and ritual events. The Great Medicine Wheel, high in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming, is an 80-foot diameter circle of rocks with a cairn in the center and twenty-eight spokes radiating out to the rim. Used once by the Tewa and Navajo Indians, the wheel now attracts tourists and researchers, Native Americans from sixty-nine tribes, New Age enthusiasts, artists, and naturalists. Although each visitor may have a different experience of the wheel’s layout, context, and meaning, one scholar discerned that whatever “the primitive spell” of the terrain might be, it is “broken by the huge white sphere on the mountain’s crest nearby—an air-traffic control tower erected by the FAA” (Lane 2001, p. 59). This interpretation is not necessarily that of everyone who comes to that circle of rocks, because for many the air-traffic control tower could be incorporated into the ritual imagination of the site.

Cemeteries too present locations of contrast and possible contradiction. Sometimes in rural outposts, yet often mapped in the middle of densely populated areas, cemeteries can be carefully landscaped retreats, or large flat expanses of graves with commercial billboards hung just outside their gates. In the seventeenth century, visitors to burial grounds may have shared the space with rutting pigs digging up the

graves, as well as sheep and cattle pastured there. The rural cemetery movement of the nineteenth century was in part a rebuke to such chaos, suggesting a more hygienic layout as well as a desire to prescribe pastoral sentiment about the nature of death. As Colleen McDannell has written about Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia, the cemetery was designed to be a space apart, landscaped to establish designed lines of sight from and within its walls. Like a church, it would exude reverence through the designed denial of the profane outside its gates. In addition to these more traditional cemetery spaces, places such as Gettysburg Cemetery in Pennsylvania, for example, or Wounded Knee in South Dakota commemorate moments of violence, hallowing places that were once ostensibly secular (like a farmer’s field or an Indian reservation) for the loss of life on them.

Within the worship spaces of churches, the visual culture shifted and changed throughout history to meet new cultural expectations and denominational reforms. In the American Catholic Church, for example, the nineteenth century witnessed alterations in the church vestments that reflected ecclesiastical developments. Whereas vestments were once relatively plain, bolder, more visibly religious fabrics began to be used that were adorned with geometric motifs, stems, and woven designs of angels and humans. As the Catholic Church became more established, these more elaborately garnished silk vestments communicated key devotional Catholic tenets, including the elevated position of the priest and the centrality of the Eucharist. Likewise, in her effort to consolidate leadership in her growing Church of Christian Science, Mary Bakker Eddy attempted to underline the image of the mother through new stained glass installed in her Boston church. Although the Catholic vestments proved to encourage central dictates of the sect, these windows confused the followers of Eddy, leading some to believe it was she who was divine. In her attempts to correct the visual persuasion of that stained glass, Eddy diluted some of her organizational sway (Kilde 2005).

Shrines supply worship spaces that often function as satellites of larger institutional operations, even as they are founded on lay revelation and organization. El Santuario de Chimayo, New Mexico, marks a Tewa Indian site for healing ceremonies where a nineteenth-century Spanish peasant repeatedly found a crucifix in the ground. The sacred dirt from the hole where that reappearing crucifix was found inspired some miraculous healings. Combining Native American traditions and Iberian Catholic ideas of veneration and pilgrimage, the shrine sits in a cave-like room,

constructing its own respite from the beating sun outside, the temptations of sacrilege, and the universality of suffering. Many miles to the east, another shrine offers a similarly womb-like space, albeit within the conic roof of the Our Lady of Charity shrine. Built on Biscayne Bay near Little Havana, the enclave of the Cuban émigré community in Miami, the Our Lady of Charity shrine was dedicated in 1973 and has since become the sixth largest Catholic pilgrimage site in the United States. In his study of the shrine, Thomas Tweed (1997) used a variety of ethnographic materials to prove that Cubans seek out the shrine to link themselves spiritually to the Cuba they left behind, as Our Lady is the Patroness of Cuba. Entering the shrine, participating in ritual events, and honoring the shrine with offerings are ways these émigrés practice a diasporic nationalism. Dark in its interior, visitors who may be Cuban exiles metaphorically ensconce themselves in their national womb while standing on American soil. The design of the shrine creates the sensory experience of religion it prescribes.

Homes

The cemeteries, shrines, and church spaces described all have a degree of public access to them. Although some religious spaces, like temples within the Mormon church and meeting centers of the Church of Scientology, are off limits to non-members, the majority of worship spaces seek to entice more congregants or encourage more ritual behavior. Homes too may host religious rituals, but they are highly personalized rather than communal agreements with institutional or communitarian prescription. Even as elements of home visual culture may be laid out in a prescribed manner to show respect to sectarian principle or after a denominational fashion, homes ultimately reflect the biography, genealogy, and sociology of the practitioners occupying them. Décor including prints of religious figures, calendars of cyclical rites, needlepoint pillows with scriptural passages, hymnals near instruments and prayer books by bedsides represent in their selection and arrangement the believer's disposition toward theology, community, and practice. They suggest the continuity of the self over time by maintaining traces of the past in the living domicile, even as that continuity can be at any point interrupted, edited, or reconsidered.

If churches, synagogues, and temples have, historically, been the domain of men, homes were traditionally the terrain of women and children. Because women were often excluded from public devotional leadership, they developed pious authority at home through its design and lay

ceremonial management. Religious prints placed on the wall offer more than one message. They may promote a personal relationship with the image represented (with Jesus or Kali, for example). They may encourage viewers to think outside themselves, to remember their deity, a creedal position, or an important scriptural idea. Images too may be commemorative of a ritual event, or a significant moment in their life. Occasionally religious prints are attributed miraculous powers, or as key facets of a larger home shrine. Catholic theories of images, for example, maintained that the exemplary representation of the saint or other holy figure acts as an intermediary between the human and the divine realms. Finally, though, religious prints may become a part of the backdrop, blending into family portraits and other wall hangings as the scrim for the everyday occurrences.

Home shrines are also a concentrated site of visual culture, combining framed prints, small statuary, souvenirs, relics, remembrances, candles, and anything else that condenses the religious values of a family into a crafted location. Shrines, sometimes known as home altars, required effort and supply multiple levels of sensual experience. They are maintained; they are viewed; they are smelled; they are felt. They may be in the more public sitting rooms of the home or in private resting spaces, sequestered from visiting eyes. Shrine building capitalizes on traditions of collage and assemblage that deemphasize formal structures or prescriptive design, exemplifying instead the owners' stories, faithful emphases, and particular spiritual needs. Shrines are increasingly inspired works by Latino/a artists as they bring into the ostensibly secular space of the art gallery the sacred constructions of home devotions. The home altar then converts into another form of visual expression, an object for trade in the fine arts marketplace.

If religious prints and home altars present religious areas in the home, the home itself offers an image of piety in American culture. Aside from any denominational or sectarian particulars, the myth of an American Dream incorporated the home and its emblematic suburban owners as icons requisite for the completion of any individual American's heroic self-fashioning. Periodicals, television shows, and films promote the home as the necessary ritual space of personal care and social preparations. Jon Pahl has argued that the myth of the suburban home as a haven was enacted particularly through rituals of purity, control, competition, and display centered on super clean kitchens and pristinely manicured front lawns. "The parlor piety of women inside the home focused on purity," he explained, whereas "the

public piety of men related to the lawn was communicated in idioms of control and competition” (Laderman and León 2003, p. 588). Objects were needed to concoct this disciplined kitchen and unnaturally green expanse of grass, gadgets for mowing and baking, chemicals for cleansing and fertilizing. But most of all the family itself was needed, practicing pieties of labor, reproduction, and nuclear affections that make the image of the intact, smiling home a ceaseless tug against its lived realities of family tragedy, marital dissolution, and children’s travails. In this instance, the visual culture is as much a portrait of wellness in the American imagination as it is an actual series of objects or arrangements of icons.

Museums

The majority of museums were built without a relationship to a specific religious context. Museums divided into genre, with those bent on entertainment, such as P. T. Barnum’s American Museum, separated from those bent on education, like the Art Institute of Chicago. Even as they served purposes pleasurable and pedagogical, museums also became a sort of sanctuary, ordering culture into commensurable subsets and narrating social virtues through selected works. “The culture of enlightenment that produced museums in their current forms framed these institutions as quintessentially modern entities,” Sally Promey explains. “Emptied of contemporary ‘religious’ content, museums instead elevated and sacralized art and culture and traced civilizing trajectories” (2009, p. 19). The museum posited itself as a space of neutrality, wherein anyone of any creed or race might enter and imbibe the elected objects, images, and narrated experiences. In the absence of a long architectural tradition in America, museum designers quoted styles from a profusion of cultural, national, and decorative sources to construct a look that seemed simultaneously commanding and socially cohering.

The design of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (1872–1876) indicates the amalgamated style that would dominate many urban exhibition venues built in the late nineteenth century. In addition to touches of Venetian Gothic and French Second Empire styles, the academy also incorporated strong evocations of Near Eastern architecture. Such details—brilliant coloration, a minaret tower, diamond-patterned wall coverings, and intricate decorative brickwork—inspired little criticism from contemporaneous observers, however, as its incorporation of Jewish and Islamic visual idiom seemed appropriate to Victorian

viewers who anticipated eclecticism as a natural extension of imperial accumulation. Called a temple of art by its 1870s promoters, the academy emerged in a moment that Neil Harris has identified as a key transition in the history of the visual arts, when the religious leader increasingly functioned as artistic spokesman (1982, pp. 307–09). Indeed, at the opening of the academy on April 22, 1876, liberal theologian William Henry Furness, father to the building’s main architect, Frank Furness, dedicated the structure with the words of Moses. The academy was sanctified by religious rites and suffused with a pastiche of religious symbols to construct a site specific and universal, inviting and elite.

Images inside the museum offered icons worthy of pilgrimage given their celebrated singularity, such as Picasso’s *Les Femmes d’Alger* or *Les Femmes d’Alger*. They also offered images that might press religious contemplation, mediation, or spiritual peace. Works such as William Inness’s *Christmas Eve* (1866) at the Montclair Art Museum or *The Pines and the Olives* (1873) at the gallery for American art at Phillips Academy in Massachusetts possibly offer all three. In *Christmas Eve*, the moon breaking through clouds makes visible a small figure of a man walking toward a nearly indistinguishable farm house. The overwhelming coloration, murky nighttime shadows, and subject matter could leave the viewer with a sense of melancholy and isolation. The precision of the moon’s placement, however, offers tranquil repose to the lonely scene, a sense that nature concocts its own equilibrium. *The Pines and the Olives* depicts a similar Inness subject orientation, as a small figure exists again in an uncanny natural landscape. Unlike *Christmas Eve*, *The Pines and the Olives* depicts a reddish dusk light as a white-robed, hooded monk retreats, lost in meditation. With a dark foreground of funeral pine trees and a retreating daytime sky, the painting conveys a religious mysticism typical of Inness’s works. Inness preferred to be known as the author of civilized landscapes even as he often captured natural settings. Asked about the goals of his art, Inness replied, “The true use of art is, first, to cultivate the artist’s own spiritual nature, and secondly, to enter as a fact in general civilization” (Werner, p. 17). A follower of mystic Emanuel Swedenborg, Inness might be studied as a religious painter, even as his paintings offer no obvious religious imagery. Echoing German Romanticism, and anticipating Surrealism, these Inness paintings express the powerful relationship between the individual, the environment, and the contemplative beyond.

Over the course of the twentieth century, the museum deconstructed and reconstructed itself. The lines between art

and science, the aesthetic and the anthropological became more difficult to draw, as the American Museum of Natural History in New York incorporated indigenous arts of Asia, and the Museum of Modern Art began to exhibit cultural artifacts like automobiles, home appliances, and utensils. As the museum began to show a wider variety of objects, so did traditions within mainstream painting and artistic production diversify what might be considered art. Even as fewer annunciations were being painted, the move to abstraction in art included a readily exposed affinity to the spiritual, beginning with Wassily Kandinsky's *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1912). Much later, the 1986 Los Angeles Museum of Art exhibition *The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting, 1890–1985* demonstrated definitively the associational ties between individual artists and movements including theosophy, spiritualism, Rosicrucianism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism. Several abstract expressionists also claimed exposure to and evocation of American Indian arts in their work. Images of masks, abstracted animals, and other forms of pictographs enter into the visual idiom of the abstractionist to, as John Dillenberger has argued, fuse the primordial and the subconscious. Icons of religion were now surprising when encountered, often stirring controversy. Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ* (1988) was a glossy, five-foot high Cibachrome photograph of a crucifix submerged in urine. Shot with bright red in a murky yellow, this image won an award partly funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. After considerable protest from the American Family Association, a Christian organization, Congress told the NEA not to fund indecent or obscene art. Even as it was being dismissed as obscene, Serrano, son of a Cuban mother and a Honduran father, credited his Catholic upbringing for part of the inspiration for the work. The painting might be read as a response to the history of Christ in Western art, as a religious articulation by a religious man, or as an altar in the postmodern museum.

Streets

On the public streets of America, religion is everywhere: in the public art of murals, in parades like the Sikh Vaisakhi Day Parade in New York City, and in the exposure of the religiously accessorized and costumed body. If the museum is clean, ordered, and relatively quiet, the city street is dirty, chaotic, and boisterous. Indeed, the museum was built in part as a reply to urbanization's excesses. Strolling the street, one might see the skyline of church steeples next door to department stores, gas stations, or imperious marble museum structures. Scholars have noted how American church architecture

borrowed from a variety of styles, but most frequently from Neoclassical and Gothic Revival techniques. Popularized by the ecclesiological movement in the 1840s, this style predominated the dense northeastern cityscapes, determining "what a church should look like," no matter its denomination, over the next one hundred years (Williams 1999, p. 377). The Gothic style and the cathedral as iconic metaphor for Christian holiness worked themselves out in the decades before the twentieth-century triumph of the aniconic international style in Euro-American architectural ideology. No matter what the signature style of the specific church in question, the cityscape pressed comparisons of church amidst the emerging abundance of structural alternatives.

From the height of the grandest cathedral to the eye-level stroll on the street, religion may be tracked within the din of urbanity or the quiet of small town America. Religion in the streets might be, as Robert Orsi has explained, a mechanism of bodily control where even people in public space find themselves monitored by the gaze of their families, their fellow church goers, and their member churches. Through the rites of the annual fiesta of the Madonna of Mount Carmel along 115th Street in Harlem, for example, Orsi finds that dislocated residents of Italian Harlem cohere in a procession that reflects traditional, local, and changing elements of the participating body. Such processions will, by their public nature, be more raucous than what transpires within nearby churches. At any moment, a plane might scream overhead or a storm cloud may gather to darken the proceedings. In the religion of the streets, the public display of a rite or an idealized icon may be defaced by communitarian graffiti or interrupted by nativist acts of violence.

Religion in public space can therefore be threatening, critical, and controversial, as was the debate over the display of the figure of Muhammad in the north courtroom frieze of the U.S. Supreme Court. In February 1997 a coalition of sixteen Muslim groups petitioned the Supreme Court to remove the face from that figure. For those protesters, the representation of the Prophet's face was an instance of idol worship prohibited by their faith. For then Chief Justice William Rehnquist, the frieze was defensible because it represented Muhammad in a line of lawgivers, not as a prophet to a major world religion. To assuage the protesters but protect this act of public display, the Supreme Court subsequently distributed brochures that identified Muhammad as the prophet of Islam rather than its founder, adding this qualification: "The figure . . . is a well-intentioned attempt by the sculptor, Adolph Weinman, to honor Muhammad

and it bears no resemblance to Muhammad. Muslims generally have a strong aversion to sculptured or pictured representations of their Prophet” (Morgan and Promey 2001, p. 41). One of the ways to appease the controversies of public display, then, is to invoke the original intentions of the artist, to explain the potential conflict of the critical out group, and to make the secular neutrality of the public sphere a visual given of any governmental artifice.

Not all public displays are as easily resolved, as performances in the streets contest constantly the content of that public square in plural America. More often than not, street displays have relied on inclusion, excess, and the preservation of the suffering parties’ visual expression over and above an incorporation of that vernacular expression. Spontaneous memorials supply a strong instance of the latter, especially at the sites of tragic and traumatic death. Roadside memorials appear alongside the nation’s highways, and makeshift shrines are common at locations of catastrophic trauma, such as lower Manhattan after 9/11. Art historian Erika Doss recounts that after the school shooting in Littleton, Colorado, such a spontaneous memorial began to grow in a grassy knoll near the school’s parking lot. First, students just piled flowers, teddy bears, and school jerseys of their murdered classmates. Eventually, the objects left behind were less specifically connected to the lives of the deceased, and were instead testimonials of the mourning—condolence cards, personal letters and poems sealed inside plastic bags, and bed sheets inscribed with biblical passages. Craft objects (origami cranes), patriotic emblems (the American flag), and evocative religious materials (votive candles arranged around photos) testified to the many layers of reply that led to that area’s sanctification. During its two-week existence, tens of thousands of people wandered through, many leaving behind testimonies of grief, others merely tourists, others still buying soda and hotdogs from vendors around the site. Food vendors were not the only visual evidence of the public nature of a memorial in a commercial, suburban district; banners from area businesses and multinational corporations offered condolences, and dozens of television vans and satellite towers squatted as they reported the unfolding aftereffects of the tragedy. It was, as Andreas Huyssen would describe urbanity, a palimpsest of memory and cultural production.

Stores

All the spaces discussed include aspects of commercial economy. Although some narratives of American religion suggest that market forces arrived within religious culture to

eventually trump its persuasive sway, scholars increasingly insist on the interactivity of market culture and religious culture. From tabloids suggesting that Jesus was seen in Takoma Park, Maryland, to products offered to balm one’s tired soul, the overlapping of religion and capitalist sale is presented visually within stores, open-air vendors, and mail order catalogs. The Easter parade offers a knotty historical example of the commingling of commercialism and religious representation. From the 1880s until the 1950s, the Easter parade included elaborate floral decorations, new clothes, fancy millinery, chocolate bunnies, greetings cards, and other gifts. It served as a cultural rite of spring to match the Gilded Age that produced it, inviting holiday displays outside churches and in shop windows. The Easter parade down Fifth Avenue was in part a fashionable promenade meant to advertise new spring fashions, including elaborate millinery, as well as tour different churches and their floral decorations. Largely the production and display of feminine beauty, childish innocence, and pastel sentiments, the Easter parades encouraged market competitiveness among the Protestant denominations yet benefited dry-goods stores by centering of the store as an exhibition space and materials distributor for décor requisite to celebrate a Christian holiday.

Over the subsequent century, different formats for commercial behavior invoked religious events. Shopping malls frequently seem to have the dreamy, absurdist intensity of pagan festivals, where stores solicit and commodities enchant. As one study of American religions observed, “advertising and witnessing have become interchangeable” (Laderman and León 2003, p. 426). Whether it is actual Christian retailing ventures or just a Gap outlet, stores sell you not just on their product, but what their products can do to transform you. No example makes this more obviously apparent in the ranks of visual culture than the rites and locations of tourism. Tourism is propelled by pictures of a grander reality, be it photographs taken in front of the Liberty Bell or the geyser Old Faithful in Yellowstone Park. This picturing achieves new overt clarity at Disneyworld in Orlando, Florida, where signature Kodak triangles indicate where families ought to stop and take a scenic photo, ideally with the Kodak film and camera equipment also sold in the park. But such pictures are not limited to the cartoon fantasies of Walt Disney. Nearly every tourist destination encourages forms of visual portraiture, including pictures of historical reality (Old Sturbridge Village), of educated mourning (Holocaust museums), or of proper ritual transition (spring break, the honeymoon). Tourism sells us mental pictures that we might

actualize. Climactic in the American scene is Las Vegas, Nevada, where that hotbed of sin and family fun promotes notions of transgression, excess, and marital passage under the screaming neon, false facades, and verdant greenery within a vast ocean of desert. The visual culture of Las Vegas offers the real and surreal, ritual and chaos, sacred and profane of religious ideation in the United States.

See also *Architecture* entries; *Celebrity Culture*; *Death and Burial Practices*; *Devotionalism*; *Economics*; *The Electronic Church*; *Film*; *Food and Diet*; *Liturgical Arts*; *Lived Religion*; *Material Culture Approaches*; *Religious Press*; *Sport(s)*; *Sunday and the Sabbath*; *Supreme Court*; *Television*; *Tourism and Pilgrimage*; *Visual Culture* entries; *Worship* entries.

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Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts in Early America

Religious belief intersected with the visual and material culture of early Americans in formal and informal ways, in both public and private spaces. This discussion covers paintings and prints, gravestones, and a variety of artifacts that commonly displayed religious messages and images in early American public and domestic settings. Some of the images and objects discussed were used in religious ritual, others

made religious beliefs present in the activities of daily life. All of them reveal the pervasiveness of religious belief in early American visual culture. Although certain items tended to be made locally—needlework and inexpensive pottery, for instance—many objects with religious content were imported, thus reflecting the religious culture of the place of origin as well.

It is worth considering how we define visual culture of religion for early America. One sense would include images and objects that reflect and convey religious belief, those produced with the authority of an institution or religious tradition behind them, and to meet local religious needs and representing folk religious culture. We can also include visual performance, for instance, the visual aspects of a mass or worship service, or the choreography of a religious processional or festival. Finally, we can include ways of ordering the world, and this might be visible only in a certain spirit of craftsmanship, a material restraint or exuberance, or order and cleanliness. This discussion focuses on the first, most obvious category of visual culture but at times engages the other, broader meanings of the term.

Eastern Seaboard

Puritan New England, because of its Calvinist roots and consequent mistrust of religious images, did not produce certain kinds of religious art: religious painting and sculpture are most notably absent. The myth of the dour Puritan who thought art was frivolous is now largely debunked, yet there is truth in the notion that Puritan arts were restrained, and that the fabled plain style favored utility over ornament. Overt religious imagery was minimal in religious settings, though found frequently in books and prints of religious education. Some rituals, such as baptism, requiring only a simple bowl of water, and marriage, commonly took place in the home. Puritan visual and material culture centered on the practical, the subdued and contemplative (*memento mori*, that is, images and objects that served as reminders of mortality), and the domestic.

The visual culture of religion in the Anglican South was restrained but refined, reflecting strong ties to England. In Anglican church interiors one could find Baroque painting of cherubs and decorative detail that emphasized the “beauty of holiness,” but overt iconic expressions of religious beliefs among Protestants, as in New England, were rare. In the slave communities, decorative objects displayed the influence of African belief—for instance the persistence of the custom of decorating graves with pottery, shells, and

bottles to free the spirit of the dead and hold off undesirable specters. By the end of the eighteenth century, the blending of African and Christian visual traditions was evident in worship practices; more extensive blended artistic traditions developed in the nineteenth century.

The inhabitants of the middle colonies, with their continental religious traditions, tended to have a richer and more visible visual culture of religion. German and Dutch immigrants, especially, continued the artistic practices of their native lands, where Protestants were less suspicious of religious pictures and predisposed to incorporate illustrations of biblical stories and religious mottoes on a wide variety of domestic artifacts. Catholics in the middle colonies, though far from the majority, were comfortable with a lively and boldly graphic tradition of religious art.

Prints

Paintings were rare in early America, but prints were common. By the eighteenth century, relatively inexpensive European prints were widely available in America, and many of them illustrated religious stories or themes. Because prints were ephemeral, generally not framed but tacked to interior walls, it is difficult to quantify their use. They do appear commonly in household inventories, however, indicating that they were a widespread form of visual culture. A person who owned no prints would certainly have at least seen them on the walls of taverns and other public spaces.

Prints that treated religious themes included popular engravings of portraits of well-known divines such as Jonathan Edwards or the evangelist George Whitefield, illustrated paeans to the lives of prominent, pious citizens, and political broadsides that used religious imagery to intensify the emotional reaction of viewers. One such image, a 1768 broadside by Paul Revere, shows a group of resolute patriots being prodded by the devil and his minions, bravely facing the yawning maw of hell rather than compromise their political principles.

Prints with specific religious content were also available. In the 1775 catalogue of the British printer and engraver Sayer and Bennet, for instance, one could find copperplate prints or mezzotints of many religious scenes, by and large copied from paintings: Barbieri's *The Holy Family*; *A Crucifix & A Dead Christ* by Lourie; a variety of small prints of scenes from the Old Testament (*Adam and Eve*) or the life and passion of Christ (*Our Saviour Healing the Blind*), along with illustrations from the lives of the saints. The popularity of such prints increased tremendously in the nineteenth

century, but evidence suggests that the trend began before the Revolution.

Illustrated Books

Printed, illustrated books were a primary means of transmitting religious belief from generation to generation. American editions of illustrated Bibles do not begin to appear until after the Revolution, yet many previously published religious books incorporated images. The first illustrated book published by Europeans in colonial America was the *New-England Primer*, an elementary reader that went through hundreds of editions and sold at least three million copies between 1680 and 1830. The most important component of these books, the illustrated alphabet, emphasized religious and moral themes. In a 1727 Boston edition, A stands for Adam, “In Adam’s Fall/We Sinned All,” and B for Bible, “Thy Life to Mend/This Book Attend.” Other letters represent Judeo-Christian history, such as Q for Queen Esther, “Queen Esther comes in Royal State/To Save the JEWS from dismal Fate.” Primitive woodblock prints accompanied each letter, helping communicate doctrine.

A sizeable proportion of the books printed and owned in early America were religious titles, and their illustrations promoted a visual understanding of a Christian history and world view. Illustrated copies of John Bunyan’s popular *Pilgrim’s Progress*, for example, graphically depicted Christian as he traveled the demanding path of virtue. Other popular illustrated volumes included copies of emblem books, such as John Bunyan’s *Divine Emblems*, and sensational, religious-themed fiction, such as *The Prodigal Daughter* (c. 1750). The frontispiece to this edition shows a young girl, the formerly prodigal daughter, emerging from her coffin to the delight of the minister present after being in a death-like trance for several days, during which she had a vision of the Other World. Another illustration in the same volume shows the newly virtuous daughter at her dressing table, now immune to the entreaties of the dark, horned, fork-tailed devil who pursues her.



The first illustrated book published by Europeans in Colonial America was the *New-England Primer*, an elementary reader that went through hundreds of editions and sold at least three million copies between 1680 and 1830. The most important component of these books, the illustrated alphabet, emphasized religious and moral themes.

Painting

The few known religious paintings in New England and the South tend to be copies made from print sources by local artists. Scripture paintings were popular among the Germans in Pennsylvania and the Dutch in New York, but their overall impact in all the colonies was much slighter than that of religious-themed prints or illustrated books. The dominant form of painting in early America was portraiture. Hence the majority of important early American paintings with

religious content are portraits of ministers or significant members of religious groups. A portrait was a way of honoring important pastors and church leaders, and these might further be engraved and reproduced as popular prints.

Samuel King's 1770–1771 portrait of Ezra Stiles, pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Newport, Rhode Island, and later president of Yale College, shows not only the face of the Gentle Puritan, as he was known, but the tools of his trade. He wears the black robe and white Geneva bands of the Puritan minister and holds a book (probably a Bible) in his left hand and places his right hand over his heart. On the bookshelf behind him are scholarly books, including *Plato*, *Livy*, *Newton/Prin*, and collections of the works of Mather, Hooker, and other Puritan divines. Behind Stiles, King painted what he described as an “Emblem of the Universe or Intellectual World” with the Hebrew word *Yahweh* at the center. Stiles recorded in his diary that he was pleased with the painting, and that “These Emblems are more descriptive of my Mind, than the Effigies of my Face.” Although early American portrait painters did tend to draw with remarkable individuality the details of the sitter's face, art historians have noticed an inordinate attention to material details that tell of the sitter's character and profession.

Jewish and Anti-Semitic Images

Portraiture was important to early America's small Jewish community, particularly among prominent families desiring to assert their positions of community leadership. Within Jewish households, faith would have been visibly evident in ceremonial objects, spatial practices, and rituals such as Shabbat and the maintenance of dietary laws, but outside the home their identity was less evident. Unlike later immigrations of eastern European ethnic Jews, these largely Sephardic communities of Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Savannah, and Charleston tended to blend in and even intermarry with Christians. A rare American portrait of a rabbi is a posthumous painting of Rabbi Haim Isaac Carigal (1782), who was a visitor to the colonies in 1773. Rev. Stiles himself commissioned the portrait from his painter Samuel King. Stiles took a great interest in the rabbi's visit and was impressed both by his erudition and his striking appearance, noting that he “was dressed in a red Garment with the usual Phylacteries and habiliments, the white silk Surplice: he wore a high brown furr [sic] Cap, had a long Beard.”

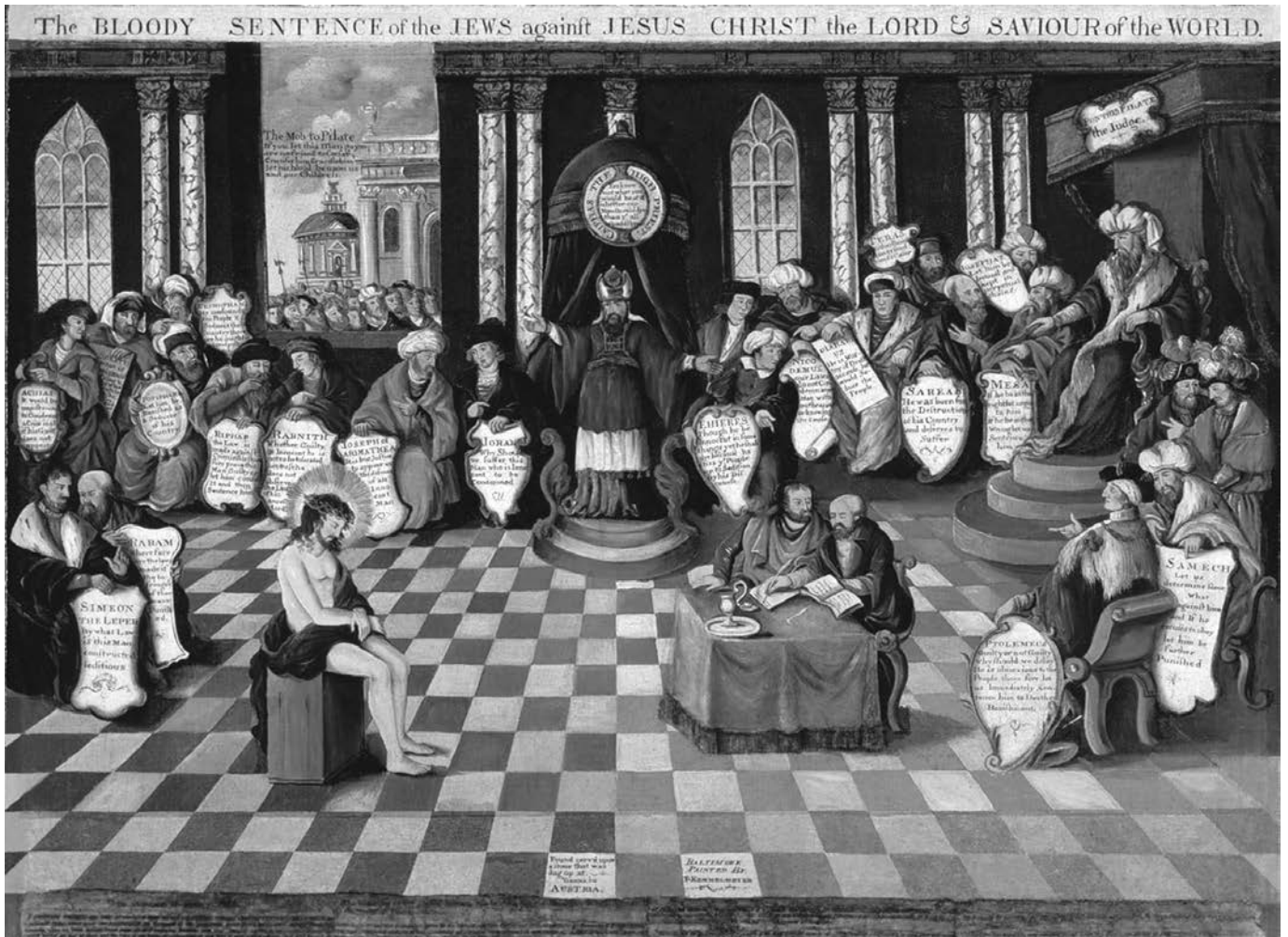
Among non-Jews, anti-Semitic attitudes were no doubt more prevalent than Stiles's respectful curiosity. Caricatures exaggerated the physical features of Jews, ridiculed their

dietary laws and other rituals, and placed them in opposition to Christianity. One such image, probably painted after the Revolution but based on an earlier print source, is Frederick Kemmelmeyer's oil on canvas painting “The Bloody Sentence of the Jews Against Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior of the World.” Kemmelmeyer was an itinerant artist working in the upper South after the Revolution and painted this canvas in Baltimore sometime between 1788 and 1802. The painting shows in narrative fashion all the stages of Jesus' trial by the Jewish judges and Pontius Pilate as depicted in apocryphal texts such as *The Gospel of Nicodemus*. In a marble columned chamber with a checkered floor, a draped Christ, the Man of Sorrows, sits before Pilate, his illuminated, thorn-crowned head bowed. Behind him the Jewish judges engage in animated conversation. A mob peers in the window behind Jesus, exclaiming, “If you let this man go you are no friend to Cesar. Crucifie him, Crucifie him. Let his blood be upon us and our children.” Visual imagery was unfortunately a common way to mock those with differing religious beliefs: Catholics and unfamiliar or threatening religious movements and sects were also the target of caricature.

The rich ritual life and associated material culture of American Jews was largely hidden from non-Jewish eyes, and the remaining material evidence is slim. Scholars have looked at the work of prominent New York silversmith Myer Myers for evidence of his religious identity in his work. Myers created magnificent Jewish ritual objects, such as the silver and brass Torah Finials he crafted for synagogues in Newport, New York, and Philadelphia. Yet he also made a set of three alms basins for the First Presbyterian Church in New York, and the majority of his commissions were domestic.

Domestic Objects

The ordinary domestic objects in American homes often displayed religious themes or reflected spiritual principles. More than any other object type, decorative needlework produced by girls and women tended to illustrate religious stories and beliefs. The process of needlework was itself associated with domestic virtue, something gained from hours of working patiently with needle and cloth, following the example of the biblical Dorcas. Mottoes on samplers reflected this emphasis on godly feminine virtue. In the early seventeenth century, Myles Standish's daughter Loara embroidered “Lord Guide My Heart that I may do thy will/And find my hands with such convenient skill/As will conduce to virtue void of shame/And I will give Glory to Thy name” on her work. Girls' samplers often include a strong statement of virtue, such



In Frederick Kemmelmeyer's oil on canvas painting "The Bloody Sentence of the Jews Against Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior of the World," Jews were caricatured by exaggerating their physical features, ridiculing their dietary laws and rituals, and placing them in opposition to Christianity. *From the Collection of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Old Salem Museum and Gardens.*

as the 1774 sampler of ten-year-old Esther Coggeshall in Newport, Rhode Island, on which she stitched, besides the alphabet and a decorative floral border, an image of Adam and Eve in Eden and the phrase, "Esther Coggeshall is my Name./ And so I Tread he [the] Clod [Earth]/And O that Every step I take/May Bring me Nearer God." Adam and Eve is a common visual trope on these samplers and pictures, although other more obscure subject matter is not uncommon. Some needlework samplers were entirely pictorial, such as Mary Williams' 1774 picture, now at the Smithsonian, titled "The Queen of Sheba Admiring the Wisdom of Solomon." This 22-by-18-inch petit point panel shows the meeting of Solomon and Sheba in vivid colors, in colonial attire, under a medieval tent. Delightful images such as this were joined by others that could be surprisingly unsentimental, such as the

circa 1776 image by Prudence Punderson now in Preston, Connecticut, of a dead "Judas Iscariot, Who betray'd his Lord and hang'd himself," lying beneath a tree to which the noose was still attached.

Most large decorative surfaces occasionally served as the site for a religious scene or verse—a quilt, the long side of a painted chest, or domestic pottery. A circa 1667 English earthenware jug in the collections of the Winterthur Museum bears the saying, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" and a late eighteenth-century brass trivet in the same collection exclaims, "Give your heart to God now." American iron founders often cast firebacks, iron tablets placed in the back of the hearth to protect the bricks, with biblical images; one such circa 1742 plate from Pennsylvania at the Bucks County Historical Society bears an elaborate

image of the Wedding at Cana, where Christ turned the water into wine. The proliferation of such biblical decoration was most common in the middle colonies, where Dutch and German immigrants were simply repeating the decorative traditions of their continental homelands. Apparently quite popular in the colonies were imported Dutch, tin-glazed earthenware fireplace tiles, hand painted with biblical scenes. Dutch factories produced these tiles from the late seventeenth through the eighteenth century, and they were very common in northern European countries, where they covered floor-to-ceiling open hearths. Many nonbiblical scenes were painted on these tiles as well. It is difficult to know how prevalent such tiles were in early America, but we do know that their use was not uncommon, and it is interesting to imagine a family sitting by the hearth, surrounded by bright images of Bible stories flickering in the firelight.

Gravestones

In the colonies of the eastern seaboard, the dominant if not the only form of religious sculpture was gravestone carving. These stones, surviving in large numbers, have been thoroughly studied, both from the craft perspective (identifying artists, shops, and carving methods) and for their symbolic dimension, as representatives of a Puritan visual language. Burying grounds typically sat in the center of communities, near the meeting house or church, and thus these sculptural images were an ever-present reminder of mortality and the Christian promise of a blessed afterlife for believers. As the archaeologist James Deetz demonstrated three decades ago, a chronology of the images decorating the upper edge of New England headstones reveals a progression from largely undecorated stones, to stones showing a winged death's head (or skull), to winged cherubs. Scholars have interpreted this evolution as evidence of softening ideas about death and judgment. In the period following the Revolution, the winged head gives way to sentimental, neoclassical imagery such as weeping willows and memorial urns. These gravestones represent the core iconography of Puritan art—symbols of mortality, death, and resurrection—that emphasize the critical importance of conversion.

Ephrata

The communal experiment at the Ephrata Cloister presaged the proliferation of better-known communities, such as the Shakers, in the decades following the Revolution and offers an interesting example of the production of religious art by such settlements. A small group of Pennsylvania German

celibate brothers and sisters established their separatist community in Ephrata in 1732. Membership peaked at several hundred in the following decade and then, because of internal conflict, declined precipitously; the last sister died in 1813. Ephrata's religious roots were radically pietistic, emphasizing individual revelation and intense devotion. The community established a disciplined life of ascetic spiritual practices and produced a remarkable, visionary visual and material culture. Concerned about material temptations, the brothers and sisters lived a spartan life in simple buildings with plain, whitewashed walls; they slept on narrow benches and distinguished themselves from the outside world by wearing plain, uniform garments. As did later communitarian groups, the Ephrata residents valued self-sufficiency, growing their own food and promoting domestic industries such as weaving and printing.

Scriptural study and singing were core disciplines of the community, and its printers and artists created beautifully illustrated hymnals and texts, illuminated in the European monastery tradition. This work is clearly related to the robust German vernacular tradition of *fraktur*, documents intricately adorned with ornamental writing and decoration that mark significant life events such as weddings. In Germany the images on *fraktur* were predominantly religious; in Pennsylvania the pictures were more often of flowers and birds, though religious themes persisted and the documents themselves marked sacramental events such as baptisms. Although the work of their hands is beautiful, the Ephrata sisters who laboriously produced these meticulously illuminated works did so as much for mortification of the flesh as for the value of the product. One image from a 1754 hymnal at the Winterthur Library depicts a large angel blowing a trumpet, surmounted by two angels flanking the Holy Ghost portrayed as a dove. Although some features of the Ephrata work are unique—such as their pale hues and the rigid discipline of the line drawing—it is closely connected with the German tradition as well as with the Moravians, another German sect flourishing in Pennsylvania. Although the Ephrata drawings never had wide circulation, they illustrate the intensely focused artistic impulse that was often a hallmark of America's religious communarians.

Catholic Visual World

The Catholic settlers in French Louisiana and Spanish Florida brought a richly visual European religious tradition that contrasted markedly with Protestant restraint to the north. Catholic Mass, as well as highly visual processions,

pilgrimages, feast days, and festivals highlighted the complex ritual aspects of the faith that brought religion out of the churches and into the streets. Rather than the text-based religious images and mottoes found on objects in Protestant homes, Catholics were more likely to own images and objects with ritual significance, such as rosaries and crucifixes.

Catholic Southwest

Explorers, missionaries, and colonists hoping to Christianize Indians and establish prosperous settlements headed north from Mexico into New Mexico, establishing the community of Santa Fe early in the seventeenth century. By 1630 fifty mission churches had been built in New Mexico. These chapels were decorated with sculptures and paintings of saints, detailed altar screens, and other religious objects imported from Spain and Catholic regions worldwide. A rich visual and material culture of religion of the early American Southwest developed through a dynamic interchange between European examples, local materials, and indigenous practices. In addition to paintings and sculpture, missionaries brought with them European-trained craftsmen who could continue in those trades and train further generations.

Religious art in the exuberant and colorful baroque style was dominant in early eighteenth-century Europe and had a lasting impact on the arts of the Southwest. As in other regions of early America, small domestic items reflected religious belief—crosses of tin and small painted miniatures worn as jewelry, for instance—though the more pervasive aspect of Catholic visual culture was the tradition of depicting images of Jesus Christ and the saints with the emblems of their miracles and martyrdoms. This most common type of religious art was known as *santos*, a Spanish word meaning holy person or holy subject. Santos took two forms: *retablos*, or two-dimensional images, usually small paintings or larger altarpieces; and *bultos*, carved and painted three-dimensional statues. One example of New Mexican work is a late eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century statue of St. Joseph holding Jesus. Over a wood base, the carver applied smoothing coats of gesso before decorating the statue with pink, orange, and blue-green paint. Although the importation of foreign-made santos continued, the market was strong enough to encourage local artisans, *santeros*, to create their own. This led to the development of a regional style that used local woods and paints and most frequently depicted images of Christ, Mary, and the saints most typically revered by the colonists, such as San Isidro Labrador: Santo de la

Terra (Saint of the Land, that is, St. Isidore, the Farmer) and Our Lady of Guadalupe, patron saint of Mexico.

The artifacts and rituals of New Mexico's religious festivals and processions were an important part of Catholic life. Santa Fe's first documented Holy Week procession took place as early as 1660. Particularly striking aspects of the visual culture include penitential practices such as the self-mortification performed by the brotherhood of the *penitentes*, and the haunting imagery of the annual Mexican El Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebrations, a ritual rooted in native Indian traditions.

Conclusion

In the visual and material religious practices of early Americans, one can already see the rich pluralism that would mark the country's future. Even within the least visual of early American religious traditions—English Protestantism in its Puritan and Anglican forms—there was depth and variety of expression. If we wish to recover an understanding of the religious life of pre-Revolutionary Americans, it is important to attend to the everyday pictures and things that gave shape to their beliefs.

See also *Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America*; *Anti-Semitism*; *Bible: As Sacred Text, Translations, Cultural Role*; *Death and Burial Practices*; *Liturgical Arts*; *Lived Religion*; *Marriage and Family*; *Material Culture, Approaches*; *Puritans*; *Southwest as Region*; *Visual Culture* entries.

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Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts from the Revolution to the Civil War

The visual culture of religious life from the beginning of the American Revolution in 1775 to the advent of the Civil War in 1860 encompassed not only painting, sculpture, drawing, and traditional printmaking but also imported and home-manufactured decorative arts, ritual objects, and devotional, didactic images for illustrated Bibles, religious tracts, broadsides, and journals. After Great Britain recognized the United States in 1783, government bodies as well as civic, fraternal, and cultural organizations encouraged the production of visual images that fostered republican ideals and cast the struggle for independence in sacred terms as fulfillment of history's divine plan. During the nineteenth century, evangelical revivalism intensified American Protestants' self-identification as God's chosen people, the inhabitants of a new Israel. However, territorial growth, immigration, technological growth, and socioeconomic growth contributed to denominational, sectarian diversity and a proliferation of images that expressed spiritual ideas and metaphysical experiences outside of traditional institutional religion. Responding to individual soul-searching and fears of national disunion over slavery and westward migration, religious representations before the Civil War increasingly blurred doctrinal distinctions in quest of universal truths.

Deism and Freemasonry

With a mobile population spread over thirteen states, the founders developed national symbols that expressed the motto of *E pluribus unum*. Designed by several congressional committees after the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, the emblematic all-seeing eye on the reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States proclaims a deist, Enlightenment conception of natural religion. Encased within an equilateral triangle surrounded by a solar glory of light, the Great Seal's providential eye floats above an ancient, Egyptian-style pyramid to suggest that the divine Creator, transcending all sectarian, denominational religions, is smiling on a new, rational order of the ages.

The seal's Egyptian masonry and all-seeing eye parallel the hieroglyphic imagery of Freemasonry, a social fraternity steeped in the religious, biblical lore of stonemasonry, geometry, and the arts of design. Imported to the American

colonies from Great Britain during the 1730s, Freemasonry attracted members of the elite as well as artisans such as Boston silversmith Paul Revere (1735–1818). Revere crafted Freemasons' silver jewels worn by lodge officers and engraved Masonic lodge certificates representing Solomon's Temple, Noah's Ark, the all-seeing eye, and numerous other emblems.

Freemasons became self-identified nation-builders, associating themselves with President George Washington (1732–1799), the new republic's leading Mason. In 1793 Washington had led a Masonic procession to lay the cornerstone for the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. Wearing aprons decorated with symbols of the stonemason's craft, lodge brothers conducted cornerstone-laying ceremonies sanctifying construction of public buildings and patriotic monuments. Freemasonry's ritual use of Christian emblems attracted American Protestants, whose churches remained relatively bare of religious imagery.

Many American Jews viewed Freemasonry's biblical imagery as a vehicle for promoting religious identity and social acceptance in the new republic. Isaac Nunez Cardozo (1751–1832), a London-born draughtsman who lived in New York, Philadelphia, and Easton, Pennsylvania, illuminated family registers with names listed between columns of Solomon's temple and beneath an arch protecting an all-seeing eye and other Masonic emblems. Cardozo also framed drawings of the Ten Commandments, written in both Hebrew and English, with similar Masonic-inspired representations of Solomon's temple.

Solomon's temple served to bridge Freemasonry with Judeo-Christian faiths, but the Freemasons' appropriation of Noah's ark more broadly appealed to deists as an inclusive, nonsectarian archetype of God's creation preserved and improved by responsible human stewardship. In Philadelphia, the artist-entrepreneur Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827), deist and Masonic initiate, painted *Artist in His Museum* (1822), a self-portrait of the artist promoting his museum of art and natural history. Akin to Noah's Ark, the museum displayed the variety and orderly harmony of God's universe. In concert with Freemasonry's cult of divine wisdom, museum exhibits ranged encyclopedically from minerals, animal and bird specimens, and the skeleton of a prehistoric mastodon to portraits of statesmen and men of learning such as Benjamin Franklin, one of the nation's most outspoken advocates of Masonic fraternalism and Enlightenment deism.

Peale's Museum also housed Native American artifacts collected by Meriwether Lewis (1774–1809) and William

Clark (1770–1838) during their exploration of western territories acquired in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. Where Peale used taxidermy to display stuffed birds and animals, Native Americans decorated animal skins and woven articles of clothing with geometric animal designs, the better to capture the animal's universal spirit. In Peale's museum, a beaded garter belt features abstract bird motifs of a line symmetrically flanked by outspread, triangular wings. Anglo-American artists regarded Native American geometric designs as a mysterious form of writing related to Egyptian hieroglyphics. Secretive Indian religious rituals stirred some revolutionary-era fraternal organizations, such as the Saint Tammany Society, to adopt Native American costumes and ceremonial symbols.

American History and Biblical Types

Themes of fraternalism and Christian martyrdom pervade the revolutionary battle paintings of Connecticut-born artist John Trumbull (1756–1843). Trumbull's battle scenes of the American War for Independence, exemplified by *The Death of General Joseph Warren at the Battle of Bunker's Hill, June 17, 1775* (1786), honor American Revolutionary War generals as sacrificial types for Christ, their bodies protectively cradled by brotherly subordinates. In his *Autobiography* (1841), Trumbull credited Christ's endorsement of fraternal love in the Gospel of St. John (15:13) for inspiring the self-sacrifice of Revolution-era patriots. Trumbull's contemporaneous drawing of *Joshua Attended by Death at the Battle of Ai* (1786) visualized an epic poem by Congregationalist clergyman Timothy Dwight (1752–1817). Dwight's *The Conquest of Canaan* (1785), draws a parallel between Israel's conquest of the Promised Land and America's struggle for independence. The Israelite commander Joshua, an Old Testament type for George Washington, is accompanied by an apocalyptic personification of Death. More frequently, as seen in a late eighteenth-century engraving of *Washington Giving the Laws to America*, the first president was compared with Moses for leading the nation to freedom under the constitutional rule of law.

After his death, Americans virtually deified George Washington as a Christ-like savior or embodiment of divine



In *Washington Giving the Laws to America*, the first president was compared with Moses for leading the nation to freedom under the constitutional rule of law. From the Print Collection of Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

wisdom. Popular prints memorialized him rising heavenward, emulating Christ's Resurrection and Ascension. In 1817 Trumbull received a commission to paint four large murals for the U.S. Capitol Rotunda, including *The Resignation of George Washington, December 23, 1783* (1822–1824), which celebrated the victorious American general's selfless abdication of power, his indifference to earthly ambition in favor of a loftier, eternal glory. After he completed his Revolutionary War murals, Congress commissioned four other artists to paint additional Capitol Rotunda panels that focused on

European exploration and Christian settlement of the New World, including John G. Chapman's *Baptism of Pocahontas at Jamestown, Virginia, 1613* (1836–1840), an imaginative representation of Native American conversion to Christianity.

Protestants and Religious Imagery

Wary of Catholic image worship, Protestants still generally resisted the pictorial, sculptural decoration of churches. John Ritto Penniman (1782–1841), a Masonic New England artist, painted a *Last Supper* (1812) for the chancel of Boston's Anglican Old North (Christ) Church. Focused upon a youthful Christ, the picture was veiled for fifteen years shortly after being installed above the Communion table. Yet Protestant Americans were fascinated by Catholic forms of worship and flocked to panoramic and more modestly scaled pictorial representations of European Catholic church interiors. The American artist George Cooke's (1793–1849) *Interior of St. Peter's Basilica* traveled throughout the southern states for fifteen years beginning in 1829. More famously, a version of *The Choir of the Capuchin Chapel* (c. 1814), by French artist François-Marius Granet (1775–1849), was exhibited in various cities for some forty years after its arrival in the United States in 1818. Philadelphia painter Thomas Sully (1783–1872) copied Granet's deep perspective view of mysteriously illuminated monastic church architecture and Catholic ritual.

In Pennsylvania, German-speaking folk artists, belonging to Lutheran and Reformed churches as well as Moravian, Mennonite, and other Pietist sects, vividly expressed the Protestant predilection for devotional imagery. Using colorful animal, floral, and paradisiacal motifs, they illuminated hymnals, psalm-books, family registers, birth and marriage certificates, and religious broadsides in a calligraphic style known as *fraktur*. By the early nineteenth century, instructional manuals in manuscript illumination disseminated the practice to other religious communities. Illuminated Pennsylvania German "heaven-letters" offering communications from the spirit world found a counterpart in New England and New York Shaker communities. By the 1830s, Shakers—the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Coming—were communing with their Christian prophetess, Mother Ann Lee (1736–1783), and other deceased luminaries through drawings from beyond the grave. Shaker women in particular served as what Shakers termed instruments for designing the gifts, decorated with flowers, trees, leaves and heart-shaped cutouts framing heavenly messages.

Commercial and missionary dissemination of biblical imagery through engravings, lithographs, and book illustrations progressed rapidly during the early republic. Before the Revolution the British government had given English publishers a monopoly in printing English-language bibles. But in 1791 the Worcester, Massachusetts, printer and publisher Isaiah Thomas (1749–1831) sought to demonstrate that his luxury folio Bible, illustrated with fifty copperplate engravings, could rival London competition. Thomas employed Connecticut-born Amos Doolittle (1754–1832), a fellow Freemason, and several other Masonic-affiliated engravers to copy illustrations from an English Bible. Many of these reproductions aroused criticism from Protestant clergymen who objected to bare-breasted female characters. Similar criticisms greeted Philadelphia publisher Matthew Carey (1760–1839), an Irish-born Roman Catholic, whose 1801 and 1803 Bibles featured more sensational illustrations of violent, sexual subjects.

Stemming from the religious revivalism of the Second Great Awakening, Protestants from mainstream denominations formed alliances to create missionary and religious voluntary societies charged with spreading Christ's Gospel. After its 1816 founding the American Bible Society, headquartered in New York City, used power presses and new stereotyping technology to print thousands of inexpensive Bibles distributed by a national network of local, auxiliary Bible societies. By the 1830s competing publishers of lavish, illustrated Bibles were including maps and topographical landscapes of Palestine, Canaan, and Judea. The more realistic images gained favor as a way of authenticating the historic truth of God's Word. Harper's *Illuminated Bible* (1846), published by an innovative electrotyping process, included more than sixteen hundred images printed not on separate plates but rather on the same pages as the written text. This richly bound volume by Harper and Brothers of New York featured not only topographical views of Holy Land sites but also images of virtuous biblical heroines, an acknowledgment of women's importance in American religious life.

Nineteenth-century voluntary societies printed other forms of religious literature enlivened by visual images. The illustrated *Christian Almanac*, founded in 1821 by the Protestant evangelical New England Tract Society, published domestic scenes of family conflict and tragedy to warn readers of life's transience. Expanding distribution of the *Almanac* and other publications, the American Tract Society employed the wood engraver Alexander Anderson (1775–1880), whose early printing career included Masonic lodge certificates. An

1825 Anderson engraving represents members of a wealthy family benevolently distributing religious tracts to a grateful lower class family. Working for the missionary society into the 1840s, Anderson's images often featured pastoral views of the pious poor, beneficiaries of mass-produced religious tracts.

During the Second Great Awakening, American Protestant women also organized voluntary associations, missionary societies, Sunday Schools, and auxiliaries for local churches. At female boarding and day schools, young women produced watercolor and needlework reproductions of biblical illustrations and inspirational Christian prints.

Church-affiliated quilting groups collectively stitched patchwork quilts for presentation to charities or for itinerant preachers and beloved ministers.

Benjamin West

Although he lived in London as president of England's Royal Academy of Art, exhibitions and engraved reproductions of his work helped Pennsylvania-born artist Benjamin West (1738–1820) gain a reputation in America as a grand-manner history painter of biblically inspired subjects. Fulfilling an 1801 commission, West sent *Christ Healing the Sick in the Temple* (1815) to the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia. The eleven-by-eighteen-foot painting of Christian healing was displayed in a Gothic-style building specially constructed for generating exhibition revenues.

Thanks to West's success with *Christ Healing* and an even larger *Christ Rejected by the Jews* (1814), exhibitions of large-scale, multifigured religious paintings became commonplace in urban America. New York painter, Freemason, and theatrical impresario William Dunlap (1766–1839) profitably exhibited pictures of Christ's Passion and the Christian Apocalypse in cities and towns from New England to Urbana, Illinois. The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 facilitated Dunlap's westward tour through areas burning with the revivalist fervor of the Second Great Awakening.

Similarly, Rembrandt Peale (1778–1860), second-oldest son of Charles Willson Peale, exhibited *The Court of Death* (1820), a huge, gloomy allegorical painting. First exhibited in Peale's Baltimore museum, the painting traveled to cities throughout the United States with many clergymen delivering supportive sermons warning against the deadly consequences of intemperance and other social vices.

Benjamin West's paintings and self-identification with Quakerism influenced Edward Hicks (1789–1849), a Pennsylvania Quaker minister and self-taught artist, who from the

early 1820s to 1849 painted more than sixty versions of *The Peaceable Kingdom*, each visualizing the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah 11:6. Hicks's imagery of a harmonic animal kingdom led by a Christ-like child derives from an English Bible illustration. His Peaceable Kingdom series, however, included landscapes situating the subject within recognizable American settings. The Christian utopian theme responded to a Quaker schism that erupted in 1827, when the artist's cousin, Elias Hicks (1748–1830), led a movement opposing orthodoxy in favor of a more liberal Quaker faith.

Washington Allston

Succeeding Benjamin West, Washington Allston (1779–1843) became by the 1820s the nation's most renowned biblical history painter. South Carolina-born and Harvard-educated, Allston expressed the evangelical spirit of religious revivalism with paintings inspired by Old Testament prophecies. Based in Boston by 1818, Allston became most famous for obsessively laboring upon *Belshazzar's Feast* (1817–1843), a grand-scale picture of Babylon's pagan king, his doom pronounced by the prophet Daniel interpreting handwriting on a wall. Boston's merchant elite, supporters of Protestant missionary societies, financially invested in the painting. Never finished, *Belshazzar's Feast* symbolized Allston's quest for spiritual perfection. Displayed at the Boston Athenaeum soon after the Episcopalian artist's death, the picture expressed American identification with ancient Israel. Its theme of Jewish liberation from Babylon foreshadowed the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, an Old Testament type for the advent of the Christian millennium.

Yet *Belshazzar's Feast* also ominously alludes to the divisive issue of African slavery. Perhaps expressing his own sense of guilt as the heir of a slave-owning South Carolina plantation family, Allston included a dark-skinned figure among the Jewish captives situated to the immediate right of Daniel. Standing just below Daniel's outstretched hand, this black African is the only one who looks directly at the glowing light emanating from the prophetic handwriting. Allston's painting draws an implicit analogy between ancient Jewish captivity and contemporary African enslavement.

Thomas Cole and American Landscape Painting

An admirer of Allston, the English-born artist Thomas Cole (1801–1848) found religious inspiration in the disappearing wilderness areas of upstate New York and New England. Cole interpreted American scenery as God's handiwork, a revelatory book equivalent to holy scripture. In Cole's *View*

from *Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm (The Oxbow)* (1836) dying, mountain-top trees symbolize Christ's Passion, the meandering Connecticut River below forms a providential, all-seeing eye, and a distant hill on the horizon appears inscribed with Hebraic lettering.

Cole painted numerous biblical landscapes, including his largest canvas, *The Angel Appearing to the Shepherds* (1833–34), its exhibition specifically targeting New York City's Protestant activists, organizers of religious voluntary associations. Cole's later *Voyage of Life* (1839–1840), is a series of four paintings representing the stages of human life, *Childhood*, *Youth*, *Manhood*, and *Old Age*, as a treacherous spiritual journey toward heavenly salvation. Reproductive prints made *Voyage of Life* one of the most popular works in the history of American art.

Cole's students Frederic Church (1826–1900) and Asher B. Durand (1796–1886) similarly painted biblically inspired American landscapes, though with greater attention to naturalistic detail. The cosmic sweep of Church's *Niagara Falls* (1857) provides viewers the exciting panoramic perspective of an all-seeing eye hovering over waters rushing toward the Horseshoe Falls. At the same time, Durand expressed a Unitarian optimism that the Christian millennium could be achieved through human agency. The golden morning light of Durand's *Progress (The Advance of Civilization)* (1853) suggests the dawn of a new age achieved through the transformative power of American industry and technology. Telegraph wires and poles follow a busy road leading toward a canal, river and railroad, transportation arteries for Christian civilization.

Durand's telegraph poles stand in tribute to Samuel F. B. Morse (1791–1872), inventor of the telegraph, a fellow painter and president of New York City's National Academy of Design. The son of a conservative Congregationalist clergyman, Morse was vehemently anti-Catholic. Painted in Italy, Morse's *Chapel of the Virgin at Subiaco* (1830) reticently refuses to depict a pilgrimage shrine's statue of the Virgin: its hidden presence suggests the secretive, suspect rituals of Catholic image worship. Morse feared that poor European Catholic immigrants would overwhelm and subvert America's Protestant identity. Such fears only increased with the nation's westward expansion.

Catholic Art in Hispanic America

After 1846, when the United States began to occupy the territories of California and New Mexico, Catholic Hispanic artists rejected Protestant authority by continuing

to produce *santos*, religious icons focused on Christ and the Virgin Mary. In the Santa Cruz Valley of New Mexico, José Rafael Aragón decorated village chapels and churches with painted *bultos* (wooden sculptures) and *retablos* (panel paintings). During Holy Week, penitents carried in public processions devotional images of the crucified Christ, his emaciated body marked by streams of blood-red paint. Worshippers attributed miraculous powers to sacred images, believing they manifested the presence of the holy persons being portrayed. Visual intermediaries, *santos* helped bridge the spiritual distance between heaven and earth.

African Americans

Wary of African as well as Catholic idolatry, Morse, Cole, and other Protestant artists identified with missionary societies that sought to Christianize black slaves. But, with the support of white abolitionist allies, African American clergymen also assumed leadership roles in organizing their own church congregations, religious denominations, and fraternal societies. In 1810 Raphaelle Peale (1775–1824), eldest son of Charles Willson Peale, painted the portrait of Absalom Jones (1746–1818), a former slave who became the nation's first black Episcopal priest. Dressed in clerical robes, the founder of Philadelphia's St. Thomas African Episcopal Church grasps a large, leather-bound Bible, thereby asserting his intellectual, moral authority as an interpreter of God's Word. Contemporaneously, a ceramic pitcher manufactured in Liverpool, England, about 1808 portrays a silhouette profile of Jones amidst Masonic motifs. The pitcher was commissioned by Jones's brother Masons, members of Prince Hall Freemasonry, a network of black Masonic lodges formed during the revolutionary era.

Whereas free blacks attempted to elevate themselves socially and culturally by establishing their own Christian identity, many slaves retained traditional animistic African rituals. In Alexandria, Virginia, a late eighteenth-century figure, nearly a foot long, was excavated at the site of a blacksmith's shop and slave quarters. The figure's stiff, ritualistic pose and formal characteristics relate to West African iron figurines and suggest that American slaves sought to communicate with African spirits and gods through cult objects. Other excavations of slave quarters have uncovered polished stones, crystals, beads, shells, and other objects used in bundles of magical charms. Deriving from West African religious practice, such bundles both conjured prophetic, healing spirits inhabiting the earth and protected households against disease and misfortune.

Mormonism

Occult practices were widespread in antebellum America. In western New England and upstate New York, seekers of esoteric wisdom thought that sacred, golden treasures lay hidden in the region's hills and valleys, buried perhaps by ancient Indian tribes, who by legend had migrated from Egypt and the Holy Land. Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–1844), prophet-founder of the Mormon faith, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, employed seer stones in practicing the occult art of divination. Attuned to Masonic rituals and symbols, Smith asserted that these luminous stones had the penetrating vision of an all-seeing eye. In 1827 Smith's angel-assisted vision unearthed golden plates bearing the Book of Mormon and magical jewels for translating the sacred, hieroglyphic text. Believing that a celestial New Jerusalem would appear in the American West, Smith's followers completed their first Mormon Temple in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1846. Surviving sunstone relief sculptures for the capitals of the destroyed building's pilasters display the sun's radiant visage as flanking trumpets announce the apocalyptic advent of Christ's heavenly kingdom.

Spiritualism and Abolitionism

For many, occultism and modern science went hand in hand. By the late 1840s Spiritualist mediums were arguing that just as the recently invented telegraph could transmit electromagnetic messages across vast distances, so might spirits from a higher life beyond the grave communicate through a spiritual telegraphy. Belonging to the Religious Union of Associationists, or First Church of Humanity, a socialist religious group practicing Spiritualism and transcendentalist nature worship, the Massachusetts artist Fitz Hugh Lane (1804–1865) painted coastal New England views that distill nature's elemental flux into crystalline images of ethereal perfection. These luminous mid-century pictures suggest a spiritual continuum between heaven and earth.

Similarly, the expatriate artist Hiram Powers (1805–1873), working in Florence, Italy, conceived his white marble sculptures of female nudes in visionary, Spiritualist terms. Beginning in 1847 Powers exhibited his *Greek Slave* (1843–1846) in American cities as a visual sermon celebrating the Greek war of independence against the Islamic Turks (1821–1832). Powers verbally clothed his idealized female nude with an exhibition catalogue narrating the chaste Greek woman's Christian resistance to Muslim enslavement. Northern abolitionists praised the phantom-white sculpture as a coded denunciation of American slavery.

A follower of the Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), Powers influenced the African American landscapist Robert Duncanson (1821–1872), whose paradisiacal painting *Uncle Tom and Little Eva* (1853) focuses on the angelic child heroine of Harriet Beecher Stowe's abolitionist novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). Like a prophetess or spiritual medium, Duncanson's Eva points heavenward where all souls are free and equal.

In contrast to little Eva's longing for an egalitarian afterlife, the German-immigrant artist Emanuel Leutze (1816–1868) envisioned in more material terms an ethnically, racially inclusive American mission. A mural in the U.S. Capitol, painted during the Civil War, Leutze's *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* (1861–1862) foregrounds a free African American leading the donkey of a poor Irishwoman among pioneers who cross the Rocky Mountains as if they were the Children of Israel entering the promised land.

Throughout this period, Americans of differing faiths deployed the visual arts as means to access the invisible world of spirit. For most, matter itself seemed infused and animated by the light of God's Word. Nature was a revelatory book open to all who possessed a mind's eye for reading visual forms as providential signs of a future, perfected state of being. The artist's medium itself became a vehicle for religious communication independent of narrative subject matter.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; African American Religion: Colonial Era through the Civil War; Bible: As Sacred Text, Translations, Cultural Role; Deism; Great Awakening(s); Latter-day Saints; Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Quakers through the Nineteenth Century; Roman Catholicism: Cultural Impact; Shakers; Spiritualism; Visual Culture* entries.

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Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts from the Civil War to World War II

In the wake of the Civil War, modernization increased the production, distribution, and consumption of a Protestant print culture that permeated middle-class American life in the Northeast and, gradually, culture generally from coast to coast. Old Master and academic art established the iconography and ways of seeing that saturated this visual landscape, composed of permanent and travelling exhibitions of fine art; popular prints and reproductions in mainstream periodicals; illustrated Bibles and volumes on the Life of Christ, the Madonna, and the saints; stereo photographs and domestic amusements; and myriad forms of commercial entertainment.

Late nineteenth-century Americans characterized the Old Masters as artists who worked before the nineteenth century and established the criteria for great art. Giotto, Fra Angelico, Raphael, Guido Reni, Albrecht Dürer, Rembrandt, and Peter Paul Rubens, among others, were well known through prints and reproductions that had circulated since the early days of settlement and were now available to a mass audience. Academic artists such as William-Adolphe Bouguereau, Thomas Couture, and Jean-Léon Gérôme were the natural heirs of the Old Masters; they attended and perpetuated the values of the European art academies that replaced the medieval guild-apprentice model of training artists during the Renaissance. The academies organized public exhibitions of contemporary art; institutionalized art training; and established a hierarchy of subjects, with history paintings that depicted biblical, classical, literary, and mythological themes at the pinnacle. They also helped maintain and propagate the assumption that fine art exemplified taste and presented eternal truths. American artists, collectors, and viewers focused their attention on masterpieces and academic art because they shared this faith in fine art as a source

of aesthetic and moral values. Indeed, they imbued it with an important civic responsibility to inculcate European-American Protestant principles and socialize lay audiences into middle-class standards of deportment.

Concerned with the rise of industrialization, the influx of immigrants, and the growing threat of urban and working-class unrest, cultural leaders, tastemakers, and publishers ensured that middle-class audiences had access to fine art and the analytical tools they needed to appreciate it. They founded museums for its permanent display and sponsored its presentation in the era's other popular exhibition sites—department stores and world's fairs. Popular travel-lecturers like John L. Stoddard used colorful narratives and stereopticon slides of Old Master and academic art to guide their audiences to far-off destinations they could not afford the money or time to visit firsthand. Individuals, families, and groups also staged tableaux vivants, or living pictures, of well-known paintings in upper- and middle-class parlors, charity fundraisers, and civic and religious pageants. In addition, newspapers and general periodicals such as *Harper's Weekly*, *Century Magazine*, and *McClure's Magazine* included art history and criticism, as did more specialized publications like *Brush and Pencil* and *The Craftsman*. Women's magazines in particular educated their publics on art's history. They highlighted the work of contemporary American and European artists and even acted as patrons. Edward Bok, the long-time editor of *Ladies' Home Journal*, commissioned Henry Ossawa Tanner to produce four illustrations for a Women of the Bible series published in 1902 and 1903. The potential of fine art to influence behavior, refine taste, and cultivate the soul encouraged America's cultural producers to expand its reach into the hearts and homes of American consumers.

The boom in art publishing after the Civil War was aided further by the belief that the home—its architecture and material culture—had the power to shape the character of its inhabitants. Tastemakers published home decorating manuals that encouraged women to hang high-quality reproductions of fine art in every room of their homes, and educators called on teachers to present children with specific works of painting and sculpture depending on their age and level of education. Progressive Era reformers, too, turned to art to assimilate working girls, immigrants, and former slaves into middle-class Protestant American life—or more specifically, into the model of civilization and progress embodied by Euro-America. The Hull House in Chicago, for example, operated a circulating picture gallery, where

framed prints of fine art paintings by artists like Abbot Hander Thayer, Jean-Francois Millet, and Fra Angelico could be checked out for two-week periods and displayed in the “bare, ugly” rooms of working-class Chicagoans.

The work of Nathaniel Currier and James Ives, the most well-known and prolific printmakers in the second half of the nineteenth century, enabled homemakers, school teachers, and reformers to follow this advice. Between 1834 and 1907, the self-proclaimed Publishers of Cheap and Popular Pictures produced millions of lithographs under seven thousand different titles. The line separating the Old Master copy and its original, the plaster cast and its classical antecedent, and the mass-produced print and its fine art precursor was fluid, and painting, mass media, photography, illustration, and commercial art overlapped in complicated and significant ways. Publishers walked in the same social circles as museum trustees and art dealers; artists decorated their homes with prints, worked on commission, and produced art with distribution and large audiences in mind; and art critics and tastemakers celebrated the democratization of art. The ideological distinctions between fine and popular art, high and consumer culture, began solidifying in this period, but they remained nonetheless in flux and reliant on one another.

The Holy Land in America

One of the major themes animating Protestant and American print culture in the second half of the nineteenth century was the search for the historical Christ: what he looked like, the places he lived, and the roads he walked. Books, magazine articles, illustrated volumes, stereo cards, lithographs, and oil paintings sought to delineate Christ’s visage, define Christ’s character, and walk in Christ’s footsteps. The quest was rooted in a complex blend of theological apologetics, intellectual debates, and national ideologies.

German biblical criticism, an interpretative strategy that located the biblical text within human rather than divine history, was central to American religious thought by the second half of the nineteenth century. Sponsored by liberal Protestants who sought an alternative to a religion based on creeds and dogma, this so-called new criticism situated Christ in his temporal and physical environments. German biblical criticism’s focus on the historical Jesus coincided with increased tourism, missionary work, and geographic and archeological discoveries in the Holy Land. Photo narratives like *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee* (1894) attempted to document every place Christ visited, road he walked, and view he beheld. In this particular publication,

more than four hundred photographs taken by Robert T. M. Bain in the areas now known as Israel, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Greece, and Italy were arranged chronologically according to events recorded in the New Testament, beginning with “Early Days in Israel” and ending with “Paul in Italy.” By enabling visual access to the landscape, these photographs testified to the Bible’s authenticity and reaffirmed the centrality of scripture to Protestant belief.

The almost obsessive documentation of the biblical landscape was due in part to American self-identification as God’s chosen people and the United States as the New Israel. Americans—beginning with John Winthrop and the Puritan colonists—cultivated a typological relationship between the Holy Land and the American continent; they read American history as the fulfillment of scriptural events. The landscape of Palestine authenticated and naturalized the union of the American present and biblical past. This same landscape also served to integrate evolutionary theory and biblical narrative in an attempt to secure religion in the modern age. Believing that nature contained the truth of history, Americans considered the Holy Land capable of explicating biblical passages and revealing religious truths. In essence, the Holy Land functioned as tangible evidence for Christ’s material reality.

The resulting literary and visual representations of Christ’s life sought to accomplish two, interconnected objectives: first, to domesticate Christ and to locate him within European-American history and contemporary life; and, second, to enable readers and viewers to insert themselves into the biblical narrative. For example, writers imagined Christ’s reincarnation by describing what Christ would encounter if he returned to earth, as in *If Christ came to Chicago!* by William Stead (1894). Others sought to fictionalize Christ’s life, like the best-selling novel of the nineteenth century, Lew Wallace’s *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ* (1880). Stereoscopic images brought the Holy Land into the homes—and hands—of middle-class Americans. At Palestine Park in Chautauqua, New York, visitors were encouraged to dress in oriental garb and traverse a scale model of the Holy Land made of stumps, sawdust, and sod. Perhaps the most elaborate illustration of America’s appropriation of the biblical story as its own national history and destiny was the Jerusalem section of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904, an 11-acre recreation of Palestine that included the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Wailing Wall, and more than a thousand residents of the Holy Land who were “imported” for ethnographic authenticity. These multisensory, embodied experiences were

understood to present history and progress as well as the essential nature of religious truth. Faith was affirmed through personal observation and experience.

The American Christ

Widespread interest in the historical Christ accompanied and animated discussions about what Christ looked like. Although scholars debated whether an authentic likeness of the historical Christ existed, most agreed that historical representations of Christ formed a composite image commonly accepted by most Western believers. Modern depictions of Christ competed with this mental image and were laden with theological, ideological, and practical dilemmas. Jesus was supposed to be both human and divine; a historic agent and contemporary presence; a Jewish man and composite Son of God; and strong and just, patient and consoling, traits associated with masculinity and femininity, respectively.

Mihály Munkácsy (1844–1900), a Hungarian artist working in the academic tradition, produced two paintings that captured the public imagination and helped consolidate its mental image of Christ: *Christ before Pilate* (1881) and *Christ on Calvary* (1884). Both large-scale paintings, surpassing thirteen by twenty feet, were painted and circulated by the entrepreneurial art dealer Charles Sedelmeyer, who sent them on tours of European and American cities, where they were often displayed in theatrical settings replete with curtains and special lighting. When *Christ before Pilate* was first exhibited in New York City in 1886 and *Christ on Calvary* in 1887, American critics, religious leaders, and spectators greeted them with fantastic reviews and critical acclaim. Millions viewed the paintings on its multicity tour and read about it in newspapers and popular periodicals. In addition, more than 35,000 Americans purportedly purchased copies of the works to display in homes, schools, and churches. Munkácsy's Christ—a European male with long, brown hair who wears long, flowing white robes—embodied popular conceptions of the sacred figure, conjured from Old Master paintings and Holy Land visual culture.

The most commercially successful representations of the modern Christ were produced by the French painter James Joseph Jacques Tissot (1836–1902) a few years later, who produced more than five hundred illustrations of the New Testament that toured the United States in 1898 and were published in two folio volumes accompanied by the Latin text of the Vulgate, its English translation, and the artist's archeological notes on Oriental life and customs. The artist represented Mary and Christ as “Jewish types” in settings

purportedly derived from Palestinian life and predicated on firsthand observation of Oriental life and customs. As a result, Tissot's illustrations were seen to authenticate the biblical narrative by providing physical evidence for Christ's historical reality. In addition, they brought the biblical past into the present. Critics noted that Tissot did more than represent Christ; he presented a living Jesus to beholders. The historical past and immediate present were fused in Tissot's sacramental vision, which enabled a reconciliation of scientific study and religious belief.

The popularity of Munkácsy's paintings and Tissot's imagery inspired three Cleveland, Ohio, businessmen to commission prominent American academic artists—including Kenyon Cox, Frank Vincent DuMond, John LaFarge, and Gari Melchers—to paint their personal conceptions of Christ in 1906. The resulting paintings formed a traveling exhibition that visited a number of U.S. cities and was widely discussed in contemporary literature. The most thorough reviewers began their commentaries with the central problem in depicting Christ: how artists embody the mental image, spirit, personality, character, or idea of Christ (as it was variously called) into material form. After all, reviewers noted, so much was left to inference. The important role of inference in translating spirit into physical form raised a second important question. What sources and interpretive models should artists use to construct their mental and material images of Christ? The paintings' titles highlight the variety of visual, textual, and cultural antecedents for the artists' conceptions: Christ's utterances from the New Testament (“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone”); biblical passages describing Christ (“In Him was life, and the life was the life of men”); art historical types (The Man of Sorrows); aspects of Christ's character (Christ the Preacher); and theological notions (The Old and New Jerusalem). The artists' stylistic choices and modes of representation were shaped in turn by art historical precedents, popular interest in the historical Christ, contemporary ideals, and their academic training.

The most celebrated work in the show was Charles Curran's *Come unto Me*. Curran represented Christ as lean and muscular, his physique emphasized by his off-the-shoulder robe and raised arms. Curran parted Christ's hair on the side, eliminated his halo, and emphasized the scars on his hands. Critics praised what they called Curran's modern and powerful representation of the figure, echoing Curran's desire to present a universal Christ that embodied both compassion and strength. The acclaim garnered by Curran's picture was

consistent with the general sense that popular representations of Christ rendered him effeminate and weak. The equation of sentimentality and religious faith that characterized the mid-nineteenth century had inspired a revolt by those that sought to reclaim Christ's virility. So-called Muscular Christians aimed to turn Jesus into a masculine ideal for an urban, industrial age, and thereby to masculinize the church and save it from feminization. Curren's work pictured such a savior, one that could provide comfort in times of distress but nonetheless thrive in the rough and tumble world of modern life.

Although Americans looked for a Christ that corresponded to archaeological investigations and contemporary conceptions of manhood, representations deemed too tainted by modernity risked public condemnation. For example, the American entrepreneur Salmi Morse attempted to stage a Passion Play in San Francisco (1878) and New York City (1880) with a cast of two hundred, a chorus of eighty, and a full orchestra. He modeled his production on the popular Oberammergau Passion Play, performed once a decade in Germany. The day-long multimedia event featured the local people as the sacred figures as well as dramatic tableaux of every aspect of Christ's life based on fine art paintings. Nevertheless, Morse's productions met with cries of blasphemy. Civic and religious leaders imagined the rural villagers of Oberammergau as part of a distant time and place uncontaminated by modern life. In contrast, Morse's spectacle appeared polluted by commercial desire.

The American fine art photographer F. Holland Day faced similar challenges when he and a coterie of friends and professional models ascended a hill outside Boston to perform Christ's life, death, and Resurrection for the camera in 1898. Selected for their presumed resemblance to the biblical figures, dressed in costumes determined by archaeological findings, and fastened to crosses just as the Christ was supported in the Oberammergau Passion Play, the participants helped Day produce more than 250 studies—with the artist playing the role of Jesus Christ. Despite Day's use of conventional iconography, discordant critics judged the work according to where they located the work's meaning. This controversy hinged on the nature of the photographic medium. If the photograph served a documentary function, its meaning rested principally on the artist's intention and the image's subject matter; if its purpose was aesthetic, its significance hinged at least in part on the work's formal qualities and the beholder's interpretation of it. For those who advocated photography's relationship to the real, Day's

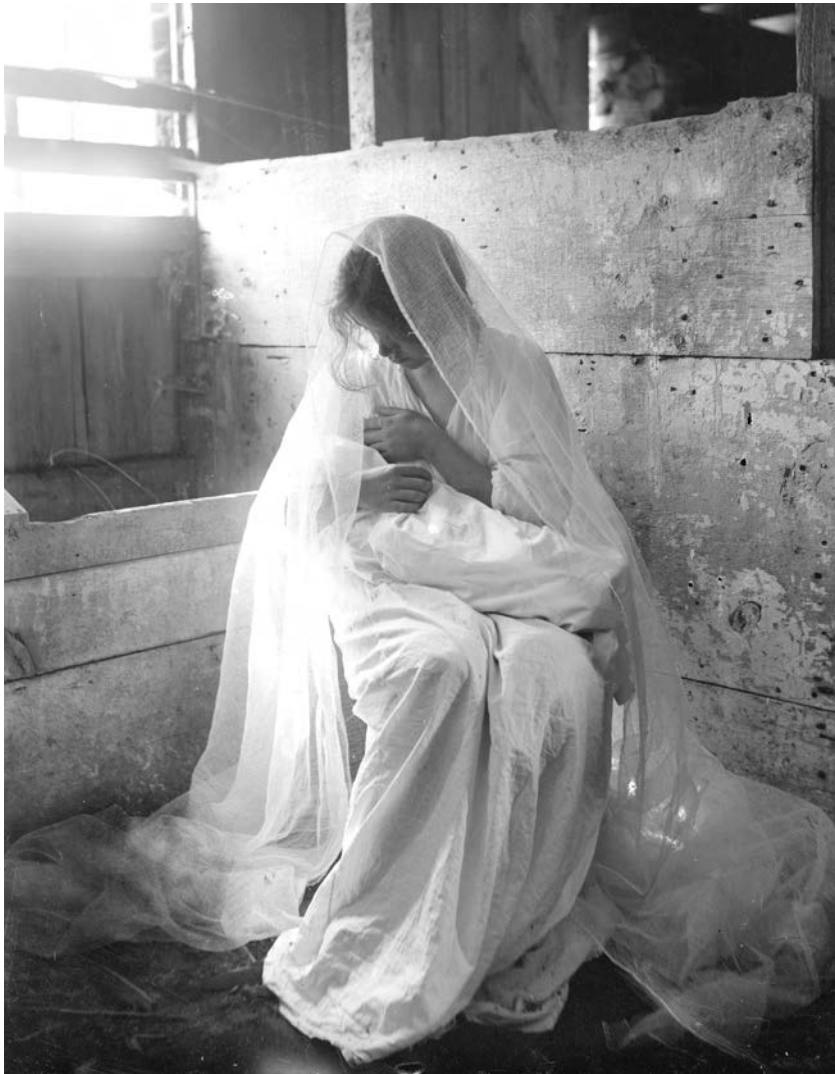
project was offensive because he sought to represent an individual who had died almost nineteen hundred years earlier. Critics who believed in the photograph's ability to evoke emotion praised the sacred series for its piety and religious feeling.

By the end of the century, representations of Christ's life were far more accepted in all forms of mass media. Indeed, the Passion played a central role in the development of narrative cinema. Early film followed a format similar to that of vaudeville and variety shows and drew on traditions of popular entertainment like lantern slide shows, magical theater, and stereographs. Viewers acknowledged the visual tricks produced by the director or performed by the demonstrator and marveled at their technological innovation. Early film versions of the Passion Play were no different; the individual showman choreographed a presentation of more than twenty films (purchased individually or in sets), lantern slides, lectures, and music. For example, *The Passion Play*, filmed in Horitz, Austria, was a ninety-minute multimedia presentation accompanied by a lecture, slides, organ music, and hymns. In 1898, when shown in Boston, Massachusetts, the local newspaper declared it an impressive spectacle that enabled the spectator to extricate the performance from its representational form and witness, firsthand, Christ's life and death.

American Madonna

Americans were surrounded by idealized representations of Anglo-American womanhood. Dressed in antique or loose-flowing drapery, placed within a nondescript landscape or domestic interior and depicted at rest or leisure, these representations adorned the walls of state capitals and commodities, art museums and advertisements, and world's fairs and parlors. Cultural leaders bestowed cultic significance on the ideal woman because the fate of American civilization rested on her domesticity, piety, and purity. She served as the primary medium for the salvation of men and children, the redemption of the nation, and the progress of civilization. The Madonna best incarnated contemporary conceptions of womanhood because she referenced the historical mother of Christ, epitomized chaste maternity, and mediated the earthly and heavenly realms. Not surprisingly, then, virtually all turn-of-the-century popular and fine art images of motherhood were granted sacred status; they presented Euro-American, middle-class women as madonnas and helped viewers access the transcendent.

Late nineteenth-century American Protestant artists drained Mary of her Roman Catholic heritage and charged



Among Gertrude Käsebier's famous photographs is *The Manger* (1901), which features a symbolic Madonna dressed in white, seated in a stable and holding a swaddled infant.

her with signifying a set of potent but contested ideals about contemporary womanhood. The English art critic Anna Jameson made the Madonna safe for Protestant consumption in her "Legends of the Madonna, As Represented in the Fine Arts" (1852), the first extensive study of Marian iconography. Jameson contended that the cult of Mary stemmed from two separate but related trends. It was the amalgamation of all types of a divine maternity, represented by Eve of the Old Testament, Astarte of the Assyrians, Isis of the Egyptians, and Demeter and Aphrodite of the Greeks, among others. It also developed in tandem with new ideas of what was referred to as the moral and religious responsibility of women in civilized societies, namely, the separation of male and female spheres. Jameson articulated the associations among her history of art,

model of ideal womanhood, and theory of social progress in the opening paragraph, when she asserted that representations of the Madonna served as what she called the visual form of female character, characterized her "beneficence, purity, and power," and illustrated her mediating role between the Deity and humanity.

Jameson's conception of the Protestant Madonna shared a number of similarities with her Roman Catholic counterparts, but their social roles were considerably different. For Roman Catholics, Mary remained tied to centuries-old theological debates and ritual traditions under the purview of the organized church. The rise in Marian apparitions, papal decrees, and clerical emphasis on private devotion throughout the nineteenth century ensured that Catholics, from the pope to the Italian-American immigrant, appealed to Mary for divine aid. Marian devotion was a primarily paraliturgical activity, occurring outside the sacrament of the Mass. The liturgy was public, enacted by the priest, and mandated by the Catholic Church, but devotions were linked to specific events and rituals, accompanied by artifacts such as rosaries and scapulars, and performed by individuals in confraternities and sodalities within the parish system. Lay devotions, in other words, took place outside the church building but remained under the control of the institutional hierarchy.

Jameson's conception of the Madonna as the quintessence of Protestant womanhood created a language and usable past that enabled writers and artists to divorce Mary from her Roman Catholic doctrinal, liturgical, and ritual contexts. Her success was revealed forty-five years later, when Estelle Hurlll, the editor of Jameson's works in the 1890s and fine art critic in her own right, produced her own analysis, *The Madonna in Art* (1897). Hurlll avoided the theological underpinnings of Marian imagery almost entirely to focus on her conceptualization of Mary as the universal mother. She described her book as "a study of Madonna art as a revelation of motherhood" and isolated love, adoration, and witness as motherhood's most prominent aspects because of their centrality in Old Master portrayals of the

Virgin Mother. By relying on the sacred nature of the Madonna to consecrate women's role in American culture and art's long history to universalize those attributes, Hurl contributed to a larger Protestant discourse that sacralized conceptions of ideal womanhood through their implicit associations with the transcendent.

In addition to the extensive number of mass-produced items decorated with the Madonna in the middle-class marketplace, contemporary artists flooded art galleries, exhibition spaces, museum and private collections, and popular periodicals with their own representations of the Virgin Mother. Indeed, a brief survey of those who relied on Marian associations at some point in their careers is a virtual who's who of American art at the turn of the century: George de Forest Brush, Mary Cassatt, Alvin Langdon Coburn, Sarah Jane Eddy, Lewis Hine, George Hitchcock, Gertrude Käsebier, Mary Macomber, Elizabeth Norse, Charles Sprague Pearce, Jessie Wilcox Smith, John Henry Twachtman, and Amelia Van Buren. The sheer popularity of Marian imagery meant that Protestant artists could remove the traditional iconography associated with her yet still sacralize the presumed natural and eternal character of women's domestic role.

A number of tensions characterize Protestant dedication to the Madonna. American Protestants presented a standard of womanhood that no mortal could possibly fulfill by imaging her as both Virgin and Mother of God. They depended on Mary's historicity to underscore the eternal and sacred nature of women's intercessory status, but at the same time considered the Madonna an abstract concept that could and should be embodied by contemporary women. Finally, they mined the Roman Catholic tradition of icons by treating women as material means to the transcendent and erasing the iconography and institutional apparatus that facilitated that practice. Marian imagery, in other words, represented the real and ideal simultaneously and fostered individual devotion to a communal symbol.

Mural Painting: Violet Oakley and John Singer Sargent

In 1890 John Singer Sargent (1846–1925) embarked on a mural series for the third floor special collections hallway of the Boston Public Library titled the *Triumph of Religion*. He was commissioned to decorate the entire room, which measured 85 feet long, 24 feet wide, and 26 feet high at the peak of the vaulted ceiling, and was allowed to select his own subject matter. After deciding against his original

idea—themes from Spanish literature—he decided to depict the history of religion or, more specifically, the development of religion as part of the progress of civilization. He gave visual expression to the immensely popular writings of French scholar Ernest Renan, whose *Life of Christ* (1863) and five-volume *History of the People of Israel* (1887 and 1893) presented an evolutionary model of Western civilization that began with paganism and ended with Christianity. Renan argued that progress reached its apogee in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, which presented ideal religion as anti-institutional and subjective. It was predicated less on authoritative dogma and more on the individual's experiential relationship with the divine.

Renan's history of religion provided the framework for Sargent's mural series, but the history of style provided the artist with his visual vocabulary. Sargent associated forms of religious belief with modes of artistic expression. He linked institutional religion to conventional and symbolic styles, and interior religion to spiritual and subjective styles. As a result, Sargent painted what he and others considered the most primitive and superstitious stage of religious history, *Pagan Gods*, in material modes of representation, or those associated with the allegories, emblems, and symbols propagated by the institutional church. In contrast, he intended to paint the *Sermon on the Mount* in a modern, expressive style, which he linked to the rejection of formulae and the embrace of private, individual religious belief.

Although Sargent worked on the murals for almost three decades (1890–1917), he never painted the final episode. Instead, the figures of *Synagogue* and *Church* that Sargent intended to frame the *Sermon on the Mount* served as the conclusion to his visual narrative, the former blindfolded and collapsing to the ground and the latter steadfast and staring directly at the viewer. Although Sargent believed both were antiquated forms of institutional religion and, as a result, represented both through the iconography of the medieval past, contemporary viewers did not see the mural series as he did. Instead, controversy ensued as soon as the allegorical pair was unveiled in 1919. Both Jews and Christians argued that Sargent presented a living Christianity emerging from the ashes of a dying Judaism—a historical fiction. Its location in a public institution heightened concern because of the murals' potential to confirm and inflame the escalating anti-Semitism of the American public. More generally, critics questioned the legality of presenting sectarian bias in a public space.

Sargent's interpretation of religious history in a public building was one of many mural projects commissioned and completed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that considered religion's role in American history. Built between 1901 and 1906, the new Pennsylvania State Capitol in Harrisburg was intended to embody the history of William Penn's Holy Experiment. The architect, Joseph H. Huston, choreographed the architectural, sculptural, and mural programs in the Renaissance Revival building to concretize Penn's philosophy of religious freedom and invited the famed woman muralist Violet Oakley (1874–1961) to decorate the frieze in the governor's reception room. In 1906 Oakley completed a set of murals for the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building in Harrisburg titled *The Founding of the State of Liberty Spiritual: Representing the Triumph of the Growing Idea of True Liberty of Conscience in the Holy Experiment of Pennsylvania*.

Historical, narrative, and philosophical progress impelled the viewer through Oakley's mural series. Presented in chronological order and from left to right, the thirteen panels were intended to show the historical harbingers of religious liberty, its eventual embodiment in William Penn, and its culmination in the founding of Pennsylvania. Influenced by Italian Renaissance frescoes and contemporary illustrations, Oakley outlined her figures, placed them along the lower edge of the canvas, and allowed them to "speak" in quotations that appeared in scrolls decorating the upper edge of each panel. The more than six-foot figures theatrically presented what one art critic called the march of enlightenment.

Although Oakley intended to present the growth of religious tolerance under the leadership of William Penn, Roman Catholics denounced the series for its anti-Catholic bias. Citing her selection of historical events, the ideological narrative she created, and the written descriptions that accompanied the murals, organizations such as the American Catholic Historical Society and the Knights of Columbus lodged formal protests, asking the governor and the Capitol Building Commission to reject Oakley's frieze. They argued that Oakley's historical imagination was predicated on a dominant Protestant model that located the origin of progress and freedom in the Reformation. More important, they feared that even well-meaning Protestant visitors would interpret the capitol through that familiar historical lens, which celebrated Protestant progress, liberalism, and democracy over and against Catholic medievalism, superstition, and hierarchy. Because of art's critical role in educating the

public and cultivating a moral citizenry, Catholic leaders feared that Oakley's murals would perpetuate these myths and stereotypes, which would be further enforced and even naturalized by the official sanction bestowed on them by their location in the state capitol.

Folk Art: Harriet Powers

Harriet Powers (1837–1911), born into slavery, is well known for producing two Bible quilts after the Civil War that have become canonical examples of pictorial quilt making in general and African American religious expression in particular. Composed of squares of differing lengths framed by sashing, Powers's brightly colored quilts included appliquéd figures and animals that referenced conventional religious iconography, local lore, and contemporary events. When interpreted in relationship to one another, they present sophisticated theological reflections that picture African American interpretive processes.

Powers's first quilt (1886) presents the biblical story and its protagonists in eleven episodes that can be read from left to right: Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden; Eve bears a son; Satan amid the seven stars; Cain kills Abel; Cain, forced to leave, goes to Nod to find a wife; Jacob and the angel; Christ's baptism; the Crucifixion; Judas Iscariot and thirty pieces of silver; the Last Supper; and the nativity. By beginning with Adam and Eve and ending with Mary, Joseph, and Christ, Powers presents a typological interpretation of the Bible; the sins of Adam and Eve prefigure Christ's sacrifice and Mary's sufferings. Specifically, Powers begins with human sin and ends with its redemption through Christ's birth, a theme she reiterates in the biblical figures she includes: Cain, Jacob, the criminal next to Christ on the cross, and Judas. All these men sinned against God but ultimately received divine mercy.

Powers's second quilt, *The Creation of the Animals* (1898), further exemplifies African American religious practice. Rather than representing the hope of new life, however, she depicts natural occurrences and apocalyptic events alongside the biblical figures. For example, in the second frame, Powers depicts May 19, 1780, better known as Black Friday. On that day, the sky grew dark at around 10:00 A.M. and stayed that way for thirty-six hours. Lacking other explanations, those who witnessed the event in New England determined it was the day of judgment. That interpretation was passed down from generation to generation and from New England to the American South, where Powers included it along with other meteorological events like the falling stars of

1833, the “creatures frozen in the cold night” of 1895, and the red light night of 1846. By integrating the biblical past with contemporary life, Powers used a common preaching technique practiced by many Protestant and African American religious leaders that called attention to the presence of God in the natural world, clothed the biblical protagonists in familiar garb, and identified the past and present as pre-figurations of the future.

Contemporary Art: Henry Ossawa Tanner

Unlike many artists who worked in a variety of genres, Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859–1937), an internationally renowned painter at the turn of the century, focused on religious subjects after establishing his position in the art world. His father, Benjamin Tucker (B. T.) Tanner, was a minister and later a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. The church, described as “the greatest Negro organization in the world” by W. E. B. DuBois in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), focused on religious conversion, evangelism, and African American uplift. Along with their Euro-American counterparts, they deemed Christianity the primary means to individual respectability, a civilized society, and the success of American democracy on an international scale. Tanner’s upbringing in the AME Church shaped his visual interpretations of the biblical text and led him to create paintings that engaged the viewer’s emotions and at the same time modeled a form of religious experience that was disciplined and restrained.

Tanner’s biblical paintings posited a relationship between seeing and believing, a theological formulation consistent with Methodism’s emphasis on experience as a means to the divine. Even a cursory glance through the biblical subjects Tanner chose to represent calls attention to the presence of the divine in human life. Daniel sits unharmed in a den of lions, angels appear before the shepherds, Gabriel approaches Mary, Lazarus rises from the dead, and the disciples and the three Marys stare into an empty tomb. Significantly, Tanner did more than simply represent God’s intervention in human history; he encouraged viewers to experience that presence before his paintings. His reliance on Christian iconography and the visual vocabulary of the historical Christ resulted in naturalistic renderings of biblical figures, and his use of more expressionistic brushwork encouraged spectators to personally engage the work of art and view it as a permanent presence rather than a historical record or instructional object.

The value Tanner placed on the importance of sensory experience in obtaining knowledge of God built on the

notion of object-centered learning, a notion that obtained widespread currency among cultural and religious leaders who believed that the study of art could cultivate the soul and encourage religious feeling. Throughout the nineteenth century, two general forms of popular religious art appeared: didactic imagery, which instructed, taught, and was used to facilitate conversion; and devotional imagery, which was contemplated by the viewer and intended to nurture and aid in character formation. Although both modes remained active throughout the century and many images encouraged both forms of engagement, emphasis began to shift during the nineteenth century from the didactic to the devotional. As Protestant attitudes toward the visual began to parallel those of Roman Catholics, many turn-of-the-century Americans turned to art to encounter the divine.

See also *African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; America, Religious Interpretation of; Anti-Semitism; Architecture* entries, *Bible* entries; *Judaism: Jewish Culture; Lived Religion; Material Culture, Approaches; Popular Religion and Popular Culture* entries; *Progressivism; Roman Catholicism: The Age of the Catholic Ghetto; Settlement Houses; Visual Culture* entries.

Kristin Schwain

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Visual Culture: Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts since World War II

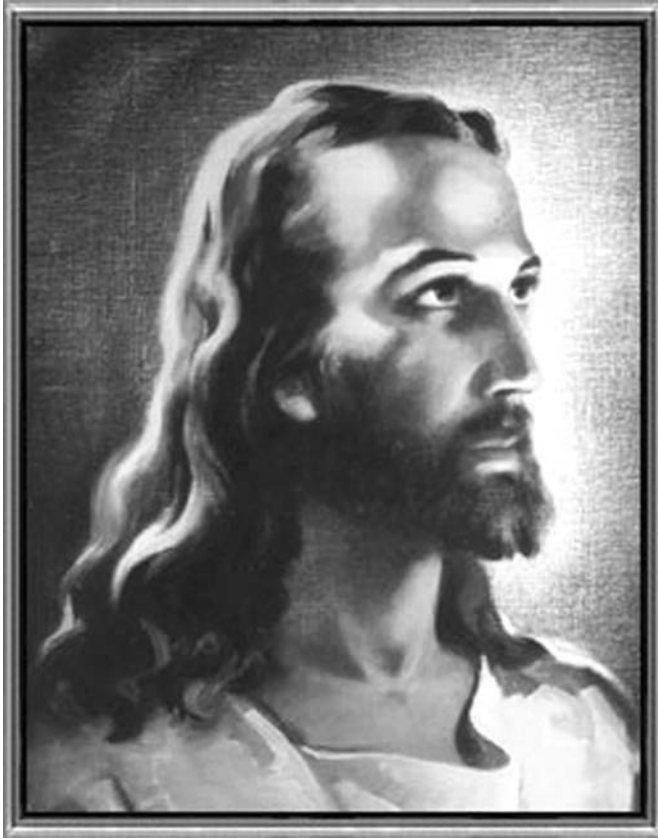
The dominant ideas and beliefs of a society or region are reflected in the art forms that make up its visual culture. Visual culture consists of both fine and commercial art forms as they exist within and outside organized faith traditions. This may include paintings, sculpture, and the graphic arts as well as still photography, television, film, and artifacts. Since the end of World War II in 1945, one of the most significant ways North American religious beliefs and values have been communicated has been through visual culture. Traditional as well as alternative and counter-approaches to religious subjects and themes have been reflected. Some artists, in fact, view their vocation as prophetic.

Popular Traditionalism and Elite Postmodernism

In spite of shifts after the war from traditional narrative approaches toward greater abstraction, an audience for traditional narrative and realistically rendered religious subject art remained outside mainstream fine art circles. For example, most of the altarpieces, wall paintings, and stained glass windows in churches and temples continued to be created within narrative and realistic art styles. Most of the imagery of holy figures and of pilgrimage sites on the walls of people's home did as well. Since the war no religious subject art work has been more widely embraced than the 1941

painting *The Head of Christ* by commercial illustrator Warner Sallman (1892–1968). Referenced as the most popular Protestant representation of Christ, this painting and others that depict Jesus with European features were increasingly criticized during the later years of the twentieth into the twenty-first century. Critics have pointed out that such representations of Jesus without reference to his Jewishness historically were used to support colonial missionary efforts. Although increasing attention has been placed on multicultural representations of Jesus, meant to symbolize how all persons are created in God's image, globally Sallman's *The Head of Christ* remains the most popular. This popularity is credited to mass marketing over the years on everything from wall hangings and lamps to prayer cards. Among other widely distributed Sallman illustrations is the poster *The Christmas Story*, in which a soldier is shown reading the Bible with an image of the holy family and the American flag in the background. During the Christmas of 1942, this poster was distributed to U.S. soldiers in support of the war. Increases in the variety of faith traditions aside, the popularity of Sallman's *The Head of Christ* reflects the continued domination of traditional Protestant Christianity and its imagery in much of America and the world.

Shifts after the war away from representing religious subjects within traditional narrative approaches helped usher in the postmodern era. Increasingly, much of fine art creation moved away from the church and other faith institutions and into museums. Critics argued that previous traditional approaches would prove inadequate for the approaching era. Based on G. W. F. Hegel's 1828 Berlin lecture, the critic and philosopher Arthur Danto has described this shift as the end of art or the death of narrative art as primary. No longer would artworks be understood simply as a part of a neatly defined linear historical narrative. Instead, there would be no agreement in the fine art world about what constituted art, and anything could in effect be art. In increasing numbers, artists would embrace interrelative approaches to the secular and religious, within expanded definitions of religion. From a Christian perspective, Colleen McDannell presents an expanded definition in her *Material Christianity*: "Religion is more than a type of knowledge learned through reading holy books and listening to holy men. . . . Throughout American history, Christians have explored the meaning of the divine, the nature of death, the power of healing, and the experience of the body by interacting with a created world of images and shapes" (1995, p. 2). Such statements highlight that religious artwork includes images



Since World War II no religious subject artwork has been more widely embraced than the painting *The Head of Christ* by commercial illustrator Warner Sallman.

of traditional religious subjects, as well as images that portray mythical themes and awe-inspiring experiences in ways that reflect Americans' values.

Increasing Abstraction in Art

New directions in North American visual culture evolved out of the destruction of the war. The center of the fine art world had shifted from Paris to New York. Although Americans no longer first looked to Europe to define new trends, one of the ways Europe continued to influence American art as well as American theology was through the artists and theologians who migrated to the United States and Canada. The American Abstract Expressionist movement embodied the growing need for new ways of thinking after the traditional ways of interpreting the world had been shaken by the realities of a second worldwide war. This movement had influenced the shift from Paris to New York. Abstract Expressionists took explorative approaches to art making as spiritual ritualistic practices. They embraced

freedom of expression through form and color in ways not necessarily bound to object representational and narrative approaches. In the 1940s Robert Motherwell (1915–1991), Jackson Pollock (1919–1956), and Willem de Kooning (1904–1997) were among the artists who embraced this expressive approach. David Smith's (1906–1965) large geometric sculptures also helped define the movement. Motherwell described the artist's vocation as functioning "to make actual the spiritual so that it is there to be possessed" (Museum of Modern Art, 1959, p. 15). Mark Rothko (1903–1970), whose approach was in keeping with the movement, also spoke about his vocation in religious terms: "I'm interested only in expressing basic human emotions—tragedy, ecstasy, doom, and so on. . . . The people who weep before my pictures are having the same religious experience as I had when I painted it" (Lucie-Smith, 1996, p. 223). Both Motherwell and Rothko countered the idea that only traditional figurative imagery could be seen as religious in subject. Later taking a related approach to painting in the 1950s, William Ronald (1926–1998) founded the Painters Eleven, a group of Canadian artists committed to abstraction.

Much of the art of the 1950s represented delicate balances between the traditional and new as well as the religious and secular. The decade began with the United States again focused on national patriotism in relation to a military conflict, the Korean War. As it had been during World War II, this patriotism often was interrelated with religious beliefs that God was on the side of the United States. The decade ended with the international influence of Abstract Expressionist artists continuing, as evident by the New American Painting exhibition that circulated throughout Europe in 1958. Through the fame of artists such as Andy Warhol, the Pop Art movement that had begun in the 1950s received greater attention. Warhol highlighted how the blurring of the lines between fine and commercial art paralleled the blurring of other previously accepted cultural boundaries. He represented the effects of modern mass-production by presenting everyday objects such as soup cans, shipping boxes, and comic strips as fine art subjects. In addition, artists such as Jasper Johns (1930–) were embracing both elements of the Pop Art movement and a type of Neo-Dadaism. Johns represented American cultural icons in ways that called for seeing the traditional in new ways. In his *Flag* painting (1954–1955), Johns reduced the flag to an abstract pattern of colors and shapes, thereby prompting the viewer to question when an image of the flag is iconic and when is it not. Also during this decade Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986) painted images of nature, such as in

her *Winter Cottonwoods, East V* (1954), in which she embodied haunting spiritual qualities within a unique approach that was both representational and abstract.

Realism and Social Conscience in Photography

Although much of the art world was moving toward abstraction, a new group of photographers were moving away from the painterly effects of their predecessors and embracing realism in ways that called viewers to moral action. At the turn into the twentieth century, many of the most prominent American fine art photographers had created soft-focus pictorial techniques that gave photographs a painterly feeling. These techniques along with focus on traditional religious subjects supported their arguments that photography could function as a fine art. Two photographers who lived well into the twentieth century and who early in their careers had embraced the pictorial approach as a part of Alfred Stieglitz's (1864–1946) famed Photo-Secession group were Edward Steichen (1879–1973) and Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882–1966). Other photographers not part of the group were nonetheless influenced by it. For example, the landscape photographs of Ansel Adams (1902–1984) show influences from both Hudson River landscape painters such as Thomas Cole (1801–1848) and the Photo-Secession group. Adams's photographs embody a spiritual quality that celebrates the beauty of North American landscapes as spiritual and Eden- or paradise-like. His landscapes also can be seen in relation to theological concerns about the ethics of ecology. Perceptions of American landscapes as Eden-like date back to the first European settlers, who understood themselves as having a covenant with God and defined America as the New Promised Land.

Moving away from pictorialism, other photographers chose instead to document the economic hardships of specific underserved communities in ways that called viewers to take moral action. This new interest in documenting realism in ways that often blurred the divide between fine art and documentary photography was influenced by uses of documentary photography during World War II. For example, Arthur Fellig who used the pseudonym Weegee (1899–1968) photographed the harsh realities of New York crime scenes and published the photographs in a volume titled *Naked City* in 1945. Gordon Parks focused on the continuing struggles of African Americans as the descendents of slaves. In the 1942 photograph *American Gothic*, he presented janitorial worker Ella Watson with a broom and mop standing in front of a U.S. flag. This was a counterinterpretation of Grant

Wood's 1930 painting *American Gothic*, which had achieved a type of iconic status suggesting how hard labor was a part of the American mythic ideal. Organized lynchings of African Americans, which continued into the 1960s, were another harsh reality of U.S. life documented in photography. These photographs were widely distributed in newspapers and magazines as photojournalism as well as on post cards as propaganda, and have since been published as a book, *Without Sanctuary*. African American leaders of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as others that followed, such as James H. Cone (1938–), described lynchings as a type of crucifixion.

African American Artists and the Radical 1960s

The movement toward social justice in photography had a parallel in the broader art world in the 1960s. Immediately after World War II prominent African American artists had already begun representing their experiences as Christians and U.S. citizens. Some of them had previously been a part of the Harlem Renaissance or New Negro movement (c. 1918–1937). They celebrated the diversity of African American experiences in ways that made statements about Christian justice and suffering in attempts to counter stereotypes. For example, Romare Bearden (1911–1988) experimented with media and style usually within a Cubist approach, and presented images of human suffering in works such as his *Passion* series (1945). Jacob Lawrence (1917–2000) also embodied a Cubist approach and in his 1947 *War* series depicted his experiences as a member of the Coast Guard during World War II. Most African Americans understood their experiences as Christians and Americans as interrelated. Both experiences influenced their struggles for political and social justice.

The 1960s brought a period of radicalism and diversity in which the previous more simplistically perceived boundaries between the profane and the mundane were blurred. This period of change brought a heightened social and political consciousness inspired by the civil rights movement, the women's movement, and the countercultural movement that supported protests against the Vietnam War. These protests reflected that a growing number of citizens no longer perceived U.S. war efforts as necessarily rooted in justice. The civil rights and women's movements helped draw attention to art created by minorities and women, in ways that highlight the diversity of American experiences. The Black Arts movement of the 1960s and after can be seen as a type of continuation of the 1920s New Negro movement and

Harlem Renaissance, in which African Americans attempted to affect the moral issues of equal rights, social liberation, freedom, and justice, often from a Christian perspective. For example, in the Chicago outdoor mural titled the *Wall of Respect* (1967) a part of the history of African American accomplishment was represented. More recently, at the turn into the twenty-first century, Carrie Mae Weems (1953–) has taken a critical and creative photographic approach to redefining daguerreotypes of enslaved persons of African descent. Kara Walker (1969–) has confronted viewers with black silhouette images that both embody and critique the shocking stereotypical ways African American women were represented before the Civil War.

The Holocaust and Nuclear Holocaust

Part of the Pop Art tradition, George Segal (1924–2000) created haunting sculptures of human figures cast from life that represented situations of injustice. In *The Holocaust* (1984) he presented images about the death and encampment of more than six million Jews during World War II. In *The Bread Line* (1991) he represented the poverty of the Great Depression. *The Bread Line* relates to the earlier work of Dorothea Lange (1895–1965) and others commissioned by the Farm Security Administration to photograph the realities of U.S. rural poverty during the period.

Continuing concerns about the existence of nuclear weapons have also been represented in art. New ethical concerns and anxieties developed after nuclear weapons were used to ensure the Allied victory in World War II and after atomic weapons continued to be developed in large numbers during the Cold War (1945–1991). These concerns exist within awareness that the United States and other nations now have weapons that can spark a nuclear holocaust. Theologians such as Gordon D. Kaufman have contemplated the ethics of living in the nuclear age. The possibility of a nuclear holocaust has been illustrated in fine art works such as Andy Warhol's silk screen *Atomic Bomb* (1965) and were a primary concern in the countercultural prophetic approach of Tony Price (1937–2000), who turned atomic salvage into sculptured religious symbols. The ethics of developing and using nuclear weapons have also been questioned through popular



After World War II, prominent African American artists celebrated the diversity of African American experiences in ways that expressed Christian justice and suffering. Romare Bearden experimented with media and style, usually within a Cubist approach, and presented images of human suffering in works such as his *Passion* series. Art © Romare Bearden Foundation/Licensed by VAGA, New York, New York.

works such as the television movie *The Day After* (1983), which presented what life in America might entail after a nuclear holocaust.

A New Theology of Art

One of the most significant theologians of the early post-war period was Paul Tillich (1886–1965), who in 1933 immigrated to the United States from Germany to escape

threats from the Nazi government. He is considered the first Western theologian to give in-depth focus to the visual arts. Within his correlation theological method, Tillich highlighted how the Christian Church and secular society are interrelated. According to him, religion in the universal sense, or religion as ultimate concern, is valid when focusing on the church as well as the secular, because religion in this wider sense gives meaning to all cultural creations, including art. Tillich argued that art can function as both a reveler to cultural understanding and an indicator of the character of a spiritual situation that otherwise would remain beyond human awareness. He described art history as the history of continuous discoveries about our spiritual beliefs and practices as they relate to our secular beliefs and practices. Tillich spoke of art as having the potential to unite humanity, and the artist's role as having a prophetic character that expressed the dynamics of society beyond the present and the mundane.

Although the idea that anything can be art was accepted within much of the fine art museum world, as the continuing popularity of works such as Warner Sallman's *The Christ Head* shows, the end of traditional approaches was not embraced by many in the Christian Church and in other areas of mainstream America. The result was a diversity of approaches and debates about what is authentically religious art. The debates can be seen in relation to not only what Arthur Danto has called the end of art but also the God is Dead movement that gained momentum in the 1960s. This movement was rooted in Friedrich Nietzsche's nineteenth-century declaration that humanity had killed God and was left contemplating how to comfort itself. God's existence and involvement in human history were no longer necessary beliefs for all. Within a new radical theology, scholars in the 1960s such as Thomas J. J. Altizer (1927–) declared traditional images of the Creator God obsolete. Altizer argued for a new approach to finding the sacred within a secularly driven world, in which traditional ideas of God were no longer necessary to explain the existence of the universe. The theologian Gordon D. Kaufman's (1925–) later definition of God as creativity can be seen in relation to Altizer's theology. Arguments that art and God were dead critiqued traditional beliefs that many no longer accepted as adequate for the postmodern era.

Andy Warhol of the Pop Art movement also used depiction of Jesus to make statements about the boundaries between religious-subject fine art and mass-produced commercial art in his 1986 *Last Supper* series. By combining the

composition of Leonardo da Vinci's *Il Cenacolo* (*Last Supper*) with Dove soap and General Electric logos, he showed how consumer culture had become a new type of American icon. Warhol's work embodied not only the new philosophy that anything could be art but the theological hope that the overthrow of previously accepted societal divisions would allow anyone to be anything he or she wished.

Controversies over Representations of Jesus

In reaction to nontraditional representations of religious subjects, public debates have continued about whether National Endowment funds should be used to support artists such as the fine art photographer Andres Serrano (1950–). Serrano placed a small plastic crucifix in a jar of his urine and entitled it *Piss Christ* (1989). Chris Ofili's 1996 collage *The Holy Virgin Mary*, in which the artist covered a representation of the Virgin with elephant dung, also gave rise to debate. One of the most vocal opponents of Ofili's work was Rudolph Giuliani, then mayor of New York, who also objected to the African American photographer Renee Cox (1960–), whose work he called anti-Catholic. In *Yo Mama's Last Supper* (1996) Cox models nude as Christ surrounded by black apostles, except for Judas, who appears to be white. Such approaches to creating postmodern reinterpretations of biblical subjects often exist in part as critical statements about aspects of the church and American society.

Postmodern works of various media have prompted debates about which representations may be defined as authentic and iconic. For example, as the result of the contest headed by the Catholic nun and art historian Sister Wendy for a more inclusive representation of Jesus for the new millennium, Jane McKenzie's *Jesus of the People* was declared the Jesus of 2000. McKenzie's painting has been embraced by many and condemned by others. She presents Jesus as a young black man surrounded by symbols that reflect a multicultural world. Other artists have taken more abstract and symbolic approaches. For example, in the fine art painting *Crocifisso 2* (1960), William Congdon presents the crown of thrones on a cross. Although questions about the iconic value of such representation may still be asked, questions about how Jesus looked and whether the artist has presented most viewers' preferred interpretation become less important. Films such as Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988) and Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (2004)

have prompted public debates about what constitutes an authentic representation of Jesus' life.

Native American Art and Electronic Imagery

During the later half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, the work of Native American artists such as the Canadian Norval Morrisseau (1932–2007), also known as Cooper Thunderbird, gained attention. Morrisseau created a unique painting style known as the Woodland school of legend or medicine painting, through which he represented some of the tensions between Native Americans and people of European descent. Using this approach, he originally painted ancient Ojibwa legends on found materials such as animal hides, but later included representations of Christian subjects in his work.

North Americans' religious values and beliefs are increasingly communicated through popular media, including film, television, print forms such as magazines, and new media forms such as the Web and mobile technologies. Values are communicated in the stories and events presented through genre such as dramas, sitcoms, talk shows, westerns, science fiction, and televised religious services. Christian symbols such as angel wings or Madonna and child imagery are used to persuade viewers to purchase everything from undergarments to baby formula. New virtual communal worship rituals take place through sites such as the Anglican Cathedral of the Second Life. Although many of the religious and iconic roles of such images and practices are different from traditional approaches, they still communicate messages about Americans' religious beliefs and practices.

Since World War II, diversity has been a key theme in the transition from the modern to the postmodern era. The move has been from ideas of art as necessarily embodying universal messages toward greater awareness of multiculturalism and how art communicates the particular circumstances and traditions of specific communities. Technological developments have greatly influenced the increased access we now have to the graphic arts and popular media as viewers and producers. Since 1945 North American visual culture has moved in new directions but remained entwined with major religious, civic, and social currents. The faith beliefs, myths, hopes, debates, protests, and turmoil of the continent have always been and will continue to be embedded in its visual culture.

See also *African American Religion: Post-Civil Rights Era; Civil Religion in the United States; Death of God Theology; Literature, Contemporary; Material Culture, Approaches; Popular Religion and*

Popular Culture: Since the Mid-Twentieth Century; Postmodernism; Religious Studies; Visual Culture entries.

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Voodoo

Voodoo traces its origins back to traditional spiritual practices of West Africa. *Vodu* refers to its African origins, *vodun* to its Caribbean expressions, and *voodoo* to its development in North America. The latter word has come to refer to a variety of magico-religious customs, reflecting African roots and New World adaptations. For the Fon-speaking peoples of Dahomey (now the republic of Benin), *vodun* refers to a god, a spirit, or a sacred object. *Vodu* refers to different deities and to a system of religious belief and ritual through which the gods could possess humans who then danced to the movements of the gods. The name suggests "spiritual forces." In this African worldview, humans interacted with spirits of trees and rivers, and the ghosts of dead ancestors continued to intervene in the lives of descendants. Humans had easy access to spiritual forces for decision making and for achieving healing from harmful forces. Spirit possession was an essential feature of West African religion. In particular rituals,

individual men and women would allow a deity to enter their bodies. When these persons spoke, it was believed that the deity was determining what was said. The West African tradition gave much authority to fate, with divination considered useful in understanding a person's destiny, and a sorcerer could often help an individual circumvent an unhappy future. Slaves brought the religion to the New World, and its early history in North America focuses on the South, specifically New Orleans, the Carolina and Georgia Low Country, and rural plantation districts with large slave populations.

Nineteenth Century: Arrival and Growth of Voodoo in America

Arrival of Voodoo in New Orleans

Voodoo, like other circum-Caribbean religions based in African traditions such as Santería, Shango, and Candomble, had a pantheon of gods and spirits, priests and priestesses who conducted services, a congregation of the faithful, and a defined belief system. Its essentials came to the French Louisiana colony with the earliest slaves. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, some ten thousand people fled the slave uprising that led to the new republic of Haiti and arrived in New Orleans, bringing the Haitian vodou religious traditions with them and easily melding them with the Louisiana version. Haitian vodou began on sugar plantations at the height of the slave trade, with huge African populations and small numbers of French planters. The demographics enabled the recently arrived Africans to replenish their spiritual traditions in the New World for generations. The Roman Catholic Church of the French planters acknowledged the humanity of the Africans and sent priests to convert them, leading to a syncretic faith in which sorcerers from West Africa and their descendants thrived and priests and priestesses became powerful political and social leaders.

The Roman Catholicism of French New Orleans similarly interacted with this African-based religion, resulting in a syncretic new tradition that became voodoo. Slaves received instruction in Catholicism in New Orleans and found congenial its conception of a supreme deity, angels, and saints—all of whom they could relate to their own spiritual beings. Just as they had prayed to spiritual beings as intermediaries to higher gods, so they embraced the Virgin Mary as intercessor to Jesus. Africans honored their deities with festivals and prayed for practical assistance, and Catholicism offered parallel experiences. Evidence suggests that nineteenth-century

voodoo practitioners identified specific Catholic saints with African deities. Marie Laveau called St. Peter “Laba,” or “Papa Limba,” terms that may have been variants of Legba, a Dahomean spirit who is the guardian of entrances, gate keeper to the spirit world, and a well-known figure in blues music lore as the protector at Mississippi Delta crossroads. The other African deity, in addition to Legba, who appeared often in New Orleans voodoo was Damballa, also called “Li Grand Zombi” and symbolized by the serpent. The snake was at the center of New Orleans voodoo, its image seen in homes of voodoo practitioners; it was a central part of ritual altars throughout the nineteenth century.

Open Practice and Spread of Voodoo in the American South

Voodoo “queens,” or priestesses, dominated voodoo activities in New Orleans in the nineteenth century. The homes of voodoo priests displayed impressive altars, composed of statues and images of saints, candles, flowers, fruit, and other gifts to the spirits. The feast day of St. John the Baptist, June 23, was marked by special rites on the shore of Lake Pontchartrain. Voodoo worship, in general, included chants, drumming, dancing, and Catholic prayers, all aimed at creating an atmosphere in which the priest or priestess could summon the spirits into the bodies of the worshipers and those spirits speak to everyone assembled through those possessed. The most famous voodoo queens were the two Marie Laveaus, mother and daughter. They were free women of color and prominent French-speaking Creoles who combined their magical powers, organizational abilities, and business sense to enable voodoo to survive despite opposition from political opponents.

Although New Orleans was the most famous center of voodoo in the nation in the nineteenth century, voodoo was also found in the Low Country of South Carolina and Georgia. Folklorist and historian Charles Joyner identifies a tradition of “magical shamanism” as a subterranean culture that derived from African vodu. Slaves and free blacks used it as protection or for malevolent purposes. When ill, for example, slaves in the area typically went to the priests of the old religion rather than to their masters. Illness was caused by imbalances between the spiritual and material realms, and sorcery was necessary to summon the spirits of the dead for their counsel and cures. This magic could cure illness, kill an opponent, or gain someone's love. The spirit of Damballa was as present in the Low Country as in southern Louisiana: snakeskins were featured in initiation ceremonies into

voodoo, snake charming was a part of rituals, and folklore in the region attributed supernatural power to serpents.

Shift from Ritual to Hoodoo Magic

During the nineteenth century, the ritual aspects of voodoo gradually declined not only in New Orleans but in other areas of large slave and free black populations, and voodoo as a system of magic came to more prominence. *Hoodoo* became the term for this magic, which placed less emphasis on spirit possession and more on healing practices and the ability to influence people and events. Voodoo implies the supernatural at work, but hoodoo workers rely on the efficacy of their prescriptions for individual clients, whatever the source of their power. *Conjure* is part of the same belief system as voodoo and particularly hoodoo. It involves influencing human behavior through the casting of magical spells. Those practicing this faith are called hoodoo doctors, root doctors, or conjurers. Women practitioners are sometimes called Madam, Sister, or Reverend. Its power rests in the community's acceptance of its effectiveness, based in previous experience with a conjurer helping or harming people. The anchoring in a community of believers gives conjure a claim as a folk religion. The conjurer's power derives partly from giving people of little social status the perceived ability to influence the life of a stronger person by harnessing the power of the spirit world.

Twentieth Century: Adaptation and Resurgence

Zora Neale Hurston and the Spiritual Churches

Zora Neale Hurston, an anthropologist as well as a novelist, gave a detailed picture of hoodoo in the 1920s and 1930s, when she participated in several initiations and apprenticed herself with New Orleans hoodooists. Hurston was initiated by Luke Turner, reputedly the most powerful Louisiana conjurer and nephew of Marie Laveau. Hurston wrote of altars, images of saints, candles, oils, waters, beef hearts, beef tongues, black chickens, black cats, sheep, elaborate feasts, and spirit possession. By this time, though, the ceremonies did not express the earlier religious complexity but aimed at using belief in the spirits to achieve such practical results as bringing lovers together, punishing enemies, winning lawsuits, or causing death.

A rich material culture of conjure has contributed to its work. Women often wore beaded necklaces as "charm strings" intended to foster good luck. Conjure makes good use of herbs and roots. Its practitioners regard John the

Conqueror root as the most potent one. John the Conqueror is sometimes associated with Saint John, Christ's apostle. Also, it is believed to stimulate sexual attraction; several blues songs mention it, including Bo Diddley's "I'm a Man" and Muddy Waters's "Hootchie Kootchie Man." A *mojo* hand is a conjurer's bag containing items used to place or remove spells. It is a cloth sack that might contain parts of dead bugs, scorpions, lizards, bones, horse hair, or intimate items from the hexed person. Conjurers add powders, herbs, roots, and commercial products to bodily waste, clothing, hair, or fingernails from the body of the person affected to create a concoction to heal or afflict. The conjurer's spell, his or her infusion of spiritual power into these items, is the key to their efficacy for believers.

In the early twentieth century, the Spiritual Churches of New Orleans adapted voodoo and related religious practices into their new faith. It became a new religious institution that used the term *spiritual* in its name to suggest its basis in a spiritualism that communicates with those in an afterlife. Mother Leafy Anderson, a minister who had come south from Chicago, founded the Spiritual Churches in 1920 and reclaimed the more purely religious aspects of voodoo, as distinct from its magical elements, combining them in a new synthesis with features from nineteenth-century Spiritualism, Pentecostalism, and Roman Catholicism. The Spiritual Churches focus worship on the Holy Mother, adoration of the saints, and Catholic-related sacramentals to distinguish themselves from more secular hoodooists. Many members of the Spiritual Churches in recent times have repudiated the magical charms associated with hoodoo. In any event, the adaptation of voodoo in the Spiritual Churches shows its importance as an institution for women in leadership roles.

Immigration and a Resurgence of Voodoo

The nation has recently experienced a new infusion of voodoo religion based partly in immigration of Haitians to North America. A rebirth of interest has taken place in New Orleans, with Haitian priests and priestesses from the island founding temples that cater to mostly white seekers of spiritual enlightenment. Voodoo shops and spiritual advisers abound in the French Quarter. This recent expansion of interest in voodoo in New Orleans is partly a popular religious phenomenon, as whites may combine voodoo elements with New Age or other contemporary religious expressions. These voodoo priests and priestesses bring the Haitian religious practices that undoubtedly remain closer to traditional African vodu than what had evolved into hoodoo

in twentieth-century Louisiana. They conduct performances for tourists to support themselves, and their workshops and Web sites educate Americans on their faith. Haitian vodou in Miami and New York City came into contexts with less historical rooting of voodoo-related spirituality than in New Orleans. Haitian immigrants celebrate the rites and beliefs of their faith in their homes, and hundreds of their healers serve their uprooted followers. Loyalties to family, land, and the spirits have long defined Haitian vodou, along with Catholic sacramentalism and devotionism, and these continue to flourish in North America.

See also *African American Religion* entries; *African Traditional Religions*; *Caribbean Religious Culture and Influence*; *Invisible Institution*; *Literature: African American*; *Santería*; *South as Region*; *Spiritualism*.

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W



Wicca and Witchcraft

The word *witch* often conjures up images of women who have sold their souls to the devil to obtain supernatural powers that they use to harm others. To the contrary, contemporary witches and Wiccans are both women and men who practice a religion—albeit an untraditional one—that neither recognizes Satan nor worships him. It is a religion that celebrates the cycle of the seasons, believes the divine is in nature and in each of us, and venerates a Goddess most commonly in conjuncture with a God but in some cases alone. Witches do use magic, but their ethical code requires that they never use it to harm others. The most common magical spells, like the most common prayers in Christianity, are for healing. Witches can either practice alone, as solitaires, or in groups called covens.

The terms *witch* and *Wiccan* are sometimes used interchangeably and at other times refer to related but different branches of the religion. M. Macha Nightmare (2001) claims, “Wicca is a subset of Witchcraft (yet in no sense lesser)” (p. 26). According to Nightmare, both are involved in the celebration of the seasonal cycles of the year, the waxing and waning of the moon, and both practice magic. Wiccans, however, venerate both the Goddess and the God, worship in mixed-sex groups, and are followers of an older initiatory tradition. Nightmare contends that witches are those who practice in single-sex groups, worship only the Goddess, or are solitaires. Other authors and some witches, such as Margot Adler, use the terms more interchangeably, while still others view witches as those who practice magic and Wiccans as those who participate in rituals that celebrate nature.

Wicca is the largest and most influential form of contemporary paganism. There are a number of different forms of paganism that share with Wicca a notion of celebrating nature and a belief in polytheism but vary in how the seasonal holidays are celebrated and which gods and goddesses are venerated.

Because witches, Wiccans, and pagans are a hidden population—that is, they often keep their religious identity secret—it is difficult to determine exactly how many there are in any country. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, estimates of the number of witches in the United States varied from 50,000 to a million. There may be 400,000 witches in the United States. In Canada, which has a smaller population, estimates of the number of pagans range from 27,000 to 100,000; about 60 percent of those would be witches.

Wicca: A Brief History

Gerald Gardner, an English civil servant, is credited with the creation of Wicca in the 1940s. He claimed to have been initiated into a coven that had been hidden since the English witch trials in the early modern period. Ronald Hutton, an historian, concluded in his comprehensive study of this religion that there is no evidence to support the notion that Wicca is an old religion. Hutton’s (1999) exploration of the records suggests that Gardner created the religion from five sources: folklore, traditional Western magic, freemasonry, the occult, and Theosophy. Folklore, particularly as presented in the works of Margaret Murray (1921), provided Gardner with a mythology of witchcraft as an old religion that was allegedly practiced by the common people in rural areas. The religion as described by Murray celebrated the fertility

of the land and venerated both divine female and male. According to this mythology, the witch trials were an attempt by the increasingly powerful Christian religion to subvert its predecessor—the old religion of witchcraft.

From freemasonry, Gardner, who was a member, incorporated the notion of the coven as a secret society with three degrees or levels of knowledge. The initiation ceremony that is commonly practiced among Wiccans is adapted from that of the Freemasons. Magical teachings that are part of the secret knowledge passed down from the elders are a combination of traditional folk magic that was practiced in English villages and more general occult beliefs that have waxed and waned in import in England since the Renaissance. Theosophy, a religion developed in the United States in the nineteenth century, brought together an interest in Eastern religions with occult or paranormal phenomena and was popular at this time in England. Gardner formed these influences into a new religion, one that has not only survived past his death but has been exported to most of the developed world. The relative newness of Wicca does not make it any less “true” than other religions. It is common, however, for new religions to claim antiquity, as it often gives an air of greater legitimacy.

Practices and Beliefs of Wicca

The religion that Gardner initially developed is practiced in covens, which ideally are composed of thirteen people: a high priestess, six other women, and six men, with one of the men serving as high priest. Gardner considered it important to have balance between male and female “energies” and therefore saw a coven with an equal number of women and men in addition to the high priestess as ideal. Balance was also maintained through worship of a Goddess of fertility and a God of the Hunt. The Goddess is viewed as eternal but is believed to transform from maid, to mother, to crone, and ultimately back to maid, to begin again the eternal cycle. The God is born of the Goddess at Yule, December 21, grows to manhood and becomes her consort on Ostata, March 21, dies at Samhain (pronounced “sow-en”), October 31, and is reborn again the next Yule. The seasonal cycle of the year and corresponding changes in the relationship between the Goddess and the God are celebrated in the Wheel of Year. There are eight *sabbats* during the year, which fall on the equinoxes, solstices, and the cross-dates between them. Each of these corresponds to the beginning and the height of a season as they are experienced in southern England where Gardner lived. These are consistent with the seasons in most

of Europe and the United States, but they do not correspond to those in the Southern Hemisphere, where the dates have been shifted by six months to more closely correspond to that hemisphere’s seasons.

Customarily in Gardnerian circles, the participants perform rituals skyclad—that is, nude. It is believed that nudity places one closer to nature and helps to eradicate status differences among people. If the ritual is done outside or if children are involved, robes are worn—long flowing gowns much like caftans. Although there is variation, a typical sabbat involves the high priestess and the high priest casting (symbolically creating) a circle. This is done by holding a ritual knife called an *athama* while walking around in a circle, encompassing all present and chanting a call to the divine, most commonly the Goddess but at times the Goddess and the God. The circle and all within it are then consecrated with symbols of the four elements (water, air, fire, and earth) such as salted water, a feather, a lit candle, and a stone. A central altar normally holds all of these elements. Gods and Goddesses associated with the four quarters—north, south, east, and west—or the energies associated with these quarters are called into the circle by the high priestess and priest or at times some of the other participants.

A reading or meditation is then done that addresses the larger significance of the sabbat. For example, if it is Samhain, the Wiccan New Year, there may be a reenactment of the death of the God. People will remember their family members or friends who have died, particularly those who died in the past year. They will often also focus on this as a period of death in the natural world and contemplate what that might mean for their own lives. For example, participants might think of things they would like to “die” in their lives, such as procrastination or unhappiness. At Beltane, which celebrates spring, participants will perform rituals for those things that they hope to “grow” in their lives, such as a new job or new relationship. Rituals typically involve dancing, singing, chanting, or meditating, to raise “energy” that can be used for a magical working, such as healing the Earth or healing an individual. Once the ritual is completed, the four quarters, also referred to as the “watch towers,” are bid farewell, the circle is symbolically “taken down,” and there is normally a feast provided by the participants that is said to “ground” them, or bring them back to normal life.

In addition to a celebration of the sabbats, the moon cycles, particularly the new and full moons, are celebrated at *esabats*. The rituals take a form similar to those used to celebrate the sabbats, in that the circle is cast at the beginning

and taken down in the end and energy is normally raised. During the full moon esabat, the moon is said to be drawn down into the high priestess—that is, the force or power associated with the moon enters into the high priestess and through her into the circle. The format of the rituals, the chants, meditations, songs, and magical workings are kept by each witch in a notebook called a “book of shadows,” which is traditionally handwritten. The Wiccan Rede (pronounced “reed”)—Do as you will as long as you harm none—combined with the Law of Return—Whatever you do, for good or ill, will return to you threefold—serve as the ethical basis of Wicca.

Wicca and Witchcraft in the United States

Rosemary and Raymond Buckland, who were initiated into Gardner’s coven, are credited with bringing Wicca to the United States in the late 1960s. Once on American soil, the religion grew and changed as it was influenced by the social movements of this time—particularly the women’s and environmental movements. From its inception witchcraft had an open nature, which resulted in alternative sects or forms of Wicca. This process began shortly after Gardner published his first book on the religion. Some of these sects were begun by groups who claimed that they too had been practicing the old religion in secret; other sects were direct branches begun by Gardner’s students. The religion has no central bureaucracy, book, or individual who can speak for it. This openness is one of the things that made the religion appealing to youth in the 1960s and 1970s, who were questioning all forms of authority. It was also this openness that made it possible for the religion to be so easily transformed by its encounter with the social movements of that era and those that followed.

Wicca arrived in America at a time when some feminists were searching for a female face for the divine. Although the religion as initially presented by Gardner was not feminist—the high priestess, for instance, was required to step down when she was no longer young and pretty—the openness of the religion meant that the roles of the high priestess and of the Goddess could be rewritten, and they were. Zsuzsanna Budapest, a Hungarian immigrant, was instrumental in these changes. In 1971 she created the first all-women’s feminist coven that worships the Goddess to the exclusion of the God; it served as a model for feminist witchcraft. Budapest drew on and rewrote Wiccan mythology and rituals in creating feminist witchcraft. In turn, her form of witchcraft influenced Wicca to be more aware of gender issues.

Miriam Simos, who both was initiated into a Wiccan coven and trained with Budapest, provided a link between feminist and more traditional Wicca. Simos, who writes under her wicca name, Starhawk, helped create in the San Francisco Bay area the Reclaiming Tradition, which is feminist, environmentalist, and activist. The Reclaiming Tradition has spread around the United States and throughout much of the Western world through Witchcamps, which are gatherings in which both women and men are trained in the tradition and encouraged to take it back to their home communities. Unlike Budapest, Starhawk’s version of witchcraft included the veneration of both the God and the Goddess and encouraged both male and female participants. But unlike Gardner, Starhawk views the Goddess as more central than the God. Furthermore, Starhawk contends that the celebration of the Goddess provides new role models for women and men, roles that are more in keeping with feminist ideals. Starhawk was one of the earliest American authors on witchcraft and is one of the most popular. Her first book, *A Spiral Dance* (1979), has sold more than 300,000 copies. Her influence has gone beyond those who have read her books, as her ideas have become part of the fabric of contemporary Wicca. Not all branches or members of the religion are feminist or attuned to those issues. There continues to be some tension among practitioners, but nonetheless feminism can be seen as one influence on the religion.

The focus on nature, particularly the belief that the divine is in nature and that Mother Nature is viewed as the Goddess, a goddess, or the body of the Goddess, makes the religion appealing to some environmentalists and those sympathetic to environmentalism. As with feminism, the influx of individuals who hold these views helped to increase the import of environmentalism as part of the worldview of the religion. Whether or not this results in individuals becoming more politically active for either environmental or feminist issues has been a matter of debate (see for example Adler, 1986; Berger et al., 2003; Finley, 1991; Jensen and Thompson, 2008; Letcher, 2000).

Prior to the wide use of the Internet, the major places that witches and other pagans interacted, shared information, and at time debated one another was in journals and at festivals, both of which are the work of umbrella groups. These groups provide services for which individuals pay, such as a subscription to their journals or attendance at their festivals. Unlike more traditional religions, Wiccans do not typically form into churches where dues are paid or donations made. Instead they pay for services or items as they are

used. One of the earliest and most important journals was *Green Egg*, which had a policy that it would publish any letter that was submitted. This resulted in this journal becoming a forum in which individuals would argue with one another about any number of pagan topics, including the place of feminism within the religion.

Festivals are retreats that normally occur in the countryside in the late spring, summer, or early fall, at a campground or at a children's summer camp prior to or after the children are in residence. Sarah Pike (2001), who has studied the festivals in the United States, notes that these have similarities to religious retreats as they are a place where individuals come together with others of their faith and share an intense time of learning and spiritual practice. But she also notes that they have the air of summer camp for adults. This is a time that witches and other pagans can walk around in ritual robes, openly wear religious symbols, such as a pentagram or images of goddesses. Rituals and classes are held throughout the gathering, and a ritual fire is lit that serves as the center of the festival. At night individuals come to the ritual fire, drum, dance, and visit. Pagans come from around the country and at times from other places in the world to share chants, songs, and details of rituals.

In addition to festivals, which also occur in England, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and several non-English-speaking European countries, individuals in each of these countries also meet at open rituals to celebrate sabbats. These are often organized by the same umbrella groups that organize the festivals and journals. The rituals are held in parks, rented rooms in liberal churches, or in backrooms of occult bookstores and provide a venue for people in the same area to meet and exchange ideas. In Canada, England, New Zealand, and Australia, there are also pub moots—these are informal meetings that take place in local pubs.

Turn of the Century and Beyond

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the religion was further changed by publication of how-to books on witchcraft and the growth of the Internet. These popular books, which tend to be basic, are believed by many of the Wiccan elders to have “dumbed down” the religion. The books also made it possible for individuals to learn about and practice witchcraft outside of the coven setting. The growth of solitary practitioners was further accelerated by the Internet. Today more witches are solitary practitioners than are members of covens.

The Internet has had several effects on the religion. It permits individuals to be “instant” experts, training others when they themselves may have little training or knowledge. Cowen (2005), who investigated online interactions on Wiccan sites, discovered that many of the sites consist of no more than information cut and pasted from another site. Berger (1999) noted that although it is possible for individuals to create their own version of the religion, this was rare, because of the tendency of homogenization—that is, the tendency, when there is uncertainty in how to proceed, for organizations, groups, and individuals to look to others in the same field for a successful model, which results in a growing similarity among practices.

The Internet made it possible for individuals to keep their witchcraft identity secret, and to come out of the “broom closet,” as Witches refer to the process of informing others of their nonconventional religious identity, only online. This made it easier for young people to become witches. Because of legal concerns, few covens will accept underage members without parental consent. How-to books and the Internet meant that the young could join the religion without getting parental consent, in fact at times without their parents knowing.

Lewis (2007) compared census data from the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and survey data from the United States (where religious affiliation is not included in the census) from two periods, the 1990s and the early twenty-first century, and concluded that there has been an explosion in membership by several hundred percent worldwide. He attributes this to two factors: the Internet and the growing interest in the religion among teenagers. According to Aloï (2007), “Andrew Flemming’s popular 1996 film *The Craft* has undeniably been the single greatest influence on the growth of teenage witchcraft in America” (p. 18) The film, which shows four teenage girls using witchcraft to deal with life in an American high school, is noted for including some realistic rituals. Although an American film, it was shown internationally and resulted in the increase of interest in witchcraft throughout the developed world. This film was followed by other films and television shows, such as *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*, which provided positive images of teenage girls who are witches.

Although the media increased interest in witchcraft among teenagers, only a small percentage of those who explored the religion converted. The media furthermore is only one cultural factor that makes witchcraft an appealing spiritual alternative for contemporary adolescents—others

include a cultural interest in environmentalism, an acceptance of notions of gender equity, the growth of interest in metaphysics, an interest more generally in individuals constructing their own spirituality, and the growth of interest in magical realism. All of these factors are the cultural background against which some teenagers become witches. Berger and Ezzy, in their study of teenage witches in the United States, England, and Australia (2007), found that those who did convert were seekers, who tended to see themselves as different and enjoyed that status, and had a long-standing interest in the occult.

Many of the elders in the religion, those who joined in the 1960s and '70s, are concerned that the young who have learned about witchcraft from how-to books and on the Internet are less well trained and less serious than those in their parents' generation who were coven trained. Johnston (2007) and Berger and Ezzy (2007) found that those young people who go beyond dabbling and convert or commit to the religion are serious about their spiritual practice. This does not mean that some are not also uninformed or poorly trained, but they are not just dabbling—they are seeking out information on the religion and are serious in their explorations.

The growth of solitary practitioners, adolescents who joined, and the growing role of the Internet are resulting in changes in the religion. Wicca always had two strands: one focused on changing the self; the other encouraged joining with others not only to venerate the Goddess but also to protect nature and to work toward greater social equity. In part because of the age of the participants and in part because of their relative isolation, there is an increasing emphasis on self-development. As Charles Taylor (1989, 1992) argues, this does not necessarily result in selfishness, but it has resulted in the religion's shift toward one direction.

Wicca is a living religion. Since its inception in the 1940 in the United Kingdom, the religion has been exported throughout the developed world and has gained in membership. There are indications that the spectacular growth in membership during the 1990s has slowed, but the religion remains vibrant. This vibrancy is at least in part due to its inclusion of contemporary social concerns within a religion that permits individuals to build their own spiritual paths.

See also *Children and Adolescents; Esoteric Movements; Feminism; Folklore; Harmonialism and Metaphysical Religion; Healing; Internet; Nature and Nature Religion; Neo-Paganism; New Age Religion(s); New Religious Movements* entries; *Occult and Metaphysical Religion; Spiritualism; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends.*

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Women

Women have played central and varied roles in the development of religion in North America. Historian Ann Braude (1997) has argued that “women’s history is American religious history” (p. 87), pointing out that the majority of people who have participated in religion, especially Christianity, within the country, since the colonial period, have been women. Women’s centrality to American religion runs deeper than simply numbers, though.

Religion is about power—divine or transcendent power as well as the human claiming of authority in describing the divine and developing appropriate worship practices. While the first type of power is typically understood to be available to all humanity, religious authority has traditionally been arrogated to males. Despite women’s majority population within most religious groups, historically women have not had significant access to power within those groups. Religious communities, steeped in patriarchal understandings of male and female roles, have often withheld intellectual and social leadership (as theologians or clergy) from women. While innumerable women, worshiping in the pews or in their homes, have found a fulfilling spiritual life within such patriarchal contexts, embracing traditional understandings of female roles and religiosity, others have found such contexts limiting and have challenged male control over religion, claiming the capacity and right to contribute to religious thought and practice. As a result, religion has been a key site of women’s struggles to develop and pursue their own agendas within the patriarchal contexts of North American society.

Women’s presence in American religious history can thus be viewed through three lenses: (1) attention to those women who have developed meaningful and empowering religious lives and identities within the traditional contexts of their respective groups, (2) attention to those who have struggled to develop fulfilling religious lives against contexts they found limiting and, as a result, have critiqued those contexts, and (3) attention to those whose efforts to escape or move outside of the established norms have resulted in creative invention or reinvention of religious practices or ideas. Each of these categories of experience

points to the dynamic among the individual, the particular religious tradition, and the sociocultural contexts within which the latter two exist. Examples of all of these categories can be found throughout the history of North America.

Colonial Period: Claiming Voice

In the early colonial period, English Puritanism and Roman Catholicism dominated religious life in the colonies. Women in these strongly patriarchal contexts had little autonomy in developing religious meaning and few opportunities to become religious leaders. Most developed their religious lives well within the boundaries of their traditions. Yet a few women took on important leadership roles, challenging their communities to reconsider women’s participation in Christianity.

Protestants

Puritan poet Ann Bradstreet (1612?–1672) both accepted and critiqued her Puritan tradition. For the most part, Bradstreet developed her religious identity well within the accepted parameters of the Calvinist faith of her community. She wrote compellingly of her Puritan faith, her family life, and her writing. She wrestled with the meaning the destruction of her home by fire when she was in her early fifties, and she reflected on the relationship between the physical world (nature, material possessions, family attachments, life on earth) and the spiritual or heavenly realm to come in which all such physical things would be abandoned. Nevertheless, her poetry also gave voice to human desires and intellectual tensions that constituted a critical posture toward Puritan theology of her community. Further, she struggled with what we now call patriarchy, rebuking men for their dominance over women and their disdain for women’s intellectual accomplishments. Religious identity, however, transcended such annoyances for Bradstreet, and her relationship with God remained separate from such earthly cares. For Bradstreet, and many other women, strong faith in God and their own religious tradition did not necessarily mean that they were unaware of socially imposed gender limitations stemming from the patriarchal culture that shaped the tradition.

Bradstreet was not alone among Puritan women in championing women’s abilities. Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643) opened her home to Bible study and theological discussion, in which, contrary to Puritan tradition that denied women intellectual and particularly religious

leadership, she frequently served as the leader or teacher. A gifted theologian, Hutchinson attracted both women and men to her meetings and earned the praise of some of the foremost male divines of the period. Hutchinson's theological interpretations, however, not only directly conflicted with those of other male ministers but also implicitly critiqued their sincerity. Some leading ministers, she asserted, were deceiving themselves if they thought they were truly among God's elect. Her transgression of gender norms and her outspoken theological opposition to the Puritan leaders prompted the leadership of the Massachusetts Colony to charge Hutchinson with behavior not appropriate to her sex in 1638. Although several months pregnant, the intellectually sharp Hutchinson responded to several days of questioning during this civil trial with biblically based arguments justifying her work. Yet there was to be no place for a woman theologian within the rigid Puritan patriarchy. Hutchinson's last-ditch appeal to a different type of religious authority, claiming that her knowledge obtained directly from God and that "divine inspiration" was the foundation for her theological critique of male religious leaders and of the court (all male), smacked of the heresy of antinomianism, and she was convicted. Soon after, the Puritan church in Boston found Hutchinson guilty of blasphemy charges. She and her followers were excommunicated and banished, exiled to the dangerous wilderness of Rhode Island.

Despite the achievements of Bradstreet and Hutchinson, most Puritan and other Protestant women lived their religion quietly—in the pews of meetinghouses and in their homes. Although men outnumbered women in church attendance in the first half of the seventeenth century, by the end of the decade, the numbers of women in the pews surpassed those of men. Reasons for this early—and continuing—domination of women are debated by scholars. Within Puritan society, women's roles were restricted to motherhood and domestic work, although in reality many worked long hours in agriculture and artisanal crafts. Once married, a woman existed within the "coverture" of her husband: she had little legal standing as an individual, could not own property in her name, and owed her husband obedience. Under this system, church attendance was another form of obedience to authority, and women, raised to be obedient, would naturally observe its directives. Yet the church offered women a good deal. Pious women could enjoy a spiritual, if not earthly, equality with men, and many were acknowledged as "saints"—that is, they were considered to be among the elect, those people whom God had chosen for

salvation. Examples of female piety echoed deeply with Puritan society, and families frequently marked the grave-stones of women with epitaphs praising the deceased's faith.

An exception to the general lack of opportunities for women's religious leadership during this period arose when Quakers, a sect founded in England in 1650, began to disrupt Puritan society with their conviction that individuals could experience the Inner Light, or God, directly. Testifying to others about one's experience of the Inner Light became a central religious practice, particularly in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, where Puritanism, with its strict Calvinist outlook and theocratic government, held sway. Because the Inner Light could be experienced by women as well as men, a theology that at least pointed toward gender equality, Quakerism afforded women a distinctive foundation for religious leadership. Among those who embraced this role was Mary Dyer (d. 1660), a friend of Anne Hutchinson, who had been among those banished to Rhode Island. Dyer had returned to England with her husband, learned of Quakerism from its founder George Fox, and then returned to Massachusetts to spread the new religion. The Massachusetts Puritans, however, brooked no Quaker dissent and banned Quakers. Dyer, who repeatedly challenged the law, was arrested and eventually banished again, only to return. In 1660, Puritan authorities executed her and several male co-religionists for heresy.

"Stepping out" of women's prescribed domestic place as did Hutchinson and Dyer could thus prove quite dangerous, yet staying quietly within it carried no guarantees for women. During the infamous Salem Witch Trials (1692–1693), many women living in Salem, Massachusetts, had their religious convictions questioned by authorities who believed youthful witnesses accusing them of associating with the devil. Accused women, faithful to the church, found themselves with few options for defending themselves, and thirteen women—along with six men—were put to death as witches before this religio-civic debacle ended.

Catholics

Catholic women in North America during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also functioned within a distinctively patriarchal religious system, yet as members of religious orders these women experienced some autonomy in pursuing their own agendas. Spanish colonizing forces, in the form of the first bishop of what would become Mexico, brought "women religious" (that is, women who have taken holy orders—nuns) to the Americas to assist in converting the

native populations, particularly women, to Christian life. The Conceptionist order established the first convent in 1550, but in a twist of fate, it and the others that followed attracted not native women but the daughters of conquistadors, settlers, and other Spanish immigrants, who struggled to maintain their elite social position despite the travail of life in the colonies. For these young women, who were not allowed to marry men of lower rank but who had few prospects for finding husbands of high rank, the convent was the best and most available recourse. Within its walls they found shelter and education. Devoting their lives to prayer, they brought benefit to their families and the community. Convents were thus prized institutions within many communities.

These Spanish and Mexican women religious, like their counterparts in Europe, functioned in a highly patriarchal culture that prescribed their activities and their movements. Convents proliferated with Spanish colonization, and in most cases, the women who lived in them were not allowed to travel outside the walls. Yet while these institutions restricted women's movement, they also provided physical, intellectual, and spiritual shelter, and from within their walls, women developed effective means of influencing colonial society. Intellectual achievements that would not have been possible for women outside the convent were commonplace for those within, and women such as Sor Catalina de Jesús Herrera (1717–1795) and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648–1695) brought the writings of women religious to the public. The convents also produced many accomplished poets, writing on spiritual or even mystical experience, among them Sor Josefa de la Concepción de Castillo (1671–1742).

Farther north, French Ursuline nuns similarly built fulfilling religious lives within the parameters of their religious orders. Ursuline sisters arrived in Quebec in 1639 to establish a convent and a school that attempted to teach the Algonquian girls of the region. Foundress Marie de l'Incarnation (Maria Guyart, 1599–1672) was noted for mystical visions, a powerful source of religious authority, that she had experienced during her earlier years in France. In Quebec, although her visions ended, she learned and wrote extensively in four Native American languages, including Huron and Algonquian, and produced religious material, including catechisms, in three. An extraordinary figure in seventeenth-century colonization, de l'Incarnation's authority and stature in her later years derived from her work with the native peoples and from her extensive body of writing, which included historical chronicles and letters

to her adult son (born to her before she entered the convent). He, too, entered the church, and, as a priest, aided his mother in getting her work published.

Native Americans

French, Spanish, and British incursions into the continent were intrusions into the lives and territories of a host of indigenous groups, each with its own distinctive social organization and system of religious belief and practice. What little we know about the women in these societies comes from those European and British Christians whose observations of native peoples were heavily filtered through their own understandings of gender and expectations for women's behavior. For instance, because Native American women performed a number of tasks within their communities that Europeans considered inappropriate for women, these early reports frequently opined that indigenous women were particularly degraded by their societies. Native women gathered, planted, and harvested foodstuffs in addition to preparing and preserving food. They cleaned hides and gathered materials for lodgings, and they raised and broke down these lodgings as their groups moved between summer and winter locations. These types of labors, in European eyes, were male duties, and for women to be engaged in them was understood as a measure of their degradation. Yet such tasks were essential to the survival of Native American tribes, making women's labor central to the communal systems that these groups practiced and forming the foundation of women's power and often considerable influence within the societies. These labors also figured into the religious systems of Native Americans. While it is impossible to generalize among the hundreds of indigenous tribes, female spiritual roles were often defined with respect to the work they did and the life stages (menarche, childbirth) they experienced. Some women gained leadership roles within tribes through individual abilities in healing and the use of medicinal plants or through visions and prophetic abilities.

Although Europeans, particularly French Catholics, endeavored to convert Native Americans to Christianity in the seventeenth century, relatively few conversions were made, and just what conversion consisted of is debated among historians. One of the few Native American Christians included in the historical record is Kateri (Catherine) Tekakwitha (1656–1680), a Mohawk woman who lived in what is now east-central New York State. Sister Kateri has remained in the public eye due to the efforts of a Jesuit priest named Claude Chauchetière, who wrote a hagiography of

her in 1695. Chauchetière focused on Kateri's piety and the bodily mortification practices she embraced and encouraged among other Algonquian women; later hagiographies focused on her healing abilities and vows of chastity. This evolutionary process of historical interpretation by European commentators well illustrates the difficulty historians face in developing full understandings of indigenous women. These European accounts favored ideas and trends of their own period. What Kateri actually did or thought is lost to history.

Growing Participation in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Protestantism, dominated by Puritan Calvinism in New England and Anglicanism in the Southern colonies through the seventeenth century, became more diverse but also more hegemonic in the eighteenth century as immigration to North America increased and as a variety of new religious groups developed. A central feature of this new diversity was the growing popularity of evangelical perspectives that countered Calvinism. In contrast to the doctrines of predestination and limited atonement embraced by the latter, evangelicals asserted that God's salvation was available to all but only through his gift of grace. Methodism, for instance, founded by English divine John Wesley, asserted that individuals must accept the gift of grace by turning to God to confess and repent their sins and by striving for a more pious existence. A profound conversion experience marked the salvation of the individual.

These ideas offered some Christians new access to God and divine power and provided women with new opportunities to shape both their own religious experience and that of others. Piety had been the central component of Puritan women's religious experience and practice, and with the rise of evangelicalism, the value placed on female piety, and by extension, female morality, soared. In the context of the growth of industrialization and the competitive and, in the view of many, immoral arena of production it created, religious women, safely ensconced in domestic activities, were held up as morally superior to men and exemplars of Christian life. By the nineteenth century, this idea of moral superiority provided one foundation upon which women gained voice and religious influence.

Moral Reform

Female moral reform societies, missionary societies, and Bible societies, founded, staffed, and financially supported by

women became an outlet for women's religiosity-based social activism. Lydia Root Andrews Finney (1804–1847), the wife of revivalist Charles Grandison Finney, pursued moral reform agendas from an early age, praying, for instance, for the conversion of her future husband upon meeting him when she was eighteen. Reshaping the role of the minister's wife, Lydia launched into evangelism, organizing teams of churchwomen to visit door to door to distribute tracts and invite people to revival meetings, as well as hosting mixed-gender prayer meetings in her home. In 1834 she served as the first director of the New York Female Moral Reform Society, dedicated to combating sexual licentiousness and eliminating prostitution. Later, when Charles became president of Oberlin College, Lydia joined the Oberlin Moral Reform Society and the Maternal Association, serving on the Ladies Board of the college. In this latter position, she opposed the efforts of a female student, Antoinette Brown, to complete the theology curriculum. In this, Finney found working for moral reform within the existing perspective of evangelicalism acceptable, but she was not interested in challenging fundamental gender constructions within evangelicalism that limited women's religious participation. She believed that ministry and the religious leadership it entailed were not appropriate for women.

Abolitionism became another cause that women embraced on religious grounds, but doing so posed some significant challenges to gender standards of the period. Quaker Lucretia Coffin Mott (1793–1880) founded the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society in 1833, acquiescing to proscriptions against gender mingling in established public organizations. Soon, however, she and other women achieved admission to the American Anti-Slavery Society. In 1840 she led the U.S. women's delegation to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London, where she and others became radicalized when the women present were sequestered and not allowed to participate in the proceedings. Such efforts to limit women's antislavery work spurred some women, including Mott and her friend Presbyterian Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902), to expand their critique of the denial of human rights beyond enslaved people to women more generally.

As much as some women tried to minimize their challenge to gender norms regarding appropriate female behavior, moral reform work inevitably took them out of their normal sphere. Women who participated in moral reform societies learned organizational and communication skills, including petitioning and public speaking that automatically

placed them outside of appropriate female behavior. Speaking to mixed-gendered audiences, for instance, as did Quaker sisters Sarah and Angelina Grimké, was forbidden in most venues, and even when allowed, women speakers were often heckled. As a result, some women developed critiques of those gender norms and began to challenge them publicly, launching the women's rights movement in the United States. Former slave Sojourner Truth (1797–1883), a Methodist, delivered her “Ain't I a Woman” speech to counter stereotypes of women's meager physical and intellectual abilities. Stanton and Mott organized the first women's rights convention in the United States in 1848. Held in the Wesleyan Chapel at Seneca Falls, New York, the convention ratified a document written by Stanton and modeled on the Declaration of Independence. This “Declaration of Sentiment” called for the recognition that “all men and women are created equal” and presented an argument based on the concept of human rights. Later, Unitarian Lucy Stone (1818–1893) joined Mott and Stanton in founding the American Equal Rights Association in 1866, and, in 1869, the national Woman Suffrage Association.

While these activities might be considered secular rather than religiously based, these women were cognizant of the fact that many who restricted women's work on public issues did so based on religious justifications. For example, the New Testament First Letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 14:34), usually attributed to the apostle Paul, was often cited to suppress women's voices, since it urges that women remain silent and not be permitted to speak in the churches.

Taking on the foundational text of Christianity, Stanton and a group of women penned a biblical commentary that offered a radical critique of its historical characterization of women. Examining all female characters in the New and Old Testaments, *The Women's Bible* was a proto-feminist assessment of women's positive, negative, and contradictory depictions, which laid the groundwork for later theological and historical analyses of Christian attitudes toward women.

The moral reform impulse among evangelical women eschewed such critiques of patriarchy but aimed nevertheless at changing male behavior, particularly with respect to alcohol use. Temperance advocate Frances Willard (1839–1898), founder of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), struggled against the restrictive view of “women's place” that her Methodist Episcopal denomination imposed upon women. Stepping out of that place, Willard addressed public, mixed-sex audiences on a range of

topics, starting with temperance but soon including women's suffrage and women's role in the church. Thousands of women across the country founded and joined chapters of the WCTU in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s and organized rallies and carried out other resistance activities against saloons. Carry (Carrie) Nation (1846–1911), a Kansas temperance advocate, believed that Jesus called her to banish alcohol by any measures and gained a reputation for smashing saloons with rocks; she was arrested several times.

Despite the many ways in which nineteenth-century reform activities transgressed and challenged restrictive gender norms for women, most of the women engaged in reform activities upheld those norms. Advocacy against prostitution and alcohol grew from a desire to protect women, children, and the ideal home, which activists felt were threatened by sinful male behavior. Few of these women conceived of their work as “religious leadership” on a par with the responsibilities of ordained clergy.

Spiritual Leadership

In addition to the idea of female moral superiority, another new avenue for women's religious participation and leadership emerged: direct access to God's revelation. Quakers were among the first to claim this type of religious authority. By the nineteenth century, evangelical women also claimed access to God as a foundation for their religious activities. At church services and camp meetings, they publicly testified to their experiences of the Holy Spirit and their conversions, standing up in public to explain their previous sins and the effect of God's grace on their “new” lives. Methodists, who embraced lay preaching and leadership rather than seminary education, provided a platform for some women, including Julia A. J. Foote (1823–1900), a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church in Boston. Foote pursued her call to preach in the face of resistance from her parents, husband, and minister. Persisting, she addressed congregations throughout the eastern seaboard and into Canada. In 1879 Foote published her autobiography, *A Brand Plucked from the Fire*, and toward the end of her life, she became the AMEZ Church's first woman deacon. In 1900 she was ordained its first woman elder.

With the development of the Holiness movement, an interdenominational movement built upon Methodist understandings of sanctification and perfectionism, the belief that individuals could directly experience the Holy Spirit received a significant boost. In some circles, women were thought to be particularly susceptible to perception of

the Spirit. Having experienced the power of the Holy Spirit itself, women leaders such as Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874) pursued religious vocations into the public arena, drawing upon the Holy Spirit to legitimize their activities. Palmer, a preacher, theologian, and author, became highly influential, advancing Holiness doctrines of sanctification, perfectionism, and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Like all of these early women preachers, Palmer faced significant obstacles to fulfilling her call, including disparagement and ridicule from both men and women who felt women did not belong in the public arena and were not appropriate religious leaders. When women preachers were warned to keep away from revivals in New York City in 1857–1858, Palmer wrote in defense of women preaching and prophesying in a book titled *The Promise of the Father*, which carefully negotiated between her respectable, Victorian, middle-class status and her conviction that God baptized both women and men in the Pentecost and called both to Christian vocations.

Another outlet for women's interest in divine power arose in the 1840s with a wave of interest in Spiritualism—the belief that communications between the living and those who have died (“crossed over”) can occur. Women involved in Spiritualism, a movement that directly countered Protestant orthodoxy, were, according to historian Ann Braude, rebelling against both death and earthly authorities. Through séances, spirit possession, and mediumship, women claimed direct access to supernatural (that is, divine) power; this legitimated behaviors that would otherwise be deemed highly transgressive: speaking in public, teaching or directing the activities of men, and participating in political activities. Not surprisingly, many Spiritualist women became involved in the suffrage and women's rights movements.

With the possible exception of Quakers, these movements did not directly confront the patriarchal organization of Christian society, even as they allowed certain “exceptional” women access to religious leadership. Radical rethinking of and challenge to patriarchal social organization did occur in the case of a communitarian group seeking to restructure Christian life along wholly new lines: the Shakers. Ann Lee (c. 1742–1784), the woman who transformed this marginal English sect into one of the most successful communitarian societies in America, advanced a view of the divine as encompassing both male and female. Her followers claimed that she herself was the female counterpart to Jesus or the Second Appearing of Christ; together, she and Jesus formed the Christ. This theology of a dual

Christ was increasingly refined through the Shakers' most productive period, initially guided by Joseph Meacham, who required male and female governance in all communities and appointed Lee's protégé Lucy Wright (1760–1821) as his own counterpart and spiritual leader of the Shakers, as well as head of women's orders. Yet gender inequality, and specifically women's subordination to men, was deeply entrenched, despite Lee's efforts. It would take many years before Shakers fully accepted gender equality in governance. And, in fact, because women's and men's activities were strictly segregated, “equality” among the Shakers had little to do with eliminating prevailing gender roles, consisting instead of the idea that women's domestic work was of equal importance as men's agricultural and craft work. Further, in expectation of the imminent return of Christ, Shakers took vows of celibacy and renounced marriage, creating a social situation that radically altered the usual power relationships between men and women. Upon Meacham's death in 1796, Wright took over leadership of the Shakers. An able administrator, she advanced Shakerism from its initial settlements in New England and New York into Kentucky and Ohio.

Other groups of this period also experimented with gender roles, sexual mores, Christian millenarianism, and women's leadership. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons), founded in the 1830s by Joseph Smith, for instance, brought new revelations to its followers, including Emma Hale Smith (1804–1879), Joseph's wife. Emma founded the Nauvoo Female Relief Society, which provided aid for widows and jobs for single women. Through the society, she also countered Joseph's efforts to institute “plural marriage” (polygyny) in the community. In contrast, the Oneida Community, founded by John Humphrey Noyes, advanced gender equality and what Noyes called “complex marriage” within a millenarian context aimed at establishing the kingdom of God. Women and men were considered equal within the community, marriage was banned, and all members were encouraged to partner sexually with a series of their co-religionists. Whether this arrangement was beneficial for women, proto-feminist, or detrimental has been a significant debate among scholars of women's religious history.

African American and Immigrant Women

While Protestant women negotiated their religious identities within these contexts, African American women and immigrants dealt not only with the expectations set by the

predominant Protestant society but also with unique racial and ethnic contexts. African and African American women, whether enslaved or free, were generally perceived through white Americans' eyes as degenerate and not fully capable of salvation. Nevertheless, by the early 1800s many enslaved and free African American women had embraced several forms of Christianity.

Some enslaved African Americans received Christian instruction from white slave owners. Some white evangelicals took their slaves to camp meetings, and some in the North taught them to read and write, using biblical verses as a primer. A number of women, including Harriet Tubman, used their rudimentary knowledge of Christianity, particularly biblical stories of suffering and redemption, as the foundation for resisting slavery and advancing social justice.

Free blacks in the North often joined white churches but were often relegated to second-class status within them. Objecting to discriminatory treatment, African Americans in Philadelphia left the predominantly white Methodist Episcopal Church in 1794 to establish Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church under the leadership of freedman Richard Allen. In 1800, Allen's wife, freedwoman Sara Bass (1764–1849), joined him in his work at Bethel and during the next four decades spearheaded a number of church-based initiatives. She organized churchwomen to sew clothing and provide food for the mostly impoverished ministers of the new AME Church and formalized their work in 1827 by forming the Daughters of Conference, an organization that survives in the early twenty-first century, supporting the AME ministry and pursuing social service. She also formed the AME Woman's Missionary Society, aided fugitive slaves, and pursued abolitionism.

In free black congregations, just as in white ones, women outnumbered men in the pews, yet experienced significant opposition from men as they tried to pursue certain religious and social agendas. As an African American middle class began to emerge in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, women established auxiliaries within their congregations and used them to improve their communities. As historian Evelyn Brookes Higginbotham has demonstrated about the National Baptist Convention, black women around the country worked through these organizations to provide education and social services, advance social justice agendas, including racial and gender equality, and promoted African American self-help. Although the individual, male minister in the pulpit emerged as the iconic symbol of

African American religious power, the thousands of women working to advance racial justice from within religious organizations have been a powerful force for change.

Catholic Immigrants

Catholic women in North America in the eighteenth century fell into two categories: laywomen and women religious. In the latter category, French Ursulines from Rouen, France, arrived in New Orleans in 1727 to establish the first community of Catholic women religious in what would become the United States. Initially intent upon the traditional Ursuline missions of teaching and advancing Christianity, the community took up nursing and hospital work in this frontier town, thus making settlement feasible in the malaria-ridden area. The sisters also continued teaching, and, as historian Emily Clark has argued, played a significant role in creating the high levels of female literacy in the region.

As immigration expanded during the nineteenth century, many more Catholic women religious arrived in the United States, setting up their communities to provide health and hospital care, education in both Christianity and nonreligious subjects to young people, and charity to the poor. At mid-century, when Catholic immigration, particularly from Ireland, increased, women religious were occasionally targeted by anti-Catholic groups. The Ursuline convent in Charlestown, Massachusetts, for instance, was ransacked and burned to the ground in 1834 in a riot spurred by Protestant demonstrators attempting to free women whom they were convinced were being held inside against their will.

Regardless of such attacks, the work of Catholic sisters in education, health, and social welfare provided a structural framework that helped thousands of new Catholic immigrants gain a foothold in American communities. These women made the parochial system of schools possible, providing the low-cost teaching force that would remain the foundation of Catholic culture in the United States until the 1960s. Women's skills in these areas and the attendant respect afforded them for their contributions pointed to their importance as religious leaders, but their power was limited. Within their religious communities, they were self-governing, and while they could influence male clergy on broader questions, they were also required to defer to them. In the twentieth century, as women made greater inroads in gaining religious authority, it was frequently women religious who led Catholic women in claiming broader rights, including ordination.

Catholic laywomen also played important roles in the development of the church in America during the

nineteenth century. Strongly influenced by church emphasis on women's roles as wives and mothers, Catholic women took the lead in developing a distinctive culture of home-based devotionism. Purchasing material objects and furniture to construct home shrines, forming an enthusiastic audience for the growing reams of devotional books and other publications written, often, by women, and participating in a host of practices from purchasing and using holy water from the Brothers of the Holy Cross at the new University of Notre Dame to advancing devotions to specific saints, new Catholic immigrant women focused their families' religious lives on the home.

Jewish Women

Jewish women experienced and participated in significant transformations in their religious identities and practices during the nineteenth century. For them, traditional female religious identity was distinctly different from that of males. Women's religious duties that were brought from Europe centered on three crucial tasks: lighting the Sabbath candles, preparing *challah* and burning a small piece of the dough in commemoration of the tithe paid to the priesthood in ancient times, and observing the laws of marital purity. Synagogue attendance, although central for men, was optional for women, who were excused from time-bound rules, and in Europe, it was uncommon for women to attend synagogue. In America, however, Jewish women began to attend synagogue, mirroring the common practice of church attendance followed by the dominant Christian society. Because women were not allowed on the main floor of synagogues—a space reserved exclusively for men—their presence required accommodation in galleries ringing the main room of the synagogue. By the mid-1800s, however, Jewish women increasingly balked at being separated from the main floor, causing many non-Orthodox congregations to eventually adopt mixed-sex, or family, seating.

In a broader cultural context in which women's moral authority was deemed central to a community's religious identity, Jews' struggle with acculturation often centered on the roles of women. Authors such as Anzia Yeziarska, *Bread Givers*, and Abraham Cahan, *Yekl and the Imported Bridegroom*, illustrated the problems and issues Jewish women faced, as the premodern aspects of their traditional faith bumped up against life in the modern United States. Central aspects of women's religiosity changed, from the custom of married women covering their hair with wigs or scarves to the rebuking of such practices as tearing one's clothing at the

death of a family member. Struggling between tradition and change, Jewish, like Catholic laywomen, grounded their religious influence in domestic practices.

Yet many Jewish women extended their religious lives beyond the home and synagogue, becoming involved in public reform activities. Among the earliest of Jewish women reformers was Rebecca Gratz (1781–1869). Gratz first became involved in public service shortly after the turn of the century when she began working with Protestant women to found several nonreligious charitable institutions, including the Philadelphia Orphan Asylum (1815). Recognizing that the needs of Jewish people were not always well served by the nonsectarian organizations that nevertheless had a strong Christian identity, she founded the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society in 1819. Similar charitable organizations soon sprang up in other localities, often founded by men but dependent upon Jewish women's supporting work. Gratz also advanced religious education, founding the first Hebrew Sunday School in the United States.

By the late nineteenth century, as Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe surged, Jewish women had carved out new roles for women in Judaism. Rachel (Ray) Frank (1861–1948), dubbed the “woman rabbi,” preached powerful sermons from Jewish pulpits. Rosa Sonneschein (1847–1932) used the pages of her short-lived magazine, *The American Jewess*, to advocate for Zionism, denounce the increasing social ostracism that Jews experienced, and encourage the expansion of women's roles as religious leaders. These women set the stage for the next generations to advance Jewish women into the highest levels of leadership in the rabbinate.

Striving to Achieve Religious Leadership

As we have seen, women through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries slowly took on leadership roles in their religious communities and congregations by claiming religious authority on a number of grounds: direct access to the Holy Spirit (Jarena Lee, Ann Lee, Phoebe Palmer), female moral superiority (Lucretia Mott), and inalienable human rights (Elizabeth Cady Stanton). By the end of the period, new female leaders were emerging, claiming their authority on new grounds and redefining women's religious identities in the process.

Healing

While healing had long been an important means through which women aided their families and communities, with the rise of the male-dominated medical profession in the

nineteenth century and the concomitant removal of women from the sickroom, women's healing abilities were eclipsed. Yet doctors' abilities were limited and their practices often mistrusted. In this context, physical healing of the body through direct access to the power of God became a religious leadership strategy available to women.

Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), founder of the Church of Christ, Scientist (or Christian Science), drew upon the power of prayer and “right relation” with God to cure the ills of the body. Embracing a metaphysical, neo-Platonic view of the world, Eddy argued that the material is illusion; only the spiritual is real. Using this lens to reinterpret the Bible, she wrote the seminal text of her new sect, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, developing a unique new theology and religious practice. Eddy, however, refused credit as a theologian, attesting that God had revealed the text to her. Eddy attracted thousands of followers, founded a number of schools across the country in which the healing practices of Christian Science were taught, and oversaw the construction of several churches in the Boston area. Eddy's undeniable success in founding a denomination that remains viable into the twenty-first century attests to her stature as a religious leader.

In the early twentieth century, Pentecostal leader Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) also established her religious credentials through faith healing, as she traveled the United States delivering her message of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Speaking in tongues and healing the sick, McPherson grounded her early career in authority that came directly from God. Although one of her central goals was integrating the spiritual gifts of Pentecostalism into mainline denominations, McPherson, like Eddy, founded a new denomination, the International Church of the Four Square Gospel, and erected its central church, Angelus Temple, in Los Angeles.

Many women followed McPherson's path to local and even national success through combining the Pentecostal idea of gifts of the Spirit with healing. In the 1940s, for instance, revivalist Katherine Kuhlman (1907–1976) offered healing services that she asserted were a modern-day analogue to Spirit-filled services experienced by the very first Christians. As her popularity grew, she founded the Denver Revival Tabernacle and soon moved into radio and later television, becoming, with McPherson, one of the first female celebrity preachers. In the cases of McPherson, Kuhlman, and others, Pentecostalism, with its premise of direct access to the Holy Spirit, provided women with opportunities to preach and evangelize, yet even within

Pentecostalism, women were generally excluded from participation in church governance and from ordination. Even though these popular leaders founded and led their own organizations, most women within established churches had limited opportunities to lead.

Missionary Work

As higher education became increasingly available to women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many looked for new ways to combine their religious convictions with their educations to work for the betterment of society. Three important areas of endeavor, each having deep roots in the previous century, coalesced: missionary work, social welfare work, and religious education. Each of these areas was dependent upon and transformed by the participation of educated, middle-class women in early decades of the twentieth century.

By the 1890s, religiously affiliated colleges and universities across the United States opened their doors to women students. Those new students at evangelical institutions were often inculcated with the same missionary zeal that young men had embraced for nearly a century. Women's missionary boards had been in place for years, raising funds and praying for male missionaries. But with well-trained women available, these boards grew more independent, raising funds for women missionaries. Although such organizations attracted some criticism from those who claimed they were competing with denominational (read, “more legitimate”) organizations, women missionaries usually worked under the direction of male ministers, often their husbands. Episcopal, Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, and Pentecostal women, just to name a few, took up posts in China, India, and Africa in efforts to spread Christianity. By the 1920s, however, the tenor of missionary work changed from conversion to service, as missionaries grew sympathetic to the human needs of the populations among whom they were living. By mid-century, providing medical aid, agricultural assistance and food aid, education, and community organization were the primary activities of missionaries. Throughout the period, women also moved steadily into leadership positions in local and national missionary organizations.

Social Service

Educated women also advanced social movements ranging from the Social Gospel to the deaconess movement. Vida Scudder (1861–1954) and Jane Addams (1860–1935) opened

settlement houses in New York City and Chicago, respectively, to counter social class divisions by bringing social and cultural opportunities to immigrant and working-class neighborhoods. Similarly, Jewish settlement houses, such as the one founded in Seattle by that city's chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women in 1906, addressed a range of needs—material, nutritional, educational, cultural, and religious—of new immigrants. *Catholic Worker* founder Dorothy Day (1897–1980), whose houses of hospitality would be adopted in cities across the United States by the mid-twentieth century, established her first experimental houses out of a desire to express her devotion to service. The Women's Convention, an organization of Baptist African American women, advanced education, funded foreign missions, fought racism and prejudice, and established several settlement houses, including the National Training School for Women and Girls, in Washington, D.C. Mormon women used their Relief Societies to provide for the needs of the poor, erecting dozens of buildings for their society's meetings. Responding to a spiritual directive to save wheat for use during future periods of want, they also built granaries for storage throughout Utah. Deaconess organizations within several denominations—Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and others—founded hospitals, schools, and other service institutions around the nation.

Women's activism in religiously based social welfare work was transformed in the 1920s as various denominations—Mormons, Presbyterians, Methodist Episcopalians, and Congregationalists, among others—consolidated many women's organizations into broader groups, a move that often resulted in the contracting of women's opportunities. Male-led organizations, advanced in some cases out of a fear that the church was becoming “feminized,” absorbed the work previously done by women's groups, leaving the women disempowered. While these women had tried to work within the system to carve out meaningful religious lives and activities, the system itself shifted to once again exclude them. Not surprisingly, this contraction during the 1920s would engender prompt new critiques of the unfair treatment of women by church organizations and foster growing interest in women's ordination.

Religious Education

Another area saw women's increased participation around the turn of the century: religious education. Protestant women had been deeply involved in the Sunday school movement since its inceptions in the late eighteenth century, acting as

teachers of young children, but with their greater levels of education in the late nineteenth century, women slowly began to move into leadership roles in the area. Although the number of female Sunday school superintendents never rivaled the number of male ones, women produced materials, taught courses, and headed up local Sunday school boards.

The expansion of opportunities for women to gain higher education and their subsequent demonstration of their ability to work on the same level as men in theology, history, and biblical exegesis propelled many Jewish and Christian women to respond to calls they felt to achieve the highest level of service and leadership: ordination. Doing so within denominations that prohibited female ordination required years of struggle and negotiation, with no guarantees that the goal would be achieved. Yet by the late 1890s there were signs that attitudes were changing. Jewish women, for instance, found encouragement in Ray Frank, as well as in Christian women such as Jane Addams, Susan B. Anthony, and Florence Kelley, who had been invited to speak from the *bimah* in several progressive synagogues. Henrietta Szold (1860–1945) followed Frank in pursuing a public career as a religious leader. Convinced that Judaism embraced gender equality, Szold pursued intellectual work—writing, editing, and translating—advancing Zionism and an American Judaism. Szold became the first woman to be admitted to the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, although her admission was dependent on the condition that she not pursue the rabbinate upon graduation. Thus denied ordination, Szold found other outlets for her religious energy and creativity, continuing her distinguished career, shattering traditions (upon her mother's death, she said the mourner's Kaddish, a prayer traditionally spoken by a male member of the family), advocating for Zionism, and, in 1912, founding Hadassah, a woman's organization dedicated to charitable service to Palestine. Although Szold's work brought the possibility of women in the rabbinate to public debate, it would be decades before a woman—namely Sally Priesand in 1972—would be ordained as a rabbi.

Protestant Christian denominations also wrestled with the question of women's ordination. Early ordinations included Oberlin graduate Antoinette Brown in the Congregational Church in 1853, Unitarian Olympia Brown in 1863, and Louisa L. Woolsey in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1889. Methodists, the largest Protestant denomination, allowed women to be ordained as local preachers in the nineteenth century but withheld full ordination until 1956. The vast majority of Protestants and

Catholics refused to ordain women. Throughout the twentieth century, women worked with educational institutions and denominational organizations to address the gender-exclusive character of the ministry. By the 1980s, women outnumbered men in Protestant seminaries, and most Protestant denominations had accepted women's ordination. The notable exception was the Southern Baptist Convention, which voted in 2000 to prohibit women from serving as pastors, rendering ordination irrelevant. The Catholic Church, while allowing women to perform some ministerial duties (perhaps because of a lack of male priests) maintains a male-only priesthood.

Mid-Twentieth-Century Activities

Civic Activism

In the post-World War II period, many women—Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish—brought their religious convictions to the public sphere by participating in a variety of political issues. African American women members of many churches across the South helped launch the civil rights movement in the 1940s. By the 1950s, individuals such as Rosa Parks, Fanny Lou Hamer, and Joanna Robinson all were working through their churches to fight racism, and collective actions such as the Selma bus boycott were successful in large measure because of women who worked through church networks. Hundreds of women associated with northern churches and synagogues participated in the Freedom Summer and continued public work on civil rights for decades.

Similarly, women from several religious groups participated in the ensuing civic debates in the 1950s and 1960s. Efforts to “ban the bomb” were supported by women drawing upon religious notions of peace and dialogue, as was many women's participation in the anti-Vietnam War movement. Catholic women religious formed collective bodies opposed to the war; and their activities spurred new efforts to achieve women's ordination in the Catholic Church, including the founding of organizations such as Roman Catholic Womenpriests, which continue to advocate for ordination.

Second-Wave Feminism

Just as feminism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries spurred some women to critique the religious foundations of women's position in society, the “second-wave” feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s brought

even stronger critiques of the patriarchal social structures and cultural assumptions that have oppressed women, including those associated with religion. Women students training to become theologians, ministers, and rabbis were among the leaders of a movement that attempted to reconstruct a history of women and gender with respect to religion—particularly within Judaism and Christianity, but also in Buddhism and other religions as well—and to recreate religious understandings and practices that would be more meaningful to women's experience and gender.

Interest in women's historical participation in religion surged in the 1970s and 1980s, and scholars and journalists began to review historical records and seminal texts with an eye toward uncovering women's stories and experiences. Despite the fact that many traditional scholars claimed there were no reliable historical sources available that would shed light on women's activities, a wealth of material illuminating women's contributions to a variety of religions was brought to bear, resulting in new appreciations of both the often oppressive, patriarchal character of ancient traditions and of the many creative ways that women found meaning within and influenced those traditions. The work of many women from previous centuries was unearthed during this period, and feminists used this material to build arguments for institutional acceptance of women's religious leadership. Jewish scholar Blu Greenberg, for instance, emphasized the profound contributions of such central biblical figures as Miriam to support her arguments in favor of ordaining women in Orthodox Judaism. Examination of historical figures also led to interrogation of the gender assumptions that limited their participation and provided new avenues for analysis. Leonard Swidler's landmark essay, “Jesus Was a Feminist,” for instance, reread the Gospels with an eye toward Jesus' treatment of women in relation to the gender norms of his day.

Textual examinations also led to a questioning of the assumptions carried in the language used to describe the divine. Building on liberal Protestant critiques of the limitations of human language to represent God, authors such as Roman Catholic feminist theologians Rosemary Radford Ruether and Mary Daly, who later identified herself as post-Christian, interrogated long-held, gender-based discursive practices regarding the divine—namely the almost exclusive gendering of God as male—and developed new theological themes based on women's experience. Virginia Ramey Mollenkott combed the Bible and history for language and images that emphasized female attributes or actions of God

to balance the traditional masculine tropes. As a result, some mainline denominations adopted gender-inclusive language, although not always without controversy.

Central among the new themes that feminist theologians brought forth were the role of the body in religious experience and the role of the religious imagination in knowing and in language. Poet Adrienne Rich and theologians Carol Christ, Penelope Washbourn, and Paula Cooney, among others, have explored these topics. Attention to the body as a central component of religious life precipitated attention to a host of related areas as well, including sexual identity and gay, lesbian, and transgendered experience. Interest in ecology and the human relationship to nature has also informed this work. African American theologians Jacquelyn Grant, Alice Walker, Dolores Williams, and Katie G. Cannon developed a perspective called “womanist theology” that interpreted and advanced black women’s experience in America in order to work toward justice for black women the world over. What these theological perspectives have in common is an interest in social ethicism and women’s ways of knowing. As historian Mary Farrell Bednarowski (1999) has demonstrated, feminist theologians share a commitment to theologizing as an activity with “practical outcomes in its uniting of critique and construction, ethics and epistemology” (p. 29).

While feminist theologians and scholars developed new ways of thinking about women and religion, women across many traditions began developing a host of new practices and rituals to more directly engage their own experiences and religious imaginations, emphasizing what Bednarowski calls “experience over doctrine” (p. 35). Some women, for instance, embraced female deities—goddesses—aided by scholarship on ancient goddess worship. The Wiccan movement provided many women with opportunities to worship a female deity and to develop meaningful new practices. Others integrated goddess perspectives with Christianity, drawing upon historical understandings of Divine Wisdom as female: Sophia. Buddhist feminist Rita Gross brought both scholarship and religious imagination to bear in her exploration of the patriarchal aspects of Buddhism. Jewish feminists, including Judith Plaskow, Aviva Cantor, and Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb, developed new rituals grounded in and celebrating women’s experience. These practices, generally well received by Reconstructionist (which developed the Bat Mitzvah in the 1920s), Conservative, and Reform groups, are renounced by Orthodox Judaism.

Christian women’s efforts to develop new practices have had similarly mixed results. In 1993, for instance, an

interdenominational group of Protestant women in Minnesota sponsored a “Re-Imagining Conference” to mark the midpoint in the World Council of Churches’ “Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women, 1988–1998.” The conference drew together many themes—the critique of patriarchy and women’s oppression through Christianity, the body, women’s experience, Divine Wisdom (Sophia), and social justice—to reimagine Christianity outside of its traditional patriarchal contexts. The visceral response among Christian conservatives and some moderates, both men and women, to the conference’s re-visioning of the Eucharist demonstrated how far apart the liberal and conservative wings of Christian church had grown.

Outside of the feminist context, conservative Protestant women in the late twentieth century transformed their religious participation even while embracing traditional gender roles. Some, like Tammy Faye Bakker, worked with their husbands to establish ministries, local and national. Others, such as Anne Graham Lotz, founder of AnGeL Ministries, and Jane Hanson Hoyt, president of Aglow International, have developed national ministries in their own right. For the most part, though, women, whether religiously conservative, moderate, or progressive, generally support their congregations through traditional means that accept male religious authority, such as working in education, administration, counseling, and support positions.

Immigrant Women’s Experience Revisited

With the relaxing of U.S. immigration laws in 1965, the population of immigrants from non-Western countries, representing a number of religious traditions, has grown substantially. Like their counterparts among nineteenth-century Catholic and Jewish women, contemporary Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Hmong, and other women find themselves negotiating between the traditional ideas and practices of their homelands and the modernized American society in which they now live. For many, this means negotiating between practices rooted in patriarchal contexts and American practices that allow greater autonomy for women. In many families, first-generation immigrant women continue the traditions of their homelands (although this varies significantly with educational background), while second-generation women find themselves in an often uncomfortable “in-between” position, in which gender becomes one of many arenas for negotiation. Muslim women immigrants to North America, for instance, have found that their choice of clothing,

particularly the *hijab* or headscarf, has become a point of contention and has thus taken on new meanings. For some Muslim women, wearing the *hijab* has become an act of solidarity and identity with Islam itself. In contrast, some Americans, steeped in gender equality, view it as women's acquiescence to patriarchal power. Muslim immigrants have also sought new forms of participation in their traditions. Asra Nomani, for instance, has pursued gender equality in the mosque, holding mixed-sex prayer sessions led by women. Resistance to their efforts, however, has been strong among traditionalists, who feel that women are not appropriate religious leaders and that prayer services should remain gender segregated. Hindu, Sikh, Jain, and other immigrant women have similarly found themselves negotiating between worlds.

Buddhist families descended from Chinese immigrants in the mid- to late nineteenth century have pursued fairly traditional practices for decades. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, they were joined by a growing number of converts from other traditions, particularly Christianity and Judaism, who infused American notions of gender equality into a religion that traditionally was patriarchal in character. As a result, opportunities for women to pursue leadership in several Buddhist traditions have opened up far more quickly in America than in other countries, with several women now holding positions as Zen *roshi* or masters. Nevertheless, recently, immigrants from South Asia—Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in particular—have built new Buddhist communities across the United States in which women continue to find meaning in the traditional practices of their homelands.

Native American Women

Native American women found their lives profoundly changed as white settlers and the U.S. government drove tribes off their lands in the late 1800s. Christian missionary work in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in particular, had highly deleterious effects on Native American women. Working in tandem with governmental policies that undermined Native American cultures, Christian missionaries attempted to impose an agriculturally based, Western lifestyle on native populations, sometimes removing children from their communities to educate them in isolated boarding schools. Much of the effort of missionaries, both men and women, was aimed at transforming Native American women's roles and activities by teaching them the domestic tasks of cooking and housekeeping based on

European models and imposing white, middle-class models of female gender subordination. As a result, Native American women lost their central role in community survival, their control of food and materials, and consequently, much of their power. Along with their traditional ways of life, they also lost the religious systems tied to their former lifestyles and to the landscape that their ancestors had practiced.

Not surprisingly, movements to restore and preserve traditional Native American practices in the late twentieth century were often spearheaded by women who as children had experienced such cultural re-education in Christian boarding schools. Native American grandmothers from many tribes across the United States and Canada have provided leadership and inspiration for efforts to reclaim and advance indigenous practices. Works such as *Night Flying Woman* by Ojibwe author Ignatia Broker and *Buffalo Bird-woman's Garden*, recounted by a Hidatsa woman named Maxi'diwiac, retell stories of tribal life from women's perspectives, shifting the focus of Native American scholarship from the activities of men to those of women. The works of Joy Harjo, Leslie Silko, Linda Hogan, and many others point to efforts to heal and revitalize contemporary life through knowledge of Native American perspectives, values, and practices.

Conclusion

Given the varieties of religious understandings and experiences, making generalizations about women and religion in America is less useful than pointing out a few patterns, all of them stemming from the premise that most religions in America have deep patriarchal roots that have shaped their construction of gender, understandings of appropriate female behavior, and, to varying extents, women's relationship with the divine and their participation in religious organizations. Many women have found deep meaning within these systems. Others have struggled against and challenged the manmade social standards for women while embracing the understandings of the divine harbored within. Still others have rejected some religious traditions entirely in an attempt to build and experience a relationship with the divine untinged by patriarchal influence. Although these three categories provide only a general framework, and the experiences of many women fall into the gaps between these outlooks, they do illuminate the variety of relationships that women have had with religion in the United States.

See also *Abolitionism and Antislavery; Antinomian Controversy; Cult of Domesticity; Feminism; Feminist Studies; Gender; Marriage and Family; Polity; Religious Thought: Lesbian Theology; Religious Thought: Mujerista; Religious Thought: Womanist; Social Reform; Scriptures, American Texts; Spirituality* entries; *Women* entries; *Women Religious*.

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Women Religious

Women religious, commonly referred to as “nuns,” are women of various Roman Catholic and Protestant orders and communities who assume a monastic way of life restricted to a population of female initiates. The terms “nun” and “sister” are often used interchangeably in popular parlance, although the two are not, in fact, synonymous, especially under the auspices of the Catholic Church’s canon law. The distinction between a nun and a sister primarily concerns the difference between the degree of vows they profess, with solemn vows for a nun and simple vows for a sister. These vows, including poverty, chastity, and obedience for both nuns and sisters, are similar in content but vary in scope and application. The concept of patrimony adds another degree of difference between the two: a nun, having professed a solemn vow of poverty, must forfeit her material wealth and possessions completely, whereas a sister, having professed a simple vow of poverty, may retain her inheritance but must apply its resources for the benefit of others besides herself.

Although most frequently associated with Roman Catholicism, communities of women religious have made significant contributions to Christian traditions outside of the Roman Catholic orbit, particularly within the Anglican Communion, Lutheranism, and Eastern Orthodox churches. The cloistered life, both in its traditional heritage and modern practices, has offered women in North America the opportunity to venture into pioneering missions work, to embrace an identity of female singlehood otherwise considered out of place within conventional social norms and roles, and to pursue a spiritual calling unhindered by the trappings and responsibilities of the traditional domestic role of wife and mother. The culture and appearance of women religious have changed dramatically over the centuries, but the presence and impact of these women living in spiritual communion have remained a constant in the history of

women and religion in America. Within Roman Catholic canon law, women religious are members of enclosed orders and maintain a strict internal rule of liturgical life and spiritual discipline.

The religious vocation of the celibate woman religious has offered a unique female space, social mobility, and educational opportunities that were otherwise limited to men. The role and identity of women religious, however, never served as a romantic escape from other, wholly cruel social and ecclesiastical realities. Like the venerable, traditional roles of wife and mother, the honorable alternative of this religious vocation also entails benefits, opportunities, and drawbacks for those who undertake it. Although giving women an important choice, the choice between wife and mother and nun is often framed in dichotomous terms, in which women are both relegated to what is deemed the lesser realm of the body and carnality (as distinct from the greater spiritual realm often associated with masculine roles and identity) and also celebrated when they occupy and fulfill that sphere as a dutiful Catholic wife and mother. Women religious, on the other hand, pursue a life that extends different opportunities and roles, the ability to remain celibate without social censure and to pursue a life wholly dedicated to spiritual aims. Within this dualistic schema, however, such a choice involves a partial denying of womanhood and embracing an identity and role more akin to that of men, although this never translates to equal authority and status in church or society.

Yet this choice also affords the ability to cultivate a uniquely feminine form of piety not directly available to Catholic wives and mothers. Women religious could revere the Virgin Mary and aspire to be like the female saints or live in a manner more closely resembling these often unattainable models, and their worldly celibacy not only precluded typical social attachments with men (and the subordination and responsibilities these attachments often included), but also denoted their singularity unto God as the chosen brides of Christ. In a unique way, women religious embody this biblical notion of the bride of Christ in a way that no man or married woman ever could. Although Catholic women's orders are still overseen by the male hierarchy of the Church, communities of women religious have provided a great deal of relative autonomy and equality for the women involved. The cloistered life also provided many women with the ability to fulfill the traditionally feminine and female roles in a way that did not limit their service and responsibility to a single household or family. The trope of

spiritual motherhood based on an ideology of feminine nurturing deeply pervades the perceptions and culture of women religious, as they care for many in the human family beyond the membership of their churches or orders and as they cultivate feminine virtue and piety in a more universal rather than domestic context. To be sure, the domestic elements of these feminine elements were emphasized and even exploited by the male clergy in some cases, but conformity to the superstructure of the church did not make women religious ecclesiastical or domestic puppets. Their numbers, presence, and work were critical to the survival and growth of women's religious orders in general in North America, as well as in their home church bodies.

History and Seminal Figures

Although English Catholicism maintained a dominant presence and influence during the colonial period in America, the importance of French and Spanish Catholicism and the communities of women religious they established should not be underestimated. If anything, the culture of English colonial Catholicism did little to encourage a significant movement toward developing numerous women's religious orders in the New World, whereas French and Spanish Catholicism experienced a revival of women's orders in the colonies of Mexico and South America that helped establish a tradition of women's religious devotion in communities that would spread throughout North America. English Catholic women who wanted to pursue such a vocation typically returned to Europe to do so, but the lasting impact of the Catholic Reformation in Spain ensured that Spanish America created space and opportunities for communities of women religious to thrive. For Spanish Catholic women, convents served as much of a social role as an enclave for spiritual discipline, for they offered refuge for the female descendants of settlers who could no longer sustain themselves and the Spanish conquistadors who had met with financial ruin. Spanish orders were more focused on the cloistered life and cultivation of the classical spiritual disciplines, entailing a pious life of steadfast prayer and devotion separated as much as possible from worldly concerns. Although these orders initially catered to a sort of socioethnic elite demographic—women of Spanish descent—eventually orders were established to include all women, regardless of socioeconomic status or ethnic/racial identification. French Catholic communities of women religious, arriving first in Quebec and Montreal, offered more opportunities for missionary work and charitable

service, especially in educating and providing hospital care to the poor and marginalized of society. Such service was considered an integral part of cultivating the spiritual disciplines of traditional convent life and not as a competing practice. Marie of the Incarnation (Marie Guyart, 1599–1672), Marguerite Bourgeoys (1620–1700), and later Jeanne Mance (1606–1673) and Marguerite d'Youville (1701–1771), for example, were influential in establishing this legacy of combined service work and ministry in the territories of New France. In the 1640s, Guyart cooperated with male French missionaries to convert local Native American populations to Catholicism; she helped found a girls' school in Quebec open to native students. In 1657, Bourgeoys opened several schools of a similar mission in Montreal. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively, Mance began a hospital in Quebec, and d'Youville oversaw a hospital in Montreal. The eventual spread of French orders into other regions and cities in North America, like the Ursulines in New Orleans, resulted in the greater development of Catholic charity work in the New World.

Republican Period and Beyond: Practicalities of Women Religious in America

During the Republican period and beyond, the survival of European Catholic orders in the United States was strained. Whereas European nuns could rely upon the established and secure support of church structures and the financial sources they provided, the reality for American orders was quite different. The great majority of women religious in America did not function in a traditional cloistered context simply because the American church lacked the resources and long-standing establishment of support needed to sustain the strictly enclosed and contemplative life associated with traditional convents. The culture of American Catholicism, partially from need and partially from the pioneering sensibilities involved in developing and sustaining Catholic life on American soil, seemed to prefer the more active service of sisters rather than the sequestered life of the classical monastic, which was largely considered an unsustainable privilege if not completely unproductive.

For these reasons, the European-established orders began to diminish, while the uniquely American orders, attuned to the needs and cultures of their home continent, survived and adapted. Elizabeth Bayley Seton (1774–1821), for example, founded the first indigenous American sisterhood in 1809. A widowed convert, Seton had to adapt the sisterhood, even under the weight of French ecclesiastical pressures to pattern

it after another sisterhood (the Daughters of Charity, founded in 1633 by St. Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, to serve the poor), so it would survive local financial constraints and socioeconomic realities. Without an official endowment of any kind, Seton, with the counsel of John Carroll (1735–1815), an influential archbishop, recognized the infeasibility of serving only the poor in the community and made plans for change. She modified the scope of the Sisters of Charity so that the members could teach and serve both the poor and the wealthy, thereby ensuring a modest income for themselves and the continued existence of their sisterhood and mission. The French orders, the Religious of the Sacred Heart, brought to St. Louis from France by Philippine Duchesne (1769–1852), and the Ursulines of New Orleans, well established through territorial expansion in the United States, continued, but others became defunct, unable to sustain themselves in the socioeconomic realities of America without the political, ecclesiastical, and economic infrastructure taken for granted by the orders so well established in Europe.

The economic realities required that American orders of women religious take creative measures to sustain themselves. Many pursued agriculture and animal husbandry along with other domestic industries to support their communities without benefit of the ecclesiastical endowments of the European churches. During the nineteenth century, education offered by women's religious orders became a particularly useful way to offer spiritual instruction and service and to sustain the orders themselves. These economic and cultural differences between European Catholic tradition and American Catholic conditions served as a continuous source of tension, as the conflict between tradition and adaptation often forced American sisters to exhibit agility in their expressions of loyalty to European centers of Catholic power and their need to survive and adapt to American needs and realities. At times these tensions were tempered more with gendered conflict between American sisterhoods and the male hierarchy of the church rather than sheer economic or cultural differences.

The male hierarchy of the Catholic Church was alternately supportive and critical of the sisters' work and ways, although women religious often had an advantage in that the male clergy frequently needed the services provided by the sisters to preserve and increase Catholic work "on the ground" in the American context. Thus, communities of nuns could effectively lobby selective causes and win some battles because the nuns themselves were critical to the

expansion and management of Catholicism in America, especially in their reach to communities and spaces otherwise limited to men and the centralized, foreign-based hierarchy of the Catholic Church. In some matters, nuns believed that it was not worth compromising their cooperation and influence for the Roman Church and to concede on more peripheral matters. They believed it was in the best interests of the church to both preserve tradition and church teaching and to make necessary accommodations conducive to the expansion of Catholicism in a variety of sociocultural and geographic contexts.

At the same time, disagreements continued to arise concerning more structural elements of convent life, despite the practical needs and appeals of American Catholic nuns. Strict regulations regarding secluded cloister life and minimal contact with the outside world had taken shape in a European context, in which well-to-do women who joined religious orders brought with them considerable dowries that could support the insular life of the religious communities. Many American Catholic nuns came from poorer backgrounds within pioneer culture; this reality combined with the lack of established financial and institutional support from a developing American Catholic Church rendered many such trappings and conventions of convent life as unnecessary luxuries and even burdensome accoutrements. Such incongruities became increasingly apparent as Catholicism spread into developing territories, where it was more practical for nuns to interact with laypeople themselves rather than to seek the formal clerical intermediaries who would have served as the proper managerial channels of more established church hierarchies in Europe. When church authorities would not concede on matters considered more urgent or critical by American Catholic nuns, some nuns would transfer to other dioceses so they could seek the approval of more lenient or amenable bishops. In more radical cases, some split from their European roots entirely to establish a new constitution more appropriate for their American situation and needs.

Mid-Nineteenth Century: Catholic Women Religious Overcome Nativism through Service

During the mid-nineteenth century, the influx of Catholic immigrants to the United States resulted in significant growth in the numbers of communities of women religious. This increased the value of and necessity for the services of women religious, but it also contributed to burgeoning ethnic tensions between Protestants and Catholics in America,

a relationship that inherited a degree of animosity from the colonial period and from within the American Catholic Church itself. Linguistic, socioeconomic, and cultural barriers continued to challenge the work and ways of American sisterhoods. A pattern of sensationalist attacks on Catholicism via communities of Protestant women religious emerged, in which certain elements of the cloistered lifestyle assumed by nuns were subject to popular ridicule and portrayed as superstitious spectacle. This trend was mostly fueled by vehement Protestant sentiment but also drew upon the ethnic and socioeconomic tensions emerging at this time.

Women religious who wore the distinctive habit were at times forced to don more secular attire for public outings to avoid harassment. The swelling of nativist sentiments in response to Catholic immigration also produced a series of exposés and tabloid-like stories that permeated popular culture, with images and stories about alleged Catholic conspiracies that shaped communities of women religious to the detriment of those involved. These reports, such as Maria Monk's *Aufful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal* (1836), stirred up scandals and engendered hostile attitudes toward Catholic nuns. Monk (1816–1849) sold approximately 300,000 copies of her lurid account prior to the Civil War, after which time it continued to be printed, although Monk herself was eventually discredited. Sisterhoods were depicted in these publications as embodying the antithesis of the American ideal of freedom and the prevailing (thoroughly Protestant) model of true womanhood that emphasized the natural, traditional roles of wife and mother. Exaggerating and parodying Catholic themes of penance and the cloistered life, such stories depicted convent life as little more than a religious prison for women, a trap thinly veiled as a sanctuary that lured innocent young women in and then exploited them as little more than slaves to the male hierarchy of the church. The underlying assumptions operating in this conspiracy theory suggested that no upright woman would willingly sacrifice the sacred roles of wife and mother, so women religious must be either immoral and subscribe to a sort of perverse, masochistic rule of church order or be the unwilling victims of a hegemonic and superstitious Catholic Church.

As time passed, however, and as Protestants became increasingly aware of the realities of Catholic work as opposed to the sensationalized myths, nativist sentiments were offset to some degree by a growing appreciation for the work of sisterhoods with orphanages, education, nursing, and social service. Women religious served a great

social need in caring for children in orphanages run by church congregations, along with free schools for poor children. During health crises, when infectious epidemics affected large swaths of major American cities, the responsive care of Catholic women religious greatly assisted in changing and correcting misconceptions and prejudices about Catholic sisterhoods. During the Civil War, women religious accounted for a much larger number of nurses caring for wounded servicemen than in proportion to their presence in the greater population. They opened their convents wholeheartedly and sometimes traveled directly into battle zones to provide medical care for Union and Confederate wounded alike. Although Protestant suspicion of Catholicism in general and women religious in particular remained, Catholic sisters' public service and charity work had the effect of reducing the hostility directed at them.

When Catholic parochial schools were declared a requirement for children of Catholic families in the late nineteenth century, women religious again proved a staple in the expansion of the American Catholic Church. Restricted finances, the ability to help preserve the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic traditions of immigrant Catholics in need of education outside the scope and offerings of the nation's public schools (which were often perceived as overwhelmingly Protestant and by law indifferent toward religious education), and the desire to transmit Catholic ethics and values to younger generations all demanded that American Catholic nuns once again serve as the lifeline of the church's expansive mission in North America. The work of women religious in positions of social service, such as serving in infant homes, maternity hospitals, penitential programs and homes for prostitutes, and educational and support centers for ethnic and racial minorities, contributed significantly to addressing the genuine human needs of those around them. Women such as Mother Austin Carroll (b. 1835), who served as a nurse during the Civil War and led her fellow sisters in establishing numerous schools, convents, libraries, and residences for the poor, and Esther Pariseau (1823–1902), who likewise established academies, schools, orphanages, hospitals, and homes for the elderly, made great pioneering efforts to galvanize the resources and members of religious sisterhoods for the spiritual service to those in need. Katherine Drexel (1858–1955), a wealthy Philadelphia heiress, founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People in 1891. The sisters in her order supported several schools, missions, and other services for members of the local

black and Native American communities. Although the efforts of such sisterhoods were often earnest, altruistic, and well intentioned, they were also often culturally insensitive, just as were those of their white, Protestant counterparts. This was especially true in terms of ministry to black and Native American populations. For this reason, various attempts were made by some orders to begin congregations of Native American sisters. These, however, did not survive, unlike the black sisterhoods, and the remaining Native American Catholic women who chose to continue or pursue the religious life ultimately had to join white orders.

Orders such as the Oblate Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of the Holy Family were founded specifically to serve those in the black community. The Oblate Sisters, founded in Baltimore in 1829 by a French Priest, Father Joubert, and four female refugees from Haiti, primarily offered education to black girls, but they also served as nurses during an 1832 cholera epidemic and oversaw orphanages for black children. It was the first order in the United States for women of African descent. The Sisters of the Holy Family was founded in New Orleans in 1842 by Henriette Delille (1813–1862) and Juliette Gaudin (1808–1888). Its members focused their efforts on education of the poor and underprivileged, especially of slaves, although their work included the establishment of an orphanage and a hospice care center where they would visit and tend to the sick. The Sisters of the Holy Family also served as nurses during a local epidemic of yellow fever in 1853. As black Catholics, these women and the orders of their time represented a double minority; their slight numbers were disproportionate to the impact they had on the communities they served and the role they played in expanding the religious life to women of all backgrounds.

The collective efforts of women religious were not always successful, in that they did not always fulfill the expectations of the church hierarchy and perhaps did harm to communities in which goodwill was intended. The spirit and impact of their work, however, remained a vital source of compassion extended by a caring Catholic hand at times shunned by the Protestant majority as superstitious and untrustworthy. Catholic feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether notes that between 1790 and 1830, twelve Catholic women's religious orders were founded, with an additional 106 between 1830 and 1900, by which time there were 40,000 nuns in the United States, thereby outnumbering Catholic priests 4 to 1. A half-century later, there were 177,000 nuns in 450 various congregations that oversaw thousands of schools, hospitals, and other social

service institutions organized and maintained by Catholic women religious.

Late Nineteenth Century: Female Diaconate among Protestant Women

In the Protestant context, the second half of the nineteenth century saw the deaconess movement, which presented an alternative model of female ministry similar in function, if not form, to the Catholic communities of women religious. Whereas Catholic sisterhoods provided an institutional branch in which women could pursue a religious vocation, Protestant women often had fewer options for church leadership and ecclesiastical mobility outside of missionary work. Internal issues over women's participation in ministry revolved more around the office and role of the deaconess and women's ordination. A modern revival took place in Germany concerning the female diaconate, whose model of Christian service and mercy to the suffering through the work of deaconesses was similarly revived and adopted in America. Several Protestant denominations, notably the Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Methodists, and other smaller groups attempted once more to take up this office and service and experienced greater success in their efforts.

When a female diaconate was first introduced to America by the Lutheran Church, it attracted few American women to its fold. Successive efforts proved more fruitful, as it took some time to counter the prevailing Protestant suspicion toward anything resembling a Roman Catholic model of monastic religious community, even for an innovative and distinct sisterhood of Protestant women. German and Scandinavian Lutheran communities in America developed the first successful deaconess motherhouses, which oversaw social charity work similar to that of Catholic sisterhoods. The Episcopal sisterhoods followed a more traditional monastic model—that is, an ordered and cloistered life of religious devotion and contemplation that was considerably less concerned with active social service. The similarities between such sisterhoods and the Roman Catholic model of convent life were at times a source of friction, as evidenced by the delayed official Episcopal approval of the female diaconate. The Episcopal Church, however, declared its national recognition of women's ministries by passing a deaconess canon, defining such ministries as primarily service oriented and thereby differentiating them from the Episcopal sisterhoods that were more focused on the cloistered, contemplative life of a convent-like community. National recognition of the ministries of the deaconess did

not render her the equivalent of a male deacon, who had the power to exercise authority in the church, to officiate over liturgical functions, to be ordained, and to pursue the priesthood following service in the diaconate. Given that these gendered distinctions were recognized and followed and that deaconesses were subject to male clerical authority, the role and service of the deaconess were welcomed by many as a much-needed addition to the ministerial palette of the Episcopal Church in the United States. This new office for women was taken seriously and valued highly by the church, as evidenced by the establishment of theological schools for the training and education of deaconesses.

The greatest success of the deaconess movement was realized within Methodism, due largely to the work of Lucy Rider Meyer (1849–1922) and her Chicago Training School founded for the training of nurses and including a deaconess order and home. Local evangelism and social service were the initial fruits of Meyer's school, but later graduates went on to foreign mission posts and to establish similar deaconess homes and training institutions elsewhere in the country. Her efforts also came under Protestant scrutiny, but she delivered a biblical and practical defense, arguing that Protestant deaconesses and Roman Catholic nuns were qualitatively distinct. Pointing to the facts that Protestant sisters did not take vows and were not required to wear a nun's habit, Meyer was able to withstand the criticisms leveled as the legacy and impact of her training school extended far beyond its more local, humble origins. The fact that the office of deaconess was service oriented—and therefore not a threat to other (male) positions of authority in the church—and closely associated with traditional female roles of self-sacrifice, maternal nurturing and care, patience, and humility, allowed the new sisterhoods to thrive amid church polity otherwise cautious and restrictive regarding women's leadership in the church.

Despite these ecclesiastical cautions, the official approval of deaconesses granted women official status within the church and promoted them to the forefront of public church service. Although the deaconess movement never gained major traction in the United States, it opened doors for many women in Protestant ministry. Ecclesiastical ambivalence toward the office eventually led to its decline, as debates about its clerical status and biblical legitimacy were continually debated and as similarities between the Protestant deaconess and the Roman Catholic nun served as a continued source of tension regarding the office. Professionalization of many of the roles served by nuns and

deaconesses alike—social worker and nurse especially—in the public sphere, however, enabled many women in the twentieth century and later to pursue the same work beyond the auspices and polity/politics of the church-sanctioned offices of women religious. Not only were these salaried positions more attractive to many women, but the increased frenzy over the issue of women's ordination also contributed to the decreased significance of the office of deaconess. Clearly, hopes that female diaconates would deflect these debates over women's leadership or constructively channel and delimit the energies of ambitious women seeking to contribute to and participate more fully in the life of the church, and public life in general, were lost. Despite the eventual decline of the deaconess movement, its flourishing lifespan of a half-century proved an important and critical stepping-stone in the advancement of women and religion in America and especially in the official positions of both Catholic and Protestant churches regarding the roles, status, and work of women religious.

Early Twentieth Century: Women Religious in Parochial Schools and Foreign Missions

By the turn of the twentieth century, the long-standing option of the cloistered life available to Catholic women had in some ways been eclipsed by the increased access Protestant women were gaining to formal religious leadership. Yet this historical alternative to traditional marriage and motherhood continued to provide many Roman Catholic women with the opportunity to serve the church in unique ways. Although the American Catholic Church was certainly better established at this time than during the colonial period, it was now confronting papal challenges regarding modernist theology and the Americanist movement, both perceived as major threats to the stability of the Roman Catholic Church structure, teachings, and traditions as they stood on American soil. The need to make Catholicism's presence more visible and assertive prompted the expansion of the parochial schools previously required of each parish by the Third Plenary Council. Increased enrollment in the twentieth century, combined with the economic realities faced by the church and the increase in American standards for teaching credentials, forced the church once again to rely on the critical mass of women religious to fulfill these rising demands. This automatically limited the vocational choices available to many sisters, as the pressing need for teachers from within the church fold was of practical, political, and spiritual concern for those women who had dedicated their

lives to religious service. In addition to this parochial-educational response to cultural and ecclesiastical threats perceived by Rome in the American context, papal bulls and other documents were issued that emphasized and implemented stricter standards for the cloister culture and practices of nuns. The need and desire to restrict contact with the outside world became a priority in what many Catholic clergy considered to be a volatile American context.

Even with the increased demand for women religious serving in some educational capacity within the American Church, nuns' work in nursing, charitable work, and other vocational alternatives continued to give Roman Catholic women religious additional opportunities for vocational service. Additionally, Roman Catholics became more interested in the enterprise of foreign missions, which had already occupied most Protestants for a century or so. Whereas Catholics had long considered their mission work in America to be focused on reaching out to fellow Catholics in communities, to non-Catholics and the unchurched, and to ethnic and racial minority groups, the twentieth century saw a great shift in the direction of Catholic missions, including the efforts of women religious. The efforts of Mary Josephine Rogers (1882–1955) were particularly noteworthy in promoting Catholic missions abroad. She and her cohort of laywomen developed a missionary journal, *The Field Afar*, and convinced male Catholic leaders in Rome and America that women could indeed serve as foreign missionaries, as she had observed in Protestant traditions. With the expansion of Catholic missions, women religious also took their tradition of medical care into foreign mission posts. Although more recent canon law declared such medical work to be inappropriate for nuns, largely based on teachings and traditions of female modesty, some foreign cultures allowed only women to provide medical care for indigenous women, so Roman Catholic women religious interested in the combination of foreign missions and serving as nurses found a means by which they could pursue such work. Indeed, this tradition was formally solidified in the Medical Mission Sisters organization, founded by Anna Dengal (1892–1980), who had previously formed a lay association of women who served as missionary physicians.

Mid-Twentieth Century and Vatican II

In the mid-twentieth century, American women religious saw many changes concerning their roles and service in the eyes of the Roman Church. Various conferences were

established to provide better educational preparation to sisters before they pursued the different kinds of service work available, whereas previously many bishops and priests assumed that sisters needed no higher education to teach children, and they provided little if any support for proper education for the myriad other services and occupations nuns provided and fulfilled. Many women of this time felt that nuns needed a broader, more comprehensive, and formal preparation for religious service, an education that tended to the variety of spiritual, apostolic, intellectual, professional elements involved. Catholic colleges created exclusively for women not only provided female students with proper education and training, but they also allowed nuns the opportunity to serve as college presidents at a time when few women college presidents existed in Protestant or secular institutions. When the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), the major council called by Pope John XXIII, convened, American women religious had already begun to modernize their work such that they could be more effective in their cultural context and in addressing the particular needs of the American communities they served. Vatican II (1962–1965) encouraged women religious to return to their orders and invest time and energy in recovering their history and heritage, so they could revise their cloistered practices and roles in light of the Christian gospel. At this point, Catholic sisters were no longer required to wear full habits—a strong visual statement about the immense changes ushered in under Vatican II.

This landmark council was not a wholly positive event for Catholic women religious, as few women were permitted to attend its deliberations until halfway through, and those who did were allowed neither a voice nor a vote in the process itself. For some, the swift currents of change proved to be overwhelming to an otherwise ordered way of religious devotion and a life of service; some women religious left their orders and others dealt as best they could with the distress and tension stirred up in the aftermath of the council. Because the Vatican had requested that 10 percent of the nuns in the United States volunteer in Latin America, many fulfilled that call and encountered the emerging culture of liberation theology. Exposure to such revolutionary, nascent theology compounded the spirit of reform heralded by Vatican II, with both negative and positive effects on women religious. Many began participating in civil displays of protest and consciousness raising about global injustices, with some running for and claiming political offices, although the Church's hierarchy was generally displeased by such public displays of political

activism and by the trend toward supporting increased women's liberation, especially in church leadership.

The Catholic Church was not alone in its appraisals of the “new nun” brought about by Vatican II. Just as the nativist press of the mid-twentieth century molded a distinct public image of the American nun, heralding her as both victim of and co-conspirator with the mounting reign of the Catholic Church in the United States, so American popular culture following Vatican II promulgated its own tropes and caricatures to depict its perceptions of contemporary cloistered life. Some characterizations came across as playful jabs at a unique religious culture that was still largely misunderstood and equally subject to the punch lines of religiously slanted humor, a comedic subgenre gaining a wider audience as entertainment culture in the United States continued to flourish. Others were more pointed in their criticism. *Nonsense* (1985), a play developed by Dan Goggin (b. 1943, of Catholic background) and based on a line of greeting cards, is a primary example of a theatrical representation of clerical figures and life. Of course, the humor in such productions can be as disarming as it can be trivializing, using comedy to open safe avenues for exploration and witty criticism of Catholic culture and traditions. Such caricatures also run the risk of making, quite literally, a laughingstock of the religious and personal lives of nuns and other church figures.

A predecessor to *Nonsense* was *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You* (1979), by Christopher Durang, a play more starkly critical in tone and presentation. Durang (b. 1949), also of Catholic descent, centers the play on a nun, Sister Mary Ignatius, who performs the ritual of catechism (religious education via formulated questions and answers), providing both the subject and structure of the play and a dramatic teaching tool used to explain the basic tenets of Catholicism to the audience. These theatrical depictions of Catholic life certainly helped give rise to other images circulated later within popular culture. Such depictions were often based much less in personal religious experience or background than in the thriving, secular entertainment industry and its shrewd use of previous comedic portrayals to catapult the success of its own motion pictures, such as the comedy films *Sister Act* (1992) and *Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit* (1993). These two films provide a more or less lighthearted critique of Catholicism, championing what it portrays as the up-and-coming generation of hip, cool, and socially aware nuns over the stodgy traditions and rigid dogmas of the largely obsolete Catholic Church. The educational, cultural, and comedic value of such tropes and

images is difficult to determine, however, when considering at whose expense such jokes have been told. After all, history alone suggests a significant gap between such parodies and the religious and social lives and experiences of Catholics, and especially nuns, in the United States.

In the decades following Vatican II, the Roman Catholic Church effectively disowned many of the more radical positions promulgated at Vatican II, including those with progressive implications for the roles and status of women religious, even as many American Catholic sisters began to publicly identify with the emerging women's liberation movement. Although sisters in the previous century certainly benefitted from opportunities afforded by the earlier phase of this liberation movement, they were not usually inclined to identify so publicly with it and often assumed a stance of indifference toward it in favor of focusing on their spiritual service rather than gender politics, whether in the church or society at large. By the late twentieth century, self-identification with the movement was much more common for women religious, as they more openly embraced its tenets and sought vocally within the church to expand and extend religious leadership opportunities available to women. The Sister Formation Movement was mobilized to demand that women religious placed in Catholic schools as teachers receive adequate education in preparation for their work. African and Hispanic women religious began to refine and voice concerns and interests unique to their own communities, with African women developing Womanist thought in reaction and response to the religious and feminist thought dominated by Anglo-Catholics. Hispanic Catholic women religious developed *Las Hermanas* as a means of reviewing the treatment of women, especially Hispanic women, by the larger Catholic Church community, including white Catholic feminists, as well as the distinct traditions of Hispanic Catholicism.

Interpretive Theories and Critical Assessment

The communities, identities, and roles of women religious in America have changed much in form and function over the centuries. Their presence in and contribution to religious service as well as in American public life has remained a constant, even among those embracing a more traditional monastic life behind the cloistered walls of a convent. The current landscape in America includes not only Catholic and Protestant nuns and women religious from Christian traditions, but also women religious from many other traditions, both old and new, claiming a space and home in a

country some consider to be the most religiously diverse in the world. Many women are finding their way to the cloisters to pursue the contemplative life of theological reflection and spiritual service amid a frantic and frenetic cultural backdrop. Some embrace a life of celibacy and poverty to counter the excess and materialism that has seeped its way into large swaths of American religious culture. Others cultivate a life of piety in community with like-minded women who long for an alternative to traditional marriage and motherhood. Perhaps there is something deeply appealing in the universal call to sisterhood in service, a social-spiritual imperative to seek a greater purpose in community with others of shared values, but whatever that appeal may be comprised of, the traditions of women religious continue to draw women to life in community and religious devotion.

Considering the long-standing history and global reach of communities of women religious, both Catholic and Protestant, there appears to be a disproportionate lack of sustained, scholarly work offering interpretive theories and critical assessments of the cultures, structures, and members of communities of women religious. Because women religious often occupy positions and livelihoods of in-betweenness—fulfilling leadership roles without access to the inner precincts of power in male-dominated hierarchies, assuming roles of wife and mother in unconventional ways, living in sequestered seclusion within the male hierarchy and as a community with a population and reach that excludes men—it is perhaps not surprising that they are often viewed as a potential threat to the established church, even as they have served as the sustaining repositories and transmitters of church culture and tradition.

It is impossible to declare cloistered sisterhoods as wholly positive or wholly negative for the women who have claimed these communities as their homes and families and their practices and cultures as their ways of life. Even within feminist circles, women religious are viewed by some as embodying patriarchal order in the church and by others as a radically theocentric community comprised for, by, and of women exclusively. Post-Christian thinkers such as Mary Daly generally contend that any participation in traditions steeped in patriarchal practices amounts to cooperation with and maintenance of those practices and that women must reach outside the orbit of traditional religion to find true liberation. Other thinkers, such as Rosemary Radford Ruether, argue more for a recovery of the feminine divine. The gyno-centric qualities of communities of women religious would likely lend themselves well to such work,

especially given the traditional Catholic emphasis on the Virgin Mary, female saints, and unique forms of female and feminine piety. Again, given the increasingly diverse religious landscape of the United States, this complex issue is complicated further by the fact that monastic communities of women in America are no longer, nor have they ever been, the exclusive province of Christian women religious. Monastic or communal life in general as a mode of social organization has been practiced in many socioeconomic, cultural, and geographic communities for a wide variety of reasons and structured in a wide variety of ways. Such communities have served a range of social, political, and theological purposes. For some, religious sisterhoods represent the pinnacle of female solidarity, whereas for others they serve as a means to a greater spiritual end that is more easily sought in the company of fellow women.

See also *Anti-Catholicism*; *Canada: Catholics*; *City Missions*; *Cult of Domesticity*; *Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools*; *Environment and Ecology: Current Ethical Issues*; *Feminism*; *Gender*; *Roman Catholicism* entries; *Women* entries; *Women: Ordination of*; *Worship: Roman Catholic*.

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Women: Evangelical

Since colonial days, women have been numerically dominant in evangelical churches. Evangelicals embrace three core beliefs: salvation comes through a conversion experience resulting in a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ (a “new birth”); believers should share the good news of salvation through Jesus with others (“proselytize”); and a believer’s life must be guided by God’s revealed, authoritative word, the Bible, which the individual is able to interpret for herself (a “common sense reading”). With these emphases, women found evangelicalism a hospitable religious home. Nonetheless, evangelicalism has had a tortuous relationship with women, at times granting them leadership opportunities unparalleled in the surrounding society and at other times severely limiting their roles, depending upon the application of theology to the historical moment.

Colonial and Revolutionary Periods

Prior to the Great Awakening, a period of religious revival in the eighteenth century, colonial women had been expected to take responsibility for the spiritual lives of those within their household: themselves, their children, servants, and slaves. Arising out of the revivals, which emphasized individual experience of grace in conversion rather than formal religious instruction, evangelicalism was a democratic, individualistic, and populist style of religion. It opened the door for the laity to take more authority in their religious lives, thus giving women their first opportunity for public roles in church.

Women immediately began to testify publicly about their conversion experiences, pray aloud, and “exhort” in public meetings. Exhortation was a style of public speaking in which the speaker warned of God’s judgment and urged repentance. In some separatist churches (those that separated from the state-sponsored, “established” churches such as the Congregationalists in New England and Anglicans in Virginia), women took part in business meetings and voted. Women even began to preach (meaning to teach authoritatively on the Bible not just from their own experience) based on the justification that God’s grace transformed their “feminine weakness” into strength.

Most Puritan ministers held that aside from defending herself against an accusation of wrongdoing and singing psalms, a woman speaking in church would be defying scripture. Churches that allowed women to preach, though, such as the Free Will Baptists, Separatist Baptists, and

Methodists, positioned themselves in opposition to the more respectable, recently disestablished churches, taking pride in their anti-intellectualism and enthusiastic practice of religion. For dissenting churches, women's preaching made both theological and practical sense: evangelicals believed that the Lord would be returning soon to usher in his kingdom. With a shortage of male ministers, separatist churches were more concerned with the harvesting of souls ripe for God than with social conventions of gender. Additionally, women's preaching served to symbolize evangelicals' distance from the secular world; however, religious leadership opportunities for women in the colonial era never extended to governing authority. Women were not allowed to perform sacramental ministries, nor did any church advocate for women's enfranchisement in the political sphere.

Female preachers were not licensed ministers, yet women such as Bathsheba Kingsley in the 1740s preached the gospel as itinerant evangelists, and Sarah Wright Townsend, who preached in her Baptist church nearly every Sunday for fifteen years, beginning in 1759, addressed mixed-gender audiences. Even women who confined their teaching to female audiences stretched traditional boundaries. In the 1740s, Sarah Osborn began a young women's religious society. In the 1760s, she expanded her instruction to include African Americans, whom she taught to read. Osborn's minister, Samuel Hopkins, whom she helped to call to her church, considered her a mentor and published her memoirs.

Although more northern evangelical women stepped into public roles, southern women, too, responded to the egalitarian implications of the revival message. Southern women prayed and exhorted publicly. Some preached, but their audiences were limited to slaves on their plantations. Resistant to earlier attempts at conversion, large numbers of slaves responded to revival-style Christianity. As a result, both slave men and women testified to their faith, prayed aloud, and exhorted at church and in secret slave gatherings. One slave woman in Georgia, Clarinda, at first known for her lack of piety, became respected even by white women, after her conversion and ensuing efforts at street corner evangelism. Yet southern evangelicalism never allowed for the same level of freedom as women had in the North. As the cornerstone to social order in a society built on slavery, women in the South still were subordinate to men and not allowed in the pulpit.

Women's public roles in the burgeoning of American evangelicalism were short-lived, however; with the coming of the Revolutionary Era, women heeded the call to

manage household affairs and to raise the next generation of virtuous, democratic citizens.

Revivalism

Evangelicalism sowed the seeds for an increase in women's equality that could never quite be reversed through a second wave of revivals. Similar to the Great Awakening, the nineteenth-century revivals, sometimes called the Second Great Awakening, were marked by fervent religious renewal and large-scale preaching events that emphasized an emotional, practical faith appealing to many women. Evangelical churches led these revivals, as they had grown in number and size and were better suited to the new competitive, democratic environment following the disestablishment of religion after the Revolutionary War. These churches also were willing, again, to utilize women to accomplish the goal of converting sinners to Christ.

The Second Great Awakening began in the South in a series of camp meeting revivals. One revival could attract thousands and last for days. Many preachers, both black and white, proclaimed the gospel. Effects on their listeners included jerking, jumping, laughing, running, collapsing, and barking. In the turbulent atmosphere of camp meetings, women were encouraged to raise their voices in prayer and exhortation. Women as well as men prayed with sinners at the "anxious bench," seeking God's redeeming grace.

Soon this second season of revivals moved north, and it was a northerner who became the most famous revivalist of his day. Charles Finney (1792–1875) believed that the right use of constituted means could ensure conversions. Toward this end, he instituted pragmatic "new measures" (although many were taken from camp meetings) to manipulate human sensibilities, such as praying for individuals by name, all-night prayer meetings, and the "anxious seat," where those on the verge of salvation could receive special prayer and exhortation. These practices and Finney's theology proved favorable to the expansion of women's religious roles. Women publicly prayed for men at his revivals and served as exhorters at the anxious seat. Also, Finney's perfectionist teaching (a belief in the power to lead a sinless life), focus on ability over doctrine, common sense reading of scripture, and definition of ministers as "soul-winners," fostered greater freedom for women.

Church documents indicate more than a hundred female preachers during this period, many of whom were quite popular. Some of the best known were African American, such as Zilpha Elaw (c. 1790–?), who took the gospel

message to southern states and across England, and Jarena Lee (1783–?), the first woman licensed to preach by the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1819. Her preaching drew both men and women and blacks and whites. At times Lee and Elaw toured together. Perhaps the most recognized is Sojourner Truth (1797–1886), born a slave, who was also an abolitionist and advocate of women's suffrage.

The most famous woman of this period, though, was Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874). Palmer was a mother, humanitarian, perfectionist teacher, writer, and sought-after speaker throughout the mid-nineteenth century. In 1837 Palmer began leading a women's group, which by late 1839 men were attending. Her distinctive theology taught that sanctification came as a result of a "second blessing" of the Holy Spirit and fire that followed salvation and the baptism of water. Palmer promoted her ideas in several publications, including *The Way of Holiness* (1845), a foundational book in the Holiness tradition. Palmer's influence extended throughout the Methodist and Holiness denominations, such as the Wesleyan Methodists and Church of the Nazarene; to individual leaders such as Frances Willard (1839–1898), the temperance leader and social reformer; Evangeline Booth (1865–1950) of the Salvation Army; Amanda Berry Smith (1837–1915), a foreign missionary; ministers, theologians, and bishops.

As evangelical churches gained respectability and moved from the margin to the center of American cultural life, they began to restrict women's roles. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Methodists and Baptists constituted two-thirds of all Protestant church congregations. With their new numerical supremacy and social respect, the freedom and relative equality of women became problematic, and women's authority was once again limited. In the broader American culture, women were limited to the domestic sphere, yet women were the majority of members in the Baptist and Methodist churches. Thus, it was essential to limit women's roles for Baptists and Methodists to be accepted in the mainstream of society.

Reform Movements

The increase in women's leadership activity during the nineteenth century was not limited to religious roles. Since colonial days, women had been seen as pious, pure, and submissive. Increasing industrialization in the Victorian Age led to a split into public (political and economic) and private (domestic) spheres of life, with women confined to the domestic. The home became the location where spirituality was cultivated, as women were thought to be more naturally

pious and moral than men. Religion, now disestablished from the state, evolved into a semi-public, civic arena. Evangelicals believed, however, that in addition to being pious, pure, and domestic, women should be useful. Conversion of the individual should lead to the reform of society. Thus, revivalism also resulted in the creation of numerous voluntary associations (many still in existence) to further the public good, as evangelical women brought their strengths to bear in the civic arena.

Many organizations were founded for religious purposes, such as prayer, Bible tract societies, the Sunday school movement, and missions. Evangelical women also founded orphanages, female moral reform associations to convert and reform prostitutes, temperance groups, abolitionist societies, and women's colleges. Mary Lyon (1797–1849), who as a pious educator fostered frequent revivals among her students, founded Mount Holyoke Seminary (now College) in 1837. Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902) was educated at Troy Female Seminary, founded in 1821. Charles Finney opened doors for women's education, too, co-founding Oberlin College, the first coeducational college and the school from which Antoinette Brown (1825–1921), the first woman in America to be ordained, graduated. Many evangelicals involved in benevolence, such as Frances Willard, abolitionists Sarah and Angelina Grimké, and Antoinette Brown, were also active in the suffrage battles and were so crucial to its success that Protestant Christianity has been called one of the three pillars of the early women's movement.

Women's reform activities were conducive to the development of leadership skills and expanding their sphere of influence. Through colleges and seminaries, women were trained to be missionaries and teachers, thus creating an alternative career track to wife and mother in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and as a result of their benevolence and reform work, evangelical women learned how to organize and lead.

Missions

By the beginning of the twentieth century, more women participated in foreign missions than in social reform and women's rights combined. The earliest female missionaries traveled overseas at the beginning of the nineteenth century as "assistant missionaries" to their husbands. (Only married women were commissioned.) These pioneers were expected to evangelize and teach native women and improve their character, serve their husbands, and bear and raise their own

children, often while educating others.’ Of the first three missionary wives sent abroad, all were educated at women’s colleges. One was almost forgotten: Roxanna Nott returned after two years in India due to her husband’s ill health. Another, Harriet Newell (1793–1812), was embraced as a martyr after she died within a year, having spent most of her time at sea. The third, Ann Judson (1789–1826), toiled as an “assistant” in Burma for more than a decade. She opened a school for Burmese girls, translated the biblical books of Daniel and Jonah into Burmese and the Gospel of Matthew into Siamese, wrote both Burmese and Siamese Christian catechisms, all in addition to giving birth, running a household, and keeping her husband alive in prison for two years.

The most influential catalyst for international missions began in the final decade of the nineteenth century. Based in collegiate revivals began by urban revivalist Dwight L. Moody, the Student Volunteer Movement vowed to evangelize the world in its generation. It encouraged students, through gatherings at men’s and women’s colleges, to sign a pledge that they would become foreign missionaries. Within the first year, more than a thousand students, both men and women, signed the pledge. By 1910, 4,338 volunteers, about one-third of them women, had sailed for mission fields. These women traveled to Asia, the Middle East, South America, and Africa, performing roles on the field that they could not at home. They served as doctors, nurses, translators, and teachers; they founded schools, hospitals, dispensaries, and colleges.

An even greater number of women provided support for those on the field than went abroad. Thousands of women raised funds from home and assisted in agencies founded to send and support missionaries in the field. After the Civil War, evangelical women organized their own separate mission agencies. Women had long been the best fundraisers for missions, but they were given little authority over how the money was spent. Convinced that the needs of female missionaries were being neglected in favor of male missionaries, women formed their own groups, which became important avenues of power and training in organizational leadership. But as concern grew that religion was being feminized, given its association with the domestic sphere, women’s predominance in the pews, and women’s new leadership roles, the women’s boards were merged with the men’s within the first few decades of the twentieth century.

Fundamentalism

While women in the mainline evangelical churches found mission work one of the few acceptable leadership avenues

available (along with teaching), women in the fundamentalist wing of evangelicalism surpassed the national trend for female employment after World War I. They were Christian education workers, youth workers, camp leaders, counselors, parachurch workers, missionaries, and Bible teachers as well as social workers, teachers, secretaries, typists, receptionists, bookkeepers, and other clerical and office support staff.

Fundamentalism arose in late nineteenth-century America. Early fundamentalists (until around 1930) were both theologically conservative and pragmatic premillennialists, who believed that Christ would soon return to earth. Time, therefore, was urgent. The harvest (of souls) was ripe, and laborers were needed. They were not so concerned about the gender of the evangelist. They believed the Hebrew prophet Joel’s prophecy that “your sons and daughters will prophesy” (Joel 2:28; NIV) had been fulfilled at Pentecost. As well, early fundamentalists accepted that the apostle Paul’s prohibitions on women teaching were not meant for all people at all times. Women were to remain submissive, but as long as they did so, their activities were largely unlimited.

Henrietta Mears (1890–1963) illustrates the circumscribed freedom of women in fundamentalism. Mears began her career teaching a girls’ Sunday school class but soon was also teaching young men. As the director of education at Hollywood Presbyterian Church, Mears mentored several evangelical luminaries, including the evangelist Billy Graham and Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ. She started a publishing house, Gospel Light Publications, to distribute Sunday school materials she authored. She was instrumental in the founding of Forest Home, a Christian Conference center, and Campus Crusade. Nonetheless, she refused to preach from the pulpit and showed limited interest in female students, preferring to focus on men as spiritual leaders.

Several factors, related to the need to impose order in what was perceived to be a liberalized and feminized world and church, led to greater restrictions on fundamentalist women. In society, women were suffragists, flappers, and social reformers, and battled over women’s roles. In mainline churches, the clergy appeared to fundamentalists to be inadequately rigorous intellectually, overly emotional, and controlled by women. The number of women in public roles in their own movement caused fundamentalists to fear the feminization of their faith. To combat the chaos, they professionalized the ministry and its training grounds, Bible schools and seminaries, thus limiting women’s access.

Fundamentalists also reemphasized the Victorian sentiment of women as submissive, domestic, and pure, while adding the corollary that “woman is either greater or worse than man.” If a woman were potentially worse, then the church must be guarded from her. Two novel theological doctrines, dispensational premillennialism and inerrancy, provided the means for protection. Dispensationalism was a method of scriptural interpretation that divided biblical history into epochs. Because of the way fundamentalists calculated the various eras, the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy could not have occurred yet but could only happen after Jesus’ second coming. Thus, women still should not speak publicly. Inerrancy taught that the Bible contains no errors and led to a literal reading of scripture. Paul’s injunction against women teaching men, therefore, was as true for their day as it was for the time and place that Paul first wrote. The end result of these changes was that instead of women being the keepers of faith, as had been true in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America, men became the guardians of faith.

This remained true for fundamentalists throughout the twentieth century, although studies have indicated that women found other avenues of power in spite of restrictions. Exclusively female ministries and events cultivated women’s spiritual abilities and provided them with a political power base within their communities. Also, although preachers such as Bill Gothard led seminars that taught women how to be submissive to men, fundamentalist women were able to subvert male headship by using it as a means of power to improve their marriages. Author Marabel Morgan purported to teach Christian women how to manipulate their husbands to get their way—including through the use of sexuality—but never to directly usurp male authority.

Holiness and Pentecostal Women

Pentecostalism arose out of the Holiness movement. It taught that Christians needed a second baptism of the Holy Spirit to bring about sanctification, which was evidenced by the ability to speak in tongues (to pray or prophesy in an unknown language). Like earlier manifestations of evangelicalism, the Holiness and Pentecostal movements felt compelled to evangelize and were willing to utilize women to this purpose. As well, the decentralized nature of these movements and the emphasis on the Holy Spirit allowed women’s preaching and leading to be accepted. Influential leaders in the Holiness movement included Evangeline Booth and Hannah Whitall Smith (1832–1911), author of *The Christian’s*

Secret of a Happy Life (1875), one of the most popular books on the sanctified life ever published. The most famous evangelist of her day was a Pentecostal woman, Aimee Semple McPherson. After having led revivals as an itinerant preacher from 1913 to 1923, McPherson founded and led her own church, Angelus Temple, which became the cornerstone of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel denomination. Initially a member of the Assemblies of God, McPherson left the Assemblies in 1922 over increasing restrictions on women’s ability to perform “priestly” functions. Ironically, the denomination she founded decided to bar women from ministry after her death.

It was not the fear of feminization that led leaders in the Pentecostal Movement to limit women’s roles. Rather, it was Pentecostalism’s growth, increasing institutionalization, and emphasis on a literal reading of scripture. In 1935 the Assemblies of God voted to again ordain women as elders (essentially pastors), but with reservations that severely limited their leadership capabilities. Other Pentecostal denominations continued to explicitly forbid women from serving as pastors.

Evangelical Feminism

After the Scopes Trial in 1925, it looked as if fundamentalism had died. Its retreat into an underground network, however, strengthened it and helped lead to a surprising resurgence of political and theological conservatism in the later part of the 1970s and 1980s. Although most fundamentalists clashed with the societal changes wrought by the 1960s, there was a group of younger evangelicals who desired to not merely react against culture but to relate the Bible in a meaningful way to the pressing social problems of their day: the war in Vietnam, racial inequality, poverty, and women’s liberation. Their efforts led to the creation in 1973 of the Evangelical Women’s Caucus, an organization dedicated to the proposition that when interpreted correctly, the Bible teaches the equality of men and women. Leaders of the movement have included author Letha Scanzoni, editor and professor Nancy Hardesty, and Virginia Mollenkott, professor of English.

Central to their efforts was the need to reinterpret scripture in a way that upheld a traditional conception of the Bible as the authoritative rule of faith, yet also revealed the Bible’s egalitarian message. In the early years, evangelical feminists were united around this work of biblical reinterpretation. By the mid-1980s, however, evangelical feminists had split over the issue of homosexuality. At the heart of

their disagreement was the issue of biblical authority: Was a view of scripture that held it was infallible compatible with an acceptance of homosexuality? In the end the two groups divided into separate organizations: the Evangelical and Ecumenical Women's Caucus (EEWC; formerly the Evangelical Women's Caucus) and Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE), founded in 1987. The women of CBE, led by Catherine Kroeger, a professor of classical studies, thought that it was not and concentrated on the goal of spreading the egalitarian message of the gospel to the evangelical world. Those who remained in EEWC, including Scanzoni, Mollenkott, and Hardesty, developed inclusive goals to encourage feminists from all Christian traditions, including liberal, mainline, and homosexual communities. Ultimately, the majority of the evangelical movement rejected the tenets of the EEWC and vigorously debated the theological arguments put forth by CBE. Women and men of CBE, such as Professor Craig Keener and author Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, regularly spoke and published on the topic of evangelical feminism.

The Evangelical Family

In 1987 pastor John Piper and Professor Wayne Grudem founded the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) to counter the teaching of evangelical feminists. According to CBMW, evangelical feminists distorted or neglected "the glad harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving, humble leadership of redeemed husbands and the intelligent, willing support of that leadership by redeemed wives" ("The Danvers Statement"). Such teaching exhibited a backlash to both evangelical feminism and liberalizing trends regarding gender roles in American society in general.

Evangelicals believed that family, church, and state were the pillars upon which civil society was based. Changing conceptions of morality, such as open sexuality and the rising divorce rate, undercut the basis of a culture in which citizens made good ethical choices. Women's changing roles and sexuality were deemed a particularly pernicious and symbolic menace, since they threatened to destabilize all three foundations of American society. The maintenance of traditional family values, then, was essential to combat the moral decline in secular society. Thus, less than one decade gave witness to the rise not only of CBMW, but of the Moral Majority (1979) and several other ministries dedicated to preserving the family, including Focus on the Family (1977) and Concerned Women for America (1979). It also witnessed the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment (1982).

Such ideology, though, has been at least as much a response to culture as a central tenet of faith to be upheld without contingencies. Although evangelicals have been more conservative in gender ideology than nonevangelicals, this has not correlated with practice. In 2000, the Southern Baptist Convention added an article to its doctrinal statement that a wife is to submit to her husband and serve him as helper. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, though, few evangelical marriages operate this way. Studies show that husbands and wives make decisions together; they share household work and coparent; they divide chores based on who is better suited to the task; and evangelical wives are as likely to work outside the home as nonevangelical women. Such dissonance suggests that one way evangelicals take a stand against a more liberal American culture is by maintaining traditional gender ideology.

Conclusion

The relationship of women in American evangelicalism has been erratic. When evangelicals have been outsiders to the mainstream of American culture, as was the case with the revivalists and dissenting churches in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries or during the early years of fundamentalism, women were allowed more leadership opportunities within the church. In those factions of evangelicalism, such as the Holiness and Pentecostal movements that emphasize leading by the Holy Spirit, women have been given more freedom to use their talents to serve the church. Whenever evangelicals had gained in public prominence and respectability, however, women's roles have been limited. Such was the case in the years following the nineteenth-century revivals when evangelical churches combined to be the largest form of religion in America. The same has been true for evangelical women in the latter part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, as evangelicals struggle to maintain distinct boundaries from a society in which they fully participate.

See also *Camp Meetings*; *Evangelicals* entries; *Feminism*; *Fundamentalism*; *Gender*; *Great Awakening(s)*; *Holiness Movement*; *Missions* entries; *Pentecostals* entries; *Religious Right*; *Revivalism* entries; *Women* entries; *Women: Ordination of*.

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Women: Jewish

American Jewish women may best be defined by the confluence of multiple components that shape their identities. They are, of course, Americans, Jews, and women, but also, over the course of their lifetimes, they are or may be daughters, wives, mothers, grandmothers, activists, volunteers, workers, teachers, judges, rabbis, students, scholars, writers, actors. Even as they craft their self-conceptions out of multiple roles, American Jewish women share with their fathers and brothers, husbands and sons, the project of reinventing Judaism and the meanings of Jewishness in the American setting. For some women, the cadences of Judaism, its Sabbaths and festivals, and its dietary laws ring out as major forces in their lives. But others express the Jewish thread of their identities through communal commitments, social welfare, politics, or the cultural productions they create and consume. Still, for others, being Jewish pales beside other paramount commitments in their braided identities. These women have let the Jewish threads in the fabric of their lives fade as they choose to highlight strands of other colors and commitments.

American Jewish Women: 1654–1881

In the late summer of 1654, twenty-three Jews left Brazil bound for New Amsterdam. Landing that September, the women among them discovered that although the place was new, the rules governing their lives and behavior were not. Judaism's Sabbaths and festivals, its dietary laws, and its laws governing marital relations fixed patterns in the lives of America's earliest Jewish women.

In the colonial era, many Jewish women lived out their lives as respectable matrons overseeing Jewish households. Perhaps New York's Abigaill Franks (1696?–1756), whose letters form the largest body of extant writings by a Jewish woman in the British North American colonies, was typical. She honored the Sabbath and holidays and kept the religious dietary laws of *kashrut*. She ensured that her daughters as well as her sons learned Hebrew, a surprising adaptation; typically, it was felt that Jewish girls did not need to learn the biblical language. While pious, Franks nevertheless lamented Judaism's idle ceremonies and superstitions and yearned for religious modernization. Franks displayed an independence of mind that would, in time, characterize many American Jewish women leaders.

In attending services in the synagogue, women emulated their churchgoing Christian neighbors. In fact, they seem to have participated in public worship in the American colonies in greater numbers than was customary in Europe. American synagogue architecture reflected women's greater presence. When the Jews of Newport, Rhode Island, built a synagogue in 1763, its raised gallery for women jettisoned the grilles and curtains typical of European synagogues, establishing a new pattern of communal worship in which women could see and be seen within the sanctuary.

Overseeing a Jewish household and attending synagogue did not safeguard Franks from living out the challenges minority faiths faced in the New World. When her daughter Phila married outside the faith, Abigaill Franks's spirit was crushed. Moreover, none of Abigaill Frank's two dozen grandchildren seem to have passed on Judaism to the next generation.

While Abigaill Franks adhered to Jewish women's traditional roles and behaviors, other early America's Jewish women proved far more relaxed in their religious practice. For example, to what degree colonial era women observed the traditional regulations governing sexuality within marriage is unknown. Under Jewish law, the timing of a woman's monthly menstrual cycle sets the pattern for permitted sexual relations within marriage. A Jewish community must maintain a *mikveh*, the bath required for ritual purification following the cessation of a woman's menstrual cycle and a requisite waiting period of an additional seven days. Yet not until 1786 did the Jews of Philadelphia build a *mikveh*, and later evidence suggests that it was not widely used.

In America Jews lived out their lives in a Christian milieu, and, on occasions, they invited gentile friends to celebrate with them at weddings and circumcisions and to visit their

synagogues. In the early United States, Jewish women joined with Christian friends and neighbors in organizing to aid others. In 1801, Philadelphia's Rebecca Gratz (1781–1869) and some twenty Christian and Jewish women founded the Female Association for the Relief of Women and Children in Reduced Circumstances, and her lasting legacy was the array of organizations she founded for Philadelphia's Jewish community. In 1819, she established the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society to aid impoverished Jewish women and children, many of them new immigrants from the German states, hoping to introduce them to the Jewish faith. In 1838, when Gratz established the first Hebrew Sunday school, she launched the prototype of a new educational setting for Jewish children and also opened a new avenue for Jewish women's communal activism as teachers. Over the course of the nineteenth century, Jewish women across the United States would weave a web of local Jewish communal organizations—benevolent societies, sewing circles, fuel societies, ladies' auxiliaries, hospital societies, soldiers' aid societies, and orphanages—to sustain their communities and to provide relief for the increasing numbers of often impoverished immigrant Jews arriving in each succeeding decade. Benevolence, for nineteenth-century Jewish and Christian women alike, constituted a central component of their religious lives.

Literature stands as another important public venue for reflecting Jewish women's religious lives. In Charleston, South Carolina, poet Penina Moise (1797–1880), superintendent of her synagogue's Sunday school, wrote the first American Jewish hymnal. In the early 1880s, poet Emma Lazarus (1849–1887) became so deeply disturbed by Russian violence against Jews, whom she met as refugees through her work with the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society, that she called for founding a Jewish state in Palestine. Her 1883 magnum opus, "The New Colossus," inscribed on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, portrays America as the "Mother of Exiles" welcoming "the huddled masses yearning to breathe free." Periodicals directed at American Jewish women, such as *Die Deborah*, published in German between 1855 and 1902, and the *American Jewess*, the first English-language magazine for American Jewish women, also provided vehicles for engaging debate about women's evolving roles in American Judaism.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, synagogues instituted changes that affected American Jewish women's religious experiences. Some synagogues began experimenting with an array of reforms that transformed the character of public worship, as Jews deliberately sought to adapt an

historic tradition to the modern world. Some of these shifts deeply affected a woman's place in the synagogue as synagogues introduced confirmation services for boys and for girls; allowed for men and for women to sing together in a choir; and ended the long-standing pattern of segregating the sexes in worship by abolishing the women's gallery and introducing, in its stead, mixed seating in family pews.

Eastern European Jewish Women in America

But the next wave of Jewish women to immigrate to America would craft different responses to the melding of Judaism with American life. Between 1881 and 1924, some two million Eastern European Jews, propelled by grinding poverty, violent pogroms, and the dislocations of revolutionary turmoil and wars, set off for America. This was overwhelmingly a migration of families, even though, in many cases, the male head of the household journeyed ahead, scrimping and saving until he could send home steamship tickets for his wife and children.

In the crowded tenements of immigrant enclaves, such as New York's Lower East Side, mothers and daughters created new Jewish homes. Even if immigration meant, for many, discarding the wig that traditionally covered a married woman's hair, other traditional behaviors—lighting candles on the Sabbath and holidays and keeping a kosher kitchen—were not jettisoned as easily. Immigrant women also sustained Judaism through the special foods they cooked and served to their families—braided challah bread to bless on the Sabbath, chicken soup with matzoh balls at Passover when no leaven is eaten, even cheesecakes to signify the dairy foods associated with the late spring holiday of Shavuot. In time, these and many other foods, often significantly adapted to regional culinary tastes, would constitute the Jewish expression of American ethnic cuisine celebrated in books like Joan Nathan's *Jewish Cooking in America* (1994).

Yet sustaining Jewish households amid immigrant poverty was often difficult and at times sparked communal outrage. When the price of kosher meat soared from 12 to 18 cents a pound in New York City in 1902, immigrant mothers broke into butcher shops, set meat afire, and even interrupted worship services to demand that their community honor their kosher meat boycott.

For many immigrant women—the young, the unmarried, sewing until their aching fingers bled, earning pennies an hour in dingy sweatshops—improving the lot of the worker became their *cri de coeur*. Yet these demands, too, could be infused by religious sensibilities. When, in 1909,

twenty-three-year-old Clara Lemlich (Shavelson, 1886–1982) roused the shirtwaist makers to strike, the young women swearing to stand fast did so with the Hebrew oath, based on Psalm 137, “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill!” (NIV).

Organizing Jewish Women

Meanwhile, well-to-do American Jewish women, those whose families had come to the United States years or decades before, expanded nineteenth-century benevolence to meet the crushing press of immigrant needs. In an era when there was much conversation among Americans about shifting gender roles and the “new woman,” Jewish women carved out new directions for communal activism. The urgencies of helping the new Russian Jewish immigrants prompted much of this activity. The National Council of Jewish Women, founded in 1893—the first nationwide Jewish women’s organization—pioneered social service to immigrant Jews. Stationing Yiddish-speaking agents at Ellis Island, it tried to protect immigrant girls traveling without guardians from falling into what was then called “white slavery.” Jewish women played leading roles in establishing vocational training schools for young women and English-language night schools to help the immigrants adjust and adapt. In New York, Jewish women created sisterhoods of personal service; they required their members to take on the mantle of “friendly visiting” to the poor to assess for themselves needs and to make recommendations. There, too, Lillian Wald (1867–1940) pioneered public health nursing and established the Henry Street Settlement House (1895). Such examples would be multiplied many times over in every city and town where Jews formed communities. All demonstrated Judaism’s traditional concern to care for widow and the orphan, indeed for any in need in its community.

Although American Jewish women came to national organizing rather late, founding the National Council of Jewish Women amid the spurt of women’s activism following the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the next several decades saw an explosion of new Jewish women’s associations. At the local level, synagogue ladies’ auxiliaries, increasingly known as “synagogue sisterhoods,” had long encouraged women to be both exemplary Jewish wives and mothers who would create a Jewish version of the home beautiful and also would extend their domestic activities into the synagogue. Synagogue ladies’ auxiliaries equipped kitchens, catered lunches, and provided prizes for students in the religious school. Between 1913 and 1923, in

each of the major branches of American Judaism—Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox—women created national associations to affiliate the local synagogue sisterhoods and to become forces for Jewishness.

But the synagogue and the forms of Jewish religious life it represented constituted only one venue for women’s Jewish commitments. Other American Jewish women found places in the ladies’ branches of *landsmanschaften*, local associations organized by those who hailed from the same European town or village, or in the socialist brotherhood of the Yiddish-speaking Workmen’s Circle.

Finally, Zionism, the movement to create a Jewish homeland in the promised land of milk and honey, commanded a great share of American Jewish women’s energies and enthusiasms. In 1912, Henrietta Szold (1860–1945), a teacher, writer, editor, translator, and leading Jewish communal activist, indeed one of the most remarkable Jews of her era, transformed a small Zionist study circle into Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America. In time it grew into the largest women’s organization in the United States. Hadassah women helped create the infrastructure for the health care system of the future State of Israel. Other women’s Zionist groups, appealing to constituencies such as Orthodox women or laboring Zionist women, followed in Hadassah’s footsteps. Into the twenty-first century, these organizations remain leading forums for American Jewish women’s ongoing support of the State of Israel and a reflection of Judaism’s commandment to seek the welfare of Zion.

In the 1930s, even as the Great Depression strained Jewish households, American Jewish women turned their attentions to the growing menace of Nazi persecution. The women of the American Jewish Congress picketed stores to boycott the sale of German goods and drew attention to the malicious anti-Semitism broadcast over American airwaves. Hadassah took on a new project, Youth Aliyah, which brought German Jewish children out of Nazi Germany to safety in Palestine. Shelters that American Jewish women’s groups established in the 1930s to house refugees fleeing Nazism soon housed Allied soldiers as America entered World War II.

The years of World War II sorely tested Jewish women on this side of the Atlantic. Some sent sons off to war; others sent young husbands; many staffed soldiers’ canteens and sold war bonds; a few went to war themselves. Those with families trapped in Nazi-occupied Europe waited with great trepidation for news. Learning only toward war’s end of the

scores of their relatives murdered by the Nazis, they improvised memorials for the dead.

Jewish Women in Postwar America

In the years after World War II, American Jewish women continued to infuse religious sensibilities into their homes, their families, and the numerous Jewish organizations they created and sustained. Now, however, they lived in new settings, in emerging Jewish suburbs and in cities with expanding Jewish populations, such as Miami and Los Angeles. They made these neighborhoods their own, inscribing Jewish identity into the local landscape, shopping at Jewish bakeries, bagel shops, and kosher butchers, and sending their children and teens for educational and social programs to the new temples and synagogues built on the major thoroughfares of these new communities. Bat mitzvah, a coming-of-age ritual for twelve- or thirteen-year old girls—parallel to the traditional bar mitzvah for boys, which had first emerged in the United States in 1922—gained increasing popularity. Jewish women imported Chanukah lamps and candlesticks from Israel and sold them in the gift shops they managed in their new suburban temples. With anti-Semitism waning in American life, these women, many the daughters and granddaughters of the East European Jewish immigrants, discovered opportunities to acculturate ever more fully into American life. Hence, for many, Jewish identification, whether expressed as religion or defined as ethnicity, became but a single strand in the design of their lives. Moreover, over the course of life, the intensity of Jewish commitments and identifications could wax and wane, perhaps more intensive when the children were young and less so before and after.

A high level of education and increasing labor force participation came to characterize most American Jewish women in the latter decades of the twentieth century. By 1990, more than 85 percent of Jewish women ages 30–39 had gone to college, and 30 percent had gone on to graduate school. Significant numbers of Jewish women stood out for achievement in the professions, the entertainment industry, business, and the arts. The Jewish Women's Archive provides biographies of hundreds of such accomplished Jewish women. For some, Judaism was foremost in their lives, supporting a range of Jewish charitable causes and endeavors. Others believed that Judaism held little meaning for them. The openness of late twentieth-century American society allowed for both choices.

However, changes in educational and labor force patterns do not characterize all American Jewish women. Hasidism,

a Jewish religious movement whose members express deep piety and who observe, with punctiliousness, the many Jewish laws, including the emphasis on strictly gendered roles, has grown substantially in North America. Hasidic women, easily identified by their modest dress—long skirts, never pants; covered arms; and, for the married, wigs or kerchiefs to conceal their hair from anyone other than their husbands—stand visibly apart from the rest of America's Jewish women. Hasidic daughters mostly eschew higher education. They marry young, often meeting their husbands through matchmakers, and have large families, a decided contrast to postwar American Jewish women with their family size of 1.9 children. Although many in the Hasidic world were born into it, increasing numbers of Jewish women have turned their backs on the secular world or the liberal expressions of Judaism to choose the Hasidic way of life.

Jewish Women and Feminism

Of the many social movements of the second half of the twentieth century, feminism has had an enormous impact upon American Jewish women. The roster of Jewish women who helped pioneer what is commonly called the second wave of feminism, which emerged in the 1960s, includes a hall of fame of feminist luminaries, among them author Betty Friedan (1921–2006), Congresswoman Bella Abzug (1920–1998), and Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (1933–).

But most significantly for American Judaism, secular feminism sparked the creation of Jewish feminism. The first Jewish feminists, like the women who founded *Ezrat Nashim* in New York, found that while feminism promised them political, social, and intellectual equality with their male peers, Judaism relegated them to second-class status within the walls of their synagogues and within the corpus of Jewish law.

These Jewish feminists began by seeking to reconfigure the synagogue as an egalitarian institution. In time this came to mean for some women wearing the prayer shawls and head coverings traditionally worn only by men; the inclusion of women in the quorum of ten necessary for a valid prayer service; and women learning Hebrew and acquiring the liturgical skills they needed to play leading roles in their synagogues.

The iconic marker of Jewish feminism's success was the ordination of women as rabbis. While the question of ordaining women, debated by American Jews since the end of the

nineteenth century, had propelled a handful of women to try to become rabbis, not until 1972 was Sally Priesand (1946–) ordained in American Judaism. A dozen years later the Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative movements—those movements within American Judaism not strictly bound by tradition—were ordaining women, and already some were challenging American Orthodoxy to do the same.

Occupying an historic place in the annals of American Judaism, female rabbis have been uniquely positioned to disseminate Jewish feminism to their congregants. Their creativity has produced new prayers and ceremonies for sanctifying the birth of daughters and the sexual and reproductive cycles of women's lives. They have designed new communal rituals, such as the bat mitzvah for adult women and the feminist seder, modeled on the Passover seder, which honor women from the Jewish past and decry women's oppressions in the present. Jewish feminists have reinvented the *mikveh*, the ritual bath, as a space for women to mark a milestone or to bring closure to a crisis. Finally, some have worked assiduously to open up space in Jewish life for those traditionally marginalized by their Jewish communities—the single, the divorced, and especially gays and lesbians.

Undergirding women's new visibility within the synagogue and this ritual invention is a growing body of theology and scholarship. Even as feminist theologians such as Judith Plaskow (1947–) and Rachel Adler (1943–) critique Judaism's androcentricity, they work from within the body of Jewish tradition seeking avenues to the theological, legal, and liturgical transformations essential to redress the wrongs of women's exclusion. Feminist liturgists like Marcia Falk (1946–) offer gender-inclusive prayers for understanding and speaking about God. Their work forms part of the growing canon of Jewish women's and gender studies that have found a home in the academy. No subfield of Jewish studies—Bible, rabbinics, history, sociology, anthropology, literature—remains untouched by this feminist scholarship.

Scholars are not the only writers energized by Jewish feminism. Female rabbis from across the denominations interject women into much of their writing. Novelists reimagine women from the Jewish past, as Anita Diamant (1951–) did in her successful *The Red Tent* (1997), and invent characters inspired by feminism, as Cynthia Ozick (1928–) has in her novels.

Jewish feminism has also deeply affected the Orthodox. The bat mitzvah has made its way into many sectors of Orthodoxy—although the particulars of the Orthodox daughter's bat mitzvah vary considerably from the bat

mitzvah ceremony in the other sectors of American Judaism. Orthodox girls now customarily receive intensive Jewish educations, even studying texts once forbidden to women. It has become customary among some sectors of American Orthodoxy for teenage girls to spend the a year after completing high school continuing their religious educations in Israel—just as their brothers have long done. There, Orthodox girls learn in schools founded only in the past few decades to teach women the Torah and rabbinic texts.

Feminism has also affected Jewish communal life, transforming the so-called secular Jewish world, the network of national and local advocacy, welfare, and communal agencies that constitute a major aspect of American Jewish society. Pointing to the gross gender imbalance in Jewish communal leadership, Jewish feminists demanded a restructuring of Jewish communal life to fully include women as leaders, both lay and professional. Organizations such as Ma'yan: The Jewish Women's Project regularly issue critical updates on women's progress in this sphere.

At one time the Jewish community relied heavily upon unpaid female volunteers. For many Jewish women, voluntarism was a major commitment in their lives, and the organizational, managerial, and financial skills they required for leadership, especially at the national levels, were comparable to those required for a professional or business career. But with the majority of adult Jewish women under sixty-five in the workforce, the Jewish community came to compete for women's limited time for voluntarism and desire for tasks commensurate with their skills. Today Jewish women assert influence over an array of worthwhile political, cultural, and (nonreligious) philanthropic causes that became open to them in an increasingly meritocratic society. This has resulted in a decline in numbers and an aging of volunteers in many of the established Jewish women's organizations and has compelled some historic Jewish women's organizations to seek to reinvent themselves to attract contemporary Jewish women.

As Jewish women move forward into the twenty-first century, the various strands of their identities may well increase, as Jewish women and men, in greater numbers than ever before, marry those of other faiths and ethnicities. The response Abigail Franks once gave to intermarriage—to resolve never to see her daughter again—ill fits the multicultural society that America has become. Some of these marital partners, more often wives than husbands, convert to Judaism, adding small numbers to the community—although likely not fully balancing converts out—and increasing

communal diversity. That diversity is apparent in other ways, too; for example, Madeleine Albright (1937–), former secretary of state, surprisingly discovered her Jewish origins, and Alysa Stanton, an African American woman raised in a Pentecostal family, became a rabbi.

What will be the directions for the future of American Jewish women in the twenty-first century? If past may serve as prologue, they will continue to weave threads of Jewish commitments into the fabric of their lives and to play leading roles in adapting and reinventing Judaism, in all its various expressions, well into the future.

See also *Anti-Semitism; Architecture: Jewish; Canada: Pluralism; Chabad-Lubavitch; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism entries; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Worship: Jewish; Women: Ordination of; Women entries; Zionism.*

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Women: Muslim

Muslim women have established distinctive social, cultural, and religious patterns of identification in the United States. In recent history and particularly since the attacks of 9/11, however, Muslim women have been targets of discrimination.

They have derived certain elements of their socioreligious identity in relation to challenging stereotypes and building alliances across various ethnic, racial, and economic strata. The U.S. Muslim population is diverse in country of origin and ethnic background. Scholars estimate that approximately one-third of U.S. Muslims are indigenous, meaning that they are neither immigrants nor the direct descendents of immigrants. Many of these are African Americans who first began converting during the 1950s and 1960s, some to more mainstream Islamic groups and others to the Moorish American Science Temple, the Nation of Islam (NOI), and the Ahmadiyya movement, which originated in India.

Other U.S. Muslims have been mostly immigrants or descendants of immigrants from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The earliest traces of Islam in the United States can be found during the period of the slave trade, in which slaves brought Islamic beliefs and customs from West Africa. These influences were not recorded with much precision, however. There are roughly five well-documented waves of Muslim immigration in U.S. history reaching from the late nineteenth century through the twentieth century. Muslim immigrants have settled across the United States in many large cities, such as Chicago and New York, but also in smaller enclaves, such as Dearborn, Michigan, and College Park, Texas. Whereas earlier immigrants were concerned with survival in a foreign land, more recent immigrants have benefited from the established mosques and other Muslim institutions, many of which were funded by Saudi oil money and missionary efforts in the 1970s. These institutions have helped Muslim immigrants cultivate distinctive U.S. Islamic identities into the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Colonization and Veil Debates

In the early twenty-first century, one of the topics most frequently discussed about Muslim women has been that of veiling. Questions such as, Why do Muslim women wear the veil? Is veiling oppressive or is it liberating? have been asked many times by U.S. newspapers, magazines, and seemingly in every media outlet. The wearing of the veil has been linked historically with responses to European colonialism and Islamic revivalism, and although neither of these movements originated in the United States, they have strongly influenced political discussion and identity politics in the United States.

Although as a country it did not directly participate in the physical colonization of various parts of the traditionally Muslim world, including North Africa, parts of Asia, and the

Middle East, the United States inherited to a considerable degree the colonial attitude of its European counterparts toward Islam and Muslim people. Colonialism was the physical European presence and dominance in certain non-European parts of the world that lasted well into the twentieth century, as well as a way of conceiving relationships among people. As Edward Said pointed out, the intellectual power of “Orientalism” resided in its peculiar and yet persuasive way of representing the world so that Westerners were superior and Orientals (including but not limited to Muslims) were inferior.

This colonial disposition is reflected in several stereotypes about Muslims from these parts of the world, and with regard to gender, one of the most tenacious stereotypes has been that of the veiled and oppressed Muslim woman. In this caricature, the Muslim woman is portrayed as both powerless and as a seductive sexual object at the same time, and images of the harem and the veiled seductress have proliferated among Western audiences of both commercial film and news media. In the war in Afghanistan in the early part of the twenty-first century, some soldiers from the United States declared that the burqa (burka)—the head-to-toe garment worn by many Afghani women under Taliban rule—served as the equivalent of a battle flag, a sign for war. Thus, Muslim women around the globe have been objectified as “other,” as both essentially different from Western women but at the same time in need of being rescued from their religion and culture.

The type of thinking in which the Muslim became “other” originated in the psychology of European colonialism. Some European colonizers viewed women in the Islamic world as symbols for the confrontation of Western values with Islamic values. In one regard the liberation of Muslim women from the hands of Muslim men justified the colonial project. These colonizers claimed that Muslim men treated “their” women poorly. Leila Ahmed, an Egyptian-born scholar on the subject of Islam and gender, recounts the story of Lord Cromer, the British colonizer who, although vehemently rejecting the cause of women’s suffrage in Britain, insisted that Muslim women needed to be freed from oppressive and backward Islamic customs, such as veiling. European colonial attitudes toward veiling were paradoxical, but at the same time, many contemporary non-Muslim Americans have uncritically adopted the idea that the veil is oppressive to women.

The emergence of the veil as a distinctly modern Islamic symbol for femininity occurred in the context of the rise of

the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Islamic revivalism more generally in the latter half of the twentieth century. During this time, some Islamic nations and groups began to promote the veil as a symbol of Muslim female modesty. After the Iranian Revolution of 1978–1979, the Islamic Republic mandated that women cover their heads in an effort to forge a national Islamic identity, and the veil took on an Islamic and a nationalist connotation. The leadership proliferated images of chador-clad women on street signs, postage stamps, and other forms of media that communicated the veiled Muslim Iranian woman as a national symbol.

U.S. Muslim women have had the option of choosing to wear or not wear the veil and other forms of Islamic clothing. In the absence of state laws mandating particular modes of dress, Muslim women who have chosen to veil give different reasons for doing so. Some of the most common reasons that have been offered are purity, or curtailing sexual appetite or appeal, and solidarity with other Muslims who have been targets of racial and religious discrimination, especially after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Some individual families have put pressure on girls at a young age to begin dressing modestly, including wearing the *hijab*, or head scarf, but there has been no consensus among Muslims in the United States about how believing and practicing women should dress. Many Muslims have stressed that veiling is a choice, and thus choosing to veil or dress modestly is one expression of Islamic piety.

Although many non-Muslim Americans have regarded veiling with suspicion, the U.S. Constitution protects freedom of religious expression. In this regard, the United States is unlike France, which in 2004 banned headscarves from public schools in an apparent effort to protect the freedom of young Muslim women *from* their religion. In recent years, however, U.S. law has had to arbitrate disputes about the extent to which freedom of religious expression in the form of veiling can be allowed. In Florida, Alabama, and California, among other places, Muslim women have sued over the right to wear headscarves in driver’s license photos or in other public spaces such as courthouses and jails. Many of these cases have been dismissed, but the relative frequency and publicity of these cases has revealed increasing disagreement about how much civil law ought to accommodate religious difference and in what circumstances.

Conversion to Islam

U.S. women have converted to Islam for a variety of reasons, such as the desire to adhere to Islamic social and moral

principles, the need to forge an identity against racism and economic exploitation, and the wish to live in solidarity with other Muslims, including in some cases their husbands. In short, the reasons for converting to Islam reflect a combination of an individual's social, religious, and cultural needs.

In the middle part of the twentieth century, some African American women began to turn to Islam to address problems of white racism and economic injustice. Many of these women also found in Islam an affirmation of identity and a strong social network, as well as a sense of personal faith before God. Gwendolyn Zohara Simmons, who converted to Islam from Christianity, was active in the civil rights movement during the 1960s. After working in the southern United States on voting registration and other civil rights projects dealing with racial injustice, Simmons converted to Islam. She followed the Sufi branch of Islam, which is representative of the more mystical aspects of the tradition, and studied under Sheikh Muhaiyadeen until his death. Simmons went on to earn a doctorate in religion from Temple University in Philadelphia with a focus on Islam and has taught and researched in the areas of Islam, African American religion, race, and gender studies.

Although Simmons's work and experiences led her to follow a Sufi teacher, other African American women chose to become part of other Islamic groups during this time. One such group was the Nation of Islam (NOI), founded in the mid-twentieth century by Elijah Muhammad. During the 1960s and 1970s, some African American women felt drawn to the NOI because they viewed it as a program of moral improvement, for U.S. society at large but especially for the African American community. The NOI was the first completely indigenous Islamic movement in the United States. (Many of the NOI's teachings were incompatible with orthodox Islam, such as its insistence on the inferiority of white people in its affirmation of black strength and power, a view later abandoned.) The NOI encouraged female modesty and the assumption of more traditional gender roles for men and women. Women took on more duties within the home, viewing men as protectors and guardians of women and children. Women's political participation was limited, and men became the central public figures in the NOI.

For some African American women and men, the connection with Islam may have been a way to remember their Islamic heritage in Africa before the Atlantic slave trade. Some evidence, which is not well documented, indicates that some slaves practiced Islam before being captured and in many cases were forced to convert to Christianity. Thus,

reconnecting with Islam meant reconnecting with an African tradition that was not intimately associated with slavery and white domination, as Christianity had become.

The number of female Latina and Native American converts to Islam has increased in recent years, and women who choose to convert do so for various reasons, including the resources within Islam to deal with economic injustice and racial discrimination. In the later part of the twentieth century, a larger number of Anglo women began to convert to Islam for different reasons, often viewing conversion as a meaningful commitment to Islamic principles. Some Anglo women converts were drawn in particular to Sufism in the 1960s and 1970s, and studies have shown that in the early twenty-first century, U.S.-born Muslim women have been joining Sufi groups, such as the Bawa Muhaiyadeen Fellowship near Philadelphia.

Yvonne Haddad, Jane Smith, and Kathleen Moore (2006) looked at several personal reasons that U.S. women have chosen to convert to Islam. Among them are the sense that Islam is personally compelling in its insistence on monotheism (worshiping one God alone), that the Muslim way of life affirms family values in a way that U.S. secular individualism does not, that Islam is more convincing as a way of life than is Christianity, and that Islam supports and protects its female members in a special way with its emphasis on modesty and respect for women as persons, rather than being targets for sexual objectification. Among U.S. Muslim converts, scholars have identified a need to reject secular ways of life that are inimical to harmonious family and other social relationships. Some women convert for very practical reasons, such as having a husband or fiancé who is Muslim.

Aminah Beverly McCloud has noted that racial and national tensions have flared up between groups of Muslims, converts and indigenous Muslims alike, in the United States during the twentieth century. Her work has examined how Muslims self-segregate in the United States, despite claims to universal fellowship. U.S. Muslims have faced the difficult questions of how to preserve Islamic values in a way that is culturally meaningful. The diversity of cultures associated with and represented in Islamic communities has at times caused conflicts of custom and tradition.

Family and Social Values

In Islam generally, the family is an important locus of social and religious ties. Muslim women in the United States, like their non-Muslim female counterparts, have to make choices about whether to work outside of the home

and how to share parenting responsibilities with a spouse. Some Muslim women think that women should work primarily inside the home as a way of living Islamic principles, but others think it is important for men and women to share the duties of housework and work outside of the home. Moreover, it is traditional for women and men not to mix socially, especially in religious settings such as the mosque, where the sexes are often segregated for prayer and other activities. However, this is not always the case—in the United States, mosques function like churches and synagogues as places of community social gathering, rather than just for worship.

Muslims have wanted to pass on Islamic values to their children, and some Muslim women have supported the establishment of Muslim parochial schools in the United States. Of general concern has been that children will absorb and preserve their Islamic heritage, and this is often tied to issues of preserving culture. In the later part of the twentieth century, Muslim women immigrants often felt the pull between maintaining their identity of origin and the pressure of assimilation, which can be described as total integration, or more negatively as the erasure of one's original cultural identity.

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, immigrant Muslims benefited from an established network of mosques and Islamic educational and cultural centers in the United States, making it possible for Muslims to foster distinctively Muslim identities. Whereas earlier generations of immigrants may have struggled to assimilate and be perceived as “American,” during this time the focus shifted somewhat to cultivating authentic Islamic identities. This move also reflects a transition in U.S. thinking about identity politics and multiculturalism, in which the idea of the melting pot—where everyone who comes to the United States abandons distinctive cultural or religious markers and comes out “American”—has lost popularity. Globally, the type of Islam that has dominated the late twentieth century has been more conservative and concerned with loss of moral values. This has had an impact on U.S. Muslim thinking and reactions to U.S. culture. Some U.S. Muslims have criticized what they perceive to be lapses in ethical and moral judgment, especially when addressing liberal culture that condones sexual permissiveness, crime, and drug use, among other vices.

U.S. Muslims have viewed marriage as a central institution for preserving Islamic values and identity, but because of the nature of living in a multicultural setting, sometimes

the goals of communal preservation have conflicted with individual needs. Although traditionally, in many Muslim cultures, the families participated in the selection of marriage partners (“arranged marriages”), in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, social mobility and other considerations have weakened this practice considerably. One pressing issue that many Muslims have faced is whether to marry outside of the religion or to have an inter-faith marriage. Islamic custom permits men to wed Jewish and Christian women in addition to Muslim women, but Muslim women may only wed Muslim men. Children derive their religious identity from their father, which means that a non-Muslim father cannot suffice. Marcia Hermansen (1991) noted that many Muslim Americans, regardless of sex, who married outside of the faith experienced stress from their communities because of the emphasis on preserving and maintaining a distinctively Islamic identity.

U.S. Muslim women have found models for Islamic feminine virtue in the examples of women from the early formative period of Islam and within the Qur'an and Sunna, or deeds of the prophet Muhammad. Conservative Sunni women in the United States look to the wives of the Prophet, such as Khadija and Aisha for guidance; Shiite women look to Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, wife of Imam Ali, and mother to Husayn. Many Muslim women have insisted that the Qur'an stipulates the equality of men and women. As the most authoritative book for Muslims, what the Qur'an says about marriage, divorce, and family life holds much power, although how to interpret certain verses is debated. Azizah Al-Hibri has argued that the Adam and Eve story, so influential in the oppression of Jewish and Christian women because of the prevailing interpretation that sin is the result of Eve's choice to eat the fruit, is re-told in the Qur'an so that Adam and Eve share equal blame for their action in the Garden of Eden. In Islam, Al-Hibri argued, “woman” alone did not bring sin into the world.

Muslim Feminism and Forms of Feminist Activism

U.S. Muslim women have reacted to, and engaged with feminism in a variety of ways since the rise of U.S. political feminism during the 1960s and 1970s. Feminism, although a complicated subject in its own right, can be defined as the notion that men and women are politically equal, and thus should have equal access to material and social goods. Feminists have criticized the existence of social hierarchies based on gender difference (in addition to race and class

differences) and the often unquestioned power that men tend to hold in societies worldwide.

Although some feminist critics of religion and of Islam in particular have insisted that religion is inherently oppressive to all women, some Muslim women have adopted some of the central critiques of feminism and applied them to their tradition. They have claimed the need for reform of aspects of the Islamic tradition according to changed ideas about women and women's roles in the home, in the workplace, and in politics. This position, more generally known as reformist, has been espoused by Muslim women and men who understand the message of the Qur'an and Sunna (the sayings of the prophet Muhammad, collected in reports called the *hadith*) as one that stresses the social and political, in addition to the spiritual, equality of women and men. Therefore these critics have argued that Muslims must work to correct the abuses of patriarchy through a reexamination of Islamic tradition. One method has consisted of careful attention to Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*) on verses dealing with women. This method has been popular among scholars such as Khaled Abou El Fadl, Amina Wadud, and Kecia Ali.

Some reformists have sought to change elements of Islamic tradition that have been male-dominated through more public action. One type of activism that has made newspaper headlines is for women to lead the Islamic call-to-prayer. In March 2005, African American Muslim scholar Amina Wadud led the call-to-prayer in New York City for a mixed group of a hundred men and women. Traditionally, women are not permitted to lead prayer services for men; some scholars of Islam have argued that this custom does not originate in the Qur'an or Sunna and is an addition that was adopted from contact with other patriarchal cultures. Asra Nomani, an Indian American Muslim journalist, was the main organizer of the worship service over which Wadud presided. Both Nomani and Wadud have publicly advocated for the political equality of women and men as a central tenet of Islamic belief and practice. Their reasons for challenging the patriarchal aspects of Islam are not explicitly "feminist," although their views of Islam are largely compatible with feminist arguments for the equality of women and men.

Other forms of scholar-activism among Muslim American women have also been prominent during this period, such as campaigning on behalf of women's human rights worldwide. Simmons has been active in advocating for an end to domestic violence and other forms of discrimination against women. She has been part of a global network of Muslim women working for increased liberties for Muslim women,

using international human rights forums and language developed in the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (1948) and the Beijing Platform (1995). Some U.S. Muslim scholars, such as Saba Mahmood, have rejected the use of liberal feminist methodology (including human rights discourse) to describe and understand the experiences of Muslim women.

Many U.S. Muslim women are ambivalent about feminist ideas, specifically the idea that equality between the sexes implies that the sexes are the same and should occupy gender roles interchangeably. Instead, these women understand gender relationships as fundamentally complementary, in which women and men are endowed with different abilities because God has designated biological and social roles proper to each sex. For instance, the male is to be the provider for and the protector of the family, working outside of the home, and the female is to be the nurturer for the family, raising children and cooking meals. In this respect, this view resembles closely the views of more conservative U.S. Christians and Jews. To work to undo these gender distinctions as they are lived out in defined social roles would be equivalent to going against God's will for humanity. Traditionalist Muslims have perceived the collapse of defined gender roles as related to the degradation and exploitation of women that is allowed by liberal societies.

See also *Architecture: Muslim; Canada: Pluralism; Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools; Feminism; Food and Diet; Holidays; Islam in North America; Islam: Tradition and Heritage; Nation(s) of Islam; Pluralism; Qur'an; Religious Thought: Feminist; Violence and Terror; Women entries; Worship: Muslim.*

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Women: Ordination of

In Christian practice, ordination is a religious ceremony, sometimes called a sacrament, whereby clergy are "set apart" by prayer and laying on of hands to a vocation of Word and Sacrament. Jewish authorization of rabbis is also considered an ordination. In some denominations, there are two levels of ordination: ordination as deacon and ordination as elder. Ordained deacons or deaconesses (women) are laity authorized for ministries of service, and, in some traditions, becoming a deacon is a step along the way to full-status clergy ordination (variously called elder, presbyter, or priest).

Ordination is not only an event; it also confers an ongoing distinctive clergy status. Ordained clergy preach, teach, oversee religious rites, and generally care for local faith communities. In the Christian tradition, ordained leaders are said to carry an indelible mark that sets them apart from ordinary people (laity) for the rest of their life. Within Judaism, a rabbi is an observant Jewish man or woman who keeps the 613 commandments, knows Jewish law and tradition, resolves disputes, and instructs other Jews.

Who Should be Ordained?

Given the way in which ordained leadership is highly valued throughout religious history, communities of faith

continually debate the criteria for ordination. Is ordination for married or celibate persons, well-educated or charismatic persons, males or females, heterosexuals or homosexuals? The answers to these questions create rivalries and difficult choices. In the Western European Christian Church, for over a thousand years, canon law has dictated that clergy were to be celibate male heterosexuals. In practice, the law was not always followed, and in the sixteenth century, Protestant reformers challenged the principle of celibacy.

The second most debated issue around the question of ordination is the concern for education and its relationship to spiritual gifts, or natural *charisma*. Should the churches and synagogues insist on "learned" educated clergy, or are people better served by Spirit-filled charismatic leadership? Seeking to correct abuses in Roman Catholic practice, Protestant Reformers emphasized the importance of educated clergy. Ornate vestments were replaced with simple academic robes. Sectarian or left-wing Reformers, however, argued that education was not enough and authentic clergy needed to have spiritual gifts. Ideally, persons with both learning and charisma deserved ordination.

Third, the question of gender and ordination became increasingly important after the sixteenth century. Although many groups (Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, conservative Protestants, and Orthodox Jews) continue to insist that females should not be ordained or exercise clerical authority in their churches, other Protestant and Jewish groups ordain women. Roman Catholics maintain that only ordained male priests can mediate the presence of Christ in worship because the male gender of a priest functions as an icon of Christ, who is the new Adam. Conservative evangelical Protestants argue that only men should be ordained based upon the biblical concept of male "headship." The scripture states that the husband is head of the family and male clergy are head of the church. Although women have important responsibilities in family and church, it is not God's intention for women to rule over men in the church.

Finally, fourth, issues of sexual identity and same-sex love relationships shape attitudes towards ordination. When self-avowed lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered persons have sought ordination, Christian and Jewish communities have debated their legitimacy. Some groups bar all homosexual people from membership in local congregations; others embrace them but consider their sexuality flawed and seek to restore them to "natural" heterosexual life; and still others may affirm and welcome them as full members but still refuse to ordain them to leadership. As health

professionals have moved to define homosexuality as “sexual orientation,” not as a lifestyle choice or character flaw, religious people have continued to disagree over biblical texts that condemn homosexuality. Some refuse to ordain any openly homosexual persons. Others will ordain them if they are celibate or in a long-term, stable relationship. Still others insist that sexual identity should not even be considered when weighing the question of ordination.

How American History Shaped the Issue

Although sporadic concern for women clergy did arise in northern Europe in the eighteenth century, the movement towards ordaining Christian and Jewish women has been uniquely shaped by American history. Christians and Jews outside North America rarely raise the issue until exposed to American arguments and practices.

The colonial period, and the Declaration of Independence leading to the formation of the United States of America, changed the way ordinary citizens (colonists and immigrants from Europe) looked at authority. Political thinking that flourished in early America insisted that power flowed from the people to their elected leaders, and this attitude about power at the grassroots affected the churches. Americans considered themselves a self-governing people. They believed that every citizen had “rights.” These attitudes strengthened the role of laity in church life and eventually reshaped attitudes about the place of women in church and society.

In Europe, most ordinary people had little say about their political, social, and religious situation. Religious authorities (bishops, monks, and priests) and political leaders (monarchs, princes, and landowners) made decisions for all. In colonial America, however, things were different. Because English religious and political leaders were far away, colonists enjoyed a great deal of political and religious independence for two hundred years. The Revolutionary War, in the eyes of most American patriots, was a war to preserve freedoms already enjoyed, not to claim new freedoms.

In New England, where churches organized as local congregational bodies, each congregation governed itself—rejecting all hierarchical religious authority. The so-called “Congregational Way” insisted that when faithful people gathered together under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they could (should) govern their churches themselves. Congregational churches called their own pastors, designed their own meetinghouses, and wrote their own covenants.

Even in colonial Virginia, where more hierarchical Anglican Church customs dominated, colonial vestries assumed

powers unknown back in England. In England, wealthy patrons nominated a rector, and the bishop “inducted” the priest into a parish. Once inducted, a rector had tenure and could not be removed unless he had serious lapses. In Virginia, however, local parishioners played a direct role in selecting their clergy. To avoid getting stuck with a rector they did not like, Virginia vestries often waited months, even years, before presenting any minister for “induction.” Laity maintained control of their parishes by simply hiring clergy from year to year. Like most Americans, they were committed to freedom from authority: political and ecclesiastical.

As colonial settlements spread west over the mountains, periods of revivalistic enthusiasm produced amazing religious diversity. Americans grew comfortable with varieties of religious practices and convictions. Independent churches and lay driven religious movements flourished. People regularly questioned old orthodoxies and were suspicious of ecclesiastical power. In hierarchical traditions, such as the Roman Catholic Church or the Church of England, they found creative ways openly to challenge authority.

After the War for Independence (1775–1783), the religious enthusiasm of frontier revivalism (what scholars call the Second Great Awakening) focused upon results, not status. If a man or woman was able to call down the Holy Spirit and bring crowds to salvation through Jesus Christ, gender did not matter. In this religious environment, women, as well as men, broke away from ecclesiastical and denominational camps. They were suspicious of and rejected formal educational credentials. They strongly affirmed the work of so-called “female laborers” in frontier revivals. They quoted the prophet Joel, remembering that God promised to “pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy” (Joel 2:28–29).

“Female laborers” were led by the Spirit, but they also took the Bible seriously, anguishing over texts stipulating that women needed to “be silent in the churches” and that women should not “rule” in the church. Through prayer and Bible study, they developed an interesting argument to justify their ministry. The Holy Spirit, they said, flows equally through both women and men. When Paul objected to women “ruling,” he never meant to prohibit women from praying aloud, singing, witnessing, exhorting, and preaching *in public*. As long as women did not “rob men of their rightful authority” inside the church, the public evangelistic ministry of women was acceptable. Early female laborers did not seek ordination; they expected and invited men to carry out all church governance roles. At the same time, they



Elizabeth A. Platz, 30, the first woman to become a Lutheran minister, gives Communion to her mother. Platz, a native of Pittsburgh, was ordained on November 22, 1970, in the University of Maryland Chapel.

founded many churches, refusing to deny the power of the Holy Spirit in their preaching. Ordained male clergy tended to the life of the churches, while Spirit-filled women spread the gospel. Unfortunately, after several decades, church people became more concerned about maintaining stable congregations than saving souls, and by the 1830s, female preaching ceased to be valued as a miraculous sign of God's grace and often came to be viewed as a sin against nature.

In American history, as immigration increased and religious enthusiasm spread across the expanding frontier, there were simply not enough ordained male clergy to meet the needs of the population. It was common for the wives of Protestant clergy to partner in ministry with their clergy husbands. Sometimes when a husband died, a pastor's wife stepped into his vacant pulpit. Among Roman Catholics, women religious (nuns) rendered important ministries in education, hospitals, and large parishes when no male priests were near. More and more people had firsthand experience with effective female leaders and without worrying about biblical or theological traditions; they affirmed and even

ordained women because they genuinely believed them to be called by God.

Prior to the Revolutionary War, Congregationalists dominated New England and Anglicans controlled tidewater Virginia. In the long run, however, the openness of the Middle Colonies and the varieties of religious practice in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware produced patterns of religious diversity that prevailed. Groups with unorthodox beliefs and practices that had been persecuted in Europe flourished in America, and female religious leaders of sectarian religious groups overwhelmed masculine assumptions about religious leadership.

The Rationale for Women's Ordination

As already noted, frontier "female laborers" held revivals and founded churches in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but they did not seek ordination. Later, when a handful of women in more established churches actively sought ordination, they were ignored and/or denied. Finally, on September 15, 1853, a woman named Antoinette Brown

(1825–1921) became the first woman ordained to the Christian ministry in a major established denomination of that era (Congregationalism). This action was not taken by a large ecclesiastical body concerned with gender equality. Rather, Brown felt God had called her to “preach the gospel,” and after graduating from Oberlin College, where she had been allowed to study for ministry, she was invited to serve a small Congregational church in South Butler, New York. Brown was ordained within a Protestant denomination where local congregations govern themselves and regularly choose their pastors, so her ordination did not cause a big stir. Over the next fifty years, a small number of denominations with similar polity (governance systems), or more liberal national structures, also ordained a handful of women. Yet even when church leaders affirmed the “ordination of women,” women clergy were considered “exceptions to the rule.” Most of the women ordained before 1870 did not demand equality with men; they simply wanted to do what they believed God was calling them to do.

Yet slowly a rationale for women’s ordination developed, building upon new ways of thinking about women’s place in society. In 1838, Quaker abolitionist Sarah Grimké linked the question of women’s equality to antislavery thinking. In her *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes, and the Condition of Woman*, she argued that women and men are equal children of God. She also rejected the idea that men and women should have “separate spheres” of activity dictated by gender. Grimké insisted that women can and should be leaders in politics, education, and religion. In 1848, a women’s rights convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York. It affirmed a statement on the rights of women modeled after the *Declaration of Independence* and launched the women’s suffrage movement.

Eventually, arguments for women’s ordination were linked to new understandings of “human rights” and an expanding vision of women’s place in society. They focused on biblical texts, arguing that all persons are called to the ministry by their baptism and that there is “neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). Discussions about ordination became part of wider social conversations about gender. The pressure to ordain women was no longer driven by individual women asking to be ordained, or by churches and synagogues encouraging women to seek ordination, or even by the need for more clergy. Decisions for or against the ordination of women became mixed up with how religious traditions embraced or resisted modern ideologies of gender equality, how they viewed the sacraments,

and how they responded to the inerrancy of the scripture when confronted with modern historical, critical study of the Bible. New opportunities for women in medicine, law, education, and music expanded professional expectations and options. Encounters with female evangelists, lay sisterhoods, deaconesses, single women missionaries, and Roman Catholic nuns stretched long-standing attitudes about women’s role in church and society.

Women’s Ordination in Mainstream American Protestantism

After the Congregationalists ordained a woman in 1853, other groups with decentralized, congregationally based decision making, and with progressive attitudes towards women, began ordaining women—Universalists (1863), Christians (1867), Unitarians (1871), and Disciples (1888). Because the Baptists, the largest denominational family in American Protestantism, split into Northern and Southern Baptists and into white Baptists and black Baptists, it is difficult to generalize about Baptists. In 1894, white Northern Baptists (later called American Baptists) ordained a woman; and in 1895, when the black National Baptist Convention was founded, it did not prohibit the ordination of women. Unfortunately, it was a long time before many African American Baptist women were affirmed as clergy. Many Southern Baptists (mostly white) still remain steadfastly resistant to the idea of ordaining women. The ordination of the first Southern Baptist woman did not take place until 1964. As more Southern Baptist women sought ordination, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) formally prohibited female leadership, ruling in 1979 that women should be barred from all positions of authority. In response, several progressive Baptist groups withdrew from the SBC and formed women-friendly alternative Baptist fellowships.

Methodism also went through controversies over slavery and the ordination of women. Before the Civil War (1844), Methodists broke into northern and southern denominations. Even earlier (1830), Methodists had split over the role of the laity and whether the church should be governed by bishops. In 1880, two women sought ordination in the Methodist Episcopal Church, North (with bishops). After their request was denied, one of them appealed to the Methodist Protestant Church (no bishops), and in 1892, she was ordained. It was not until 1924, however, when the predominantly white Methodist Episcopal Church, North, approved the ordination of women. At first, women were ordained as local preachers and did not have full equality as Annual

Conference members. Finally, in 1956, after a 1939 reunion of several Methodist groups into the Methodist Church, women were granted Annual Conference membership. Finally, in 1968, when the Evangelical United Brethren Church (EUB) completed a merger with the Methodist Church to form the United Methodist Church, irregular policies around the status of women clergy in the EUB were corrected, and all women gained full clergy status.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) was a separate black Methodist denomination established in Philadelphia in 1816 by Richard Allen. Soon thereafter, a female preacher named Jarena Lee requested a license to preach. Allen resisted and never ordained her, but she is considered the first female preacher in the AME church. Formal regulations allowing the ordination of women in black Methodism came slowly—African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1898, African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1960, and Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in 1966.

Also, after a series of nineteenth-century Wesleyan Holiness revivals, a number of small new Holiness denominations broke away from Methodism. The Wesleyan Methodist Church (1891), the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana, 1885), and the Church of the Nazarene (1908) all ordained women from their founding. Only later, when biblical inerrancy thinking overwhelmed Holiness commitments to the power of the Holy Spirit, did Wesleyan Holiness denominations begin to discourage the ordination of women.

Reformed, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Episcopal denominations made limited progress towards the ordination of women until the 1960s and 1970s. The Presbyterian practice of ordaining lay ruling elders as well as teaching elders (clergy) complicated the issue. Some congregations in the small populist Cumberland Presbyterian Church ordained a woman to clergy status in 1889. Other Presbyterian bodies took action much later—the (Northern) Presbyterian Church in the USA (that in 1958 united with the United Presbyterian Church) ordained women clergy in 1955; and the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern) did so in 1964.

Lutherans in America trace their roots back to Scandinavian and German immigrant groups. Lutherans linked to Scandinavia eventually came together to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1987. Most of those groups had approved the ordination of women in 1970. Lutherans linked to more conservative German traditions, especially the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, still reject the ordination of women.

Throughout these years, the Episcopal Church, sensitive to its place in the global Anglican family, continued to debate the question of the ordination of women. After 1970, when the ordination of women as deaconesses was approved, Episcopal bishops voted in favor of ordaining women priests, but laity in the General Convention rejected the idea. Only after an irregular ordination of eleven women priests in 1974 did the General Convention regularize the ordination of the eleven and formally approve the ordination of women to both the priesthood and to the episcopate.

This brief outline of events in mainline Protestant denominations is only half the story. Census data show that over fifty percent of all ordained women since 1853 served in independent Holiness, Pentecostal, and evangelical congregations. As late as 1977, only seventeen percent of women clergy could be found in the ten largest Protestant denominations. It seems that when women were denied ordination, they found it easier to start their own independent congregations.

Women's Ordination in Judaism

The movement of American Judaism to ordain women did not come to pass until the 1960s and 1970s. By that time, there were four sub-groups within the American Jewish community. Many Jewish women were well-educated leaders in the secular “women’s liberation movement.” Often they were part of Reform Judaism, a progressive brand of Judaism that found ways to blend Jewish law and practice with common American values, especially gender equality. Reform Judaism ordained its first female rabbi in 1972. In 1968, another progressive group of Jews, who called themselves “Reconstructionists,” started a new rabbinical college based on the egalitarian thinking of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan. Their school admitted women and men from the beginning. The first female Reconstructionist rabbi was ordained in 1974.

The majority of American Jewish women tried to walk a line between tradition and feminism, aligning themselves with Conservative Judaism. At first they rejected the idea of female rabbis, focusing upon the need for lay women to have more power in synagogues. They challenged Jews to reinterpret Jewish law. In 1977, the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly appointed a study commission to examine the issue of women’s ordination, and eventually it recommended that women be admitted to study to be rabbis. The first female Conservative rabbi was ordained in 1985.

Not all Jewish women went along with these developments. Women within Orthodox Jewish communities resisted the pressures of second-wave feminism completely, reaffirming traditional roles for women with new zeal. Many Orthodox Jews, who had come to the United States from Eastern Europe with personal memories of the Holocaust, felt a responsibility for the future of Judaism. Orthodox women did not think that women should be rabbis and accepted their distinct female roles in the family. They believed that separate was not unequal and that gender differences were essential for the future of Judaism. Although many Orthodox Jewish women have become respected scholars of scripture and tradition, there are no Orthodox Jewish women rabbis.

Women's Ordination and Roman Catholicism

As Protestant groups debated the issue of women's ordination, the Roman Catholic Church stood aloof, resisting any expansion of roles for women in the church. Resistance was not justified so much by citing biblical texts but by upholding a high sacramental view of clerical authority. It was not until the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s that things began to change.

Initially, women were optimistic, as religious orders and liturgical practice modernized. Some Roman Catholic women enrolled in seminaries, anticipating that priesthood for women might be possible in their lifetime. In 1975, a large Women's Ordination Conference was held in Detroit, Michigan, promoting the ordination of women.

In 1976, the Vatican issued a formal "Declaration on the Question of the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood," rejecting the idea that ordination is a woman's right. Only a male priest, with a "natural resemblance" to Christ, could officiate at the Eucharist. Yet the Women's Ordination Conference has continued to meet, keeping the issue alive. From time to time, renegade bishops ordain a handful of women in what they call "ecclesiastical disobedience," but the official position of the Church does not change. In 1994, the Vatican restated its position against the ordination of women, with an admonition against debating the issue. American Catholics stubbornly affirm the ordination of women. In a 2005 Associated Press poll, over sixty percent of American Roman Catholics said that they supported the ordination of women.

Conclusion

After many centuries of exclusive male leadership in Christian and Jewish communities, in nineteenth-century

America, attitudes about gender roles began to change. Women and men, especially in American churches and synagogues, embraced new ways of looking at religious leadership and began developing arguments supporting the ordination of women. During the past two hundred years, Christians and Jews in many parts of the world have been influenced by four American developments.

(1) From the earliest colonial settlements, American religious life depended upon strong lay leadership (male and female). People were eager to reform religious as well as political institutions. They gave women new opportunities for leadership and after several generations, many people changed their thinking about women and ordination.

(2) The popularity of Charismatic and Pentecostal leadership in American congregations created a culture of openness towards women. If the Holy Spirit expands where it will, then it can (and does) call women as well as men to leadership.

(3) Throughout much of American religious history, there have not been enough male clergy. Women have often stepped in as temporary or ad hoc, priests, pastors, and teachers, and they were even ordained. This is not so much because people were on a campaign to ordain women, but because leadership was needed and women obviously could do the job.

(4) Sectarian religious groups (Quaker, Shaker, Christian Scientist, and so on), alongside thousands of independent female pastors and evangelists in frontier revivals and urban storefronts, stretched traditional religious attitudes about women's role. Once people had firsthand experience with strong female religious leaders in marginal religious groups, reasons not to ordain them faded.

See also *Churches of Christ; Episcopalians: Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries; Feminism; Feminist Studies; Gender; Judaism: Conservative; Ministry, Professional; Pentecostals* entries; *Preaching; Religious Thought: Feminist; Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century; Same-Gender Marriage; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Women* entries; *Women Religious*.

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Women: Protestant

As a dominant division of American Christianity and as a significant formative element in the American political climate, Protestantism has provided women with a means of advancement, both as they have worked within the tradition and acted outside its traditional confines. This dynamic relationship between the ways in which women can function within traditional Protestant thought and critical thought about these very traditions and practices has allowed women to make large political and social strides. As women examined Protestantism, they examined themselves and grew to find the ways in which they wanted to exist as wives, mothers, citizens, churchgoers, and members of society.

Distinct strands of religious observance and devotion wind through each period of Protestant history. One can see throughout U.S. history Protestant women's deep commitment to political and social issues; they stood upon and within a religious platform to examine their own views and to enact social change. A blend of religious observation, religious rebellion, political savvy and activism, and concern for domestic welfare and the public welfare moved women to understand themselves in the context of a patriarchal country. Protestantism has evolved to fit the needs of women so that they now largely have the opportunity for leadership, a political platform for reform, and a set of religious beliefs to begin to claim and own as both female and Protestant.

1600s–1700s: The Puritans and a New Nation

Protestantism made its way to the American colonies in the 1620s when John Carver (1576–1621) and William Bradford (1590–1657) arrived with followers from England. These budding colonies clung tightly to religious convictions—both because their beliefs had taken them across the ocean

and because they needed these convictions to maintain a sense of normalcy and to secure their English identity. While men took on the task of structuring the new colonial nation, women were charged with maintaining the domestic sphere. This emphasis on domesticity led to what historians have termed the Puritan “Good Wife,” or a standard of behavior and ideal image of the Puritan woman.

The Good Wife played the important role in the new colonies of embodying Christian piety—she raised her family according to Puritan values, attended church herself, and ensured that her household participated in church. She fulfilled charitable roles, including caring for orphans and visiting the sick. Moreover, as her sobriquet suggests, she was a deferential wife, adhering strictly to the Proverbs 31 ideal of the reverent wife who quietly submitted to the authority of her husband. Her submission to her husband's guidance and leadership was considered to be a reflection of the Puritan church's submission to the headship of Christ.

This pattern of deference and the emphasis on piety and virtue has continued to shape female Protestant identity throughout American history. The tendency to describe religious piety and virtue as being inherently female while somewhat excusing males in the religious arena has led to what Ann Douglas has termed a “feminization” of religion. The importance placed on individualism and individual conversion within Protestantism has blended with the concept of female deference such that women were able to find both a subordinate position within the church and home and, simultaneously, personal growth and communal development. This paradoxical stance gave women a forum for reform, especially through the medium of the church.

The 1600s

Anne (Marbury) Hutchinson (1591–1643), wife of a prominent merchant and clergyman, was one Puritan woman who used religious settings as a venue for social reform. During 1635 and 1636 Hutchinson began holding meetings in her home on Sunday evenings in which the Sunday sermon was discussed at length. Hutchinson questioned the authority of the church and scripture as the ultimate will of God and, by extension, the political leadership of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. She became an influential lay preacher. Eventually the Massachusetts Bay Colony banished her and the First Church in Boston excommunicated her for her radical teachings and challenges to the authority of the church. The dispute over her teachings was known as the Antinomian Controversy.

Hutchinson was not alone in her reform efforts, as other women and men also stepped forward against the Puritan Church. For example, the Society of Friends, or Quakers, was born out of reform efforts. Also excommunicated from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Quakers promoted a more radical, egalitarian structure, dividing their meetings along gender lines and allowing women to conduct their own weekly meetings. This egalitarian structure allowed for several women to step forward as Quaker leaders and social reformists. Mary Dyer (1611–1660), a contemporary of Hutchinson, was banished to Rhode Island with her husband. In the years following her excommunication, Dyer continued to visit imprisoned Quaker friends in Boston, where she was eventually hanged in 1660 for her affiliation with the Quakers and her outspoken critiques of the Puritans.

Several women met a similar fate for abdicating traditional female roles and embracing the egalitarian nature of the Quakers, including missionary and preacher Elizabeth Hooten (1600–1672) and Margaret Fell (1614–1702), the latter commonly known as the “Mother of Quakerism.” Margaret Fell and Quaker founder George Fox (1624–1691) advocated an equality of Adam and Eve prior to the Fall. Fell defended her position as a preacher in an important 1666 tract entitled “Women’s Speaking Justified, Proved and Allowed of by the Scriptures.”

These teachings increased persecution of Quaker men and women within the Massachusetts colony, to the extent that Quaker preacher Mary Fisher (1623–1698) was imprisoned and shipped to Barbados. In addition to the condemnation and banishment of dissenting women, a paranoia of witchcraft swept through the colony. These trials are not unique to Puritan America, as there is a long legacy of witch hunting in Christianity dating back to the Middle Ages. Allegations of witchcraft began in Boston around 1647 and culminated with the Salem witch trials in 1692; there were over ninety-seven trials and several executions.

These acts of violence against women indicate the level of importance placed upon the image of the “Good Wife” within Puritan America and, moreover, the extent to which Puritan women were needed to retain a normative social structure in which the church was a high authority and men held the sole responsibility for and power to enact social reform. While Hutchinson, Dyer, and others provide striking examples of women working towards social change and dismissing the role of the Good Wife, they did not represent the majority of Puritan women, who complied with and

respected the teachings of the church. Poet Anne Bradstreet (1612–1672) adhered closely to Puritan teachings, as is evidenced in her work originally titled “The Tenth Muse” and later changed to “To My Dear and Loving Husband.” As the title suggests, Bradstreet’s poems contain a level of deference to and respect for both her husband and God and indicate a reverence for the God-ordained nature of submission within her marriage.

The 1700s

Despite the influence of women like Hutchinson and the influence of the Quakers, this dominant paradigm of submission continued as an important characteristic for Protestant women in the 1700s. While the violence gradually subsided, the Puritan ideal still reigned supreme throughout the colonies. The subsidence in violence, however, allowed Quaker preachers to travel and speak where they chose. These preachers included the well-known Sophia Hume, granddaughter of Margaret Fischer. A few women even began to preach in churches. These included Barbara Heck, who established the first Methodist Church in America in the 1760s with a group from Northern Ireland. As these sects became more well-known, however, they gradually conformed to traditional values and pushed women out of the pulpit.

Puritan values held broad sway throughout the 1700s and well into the American Revolution. While the 1600s church saw high female attendance due to an emphasis on female piety, the early 1700s saw an influx of male churchgoers with the first Great Awakening (1730–1747). Spurred by the preaching of figures such as George Whitefield (1714–1770) and Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), the Great Awakening spread throughout the northern and southern colonies. During this revival women were able to jump upon the evangelistic bandwagon and gain some church leadership roles.

Massachusetts resident Bathsheba Kingsley experienced a revival-like conversion during the first Great Awakening, and she took on the role of a public evangelist. Continually denounced for her “preaching,” Kingsley was told that she could share her faith but was not allowed to speak publicly. Similarly, contemporary Sarah Osborn (1714–1796) was moved by the preachings of Whitefield to lead a young women’s religious society in her home. It met for fifty years, and Osborn eventually led a group for African Americans in the 1760s. Criticized for abandoning her household duties to take up religious leadership, Osborn

nonetheless began giving spiritual counseling and teaching reading and writing. These women built the foundational precedent for female ordination within the Protestant Church and slowly pushed back the boundaries around the ideally pious woman; she need not be only quietly religious.

The first Great Awakening gave way to American colonial independence from Britain in 1776. The patriotism that crossed the newly formed America gave women a new identity, termed by historian Susan Hill Lindley (1996) the “Republican Mother.” This identity gave women a sense of inclusion in the politics of the forming society. This inclusion, though, hinged upon a maternal obligation to raise sons to be virtuous, educated citizens and daughters to be, again, Republican Mothers.

The 1800s: An Era of Moral and Social Reform

This transition to a more political role for women, if only nominally, led to American Protestant women taking on the role of social reformer in the 1800s. Nineteenth-century America saw the birth of several political and moral reform movements, including temperance, abolition, prison reform, capital punishment, and poverty eradication. These movements were largely spearheaded by Protestant women’s groups.

Within the context of these religious groups, women were able to exercise a new political freedom, one that was divorced from the wifely duties of the Puritan Good Wife and eventually stepped away from the Republican Mother ideal. The booming industrialism of the 1800s led to a greater distinction of social spheres for men and women. Also, the teachings of the Second Great Awakening (1790s–1840s) emphasized renewed personal salvation during church revival meetings. Together these brought about a new ideal for womanhood—the “Cult of True Womanhood.” This ideal emphasized four cardinal virtues: piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity.

Social Reform Work

Industrialization led to more leisure time for women, which could be interpreted as an explanation for their greater piety—men were seen as being too busy for religious concerns. Additionally, industrialization saw the role of the American woman change as factory work and businesses slowly began to take over household tasks, thereby freeing women’s time for other efforts—including social reform work.

Education reform was a high priority during the early nineteenth century with women like Emma Hart Willard (1787–1870) and Mary Lyon (1797–1849). Willard opened Troy (New York) Female Seminary in 1821, which intended to offer young women students a secondary education equivalent to that offered to young men. The curriculum focused largely on social graces of the time, including moral instruction, drawing, painting, dancing, and the art of being a wife and mother. However, the founding of such a school was a distinct step towards both bettering female education and promoting a view that women were deserving of a quality education. Shortly after Troy Seminary was opened, Lyon opened Mount Holyoke Female Seminary with a central focus on Christian education.

Similarly, deaconess education was popularized in various Protestant traditions during the late 1800s. Methodist Lucy Rider Meyer founded the Chicago Training School for City, Home, and Foreign Missions in 1885. The school specialized in biblical training, missions, sociology, and social service. The Chicago Training School provided women with a more socially acceptable way to become involved in church leadership than female ordination (almost unheard of), and it gave women an opportunity to become more empowered within their own religious tradition and their congregations.

The empowerment of women through education was similarly marked by their involvement in social reform groups. Wearing the mantle of religious service, women were able to step into the political realm and have lasting socioeconomic impact through these reform movements. As early as the 1830s, women began organizing against slavery in the United States. Many women spoke out actively against slavery—both of African Americans and “white slavery,” or prostitution—including Quaker minister Lucretia Coffin Mott (1793–1880) and Quaker sisters Sarah (1792–1873) and Angelina (1805–1879) Grimké.

White slavery was addressed by several organizations, including the Female Moral Reform Society (FMRS) founded in 1834 by Lydia A. Finney. FMRS was created for the purpose of preventing prostitution and encouraging sexual abstinence. Providing an outlet for publishing, this group also circulated *The Advocate of Moral Reform*, to which a large number of urban and rural women subscribed. The first successful settlement house was designed by Jane Addams for women to undergo training in health, hygiene, and etiquette.

This reform effort indicates an adherence to the ideal of the Cult of True Womanhood—that women should seek to

instill a sense of piety and sexual purity in other women—and points to the class distinctions between those Protestant women with access to the political arena and lower-class women. The social gains made by Protestant women in the nineteenth century, though beneficial across economic classes, were mainly driven by white women of the upper economic echelon with access to education and a more leisurely lifestyle that allowed them time to devote to religious activity.

While most of the issues of women's moral reform became deeply entwined with each other, two of the most intertwined issues were those of temperance and women's rights. In 1837 Francis Willard (1839–1898) established the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The WCTU, established as part of the temperance movement, eventually focused on women's suffrage. Within the temperance movement, women gained opportunities to publish articles, tracts, and periodicals—such as Amelia Jenks Bloomer's (1818–1894) newspaper, *The Lily*. Additionally, at the 1848 Seneca Falls Meeting in New York a collection of women discussed the role of women in society as well as the temperance movement sweeping the nation.

Mission Work

This trend of upper-class white women enacting social change can also be poignantly traced in the foreign missions movement. While the 1800s provided a small political platform for women, it also led to an emergence of a new type of religious leadership. In 1800 Mary Webb (1779–1861) organized a small group of Baptist and Congregational women in the formation of the Boston Female Society for Mission Purposes. This society launched a movement that was supported by almost all Protestant groups by the end of the twentieth century. Mission work, both at home and abroad, gave women the opportunity to travel and teach, opportunities scarce within the traditional Protestant woman's life. Missionary wives were seen as important in teaching the “heathens” the ways of a Christian household and as integral to maintaining the piety of the missionary family.

Additionally, several unmarried women began traveling as missionaries well before the Civil War. Various women's mission boards were formed, including the Women's Union Mission Society (1888). On these boards women were able to develop their autonomy and leadership as they designated how money would be spent for missions and how mission operations would be conducted. They published their own teaching materials and targeted a wide range of donors. As

with the Chicago Training School for deaconesses, the field of foreign missions offered women a way to become involved in religious teaching and instruction, as well as publication, without meeting opposition from male clergy and laity. Women's groups provided a space for women to enter the public sphere and exert political thought and action without diverging hugely from their socially acceptable place in the home. Women slowly began to emerge into the public sphere over the course of the nineteenth century, laying the foundation for the prominent women's suffrage movement at the turn of the century and for women to assume more roles of religious leadership.

The 1900s: Ordination and Ecumenism

The turn of the twentieth century saw the culmination of several of these women's groups in the female suffragist movement. Although not all members of women's groups considered themselves feminists or suffragists, their actions are often cited as protofeminist, and their organizations opened the gateway for the formation of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1892. NAWSA was originally headed by suffragist leader Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902), who resigned in 1894 to begin exploring the connection between religion and women's rights. In 1895 she published *The Women's Bible*, which focused on realigning biblical passages to the interests of women's liberation and approached scripture as being written by human hand, not divine ordination. Her text created a great stir among church clergy and an almost equivalent reaction from NAWSA, which largely wished to dissociate itself from her work. Nevertheless, Stanton's work set an important precedent for future feminist religious scholars who would examine scripture through a lens of sexism and gender bias.

The early feminist movement on the whole reflected the tone of Stanton's work, as it asserted that before being wives and mothers women were individuals and citizens. Women gained the right to vote and exercise political thought as they also slowly began to enter the American workforce. Women were leaving the domestic sphere and building a bridge between their public and domestic lives. This period of change (1848–1920) has become known as the first wave of feminism.

As women began to enter the workplace in greater numbers, the division between the public and private sphere became even more obsolete. Though women still represented the majority of churchgoers, the elevated idea of

female piety established by notions of the Good Wife and the Cult of True Womanhood slowly began to fade from popular thought.

Women in the Ministry

Antoinette Brown (1825–1921), later Antoinette Brown Blackwell, had been the first woman ordained in a Christian church—in 1853 as a Congregationalist minister. Though her ordination was controversial, several denominations followed suit and began ordaining women in the church. In 1894 in Poughkeepsie, New York, Julia A. Foote was the first African American woman ordained in a Protestant church. Following on the heels of the popularized deaconess education movement, Foote, a member of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church, was ordained to deacon's orders over fifty years before the predominantly white Methodist Church granted full conference membership to women.

As female ordination and female religious education became more accepted, women began to take on leadership roles in institutions of higher religious education. Georgia Harkness (1891–1974) was an important figure in the movement for women to gain ordination, and she was also one of the first women to teach theology within a seminary, first at Garrett Biblical Institute in Chicago and later at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. Author of over thirty books, Harkness was one of the first significant female theologians.

Feminism and Ecumenism

Harkness advocated for an ecumenical understanding of the Christian church, and this ecumenism carried over into the religious thought during the second wave of feminism in the 1960s. America saw a shift to the “personal is the political” mind-set among feminists, who believed the mistreatment of women extended beyond the legal field of ensuring the right to vote and receive an education into the personal domain. Feminist groups began consciousness-raising groups, akin to earlier women's groups and maternal associations, in which women would come together and discuss their social position. Similarly, ecumenists united for the collective goal of raising the religious and social consciousnesses of various Protestant and other religious strands.

The Evangelical and Ecumenical Women's Caucus (EEWC), for example, was established as a branch of a group first known as the Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA). Founded in 1973, the ESA caucused annually with a specific list of concerns, including racism, sexism, peace, and simpler

lifestyles. Out of this group the Evangelical Women's Caucus developed to combat sexism in a religious context, including noninclusive language of worship, ordination rights, and inequitable family structure dynamics. In 1990 the organization's name was changed to Evangelical Ecumenical Women's Caucus to reflect its increasingly inclusive nature.

Organizations like the EEWC reflect the ways in which stratified Protestant groups began to unite under common social and political causes—causes that had been spearheaded by various women's reform groups in the mid- to late nineteenth century. Rev. Dr. Joan Brown Campbell (1931–) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the American Baptist Churches, for example, is a leading ecumenist who was the first woman to be named executive director of the World Council of Churches. She also served for a decade as the general secretary to the National Council of Churches, the nation's largest ecumenical body with thirty-two Christian denominations and over 42 million members.

The Language of Worship

The tenets of equality and egalitarianism in religious relationships have extended beyond the ecumenical movement into the ways in which female theologians have been re-envisioning the language of worship and scripture. Several more liberal Protestant denominations have gender-neutral liturgies in their services, and the Unitarian Universalists encourage congregants to worship at an individual level, which can include a female deity. Protestant theologian Ruth Duck (1947–) has encouraged a new hymnody that incorporates female imagery. Duck has published several texts about her work with language in worship, including *Gender and the Name of God: The Trinitarian Baptismal Formula* (1991). Twelve of her hymns are a part of the 1995 United Church of Christ hymnal, and eleven are in the Disciples of Christ *Chalice Hymnal* (1995). Building on the long tradition of female hymnists, Duck revises the tradition by pulling into worship a vernacular that fuses reverence with egalitarian language.

The Twenty-First Century

Harkness, Brown Campbell, and Duck represent the gains women have made in assuming roles of leadership in Protestant churches and organizations in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Ordination is still an issue of contention among Protestant denominations. Several more conservative denominations, including the Southern Baptists, the

Presbyterian Church of America, and Pentecostal strands, do not ordain women. They hold closely to the belief that men alone should be ordained, and they find a scriptural basis for the importance of maintaining distinct gender separation within church leadership roles. These denominations draw upon traditional, Puritanical gender beliefs that men are the head of both the household and the church and that women act in a supporting role to each in each of these domains.

However, most mainstream Protestant denominations, like the United Methodist Church, began ordaining women in the mid-twentieth century. In 1989 Barbara Harris became the first female Episcopal bishop. The first presiding female Episcopal bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori (1954–) was ordained in that position in 2006. While the number of male clergy is still higher than female clergy, the trend is shifting with increased female enrollment in seminary. This divergence among denominations demonstrates the very flexibility Protestantism provides women.

Protestant women have been a dominant force in American social and political reform. The image and definition of the Protestant woman has been in a constant state of revision alongside the changing sociopolitical climate of the United States. Since the founding of the American colonies, religious forums have provided women with a platform for exercising political and social power. Moreover, the belief systems and religious convictions of Protestants have motivated these women to organize and impact social change. Within Protestantism women have had the ability to move through various social roles. They have played the part of volunteer, nurturer in the home, missionary, social reformer, evangelist, pastor, and theologian. The complexity of the role of Protestant woman has reflected and guided the evolving role of women within society at large as well as evolving social mores.

See also *Abortion; Benevolent Empire; Cult of Domesticity; Feminism; Gender; Great Awakening(s); Marriage and Family; Puritans; Quakers* entries; *Scriptures: American Texts; Sexuality and Sexual Identity; Social Reform; Women* entries.

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Women: Roman Catholic

The stories of Catholic women in North America are not easily reduced to commonalities. Roman Catholicism is a global religious tradition that is anchored by a centralized hierarchy yet develops in unique ways all over the world. Catholic women in North America claim heritage in all of these communities, including indigenous traditions. Their experiences of being female and Catholic in North America are therefore wonderfully diverse. Such diversity should be studied and celebrated for its own sake, as well as embraced as a natural guard against overgeneralization.

Common Threads

At least three common threads do appear in North America that bind Catholic women together. First, Catholic women,

whatever their heritage, were forced by necessity to negotiate multiple identities. As members of multicultural colonies and nations, they defined themselves by class, race, ethnicity, and gender as well as by nationality and faith tradition. Scholars who bring questions of identity to these women's experiences greatly enrich the study of Catholic women. For example, instead of assuming that Catholic women looked at themselves in similar ways (as taught by the Catholic Church), historians now ask how factors such as race or gender contributed to how they defined themselves and the choices they were forced to make. A Native American woman may have had to choose between losing her culture through forced conversion to Catholicism or losing her life; a Catholic woman in colonial New England might have felt a tension between her faith tradition and her national identity; a free Catholic woman of color in nineteenth-century New Orleans would find herself part of a majority religious culture, but an outsider because of her race, class, and status; a twentieth-century Latina in the United States might find herself torn between both national and religious cultures.

Each of these women would have struggled to define not only who she was, but what shape her Catholicism would take and how it would influence her life. This brings us to the second theme. Catholic women in all their diversity engaged with Catholic tradition, shaping it through their own experiences as they adapted it to the environment in which they found themselves. In the United States and English-speaking Canada, Catholic women had to adapt not only to environmental conditions far different from those in Europe, but also to their minority status in nations suspicious of popery. From the beginning they created new forms of Catholicism to fit within (or stand in opposition to) Protestant cultures preoccupied by individualism and independence. Even women in predominantly Catholic areas such as Mexico and Quebec found that the North American context not only forced perhaps unforeseen adaptations of Catholic community structures and practices, but also encouraged creative re-imagining of Catholic tradition that reflected individual experiences in the New World. Since the last third of the twentieth century, particular attention has been paid to traditionally female rituals, such as devotions to particular saints or to the Virgin Mary. Although the nature of those practices is of great interest, such studies also contribute to our knowledge of power dynamics within Catholic families and church communities, and between Catholicism and the surrounding culture.

Finally, Catholic women in North America shared the struggle to understand their role as valued yet unequal participants in the church's governance and mission. Perceptions of gender roles changed over time in North America, but the global Catholic Church's perception of gender rarely kept pace. As a result, generations of Catholic women have been confined by strictures that limited women's participation in decision-making and ministry. Studies of recent history are particularly helpful in understanding conflicts over gender construction and women's rights in the North American church. It becomes more and more clear that many Catholic women did in fact object to their position in Catholicism and applied feminist theory to their faith to challenge the injustice. Meanwhile, others continued to accept limitations on women as God's will and tried to use their gifts as they could. These women, too, are more frequently becoming subjects of study as researchers seek to understand the nature of Catholic conservatism and women's place within it. Each of these three threads can be traced through the history of Catholic women in North America.

Colonial Period

The earliest history of Catholic women in the Americas is one of brutality. Because only men undertook the European voyages of discovery, the first Catholic women in the American colonies were forced converts. Those who refused to convert and obey were subject to slavery, rape, and death, but even conversion did not save many from these fates, which the Spanish proclaimed the will of God. From these first contacts with indigenous women of the Caribbean, Catholicism spread to Mexico, Central America, South America, and what is now the American Southwest. It then travelled with French explorers into present-day Canada and New England, the northern Midwest, and down the Mississippi River to Louisiana. British Catholics brought their own brand of Catholicism to the Chesapeake region. Catholic women who were members of European cultures, indigenous women who encountered Catholic cultures, and African women brought into them by force all had unique experiences.

The Spanish colonies of North and South America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries developed into class-stratified societies dominated in nearly all aspects by the Catholic Church. The women included Catholic natives of Spain, Creoles born in the colonies, those of mixed Spanish and indigenous ancestry (mestizo), and those descended from powerful indigenous civilizations. A woman's

experience of Catholicism was thus determined by her class and ethnicity. Pious Spanish and Creole women often strove to emulate Old World standards for holiness, hoping to be compared to European saints. Mestizo and indigenous women might have shared such aspirations, but the dominant culture was reluctant to embrace them. It took nearly a century, for example, for women of color to be allowed to take vows as nuns.

Catholic women in New Spain responded—at first to the brutality of forced conversion, and then to racist discrimination of Catholic culture—with syncretic religious practices (mixing Catholicism with indigenous religions). The best example of this in the sixteenth century is veneration of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In 1531 the Virgin Mary appeared to Juan Diego, an indigenous peasant, in the form of an indigenous woman. She sent Diego to the Spanish bishops, and when they refused to listen sent Diego back with her image on his cloak and a miracle. The story empowered nonwhites by demonstrating that the Christian God shares in the struggles of the lowly and is reflected in their image. Furthermore, the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe is an amalgamation of Christian and Aztec religious symbolism. For example, the blue-green of her cloak was a symbol of Aztec royalty, and the black sash around her waist symbolized pregnancy. The enduring popularity of this figure in Mexican culture shows how Catholic women were able to adapt a faith once forced upon them.

Seventeenth Century: Mexico

Options for pious women expanded in Mexico and in the Spanish missions of the American Southwest in the seventeenth century. Married and single women participated in confraternities, or single-sex religious organizations, dedicated to the devotion of particular saints. In addition, the number of convents increased and women of color were slowly accepted as holy women. To be a nun was not the only option for women. Lay women could become *beatas*, women who dedicated their lives to prayer but remained within their own homes. Nuns and *beatas* had some power in this culture where they were valued for their prayer, advice, and example. Nevertheless, to be a pious and holy woman in colonial Mexico was to face restriction; the Catholic Church's battle against the Protestant Reformation translated into strict obedience to traditional codes of behavior for women who would dedicate their lives to Christ.

Religious women found it difficult to choose their own paths, as their choices were often subject to the approval of

male clerics. One such individual was Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648–1695), a phenomenally intelligent Creole nun who entered the convent because it afforded her freedom to write poetry and study philosophy. Her work was much praised, and she ultimately amassed one of the largest libraries in New Spain, but she was eventually forced to withdraw from public life after she publicly questioned her bishop's power to control her.

Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: New France

Catholic settlement in North America expanded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to include the colonies of New France. French missionaries worked to convert native tribes in Quebec and Louisiana, and nuns arrived from France to establish convents modeled on their European orders. Indigenous women who converted to Catholicism were welcomed into European settlements, and often rejected by their own people, yet New France too was unwilling to fully accept people of color. The first indigenous woman allowed to take a vow of chastity in New France was Kateri Tekakwitha (1656–1680), daughter of a Mohawk father and a Catholic Algonkian woman. Her decision to be baptized and her subsequent zeal for her faith put her at odds with her tribe, and she was forced to flee to an established community of Catholic indigenous people where she adopted a life of penance and prayer. Recognized at the time as a saint, hagiographers in the century after her death described her in terms normally reserved for European saints. Historians argue that this was an attempt to validate Kateri's sanctity by linking it to the old world. One may read this in a negative light, observing that European experience clearly set the standard for holiness in North America; conversely, one could argue that through Kateri other indigenous women were being encouraged to view themselves as participants in a larger tradition.

Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: English Colonies

Catholic women also lived in the English colonies, but their experiences diverged sharply from their counterparts in New France and New Spain. At first, British Catholics in North America were primarily elites who chose the opportunities of the colonies over the restrictions of Catholic life in England. The most famous of these women was Margaret Brent (1601–1671), a wealthy, single laywoman and extensive landowner well known for her success as a business woman and her ability to argue the law. Brent defied all expectations for

a nontitled Englishwoman. She served as attorney to Lord Calvert, the governor, and even restored order to the colony in the face of a local rebellion after his death. In 1648 she stood before the Maryland Assembly and demanded two votes, one as Calvert's attorney and one as a landowner in her own right. Her request was denied, but she is credited as the first woman to request the right of suffrage in America.

Margaret Brent's life was extraordinary, but it does speak in one way to the nature of women's experiences of Catholicism in early America. Catholic women in Maryland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries exercised considerable control over religious matters in their communities. Because churches and priests were scarce, Catholic practice was often centered in the home, the locus of women's authority. In lieu of weekly Mass, women would often lead prayers or devotions at home with their families and neighbors and were known to baptize their own children.

Maryland and Louisiana Catholics also brought another group of Americans into the Catholic faith, their African slaves. Laypeople, priests, and nuns frequently owned slaves, and many made their conversion a priority. An estimated three thousand Catholic slaves lived in Maryland by 1785. Catholic free women of color, mainly members of the French West Indian émigré community, also practiced their faith in Maryland. The call to serve the Catholic free black population in Baltimore led a small group of African American Catholics to found the Oblate Sisters of Providence in 1828, a daring proposition for a community that already held a precarious position in the larger society by virtue of its race and free status.

Nineteenth Century

An examination of nuns in the nineteenth-century United States reveals a great deal, not only about the specific experiences of Catholic women, but about the power dynamics of Catholicism in America. The majority of nuns who established convents in the United States in the first half of the century arrived as immigrants from European orders, though religious orders could be homegrown as well, such as Elizabeth Seton's Daughters of Charity, founded in 1809. In either case, communities were subject to the authority of a priest and the local bishop, a practice that often brought tensions over authority and obedience to a head. The leadership of the American church in the early nineteenth century attempted to adapt its minority religion to the new American context of independence, a difficult feat in an authoritarian church determined to uphold tradition at the expense of

individual liberty. Women religious learned to use this conflict to their advantage; when local bishops demanded that women religious reject the rule of their European convents, give up their chosen work to teach in local schools, or leave their cloisters, nuns often appealed to Rome and won.

In other ways, nuns did wish to explore the possibilities that American Catholicism might hold for them, which could put them at odds not only with their male supervisors in America but also with their superiors in Europe. Many traditional practices simply did not work in America; for instance, nuns in the United States did not pay dowries and therefore their communities lacked endowments. As a result, American convents needed to be self-supporting, and nuns learned how to take initiative and adapt the charisms, or spiritual gifts of their orders, to the realities of the local community and its people. These changes were not easy and often entailed pitched battles over the critical (if mundane) details of dress and diet, and the more central questions of vocation and authority.

Yet over the course of the nineteenth century, American nuns built and administered large educational, charitable, and medical institutions that ministered to Catholics and non-Catholics alike and constituted the infrastructure that sustained the national Catholic population. These institutions included a large network of women's colleges that served the growing numbers of Catholic middle-class women in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. Institution building is something they had in common with women religious in Canada in this period. In contrast, Protestant women in both countries rarely encountered such opportunities. Catholic laywomen did not enjoy such opportunities either. The Catholic hierarchy preferred to place power in the hands of those it could most easily supervise and control.

By the mid-nineteenth century the numbers of Catholic laywomen in the United States had reached unprecedented levels; massive numbers of immigrants, first from Germany and Ireland, and eventually from southern and eastern Europe, greatly increased the Catholic population and forever changed the way Catholicism was practiced in the United States. In the 1830s Catholic immigration sparked anti-Catholic hysteria, resulting in suspicion at best and riots at worst. Nuns' gracious service as nurses in the Civil War helped mitigate that suspicion to some degree, but it never disappeared. In response, the burgeoning Catholic community turned inward, building its own institutions, as we have already seen, and turning back to a more traditional form of Catholicism (and hierarchical authority) favored by Rome

and the Irish priests and nuns who dominated church leadership in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Late Nineteenth Century

The Catholic Church in Mexico and Canada experienced a similar inward turn in this period; all three were reacting against the emerging forces of modernity, which included calls for gender equality. The Catholic hierarchy demonstrated its fear of change by attempting to reinforce traditional gender roles, most particularly for women. Catholic women in North America were inundated with sermons and prescriptive literature designed to teach them how to be a “Catholic True Woman.” The Catholic true woman had much in common with her Protestant counterpart, yet she was also distinct. Catholic authors took Mary as the model for all women, claiming self-sacrifice, docility, silence, obedience, and suffering to be Marian virtues.

Historians have learned to treat such injunctions with care. How many women internalized this ideology of womanhood? Did women receive it as restrictive, as many would today, or did they find it empowering? Responses to these gender prescriptions differed from community to community and from individual to individual, of course. We can, however, draw a few conclusions. Many women did find agency and power within the confines of the Catholic true woman ideology. Catholic laywomen, though expected to be obedient and docile, were also charged with the education of their children in the ways of the faith. Some women reveled in such responsibility and believed that theirs was a major contribution to the preservation of the church.

In addition, Catholic women from diverse communities—eastern and southern European immigrant enclaves, Latinas in the United States, Mexicans, the Canadian frontier—practiced various forms of popular religion both in their homes and in their parishes in which they had a central role. Recent scholarship has explored how popular forms of piety such as devotions to saints, community religious festivals, or home altars and family prayers have empowered women even as church teaching has sought to undermine their power and importance. Popular religious devotions are a means of self-expression and control that have been stubbornly maintained by diverse groups of women who exercise little power elsewhere in the church.

Twentieth Century

The twentieth century saw continued attempts to affirm Catholic women’s traditional roles, but many factors

encouraged women to seek new identities in the church and new ways of contributing to the mission of Catholicism. Catholic enclaves were not and have never been immune to cultural changes. Women sought work outside the home in larger numbers and became more actively involved in political issues. Gradually Catholic women began to leave the security of the ethnic Catholic urban enclaves of the United States in favor of more isolated, suburban, and secular neighborhoods. Catholic women’s colleges also provided opportunities for students and sisters to explore new roles. These and other changes led to new opportunities and ways of being Catholic. A thorough melding of the Catholic and the modern can be found in Dorothy Day, a convert who helped develop a radical interpretation of Catholicism found in her newspaper *The Catholic Worker* and her movement to found “houses of hospitality” to meet the needs of the poor starting in the 1930s. Another, more conservative, option for laywomen seeking new opportunities was an organization called the Grail, which starting in the 1940s built communities of women focused around liturgy and prayer.

The sisterhoods of nuns also began to undergo transformations in the middle decades of the century; in fact, nuns were often on the cutting edge of movements for change in the Catholic church throughout North America. In the United States, nuns sought to change the very nature of their identities as women religious. Nuns suffered from a lack of professionalization in their chosen fields because their access to education was often limited by the need to enter service immediately, as well as by a misplaced desire to keep women religious isolated. The Sister Formation Conference (SFC) was formed in the 1950s to encourage educational and spiritual development for America’s sisters. The results were striking. By bringing young progressive sisters (called New Nuns) from different orders together to study and pray, SFC led to fundamental changes in religious orders across the country. Women religious developed new, more active apostolates (work) that were responsive to the present needs of the communities in which they lived. They changed their habits, revisited their congregational histories, and adapted their rules to the new realities in which they found themselves.

This spirit of reform predated the seismic changes brought by the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), a worldwide conference that reformed the church in radical ways. All Catholic women in North America were affected in profound ways, from how they participated in Mass and

received Communion, to the understanding that laypeople would now be empowered to shape and enact the church's mission as the "People of God." Vatican II, however, did little to address women's roles or needs in the church. In fact, the church had to be forced to admit women into the Vatican Council meetings, and then only as nonvoting observers. Seemingly, the hierarchy was attempting to usher the church into the modern world without adjusting its long-standing limitations on women. Evidence of this came when the church officially condemned artificial birth control in 1968, disregarding its own commission that had advocated the acceptance of contraception. One of the greatest shifts for women in the church came in the last quarter of the twentieth century, when massive numbers of Catholic women quietly chose to disregard the church's teachings on birth control.

Mid-Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

The Catholic feminist movement in North America emerged in response to those who wished to keep women as they had "always been"—helpful, obedient, and silent. Catholic feminists began their push for the liberation of women on two fronts. First, they poured into the field of theology, a path denied women in the United States until the 1960s. In doing so, Catholic feminist theologians such as Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Rosemary Radford Ruether demonstrated the importance of women's experiences in the interpretation of scripture and Catholic practice as they exposed the roots of women's oppression in religion itself. Second, Catholic feminist activists worked for the ordination of women into the priesthood and diaconate, the elimination of sexist language, and the transformation of the church into a more egalitarian, open, less clerical institution. Feminist activist organizations included the Women's Ordination Conference in the United States, the Canadian Conference for Women's Ordination, and *Mujeres para el Dialogo* in Mexico. The Vatican's official declaration against women's ordination in 1977 dashed the hopes of many and caused feminists in North America to seek alternatives to parish life in a church that seemed to reject them. Some women chose to leave the church entirely; others established communities of women dedicated to the enactment of church outside the bounds of traditional Catholicism.

In the twenty-first century, Catholic women continue to negotiate their multiple identities and make sense of their church and their roles within it as the context around Catholicism continues to shift. The sisterhoods are

decreasing, and the church must learn to cope with this loss: in 2002, there were 75,000 women religious in the United States, compared to 180,000 in 1965. Catholic immigrants continue to pour into and move within North America from Central and South America as well as from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Their presence challenges once again the notion of what it means to be a Catholic woman on the continent.

See also *Anti-Catholicism; Canada: Catholics; Cult of Domesticity; Devotionalism; Feminism; Feminist Studies; Gender; Mexico: Colonial Era; Missions: Native American; Music: Roman Catholic; Neo-Thomism; Religious Thought: Feminist; Religious Thought: Mujerista; Roman Catholicism: The Later Twentieth Century; Women Religious; Women* entries.

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World War I

The war that began in Europe in August of 1914 drew American attention immediately, but the United States did not enter the war until April of 1917, and it took another year to field a numerically significant fighting force. Two religious factors played significant roles in moving America and Americans from putative neutrality to active participation in war: the covenantal vision of President Woodrow

Wilson and American clergy's energetic sanctification of the war and demonization of the enemy.

Americans and their political leaders had long imagined the United States and the colonies from which they grew as favored by God. Woodrow Wilson, son of a Presbyterian minister, stood firmly in this tradition and drew upon its power as he argued that his great and peaceful nation must make war against Germany. Wilson used his second inaugural address in March of 1917 to insist that the "fires" of war would "purge" America of faction and "purify" the nation as never before. He reminded Americans also that they stood "in some sense apart" and served interests that "transcended the immediate issues of the war itself" (Leonard, 1918, p. 27). Predictably, Wilson's covenantal thinking also had an international dimension. In keeping its covenant violently, America would punish Germany, which was incapable of covenanting faithfully. Germany, Wilson noted, favored "secret covenants" and "separate and selfish compacts" (Leonard, 1918, pp. 96, 108), not the "open covenants of peace" (Leonard, 1918, p. 97) that defined righteous governing. Like public figures from John Winthrop in the seventeenth century to Henry Ward Beecher in the nineteenth century, President Wilson used the notion of covenant to unify a collective and to authorize violence against an enemy.

American clergy, Protestant and Catholic, were often far less subtle. Their wartime sermons included declarations of the righteousness of the Allied cause and assertions of the devilish nature of the German enemy. Not all had the fire of Billy Sunday, who declared during revival campaigns in 1917 that if you "turned hell upside-down you would find 'Made in Germany' stamped on the bottom of it" and "Jesus will be our Commander in Chief and he has Hindenburg beaten to a frazzle," but clerical sentiments were often similar (McLoughlin, 1955). After touring army training camps in 1917 and meeting several chaplains, the young and typically self-critical theologian Reinhold Niebuhr said that they were mixing the worship of the "God of love" and the "God of battles." He was right, but different groups mixed this worship differently.

Clergy of a progressive stripe justified waging war based mainly on their belief that German militarism constituted a serious obstacle, if not the final obstacle, on the road to a more perfect world and, perhaps, the millennium. If, as post-millennialist clergy believed, history had a generally upward trajectory and human effort was required to bring about its consummation, waging one last war to "end all war" could be both just and righteous.

More conservative fundamentalist and profundamentalist clergy, even those who embraced Darbyite premillennialism and thus treated human actions as basically irrelevant to the culmination of history, came to justify the war as a struggle to keep lighted the lamps of Christian civilization in the face of infidel Germany's attempts to extinguish them. True to their tendency to see political developments as "signs" of the approaching end times, these clergymen looked on the British conquest of Palestine as evidence that the war might indeed create conditions that would facilitate Christ's dramatic return.

Pentecostals, who in 1917 were deeply skeptical of nations and were working feverishly to bring Spirit baptism and salvation to the world, saw the war generally as God's judgment upon a fallen world. But even as they lamented the killing of those not yet "baptized in the Spirit," they had to reckon with the personal burdens of worry and loss as they saw their sons and brothers drafted into service. Pentecostals reacted to these burdens by turning from antinationalist and pacifist sentiments.

America's Catholic clergy approached the war with an enthusiasm that was initially tempered by sympathies for either a German homeland or Irish struggles against Britain but soon rivaled the nationalism of liberal and conservative Protestants. The wartime patriotism of Catholics and Jews was tinged with the hope that service to the nation would provide an unequivocal answer to persistent questions about loyalty and the ability to assimilate. Father Francis Duffy and Rabbi Lee Levinger were two of the many non-Protestant chaplains in France who offered strong, enduring arguments against Protestant nativism.

Both Catholic and Protestant leaders came together in national bodies organized to demonstrate their support for the war effort. The Protestant Federal Council of Churches of Christ organized the General War-Time Commission and the Catholic Church in the United States established the National Catholic War Council. These bodies coordinated the support efforts of denominations and parishes and even established committees to assess the spiritual fitness of the American soldiery. Religious auxiliary organizations such as the Catholic Knights of Columbus, the Protestant YMCA, and the Salvation Army supported the war effort by providing soldiers with a mix of religious instruction, worship, hospitality, and "wholesome" entertainment.

The military chaplaincy on the eve of the Great War was hardly the organization that it has become in the twenty-first century. There was no uniform mechanism for

appointing chaplains, no set curriculum to prepare them for service, and no agreement as to the rank chaplains should wear and how they should be paid. Each of these issues was resolved during the course of the war due largely to the efforts of Episcopal bishop Charles Brent, who served as chief of chaplains for the American Expeditionary Force. As Brent worked to create and staff a professional chaplain corps, volunteer “secretaries” of the YMCA and the Knights of Columbus also provided chaplain services.

The First World War and the Faith of the Doughboy

For decades prior to the First World War, American boys and young men had been regaled by cultural custodians trumpeting the value of struggle and strain and by clergy attempting to masculinize and even militarize Christ. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the rapid growth of “muscular Christianity” and the spread of its institutional manifestations, such as the YMCA. Through contact with such organizations a generation of American men learned to value the spiritual benefits of exertion and struggle and to imagine Jesus Christ as the most rugged individual ever to have walked the earth. Indeed, many American soldiers wrote of the war and its meaning using language that reflected the righteous, muscular Christianity of American clergy as well as the national and international covenantal views of Wilson.

Stars and Stripes, the soldier-authored public voice of the American Expeditionary Force, was full of images and allusions that encouraged American soldiers to think of themselves as crusaders, beyond moral reproach in their struggle with a demonic enemy. Editorial prose and illustrations repeatedly asserted the devilish, anti-Christian nature of German leadership and German soldiers and the presence of God and Christ on the side of the Allies. The diaries, letters, and memoirs of American soldiers, though often less articulate, were no more ambiguous in their description of the conflict. Soldiers described themselves as “crusaders” and wrote of Allied sufferings as being Christ-like.

Moreover, a great many soldiers harbored the belief that the experience of war would and did make them better and redeem them from lives that had become limited and limiting. The notion that war experiences would transform a person for the better and that service to nation would enhance a man’s social and civic value was promulgated by Wilson, Roosevelt, and the influential psychologist G. Stanley Hall, and it was affirmed, though with subsequent regret,

by W. E. B. Du Bois. Du Bois was an early and energetic supporter of African American participation in the war in spite of the fact that black soldiers were segregated and, in many instances, led by white officers. African Americans stood to gain immeasurably, he believed, from faithful service. War, he argued, could redeem a captive people. The words of African American veterans suggest that Du Bois reflected the beliefs of his intended audience.

Religion, Soldier, and Nation in Postwar America

A great deal has been written about the disillusioning experience of the First World War and the literary expression of that disillusionment among Lost Generation authors. While these effects are undeniable among the Hemingways and the Fitzgeralds, an equally powerful and more widespread effect among American soldiers was “reillusionment”: a strengthened commitment to the ideals that had drawn so many men to war in the first place. The most influential institutional manifestation of reillusionment was the American Legion, founded in March of 1919 by veterans of the Great War. Their purpose was to keep alive what they saw as the spirit of the Great War, the spirit of struggle and sacrifice that had shaped so many soldiers’ experiences. By the end of 1919, 800,000 former doughboys had joined the Legion.

No organization before or since has worked harder and been more successful at establishing the privileged place of the soldier in American social and civic life. Nor has any other organization more forcefully, more broadly asserted the sanctity of the nation and the nobility of complete devotion to it. As a lobbying organization the Legion was instrumental in the founding of the Veterans Administration (today the Department of Veterans Affairs) and in keeping before the eyes of an often ungrateful nation the service that soldiers had rendered. As a political and sometimes vigilante force, the Legion used the yardstick of “one hundred percent Americanism” to measure the loyalty of individuals and organizations. As the self-proclaimed watchdogs of a nation under threat, the Legion persecuted those it believed to be pacifists, socialists/communists, and “alien slackers,” who had come to America to enjoy the benefits of freedom but were not willing to sacrifice for the nation. The Legion also stood against what it viewed as the excessive moralism of Christian fundamentalists and the anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish politics of the Ku Klux Klan and its sympathizers. The themes that united the Legion’s intolerance of political difference and its tolerance of religious difference were the importance of unity as a chosen people and the righteousness of

covenanting to a sanctified nation. Those who troubled the unity or questioned the nation could expect to draw at least rhetorical fire as did the “demonic,” untrustworthy Germans against whom Wilson and American clergy had directed the nation’s might.

Opportunities for Further Study

The First World War as an American experience offers seemingly infinite opportunities for further study. A fuller accounting of its religious dimensions would bring us closer to an understanding of the religious dynamics of the interwar period and to the reshaping and rearticulation of American civil religion during that time. The war’s myriad unfulfilled promises clearly fueled the rise of pacifist movements, contributed to a deepened skepticism of state motives, and more broadly complicated progressive readings of history. Yet the war also gave rise to a nationalist religion, manifested in the American Legion, and helped birth the patriotic theologies of midcentury fundamentalism and Pentecostalism. These developments and the numerous interwar clashes among those shaped by them make the “Great War” an important interpretive key to the religious lives of Americans in the middle decades of the twentieth century.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; America, Religious Interpretations of; Civil Religion in the United States; Civil War; Fundamentalism; Literature: From the Civil War to World War II; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Social Gospel; Sport(s); World War II.*

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World War II

Disappointment over World War I, combined with fascism’s threats to peace, justice, and Western civilization, led most religious organizations to respond to World War II with “a cautious patriotism,” according to historian Gerald Sittser (1997). While they supported the Allied cause, loyalty to God and their faiths’ principles took precedence over unqualified patriotism. Thus they met national wartime needs while exercising their critical prophetic voices when the United States violated American or religious values.

Nothing shaped this tempered approach more than religious groups’ naïve jingoism during the Great War of 1914–1919 and their subsequent embarrassment upon learning of the war’s baser imperialistic motives and America’s failed effort to create a new world order. As expansive fascist dictatorships arose in Europe in the 1930s and Japanese militarists sought to build an Asian empire, most American religious communities urged the United States to remain neutral and seek peace. Faith groups saw in this developing conflict the same drivers that had caused the world’s previous conflagration. Their pacifism mirrored the nation’s.

Divisions

When Europe slid into full-scale war, France fell under Nazi control, and Britain’s survival became tenuous under German bombing in 1940, America’s religious communities entered the national debate over how to respond. They split generally into two factions: one urging America to preserve its neutrality at all costs and the other willing to support interventionist aid to the Allies short of war. These factions split congregations and denominations (including Methodists, Congregationalists, and Catholics), as well as created strange alliances across the political spectrum from socialist to conservative.

For example, devout neutralists included Quakers Herbert Hoover and Rufus Jones, socialist Norman Thomas, and conservative “America First” spokesperson Charles Lindbergh. They also included absolute pacifists like A. J. Muste

(Fellowship of Reconciliation) and Dorothy Day (Catholic Worker Movement); as well as practical pacifists like Reverend Harry Emerson Fosdick (Presbyterian); Francis Talbot, editor of the Catholic journal *America*; and Charles Clayton Morrison, editor of the Protestant *Christian Century*. Neutralism, they asserted, would best position the United States to be a peace broker as well as aid war victims on both sides. They also feared the negative repercussions of war, such as lost civil liberties, the temptation to expand government's powers toward totalitarianism, bolstered imperialism even among the Allies, and cooperation with communist Russia. Finally, they doubted that war could stop evil in the world; to them, only goodness and Christ-like nonviolence could do that. They accused interventionists like Union Theological Seminary professors Reinhold Niebuhr and John Bennett of sacrificing their earlier Christian pacifist values on the altar of relativism by allowing events to change their position.

Interventionists had indeed moved with events. Niebuhr and Bennett saw something worse than war threatening Western civilization: tyranny. With others they launched a new journal, *Christianity and Crisis*, to urge Christians to exchange an impractical adherence to pacifist ideals for a realism that discerned between greater and lesser evils in a sinful and interdependent world. Whereas neutralists favored the power of love to conquer violence, interventionists argued that power must confront power to achieve not simply peace but a just peace. Like the neutralists, however, interventionists understood that America was imperfect; it must guard against pride and ambition as it participated in war to defeat a greater evil. The interventionists and neutralists agreed that World War II was no holy war. Even most conservative groups, such as the Southern Baptist Convention and the Reformed churches, which saw defense of nation as a Christian duty, dubbed this war a necessary evil. Jews were eager to fight while resisting glorification of the war as well, but early in the war the army gave many Jews the cold shoulder.

Service

Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941 turned most practical pacifists and neutralists into cautious supporters of the war. With few exceptions only the traditional peace churches, such as Quakers, Brethren, and Mennonites, as well as absolute pacifists such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and Catholic Worker Movement (CWM), remained opposed. But these groups divided in

their expression. While claiming conscientious objector status for their members, most peace churches supported the nation's efforts in nonmilitaristic ways by funding and administering Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps. As an alternative to military service, young men worked on CPS projects of national interest such as building and repairing infrastructure. These churches also urged the purchase of civilian rather than war bonds. Through these efforts, they exhibited both their patriotism and religious values. Members of the FOR and CWM, however, remained opposed to the war and all alternative service, preferring nonviolent resistance instead.

With few exceptions (such as Christian Reformed and certain fundamentalist churches), nonpacifist groups supported the rights of conscientious objectors, including those who objected to particular wars. Obedience to one's religious conscience took precedence over loyalty to any earthly power. Therefore, many donated to the CPS program, and both Protestants and Catholics fought the Burke-Wadsworth Conscription bill (1940), which would have restricted conscientious objector status to members of peace churches only.

Nearly all religious groups embraced the war as an opportunity to extend their faith's influence in society, whether through evangelism or service projects. Such efforts reinforced competition among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, as well as between theological liberals and conservatives. Ironically, this drive to expand their influence, combined with their desire to meet practical wartime needs, enhanced both ecumenical and interfaith bonds. Protestants and Catholics of all stripes increased their evangelistic efforts to call Americans back to God. But Protestants created ecumenical organizations and interfaith connections that matched their theological orientations. For example, liberal mainline Protestants supported the Federal Council of Churches and plans to unite various ecumenical groups into both a National and World Council of Churches after the war. Neoevangelicals created the National Association of Evangelicals (1942) and Youth for Christ to unite their organizations in cooperative efforts. Fundamentalists meanwhile created the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC, 1941), as well as worked through the World Christian Fundamentals Association to extend their message while responding to war needs.

Service activities drew the effort, money, and sacrifice of nearly every religious group, for they emphasized good citizenship during national crisis, even while dubbing the war

a grim necessity. Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and members of other faiths across the theological spectrum got behind rationing drives, war bonds, increased taxes, collective relief funds for refugees, and military service. They organized an array of programs to meet both the spiritual and social needs of servicemen and -women, as well as Americans working in the defense industries. Many religious-based colleges allowed the military to use their campuses for training purposes. Groups got together to pray, assemble care packages, and send religious literature to soldiers overseas. They also created programs to help Americans deal with the dislocations of war. There were few wartime service tasks in which religious groups were not engaged.

The greatest responsibility of religious denominations was providing the military with a quota of chaplains commensurate to their representation within the population. Meeting rising military demand meant many faith groups suffered clergy shortages at home. The elimination of draft deferments for pre-seminary students did not help. Nevertheless, denominations made the necessary sacrifices, in part because they refused to fall behind their competitors. The military's chaplains unit received General George Marshall's praise as "the best run group of the army." Overwhelmingly popular, chaplains provided numerous services regardless of soldiers' religious affiliation, including sacraments, worship opportunities, counseling, funerals, religious education, whiskey rations, dances, and lessons on condom use.

Prophetic Criticism

On the whole religious organizations did not sacrifice their critical voices amidst the patriotic drive for victory and unity. For example, although reluctant to protest forcefully the government's internment of Japanese Americans from the West Coast, most religious groups called it an unjust deprivation of civil liberties. They blended mild criticism with a call to members to aid internees in every way possible. The American Friends Service Committee took the lead in helping internees find guardians for their property, pack, and settle in the camps. Working with the War Relocation Board, they also helped Japanese American students escape the camps to colleges further east. And they assisted internees in finding housing and jobs after the war.

Most mainline Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic organizations also criticized the beatings and imprisonment of Jehovah's Witnesses who refused to salute the flag or join the military because of their religious beliefs. The sacred right of religious conscience united them. Only conservative faith

groups, such as neo-evangelicals and fundamentalists, showed little interest in defending civil liberties.

To varying degrees, religious organizations also overwhelmingly criticized the hypocrisy of America's racial discrimination toward African Americans in the face of its wartime rhetoric that promoted freedom and condemned the Nazis' racist ideology. The American Jewish Congress, Jewish Labor Committee, and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith worked particularly hard to end discrimination in the workplace, not only for blacks but for anyone on the basis of "race, creed, color, or national origin."

Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish organizations had solid information from Europe about Hitler's attempts to eliminate Jewish populations there. While their members varied in their attention to, belief in, and willingness to act upon that information, the religious press carried stories about the Holocaust as it happened. Protestant groups admired the courage of those few German Protestants and Catholics who condemned Hitler and refused to allow the state to control their churches. Ecumenical and interfaith groups signed statements urging aid to Jewish refugees and a relaxation of America's strict immigration rules, as well as a halt to anti-Semitism. But these efforts largely failed to move the public until after the concentration camps were liberated. Jewish chaplains played a lead role communicating between Holocaust victims and the U.S. military. After the war both Christians and Jews united to support the creation of a Jewish state. Over half a million Jews had served in the war, feeling America's victory as their own. Their experience fighting as a religious minority in a sea of Christians, and against the Nazis, enhanced their sense of Jewish identity.

While most Americans supported firebombing civilians and using atomic weapons to bring a brutal war to a quicker close, many church leaders did not. The Federal Council of Churches, for example, called the nuclear bombing of Japanese cities an "atrocious act of a new magnitude," an unnecessary act against an already beaten foe. Conversely the fundamentalist ACCC saw the new weapon as a gift from God justly used.

Fundamentalist and liberal Christians parted strongly over the postwar creation of the United Nations, too. Liberal mainline Protestants, under the Federal Council's leadership, helped brainstorm, refine, and sell the concept of the United Nation to their constituents. They saw it, and its later Declaration of Human Rights, as a foundation for a new world order most consonant with Christian values. Conversely, fundamentalists' biblical interpretation of the end times left

them fearful that the United Nations might lead to a fore-told world government that would trigger Armageddon.

All in all, most religious groups viewed World War II as a necessary war, one that required their sacrificial service and loyalty, but not at the expense of their highest values or prophetic voices. They also knew this crisis was a turning point in human history that required their influence. This enhanced both religious competition and ecumenical and interfaith organization, all of which expanded after the war.

See also *Adventism and Millennialism; African American Religion: From the Civil War to Civil Rights; America, Religious Interpretations of; American Revolution; Civil Religion in the United States; Civil War; Establishment, Religious; Fundamentalism; Holocaust; Neo-Orthodoxy; Pacifism and Conscientious Objection; Protestant Liberalism; World War I.*

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Worship: Anglican

The Anglican Communion, including those churches in Canada and the United States, has its origins in the Church of England founded during the English Reformation. All the national churches within the Communion ultimately derive their worship patterns from various revisions of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) produced by the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, in 1549 and 1552, during the English Reformation. The BCP was subsequently revised in 1558 under Elizabeth I and again in 1662 after the Restoration. The 1662 book became the basis for most Anglican worship until the twentieth century, with the notable exception of the Episcopal Church in the United States.

The Church of England in the Colonies

Anglican worship is assumed to have commenced in North America with British colonization and been formalized in

the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. In 1610 the colony imposed martial law, requiring colonists to attend services. Worship would have followed the Elizabethan prayer book (1558) and, as was common at the time, would have consisted primarily of the Great Litany, the pro-anaphora or “fore-mass” from the Holy Communion Service, and Morning and Evening Prayer.

During the colonial period Anglican priests would have been required to travel to England for ordination by a bishop, and part of the ordination rite required an oath of allegiance to the British monarch. Needless to say, after the Revolutionary War such an oath would have been unacceptable, not to mention treasonous, for a citizen of the United States. Consequently the emergent Episcopal Church looked elsewhere for Episcopal ordination.

Samuel Seabury traveled to Scotland in 1784 where he found the Scottish bishops willing to consecrate him to the episcopate. The Scottish Episcopal Church had refused the loyalty oath to William and Mary in 1688 when they had replaced the Stuart line on the English throne at the close of the Glorious Revolution. Consequently its clergy, known as Non-jurors, had been free of the constraints of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and developed their own liturgy based on the 1549 Book of Common Prayer and newly discovered ancient texts. In a series of “Wee Bookies” they had restored the shape of the Eucharistic Prayer to its original form, thus overcoming the various rearrangements and revisions of the prayers that had been the result of argument and compromise between traditionalists and reformers since the first prayer book.

The Scottish Church’s condition for Seabury’s ordination was that the new American Episcopal Church adopt the current Scottish Book of Common Prayer, the distillation of the scholarship and experimentation of the Non-jurors. The Americans assented, and it was this book that Seabury brought to the General Convention of 1789 for ratification. Such ratification would place Anglican worship in the United States, especially in the shape of the Eucharistic Prayer, in a direct line from Archbishop Cranmer’s original reworking of the Gregorian Canon of the Sarum Rite. In Canada, which would remain part of the Church of England, worship would continue to use the forms of the 1662 BCP until the twentieth century.

Despite a movement to excise trinitarian language from Episcopal worship, the trinitarians prevailed, and the 1789 Book of Common Prayer took its inspiration and, most important, the structure of its Service of Holy

Communion from the Scottish book. This structure was much closer to the rites of the medieval Western Church than was the structure of the 1662 Prayer Book and would be more easily adapted to the dramatic changes in ritual and architecture that were the next great watershed in Anglican worship.

Nineteenth-Century Medieval Revival

That watershed began in 1840 with a series of pamphlets called “Tracts for the Times,” which gathered a wide group of followers who called themselves Tractarians. Their aim was the reform of the Church of England modeled on the spirituality and worship of the pre-Reformation English Church. These reformers, because of their espousal of medieval ritual and ecclesiology, began to be called Anglo-Catholics. At the same time, reformers from the more Protestant side of the *via media* (the Anglican “middle way”), the evangelicals, began to call for a reform of the church and of the moral and spiritual life of the people. Their spirit was particularly in evidence in the American Great Awakening.

From the point of view of worship, it was the Anglo-Catholic movement that would have the greatest influence. The Oxford movement of the Tractarians and the subsequent scholarship of the Cambridge Camden Society, centered on recovery of the medieval heritage of liturgy and church architecture, would influence all subsequent American prayer books. To understand their impact, we must first examine the nature of typical Anglican worship through the middle of the nineteenth century, before the Oxford movement and the Gothic Revival movement in church architecture.

Reformation controversies, especially those surrounding the sacrificial nature of the Mass and the relationship between the ordained priesthood and the laity, had led to a distrust of Eucharistic worship in which the people did not receive Communion. As Holy Communion in the Book of Common Prayer was to be celebrated only when it included Communion, it tended in most places to be celebrated from four times a year to once a month. At the same time, Cranmer had been anxious to restore the Daily Office, which he condensed into two offices of Daily Morning and Evening prayer, to the common worship life of Anglicans. The basic pattern of Anglican worship, then, from the time of the Reformation until the middle of the nineteenth century, consisted of Morning Prayer, the Great Litany (the first piece of the prayer book to have been

translated from the Latin of the Sarum Use), and the pro-anaphora or fore-mass; that is, the Holy Communion service through the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ’s Church. On Communion Sundays, the worship would simply have continued with the Eucharistic prayer (currently referred to by the more ancient title of the Great Thanksgiving) and the Communion of the people.

One of the goals of the Anglo-Catholic movement was the restoration of weekly Communion as the central act of Christian worship on the Lord’s Day. The first result of this initiative was the now almost ubiquitous 8:00 a.m. Eucharist or Holy Communion that begins each Sunday in Episcopal and Anglican churches across North America. Many of the other customs now most identified with Anglican/Episcopal worship date as well from the second half of the nineteenth century: the use of the cassock and surplice for clergy at the Daily Office and, in many places, at the Holy Communion; the use of stoles and chasubles in seasonal colors (green for ordinary time; white or gold for Easter, Christmas, and certain feasts of saints; red for Pentecost and, in a deeper color, for feasts of martyrs; purple for Lent and Advent); the use of candles and a cross on the altar.

The rediscovery, during the Romantic movement, of medieval English heritage led to a new interest in Gothic architecture. This was reflected both in secular (the Pre-Raphaelite painters, for example) and sacred art and architecture. Churches began to be built using the floor plans and architectural details of the medieval cathedrals and parish churches. This Gothic Revival set the direction for church architecture until the second half of the twentieth century. The typical Gothic Revival church divides the worship space into three principal areas: the nave where the people sit in pews; the chancel where the choir sits facing across the area; and the sanctuary, which, divided from the chancel by the altar rail, contains the altar. Many Gothic Revival churches imitated their medieval counterparts by including a stone or wooden screen, the “rood screen,” to separate the nave from the chancel.

The late nineteenth century saw also the rediscovery of chant and the adaptation of plainsong (a simplified form of Gregorian chant) settings for the psalms in worship. With these changes, even Anglican/Episcopal churches that would not have considered themselves Anglo-Catholic took on many of the appurtenances that, to the generation before, would have been identified as High Church. The varying worship styles in North America, as throughout the Anglican Communion, from this time coalesce into patterns

referred to as High Church, Low Church, and Broad Church or latitudinarian. These terms refer exclusively to the ritual style of worship, as the text used in almost every instance continued to be the Book of Common Prayer in its various revisions.

The Canadian book, as the Prayer Book of a part of the British Commonwealth, continued to be the 1662 Book of Common Prayer until it was revised in 1918 and subsequently in 1962. A French translation, *Le Recueil des Prières de la Communauté Chrétienne*, was published in 1967. The American book went through revisions in 1892 and 1928. Then major revisions took place in both Canada and the United States beginning in the 1970s.

Twentieth-Century Liturgical Renewal

The twentieth-century liturgical movement, sparked by the discovery of ancient liturgical sources and by the need for liturgical reform, had lasting effects on the worship life of all liturgically centered churches, including those in the United States and Canada. As early as the 1960s trial rites began to appear based on an increasing body of scholarship about the history of liturgy and on the need to involve the laity more actively in worship. Central to these trial rites were the recovery of a baptismal ecclesiology, the restoration of ancient and engaging practices such as the liturgies of Holy Week and the Great Vigil of Easter, and the recovery of the ancient Eucharistic prayer structure that many believed was exemplified by the prayer in the *Apostolic Tradition*, a third-century church order attributed at the time to Hippolytus. Needless to say, these rites had to be adapted to current usage and could only be translated into contemporary English. The change from the Tudor English of the Canadian versions of the 1662 Prayer Book and of the American Episcopal 1928 Book of Common Prayer was one of the most controversial and difficult facets of prayer book renewal.

The series of trial rites eventuated in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer of the American Episcopal Church and in the 1985 Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada. Unlike all their predecessors, both books included a choice of Eucharistic Prayers (Great Thanksgivings). These included at least one based on the traditional Anglican prayer of Thomas Cranmer, one modeled after the Prayer of Saint Basil (one of the prayers in the Orthodox Churches), and several based upon the structure of the prayer from the *Apostolic Tradition*. While the American BCP was a new prayer book replacing its American

predecessors of 1789, 1892, and 1928, the Canadian book was intended to coexist with the 1962 Canadian Book of Common Prayer, itself a version of the 1662 book used by the Church of England.

The process of liturgical renewal did not, however, end with the adoption of the 1979 Prayer Book in the United States. In 1982 a new hymnal replaced the 1940 hymnal, and continuing revision of the worship texts proceeded with the publication of inclusive-language prayers, including three new Eucharistic prayers; new rites for visiting the sick in two volumes entitled *Enriching Our Worship 1* (1997) and *Enriching Our Worship 2* (2000); as well as three additional authorized hymnals, *Lift Every Voice and Sing* (a collection of African American hymnody), *Wonder, Love and Praise*, and *Voices Found* (hymns by or about women). Other rites and propers for feast days are included in two books continually in the process of revision, *The Book of Occasional Services* and *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*.

The process of gradual return to Eucharistically centered worship has continued for most of the United States and Canada. In both churches, the vast majority of parishes celebrate the Eucharist as the “principal act of Christian worship on Sunday,” as called for in the American book. Movement away from the fixed rites of the Book of Common Prayer and experimentation with other forms has gained impetus from two directions. One comes from the adoption by some Anglican and Episcopal bodies of worship practices developed during the American Great Awakening, the Charismatic Movement of the 1970s, and the biblical literalism of the fundamentalist churches. The other derives from the desire for more inclusive and expansive language about human persons and God and the recognition of the multicultural diversity of the global Anglican Communion.

See also *Anglicans in Colonial and Revolutionary America; Architecture: Early America; Canada: Anglicans; Episcopalians* entries; *Latino American Religion: Mainline Protestants; Literature: Colonial; Mainline Protestants; Music: Christian; Romanticism; Women: Ordination of; Worship* entries.

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Worship: Contemporary Currents

Since the 1960s several movements have significantly reshaped Christian and Jewish worship practices. Although these movements have distinctive approaches, they all advocate the use of contemporary music, language, and performance style. These contemporary forms are valued for relating religious truth to present-day situations, facilitating participation, and attracting new members. Because worship services are also one of the chief ways religious communities maintain identity over time, however, changes have generated considerable conflict. At the turn into the twenty-first century, debates concerning “contemporary” and “traditional” worship among Protestants were widely described as “worship wars.” Similar “liturgy wars” occurred among Roman Catholics. These conflicts are rooted in developments that began in the 1960s.

Three distinct approaches to worship advocating contemporary forms emerged: the liturgical renewal movement, seeker services, and praise and worship. By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, more than a generation had been shaped by various forms of contemporary worship, and significant countermovements had emerged. Many of these were marked by an emphasis on the recovery of tradition, albeit in an intentionally postmodern context.

Traditional and Contemporary

Contemporary worship emerged as a particularly potent category in the last third of the twentieth century because the preceding decades had strongly emphasized tradition. Traditional religious practice was valued for providing a sense of order amid suburban migration, the baby boom, and the threat of the Cold War. Theological movements such as neo-orthodoxy and neo-Thomism emphasized the recovery of the riches of religious tradition that had been previously deemphasized. Liturgical reform among

mainline Protestants and Catholics was shaped by a strong orientation toward recovering the historic forms of worship. Few new congregational songs entered the Protestant repertoire in the thirty years preceding 1965, but many compositions from earlier centuries gained popularity. Church buildings were often constructed in Georgian or other historic revival styles. When they were modern, Protestant churches typically embraced a more traditional interior arrangement than the auditoriums common at the beginning of the century. The 1940s and 1950s defined tradition in American memory.

The 1960s, by contrast, brought a substantial emphasis to the expression of religion through the forms of contemporary culture. Discussion of the cultural captivity, particularly the suburban captivity, of religion was widespread. Movements for civil rights, peace, and women’s liberation supported the belief that fundamental religious significance was to be found in contemporary events. The need for religious institutions to be relevant and shaped by the surrounding culture was promoted across the theological spectrum. Liberals celebrated the call of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the slain German theologian, for what he had termed “religionless Christianity” and the “servant church.” Evangelicals followed Donald McGavran and C. Peter Wagner of Fuller Theological Seminary in stressing the need to meet the cultural preferences of potential church members to facilitate church growth. Contemporary styles of architecture, music, and language were increasingly used in worship.

Liturgical Renewal

Much of this focus on the contemporary was linked to the liturgical renewal movement, which had been at work among some Catholics and Protestants throughout the twentieth century. It emphasized the active participation of the people in a service of worship centered on the reading and preaching of the scriptures and the celebration of the Eucharist. For Catholics this meant that the Mass was not merely a ceremonial sacrifice offered by the priest. For Protestants it meant that worship was not primarily the sermon and prayers offered by the minister. To both, liturgical reformers explained that the liturgy was a communal celebration through word, prayer, and sacrament of Christ’s work of redemption. Through the liturgy, Christians participated in Christ’s saving acts and were shaped to be his body for the world. Where the movement was implemented, convergence between Catholic and Protestant worship was considerable.

The liturgical movement was strongly shaped by historical research on worship in the early church, particularly the second to the fifth centuries CE. It sought to reform the spaces, orders, words, and actions of worship that had developed since the Middle Ages according to the simpler forms of early Christianity. It taught that liturgy should be conceived of not as text, but instead as a set of ordered actions. It also sought to affirm the presence of God in the world and that the church was not an institution but instead a servant community. It emphasized the need to express the fundamental actions of Christian worship in forms that facilitated full participation. To accomplish these goals, it embraced a modern aesthetic and the informality of contemporary culture.

In 1963 the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) adopted most of the ideas of the liturgical movement and authorized a thorough reform of worship. Between 1964 and 1967 the Mass shifted from Latin to the vernacular. The new liturgies were phrased in unadorned modern sentences. God was addressed as “you,” not “thou.” Congregations were expected to sing, and though some hymns were borrowed from Protestants or older Catholic usage, Catholics composed a great deal of new music. Much of this was in a folk style and accompanied on guitar. The ideal space for worship was not a solemn temple, but a living room in which people gathered around a table. Church interiors were reconfigured and dress and deportment reflected this new understanding of the space.

Similar liturgical changes took place among mainline Protestants. The reforms were shaped by scholarship on the early church and understood by their proponents as continuing the work of reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin in purging worship of medieval corruptions. But because the revised services were expressed in modern language, abandoning antiquated pronouns and verb forms long used in Bible translations and worship, many worshippers understood the services chiefly as contemporary.

Out of the liturgical reform, however, a basic pattern developed that Catholics and mainline Protestants (at least in their official texts) now share. The normal Sunday service is a celebration of the Lord’s Supper. The congregation gathers, hears the Word proclaimed through scripture reading and sermon, responds in profession of faith, in prayer, and through offerings, and then gathers around the Lord’s table for Eucharist. The three-year cycle of readings, or lectionary, introduced by Catholics in 1969 was widely used by Protestants, especially in modified forms that were standardized in

1992 in the Revised Common Lectionary. Not only in the readings but in the Eucharistic rite itself similarity across denominations is considerable. Full Eucharistic prayers were adopted by Lutherans and others who had used only the Bible’s account of the Last Supper. Shaped by ancient texts and modern sensibilities, the new rites sought to transform the Lord’s Supper from a penitential rite of remembrance to a joyful celebration of thanksgiving. With its emphasis on ritual action and symbolism, the liturgical movement offered new sacramental theologies that transcended old divisions and enabled many Protestants to affirm a richer understanding of sacraments as instruments of God’s presence.

Liturgical renewal was somewhat top-down in its approach. New official rites were authorized by denominational leaders but not uniformly embraced by congregations. Weekly Communion, for example, did not take place in most churches. But even where only partially embraced, the revised rites increased the frequency of Communion and reshaped Protestants’ experience of sacraments and liturgy.

After the initial round of reforms, feminist critiques came to the fore. In the 1970s and 1980s, the first generation of contemporary liturgies was exposed as being, if anything, more masculine in language than their traditional counterparts. This awareness gave rise to a new generation of liturgies. Texts that excised references to God as Lord or called God, Sophia or Wisdom sparked controversy, but inclusive language for people was widely accepted by mainline and even some evangelical Protestants as in the *New Revised Standard Version* of the Bible (1989). Catholic officials resisted such changes to official texts as a more conservative liturgical policy took hold in that church. In other communities, by the twenty-first century new liturgical prayers, such as some in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (2006), used a harmonious variety of images for God that went far beyond early efforts.

Cultural diversity in worship was also increasingly affirmed. Many hymnals incorporated songs from around the world. An emphasis on cultural relevance also fostered the affirmation of distinctive African American, Asian American, and Latino/a practices. In each case, however, the use in worship of controversial forms of popular culture, such as hip-hop, generated controversy. Particularly important in many communities was the greater place for a variety of types of dance.

Jewish communities also engaged in liturgical reform. The Reform movement published *Shaarei Tefillah: Gates of Prayer* in 1975. It contained the liturgy for weekdays, Sabbath, and festivals; additional volumes in the *Gates* series

followed. The Conservative movement published a new prayer book, *Siddur Sim Shalom* in 1985. Like contemporary Christian liturgies, it used modern language in its English translations and also responded to the expanded role of women in the Conservative community. More openness to tradition and the symbolism of liturgy was also reflected, such as when the Reform text restored the statement “for in six days the Eternal God made heaven and earth,” which liturgies had earlier omitted out of concern for scientific accuracy. Within the Reform tradition, a later revision of the liturgy, *Mishkan T’filah: A Reform Siddur* (2007), was designed to open as a Hebrew book (that is, with the spine facing to the right rather than to the left, because the Hebrew language is written right to left), not as an English one. At the same time, it reflected the Reform tradition’s emphasis on diversity in the alternative texts it offered.

Seeker Services

The other two movements emphasizing contemporary worship were rooted in the evangelical tradition and embraced rock music in their services. This style became the defining characteristic of contemporary evangelical services. Indeed, for many worship came to be equated with singing. Dress at such services was typically casual. The worship space focused on a stage on which a band sat or stood, and vocalists known as worship leaders either performed or led songs. The order of worship began with music and concluded with a message by the pastor, who spoke from the stage rather than from a pulpit.

Beyond these common elements were two distinct approaches to worship. Seeker services were rooted in an evangelical Protestant approach that emerged from nineteenth-century revivalism and saw the primary purpose of worship as drawing the unchurched into the Christian life. Services were crafted pragmatically to accomplish this goal, without regard for traditional norms. Seeker services shared this approach and this goal, but dispensed with the traditional call to the altar or invitation to discipleship in order to present a more welcoming environment.

Seeker services were closely associated with megachurches that developed the service form and organized conferences to share it with other churches. Foremost among these megachurches was Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois. Willow’s founders developed the basic form of the seeker service as youth ministers at another church in 1973. They were also shaped by the Church Growth philosophy of Peter Wagner, which

emphasized identifying a target demographic group and researching what sort of service would attract the group.

Seeker services were characterized by a desacralized environment. Willow first met in a movie theater, for example. Theater-style seats are therefore found in most churches built for seeker services, and religious symbols such as the cross are not. All of this was designed to make the unchurched feel comfortable. The worship service was carefully structured to communicate a message relevant to the seeker’s life. Four basic elements were typically included: music, drama, visual media, and message. Music included both Christian songs and secular contemporary music that expressed a theme related to the message. Often this was performed by the worship leaders. Congregational participation was not expected. A skit often dramatized the problem the message would address. Elaborate multimedia presentations introduced the message. Finally, the message offered a Christian perspective on everyday issues without using traditional theological language. It was designed to be positive, uplifting, and nonjudgmental, but ultimately to bring individuals to Christ.

Everything was crafted to attract and capture the attention of the seeker by offering relevant messages in a familiar setting. Some congregational singing took place but was not emphasized. When a collection was taken, visitors to the church were asked not to contribute because they were guests. Members were expected to attend the midweek services in which more emphasis would be on congregational singing and the message would be oriented around the exposition of a biblical passage or theological theme.

Other prominent megachurches popularized variations on this approach. Rick Warren of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, spoke of “seeker-sensitive services.” He believed that worship could be a witness to seekers and sought to craft services that would serve believers but be attractive to the target seeker population. Walt Kallestad, pastor of the Community Church of Joy, a Lutheran congregation in Glendale, Arizona, developed a variety of services that differed in style of music and extent of traditional liturgy. Many other congregations also began holding services in different styles. As technology advanced, some churches began holding simultaneous services with different styles of music that all received the same message by video from the pastor. Such catering to different musical preferences reflected the increasingly personalized character of musical experience made possible as radios became portable and then gave way to MP3 players.

In the 1990s, as seeker services attracted media attention, critics questioned whether they were inappropriately “dumbing down” worship services. The term *worship wars* emerged in Lutheran circles, where many rooted in Lutheranism’s confessional and liturgical heritage were alarmed by Kallestad’s advocacy of what he called “entertainment evangelism.” Others argued that Willow Creek’s distinction between the weekend seeker services and midweek worship services for believers did not work in practice. Still others objected to services’ embrace of the ethos of consumer culture. Seeker and even seeker-sensitive services were faulted for being focused not on God but instead on the worshipers.

In time the seeker-sensitive model prevailed over the seeker model. At Willow Creek more active worship engagement characterized the weekend services, though they still were designed as seeker services. In 2007 Willow Creek announced that it was reevaluating its work in response to an internal survey among its members. The survey had revealed, it said, a desire for more spiritual depth. It would therefore devote more attention to teaching in mid-week programs and to worship on the weekend.

The seeker service was also judged to be limited to the particular background of its initial target group. Baby boomers attracted to Willow Creek usually had had substantial background in a church as children and felt that the church did not relate to their real-life experiences. Younger generations were less likely to have a church background and more likely to value elements of traditional Christianity that were new to them. They also preferred more recent and participatory musical styles.

Praise and Worship

Praise and worship services featured a musical style and architectural arrangement similar to that in seeker services, but their approach to worship was rooted in the Pentecostal tradition’s emphasis on the experience of the Holy Spirit. The movement’s roots are traced to the Latter Rain movement of the late 1940s and early 1950s, which brought to Pentecostalism a new focus on the personal experience of God in worship and encouraged the singing of short scripture songs or praise choruses. These practices spread beyond Pentecostal churches as the Charismatic Movement developed in the 1960s. One aspect of this was the so-called Jesus movement. Emerging out of the counterculture, its gatherings took the form of rock concerts, with a band performing and the audience joining enthusiastically in songs of praise. Some of these musicians joined Calvary Chapel, an independent Charismatic

church in Costa Mesa, California. In response to the demand for recordings of these new artists, the church started Maranatha! Music, which released its groundbreaking *The Praise Album* in 1974. Among other songs, the album featured “Seek Ye First” and “Father I Adore You,” which were soon used in many denominations. Praise and worship was most prevalent in Charismatic churches and Charismatic fellowships within mainline denominations.

A typical praise-and-worship service began with a period of singing lasting twenty-five to forty-five minutes and followed by prayer, announcements, a sermon, and sometimes what was called a ministry time of prayer and charismatic activity. The free-flowing period of singing is usually structured to lead from joyful songs to quieter, prayerful pieces. Two models for discussing this structure are common. Pentecostals use the image of the biblical temple and speak of worshipers moving from outside, through the courts, into the temple proper, and finally into the presence of God in the Holy of Holies. Those influenced by John Wimber, leader of the Vineyard movement, speak of five phases: invitation, engagement, exaltation, adoration, and intimacy. Fundamental to either approach is the idea that *praise*, a focus on God’s greatness, leads to *worship*, a more personal communion with God’s presence.

Praise and worship services are highly participatory: worshipers sing, clap, raise their hands in adoration, and sometimes dance. Song lyrics are usually projected on a screen. On the stage, the singers and instrumentalists who make up the “worship team” see themselves not as performers but as worshipers leading others toward God. Worship leaders often rival the pastor in importance. They are responsible for selecting songs, planning the “worship set,” and adjusting it in response to the worshipers’ reactions.

A considerable industry has developed to supply Contemporary Worship Music to congregations. This includes song writers and performing artists such as Matt Redman, publishers such as Maranatha! Music, magazines such as *Worship Leader*, and copyright clearinghouses such as Christian Copyright Licensing, Incorporated. Such clearinghouses charge congregations an annual fee for permission to reproduce songs (typically on video screens), survey the congregations on the music they use to determine royalty distributions, and publish lists of the most widely used songs.

Worship songs, like seeker services, have frequently been criticized for a lack of substance and for not sustaining a language of faith uniting Christians across generations. Among the problems cited with some songs is that they

focus on the worshipers rather than on God—on their desires, their praise of God, or their experience of God. Others find the songs not so much wrong as thin, lacking in theological substance and biblical allusion. The songs also tend to focus on a narrow spectrum of attitudes of worship. Services crafted from praise choruses do not generally emphasize the communal nature of the church, the need for intercessory prayer, the sacramental presence of God, or explicit personal confessions of sin. The focus is more narrowly on the praise and experience of God.

Defenders of contemporary worship music point to the God-centeredness of the lyrics and the personal dedication and communion with God that honestly singing them demands. What the lyrics lack in doctrinal breadth, defenders maintain, they make up for in intensity and focus. Defenders also point to the growing diversity and sophistication of the repertoire and its inclusion of more traditional hymns. Early worship songs were short and focused on the worshipers' praise of God. More recent popular songs have more than one stanza to complement the repeated chorus and incorporate a larger variety of images and themes. Recent years have seen a number of artists record new settings of traditional hymns. Many young evangelicals were introduced to traditional hymns such as "O Worship the King" through recordings such as *Hymns: Ancient & Modern* by the Passion Worship Band.

Countermovements

By the end of the twentieth century, some form of contemporary worship, whether informed more by seeker services or praise and worship, had become dominant in evangelical churches, but significant countermovements had also emerged, many grouped under the label *emergent*. The most common characteristics of emergent worship were that it was a reaction to seeker-sensitive worship and identified with the generations that followed the baby boom, often termed Generation X and millennial. Individuals in these generations had often been raised completely outside the church or within contemporary worship traditions. Many found traditional rather than contemporary forms attractive. Their appropriation of tradition, however, was often eclectic. A similar movement of emergent Jewish communities also took shape.

Leaders of emergent communities were deliberate about the need to embrace new forms of theology and ministry appropriate to a postmodern culture. Where seeker services were associated with the suburbs, auditoriums, a unified

focal point, linear sequencing, and a rejection of tradition, emergent worship was associated with the inner city, living-room-like space, multiple focal points, a nonlinear sequence, and the embrace of ancient practices and symbols. An explicit emphasis on artistic creativity and the importance of senses such as smell and touch was often found. Services were often highly participatory, with a strong attempt to cultivate a sense of community and mystery. They included a wider variety of musical styles and more extensive use of the visual arts. Historic creeds and prayers were included. Many churches included more frequent, even weekly, celebrations of the Lord's Supper.

Related to this emergent movement was a new engagement on the part of evangelicals with the ideas and practices championed by the liturgical movement. For more than thirty years, Robert Webber, a professor at Wheaton College, promoted the ideals of the liturgical movement among evangelicals; he also celebrated the convergence of the charismatic and liturgical movements in the common emphasis on worship, an activity Protestants had long neglected. Toward the end of his career, Webber promoted his vision of contemporary liturgical worship under the name Ancient Future. In 2008 the evangelical magazine *Christianity Today* featured a cover story on the movement and acknowledged that several of its senior editors were supporters of the movement and members of Anglican or Episcopal churches.

A renewed emphasis on tradition can also be seen among Roman Catholics. In the beginning of the twenty-first century, various regulations heightened the traditional distinction between lay and clergy roles in worship and between Catholic and Protestant practice. In 2007 Benedict XVI gave general permission for the celebration of the pre-Vatican II Latin Mass. New English translations of the Mass promised to use a heightened style to be more traditional or at least more formal. Recent and remodeled church buildings have also embraced a more traditional style and arrangement, and traditional devotions are also on the rise. Although by no means embraced by all Catholics, the more traditional practices are often most popular among the young.

The liturgical movement, seeker services, and praise and worship marked a new era in the history of worship. Liturgical renewal redefined liturgical tradition, and the other forms of contemporary worship brought a new style and body of music to churches of many denominations. Technological advances gave individual congregations great freedom in crafting their services from a variety of sources and raised congregations' standards for professional presentation.

Future developments will likely be marked by continued oscillations between an orientation toward traditional and contemporary forms.

See also *Bible: As Sacred Text, Translations, Cultural Role; Charismatics/Charismatic Movements; Emerging Church Movement; Liturgical Arts; Megachurches; Music: Contemporary Christian; Music: Hymnody; Preaching; Seeker Churches; Spirituality: Contemporary Trends; Worship* entries.

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Worship: Eastern Orthodox

The Eastern Orthodox Church has a rich tradition of worship with a wide array of diverse expressions that stem back to early Christianity. For the Orthodox, liturgical and sacramental worship is a central dimension of the Christian life. Indeed, the Orthodox believe that worship is not only a means by which the believer draws closer to God but also a way in which God unites the believer to himself. According to Eastern Church Fathers, the purpose of liturgy is for believers to become “partakers of God according to grace”; the Church becomes a meeting point of heaven and earth.

Americans unfamiliar with Orthodoxy will likely find its worship highly distinct from other forms of Christian worship encountered in the United States. The Orthodox believe that God is manifested in beauty, and therefore everything connected to church and worship is meant to reflect God's beauty: the architecture of the church building, the iconography that adorns its interior, the vestments the clergy wear, the music of the service. (Great composers, such as Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov, have composed music for Orthodox services.) The service is a feast of the senses, as worshippers light candles before icons and the clergy burn incense. Everything in the service is sung or chanted (including the scripture readings), usually as responses between the clergy and the choir. For most of the service the faithful remain standing; indeed, in the “mother churches” of the Old World there are not even pews. The service is very solemn and “high,” yet there is also freedom of movement as worshippers often mill about, lighting candles and venerating icons. The celebrant will usually give a sermon, but this is not the centerpiece or focus of a Sunday morning Divine Liturgy; rather, the Eucharist is the center.

The Eastern Orthodox Church follows a unified liturgical tradition known as the Byzantine rite. This tradition evolved gradually in the millennium of the Byzantine Empire between the fourth and fifteenth century, though the rite has remained stable since that time. The Byzantine rite represents a synthesis of diverse liturgical traditions of the East that were brought together in the Great Church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire.

The Divine Liturgy

The most important worship service for Orthodox Christians is the Divine Liturgy, celebrated every Sunday morning throughout the year as well as on major feast days. In some monasteries and cathedrals, the Liturgy is celebrated daily. There are two primary liturgies in the Byzantine Orthodox tradition, the Liturgy of John Chrysostom, which is served most frequently, and the Liturgy of Basil the Great, which is appointed for ten times a year (such as the Sundays during Great Lent). The primary difference between the two is the *anaphora*, the lengthy prayer for the consecration of the Eucharist. There is also a Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, for which the elements of the Eucharist are consecrated on the previous Sunday; it is appointed for the weekdays of Great Lent, when the celebratory mood of the Divine Liturgy is considered inappropriate.

The structure of the Divine Liturgy is as follows: it begins with the Preparation, when the priest prepares the bread for the Eucharist. This is followed by the Liturgy of the Word (or the Liturgy of the Catechumens), which culminates in the reading of the Epistle (a selection from the Letters of Saint Paul or other letters from the New Testament) and the Gospel, followed by the homily; the readings follow a set lectionary that assigns the readings for every day of the year. The culmination is the Liturgy of the Faithful, which begins with the solemn Great Entrance, when the clergy process with the bread and wine through the Church, and centers on the *anaphora* or Eucharistic prayer and the communion of the faithful.

Sacraments

The Eucharist is regarded as the sacrament par excellence, as ordinary elements of this world are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Orthodox believe that the Eucharist is truly the Body and Blood of Christ, but they accept this as a mystical reality rather than something which can be explained analytically as in the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, according to which the bread and wine are literally, physically turned into Christ's flesh and blood. So also baptism and chrismation, as rites of initiation, are central: baptism is not a mere "sign" of one's faith, as in some Protestant traditions, but it is an event when the believer is actually, spiritually united with Christ and becomes a member of his Body. Chrismation is an anointing with oil that is the sacramental parallel to the Catholic rite of confirmation, but it is performed by the priest immediately following baptism. The Orthodox baptize infants or children, who then receive Communion directly after baptism.

The Orthodox do not make hard and fast distinctions between what is and what is not sacramental. Some of the church fathers spoke of two sacraments (baptism-chrismation and the Eucharist), others of as many as eleven—the number is not important, though the number seven has been used in recent centuries under Western influence. While baptism-chrismation and the Eucharist are the two central and most important sacraments, marriage, ordination, confession, and the sacrament of anointing (healing) are also considered sacraments.

Consecration of Time

The Orthodox attempt to consecrate time, both in the daily cycle and in the annual cycle, with worship. Thus there are daily liturgical forms of worship that mark the morning and

the evening (Vespers and Matins). Moreover, the Orthodox celebrate an annual cycle of feasts, especially ones that commemorate key moments in the life of Christ and the Virgin Mary but also revered saints. The high point of the year is the celebration of Pascha (all languages of Orthodox nations retain some variant of the Hebrew for "Passover" to designate Easter), the resurrection of Christ, a service that typically takes place at midnight.

The fundamental building blocks of Orthodox services are the scriptures. For example, appropriate psalms are chosen to serve as the fundamental elements of Vespers and Matins. Another basic element is the petitions or prayers of supplication. Finally, the services employ a rich tradition of hymnography. There are hymns appointed for every day of the year, for example celebrating the particular saints commemorated on that day. The *Menaion* contains the hymns for the feast days, and the *Triodion* contains the services for Great Lent.

In addition to the cycle of feasts, the Orthodox also observe fasts. Naturally, different people fast to greater or lesser degrees, though most Orthodox believers are at least aware of the ideals set forth by the church. Fasting usually means abstaining from certain foods (particularly animal products such as meat and dairy). The church designates most Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year as fasting days and sets aside particular seasons of the year, such as before Nativity (Christmas) and Pascha.

Some Orthodox Christians (Russians and Serbs, for example) still follow the Julian calendar (the original calendar of the church), which is thirteen days behind the Gregorian calendar, and they therefore celebrate the Nativity of Christ (Christmas) on January 6 (which is December 25 according to the Julian calendar). Other Orthodox Christians, such as the Greeks and Romanians, adopted the Gregorian calendar in the twentieth century and therefore celebrate Christmas at the same time as Western Christians. The issue of the calendar has been one of the most contentious pertaining to Orthodox worship, both in America and in the rest of the world. All Orthodox celebrate Pascha at the same time. Since there is a different procedure for establishing the date of Easter, it sometimes falls as much as a month apart from Western Christians.

Iconography

Another distinctive feature of Orthodox worship is iconography, sometimes referred to as "theology in color." Icons decorate Orthodox Churches, most notably the *iconostasis*, or

icon screen, that separates the altar from the nave. During the iconoclastic controversy in the eighth and ninth century, the Orthodox Church developed an explicit theological justification for the use of icons in response to the charge that this violated the commandment not to make “graven images.” The core argument in defense of icons stems from the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God incarnate: the prohibition against images is primarily against depicting God the Father, who is invisible (and is traditionally not depicted in Orthodox iconography). But since the Son of God became human, he became visible and therefore can be depicted. Moreover, images depict the Gospel for the illiterate, as most people would have been before the modern age; this, however, is not the most important reason for icons, and they still play an important role even when most people are literate.

Orthodox Christians do not worship the icon but what is depicted in the image; making a crucial distinction between worship and veneration or honor, the Orthodox believe that icons are worthy of honor because they serve as vehicles to make Christ and the saints present, though worship is reserved for God alone. The two-dimensional Byzantine iconography used to be regarded by art historians as somehow primitive and lacking in the knowledge of perspective “discovered” in the Renaissance that makes painting more realistic. We now know that the ancients understood perspective; traditional Orthodox icons are intentionally “unrealistic” because they are meant to draw the worshipper away from this world. They are “windows to heaven” that are meant to represent spiritual realities. Every aspect of the icon, every color and gesture, is coded in its own profound symbolic language.

Orthodox Worship in the United States

All Orthodox Churches follow the same rite for worship services. Thus on an average Sunday morning in any Orthodox Church, the same Divine Liturgy will be celebrated. The difference between Greek and Russian practice, for example, is primarily in the music and language. One controversial aspect of Orthodox worship in the United States has been the language issue. Immigrants who came to America employed the languages of their homeland for services, which are usually an archaic form of the spoken language (such as Old Church Slavonic as used in Russian and Serbian churches) not readily understandable to native speakers, let alone later generations born in America. Throughout the twentieth century, there have been tensions between those who want to maintain the traditional language and

those who wish to use English for the services. Though these decisions tend to be made at the individual parish level, there are different trends in the various Orthodox Churches in the United States: most parishes of the Orthodox Church in America, for example, will use predominantly English, whereas most Greek Orthodox Churches will use a mixture of Greek and English.

The second important liturgical development in the United States has been the Eucharistic revival. In the Middle Ages it became customary in Orthodox Churches for the faithful to receive Communion only a few times a year. The theological rediscovery of the meaning of the Eucharist, led by professor Alexander Schmemmann of St. Vladimir’s Seminary in Crestwood, New York, led to a revival of frequent Communion and had a dramatic impact on Orthodoxy in America, especially, though not only, in the Orthodox Church in America.

See also *Canada: Pluralism; Devotionalism; Eastern Orthodox Tradition and Heritage; Eastern Orthodoxy; Holidays; Music: Hymnody; Pacific Northwest Region; Spirituality* entries; *Sunday and the Sabbath; Systematic Theology; Visual Culture* entries; *Worship* entries.

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Worship: Jewish

Jewish worship in America can be divided into four stages: Sephardic (Sefardi) and Ashkenazi origins: 1654 to 1895; classical Reform dominance to the emergence of Conservative Judaism: 1895 to 1946; postwar suburbia and Conservative dominance to the Six Days' War: 1946 to 1967; and liturgical renaissance: 1967 to present.

From the beginning, the insistent U.S. separation of church and state has encouraged newly arriving ethnic groups to acculturate as Americans while retaining their ethnic independence in the form of religious preferences. At the beginning, therefore, Jewish worship constituted the primary symbolic expression of ethnic distinctiveness—as Jews, relative to other Americans and as one kind of ethnic Jew rather than another. Only recently, in stage four, is ethnicity disappearing, making worship no less an index of identity, but identity rooted in stylistic preference, rather than ethnic inheritance. Often, but not always, worship style reflects a larger attitude toward halakhah (Jewish law) because halakhah for Jews is the functional equivalent of theology for Christians. Theology is a consideration, especially for Jews who pray in the vernacular rather than the original Hebrew and Aramaic, and who must come to terms with the content of what they are saying. But choosing the vernacular is itself a halachic decision, so that halakhah remains primary.

For most Jews, however, neither halakhah nor theology has been probative. As a function of identity, Jewish worship should be seen holistically as an aesthetic combination of prayer content and performance (better described as worship choreography). Variation is to some extent limited because Judaism is fully liturgical: Having a required order and content of prayers, synagogues cannot improvise altogether novel scripts for worship. Choreography, however, is less determined. Even relatively traditional worshipping communities may feel less constrained to perpetuate inherited performance elements such as music, spatial arrangements, length of service, the presence of a sermon, and the like.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the expanding frontier led competing Protestant churches to “franchise” religious preferences by institutionalized denominationalism. Jews followed suit, so that, broadly speaking, both ethnic heritage and personal style have correlated with movement affiliation. Since the postwar era (stage three), it has been common to think of Jews as arrayed denominationally from right to left in terms of traditionalism, measured officially by

halachic stance, but unofficially by liturgical style: Orthodoxy on the right, Reform on the left and Conservative in the middle (a fourth denomination, Reconstructionism, is a relatively small offshoot of Conservative Judaism, usually liberal on social issues but conservative in worship style).

Sephardic and Ashkenazi Origins: 1654 to 1895

Sephardic Jews (those hailing originally from Spain and Portugal) arrived in the American colonies when Portugal conquered the Dutch colony of Recife in Brazil. They had emerged in Protestant Holland after escaping the Spanish Inquisition. Fearing that Portugal would reinstate the Inquisition in Recife, they fled to Dutch New Amsterdam, later (under England) New York. From there, they spread to Newport, Philadelphia, Charleston, and elsewhere, establishing the distinctive worship patterns that differentiated them from their cultural rivals, Ashkenazi Jews of central, northern, and eastern Europe. Sephardic worship featured its own version of the traditional prayer text, Hebrew pronunciation, music, lectionary, decorum, and seating arrangement. The Touro Synagogue in Newport (built 1763), for example, the oldest extant synagogue in the United States, replicates Sephardic architecture and seating patterns of the great synagogue of Amsterdam (1675) and Bevis Marks Synagogue in London (1701).

Sephardic Jews were soon outnumbered by Ashkenazi émigrés from central Europe. At first, they joined Sephardic synagogues already in place, but were emerging independently as the century drew to the end. Between 1820 and 1840, the U.S. Jewish population increased from 3,000 to 15,000; by 1860, it reached 150,000. Almost all the newcomers were German-speaking Ashkenazi Jews. Many took advantage of U.S. freedom to drop religious affiliation altogether. Of those for whom religion mattered, some were Orthodox, but most sought to achieve religious reforms that reactionary rulers in the wake of Napoleon, and then again after the abortive 1848 revolution, had denied them. German reform dominated the United States until the end of the century, when eastern European Jews, in turn, swamped the central Europeans, prompting the “German crowd” to adopt ever more extreme reforms to distinguish their worship from what they considered the backward Orientalisms of new arrivals. Traditional Jewish prayer preached a doctrine of Jewish exile; God would eventually send a messiah from the House of David to return all Jews to their land and restore the ancient sacrificial cult in Jerusalem. God would wreak vengeance on Israel’s enemies, then resurrect the Jewish dead

and bring them home to Jerusalem. Reform prayer books denied resurrection and proclaimed the diaspora home. The notion of a personal messiah was replaced by the idea of a messianic age that would be achieved by human effort, not by God, as Jews and non-Jews together worked to fulfill the prophetic mandate of universal justice. Prophetic Judaism became especially central in the 1990s, influenced by the Social Gospel movement in Protestant circles.

Accompanying this altered worship message was a radical change in choreography. Ashkenazi cantorial tradition had nurtured the use of traditional musical modes, chanting of the weekly scriptural readings (Torah and haftarah), and artistic cantorial solos enhanced by stylized improvisations; Jewish law banned musical instruments in worship. People *davened*, a term describing a sing-song style of congregational participation whereby worshipers “muttered” aloud the same paragraph together, more or less *sotto voce*, but at individually selected speed and volume. Women were excluded from the main worship space, not encouraged to attend, and not counted as part of the worship gathering when they attended anyway. Reform Jews replaced cantorial chanting with sophisticated musical compositions in Western notation that soloists, four-part choirs, and an organist could perform to a relatively passive congregation. Family pews replaced segregation by sex. Traditional worship garb disappeared, as Reform Jews acted out a message of modernity, decorum, and appreciation for the high artistry of Western culture. Worship was enhanced spatially by grand sanctuaries with elaborate internal design and architectural lines reaching toward heaven. Central to the service was the sermon, matching a corresponding Protestant emphasis on great evangelical preachers such as Billy Sunday (1862–1935) or liberal “princes of the pulpit,” such as Phillips Brooks in Boston (1835–1893) and Harry Emerson Fosdick in Manhattan (1878–1969). In keeping with the style defined by Rudolf Otto, God was represented as wholly transcendent, awe-inspiring beyond description, and a numinous presence that the great music, the King James English of the liturgy, and the flowing sermonic rhetoric of the rabbi could at best suggest.

The two most influential prayer books that contributed to this message were *Minhag America* and *Olat Tamid* by Rabbis Isaac Mayer Wise and David Einhorn, respectively. Wise was the chief architect and denominational founder of Reform Judaism, but a relative moderate liturgically; Einhorn was more radical, and in 1895, a *Union Prayer Book*, based largely on Einhorn’s prototype, was adopted officially

by the Reform movement—a reaction to the eastern European newcomers.

With the prayer text came new music. Early Reform rabbis such as Wise had imported the music of Viennese cantor and composer Salomon Sulzer, who had notated traditional music so that it sounded “cultured.” Wise himself celebrated Sulzer for “abolishing the prevailing chaotic mood of worship” and doing away with the “screaming” by daveners. In an 1854 newspaper review Wise applauded his own service in Cincinnati for its “difficult pieces of vocal music” that made “an indescribable impression” on worshipers. Those present “felt once more the beauty and sublimity of Hebrew poetry,” going far toward producing a divine service “worthy of the name.”

In 1897, Cantor Alois Kaiser of Baltimore compiled a hymnal designed to increase the modern repertoire of melodies with music that would be qualitatively as rich as the musical heritage of the Church, but on Jewish themes. As late as 1907, however, rabbis bewailed the widespread use of Christian classics, albeit shorn of their Christological content. In 1920, the same body of rabbis complained of the utter passivity of congregants who refused to sing hymns the way neighboring Methodists did. The Reform service had stagnated.

By then, German immigration had virtually ceased, and the eastern Europeans against whom the message of radical Reform identity had been directed had become the majority of U.S. Jews.

Classical Reform Dominance to Emergence of Conservative Judaism: 1895 to 1946

Between 1881 and 1914, some two million Jews arrived from eastern Europe (mostly Russia, Ukraine, Romania, and what is now Poland). They shared the general eastern European opinion of Germans as arrogant and were unfamiliar with the high German culture that classical Reform worship featured. Rather than follow the railroads west, as the German migrants had done, these Jews remained in the east, largely in New York. Many dispensed with religion altogether, some became socialists, and others simply concentrated on escaping Lower East Side poverty. A few retained their Orthodoxy, praying just as they had in Europe, but in ethnic synagogues representing the towns, or even villages, whence they had come.

Not all German Jews had become Reform, but even German Orthodoxy valued decorum and altered its worship as much as its perspective on Jewish law allowed. Eastern

European Orthodoxy was different. Instead of decorum, it featured the worship favored by Hasidism, a movement dating back to the eighteenth century and rooted in a popularization of the mystical system called Kabbalah. Stylistically, it was evangelical, joyous, and noisy. Anxious to socialize their poor cousins rather than be embarrassed by them, Reform Jews encouraged a new mixture of tradition and modernity that became known as Conservative Judaism. Its development was retarded by the Great Depression and World War II, but in 1946, the first generation of Conservative-trained rabbis announced its denominational identity with a newly edited liturgy, generally known as “the Silverman Prayer Book,” after the prototype already developed by Rabbi Morris Silverman from Hartford, Connecticut. By then, liberal Jews had two options, both of them reflecting rival ethnicities: Reform Judaism for Germanic Jews, Conservative Judaism for eastern Europeans.

The Conservative message was revealed in advertisements that heralded “a modern traditional prayer book . . . [printed] in an attractive format and bound in the best Wavy pattern Cloth.” Its very makeup mirrored the ambivalence in identity felt by second-generation eastern European Jews. On the one hand, they demanded traditional “authenticity,” as opposed to German Reform Jews, whose worship (they said) “threw out the baby with the bath” and created services that were “cold and uninspiring.” On the other hand, these second-generation Jews wished to demonstrate their full acculturation as Americans. Worship included the traditional text of prayer, barely altered, and delivered in Hebrew with cantorial music and no instrumentation. Prewar Conservative worship had been less doctrinaire, but the hardening of a distinctive Conservative identity brought with it an equal freezing of liturgical style.

The content of the prayers differed somewhat. Most of the Silverman Prayer Book simply reproduced the traditional prayer text, but the left page provided translations, and some new English prayers supplemented the traditional corpus. Conservative Jews did not go as far as praying for a return of animal sacrifice, but the book did look forward to a return to Zion, reflecting not just traditional sentiment but also Zionism as a central tenet of their faith—the book appeared only two years before the birth of the state of Israel. By contrast, still viewing the diaspora as home, Reform Judaism officially opposed Zionism. Its *Union Prayer Book*, which had gone through two revisions by then, included a single paragraph applauding efforts at rebuilding the Land of the Bible, but it continued to exclude traditional prayers for a return to it.

The Conservative prayer book polemicized not just against Reform but also against a philosophy of Judaism preached by Mordecai Kaplan, a prominent professor at the Conservative seminary itself. Kaplan had made history in 1934, with a manifesto that faulted all existing varieties of U.S. Judaism and called instead for “reconstructing American Jewish Life.” Among other things, he denied the doctrine of chosen peoplehood and did away with a supernatural deity altogether, preferring to see God as a power in the universe “that makes for salvation.” Although he valued traditional worship style, he advocated changing prayer wording to reflect his philosophy—instead of praising God “who chose us *from among* the [other] nations,” for example, he offered praise for “choosing us *along with* the [other] nations.” When Kaplan’s liturgical works began appearing in 1941, Orthodox rabbis actually excommunicated him. Conservative editors in 1946 drew attention to the “patent weaknesses” of Reconstructionist worship, which Conservatism sought to combat. Much of Reconstructionism was eventually co-opted by individual Reform and Conservative rabbis who preached Kaplan’s message without adopting his liturgies, and in 1968, the Reconstructionists opened their own rabbinical school, formally declaring their independence.

Postwar Suburbia and Conservative Dominance to the Six Days’ War: 1946 to 1967

The postwar years brought about a religious awakening, at least in institution building (if not actual piety), as Americans in droves settled the suburbs, dotting them with churches and synagogues on every corner. Since most U.S. Jews then hailed from eastern European stock, Conservative Judaism dominated. But even though Jews joined their newly erected religious institutions, they did not generally attend weekly worship faithfully. Architects therefore designed synagogues with small sanctuaries and a collapsible wall that opened onto a social hall large enough to accommodate the crowd that did continue to come for the High Holy Days (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur). Conservative Judaism retained traditional *davening* style, but tended also toward some degree of performance-oriented worship that featured passive congregational appreciation of cantors and choir.

Reform Jews were already used to performance worship. So postwar composers, influenced by atonal style, wrote sophisticated but somewhat inaccessible music that Reform worshipers were expected to appreciate through listening. Architectural design colluded with these musical offerings

by featuring stage-like areas facing the congregation, where rabbi and cantor (or soloist) led worship.

The time of Sabbath (Shabbat) worship was being renegotiated as well. Traditionally, morning worship far outweighs evening prayer in popularity, length, and emphasis. Friday night services were short preludes to the main celebration of the Sabbath at festive home dinners. But most German Jews had been shopkeepers who could not easily close their stores on Saturdays. Reform worship had therefore enhanced worship on Friday night at the expense of Saturday morning. Valuing traditional practice more, Conservative Judaism preferred maintaining the supremacy of Saturday morning, but until 1946, many Conservative synagogues (and Orthodox ones too) emulated Reform in building up Friday night as well. After 1946, Conservative (and certainly Orthodox) Jews retreated to their traditional stance, urging people to celebrate Sabbath eve at home, and to observe the Sabbath day by worshipping instead of working. As time went on, Conservative and Orthodox Jews were once again meeting for prayer primarily on Saturday mornings; Reform Jews, by contrast, worshipped almost exclusively on Friday nights, even moving the central reading of scripture (Torah) from Saturday to Friday.

Jewish law calls for worship daily, not just on the Sabbath, but except for small oases of tradition (usually in Orthodox circles) the reality of life in the United States had shrunk the existence of weekday prayer dramatically. Reform Jews rarely met then at all, except when a death required the recitation of the *kaddish*, the mourners' prayer, as part of a worship service in which case special services were held in mourners' homes. Orthodox, Conservative, and (sometimes) Reconstructionist synagogues retained daily worship as much as possible, even though it sometimes took great effort to ensure the necessary "ten men" required for a *minyan* (a prayer quorum, without which halakhah prohibits a complete worship service). The task became all the more difficult for Orthodox and Conservative Jews because, in keeping with tradition, neither movement included women in the count. Reform, by contrast, had granted women worship equality in 1845, although, ironically, it also abolished the need for a *minyan*, making the matter of counting moot. From its inception, Reconstructionism adopted the Reform stance on women.

Liturgical Renaissance: 1967 to Present

By the 1970s, all liberal Jewish liturgies were under pressure to reflect the tectonic changes that had transformed postwar

Judaism. In 1961, the trial of Adolph Eichmann had raised the Holocaust to full consciousness among Jews who had hitherto been unable to face the fullness of its horror. An entire generation of Jews had meanwhile grown to adulthood as college students rebelling against the Vietnam War and championing civil rights for African Americans. Israel had come into its own as a Jewish state, but was newly threatened by the Six Days' War in 1967. And within Orthodoxy, the remnants of great Hasidic dynasties had come here after the Holocaust, altering the demography of Orthodox Judaism and moving it farther and farther to the right. As always, Orthodox worship resisted change—all the more so as liberal Jews adopted it. But for the other movements, it became increasingly impossible to pray without some reference to the Holocaust, Israel, and the liberal agenda that had seized the baby boomer generation coming out of college. Liturgical reflections of political liberalism proved momentary; consciousness of the Holocaust, Israel, and Jewish particularism generally proved momentous.

Developments among Christians proved decisive as well. By the 1960s, the Second Vatican Council was asking Catholics to liberalize their worship by (among other things) replacing Latin with vernacular prayer, building congregational participation, and emphasizing the joy inherent in the Christian message. Mainline Protestants too joined the liturgical renewal, creating new worship books of their own. In the 1970s, evangelical Christianity too began emphasizing joy in its worship, as its adherents gave up separatism for full participation in U.S. process and debate. Feminism leveled a worship critique within Christian and Jewish circles equally. Simply put, worship per se had taken center-stage in U.S. religious consciousness. Jewish dissatisfaction with its pre-Holocaust and pre-state of Israel liturgies merged with the general feeling that a new liturgical age was dawning everywhere.

The first signs of change came from high school students, who began designing "creative liturgies" that were hastily composed each week and then copied on "modern" mimeograph machines. New prayers on the themes of Israel, the Holocaust, and liberal causes became commonplace. More lasting was the popularization of the guitar-led folk idiom, fed with compositions by young U.S. Jews (most notably Debbie Friedman) trained in summer camps, and by similar songs drawn from annual Israeli song festivals. The centrality of a Jewish state where Hebrew was spoken virtually ended singing in English, even though worshipers did not understand the Hebrew words of the songs they were memorizing.

Seeking greater intimacy, these young Jews abandoned sanctuaries and prayed in small circles that emphasized egalitarianism and sought God's presence not in cathedral-like majesty but in the immediacy of human contact. The search for less formal, more intimate, and fully inclusive worship was enhanced by the feminist critique that grew with time, particularly after 1972, when the Reform movement began ordaining women; in 1974, Reconstructionism followed suit, as did Conservative Judaism in 1985. Feminist influence can also be seen in an emphasis on personal healing and a sense of wholeness, not just in body and mind, but in spirit. Throughout the 1990s, separate healing services became common, and even regular worship began newly emphasizing prayers for the sick.

In 1975, the Reform movement replaced the venerable *Union Prayer Book* with *Gates of Prayer*, a liturgy that featured separate services for Israel Independence Day and Holocaust Day, restored Hebrew to prominence, favored Zionism, restored Jewish traditions that classical Reform had jettisoned, and adopted gender-neutral language that, for example, no longer referred to "men" alone, as if women were obviously included. A decade later (with the ordination of a significant cohort of women rabbis clamoring for change), masculine referents to God were dropped as well. Rabbis and cantors doffed their specifically clerical robes, joined their congregants in rediscovering traditional prayer garb, moved off the pulpit to be with the people, replaced sermons for congregational conversations on the weekly Torah portion, and moved Sabbath worship to small spaces conducive to informal worship in the round.

New Conservative and Reconstructionist liturgies followed. The Conservative movement remained conservative: Worship was solely in Hebrew; only a few traditional prayers were dropped or significantly altered. But prayers regarding the Holocaust and the new state of Israel were added, as were optional English worship supplements. Reconstructionist worship, however, changed dramatically. The era of the 1970s had given birth to *chavurah* Judaism, small worship groups that leaned toward tradition but eschewed denominational affiliation. *Chavurot* implemented fully participatory worship that breaks down the distinction between the prayer leader and the congregation; in keeping with this democratization, everyone was urged to achieve competence at worship leadership. A loose coalition of *chavurot* eventually merged with the Reconstructionist movement adding a populist, and even New Age, quality to what had formerly been the highly

rationalist approach to prayer favored by Kaplan, the movement's founder. By then, New Age Judaism had emerged more formally in gatherings that described themselves as "Jewish Renewal," influenced especially by the neo-Hasidic views of Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. Renewal worship varies widely, combining a high regard for tradition with intense creativity and new forms of spirituality, including meditation practices borrowed from Eastern religions. Just as mainstream denominations once absorbed the Reconstructionist innovations of Mordecai Kaplan, so too are they now engaging, at least around the edges, in spiritual practices of Renewal Judaism.

This liturgical renaissance has transformed even Jewish Orthodoxy. A new and sharply designed Orthodox prayer book was published in 1960 but proved a failure because its modern appearance contradicted Orthodox identity as keepers of the faith and purveyors of tradition. Orthodox Jews preferred the old prayer books—precisely because they were old. By contrast, throughout the 1980s, a set of attractive ArtScroll liturgies emerged, each outfitted with marginal summaries of traditional commentary. These have virtually become universal among Orthodox Jews, an index of the revival of Orthodoxy generally. A 2000 survey showed Orthodoxy having grown from some 5.5 percent in 1990 to 8 to 9 percent nationally. With that growth has come a sense of confidence: no longer just a defensive measure against rampant reforms elsewhere, Orthodox Judaism has become a proud and proactive alternative for U.S. worshipers. At the same time, its worship has moved far to the right, generally erecting a visible barrier (a *m'chitzah*) between men and women, instead of separating them simply by an aisle.

Jewish worship remains in a state of remarkable flux, fed by the technological ability to produce ever more attractive liturgies and the Web-based competence to access new music and ritual from around the world. In 2007, a new Reform prayer book replaced *Gates of Prayer*, restoring the classical Reform emphasis on universalistic prophetic ethics without compromising identification with the Jewish people specifically and with its traditions. Musically speaking, a host of new composers have arisen, some of them (Craig Taubman, for example) introducing entire bands, now commonplace, especially in Reform circles. Elsewhere, traditional cantorial music is being challenged by the music of Shlomo Carlebach, a neo-Hasidic charismatic figure who died in 1994. Carlebach outfitted many traditional liturgical texts with a joyous syncopated sound that requires no

instrumentation and is especially attractive to contemporary Orthodoxy. In New York City, a Conservative-style synagogue (B'nei Jeshurun) has imported a new liturgical sound from Argentina.

Long-term expectations, then, include continued experimentation and emphasis on liturgical joyfulness and communal participation. Ever-evolving denominational liturgies will compete against worship books published privately by rabbis attracted to the technology of desktop publishing. Trends from evangelical megachurches are appearing as well—the use of projected liturgies and song lyrics, for example. Dominating worship, ever since the renaissance era began, has been an overriding demand for personal spirituality, especially as religious search has come more and more to imply an authentic expression of the self. Another trend since about 2000 has been the reassertions of Judaism's ethical mandate, especially as U.S. governmental policy has urged faith-based social initiatives to combat widespread hunger and poverty. Concern for the planet too is increasingly being reflected in Jewish worship, as entire sanctuaries are being designed with ecological consciousness in mind. As the second decade of the twenty-first century approaches, with baby boomers aging and being replaced by the next generation, surveys find the importance of ritual, spirituality, authenticity, inclusivity, prophetic justice, and engagement with tradition increasing. We can expect all of these to figure prominently in the liturgical expression of Jewish identity for the foreseeable future.

See also *Anti-Semitism; Architecture: Jewish; Canada: Pluralism; Chabad-Lubavitch; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism* entries; *Music: Jewish; Religious Thought: Jewish; Torah; Women: Jewish; Women, Ordination of; Zionism.*

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Worship: Muslim

Muslim Americans, for the most part, have followed the established worship practices of Islam found throughout the world. The term worship indicates religious or devotional exercises and observances that are performed on group and individual levels alike. Though we can distinguish worship practices from matters of belief and doctrine, they are often standardized within a given tradition as well. In this sense, most American Muslims have been united in their attempt to remain faithful to the Five Pillars of Islam—also known as *‘ibadat*, or acts of worship—that are part of the *Shari‘a*, or Islamic law. At the most basic level, these consist of *shahada* (testimony of faith in one God), *salat* (ritual prayer service), *zakat* (almsgiving), *sawm* (fasting during the holy month of Ramadan), and *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca).

However, Islam (unlike, say, Eastern Orthodoxy or Roman Catholicism) is, in many respects, a decentralized religion—that is, authority tends to be distributed and administered more locally—and thus many Muslim practices and styles of worship have differed according to group and region. This decentralization means that almost every aspect of Muslim worship in America—including but not limited to physical settings, ritual components, the garbs and demeanors of those in attendance, sex and gender roles, and the like—often has a wide range of variation depending on the individuals under observation. Furthermore, though the large body of Islamic historiography and scholarship frequently construes the worship practices of majority Sunni Islam as normative, Shi‘i, Sufi, and African American Muslims (who can be Sunni, Shi‘i, Sufi, or members of one of the newer Muslim American movements, such as the Nation of Islam, Moorish Science Temple, or Five Percenters) have made significant and often-overlooked contributions to Islam's rich and colorful history. These diversities are particularly evident in the United States.

The Five Pillars

Shahada

The first pillar of Islam is the *shahada*, the declaration of faith in God's unity or oneness and Muhammad's status as prophet. Normally, professing the *shahada* (*La ilaha illa*

Allah. Muhammadun rasul Allah, or, “There is no god but God. Muhammad is the Messenger of God”) once in one’s life—with heartfelt sincerity, in a formal setting, and in the presence of another Muslim—is all that is formally required to become a Muslim in America. Some Americans, though, have maintained the shahada must be pronounced three times or more before one is considered a legal or legitimate Muslim. So central is this tenet to the Muslim faith that a majority of congregations in America have displayed a calligraphic depiction of the shahada in their Islamic centers and mosques, and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) has even provided certificates to those who have taken the shahada. (This certificate is required by Saudi Arabia for a person to be allowed on Hajj.)

The meaning of the shahada has been the same for a majority of American Muslims. Still, the statement took on a uniquely American connotation in the Nation of Islam (NOI). Specifically, when NOI members have recited it, the name “Allah” in the first part of the shahada has been conflated with the person of Wallace Fard Muhammad and “Muhammad” in the second part conflated with the person of Elijah Muhammad. This is in conformity with the NOI understanding of Wallace Fard Muhammad as God incarnated and Elijah Muhammad as his last earthly prophet. Nevertheless, this is a highly controversial belief that many American Muslims consider to be a kind of idolatry.

Salat

The second pillar of Islam is *salat*, the formal prayer worship directed toward the primary Islamic sanctuary (or *Ka’ba*) in Mecca, the holy city in Saudi Arabia, and performed five times daily: early morning, noon, midafternoon, sunset, and evening. Additionally, there has traditionally been a required congregational service (including a sermon/oration, or *khutbah*) on Fridays as well as other days that mark various occasions (such as funerals and major festivals). Salat is a highly regulated form of worship that involves an initial call to prayer (called the *iqama*, traditionally announced from atop the mosque, but often accomplished with speakers and recorded voice in America), ritual washing, proper attire, and a series of postures that culminates in total prostration. Shi’i Muslim Americans occasionally include an expression of admiration for ‘Ali in their prayers. Likewise, the Shi’i call to prayer can also include expressions of ‘Ali’s authority. Many American mosques have debated whether to use English as the primary language during certain parts of the services. It is common for the imam—who is, traditionally, always

male—to deliver the *khutbah* in the local language (more often than not English) while directing the formal rites of prayer in Arabic.

We should also note that NOI members have not typically prayed five times a day, and, moreover, they have prayed while sitting in pews. Furthermore, while most American Muslims have considered the mosque to be the official house of worship and the imam to be the *salat* leader in addition to general religious teacher, NOI members, showing the influence of African American churches, have preferred the term temple to mosque and minister to imam. Though Warith Deen Mohammed, upon assuming leadership of the movement in 1975, abandoned many of these elements in his reforms and attempts to align the NOI with mainstream Sunni Islam, Louis Farrakhan has retained much of the original NOI practices and styles of worship.

As with the other pillars, Muslims in America have had to modify certain elements of the *salat*. For instance, many preexisting buildings have been converted into houses of worship and thus American congregations have not always prayed while facing the front of mosques, but rather, they have used electronic devices to orient themselves toward Mecca. Similarly, many American Muslims, depending on the rules of individual workplaces and schools, have had to adjust prayer times and places accordingly. Certain Muslim students have even joined with Christian ones to petition for the freedom to pray, or, barring that, to form prayer groups that meet before, between, or after classes. For another example of Muslims adapting to American society and culture, many American mosques, located in residential and commercial neighborhoods, have either adopted playing a recording of the call to prayer or giving it inside the mosque or Islamic center instead. Lastly, some mosques have begun holding communal prayer services on Sundays in America due to the fact that most Americans must work on Fridays.

Zakat

The third pillar of Islam is *zakat*, the practice of obligatory almsgiving. Traditionally, *zakat*—conceived as an annual tax comprising 2.5 percent of one’s wealth that supported the Islamic community and state—has been distinguished from voluntary acts of charity. The practice of *zakat* in modern-day America has been complicated by a number of factors. For one, there has been the question of whether Muslims should still be compelled to pay a *zakat* tax when they already pay income taxes well above 2.5 percent. For those

communities that have ceased to interpret zakat as compulsory, furthermore, there has been the question of how to finance the construction and maintenance of mosques within a system of voluntarism—that is, without state support of religious institutions. This peculiarly American situation has often been in stark contrast to the system of state-supported mosques many emigrants from Islamic countries have left behind. (*Ithna ‘Ashari*, or Twelver Shi‘a have not encountered this problem to the same extent because they levy a twenty percent religious tax, in addition to zakat, that pays for Islamic centers and the salaries of administrators.)

In addition, there has been debate over the means by which American Muslims should pay their zakat and the authority to which it should be paid. On the former question, many American Muslims have submitted their zakat payment via the Internet with credit and debit cards. Conversely, many American Muslims have reinterpreted the submission of zakat to include nonprofit service carried out in their community. The latter question of authority has become particularly problematic since the events of September 11, 2001. The United States crackdown on funding certain Islamic groups (in particular those thought to be associated with terrorism) has made it difficult to give money freely because the status of some groups is still questionable or undecided. The ISNA has alleviated some of these problems by creating a zakat fund that it has used to support various national services and social programs. NOI members have generally contributed a portion of their income to the NOI itself that was then applied to the funding of Muslim schools and other services.

Sawm

The fourth pillar of Islam, and one of the most followed and well-known forms of Muslim worship in America, is *sawm*, the act of fasting during the holy month of Ramadan. By tradition, observant Muslims around the globe abstain from eating, drinking, smoking, lying, violence, and sexual relations between dawn and dusk in the ninth lunar month. The breaking of fast (*iftar*) at the end of each day is a time of joy and giving thanks, when Muslims everywhere gather together with friends and family. American Muslims have widely regarded fasting during Ramadan as a time of both physical and spiritual reflection. Many immigrants to the United States have regarded the time as one where Muslims can renew their religious devotion to God and their involvement in the global Muslim community, as well as

use the month to promote interfaith conversations. For instance, the Council on American–Islamic Relations (CAIR) has provided a number of ways everyday American Muslims can educate the community about Islam in general and the significance of Ramadan in particular, in addition to ways of reaching out to the larger community through volunteer work.

Since American Muslims are not a homogenous group, there have been discrepancies and disagreements over certain aspects of sawm and Ramadan. For one example, NOI members have always observed Ramadan in December rather than in the lunar month. For another example, non-NOI Muslims have recognized the new moon as the end of Ramadan and the beginning of the minor canonical festival, *‘id* (or *‘eid*) *al-fitr*, the Feast of Breaking the Ramadan Fast. However, a debate has developed in America over whether to follow “official” Meccan sightings of the moon or to follow one’s own sightings. Many Muslims in the United States have also added distinctively American elements to Ramadan, such as coordinating potluck-style meals or charitable food drives. Lastly, though many advances have been made in recent years, Muslims in America have faced a unique difficulty in petitioning for certain allowances to be made during Ramadan and for official recognition of the Islamic holiday in schools and the workplace. The United States Postal Service honored the Eid holidays in 2002, 2008, and 2009, respectively, with 37-, 42-, and 44-cent stamps.

Hajj

The fifth and final pillar of Islam is *hajj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca during the holy month of *Dhu al-Hijja* at least once in one’s lifetime. This pilgrimage is incumbent upon all adult Muslims who are financially and physically able. As the hajj is the most expensive and time-consuming act of worship, it is also perhaps the most highly anticipated. American Muslims, like those from other countries, have spent years saving money and making preparations for the journey. Once there, pilgrims—who typically number in the millions—dress in ritual garb (males don simple white clothing symbolizing unity while females wear a variety of garments that symbolize diversity) and perform a number of rituals, such as circumambulating the Ka’ba (paying particular attention to the “black stone,” which marks the covenant made with God), throwing pebbles at a pillar representing the devil, and sacrificing an animal that symbolizes the ram Abraham sacrificed in lieu of Ishmael (rather than Isaac as is believed in Judaism and Christianity). This act, always

performed on the tenth day of the lunar month and celebrated by Muslims around the world, begins the major canonical festival, *'id* (or *'eid) al-adha*, the Feast of Sacrifice. Lasting three days, the festival is a time of joy, worship, and sharing. Muslims in America have customarily commemorated the occasion by purchasing *halal*, or permissible, meat that is regulated in a way similar to kosher Jewish food.

Traditionally, the hajj has been less important for NOI members than for other Muslims. A primary reason for this discrepancy was Elijah Muhammad's interpretation of the practice. Although E. Muhammad and others made the pilgrimage partly in an attempt to bolster their credentials as "true" Muslims, they have read the act through the singular lens of NOI understanding. Specifically, Elijah Muhammad understood the "black stone" of the Ka'ba as a sign of himself, whom he considered the most recent messenger of God and the one who would ultimately lead black Muslims the world over out of oppression.

As with the other pillars, distinctively American issues have developed with respect to the hajj. For one, it is only recently that Muslims in the U.S. Armed Forces have secured permission for leave of duty to make the hajj. Likewise, and analogous to the situation with the festival of breaking fast at the end of Ramadan, public schools and businesses have only just begun recognizing the Feast of Sacrifice as a major Islamic holiday.

Beyond the Five Pillars: Other Components of Muslim Worship in the United States

To give a better understanding of the topic at hand, it is helpful to turn away from the Five Pillars and highlight some of the details of typical weekly Muslim worship in America. First and perhaps foremost among these components are the actual settings where Muslim worship takes place. Of course, solitary worship—such as individual prayer performed five times daily—may take place almost anywhere. (Nevertheless, there have been interminable debates—especially since the events of September 11, 2001—over the rights of individuals to pray in public places such as schools and airplanes.) In Muslim and non-Muslim countries alike, however, acts of public worship—such as congregational services on Fridays and other days marking special occasions—traditionally take place in a mosque.

A mosque, in the most basic sense, can be any physical structure Muslims use for worship. In predominantly Muslim countries, mosques are often sophisticatedly crafted structures comprising domes, minarets (from which the call

to prayer, or *iqama*, is made), an ornate space for ritual washing, and the like. However, there are no formal regulations or restrictions on a mosque's architecture, and thus, in the American context, mosques in the United States vary in appearance. For instance, many Muslim communities—when necessary financially—have frequently converted buildings formerly used as homes or businesses into mosques. Similarly, in America's more crowded urban areas, the issue of noise ordinances has come up and, as a result, the call to prayer has regularly been announced via speakers and recorded voice.

The first thing one ordinarily sees when entering a typical American mosque is a place for shoe storage and an area set apart for ritual washing; past these is a larger space designated for prayer. The prayer space is relatively empty—there are no pews (with the exception of NOI temples), but chairs are provided for those physically unable to go through full prostration—although the walls of many mosques contain calligraphic Qur'anic verses and decorative patterns. (The depiction of personages is, however, considered idolatrous in Islam and strictly disallowed.) In addition, at the eastern end of American mosques are a *minbar*, or pulpit—from which the imam officiates—and a *mihrab*, the niche that marks the *qibla*, or direction of Mecca.

A distinctly American innovation on the mosque is the Islamic center. In Muslim countries—where most facets of one's social and cultural life operate within a single system—mosques do not need to offer services beyond the acts of worship mentioned above. Yet the American context—in which Muslim communities, often comprised of first- and second-generation immigrants, are frequently isolated minorities—has necessitated the construction of all-encompassing, family-centered institutions that provide certain unmet services and facilities for recreation, education, and the like. Usually seen in larger cities—Washington, D.C., is home to the first and perhaps most famous one, known simply as The Islamic Center, which former president Dwight D. Eisenhower dedicated in 1957—these establishments unite families from a number of ethnic or national backgrounds and even attract the growing number of Muslim Americans who self-identify as "un-mosqued" and otherwise do not worship or attend religious services at traditional mosques.

Another significant factor in worship for Muslim Americans is that of sex and gender roles. Many Muslims in the United States have come from predominantly Islamic countries where women and men have very different—and often

unequal—rights and responsibilities. For instance, in some parts of the Islamic world women are not allowed to marry non-Muslims; men, conversely, may marry non-Muslims so long as they raise their children within the Islamic faith. Although examples such as this—whether they are founded in cultural or legal considerations—are less prevalent in non-Muslim countries like the United States, distinct sex and gender roles have continued to exist in various forms. For one, many Muslims in America have been divided on whether women should wear a *hijab*, or veil, in public. While some women have chosen to adopt secular norms regarding societal garb and demeanor, others have opted to don the traditional covering (in some cases, against their family's wishes), arguing that it allots them a modicum of modesty in the face of Western indecency, as well as forcing others to respect women for their minds rather than their bodies.

An additional issue has been the physical segregation of Muslim women and men in American mosques. As with the *mechitza* (*m'chitzah*), or partition, seen in Orthodox Judaism, the sexes in Islam have traditionally separated during worship: women and men reside in opposite sides of the worship space or, as is often the case, women come together in an area or balcony behind male worshippers. Women and men also have separate areas for ritual washing. Those in favor of this situation have normally maintained that segregation cuts down on distractions during worship. However, some American Muslim women—such as Amina Wadud—have recently begun leading contentious mixed-gender prayer services.

Shi'i and Sufi Muslims

In addition to the aforementioned modes of worship, minority Shi'i and Sufi Muslims have had a number of unique practices not observed in majority—or what is often called “mainstream”—Sunni Islam. While following the Five Pillars of Islam, Shi'i Americans have also placed importance on additional practices and acts of worship. Some of these are as follows: *jihad* (or struggling and striving to please God; not to be confused with “holy war,” *jihad* is separated into lesser/external and greater/internal forms and is sometimes regarded as the Sixth Pillar of Islam), enjoining the good, forbidding the evil, and venerating the Prophet Muhammad and his family. In addition to the canonical festivals observed by Sunnis, Shi'i Americans, like all Shi'i Muslims, have commemorated *Ashura*—the anniversary of the prophet's grandson Husayn's death and martyrdom at Karbala—which takes place on the tenth day of the first Islamic calendar month (*Muharram*). However, for American Shi'a who cannot make

the pilgrimage to Karbala, certain transplanted rituals have developed in the United States. These include assemblies, sermons, public processions, special meals, physical rites of mourning, artwork (such as calligraphy and stained glass), poetry recitations, scale-model reconstructions of the town of Karbala, and even blood drives in place of self-flagellations, all of which are often performed in *Imambargahs*, or structures designated specifically for these types of worship. As with mosques, the issues of whether to use English or segregate women and men in *Imambargahs* have been contentious ones.

Though Shi'a have obtained more rights to worship freely in the United States than in some predominately Sunni Islamic countries, some of these rights to worship have been hard-fought or are even ongoing. For just one example, certain prisons, such as New York's Fishkill Correctional Facility, only supply Sunni chaplains, services, literature, and programs for their diverse community of Muslim prisoners.

Historically, Sufi Muslims—a widespread and influential group of mystics and ascetics—have emphasized the inner, often esoteric, way toward God (*tariqa*) in tandem with God's external or exoteric law (*shari'a*). Thus Sufis, like Shi'a, have observed the Five Pillars in addition to other, distinctive forms of worship. Also similarly to American Shi'a, Sufis in the United States have been unable to keep all of the practices to which Muslims in Islamic countries adhere, such as regular pilgrimage and tomb visitation. However, there are exceptions. For instance, Sam Lewis and Bawa Muhaiyaddeen each have a *mazar*, or tomb, where Americans make pilgrimage.

For Sufis, including those in the United States, one of the primary religious practices is *dhikr* (rendered *zikr* in some languages): literally, “remembering” or “mentioning” God. Although this practice has usually taken either a silent or spoken form (sometimes incorporating counting beads, or *tasbeih*), *dhikr* has sometimes had a musical component accompanied by instruments, singing, and dancing. The members of the Mevlevi Order of Sufis, founded by followers of Jalal al-Din Rumi in the thirteenth century and known more commonly as “Whirling Dervishes,” are perhaps the most famous performers of this particular style of *dhikr*. Other Sufi orders in America have practiced musical *dhikr* as well. For just one example, Hazrat Inayat Khan's later disciples—especially Sam Lewis and Shahabuddin David Less—originated the Dances of Universal Peace in New York in the 1960s and 1970s. However, more “traditional” or “sober” Sufi groups in

America—such as Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America and the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship—have continued to practice nonmusical forms of dhikr.

In addition to dhikr, Sufi Americans have also participated in prayer litanies, secluded meditation, night vigils, and initiation rites. Lastly, Sufis across the world have retreat centers or lodges known as *tekke* or *tekkiyeh* (also called *khanqahs*). These structures, like mosques, have provided space for worship such as prayer, meditation, and dhikr. However, unlike mosques, these centers also contain quarters for the Sufi master and teacher (with the title *pir* or *sheikh/shaykh* rather than imam) as well as Sufi pilgrims. The first Sufi center in the United States was the Kaaba Allah Lodge, established by Hazrat Inayat Khan's group (founded in 1910, they were simply dubbed the Sufi Order) in Fairfax, California, in the 1920s.

Conclusion

In short, Muslim Americans, while abiding by the standard forms of worship to which all members of Islam adhere, have been compelled to innovate and adapt certain practices due to the geographical, political, and social environment in which they currently find themselves. Whether Sunni, African American, Shi'i, Sufi, immigrant, or native-born (or a combination of any of these), Muslim styles of worship in the United States have reflected the country's diverse array of cultures. For this reason, Muslim Americans as a whole have composed a significant and distinctive subculture within the larger global Muslim community.

See also *African American Religion: Post-Civil Rights Era; Angels; Architecture: Muslim; Canada: Pluralism; Children and Adolescents; Devotionalism; Education: Parochial and Private Religious Day Schools; Education: Sunday Schools; Islam: in North America; Islam: Tradition and Heritage; Nation(s) of Islam; Qur'an; Women: Muslim; Worship* entries.

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Worship: Protestant

Protestant worship encompasses a variety of services in which Protestants offer praise and prayer to God, hear the scripture read and interpreted, attend to the presence of the Holy Spirit, and celebrate baptism and the Lord's Supper. Defined as the adoration of God, the term worship is used by Protestants in various ways. Sometimes it refers only to the nonpreaching portions of a service or the act of singing praise. Other times, worship designates the all-encompassing framework for Christian life. The focus here is on the history of communal gatherings for worship, especially Sunday services.

As Protestants took different approaches to reforming medieval Christian worship, distinct families of practice developed. Historian James F. White identified nine traditions of Protestant worship. These are defined by their distinctive institutional networks, theologies, and ritual structures. Five traditions coalesced prior to Protestant settlement in America: Lutheran, Anabaptist, Reformed, Anglican, and Puritan. Four emerged after settlement, though often in an international context: Quaker, Methodist, Frontier, and Pentecostal. Frontier designates the tradition that emerged from nineteenth-century revivalism and became the most pervasive in America. Like Puritan and Pentecostal, this tradition shapes worship in several denominational families.

The traditions differ in how they regulate worship. The Anglican, Lutheran, and to lesser degrees Methodist and Reformed traditions employ official texts prescribing the order and often the words of worship. Because of these written liturgies, these traditions are sometimes described as liturgical. Traditions that reject standardized texts and emphasize local autonomy, such as the Anabaptist, Puritan,

and Frontier, are often described as free church. It is sometimes helpful to define other traditions within the free church grouping, such as that rooted in African American experience or in the early nineteenth-century Restoration movement stemming from Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell. Other traditions, such as the Quaker and Pentecostal, go beyond an emphasis on local autonomy to affirm the Holy Spirit's role in actively leading worship.

In liturgical traditions, worship has long been a subject for reflection. Scholarship on these traditions is the most developed. In the Pentecostal tradition, worship is prized as a central practice and means of communion with God, though not often of critical reflection. In other traditions, worship per se is less important and the scholarship less developed. At times, Sunday assemblies in these traditions have been conceived as "preaching" or "meeting" rather than worship or liturgy. Music and preaching are the most studied aspects of worship in these traditions, but a focus on the importance of religious practice in both churches and the academy has substantially advanced research in recent decades.

This essay begins by introducing the traditions present in colonial America, identifying their major characteristics, and tracing their early history. It then proceeds chronologically, describing developments that shaped several traditions and the emergence of new traditions. Developments since 1960 are primarily discussed in the essay on contemporary currents in worship. While the Anglican tradition with its developed liturgy has greatly influenced other traditions, it positions itself between Catholicism and Protestantism and is discussed in a separate essay.

Puritans and the Free Church Tradition

Puritans settled in New England beginning in 1620 seeking liberty to worship, free of the requirements of the Church of England and its *Book of Common Prayer*, which they felt were not sufficiently reformed of Catholic beliefs and practices. While theologically Puritans belonged to the Reformed tradition, their rejection of liturgical texts made them a distinct free church tradition of worship. They sought to worship according to biblical principles, free of human inventions.

Sunday morning and afternoon services occurred in meetinghouses that focused on a pulpit occupied by a clergyman. Each service was composed of prayer, the reading of a chapter of the scripture, psalm singing, preaching, and additional prayer: it lasted about three hours. Because of concern about vain repetition, they did not recite the Lord's

Prayer. Similar concerns about the "dumb reading" of the scripture meant that often an exposition followed the reading. If a teacher was not available to give an exposition, the reading was sometimes omitted. Believing that only words provided by the Bible should be sung in worship, they did not sing hymns but only metrical translations of psalms.

Puritans observed two sacraments, as did most Protestants. Like Anglicans, Lutherans, Reformed, and Methodists, they baptized infant children of church members. They observed the Lord's Supper between six and twelve times a year at the conclusion of the morning service. Like many early Protestants, Puritans emphasized the Bible's statement that those who eat and drink the Lord's Supper unworthily, eat and drink "damnation" to themselves (1 Corinthians 11:29). All were expected to engage in preparation and self-examination before Communion. Only full members of the church could partake. The Bible's accounts of Jesus's Last Supper provided the outline as well as the warrant for the rite. The pastor recited the story, pausing after mentioning each action (blessing God, breaking the bread, distributing the bread, blessing God, sharing the cup) to perform it. Communicants remained seated while deacons served them the bread and wine. The mood was somber as the pastor exhorted at length on Christ's sacrificial love and the need for Christians to be penitent and thankful. Puritan sacramental theology was ambidextrous, affirming that the sacraments were reliable seals of what they represented but cautioning against too close an association of the sacramental elements with what they signified.

Puritans' insistence on the freedom of individual churches to follow biblical norms caused worship to be strongly shaped by local events and theological preoccupations. Worship practices changed over the decades in many congregations, particularly in the eighteenth century after Anglican churches appeared in New England and evangelicalism emerged. The Lord's Prayer became more common. Pipe organs and hymn singing were introduced. Services became shorter and standards of church membership were often relaxed to encourage more to partake of the Lord's Supper.

The emphasis on biblical authority and local autonomy made Puritan worship a diverse and influential tradition. It was continued not only by the Congregationalists, as later members of Puritan churches were known, but also by Baptists and Unitarians who separated from them. Baptists believed the Bible stated that baptism requires a profession of faith, thus they rejected infant baptism. Likewise, they usually insisted on baptism by immersion. Unitarians

insisted that a reasonable interpretation of the scripture left no room for the harsh doctrines of Calvinism or the traditional theology of the Trinity.

Quakers

Out of seventeenth-century English Puritanism, George Fox and other early Quakers, or Friends, pursued a more radical reform of worship. They dispensed not only with written liturgies but also with song books, hired clergy, and the rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper. At the heart of Quaker worship is the idea that God is accessible to all as an inner light. True baptism and Communion were inward experiences. They did not require external rites. In Pennsylvania and other settlements, Quakers erected unadorned meetinghouses. These lacked a pulpit, containing only simple benches facing one another. Until well into the nineteenth century, men and women met separately. They sat in silence, waiting to be moved by the spirit. When moved, an individual would speak or sing. Sometimes all would sing together. Elders exercised leadership by gently reproving those who transgressed the boundaries of acceptable speech. They also signaled the end of the meeting.

Beginning in the 1830s, many evangelical Quakers were influenced by revivalism and embraced "programmed worship," that is, prepared sermons, music, and prayers such as used by other denominations. The form of traditional Quaker worship changed little over the years, but as the Quaker tradition developed, silence was sometimes prized not as a means of being open to the spirit but as a practice in and of itself. For some liberal Friends, the goal was not to be vessels of the spirit but through silent reflection to access their true selves.

Anabaptists

Eighteenth-century immigration brought another free church tradition from Europe. Anabaptists, including Mennonites, Amish, and Hutterites, shared with Puritans an insistence on relying on the Bible for the regulation of worship. They tended not to emphasize the authority of the Old Testament, however, and like Baptists rejected infant baptism. Most also rejected the use of set liturgical texts. They did embrace hymnody, however. Many early hymns reflected the witness of their martyrs during persecution by the state churches in Europe. In later years, they adopted hymns from other groups

Anabaptists remained a small tradition in America. Those who assimilated most fully into American society adopted

the worship practices of other evangelicals, although they often retained unaccompanied singing and the practice of foot washing whenever the Lord's Supper was administered. Others, such as the Amish, retained more distinctive traditions of worship, including worship in homes instead of in church buildings.

Lutherans

Among the first generation of Protestants, Martin Luther was the most conservative in his liturgical reforms and retained many aspects of medieval liturgy including images, vestments, the liturgical year, and a traditional structure of lectionary readings. He excised the Mass of prayers that presented it as the church's sacrifice, reducing the canon to the words of institution recounting the Last Supper. He retained, however, the service's traditional structure and many of its texts. He and the Lutheran confessions insisted on the realism of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Sins were truly remitted in baptism; Christ's body and blood were truly present in the bread and wine. They also, however, insisted that most of the ceremonies were not essential. They were *adiaphora*, things indifferent. Accordingly, some Lutherans preserved a traditional form of liturgical worship, while others, especially under the influence of pietism and rationalism, dispensed with liturgical tradition and ordered worship as seemed to best reflect the gospel of salvation by faith alone. Lutherans, however, were united by another legacy from Luther: congregational participation by singing hymns, not just psalms in worship.

Lutherans brought to America no single liturgical text. Swedish settlers in Delaware and Pennsylvania initially maintained the high-church ceremonies and sung liturgy of the Church of Sweden. They later modified their services to make them more like the services of neighboring churches. In 1748, American Lutherans' first synodical body, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, adopted a German language liturgy prepared by Henry Melchior Mühlberg. Based in part upon the liturgy of a German congregation in London, it was similar to German and Scandinavian liturgies, including prayer texts, a lectionary, the *Gloria in Excelsis* hymn, and the creed. The Lord's Supper was not a regular part of the Sunday service but had to take place on Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. In 1786, a revised form of this liturgy was printed, and in 1795 an English translation was published.

The influence of rationalism and evangelicalism together with acculturation to American practices drew the services in many Lutheran congregations more in line with free

church traditions. The liturgy prepared for the New York Ministerium in 1814 consisted mainly of rubrics for the minister. In many churches, extemporaneous prayers were substituted for written ones and the pastor's chosen sermon text for the appointed lectionary readings. Yet Lutheran services continued to be distinguished by occasional use of liturgical text, the observance of the liturgical year, and the signing of Reformation hymnody. Continued immigration multiplied the number of Lutheran denominations and liturgies until efforts to develop a common liturgy emerged late in the nineteenth century.

Reformed

The Reformed tradition, whose early European leaders included Huldreich Zwingli and John Calvin, was committed to a thorough reform of worship according to principles derived from the Bible and the early church. Vestments were abandoned, images were removed from churches, and, until the eighteenth century, only biblical texts, chiefly the psalms, were sung in worship. Baptism and the Lord's Supper were shorn of their medieval ceremony. Reformed abandoned the medieval custom, retained by Anglicans and Lutherans, of kneeling for Communion. They sat at tables or later, in pews. They also differed with Lutherans and insisted that Christ's body was not physically present in the bread and wine. This is not to say that for all Reformed the sacraments were "mere" symbols. Calvin, for example, insisted that the bread and wine truly conveyed Christ's body and blood to those who received them in faith. On the whole, worship had a strongly didactic character. Learned sermons were prized and sacramental rites were marked by exhortations that explained their meaning.

The Dutch Reformed in New York and the German Reformed in Pennsylvania both used versions of the "Palatinate Liturgy" of 1563. In either version, it was a pulpit liturgy used by the minister, not a prayer book used by the people. It provided texts for sacramental rites and some instructions and prayers for the regular Sunday service. The Lord's Supper was to take place between six and twelve times a year. While the Dutch were slow to embrace hymns, the influence of Lutherans on German Reformed was evident in their hymn signing and the inclusion in their hymnal of liturgical material, including the collects, epistles, and gospels for Sundays and other holidays and the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. In both groups, evangelical revivals and the dominance of free church worship in America placed pressure on their distinctive traditions.

In Britain, the adoption of the *Westminster Directory of Worship* in 1645 meant that English Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians would regulate their worship through a collection of guidelines and a few model prayers rather than a written liturgy. For this reason, Presbyterian worship in early America could be placed in the Puritan tradition instead of the Reformed. American Presbyterians adopted a revision of the *Directory* in 1788 which with slight revisions regulated their worship until more substantial revisions in the 1960s. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, however, various Presbyterians looked to earlier Reformed texts to revive a distinctively Reformed approach to worship.

Administering the Lord's Supper in multiday "sacramental occasions" was a distinctive Presbyterian practice. At these events, ministers from neighboring churches joined together. Typically, two days of sermons were preached in preparation. As in many churches of the time, those who had prepared to receive Communion were presented with a token that admitted them to the Lord's Supper. On Sunday, the supper itself was framed by long orations. The occasion concluded with services of thanksgiving on Monday. These festivals were frequently attended by large numbers of believers and visited by emotional experiences of conviction and conversion. In the nineteenth century, they became the primary basis for the emergence of the camp meeting.

Methodists

Pietism and the evangelical revivals of the eighteenth century affected all Protestant traditions with their emphasis on the inward experience of God's grace. Strict views of what constituted proper worship were challenged by practices that conveyed spiritual experience. Preaching to the felt needs of the congregation was judged more important than following a set cycle of the liturgical year. Extemporaneous spirit-anointed prayer was preferred over set texts. Evangelical hymns challenged the exclusive singing of psalms. This pietism was expressed in several immigrant groups from the continent including the Moravians (*Unitas Fratrum*) and the Brethren, but the largest tradition to emerge from eighteenth-century revivals was Methodism.

Methodism began as a renewal movement within the Church of England, led by John Wesley, an Anglican priest. Accordingly, Methodist worship was shaped both by Anglican liturgy and the practices of Methodist meetings. These meetings were freely structured, consisting of prayer, preaching, testimony, and the signing of hymns, very many of which were written by John's brother Charles Wesley. Methodist

spirituality focused on the importance of religious experience and testimony to that experience. This was highlighted in the practices of love feast, watch night, and covenant renewal and catalyzed through the intensity of the quarterly conference and camp meetings. These occasional services in turn shaped the nature of the weekly worship.

Methodists adopted the love feast from the Moravians. It focused on lay testimony. The basic format included a hymn, prayer, the taking of bread and water, the relation of religious experience, almsgiving, singing, prayer, and benediction. Often held a few days before the Lord's Supper, it provided an opportunity for reconciliation prior to the sacrament. Admission was limited to members and serious inquirers. This generated criticism, but it enabled women and men, often of different races, to speak openly in a context of Christian love. In the twentieth century, as Methodists came to see themselves more as a churchly denomination and less as a religious society, the love feast fell into disuse.

Watch night services, nighttime services of singing, prayer, and exhortation, initially occurred throughout the year. Gradually, the service came to be fixed on New Year's Eve, and it became the occasion for the renewal of believers' solemn covenant with God, an independent Wesleyan tradition.

Quarterly conferences, a part of Methodist polity, were also important occasions of worship, often combining love feast, watch night, preaching, and the Lord's Supper in a two-day event. Because of the limited number of ordained clergy, these were often the only occasions when Methodists received the Lord's Supper. They were the major worship occasions for early American Methodists and functioned as a regular time of revival, one of the forerunners of the American camp meeting.

In 1784, when Wesley permitted U.S. Methodists to organize separately from the Church of England, he sent the church his own abridgement of the *Book of Common Prayer* to be its liturgy. *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America* provided texts for Sunday morning and evening prayer, the Lord's Supper, baptism, marriage, burial, and ordination. It also reflected Wesley's theology of Christian perfection in his redaction of some of the prayers. Wesley stated that the Lord's Supper should be celebrated weekly. This was attempted in some urban areas but soon abandoned.

American Methodists had been shaped more by distinctively Methodist services than by Anglican liturgy, so in 1792, one year after Wesley's death, the liturgies in the *Sunday Service* were revised and placed in the denomination's *Book of Discipline*. In place of morning and evening prayer, directions

were given that Sunday morning worship consist of singing, prayer, the reading of a chapter out of the Old Testament and another out of the New, and preaching. Other services were largely unchanged, though the liturgy of the word was removed from the Lord's Supper, leaving only a sacramental rite to be appended to a preaching service. Preachers generally used these forms for sacraments and rites of passage, though even these were sometimes altered.

Revivalism and the Frontier Tradition

Revivalism generated a distinct free church tradition characterized by a strong focus on preaching for conversion and a pragmatic approach to determining the proper forms of worship. The early distinctive form of this Frontier tradition was the camp meeting, where preachers, often of many denominations, preached for several days to thousands gathered in an outdoor assembly. The landmark 1801 camp meeting at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, was convened as a Presbyterian sacramental occasion, but Methodist quarterly conferences and Separate Baptist preaching assemblies also contributed to the form. While camp meetings often included the Lord's Supper, their distinctive elements were preaching for conversion and the emotional response of the awakened. This introduced a new structure and norm into Protestant worship.

A noted spokesman for this approach was Charles G. Finney, a Presbyterian who served as an urban revivalist. Finney advocated a number of controversial new measures including inquiry meetings, protracted meetings, and the anxious bench where those who were troubled concerning the state of their soul sat to be addressed directly by the preacher. In *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (1835), Finney defended these innovations, insisting that forms of worship were not set in the Bible or by tradition but should be evaluated on their ability to accomplish the desired goal.

For Finney and many others, this goal was conversion. Whereas other traditions saw worship services as primarily concerned with the worship of God and the ongoing formation of Christians, this tradition tended to see its purpose as reviving lapsed Christians and making converts. This approach was revolutionary but well attuned to Americans' pragmatic spirit and the free-market environment of American religion.

It became the most widespread approach to worship, characterizing the worship of most Baptist and independent churches and strongly reshaping the services of Methodists and other evangelicals. The initial portion of the service was essentially preparation for the sermon. It consisted of singing, prayer, and perhaps scripture readings.

Prayer included intercession for the concerns of the community, but it often focused on making the congregation responsive to the sermon. As the focal point of worship, the sermon played something of a sacramental role, serving as a means of grace. It led to the final part of the service, an invitation or “altar call.” Here, those who wished to respond by professing their faith in Christ might be invited to come forward while the congregation sang a hymn of invitation such as “Just as I Am.”

In many respects, this approach focused worship services on the people, instructing them and appealing to them for a decision. At the same time, it reaffirmed a community’s beliefs and provided a ritual of weekly personal renewal. The songs most characteristic of this tradition are gospel hymns. They are typically phrased in the first or second person as hymns of dedication, testimony, or exhortation. One prolific author of these texts was Fanny Crosby, a Methodist, who wrote “Blessed Assurance,” “Rescue the Perishing,” and thousands of others. Auditorium-style buildings became popular after the Civil War in part because of the attention they directed on the preacher and choir as individuals addressing the congregation and in part because they made members of the congregation visible to one another, creating a sense of community and social pressure.

In addition to the Sunday morning service, this tradition developed several distinct forms of worship. Sunday evening services were typically more informal, with music in a more popular style. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, assemblies opened and closed Sunday school classes. These also employed popular music and were more likely to feature creative forms of worship, new rituals, and specially written liturgies focused on a didactic theme. Mid-week prayer meetings provided an opportunity for lay testimony and intercessory prayer. Revivals featured a series of special services often led by visiting musicians and preachers. The annual calendar was strongly marked by periodic mission emphases, national holidays, and other special days such as Children’s Day and Mother’s Day.

A distinctive tradition to emerge on the American frontier was the Restoration tradition stemming from Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell. Responding to denominational diversity and objecting to the strict Calvinism of their native Presbyterianism, they insisted on the New Testament as the sole norm for Christian faith and practice. For them this meant baptism by immersion for the remission of sins upon profession of faith, the observance of the Lord’s Supper each Lord’s Day, and the rejection of instrumental music

in worship. Despite observing the Lord’s Supper weekly, this tradition was strongly influenced by Enlightenment rationalism and saw the Eucharist chiefly as a memorial. It also initially rejected ordained clergy, and within the various denominations of this tradition lay presidency at Communion remained customary.

African Americans

African Americans found a home in every tradition, but they were most numerous in Methodist, free church, and Pentecostal traditions. In part, this was due to an emphasis on experience and free expression that created an amenable environment for indigenous African spiritual practices, including spirit possession, dance, and call and response singing. Through their contributions to interracial religious gatherings, African Americans shaped the development of evangelical worship even as it was practiced in white congregations.

While African Americans sometimes worshiped in the same manner as other ethnic groups, many shared several distinctive practices. Many African American Baptist churches maintained a distinction between two parts of a Sunday service. The “devotion” led by the deacons featured long formulaic prayers and the lining out and slow singing of older Protestant hymns. This was followed by “worship” led by the pastor with a much livelier musical style. Walter Pitts has suggested that this two-part service may reflect an African ritual structure that catalyzes spirit possession.

Other characteristics predominant in African American churches include elaborate ritual surrounding the sermon and the Lord’s Supper, including special garments worn by leaders and fixed expressions of ritual language. This heightened ritualization served to affirm human dignity among a historically oppressed group. The ritualization of hospitality through the formal welcoming of guests helped serve the same purpose. Distinctive musical repertoires, including the use of music in the sermon, are also shared by many African Americans across different traditions.

Rationalism

Along with revivalism’s emphasis on emotion and pragmatic approach to forms of worship, the rationalism of post-Enlightenment America reshaped older traditions of worship. Rationalistic Protestants saw the primary purpose of worship as being to instruct and edify. The main task of preaching was to encourage a moral life in worshipers. This led many away from liturgical tradition.

More pervasively, rationalism transformed understandings of the sacraments. Increasingly they were seen simply as “ordinances” that must be followed. Their significance was primarily in the interior reflection they prompted. Unitarian minister Ralph Waldo Emerson reflected this view in 1828 when he explained that the whole aim of the Lord’s Supper “is but this, to make those who partake of it better.” Four years later, he became so convinced that the Lord’s Supper was not necessary that he resigned his pastorate rather than administer it. While Emerson is an extreme example, with little controversy, the Lord’s Supper came to be widely seen as a human act of remembrance and an urging to good behavior. It was not a means of grace in which God took an active role.

Liturgical Revival in the Nineteenth Century

There were occasional protests against this low view of the sacraments and the dominance of revivalism and the free church traditions. These first became prominent in the 1840s. The most theologically substantial was led by John Williamson Nevin and Phillip Schaff, professors at the German Reformed seminary in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. In the *Anxious Bench* (1843), Nevin presented a scathing critique of revivalism, arguing that the emphasis on the creation of a crisis moment for conversion overturned the gradual work of sanctification. In subsequent works, Nevin rejected not only new measures of revivalism but also the prevailing views of the sacraments. He sought to recover Calvin’s strong affirmation of Christ’s mystical presence and, influenced by Romantic thought, emphasized the role of the incarnation in God’s ongoing work of grace through the church and its sacraments. In 1847, the German Reformed Church authorized the composition of a new liturgy. Nevin helped prepare a “Provisional Liturgy,” released in 1857, and a revised version published in 1866 as *An Order of Worship for the Reformed Church*. These used a full Eucharistic prayer for the Lord’s Supper, rather than simply the words of institution. They created a controversy that persisted until a Presbyterian-style *Directory of Worship* was adopted in 1884. It permitted liturgical diversity, leaving the Mercersburg theology a living practice in a few congregations, but largely a movement to be celebrated by liturgical reformers a century later.

There were also minor movements to recover liturgical texts to provide for orderly worship in other denominations. Charles Baird published *Eutaxia; or The Presbyterian Liturgies* anonymously in 1855, but he was confident enough two years later to release under his own name *A Book of Public*

Prayer prepared from sixteenth-century Reformed liturgies. In 1867, Charles W. Shields argued historically that with minor amendments, the *Book of Common Prayer* was an authentically Presbyterian book. Thomas O. Summers spearheaded the effort to revive Wesley’s *Sunday Service* for optional use, receiving permission to publish the *Sunday Service of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* in 1867. The (Dutch) Reformed Church in America entertained resolutions to establish more uniformity in liturgy in 1848 and again in 1853. A provisional liturgy published in 1857 was not officially approved by the denomination’s regional bodies. In 1882, a revised liturgy was officially adopted.

Among Lutherans, liturgical recovery was complicated by the large number of Lutheran bodies in the United States, their various languages of worship, and contest over Lutherans’ relations with other Protestants. The most significant development came in 1883 when representatives of three bodies began to prepare a *Common Service*. Guided by Reformation Lutheran orders, they agreed on a basic pattern that included the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, New Testament lessons, creed, sermon, general prayer, and the Eucharist without a Eucharistic Prayer. Completed in 1888, the service was initially published in different versions by the three bodies. But their joint acceptance of a hymnal containing the *Common Service* in 1917 facilitated their union as the United Lutheran Church in 1918. In the coming years, the service would be adopted by almost all English-speaking Lutherans.

The growing prosperity and cultural sophistication of many Protestants together with the example of the Episcopal Church strongly motivated many of these liturgical efforts. Debating the liturgy in 1873, the Reformed Church in America considered simply adopting the *Book of Common Prayer* as its liturgy. While there was considerable desire to differentiate Protestants from the more controversial doctrines emphasized in the Catholic revival in Anglicanism, many Protestants desired the order, decorum, and congregational participation that characterized the Anglican service of morning prayer. While the whole Anglican service was adopted by few, from the late nineteenth century onward many Protestants, particularly those in upper classes, did model their services on it. Hymnals provided standard orders of worship and supplied texts for responsive readings and tunes for singing canticles and acclamations such as the *Gloria Patri*. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these became common practices in many upper- and middle-class Protestant churches, and distinctive evangelical practices, such as Methodist love feasts, diminished.

Concern for social issues led to broadly accepted changes in Communion practice. As the temperance movement grew in strength, many were troubled by the use of fermented wine. In the 1870s, the marketing of Dr. Welch's Unfermented Wine provided an alternative that was eventually embraced by all except some Lutherans and Presbyterians who did not support temperance. The discovery, also in the 1870s, that disease was spread by germs challenged the use of a common Communion cup. Individual cups, filled prior to the service and passed on custom-made trays, began to be used in the 1880s and were practically universal by the 1920s. Lutherans concerned about the disposal of surplus consecrated wine, however, objected to them. Many Lutheran congregations retained the common chalice; others made accommodation for a cup to be filled from a chalice just prior to Communion.

Pentecostals

The Pentecostal revival of the early twentieth century created a distinct tradition of worship found not only in Pentecostal churches but also in the widespread charismatic movement. It is distinguished by its emphasis on spontaneity, experience, and the exercise of spiritual gifts. To the familiar rites of evangelical worship, it added speaking and singing in tongues, the interpretation of tongues, healing, prophecy, being "slain in the Spirit," and physical expressions such as raised hands and holy dance.

For many in the Pentecostal tradition, worship is the Christian way of life. They understand acts of worship as means of communion with the presence of God and all experiences of God's presence as worship. Awareness of the presence of God yields concern for the needs of others. Thus, ministry constitutes an important component of worship services. This includes healing rites and personal intercessory prayers for others, sometimes with the laying on of hands.

Pentecostal worship has been described as having a strongly oral quality. There is generally no written liturgy, and the songs and choruses sung change over time and are often committed to memory. This oral character gives agency to the worshipers. Spontaneity is valued with the Holy Spirit functioning as the ultimate liturgical leader.

Despite the emphasis on spontaneity, there are often three sequential clusters of activities in a service: worship and praise, sermon or biblical-pastoral message, and the altar response rite. Within these three rites there are many gestures and practices that are important: exclamations such as

"Glory," or "Hallelujah," upraised hands, touching, hand-clapping, and communal singing in tongues. The altar response rite is not merely the invitation characteristic of evangelical services but is a time of "tarrying" in God's presence in which spiritual gifts are enjoyed and forms of ministry take place. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the key rite of passage, but unlike water baptism, it is not a rite that is administered but an experience that must be sought through prayer. Some churches in the Pentecostal tradition have de-emphasized the practice of paranormal spiritual gifts often out of a concern for the perception of visitors and the desire to present a well-organized program to the church.

Liturgy Revival in the Twentieth Century

In the twentieth century, services rooted in the Pentecostal and free church traditions continued to develop and flourish, but there was also a marked increase in liturgical traditions of worship, particularly among mainline Protestants. Methodists published a standard order of service in 1905 and Presbyterians published their first *Book of Common Worship* in 1906. The most significant developments, however, took place after World War I. In the 1920s, there was a surge of interest in the aesthetics and psychological experience of worship. Writers such as liberal Congregationalist Willard Sperry and Congregationalist-turned-Unitarian Von Ogden Vogt emphasized the need for objective forms of worship that suggested the reality of God and did not focus directly on forming various feelings in the worshiper, but rather led them through a set of objective acts of worship. Many writers advised ordering the elements of worship according to the stages of mystical experience they discerned in the prophet's account of his vision of God in Isaiah 6. Protestants of many denominations built churches with divided chancels that focused on an altar or Communion table, not on the choir and pulpit. In this and other ways, their vision of liturgical worship was shaped largely by the practice of the Episcopal Church, particularly on morning prayer and sermon. Service books were published for all traditions, including Congregationalists' *Book of Church Services* (1922). Individual congregations also began to reproduce their own orders of service.

From the 1930s to 1960s, the influence of ecumenism and neo-orthodoxy directed Protestant interest in liturgical worship in a more historical and theological direction. Liturgists in many denominations directed attention to the historic liturgies in their traditions. These forms were often valued for their theological content, particularly their emphasis on

human sinfulness. Greater acknowledgement was also made of the traditional seasons of the church year. Ecumenical conversations directed new attention to historic sacramental theology, yielding a greater attention to the sacraments as conveying God's grace. This ecumenical and historical orientation was reflected in the liturgies and hymns contained in books published toward the end of this era, such as the *Lutheran Service Book and Hymnal* (1958) and the *Methodist Hymnal* (1966). Ecumenical contacts also brought a few Protestants, particularly among Lutherans, into contact with the international liturgical movement, which would soon dramatically reshape much of Protestant worship.

The 1960s began a new era marked by convergence among denominations in liturgical practice, the use by many Protestants of a three-year common lectionary, and an emphasis on forms of worship that would relate to the contemporary world. The decades that followed also saw contemporary worship emphasized in free church traditions, as seeker services developed from the evangelical emphasis on pragmatic forms and praise and worship emerged from the charismatic branch of the Pentecostal tradition. These and other developments are discussed in the essay on contemporary currents in worship.

See also *Architecture: Protestant, From the Nineteenth Century to the Present; Camp Meetings; Ecumenism; Holidays; House Church Movement; Liturgical Arts; Megachurches; Ministry, Professional; Music: Christian; Preaching; Revivalism* entries; *Visual Culture; Women: Ordination of; Worship: Contemporary Currents.*

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Worship: Roman Catholic

Roman Catholic worship centers on the Mass. Here scripture is read, prayers offered, and in the sacrament of the Eucharist bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. Together with the liturgy of the hours (formerly the divine office), a cycle of daily prayer, the Mass and the celebration of the other six sacraments constitute the church's official liturgy. Various popular devotions also play a role in public worship.

Reforms authorized by two ecumenical (or churchwide) councils shaped the history of worship. After the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the liturgy was officially distinguished from popular devotions and standardized in the *Roman Missal* (1570) and other books that prescribed the words and actions of liturgy throughout the world. Despite a high degree of standardization, worship practices varied somewhat among ethnic groups and changed in some ways over the centuries. These changes pale in comparison to the substantial revision of liturgical books authorized by the Second Vatican Council in 1963. Dramatic changes followed: revised rites reflected new theological and historical judgments, liturgical language shifted from Latin to modern languages, the practice of popular devotions declined, and cultural diversity in liturgy was advocated. These changes began a new era in the long history of Catholic worship. They also generated controversy and resistance, and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, several were being reversed.

Worship after Trent

To understand Catholic worship between Trent and Vatican II, it is useful to consider four elements: authority, sin, ritual, and the miraculous. Authority rested with the clergy who alone had the power to perform the sacraments. The chief

concern of worship was to secure God's grace upon sinners. The liturgy was replete with words and gestures emphasizing human sinfulness. Each Mass presented Christ's sacrifice on the cross anew to God as a meritorious sacrifice for particular intentions. These could be temporal or spiritual, but most commonly the Mass and other devotions were offered for the dead, to reduce the suffering of the souls in purgatory and speed their entrance into heaven.

The efficacy of the sacraments and devotions required precise performance of rituals. In the Roman rite to which most Catholics belonged, liturgies were conducted in Latin by a priest. Mass took two major forms; in both the priest usually faced an altar with his back toward the people. At Low Mass he said the liturgy, and an attendant made the necessary responses. At High Mass he chanted the liturgy; a deacon and subdeacon assisted; and a choir sang the *Kyrie*, *Sanctus*, and other parts of the Mass. Portions of the Mass had to be said inaudibly, and often all of the Low Mass was spoken this way.

Laypeople were required to attend Mass every Sunday. Kneeling in silence, the people might follow the Mass in a bilingual translation. More typically they performed other devotions. Some said the rosary, a devotion focused on the Virgin Mary. Others followed books that provided prayers appropriate to various parts of the Mass or forms for making an act of spiritual communion.

The Mass focused on the miraculous transformation of bread and wine into Christ's body and blood. As the moment of consecration approached, bells rang to direct attention to the altar. After consecrating the bread and the wine, the priest elevated each so they could be seen and adored. All had a clear view of the elevated sacrament and of the central tabernacle where consecrated wafers were reserved for Communion outside of Mass and enshrined for adoration. The people's role was to pray silently.

While the Council of Trent had advised Catholics to receive Communion at each Mass they attended, they were required to receive Communion only once a year. Many regarded eating Christ's body as too holy an act to be performed frequently. Prior to Communion, it was necessary to receive the sacrament of penance and not to eat or drink after midnight. Since priests were also under this obligation, Masses took place in the morning. The laity often received Communion not during Mass with the priest but before or afterwards. They received only the bread, not the wine. They did not touch the bread; the priest placed it on their tongue. All this served to emphasize the authority of the priest, the

sinfulness of humans, the importance of ritual, and the miracle of the Eucharist. These elements also characterized the other six sacraments: baptism, confirmation, penance, holy orders, matrimony, and extreme unction.

The liturgy structured time through a cycle of daily prayers and annual festivals. Monastic communities held eight daily services, known as the divine office. Clergy and members of religious orders were also required to pray them, though not in community. Most Catholics experienced the divine office only if they attended the parish service of Vespers on Sunday afternoon. The liturgical year included both the cycle of seasons and festivals dated with respect to Christmas and Easter and saints days occurring on fixed dates.

In addition to the liturgy, public devotions that emerged in the late medieval and early modern period formed an important part of Catholic life. These included the Forty Hours Devotion, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and holy hours, together with public celebrations of the stations of the cross, the rosary, prayers to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and other devotions. These devotions, unlike the Mass, were celebrated in the vernacular and could take place in the evening.

Ethnic Diversity and Public Celebrations of Devotions

Worship in Spanish colonies reflected Baroque culture and featured devotion to many saints. Along with preaching the pageantry of the liturgy and outdoor processions on festival days served missionaries as tools of evangelization. The commemoration of Christ's passion in Holy Week received particular emphasis, with members of lay organizations known as *penitentes* engaging in public displays of extreme devotion.

In British colonies, a plain-style Catholicism prevailed, shaped in part by the values of the Enlightenment and in part by legal restrictions on Catholic public worship. A typical Mass was said by a traveling priest, either in a church or in the parlor of a house where he most likely dressed in street clothes, not vestments. Since priests only visited infrequently, nearly all present made their confession and received Communion. In the absence of a priest, laity were advised to meet on Sundays for English prayers and readings.

English also played a significant role in the Mass. Prior to becoming the first bishop of Baltimore in 1789, John Carroll argued for the celebration of the sacraments in the vernacular. In 1791 Bishop Carroll showed more caution but still instructed that on Sundays and feast days the gospel

be read in English. He also specified English prayers to be said aloud by the people. Through the first several decades of the nineteenth century, significant portions of other sacramental liturgies were often said in English.

The worship favored by other early American Catholics was shaped by the visual extravagance and the connection between the senses and religious sentiment characteristic of the Baroque period. Ambrose Maréchal, who became archbishop of Baltimore in 1817, lamented the lack of color and statuary in the Classical Revival cathedral commissioned by Carroll. He also attempted to prevent the publication of an English translation of the missal. Plain-style liturgical piety was largely interior and focused on the Mass and the divine office, with little attention to the saints. The piety encouraged by Maréchal, on the other hand, emphasized the visual aspects of Catholicism and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mary, and other saints. These were increasingly represented in churches by colorful statues and windows.

As immigration surged after 1840, other groups brought diverse worship traditions. Among the Irish, silent Low Masses were nearly universal. Germans insisted that devotions and sermons be conducted in German. They used more music in worship, including, by the twentieth century, congregational German hymns corresponding to the parts of the Mass. Poles and other Eastern Europeans emphasized special services linked to the liturgical year, such as a vigil before a replica of Jesus' tomb on the Holy Saturday.

Given traditions of anticlericalism among Mexican and Italian Americans, their piety did not center on the Mass and clergy-led devotions. Instead annual festivals involving street processions, such as the one in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel among Italians, were central rituals of public worship. Mexican Americans emphasized attendance at rites of passage such as baptism, weddings, and funerals and at church on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. As these groups became more Americanized, however, they increasingly conformed to the Mass-and-sacraments Catholicism promoted by the Irish American hierarchy.

The greatest liturgical diversity came with immigrants from Ukraine, Romania, Syria, and neighboring lands that brought Eastern-rite Catholicism to North America. Although in communion with Rome, these churches do not follow the Roman liturgy but rather ancient Eastern liturgies in their own ancient or modern languages. Most are known as Byzantine or Greek Catholic and use the same liturgies as the Eastern Orthodox, principally the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. Others, including Armenians and Copts, use

liturgies shared with Oriental Orthodox churches. Maronites, members of a Lebanese rite, have their own liturgy.

The period from 1840 to Vatican II was marked by a strong emphasis on popular devotions. One widespread devotion was to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Defined by visions received by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque between 1673 and 1675, it focused on Jesus' love and continual suffering from human ingratitude. Pius IX made the Sacred Heart a universal feast in 1856. First Friday communions as reparation for Jesus' suffering became common, as did the observance of a "holy hour" on Thursday evening to share in Christ's sufferings in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Forty Hours Devotion was also widely observed. Introduced to the United States in 1853, the core of this devotion was the exposition and veneration of the Blessed Sacrament over three days. The event began with an elaborate procession and included special liturgies, talks by a visiting priest, and the entire parish receiving Communion. Public performances of devotions, such as the rosary or prayers to a particular saint, largely replaced Vespers as the Sunday afternoon service. Many parishes scheduled a midweek devotion as well. Like Vespers, evening services were always concluded by the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, in which the priest blessed the people with a consecrated host.

In 1886 Leo XIII extended devotions into the Mass when he stipulated that the priest lead certain prayers to Mary, St. Michael, God the Father, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The papacy's role in promoting and standardizing devotions fostered an international Catholic culture centered in Rome. Devotionalism strengthened the bonds of Catholic identity and community, marking a boundary between Catholics and their Protestant neighbors. Devotions also reshaped the year: May and October focused on Mary, March on St. Joseph, June on the Sacred Heart, and November on prayers for the dead.

The popularity of devotions rested largely in the fact that they were celebrated in the vernacular, involved active participation by the people, and expressed a warm and affective piety that united the personal concerns and life experiences of the devotee with the emotional experience of Jesus and the saints. They also partook of the sentimental culture of nineteenth-century America. At the same time, they reinforced Catholic and ethnic identity.

Frequent Communion and the Liturgical Movement

In the twentieth century two reform movements reshaped Catholic worship. In 1905 Pius X called the faithful to

frequent, even daily, Communion. Rather than an exceptional event preceded by scrupulous preparation, Communion was to be a regular event that sustained a holy life. Pius advised that if only venial sins had occurred since one's last confession, the sacrament of penance was not required prior to Communion. In 1910 he lowered the age for first Communion. Formerly Catholics had made their first Communion between ages ten and fourteen; soon it was a rite of passage for seven-year-olds. Confirmation, which had taken place before Communion, now became an adolescent rite. With vigorous promotion by many clergy, the frequency of Communion increased. By the 1950s monthly reception was the norm for pious Catholics, and some communed daily. Alterations in the pre-Communion fast facilitated frequent reception. In 1953 Pius XII announced that drinking water did not break the fast. In 1957 the fast was reduced to three hours for solid food and one hour for liquids other than water, thus facilitating evening Masses.

The other force reshaping worship was the liturgical movement. This movement argued that since the texts of the liturgies showed that they were communal services, the laity should not simply witness them but fully take on the role assigned to them. In 1903 Pius X provided a rallying cry when he called "active participation" in the liturgy by the laity the "most important and indispensable source" of the true Christian spirit. This European-centered movement began in the United States in 1926 when Virgil Michel, a Benedictine at St. John's Abbey in Minnesota, founded the journal *Orate Fratres* (after 1951 *Worship*). Michel emphasized that the liturgy's communal character was the foundation of the reform of both church and society. The liturgy showed that the people were called to an active role in the church's work and demonstrated the mutual obligations of members of a Christian society to one another.

The initial focus of the liturgical movement was on increasing appreciation of and participation in the existing liturgy. Easy-to-follow service books such as *My Sunday Missal* (1932) enabled worshipers to follow the words and action of the Mass and thus "pray the Mass" silently, instead of performing other devotions. Beginning in 1940 annual Liturgical Weeks in different cities promoted the movement. By the 1950s in a few places, worshipers were singing the responses at High Mass. In other places a "Dialogue Mass" was practiced where worshipers recited the responses. To facilitate this, sometimes one priest said Mass in Latin at the altar while another led the congregation through the Mass.

This cumbersome arrangement demonstrated the need for reform of liturgical texts and regulations. Beginning in 1927 some European countries received approval for translation of the *Ritual*, containing the services of baptism, marriage, and extreme unction, into the vernacular. Not until 1946, however, did a few U.S. Catholics form the Vernacular Society to lobby for English liturgy. In 1954, despite the opposition of high-ranking American bishops, a newly translated *Ritual* was approved for the United States. As the bishops' resistance suggests, the spread of the liturgical movement in the United States was limited. It was strongest in the Midwest and among German Americans, but many parishes were almost untouched by it and, thus, unprepared for the dramatic changes that soon arrived.

Vatican II and Changes in Practice

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) overwhelmingly approved the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy in November 1963. Fundamental to the Constitution was the call for the "full, conscious, and active participation" of the laity in the liturgy. It also called for liturgical books to be revised so the liturgy would more clearly express its meaning. The first reforms took effect on November 29, 1964. Most of the liturgy was conducted in English. A layman read a scripture lesson and led general intercessions. (Women were formally permitted to be readers in 1970.) The people were instructed to sing an opening song, to say the responses, and to sing the parts of the Mass formerly sung by the choir. The priest faced the people throughout the service, standing behind a freestanding altar. At Communion in many churches, people received standing and were offered consecrated wine as well as the bread. The pre-Communion fast was reduced to one hour, and the devotional prayers introduced by Leo XIII were omitted.

Early opposition to these changes was not widespread. They were greeted with an attitude of acceptance rooted in Catholic obedience to authority. Many people were confused by the changes, and the reasons for them were not well explained in some parishes. Others were disoriented at being asked to say things previously delegated to servers or the choir. Still others relished the ability to hear and participate in the liturgy in their own language. While official reforms emanated only from Rome, the spirit of the reform and the knowledge that further changes were forthcoming encouraged experimentation. Collections of experimental liturgies circulated widely. This trend increased in 1967 when permission arrived for the entire

liturgy to be said in the vernacular. An English liturgy required new musical settings along with English hymns and songs. Some were taken from Protestant or Catholic collections. Others were newly composed, often in a folk style. The guitar-accompanied folk Mass soon became a common feature of Catholic life.

Widespread theological and cultural movements gave liturgy a much stronger emphasis on the immanence of God. The chief understanding of the Mass was no longer that it was a sacrifice performed according to a precise ritual but rather that it was a celebratory meal. Thanksgiving was emphasized more than sacrifice, comprehension more than mystery, community more than contemplation, celebration more than reverence. The language employed in the official translations that began to appear in 1967 was simple and direct. Required vestments were simplified, and new vestments were made in simpler fabrics than the traditional silk brocade. Worshipers' attire also changed as American culture became more informal.

These changes in Catholic worship dramatically accelerated movements for liturgical reform among Protestants. Many denominations joined Catholics in adopting a liturgical agenda focused on the participation of the people in a weekly celebration of word and sacrament. This produced extensive convergence in the theology and practice of worship among Catholics and Protestants.

Church architecture also reflected this worldly emphasis. Kneeling rails that separated the people from the altar disappeared. In many churches the people were arranged surrounding the altar. In most churches the tabernacle was moved away from the center axis of the church. Elaborate decorations were deemed distracting with a plain, modern aesthetic valued instead. Rather than the early-modern throne room, or Gothic cathedral, the model liturgical space was an early Christian house church or a modern living room.

The emphasis on the Eucharist as a meal was also reflected in the practice of Communion. Churchgoers received Communion much more frequently. By 1976 more than half of those attending any given Mass received Communion. Twenty-five years later nearly all attendees did so. Some parishes replaced wafers with Eucharistic bread that looked and tasted like real food. Laypeople were authorized to assist priests in distributing Communion in 1973. In many places they began to receive Communion in the hand instead of on the tongue, and this widespread but controversial practice was formally permitted in the United States in 1977. All of these changes had the goal of transforming the

liturgy from an action performed by the priest to the work of the entire gathered community.

Reformers promoted the liturgy as the official and communal prayer of the church and deemphasized devotions as reflecting a sentimental and individualistic piety. This was one factor contributing to a major decline in popular devotions. Since the Council of Trent, devotions had occupied a second-class status in both official and popular theology. Now the Mass was just as accessible to laity: like the devotions, it was conducted in the vernacular accompanied by music in a popular style. Devotions had lost their distinctive role. Many devotions had been associated with a Catholic subculture and the "God-and-country" piety that prevailed in the Cold War. The increasing integration of Catholics into American society and the fragmentation of Cold War consensus by the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement took their toll on devotionism. Furthermore, television and other innovations competed for evening leisure time. Services that had been popular for many decades, including Forty Hours devotions and First Friday Communion, rapidly disappeared.

A new Catholic charismatic movement, which began in 1966, expressed some of the piety once expressed through devotions. Charismatic prayer meetings were typically held outside of the church proper and incorporated Bible reading, singing, testimonials, fellowship, speaking in tongues, and sometimes healings. The movement influenced the style and music of liturgical worship, particularly on retreats and in other informal settings.

Process of Liturgical Reform

The revision of the liturgy took place in three major steps. First, instructions or revised liturgical books were prepared in Latin by an international body centered in Rome. From 1964 to 1970 this was the Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy. After that the work was taken up by the Congregation for Divine Worship. Second, bishops oversaw translation into their nations' vernaculars. Bishops of English-speaking countries created the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) to prepare a common English translation. Third, the reformed texts were implemented at the local level.

The Consilium consulted with many scholars, including those of Protestant and Orthodox churches. They were strongly influenced by research into early Christian worship. Particularly important was the *Apostolic Tradition*, a text believed at the time to date from early third-century Rome.

While many parishioners encountered the changes as “the new Mass,” it was for others a liturgy shaped by the primitive forms of Christian worship. Most of the new Latin liturgies were completed between 1969 and 1973.

Official English translations appeared over a twenty-year period. Among these were liturgies for the baptism of children and marriage in 1969, the *Roman Missal* in 1973, and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in 1986. Following the methodology of dynamic equivalence, authorized by Rome in 1969, these translations sought to communicate the meaning of a Latin passage in a manner appropriate to modern English. They employed a spare English style and simplified the content of many Latin prayers.

A new cycle of scripture readings for Sunday Mass was introduced in 1969. This lectionary stipulated a reading from the Old Testament and a Psalm in addition to the Epistle and Gospel and replaced a one-year cycle with a three-year cycle, providing for more of the Bible to be read in worship. Many publishers provided extensive homiletical resources keyed to the lectionary. Required at Sunday Mass, homilies were typically about ten minutes long and focused on an exposition of the Gospel reading. With the new lectionary came a liturgical year that reduced the number of feasts that could take precedence over Sunday in order to emphasize the centrality of the weekly celebration of Christ’s death and resurrection. Protestants were attracted to the three-year lectionary and widely adopted it, particularly in the modified form known as the *Revised Common Lectionary* (1992).

The high point of the liturgical year is the celebration of Easter, particularly the Triduum or “Three Days” liturgy composed of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil in the night before Easter Sunday. Initially reformed in 1951, it was further revised after Vatican II. The Easter Vigil is the principal and most complex service of the liturgical year and the culmination of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). Modeled on the practice of the early church, RCIA is a multistage rite through which adults entering the Catholic Church are brought before the congregation on several Sundays for special prayers while participating in a series of classes. They then receive the sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist) in the Easter Vigil. (Those previously baptized in other Christian groups are not rebaptized.)

Pastoral rites also changed. The sacrament formerly known as extreme unction was restored to its original purpose of the anointing of the sick and began to be practiced not only at

the bedside but also in communal services. Its popularity benefited from the charismatic movement’s emphasis on healing and an increasingly holistic approach to health. The sacrament of penance became known as reconciliation. New forms of confession were introduced, including face-to-face confession where pastoral counseling might occur and seasonal communal penance services that included opportunities for individual confession. Before any reform of this rite, however, the frequency of confession dramatically declined. Surveys show that the number of Catholics going to monthly confession dropped from 38 to 17 percent between 1965 and 1975, while the number who stated that they “never” or “practically never” went to confession increased from 18 to 38 percent. These numbers never recovered.

There were many reasons for this change. Advocates of frequent Communion had long advised that one did not need to go to confession to be absolved of venial sins prior to Communion, and some priests impatient with hearing minor sins discouraged frequent confession. Also, laity now heard and recited publicly the penitential rites of the Mass, which may have seemed to many to serve the same function as confession. On the other hand, many liturgical reformers actively sought to orient Catholics away from a penitential piety. Finally Paul VI’s unexpected reaffirmation of the ban on contraception in 1968 dissuaded many from confession.

Implementation of the reforms at a local level generated a new network of liturgical experts and resources. These were represented by organizations such as the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions; the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy; Liturgy Training Publications; and the North American Academy of Liturgy, an interfaith scholarly group. Many parishes hired liturgy directors in addition to music leaders and clergy. While the goal of this new cadre of liturgical leaders was active participation by the laity, many churchgoers experienced liturgical experts as heavy-handed and unsympathetic to existing habits of piety. Dramatic changes in worship left some Catholics feeling a “piety void” and others feeling disrespected by a movement that intended to empower them. On the other hand many embraced the implementation of the reforms, and others complained that they did not go far enough.

Liturgical Reform and Cultural Diversity

In calling for full participation in the liturgy, Vatican II not only permitted the translation of the liturgy but also the development of “legitimate variations” for different cultural groups. Minority ethnic groups in the United States,

especially Latinos and African Americans, have insisted on the development of distinct liturgical traditions. African Americans had conformed to Euro-American Catholic practices, but in the context of Vatican II and the civil rights movement, a desire for a distinctively African American Catholic liturgical tradition emerged. Black Catholic liturgies incorporated highly rhythmic music, musical improvisation, dance, spontaneous participation, and richly poetic prayer and preaching.

By the 1980s, however, many black Catholic leaders were frustrated by the U.S. hierarchy's support for merely "adapting" the liturgy to African American culture, since this approach assumed that the European culture imbedded in the Roman rite was normative. They, like other Catholics around the world, spoke of the need for "inculturation," an approach whose goal was for the liturgy to express itself in the forms of speech, song, and action belonging to each local culture. This meant recognizing that the Roman rite expressed Catholic worship in forms drawn from European culture and that the liturgy should be authentically expressed and enriched through African American culture.

Controversy over the extent of change, and the proposal to create a separate African American liturgical rite, resulted in a small but well-publicized schism when George A. Stallings founded Imani Temple in 1989. In 1994 Rome's Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments (CDWDS) issued the instruction *Varietates Legitimae* embracing the language of inculturation but limiting its extent and insisting on the need to maintain the unity of the Roman rite. Services employing African American music and dance continued, but official liturgical texts incorporating African American forms of language and action were not forthcoming.

While African Americans sought to develop a distinct tradition, Latino/a Catholics sought to have their historic traditions more fully accepted within the Church. The popular devotions that had developed over the centuries of Latino/a Catholic experience did not suffer the decline that such devotions did among U.S. Catholics at large. The distinctive impetus of liturgical reform among Latino/a Catholics has been to recognize the importance of popular devotion and break down the division between it and the liturgy. This effort has forced proponents of liturgical reform to reassess many of their ideas about the relationship between inculturation and popular devotion. As the Latino/a population in the United States has grown, Spanish Masses have become more common throughout the nation and parishes.

Spanish was recognized as a liturgical language of the United States in 1985, allowing American bishops to standardize the various translations in use. Another sign of the growing Latino/a presence is the new shrines to Our Lady of Guadalupe erected in many churches. In 1999 John Paul II named her patroness of the Americas, making her feast obligatory throughout the hemisphere. Early morning celebrations now occur in many parishes each December 12, her feast day.

Opposition to Reforms

Since the late 1960s many Catholics have criticized the liturgical reforms, and a small number have rejected the authority of these and other reforms from the Second Vatican Council. The Society of Pius X, founded by French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, is the largest such group in the United States, claiming some 100 chapels and 60 priests in 2008. More significant are those who recognize the legitimacy of the reforms but are critical of the way the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy was implemented. These critics seek a greater degree of formality, tradition, reverence, and distinctively Catholic identity. They favor the restoration of the tabernacle to a central position in the church; a preference for classical or traditional styles of architecture, music, and vesture; traditional signs of reference for God and the Eucharist, such as bowing and kneeling; clearer demarcation between the roles of priest and people; less emphasis on inculturation; and more emphasis on the formal unity of the Roman rite. They also seek renewed attention to Marian piety, Eucharistic adoration, and other devotions.

Leaders of the liturgical reforms were not unsympathetic to some of these criticisms. ICEL had begun a revision of its translation of the *Roman Missal* in 1982, aiming to replace the sparse language and plain style of the existing translation with language in a more elevated style that would communicate more of the complexity of the Latin. It also, as in the previous translation, prepared additional liturgical material, including opening prayers corresponding to the three-year lectionary cycle.

By the 1990s, however, conservative criticisms of the liturgy began to be backed by official power. While early reports in ICEL's slow and deliberate process generated little comment, a 1992 report to U.S. bishops yielded well-publicized criticism. In particular, objections were raised to the use of inclusive language and the free translation of the Latin. These proposed changes provided a cause around which liturgical conservatives coalesced. The instruction on inculturation issued by CDWDS in 1994 indicated Rome's

intention to pursue a more conservative liturgical policy. By the mid-1990s several organizations had been formed, including a scholarly society (Society for Catholic Liturgy), a popular reform caucus (Adoremus), and a graduate program (the Liturgical Institute at Mundelein Seminary).

After further revision the revised ICEL translation of the *Roman Missal*, which it, as in 1974, called by the more ancient term *Sacramentary*, was approved by U.S. bishops and forwarded to Rome for the required *recognito* in 1997. The same year CDWDS rejected ICEL's recently submitted translation of the ordination rites. The same fate befell the *Sacramentary* in 2002. In the interim the Holy See announced the publication of a new edition of the *Roman Missal*. The corresponding edition of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* was released in 2000, two years before the Latin missal. The revised missal is less significant for changes in the Latin text than for changes in how the Mass is translated and celebrated.

The translation will be in accordance with the principles contained in the instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam* issued in 2001 by CDWDS. Rejecting dynamic equivalence, it insists on great fidelity to the Latin. It also cemented recent changes giving Rome more control over translation. Subsequently, a completely reorganized ICEL prepared translations that were Latinized in sentence structure and word choice. In 2006 U.S. bishops began the multiyear process of approving these new translations. They rejected some proposed changes because they were too awkward in English and departed too far from the familiar translations. However, they did approve changes in commonly recited parts of the Mass. For example, Catholics will respond "and with your spirit" instead of "and also with you" and will sing "God of hosts" rather than "God of power and might." Proponents of such changes see not only a greater fidelity to the Latin but also the preservation of biblical and patristic allusions. Opponents see a departure from ecumenically agreed upon translations and a rejection of living language in liturgy.

Changes in the actions of the Mass mandated in the revised *GIRM* and the 2004 instruction from the CDWDS, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, have been implemented. Many have the effect of widening the distinction between priest and people and increasing the devotion shown to the Blessed Sacrament. Priests may no longer permit laypersons to preach the homily. Likewise laity may participate in distributing Communion only when not enough priests and deacons are present, not as a means of manifesting their participation in the liturgy. While Communion continues to take place standing, the laity are to make the gesture of

reverence authorized by their bishop before receiving, most commonly bowing.

The most dramatic sign of the reconsideration of liturgical reform came in 2007 when Benedict XVI gave general permission for the celebration of the pre-Vatican II Latin Mass. More limited permission had been given in 1984. The Mass as revised after Vatican II may also be celebrated in Latin. Although it is doubtful that Latin Masses will be widely celebrated, they draw a faithful congregation in at least one church in most metropolitan areas. While they are a reaction to liturgical reform, these Latin liturgies are not typical of liturgy before the Council but reflect the influence of the liturgical movement. The people are fully aware of the liturgical action of the Mass. They often follow the liturgy in bilingual missals and take their part in saying and singing the responses.

The conservative trend is also reflected in a modest increase in popular devotions. The emphasis on reclaiming tradition directed new attention to devotions, as did the sense among some liturgists that the reform had been too centralized and not significantly engaged with popular piety. Official support for increased attention to popular devotion has come in several forms, including a 2001 Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy from CDWDS.

The emphasis on tradition is driven by a number of factors. Some church leaders feel that one reason for the dramatic decline in priestly vocations is the degree to which the unique identity of the priesthood has been deemphasized. A reversion to more hierarchical norms is intended to address this problem. Also, many Catholics appreciated the more open liturgical style of the post-Vatican II era as a contrast to earlier constraints and within an intellectual framework shaped by the religious education of the pre-Vatican II era. More recent generations do not bring this background to the liturgy. The amount of time devoted to religious education has dramatically decreased since the Council. Among a generation not schooled in tradition, traditional forms seem new, substantial, and empowering. This turn toward tradition has also been noted among many observers of post-baby boom generations across American religion. At the same time the reforms stemming from the Second Vatican Council have set the context in which Catholic worship in America will continue to develop in the twenty-first century.

See also *Architecture: Roman Catholic; Canada: Catholics; Charismatics/Charismatic Movements; Death and Burial Practices; Devotionalism; Latino/a Religious Practice; Mexico* entries; *Music:*

Coritos/Spanish-Language; Music: Roman Catholic; Visual Culture entries; *Worship* entries.

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Z



Zen Buddhism

Although plagued by misunderstandings and inaccurate stereotypes, Zen has the distinction of being one of the most recognizable forms of Buddhism to Americans. A diverse movement, Zen coalesced in China (beginning perhaps in the seventh century CE but taking five or more centuries to fully develop) around a mythical lineage of great patriarchs who passed special teachings down from the original Buddha in India. This emphasis on lineage transmission replicated Confucian filial piety models within the celibate Buddhist monastery, and by venerating new “Zen masters” as living Buddhas, these lineages helped shift attention from India as the homeland of Buddhism to China as the authentic inheritor of the Buddhist tradition. Zen also came to be associated strongly with meditation practice and the “sudden enlightenment” side of the debate within Chinese Buddhism over whether awakening occurred in a gradual or all-at-once manner. An extremely literary movement, Zen eventually produced many new genres of Chinese Buddhist writing, especially collections of earlier patriarchs’ alleged sayings, known as koans. Originally scriptures intended for study, koans came to be used as innovative meditation techniques designed to push the mind toward dramatic epiphanies. From China, Zen was taken to Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. It is from Japan in particular that Zen has impacted North America (Zen is the Japanese term for the school; in China it is Chan). It should be noted, however, that Chinese, Vietnamese, and to a lesser extent Korean forms of Zen also are operating in America. Among the immigrant populations these are typically mixed with other forms of Buddhism, while for newer

converts to Buddhism the characterizations herein of Japanese-derived Zen practice largely apply also to forms originally taught by missionaries from China, Vietnam, and Korea.

History

Japanese Buddhism came to have a more highly sectarian nature than in most parts of East Asia, and Zen entered Japan at the historical moment when this sectarianism was on the rise. Eventually this gave rise to a number of competing Zen sects. The largest of the Zen sects in Japan is Soto Zen. Its meditation techniques focus on silent illumination rather than koans, letting thoughts and feelings arise and pass without any particular meditative focus, since perfect seated meditation is itself akin to Buddhahood in this school. Rinzai Zen is a broader umbrella, covering more than a dozen different major lineages that developed in Japan, although with fewer total members than Soto. This form focuses on koan study and was strongly associated with the ruling classes, including the samurai, giving it an aristocratic nature that often included personal cultivation through the fine arts. Obaku Zen, an outgrowth of further Chinese developments in the Rinzai school, is a small school that combines more overt Pure Land Buddhist material than do other forms of Japanese Zen. Pure Land is a school of Buddhism that tends to deify the Buddha and looks for rebirth in a mythic “pure land” or ideal realm for those who put their faith in the Buddha. There are also Zen new religious movements of the modern age, such as Sanbo Kyodan, a tiny reformist sect in Japan that has had an outsized influence on American Zen.

Given Zen’s prominence in current English-language works on Buddhism, it is perhaps surprising to find that it

received no particular attention in the first encounters of Americans with Buddhism. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century travelers to Japan gave it no special notice, and early on it was Jodo Shinshu Pure Land Buddhism that seemed to act as the primary Japanese conduit for information on Buddhism to the West. This changed only very slowly. Zen's first big splash in the West came at the famous 1893 World's Parliament of Religions, where the Rinzai teacher Soen Shaku (1859–1919) delivered a well-received address along with representatives of several other forms of Buddhism. Soen was a modernist and reformer, and in 1897 he sent his lay student Suzuki Daisetsu (1870–1966; known in the West as D.T. Suzuki) to assist influential liberal religious publisher Paul Carus (1852–1919) in his Chicago-based Buddhist translation and dissemination efforts. Suzuki was key in helping to get early information about Zen into English-language forums, and his apprenticeship during this period was an important prelude to his extremely successful efforts to promote a highly idiosyncratic vision of Zen to America during the mid-twentieth century, by which time he had become a major scholar of Buddhism.

Japanese Immigrants and Missionary Zen Priests

Zen's history in America largely breaks into two different, though at times overlapping and mutually influencing, streams: the first, the Japanese immigrants who brought Buddhism with them as their family faith, the second, the Americans from a non-Buddhist (and largely non-Asian) background who took up elements of Zen as individuals. Japanese immigration began in the 1860s and increased dramatically in the 1880s and 1890s. Most immigrants were members of non-Zen schools of Buddhism, but there were nonetheless some Zen Buddhists in the mix, and they began to form new Buddhist institutions in the West. The first temple was established in Honolulu in 1913, with others being established in Hawaii and on the West Coast in following years. The Japanese experienced intense prejudice, both racial and religious, and their temples often became places of refuge, where Japanese could be spoken safely and taught to the children, traditional foods and arts practiced, and solace sought through rededication to religion. Such discrimination peaked in two particularly significant events: the 1924 Immigration Act, which banned most of further Japanese immigration to America, and the 1942 forced expulsion of West Coast Japanese Americans from their communities into internment camps, based on unfounded suspicions about their loyalty during World War II. With

immigration cut off and then most of their assets confiscated, Japanese American Buddhism, Zen included, was dealt severe blows that prevented it from growing widely in North America. Nonetheless, pockets of immigrant Zen practitioners and their descendants kept the faith alive, holding services in the wartime camps and eventually reopening their temples when they were released. These temples still are few in number, and while they have assimilated into American society—adopting English, pews, Sunday services, boards of directors, nonprofit status, and other elements—their primary patrons are still Japanese Americans, with the temple continuing to serve as an ethnic community center as well as a religious organization.

Beyond the numbers of immigrants who came to America for economic reasons, a smaller variety of missionary Zen priests came in the first half of the twentieth century to work among Americans of non-Asian background. Priests such as Sokei-an Sasaki (1882–1945) in New York City (beginning 1930) and Nyogen Senzaki (1876–1958) in Los Angeles (beginning 1922) founded small mediation-oriented study groups. Numerically insignificant, these pioneers nonetheless contributed to the later Zen boom by beginning to work out a vocabulary for Zen Buddhism in English and fostering early networks among alternative spiritual seekers that would later prove useful to successive waves of Buddhist sympathizers in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Their memory also served later generations of American Zen practitioners in the production of an imaginative lineage of Zen masters in the West, domesticating Zen in America in a process similar to how it originally arose in China.

Zen in the 1950s and 1960s

Zen as a phenomenon among non-Asians in North America really began to take off in the 1950s. The war between the United States and Japan had dire consequences for Zen practitioners in America of Japanese background, but for non-Japanese it was the catalyst that would lead to Zen becoming a major religious alternative in the West. The war in the Pacific forced the United States and Japan to deal with one another first as enemies, then as occupier and occupied, and finally as staunch allies, all of which necessitated an ever-deepening entanglement that brought many Americans to Japan and vice versa, as well as driving the rapid assimilation of information about Japan by Americans. Some Americans were exposed to Zen during the war, such as prisoner of war Robert Aitken (1917–), and immediately

afterward, such as Philip Kapleau (1912–2004), who covered the trials of Japanese war criminals; and many more began to add Japan to their itinerary as postwar generations sought personal renewal and spiritual discovery via travels in Asia.

In 1949, D. T. Suzuki returned to the United States to lecture on Zen in Hawaii and on the mainland. His many publications and public appearances helped to spark a wider interest in Zen. That year Aitken moved to Hawaii and began to teach Zen to American laypeople. Zen actually had a significant advantage over other larger sects such as Jodo Shinshu because it was so thinly represented on the ground in America: this allowed it to be divorced from actual practices and structures as found in Japan and to be creatively reimagined as an iconoclastic, personalized path of freedom and mystic insight, in part because of the revisionist, ahistorical depictions that Suzuki provided. Soon members of the West Coast literary revolution began to promote this decontextualized Zen as an antidote to postwar conformist values—these included the Beats, such as Gary Snyder (1930–), who subsequently spent years in Japan studying Zen, and Jack Kerouac (1922–1969), as well as Alan Watts (1915–1973), a major popularizer of Asian spirituality. Kerouac immortalized his circle of hip Zen renegade poets in such books as *On the Road* (1957) and *Dharma Bums* (1958), which remain popular both in high school and university English classes and the wider culture.

Scholarly understandings of the central place of ritual, discipline, and hierarchy in Asian Zen have advanced since the 1950s; but for the average American, Zen remains indelibly stamped by these early impressions of free spirits finding personal inspiration in the puzzling, nondualistic, anti-institutional statements of famous Zen masters. The 1960s saw an explosion of countercultural activity, much of it overtly inspired by growing contact with Asian cultures. Many important Zen training centers were founded, including the San Francisco Zen Center (1962) of Suzuki Shunryu (1904–1971), Philip Kapleau's Rochester Zen Center (1966), and the Zen Center of Los Angeles (1968) of Maezumi Taizan (1931–1995). The Zen center model was a new evolution in Buddhist practice, offering modified practices normally reserved for the monasteries to a noncelibate lay population, many of whom were not explicitly Buddhist in belief. Above all, meditation practice—a rare activity for laypeople in Asia—was advanced as the core of Zen, and many Japanese Zen ceremonies and other elements were left out of the programs of these new centers. Americans from non-Asian backgrounds, especially Caucasians, flocked to

these Zen centers, often demanding a nondevotional and nonritualistic approach to Buddhist practice that fit the streamlined version of Zen earlier promoted by D. T. Suzuki though was at odds with mainstream Zen practice.

Zen in America at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century

Zen centers continued to proliferate from the 1960s onward and remain a growing phenomenon found in most urban parts of the country in the early twenty-first century. In the intervening decades they have undergone a number of shifts. American Buddhism, including Zen, was rocked by sex and power scandals centering on major teachers in the 1980s who were naively treated as virtual Buddhas and given far-reaching power over their disciples and organizations with little in the way of checks and balances. The most famous of these was the meltdown at San Francisco Zen Center in 1983 over feelings that head teacher Richard Baker (1936–) had abused his position, turning regular Center members into a poorly paid labor force and cheating on his wife with married Zen students. Outside the major centers there have also appeared fake “Zen masters” with no actual training in the tradition, who look to cash in on the popularity of Zen. In response to the scandals, some Zen centers developed more democratic governance models, sought to elevate the status of women within American Zen, and underwent self-criticism. Zen also became more overtly bureaucratized, and national organizations with some ability to serve as credentialing institutions—such as the American Zen Teachers Association—emerged both to help deal with problems with actual Zen teachers and to censure scam artists claiming Zen authority. Over time more ceremonial elements have begun to appear within the Zen centers, such as funerals, rituals to deal with abortion, and other forms of practice, that partially de-center the emphasis on seated meditation. Zen has also been applied to various social issues, giving rise to Zen hospices, Zen prison ministry, and other forms of engaged Buddhism. And Zen has become involved in interfaith encounters; the stripped-down American Zen has even proven congenial to dual practice as Christian-Buddhists or Jewish-Buddhists for many people.

One effect of Zen's meteoric rise in popularity has been the commercial appropriation of Zen by wider market forces. The term Zen is now used to sell all manner of products, from baby swings to stock market advice, and is especially common in the health food industry. Applying the word Zen to tea, crackers, water, hot dogs, or virtually any

other product is intended to associate it with balanced living, inner peace, and exotic Asian aesthetics.

Zen in America is thriving but also faces serious challenges for the future. Most centers do not offer programs for children, and converts to Zen have proven largely unwilling to pass the tradition on to their families. Thus while some centers have a healthy number of young adult practitioners, Zen overall has experienced a pronounced graying effect. The status of American meditators as neither real monks nor normal laypeople remains a source of confusion and occasional problems. And the way that Zen has been nearly universally psychologized and divorced from more traditional Buddhist worldviews sometimes presents difficulties in differentiating it as a religion, rather than a self-help fad, leaving it vulnerable to shifting tastes in American pop spirituality culture.

See also *Buddhism in North America; Buddhist Tradition and Heritage; Celebrity Culture; Immigration* entries; *Spirituality: Contemporary Trends; Transcendental Meditation*.

Jeff Wilson

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Zionism

Zionism is the self-identifying term that Jews and Christians in the late modern era have given movements to support the building of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine. Translating religious yearnings into political messianism, Zionists initiated the settlement of Jews in Palestine beginning at the turn of the twentieth century and led an international diplomatic

campaign that culminated in the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. Zionism also wished to modernize the Jews and transform Jewish values and culture. Between 1920 and 1980, many Jews, including in the United States, embraced Zionist ideals. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Zionism is popular among modern Orthodox Jews and conservative evangelical Christians, while others have moved to define themselves as post-Zionists or have come to express doubts over the Zionist ideals.

Origins and Early Beginnings

The origins of Zionism are both religious and secular. The spiritual roots of Zionist movements lie in Jewish yearnings to return to the Land of Israel and rebuild Jerusalem and in the Christian eschatological belief that Jewish restoration in Palestine is a necessary step towards the return of Jesus to earth. While Judaism as a whole had accommodated itself to a life without a political and religious center, hopes for return to the ancestral land had remained part of the Jewish spiritual agenda. Jewish yearnings for political and spiritual redemption gave rise occasionally to messianic movements, the largest of which took place in the mid-seventeenth century. Protestant hopes for a Jewish restoration in Palestine as a necessary step in the Second Coming date back to the sixteenth century.

Christian political initiatives for the restoration of the Jews in Palestine predate the rise of political Zionism. Throughout the nineteenth century, a number of pietist and evangelical Christian leaders, mostly in English-speaking countries, petitioned their governments to take upon themselves international diplomatic efforts that would lead to the returning of Palestine to the Jews. One such outstanding initiative was the “Blackstone memorial” of 1891. Motivated by a biblical eschatological faith, William Blackstone, a businessman and evangelist from Chicago, organized a petition requesting that the U.S. government work towards the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine. Hundreds of prominent Americans—members of Congress, governors, mayors, editors and publishers of major newspapers, as well as financial magnates and church leaders—signed the petition, demonstrating the strong effect of a biblical Protestant worldview on American culture. Protestant sentiments would continue to play a vital role in supporting Zionist initiatives.

The first self-declared Jewish Zionist groups that promoted the settlement of the Jews in Palestine started in Europe in the 1880s and 1890s. A few thousand Eastern European Jews immigrated to Palestine, establishing farming

communities there. These immigrants were in a minority; most Jews wished to improve their lives in the communities in which they lived or to immigrate to countries that offered them better opportunities. However, by the late nineteenth century, partly as a reaction to noninclusive attitudes, acculturated European Jews promoted the idea of creating a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine.

Influenced by European ideas about peoples' need for self-expression and contemporary struggles for the creation of national states, Theodore Herzl (1860–1904), the father of political Zionism, came forward with plans for the return of the Jews en masse to Palestine and the building of a nation-state there through international consent. He first publicized his ideas in his book *The Jewish State* (1896). Published a few years later, *An Old-New Land* described a utopian Jewish commonwealth organized according to the values of Western liberals. Herzl considered Palestine “a land without a people,” taking little notice of the indigenous Arab population. Organizing a conference in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland, attended by proponents of the Zionist ideal from various parts of Europe, Herzl began a global campaign towards the creation of a Jewish state. Zionism, however, did not remain a united or uniform movement, and different supporters developed varied interpretations of its goal.

Suggesting a plan for the redemption of the Jews, Zionism secularized Jewish messianic yearnings. Those who joined the new movement often felt the experience as a conversion to a new faith. The Zionist ideal offered its adherents an all-encompassing cultural and political worldview and an alternative means of constructing a Jewish identity. This identity held the Jews to be an active nation, not merely a community of faith, whose members could find their homes anywhere on earth. Zionism followed in the footsteps of the Haskalah, the Jewish Enlightenment, which wished to see the Jews “normalize”; that is, develop their bodies as much as their minds, acquire new skills, and adopt new occupations. Zionists were mostly secular modernists who promoted a progressive messianic view of the future. Influenced by the optimistic mood of Western nations between 1870 and World War I, many liberal Jews, as well as non-Jews, were certain that they could create through reason and social and economic planning a perfect European society, in this case on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Building an ideology of a total change of the Jewish psyche and culture, many Zionists rejected the entire historical Jewish experience as a nonindependent, dispersed people outside of the land of Israel.



Theodore Herzl, the father of political Zionism, proposed plans for the return of Jews en masse to Palestine and the building of a nation-state there through international consent. The ideas were first publicized in his book *The Jewish State* (1896).

Many Jews, including Ultra-Orthodox leaders, rejected the Zionist ideals, insisting that Jews should not become politically active and instead should wait for the Messiah to deliver Israel and restore its people to the land. They also resented the mostly secular character of the movement. Other groups of Jews, whether socialist or acculturated liberals, also objected to the idea of a national state where all Jews would build their homes. “Shlilat HaGola,” the rejection of Jewish life in the diaspora, which was part of the Zionist ideology, stood on the way of American Jewish acceptance of the new movement and its goals.

Zionism in America: Colonial Times through the Nineteenth Century

In its early years Zionism did not appeal to American Jews. When Jews arrived in America in the colonial era and established the first congregations in what would become the

United States, they brought with them, as part of their identity, the self-consciousness of a dispersed people. While they integrated successfully into urban colonial societies, they prayed for the redemption of Zion.

While colonial Jews maintained a benign longing for Zion, American Protestants often understood their own experience in the New World in biblical terms, as Israelites in covenant with God arriving in Canaan to build Zion, “a city built upon a hill.” The New England Puritans also expected the redemption of the Jews in Palestine, and in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries many American Protestants looked favorably upon the Zionist settlement of Palestine as an experience that was similar to that of their own in settling the New World. New Christian messianic movements that envisioned the imminent building of the kingdom of God on earth appeared on the American scene, promoting at times the return of the Jews to Palestine. One such group has been the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which while considering America to be the promised land where the tribe of Joseph (themselves) would gather in the fullness of time, has also expected the tribe of Judah, the present-day Jews, to congregate in Zion. American Jews have not shared that vision.

By the late nineteenth century, some American Jews openly considered America to be their promised land. “The country wherein we live is our Zion,” declared leaders of the Reform movement that swept through American Judaism from 1850 to 1890. The messianic era of righteousness and prosperity, they concluded, would come through human progress, not messianic intervention. The mission of the Jews, they asserted, was to spread the knowledge of the one God and his moral commandments among the nations.

Zionism in America: Twentieth Century

By the turn of the twentieth century America was home to one of the largest Jewish communities on earth. However, the masses of Jewish immigrants that were arriving from Eastern Europe at this time, as well as the better-settled German Jewish elite, saw little merit in the Zionist program. The immigrants were busy building a life for themselves in “the Golden State,” as Yiddish-speaking Jews related to America, and viewed their new country as the promised land, an understanding not much different from that of the more veteran American Jewish elites.

The first groups in America to call themselves Zionists were small organizations that began their activities in the

late 1880s. Their membership never exceeded a few dozen, turning into a few hundred when Herzilian Zionism came on the scene at the beginning of the twentieth century. American Zionism remained small and not very significant until World War I. It grew considerably when American Jews began reconciling their identities as Americans and Jews with the Zionist ideal, discovering in Zionism a convenient means of creating Jewish solidarity and a sense of loyalty towards their heritage.

The architect of an American Zionist ideology, U.S. Supreme Court justice Louis Brandeis (1856–1941) found a rationale for an American brand of Zionism, legitimizing it and turning it into a popular ideal that gave expression to American Jewish sentiments. Brandeis asserted that in order to be good Americans, Jews needed to be proud of their identity. To accomplish that, they should become Zionists. Brandeis’ American Zionist ideology did not speak about the ingathering of all Jews in Palestine but rather about American Jewish support for a Jewish national home, which would provide a haven for underprivileged Jews from around the world. In the 1920s Zionism, in different forms, began making inroads into the American Jewish agenda.

A series of parties emerged within American Zionism, reflecting both international Jewish trends and local American preferences. Liberal, free-market-oriented American Jews established the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA). Immigrants from Eastern Europe imported labor-oriented forms of Zionism, such as Poale-Zion, which also served as a social and cultural support group. Modern Orthodox Zionists organized a local branch of HaMizrahi. In the 1930s some Revisionist Zionists settled in America. All these groups also sponsored Zionist youth movements, often organized by Zionist emissaries from Palestine. Zionists established the largest Jewish Women’s organization in America, Hadassah, which has sponsored medical and educational programs in Israel. Cultural Zionism particularly impressed American Jewish intellectuals. It argued that a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine could not provide the Jews with a safe haven but would serve as a cultural center that would help ensure Jewish national survival and creativity. Jewish American thinkers, such as Judah Magnes (1877–1948) and Mordechai Kaplan (1880–1983), found cultural Zionism compelling, as it meshed well with their humanistic and universalistic worldview.

By the 1930s Zionism had become the largest Jewish ideological movement in America, serving as a means of expressing Jewish identity and solidarity. The rise of the

Nazis to power in Germany eroded much of the opposition to Zionism among members of the Jewish social elite; the creation of a Jewish state where persecuted Jews could find a haven seemed more attractive than ever. Following World War II, the dividing line between Zionists and non-Zionists blurred, with almost all American Jews supporting the Zionist agenda, even if they did not identify themselves as Zionists. Following the destruction of European Jewry, American Judaism became the leader of world Jewry, and American Jewish organizations and donors became the major supporters of Zionist activity, contributing extensively to cultural, medical, educational, and welfare activities in Palestine.

The campaign of Jewish leaders and Protestant supporters, who organized to lend public encouragement to the Zionist program, helped persuade President Harry Truman to support the establishment of a Jewish state in May 1948.

1948 and Beyond

After the birth of Israel in 1948, Arab opposition to Zionism and to Israel remained firm, and the Soviet bloc too came to look upon Zionism as an instrument of Western imperialism. American Jews, however, looked upon the outcome of the Zionist efforts in Israel with admiration, often romanticizing the young Israeli state. Zionism and Israel became central features of American Jewish culture, and support for the new state became a priority for American Jewish groups. Evangelical Christians too delighted in the new state and its absorption of immigrants from all around the world.

Following the June 1967 war between Israel and its Arab neighbors, American—Jewish and Christian—involvement with and support for Israel became even more extensive. American Jews took pride in the Israeli victory and felt that Israel stood triumphant on the battlefield of the Cold War, defending itself against Soviet-backed armies. The Israeli victory, including the taking of the historical parts of Jerusalem, convinced many evangelical Christians that Israel was created for a historical purpose and that the Jewish state was to play an important role in preparing the ground for the arrival of the Messiah. Regarding themselves as Christian Zionists, conservative evangelical Christians became an

important part of the pro-Israeli lobby in America, urging Washington to take a favorable line towards Israel.

Liberal and left-wing thinkers have been less favorably impressed. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories taken from Egypt and Jordan and the settlement there of Jewish groups who have viewed themselves as representing a new Orthodox-nationalist revival of Zionism have increased the critique of the Zionist project. New post-colonial intellectual trends have also worked against the public image of Zionism. Many Israelis have come to define themselves as post-Zionists. They consider the older Zionist teachings to be irrelevant to current realities and argue that the state of Israel having been accomplished, they now wish to build a pluralistic society and promote peace between Jews and Palestinians. Likewise, in the 1980s to 2000s, many American Jews have become more critical of Zionism or have distanced themselves from it altogether. Both Jews and non-Jews continue to confront the historical significance of the movement and differ in their evaluations.

Yaakov Ariel

See also *Anti-Semitism; Hasidism; Holocaust; Judaism* entries; *Latter-day Saints; Religious Right; Torah; Women: Jewish*.

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